



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

VOL. XIX No. 5
February 1980

MILLER CREEK AREA

TRAIL BEGINNING 4160 ft. (1267 m.)
Junction of Plant Creek Road 2132
and Miller Creek Road 464.

TRAIL ENDING 4160 ft. (1267 m.)
This trail is a loop, returning
to the trailhead.

ACCESS Travel south on Highway 93
to its junction with Miller Creek
Road. Take Miller Creek Road 464
and continue for 0.5 miles to the
fork of Upper and Lower Miller
Creek Roads. Turn north (left)
onto Upper Miller Creek Road and
continue 12.5 miles to the intersec-
tion of Plant Creek Road 2132. The
county stops road plowing at this
intersection; the plowed parking
area can accomodate several vehicles.
See Sketch Map.

ATTRACTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Because of its low elevation and
geographic location, the skiing/snow
shoe season in the Miller Creek
drainage begins in midwinter during
a normal snow season. This 8.15
mile loop makes a long day trip;
however the short access to the
trailhead permits skiers to get
an early start. The topography
along this route is varied with
gentle pitches and occasional
steeper sections. The steeper
sections (15-20% slope) are
generally short; some sidestepping
on the climbs and controlled turn-
ing on the downhill runs may be
necessary.

HOLLOMAN-PLANT CREEK XC/SNOWSHOE LOOP

Length: 8.15 mi. (13.1km.)

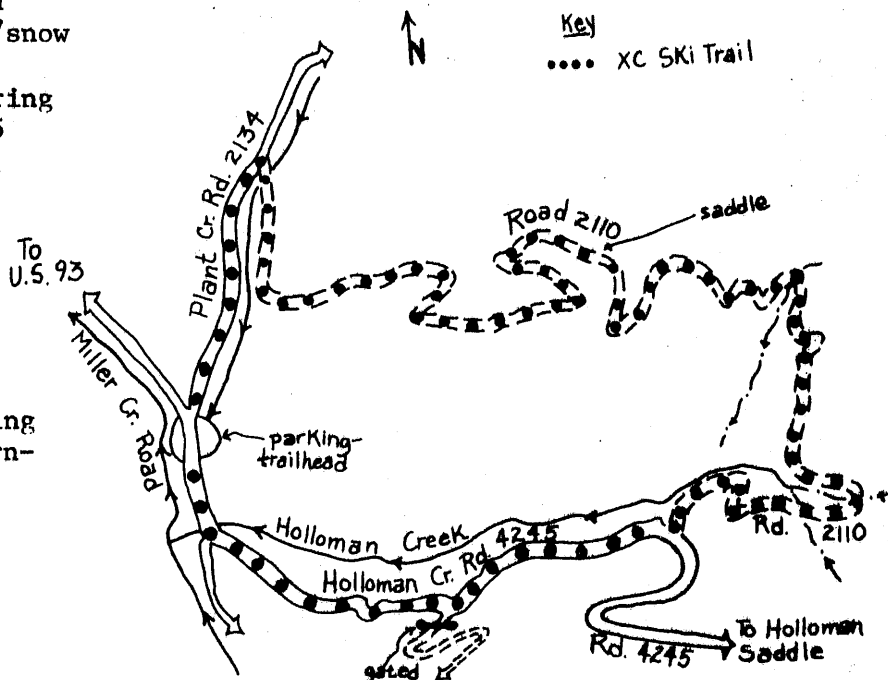
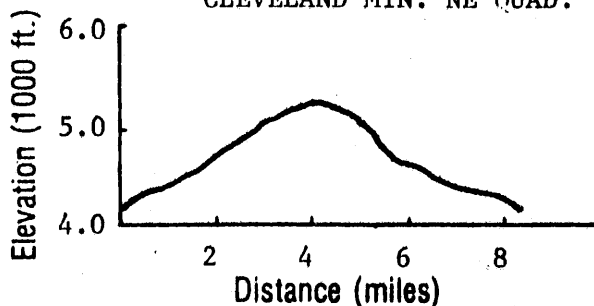
Recommended season:

| Spring | Summer | Fall | Winter |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| | | | ←→ |

Use: Moderate

Difficulty: More Difficult if powdery snow

USGS Map(s): Most Difficult if packed & icy
CLEVELAND MTN. NW QUAD.
CLEVELAND MTN. NE QUAD.



