

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

Section 1

- 0.0 mi – 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 lake.
- 3.5 mi – Reach Raven Ridge Rd by a gravel pull-off. Turn R to cross the causeway and continue on the trail.

Section 2

- 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 mi – Junction with Possom Track Rd, by a dead end, and cross this to continue on the Falls Lake Trail.

Section 3

- 6.3 – By dead end of Possom 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. Possom 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 mi – Walk up a concrete culvert to arrive at Possom Track Rd. Turn R to walk across the causeway.

Section 4

- 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 mi – Reach the Yorkshire Center, a NC Parks and Recreation facility. Bayleaf Church Rd, L, dead ends here.

Section 5

- 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 mi – Walk up a rock-lined drainage to reach Six Forks Rd. Turn R to walk across the causeway.

Section 6

- 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 mi – 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

- 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.
- 11.1 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 mi – 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

- 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 mi – Reach New Light Road. Turn R to walk along the grassy shoulder.

Section 9

- 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 mi – Reach Ghoston Road and cross to enter the next section (gamelands).

Section 10

- 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 farmsite, soon passing the remains of a tin shed, L.
- 25.7 – Cross a wide roadbed to stay on the trail.

- 25.8 – Cross a creekbed.
- 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 mi – By a signboard and graveled parking area, reach NC-50 (1.6 mi N of NC-98).

Field notes taken by Mark Edelstein during the winter of 2006-2007