

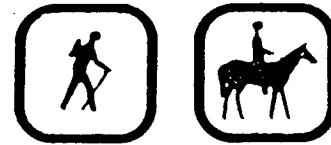


# Clackamas River Ranger District

**Estacada Ranger Station**  
595 NW Industrial Way  
Estacada, OR 97023  
(503) 630-6861 or 630-8700

**Ripplebrook Guard Station**  
61431 E Hwy 224  
Estacada, OR 97023

**WELCOME LAKES TRAIL # 554**  
(Also needed: see *Trail Access* below).



**Recommended Season:** June to November

**Length:** 5.0 miles      **Use:** Medium  
**Elevation:** 2600' to 5523'      **Difficulty:** More difficult  
**USGS Map:** Battle Ax

**Description:** (*in Bull of the Woods Wilderness area, closed to mountain bikes and motorized vehicles*).  
The Welcome Lakes Trail is a major east-west trail in the Bull of the Woods Wilderness Area, connecting the summit of Bull of the Woods with the Elk Lake Creek Trail # 559 to the east. In its course it traverses the full range of terrain from deep old growth to open rocky ridges and intersects many of the other trails in this area.

**Trail Access:** (*No access via road: See the Trail Use Guides for the two trails mentioned below*).  
Road access to the two ends of the trail are with the Bull of the Woods Trail # 550 on the west end, and Elk Lake Creek Trail # 559 on the east end.  
**Trail Mileage Log:**

- 0.0 Depart Elk Lake Creek Trail # 559 2.2 miles from its northern trailhead and climb westward through old growth forest via several switchbacks.
- 0.9 Cross dry gulch at a switchback, and again above. Continue hard climbing through switchbacks.
- 1.4 Last switchbacks in this series. Still deep forest.
- 2.2 Pass base of rock slide.
- 2.4 Junction on right with spur trail to Lower Welcome Lake to the north.
- 2.6 Elevation 4400 feet. Upper Welcome Lake camping area and trail junction. Cross small stream to the north to find Upper Welcome Lake. To the right is start of West Lake Way Trail # 556 heading in a northwesterly direction. Our Welcome Lakes Trail continues to climb the ridge through a series of switchbacks through meadows. Rock slide areas offering good views.
- 3.2 Trail reaches the crest of a ridge on a switchback and trail junctions on left with the Geronimo Trail # 557. Trail then crosses ridge and climbs the south face of the ridge. More switchbacks.
- 3.7 Open ridgetop with views of West Lake Basin and to Big Slide Mountain. Then continue climbing on north side of the ridge.
- 4.1 Trail junction on right with Schreiner Peak Trail # 555, which drops sharply to the north. Leave open ridgetop and enter forest.
- 4.3 Trail junction on left with Mother Lode Trail # 558. Continue climbing south face of ridge toward Bull of the Woods.
- 4.5 Open rock slide with view south to Mother Lode and Battle Ax Mountains.
- 4.7 Begin switchbacks. Deep forest.
- 5.0 End of trail at the summit of Bull of the Woods near old fire lookout tower which sometimes staffed by a Forest Service Wilderness Guard, and could be an emergency shelter. This is also the junction with Bull of the Woods Trail # 550. This open summit offers outstanding views in all directions.



ML Hood  
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