

HELPFUL NOTES FOR THE CABIN BUYERS

Access to the Cabin during summer/fall:

Commercial bush plane: Jerry Lee, Lee's Air Taxi from Tolsona Lake. Dehavilland Beaver or Super Cub on floats. (907) 822-3574 / 3343. It is a half hour flight each way and the cost is around \$850 to \$900 roundtrip. I recommend filling the plane with as much freight and passengers as Jerry will allow since you're paying for it either way. Super Cub service for a single passenger is a lot more affordable if you're not hauling more than a backpack full of gear.

Overland travel: Amphibious Argo ATV is by far the only good way to go. 4 wheelers are not recommended due to necessity of crossing the Nelchina River. I know folks who have done it, but I don't know where they crossed and the trail between the river and Upper Twin Lake is very rough and swampy. Then you are stuck on the wrong side of the lake when you get there and faced with another difficult task of going around it. The Argo handles the whole trip with ease and safety.

On the Glenn Hwy, exactly 9 miles after passing Eureka Lodge eastbound, pull off into the large parking lot on the left across from the Mile 137 highway marker. After loading your gear, cross the road and start down the clearly defined trail directly across from the parking area. It breaks out of the woods after a hundred yards or so and goes a mile across a swampy open area and then bears right into the woods again. From there it becomes solid ground and a well defined trail all the way for another mile and then starts going down hill gradually until it parallels a small creek. From there the trail is swampy in places along the creek but is good going most of the way until it comes out onto the wide flood plain of the Nelchina River.

Crossing the Nelchina River: Where the trail breaks out onto the river bed turn right and follow the river bank upstream. You will notice that upstream of the rapids there is a long stretch of smooth water. Drive along the rocky shallows and up along the north bank as far as you can go along the base of the gravel bluffs. You will see that the river gets narrow there with a fast but smooth current. I have crossed there several times, with and without a long shaft outboard motor as a kicker. Enter the river at this far upstream point and begin powering across. The current will carry you downstream at a pretty good pace but you will be making progress toward the other side all during the drift and it is $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or so downstream to the take out point. I prefer using the outboard motor with a guy at the tiller while the Argo driver stays in front to power up the bank when the wheels touch on the other side. The outboard is needed more to enhance steering capability than it is for power. The key is not to try going up the bank on the other side too soon because the sandy banks will act like quicksand and there is no traction. But by then you are already across the river and in no danger getting to the rapids. Just continue with nose pointed downstream until you come to a flat rocky beach just above where the riffles begin. That is the aiming point. As soon as the wheels make contact with the bottom it is a cinch to drive up onto the bank. The only hazard I've encountered while crossing is submerged sandbars. You can get stuck on them if you are not careful. Coming back across the river is much easier because the north shore is almost all flat shallow beach and any take out point is as good as the next. After the first hunting season that I crossed the river I made up a set of detachable pontoons to act as outriggers for additional stability while making the river crossing. These worked like a champ and I never worried about the crossing after that. The pontoons can be cached there for use on the return trip, but I kept them aboard the trailer (yes I crossed towing a meat trailer) for crossing Upper Twin Lake later on.

The trail on the south side of the Nelchina: There is a dried up oxbow after you cross the river. It is smooth going on a sand flat and you can make good time there. As you come to a pond on the right you will see wheel tracks on the left of it. It is a swimming hole of a local cabin owner and you will see a swimming platform moored there. Follow that trail along the oxbow until you get to a gully where a narrow creek comes down out of the woods.

You will see the trail going up a steep hill just to the left of the creek and that is where you need to go. You have about 2 miles to go to reach the lake. The trail is not a good one like the one on the highway side of the river, but it is well defined and easy to follow. There is a lot of swamp and deep mudholes. At one point there is a rough detour around a small pond but we have filled in the deep pits with brush to make it passable. When you get to the end of the swamps and mud bogs you enter tall spruce timber again with solid ground. You will pass a couple of no trespassing signs, but they are only there to discourage people who don't own property out there. The trail drops downhill sharply and comes out on Upper Twin. As long as the lake is calm, it is easy to take an Argo straight across with or without pontoons. I usually drop the trailer there however and use the boat to ferry the stuff across after I get to the cabin. Just look for the dock with the motorcycle tire bumpers. On a good day without encountering problems the trip in from the highway takes about 3 to 4 hours to cover approx. 7.5 miles.