

# **Recommended Day Hikes**

## **Orleans, Ukonom, and Lower Trinity Ranger Districts**

### **Six Rivers National Forest**

(Revised September 29, 2021)

This document is made available to the public at [KlamathMountainTrail.us](http://KlamathMountainTrail.us) , where you can find additional information on trails in the Klamath Mountains of northern California.

**Note: Always inquire about current trail conditions before starting on any of these hikes.**

*The region-wide closure, of all national forests in California, has ended. However, as of this writing, closure orders remain in effect covering the Marble Mountain and Trinity Alps Wildernesses, and some adjoining lands. The expiration dates of the closures are subject to change, so previously-announced expiration dates have little meaning. Check with the U.S. Forest Service for the up-to-date status.*

*As of this writing, the 2021 McCash Fire has burned over the areas of most of the described trails within the Marble Mountain Wilderness, with the notable exception of Wooley Creek Trail from the trailhead to Bridge Creek. Please take this into account when making plans for visits in late 2021 or 2022.*

*Virtually every mile of trail inside the Trinity Alps Wilderness boundary within the scope of this document burned over in the 2020 Red Salmon Fire. There were areas of major torching and stand-replacing crown fires, which have left a continuing hazard of fire-weakened snags falling--especially in windy, rainy, or snowy weather, but they may fall without warning even on sunny, calm days. Areas of unstable soil and concealed cavities from burned out roots may also exist along trail treads. Sections of trail that were previously brushy are likely to have many hardened, burned branch ends projecting into the trail right of way. Please be guided accordingly. Choose campsites with care, keeping in mind the danger of limbs falling from dead or weakened trees. Modest rehabilitation efforts were undertaken in the autumn of 2020, but the winter is likely to have resulted in many snags falling across trails, and sloughing of the trail tread in many places. Further rehabilitation was done on some of the trails in summer 2021, but we lack detailed information on what work was completed.*

Also available at [KlamathMountainTrails.us](http://KlamathMountainTrails.us) :

- o "Trail Conditions and Descriptions, Orleans R.D. Administered Areas of the Klamath Mountains, Six Rivers National Forest" (PDF file, frequently updated with trail condition information)
- o A detailed mileage chart for trails in the Ukonom R.D. portion of the Marble Mountain Wilderness.
- o Fowler Cabin Journal, 2003-2018 (PDF file)

o KML files with accurate paths for trails (for use with Google Earth)

Compiled by Chris Valle-Riestra. This is not an official U.S. Forest Service document.

## **ORLEANS RANGER DISTRICT:**

### **Fish Lake Trail (#4E54)**

The Fish Lake Campground is one of the most popular on the Six Rivers National Forest. The gently sloping terrain in this southern end of the Siskiyou Mountains supports a thick mixed evergreen forest with plenty of Douglas-fir, and, close to lakes and streams, Port Orford-cedar. In this drainage, Port Orford-cedar has, unfortunately, largely succumbed to a pathogen that is always fatal to the species when introduced into a watershed. Research and propagation efforts are in progress, to produce a pathogen-resistant strain. The Fish Lake Trail is a short path around the lake. This recreation site also has camping, boating, and fishing opportunities. This trail connects to others, described below, for expanded day hike opportunities.

Approx. length: 1.0 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 35 minutes

### **Blue Lake Trail (#4E56)**

This loop trail goes around Blue Lake, which features a Douglas-fir and Port Orford-cedar forest and has fishing opportunities. A newly-constructed boardwalk crosses a boggy area. Blue Lake usually has fewer visitors than Fish Lake.

Approx. length: 0.5 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 35 minutes

### **Red Mountain Lake Trail (#4E55)**

This trail connects Fish Lake and Blue Lake. Hikers can start from either end. The trail passes Red Mountain Lake, which is only accessed by hiking. The environment is similar to that at Fish Lake and Blue Lake. There is an alternate route for the lower part of the trail, the "Old Red Mountain Lake Trail." All of these routes can be combined for a longer hike.

