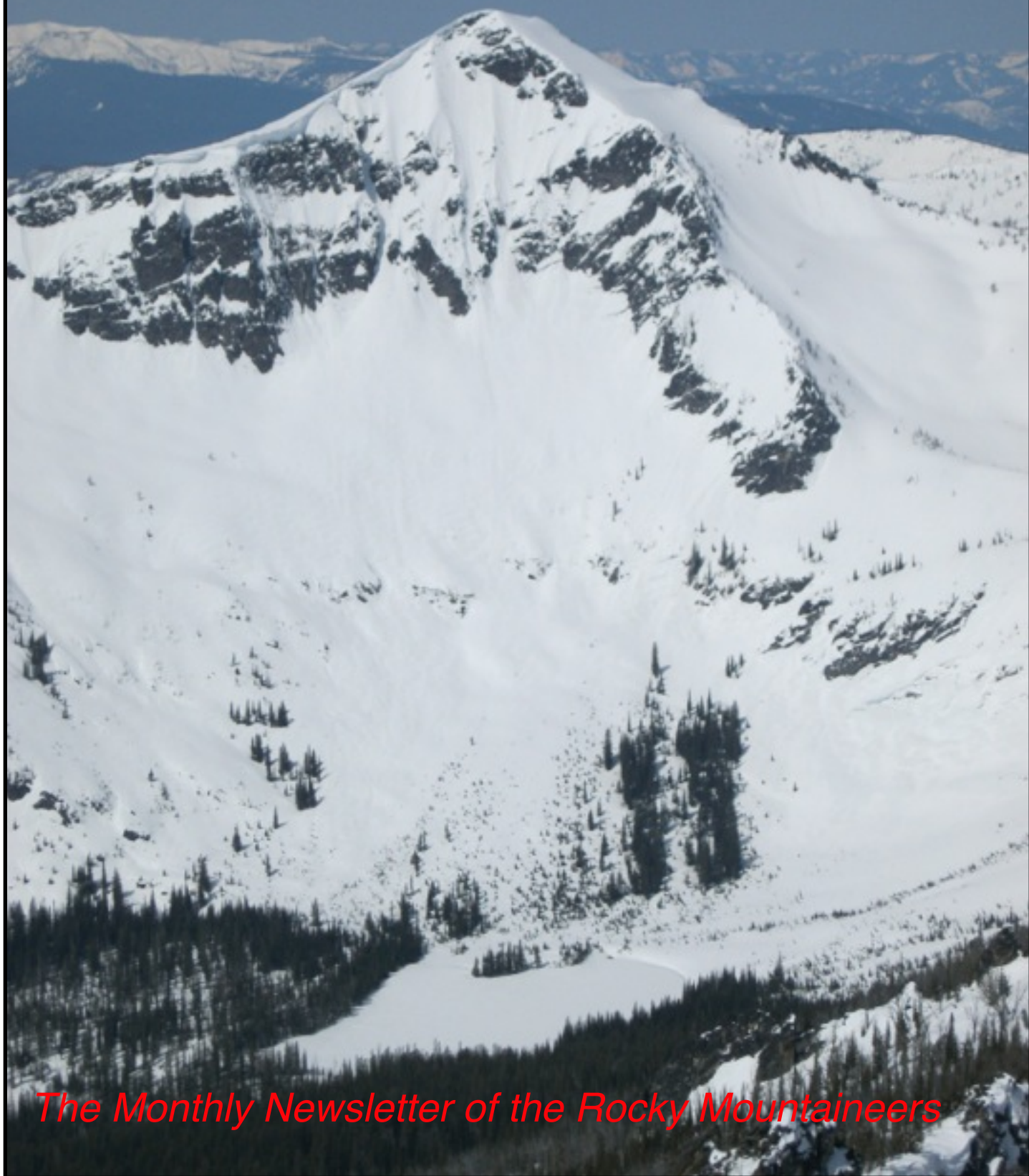


APRIL 2014

THE MOUNTAIN EAR



The Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers



Climb. Hike. Ski. Bike. Paddle. Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Promotion of Responsible Outdoor Adventure.

