

Description: If you are a "Sweeping View" kind of hiker and you find yourself with a free clear weather day this one is for you. This is a moderate 8.8 mile (9.2 if starting from Camp Roosevelt) circuit hike on Massanutten Mountain. There are views as you both ascend and descend the ridge as well as at the focal point of the hike, Kennedy Peak. From there you get an unobstructed view of the Shenandoah Valley and Blue Ridge Mountains to the east. On a clear day you can almost see Front Royal to the north. The trail is well maintained although pretty rocky in places. The main difficulties are the 1100 foot elevation gain over 2.5 miles as you climb from the valley to the peak itself.

Directions from the intersection of US340 and US211 at Luray, VA:

1. Proceed south on Business US340 for approximately 0.25 miles.
2. Turn right onto Rt675, immediately crossing the Shenandoah River.
3. In 3.5 miles cross the Shenandoah again and turn left to stay on RT675.
4. In ½ mile turn right to stay on RT675.
5. Switchback up the mountain and descend again. Trailhead parking is up a gravel road on the right. To start the hike at Camp Roosevelt (Flush Toilets!!!) proceed a little further down RT675 and turn right and then right again to the picnic parking area.

Trail Notes: Starting from the restrooms in the picnic area, follow a footpath out to RT675. Turn left (uphill). Pass the dump station and Massanutten southbound trailhead on the right.

Turn left onto the gravel road. Pass the orange blazed Massanutten Trail on the right (your return route). Walk through the large gravel parking lot and find the trailhead for yellow blazed Stephen's Trail. Stephen's Trail parallels the ridge, climbing up and down gentle hills and in and out of small coves.

Just before you begin a steep climb through a series of switchbacks you will obtain a view of the western ridge to the left. At 4.21 miles from the trailhead reach the intersection of orange blazed Massanutten Trail. Turn right here.

At 0.81 miles from the Last trail intersection arrive at white blazed Kennedy Peak Trail. Climb steeply for 0.23 miles up a rocky trail to the ruins of an old fire tower. Climb to the top for a great view of the surrounding valley and the Blue Ridge to the East. The gap in the mountains directly in front of you is the Jeremy's Run drainage in the SNP.

Return to the Massanutten Trail and turn left. There are more partial views of Fort Valley and the western ridge along the higher part of this segment. In 2.23 miles reach RT675 at Edith Gap and a final view of the valley. Turn right and walk downhill a few yards where you will re-enter the woods on the continuation of Massanutten Trail.

In about 0.78 miles arrive back at the gravel parking area. Retrace your steps to the picnic area.