

M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure



11/14/2009, Piney Point-Middle Run Circuit: Four days of near constant rain is enough. Five of us met at the I-70/Route 32 park and ride for a quick fix hike in the Liberty Reservoir Watershed regardless of the misty rain, swollen streams and bow hunters. The trail head is only 12 miles from the met-up place so we were preparing to hike into the woods by 8:30. The trail was pretty saturated with water but only occasionally muddy. When P-Hyker and I scouted this route in February only the first stream crossing was slightly difficult. Today I took a dip in the first one. My partners in crime managed to find an easier crossing but most got their feet wet. At least we didn't have to worry about staying dry on subsequent crossings. Except for passing a hunter's arrow stuck in the trail and some deer scent bottles hanging in some small trees the hike out to Piney Point was uneventful. The heavy cloud cover/mist/fog put a damper on the last chance for color viewing but the grayness added a spooky feel to Liberty Reservoir. We hiked back through the pine plantation and resumed the loop part of the hike, walking through several more evergreen plantings.

The final three crossings of Middle Run were deeper than the first. One was made even more problematic by the introduction of a recently constructed beaver dam that funneled some rapid moving water onto the crossing. It was like getting hit in the knees by a high pressure fire hose. Still, we all managed to make all of the crossings without any further mishaps. The weather conditions and wet feet kept us moving with very little in the way

of breaks. Thankfully the terrain was relatively easy. We squished along for the last miles, finding ourselves back at the van by 11:30. We had all thought ahead and brought either a change of socks and/or footwear to wear back home.