Ray Paolella

Two hikers on the Snow Mountain Ranch portion of the new William O. Douglas Trail. The 75-mile route connects mostly existing trails, and celebrates places important to the Supreme Court justice who did much to protect wilderness in Washington.

The William O. Douglas Trail

New 75-mile route celebrates the life of a justice and conservationist

By Ray Paolella

On September 9, 2005, 150 people gathered in downtown Yakima to begin the inaugural hike on the proposed William O. Douglas Trail. Four days and 80 miles later, two hikers (Ray Paolella and Jeff Hagen) finished the journey near Ohanapecosh in Mount Rainier National Park.

The William O. Douglas Trail connects the City of Yakima to Mount Rainier, using a 75-mile route that passes through twelve distinct ecosystems. As a result of the Cascade Mountains' rain-shadow effect, hikers can experience the wide biological diversity of vegetation zones from arid shrub-steppe to mixed-conifer to alpine. This trail also follows many miles along the ancient Cowlitz Pass Indian Trail, where thousands of moccasins have passed across the Cascade Crest through the centuries.

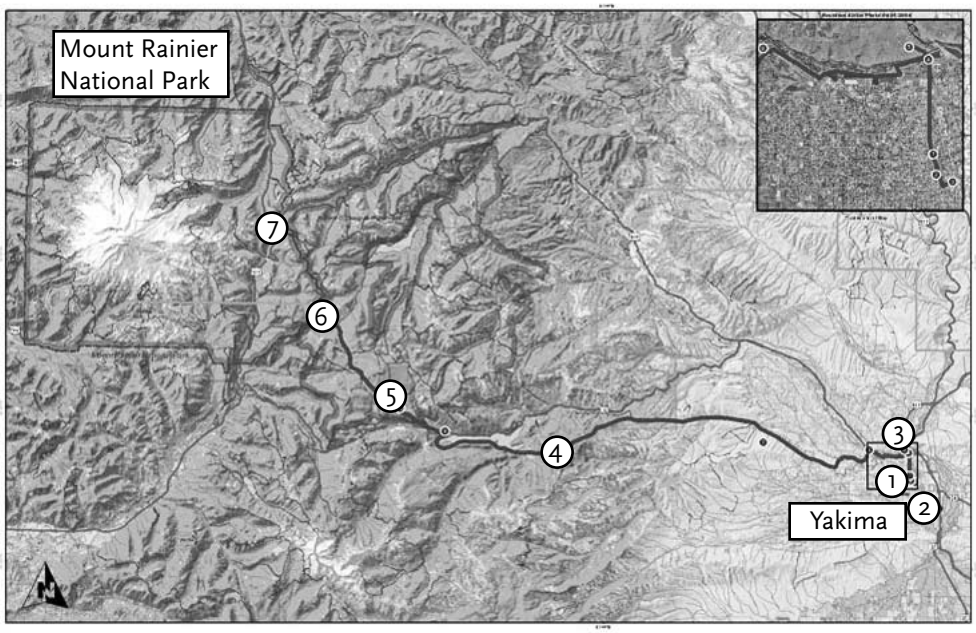
William O. Douglas was the longest serving justice in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court, where his opinions were characterized by a fierce commitment to individual liberties and a strong interest in the conservation of wildlands. He came close to being Franklin Roosevelt's vice president in 1944, which would have made him president when F.D.R. died in 1945.

As a boy growing up in poverty in Yakima just after the turn of the last century, Douglas had a childhood disease that left him physically frail. To overcome these challenges, Douglas took up hiking with a passion. He strengthened his weakened legs by taking numerous hikes from his house into the foothills around Yakima. Later, Douglas ventured further into the high Cascades, and he wrote, "It is only by foot that one can really come to know the nation."

