

Shoe Lake, August 12 to 15, 2009

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Thanks for looking at coming. I have included relevant basic information and trail descriptions here. Please contact me if you have other questions.

Overview

The label "Shoe Lake" doesn't define the entire trip – that is the first commonly recognized point on the trail. It would be worth the trip to stop here but God provided further sights well within reach.

The trailhead for the Pacific Crest Trail is just east of White Pass, elevation 4400'. A description of the trail to Shoe Lake is attached. Camping nearest to Shoe Lake is about 1 mile farther down the trail at Hidden Spring (8 ¼ miles from the trailhead at 5800' elevation) with enough camping area for a group. It also includes the implied water supply (there really was a hidden spring when I was there last).

At 12 ¾ miles from the trailhead and 5200' elevation, McCall Basin provides excellent camping and water supply. Snowgrass Flat is a very nice area also – rather unique. I will describe some options for adventure below.

Some basic logistics

Personal preparation: I don't mean to suggest that anyone do something they should not do. With reasonable physical condition, though, we can do this together. I suggest climbing about 4 flights of stairs at a steady pace several times. If you are more winded at the end than you are comfortable with, this is probably not a good fit for you. With that said, as in the day-to-day functioning in the Body of Christ, I expect that we will have people with a variety of ability and will work together.

Transportation: Parking at the trailhead requires a Forest Pass (\$5 per day or \$30 per year per vehicle). Carpooling will be beneficial. The trailhead is close to Highway 12. I haven't heard of vandalism or theft problems there but basic precautions are essential: the main point is to not leave valuable items in vehicles. Leaving it as empty as possible is a good idea.

Food: I anticipate groups of 3 to 5 or 6 people arranging for and preparing food for their group for several reasons: first, I have enjoyed working with other people, seeing their ideas and sharing mine; also, it is less weight overall to carry less equipment (if I don't have to carry as much, there is less chance that I will slow you down); third, when less preparation time is required, there are more people to help. I think of 4 people as optimal but that can be up to you. If you are already a group, such as Dad bringing boys, you are bring a friend and his son, etc, great. If you would like to be part of a group, please let me know and I will be glad to arrange that.

Equipment: The weather forecast typically provides a reasonable idea on what to expect.

Clothing: Regardless, everyone should have basic preparation for unexpected change, particularly rain, heat and cold. For the most part, the trail is as smooth and well-maintained as they get (we'll be on the Pacific Crest Trail most of the time). An extra rainshell and sweatshirt are very valuable when it is different than the forecast indicated (we'll be camping at over 5,000 feet).

Shoes: I know people who hike in tennis shoes but I personally prefer the extra protection and support of lightweight hiking boots. It is important that whatever shoes you wear are broken in.

Sleeping Bag: If your bag is not adequate below 40 degrees, you'll probably need additional insulation. Wearing a hat and keeping a fleece jacket on helps a lot.

Tent: It often works well for those in one or more tents to be the same as meal groups.

Cooking: I am not sure whether campfires are allowed in this area – I think they are not but I am not sure. I have rarely had a fire because of the varying regulations, being able to reduce processing time by using a stove, etc. I suggest using stoves.

Other Essentials: With other people having written books on the topic, I don't mean for this to be a complete preparation guide. The Boy Scouts do a good job of defining what have been recognized as the 10 Essentials for a very long time. You can find it at

<http://www.scoutingmagazine.org/issues/0403/d-outs.html>.

Don't let a lack of equipment deter you from coming. If you have a need for additional equipment, such as a pack, sleeping bag, nobody in your group has a tent of adequate size or stove, etc, please let me know. Also, if you have extra equipment you would be comfortable loaning out, please let me know also. I fully expect that we can work out details for anyone who is otherwise able to come.

Trail to Shoe Lake

Review by www.nwhiker.com

Length: 7.75 Miles one way

Elevation Gain: 2900' in /700' out

Difficulty: Difficult ("difficult" above Goat Lake which they rate as "challenging")

Features: This is one of the most popular hikes in the Goat Mtn Wilderness. Having said that, only once have I met more than a couple of people while hiking to this lake. The trail head is along US Hwy 12 just a bit east of White Pass. This hike is almost entirely on the Pacific Crest Trail #2000.

The trail begins to climb rather steeply right off the bat. The first 2 miles are uphill and in dense forest. At about 2.5 miles you will come to the junction to Trail #1144 to Twin Peaks to the east. Also, at this point the trail begins to wander in and out of the dense forest and offers more meadow views.

