

Description: This is a moderate 23 mile backpack trip using many of the primary Park and Forest trails on Canaan Mt. You'll spend much of your time walking through mature evergreen and deciduous forests with a few small bogs along the way. The highlights of the trip are the views at Table Rock and Lindy Point. Despite its closeness to Blackwater Falls State Park and Canaan Valley this venue gets very little foot traffic. In over 53 miles of hiking over 6 days in the past 2 years I've seen 2 mountain bikers (one at 9:00 o'clock at night) and 2 hikers on Canaan Mt. This includes the park trails. If you want solitude and still wish to enjoy some of that Monongahela magic we all enjoy this may be your hike.

Some notes here: 1) The North section of Lindy Run Trail used in this hike has been officially abandoned by the USFS. As of this writing the trail is very open and no signs prohibiting access have been posted. 2) Portions of the Plantation Trail west of Lindy Run and the north section of Lindy Run Trail can be very muddy at times. 3) Since I have to drive a good distance to get to this hike I've laid it out as a 3 day trip with a daily mileage breakdown of about 7/10/6. If you get there early enough you could easily complete it in 2 days. If you wish to do this make sure you find a suitable spot to camp after the first 10-12 miles.

Directions from US219 and WV32:

1. Follow WV32 south through Thomas and into Davis.
2. Turn right onto Blackwater Falls Rd.
3. Follow signs to the Lodge. Start there. The park requests that you leave the names of the participants, vehicle descriptions and tag numbers and emergency contact numbers with the receptionist before starting the hike.

Trail Notes: From the lodge parking lot walk out to the sign at its main entrance. Across the road find a sign for Yellow Birch Trail (yellow blazes). Follow it for 0.93 miles to its intersection with the stable drive. The official route of the Allegheny Trail is up the drive, through the stable gate and left on a wide trail. A route more agreeable to one's olfactory nerves is to cross the drive, remaining on Yellow Birch Trail. At this point you are actually also on Allegheny Trail-southbound. Cross Engine Run on a wooden bridge and soon arrive at a wide, unsigned or blazed trail. (This used to be a section of the Davis Trail. Its official trailhead has been moved further south at the park/MNF border on the Allegheny Trail.) Turn right here and merge onto the official Allegheny trail. There will be peat bogs to your left.

In 0.3 Leave the park and enter MNF. Stay straight on the Allegheny Trail. This is the official trailhead of the Davis Trail. Both it and the Allegheny Trail share the same tread through the Canaan Mt area.

Soon cross Engine Run on a foot bridge. The trail turns left and follows the drainage for a while. Over the last 0.3 miles or so the trail veers away to the right of the stream and ascends through a series of steep but quick climbs. At 1.37 miles from leaving the park boundary arrive at a wide, flat rocky area with a shelter on your right. In 70 yards reach the intersection with blue blazed Plantation Trail.

Turn right on the Plantation Trail and cross the west fork of Engine Run. In 1.18 miles from the last trail junction pass Fire Road #6 on the left, arriving at the Lindy Trail at another 1.05 miles.

Cross two forks Lindy Run and climb a short hill. On the right is a meadow filled with Hay Scented Fern suitable for several tents. There is a fire ring in the middle. This is where I camp on night two of the trip. There are several spots along this segment of Plantation Trail under the bows of giant Hemlocks that would make great campsites but they are dry. If you intend to use them "water up" at the last Lindy Run crossing.

At about 1.47 miles from leaving Lindy Run reach the difficult-to-recognize juncture with unsigned Railroad Grade Trail. Stop here and study the trails. For about 30 yards both trails share the same tread. The Railroad Grade Trail bears slightly to the left through a trough and has a blue diamond blaze in eye sight while the Plantation trail climbs a rise on the right. Follow the blazed Railroad Grade Trail to the left.

The Railroad Grade Trail first goes directly up the trough and then follows the right berm for a bit before crossing over to the left berm. Eventually the grade rises to follow the valley wall along a trail softened by Hemlock and Spruce needles. In 0.59 miles from the last trail intersection cross a stream and arrive at a large shelter. There are campsites on the hill behind it. This is a great spot for the first night's camp.

From there it is a pleasant 1.23 mile jaunt out to CLR13. Turn right onto CLR13 and hike to the junction of Table Rock Trail (TR113), passing unmarked FR412 on the left (crosses Red Run. Good camping is up on the hill.) at 0.74 miles from the Railroad Grade Trail and FR244, also on the left, in another 0.77 miles. Arrive at Table Rock Trail in another 1.74 miles.

Turn left onto Table Rock Trail. Near the top of the slope the pace becomes slower as you negotiate a series of seeps. As you reach the end, the trail splits. A lesser view is to the left. Bear right, passing through a nice but dry campsite, to see the real views. This is a great place to spend a night if you lug up some extra water!

Retrace your steps to CLR13. Turn left on CLR13 for less than 0.1 miles and turn right onto Plantation Trail. Climb for less than 0.5 miles and descend to the fringe of a peat bog. Climb again, reaching that confusing intersection with the Railroad Grade Trail at about 1.89 miles from CLR13. Bear to the right here, staying on the Plantation Trail. If you are doing the trip over 2 nights hike to the clearing near Lindy Run discussed earlier.

From the campsite re-cross the 2 forks of Lindy Run and continue to the intersection with Lindy Run Tr. The sign here states that CLR13-north is 1.5 miles away. Turn left here and quickly descend to CLR13, crossing Lindy Run near the halfway point.

Turn right onto CLR13 and cross Lindy Run again. Soon arrive at the parking area for Lindy Point Overlook. Turn left onto the trail. In about 0.38 miles, come to a fantastic view of the Blackwater River drainage.

Return to CLR13 (paved at this point) and turn left. In another 0.095 miles arrive at the Ski Warming Hut on the right. Begin to walk up the sledding slope. To your left there will be a trail with a green metal sign stating that it is a "fee trail" (for skiers) and a wood sign marking this as Shay Trace Trail. Turn left onto this trail. The blazes are blue.

Cross the intersection of Cherry Lane (yellow circles) and red blazed Red Spruce Horse Trail (They come together at Shay Trace Trail) and then the access road for the cabins (0.51 miles from the warming hut). You will pass cabins 6 and 5 on your right and 2 and 4 on your left as you cross the road.

Once again cross Red Spruce Trail and then orange blazed Balanced Rock Trail (shown red on the map). In 0.88 miles from the cabin road arrive at the west entrance to the Lodge and your vehicle