



Gerhard Shelter - Wardensville, West Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
10.6 mls	★	★	★	★	★
Hiking Time:	5.5 hours with a half hour for lunch				
Elev. Gain:	1,890 ft				
Parking:	Park on the left after crossing Waites Run				

There are some nice views on both sides of Great North Mountain from the ridge just before arriving at Gerhard Shelter. The views of the valley from Vance's Cove can be wonderful on a clear day as well, but the main attraction is the solitude. We have never seen other hikers on this route.

Begin by turning left uphill on the blue blazed Tuscarora Trail passing a closed gate. At this point the trail is a closed forestry road (FS) that slowly climbs the side of the mountain for 0.8 miles before the blue blazed Tuscarora Trail makes a sharp right, and the FS road continues straight. Turn right on the blue blazed trail. If you start going downward on the FS road you missed the right turn.

The blue blazed trail climbs the side of Great North Mountain steeply and makes several switchbacks before reaching the ridge line in another 3.0 miles. Follow the ridge for 1.0 miles and arrive at Gerhard Shelter. The shelter is generally used by through hikers.

Turn right downhill on the white blazed Gerhard Shelter Trail that very steeply descends Great North Mountain. The footing is precarious with loose stone for the majority of the descent. In 0.5 miles pass a side trail on the left that takes you to a spring, and in another 0.2 miles emerge onto a FS road.

Turn right on the unblazed forestry road. The forestry road is normally closed to motorized traffic, unless your hiking during hunting season (bad idea!). At the end of the FS road in 0.8 miles, just past a burn, the unmarked Vance's Cove connector trail will bear right. Follow the trail for 0.5 miles where it merges with the yellow blazed Vance's Cove Trail.

Stay right on the now yellow blazed trail for another 0.2 miles where the Vance's Cove Trail ends and a sign marking the border of WV and VA. Turn right on the yellow blazed Wilson Cove Trail and FS road as it winds through the valley for 2.0 miles and passes a closed gate and small parking area. Continue down to Waites Run FS Road passing a private driveway on your left at the bottom of the hill. Continue to your right on Waites Run FS Road road for another 0.8 miles back to the parking area.