

Don't judge a fishing spot by its name



Cheryl Hoefler/Go! Magazine

Poison Creek Reservoir offers fishing, birdwatching and some peace and quiet.

By Cheryl Hoefler

Go! Magazine

SENECA — Anything with “poison” in its name hardly sounds inviting.

But the fish don't care, and neither should visitors to this peaceful fishing hole.

Poison Creek Reservoir is just off Highway 395 about halfway between John Day and Burns. Sitting on about 27 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, the reservoir is nestled among sagebrush, marshes and rimrock outcroppings.

A trail partway around the reservoir offers plenty of private spots to drop a line.

Not into fishing? The reservoir attracts an assortment of birds, not to mention rabbits and other critters, so bring your binoculars and a camera.

This pleasant little wayside offers a local history lesson, too.

A couple of interpretive signs share information about the Silvies Valley. For centuries the area was home to Northern Paiute American Indians. Named in 1826 for trapper Antoine Sylvaile, the valley became a vital source of lumber and livestock after the 1862 discovery of gold near Canyon City several miles north.

Another sign tells about the restoration of historic buildings in the area, such as the Gibson and Bulkeley cabins and the one-room Trout Creek Schoolhouse, built in 1905.

Poison Creek Reservoir is 11.5 miles south of Seneca, or about 30 miles north of Burns. Turn east on County Road 73 — also called Silvies-Hopper Ranch Lane — at the green sign for Rock Springs Campground and Drewsey. After about half a mile, turn left at the sign for “Poison Creek Reservoir.” A short gravel road leads to the water.

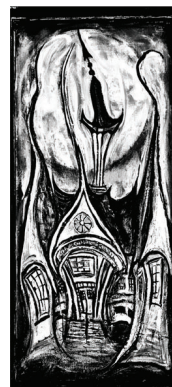
There's a vault toilet onsite and plenty of parking, but no garbage service, benches or tables, so pack out your trash and bring a chair or a blanket so you can relax for a bit in the quiet.



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