



Walking the MST into Elkin
Photo by Joe Mickey

The Elkin Valley—MST Segment 6

DEVILS GARDEN OVERLOOK TO PILOT MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

By **Bob Hillyer**

This 69-mile segment marks the transition from mountains to Piedmont as the trail drops more than 2,000 feet in six miles off the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) to a tranquil valley within Stone Mountain State Park. At the base of the massive granite monolith that gives the park its name, hikers enter a gentler landscape at the Hutchinson Historic Homestead.

From there, the journey continues a more gradual descent, over foothills and past farms and forests to the town of Elkin. The flora, fauna,

and wildlife also make a noticeable transition. Yellow-pine forests begin to dominate the landscape along fields of corn and tobacco and trellised grapes at wineries. Once a textile powerhouse, Elkin welcomes visitors to explore its downtown as well as its proud history and beautiful setting on the Yadkin River.

From Elkin, the trail heads east, following the Yadkin River, past farms and forests to the historic village of Rockford, the county seat of Surry County from 1789 to 1850. Ahead looms the granite dome of Pilot Mountain, the westernmost peak in the Sauratown Mountain range. This MST segment ends at the start of the Corridor Trail in Pilot Mountain State Park, which in Segment 7 leads hikers toward that peak.

Two of the trail sections in this segment are also open to horses. You can learn about those trail sections by reading the hiking directions in this guide.

Eastbound travelers may choose to complete the eastern half of this segment by paddling the Yadkin from Elkin to Rockford or Pilot Mountain State Park. See the “Paddle Option” section later in this guide for more information.

This trail segment is “actively under development” by the Elkin Valley Trails Association (EVTA) and local governments that have made completion of the MST a priority. Please contact EVTA (see contact information in the “Additional Information” section for this segment) to learn how you can get involved.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE

- Stone Mountain State Park with its massive granite monolith, numerous waterfalls, designated trout streams, horse trails, and technical climbing on a 600-foot rock face
- Wells Knob, offering views of the mountains and the Piedmont from its 1,600-foot peak
- Easy hiking along the Elkin & Alleghany “rails-to-trails” as you enter Elkin

- A stroll down Main Street Elkin, where the sidewalks are marked to tell you that you're on the MST
- A possible side trip to hike portions of the Revolutionary War–era Overmountain Victory Trail
- An alternate paddle to complete the eastern part of this segment from Elkin to Pilot Mountain State Park
- Historic Rockford, founded in 1790, which provides a pleasant stop halfway between Elkin and Pilot Mountain
- Pilot Mountain, which rises abruptly from the rolling hills, resembling the mesas out West



The Rockford General Store
Photo by Joe Mickey

Total Distance: 69.4 miles (21.4 miles on trail, 5.5 miles on gravel road, 42.5 miles road walking)

Difficulty: Easy to moderate except on the western side of Stone Mtn. State Park, which is very strenuous

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 MountaintoSeaTrail.org/updates.

Trail Angels

The MST is fortunate to have many Trail Angels: friendly people who have volunteered to provide assistance to long-distance hikers ranging from local information to lodging and food. We greatly appreciate our Trail Angels' willingness to give back to the hiking community and the MST. For information about Trail Angels in Segment 6 and the services they can provide, see MountaintoSeaTrail.org/the-trail/trail-angels.

Camping/Lodging on the Trail

Note: All prices listed in this guide are for comparison only and are subject to change at any time.

Backcountry campers may leave cars at Blue Ridge Parkway overlooks overnight, but must call the BRP Comm Center (828-298-2491) the day before or the morning they leave to provide details.

Eastbound (EB) Mile 1.3; Westbound (WB) Mile 68.2

NPS Mahogany Rock Campsite (H5). The National Park Service (NPS) operates a primitive backcountry campsite intended for MST thru-hikers and section hikers. The maximum occupancy is 6 campers, and stay is limited to no more than two consecutive nights. The site is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and requires a BRP/NPS backcountry use permit available at a self-registration box about 20 yards into Segment 6 from the Devils Garden Overlook. To reach the campsite from the MST turn left (EB) or right (WB) at the junction with the Sparta Trail; the campsite is about 100 yards down the trail.

EB Mile 4.9; WB Mile 64.5

Stone Mtn. State Park, 3042 John P. Frank Pkwy., Roaring Gap, 28668. Westbound hikers can self-register for these sites, which cost \$12/night, at the Backpack Parking Lot. Eastbound hikers must call the park office at 336-957-8185 to reserve a site, then pay the next day at the Backpack Parking Lot.

EB Mile 9.7; WB Mile 59.7

Stone Mtn. State Park, 3042 John P. Frank Pkwy., Roaring Gap, 28668. To reserve campsites in the main park campground, call 877-722-6762 or reserve online at www.ncparks.gov/stone-mountain-state-park. Non-electric campsites range from \$19-23/night.

EB Mile 30.3; WB Mile 39.1

Byrd's Branch Campground, 225 Martin Byrd Rd., Elkin, 28621, 336-526-1146; byrdsbranchcampground.com. RV and tent camping available as well as a small store with refreshments and ice cream. Tent sites are \$25/night.

EB Mile 37.2; WB Mile 31.9

Crater Park, Downtown Elkin, 28621, 336-794-6478; www.elkinnc.org. Camping is allowed in Crater Park at the Yadkin River takeout. A reservation is not required, but people interested in camping are asked to check in at the Elkin Recreation Center, 399 NC 268 W, Elkin, 28621, or by calling 336-835-4747. The center is located directly on the trail route at EB Mile 34.3; WB Mile 33.2. To reach Crater Park, follow these directions: For eastbound hikers, beginning at Mile 35.1, head south on N. Front St. for 800 feet and turn left onto Commerce St. Follow Commerce St. 0.25 mile to Crater Park. For westbound hikers, beginning at Mile 32.0, turn left on Standard St. and bear right at intersection with Fabric St. to reach Crater Park.

EB Mile 53.8; WB Mile 15.6

Rockford Inn Bed and Breakfast, 4872 Rockford Rd., Dobson, 27017, 800-561-6652; www.rockfordbedandbreakfast.com. Rates are approximately \$85-95/night.

EB Mile 54.4; WB Mile 15.0

Yadkin River Adventures, 104 Old Rockford Rd., Rockford, 27017, 336-374-5318; www.yadkinriveradventures.com. The owner of Yadkin River

Adventures allows MST hikers to camp on his property. Please call in advance.

