

Carter Caves State Resort Park



TRAIL MAP

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
parks.ky.gov



Carter Caves State Resort Park

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Olive Hill, KY
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Reservations (800) 325-0059



Explore Carter Caves State Resort Park

Nestled in the hills of Eastern Kentucky, Carter Caves is 2,000 acres of a mixed deciduous forest rich in plants, animals and geologic formations, both above and below ground. The Park offers year round guided tours of some of the region's most impressive cave systems, including tours of Cascade Cave and X-Cave.

Laurel Cave, seasonally, and Horn Hollow Cave, year round, are two undeveloped caves visitors can explore by permit. Call the park for more details on regulations and permits.

The park has over 30 miles of trails highlighting many fascinating geological features, including natural bridges, arches, caves, sinkholes, cliffs and a boxed canyon. The trail system supports over 15 miles of multi-use trails that offer hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders a place to escape. There is a designated area for experienced Rock Climbers and Rappellers to "get on rope" while at the park.

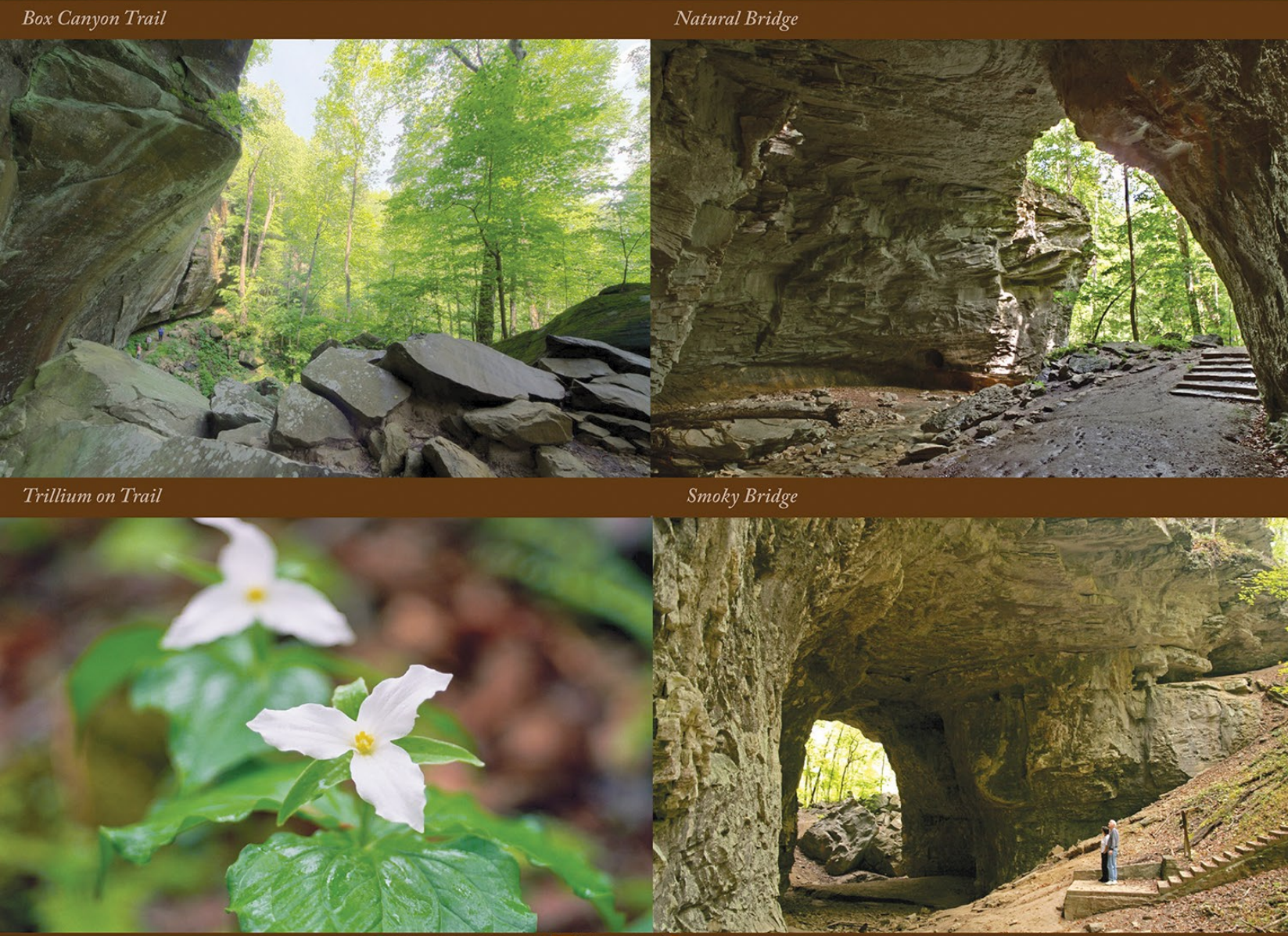
Paddlers and anglers can enjoy some good water time on either the secluded 45-acre Smoky Valley Lake or along a stretch of Tygarts Creek, that borders a portion of the park. Other day amenities include playground areas, tennis courts, a basketball court, picnic areas, and shelters.

