Butterfield Hiking Trail

A parking area and a sign just past campsite # 7 signal the exact spot where the Butterfield Trail crosses Lee Creek.

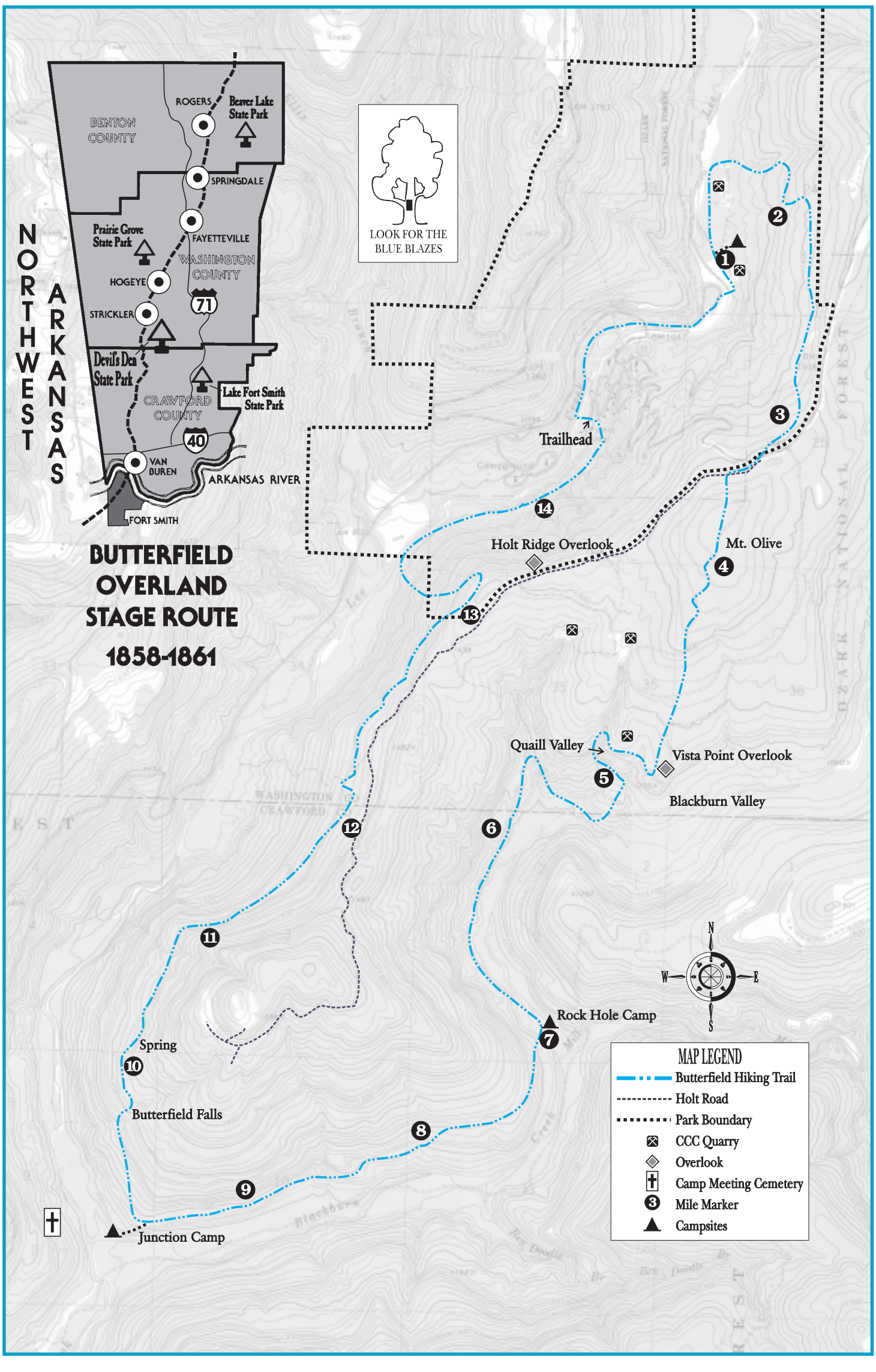
Camping Area A to Quaill Valley

After crossing the creek, the Butterfield coincides with the Lee Creek Trail & the Fossil Flats Trail. The trail turns north through an excavated area used by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The black, flaky rock is shale. About 100 yards beyond this excavated area there is a spur trail to the Walk-in Camp (this is a fee area and registration is required at the Visitor Center). At the trail junction (about 1.5 miles), the Lee Creek Trail turns left (west) to the creek, and the Fossil Flats Trail continues straight ahead (north). The Butterfield turns right (east) and up the ridge past several old homesites and an old cemetery. There is a 450 foot elevation gain in the next 1.5 miles.

