

Falls Lake Trail (A part of the NC Mountains-to-Sea Trail) – East to West

Distances in miles

Section 1 (Falls of the Neuse Rd to Raven Ridge Rd)

- 0.0 – Parking area of the Tailrace Fishing Area, just below the dam, off Falls of the Neuse Rd. Trail starts across from the restrooms, by three large boulders. Following white blazes, start on an open path.
- 0.1 – By a trail post, turn L onto a more narrow path.
- 0.2 – Stay R, as an alternate blue-blazed trail goes off to the L (This trail goes 0.6 mi, by-passing the Dam Management Center, to rejoin the Falls Lake Trail).
- 0.3 – Cross a dam access road and turn R to walk on a wide, gravel path. Pay attention to trail signage through this section.
- 0.4 – Turn L off the gravel path and into woods.
- 0.5 – Reach another section of the access road and turn L, then quick R to enter an area of young pine growth (Restrooms, a public telephone and [water fountain](#) are within view).
- 0.6 – Cross a paved road near the Management Center and turn R onto a gravel footpath. In about 100 yd turn L off this path to continue on the Falls Lake Trail.
- 0.9 – Cross a paved service road by the lake.
- 1.0 – Reach a junction, L, with the alternate blue-blazed trail. The Falls Lake Trail stays R.
- 1.2 – Cross a small plank bridge over a feeder [creek](#) and turn L on the other side.
- 1.3 – Reach an open footpath and turn R, then quick L, to stay on the trail.
- 1.6 – Walk across a wide utility easement.
- 2.1 – Cross a small [creek](#) on a footbridge.
- 2.4 – Use a footbridge to cross another small [creek](#) and soon, another one, at a low point passing around a cove.
- 2.8 – After a hillside descent, cross a [creek](#) on a footbridge and turn R to walk beside it. Eventually return to the the lake.
- 3.5 – Reach Raven Ridge Rd by a gravel pull-off. Turn R to cross the causeway and continue on the trail.

Section 2 (Raven Ridge Rd to Possum Track Rd)

- 3.7 – At end of guardrail, turn R to head back into the woods.
- 4.1 – Skirting a cove, cross a small footbridge.
- 4.3 – Reach lake views, which are plentiful along this area.
- 4.9 – Cross a footbridge above a small [creek](#). In times of high water a small cascade is visible to the L.
- 5.0 – Cross an old roadbed. To the R is a path to a former homesite on the lakeshore.
- 5.2 – Pass a [pond](#), L.

- 5.3 – Turn L to stay on the trail (R leads to the lake).
- 5.6 – On stepping stones, cross a small **creek**.
- 5.9 – Cross a low footbridge over a dry creekbed.
- 6.2 – Exit the woods to Red Fox Run, a private, gravel road.
- 6.3 – Junction with Possum Track Rd, by a dead end, and cross this to continue on the Falls Lake Trail.

Section 3 (End of Possum Track Rd to Possum Track Rd)

- 6.3 – By dead end of Possum Track Rd reenter woods.
- 6.5 – Cross a low-lying footbridge and soon, another one.
- 6.6 – Cross a paved access road.
- 6.9 – Cross some former logging roads and soon move into a wildlife clearing. Walk through this for the next 0.6 mi.
- 7.1 – Cross a low footbridge over a creekbed.
- 7.5 – Move out of the wildlife clearing and walk on a short footbridge. Catch a view of the lake but soon leave it.
- 7.7 – Cross a footbridge over a small **creek**.
- 7.8 – Move back to views of Falls Lake.
- 8.1 – Cross a footbridge and soon, an old roadbed.
- 8.6 – Cross a small **creek** on a footbridge.
- 8.8 – Cross a footbridge by a large drainage pipe. Possum Track Rd is directly above you.
- 9.2 – Turn R off a narrow path that you've been on for the last 0.1 mi.
- 9.3 – Walk up a concrete culvert to arrive at Possum Track Rd. Turn R to walk across the causeway.

