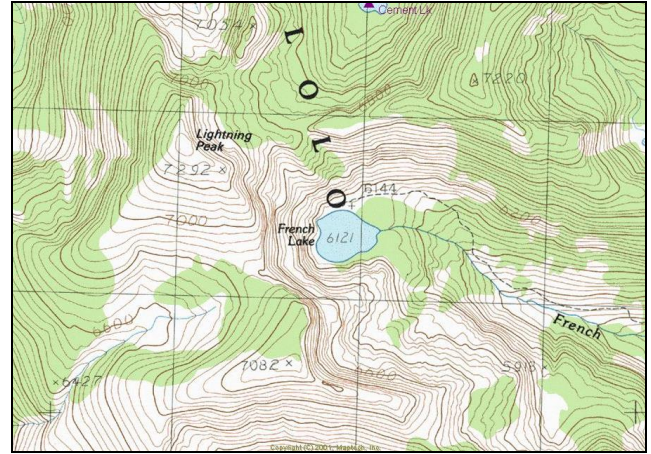


French Lake



Description: French Lake is a moderately sized (18.1 acres), remote, glacial cirque lake located in the North Fork Fish Creek drainage at 6,121 ft elevation. The lake lies on the Lolo National Forest (Ninemile Ranger District) in the *proposed* Great Burn Wilderness Area.

Location: T14N, R26W, Section 18; Latitude N46.9669°, Longitude W 114.9370°; Nearest Town: Alberton, MT

Access: Access to French Lake can most easily be obtained by taking Fish Creek Road (USFS Road #343) from Interstate Highway 90. From Road #343, go west on USFS Road #7750 until you get to the campground and Forest Service outpost (Clearwater Crossing) at the end of the road. Take the North Fork Fish Creek Trail (USFS Trail #103) approximately 7 miles to Trail #143. Take Trail #143 west for approximately 2.7 miles to the lake.

Campsites and Use: French Lake lies in a remote setting that receives light use, primarily from horse pack trips. However, there is an established trail around the lake with a campsite and fire ring. 'Leave no trace' camping and recreating is essential in this area as it is proposed wilderness.

Angling Opportunity: French Lake supports a wild rainbow trout population (likely hybridized) that is supplemented with stocked westslope cutthroat trout. Shoreline topography is very steep along portions of the perimeter, but >60% of the shoreline is accessible for angling.

Stocking History: French Lake has been previously stocked with rainbow trout and westslope cutthroat trout. In 1948-1953, the lake was stocked several times with rainbow trout. Since 1982, the lake has been planted twice with westslope cutthroat trout. MFWP plans to continue stocking westslope cutthroat trout every 7-10 years in the future.

Angling Pressure: Estimated angling pressure from Montana state-wide mail surveys in 1995-2005 was very low and averaged 7 angler-days per year.

Other Nearby Lakes: French Lake is rather isolated. The Trio Lakes are about 2.5 miles south of French Lake, but getting to them will require returning to the North Fork Fish Creek Trail (#103), continuing Southwest on Trail #103 for approximately 2.8 miles, then hiking up to the lakes (no known established trail). Crater Lake is less than 4 miles southwest of French Lake. To reach Crater Lake, return to the North Fork Fish Creek Trail (#103), travel back (southeast) towards Clearwater Crossing for approximately 2.5 miles, then ascend the unofficial Crater Lake trail. This trail involves a steep, two mile hike to reach the lake.



