

MONON LAKE TRAIL #729

LENGTH:	2.70 Miles	USE:	Medium
ELEVATION:	4,965 ft.	DIFF:	Easiest
USGS MAP:	Olallie Scenic Area	MT BK RTG:	Closed
AVERAGE GRD.	0 %	MAX GRD.	3 %

ACCESS AND USE:

Open to hikers only. No horseback riding or mt. biking. The reason being that many stretches of this trail are on raised planking and wooden bridges. Parts of Monon lake are fairly young and expanding compared to other lakes in the area. Many areas around its perimeter are very soft and marsh like, making a permanent trail at ground level around the lake impossible to maintain. It has a very fragile lakeshore, requiring visitors to take care to tread lightly, especially in the meadows on the west side of the lake. There are several very beautiful disperse (camping) sites in this area, but please remember to use only existing fire rings and campsites. Lake side ecosystems are easily damaged and scars from fire rings and tent trenches last for decades. The 4220 skyline rd. passes right on the western shore of the lake, with many campsites accessible by automobile. Parking can be limited on busy weekends in the summer months. No facilities. No water. Located within easy walking distance of Peninsula camp ground via the Mon-Olallie trail, which connects Olallie and Monon lakes.

Access: Forest service rd. 46 to 4690. Left turn to 4220 Skyline Rd. Right turn to Olallie lake. Monon lake is approx. 1/2 mile south of the Peninsula camp ground turn off, which is south of Camp 10 camp ground located on Olallie lake. Two trail heads-One begins on the north end of the west shoreline on the 4220 rd. The other begins on the south end of the west shore on the 4220 rd.

DESCRIPTION:

This trail follows the shoreline of Monon lake in a way that makes for a pleasant and undemanding walk. The lake itself is one of extraordinary beauty and interest. It is actively expanding its acreage each season, making it unique in several respects, not the least of which is being able to observe how high Cascade lakes are formed and how they expand, reaching into low spots around their circumference, as water levels increase. The path is very well maintained, but elevated on planking and bridges in places making any kind of wheeled traffic impractical. The trail intersects numerous coves and inlets along its circumference, making it popular with fisherman and canoeists, and its unusual shape makes it fun to explore by boat. The lake itself is the second largest in the scenic area, at 65 acres. It is 30 Ft deep at its center, and though not stocked on a regular basis, Eastern Brook and Rainbow trout occur naturally in the lake. There are no developed campsites. Good views can be had of Olallie butte from the south shore and Mt. Jefferson from the north shore for those who like to try their hands at reflective photography. The best times to catch still water is very early in the morning or sunset. Because of the lack of any significant elevation gain or loss, this trail makes for a leisurely walk for persons of any hiking endurance of skill, and is great for children.

TRAIL MILEAGE LOG:

- 0.00 For our purpose, we will begin at the trail head originating on the north end of the western shore, just off the 4220 Skyline rd.
- 0.20 Trail skirts western shore past several disperse sites accessible from the 4220.
- 0.40 Trail meets first of many areas of elevated planking designed to protect fragile lakeside ground cover.
- 0.50 You Encounter a 25 ft. long, 48" wide wooden foot bridge that crosses a small finger of the lake on the northwest corner of the shoreline. (Note of interest-this bridge crosses a small channel that was formed in very recent times. It connects a new bay to the main lake, making for an interesting example of how Cascade lakes are born and grow in size).

- 0.80 Path reaches north west corner of the lake. Goes through a series of gentle ups and downs, slightly in from several fingers of land that jut out into lake. Great fishing spots here!
- 1.20 Trail reaches the Mon-Olallie junction. A left turn here takes you north approx. 1/2 mile to Peninsula camp ground and Olallie Lake. Continue straight ahead to go around the rest of Monon Lake. Also, this is a nice rocky elevation, about 25 ft. above lake level to take pictures.
- 1.50 Trail climbs moderate incline for a short distance reaching the highest point above the lakeshore, about 75 ft. below. Lovely view across the lake towards the 4220 rd. Gives an interesting perspective on how large and odd shaped this lake is.
- 1.80 Path encounters another stretch of 12" planking.
- 1.85 Another wooden footbridge, 15 ft. long and 36" wide crosses another expansion channel, this one on the eastern shore.
- 1.90 Trail drops down on to the shoreline and follows closely for 1/2 mile.
- 2.40 Again you come to a series of elevated planking 12" wide that follows lakeshore in a southwestern direction. There are also several short bridges along here, made of 36" wide planking to allow for expansion.
- 2.70 Trail terminates on the 4220 rd. approx. 4/10ths of a mile south of where it started out. To reach your starting point, just walk northward, toward the Peninsula camp ground spur rd.