

Wayah Gap

Rating: Difficult

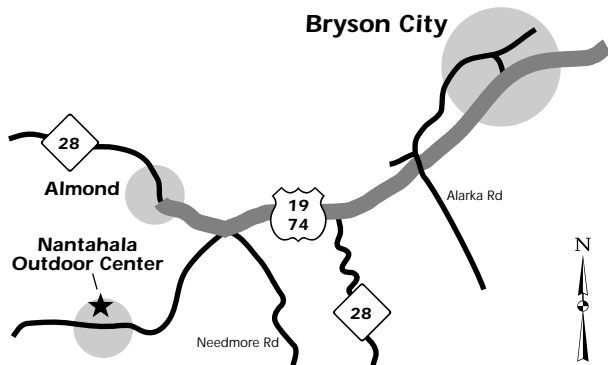
70 Miles

This ride is rated difficult due to the overall length as well as the climbs on NC 28 and the very long climb up to Wayah Gap.

Much of this ride is along the Mountain Waters Scenic Byway, a series of roads following beautiful rivers and streams in western North Carolina. You'll see a lot of waterfalls. It also follows portions of the Mountains-to-Sea state bike route. Starting at the Nantahala Outdoor Center, you'll ride all the way to Franklin on the very curvy and hilly NC Highway 28—a real roller coaster ride. Leaving Franklin, the climb up to Wayah Gap is long and torturous as well as beautiful. The road follows a cool rushing stream the entire way up. Your reward for the climb: 27 miles of almost continuous downhill! You'll pass by Lake Nantahala, the Cascades of the Upper Nantahala River and through the Nantahala Gorge. What a way to finish.

Estimated Riding Times

- Beginner: not recommended
- Intermediate: 6 - 7 hours
- Advanced: 4 - 5 hours



Directions to the Start

- Ride begins at the Nantahala Outdoor Center Bike Shop on US 19/74 in the Nantahala Gorge
- Park in the far parking lots across the steel bridge on the other side of the river

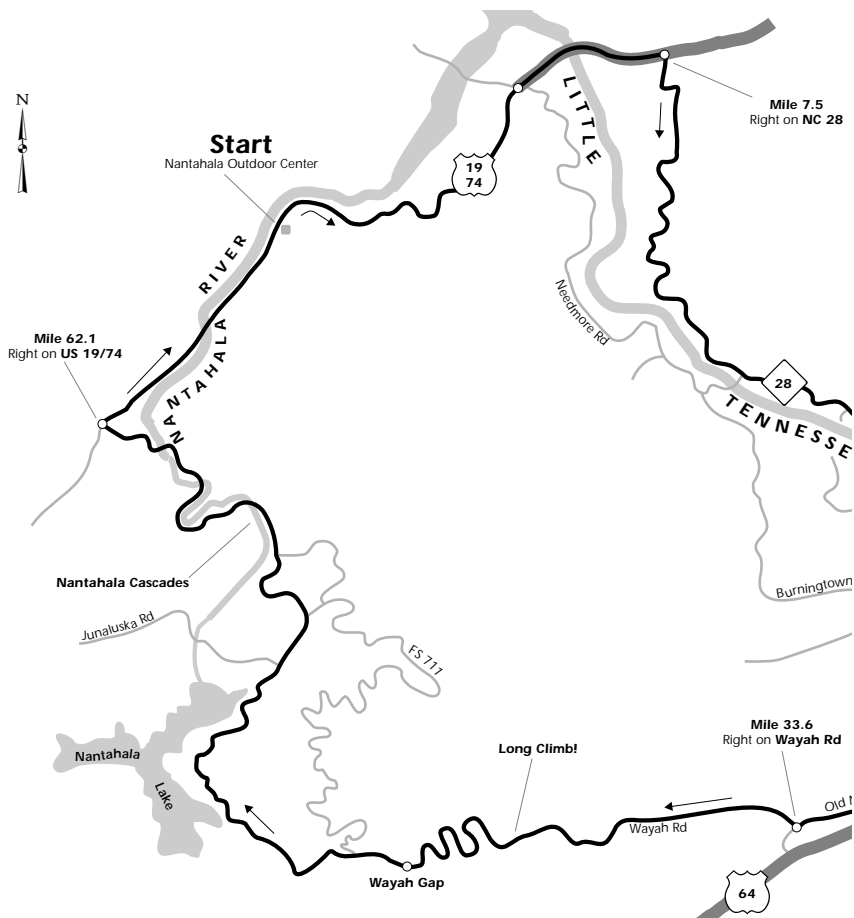
Ride Characteristics & Cautions

- US 19/74 through the Nantahala Gorge sees a lot of tourist traffic as well as truck traffic
- You'll follow a 4-lane highway for 3 miles. It has a wide shoulder.
- NC 28 has quite a few blind curves. Be sure to stay well to the right side of the road.
- There is a convenience store at the turn onto Wayah Road. It's the last place of its kind for a long way.
- You'll find water at Arrowood Glades Campground. This is a good place to tank up before beginning the long climb.
- There's plenty of shade on this route

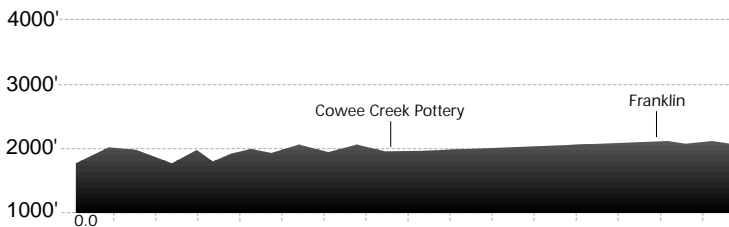
Points of Interest

- Nantahala River rafting and Nantahala Outdoor Center (they have a good bike shop and three restaurants)
- Cowee Pottery
- Fresh produce stands and an honor system honey stand
- Gem mines
- Lots of waterfalls

Wayah Gap



Profile



Map Legend



Interstate Highway

Milepost



US Highway

Railroad Track



State Highway

Route

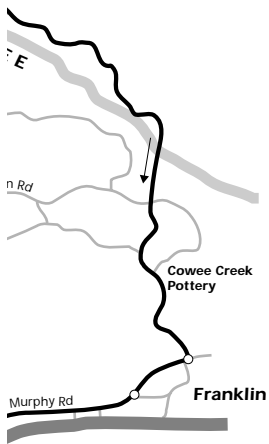
Other Road

Direction of Travel

Approximate Scale of Miles



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For detailed turn-by-turn directions see page 87.

