

Sourdough Ridge/Elephant Butte (7380')

3 or 4 days,

Elephant Butte lies at the extreme east end of the Pickets and across from the northwesterly end of Sourdough/Stetattle ridge above Diablo lake. It is not technically difficult (class 3) but both the trail approach and ridge run are extremely strenuous as the Sourdough Mt trailhead (2 – 1/2 hours from Seattle) is at only 900', the ridge run has considerable ups and downs, and there is the necessity to lose ~ 1500' of elevation to drop to 4950' at Torrent Pass before climbing Elephant Butte itself.

The rewards are the incredible views from all along the ridge and from Elephant Butte's summit – the Pickets to the immediate west, the Snowfield/Colonial group of peaks to the south across Diablo lake, and Ross lake and the Pasayten wilderness to the east. The intent would be to hike the Sourdough Mt trail and part of the ridge the first day to camp (est 5400' gain, 6 miles), traverse the ridge to Elephant Butte the second day (strenuous), then exit back to the trailhead, visiting the historic [Sourdough Mt lookout](#) site on the way out. I have not climbed here previously; the trip reports are uniformly consistent in that this is a very strenuous climb (though not technically challenging) in a magnificent setting. Ice ax and helmet likely required.

Map link: <https://mappingsupport.com/p/gmap4.php?ll=48.760248,-121.139718&z=13&t=t4>



Sourdough ridge with Elephant Butte top center-left