

Chain of Lakes Trail, WA



Vicinity Location:

About 240 miles north of Portland, OR and about 135 miles northeast of Seattle in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Directions:

From Portland: Drive about 300 miles and 5.5 to 6.5 hours through Seattle.

From Seattle: Drive on I-5 for about 240 miles and take exit 232 for Sedro-Woolley. Drive 5.2 miles to Sedro-Woolley and take Hwy 9 North for 30.5 miles to Hwy 542.

Take Hwy 542 East for 70.3 miles driving through Maple Falls and other communities to the trailhead area.

There is a large parking area for this trailhead.

There is a restroom at the trailhead

Northwest forest permit or equivalent is required to park here.

Blue bags or equivalent are required and you are required to pack out your feces.

Length and Elevation:

7.9 miles roundtrip. Elevation at the trailhead is 4,262 feet. Total gain is 2,360 feet and loss is 2,360 feet. Highest elevation is 5,430 feet and the lowest elevation 4,173 feet.

Trails:

Chain of Lakes Trail #682, Wild Goose Trail #684.3, with connections to multiple trails.

There is at least one geocache at: **N 48° 51.111 W 121° 43.193** Info at Geocaching.com

Trail Maps:

Topo Map, Download Garmin .gpx file, Open Garmin .gpx file

Review: August 14, 2022

From the overflow parking lot take the trail and in about 50 feet turn right and head down towards a small lake. You take the same trail down to another trail Junction where you bear right to take the chain of lakes trail.

This trail continues to drop down and crosses over a small dam at the end of a lake.

Gently climb along the lake then climb fairly steeply once you reach the end of the lake. There are many different kinds of alpine wildflowers along the trail.

After 3/4 of a mile you reach the bridge over Bagley Lake. Stay on the right side of the lake and continue hiking past fantastic views of the nearby mountains.

The views get better and better as you switchback up the well worn trail out of the valley and

continue climbing. Looking back you see majestic views of Mt. Baker.

Climb up several switchbacks to reach a pass with panoramic views of Mt. Shuksan on the left and Mt. Baker on the right. Lakes are spread out beneath you and snowfields remain far into the summer.

From the saddle you drop down down down into the chain of lakes basin. Soon you pass by Iceberg Lake and the other lake, walking on the trail between them. Near the far end of the lake is a nice beach access. Walking a little further you'll cross a lovely little stream and then began climbing again. You'll pass by the junction for Mazama camps. It looks like there are good places for camping. There are no fires allowed at the campsites at these lakes.

Continue climbing up a large scree field as you ascend towards a small pass. There's nice views of Mount Baker along the way as well as the lakes below. At the little pass you can walk off the trail a bit for some more nice views of Mount Baker, if the clouds allow.

The next section of trail is mostly level on the side of a mountain ridge, passing many wonderful views of Mount Shuksan. From here you can see the parking lot for Artist Point, about a mile away.

At the parking lot, walk across the parking lot and walk down the trail a short distance where it crosses the road then continues down. This is the Wild Goose trail. There are stone cairns that look to have been built about 50 years ago and some of them still have the trail symbol for geese on them.

Heading down you will encounter several sets of steep cable stairs. There are over 100 stairs which go steeply down to where the trail levels out a bit. Once it does can look down to Bagley Lake and see the trail where you were several hours ago.

Descend fairly steeply down several sets of stone steps to a parking lot by a lake. From here continue to follow the Wild Goose Trail back to the overflow parking lot. There are a myriad of trails here so it is easy to get on the wrong one. Pay attention to where you are going.

You'll pass a little seasonal stream and a little bit of columnar basalt and lots more as you drop down to the parking lot.

Enjoy the photos!!

Gallery Pics

Switchback Steve

121°44.000' W 121°43.000' W 121°42.000' W 121°41.000' W WGS84 121°40.000' W



48°52.000' N

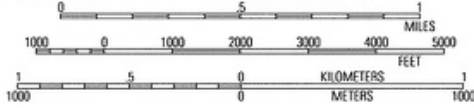
48°52.000' N

48°51.000' N

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Map created with TopoGIS © 2008 National Geographic

121°44.000' W 121°43.000' W 121°42.000' W 121°41.000' W WGS84 121°40.000' W



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10/09/23