Just beyond mile marker 3, the trail crosses Arkansas Highway 74 at the park's east entrance and follows an old road called the **Holt Road** for .2 miles. The trail then turns left and works its way up and around Mt. Olive, the highest point on the trail, and near the location of the Mt. Olive school and church of 1880-1937.

Just before mile marker 4, the Butterfield crosses the Vista Point Horse Trail (green markers). One mile further, they coincide. At this second junction, you may either take a spur trail by following the horse trail straight ahead 150 yards to the Vista Point Overlook (a beautiful view of Blackburn Valley), or turn right and continue on the Butterfield Trail. From this junction, the trail drops, crosses an intermittent stream and rises again through a shortleaf pine stand which is somewhat unusual for this area.

From here the trail is on top of an 80 foot bluff, providing the hiker with many views into Blackburn Valley. Once again, the trail quickly descends and crosses an intermittent stream (one of the more dependable locations for water). At this point, the horse trail turns up to the right, and the Butterfield drops left into **Quaill Valley** near mile marker 5.



Quaill Valley to Junction Camp

Quaill Valley is a complex geological area. A huge section of the mountain broke off and slid nearly 100 feet into the valley. As a result, there are several fracture caves, crevices and waterfalls in the area.

After crossing the intermittent stream again at Quaill Valley, the trail rises to the top of the detached rock. To the left is a boxed-in-ravine filled with mosses, ferns and flowers.

Beyond mile 5, the trail leaves Quaill Valley and descends the mountain to an old road which follows Blackburn Creek. The Butterfield follows this road to the right (west) for approximately 100 yards before branching off to the left. After crossing an intermittent stream, the trail ascends 180 feet in elevation to follow a geologic bench. You will reach mile 6 half way along this bench.

The trail gradually descends, connects into another old road, and heads downstream to **Rock Hole Camp**. This primitive camping area is named for the large rock in the center of the deep pool on Blackburn Creek. The trail continues through the center of Rock Hole Camp, works its way uphill, and follows a bench for the next 2½ miles to Junction Camp.

Junction Camp to Holt Ridge Overlook

To reach Junction Camp, turn left and travel for 1/4 mile down the hill. Junction Camp is located at the confluence of Blackburn Creek and Lee Creek near the site of the historic community of Anna. Camp Meeting Cemetery, where some of the residents of Anna are buried, is located across Lee Creek from Junction Camp. The cemetery, a hand dug well and a foundation are all that is left of Anna. The community was abandoned after a flash flood on April 29, 1893.

From the spur to Junction Camp, the Butterfield Trail continues up the logging road for 1/4 mile and then leaves the road to the left. As the trail works its way around the west side of Holt Ridge, it enters a "rock garden" of large scattered boulders. The trail works its way up to the base of a 25 foot bluff, then climbs up through the boulders, known as **Butterfield Falls**, to the top of the bluff. During high water this climb is through a waterfall. This route can be difficult; **caution is advised!**

Once on top of the bluff, the trail continues to gain elevation around the west side of the ridge. There is a spring against the bluff on the right hand side of the trail near mile 10.7. Here, as elsewhere along the trail, you should purify the water before drinking it. There is a house foundation up the hill from the spring, adding further evidence that this area was well settled in times past.

The trail is fairly level from mile 11 to 12. Beyond mile 12, the Butterfield intersects an old road. The Butterfield trail follows the old road to the right for 100 feet, then turns left off the road. (For reference, note that the Holt Road is 100 yards east of this old road). You will reach another junction after mile 13. From there, the Butterfield turns down the hill to the left, and the horse trail continues to the Holt Ridge Overlook. Large, open cedar glades with wide vistas await you at the overlook, should you decide to take this .6 mile side trip (one way). **This view is highly recommended.** From the overlook, you can see the Ellis Creek Valley to the west/northwest and camping area E, the CCC dam, lake, and several miles of the Lee Creek Valley to the north. This is considered the most scenic view of Lee Creek Valley.

Holt Ridge Overlook Junction to Trailhead

From the Holt Ridge Overlook junction, the Butterfield Trail descends the ridge in a wide arc. The elevation change in this 1/2 mile is almost 400 feet. When you reach the bottom, take a few moments to rest along the limestone bluffs on Lee Creek.

The trail then works its way up and down along the bank of Lee Creek and is joined by horse trails. The elevation change is less than 100 feet. Mile marker 14 is the last one you will see.

After completing the trail, please stop by the Visitor Center to drop off your permit. If the office is closed, slip your permit through the mail slot in the front door.