

Bear River Trail #171

This trail is located in the eastern portion of the Boise National Forest. The trail follows the narrow glacial valley of the headwaters of Bear River. Vegetation varies greatly, from dry ponderosa pine to sub-alpine fir and white bark pine. The lower portion of the trail was severely impacted by the 1994 Boise River wildfires, where most of the trees were killed. The scenery becomes increasingly more interesting as one goes up the trail; Bear River runs between 8,800 foot ridgelines with 8,870 foot Wolf Mountain on north side and 8,900 foot Shephard Peak at its headwaters. Use is currently light; expect to have the whole valley to yourself, except in the fall when hunting parties ride horses in to set up camps and pack out big game.

LOCATION- Follow Highway 21 northeast from Boise through Idaho City. Turn off Highway 21 onto FS Rd 384 at Edna Creek (18 miles past Idaho City). Follow FS Rd 384 for 13.5 miles to North Fork Boise River and FS Rd 327. Turn upriver on FS Rd 327 to Deer Park (6 miles) and turn left onto FS Rd 348. Follow FS Rd 348 to Bear River (6 miles). Cross bridge and travel 200 yards beyond bridge and turn right onto side road. Approximately 100 feet up this road, turn right again onto jeep road (OK for 2-wheel drive pickups) and follow jeep road about 0.25 mile back to trailhead. A dispersed campsite is located at trailhead.

At a Glance

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| Current Conditions: | Trail conditions vary. The lower 3 miles are in good condition. Most mountain bikers will stop at or before the first crossing on Bear River. As the trail passes through the steep canyon area, conditions are at times poor due to water outwashes from side drainages; the trail is frequently damaged in the depositional (flat) areas of these outwashes. You may have to look ahead to determine where the trail is likely to exit these outwashes. One particularly difficult section occurs about 1 mile from the upper end, where the trail follows a steep finger ridge leading away from the valley floor. (a reroute is scheduled). Horse riders should exercise caution on this steep section. The last mile to the Graham Road is in good condition. |
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| Information Center: | <p>For more information contact:</p> <p>Idaho City Ranger District P.O. Box 129 Idaho City, ID 83637 (208) 392-6681</p> |
| Operational Hours: | <p>WEATHER- Summer days are normally quite warm, but temperatures drop into 40s or cooler. Be prepared for the infrequent summer thunderstorms. Serious threats of snowstorms can be expected any time after September.</p> |
| Best Season: | <p>Normally, this trail is free of snow from early July to mid-October. Expect high water crossings early in year (usually you can find logs across streams). Fall colors are spectacular.</p> |
| Usage: | <p>Light</p> |
| Rentals and Guides: | <p>MAPS AND GUIDEBOOKS- A variety of guidebooks are available at the Idaho City Ranger District Office. A US Forest Service Visitor Map is also available for a small fee.</p> |
| Permits Info: | <p>USGS MAPS For more detailed map readings for the area, the following USGS maps are available: Bear River, Swanholm Peak, and Tye Mountain</p> |
| Restrictions: | <p>EQUIPMENT- Good boots are essential. This trail crosses creeks that flow actively during some parts of the year, so water resistant boots are important. Raingear and warm clothes are recommended. Sunglasses, sunscreen, and mosquito repellent are advisable.</p> |
| Closest Towns: | <p>Idaho City</p> |
| Water: | <p>WATER- You will find lots of water along this trail, but none can be counted on as safe to drink untreated due to Giardia. Use a water filter/purifier or boil water for 3 minutes to eliminate Giardia or other nasties. Most</p> |



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General Information

General Notes

SUGGESTED INTERESTS- This country is as close to wilderness without actually being in one (the area is being considered for addition to the Sawtooth Wilderness). Enjoy the scenery.

-Intermediate level mountain bikers will find the first 3 miles rideable.

-The secluded, scenic area offers a great getaway area with unlimited camping spots (undeveloped).

-Fish for pan-sized rainbow trout in pristine Bear River. This is bull trout country; you must release all bull trout.

-This is mountain goat country and with binoculars and a little luck, you may see them on the steep, rocky faces. Also expect to see mule deer and elk on the valley floor.

-See the rebirth of the ponderosa pine and lodgepole pine forests in the burn area

