

## Bootski Lake Hiking Route

This very rewarding hike leads to Bootski Lake, a high alpine tarn nestled at the foot of a spectacular rock wall.

### Directions to the Trailhead

From Tumbler Ridge, drive south on Highway 52 (Heritage Highway) for 48 km. Turn right onto a gravel road called the Ojay Main road (formerly known as the Wapiti Road). This is a radio controlled industrial road, and a radio with the proper channel (RR1, 150.080 MHz) should be used.

Follow the Ojay Main road for 25 km to a fork, and take the right fork onto the Wapiti Forest Service Road. Follow this road, crossing the Wapiti River at km 5. Go to km 12.1, turn right onto a small road, and park here. The road is deactivated past the creek crossing.

Time/distance: 5 hours/11 km return Elevation gain: 550 m Rating: Challenging
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### Route Directions

From the parking area, the route follows a deactivated logging road. High clearance 4WD vehicles may be able to drive this road, but be aware that there are creek crossings and deep cross ditches to navigate. After 650 metres there is a creek crossing which must be waded at high water. At low water, it is possible to hop across on the rocks. The road leads into a cutblock and climbs to the top of it. After 3 km, a sign shows where the route leaves the road and climbs upwards through the last of the cutblock into the forest.

The route climbs steadily through the forest until it passes through a burned area. This fire was active in 2006, and burned the slopes on the opposite side of the valley as well. Watch for orange flagging that marks the way in this section.

Eventually the route passes back into intact forest, which is more stunted and open as elevation is gained. The last of the trees are left behind at about the 4 km mark. The route goes to the crest of the ridge, with a rock cairn marking a turn to the left. Remember this cairn, or mark it with your GPS, as you will need to find it for the way back. The dramatic wall of Wapitik Mountain dominates the view to the west. Mountain goats are often seen on the brown shale face on the lower right of the wall.

Follow the ridge crest up to the left, which climbs moderately then flattens out. Wildflowers along the ridge include Langsdorf's Lousewort, with its vertical stalk of pink flowers. The lake is in the bowl directly under the face of Wapitik Mountain.

The bedrock forming the rock face is limestone of the Mount Hawk and Palliser formations, which is of Devonian age, about 370 million years old. It had its origin in a warm shallow sea much like the modern day Bahamas. Reef building organisms such as coral slowly built up in layers, eventually hardening into rock. These rocks were uplifted and folded during the formation of the Rocky Mountains, then shaped by glaciation into the landscape we see today.

The saddles to the northwest and southeast of the lake are formed in softer rock of the Perdrix Formation. The cover picture shows the northwest saddle. An anticline (arch in the rock strata) passes through both saddles.

As with many lakes formed in limestone, Bootski Lake does not have a surface stream as an outlet; it drains underground through cavities in the rock. The lake is full in spring from snowmelt. The level slowly drops throughout the summer, leaving concentric rings as the shoreline recedes. Features like the underground outlet of the lake and the sinkholes in the ridge leading to the lake are characteristic of karst topography. This forms in limestone due to the dissolution of the rock by weakly acidic water.

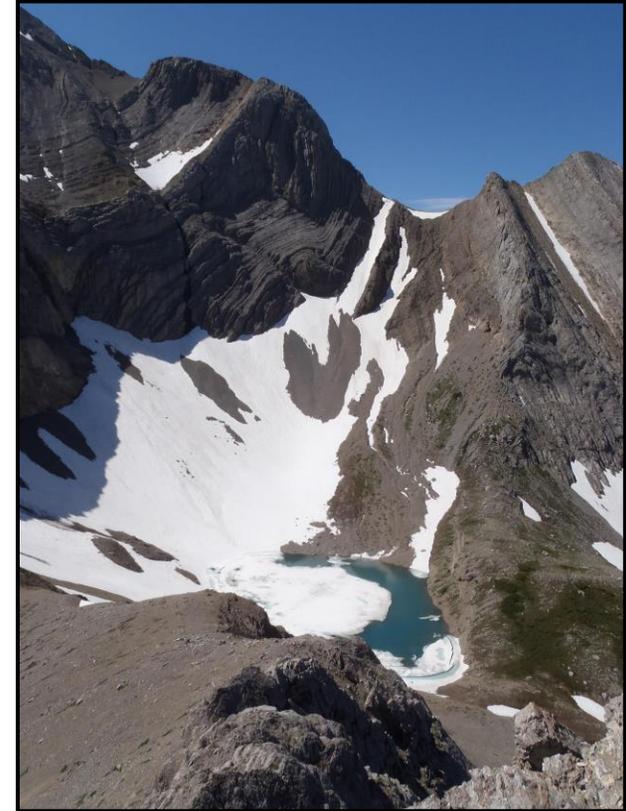
There are two worthwhile side trips in the area. The short steep climb above the lake to the southeast brings the hiker to a saddle. There are excellent views of Mt. Becker and its subpeak from here.

