

AT – Woody Gap to Cooper Gap Trail

Departure Destination: Cooper Gap

Go approximately 7.3 Miles north of Dahlonega, GA on GA-52 / GA-60 / GA-9. Turn left onto GA-60 and travel approximately 6.8 Miles to Cooper Gap Road (USFS-42). Follow USFS-42 until it crosses the AT Trail, **twice**, this is Cooper Gap. It is approximately 8.5 Miles on Cooper Gap Road (USFS-42) from GA-60.

Car Drop Location: IN and OUT (Round trip) no need.

Rating: Moderate to Strenuous

Distance: 16.6 Miles

Emergency Numbers: 911

Land Management Office:

Blue Ridge District

Alan Polk - District Ranger

1881 Highway 515

P.O. Box 9

Blairsville, GA 30512

Phone: 706 745-6928

Fax: 706 745-7494

Office hours: Mon. - Friday, 8:00 - 4:30

Water Availability:

1.6 mi - Justus Creek

2.6 mi – Gooch Mountain Shelter

4.5 mi - Blackwell Creek

4.7 mi - small stream

For the last 3.5 Miles no water sources until reaching Woody Gap, just past restrooms down to the left.

USGS Quadrangles: Suches

Note: This trip can be accomplished in either direction. Water sources are not available the first 3.5 miles heading from Woody Gap. Afterwards the water availability is good.

Once you reach Woody Gap, be sure to fill your water for the return trip. The water source is located just past the restrooms on the spur to the left down the ridge.

Description

The AT crosses FS 42 again at Cooper Gap (2820 ft) marked by a stand of large tulip poplars. The trail continues from Cooper Gap and ascends Justus Mountain to its summit at 3336 ft. From the summit, the trail again loses elevation for the next 0.3 miles until it reaches Brookshire Gap (2940 ft). After passing the gap, it follows the ridge over Phyllis Spur (3081 ft) and begins to descend again. The AT then crosses an old roadbed, turns right onto another roadbed, and then crosses Justus Creek. After crossing the creek, the trail continues along the roadbed and gently rises to cross Blackwell Creek.

After crossing Blackwell Creek, the trail slowly begins to climb through a series of rhododendron thickets. A short blue blazed trail to the left leads to Gooch Mountain shelter. Just beyond the shelter trail, the AT turns abruptly to the right and climbs sharply for 0.2 miles to a high spot on Horseshoe ridge at (3004 ft) . After the climb, the trail then descends to a gap and follows the northern ridge of Gooch Mountain, rising for 0.5 miles before finally descending.

At mile 16.1 the trail crosses a small stream, and you may notice the side trail to the old Gooch Gap shelter, which was removed by the GA-ATC in 2002.

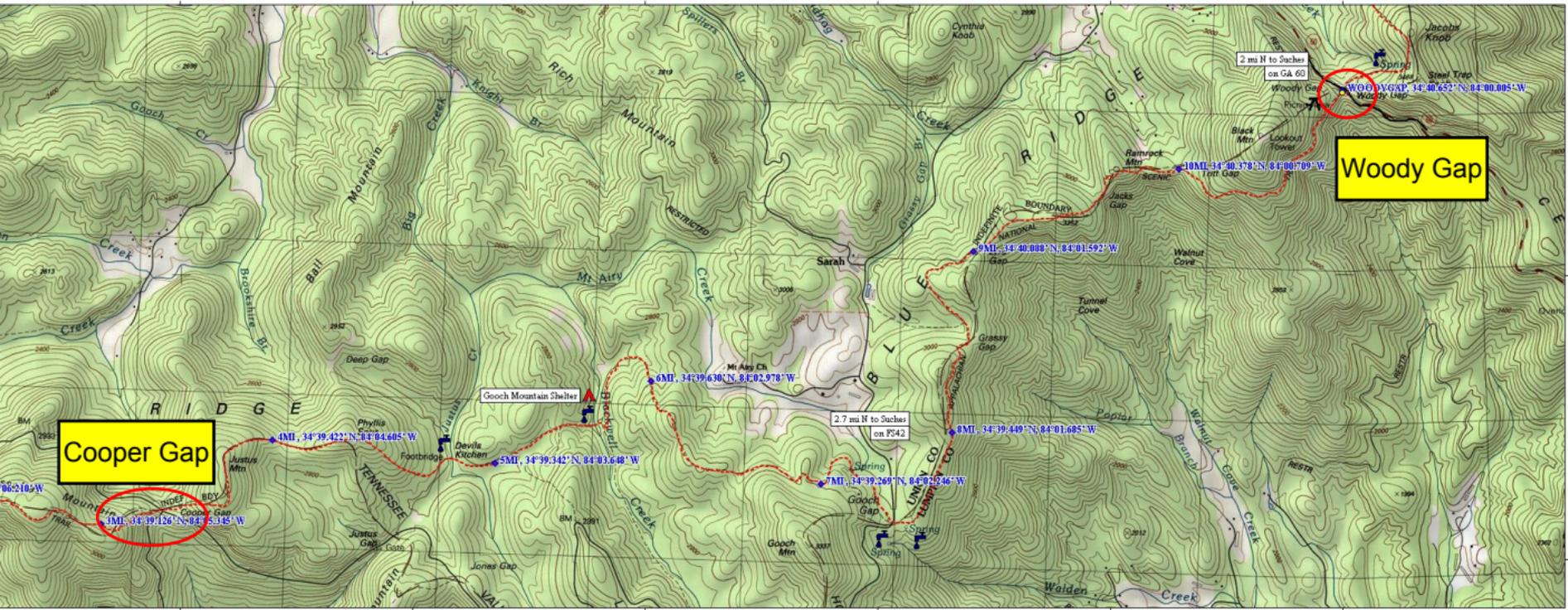
From Gooch Gap, the trail follows several easy grades to another stand of tall tulip poplars (Liss Gap - 3020 ft)

After leaving Liss Gap the trail ascends to Page Knob (3252 ft), then continues down the ridge to Jacks Gap (3020 ft). It then climbs for 0.2 miles to Ramrock Mountain (3200 ft) before dropping to Tritt Gap (3060 ft). The remainder of this section is mostly level as it winds around the southern slope of Black Mountain to Woody Gap at 3160 ft.

Reverse the trip and head back to Cooper Gap. Several campsites are available about every 1.5 to 2 miles along the trail. These are small sites for 2-3 tents. No water will be found at these sites. Gooch Gap, Justus Creek and Gooch Mountain Shelter are the preferred campsites.

Highlights

The area between Justus Creek and Blackwell Creek is especially rich in botanical diversity with notable displays of ferns and wildflowers. 18.7 mi - view from Ramrock Mtn be attributed to the lack of silt and industrial pollution that is more commonly found in the downstream urban paradise.



Cooper Gap

Woody Gap

