

### **Gathland State Park/Weverton Cliffs AT Shuttle Hike**

**Description:** This is a relatively easy shuttle hike on the AT. There is a minor elevation gain at the beginning and then the hike is mostly flat until you reach the descent near the cliffs. I believe there are 14 switchbacks involved to get back down to your cars. The views from the cliffs above the Potomac are outstanding. On a clear day you can see Harpersferry beyond the U.S. 340 bridge that crosses the Potomac. Gathland SP is the site of the home of George Townsend, a civil war correspondent. There is a huge memorial erected to war correspondents near the road. This was also the site of an important civil war battle that culminated in the Battle of Antietam some 3 days later. For more information go to:  
<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/gathland.html>

### **Directions from the intersection of I-70 and U.S> 340 in Frederick, MD:**

1. Drive south on U.S. 340 for 14.7 miles.
2. Turn right onto Rt67 toward Boonsboro.
3. In 0.15 miles turn right onto Weverton road and pull into the gravel lot on the right. Leave some cars here and return to Rt67.
4. Turn right onto Rt67 and drive 4.9 miles to Gapland Rd.
5. Turn right onto Gapland Rd and drive to Gathland Park at the top of the hill. There is lots of parking on the left.

**Trail Notes:** This is probably the easiest hike description I've had to write. Find where the white blazed Appalachian trail crosses the road and follow it south past the rest rooms and then the brick building on the left. The AT will weave behind an old flower garden and climb a hill to gain the main ridge. From there follow the white blazes.

In about 5 miles, come to a spur trail to the left that leads to the Ed Garvey Memorial AT shelter. I've only hiked small portions of the AT in VA, MD and PA but have seen several shelters. Believe me when I say this one is the Taj Mahal of them all. It even has a sleeping loft with plexiglass windows facing east to catch the morning sun. The privy is equally impressive.

From the shelter continue south to the junction with the blue blazed Weverton Cliffs spur trail. This may not be signed but should be obvious none the less. Follow it down to the cliffs for a short distance and enjoy the view.

Return to the AT and descend via 14 switchbacks to a road below. Cross the road and follow the white blazes on the telephone poles along Weverton Rd. back to your cars. Return to Gathland SP to pick up the rest of the cars.