

Trail Markings:

General Forest Trails marked by white diamonds with trail numbers written onto them.



River to River Trail (R2R) features white diamonds with a blue “i”, except in wilderness where it is a natural wood diamond with the “i” routed.



Surface Type: Dirt and rock

Safety: Personal safety-make sure someone knows your route and establish a check in time. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear depending on the weather and terrain. Carry plenty of water, food, compass and a first aid kit. This hike is remote cell phone coverage could be spotty.

Environmental safety- Be aware of poison ivy and stinging nettle. Various insects including ticks and mosquitoes are present here during spring, summer and fall. Venomous snakes are also present here including timber rattlesnakes and copperheads.

Hutchins Creek can rise quickly to flash flood levels during heavy rain events.

Due to the dynamic nature of Hutchins Creek the River to River trail crossings at Hutchins Creek may not be apparent. Some scouting may be required to locate them as the high water moves the gravel around and erodes the stream bank from time to time.

Emergencies: In the event you become lost or injured stay put and call 911. If there is no cell phone coverage follow Hutchins Creek either north or south to exit the area or travel the River to River trail east and west to the nearest road.

Camping: There are no designated campsites along the trail but numerous ideal camping areas exist. Use existing campsites. If no existing campsite is present where you camp please fol-

low the Leave No Trace principles by camping 200 feet off the trail, use portable stove for cooking. If a campfire is needed keep it small and remove it before leaving the campsite. Protect water quality by washing yourself and your dishes 200 feet from any water source. Pack out what you pack in. Please bury human waste and toilet paper by digging a cat hole (6 inches deep hole).

Trail Ethics: “Please practice Leave No Trace principles” To protect rare plants please stay on designated trails. Leave rocks, plants and wildflowers for others to enjoy. These trails are open to hikers and equestrians. Please remember that hikers yield to horses. If you are sharing the trail with your pet please keep it under control. Almost all of this hike is within wilderness. Please abide by wilderness guidelines and restrictions.

Facilities: There are no facilities in Bald Knob and Clear Springs Wilderness areas. When you leave the trailheads you become self-reliant.

Avenza: The map included with this brochure is available in the Avenza Map Store for downloading to your smart phone. The Avenza App can be downloaded by searching the app store on your phone for this:



Once the app is downloaded access the map store and search for the following map: Shawnee NF Multi-Day Hikes

This brochure will still be a handy reference to know what the points of interest might be.

Clear Springs—Bald Knob Wildernesses Loop

Description: This loop is a total hike of approximately 15 miles and would be ideal for a 2-3 day weekend hike. You can start this hike from the McCann Springs or the Godwin (east/west) trailheads. The directions in this brochure are based on starting at the Godwin East trailhead on Bald Knob Cross road.

The area remains much the same as it did when the first government surveyors came through in 1803. Rugged, steep and unforgiving, the ridges and hollows of Bald Knob and Clear Springs Wilderness are the northern most range of the Ozarks. The tall narrow ridge tops fall sharply into deep ravines where the sun comes up late and goes down early. The land use history of Clear Springs suggests this area provided suitable timber for the early settlers who were mostly of Scotch-Irish or German decent, as well as timber resources suitable for railroad ties and barrel staves. Historic travel routes traverse the ridgetops and through the Hutchins Creek valley where early settlers, timber companies and the US Forest Service sought to harvest the valuable timber resources to improve their quality of life and provide lumber, railroad ties, barrel staves and poles to support the local economy. Today these historical routes provide visitors access to some of the most primitive areas in southern Illinois.

Hutchins Creek separates Clear Springs from Bald Knob Wilderness and is rich with aquatic life, including bass, sunfish, minnows, and catfish. This powerful waterway is a Candidate for Wild and Scenic River designation, and is one of the highest quality streams in Illinois. Spring

wildflowers put on their best faces beginning in late March as remnant daffodils, Blue-eyed Mary’s, Putty root orchids, wild phlox, Larkspur and May Apples bloom through May along the Hutchins Creek trail. Columbine drapes elegantly over rock outcrops and golden seal makes its appearance along the ridge tops.

