

## **Piney Ridge-Thornton River Loop**

### **Directions from US 211:**

1. **Enter the Shenandoah Park (\$10.00 per vehicle) and proceed north on Skyline drive to Elkwallow Picnic area (After mile marker 25).**
2. **Turn left into Elkwallow Picnic area. Park at sign for Jeremy's Run Trailhead.**

**Trail notes:** The descriptions I've seen of this hike always use a one mile in and out route from outside of the park boundary. The hike described here removes this route by starting the hike at the Elkwallow Picnic Area. An alternate starting point is at the Thornton River Trail parking lot between mile post 25 and 26.

**From the parking area in the Elkwallow picnic area descend down the white-blazed AT spur trail. At the junction with The main AT turn right. Cross Skyline Drive and gradually ascend almost to the top of Piney Ridge. Turn right onto Range Cabin Service Road. The Range Cabin Service road will bear left and go slightly downhill to the cabin. Blue-blazed Piney Ridge Trail continues straight as a foot path. Continue the hike on Piney Ridge Trail or stay on the service road and visit the Cabin w/spring.**

**Return to the the junction of blue-blazed Piney Ridge Trail. Turn left onto Piney Ridge Trail and follow this to blue-blazed Fork Mountain Trail. Just prior to this junction on the right is an old cemetery. Piney Ridge Trail will turn sharply left. Stay straight on Fork Mountain Trail and follow it to the intersection with yellow-blazed Hull School Trail.**

**Turn right on Hull School Trail and descend to Thornton River. Turn right on blue-blazed Thornton River Trail. Ascend, crossing Thornton River 4 times. Reach the Thornton River Trail parking lot through a series of gradual switchbacks.**

**Cross Skyline Drive, bearing slightly to the left, to regain the remainder of the Thornton River Trail. Climb via switchbacks to the junction with the white-blazed AT.**

**Turn right on the AT and follow it back to your cars in the Elkwallow Picnic area passing Jeremy's Run trail on your left as you go.**