

**WEBSITE PROPERTY NOTES**  
**PLEASANT VALLEY FOREST (73 ACRES +/-)**  
**WYOMING COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA**  
**PRICE \$139,000.00**

**Agent Contact:**

Randy S. "Riverbend" Burdette 304-667-2897, David Sibray 304-575-7390

Pleasant Valley Forest on Milam Fork Creek says it all. This (73 acre by deed) wooded paradise is located at the end of a private gated road off Stephenson Basin Road on Pleasant Valley Road. This is an excellent recreational tract to hunt the big bucks and the wild turkeys. Black bears are also known to be in the local forests. All types of small animals, including squirrels, rabbits, and more, make this exciting forest home. Milam Fork Creek flows thru the lower part of the property and is a year-round stream. The beavers have created a dam near a small bottom meadow. The property has two small meadow fields that would be excellent camping locations. The woodland consists of a mixture of Appalachian hardwoods that have not been harvested in many years. The forest consists of poplars, maples, oaks, and many other species. The property abounds with many excellent sites to build a cabin or a home. Pleasant Valley Forest is located in the Cumberland Mountains region of southwestern West Virginia, an area perhaps best known as a destination for outdoor recreation and off-road vehicle tourism.

Thousands of tourists visit the region to explore the rugged landscape using all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs), and other motorized off-road vehicles. The network of trails and backroads that lead through the region is complimented by designated and maintained off-road trails managed by the state-operated Hatfield-McCoy Trails.

**\*Please note that another listing is available for a 34-acre farm on Pleasant Valley Road. This property is known as Pleasant Valley Farm on Milam Fork Creek. The farm property is within walking distance of the forest.**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Wild and Wonderful Wyoming County, West Virginia
- 73 Acres +/-
- Gated access to the property
- Solid gravel access road to the property
- Excellent cabin sites
- Great camping and recreational property
- Mature forest
- Quaint small meadows
- Miles of trails
- Right on Milam Fork Creek
- Quick ride to the Hatfield and McCoy ATV Trail System
- Excellent hunting
- Private setting at the end of the road
- Public water is at the main entrance gate

- Grazing areas
- Lots of wildlife to enjoy
- Electric is on the property

## LOCATION

**Google Coordinates:** 37.526134°(N), -81.314634°(W)

**Address:** 892 Pleasant Valley Road, Herndon, WV 24726

**Elevation Range:** 2237 ft. to 2680 ft. +/-

### Estimated drive times

Fayetteville, WV 1 hour  
 Beckley, WV, 40 minutes  
 Mullens, WV 15 minutes  
 Princeton, WV, 36 minutes  
 Twin Falls 30 minutes  
 Pineville, WV, 26 minutes  
 Oceana, WV, 45 minutes  
 Logan, WV 1.5 hours  
 Huntington, WV, 2.5 hours  
 Charlotte, NC – 3.5 hours  
 Charleston, WV – 1.5 hours  
 Columbus, OH – 4 hours  
 Lexington, KY – 4.5 hours  
 Pittsburgh, PA – 4.5 hours  
 Raleigh, NC – 4.5 hours  
 Roanoke, VA – 2.5 hours  
 Richmond, VA – 4.5 hours  
 Washington, DC – 5.5 hours



## SELF-SUSTAINING LIFE OFF THE GRID

Just as 150 years ago, when the first mountaineers settled in the area, the property can be self-sustaining in times of necessity – even without electricity.

- Fresh water for drinking and cooking can come from streams or a drilled water well (hand drawing water from the well using a cylinder well bucket).
- The streams and forests can provide fresh food (deer, squirrel, rabbit, and turkey).

- The former agricultural land could be cleared again and provide vegetable gardens, berry patches, fruit orchards, and row crops of corn, oats, and barley.
- Beehives can provide honey and beeswax for candles and pollinate the fruit trees.
- The forest can provide firewood for heating and cooking, lumber for building, maple syrup, and pounds of nuts (walnuts, beechnuts, and hickory nuts).
- A vineyard could be created to provide jellies, jams, juices, and wines.

Livestock can be raised, including dairy cows, chickens, geese, turkeys, rabbits, goats, sheep, pigs, and cattle. Milk, cheese, eggs, meat, wool, leather, fur, feather pillows, and down comforters can all be produced.



## WHAT IS A PERMACULTURE DESIGN?

The three core tenets of permaculture are:

- **Care for the earth: Provision** for all life systems to continue and multiply. This is the first principle because, without a healthy earth, humans cannot flourish.
- **Care for the people: Provision** for people to access those resources necessary for their existence.

**Setting limits to population and consumption:** By governing our own needs, we can set resources aside to further the above principles. This includes returning waste back into the system to recycle it into usefulness. The third ethic is sometimes referred to as Fair Share, which reflects that each of us should take no more than what we need before we reinvest the surplus. Permaculture design emphasizes patterns of landscape, function, and species assemblies. It determines where these elements should be placed so they can provide maximum benefit to the local environment. Permaculture maximizes useful connections between components and synergy of the final design. The focus of permaculture, therefore, is not on each separate element but rather on the relationships created among elements by the way they are placed together; the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. Permaculture design, therefore, seeks to minimize waste, human labor, and energy input by building systems and maximizes benefits between design elements to achieve a high level of synergy. Permaculture designs evolve over time by taking into account these relationships and elements and can evolve into highly complex systems that produce a high density of food and materials with minimal input.