Also check Friends' "Trail Angels" page at MountainstoSeaTrail.org/trail/trail-angels for additional camping and lodging options.

Other Lodging, Campgrounds, and Cabin Rentals

Additional lodging within driving distance of the trail is available in Elkin, Jonesville, Dobson, and Pilot Mtn. and at other sites listed below. See "Additional Information" for tourism websites.

Nearby Campgrounds

On the southern outskirts of Stone Mtn. State Park, approximately 5 miles from EB Mile 13.1; WB Mile 56.3

Sandy Creek Family Campground, 969 Traphill-Brown Rd., Traphill, 28685, 336-957-8525, sandycreekfamilycampground@gmail.com; sandycreekfamilycampground.weebly.com. Tent sites are \$25/night. To arrange a shuttle from Stone Mtn. State Park, call 336-957-8525 or, if no one answers that number, 336-452-8795.

About 4.5 miles from EB Mile 21.6; WB Mile 47.8

Rocky Ridge Family Campground, 361 White Rock Rd., Thurmond, 28683, 336-366-7396; <https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/18691288>. This campground, on the South Fork of the Mitchell River, has primitive camping with grassy sites, fire pits, and picnic tables. From the intersection of Roaring Gap Rd. and Roaring Gap Church Rd., head north on Roaring Gap Church Rd. 1.7 miles to a T-intersection and turn right on Traphill Rd. At the T-intersection 0.2 mile later, turn right on US 21. Continue 1.1 miles to a left turn on Thurmond Rd. In 0.2 mile, you will reach an intersection where several roads come together; take the 90-degree left turn onto Haystack Rd. Continue 0.8 mile on Haystack Rd. to a left turn on White Rock Rd. The campground will be 0.5 mile ahead on your left.

About 10 miles by road and 8.3 miles by trail from the eastern end of Segment 6

Pilot Mtn. State Park campground, 1792 Pilot Knob Park Rd., Pinnacle, 27043. Reserve a campsite online at www.ncparks.gov/pilot-mountain-state-park or call 877-722-6762. Sites are \$19-23/night.

Nearby Cabins

Three vineyards rent cabins between Elkin and Stone Mtn. State Park in the vicinity of EB Miles 29-31; WB Miles 38-40.

Elkin Creek Vineyard, 318 Elkin Creek Mill Rd., Elkin, 28621, 336-526-5119; www.elkin creekvineyard.com. Cabins are \$139-159/night.

Klondike Cabins (at Grassy Creek Vineyard & Winery), 235 Chatham Cottage Ln., State Road, 28676, 336-835-4230; www.grassycreekvineyard.com. Rates vary.

Frog Holler Cabin Rentals, 564 E. Walker St., Elkin, 28621, 336-536-2661; www.froghollercabins.com. Rates are \$135-145/night

Food/Supplies/Post Office/Laundry

EB Mile 14.3; WB Mile 55.1

Stone Mtn. Country Store, 1050 John P. Frank Pkwy., Traphill, 28685, 336-957-8154; stonemountainstore.com.

EB Mile 20.5; WB Mile 48.9

Rex Triplett Grocery (grocery & hardware), 979 Roaring Gap Church Rd., Elkin, 28721, 336-957-2795.

EB Mile 30.3; WB Mile 39.1

Byrd's Branch Campground (short-term supply and ice cream). See "Camping/Lodging on the Trail" above.

EB Mile 32.0; WB Mile 37.5

Shops, restaurants, and a brewery 0.4 mile away down Skull Camp Spur Trail.

EB Miles 33.5 to 37.5; WB Miles 31.9 to 35.9

Full re-supply in Elkin: food, laundry, motels, AYCE restaurants, banks, post office, drugstore, library (with internet).

EB Mile 54.4; WB Mile 15.0

Rockford General Store, 5174 Rockford Rd., Rockford, 27017, 336-957-2795; rockfordgeneralstore.com.

EB Mile 62.8; WB Mile 6.6

Shorty's Country Store, 7063 Siloam Rd., Siloam, 27047, 336-374-2266.

River Outfitters

Near EB Mile 37.3; WB Mile 32.1

Jonesville Kayak & Tube Rentals, 1917 NC 67, Jonesville, 28642, 336-934-0874; www.67riverrentals.com.

EB Mile 54.4; WB Mile 15.0

Yadkin River Adventures, 104 Old Rockford Rd., Rockford, 27017, 336-374-5318; www.yadkinriveradventures.com.

Water/Restrooms



Water is available all along this route in streams and rivers, but that water must be treated. There are also convenience stores along the route where bottled water can be purchased.

EB Mile 7.9 or 9.7;



WB Mile 59.7 or 61.6

Lower Trailhead Parking Lot, Stone Mtn. State Park  

EB Mile 30.3; WB Mile 39.1

Byrd's Branch Campground  

EB Mile 36.4; WB Mile 33.1

Elkin Recreation Center/Elkin Municipal Park  

EB Mile 37.2; WB Mile 32.3

Elkin Public Library  

Near EB Mile 37.2;

Elkin Crater Park  

WB Mile 31.9

EB Mile 43.9; WB Mile 25.4

Carolina Heritage Vineyards 

Hunting

Sections of trail not in Stone Mtn. State Park or in the town of Elkin are on private land and may be open to hunting. Before you hike in these areas, see www.ncwildlife.org/Hunting for information about seasons and licenses, and always wear blaze orange during hunting season.

Signs/Blazing

The MST is blazed with 3-inch white circles on the westernmost 6 miles in Stone Mtn. State Park and on trails between the park and Elkin.

Other Trail Users

The trail over Wells Knob and a portion of the route through Stone Mtn. State Park are open for horseback riding as well as hiking. Look at the

hiking directions to find information about sections of trail open to users other than hikers.

Paddle Option

Eastbound hikers may choose to complete part of this segment by paddling the Yadkin River between Elkin and Rockford or Pilot Mtn. State Park. A convenient place to start is at Crater Park in downtown Elkin, and the paddle from there can be done over one or two days. A 6-hour trip will reach the historic town of Rockford, where campsites and provisions are available, and a 10-hour trip will reach the Yadkin River Section of Pilot Mtn. State Park. For more information about this option, contact the river outfitters listed above. To reach Crater Park from EB Mile 37.2, head south on N. Front St. for 800 feet and turn left onto Commerce St. Follow Commerce St. 0.25 mile to Crater Park.

Special Considerations

Except in Stone Mtn. State Park, the trails in this section are almost entirely on private lands. Please stay on the trail and respect the property owners' privacy. Camp only in the areas shown in this guide.

