

10 Great Loop Hikes for Your Summer To-Do List

Washington TRAILS

EXPANDED
ISSUE!
8 More
Pages!

Return to Glacier Peak

Post-Hike Food & Brew

Shedding Light on the Dark Divide
Explore B.C.'s Vancouver Island

Jul+Aug 2015

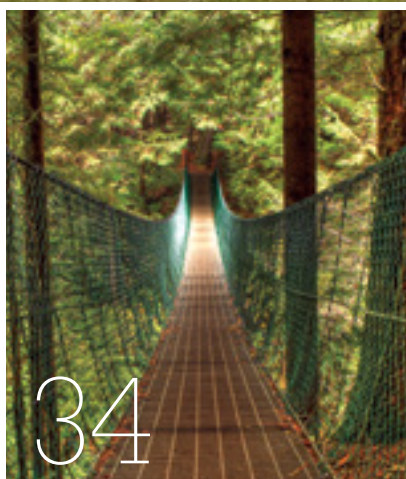




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Jul+Aug 2015

NW Explorer

Return to Glacier Peak

With the Suiattle Road reopened, hikers can once again access the western Glacier Peak Wilderness and Pacific Crest Trail. Here's what you need to know. » **p.18**

Will Hike for Food

Satisfy your post-hike hunger at any of these outstanding establishments. You'll hike just to eat. » **p.24**

Discover the Dark Divide

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NW Weekend: Vancouver Island

Great food, great trails and fascinating culture and history are just a short ferry ride away. » **p.34**

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Big Loops!

Ten view-packed loop trails for the peak of summer. » p.46

COVER: Image Lake in the Glacier Peak Wilderness is once again accessible from the west with the reopening of the Suiattle River Road. Photo by Don Geyer.

Washington's Leading Hiking Resource and the Nation's Largest Volunteer Trail Maintenance Program

Washington Trails Association is a volunteer-driven nonprofit membership organization working to preserve, enhance and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state. We engage and mobilize a community of hikers as advocates and stewards for our trails statewide. Through collaborative partnerships and grassroots advocacy, WTA focuses on state and federal issues, including trail funding, hiker safety and wilderness protection. WTA is committed to leaving a rich legacy of trails and wildlands for future generations to enjoy.

WTA was founded by Louise B. Marshall (1915–2005). Ira Spring (1918–2003) was its primary supporter. Greg Ball (1944–2004) founded the volunteer trail maintenance program. Their spirit continues today through contributions from thousands of WTA members and volunteers.

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D.C. Report

As I flew back from Washington, D.C. in late May, I reflected on the trip's highlights and noted that it was the unexpected that had the biggest impact on a very busy and highly productive trip.

As expected, there were many discussions about the National Park Service and their upcoming centennial, recreation funding and access issues. There were also conversations about new initiatives aimed at introducing youth to the outdoors—with some excellent potential partnerships for our Outdoor Leadership Training program—as well as meetings with the directors of some national partners (American Hiking Society and Outdoor Alliance) about the Northwest Forest Pass, Land and Water Conservation Fund and recreational funding. There was a deep appreciation for WTA's model of on-the-ground work, which they describe as a national model.

In my meeting with Rep. Suzan DelBene, we discussed her work on the Highway 2 corridor, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act and access issues. I also got to witness her enthusiastic downloading of WTA's Trailblazer app and Green Mountain Lookout guide, which she will use on her upcoming hikes.

Finally, my hike with Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior, was intense and fun as we scrambled the challenging Potomac River Billy Goat Trail. I also got to hear Sally describe when a local teacher named Mrs. Black led students on annual weeklong adventures that combined geology, history, science and environmental education—the pivotal experience that instilled in her a lifelong passion for the outdoors. (Coincidentally, Mrs. Black is none other than WTA board member and crew leader Lisa Black's mother, who now lives in Chewelah, south of Colville.)

Every single person I met with had a story about hiking in Washington. One of my favorites came from Bryan Petit, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee senior professional staff member, who offered a detailed description of the Lake Chelan Lakeshore Trail.