Approx. length, round trip: 4.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 35 minutes

### **Bluff Creek Historic Trail (#5E01)**

This trail connects Highway 96 near E-Ne-Nuk Campground with Slate Creek Road. The Highway 96 end is clearly marked by a sign. The far end has no sign. Starting from Highway 96, the trail climbs a short set of switchbacks through a patch of whitethorn ceanothus on serpentine soil, then enters woods. After the initial climb, the trail is almost level. There is a fine, attractive stand of old growth Douglas-fir along the way. It is possible to use a car shuttle to cut the length of the hike in half. This trail is suitable for year-round use.

Approx. length, round trip: 3.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 12 minutes

### **Prospect Trail (#6E02)**

This trail passes through a mixed evergreen forest and some interesting serpentine bunchgrass prairies. Long stretches of the trail follow old ditches that were used in early days to carry water for use in hydraulic mining. There are other relics of mining activity to be seen. Well along the upper half of the trail, there are good views of the canyon of the Klamath River above Orleans. The trail is suitable for year-round use.

The upper trailhead is shortly past the 6-mile sign, on the right side of the G-O Rd. (called "Eyeseed Rd." on the highway sign at the Highway 96 junction). There is a new, large road sign marking the parking area. The trail departs from the southeastern corner of the parking area. After closely following a former ditch for a long distance, the trail turns to the left and begins a long, steep descent, very steep at times, switchbacking to the lower trailhead on Ishi Pishi Rd. A wooden post sign, visible from the road, marks this trailhead. It is a short distance north of the county refuse disposal site. Prospect Trail offers an excellent opportunity for a downhill one-way hike using a car shuttle.

Be aware that knee-high poison oak is abundant along the top section of the trail.

Approx. length (one way): 4.5 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 5 minutes to Ishi Pishi Rd. trailhead, 12 minutes to G-O Rd. trailhead

### **Boundary Trail (#4E50)**

The Boundary Trail is an excellent introduction to the wild and rugged high country of the Siskiyou Mountains. It offers good opportunities for solitude. A short hike, but one with considerable elevation gain, takes one to a high tarn located near the first pass on the east side of the Siskiyou Mountains crest. This climbs through serpentine outcrops, and offers views of a diverse forest, distant mountains and river canyons, gnarled Jeffrey pines, and the features known as Turtle Rock

and Chimney Rock. The trail is maintained as far as the first pass to a moderate standard, passable to hikers and stock.

The trail after the pass at the high tarn is primitive. It crosses an area burned in a wildfire several years ago. Good routefinding skills may be needed in places. The trail first descends very steeply to two meadow crossings, then ascends extremely steeply to a junction with the disappearing Buck Camp Ridge Trail, and then to a ridge south of Sawtooth Mountain. It then descends, at a rate beyond extremely steeply, into Elk Hole. Do not be fooled by the nominally short length of the trail. A hike to Elk Hole and back will take all day. This is for experienced hikers.

To get to the trailhead, follow the G-O Rd. to near its end, and turn left on a spur into Elk Valley. This spur is subject to closure during the rainy season and well into spring to combat spread of the Port Orford-cedar pathogen. Inquire about the road status at the Orleans Ranger District office. In most years, it opens June 1, and closes after the first one inch fall of rain in autumn. The last part of the road into Elk Valley is rough. High clearance vehicles are strongly recommended. Going north from where the end of the road in Elk Valley crosses Blue Creek (possibly dry), watch for a wooden sign high in a tree to your left marking the start of the trail.

Please be aware that during late summer months, members of native American peoples with homelands on the area's rivers frequently visit Elk Valley and the nearby "high country," including the southern portion of the Boundary Tr., for spiritual purposes. Please do not approach other persons you may see in these areas, as they may wish to remain in complete isolation. Please pass through quickly and quietly.

