



Dark Hollow Falls Hike

- 1.4-mile round trip
- 1.25-hours hiking time
- Moderate
- 440-foot elevation gain

From the trailhead, follow the trail 0.75-mile to the falls and return by the same route. **This trail is short, but very steep and rocky. The return climb is challenging! No pets.**

Story of the Forest Hike

- 1.8-mile circuit
- 1.5-hours hiking time
- Easiest
- 290-foot elevation gain

From the front of Byrd Visitor Center, turn right and follow the sidewalk to the trail. After crossing the bridge, turn left and follow the trail to its intersection with a paved walkway near the Campground Office. Turn left and follow the walkway back to your starting point. **No pets.**

Rose River Loop Hike

- 4-mile round circuit
- 4.5-hours hiking time
- Moderate
- 910-foot elevation gain

From the north end of Fishers Gap parking at mile 49.4, cross Skyline Drive and start down the road. Just after the chain, take a left onto the Skyland-Big Meadows Horse Trail (yellow blazed). In about 0.6-mile take the blue-blazed Rose River Loop Trail. Follow it past beautiful falls and cascades. You'll climb back to the road (yellow blazed), and go right across the bridge. For an added treat (and about .25-mile more hiking), you can take the Dark Hollow Falls Trail to the base of the falls and back. Then continue uphill about one mile back to Skyline Drive.

Lewis Falls Trail Hike

- 3.3-mile circuit
- 4-hours hiking time
- Moderate
- 990-foot elevation gain

From the Big Meadows amphitheater parking area, take the Lewis Falls Trail. Continue straight to descend—it's a bit steep and rocky, so watch your footing—to the falls observation point. Then, take the Lewis Falls Trail to its intersection with the Appalachian Trail (A.T.). Turn left onto the A.T. and take it back to your starting point.

Hiking Difficulty Scale

Easiest: Generally suitable for anyone who enjoys walking. Mostly level or with a slight incline. Generally less than 3 miles.

Moderate: A moderate hike generally suitable for novice hikers seeking a bit of a challenge. The terrain will involve a moderate incline and may have some steeper sections. Generally 3 to 5 miles.

Moderately Strenuous: Generally challenging for an unconditioned person. The terrain will involve a steady and often steep incline. Generally 5 to 8 miles.

Markers & Blazes

Trail markers are at trailheads and intersections. The metal bands are stamped with directional and mileage information.



Trail blazes are found on trees and rocks throughout the Park. The color identifies the trail type:

- Blue - Hiking trail
- White - Appalachian Trail
- Yellow - Open to horses



Need to Know

Pets are not allowed on Dark Hollow and Story of the Forest Trails. Where allowed, pets must be on a leash no longer than 6 feet at all times.

- Be sure you are physically able to complete your hike.
- Take plenty of water—at least a quart per hour.
- When you return from your hike, check for ticks.
- Stay on the trail and avoid trampling sensitive vegetation.
- Be sure someone knows where you are and when to expect your return.
- Leave what you find. Artifacts and wildflowers are protected.
- It's dangerous and potentially deadly to climb on the rocks near waterfalls.
- Cell and GPS services are unreliable.

Good to Know

The Big Meadow is a great place to wander. There's no right or wrong way to do it; just follow the animals' paths. Every season will reveal something special: wildflowers, fawns, butterflies, tracks in the snow—you never know what you might find.

The Story of the Forest Trail takes you past the Park's Air Quality Monitoring Station. Look to your left along the fence for a sign that explains what we monitor and why!.

Strenuous: Will challenge most hikers. The hike will generally be longer and steeper, but may be deemed strenuous because of the elevation gain. Generally 7 to 10 miles.

Very Strenuous: Only well conditioned and well prepared hikers should attempt. Generally long and steep, and may include rock scrambling, stream crossings, and other challenging terrain. Generally 8 miles and over.