



Backpacking the Idaho Sawtooth and White Cloud Ranges

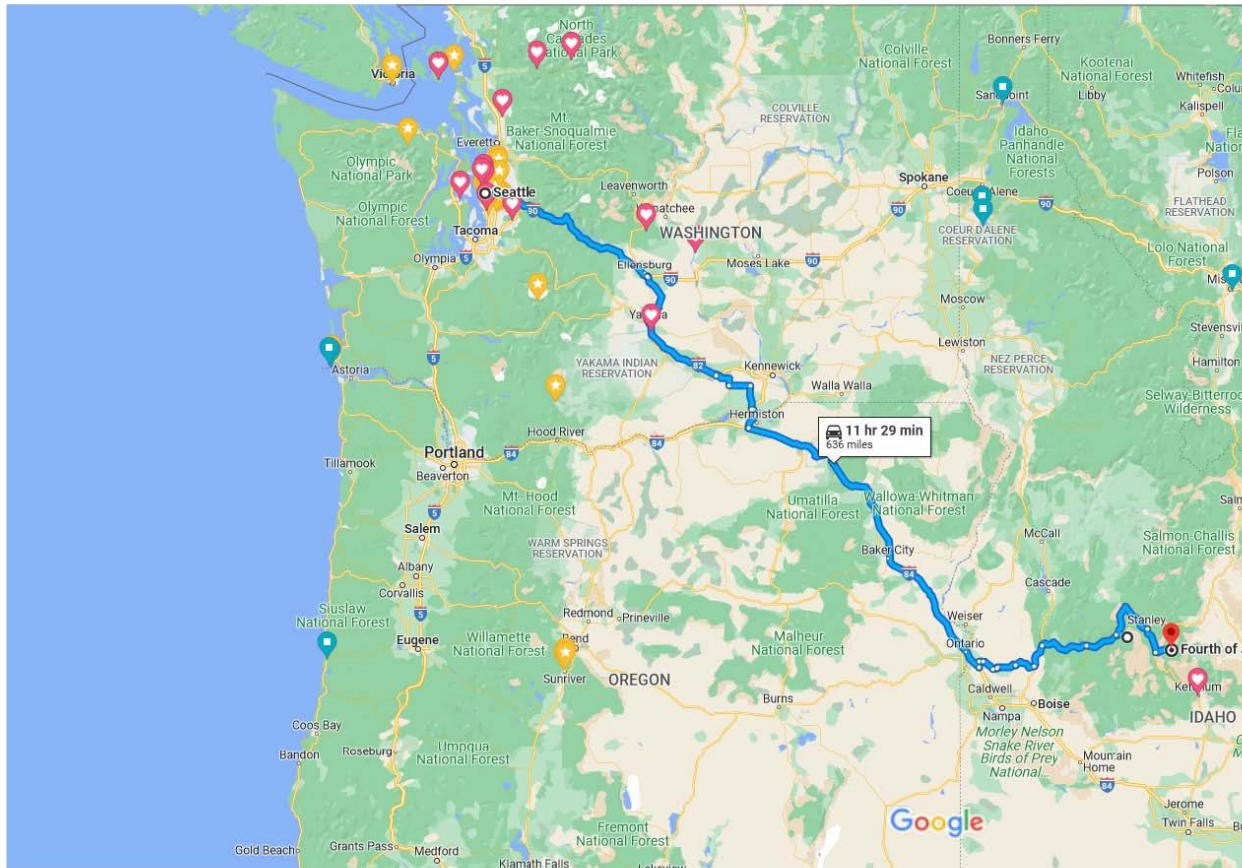
Walking the Wild

April 20, 2023

Dick Lambe

Outline

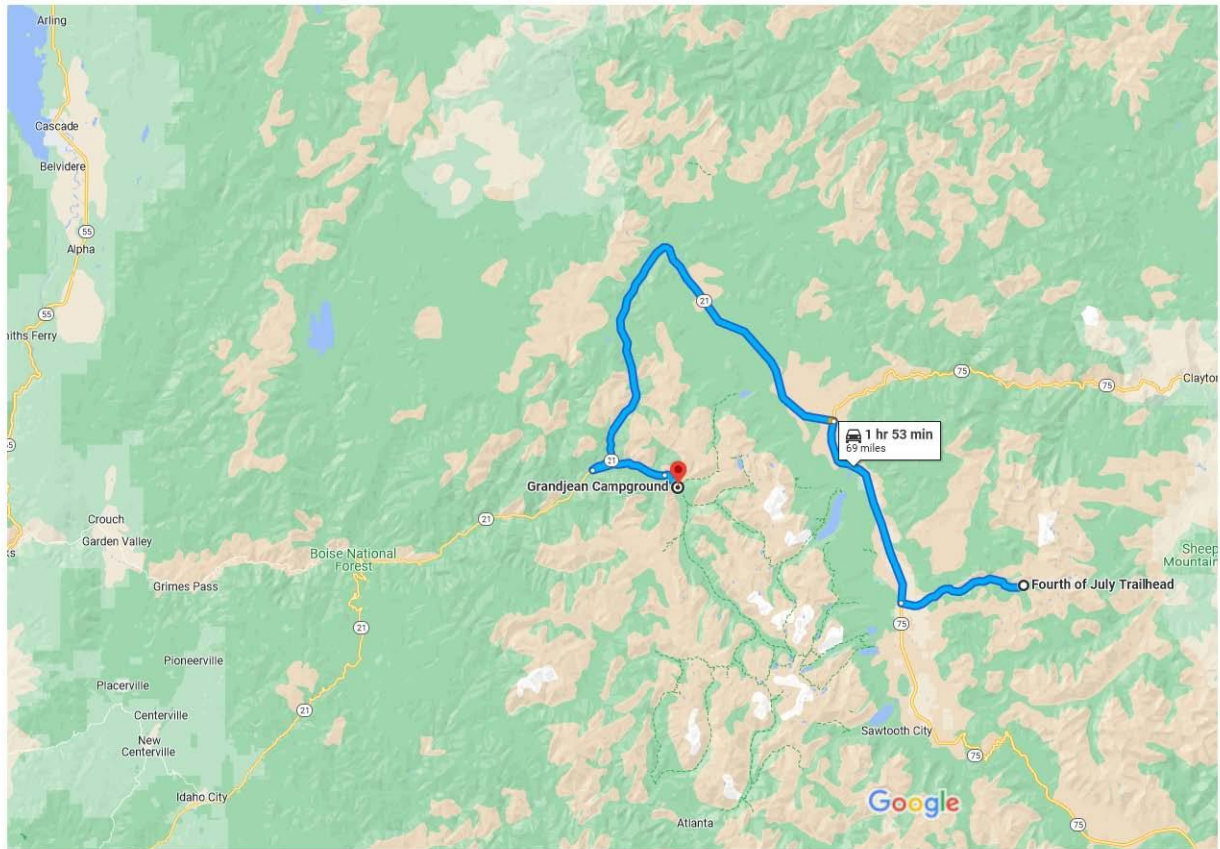
1. Two trips in Idaho, trailheads close together
 - a. Sawtooth Grand Loop
 - i. July 24-29, 2020
 - ii. With 3 friends
 - iii. 72 miles
 - iv. 13,300 feet climbed
 - b. White Cloud Range
 - i. August 15-19, 2022
 - ii. Solo
 - iii. 45 miles
 - iv. 8,800 feet climbed
 - c. For each trip
 - i. Route
 - ii. Photos
 - iii. Pros and cons
 - iv. Alternative route for White Clouds
 - v. Feasibility for electric car
 - vi. Questions



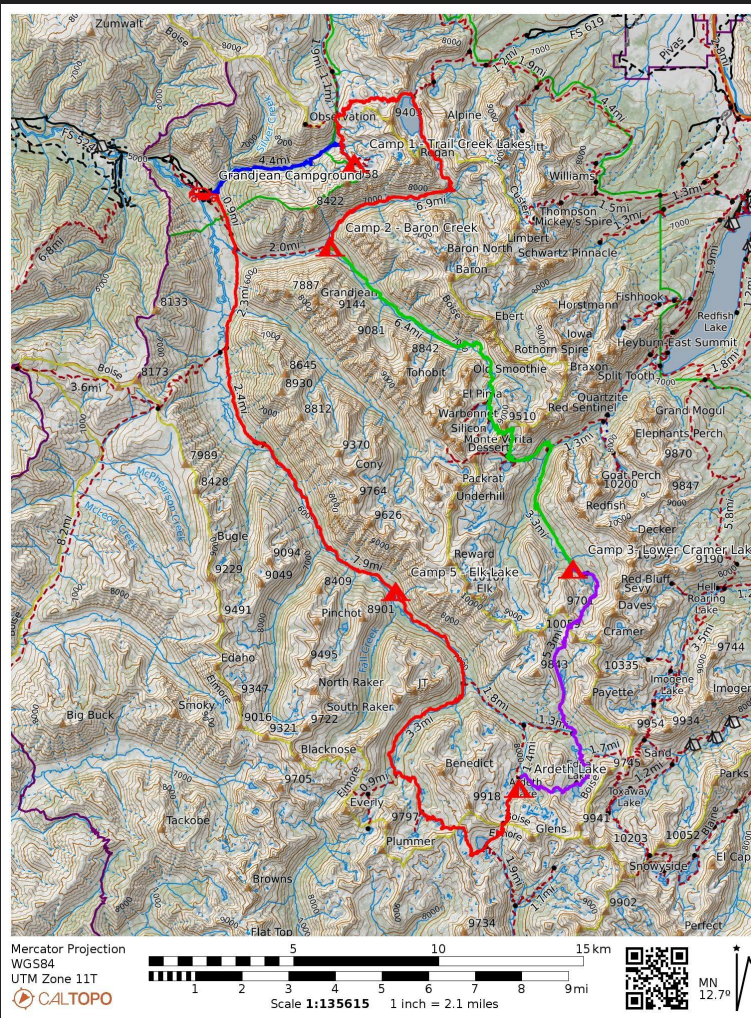


Fourth of July Trailhead, Stanley, ID 83278 to Grandjean
Campground, Boise National Forest, Forest Rd 524, Lowman, ID 83637

