

OCONEE STATION and STATION COVE FALLS



DESCRIPTION: This short hike, or the Falls only version, is usually done in combination with the OSP Connector hike. Oconee Station State Historic Site (Park) and the adjoining Station Cove Falls offer exceptional water features, spring wild flowers, and historical interest via a few miles of easy trails. The Falls, a 60 ft gushing cascade, is set in a mighty rock walled stage with wader friendly splash pool below. It's lush gateway includes acres of trillium, May apples, red buds, and many varieties of delicate wild flowers. The Historic Site features a small wood and stone "blockhouse" and residence that supported a military outpost and trading center for settlers in the time of the Cherokees.

There two ways to start: The first, from the trailhead, 200 feet beyond the Park's parking area or, roadside, 0.2 miles north of the Park entrance on Oconee Station Road. From the first, go downhill, then right at the fork and circle to the far side of the pond. Head up through the woods and across Oconee Station Road to the second trailhead, alternate parking, and kiosk. Head downhill. Note beaver ponds to the left, an alder swamp and, in spring, a dazzling display of wild flowers. The trail ends at the Falls, past the Oconee Connector Trail and an easy rock hop across the creek. Play in the spray beneath the Falls and enjoy lunch on a fron-row rockery. On the return, after crossing the road, keep right through the forest, complete the circle around the pond, and return to the main parking area. Total: less than 4 easy miles.

DIRECTIONS: (GPS: 34.846711, -83.071708)

From Walhalla, drive north on SC 183 for three miles and turn left (north) onto SC 11. Drive 1.5 miles north on SC 11 and turn left (northwest) onto Oconee Station (Oconee County S-37-95). Oconee Station Historic Site is approximately 2.1 miles ahead on the right. Enter the site and park in the parking area. There are restrooms and drinking water there. The alternate trailhead and parking are on the left, 0.2 miles further north on Oconee Station Road.

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