

Strasburg



Signal Knob

Airway Beacon  
2706

AQUEDUCT

# Outdoor Guide

Shenandoah Valley  
Overlook

Meneka  
Peak

## to the



Blue Hole

Fort Valley  
Overlook

## Northern

Spring

## Shenandoah

Camp



## Valley

Elizabeth Furnace  
Recreational Area

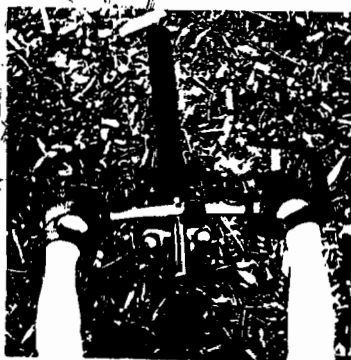
Amphitheater

Picnic

Campground

By Robert Drake

Shawl Gap



N

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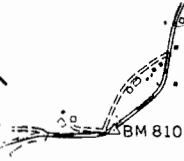
BM 810

Strasburg  
Passage

MOUNTAIN



TRAIL



B1  
64

***Outdoor Guide***  
*to the*  
***Northern Shenandoah***  
***Valley***

**Robert B. Drake**  
*1997*

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Outdoor Guide to the Northern Shenandoah Valley

1997 Robert Drake

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The author has made his best attempt to ensure that all information in this publication is accurate. However, conditions of trails, etc. can change over time due to severe storms or financial trouble. The author accepts no responsibility for injury, damage, inconvenience, or death on any of the included activities. When planning an outdoor trip, make sure you are properly prepared. BE PREPARED.

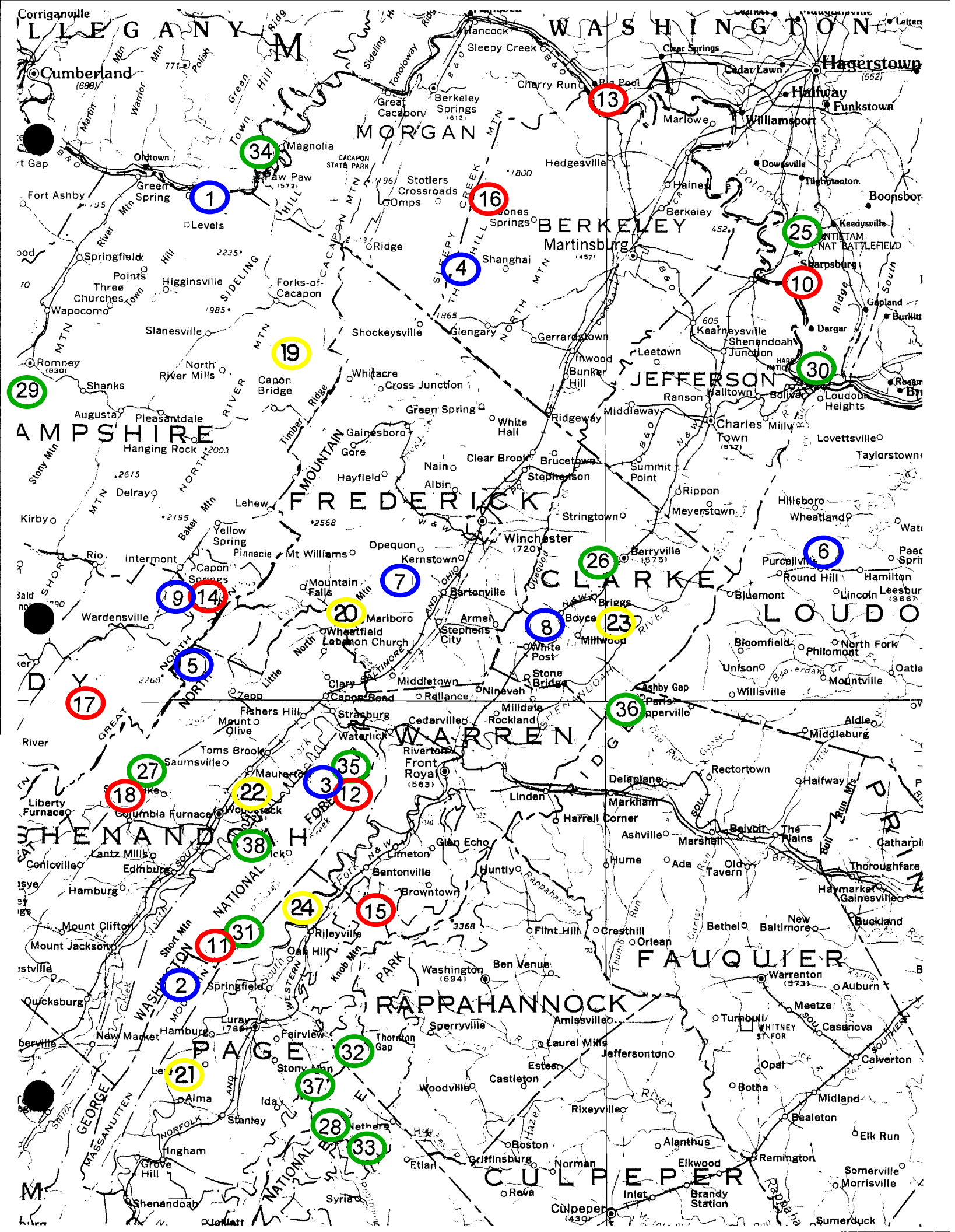
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**Map Key**

-  **Biking**
-  **Camping**
-  **Canoeing**
-  **Hiking/Backpacking**







# General Introduction

The Northern Shenandoah Valley provides the outdoor enthusiast and common citizen alike many outdoor adventures. The Northern Shenandoah Valley is home of some of the country's foremost camping, hiking, fishing and biking locations.

This guide will lead you through some of this area's best and favorite outdoor recreation activities. This book includes detailed information on camping, canoeing, road and mountain biking, hiking, backpacking, and fishing. It also includes lists of resources for finding detailed information on rock climbing, archery, shooting, and horseback riding.

The book is divided up into six different categories. The introductions to each category provide you with a brief summary on what to expect in that category and what supplies are needed to have a fun and successful time on the outings. In most categories there are six or more completed outing plans. These plans include an introduction, complete directions, a detailed description, and information on other maps and books that relate to that trip. At the end of each category there is a resource section. This includes addresses and phone numbers of local agencies, other suggested books that pertain to your topic, and local shops or dealers where equipment can be purchased and accurate information gathered. The general resources which are found at the rear of the book include sources which cover a broad range of outdoor activities.

I wrote this guide book for a Boy Scout Eagle Project, so I may earn the Eagle rank, the highest rank in Boy Scouts. It is extremely hard to find detailed information on all types of outdoor information in one book. This book includes information on all types of activities. The Boy Scouts of Troop 21, other scouts of various troops, and I recorded and compiled all the information in this book from firsthand experience. We sincerely hope that this guide will help you better enjoy and take advantage of the natural wonders and beauty which the Northern Shenandoah Valley has to offer. If you have any corrections or suggestions to make, I would be happy to receive them and make appropriate changes. You can reach me at 540-662-8044, [crdrake@mnsinc.com](mailto:crdrake@mnsinc.com), or you can write me at 170 McGuire Rd., Winchester VA 22603.

Boy Scouting is a very important part of many boys' lives and can better prepare them for careers and future well being. Over 92 million boys have at one time been involved in Boy Scouts. Of the original 214 astronauts, 130 of them were involved in scouting and 33 of them were Eagle Scouts. Approximately fifty percent of the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress participated in scouting in one way or another. I hope that scouting will better prepare me for my future as it has so many others.

## Biking

The Northern Shenandoah Valley provides a variety of different types and difficulties of road biking and mountain biking. Some of the road biking courses are the Winchester Quarter Century, the White Post bike trip, and the Washington & Old Dominion Scenic Trail. Some of the mountain biking trails are Duncan Hollow trail, Yellow Springs trail, Vances Cove, Sleepy Creek, Signal Knob, and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Scenic Trail. These hikes and trails range in difficulty so that bikers of all ages and skills can enjoy the beauty and variety of Northern Virginia's biking trails. Local bike shops are of great help in purchasing equipment, answering questions, and repairing your bike. If you are unsure about any aspect of your equipment or you want to explore further into the Northern Shenandoah Valley's biking adventures, they are great people to talk to. The bikes they sell come in a variety of different prices to fit all budgets.

When on the trail, there are a few things that you will need. Your bike must be in top shape. If you are worried about any part of it, you should check it out at a bike shop. The bike that you ride depends on the type of road or trail that you will ride on. On a trail that is listed as a mountain biking trail, you will need a bike that has knobby tires and a straight handle bar. On a road bike trip, you can either ride a mountain bike or a road bike. A road bike has very thin, smooth tires and has a curved handle bar. You should not ride a road bike on a mountain biking trail. It is a good idea to bring a backpack or a large fanny pack along if you do not have an equipment holder mounted on your bike. Things that you need to bring on all trips no matter what bike or surface you are riding on include a tire pump, a spare tube that will fit your rim, tire levers, a patch kit, at least one large bottle of water, a map of the area you are riding in case you become lost, and a first aid kit in case you have a wreck. Other suggested items include a flashlight in case your ride time is a little longer than planned, food that may include trail mix and energy bars, allen wrenches, adjustable wrench, duct tape, a compass, and a cycling computer. Getting your bike from where you live to where you are going to ride may require a bike rack if you own a small vehicle. After you return from a ride, it is always good to apply lubricant to the chain and other mechanical parts of your bike.

Keeping your bike in tip top shape will make it last longer and provide more fun for your biking trips. This may require yearly tune-ups at your local bicycle repair shop. All items listed above are available at local bike shops. Some Winchester bike clubs include the Winchester Wheelmen and The Single Track Society of Virginia Mountain Bike Club. These clubs are great if you are new to biking and want to ride with experienced riders.

# Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Biking

## Introduction

The 184 mile Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park towpath is an excellent trail for biking. There are numerous entry points to the towpath, and many camping areas are spaced along the entire length of the park for extended trips. Numerous historic sidetrips are easily accessible from the trail.

## Directions

A favorite trip of many riders is the trip from Cumberland, Maryland to the Paw Paw tunnel in West Virginia. Start from the intersection of Route 37 and Route 522 northwest of Winchester. Drive north on Route 522 to Route 127 just past the Summit. Turn left onto Route 127 and drive 11 miles and turn right onto Route 29 north. Drive 11 miles to Paw Paw. The Paw Paw tunnel is 0.7 miles on the right past a convenience store in Paw Paw. At the Maryland border, Route 29 becomes Route 51. Follow Route 51 about 30 minutes into Cumberland where it becomes Industrial Boulevard. Closely follow tourist information signs with the first sign being under the Route 40/40A underpass. The Chesapeake and Ohio office and museum is on the second floor of the old train building. The towpath starts about 100 yards from the building next to the railroad tracks.

## Description

The bike trip from Cumberland to Paw Paw is 28.5 miles. The trail is flat and hard-packed dirt or gravel. Due to intermittent flooding, the condition of the towpath varies considerably. Mountain bikes are perfect for this trail, but even a single speed bike with wider tires should perform well. Bicyclists must yield right-of-way to hikers and horses. Speed limit for bikers is 15 miles per hour. Ride on the right and in single file except to pass. Horns or other sound devices are required. Helmets are very important and are required on many sections of the trail. Be sure to bring an extra innertube and a pump, along with bike repair tools, on the trail. A towpath guidebook is indispensable for identifying historic sections and canal locks along the way. The Cumberland to Paw Paw section has many intact locks along the towpath and in many areas the canal has been "rewatered". Hundreds of turtles abound in these sections of the canal and fishermen lounge along the banks trying their luck. A magnificent aqueduct can be found at mile 162.3. Numerous access points from Route 51 make picking up stragglers fairly easy. Four camping areas can be found along this section of the canal.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see biking resources)

184 Miles of Adventure, excellent packable guidebook with maps and points of interest

Towpath Guide to the C&O Canal, by Thomas Hahn, detailed guide describing many historical features along the way

C&O Canal National Historical Park, Box 4, Sharpsburg, MD 21782, or phone 301-739-4200; Information center in Hancock, MD is a good source for brochures and books on the canal ; Williamsport Visitor Center 301-582-0813

# Duncan Hollow Mountain Biking

## Introduction

This is a tough trail that will challenge even the best mountain bikers. This trail is rocky and steep in certain sections, and some wet areas are quite difficult after a horse trail ride has been through.

## Directions

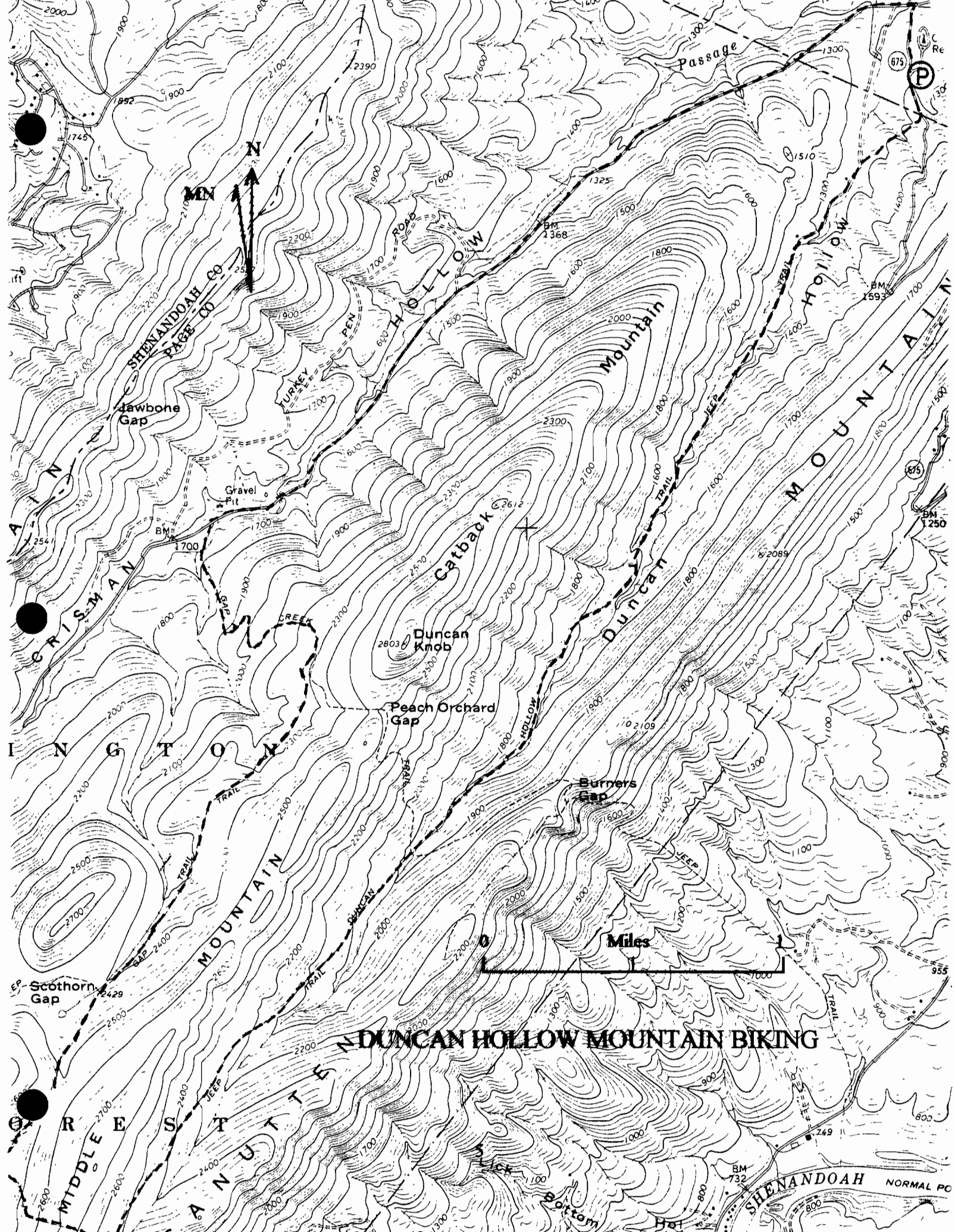
Starting at exit 307 in Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81 for 28 miles and exit at Edinburg (exit 279). Turn left onto Route 675 and drive east 0.8 miles to the intersection with Route 11. Turn left and drive north on Route 11 for 0.5 miles and turn right again onto Route 675. Drive 5.8 miles over Edinburg Gap into Fort Valley to King's Crossing. Bear right and continue on Route 675 for 3.5 miles to the entrance to Camp Roosevelt. Park in the picnic area lot. Total driving time is about 45 minutes.

## Description

The Duncan Hollow Trail (part of the orange blazed Massanutten East Trail) starts on Route 675 just east of the entrance to Camp Roosevelt behind the pullout for sewage disposal. There is a sign for the trail on Route 675. The trail begins as a single track, rolling trail that crosses many damp ditches. At about mile 0.3, the trail joins a service road (after about 3 miles you'll see the Gap Creek Trail off to the right). The early part of the trail is very rocky and can be **Extremely Muddy** after wet weather. After about 4.8 miles, you will travel down a steep rocky hill which is dangerous to the novice mountain biker. At the base of the hill, turn right on the Middle Mountain Trail and follow the yellow blazes for 0.6 miles to merge with the Scothorn Gap Trail. Veer right to hook up with this red blazed trail. Follow this trail for 1.4 miles and take a left hand turn onto Gap Creek Trail. This is a muddy, rocky trail that switches back and forth down the hill for 0.8 miles. Cross the stream and turn right onto Crismon Hollow Road (Forest Service Road 274) and follow for 3.1 miles. This hard packed gravel road is very pleasant and will go by quickly. Turn right on Route 675 and continue for 0.3 miles back to the dump station.

## Resources/Maps

Lee Ranger District Office 540-984-4101  
Map of Lee Ranger District  
Off The Beaten Track, Jim Parham



# Signal Knob Mountain Biking

## Introduction

Signal Knob is a popular mountain biking trip that can either be a fun out and back ride mainly on fire roads, or a severe challenge if the loop over the Bear Wallow Trail is chosen.

## Directions

From milepost 307 in Stephens City, drive 8.5 miles south on Interstate 81 to exit 298. Turn left on Route 11 and drive 2.0 miles into Strasburg. Turn left onto Route 55 (East King Street) and drive 5.1 miles to Route 678. Turn right and drive 4.4 miles to the parking area on the right just across the road from the Elizabeth Furnace Family Camping Area. About 6 car spaces are available.

## Description

Start out on Forest Road 1350. As you head up the road, take the right fork of the road and at mile 0.15 pass a gate across the road. This road is mainly sand, gravel, and dirt. The first 1.5 miles or so are very steep. At mile 3.37 the road ends and the Mud Hole Gap Trail starts. Go onto the trail and travel down the short, rocky, single track and bear right at the base of the hill. Mud Hole Gap Trail parallels the Little Passage Creek. Cross the stream at 3.7 miles. Follow the fairly tough jeep trail and the second stream crossing is at mile 3.75, and the third at mile 3.93. The fourth stream crossing is at mile 4.05. At mile 4.29 there is a Mud Hole Gap Trail sign. Cross the stream the last time and pass the gate at mile 4.3. Turn right onto Forest Road 66, which is blazed orange, and head up a gradual ascent. There are cabins that are closed to the public, immediately on the left. At mile 6.4 is a single track trail off to the left that is blazed orange that meets the road on the west side of the Strasburg Reservoir. You can take this trail but I found it almost impassable because of a stream and fallen trees. Continue up the road and at mile 6.7 reach the reservoir and cross the dam. After crossing the dam, bear right and travel up and down a tough single track which is blazed orange (You can stay on the road instead of crossing the dam which will hook up to the trail above the reservoir). At mile 7.29, turn right onto the Bear Wallow Trail. This trail has a well-marked entrance (some people may want to travel a 1.3 mile detour up to Signal Knob which has an elevation climb of 600 feet). Bear Wallow Trail is blue blazed (also part of the Big Blue/Tuscarora Trail) and **extremely rocky and steep**. The trail is very narrow and catching a pedal on a root is a possibility. There are rumors that some mountain bikers have made it to the top of the trail without walking (at mile 8.05). Continue down a rocky descent with many switchbacks and at mile 9.95 the Glass House Trail (white blazed) which is poorly marked bears off to the right. This trail intersects the forest road 1350 at 10.6 miles. Turn left at this road and continue back to the parking lot at 11.85 miles. Total time is about 3 hours. An alternate route instead of the Glass House Trail is to stay on Bear Wallow Trail to mile 10.75 and then turn right on a white blazed trail back to Forest Road 1350 and then continue left to the parking lot.

Resources/Maps ( for complete information see biking resources)

U.S. Forest Service, Lee Ranger District (540) 984-4101

Off the Beaten Track Volume 5 , Jim Parham

PATC Map G

USGS Strasburg Quadrangle





# Sleepy Creek Mountain Biking

## Introduction

This is a great mountain biking trip that is good for most skill levels. A few mountain bikers will be able to ride the whole trail without carrying their bikes over obstructions or dragging them up some severe, eroded inclines.

## Directions

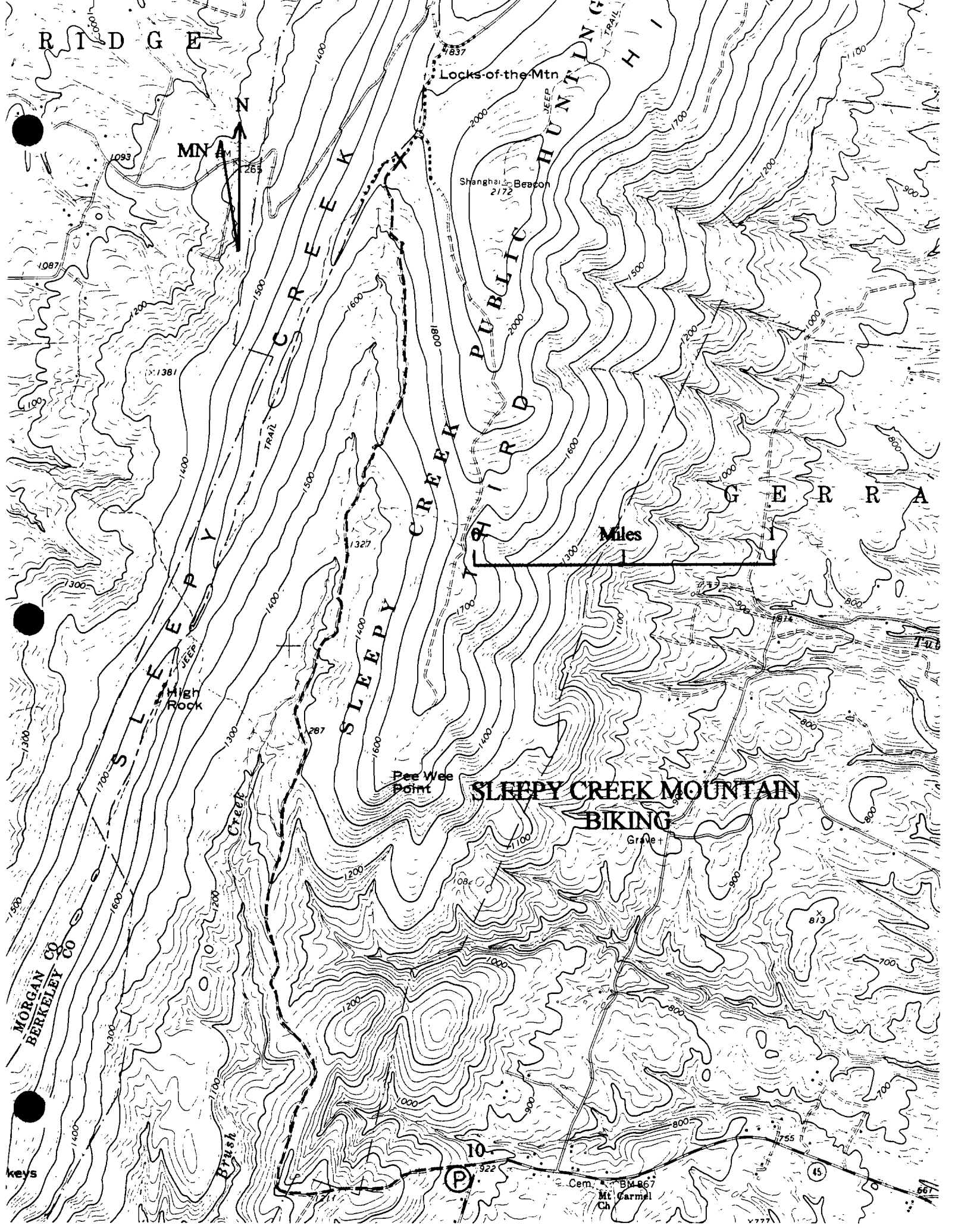
Starting at exit 317 on Interstate 81, drive north 11 miles to the Inwood exit (milepost 5). Turn left onto Route 51 and drive west 4.6 miles through Gerrardstown to the intersection of Route 45. Turn left onto Route 45 and drive 2.6 miles to Glengary. Drive another 2.4 miles on Route 45 and as the road turns to the south, there is a gravel road bearing to the right. Park at this intersection for the bike trip. Driving time is about 25 minutes.

