Vineyard Gap and Riverside Trails, Pisgah National Forest

Get ready for an easy summer hike where you can get wet! At 7.3 miles it may take about 4 hours to complete. Make it a loop trail with both trails follow the Yellow Blaze.

The Riverside Trail along the South Fork of Mills River in Pisgah National Forest fords the river several times. You'll get to wade in a crisp, cool mountain stream up to your knees as you negotiate the current and the smooth, slippery rocks on the bed. Enjoy the peaceful sounds of the babbling water as you hike alongside this beautiful mountain river that's full of twists and turns. Start with the two-mile Vineyard Gap Trail up and over Forge Mountain to make a loop of the hike, then put away the boots and get out your water shoes. Obviously this hike is best during warmer weather, unless you don't mind freezing your tootsies. The plan is to take the Vineyard Gap Trail over Forge Mountain to connect with the Riverside Trail, then follow the S. Mills River back.

Directions:
Head towards Waynesville, exit toward Walmart and head up main street, turn right onto US-276 S or Pigeon St follow for 35 miles or so, turn left onto NC-280 E for 5 miles, then turn left onto Turkey Pen Rd to trailhead.