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Smith Lake - Desolation Wilderness

Fishing:



Hiking:



Scenery:



Solitude:



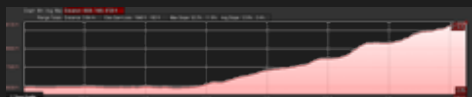
Distance:



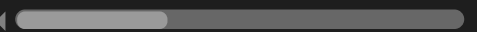
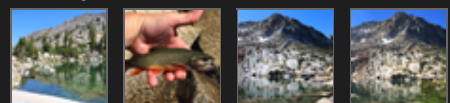
Map:



Elevation Profile:



Gallery:



See a short video of this lake.

Smith Lake - (El Dorado County)

Desolation Wilderness

June 13, 2015

Like 0



Getting There

Smith Lake is located inside Desolation Wilderness in El Dorado County. It can be reached by taking [Wrights Lake Road](#) off of Highway 50. Follow Wrights Lake Road until you reach Wrights Lake. If the recreation area is open, at the junction by the stop sign, turn right and follow it to the end where you will find a trailhead parking lot. If the Wrights Lake recreation area is closed, you will have to park at the overflow parking lot about a quarter mile from the gate. Add a mile to your hike if this is the case. Remember to [go here](#) to get your Desolation Wilderness permit if you plan on staying at [Grouse](#) or [Hemlock Lake](#). There are no legal campsites at **Smith Lake**.

The Hike

The hike to **Smith Lake** is strenuous. You begin on flat ground and ascend to a junction for [Twin Lakes](#) / [Grouse Lake](#). It is a rigorous hike to [Grouse Lake](#) and it makes a good place to rest. The remaining hike demands only one more major ascent before you reach beautiful [Hemlock Lake](#) and two more ascents before you reach **Smith Lake**. We chose to camp at Grouse and day-hike to Hemlock and Smith.

The Fishing

Smith Lake is enclosed in a cirque, has a small dam and sits on the edge of the

world. You can see for miles to the west and catch views of Wrights Lake, Dark Lake, Union Valley Reservoir and Icehouse Reservoir. **Smith Lake** has a self-sustaining fishery of Brook Trout.

Upon arrival to **Smith Lake**, we could see the fish rising in every direction. They did however, appear to be very small. We assembled our rods and began to fish **Smith Lake** with our Kastmasters and Copper Johns. My wife landed three Brook Trout on the north shore with a small gold and red Kastmaster and I landed one Brookie at the dam with my fly rod and a few more on the south shore among the boulder field. The fishing action is fast and the fish are small, the largest being maybe 10 inches in length or so.

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About

This site was created to provide information on fishing the lakes and streams in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains.

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