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Organization:

Title:

Comments: No complaints about most of the trail. Up at the lake, the snow was so deep on the walkways that I almost fell into the water.

My biggest issue with the trail was the stairs right before the lake. I was on the trail on 1/22/23. When we got to the stairs, the snow was so deep, you couldn't even see the stairs. I'm not an experienced hiker, but multiple experienced hikers that were there that day had commented that the stairs were extremely dangerous. The snow was so thick that it came up to the middle rail in most spots, and the top joint between two bars in one spot (so basically if you fell in that spot, you'd go over the side of that cliff). Standing on the snow, the top rail didn't even come up to my knees. That is terrifying considering that the rail is the only thing keeping people from falling off the side of the cliff. I made it up to the lake on my hands and knees, but I didn't want to take the chance of falling over the rail on the way down, so I chose to slide down on my butt. Even then, I almost slid too far, and almost went over the point where the snow was even with the top rail. Thankfully, I caught myself just in time. Someone else may not be so lucky.

My suggestion is an elevated stairway, that is grated, or has some kind of openings to allow some snow to go through and not accumulate so bad in such a dangerous spot. I also recommend cable netting, in addition to higher rails, because those rails are almost entirely worthless when the snow is so deep. It is incredibly (should be criminally) negligent to have only a couple rails between a stairway and a drop off the side of a cliff that could kill someone.

I'll be keeping a copy of this form in case this stairway doesn't get fixed. It may be useful (in a lawsuit) to a family someday if their loved one dies from falling off the side of those stairs. I even took a picture of the stairs, but even that doesn't show how bad it really was.