## Description

After parking your car, travel up the dirt road (Big Blue/Tuscarora Trail) and at mile 0.4 finish a steep climb. At 0.6 miles, veer right at a fork in trail and at 0.7 miles, enter the Brush Creek Trail. The first wildlife area clearing is at mile 1.4 with subsequent clearings at 1.7, 2.0, and 2.4 miles. You will reach the first tank trap at mile 2.9. From mile 2.9 to 3.1 the trail is muddy and wet with another tank trap at mile 3.1. At mile 3.2, begin a painful ascent for 0.4 miles. At mile 4.1 begin another difficult, rocky, eroded ascent (if you return by this trail, be very careful in this section). At mile 4.4 pass another tank trap, reach a small clearing and end at a "T" intersection at mile 4.5. The left fork goes down an old jeep trail and the right continues on as the Big Blue/Tuscarora Trail. You have to make a decision now. You can head back the way you came, you can explore the old jeep trail, you can keep going to the Pee Wee Point Trail, or you can opt for a road trip back to your car. The old jeep trail to the left has a game clearing at mile 1.8 from which an abandoned, brush covered and obscure trail winds its way back to the Brush Creek Trail at game clearing number 34 (know how to follow your map and compass if you choose this trail). The old jeep trail eventually dead ends at mile 2.6 after passing numerous rock outcroppings. If you continue north after the "T" intersection, there is a right turn to the Pee Wee Point Trail in less than 0.1 miles. The jeep trail to Pee Wee Point is 2.4 miles to a dead end with nice views through the trees. Right after passing the Pee Wee Point Trail is the Wolf Spring Campground. If you continue another 0.1 miles past the campground, you will reach the road. From here you can take a 13 mile road section back to your car. Turn right and travel down a 4+ mile downhill ( You need good brakes if undertaking the road section). At the end of the hill, you will reach Shanghai, WV. Turn right onto State Road 7 until you reach Glengary, WV. Turn right onto Route 45 at the convenience store and travel another 2.4 miles back to the car.

## Resources (for complete details see biking resources)

The Big Blue, A Trail Guide, PATC  
PATC Map L  
USGS Glengary Quadrangle



RIDGE

MNA

Locks-of-the-Mtn

Shanghai Beacon  
2172

1381

High Rock

Pee Wee Point

SLEEPY CREEK MOUNTAIN

BIKING

Grave

MORGAN CO  
BERKELEY CO

keys

10  
P

Cem. BM 867  
Mt. Carmel  
Ch

15

667

# Vances Cove Mountain Biking

## Introduction

This is a great bike trip where you will encounter many different types of obstacles. Test your skills as you cross many rocky streams, climb your way over numerous fallen logs, and end with a wet, muddy trail that crosses a stream several times. This trip is recommended for intermediate to advanced mountain bikers.

## Directions

Start at the intersection of Route 11 South and Route 628 (Middle Road) in Winchester. Travel west on Route 628 for 12.7 miles. At the intersection of Route 628 and Route 55, turn west onto Route 55. Travel 9.6 miles on Route 55 and turn left onto Forest Road 93. The entrance to the road is very poorly marked (shortly after the turn, there is a small number 93 on the left of the forest road. The turn for this road is right before a series of curves in Route 55 that continue up the mountain. If you reach the top of the mountain, you have gone too far. Travel 2.7 miles down the dirt forest road and park at the "Y" in the road. Total driving time is about 35 minutes. An alternative approach would be to take Interstate 81 to exit 296 and drive on Route 55 west for 13.5 miles to the Forest Road 93 turnoff and then follow the rest of the directions above.

## Description

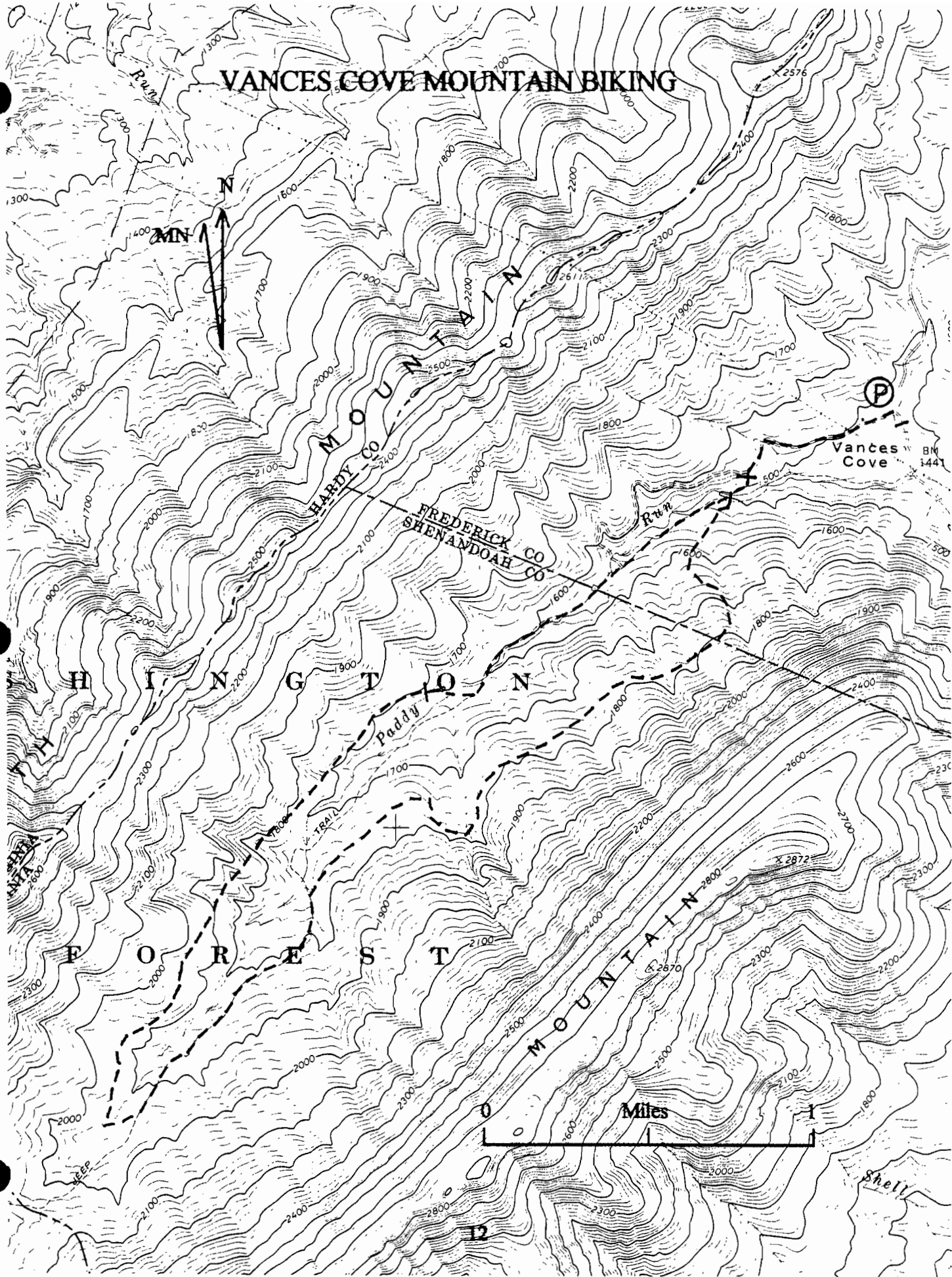
Start out the trip traveling up the right fork of the forest road for 0.4 miles and turn left down a gradual descent. Less than one tenth of a mile later, you will pass a gate and continue down the trail and over a concrete bridge. Immediately after the bridge, veer left up the hill. At 0.75 miles, take a sharp left (there may be an old culvert on the right). At 0.9 miles you will begin a very hard climb. There is a very technical uphill section at mile 2.1. At 2.46 miles, take a right at a "T" intersection. Ride past a game clearing and immediately turn left (mile 2.6). If you continue straight, the trail will take you back to the forest service road. There is a large group of tulip poplars blown down at mile 3.3 which have been cleared from the trail. At about mile 4.1 you will cross two tank traps (large dirt mounds) and take an immediate right turn. You will ride over several more tank traps as you descend. At about mile 5, you will reenter the forest road and begin a hair-raising descent. At about mile 6, you will pass a gate and switch to a gravel road. Immediately, you will take a right turn and then a quick left turn past another gate. Follow the yellow blazed trail that crosses Paddy Run several times and ends near the concrete bridge that you crossed near the beginning of the trip. Travel back to the forest road and continue to your vehicle. The total trip length is 8.14 miles. Expert riders might finish this trail in about 90 minutes and intermediate riders in about two hours.

## Maps/Resources (for complete information see biking resources)

PATC Map F- does not show all of the above parts of the Vances Cove Trail  
Sarah Zane Bicycle Company, 540-662-7654, great source for information about  
this trail and nearby rides

The Single Track Society of Virginia Mountain Bike Club, 540-662-7654

# VANCES COVE MOUNTAIN BIKING



# Washington & Old Dominion Trail

## Introduction

This is a paved bike trail that covers 45 miles from Purcellville to Arlington, Virginia. The trail follows an old W&OD railroad bed and is a perfect trail for all ages and skill levels. The western sections of the trail( Sterling and west) are fairly uncrowded, but as you move east ,they become more congested.

## Directions

From the intersection of Interstate 81 and Route 7, travel east on Route 7 for 21.9 miles to Purcellville. Take business Route 7 east for 2.4 miles and turn left at the first flashing lights onto Route 1604 (21<sup>st</sup> street). Then go 0.3 miles to the Purcellville railroad station. There is little or no parking available at the station. For easy weekend parking, stay on business Route 7 east for 0.5 miles, past the flashing light and turn left onto Maple Ave. (Seven Eleven, Amoco, and McDonalds are at the intersection). Follow Maple Ave. 0.5 miles to Loudoun Valley High School. There is parking at the school and across the street. The trail is at the end of the parking lot.

## Description

The trail is paved all the way to Arlington from Purcellville. There are many road crossings that need to be treated with caution. Along the trail in the western sections, there are a lot of wildlife and agricultural settings. You should carry plenty of water if you plan to do a large section of the trail. There is access for restrooms at approximately fifteen mile intervals. These restroom locations are marked clearly on the trail. An experienced cyclist could travel twelve or more miles in an hour. The trail is very well kept and is smooth and flat. The trail could easily be done in a day on a bike. The trail is also a favorite for rollerbladers. Hikers and horseback riders also find the trail exceptionally enjoyable and peaceful. Horses, then pedestrians, have the right of way unless otherwise posted. There are many cross-roads along the trail where you could be picked up or dropped off, find food or other facilities. There are few bicycle repair shops along the way so minor bike repair skills (such as repairing a flat tire)are a good idea.

## Resources\Maps (for complete information see biking resources)

Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park Trail Guide  
W&OD Trail office 703-729-0596

# Western Quarter Century Bike Ride

## Introduction

This intermediate 24.3 mile road trip consists of several large ascents and descents, and plenty of rural scenery.

## Directions

Starting at the intersection of Route 55 and Route 37 just west of Winchester, drive 0.7 miles towards downtown to the James Wood Middle School parking lot to begin the trip.

## Description

Travel west on Route 50 for 0.4 miles and turn left at the light onto Merrimans Lane. After 2.8 miles on Merrimans Lane, turn right at the flashing yellow lights onto Cedar Creek Grade (Route 622). As you ride over the hills, take a look at the picturesque orchards and cornfields with the mountains in the background. This rural, agricultural setting makes the trip more enjoyable. The Cedar Creek Grade road is fairly narrow but the surface quality is decent in most spots. After 4.2 miles on Cedar Creek Grade, the loop can be shortened by turning left onto Route 732 which cuts across to Middle Road. Turn left on Middle Road after traveling 8.6 miles on Cedar Creek Grade. Middle Road is wider and less winding than Cedar Creek Grade. **BE CAREFUL** as Middle Road is busier than Route 622 and the cars travel faster. After riding 4.4 miles on Middle Road, there is a small country store which has a pay phone and is also the only place to stop and get a cold drink. Turn left on Route 621 (Jones Road) after 7.3 miles on Middle Road. Travel 2.0 miles on Jones Road, cross the intersection onto Merrimans Lane and continue back to the parking lot. For a shorter trip which is 17.9 miles, park at the Stonebrook Soccer Field which is on Jones Road and ride the Cedar Creek Grade and Middle Road loop.

## Resources/Maps (see biking resources for complete information)

Winchester Wheelmen Ride Booklet

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer

# White Post Biking Trip

## Introduction

The White Post ride is an intermediate road trip that is 17.8 miles of various terrain. The ride starts off as flat terrain for the first half and ends in a ten mile series of many small hills. A multi-speed bike is needed on the trip, and you need to make sure to ask the people at White Post Restorations permission to park on their property. The trip takes approximately 2-3 hours.

## Directions

From the intersection of Route 50 east and Interstate 81(exit 313),take Route 50 east 7.0 miles and turn right onto Route 340. Take Route 340 1.8 miles to the intersection of Route 658. Take a left onto Route 658 and go 0.4 miles to White Post Restorations.

## Description

Start the biking trip at White Post Restorations. Turn right and travel down Route 658. You will reach the Norfolk and Western Railroad at mile 1.2. Turn left at the railroad intersection onto Route 658. At mile 3.3 turn left at Stone Bridge and continue on Route 658. After traveling 5.7 miles, turn left onto Route 661. At mile 7.0, turn left onto Route 624. Up until mile 9.2, the road is moderately flat. From mile 9.2 to mile 14.2 there are many rolling hills. At mile 14.2 you will turn left onto Route 626. Continue on for 0.9 miles and then turn right onto Route 628 and cross the railroad at approximately mile 17.1. At mile 17.7 turn left onto Route 658 ( a "white post" is in the middle of the intersection ). Continue 0.1 mile to White Post Restorations.

## Maps\Resources

Winchester Wheelmen Ride Booklet

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer

USGS Boyce Quadrangle

# Yellow Springs Mountain Biking

## Introduction

This is a circuit trip that combines mountain trails and quiet country roads. The ascents are grueling and the descents through the woods are wild and exhilarating.

## Directions

Starting at the intersection of Route 50 and Route 37, drive west from Winchester on Route 50 for 11.2 miles and turn left onto Route 259. Drive 13.5 miles and turn left onto Route 16 (Capon Springs Road). Drive 4.6 miles up the mountain through a resort tucked in the hillside and eventually on a dirt road. Turn right at a sign for Hawk onto Forest Service Road 502. Drive 1.2 miles and turn right at another sign for Hawk. Drive 0.6 miles down to the Hawk Recreation Area and park in the picnic area parking lot. Total driving time is about 45 minutes. When the bike ride is over, return the same way to Winchester, or turn right out of Hawk and then a left onto Route 55 to end up at Interstate 81.

## Description

Look for the blue blazes of the Big Blue Trail/Tuscarora Trail at the parking lot and start off to the right as you face the picnic area from the parking lot. You will continue on this trail for the first 3.8 miles of the ride. Remember that two blazes means that a turn is coming shortly. At 1.0 miles, pass an open meadow on your left. Cross a small stream at 1.4 miles and the trail begins to narrow. There is a short, steep descent at mile 1.5 with a left turn at the bottom before crossing the stream. At mile 2.1, cross Hawk Run. If there has been a lot of rain recently, you will get your feet wet or have to find a log to cross on. You will cross the stream twice more in the next 0.35 miles. Look for another double blaze soon after crossing the stream the third time at about mile 2.5. Turn right and begin an impossible climb for 0.2 miles up the mountain. Reach the top of the hill at mile 2.73 and the trail turns into a rutted jeep road. Bear right at mile 3.45 past some hunters' trailers and begin a severe descent at mile 3.56. At 3.8 miles end your descent, cross a small stream, and watch for a CHAIN across the trail. Immediately afterward, turn right onto Route 16 and begin your ascent. You will reach the right turn back to Hawk at mile 7.3 after a grueling, constant ascent of 3.3 miles. Pedal on Forest Road 502 back to the right turn to Hawk at mile 8.3. Look for the Big Blue coming in on the left as you ride down this last hill. If you want to log hop, take the Big Blue back to the parking lot, or just stay on the road to end the trip at mile 9.0 back at Hawk.

## Resources/Map (for complete information see biking resources)

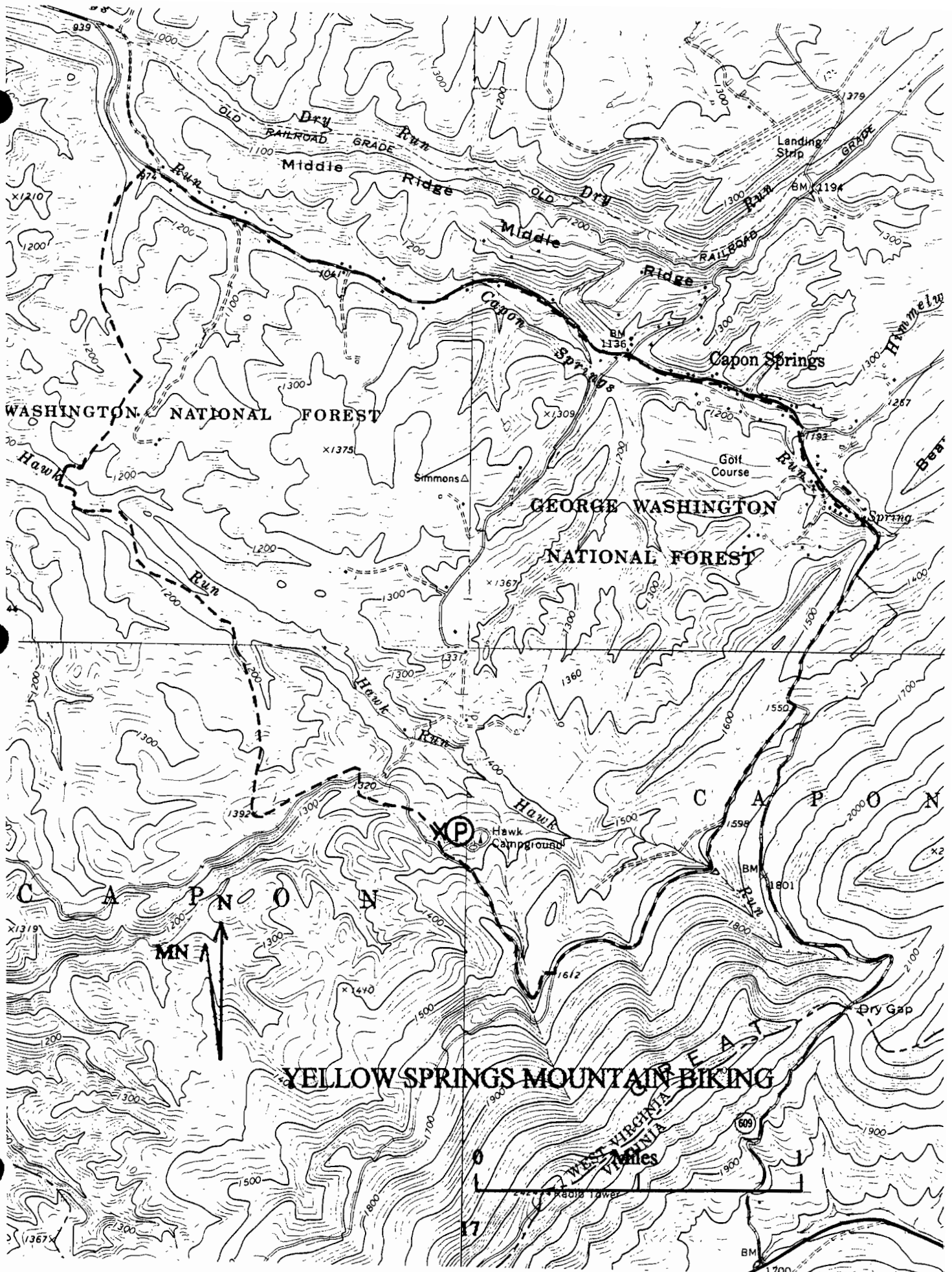
The Single Track Society of Virginia Mountain Bike Club 540-662-7654

Sarah Zane Bicycle Company 540-662-7654

PATC Map F, shows the entire trail system around Hawk campground

USGS Mountain Falls, Capon Springs, Yellow Springs, Wardensville Quadrangles





# Biking Resources

## **Biking Information Sources**

Blue Ridge Schwinn  
2228G Papermill Road  
Winchester, VA 22601  
540-662-1510

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park  
P.O. Box 4  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782  
301-739-4200

Jim Barnett Park  
1001 E Cork Street  
Winchester, VA 22601  
540-662-4946

*Unfortunately the mountain biking trail was devastated by city work crews in 1996*

Mount Vernon Trail  
National Park Service  
George Washington Memorial Parkway  
Turkey Run Park  
McLean, VA 22101  
703-285-2600

Sarah Zane Bicycle Company  
301 North Loudoun St.  
Winchester, VA 22601  
540-662-7654  
*Molly is the secretary of the Winchester Wheelmen*

The Single Track Society of Virginia  
Mountain Bike Club  
P.O. Box 381  
Winchester, VA 22604  
540-662-7654

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101

*Be sure to get a copy of the Inventory of Trails on the Lee Ranger District (Trails suitable for mountain biking are starred)*

Virginia Department of Transportation  
State Bicycle Coordinator  
1401 E. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23219  
804-371-4869, 800-835-1203  
*(call for state bicycling packet)*

Washington and Old Dominion Trail  
Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority  
5400 Ox Road  
Fairfax, VA 22039  
703-352-5900

West Virginia Travel Development Division  
1900 Washington St. E  
Dept. SV  
Charleston, WV 25305  
800-CALL-WVA  
*Lots of trail information throughout WVA*

Winchester Bicycle Center  
2040 S. Pleasant Valley Rd.  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-662-5744

Winchester Mountain Biking Club  
540-662-7654

Winchester Wheelmen  
P.O. Box 1695  
Winchester, VA 22604  
540-667-6703

### **Biking Books**

Mountain Bike Emergency Repair, Tim Toyoshima, The Mountaineers, 1011 SW Klickitat Way, Seattle, WA 98134, 1995

Mountain Bike Virginia, Scott Adams, Country Roads Press, 1201 Beachway Lane, Springfield, VA 22153, 1995

Off The Beaten Track, Volume 5: A Guide to Mountain Biking in Northern Virginia, Jim Parham, WMC Publishing, P.O. Box 158, Almond, NC 28702, 1995

184 Miles of Adventure, Hiker's Guide to the C & O Canal, Mason-Dixon Council Boy Scouts of America, 1200 Crestwood Drive, P.O. Box 2133, Hagerstown, MD 21742, 1970.

Towpath Guide to the C & O Canal, Thomas F. Hahn, American Canal & Transportation Center, Box 310, Shepherdstown, WV 25443, 1993.

