

Fort Mountain State Park Trail Map

181 Fort Mtn. Park Road · Chatsworth, GA 30705 · Park: 706-695-2621 · emergency: 706-695-4592 · Reservations: 1-800-864-7275 · www.gastateparks.org

LEGEND

Hiking Trails

- Big Rock Trail
- Campers Loop
- CCC Stone Tower
- Cool Springs Overlook
- Gahuti Trail (Backcountry)
- Creek Conn.
- Goldmine Creek
- Lake Trail (multi-purpose)
- Multi-use 201
- North Stone Tower
- Stone Wall
- Upper Cabin Access
- West Overlook

Biking Trails

- 301
- 302
- 303

Horse Trails

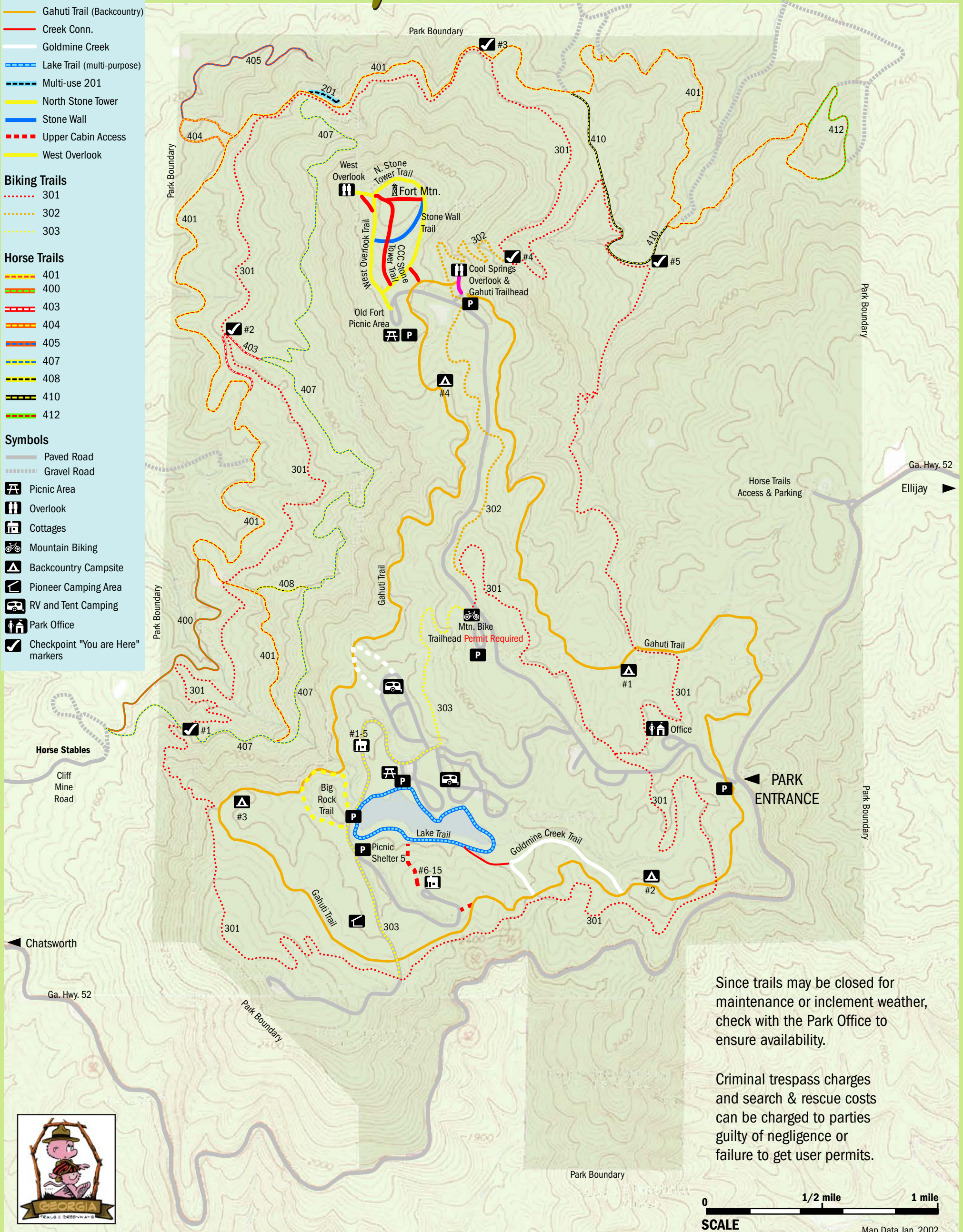
- 401
- 400
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- 407
- 408
- 410
- 412

