



WHITE PINE LAKE - **LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON**



Rating: Moderate Hike

Length: 4-6 hours (10.5 miles)

Gear: Standard Hiking Gear

Maps: Dromedary Peak, UT

Water: Filterable along the way.

Season: Summer, Fall

Waypoints:

Trailhead	12T 442344mE 4491861mN N40° 34' 32" W111° 40' 52"
Jct.	12T 441644mE 4490823mN N40° 33' 58" W111° 41' 22"
Overlook	12T 441960mE 4491162mN N40° 34' 09" W111° 41' 08"
White Pine Lake	12T 442459mE 4487917mN N40° 32' 24" W111° 40' 46"

Hype

Of the three hikes that start from the White Pine Trailhead (White Pine Lake, Red Pine Lakes, and Maybird Gulch), this is by far my favorite. The hike follows an old service road for its entire length, which makes for less steep grades than Red Pine and Maybird, but it also offers bigger views sooner. Though White Pine Lake is small and not as picturesque as the Red Pine Lakes, the setting and overall views are better at White Pine in my opinion.

The high country keeps snow until at least mid-June. Summer brings wildflowers along the trail, while fall shows off the changing colors. Anytime summer through fall would be a good time to visit. The last part of the trail and the lake are both quite exposed to afternoon thunderstorms. Make sure the forecast is good before venturing up.

Finally, some do this as an overnight backpack. Rules require camping at least 200 feet from the lake or stream. Be aware the area is very rocky and finding a spot that meets that requirement will take some looking around.

Tags: *hike, wildflowers, fall colors, beginner, access: paved*

Trailhead

Little Cottonwood Canyon is on the east side of the Salt Lake City Valley. Get there by following I-215 to the east, taking exit 6 off the interstate and heading east toward the mountains.

Follow 6200 South which becomes Wasatch Blvd for 1.8 miles to the stop light and signs for Big Cottonwood Canyon. Continue south (straight) through the light an additional 2.3 miles to a junction and light. Stay left here, reaching the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon in an additional 1.6 miles.

From the mouth of Little Cottonwood, travel up the canyon 5.3 miles to the signed White Pine Trailhead on the south side of the road. This is about a mile up the canyon from the Tanners Flat Campground.

Route

To White Pine Junction (1 mile)

From the trailhead, follow the well used White Pine/Red Pine trail as it descends from the trailhead, crosses a bridge, and begins its ascent from the valley floor. After about 20-30 minutes, the first junction is reached. Left goes to White Pine, right is signed for Red Pine. Stay left on the old service road.

To White Pine Lake (4-ish miles)

Continue up the service road. At the next switchback, an excellent overlook is reached with views of the Salt Lake Valley down canyon and peaks that dot the ridge between Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons to the north. To the overlook and back makes an excellent short evening hike.

The road continues meandering up the White Pine drainage, offering glimpses of the upper ridge at times. The road visible in the distance crossing the talus slope is the road you're on, and White Pine Lake is just to the right of the talus. As the road climbs up to drainage, it steepens a bit.

The road eventually climbs out of the trees and begins a final series of switchbacks up the talus slope, then cuts west to the ridge overlooking White Pine Lake. From the ridge, the road descends for a few minutes to the stunning White Pine Lake proper.

Return the same way.