Approx. length, to high tarn, round trip: 3.0 miles

Approx. length, to Elk Hole, round trip: 7.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 60 minutes

### **East Fork Blue Creek Trail (#4E09)**

This hidden jewel offers likely solitude, immersion in a diverse mixed evergreen forest, views of mid-elevation ridges of the Siskiyou Mountains, and a lovely creek with dipping opportunities in cool pools. As one approaches East Fork Blue Creek, one enters a dark, primeval grove with large Port Orford-cedars (some of the best on the Six Rivers National Forest) and even larger specimens of Douglas-fir. Don't miss the rhododendron bloom in early June!

The trail begins by descending a steep series of switchbacks through a regenerating forest on a decades-old cut block. As it enters old growth forest, it intersects an older section of trail (abandoned and almost indiscernible from that point east), and continues west high above the creek, finally descending gradually. The trail then crosses the creek five times. Watch closely for the crossing points, as they may be obscure. In summer, the crossings are ordinarily no more than knee deep, and the water not too swift. The crossings generally require wading at any time of year, so bring wetable footwear. Along the trail sections between the creek crossings, there are several large down logs to scramble over. Past the last creek crossing, a continuation of the trail known as the

Forks of Blue Trail, faint in many places and somewhat overgrown, begins a long ascent of the ridge to the north.

Remember that you will have about a 1200 vertical foot climb at the end of the day to return to your car, and budget time accordingly!

The Nickowitz Peak Rd. from the G-O Rd. to the trailhead is built to a standard suitable for passenger cars. However, rocks and logs are frequently dislodged from road cuts over the winter. Especially early in the season, before there has been time for maintenance, be very cautious of obstacles on both the paved and unpaved sections of the road, and be prepared to do some self-service clearing. The Nickowitz Peak Rd. is subject to closure during the rainy season and well into spring to combat spread of the Port Orford-cedar pathogen. Inquire about the road status at the Orleans Ranger District office. In most years, it opens June 1, and closes after the first one inch fall of rain in autumn.

Approx. length, to last creek crossing, round trip: 6.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 65 minutes

### **Forks of Blue Trail (#4E07)**

This ridgetop trail in the Siskiyou Wilderness mostly passes through an open-canopied forest with a variety of conifer species, including some fine specimens of Port Orford-cedar. There are great views of mid-elevation ridges of the Siskiyou Mountains, including Peak 8 and Doctor Rock in the "high country" sacred to local native American peoples. This is one of the least-known trails in the Orleans area, and offers almost certain solitude.

The trail begins at a signboard visible from the G-O Rd. It undulates through forest and meadows, dropping gently and then cresting at a scenic viewpoint on a serpentine bald, a mile and a quarter in. From here, the distant views of the high Trinity Alps and innumerable other ranges are not to be missed. The trail then drops and crosses a boggy area supporting a stand of Port Orford-cedar. After a further short traverse of the mountainside, the trail drops sharply to a saddle, climbs steeply back up to crest, and then follows a prominent ridge line to the south. Near the high point approximately five miles in, the trail enters an area burned over in the Forks Fire in the summer of 2017. Passing out of the fire footprint, the trail descends a small wooded valley. Watch closely for the point at which the trail veers west out of the valley. It then crosses a brushy slope, and begins a long descent to East Fork Blue Creek. In a few spots with knee-high brush, the trail along this last section may be hard to see. Use of a good GPS track is suggested. An accurate path in KML format is available at [klamathmountaintrails.us](http://klamathmountaintrails.us). Topographic maps show some important details of the trail location inaccurately. After the first crossing of the creek, the trail is known as East Fork Blue Creek Tr.--see the separate description of that trail.

Forks of Blue Trail, combined with East Fork Blue Creek Trail, offers a great opportunity for a through hike with a car shuttle. In the area of the high point, where the Forks Fire burned, there are

opportunities for off-trail explorations of regrowing knobcone pine stands, and of a couple of seasonal ponds shown on the topographic map.

