



View from Beacon Heights
Photo by Randy Johnson

The High Country—MST Segment 5

BEACON HEIGHTS NEAR GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN TO DEVIL'S GARDEN OVERLOOK NEAR SPARTA

By Carolyn Sakowski

This section, covering almost 91 miles, offers the hiker some of the most astounding scenery in northwestern North Carolina. This part of the trail, which travels along the ridgeline where elevations range from 4,300 to 3,400 feet, offers views looking down the escarpment into the North Carolina Piedmont.

Most of this section runs parallel to the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) and often crosses the parkway as the trail goes back into the woods and away from the road. There are a few stretches that cross fields, which will some-

times share space with friendly cows. There are also a few patches where the trail travels along a backroad or the shoulder of the BRP, but most of this segment is on well-engineered footpaths that make the ascents and descents easy to hike. Although the BRP is always nearby, you often feel that you are deep in the woods, miles from civilization.

This section begins at Beacon Heights and follows the Tanawha Trail as it travels along the base of Grandfather Mountain, which is one of only 553 certified biosphere reserves in the world. It continues past the resort town of Blowing Rock, travels near West Jefferson, and ends near Sparta in the northwest corner of North Carolina near the Virginia border.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- The Linn Cove Viaduct, a 1,243-foot concrete engineering marvel that carries the BRP around the base of Grandfather Mountain
- Views of Grandfather Mountain, Table Rock, Hawksbill, and Pisgah National Forest that can encompass over 50 miles on a clear day
- Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, where the MST uses the park's former carriage trails and passes by Flat Top Manor, which now serves as the parkway's craft center
- E.B. Jeffress Park with the restored cabin of farmer Jesse Brown and Cool Springs Baptist Church as well as "The Cascades" waterfall, which slides over rocks for 250 feet
- Mount Jefferson Overlook, where you have a panoramic view of Grandfather, Sugar, and Beech Mountains to the south and Mount Jefferson looming over the town of Jefferson in front of you
- Doughton Park, whose 7,000 acres offer picnic areas, camping facilities, and hiking along ridges and through meadows with long-range views of the surrounding area
- Brinegar Cabin, built about 1885, which often offers hand-loom weaving and other mountain craft demonstrations during the summer

The nearby towns of Linville, Blowing Rock, Boone, West Jefferson, and Sparta offer all amenities. They also make it easy to break this segment into several day hikes.



Lunch hour at the Bull Thistle Café
Photo by Dave Fairall

Thanks to the following for their assistance: Dave Bauer, Allen de Hart, Nancy Dexter Wilson, Tom Dillon, Alton Franklin, Carmen Frankowski, Jim Hallsey, Randy Johnson, John Lanman, Doug Smith, and Jane Wallace.

Total Distance: 90.3 miles (8.3 miles on road or BRP shoulder; 82 miles on trail)

Difficulty: Easy to moderate with only a few strenuous parts

Trail Updates

When planning your trip using this guide, take a moment to see whether Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (Friends) has posted any updates about the trail route by visiting Friends' "Trail Updates" page at www.MountainstoSeaTrail.org/updates.

Trail Angels

Eastbound (EB) Mile 58.1; Westbound (WB) Mile 31.2

Terry Mohn has offered camping, water, electricity, and WiFi. He lives 0.4 mile from the intersection of the BRP and NC 16 at Horse Gap. His house is at the end of the gravel road where you pass around an iron gate on the southeast side of BRP. Please call ahead (336-813-2397) so Terry and his neighbors know you are coming.

EB Mile 66.2; WB Mile 23.0

Thomas & Theresa Haislip provide free camping with a picnic table, fire pit, water, and clothesline in a field next to their house. At MP 256, across from the driveway leading to Mountain View Lodge, follow Don Bare Rd. for 0.2 mile on west side of BRP, opposite of where MST goes. House can be seen from the road. Please call ahead (336-982-3082).

EB Mile 71.9; WB Mile 18.4

Marc Arnsdorff can provide camping and water. His farm is located on Peak Creek Church Rd., which is on the west side of the BRP, across from Darnell Woodie Rd. His is the 2nd white farmhouse on the right across from an old barn. It is approximately 500 yards off BRP. Please call ahead (336-982-4034).

Shuttle and Guide Services

EB Miles 0.0-30.2; WB Miles 60.1-90.3

HikeMore Adventures, 9041 NC 181, Jonas Ridge, 28641, 828-595-HIKE or 828-733-2303 (after hours), info@hikemoreadventures.com; www.hikemoreadventures.com. HikeMore Adventures provides shuttles between the Woodlawn Work Center on US 221 (Segment 4 EB Mile 19.7; WB Mile 55.5) and Aho Gap (Segment 5 EB Mile 30.2; WB Mile 60.1), as well

as guide services in the Linville Gorge and Harpers Creek wildernesses. Their Base Camp, about 5 miles north of the MST on NC 181 (Segment 4 EB Mile 52.7; WB Mile 22.5), also has a store with hiking supplies.

Camping

Note: Camping on BRP/NPS land is limited to designated, approved areas. It is illegal to camp along the MST on these lands unless there is signage allowing camping or you have a proper permit on other approved land.

Friends is constructing 5 campsites along the parkway and expects they will open soon. Check the website at www.MountainstoSeaTrail.org/updates for additional information.

EB Mile 8.0; WB Mile 82.3

Grandfather Mountain State Park, www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/grmo/main.php (obtain free permit at sign-up box at the Grandfather Mtn. State Park sign at EB Mile 8.0; WB Mile 82.3.):

Streamside Campsite (fire ring) 0.7 mile from MST

Hermitage Campsite (no fire ring) 0.8 mile from MST

Storyteller's Rock Campsite (fire ring) 1.2 miles from MST

Refuge Campsite (fire ring) 1.4 miles from MST

EB Mile 13.0; WB Mile 77.3

Julian Price Memorial Park Campground, BRP MP 297, Blowing Rock, 28605, 828-963-5911; www.blueridgeparkway.org/v.php?pg=36. Half of these sites are available without reservations.

EB Mile 15.9; WB Mile 74.4

Backcountry site with bench & firepit with grate but no amenities; get permit from Price Park campground office. Maximum of 6 campers allowed.

EB Mile 62.6; WB Mile 24.7

Raccoon Holler Campground, 493 Raccoon Holler Rd., Jefferson, 28640, 336-982-2706; www.raccoonholler.com. Open mid-April through October.

EB Mile 75.6; WB Mile 14.6

Wild Woody's Campground, 14234 NC 18, Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-984-8088. 0.2 mile from MP 248, intersection of BRP and NC 18; also has eclectic antique store; open May-Oct.

EB Mile 76.0; WB Mile 14.1

Miller's Campground, 793 Miller Rd., Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-359-2828; www.millersc.com. Located 0.4 mile from intersection of BRP and NC 18, on the trail. Open April-Oct.; tent and RV camping sites. Ask about MST discounts.

EB Mile 84.6; WB Mile 5.1

Doughton Park (MP 239.2, located on the trail); reservations made online at RECREATION.gov or 336-372-8568. 110 campsites; 25 RV sites. Open April-Oct.

Food

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 90.3

Town of Linville is 3 miles south of BRP from Beacon Heights on US 221; www.averycounty.com.

EB Mile 25.1; WB Mile 65.1

Town of Blowing Rock is 1.0 mile from MST; www.blowingrock.com.

EB Mile 38.1; WB Mile 51.4

Blue Ridge Diner, 5176 Old Hwy. 421 South, Boone, 28607, 828-265-1999. Open 11-8 Monday through Friday.

EB Mile 51.9; WB Mile 37.9

Park Vista Restaurant, 1907 Park Vista Rd., West Jefferson, 28694, 336-877-5200; parkvistainn.com. Lunch and dinner daily.

EB Mile 58.1; WB Mile 30.2

Mountainaire Seafood and Steaks, 9930 NC 16, West Jefferson, 28694, 336-982-3060; www.mountainaireseafood.com. Located 1.0 mile from trail on NC 16. Closed Mondays. Open for lunch & dinner, Tues.-Sun. Winter hours vary. N36.315833, W81.369722.

EB Mile 61.9; WB Mile 27.3

Northwest Trading Post/Sally Mae's on the Parkway, 414 Trading Post Rd., Glendale Springs, 28629, 336-982-2543. Located at MP 259; sandwiches, sodas, fudge, gifts featuring Hand Made in the USA products. Closed during winter months.

EB Mile 75.6; WB Mile 14.6

Station's Inn Bar & Grille, 14355 NC 18 South, Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-359-2888; www.thestationsinn.com. 0.2 mile from MP 248, intersection BRP and NC 18; located on the trail.

EB Mile 75.6; WB Mile 14.6

Freeborne's Eatery & Lodge, 14300 NC 18, Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-359-8008; www.freebornes.com. 0.2 mile from MP 248, intersection BRP and NC 18; located across road from the trail; closed during winter.

Lodging/Supplies/Services/Post Office

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 90.3

Town of Linville is 3 miles south of Beacon Heights (MP 305.2) on US 221. Linville post office, 4235 Mitchell Ave., Linville, 28646, 828-733-5745; weekdays, 8:00 to noon & 1:00 to 4:00; Saturdays, 8:00 to 11:30. www.averycounty.com.

EB Mile 11.9; WB Mile 78.4

Foscoe Country Corner & Deli, 8937 NC 105 South, Foscoe, 28604, 828-963-9512. One mile east from Holloway Mtn. parking area.

EB Mile 11.9; WB Mile 78.4

Hidden Valley Motel, 8725 NC 105, Foscoe, 28604, 828-963-4372; www.hiddenvalleymotel.com. One mile east from Holloway Mtn. parking area, then go 0.3 mile north on NC 105.

EB Mile 25.1; WB Mile 65.1

Town of Blowing Rock is 1.0 mile or less from MST; www.blowingrock.com.

EB Mile 43.3; WB Mile 46.7

Dollar General Store, 146 Yuma Lane, Deep Gap, 28618, 828-355-4679. Located one mile west of BRP on US 421.

EB Mile 43.3; WB Mile 46.7

Jim's Produce, 7808 Old 421 South, Deep Gap, 28618, 828-264-5788. Located one mile west of BRP on US 421.

EB Mile 51.9; WB Mile 37.9

Park Vista Inn, 1907 Park Vista Rd., West Jefferson, 28694, 336-877-5200; www.parkvistainn.com. Parking is allowed at this motel if you let staff know. Resident manager's email is unclelewi@hotmail.com. MP 268; N36.27901777, W81.4153771.

EB Mile 58.1; WB Mile 30.2

Marathon Run-In (gas, convenience store, groceries & produce), 10703 NC 163, Glendale Springs, 28629, 336-982-4944; mymarathonstation.com.

[com](#). Located one mile north of BRP at intersection of NC 16 & NC 163; N36.315833, W81.369722.

EB Mile 61.9; WB Mile 27.3

Northwest Trading Post/Sally Mae's on the Parkway, 414 Trading Post Rd., Glendale Springs, 28629, 336-982-2543. Located at MP 259; gift shop featuring crafts, food, and drinks.

EB Mile 62.0; WB Mile 28.5

New River Inn and Cottages, 264 Trading Post Rd., Glendale Springs, 28629, 336-982-8282; www.newriverinnnc.com. Located near the trail, 0.1 mile north of MP 259 & Northwest Trading Post.

EB Mile 66.2; WB Mile 23.0

Mountain View Lodge, 164 Mountain View Lodge Dr., Glendale Springs, 28629, 336-207-7677; www.mtnviewlodge.com. Pet-friendly cabins.

EB Mile 75.6; WB Mile 14.6



Station's Inn, 14355 NC 18 South, Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-359-2888; www.thestationsinn.com. 0.2 mile from MP 248, intersection of BRP and NC 18; located on the trail; has general store with sodas, snacks, beer/wine, light groceries.



EB Mile 75.6; WB Mile 14.6

Freeborne's Eatery & Lodge, 14300 NC 18, Laurel Springs, 28644, 336-359-8008; www.freebornes.com. 0.2 mile from MP 248, intersection BRP and NC 18; located across road from the trail; closed during winter.

