

Gum Springs-Meadow Creek Mountain Loop

A Strenuous 6.25 Mile Loop

Elevation Gain 1250 Feet

Good Footpath but Muddy in Places - Minor Creek Crossings

A steep climb to an old Fire Tower with outstanding 360 degree vistas.

Hiked February 12, 2011

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Directions to Trailhead: Leave Greeneville on Highway 70, locally known as the Asheville Highway. Set your trip counter at the last traffic light with Food City on the left and McDonalds on the right. Drive past the Nolichucky River and the dam for 8.5 miles and turn right on Highway 107 which goes through Houston Valley. After a total of approximately 17 miles, park at the campground and picnic area on your left. The trailhead is directly across the road.

You will start your hike immediately on a switchback and climb moderately for a half mile and pass a connector trail which comes in from the left. There is a carsonite sign present indicating that the Gum Springs Trail is straight ahead. Your climb becomes more strenuous as you go

through a newly relocated section avoiding a muddy creekbed.

After climbing for about a mile and a half you will reach a junction with the Meadow Creek Mountain Trail at a gap. Take the left here and continue climbing over a couple of small knobs until you reach a junction with a Forest Service Road that connects Hwy. 107 with the Long Creek Road. Follow this road and continue climbing more moderately until you reach a forest service gate which may be closed. Leave the road, which makes a right turn just before the gate and pass through the gate into the parking lot for the Meadow Creek Tower. At the far end of the parking lot, you will see a series of steps to the right and a trail continuing to the left. To reach the tower take the steps and a path steeply up the hillside.

Meadow Creek Fire Tower has not been used in many years and is in a state of disrepair. Be very careful if you decide to climb up the one flight of stairs to improve your views which can be overwhelming on a clear day.

Leave the tower and head back down the road by the same route but when you reach the junction with the Meadow Creek Trail do not take it but continue on the road for another mile and a half. You will reach a wide dirt road leading to the left just before reaching Highway 107. This road is the beginning of the Gum Springs Connector Trail. After a short distance the road forks and you should go right here and continue for a half mile back to the Gum Springs Trail. The trailhead is a half mile to your right.

SYNOPSIS OF HIKE

Mile	Elevation	Description
0	1650	Trailhead across from campground.
.052	1888	JCT Gum Springs Connector. Continue right.
1.43	2474	JCT Meadow Creek Mountain Trail. Take the left.
2.43	2712	JCT Forest Service Road. Take the right.
3.03	2897	Meadow Creek Mountain Fire Tower.
3.79	2712	JCT Meadow Creek Mountain Trail. Continue on the Road.
5.23	2148	JCT Gum Springs Connector. Take the trail to the left.
5.73	1888	JCT Gum Springs Trail. Take the right.
6.25	1650	Trailhead.