I returned home with a renewed sense of gratitude for our public servants, pride at what we have accomplished here in Washington state and focus on what lies ahead as WTA continues to grow its work as the nation's largest statewide trail organization.

Karen & Daubert

P.S. Thank you to those of you who have asked about Nepal. Yes, it was the Langtang Valley (where I spent much of December) that was severely impacted—buried completely—by the recent earthquakes, and one of the villages we briefly called home. My husband Jared is now in Nepal with Engineers Without Borders to see how he can help. Our hearts go out to the Nepalese people.



TOP: Reagan Dunn of the King County Council and David Kappler of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club cut the ribbon on the Margaret's Way Trail, with representatives from the Trust for Public Land, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, King County and WTA. WTA volunteers contributed more than 7,500 hours to construct this trail in the new Cougar–Squak Corridor Park.

MIDDLE: On National Trails Day this year, nearly 300 WTA volunteers celebrated by giving back to 14 different trails statewide. Members of WTA's Fireside Circle, pictured here, volunteered to repair winter damage to the Pratt River Connector Trail in North Bend.

BOTTOM: Rep. Suzan DelBene lent a hand on WTA's Pratt Connector work party on National Trails Day. In addition to helping clear a rock-choked stream to improve the crossing, DelBene helped hang the new Alpine Lakes Wilderness sign, officially marking the new boundary of the expanded wilderness. She and Rep. Dave Reichert were among the many strong supporters in our Washington delegation that helped pass this bill.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Stay Found Carry SPOT

Love it or hate it, technology has invaded our trails—smartphones and apps, selfie sticks, flying drones, etc. While some tech on trail can be an eyesore and a nuisance, other tech can be beneficial. Cameras allow us to capture our favorite scenic views, and GPS devices help us navigate the backcountry. And some tech can keep us in touch with loved ones back home, and be lifesaving in case of emergency.

If you've been a member of WTA for a while now, you've heard me sing the praises of SPOT satellite devices before. Now I'm going to sing it again. During the incident I describe on this page, I was able to communicate with home and the local forest services when I found myself nearly surrounded by wildfires.

With my **SPOT Gen3** messenger, I was able to transmit my location to my wife back home to let her know exactly where I was on the PCT. She, in turn, was able to share those coordinates with forest managers and alert them to the presence of a hiker in the vicinity of wildfire. In addition, I was able to use my **SPOT Global Phone** to communicate directly with my wife to coordinate an action plan and possible escape routes to get out of a potential danger zone.

Sure, carrying tech like this adds a little extra weight to my pack—but the piece of mind when it's needed makes it worth it.

SPOT devices have been credited with more than 3,500 rescues around the world. Learn more about the SPOT Global Phone (left) and SPOT Gen3 messenger (right) at findmespot.com.



SIGNPOST

Eli Boschetto

editor@wta.org

Hiking with Fire

Last summer, while hiking the Pacific Crest Trail through southern Oregon, I found myself in the unique and unnerving situation of being deep in the Sky Lakes Wilderness and being surrounded by blooming wildfires.

During the hot, dry summer, tremendous thunderstorms brewed over the Oregon mountains and desert. Lightning strikes were common almost every afternoon. In fact, on one day last summer—one of the days I was on trail—more than 24,000 lightning strikes were recorded across Oregon, Washington and Idaho. New plumes of smoke were seen rising from the valleys and ridges on a daily basis, most of them far off and, thankfully, not in the direction of my travel—until I got to the crest on Devils Peak.

From my high vantage point, I could see that the forest was smoking to the north, near Crater Lake National Park—the direction I was headed. It was also smoking to the south—in the pass I had come through just the day before. There were also a couple of new plumes rising to the west. Uh-oh.

Out came my satellite phone and I placed a call to my wife, Mitzi. I informed her of my situation and gave her my GPS coordinates. She then proceeded to call the local forest and national park land managers for information while I pulled out my map to study possible escape routes.

