



Trail 18-- White Fir Pass via Terraces Picnic Area, Bowman Fork

Duration: 2 hours

Distance: 4.25 miles out-and-back

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Bowman Fork trailhead

Elevation: Terraces Picnic Area 6100; Bowman Fork trailhead 6215'; White Fir Pass 7590'

Avalanche: Known avalanche paths

Map: Mt. Aire 7.5' quadrangle

GPS Coordinates: White Fir Pass: 12 T 440757/4504323

Dogs: Dogs are allowed in Mill Creek Canyon but are subject to odd/even day leash restrictions.

Introduction: The accolades of this trail include its solitude, a gradual but consistent climb into backcountry, and a pleasant view from the top. The times I have used the trail it has been well defined by the use of others. It should be easy to follow. Squirrels, chick-a-dees, and tall evergreens span the trail from beginning to end. From White Fir Pass views of Porter Fork, an avalanche path above Porter Fork, and the mountains beyond are your reward.

How to get there: Terraces picnic area sits 3.8 miles up Mill Creek Canyon from the fee booth. The Forest Service has cleared a number of parking areas around the Terraces, one just across the road. The picnic area sits on the south side of the road.

Trail Description: Bowman Fork trailhead is found at the top of the Terraces picnic area, and White Fir Pass is accessed by following Bowman Fork and then switchbacking up the mountain to the pass.

Begin by parking at Terraces Picnic Area found right along the road up the canyon. A wide, snow-packed road that heads off to the south leads for .25 mile to the upper picnic area. Follow the road through the upper picnic area, where you'll find a trailhead sign and trail markers to Bowman Fork. The trail sits behind the restroom. The trailhead is a bit confusing as there are at least two possible trails that head out from this point. Head up the trail to the left of the trailhead sign, no arrows tell you where to go, but a short way up the trail small signs point you to the right for Bowman Fork, while Elbow Fork heads back toward Mill Creek's main road. As you make your way up Bowman Fork the trail narrows. The frozen stream becomes your companion, and sightings of the occasional squirrel, grouse or chic-a-dee occur. One mile from Terraces base picnic area, you'll hit Mt. Olympus Wilderness area. The trail is a consistent climb to the top. On your way down from the pass you can cut time and enjoy powder by heading straight down the mountain rather than following the switchback trails back into Bowman Fork.

Options: From White Fir Pass you can continue around the back side of the mountain up to other peaks.