Water/Restrooms

Note: Water sources from creeks are noted throughout this segment, but please exercise caution and treat water taken from creeks or springs before drinking.

EB Mile 1.6; WB Mile 88.7 Linn Cove visitor center at MP 304.4 (closed in winter)  

EB Mile 13.0; WB Mile 77.3 Julian Price Memorial Park picnic area and campground at MP 297.0 (closed in winter)  

- EB Mile 21.2; WB Mile 68.9 Moses H. Cone Memorial Park at MP 294.0  
- EB Mile 47.3; WB Mile 41.9 Cascades Recreation Area at MP 271.9  
- EB Mile 61.9; WB Mile 27.3 Northwest Trading Post/Sally Mae's on the Parkway at MP 259  
- EB Mile 82.8; WB Mile 7.1 Doughton Park at MP 239.2 (closed in winter)  

Hunting

Hunting is not allowed on any of this segment.

Signs/Blazing

Where the MST runs conjunctively with the Tanawha Trail, the Tanawha Trail uses a white feather as signage. The MST uses a three-inch white dot on signs and trees. The section that follows carriage trails in Moses H. Cone Memorial Park has good signage but limited reference to MST. The Boone Fork Trail (BFT) near Price Park Campground uses an orange diamond. Bluff Mountain Trail (BMT) is maintained primarily by the National Park Service.

Special Considerations

There are several different locations using the name Boone Fork. Make sure you get the right location when looking for a specific site. Don't confuse Upper Boone Fork Trail along Tanawha Trail section with Boone Fork Trail in Price Park.

Some National Park Service facilities are closed from November to April, and many of the privately owned facilities are also seasonal. Consult the websites before planning your trip.

This section offers many opportunities for shorter day hikes, especially if you use shuttles between parking areas.

Dogs are allowed on this segment of the MST, but should be on leashes at all times.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Friends office: 919-825-0297 or info@MountainstoSeaTrail.org

Carolyn Sakowski: sakowski@blairpub.com

Trail Maps

Google map of the entire MST: www.MountainstoSeaTrail.org/map

Grandfather Mountain trails:

www.grandfather.com/pdf/07trail_map.pdf

Price Park trails: www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/julian-price-trails.htm

Moses H. Cone Memorial Park carriage trails:

www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/moses-cone-trails.htm

Tanawha Trail: www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/tanawha-trail.htm

Doughton Park Trails:

www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/doughton-park-trails.htm

Park Websites

National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway site:

www.nps.gov/blri/

Blue Ridge Parkway: www.blueridgeparkway.org

Grandfather Mtn. State Park:

www.ncparks.gov/grandfather-mountain-state-park

Tourism Sites

High Country Host: highcountryhost.com

Avery County Chamber of Commerce: www.averycounty.com

Visit Blowing Rock: www.blowingrock.com

Ashe County Chamber of Commerce: www.Ashechamber.com

Alleghany County Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center:

www.visitalleghanync.com

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Page 1)

Beacon Heights Parking Area

(MP 305.2)

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 90.3



N36.083928, W81.830119

Stack Rock Parking Area

(MP 304.8)

EB Mile 0.9; WB Mile 89.4



N36.088956, W81.822173

Linn Cove Visitor Center

(MP 304.4)

EB Mile 1.6; WB Mile 88.7



N36.090133, W81.8146

Wilson Creek Overlook Parking Area

(MP 303.6)

EB Mile 2.9; WB Mile 87.4



N36.100471, W81.808981

Rough Ridge Parking Area

(MP 302.8)

EB Mile 4.4; WB Mile 85.9



N36.098269, W81.797310

Boulder Fields Overlook Parking Area

(MP 302.4)

EB Mile 5.1; WB Mile 85.2



N36.098056, W81.7875

Boone Fork Parking Area

(MP 299.9)

EB Mile 8.1; WB Mile 82.2



N36.1199, W81.78145

Cold Prong Pond Parking Area

(MP 299.0)

EB Mile 9.8; WB Mile 80.5



N36.128964, W81.770168

Holloway Mountain Rd. Parking Lot

(MP 298.6)

EB Mile 11.9; WB Mile 78.4



N36.139783, W81.7574

Julian Price Park Campground

(MP 297)

EB Mile 13.0; WB Mile 77.3



N36.13913, W81.73245

Trout Lake Parking Area

(Located off Shulls Mill Rd. from MP 296.4)

EB Mile 20.1; WB Mile 70.2

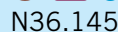


N36.152613, W81.703562

Cone Manor House Parking Area

(MP 294.0)

EB Mile 21.2; WB Mile 68.9



N36.14573, W81.69314

Coordinates can be entered in your mapping software just like a street address.

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Page 2)

Thunder Hill Overlook

(MP 290.3)

EB Mile 27.1; WB Mile 62.4



N36.136310, W81.643188

Raven Rock Overlook

(MP 289.5)

EB Mile 27.9; WB Mile 61.1



N36.144508, W81.633430

Boone's Trace Overlook

(MP 285.1)

EB Mile 33.8; WB Mile 56.2



N36.197903, W81.604227

Grandview Overlook

(MP 281.2)

EB Mile 37.4; WB Mile 52.2



N36.227267, W81.567283

Osborne Mountain Overlook

(MP 278)

EB Mile 41.2; WB Mile 47.0



N36.224783, W81.513033

Tomkins Knob Parking Area

(MP 272.5)

EB Mile 45.6; WB Mile 43.0



N36.244275, W81.465830

Cascades Recreation Area

(MP 271.9)

EB Mile 47.3; WB Mile 41.9



N36.245648, W81.458453

Park Vista Inn

(MP 268)

EB Mile 51.9; WB Mile 37.9

; ask staff for permission

N36.289187, W81.415507

Mount Jefferson Overlook Parking Area

(MP 267.0)

EB Mile 52.9; WB Mile 36.6



N36.2948508, W81.4131549

Jumpinoff Rock Overlook Parking Area

(MP 260.3)

EB Mile 59.1; WB Mile 28.4



N36.324268, W81.368083

Northwest Trading Post

(MP 259)

EB Mile 61.9; WB Mile 27.3



N36.343949, W81.375461

Basin Cove Overlook

(MP 244.7)

EB Mile 78.8; WB Mile 10.9



N36.3907529, W81.199762

Coordinates can be entered in your mapping software just like a street address.

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Page 3)

Bluff Mountain View Overlook

(MP 243.4)

EB Mile 80.4; WB Mile 9.3



N36.40833, W81.19556

Alligator Rock Overlook Parking Area

(MP 242.3)

EB Mile 81.5; WB Mile 8.8



N36.421121, W81.189732

Doughton Park

(MP 241.5)

EB Mile 83.2; WB Mile 6.9



N36.43384, W81.17726

GPS may not work in the park;
open April through Oct.

Brinegar Cabin Parking Area

(MP 238.5)

EB Mile 87.2; WB Mile 3.6



N35.41866, W81.14648

GPS may not work in park

Devil's Garden Overlook Parking Area

(MP 235.7)

EB Mile 90.3; WB Mile 0.0



N36.434037, W81.104296













Wildflower array
Photo by Jacqueline Brown

Coordinates can be entered in your mapping software just like a street address.

Hiking Directions, Eastbound

To help with directions, EB on BRP is going north; WB is going south. When going EB, west is on the left, east on the right. Going WB, west is on right, east on left.

- 0.0 The southern terminus of Segment 5 is Beacon Heights parking area on BRP (MP 305.2). The parking area is 4 miles east of Linville. Take US 221 toward the BRP. You pass Grandfather Mtn. entrance after 2 miles; 2 more miles at intersection with BRP, turn south and go 0.2 mile to parking area on left. To begin hike, cross paved road between parking area and woods and follow signs to Beacon Heights Trail, heading into the woods.    
- 0.1 At intersection with Tanawha Trail, which runs conjunctively with MST for next 13 miles of this segment, turn left (north).
- 0.4 Cross paved US 221.
- 0.5 Ascend to area with large boulders. Hike on boardwalk next to stone parkway retainer wall. Leave boulder field.
- 0.9 Ascend steps. Trail forks. MST goes right. Stack Rock parking area (MP 304.8) is 90 feet to left. 
- 1.1 Ascend and then descend on wooden stairway and boardwalk that goes around giant rock formation known as Stack Rock.
- 1.2 Cross bridge over Stack Rock Creek and pass waterfall. 
- 1.3 Ascend wooden and stone steps. (This section is strenuous.)
- 1.5 Pass storage buildings on left.
- 1.6 Come to Linn Cove parking area and visitor center (MP 304.4). Follow paved path around outside of parking lot.   
- 1.7 Pass Linn Cove Viaduct sign.
- 1.9 Pass under viaduct and follow steps through large boulders to continue on MST/Tanawha Trail. 
- 2.0 Cross bridge over Linn Cove Branch.
- 2.2 A side trail goes to right 60 feet to rock outcrop with good views of viaduct, Table Rock, Hawksbill, and Pisgah Forest.
- 2.5 Cross footbridge.
- 2.8 Balanced Rock is on right.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies

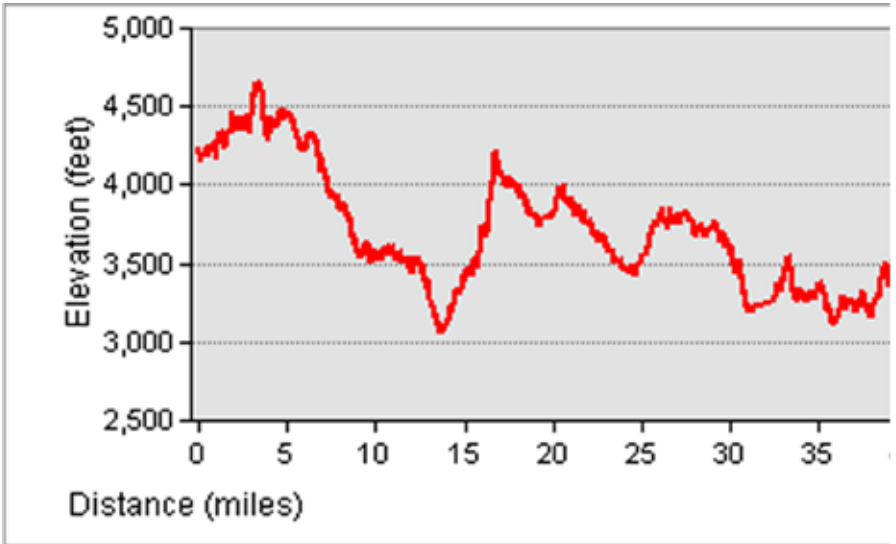


Water



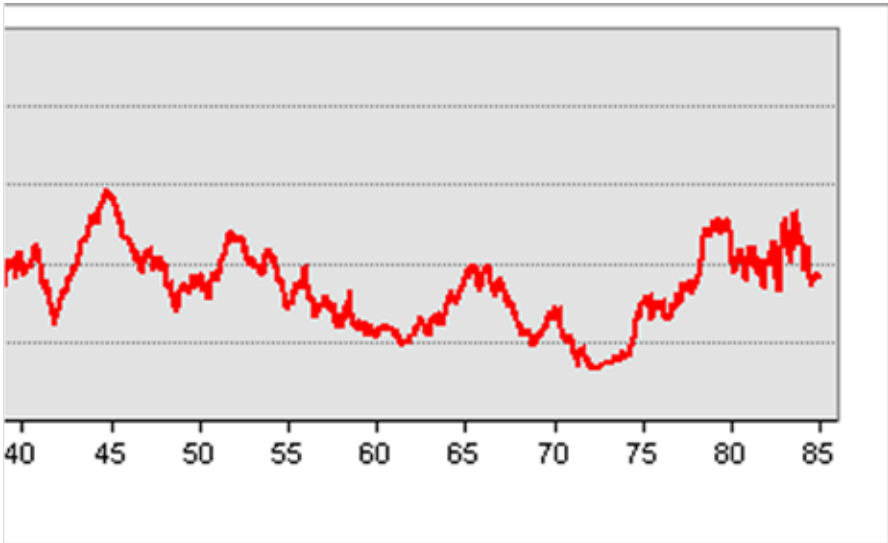
Picnic

Segment 5 Eastbound






- 2.9 Trail to Wilson Creek Overlook (MP 303.6) is on right. Continue left and cross bridge over Wilson Creek. Next 1.23 miles ascend through large boulders. (P) 💧
- 3.8 Side trail on right goes to rock outcrop with good views. Continue left on main trail.
- 4.2 Walk on Rough Ridge boardwalk.
- 4.4 Trail to Rough Ridge parking area (MP 302.8) goes right. Stay on main trail. (P)
- 4.6 Cross Little Wilson Creek on arched footbridge. 💧
- 5.1 Side trail on right leads to Boulder Fields Overlook parking area (MP 302.4) but stay left. (P)
- 6.6 Cross footbridge.
- 7.6 Daniel Boone Scout Trail goes left. Stay straight on main trail. Campsites are available 1.2 miles up the left-hand trail at Daniel Boone Campsite. (A)
- 7.8 Nuwati Trail goes to left. The 4 campsites described in “Camping” are on the Nuwati Trail. Stay right for MST. (A)
- 8.0 Asutsi Trail goes right for 0.4 mile to US 221 (winter parking when BRP is closed). Cross Upper Boone Fork bridge to stay on MST.