I was directed to head for the nearest lake, just a short detour off the PCT, to spend the night and wait for more news in the morning. It was an anxious, sleepless night. The next morning, I was directed to proceed ahead—with haste—into the national park. Just a few days later, with the southern fire out of containment, the Forest Service closed off the entire PCT through the Sky Lakes area. At Crater Lake, I met fellow hikers who shared harrowing stories of having to be escorted and airlifted out of the burning forest.

I've hiked in the vicinity of grizzlies, had close encounters with rattlesnakes, and had to routefind through unexpected snowstorms, but being surrounded by wildfire was a most frightening experience.

This summer promises more of the same. Use caution when hiking in hot, dry country, check weather reports before you go, and carry your Ten Essentials—including extra water—and a phone to call for help, if necessary.

Be safe ~

WTA STAFF PICKS: Post-Hike Food Pyramid



When it comes to post-hike food and beverage cravings among WTA's staff and board, the standout winner was the good ol' cheeseburger, followed closely by pizza, french fries and, of course, beer. Rounding out the top selections were cold drinks and frosty treats.

What's at the top of your post-hike cravings? If you're looking to find some new ones, check out this issue's feature, "Will Hike for Food" on page 24.

Relaxing in camp and gazing into a velvety night sky jam-packed with stars is one of the best rewards for a long hike into the backcountry. See the night skies of Washington through the eyes of photographers who participated in our 2014 Northwest Exposure contest at wta.org/gallery.



Night sky over the Rampart Lakes, by Kerry Sullivan

ADVICE FROM THE PROS:

Best Night Outdoors

Our permanent and seasonal staff spend all summer outdoors and in the backcountry, so we asked around about everyone's ideal formula for a great night in the woods. Learn more about our staff at wta.org/staff.

Jen Haas (Mount Rainier seasonal crew leader): *Three things I like to have for a great night out in the woods: a cup of kava tea before bed, my comfy cotton sleeping bag liner and my tent located near running water. I sleep like a log every time!*

► 4 miles out of Sunrise, camp (with a permit) at Granite Creek, and fall asleep to the soothing sounds of running water.

Ben Mayberry (seasonal crew leader): *Bring sufficient quantities of wine, dark chocolate and good company. Add a campsite with solitude, scenery and stars overhead. Enjoy responsibly.*

► Take several days to meander the Larch Creek–Billy Goat Pass Trail to Corral Lake to find solitude and stars aplenty.

Anna Roth (hiking content coordinator): *Solid mileage during the day and a hearty, family-style dinner in camp. Cross your fingers for a clear night—a sky packed full of stars and planets is the best kind of blanket to fall asleep under.*

► Head for the meadow camps on the shoulders of Mount Adams for night after night of summer skywatching delights.

WTA TRIP REPORTS:

The Good Life

My favorite moment of the entire trip was lying in my hammock with my sleeping bag, listening to Herb strum away on his ukulele from a few feet away and gazing at the stars. Why can't every moment of life be that moment?

— Jerner, Packwood Lake

Read more trail stories and conditions in Trip Reports, and help the hiking community by filing a report of your own at wta.org/tripreports.



Get Inspired on Instagram



@johnporter

Want a reliable feed of local summits, scrambles and mountain dog pics? Follow the formative adventures of trip reporter (onehikeaweek) and mountaineer John Porter.



@karenkwang

Photographer, WTA volunteer and adventurer Karen Wang mixes up gorgeous backcountry landscapes with the perfect recipe of food, friends and funny.



@derekposey

Bellingham-based trail volunteer Derek Posey has a knack for capturing the particular feeling of hiking Pacific Northwest trails. Check this feed for a fix of fresh air/green.

For more folks we love on Instagram, visit wta.org/whotofollow.

KNOW YOUR RIGHT-OF-WAY

One of the most common hiking questions is “*Who has the right-of-way on trail?*” There is a general rule, but also some exceptions. Use common sense, communication and courtesy as your right-of-way guidelines.

▼ Yield the trail to uphill hikers. It's easier to resume a faster downhill pace.

▼ Make your presence known and yield to horseback riders. Step downhill and off the trail.

▼ Dog hikers should yield to all. Heel your pup around hikers with children or other dogs.

