

MT HOOD INFORMATION CENTER 65000 E Hwy 26 Welches OR 622-7674/622-3360

Length: 7.8km (4.90mi.)



Recommend Season:

SPRING SUMMER FALL WINTER

Use: Light

Difficulty: Moderate

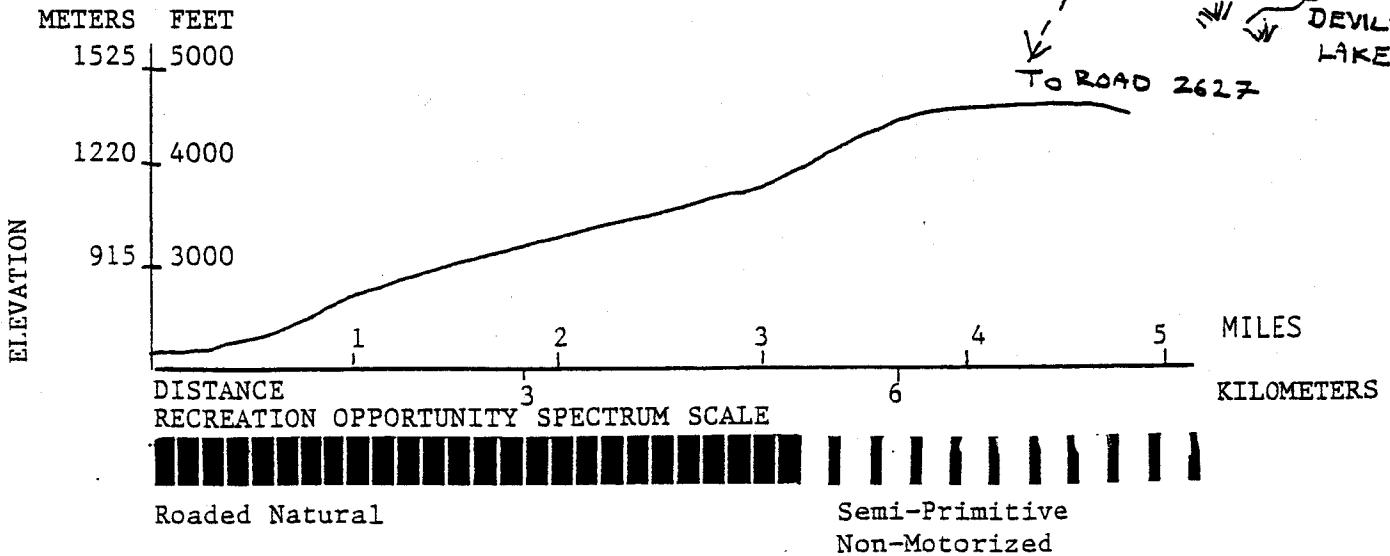
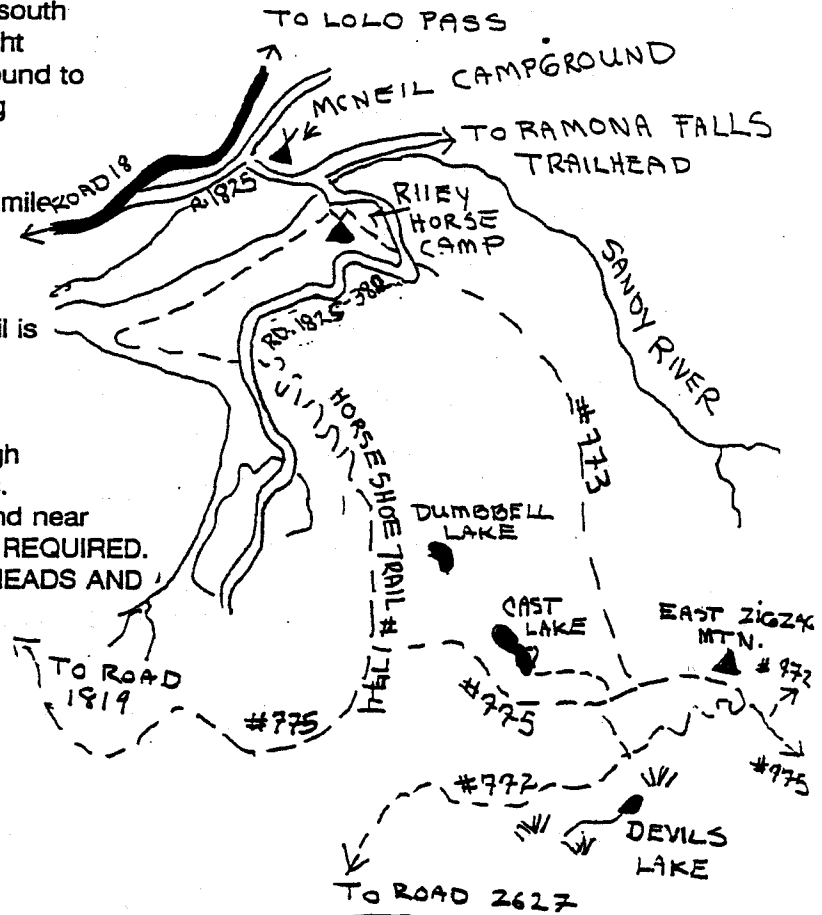
HORSESHOE RIDGE TRAIL #774