Seasonally, visitors can enjoy guided horseback riding, a swimming pool with a diving well, a gem mine attraction, an 18-hole miniature golf course, guided Smoky Lake canoe trips, and summer recreation and interpretive naturalist programs. Special events are regularly scheduled throughout the year, including Winter Adventure Weekend, Pioneer Life Week, and the Fraley Mountain Music Festival.

Staying over for several days is made easy with several overnight accommodations available, including a 28 room field stone lodge, 11 modern two-bedroom, and 1 modern three-bedroom vacation cottages. The campground provides many overnight options including RV sites, tent sites, bunkhouses and equestrian campsites. Tierney's Cavern restaurant, open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner, offers a wide variety of sandwiches and country dishes.

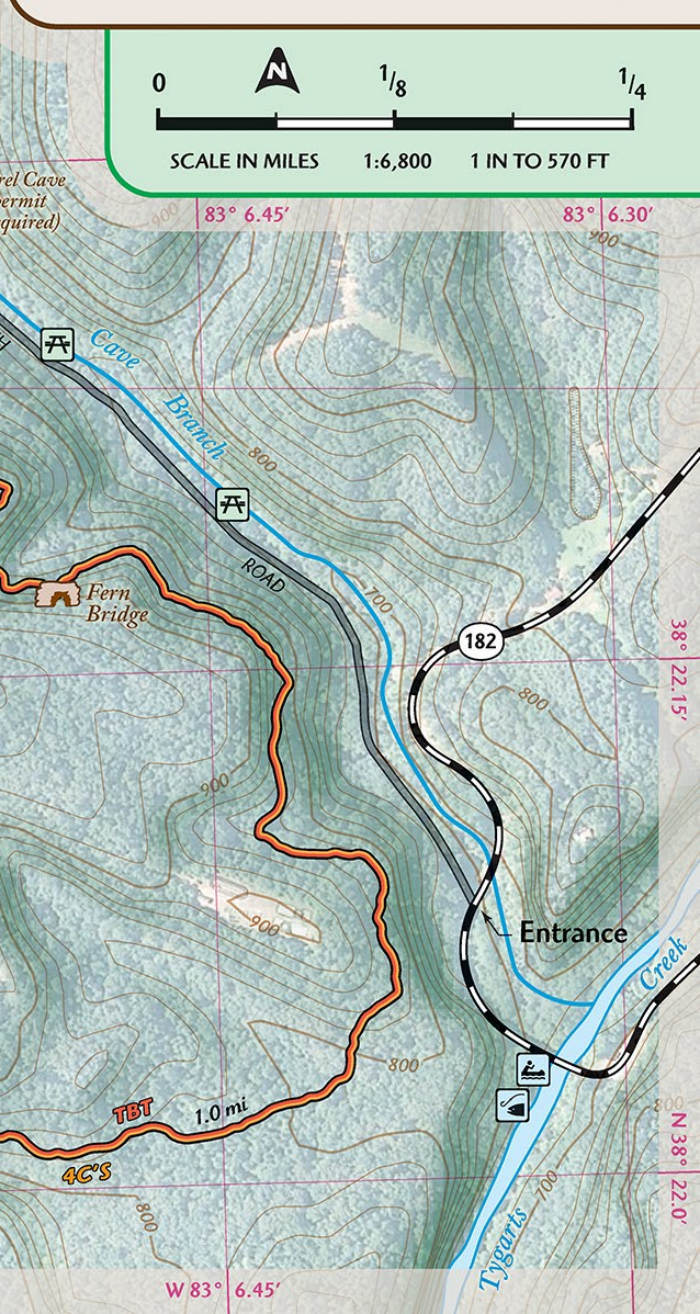
Trail Regulations

Trails are managed as part of the natural environment. Visitors must be prepared to meet and accept nature on its own terms. All plants, animals, and natural park features are protected by state law against removal, destruction and injury. For your safety, please stay on designated trails, wear proper footwear, and avoid hiking alone. All trails close at dusk.