▼ If you're moving fast, call out to hikers ahead of you. Indicate how you will pass.

▼ When you step off the trail, try for the downhill side and a durable surface.

The Results Are In: You're Hiking Fanatics!

Thousands of you took our May survey and shared your thoughts on WTA, what hiking means to you and the future of Washington's trails. Here are a few interesting things we learned:

- You hike where you live—and beyond. The majority of you travel beyond your local region to explore Washington's trails.
- More than 43% of you count lack of time among your barriers to hiking.
- A whopping 91% of you count exercise among the reasons you hike.
- You like to talk hiking enough to stick around for a really long survey. **Thank you!**



Volunteers, staff and partners at WTA's Crew Leader College, hosted by the Snoqualmie Ranger District in North Bend. At this annual gathering, volunteers attend and teach classes on trail building and maintenance.



Photo by Kindra Ramos; below by Aaron Theisen

WTA's Remarkable Leaders

I recently went to a workshop on how to engage youth in trail building and maintenance projects—a timely topic since nearly one-quarter of WTA's trail volunteers are kids and teens. In attendance were volunteers who help lead WTA trail work parties on the Olympic Peninsula, in Spokane and everywhere in between.

The workshop was part of WTA's annual Crew Leader College, a gathering of some of the most dedicated stewards of trails in Washington, including the five volunteers I got to chat with:

- ◆ **Dave Blevins** is one of WTA's longest-serving volunteers, approaching two decades of service to trails, yet he doesn't tire of sharing what he's learned with the next generation.
- ◆ **Lezlie Cox** is thrilled to welcome first-time volunteers to WTA work parties. She is continually building her own trail skills and is considered a mentor by other crew leaders.
- ◆ **Randy Greyerbiehl** is a pioneer helping WTA do more for hikers in Spokane and Eastern Washington. He shows how volunteers can turn dreams into reality.
- ◆ **Marta Sheridan** is the kind of volunteer leader who asks, "How can I help?" and often pitches in before you even realized help was needed.
- ◆ You can't spend much time with **Rick Zitzmann** before his love of trail work, especially the art of the crosscut saw, rubs off on you.

These remarkable volunteers are among more than 125 assistant crew leaders committed to keeping WTA's trail volunteer community—already some 3,700 strong—growing and thriving. WTA invests in this ever-growing group of leaders with skill-building events like Crew Leader College, where hands-on learning on topics like how to build a retaining wall or protect a trail from erosion is side by side with sessions on leadership and how to engage teams of volunteers from all walks of life. As federal, state and local land managers depend more on volunteer groups like WTA to keep trails open, that's a good thing.

— Rebecca Lavigne, Trail Program Director



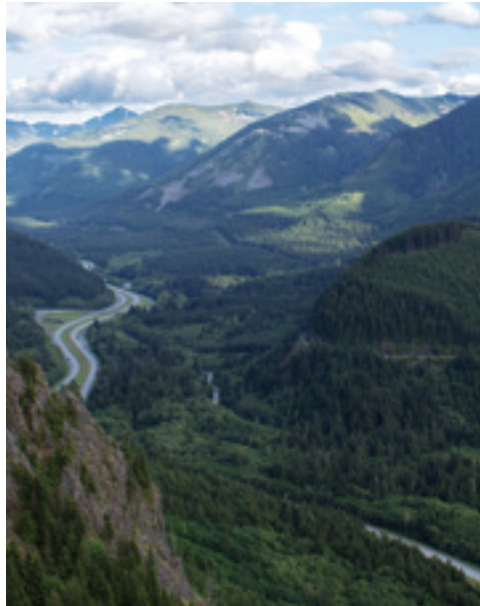
WTA volunteers are improving and expanding the extensive trail system at Riverside State Park outside Spokane. Volunteers broke ground on the new Knothead Trail in 2013. This spring, they completed work on a new section of the trail that takes hikers to two scenic viewpoints overlooking the Little Spokane River.

