

M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure



03-12-2011, Stone Tower Loop, St. Anthony's Wilderness (Aborted AGAIN!): We tried to do this loop about a month ago but were turned around by too much crusty snow. The weather was great today but I had forgotten the effect that three inches of rain in a 24 hour period can have on an otherwise placid Clark Creek. Both the rock hop on the Sandstone Spring Trail and the log bridge w/cable on the Stone Tower Trail were under a raging torrent. We retreated to the AT parking lot hoping to cross the creek over the concrete bridge so we could do the AT/Old Horse-Shoe Trail hike. Precious and I did a few weeks ago but it too looked pretty risky. Not wanting to drive a total of five hours for naught we bagged plans A and B and set off on Plan C, an out-and-back on the AT to the Kinter View. The trail switchbacked up a gradual grade, crossing a powerful little stream several times, on our way to the ridge line of Peters Mt. In some places the trail became part of the stream but it was much easier to navigate through than Clark Creek would have been. Most of the real effort was over once we reached the primary ridge. To our right was a near constant view through the trees of a wide rural valley with Berry Mountain defining its northern boundary. To our left were huge boulder sculptures and an almost never ending series of spines. The AT crossed over several of these. We climbed up on one for a partial view of Third Mountain, proceeded past the junction with the Shikellimy Trail before stopping at the main overlook, another spine, for lunch. Having wasted about a half hour

retreating from the flood waters and facing a two hour drive back to the park and ride, we casually retraced our steps back to the vehicles and called it a day. I won't be adding this hike to our site, at least not now, because I have greater plans for the AT section on Peters Mt., possibly forming a loop(s) with the De Hart Aqueduct, all of which is on public lands. These may require fords of Clark Creek although I suspect that one connector might cross the creek on a another bridge. I hope to find out this summer.