HOLLOMAN-PLANT CREEK XC/SNOWSHOE LOOP

NARRATIVE The snowpack on this route is inadequate for early season skiing, but skiers should keep this trail in mind for midwinter use. The route makes a loop along Road 2110 via the Holloman Creek Road 4245 and the Plant Creek Road 2134. The loop trip, along Road 2110, can be approached from either Plant Creek or Holloman Creek. However, because of the steeper climb (5-10% grade) encountered on Road 2110 if approached via Plant Creek, the recommended approach is to ski up Holloman Creek Road 4245 and follow Road 2110 down to Plant Creek Road 2134.

From the plowed parking area at the Plant Creek/Miller Creek junction, the ski trail follows Miller Creek Road for 0.5 miles to the Holloman Creek Road 4245 intersection. The ski loop continues southeast (through this intersection) and begins climbing along a 4-6% grade. While climbing, skiers will find themselves alternating from sunny (southerly) to shaded (northerly) aspects. The moist habitat conditions along the northern facing slopes have generated the growth of some cedars in this area.

After climbing 2 miles, the ski loop turns sharply to the northeast (left), abandoning Road 4245 and turning onto Road 2110. The route continues to climb along Road 2110 for an additional 2 miles until reaching a small saddle. From this saddle, the trail begins a 2.3 mile downhill run (5-10% grade) and joins Plant Creek Road 2134. Two sharp switchbacks are encountered along this downhill stretch and should be approached with caution if conditions are icy. From the Plant Creek Road junction, the route turns southwest and returns to the parking area following Plant Creek Road.

The Miller Creek/Holloman Creek portion of this loop is utilized by snowmobilers; therefore, some sections of the route may have a packed base. Some drifting does occur along Road 2110 and trail will need to be broken by skiers on occasion.

NOTE: The drainages and sidehills along this loop do support some big game winter habitat. Because of the stresses placed on these animals from their environment, they are sometimes in a weakened condition. Any undue harassment can cause further stress and even endanger the lives of these animals. Please remember to observe from a distance and keep all pets under control.

The Birch Wood

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The Rocky Mountaineers of Western Montana, Box 4262, Missoula, Montana, 59806, welcome all persons interested in hiking, camping, ski-touring, snowshoeing, river floating, bicycling, and technical climbing--summer, autumn, winter, and spring. Subscription to the Mountain Ear is by membership: \$4.00/year, single; \$5.00/year, family; or \$2.00/volume to out-of-town addresses. Eight issues per volume.

OFFICERS

President- Myra Bair.....728-3616
 Vice-Pres- Katherine Peterson.....721-5200 work
 Secretary- Les Ojala.....549-5263
 Treasurer- Arnold Finklin.....543-8705
 1st Past Pres.-Jerry Kogan.....721-3286
 Newsletter Staff-Myra Bair and
 Virginia Vincent.....543-8078

* * * * *

* **NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, February 13, 1980 *

* **PROGRAM:** TELEMAR TURN SKI CLINIC with instructors from the Trailhead *

* at MARSHALL SKI AREA. The lifts are open from 7-10 pm. and *

* the cost is \$2.25 to use the rope tow. Refreshments will be *

* served in the extra ski lodge. In the event of too little *

* snow to ski, we will meet at 7:30 pm at the Double Front *

* basement for an alternate program. Call Velma Green at *

* 258-6619 on the meeting day to see if she plans to run the *

* rope tow that night. *

* **LOCATION:** Meet at the double front to car pool. Come at 6:00 pm for *

* a meal, or no later than 6:45 pm for a ride. If there is no *

* skiing that night, the meeting will be the usual time, 7:30. *

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS: Brenda Lambert, 12 Parsons Dr.; Roger Stang, #5 Pamela, El-Mar;
 Thomas Greason and Barbara Kosa, 428 Chestnut, Dillon, MT. 59725;
 Bill Bishop, Shoreline Route, Polson, MT. 59860.

RENEWALS: Ralph Klawitter family, Dave Hohl, Caroline Eder, Bob Schipf family.