A New Trail Is Coming to the I-90 Corridor

SEATTLE – To access Dirty Harry's Peak and Balcony, two beautiful viewpoints less than 40 miles away from the heart of Seattle that are good for either an all-day trek or a quick after-work thigh burner, hikers currently use an old logging road and climbers' paths. This spring, Washington Trails Association volunteer crews started work on a new, official route to the viewpoints. Soon, the Department of Natural Resources will begin decommissioning the old road. This multiyear project will result in a more sustainable, enjoyable route for those seeking a rugged hike to beautiful vistas.

Because of their proximity to the most densely populated part of Washington, hikes in the Mountains to Sound Greenway corridor, which includes Dirty Harry's Peak and Balcony, are packed with people—and trails are seeing more traffic than ever before. The DNR's Snoqualmie Corridor Recreation Plan, which the new trail is a part of, aims to address the significant increase in hikers and rock climbers, protect the corridor and provide recreation opportunities for future generations.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the first stage of this project. Check wta.org/volunteer later this season for more opportunities to volunteer and help make this new route a reality.



A Passion for Trails

Sometimes reflecting on a single moment or person gives us a clearer look at the big picture. Longtime WTA member and trail volunteer Sheldon "Shel" Woodlee IV passed away this spring. A part of the WTA community for more than a decade, Shel logged many hours hiking with his dog, Taz, on trails near his home in North Bend.

An avid outdoorsman, Shel grew up with his sisters, Kate and Sue, on Long Island Sound. Given his interests in building and the outdoors—due in part to his lifetime in building and engineering—it's not surprising that Shel took to trail work. His sister Kate recalls that when she visited from the East Coast, he liked to take her for hikes on trails where he had worked as a volunteer. "Shel loved WTA and the trail system," she says.

Shel's love for trails was contagious. He inspired his family to join him in supporting WTA, even though they live many miles from Washington state. His legacy will live on through the trail work their support has made possible.

This WTA volunteer crew was one of three amazing Backcountry Response Teams who restored hiker access to the Duckabush Trail this spring. They cleared hundreds of logs that had been toppled by winter storms and were blocking a 1.5-mile section of the trail in the Brothers Wilderness.



Photo by Ken Vandier; above by Alex Spickard

“Spending
time
outdoors
instills a
sense of
wonder
and
respect for
the world
around us.”

— Anna Hoekman
WTA YAP



Photo by Andrea Martin

Youth Ambassadors Spread the Word About WTA

Now in its third year, WTA's Youth Ambassador Program, a leadership program that engages youth trail maintenance volunteers in outreach to their peers, benefited from a cohort of ambitious and creative young people. Polly, Sarah, Jack, Yale, Dorothy, Mark, Jacob, Henry, John, Anna, Elise, Hannah and Tristana completed a combined total of 151 days of trail work. This school year, they also talked with more than 700 of their peers about volunteer opportunities with WTA. Here are some more highlights of this year's accomplishments:

- 5 organized hikes and trip reports
- 3 ambassador-organized trail work parties at 3 different locations
- 1 school photo contest
- 2 new “How to Pack” videos on the WTA website

Mark Bajtaj, who was an ambassador for the last two years and will be attending the University of Pennsylvania next year, has this to say to next year's cohort: “Ambassador work is an incredibly important job that is crucial to WTA's success. I had the opportunity to do some of my work with the local southwest Washington WTA office and that was great. I scouted trails, wrote trip reports and actively helped plan the next steps in the mission of raising awareness about the Dark Divide. I would recommend trying to do something similar if you're like me and love being outside!”

The fourth ambassador cohort will start in fall 2015. For more info, email andrea@wta.org.

“My favorite place to hike is the North Cascades. I want to give back to protect them, today and in the future.”



Jim Hansen was five years old when his father took him on his first hike. The 2.5 miles to Heather Lake felt like the longest of his life! But he was hooked. Now Jim and his wife, Diana, are planning a 260-mile trek this summer. A long-time WTA member and volunteer, Jim has participated in many work parties, earning the name “Root Slayer” on his first Backcountry Response Team trip last month.

