



Wilson Lake:

Difficulty: *Classic*

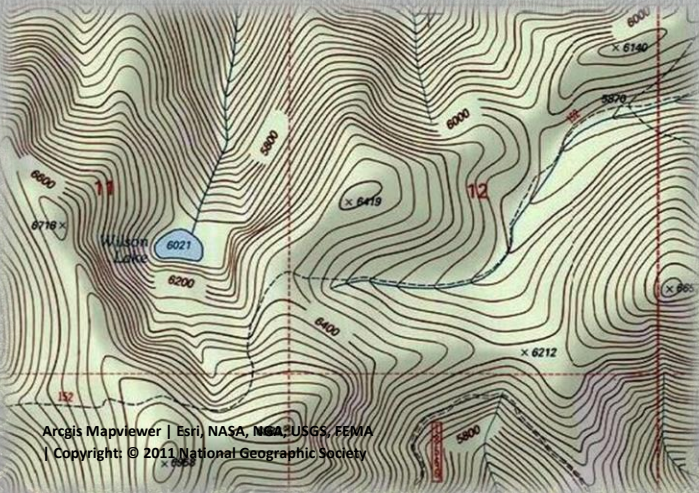
Distance: 6.0 miles

Trailhead Elevation: 3100 feet; **Trailhead Lat/Long:** 47°12'15.36"N / 115° 1'4.24"W

Lake Elevation: 6050 feet; **Lake Lat/Long:** 47° 9'28.86"N / 115° 5'52.77"W

Getting There: Take the Dry Creek Road exit off I-90, about 5 miles West of Superior. Cross the railroad tracks on the Southside Highway (#69); after about 3/4 miles, hang a right on Dry Creek

Road #342. Continue up Dry Creek Road for 2.1 miles where a marginal road leaves the main road to the left. There is signage for an old Elk enclosure. This is the start of trail #152. It is an old road but passable for a little more than a 1/2 mile and then then turns into a single track. There is a place to turn around and park.



Trail #152 climbs moderately up the Dry Fork creek bottom for about 1.5 miles to the point you cross the creek. From the crossing the trail climbs

relentlessly for the next 1.5 miles before becoming moderate again after reconnecting with the upper reaches of Dry Fork creek. The trail follows the creek through an old burn area for another 1.5 miles until the intersection with the trail to Sheep Mountain.

In 2023, I hiked to Sheep Mountain, so I am unable to verify the rest of the route. The trail to that point was in good shape and is probably kept that way by horse usage.

I have been to Wilson Lake just once when I was 17. I rode my motorcycle behind the gate at the end of the Lost Creek Meadows road #7865 from Cedar Creek Road (#320) and followed the logging roads up until I connected with the main sheep drive trail #152 that comes up from Dry Creek past Sheep Mtn. and then rode the trail until I hit the trail going down to the lake.

That route is probably not viable anymore due to the logging roads I drove have filled in with trees over the past 50 years. However, there have been some recent logging operations back up those old roads so there might be some passable routes available.

At the Lake: Wilson Lake is no more than a pond and it is warm as I recall going for a swim. There are no fish, and the lake level does fluctuate year over year. You can check out the historical imagery on Google Earth. I did not have a camera with me that day, so no historical pictures. I do remember at least 1 camp site at Wilson Lake, and I believe there are several spots along the upper reaches of the Dry Fork of Dry Creek where a person could set up a tent.





Lakes of the Great Burn & More

The other time I was close but not actually at the lake was during the winter. In 1987, a girlfriend and I completed a 3-day 2-night 12 mile plus ski trip up past Sheep Mtn, then along the ridgeline past the lake and eventually spending the second night at the Lost Creek Meadows. We skied down the road several miles and my brother picked us up down the road by the dredging operations.

The ridgeline between Sheep Mtn is flat and with the amount of fresh snow made navigation and skiing difficult. The vast bulk of the trip was either uphill and/or breaking trail. It was a hard couple days as there were no GPS or cell phones back then to help with navigation. I just knew not to drift to the right and get off the ridge into the Dry Creek drainage. We eventually tied into the logging roads that I used before on my motorcycle and made it down to the Lost Creek Meadows.

When I was in my mid 20's, working on a fire crew out of St. Regis, I decided one day to run to the top of Sheep Mtn and back after work. Took nothing with me, just drank out of the creek; you could do that back then. The round-trip time was about 3 hours covering over 12 miles and 3,700 ft elevation gain, oh to be in that golden age. Back in the day (before me) there used to be a lookout cabin on the summit, some of the remnants were still around when I climbed it that day.

There are pretty good views of the state line country and of the valley below. The trail from the junction on trail #152 is very pleasant compared to much of the trail coming up. It stays close to or on the ridge and winds through the Lodgepole Pine.

