

Meadow Creek Ski/snowshoe Tour by Dave Cooper



Open meadows and spectacular peaks are the reward.jpg

Nestled between two popular ski-touring drainages, North Tenmile Creek and South Willow Creek, Meadow Creek seems to have escaped the attention of most ski-touring guidebook authors. This may be due in part to the fact that the trail climbs an unrelenting 2000 feet in little over 3 miles, limiting its appeal to advanced skiers and snowshoers.

For those who persevere though, the tour rewards you with pristine meadows surrounded by spectacular summits. When conditions permit, the tour can be extended to the south to connect with North Tenmile Creek or continued up to Eccles Pass to the north. In addition, plenty of telemarking terrain can be found on the surrounding hillsides. The tour described here has little if any exposure to avalanche danger, but the surrounding slopes can have considerable danger. Use good judgment.

Hike Description

The tour reveals its character right from the start as you climb from the trailhead at a steady grade which, depending on snow conditions may be better tackled with climbing skins.

Starting up the well-tracked trail.jpg-compressed.jpg

The trail will be very well tracked to the Lilypad Lake Trail junction at 0.5 miles. Most people turn right and head towards the lake but we

Getting to the Trailhead: Drive to the east Frisco exit off I-70 (Exit 203). From the traffic circle take the dirt road southwest (not the private road), paralleling I-70 for 0.6 miles to a plowed parking area by the trailhead.

Hike Statistics: Trailhead to the end of the tour at 11,200 feet: 2000 feet of total elevation gain in 3.5 miles one way.

Difficulty: An advanced ski tour, possibly requiring climbing skins and definitely requiring strong downhill skills. A moderate snowshoe outing.

USGS Quad: Frisco, CO, Vail Pass, CO.



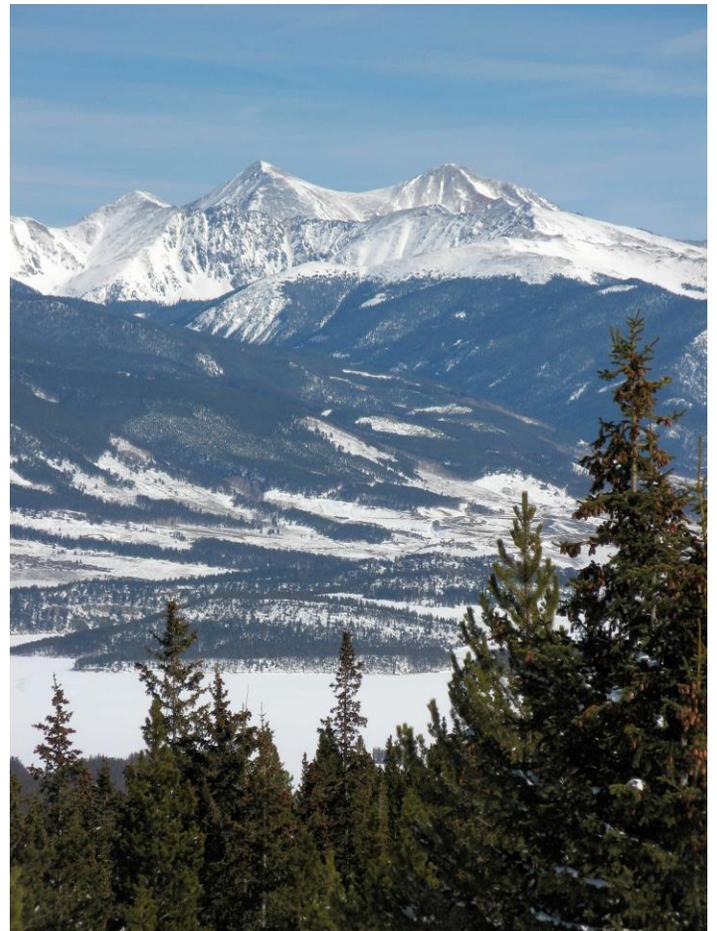
stay straight. Shortly after the Lilypad Lake Trail junction and just before the Eagles Nest Wilderness boundary there is another, unsigned junction where we stay straight (right). Still likely to be tracked, the relentless climb continues, reaching and crossing to the north side of Meadow Creek after 1.3 miles.



