

Youth & Families »

Head in to Hart Lake

Take a ferry up Lake Chelan to check out trail work done by WTA crews

Would you like to camp with your family amidst the golden splendor of larches? Would you like to see some of the work done by WTA's Youth Volunteer Vacation crews in person? Yes to both? Make your way to Hart Lake this fall.

As this destination is reachable only by water, your journey begins with a ferry ride up Lake Chelan. As you cruise up the third-deepest lakes in the United States, your cares will melt away. Next up, a 12-mile bus ride will bring you to the base of the Copper Mountain and into the heart of the Cascades.

Hiking in to Hart Lake, you will experience autumn hues and see narrow waterfalls spilling down the valley wall, as you move in and out of cottonwood trees. You will pass a pond on your left that you swear a moose should be wading in.

It is a flat journey through the valley bottom for about 3 miles. Your path will get steep as you approach the lake, but the impressive waterfall flowing out of the lake will keep you motivated to move along the trail. WTA brushed the trail going up to Hart Lake earlier this summer, so you can concentrate on the scenery.

The next day, venture 4 miles deeper into this valley to visit Upper and Lower Lyman Lakes. A WTA crew working a mile beyond Hart Lake

and just before Rebel Camp replaced deteriorated puncheon with two new puncheon bridges. From the lakes, you'll see Lyman Glacier, a beautiful sheet of ice that is quickly receding.

Back at your Hart Lake base camp, you can enjoy fishing, swimming and hummingbird-watching. In fall, the bugs should be gone, so you'll have some peace as you absorb views of Bonanza Peak, the tallest nonvolcanic mountain in Washington.

Hiking out, save some room for ice cream at Holden Village. They don't serve it every day, so if luck's not with you, you can pick up a treat at the village gift shop instead. Arrive back early enough, and you can explore the village or enjoy a hearty lunch in Holden's cafeteria (\$7 per person). You could also set off on one of the many shorter trails just outside of the village, such as the Ten Mile Falls Trail or Monkey Bear Falls Trail. WTA crews have worked on both of these paths. Just be sure you're back in plenty of time to load the 1:30 p.m. bus to Lucerne.

For an unforgettable long weekend, explore the delights of fall in Eastern Washington with your family and admire the work that Washington Trails Associations youth crews accomplished this summer. ♦

Hike It»

Day One: Take the Lady of the Lake Ferry from Fields Point Landing to Lucerne. Take the bus to Holden Village, hike in to Hart Lake and set up camp. Hart Lake is 4.5 miles from Holden Village, 900 feet of elevation gain and 100 feet of elevation loss.

Day Two: Venture farther into the valley to visit Upper and Lower Lyman Lakes. Return to your base camp at Hart Lake.

Day Three: Hike from Hart Lake back to Holden Village. Take the bus downhill to Lucerne and the 2:30 p.m. ferry back to Fields Point, where you'll arrive around 5 p.m.

For the current ferry schedule, tickets and information, visit www.ladyofthelake.com or call (509) 682-4584. To reserve space on the bus to Holden Village, send a note via email to registrar@holdenvillage.org.

Past WTA crews have improved the trail leading to Hart Lake. This summer, WTA youth crews worked on the stretch up to Lyman Lakes. Photo by Arlo Smith.

