

The Lonesome Pine Special Trail follows the old Coal and Iron Narrow Gauge Railway over 18 trusses between Bristol and Mendota, Virginia, through 12 miles of lovely rolling woodlands, dramatic gorges and bucolic farms.

The railway from Bristol to Big Stone Gap was first conceived in the mid-1850's when Bristol's economy began to prosper, but construction was postponed by the Civil War until the 1870's, aided by free convict labor from Richmond.

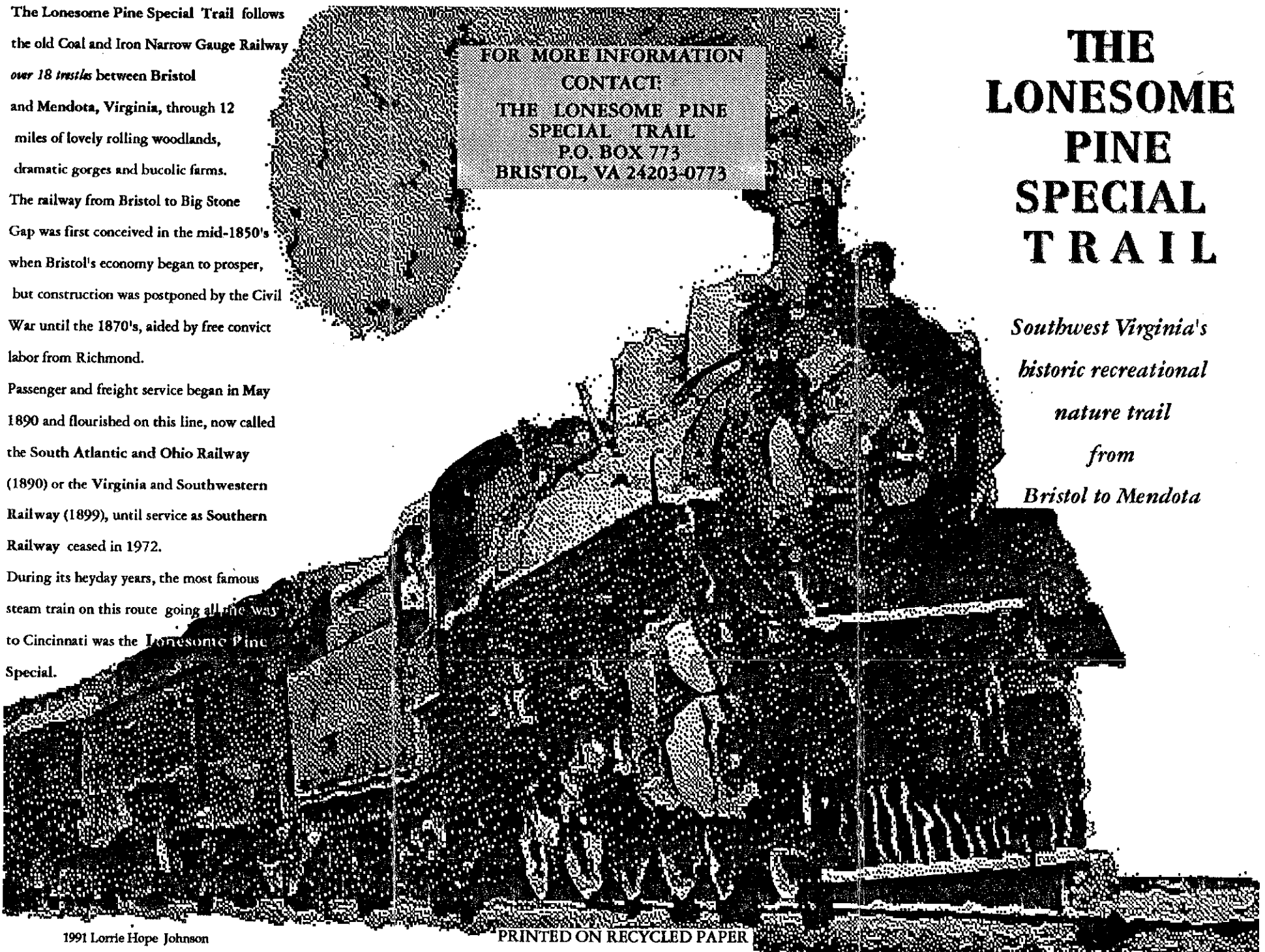
Passenger and freight service began in May 1890 and flourished on this line, now called the South Atlantic and Ohio Railway (1890) or the Virginia and Southwestern Railway (1899), until service as Southern Railway ceased in 1972.