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The Mountain Ear is the club newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers and is published at the end of every month. Anyone wishing to contribute articles of interest are welcomed and encouraged to do so - contact the editor.

Membership application can be found at the end of the newsletter.

ABOUT THE CLUB:

Mission Statement:

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of responsible outdoor adventures.

Meetings and Presentations: Meetings are held the second Tuesday, September through May, at 6:00 PM at the Trail Head. Each meeting is followed by a featured presentation or speaker at 7:00 PM.

Please be sure to check out our **Facebook group** to receive the latest up-to-date news and post short-notice trip proposals:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rockymountaineers/>

Cover Photo: Sky Pilot gracefully rises over Bear Lake, as seen from Gash Point, Bitterroots. Photo by Dan Saxton.

***NOTE* It's time to renew your membership! Club dues are \$10.00; see the last page of this newsletter for more details.**

TRIP REPORTS

Sunday, April 20, 2014 - Woody Mountain Logging Road Hike

April 20th, Easter Sunday, was a beautiful day when Eileen & Fred S., Beth Anne A., and Julie K. met to drive up Marshall Creek and walk logging roads behind Woody Mt. in the Mittower drainage. It was windy on the sides of the ridges facing into the Clark Fork Canyon around Bandmann Flats. All of the shoulders of the ridges had great views into the canyon and when we got high enough, over the saddle of Mt. Jumbo. There was snow above on Woody Mt. but we turned back at a preset time, where the road crossed Mittower Creek and encountered the 1st snow. For some reason walking the roads back out they seemed longer and steeper then they had going up. Wildflowers were sparse except yellow bells which we saw plenty of. Some balsamroot was coming up and starting to form blossoms. *Julia Kahl*

Saturday, April 26, 2014 – Fish Creek State Park



Photo by Steve Schombel

It was a wet and cold morning, so none of the locals wanted to go. When I called friend Jim, from down Superior way, he said it was getting a little brighter down there, and would go if I did. When we met at the lower Fish Creek Bridge it wasn't raining, and I found out that Jim had never hiked down to the confluence. Of course I had to show him this very pretty spot. One special thing is, there is a small creek that cascades down the cliffs right at the confluence, so you see 3 waters joining together. We also explored some of the drops and pools and the boat camp, and we saw our first blooming balsamroot of the season. Then we went up to the roads on a bench just west of the creek. This bench was fairly flat and had a lot of roads that right now are open, but may become bike trails when the park is developed. It was too muddy to drive any of the roads, but we walked one that dropped almost to the creek, then another that kept climbing gently. Then it really started to rain, so we turned around. I drove over to Rivulet, and thought the Rock Creek Road also looked very muddy. It was still raining off and on, mostly on. Jim invited me down to his house to join him and his wife, Cathie, for a soak in their hot tub, witch I gladly accepted. It wasn't rugged Rocky Mountaineers stuff, but still a pleasant day considering the weather. Jim was impressed by what he saw of the roads, and thought they would be great for mountain biking. I definitely want to go back and explore more and hike up Cyr Peak. *Steve Schombel*



Photo by Steve Schombel

Saturday, April 26, 2014 - Petty Mountain

Dan Saxton and Alden Wright climbed Petty Mountain on Saturday, April 26. There is a new well-marked trailhead that leaves from the now paved Petty Creek road. The trail is well switchbacked and gradual enough for a strong mountain biker to bike up.



The herd of rams! Photo by Dan Saxton

About 2 miles up we could see a herd of bighorn sheep ahead of us. When we got closer, it was apparent that they were all mature rams - about 25 of them! They were not very spooky and we walked to within about 70 yards of them before they ran off. The herd was close together and stayed together as they ran off; they only ran about 100 yards before stopping. Shortly after leaving the sheep, we saw a fresh wolf track and we expect that this is the reason that they were so tightly grouped.

