

Day: Saturday	Start Time: 8:30 am	End Time: 4:30 pm
Co-Leader: Susan Freeman	Co-Leader: Bob Israel	Limit: 15 people
Transportation: Van B	Driver(s): Niles Seldon	Radios: 2 / First Aid Kit: 1
Fees: none	Travel Distance: 18 Miles one way	Travel Time: 50 Min. one way

7.5-Mile Buttermilk Falls Moderate/Strenuous Hike

Enjoy a 7 ½ miles (with approximately 1400 Ft. elevation gain) hike which highlights interesting terrain while taking the wanderer to great destinations along the way. On this lollipop loop hike, you'll enjoy the tallest waterfall in New Jersey and climb up alongside it to two lookout platforms. You will also hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail (AT), relax at a glacially formed lake while having lunch, hike through dying hemlock groves with a deep wood feel, and pass by several vista points with views of the surrounding Kittatinny Mountains.

The first 1.4 miles of trail will be almost entirely uphill (and downhill on the return leg), climbing just under 1100 ft. until reaching the Appalachian Trail on the top of the ridge. This early section looks quite difficult on the elevation chart but doesn't be discouraged as there are wooden steps with railings for the most difficult portions. The falls themselves are wonderful, topping out at 200 ft., the tallest in New Jersey, and are stunning on a sunny day with the sun's rays peeking through the forest canopy above.

Once on top, you'll trek portions of the historic Appalachian Trail. We will take lunch at Crater Lake, where you'll find rocks to sit on and restrooms near the parking area. At points along the hike, score some sweeping views of NJ from above. The views on this hike are limited but still beautiful. Photo opportunity? Definitely!

This loop has a little of everything-waterfalls, ravines, and views. You'll also engage in valley walking, steep climbing, and ridge walking,

- Bring standard hiking gear: Hat, Walking Stick(s), Water, Food, Good hiking boots with ankle support.
- Distance from camp 18 miles / 50 min.
- [NJHiking Best Hikes in NJ](#) / [Hiking Project](#)
- [YouTube 1](#) / [YouTube 2](#)

Logistics

- Depart Camp 8:30 am
- 8:30 am – 9:30 am Travel from camp to Buttermilk Falls
- 9:30 am – 9:45 am Prep and Gear Check
- 9:45 am – 3:00 pm Hike
- 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm Travel back to camp via Ice Cream Stop

Stats:

- Trail 7.5 mile Intermediate/Difficult lollipop loop
- High Elevation: 1,545' / Low Elevation: 431'
- Grade: Avg Grade: 7% (4°) / Max Grade: 56% (29°)

Hike Description

Start this great hike with a long and winding car ride through dirt roads in the backwoods of the Delaware National Recreational Area. The trailhead is at the base of Buttermilk Falls, and your payoff is immediate, although the flow does slow to a trickle in the drier months.

The hike begins on the blue-blazed Buttermilk Falls Trail which takes you up the eastern flank of the river. This early section looks quite difficult on the elevation chart but doesn't be discouraged as there are wooden steps with railings for the most difficult portions. The falls themselves are wonderful, topping out at 200 ft., the tallest in New Jersey, and are stunning on a sunny day with the sun's rays peeking through the forest canopy above.

The first 1.4 miles of trail will be almost entirely uphill (and downhill on the return leg), climbing just under 1100 ft. until reaching the Appalachian Trail on the top of the ridge. Here, turn south (right) for just under a mile and pick up the Crater Lake Trail. This is a little tricky as there are no blazes on Crater Lake Trail and there are a few other unmarked trails in the area as well. You can loop around Crater Lake in either direction, but I recommend clockwise as it breaks up the Appalachian Trail into two sections.

Crater Lake is the perfect lunch spot. At the south end near the parking lot (this lake is also accessible by car), you can relax on exposed bedrock near the shoreline. The lake itself was formed by a glacier approximately during the last twenty millennia and is one of the most serene places in the area to visit.

The loop hooks back into the AT at the north end of the lake and bears left (north) onto the Orange Trail for 1/2 of a mile and then picks up the Blue Mountain Lake Trail (Outer Loop) for 1/3 of a mile. These two sections of trail cut a path through amazing groves of the soon to be extinct Hemlock Trees. Here, you can see the devastation of the Woody Adelgid with one grove almost completely devoid of needles.

Next bear right onto Woods Road, which is more of a trail than a road, and goes 1 1/3 miles northeast until it intersects with Buttermilk Falls Trail. This section is pleasant hiking with the highlight being a swamp towards the beginning of the trail that is home to dozens of dead trees standing in water until they ultimately fall short. The scene is a bit spooky if you use your imagination.