Snowshoer enjoying the spectacular views.jpg-compressed.jpg

The trail climbs steadily, paralleling the creek perhaps 100 feet below. The open pine trees along this section offer exceptional skiing on the way down for those so inclined.

It isn't until mile 2.1 that you will reach the first clearing. Take a look back at the views of Grays and Torreys.

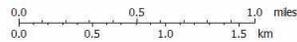
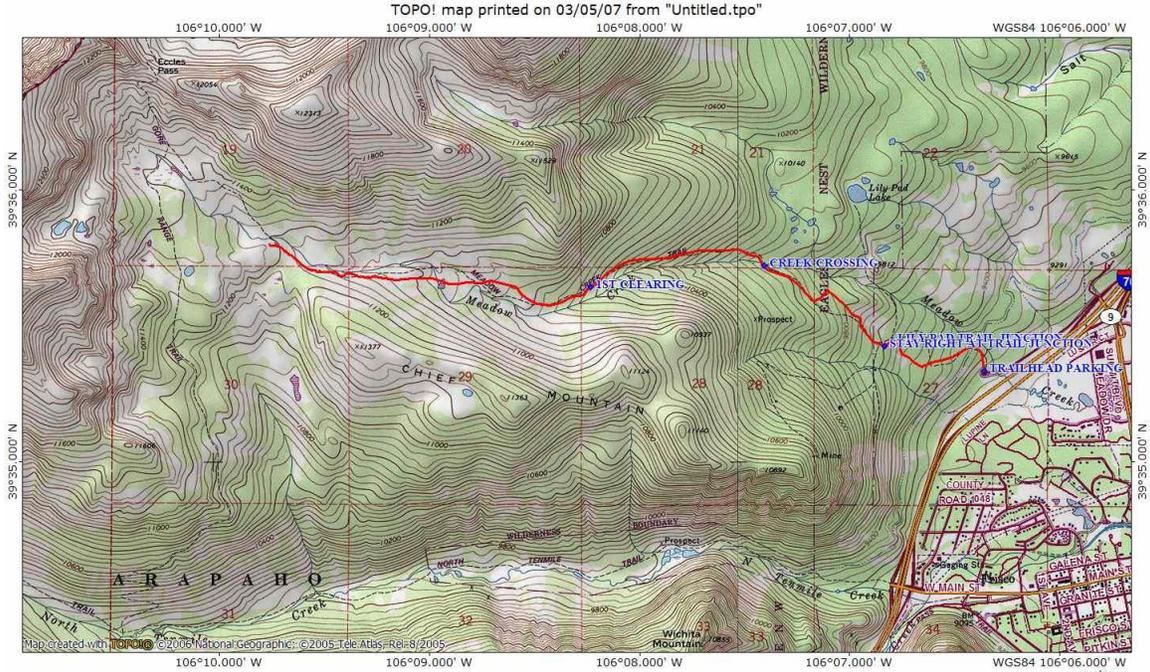


Good views of Grays and Torreys peaks.jpg-compressed.jpg

Continue west as the trees become more open and the grade eases. The summer trail eventually curves northwest towards Eccles Pass. Choose one of the meadows around the 3.5 mile mark as your destination and enjoy the scenery over lunch.

The run back down, depending on conditions, can be wonderful or "character-building". Competent telemarkers are likely to look for routes through the trees rather than barreling down the trail. Just keep an eye open for tree stumps and rocks and don't stray too far from the trail.

TOPO! map printed on 03/05/07 from "Untitled.tpo"



10°
03/05/07

GPS Latitude / Longitude NAD83 (Deg., Min., Sec.)

TRAILHEAD PARKING: 39,35.334N / 106,06.360W, 9155 feet

LILYPAD LAKE TRAIL JUNCTION: 39,35.444N / 106,06.795W, 9596 feet

STAY RIGHT AT TRAIL JUNCTION: 39,35.423N / 106,06.835W, 9639 feet

CREEK CROSSING: 39,35.721N / 106,07.407W, 10030 feet

1ST CLEARING: 39,35.642N / 106,08.232W, 10650 feet