As we got up into the snow, we had winter conditions with blowing snow and limited visibility. First snow was encountered at just above 5,000 feet once we got into the woods, and on south facing slopes up to 6,000 feet the snow was mostly new. Once we got upon the main ridge leading south to Petty, the deeper snow was fairly consolidated and Dan never put on his snowshoes. Dan took pictures of 15 foot drifts along the ridge leading to Petty's lower north summit. We reached the top at about 2:15 but there was no view. On the way down, we could barely see our tracks coming up due to the fresh snow. As we got down lower, the precipitation quit so we had no rain. It was a good hike. *Alden Wright/Dan Saxton*



The north ridge of Petty - Christmas in April? Photo by Dan Saxton

UPCOMING TRIPS AND ADVENTURES

Trip Notes:

Please contact the trip leader for more information regarding any listed trips. Mileage listed is round trip mileage. Elevation listed is gain only. For information on Class Rating see below:

Class Rating System

CLASS 1 – HIKING Mostly on trails, but may also include some easy cross country travel.

CLASS 2 – EASY SCRAMBLING Rugged off trail hiking, no hands required.

CLASS 3 – SCRAMBLING Use of hand to ascend some sections of rock. Little to no exposure; a fall would not likely cause serious injury.

CLASS 4 – CLIMBING Easy climbing, great exposure; a fall would quite possibly cause serious injury. Use of a rope and protection at times possible.

CLASS 5 – TECHNICAL CLIMBING Use of rope, protection and belay are a must.

CLASS 6 – AID CLIMBING Use of equipment to support your weight as you climb.

Saturday, May 3, 2014 - TRAPPER PEAK SKI/SNOWSHOE

Rating: Class 2; Distance 12 miles round trip; Elevation Gain: 5000'

Description: I am planning a Trapper Peak ski/snowshoe/hike on Saturday, May 3. Trapper Peak is the 10,000' peak southwest of Darby. We probably won't be able to drive to the summer trailhead and the posted distance/elevation gain assumes that we will start considerably below the summer trailhead. There will be lots of snow: skis with skins or snowshoes are needed. There is no avalanche danger. I will have a number of friends joining me, so I expect to have a lot of participants (over 15 at present count). Please contact me right away if you weren't aware of this before but would still like to go! We will be meeting at the place in the West Fork Highway where the road to the Trapper Peak summer trailhead cuts off, at 8am if you want to join us.

Leader: Alden Wright: rocky@wrightmontana.net

Saturday - Sunday, May 10-11, 2014 - LITTLE SAINT JOE CABIN SKI TRIP

Description: I'm planning a ski trip to the Rocky Mountaineers cabin on Little St Joe Pk on May 10-11. For more information about the trip call me at 728-6881.

Leader: Paul Jensen

Sunday, May 18, 2014 - SPOTTED DOG WMA

Rating: Class 1 (hike); *Distance:* 3-5 miles (5-8 km) round trip; *Elevation Gain:* unknown

Description: The Spotted Dog WMA was recently acquired by the state and is closed from Dec. to May 15th. It is just east of I-90 south of Deer Lodge in the Beck Hill area, in the foothills of the Boulder Batholith. This is a trip to explore the area for future use. Expect walking in sage brush covered hills, with some trees. Wildflowers should be numerous.

Leader: Julie Kahl: jawkal@rockymountaineers.com

Showcasing Snapshot.....

The North Fork - The Side Most Don't Know



The North Fork valley from the summit of Mount Hefty. King Edward and Starvation Peaks are immediately left of the US/Canada boundary line, and Kenow Mountain is across the next valley to left. To the right are, of course, the well-known peaks of Glacier National Park. Photo by SummitPost member "RebelGrizz."

“The North Fork” - most Montanans know this as the North Fork of the Flathead River, one of the most tantalizing and pristine waterways in the state, traveling down the western end of Glacier National Park. But a certain political boundary prevents many people from getting a full idea of the North Fork Valley’s extensive breadth - and scenery. This “Showcasing Snapshot” will display the British Columbia side, where the headwaters of the mighty Flathead River are located.