In season this hike is a walk through wildflowers. Almost from the beginning and certainly at the end, wildflowers of many types are replete. The trail skirts the White Pass Ski Area but you never actually see any of it.

At about 5 miles the trail enters a very open area. At about 5800' elevation the trees are small and further apart. The trail now follows along the east side of Hogback Mountain and is almost entirely out in the open.

At about 6.5 miles the trail crosses over a saddle and you get your first views of the Goat Rocks in the near distance and Shoe Lake below you. It is a short walk to the junction of the trail that will take you to the east around Shoe Lake and eventually back to the Pacific Crest Trail.

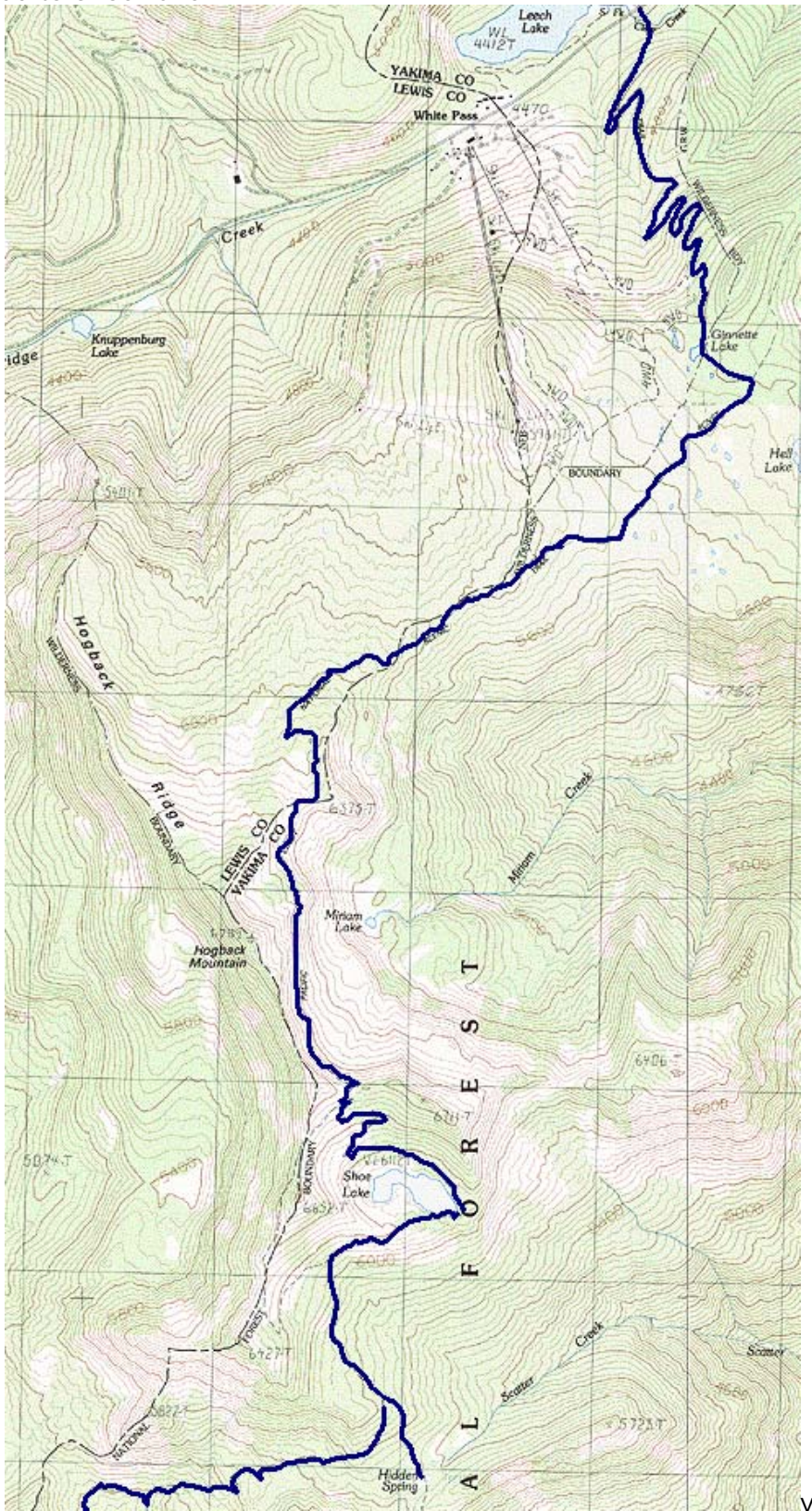
The trail drops about 700' elevation descending to Shoe Lake. In season this area around the lake is an absolute floral garden. And the views never quit. It is no wonder why this hike is so popular. Following the trail around the east side of the lake brings you to the best views of the lake.