HIKING TIPS

All of the park's trails are hilly, and many pass near high cliff areas. For your safety, stay on the marked trails and walk the trails only during daylight hours. Hiking at night is not permitted. Parents should accompany children at all times. For safety, wear comfortable shoes with textured soles, since all trails have natural surfaces that may be rocky or uneven. On the longer trails, a water supply may be needed since there are no water sources on any of the trails. Snakes are rarely encountered, but if they are, leave them alone. Carter Caves is home to two venomous snakes, the Northern Copperhead and the Timber Rattlesnake. It is illegal to harm any animal in the park, including snakes. Be aware of poison ivy; it is a common plant.



FOOT TRAILS

TBT Three Bridges Trail - 3.6 mi
 This popular trail highlights three of the Park's natural bridges, including Smoky Bridge (the largest), Raven Bridge, and Fern Bridge. The trail overlooks many vistas of Smoky Valley Lake and traverses alongside many impressive sandstone cliffs. Red blazes mark the trail.

RBT Raven Bridge Trail - 0.6 mi
 This trail is the most direct and easiest route to the delicately balanced sandstone arch, Raven Bridge. This ridgetop trail is fairly level and can be combined with the Three Bridges Trail to make a loop from the lodge. Blue blazes mark the trail.

RHT Rockhouse Trail - 0.1 mi
 This is a short connector trail between TBT and RBT trails. The trail takes you alongside some striking sandstone cliff faces. Yellow blazes mark the trail.

HHT Horn Hollow Trail - 1.5 mi
 This hilly, but scenic trail, takes you from the ridges into the streamless valley of Horn Hollow, where you see multiple cave entrances. This trail is especially rewarding during the spring wildflower season from April - May. Green blazes mark the trail.

NBT Natural Bridge Trail - 0.5 mi
 This impressive limestone Natural Bridge is one of the landmarks of the area and may be considered unique in Kentucky. Why? It is the only natural bridge in Kentucky that supports a paved highway. White Blazes mark the trail.

BCT Box Canyon Trail - 0.8 mi
 The trail is one of the most scenic trails that supports unusual geologic features in the park, including the Cascade Natural Bridge, the Box Canyon, and the Wind Tunnel. This trail is hilly and fairly difficult. Orange blazes mark the trail.

4C's Carter Caves Cross Country Trail - 8.3 mi
 One of our longer hiking trails that visits the Park's backcountry. Two suspension bridges are found on this trail. Johnson Home place is a backcountry campsite that requires a permit. A short portion of this trail is within Tygarts State Forest and allows equestrian and mountain bike use. During designating hunting seasons, avoid this section of the trail or wear blaze orange. Orange blazes mark the trail.

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPSITES
 These primitive sites require a permit. Contact the Front Desk at the Lewis Caveland Lodge to get an overnight permit.

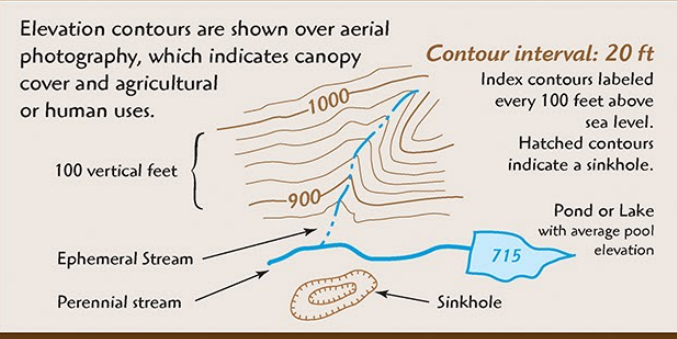
Eagles Nest Backcountry Campsite is located along the 4 C's trail on the far west side of Smoky Lake, this site includes a raised half-face shelter with 2 fire rings and space for 2 tents.

Johnson Homeplace Backcountry Campsite is located on the south side of Smoky Lake. This site is large enough to accommodate several tents.

