

Welcome to Chopaka Lake/ Chopaka Mountain Wilderness Study Area

Secluded Chopaka Lake lies high in a mountain basin near the Canadian border. The lake's northern portion is within a 5,518-acre Wilderness Study Area (WSA) administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This area is managed to protect its wilderness qualities and maintain or enhance wildlife habitat, while allowing seasonal livestock grazing and supporting various recreational activities.

Getting There

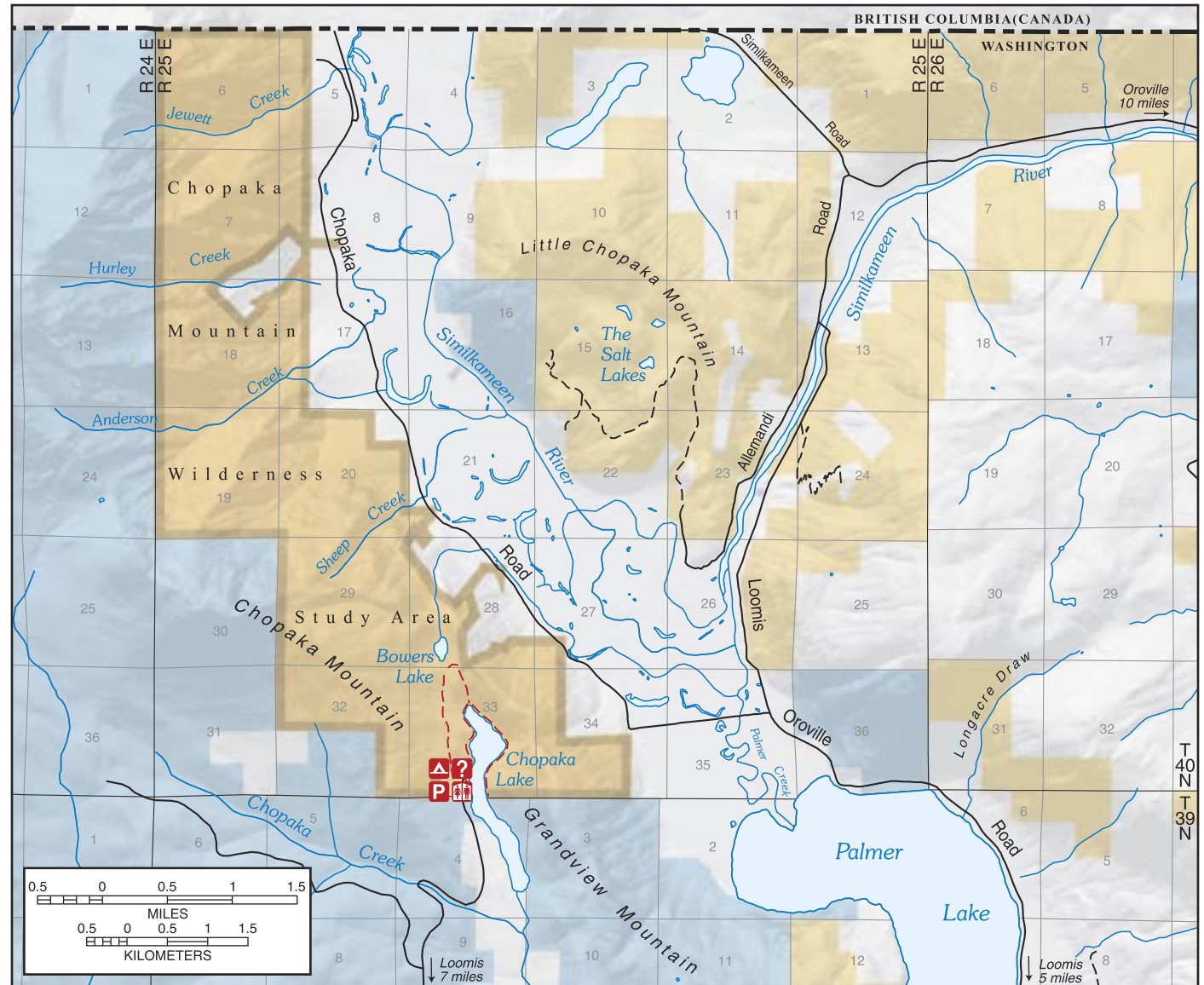
From Highway 97 at Tonasket, take the Loomis-Oroville Highway west through Loomis. Two miles past Loomis, turn left onto the Chopaka Mountain Road. Keep to the right and drive the steep grade up the mountain. After 3.5 miles, take the road to the right for 2 more miles to reach Chopaka Lake. The BLM camping area is north of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources campground.

Geology

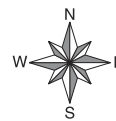
The area is in the North-Cascades geomorphic province. It consists of metamorphic rocks (schist and gneiss) that were later intruded by granitic rocks. The weathering resistance of these relatively harder rocks has resulted in the majestic scenery that you see at Chopaka Mountain today. Although the high peaks were not covered by glaciers, recent glaciations rounded the lower landscape and carved out the places where Chopaka and Bowers Lakes currently lie.