Elevation Profile












Upper Boone Fork Trail goes right 0.5 mile to Calloway Peak Overlook (MP 299.7). Continue left for MST. Just past Asutsi on the right, the Grandfather Mtn. State Park sign shows which campsites are in use and has permits to register for open sites located on Nuwati and Daniel Boone Scout Trails.

- 8.1 Boone Fork parking area (MP 299.9) is 400 feet to right. Go left to continue on MST. *Note:* Don't confuse this overlook with Boone Fork Trail in Price Park. 
- 9.5 Cross bridge.
- 9.7 Cross another bridge.
- 9.8 Trail to Cold Prong Pond parking area (MP 299) is on right. Follow Tanawha Trail sign directing you toward Price Lake. You rock-hop 4 creeks in this segment.  
- 10.7 Pass through stile to enter meadow. Go 50 yards and follow Tanawha Trail signs to make right turn. Walk 50 yards to enter woods, following MST sign.
- 10.9 Leave woods and enter field. Follow Tanawha Trail markers as trail veers left.



View from Rough Ridge
Photo by Randy Johnson

- 11.1 Go through wooded area to reach another meadow. Trail goes left (north) up the hill. On right, at bottom of hill, is graveled Holloway Mountain Rd. As you approach woods at top of hill, you'll see markers on the trees.
- 11.3 Trail goes in and out of wooded areas. Trail curves to left in field; gate at top of hill, but continue on trail.
- 11.4 Go through stile and enter meadow with good views of Grandfather Mtn. to right. At top of hill, there is tree-sheltered area. Signs for Tanawha Trail direct you to turn right here. You can follow that trail or head straight over the hill.
- 11.9 Descend downhill to Holloway Mtn. Rd. parking area. *Note:* BRP is 1.0 mile to the right from this parking area. The intersection with BRP is 6 miles west of Blowing Rock. To the left, it is 1.0 mile to the town of Foscoe and NC 105. Access MST through a stile across gravel road from the lot or go left for 30 yards to gated dirt road and follow that road. The two options merge later.    
- 12.2 Follow Tanawha Trail signs to right; another trail goes left.

- 12.3 Trail appears to fork. Leave old roadbed and go left onto single track.
- 12.4 Go through stile and join old roadbed. At fork, stay right for few yards, where you skirt and then walk through meadow.
- 12.8 Leave meadow and cross bridge.
- 12.9 Just after passing by stile on right is a second bridge.
- 13.0 Tanawha Trail intersects with Boone Fork Trail (BFT). It is 0.5 mile to right to Julian Price Park Campground. Continue left on BFT.    
- 13.3 Cross meadow. At top of meadow, there is a milepost sign for BFT (3.5 MP). Turn right at that sign and proceed downhill; this is the route laid out in 2014.
- 13.5 At large rock on left, trail goes right, following orange diamonds. You see closed trail to left. There are 3 creek crossings via rocks. The next 2 miles have numerous creeks where you can access water, but it should be treated. 
- 13.7 Cross bridge; a few yards later is BFT 3.0 milepost. Cross 2 creeks using rocks.
- 13.9 Cross second bridge, followed by 2 more quick creek crossings. After second creek crossing, trail goes uphill to the left. This is the route made in 2015.
- 14.0 In the next 0.2 mile, there are 3 more creek crossings.
- 14.2 Cross old log bridge and then metal bridge. About 100 yards later is BFT 2.5 milepost. It is 30 feet to first of 4 creek crossings, some of which may require getting your shoes wet. After the third creek crossing, you have to climb up large rocks. After the fourth creek crossing, it is 100 yards to a plank walkway.
- 14.5 Follow steps down to right to cross creek using large boulders. In the next 0.2 mile, you climb up and down hills, with a series of cascades in creek on left, followed by 3 sets of wooden steps.
- 14.7 Cross metal bridge, just past BFT milepost sign. Within a few yards, there are 2 easy creek crossings.
- 14.8 Trail goes right, following stone walkway uphill and around large rock formation. Go a few yards to wooden ladder leading down rocks, followed by BFT milepost sign.
- 15.3 Side trail to Hebron Falls is on left, but stay on main trail.
- 15.5 Old dam site is on left.



Camping

Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms










Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 15.7 Leave BFT at large rock outcrop. Cross the Boone Fork bridge, then continue straight uphill. Climb over large boulders for 75 yards. At top of hill, stay right.
- 15.9 Backcountry campsite with bench and firepit with grate but no amenities. Permit required from Price Park campground office. Maximum of 6 campers allowed. 
- 16.3 Follow old roadbed. Side trail is on left. Keep on main trail.
- 16.4 Turn left as trail leaves old roadbed. Watch closely for trail sign on right, indicating left turn up the hill.
- 17.2 Pass gate to reach Shulls Mill Rd. Turn right and walk 75 yards on road's shoulder. On left, take wooden steps up the hillside, into the woods. The trail climbs 500 feet in elevation in next half-mile.
- 17.7 Climb over step stile to reach gravel road, which is part of Moses H. Cone Memorial Park's carriage trail system. Turn right onto that road. You are on Rich Mountain Trail.
- 18.3 At trail intersection in pasture, turn right.
- 18.4 Turn left onto trail leading to Trout Lake.
- 18.7 In next 0.3 mile, trail crosses over 3 culverted streams before reaching gate. 
- 19.4 There is a short side trail to a stream on north near small dam. Continue on main trail. 
- 20.1 Go left when trail forks to continue on MST. *Note:* To end the day-trip if you arranged for shuttle at Trout Lake, turn right and cross the bridge. The trail leads to the Trout Lake parking area. To continue on MST, cross over dam and continue to right on carriage trail along lake. Take left fork going to manor house. Cross road (Flannery Fork Rd.) to follow trail toward manor house. 
- 21.2 At trail intersection, go right through tunnel under parkway. The trail passes in front of carriage house.   
- 21.4 Take trail to left before reaching manor house. It is an unsigned trail.
- 22.0 The carriage trail curves right. Continue straight, following signs to Watkin Rd.
- 24.1 Watkin Rd. intersects with Black Bottom Rd., which comes in from right. Follow signs to US 321.
- 24.8 There is lake on right.



Ladder on Boone Fork Trail
Photo by Eileen Kelly

- 24.9 Cross creek by rock hopping. Go right on gravel Old Camp Catawba Rd. You are walking through an area with some residential traffic. 💧
- 25.1 Reach US 221/321. To the right is a nearby shopping center and the town of Blowing Rock. To the left, it is 7 miles to Boone. To continue on MST, turn left and walk 200 feet on shoulder of US 221/321. Turn left and walk up entrance ramp to BRP (MP 291.9). 🍴 🚻 🛏
- 25.4 Reach BRP and turn right (north).
- 25.6 Walk on shoulder of BRP to where trail goes into woods on right, just after crossing bridge over US 221/321.
- 25.7 Follow trail along hillside to stile, after which trail bears left and follows barbed-wire fence to pasture.

- 25.8 Continue through pasture and enter woods near fence along BRP.
- 26.2 Emerging from woods, trail cuts right across pasture to point below a pine tree on far side of pasture. Trail then travels along side of hill, down to two bridges. After the second bridge, trail goes through section of clearing. Continue into woods to another stile.
- 26.6 Hike uphill and into rhododendron thicket before reaching another stile at top of ridge.
- 26.7 In pasture, trail bears left along BRP through short section of woods and out to pasture.
- 26.8 Cross pasture to angled treeline that borders dirt farm road, leading into trees again. Bear left at fork and go into another pasture.
- 26.9 Out of woods, angle right (away from BRP) to stile at Greenhill Rd. next to farm gate. Climb over stile and go left (west) 200 feet to the BRP (MP 290.7), then turn right (north) and walk 500 feet. Cross the BRP and go through stile. Follow trail uphill through meadow, then go right. Go to top of hill and then head downhill toward overlook.
- 27.1 Thunder Hill Overlook (MP 290.3) is across BRP at bottom of hill. Go through a stile at bottom of hill and turn left. **P**
- 27.5 Walk along fence and then on west (left) shoulder to reach side road on left. Enter woods on north side of side road.
- 27.9 Walk 450 feet uphill. At top of hill, trail bears right, going steeply uphill then leveling off. Trail goes up and down hills. At one point, it goes sharply left and downhill away from BRP. At bottom of hill, take sharp right onto old forest road. Trail goes to right around large rock. After topping a hill, log bench is on left on way down. Trail continues downhill, curving back towards BRP before turning away. One final uphill section goes to Raven Rock parking area (MP 289.5). **P**
- 28.8 From north side of overlook, continue north on BRP shoulder for 900 feet. At "Overlook Ahead" sign, trail goes left into woods. Trail veers right, meandering through woods for 800 feet before reaching stile. Climb over stile and go through pasture close to fence, which parallels BRP on right. Sometimes there are cows in this field, but they are no bother. A protective mule may be interested in your dog. From top of hill, you can see old cattle pens and Blackberry Rd. at



Autumn sunrise over Trout Lake

Photo by Victor Ellison

- bottom of hill. Follow fence line to stile in right corner. Climb stile, continue few feet to bridge and go up steps to Blackberry Rd.
- 29.2 Cross Blackberry Rd. and climb stile into pasture. Walk uphill, staying near fence along BRP. Skirt to left of family cemetery near top of hill. At times, there are horses here; one horse may be aggressive to dogs. Continue 250 feet to stile.
- 29.6 Cross stile. Trail winds through woods and wetlands, crossing 3 bridges before coming out to BRP shoulder.
- 30.2 Turn left and walk on shoulder for 80 feet. Cross BRP to Sampson Rd. Walk on right shoulder of Sampson Rd. for 300 feet. Turn left onto George Hayes Rd. Walk along shoulder for 0.46 mile to set of wooden steps on left.
- 30.8 Go down steps through pasture, bearing right to boardwalk/bridge. Cross bridge and go uphill to left. Trail winds across ridgeline.
- 31.8 Trail goes under large fallen tree, immediately followed by creek crossing, which requires rock-hopping and may dampen your shoes. Ascend to follow old roadbed. 💧



