Moss Lake Natural Area

Moss Lake Natural Area is extremely valuable from an ecological standpoint. The lake and associated bog and wetland comprise a rare habitat in King County, and the relatively unaltered nature of the area make the site a unique resource. In addition, the surrounding upland forest provides valuable wildlife habitat for several King County “species of concern,” including bald eagle, Vaux’s swift, red-tailed hawk, pileated woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon, western toad and Beller’s ground beetle.

The trail heads a short distance from the parking lot to a natural art installation, “Axelilia,” that was created in 2001 by Chuck Greening and incorporates native plants and a viewing berm with stone benches provided for the quiet contemplation of nature. Here visitors will find a gravel path to the water, where they can take in spectacular views of the lake and surrounding wetlands, or even launch a canoe to further explore the park. The trail continues southeast past the lake through a conifer forest and into more open areas of alder and cottonwood, eventually climbing back northeast of the lake where it ends at private forest land.

Area
372 acres

Trail length
2.9 miles

Trail uses
Moss Lake Natural Area is open to hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers. There is also a gravel access path to the lake where users can launch small non-motorized boats. The park is popular for bird watching and nature observation.

Access
From I-90 take Exit 22 (eastbound or westbound), and head north on Preston-Fall City Road. In downtown Fall City, follow signs at the main intersection to State Route 203 (Carnation-Duvall Road). In 8.8 miles, north of Carnation, turn right on NE Stillwater Hill Road (which becomes Kelly Road NE). In 2 miles, bear right on Lake Joy Road NE, and at the fork 1.8 miles later, keep left on East Lake Joy Drive NE. In .7 miles, turn left on NE Moss Lake Road, which ends at the park in .5 miles.

There is a pit toilet and a paved parking lot for up to 16 cars or 10 cars and three buses.

Moss Lake Natural Area is located five miles southeast of Duvall, 3.5 miles northeast of Carnation, and one mile east of Lake Joy in the Cascade foothills. The site comprises 372 acres of high-quality wetland and forested upland habitats. An extensive 150-acre wetland complex encompasses a large sphagnum bog and also features beaver dams and includes a 6.5-acre cattail and spirea-fringed lake. Moss Lake was acquired in three phases from 1990-2002, with the initial 275-acres purchase representing the first major acquisition under the 1989 Open Space Bond approved by King County voters.