

Camp Robertson

Lamoille Canyon

Ruby Mountains of Nevada



Obsidians, Eugene, Oregon

Obsidian Summer Camp

Saturday, July 30 – Friday, August 5, 2016

This Camp Guide is available at www.obsidians.org

Compiled by Laurie Funkhouser

OBSIDIAN SUMER CAMP COMMITTEE

John Jacobsen	Camp Boss
Don Doerr	Treasurer and Camp Registration
Laurie Funkhouser	Camp Booklet
Lana Lindstrom	Food Manager

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Emergency Services	911
Nevada Hwy Patrol	(775) 738-8035
Elko County Ambulance	(775) 738-4011
Elko County Sheriff	(775) 777-7300
Nevada Division of Wildlife	(775) 738-5332
Report Wildfires	(775) 738-5137
Karen Taufer, Camp Lamoille Host – may be used as an emergency point of contact	(775) 397-6002

Lake after in approximately 0.4 miles. Smith Lake is a picturesque, glacier-carved cirque basin. Return by following your path along the creek back to the Grey Lakes Trail. The trail continues a lengthy, moderate climb to a ridge and a short traverse to reach the aspen-lined Trout Creek. Note the old signage regarding Pole Canyon, Angel Lake Trail, Trout Creek. Cross Trout Creek to continue on a 1-mile steep switchback climb to reach a notch in a ridge. The then has a mild descent to a small meadow with a well-placed Trail sign for guidance. It is a short climb to the top of the ridge to enter the canyon of Greys Creek with a mile descent across the east wall to view Greys Lake lined by jagged rocks and the 10,674 foot Greys Peak. After some switchbacks, you will have traveled the 5.1 miles to the lakeshore.

13. Winchell Lake

Difficulty: Medium
Driving Distance: 144 miles RT
Hiking Distance: 6.2 miles RT
Elevation Gain: 7,458 to 8568 (1110 feet)

Driving Directions: See directions for Grey and Smith Lakes. At 9.7 miles from SR 231, in the middle of a turn, is the trailhead for Winchell Lake.

Trail Description: The trail starts by dropping into a pocket of aspens and wildflowers then opens up after crossing a small, seasonal stream to give views of Chimney Rock and distant ranchlands. Continue south on the undulating trail to reach the East Humboldt Wilderness sign which is followed by a couple of South Fork Angel Creek crossings. A view of the entire flank of the East Humboldt Range is visible. Pass through a gate in a barbed wire fence to a grassy clearing and crossing of Schoer Creek at the 1.1 mile mark. Wind around a hillside and descend into a seasonal stream. The grade moderates as you traverse through aspens and then tobacco brush around some beaver ponds for about 0.75 miles. Then moderate climbs along side a beaver pond to a confusing junction – look for and follow the uphill trail marked by the cairn. Continue uphill for 75 yards before a bend to the south and traversing through aspen and wildflowers. A short climb to the basin of Wiseman Creek which you wander through to ascend a sage-covered hillside followed by an undulating trail to reach a set of climbing switchbacks to the shoreline of Winchell Lake.

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11. Overland Lake

Difficulty:	Hard
Driving:	144 miles RT
Hiking:	12 miles RT
Elevation Gain:	3000 feet

Driving Directions: Turn left out of camp, left onto SR 227 towards Elko traveling about 12 miles, turn left (south) onto SR 228 to travel 42.5 miles to fork left to Harrison Pass Rd. (CR 718). Travel CR 718 for about 13 miles to turn left onto SR 767. Travel about 10 miles to turn left onto an unimproved road to reach NF Trail Number 047.

Trail Description: Located on the east side of the Ruby Mountains. Do not follow the jeep trail, instead the trail follows the fence, crosses a small drainage and again follows the fence. After 1.5 miles, the trail turns sharply right (north), away from Mayhew Creek, then climbs steadily with steep switchbacks to cross the ridge into Overland Creek drainage at 3.6 miles. The trail turns west (left) to meet the Ruby Crest Trail at 5.6 miles. Follow the trail up the ridge to Overland Lake at 5.9 miles nestled in the classic glacial cirque. Reverse your path to return to the trailhead.

East Humboldt

12. Greys and Smith Lakes

Difficulty:	Hard
Driving Distance:	170 miles RT
Hiking Distance:	12 miles RT (11 miles RT w/out Smith Lk)
Elevation Gain:	7,900 to 8100 (2000 feet)

Driving Directions: Turn left out of Camp to turn left onto SR227 (Lamoille Hwy) to return to Elko and I-80 (20.3 miles), travel 46.6 miles to take Exit 351. Turn right onto Humboldt Ave, immediately turn right onto NF-098/SR 231 (Angel Lake Rd). Travel SR 231 for 10.2 miles to reach Angel Lake. (Note: If you park at Angel Lake Day Use Area, you are subject to a fee).

