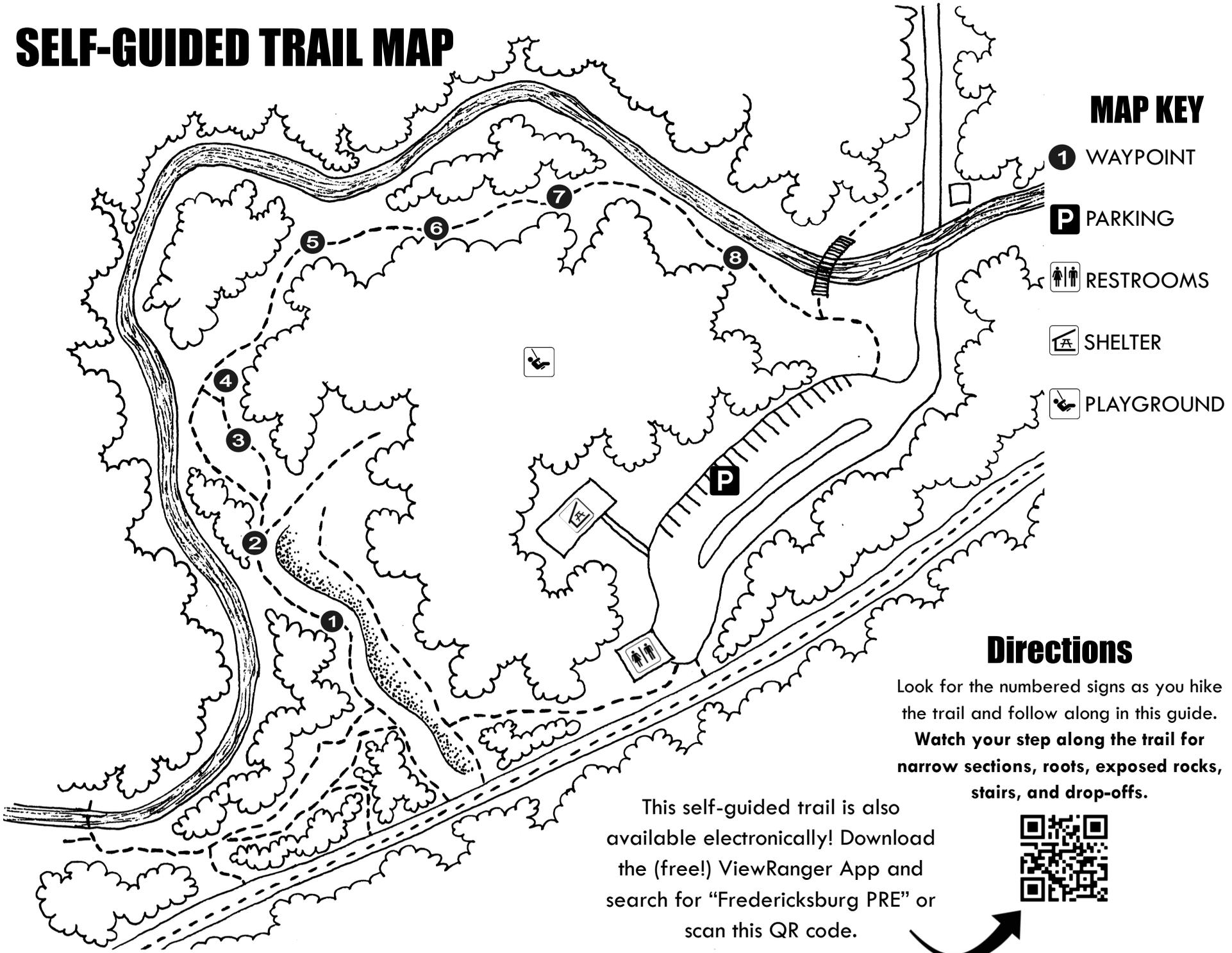


SELF-GUIDED TRAIL MAP



MAP KEY

- 1 WAYPOINT
- P PARKING
- RESTROOMS
- SHELTER
- PLAYGROUND

Directions

Look for the numbered signs as you hike the trail and follow along in this guide.

Watch your step along the trail for narrow sections, roots, exposed rocks, stairs, and drop-offs.

