



# Visit the Blue Mountains Trail: Buckhorn Overlook & Indian Village Grove

Visit **Buckhorn Overlook and the Indian Village Grove** overlooking Hells Canyon on the Blue Mountains Trail. A short, easy drive from **Joseph and Enterprise, Oregon** takes you to this historic place with some of the most majestic views of the deepest canyon in North America.



## THE STATS:

**Recreation type:** Vehicle/ADA  
**Duration:** 4-6 hours from Enterprise  
**Time of year:** May to November  
**Physical difficulty:** Easy  
**Logistical difficulty:** Easy access  
**Permits required:** None

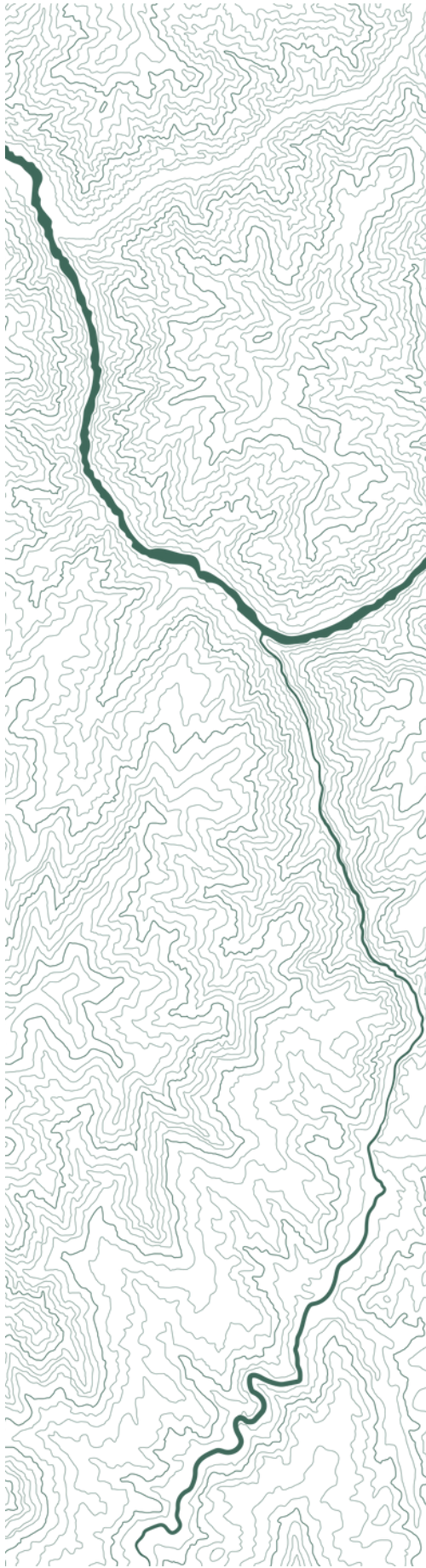


## TRIP DESCRIPTION:

Perched on the rim of Hells Canyon in the Wallowa Whitman National Forest, Buckhorn Overlook offers an awe-inspiring views of the confluence of the Imhaha River, Lightning Creek, Cow Creek, and Snake River far below. Canyon country is on full display, as are the snowcapped Seven Devil Mountains in Idaho perched high across North America's deepest river gorge. Buckhorn Overlook is no longer used as a fire lookout, but with ample parking, interpretive signage, and soaring vistas, it makes a great spot for a photo opportunity, a picnic, or an ADA-accessible adventure. Buckhorn Campground and its perennial spring water is a short walk or drive from the lookout.

Near Buckhorn, the Indian Village Grove is a site that was historically used by the Nez Perce, or Nimiipuu, and it is now situated in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area near the western rim of Hells Canyon. From the roadside parking, a short walk leads to some interpretive signage explaining how the cambium of large ponderosa pine trees was harvested and consumed at various times of the year. The site is easy to reach on National Forest Road 880 about 2 miles south from its junction with Buckhorn Road (National Forest Road 46).





## TRIP DESCRIPTION, CONT:

Visiting these destinations takes you into the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA), a large protected area that spans 652,488 acres of Hells Canyon in Oregon and Idaho. The HCNRA was protected by an act of Congress in 1975 as a result of strong advocacy to keep the Snake River flowing freely through the deepest reaches of Hells Canyon. You can read more about the HCNRA and the role Greater Hells Canyon Council played in its formation at [www.hellscanyon.org/our-history](http://www.hellscanyon.org/our-history).

These areas are sensitive to human activities, and they are important places to the indigenous peoples who have lived here since time immemorial. You can join us in reporting recreation impacts or areas that need additional maintenance using the Recreation Impacts Monitoring System (RIMS) app (contact us for details and to sign up or download the app and get started). This area also supports abundant wildlife and protected flora; when visiting here, please follow Leave No Trace principles.

## BEFORE AND AFTER IN JOSEPH AND ENTERPRISE:

On the northern end of Wallowa Lake, 6 miles from the Wallowa Lake Trailhead, Joseph, Oregon is a small but vibrant community with a lot to offer visitors and residents alike. As the northern terminus for the Blue Mountains Trail, it is a full-service town with a small grocery, laundromat, restaurants, and lodging. It is compact and all hiker services are easily walkable. It also has a vibrant arts community.