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

Elkin Valley Trails Association: elkinvalleytrails.org

What's Up in Elkin: www.whatsupinelkinnc.com

Trail Maps

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

Stone Mountain State Park: files.nc.gov/ncparks/maps-and-brochures/stone-mountain-state-park-map-2020.pdf

Pilot Mountain State Park (River Section): files.nc.gov/ncparks/maps-and-brochures/pilot-mountain-state-park-map-river-section.pdf

Pilot Mountain State Park (Mountain Section): files.nc.gov/ncparks/maps-and-brochures/pilot-mountain-state-park-mountain-section-map-2020.pdf

Links for Parks and Historic Sites Along the Route

BRP: www.blueridgeparkway.org

BRP NPS Site: www.nps.gov/blri

Stone Mountain State Park:
www.ncparks.gov/stone-mountain-state-park

Pilot Mountain State Park:
www.ncparks.gov/pilot-mountain-state-park

Overmountain Victory Trail: www.nps.gov/ovvi

Links for Other Points and Organizations of Interest

Wilkes County Tourism: www.wilkescountytourism.com

Explore Wilkes: www.explorewilkes.com

Town of Elkin: www.elkinnc.org

Downtown Elkin: downtownelkin.com

Yadkin Valley/Surry County Tourism: yadkinvalleync.com

Vineyards

There are more than 47 vineyards within 30 miles of Elkin in the Yadkin Valley Appellation: www.yadkinvalleywinecountry.com
www.yadkinwinetours.com
www.surrywineries.com/Surry_Wineries/Welcome.html

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS

Devils Garden Overlook (BRP Milepost 235.7)

EB Mile 0.0; WB Mile 69.4



N36.43404, W81.10429

Backpack Parking Lot

EB Mile 6.0; WB Mile 63.5



N36.39460, W81.06890

Lower Trailhead Parking Lot

EB Mile 7.9 or 9.1; WB Mile 60.3 or 61.6



N36.39780, W81.05170

Upper Trailhead Parking Lot

EB Mile 9.7; WB Mile 59.7



N36.38394, W81.02752

Stone Mtn. Country Store

EB Mile 14.3; WB Mile 55.1



N36.35699, W81.02571

Byrd's Branch Campground

EB Mile 30.3; WB Mile 39.1



N36.28918, W80.87722

Elkin Recreation Center

EB Mile 36.4; WB Mile 33.1



N36.25204, W80.86124

Elkin Town Hall/Police Department

EB Mile 37.3; WB Mile 32.1



N36.24555, W80.85049

Yadkin River Adventures

EB Mile 54.4; WB Mile 15.0



N36.26849, W80.64841

Hauser Rd. Parking Area

EB Mile 69.4; WB Mile 0.0










N36.26745, W80.49578

Note: Please let business owners and government staff know if you plan to park overnight or longer. If you do not notify anyone at the state parks, they may launch a search to determine that you are not in danger. The other owners and government agencies may tow your car.

During wet conditions, the Hauser Rd. parking area may be gated to prevent horse damage. Roadside parking is allowed as long as your car is fully off the road and not blocking the gate. If there is not enough room to park here, go east on Hauser Rd. 0.2 mile to a right turn on the gravel access road for the Yadkin River Section of Pilot Mtn. State Park. Additional parking is available approximately 0.2 mile down this road, and a spur trail returns to the Hauser Rd. parking area.

Hiking Directions, Eastbound

- 0.0 Begin Segment 6 at Devils Garden Overlook at MP 235.7 on the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP). The MST goes into the woods at the northeast corner of the overlook. *Note:* The overlook is 6 miles south of the intersection of BRP and US 21; Sparta is 7 miles north on US 21. It is 25 miles south on US 21 to Elkin at I-77. If you plan to leave your car overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify the BRP Comm Center as noted above. 
- 0.4 Turn left at junction with old forest-access road.
- 1.3 At bottom of switchbacks, turn right at junction with Sparta Trail, marked with a sign. *Note:* The NPS Mahogany Rock NPS campsite (H5) is about 100 yards down the Sparta Trail, near the creek. See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for more information about the site, including registration requirements.  
- 1.4 Pass abandoned cabin on right.
- 2.9 Cross a small creek. 
- 4.9 At a trail junction, turn left. You are joining the Widows Creek Trail, also marked by square orange blazes. *Note:* For remote camping, turn right at the junction. Before camping, you must call 336-957-8185 to reserve your site. Pay for your campsite the next day on your way by the trailhead parking lot at Mile 6.0. See additional details in the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment. 
- 5.1 Cross footbridge over Widows Creek.
- 5.5 Cross second footbridge over Widows Creek.
- 5.6 Cross third footbridge over Widows Creek. 
- 5.9 Bear right at Y-intersection.
- 6.0 Continue straight past spur trail to Backpack Parking Lot. *Note:* If you plan to leave your car in the park overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify a Stone Mtn. State Park ranger. Otherwise they may assume you are lost and start a search for you. 
- 6.1 Cross paved road and a bridge over East Prong of Roaring River, then continue onto gravel road.
- 6.2 Turn right onto trail and cross footbridge.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies

