

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: October 30, 2014
Media Contact:
Anna Smathers
Communications Manager
828.452.0152 ext. 205
anna@visitncsmokies.com
www.visitncsmokies.com



Maggie Valley | Waynesville | Lake Junaluska | Canton | Clyde

Blue Ridge Parkway Announces Full Road Closure at Milepost 422 for Rehabilitation of Devil's Courthouse Tunnel – Detour Available

(Waynesville, NC) – Blue Ridge Parkway officials announce the closure of a small section of motor road between existing gates at Milepost 420.3 near US Forest Service Road 816 (Black Balsam Road) and Milepost 423.3 at NC Highway 215. Both lanes of the motor road in that section will be closed to all visitors beginning November 3, 2014 through May 2015. During this closure, Devil's Courthouse Overlook at Milepost 422.4 will be accessible from the south by foot, bicycle or skis at NC Highway 215. The Art Loeb Trail crossing at Milepost 421.2 will be accessible from the north at Black Balsam Road. Visitors inside the closure are encouraged to use extreme caution and watch for construction related traffic also in the area. Devil's Courthouse Tunnel was originally constructed in 1941. This project will make repairs to the aging drainage system and concrete lining inside the tunnel. The work requires that portions of the overhead concrete lining be removed, creating potentially hazardous conditions for visitors that require a full road closure. The tunnel will be sealed and inaccessible to any traffic during this project. The Blue Ridge Parkway is recognized internationally as an example of landscape design achievement and Parkway tunnels are a significant design feature along the historic route. Twenty-five of the twenty-six tunnels along the Parkway are in North Carolina, with all Parkway tunnels representing 36% of the entire National Park Service tunnel inventory. Tunnels along the Parkway were often constructed to reduce excessive scarring that open cuts would entail, enabling the Parkway to cross through ridges in the interest of maintaining the most desirable route location. The distinctive stone masonry portals on most Parkway tunnels were generally not part of the original construction, added later in the 1950s and 1960s.

But even with the road closure, you can still enjoy the wonders of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Haywood County. A detour is available that will bring you off the parkway, through scenic rural landscapes and right back up to the parkway to continue your journey. There are even spots to dine and fuel up at along the way.

If traveling South to North on the Blue Ridge Parkway prior to Devil's Courthouse - Exit the Parkway at mile marker 423.3 via the access ramp and proceed on Hwy 215/Lake Logan Rd. towards Canton. Continue for 17 miles and enjoy the beautiful sights along the way, including Lake Logan and Sunburst swimming area. The road will come to an end at a

T-Junction where you will make a right onto Hwy 276/Cruso Rd. Continue on this road for 15 miles. The road will wind you through rolling farm land and rural communities including Springdale Country Club. Continue up the mountain and onto the Blue Ridge Parkway access ramp to head North and pick up your original route. If you're hungry, stop for a bite to eat at Jukebox Junction or Breaking Bread Café, both located less than a mile after turning on to Hwy 276/Cruso Rd. There are also several gas stations in this area to fuel up for your adventure.

If traveling North to South on the Blue Ridge Parkway prior to Devil's Courthouse - Exit the Parkway at mile marker 411.8 and proceed on Hwy 276/Cruso Rd. towards Canton. Continue for 15 miles and enjoy the beautiful sights along the way, including picturesque farms, rural communities and Springdale Country Club. After passing Bethel Baptist Church on your left, make a left onto Hwy 215/Lake Logan Rd. Continue on this road for 17 miles. The road will wind you through beautiful sights along the way, including Lake Logan and Sunburst swimming area. Continue up the mountain and merge onto the Blue Ridge Parkway access ramp and head South to continue along your original route. If you're hungry, stop for a bite at Jukebox Junction or Breaking Bread Café, located less than a mile before you turn onto Hwy 215/Lake Logan Rd. There are also several gas stations along the way to fuel up for your adventure.

For regular Parkway updates on this and other projects follow the Blue Ridge Parkway on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BlueRidgeNPS or for real-time road closure information visit maps.nps.gov/blri/road-closures/. You can also call the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority for visitor information: 800-334-9036 or visit www.visitncsmokies.com.

###

Along with its picturesque beauty, Haywood County and its five towns of Maggie Valley, Waynesville, Lake Junaluska, Canton and Clyde offer year round activities and events centered around food, heritage, music, art and the outdoors. No matter what experience you choose, we guarantee you will always experience Authentic Appalachian, Pure & Simple! For more information visit www.visitncsmokies.com or contact the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority at 800-334-9036.