

GUIDED OVERNIGHT BACK COUNTRY RIDE ITINERARY:
KLAMATH NATIONAL FOREST, CA



Location: This trip takes place in the rugged Marble Mountains of northern California, just south of the Oregon border.

Trailhead: We will meet at Lovers Camp Trailhead equestrian camp about 40 miles outside of Yreka, CA (click here for a map: [Lovers Camp TH](#)).

The trailhead features 4 very large pipe corrals capable of housing multiple horses; we can further divide them into smaller enclosures with portable panels or electric fencing to create individual spaces, as needed. There is parking for trucks/trailers, water for the horses (non-potable, so bring drinking water or plan to treat before using), and a pit toilet as well as several campsites. This location will be used as a base camp before and after the overnight trail ride.

Itinerary: Participants gather with Gillian and an assistant on Friday afternoon (by 3:00pm) to prepare for the trip. There will be an information session to review equipment and supplies for each rider, as well as to ensure that everyone has the correct navigation route available and is briefed on emergency procedures; the group will go over the planned operations for the upcoming weekend and pack saddlebags in preparation for departure. We will share an evening meal and spend the night at the trailhead.

On Saturday morning, everyone will tack up and load stock, then ride out of the trailhead on the way to Big Elk Lake. This day has the longest ride (11 miles) with about 3500' of elevation gain in total, as we climb to some beautiful views of the

surrounding mountain ranges, passing several lakes and traversing a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail along our way. When we reach our trail camp at Big Elk Lake, we will construct appropriate stock containment for the horses and/or mules, with support and guidance from Gillian as needed. We will also set up our tents and make ourselves comfortable to spend the evening together chatting over our dinners (a campfire may or may not be allowed depending on conditions) before retiring for a night of dark skies with the sounds of nature around us.

On Sunday, we will break camp and load our horses/mules for the return trip to the trailhead, this time on a slightly shorter route (9 miles), which is mainly on a descent and again includes a portion of the PCT. Upon returning, we will once again have the opportunity to share a meal and spend the night at the trailhead camp, although those who wish to begin their drive home can elect to do so. Everyone else will plan to depart on Monday morning.

Travel: The road to the trailhead is paved the entire distance, although the last portion (8 miles on FS44N45) is single-lane with occasional turnouts, so be cautious while driving. For those who are arriving from too far away to make the trip in a single day, Gillian can help with suggestions about where to stay along your route. The nearest town is Fort Jones (24 miles) or the larger Yreka (about 40 miles); there will be no cell service at some point after passing Fort Jones, although if you have already inputted the route on GPS you will continue to get directions.



Gillian Larson Wilderness Horsemanship proudly operates under a permit issued by Klamath National Forest.