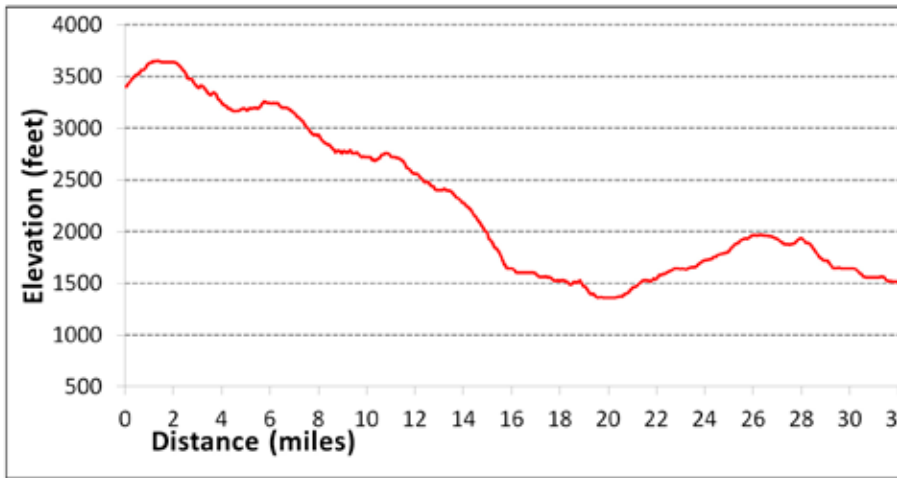





Water



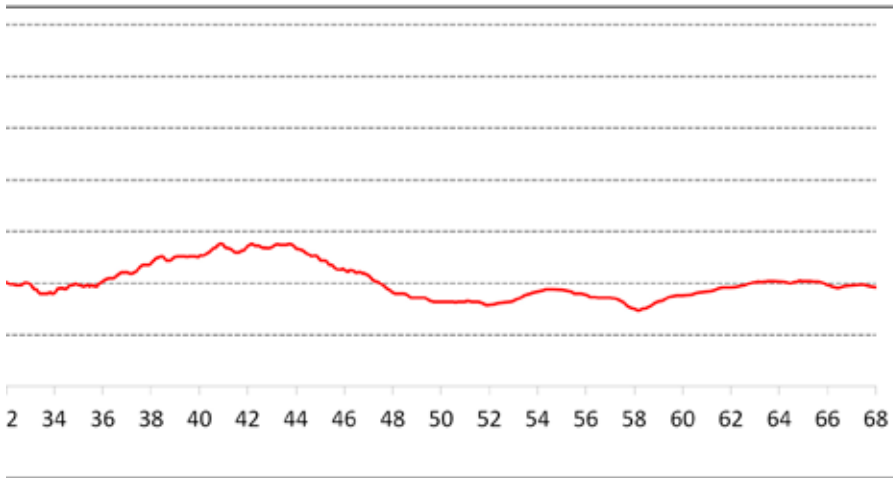
Picnic








Segment 6 Eastbound



- 7.9 Turn right at trail sign onto old roadbed. This is also known as the Wolf Rock Trail and is marked with red squares. *Note:* Continuing straight leads 0.8 mile to the Lower Trailhead Parking Lot, with water and restrooms. The parking lot can also be accessed from Mile 9.1.   
- 8.2 Pass a spur trail on the right leading 100 yards to the open face of Wolf Rock, with views to the Blue Ridge Mountains.
- 8.3 Pass ruins of an old homestead on right. A chicken coop is near the trail, an old chimney farther away.
- 8.4 At signed trail junction, turn left on Cedar Rock Trail, marked with red circles.
- 8.5 Emerge from the woods onto the face of Cedar Rock and traverse the face, keeping near the left side and aiming for a point just right of the highest point of the rock, then return to the woods.
- 8.6 Emerge onto another portion of Cedar Rock and continue straight across, then return to the woods again. Just before emerging to another rock face with great views of Stone Mtn., turn sharply right to head downhill.
- 8.9 At junction with the Black Jack Ridge Trail, turn left to remain on the Cedar Rock Trail.

