

## YAPOAH LAKE: The forest is extremely dry right now

*Continued from page 18*

Between these two trail junctions, the transition from dead lodgepole to healthy young fir and hemlock trees accelerates quickly.

We continued west on the Scott Pass Trail and decided to go farther west this time, then go off-trail to the south and work our way back east. On the way in, it became apparent that the marker we'd spotted the year before had been removed. We saw a couple of possible pathways toward the lake but stuck to our original plan. When we reached a point in the trail where map contours suggested that we were due north of the lake, we decided to head back to the nearest "possible" route. Of course, for GPS users, this trip is probably a no-brainer.

Heading east on the same trail, however, I almost immediately spotted a potential route we hadn't seen on the way in. Wandering less than 50 yards off-trail, I hit pay-dirt and knew I was on the right track when

I spotted an official Forest Service "Temporary Sign" that threatened a \$200 fine for "Maintaining or marking trail without authorization." Since it didn't prohibit writing about it, I figure I'm okay.

Looking back toward the main trail, I could see that the area between me and the main trail had been swept and camouflaged with logs and branches. Someone wants to keep this place a secret. Stepping around a fallen tree behind the warning sign, however, revealed a well-worn trail about as obvious as a super-highway.

The trail is well laid-out, clear of debris, and deeply cut as if worn by scores of pack trains. From that discovery, it was only a few hundred yards through a dense, healthy, green, hemlock forest to beautiful little Yapoah Lake. Mystery solved.

The trail meets the lake on the north shore under a grove of about two dozen big old cottonwood trees that are now in fall colors. The top of the North Sister can be seen peeking over the top of a ridge south of the lake. We saw fresh footprints, so someone else was in there

recently.

We circled the lake counterclockwise and lunched on the south shore, looking back toward the yellow cottonwoods. We could see a few fish rising, and I remembered a tale related to me by a local old-timer. According to the rumor, sometime back in the 1950s, someone had secretly visited the lake and used dynamite to collect the large trophy trout from Yapoah Lake. Not very sporting ... no wonder people keep this place a secret.

After lunch, we continued around the lake on the east shore. Because of the dry year, some of the lake bottom was showing around the shoreline; and we walked along that exposed area. The only tributary to the lake is in this area, and some feeble springs were still feeding into the lake from the moss-covered hillside.

We are accustomed to picking up trash when we see it, and my friend spotted an old beer can on the lake bottom, with the markings all but faded away. When she picked it up, however, we discovered that it had never been opened. We didn't see any point in carrying a full can back to the truck. So, we

popped the top and shared a cold beer.

In the spirit of "secrecy," I'm not going to give any more specific directions about finding the "unauthorized" trail. I'm sure there are those who think I've already disclosed way too much. If you can find it, though, you can share in that bit of excitement that goes with making a discovery.

I will, however, tell you how to get to the Scott Pass Trailhead. The trailhead can be reached by taking the McKenzie Highway (242) 5 miles east of Sisters to a left turn onto Forest Road 1018; there is a brown sign pointing toward the Scott Pass Trailhead and other features. About six miles later, turn right onto Road 1026; there is no signage here, but a forest road stake shows the correct number, 1026. From here, it's a little over a mile to the trailhead. This is not a fee-use area, but free wilderness permits are required and available.

And, if you're wondering about the name "Yapoah," which is borrowed from nearby Yapoah Crater, you will have to wait for the answer in next week's column.

## OPB to re-air earthquake documentary

OPB's Oregon Field Guide will re-air its documentary on the effects of a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake, "Unprepared," on October 12 at 9 p.m.

The Pacific Northwest has seen earthquakes before. But Cascadia subduction zone earthquakes are completely different — and will trigger massive destruction from British Columbia to California and produce tsunamis that can wipe entire towns off the map.

The geologic record reveals that they strike every 300 to 500 years. The last one was in 1700. Can we prepare? How? And what lessons can we learn from earthquakes elsewhere?

Oregon Field Guide sent a team to Japan to look at the effects of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. They examine the staggering vulnerability of our aging infrastructure. Most importantly, they explore ways that our region can take steps to be better prepared.



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## All American Hearing

Your hearing is vital to your quality of life. Hearing loss can make it hard to participate in social situations and hard to hear the beautiful sounds of the natural world of Sisters Country.

Sisters has no hearing services of its own — but All American Hearing in Redmond is filling that gap. Sisters resident Lanie Tandy, a hearing equipment specialist with All American Hearing, is excited to reach out to her hometown to provide hearing exams, hearing-aid systems, free cleaning services and more.

All American Hearing will host a hearing screening at Sisters Park & Recreation District on October 20. Lanie encourages all to take advantage of this service. She says that all adults should have a screening so they have a baseline and so that they can intervene early if hearing loss is detected.

See the ad adjacent for times and for the number to call to make an appointment.

## Special Event... FREE Hearing Screenings!

**When: Thursday, October 29th**

**Time: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**Where: Sisters Park and Recreation Building**

**Given by: Lanie Tandy, Hearing Instrument Specialist**

Stop by to receive your quick and easy **Free** Hearing Screening and to ask Lanie any hearing health care questions you may have.

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