

Local and Lees-McRae Amenities and Trails

Lees-McRae Campus- Located in Banner Elk, NC at 4000', the Lees-McRae campus cycling facilities contain over 6 miles of ever evolving trail ranging from flow trail to technical single-track and everything in between. There is a dirt jump line, well maintained dual slalom track with start gate, and a challenging downhill track with times ranging from 2-3 minutes. The campus trails are set up to be used as race courses with a unique cross country race lap and a short track course as well. Our trails have also been used in multiple national and conference championship events. The dual slalom, short track, and more tame "Pirate Trails" are located near the Williams Gym behind the softball facilities. The trail head for the cross country and downhill is located by The Mill Pond across from the dam. For first timers it is recommended that you are guided by someone who is familiar with the trails as they intertwine and are loosely marked. See page 2 of this PDF for the full map of campus trails.

Beech Mountain- Banner Elk is located at the base of Beech Mountain, which has the highest elevation of any town east of the Mississippi at 5506'. Beech is host to great mountain bike events and opportunities throughout the year. Lees-McRae cyclists enjoy riding Beech on a weekly basis as it is a short drive or roughly a 30-40 minute pedal up from campus. There is also an old gravel road to get you there if you prefer the route less travelled.

- **Beech Mountain Bike Park-** The park is covered with several lift assisted downhill mountain bike trails. These facilities were used for multiple recent US and collegiate National Championship events. Trail difficulties range from easy to extremely technical. The Park is open from June through September. For more info, click on the link: <http://www.beechmountainresort.com/summer/mountain-biking/>
- **The Emerald Outback Trails-** This trail network is open year round and is located at the summit of Beech Mountain. The "EMO" is an 8 mile stretch of trails with seven different trail options that can be linked together in different ways. The trails vary in degree of difficulty from flowing single-track to rocky and technical. They are also riddled with natural "hits" and features that make the trails a joy to ride. For more info, click on the link: <http://beechrecreation.org/emerald-outback-trails/>.

Sugar Mountain- The resort town of Sugar Mountain is also located a few miles down the road from campus and offers a ski area in the winter and downhill bike park in the summer. The mountain, which has hosted international level mountain bike events in the past, has recently re-opened lift service riding on its classic advanced tracks, as well as created new beginner and intermediate trails. The Park is open from June through September. For more info, click on the link: <http://www.skisugar.com/bikepark/>

Long Ridge Farms- Long Ridge Farms is a 4.5 mile ride from Banner Elk and consists of very tame but fun singletrack trails. The area contains two different trail options that consist of an eleven mile loop and another seven mile loop with minimal elevation change. Lees-McRae riders frequent this riding area as it is not as tough and great for a long endurance ride that isn't as taxing as other more mountainous terrain in the area.

Rocky Knob Bike Park- Located 20 minutes from Banner Elk, Rocky Knob is a favorite among Lees-McRae mountain bikers as it is very well constructed. Three professional trail building companies worked with BAC volunteers to create 8 miles of mountain bike trails for all skill levels with more trail currently under construction. The park also includes four skills areas, a jump trail, and a pump track. Other amenities include bathrooms, a picnic shelter, and an adventure playground. These trails typically close for adverse winter conditions. For more info, click on the link: <https://rockyknob.wordpress.com/>

Pisgah National Forest/Wilsons Creek/Brown Mountain- Located 25 minutes from Banner Elk are trails for the skilled rider with a strong desire for adventure. These desolate areas are covered with hundreds of miles of trail only accessible by hikers, horseback, and mountain bikes. These trails systems offer great variety and contain some of the best hidden gems in the country. The buddy system is a must when riding here as it is very isolated and loosely marked. Plenty of food, water, medical supplies, and lights are also recommended for riders who are new to riding here.

Lees-McRae and Surrounding Area Road Amenities:

Beech Mountain

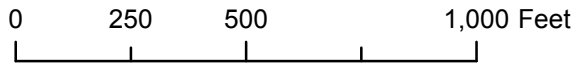
Blue Ridge Parkway- The iconic ride option that is famous for its views off of the Linn Cove Viaduct section. The parkway stretches 469 miles in total; however, the segment from Blowing Rock to Linville Falls is the most commonly ridden part by students. Team riders often include this road as a loop from campus to make a longer ride option. This roadway has great pavement and traffic is slower.

The North Carolina High Country has a plethora of rural roads with great views and epic climbs.

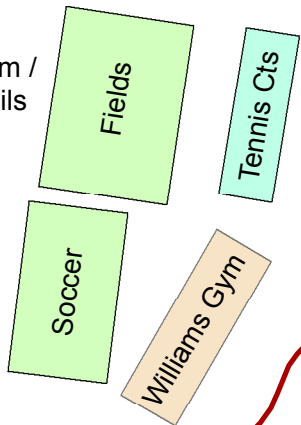
The Lees-McRae College Williams Gymnasium parking lot is a great place to park, begin rides, and to take advantage of restrooms and drinking water.

From the cycling team homepage you can view several of the Bobcat training routes via our MapMyRide profile, all of which will start from and bring you back to the gymnasium parking lot.

Mountain Biking and Hiking Trails



Dual Slalom /
Pirate Trails



Hickory Nut Gap Rd

No bikes beyond
this point!
Gate

Children's Hope Alliance
(Private Property)



Trail Difficulty

- Beginner (green dashed line)
- Intermediate (blue dashed line)
- Expert (black dashed line)

House

Lung Buster

Home Course XC

Home Course XC

Steep DH

Downhill

Hidden Boulder

Jungle Rock

Trail

Nector
Sector
Loop

Hemlock

Road

Climb

Fire

Road
Bailout

Water
Treatment
Plant

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You are
here

Millpond

Gravel

Elk
River

Lees-McRae
College Campus