



Camp Hoover / Rapidan Camp - SNP, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
7.6 mls	★	★	★	★	★
Hiking Time:	4.5 hours with a half hour for lunch				
Elev. Gain:	1,320 ft				
Parking:	Park at the Milam Gap parking area				

Camp Hoover, also known as Rapidan Camp, is a scenic and historic hike that passes the retreat of former President Herbert Hoover, and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover. The circuit is a moderate hike and passes Big Rock Falls, which is a small pool and stream cascade where the trail crosses Mill Prong.

From the parking area at Milam Gap, cross Skyline Drive and follow the white blazed Appalachian Trail (AT) for 100 yards to the intersection of the blue blazed Mill Prong Trail. Turn left downhill on the blue blazed trail as it descends into the valley, then in 0.5 miles crosses Mill Prong for the first time. Continue to follow the trail for another 0.4 miles where it crosses another small creek that feeds Mill Prong, and in 100 yards arrive at the intersection of a horse trail that leads to the Rapidan Fire Road.

Turn right downhill on the now yellow blazed Mill Prong Trail, from this point to Camp Hoover, backcountry camping is not allowed. In 0.3 miles from the previous intersection, the yellow blazed Mill Prong Trail will cross Mill Prong and pass Big Rock Falls. Continue downward on the trail for another 0.4 miles where the Mill Prong Trail ends at Camp Hoover. Turn right on the access road, then immediately left down the footpath passing "The Creel" house. "The Creel" was occupied by two of President Hoover's chief aids. Larry Richey, a former F.B.I. agent assigned to guard the President who also acted as his personal secretary; and Joel T. Boone Jr., the Presidents personal physician.

60 yards past "The Creel" house is the presidential main quarters known as the "Brown House". The rear deck on the "Brown House" is a great place to enjoy the same view former President Hoover and world dignitaries enjoyed back in the 1920's. When he left office, Herbert Hoover, and his wife Lou Henry Hoover, donated the land to the government to become part of the newly created Shenandoah National Park.

From the "Brown House" continue on the yellow blazed Laurel Prong Trail, that starts at the Camp Hoover turn around. The yellow blazed trail will initially follow an old forestry road for the first 0.4 miles, then the forestry road veers right uphill. Remain left on the narrower yellow blazed trail for another 0.5 miles to the intersection of the yellow blazed Fork Mountain Trail. Stay straight on the now blue blazed Laurel Prong Trail for 0.4 miles, then pass a spring and only good camp site on the hike. Follow the trail uphill for another 0.8 miles to the saddle, and junction of the Cat Knob Trail.

Turn right on on the blue blazed Cat Knob Trail as it continues uphill for 1.1 miles to the intersection of the white blazed Appalachian Trail (AT). Turn right uphill on the AT crossing over the hike high point, and Hazeltop Mountain, in 0.4 miles. From the high point, the AT now heads downward for the remaining 2.3 miles back to Skyline Drive, and the Milam Gap parking area.