

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas  
94th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2023

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 534

By: Senator Crowell  
By: Representative Gonzales

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE "ARKANSAS ROCKS! MINING AND MINERAL TRAIL"; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

TO CREATE THE "ARKANSAS ROCKS! MINING AND MINERAL TRAIL".

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 27, Chapter 67, Subchapter 2, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

27-67-230. Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail – Legislative findings.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Arkansas has long been noted for its mineral wealth and beautiful rock formations;

(2) The geological diversity of the state provides residents and visitors with:

(A) Excellent recreational opportunities; and

(B) Natural scenic beauty;

(3) In particular, southwest Arkansas has received national and international recognition for its geological formations and unique localities, including without limitation:

(A) Crater of Diamonds State Park located in Murfreesboro, providing recreational opportunities for visitors to hike and to search for diamonds atop a diamond-bearing volcano known as the Prairie Creek Diatreme;



(B) Hot Springs National Park, set aside by the federal government to preserve as an area for recreation long before the concept of a national park existed, containing the intricate system of geothermal springs that formed and today maintain a historic and thriving resort community;

(C) Mount Ida, renowned for its abundance of quartz and known as the "Quartz Crystal Capital of the World";

(D) Jessieville, with its abundance of quartz and rock shops;

(E) Clay deposits in Malvern and Perla, producing high quality bricks from local clay and giving Malvern its nickname of "Brick Capital of the World";

(F) Novaculite formations found throughout the Ouachita Mountains, providing high-quality sharpening stones known as "Arkansas Stones";

(G) Vanadium deposits, used in many high-tech and defense applications;

(H) Deposits of other precious and semiprecious stones, renowned for their beauty, including without limitation:

(i) Diamond;

(ii) Quartz; and

(iii) Wavellite;

(I)(i) Cinnabar deposits, found in a belt running through Howard, Pike, and Clark counties.

(ii) The cinnabar mines near Murfreesboro provided much of the mercury fulminate used for ammunition primers and detonators in the weapons of the Allied troops during World War II;

(J) Brine deposits at a frontier post called Blakelytown, driving historic salt production, which developed into the thriving community of Arkadelphia; and

(K) The varied geography of the Ouachita Mountains and the rolling topography of the Western Gulf Coastal Plain, the two physiological regions making up southwest Arkansas;

(4) The geology of the southwest region has had profound effects on American culture through its influence on the development of local communities and the individuals who call them home, including without limitation:

(A) The historic development of spring training as a standard component of professional baseball in Hot Springs;

(B) The comedic talents of Lum and Abner from Waters, now Pine Ridge;

(C) The musical and television talents of Glen Campbell, who was proud to tell anyone and everyone throughout his career that he was from Delight;

(D) The country-western and gospel stylings of T. Texas Tyler of Mena;

(E) The folk singing tradition preserved by Emma Dusenbury of Mena, who:

(a) Contributed one hundred sixteen (116) songs to the Library of Congress; and

(b) Sang at the state centennial celebration in Little Rock;

(F) President William Jefferson Clinton, who grew up in Hot Springs;

(G) Actor Alan Ladd of Hot Springs; and

(H) Gangster and casino owner Owen Vincent "Owney" Madden of Hot Springs;

(5) Hiking trails, lakes, rivers, and other non-consumptive forms of recreation are in plentiful supply throughout the southwest region, including without limitation:

(A) Eagle Rock Loop, the longest hiking loop in Arkansas;

(B) The Ouachita National Recreation Trail;

(C) Five (5) state parks; and

(D) Three (3) International Mountain Biking Association Epic Trails; and

(6) The designation of the Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail is essential to preserve the region's history and natural beauty and to promote the economic development of cities in the Diamond Lakes region and in Polk County.

(b) The route along State Highway 301 from Crater of Diamonds State Park to its intersection with State Highway 27 in Murfreesboro; then along State Highway 27 through Kirby becoming U.S. Highway 70 to its intersection with State Highway 27 in Glenwood; then north on State Highway 27 through

Caddo Gap and Norman to its intersection with U.S. Highway 270 in Mount Ida; then west on U.S. Highway 270 to its intersection with State Highway 27; then north along to State Highway 27 to its intersection with State Highway 298 in Story; then east along State Highway 298 to its intersection with State Highway 7 south of Jessieville; then south along State Highway 7 through Blue Springs to its intersection with State Highway 192; then west along State Highway 192, West Strawberry Road, to its intersection with State Highway 227; then north along State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road, to Lake Ouachita State Park; picking up at the intersection of State Highway 192 and State Highway 227, then south along State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road, to its intersection with Mid America Boulevard; then along Mid America Boulevard to its intersection with State Highway 277; picking up at the intersection of State Highway 277 and its first intersection with Mid America Boulevard, then south along State Highway 227 to its intersection with U.S. Highway 270 in Piney; then east along U.S. Highway 270, Albert Pike Road becoming U.S. Highway 70 to the divergence of U.S. Highway 270 and U.S. Highway 70; picking up at the intersection of U.S. Highway 270 and State Highway 51 near Price, then along State Highway 51 through Butterfield becoming U.S. Highway 270, Oliver Lancaster Boulevard; then along U.S. Highway 270, Oliver Lancaster Boulevard, becoming Martin Luther King Road, becoming South Main Street to its intersection with West Page Avenue in Malvern; then south along West Page Avenue becoming U.S. Highway 67, through Arkadelphia and Gurdon to its intersection with State Highway 51, west of Beirne; then south along State Highway 51 through Beirne to its intersection with State Highway 53; then north along State Highway 53 to its intersection with State Highway 26 in Hollywood; then west along State Highway 26 through Antoine and Delight to its intersection with State Highway 27 in Murfreesboro; picking up at the intersection of State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road and U.S. Highway 270 in Piney, along U.S. Highway 270 through Mount Ida to its intersection with State Highway 88 in Pencil Bluff; then west along State Highway 88 through Pine Ridge to its intersection with U.S. Highway 71 near Mena; which will be known as the "Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail".

(c) The Arkansas Department of Transportation shall erect appropriate signs along the route described in subsection (b) of this section designating the route as the "Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail".

(d) If the Arkansas Department of Transportation does not have the

funds available to erect the signs required under subsection (c) of this section, the Arkansas Department of Transportation may accept and use gifts, grants, and donations received from private, public, and nonprofit sources, including without limitation a city street department or a county road department for:

(1) Acquiring and installing the signs required under subsection (c) of this section; and

(2) Maintaining, replacing, or reconstructing the signs required under subsection (c) of this section.