Approx. length, including E. Fk. Blue Cr. Tr.: 10.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 50 minutes

### **Salmon Summit Trail (#6E03) and Red Cap Lake Trail**

The road approach is from Red Cap Rd., starting from Highway 96 just across the Klamath River bridge from the Orleans Ranger Station. The trail alternates between old growth forest and more open areas with long views. A little over halfway along the route, there is a trail junction, with the right hand fork leading to Red Cap Lake. Alternatively, one can follow the left fork, and then make a short cross country ascent of Salmon Mountain, the highest peak in Humboldt County. This may have snow early in the season. Salmon Mountain offers spectacular views of mountains and canyons in every direction. It is possible to make a longer loop hike by taking the Salmon Summit Tr. left at the fork, dropping to Red Cap Lake by way of the southern extension of the Red Cap Lake Tr., and then returning by way of the rest of the Red Cap Lake Tr. Parts of the trail on this longer route are rough, faint, and difficult to follow, with unmarked junctions.

Approx. length, to Red Cap Lake, round trip: 11.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 40 minutes

## **UKONOM RANGER DISTRICT:**

### **Wooley Creek Path**

Not to be confused with Wooley Creek Trail, Wooley Creek Path is a very short route furnishing access to Wooley Creek near its mouth. The path starts near the end of the stub of the Steinacher Creek Road, off an unpaved road loop at the ridgeline dividing the Salmon River and Wooley Creek watersheds. A sign at the start reads, "Creek Trail." The path is steep and has some very narrow, precarious spots. Use caution traveling with children, as there are sheer dropoffs. This is a lovely stretch of Wooley Creek in a deep canyon. Swimming and sunning are excellent in mid to late summer, after the water level goes down and the water temperature goes up. There are views of Black Mountain and Medicine Mountain up the creek canyon.

Approx. length: 0.2 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans: 20 minutes

### **Steinacher Trail (#5413 or 12W20)**

This short access to a cool, pretty glade along Steinacher Creek starts at the end of the stub of the Steinacher Creek Rd., near the start of Wooley Creek Path. It initially follows the route of the fully decommissioned road.

This is a great place to view the ongoing recovery of the forest following a full decommissioning project that aimed to restore the natural contours of the land. This road was built in 1968 with the idea of doing extensive logging in the Steinacher Creek watershed, but not a single tree was ever cut in a timber sale. The decommissioning project was completed in the 1990s, with the upper half accomplished by the Karuk Tribe under contract with the U.S. Forest Service. This returned nearly the entire Wooley Creek watershed to a wild state.

There are good views of the canyon of Wooley Creek. After leaving the old road bed, the trail descends into the ravine of the creek. Beware of poison oak along the last part of the trail.

For a longer day's recreating, a hike on Steinacher Trail can be combined with a swim at the end of the Wooley Creek Path, or in the Salmon River under the Steinacher Creek Rd. bridge.

Approx. length, round trip: 1.6 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 20 minutes

### **Orleans Mountain Trail (#7E16)**

The trail starts at the last flat spot to the right of the Nordheimer Creek Rd. about 100 feet from where that road leaves Salmon River Rd., just across from Nordheimer Campground. There is no sign. The first part of the trail makes an interesting short hike for those staying at the campground. The trail climbs steadily, initially up a set of switchbacks through attractive rocky barrens with wildflower displays in spring. Views of distant peaks open up. The trail then enters forest. Tan oak tops have fallen on the trail, making progress difficult past half a mile from the trailhead.

Approximate length, round trip: 1.0 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 40 minutes

### **Butler Mountain Trail--North**

This is part of the historic route up the Salmon River. From gold rush days until the construction of the Salmon River Road crossing the Grant Bluffs in the 1920s, the trail was the only access up river to reach Forks of Salmon, Sawyers Bar, and points beyond. One can see that portions of the trail remain deeply incised from the hooves of thousands of pack trains that once traveled the trail to reach mines and settlements up river.

