

STATE LINE NORTH & NEZ PERCE TRAIL #16 & #13

(Moderate)

DIRECTIONS TO TRAILHEAD: From Triple Creek Ranch Driveway, turn right onto the West Fork Road. Proceed on the paved road about 5 ½ miles. Turn right onto the Nez Perce Road just past the US Forest Service Ranger Station. Signs will say Nez Perce Road - Elk City, Idaho. Drive 16 miles to the top of the Nez Perce Pass. There is a generous parking area at the pass. The trail starts across the highway on the north side of the Nez Perce Road. The restrooms and horse ramps are on the south side of the road.

ELEVATIONS: Trailhead - 6587 ft.; fork in trailhead - 7160 ft.; Nez Perce Peak – 8,387 ft.

MILEAGE: Indian grave – 0.7 miles; Fork in trail - 3 miles; Nez Perce Peak – 6 miles

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: Cross the road to the north side. The well-defined trail climbs steeply through a grove of widely spaced trees for 0.6 miles and then emerges in a large, open, hillside meadow. The route levels out a bit in the meadow. A very unobtrusive sign for Fales Flat trail junction is located at the northern end of the clearing. Stay left and continue hiking north. About 300 yards past the junction, on the left side of the trail, is an Indian grave with a marble headstone. This is the final resting-place of Francis Adams, Salish Indian, who died at age 80 in 1900. The grave is outlined with small rocks. I have been told that there are other Indian graves nearby, however this is the only one with a marker. The route climbs for another 0.2 miles beyond the gravesite and then follows more gentle rolling terrain. It continues through a series of open hillside meadows with grand views in every direction. When the Beargrass plumes are in season the white flowers dominate the landscape. From this area Nez Perce Peak is clearly visible to the west.

The trail enters a wooded segment for 0.7 miles before reaching a signed trail junction. Turn left for Nez Perce Peak and follow the Nez Perce Trail west through the lodgepole forest. This trail follows a spur ridge leading all the way to the peak. The route winds through some trees and then crosses a large open hillside meadow and makes a steep descent through a grove of trees. At 5.2 miles a steep climb leads to a saddle at the lower end of an open hillside. There is a campsite on the north side of the trail at the saddle. The view of the peak is blocked by the steep hill. A good spring is located about 400 yards southwest of the campsite on the south-facing hillside. The trail from the campsite to the spring is quite dim and hard to find. The route to Nez Perce Peak leads up the ridge past the campsite and then climbs through a hillside meadow where a 50-foot segment of the trail is not clearly defined. Just head uphill facing west and watch for the trail on the left. The remaining 0.7 miles segment is very easy to find as it climbs through an open grassy hillside. At the top are the remains of an old lookout tower.

HAVE A GREAT HIKE AND ENJOY!