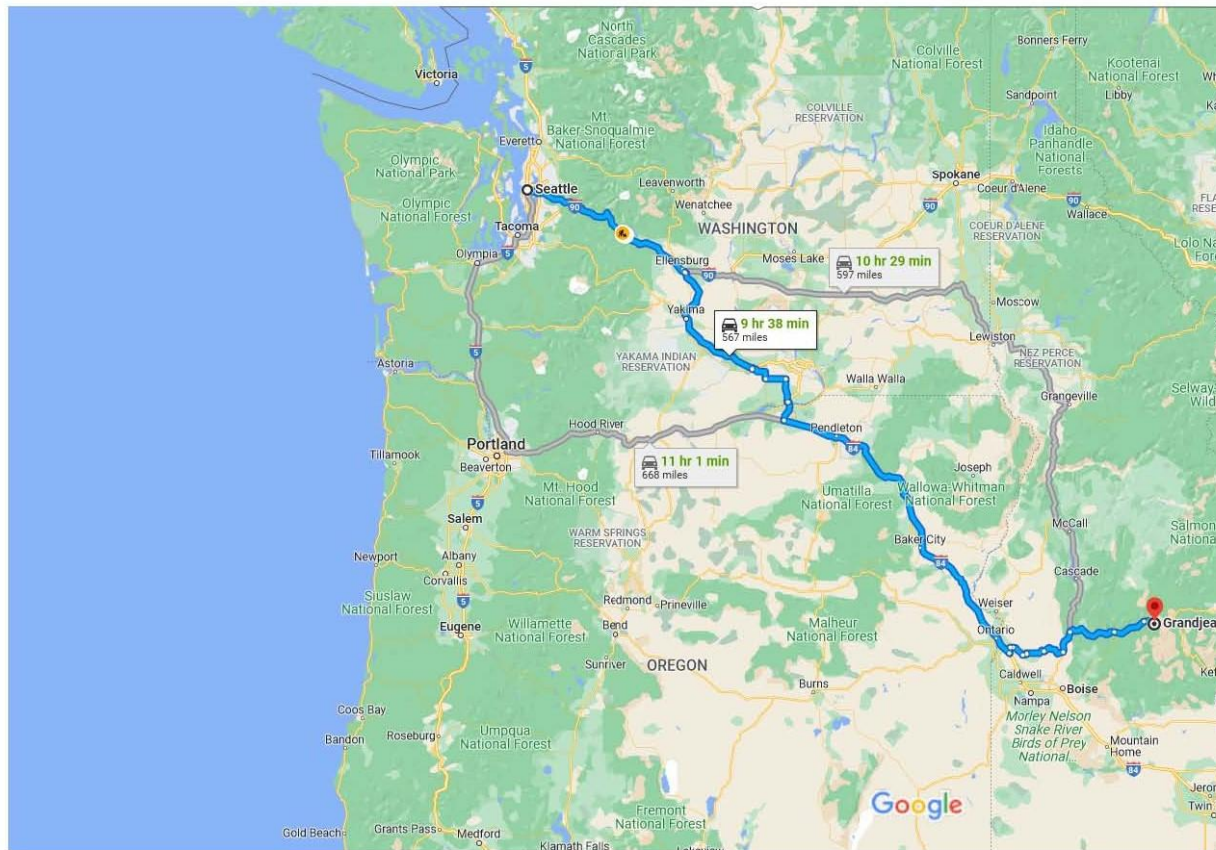
Drive 69.0 miles, 1 hr 53 min



Sawtooth Grand Loop July 24-29, 2020



Driving to the Sawtooth Grand Loop trailhead

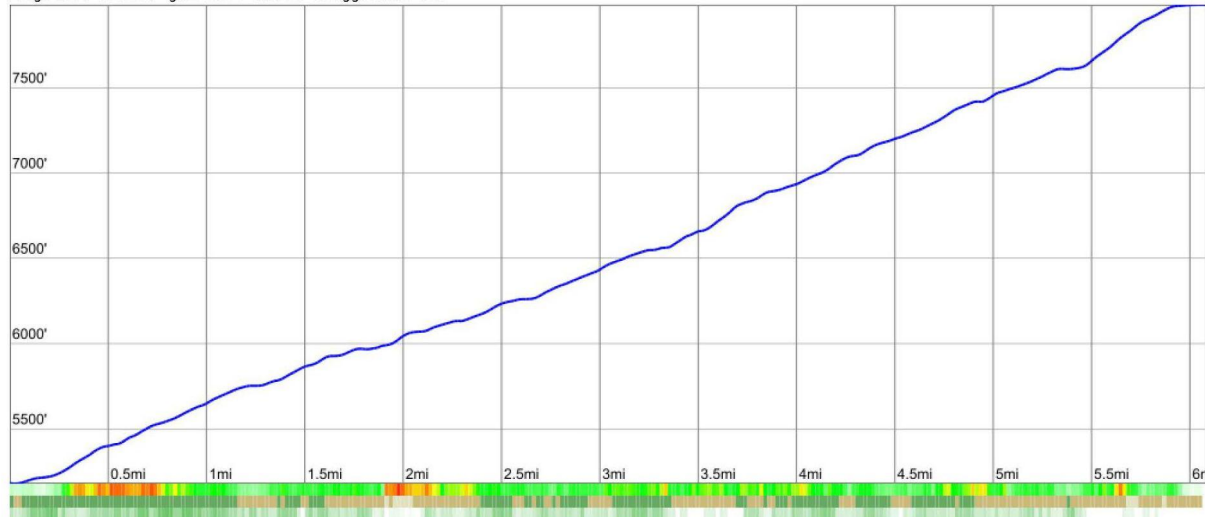


Day 1 - Grandjean Campground to Trail Creek Lakes, 6.1 miles



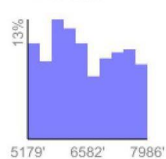
Sawtooth Grand Loop - Day 1

range 5177' to 7986' gain 2812' loss 10' exaggeration 4.6x



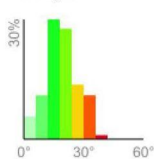
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



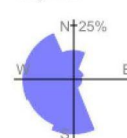
Min 5179'
Avg 6530'
Max 7986'
Delta 2807'

Slope

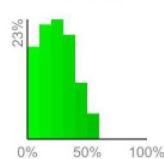


Min 1°
Avg 19°
Max 38°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Shrub 49%
Forest 48%
Grassland 3%



GRANDJEAN HIKER TRAIL

WELCOME TO THE SAWTOOTH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

PLEASE TAKE A MINUTE TO READ THESE MESSAGES

Leave No Trace

- #1 Plan Ahead & Prepare
- #2 Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- #3 Dispose of Waste Properly
- #4 Leave What You Find
- #5 Minimize Campfire Impacts
- #6 Respect Wildlife
- #7 Be Considerate of Other Visitors

SAWTOOTH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



Wilderness

Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Areas







Day 2 - Trail Creek Lakes to Baron Creek, 13.5 miles



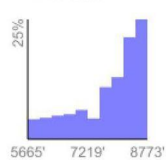
Sawtooth Grand Loop - Day 2

range 5663' to 8773' gain 1647' loss 3960' exaggeration 9.2x



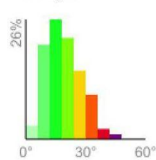
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



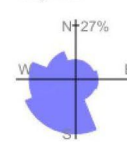
Min 5665'
Avg 7770'
Max 8773'
Delta 3108'

Slope

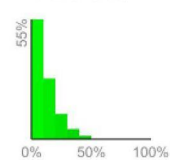


Min 1°
Avg 19°
Max 46°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Shrub 48%
Grassland 33%
Forest 19%