There is no sign at the northern trailhead. Park 0.2 mile south of the Salmon River Road bridge that crosses Butler Creek, on the river side of the road, at a sign reading, "No Overnight Camping." The trail starts on the other side of the road, 30 feet up river (south), initially following a short unpaved road spur that climbs steeply. Where this road curves left, the trail turns to the right, and here a sign marks the direction of the trail. The first 0.6 mile of the trail borders private property, so please stay on the trail. After mostly traversing forest, the trail reaches a ridge with views up Butler Creek and across the river to Tom Payne and Portuguese Peaks. The trail continues to ascend, and after a total elevation gain of 1900 feet tops out at a saddle between the Butler Creek and Lewis Creek drainages. Part of the section of trail beginning a descent into Lewis Creek is quite overgrown at present, so that further progress is extremely difficult.

Approximate length, round trip: 4.2 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 25 minutes

### **Butler Mountain Trail--South (#7E15)**

The southern trailhead is easy to spot, with the trail switchbacking up a short, open slope across the road from a home next to the Salmon River, with a big green grassy area in front. About 1.5 miles of the trail are in passable condition. It ascends the canyon of Lewis Creek. There is the sound of the rushing stream below, and there are views of surrounding peaks. This part of the trail is attractive in spring. Be cautious of areas of narrow, sliding trail tread. Past the recently-cleared section, the trail becomes quite overgrown, though only for a short distance, and further progress is extremely difficult.

Approximate length, round trip: 3.3 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 35 minutes

### **Somes Mountain Trail (#6E05) and Salmon River Trail**

This is a pleasant walk with close views of the Salmon River, though one should beware of abundant knee-high poison oak. Approach by turning off Highway 96 just south of the Salmon River bridge, and following a short, potholed road to its end. Initially, the route follows the Somes Mountain Trail. After 3/4 mile, one reaches a signed junction with the Salmon River Trail, which continues up the river for another half mile. This trail ends on a river bar opposite the Oak Bottom river access point.

Another option is to go past the junction uphill on the continuation of the Somes Mountain Trail. As of August 2020, the trail has been largely cleared for about the first 3/4 mile only. There are many down logs, but they are easy to get over or under, making this section easily passable. This section ends at the crest of a sharp-sided ridge--a worthy destination in itself, with a view up Somes Creek to the summit of Somes Mountain. Past that point, the trail has received partial maintenance for another mile, passable for the adventurous, with some obstacles remaining. After climbing some more switchbacks, the trail turns south, traversing the mountainside high above Somes Creek, with



expanding views of the canyon of the Salmon River. Although past here there are no recent reports of conditions, the continuation is likely to be passable, with some difficulty, past the junction of the Red Wing Mine Trail (which branches left), and up at least as far as the first saddle on the main ridge, marked elevation 2567 on topographic maps, about 3.4 miles from the trailhead.

Approx. length, round trip (to the end of Salmon River Tr.): 2.5 miles  
Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 12 minutes

### **Ten Bear Trail (#5802) to Ross Meadow**

This is a short hike but a long drive. It is not currently possible to approach the trailhead from the Camp Three Road, due to a major washout. The trailhead must be approached using the road from Ti Bar on Highway 96. The spur road past the corrals, to the trailhead, is becoming narrow due to encroaching brush. One option is to park by the corrals, and walk the rest of the spur road.

The trail goes through forested country. It first passes Ti Creek Meadows, and then, at the end of the described hike, reaches Ross Meadow. These meadows have ever-changing wildflower displays through the summer, peaking in July. The crossing of Ross Meadow can be confusing. In either direction, start crossing at the large rock cairn at the edge of the meadow, pass between the two cairns in the middle, and aim for the large cairn at the opposite edge. It is possible to make a longer hike by continuing on Ten Bear Trail deeper into the Marble Mountain Wilderness.

Approx. length, round trip, to Ross Meadow: 3.2 miles  
Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 70 minutes

### **Haypress Trail (#5828) to Stanshaw Meadows Tr. junction, or to Monument Lake**

It is not currently possible to drive between the Camp Four Trailhead (the trailhead for Haypress Tr.) and the Stanshaw Trailhead, due to a major washout. The only approach to Haypress Trail is the Camp Three Rd. Long sections of the trail--most of the way from the trailhead to Monument Lake--burned over in the Haypress Fire, summer 2017. While along the majority of the trail the fire stayed on the ground, there were areas of major crown-killing flareups, which have left a continuing hazard of fire-weakened snags falling. Please be cautious. It would be prudent to avoid the area in windy, rainy, or snowy weather.

