

Day Hikes from Grayson Highlands State Park (36.6286° N, 81.4966° W)

Virginia Highlands Horse Trail and Cabin Ridge Trail loop:

8 miles. Easy to moderate.

From Massie Gap, take the Rhododendron Trail and Park horse trail, turning left at the intersection with the AT. When you reach the Park/Forest boundary at the fence, turn sharply left to follow the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail (VHHT). (Wet in some seasons.) At the trail intersection with the Cabin Ridge Trail, continue straight on the Cabin Ridge. Stream crossing near Briar Ridge. At Briar Ridge (open area with vistas), turn sharply right and pick up the VHHT and bear right in another open area to continue following the VHHT back toward the Park, turning left at the Cabin Creek/VHHT intersection, to return to the Park/Forest boundary and retrace your steps back to Massie Gap.



Briar Ridge with view of Whitetop Mtn.



Rhododendron Gap

Note: Good maps that show these hikes and variations of them include the National Geographic maps of the Mt. Rogers area (#786 and #318) and the *All Trails* and *Avenza* apps.

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/document/data/grayson-highlands-avenza-map.pdf> Grayson Highlands State Park also has a free print map of trails within the Park, but this does not include land outside the Park, like Mt. Rogers, which is on National Forest land.

(Hikes suggested by the Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club, mratc.org.)

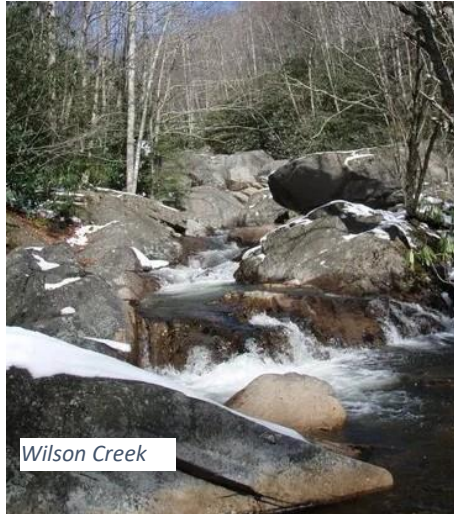
Two Short Waterfall hikes:

1. Cabin Creek Trail. 1.5 miles. Easy to Moderate terrain. Loop.

From Massie Gap, the Park's main parking area, take the steps down to the grassy area and turn left to look for the sign to the Cabin Creek Trail near the road to the stables. Enter the woods. Bear left on the lower part of the trail. Small stream crossing. At the lower part of the waterfall, the trail bears right to ascend to higher falls. Return to the parking lot on the upper part of the trail.

2. Wilson Creek Trail. 1.25 miles. Easy to moderate terrain. Loop.

Park at the Country Store next to the Park's Hickory Ridge Campground. Locate the map kiosk at the start of the Wilson Creek Trail. Hike downhill to reach the creek with its rushing water and boulders. The trail then ascends to the Seed Orchard Road. Bear left to return to your car in about an additional 1/3 mile.



High Country Loop. 11 miles. Difficult. From Massie Gap, take the Rhododendron Trail up to the A.T. (0.5 mile); A.T. northbound to Pine Mountain (6.4 miles); blue-blazed Pine Mountain Trail to Rhododendron Gap (2.1 miles); A.T. north over Wilburn Ridge to Rhododendron Trail (2.1 miles) and back to Massie Gap (0.5 mile). The blue-blazed Wilburn Ridge Trail can be used in place of the A.T. for 0.8 mile on Wilburn Ridge. Also, you can use the Crest Trail to connect the two AT sections, instead of the Pine Mountain Trail.

Shorter High Country Loop Option: Moderate. 8 miles.

After leaving Massie Gap via the Rhododendron Trail and the horse trail, turn right onto the AT northbound (sign). Hike 2 miles to Wise Shelter, then about 3/4 mile farther on the AT to the junction of the AT and the Scales Trail. Take the Scales Trail 1 mile to the Scales. Then turn right and continue south over Stone Mtn. on the AT for 3 miles to return to Wise Shelter and hike south 2 more miles to Massie Gap.

Massie Gap, AT south to Mt. Rogers.

8 miles total. In and out. Moderate to difficult. Begin at Massie Gap pkg. area and hike via the blue-blazed Rhododendron Trail to the Park's horse trail, turn left (south) on the

AT where it intersects the horse trail. Reach the Park's boundary with USFS land and continue through scenic rocky terrain on the AT, southbound. Pass Thomas Knob Shelter, then in 1/4 mile take the 1/2 mile side trail to the Mt. Rogers summit (Highest mountain in VA at **5,729** ft.) You have hiked 4 miles; Retrace your steps back to Massie Gap (another 4 miles).

