



ADRIENNE YANCY ILLUSTRATION

The dense woods covering the area hold many nut-producing trees that squirrels love. That makes Mill Creek an excellent destination for the upcoming June squirrel season.

Ruffed grouse also call the area home. “I saw three or four broods last fall along roads when traveling on the area,” Lynch said.

Lynch suggests that hunters find the most gnarly laurel and rhododendron thickets to flush a ruffed grouse.

The area has no developed facilities outside of the S-Tree Campground, operated by the U.S. Forest Service. Mobility-impaired access is granted with permit through the Renfro Loop Trail and a section of the Sheltoewe Trace Trail. These trails are open to all-terrain vehicles less than 50 inches wide. ■

Mill Creek WMA

MILL CREEK WILDLIFE Management Area (WMA), located just south of McKee in Jackson County, offers more than 13,000 acres of prime turkey and squirrel hunting.

“It is typical of Daniel Boone National Forest,” said Chris Garland, assistant director of wildlife for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. “Mill Creek is about 95 percent forested with mostly steep, rugged terrain.”

Accessing this area is a challenge. “Most of the access is on ridgetops on gated forest service roads,” Garland explained. “There is no public access past the locked gates on the area.”

Mill Creek WMA has approximately 30 acres of forest openings. Area Manager Dale Lynch regularly sows these with a mixture of clover and orchard grass to benefit wildlife.

The terrain makes great wild turkey habitat. “We have an excellent turkey population,” Lynch said. “Turkeys are the main thing on Mill Creek.”

Garland said many hunters on Mill Creek WMA hunt close to the road and near the forest openings. “The more off the beaten path you set up, the more likely your success when hunting turkeys on this area,” Garland said.

Being a mountainous, forested landscape, Mill Creek WMA has lower deer densities than other parts of Kentucky. However, this can produce a large buck for a hunter willing to put in the effort. “We are about as good as any of the other mountain wildlife management areas for deer,” Lynch explained. “We usually have good mast for them. But, any deer you get off Mill Creek, you are going to work for it.”

HOW TO GET THERE

From Richmond, take U.S. 421 then turn right on KY 89 to access to the western section of Mill Creek. Take U.S. 421 to KY 290 south of McKee to access the eastern section.

Entrance GPS coordinates

Latitude N 37.42396; Longitude W -84.06375