The William O. Douglas Trail conveys hikers from Douglas' Yakima home across 55 miles of diverse terrain to the

William O. Douglas Timeline:	Born in Maine, Minnesota October 16, 1898	Graduated North Yakima High School in 1916	Enrolled in Columbia Law School and graduated in the top of his class in 1925	Practiced law in New York and Yakima until 1927

The William O. Douglas Heritage Trail



1. Douglas Boyhood Home
2. Yakima (Davis) High School
3. Selah Gap
4. Kloochman Rock
5. Cowlitz Pass Indian Trail
6. Fish Lake Camp
7. Mount Rainier National Park, Pacific Crest Trail

William O. Douglas Wilderness boundary; from there it is about 20 wilderness miles to Mount Rainier National Park. The trail is 90 percent complete, based upon the linking of existing trails and public lands. This heritage trail provides muscle-powered users the opportunity to experience many of the natural, historic and cultural sites that Douglas hiked and wrote about in his book *Of Men and Mountains*.

The route generally follows a westerly direction from Yakima to Rimrock Lake, traveling along the Yakima Greenway and Naches River, Cowiche Canyon, Cowiche Mountain, Jumpoff Lookout and Divide Ridge. From Rimrock Lake, the route traverses northwesterly through the wilderness to the ramparts of Mount Rainier, passing by Russell Ridge, Tumac Mountain, Twin Sisters Lakes, Bumping River, Crag Mountain, Cougar Lakes ,and along the PCT to Chinook Pass.

Among the special places that Douglas frequented along this route, one can experience the Selah Gap climb (where Douglas started hiking to overcome childhood disabilities), Kloochman Rock (a harrowing climb that inspired him to write about the "indomitable spirit of the mountains" that one can experience from climbing the ridges and peaks and exploring the forest and high mountain meadows), Indian Creek (where a Yakama Indian taught Douglas how to spear salmon), Cowlitz Pass (where he camped with a sheepherder in 1914 to share news of the outbreak of World War I), and Fish Lake (where Douglas caught cutthroat and heard the screech of a cougar).

A few decades ago, William O. Douglas led a number of well-publicized hikes to seek protection of natural areas such as the Olympic Peninsula beaches, Guadalupe Mountains in New Mexico, and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal near Washington, D.C. Today, we have an opportunity to explore the quintessential Douglas heritage trails, to walk in his footsteps and experience some of his favorite wild areas between Yakima and Mount Rainier. ♦

Ray Paolella is a WTA member from Yakima.

Trip Essentials

William O. Douglas Trail

Hikable: Some foothills locations year-round, high country sections from late July–September

Mileage: 75 miles one-way from Yakima to Mount Rainier National Park, mostly on existing trails

Maps: Green Trails 305 Tieton, 304 Rimrock, 303 White Pass, 271 Bumping Lake, 270 Mount Rainier East

To get there: Start at Douglas' boyhood home at 111 North Fifth St., or begin on the the Yakima Greenway Trail at the 16th Ave. parking lot between Highway 12 and the Naches River.

Served as professor of law at Columbia University (1927) and Yale University (1928-1934)

Appointed by President Franklin Roosevelt to the Securities and Exchange Commission, 1936

Elevated to the U.S. Supreme Court by Roosevelt in March 1939

Published *Of Men and Mountains* 1950

Key sites on the William O. Douglas Trail

By Tom R. Hulst

Douglas Boyhood Home

William Orville Douglas was born to William and Julia Douglas in Maine, Minnesota in October 1898. The Douglases ventured first to California and then settled in Cleveland, Washington in 1904. After his father's untimely death resulting from complications of stomach surgery, Douglas' mother moved William and his two siblings to 111 North Fifth Avenue in Yakima. During the children's grade school years they were among the poorer families in Yakima. The children began working when they were merely seven years old—washing windows, sweeping stores, and taking any job that was available. Douglas remembers the family as being poor and wrote that, "[it]was the ten cents or fifteen cents that we brought home each evening that often meant the difference between dinner and no dinner."

Yakima (Davis) High School

William O. Douglas's mother, Julia, pushed her children to excel in school. Douglas later recalled that Yakima High School in 1912 was a joy. Douglas was a straight-A student graduating as valedictorian of his Yakima High School class. His achievements in high school earned him a scholarship to Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington.

Douglas worked in a jewelry store, looked after furnaces, mowed lawns, and swept out small shops; Somehow he still made time to participate on the debate and tennis teams, join a fraternity, and lead Sunday evening services at local area churches. Majoring in English, he graduated second in his class from Whitman College in 1920 at the age of 21.