Trail Description: Climb a hill covered with shrubs, aspens and wildflowers to a switchback and conjoining with a trail from Angel Lake Campbell. Continue uphill with views of Grey Peak and Chimney Rock and a glimpse of Angel Lake. At 1.25 miles, you reach the aspen/brush banks of Clover Creek, cross the shallow stream, which drains from Smith Lake. Continue about 75 yards at which point you can follow Clover Creek upstream to reach Smith

trail has two big benches to climb and best approached by getting above the rim rock shelves to your left. There are rock cairns, sawed deadfall, blazes and broken grass to help find the route. Once on top of the second bench – past a couple of waterfalls – cross a large field of slick rock as you head towards the lake. Follow the same path upon return. Your clue to leave the jeep trail is a rock cairn atop a erratic boulder.

10. Soldier Basin/Hidden Lakes/Robinson Lake

Difficulty: Hard
Driving: 44 miles RT
Distance: 10.5 miles RT
Elevation: 2734 elevation gain

Driving Direction: Drive through Lamoille until the pavement ends at a “T” intersection by the Lamoille Church, turn left (Crossroads Ln), and then turn right (Clubine Rd) when the road makes another quick T intersection. After about 11 miles on Clubine Road look for a small brown sign after the road dips to cross Cold Creek that says “Soldier Canyon” and points to the right. Go through the gate onto a somewhat rougher road traveling 6 miles to a small turnaround with an outhouse. Park here.

Trail Description: Immediately cross Soldier Creek and walk up the jeep road for about $\frac{3}{4}$ miles until you reach a USFS kiosk with a gate blocking ATV use. The trail is rocky at first, climbing through aspens at a 13% grade. The canyon narrows and the trail follows the creek closely. After about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles, the canyon opens up and you leave the forest for scrub hillside. Follow the creek up the canyon as it bends to the right. At about 3 miles, pass the turnoff to Ross Creek and Krenka Creek trailhead. At about 4 miles the first of five tarns that collectively are named Soldier Lakes in a treeless/windswept basin appears. At 4.5 miles, there will be a sign marking the turnoff to Hidden Lakes which at times is thin, but marked with rock cairns contouring the hillside to reach the twinned lakes at 5.25 miles. Or continue on the main trail, taking in the overview of Soldier Lakes as you go up the tundra slope, keeping an eye out for a 0.1 mile spur to the right to reach Robinson Lake.

INTRODUCTION

The Place

The 2016 Obsidian Summer Camp will be held at the Elko Lion's Club Camp Lamoille (pronounced la-moyal) located approximately 26.5 miles south-east of Elko, Nevada.



*Lamoille Canyon and the Ruby Mountains
Camp Robertson located slightly left of scene center*

The Campsite

Camp Robertson is in the scenic Lamoille Canyon of the Ruby Mountains of Nevada at an elevation of approximately 7,000 feet. The Camp is just off of the paved Lamoille Scenic Byway where many hikes are located.

You may pitch your tent on the camp's grounds and/or there are 9 A-frame shelters available on a first come basis. Please note the A-frames do not have cots, bed frames or mattresses – you may want to bring your tent as a back-up. RVs and trailers will park in designated areas. There are no RV hook-ups.

Two bathhouses provide showers, sinks and flushing toilets.

Cell phone service is limited-to-non-existent in camp but is available in Lamoille or just before the entrance to camp. Camp power is provided by a propane generator which is turned off at night so

remember to bring a flashlight!

The main lodge features a kitchen with a dining area and is furnished with tables and chairs and has a fireplace.

Getting There

The camp is approximately 615 miles (11 hours) from Eugene.

Campers **should not arrive at camp before 3:00 PM** on Saturday, July 30th. *Your courtesy in not parking outside of camp and wandering through camp is appreciated* – the Summer Camp crew needs uninterrupted time to set-up.

From Eugene to Winnemucca, Nevada, check maps for your preferred route.

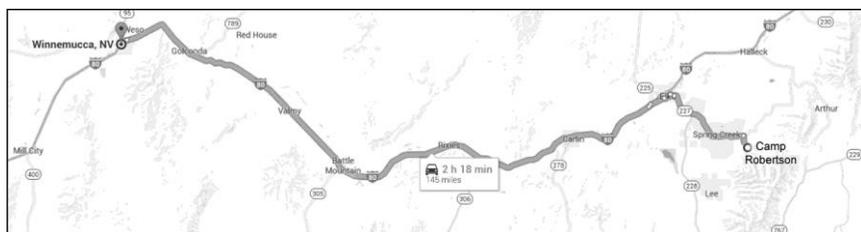
Be aware of your gas gauge and limited services as you travel the remote areas of eastern Oregon and Nevada.