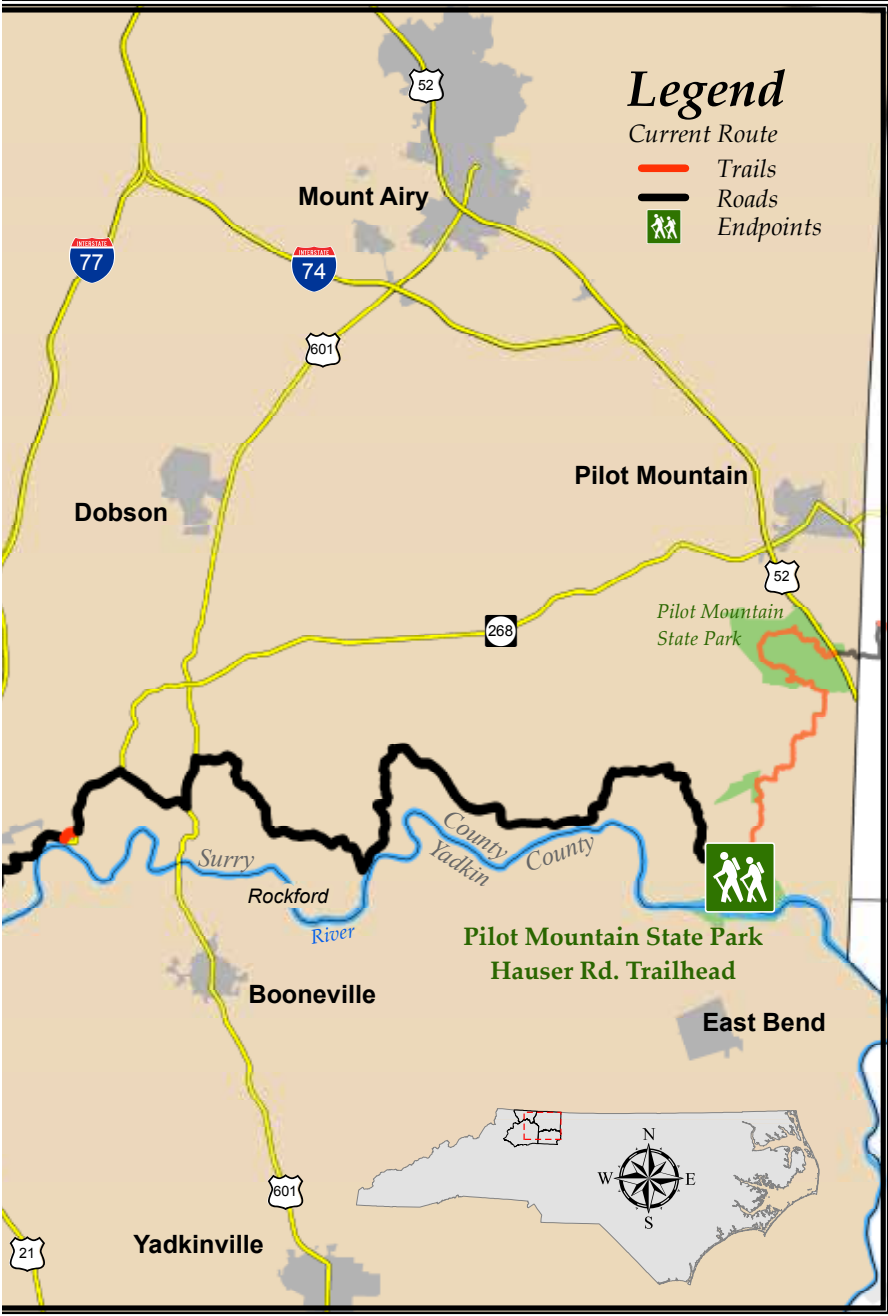
Elevation Profile








- 9.1 At a major trail junction where the historic Hutchinson Homestead is visible to the left, take a sharp right onto the Loop Trail, marked with orange circles. *Note:* The Lower Trailhead Parking Lot, mentioned at Mile 7.9, is 0.8 mile to the left.   
- 9.2 Cross the first of a series of 4 footbridges before the next turn.
- 9.7 At trail junction next to a bench, turn right on Middle and Lower Falls Trail, marked with blue circles, then cross a small creek. *Note:* Continuing straight instead leads 0.4 mile to Stone Mtn. Falls, a spectacular 200-foot-tall cascading waterfall. Parking, plus water and restrooms, is available at the Upper Trailhead Parking Lot an additional 0.5 mile beyond the falls, and the Stone Mountain State Park campground is beyond that. See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for more information about camping here.    
- 9.8 Pass a small cave on right. *Note:* Local legend says a Civil War deserter hid in this cave, although there is no historical evidence this is true.
- 9.9 Pass a trail to Middle Falls on right, then rock-hop or wade across Big Sandy Creek.



Map and elevation profile produced for Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail by Curtis Belyea, 2020.



- 10.2 Pass through fence, then cross small stream and turn left onto the Bridle Spur Trail, marked with red triangles, where horses are permitted.
- 10.3 Cross a footbridge.
- 10.4 Pass the remains of a still in the woods on the right and begin ascending a long but gentle set of switchbacks.
- 10.6 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 10.8 Cross a footbridge.
- 11.7 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 12.3 At a four-way intersection, turn left. *Note:* Combs Rock, about 0.4 mile straight ahead at the end of the Bridle Spur Trail, has views back to Stone Mountain and the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- 12.4 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 12.6 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 12.7 Continue straight through Martins Low Gap, in an open area.
- 12.9 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 13.1 Turn left on John P. Frank Pkwy. *Note:* Camping is available approximately 5 miles away at Sandy Creek Family Campground. See the “Nearby Campgrounds” section for this segment for more information. 
- 13.2 Turn right on Mosswood Rd.
- 13.9 At intersection with John P. Frank Pkwy., enter the woods on your left at marked trail entrance. Follow rustic trail 0.5 mile to intersection with an old farm road.
- 14.3 Turn left onto farm road at marked intersection, and follow the farm road down to valley floor. *Note:* The Stone Mountain Country Store, with limited supplies and parking, is 0.3 mile to the left on the farm road.    
- 14.4 Cross the first of four power-line cuts on this section of trail.
- 14.6 Cross the second power-line cut.
- 14.9 Cross the third power-line cut, which has a much larger transmission line.
- 15.0 Cross a small creek.
- 15.2 Cross a small creek, then the fourth power-line cut.
- 15.5 Cross a small creek.
- 15.6 At T-intersection, turn right on gravel Traphill Ridge Rd.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies







Water



Picnic



Stone Mountain in Autumn
Photo by Joe Mickey

- 15.8 Turn left (east) on paved Traphill Rd.
- 16.7 Turn right on Swaringen Rd.
- 17.5 Continue straight as Swaringen Rd. turns to gravel.
- 18.9 At T-intersection, turn left on Austin Traphill Rd.
- 19.6 Take a hard left onto Roaring Gap Church Rd.
- 20.5 Pass Rex Triplett Grocery on left.   
- 21.6 After crossing over Elkin Creek, turn right on Roaring Gap Rd.
Note: Continue straight instead to reach camping approximately 4.5 miles away at Rocky Ridge Family Campground. See the “Nearby Campgrounds” section for this segment for directions and more information. 
- 22.0 Turn right on gravel drive. (Sign says “Wit’s End Eventing.”) Take gravel drive 700 feet to marked trail entrance on right. *Note:* This portion of the MST is open to horseback riding as well as hiking.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms














Supplies



Water
















Picnic









- 22.2 Turn right at marked entrance to trail over Wells Knob. This section is steep and has numerous switchbacks.
- 23.7 Go around gate on left and continue on old road/power line.
- 24.0 Bear right on Wells Knob Rd., a private gravel road.
- 24.5 At T-intersection, turn left on Mining Ridge Church Rd.
- 24.6 Turn right onto Shoaley Branch Church Rd.
- 25.2 Turn left on state-maintained gravel Shoaley Branch Rd. **DO NOT** go straight on Shoaley Branch Church Rd.
- 26.8 At T-intersection, turn left on Murray Rd.
- 27.2 Turn right on Couch's Fish Lake Rd.
- 29.1 At T-intersection, turn right on Pleasant Ridge Rd.
- 30.2 Turn left on Martin Byrd Rd.
- 30.3 Turn left on gravel path and follow trail 275 feet, around pond, past water spigot, and over small bridge to graveled trail that leads to camp store. Pass behind camp store and continue on upper drive/trail, passing another water spigot. *Note:* Water, restrooms, and light snacks are available at the store during open hours. See the "Camping/Lodging on the Trail" section for information about camping at Byrd's Branch Campground here.     
- 30.5 Turn left on Martin Byrd Rd. and go 165 feet to trail entrance into the enchanted white-pine forest.
- 31.0 Turn left on Martin Byrd Rd. again and go 120 feet to marked trail entrance on right.
- 31.3 Turn right at T-intersection. *Note:* The trail to the left goes to Grassy Creek Vineyard & Winery approximately 0.4 mile away.
- 31.4 At far end of field, re-enter woods on marked trail.
- 31.6 Turn left on Brookfall Dairy Rd.
- 31.7 Just past the "Elkin City Limits" sign, turn right into pasture and follow marked trail.
- 32.0 Continue past Skull Camp Spur on left, leading 0.4 mile to N. Bridge St., with shops, restaurants, and a brewery.  
- 32.6 At end of trail, turn left on Carter Mill Rd.
- 33.5 Turn right on N. Bridge St. *Note:* Restaurants, banks, full grocery stores, laundry, motels, drugstores, and hospital are available along this section, but it also has heavy traffic.    
- 34.2 At second traffic light, turn right on Collins Rd.



