

LOST LAKE

The Hood River Indians called it E-e-kwahl-a-mat-yam-lshkt, meaning 'heart of the mountains,' which to the modern day visitor may seem more appropriate than lost.' However, Lost Lake is easier to pronounce.

Lost Lake is located ten miles northwest of Mt. Hood and about a mile east of the crest of the Cascade Mountain Range. Total surface acres are 290 and the perimeter measures about 4.4 miles. The lake is 5395 feet in length and 4150 feet wide at its greatest point and 167 feet deep. In the Mt. Hood National Forest only Wahtum Lake to the north, at 177 feet, is deeper. The lake is 3100 feet above sea level and is generally accessible from mid-May until snow blocks the road, usually late October. Drainage is to the northeast via the Lake Branch of Hood River. The lake contains brook, rainbow and brown trout, and Kokanee. Douglas fir, Mountain Hemlock, Cedar and some White Pine constitute the principal cover, with Alder and Huckleberry forming the underbrush. Otter are found in the lake as well as beaver. Blacktail deer, squirrels and chipmunks are found throughout the area with black bear, cougar and bobcat in the surrounding hills.

HISTORY

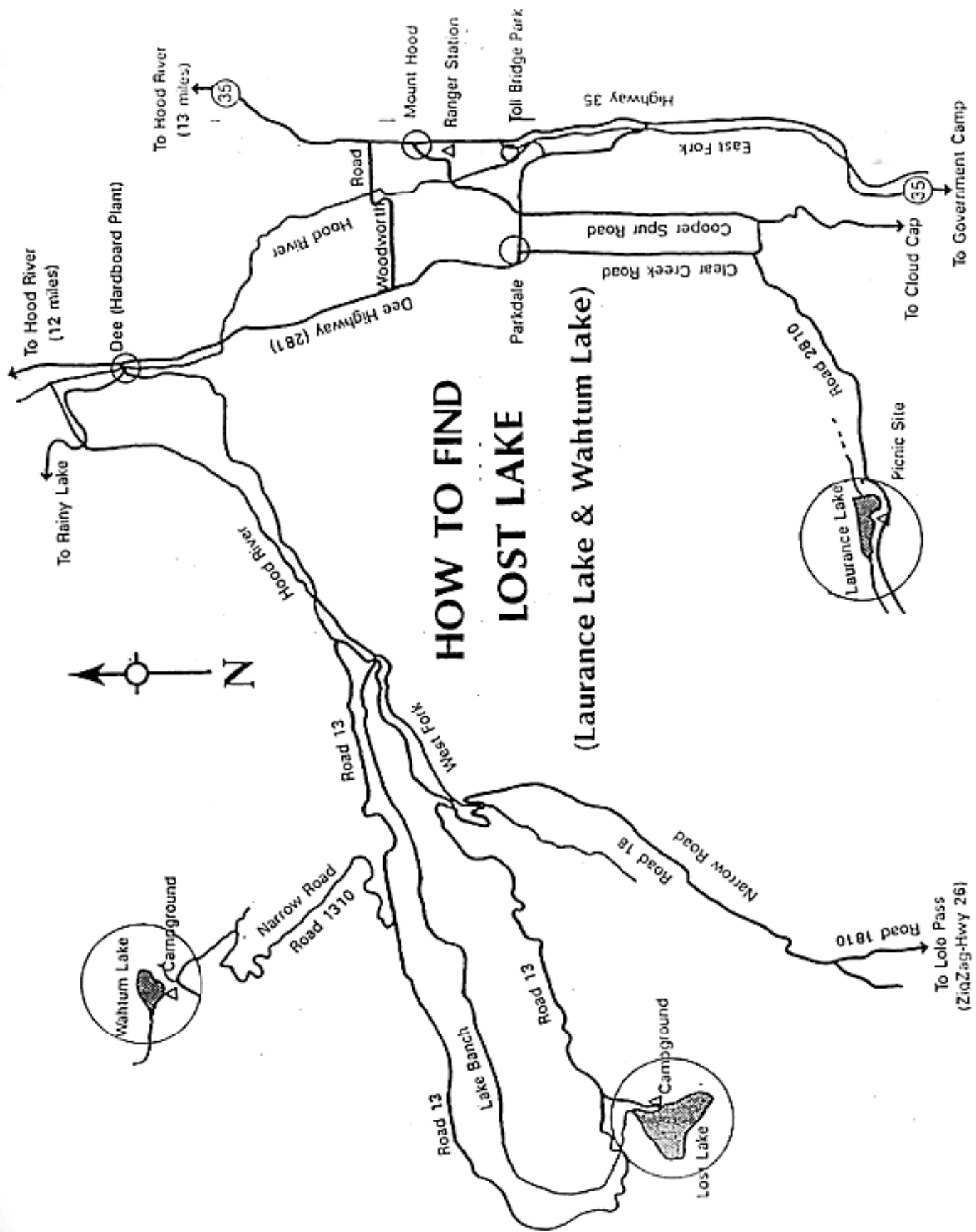
In August of 1873, a party of men from The Dalles made a horseback trip around Mount Hood with John Divers of Hood River as their guide. They knew the body of water as 'Big Lake,' and reached it by following Lake Branch of the Hood River to its source. Arriving at the lake during a typical Lost Lake rainstorm they proceeded to build lean-to shelters by stripping cedar bark from the great trees. On their third night at the lake, while lingering over an evening meal of trout, one of the Diver's boys said: I wonder if that stuff on those trees would burn?' and without thinking touched a long strand of dry moss with a red-hot stick he had just used to light his pipe. The moss burst into flame and quickly spread to other trees. They left without stopping to gather their camping gear. Wind swept the fire south and up what was later to become known as Huckleberry Mountain. The purple berries appeared in great number a few years after the fire. The story remained a family secret for many years and Lost Lake remained 'lost' until its official discovery in 1880 by a group of 11 men from Hood River. Leaving town on August 18th they traveled south to the present site of Dee where they experienced their first adventure. In order to reach the west side of the river they had to fell a large tree and then crawl