Symbols

- Paved Road
- Gravel Road
- Picnic Area
- Overlook
- Cottages
- Mountain Biking
- Backcountry Campsite
- Pioneer Camping Area
- RV and Tent Camping
- Park Office
- Checkpoint "You are Here" markers

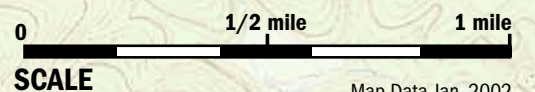


Permits required for all Bicycle, Equestrian and Backcountry Use



Since trails may be closed for maintenance or inclement weather, check with the Park Office to ensure availability.

Criminal trespass charges and search & rescue costs can be charged to parties guilty of negligence or failure to get user permits.



Map Data Jan. 2002



Mystery of Fort Mountain

High atop Fort Mountain are the rocky ruins of an ancient “stone wall” with prehistoric origin steeped in legend. Generations of archaeologists and historians have unsuccessfully sought to unravel the riddle of this wall, one of several stone assemblages scattered throughout the Southeast. More than 150 years after its discovery, answers still evade us as to who built the wall, when and for what purpose.

Theories abound, and one of the more realistic explanations is that the wall was built around 500 A.D. by a tribe of Native Americans for ceremonial or religious purposes. Others assert the wall was built by wandering bands of Welsh explorers during the 14th century as fortification against Indians. Welsh Prince Madoc has been credited with building several stone petroglyphs in the Southeast after supposedly sailing into Alabama. Another theory, based on Cherokee legend, is that the wall was built by the “Moon Eyes,” a race of light-skinned people who could see in the dark because of their larger or paler eyes. Or perhaps Spanish conquistadors, possibly Hernado de Soto, built the wall as a defense against Indian attacks.

Since no artifacts have been found to support these theories, no one knows who built the “wall of stones” zigzagging across the southern face of the Cohutta mountain range's most prominent peak. This part of the southern Appalachian Mountains rises above the Piedmont Plain and offers 80-mile views, making it an ideal location for ceremonial practices or defensive needs.

The stone wall runs east and west for 855 feet, and its height varies from two to six feet. Archaeologists believe it was much higher before exploration and plunder by previous scientists and treasure hunters. Adding to the mystery are 30 “pits” built into the wall. Were these gun emplacements or symbolic to some ceremonial practice of earlier inhabitants? Will the secrets contained within these stones forever remain a mystery?

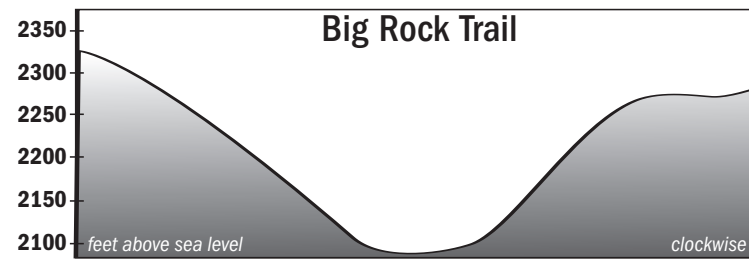
Trail Safety & Etiquette

- Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time.
- Be prepared for unexpected weather changes by dressing in layers and carrying rain gear.
- Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight and whistle. Three short blasts on a whistle are known as a call for help.
- Do not stray from trails. If you become lost, stay in one location and wait for help. This will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Pack out all trash.
- Keep pets on a leash.
- Do not pick flowers or disturb wildlife.
- Protect the landscape by staying on trails.

Mountain Biking Safety & Etiquette

- Wear a helmet.
- Bikers yield to hikers and horses.
- Announce your presence to others. When passing, a polite “On your left” or “On your right” is suggested.
- Carry maintenance tools and replacement inner tubes.
- Prevent erosion by staying on trails and not skidding.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR SELECTED TRAILS

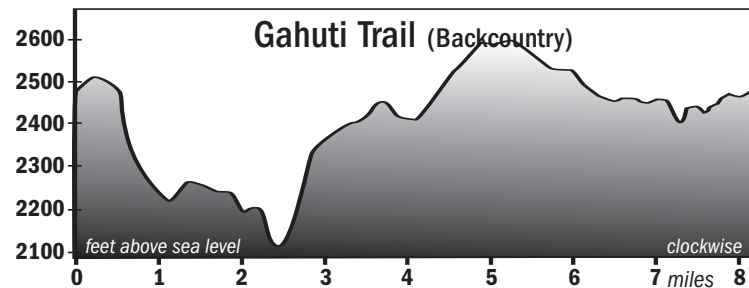


0.5-Mile Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 1 Hour
 Foot Travel Only.

Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 14%; **Max:** 30%/200LF
Min. Width: 30 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 30%/20LF

The Big Rock Nature Trail travels from the ridgeline near the lake down into a mountain hollow, then crosses a dividing ridge and returns up Gold Mine Creek passing several small cascades and waterfalls. Wildflowers abound in spring.

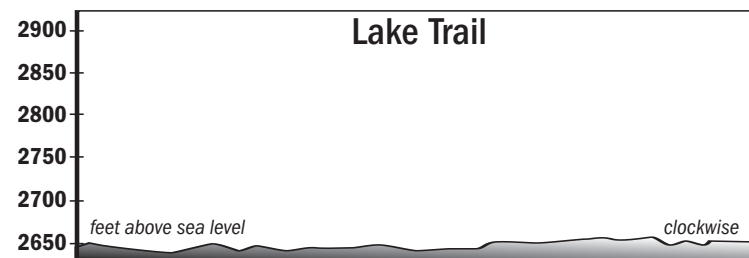
Cool Springs Overlook Trail 100% accessible by 2002 standards.



8.8 Mile Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 5 Hours
 Foot Travel Only.

Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 10%; **Max:** 25%/500LF
Min. Width: 18 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 30%/50LF
 Camping by Permit Only.

The Gahuti Trail travels around the edge of the park, passing just below the summits of both Cohutta and Fort mountains. Ever changing, the trail is both beautiful and challenging in all seasons. Hikers should always be aware of changing weather. Four backcountry campsites are available for use by permit.

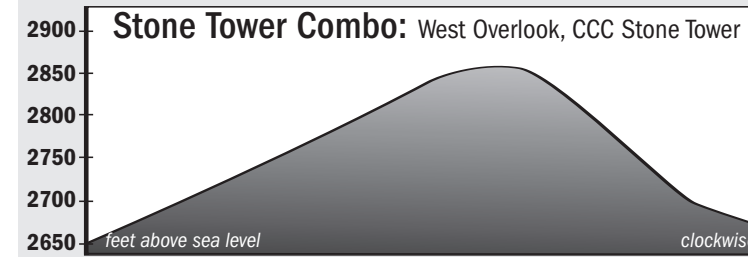


1.2-Mile Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 1 Hour
 Open to Biking & Foot Travel.

Starts and ends at picnic shelter #5
 Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 4%; **Max:** 20%/75LF
Min. Width: 30 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 25%/60LF
 Bikers must yield to all other users.

The Lake Trail loops around Fort Mountain's lake and can be accessed from the campgrounds, cottage areas, picnic area and picnic shelter #5, and the Big Rock Trail parking area. Trail is most accessible traveled clockwise. In this manner, users descend the 75 lineal feet 20% grade.

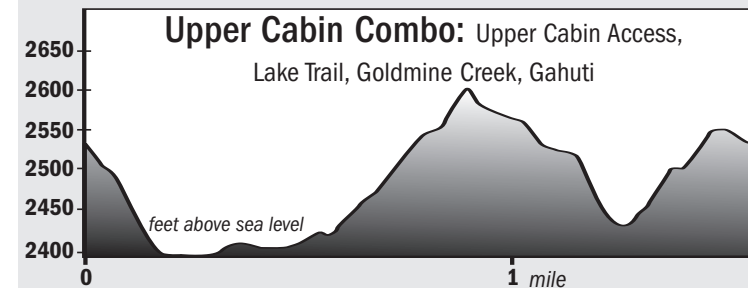
Combination Trails: made by combining trails shown on the map.



0.9-Mile Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 1 Hour
 Foot Travel Only.

Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 14%; **Max:** 20%/250LF
Min. Width: 36 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 15%/45LF
 Stone Steps on East Part of Loop

The Stone Tower Loop is hiked by traveling uphill on the West Overlook Trail and returning on the CCC Stone Tower Trail. Year-round vistas from West Overlook.



