



MT. HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

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

PLAZA TRAIL #783

TRAIL BEGINS: 1311 meters (4300 feet) elevation on the north side of Road 4610 just west of Twin Springs Forest Camp.

TRAIL ENDS: 1233 meters (4045 feet) elevation at its junction with Boulder Ridge Trail #783-A.

ACCESS: Follow State Highway 224 approximately 7 miles south of Estacada, turning north (left) on Forest Road 4610. Follow Road 4610 approximately 15 miles. Plaza Trail may also be accessed from the north via Boulder Ridge Trail #783-A, or Bonanza Trail #786, or via Abbott Road and Hwy. 26 from the west.

ATTRACTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS: This south to-north-running ridgetop trail provides the southern access into the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness. Wilderness rules apply. No motorized vehicles or bicycles are allowed. Outstanding views, solitude, and wildflowers characterize this route.

Length: 11.7 KM (7.3 Miles)

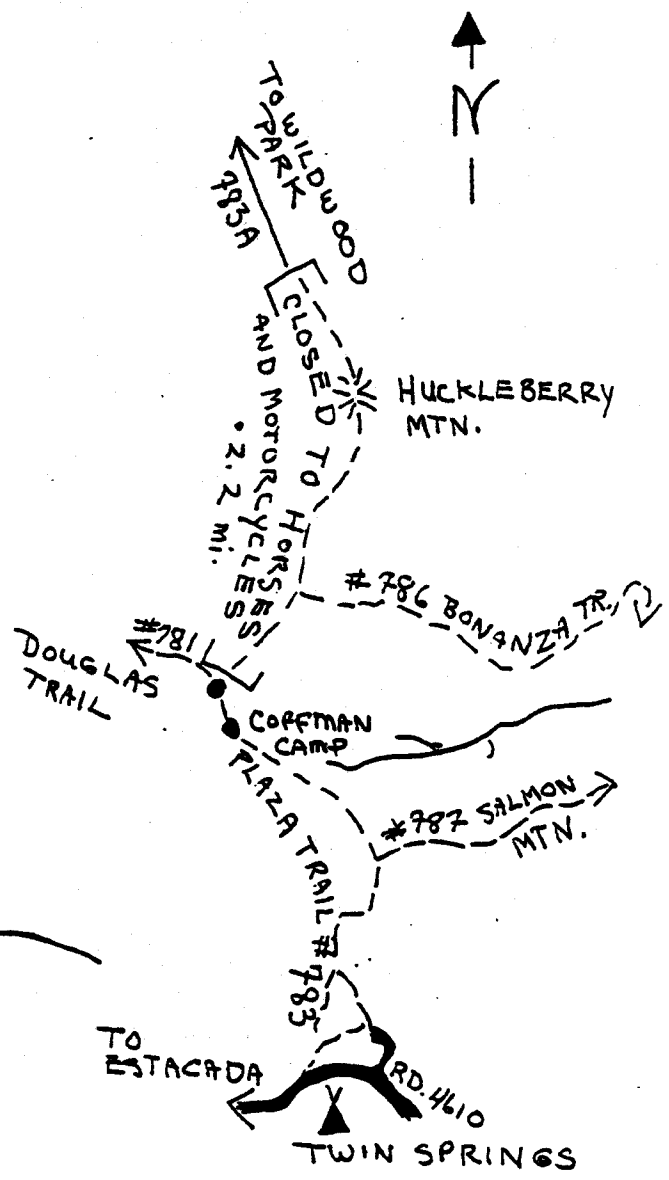
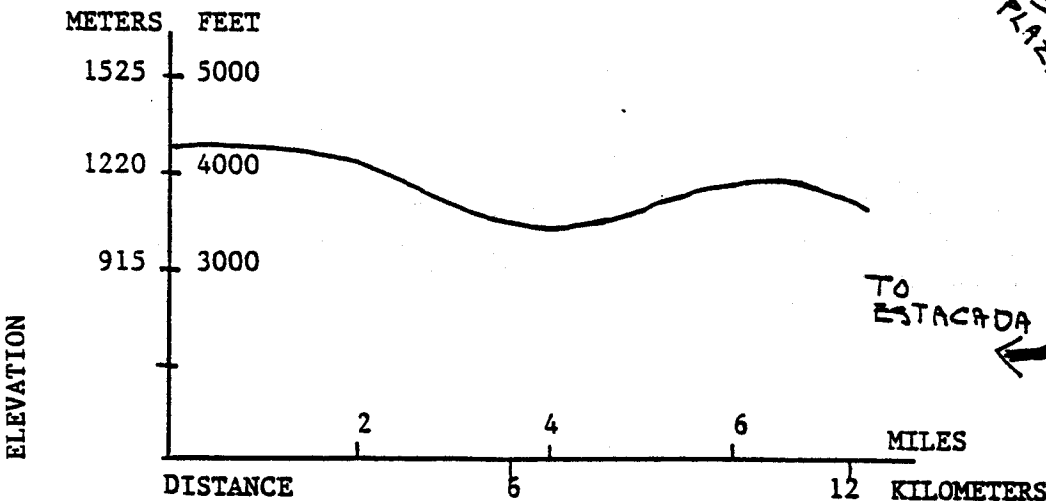


Recommend Season:



Use: Light

Difficulty: Moderate



RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM SCALE



SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED

SEMI-PRIMITIVE NON-MOTORIZED

NARRATIVE: PLAZA TRAIL #783

Access is gained via a trail on the north side of Road 4610 located just west of Twin Springs Forest Camp. The trail branches after 50 feet. It is the eastern portion leading to the Douglas Trail, that will be described here. Access to the Plaza Trail can also be made via the old route which is located further east on 4610. This old road has been revegetated and leads to the site of the old Plaza Guard Station, which was built as early as 1910.

At .9 mile the trail passes Sheep Head Rock which offers views to the north, west and east. Using switchbacks the trail climbs, dips and then contours around a large semicircular drainage basin. Rhododendron and huckleberries are scattered along portions of this section of trail. At 2 miles a small creek may be found which is the last water source until Coffman Camp.

The junction with Salmon Mountain Trail is at 2.65 miles. A 3.5 mile round trip on it leads to outstanding 360° views at an old lookout site. One third of a mile further on Plaza Trail, an unmarked trail on the west side of the trail leads to water in a few hundred yards. Back on route, the abandoned Cheeney Creek Way Trail junction is found 4.3 miles from the trailhead. This unmaintained, overgrown steep and rugged route is best tackled by only the serious adventurer experienced with map and compass.

Coffman Camp, 4.5 miles from the trailhead, consists of a fallen-down shelter and an access trail leading to water in 500 feet. This is a good spot for camping. Wind flower, wood violet, bleeding heart and other wildflowers are abundant in this green oasis.

Several viewpoints exist along the section of trail located between the Douglas Trail junction at 5.1 miles and the Bonanza Trail junction at 6.7 miles. The maintained portion of Plaza Trail ends at its junction with Boulder Ridge Trail, after passing a spectacular viewpoint and the summit of Huckleberry Mountain. An unmaintained steep portion of the Plaza Trail continues on downhill to the Welches area.

Plaza Trail is open to use by both equestrians and hikers. It is in the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness so it is closed to motorized vehicles and bicycles. Wilderness rules apply to this area. Wilderness permits are required. They are self-issuing at the trailheads or at the wilderness boundary. North of the Douglas Trail junction, forest regulations prohibit the use of horses to protect the resource and provide a safer, more enjoyable foot trail for hikers.

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.