

Lee Falls



Class: Segmented

Height: 90 feet

Rating: Spectacular

Stream: Tamassee
Creek

Hike Length: 1.6 miles*

Hike Difficulty: Difficult

Hiking Time: 2 hours*

USGS Quad: Tamassee

Fee: None

*one way

Lee Falls is considered one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the Upstate. Tamassee Creek drops 100 feet in four tiers to form the waterfall, and after heavy rain, three separate segments of water can be seen flowing over the granite in a rocky cove. Both the sides of the falls and the cliff behind it are covered with thick green moss and other vegetation.

Lee Falls lies deep within a hardwood forest. Rare local Oconee Bells and bulblet ferns grow in the moist environment.

There is no official trail to the falls, although hikers, hunters, and fishermen have established a path that can be followed. This trail is subject to frequent changes. Look for white surveyor's tape that helps mark the trail. Several small and large stream crossings are necessary. The water can be more than ankle deep and convenient stepping stones are not always available, so be prepared to get your feet wet. The constant mist from the falls makes the nearby boulders and fallen trees slick and dangerous.

Driving Directions:

1. From Walhalla follow SC 183 North 3.5 miles to the intersection with SC 11 and turn right onto SC 11 North.
2. Drive for 4.5 miles to Cheohee Valley Road on the left just before Becca's Kitchen.
3. Turn left onto Cheohee Valley Road.
4. Drive 2.1 miles and turn left onto Tamassee Knob Road.
5. Drive 0.5 mile and turn right onto Jumping Branch Road.
6. Drive 1.5 miles and turn left onto FS 715A, which is gravel. (Pass FS 715 on the left and continue 0.2 mile to FS 715A.)
7. Drive 0.6 mile to the bridge over Tamassee Creek.
8. Turn right before the bridge into a parking area. There is a barricade across the road where the trail begins.

Hiking Directions:

1. Hike north from the parking area past the barricade.
2. Continue 0.75 mile through four grassy fields (these are wildlife openings, which may be grown up with weeds from knee high to head high), crossing Tamassee Creek two times.
3. At the end of the last field, the trail enters the woods.
4. Follow the trail for 0.3 mile, crossing the creek and heading toward a larger branch of Tamassee Creek.
5. Follow the trail another 0.2 mile, following Tamassee Creek upstream to a point where the trail becomes rocky and overgrown with vegetation.
6. Follow the trail another 0.1 mile past an abandoned gold smelter (now reduced to a mound of dirt).
7. Continue another 0.25 mile uphill to the falls over boulders and fallen trees. Use extreme caution.