

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

One Night

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



Rapidan, Fork Mountain, and Rose River

Horse - Circuit

Level: Experienced

Total Length: 22.9 to 17.3 miles

Trip Description: Horse-packing circuit, camping in the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area

Entry: 51 MP - Big Meadows/Rapidan Rd

Exit: 51 MP - Big Meadows/Rapidan Rd

Map(s): PATC #10 Central District

Day One

Campsite: Rapidan Wildlife Management Areas - backcountry

9.8 to 11.5 miles

Park at Rapidan Road Parking Area.

Ride down Rapidan Fire Road, 1.2 miles.

Turn right onto Mill Prong Horse Trail and ride 1.8 miles.

Turn right through Rapidan Camp to Laurel Prong Trail (about 0.3 mile).

Ride on Laurel Prong Trail for 0.6 mile.

Turn left up Fork Mountain Trail for about 1.4 miles.

Turn right onto Fork Mountain Fire Road, riding for about 4.5 miles.

Turn left onto Rapidan Fire Road (you are now outside the Shenandoah National Park boundary).

Choose a place to camp within the next 1.7 miles before re-entering Shenandoah.

You will be camping in the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. For camping regulations in this Virginia State Land, visit <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/regulations/wmarules.pdf>.

Day Two

11.4 to 13.1 miles

Continue riding up Rapidan Fire Road another 2 to 3.7 miles (total of 3.7 from Fork Mountain).

Turn right onto Upper Dark Hollow Trail and ride for 2.2 miles.

Turn left onto Rose River Fire Road, riding 3.2 miles.

Turn left onto Stony Mountain Trail and ride 1.1 miles.

Turn right onto Rapidan Fire Road and ride 2.9 miles to return to your vehicle.

Notes

Please see regulations on horse use in Shenandoah.

You need a topographic map (suggest PATC map #10).

Please use certified weed-free feed before and during your trip.

Wear blaze orange during hunting season, as you will pass through, and camp in, areas of Rapidan Wildlife Management Area where hunting is allowed (see topographic map).

Options

You may shorten the second day to between 5.8 and 7.5 miles (depending on your campsite) by continuing straight up Rapidan Road all the way to your vehicle.