

Mount Powell Trail Head (TH) (12 km dirt road)

A beautiful point-to-point dirt road that is nice to run uphill with the rising sun at your back. Arrange transportation from finish. Do not venture away from the road during the first 8 km because you are crossing Montana State Prison Ranch land. Normally passable from May 1st through November 1st, but snow and ice can linger in high areas.

Directions:

Exit I-90 at Deer Lodge or Race Track and proceed west on country roads toward the south face of Mount Powell until you find yourself on Dempsey LAKE Road (not the most precise directions). On that road you will find Montana State Prison Ranch #2 outpost, where Perkins Road splits directly west toward Mount Powell. Follow Perkins road for less than 100 meters before turning north (right) uphill on Dempsey CREEK Road.

Begin 12 km run to trail head from there (no established parking area – you'll need to shuttle your higher-clearance automobile to the trail head). The road is easy to follow - stay on the main road all the way as it climbs to the TH. TH has no facilities.

There is no official trail to the top of Mount Powell, but there are a couple of routes that locale hikers use to walk up there. Considerable amounts of scrambling are required.

Alternative finish: As described, this run ends at a TH, so obviously you could continue on. The one trail is all double-track, but it is quite steep and rugged in places due to erosion, and running there is **only for the very hardy**. The trail accesses the backcountry lakes, which are many, remote and beautiful. Lower Caruthers Lake is the first larger lake that you will encounter 8 km above the TH.

Description:

Route has 400 meter altitude gain to the TH with good footing on dirt road.

Negatives:

First 7 km are treeless and can be very cold or hot & dry with wind.

Some steep up hills.

Higher clearance automobile shuttle required.

TH area sometimes heavily used by motor sports enthusiasts.

Minimum security prisoners occasionally work this far out on the MSP Ranch – running companion recommended.