North Fork Boise River
Deer Park Cabin Family Campout
July 2012

We went camping at the Deer Park Cabin that the Forest Service rents for $35 a night. See link: http://www.recreation.gov/campgroundDetails.do?topTabIndex=CampingSpot&contractCode=NRSO&parkId=73911
It sits along the North Fork of the Boise River at the end of the road on the North Fork. The highlight of the area is the North Fork Boise River Trail that leaves from behind the cabin. It leads into a very narrow scenic canyon along the river where small Rainbow can be caught.

It was nice because all we had to bring was our sleeping bag, water container for hauling water from the water pump (very good water) and food. It had a propane stove, fridge, dry sink, beds, cooking and eating utensils, propane lights, trash service, an outside vaulted toilet and good dirt roads to get there. The forest Service cleans the cabin between visits. It was a fun atmosphere to spend a couple of nights with the family.
On the evening I arrived I decided to hike the trail to scout out a good swimming hole for the family the next day. Jacie and Kylie came with me as I named the birds and plants we saw. They were having a good time. We found a good swimming hole where the trail first accesses the river at about a ½ mile. The trail is high on the ridge until this point but stays close to the river for the next couple of miles through the canyon. I hiked through the canyon on the last morning and it was a spectacular hike.

On our return hike to the cabin I pointed down to the river at a Bear eating berries. Fear came to my girls’ faces until I told them it was going to be fine. The bear saw us and ran across the river and continued foraging. The girls had great close-up looks at the Bear especially with the binoculars I had. Seeing the Bear was the highlight of their trip and they couldn’t wait to get back to the cabin to tell their sisters what they missed out on.

The next day we hiked up the trail and went swimming. The girls had a blast. We got fish to chase our spinners but no bite. I could have caught them with my fly rod but I decided to keep it in its case and spend time with the family. I’ve fished the N.F. Boise River lower down at Blacks Creek Campground and caught several small Rainbow Trout. We had the canyon all to ourselves.
Hiking upstream with Kylie to find another fishing hole
After swimming and fishing we hiked back to the cabin for tinfoil dinners and smores around the campfire. All the girls had a turn to bat as I pitched them balls out in the yard. We had a fun time bird watching together as well. We saw White-breasted Nuthatches, Gray Catbirds, Night Hawks, Lazuli Buntings, Western Tanagers, Warbling Vireos and Cedar Waxwings to name a few.

It was a different experience than our regular tent camping. It really cut down on what we had to pack. I’ll have to see what other cabins are in the reservation system. The main draw to this cabin is its location and solitude. The hike is a must do! It was definitely worth the trip and the memories. I know the girls won’t forget it.
Another view of the canyon