

31

MACKS CREEK



Coordinates

Trailhead:

N 43°36.571'
W 115°55.945'

Turnaround Point:

N 43°37.590'
W 115°56.612'

Distance: 3.0 miles out and back

Total Elevation Gain: 400 feet

Difficulty: Easy

Time: 1 to 2 hours

Season: Spring and fall are optimal. Please avoid during winter as it's critical winter habitat for deer.

Shade: Intermittent

Leash Requirements: On leash the 0.25 mile nearest the trailhead, remaining trail off leash. The first section of the hike is in the Boise Wildlife Management Area where leashes are required. See map for details.

Water Availability: Macks Creek

Cautionary "Tails": Be cautious of hunters in fall.

Restrooms: Vault toilets near trailhead at Macks Creek Park and Five Mile Flat

Dog Waste Stations: None

Information: Boise National Forest, Mountain Home Ranger District, (208) 587-7961

MACKS CREEK

Located between Lucky Peak Lake and Arrowrock Reservoir, this family-friendly out-and-back trail has a little something for everyone. In spring and early summer, the budding trees and wildflowers create an explosion of color. The autumn palette is equally delightful as the abundant aspens and alder trees show their full glory. The trail is an easy-to-follow, gentle stroll through a birding paradise. Screech owls, meadow larks, spotted towhees, red-wing blackbirds, mountain bluebirds, and a wide variety of wrens keep dogs on full alert and exploring around the trail. If you have a birding book or app, you'll want to bring it along.

For the more adventurous humans and canines, numerous game trails lead up the surrounding hillsides and through gullies that can keep the explorer's

heart full and energetic pup content. Deer and elk are plentiful through this area, making excellent recall a must for your pup. The surrounding hillsides could also hold a treasure trove of sheds (antlers that deer and elk “shed” annually).

If you and your two-footed or four-footed hiking partners are new to backpacking, the short hike into a large meadow and easy access to water create a welcoming space to test equipment and skills.

Macks Creek Park offers reservation-only camping if you’re inclined toward a multi-day excursion around the reservoirs. See Cinch Creek Trail 32 and Cottonwood Creek Trail 33 for other outings nearby.



Berry in her office

DRIVING DIRECTIONS

Take I-84 east to Idaho City/ID 21 (exit 57) in Boise. Reset your tripmeter. Turn left onto Gowen Road/ID 21 north. At 12.9 miles, turn right after the Mores Creek Lucky Peak Bridge onto paved FR 268/Arrow Rock Road. Approximately a quarter mile past Macks Creek Park, at 4.9 miles, the trailhead will be on your left. There is a small parking area (2-3 cars) at the trailhead and a pullout for several more cars a few more yards up on your right. This road can be extremely busy in summer months.

THE HIKE

The trailhead is marked by a non-motorized trail sign and meanders along Macks Creek. The hike starts at the mouth of the canyon, which will provide shade for pooches early and late in the day. Interesting rock features along both canyon sides provide perches for birds of prey. At a mere 0.1 mile an inviting sandy beach offers easy access to the creek. Water levels fluctuate significantly with the seasons. A short distance later the trail splits before merging again at 0.4 mile. For variety, take the “high road” out and the trail closer to the creek (and shade) on the way back. The trails merge at the base of a welcoming