The design principles, the conceptual foundation of permaculture, were derived from the science of systems ecology and the study of pre-industrial examples of sustainable land use. Permaculture draws from several disciplines, including organic farming, agroforestry, integrated farming, sustainable development, and applied ecology. Permaculture has been applied most commonly to the design of housing and

landscaping, integrating techniques such as agroforestry, natural building, and rainwater harvesting within the context of permaculture design principles and theory.

## **FOREST/TIMBER RESOURCES**

The abundant timber resource is well positioned for current timber income as well as value appreciation over the coming decades. With an attractive species mix, adequate stocking levels, and favorable diameter class distribution, the timber amenity represents a strong component of value to the investor.

This well-maintained timber resource can provide a great deal of flexibility to the next ownership in terms of potential harvest revenue and can be managed to provide cash flow opportunities to offset holding cost and long-term asset appreciation. The forest predominantly well-drained upland terrain has led to a resource dominated by hardwood species. Overall, the species composition is highly desirable and favors Appalachian hardwood types, consisting primarily of oak, chestnut oak, poplar, cucumber, sugar, red oak, and soft maple, and a host of associated species.

A value of the timber has not been conducted.

## **FOREST FARMING**

The most common crops are medicinal herbs and mushrooms. Other crops that can be produced include shade-loving native ornamentals, moss, fruit, nuts, other food crops, and decorative materials for crafts. These crops are often referred to as special forest products.

Here are some specific examples of crops:

- Medicinal herbs: Ginseng, goldenseal, black cohosh, bloodroot, passionflower, and mayapple
- Mushrooms: Shiitake and oyster mushrooms
- Native ornamentals: Rhododendrons and dogwood
- Moss: Log or sheet moss
- Fruit: Pawpaws, currants, elderberries, and lowbush blueberries
- Nuts: Black walnuts, hazelnuts, hickory nuts, and beechnuts
- Other food crops: Ramps (wild leeks), maple syrup, and honey
- Plants used for decorative purposes, dyes, and crafts: Galax, princess pine, white oak, pussy willow branches in the spring, holly, bittersweet, and bloodroot and ground pine (Lycopodium)

## **WILDLIFE**

The property has a mixture of mature hardwood and softwood species. The diverse tree species and abundant water supply from the nearby streams create the perfect wildlife habitat. The “edge effect” created between area farm fields, creeks, hollows, ridges, and rock outcrops benefits all the resident wildlife. Whitetail deer, black bear, squirrel, rabbit, bobcat, raccoon, fox, and many species of songbirds, owls, and raptors make up the resident wildlife population. Beavers are residents of Milam Fork Creek.

The nearby hardwood forests provide the essential nutrient source and produce tons of hard mast, including acorns, hickory nuts, beech nuts, and black walnuts. Soft mast

includes stag horn sumac, black cherry, tulip poplar seeds, maple seeds, autumn olive berries, and blackberries.

## **WATER**

A portion of Milam Fork, a blueline stream, runs through the property. There should be regular water flow, particularly during rain events and snow melt.

## **MINERAL RESOURCES**

West Virginia is one of the states in the US that has two ownership titles, those being SURFACE RIGHTS and MINERAL RIGHTS. This property is being sold as SURFACE ONLY.

## **BOUNDARIES AND SURVEY**

The property is being sold by the boundary and not by the acre.

## **UTILITIES**

Water: Public water may be possible, or a well could be drilled

Sewer: None; a septic system could be installed

Electricity: APCO is on the property

Telephone: Frontier landline might be available

Internet: Hughes Net or possibly Frontier Communications

Cellphone Coverage: ATT seems to have the best signal

## **ACCESS/FRONTAGE**

Pleasant Valley Road travels to the property. This is a gated private road with no thru traffic, and the road ends at the subject property.

## **ZONING**

Wyoming County is subject to some zoning and subdivision regulations. All prospective buyers should consult the County Commission and also the Health Department for details regarding zoning, building codes, and installation of wells and septic systems.

## **PROPERTY TYPE/USE SUMMARY**

This property is comprised of a small former farm field area and forestland.

(This summary is an estimation of current property use as determined from aerial photography. It is made subject to the estimation of property boundaries and any errors in the interpretation of land use type from the aerial photography utilized.)

