

# Cherokee Hiking Club Trail Blurb

## Benton MacKaye Trail Section 12e Lost Creek Campground to Reliance Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District - Cherokee National Forest

---

**Distance:** 4.1 miles

**Elevation Change:** 280 feet

**High Point:** 1080 feet

**Low Point:** 800 feet (Hiwassee River)

**Trail Rating:** Easy (please refer to our trail difficulty rating system on our website)

**Parking:** The best parking is at the Lost Creek Campground and also at the state canoe launch site along the Hiwassee River. Parking is also available along the edge of the road where the trail enters the woods near Lost Creek Campground and also at the forest service gate about a half mile south of the canoe livery. Do not block the gate itself and be sure to not obstruct traffic along both of these forest service road. If you park at the Lost Creek Campground, do not park in any campsite unless you are camping there.

**Driving Directions to the Reliance Hiwassee River Canoe Launch Parking Lot:** From US 411 south of Etowah, take TN 30 east to Reliance. Just past the small general store by the bridge at Reliance, bear left onto the road to the Hiwassee River Outfitters. Just before the railroad overpass, turn left into the canoe access parking lot. This is a large lot with a bathroom near the entrance

**Driving Directions to the Lost Creek Campground and Parking Area:** From Reliance, drive south of TN 30 for 1.3 miles. Turn left onto Lost Creek Road and drive this gravel forest service road for 7.2 miles to the campground which is just past the bridge over Lost Creek on the left side of the road. Several primitive campsites are available at no charge. The best parking is along Lost Creek Road to the west of the bridge or up the road a ways toward TN 30 near where the trail heads off the right side of the road.

**Trail Description:** This entire trail is part of the Benton MacKaye Trail, which is a 300 mile long distance hiking trail from Springer Mountain in Georgia to the north end of the Smokies. This segment of the BMT is especially beautiful as it follows along the edge of Lost Creek. This is a moderately sized creek with flows through a rock-lined gorge down to the Hiwassee River. There are many great places for a quick dip in the creek. The trail is fairly level except near each end where there is an elevation change of about 200 feet. Thus the trail is labeled as easy.

A good hike for those camping at Lost Creek Campground is to hike downstream from the campground for about 3 miles to the point where the trail leaves the creek, then turn around and hike back up to the campground, for a total of about 6 miles. This is an easy and beautiful hike to take children and your dogs on. Your dogs especially will love playing in the creek and your whole family may want to take a lunch and plan on a swim in the creek as well. Campers at the Hiwassee Canoe Livery could just hike out of the campground up the forest service road, then down to the creek at the forest service gate about 0.7 miles down the road. In wet weather it is not a good idea to drive to the gate up the forest road, especially if you do not have a 4-wheel drive high clearance vehicle. You would have to ford over a creek

and drive up a very steep slick muddy road. And parking at the gate is very limited. There is room for maybe only one car.

**Camping:** There are two trailside campsites, one just a short distance below the main Lost Creek Campground and the second about a half mile down the trail. Also camping is available at the Lost Creek Campground as well as at the canoe livery along the Hiwassee River. Showers and a small store with some food supplies are available at the canoe livery. If you camp, be sure to use Leave No Trace ethics. Leave your campsite cleaner than you found it and obliterate any evidence you were ever there.

**Water:** Water is available all along the trail from Lost Creek and from several small creeks which cross the trail, especially Little Lost Creek, which crosses the trail at about the midpoint. Be sure to sterilize all water appropriately.

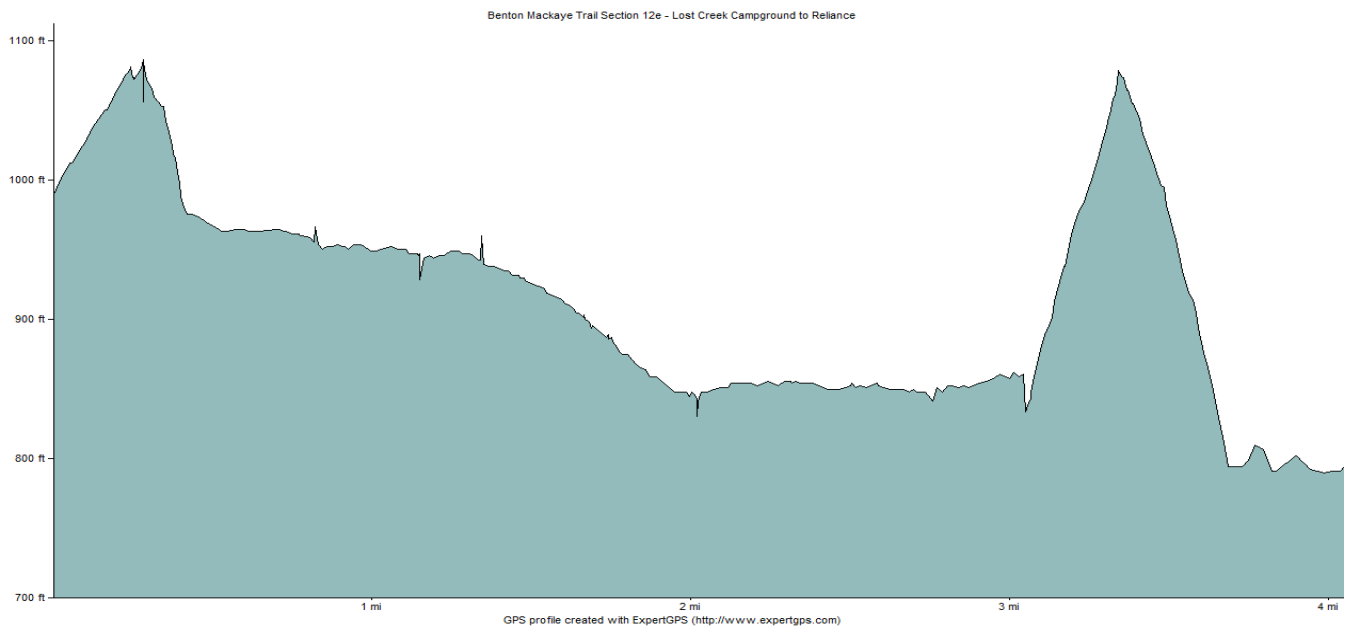
**Cell phones:** Cell phone service is spotty in the Cherokee National Forest. However, you may have some service intermittently along this trail, especially near Lost Creek Campground. Good service is available in Tellico Plains and Etowah. Emergency is 9-1-1.

**History of the Trail:** This section of the Benton MacKaye Trail follows an old road up the valley of Lost Creek which was used by pioneers to access the watershed of Lost Creek and later by loggers to extract the timber.

**Trail Maintenance:** This and other trails in the Ocoee Ranger District of the Cherokee National Forest are maintained by volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, contact the Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger Station at 423-338-3300 (3171 US Highway 64, Benton, TN 37307, [sbiatowas@fs.fed.us](mailto:sbiatowas@fs.fed.us)). If you see something which needs the attention of the trail maintainers, please contact the ranger station.

Updated March 13, 2009

This trail blurb was developed by the Cherokee Hiking Club, 2359 Varnell Road, Cleveland, TN 37311. For more information, check out our website at [www.CherokeeHikingClub.org](http://www.CherokeeHikingClub.org)





# Cherokee Hiking Club Trail Blurb

## Benton MacKaye Trail Section 12e Lost Creek Campground to Reliance Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District - Cherokee National Forest





# Cherokee Hiking Club Trail Blurb

## Benton MacKaye Trail Section 12e Lost Creek Campground to Reliance Road Access Ocoee/Hiwassee Ranger District - Cherokee National Forest

---

