



## **Virginia Creeper Trail Bike & Hike Adventure (34 Mile Bike, 6 Mile Hike)**

*Friday, May 5 at 7AM through Monday, May 8 at 7PM*

Let your love for adventure take you to one of the most beautiful bike trails in the country, the Virginia Creeper Trail. Ride all 34 miles of the stunningly scenic trail as you cross 47 trestles and enjoy the gorgeous Appalachian Mountains. If that wasn't already amazing enough, we will pair this amazing biking experience with a day hiking in Grayson Highlands State Park for a chance at seeing wild ponies while hiking through beautiful 360 degree panoramic mountain views.

Attendance at the pre-trip informational meeting is required (Tuesday, May 2nd, 6-7:30PM, Oak Openings Preserve Metropark Lodge). We will check and fit gear, talk about the trip, and answer any questions.

The Virginia Creeper Trail is primarily gravel and will include sections with some larger (softball-basketball size) rocks and uneven surfaces. Our route will be primarily downhill, however, the last one-third of the ride has some moderately strenuous uphill sections. While hiking in Grayson Highlands the terrain can consist of packed dirt, gravel, larger rocks, and roots.

Fee: \$655 per guest. Tents, sleeping bags, pads, stove and cook sets available to borrow. Please indicate your interest in the registration system. Program fees include all equipment, bike rentals and shuttle, state park entry fees, travel, and camping permits. Meals are not included.

We will adhere to any recommendations or requirements that come from the state during the time of the trip, should there be any COVID concerns.

Because of the intense planning for this trip, 50% of the fee is considered a non-refundable deposit per the refund policy. If you need to cancel for any reason, please call Ashley Smith at 419-265-2920. Anyone who would like to cancel their trip due to concerns related to COVID-19 may do so with no financial penalty.

The following packet contains information and resources you need to prepare for the trip including the trip agenda, packing list, and food suggestions for the trip. Please feel free to reach out to your trip leader with any additional questions.

Jake Willing: 419-277-0107 or [Jake.Willing@MetroparksToledo.com](mailto:Jake.Willing@MetroparksToledo.com)



## Travel Plan

Meet at the Buehner Center parking lot at Oak Openings Preserve Metropark on Friday, September 22 at 7:00AM. The drive to this location from Toledo takes about 10 hours with stoppage time.

## Tentative Schedule

This is our desired plan however it could be subject to minor changes. You will be advised of the final schedule at the mandatory pre-trip meeting. Please note that daily mileages are approximate.

Friday, May 5th	7:00 AM: Meet at Buehner Center Parking Lot Travel to Whitetop VA Set up camp Dinner
Saturday, May 6th	7:00AM: Wake Breakfast Pack up and head to shuttle pick-up location. Shuttle from Abingdon to Whitetop Mountain trailhead. Ride from Whitetop Mountain to Abingdon on the Virginia Creeper Trail (34 miles) Return rental bikes to shuttle service Head back to campsite, prepare dinner, eat, evening share
Sunday, May 7th	7:00AM: Wake Breakfast Pack up and head to Grayson Highlands to hike. Hike ~6 miles within Grayson Highlands. Head back to campsite, prepare dinner, eat, evening share
Monday, May 8th	8:00AM: Wake, break camp Breakfast Break camp Travel home <b>Total mileage: 34 miles biking, 6 miles hiking</b>

There are several scenic stops along the way to stop and take photos. This is YOUR trip, so please make sure you let leaders know when you want to stop for photo ops!