After graduation from college Douglas returned home to teach Latin and speech at his high school alma mater—now Davis High School in Yakima. There he met Mildred Riddle, a colleague at Yakima High School, who he later married in 1924. Receiving advice and encouragement from a Columbia alumnus he decided to attend Columbia University Law School in New York City, He subsequently taught law at Columbia and Yale for a time in the early 1930's where he became expert in corporate finance. In 1936 President Franklin Roosevelt appointed William O. Douglas to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

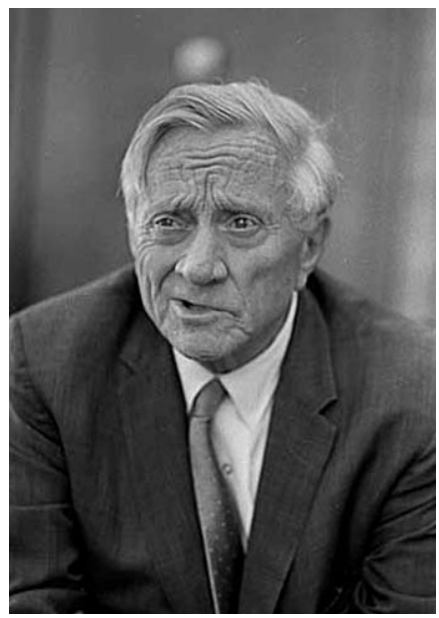
In 1939 Roosevelt elevated William O. Douglas to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Douglas, the second youngest person to receive an appointment to the United States Supreme Court, served for 36 years, longer than any other Justice.

As his experience on the Court deepened he acquired an increasing tendency to seek out the larger public interest in a wide range of legal areas. He affirmed that First Amendment freedoms occupy a "preferred position" in the constitutional system; and believed that decisions of all governments—federal, state, and local—that intrude on fundamental rights must submit to strict scrutiny.

Justice William O. Douglas died on January 19, 1980. He left behind a substantial legacy of judicial opinions and other writings. He wrote over 1,200 majority, concurring, and dissenting opinions while serving on the Court—the most ever. He also wrote 32 books, (more than any other justice)—some that were best sellers—delivered countless speeches, and penned many articles in magazines and law reviews.

Selah Gap

Justice William O. Douglas developed a love for the mountains and the wilderness early in his life. Douglas was self-conscious about his health and skinny physique and worried that he could not compete physically with other boys his age. A friend suggested that he begin hiking as a way to build his strength and vigor. He noticed the hills and mountains to the west. He started slowly walking the hills closest to Yakima and eventually ventured further into the lower Cascade foothills. One time he walked two miles to Selah Gap to the top of a ridge without slowing his pace. As a youth he frequented places in the south Cascades including Mount Adams, the Goat Rocks, Goose Prairie and Chinook Pass.



Seattle Post-Intelligencer Collection, MOHAI

Yakima-raised juror William O. Douglas was the longest-serving Supreme Court Justice and a tireless advocate for conservation.

"It is only by foot that one can really come to know the nation," he later wrote in his autobiography.

On many occasions in his life Douglas organized hikes to preserve areas from development or ruin. He lead "marches" and other actions to safeguard wild places

Led a protest hike at the C & O Canal along the Potomac River in 1954 that later resulted in designation as a National Historical Park

Led hikes along Pacific Beach of Olympic National Park in 1958 and 1964 that halted plans to insert roads along the coastal strip

Wrote *A Wilderness Bill of Rights*, 1965

on the Olympic Peninsula and Glacier Peak in Washington State, the Buffalo River in Arkansas, the Allagash River in Maine, the Guadalupe Mountains in New Mexico, and the Chesapeake and Ohio (C & O) Canal, that parallels the Potomac River, near Washington, D.C.