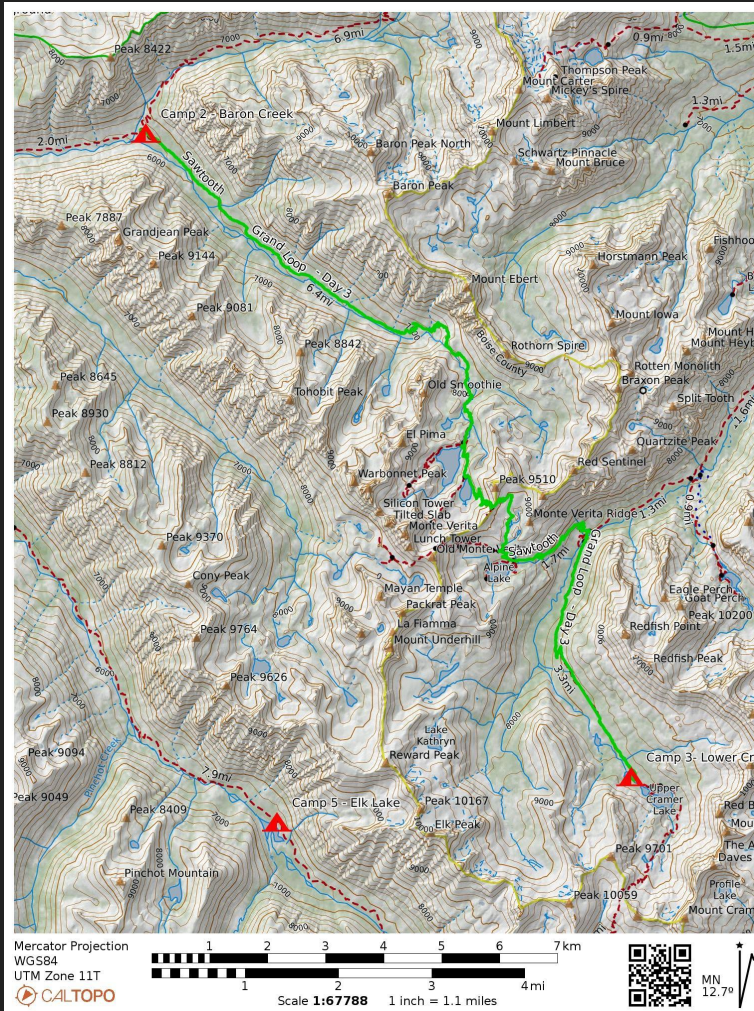






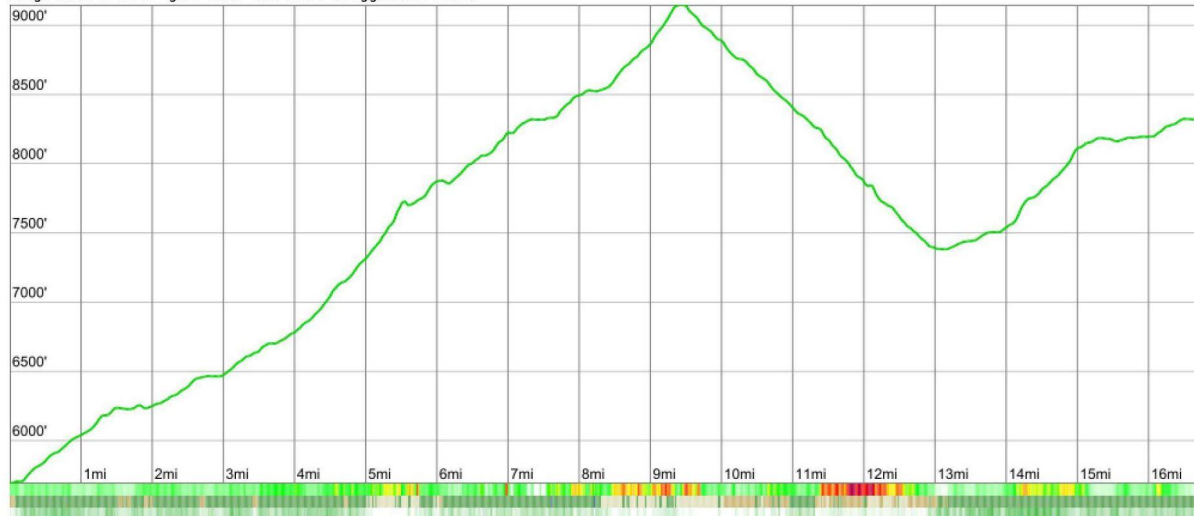


Day 3 - Baron Creek to Cramer Lake, 16.8 miles



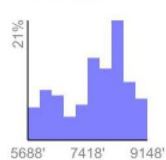
Sawtooth Grand Loop - Day 3

range 5686' to 9147' gain 4573' loss 1942' exaggeration 10.3x



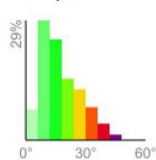
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



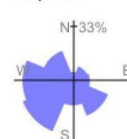
Min 5688'
Avg 7631'
Max 9148'
Delta 3460'

Slope

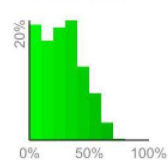


Min 0°
Avg 17°
Max 46°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Forest 70%
Grassland 15%
Shrub 14%







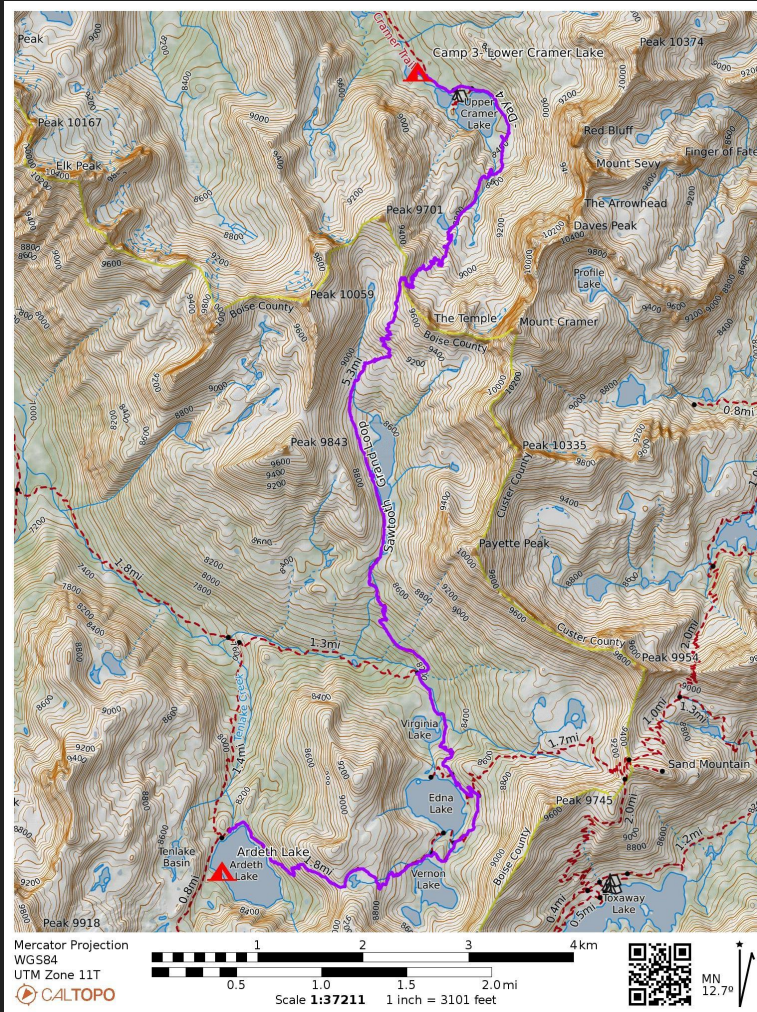








Day 4 - Cramer Lake to Ardeth Lake, 10.6 miles



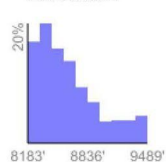
Sawtooth Grand Loop - Day 4

range 8182' to 9488' gain 2165' loss 2234' exaggeration 17.1x



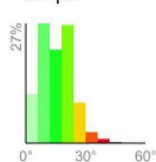
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



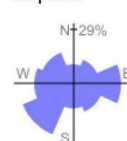
Min 8183'
Avg 8624'
Max 9489'
Delta 1306'

Slope

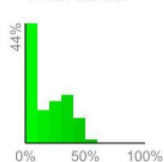


Min 2°
Avg 15°
Max 42°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Forest 49%
Grassland 28%
Shrub 16%
Barren 5%
Water 1%

















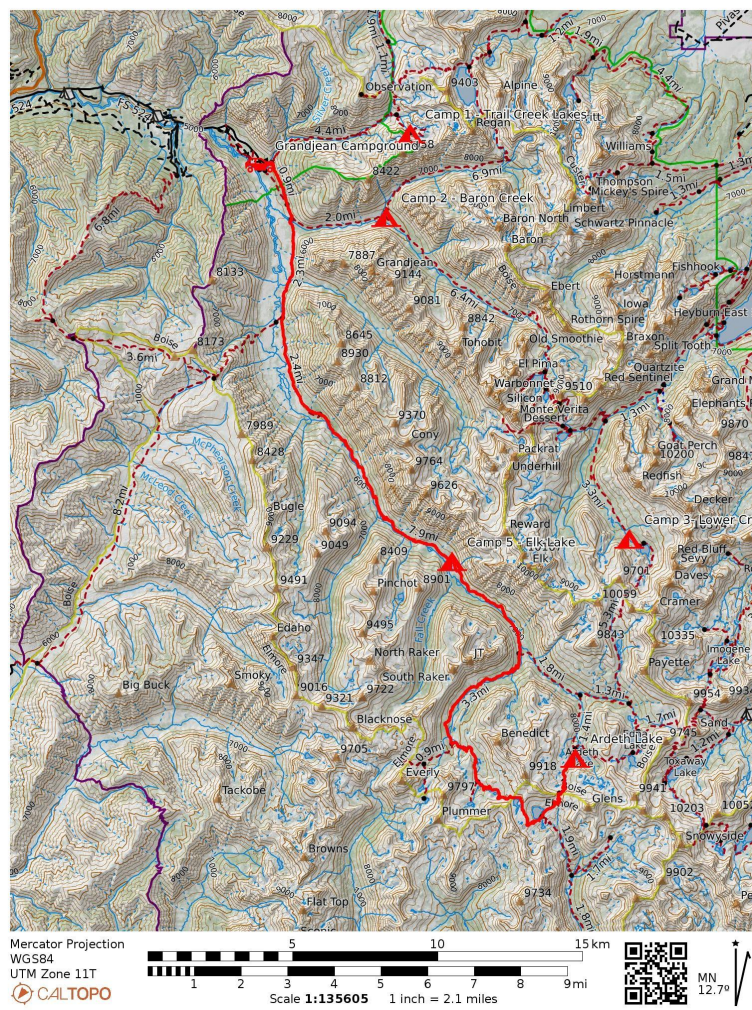








Day 5 - Ardeth Lake to Grandjean Campground, 25.9 miles



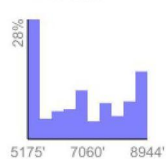
Grand Sawtooth Loop Day 5 - a long day ending with thunder and lightning

range 5174' to 8944' gain 1719' loss 4780' exaggeration 14.5x



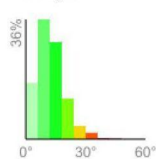
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