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 32.2 Cross impressive footbridge over cascading High Shoals Creek. *Note:* There are good photo opportunities from bridge.
- 32.3 A few yards past the bridge, a well-used trail leads uphill on left to a pull-out area on BRP, just south of Goshen Creek Viaduct. The pullout can accommodate several cars. Continue straight. 💧
- 32.4 Follow path along scenic creek bed. Cross stile under Goshen Creek Viaduct; BRP is overhead. Cross pasture under bridge. Cross over second stile to reach Bamboo Rd. 💧
- 32.6 Turn right and walk along shoulder of paved Bamboo Rd., which becomes gravel. After walking a short distance, you pass George Hayes Rd. For the next 0.7 mile, walk on road next to fields before reaching intersection of Bamboo and Little Laurel Rds. Continue straight past intersection along shoulder of Bamboo Rd. for 180 feet before trail goes right into pasture. In pasture, trail curves right into woods. Follow trail for a short distance to BRP.
- 33.5 From MP 285.5, turn left and walk shoulder of BRP beside meadow until trail enters woods on left.
- 33.8 Trail goes through woods and back to BRP. Turn left and walk shoulder about 100 feet north to Boone's Trace Overlook on east (right) side (MP 285.1). From the overlook, walk north about 900 feet to where trail goes right into woods. 🅇 🅆
- 34.1 Trail returns to BRP. Turn right and walk north 0.1 mile to MP 284.5. Trail goes into woods on left (west) side of BRP.
- 34.4 Cross BRP to where trail enters woods on east (right) side. It climbs ridge, goes through rhododendron thicket, and follows switchbacks to creek crossing. Ascend hill. Friends trail workers call this section the "enchanted forest."
- 35.3 Come out of woods at private driveway. Cross drive and continue into woods. At pasture, turn left and walk inside split-rail fence. A large home sits atop hill on right. A third of way through pasture, watch for sinkholes. At end of fence, jog left through fence, turn right and walk shoulder of BRP north for 240 feet to MP 283.2. Cross BRP; trail goes left into woods.
- 35.8 Trail crosses bridge and goes to Don Hayes Rd. at MP 283. Turn right on road; walk through tunnel that goes under BRP. Walk 355 feet and turn left to cross bridge leading into woods on east side of



MST through the woods near Thunder Hill Overlook
Photo by Charles Register

- BRP. At BRP, turn right and walk north 0.35 mile to MP 282.3. At end of wide cleared area on right, trail goes right into woods.
- 36.8 Walk north on east (right) side of BRP. Cross ridgeline, through switchbacks down and over Elk Creek Rd. Cross road onto dirt/grass service road paralleling BRP. Follow service road to pasture at top of hill. Before entering pasture, trail goes left into woods.
- 37.4 Walk north on BRP for 0.7 mile and go past Grandview Overlook on right (MP 281.2). Walk 800 feet north of overlook to where trail goes right into woods. **P**
- 38.1 Walk in woods about 600 feet to service road. You pass a heritage apple orchard in this section. Turn left on service road, walk 225 feet and go through gate to BRP. You can see Parkway Elementary School across BRP. Turn right and walk 650 feet on shoulder. Turn right into woods on east (right) side. After 838 feet, trail crosses open area near Old US 421 and continues north. Trail comes back to BRP near speed limit sign. *Note:* For food, access Old US 421 and travel right (north) for 0.15 mile to Blue Ridge Diner, open 11-8 Monday through Friday. **🍴**



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water








Picnic



Goshen Creek
Photo by Shelton Wilder

- 38.9 At BRP, turn right and hike north. After hiking past two pastures on left, trail goes left into woods at MP 279.6.
- 39.8 Trail goes through small glade and uphill to landscaped driveway after 600 feet. Turn left on drive and walk 97 feet to road (Wildcat Rd.). Cross road onto another driveway and go 83 feet to right turn onto service road entering woods. Service road goes uphill; turn right into woods as service road curves left. Trail goes downhill near BRP, then back up before descending again. The Wilder Bench is on trail as you head downhill to BRP.
- 41.2 Cross BRP and enter woods on east side. Go uphill to white pines, then down switchbacks and back uphill to BRP. Turn right and walk on shoulder for 472 feet to Osborne Mountain Overlook (MP 278). **P**
- 42.0 At north end of Osborne Mountain Overlook, cross to west (left) side of BRP and go into grassy field and then uphill into woods. The next 1.25 miles follow switchbacks to the ramp at US 421 on the west side of the BRP. Parking space is available in flat grassy area on

- BRP 0.2 mile south of entrance ramp. Leave the woods on the west side of the BRP, just south of bridge crossing over US 421.
- 43.3 Cross bridge, walking left along the west shoulder of BRP, facing oncoming traffic. Cross BRP at “Roanoke” mileage sign. Trail goes uphill into woods on right side.
- 43.6 Trail goes steadily uphill for a gain of 650 feet in elevation, but trail through hardwoods high above BRP is well graded.
- 45.3 Cross BRP diagonally and enter woods on west (left) side. This level section comes back to BRP across from sign for E.B. Jeffress Park (MP 274.1).
- 45.6 Just north of sign for Jeffress Park, enter the woods on the east (right) side of BRP and begin short ascent. This section is an easy walk with moderate elevation changes. Come out of the woods at Tomkins Knob parking area. 
- 47.2 Enter woods at north side of parking area, near the BRP. It is 75 yards to the Cool Springs Baptist Church and the Jesse Brown cabin historic area.
- 47.3 Go back into the woods at the north side of the historic area, just to the left of the sign about Cool Springs Baptist Church. The trail goes downhill slightly then becomes level before reaching Cascades Recreation Area (MP 271.9).    
- 48.0 At the north end of the recreation area, enter the woods following the signs to the cascades. After a few yards on the trail, take the left fork of this loop trail. The trail goes downhill and follows a stream. After crossing a log bridge, turn left going uphill to follow MST. If you go straight, it is a short walk downhill to the waterfall, which is well worth the detour.
- 48.4 Trail goes through woods until it reaches the BRP. Cross the parkway. Go around the chain across the road and walk 40 feet to turn right to follow MST. This part of the trail travels high above the BRP. You can appreciate the difficult construction work that allows this section of the trail to hang on the side of the steep hillside yet still makes it an easy walk as the path follows the ridgeline.
- 49.5 Come out of the woods and walk down across a pasture. Walk north on the west shoulder of BRP past Phillips Gap Rd., which goes west. Be sure to face oncoming traffic because of narrow shoulders and



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic

- short sight lines. Phillips Gap is the crest of the Blue Ridge at 3,221 feet.
- 50.2 Come to the section of Phillips Gap Rd. that turns gravel and travels east. There is a parking space a few yards down the eastern segment of Phillips Gap Rd. (MP 269.8). Opposite this intersection, the MST goes uphill into the woods before leveling off.
- 50.5 Come to pasture. Cross it, going downhill. Keep near the tree line on the right, heading toward BRP.
- 50.6 Cross BRP diagonally. Look north for the MST sign at the end of the pasture where the woods begin. The sign is close to the BRP.
- 51.1 This section goes through a nice woodland. Cross a brook coming out of a stone culvert. This section of the trail is below the BRP, with a sharp drop-off on the right. 💧
- 51.9 Continue walking through the woods until trail comes back to BRP, just south of intersection with Park Vista Rd. at Benge Gap (MP 268). Park Vista Inn can be seen from BRP. See “Lodging” for parking information. 🛏️ 🍴 🅅️ 💧
- 52.0 Cross BRP to west side. Turn right off Park Vista Rd., following paved Blue Ridge Church Rd. up the hill.
- 52.4 Pass the National Park Service maintenance yard on the right before arriving at Blue Ridge Baptist Church on the left a few yards beyond. The church cemetery is on the right.
- 52.5 Walk north of the cemetery and cross BRP. Walk 500 feet along the eastern segment of Blue Ridge Church Rd., which is now gravel. Turn left into the woods, following a creek. At top of the hill, MST makes a sharp left. *Note:* Don't be confused by the MST sign with arrow; that sign is for hikers traveling southbound. Keep walking up the hill to your left. A few yards up the hill, MST turns right. You are parallel to the BRP. 💧
- 52.9 Walk through a stile into a pasture. Walk along the fence posts, noting the white dots on the posts periodically. You are on top of the ridge here and have an astounding view, with Grandfather, Sugar, and Beech Mountains to the south and Mount Jefferson in front of you. As you climb the hill, note large trees in the middle of the pasture will have MST dots and signs as the trail moves over to the center of the pasture. At the top of the hill, you will be opposite the



MST near Osbourne Mountain Overlook

Photo by Shelton Wilder

Mount Jefferson Overlook below. *Note:* If you park at the overlook, you can reach the trail by going to either of the stiles at the ends of the pasture. Continue downhill along tree line. A well-trod footpath begins closer to fenceline and white dots appear again on fence posts. Just past a pasture gate, go through a stile into the woods on your left. **P**

- 53.7 The path goes through rhododendron thickets and woods, even though it is close to the BRP. The trail comes out of the woods and goes 150 yards outside the fenceline on the BRP shoulder before going back into the woods—still on the east (right) side of the BRP. Trail continues in woods along fenceline before going downhill away from the BRP.
- 54.3 Trail comes out of the woods at gravel road. This is once again Blue Ridge Church Rd. Turn left and walk on the road, which has little-to-no traffic. You will walk alongside scenic meadows for this section.
- 54.9 The gravel road reaches an intersection. Turn left (west) and go to BRP. Across the BRP, you'll see Calloway Gap Rd. Cross the BRP and follow MST sign a few yards north of Calloway Gap Rd.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms








Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 55.0 Trail ascends to fenceline. *Note:* This fence is electrified! Trail comes out to BRP. Turn left and walk 600 feet on the shoulder. Trail goes back into woods along electrified fence still on west side of BRP.
- 55.5 At end of fence, trail enters laurel/rhododendron thicket then goes into forest with fern-covered floor. Trail goes up and down hills but steep ascents and descents never go more than 200 feet before leveling out. After switchbacks, trail comes into clearing. Trail crosses clearing going away from BRP towards the woods. Watch for white dots on trees. Trail passes Christmas tree farm with large pond on left. Trail ascends and makes sharp left turn near BRP. Trail descends 300 feet to wooden steps at switchback. It's 100 feet to open field.
- 57.1 It's 300 feet across field. You pass 2 MST posts placed at trail forks while crossing field; go right at first, left at second post. Enter woods and walk downhill about 700 feet. Trail is level for about 100 feet before descending for 0.4 mile. Come out of woods.
- 58.1 MST crosses BRP diagonally. This is Daniels Gap (MP 262.2). Look for MST sign at edge of woods to the north on the east side of BRP. The trail travels through woods for about 0.5 mile until it opens onto a grassy area under large power lines. Cross under lines and go back into woods. Trail comes to a gravel road; turn left. (*Note:* See Terry Mohn's entry under "Trail Angels" for camping.) Pass an iron gate; continue on road for 30 feet to where MST turns left into woods. Walk through woods to field that borders BRP. Turn right & walk along BRP to overpass over NC 16 (MP 261). Walk across the overpass on the shoulder. (Food & supplies 0.5 mile to left on NC 16. It is 13 miles to West Jefferson.)   
- 59.1 MST goes back into woods across the access ramp on east (right) side. Look for sign northeast of stop sign. After 60 feet, turn left on grassy roadbed. Walk 40 feet to left turn back into woods. Blaze indicating turn may be faded, so look closely for this quick turn. After 260 feet, turn right onto old logging/service road. Walk 100 feet to where MST goes left back into woods. It's 0.2 mile to fork in trail. 100 feet to right is stonework overlook at Jumpinoff Rock; it's well worth the short detour. From the fork, MST goes left. It's 200 feet to bench on left. It's 0.2 mile to the Jumpinoff Rock Overlook parking area (MP 260.3).  