Kloochman Rock

William O. Douglas experienced an adventure in the Goat Rocks-Tieton River Basin during his early years that had a profound impact on him. In the summer of 1913, he made a memorable climb of Kloochman Rock, a large basalt monolith that lies east of the Rimrock Reservoir near White Pass. This huge massif is a mile long and rises some 2,000 feet above the floor of the basin to a total elevation of 4536 feet. Douglas and his friend Douglas Corpron climbed an untried route, and reached the summit successfully, but not without much fear and trepidation. Though they were underprepared for the climb, they overcame serious danger. Douglas later wrote in *Of Men and Mountains* about the lessons he learned as a 15-year-old on Kloochman Rock:

When man knows how to live dangerously, he is not afraid to die. When he is not afraid to die, he is, strangely free to live. When he is free to live, he can become bold, courageous, reliant. There are many ways to learn how to live dangerously. . . . . The mountains that traverse this country offer still a different way, and one that for many is the most exciting of all. The mountains can be reached in all seasons. They offer a fighting challenge to heart, soul, and mind, both in summer and winter. If throughout time the youth of the nation accept the challenge the mountains offer, they will help keep alive in our people the spirit of adventure. That spirit is a measure of the vitality of both nations and men. A people who climb the ridges and sleep under the stars in high mountain meadows, who enter the forest and scale the peaks, who explore the glaciers and walk ridges buried deep in snow—these people will give their country some of the indomitable spirit of the mountains. (Douglas, *Of Men and Mountains*, 1950).

Cowlitz Pass Indian Trail

For more than 6,000 years Taidnapam and Yakama Indians traveled back and forth across the Cascade Mountains between Puget Sound and the Yakima Valley to trade blankets, berries, and salmon. The Yakima-Cowlitz Trail followed the Cowlitz River east to a fork where one branch went north to Naches Pass and another to Cowlitz Pass. Other Native American travel routes include a trail between the Cowlitz and Nisqually rivers over Skate Creek; the Cowlitz to Carbonado Trail; and the Klickitat Trail over Cispus Pass.

Grazing dominated the use of the upland forestlands in the White Pass corridor through the early 1900s. In 1914, 15-year old William O. Douglas traveled to Cowlitz Pass to visit sheepherders to share the news of the outbreak of WWI. He wrote "I planned to enter the Cascades through the Naches and the Tieton and go back into the lake country beyond Cowlitz Pass. . . . The papers carried big news—news of war in Europe. So I decided to take recent issues of the Yakima Daily Republic with me."

In a meadow near Cowlitz Pass Douglas met a sheepherder who reminded him of Walt Whitman. The sheepherder started supper while Douglas read the news to him aloud. After dinner the man asked Douglas if he could see well enough in the retreating light to read more news to him. When the dishes were done the two built up the fire to increase the light so the sheepherder could hear still more news from the mouth of the future Supreme Court Justice. After a substantial breakfast the next morning Douglas strode down the trail and out of the wilderness home. He reflected years later in *Of Men and Mountains*, "[t]hat is how I marched out of the Cascades on the last wholly carefree trip I ever had in the high mountains."

Fish Lake Camp

The William O. Douglas Wilderness, created in 1984 to honor the man who had been an important figure in the wilderness movement, encompasses many of Douglas's favorite mountains, meadows and lakes on a high plateau in the south Cascades. The wilderness area includes 166,000 acres on the forested mountain crest between Chinook Pass and White Pass. It includes over sixty hiking trails totaling 250 miles. A portion of the Pacific Crest Trail runs north and south along the 27-mile backbone of the wilderness. The topography includes mountain peaks, pine forests, exposed ridges, and 59 named (and 250 unnamed) lakes and ponds.

High mountain lakes such as Twin Sisters, Apple, Snow, Jug, Cougar, Swamp and Fish flank the region around Tumac Mountain. Many produce the orange-bellied eastern brook trout that run 12-14 inches in length. Douglas fished many of these lakes in his long lifetime.

