

Description: This is an 11.3 mile moderate circuit hike through a very scenic area of the Monongahela NF. More than half of the trails are actually old railroad grades used by lumber companies long ago. The forest is a mix of deciduous and conifers (mostly Red Spruce which is coming back strong in some places). There is a 1500 foot gain in elevation but all except the steep climb to the ridge line of Tea Creek Mt is spread out over the first 7 miles. A brief excursion along the Right Fork Connector Trail will bring you to a recently constructed boardwalk with viewing blinds that lead you to a beaver pond with Red Spruce and Gauley Mt as its backdrop (See photo on this page.).

Directions from the intersection of U.S. 219 and I-64 at Lewisburg:

1. Travel 44 miles North on U.S. 219 through Marlinton.
2. Turn left onto Scenic Highway 150.
3. In 9 miles cross Williams River and turn left onto an exit ramp for FR 86.
4. At the end of the ramp turn left. Travel 1 mile and turn right, crossing a low narrow bridge, to get to Tea Creek Primitive Camp Ground. The hike begins at the Kiosk in the small day use area to the right of the water pump.

Trail Notes: From the Kiosk, travel up-river, crossing Tea Creek on a bridge. There will be an old trail immediately on the other side on the left. Bypass it. Soon turn left up a hill to the signpost for Tea Creek Mt Trail (right) and Tea Creek Trail (left). Turn left, climb over the crown of the hill and descend to an old, overgrown railroad grade that parallels Tea Creek.

For the next 2.5 miles follow the creek up the drainage. You will cross two streams. A bridge has recently been constructed over one. Come to an Adirondack shelter, often trashed out by fishermen, and the confluence of Tea Creek and the Right Fork of Tea Creek. There is an Olympic size swimming hole here. Make a sharp about-face and take North Face Trail up the back of the mountain for about 0.4 miles.

Turn hard left onto Right Fork of Tea Creek Trail. The last time I was there the post was gone and the sign was propped up on a tree. The trail is obvious since it too is an old railroad grade. You will climb gradually for a bit and then descend for the first of several stream crossings. In 1.6 miles from the last trail junction come to the junction of Red Run Trail, Red Run and a scenic lunch spot. Cross Red Run and continue upstream passing a couple of nice camp sites, a huge beaver dam/pond and meadows full of young Red Spruce. Just before you climb out of the drainage come to the Right Fork Connector Trail on your left. If you desire, turn left here to visit the previously mentioned boardwalk.

Return to the Right Fork Trail and ascend onto a large open meadow. The trail fades away here but if you simply walk straight you will reach a gravel road. Turn right into a small parking area and the trailhead for the Tea Creek Mt Trail. There might not be a sign here but a quick look into the woods will reveal a Kiosk and the trail.

This is by far the hardest part of the day as you climb almost 500 feet in less than 0.3 miles. Thankfully there are some switchbacks and the climb is short. The rest of the hike, until the final descent, is flat with a few gentle knobs to walk over. You may lose the trail in a rock field but the field is narrow and the trail on the other side is well defined.

Pass the southern terminus of North Face Trail on the right and descend steeply passing Tea Creek Trail on your right just before reaching Williams River Trail. Turn right and walk back to your vehicle.