

MY FAVORITE RIDE

Destination: Showers Lake from Carson Pass, by way of the Pacific Crest Trail
Elevation Change: From 8560' to 8790'
Trail Distance: About 5.1 Miles
Distance from Carson City: Approximately 50 miles (1 hours drive) from Carson City.
Maps/State: El Dorado National Forest, California; Caples Lake USGS Quad Topo
Topo Map #(s): Echo 7.5
Coordinates: Latitude 38: 7419, Longitude: -120.0349, Altitude 8,652', Center: 38.7419°N 120.0349°W
Elevation at center: 8,684'

P.O.C: Information: N/A **Tele. #:** N/A
Reservations/Fees: N/A **Tele. #:** N/A

Trailhead Info:

Established: Yes
Parking Area Size: Enough for about 10+ horse trailers; depending on how many hikers are at this trailhead (generally not a lot).
Hitching Post: No
Corrals: No
Horse Water: No
Water Trough: No
Distance to Water: It is a couple of miles to the first pond/watering hole.
People Water: No
Bathrooms: Yes
Showers: No
Trailer Hook-Ups: No

Camping Facilities: Drive-in Ride-in Established Ride-in Wilderness ¹
Water Available Feed Available Corrals (Fencing)

Distance/Time to Camp: About 2 1/2 hours in depending on speed of riders and how long you spend at the historic ranch in Meiss Meadows.

Are Dogs Allowed: Yes

Trail(s) Rating: Beginner/Easy Intermediate/Moderate Advanced/Strenuous

Trail Condition: Well Marked Hard to Find Over Grown Rocky ²
Steep Water Crossing Fast Water Deep Water

Highway directions from Carson City: From Highway 395 South, Take Highway 88, crossing in to California and continuing through Woodfords. Stay on Highway 88, passing Sorensen's Resort and continue through Hope Valley passing the Highway 89 turnoff (toward Lake Tahoe). Continue northwest on Highway 88 through the Carson Pass Scenic Byway. At the top of the summit (8,573'), on the right (North side) you will see the Carson Visitor's Center. The trail head is across the street on the South side of Carson Pass.

¹ There are many established campsites in and around Showers Lake, many with rustic rock fire pits. You must get a fire permit from the Forest Service (in person), which is free good for the entire year. A camping permit is not required. Meiss Country is not a true "wilderness," but is considered a roadless area. Not all "wilderness" rules and regulations are applicable in Meiss Country. Questions? Contact the Forest Service.

² There are only some larger boulders to pass in the first mile and a half.

Trail Directions: This trail follows the Pacific Crest Trail (no mountain bikes allowed) through expansive meadows with views of Little Round Top (10,381'), Elephant's Back (9,585') and Red Lake Peak (10,063'). The trail begins by winding upward 400 vertical feet through a series of switchbacks littered with large boulders for over a mile until you reach the summit where there is a small pond. After reaching the summit, the trail drops down a slight grade into the flatlands of Meiss (pronounced "Mice") Meadows, which is riddled with many streams and tons of wildflowers. When you come to the junction of the Tahoe Rim Trail—stay to the left. At this junction, you will also find the Meiss Backcountry Hut. It's a historic landmark and has a wonderful story board. After leaving the TRT junction, you will eventually proceed up a moderate hill, covered with tons of wildflowers (waist high) in the spring and early summer. Reaching the crest, the trail descends in to Showers Lake, one of the cooler lakes in the Tahoe area.

Concerns to be Aware of (Road/Trail Conditions, i.e., Curves, Steep Grades, Hard to Find Turn-offs, etc.): The highway up to Carson Pass after you leave Hope Valley gets a little steep and has a couple of tighter turns, but it is very doable.

Points of Interest: Views of Caples Lake at the beginning of the ride (Caples Lake and Woods Lake on the way back), Showers Lake is the highest in the Upper Truckee River Basin. You can also view Lake Dardanelles from the vista at Showers Lake. This is a very lovely ride with a great many wildflowers in June and July and even some in August. It's not too terribly long and is very scenic, with views of Meiss Lake and other ponds. You will also cross the Upper Truckee River. It's a good, easy day ride or an easy campout with the horses. Showers Lake is stunningly beautiful.













