

Deschutes River Trail Bike Ride

Length 14.5 miles













Time 1:30 @ 10-11 mph pace, 3:00 @ 5-6

Difficulty Easy to Moderate. Some technical areas.

Take Century Drive just past the Inn At The Seventh Mountain. Turn left on Forest Road 41, marked "Deschutes River Recreation Areas". All access to day use parking areas except the Benham Falls (east) area is from Road 41. Access to the Benham Falls east side parking is via Hwy 97 and the Lava Lands Visitor Center road.

- Parking / Day Use Lot 
- Kybo 
- Lunch Stop 



-   **Mile 0 - Lava Island Day Use Area**
Park in circular area. Trailhead Parking Permits are required for all vehicles. Go past gate and start up easy section of dirt / gravel road. There is one pitch up and down a small hill at the end of this stretch.
- Mile 0.7** - Look for the bike sign marking the short stretch of singletrack trail that takes off to the left (river) side. This cuts over to the Big Eddy Day Use Area.
-   **Mile 0.8 - Big Eddy Day Use Area**
Look for the singletrack trail on the other side of the access road. Still an easy ride which meanders through forest and brush. This is a very gentle climb you might not even notice. Watch for low hanging branches and pine cones or roots on the trail.
- Mile 1.1** - The singletrack crosses an old abandoned USFS dirt road.
- Mile 1.5** - The singletrack crosses another closed USFS dirt road.
- Mile 1.7 - Aspen Day Use Area**
After crossing the access road, look for the short trail that cuts past the locked gate and onto the forest service road. This short 50 yard trail cuts down steeply then up again.
- Mile 1.8** - Follow the double track road along the river. This is a gentle climb.
- Mile 2.3** - Look for the bike sign that marks the singletrack trail that takes off to the left (river) side. The trail pitches up sharply. You might want to walk this first part. Then the trail levels out. This marks the beginning of the most technical section of the ride. There are large boulders next to the trail, sharp turns, and portions along the river bluff. There are also rocks in the trail sometimes requiring you 'hop' the bike. *Slow down, and walk your bike through any portion with which you are not comfortable.*
- Mile 2.6 - Fat Man's Misery.** Two large boulders straddling the trail leave just enough room for your pedals plus half an inch on either side. Many a bloody ankle and shin have been caused here. *Best to simply get off and walk the bike through this portion.* The trail soon levels out and follows the bank right next to gorgeous Dillon Falls.
-   **Mile 3.0 - Dillon Falls Day Use Area**
Follow the gravel road out of the parking area.
- Mile 3.1** - Look for the fence and the signs marking the start of the single track trail across Ryan Ranch Meadow towards Slough Meadow. This is a beautiful stretch of trail. Level, yet hard pack with some bumpy spots. Watch out for waterfowl on the trail along the bank of the river.
- Mile 3.6** - On the far side of the meadow, the trail pitches up in a short climb and enters the forest. Again, watch for roots and pine cones on the trail. There is also a downed tree on this portion of trail.
- Mile 3.8** - There are some whoop-de-doo jumps along the trail for those of the BMX persuasion. The trail soon flattens out and follows the bank of the river, then cuts inland to go around a marshy meadow area.
-   **Mile 4.8 - Slough Meadow Day Use Area.**
On the other side of the circular parking area, look for the signs marking the singletrack trail that leads to Benham Falls.
- Mile 5.2** - More whoop-de-doo jumps.
- Mile 6.0** - The trail now begins a gentle climb along the river as you head up toward the falls.
- Mile 6.3** - The trail pitches up steeply here for about 25 yards.
- Mile 6.4** - Benham Falls Viewpoint. Follow the switchbacks up the hill to the parking area. This marks the beginning of a very heavily used stretch of the trail. Be sure to slow down and yield to any hikers on the trail. If crowded, it will be best to get off an walk the bike.
-   **Mile 6.5 - Benham Falls Viewpoint Parking Lot (West Side)**
On the other side of the kybo, look for the wide dirt path that leads along the river. This is actually an old right of way for a logging railway. They used to haul the cut logs from up river past the falls, then float them down the Deschutes to the mills in Bend.
- Mile 7.1** - Cross the wooden footbridge to the other side of the river. The graveled trail takes off to the right and follows the river for another 25 yards or so.
-   **Mile 7.3 - Benham Falls Viewpoint Parking Lot (East Side)**
This marks the turnaround point. The parking area is accessed from Hwy 97, turn off at the Lava Lands / Lava Butte viewpoint.