## **DEED AND TAX INFORMATION**

**Deed Information:** A portion of WB 43 Pg. 240  
Wyoming County, West Virginia

**Acreage:** 73 acres from tax statements

**Real Estate Tax ID/Acreage/Taxes:**

Wyoming County (55), West Virginia

Barkers Ridge District (2)

Tax Map 114 Parcels 27, 29, and 30; Class 3

**2022 Real Estate Taxes: \$173.44**

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

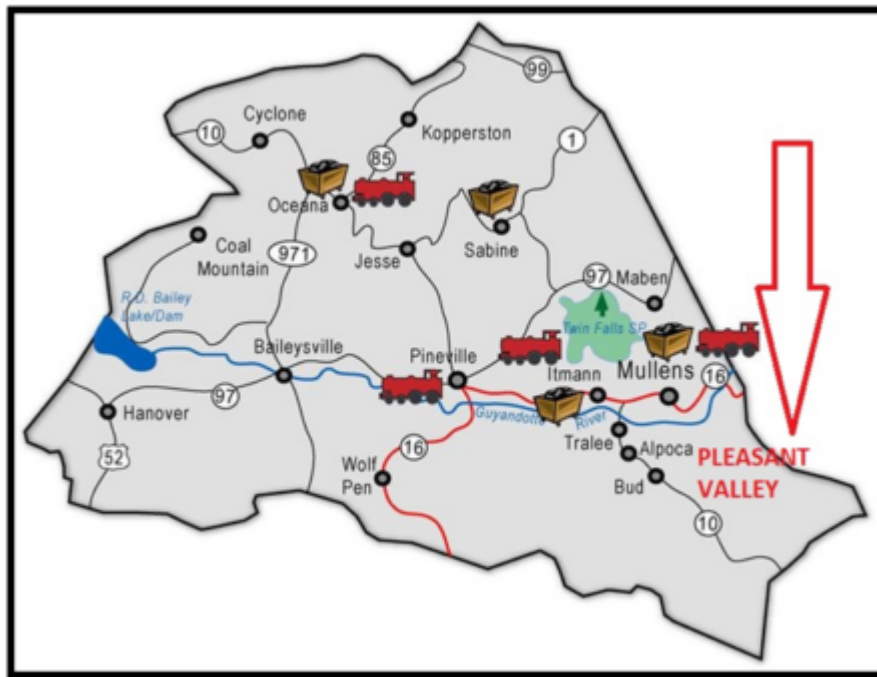
Public Elementary School:  
Mullens Elementary School  
Herndon Consolidated

Public Middle School:  
Mullens Middle School  
Herndon Consolidated

Public High School:  
Wyoming County East High School

Colleges:  
Wyoming County Career & Technical Center  
Southern West Virginia Community College  
West Virginia University Institute of Technology  
New River Community and Technical College  
Bluefield State College

## SURROUNDING AREA



**WYOMING COUNTY**



Year Founded: 1850  
County Seat: Pineville  
Demographics  
Land Area (sq miles): 499.45  
Population: 20,786

## WYOMING COUNTY HISTORY

Wyoming County was created by the Virginia General Assembly on January 26, 1850, from the upper portion of Logan County. There are conflicting reports concerning the county name's origin. Most historians believe that it came from a loose translation of the Delaware Indian word Maughwauwama, meaning "large or extensive plains." Others believe that it originated from a poem written by Thomas Campbell entitled "Gertrude of Wyoming." Since its formation, parts of Wyoming County have been used to form Raleigh County and McDowell County.

### First Settlers

The first native settlers in southern West Virginia were the Mound Builders, also known as the Adena people. Remnants of the Mound Builders civilization have been found throughout West Virginia, with a high concentration of artifacts located at Moundsville, West Virginia, in Marshall County.

According to missionary reports, several thousand Hurons occupied present-day West Virginia during the late 1500s and early 1600s. The Iroquois Confederacy (consisting of the Mohawk, Onondaga, Cayuga, Oneida, and Seneca tribes, and joined later by the Tuscaroras tribe) drove the Hurons out of the state during the 1600s. The Iroquois Confederacy was headquartered in New York and was not interested in occupying present-day West Virginia. Instead, they used it as a hunting ground during the spring and summer months.

During the early 1700s, southern West Virginia, including present-day Wyoming County, was used as a hunting ground by the Mingo, who lived in both the Tygart Valley and along the Ohio River in West Virginia's northern panhandle region, the Delaware, who lived in present-day eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, but had several autonomous settlements as far south as present-day Braxton County, the Shawnee, and by other members of the Iroquois Confederacy, especially the Seneca, one of the largest and most powerful members of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The Mingo were not actually an Indian tribe but a multi-cultural group of Indians that established several communities within present-day West Virginia. They lacked a central government and, like all other Indians within the region at that time, were subject to the control of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Mingo originally lived closer to the Atlantic Coast, but European settlement pushed them into western Virginia and eastern Ohio.

The Seneca, headquartered in western New York, was the closest member of the Iroquois Confederacy to West Virginia and took great interest in the state. In 1744, the Seneca boasted to Virginia officials that they had conquered the several nations living on the back of the great mountains of Virginia. Among the conquered nations were the last of the Canawese or Conoy people, who became incorporated into some of the Iroquois communities in New York. The Conoy continue to be remembered today through the naming of two of West Virginia's largest rivers after them, the Little Kanawha and the Great Kanawha.