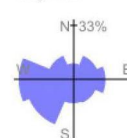
Min 5175'
Avg 6865'
Max 8944'
Delta 3768'

Slope

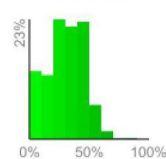


Min 1°
Avg 12°
Max 44°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Forest 77%
Shrub 14%
Grassland 9%

















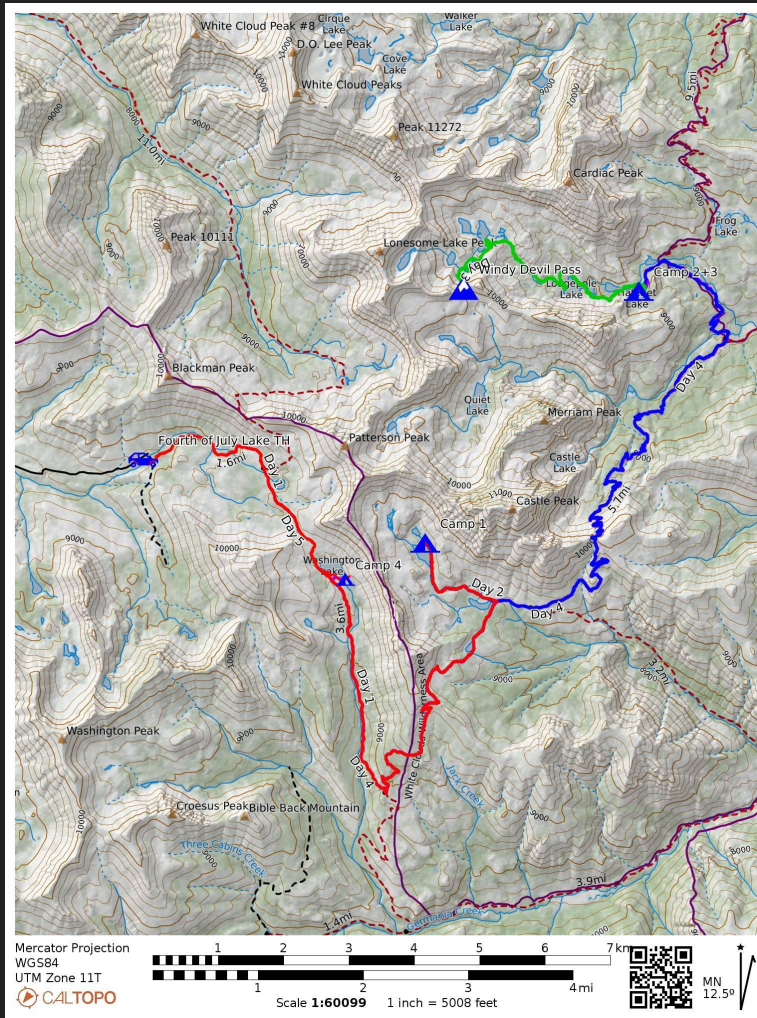


Can this trip be done in an electric car?

1. Probably
2. From Boise
 - a. It's about 206 miles roundtrip from Boise, which has lots of chargers
 - i. My electric car has a 320 mile range
 - ii. Battery loss during backpack about 3%
 - b. Possible emergency chargers in Couch, Idaho, on route
 - c. Or return via Stanley, Idaho, which is 59 miles from the trailhead, which has level 2 chargers
3. From Hailey, Idaho
 - a. Level 3 chargers in Hailey priced at 19 cents per Kwh
 - b. 334 miles round trip from Hailey to Grandjean Campground
 - c. But charging options in Stanley, which is on route
4. Adapters
 - a. Need CSS adapter for Hailey Level 3 chargers
 - b. Need NEMA 14-50 adapter for Stanley

Questions?

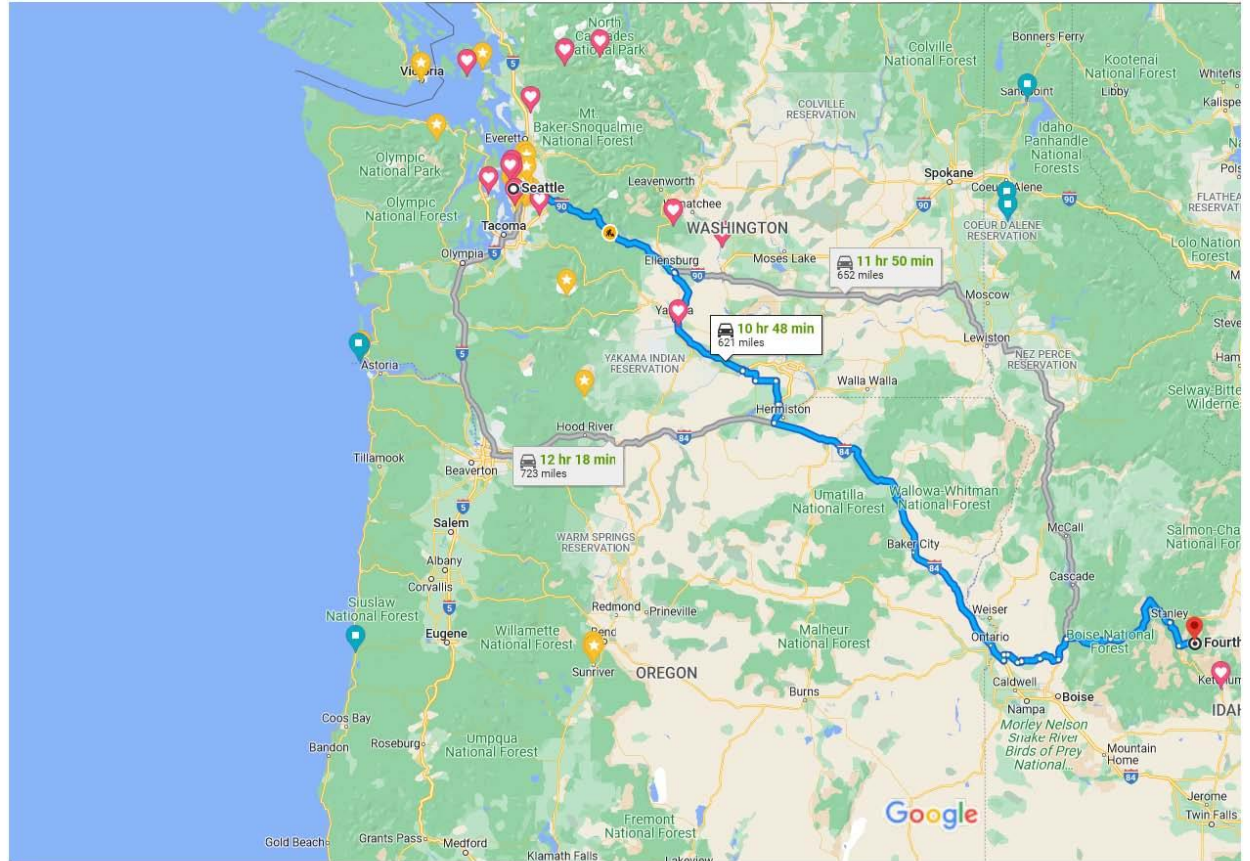
White Clouds August 15-19, 2022



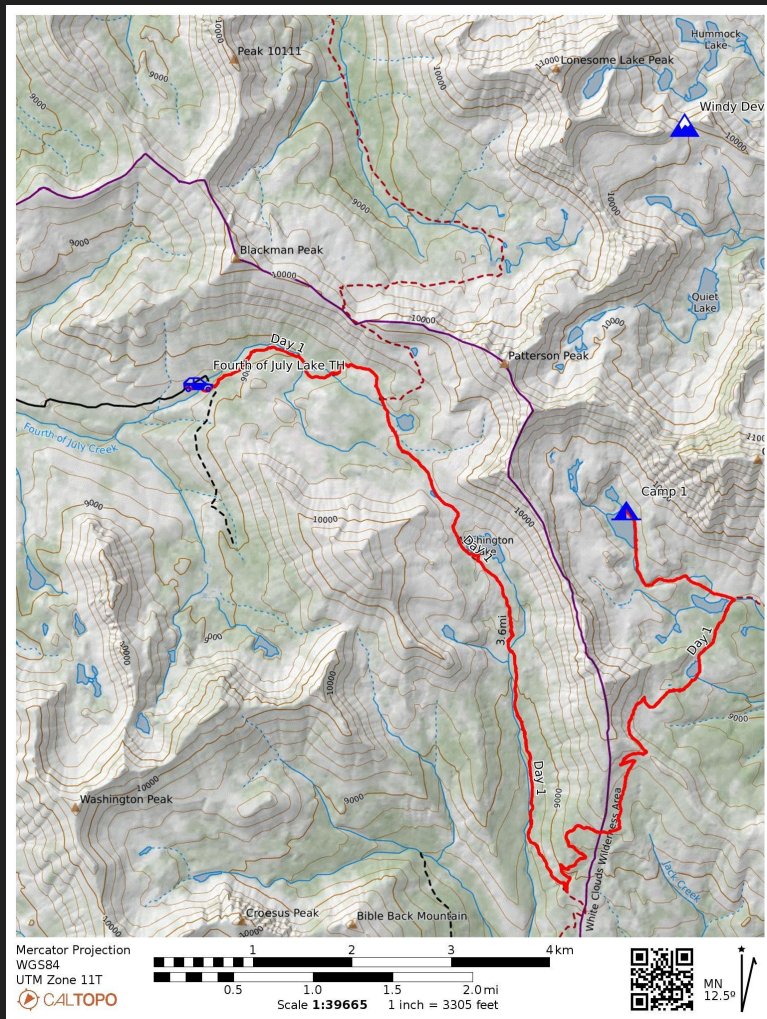
Driving to White Clouds trailhead

Google Maps

Seattle, Washington to Fourth of July Trailhead, Stanley, ID Drive 621 miles, 10 hr 48 min
83278