Wells Knob rises above farm fields.
Photo by Joe Mickey

- 34.6 Turn right on second gravel road, directly across from the first house on your left. Watch for 3-inch white MST markers, and be careful not to turn on the first gravel road, which is a dead end.
- 35.4 Join the old bed of the Elkin and Alleghany Railroad and cross 178-foot-long bridge over Elkin Creek. Pass gong on left, then continue on crushed granite path past reservoir on left. *Note:* Legend says to ring the gong three times for luck.
- 35.5 Pass access road on right and spur trail on left.
- 35.7 Continue under bridges of NC 268 Bypass.
- 35.8 At Y-intersection with access road, take left fork.
- 35.9 Cross footbridge over Elkin Creek.
- 36.0 Pass picnic area, side trail, bench, rain shelter, and Shoe Factory Dam on left. 
- 36.2 Continue under NC 268 bridge.
- 36.4 Enter Elkin Municipal Park and pass “100 Strong” railway sculpture on left, keeping right at the Y-intersection. Continue past Elkin Recreation Center and parking on left. *Note:* Internet access is available in the park. The Elkin Recreation Center has water and restrooms,

- and you can ask about showers and camping at Crater Park; for more information about camping, see the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment.    
- 36.8 At T-intersection just past left-hand curve, turn right, then cross culvert over small stream. Pass bridge on right that crosses Elkin Creek.
- 36.9 Pass fishing platform on right, then bear right at small parking area as path continues alongside N. Front St. 
- 37.0 Turn right on Market St., then cross bridge over Elkin Creek and turn left onto crushed granite path into Elkin Peace Park.
- 37.1 Pass information kiosk on left. At peace pole, turn left on W. Main St. and cross bridge over Elkin Creek.
- 37.2 Pass library on left, then cross Front St. to enter downtown Elkin. *Note:* The library has internet access, restrooms, and water, and there are restaurants, shops, and a post office along Main St. For camping at nearby Crater Park (with restrooms and water) and the paddle option, see the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” and “Paddle Option” sections for this segment.     
- 37.3 Continue straight across Bridge St. *Note:* To reach parking at the Elkin Town Hall/Police Department, turn left and walk 0.1 mile north. If you plan to park in this lot overnight or longer, please tell the police or town officials of your plans. 
- 37.5 Pass ornamental directional pole on left, then continue straight on Main St. where E. Market St. joins from the left.
- 39.1 Cross under I-77.
- 43.4 Cross bridge over Mitchell River.
- 43.5 Turn left on marked trail directly across from Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church.
- 43.6 Turn left onto dirt road, then cross power-line cut.
- 43.8 Exit woods and follow the edge of Carolina Heritage Vineyards grape arbors to NC 268. *Note:* Visitors are welcome at the vineyard tasting room, and water is available. 
- 43.9 Turn left on NC 268.
- 45.8 Turn right on W. Mt. Herman Church Rd.
- 47.6 Turn left on US 601.
- 48.8 Turn right on Jenkinstown Rd.
- 50.4 Cross bridge over the Fisher River.










- 50.5 Turn right on Buck Fork Rd.
- 52.8 Turn right on Rockford Rd. and enter the historic Rockford community.
- 53.8 Pass Rockford Inn Bed & Breakfast on right. 
- 54.4 Turn left on Old Rockford Rd. Yadkin River Adventures and Rockford General Store are at this intersection. *Note:* See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for information about camping at Yadkin River Adventures.    
- 56.2 Just past sharp right-hand curve in road, cross bridge over creek.
- 57.7 At T-intersection, turn right on River Siloam Rd.
- 59.9 Pass Kirby Bowman Rd. on left.
- 62.8 Turn right on Siloam Rd. at Shorty’s Country Store. Almost immediately turn left on Hardy Rd. 
- 64.5 Turn right on Quaker Church Rd.
- 65.4 Cross bridge over Ararat River.
- 65.8 Turn right on John Scott Rd.
- 67.3 Turn right on Shoals Rd.
- 68.4 Turn left on Hauser Rd. and enter “Yadkin River Section” of Pilot Mtn. State Park.
- 69.4 Reach Lower Section parking area for the “Corridor Trail” in Pilot Mtn. State Park and the eastern end of Segment 6. *Note:* The parking area is located at 606 Hauser Rd. To reach it from US 52, take Exit 129 (Perch Rd.) and go west, following the signs to Horne Creek Living Farm Historical Site. The route comes to several forks, but always follow the signs. The parking area is about 0.1 mile beyond the entrance to the historic site on the left. If you plan to leave your car overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify a park ranger. Otherwise they will assume you are lost and start a search for you. See the “Primary Parking” section for this segment for information about parking here during wet conditions when the parking area is gated.  



















Walking the trail at Wells Knob
Photo by Joe Mickey

Hiking Directions, Westbound

0.0 Segment 6 begins at the Lower Section parking area for the Corridor Trail in Pilot Mtn. State Park. From the parking area, go left (west) on Hauser Rd. *Note:* The parking area is located at 606 Hauser Rd. To reach it from US 52, take Exit 129 (Perch Rd.) and go west, following the signs to Horne Creek Living Farm Historical Site. The route comes to several forks, but always follow the signs. The parking area is about 0.1 mile beyond the entrance to the historic site on the left. If you plan to leave your car overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify a park ranger. Otherwise, they will assume you are lost and start a search for you. See the “Primary Parking” section for this segment

- for information about parking here during wet conditions when the parking area is gated.  
- 1.0 Turn right on Shoals Rd.
 - 2.1 Turn left on John Scott Rd.
 - 3.6 Turn left (west) on Quaker Church Rd.
 - 4.0 Cross bridge over Ararat River.
 - 5.0 Turn left on Hardy Rd.
 - 6.6 At T-intersection, turn right on Siloam Rd. Almost immediately, turn left on River Siloam Rd. at Shorty's Country Store. 
 - 9.5 Pass Kirby Bowman Rd. on right.
 - 11.7 Turn left on Old Rockford Rd. and enter historic Rockford community.
 - 13.2 Cross bridge over creek, then follow a sharp left-hand curve in road.
 - 15.0 Turn right on Rockford Rd. Yadkin River Adventures and Rockford General Store are at this intersection. *Note:* See the "Camping/Lodging on the Trail" section for this segment for information about camping at Yadkin River Adventures.    
 - 15.6 Pass Rockford Inn Bed & Breakfast on left. 
 - 16.6 Turn left on Buck Fork Rd.
 - 18.9 Turn left on Jenkinstown Rd.
 - 19.1 Cross bridge over the Fisher River.
 - 20.7 Turn left on US 601.
 - 21.8 Turn right on W. Mt. Herman Church Rd.
 - 23.6 Turn left on NC 268.
 - 25.5 Turn right on marked trail just before the entrance to Carolina Heritage Vineyards and follow the edge of the vineyard for 500 feet. *Note:* Visitors are welcome at the vineyard tasting room, and water is available. 
 - 25.6 Enter woods and follow marked trail.
 - 25.8 Cross power-line cut, then turn right onto singletrack trail.
 - 25.9 Turn right on NC 268.
 - 26.0 Cross bridge over Mitchell River.
 - 30.3 Cross under I-77. NC 268 becomes E. Main Street heading into Elkin.
 - 31.9 Where E. Market St. bears off to the right and uphill, continue straight on Main St., then pass ornamental directional pole on

