

WILDERNESS HIKING

ROCK CREEK CANYON

Inyo National Forest



LITTLE LAKES VALLEY & MONO PASS

From Hwy 395, turn south at Tom's Place and continue up Rock Creek Canyon. Follow this road all the way to the end (Mosquito Flat Parking), about 10 miles.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

In Little Lakes Valley, glacial activity is vividly portrayed. This charming valley is surrounded by 13,000-foot peaks (Mt. Mills, Dade, Abbot and Bear Creek Spire) and has the typical U-shaped profile of a glacially-carved canyon. The lateral moraines that were pushed to the sides of the valley by the force and flow of ice are now topped by small lakes. The valley, with its long chain of lakes, is popular for beginning hikers and for fishing enthusiasts seeking Brown, Brook and Rainbow trout. Hikers can continue up Little Lakes Valley to Morgan Pass.

The Mono Pass Trail (crossed in 1864 by William Brewer and party) ascends to Ruby Lake, where sheer granite walls tower over the emerald waters. The trail then climbs steeply over switchbacks up to Mono Pass (12,040'). Views from Mono Pass are excellent of the Mono Recesses and Pioneer Basin. The trail continues down Mono Creek where it joins with the Pacific Crest Trail.

BEAR CANISTERS ARE NOW REQUIRED in Little Lakes Valley. This includes the Mono Pass trail up to Mono Pass and the Little Lakes trail over Morgan Pass to the southeast end of Lower Morgan Lake. It also includes the Gem Lakes, Treasure Lakes, Mills Lake and Ruby Lake areas.

HILTON LAKES

Trailhead parking for Hilton Lakes is located below the Rock Creek Pack Station, on the road to Mosquito Flat. (9,600')

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The Hilton Lakes Trail takes hikers through a forest of Whitebark and Lodgepole pines before it enters the basin of Hilton and Davis Lakes. The upper Hilton Lakes contain Brook and Rainbow trout.

TAMARACK LAKES

Trailhead parking for Tamarack Lakes is located near the east side of Rock Creek Lake (9,600') or at Pine Grove Campground (9,300').

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The Tamarack Lakes Trail begins at the eastern shore of Rock Creek Lake. The trail is steep initially, but levels out around the intermediate lakes before starting a final climb to Tamarack and Buck Lake. Fishing enthusiasts will find Golden trout in Tamarack Lake, while lower Dorothy Lake has Brook trout and Lahonton Cutthroat.

Part of the Rock Creek area is included in a Bighorn Sheep habitat closure. The south end of Little Lakes Valley (including Treasure Lakes, Morgan Pass and Morgan Lakes) is CLOSED TO GOATS. Also included in the closure is the area south and east of the Tamarack Lakes trail. Please contact the ranger station for more information.

Weather conditions change rapidly in the Sierra Nevada. Hikers should carry ample clothing for the anticipated changes. It is recommended that all hikers boil water for 3 to 5 minutes or use a filtering system before drinking due to the presence of giardia in most of the waters.

Pack stock often use the trails in the Rock Creek area. Please remember that stock have the right of way on all trails. Stand quietly off trail until all stock have passed to avoid spooking the animals.

PLEASE pack out all trash including empty bait containers.

GUIDEBOOKS

Sierra North—100 Backcountry Trips by Thomas & Jason Winnett (Wilderness Press)

Best Short Hikes in California's Southern Sierra by Karen & Terry Whitehill (The Mountaineers)

Discovering Sierra Trees by Stephen F. Arno (Yosemite Natural History Association)

MAPS

USFS: John Muir Wilderness Map (topo)

USGS: Mt. Abbot 7.5 minute quad (topo)

Mt. Morgan 7.5 minute quad (topo)