During its heyday years, the most famous steam train on this route going all the way to Cincinnati was the Lonesome Pine Special.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT
THE LONESOME PINE
SPECIAL TRAIL
P.O. BOX 773
BRISTOL, VA 24203-0773

THE LONESOME PINE SPECIAL TRAIL

*Southwest Virginia's
historic recreational
nature trail
from
Bristol to Mendota*



TRAIL LOG

The Trail begins at **Mile 0** in a Cambrian geological strata 600 million years old, and continues on toward Mississippian limestone 350 million years old at **Mile 12.5** - a 250 million year time travel! Fossiliferous rocks can be seen at several sites along the Trail.

MILE 0: The trail starts at the intersection of Island Road and Interstate 81. Parking is available nearby.

MILE .26: (Two-acre parcel of trail is attached acreage.) The LPS Trail begins its ascent from 1700 to 2100 foot elevation up Big Walker Mountain.

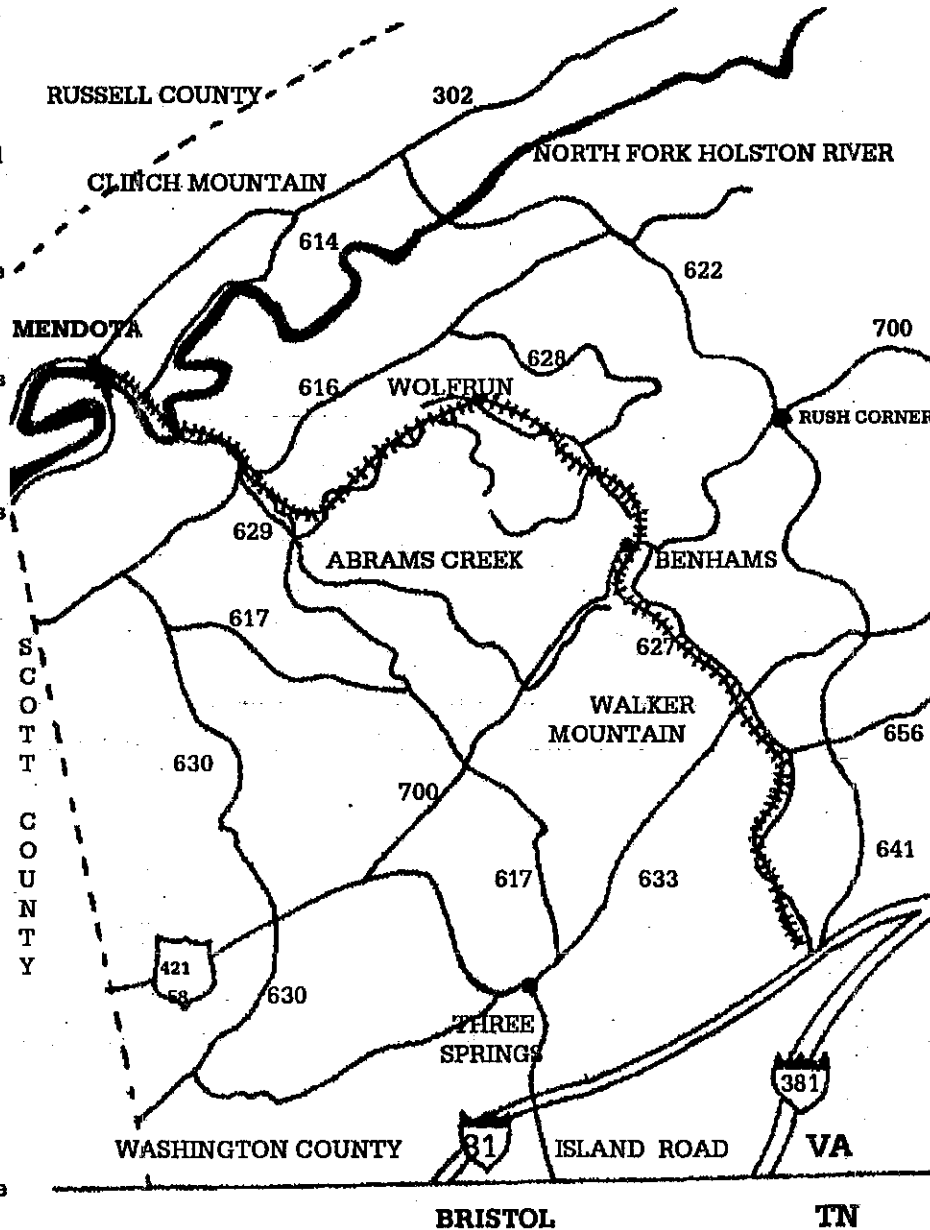
MILE 1.4: As it winds through the small farms along Little Creek, LPS Trail passes over a large trestle haunted by a lantern-carrying man searching for his two sons killed by the mail train on the bridge 100 years ago.