Washing & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park Trail Guide, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, 5400 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039, 1996.

Winchester Wheelmen Ride Booklet, Winchester Wheelmen, P.O. Box 1695, Winchester, VA 22604, 1987

### **Commercial Biking Locations**

Massanutten Resort  
P.O. Box 1227  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801  
540-289-9441

Snowshoe Mountain Biking Center  
P.O. Box 10  
Snowshoe, WV 26209  
304-572-1000

Whitetail Ski Resort & Mountain Biking Center  
13805 Blairs Valley Road  
Mercersburg, PA 17236  
717-328-9400

Wintergreen Resort  
P.O. Box 706  
Wintergreen, VA 22958  
804-325-2200  
800-325-2200

## Camping

The Northern Shenandoah Valley is known for its great variety in outdoor camping adventures. There are many types of camping, ranging from primitive backpacking to tailgate camping. Some of the camping adventures described in this guide are Antietam Creek Campground, Camp Roosevelt Recreation Area, Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area, Fort Frederick State Park, Hawk Campground, Shenandoah National Park, Sleepy Creek Recreation Area, Trout Pond Recreation Area, and Wolf Gap Recreation Area. All of these camping areas range in size and distance from Winchester. Camping supplies are available for purchase at many different area merchants. These stores can also provide you with detailed information on different camping areas that you may be interested in.

To be a successful camper you need to be aware of the weather, environment, and necessary supplies. If you are interested in camping in the spring, summer, fall, and occasionally in the early and late winter, you might want to invest in a three season tent. For those who want to do more winter camping, a four season tent would be best. A sleeping bag is the most important piece of camping gear. They come in a variety of temperature ratings from 40 degrees to -50 degrees. Choose one that would best fit the nighttime temperatures when you will be camping recognizing that many manufacturers tend to over estimate how warm their bags will keep you. Sleeping bag liners are also made so you can put one inside your summer bag and turn it into a light winter camping bag. A sleeping pad or mattress is also a good investment to make. It adds to overall comfort and in cold weather insulates your body from the cold ground. Cooking when camping also requires some attention. A propane stove is great for heating water for coffee or hot chocolate and for cooking dinner. A small backpacking stove is perfect for no trace camping in wilderness areas where open fires are often prohibited and scar the landscape. If you are tailgate camping, a propane lantern is helpful for lighting a larger area than a flashlight. When you are sleeping in cold weather, it is a good idea to put on an insulating winter hat since you lose most of your body heat through your head. Wearing clothes like synthetic long underwear can also increase your warmth when camping on a cold night. A synthetic fleece jacket makes a great insulating layer in cold weather. An outer shell garment is good on chilly fall and spring mornings.

All the supplies above can be purchased either at a local outdoor store or by mail order. The local outdoor stores can be of great help when trying to pick out the right materials for your camping adventures. Remember, the outdoors are part of the Northern Shenandoah Valley's treasures, so try to leave little evidence of your presence. Always pick up and properly dispose of your trash so the next generation can enjoy this treasure as much as you do.

# Antietam Creek Campground

## Introduction

This is a peaceful tent campground on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal close to historic Antietam Creek Battlefield.

## Directions

Starting at exit 317, drive north 17.9 miles on Interstate 81. Just before reaching Martinsburg, WV take exit 12 onto Route 9/Route 45 going east. Stay on Route 9 for 7.1 miles and at Kearneysville take a left onto Route 480. Drive north 6 miles on Route 480 through Shepherdstown and take the bridge over the Potomac River. Immediately after crossing the river (Route 480 becomes Maryland Route 34) go up a hill and take the first right onto Canal Road (look for historic markers for Blackford Ford and Packhorse Ford). Drive 0.2 miles down to a parking area by the C&O Canal, turn to the left and note sign for Antietam Creek Campground in three miles. Stay on Canal Road paralleling the canal until you reach the campground. There is a ranger station on the left at the campsite.

## Description

This C&O Canal campground is for tent camping only. Camping equipment must be carried across the canal from the parking lot to the camping area. No reservations are taken. You might want to call ahead to make sure the campground is open as it is sometimes flooded. This is a generally quiet campground that receives fair amounts of traffic on and off the towpath. Water is available from mid April through mid November. Nearby attractions include the Antietam National Battlefield, the Potomac River, the C&O Canal Visitors Center at Williamsport, MD, and the C&O Canal Towpath. The Rohrbach Group Campground administered by the Antietam National Battlefield is also nearby.

## Resources/Maps ( for complete details see camping resources)

C&O Canal National Historic Park 301-739-4200; Williamsport Visitor Center - 301-582-0813

184 Miles of Adventure, Hikers Guide to the C&O Canal

Printed directions to the campground are available at the Antietam Battlefield Visitor Center. 301-432-5124

# Camp Roosevelt Recreation Area

## Introduction

A once roaring CCC camp, Camp Roosevelt is a perfect place for a quiet family campout.

## Directions

Starting at exit 307 (Stephens City), drive south on Interstate 81 for 28 miles and turn off at exit 279 (Edinburg). Turn left onto Route 675 and drive 0.8 mile to the intersection with Route 11. Turn left on Route 11 and drive 0.5 miles and turn right again onto Route 675. Drive 5.8 miles over Edinburg Gap into Fort Valley and to King's Crossing. Bear right and continue 3.5 miles on Route 675 to the entrance to Camp Roosevelt. Total driving time is about 45 minutes.

## Description

Camp Roosevelt was the first Civilian Conservation Corps camp established in 1933. During the Great Depression, the Forest Service and the U.S. Army formed the CCC to have unemployed men help maintain the country's natural resources. Many of the roads and trails in Fort Valley were built and maintained by the CCC. As you arrive at the camp, you will see the campsites to your left, and down the road on the right is the picnic area. The camping area has 10 sites to choose from. They each have a tent site, picnic table and fire ring with grill. The camping area has a bath house and one water spigot. The sites are on a first come first serve basis and require an overnight camping fee. The picnic area is great for a family picnic, whether you're staying overnight or just for the afternoon. You will find great hikes and mountain biking trails in the area.

## Resources/Maps

USFS Lee Ranger District Office 540-984-4101

Map of Lee Ranger District

USGS Hamburg Quadrangle

*See Kennedy Peak hike on page 66*

*See map for Camp Roosevelt on page 67*

*See nearby Duncan Hollow mountain biking trip on page 4*

# Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area

## Introduction

Elizabeth Furnace is a quiet United States Forest Service recreation area with camping, hiking, biking, and fishing opportunities within yards of each other.

## Directions

From milepost 307 at Stephens City, drive 8.5 miles on Interstate 81 to exit 298. Turn left on Route 11 and drive 2.0 miles into Strasburg. Turn left on Route 55 (East King Street), and drive 5.1 miles to Route 678. Turn right and drive 3.6 miles to the group camping area, 3.9 miles to the day use/picnic area, or 4.4 miles to the family camping area. Total driving time is about 30 minutes.

## Description

The Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area is located at the northern end of the beautiful Fort Valley, bounded on each side by the towering East and West Massanutten Ranges. Passage Creek babbles (and sometimes rumbles) through this narrow terminus of the Massanutten mountains on its way to the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. The group camping area is available by reservation only and provides a rustic setting that still has close-by road access. The family camping area has 30 non-reservation sites bordering on Passage Creek with a chilly swimming hole. Nearby, a restored cabin is run by the camp hosts as an information center and small bookstore. The day use/picnic area features a historic pig iron furnace with two short interpretative walks. An excellent 10 mile hike up Signal Knob starts just north of the group camping area, and a rigorous mountain biking loop trail begins just across the road from the family camping area. Passage Creek is intermittently stocked with trout for those handy with rod and reel. A fishing license, appropriate trout stamp, and National Forest stamp are required.

## Resources/Maps (see camping resources for complete information)

USFS Lee Ranger District Office 540-984-4101

Guide to Massanutten Mountain, PATC

Lee Ranger District map

PATC Map G

USGS Strasburg Quadrangle

*See Signal Knob Hike on page 74*

*See Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area map on page 75*

*See Signal Knob mountain biking on page 6*



# Fort Frederick State Park

## Introduction

Fort Frederick is a state park located in the historic Cumberland Valley in Maryland that offers many activities for families and group outings.

## Directions

From Interstate 81 in Winchester (mile marker 317), drive north 34 miles to junction with Interstate 70 (Maryland exit #4-Hancock). Take Interstate 70 west toward Hancock for 13 miles. Take exit 12 (Big Pool exit). Turn left onto Route 56 east. Go one mile. Entrance to park is on the right. Driving time from Winchester is about 45-50 minutes.

## Description

Fort Frederick is a Maryland state park that offers a historic stone fort, camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, and boating. The stone fort was a cornerstone of Maryland's defense during the French and Indian War. It was rebuilt by the state of Maryland and the Civilian Conservation Corps and now hosts many historic events each year. Touring the massive fort and exploring the restored barracks provides a fun and informative family adventure.

The campground borders on the Potomac River and has 28 family sites with picnic tables, grills, and unimproved restrooms. The adjacent group camping area has four sites available by reservation.

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal trail passes through the park and is an excellent path for hiking and biking. The park has other trails including the Beaver Pond Trail and the Plantation Nature Trail. Fishing along the Potomac and at Big Pool adjacent to the camping area is usually productive. A Maryland fishing license is required for anyone over 15 years old. Canoes and boats with electric motors can be launched at Big Pool from a ramp in the park. Rental boats are available during the summer months at the concession shop across from the fort. The park also has frequent special activities throughout the year.

## Resources/Maps

Fort Frederick State Park, 11100 Fort Frederick Road, Big Pool, MD 21711,  
301-842-2155.

C & O Canal Visitor Center, Williamsport, MD 301-582-0813

# Hawk Campground

## Introduction

Hawk is a quiet campground hidden away in the George Washington National Forest just across the border in West Virginia.

## Directions

Drive south on Interstate 81 from Stephens City (milepost 307) for 10.6 miles and turn right at the Route 55/Strasburg exit(milepost 296). Travel west 15.1 miles on Route 55 and turn right on a gravel road (this turn is very poorly marked so watch carefully but there is a sign for the George Washington National Forest shortly after the turn). Continue on this dusty gravel road for 2.9 miles, then turn left on another gravel road. After 0.7 miles, turn right into the recreation area. Total driving time is about 45 minutes.

## Description

Hawk Campground is located fairly close to Winchester. It is situated on the west side of Great North Mountain about one mile inside West Virginia in the George Washington National Forest. As you drive into the recreation area, there is a picnic area, group camping area, and a family camping area. The group area is well maintained with several pea gravel tent spots. It has a rock fire pit with metal cooking grills surrounded by a few rows of wooden benches and four picnic tables. There is a primitive outhouse for both sexes. In the family camping area there are 15 sites each with a metal fire ring and metal cooking grill. These sites are first come, first serve and no fee is required. These sites will accommodate RVs but there is no electrical or water hookup. The outhouse is like that in the group camping area. The family camping area does have one lever action water pump. There is an assortment of trails (including the Big Blue/Tuscarora Trail) at the Hawk Recreation Area and good hunting in season. Civilization seems far away while camping at this location.

## Resources/Maps (see camping resources for complete information)

The Big Blue, A Trail Guide, PATC

GWNF Lee Ranger District Headquarters 540-984-4101

Map of Lee Ranger District

USGS Mountain Falls, Capon Springs, Yellow Springs, Wardensville Quadrangles

PATC Map F, Great North Mountain - North Half.

*See Yellow Springs mountain biking on page 16*

*See page 17 of this Guide for map of Hawk area*

# Shenandoah National Park

## Introduction

The Shenandoah National Park is home to some of the east's most beautiful forests and wildlife. Dedicated in 1936, many people have been able to enjoy the natural wonders of Shenandoah National Park.

## Directions

To reach the northern entrance of the park, from the Stephens City exit (milepost 307), drive south on Interstate 81 for 6.1 miles and turn onto Interstate 66 east. Drive 7 miles to the Front Royal exit and turn right onto Route 522 south. Drive 2.0 miles and turn left at the light. One half mile later Route 522 and Route 340 split; stay on Route 340 through Front Royal. The Shenandoah National Park entrance is 2.8 miles later. To get to the central entrance to the park, follow the directions above until you reach the Route 340/522 split in Front Royal. Then turn left onto Route 522 and drive 16.2 miles to the intersection of Route 522 and Route 211. Turn right onto Route 522/211 and drive 8.0 miles to Sperryville. At the intersection with Route 231 in Sperryville, continue straight on Route 211 and reach the entrance to the Shenandoah National Park 7.0 miles later.

## Description

The word Shenandoah is thought to be derived from an Indian word " daughter of the stars ". The park was authorized by congress in 1926. The government started to raise money to purchase 4000 tracts of land from the local landowners and the state of Virginia. President Franklin Roosevelt dedicated the park in 1936 and members of the Civilian Conservation Corps built the many trails, shelters, and roads that were needed. The park now is nearly 200,000 acres and about 75 miles long. The park started as wornout farm land and has since been in the process of reverting back to the original pristine forest. The park is best known for its trails, wildlife, and its beautiful waterfalls. Many different outdoor activities can be enjoyed in the Shenandoah National Park. These include horseback riding; camping, hiking, backpacking, and driving the scenic Skyline Drive. There are four different campgrounds in the national park. They are Big Meadows campground (mile 51.9), Lewis Mountain campground (mile 57.5), Loft Mountain campground (mile 79.5), and Matthew's Arm campground (mile 22.2). Matthew's Arm campground is currently closed due to storm damage and funding problems, but is rumored to be reopening in 1998. Lewis Mountain and Loft Mountain campgrounds are on a first come- first serve basis with no reservations and cost \$14 to use. To make a reservation at Big Meadows campground you must call 1-800-365-CAMP with a fee of \$16. Fires in the park are to be kept in designated areas only. Also in the park are many backcountry shelters which usually are along the Appalachian Trail. These shelters are for use only by long distance Appalachian Trail hikers and are maintained by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. For backpacking overnight in the park, back country permits are needed. These are available at park headquarters, visitor centers, and park entrances. To get additional information on backcountry shelters, contact the PATC. There are over 500 miles of trails in the park that include Old Rag, White Oak Canyon, and the Appalachian

Trail. The Skyline Drive that is one of the most beautiful scenic roads in the country, runs through these green mountains. Many short hikes branch off of this road.

#### Maps\Resources

Emergency Number 540-999-0911

Information Number 540-999-3500(*prerecorded general info. about the park*)

PATC Number 703-242-0693

Shenandoah National Park

Route 4, Box 348

Luray, VA 22835-9051

*See the Fishing section on page 45 of this guide for more information on trout fishing in the park.*

*See pages 58, 68, 70, and 78 of this guide for good hikes in the park.*

# Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area

## Introduction

Sleepy Creek is a nearby, but “remote”, public area set aside by the state of West Virginia for hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, and camping.

## Directions

Starting from the north intersection of Route 37 and Interstate 81 (milepost 317), drive 11 miles north to the Inwood exit (milepost 5). Turn left onto Route 51 and drive west 4.6 miles through Gerrardstown to the intersection with Route 45. Turn left onto Route 45 and drive 2.6 miles to Glengary (Sleepy Creek sign near turn in Glengary). Turn right onto Backcreek Tomahawk Road (Route 7 at the Glengary Post Office and General Store). Drive 4.6 miles and turn left onto Hampshire Grade Road (Route 7/13 with small brown hunting/fishing emblems on left side of road at turn). At 2.3 miles pass a sign for the Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area. One mile later, turn right onto a rough gravel road where there is a sign for the shooting range. The shooting range is 1.5 miles down this road. 2.1 miles past the shooting range turnoff, turn left. 1.3 miles along this road is the camper’s self-service registration area. One tenth of a mile later, the road splits with campgrounds on the left and right along the lake.

## Description

There are 4 camping areas at the Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area. These are the Lower Campground, Piney Point Campground, Myers Place Campground, and the Upper Campground. The last 3 are all on the Sleepy Creek Lake with the Lower Campground a few hundred yards from the lake. Each campground has a central hand-powered water pump, privy, gravel tent pads, and fire rings. The fee is \$5 for groups of 6 or less and fifty cents for each additional person. The campsites on the water are perfect for family camping and canoeing. The trees of the Lower Campground have been decimated by pine beetles. Other activities at this area include hiking and biking. The Big Blue/Tuscarora Trail passes right by the lake and there are numerous other trails and fire roads for exploring. The shooting range has strict rules posted. Don’t come to Sleepy Creek during hunting season if you’re not hunting.

## Resource/Maps

West Virginia Dept. of Natural Resources  
Sleepy Creek Public Hunting Area  
304-754-3855

The Big Blue, A Trail Guide, PATC  
PATC- Map L

USGS Glengary and Stotlers Crossroads Quadrangles  
*See Sleepy Creek mountain biking on page 9*

# Trout Pond Recreation Area

## Introduction

Trout Pond Recreation Area is a picturesque site with many outdoor opportunities for swimming, camping, boating, hiking and picnicking.

## Directions

Drive south from Stephens City (exit 307) on interstate 81. Exit at milepost 296 and drive west on Route 55. Drive 19.3 miles on Route 55 to the intersection with Route 259 in West Virginia. Continue driving 0.7 miles on Route 55/259 into Wardensville and turn left on Trout Pond Road (WV 23/10). After 5.2 miles, make a sharp right turn and continue another 6.1 miles to Forest Service Road 500 and drive a mile to the entrance station. The trip takes about 40 minutes after you exit the interstate.

## Description

Camping- Trout Pond Recreation Area has 50 campsites with fire rings and picnic tables. 14 campsites have electric hook-ups. The campground has hot showers and restrooms. Reservations may be made for the campsites by calling 1-800-280-CAMP.

Day Use- Trout Pond has numerous facilities for outdoor recreation. There is a beach with swimming area and bathhouse. There is a boat launch for electric powered boats and sailboats. Gasoline powered boats are not allowed on the lake or pond. Life jackets are required for each passenger. There are 30 picnic sites and two group picnic areas which will accommodate up to 100 people. The group sites must be reserved in advance by calling 1-800-280-CAMP. A day use fee is charged for persons over age six.

Fishing- A West Virginia fishing license, Trout Stamp, and National Forest Stamp are required except for persons younger than age 16. Trout Pond covers two acres and is the only natural lake in West Virginia. Rockcliff Lake covers 17 acres. Four trout per day can be taken from either the pond or lake and a total of six trout a day total from pond, lake or stream.

Hiking- Trout Pond has trails ranging in length from 0.4 miles to 7.8 miles. A trail map is available from the U.S. Forest Service.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see camping resources)

George Washington National Forest ,Lee Ranger District, 109 Molineau Road,  
Edinburg, VA 22824, 540-984-4101

National Forest Recreation Reservations 1-800-280-CAMP

USGS Wolf Gap and Baker Quadrangles

# Wolf Gap Recreation Area

## Introduction

Wolf Gap is a small, somewhat isolated, rustic camping area run by the United States Forest Service along the Virginia-West Virginia border.

## Directions

Drive south on Interstate 81 from Stephens City (exit 307). Turn right off the interstate at exit 283 onto Route 42 and drive southwest. Drive 5.6 miles on Route 42 and turn right onto Route 675 (sign for Wolf Gap at turn). After 3.1 miles, Route 675 bears to the right (follow sign for Wolf Gap) and the road narrows and ascends in a remote mountain setting. The Wolf Gap Recreation Area is reached after driving 6.4 miles on Route 675. Driving time from Stephens City is about 45 minutes.

## Description

The Wolf Gap campground is nestled in the Great North Mountain range on the Virginia- West Virginia border. There are ten campsites, each with fire ring, tent platform, picnic table, and lantern post. There is a central water pump and modern outhouse. Campers are required to self-register at the campground. A picnic area is adjacent to the campground. There is a small parking area for picnickers and hikers. Hiking trails lead from the campground to Mill Mountain, Big Schloss and Tibbet Knob trails.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see camping resources)

United States Forest Service, Lee Ranger District Office 540-984-4101

PATC Map F

USGS Wolf Gap Quadrangle

*See Big Schloss hike on page 56*

*See map of Wolf Gap area on page 57*

# Camping Resources

## General Camping Information Sources

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park  
P.O. Box 4  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782  
301-739-4200

*Offers many outdoor activities including hiking, biking, and camping all in a historic setting*

Monongahela National Forest  
200 Sycamore Street  
Elkins, WV 26241-3962  
304-636-1800

*the closest real wilderness to our area, make sure you get information and maps before you visit this destination*

Mountain Trails  
212 East Cork Street  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-667-0030

*excellent resource for equipment, advice, and outdoor literature covering the entire region*

Potomac Ranger District Office  
304-257-4488

Shenandoah National Park  
Route 4, Box 348  
Luray, VA 22835-9051  
540-999-3500

*scenic views; fall colors; the AT winds its way along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains; numerous side trails for all levels of hikers; camping of all varieties*

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101

Massanutten Visitors Center  
*miles of trails for hiking and biking, rustic campgrounds, recreation without the crowds of the Skyline Drive; make sure you get the map of the Lee Ranger District and the inventory of trails in this section of the George Washington National Forest*



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
203 Governor Street, Suite 302  
Richmond, VA 23219  
1-800-933-PARK (camping and cabin reservations, weekdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. )  
804-786-1712 (general information)  
*information on Virginia State Parks*

Virginia Tourism Corporation  
901 East Byrd Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
*call for a copy of Virginia Outdoors, a good free guide to outdoor activities in VA (800-827-3325) and Virginia Is For Lovers Travel Guide(800-VISIT VA, 804-786-1919, [www.VIRGINIA.org](http://www.VIRGINIA.org))*

West Virginia Travel Development Division  
1900 Washington Street E  
Dept. SV  
Charleston, WV 25305  
800-CALL-WVA  
*provides very useful information and brochures on all outdoor activities in wild and wonderful West Virginia*

### **Camping Books**

Virginia, A Guide to Backcountry Travel & Adventure, James Bannon, Out There Press, P.O. Box 1175, Asheville, NC 28802  
*an extensive, general guide to regions and types of outdoor activities in the state; does not describe specific hikes or rides, useful for general planning of trips*

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer, DeLorme Mapping Company, P.O. Box 298, Freeport, Maine 04032, 1995.  
*Most complete listing of all major and back roads in Virginia-don't leave home without it!*

Virginia Outdoor Activity Guide, W. Lynn Seldon, Country Roads Press, P.O. Box 286, Lower Main St., Castine, Maine 04421  
*overview guide that tends to focus on commercial outfitters*

## Camping Locations

Backcountry Camping along AT or Big Blue Trail or Dolly Sods

### C & O Canal Trail

Antietam Creek- historic battlefield nearby, primitive sites along the river

Fort Frederick - historic fort, hiking, biking and fishing

Paw Paw Tunnel- open field with portable toilets with ready access to tunnel and C&O trail

### George Washington National Forest, Lee Ranger District

Trout Pond- 50 sites, reservations 800-280-CAMP

Elizabeth Furnace- 30 family sites- no reservations; 3 group camping sites that require reservations, primitive toilets

Camp Roosevelt- 10 sites, no reservations, primitive toilets

Hawk- 15 family sites and group camping, no reservations, primitive toilets

Wolf Gap- 10 rustic campsites with primitive toilets

High Cliff Canoe Camp- accessible by car or canoe along west side of South Fork of Shenandoah River

### Private Campgrounds

Battle of Cedar Creek Campground, P.O. Box 341, Middletown, VA 22645  
540-869-1888

Candy Hill Campground, 200 Ward Ave., Winchester, VA 22602 540-662-8010

The Cove Campground, 980 Cove Road, Gore, VA 22637 540-858-2882

Front Royal/Skyline Drive KOA Campground, P.O. Box 274, Front Royal, VA  
22630 800-248-0828.

Log Cabin Campground, 2058 Morgan Frederick Grade, Cross Junction, VA  
22625 540-888-7910

### Shenandoah National Park

Matthews Arms - mile 22.2; closed until ? 1998

Big Meadows - mile 51.3; reservations Destinet 800-365-CAMP

Lewis Mountain - mile 57.5; first come, first served

Loft Mountain - mile 79.5; first come, first served

PATC Shelters and Cabins - contact PATC

Backcountry Camping - backcountry permit required from any visitor's center, park entrance stations, or park headquarters.