This is the primary western access to the high country of the Marble Mountain Wilderness. The trail starts at the Camp Four Trailhead (*no camping facilities*, this was the name of a logging camp). It initially climbs through forest, including areas of beautiful, open, old growth forest, mostly on a gentle grade, then drops to Trail Meadow and a crossing of Haypress Creek. Passing by a grove of mountain hemlock growing at an unusually low elevation, it soon meets the Stanshaw Meadows and Let'er Buck Trails. There is a nice meadow here, with good wildflower displays in summer. Haypress Creek can be reached again just to the left, along the Stanshaw Meadows Trail.

Although it makes for a long day, some people make a day hike all the way to Monument Lake. Continue by climbing steadily to a divide, then dropping to Halfmoon Creek and junctions with the Torgerson Meadow and Halfmoon Meadow Trails. From that point, the trail begins a long, steady, tough climb. One passes a 1/10 mile spur to attractive, willowy Round Meadow. Then there is a fine spring just before the trail makes a switchback left. This is the last trailside water before you drop to Monument Lake. The climb ends at the top of Sandy Ridge, where views open up and one truly enters the high country. Soon after is the upper junction with the McCash Loop (currently unsigned, as the old sign burned up in the 2017 Haypress Fire, leaving only a set of bolts in a charred trunk to mark the spot). (This offers an alternate option for the return trip via the very faint and hard to find Torgerson Meadow Trail.) Before long one reaches the spur downhill to the south (#5831) to popular Monument Lake, with opportunities for fishing and swimming. Look for Brewer's spruce growing in this basin.

Approx. length, to Stanshaw Meadows Tr., in the Haypress Meadows, round trip: 4.8 miles

Approx. length, to Monument Lake, round trip: 15.0 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 60 minutes

### **Let'er Buck Trail (#5821)**

This trail is a scenic alternative to the first part of the Haypress Trail. The approach is via Camp Three Rd. This is a primitive trail, and has some very steep ups and downs, but presents no real difficulties for hikers. Most of the length of the trail burned over in the Haypress Fire, summer 2017. There were areas of major crown-killing flareups, which have left a continuing hazard of fire-weakened snags falling. Please be cautious. It would be prudent to avoid the area in windy, rainy, or snowy weather.

The trail starts out through forested country. Starting from the main trailhead, one passes a number of impressive old sugar pines, though sadly many were killed in the Haypress Fire. After approximately three-quarters of a mile, the trail passes the end of a spur road. This can be used as an alternate starting point, but is not maintained to a high standard and is not recommended for passenger cars. From this point, the trail begins climbing steeply, then eventually drops very steeply to cross the first of several meadows. The rest of the trail undulates and crosses both wet and dry meadows, which have ever-changing displays of wildflowers through the summer, peaking in July. The crossing of Let'er Buck Meadow can be confusing. In either direction, cross the very boggy meadow in a straight line past the solitary tree in the middle of the meadow. The trail ends at Haypress Trail, just above the junction with Stanshaw Meadows Trail. Haypress Creek is just down the trail to your left.

Approx. length, round trip: 4.8 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 60 minutes

### **Wooley Creek Trail (#5832)**

The Wooley Creek Trailhead is on the Salmon River Rd. up river from Somes Bar. This trail provides access to the heart of the Marble Mountain Wilderness. The most difficult part is the first 3/4 mile, which climbs steeply several hundred feet across a rocky talus slope exposed to the midday sun. Choose the time of day or time of year for your trip with this in mind. Thereafter, Wooley Creek Trail is a predominantly shady, undulating walk through impressive stands of old growth Douglas fir, pine, and hardwoods. Much of the trail traverses bluffs high above the creek, with great views of the gorges of the creek and Salmon River. Although Wooley Creek is often far below, water sources are frequent, as the trail crosses numerous small side streams. Wildflower displays at lower elevations can be very good early in the season, especially in May.