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms





Supplies



Water






Picnic

- 60.1 From Jumpinoff Rock parking area, cross to west (left) side of BRP and enter woods to the north. Go 150 feet to gravel road. Turn right onto Doyle Bare Rd. Go 370 yards, pass gravel road on left (BRP is ahead). Before reaching parkway, just past the driveway, trail goes left into woods. Go on old logging road for 300 yards before turning right into woods. Come to and walk through field just below BRP. Go back into woods for 300 yards before coming back to BRP. Walk 220 yards on west (left) shoulder along split-rail fence. Come to Pony Farm Rd. (S.R. 1632).
- 61.9 Turn left on Pony Farm Rd., going away from BRP. Walk on gravel road that parallels BRP before going behind Northwest Trading Post to Trading Post Rd. You pass New River Inn & Cottages on the left. Glendale Springs is 0.5 mile to the left. Cross Trading Post Rd. and walk 150 yards east (right) on the north side of the road. Pass the Northwest Trading Post (MP 259) on the right. Sally Mae's on the Parkway gift shop is inside, along with sodas, sandwiches, and fudge. 
- 62.6 Cross BRP and go left into woods just before Old Wilkes Rd. also goes off to the left. Walk about 950 yards before coming back to BRP. Turn right (north) and walk along east shoulder of BRP for 580 yards. Pass MP 258 on the way. Go back into woods on east (right) side. When you come out of woods, gate to Sam Miller Cemetery is on right; BRP on left. Cherry Hill Rd. is straight ahead. Raccoon Holler Rd. and Raccoon Holler Campground are across BRP. 
- 64.1 Continue straight on Cherry Hill Rd. for 800 yards. MST goes into woods on left. Trail comes out of woods at Cherry Hill Rd./Bare Creek Rd. intersection. BRP is on left; CH Coffeehouse Lane is across the BRP. Bare Creek Rd. is on other side of Cherry Hill Rd. Walk on Bare Creek Rd. for 150 feet. MST goes into woods on left. Trail comes out of woods at BRP and Bare Creek Rd.
- 65.6 Cross BRP to west side, staying on Bare Creek Rd. Go into woods north of Bare Creek Rd. Walk 660 yards back to BRP. Walk 125 yards north on BRP shoulder along fenceline. Go back into woods for 150 yards. Trail comes out at BRP (MP 256).



Climbing up from Deep Gap overpass

Photo by Shelton Wilder

- 66.2 Cross BRP to Don Bare Rd. Entrance to Mountain View Lodge and Cabins is at this intersection. (Note: See “Trail Angels” for information about free camping courtesy of Thomas & Theresa Haislip.) Walk 50 yards on Don Bare Rd., then turn left onto gravel Thistle Hill Lane. Walk 200 yards to left turn into woods. This is not well marked, so watch carefully for this turn. You can see a pond through trees on the right. Walk 150 yards to log steps leading down to small creek. Continue 0.4 mile to Roe Hunt Rd. (MP 255.3).   
- 67.3 Cross to west side of BRP. Trail ascends gradually but steeply, then goes downhill for 0.8 mile to an interesting tree-root/rock area over a wet spot.
- 68.2 Still on west side, MST parallels BRP the whole way. It is 0.2 mile to switchback going downhill. It’s another 0.2 mile of path meandering in woods to arrival at junction of gated side road and BRP.
- 68.6 Cross gated road and continue on west side of BRP. There is a short switchback before trail travels parallel below the BRP for little over 0.2 mile before starting steep but gradual downhill for 0.3 mile to a switchback. It is 200 feet to BRP.

- 69.2 Turn left to walk north along guardrail on west (left) side of BRP. Turn left uphill on gravel road leading up to Sheets Cemetery. You can see gate from the road. Go around gate and walk 65 feet to where MST goes right into woods.
- 69.4 MST winds through woods high above Sheets Overlook on BRP (no access from MST) before going steeply downhill to BRP.
- 70.2 Cross to east side of BRP. MST goes up and down before reaching gravel Cameron Mtn. Rd. Turn left on this private road and walk 180 feet past gate. Do not take road to right; MST goes right into woods near BRP. Jesse Sheets' log cabin (built in 1818) is on other side of BRP.
- 70.5 Proceed through young-growth pine stand. There is a moderate climb as trail winds around ravines before descending. Trail passes a cabin on the right before coming to dirt road. Turn left and walk 200 feet to go around gate. Continue 250 feet toward BRP. You are at Alder Gap. Turn right into woods just before BRP.
- 70.8 There is a gentle climb to ridgeline before a gentle descent back to BRP.
- 71.7 Turn right to walk 0.2 mile on BRP shoulder next to split-rail fence. You pass MP 251.
- 71.9 At end of fenceline, MST goes into woods on north side of Darnell Woodie Rd. There is a geological survey marker reading 3,008 feet elevation near MST sign. (Note: See Marc Arnsdorff's "Trail Angel" entry for camping.) You cross 4 small log footbridges in this section. Reach BRP at MP 250 and Hiram Bare Rd. 💧
- 72.8 Cross BRP to west (left) side at intersection with Hiram Bare Rd. MST goes uphill into woods on north side of dirt road. MST rises above BRP and makes several curves to skirt ravines and avoid steep ups and downs. Trail crosses creek about 100 feet before reaching gravel South Laurel Fork Rd. Turn right and walk 250 feet to BRP. 💧
- 73.9 Cross BRP to east (right) side and continue descending on curves of gravel South Laurel Fork Rd. Cross a small bridge; you'll see BRP on high bridge to your left. Walk about 50 feet and turn left onto old dirt/grass road.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water










Picnic



Map and elevation profile produced for Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail by Curtis Belyea, 2016.



- 74.5 Approximately 100 feet on the road, the MST goes right up steps. You'll rock-hop one stream as the trail parallels the BRP before descending to come out of the woods just south of the BRP entry ramp to NC 18. 
- 75.3 Cross the BRP and walk along the shoulder as it crosses over the overpass. At the exit ramp, turn left and walk to the stop sign at NC 18. Turn right and walk west on the shoulder of NC 18.
- 75.6 You pass by or near restaurants, motels, campgrounds, and a small store (some are closed from November to April). Walk past Station's Inn and the general store on the right. Wild Woody's campground is on left past Freeborne's Eatery & Lodge. Turn right onto Miller Rd.    
- 75.7 Pass Mountain Side Dr. on the left.
- 76.0 MST stays on Miller Rd. Pass Stillhouse Branch Rd. on right. Miller's Campground is visible uphill on left.  [closed Nov.–March]
- 76.2 Turn right onto Pruitt Cove Rd. Cross BRP to east side. MST goes uphill into woods on north side of the dirt road.
- 76.6 Reach the BRP and turn right (north). Walk 100 yards to the intersection with Elk Knob Dr. on the left. Cross the parkway onto Elk Knob Dr., then make a quick right onto Grassy Gap Lane on the right. Walk over small bridge and past old farmhouse on left. On right as you climb hill on the road, just before the gated private road, MST goes uphill to the right into the woods.
- 77.6 MST ascends through the woods. During the fall, trail may be difficult to follow at times but follow the grade until you find a white blaze. Pass buildings of district ranger's office down the hill to the right. After approximately a mile, there is a clearing with a hillside pasture on left. Look for white blazes showing right turn. BRP is uphill to the left now. Look for wooden steps leading up to the parkway in about 100 yards. The turn up the steps may not be well marked.
- 78.8 At BRP, cross to east side and walk left (north) beside stone wall. At end of wall, you'll be at Basin Cove Overlook (MP 244.7). In middle of overlook, look for break in the wall to find entrance to Bluff Mountain Trail (BMT) on left. 
- 78.9 Descend steeply for 300 feet to intersect with Flat Rock Ridge Trail, which goes right. Go left. Pass trail sign to stay on BMT, which runs



MST near Alder Gap

Photo by Carolyn Sakowski

conjunctively with MST for next 6.5 miles. This is an easy, gradual descent for about 0.5 mile to a footbridge, then 60 feet to an old stile to the right of the trail. Continue to another stile and go through it to join a fire road (part of Grassy Gap Trail). At this stile, turn left onto road.

79.9 MST goes off Grassy Gap Trail, downhill on the right, about 50 feet before reaching gate up to BRP.

80.0 The trail may not be well marked in this part. Soon after you turn into the woods, you'll see a concrete water trough at the bottom of the hill. Do not follow cowpaths leading to that trough; stay straight. Trail stays just below the ridgeline until you come to an open pas-



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms












Supplies







Water



Picnic

- ture. At pasture, there are no signs. Turn right and you'll see a sign that reads "No horses" where trail re-enters woods.
- 80.4 Pass through a turnstile and walk around a bend to steps ascending sharply on left to Bluff Mountain View Overlook (MP 243.4). It's worth the short climb to the overlook to see the view. 
- 80.6 Continue north from the overlook. After crossing a small stream, MST turns right as it ascends hill. 
- 81.5 Come to Alligator Back Overlook parking area (MP 242.3). Alligator Back's unusual outcroppings seen from here are geological features composed primarily of schists and gneiss. 
- 82.0 Ascend 400 feet to top of Bluff Mountain. There are 5 sets of wooden steps before reaching an outcrop of rocks with spectacular views. Turn left and climb up the rocks to the ridge. Just past the summit, MST/BMT goes left toward the BRP. To the right is Bluff Ridge Primitive Trail. There is a 3-sided log-and-stone shelter a few yards down the right trail. The shelter is for viewing, not camping.
- 82.4 Descend toward the loop road for the Doughton Park picnic area (open seasonally), which you can see from the top of the hill. You are descending on BMT, so follow signs for that trail.  
- 82.8 Cross the parking lot and ascend another knob where a lone tree stands in a meadow. Descend into a field and go through a stile; trail makes a sharp left. Ascend again and walk past restrooms (open seasonally) on the left. Bluffs Lodge (not open at this time) is on the right. You may want to take a short spur trail to Wildcat Rock. To reach it, go through the lodge parking area to the right end of the parking area. The Caudill Cabin is 800 feet below the overlook. To stay on the MST, stay left.  
- 83.2 Cross the road to walk past the Bluffs Coffee Shop (not open at this time). BMT/MST continues at north end of parking lot. 
- 83.4 Cross to east (right) side of BRP.
- 83.7 Go through stile into meadow. Follow faint trail through the meadow before entering woods.
- 84.4 Trail descends to BRP and crosses to west side at Low Notch Gap.
- 84.6 Travel 800 feet as MST ascends to tent campground area. Follow signs for "Brinegar Cabin" as trail parallels the campground's paved road. 

- 85.6 Trail makes a right turn into the woods, away from paved campground road, then comes back to paved road later. Follow signs to Brinegar Cabin. When trail comes out of woods, turn right toward BRP.
- 85.8 Cross to east side of BRP (follow BMT signs). The trail goes 200 feet to a paved walkway. Follow white dots on pavement; you are in Doughton Park's RV campground area. Pass information sign on left. Go into woods at north end of campground. Still follow BMT and Brinegar Cabin signs.
- 86.1 Trail goes through meadows paralleling BRP before going back into woods.
- 87.0 Cedar Ridge Trail goes straight; BMT/MST goes left. Sign directs you to Brinegar Cabin. There is a Doughton Park trail information sign at this turn.
- 87.2 Descend out of woods to parking lot for Brinegar Cabin (MP 238.5). BMT stops here. Cabin often has live craft demonstrations in summer. Follow paved path that runs to left of cabin. At information sign labeled "A Mountain Home," turn left heading downhill where you will see a sign for MST going into the woods.   (seasonal)
- 87.4 Trail goes through several ascents and descents but none more than 200 yards long. You'll see several concrete USDI/NPS markers as trail travels along park-service boundary with Thurmond Chatham Game Lands.
- 88.6 Come out of woods and walk on shoulder of BRP as it crosses Air Bellows Gap (3,729 feet, crest of the Blue Ridge). Pass a ramp to Air Bellows Gap Rd. on right. (There is limited shoulder parking on that road.) Continue 50 feet uphill, going back into woods.
- 88.8 Trail goes through woods. Trail descends out of woods and crosses BRP diagonally to reach west (left) side.
- 89.2 Trail descends and ascends, paralleling BRP. You cross a small creek with BRP high above to right. Pass large rock field and see BRP stonework. MST descends to BRP. 
- 90.3 Cross BRP to Devil's Garden Overlook parking area (MP 235.7) on east side. MST continues uphill at north end of parking area. You can continue north on BRP for 6 miles to US 21. Sparta is 7 miles north on US 21. It is 25 miles south on US 21 to Elkin and I-77. 



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies







Water



Picnic

Hiking Directions, Westbound

To help with directions, WB on BRP is going south; EB is going north. When going WB, east is on the left, west on the right. Going EB, east is on right, west on left.

