

TOP PICKS WHERE TO EXPLORE

Top picks south of Bend

Crescent Lake — The lake level may be incredibly low this year and it may be difficult to launch your boat but the views are still worth the trip south. Right now the gently sloping and exposed shoreline is filled with vibrant purple flowering lupin all within reach from just about any day use or campground site. Add in the snow-capped view of Diamond Peak and you've got a wonderful day out.

Maiden Peak — The trail to the summit of the 7,805-foot peak near Odell Lake may still have some sections of snow along its 17 mile out-and-back. It travels along forested hillsides, the Rosary Lakes and up to the peak that offers stunning views of southern Oregon. The trail is listed as difficult due to its over 3,000-foot elevation gain.

Paulina Lake Loop Trail — While Paulina Peak and even Big Obsidian Flow may still be under some lingering snow, the easier loop trail around the caldera's lake is snow free and clear for summer hikes. Clocking in at 7.5 miles round trip, the day hike takes you around the entire lake through lava fields, skirting hot springs and has great views of the peak above it all.

— Photo and story by Makenzie Whittle, *The Bulletin*

Diamond Peak as seen from Spring Campground at Crescent Lake on June 6.



Mark Morical/The Bulletin

Water features along Paulina Creek near Newberry Crater.

Water

Continued from B1

But we reached the shade of taller trees soon enough.

It was not long before we encountered the first small waterfall feature. After that, we came across waterfalls about every half-mile or so.

Highlights included a small but beautiful waterfall that hikers can walk nearly all the way behind, taking in the mist and the thick moss that lines the rocks behind the falls. There is also a wider double falls a bit farther up the trail. Hikers can walk out onto smooth, flat rocks for an up-close view of these falls.

Towering Paulina Creek Falls near Paulina Lake marks the east end of the trail, but we had no interest in hiking that far. Walking all the way to those falls and Paulina Lake would be

be viewed after a short walk from a parking area farther up the road.

Later in the summer, Paulina Creek transitions from a hiking destination to a swimming-and-sliding destination. A few of the waterfalls along the creek form naturally smooth rock slides, and many adventurers enjoy sliding down these formations on hot summer days.

Three years ago, Johnson and I hiked the trail in August, and we came across dozens of folks enjoying the cold water slides on a hot day. In late spring though, nobody appeared bold enough to take the plunge on a day when temperatures reached about 80 degrees. We also saw far fewer other hikers in general this time around, coming across just three or four other trekkers. (The Peter Skene Ogden

Trail is open to biking as well, but uphill only.)

After hiking about 3 miles, we decided to turn around and head back to McKay Crossing, making for about a 6-mile trek that required about 2 hours, 40 minutes. We gained nearly 700 feet on the hike, topping out at an elevation of 5,420 feet. (Paulina Lake sits at 6,331 feet, nearly 1,000 feet higher up the trail.)

Paulina Creek certainly makes for an enjoyable and scenic hike, especially during the late spring before the crowds of swimmers and sliders arrive.

Aside from hiking, Newberry Crater offers a bounty of recreational activities. The fishing in Paulina and East lakes can be phenomenal, and this time of year the kokanee are usually biting. As the snow

melts at higher elevations this summer the hiking trail up Paulina Peak (7,984 feet) and the Newberry Crater rim loop, popular with mountain bikers, become accessible.

Bur for now, a relatively easy and peaceful walk along Paulina Creek is enough to enjoy the natural water wonders of Newberry.

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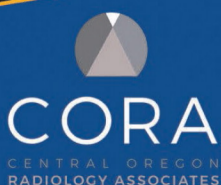


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