

Wheeler Peak Summit Trail #67

Type: Out & Back

Length: 2.2 miles (4.1 miles from Williams Lake Trailhead)

Difficulty: Intermediate to Expert

Elevation Gain: 1,910 ft. (2,961 feet from Williams Lake Trailhead)

Trail Beginning: 11,140 ft.

Trail Ending: 13,161 ft.

Access:

Travel approximately 4 miles north on U.S. Hwy. 64 from Taos to the junction of NM State Highway 150, then head east on NM State Highway 150 to Taos Ski Valley. Follow Twining Road for about two miles past the main parking area that climbs above the village to the designated hiker parking lot, before the Kachina/Bavarian area.

Trail Description:

The trail follows the Williams Lake Trail almost to the lake before heading to the summit for an additional 2 miles. Start by hiking south on the broad trail from the parking lot. Walk past a small pond on the left then continue past the restaurants and ski area facilities. Walk up and under the chairlift to the directional sign for Williams Lake. This area is very well marked. The trail is rocky and broad at first, but soon the Wheeler Peak Wilderness boundary is reached and the tread gets more narrow and even. Take time to view the avalanche paths and their impact on the surrounding forest. Continue on the trail for nearly 2 miles of gentle grade to the junction with the Wheeler Peak Trail #67, the trailhead will be on your left. This area offers opportunities to view the scenic Williams Lake a short walk further on trail #62. Take time to appreciate the striking features left behind from the last of the glaciers receding over 10,000 years ago. After the junction of the Wheeler Summit Trail #67 the grade gets a bit steeper. It maintains a fairly consistent pitch however; technical climbing gear is not needed. Because the tread is narrow and uneven, built through several scree fields, no equestrian travel is permitted on trail #67. The trail traverses several switchbacks, stay on the trail to prevent falling rock and trail degradation. Please stay off the steep "old route"; it is undergoing rehabilitation efforts by the Carson National Forest. Above tree line enjoy the stunning views throughout the rest of the trail. In approximately 2 miles from the Williams Lake Trail junction, trail #90 is reached. Hike to the right continuing south a short distance to the Wheeler Peak summit, 13,161 feet.

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