

The Chain Lakes Bump Hike

The destination of this hike is the top of the granite bump to the east of Chain Lakes. This bump can be hiked to from Crabtree Camp, which is not far by road from Pinecrest, but this hike is a very long one. An easier way to get to the bump is by driving to a trailhead called Box Spring. It can be found on the National Forest Service Map of the Stanislaus National Forest. The drive is a long one, taking almost an hour and a half, but the views from the top of the bump make it worth it, in the author's opinion. (Some of the views from the top are shown in Figures 7 and 8).

A map of the route is shown in Figure 1.

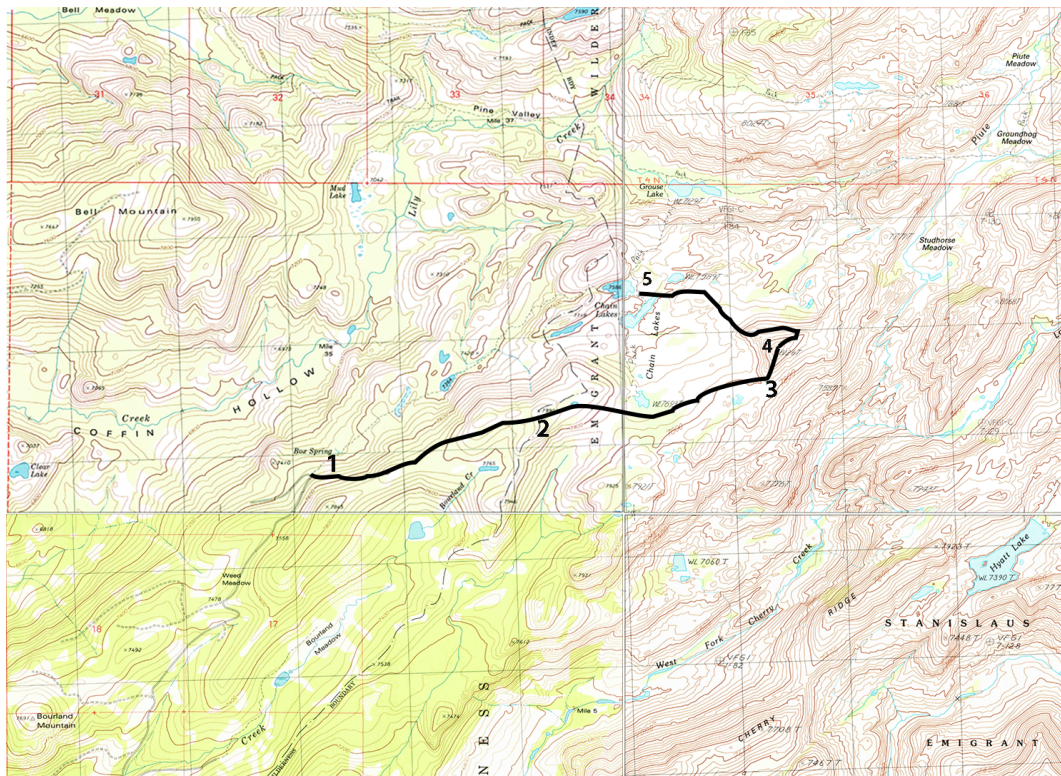


Figure 1: Chain Lakes Bump Route Map.

After parking at the trailhead, one should immediately walk east up to the top of the ridge, as shown on the map. There is almost no brush on this part of the route, since it is on the north-facing side of the ridge. Upon gaining the top of the ridge, one should walk eastward along the ridge (or perhaps slightly south of the ridgeline) for about 1.5 miles. The picture in Figure 2 is looking back along the ridge in the direction of the trailhead.



Figure 2: Looking West From East of Box Spring.

At mark 2 on the map, the bump comes into view (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: The Bump.

The valley between mark 2 and the Bump is a flat area that contains many small lakes that are collectively called the Chain Lakes. At mark 2, one should make one's way down onto this flat area, heading towards the bottom of the right-hand ridge coming off of the Bump. After another 1.5 miles, the bottom of this ridge is reached (in Figure 4, two hikers are seen approaching the bottom of the ridge).



Figure 4: Nearing the Bottom of the Ridge.

Figures 5 and 6 are two views of this ridge.



Figure 5: Near the Bottom of the Ridge.



Figure 6: Halfway Up the Bump.

The views from the top of the Bump are spectacular!



Figure 7: Looking East From the Bump.



Figure 8: Looking Southeast From the Bump.

After admiring the view, one can come off of the Bump on its north side. Figure 9 looks south towards the north side of the Bump; it is relatively easy to come down this side on the eastern (left-hand) ridge. When the terrain flattens a bit, one can walk west and then northwest towards the lake at mark 5 on the map. The lake is shown in Figure 9. It is bounded on the north side by a low granite ridge.



Figure 9: Lake 7586.

At the west end of this lake, a trail can be found heading southwest. This trail leads to Box Springs.