

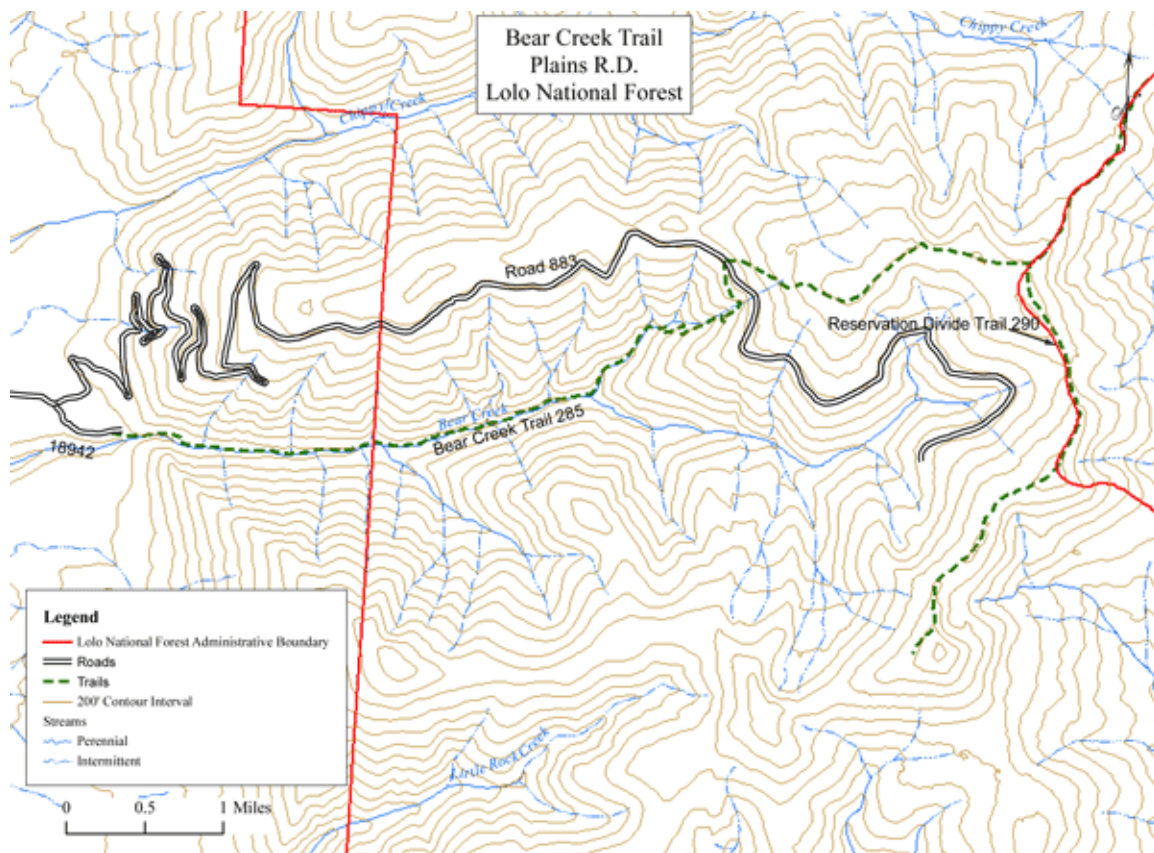
Lolo National Forest Trails Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger District

Bear Creek Trail #285 Extended Information

Trail Attributes Table

Item	Remarks
Managed Use(s):	Hiker
Difficulty:	Moderate to difficult
Trail Length:	8.5 miles
Trail Termini:	The trail begins at the end of a short spur road off FS 883. The upper end of the trail is at the Reservation Divide Trail (#290). The trailhead is accessed by going east on FS 883 from the Thompson River County Road (about mile 21). Follow road 883 for about 2.5 miles and turn right on a spur road (signed with a hiker sign). Follow that road to the end.
Trail Elevation:	3500 feet at the lower end to about 6800 feet at the Reservation Divide Trail
Managed Use Seasons:	Mainly spring through fall, however the trail is available year round.
Maintenance Frequency:	Low
Trip Type/Duration:	This is a long and primitive trail; rough, rocky conditions make travel slower and potentially increase the danger of falls or injuries. The first 4.5 miles has a gentle grade along Bear Creek. After this, the trail is steeper for about 2 miles (within which the trail crosses road 883) until it arrives at the ridgetop where the grade is again gentle for 2 miles to the Reservation Divide Trail.
Trail Usage:	Low
Trailhead Facilities:	Parking for 2-3 vehicles at each trailhead; there are no other facilities.
Trail Use Restrictions:	Trail is closed to motorized vehicles year long. Pack and saddle users should be aware of very rocky trail conditions through many talus slopes within the lower 5 miles. The trail is also very narrow in many places.
Reference Maps:	Lolo Visitor's Map, West Half USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle <i>Cook Mountain</i> and <i>Bassoo Peak</i>
Map Location:	Sections 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, T23N, R26W
Associated Trails:	Reservation Divide (#290)