The Seneca and other members of the Iroquois Confederacy often traveled through the state to protect its claim to southern West Virginia from the Cherokee. The Cherokee were headquartered in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee and rivaled the Iroquois nation in both size and influence. The Cherokee claimed present-day southern West Virginia as their own, setting the stage for conflict with the Iroquois Confederacy. In 1744, Virginia officials purchased the Iroquois title of ownership to West Virginia in the Treaty of Lancaster. The treaty reduced the Iroquois Confederacy's presence in the state.

During the mid-1700s, the English had made it clear to the various Indian tribes that they intended to settle the frontier. The French, on the other hand, were more interested in trade. This influenced the Mingo to side with the French during the French and Indian War (1755-1763). Although the Iroquois Confederacy officially remained neutral, many in the Iroquois Confederacy also allied with the French. Unfortunately for them, the French lost the war and ceded all of its North American possessions to the British. Following the war, the Mingo retreated to their homes along the banks of the Ohio River and were rarely seen in southern West Virginia.

Although the war was officially over, many Indians, especially the Shawnee who resided in Ohio, continued to see the British as a threat to their sovereignty and continued to fight them. In the summer of 1763, Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, led raids on key British forts. Shawnee chief Keigh-tugh-qua, or Cornstalk, led similar attacks on western Virginia settlements in present-day Greenbrier County. By the end of July, Indians had captured all British forts west of the Alleghenies except Detroit, Fort Pitt, and Fort Niagara. Then, on August 6, 1763, British forces under the command of Colonel Henry Bouquet retaliated and destroyed Delaware and Shawnee forces at Bushy Run in western Pennsylvania, ending the hostilities. Fearing more tension between Native Americans and settlers, England's King George III issued the Proclamation of 1763, prohibiting settlement west of the Allegheny Mountains. However, many land speculators, including George Washington, violated the proclamation by claiming vast acreage in western Virginia. In 1768, the Iroquois Confederacy (often called the Six Nations) and the Cherokee signed the Treaty of Hard Labour and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, relinquishing their claims on the territory between the Ohio River and the Alleghenies to the British. With the frontier now open, settlers, once again, began to enter into present-day West Virginia.

In 1772, a series of incidents between settlers and Indians in West Virginia ended what had been nearly eight years of peace. During the spring of that year, several Indians were murdered on the South Branch of the Potomac River by Nicholas Harpold and his companions. About the same time, Bald Eagle, an Indian chief of some notoriety, was murdered while on a hunting trip on the Monongahela River. In the meantime, Captain Bull, a Delaware Indian Chief, and five other Indian families were living in Braxton County in an area known as Bulltown, near the falls of the Little Kanawha River, about fourteen miles from present-day Sutton. Captain Bull was regarded by most of the settlers in the region as friendly. But some settlers suspected him of providing information to and harboring unfriendly Indians. While away from home in June 1772, the family of a German immigrant named Peter Stroud was murdered, presumably by Indians. The trail left by the murderers led in the general direction of Bulltown. Peter's brother, Adam Stroud, had a cabin nearby and, seeing smoke rising into the sky, raced



to his brother's cabin. He gathered up what was left of the bodies and buried them. He then headed for Hacker's Creek, where he met with several other settlers who agreed to join him in an attack on Bulltown. They killed all of the Indians in the village, including Captain Bull, and threw their bodies into a nearby river. News of Captain Bull's murder quickly spread across the western frontier. Following what the Indians referred to as the Bulltown massacre, Shawnee Chief Cornstalk, who had led numerous raids against West Virginia settlers in the past, began to organize the Indians in a concerted effort to drive the whites from their territory.

In 1773, land speculator Michael Cresap led a group of volunteers from Fort Fincastle (later renamed Fort Henry) at present-day Wheeling, murdering several Shawnee at Captain Creek. Among other atrocities, on April 30, 1774, colonists murdered the family of Mingo chieftain Tah-gah-jute, who had been baptized under the English name of Logan. Although Logan had previously lived peacefully with whites, he killed at least thirteen settlers that summer in revenge.

Virginia Governor John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, worried about the escalating violence in western Virginia, decided to end the conflict by force. He formed two armies, one marching from the North, consisting of 1,700 men led by himself, and the other marching from the South, comprised of 800 troops led by western Virginia resident and land speculator Captain Andrew Lewis. Shawnee chieftain Keigh-tugh-qua, or Cornstalk, along with approximately 1,200 Shawnee, Delaware, Mingo, Wyandotte, and Cayuga warriors, decided to attack the southern regiment before they had a chance to unite with Lord Dunmore's forces. On October 10, 1774, the Indians attacked Lewis' forces at the confluence of the Kanawha and Ohio Rivers, at present-day Point Pleasant, in Mason County. During the battle, both sides suffered significant losses. Although nearly half of Lewis' commissioned officers were killed during the battle, including his brother, Colonel Charles Lewis, and seventy-five of his non-commissioned officers, the Indians were finally forced to retreat back to their settlements in Ohio's Scioto Valley, with Lewis' men in pursuit. In the meanwhile, Lord Dunmore arrived and joined forces with Lewis. Seeing that they were now outnumbered, Cornstalk sued for peace.

