

# Fire Lane 12, OR

## **Directions:**

From Portland, OR, take I-405 to exit 3 for Hwy 30 West and drive towards St. Helens for 8.1 miles. Turn left at NW Harborton Dr.

Once on NW Harborton Dr, turn right and go up the hill for .1 mile, then turn left to stay on NW Harborton Dr. Follow NW Harborton as it winds uphill for another .1 mile.

Turn right onto NW Creston Rd. and park about 400 feet down the road. The road is narrow but there is a wide section of shoulder to park on. Don't park at the west end of NW Creston Rd. because it is marked with no parking signs and signed as private parking only.

Leash law and scoop laws are in effect for this trail.

No permits are required.

There are no bathrooms at this trailhead.

## **Length and Elevation:**

2.8 miles round trip. Elevation gain 800 Feet and loss 800 feet round trip. Elevation at the trailhead is 230 feet and the high point is 890 feet.

## **Trail:**

Fire Lane 12 Road, BPA Road, and Fire Lane 13 Road with connections to Fire Lane 15 Road.

## **Trail Maps:**

Topo Map

## **History:**

In 1999 fundraising and tax dollars were used to buy this 73 acre parcel of land that this trail passes through. The acreage is surrounded by Forest Park and was slated for development. The land is between Germantown and Newberry Roads and a portion of the Wildwood Trail now passes through it. This acquisition was the culmination of years of work by the Friends of Forest Park, the city of Portland, and Metro. Plaques placed on boulders during in the fall of 2001 commemorate major donors who helped with the purchase of the property.

## **Review:** October 24, 2008

Walk to the metal orange gate at the west end of NW Creston Rd. After a few hundred feet, the trail starts a steady climb and passes under some unobtrusive powerlines. The trail goes uphill through a mostly alder forest with cedars and Douglas Fir mixed in. The trail continues to climb as it follows Miller Creek.

After about a mile, take a left at a trail junction with Fire Lane 15. This is the first major trail junction you come to. There is another set of powerlines overhead which can just barely be seen through the trees and can be used for a landmark.

The trail now goes fairly steeply uphill past a switchback then comes to the junction of Fire Lane 12 and the BPA Road in about .4 mile, waypoint JCBP.

From there take a left and follow the BPA Road north. Also at the junction are a couple of plaques

commemorating the purchase which was to fill a gap in Forest Park. The first plaque says "You are standing in the middle of 73 acres in the heart of Forest Park once threatened by development. In 1999, the potential "hole in the park" was acquired by a cooperative effort of Metro, Portland Parks and Recreation, and the Friends of Forest Park. This acquisition was possible thanks to the following donor's significant contributions to Friends of the Forest and to John Sherman's leadership and tireless efforts." The plaques also list the names of major financial donors. All who hike this trail should thank these groups and people for their efforts to add this parcel to Forest Park.

From the junction, the trail dips briefly into the forest then the road goes back under the powerlines. This is the highest elevation on the trail and from here the trail crests one more hill and then descends the rest of the way back to the trailhead.

At the junction of Fire Lane 13 and the BPA Road, take the left fork and follow Fire Lane 13 all the way to the end. At the top of the hill just past the junction, you can see North Portland, Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Adams through the powerlines on a clear day. There are also two picnic tables at the top where you can stop, have lunch, and enjoy the views.

After dropping sharply downhill for about .4 mile, you come to a junction of Fire Lane 13 and Fire Lane 13a. Continue straight ahead, down the ridgeline. Less than .2 mile with the junction of Fire Lane 13a, the trail crosses under two sets of powerlines and comes out to a promontory with views down into Miller Creek Valley, and the new Sauvie Island Bridge.

After walking towards the powerlines at the end of Fire Lane 13, look for the trail just on the right side of the power poles and follow the trail past the power poles and slightly to the left.

The user trail is easy to follow for few hundred feet down the ridge, but the trail becomes more indistinct as people leave the ridge and head down towards Fire Lane 12. Make your way through the sword ferns and trailing blackberries and descend on the ridge as long as possible. Finally you'll see some houses through the trees on the right. Now you can break left off the ridge and drop down the west side of the hill. If you've navigated well then you'll come out right by the orange metal gate.

This trail is good exercise because it mainly goes up or down. Since it is not heavily used, most dogs you encounter will be off-leash so act appropriately and stand still until the owner gets their dog under control. The trail tread is mostly on large-graveled jeep roads so it isn't very muddy in the rainy season. This trail is okay for dogs and small children. Children can gain experience route finding and following directions on this trail. Stay near inexperienced hikers on the off-trail section so they don't stray off the ridge and get lost.

Enjoy the Photos!

Gallery Pics

Switchback Steve