While in Joseph, you can get outdoor gear and equipment at Quickhatch Provisions or The Sports Corral. Local attractions include the Old Chief Joseph Gravesite and the adjacent Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site at the north end of Wallowa Lake, the Joseph Center for Arts and Culture with its rotating exhibits that provide unique and in-depth perspectives of Wallowa County, the Wallowology Natural History Discovery Center that offers an exploration of the natural history of the region, and you can take a self-guided tour of Joseph's artistic endeavors along the Joseph Oregon Bronze Art Watch.

The still small but larger community of Enterprise is another 6 miles northwest of Joseph along Highway 82. Here you'll find more places to eat, sleep and get the gear and goods you need to make the most of your time in the mountains. Sugar Time Bakery has some of the best sweet and savory snacks and sandwiches in the area, and you can join the crowds for a great pint of beer with a bison burger and other good fare at Terminal Gravity Brew Pub. There are many places to stay for all budgets, along with camping a short distance from town.

For a full list of amenities, including grocery stores, where to do your laundry, post offices, public transit options, and more places to eat and stay, check out the Blue Mountains Trail Town Guides for Joseph and Enterprise.

## TRIP PLANNING INFORMATION AND LINKS:

### Buckhorn Overlook

USFS webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/wallowa-whitman/recarea/?recid=51825>

Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/eRuc9RgtughUQ3dJ7>

### Nearby town guides for Joseph and Enterprise:

<https://www.hellscanyon.org/blue-mountains-trail/towns/joseph>

<https://www.hellscanyon.org/blue-mountains-trail/towns/enterprise>

### Local US Forest Service Office:

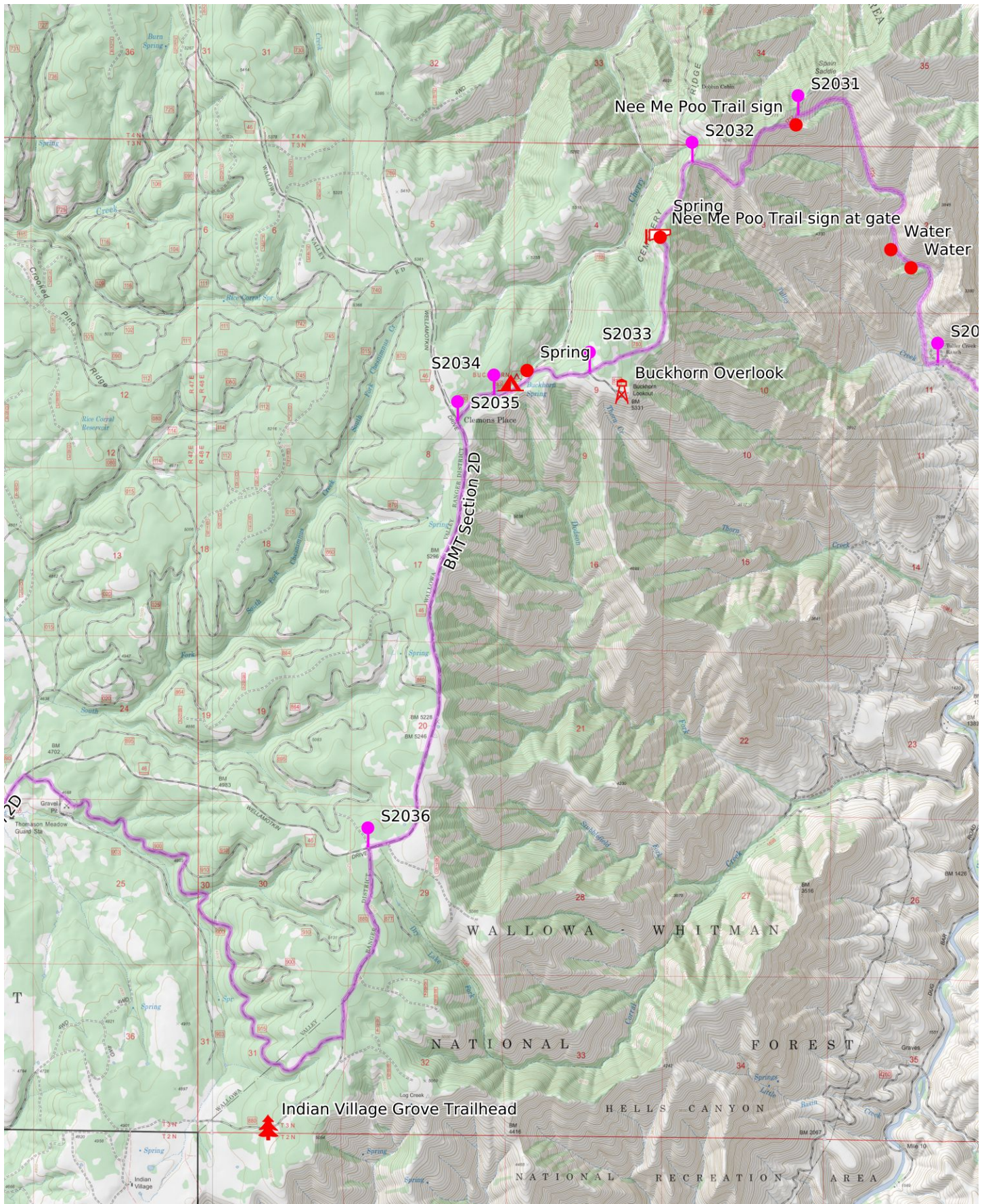
Wallowa Whitman National Forest, Wallowa Mountains Office, 541-426-5546