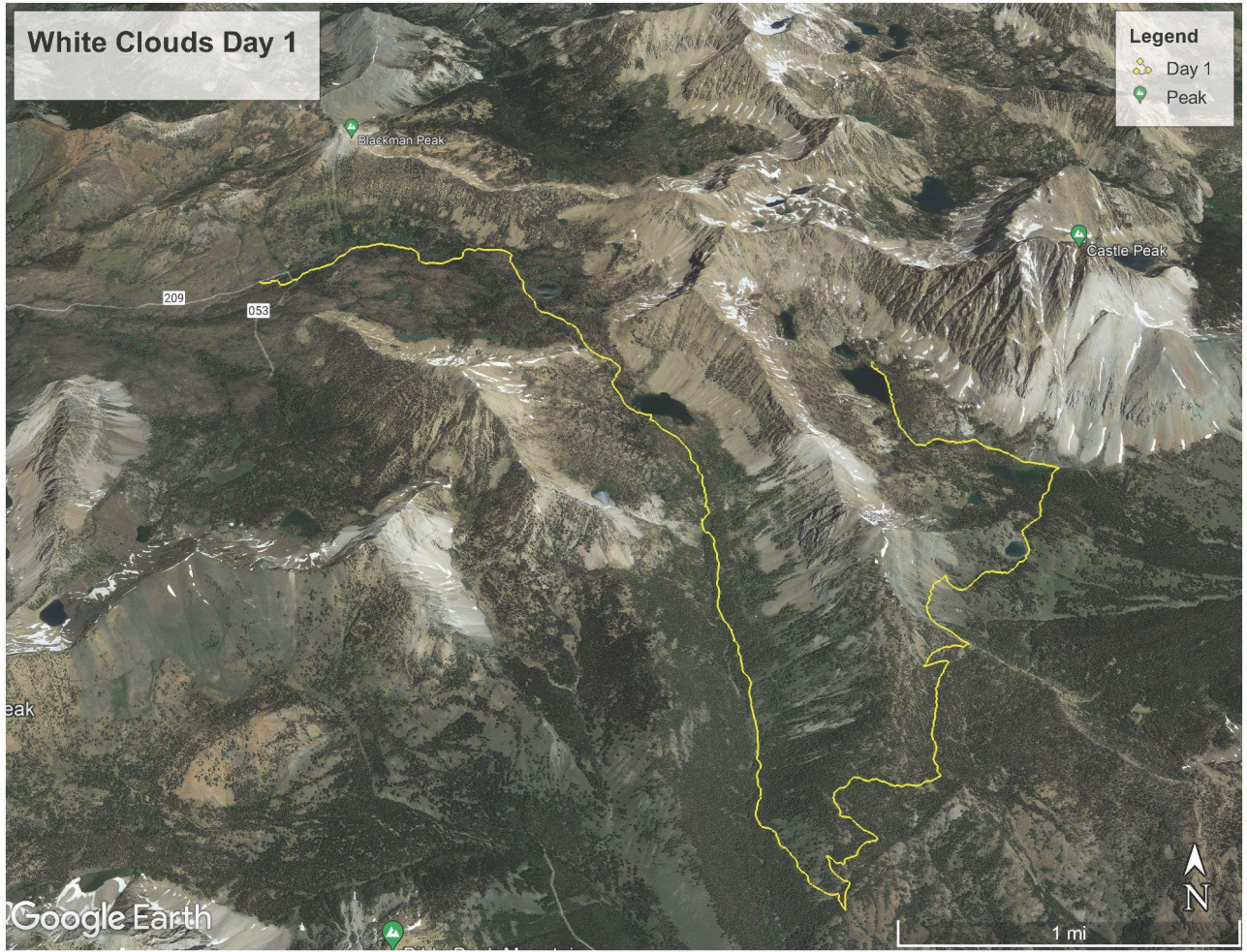
White Clouds Day 1 - Fourth of July trailhead to Upper Chamberlain Lake, 10.3 miles



White Clouds Day 1

Legend

- Day 1
- Peak



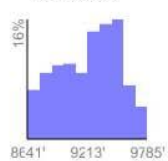
Day 1

range 8638' to 9783' gain 2313' loss 1594' exaggeration 18.9x



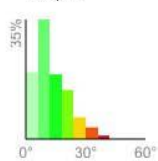
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



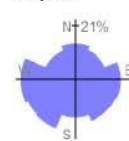
Min 8671'
Avg 9222'
Max 9785'
Delta 1114'

Slope

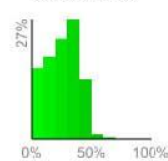


Min 0°
Avg 13°
Max 41°

Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover

Forest 79%
Shrub 12%
Grassland 7%

FOURTH OF JULY CK TRAILHEAD

WHITE CLOUD MOUNTAINS

Please Take a Minute
to Read These Messages



Be a Good Guest

Group Size Limit

Group size is limited to 12 people.
Large educational groups must be escorted by a ranger or park biologist.

When Nature Calls

Don't urinate inside. Use the toilet.
Pack out what you pack in.

No Campfires on the Following Lakes:

Chapel Lake, Crystal Lake, Indian Lake, Lake
Catherine, Pine Lake, Lake Louise, Lake
Catherine, and Lake Louise.

What to Expect in the Open Mountains

Expect to see a lot of wildlife.
Please don't feed them. It can harm them and
change their behavior. Please don't touch them.



Bear
COURTESY

Read your back-
country permit
carefully and
follow all rules
and regulations.
Don't feed
wildlife. Feeding
wildlife is illegal
and can harm
wildlife.



Please use stock the areas at
Bentley Lake, Lake Louise, Lake Louise,
Pine Lake, Pine Lake, Lake Louise,
and Lake Louise.

Don't walk directly in front of your horse or
don't enter from within 100 feet of him.
Always use proper riding technique.
Bring and use hand signals for lead.
No touching or leaning.

Enjoy Your Ride

Mountain Bikers

• No alcohol
• Don't drink and ride
• No parking on trails
• Yield to hikers
• Yield to equestrians

Motorcycle Riders

• Don't drink and ride
• Don't drink and ride
• Don't drink and ride
• Don't drink and ride
• Don't drink and ride

Respect Wilderness Boundaries

Sawtooth National Recreation Area
Caring for the land and Society's legacy



SAWTOOTH National Recreation Area









CECIL D.
ANDRUS
WHITE CLOUDS
WILDERNESS
SAWTOOTH
National
Forest





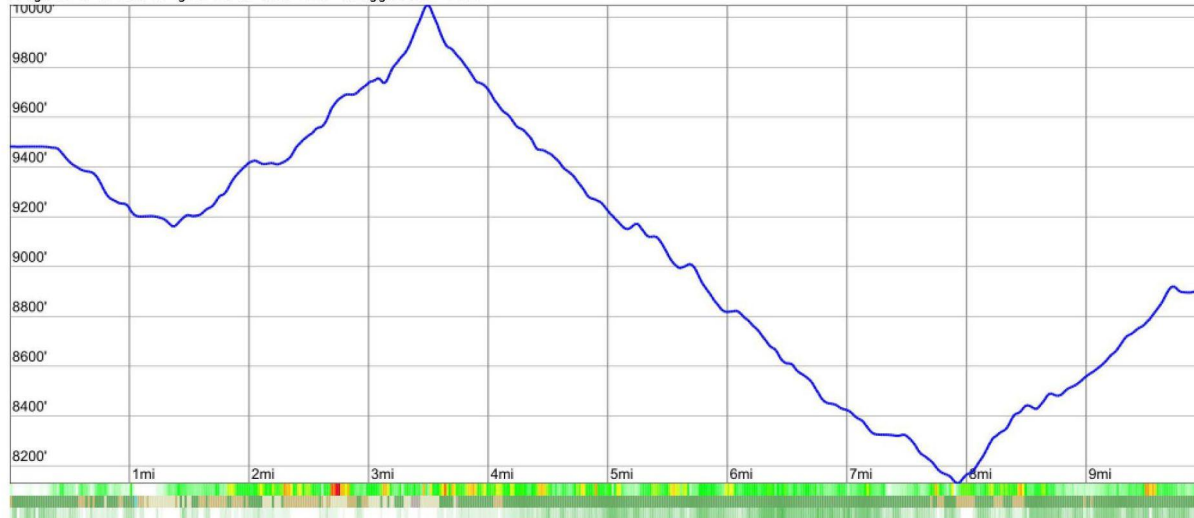


White Clouds Day 2 - Upper Chamberlain Lake to Hatchet Lake, 10 miles

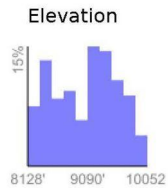


Day 2

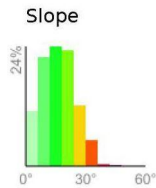
range 8127' to 10049' gain 1818' loss 2405' exaggeration 11.0x



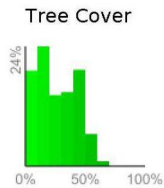
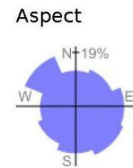
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)



