

Description: This is a 13.3 mile strenuous shuttle hike in the George Washington National Forest. If you've hiked up to either Big Schloss or Halfmoon Lookout you've seen Long Mountain and Tibbet Knob. After hiking this one you'll have viewed Trout Run Valley and the surrounding mountains from every possible vantage point.

The trek is a mixture of everything a hiker can expect to find on the trail: a small but technically challenging stream crossing at the beginning, a steep climb, (I believe the "overall" elevation gain is around 2400 feet through the course of the hike), a 350 yard rock field crossing and a fantastic view from the focal point of the hike, Tibbet Knob. This is topped off with a 200 foot four wheel drive descent from the knob before returning to a more conventional tread. Most of the hike is a pleasant mixture of old woods roads and narrow footpaths except for the above mentioned rock field and the rocky access to Tibbet Knob.

Although I classify this one as strenuous my friends and I accomplished it in 6.5 hours including breaks.

Directions from the junction of I-81 and Rt 42 (Woodstock, VA):

1. Take Rt. 42 West to Columbia Furnace (5.8 miles).
2. At Columbia Furnace turn right onto SR 675. Cross Stony Creek and immediately turn left to stay on SR 675.
3. At the junction with SR 717 (3.1 miles from Columbia Furnace) bear right staying on SR 675.
4. At about 2 miles pass FR 92 on the right.
5. In another 0.9 miles turn right into Wolf Gap Campground. Leave vehicles in the day use area behind the kiosk.
6. At the entrance/exit turn right onto Wolf Gap Road and enter WV. Wolf Gap Rd becomes Trout Run Rd. In about 7.5 miles watch for a gravel forest road on the right with "521" painted on the backside of a stop sign. There will be orange blazes on trees going up the forest road and yellow blazes on trees on the left side of Trout Run Rd. This is the Long Mountain Trailhead. Park here.

Trail Notes: Both Long Mountain Trail and Tibbet Knob Trail are blazed with yellow paint. Follow Long Mt Trail north for a few hundred yards and then turn sharply left (south) onto an old woods road. The trail will leave the road and pass through a grassy area near a campsite. Cross Trout Run on a recently constructed bridge. Climb steeply up a footpath. The trail eventually becomes a woods road and switchbacks up Cherry Ridge. At about 1.87 miles from the trailhead pass a grassy clearing on the right and an old woods road on the left (the old Crack Whip Furnace trail, I believe) before arriving at yet another large grassy clearing. The continuation of the trail is a grassy woods road on the right side of the clearing.

Turn right here and in about 0.3 miles arrive at another clearing and the junction of 4-5 woods roads. Long Mt Trail is the one on the left and is marked with a yellow blaze. In about another 1.2 miles the fun begins as you reach the rock field discussed in the description. There is no trail but the trees are blazed rather frequently. Take your time! Once across you'll

return to a relatively smooth footpath. In about another 0.3 miles come to yet another grassy clearing. A woods road goes right and downhill. You want to turn left and follow the blazes.

In another 1.78 miles there will be another grassy opening to the right of the trail. This is a great campsite under the shadow of Ben's Ridge complete with a fire ring. There is a small spring in the woods behind the clearing (walking towards the ridge) that some one has damned up. A better water source is a stream that crosses the trail less than 100 yards south of the campsite. This stream is not shown on any maps I've found but it does exist.

As you travel south from the campsite you will pass one more woods road on the right and begin to ascend Devil's Hole Mt. at 0.69 miles from the campsite come to the intersection of purple blazed Trout Pond Trail. Turn left staying on Long Mt Trail. As you climb you will be following a narrow footpath. As you reach the crest of the mountain the trail will once again become a woods road. Pass several grassy clearings on the left and in 2.27 miles from Trout Pond Trail reach FR 691.

Turn left on FR 691 and walk 2.47 miles to a parking area on the left with a campsite and fire ring. Look for yellow blazes marking the beginning of Tibbet Knob Trail. Follow the blazes (some will be on rocks) along the spine of the ridge until you reach the overlook. Long Mt will be to your left, Halfmoon Lookout straight ahead and Mill Mt with Big Schloss on your right.

Follow the yellow blazes and scramble/slide/sush your way down the steep face of the knob. In a hundred yards or so you will regain a more normal trail that descends to the Wolf Gap Campground and your awaiting vehicles (1.50 miles from the top). On the way down you will cross over a small summit which affords nice views of Big Schloss and Little Sluice.