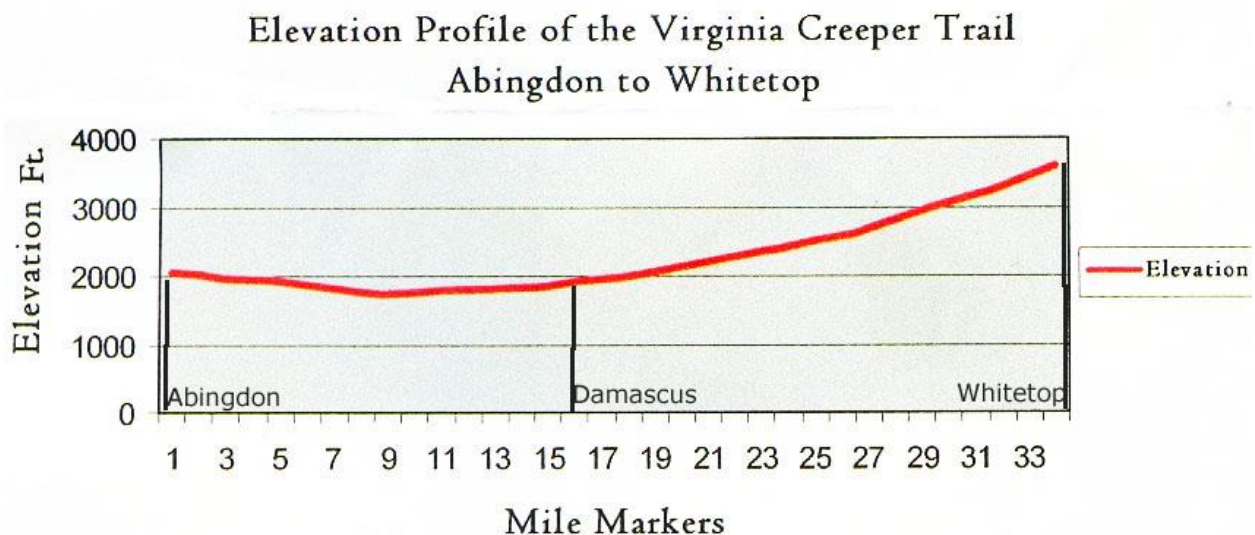
## Ride Profile

The terrain on this ride will vary slightly. Although we will be taking the downhill route, there will be sections that are relatively flat along with some sections that have near constant elevation changes, both uphill and downhill.

The last few miles of the trail are steadily uphill, so be prepared for some relatively strenuous pedaling. For those of us who live in flat NW Ohio it will be totally different from what we are used to and therefore more strenuous.

The trail is primarily packed dirt or gravel with some larger softball size rocks in certain areas. We will also be crossing many trestles that are primarily made of wood.

With all of that said, if we take our time this should be doable for all participants and incredibly memorable.



\*Please keep in mind that we will be riding from Whitetop to Abingdon.

## Food Plan

Pack snacks for the trip down and back. Pack a lunch for the trip down to speed up drive time. Bring a refillable water bottle for the ride.

### Trail food

Participants will need to bring their own food. Generally speaking you want to select food items that are calorie dense and high in complex carbohydrates and protein. We will have no access to refrigeration or coolers so please avoid foods that will spoil. Avoid foods that will squish or crumble easily.

*For the trek you will need to pack:*

3 dinners – Friday, Saturday, Sunday

4 lunches – Friday (bus lunch), Saturday, Sunday, Monday (bus lunch)

3 breakfasts – Saturday, Sunday, Monday

### Pro Tips

- Also pack trail snacks between breakfasts and dinners and to supplement meals. Food for a typical day on the bike or hiking trail it usually involves breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner.
- We will take the time to boil water in the mornings for coffee/tea/oatmeal/dehydrated meals, but please plan for a relatively quick breakfast. Lunches should be ready to eat and require no cooking. We'll have time to cook for dinners.
- Calorie needs vary per person, but plan for somewhere between 2500-4000 calories per day.
- As a camping, biking, and hiking experience, we look to take a page out of the backpacker's book and for dinners we recommend opting for light-weight freeze dried meals. There are several brands to choose from, and meals can typically be found at Bass Pro, Cabelas, REI, Walmart, or online. Freeze dried meals typically just require adding boiling water. Pre-packaged varieties usually come sized for 1 or 2 persons/servings, or you can purchase bulk canisters that you can control your own portions by portioning into freezer strength zip-lock bags. For those that do not wish to purchase freeze-dried meals please see the sample meals section below for other trail-friendly meal suggestions.
- For more information on meal planning please see REI's expert advice:  
<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/planning-menu.html>

## Sample Meals

**Breakfast:** select 1 or more, supplement with bars, trail mix, dried fruit, jerky etc.

- Cold cereal with dehydrated milk (add water at breakfast)
- Bagel or tortilla with peanut butter
- Instant oatmeal (two packs for most people)
- Tea, instant coffee, hot coco
- Dehydrated meals

**Lunch:** select 1 or more, supplement with bars, trail mix, dried fruit, jerky etc.

- Bagels or tortillas with peanut butter and jelly or honey
- Tuna or chicken packets with crackers

## Dinner:

- Dehydrated or freeze dried meals (Mountain House, Backpackers Pantry, etc.)
- Any combination of quick-cook pasta, dehydrated potatoes, instant rice, or pasta and rice sides with chicken or tuna packets, canned beans, or nuts for protein. For example:
  - Mac and cheese with chicken or tuna packets
  - Ramen noodles with chicken and instant mashed potatoes
  - Mexican rice with tortillas and chicken packets or beans
  - Thai noodles with peanuts and peanut butter

**Snacks:** Plan for a morning snack between breakfast and lunch, and an afternoon snack between lunch and dinner. Snacks also make good supplements to meals. Many people find they prefer to bring a mixture of both salty and sweet snacks. Popular snacks include: goldfish, Cheez-its, chips, jerky, granola bars/protein bars/energy bars, dehydrated fruit, trail mix, fruit snacks, teddy grahams, cookies, nuts.

**Water:** Plan to carry 1-2L of water in refillable bottles/hydration packs for the ride and for the hiking day. Water is available at limited stops along the trail.

