

Glacier View, WA

Notice: 2/6/2020: Heavy rains have washed out a 100'x60' section of Forest Road 59 near milepost 1.0. The road is currently impassable and travelers should avoid this route until further notice.

Vicinity Location:

About 10 miles north of Ashford, WA near Mt. Rainier National Park.

Directions:

From Portland, take I-5 North and take exit 68 to Hwy 12. Take Hwy 12 for about 30 miles to Morton. Turn left on Hwy 7 and drive about 17 miles to Hwy 706. Turn right and drive through Ashford. onto Forest Road 59. It is near milepost 11. 3.8 miles past Ashford, turn left (north) onto the Copper Creek Road, which is Forest Service Road #59. **FS 59 is just before MP 11 and not well marked. If you get to the Copper Creek Inn, then you've gone too far.**

From Seattle, take I-5 South to Hwy 512 East and go towards Puyallup (Exit 127). Follow Hwy 512 East for about 2 miles. Turn south onto Hwy 7 towards Mt. Rainier. Follow Hwy 7 south to Elbe. At Elbe, turn left onto Hwy 706, travel through Ashford, and 3.8 miles past Ashford, turn left (north) onto the Copper Creek Road, which is Forest Service Road #59. **FS 59 is just before MP 11 and is not well marked. If you get to the Copper Creek Inn, then you've gone too far.**

Drive 9.1 miles on Forest Service Road 59 to the trailhead. (Driving time from Seattle is about 2.5 hours.) - There is a washout on FS 59 about 3 miles from the pavement - it's passable, but a tight fit. Forest Road 59 is bumpy. There are several turnout from Forest Road 59. Follow what appears to be the most travelled road. At the big clearing that looks kind of like a gravel pit, turn left. The trailhead is where Forest Road 59 ends at a dirt barricade.

No restrooms are at the trailhead.

Dogs and pack animals are allowed on this trail.

A Northwest Forest pass is required to park.

Length and Elevation:

4 miles round trip to Glacier View and 6 miles round trip to Lake West. Elevation gain 1,191 feet and 335 feet loss. Total gain and loss is 1,546 feet one way. Elevation at the trailhead is 4,560 feet, the high point of the trail is 5,450 feet. To Lake West the total elevation gain is 1,251 and 901 feet loss one way.

Trail:

Glacier View Trail #267 with connections to Puyallup Trail #248 and Peak Two Trail #268.

Trail Maps:

Topo Map, Forest Service Map, Download Garmin .gpx file

Review: August 29, 2009

The Glacier View Trail offers several hiking and camping options once you reach the fire lookout site. Beyond the junction to Glacier View, down the switchbacks, there are three lakes and several campsites along the trail and at West Lake.

From the trailhead parking lot the trail crosses a small meadow and climbs up about 100 feet to the junction of Glacier View Trail and Puyallup Trail. Look around carefully here to remember what this junction looks like. It is very easy to walk past this junction on the return trip, miss the trail down to the parking lot, and start along the Puyallup Trail.

Turn left at this first junction and start looking for huckleberries and blueberries. In late August and early September these make for tasty treats along the trail and make purple spots on your fingers and lips!

The trail climbs moderately along an open forested ridge with nice views of Mt. Rainier to the east. Soon the trail enters the forest and climbs more steeply for about a mile. The trail climbs up and over a forested knob and then drops down to a sloping wildflower meadow.

This is the first trail section that I helped repair with a Washington Trails Association work crew in August 2009. Our work crew spent three days raising and widening the tread, taking rocks and roots out of the trail, and brushing and cutting down trees that could obstruct the trail.

This first meadow has a couple of rocky points that can be climbed for views of Gobbler's Knob and partial views of Mt. Rainier. If you want to go to the top of the knob, ascend using the slope facing the trail and go up next to the trees, using cedar branches to hold onto while climbing up and down.

From this mountain meadow, the trail enters back into the woods, crosses through two more meadows as it winds just below a ridge, up to the junction to Glacier View and West Lake. From the junction, turn left and climb the fairly steep trail .3 mile to the old lookout site.

The lookout site has a 360 degree view but part of the forests below have been clear-cut. The view of Mt. Rainier is superb and to the right of Mt. Rainier, about 3 miles from Glacier View, is the Gobbler's Knob fire lookout. If you have the chance to camp along the trail, the sunsets from the viewpoint can be amazing.

Back at the junction, you can continue downhill about .4 mile to the junction for the trail to Lake Helen. Turn right and in about .1 mile there is a faint trail junction to the left that leads to Saddle Lake. There is a small flat area near the lake for camping. A fairly large camping area is seen off to the right of the main trail.

Continue down the trail past lots more huckleberry bushes, down several switchbacks, to a junction for Peak Two Trail #268. Turn right at the junction and continue down and across the outlet stream to Lake West. Lake West has a small camping area near the lake and there is a good shoreline for sitting along the lake or going for a swim.

Return along the trail and back to the junction with the Puyallup Trail and the parking lot, being careful not to miss the junction leading back to the trailhead.

The trail crosses steep slopes but they are wooded or covered in brush. If a person was to fall off these first sections of the trail, the trees and brush will prevent a long tumble.

This trail is safe for children who are experienced hikers and safe for dogs except for at the old fire lookout, where there are steep slopes and some cliffs. Keep children under control after the trail junction to the fire lookout to prevent falling off the trail. There are plenty of huckleberries and tart blueberries along the trail in late August.

Enjoy the photos!!

Gallery Pics

Switchback Steve