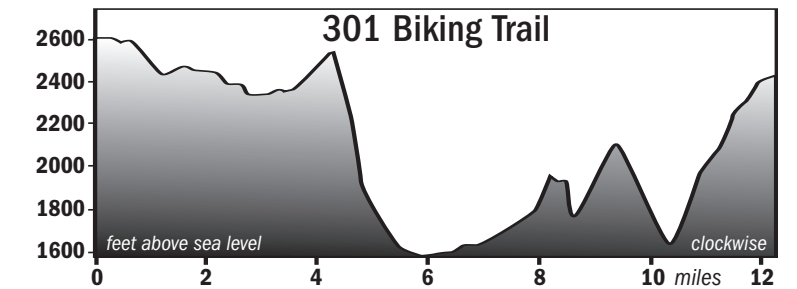
1.6-Mile Combination Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 1 1/4 Hours
 Foot Travel Only.

Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 10%; **Max:** 25%/150LF
Min. Width: 18 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 25%/25LF
 Beware of bikes on Lake Trail

Trail to the Lake Trail, proceeding to the Goldmine Creek Trail and returning on the Gahuti Trail to the upper cottage area.

This combination of trails offers excellent vistas from the upper levels of the ridgeline and wonderful views of the lake and Goldmine Creek. The creek was named for early goldmining, with some of the old mining pits visible along the trail.

The Upper Cabin Loop is hiked by using the Upper Cabin Access



14.6-Mile Loop
Avg. Travel Time: 4 Hours/Bike
 Open to Biking & Foot Travel

Compacted Natural Soil Surface
Avg. Grade: 10%; **Max:** 25%/1330LF
 20% Ascending in last 3 miles
Min. Width: 48 Inches
Avg. X-slope: 12%; **Max:** 20%/50LF
 Hikers Yield To Bicyclists.
 Trail Closed to Horses.

The East-West Bike Loop is rated by many as one of the most beautiful and challenging bike trails in the southeastern United States. Users travel from mountain ridge top to valley floor, through pine and scrub laurel thickets, upland hardwood and cove forests, by old mines, then waterfalls and rhododendrons along Hassler's Mill Creek before returning up the mountain.



Grade



X-slope



Width

All trail profiles start and end at their trail heads unless otherwise indicated.

Obstacles may include uneven surfaces, exposed rock and tree roots, fallen trees and/or limbs, steps, long steep grades, loose stones and leaf litter, softness, mud, icing, or other slick conditions when wet, poisonous plants, heat or cold in season, insects, snakes, and wild animals including bears.

Horse Trails

More than 25 miles of horse trails offer loop rides varying from 3 to 16 miles. Riders must bring their own horses and register at the stables. First-time riders must attach a photocopy proof of a negative Coggins test. Parking is at the stables access (west side of the park). Check the website or call ahead for trail closings during bad weather.

The horse trails pass through varied environments, from lush forest coves to wind-swept ridge tops. Wildflowers catch the eye in early spring, green foliage is bountiful during summer, changing leaf colors welcome fall, and spectacular vistas arrive with winter. Cliffs, waterfalls, old mines (some that provide natural “air-conditioning” during summer and warm air during winter), and abandoned mining equipment add interest to the trails. Horse watering stations are at approximately two-mile intervals.

The shorter loops, which begin at the stables and go past waterfalls, are the easier trails, with most at a 20% or less grade. Basic rules apply: riders must stay on marked trails; no trail riding between sunset and sunrise; no reckless or fast riding; and horses should not be left unattended or unbridled. Anyone found in violation of these rules will face criminal prosecution (OCGA 12-3-10) and be banned from use of horse trails at all state parks.

Climatic Data for Chatsworth, GA

Month	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Avg. Mean	Avg. Precip.	Record High	Record Low
Jan	47°F	27°F	38°F	5.30 in.	79°F (1949)	-10°F (1985)
Feb	52°F	30°F	42°F	4.90 in.	79°F (1989)	0°F (1966)
Mar	62°F	38°F	52°F	6.20 in.	87°F (1982)	7°F (1993)
Apr	72°F	46°F	59°F	4.40 in.	91°F (1986)	25°F (1987)
May	79°F	54°F	67°F	4.60 in.	95°F (1962)	33°F (1971)
Jun	86°F	62°F	75°F	4.20 in.	103°F (1988)	42°F (1984)
Jul	88°F	67°F	78°F	5.40 in.	103°F (1952)	52°F (1967)
Aug	88°F	66°F	77°F	4.10 in.	103°F (1983)	51°F (1968)
Sep	82°F	60°F	72°F	5.00 in.	102°F (1954)	32°F (1967)
Oct	72°F	46°F	60°F	3.60 in.	94°F (1954)	23°F (1952)
Nov	62°F	39°F	51°F	4.50 in.	86°F (1961)	12°F (1955)
Dec	52°F	31°F	42°F	5.10 in.	78°F (1956)	-4°F (1983)