Trail Map

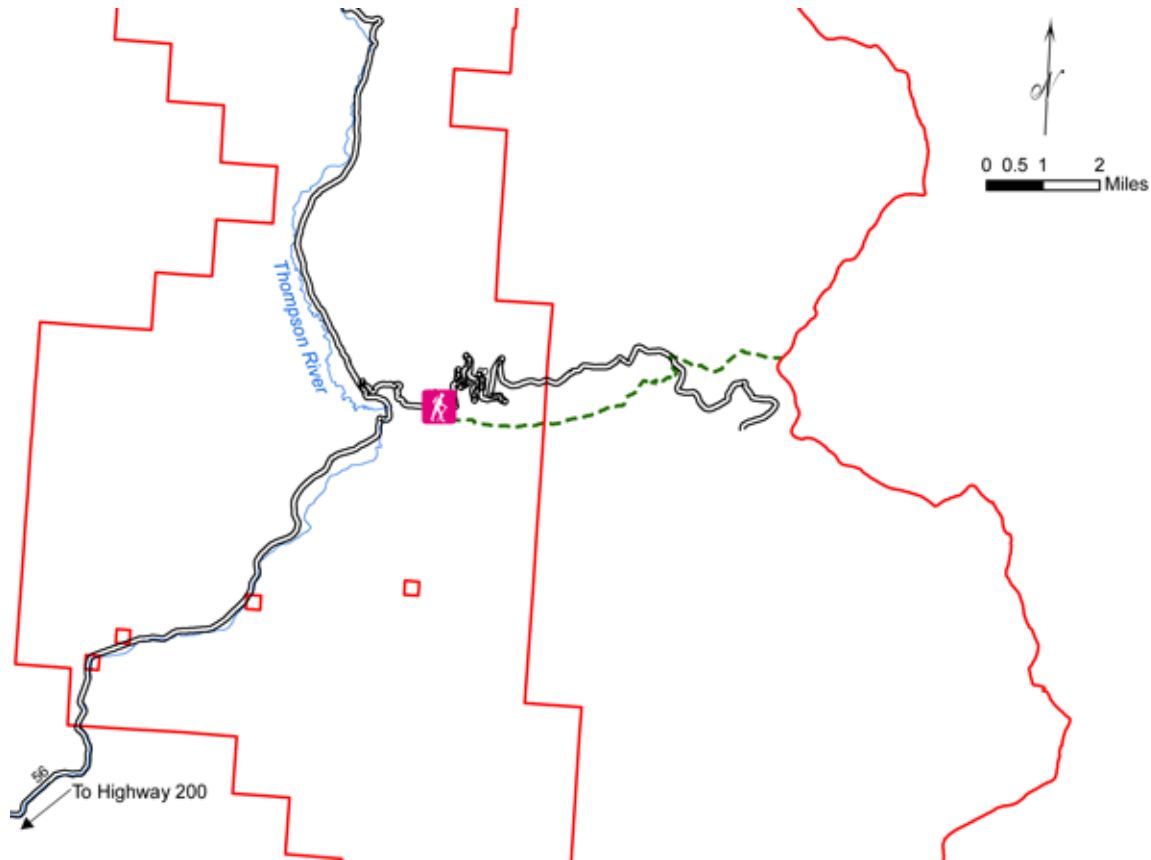


Attractions and Considerations

The lower 3-4 miles of the trail follow Bear Creek which is a major stream with abundant trout habitat. In 2007, the entire Bear Creek Drainage was burned in the Chippy Creek wildfire. The trail is an excellent showcase for post-fire forest conditions and natural forest succession after wildfire. Wildlife species that use burned habitats are also abundant and include several woodpecker species. Forage for big game should increase dramatically within the years following the 2007 fire. Many rock cliffs exist above the lower portions of the trail increasing the scenic value of the trail. Below the road crossing, the trail travels through 2 clearcut harvest units from the 1990s. The upper portion of the trail has excellent views as one nears the ridgetop. The Bear Creek road (FS883), although closed, could be used to access further portions of the trail, bypass the talus sections, or make a loop route of the trail.

Although pack and saddle stock may use the trail at any time, users should be aware of the very rocky and narrow trail through much talus in the lower portions of the trail.

Access Map



Reminders

Visitors are reminded to practice Leave No Trace techniques. For details on this and other trail etiquette topics, visit our main trails page at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo/recreation-trails>

More Information

For current trail conditions and other trail information, contact the Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger District at (406) 826-3821, PO Box 429, Plains, MT 59859.

To visit the ranger station, drive west on Highway 200 to the town of Plains, then take Clayton Street east to the station.