



DAY TRIP TO SUMPTER

From Baker City · Baker County, Oregon



GOLD MINING



Photo: Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 4.0

LIVING GHOST TOWN

An incorporated city of 204 (2020 census). At evacuation Level 1 for the McCully Fire, per the Baker City Herald of September 2, 2026. The dredge is open May to October and the railroad runs on a 2026 calendar.

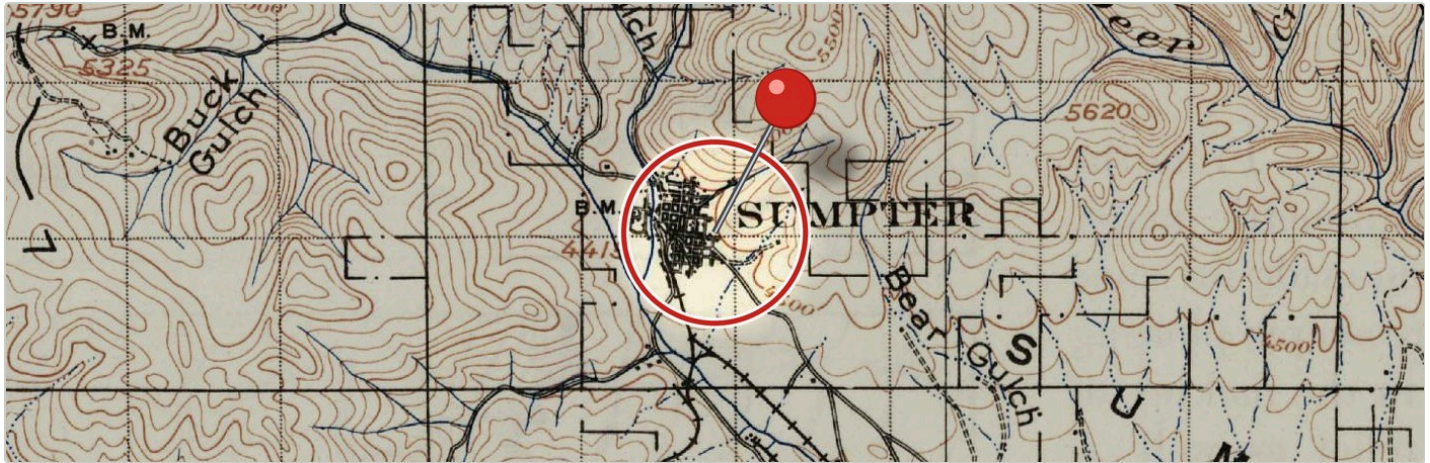
Sumpter is an easy half day from Baker City: 29 miles of state highway each way, the dredge, a walk through town, and in season a ride on the steam train. Go between May and October, when the dredge is open.

A SAMPLE DAY

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| ☐ Morning | Drive west from Baker City on OR 7 up the Powder River, then right on OR 410 into Sumpter. |
| ☐ Late morning | Board the dredge and walk the pond trails. |
| ☐ Noon | Walk Mill Street and the side streets: the brick fronts, the bank site and the old wooden houses. |
| ☐ Afternoon | On a train day, ride the Sumpter Valley Railroad; otherwise drive back down the valley past the tailings. |

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The dredge from across its pond.** Morning light on the east side of the hull and the bucket ladder.
- **The bucket line close up.** The steel buckets and gears show the scale of the machine.
- **The Bank of Sumpter sign.** It dates the bank and the 1917 fire in one frame.
- **Tailings rows down the valley.** Low sun brings out the rock ridges the dredges left.



USGS topographic map, 1901 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	29 mi, about 44 min each way from downtown Baker City. From Boise: 157 mi, about 3 h 03 min.
DREDGE SEASON	Visitors may board the dredge May to October. Guided tours on weekends only (Oregon State Parks, read October 29, 2026).
ADMISSION	The state parks page lists no fee for the dredge. Oregon State Parks charges a day-use parking permit at some parks (\$10 a day for residents, \$12 for nonresidents, as listed in October 2026); check the park page for whether it applies here.
TRAIN	The Sumpter Valley Railroad's 2026 calendar runs trains from Sumpter on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Halloween weekends, and from McEwen on selected weekends from June to October and for December Christmas trains. Fares are on its booking page.
TIME ON SITE	One to two hours for the dredge and its trails, an hour for town.
WALKING	About 1.5 miles of trails around the dredge ponds, with viewing platforms.
RESPECT	People live in Sumpter. The old buildings are homes and businesses; look from the street.
CONTACT	Dredge: 541-894-2486. Railroad: 541-894-2268.
WEBSITE	stateparks.oregon.gov/park_239.php

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Stay out of mine shafts, tunnels and unstable buildings.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 44.74611, -118.19750 • 44°44'46"N
118°11'51"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/oregon/sumpter/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.