Section 4 (Possum Track Rd to Bayleaf Church Rd)

- 9.5 – At end of guardrail, turn R to reenter woods.
- 9.9 – Midway through an area of young pine growth (Trail is marked by several carsonite posts), cross a wide roadbed.
- 10.0 – Enter more open woodlands.
- 10.2 – Note a former homesite, L. Soon enter a wildlife clearing, as the trail touches a wide roadbed and passes by the remains of a rusted car.
- 10.7 – Cross a small **creek** on a footbridge as you leave the wildlife clearing.
- 10.9 – Return to lake views.
- 11.0 – Trail turns sharp L by a lake promontory.
- 11.3 – Cross a narrow, old roadbed and soon enter an area of profuse laurel and holly.
- 11.9 – At the end of a cove, cross a footbridge over a **creek**. You have now entered an area of state parklands (No hunting).
- 12.0 – Cross a creek bed on a low footbridge.
- 12.3 – Reach the Yorkshire Center, a NC Parks and Recreation facility. Bayleaf Church Rd, L, dead ends here.

Section 5 (Bayleaf Church Rd to Six Forks Rd)

- 12.3 – By a signboard, cross the paved road and quickly turn L to reenter woods.
- 12.5 – Cross a creek bed on a small footbridge.
- 12.7 – Cross a short plank walkway to reenter state gamelands.
- 12.9 – Cross a creek bed on a footbridge.
- 13.1 – By the lake, cross a small **creek** on a footbridge.
- 13.4 – Cross another small **creek** on a footbridge.
- 13.6 – Walk up a rock-lined drainage to reach Six Forks Rd. Turn R to walk across the causeway.

Section 6 (Six Forks Rd to Six Forks Rd)

- 13.9 – By end of the guardrail, at a graveled pull-off, turn R. Note signboard welcoming you to Blue Jay Point, a Wake County Park. Reenter woods to continue on the Falls Lake Trail.
- 14.0 – After crossing a small plank walkway, descend to cross a footbridge over a small **creek**.
- 14.5 – Cross several footbridges in an area with evidence of the ravages of hurricanes Fran and Floyd.
- 14.6 – Cross a wide footpath.
- 14.9 – Descend on some steps to cross a footbridge.
- 15.2 – Cross a graveled, blue-blazed trail (R leads to park's namesake, Blue Jay Point).
- 15.3 – Cross a small footbridge and turn R to stay on the trail (Red-blazed trail turns L to ascend some steps and head uphill to a playground and **restrooms**).
- 15.4 – Stay straight at a junction with a red-blazed trail, L.
- 15.5 – Stay R at a junction with a yellow-blazed trail, L, as the trails run concurrently on a wide footpath.
- 15.6 – Turn R as the yellow-blazed trail turns off to L.
- 15.7 – Cross a narrow footbridge.
- 15.8 – Reach a wide blue-blazed path and turn L with this for about 100 yd, before turning L onto a narrower footpath.
- 15.9 – Reach a signboard by a parking area and turn R to cross a park road to continue on the Falls Lake Trail.
- 16.1 – Cross a bridge over a creekbed. The lake is to the R, below you.
- 16.2 – After descent to the lake, cross 2 footbridges, with a bench between them.
- 16.5 – Cross another footbridge, by the end of a cove.
- 16.7 – Cross another footbridge.
- 17.0 – Walk down some steps and reach Six Forks Rd. To continue on the trail, turn R to cross the causeway. The boat ramp is in view here.

Section 7 (Six Forks Rd to NC-98)

- 17.3 – By a graveled pull-off, turn R to reenter woods.
- 17.4 – Reach the overflow lot for Barton Creek Boat Access. Walk straight across this and reenter woods by a sign-board. You are returning to NC gamelands (Hunting in season).
- 17.5 – Turn L onto an old roadbed to enter a young pine forest.
- 17.7 – Cross a powerline, by a clear-cut.
- 17.8 – Cross an L-shaped footbridge and shortly, a second footbridge.
- 18.0 – Cross a dry, usually, creekbed.
- 18.1 – Cross a narrow roadbed and soon enter a small clearing. Stay L to continue on the trail, soon crossing a pipe conduit. Shortly, the trail turns R across a small **creek**.
- 18.3 – Cross a 2nd power line clear-cut near a cove.
- 18.5 – Enter a 3rd power line clear-cut. To traverse this section, turn R, then quickly L for a slight ascent to reach an access road. R onto this and quick R at bottom of this to soon reenter woods.
- 18.8 – Descend slightly to go through a low area.
- 19.2 – After curving around a cove, cross a small **creek**.
- 19.4 – Cross a small creekbed on a footbridge and soon turn L onto a wider footpath. Shortly reach the old '98' roadbed (paved) and turn R onto this.
- 19.6 – Turn L off the roadbed and into woods.
- 19.7 – Descend to reach NC-98, by end of a guardrail. To continue to the next section, turn R to walk along the grassy shoulder and cross (Use caution!) the road by a double-blazed utility pole.