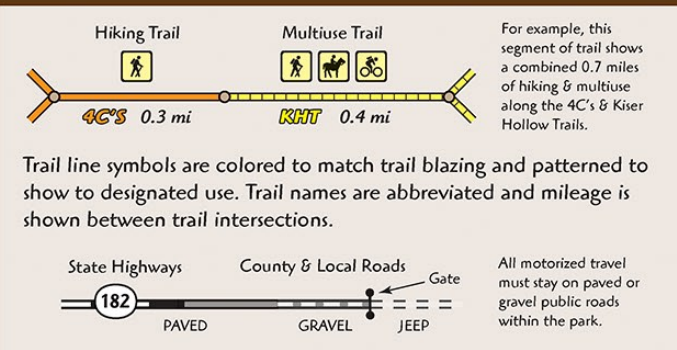
MAP SYMBOLS

- Foot Travel Trailhead
- Equestrian Trailhead & Facilities
- Mountain Bike Trailhead
- Restroom
- Backcountry Camp Permit Required
- Tent Campsites
- RV Campsites
- Picnic Shelter
- Picnic Area
- Golfing Facilities
- Playground
- Welcome Center
- Lewis Caveland Lodge
- Cottages
- Cave Tour
- Scenic Arch
- Historic Feature
- Cemetery
- Trail Intersection
- Suspension Foot Bridge
- Stairs
- Gate
- Rock Climbing Area
- Swimming Pool
- Canoe Launch
- Fishing Area
- Dam
- Boat Ramp
- Golf Course Fairway Number

TOPOGRAPHY & PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY



TRAVEL & TRAIL SYMBOLS



Carter Caves State Resort Park TRAIL MAP

STATE PARK NATURE PRESERVES

Two state nature preserves are located within the borders of Carter Caves State Resort Park. Both areas were dedicated into the nature preserves system in 1981 to protect several rare species and habitat. Bat Cave harbors one of the largest wintering populations of the federally endangered Indiana bat. The bats begin cave hibernation in October with sufficient fat reserves to survive until spring. The steep north-facing slopes at Cascade Caverns support two rare plants usually found in cooler northern climates; the Mountain maple and the Canadian yew. The Kentucky Department of Parks recognized the significance of these areas and pursued the highest level of protection possible for Bat Cave, 128 surface acres surrounding the cave's openings and 18 acres of land above Cascade Caverns.