MILE 2.0-2.7: The LPS Trail parallels Route 627 through lovely farmland ascending to the top of Big Walker Mountain with a view of Holston Mountain to the east. (At Mile 2.7 is a 3.2 acre tract belonging to the trail acreage, and available for development as a picnic, camping, or other recreational area.)

MILE 3.2: A one-acre tract belongs to the trail, purchased by the railroad from an irate farmer at one time because an engineer under the influence of "demon rum" ran a diesel train off the tracks here. (Available for development- a lovely wooded area.)

MILE 5: The LPS Trail crosses Abram's Creek on an 80 yard trestle, 30 feet above the water in upper Rich Valley.

MILE 5.5: At Benhams Mall, snacks and soft drinks can be purchased before the



trail enters Wolf Run Gorge. Abundant parking is available at what was once an old railroad yard.

MILE 6: The Trail descends across ten bridges over Wolf Run, which cascades for the next two miles down limestone steps forming a 600-foot deep gorge with stone bluffs on either side.

MILE 10: The Trail emerges from Wolf Run Gorge at the junction of Wolf Run and Abrams Creek 3/4 mile downstream from Abram's Falls. Local lore suggests that a riderless horse haunts this site looking for his rider, a Northern sympathizer bushwacked here during the Civil War. (A large tract of land owned by the Trail is available for development here.)

MILE 11: The Trail meanders with Phillips Creek for a mile across rich bottomland. One of these farms is owned by a family who inherited it from a surveyor of the original railroad, a widower who in 1870 visited the farm to strike a deal for the railroad right-of-way and married the farmer's widowed daughter three days later.

MILE 11.7: The Trail crosses the north fork of the Holston River on a 100-yard bridge 50-feet high. In 1879, a convict laborer attempting to escape plunged into the river and disappeared. Though the body was never recovered, the workmen on the bridge reported being grabbed at the ankles by cold hands. For the adventurous hiker, there is a swinging footbridge alongside the trestle.

MILE 12.5: The pleasant town of Mendota lies between the Holston River and Clinch Mountain, 3100 feet high. Only a general store remains on a site once occupied by six stores, two banks, and a 40-room hotel. (The Trail ends here close to Route 802 in a one-acre tract owned by the Trail, a potential recreational site.)

PLEASE SEND YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE