



Great Basin Bicycles

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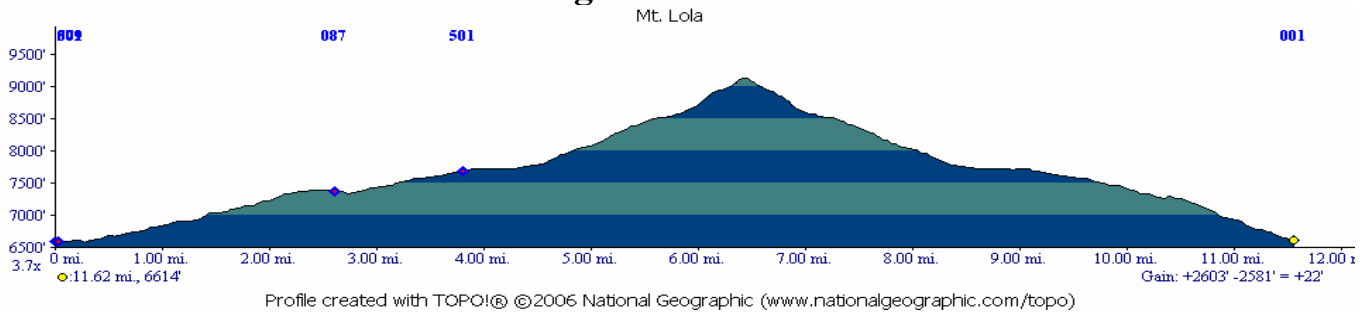
Mt. Lola, North of Truckee California

From Reno, take Hwy 80 west to the first Truckee exit. This exit is marked as Hwy 89, Sierraville California. Take the exit and turn right on Hwy 89 (north.) Continue north for 14.5 miles. Here at the top of the hill you will see a left hand turn on a paved road that is marked as "Independence Lake - .Webber Lake – Jackson Meadows Reservoir. Take a left and follow the paved road (black road on the map below) west for 1.5 miles. Here you will see a dirt road on your left with a sign marking it as "Independence Lake." Take a left, and the road will turn and backtrack to the east, it will cross a creek, then climb up. Very quickly you will come to a "T" Intersection. You can go strait to Independence Lake, or take your right and head west to the Mt. Lola Trail Head. So, take the right, and continue 3.25 miles to the trail head. When you get there you will see the parking area through the trees, and there is a shot out forest service sign marking this parking lot as the trail head. Park here and get ready to ride. There are two ways to ride this trail. You can leave the parking area and jump immediately on the singletrack and start to climb. About 60% is rideable. The rest is hike a bike. It is steep, loose, and rocky. Most people head back the way you came on the dirt road, and in .3 miles you will see a dirt road that will head south up the hill and intersect the singletrack about ½ way to the top of Mt. Lola. The end of this climb is horrible. It is loose, and steep, and un-rideable. .We saw 2 people that just left their bikes and hiked the last ½ mile to the top. The view is worth the work to get there, and remember, once on top it is downhill from there.



Focus on You Photography
Mt. Lola Summit

Mt Lola – Hwy 89 ½ way between Truckee and Sierraville Ca. (Red to Purple Trail) (Advanced) 11.62 miles 2603 ft. total elevation gain



Once at the Mt. Lola Trail Head, I would recommend heading back the dirt road you came in on. Riding up the jeep road is much easier than the singletrack in front of you. I went up the singletrack,



and found it to be about 35% hike a bike with an average gradient of 10% for just over a mile with steeper short pitches. If you take the jeep road, then you can ride the whole thing and intersect the singletrack above. Then ride the singletrack all the way back to the car. So, head out of the parking area, and follow the road back .3 miles to the first jeep road on your right. Take a right and follow the jeep road uphill to the north. In 2.21 miles (2.5 miles

from the start) you will see a jeep road on your left. Continue straight, and in .65 miles (3.15 miles) you might see your return singletrack on your right. We missed it the first time, so if you miss it, continue up the jeep road, and in .4 miles (3.55 miles) the return singletrack will join the jeep road. Stay uphill on the jeep road, and it will cross the creek, and almost immediately it will cut off the jeep road to the left. Follow the singletrack, and it will pass to the west of Cold Stream Meadow (see pic above.) Follow the singletrack for .98 miles (4.53 miles) and the singletrack will again join the jeep road. Once you hit the jeep road, stay straight. Do not take the left on the jeep road. Stay heading due south, and almost



immediately you will see the singletrack take off the right side of the jeep road. Take the right and continue due south uphill on the singletrack. From here it is just singletrack to the top of Mt. Lola. There are some steep, loose, and rocky climbs (see pic. right), but no more jeep road intersections. In 1.38 miles (5.91 miles) the trail starts to get very loose and steep. Sections are rideable, but this is where the hike a bike begins. You are headed for the bald ridge in front of you. Continue uphill, and in .41 miles (6.32 miles) you will have no choice but to hike a bike to the top.

This section averages 18% grade with steeper short pitches. The view however is worth it. Continue slogging uphill, and in .3 miles (6.62 miles) you will be at the highest point in Nevada

County, California. Now, there is another option for your return trip. I have not completed this trek yet, but here is the information. If you come into Great Basin Bicycles, I can give you a map that will show you how to continue on this trail and end up on Donner Pass Summit. This trip would be a total of 16.44 miles and 4833 ft. of climbing. This is on my radar for next year, 2009. Anyway, you are now on top of the world, enjoy the view (see pic above), take in some food, and start your downhill trip. Retrace your steps back downhill on the singletrack, and in 2.03 miles (8.51 miles) the singletrack will again drop out onto the jeep road. Continue to the left on the jeep road, and in about 25 feet you will see the singletrack pick back up on the right. Jump back on the singletrack, and pass by Cold Stream Meadow, and in .97 miles (9.48 miles) you will again drop out on the jeep road. Take a right, cross the creek, and almost immediately you will see the singletrack on the left. From here down there are a handful of technical sections, so be careful. This last section of singletrack is 2.14 miles back to the car. So take the left, and follow the singletrack back to the car for a total of 11.62 miles.

Warren Lake Trail from Mt. Lola Trail Head to Donner Summit ---CAN'T BE DONE!!! DON'T DO IT!!! (Black Trail Past Mt. Lola heading south)

Remember, I spend the night so you don't have to!!!

Don't do this ride! Even though it is on the map, and the trail up Mt. Lola and down the other side is there, the trail in the middle is gone. It has returned to nature. I think that the Pacific Crest Trail has taken all the foot traffic, and the Warren Lake Trail has returned to nature. I only know this because a friend and I tried to do the trail, and had Search and Rescue called on us the next morning. So, here is my story of what happened, and how to prepare for something like this happening to you. We started up the Mt. Lola trail above. No problems to the summit. We then dropped off the south west side of the mountain towards White Rock Lake. The trail is very steep and very loose. Rideable, but not that fun, and not something that you want to go back up. Before we left, I had researched the maps of the area and found 4 escape routes incase something went wrong, like a severe crash, bad weather, or what ever. So, one escape route was a jeep road on the west side of White Rock Lake. At this point we were both fine and continued on the Warren Lake Trail heading south towards Donner Summit on I-80. As we continued up the trail, it just disappeared. Someone had placed rock cairns and red tape tied to trees where the trail used to be. I had a topo map with GPS coordinates on the map, and I had 2 GPS receivers with me, so tracking the trail was not a problem. So between the trail markers, and the topo map and the GPS, we tracked the trail most of the way up the next ridge walking the entire way, when suddenly the trail markers disappeared completely. We then tracked the trail using the topo map and the GPS. Once on the next ridge, we had 3 escape routes. One was heading southwest into Paradise Meadow, then drop out a jeep road 20 miles down to Cisco Grove on I-80, or drop down into the Warren Lake basin. Once at Warren Lake, there were 2 escape routs on the map. One was to continue south on the Warren Lake Trail, and the other escape route was an old hiking trail to jeep road that went down the Warren Lake drainage to the east 9 miles, to Hwy 89 through Carpenter Valley. The problem here is that Warren Lake is a giant granite fish bowl with Warren Lake in the bottom of the bowl. So, once in the bowl you really only have 2 escape routs, and the Paradise Meadow route is now gone. You would have to climb an 800 vertical cliff wall that was broken up in to 3 shelves. So, we figured that once at the lake, we would find the trail that would lead back to Donner Summit, and if not, we would take the trail to jeep road out the Warren Lake Drainage to Hwy 89 through Carpenter Valley. Once we bush waked into the Warren Lake Basin we quickly realized that there was no Warren Lake Trail, and where the map put the trail, all we saw was a solid 1000 vertical foot granite wall with a shoot (couloir) breaking the granite cliff in half. This shoot was ½ mile long, 1000 vertical feet up, and filled with Volkswagen sized granite rocks. Not a shoot that you wanted to climb up, much less

