Shenandoah National Park
Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

Trip Name: **Graves Mill**

Description: Gently rolling trail following a beautiful river, excellent swimming holes

Entry: Graves Mill Boundary (Central District; East side; Route 662)

Exit: Graves Mill Boundary (Central District; East side; Route 662)

Map(s): PATC #10 Central District

Level: Beginner

Total Length: 1.2 to 4.2 miles

Day One

Campsite: Graves Mill Trail - backcountry
0.6 to 1.5 miles
Hike into Shenandoah National Park on Graves Mill Trail 0.5 mile.
Turn right, remaining on Graves Mill Trail. Cross stream, and hike as far as desired.
Find a legal place to camp.
The last half mile to where the Graves Mill Trail meets the Rapidan Fire Road is an undesirable area in which to camp, as the drop-off to the rever and upslope are areas too steep on which to pitch a tent.

Day Two

0.6 to 1.5 miles
Return the way you came.

Notes

Beware of poison ivy in the area.

You probably won't find pre-existing sites in this area. However, since there is so much level ground existing in the first half of the hike, you should be able to find good places to camp during that stretch. For beginners, this is an excellent trip to practice pristine site camping techniques.

You will be following the Rapidan River upstream from where it leaves Shenandoah National Park for the last time. Fish, swimming holes, and level areas to camp abound. You may extend your hike by continuing to follow the Rapidan River up the Rapidan Fire Road. Rapidan Camp, President Hoover's historic retreat, is about 4.2 miles up the road. (Be sure to turn left shortly after the gate near the Camp, or th historical site will be missed.)

If you don't mind crossing cold, rushing streams, this is also a good area in which to camp during the winter.