Although western Virginia's settlers continued to experience isolated Indian attacks for several years, Cornstalk's defeat at Point Pleasant was the beginning of the end of the Indian presence in western Virginia. The Indians agreed to give up all of their white prisoners, restore all captured horses and other property, and not to hunt south of the Ohio River. Also, they were to allow boats on the Ohio River and promised not to harass them. This opened up present-day West Virginia and Kentucky for settlement. Cornstalk was later killed at Fort Randolph near Point Pleasant in 1777 in retaliation for the death of a militiaman who was killed by an Indian.

During the American Revolution (1776-1783), the Mingo and Shawnee, headquartered at Chillicothe, Ohio, allied themselves with the British. In 1777, a party of 350 Wyandots, Shawnees, and Mingos, armed by the British, attacked Fort Henry near present-day Wheeling. Nearly half of the Americans manning the fort were killed in the three-day assault. The Indians then left the Fort celebrating their victory. For the remainder of the war, smaller raiding parties of Mingo, Shawnee, and other Indian tribes terrorized settlers throughout West Virginia. As a result, European settlement in the state came to a virtual standstill until the war's conclusion. Following the war, the Mingo and

Shawnee, once again allied with the losing side, returned to their homes. However, as the number of settlers in the region began to grow, and with their numbers depleted by the war, both the Mingo and the Shawnee moved further inland.

### **European Pioneers and Settlers**

David Hughes may have been the first Englishmen to set foot in present-day Wyoming County. Some reports indicate that he first explored the area in 1784, while others suggest that he arrived in the county in 1777. He did not establish a home in the area but returned to the area in 1780. He was accompanied by Edward McDonald, who was interested in finding a permanent settlement in the western frontier. McDonald returned in 1784 and later obtained a patent for 840 acres in the county. Due to Indian unrest, he did not develop the land until 1802.

During the summer of 1787, a band of Mingo Indians raided settlements along the New River, stealing twenty horses. Captain James Hull and about twenty men, including John Cooke, Sr., chased the Indians, eventually traveling through the county near present-day Oceana.

In 1799, John Cook, Sr. applied for and received a land grant of 92 acres near the forks of the Laurel Creek and Clear Fork. He moved to the county in October 1799 with his wife, Nellie, their four sons (Thomas, John Jr., William, and James), and a daughter-in-law. They built a log cabin near the Laurel and Clear Forks in 1799, and it remained standing until 1922. It is said that his children were the first to call the area Wyoming County.

After moving into the county, the Cook family met a man named Milam, who supposedly lived in the area for some time, moving to and from three hunting lodges he had constructed. In 1800, Captain Ralph Stewart and his family settled in the area, just a few miles from the Cooke's cabin.

In 1802, Edward McDonald and his family moved onto his land near Big Bottom Fork. He was accompanied by his son-in-law, James Shannon, and several slaves. They cleared land for a plantation at the main fork of the Guyandotte River. The plantation flourished until the Civil War when Union forces burned it to the ground. In the meantime, the Cooke and Stewart families intermarried, creating a strong bond between the families that lasted for generations. A census taken in 1890 revealed that a majority of the county's residents were direct descendants of John Cook, Sr.

In 1804, Thomas Morgan acquired 200 acres of land near Indian Creek. His farm did well, but his farm animals were constantly being attacked by roving bands of wolves. He built a log wolf trap to deal with the problem, and the area became generally known as "Wolf Pen Creek."

### **Important Events of the 1800s**

The first meeting of the Wyoming County court was held in June 1850 at John Cooke's home near present-day Oceana. The act creating the county specified that the county seat was to be laid out on the lands of William Cooke, Sr., one of John Cooke's sons. The town was laid out that year and originally named Cassville in honor of Lewis Cass, a famous American statesman. Leroy B. Chambers operated the town's first business, a retail store, and served as the county's first clerk. James Cooke was the county's first sheriff. At that time, the county was sparsely populated. The 1850 census revealed that there were only 1,645 people living in the county at that time.

On July 19, 1850, the County Court awarded contracts totaling \$2,000 for the construction of three public buildings, a courthouse to be constructed by John Lambert, a jail constructed by Mitchell Cooke, and a smaller brick building for storage and other community activities. The county courthouse was completed in August 1851. It was a large, barn-like structure containing a courtroom, two jury rooms, a sheriff's office, and a small room for the prosecuting attorney. The building was in use until November 7, 1907, when it was destroyed by fire.

In 1851, Cassville was renamed Sumpterville because another settlement was also calling itself Cassville, creating confusion for the mails. In 1853, the town changed names again, this time to Oceana, in honor of Chief Cornstalk's youngest daughter. However, most of the town's residents and others residing in the areas referred to the town as the Wyoming Court House.