Resources for purchasing backpacking style food:

<https://www.alpineaire.com/us/us>  
<https://www.backcountry.com/backpacking-food>  
<https://www.mountainhouse.com/>  
<https://www.backpackerspantry.com/>  
<https://goodto-go.com/>  
<https://www.rei.com/>

## Packing List

*All items need to be packed in zip top bags or dry bags to keep them waterproof.*

### Backpack

- Or riding/hiking bag with water bladder (optional)

### Sleep systems

- 1 or 2 person tent (available to borrow)
- Packable sleeping bag (available to borrow) in stuff sack lined with 30 gallon trash bag. Must be rated to 20 degrees or lower and made of down or synthetic down. We do not want oversized "sleepover bags" that are bulky and heavy. Bags should weigh less than 4 lbs.
- Sleep pad (available to borrow)
- Inflatable pillow (optional) or stuff a jacket into a stuff sack

### Clothing

**NO COTTON, PLEASE. Cotton does not insulate if it gets wet. Opt for synthetic materials such as nylon, polyester, spandex, or wool. Fleece is good.**

- 1 pair good flat riding shoes that firmly tie or strap to your feet and have an enclosed toe.
- 1 pair of broken in hiking shoes or boots.
- (Tennis shoes and the like work just fine)
- Please bring your own personal helmet. (helmets available to borrow)
- Camp shoes (optional but recommended to let feet breathe.) Crocs or light tennis shoes or sandals.
- 2-3 pair socks.
- 1 set clean underwear per day
- Sports bras x2 (women)
- Riding clothing: Jacket, shirt and pants/shorts: 1 set, quick dry, non-cotton required
- Sleep Clothes – these are only for inside the tent. Depending on how cold or warm you sleep you may want a tee-shirt/shorts or long johns. Non-cotton.
- Packable rain gear such as Frogg Toggs (\$40 at Walmart or online). Jacket and pants. Keep in mind a way to limit the baggy lower leg for use while riding. Velcro pant straps or reusable zip-ties work well to control this.
- Wool sweater or down or fleece jacket (when paired with your rain suit this should be suitable for most weather conditions). No cotton jackets.
- Wicking base layer (tops/bottoms): Optional but recommended
- Hat, gloves, buff (optional)

### Camp Kitchen

- Bowl/plate depending on what you are eating. Light-weight and not glass.\*
- Cup/measuring cup\*
- Spoon\*

- Food bag
- Cook kits\* (available to borrow)
- Backpacking stove (available to borrow)
- Food\* (see Food Plan for meal planning suggestions)

### **Miscellaneous**

- Pocket knife or multi-tool.
- Waterproof matches or lighter\*
- Headlamp or lightweight flashlight (extra batteries)
- 2-3 bandanas/hankies
- Lip balm (with sunscreen recommended)\*
- Toothbrush\*
- Travel tube toothpaste\* or baking soda in a small bottle
- Personal first aid items\*: Staff will have a full first aid kit, but we cannot administer medications. Please bring a personal supply of your pain reducer of choice in case of sore muscles, headache, etc. (a small supply of ibuprofen, antacids such as Tums, Tylenol and aspirin should cover most inconveniences that may occur). Also include band-aids, antiseptic wipes.
- Sun protection: hat with brim, sunscreen\*, long sleeves, sunglasses
- Feminine hygiene items\*
- Hand sanitizer\*
- Soap/shampoo and other cleaning items for use at the campsite.

### **Water**

- Water bottles that add up to 1-2 liters.
- **OR** 1 bladder water system and at least one water bottle. Together these should add up to 1-2 L.

### **Optional**

- Camera
- Note pad/pencil
- Whistle
- Watch

### **Group gear**

*Group gear will be provided for you by Metroparks.*

- Group first aid kit\* provided (you still need to bring your own first aid basics listed above)
- Trekking poles for the hiking portion

## For travel

We recommend packing a travel bag separate from your riding backpack/bag to leave in your car. In this bag you will want to pack:

- Clean travel clothes for the ride home
- Wet wipes and deodorant to freshen up (optional, but you'll feel better after!)
- A water bottle separate from your biking/hiking water
- Snacks

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. What do I do with my trash on the trail? Will there be garbage cans?
  - a. We will pack in and pack out all trash and practice Leave No Trace on the trail. For an overview of Leave No Trace (LNT) outdoor ethics: <https://lnt.org/>
2. What if I am a beginner?
  - a. This adventure is tailored towards intermediate cyclists. If you have never ridden for a long period of time (5+ hours), please take the time to get your helmet and bike and head out on some local biking trails.
    - Training in advance will be key to a successful trek. The Towpath and Wabash-Cannonball Trail are great longer stretches of trail for multi-use and biking. Although this trip is a more casual trail and by no means requires mountain biking skills, you can also ride the Beach Ridge Singletrack at Oak Openings Preserve Metropark to train if you enjoy mountain biking.
    - If you are looking to get into mountain biking, but don't know how; check out our Mountain Biking 101 and 201 programs!
3. Why all the info? This is overwhelming.
  - a. None of this information is intended to scare off potential participants but it is very important to make sure you have a full understanding of this trek. We are very excited about the planning and execution of this trip and hope to fulfill some cycling dreams!