

Red River Suspension Bridge High Water Route

The suspension bridge over the Red River was destroyed by falling trees in 2022. Recent rains and the high water that resulted made fording the river unsafe. There is, however, a high water route around this vital "pinch-point" in your trek to Tennessee. Should additional rain keep the river too deep to cross (you can not see the sandbars in the river), it is advised that you do not ford the river and take the alternative route instead. +Follow these directions:

Going North to South on the Trace - After coming down the hill on the Sheltoewe Trace to Highway 715, cross the roadway and hike down to the northern end of the suspension bridge. Make a right onto Trail 211, the Sheltoewe Connector Trail. Follow this trail along the river for **.43** miles to the Suspension Bridge Trailhead. Follow the gravel road up the hill to Highway 715 and make a left.

Follow Highway 715 for 1.54 miles to the intersection of Highway 715 and Highway 77. Make a left onto Highway 77 and follow the road for **.77** miles to the steel bridge across the Red River. Make a left across the bridge and follow Highway 77 for 1.21 miles to the Martin's Fork trailhead on the left beyond the parking area. (There are restrooms on the right in the parking area should they be needed.)

Make a left onto Trail 221 (Rough Trail). Follow Rough Trail for .74 miles to the intersection of the 205 and 209 trails. Make a right onto the 209 (D. Boone Hut Trail) and follow the trail for .76 miles to the Gray's Arch parking area at the top of the hill. You will enjoy the views, the side trip to D. Boone Hut, and especially the stairs.

At the top of the hill, make a right and walk over Tunnel Ridge Road. Make a left onto Tunnel Ridge Road and walk for .13 miles. The Sheltoewe Trace crosses the road and makes a right into the woods. BE SURE you do not take the Sheltoewe Blaze on the left of the roadway, or you will find yourself on the other side of the broken bridge with a bad climb back out of there.

After making the right onto the Sheltopee Trace, the path will continue through the Pinch 'Em Tight Trailhead, across the highway, and down into Whittleton Branch to the shuttle to your car.

These directions seem much more complicated than they are, and a shuttle might help eliminate the road walk around this obstacle.