Wyoming County's government ceased functioning during the Civil War. Following Virginia's decision to secede from the Union, those loyal to the northern cause met at what became known as the Second Wheeling Convention on June 13, 1861, to create a new Virginia government headquartered in Wheeling. The new government was initially called the Restored or Loyal Virginia Government. The Second Wheeling Convention gathered again in August 1861 and adopted a "Dismemberment Ordinance" that provided for the creation of a new state, called Kanawha, that included thirty-nine counties, including Wyoming County, subject to the approval of the voters in those counties. The referendum was held on October 24, 1861. Because it took place during the war, only 19,000 of the 48,000 eligible to vote in these counties participated in the election. The dismemberment ordinance was approved from 18,408 to 781. Another convention met in Wheeling in November 1862 to write a constitution for the new state. During its deliberations, the state was renamed West Virginia, and nine more counties, including several that were still under Confederate control, were added to its boundaries. Wyoming County was represented at the Constitutional Convention by Captain William Walker Jr., who was assigned to the Committee on Education. On January 21, 1862, Wyoming County residents Captain Richard M. Cook and Johanus P. Hoback were also admitted as delegates to the convention.

Judge Henry J. Samuel reconvened the Wyoming County government following the war's conclusion.

### **County Seat**

The county's residents voted to move the county seat to Pineville in 1907, primarily because it was more centrally located. Pineville was established on the lands of Rev. William H. Cook. Located at the junction of seven Indian trails, it was initially settled in 1840 and known as Rock View. It was incorporated with that name by the West Virginia state legislature on February 16, 1871. The town was renamed Pineville by John W. Cline, who reopened a post office there in 1880. He could not use the name Rock View because that name was already being used by another town at that time. The name Pineville was derived from a nearby large pine forest. Wyoming County built a temporary second courthouse in Pineville in 1908. It was a simple, one-story, wooden framed building. In 1916, it was torn down and replaced by a larger, \$79,000 stone building. In 1958, an annex was added to the building.

Wyoming County is located in the Cumberland Mountains region of southwestern West Virginia, perhaps best known as a destination for outdoor recreation and off-road

vehicle tourism. Thousands of tourists visit the region to explore the rugged landscape using all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs), and other motorized off-road vehicles. The network of trails and backroads that lead through the region is complimented by designated and maintained off-road trails managed by the state-operated Hatfield-McCoy Trails.

The region was formerly among the most productive coal-mining areas of the world. Many tourists are drawn to the ghost towns and abandoned industrial sites that may still be found within its forested mountains. Hundreds of thousands of miners and their families lived in the surrounding mountains through the early 1900s, though by the 1950s, employment began to dwindle. The richest seams had been mined out, and mechanization replaced many traditional mining jobs. For instance, the population of adjoining McDowell County had dropped from nearly 100,000 people in 1950 to little more than 10,000 today.

Though the decline in mining presented enormous difficulties, the decrease in population and industrialism allowed the environment to renew. Forests teeming with wildlife now cover vast expanses of mountain terrain, and some streams in the region are nearly primeval in their character, notably those in nearby Twin Falls State Park. Residents cite the rural landscape and its welcoming communities as a principal reason for their residency.

### **Cities and Towns**

Allen Junction / Amigo / Brenton / Bud / Clear Fork / Coal Mountain / Corinne / Covel / Cyclone / Fanny / Fanrock / Glen Fork / Glen Rogers / Hanover / Herndon / Ikes Fork / Itmann / Jesse / Kopperston / Lynco / Maben / Marianna / Matheny / McGraws-Tipple / Milam / Mullens / New Richmond / North Spring / Oceana / Pineville / Ravenclyff / Rock View / Sabine / Saulsville / Simon / Stephenson / Windom / Wolf Pen / Wyco / Wyoming

### **Coalfields Expressway**

The new Coalfields Expressway is a significant factor in regional growth; a new multi-lane expressway now connects the area to Interstates 64 and 77 at the Beckley junction and is a 30-mile drive that can be completed in about half an hour. A new section under construction will see a second exit opening at Pineville. The route will eventually extend to the US-52 expressway in western Virginia, opening some of the most rugged regions in the Appalachian Mountains to increased commerce.

### **COMMUNITIES**

Two unincorporated communities Herndon and Bud, are located nearby in surrounding Wyoming County—Mullens, Pineville, and Oceana are the main incorporated towns of the area.

#### **Mullens**

Mullens is the largest municipality in the region, with some 1,500 residents. The national historic district in Mullens includes 95 buildings built between 1918 and 1929. The town is sometimes considered a bedroom community within the greater Beckley metropolitan area and is a drive of 25 minutes from the city by the Coalfields Expressway.

#### **Pineville**

Twelve miles west of Mullens, the seat of justice for Wyoming County, Pineville's population is nearly 650. It may best be known for its elaborate stone courthouse, built

by many of the stonemasons employed to supervise the construction of the Itmann store and offices. The Castle Rock towering near the center of the community, is a renowned natural wonder.

### **City of Beckley**

A 35-minute drive from Pleasant Valley, the City of Beckley, with a population of more than 17,000 and a market area of nearly 125,000, is the largest municipality in southern West Virginia. The city is an interstate transportation hub. Expressways I-77, I-64 and US-19 converge there. The center of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve near Grandview is just outside Beckley.