Min 8128'
Avg 9060'
Max 10052'
Delta 1923'



Min 0°
Avg 16°
Max 42°



Min 0%
Avg 16%
Max 42%

Land Cover

- Forest 72%
- Shrub 16%
- Grassland 10%















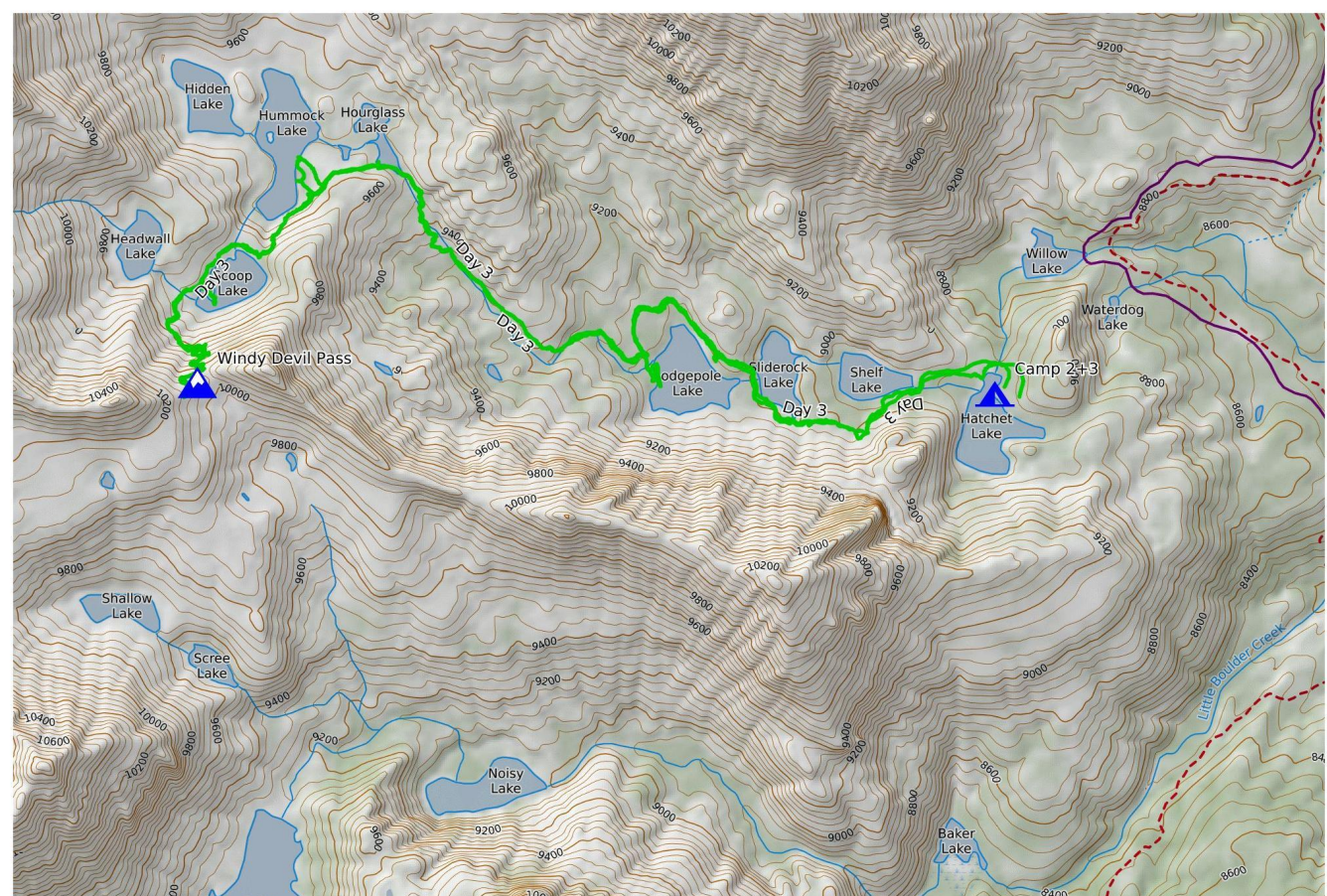




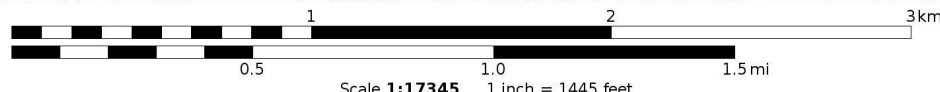




White Clouds Day 3 - Hatchet Lake to Windy Devil Pass through Boulder Chain Lakes, 8 miles



Mercator Projection
WGS84
UTM Zone 11T
 CALTOPO



MN
12.5°

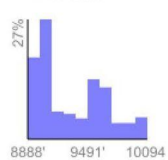
Day 3

range 8888' to 10092' gain 1552' loss 1581' exaggeration 13.9x



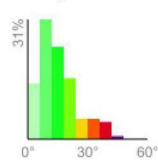
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



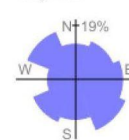
Min 8888'
Avg 9322'
Max 10094'
Delta 1206'

