



# Tonoloway Creek Little Tonoloway Creek

tenacious plant that you are likely to notice here, and also on the rocky cliffsides, is the columbine. This plant is most prominent in early May when it displays its intricate, red, drooping flowers that contrast so brilliantly with the grays and browns of the bare rock.

## Tonoloway Creek

**INTRODUCTION:** Tonoloway Creek drains an area of rolling hills and low ridges east of Sideling Hill to join the Potomac River at Hancock. Most of its drainage and length is in Pennsylvania, its last few miles crossing Maryland at the state's narrowest point. The Tonoloway's valley is apple country, and many a hillside is decorated by the orderly patterns of orchards. Yet, little of this activity is apparent to the Tonoloway paddler, who sees and enjoys what seems to be the remotest of streams.

**Section 1. Needmore, Pa., (U.S. Rte. 522) to mouth**

Gradient	Difficulty	Distance	Time	Width	Scenery	Map
10	A to 1	20.7	6.5	15-30	Good to Excellent	27

**TRIP DESCRIPTION:** Put in at U.S. Rte. 522 or one mile downstream at the tiny concrete bridge of T363, east of Needmore. The following miles to the confluence with Little Tonoloway Creek describe an incredibly serpentine course that advances you about one mile down the valley for every two miles paddled. While there are occasional farms and fields, most of the way is through woodlands, easily viewed over low banks. Almost every bend exposes pretty shale cliffs, and almost every northern exposure displays a cool green hemlock grove. Most of the surrounding hills are close by and steep, the combined effect being one of intimacy and remoteness. You speed through this setting on a strong current spiced with many easy riffles. Beginners can easily handle this trip. But, since the stream is so narrow, they must be ready to avoid an occasional fallen tree or other strainer.

Below the Little Tonoloway Creek confluence, Tonoloway is slightly larger and slower than above, while the surroundings are more settled and open. Nevertheless, it is still a pretty stretch to paddle. There are no really nice take-outs in Hancock, with the lesser of evils being to finish at the Timber Ridge Road bridge just below I-70.

**HAZARDS:** Watch for occasional deadfalls.

**WATER CONDITIONS:** Canoeable winter and spring within a day or two of hard rain. Below Little Tonoloway, it lasts a day longer.

**GAUGE:** If you can run the riffle at T363, then there is just enough water. USGS gauge upstream of Needmore (see USGS website) should report over 15 cfs (3.7 feet). For a rough correlation, the USGS gauge at Saxton, on the Raystown Branch (call State College or see USGS website), should be at least 1,560 cfs (3.2 feet) for the upper creek and 1,360 cfs (3.0 feet) for below Little Tonoloway.

## Little Tonoloway Creek

**INTRODUCTION:** Considering that Interstate 70 follows over half of this course, it is amazing what a pleasant run Little Tonoloway is. It accomplishes this seemingly impossible feat by twisting behind little hills and cliffs, which not only block the view, but screen out the sound of the busy