### Weather forecast at Buckhorn Overlook via the National Weather Service:

<https://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lon=-116.823&lat=45.754>

Credit for photos as follows: Front page Header: Leon Werdinger; Front Page Inset: Heidi Chamberlain





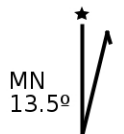
Buckhorn Overlook and Indian V 1/21

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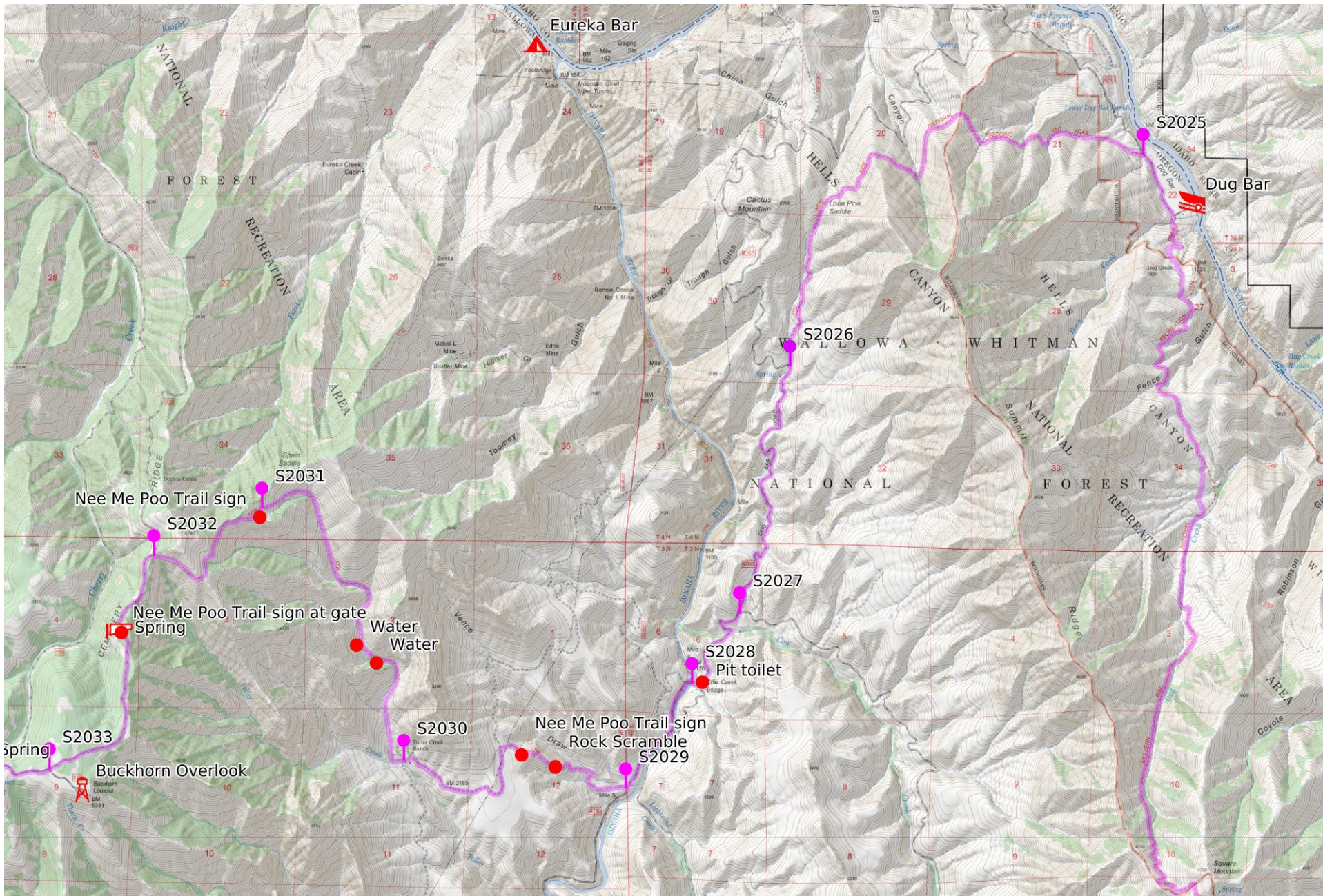
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Scale **1:50000**  
1 inch = 4167 feet







Buckhorn Overlook and Indian V 2/21

WGS84

UTM Zone 11T



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