An abandoned border station, closed for many years, prevents direct access to those who want to continue exploring up the North Fork. To get there, you must make a huge roundabout journey into Canada up

The upper North Fork. Photo by Troy Colautti

US 93 to Elko, and then take your pick of the best logging road to take you through the MacDonald Range to reach the North Fork’s headwaters - over Cabin or Harvey Passes. Is it worth the effort? I say, it looks like it is.



The North Fork Valley looking north. Packhorse Peak at center. Photo by Fred Brown

The rugged peaks that comprise Glacier National Park, undaunted by politics, reach on a little further along the east side of the North Fork Valley; they are partly within the boundaries of Akamina-Kishinena Provincial Park. The intrepid duo of King Edward Peak (9,177') and Starvation Peak (9,301') face off Long Knife Peak across the intervening valley, and Kenow Mountain (8,868') is the next big peak to the north. All these peaks, geographically just a part of Glacier as their counterparts to the south, undoubtedly see very few ascents. Further north, Scarpe Mountain (8,573') is the most significant summit as the Canadian Rockies prepare the way for the High Rock Range which continues on to Crowsnest Pass. The North Fork continually laps away at the feet of all these peaks - I'm sure it also rewards fishermen!

On the opposite side of the North Fork, the Whitefish Range finally comes into its own. Somewhat undistinguished on the Montana side, it becomes much more impressive once it changes political allegiance (and its name to the MacDonald Range). The vertical



Inverted Ridge from Mount Hefty. Photo by "Rebel Grizz"

battlements of Inverted Ridge, 15 miles long (highest peak 7969') hold the attention of all who choose the drive over Cabin Pass. On the other side of the pass is the highest peak of the whole Whitefish/MacDonald Range, Mount Doupe (8,760'), a majestic summit on par with its Montana brothers. The MacDonald Range continues to the headwaters of the North Fork, where it merges with the Continental Divide to form the High Rock Range.

All the peaks around the Canadian side of the North Fork have very little information on them, and will undoubtedly reward the persistent mountaineer. The foremost authority to consult, on www.bivouac.com, are the trip reports of Rick Collier, who was the dean of peak baggers for the Canadian Rockies (he sadly died a couple years ago in a fall on the



Mount Doupe from Mount Hefty. Photo by "Rebel Grizz"

Ramparts in Jasper National Park). Rick Collier has trip reports for Starvation, King Edward, Kenow, Inverted, Doupe, and others, which are definitely worth the \$25 (Canadian) fee paid for membership on Bivouac.

The North Fork itself has been the scene of much debate over mining and drilling. British Columbia, fortunately, has recently made it off-limits to these

activities, which is a huge morale-booster for those who want to preserve one of the most beautiful and pristine major river valleys in the Northern Rockies. The only real blemish remains the scars of logging in various spots. Work continues to go on to fully make sure that the North Fork remains in its wild condition.

A trip to the Canadian side of the North Fork of the Flathead River definitely favors curious and intrepid explorers and adventurers!

Rocky Mountaineers Peak List Revision

The Rocky Mountaineers have recently gone over their peak lists, revising them for more accuracy. This has introduced some new peaks onto the lists and removed some old ones. In this issue, the second half of the lists will be presented: those for the Rattlesnake, the Missoula Horizon, and the Bitterroots. Feedback can be given to the board members.

Awards are given to those who complete the lists - see <http://www.rockymountaineers.com/index.php/achievement-awards> for more details. Prominence cutoff was set at 400'.

I apologize if some of the place marks make it confusing to see which peak is which on the maps. That's where you can pull out the topo map for more detail! ;-)

I hope this encourages many to get out there and do some good climbing!

NOTE OF ERRATA:

1. Panoramic Peak was mistakenly omitted from the Missions map in the last newsletter. It is located east of McDonald Peak and NNE of Glacier Peak.
2. A peak in the Swan Range was forgotten - please add Puma Peak, 8,553', 613' prominence. It is located east of Goat Mountain and basically looks like a steep haul up from Youngs Creek valley.



