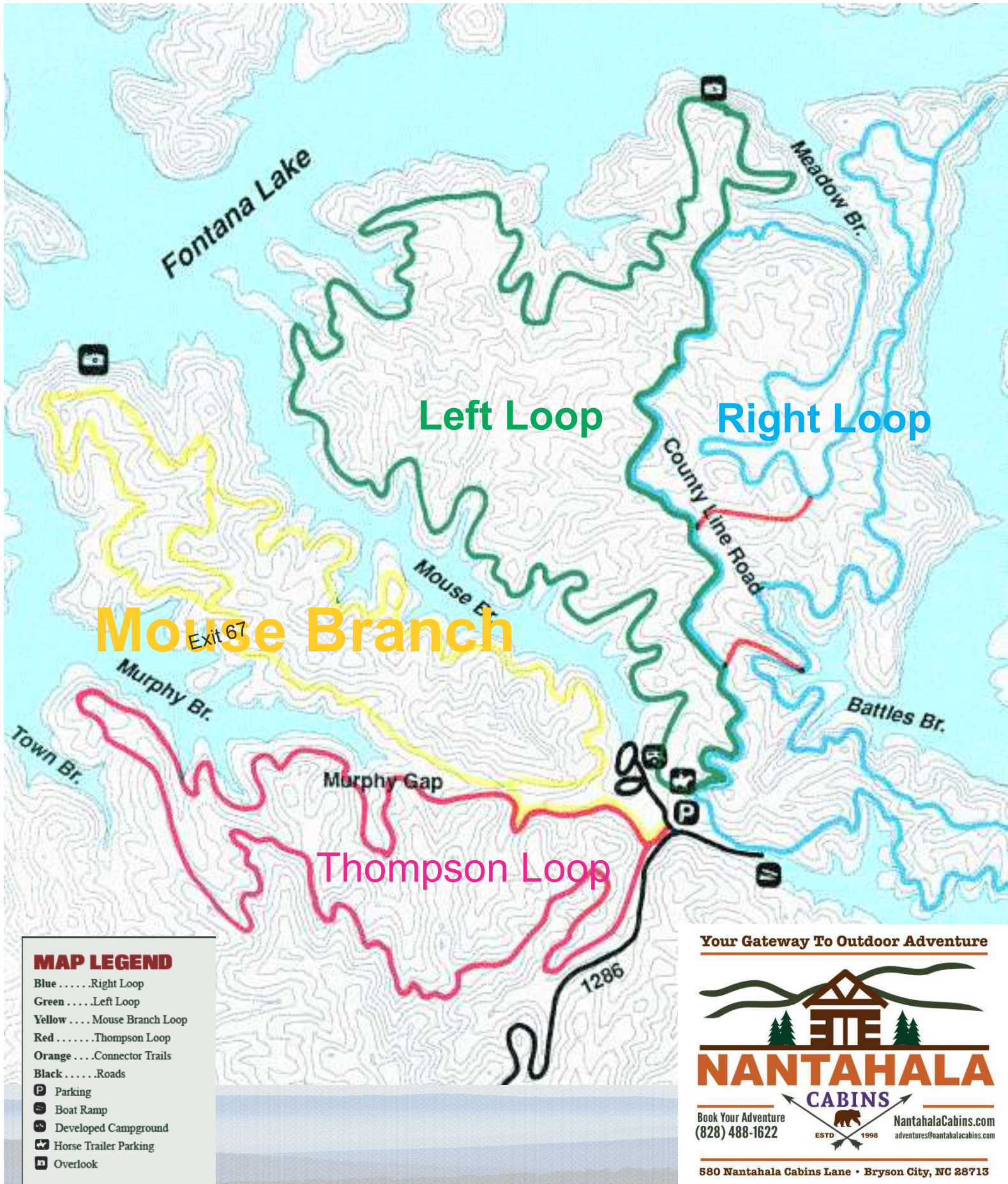


# Tsali Recreation Area Map



Mouse Branch

Left Loop

Right Loop

Thompson Loop

## MAP LEGEND

- Blue . . . . .Right Loop
- Green . . . . .Left Loop
- Yellow . . . . .Mouse Branch Loop
- Red . . . . .Thompson Loop
- Orange . . . . .Connector Trails
- Black . . . . .Roads
- Parking
- Boat Ramp
- Developed Campground
- Horse Trailer Parking
- Overlook

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# Face the challenge of Tsali

Challenging—that's the best word to describe the 42 miles of Tsali Trails, rated as "more difficult."

Suited for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders, the 4-loop system offers a variety of landscapes. You can climb 1-foot wide rugged paths or travel flat, well-beaten roads. The four trails—Right, Left, Mouse Branch, and Thompson Loops—meander through mixed pine and hardwoods on a peninsula stretching into Fontana Lake.

Hikers may travel the trails on any day, but mountain bikers and equestrians, the primary users, are kept separated by alternating use of the trails. A schedule is posted at all trailheads.

Fees are charged and used for trail improvements at Tsali Recreation Area.

## Right Loop - BLUE

**Length:** 11 miles

**Highlights:** Single track, views of Lake Fontana, creek crossings, shorter 4- and 8-mile loops possible.

## Left Loop - GREEN

**Length:** 11.9 miles

**Highlights:** Longest Tsali trail, single track, creek crossings, views of the Smokies and Lake Fontana at the overlook.

## Mouse Branch - YELLOW

**Length:** 9 miles

**Highlights:** Single track and old logging roads, potential views of wild turkey, deer, and grouse in forest wildlife openings, old home sites.

## Thompson Loop - RED

**Length:** 7.7 miles

**Highlights:** Single track, potential views of wildlife, overlooks, stream crossings, old logging roads, old home sites.



## A look back in time

The Tsali Recreation Area is named for a Cherokee man who hid in this area in 1838. The U.S. Government had ordered the Cherokees to move to Oklahoma—a tragic removal that's known as "The Trail of Tears". Exasperated by the brutality to his family, Tsali and others escaped to these mountains.

Tsali was coaxed to surrender by a promise to allow the others to remain in the area. Tsali voluntarily came forward as a sacrifice for his people. As a result, he, his brother, and two older sons were shot and killed.

Today the Eastern Band of the Cherokee live on ancestral Cherokee land about 12 airmiles east of the Tsali Recreation Area.

## Forest management in the works

National forests are managed for many uses, including outstanding recreation, wildlife habitat, wood products, and clean water. Watch for signs of forest management.

The pine forest here is threatened by southern pine beetles. To control the beetles, infested trees are cut and removed. A ring of healthy pines around the infestation are also removed to create a buffer.

You will discover many grassy openings created for wildlife on the Tsali peninsula. These small plots were cleared and seeded with orchard grass and clover. Some animals benefiting from these openings are wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, rabbits, songbirds, and butterflies.

- [Thompson Loop Trail](#) and [Mouse Branch Loop Trail](#)
- Hiking - seven days a week
- Horseback Riding - Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- Mountain Biking - Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday
- [Tsali Horse Trail](#) (Right Loop and Left Loop)
- Hiking - seven days a week
- Horseback Riding - Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday
- Mountain Biking - Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- **SPECIAL NOTE:** Mountain bikers and horse riders must pay a [daily use fee](#).

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