### Sky Meadows State Park

Primitive hike-in sites

### Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area

4 small campgrounds near the lake all with primitive toilets

# Canoeing

The Northern Shenandoah Valley has some excellent and diverse canoeable creeks and rivers. Among these are the North and South Forks of the Shenandoah River, Cedar Creek, and the Cacapon River. In this section I will describe many great trips for all age and skill levels. Also, I will provide you with additional resources to contact in case you need more detailed information. Along with having great rivers, the Northern Shenandoah Valley has many helpful and knowledgeable canoe outfitters to help you get the necessary equipment you need. Many canoe outfitters sell used canoes or have canoe auctions, usually at the end of the canoeing season. You can also purchase nearly indestructible paddles and high quality life preservers.

The following are some of the items that you may need on and off the river besides your canoe, paddles, and life preservers. An important piece of equipment on the river is the dry bag. This special bag seals out all water, even if submersed, to keep your wallet, cellular phone, or extra clothes dry. These come in a variety of sizes to fit your needs. An essential item for transporting your canoe to the river is a sturdy canoe rack. These racks can be purchased at some canoe outfitters and are a good investment if you are serious about canoeing. Ratchet straps are the easiest way to hold down your canoe when you're driving to and from the river. Trash bags always come in handy if your canoe takes a spill and you don't want your car to become wet from all your dirty gear. Water shoes or sandals are essential because the bottom of the rivers are jagged and slippery. A cellular phone works on most of these rivers in case of an emergency. Before starting your journey on the water, make sure all your belongings are secured to the boat so you don't lose your gear in the river. Fishing gear is a must for the canoeist who likes to fish as he or she travels along the river. Don't forget to purchase a fishing license if you have not already done so. All of these rivers and creeks are great for fly and spin fishing for a variety of fish.

Before setting out on the river, you can find out what the water level is at various places along the Shenandoah and Potomac River Basins by calling (703) 260-0305. Canoeing on the South Fork of the Shenandoah is not recommended when the gauge reading in Front Royal is over 4 feet. Make sure that each person in a canoe has either a class I, II, III, or V life preserver. Class IV throwable life preservers are not acceptable. Stay well away from dams or low water bridges as underestimating the hydraulic force of water can result in tragedy. Remember, we all need to help preserve our wonderful rivers by not leaving any trash in or near the river. We want our children's children to enjoy the rivers as much we do.

# Cacapon River Canoe Trip

## Introduction

The Cacapon River provides a great paddling experience close to Winchester. The trip has plenty of whitewater rapids and many spectacular cliff outcroppings along the banks.

## Length and Difficulty

This 10 mile paddle takes 3 to 5 hours depending on the flow. It has many class I rapids and three class II-III ledges. It is recommended that you be an advanced beginner or an intermediate canoeist before undertaking this trip.

## Directions

Beginning at the intersection of Route 37 and Route 50 west of Winchester, drive west on Route 50 for 17.2 miles. After you cross the metal bridge at Capon Bridge, WV, turn right on Route 45\20 (Springfield Glade Road). Drive 3.2 miles on Springfield Grade Road to a boat landing on the right called Sportsman Public Landing (C-18). After dropping off the canoes, shuttle cars to the C-17 boat ramp. To do this, continue driving on Route 45\20 for 8.5 miles and then turn right on Route 29 (29 will become Route 127 after about 5 miles). Drive 6.5 miles to the C-17 boat ramp, on the left after you cross the bridge. The total round trip shuttle takes about 40 minutes. After canoeing, return to Winchester by driving 9.3 miles on Route 127 to Route 522. Turn south on Route 522 and drive 12 miles to Winchester.

## Description

The put-in spot at the parking area is a small dirt ramp leading to the water. Across the river is a high loose rock face that is dangerous for climbing. Soon after the put-in, there are stairstep riffles that will abound throughout the whole trip. On some of these small ledges you may have to get out and push depending on the water level. About 0.5 miles down the river you will reach the first of three major ledges. There are many ways to go over it, but your best bet for remaining dry is to find a gap in the ledge with enough flow to prevent getting stuck and then swamped. Immediately past the ledge, there is a great rope swing on the left that extends out over the river. The river then continues winding its way through the high cliffs that tower above the numerous riffles and deep holes that are good for swimming. Around six to seven miles down the river you will reach the second and third major ledges. These ledges may have to be scouted for the best route depending on the water level. Castle Rock provides an imposing sight on the left just past the last major ledge. The rapids start to become smaller but more plentiful as you come to the end of your journey. About one-half mile from the end of the trip there are small cliffs on the right that have tiny caves at the water line that have been carved out by the water. The take-out is a parking area on the right, under the Route 127 bridge.

Resources/Maps (see canoeing resources for complete information )

Appalachian Whitewater Volume II, Ed Grove

USGS Maps - Largent and Capon Bridge Quadrangle

# Cedar Creek Canoe Trip

## Introduction

This is a quiet, breathtaking paddle along Cedar Creek, famous for the Civil War battle which started with a Confederate predawn crossing of this creek.

## Length and Difficulty

The paddle is 10.5 miles with rapids up to Class II. It is recommended for Advanced Beginners and Intermediate canoeists.

## Directions

From Interstate 81 in Stephens City (milepost 307), drive south 4.7 miles to the Middletown exit. Turn right onto Reliance Road and go 0.3 miles and turn south on Route 11. Drive 3.0 miles and just before a bridge crosses over Cedar Creek, turn left and drive down between the two bridges to a gravel parking area. Leave a car here at the takeout. Turn back on Route 11 south and drive 0.8 miles and turn right onto Route 629. Drive 2.2 miles on Route 629 and turn right on Route 622. Route 622 (Minebank Road) immediately turns right. Drive 3 miles on this road and turn right onto Route 627. Drive 0.6 miles on Route 627 and turn left onto Route 622. Drive 0.5 miles and turn right onto Route 628. Drive 0.1 miles and turn left onto Route 622. Drive 1.1 miles and turn left onto Route 623. Drive 0.7 miles on Route 623 and cross the low-water bridge and park at the small pull-out on the left (room for 1 to 2 cars). Round trip shuttle is about 30 minutes.

## Description

This section of Cedar Creek is interspersed with numerous riffles and rapids with alternating quiet, deep pools hiding smallmouth bass. As you approach Route 628, you will weave your way through towering boulders and encounter a waterfall along the left bank (Hurricane Fran in September of '96 decimated this waterfall). The creek is bordered by high cliffs at times and is shaded with mature forest throughout this section. After passing under the Route 622 bridge (there is access here), you will eventually reach an old low-water bridge. We would strongly advise against paddling under this structure (exposed rebar), and would portage over its cobblestone bed. Soon afterward, you will reach a series of small caves (Panther Caves) on the left bank ready to be explored. The end of the trip comes as you pass under Route 11 and take out on the left bank.. This trip can usually only be made in the spring and early June. However, this section has been canoed in August following a very wet summer.

## Resources/Maps(see canoeing resources for complete information)

Virginia Whitewater by Roger Corbett

USGS Map - Middletown Quadrangle

# Newport to Luray Canoeing on the Shenandoah River

## Introduction

This is an excellent, quiet paddle on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River

## Length and Difficulty

9.0 miles with Class 1 and 2 rapids

## Directions

Start at mile post 307 heading south on Interstate 81 from Stephens City. Drive 42 miles and exit Interstate 81 at Newmarket exit 264, and turn left on Route 211 east. Follow the Route 211 east signs through Newmarket driving towards Luray. (4.4 miles on Route 211 is the Massanutten National Forest Visitor Center ). After 7.1 miles on Route 211, turn south on Route 340. After 3.6 miles on Route 340 you will turn left at a public boat landing. Look for a small Virginia Game Commission sign on the left. Total driving time is one hour. To leave a shuttle car at the take out, return to Route 340 and drive north 3.6 miles on Route 340 and turn right on Route 211 east towards Luray. Drive 2.7 miles and just after you cross the bridge going over the Shenandoah River, turn left onto the access road and park under the bridge at the Whitehouse Virginia Game Commission Boat Landing.

## Description

This section of the Shenandoah is interspersed with frequent rapids and some ledges. After passing under the Route 340 bridge about an hour into the trip, there are few summer homes or camps to change the mood of solitude. The banks are mostly tree lined and frequent rock formations add to the landscape. We were unable to find the remains of the old mill described in Roger Corbett's book, Virginia Whitewater. Fish are plentiful in this section of the river. This is an easy 4 hour paddle with time for picnicking and canoe battles. Many of the rapids are washed out when the water is up to the 2 foot level at the 211 take-out bridge.

## Resources/Maps(see canoeing resources for complete information)

Virginia Whitewater by Roger Corbett

Blue Ridge Voyages, Vol. 4 by Mataracia and Cecil

Virginia Atlas & Gazetteer

PATC Maps G and H

# North Fork of the Shenandoah Canoeing

## Introduction

The North Fork of the Shenandoah provides a quiet paddling experience with the Massanutten mountains as a backdrop for smallmouth bass fishing

## Length and Difficulty

The paddle is approximately 4 miles through alternating riffles and quiet pools with only Class I rapids.

## Directions

From Interstate 81 in Stephens City (milepost 307), drive south 15.6 miles to the Toms Brook exit (milepost 291.5). Drive east on Route 651 for 0.8 miles. Turn south on Route 11 and drive 4.9 miles to Route 663. Turn left and drive 0.5 miles to the low water bridge. Park one vehicle along the road before bridge. Return to Route 11 and proceed 1.2 miles south. Turn left on Route 665 (tiny route sign is not visible from the north, turn is across from Woodstock Garage and next to an old school). Drive 1.4 miles and turn left onto Route 758. Drive 0.4 miles to Burnshire Lane. A small parking area is available. Carry your canoe down to the river just below the dam. Take out at the end of the trip should be on the extreme right of the river at the low water bridge.

## Description

The North Fork of the Shenandoah is a more peaceful river compared to the South Fork. No canoe companies are located here as the river is not consistently canoeable throughout the summer due to low water. Vacation homes and trailers are much less common than on the South Fork. The best time for paddling along this stream is spring and early summer. The river in this section is alternating riffles and pools with a long section of quiet water at the end of the paddle. Fishing for smallmouth bass is particularly good in the riffles and where deep ledges are found. The scenery is exquisite with the Massanutten Mountains rising to the east, and the river is flanked with hardwood forests along most of the route. Few No Trespassing signs are visible (hopefully canoeists in the future will continue to pick up their trash and not start campfires).

## Resources/Maps (see canoeing resources for complete information)

PATC Map G

For fishing information, contact Harry Murray at Murray's Fly Shop (fly fishing heaven!) in Edinburg, VA 540-984-4212. Good fishing information also available at Beaver's Bait & Tackle on Rt. 7 east in Winchester, VA 540-665-0611.



# Route 50 to Route 7 Shenandoah Canoeing

## Introduction

This is a leisurely paddle close to Winchester with easy access points that would be fun for the whole family.

## Length and Difficulty

15 miles of mainly quiet water with class I rapids

## Directions

Starting at Exit 313 on Interstate 81 (at the intersection with Route 50), drive east 12.2 miles on Route 50. Turn left on Route 622 and drive 0.3 miles to the Virginia Game Commission parking area under the bridge (15 minutes driving time). To shuttle a vehicle to the takeout, return to Route 50 and drive west 0.3 miles and turn right on Route 723. Drive 0.1 miles and turn right onto Route 621. Drive on Route 621 for 5.8 miles to the Lockes Landing Virginia Game Commission parking area (a good takeout spot if you are planning a shorter trip). Continue on Route 621 for 4.7 miles to the intersection with Route 7. Turn right and drive 2.4 miles to Route 606 just across the Shenandoah River bridge. Turn right and drive 0.1 miles to the Virginia Game Commission parking area under the bridge (total round trip shuttle time is one hour).

## Description

This 15 mile section of the Shenandoah is ideal for a leisurely day of paddling, fishing, and watching nature as you drift slowly downstream. Soon after the put-in, you must make a decision about which side of Burwell Island to explore (the longest island in the Shenandoah). In low water, the right channel can be a bit slow, but is otherwise an intimate, quiet ride. There are numerous class I riffles early in the trip with slower water predominating toward the end of the paddle. For this reason, many people choose to end their trip at Lockes Landing about ten miles from the Route 50 put-in. The scenery is typical of the Shenandoah River with farms along the banks and the Blue Ridge Mountains dominating the eastern views. Canoeing time is about four hours to Lockes Landing and two hours further to the take-out at Route 7. Fishing for smallmouth and sunfish is generally good except if there is an overgrowth of aquatic grass in August. Take your fishing license as the game warden has been known to paddle this section of the river.

## Resources/Maps (see canoeing resources for complete information)

Virginia Whitewater by Roger Corbett

Blue Ridge Voyages, Vol. 4 by Mataria and Cecil

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer

PATC Map 8

# South Fork of the Shenandoah Canoeing

## Introduction

This is a great paddle for combining fishing and canoeing on the South Fork.

## Length and Difficulty

7.5 miles with only Class 1 rapids.

## Directions

From the Stephens City exit (milepost 307) drive south on Interstate 81 for 6.1 miles and turn onto Interstate 66 east. Drive 7.0 miles to the Front Royal exit and turn right onto Route 522 south. Drive 2.0 miles and turn left at the light. 0.5 miles later Route 522 and Route 340 split; stay on Route 340 through Front Royal. You will pass the Shenandoah National Park entrance 1.8 miles later. Continue down Route 340 for 13.9 miles and turn right onto Route 663. Drive 1.2 miles and park a shuttle car at the takeout access (parking is very limited). Return to Route 340 and drive 3.4 miles to Route 661. Turn right and drive 1.5 miles to the river. Driving time is about 55 minutes.

## Description

This 7.5 mile section of the river particularly represents the best of what the South Fork of the Shenandoah has to offer the canoeist/fisherman. The Massanutten Mountain Range looms around each bend in the river; ledges and pools alternate, begging to be fished; winding side channels invite exploration under the overhanging sycamore trees; cow pastures and vacation camps do not overwhelm the view. This section of the river is well-marked with milepost numbers along the left bank in trees. As you approach milepost 10, you will begin to see the overlapping ridges of the Massanutten Range that dominate this part of the valley. At the same time, the river structure changes to ledges, pools and riffles teeming with fish. The next two miles of the river may have the best fishing along the South Fork. There is a National Forest campground along the left bank just before milepost 13. The river divides into three channels at milepost 15, each of which looks inviting to explore. The takeout is along the right bank at milepost 16. Canoe time is about 3 hours with a fair amount of fishing. Gauge reading of around 2.5 feet at Front Royal is fine for canoeing this section of the river.

## Resources/Maps (see canoeing resources for complete information)

Virginia Whitewater, by Roger Corbett

Blue Ridge Voyages, Vol. 4, by Matacia and Cecil

Virginia Atlas & Gazetteer

PATC Map G

# Canoeing Resources

## **Canoeing Books and Maps**

An Illustrated Canoe Log of The Shenandoah River, Louis J. Mataria and Owen S. Cecil, III, MATA CIA, P.O. Box 32, Oakton, VA 22124, 1974.

Appalachian Whitewater, Volume II: The Central Mountains, Ed Grove, Bill Kirby, Charles Walbridge, Ward Eister, Paul Davidson and Dirk Davidson, Menasha Ridge Press, 3169 Cahaba Heights Road, Birmingham, AL 35243, 1987.

Fly Fishing for Smallmouth Bass, Harry Murray, Lyons & Burford Publishers, 31 West 21 Street, New York, NY 10010, 1989.

“Shenandoah River Float Trips”, Virginia Wildlife, Education Division of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, 4010 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230 August, 1987

Virginia Atlas & Gazetteer, DeLorme Mapping Company, P.O. Box 298, Freeport, Maine 04032, 1995.

Virginia Whitewater, H. Rodger Corbett, The Seneca Press, Rockville, Maryland, 1988.

## **Preservation of the Shenandoah River:**

Friends of the Shenandoah River, P.O. Box 410, Front Royal, VA 22630, 540-636-4948

## **Canoe rental companies on the South Fork of the Shenandoah:**

Down River Canoe Company, P.O. Box 10, (884 Indian Hollow Road), Bentonville, VA 22610, 800-338-1963, 540-635-5526.

Front Royal Canoe Company, P.O. Box 473, Front Royal, VA 22630, 800-270-8808, 540-635-5440.

River Rental Outfitters, 2047 Rocky Hollow Rd., Bentonville, VA 22610, 800-RAPIDS-1; 540-635-5050.

Shenandoah River Outfitters, 6502 S. Page Valley Road, Luray, VA 22835, 540-743-4159, 800-6CANOE2

## **Canoe rental companies near Harpers Ferry:**

River & Trail Outfitters, 604 Valley Road, Knoxville, MD 21758, 301-695-5177.

Blue Ridge Outfitters, P.O. Box 750, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425, 304-725-3444.

River Riders, Inc., Rt. 3, Box 1260, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425, 800-326-7238.

**Rafting Guidebooks**

Raft West Virginia- Excellent guide to rafting opportunities throughout West Virginia which has some of the best white water in the East, 800-CALL-WVA.

**Professional Organizations**

Virginia Professional Paddlesports Association, 352 Shenandoah Heights Road, Front Royal, VA 22630.

## Fishing

The Northern Shenandoah Valley is acclaimed for its wonderful fishing locations. Among these are Lake Frederick, Sherando Lake, Clearbrook Lake, Wilkins Lake, native trout streams, stocked trout streams, and the Shenandoah River. These fishing areas will meet the needs of anyone, even if you are very new to fishing. This area has many knowledgeable fishing equipment dealers that can answer any questions you have about tackle or fishing locations. There are many ways to fish in this area; either by standing on the bank, canoeing, wading, or float fishing from small watercraft.

There are two basic types of fishing equipment. One type is fly fishing which uses a light pole and heavy fly line which is used to cast a light fly. This fly is frequently tied(hand made) by the fisherman to imitate an aquatic insect. A fly rod also includes a small reel used only for bringing in large fish and for storing line. The other type of fishing is spin and bait fishing. This method uses the weight of the lure to propel the light monofilament line through the air. When fishing at Wilkins Lake, Sherando Lake, or Clearbrook Lake, fishing from the bank is very popular. If you decide to fish one of the Northern Shenandoah's many trout streams, waders are recommended because of the very cool water which trout need for survival. Waders come in two lengths; waist high which will hook to your belt, and chest high which looks like overalls that come up to your chest. On small trout streams, waist high waders are recommended unless after a big rain or in early spring. On the Shenandoah rivers, a canoe, small boat or float tube is recommended if you wish to cover a large area. Canoes can be rented from the numerous river outfitters for use on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. Float tubes that are meant for fishing cannot be rented but can be purchased at fishing supply stores or through a mail order catalog.

The fishing areas in the Northern Shenandoah Valley are loved by outdoorsmen and fishermen alike. Help keep these streams, lakes and rivers clean from trash and pollution.

# Lake Frederick, Wilkins Lake, Sherando, and Clearbrook Lakes

## **Lake Frederick**

Lake Frederick is a 117 acre man-made lake in the southern portion of Frederick County. To get there take exit 307 off Interstate 81 and travel 4.5 miles east on Route 277 (Fairfax Pike). Travel south on Route 522/340 for 1.4 miles, turn right, and travel 0.5 miles to the lake. Fishing from the bank can be very productive. It is accessible from the dam area

as well as the large fishing dock. A short trail leads around the sides of the lake from the dam and is suitable for the more agile angler. The best fishing will be from boat or canoe as many of the coves are still very difficult to access on foot. Two man-made cover areas have been sunk into place and these are marked with white pylons. The upper end of the lake has excellent cover as many of the trees are still standing in the water. Bass and Bluegill are both plentiful. The lake is also stocked with Walleye and is open for fishing 24 hours a day.

## **Wilkins Lake**

Stocked seven times a year, fishing this lake can be very productive. Many large trout and bass have been caught from this large pond. Wilkins Lake is great for beginners because of its uncluttered banks and ease of catching fish after a recent stocking. Located near Shenandoah University and the Winchester/Frederick County Visitor Center, this pond is convenient for fishing when the urge strikes.

## **Sherando Lake, Clearbrook Lake**

Both of these lakes are located in Frederick County, Virginia. Sherando Lake is located east of Stephens City on Route 277 within Sherando Park. Clearbrook Park is located on Route 11, north of Winchester. Clearbrook Lake is stocked 7 times a year. Clearbrook lake can also be fished by paddle boat which can be rented at the lake. Sherando Lake is not stocked with trout.

# Fishing on the Shenandoah River

## **South Fork**

The South Fork of the Shenandoah River is home to a variety of fish. They include smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, rock bass, channel catfish, redbreasted sunfish, and bluegill. Largemouth bass are most often found in deep pools made by dams, whereas smallmouth abound throughout the river in the numerous riffles and pools, and along ledges. This river can be fished in many different ways. You can wade in across the river in most places throughout the summer in just a swimsuit. A canoe or a float tube can come in handy in the deeper pools. Fly fishing and spin fishing with artificial lures or bait can be equally fun and productive. Fishing the areas behind rocks and in the tall water grass can produce smallmouth and rock bass. During the night, poppers can be very effective on the flat water above riffles and rapids. In the rapids, different artificial lures can work well during varying water conditions.

There is a health advisory in affect from the Virginia Department of Health for mercury contamination from Port Republic to the Page/Warren County line, and for PCBs from the Route 619 bridge downstream. Refer to the Virginia fishing regulations brochure for advisory details.

## **North Fork**

The North Fork is somewhat smaller than the South Fork. It contains redbreasted sunfish, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, channel catfish, rock bass, and blue gill. This river is fished in the same way as the South Fork, behind rocks in the riffles, and at the head and tail of the riffles. Crappie and muskellunge can be found in very deep holes usually after a dam. Walleye are also found from Strasburg to Front Royal. One problem with this fork of the river is its limited access points for boats and fishermen.

There is a health advisory in affect from the Virginia Department of Health for PCBs downstream from Passage Creek below Strasburg. Refer to the Virginia fishing regulations brochure for advisory details.

## **Shenandoah River (Mainstream)**

The mainstream of this river contains smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, blue gill, redbreasted sunfish, crappie, walleye, and channel catfish, much the same as in the other forks. There is good fishing for crappie, largemouth bass, and musky (muskellunge) in the deep holes left by dams, especially below the Warren Hydroelectric Dam. There are many public boat accesses located on this section of the river.

There is a health advisory in affect from the Virginia Department of Health for PCBs downstream from both forks to the West Virginia State Line. Refer to the Virginia fishing regulations brochure for advisory details.

# Trout in the Northern Shenandoah Valley

Trout are some of the most abundant fish in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Trout season in Virginia is open year round with a stocking program from October through May. There are three types of trout programs found in Virginia. The first one is the Catchable Stocking Program. Over 600 miles of streams are stocked each year in Virginia. Over 1.2 million trout of catchable size are stocked each year in streams and lakes. For daily stocking information call 1-804-525-FISH. Marked areas of streams are open for year round public use. The second program is the Wild Trout Program which covers 2,300 miles of stream. This area is home to the best brook trout fishing south of New England. There is a seven inch minimum size for native trout in Virginia with certain streams having exceptions to this rule. The Rapidan River is Virginia's best known native trout stream. For up-to-date information on conditions of the Rapidan due to the 1995 and 1996 storm damage, please call 1-800-732-0911. The last program being undertaken is the Fingerling Trout Program. This program involves taking young uncatchable trout and placing them into streams to mature and grow. After 6-24 months these fish are of catchable size. These fish will have the same characteristics of native wild trout. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries publishes a yearly freshwater fishing guide that is available at local sporting goods stores. The VDGIF also publishes Virginia Wildlife magazine which has frequent excellent articles on all aspects of fishing in our state.

## **Fishing Locations**

### Frederick County

Wilkins Lake, Clearbrook Lake which are both stocked 7 times a year  
Hogue Creek, Paddy Run which are stocked 5 times a year

### Warren County

Happy Creek is stocked 5 times a year and Passage Creek is a delayed harvest special regulation stream in this county

### Shenandoah County

Stony Creek, Mill Creek, Peter's Mill Creek, Tomahawk Pond, Passage Creek, and Little Passage Creek which are stocked 3-5 times a year depending on the stream



# Fishing Resources

## General Fishing Sources

Beaver's Bait & Tackle  
1601 Berryville Pike  
Winchester, VA 22601  
540-665-0611

Murray's Fly Shop  
P.O. Box 156  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4212

Shenandoah National Park  
Route 4, Box 348  
Luray, VA 22835-9051  
540-999-3500

Shenandoah Sports Ltd.  
175 Front Royal Rd.  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-665-6455

Sparks Sporting Center  
Wheatlands Street Ext.  
Martinsburg, W VA 25401  
800-525-8467

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
4010 W. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23230  
804-367-1000

**Fishing Books**

Fly Fishing for Smallmouth Bass, Harry Murray, Lyons & Burford Publishers, 31 West 21 Street, New York, NY 10010, 1989.

Trout Fishing in the Shenandoah National Park, Harry Murray, Shenandoah Publishing Company, P.O. Box 156, Edinburg, VA 22824, 1996.

Virginia Trout Streams: A Guide to Fishing the Blue Ridge Watershed, Harry Slone, Backcountry Publications, P.O. Box 175, Woodstock, VT 05091, 1994.

Virginia Wildlife magazine, Education Division of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, 4010 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230.

## Hiking/Backpacking

The Northern Shenandoah Valley is home to some of the country's best hiking trails. The Appalachian Trail (AT) is probably the world's most famous hiking and backpacking trail. Another wonderful trail that was built as an alternate trail for the AT is the Big Blue or the Tuscarora Trail (which is now the official trail name). There are many hiking trails in the George Washington National Forest as well as wilderness hikes at Dolly Sods, WV. The Chesapeake and Ohio Historic Trail and the Antietam Battlefield offer excellent historic hikes in this area. Some of the hiking trails listed are Old Rag, Antietam Creek Battlefield Hike, Stony Man Hike, Bears Den Hike, Big Schloss, Cedar Run/White Oak Canyon, Dolly Sods Wilderness Area, Harpers Ferry Hike, Marys Rock, Paw Paw Tunnel, Signal Knob, Sky Meadows, and the Woodstock Tower Hike.

There is very little essential gear for having a good hiking trip. On a short hiking trip that is less than ten miles, all you need is good hiking boots and a small knapsack with rain gear, first aid kit, snacks, and extra water. Hiking boots come in a variety of prices to fit anyone's budget. More expensive boots will generally have Gore-Tex liners or other waterproof/breathable material. Rain gear for hiking should be light and breathable so you will not overheat in a midsummer downfall. Waterproof/breathable material like Triple Point Ceramic and Gore-Tex are great but generally cost more. On high rocky peaks, a wind breaker or an outer shell layer is superb for keeping out the strong wind gusts. On colder days a polyester fleece jacket provides an excellent insulating layer.

For Backpacking, more items are needed for a successful outing. Overnight backpacking requires a light backpacking tent, a compact sleeping bag, a small one burner backpacker stove, enough water for the number of people (a water purifier can be helpful), knife, sleeping pad (optional), and a flashlight. A large pack is needed for carrying your gear on the trail. Internal frame packs are commonly used for mountaineering and carry gear closer to the backpacker's center of gravity. External frame packs are preferred by some backpackers as the frame allows better ventilation and stows gear more readily. Pack covers are a must for backpacking to protect your gear in wet weather. Make sure whatever pack you purchase is comfortable and is the appropriate size.

Hiking is a very popular activity in the Northern Shenandoah Valley and can be enjoyed by all. Help keep the trails clean by picking up all your trash and trying to make as little impact at your campsite as possible.

# Antietam National Battlefield

## Introduction

Antietam National Battlefield, the site of the single bloodiest day in American military history with 23,110 fatalities, is just outside of Sharpsburg, Maryland. This pastoral Civil War site has been restored and maintained to nearly the same conditions that existed at the time of the original battle. The visitor center is open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. All visitor center facilities and most tour route exhibits are wheelchair accessible.

## Directions

From Winchester, take Interstate 81 north for 30 miles to Maryland Exit #1 (Maryland Route 68). There are clear signs to the Battlefield from this point. Turn right on Route 68 (east) and travel 5 miles to Maryland Route 65. Turn right on Route 65 (south) and go 6 miles to the Visitor Center entrance on the left.

## Description

The visitor center includes much information about the battle and the battlefield. It includes an interpretive movie, a small museum with uniforms, weapons, and other artifacts, and a bookstore. The battlefield offers much information on the battle itself through many different displays. National Park Service Waysides are information signs located at numbered auto tour stops. They tell the basic story of the battle. War Department Tablets which are scattered throughout the battlefield, provide more detailed information about the battle. There are over 300 tablets throughout the park. Monuments, primarily built by veterans of the battle, are typically located where the troops fought during the battle. Artillery locations mark the sites of the 500 cannons that were used during the battle. There is a detailed artillery brochure available at the visitor center. Mortuary cannons, which are cannon barrels mounted on their muzzles in blocks of stone, mark the names and locations where generals were killed or mortally wounded during the battle.

There is a special program offered to organized groups (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.) called "**A Day in the Life of a Civil War Soldier**" put on by volunteer "Bill" Hasenbuhler, which consists of talks and demonstrations throughout the day, including drill with wooden training muskets and breaks for lunch and dinner. Comparisons between modern and Civil War eras are made. The program begins with an orientation at 9:00 A.M. and ends with ghost stories at 8:00 P.M. To schedule, call Bill Hasenbuhler at 301- 582-5986.

One of the most enjoyable means of viewing the Antietam National Battlefield is by touring the Battlefield on bicycle. The park has eight miles of paved roads open to cycling. Bicyclists are subject to Federal law and Maryland State Traffic Laws. Information on areas open to cycling is available at the visitor center.

The Rohrbach Campground is part of the Antietam National Battlefield. It is a walk-in, primitive camping area available to organized groups and is open each year from April 1 - November 30. The campground has ten sites, each of which is provided with a fire ring and picnic tables and space to accommodate a maximum of 30 people. Each site

is assessed a \$25.00 charge for either a one or two-night stay. Additional stays are charged at a rate of \$10.00 per night. For reservation forms, call 301- 432-2243. It is recommended that you make your request at least six weeks in advance.

Just south of the battlefield is the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland. This is the site of the Antietam National Cemetery where the remains of 4,776 Federal soldiers are buried. The Sharpsburg Heritage Festival is held on the second weekend of September and includes many activities related to Civil War events and the times of the Civil War. For information on the Festival call 1-800-228-STAY. Fees for the Antietam National Historic Battlefield Park are \$2.00/person or \$4.00/family. Children under 16 and senior citizens are free.

Maps\Resources

Superintendent, Antietam National Battlefield  
P.O. Box 158  
Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782  
301- 432-5124

# Bears Den Overlook Hike

## Introduction

This is a short hike along the Appalachian Trail (AT) to the breathtaking overlook at Bears Den. The hike is a short distance from Winchester with great views of the Shenandoah Valley and a fun climb among the rocks at Bears Den. While on this hike, visit the nearby Bears Den Hostel.

## Directions

From Winchester travel east on Route 7 toward Berryville (12 miles). At Berryville stay on Route 7. You will cross the Shenandoah River 18 miles from Winchester. Keep going up to the top of the mountain. As you near the top of the mountain you will see trail markers where the AT crosses Route 7. Parking where the AT crosses Route 7 is limited. Continue 0.2 miles to a parking area on the right at the top of the mountain just before an intersection with Route 601. The parking area is about 20 miles and 25 minutes driving time from Winchester. A new trail from this parking area going south leads to the AT and Bears Den.

## Description

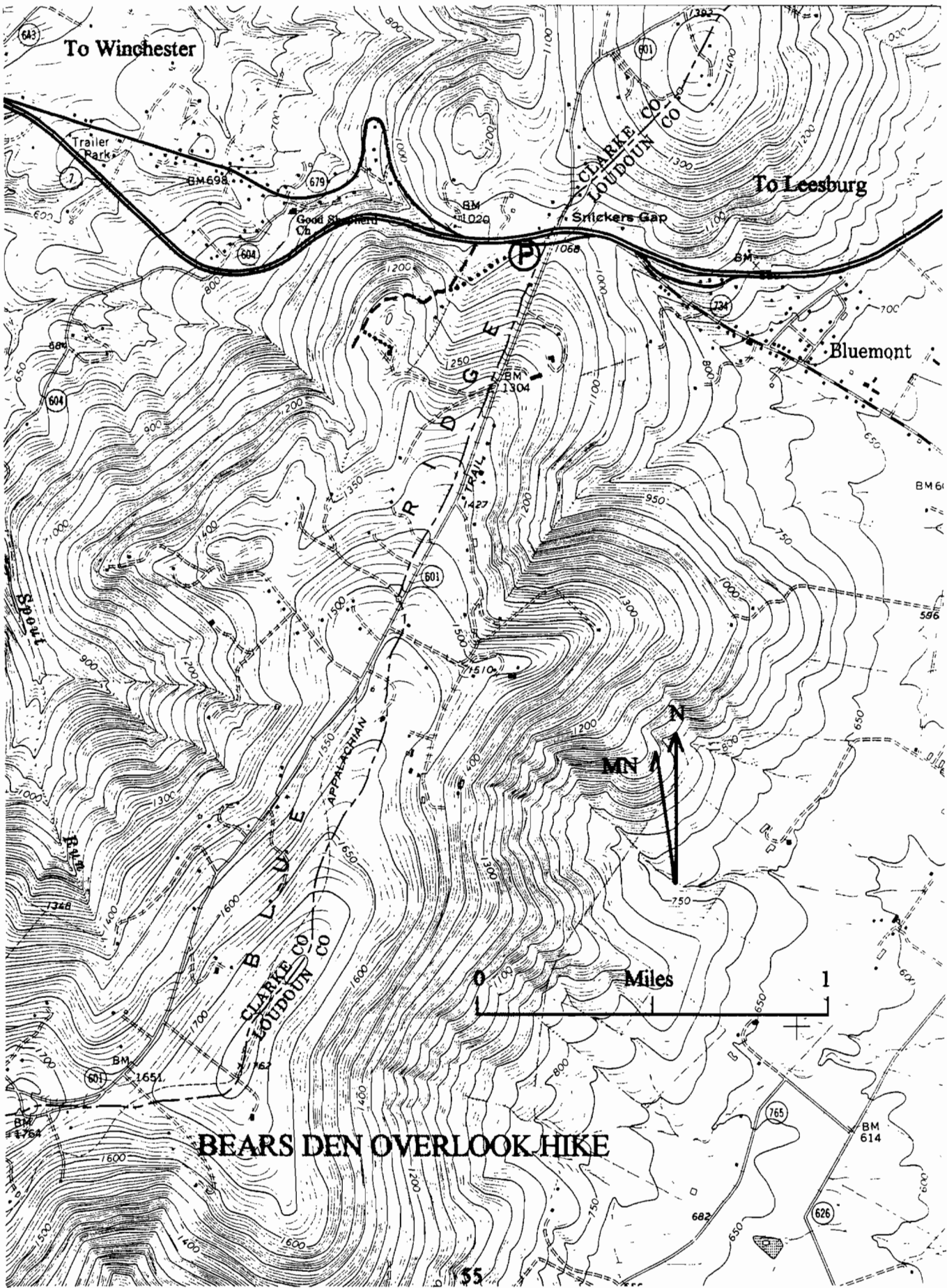
Follow the new trail (blue blaze) from the parking area to the AT (white blaze) which is about a 10 minute walk. Take the AT south (left) ascending through a forest of laurel, dogwood, and oak. The gentle climb is about 15 minutes to the Bears Den Overlook. The view of the Shenandoah River valley and outlying mountains is spectacular, particularly in the fall. Be sure to bring some binoculars. There are many tunnels and rock outcroppings to explore and climb. From the overlook there is a blue blaze trail which leads east to the Bears Den Hostel, an easy 5 minute walk. At the hostel there is water and a day use room for hikers. The hostel's office hours are from 5pm - 10pm. There are beds available for 10 females and 10 males.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking resources)

Appalachian Trail Guide To Maryland and Northern Virginia, PATC

PATC Map 8

USGS Bluemont Quadrangle



To Winchester

To Leesburg

Bluemont

# BEARS DEN OVERLOOK HIKE

MN

Miles



# Big Schloss Hike

## Introduction

This is a relatively short hike of 4.4 miles along a ridge ending with spectacular views of the Shenandoah Valley and surrounding mountains. Hiking boots are recommended. **Consider other hikes during hunting season.**

## Directions

Starting from Stephens City (exit 307), drive south on Interstate 81. Exit at milepost 283 and turn southwest onto Route 42. Drive 5.6 miles on Route 42 and turn right onto Route 675 (Wolf Gap sign at the turn). After 3.1 miles, Route 675 bears to the right (follow Wolf Gap signs) and begins ascending into the mountains. 3.3 miles later, turn right into the Wolf Gap Recreation Area. Park in the small parking area between the picnic ground and the campsites. Total driving time is about 45 minutes.

## Description

The trail to Big Schloss begins as the Mill Mountain Trail between campsites 8 and 9. The trail marker is labeled Mill Mountain Trail No. 1004. Begin ascending immediately along a wide path. The orange-blazed trail winds continuously up the mountain for the first 0.75 miles. As soon as you reach the ridge, there are nice views of the Shenandoah Valley to the east and Long Mountain to the west (be sure to bring your topographical map as a reference and a camera). Continue along the ridge trail and if you are hiking in the winter, you will be rewarded with glimpses of the Big Schloss rock outcropping each time you reach a high section of the trail. There are a few flat areas along the ridge trail where campers have pitched their tents and, unfortunately, built fire rings practically in the trail. At mile 1.9 you will see a double orange blaze. The Mill Mountain Trail (orange blaze) continues straight and the trail to Big Schloss (sparsely white-blazed) bears off to the right at a 45 degree angle and ascends immediately through the woods. Cross a wooden bridge at mile 2.2 just before climbing up onto the rocks of Big Schloss. The views in all directions are spectacular. Little Sluice Mountain and the Shenandoah Valley are seen to the east. Long Mountain and Trout Run Valley lie to the west. Savor the view before retracing your steps back to the Wolf Gap parking area. Total hiking time is around 2 hours or more depending on your conditioning.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking resources)

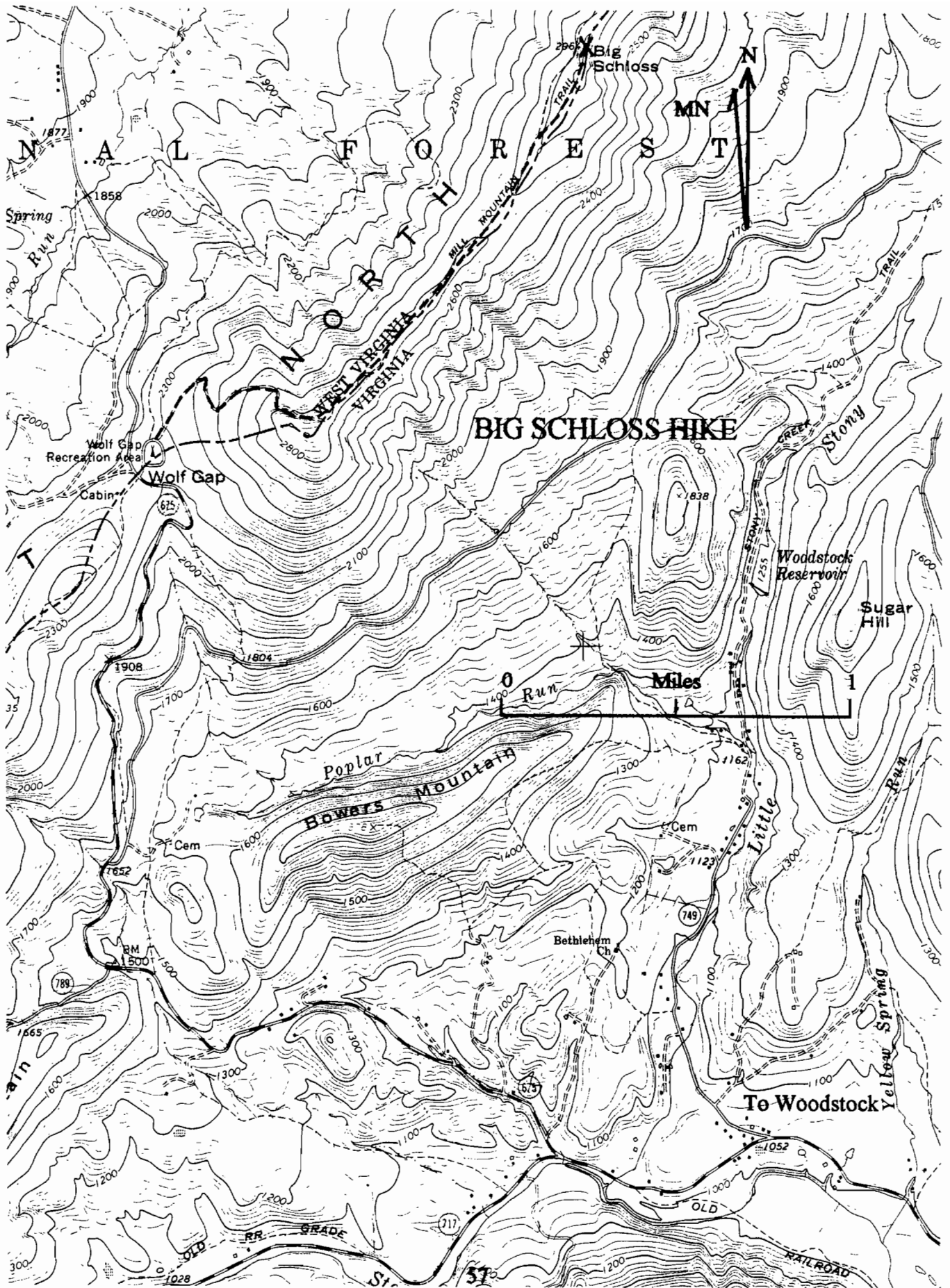
Lee Ranger District Office-540-984-4101

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M. Adkins

PATC Map F

USGS Wolf Gap Quadrangle





### BIG SCHLOSS HIKE

Miles

To Woodstock

# Cedar Run/White Oak Canyon Hike

## Introduction

This very popular hike competes with the Old Rag Mountain hike as the best trek in the park. With deep canyons, towering waterfalls, deep emerald pools and ancient hemlocks, this strenuous hike has it all. Hiking boots, extra water, and a map are very useful for this trip. The vertical elevation rise of this hike is over 2,500 feet.

## Directions

Starting at milepost 307 in Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81. After 6 miles turn left onto Interstate 66 and drive east to the Front Royal exit at milepost 6. Turn south onto Route 522/340, drive 1.9 miles and turn left at the light. Drive 0.6 miles and turn left onto Route 522 at the split with Route 340. Drive 16.2 miles on Route 522 to the intersection of Route 522 and Route 211. Turn right onto Route 522/211 and drive 8.0 miles to Sperryville. Turn left onto Route 522/231 and then take another immediate left and drive 0.7 miles and turn right on Route 231. Drive 9.8 miles to Route 643 (NPS sign for White Oak Canyon at Route 643). Turn right on Route 643 and drive to the intersection with Route 600. Turn right on Route 600 and drive 3.6 miles to the trailhead parking area. The drive takes about 90 minutes.

## Description

The trails throughout this entire hike will be blue blazed except for the white blazes on the Appalachian Trail. Starting from the parking lot, you reach the junction with the Cedar Run Trail at 0.2 miles. There is a backcountry permit self registration at this juncture (however there is no camping in White Oak Canyon between this point and the upper falls or along the Limberlost Trail). Bear right on the White Oak Canyon Trail and cross White Oak Run at 0.4 miles. At 0.9 miles the Cedar Run/White Oak Canyon Link Trail comes in from the left. Continue straight and you will reach the base of the spectacular, 60 foot lower falls at 1.5 miles (there are 6 cascades of over 40 feet in this canyon). After relaxing by the deep emerald green pool at this falls, begin a difficult ascent. There are stunning views of the canyon and cascading falls as you make this climb. Reach the top of the 86 foot upper falls at mile 2.9. At mile 3.0, cross a footbridge over White Oak Run and turn right (turning left will let you immediately join the Skyland/Big Meadows Horse Trail which is a shortcut that cuts off 1.3 miles from this trip). Continue on the White Oak Canyon Trail for 4.4 miles and then reach the intersection with the Limberlost Trail. Take the left turn onto this graveled, quiet nature trail. Strolling through this contemplative, ancient hemlock grove provides stark contrast to the raucous water of White Oak Canyon. At 4.8 miles, turn left on the eroded Crescent Rock Trail. Follow this trail to a juncture with the Skyline Drive at mile 5.9. Cross immediately to the Crescent Rock Overlook and find the trail marker at the northern edge of the pullout. Follow the connector trail 150 yards down to the Appalachian Trail and turn left on the white blazed trail. Follow this trail to the Hawksbill Gap parking area at mile 6.7. Cross the Skyline Drive immediately and pick up the Cedar Run Trail. At 6.8 miles the yellow blazed Skyland/Big Meadows Horse Trail intersects the Cedar Run Trail.

Continue down Cedar Run and reach the first falls at 7.8 miles. The flowing water now provides a continuous musical cascade as you proceed down the rocky, steep trail. Cross Cedar Run at 8.3 miles. The trail here is quite rocky, steep and slick in spots from the numerous springs flowing down the canyon sides. Cross Cedar Run again at 9.2 miles. Reach the intersection with the Cedar Run/White Oak Link Trail which bears off to the left at mile 9.4 (if you had started the hike originally from the Skyline Drive, this link trail would be an appropriate shortcut). Continue straight and reach the parking area again at mile 10. Total hiking time is between 4:15 and 8 hours depending on conditioning and time spent lingering at the various falls.