The variety of foliage, ranging from floodplain to grassy openings and pine plantations provide ample habitat for an abundance of wildlife. Neo-tropical songbirds, wild turkey, deer, bobcat, timber rattlesnakes and eastern woodrats thrive in the mixed forest and on the clean, spring-fed creeks. Indiana bats and timber rattlesnakes rely on this area for survival. Cerulean warblers and scarlet tanagers are rarely seen indicators of a healthy wilderness. Barred owl, pileated woodpecker, hawks, vireos and occasional Bald Eagle soar through the old white oak forest and high above the meandering creek. Amphibians thrive in the ephemeral drainages, intermittent cool streams, and fishless ponds.

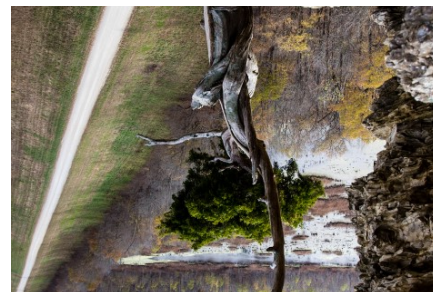
Spend the night in Clear Springs Wilderness and be treated to a wonderful symphony of night sounds including the harmony of tree frogs in early spring, the inquiry of the barred owl as he wonders “whooh” is spending the night in his house, and listen for the high pitched chorus of coyotes as they run the ridges. Even the sounds of the lonesome freight trains in the distance seem to blend in to the majesty.

Travel Time: This depends entirely on how fast you hike and how much exploring you do but is recommended as a 2-3 day adventure.

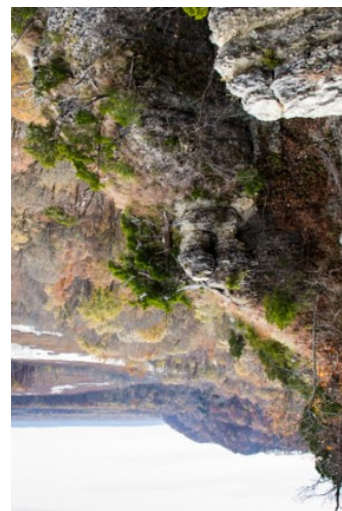


#	Directions (The numbers show on the map)	Miles
1	Starting at the Godwin East Trailhead on Bald Knob Cross Road. There is limited parking here. Head west following R2R Trail.	0
2	The R2R Trail crosses Hutchins Creek	2.75
3	The R2R Trail hits trail 368 and turns left continuing west	6
4	The R2R Trail arrives at the Godwin West Trailhead along Pine Hills Road.	6.75
5	At the Inspiration Point trailhead on Pine Hills Road, turn left and follow the Inspiration Point Trail.	7
6	Arriving at the McCann Springs trailhead turn right onto Pine Hills Road and proceed back uphill.	8
4	Turn left at the Godwin West Trailhead and follow the R2R back east.	8.8
3	Where the R2R Trail turns right at the intersection with trail 368, continue straight following trail 368.	9.5
7	At the intersection of trails 368 and 374, turn right/east on 374.	9.6
8	At the intersection of trails 374 and 372 and Hutchins Creek, turn right/south on 372 paralleling the creek.	11.5
9	At the intersection of trails 372 and 203, turn left/east and start the climb uphill on trail 203. Stay straight onto trail 206.	12.9
10	At the intersection of trail 206 and 807, turn and follow 807 south toward Bald Knob Cross Road.	15
11	At Bald Knob Cross road, turn right and walk the 0.3 miles up to the Godwin East Trailhead.	15.7

Odie's Place is an active equestrian outpost located right along the banks of Hutchins Creek and trail 372 midway between the one mile gap between points 2 and 9 on the map. It features several old abandoned cars, lots of old farm equipment and a shelter building. It is definitely worth the detour.