Finally, head back down to the base of Buttermilk Falls, being careful not to slide down the mountain. It's almost as difficult going down the steep incline as it was going up, but well worth your time and effort.

Flora & Fauna

Northern NJ Hardwoods, some wildflowers, hemlock groves - also saw a great blue heron as well as deer in the area.

History & Background

From the National Park Service: Crater Lake is glacial lake left behind after the Wisconsin Glacier retreated from this area about twenty-two thousand years ago. This beautiful setting attracted developers, and in the mid-1900s, this was a budding vacation community. Hikers may spot remnants of old abandoned buildings along several trails.

Contacts

Land Manager: NPS - Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

- Information desk at HQ: (570) 426-2452: 1978 River Rd. Bushkill, Pa. 18324
- Visitor Centers in season: (570) 828-6125 or (908) 496-4458 (hours of operation)
- Millbrook Village, NJ in season: (908) 841-9531

☰ Buttermilk Falls - Del. W... 🔍 ⋮

▼ From NJ's highest waterfall hike steeply uphill to the Appalachian Trail and on to Crater Lake. <https://www.njhiking.com/best-250,837-views>
☆
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☑ **Buttermilk Falls**

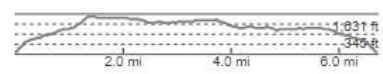
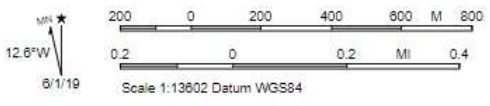
- 👤 Buttermilk Falls
- AT makes a right to viewpoint
- AT returns to woods road
- BLUE end/AT
- BLUE/Wood Road
- 📍 Crater Lake PKG
- 👤 Crater Toilet
- Hemlock Pond
- Hemlock Pond Woods Road
- Orange bears left
- ORANGE/AT
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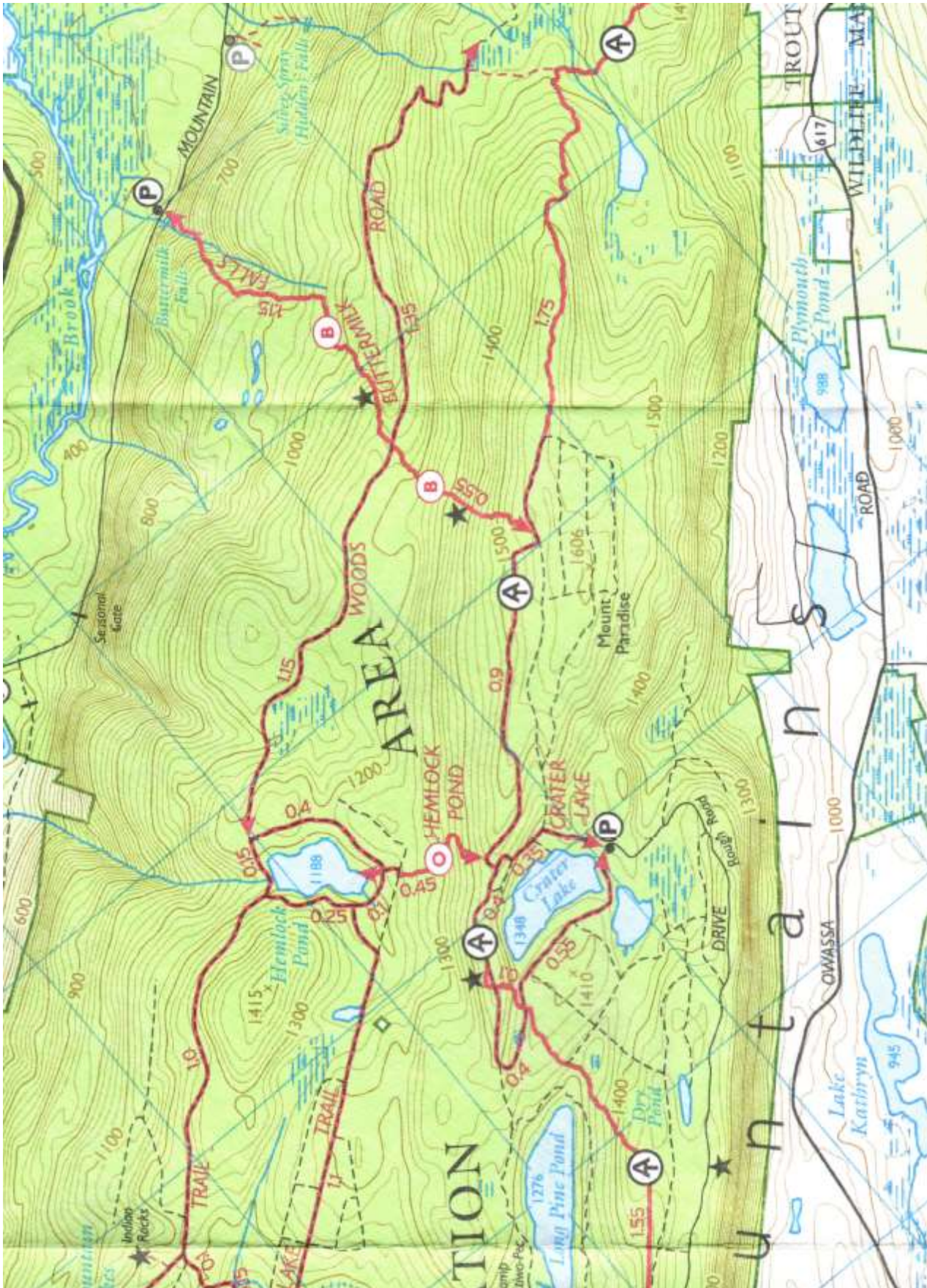
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Buttermilk Falls and Crater Lake Loop ...