Resources/Maps (for complete details see hiking/backpacking sources)

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M. Adkins

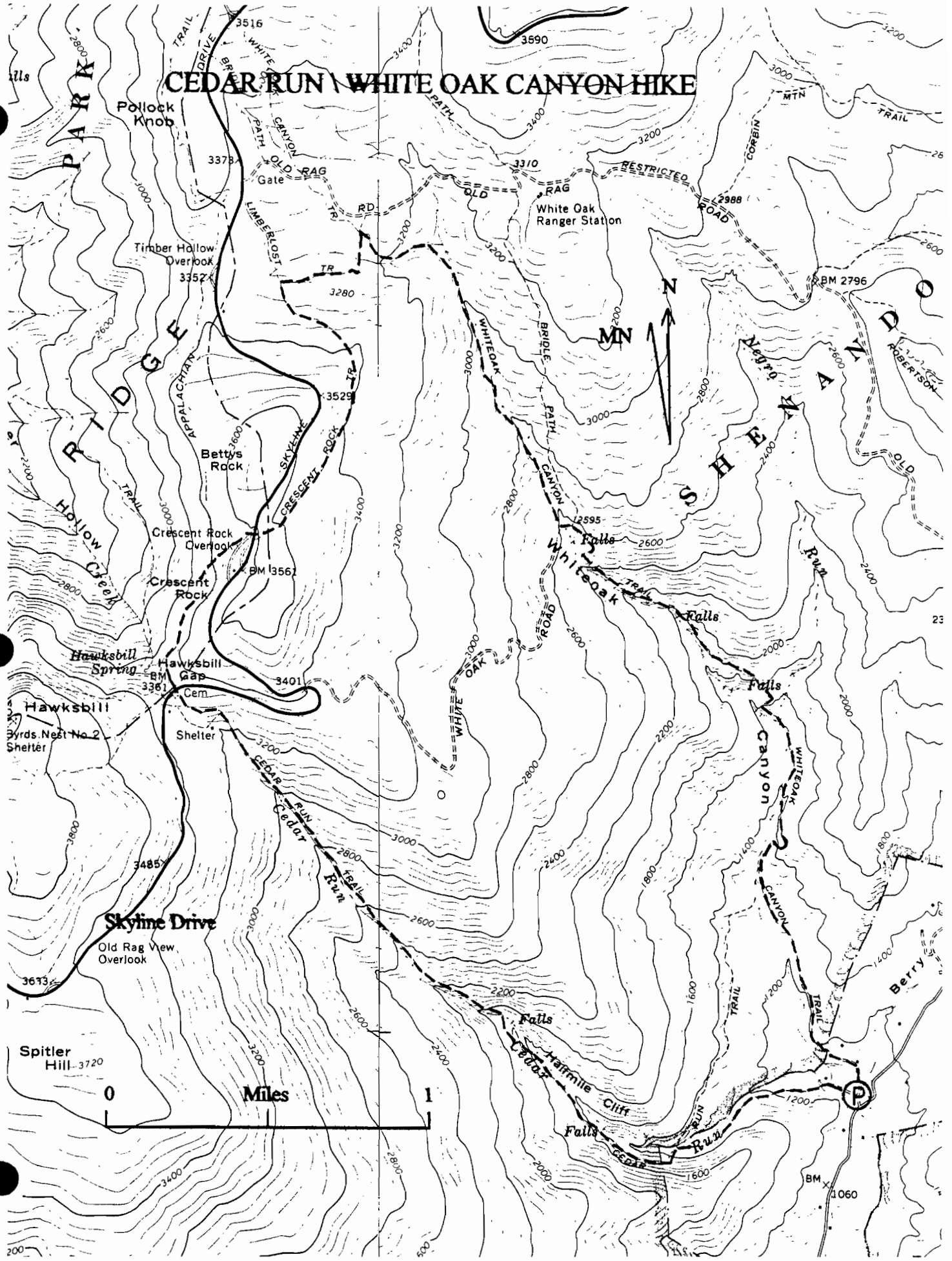
Guide to the Appalachian Trail and Side Trails in the Shenandoah National Park,

PATC

PATC Map 10

USGS Big Meadows and Old Rag Mountain Quadrangles

# CEDAR RUN WHITE OAK CANYON HIKE



# Dolly Sods Wilderness Area

## Introduction

This is a true wilderness area with a subarctic environment that can provide both pleasure and challenge for the serious backpacker.

## Directions

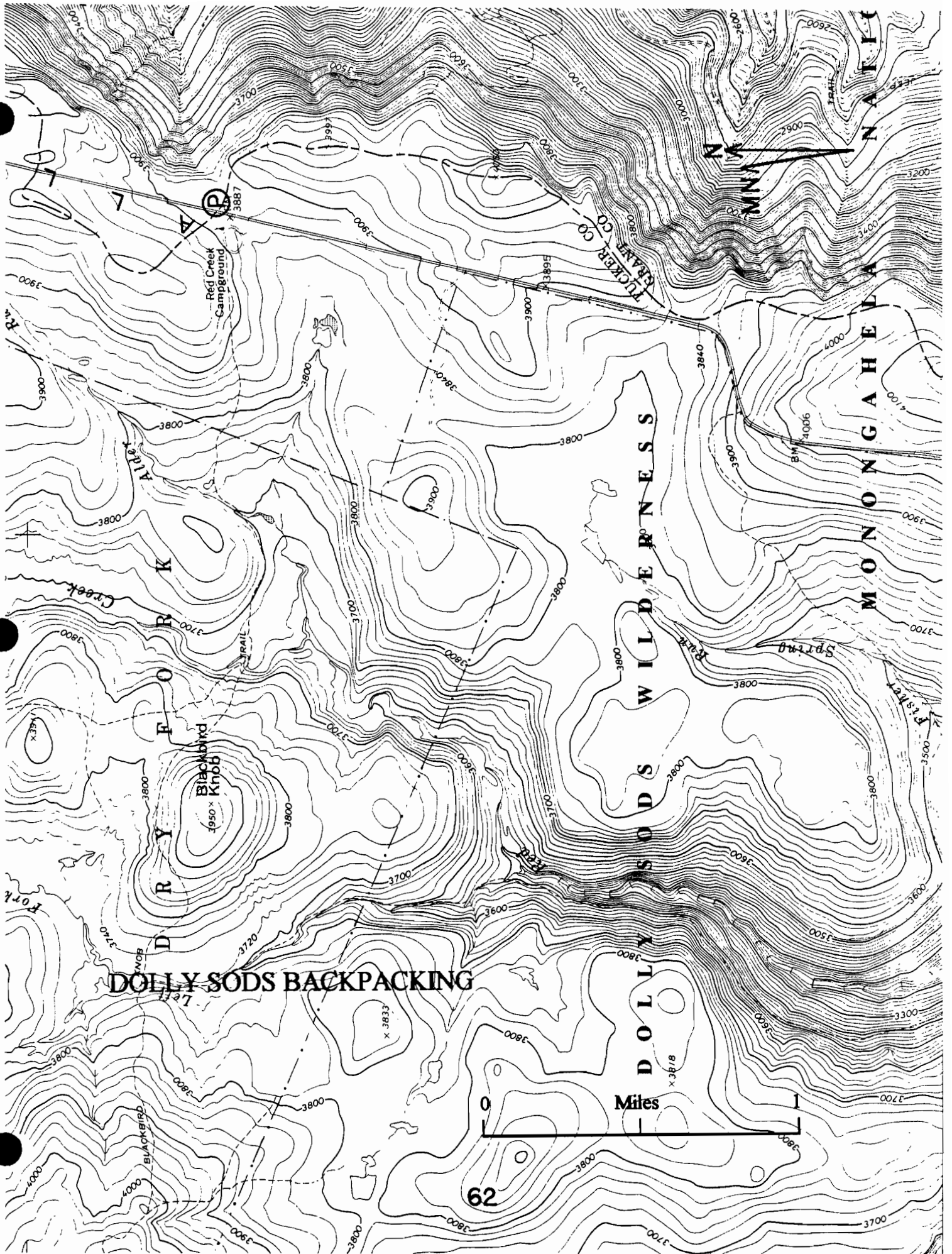
Start at the junction of Route 37 and Route 50 west of Winchester. Drive west on Route 50 through Romney, Junction, Burlington and Ridgeville to New Creek, West Virginia. Follow Route 93 south and then Route 42 south to Jordon Run road. Drive south on Jordon Run road for 9 miles and turn right onto Forest Route 75 (gravel). This road eventually reaches a parking area several yards north of the entrance of Red Creek Campground. The entrance to the Blackbird Knob Trail is across the road from the parking area. Total driving time is about two and one-half hours.

## Description

The 16 square mile Dolly Sods Wilderness was established in 1975 as an area where nature is allowed to reclaim the land. Trails are for the serious backpacker and are frequently rocky, steep, and poorly marked. There are more than 30 miles of trails in this wilderness area, but at times good camping areas such as those along Red Creek seem to get a little crowded. Stream crossings can be difficult after rain and the trails may get water-logged. This area is subject to severe weather with snow from October through April, and high winds and dense fog at any time. Adjacent to the Dolly Sods Wilderness is the Dolly Sods Scenic Area covering about 2,000 acres. Here, Bear Rocks provide excellent views of the bog-covered, subarctic plains and stunted trees that populate this wind-swept environment. There is no camping in the scenic area except at Red Creek Campground located along Forest Route 75. This campground has 12 primitive campsites with a hand pump for water and outhouse toilets. **Notice:** in World War II this area was used for artillery practice and shells are still occasionally found. Do not touch and report any found shells to the Potomac Ranger District office.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking/backpacking resources)

Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, Allen de Hart and Bruce Sundquist, important guidebook with trail descriptions, enclosed topographical maps, recommendations- take with you on this wilderness backpacking trip  
Monongahela National Forest, Potomac Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service,  
Route 3, Box 240, Petersburg, WV 26847, 304-257-4488- several excellent brochures for Dolly Sods and surrounding wilderness attractions  
West Virginia Official State Highway Map  
USGS Blackbird Knob, Blackwater Falls, Laneville, Hopeville Quadrangles



**DOLLY SODS BACKPACKING**

Miles

62

# Harpers Ferry/ Split Rock/ Jefferson Rock Hike

## Introduction

This is a historic 6.8 mile hike through Harpers Ferry, the surrounding mountain ridges and along the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath.

## Directions

Starting at exit 315 on Interstate 81, drive east on Route 7 for 9 miles. Turn north on Route 340 and drive 12.7 miles. Take the Charles Town, Harpers Ferry exit and continue on 340 north. Drive 5 miles and reach the intersection for the turnoff to Bolivar/ Harpers Ferry on the left and the entrance to Harpers Ferry National Park on the right. Continue on 340 and after crossing the bridge drive 1.4 miles further and turn right into a large gravel parking lot (if you reach the service station on the right or Route 671, turn around and drive back 0.1 miles to the lot). Leave your car here. Driving time is about 30 minutes.

## Description

From the parking area, walk back 0.2 miles along 340 towards Harpers Ferry to the trailhead for the Loudoun Heights Trail. The trail is blue blazed and immediately ascends through the woods. At 0.4 miles, begin a series of switchbacks climbing through the forest. At 0.7 miles you have reached Split Rocks; be prepared for an awesome view of Harpers Ferry and the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. At 1.2 miles, power lines appear on the right. At 2.3 miles, the Loudoun Heights Trail intersects the white blazed Appalachian Trail. Turn right down the AT and head for Harpers Ferry. Cross paved road at 2.9 miles and continue on through the woods. At 3.1 miles there is a majestic view of the Shenandoah River and an immediate steep descent. At 3.5 miles, reach the Shenandoah River bridge and carefully cross towards Harpers Ferry. Immediately after crossing the bridge, at the intersection of 340 and Jefferson Street, look for a white blaze on a guard rail and a sign for the Cliff Trail and the Appalachian Trail Conference. Ascend steeply up this trail and at 4.0 miles reach trail marker for path to the Appalachian Trail Conference. Continue straight on the AT and at 4.4 miles reach Jefferson Rock. From the top of the rocks there is beautiful view of the steeple of Saint Peter's Catholic Church with the rivers in the background. Proceed down the trail to this church. Before descending the steps by the church, find a trail marker which gives AT directions through Harpers Ferry. At the bottom of the steps, turn right on High Street and walk down to Shenandoah Street (you might detour at the bottom of the steps and walk across the street to the information center to begin a tour of historic Harpers Ferry). At Shenandoah Street, turn left and pass John Brown's fort on the right. Immediately turn right and find the foot bridge over the Potomac River at 4.7 miles. After crossing the bridge, go down the spiral staircase and turn right on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath. At 5.9 miles, turn left off the towpath (there are double blue blazes and the 340 bridge is overhead). Cross the canal remains and the railroad tracks and turn right on Sandy Hook Road. After walking under the 340 bridge, turn left on old abandoned access road and walk up to the bridge. At 6.1 miles, cross the 340 bridge on the narrow sidewalk.

Walk back on 340 past the intersection with 671 and a gas station to reach your car at 6.8 miles. Total hiking time is a little over 3 hours unless you explore Harpers Ferry or linger at the overlooks. There is an abundance of poison ivy on this trail. If you hike it in the summer, there is a good chance you will get it!

Resources/Maps (see Hiking resources for complete information)

Appalachian Trail Guide to Maryland and Northern Virginia, PATC

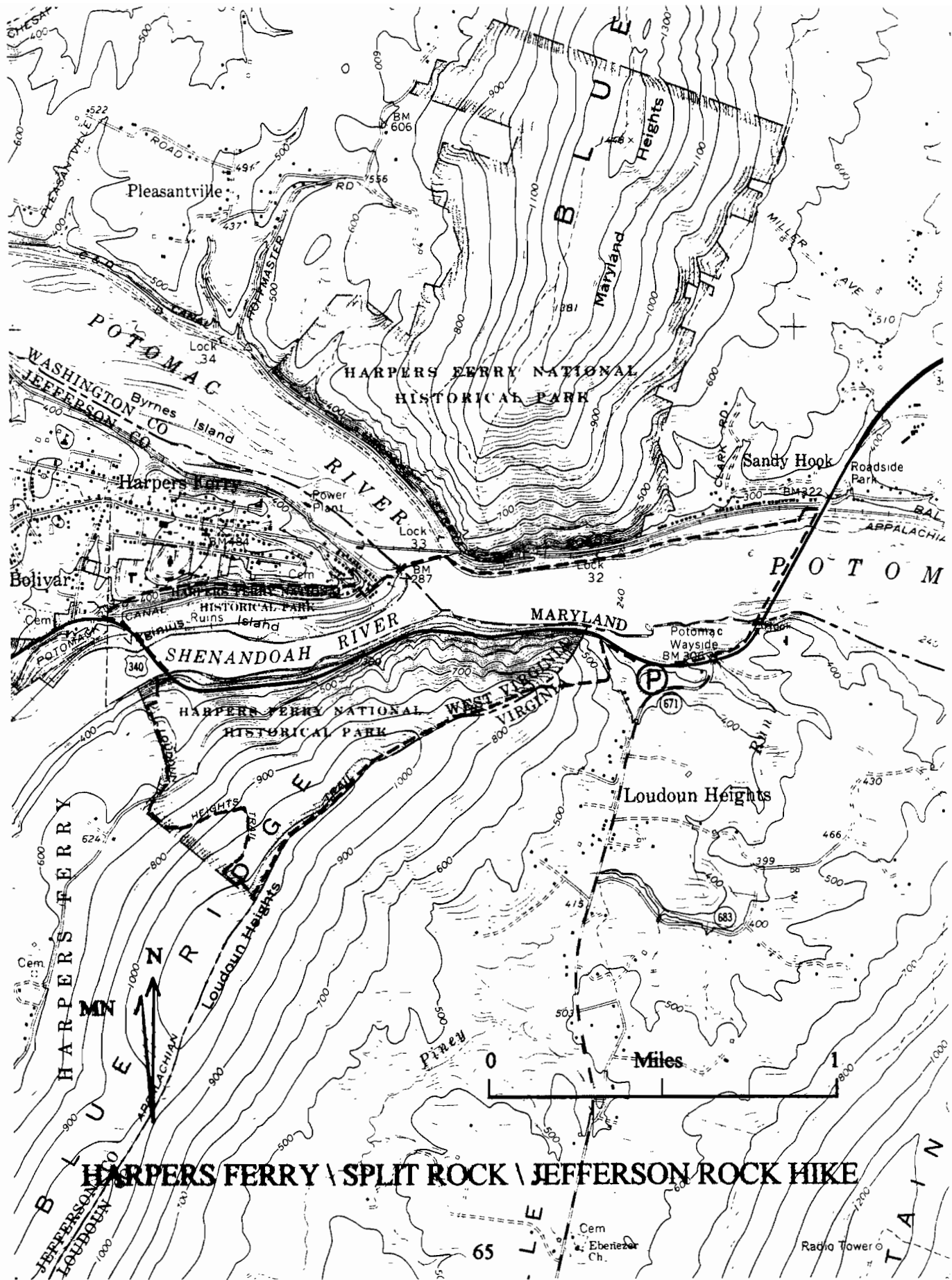
50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M. Adkins

Harpers Ferry National Park 304-535-6029

USGS Harpers Ferry Quadrangle

PATC Map 6





**HARPERS FERRY \ SPLIT ROCK \ JEFFERSON ROCK HIKE**

# Kennedy Peak

## Introduction

This is a moderately easy six mile hike with excellent views from the Massanutten ridge tops of the Fort and Page valleys.

## Directions

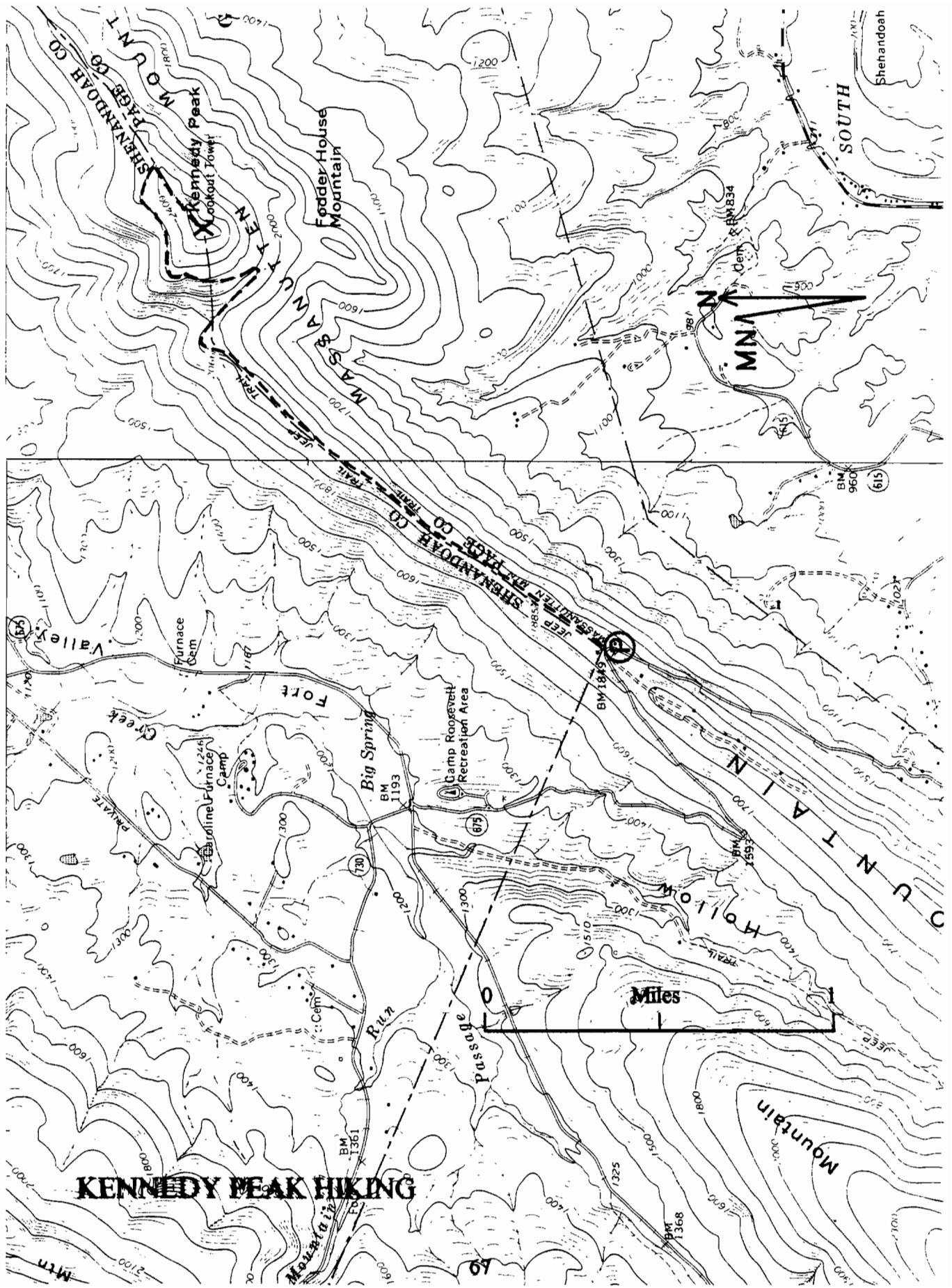
Starting at exit 307 in Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81 to exit 279 at Edinburg. Turn left and drive east on Route 675 for 0.8 miles to the intersection with Route 11. Turn left and drive north 0.5 miles. Turn right back onto Route 675 and drive east 5.7 miles over the Massanutten West Mountains to the intersection with Route 678 at Kings Crossing. Continue on Route 675 for 5.0 miles (pass entrance to Camp Roosevelt at 3.5 miles) and reach parking area just before Route 675 plunges down into the Page Valley. Driving time is about 50 minutes.

## Description

Start the hike up the jeep trail to the north (orange blazed trail- Massanutten Mountain East Trail). A trail marker about 100 yards up the trail gives the mileage to Kennedy Peak as 3 miles. The trail follows the ridge line on a jeep trail, except for a slight detour around the west side of a small knob, for the first 1.5 miles of the trip. In the winter, Kennedy Peak frequently looms ahead behind the bare trees. The jeep road ends at the southern base of Kennedy Peak and becomes a rocky path gradually ascending through the woods. After initially climbing to the east, the trail switches back and passes along the west face of the mountain. There is a viewpoint of Fort Valley off to the left at about 2.2 miles. At 2.3 miles, the trail splits and the white blazed Kennedy Peak Trail breaks off to the right up the mountain. This trail ends at a stone observation tower on top of the peak with a wonderful panoramic view. Gently rounded mountain ridges fade in the distance in all directions. The south fork of the Shenandoah River weaves in and out of view along the floor of Page Valley. Small, well tended farms lie quietly along the rolling hills of Fort Valley. If you can break away from the view, retrace the trail back to the parking area. Total hiking time is around two hours.

## Resources/Maps

Guide to Massanutten Mountain, PATC  
USFS, Lee Ranger District, 540-984-4101  
PATC Map G  
USGS Hamburg, Luray Quadrangles



# KENNEDY PEAK HIKING

# Marys Rock Hike

## Introduction

This is a 3.8 mile round trip hike with a moderately difficult 1,210 foot climb up to a rocky mountain top with an elevation of 3,514 feet that provides spectacular views of the Blue Ridge mountain range.

## Directions

Starting at milepost 307 in Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81. At milepost 301, turn left onto Interstate 66 and drive east to the Front Royal exit at milepost 6. Turn south onto Route 522/340, drive 1.9 miles and turn left at the light. Drive 0.6 miles and turn left onto Route 522 at the split with Route 340. Drive 16.2 miles on Route 522 to the intersection of Route 522 and Route 211. Turn right onto Route 522/211 and drive 8.0 miles to Sperryville. Continue straight on Route 211 at the intersection with Route 231 in Sperryville and reach the entrance to the Shenandoah National Park 7.0 miles later. You can enter the park ( five dollar entrance fee), drive south on the Skyline Drive and almost immediately turn right into the Panorama Restaurant parking lot. The trail head for Marys Rock is at the rear of the parking area. An alternate approach is to continue on Route 211 past the entrance to the park and enter another Panorama Restaurant parking area off of Route 211. Driving time is about an hour.

## Description

Begin the hike at a trail marker at the back of the parking area that gives mileage to Marys Rock as 1.9 miles. The trail meets with the white blazed Appalachian Trail after 30 yards. Turn left and begin a gradual ascent up the trail that is fairly rocky in places. The trail switches back along the way with frequent fine views to the east. At times the trail is almost completely enclosed with mountain laurel. Notice along the way the stone work of the trail which was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's. Near the top of the mountain there is another trail marker. The Appalachian Trail turns off to the left and the peak of Marys Rock is 0.1 miles straight up the trail. As you reach the top, a turn to the left reveals a large, grandiorite rock outcropping (estimated to be over one billion years old) with magnificent views in all directions. A scramble up the highest rock reveals a United States Geologic Survey marker with an elevation of 3,514 feet. From this vantage point, the quiet beauty of the ancient Blue Ridge Mountains is easily seen. Retrace the trail back down the mountain when rested. The trip takes about 1.5 to 3 hours depending on hiking pace.

