

Description: This Loop can be done in several fashions: a 4.5, 6.2, 7.4 or 8 mile circuit. There is a pretty steep climb (900 feet in a little over 1.3 miles) which will give anyone a quick lung capacity test, especial if the trail is covered with snow. Besides this steep climb, the trek offers a great view of the Michaux Forest and Waynesborough Reservoir and the gentle gurgling of Tumbling Run as it meanders under a canopy of Hemlocks. Thickets of Mountain Laurel line the Appalachian Trail as well as the upper portion of the return route and bloom in June. The Rhododendron along Tumbling Run do their thing in July.

Directions to Old Forge Picnic area from U.S. 15 near Emmitsburg, MD:

1. Go west on S. Seton Ave (left turn if you are traveling north on 15).
2. Turn left onto Main St, MD Rt 140
3. MD 140 will go through Emmitsburg and bear off to the right becoming Waynesboro Rd. Follow that route.
4. As you cross into PA Rt. 140 becomes PA Rt. 16 (Waynesboro Pike, then Sunshine Trail and eventually E. Main St.). Continue on 16.
5. Just before or just as PA 16 becomes E. Main St. in Waynesboro turn right onto Old Forge Rd.
6. In about 5 miles turn right into the Old Forge Picnic Area. The Appalachian Trail follows the distant edge of the baseball diamond.

Trail Notes: Begin at the well house behind the backstop. Locate the white blazes for the AT and turn left onto it (north). In 0.18 miles cross Rattlesnake Rd and in another 0.42 miles come to Old Forge Rd. Turn right on the road, cross the bridge over Tumbling Run and immediately turn left to get back on the AT.

In about 0.23 miles, come to the junction with blue-blazed Tumbling Run Trail. There are 2 shelters, a privy and picnic table by the stream. Stay on the AT and begin a steep ascent for the next 1.27 miles.

Turn right onto a blue blazed spur trail to Chimney Rocks (AKA Buzzard Peak) for lunch and a nice view.

Return to the AT. If you wish to do the shortest version cross the AT onto unsigned but blue blazed Tumbling Run trail and follow it down to it's junction with Chimney Rocks Rd. Pickup the directions later.

To complete a longer version of the hike turn right on the AT and continue north until you reach a gas pipeline swath in 1 mile. TO complete a 6.2 mile version turn left onto the swath for a short distance and then left again onto un-signed Chimney Rocks Road. Pickup the directions later.

To do a longer version cross the pipeline and continue on the AT. In 0.66 miles turn left onto an unmarked but obvious path. Soon arrive at the north section of Chimney Rocks Road. Turn left.

Soon come to a fork in the road. To complete the 7.4 mile version continue straight (left) on Chimney Rocks Rd. In about 0.6 miles arrive back at the pipeline. Cross it and pick up the directions later.

To do the longest version of this loop (8.0 miles) turn right at this fork and follow it out to the pipeline. Turn left onto the pipeline swath and walk uphill for 0.45 miles to unsigned Chimney Rocks Road. Turn right. If you are doing the 7.6 or 8.0 mile version follow the woods road continue south-east on the woods road. In 0.69 miles come to a turn-out area. Blue blazed Tumbling Run Tr will come in from the left. If you are doing the shortest version you had just come down from the overlook. Turn left here. The woods road will be blue blazed. There are two woods roads that come in on the right. Stay on the blue blazed road!

In about 0.7 miles the trail will leave the road at a right turn onto a footpath. Follow the Tumbling Run trail for another 0.7 miles to its junction with the AT. Retrace your steps for the remaining 0.83 miles back to the cars.