carry a bike up in cycling shoes. So, we decided to take the trail to jeep road east out the Warren Lake drainage into Carpenter Valley. Once we realized that this was our last option, we climbed up the hill side to cell coverage, and called my wife to tell her where we were, and where we were headed, knowing that once we were in the canyon, we were going to be out of cell range until we hit Hwy 89. We then started our descent east towards Carpenter Valley. As we headed down towards the trail, using the map and GPS to find the trail, we quickly realized that there was no trail and we were stuck in a steep canyon with only the drainage to go down. This drainage was filled with granite boulders. So we would hand the bikes down to each other, and also use the bikes as crutches to make it over gaps in the rocks, and down those 2 – 9 ft drops. Once we hit the spot where the jeep road was supposed to be, we found no jeep road. At this point, it was getting dark, and the bikes were becoming more of a liability than a help, so we marked our location on the GPS and ditched the bikes. We continued on foot down the wash until it opened up on a giant sheet of granite. We walked over to the edge only to look over a 500 – 800 foot drop on 3 sides of us. Only way down is with ropes or a hang glider. Looking for other options, all we could see was huge slabs of granite on both our right and left, so the probability of getting down safely as the light diminished with cycling shoes on was slim. We decided to hunker down for the night. I had watched the weather report before we left, so I knew we had clear skies, and calm winds if any. So we found a rock covey, covered the ground with manzanita and pine bows, we then cut down a ton more pine bows for a blanket cover. We both had extra clothing for our upper body, but none for our legs. So we took the water bladders out of our packs so that we did not end up getting ourselves wet by accidentally rolling over on the valve, then took the packs and placed them over our legs, or part of them anyway, and covered ourselves with pine bows. It is amazing, the pine bows actually keep the heat in by 10 – 15 degrees. The outside temp dropped to 25 degrees that night, so the pine bows kicked that temp up to 35 – 40 degrees. Not great, but much better than 25 degrees. Before we left, I had tons of stuff in my pack, light jacket, long sleeved jersey, the clothing I had on, tons of food, tons of water, signal mirror, everything to fix the bikes, 2 GPS units (one with a built in CB radio,) one small digital camera, one pocket knife, but I forgot matches. I recently changed packs, and forgot to transfer the matches. So I pulled the batteries out of the camera and tried to use a piece of metal to short out the batteries and create a spark to start a fire. No luck. So we then tried to take a stick and run it up and down a grooved piece of wood to create enough friction to start a fire. We got smoke, and usually where you have smoke you have a fire, but not in our case. So after awhile of trying, we just hunkered down for the night. As the night progressed, the temp would not drop degree by degree, it would stay at one temp, then drop by 8 – 10 degrees all at once. So I would get up, stomp more blood back into my feet and the rest of my body, cut down more pine bows to cover us up even more. I did this 3 more times throughout the night. I would sleep 10 minutes here and there, but not much. I expected to see search lights in the canyon below, so I stayed mostly awake listening and watching for anything that might mean a search crew was on its' way. Not that they could have done anything with us up a 800 vertical foot cliff face, but at least we could have let them know we were ok. But they never showed. We waited for the sun to come up, and stayed in place till 8 am. We waited because we could hear a helicopter on the other side of the ridge going back and forth. We figured it was looking for us, so we hung out waiting for it to come our way. It never did. So we walked over to the cliff face, and surveyed Carpenter Valley. The GPS told us that it would be about 9 miles to Hwy 89, and by the look of things, no cell coverage the entire time, and under heavy timber, so a search helicopter would not be able to see us. The options for heading down into the valley below were risky at best no matter which route we chose (especially in cycling shoes,) and no road to be seen anywhere, even though it was on the map. So we decided to hike back up to Warren Lake, and up the cliff side back into cell coverage. So we made the hike and got into cell coverage and called everyone to let them know we were ok. We then had to clear the granite cliff face by handing the bikes hand over hand until we climbed out of the Warren Lake basin and reached Paradise Lake, then dropped into Paradise Valley, then onto the jeep road that took us to Cisco Grove on I-80. About 7 miles from Cisco Grove we were met by the County Sheriff, Search and Rescue, and our wives.

In this case, the GPS and the printed map were invaluable. Once in cell contact with the world, we were able to tell the dispatchers exactly where we were, and where we were headed. This told crews where to go to meet up with us on the way out. As it turned out, I usually give my wife a map of where I am headed. This time of course, I did not do that. So when we did not turn up that night, my wife called search and rescue and told them that we were in the Warren Lake drainage heading east towards Hwy 89. The Forest Service told her that there was no such Warren Lake, and that she must have meant Webber Lake. Well, Webber Lake is a small lake by the Mt. Lola Trail head. We were at least 10 miles south east from Webber Lake where Search and Rescue was setting up a base camp. The helicopter was doing a search pattern 2 ridges to our north. Every time we would see him crest the ridge, I would use the mirror to flash him, but he never saw the flashes. Then my wife called into the bike shop and had our manager print up a map from National Geographic Topo where I had the map drawn out, and fax it into the Forest Service. Once they got the map and realized that they were in the wrong place, they then started to search the ridges to our south thinking that we continued on the Warren Lake Trail towards Donner Summit. They never looked in the canyon that we were in. Once we were in cell range, the GPS proved priceless, giving the search crews our exact location. In fact, when I called in, they did not believe that we were where we said we were. They figured that there was no way that 2 people with bikes would be able to climb up the granite cliff faces out of the Warren Lake basin. The dispatcher kept arguing with me, telling me that there was no way that I could be where I said I was until I gave them the GPS coordinates. They were amazed that I had a GPS, and then used those coordinates to triangulate my location on their map and realized that I was where I said I was. Once we were met by Search and Rescue, they pulled out their map and had me point out where we went, and they were using the same map that I was, and it had the same trail systems on their map that mine had. So I showed them, "ok, we started here, and got here, and this trail on the map does not exist, then got here, and this trail does not exist, so we went for this escape route, and it did not exist, so we just hunkered down for the night, and climbed out to our last escape route which we could see before we dropped into the Warren Lake basin." Lastly, I have always have been made fun of by my employees for carrying my "suitcase" with me every time I go out. My pack is full of everything. I plan to add space blanket, large trashbag, matches, and even a striker to be able to start a fire. That would have made our night stay a lot more comfortable. By the way, the trash bag packs into nothing, and keeps heat in, and rain out. Very inexpensive, but works great.