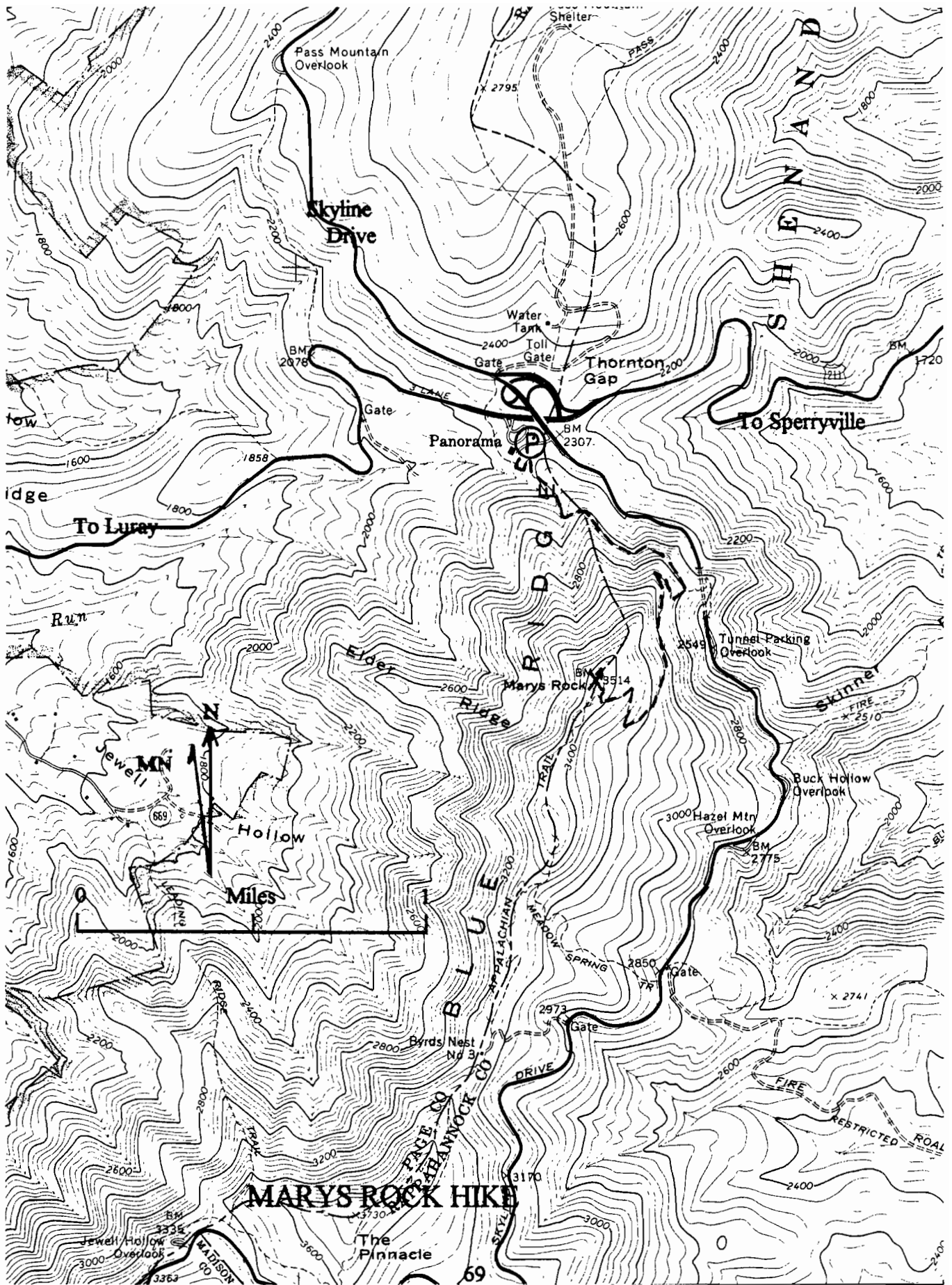
Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking resources)

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard Adkins

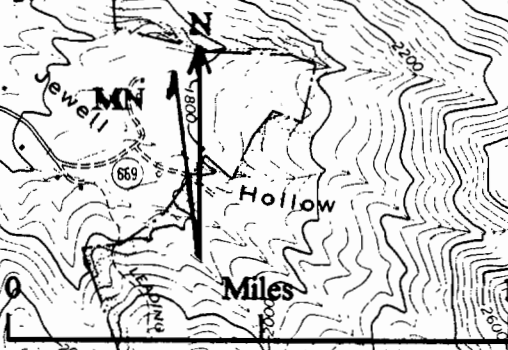
Appalachian Trail Guide to Shenandoah National Park, PATC

PATC Map 10

USGS Thornton Gap Quadrangle



# MARYS ROCK HIKE



# Old Rag Mountain Hike

## Notice

The National Park Service as of 5/25/96 has instituted a policy requiring a permit to climb Old Rag Mountain. The fee is \$3 for anyone over 16 or \$5 for a family, and can be obtained at the lower parking area at the base of the mountain. A Shenandoah National Park entrance permit may also be used as a hiking permit. The number of permits will be limited to the parking spaces available and cars parked along the road illegally will be ticketed and towed. For further information about obtaining a hiking permit, contact the Shenandoah National Park at 540-999-3500.

## Introduction

A strenuous hike to introduce the beauty of Old Rag Mountain

## Directions

Starting at Exit 313 on Interstate 81, drive south 12.8 miles and turn onto Interstate 66. Drive 6.7 miles and take exit 6 to Route 522. Drive south on Route 522/340 for 1.9 miles to a stop light and turn left. Drive 0.6 miles and turn left onto Route 522 at the split with Route 340. Drive 16.2 miles on Route 522 to the intersection of Route 522 and Route 211. Turn right on Route 522 and drive 8.0 miles to the intersection of Route 522/231 and Route 211. Turn left onto Route 522/231 and then take another immediate left and drive 0.7 miles to the split of Route 522 and Route 231. Turn right on Route 231 and drive 8.2 miles to Route 602. Turn right on Route 602 and drive 3.3 miles to the lower parking area for permit (driving time is about 1 hour and 15 minutes). The trailhead is 0.8 miles further up the road (on some weekends a shuttle may be available for taking hikers to the trail).

## Description

The NPS estimates that nearly 100,000 people climb Old Rag Mountain each year. If you can avoid the weekends, the hike may be much more enjoyable. The 2.85 mile Ridge Trail is blue blazed to the peak of Old Rag Mountain (3,268 feet). From the trailhead, begin a gradual uphill climb. Cross several small streams and ascend along numerous switchbacks until reaching the first rock outcroppings at about 2 miles. From here on the trail becomes even more interesting. The views along the way are some of the best in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The trail frequently involves some rock scrambling and even requires pulling yourself up a 5 foot vertical rock formation at one point. There is a 40 foot rock tunnel and several narrow crevices that must be wriggled through as you work slowly through the rock maze toward the summit. The top of Old Rag is reached at about 3 miles and is a great spot for lunch, relaxing, and enjoying the magnificent views. You may return via the Ridge Trail or continue on a circuit hike following the Saddle Trail and the Weakley Hollow Fire Road. If you choose the circuit hike, keep on the trail past the summit of Old Rag and reach the Byrds Nest 1 Shelter at about 3.4 miles. Bear right here and follow the Saddle Trail and reach the Old Rag Shelter at about 4.5 miles. Follow the old road off to the right for about 0.4 miles and reach the intersection of Berry Hollow,

Old Rag and Weakley Hollow Fire Roads. Follow Weakley Hollow Road downhill and eventually come back to the trailhead at 7.7 miles. Total hiking time is 5-6 hours.

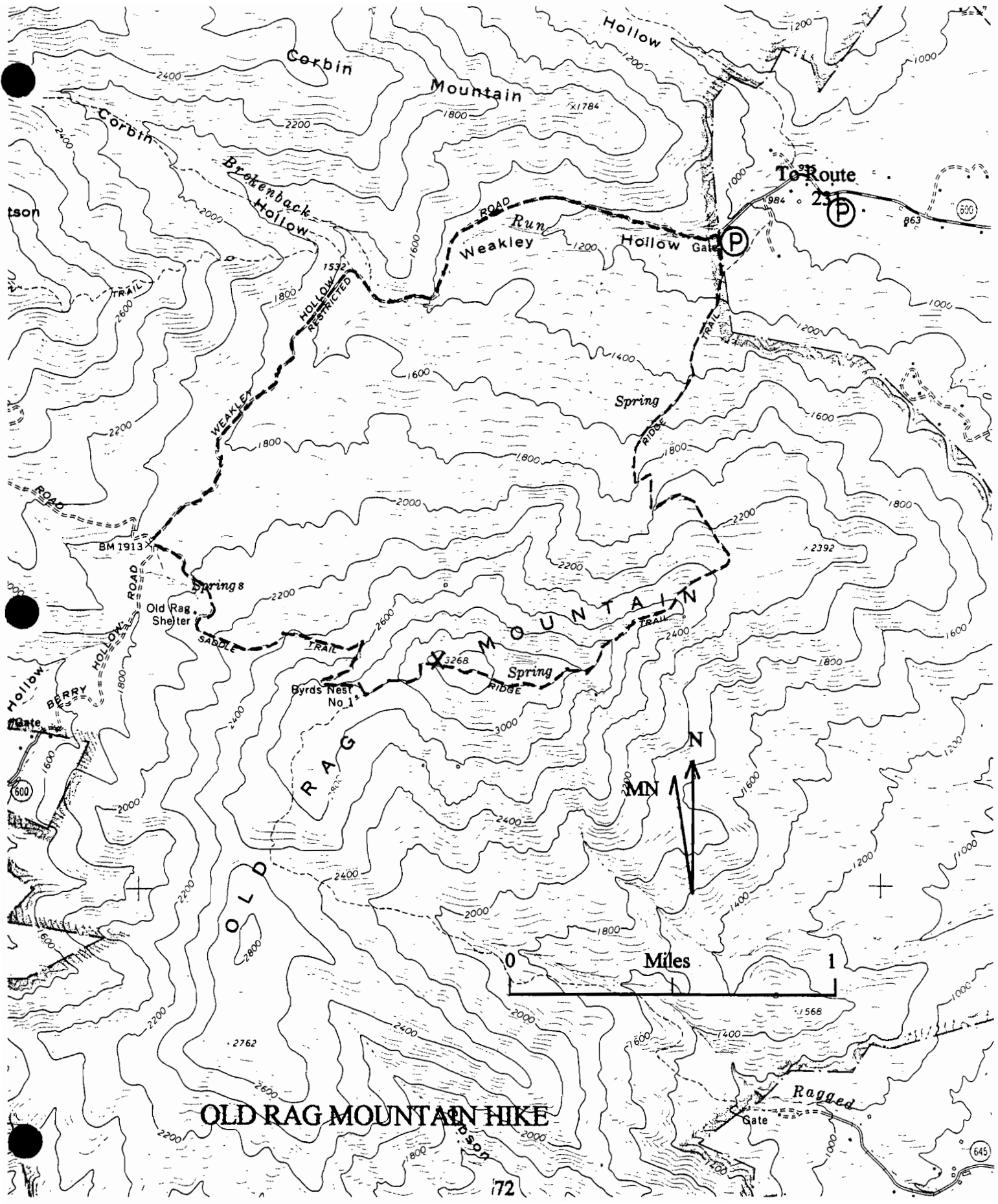
Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking resources)

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M. Adkins

Guide to the Appalachian Trail and Side Trails in the Shenandoah National Park,

PATC

USGS Old Rag Mountain Quadrangle



# OLD RAG MOUNTAIN HIKE



# Paw Paw Tunnel Scenic Hike

## Introduction

As part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, the Paw Paw tunnel is a man-made tunnel through a mountain. It is situated in a beautiful wooded area, perfect for exploration and reliving history. A nearby picnic area exists for further enjoyment and relaxation. There are toilet facilities and a hand pump for water.

## Directions

. From the intersection of Route 37 and Route 522 northwest of Winchester, follow Route 522 north approximately 15 miles to Route 127. Turn left onto Route 127, heading west. Follow Route 127 west 11 miles until you come to Route 29. Turn right onto Route 29, heading north. Follow Route 29 approximately 8 miles to where Route 29 becomes Route 9. Follow Route 9 about 2 miles through the small town of Paw Paw, West Virginia and across the Potomac River into Maryland. Right after crossing the river, there is a sign on the right side of the road for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and Paw Paw Tunnel. Turn right onto the road after the sign and follow it to the parking area near the picnic area. At the picnic site, there is a sign with information about the history of the tunnel and a path that leads to the tunnel.

## Description

The Paw Paw Tunnel is one small section of the remains of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal system. It offers a realistic experience of what our ancestors created to move goods and products westward over mountain ridges as our nation expanded from East to West. The wooded setting is peaceful and beautiful through any season. Beyond the east side of the tunnel, the towpath leads to what remains of one of the locks of the canal. One can visualize how a boat would be pulled into the lock, where water was either let in or out, depending on the direction of the boat. This allowed the boat to move up or down the height of the terrain. For a more strenuous hike, take the Tunnel Hill Trail that travels over the top of the tunnel through the woods. There are numbered markers on the trail which are matched to key topics on the brochure. This trail is approximately 1 mile long one way, and can be combined with the towpath through the canal for a circuit hike.

## Maps\Resources

184 Miles of Adventure, excellent packable guidebook with maps and points of interest

Towpath Guide to the C&O Canal, detailed guide describing many historical features along the trail

C&O Canal National Historical Park, Box 4, Sharpsburg, MD 21782, or phone 301-739-4200. Information center in Hancock, MD is a good source for brochures and books on the canal.

C&O Canal National Historical Park Brochure

# Signal Knob Hike

## Introduction

Signal Knob is a breathtaking 10.5 mile hike that passes overlooks of Fort Valley and the Blue Ridge Mountains.

## Directions

From milepost 307 at Stephens City, drive on Interstate 81 for 8.5 miles to Exit 298. Turn left onto Route 11 and drive 2.0 miles into Strasburg. Turn left onto Route 55 (East King Street) and drive 5.1 miles to Route 678. Turn right and drive about 3.5 miles to large Signal Knob parking area on the right. The trail starts at the north end of the parking lot.

## Description

The trail starts at the northwest end of the parking lot and travels northwest following the yellow trail markers. Soon on the left is a very nice stone cabin that is owned by the forest service. At mile 0.5 you cross a small stream and take a sharp right turn and start a steeper ascent. As you continue on, Fort Valley is on your right. About a mile past the stream you will come to the Buzzard Rock Overlook which shows a commanding view of the northern Fort Valley area. There will be a left switchback and you will continue to ascend. At mile 2.1, the Fort Valley Overlook will appear on the left. Continue up the trail and around a mile later there will be an intersection. The Meneka Ridge Trail will veer left while the Signal Knob Trail continues right. Stay on the Signal Knob Trail. The trail will become more level as you continue to the Signal Knob Overlook. There will be two towers and a small building at the overlook. Now, you can continue back the way you came or you can go down the Massanutten Mountain West Trail that is on the west side of Signal Knob. This trail starts as a freshly graded access road that will eventually start to have orange blazes. After traveling down the mountain, there is a well-marked trail entrance to the Bear Wallow Trail on the left with blue trail markers. Travel up this very rocky and steep trail that goes over Green Mountain. Hike down the east side and near the bottom there will be an intersection. The trail on the right is the Bear Wallow Spur Trail (white blazes); veer to the left and cross the stream. This trail will be marked with blue and white trail markers. After traveling approximately one mile there will be another intersection. The Bear Wallow Trail (and Big Blue Trail) leads to the right and the Big Blue Spur is on the left. Go left and continue till you reach the Signal Knob Parking Area.

## Resources/Maps( see hiking resources for complete description )

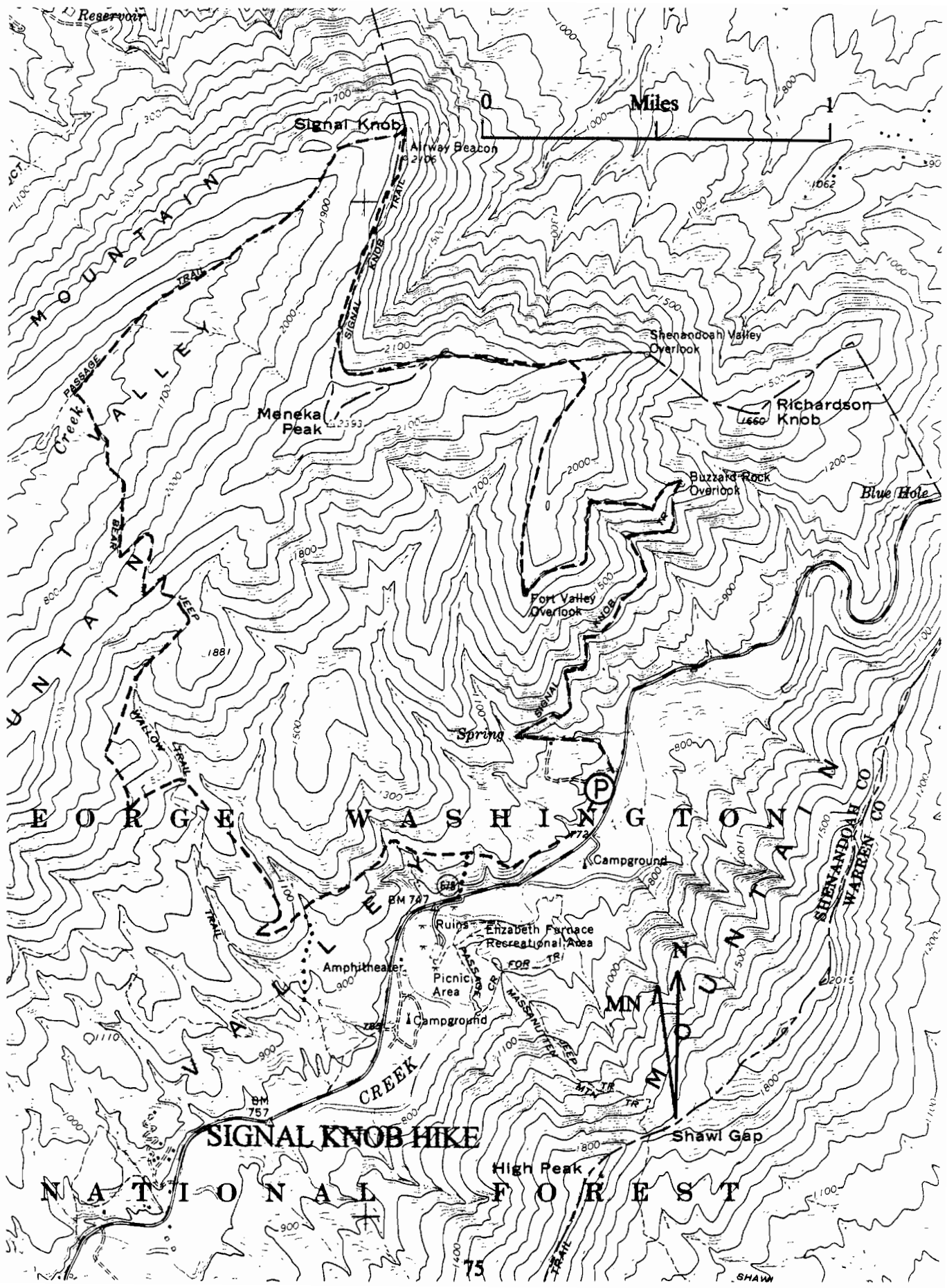
United States Forest Service, Lee Ranger District 540-984-4101

Guide to Massanutten Mountain, PATC

Elizabeth Furnace Recreation Area pamphlet ( pick up at family camping area )

Map G, PATC (map is correct )

USGS, Strasburg Quadrangle ( trails are incompletely marked )



Signal Knob  
Airway Beacon  
2106

Miles

Meneka Peak  
2393

Richardson Knob  
1660

Buzzard Rock Overlook

Fort Valley Overlook

Spring

Campground

Ruins Elizabeth Furnace  
Recreational Area

Amphitheater  
Picnic Area

Campground

Shaw Gap

High Peak

SIGNAL KNOB HIKE

GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST

SHAW

# Sky Meadows State Park

## Introduction

This is a beautiful park situated along the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains with numerous hiking trails with excellent views, primitive camping, interpretive programs, fishing and bridle paths.

## Directions

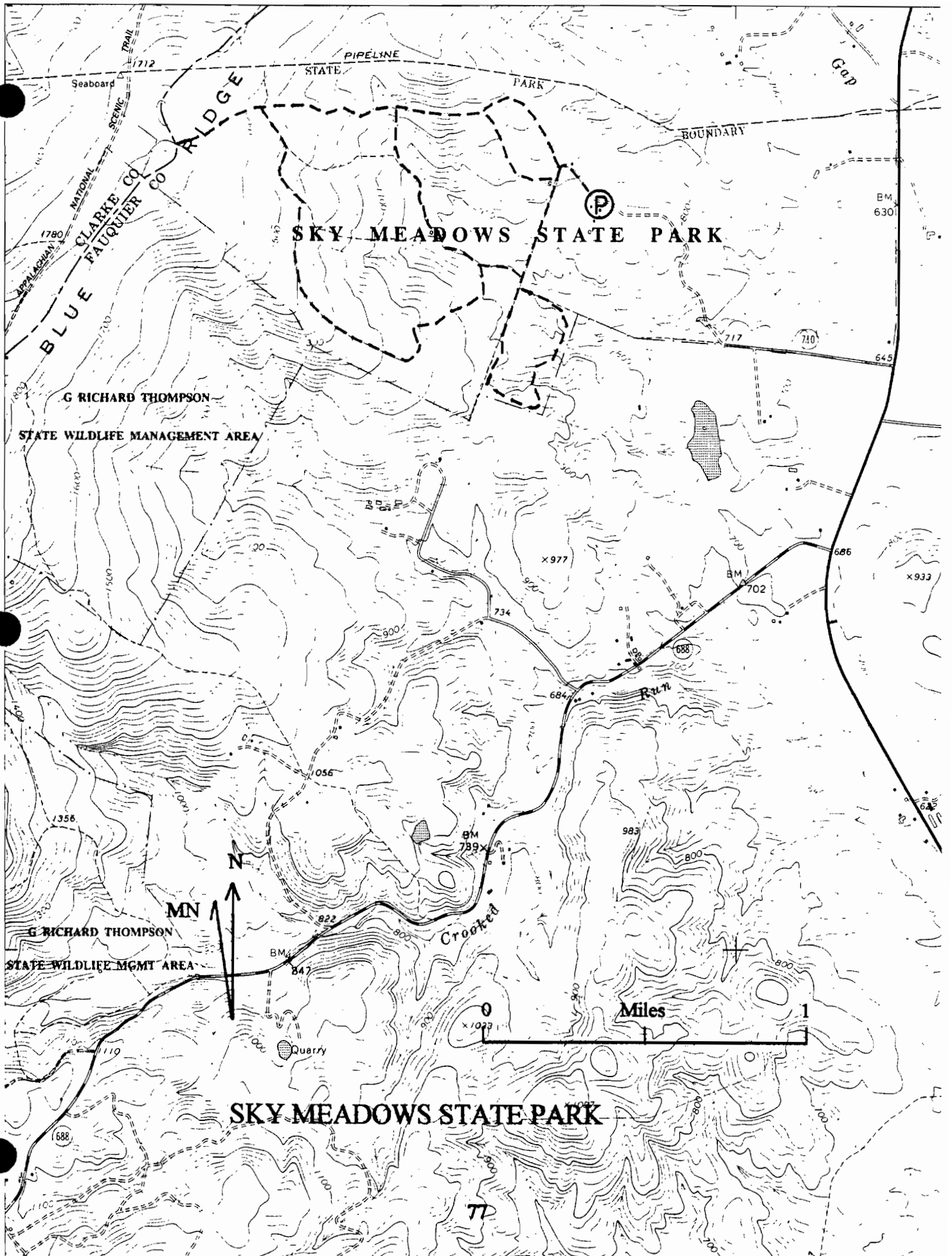
Starting at the intersection of Interstate 81 and Route 50/17, drive east on 50/17 for 16.3 miles. Turn right at traffic light onto 17 and drive 1.3 miles to Edmonds Road (at 0.7 miles you will pass the Sky Meadows State Park fishing pond on the right and entrance for bridle trails on the left). Turn right onto Edmonds Road and drive 1.1 miles to the Sky Meadows State Park visitor center. Total driving time is about 25 minutes.

