

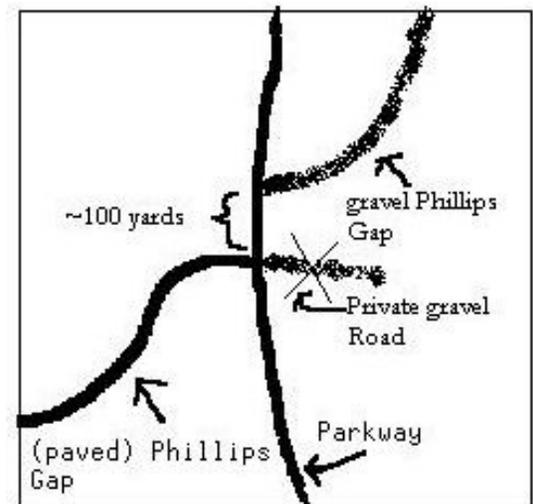
Directions to the Dark Sky Observatory (DSO)

The directions below are for driving from Boone. If you are coming from the Wilkesboro, Winston-Salem direction on 421 pick up the directions below at the Deep Gap traffic light. If coming from the south on 321, via Blowing Rock, go to Boone and get on 421. The 20-mile trip from Boone takes about a half-hour each way.

Astronomical domes are not heated so you should be dressed appropriately. All roads and most walkways are gravel or grass+dirt, so you should have appropriate, comfortable shoes. You may want to bring a flashlight of your own, although that is not necessary. There are restrooms in the Visitor Center, which also has heat and air conditioning. DSO-logo souvenir merchandise is also available.

Directions. to DSO:

Take highway 421 toward Deep Gap/Wilkesboro/Winston..Salem. You will drive about 10 miles and then just after the traffic light in Deep Gap, exit 421 right to get on the Blue Ridge Parkway going north (left at the Stop sign). After you cross over 421 on the bridge at you will drive about 7 miles until you turn right on Phillips Gap Road, which crosses the Parkway between the 269 and 270 mile markers. It is paved on the left and gravel on the right--the gravel road is ***NOT*** the one immediately across from the paved side nor just after the wooden "Phillips Gap" sign, but is about a hundred yards on down the Parkway and is marked with its name on the post of the stop sign (see sketch at right ->).



Travel about 1.5 miles on the gravel road until you come to Observatory Road on the left—it is marked with a green state road sign. There is a large observatory sign just before our gate on Observatory Rd. If you arrive before too early before the event time, the gate will still be locked and nobody likely there.

There will be some temporary blue and white signs directing the way to the Observatory, starting at the intersection of Phillips Gap Rd and the Parkway.

At the Observatory:

After you drive past the Lowe's House Observers' Quarters on your left. Go past the first group of domes (one or more of these may also be open), and weather tower, and follow the "Public Viewing" signs for about another 1,000 feet to the 32-inch telescope dome and attached Cline Visitor Center at the end of the road. Park as best as you can on the grass field around it.

Return Trip Directions:

Drive out our road (Observatory Rd.) and turn right onto the gravel Phillips Gap Road. Drive about 1.5 miles until you reach the stop sign. Turn left onto the Parkway and then drive about 7 miles until you exit onto 421 at the first exit, at Deep Gap. Take 421 back to Boone. If you are heading to Charlotte or Winston Salem, take 421 back in that direction. If the Parkway has snow on it you may want to jog across the Parkway and follow the "winter non-Parkway" route back to Deep Gap, as indicated on the map.

