

## Little Kanawha Byway

Perhaps the most accessible of all of West Virginia's byways, the Little Kanawha Byway is bookended by I-77 and I-79. Starting in the west at I-77, the parkway begins its journey in Mineral Wells and mirrors the banks of the Little Kanawha River. Being totally paved, this roadway is perfect for RVs and others wanting a smooth ride so they can take in all of the beautiful pastoral sites.



### **Hughes River Wildlife Management Area**

The byway passes the Hughes River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This 10,000-acre WMA allows hunting for turkey, deer, grouse, squirrel, and rabbit. The nearby Hughes River, along with the Little Kanawha, is filled with muskellunge, smallmouth bass, and channel catfish perfect for a weekend fishing trip.

### **Burning Springs**

Further along the river, the town of Burning Springs was once one of the major hubs of the American oil industry. In 1859, and later in the 1890s, the area around Burning Springs and Parkersburg was literally seeping with oil just beneath the surface. These oil strikes turned many men into millionaires in only a few months until the shallow wells ran dry. For those interested in seeing a piece of the Mountain State's oil history, The Parkersburg Oil & Gas Museum is restoring one of the old derricks that stood above the oilfields in Burning Springs.

### **Burnsville Lake Wildlife Management Area**

At the eastern edge of the byway, the beautiful lake and surrounding protected fields and forests of the Burnsville Lake Wildlife Management Area provide a welcome respite from the hurried pace of today's world. Stretching for over 18,000 acres, this WMA offers both hunting and fishing as well as boat rentals and campgrounds.

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### **Cedar Creek Road**

Just a few miles west of Glenville, the Cedar Creek Road branches off from the Little Kanawha Byway and takes drivers on a rustic route through some of West Virginia's most scenic farm country. This road is perfect for a leisurely, slow-paced drive with some parts of the road being paved with gravel and other parts having



only one lane. Southeast from Glenville, Cedar Creek State Park is perfect for anyone wanting a weekend vacation filled with camping, paddle boating, and hiking. During the year, all three lakes are stocked with trout, muskie, bass, and catfish.

### **Mountain Parkway Byway and Mountain Parkway Backway**

Less than 15 miles from the Little Kanawha Backway and Cedar Creek Road, Mountain Parkway Byway and its neighbor, the Mountain Parkway Backway, make their way through beautiful Webster County. When you begin your journey on these two wonderful roads, head for one of three informative kiosks at the main entrances. Starting out on the southern part of the byway, Holly River State Park is home to many popular hiking trails leading to small waterfalls. The second-largest park in the state is complete with tennis courts, an archery range, a softball field, a basketball court, and a swimming pool.

While these rural roads may have wonderful stretches where you feel like you are the only person around, there are still plenty of shops to visit. Shops selling everything from pottery to wood furniture made from area trees can be found on the



drive. The Jerry Run Summer Theater's weekly bluegrass or country music shows have become quite popular and nearby Hacker Valley Elementary School hosts ramp dinners every spring and fall. Also along Jerry Run, there is a natural spring that, even today, residents will take water from in times of severe drought. While in the area, don't miss the historic sites at the Wheeler Overlook and Mollohan Mill.

**Together, these four roadways are a natural gateway to the center of the state and help to provide a glimpse of untouched beauty making them the perfect back-to-nature getaway.**