



Wonder Lakes Backpack (Intermediate): September 10-13, 2015

10 miles, 2000 feet elevation gain and loss

At 11,500 feet, Wonder Lakes Basin offers solitude and easy access when it comes to reaching the stunning high Sierra. The Wonder Lakes Basin has everything: plenty of trees, wildflowers, grassy meadows alongside streams and lakes, flowing waterfalls, all kept together in a carved granite bowl. The only thing missing is people and evidence of them.

This excursion starts near Bishop, CA at North Lake and allows us to start our hike on a flat trail in lush aspen groves and then pine forest. The trail gets steeper as we continue to Lower Lamarck Lake - a beautiful place to take an extended break for snacks. We then venture off-trail to reach Wonder Lakes, but besides the climb, it's very manageable, not technical, and the views back down the valley are stunning. The Wonder Lakes are filled with cascading waterfalls - clearly the highlight of the area. We'll choose a lovely spot to camp at whichever lake we think is nicest. Our free day can be spent day hiking to the highest lakes in the basin, or just relaxing at the shore of a lake with a book.

In order to acclimate to the elevation and allow folks time to group up, our first night will be car camping at North Lake (9300 ft). The next morning, we'll eat a hearty breakfast and get on the trail by 9:00am to make the most of our day on the trail.

Thursday, 9/10: Drive to North Lake Camp for elevation acclimation

Friday, 9/11: Breakfast, break camp and be at the trailhead ready to start hike at 9:00am

Saturday, 9/12: Free day! Explore area or relax at lakes

Sunday, 9/13: Break camp and head back to cars

Weather: Expect warm days and chilly evenings and mornings. Dressing in layers is the best way to manage the possible range of temperatures. Precipitation is always a possibility, so rain gear is mandatory.

Bring: 10 Essentials (no kidding, every person needs a personal first aid kit); food for each meal plus extra snacks; water bottle and filter system; sleeping bag and pad; tent; broken-in hiking boots; layered clothing; jacket; rain gear; wide hat; compass; toilet paper & trowel; compact camp stove; fire starter; headlamp; sunglasses; sunscreen; insect repellent; camera and entertainment (book, card game, etc). Group may share water filtration system. Topographic maps of the area will be provided at the trailhead.

Cost: \$26 for GO Members, \$51 for non-members (includes 1-yr membership into GO). Backpacking permit for each person is included. Register early. Maximum 6 people due to reservable limit of 6 backcountry permits per day. When capacity is reached, a waiting list will be in effect. Cancel before August 15 to receive a refund.

Other considerations: As with any backcountry experience, this one is "Leave no Trace" - our trash comes out with us. Active bear area so either bear cans or hung bear bags are mandatory. No campfires at Wonder Lakes. Dog friendly!

Directions: I-395 North to Bishop, CA. Left on Line St/ CA-168 for 18 miles following signs to North Lake. Right on N. Lake Rd for 1.5 miles, drive to campground. Parts of N. Lake Rd are unpaved, but smooth and easily manageable by any passenger car. Carpooling is highly encouraged.

Trip Leader: Please contact Chris Fava at trancefusion@mac.com