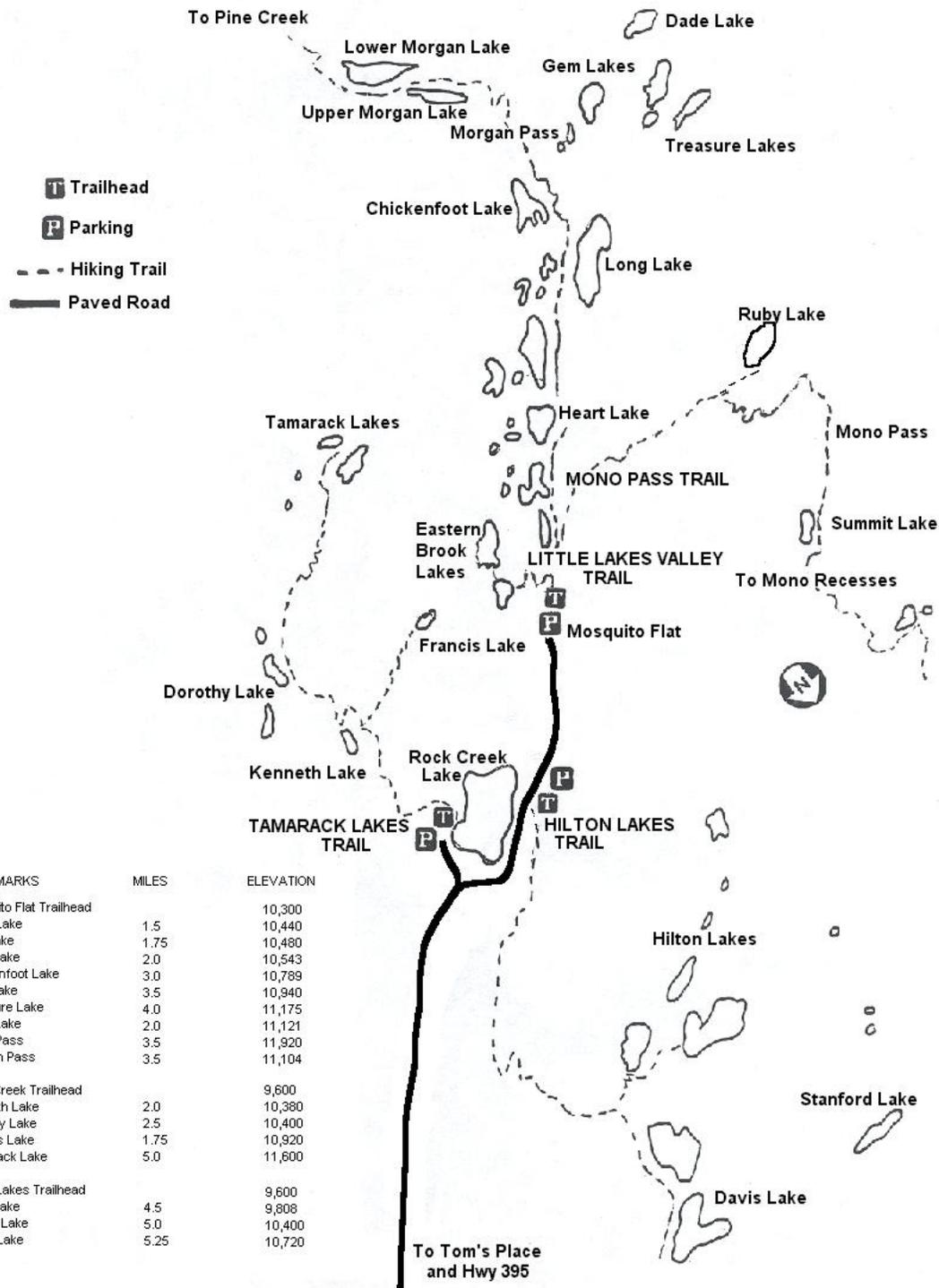


United States
Department of
Agriculture



Forest
Service

White Mtn.
Ranger Station



LANDMARKS	MILES	ELEVATION
Mosquito Flat Trailhead		10,300
Heart Lake	1.5	10,440
Box Lake	1.75	10,480
Long Lake	2.0	10,543
Chickenfoot Lake	3.0	10,789
Gem Lake	3.5	10,940
Treasure Lake	4.0	11,175
Ruby Lake	2.0	11,121
Mono Pass	3.5	11,920
Morgan Pass	3.5	11,104
Rock Creek Trailhead		9,600
Kenneth Lake	2.0	10,380
Dorothy Lake	2.5	10,400
Francis Lake	1.75	10,920
Tamarack Lake	5.0	11,600
Hilton Lakes Trailhead		9,600
Third Lake	4.5	9,808
Fourth Lake	5.0	10,400
Davis Lake	5.25	10,720

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