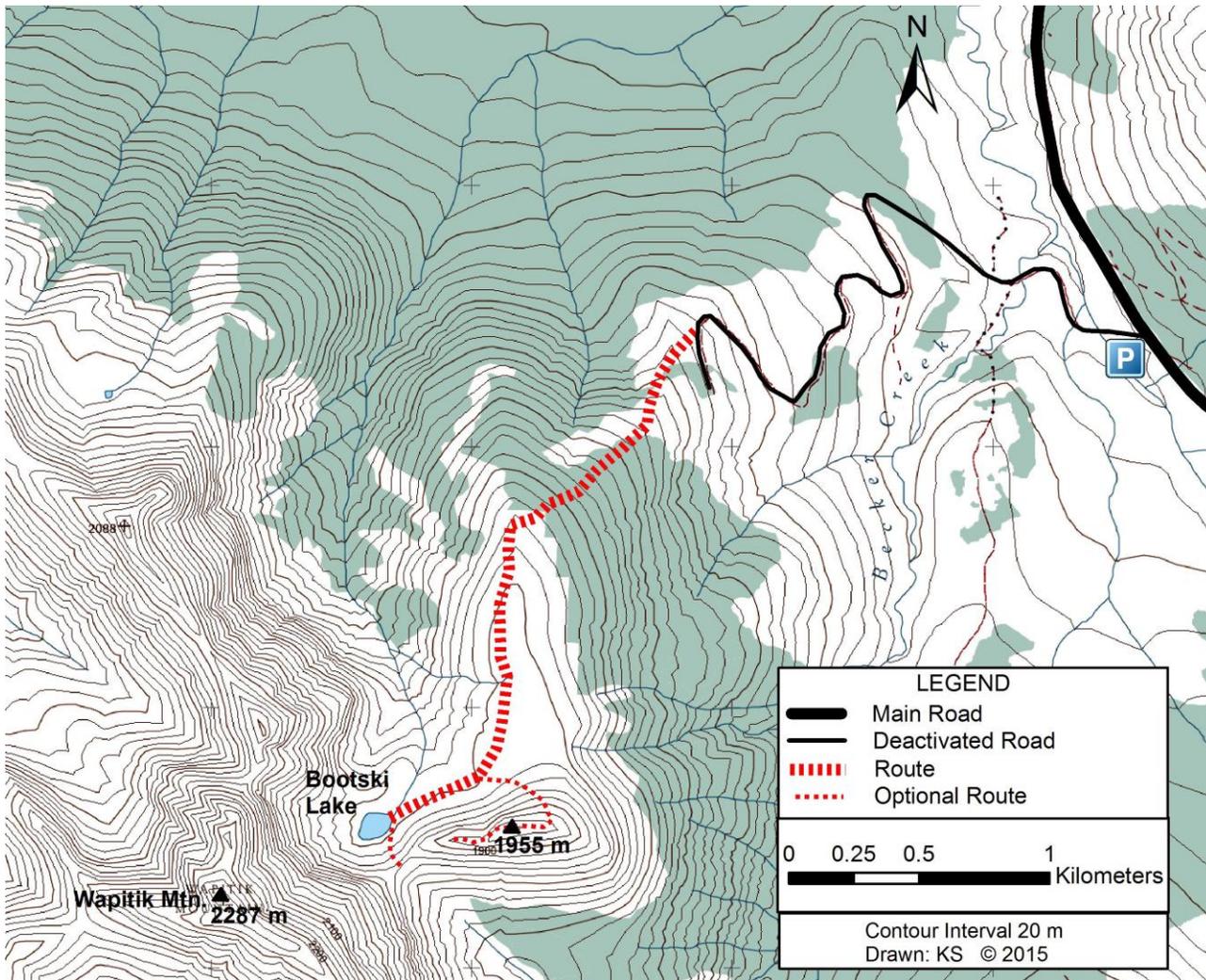
For experienced and fit scramblers, the ridge to the east of the lake can be climbed as well, reaching the summit marked 1955 m on the map. This route ascends steeply up loose rock, then follows an exposed ridge. Take great caution on the ridge, as it has very narrow sections with steep drop-offs on both sides. Do not attempt this route in wet or windy weather. The reward is a spectacular view down to the lake, with the rock wall as an impressive backdrop. This is a good place to look at the folding in the limestone rock layers. Do not attempt to descend towards the saddle, as there is a cliff that is not passable.

When returning, follow the open ridge, and watch closely for the rock cairn which marks the point where the route makes a 90 degree right turn and descends into the forest.

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### **BOOTSKI LAKE HIKING ROUTE**

- ***THIS ROUTE IS IN BEAR COUNTRY; TRAVEL IN GROUPS AND MAKE NOISE***
- ***PLEASE PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACKED IN***
- ***ALPINE WEATHER CAN CHANGE SUDDENLY – CARRY APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND A MAP AND COMPASS OR GPS***

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Mount Becker from ridge east of Bootski Lake



Langsdorf's Lousewort

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