
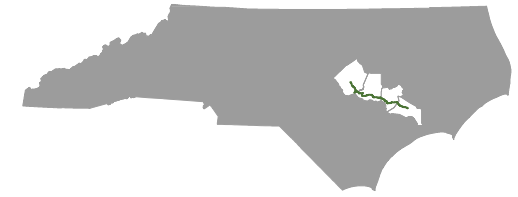
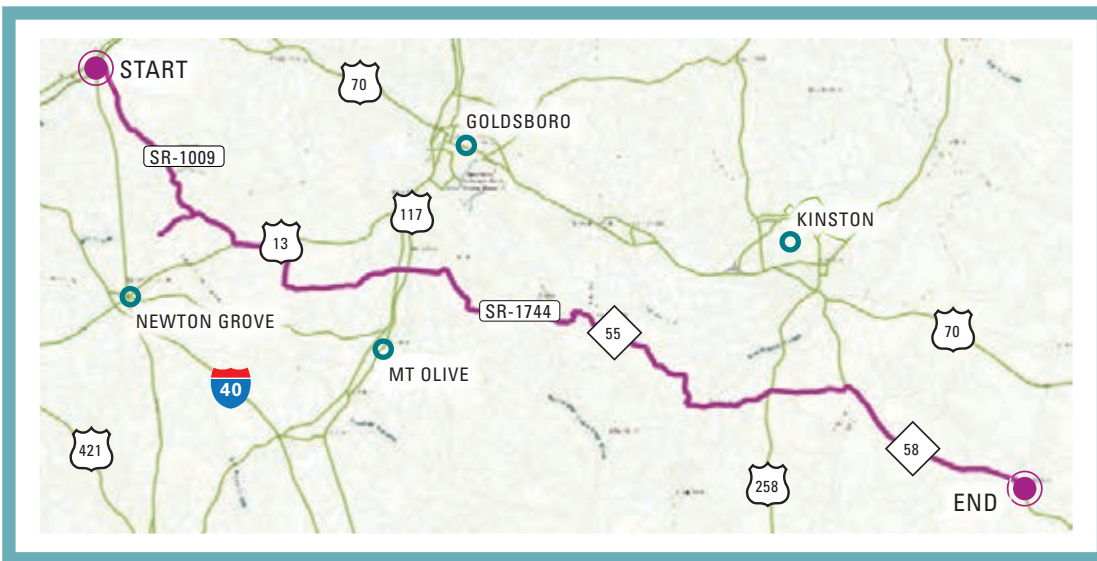


BLUE-GRAY

Byway

A large, two-story white house with teal trim and a balcony, surrounded by trees and a clear blue sky. The house has a prominent red brick chimney and a balcony with white railings. The surrounding area is a mix of green and bare trees, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

The Blue-Gray Scenic Byway reflects the significant impact the Civil War, fought between 1861 and 1865, had on Eastern North Carolina. Travelers begin the byway by tracing the path of a local legend on Devils Racetrack Road. As folklore states, people traveling this road could once hear the footsteps of a horse carrying the devil as he rode through the area; however, no one has ever seen the horse or its rider. The route continues through Civil War battle sites, noted by the many historic markers along both sides of the road. Travelers will cross over several creeks and through an abundance of rich farmlands in this part of the Neuse River Basin. The fertile soil is the result of thousands of years of flooding and changing patterns of the river and creeks that flow nearby. Below the Neuse River, motorists will encounter the Seven Springs Hotel. Now a privately-owned residence, this hotel was named for the surrounding mineral springs and was once the site of a Victorian resort that operated between 1881 and 1944.



Counties: Johnston, Jones, Lenoir, and Wayne

Total Distance: 84.4 Miles

Drive Time: 1 hr 55 min

Getting There

The byway begins at US-701 and Devil's Racetrack Rd near I-95, Exit 90 in Four Oaks.

