

# Ozark Mountain

Taney County

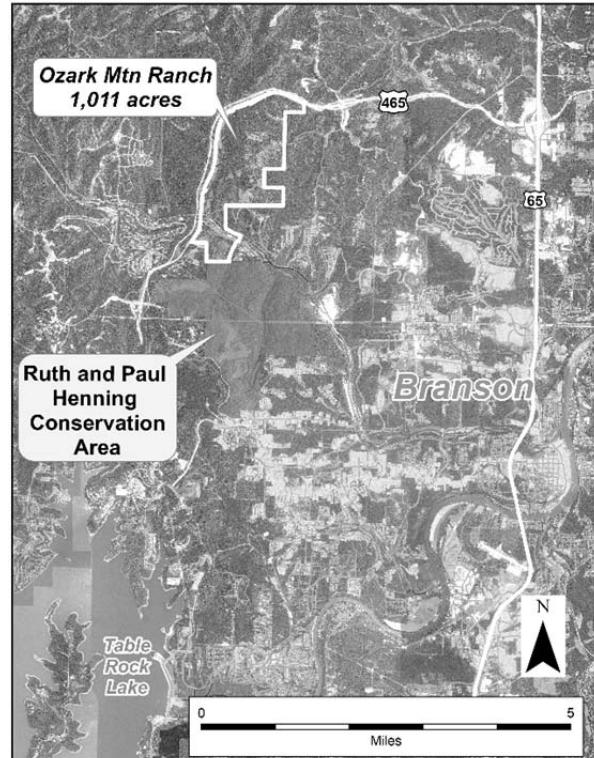
This property remains closed to the public.

## Location

The Ozark Mountain property is located in western Taney County on the north fringe of Branson's urban zone. It covers 1,011 acres and shares a border with the Ruth and Paul Henning Conservation Area. The East Fork Roark Creek traverses the property, seven miles upstream of Lake Taneycomo.

## Key Natural Attributes

- 1,011 acres
- 2.2-mile stretch of Roark Creek, upstream of Lake Taneycomo and the Branson urban zone
- Adjacent to the Ruth and Paul Henning Conservation Area
- Five bedrock-lined tributary streams, with several wet-weather waterfalls
- 430 acres of Ozark glades
- 400 acres of forest
- Five bald knobs
- Historic Garber one-room school house
- Wide views of the Branson area and surrounding Ozark Mountains
- Distinctive southwest Missouri plant and animal life



## General Description

The Ozark Mountain property features a distinctive southwest Missouri landscape of bald knobs, natural glades and woodlands traversed by 2.2 miles of Roark Creek, including much of the three-mile long East Fork Roark Creek. The property's vegetation reflects southwest Missouri's distinctive grasslands and glades natural heritage. More than 430 acres of dolomite glades cover the knobs, ridgetops and hillsides across the property. Together with the associated dolomite woodlands, the White River region's two most distinctive native ecosystems cover more than two-thirds of the property's 1,011 acres.

The woodlands and glades alongside Roark Creek and East Fork Roark Creek contribute to the water quality and aquatic habitat by providing shade, surface and groundwater inputs, and watershed protection in the rapidly urbanizing areas of Branson and surrounding Taney County landscape. They are also key natural resources from a wildlife, bird and native plant conservation perspective. Particularly important are the species that are unique to glades and are adapted specifically to the glade environments.

The Ozark Mountain property has been operated as a ranch for much of its recent history. There are about 120 acres of domestic pasture and hayfield, including the floodplain. Another 140 acres of open- or semi-open fields are covered predominantly by native Indiangrass, bluestem, and sideoats grama grasses. Some of the fields retain savanna-like stands of mature post oaks, while others are simply pastures or fields in various stages of brush reclamation.

## **Distinctive Plants and Wildlife**

Many of the plants and animals found on this property are unique to Missouri's glades or are distinctive to this region. Roadrunners, painted buntings, Bachman's sparrows, collared lizards, spotted skunks, long-tailed weasels, tarantulas, scorpions and ringed salamanders have all been known to occur, and some are common. Prickly pear cactus, American aloe, stenosiphon, pallifoxia, blue wild indigo, bottlebrush blazing star and poppy mallow give a strong Southern Plains character to the flora, while plants like yellow coneflower are native only to the Missouri Ozarks.

## **Roark Creek**

Roark Creek is the property's major aquatic feature, a Class C stream that feeds Lake Taneycomo through a 40-square mile watershed. Roark Creek's East Fork is an Ozark Creek natural community traversing 1.5 miles through the property to its confluence with the West Fork. Both are tree-lined wet-weather streams over bedrock and cobbles. Roark Creek below the forks is larger, also tree lined but flows through the hay fields of the former Ozark Mountain Ranch before exiting the property another mile downstream.