

**Lolo National Forest Trails
Missoula Ranger District**

Valley of the Moon Nature Trail



Item	Remarks
Managed Use(s):	Walking/interpretive nature trail
Difficulty:	Easy
Trail Length:	Approximately ½ mile total for the loop.
Trail Termini:	Beginning-Trail starts to the left of the large interpretative sign and begins on gravel but quickly changes into a series of boardwalks. Ending-The trail is a loop that ends where it begins, by the introductory interpretive sign.
Trail elevation:	Lowest/Beginning: 4000 ft. Highest/Ending: 4000 ft.
Managed Use Seasons:	Spring/summer/fall
Maintenance:	High facility maintenance/low trail maintenance
Trip Type/Duration:	Short, easy walk. Approximately one hour.
Trail Usage:	Low/medium
Trailhead Facilities:	Parking for 6-8 cars; garbage, restroom, picnic tables, developed drinking water is NOT AVAILABLE. All facilities are accessible.
Trail Use Restriction:	Closed to all motorized vehicles and stock.
Reference Maps:	USFS Lolo National Forest, West Half
Map Location:	Section 24, T11N, R16W

Associated Trails: None

Attractions and Considerations

Valley of the Moon Trail is perfect if you are looking for a beautiful walk or place to picnic. Most of the trail follows a boardwalk due to the area being a riparian corridor. Most of the plant species found along the trail include aspen, willow and tall grasses and shrubs. Near the back part of the loop, the vegetation opens up to a black cottonwood stand.

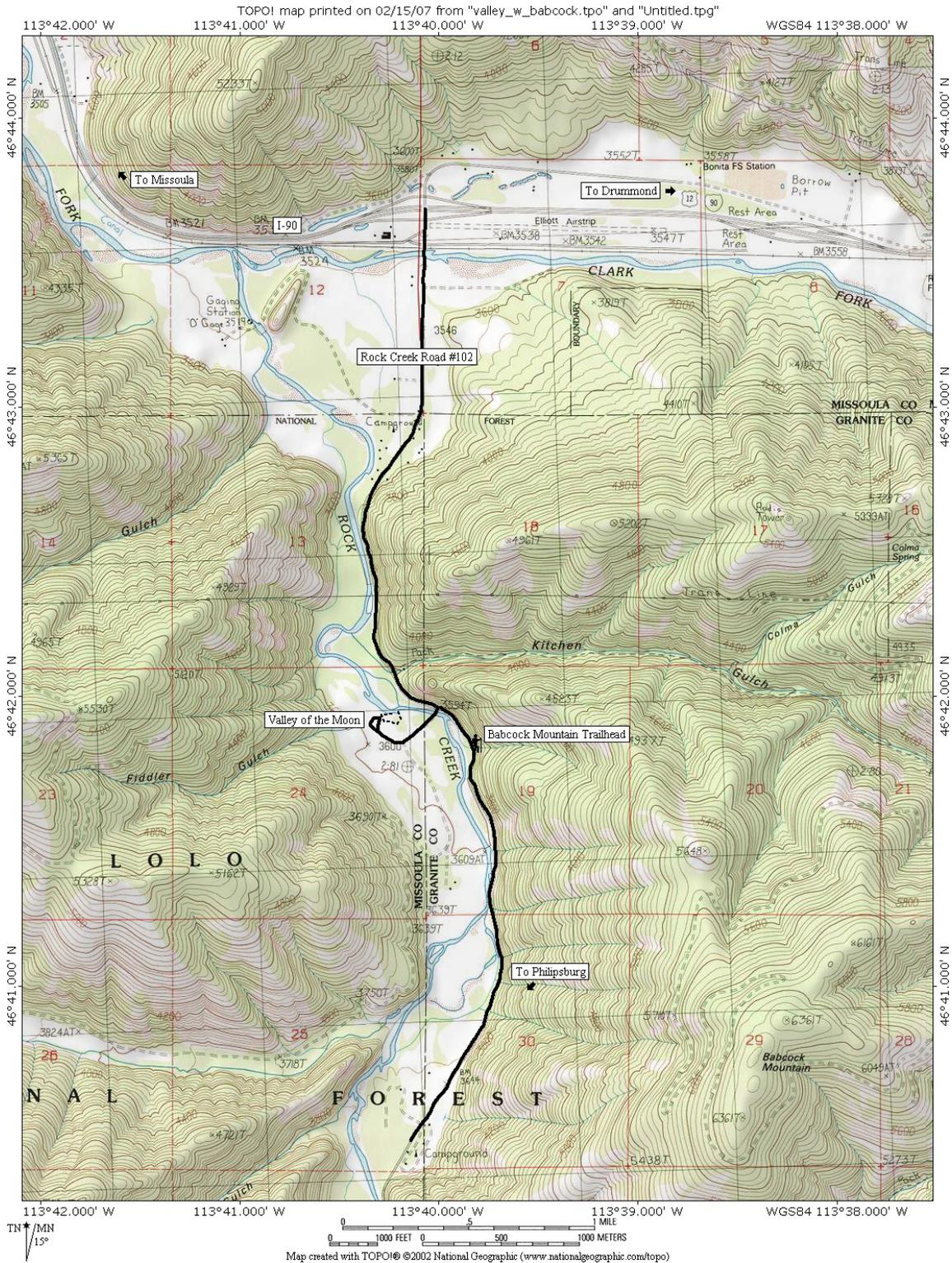
From beginning to end, the trail is flat. Portions of the trail are surfaced with gravel or a boardwalk, but otherwise most of the trail should pose no problem for most travelers. Restrooms are available. Valley of the Moon is home to several interpretive signs that provide a quick and easy way to learn about the ecology of the Rock Creek corridor. These are placed about every 50-75 feet and contain natural history information on native fish such as the cutthroat, small mammals that inhabit the area, and vegetation. Scenery from the trail is slightly limited, but there are great views of the mountains that surround the valley.

Carry your lunch with you on your walk to enjoy a peaceful break along the creek at one of the picnic tables that are available. Benches are also placed along the trail to provide great places to rest, ponder and to view the beautiful scenery.

Have fun and remember to pack out whatever you pack in!

Accessing the Trail

From Missoula, drive 20 miles east on Interstate 90 and exit onto Rock Creek Road #120, Exit 126. Drive two miles south from the interstate until you see a sign for Valley of the Moon (the road is paved but narrow). Take a right and cross the bridge, follow the gravel road until you see another Valley of the Moon sign and take a right. You will see a toilet, bear proof garbage can, and an interpretive sign.



For more information contact the Missoula Ranger District at 406-329-3814.