



USGS Survey Markers (Benchmarks)

A wide array of objects have been used to define boundaries, elevations, etc. - brass disks, rock carvings, glass bottles, clay pots - whatever is handy. During the 19th century, surveyors drilled holes in rock ledges or chiseled crosses/triangles into the rock.

Today, surveyors use metal disks marked with "legends". These disks may be embedded in rock ledges, concrete pillars or set atop pipes sunk in the ground. Disturbing one of these permanent markers is prohibited by state/federal law.

In the early 1900s, markers were used as part of triangulation surveys. The information gleaned from these surveys was used by cartographers to create maps.

The most familiar geodetic markers for hikers are tied to triangulation surveys. The triangulation station is stamped with a triangle. The station usually is surrounded by three reference disks, each of which is stamped with an arrow pointing to the main station.

A few of the triangulation survey markers along the BMT are:

- ◆ Bob Bald

- ◆ Brawley Mountain (two under the towers)
- ◆ Joyce-Kilmer (on Stratton Bald – (lat/long is 35 22' 16"N 83 59' 59"W – per Google Earth)
- ◆ Mount Sterling
- ◆ Rocky Mountain (along the side trail to the top of Rocky Mountain)
- ◆ Tipton Mountain (between HWY 60 and the Brawley Fire Tower)
- ◆ Unicoi Crest Parking Lot (50' from the BMT)

If you know of another triangulation marker along the trail, please advise of the location and include a picture if possible. Send to sharepictures@bmtaemail.org.



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