Trail after Shoe Lake

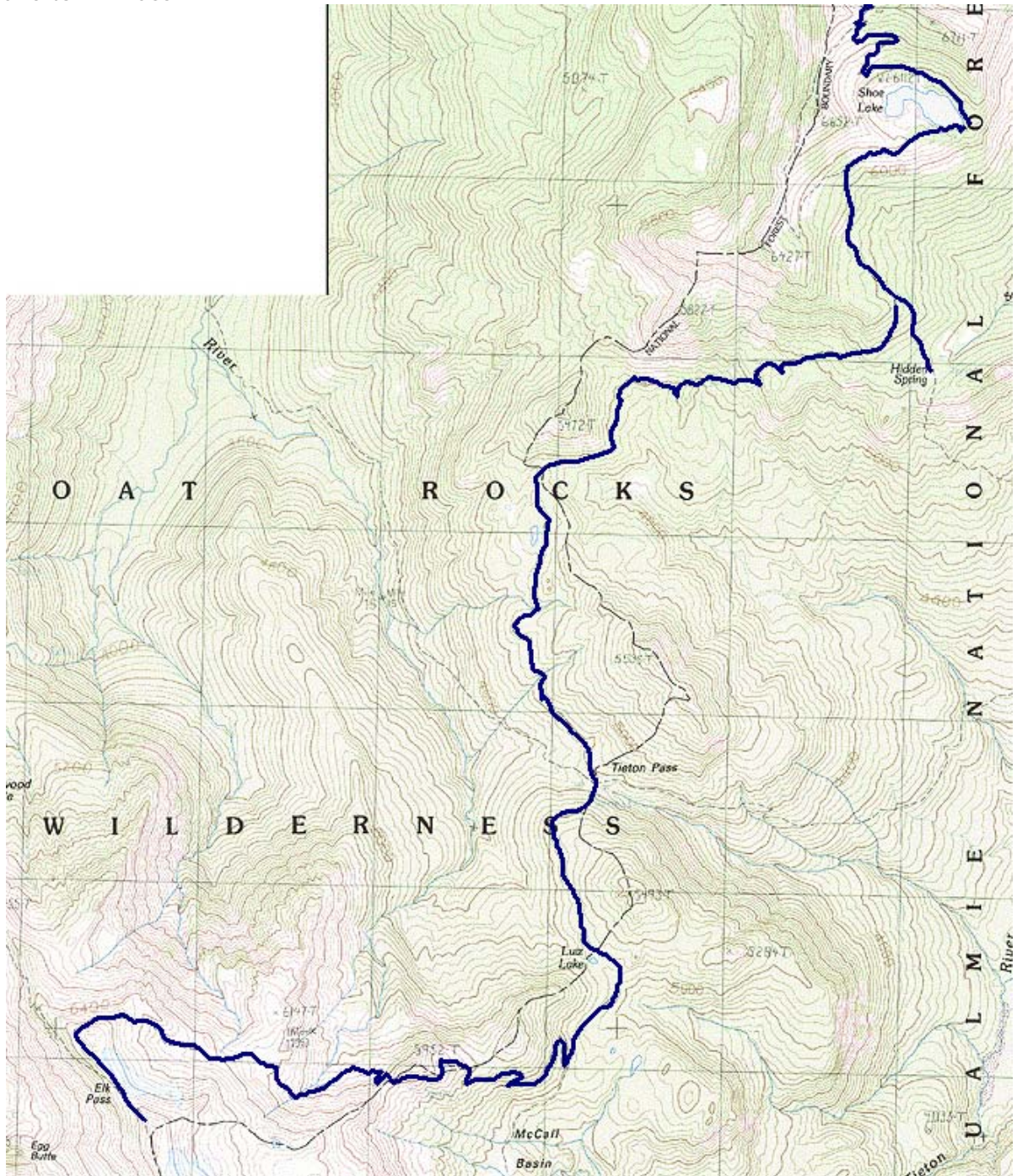
McCall Basin is about 4 ½ miles from Hidden Spring and about 500 feet net elevation drop. After McCall Basin Elk Pass is about 3 ½ miles past McCall Basin, about 1900 feet elevation gain.