MULTIUSE TRAILS

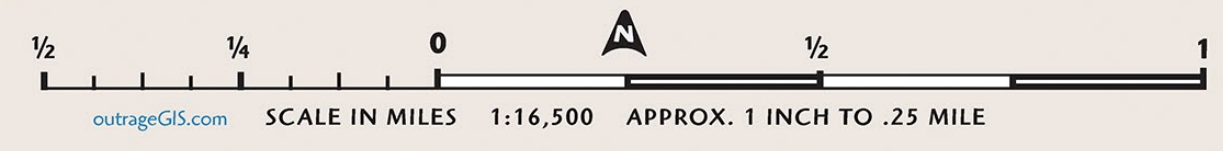
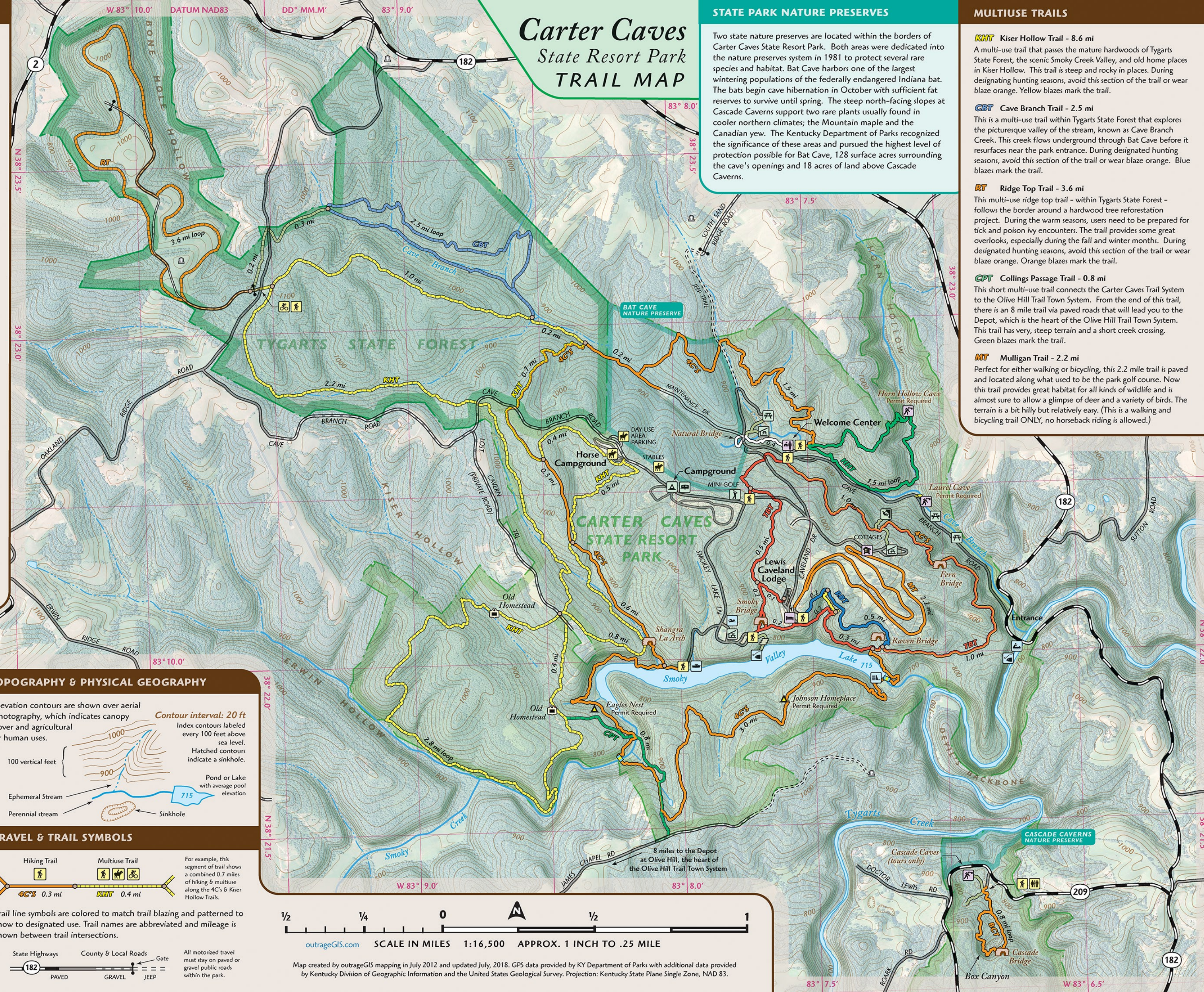
KHT Kiser Hollow Trail - 8.6 mi
 A multi-use trail that passes the mature hardwoods of Tygarts State Forest, the scenic Smoky Creek Valley, and old home places in Kiser Hollow. This trail is steep and rocky in places. During designating hunting seasons, avoid this section of the trail or wear blaze orange. Yellow blazes mark the trail.

CBT Cave Branch Trail - 2.5 mi
 This is a multi-use trail within Tygarts State Forest that explores the picturesque valley of the stream, known as Cave Branch Creek. This creek flows underground through Bat Cave before it resurfaces near the park entrance. During designating hunting seasons, avoid this section of the trail or wear blaze orange. Blue blazes mark the trail.

RT Ridge Top Trail - 3.6 mi
 This multi-use ridge top trail - within Tygarts State Forest - follows the border around a hardwood tree reforestation project. During the warm seasons, users need to be prepared for tick and poison ivy encounters. The trail provides some great overlooks, especially during the fall and winter months. During designating hunting seasons, avoid this section of the trail or wear blaze orange. Orange blazes mark the trail.

CPT Collings Passage Trail - 0.8 mi
 This short multi-use trail connects the Carter Caves Trail System to the Olive Hill Trail Town System. From the end of this trail, there is an 8 mile trail via paved roads that will lead you to the Depot, which is the heart of the Olive Hill Trail Town System. This trail has very, steep terrain and a short creek crossing. Green blazes mark the trail.

MT Mulligan Trail - 2.2 mi
 Perfect for either walking or bicycling, this 2.2 mile trail is paved and located along what used to be the park golf course. Now this trail provides great habitat for all kinds of wildlife and is almost sure to allow a glimpse of deer and a variety of birds. The terrain is a bit hilly but relatively easy. (This is a walking and bicycling trail ONLY, no horseback riding is allowed.)



Map created by outrageGIS mapping in July 2012 and updated July, 2018. GPS data provided by KY Department of Parks with additional data provided by Kentucky Division of Geographic Information and the United States Geological Survey. Projection: Kentucky State Plane Single Zone, NAD 83.