The most direct route:

- Highway 58 to Crescent cutoff to Crescent
- North on Highway 97 to just south of LaPine
- East on Highway 31 to join Highway 395 at Valley Falls heading to Lakeview
- East on Highway 140 to turn right onto Highway 95 to reach Winnemucca.

From Winnemucca to Elko to Camp Robertson:

- Travel east on I-80 from Winnemucca, NV for approximately 124 miles exiting at Exit 298 to Elko W,
- Right onto NV-535 E (Idaho Street).
- Once in Elko, turn Right onto S. 5th Street (NV-227, Lamoille Hwy), travel about 19 miles
- Turn right onto NF-660A, traveling approx. 5 miles for a right turn at the Lamoille Camp sign.
- Follow the gravel road approx. 3/4 mile to the campground where greeters will meet you.



then widens out exposing two draws/outlets from the lake. Generally, the cairns stay to the left bank of the left draw (in general, chose left if given a choice). Once the grade flattens, you are just about there. You can continue from Griswold Lake to free-climb to Ruby Dome.

8. Ruby Dome (11,380 feet)

Difficulty:	Strenuous
Driving:	22 miles RT
Distance:	11-12 miles RT
Elevation:	6,000 to 11,380 (4,600 feet)

Driving Directions: See directions for Griswold Lake and obtaining access.

Trail Description: Standing at Griswold Lake, the Dome is across the lake and to the left (southeast), climb the ridge aiming at a knob of rock and go around its left (east) side. This takes you into a cirque at the base of the Dome. Climb/zigzag on the Dome's right (west) ridge at its lowest spot. Once on the wide ridge, simply walk to the top. There is a logbook in a coffee can at the top.

9. Seitz Lake Trail (not maintained by USFS)

Difficulty:	Hard
Driving:	22 miles RT
Distance:	10 miles RT
Elevation:	2700 elevation gain

Driving Directions: See directions for Griswold Lake and obtaining access.

Trail Description: After the gate, walk/drive up the section fence line (on your left/east). Park. Find a contouring cow trail to cross county heading north east towards the section fence. Head uphill to the ridgeline – follow the cow trails with your own switchbacks. As you approach the ridgeline, plan to be near the section fence, so you can pick up another contouring cow trail into the canyon. At about 7000 feet you need to cross Seitz Creek looking for a creek bank that has been cut away by water. Cross the creek, walk straight ahead and you will reach an old jeep road to hike another ½ mile up the Seitz Canyon. As you walk up the jeep road, keep an eye out for a rock cairn by a mahogany tree which marking the trailhead. The road dead-ends at an old hunting camp...back track 150 feet. Once on the trail, it becomes lush and overgrown. If you lose the trail, stay left of the creek and left of the beaver ponds. The

climbable mini-chute towards the left. Climb up the chute and continue to make your way uphill along a series of rocky camps. At about 9900 feet, you will reach a talus field on the east end of a glacial bench with a tarn off to the right. Starting skirting across the talus, climbing up a series of rock ramps and ledges shorting for a spot left of the lowest part of the ridge. There is exposure with ledges, hand and footholds. Once on the ridge, cross over for the easier walk up the ridge to reach the shoulder of the summit. Cross back over the ridge and traverse the face until you reach the obvious cleft between the main peak and the eastern sub-peak. The cleft provides solid holds up a steady pitch (Class 3 climbing). Spectacular views on top. Look for a large summit cairn which has a register.

7. Griswold Lake

Difficulty: Hard
Driving: 22 miles RT
Distance: 7 miles RT
Elevation: 6000 to 9200 (3200 elevation gain)

Note: The beginning of this trail requires obtaining a key and permission from Spring Creek Association (SCA), 451 Spring Creek Park, Spring Creek, NV, (775) 753-6295. SCA requires a \$25 refundable deposit for the key plus \$10 per person for parking.

Driving Directions: Left out of camp to travel to Lamoille Highway (Hwy 227), after approximately 2.5 miles turn left onto Pleasant Valley Road a dirt road that points to Ruby Mountains. Travel for about 3 miles, the road will make a 90-degree turn where you will see a locked green gate to the left.

Trail Description: From the gate, walk/drive up the dirt road; take the right fork to the campground where there is a large sign "Ruby Dome 4 mil. Griswold 3 mi". Follow the arrows, cross Butterfield Creek on the bridge, pass through the man-gate and you will be on the trail. The trail is a steady 16% grade. You will pass through a second man-gate after about ½ mile, now you are officially out of the private property. Close the gate behind you. The trail climbs up the left side of Butterfield Creek going through aspens and mahoganies – note the Basque shepherders' carvings on the aspen. After 2 miles you reach the end of the trees, head uphill on the rock, looking for cairns. The cairns will lead you up the rock bench to the lake. There is a narrowing right next to the creek but

Carpooling: In the interests of conserving gas and costs, we encourage campers to share rides to camp. To find rides or riders, check the online signup sheet for Camp Robertson. The carpooling fee to/from camp and while driving to trailheads at camp is \$.09/mile (round trip distance is approximately 1200 miles).