across to the other side. Their animals were hauled across the river with ropes. Reaching the upper West Fork of the Hood River they found the area completely burned over from a forest fire the year. The soft ash quickly filled their shoes and made travel difficult, but they did eventually reach a point high in the hills where, according to their calculations, the lake should have been. It was not there. One of the party said: We must be lost.' 'Oh, no,' replied Smith, a competent surveyor, 'we know exactly where we are. It's like the Indian who said he wasn't lost-his wig-warn was.' Continuing southward the men finally reached the lake and christened it Lost Lake as a result of Mr. Smith's remark.

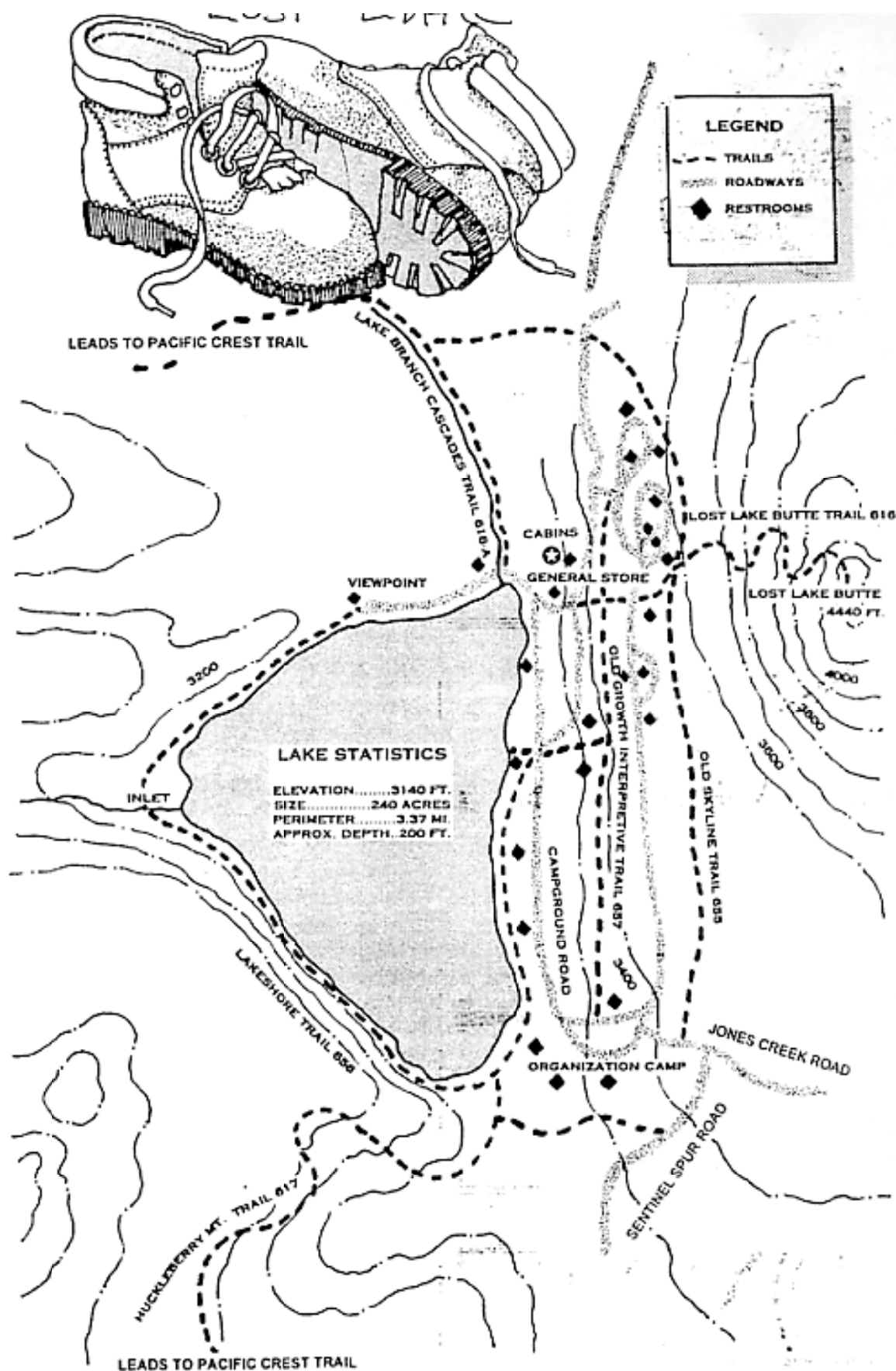
These days visitors who like to fish, hike, swim, picnic, pick berries or simply laze about their campsite wish that the lake was more 'lost.' The Forest Service campground, presently a concessionaire operation under permit to a private party, is often full, especially from Friday afternoon until late Sunday. Improvements are underway designed to both protect the resource, and provide a quality experience for the visitor. There is one rule that does help preserve the original serenity of the lake and that is - no motorboats are allowed.

Lost Lake is about 100 miles from Portland. Follow 1-84, the Columbia River Highway, east to the town of Hood River, then travel south over good paved roads to the community of Dee and west over paved county and forest roads to the lake.

ENJOY YOUR VISIT



G N I K I H



TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

LAKESHORE TRAIL This is an easy 3.2 mile stroll around the perimeter of the lake. Starting at the viewpoint at the north end of the lake the first portion of the trail is a self guided nature walk and from the store parking. lot south to the bottom of the lake is barrier free. Allow yourself an hour or more so you can stop along the way to enjoy the splendid views of the lake and Mt. Hood.