- right. *Note:* There are restaurants, shops, and a post office ahead on Main St. For camping at nearby Crater Park (with restrooms and water), see the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment).     
- 32.1 Continue straight across Bridge St. *Note:* To reach parking at the Elkin Town Hall/Police Department, turn right and walk 0.1 mile north. If you plan to park in this lot overnight or longer, please tell the police or town officials of your plans. 
- 32.3 Cross Front St., then pass library on right and continue over bridge over Elkin Creek. *Note:* The library has internet access, restrooms, and water.    
- 32.4 Cross bridge over Elkin Creek, then turn right onto crushed gravel trail into Elkin Peace Park, passing peace pole on left then information kiosk on right.
- 32.5 Cross Elk Spur St., then turn right to cross bridge over Elkin Creek on sidewalk. Turn left onto crushed gravel path along left side of N. Front St.
- 32.6 At small parking area, follow path running along Elkin Creek into Elkin Municipal Park, then pass fishing platform on left. *Note:* Internet access is available in the park. 
- 32.7 Pass bridge on left that crosses Elkin Creek. Cross culvert over small stream, then, at Y-intersection just before baseball fields, take left-hand path.
- 33.1 Continue straight past Elkin Recreation Center and parking on right. Pass “100 Strong” railway sculpture on right, then continue onto the old bed of the Elkin and Alleghany Railroad. *Note:* The Elkin Recreation Center has water and restrooms, and you can ask about showers and camping at Crater Park; see more information about camping in the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment.    
- 33.2 Continue under NC 268 bridge.
- 33.4 Pass Shoe Factory Dam, rain shelter, bench, side trail, and picnic area on right. 
- 33.5 Cross footbridge over Elkin Creek.
- 33.6 Pass access road on left.
- 33.7 Continue under bridges of NC 268 Bypass.



The Elkin Trail in the snow
Photo by Joe Mickey

- 33.9 Pass access road on left and spur trail on right.
- 34.0 Pass gong on right, then cross 178-foot-long bridge over Elkin Creek. Follow crushed granite path past reservoir on right, then continue onto gravel road. *Note:* Legend says to ring the gong three times for luck.
- 34.9 At T-intersection, turn left on Collins Rd.
- 35.2 Turn left on N. Bridge St. *Note:* Restaurants, banks, full grocery stores, laundry, motels, drugstores, and hospital are available along this section, but it also has heavy traffic. 🏠 🛏️ 💧 🍴
- 35.9 Turn left on Carter Mill Rd.
- 36.8 At the end of a long downhill, turn right on marked trail at the end of a pasture on your right and just before crossing Grassy Creek.
- 37.5 Continue past Skull Camp Spur on right, leading 0.4 mile to N. Bridge St., with shops, restaurants, and a brewery. 🏠 🍴
- 37.7 At end of trail, turn left on Brookfall Dairy Rd.
- 37.8 After 550 feet, just beyond left-hand curve in road, turn right at marked trail entrance.



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms












Supplies



Water







Picnic

- 38.1 Emerge to farm field and follow right side of field about 520 feet to re-enter woods.
- 38.5 Turn left on Martin Byrd Rd. and go 120 feet to marked trail entrance on right.
- 38.9 Turn left on Martin Byrd Rd. again. After about 165 feet, enter the enchanted white-pine forest and follow the marked trail.
- 39.1 Pass a water spigot, then walk behind camp store and continue on small graveled trail. Pass another water spigot, cross small bridge, and go around pond, then follow gravel path 275 feet to right turn on Martin Byrd Rd. *Note:* Water, restrooms, and light snacks are available at the store during open hours. See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for information about camping at Byrd’s Branch Campground here.     
- 39.2 At T-intersection, turn right on Pleasant Ridge Rd.
- 40.3 Turn left on Couch’s Fish Lake Rd.
- 42.2 At T-intersection, turn left on Murray Rd.
- 42.6 Turn right on state-maintained gravel Shoaley Branch Rd.
- 44.2 At T-intersection, turn right on Shoaley Branch Church Rd.
- 44.8 At T-intersection, turn left on Mining Ridge Church Rd.
- 44.9 Turn right on Wells Knob Rd., a private gravel road.
- 45.4 Turn left on old power-line right-of-way that continues uphill.
- 45.7 Go around gate on right and continue on marked trail over Wells Knob. This section is steep and has numerous switchbacks. *Note:* This part of the MST is open to horseback riding as well as to hiking.
- 47.2 Turn left on a gravel drive/road.
- 47.4 Turn left on Roaring Gap Rd.
- 47.8 At T-intersection, turn left on Roaring Gap Church Rd. *Note:* Turn right instead to reach camping approximately 4.5 miles away at Rocky Ridge Family Campground. See the “Nearby Campgrounds” section for this segment for directions and more information. 
- 48.9 Pass Rex Triplett Grocery on right.   
- 49.8 Take a hard right onto Austin Traphill Rd.
- 50.6 Turn right on the partially state-maintained gravel Swaringen Rd.
- 51.9 Continue straight as Swaringen Rd. becomes paved road.
- 52.7 Turn left on Traphill Rd.