The trail allows for as long or as short a hike as you like. A good destination is the first direct access to Wooley Creek, about 2.7 miles from the trailhead. This is just before a small flat along the trail known as Julia's Camp. Access to Wooley Creek is easier at Deer Lick Creek, about 2.9 miles from the trailhead, by following this side creek to its mouth. Deer Lick Creek flows through a cool glade, a welcome respite on hot summer days.

Wooley Creek Trail is one of the few long trails near Orleans suitable for year-round use. However, the crossing of Deer Lick Creek may be difficult at times of high water, so in winter or spring this could be the end of your hike.

Approx. length to Deer Lick Creek, round trip: 5.8 miles  
Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 18 minutes

### **Portuguese Peak Trail (#7E14)**

To reach this trail, take the Salmon River Rd. from its start at Highway 96. Soon after the road crosses the Salmon River, there is a signed junction with the short remaining piece of the Steinacher Creek Rd., the rest of which was decommissioned in the 1990s. The Steinacher Creek Rd. crosses back over the Salmon River on a high bridge, then switchbacks left. Shortly past the switchback, you will see a large signboard marking the start of the trail.

In recent years, the first part of the trail has been kept in good condition for hikers and equestrians. After climbing through an area that burned several years ago, fully exposed to the summer sun, the trail enters a beautiful old growth forest for some distance. Maintenance has extended approximately the first 2.5 miles, as far as a ridge top view point 1/10 mile past a flat at the end of the fully decommissioned Steinacher Creek Rd. The last half mile or so is in rough condition, and not suitable for equestrians, although passable for hikers. Hikers who complete the 2400 foot vertical ascent to the ridge top at the end of the currently-maintained section will be rewarded with views of Medicine Mountain, Salmon Mountain, and other high peaks in the surrounding ranges. This is an especially attractive hike in autumn, with cooler weather, the light of the sun low in the sky casting

shadows, and fall colors. Just past this view point, one will begin to encounter heavy brush and down logs, making the continuation of the trail essentially impassable at present.

Approx. length, round trip: 4.8 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 21 minutes

### **LOWER TRINITY RANGER DISTRICT:**

#### **Boise Creek Campground Trail (#5E65)**

This is a short trail at Boise Creek Campground. The trail descends to Willow Creek, a tributary of the Trinity River, with very beautiful riparian scenery.

Approx. length, round trip: 0.6 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 60 minutes

#### **Horse Linto Trail (#5E36)**

This is an interpretive trail at Horse Linto Campground, showing examples of instream enhancement structures. It is also a good place to watch salmon spawn, when they are running.

Approx. length: 0.4 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 75 minutes

#### **Grays Falls Trail (#6E30)**

This trail furnishes access through a cool forest to the Wild and Scenic Trinity River at Grays Falls Campground (currently closed) and day use area (open). Three different trail segments make up this trail system. It's approximately a 0.4 mile hike to the river from each of the two trailheads. The eastern starting point is in the day use area. The western starting point is in the campground. After the routes from the two trailheads join, close to the river, the trail branches again. Both forks lead to the water's edge. Grays Falls is one of the largest rapids on the Trinity River. There are opportunities for fishing and river recreation.

Approx. length, round trip to one river access point: 0.8 mile

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 65 minutes

#### **South Fork Trinity Trail (East Side) (#6E23.1)**

The approach is via the South Fork Trinity Rd., a long and rather rough road that heads south from Willow Creek. This trail furnishes access to a remote, roadless canyon on the Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Trinity River. Parts of the trail (starting about 3/4 of a mile in) are currently covered by

tangles of small fallen trees. It can be difficult to find your way through some of these. Later, in the vicinity of Hells Half Acre Creek, parts of the trail are very extremely narrow and unstable, with steep dropoffs, so use caution, especially when traveling with small children. This is a beautiful spot in spring, with a good display of wildflowers. It is possible to continue on the South Fork Trinity Tr. (West Side) (#6E23.2) after fording the river. *A low elevation snowstorm in December 2021 is believed to have brought down many trees. This may have rendered parts of the trail very difficult or impassable until the trail is logged out.*