TOSRV



ANNOUNCEMENT: The Missoula Bicycle Club has announced dates for this year's Tour of the Swan River Valley, one of Missoula's major recreational events. The 231 mile tour will take place on May 24-25, 1980. The 1980 tour will be the 10th annual. It is strictly limited to 500 riders. Entry forms for the event will be made available soon. To receive a free poster/entry form, send a business-sized, stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

TOSRV WEST 80, Missoula Bicycle Club
 P.O. Box 8903M, Missoula, MT. 59807

ROCKY MOUNTAINEER COMING EVENTS SCHEDULE:

Feb. 9-12 Long 3 to 5 day trip for hard core skiers. Call Jerry Kogan, 721-3286.

Feb. 10 Sun. Moderate ski tour trip to explore MARSHALL BOWL. Meet 8 am at the north east corner of the UM Fieldhouse parking lot. Bob Benson will be the coordinator. 549-1426.

Feb. 13 Wed. Meeting night TELEMAR TURN CLINIC at MARSHALL SKI AREA 7-10 pm. See the meeting announcement for details.

Feb. 17 Sun. PACK CREEK ROAD from LOLO PASS, 8 miles total mostly downhill. The group will LEAVE from the K-Mart parking lot near I-HOP at 9:00 am sharp. Virginia Vincent, 543-8078.

Feb. 24 Sun. POTLUCK BREAKFAST and SKI TOUR. Bring your own plate, cup, and utensils to 2325 Valley Drive. Eating will begin at 9 am with food you bring to share. Those who survive may wish to try some gentle ski touring afterwards. Bob Benson will accept only the first 25 reservations from Rocky Mountaineer members and guests. 549-1426.

Feb. 25-Mar. 2 THIRD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL at the University. Major showings Friday and Saturday evenings.

Mar. 2 Sun. LUBRECHT SKI TOURING with MaryAnn Schipf. Meet 9am at the northeast corner of the University Fieldhouse parking lot. 728-2995.

Mar. 7-9 BIG MOUNTAIN WEEKEND DOWNHILL SKI TRIP leaving Missoula Friday afternoon or evening. Lodging at Rocky Mountain Lodging is \$7.25 per person per night. Lift tickets are \$10.50 a day. George Howe needs lodging money from the first twelve to reserve by FEBRUARY 13. 543-4200.

Mar. 8-9 LOST TRAIL HOT SPRINGS WEEKEND 5 miles south of Sula. Something for everybody- hot springs pool, whirlpool hot tub, sauna, home-made soups, fresh bread, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, ice skating, and indoor games area. The first 35 reservations will be accepted. Myra Bair, 728-3616.

Mar. 12 Wed. March meeting.

Mar. 16 Sun. EPICUREAN SKI TOUR. Gourmands, get together your favorite cuisine. We aren't going too far, so bring your wok. All wines older than one year will be tasted by the leader, Rob Holden, 543-5545.

April 5-6. EASTER at the CLUB CABIN. Myra, 728-3616.

April 19-? AFTER-TAX-SEASON-LONG-TRIP. Myra.

May 24-25 TOSRV WEST

July 4 Five days SAILING THROUGH THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS on a 30 foot Catalina sailboat with Ben Engelking. The boat sleeps 7, has a galley, head, etc. and costs about \$90/day. Write Ben at 14956 NE 31st Circle, Redmond, WA. 98052.

HOLIDAY FEAST AT THE CLUB CABIN

Eight tourers looking for snow and suffering from holiday fallout gathered on yet another snow free, sunny morn in the Bitterroot. Walking seemed to be the best mode until after the lunch stop at the summer trailhead.

The snow and the group arrived at Little St. Joe peak concurrently (Don Baty excluded since he arrived sooner). For most of our stay the valley below was covered by a sea of clouds.

The New Year's Eve feast had an amazing number of courses preceded by a happy hour or two. A full moon apres feast ski was attempted by some, but the moon clouded over.

Returning from the cabin in the new-fallen snow (8 inches) resulted in two broken ski poles, a gimped knee, frayed rope climbers, and a nice glide down the ridge road. There wasn't a lot of snow, but a great time was had by all. Participants were; Myra Bair (organizer), Rob Holden (author), Bob Benson (knee), Bill Morgan, Tom Greason, Barb Kosa, Don Skaar, and Don Baty.

