

BRUSH HOLLOW
Allegheny National Forest, Elk County
(Hike)

Distance: 6.3 miles
Time: 3 ¾ hours

Brush Hollow Trail is a set of three loop trails just west of Big Mill Creek in the Ridgway District of Allegheny National Forest. Primarily intended for cross-country skiing, the trail is also open to hikers and mountain bikers year-round. This hike is a tour around the perimeter of this trail system.

The trailhead is on PA948, 10.7 miles north of the junction with US 219 in Ridgway and about 18 miles south of Sheffield. The loop trails are marked with blue-plastic diamonds nailed to trees. Some of these markers have a white arrow on them.

Milage log:

- 0 Head down the gated road, and then bear left on an old railroad grade above Mill Creek.
- 0.1 You pass a trail to the right marked with white diamonds that connects with the western part of Mill Creek Trail.
- 0.4 Cross the bridge over the run and continue up Mill Creek.

At the next junction, cross Ellithorpe Run and continue upstream

The trail then swings left and starts to climb the hill above Cherry Run, leaving the railroad grade behind.

- 1.6 Continue up the gentle grade to the broad ridgetop.

The trail continues to follow an old grade along the top of the ridge, skirting the edge of a clear cut. Next descend to Ellithorpe Run and cross on a bridge. Then turn down-stream on a logging railroad grade. Pass through a small stand of red pine and then turn right to another grade.

- 3.7 After crossing a stream flowing through a culvert, turn right on the Brushy Gap Loop and climb to a gas well at the top of the hill. Use care to pick up the trail again on the far side of the clearing; then descend gently to a junction with the Challenger Loop. Turn right and then left, crossing the run and passing an old oil well site. Bear left on a grade that slabs the north side of the ridge between Brush Hollow and PA948. Finally, the trail emerges on the ridgetop.

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As you approach the end of the ridge there is a view up Big Mill Creek. The trail then switchbacks to the left. Next, switch-back to the right, and reach the major trail junction at the end of Brush Hollow. Turn right on the railroad grade, and retrace your steps to the parking lot.

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