McLeod Peak and the Mission Mountains from the top of Stuart Peak. Photo by Dan Saxton

RATTLESNAKE AREA PEAKS

The Rattlesnake peaks rise right above Missoula to the north. Some of these peaks are popular climbs, such as Stuart Peak and Point Six, while others like McLeod and Triangle Peaks require more of an effort to get to. This is a good “intermediate list” for peakbaggers to work on after finishing the Missoula Horizon!

	Name and Elevation	Prominence	Notes
	McLeod Peak 8620'	3760'	
	Murphy Peak 8167'	587'	
	Mosquito Peak 8057'	557'	
	Stuart Peak 7971'	720'	
	Point Six 7942'	480'	
	Triangle Peak 7800'+	1080'	
	Sheep Mtn 7646'	2026'	
	Mineral Peak 7482'	1547'	
	Gold Creek Peak 7207'	1467'	



Location of the Rattlesnake Peaks

MISSOULA HORIZON

This is the beginner's list for peakbaggers just starting out in the Missoula area. The list covers all the summits that are most prominently seen on the horizon from Missoula. These peaks are relatively easy to ascend and provide great perspectives of Missoula from a distance; a zoom shot of the "M" from peaks like Ch-paa-qn (Squaw) or Petty Mountain is particularly interesting. Take your friends up some of these peaks and introduce them to the marvelous activity of "peakbagging!"

	Name and Elevation	Prominence	Notes
	Black Mtn 5951'	731'	
	Blue Mtn 6460'	880'	
	Charity Peak 6535'	1600'	
	Ch-paa-qn aka Sleeping Woman aka Squaw Peak 7996'	4016'	
	Miller Peak 7030'	1198'	
	Mount Dean Stone 6204'	983'	
	Mount Jumbo 4768'	828'	
	Lolo Peak 9139'	750'	
	Petty Mtn 7270'	2890'	
	Point Six 7942'	480'	
	Sheep Mtn 7646'	2026'	
	Stark Mtn 7349'	2239'	
	Stuart Peak 7971'	720'	
	University Mtn 5709'	1646'	
	Woody Mtn 6218'	760'	



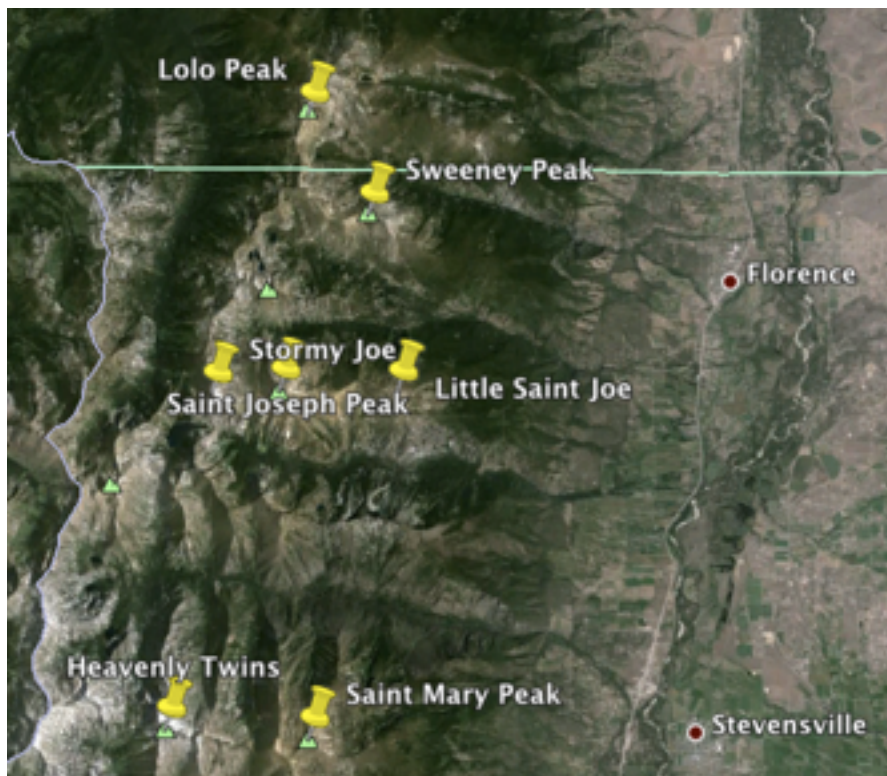
Location of the Missoula Horizon Peaks

BITTERROOT MOUNTAIN PEAKS ABOVE 9,000'

