

COLD SPRINGS TRAIL SYSTEM

Length: Approx. 11 miles

Difficulty: L1 – L2

Elevation: 5840' to 6025'

Access: This trail system can be accessed by driving northeast on Hwy 140 to MP 41. Turn left (north) on FS Road 3651 and continue for 10 miles to the trailhead. You will come to some intersecting side roads, but stay on the main road all the way to the end. (This can be very dusty in the summertime.) The parking/camping area makes a loop for easy turning. You can back into empty sites or park along the road headed back out.

The trail that takes off from the trailhead is the Cold Springs Trail #3710. About 0.7 miles the South Rock Creek Trail #3709 takes off to the right. You can go either way to make a loop. This will describe the clockwise loop which takes a riding time of about 4 hours.

Continue on the Cold Springs Trail to the left. This route climbs a gentle slope through Lodgepole Pine stands, and then gently climbs to its junction with the Sky Lakes Trail #3762. Turn right on the Sky Lakes Trail and travel about ½ mile. (Turning left will take you to the PCT.)

On the left you will find the Isherwood Trail #3729. (At this point you can make a short loop by staying on the Sky Lakes Trail, going between the Heavenly Twin Lakes, intersecting with the South Rock Creek trail and back to the trailhead.) Turn left onto the Isherwood Trail. This trail winds through a mosaic of old growth forest and ponds bordered with wildflowers. Then it climbs a scenic ridge above Isherwood Lake twisting through tranquil scenery before connecting back into the Sky Lake Trail.

The Isherwood Trail ends at an intersection with the Sky Lakes Trail. (Again, for a shorter loop you can go to the right, connect with the Rock Creek Trail and go back to the trailhead.) Turn left on the Sky Lake Trail and continue on, passing several small lakes, and then the much larger, Trapper Lake, on the left. Here you will see the Cherry Creek Trail intersection on the right and just past there the Donna Lake Trail also goes to the right. (For a little side trip you can take the Donna Lake Loop, about 1 mile). Stay on the main trail to the left. After you pass Trapper Lake you will see our destination, Margurette Lake. You will also come upon another intersection with the Divide Trail, but stay to the right. There are numerous spots to tie up and have lunch.

To return to the trailhead, go back out the way you just came in, down to the Isherwood Trail intersection. Continue straight ahead on the Sky Lakes Trail. You will go past the Heavenly Twin Lakes and come to a tricky intersection between the lakes. (If you go between the lakes you missed the intersection! The scenery is so beautiful it's easy to do!) Make a sharp left turn onto the South Rock Creek Trail. Follow this trail back to the intersection with the Cold Springs Trail and then back to the trailhead.

