



Beacon Heights - Pisgah National Forest, NC

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
0.8 mls	★	N/A	★	★	N/A
Hiking Time: 45 minutes with 15 minutes of breaks Elev. Gain: 180 ft Parking: Park at the Beacon Heights Overlook parking 36.08391, -81.83011					

Click Here For Detailed Location



By Trail Contributor: Zach Robbins

One of the finest slices of the Blue Ridge Parkway is the winding stretch on the east side of Grandfather Mountain. Here the Tanawha Trail runs parallel to the parkway for 13 miles, providing many opportunities for short or moderate hikes. At the southern terminus of the Tanawha Trail lies Beacon Heights, a series of large, east-facing cliffs with outstanding views of Grandfather Mountain, Grandmother Mountain, and the Wilson Creek basin. From the Beacon Heights

Overlook the cliffs can be reached by an easy 0.3-mi trail that is a perfect quick stop while traveling on the Blue Ridge Parkway for hikers of all ages and abilities.

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – Beacon Heights Overlook parking beside the Blue Ridge Parkway. You might simply enjoy the view from the parking area as Grandfather Mountain towers over the landscape. Pick up the signed, but unblazed trail on the east side of the parking lot heading into the woods.
- ▶ **Mile 0.1** – Junction with the Tanawha Trail (*white blaze*) and Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST). Turn right following the Tanawha Trail + MST.
- ▶ **Mile 0.2** – At T-junction the Mountains-to-Sea Trail continues south/right. Turn left following the sign to Beacon Heights.
- ▶ **Mile 0.3** – The trail splits at a bench. Turn left for the first overlook area in 100 feet. From this expansive cliff the rounded summit of Grandmother Mountain with its communications tower dominates the surroundings. To the left of the mountain lies the Wilson Creek basin. In the distance to the left of the summit you can see the distinctive peaks of Linville Gorge.
- ▶ **Mile 0.4** – Turn right at the bench and follow the unsigned trail to the second overlook.
- ▶ **Mile 0.5** – Trail ends at the second overlook. Even though this cliff is easily reachable it receives much less traffic than the first overlook. The vista is shifted here, ranging from Grandfather Mountain to the Wilson Creek basin with Grandmother Mountain peeking above the trees. The rocky MacRae Peak and Attic Window Peak rise high above the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- ▶ **Mile 0.8** – Hike ends at parking area.