

BRIMSTONE-BUFFALO RIVER CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAILS

Parking for the Buffalo River Ski Trail is located at the Island Park Ranger Station. The trailhead and parking area for the Brimstone Trail System is located 1/4 mile north of the Island Park Ranger Station off Highway 20 near Ponds Lodge Resort. Idaho Park N' Ski permits are required at both parking areas. Permits can be obtained at the Ranger Station or Ponds Lodge. The trail system totals 11 miles and all trails are usually groomed weekly with the exception of the Thurmon Ridge trail that is not groomed. Moose may be encountered on any of these trails and could possibly be a hazard. Always give them the right of way; they are bigger than you are! All mileages given below are the shortest distance to complete the named loop. Trail maps are posted at the numbered trail intersections.

Buffalo River Interpretive Ski Trail - 2.5 miles or 4.0 km (Round trip from the trailhead)

This is one of the few interpretive ski trails in the National Forest system. Information in the trail brochure is geared towards learning about nature in the winter. Trail brochures are available at the trail register ¼ mile North of the Ranger Station. This is an excellent trail for the beginning skier. The trail begins at the Island Park Ranger Station and winds eastward along the south bank of the Buffalo River, then turns south at Tom's Creek and west through lodgepole pine forests back towards the Ranger Station. Moose and numerous waterfowl can be seen along the river.

Difficulty level – Easiest

Moose Loop - 2.8 miles or 4.5km (Round trip from the trailhead)

This loop offers an easy ski over gentle terrain along the banks of the Buffalo River. Watch for trumpeter swans, buffleheads, mallards and Canada geese.

Difficulty level – Easiest

Eagle Trail - 4.3 miles or 6.9 km (Round trip from the trailhead)

The trail takes you from the Moose Loop, across the Island Park Dam to the Harriman Wildlife Refuge. At intersection 4, Eagle Trail branches left and joins the main trail at intersection 6.

Difficulty level – More Difficult

Thurmon Ridge - 5.7 miles or 9.1 km (Round trip from the trailhead)

From trail junction 5 you make a steady climb up Thurmon Ridge. At the south end you can take an exciting 200 ft plunge off the ridge to the volcanic caldera below.

Difficulty level – Most Difficult

Boggy Springs Loop - 5.6 miles or 9.0 km

From intersection 7, this trail parallels Box Canyon (Box Canyon Trail) for 0.6 miles, then heads northwest skirting a large spring area to the base of Thurmon Ridge (Boggy Springs Trail) and then parallels the base of the ridge back to intersection 7.

Difficulty level – More Difficult

Antelope Park Loop - 7.8 miles or 12.5 km (Round trip from trailhead)

This loop with its gentle terrain is not technically difficult to ski, however, at its farthest point (intersection 11) it is 3.9 miles from the trailhead. Be prepared for a long day trip. The loop reaches its southern extreme at a small waterfall that drops into the Henrys Fork. Moose are frequently seen feeding in the small stream on the West side of this trail. The far end of this trail connects with the Brimstone Connector of the Harriman State Park trail system.

Difficulty level – More Difficult

Brimstone Connector Trail 10.8 miles or 17.4 km (Ponds Lodge to Harriman HQ)

This trail is flat but long, providing a mixture of open and forested areas. The trail goes to the Brimstone trailhead near Ponds Lodge. Caution: The distance is 10.8 miles one way.

Difficulty level – Most Difficult due to length.

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