

[Mt Fernow](#) (9249') and [Copper Peak](#) (8964')

July 1-4, Sat-Tues

Fernow and Copper are located in the eastern part of the Glacier Peak wilderness and just west of Lake Chelan. Besides being complex climbs in a remote area, one of the motives in choosing these peaks is to introduce folks both to the [Lake Chelan Ferry](#) and also the community of [Holden](#), an old mining site and now a Lutheran retreat center nestled in the mountains west of Lake Chelan. Holden is a welcoming community and, along with [Stehekin](#) at the head of the lake, both are places which are 'out of time' in that they are remote, difficult of access, and retain the atmosphere of a bygone era.

Access to the area is via the ferry from Fields Point Landing (northwest of Chelan) and the school bus to Holden. From there we hike the Copper basin trail about 3-1/2 miles and 2400' elevation gain into Copper basin and camp (5550'). Both the ferry and the bus access will involve financial outlay; I'd estimate about \$50 in total for the round trip but you might check the websites for more current information.

The two middle days of the schedule are summit days: Fernow is SW of camp and climbed via the east ridge – class 3. Copper is west of camp and more difficult, with some typical North Cascades brush-bashing before entering a large steep basin below the summit. Expect to encounter some steep snow and class 3/4 rock before

attaining the north ridge, then following it to the summit. We'll exit on day 4, returning early to Holden and await the bus back to the ferry dock. We should be able to shower at Holden prior to departing and possibly partake in some fresh food. We'll then board the ferry to Stehekin to sample its ambiance for a short time before returning to the ferry dock and cars at Fields Point Landing.

We have climbed Copper from the basin previously but were thwarted on Fernow by low cloud and visibility issues; I have summited Fernow via the east ridge before, but from an entirely different approach.

Gear requirement: helmet, crampons and ice ax. I may bring a short rope for a handline also.

The expectation would be for folks to drive up Friday evening to spend the night with us in Seattle, then make an alpine driving start to reach the ferry at Fields Point by about 9am (3-1/2 hours from Seattle). Days 2 and 3 are summit days, while the last day is spent returning.

CAVEAT: I want to do these climbs; however, the Holden mine site has been under [superfund remediation by Rio Tinto](#) for the past few years. At time of writing, the Holden community is due to reopen in 2017 with access restored. That said, conditions may change and the contractor/forest service may maintain some access restrictions further into 2017. I won't know with any certainty until later in the

spring. If access remains restricted, I'll offer another option, most likely the Ruth/Icy combo which we've done previously.



Copper basin from beneath Copper Peak

Map link:

<https://mappingsupport.com/p/gmap4.php?ll=48.180972,-120.779495&z=14&t=t4>