Slope

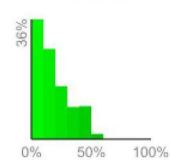


Min 0°
Avg 15°
Max 43°

Aspect



Tree Cover

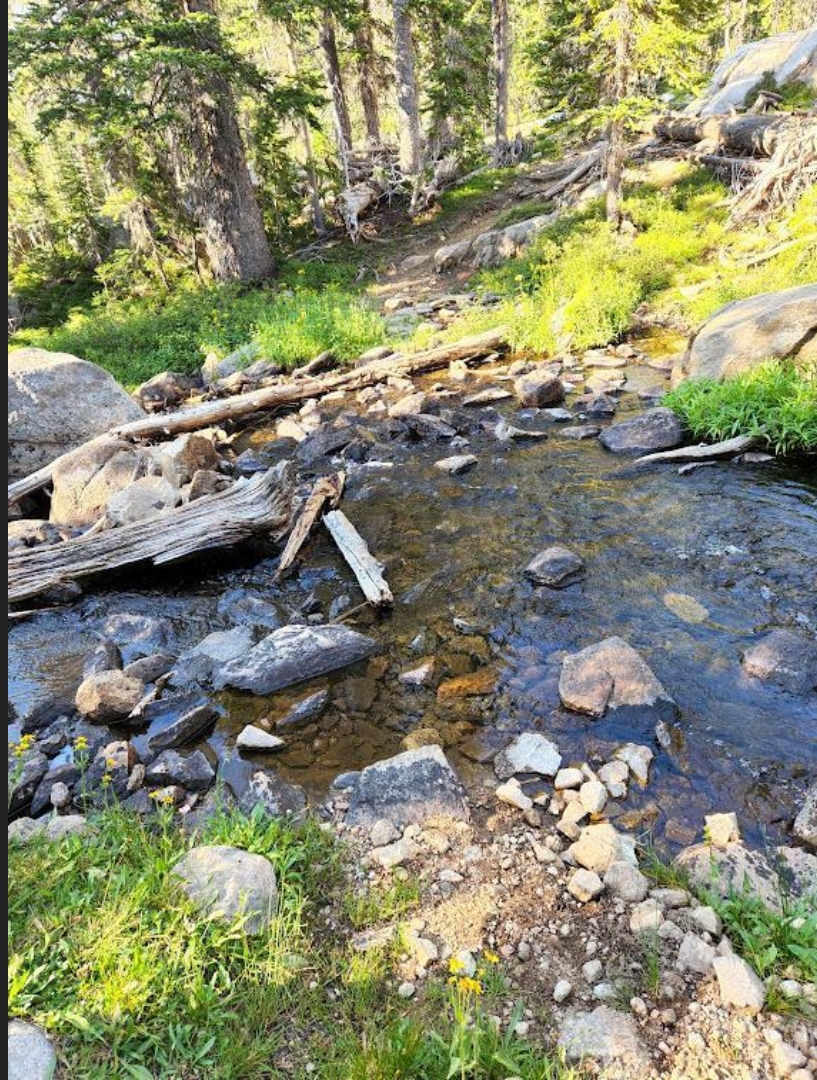


Land Cover

Forest 50%
Grassland 25%
Shrub 18%
Water 7%





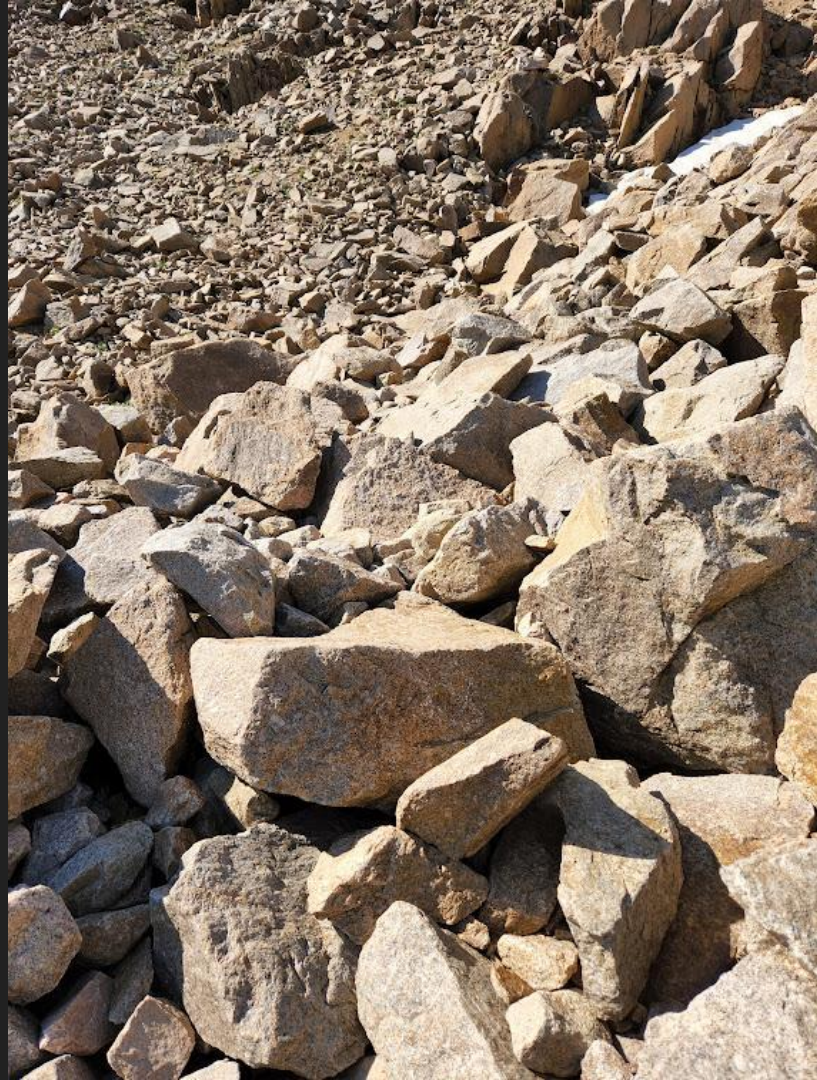












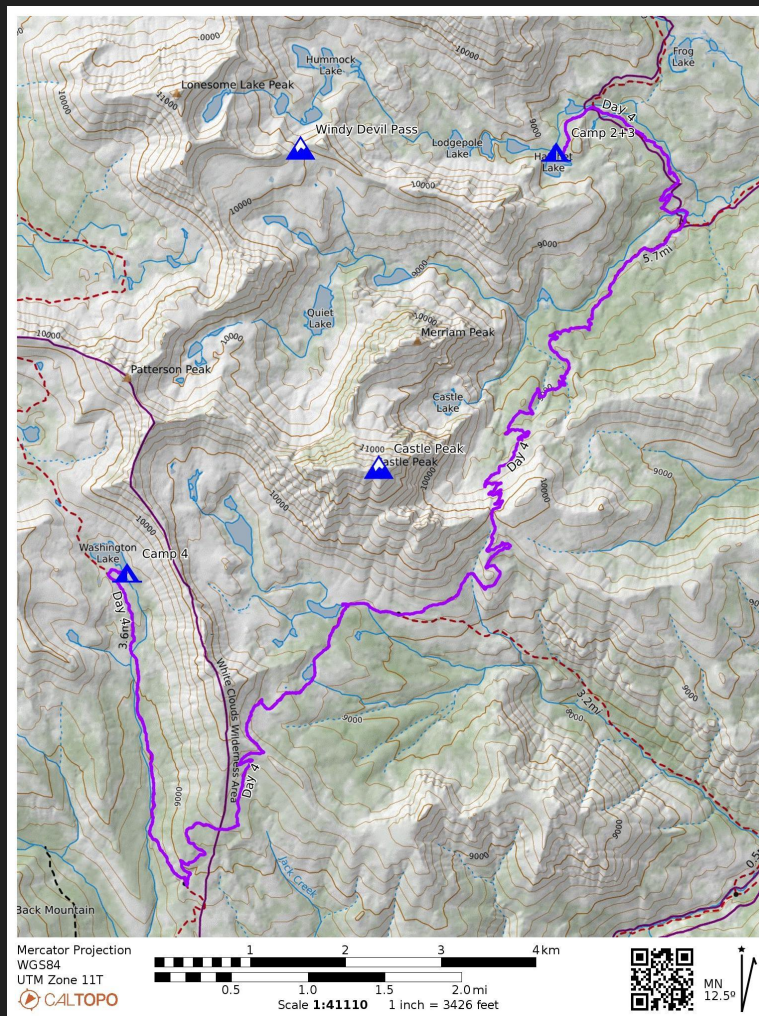






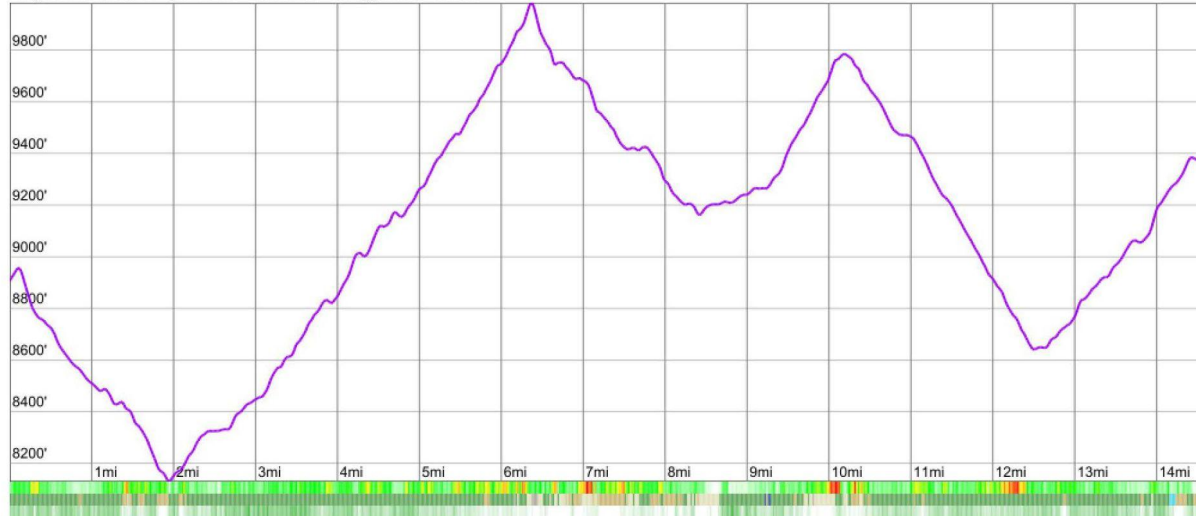


White Clouds Day 4 - Hatchet Lake to Washington Lake, 14.6 miles



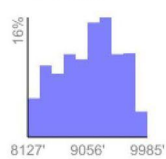
Day 4

range 8127' to 9984' gain 3419' loss 2956' exaggeration 16.6x

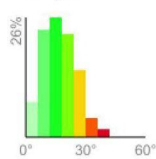


Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

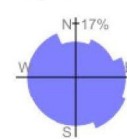
Elevation



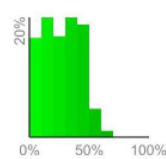
Slope



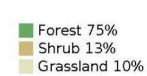
Aspect



Tree Cover



Land Cover















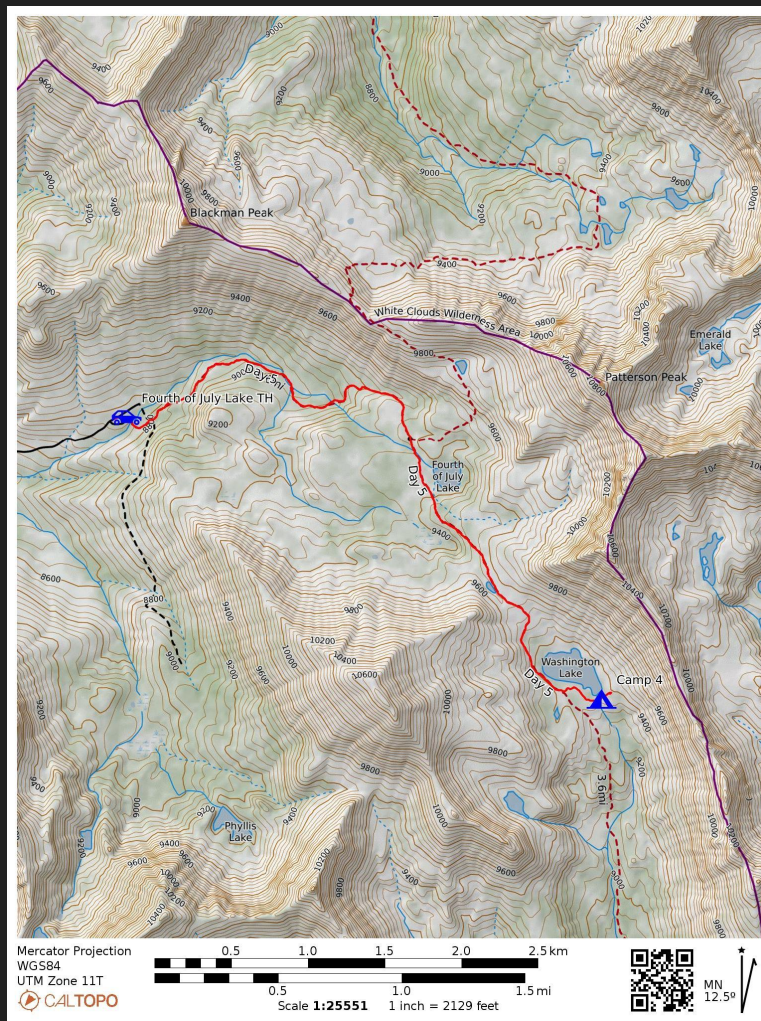








White Clouds Day 5 - Washington Lake to Fourth of July trailhead, 3.3 miles



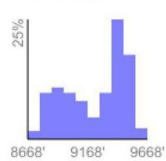
Day 5

range 8760' to 9570' gain 259' loss 869' exaggeration 8.7x



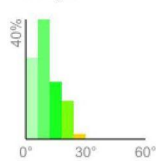
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Elevation