Section 8 (NC-98 to New Light Rd)

- 19.8 – By a graveled pull-off, to W of NC-98 causeway, reenter woods. You are still on state gamelands.
- 19.9 – Reach a wide power-line cut. The trail goes straight across to reenter the woods.
- 20.0 – Cross a wide, open roadbed
- 20.1 – Cross a short footbridge, without handrails.
- 20.3 – Cross an older, low-lying footbridge, with a sloping handrail. Soon cross a narrow roadbed.
- 20.5 – Cross a footbridge by another cove.
- 20.8 – Reach lake views, R. These will continue for awhile.
- 21.3 – By the end of a cove, reach a high footbridge. Around the bend, cross a second high footbridge, with many steps.
- 22.1 – Reach a high footbridge over a small **creek**.
- 22.2 – Cross a small inlet by the end of a cove and enter a section of state parklands.
- 22.5 – Cross a low-lying footbridge over a small **creek**, by the end of a cove.

- 22.8 – Reach a gravel road by Shinleaf Recreation Area (Walk-in campsites). Turn L and go by a vehicle gate to cross a paved road (A parking area and **restrooms** are R) and reenter woods. Soon pass by the old Norwood family cemetery plot, L.
- 23.0 – After a slight descent, cross a small footbridge.
- 23.3 – Cross through a large depression.
- 23.4 – Reach New Light Road. Turn R to walk along the grassy shoulder.

Section 9 (New Light Rd to Ghoston Rd)

- 23.5 – Turn L to cross the road into woods (No hunting in this section).
- 23.6 – Cross a small footbridge.
- 23.8 – Cross another footbridge.
- 24.0 – Reach Ghoston Road and cross to enter the next section (gamelands).

Section 10 (Ghoston Rd to NC-50)

- 24.5 – After some minor ups and downs, cross the outlet of a small pond, L, on a footbridge.
- 24.6 – Reach lake views, R.
- 24.8 – Cross a short plank walkway and ascend to reach a ridge offering views of the lake, R.
- 25.1 – After walking along a **creek**, turn R to cross it on a footbridge.
- 25.3 – Walking along a narrow roadbed, pass some old stone markers, L.
- 25.5 – Stay straight at a junction of several wide roadbeds.
- 25.6 – Turn R off the roadbed to go around an old farm site, soon passing the remains of a tin shed, L.
- 25.7 – Cross a wide roadbed to stay on the trail.
- 25.8 – On a footbridge cross a creek bed.
- 25.9 – Reach the roadbed again and turn L to follow it.
- 26.0 – Turn L at a junction and soon R, by some state park markers on carsonite posts.
- 26.1 – Cross a gravel service road.
- 26.4 – Cross a paved service road.
- 26.5 – Cross a paved road (R to Falls Lake Information center).
- 26.7 – By a signboard and graveled parking area, reach NC-50 (1.6 mi N of NC-98). Cross this busy road and turn R to walk along the road shoulder and access the next section.

Section 11 (NC-50 to Boyce Mill Rd)

- 26.8 – By beginning of guardrail (On W side of NC50), turn L to reenter woods.
- 27.1 – Reach a powerline cut and turn R to follow this.
- 27.2 – By a pole, turn R, back into the woods.
- 27.3 – Walk between 2 large, downed trees, both to sides of the trail.

- 27.4 – Cross a small feeder creek.
- 27.8 – Use a footbridge to cross a small creek.
- 28.0 – Turn R to stay on the trail and soon cross an old roadbed.
- 28.2 – After walking through a low area, the trail turns R.
- 28.5 – Cross a narrow footpath.
- 28.6 – A view of Rolling View Marina is R, across the lake.
- 28.7 – The lake comes into full view as the trail starts to curve around a cove.
- 29.2 – Pass R of a creek with a pretty cascade and start to walk beside it.
- 29.6 – Cross a small creek on stepping stones.
- 29.7 – Cross a footpath by trail signage.
- 30.6 – Turn R by a creek bed and quickly cross it.
- 30.7 – Cross an open area of woodland.
- 30.8 – Cross a roadbed and soon pass through the remains of a homesite, with a tobacco barn still standing.
- 30.9 – The trail turns R.
- 31.1 – Cross a creek on a footbridge.
- 31.2 – Falls Lake comes into view, R.
- 31.3 – Cross another creek on a footbridge.
- 31.5 – Turn L by some trail signage.
- 31.6 – Turn L and walk along some old barbwire, L.
- 31.8 – Cross a wide creek.
- 31.9 – Pass by the remains of a shed, R, and start to follow an old roadbed.
- 32.4 – Reach gated end of Boyce Mill Road (gravel). Turn R to cross a barrier and enter next section.

