TRIP REPORT

Goat Lake

NORTH CASCADES

TRIP REPORT BY:

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WTA Member

HIKED: Aug 4, 2012

TYPE OF HIKE: Day hike

TRAIL CONDITIONS: Obstacles on trail:
Muddy or wet trail.
If you want a hike with some history, then this trip is for you.

There are two options for reaching Goat Lake on the Elliott Creek Trail: Upper Elliott and Lower Elliott. Both trails converge again about 1.5 miles before reaching the lake. For this trip, I took Upper Elliott on the way in, and Lower Elliott on the way out. The upper trail will provide more solitude on a busy weekend.

Both trails are in superb condition. The upper trail follows an old alder-lined road. A few
small waterfalls and streamlets to cross give this trail some added interest. The lower trail, which follows right alongside rushing Elliott Creek, is more of a “true trail” with more ups and downs, more variety in terms of foliage, and more small streams to cross.

A short ways after the trails join together, you will enter the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness. This is where the trail starts to climb, and this portion of the trail had a few muddy patches. Although the hike has only 1400 feet of elevation gain, keep in mind that most of that climb is concentrated in this one short stretch which comes after you have already hiked about 4 miles. The climb is short-lived, and soon enough you will reach the lake, site of a once-bustling mining operation.

Before reaching the lake (or on your way back down), be sure to follow the side-trails that lead to a view of Macintosh Falls, named after the family that operated a lodge at the lake during the 1920s and 30s. To get to one of the viewpoints there are several blowdowns to crawl under, but the views were worth it. Be careful on the rocks near the falls; the ones that are wet from spray are certainly slick!

Though this would be a great hike to a magnificent lake even without knowing the history of the area, taking some time to research the past activity at the lake makes it an even more impressive hike.