

October 1, 2011

Six Swan Rangers hiked up the Wire Trail just south of Swan Lake on Saturday, with four continuing on to its junction with historic Alpine 7 trail on the Swan Crest. They came upon some nice patches of huckleberries, and a couple nice piles of grizzly bear scat full of said berries! They also saw tracks of elk and mountain lion!

A couple hundred yards of the trail slid off the mountainside this spring in the east-most avalanche chute on the aptly named Spring Slide Mountain, so the going there is very tricky indeed. In fact we dug a few footholds with our hiking poles in the steepest portions of the now hard-pan mud.

This was a 10 mile round trip and brought us back to our cars about 4:30 pm, but it was nice to see some new high alpine country!

The Swan Rangers meet every Saturday at the Echo Lake Cafe for **breakfast at 7:30, leaving at 8:30** for a partial day outing in the northern Swan Mountains and foothills.

They carpool from the Swan River School parking lot next to the Cafe.

When hiking in bear country, remember to carry bear spray and avoid the 3-D's: dawn, dusk, and darkness.

Everyone is welcome!



Keith

Photos on following pages by Keith Hammer:



The trail is not too bad in Spring Slide Mountain's rockier west avalanche chute . . .



. . . but most of it is gone in the eastern chute, likely due to last winter's heavy, wet snow pack!



Thunderbolt Mountain and a passing rain shower.



Huckleberry-laden grizzly bear scat!



Lots of dead white-bark pine along the Swan Crest.



Turn-around at Alpine Trail #7.