- 0.0 Segment 5 begins at Devil's Garden Overlook on BRP (MP 235.7). This is 6 miles from the intersection of US 21 and BRP. Sparta is 7 miles north on US 21; Elkin and I-77 are 25 miles south on US 21. Cross BRP to west side and begin ascent. Trail descends and ascends, paralleling BRP. Pass large rock field and see BRP stonework. You will cross a small creek with BRP high above on left. Descend out of the woods to BRP.  
- 1.1 Cross BRP diagonally to east (left) side and ascend into woods. Trail goes through woods. Trail comes out of the woods.
- 1.5 Walk along shoulder and pass the ramp on left leading to Air Bellows Gap Rd. (There is limited shoulder parking on that road.) Continue walking on BRP shoulder as the trail crosses Air Bellows Gap (3,729 feet elevation, crest of the Blue Ridge). Continue on shoulder; MST goes uphill back into woods, staying on east (left) side. It may be hard to see any white blaze indicating trail goes uphill into woods, but head uphill to an old road opening.
- 1.7 Trail goes through several ascents and descents but none more than 200 yards long. You'll see several concrete USDI/NPS markers as trail travels along park-service boundary with Thurmond Chatham Game Lands.
- 3.6 Descend out of woods to see Brinegar Cabin (MP 238.5) at top of the hill on the left. Walk toward the cabin and follow paved path that runs to right of cabin. Pass an information sign that reads "A Mountain Home." Reach the parking area (water fountain seasonal). Cabin has live craft demonstrations in summer.   (seasonally)
- 3.8 Continue to south end of parking lot. Begin Bluff Mountain Trail (BMT), which runs conjunctively with MST for next 6.5 miles. Trail goes uphill into woods. Come to T-intersection. Cedar Ridge Trail goes left; BMT/MST goes right, going toward Doughton Park



Brinegar Cabin
Photo by Jonah Unks

campgrounds and coffee shop. A Doughton Park trail information sign is at this intersection.

- 4.1 Follow trail across meadow, paralleling BRP. Trail goes back into woods briefly, then enters another meadow before entering woods a second time.
- 5.1 Come out of woods at Doughton Park's RV campground. Head uphill toward parking area. Follow white dots on pavement. Information sign for campground is on right. Follow BMT signs. Trail goes 200 feet across BRP to west side (tent campground). ▲
- 5.3 Follow trail along left side of campground road. At trail sign, BMT/MST goes left into the woods away from campground road. ▲
- 5.5 Trail comes out of woods, back to campground road. Turn left and continue back into woods. Trail goes through campground and begins descent to BRP at Low Notch Gap.
- 5.7 Cross BRP to east side and ascend into woods. BMT/MST comes into meadow, where it follows a faint trail.
- 6.9 Go through stile and cross to west side of BRP. Come to parking area for Bluffs Coffee Shop (not open at this time). BMT/MST continues across parking lot in front of the coffee shop. P



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms








Supplies











Water



Picnic

- 7.1 Cross to east side of BRP. You may want to take the spur trail to Wildcat Rock (MP 241.1) on the left, which you can pick up at end of the Bluffs Lodge parking lot. It is worth the short walk to see Caudill Cabin, which is 800 feet below the overlook. Walk past Bluffs Lodge (not open at this time) on the left. Pass restrooms (open seasonally) on the right. Descend and go right to go through a stile. Ascend to knob where a lone tree stands in a meadow. There are outstanding long-range views here. Descend and cross parking lot.   (seasonally)
- 7.5 Ascend BMT/MST from picnic area (open seasonally) to top of hill. At ridge, BMT/MST goes right. To left is Bluff Ridge Primitive Trail. There is a 3-sided log-and-stone shelter a few yards down this trail. The shelter is for viewing, not camping. 
- 7.9 The trail comes to a large rock outcropping with panoramic views. Descend on rocks but trail turns sharp right, going into woods before reaching ledge. Descend 5 sets of wooden steps and continue 400 feet before coming out of woods.
- 8.8 Reach Alligator Back Overlook parking area (MP 242.3). Alligator Back's unusual outcroppings seen from here are geological features composed primarily of schist and gneiss. 
- 9.3 Walk past overlook and continue on east side until trail goes back into woods. Trail descends and makes sharp left turn at small stream. Trail continues to base of Bluff Mountain View Overlook (MP 243.5). It's worth the climb up steps to the overlook for the expansive view. 
- 10.2 Continue trail around bend to turnstile. Trail enters woods.
- 10.4 Trail comes out of woods and enters meadow. There is no signage here, but walk in meadow along woods about 200 feet. Trail goes back into woods on the left. You will see an old concrete water trough downhill to the left of the trail. This section may not be well marked, so watch carefully for faded white dots on trees. The trail is ascending toward the ridgeline.
- 10.8 Trail joins old fire road, which is part of Grassy Gap Trail. Turn left and walk on road. To the right is gate just before reaching BRP.
- 10.9 BMT/MST goes right, uphill and around stile. Trail ascends gradually. Pass an old stile on left; cross footbridge. It is about 0.5 mile

- to trail information sign. Flat Rock Ridge Trail continues straight. BMT/MST ascends to right very steeply for 300 feet to Basin Cove Overlook (MP 244.7). Trail no longer runs conjunctively with BMT. 
- 11.9 Follow paved walkway south and walk along stone wall on BRP shoulder. Cross BRP to west side, where steps lead back into woods.
 - 12.0 Walk down steps and follow trail to the right. You will intuitively want to go left, but turn right. Walk about 100 yards through woods toward open field ahead. Just before reaching field, trail turns sharp left. Pass district ranger's office downhill on left. Trail comes out of woods at farm road.
 - 12.8 Turn left onto farm road. There is a gate across private road on right. Walk toward white farmhouse. Pass farmhouse on right, cross small bridge. You are on Grassy Gap Lane. Short walk to intersection with Elk Knob Dr. Turn left for short walk to BRP. Cross BRP to east side. Walk 100 yards to where trail goes back into woods. 
 - 13.8 Trail descends out of woods to Pruitt Cove Rd. Cross BRP to west side, staying on Pruitt Cove Rd.
 - 14.1 Turn left onto Miller Rd. Pass Stillhouse Branch Rd. on left. Miller's Campground is visible uphill on right.  (closed Nov.-March)
 - 14.3 Continue on shoulder of Miller Rd. Pass Mountain Side Dr. on right.
 - 14.6 Reach NC 18. Turn left and walk in front of Station's Inn (general store, restaurant, and motel). Wild Woody's Campground & Freeborn's Eatery & Lodge are across NC 18. Continue on shoulder of NC 18, walking toward BRP.    
 - 14.7 Turn left and walk up ramp to BRP. At the parkway, turn right (south) and walk on shoulder as you cross over parkway overpass. Once across overpass, cross BRP to east (left) side. Walk through the grass, heading uphill to the woods.
 - 15.0 Trail parallels the BRP. Rock-hop one stream. Trail comes out of woods. Descend steps to dirt/grass farm road. Turn left and walk approximately 100 feet to South Laurel Fork Rd. 
 - 15.8 Turn right and walk on shoulder of South Laurel Fork Rd. Cross a small bridge. On the right, you'll see BRP traveling on high bridge. The road ascends through several curves before reaching BRP.

- 16.4 Cross BRP to west (right) side. Walk about 250 feet on gravel road to where MST goes left into the woods. Cross small creek. Trail ascends and makes several curves as it skirts the ravines to avoid steep ups and downs. Come out of woods at a dirt road. Turn left and walk to BRP. Cross to east side at this intersection with Hiram Bare Rd. (MP 250). 💧
- 17.5 Cross 4 small log footbridges in this section. As you come out of woods on north side of Darnell Woodie Rd., there is a geological survey marker near MST sign, which indicates an elevation of 3,008 feet. 💧
- 18.4 Cross Darnell Woodie Rd. and walk on shoulder of BRP beside split-rail fence. (*Note:* See Marc Arnsdorff's entry under "Trail Angels" for camping.) You pass MP 251.
- 18.6 At end of fenceline, MST goes back into woods. There is a gentle climb to ridgelines before easy descent that ends at dirt road. You are at Alder Gap. ▲
- 19.5 Turn left and walk about 250 feet to gate. Walk around gate and walk about 200 feet before MST goes right. Watch closely for this turn. Trail passes a cabin on the left. There is a moderate climb as trail winds around ravines before going through young-growth pine stand.
- 19.8 Trail reaches gravel Cameron Mtn. Rd. Turn left on this road, going away from BRP. You can see Jesse Sheets log cabin (built in 1818) on other side of BRP. Walk past a private road going to the left; go past gate. Cameron Mtn. Rd. goes left, but MST goes off to the right. Come out of the woods and cross to west side of BRP.
- 20.1 MST ascends steeply as it winds through woods high above Sheets Overlook on BRP before coming to gravel road. (There is no access to Sheets Overlook from MST).
- 20.9 Gravel road continues right to Sheets Cemetery. MST turns left. Go around gate to shoulder of BRP. Walk south (right) along guardrail. Trail goes back into woods on west (right) side of BRP.
- 21.1 Trail begins a steep but gradual ascent for about 0.3 mile. It then travels parallel below the BRP. There is a short switchback before trail comes to road.





Fence along overlook at Doughton Park
Photo by Janet Pearson







- 21.7 BRP is to the left, but continue across gated side road. Trail goes back into woods, still on west side of BRP. After trail crosses an interesting tree-root/rock area, it ascends and then descends gradually but steeply back to BRP.
- 23.0 Cross to east side of BRP at this intersection with Roe Hunt Rd. (MP 255.3). Go back into woods on south side of Roe Hunt Rd. Cross log steps leading down to small creek. Come to gravel road. Turn right onto Thistle Hill Lane. You can see pond on left through the trees. It's about 200 yards to T-intersection with Don Bare Rd. MST turns right on that road, heading toward BRP. At the parkway, the driveway to Mountain View Lodge and Cabins is on the left. *Note:* See "Trail Angels" for information about free camping courtesy of Thomas & Theresa Haislip. 🛖💧⚠️
- 24.1 Cross BRP to west side. MST goes back into woods (MP 256). Trail comes back to BRP; walk south on shoulder along fenceline for about 125 yards. Go back into woods on west (right) side until you reach Bare Creek Rd. Turn left and walk to BRP.
- 24.7 Cross to east side of BRP. MST goes into woods on south side of Bare Creek Rd. Trail comes out of the woods at intersection with










Bluff Mountain View Overlook

Photo by Carolyn Sakowski

Bare Creek Rd. again. Turn right and go about 150 feet to intersection with Cherry Hill Rd. BRP is on right; CH Coffeehouse Lane is across the BRP. Go left on Cherry Hill Rd. to where MST goes back into woods on south side of that road. Continue through woods until trail comes to paved Cherry Hill Rd. Turn right and walk 800 yards on that road to intersection with BRP and entrance to Sam Miller Cemetery. Across the parkway, Raccoon Holler Rd. leads to Raccoon Holler Campground.  