## Description

Before entering the park, stop at the entrance station and pick up a parking permit (\$1.00 on weekdays and \$1.50 on weekends) and a park brochure. Hike-in camping permits may also be purchased at this location for \$8.00. The park opened in 1983 after land was given by Mr. Paul Mellon in 1975. Additional parcels of land have been added to the park since that time. A history of the park can be found in the park brochure. The park contains several hiking trails with a mixture of open meadow and forest land. A particularly scenic hike is the North Ridge-Gap Run loop hike which is 2.0 miles in length. A short detour from this loop hike onto the Piedmont Overlook Trail leads to a classic view of the rolling hills of the Piedmont as they meet the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Snowden Nature Trail follows an old 1820's roadbed for 1.1 miles in the park. The Appalachian Trail can be accessed from the park trail system. The park has 12 primitive hike-in campsites that each have a picnic table and fire ring with grill. There is a well pump at the campground but the water must be purified before consumption. An old farm shed provides cover for three of the campsites. The park has numerous interpretative programs throughout the year.

## Resources/Maps (for complete information see hiking resources)

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard Adkins  
Sky Meadows State Park Guide  
Sky Meadows State Park 540-592-3556  
USGS Upperville Quadrangle



# Stony Man Hike

## Introduction

The two short hikes to Little Stony Man and Stony Man provide excellent views of the Blue Ridge Mountain Range and the Piedmont of Virginia, and a chance to learn about the natural history of this region.

## Directions

Starting at milepost 307 in Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81. At milepost 301, turn left onto Interstate 66 and drive east to the Front Royal exit at milepost 6. Turn south onto Route 522/340, drive 1.9 miles and turn left at the light. Drive 0.6 miles and turn left onto 522 at the split with 340. Drive 16.2 miles on 522 to the intersection of 522 and Route 211. Turn right onto 522/211 and drive 8.0 miles to Sperryville. Continue straight on Route 211 at the intersection with Route 231 in Sperryville and reach the entrance to the Shenandoah National Park 7.0 miles later. Enter the park ( five dollar entrance fee), drive south on the Skyline Drive to milepost 41.7, and turn right into the first parking lot. The milepost for the Little Stony Man parking lot is at 39.1.

## Description

### **Little Stony Man**

Little Stony Man is at mile marker 39.1. Across the valley is Massanutten Mountain. It is a 0.9 mile round trip to a panoramic view. Park in the Little Stony Man parking lot on the west side of the Drive. Take the trail uphill 50 yards to the Appalachian Trail (AT) and turn left. The trail climbs steadily for 1/3 of a mile until you reach a concrete signpost. Stay right. The cliff with outstanding views is just 0.1 mile from the post. On your left are the higher cliffs of Stony Man. Retrace your steps to complete this one hour hike.

### **Stony Man Nature Trail**

Stony Man Nature Trail is at mile marker 43.7 (1.6 mile round trip). You will reach the trailhead by driving into the north entrance of Skyland and making a right into the first parking lot. You can pick up a nature trail pamphlet from the dispenser (50 cents). Then you will begin the gradual ascent into the oak forest. (If there are no brochures, you can obtain one from the Byrd Visitor Center at Skyline Drive milepost 51). The booklet corresponds to the numbered posts along the trail. Go north on the Appalachian Trail for 0.4 miles. At trail crossing, leave the AT and go straight ahead, up the blue blazed trail to panoramic viewpoints on Stony Man. Continue around the summit on the same trail, which circles around and meets itself. Walk downhill to AT intersection and retrace your steps to the parking lot to complete this 1 1/2 hour hike. Viewed from the north, Stony Man Mountain resembles the face of a bearded man. Stony Man's forest changed when all of its large chestnuts trees died. A fungus disease introduced into North America from Asia, killed the American chestnuts by the early 1930's. Because chestnut wood contains tannin, a natural preservative, the wood decomposes slowly. When the chestnuts died, the oaks took over. The acorns from these oaks feed many of the animals- squirrels, chipmunks, bear, deer, turkey, ruffed grouse and birds. Over 1,000 different kinds of trees and shrubs and smaller plants live in the forest. From the top of Stony Man,

you will see a view of the west over the Shenandoah Valley. Looking east, the view is of the Piedmont, a rolling landscape which gradually slopes toward the ocean. The ragged, rocky peak of Old Rag Mountain is the view from the right. The rocks you see around are very ancient. 800 million years ago, there was volcanic activity. A total of 12 lava flows eventually added 1,800 feet of volcanic rock. A close look at the rocks reveal the presence of minerals of different colors and textures. Scattered copper mining sites can be found on Stony Man. In the 1800's, nuggets of native copper were found. The copper ore was hard to work and the mines were abandoned before 1850. A day at the top of Stony Man can bring peace as you experience the silence of the mountain, joy in the breezes, the music of the birds, and the strength of the trees.

Maps\Resources (for complete information see hiking resources)

Appalachian Trail Guide to Shenandoah National Park, With Side Trails, PATC

PATC Map 10

USGS Big Meadows Quadrangle





# Woodstock Observation Tower

## Introduction

A short walk to this observation tower provides excellent panoramic views of the Shenandoah Valley, North Fork of the Shenandoah River, and the Appalachian Mountains.

## Directions

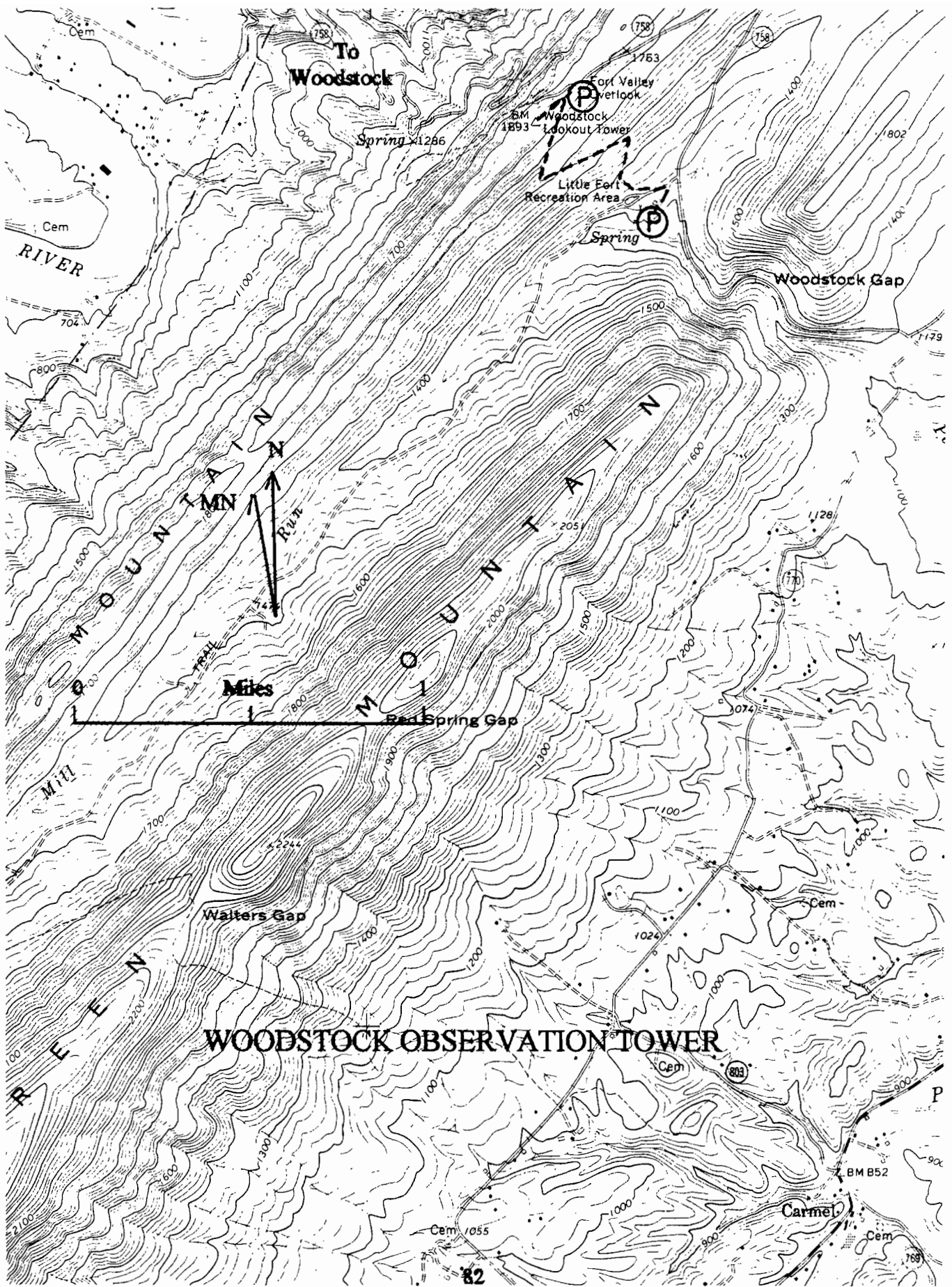
From milepost 307 at Stephens City, drive south on Interstate 81 for 23.7 miles to the Woodstock exit (milepost 283). Turn left onto Route 42 and drive 0.7 miles and turn left onto Route 11 north. Drive 1.8 miles and turn right onto Route 665 (tiny sign just before school). Drive 1.4 miles and turn left onto Route 758. Drive 4.3 miles up this winding, sometimes dusty, mostly gravel road to the top of the west ridge of the Massanutten Mountains and park on the right just over the top at a large pullout for short walk. For a longer hike drive another 0.4 miles to the Little Fort Recreation Area, take the left fork before reaching the campground loop and park in the day use area.

## Description

From the pullout on top of the mountain it is a very short easy hike to the observation tower. If you would like to go on the longer hike from the Little Fort Recreation Area you need to park at the bottom of the left fork of the road before you reach the camp ground. This parking area is also used for off-road vehicle parking. From the parking area hike up to the campground and take the right fork of the loop. After the first or second campsite there will be a small trail head on the right. The trail is blazed white all the way up to the intersection of the short path described above. The longer trail to the Woodstock Tower from the Little Fort Recreation Area is a steeper and a more difficult hike and is about a mile and three quarters round trip. Once you come to the intersection of the short path turn left and continue to the observation tower. Once at the top of the Woodstock Tower you will be glad you came. The tower will provide an excellent view of the topography of the entire region. It shows all the local mountain ranges running north to south and the meandering North Fork of the Shenandoah River. For those who love tough, steep, and rocky mountain biking the longer trail provides a good challenge for those who want to pedal to the Woodstock Tower.

## Resources/Maps (see hiking resources for complete information)

Guide to Massanutten Mountain, PATC guidebook  
50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M, Adkins  
Inventory of Trails on the Lee Ranger District GWNF  
PATC Map G  
USGS Rileyville Quadrangle



# WOODSTOCK OBSERVATION TOWER

# Hiking/Backpacking Resources

## General Hiking/Backpacking Sources

Appalachian Trail Conference  
Box 807  
Washington & Jackson Streets  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
304-535-6331

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park  
P.O. Box 4  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782  
301-739-4200

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
P.O. Box 65  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
304-535-6029

Monongahela National Forest  
200 Sycamore Street  
Elkins, WV 26241-3962  
304-636-1800

Mountain Trails  
212 East Cork Street  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-667-0030

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club(PATC)  
118 Park Street, S.E.  
Vienna, VA 22180  
703-242-0693

Shenandoah National Park  
Route 4, Box 348  
Luray, VA 22835-9051  
540-999-3500

Sky Meadows State Park  
11012 Edmonds Lane  
Delaplane, VA 22025-9508  
540-592-3556

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101  
Massanutten Visitors Center  
540-740-8310

United States Geological Survey  
Printing and Distribution Center  
Denver Federal Center  
Box 25286  
Denver, CO 80225  
303-236-7477

**Hiking/Backpacking Books**

Appalachian Trail Guide to Maryland and Northern Virginia with Side Trails  
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180, 1993.

Appalachian Trail Guide to Shenandoah National Park with Side Trails, Potomac  
Appalachian Trail Club, 118 Park St., S.E., Vienna, VA 22180, 1994.

Circuit Hikes in the Shenandoah National Park, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 118  
Park St., S.E., Vienna, VA 22180, 1980.

50 Hikes in Northern Virginia, Leonard M. Adkins, Backcountry Publications,  
P.O. Box 175, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, 1994

Guide to the Massanutten Mountain, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 118 Park St.,  
S.E., Vienna, VA 22180, 1993.

Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, Allen De Hart and Bruce Sundquist,  
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321, 1993.

184 Miles of Adventure, Hikers Guide to the C & O Canal, Mason-Dixon Council,  
Boy Scouts of America, 1200 Crestwood Drive, P.O. Box 2133, Hagerstown, MD  
21742, 1970.

The Big Blue, A Trail Guide, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 118 Park St., S.E.  
Vienna, VA 22180, 1987

Towpath Guide to the C & O Canal, Thomas F. Hahn, American Canal & Trans-  
portation Center, Box 310, Shepherdstown, WV 25443, 1993.

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer, DeLorme Mapping Company, P.O. Box 298,  
Freeport, Maine 04032, 1995.

# Specialized Activities

## **Rock Climbing**

Rock climbing has fairly recently become a widely popular outdoor activity in this area. It requires a commitment to conditioning, lots of practice, and instruction by a rock climbing instructor before attempting this challenging sport. Unfortunately, this area does not have many public areas where rock climbing is allowed. The closest site in this area is Crescent Rock/Raven Rock near Bluemont. Access to this area is restricted to hiking the Appalachian Trail north from Route 7, about an hour and a half hike. Seneca Rocks in West Virginia is for advanced climbers and climbing schools are located nearby this park. There are over 300 different climbs here. Another such area is at Great Falls National Park located between Route 7 and Interstate 495 off Route 193(Old Georgetown Pike). Park admission is \$5. The PATC Climbers Guide to Great Falls is essential for helping you find top-rope climbs in the difficulty range you want. Great Falls is about one and a half hours from Winchester. On private land, permission is needed before you can climb on their property. Guide books are available at local outfitters on a variety of different climbs in this area. Look in the rock climbing resources for additional information.

## **Horseback Riding**

Horseback Riding is a very popular outdoor activity in the Shenandoah Valley. Some trails in the George Washington National Forest are made available for horseback riding. Although horses have the right of way, these trails are also used by hikers and mountain bikers so watch out for them. There are also private trail riding companies where trail riding is made available to the public. These include Marriott Ranch, Skyland Stables, and Fort Valley Stables. Sky Meadows State Park also has horseback riding trails. Refer to the horseback riding resources for additional information on horseback riding locations and contacts.

## **Shooting\Archery**

Shooting and Archery are favorite past times for many outdoor enthusiasts. Hunting and target shooting are both popular in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Weapons can be purchased at the numerous local stores and outfitters. People there can give you knowledgeable help on finding an appropriate gun or bow and a place to shoot. Numerous shooting facilities and clubs are maintained in the Northern Shenandoah Valley by different organizations. Hunting is allowed in the National Forest during certain seasons throughout the year. Please contact the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for information on hunting seasons. For more information on shooting and archery, please locate the shooting\archery resources for listings of local stores, books, and clubs.

# Seneca Rocks Climbing

## Introduction

Located in West Virginia's magnificent Potomac Highlands, Seneca Rocks in Pendleton County is a visual landmark and an excellent way to learn or perfect rock climbing skills as well as view untainted natural beauty.

## Directions

From Winchester, VA travel Route 50 West into West Virginia, where at Junction, WV, you travel south on Routes 28/220 to Moorefield, WV. Here Route 55 West joins Route 220 south - travel to Petersburg, WV, and continue on Routes 28/55 south to Seneca Rocks, WV. Signs to Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area are clearly visible and are numerous. The trip from Winchester to Seneca Rocks, WV is 108 miles.

## Description

Seneca Rocks is part of the Spruce Knob- Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, which covers 100,000 acres. Purchased by the federal government in 1969, Seneca Rocks has long been one of West Virginia's most popular attractions.

The rocks rise 900 feet above the North Fork River and are composed of white\gray Tuscarora ( sandstone ) quartzite, approximately 440 millions years old.

There are 375 mapped climbing routes, ranging from 5.0 to 5.12 in difficulty. There are climbing schools in the area which offer training. In addition, there is a well-marked trail (complete with occasional benches) that takes you to an observation deck. This 1.3 mile walk takes approximately 1 hour to traverse in each direction and is self-guided.

There is a Visitor's Center (with restrooms) and extensive parking at the site.

## Resources/Maps (for rock climbing schools see rock climbing resources)

Mountain Trails in Winchester is a great source for all information concerning rock climbing in this area, 540-667-0030

# Specialized Activities Resources

## Archery Resources

Nail's Archery Shop  
Gainesboro, VA 22603  
540-888-3945

Shenandoah Sports  
175 Front Royal Rd.  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-665-6455

Sparks Sport Center  
Wheatlands Street Ext.  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
800-525-8467

Valley Bowhunters  
contact: Barry Shrum at Hunters Habitat, 540-459-8380

## Horseback Riding Resources

Fort Valley Stables  
299 S. Fort Valley Rd.  
Fort Valley, VA 22652  
540-933-6633

Marriott Ranch  
Route 1, Box 113  
Hume, VA 22639  
540-364-2627

Sky Meadows State Park  
11012 Edmonds Lane  
Delaplane, VA 22025-9508  
540-592-3556

Skyland Stables (Shenandoah National Park Milepost 41.7)  
540-999-2210



United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101

Virginia Tourism Corporation  
901 East Byrd Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
800-VISIT VA, 804-786-2051

West Virginia Travel Development Division  
1900 Washington Street E.  
Dept. SV  
Charleston, WV 25305  
800-CALL-WVA

## Rock Climbing Resources

Mountain Trails  
212 East Cork Street  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-667-0030

Rivers Climbing School  
800-879-7483  
West Virginia New River Gorge area

Seneca Rocks Climbing School, Inc.  
Box 53  
Seneca Rocks, WV 26884  
304-567-2600, 800-548-0108

Seneca Rocks Mountain Guides  
Box 223  
Seneca Rocks, WV 26884  
304-567-2115, 800-451-5108  
E-mail: Seneca Trad@aol.com

West Virginia Travel Development Division  
1900 Washington Street E  
Dept. SV  
Charleston, WV 25305  
800-CALL-WVA

## Shooting Resources

Bull Run Shooting Center  
7700 Bull Run Drive  
Centreville, VA 22020  
703-830-2344

Flying Rabbit Sporting Clays  
P.O. Box 1234  
1015 Greystone Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801  
540-432-3969

Isaac Walton League  
P.O. Box 2954  
Winchester, VA 22604  
540-662-9736

Old Dominion Sport Center  
370 Battle Avenue  
Winchester, VA 22601  
667-4876

Shenandoah Sports  
175 Front Royal Road  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-665-6455

Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area  
West Virginia Department of Natural Resources  
304-754-3855

Sparks Sport Center  
Wheatlands Street Ext.  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
800-525-8467

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101

# General Resources

## General Outdoor Information Sources

Appalachian Trail Conference

Box 807

Washington & Jackson Streets

Harpers Ferry, WV 25425

304-535-6331

*nonprofit organization that coordinates land acquisition, trail management and information about the more than 2,150 mile AT*

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association

P.O. Box 366

Glen Echo, MD 20812-0366

301-983-0825

*Organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of the C&O Canal*

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park

Box 4

Sharpsburg, MD 21782

301-739-4200

*Offers many outdoor activities including hiking, biking, and camping all in a historic setting*

Department of Transportation

1401 E. Broad St.

Richmond, VA 23219

804-786-0002

*ask for Map of Scenic Roads in Virginia*

Front Royal-Warren County Visitor Center

414 E. Main St.

Front Royal, VA 22630

800-338-2576, 540-635-3185

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

P.O. Box 65

Harpers Ferry, WV 25425

304-535-6029

Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce

46 E. Main St.

Luray, VA 22835

540-743-3915

Monongahela National Forest  
Potomac Ranger District  
U.S. Forest Service  
Rt. 3, Box 240  
Petersburg, WV 26847 304-257-4488

*the closest real wilderness to our area, make sure you get information and maps before you visit this destination*

Mountain Trails  
212 East Cork Street  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540-667-0030

*excellent resource for equipment, advice, and outdoor literature covering the entire region*

Outdoor Books East  
3420 Sylvan Lane  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
410-465-7213

*mail order for hundreds of outdoor books covering the entire spectrum of activities*

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club(PATC)  
118 Park Street, S.E.  
Vienna, VA 22180  
703-242-0315 or 0693

*protects and maintains 240 miles of the AT and 700 miles of additional trails in this area; publishes numerous guide books and trail maps; maintains shelters and rents cabins along the AT and Big Blue Trail*

Shenandoah County Travel Council  
P.O. Box 802  
Woodstock, VA 22664  
540-459-2332

Shenandoah National Park  
Route 4, Box 348  
Luray, VA 22835-9051 540-999-3500

*scenic views; fall colors; the AT winds its way along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains; numerous side trails for all levels of hikers; camping of all varieties*

Shenandoah Valley Travel Association  
P.O. Box 1040, Dept. TG96  
New Market, VA 22844-1040  
540-740-3132

United States Forest Service  
George Washington National Forest  
Lee Ranger District  
109 Molineau Road  
Edinburg, VA 22824  
540-984-4101  
Massanutten Visitors Center  
540-740-8310

*miles of trails for hiking and biking, rustic campgrounds, recreation without the crowds of the Skyline Drive; make sure you get the map of the Lee Ranger District and the inventory of trails in this section of the George Washington National Forest*

United States Geological Survey  
Map Distribution  
Federal Center, Building 41  
Box 25286  
Denver, CO 80225  
303-236-7477

*National source for topographical maps that might not be available locally*

United States Geological Survey  
Earth Science Information Center  
507 National Center  
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive  
Reston, VA 20192  
800-USA-MAPS

*Has a visitor's center and map store; call 703-648-4748 to arrange a tour*

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation  
203 Governor Street, Suite 302  
Richmond, VA 23219  
1-800-933-PARK (camping and cabin reservations, weekdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. )  
804-786-1712 (general information)  
*information on Virginia State Parks*

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
4010 W. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23230  
804-367-1000

*publishes Virginia Wildlife magazine- excellent source for hunting, fishing, boating and conservation and photography articles covering the entire Virginia outdoors*

Virginia Tourism Corporation

901 East Byrd Street

Richmond, VA 23219

*call 800-827-3325 for a copy of Virginia Outdoors, a good free guide to outdoor activities in Va. and for Virginia is for Lovers Travel Guide call 800-VISIT VA, 804-786-2051, fax 804-786-1919, [www.VIRGINIA.org](http://www.VIRGINIA.org)*

Virginia Welcome Center

Interstate 81 near Virginia-West Virginia line

*state road maps and travel information*

West Virginia Travel Development Division

1900 Washington Street E

Dept. SV

Charleston, WV 25305

800-CALL-WVA

*provides very useful information and brochures on all outdoor activities in wild and wonderful West Virginia*

Winchester and Frederick County Chamber of Commerce

1360 S. Pleasant Valley Rd.

Winchester, VA 22602

540-662-4118, 800-662-1360

Winchester- Frederick County Visitor Center

1360 S. Pleasant Valley Road

Winchester, VA 22601

540-662-4135, 800-662-1360

### **General Outdoor Books**

184 Miles of Adventure, Hikers Guide to the C & O Canal, Mason-Dixon Council, Boy Scouts of America, 1200 Crestwood Drive, P.O. Box 2133, Hagerstown, MD 21742, 1970.

*Straightforward guide to the towpath with maps and description of points of particular interest by milepost sequence.*

Virginia, A Guide to Backcountry Travel & Adventure, James Bannon, Out There Press, P.O. Box 1175, Asheville, NC 28802

*an extensive, general guide to regions and types of outdoor activities in the state; does not describe specific hikes or rides, useful for general planning of trips*

Virginia Atlas and Gazetteer, DeLorme Mapping Company, P.O. Box 298, Freeport, Maine 04032, 1995.

*Most complete listing of all major and back roads in Virginia-don't leave home without it!*

Virginia Outdoor Activity Guide, Lynn Seldon, Country Roads Press, P.O. Box 286, Lower Main St., Castine, Maine 04421.  
*overview guide that tends to focus on commercial outfitters*



# *Notes*

*Notes*