

BEAR CREEK
Allegheny National Forest, Elk County
Bike Trail

Description: This ride is a mixture of dirt roads and double-track and follows a 3-mile section of Bear Creek.
Distance: 16.7 miles
Time: 3 ½ hours
Trail Type: Dirt roads & double-track

Comments: Lots of miles and great scenery however some sections have heavy brush and the trail can be somewhat obscured. There is a large creek to cross, which can be difficult in the winter or early spring. If necessary bypass the creek by using the roads identified in the mileage log.

Access: From Ridgway take State Route 3002 (Laurel Mill Road) west for 15½ miles. This road passes the Ridgway Country Club and Sandy Creek Park. After crossing a wooden bridge turn right at the intersection and follow the signs to the parking lot at the Bear Creek Recreational Facility.

Mileage Log:

- 0 Begin the ride from the parking lot head left onto Forest Road (FR)135.1 going back the way you came.
- 1.2 There is a large pull-off on the right, with a gas company spur road running back along the ridge. Pass this road but keep an eye out for another spur to the right within 50 yards. Turn right at the second road.
- 1.3 The road dead-ends at a gas well; if you look to the left you will notice a pipeline. Push your way onto the pipeline and the weeds will give way to a grassy double-track.
- 1.7 Wade a small stream or use the bridge if you prefer. Ignore the pipeline you'll come to and continue straight on the road.
- 2.3 Pass a gate and turn left.
- 2.5 Turn right on the rutted trail heading up into the woods.
- 3.8 Continue straight across the pipeline and follow the forest service road.
- 5 FR237B intersects with FR237. Turn right here.
- 6.5 Turn left onto FR143. The stream in front of you is Big Mill Creek. Stay on FR143 for approximately 150 yards, and then turn right into a parking area

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with a pond in front of it. Keep to the left, passing a gate and following a footpath down to Big Mill Creek. Cross the stream. If the water is too deep, follow the bank upstream until you find the crossing a little easier. If you can't find a place to cross, go back onto FR143 and continue north until the road intersects with the trail. After fording the

stream, you'll have to hack your way for approximately 100 yards. Begin by ducking under some hemlock boughs and entering a small weedy clearing. Keep to the left until you come to a small, rocky stream. Cross over and again duck under some hemlock boughs. You'll see an old railroad bed. This is the trail.

7.8 At the T-intersection stay to the left.

8.5 At the next T-intersection, turn left.

8.8 An old railroad bridge will take you cross Big Mill Creek.

9 Cross over the pile of dirt blocking the road and where the trail splits, make a left up to FR143 and then turn right.

9.2 Make a left onto a gated, grass-covered road. This is a very steep climb so you may have to walk your bike up this road until you reach the top of the hill.

10.2 After winding around a gas well, some wet areas and a mound of dirt; the trail spills out onto FR297. Turn right here.

10.8 Turn right onto the power line right-of-way where the ATV'S have made a path. Prepare for a steep descent down the power line until you reach a Bear Creek.

11.3 You'll follow Bear Creek back to the recreational area but first you must cross the stream. After crossing the stream, head uphill 150 yards to meet the Forest Road and turn left.

11.7 The road ends at a turnaround. From this dead-end look left towards the stream where you will see a faint trail. Follow this down to a railroad bed that parallels Bear Creek. Make a left and follow the trail.

12.4 Cross the stream.

13.4 Cross Bear Creek and follow the railroad bed down the other side of the valley.

13.9 Ride around a gate and turn right onto ungated, dirt FR339.

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15.1 Immediately after crossing the wooden bridge over Bear Creek, turn left onto FR129.

16 Get some speed up for another creek crossing. Ignore the road to the right, immediately after the crossing.

16.6 Turn left and make your way back to your vehicle at the recreation area.

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