I appreciate being aware of options available. If we are ready for additional travel past that, Snowgrass Flat is an additional 3 ¾ miles past Elk Pass, an elevation drop of about 1300 feet.

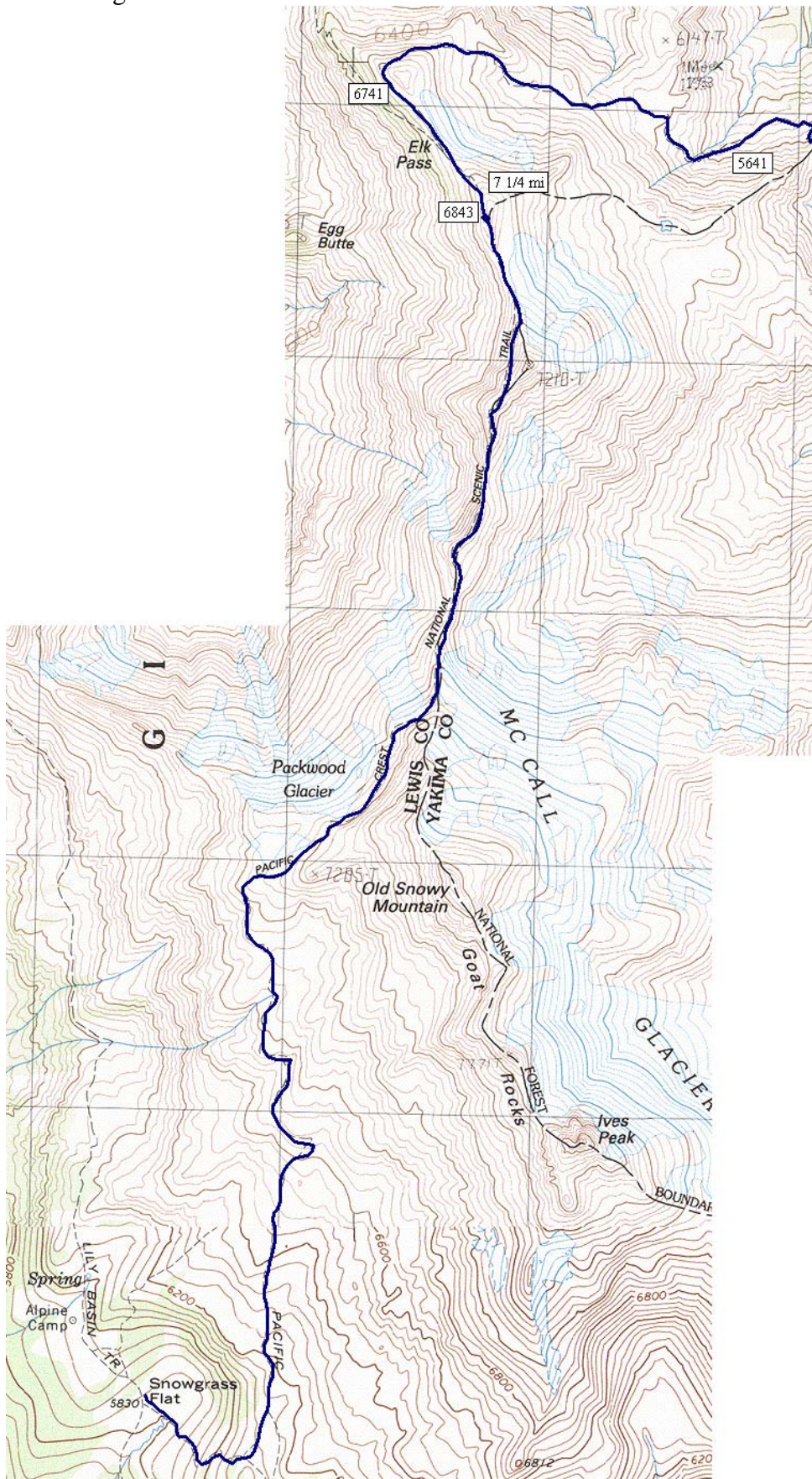
Trailhead to Shoe Lake



Shoe Lake to Elk Pass



Elk Pass to Snowgrass Flat



A couple photos from Snowgrass Flat

