

July 21, 2007

Seven Swan Rangers hiked up the Peterson Creek Trail Saturday to the Quintonkin Creek divide, where a bite of lunch was had in the cool of the shade and high elevation.

The hike up was delayed first by the need to drown out someone's abandoned, smoldering campfire at the trail head, then by the discovery of very tasty huckleberry patches along the way!

Three Rangers needed to return from the divide for afternoon social engagements, while four continued on to make a loop around the southernmost peaks of Broken Leg Mountain; following Alpine Trail #7, the Broken Leg Divide Trail, and the off-trail descent of a ridge that shortcuts a couple miles off the loop.

We discovered a really big meadow of Indian Paintbrush in the Wheeler Creek watershed on the back side of Broken Leg Mountain. Unfortunately, we also discovered motorcycles are still illegally using Alpine Trail #7 there and trashing the alpine meadows it passes through.

If you'd like to help, please take a moment to write a short email to the Forest Service officials whose email addresses are listed below. Please urge them to close to motorized vehicles the Quintonkin Trail and Peterson Creek Trail access to Alpine #7 in order to move enforcement down to the roads and trail heads, rather than allow rampant, illegal and damaging use of Alpine #7 to continue.

Flathead Forest Supervisor Cathy Barbouletos: cbarbouletos@fs.fed.us

Swan Lake District Ranger Steve Brady: sbrady@fs.fed.us

Spotted Bear District Ranger Deb Mucklow: dmucklow@fs.fed.us

Hungry Horse District Ranger Jimmy DeHerrera: jdeherrera@fs.fed.us

Thank you!

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.

Everyone is Welcome!

Hope to see you soon,

Keith

Keith Hammer photos:



A meadow of Indian Paintbrush along Alpine Trail #7.



A meadow of Indian Paintbrush trashed by illegal motorcycle use of Alpine Trail #7.



Fantastic views abound as the Peterson Creek Trail traverses the old Red Owl burn at high elevation.



The Peterson Creek Trail is moderate hiking thanks to a moderate grade, but hiking progress can be slowed by ripe huckleberries!