

Warmsprings Pond (16 km dirt road & converted rail-trail)

A waterside loop that is open in most weather conditions with multiple shorter loop options and abundant waterfowl (and other wildlife) viewing .

Directions:

Exit I-90 at Warmsprings and proceed 1.5 km east on dirt road, cross the Clark Fork River and park immediately at the “Bald Eagle” pull-out on the right.

Begin run on access road going south around the Warmsprings Pond, which is a settling pond designed to improve water quality at the headwaters of the Clark Fork River. The west side of the loop runs along the top of the levee between the pond and the river. I-90 is clearly visible on the other side of the river. At the far south end of the pond, one can turn back on the lightly driven county road that borders the pond’s east side, or you may cross the road and enter the developed (but rarely used) rail-trail that runs adjacent to the road. Both routes have nice footing. The rail-trail adds a couple 100 meters to the length of the run, and it crosses a couple nice foot bridges. The rail trail eventually crosses back over the road and follows the pond’s shoreline.

Alternative routes: Three main levees divide the pond into sections. Crossing the pond at the first levee makes a 3 km loop, the second a 5 km loop and the third an 8 km loop. There are also three alternative parking areas on the big loop’s eastern border.

Description:

Flat with good footing and a very slight southern rise, and a few rolling hills on the east side.

Negatives:

Lots of bugs in warmer weather.

Often windy with no shelter.

6 km stretch on west side separated from I-90 only by river.