

RHODODENRON RIDGE TRAIL 564 (RHO RIDGE TRAIL)

Recommended Season: June through October

Length: 10.25 miles Use: Light
Elevation: 4300'-5300' Difficulty: Moderate
USGS Map: Mount Lowe and Breitenbush Hot Springs

Description:

This trail runs most the length of Rhododendron Ridge, the divide running north-south which separates the upper Clackamas drainage from the Collawash drainage. It can be accessed at three passes and at intermediate points. It connects on its north end with the Burnt Granite Trail 595 which drops down off the divide towards the Clackamas River adding several more miles of hiking opportunity and lower access. It also connects to several interesting abandoned trails and the Hawk Mountain Trail 564-A which leads to an interesting lookout site. The trail also passes the Mount Lowe lookout site.

This trail passes through lower to middle alpine ecosystems. There are some areas influenced by the proximity to the east as evidenced by the occurrences of Tamarack and Pine. In spite of recent timber harvesting, most of the route is heavily timbered. There are a few small meadows. There is little, if any, water available.

Two car shuttles are a good method for hiking this trail due to its excellent accessibility.

Trail Access:

The north half of the trail is best accessed by the 4670 Road. Follow Hwy. 224 south from Estacada for 43 miles to the 4670 road. Travel about 8 miles to the 6310 Road and proceed about a mile on this road to the saddle in the ridge. Take a hard left on a short spur to a parking spot. The trail starts slightly to the right and heads south into the timber.

The 4670 Road parallels the trail to Graham Pass offering several intermediate access points. The south half is accessed by the 6350 Road from Graham Pass, at Fawn Meadow, and at the south terminus of the trail near Cachebox Meadow a quarter mile west of the 6350 Road on the 6355 Road.

Trail Mileage Log (from the South Trailhead):

Mile 0

Trail begins at the 6355 Road climbing through open country, around the west of a rocky highpoint and into a saddle where it drops into the timber .

Mile 1.2

Intersection with old trail of the right to Twin Meadows.

Mile 1.72

Intersection with Hawk Mountain Trail 564-A on the right at Round Meadow. Trail continues along the east side of Round Creek (dry early in the season).

Mile 3.02

Having emerged from the woods into a recent clearcut the trail crosses the 6355-120 spur road.

Mile 4.64

Trail crosses 6350-290 spur road.

Mile 5.5

Trail crosses 6350-270 spur road.

Mile 6.71

Graham Pass Trailhead. Trail continues across the 6350 Road. Crosses spur road, continues with vague tread through clearcut then back into larger timber.

Mile 7.32

Trail crosses 4670 road at "Bear Camp" and junction north out of the camp, east side of the road, with the Rho Creek Trail 569, route to old Guard Station site, and year round water – ¼ mile.

Mile 9.29

Trailhead at 4670 Road.

Mile 9.92

Short side trail west to summit of Mount Lowe, lookout site.

Mile 10.04

Junction old Lowe Creek Trail, abandoned.

Mile 10.19

Trailhead at 4670-220 spur road

Mile 11.25

North Trailhead at end of short spur from 6310 at saddle.

To connect with Burnt Granite Trail 595, walk 6310 north to 6310-270 spur, follow to end of road. Ribbons lead to trail at north east edge of clearcut, about a ¼ mile.