Layton, NJ ★★★★★





TrailHead: [N41 08.221 W74 53.350](#)

Buttermilk Falls, Mountain Rd, Layton, NJ 07851

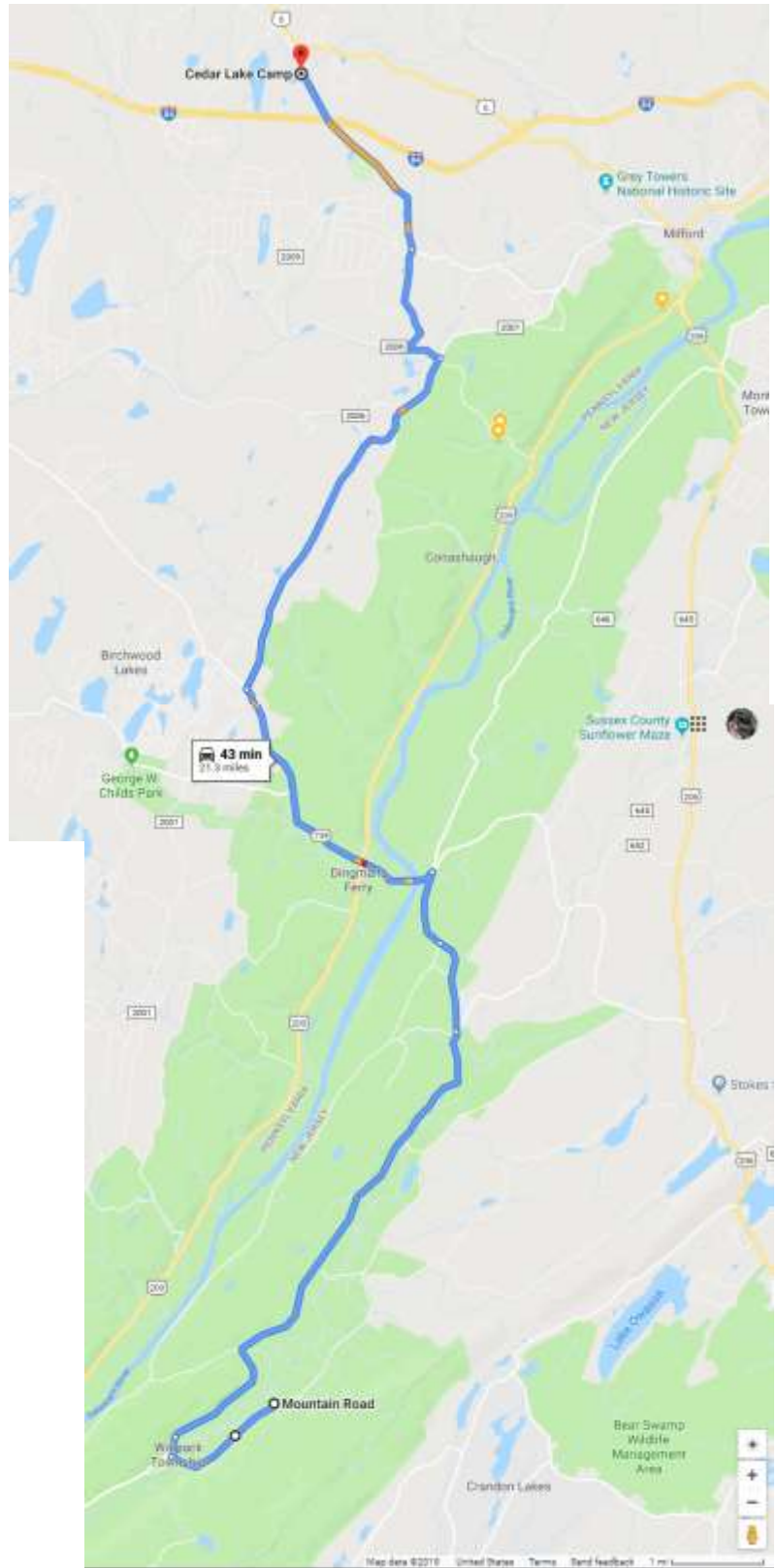
The lot is a medium-sized dirt lot, reached by a dirt road that has bumps and potholes – many are rather deep.