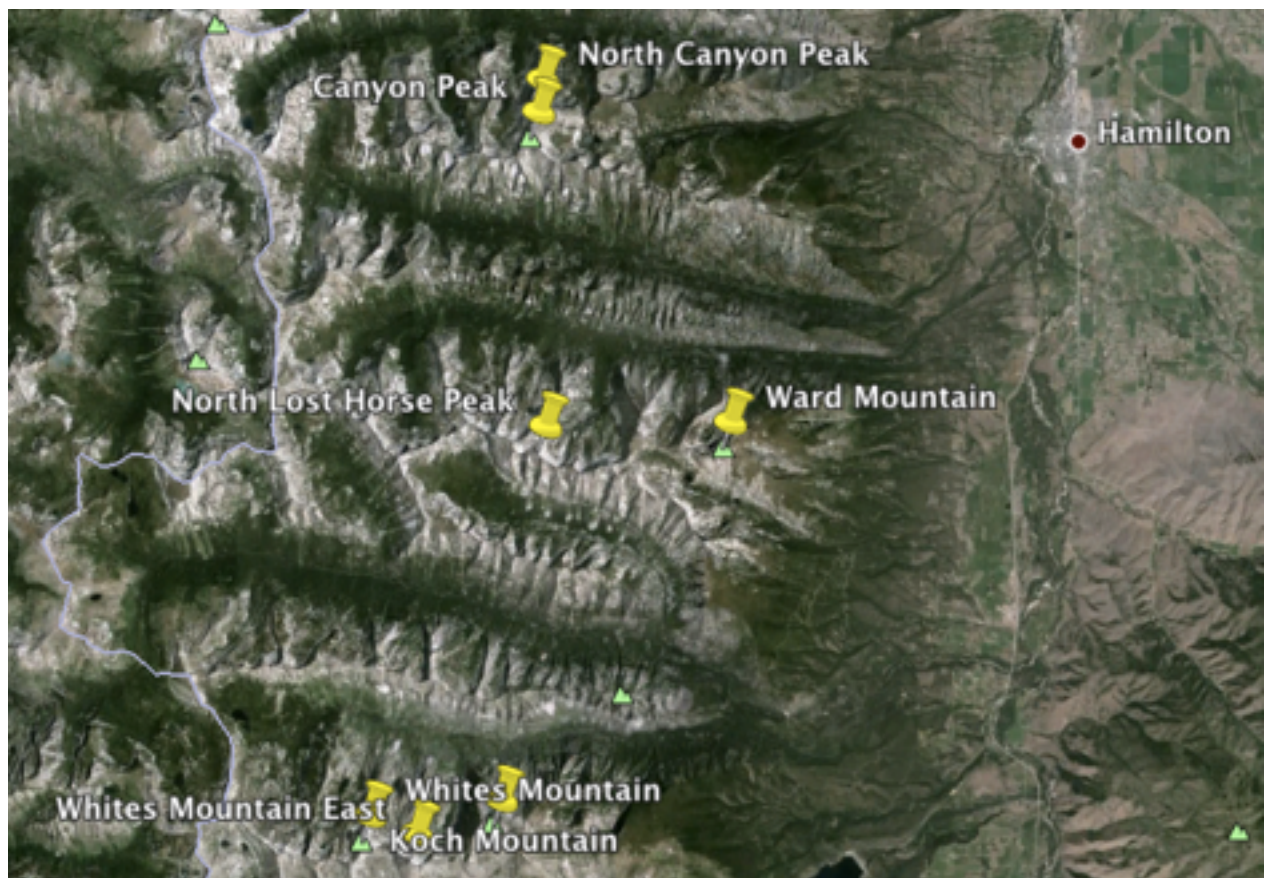
The Bitterroots are the closest big mountains to Missoula, and the most accessible of these in terms of logistics. There is an enormous amount of diversity in the peaks listed here, ranging from easy walk-ups (Trapper, Saint Mary), to technical climbs (Canyon Peak). At least one person (Steve Niday) has completed this list, so contact him for beta on these summits; my "notes" are only quick, basic observations and surmises from topo maps/satellite.