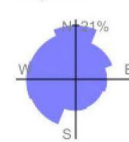
Min 8763'
Avg 9229'
Max 9573'
Delta 810'

Slope

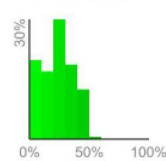


Min 0°
Avg 10°
Max 27°

Aspect

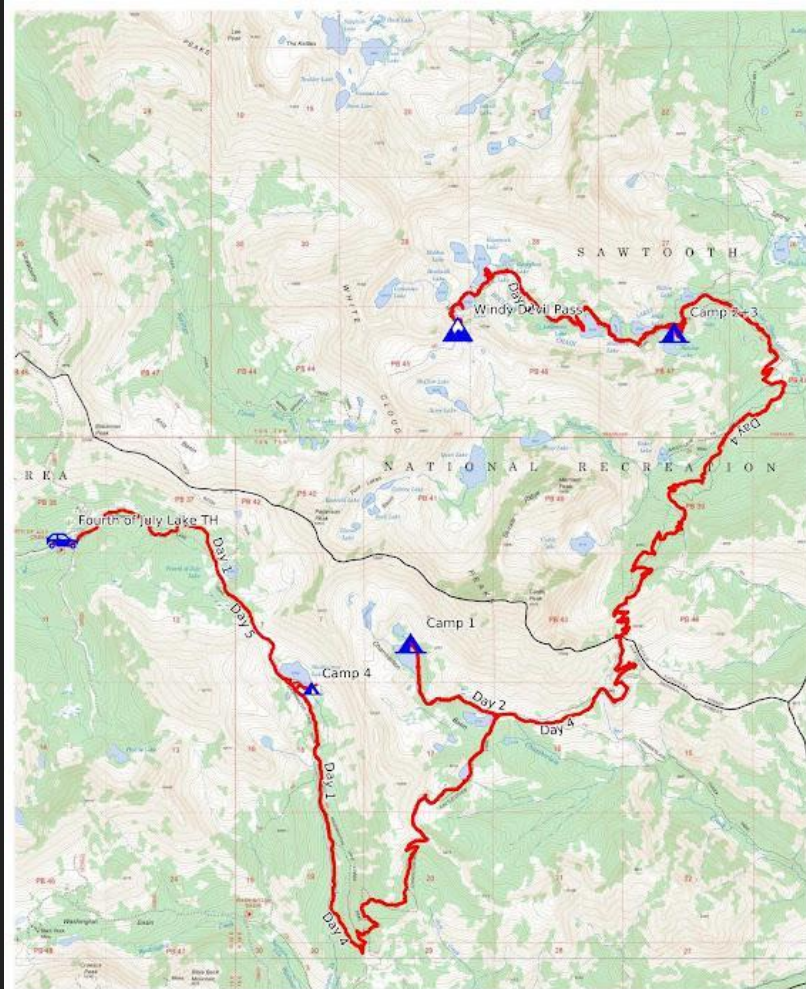


Tree Cover

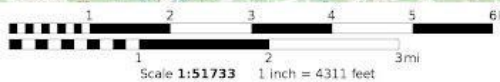


Land Cover

Forest 73%
Shrub 20%
Grassland 6%

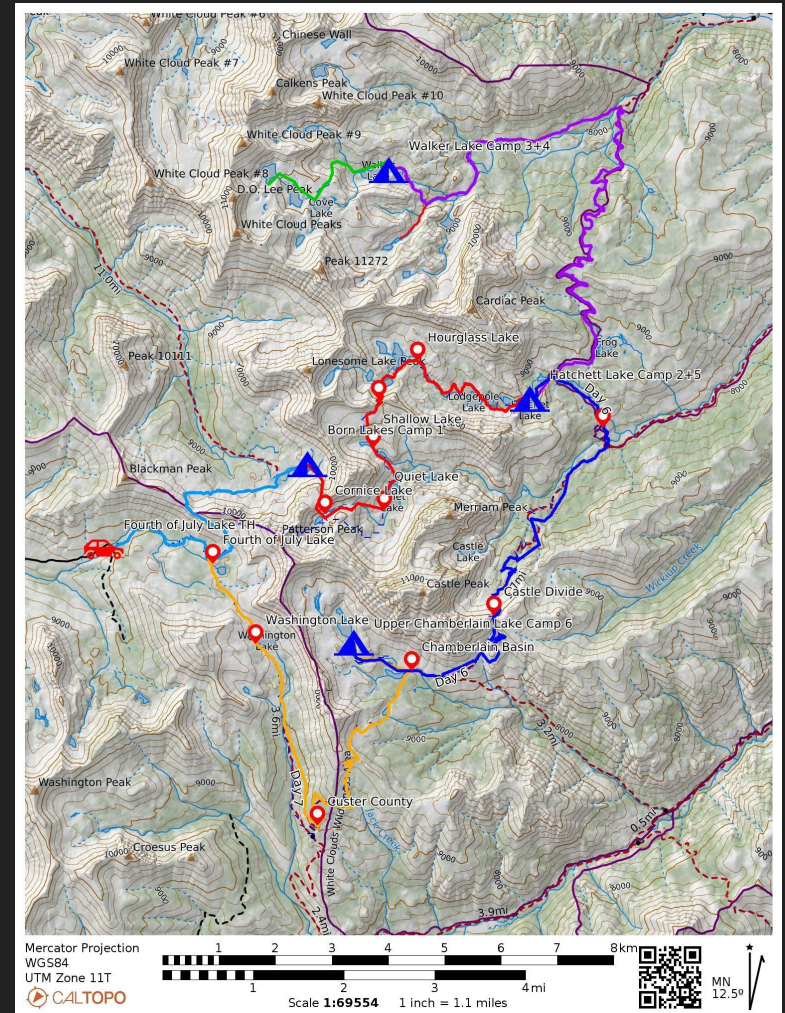


Mercator Projection
WGS84
UTM Zone 11T
 CALTOPO



White Clouds alternative route

1. Route I originally posted on Mountaineers website for July 2022, cancelled due to discussion with Ranger about late snow at 2 passes, and rescheduled to August 14-20, 2022; Can see detailed description on website
2. Includes 2 lake basins
 - a. Boulder Chain Lakes (which I did visit)
 - b. Big Boulder Lakes
 - c. Includes off-trail section from Antz Basin to Born Lakes
 - i. Steep descent, varying reports of difficulty



Can this trip be done in an electric car?

1. Probably
2. From Boise?
 - a. It's about 316 miles roundtrip from Boise, which has lots of chargers
 - i. My electric car has a 320 mile range
 - ii. Battery loss during backpack about 3%
 - b. Probably not possible
 - c. Possible emergency chargers in Couch, Idaho, on route
 - d. Or stop in Stanley, Idaho, which is 59 miles from the trailhead, which has level 2 chargers
3. From Hailey, Idaho
 - a. Level 3 chargers in Hailey priced at 19 cents per Kwh
 - b. 136 miles round trip from Hailey to Grandjean Campground
 - c. Also, charging options in Stanley, which is short detour from direct route
4. What I did
 - a. Charged to 100% in Bellevue, Idaho
 - b. After backpack, drove directly to Ontario and charged.
 - c. 252 total miles
5. Adapters
 - a. Need CSS adapter for Hailey Level 3 chargers
 - b. Need NEMA 14-50 adapter for Stanley
6. Suggest you bring a spare tire; sharp rocks on 10 mile gravel access road



Logistics

1. When to go
 - a. Sawtooth Grand Loop
 - i. Lorain's guide book says July to mid-October
 - ii. We did it July 24-29, 2020. No snow encountered.
 - b. White Clouds
 - i. Lorain's guide books say mid-July to early October
 - ii. I originally scheduled it for late July, but changed to mid-August based on calls with Ranger
 - c. Confirm with Ranger in Stanley; very helpful
2. Maps
 - a. Sawtooth & White Cloud Mountains Trail Map Map (July 1, 2020) by Adventure Maps
3. Guide books
 - a. Backpacking Idaho, From Alpine Lakes to Desert Canyons (2nd edition), Douglas Lorain
 - b. Trails of the Sawtooth and Boulder-White Cloud Mountains (6th edition), Margaret Fuller
4. Permits
 - a. Self-issue at trailhead; no quotas

5. Suggested gear
 - a. Standard backpacking gear
 - i. Keep it light - long distances, higher elevations, lots of ascent
 - b. Bear cans?
 - i. Not required; I took Ursack
 - c. Poles for stream crossings
 - d. Footwear - I used low light hikers
6. Possible Gateway towns, places to stay going to or from trip
 - a. Sawtooth Grand Loop
 - i. I did not stay in any towns before or after; COVID-19
 1. Other 3 stayed in lodge - Haven Hot Springs, in Lowman, Idaho
 - ii. Sacajawea Hot Springs is a natural hot spring, short distance from the trailhead
 - b. White Clouds
 - i. I stayed the night in Bellevue, Idaho
 - ii. Other options: Sun Valley, Hailey, Stanley

Are these good trips for you?

Pros

1. Fantastic scenery
2. No quotas or permit limits
3. Good camping options
4. Plenty of water
5. Lots of swimmable lakes
6. Bugs not bad in July or August

Cons

1. Weekends may be crowded
 - a. I did White Clouds Monday to Friday; Friday at Washington Lake was crowded
2. Long drive (but less than Sierras)
3. High elevations, up to 10,000'
4. Motorcycles allowed on part of White Clouds route

Questions?

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Mountaineers
Walking the Wild event:**

700 Miles of Desert on the Pacific Crest Trail with Karen Altergott

June 7, 2023 – 7 to 8:30PM on Zoom

Tickets at www.mountaineers.org/events

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