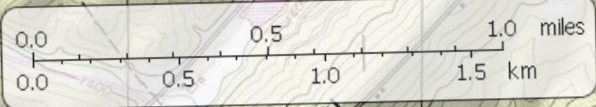


[www.HikingUpward.com](http://www.HikingUpward.com)



## Riddle's Cut – Basye, VA

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
5.8 mls	★	★	★	★	★
<b>Hiking Time:</b> 4.0 hours including breaks <b>Elev. Gain:</b> 1,450 ft <b>Parking:</b> Small parking area off VA 717. 38.81810, -78.79769					

[Click Here For Detailed Location](#)



Located near Basye and Orkney Springs Virginia, this hike is one of the more secluded and least utilized in the Great North Mountain trail system. Riddle's Cut is the name for the gas pipeline clearcut that provides wonderful views to both the east and west at several different points along the Orkney Springs and Massanutten trails. Starting from the valley and climbing to the ridge, the Orkney Springs Trail will give you a decent workout gaining 1,450ft of altitude in 2.5 miles.

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** - From the parking area DO NOT take the forestry road at the closed gate. Instead, follow the purple blazed Orkney Springs Trail in the opposite direction. The trail is wider here and will shortly pass through a stand of small pine.
- ▶ **Mile 0.25** - Turn right at the first intersection continuing to follow the purple blazes. The trail will become more steep, and the creek in Broad Hollow becomes apparent on the right. Cross the creek three times within 0.3 miles.
- ▶ **Mile 1.25** - Shortly after crossing the creek for the third and final time, arrive at the next intersection. Stay right and the trail will become steeper. Where the trail makes a turn back to the left it passes through a seam of iron ore that supplied the furnaces during the 1800's. Many of the rocks along the trail are heavily oxidized, and you can find them where the iron ore seam is easily visible.
- ▶ **Mile 1.8** - Arrive at Riddle's Cut which is visible extending for miles into the Shenandoah Valley. The Orkney Springs Trail will now follow the cut uphill. In 50 yards there is a rock outcrop on the right. If you climb to the top of the outcrop catch a nice view of the valley and small man made lake. Continue for another 50 yards uphill, at which point the purple blazed Orkney Springs Trail re-enters the forest. Just before arriving at the ridge look for a side trail on the right. This leads to a spring fed pond. Continue the short distance to the ridge.
- ▶ **Mile 2.5** - At the ridge follow the orange blazed North Mountain Trail to the left and south. In 100 yards stay left again uphill where the Long Mountain Trail now follows a wider service road. Continue up the trail for 0.17 miles at which point the North Mountain Trail turns left off the service road. Stay straight on the service road, and follow it for another 0.1 miles to the western side of Riddle's Cut.
- ▶ **Mile 2.75** - From the cut look west into the Lost River Valley in West Virginia. Turn left uphill and crest the mountain where the orange blazed North Mountain Trail crosses. Just beyond the crest is a beautiful spot in the cut looking east into the Shenandoah Valley and hike turn around point. Retrace your route to return.
- ▶ **Mile 5.8** - Arrive back at the parking area off VA 717.