Mountain Rainier National Park, Pacific Crest Trail

William O. Douglas expressed exuberance for Mount Rainier and the Cascades on many occasions. One time early in his life as he tested his legs against the foothills of Yakima, he confronted the majesty of Mount Rainier. "Then came a sudden storm, splattering rain in the lower valley and shooting tongues of lightning along the ridges across from me. As the weather cleared, Adams and Rainier stood forth in power and beauty, monarchs to every peak in their range . . . . They appeared to hold untold mysteries and to contain solitude many times more profound than that of the barren ridge on which I stood. They offered streams and valleys and peaks to explore,

Actively fought efforts to log the areas near his home in Goose Prairie, Washington 1960's and 70's

Led a hike in the Glacier Peak Wilderness in 1967 to oppose a copper mine there

Resigned from the Supreme Court in 1975

Douglas dies, January 19, 1980

snow fields and glaciers to conquer, wild animals to know."

Douglas never scaled Mount Rainier but few people spent as much time around the mountain as he did. Douglas frequented Dewey Lakes, Chinook Pass, the American Ridge and the entire area east of Rainier—the wilderness now named for him.

Justice William O. Douglas was destined to test his fate on the parapets of Mount Rainier in the late summer of 1949. After several weeks in Goose Prairie, he was due back to Washington, D.C. for the new term of the United States Supreme Court. He had begun writing *Of Men and Mountains*, his first book, and wanted additional information from his boyhood haunts to include in the book. He delayed his flight to Washington, D.C. to make one last trip on horseback into the Chinook Pass area before departing for the "other" Washington.

He and Elon Gilbert reconnoitered at Tipsoo Lake, fortuitously met his old friend Willie McGuffie there, and started out on the Pacific Crest Trail toward Sourdough Gap. Gilbert rode ahead of Douglas and was out of earshot when, for some reason, Douglas's horse, Kendall, reared and sent Douglas sliding down its back and over its tail to the ground. Rolling downhill another 30 yards he came to a stop without injury. Douglas wrote in his autobiography that, "I glanced up. Kendall had slipped and fallen too. He rolled over me and I could hear all the bones break in a sickening crescendo."

X-rays indicated he had broken 23 ribs—all but one—and punctured a lung. Bruce Allen Murphy wrote in his biography of Douglas that "his doctors all agreed, it was due only to his extraordinary physical condition for a man his age and his will to live that Douglas survived an accident that would have killed eight out of ten other people." ♦

Tom Hulst is a WTA member from University Place, Washington and is the author of The Footpaths of William O. Douglas: A Legacy of Place.

William O. Douglas Wilderness created by Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1984

Hike and Bike Loops

Avoid car shuttles or use mass transit by incorporating a bike into your hikes

The author on Escondido Ridge on the PCT. A loop trip in this area was made easier by biking the 3-mile Cooper Lake Trail, which is open to mountain bikes.

by Dick Burkhart

Most people look at their map or guidebook and opt for a short drive, a short walk up to a pretty view, and quick hike back out. But a mountain bike in the back of the car opens up a new world of hiking adventures. It also saves the uncertainty of hitchhiking, or the hassle and expense of two cars, when you just wish you could connect the two ends of an almost-loop. You can do even more when public transit is available. To be sure, good hiking loops can be found (check out the guidebook *Best Loop Hikes, Washington* by Dan Nelson) but not always where you want to go or in the time on hand.

Consider the popular five-day hike along the Pacific Crest Trail from Stevens Pass to Snoqualmie Pass, normally a two car affair. Stevens Pass is served by Trailways bus twice daily but, unfortunately, Greyhound no longer serves Snoqualmie Pass. Instead I drove up to Snoqualmie, left the car at the PCT trailhead, biked most of the way back to Seattle, then took the Trailways bus the next morning to Stevens. That night, by coincidence, I teamed up with a strong young PCT thru hiker and had a wonderful hike. At the end, in addition to being a mentor, I even acted as a "trail angel" by giving her a ride to Seattle. Other hikers were even more amazing, from the four young men attempting to hike through the night from Stevens to Snoqualmie non-stop to renowned trail speed demon "Squeaky."

Incidentally, the John Wayne Trail at Snoqualmie Pass is a fabulous ride through the tunnel and 20 miles down to Rattlesnake Lake. From there the Upper Snoqualmie Valley Trail, another splendid rail-trail, leads past North Bend, then on road by Snoqualmie Falls to Fall City and halfway to Preston. There you pick up the Preston rail-trail, then on road to High Point, followed by more rail-trail into Issaquah. Here I opted to put my bike

Dick Burkhart

You can use a bike stashed at a trailhead to extend how far you go on overnight trips. Loop trips including Three Fools Trail and the long Boundary Trail in north Washington can be aided by biking back to your car.

on the Sound Transit 554, but you could also bike Sammamish road west toward Eastgate, then pick up the I-90 trail at Factoria all the way into Seattle.