LOGISTICS

Meals

The camp fee includes 3 meals per day, starting with dinner on Saturday, July 30th and ending with breakfast on Friday, August 5th. Vegetarian options will be available; however, no accommodations can be made for special dietary needs such as lactose or glucose intolerant.

Breakfasts will be continental and include cereal, fruit, yogurt, hard boiled eggs, coffee and tea. Participants will make their own lunches; the fixings will include lunch meat, cheese, tuna, tofu pate, fruit and chips. Dinners will be catered by a local restaurant. Participants will need to bring their own dishes, cups and utensils for breakfast and dinner. Campers will wash their own dishes after meals and put them in their ditty bag to store/dry them

Meal times are as follows:

Breakfast	6:45 AM – 7:30 AM
Lunch Preparation	6:45 AM - 7:30 AM
Dinner	6:30 PM

Hands must be washed prior to each meal, especially when making lunch at the communal tables.

Please wear ***your*** nametag at dinner.

Duties

At camp, duties will be assigned to everyone randomly by computer and posted on the bulletin board. A "Lead Person" will supervise and provide instructions for table set-up, dish washing, lunch prep, lunch clean-up, and camp clean-up. Individuals are responsible for finding replacements if unable to perform at assigned times.

At the end of the week, we are responsible for a thorough cleanup of the camp and all campers will be asked to help with those duties before departing camp.

Campfire

We will gather around a campfire most evenings after dinner for announcements and trip reports, skits and other entertainment.

Bulletin Board

Campers should check the bulletin board to:

- Post and/or sign up for hikes
- Find their assigned duties
- Read notices
- Find general information and maps
- Leave or receive messages

Pets, firearms and illegal drugs are not allowed at Summer Camp. Alcohol is not permitted on official Obsidian outings, but is allowed in camp. Electronic devices should not be used in a manner that disturbs your fellow campers.

What to Bring

- Camping and hiking gear, including tent, sleeping bag, pillow, etc. If you plan to stay in one of the nine A-frames, bear in mind they are unfurnished with bare wood floors. They can accommodate up to 4 people each – first come, first served. If you plan on an A-frame it might be wise to have a backup tent, just in case the A-frames are all taken.
- Ditty bag with plate, bowl, mug/cup and utensils
- Binoculars and spotting scopes
- Clothes for warm, cold, and wet weather, including swimsuit
- Clothesline and pins
- Towel
- Flip-flops for the shower
- Water bottles
- 2 hard-plastic containers suitable to pack lunches
- Cloth lunch sack and napkin
- Camp chair
- Mosquito repellent
- Personal hygiene items
- Playing cards, and board games
- Hiking poles
- Ten Essentials to carry when away from camp:

5. Echo Lake

Difficulty:	Hard (trail finding)
Driving Distance:	0
Hiking Distance:	14.0 miles RT
Elevation Gain:	7000 to 10,500 (3500 feet)

Driving Directions: At the sign to Camp Lamoille, follow the road over the bridge until the cattle guard. At the cattle guard there is a stop sign. Only authorized vehicles can proceed past this point. There is plenty of parking in the turn around by the cattle guard.

Trail Description: At the end of the road, the trail heads off to the left then splits, continue straight (not toward creek). A short distance a bridge will cross the creek. The trail climbs up the side of the canyon and trees up to the upper half of Right Fork Canyon. From here follow the left side of the stream – may involve some trail searching – to good crossing. Continue to head up the canyon crossing another stream. At the fork of the stream, cross the right fork to staying on top of the ridge and head to the hill before Goat Lake (very small lake along the back of Right Fork Canyon). Hike around the back of Goat Lake, start the steep climb to the ridge between Right Fork and Box Canyon, aiming to the left of the saddle. Once at the top ridge, a small no-name lake will be below sits below you. From here, trail finding is difficult – to your right (west) look for a small pile of rocks, head towards to the lower side of the rocks. Upon reaching the rocks, cross the slope maintaining your elevation, dropping below the cliffs to remain on solid ground heading towards Echo Lake. Once at the saddle above Echo Lake, take in the view, then drop down to the lake.

6. Mt. Gilbert (11,120 feet)

Difficulty:	Hard
Driving:	0
Distance:	7 miles RT
Elevation Gain:	7,094 to 11,120 (4026 feet)

Driving Directions: From Camp – see directions for Right Fork of Lamoille Canyon (#1).

Trail Description: At about 1.7 miles, at the top of a glacial bench, leave the trail, cross the creek and head through the brush to the base of Mt. Gilbert. Keep to the left of the dish beneath the peak, and you'll find a small waterfall path that should be dry. Following the waterfall path is a great way to make your way up, has a couple of steep places. Eventually you will end up at a rock band, with a

4. Dollar, Lamoille, Liberty and Favre Lakes (Ruby Lakes)

Difficulty: Medium
Driving Distance: 14.4 Miles RT
Hiking Distance: 7.0 Miles RT (to Liberty Lake)
Elevation Gain: 8800 to 10,250 (2100 feet)

Driving Directions: Turn right from Camp onto FR 660 (Lamoille Canyon Road National Scenic Byway) for 7.2 miles to reach the parking area at Roads End where there are pit toilets, water and picnic area. The trailhead is at the north end of the loop.

Trail Description: This trail boasts incredible mountain scenery, picturesque lakes, interesting geology, vistas and stunning wildflower displays.

The hike begins with a moderate climb near the Lamoille Canyon surrounded by wildflowers. After crossing the creek on the wooden bridge, the limber pines begin to diminish as you approach Liberty Pass. Approximately 0.33 miles after the bridge crossing, the trail bends to cross the east branch of the creek that drains the Dollar Lakes. After two more creek crossings, the trail begins a steeper climb to reach the gentler terrain around Dollar Lakes. A gentle ascent leads away from Dollar Lakes to reach the much larger Lamoille Lake in 0.33 miles. Lamoille Lake is cradled in a deep gouge in the west edge of the upper part of Lamoille Canyon, the steep cirque providing a rugged, foreboding ambiance. A chilly swim may be taken. Past Lamoille Canyon, the trail becomes very steep for approximately 700 feet to Liberty Pass winding through boulders and rocks beneath towering cliffs. Ice and snow remain in the crevices through summer and early season hikers may need an ice axe to reach Liberty Pass at 10,400 feet. Looking south along the crest of the ridge from the Pass, the views of Lake Peak (10,922) and Wines Peak (10,893) will grab your attention. Cross the well-marked Ruby Mountains Wilderness near the pass for a stiff descent to Liberty Lake which is tucked out of view, deep in the cirque. Within 0.6 miles of the Pass, arcing high around the west edge of the cirque, a junction with a short, lateral trail leads to the southwest shore near the outlet of the deep-blue lake. For hearty hikers, the trail may be extended to reach Favre Lake and Castle Lake (consult map of area).

First-aid kit

- Compass (and know how to use it)
- Map(s) of the area where you will be
- Small functional pocket knife
- Flashlight with good batteries (extras & bulb)
- Rain gear (parka and pants)
- Sunscreen / Sun hat
- Extra food and water
- Fire kit (waterproof container of matches, candle)
- Whistle

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

We try to be eco-friendly at camp. You can help by bringing two hard-plastic containers in which to pack your lunches -- one for a sandwich or dinner leftovers, the other for veggies, fruit, or cookies -- as well as a cloth lunch sack and napkin. Please take your personal beverage containers with you when you depart camp.

Essential Services

Full fuel, groceries, shopping and other services are available in Elko, approximately 25 miles from camp. Lamoille may have some minimal amenities.

The Weather

The closest location with comprehensive weather data is Lamoille Station (8 miles away and 3,293 feet lower) which provided the following statistics:

	<u>Average High</u>	<u>Average Low</u>	<u>Average Rain</u>
July	85°	47°	0.40 inches
August	84°	46°	0.50 inches

The camp will be slightly cooler, and the mountains cooler still. Afternoon thunderstorms may move in while hiking, remember to: stay low, find shelter in a building (keep away from trees, tall objects, hiking poles, metal objects and water), spread out as a group, and crouch down.

SAFETY•SAFETY•SAFETY

Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing is our best defense against illness. You **must** wash your hands prior to making lunch at communal tables!

Ticks

Please be aware that there are ticks in the area. Do a thorough tick check after a hike.

Rattlesnakes

Rattlesnakes are not normally found higher than the mouth of Lamoille Canyon, but still, be aware. Wear shoes/hiking boots, avoid putting your hand where you cannot see, step ON logs and rocks versus around/over, and don't grab "sticks/branches" when swimming.

Leading Hikes

Anyone planning or considering leading a hike at Summer Camp should be familiar with the Obsidian Safety Manual which is available on-line.

Disclaimer: **DO NOT** rely solely on the driving and hiking descriptions in this booklet. They may be outdated and certainly do not provide enough information.

Health Care Services

Great Basin Surgical Ctr
855 Gold Course Rd.
Elko, NV
(775) 753-4700

Northeastern Nevada Regional Hosp
2001 Errecart Blvd.
Elko, NV
(775) 738-5151

pond and waterfalls. The narrow path climbs up the hillside through tall grasses, giving a glimpse of a short, cascading waterfall. Continue the steep climb to a short, flat, moderate, grade where Thomas Creek glides and swirls over rock shelves. The climb resumes with majestic views of Mt. Fitzgerald. The canyon widens easing the grade to allow viewing of the wildflowers and shrubs blanketing the slopes. The climb returns and travels along the cascading creek. The trail continues up either side of the creek without a discernible trail for approximately .5 miles and you will need to contend with bushes and/or boggy areas to find the trail to reach the upper canyon. At the upper canyon, if you follow the west branch of Thomas Creek it leads to a minor scramble to lush meadow with a stunning view of Mt. Fitzgerald or the east branch of Thomas Creek to view the scenic rock basin of Snow Lake Peak.

3. Island Lake

Difficulty: Easy
Driving Distance: 14.4 miles RT
Hiking Distance: 3.2 miles RT
Elevation Gain: 8800 to 9675 (875 feet)

Driving Directions: Turn right from Camp onto F.R. 660 (Lamoille Canyon Road National Scenic Byway) for 7.2 miles to reach the parking area at Roads End where there are pit toilets, water and picnic area. The trailhead is at the north end of the loop.

Trail Description: The best of the Ruby Mountains – craggy cirque basin, wildflowers, cascading streams, mountain lake - in a condensed area. A popular hiking and fishing spot. From the parking area, follow the well-graded trail lush foliage and wildflowers – paintbrush, lupine, phlox, potentilla, larkspur – for a steady climb with switchbacks with views of Lamoille Canyon. At 1 mile, a rock and timber bridge spans the creek giving an excellent view and opportunity to relax. The trail continues with switchbacks to climb to the lake basin. After the final switchback, cross the creek hopping the boulders and follow the trail on a short climb to the lakeshore.

Note: Provides a variety geology features.

1. Right Fork Lamoille Canyon

Difficulty: Medium
Driving Distance: 0
Hiking Distance: 5 miles RT
Elevation Gain: 7100 to 8400 (1300 feet)
Driving Directions: None.

Trail Description: This trail leaves from Camp past the A frame cottages beginning on a twin-tracked jeep road which eventually turns into a single track past small aspens to the west bank of the Right Fork Lamoille Creek, head upstream. Within a short distance there will be a fork – left crosses a couple of bridges to the Camp’s archery area – continue on the right side. You will reach another information junction, the main trail curves down to a ford of the creek. [Note: The primitive straight path leads to a series of cascades that tumble dramatically down the rock cliffs.] Cross/ford the creek and follow the trail through an assortment of wildflowers, climb with switchbacks through dense aspen, reaching the Ruby Mountains Wilderness (approximately 1.1 miles). The climb continues as the scenery changes from foliage to granite to foliage and eventually to granite slabs. The trail appears to end at a massive rock wall. However, there is a path through the narrow gap between the base of the rock and the creek to return to a distinct tread as you climb over more rock slabs away from the cascading creek. When the route is hard to discern, the path of ducks should successfully guide you through this rock stretch and into the widening upper basin. The tread diminishes for good as you head near a vegetation-encircled beaver pond with the hanging valley of the upper canyon. You have traveled 2.5 miles to reach this point with a wide open basin to explore further.

2. Thomas Canyon

Difficulty: Easy/Medium
Driving Distance: 4.8 miles RT
Hiking Distance: 4 miles total
Elevation Gain: 7550 to 8800 (1,250 feet)

Driving Directions: From Camp, turn right onto F.R. 660 (Lamoille Canyon Road National Scenic Byway), drive 2.4 miles to the Thomas Creek Campground entrance, then continue on the campground access road to the trailhead.

Trail Description: This trail offers the best views of Mt. Fitzgerald (11,215 feet) looming above the glacial-carved canyon with beaver

NON-HIKING/ON-THE-WAY ACTIVITIES

Northeastern Nevada Museum: 1515 Idaho Street , Elko.

Award-winning museum with art and history exhibits and wildlife habitat dioramas covering over 20,000 square feet. 775-378-3418
Open: Tuesday – Saturday 9 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday 1:00 p.m. -5:00 p.m. Admission: \$5 (65+ \$3). <http://museumelko.org>

Western Folklife Center: 501 Railroad Street, Elko.

Host for the annual National Cowboy Poetry Gathering held the last week of January and other entertainment, activities, educational programs which preserve the rich culture and spirit of the American West. The Center features a gift shop. 775-738-7508. Open: Monday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. www.westernfolklife.org

Sherman Station Visitor’s Center: 14th and Idaho, Elko.

Historic limber pine ranch house and outbuildings filled with historic artifacts were relocated from the 1875 Walther Family settlement in Huntington Valley, NV . Now it is the home of the Elko Chamber of Commerce. Self-guided walking tours and group guided tours are available. 775-738-7135

Newmont Mine Tours: Mining of gold continues in the area today especially since a resurgence in the 1980s. Tours out of Elko are limited to the second Thursday of each month, leaving at 9:00 am returning at 12:30 p.m. free to the public. No shorts, sandals or tank tops are allowed. Contact Newmont Mining Corporation at 775-778-4068 or 702-635-4302 for additional information and reservations.

California Trail Interpretive Center: 1 Trail Center Way, Elko, NV.

This historic interpretative trail center opened in 2015 giving insight to the 2,000-mile trek of pioneers between 1841 and 1869. Open year round: Wednesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. 775-738-1849. www.californiatrailcenter.org

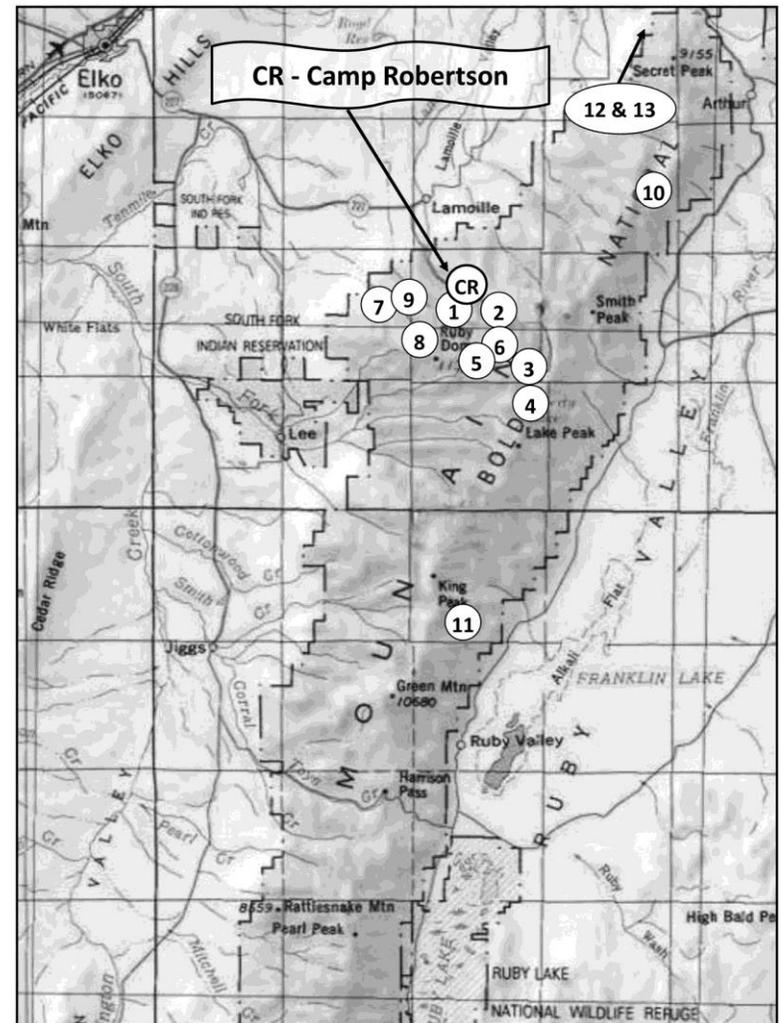
Little Church of the Crossroads, one of the most photographed buildings in the county, was built in 1905 with donations of \$3,000, eventually being abandoned in 1954, but refurbished by the dedication of 13 members within a year to the condition it is today. Located a short distance past the turnoff to camp on Lamoille Hwy (Hwy 227) in Lamoille, NV.

Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge: Features 37,632 acres of marshes, open ponds with more than 200 species of birds. Visitor center is open 7 AM to 3:30 PM Monday through Friday; Refuge open from one hour before sunrise until two hours after sunset. Take the 7.5-mile auto tour with interpretative and educational panels sharing information with visitors. 775-779-2237. www.summitpost.org/ruby-lake-national-wildlife-refuge/356009 and www.fws.gov/Refuge/Ruby_Lake



Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge and the Ruby Mountains

HIKING GUIDE



The numbers on the above map correspond to the numbered hikes following and shows their general location.

Difficulty Rating

Easy: up to 5 miles roundtrip and 1,000 feet of elevation gain.

Medium: up to 10 miles roundtrip and 2,000 feet of elevation gain.

Hard: up to 15 miles roundtrip and 3,000 feet of elevation gain.

Strenuous: over 15 miles and over 3,000 feet of elevation gain.

Maps

The following maps were used in preparation of this guide. All trails mentioned in this guide appear on this map.

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Ruby Mountains Ranger District, US Forest, United States Department of Agriculture

The maps are available from the USDA Forest Services for \$10.00 + \$2.00 processing fee at:

<http://www.nationalforestmapstore.com/product-p/nv-12.htm>

PERMITS AND FEES

Day Hiking

A wilderness permit is NOT required for hiking and a recreation pass is NOT required for parking at trailheads.

Backpacking

Wilderness permits and campfire permits are required before entering the wilderness. Campfire permits are needed for the operation of a backpacking stove or camp stove. Both of these permits are issued at no cost to the visitor. Permits are NOT available at trailheads. Backpacking groups are limited to 10 persons while hiking and while camping.

THE AREA

History of the Area: The original inhabitants of this area were the “diggers”, the Elko Colony of the Shoshone Indians, named by the pioneers for their dependence upon roots and game for subsistence. In late 1840’s the pioneer wagon trains traveled north of the Ruby Mountains following the Humboldt River along the route known as the Emigrant Gap which is present day I-80. However, the infamous Donner Party opted for the “Hastings Cutoff” which travels around the southern end of the Ruby Mountains, adding 150 miles to the California Trail contributing to their difficulties. Wagon trains were followed by the transcontinental railroad with Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) establishing a “tent” city in 1868 which eventually became Elko, Nevada in 1869. Charles Crocker, the CPRR superintendent, is attributed with naming the town for his fondness of animal names (Elk) and adding an “o”. Shipping, ranching, gaming and mining contributed to the growth of the town from 1160 in 1970 to over 20,000 in 2013.

Geology: Major Clarence Dutton, one of the early explorers, noted that the map of Nevada looks like “an army of caterpillars crawling northward out of Mexico” describing the over 300 named mountain ranges within the state. Nevada’s ranges have developed through “uplift and crustal extensional” meaning the mountains are caused by the North American plate stretching out over several million years with intervening earthquakes thrusting metamorphic and igneous rocks through the sedimentary rocks. The Island Lake trail provides prime examples of the sedimentary (limestone, dolomite and shale) rocks of 540 to 443 million years old surrounding the lake at the head of the glacial valley. The sedimentary rocks have been metamorphosed to gneiss (“nice”) and marble with intrusions of igneous rock (granite and pegmatite).

Wildlife:

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep aka Ram: The sheep with their massive horns which curl back and then forward are native to the Ruby Mountains. However, the numbers have been tenuous due to bouts of pneumonia. In November 2009, the count was 50 strong in the Lamoille Canyon. The track of the ram is blocky and similar to a pair of sneaker foot-prints no longer than 3 ½ inches.

Mountain Goats: These animals were introduced to the Ruby Mountains in the mid-1960s and as of 2005 the population was up

to 270 goats. Billy's (male) have broad based horns compared to Nanny's (female). Goats have a white/beige coat with the hint of a beard accented by jet black eyes and standing about 2 ½ to 3 feet.

Himalayan Snowcock: These grouse-like birds came from Pakistan and the Himalayans and were introduced in the late 1960s. They stand about 14 inches tall with light colored feathers along the neck and face with a yellow streak around its eyes. The body is a mixture of dark, orange and white feathers providing excellent camouflage. Sightings have been noted in the Island Lake area in the peaks in the early mornings.

Other wildlife to look for: Mule Deer, Pronghorn Antelope, Wild Turkeys, Pika, Coyote...

Trees: Different from the firs of the Cascades, keep an eye out for:

- Curl-Leaf Mountain Mahogany: Brushy tree with curled, twisted limbs highlighted with thickened needles and feathery seeds.
- Utah Juniper/Singleleaf Pinion Pine: Long stiff needles, the singleleaf pinion pine reach the higher elevations.
- Bristlecone pine: Pine shrubs low to the ground and appear sculptured by wind
- Whitebark Pine and Limber Pine: Large and full trees with flexible limbs which become gnarled by conditions with the higher elevations.
- Quaking Aspen, Cottonwood, Willow

Flowers: Many of the flowers/plants will be familiar, such as: marsh marigolds, primrose, alpine shooting stars, yellow monkeyflower, mule's ear, prickly poppy and elderberry.

This and That:

Ruby Dome is the tallest peak standing at 11,387 feet and was named for the red garnets found within the mountain.

Famed crooner, Bing Crosby, resided in Elko for over 15 years, raised his three sons, named honorary Mayor in 1948, and became known as "Man of Many Songs" when adopted by the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe.

Lamoille was named by Thomas A. Waterman, one of the original settlers in the Lamoille Valley and a native of Lamoille County, Vermont.

White Sulphur Hot Springs also known as Hot Hole or Elko Hot Springs (190 degrees) is fenced off due to various tragedies.

REFERENCES

Books/Websites

The following resources were used in preparing the information provided in this booklet and may be helpful to campers:

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Mike White, *50 Classic Hikes in Nevada: From the Ruby Mountains to Red Rock Canyon*
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<http://www.backpackingintherubymountains.info>

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