

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

One Night

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Shenandoah National Park
Emergency: 1-800-732-0911



Pass Mountain and Piney Ridge

Standard - Circuit

Level: Advanced

Total Length: 21 miles

Trip Description: Boundary hike circuit, seldom-camped wilderness ridge for solitude at night

Entry: Pass Mtn Boundary

North District; East side; US Highway 211

Exit: Pass Mtn Boundary

North District; East side; US Highway 211

Map(s): PATC # 9 North District

Day One

Campsite: Piney Ridge Trail - backcountry

9.4 to 10.4 miles

Park on U.S. Highway 211, and cross the road to the cement trail post.

Hike up Pass Mountain Trail 3 miles.

Turn right onto the Appalachian Trail (AT), hiking north 1.9 miles.

Turn right onto Rocky Branch Trail, hiking 0.4 miles.

Cross the paved parking lot; you'll find an unmarked trail to Hull School Trail on the other side.

Turn right onto Hull School Trail and hike 2.9 miles. Be sure to pick up water for the night.

Turn left onto Fork Mountain Trail, hiking 1.2 miles, where it ends at Piney Ridge Trail.

Continue straight (uphill) on Piney Ridge Trail and find a place to dry-camp in the next mile or so.

Day Two

12.2 to 13.2 miles

Continue on Piney Ridge, hiking a total of 2 miles from Fork Mountain.

Continue uphill a short distance on the service road to reach the Appalachian Trail (AT).

Turn left onto the AT and hike 8.2 miles (there are several water options at Elkwallow).

Turn left onto Pass Mountain, descending 3 miles to return to your vehicle.

Notes

This is a strenuous hike due to the many mountainous miles each day. There is only one major stream crossing, but the Thornton River can be high at times. After heavy rains, or sometimes in the spring, this crossing could be dangerous. Be prepared to turn around if necessary.