	Peak and Elevation	Prominence	Notes
	Trapper Peak 10157'	3570'	
	El Capitan 9983'	1978'	
	The Shard 9883'	1543'	
	Boulder Peak 9804'	2384'	
	N Trapper Peak 9801'	421'	
	W Como Peak 9624'	1204'	
	Saint Joseph Peak 9587'	3407'	
	Sugarloaf Peak 9586'	926'	
	Middle Como Peak 9530'	400'+	Over 400' prom as per data from AllTopo
	East Boulder Peak 9500'	440'	
	Chaffin Peaks 9486'	506'	
	E Como Peak 9485'	400'+	Over 400' prom as per data from AllTopo
	Bare Peak SE 9459'	1090'	
	Bare Peak NW 9440'+	639'	Lists of John extrapolates the 9440' contour upwards by 20 feet. We do not know which Bare Peak summit is higher, but the contour is bigger around Peak 9459'.
	Mink Peak 9363'	543'	On the ridge west of Trapper Peak.
	Mount Jerusalem 9355'	1215'	
	Saint Mary Peak 9351'	2011'	
	Heavenly Twins 9282'	1422'	

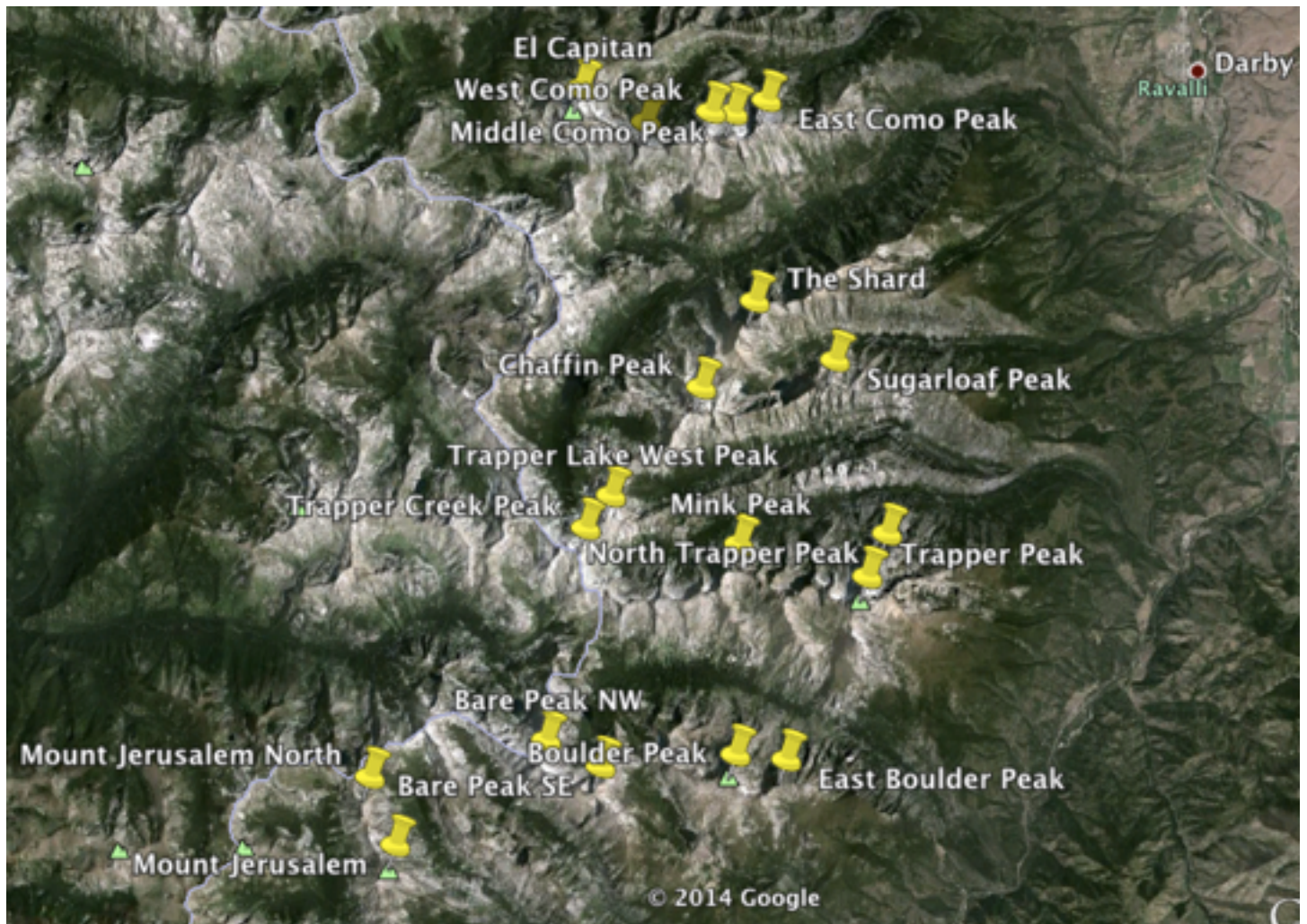
	Trapper Lake W 9260'	840'	Located SW of the Chaffin group of peaks. Hard to get to, no trails come very close. Possible approaches via Boulder Creek and Tin Cup trails.
	Lonesome Bachelor 9185'	485'	
	Mount Jerusalem N 9169'	429'	Long hike in up Watchtower Creek. May be combined with Jerusalem.
	Whites Mtn 9162'	2462'	
	Sweeney Peak 9161'	1101'	
	Canyon Peak 9155'	2375'	
	Ward Mtn 9119'	1659'	
	Lolo Peak 9139'	750'	
	Whites Mtn E 9095'	635'	
	Koch Mtn 9072'	652'	
	N Canyon Peak 9042'	462'	
	Little Saint Joe 9,040'+	440'	
	N Lost Horse N 9018'	838'	
	Trapper Creek Peak 9012'	552'	Probably the most remote peak on the list along with Trapper Lake W, a long way in from anywhere. Boulder Creek looks like easiest approach?
	Stormy Joe 9003'	783'	