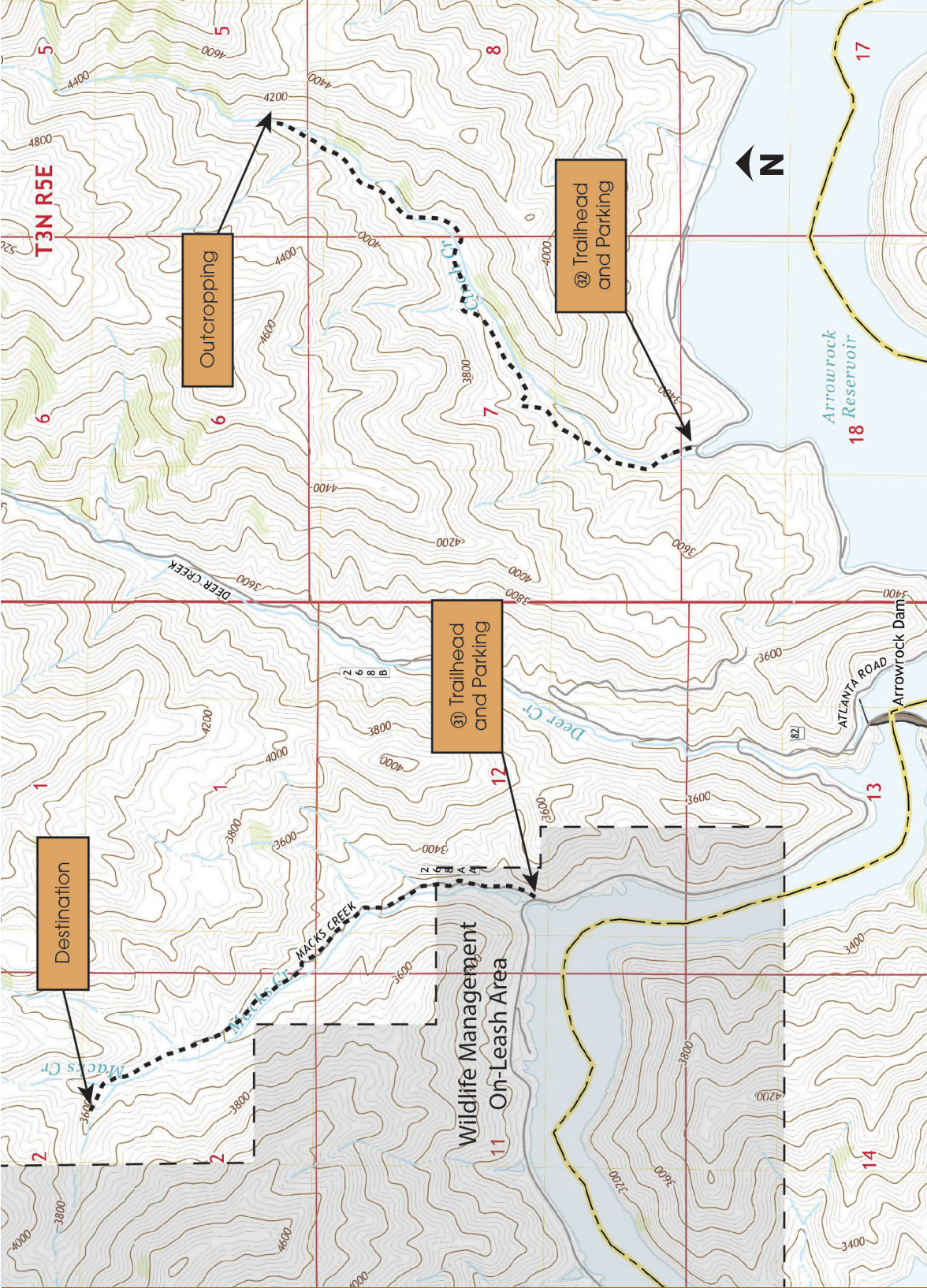
Macks Creek Drainage

meadow. Pooches will have a great time sniffing all the wildlife tracks throughout the meadow.

From the meadow, you will see a lone ponderosa pine on the hillside to the west. If you explore off trail, this ponderosa can act as a homing beacon. At 1.2 miles a well-worn user trail goes to the right. Stay on the lower trail. Just past that junction, you will cross an intermittent stream. In the wet season, your pooch will enjoy splashing and slurping the cool water. At 1.5 miles the trail peters out. Nearby trees provide shelter for a picnic and game trails to explore. The mileage in this book uses this point as the turnaround point. If you are seeking more of a challenge, this is a good location to start an ascent to the summit of Macks Peak on the west side of the canyon. You can follow the game trails up the draw or cross country directly to the summit. Either way, you'll gain nearly 1,400 ft in 0.5 to 1.0 mile. Note: The west side of the canyon is in the Boise Wildlife Management Area, and dogs are required to be leashed when hiking in the WMA.



In-fur-mational Tip *Always carry poop bags, pick up after your dog, and carry them out. Put waste bags in odor-proof barrier bags to help cut the stink!*



T3N R5E



Outcropping

32 Trailhead and Parking

31 Trailhead and Parking

Destination

Wildlife Management
On-Leash Area

Arrowrock
Reservoir

ATLANTA ROAD
Arrowrock Dam