French Lake

Watercode: 05-8816

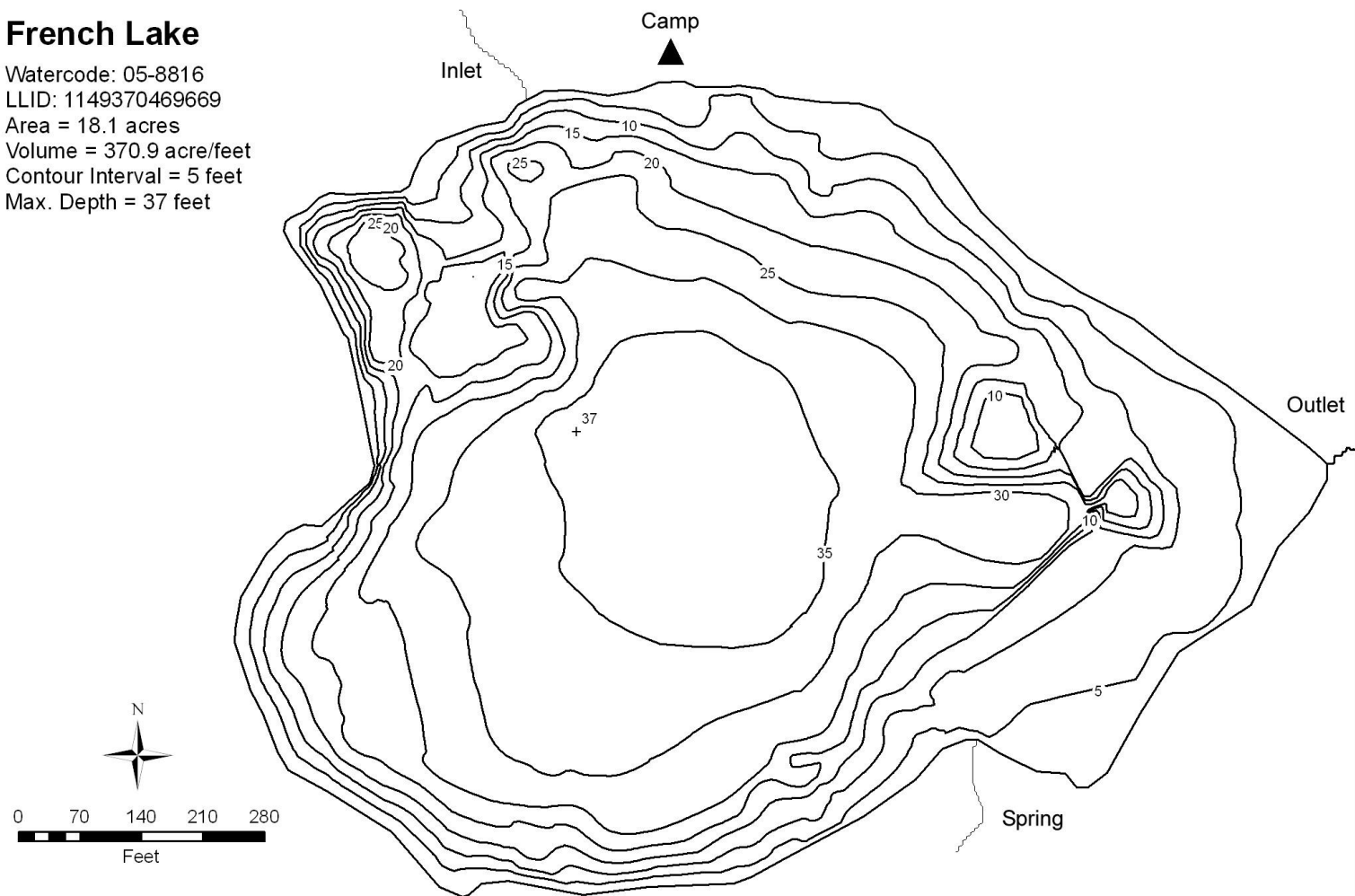
LLID: 1149370469669

Area = 18.1 acres

Volume = 370.9 acre/feet

Contour Interval = 5 feet

Max. Depth = 37 feet



Data Source:
Depth and perimeter points collected with recreational
grade GPS unit and processed with ESRI ArcGIS 3D Analyst.
Map produced by:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Information Management Unit
490 N. Meridian
Kalispell, Montana 59901
June 14, 2006

