

### SCOUT LAKE AND POTATO LAKE ROAD, SILVERTON, COLORADO

The Potato Lake Road is the first (southern) part of the old Lime Creek Road, which was at one time the main road through this area. We drove this road with the idea to hike to Potato Lake, which is a small lake 1.2 miles from the road and is just below Potato Hill. However, the road was worse than we had expected (and our vehicle only had street tires), so we didn't get all the way to the parking area and decided to head back after hiking up to the parking area. (Note: It appears that "easy" 4WD roads in this part of Colorado are equivalent to "Moderately Difficult" roads in Death Valley. Whether or not the reader finds this road easy or more difficult will depend on their skill with 4WD roads.)

The main difficulty with this road is these "rock steps", as seen in the next three photos. These rocks could scrape the undercarriage of a low-clearance vehicle (or of any vehicle, if the driver isn't sufficiently certain where the higher and lower clearance points of their vehicle are).



Panorama of Scout Lake (the TOPO map indicates there are actually multiple small lakes near this one, all labeled "Scout Lake"). Notice all the lily pads (?) in the lake. This is the only place in this area we have seen so many of these lily pads; I wonder if they are this prevalent in other lakes in this area which we haven't yet visited.



Looking east towards the West Needle Mountains.



Taking a closer look at the pond growth.



The parking area for Potato Lake is just ahead; Potato Hill is just above it. The hill is so named because it looks like a potato, and the lake is named for the nearby hill. Locals also refer to this as "Spud Hill" and "Spud Lake."





Looking east across at where the Old Lime Creek Road goes. Also notice the blooming Colorado False Hellebore.



Looking southeast across a marshy area near Scout Lake.



The trail to Potato Lake starts out rocky.



It also passes through some nice trees. We would have liked to hike to Potato Lake, but we were concerned about driving back out this road before the nearby thunderstorm reached us.



Looking across Scout Lake again, at what appears to be a large beaver hut in the middle of the lake (barely visible in the center of this photo).



Looking back down the Potato Lake Road. Engineer Mountain is visible to the right in this photo.



This is a particularly nasty rock in the road which could seriously damage the undercarriage of a smaller vehicle.



Heading back down the Potato Lake Road.



If I recall correctly, there was one particularly narrow section of the road, near a cliff.





Looking back at this narrow section. It would not be a good place to meet another vehicle, as the downhill side of the road has a steep dropoff.



Continuing down the road, we finally reach where it is much smoother and wider.



Here we are getting another view of the southeast side of Engineer Mountain.



This is the very beginning of the Old Lime Creek Road, which is very nicely graded.



Driving by the Hermosa Cliffs on our way back to Durango.

