

## OMH Trail Data / History

### Ouachita National Recreation Trail / Sect 1

Ouachita National Forest (OK)

Section 1 is the western-most portion of the OT, running from Talihena State Park (Mile 0.0) in the west to Winding Stair Trailhead (mile 23.7) in the east. This section is completely within Oklahoma; it parallels Talihena Scenic drive and lies mostly within the Winding Stair National Recreation Area. Section 1 is perhaps the most difficult section of the trail as well. The vertical challenges are not as severe as in section two and some of the later areas, but the footing is terrible. This is a VERY rocky area. The trail crosses several rock glaciers, and at times there is no tread at all, simply blue blazes on rocks. The worst rocks are between miles 10 - 14. The entire stretch (Deadman's Gap to Horsethief Springs) is 12 miles of very rough terrain with no easy way to break it up.

There are some beautiful scenic overlooks in this section and areas where the trail runs along a shelf with steep rock bluffs above you and sharp drop offs below.

**Planning notes:**

1. There is no good way to break this trip up, because of the 12 mile stretch from Deadman's Gap to Horsethief Spring. Past trips have done a two day trip from State Line to 259 (17 miles) and a three day trip from 259 to Talihena. This leaves that awful 12 mile stretch in the middle of three day trip. Recommendation: Make the trip from state line to Winding Stair TH (22.6 miles) and the next trip all of Section 1 only (23.7 miles). Either can be two long hiking days or three shorter ones.
2. There are a few forest road access points that provide better hike plan alternatives, but they are useable ONLY IF a shuttle crew is available. None of these are designated trailheads; there is no parking; and they are not marked; FR 8553 requires a 2-mile drive on a bad forest road (no low cars). See "Other access points" below.

**Access Notes:**

1. All trailheads are well marked and offer good parking.
2. West end of Trail (Mile '0'): Talihena State Park on 271, several miles N of Talihena, OK
3. Deadman's Gap TH on scenic hwy 1; 8 miles from West end
4. Horsethief Springs TH and Winding Stair TH also on scenic hwy 1
5. Big Cedar Creek off Hwy 259; south of rte 1; about a mile north of OK hwy 63
6. Other access points: FR 6010 (mile 5.8); FR 6014 (mi 21.7). Both of these are just off Hwy 1.
7. FR 8553 (@ mi 13); a bad road with a long shuttle drive.
8. Unmarked location on hwy 1; short spur trail to trail at Holston Valley Vista (mi 16.9). This spot is 2.5 road miles west of Horsethief Springs TH, or 7.7 miles west of hwy 259/hwy 1 intersection

**For additional info:** Tim Ernst: "Ouchita Trail Guide" (Fourth edition)  
USFS map: TR-1 (det)  
Ben Glazer knows area well; Jim Gifford led trip in 2006 and 2011

### Recent Hikes:

Apr 7, 2011

Leader: Jim Gifford

17 Hikers

OMH Overnight

Route: FR 6014 west to Talihena State Park [5.8 - 0.0]

5.8 miles

Difficulty Rating 3

Scenic Rating 3

Day three of three-day Section One trip. Jim led the trip for Marv (who came down sick).

Compared to the rocks of day one and two, this was literally a "walk in the park". Most of trail easy going, almost all downhill.

Jeannie Eichler and Mike Gold finished the Ouachita Trail, so we had an appropriate celebration and shirt ceremony at end of trail.

sss: Watershed areas; dry waterfalls.

Dogwood trees in full bloom, particularly near park.

Overnight notes: Stayed at Big Cedar RV Park in Hodgen, OK (See Apr 5)  
Late lunch at Butcher Block in Mena on way home (after





