

Trail Notes For the Doyles River Loop

Description: This is strictly a waterfall hike. The first set of 3 falls are along Jones Run. The top two are broad affairs cascading over large flat boulders. During periods of dry weather (as shown in these photos) they are reduced to trickles. Still the pools below them are quite refreshing. Beyond the falls the run cascades over and around moss-covered rocks as you hike along some massive rock formations and giant trees, some more than 3 feet in diameter. The Doyles River Tr picks up where the Jones Run Trail ends. As you climb, sometimes steeply - especially in the middle, you will enjoy many cascades and pools as well as the focal points: 28 and 63 feet waterfalls. (The shorter - upper - one is quickly joined by other cascades making it appear taller.) There are many pools along this section but, unfortunately, impenetrable thickets of Stinging Nettles prevent the hiker from visiting many of them during the season of greatest appeal - summer.

While you will lose and gain approximately 1200 feet of elevation along the first five miles the final leg of the trek is a relatively flat 3 mile lark on the AT. If you want to steal a quick vista pop up to Skyline Drive at the end of the Doyles River Tr and walk over to the Big Run Overlook. If you want to shorten the hike to about 6.5 miles you can take the Brown's Gap Fire road up to the AT. This will also save you about 600 feet in elevation gain while still allowing you to view all of the water works.

[Google Custom Directions](#)

Special Note: Google Maps and other on-line mapping programs might suggest you use old fire roads that are no longer accessible by automobile. Use a real map to confirm your route. This trailhead is just south of Mile Post 84 on Skyline Drive.

Trail Notes: From the kiosk proceed down the blue blazed Jones Run Tr. Soon cross the AT. You will be returning on it from your left. Descend along a wide trail with several erosion dams. These are frequent enough to prevent you from establishing a good stride but it improves shortly. In 0.21 miles you'll pass an un-signed and unblazed trail to the left. This leads up to the Dundo Group Campsite on Skyline Drive. You'll cross it again near the end of the hike. After a sharp switchback you'll the trail becomes what looks to be an old jeep road. In 1.35 miles from the "Dundo Short-cut" the falls viewing begins. At first you'll see the upper falls from the top. The trail will then switchback through the ravine allowing you to visit the tops and bottoms of the 3 main falls. The trail will eventually cross the stream and in 0.91 miles from the top of the upper falls you'll arrive at the blue blazed Doyles River Trail. Follow it.

The Doyles River Trail starts off gradually but increases significantly in pitch as you near the primary focus of the trip. In 0.5 miles from the last trail junction cross a tributary on a bridge. There is a small falls here when the water is flowing well. In another 0.33 miles arrive at the lower falls. From

there it is a steep 0.38 mile climb to the upper falls. This one has a small side trail cut through the Nettles to allow you to get to the base.

For the next 0.39 miles the grade lessens and the trail becomes more of a wide road than a trail with a nice surface for walking on. Just before reaching the Brown's Gap Road you'll cross the stream. From here there are no more water works to enjoy. If you want to take the easier 6.5 mile route turn left onto the road and follow it to the AT. Make a left there and in 1.36 miles arrive back at your car.

To complete the entire loop cross the road and continue to climb. You know you're getting close to the top when the trail begins to switchback. In 0.59 miles arrive at a trail junction. Left takes you to the Doyles River Cabin (Rentable from the PATC). Turn left here and climb to the intersection with the AT in another 0.37 miles. To take in a vista continue to Skyline Drive and walk down and over to the Big Run Overlook. To continue with the hike turn left - right if you went to the vista - (South) onto the AT at this point.

The rest of the trek is pretty flat from here on out with only minor hills. In 1.07 miles cross Skyline Drive. You'll pass through the Doyles River Overlook along the way with views of the drainage. In another 0.43 miles pass the southern terminus of the Big Run Loop Tr on the right. In another 0.50 miles find yourself at the Brown's Gap Parking Area. Walk through it to the drive. The AT continues on the other side a few yards to the south.

In 0,71 miles pass a spur trail on the right that leads to the Dundo Group Campsite and in another 0.14 miles cross through the intersection with the "Dundo Short-cut" mentioned earlier. There is a blank sign post here. In another 0.51 miles turn right onto the Jones Run Tr and arrive back at your car.