



## Falls Ridge - Columbia Furnace, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
11.7 mls	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
<b>Hiking Time:</b>	6.5 hours with a half hour for lunch				
<b>Elev. Gain:</b>	2,390 ft				
<b>Parking:</b>	From VA701: Turn right (church directly ahead) onto VA701/Dellinger Gap Rd. for 1.5 miles where the road will turn left and become gravel, Continue for 0.5 miles and park where the road ends.				

This hike is long and steep both up and down. The main attraction, for us at least, on the High Falls Hike is the solitude. This is one of the few hikes where we didn't see another sole the entire day. At 11.7 miles and 6.5 hours that's saying something. The descent, following one of the two underground gas pipelines down Great North Mountain is extremely steep. Also, as the pipeline swath is clear cut, at least 50ft across, there isn't any cover from the sun, so on a warm sunny day make sure you bring a hat.

Start by turning right, crossing the steam, and following the yellow blazed trail. In 200 yards arrive at an old bus where the trail splits. Bear right on the yellow blazed trail and continue uphill as it passes through a grassy area and thicket before becoming steeper and crossing a blue blazed forestry service road in another 0.5 miles.

Cross the FS road and continue uphill on the yellow blazed trail as it becomes increasingly steeper and then traversing High Falls Ridge arriving at the main ridge line of Great North Mountain and the orange blazed trail in another 2.0 miles

Turn left on the orange blazed Great North Mountain Trail continuing on the ridge line for 4.1 miles, with several great views on both sides of the mountain, before arriving at a transmitting tower installation. Cross the FS road and pass the closed gate staying to the right of the installation following the orange blazes as you turn left slightly uphill to the ridge in another 100 yards.

Steeply descend either one of the two (they parallel each other) underground gas pipeline clear cuts as they go directly downhill and cross a FS road in 0.5 miles. Continue steeply downhill for another 0.5 miles before the clear cut flattens out. In 0.4 miles after the clear cut flattens out look for the blue blazes and small rock pile on the left where you will cross the stream and take the blue blazed trail.

After crossing the stream follow the blue blazed trail as it turns uphill for a short distance before turning right and traversing the mountain for 1.5 miles where the purple blazed trail will enter from the right.

Turn right on the purple blazed trail as it winds around, crossing a stream then winding through the valley crossing another stream and in 1.5 miles arriving back at the old bus and the yellow blazed trail. Retake the yellow trail downhill for the remaining 200 yards re-crossing the stream and arriving back at the parking area.