## **REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS**

Tourism is now a chief economic force in the region, especially where off-road vehicle recreation is concerned. Primary travel draws are hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, camping, and kayaking. Though the coal industry employs many mine workers and the timber industry employs many laborers, the travel industry continues to employ and supplement an increasing number of county residents. Many residents have opened restaurants and lodging facilities, including cabins and vacation rentals, to host visitors exploring the off-road adventure trail network.



### **Hatfield-McCoy Trails**

One of the southern state's largest networks of off-road motor vehicle trails, the Pinnacle Creek Trail system approaches within a few miles of the property. Part of the Hatfield-McCoy Trails, the trail explores more than 100 miles of some of the most rugged mountain country in the Mountain State. In 2021, more than 94,000 riding permits were sold for the trails, of which more than 78,000 were out-of-state permits. The Pinnacle Creek Trail is located near the towns of Pineville and Mullens, with the Trailhead located at 2733 Pinnacle Road near Pineville. Riders have easy access to food, fuel, and lodging with connector trails to these two towns. There are connector trails to the Pocahontas and Indian Ridge trail systems. Pinnacle is known for its scenery and proximity to Twin Falls State Park.

Staffed Trailhead: Located at 2733 Pinnacle Road, Pineville, WV 24874 (lat 37.55580, long -81.50793), Trailhead has a 2+ acre parking lot, on-site restrooms, permits, and merchandise.

Permits: Valid permits are required to ride the Hatfield McCoy trails. Permits may be purchased at the Pinnacle Trailhead and several nearby authorized retailers. Permit cost: \$26.50 WV resident and \$50 non-resident

Hours: All riders must be off the trails by dark.

### **“Outlaw Trails”**

Located throughout Wyoming County, “Outlaw Trails” are actually unpaved county roads that provide great ATV, dirt bike, and mountain biking opportunities. Riders are encouraged to follow county road maps and not trespass on private property or private rights-of-way.

### **Twin Falls Resort State Park**

One of the state’s flagship resort parks, Twin Falls, hosts an average of more than 300,000 guests annually. Most are attracted by the park’s vast woodlands, though it also includes an 18-hole golf course and a lodge with 47 guest rooms, an indoor pool, and a restaurant with scenic views. Fourteen cabins and 50 campsites are also available to overnight guests. More than 25 miles of hiking trails wander the park, visiting natural landmarks that include the two waterfalls for which the park is named. It also includes a restored pioneer cabin. The park is a drive of approximately 30 minutes from the property.

### **National Coal Heritage Trail**

Traveling more than 180 miles through southern West Virginia, the National Coal Heritage Trail visits some of the most important historical landmarks in the region, including the Itmann Store and Office. The region was America’s most productive energy-producing region through the early 1900s, providing the carbon-rich fuel that helped transform the U.S. into a world power capable of defending itself through two world wars. The National Coal Heritage Authority administers the route.

### **Guyandotte River Water Trail**

One of the state’s new flatwater-paddling trails, the Guyandotte Water Trail descends through some of the most rugged mountain forests in the Appalachian chain, flowing on its 135-mile course from the roots of Great Flat Top Mountain to the Ohio River. Carry-down boat access sites are located at Itmann across WV-10. Another is located upstream at Mullens. A third is located downstream at Guyandotte Roadside Park.

### **R.D. Bailey Lake**

A drive of 50 minutes west of the property, the 630-acre R.D. Bailey Lake welcomes campers, anglers, and boaters. Hunting is permitted in the state wildlife management area in season. The lake is an impoundment of the Guyandotte River and is an important and popular park of the Guyandotte River Water Trail. The Army Corps of Engineers administers the lake.

## **OTHER REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS**

### **Winterplace Ski Resort**

A drive approximately 45 minutes from the property, Winterplace attracts thousands of skiers annually, notably from the southeast. The resort boasts 90 acres of skiable area and 28 trails, a terrain park, nine lifts, and a 16-lane snow-tubing park. The average annual snowfall at the resort is 100 inches, though, in Wyoming County, the average annual snowfall is a far more moderate 35 inches. Protected by the mountains, the valleys around Wyoming County also remain more moderate. January temperatures average a high of 45 degrees and a low of 25.



### **New River Gorge National Park and Preserve**

The nation's newest national park, the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, attracts more than 2.6 million visitors annually to the region. The park's best-known attraction, the New River Gorge Bridge, is a drive of approximately an hour and 15 minutes from Wyoming County. Hiking, biking, angling, hunting, kayaking, and camping are popular throughout the park, though it may best be known as a destination for rock climbing and whitewater rafting.

### **The Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve**

An hour's drive from the property, the 14,000-acre Summit Bechtel Reserve is an outdoor-recreation park that also hosts the Boy Scout Jamboree and is one of five high-adventure bases for the scouts. The 24th World Scout Jamboree welcomed more than 45,000 visitors in 2019. The 17th Interamerican Scout Jamboree is planned for 2023. The reserve is the home of the Paul R. Christen National High Adventure Base, the James C. Justice National Scout Camp, and the John D. Tickle National Training and Leadership Center.