- Head east 12.5 mi. on Devils Racetrack Rd toward Hillsboro Rd.
- Turn right onto Harper House Rd and continue until you reach Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site on the right in 1.9 miles.
- Backtrack on Harper House Rd to Devils Racetrack Rd. Continue on Harper House Rd. across Devils Racetrack Rd. for 0.1 miles and turn right onto St. Johns Church Rd.
- Follow St. Johns Church Rd for 0.4 miles until it turns into Bentonville Rd and continue on Bentonville Rd. for 3 miles.
- Turn left onto US Hwy13 and travel 4.1 miles to the crossroads in Grantham.
- Turn right onto Grantham School Rd and follow for 3.2 miles to Dudley Rd/Oberry Rd.
- Turn Left onto Dudley Rd/Oberry Rd and follow for 7.5 miles until you reach US-117. Cross US-117 and continue on Oberry Rd./ Sleepy Creek Rd through the town of Dudley for 3.1 miles.
- Turn Right onto Eagle Nest Rd and continue for 3.11 miles until it dead ends into Indian Springs Rd.
- Turn left onto Indian Springs Rd. (SR-1744) and follow until you reach NC-55 in 6.6 miles Turn left onto NC-55 and then turn left onto W Spring St in 0.4 miles.
- Follow W Spring St. 1 mile into the Town of Seven Springs and turn right onto Main St to return to NC-55 in 0.1 miles.
- Turn left onto NC-55 and follow for 4.8 miles to Smith Grady Rd. Follow Smith Grady Rd for 3.6 miles and veer right to travel on Old Pink Hill Rd. Follow Old Pink Hill Rd for 1.8 miles to Liddell Rd.
- Turn left onto Liddell Rd. and follow it for 1.8 miles through the town of Deep Run to



ABOVE: Civil War Trail Marker at Howell Woods

OPPOSITE: Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site

John Green Smith Rd. Turn right and follow John Green Smith Rd for 2.1 miles and turn right onto Big Oak Rd.

- Follow Big Oak Rd for 0.6 miles and take a slight left onto Sandy Foundation Rd and follow for 1.1 miles.
- Turn left onto US-258 and almost immediately take the first right onto



Lightwood Knot Rd. Follow Lightwood Knot Rd for 4.8 miles to Vine Swamp Rd.

- Turn left onto Vine Swamp Rd and follow for .3 miles and take a sharp right onto NC-58 and follow for 13.6 miles into the Town of Trenton.

- In the Town of Trenton, take a right onto Market St and follow for 0.5 miles near Mayfield Rd where the byway ends.

ABOVE: Bentonville Battle State Historic Site

OPPOSITE: Cliffs of the Neuse State Park

Start



Mill Creek



Battle of
Bentonville





Cliffs of the
Neuse State Park




Seven Springs

Points of Interest


 After crossing Hannah's Creek, the byway crosses Mill Creek where Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's troops were prevented from attacking Union troops under the command of General William T. Sherman from the rear because of a flood. The Confederates were able to escape after their defeat. In the community of Bentonville, one-half mile further along the byway, Confederate forces kept naval stores of tar, pitch, and turpentine, which they burned after their retreat from Bentonville.


 The Civil War Battle of Bentonville took place on March 19-21, 1865, at what is now the Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site, approximately four miles southwest of Bentonville. This 1865 battle slowed Sherman's march through the state and was the bloodiest and largest land battle ever fought on North Carolina soil with nearly 5,000 total casualties. The battle, the only significant attempt to defeat Sherman's army during its march through the Carolinas, was the last full-scale action in which a Confederate army was able to mount a tactical offensive during the Civil War. Reenactments of this historic battle are held each March in remembrance of those few days. The nearby Harper House was used as a Union field hospital and is included in the site's tour. (36)

 Just off the byway after the Indian Springs community is the Cliffs of the Neuse




State Park. The park features cliffs that rise 90 feet from the Neuse River and were formed from a fault shift thousands of years ago. Over time, erosion exposed the multi-colored sedimentary layers in a formation that enables laurel and other mountain plants to grow here. Nature trails and a museum are available to park visitors.

 Seven Springs was originally named Whitehall after the plantation of William Whitefield, a prominent pre-Revolutionary War settler, in 1741. A state Civil War marker near the Neuse River Bridge denotes the site where the Confederate ironclad, C.S.S. Neuse, was built. This was also the site of an early Civil War skirmish, the Battle of Whitehall, where Union troops damaged the ship, which is now housed in Kinston. The battle occurred as the Union troops were marching north in an attempt to capture a railroad trestle near Goldsboro. (52)

 The farming community of Deep Run, located along the byway, was established in the 1880s with the opening of a turpentine distillery. It was originally called Red Town because the community's houses were painted red.

 The town of Trenton was established as Trent Courthouse in 1779 and named for the river, which was named for the Trent River in England. By 1784, the name Trenton was adopted.

 Nearby places of interest include New Bern and the beaches of the Crystal Coast. New Bern, the colonial and state capital from 1746 to 1792, is 25 miles northeast of Trenton. About 35 miles southwest of Trenton are the Bogue Sound and beach recreation areas.



Deep Run



Trenton



New Bern