

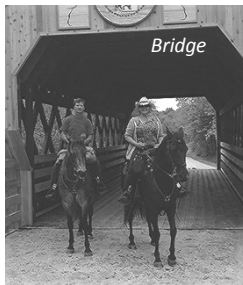
RIDE WISCONSIN-Kickapoo Valley Reserve *Patty Wisneski*

Kickapoo is an Algonquin word meaning “one who goes there, then here,”

The Kickapoo Valley Reserve has been one of my favorite destinations for trail riding in Wisconsin. The Kickapoo is an 8,569 acre tract of land located between the villages of La Farge and Ontario in southwestern Wisconsin. The Reserve offers approximately 37 miles of riding trails, and shares a border with Wildcat Mountain State Park to the north with its 15 miles of horse trails.



The Reserve is in the heart of the Driftless region, an area untouched by glacial drift. The trails wind their way through the Reserve passing beneath towering limestone-capped sandstone rock outcroppings that overlook the Kickapoo River and its tributaries. Ascents and descents are numerous as the trail takes you over the valley's deeply carved terrain. Old growth pine, short grass prairie remnants, and Cambrian era plant relicts are just a few of the unique features to be found in the Reserve.

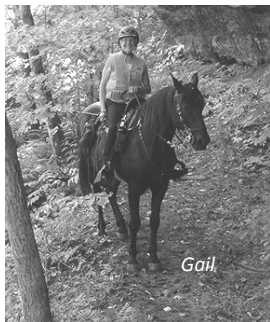


Primitive camp areas are available on the Reserve accessible to vehicles with horse trailers. Willow and Mule Camp areas, located north of La Farge off of State Highway 131, are traditional favorites for horse and mule riders. Camping is on a first-come, first-served basis. All visitors are required to obtain a camping and/or visitor's permit. Permits are available at the Reserve Visitor Center and sixteen self-registration stations on the Reserve.



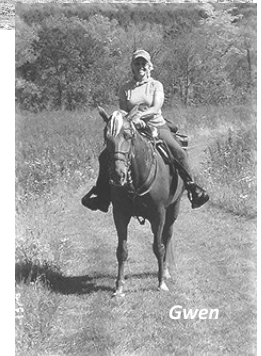
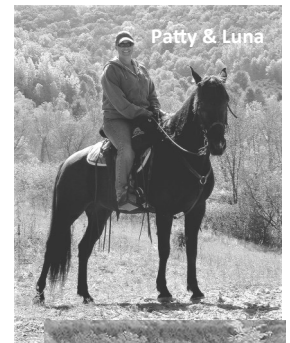
My favorite place to camp is End of the Trail Campground because it offers amenities as well as a

friendly atmosphere provided by Jan and Moose. This is a popular campground so reservations should be made in advance to insure a spot.



When planning your visit to the Reserve, please consider the following:

- The trail season runs from May 1 to November 15 in both the Reserve and Wildcat Mountain State Park.***
- All visitors are required to obtain a Visitor's Permit for the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.***
- All trail riders must stay on the designated trails!***
- Trails are subject to closure due to wet conditions. Call ahead about current conditions - (608) 625-2960.***
- Remember that the terrain is challenging, so plan your route accordingly to avoid overworking your mount or yourself.***
- Highways and roads run in and along the Reserve. Be cautious and courteous. Maintain a single file line and watch for oncoming traffic. When crossing bridges, it is usually safest to dismount and lead your horse.***
- Pack it in; pack it out! Leaving litter or trash in or around the Reserve is unacceptable.***



Regardless of the time of year, the Reserve is one of the most beautiful tracts of land in all of the Midwest. You can see over 300 species of rare plants and wildflowers, over 100 species of bird, from bald eagles to sandhill cranes to rare Kentucky warblers. You can see muskrats, beaver, white-tailed deer, raccoons, woodchucks, mink, otter and fox. You can see four types of forests, goat prairies, and prairie remnants. Starting with the massed color displays of spring wildflowers, through the dense green, almost tropical growth of mid-summer, and culminating with the brilliant autumn hues of hardwood timber, the scenery of the Reserve is compelling enough to find you wanting to return to the Valley time and time again.

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Kickapoo Reserve Management Board Mission Statement:

The land in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve shall be protected, preserved, and enhanced so that its unique environmental, scenic, and cultural features provide opportunities for the use and enjoyment of visitors to the Reserve. The Reserve will be promoted as a unique example of the Driftless Area Ecoregion and as a destination for low-impact tourism and education.

With so many trails to ride, I make Kickapoo Valley one of my riding weekends every year. The trails are phenomenal and the scenery breathtaking. If you have not enjoyed these trails yet, make this a “must” destination for the future.

“Show me your horses and I will tell you what you are”

English Proverb

Until next time – Happy Trails!