

## SWITMO

### THE HAPPY/PANTHER TRAIL aka RUBY TO ROSS or ROSS TO RUBY

#### A Whatcom County hike

"Happy" refers to Happy Creek which is near Ross Dam and "Panther" refers to Panther Creek which is near the south-eastern end of the trail. "Ruby" refers to Ruby Creek and "Ross" refers to Ross Dam or Lake.

The trail is mostly in woods but there are views of Ross Dam and Ross Lake along the way. This was part of the old pack trail bringing people and stock up the Skagit River in the days before Highway 20 was built. When the Highway opened in September of 1972, the old stock route was abandoned. In the 2000's the Park Service resurrected and improved this old trail, building two new bridges and making other improvements.

Note: The Ross Dam Trailhead near milepost 134 is usually accessible all year. The South-eastern Trailhead at the East Bank Trailhead at milepost 138 is accessible only when Highway 20 is open beyond milepost 134.

This trail is in the Ross Lake National Recreation Area.

This 6.34 mile one-way hike can be done from either end. One can leave a shuttle car at either end and hike one way.

The description below is written as if the hiker begins at milepost 134 and ends at milepost 138.

Driving Instructions: From Sedro-Woolley drive east on State Highway 20 to the large Ross Dam parking area near milepost 134. If using a shuttle car, drive it to the East Bank parking lot near milepost 138.

Data: The one-way distance is 6.34 miles\*\*. Elevation gain is about 550 feet. SWITMO gives it a rating of easy to moderate.

\*\*This was measured using a mileage wheel on the ground.

Hike description beginning at milepost 134:

Descend the trail 0.73 mile through a series of switchbacks to the gravel road below. Not far from the trailhead you will cross a new bridge over Happy Creek.

At the gravel road turn RIGHT and walk 0.29 mile toward Ross Lake. A ways down the road look for the trail entrance on your RIGHT.

Hike south-easterly 5.32 miles more to the East Bank parking lot. This is the end of the hike. You will cross two major creeks on significant bridges on this section of the trail. The first one is Lillian Creek. The second one is Jumpin' Jim Creek

If you return the way you came, total distance for the day would be 12.68 miles round trip.