Section 12 (Boyce Mill Rd to NC-98)

- 32.6 – After turning L off the roadbed, pass by a pond, L.
- 33.0 – Cross a feeder creek.
- 33.3 – Cross a small creek bed and soon walk through the cut remains of a large downed tree.
- 33.5 – Cross a boardwalk and soon junction with a footpath entering from the R.
- 33.7 – Cross a water run.
- 33.8 – Turn L off a path to stay on the trail
- 34.0– The trail arrives at NC-98, by Lick Creek. To continue on the next section, turn R to walk along the road's shoulder.

Section 13 (NC-98 to Rolling View)

- 34.3 – Turn R to cross a culvert and enter an area cleared for wildlife. Soon turn R onto a footpath.
- 34.5 – Leave the cleared area to enter the woods. Cross a creek on a footbridge and soon turn R.
- 34.8 – Cross an old roadbed.

- 35.0 – Go through a wet area, the result of beaver activity, on a series of boardwalks.
- 35.1 – Cross a feeder **creek**.
- 35.2 – Cross under power lines.
- 35.3 – Cross an old roadbed.
- 35.5 – Cross a roadbed by an open area.
- 35.9 – Cross a creek bed and soon junction with a wide roadbed. Turn R to walk along it and turn L to reenter the woods.
- 36.1 – Cross a wide **creek**.
- 36.5 – After walking along an old roadbed by the lake, R, turn L off it to skirt the shoreline. Soon reach the state park boundary (no hunting).
- 36.7 – Cross another open roadbed.
- 37.1 – Junction with a blue-blazed trail, L, to a hiker's parking area (*Soon reach a pond and turn L to curve around it -> at 0.2. mi. reach a road, cross it and turn L to walk along a path by the edge of the woods -> at 0.3 mi reach the lot*).
- 37.2 – Cross a creek bed and then a footbridge.
- 37.4 – The remains of an auto can be seen to the L.
- 37.5 – Reach Baptist Road by the gated entrance, R, to the Rolling View recreation area/campground. Cross the road and turn R to walk along the grassy shoulder to enter the next section.

Section 14 (Rolling View to Santee Road)

- 37.7 – After passing by the entrance station to Rolling View, reach a yellow manhole cover and turn L to reenter the woods.
- 37.9 – Cross a small creek bed. Soon junction, L, with a blue blazed path to a hiker's parking lot off Baptist Road (*After some small ups and downs cross a creek bed at 0.3 mi -> after a short, steep ascent the trail levels off to reach the lot at 0.5 mi*). Shortly after this, pass through a low lying, wet area.
- 38.1 – Cross a small creek bed.
- 38.2 – Cross another small creek bed in a low lying section.
- 38.3 – Cross a **small creek** (May be dry).
- 38.4 – Junction with an unmarked path, L.
- 38.6 – By the top of a rock face cross a **small creek**.
- 38.7 – After a slight ascent, reach lake views, R. Soon pass through piles of trees cut to allow passage of the trail.
- 39.2 – Near the lake shore turn L to walk up some steps and pass by a private residence. The trail becomes narrow through here.
- 39.4 – Pass through a slightly open area with lake views, R.
- 39.5 – Go through a low, wet area (Possible standing water).
- 39.7 – Pass through another low lying, wet section.
- 40.0 – Cross a roadbed, coming from a private residence. Soon start to walk by the lake shore, R.
- 40.4 – Cross an overgrown roadbed and soon a dry creek bed.
- 40.5 – Reach another old roadbed and veer towards L to stay on the trail.

