

Bucks Lake Wilderness

Plumas National Forest

Mt. Hough Ranger District



California Wilderness Act of 1984

The Bucks Lake Wilderness came into being with the passage of the California Wilderness Act in 1984. The Act allowed 23,578 acres of the Plumas National Forest to be set aside and protected as part of the National Forest Wilderness System.



Wilderness areas in the National Forest system are to be managed to preserve the natural processes, native vegetation and wildlife. Wilderness is a place where people can visit, but not remain. In the wilderness, preservation of the land is the first priority, while human use is secondary.

As part of the Wilderness Act, no motorized vehicles are allowed inside the wilderness area. Mechanized equipment and wheeled vehicles are NOT allowed either. Therefore, no jeeps, 4 wheelers, Razors, bicycles, wheelbarrows, carts or hang gliders are allowed to be used here. Hikers are welcome as well as saddle and pack stock.

You may see cattle in the wilderness area from August 1 through September 30. The Bucks Lake Wilderness has been used for domestic livestock since the early 1900's. The California Wilderness Act allows cattle grazing to continue as practiced before the Act.



Permits are not required to enter the Wilderness, but we do ask you to sign in at each trailhead you are hiking.

Wilderness trails are popular with equestrian riders and provide miles of horse-friendly trails along with many opportunities for overnight camping. Please make sure to note which trails have been recommended for horses.

For more detailed information, a Bucks Lake Wilderness map can be purchased at any Forest Service office on the Plumas National Forest, or contact the Mt. Hough Ranger District at (530) 283-0555

Simple tips for **Leave No Trace**

- ❖ Plan for small groups
- ❖ Stay on designated trails
- ❖ Select a campsite 200 ft. away from trails, lakes, streams, and wet meadows.
- ❖ Do all washing away from camp and water sources
- ❖ Take all your trash home with you
- ❖ Play quietly so others may find solitude.

Pack It In, Pack it Out!



United States
Department of
Agriculture



Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
Plumas National Forest
www.fs.fed.us/r5/plumas

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Bucks Lake Wilderness Trails

There are six access points, or trailheads, that may be used to reach the wilderness. They are; Bucks Summit, Bucks Creek, Mill Creek, Three Lakes, Belden, and Silver Lake.

Mill Creek Trail

The Mill Creek Trail parallels the northwest shore of Bucks Lake and is well known for its beautiful wildflowers, views of the lake, and swimming opportunities. It continues north of the lake near Mill Creek Campground and ultimately connects to the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). The trailhead is located approximately ½ mile west of Whitehorse Campground along Bucks Lake Road. This trail passes an intersection with Right Hand Branch Trail, adjacent to the dispersed “boat in” camp sites along the shore of Bucks Lake. The trail may also be accessed at Mill Creek Campground and Chuck’s Rock along the 24N33 Road.

Distance (one way) - 11.4 miles

Difficulty - Easy along the lake (5 miles), Moderate between Mill Creek Campground and the PCT.

Gold Lake Trail

The Gold Lake Trail ascends through large pines and fields of granite boulders to reach the shore of Gold Lake. The trail offers stunning views of Silver Lake and Mount Lassen to the north, as well as views of Jack’s Meadow and Quincy to the east. The trailhead is located at Silver Lake Campground at the end of Forest Road 24N29X.

Not recommended for horses

Distance (one way): 1.7 miles

Difficulty: Strenuous

Granite Gap Trail

The Granite Gap Trail continues southwest from the Gold Lake Trail and connects to the Pacific Crest Trail. The Granite Gap Trail climbs through granite steps past Rock Lake and Mud Lake until it reaches the ridge. Beautiful views are found all along the trail. **Not recommended for horses.**

Distance (one way): 0.9 miles

Difficulty: Strenuous

Rock Lake

This short spur trail connects Granite Gap to Rock Lake for a quick side trip to a beautiful little lake.

Not Recommended for Horses

Distance (one way): 0.1 miles

Difficulty: Easy

Spanish Peak

This trail connects the PCT to the summit of Spanish Peak at 7,017 feet elevation and offers spectacular views of Mount Lassen, Lake Almanor and the valleys below.

Distance (one way): 0.3 miles

Difficulty: Easy

Right Hand Branch of Mill Creek

The Right Hand Branch Trail connects the Pacific Crest Trail with the northeast shore of Bucks Lake along the Mill Creek Trail. This shady, forested trail meanders through high meadows filled with wildflowers, and parallels the Right Hand Branch of Mill Creek.

Distance (one way): 5.3 miles

Difficulty: Moderate

Three Lakes Trail

This out and back trail follows the shoreline of three lakes, and lies mostly within the Bucks Lake Wilderness. The trail offers views of the lakes and plenty of solitude. 4WD is required along Forest Road 24N24, to reach the trail. Primitive camping is available at Three Lakes.

Distance (one way): 1.0 miles

Difficulty: Easy

Three Lakes PCT Tie

This short piece of trail connects the Three Lakes Road (24N24) and the Three Lakes Trailhead to the PCT. 4WD is required along Forest Road 24N24, to reach the trail. Primitive camping is available at Three Lakes.

Distance (one way): 0.3 miles

Difficulty: Easy



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