- 26.2 MST enters woods to right of gate to cemetery. Trail comes out of woods and travels 580 yards along the east (left) shoulder of the BRP. Pass MP 258. Trail goes back into woods at end of field.
- 27.3 Trail comes out of wood at T-intersection with Old Wilkes Rd. Turn right and walk toward BRP. Cross to west side of BRP at Northwest Trading Post (MP 259). Sally Mae's on the Parkway gift shop is inside, along with sodas, sandwiches, and fudge.      
- 27.7 MST continues past the trading post on Trading Post Rd. for 150 yards, going toward Glendale Springs. Turn left onto Pony Farm

- Rd. (S.R. 1632) at New River Inn & Cottages. Walk on gravel Pony Farm Rd. as it goes behind the trading post and parallels the BRP. 
- 28.4 When Pony Farm Rd. reaches BRP, turn right (south) and walk along shoulder of parkway beside split-rail fence for 220 yards. MST goes back into woods on west (right) side of BRP. Come out of woods and walk through grassy meadow, which is just below BRP. Go back into woods for short distance until trail comes to old logging road. Turn left onto the logging road. MST comes to T-intersection with gravel Doyle Bare Rd. BRP is on left. Turn right and walk on shoulder of Doyle Bare Rd. for 370 yards. MST goes back into woods on left side, just after climbing a hill and just before road curves to the right. Go 150 feet before coming back to BRP across from Jumpinoff Rock Overlook parking area (MP 260.3).  
- 30.2 Cross to east side of BRP. At south end of parking area, MST goes back into the woods. When you come to a bench on right side of trail, don't think the dirt path on the left leads to the overlook. Continue down trail for another 200 feet to the legitimate spur trail. It's only 100 feet to the left to a stone overlook with views of surrounding area. MST goes off to the right (south). Trail comes to old logging road; turn right. Walk about 100 feet to where MST goes left into woods again. Trail comes to grassy roadbed. Turn right and walk on road for about 40 feet to where MST goes back into woods on the right. Go about 60 feet before coming out of woods at ramp for NC 16/BRP (MP 261). (Food & supplies are about 0.5 mile to right on NC 16. It is 13 miles to West Jefferson.)  
- 31.2 Walk along shoulder of BRP as it crosses the overpass. Trail goes uphill across the grassy area to go back into the woods. Trail is in woods for a short distance before coming to gravel road. Turn right onto road; pass an iron gate. (*Note:* See Terry Mohn's entry under "Trail Angels" for camping.) Trail then goes back into woods on right; look carefully for the sign. Cross grassy area under power lines and go back into woods. Trail comes back to BRP at Daniels Gap (MP 262.2). 

- 32.2 Cross BRP diagonally, heading south. MST enters woods. Trail ascends, levels off, then ascends again. It comes to field. Walk across field. You pass 2 MST posts placed at trail forks in the field.
- 33.2 Trail re-enters woods. Come to wooden steps at switchback as trail ascends. Trail comes close to BRP at top of hill, then makes a sharp right turn to begin descent. Pass a Christmas tree farm with large pond on right. Cross a clearing with BRP visible to the left, but MST goes away from parkway to re-enter woods. Trail goes up and down hills but ascents and descents never go more than 200 feet before leveling off. Walk through a beautiful forest where trees tower over fern-covered floor. Trail then enters laurel/rhododendron thicket before coming to fenceline. *Note:* This fence is electrified. Walk along the fence before coming out of the woods.
- 34.8 MST comes back to BRP. Walk 600 feet on shoulder and re-enter woods. Trail comes out of woods at BRP.
- 35.3 Cross to east side of BRP. Calloway Gap Rd. is to the south of where you exited woods. Go a few yards down the road (Lump Rd.) on east (left) side of parkway before turning right onto Blue Ridge Church Rd. Walk along this gravel road past scenic meadows. There is little traffic on this road. MST turns right to go back into woods after 0.6 mile.
- 36.0 Trail ascends toward the BRP. You come out of the woods but turn left and walk along fenceline beside the BRP for 150 yards. Trail goes back into woods on left. It goes through woods and rhododendron thickets, although you are close to the parkway.
- 36.6 Go through a stile near a gate into a pasture. Walk through pasture going uphill near the fence posts. You will see white dots on some of the posts. Trail veers off towards woods. At the top of the hill, you can see large trees in the middle of the pasture; look for MST dots on the trees. You can see the Mount Jefferson Overlook below on the right. If you park at this overlook, you can access the trail through stiles at either end of the pasture. From the summit you have astounding views of Grandfather, Sugar, and Beech Mountains to the south and Mount Jefferson in front of you. Walk downhill, going along the fence posts. There is a stile at the south end of the pasture. 



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 37.4 Go through stile and enter woods. MST turns left going downhill. Trail then turns right to parallel creek. It comes to gravel Blue Ridge Church Rd. Turn right and walk about 500 feet to BRP. 💧
- 37.8 Cross BRP to west side, where you see Blue Ridge Baptist Church and its cemetery. Walk past the church and cemetery on paved road. Pass the National Park Service maintenance yard on the left.
- 37.9 Blue Ridge Church Rd. comes to a T-intersection with Park Vista Rd. Park Vista Inn is on right. Turn left and go to BRP. 🛏️🚻🅅️💧
- 38.3 Cross BRP to east side. You are at Benge Gap (MP 268). Walk south (right) on shoulder to where MST goes back into woods on your left.
- 38.4 This section of trail goes through a nice woodland. Cross a brook coming out of a stone culvert. This section of trail is below BRP. It has a sharp drop-off on your left. 💧
- 39.2 Trail comes back to BRP. You cross to west side and walk uphill through a pasture. Walk along the tree line to find sign where trail re-enters woods.
- 39.7 Trail goes through woods before descending to BRP at Phillips Gap Rd. (MP 269.8). You will see the gravel part of that road across on the east (left) side of the parkway. Walk along right (west) shoulder of parkway with traffic past the paved section of Phillips Gap Rd., which goes west. Phillips Gap is the crest of the Blue Ridge at 3,221 feet.
- 40.0 On west side of BRP, walk uphill across a pasture. Look for MST sign showing where trail re-enters woods.
- 40.1 This section of trail travels high above the BRP. You can appreciate the construction work that allows this section of the trail to hang on the side of a steep hillside yet still makes it an easy walk as the path follows the ridgelines. Come to side road with chain across it. Turn left going toward the BRP.
- 40.8 Cross BRP to east side and re-enter woods. At a T-intersection, turn right on loop trail to waterfall at Cascades Recreation Area (MP 271.9), which runs conjunctively with MST. A short spur off to left to see the cascades is highly recommended. After seeing the falls, continue on MST. You cross a log bridge and then go uphill and follow a stream.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms









Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 41.9 Trail comes out at north end of Cascades Recreation Area. Restrooms are on left.    
- 42.3 Walk across parking area and past picnic tables to where trail enters woods on south side of recreation area. Trail goes slightly uphill before coming out at Cool Springs Baptist Church and Jesse Brown cabin historic area.
- 43.0 Cross to south end of the historic area and go back into the woods. It is 75 yards to Tomkins Knob parking area. 
- 43.1 Enter woods again at south end of parking area. This section is an easy walk with moderate elevation changes. When you come out of the woods, you will see sign for E.B. Jeffress Park (MP 274.1) straight ahead.
- 44.7 Cross BRP diagonally and enter woods on west (right) side of parkway.
- 45.0 Come out of woods and cross BRP diagonally to enter woods on east side. This 1.7-mile section of trail descends about 650 feet in elevation before reaching the US 421 bridge.
- 46.7 Trail comes out of woods on east shoulder of parkway near “Roanoke” distance sign. Cross parkway, walking south (left) along the west shoulder of BRP with traffic. You will have to walk along shoulder of the parkway from this spot all the way to the south side of the overpass over US 421. Be sure to walk on the right (west) shoulder with the traffic as the shoulder is narrow and sight line is limited on the left (east) shoulder.
- 47.0 On west side of BRP, just across from the ramp coming from US 421 to the BRP, MST goes uphill into the woods. Parking space is available in flat grassy area on BRP 0.2 mile south of entrance ramp. The trail goes high above the BRP for next 1.25 miles. Trail comes out of woods and downhill into grassy field. Cross BRP to Osborne Mountain Overlook (MP 278) on east side of BRP. 
- 48.3 At south end of parking area, continue along shoulder of parkway for 472 feet. MST then goes downhill into woods on east (left) side of BRP. Trail descends then goes uphill through switchbacks before going through stand of white pines and then out of woods back to parkway.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic



Ferns in the mist in Ashe County
Photo by Carolyn Sakowski

- 49.1 Cross BRP to west side. You will see the Wilder Bench beside trail as you head uphill. Trail goes up and down as it parallels the parkway. Trail comes out at a service road. Turn left and follow service road downhill. MST turns left onto a driveway and goes 83 feet to Wildcat Rd. Cross that road and walk 97 feet on landscaped driveway. Turn right and walk downhill and through small glade for 600 feet.
- 50.5 Trail comes out of woods at MP 279.6. Hike on shoulder past large pasture on right, followed by pastures on both sides.
- 51.4 Cross to east side of BRP. Trail goes back into woods near speed limit sign. It crosses an open area near Old US 421, then goes back into woods for 838 feet before coming back to BRP. Turn left and walk on shoulder 650 feet. You can see Parkway Elementary School on the right. Turn left onto service road, go through gate, and walk



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms





Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 225 feet. Turn right into woods at signpost. Walk 600 feet through the woods; you pass a heritage apple orchard in this section. *Note:* For food, access Old US 421 and travel right (north) for 0.15 mile to Blue Ridge Diner, open 11-8 Monday through Friday. 
- 52.2 Come out of woods, turn left, and walk 800 feet south past Grandview Overlook (MP 281.2). Continue 0.7 mile on parkway shoulder. 
- 52.9 Trail goes into woods and meanders up and down until it reaches a pasture and service road. Turn right onto dirt/grass service road, which parallels the parkway. Service road comes to Elk Creek Rd. Cross that road. (There is no MST sign here.) *Note:* Watch for traffic coming out of tunnel to right; sight lines are short. Continue on trail that goes uphill through switchbacks before strolling across ridge-line.
- 53.5 Trail comes out at BRP at MP 282.3. Walk on shoulder 0.35 mile past wide cleared area on right. Trail then goes left into woods, still on east side of BRP. This uphill section is a delightful walk. Trail comes out of woods. Cross bridge. Come to Don Hayes Rd. at MP 283. Turn right and follow road through tunnel under BRP. Turn left to follow trail into woods. You are now on west side of BRP.
- 54.5 Come out of the woods and cross to east side of BRP. Walk south on shoulder for 240 feet. At fence, jog right through the fence and continue walking through pasture on inside of split-rail fence. A large house sits atop hill on left. About two-thirds of way across pasture, watch for sinkholes. At end of pasture, trail re-enters woods for short distance. (This is not marked, so look for trail going into woods.) Come to private driveway. Cross drive and continue into woods.
- 55.0 Friends trail workers call this section the “enchanted forest.” The trail descends below the parkway, crosses a creek at the bottom, then follows switchbacks as it ascends the hill. It then goes through rhododendron thickets as it comes down from the ridge.
- 55.9 Cross BRP to west side. Walk along shoulder before trail goes into woods. Trail comes out of woods. Cross BRP to east side and walk on shoulder 0.1 mile before trail goes into the woods. Trail comes out of the woods.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies






Water



Picnic



MST by Blue Ridge Baptist Church
Photo by Chris Underhill

- 56.2 Turn south (left) and walk about 900 feet on shoulder to Boone's Trace Overlook (MP 285.1), where there is picnic table and trash receptacle. Cross to west side of BRP. Walk about 100 feet south on shoulder before trail goes back into woods.  
- 56.5 Trail comes out of woods. Walk on shoulder alongside meadow on right.
- 56.8 Trail turns right into woods for short distance before coming to paved road. Turn left onto Bamboo Rd. It is 180 feet to intersection with Little Laurel Rd. Continue straight, staying on Bamboo Rd. For next 0.7 mile, walk on gravel road. You will see BRP paralleling on the left. Pass George Hayes Rd. on left. Bamboo Rd. becomes paved.
- 57.7 MST turns left and crosses a stile to reach pasture under Goshen Creek Viaduct high overhead. Cross pasture (you may have the company of a few cows). Cross a second stile and walk under the viaduct. MST follows a scenic creek. 