LITTLE ST. JOE CABIN REGISTER NOTES

Dec. 31, 1976 "Last visitors of 1976. Snow 2½ feet deep. Parted & belched all the way up. Will bring skis next time. Party at Don's tonight. Every one welcome."-John Walker

"Times like these is when you appreciate life"-Doug Walker

Feb. 26, 1977 "wish I had my skis. Crawling in snow is work!"-Carol Butterbaugh
"No skis, but the wood stove makes me think I would stow them for the afternoon any how."-Bruce Jeske.

"who needs skis!"-John Walker

"dug a lot of post holes."-Martha Yale

"glad someone else broke trail."-Jim Schultz

"wish I had snowshoes."-Lynn McLeod

"Bill Morgan & I were the only ones to bring skis. Beautiful snow."-Myra Bair

"Great place to be stranded, but bring snowshoes or skis."-Chuck Davis

April 2-3, 1977 Hell of a trip. Heavy, wet snow. Couldn't get past Power's Palace. I think I broke my body."-John Walker

Dec. 31, 1977 "Dave Hohl, Bill Morgan, Myra Bair left Bill's truck at the commune before noon and got to the cabin around 5:30. Beautifully clear and cold day (-5 F). Stars are magnificent tonight. pretty nice place to see out the old year and see in the new."-Myra Bair

Jan. 1, 1978 "what a beautiful start to the new year. The day was clear and cold again, and the snow was beautiful for skiing. We went to the top of Little St. Joe (11:20-1:40) via the far ridge (N.). The skiing was 'outstanding!' This is better than the Bugaboos as far as I am concerned.

Don Baty and Ron Friedman just got here at 5:15. They smelled our turkey coming from way down the hill."

Jan. 2, 1978 "yet, another beautiful day. Don and Myra did the peak. Skiing is still outstanding."-Myra Bair

March 7, 1978 "Ed Bloedel, Ray Thompson, Melissa Patterson left Bass Cr. Commune 0845, arrived cabin at 1330. Snow depths approx. 5-6' for last ½ mi. Trip official Forest Service for Special Use inspection of facility. All use, repairs, and facilities appear to be in compliance w/the permit.

Several ridge poles were bent with heavy snow. Water leak around stove pipe with stove operating. Snow generally above all blazes for last $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. May need to raise some of these. Skiing sticky 40° sunny."

April 30, May 1, 1978 "Supah skiing enjoyed by all from the stormy summit of St. Joe's peak. Two new inches of moist snow added to the delight of our telemarks. Special thanks to Sherpas Jon & Mo for making an intended day trip into a relaxing two day venture."-peter Dea Steve Mo Jon

Jan. 27-Feb. 2 1979 "The weather was clear and cold-really beautiful. The tree skiing on the ridge was fantastic! Really peaceful trip."-Tim Wood

"Same time-Outrageous Powder! Nothing could compare to the steep tree skiing here. Next time we'll bring more whiskey!"-Mark Pearson

May 7, 1978 "Kleepse & Carolyn came here & sat around. Then made turns. Stevensville

January 7, 1979 "We came to do a bit of skiing. Made a wild run down from the top last night(3/4 moon)! Beautiful weather."-Paul Jensen

"Skiing last night was out of this world! The snow was excellent. Great weather."-Tim Wood

June 9, 1979 "Came up yesterday to do some Spring skiing. Really great. Took yellow plastic can. Will return it shortly full of kerosene. Enjoyed the comfort of sleeping on large foam pad. Thanks Jack!"-Gene Stuart

May 23, 1979 "I like my father being in Rocky Mountaineers."-Jose Miller, age 8

July 4, 1979 "Chopped down a tree and chopped it into firewood. Nice cabin."-Michael Power, 13; Paul Power, 15; Chris Berg, 15; Andrew Bangert, 12, Julia Bangert, Pope the dog

March 4, 1979 "Beautiful weather, terrible snow. Most magnificent view of mountains."-Joe Knotek, Raelen Williard, Bill Morgan, Jim Lynk

March 29, 1979 "20" of fresh powder and blustry weather. Witnessed a couple small slab avalanches; stayed out of bowl and just skied the ridges. Snow is very nice."-Mark Pearson

"It sure was nice to ski fresh powder again even though snow was rather unstable. The ski down should be nice."-Tim Wood

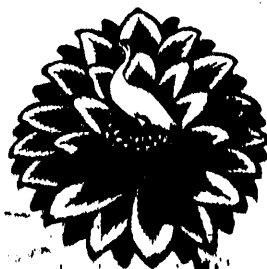


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