This self-guided trail is also available electronically! Download the (free!) ViewRanger App and search for "Fredericksburg PRE" or scan this QR code.



Alum Spring Park



SELF
GUIDED
TRAIL

1 Greenbrier Drive
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(540) 372-1086
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1 Sandstone Cliffs

This sandstone cliff is a geological formation about 100 million years old. Back when dinosaurs

roamed the earth, waters flowing from the western mountains toward the newly formed Atlantic carried tons and tons of weathered sediment. As the terrain flattened out, sediments were dropped from the moving waters in layer upon layer of sand and clay. Chemicals in the water cemented the sediments together into the sandstone you see today.

Water seeping from under the cliff, midway along the path, deposits a crystalline pink, white, or yellow layer of alum on the ground. Alum was used in Revolutionary times to preserve meat. At the far end of the cliff, the dripping of water forms a spring which gives the area its name.

Under these cliffs, hundreds of women and children took refuge under this rock ledge during the Civil War bombardment of the town in December 1862. Imagine what this would have been like for those Fredericksburg residents.

2 Hazel Run

Hazel Run stretches about seven miles from Spotsylvania County, through the City of Fredericksburg, until it empties into the Rappahannock River. Streams, like Hazel Run, have a current, meaning the water is constantly moving. This current is driven by gravity. The water comes from the source (headwaters) of the stream, smaller streams (tributaries), and runoff from the land nearby.

3 Stop, Look, and Listen

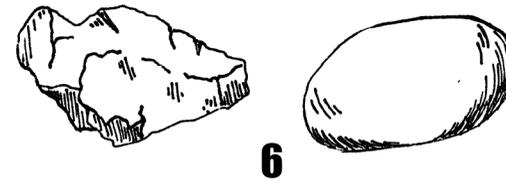
Take a minute to pause in this spot. Inhale and exhale. See how many different natural colors you can glimpse from here. Close your eyes for a full minute and count how many different sounds you can hear? Did you hear any birds or insects that you can identify?

4 Historic Ice House

This deep pit and a bit of stone wall are all that remain of a historic ice house. In the cold winter months, ice was harvested from Alum Spring mill pond and stored here between layers of sawdust and straw. It was sought as the clearest ice available to the townspeople of the 1800s. In the days before modern refrigeration, iceboxes were used to keep perishables and provide the coolant for an occasional summer treat. Records show the ice was typically sold for \$5 a share, entitling the holder to eight pounds a day for the season.

5 How has the land been changed by the stream?

As a stream flows through an area, the water wears away at the sediment and rocks in a process called erosion. Hazel run, and other streams, started out as a thin sheet of water following the slope of the ground but over time, the stream dug in a larger and larger channel. This is the same way river valleys form on a much larger scale.



6 How did all these smooth stones get here?

In the same way the land is getting cut through by the water in the stream, the sediments and rocks that are pulled from the banks have to go somewhere. As the rocks are tumbled by the water's current, they knock into each other. All of the uneven parts of the rocks get broken off and worn down until they are deposited in new locations (at the mouth of the stream or at a curve in the river bed like this one). This process of wearing down rocks is called weathering. The size and smoothness of rocks can give you an idea of how long they have been in the water or how old the stream is. Typically, the rocks at the mouths of rivers and streams are much smoother and smaller than those at the headwaters.

7 How old is the tree?

Did you know trees record history? They keep detailed records and can tell you a story as long as you know how to read them.



The way trees are shaped can tell you all about their lives. Here you can see where sycamore trees fell across the trail and had to be cut. This gives us the perfect opportunity to learn more about the life of the tree. Check out the cross-section of one of the trees. By counting the rings, you can determine the age of the tree but more than that, you can learn more about each of those years. Thicker rings can show years of the greatest growth and thin rings mark scarcer years.

8 Why does the water rush?

As you've walked along Hazel Run, you have probably noticed that it is still at some points and at other points it moves very quickly. Many factors can influence the speed of the water in a stream such as the shape of the channel, the volume of water, and the slope of the riverbed. At points of a stream where there are a lot of rough rocks, the water slows because of friction. After a big storm, the volume of water in the stream rises causing it to move faster. And at point when the stream is flowing down a steep slope, gravity is pulling the water down which creates greater velocity.