OLD GROWTH TRAIL This trail runs north and south between A Loop Campground and the Organization Camp for a distance of 1 mile. It offers the hiker an ideal opportunity to learn more about the ecology of the area through numerous interpretive signs set along the trail. The Old Growth Trail is an easy walk and is barrier free the entire length.

OLD SKYLINE TRAIL A slightly more difficult trail, 2.5 miles long, it connects the Lake Branch Cascades Trail, north of the lake, with Jones Creek Road and is open to mountain bikes as well as hikers.

LAKESHORE EXPRESS This is a short, half mile trail that connects the Old Growth Trail with the Lost Lake shoreline at the public boat launch. It is a little more strenuous but is still barrier free.

LOST LAKE BUTTE TRAIL This trail is a steep one, climbing 1400 feet in it's 2 mile length, but well worth the effort. It starts from the General Store parking area and takes you up east of the lake to where you can see pretty near everything that's worth seeing... Mt. Adams, Mt. Baker, Mt. Hood as well as occasional views of Mt. St. Helens. All you need is that extra bowl of Wheaties...

LAKE BRANCH CASCADES TRAIL Just less than a mile long this trail meets up with Lake Branch Creek Road where you can either loop back around to Lost Lake Road to the east or head west and connect with the Pacific Crest Trail. This trail has some rough areas but is open to mountain bikes.

HUCKLEBERRY MOUNTAIN TRAIL This trail starts either at the south end of the lake on the Lakeshore Trail or from Sentinel Spur Road off of Jones Creek Road. It is a fairly steep 2.5 mile climb and connects to the Pacific Crest Trail.

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