

Snow remains common obstacle in Desolation



As seen on June 18, many lakes are still largely frozen, with surrounding campsites snow covered. Photo/Shannon Macguire/USFS

By U.S. Forest Service

The report and photos below are from Forest Service wilderness ranger scouting expeditions this last week in Desolation Wilderness. Many hikers are turning around because of difficulty finding the trail, a great deal of snow, limited dry ground, frozen lakes, and high stream crossings. Sturdy, waterproof hiking boots and proper clothing are recommended along with a map and compass and trekking poles. Travel with a buddy, never alone and keep in mind your mobile device may not work in some areas. Develop an emergency plan in the event you are unable to call for help.

Bayview trail

Trail clear to Granite Lake. Snow on trail to top of ridge (Maggie's Peak), and solid from top of ridge on. Difficult to follow trail, with hazardous conditions. Large amounts of snow and water from Bayview/Eagle junction onward, with limited dry ground for camping. The upper lakes are beginning to thaw, but still holding ice and snow. High stream flow conditions,

exercise caution if crossing.

Eagle Lake

Trail clear to Eagle Lake. Above Eagle Lake, trail is a mix of snow, flowing and standing water, and dry. Minor stream crossings to junction with Bayview Trail. Beyond junction, trail is primarily snow and water. Lakes higher in Desolation are thawing, but still surrounded by much snow and water. Water crossings are high and swift, many travelers are turning around at Velma crossing and Fontanillis crossing.

Echo Lake

Snow above Upper Echo Lake on the PCT, Tahoe Rim Trail before Haypress Meadow. Lake Aloha is thawing quickly. Exercise caution if crossing streams. Parking is available at the upper lot, but not in the lower lot. Chalet and boat taxi are currently closed. Anticipated opening, July 4.

From Tahoe Rim Trail Association: Echo Lakes to Barker Pass

(June 13) Lower Echo Lake is completely thawed and Upper Echo Lake is mostly cleared of ice. The trail around the lakes is partially cleared of snow. Closer to the wilderness boundary the snow increases covering the entire trail. Expect Desolation Wilderness to be completely covered in dozens of feet of snow. The higher passes, such as Dicks Pass, are likely to be corniced and hazardous.

Lake Aloha from all trails:

(June 22) Beautiful, but expect to find plenty of snow on your hike. The hike is 100 percent snow from the end of Upper Echo Lake on. Highly suggest a GPS unless you know the area well, the trail can be tough to find at times.

Meeks Bay trailhead

Trail is very wet through lower meadows, but mostly clear to Genevieve Lake, a few snow patches remain. Clear of downed trees to Genevieve Lake. Travel with waterproof boots to stay on the trail. Stream crossings are high and fast moving, use caution if crossing – many hikers are turning around at stream

crossing just south of Crag Lake.

Mount Tallac trail

Trail clear of snow until Floating Island Lake. Snow on trail as it continues to Cathedral Lake. Seasonal stream crossings, exercise caution if crossing.

Glen Alpine trailhead

Trail is very wet. Stream crossings on all trails in the Glen Alpine drainage are currently swift and high, use caution if crossing. Expect snow beyond the Susie Lake-Gilmore Lake trail junction.