

## ***6 Hard To All Day Hikes In The Franconia Notch***

### ***Falling Waters Trail* Class III, Distance 3 1/4 mi., Time 3 hrs., Elev. Gain 2700'**

Head SE along the blue blazes just off the Franconia Notch Parkway (I-93), across from the Lafayette Campground. The trail follows Walker Brook to a crossing at Walker Falls. Continue SE away from the brook and ascend to Dry Brook. After you cross heading E. Stairs Falls come into view. Above the falls continue to ascent, passing outcrops of granite, and cross the dry brook by the awesome Swift Water Falls (60'). Take care along this route! The path switches back and forth for a short distance, then ascends steeply away from the tote road to an overview of the highest falls in this region - Cloudland Falls (80'), which descends into the forest below, with two smaller falls descending into the valley. The trail then climbs along forested ridges of Haystack Mtn. Shinning Rock is now reached via a side trail about 100 yds. off the main trail. Do not attempt to climb this rock without proper experience and equipment. It is usually very slippery and steep, with few holds. The views are magnificent as you ascend on the main trail NE along the base of the cliff to where the trail enters the woods, finally climb steeply to timberline, and meets Franconia Ridge Tr. Caution is advised; turn back if weather is bad.

### ***Flume Slide Trail* Class III, Distance 4 1/2 mi., Time 3 hrs., Elev. Gain 2600'**

This trail leaves the S side of Liberty Spring Tr., 1/4 mi. from its start. The trail is very wet and slippery in many places, and many brook crossings must be negotiated. Continue SE ascending at a gradual grade, crossing a brook and soon another. In 1/2 mi. the trail descends rapidly to another crossing. From here, the trail traverses a wet area, crossing several brooks. Watch for the trail markers through this area, as the trail has been relocated in sections. After the mud zone, the trail follows an extremely steep, gravelly slide. Do not attempt this part of the trail if the weather is wet or icy; turn back here. Across the slide, the trail passes through thick trees along a steep ascent to Franconia Ridge and reaches the jct. with Osseo Tr., 0.1 mi. S of Mt. Flume.

### ***Franconia Ridge Trail* Class III, Distance 5 mi., Time 4 hrs., Elev. Gain 1800'**

From the summit of Mt. Lafayette, head S along the open talus-and scree-strewn ridge. The alpine plants along this trail are fragile, yet hardy enough to endure this harsh climate better than human beings. This ridge is known for extremely severe weather and wind; use extreme caution. If the weather looks at all threatening, don't attempt to ascend above treeline - the weather will only be worse. The trail generally passed due S over Mt. Lincoln and then Little Haystack Mtn. At the summit of Little Haystack, Falling Waters Tr. descends W. At an altitude of over 4,000', the trail winds S among glacial erratics and talus boulders, then climbs to the summit of Mt. Liberty. Franconia Ridge Tr. is dry beyond this point; water may be found at a good spring 1/4 mi. down Liberty Spring Tr., which leaves SW 1/4 mi. before the summit of Mt. Liberty. The main trail continues E from the summit and descends S along the SE slopes of Mt. Liberty to a lower summit, Mt. Flume. Franconia Ridge Tr. terminates at a jct. S of Mt. Flume; flume Slide Tr. will take you to Rte 3.

### ***Greenleaf Trail* Class II, Distance 3 1/4 mi., Time 3 hrs 30 min., Elev. Gain 2100'**

The trail begins off the Tramway parking lot near the north bound parkway ramp and runs parallel to the road for a short distance. The trail then heads E up a steep hill to Eagle Cliff by way of switchbacks. There are occasional views along this route. At approx. mi. the trail passes through a narrow notch called Eagle pass and continues E for a short distance, then swings S across talus along the NW side of Mt. Lafayette. Greenleaf Tr. ends at Greenleaf Hut. Treat this beautiful area with respect - it is much used and therefore fragile. No camping.

### ***Liberty Spring Trail* Class II, Distance 2 1/2 mi., Time 2 hrs. 15 min., Elev. Gain 2700'**

Park just N of the Flume Visitor Center and access this trail via the Whitehouse Tr. (about mi. north). The trail crosses another brook and slabs the W slopes of Mt. Liberty. flume Slide Tr. branches off the main trail towards flume Brook; the main trail ascends E, crossing many brooks. The trail finally passes Liberty Spring Campsite. The trail continues steeply and ends at the Franconia Ridge Tr., about 1/4 mi. N of the summit of Mt. Liberty.

### ***Old Bridle Path* Class II, Distance 3 1/2 mi., Time 3 hrs., Elev. Gain 3300'**

The trail begins at the Lafayette Campground parking lots on both sides of I93. Ascend E at a steep grade through forest. After swinging N, with a view of Mt. Lincoln, continue the ascent to open cliffs with spectacular views. The trail reenters the woods and resumes a steep ascent over Agony ridge to Greenleaf Hut and Eagle Lake. The trail soon climbs above treeline and continues across the rocks at a steep grade to the foundations of the old summit house at the top of Mt. Lafayette. There are spectacular views in all directions. This is one of the easiest routes to the top of the Franconia Range.