Later in the summer I did a hike-n-bike in the North Cascades, heading up the East Bank trail of Ross Lake, then east on the Boundary trail to the PCT and south to Rainy Pass. The 7-day, 105-mile hike, which included a side trip up Desolation Peak, began when I hid my pack and hiking poles in the woods at the Panther Creek trailhead, then drove to Rainy Pass to park the car. From the Pass it was a fast 20-mile bike ride back down to Panther Creek, with Rainy Pass living up to its soggy name. There I stashed the bike, locking it to a tree and covering it with the extra rain poncho I'd just used, retrieving the bike by car at the end of the hike.

It was a fabulous hike, with glorious weather, until the last morning once again cold, dripping clouds rolled into Rainy Pass. On this kind of trip you can get into remote country, with high ridges and lakes all to yourself. Such was the Boundary Trail (Lightning Creek and Three Fools Trails), which needed maintenance (fallen trees along Lightning Creek, brush in the Big Face valley), but rewarded me with beautiful high meadows and views and loads of berries.

Once again the PCT hikers were an inspiring lot, from a young New Zealand woman and a family from England, only day's hike from the finish line at Manning Park, south toward Rainy Pass, where I photographed cheery "Sherpa" and "Little Monster," bare legged against wet snow, and wise, old, white-bearded "Floater." Perhaps more surprising was meeting 7 or 8 mostly elderly but fit hikers with very light day packs at a remote section below Three Fools Peak. Turned out they were headed to Mountain Home Camp where Birch and his Backcountry Burros had everything set up for them. My sister and I had encountered Birch and his wonders a few years ago when our 80-year-old mother, too old to pack it in anymore but still in love with the wilderness, had hired him to set up camp for several days in Horseshoe Basin at the east end of the Boundary Trail.

Over the years I've done many a hike-n-bike. One year there was a road washout by the Chiwawa River east of Glacier Peak, but it was no obstacle to bicycles. We had the scenic Buck Creek Pass area entirely to ourselves. Similarly, the west side road on Mount Rainier is closed by frequent Tahoma Creek flooding but is still open to bicycles to get to the trails, such as the great hike to St. Andrews Park.

Another time I got a little too ambitious – a five day hike in the Olympics from Obstruction Point to Whiskey Bend on the Elwha, connected by bicycle. This meant a 35-mile, 7 hour bicycle ride, including the climb up Hurricane Ridge. It took me an hour of eating, drinking, and resting at the lodge before I was ready to go on to meet my wife at the trailhead. I'd left her there in the morning with our packs before driving back to Whiskey Bend. She was sure glad when I finally showed up, but the back country rewards were well worth it.

An easier one was a three day my wife and I did this summer from Salmon La Sac to Waptus Lake, over Escondido Ridge on the PCT, and out via Pete Lake. We arrived late and slept in our minivan at the Salmon La Sac trailhead, then I drove to the Cooper Lake trailhead early in the morning after stashing my pack and giving my wife a send off. To shorten the long road route back, I biked the challenging 3 mile Cooper River Trail (open to bikes) to Salmon La Sac and raced to catch up with my wife. The scenic swim at Waptus Lake was only matched by the spectacular camp near Solo Tarn high on Escondido Ridge.

Even more typical was my overnight hike in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness west of Snoqualmie Pass, starting at the Mason Lake trailhead and ending at the Denny Creek trailhead, via Pratt Lake and Melakwa Lake. The easy bike ride down from Denny Creek included secondary roads at both ends with some I-90 shoulder riding in the middle, locking and stashing the bike where I'd hidden my pack. It sure beat the crowds doing the usual up and back.

I hope that this sampling has whet your appetite to try this yourself. ♦

Dick Burkhart is a WTA member from Seattle.