TRAIL BEGINS: 598 meters (1960 feet) elevation at the south end of Riley Campground.

TRAIL ENDS: 1427 meters (4680 feet) elevation at its junction with Zigzag Mountain Trail #775.

ACCESS: Follow US Highway 26, 18 miles east of Sandy to the community of Zigzag, turn north (left) at the Zigzag Store onto Lolo Pass Road (Road 18), following it for 4.0 miles. Turn east on Road 1825. Continue .6 miles, bear right, cross a bridge and continue .4 miles. Turn south (right) on Road 1825-380. Follow it .1 miles, turning right into Riley Horse Camp. Continue through the campground to the unloading and the trailhead. Note: 2 miles of hiking distance can be saved by those not interested in the facilities at Riley Horse Camp. Instead of turning into the campground, continue south on Road 1825-380 2 miles until you see a sign for the Horseshoe Trail. Parking is on the road shoulder.

ATTRACTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS: Horseshoe trail is undoubtedly the least difficult access trail into the Zigzag Mountain portion of the Mt. Hood Wilderness. By parking on Road 1825-382, the hike to the ridgetop and the junction of Zigzag Mountain Trail gains, through a series of switchbacks, about 2000 feet in just 3 miles. Huckleberries, wildflowers and scenic 360 vistas abound near the top of the trail. **WILDERNESS PERMITS ARE NOW REQUIRED. THEY ARE SELF-ISSUING AND AVAILABLE AT TRAILHEADS AND THE WILDERNESS BOUNDARY.**



NARRATIVE: HORSESHOE RIDGE TRAIL #774

Horseshoe Ridge Trail provides access to the Zigzag Mountain Ridge and a loop opportunity for both hikers and horsemen when combined with Cast Creek Trail #773 and Zigzag Mountain Trail #775. The loop is just over 10.5 miles starting from Riley Horse Camp and approximately 8.5 miles for hikers parking on Road 1825-380.

For those making the loop a short car shuttle (or an extra 1.5 miles of hiking up Road 1825-380) is necessary for those parking on Road 1825-380. A word of caution: Cast Creek Trail is a steep, rugged, rutted trail that is best traveled carefully and in a downhill direction. At the time of this writing Cast Creek trail is closed for repairs. Please check with the Mt. Hood Information Center to find out if it is open. 503-622-7674. Riley Horse Camp, the hub of equestrian activity in this area, has facilities which include camp and picnic sites, toilets, a horse unloading ramp and parking.

Carry water, as it is generally unavailable along the upper portion of the Horseshoe Ridge Trail.

Starting from Road 1825-380, at the permit box, the trail travels steadily uphill through the wooded hillside utilizing a series of switchbacks. Take the time to familiarize yourself with Wilderness regulations and to fill out a wilderness permit. The permits are self-issuing at the trailhead or at the wilderness boundary. The ridgetop, offering magnificent views in all directions, is reached after approximately 2 miles. This area is abundant with wildflowers in the spring and early summer and has known to be prolific with ripe huckleberries later in the season. Horseshoe Ridge Trail follows the ridge until it ends at its junction with Zigzag Mountain Trail #775. Zigzag Mountain Trail can be hiked to the west toward West Zigzag and Rhododendron or to the east toward Cast Lake, Cast Creek Trail #773, East Zigzag, Burnt Lake, and Paradise Park.

Those intent on camping in this portion of the Mt. Hood Wilderness need to allow some extra time for scouting out a "NO TRACE" campsite. Visitors anticipating camping at Cast or Burnt Lakes should realize that only a limited number of potential campsites exist and areas are extremely crowded on weekends.

Wilderness regulations prohibit the use of motorized vehicles and bicycles on this trail.

WATER STATEMENT:

Unfortunately open water sources are easily contaminated by human or animal wastes. Water from springs, lakes, ponds and streams should not be used for drinking without proper treatment. A recommended method of treatment is to bring clear water to a rolling boil for 5 minutes.