

Winding Stairs Trail



Sumter National Forest



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Region

February 2009

A 75-foot waterfall tucked away along this moderate, 3.5-mile trail helps make the Winding Stairs Trail one of the finest beginner trails in northwest South Carolina. If you start at the northern trailhead at the Cherry Hill Recreation Area, this meandering path is an easy hike because it drops 1,100 feet over its entire length. If you are looking for a more demanding hike, start at the southern trailhead on Tamassee Road (FS 710). Either way, this is a great hike for beginners.

Follow rust-colored blazes through a hardwood forest, encounter a multitude of wildflowers, and cross small creeks, all within sight or sound of the west fork of Townes Creek. The forest is mainly oak with an understory of buckberry and blueberry; fall colors here are particularly striking. Deep ochre, red and yellow fill the woods and provide a gorgeous habitat for thrushes, warblers and indigo buntings in addition to deer and wild hogs. You will eventually enter a dry, open pine grove that gives way to a smaller path that leads to Miuka Falls.

Oddly, just before the switchback to the falls, the Winding Stairs Trail makes its sole departure from Townes Creek, possibly the only point you won't hear the water. The path to the falls is not totally obvious, especially in winter and early spring, so keep your eyes open. Continuing from Miuka Falls, you eventually come to the southern trailhead on Tamassee Road.

Surrounding Area:

- Cherry Hill Recreation Area
- Oconee State Park (864) 638-5353
- Burrells Ford Campground

Directions:

To the northern trailhead: From Walhalla, drive west on Highway 28 for 7.5 miles and bear right onto SC 107. Drive 8.8 miles to Cherry Hill Recreation Area on the right. The trailhead is on the right (east) side of the highway, just south of the entrance to the recreation area.

To the southern trailhead: From Walhalla, drive west on Highway 28 for 7.5 miles and right onto SC 107. Drive 5.8 miles and turn right onto Tamassee Road, also marked Cheohee Road (FS 710). Drive 2.5 miles to a small parking area and trailhead on the left, just before a bridge crossing Townes Creek.

Camping: Primitive camping is allowed, but campsites must be more than 50 feet from streams and trails, and more than .25 miles from roads.

Difficulty Level: Easy

Length: 3.5 miles

Season: Year round

Surface Type: Dirt

Trail Blazes: Rust

Travel Time: Two hours

For more information:

Andrew Pickens Ranger District

112 Andrew Pickens Circle

Mountain Rest, SC 29664

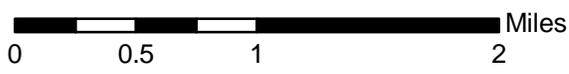
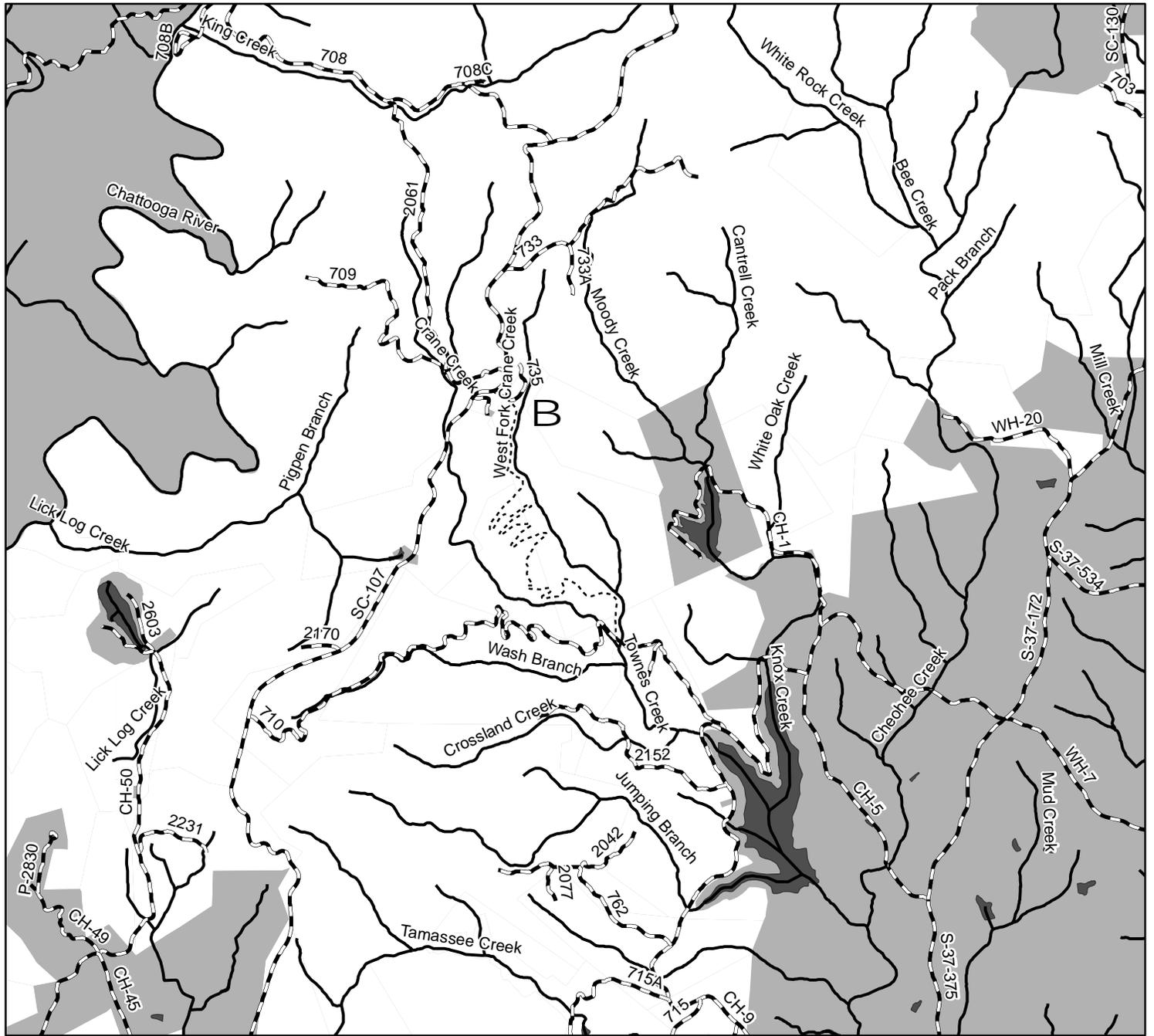
Phone: (864) 638-9568

Fax: (864) 638-2659

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–12 p.m.
and 12:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Winding Stairs Trail Sumter National Forest



Features			
-----	WindingStairsTrail		Waterbody
- - - - -	Roads		Town\City
————	Streams		Private Ownership

