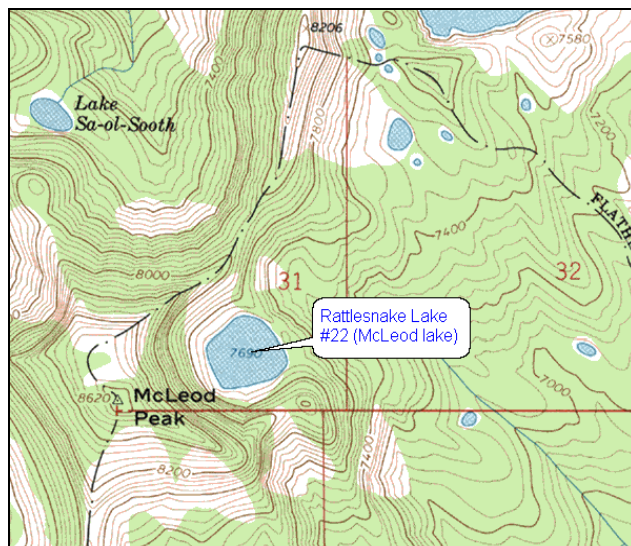


Rattlesnake Lake #22 (McLeod Lake)



Description: McLeod Lake (Rattlesnake Lake #22) is a moderate-sized (13 acres), very remote glacial cirque lake located within designated Wilderness in the Rattlesnake Creek drainage near Missoula at 7,690 ft elevation. This is the highest fish-bearing lake in the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area.

Location: T16N, R18W, Section 31; Latitude N47.0965°, Longitude W113.9174°; Nearest Town: Missoula, MT
Surrounding land ownership: Lolo National Forest (Missoula Ranger District). McLeod Lake lies on the north end of the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area below McLeod Peak.

Access: Although the lake is geographically close to the city of Missoula, access is very difficult and requires substantial off-trail travel through steep terrain. There are several USFS routes from which to choose. Route distance and difficulty vary, but all require non-motorized travel. Common starting points are the trailheads at West Fork Gold Creek (Trail # 52), Ravine Creek in lower Grant Creek (Trail # 34), or in lower Rattlesnake Creek at the main Rattlesnake National Recreation Area trailhead (Gated Road #99). Please refer to USFS maps for specific travel routes and connecting trail numbers to reach the upper Rattlesnake basin on USFS Trail #515. From the end of this trail, access will require a ~ 2.5 mi off-trail climb of ~ 1,700 ft to reach the lake. Total travel distance from USFS trailheads ranges from 10-18 miles. There may also be shorter, alternative routes through the Flathead Indian Reservation from the northwest.

Camp Sites and Use: McLeod Lake lies in a remote setting that receives very light use. There are no established trails to the lake and no campsites. Other than some remnant plane wreckage, there are no obvious signs of human use. 'Leave no trace' camping and recreating is essential, as the lake lies within designated Wilderness.

Angling Opportunity: McLeod Lake supports an abundant westslope cutthroat trout population with consistent natural reproduction. Shoreline topography and access allow for angling along about half of the lake perimeter.

Stocking History: McLeod Lake was historically stocked with westslope cutthroat trout, but has not been planted in recent decades. The lake supports an abundant, self-sustaining trout population, so no future stocking is planned.

Angling Pressure: Due to difficult access, angling pressure is very light (likely < 20 angler-days per year).

Other Nearby Lakes: There are at least eight small lakes within 1.4 miles of McLeod Lake, and all require off-trail hiking in steep terrain. Most nearby lakes lie in the Five Lakes Basin area located ~ 1 mile to the south of McLeod Lake. Two of these lakes are fish-bearing (Rattlesnake Lakes #15 & #17).