Location of the Bitterroot Peaks - North



Location of the Bitterroot Peaks - Central



Location of the Bitterroot Peaks - South

Looking ahead.....

Annual Club Picnic - Tuesday, May 10, 2014. On Tuesday, May 10, 2014, The Rocky Mountaineers will have their annual club picnic starting at 6:00pm at the Pattee Canyon Picnic Area. The picnic area won't be officially open, but we have permission to have our picnic at the group area which is 150 yards downhill from the parking area around the toilet at the turnaround. We will hold elections for the next year. A proposed slate of candidates will eventually be available on the website to inspect.

The club will supply utensils and paper plates and cups and a small grill. Bring some food to share and your own beverage. We hope to see you there!!!

Also make sure to plan for the annual Glacier Classic at Many Glacier from August 22-24!

Rocky Mountaineers' Meeting Minutes 4/8/2014

Julia Kahl was out this time around, so we did not record minutes as precisely. Meeting this evening were Paul Jensen, Steve Schombel, Alden Wright, Steve Niday, and Dan Saxton. We quickly confirmed the dates for the Glacier Classic, spent time discussing details of the upcoming picnic, and cleared up some last details concerning the revised peak lists. We then enjoyed Don Gisselbeck's presentation on "The Real Ski Season."

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: \$10.00

Note: Membership includes all members of a family or household.

Make checks payable to 'The Rocky Mountaineers' and send to: The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Additional Family Members' Names:

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone (optional): _____

Email: _____

Additional Email (optional):

Joining or maintaining your Rocky Mountaineers membership has never been easier!

PayPal is now available on the Rocky Mountaineers website. Click on the membership link on the main page.