

Water Sources along the Standing Stone Trail

Water supply is sporadic along the Standing Stone Trail. Dehydration can be deadly, so plan ahead to assure you have an adequate supply of water. On this trail, most water sources are at most 8-10 miles apart, so they can easily be reached in a day's travel. The through hiker especially must plan mileage and camping spots with water in mind. Be prepared to boil the water, carry water treatment chemicals or use a ceramic filter pump.

Water sources located on the SST are described from **south to north**, the direction most Great Eastern Trail through hikers will be traveling.

1. At the southern terminus in Cowans Gap State Park, stream water abounds, and potable water is available at park headquarters, or at select picnic areas, cabins and campsites. Tank up, for there is no water atop Cove Mountain.
2. After coming down from Cove Mountain and approaching Vanderbilt's Folly in Buchanan State Forest, Ninemile Run flows year-round. Note there are some good flat areas for camping a short distance farther along the trail.
3. Immediately before Sheep Hollow Road, there is a year-round stream you will cross on a log bridge.
4. After crossing highway 522, you'll hike across a concrete bridge spanning Little Aughwick Creek. This large, often muddy stream drains a huge watershed, so beware of its pollution potential.
5. A short distance beyond Little Aughwick Creek you'll cross over one small stream that flows year-round. It will continue on your right as you begin to ascend Blacklog Mountain.
6. In and around Ramsey Path is a seasonal stream, and there is one little spring you'll rock hop over. This is the last water prior to Lockes Valley Road atop Blacklog Mountain.
7. As you hike downhill toward Meadow Gap through SGL #81, where the trail merges onto a wide former rail road grade, there is at least one tiny stream that flows most of the year. Other small flows may be in the region during springtime.
8. In Meadow Gap, you'll cross over the large stream called Lick Run. This drains a large watershed, so beware of its pollution potential. There's also a culvert beside the bridge which flows from a spring somewhere uphill of Meadow Gap, and it has been used by some hikers.
9. While hiking along the six-mile valley road walk between the village of Meadow Gap and the *Trail Town* of Three Springs, the roadway will generally follow Lick Run, which is not always very accessible due to private properties, but in a pinch it would suffice.
10. Three Springs has a convenience store with bottled water for sale. There's also a pizza shop at the main intersection in town along the SST.
11. Once the hiker leaves Three Springs, take plenty of water since there's a long, exposed uphill grind to deal with, and the next water supply, Deeter Spring, is several miles away. Deeter Spring is toward the tail

end of SGL #99 along the well traveled Jacks Tower Road. Since signage has been disallowed, you'll have to watch for it on your left, about 10 feet off the road surface. (If you arrive at the Butler Knob shelter, you missed it and went ¼ mile too far.)

12. Below the Throne Room as you merge onto a less-traveled branch of Jacks Mountain Road, watch for a white PVC pipe just off the trail to the right. On the opposite side of the road from the pipe is a stream that often runs year-round.

13. Continuing along the SGL #71 access road nearly 5 miles from Deeter Spring, you'll cross over Singers Gap Run. This crystal clear stream flows year-round. Take your boots off and "set a spell."

14. Proceeding about 4 miles along Jacks Mountain toward the *Trail Town* of Mapleton, you'll cross over Scrub Run several times. This is the water supply system for Mapleton, so it runs year-round and is usually quite clean flowing.

15. In Mapleton, there is a pizza shop and a fire station where you can resupply with potable water. In a pinch, the Juniata River is nearby.

16. Crossing over highway 22, there's a convenience store (Mapleton Express) where bottled water and snacks can be purchased. It is highly recommended to stop here to assure you have adequate water for the next half-dozen grueling miles.

17. Water is found at the bottom of the Thousand Steps where this stream once again gushes out of the mountain in the form of the fabled Jacks Spring. This spring purportedly contains PCB, so it is believed to be unfit to drink.

18. In the Thousand Steps and Jacks Narrows area, water is occasionally available on the uppermost rock steps and at the dinky house just beyond. Don't count on this, however. Fill up at Mapleton instead.

19. Atop Jacks Mountain near Shorb's Summit, there is a hidden side trail to Smokum Spring. The SSTC plans to develop this as a water source soon, but in the meantime don't rely on finding it.

20. Descending Jacks Mountain several miles beyond the Thousand Steps, watch for a hunting camp on the flat to the left. There's a small stream passing through a culvert beneath the trail. This is seasonal, so don't count on it being there during the summer.

21. At highway 655, you'll cross over Saddler Creek. This stream is supplied by a large watershed, so be wary that toxins or septic runoff may be present.

22. About 1-2 miles past Route 655 in SGL #112, there's a small stream that usually runs year-round. That is the last resupply point of note for the next 8-10 miles.

23. Within the borders of SGL #112 water is generally not available except in a few wet spots. A few miles beyond the double power line however, there is a SGL #112 access road coming in from the left, and if you're desperate you can walk about a mile down that road to a stream.

24. Beyond the access road mentioned above, heading northward the trail weaves among rock outcrops and past several small streams. These streams usually flow year-round.

25. Approaching the Frew Road cul de sac, there is water right near the cul de sac. If this stream is dry backtrack a short distance to follow the Carbon Trail uphill to a spring located in a clear cut. This spring is about 200-250 yards from the road and is usually available in the event the stream is dry.

26. As the hiker is about to cross Frew Road for the second time, the stream crossing usually flows year-round, but not always. If it's dry, proceed a few hundred feet farther to Frew Road and look for another stream passing through a large culvert to your left.

27. If both streams cited above are dry, you'll definitely need water for the trek up and across Stone Mountain, which is totally void of water. In this situation, consider hiking a half-mile to the left on Frew Road. When you arrive at the three cabins comprising Martin Gap, you'll find two streams that merge into one, providing ample water for your charge up Stone Mountain.

28. Immediately after crossing Frew Road, if you are having second thoughts about matters, there's often one last chance to fill up. You'll slop through several tiny streamlets that cross the trail, so top off the water bottles now or suffer the consequences.

29. Hiking off Stone Mountain and approaching Greenwood Furnace State Park, several potable water sources can be found at park headquarters or in the picnic areas. There are numerous public restrooms here too. If everything is locked up for some odd reason, don't panic, there's a stream flowing year-round through the park.

30. Leaving Greenwood Furnace there is no water for several miles until just before Alan Seeger Natural Area, where there is a stream off to the right immediately after crossing Seeger Road. It's labeled with a small sign.

31. Upon arriving at Alan Seeger Natural Area, there are streams galore. You'll cross over many of them on bridges. They flow clear year-round.

32. Before connecting with the Mid State Trail, there are numerous opportunities to tank up along Detweiler Run, which flows year-round.

NOTE: NONE OF THE AFORMENTIONED SPRINGS OR STREAMS HAVE BEEN TESTED TO SEE IF THEY ARE FIT TO DRINK. IT IS BEST TO FILTER, BOIL OR CHEMICALLY TREAT ALL WATER. MOST OF THESE SPRINGS AND STREAMS FLOW THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER UNLESS DROUGHT CONDITIONS PREVAIL.