

Goat Flat and Four Mile Basin, Pintlar Wilderness

We all took a trip to Butte on Sunday, July 13, 2008, to catch the end of the International Folk Festival and to begin a three day stay at Fairmont, where my Mom has a condo for the week.

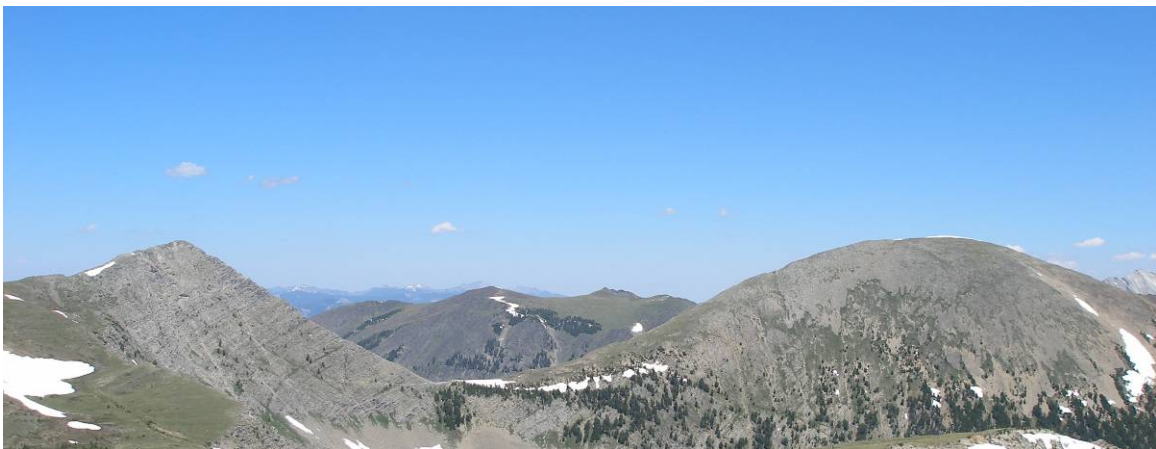
I had plans to work, as I'm heading off for a backpack next week, but instead took day trips up into the Pintlar Wilderness on both Monday and Tuesday.

The summer has been hectic, with one week work trips to New Mexico, Mexico, and San Diego. The Mexico and San Diego trips, with work in Missoula sandwiched in between, left me spiritually dry, and I needed, more than I realized, some time for myself in the high country. Thankfully, the Pintlars have worked their own brand of alpine magic on me, and I feel rejuvenated.

On Monday, I drove up to Storm Lake and hiked up to an amazing high alpine meadow called Goat Flat. The views in all directions were spectacular (the Pintlar, Pioneer, Bitterroot, Sapphire, Flint, and Highlands were visible), and I summited Tiny Mountain, which stands at around 10,000 feet. All of the pictures below are from this hike, as I forgot the camera on Tuesday. Incidentally, Jen and I took our very first Christmas picture on Storm Lake Pass 13 years ago, and it was the first time I'd been back there since then.

On Tuesday, I drove up the next drainage to the east, where Twin Lakes sit. I hiked into 4 Mile Basin, which has several lakes and, according to the maps, no trail to get you there. After some bushwhacking, I made it to the gorgeous upper lake, and then struck east over a high ridge and down into the Twin Lakes drainage. Along the way, I passed a no-name lake with trout rising and no trail in. Perhaps some day I'll return and try my luck with these little-visited fish. Twin Lakes drainage is beautiful, but with the myriad clear cuts and logging road trail, it is less pristine than Goat Flat. On the other hand, several of the Pintlar's highest peaks can be reached from this drainage, so I hope that I'll be back to see if I can reach their summit's.

I hope that you all are enjoying your summer. Me, well, I'm busier than I'd like, but am doing my best to fit in as much joy as I can, and for me, that invariably involves outdoor adventure.



Tiny (left) and Rainbow Mountains from the south end of Goat Flat.



Goat Flat.



Upper Seymore Lake from Goat Flat, looking southeast, with the Pioneer range in the distance.



At the trailhead on Storm Lake, with Rainbow peak in the background.