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic

- 58.0 As you begin to climb away from the creek bed, you can see a footpath leading up to the parkway. There is a gravel parking area for a few cars here.
- 58.1 Continue on MST to impressive footbridge over cascading High Shoals Creek. *Note:* Excellent photo op here. 💧
- 58.5 Come to creek crossing, which requires rock-hopping and may dampen your shoes. Trail then goes under large fallen tree. Trail winds across ridgeline, then descends to bridge. Climb steps up to George Hayes Rd. 💧
- 59.5 Turn right and walk along shoulder of paved road for 0.46 mile to intersection with Sampson Rd. Turn right onto Sampson Rd. and walk 300 feet to BRP.
- 60.1 Cross BRP to west side, turn left (south), and walk 80 feet to where trail goes into woods. Trail crosses 3 bridges as it winds through woods and wetlands. Come to and climb over stile.
- 60.7 Cross pasture so you skirt the family cemetery near top of hill. At times, there are horses here; one horse may be aggressive to dogs. Walk downhill and stay near fence along BRP. Climb stile and cross Blackberry Rd. *Note:* Fence may be electrified.
- 61.1 Climb down steps and cross bridge before crossing over another stile. Climb uphill, keeping close to the fence parallel to the parkway. You can see cattle pens to the right. Ascend the hill and follow treeline until you come to stile on the left. Cross over the stile. Trail continues through the woods for 800 feet before coming out at BRP. Turn right (south) and walk 900 feet on the shoulder to the Raven Rock Overlook parking area (MP 289.5) 🅅
- 61.5 At south end of overlook parking area, MST goes downhill into woods curving away from the parkway. You pass beside large outcroppings, then reach a log bench on right after ascending back up the hill. After descending another hill, take sharp left onto old forest road at bottom. Trail goes up and down hills. Trail goes sharply right and uphill away from BRP. Trail bears left going steeply uphill before leveling off. (This is Thunder Hill.) It's 450 feet downhill to side road just off the parkway.



Thunder Hill Overlook
Photo by Charles Register

- 62.4 Cross side road, turn right (south), and walk along west (right) shoulder and then beside fence. Thunder Hill Overlook (MP 290.3) is across BRP. **P**
- 63.2 Go through stile across from south end of parking area. Climb hill. After going over top of hill, turn left and cross meadow, going toward BRP. Go through stile and cross to east (left) side of BRP. Walk south 500 feet. Turn left onto Greenhill Rd. Walk 200 feet and climb over stile near farm gate and into pasture on right. Cross pasture heading toward BRP where MST goes back into woods.
- 63.4 Keep walking south until you reach an old farm road. Turn right and follow road out of woods into pasture. Go up the pasture toward the BRP and trail goes back into woods.
- 63.8 Go over stile at top of ridge and hike downhill through rhododendron thicket.
- 63.9 Come to another stile; continue into woods. Go through section of clearing, then cross 2 bridges. Trail travels along ridge across the pasture until it re-enters the woods.
- 64.3 Travel through woods near fence along BRP. Come into another pasture, where trail travels close to barbed-wire fence. Trail bears to the



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms













Supplies



Water





Picnic

- left and comes to another stile. Follow trail along hillside for 822 feet before it comes out to BRP.
- 64.7 Turn left and travel south along shoulder of BRP. Cross overpass over US 221/321 (MP 291.9).
- 65.1 Turn left and descend the exit ramp. To the right is a nearby shopping center and the town of Blowing Rock; Boone is 7 miles to left. Turn right onto shoulder of US 221/321 and walk 200 feet.   
- 65.3 Turn right onto gravel Old Camp Catawba Rd. You are walking through a residential area with some traffic. MST turns left. You are now hiking on Watkin Rd., part of the Cone estate carriage trail system. Cross creek by rock hopping. 
- 65.5 You can see lake on left through the trees.
- 66.2 Come to intersection with Black Bottom Rd. Go right on Watkin Rd., following signs to the manor house.
- 68.3 At next intersection, turn right, still traveling toward manor house.
- 68.9 Just before reaching the manor house, turn right and follow road that goes in front of the carriage house. There are restrooms and water at the carriage house. There is parking here, but rangers discourage hikers from using it because it gets crowded on summer weekends. Continue through tunnel that goes under BRP.   
- 69.1 At trail intersection, turn left going toward Trout Lake. Trail follows gentle switchbacks down to Flannery Fork Rd. Cross that road and continue on trail to Trout Lake. Turn right and walk alongside the lake. Turn left and cross over the dam. Continue to walk along the lake. 
- 70.2 MST turns right, following signs to Rich Mtn. You can continue on the trail along the lake to a right turn up the hill to a parking area.  
- 72.0 Follow trail up to Rich Mtn. until it opens into a cleared area. You will cross 3 culverted creeks in this section. Turn right and go short distance to left turn, staying on Rich Mtn. Trail traveling conjunctively with MST.
- 72.6 You will see a large wooden stair-step stile on the left with MST sign. Climb that stile and head down a steep hill. The trail descends 500 feet in next half-mile. Trail descends wooden steps to Shulls Mill Rd.



Heritage apple orchard near Grandview Overlook
Photo by Shelton Wilder

- As the road curves to the right, go left on the trail from the informal parking area and walk through overgrown pasture, then into woods.
- 73.1 Hike through woods until you reach logging road. Turn right and continue on the road.
 - 74.0 Follow old roadbed. A side road goes off to right, but stay on main road.
 - 74.4 Come to backcountry campsite with bench and firepit with grate but no amenities. Permit is required from Price Park campground office. Maximum of 6 campers allowed. 
 - 74.6 The trail goes downhill to the left, crossing over large boulder field for 75 yards. Bear right and walk downhill to cross Boone Fork bridge. On the other side of the creek, MST travels conjunctively with Boone Fork Trail (BFT). Turn right onto BFT/MST. The next 2 miles have numerous creeks where you can access water, but it should be treated. 
 - 74.8 Pass an old dam site on right.
 - 75.0 Pass side trail to Hebron Falls on right.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water

















Picnic



Falling water near Bamboo Gap
Photo by Charlie Day

- 75.5 Pass a BFT milepost sign. Climb wooden ladder to get to top of rocks. Follow a stone walkway as it circles a large rock formation and goes downhill to continue on the trail.
- 75.6 Make 2 easy creek crossings. Cross metal bridge and pass a BFT milepost sign.
- 75.8 Climb down 3 sets of wooden steps. For the next 0.2 mile, you climb up and down hills, with a series of cascades in creek below on right. Cross creek using large boulders. Ascend steps and turn left to follow trail.

- 76.1 Cross a plank walkway. It is 100 yards to first of 4 creek crossings, some of which may require getting your feet wet. Climb down large rocks to third creek crossing. It is 30 feet past 4th creek crossing to another BFT milepost sign. About 100 yards beyond is metal bridge followed by crossing an old log bridge.
- 76.3 Make 3 more creek crossings.
- 76.4 Trail goes steeply downhill to the left to make another creek crossing. A 2nd creek crossing comes quickly followed by a bridge.
- 76.6 Rock hop 2 more creeks. Pass BFT milepost. Cross bridge
- 76.8 Rock hop 3 more creeks. Come to large rock. BFT/MST now turns to the left, heading uphill. Old trail straight ahead is closed off.
- 77.0 Climb uphill. Come out of woods into meadow. Follow trail uphill through meadow to summit, where there is another BFT milepost. Turn left to continue across ridge of meadow, heading toward the woods.
- 77.3 Tanawha Trail comes in from the right. It is 0.5 mile straight ahead to Julian Price Park Campground. Turn right and follow as MST and Tanawha Trail now run conjunctively for rest of this segment.    
- 77.4 Cross bridge; pass stile on left.
- 77.5 Cross bridge and enter meadow.
- 77.9 Walk through meadow. At fork, stay left. Join old roadbed. Go through stile.
- 78.0 Travel on single-track trail until you reach old roadbed. Turn right onto roadbed.
- 78.1 Follow Tanawha Trail signs with single white feather as well as MST signs.
- 78.4 Go through stile to reach Holloway Mtn. Rd. A designated parking area is across the road. *Note:* BRP is 1.0 mile to left using Holloway Mtn. Rd. The intersection with BRP is 6 miles west of Blowing Rock. To the right, it is 1.0 mile to the town of Foscoe and NC 105.    
- 78.9 It is confusing as to what the official trail route is from the parking area. You can go across the pasture and go straight up the hill. The signs for the Tanawha Trail direct you to go left and circle that same hill. Either route arrives at the tree-sheltered area at the summit,

- where you continue to cross pasture on Tanawha/MST. On clear days, you have good views of Grandfather Mtn.
- 79.0 Go through stile and follow trail as it curves to left through a field. Trail then goes in and out of woods.
- 79.2 Trail comes out into pasture, then heads downhill. You should see trail markers on trees in the pasture. Downhill to the left, you see graveled Holloway Mountain Rd. Trail then goes off downhill alongside woods until it enters woods on right.
- 79.4 Leave woods and enter another field. Follow Tanawha Trail feather markers as trail veers to left and enters wood.
- 79.6 Come out of woods into another field. Walk about 50 yards and make left turn. You should see Tanawha Trail signs. Go about 50 yards to pass through stile going back into woods.
- 80.5 Rock hop 4 small creeks. Come to where trail to Cold Prong Pond parking area (MP 299) goes off to the left. You will also see Tanawha Trail information sign.  
- 80.6 Cross a bridge.
- 80.8 Cross another bridge.
- 82.2 Boone Fork parking area (MP 299.9) is 400 feet to the left. *Note:* Don't confuse this overlook with Boone Fork Trail near Price Park. 
- 82.3 Upper Boone Fork Trail goes to left 0.5 mile to Calloway Peak Overlook (MP 299.7). Stay on Tanawha/MST. Cross Upper Boone Fork bridge. Asutsi Trail goes to left for 0.4 mile to US 221 (this is winter parking when BRP is closed). Just past Asutsi on the left, the Grandfather Mtn. State Park sign shows which campsites are in use and has permits to register for open sites located on Nuwati and Daniel Boone Scout Trails.
- 82.5 Nuwati Trail goes to the right. The 4 campsites described in "Camping" are on this trail. Stay left for MST. 
- 82.7 Daniel Boone Scout Trail goes right. Stay straight on main trail. Campsites are available 1.2 miles up the right-hand trail at Daniel Boone Campsite. 
- 83.7 Cross footbridge.
- 85.2 Side trail on left leads to Boulder Fields Overlook parking area (MP 302.4), but stay on main trail. 



Bamboo Valley in the fall
Photo by Shelton Wilder

- 85.7 Cross Little Wilson Creek on arched footbridge. 💧
- 85.9 Trail to Rough Ridge parking area (MP 302.8) goes left. Stay on main trail. 🅅 💧
- 86.1 Walk along Rough Ridge boardwalk
- 86.5 Side trail on left goes to rock outcrop with good views. Continue right on main trail. Trail goes through field of large boulders for next 1.23 miles.
- 87.4 Cross bridge over Wilson Creek and continue left. Trail to Wilson Creek Overlook parking area (MP 303.6) is on left. 🅅 💧
- 87.5 Balanced Rock is on left.
- 88.0 Cross footbridge.
- 88.1 Side trail goes left for 60 feet to rock outcrop with good views of Linn Cove Viaduct, Table Rock, Hawksbill, and Pisgah Forest.
- 88.3 Bridge crosses Linn Cove Branch. 💧
- 88.6 Follow steps through large boulders and pass under viaduct.



Fallen Splendor

Photo by Chris Underhill

- 88.7 Come to Linn Cove parking area and visitor center (MP 304.4). Follow paved path around outside of parking lot.
- 88.8 Walk past visitor center. Storage buildings will be to right of trail.
- 89.0 Descend wooden and stone steps. *Note:* Some hikers may consider this section strenuous.
- 89.1 Cross bridge over Stack Rock Creek with waterfall on right.
- 89.2 Ascend and then descend wooden boardwalk and stairway as they go around giant rock formation known as Stack Rock.
- 89.4 Stack Rock parking area (MP 304.8) goes 90 feet to right. MST goes to left and descends steps.
- 89.8 Follow boardwalk next to parkway's stone retainer wall. Descend into area with large boulders.
- 89.9 Cross paved US 221.
- 90.3 Reach southern terminus of Tanawha Trail. Turn right and go 0.1 mile to Beacon Heights parking area (MP 305.2). Come out of woods and cross paved road to reach parking area. You can reach Linville by going north on BRP to first exit, which leads to US 221. At end of exit ramp, turn right and it is 2 miles to entrance to Grandfather Mtn. and another 2 miles downhill to Linville and intersection with NC 105.

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