

VANWINKLE TRAIL (LIGHTNING CREEK)

Rating: Hard due to distance and some of the grades.

Trail accesses are south of Ella Lk. on the Cariboo Waggon Rd.

Groundhog Lake, 6 or 8 km on 1861 Gold Rush Pack Trail.

Need 10 – 12 hrs, unless camping is planned.

Maximum elevation gain: 1147 ft, 874 m

Maps required from our website: 1, 3, & 4

Return via 1861GRPT: add **2 & 5**

This trail is one of the nicest trails as it is mainly in the alpine meadows once out of the valley. That is also the reason the miners used this route, the going was much easier than trying to travel in the valley bottoms fighting mud, down timber and clouds of bugs. This was the route to the Goldfields prior to the completion of the Cariboo Waggon Road into Richfield and Barkerville.

To get to the West end of the Trail one must pass through Barkerville (A) to Richfield (B) and continue on the Waggon Road, pass Summit Rock (C) and stay Right (straight ahead) at the junction near the shelter. Keep on the road cross Jack of Clubs Creek and climb slightly to Ella Lake, (this lake was once a reservoir for hydraulic mining near Barkerville, water was moved from here via 30 plus kilometres in hand dug ditches) once pass Ella Lake you will come to the height of land and signage to indicate the start of the VanWinkle Trail (E) to your Left. Follow a short ditch and begin your climb along the creek, crossing several times and eventually over a ridge and down to Groundhog Lake (D). (You may wish to return to Barkerville via the trail going down the valley). The main trail continues pass the Lake and climbs close to the base of Mt. Agnes. At the end of the alpine meadow the trail splits into two routes an upper trail and one that drops into the valley. We will describe the lower trail as it is more defined to follow. You will be wanting to follow the upper as it is easily seen at the beginning, but trust yourself and head down and the trail will be picked up. This route will take you down to the Headwaters of Jack of Clubs Creek which may not have water depending on the weather. Soon the trail will cross below the slopes of Bald Mtn. and start to slowly climb up onto a ridge that will overlook the headwaters of Williams Creek. At this point you will intersect the Powder House Trail (F), again you may return to Summit Rock (C) by turning Left

(North), but the main trail turns Right (South) and heads to the top of Bald Mtn, and follows the top of the bowl overlooking Williams Creek.

The trail splits on top of Bald Mtn. **(G)** where you overlook the headwaters of White Grouse Creek. Straight ahead will take you to close to 8km **(H)** on the 1861 Goldrush Pack Trail, while turning Left (NE) will continue to take you along the edge of the bowl and then into scattered timber for 1.5 kms and finally join the 1861 GRPT at 6km **(I)** You now just follow this trail down the hill cross McCallums Gulch and by staying on the trail you will end up at the Richfield Courthouse and 2km will put you into Barkerville **(A)**