Mountain Road has more potholes than road. It is passable with a regular car if you take it very slowly.

Allow an extra 20 minutes for the last mile along Mountain Road so as not to do damage to your vehicle. The driving directions from the camp below will take you along past the north end of Mountain Road to get you to the southern end of the road.

FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS and do not follow your GPS! The approach from the north is a 2.5 miles long road of potholes that seem a bit worse than the 1-mile approach from the southern end.

Restrooms: At times, there is a Port-A-John, at the Falls parking, but do not depend on it.



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Directions from Camp to Trailhead

50 MIN / 18.0MI

1. Head out of camp and turn right out of driveway going southeast on Sawkill Rd. toward Honeywell Rd.
 - a. Then 2.35 miles 2.35 total miles
2. Turn right onto Kiesel Rd.
 - a. Kiesel Rd. is 0.1 miles past Vanauken Hill Rd.
 - b. If you reach Fisher Ln., you've gone about 0.7 miles too far
 - c. Then 1.26 miles 3.60 total miles
3. Turn left onto Raymondskill Rd.
 - a. Then 0.44 miles 4.04 total miles
4. Turn right onto Route 2001/SR2001.
 - a. Then 1.83 miles 5.88 total miles
5. Route 2001/SR2001 becomes Milford Rd.
 - a. Then 2.57 miles 8.45 total miles
6. At light turn left onto Route 739/PA-739 (Portions toll) (Crossing into New Jersey).



- a. Route 739 is 0.5 miles past Spencer Rd.
 - b. If you reach Kemodobi Cir., you've gone about 0.6 miles too far
 - c. You will need \$1 Cash for Toll when crossing over the Delaware River into NJ and \$1 cash for the return trip.
 - d. Then 3.11 miles 11.56 total miles
7. Route 739/PA-739 becomes Tuttles Corner Dingmans Rd./County Hwy-560 (Portions toll).
 - a. Then 0.22 miles 11.78 total miles
8. Turn sharp right onto Old Mine Rd.
 - a. You will see a sign for Peter's Valley Craft Center / Walpack Center.
 - b. This turns a shortly after you cross over the Delaware River into NJ
 - c. Then 0.85 miles 12.63 total miles



- a. Then 1.63 miles 14.26 total miles
9. Stay straight to go onto Walpack Rd.
 - a. Then 1.63 miles 14.26 total miles

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10. Turn slight right onto Walpack Flatbrook Rd.
 - a. Walpack Flatbrook Rd is 0.5 miles past Kuhn Rd.
 - b. If you reach Brook Rd., you've gone about 0.3 miles too far
 - c. Then 2.62 miles 16.88 total miles



11. Bear left onto Main St. (Haneys Mill Rd.)
 - a. If you reach Pompey Rd., you've gone about 1.2 miles too far
 - b. Then 0.60 miles 17.48 total miles



12. Take the 1st left onto Mountain Rd (Portions unpaved).
 - a. If you reach Main Tilman Rd. you've gone a little too far
 - b. Then 0.49 miles 17.97 total miles



13. Go about 1 mile. The Trail Head parking lot is on your left. You will see Buttermilk Falls on your right.

Go back the same way you came for the return trip. There is a convenience store that serves ice-cream at the corner of Rte. 739 and Milford Road.

Nearest Hospital: Newton Medical Center | 175 High St, Newton, NJ 07860 | (973) 383-2121

<https://www.atlantichealth.org/conditions-treatments/emergency-services/newton-emergency-services.html>