- Hutchins Creek



- Inspiration Point

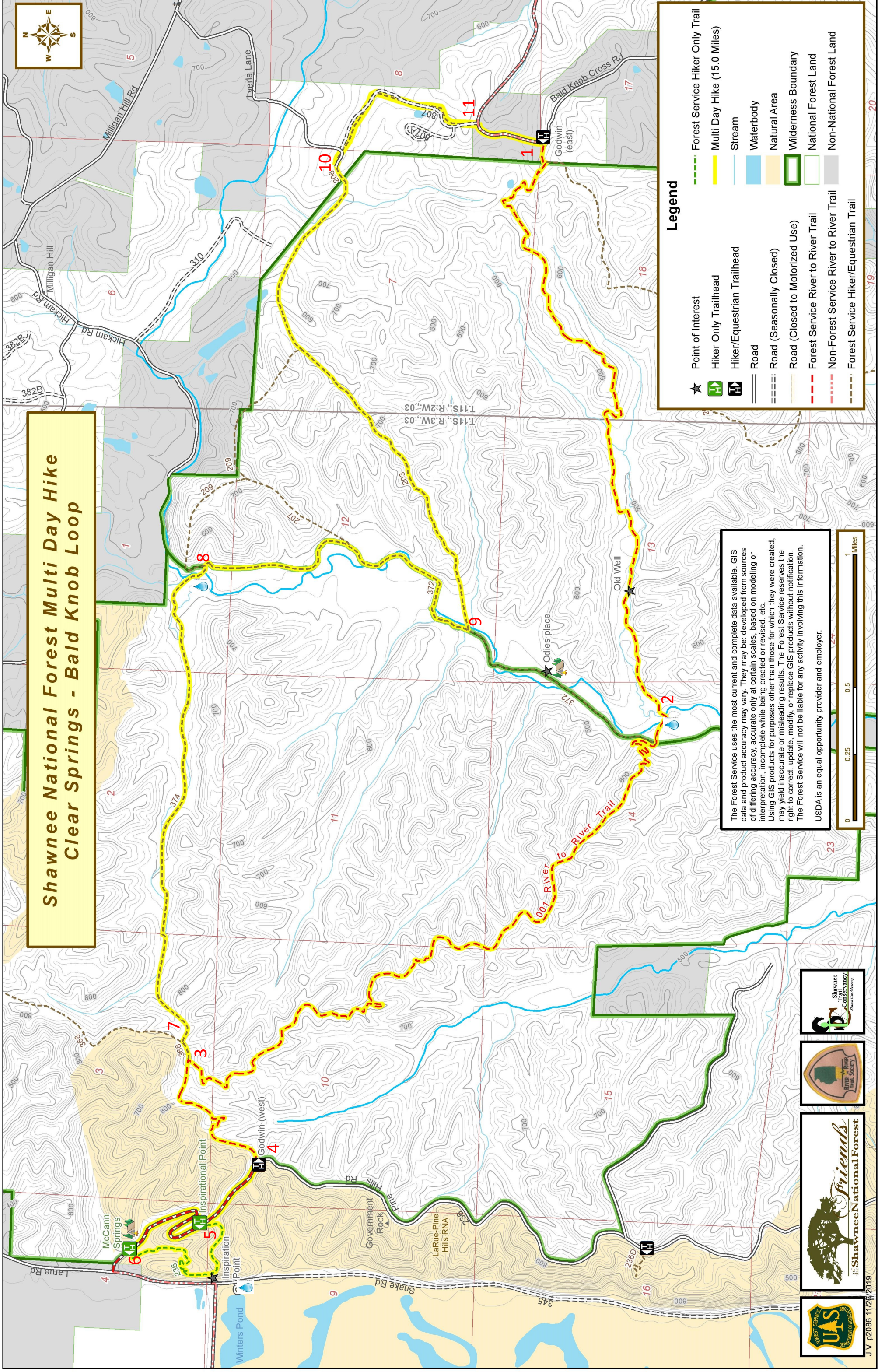


- Odies Place

Points of Interest:

Clear Springs—Bald Knob Wildernesses Loop

Shawnee National Forest Multi Day Hike Clear Springs - Bald Knob Loop



Legend

★	Point of Interest	⋯⋯⋯	Forest Service Hiker Only Trail
🏠	Hiker Only Trailhead	—	Multi Day Hike (15.0 Miles)
🏠	Hiker/Equestrian Trailhead	—	Stream
—	Road	—	Waterbody
---	Road (Seasonally Closed)	—	Natural Area
---	Road (Closed to Motorized Use)	—	Wilderness Boundary
---	Forest Service River to River Trail	—	National Forest Land
---	Non-Forest Service River to River Trail	—	Non-National Forest Land
---	Forest Service Hiker/Equestrian Trail	---	

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