Recreational Activities

Enjoy the solitude of Chopaka Lake and the nearby Wilderness Study Area. Aspen groves and sagebrush line the shores, providing a scenic backdrop to lakeside activities. You might even see a mountain goat or two, high on the surrounding mountainsides. Eight campsites with fire rings and a vault outhouse provide camping facilities at the lake. Try your luck fly-fishing for trout, or take a peaceful hike in the 5,518-acre Wilderness Study Area. Hike or boat-in camping is also allowed in the WSA, but there are no developed campsites. *Note that motorized vehicles and mechanical transport (e.g. bicycles) are not permitted in the WSA.*



USDI - Bureau of Land Management
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LEGEND			
	Camping		Administered Land
	Information		Bureau of Land Management
	Parking		BLM Wilderness Study Area
	Restrooms		Washington Department of Natural Resources
	Improved Road		Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
	Trail		Private or Other
	Other Road or Trail, Access as Designated		

Wildflowers



Scarlet Gilia

The slopes of Chopaka Mountain are vibrant with colorful wildflowers in the spring and early summer. At these higher elevations, the wildflower season extends into June and July, when the alpine meadows seem carpeted with flowers. In non-forested areas,

members of the buckwheat family color sagebrush slopes in delicate yellow hues. Other wildflowers sure to catch your attention are the brilliant red, trumpet-shaped flowers of scarlet gilia and the cat ear-shaped petals of cats-ear mariposa lily.

While in the forest, look for the bumblebee-pollinated, purple monkshood flowers and the bold yellow flowers and heart-shaped leaves of heart leaf arnica. A bit harder to find is baneberry, with its many small white flowers and shiny red berries. Remember to bring your camera to take photos, not flowers, so the next visitors can enjoy the flowers too.

Wildlife

Remote Chopaka Lake and its surrounding hillsides are excellent places for viewing wildlife. Take a hike around the lakeshore and the surrounding hillsides, and you may hear the song of redwing blackbirds, nesting sage thrasher, Brewer's sparrow, lark sparrow and long-billed curlew. A healthy population of rainbow trout challenges flyfishing anglers adrift on the pristine lake waters. Note that special fishing rules apply (*see Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife guidelines*).

Catch a glimpse of bald and golden eagles, and even peregrine falcons, high in the sky above the mountain cliffs. You may even see bighorn sheep, mule or white-tailed deer, black bear, moose and mountain goat on your visit to Chopaka.

Cultural

The Chopaka area has been a place of importance to Native Americans for thousands of years. Although the meaning of Chopaka, likely of Salish language origin, is unknown, the area has been the subject of numerous traditional stories. The Okanogan (one of the region's largest Native American tribes) occupied seasonal camps, hunted game, and gathered numerous varieties of traditional foods.

By 1859, discovery of gold on the Similkameen River enticed many prospectors and miners to the region. The mining era ended by 1879, when the area was granted to Chief Moses and his people, forming the Moses Columbia Reservation. However, by 1884, the Reservation was revoked and opened for mineral entry. Efforts to open the area for mineral entry were led in part by Okanogan Smith, a colorful figure in the region's mining history. The remains of a once booming mining industry are still evident on this area's landscape.

- *State hunting and fishing regulations apply to private lands.*
- *Check with private landowners before entering their property.*
- *Landowners are not required to post or fence their lands.*
- *It is unlawful to trespass on private lands.*

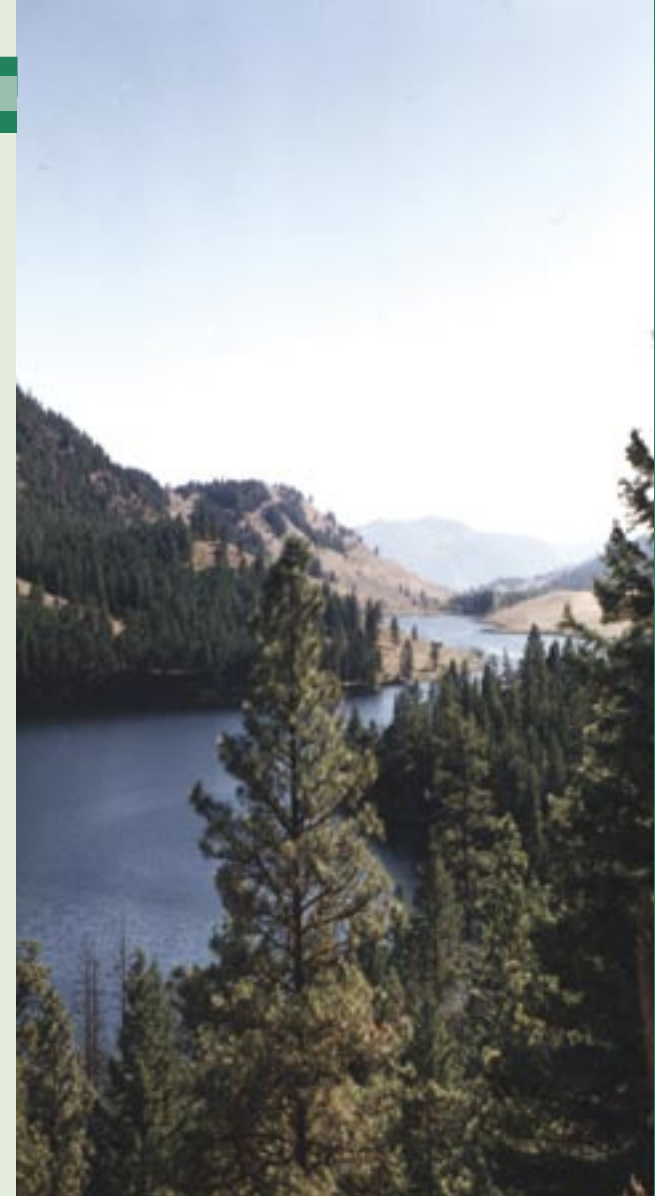
We hope you enjoy your visit to the Chopaka Mountain area."

For more information, contact:

BLM Wenatchee Resource Area
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Wenatchee, WA 98801
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Check our website for other recreational opportunities and periodic updates:
www.or.blm.gov/spokane

BLM/OR/WA/GI-05/019-1122



Chopaka Mountain WSA/Chopaka Lake

Chopaka



Deep in the Okanogan highlands of northern Washington hides a jewel of a mountain lake...