## **SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIAN COAL FIELDS**

With the infusion of money from the Philadelphia area, the Norfolk & Western Railroad was completed through southern West Virginia to Pocahontas, Virginia, by 1892. It quickly became the leading hauler of Pocahontas coal. The Pocahontas Coalfield boasted the thickest bituminous coal seam in the world—as high as 14 feet in some places. In addition, Pocahontas coal burned cleaner than other bituminous coals, or, as an inspired marketing executive dubbed it, “smokeless coal.” Overnight, the Pocahontas Coalfield—located primarily in McDowell and Mercer counties—became the most valuable coal-producing region in the world.

By 1892, the N&W had been extended to the Ohio River at Kenova, sparking the rapid growth of towns along the way, including Welch and Williamson. Bluefield's population grew from 600 to 11,188 people in just 20 years. One small Mercer County town became a banking center for leading coal operators; Bramwell became known as the “home of millionaires.”



## **KING COAL**

For many years, southern West Virginia produced more bituminous coal than any other region in the country. The coal boom began as operators opened small mines with little money. The coming of the railroads changed everything, as hundreds of independent operations sprung up in Fayette and Raleigh counties in the 1870s. Within months of

the C&O's arrival in 1873, Joseph Beury opened the first large-scale mine in southern West Virginia at Quinnimont in Fayette County; after the N&W's completion, Beury also became a pioneer in the Flat Top-Pocahontas Coalfield. By the end of the 1870s, the New River Coalfield produced more than 365,000 tons of coal annually.

Investors in the N&W realized the C&O's error in not acquiring valuable coal lands near its tracks. The N&W purchased vast acreage in the smokeless coalfields of Mercer and McDowell counties. In 1885, the railroad's executives formed the Flat-Top Coal Land Association Company (later reorganized as the Pocahontas Land Corporation), which leased tracts to coal operators. This system of owning the rails, the mines, and the land gave the Pennsylvania-based N&W (and, later, other railroads) vast power. Due to the economic dominance of the railroads, in 1895, the West Virginia Legislature prohibited rail companies from engaging in the coal industry. In response, the railroads sold the property to separate land companies, which frequently had the same stockholders as the railroads.

Railroads were the catalysts for the burgeoning coal industry. Before the railroads arrived, however, investors had anticipated the growth. Hundreds of coal companies were formed in the years after West Virginia became a state. Many of the investors were from out of state, creating a situation where non-West Virginians controlled the bulk of the state's economy.

## COAL PRODUCTION

The earliest people in the New River area were the generations of the American Indians, believed to be the Shawnee, Cherokee, and Delaware tribes. In the 1750s and early 1800s, settlers made their way into the area. In the middle 1800s, the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad made its way into the New River Gorge, making a significant travel corridor along the river.

The Flat Top-Pocahontas Coalfield contained some of the best coal in the world. A high BTU (~15,000) low volatile met coal is what this region is known for. This was the No. 1 coal-producing field in the state after the decline of the New River Coalfield. Now, this coalfield is in decline.

The Flat Top-Pocahontas Coalfield consists of the coal mining region of eastern Mercer County, McDowell County upstream of Iaeger, and Pinnacle Creek and Indian Creek in Wyoming County. It also extends into Tazewell County, Virginia. This coalfield was mainly the domain of the Norfolk & Western Railway. The main line of the Virginian passed through the eastern part of the field. Norfolk-Southern owns all of it today. They still maintain a large repair shop for their engines in Bluefield. Mining began in the 1880s around Bramwell (and nearby Pocahontas, VA) and accelerated when the N & W built their "Ohio Division" from Bluefield to Kenova in the 1890s. Many European immigrants and African-Americans from the Deep South came to the area to work in the mines. U.S. Steel was a major player in this field until the 1980s, as was Eastern Associated Coal (Eastern Fuel and Gas). The region has seen a steep drop in population. In 1950, McDowell County had a population of about 98,000 people. It now has less than 20,000.

## DIRECTIONS

From the Post Office in Bud, WV (United States Postal Service 3714 W VA Rt 10, Herndon Rd, Bud, WV 24716), Head east on State Hwy 10 South toward Belmont Lane for 3.5 miles, then turn left onto Stephenson Basin Road for 3.6 miles, Pleasant Valley

Road will be on the left. NOTE, This is a gated road; please do not access without a Foxfire agent present.

#### REGIONAL INFORMATION

- <http://visitwyomingcountywv.com/>
- <https://wyomingcounty.com/>
- <https://trailsheaven.com/>

#### STATE INFORMATION

- [State of West Virginia](#)
- [West Virginia Explorer](#)
- [West Virginia Government](#)
- [West Virginia State Parks](#)
- [West Virginia Tourism](#)
- [Wonderful West Virginia Magazine](#)
- [WV Department of Natural Resources](#)
- [Virginia – Commonwealth of Virginia](#)
- [Virginia is for Lovers](#)
- [Virginia Museum of History & Culture](#)
- [Virginia Museum of Natural History](#)
- [Virginia National Park Service](#)
- [Virginia Recreation](#)
- [Virginia State Parks](#)