Pilot Mountain from the Yadkin River
Photo by Yadkin Riverkeeper

- 53.6 Turn right onto gravel Traphill Ridge Rd.
- 53.8 Turn left into woods at marked sign, and follow marked trail and farm road.
- 53.9 Cross a small creek.
- 54.2 Cross the first of four power-line cuts on this section of trail, then cross a small creek.
- 54.4 Cross a small creek.
- 54.5 Cross the second power-line cut, which has a much larger transmission line.
- 54.8 Cross the third power-line cut.
- 55.0 Cross the fourth power-line cut.
- 55.1 Turn right at marked intersection entering wood trail on right. *Note:* The Stone Mountain Country Store, with limited supplies and parking, is 0.3 mile straight ahead on the farm road.    
- 55.6 Turn right on John P. Frank Parkway, then immediately turn right onto gravel Mosswood Rd.
- 56.2 Turn left on John P. Frank Pkwy.
- 56.3 Turn right onto the Stone Mountain State Park Horse Trail, a gravel road, and pass “Entering Stone Mountain State Park” sign. *Note:*



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



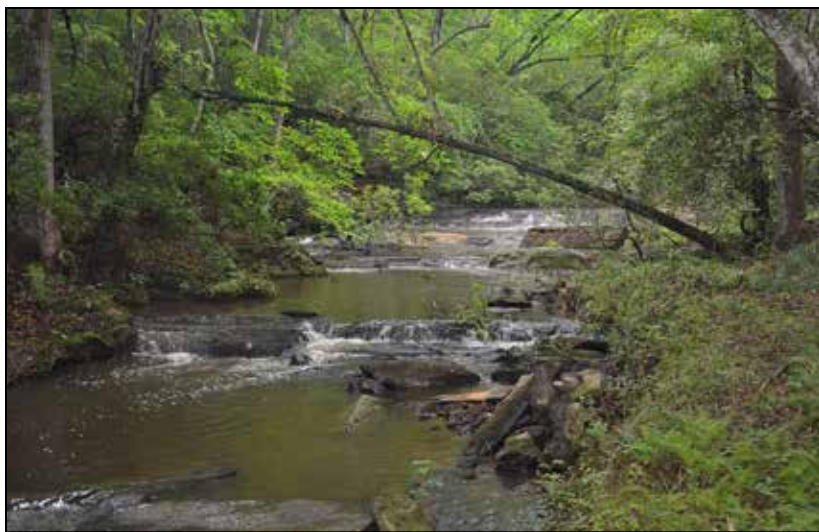
Supplies



Water










Picnic



Grassy Creek
Photo by Joe Mickey

Camping is available approximately 5 miles away at Sandy Creek Family Campground. See the “Nearby Campgrounds” section for this segment for more information. ▲

- 56.4 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 56.7 Continue straight through Martins Low Gap, in an open area.
- 56.8 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 57.0 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 57.1 At a four-way intersection, turn right onto Bridle Spur Trail, marked with red triangles, where horses are permitted. *Note:* Combs Rock, about 0.4 mile to the left at the end of the Bridle Spur Trail, has good views of Stone Mountain and the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- 57.7 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 58.2 Begin descending a long but gentle set of switchbacks.
- 58.6 Cross a footbridge.
- 58.8 Continue through a power-line cut.
- 59.1 Pass the remains of a still in the woods on the left, then cross a foot-bridge.

- 59.2 Turn right onto Middle and Lower Falls Trail, marked with blue circles, cross a small stream, and pass through fence, following Big Sandy Creek upstream.
- 59.5 Rock-hop or wade across Big Sandy Creek, then pass a trail to Middle Falls on left.
- 59.6 Pass a small cave on left. *Note:* Local legend says a Civil War deserter hid in this cave, but there is no historical evidence this is true.
- 59.7 Cross a small creek. At T-intersection with a bench, turn left on Loop Trail, marked with orange circles. *Note:* Turning right instead leads 0.4 mile to Stone Mtn. Falls, a spectacular 200-foot-tall cascading waterfall. Parking, plus water and restrooms, is available at the Upper Trailhead Parking Lot an additional 0.5 mile beyond the falls, and the Stone Mountain State Park campground is beyond that. See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for more information about camping here.    
- 59.8 Cross the first of a series of 4 footbridges before the next turn.
- 60.3 At a major trail junction where the historic Hutchinson Homestead is visible straight ahead, turn left on Cedar Rock Trail, marked with red circles. *Note:* The Lower Trailhead Parking Lot, with water and restrooms, is an additional 0.8 mile straight ahead. The parking lot can also be accessed from Mile 61.6.   
- 60.6 At junction with the Black Jack Ridge Trail, turn right to remain on the Cedar Rock Trail.
- 60.8 Turn to the left where a path to the right leads to a face of Cedar Rock with great views of Stone Mtn. Emerge from the woods onto the face of Cedar Rock and traverse the face, then return to the woods.
- 60.9 Emerge onto another portion of Cedar Rock and continue down, keeping near the right edge of the rock face.
- 61.0 Return to the woods. At T-intersection, turn right on Wolf Rock Trail, marked with red squares.
- 61.1 Pass ruins of an old homestead on left. A chicken coop is near the trail, an old chimney farther away.
- 61.2 Pass a spur trail on the left leading 100 yards to the open face of Wolf Rock, with views to the Blue Ridge Mountains.
- 61.6 Take a sharp left at a signed trail junction where the right fork begins to descend. *Note:* Continuing straight instead will lead 0.8 mile to



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water





Picnic










Widows Creek Falls

Photo by Joe Mickey

the Lower Trailhead Parking Lot mentioned at Mile 60.3.  



- 63.2 Cross a footbridge, then turn left on gravel road at T-intersection.
- 63.3 Cross bridge over East Prong of Roaring River, then paved road.
- 63.5 Continue straight past spur trail to Backpack Parking Lot and continue on Widows Creek Trail, which runs conjunctively with MST and is marked with orange squares as well as white circles. Continue left where path to road comes in from right. *Note:* If you plan to camp at a primitive campsite at Mile 62.5, register and pay for your campsite in the parking lot. See additional details in the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment. If you plan to leave your car in the park overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify a Stone Mtn. State Park ranger. Otherwise they may assume you are lost and start a search for you. 
- 63.9 Cross two footbridges over Widows Creek. 
- 64.3 Cross third footbridge over Widows Creek.
- 64.5 At trail junction, leave Widows Creek Trail and take MST to the right. The first section is quite steep. *Note:* To reach primitive campsites, take left fork to continue on Widows Creek Trail. 

- 66.5 Cross a small creek. 
- 68.1 Pass abandoned cabin on left.
- 68.2 Turn left at junction with Sparta Trail, marked with a sign. *Note:* The NPS Mahogany Rock NPS campsite (H5) is about 100 yards down the Sparta Trail, near the creek. See the “Camping/Lodging on the Trail” section for this segment for more information about the site, including registration requirements.  
- 69.0 Turn right onto trail.
- 69.4 Reach the Devils Garden Overlook (BRP MP 235.7) and the western end of Segment 6. *Note:* The overlook is 6.0 miles south of the intersection of BRP and US 21; Sparta is 7 miles north on US 21. It is 25 miles south on US 21 to Elkin at I-77. If you plan to leave your car overnight or longer, you **MUST** notify the BRP Comm Center as noted above. 



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic