

Trip Report
Use this form to report on wilderness trips

Submitted by: Art Pope

Date: 10/28/17

Report Title: Strawberry Lakes Hike

Route: where did you go

Hiked to trail #375 to Strawberry Lake, on to Little Strawberry Lake on trail #5003 and returned on the opposite side of Strawberry Lake on trail #5004.

Length: number of days
We were on a day hike.

Summary: 250 word max

A wonderful fall day hike into Strawberry Lake and Little Strawberry Lake. On a blue-sky day extensive stands of Tamarack in their golden fall foliage make this a stunning hike.

This is a popular and well-used trail. Some years ago sections were reconstructed to reduce grades and poor design this has created emerging erosion problems as users cut switchbacks. Often an overly wide brushing swath creates drainage challenges and adds to tread erosion. Lakeside campsites are dot all available sites and bare the usual signs of heavy use: fire rings, bare soil, absence of woody debris.

Wilderness or Wild River:
Strawberry Mountain Wilderness

Management Unit:
Malheur National Forest

Administrative Location:
John Day, Oregon

Head of Administrative Unit:
Steve Beverlin, Forest Supervisor

Trip Report: Grade the success of the management agency with an A TO F letter grade. Comments must support letter grades in each category; skip any category on which you do not want to comment.

B Access: is resource damage occurring on trails and at trailheads.

Trails hiked are in generally fair condition with moderate erosion in some areas; if not addressed serious resource damage should be expected within a few years. Poor trail design has resulted in numerous shortcut trails near the trailhead. Many sections have been bucked and brushed to create an extremely wide trail corridor that is aesthetically unappealing and makes erosion control structures unnecessarily difficult to build and maintain.

B Management: regulations, permit systems, education, enforcement actions.

Nice trailhead signage. One sign clearly informs users about party size limits and prohibitions on the use of mechanization within wilderness. Another sign explains how trailhead registration information is used and requests user cooperation.

Party size regulations (see attached photo) allow up to 18 horses and 12 people—a party size sure to have severe impacts on the resource. This is far too large a group for low-impact wilderness travel.

B Stewardship: are management actions in accord with protecting wilderness values.

No significant concerns were identified during this hike beyond a need to re-evaluate party size limits.

C Wilderness: how well is management protecting the wilderness resource.

Strawberry Lake and Little Strawberry Lake are popular areas. Camping impacts are significant trending to extreme in these areas. Campsites and campfire rings are numerous, vegetation is absent and the forest floor vacuumed clean of woody debris. No garbage or litter was observed.

___ Fire Management, Wildlife Management, Other

Nice population of trout ascending Strawberry Creek. Native?