



New Backcountry Campsites along the Pine Mountain Trail

In early 2012 two new backcountry campsites were presented for consideration to the managers of FDR State Park, who endorsed the presented sites. After review by various Georgia Department of Natural Resources departments, the campsites were approved. Volunteers working with the Pine Mountain Trail Association helped clear the sites and access trails including carrying in parts for a bridge the PMTA provided at one site. The wooden name and directional signs for the two new sites were installed on May 26th. Both camps were ready for use on May 27, 2012.

Turtle Hollow Campsite.... (a large group size camp with 2-tent sub camp Turtle Bluff).

The start of the access trail to **Turtle Hollow Campsite** is 1.4 miles east of Fox Den Cove Parking Lot on the Pine Mountain Trail. From Molly Hugger Hill Parking Lot it is about 3.6 miles west. There is a wooden sign and brown strip sign at the head of the of the access trail to the camp off the PMT. Follow the white blazed access trail down west some 780' to another brown strip sign. To the right of this sign is the main campsite which can accommodate a large group of backpackers (12-15 tents or around 30+ backpackers) but there is only one established fire ring. Water for this group size camp is a small spring stream that runs by the camp.

For 1-4 people with 2 tents max use **Turtle Bluff**. At the brown strip sign is a footbridge. Cross the bridge and follow the trail up a short ways to Turtle Bluff. This small sub camp, overlooks the spring stream below. There is room for only two tents and there is an established fire ring there.

Even if there is a group staying at the main Turtle Hollow Campsite, Turtle Bluff is across the spring and up the hill enough to offer "privacy" for backpackers away from a group at the main campsite.

While scouting out the location for this new campsite, a turtle shell was found near the water. The name Turtle Hollow seemed to fit, and was chosen as the name.



TURTLE HOLLOW/TURTLE BLUFF CAMPSITE



Signs at the start of the access trail to the campsite



Scouts helped by bringing in the bridge parts that PMTA

Jim Hall, Joe Skinner and Mark Hughes put together.



As noted, 780' off the Pine Mountain Trail you come to this area. Straight ahead across the bridge is a short path to Turtle Bluff. To the right leads you to the main Turtle Hollow Campsite area.



Fire ring at Turtle Hollow.....



Tent sites area is rather large flat area along the spring.

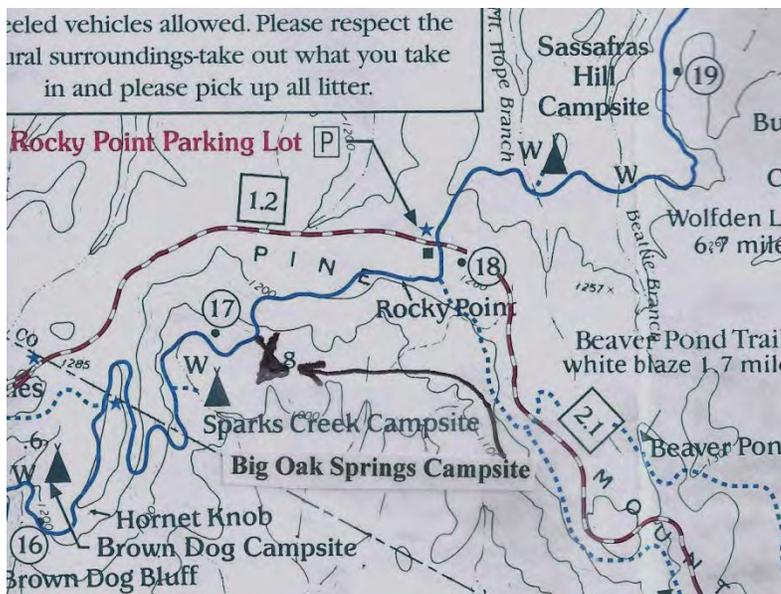


Direction sign at Fox Den Cove Parking Lot

Big Oak Springs

The access trail to **Big Oak Springs Campsite**, starts off the Pine Mountain Trail about .8 of a mile west of Rocky Point Parking Lot. If you are coming east from say Dowdell Knob it is just about 500' east of the PMT Mile 17 marker (which is east of nearby Sparks Creek Campsite.) Follow the white blazed access trail off the PMT 495' down to the main part of the camp and the one established fire ring. Just west of the fire ring is a large pile of rocks. There are two signs telling do not move/use the rocks nor camp within 50' of them (they are part of historic old home place.) The water source for the camp is further down the access trail just 250' to a beautiful spring head. There are actually a couple of springs coming out of the ground at this point. One spring has a neat rocked frame around it. Across the stream is evidence of two "whiskey stills." Above the springs you will see a HUGE white oak tree. Hence the name of the camp, Big Oak Springs. This area for this new campsite was found and suggested by PMTA Board and LIFE member Eddie Hall.

At both camps there is a lot of dead, on the ground fire wood to use (where there is not a FIRE BAN and campfires are allowed.) The main thing is that like at all Pine Mountain Trail backcountry campsites, use the established fire rings and do not build or move them. At these two new camps there is only one fire ring at each. Noted with red signs at each camp is the boundary of the camps telling do not camp beyond the signs (as those areas are not part of the established camp.)



Big Oak Springs Campsite



Start of access trail off the Pine Mountain Trail is about

500' east of the Mile 17 marker.

Main part of the camp with fire ring

Water source with neat spring rocked in.....



Water source trail

There are two signs like this near the rock pile





Some of the volunteers who helped clear the trail and campsite



The BIG OAK



Direction sign near Rocky Point



Eddie Hall with the BIG OAK