



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Blue Ridge Parkway**  
www.nps.gov/blri

199 Hemphill Knob Road  
Asheville, NC 28803

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## Blue Ridge Parkway News Release

March 11, 2008

For Immediate Release

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### **Parkway Announces Spring Openings**

(Asheville, NC) Visitor facilities along the Blue Ridge Parkway will be opening for the season beginning in April. A new Park Service building near Asheville, the Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center, has been open to the public since December. There will be a grand opening ceremony on Monday, April 14. The concession at Mt. Pisgah will open on Thursday, March 27, weather permitting; and the Parkway Craft Center at the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park near the town of Blowing Rock will begin operations on Saturday, March 15.

In an announcement today, Superintendent Phil Francis noted that the picnic areas at Peaks of Otter, Humpback Rocks and Linville Falls will begin operation on Friday, April 4. These are in addition to the picnic area at Price Park, which is open year-round. All other Parkway Picnic Areas will be open on May 9.

Linville Falls Campground will open on Friday, April 4, (the fishing season begins that date) while all other Parkway campgrounds will open Friday, May 16. Some sites at Mt. Pisgah, Linville Falls and Price Park Campgrounds can be reserved (for arrival dates beginning May 23 or later in the season). For more information, visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) on the Internet or call toll-free (877) 444-6777. To reserve your camping space via [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov), the fee is \$19.00. A number of individual sites at these campgrounds and all sites at the remaining six Parkway campgrounds will still be available as first-come, first-served. The daily camping fee for 2008 for all "first-come" campers is \$16.

Seasonal openings announced today are in addition to year-round operations at the Peaks of Otter lodge and restaurant near Bedford, VA., the Folk Art Center, the new Destination Center at Asheville, N.C., and the Museum of North Carolina Minerals near Spruce Pine, N.C.

A schedule for all visitor centers follows. Some begin with weekends or a 5-day-a-week schedule through late May. As an exception, the Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent and Eastern National decided that the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center be closed for the 2008 season. That section of the motor road (at Milepost 364.5) will be closed for repair due to a slide. The area closest to the slide is particularly unstable and is closed even for hikers, bicyclists and other activities.

From Asheville, a visitor driving north on the Parkway can travel as far as the Craggy Gardens Picnic Area, which is found at Milepost 367.6. That picnic area will open on Friday, May 9.

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At the present time in North Carolina, MP 355 (the entrance of Mt. Mitchell State Park) to MP 375 at Bull Gap is closed due to ice in the tunnels and debris on the roadway. After the debris is cleared from the section north of Bull Gap and there is no ice on the road, the closure will be the section from Craggy Gardens just north of the Craggy Gardens Picnic Area (MP 367.6) to the south side of Mt. Mitchell (MP 355). Access to Mt. Mitchell State Park will continue to be from the north only, meaning visitors will have access to the Blue Ridge Parkway at Highway 80, Highway 226A, or Highway 226 (the most used detour route).

The Parkway is subject to springtime snow and ice, and temporary closures are still possible. For information on current road conditions, call (828) 298-0398.

Beginning in June, Ranger-led campfire programs, nature walks and other interpretive services will be offered at campgrounds, visitor centers and selected locations along the Parkway. Weekly schedules will be posted.

In addition, the summer concert series at the Blue Ridge Music Center will be offered on Saturday evenings June to early autumn. The series is provided through the partnering organization, the National Council for the Traditional Arts. For information about specific performances, visit [www.ncta.net](http://www.ncta.net) on the Internet.

Additional information about the Parkway is also available at [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri).

Rangers are continuing to emphasize traffic patrols, especially on weekends, to reduce accidents. Motorcyclists are urged to exercise special caution.

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The full schedule of seasonal operations follows.

**BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY  
FACILITY OPENINGS/CLOSINGS  
SPRING 2008**

**CAMPGROUNDS**

|                               | <b><u>Open</u></b> | <b><u>Close</u></b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Linville Falls                | 04/04/08           | 11/03/08            |
| Otter Creek                   | 05/16/08           | 11/03/08            |
| All Other Parkway Campgrounds | 05/16/08           | 11/03/08            |

**PICNIC AREAS**

|  |                 |          |
|--|-----------------|----------|
| Price Park   | Open Year-round |          |
| <i>(Full Service Restrooms and Water Fountains open April 30)</i>  |                 |          |
| Peaks of Otter   | 04/04/08        | 11/17/08 |
| <i>(Lower loop only. Upper loop closed for dam project construction.)</i>  |                 |          |
| Humpback Rocks   | 04/04/08        | 11/17/08 |
| <i>(Port-a-Johns will be used April 4 to May 9; and November 3 to November 17 at Humpback Rocks and Peaks of Otter Picnic Grounds)</i> |                 |          |
| Linville Falls   | 04/04/08        | 11/03/08 |
| All Other Parkway Picnic Areas   | 05/09/08        | 11/03/08 |

