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Inscription gratuite sur le site (section documentation).**

Springer Mtn., GA to Damascus, VA

1 – I generally start with 3 – 4 days of food / supplies, which is more than sufficient to get from Amicalola Falls State Park to Neels Gap, a distance of just under 40 miles. The amount you start with depends, of course, on whether you're going to take a full day hiking the Approach Trail to Springer, and also how many miles you anticipate per day for your first week.

2 – The Walasi-Yi Center, Neels Gap. (30.7 miles from Springer) A great place for a small maildrop, though not entirely necessary as they sell sufficient food to get you through the next stretch. Also, a great place to field-strip your pack and send home stuff you discover you don't need.

3 – Dick's Creek Gap / US 76 (36.1 from Neels Gap). This is the road that leads to the nearby town of Hiawassee. The hitching is easy; avoid the local who makes an annual appearance by offering you a ride to town and then lets you know in Hiawassee that he expects to be paid. You shouldn't hand out money for a ride, either here or anywhere else, unless you want to encourage money to someone taking a very long way. Hiawassee is a great town, 2 good supermarkets, other services available as well. Some motels will accept mail, but check with them first; this will enable you to bypass the post office. As always, though, if you send mail to a non-post office place, business, motel, hostel, etc. in GA, you end up NOT staying there for some reason (like your friends are staying elsewhere, or you decide not to stay in town, or whatever) and the folks a few dollars for safekeeping and holding your mail. In most cases, they'll turn you down, but it's a nice gesture.

4 – The folks resupply in Franklin, NC (Winding Stair Gap, just over 40 miles from Hiawassee); some go to Rainbow Springs Campground just before there (the crossing is at Wallace Gap). On my last hike I did neither, since I didn't need resupply. Whether or not you layover here is largely dependent on how the weather has been treating you, and how badly you need a night under a roof and real food.

5 – The Nantahala Outdoor Center on the trail (universally known as the NOC) at US 19 (about 27 miles past Franklin) is a great place to resupply. They hold mail, plus they have a fairly good selection of trail food. Very well run, very thru-hiker friendly place.

6 – Fontana Dam (27 miles later, or 161.7 from Springer). You will need re-supply here before entering the Smokies. If you're staying out at the dam in the big shelter, or in Fontana Village, I absolutely suggest a good maildrop as the resupply offered at the Fontana Village store is spotty, overpriced, and incomplete, especially as hordes of starving thru-hikers have most likely pillaged the place before you got there. Other idea; if you stay at the very friendly Hike Inn Motel, the owners will shuttle you to nearby Robbinsville, where there's a real market. In any case, how much food you pack out of Fontana Dam is up to you, and primarily depends on whether you intend to go right thru the Smokies. If you don't plan to leave the Park for supplies at Gatlinburg, you will have to pack 5 – 7 days worth of food from Fontana, and the