

Over the Hill & Back

Quality:****

Distance: 22.7 miles

Difficulty: Advanced/expert

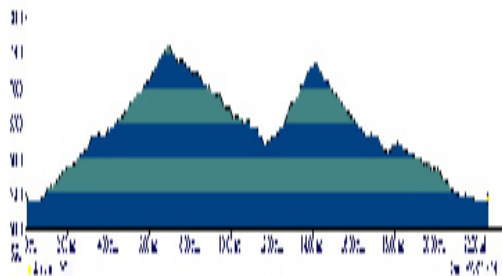
Riding time: 4 - 5 hours

Vertical gain/loss: 3,731 feet

Tread: 4WD dirt road, single-track

Season: Late June—October

Watch out for: Vehicles, hikers and ATVs



Getting there: From McCall, go west of town on Idaho 55 for less than a mile to a signed turnoff for Bear Basin Road #451. Turn right and follow the road a little over a mile to a wooden fence by a road junction on the left. Park. The ride starts here.

The Ride: This is a great “big ride” with close access to McCall. It’s a long arduous climb to the top of Brundage Mountain Ski Resort, and then a fun zoom down Elk Trail towards the bottom of Brundage. Then you’ll climb Brundage (when the lift isn’t running) and scale another 1,500 vertical feet before cruising back to McCall via the Payette Rim Trail. For a good day’s ride, this one is outstanding in my book.

To begin, head up Bear Basin Road. It starts out as a 2WD gravel road and phases into a 4WD jeep trail as you get closer to Brundage Mountain. Ignore side junctions and proceed up the road 5.9 miles. Go left at the junction for Brundage Reservoir and climb the final stretch to the top of Brundage Mountain. Ride over to the top of the Bluebird Express quad chair. Go left on Elk Trail (mile 7.1). It’s four miles of totally fun downhill riding. Close to the bottom, peel left on Growler Trail (mile 11.8). At mile 12.1, bear left on the singletrack and climb. Then peel right on the singletrack and merge with the 4WD jeep trail that climbs to the top of Brundage. Climb the singletrack or the road (easier). Take your pick. At mile 14.4, you reach the shoulder of Brundage and descend on Bear Basin Road for 3 miles. Turn left on Payette Rim Trail, Forest Road #659 at mile 17.5. Watch for a singletrack on your right after 1.5 miles. Peel right and ride the Payette Rim Trail (see page 74) back to Bear Basin Road (mile 21.7). Mileage at the finish: 22.7. Go have a beer! You’ve earned it.

Note: If the Payette Rim Trail is unpassable because of the logging project in 2010, take Sheep Trail to the right of Bear Basin Road on your way back to McCall. See page 76 for that description. -- SS