**VISITOR CENTERS**

|  | <b><u>Hours</u></b> |
|--|---------------------|
| Humpback Rocks   |                     |
| April 25 - May 23, 7 Days a Week - Closed for Lunch (12-1) | 9-5                 |
| May 24 – November 2, 7 Days a Week                         |                     |
| Last Day Open: Nov. 2                                      |                     |
| James River  |                     |
| May 24 - November 2, 7 Days a Week,                        | 9-5                 |
| Last Day Open: November 2                                  |                     |
| Peaks of Otter   |                     |
| April 25– May 23, 5 Days a Week, Closed Wed & Thurs        | 9-5                 |
| May 24 – November 2, 7 Days a Week                         | 9-5                 |
| Last Day Open: Nov. 2                                      |                     |
| Explore Park Visitor Center (operated by Roanoke County)   |                     |
| April 1 – October 31, 7 Days a Week                        | 9-5                 |
| Rocky Knob   |                     |
| Weekends Only (Sat, Sun): May 10, 11; May 17, 18           | 9-5                 |
| May 24 – November 2, 7 Days a Week                         | 9-5                 |
| Last Day Open: November 2                                  |                     |
| Blue Ridge Music Center                                    |                     |
| May 3 – May 23, 5 Days a Week, Closed Mon & Tues           | 9-5                 |
| May 24 – Nov. 2, 7 Days a Week                             | 9-5                 |
| Last Day Open: Nov. 2                                      |                     |

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|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Moses Cone  |                 |
| <i>(Information desk and bookstore)</i>   |                 |
| Open these Weekends: April 11,12, 13; 18, 19, 20  | 9-12, 1-5       |
| April 25 – May 23, 7 Days a Week, Closed for Lunch (12-1)   | 9-12, 1-5       |
| May 24- Nov. 2, 7 Days a Week   | 9-5             |
| NPS Desk: Last Day Open Nov. 2 (EN may stay open weekends in November, but will make that decision later in the season.)                          |                 |
| Moses Cone Concessions  |                 |
| <i>(Craft Center open March 15-November 30)</i>   | 9-5             |
| Linn Cove   |                 |
| April 25 – Nov. 2, Full Time, 7 Days a Week   | 9-5             |
| Closed for Lunch (12-1) April 25-May 23   | 9-12, 1-5       |
| Last Day Open: Nov. 2   |                 |
| Linville Falls  |                 |
| Open these Weekends: April 5, 6; 12, 13; 19, 20   | 9-5             |
| April 25 – Nov. 2, 7 Days a Week  | 9-5             |
| April 25 - May 23: Closed for lunch 12-1  | 9-12, 1-5       |
| Last Day Open: Nov. 2   |                 |
| Museum of North Carolina Minerals   | Open Year Round |
| <i>(Closed only on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Day)</i>  |                 |
| Oct 31, 2007 – May 23, 2008: Closed for Lunch, 12-1   | 9-12, 1-5       |
| May 24 – Nov 2, 2008  | 9-5             |
| Nov 3, 2008 – until 2009 spring season: Closed for Lunch, 12-1  | 9-12, 1-5       |
| Craggy Gardens  |                 |
| <i>(Due to the rock slide and road repair mentioned in the press release above, Craggy Gardens Visitor Center is closed for the 2008 Season.)</i> |                 |
| Folk Art Center   | Open Year Round |
| <i>(Closed only on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Years Day)</i>   |                 |
| May 24, 2008 – Nov. 2, 2008   | 9-6             |
| Other Dates   | 9-5             |
| Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center   | Open Year Round |
| <i>(Closed only on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Years Day)</i>   | 9-5             |
| Waterrock Knob  |                 |
| April 25 – May 23, 7 Days a Week  | 10-4            |
| May 24 – Oct 31, Full Time, 7 Days a Week   | 10-5            |
| Last Day Open: Oct 31   |                 |

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## CONCESSIONS FACILITIES

Otter Creek Restaurant and Gift Shop – *Milepost 60.8*  
May 7 – October 26

Peaks of Otter Lodge/Restaurant/Lounge/Gift Shop - *Milepost 85.9*  
Lodge, Restaurant and Gift Shop: Open Year-Round

Peaks Country Store: Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in May -----  
May 9, 10 & 11  
May 16, 17 & 18  
May 23, 24 & 25

Daily  
May 30 - October 26

Sharp Top Bus Service: Same as the Peaks Country Store

Rocky Knob Cabins – *Milepost 174.1*  
April 26 – November 3

Mabry Mill Restaurant/Gift Shop - *Milepost 176.2*  
April 26 – November 3

Bluffs Lodge/Restaurant/Gift Shop – *Milepost 241.1*  
April 26 – November 3

Price Park Lake Boat Rentals – *Milepost 297.1*  
Weekends: May 17-18, and weekends between September 6 and October 26  
Daily: May 24 – September 1 (Memorial Day – Labor Day)

Crabtree Meadows Snack Bar/Gift Shop/Camp Store – *Milepost 339.5*  
April 26 – October 26

Northwest Trading Post Gift and Craft Shop – *Milepost 258.8*  
April 26 – November 30 (closed Thanksgiving Day)

Parkway Craft Center at Moses Cone Manor House – *Milepost 294*  
March 15 – November 30 (closed Thanksgiving Day)

Folk Art Center – *Milepost 382*  
Open year-round except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas

Pisgah Inn/Restaurant/Gift Shop/Country Store – *Milepost 408.6*  
March 27 – November 3

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