

Riding in from Highway 20:

Where does the route start?

The route starts at the low point between Washington Pass and Rainy Pass. Some get confused and start clear from Rainy Pass but that just adds 2 miles for nothing as you parallel the highway. There is parking at the trailhead in between the two passes.

Is the trail well maintained for stock?

The trail is generally well maintained being part of the Pacific Crest Trail but maintenance has been sketchy some years so be sure and check with the National Park Service before starting on your journey. There are two things maintenance-wise that could ruin your trip; those being logs across the trail or the ford at Maple Creek being impassable. Maple Creek is 7 miles down the trail and in the spring and early summer can be an issue. In 2008, the ford was in great shape. Another thing to mention is that even if the trail has been logged, blow downs can happen at any time and located in spots where continuing would be impossible. Because of this I recommend carrying a good sharp axe.

How much trail experience should my horse have before taking this trip?

Do not even consider using an arena horse that is not trail-wise. This is no place to be training a horse. The entire route has rocks so if your horse is accustomed to being shod you will want it shod for this trip. Even if your horse is acclimated to going barefoot I recommend carrying a set of Easyboots or equivalent in your saddle bags.

Should I take 2 days to ride in, or can it be done in a single day?

This question has many variables. The route takes you down Bridge Creek drainage 12 miles to Bridge Creek Campground on the Old Stehekin Road. This road is now closed thanks to the National Park Service. At that point we have a base camp that can be used by groups such as yours and with prior arrangements we can have feed at that location for you. From Bridge Creek Campground to the ranch it is 7 more miles. This portion is about 1/2 on road and 1/2 on trail. It is a pleasant grade so that part is not too tough on horse or rider. I usually figure on making 2 mph on the trail counting small rests. The real question is whether everyone on the trip would enjoy being on the move for 9.5 hours. Almost all adults do come the entire 19 miles in one day. If you have children with you, a campout with the kids at Bridge Creek could be a wonderful experience for the group. If you elect to do this, you can do it without pack stock because you can utilize our base camp and feed with our feed. You have only to bring warm clothing and grub with you. Visit www.steekinoutfitters.com for more information about our "Tent to Tent" base camps.

Is there a way send extra gear ahead instead of bringing a pack animal?

What most people do, if they wish to have a change of clothes etc. for their stay at the Ranch, is to UPS a box of gear to the Ranch. We will have it waiting for you upon your arrival. We will in turn ship a box back for you when you depart. (You will be responsible for shipping charges.)