- 40.6 – Pass some trail signage and veer to the L by a field.
- 40.8 – Reach a gravel road (private) as the trail turns R to follow it for a short distance.
- 40.9 – After going over a small pond, turn R to reenter woods.
- 41.2 – Cross another roadbed, with a connection (0.1 mi, L) to Santee Road.
- 41.4 – Cross under a powerline.
- 41.6 – Reach another powerline. The lake is R. *Current end of trail until a bridge is built.*

To reach Section 15, take Baptist Rd to NC-98. Turn R onto NC-98 and go 0.7 mi to traffic signal and turn R onto Patterson Rd. Go 2.6 mi and turn R onto Jimmy Rogers Rd. Go about 1.6 mi on this to where road curves (See Section 15).

Section 15 (Jimmy Rogers Road to Cheek Road)

- 0.0 – From junction of Jimmy Rodgers/Little Rogers Road, follow powerline roadbed.
- 0.2 – Within sight of the lake, and just before first concrete support, turn L into woods, then quick L onto a discernable path. Follow this for a short distance before a R onto the blazed footpath.
- 0.4 – Cross through some trees cut for the trail's passage.
- 0.7 – Cross a **small creek**.
- 0.9 – Pass through an open area and turn L to stay on the trail.
- 1.2 – Cross an unmarked path.
- 1.4 – Cross a **creek** on a footbridge.
- 1.6 – Go through a powerline clearing and soon cross a **small creek**.
- 1.8 – Cross a footpath, the remains of a roadbed (L, about 130 yards, is the dead end of Shaw Road).
- 1.9 – Reach an unmarked path and turn R onto this.
- 2.0 – Turn L off of a more open path.
- 2.1 – By the lakeshore, cross a roadbed.
- 2.6 – Reach another roadbed and turn L onto it.
- 3.0 – Cross another narrow roadbed.
- 3.1 – On a footbridge, cross a **creek** (may be dry).
- 3.2 – Cross another narrow roadbed. Soon cross a powerline with a small **creek** at the midpoint (may be overgrown). The lake is to the R.
- 3.5 – Cross another small **creek**.
- 3.6 – After coming through some possible overgrowth, reach a field with a powerline. To traverse this turn R to walk along the field's edge.
- 3.8 – Cross under one of the large supports and soon turn R to reenter the woods.
- 4.0 – Cross a dry creek bed with some large rocks underfoot.
- 4.2 – Walk through an open area.
- 4.6 – Cross another small, dry creek bed.
- 4.7 – Reach Cheek Road by a graveled pullout. To continue to the next section, turn R to walk along the road's shoulder.

Section 16 (Cheek Road to Hereford Road)

- 4.7 – After approximately 70 yd, cross the road to reenter woods.
- 4.9 – Cross an open area after trail curves to the R. Soon pass by the edge of a field.
- 5.1 – Lake views become available, R.
- 5.4 – Pass through another open area with a nice lake view, R.
- 5.6 – Reach Hereford Road. To reach the next section, turn R to walk along the road's shoulder.

Section 17 (Hereford Road to Redwood Road)

- 5.8 – By end of guardrail, turn R to reenter woods. Soon, stay to L by some trail signage.
- 6.1 – Reach an open area by a cove. The trail turns L by the uprooted remains of several trees.
- 6.2 – Turn R to cross a creek bed on a footbridge.
- 6.4 – For a short distance walk by the lake's edge, R. Soon stay to L to leave this.
- 6.6 – Cross an old roadbed and enter a section of young forest growth (May be overgrown in warmer weather).
- 6.7 – By a trail post, turn L onto a more open path. Soon pass the remains of a shack, R.
- 6.8 – Pass by the remains of another structure, L.
- 6.9 – After turning R off this open path, reach Redwood Road. Get to the next section by turning R to cross the causeway on the road's shoulder.

Section 18 (Redwood Road to Hickory Hill Boat Ramp)

- 7.1 – Turn right by end of guardrail to reenter woods.
- 7.2 – Cross a **small creek** on a footbridge.
- 7.6 – By a signboard, reach Hickory Hill Boat Ramp. Road to L goes out to Redwood Road. To stay on trail, stay straight and soon turn L to reenter woods.

Section 19 (Hickory Hill Boat Ramp to East Geer Street)

- 7.6 – After entering woods the trail immediately turns R.
- 7.8 – Cross the remains of a roadbed.
- 8.1 – Walk through a dry creek bed.
- 8.3 – Cross the remains of a roadbed and soon pass through a large depression.
- 8.5 – Reach a powerline right-of-way by I-85. Turn L to walk along this for a short distance and come to the gated end of East Geer Street. To continue on the trail go L to walk around this barrier.

Field notes taken by Mark Edelstein and updated 10/09