

## Osberg Ridgeline Trail to Castle Saddle

### Overview

This hike, which shares a trailhead with the popular Baker Lake trail, is primarily a lightly used mountain biking trail and for much of the year offers little to hikers. However, for about two to three weeks in early to mid-July its hillsides burst with wildflowers. During those weeks, it is an excellent choice for wildflower-seekers looking for a challenging climb, solid mileage, and decent views of the Smoky Mountains.

### The Numbers

4.4 mile out and back

845 feet total elevation gain

Ascent Grade: 6.7% (Moderate)

### Water

While there are stream crossings at the beginning stages of the hike, the climb is in open sun, so carrying water for yourself and your dogs is highly recommended.

### Drive

From downtown Ketchum, it is a 24.2-mile drive with the last 9.1 miles on a well-maintained dirt road. [Click here](#) for directions. There is parking for about 30 cars, though the lot will fill up on summer weekends.

There are bathrooms at the trailhead.



Parking and Trailhead

### Key Waypoints

Mid-June through early October

### Route

After parking, walk back towards the road that brought you to the lot and look to your right to find the clearly marked trailhead (“Osberg Ridgeline Trail No. 147”). The trail begins with

an easy winding descent towards Baker Creek. A bridge crosses the creek just .1 miles in and then the trail starts to climb towards a forest charred by 2013's Beaver Creek Fire. The burnt trees offer little protection from the sun as you begin the ascent.

At about .35 miles, cross a bridge spanning a small ravine and continue to pass through the blackened forest. Shortly before reaching the mile mark, you exit the tree line and enter a hillside meadow exposed to the sun. In mid-summer, this area is covered in buckwheat, lupine and other wildflowers.



Wildflowers (Not quite at their peak)

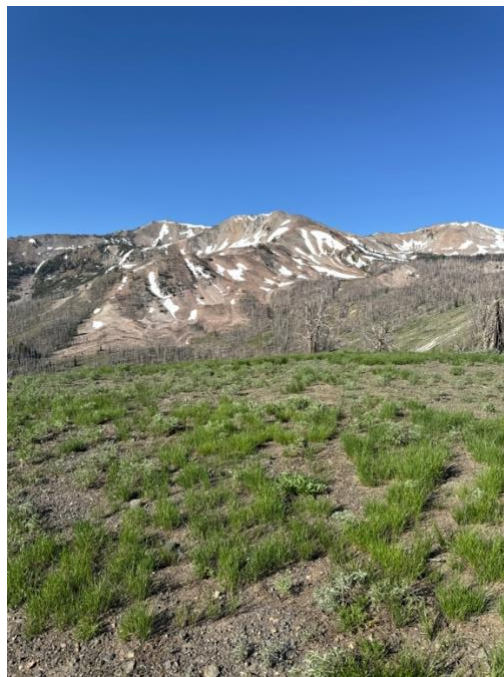
Continue climbing through fields of wildflowers and reach a signed junction with Castle Creek trail just before 1.5 miles. Turn right.



Junction with Castle Creek trail (Turn Right)

The trail cuts through the middle of an open hillside before leveling out as it reaches another section of the fire-damaged forest at about 1.65 miles. The trail then pleasantly rolls over the next half mile or so and beautiful views of the Smoky Mountains open before you.

At 2.2 miles, reach an open hilltop. While the trail continues on, this is a natural stopping point for the hike. Enjoy the views for a bit before heading back down to the trailhead to experience new perspectives of the wildflower hills.



Destination