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Rattlesnake Lake #22

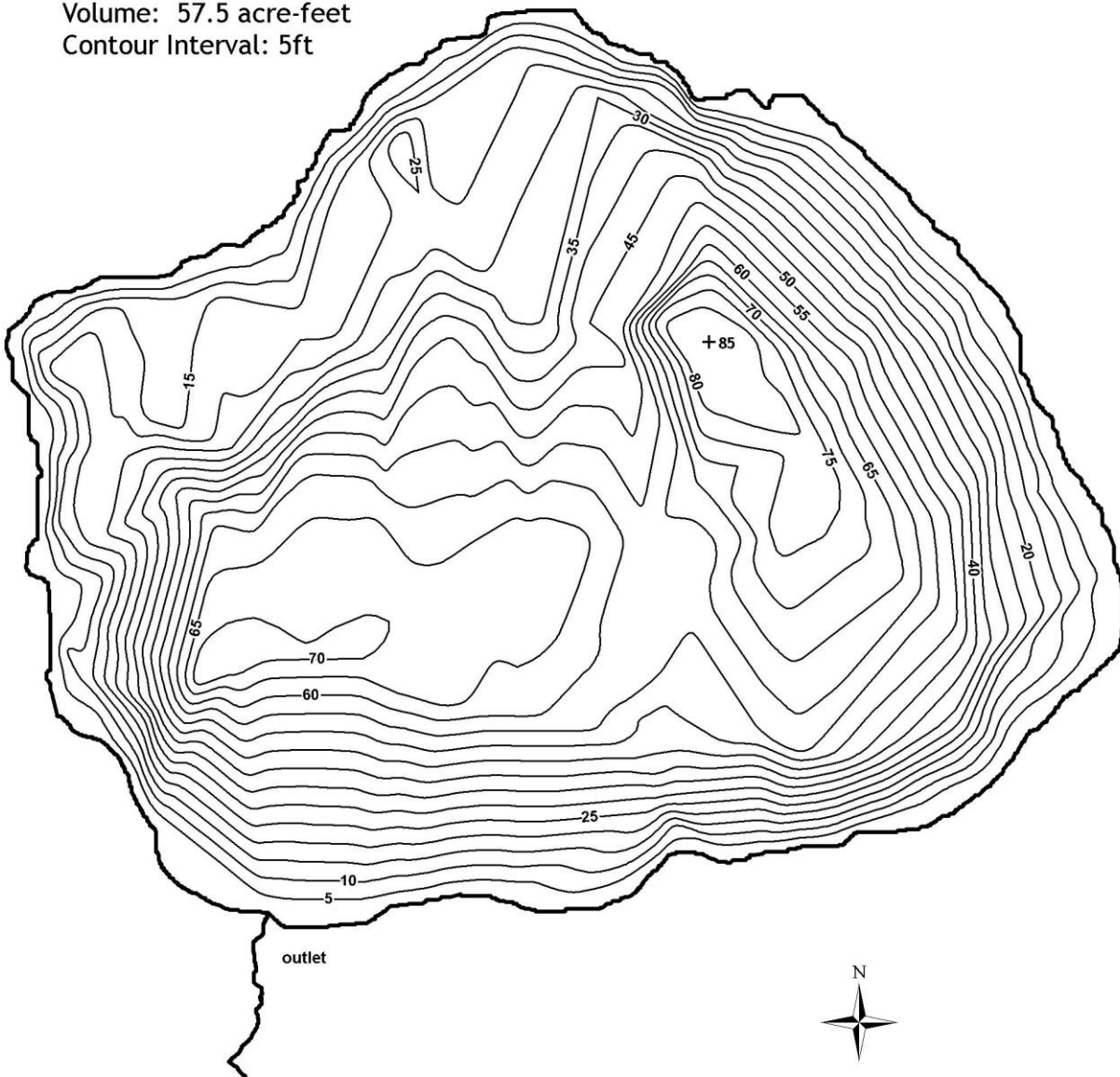
LLID: 1139160470968

Surface Area: 13.0 acres

Max Depth: 85 feet

Volume: 57.5 acre-feet

Contour Interval: 5ft



Data Source:
Depth and perimeter points collected
with field grade GPS unit and measurements collected 2009.
Volume calculation and contours processed
with ESRI ArcGIS3-D Analyst. Map produced by:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Strategic Planning and Data Services
Helena, MT 59620
January 7, 2010 - ASP
IS Request 7756



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