Approx. length, round trip to river: 5.6 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 95 minutes

### **Red Cap Hole Trail (#6E14) to Lower Mill Creek Lake**

This trail starts at the Mill Creek Lakes Trailhead, at the end of a rather rough and narrow spur road. This can be approached either from Red Cap Rd. out of Orleans, or from Big Hill Rd. starting in Hoopa. Make a left turn just a few yards after starting hiking from the trailhead. The trail passes through an attractive conifer forest in the Trinity Alps Wilderness, with one stream crossing along the way. At a signed junction, turn right on the short trail (#6E73) to Lower Mill Creek Lake. The lake is in a scenic setting against cliffs, in a glacial cirque. As this is the most easily accessible major wilderness lake in the Orleans area, it is a popular destination. There are opportunities for fishing and swimming.

Approx. length, round trip: 3.4 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 110 minutes

### **Long Prairie Trail (#6E19) to Water Dog Lakes or Lookout Rock**

This trail shares the Mill Creek Lakes Trailhead with the Red Cap Hole Trail (#6E14). The trail passes through the western side of the Trinity Alps Wilderness, initially in a forest partially burned over in the 1999 Megram Fire. Just a few yards from the trailhead, bear right at the first trail junction, and bear left at the second. After crossing a large, cool stream, the trail climbs steadily, and soon passes through a succession of small prairies. These have wildflower displays in spring and early summer. Continue over the top of the ridge to a junction with the Horse Trail Ridge Trail (#6E08). Turn left, and you almost immediately come to the larger of the small, shallow Water Dog Lakes.

For a longer hike, continue on the somewhat vague Horse Trail Ridge Trail, skirting some meadows on their western side. After topping a ridge, you eventually come to a possibly-obscure spur to the right, leading to Lookout Rock, with spectacular views of the high Trinity Alps and many other mountains to the east and north.

Approx. length, round trip to Water Dog Lakes: 2.8 miles

Approx. length, round trip to Lookout Rock: 5.8 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 110 minutes

## **Crogan Basin Trail (#6E16) to Trinity Summit Guard Station**

This is sometimes called Grogan Basin Tr. or Oregon Basin Tr. These are probably misspellings. The trail starts at the Bear Hole Trailhead, at the end of the rather rough and narrow Road #10N02A (labeled #10N02 on some maps). This can be approached either from Red Cap Rd. out of Orleans, or from Big Hill Rd. starting in Hoopa. The trail passes through the western side of the Trinity Alps Wilderness, in a conifer forest, much of which burned heavily in the 1999 Megram Fire. After climbing a brushy hillside to a small ridge, and descending to cross dancing Tish Tang a Tang Creek, you begin another ascent through an attractive area of sloping dry meadows bordered by open forest. In the vicinity of Crogan Hole, at the spot known as Andy's Camp, you cross the Crogan Hole Tr. (#6E74), which is on the alignment of a decommissioned road. At this point, the two trails coincide for perhaps 100 feet. Watch for a rock cairn marking the uphill continuation of the Crogan Basin Tr. After climbing some more, alternately in forest and open meadows, you reach the crest known as Trinity Summit, and an intersection with the Horse Trail Ridge Tr. (#6E08) and the One Mile Tr. (#6E17). Turn right on the Horse Trail Ridge Tr., and spectacular views of the high Trinity Alps to the east soon open up. The described hike ends at historic Trinity Summit Guard Station, in a lupine-filled prairie. Parts of the trail may be a little vague, but with the use of common sense the route is not hard to follow. In the 1850s, the trail system in this area furnished the earliest access routes to mining camps in the New River area.

Approx. length, round trip: 7.4 miles

Approx. driving time from Orleans, one way: 110 minutes