

Bear Lakes Loop

Plumas National Forest
Beckwourth Ranger District



Trail Description

The two mile Bear Lakes Loop is one of the most popular hikes in the Lakes Basin Recreation Area. The trail offers wonderful views of four glacially carved alpine lakes as it passes through a diverse conifer forest. High peaks provide a spectacular backdrop for the entire hike. This description of the trail begins by taking the trailhead on the south end of the parking lot.

The first .6 mile of the Bear Lakes Loop Trail gradually climbs through mixed conifer forest to Big Bear Lake. This section of trail usually offers an abundance of wildflowers. About .1 mile before reaching the lake bear to the right at the intersection with the Round Lake Connector (Trail).

The trail continues west .8 miles past Big Bear, Little Bear and Cub Lakes and connects to the Silver Lake Trail. Most of this section is a gradual uphill grade. The lakes offer opportunity for exploration or relaxation. Just after Cub Lake the trail gets slightly steeper.

Bear right at the intersection with Silver Lake Trail and continue .3 miles to an intersection with the Long Lake Connector (trail). Options for visiting Long Lake are provided in the Notes.

From Long Lake Connector, Bear Lakes Loop descends .3 miles returning to the parking area. This is the steepest part of the loop so take your time and be safe.

Related Activities

- Many intersecting trails await exploration
- A wonderful view of Long Lake awaits .2 miles south on Silver Lake Trail
- Use the Long Lake Connector to visit Long Lake - The lake is only .2 mile away (use the map)
- Swimming (cold water)
- Fishing
- Bird watching
- Observing wildlife
- Flowers and fall color
- Photography
- Picnic



Driving Directions

From Graeagle go south about 1.5 miles on Highway 89. Turn right onto Gold Lake Highway. Drive 5 miles and turn right at Lakes Basin Campground. Continue past the campground. The trailheads and parking area are at the end of the road.

Notes

- Bear Lakes Loop is open to foot traffic, mountain biking and horseback riding
- Trailers and large vehicles are not recommended on the narrow winding road after Lakes Basin Campground. Use the horse trailer parking area before the campground.
- Camping is not allowed in this part of Lakes Basin Recreation Area
- Do not crush brush or block traffic when parking
- Pack out all trash
- The parking area has a restroom and water
- Do not drink from naturally occurring water sources without proper water treatment
- Dogs must be under control at all times
- Take along a map
- Stay hydrated, bring plenty of water
- Expect changeable weather and winter snow

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Distance - 2 miles

Elevation—6,320 - 6,640

Usage—High

Difficulty Moderate