When Jim retired, he and Diana decided they wanted to increase their support for trails. So they joined WTA's Legacy Circle by naming WTA in their estate plans. “Everyone should get to experience nature,” says Jim. “It would make the world a better place if we all did.”

Thank you, Jim and Diana, for creating a lasting legacy for trails!

Learn more about WTA's Legacy Circle at wta.org/support, or call (206) 625-1367.

Celebrating Trails with the Fireside Circle



This spring, members of WTA's Fireside Circle gathered at Seattle's MadArt gallery to celebrate trails and learn how their support is helping WTA maintain and build trails around the state, advocate for the outdoors and hikers, and ensure that youth have opportunities to connect with nature.

Learn how you can join WTA's Fireside Circle at [**wta.org/support**](https://wta.org/support).

At the Fireside event, artist John Grade shared insights into *Middle Fork*, his life-size sculpture of a hemlock tree near North Bend that was on display at gallery, including how—like with trail work—a community of people came together to create it. After its presentation at MadArt, *Middle Fork* will be moving to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C.



PARK UPDATES:

Channel Your Inner Indiana Jones at Mt. Rainier

MOUNT RAINIER – Are you ready to put your treasure-hunting hat on? The website Visit Rainier has partnered with Mount Rainier National Park and Washington State Geocaching Association to create one more way to enjoy Mount Rainier this summer—with the **Visit Rainier Centennial GeoTour!**

Over the next two years, 100 new geocaches will be placed around Mount Rainier National Park and its gateway communities to celebrate the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016.

New caches will be released in four separate series. The first series was released on June 13, with subsequent series scheduled for October this year, and April and September next year.

Each cache will contain a code word that participants can record in a special passport (downloadable on VisitRainier.com). When the passport contains all 25 code words, participants can turn it in for a trackable pathtag. A new pathtag will be available for each series. Everyone who logs all 100 caches, and collects all four pathtags, can then receive a commemorative geocoin!

Are you up for the challenge? Download



your free passport and get more info on the Visit Rainier Centennial GeoTour at visitrainier.com and geocaching.com.

Victory in Olympia Brings Outdoors Into the Governor's Office

OLYMPIA – For the first time in Washington state history, outdoor recreation will have a seat in the governor's office. Hikers around the state will now have a direct representative in Olympia championing the economic benefits of public lands and making sure schools have resources to get kids outside.

In May, Governor Jay Inslee signed into law SB 5843, which appoints a senior policy advisor to promote and increase opportunities for outdoor recreation in our state. This will elevate outdoor recreation to the same level as health care, labor and transportation, which have similar positions in the governor's office. In the past, the governor has had an advisor on environmental issues but never with the goal of generating economic activity.

Our public lands and waters are a proven economic powerhouse worth \$21.6 billion a year. When the advisor is appointed, one of their first goals will be to increase jobs related to outdoor recreation. It is estimated that Washington currently has more than 190,000 of those jobs. The new advisor will be charged with increasing employment and consumer spending in the outdoor sector, though specific milestones are yet to be determined. A timeline has not yet been announced for when the senior policy advisor position will be filled.

The new law also funds the No Child Left Inside program, providing grants to Washington state outdoor education and recreation programs for youth. Community groups, nonprofits and schools will be eligible for the grants. The program will begin in schools, prioritizing students who might not otherwise get a chance to explore Washington's landscape. This includes students who receive free and reduced lunch and those who are at risk of dropping out.

Getting kids from all walks of life outdoors is critical for creating the next generation of stewards for our public lands. And it's been proven to benefit the kids too. Studies show that time outside increases kids' attention spans, reduces stress and offers a fun way to exercise while being social.

SB 5843 was primarily sponsored by Sens. Kevin Ranker and Linda Evans-Parlette, who were joined by many of their colleagues in support. In the words of Ranker, "It's not about Republicans or Democrats. It's about a good idea." No matter where Washingtonians identify on the political spectrum, we all benefit from the outdoors.

Another essential ingredient to moving this bill forward was support from the outdoor recreation community. Hikers and other trail users gave SB 5843 momentum on WTA's Lobby Day in February by having more than 90 sign-ins in support of the bill at its hearing.

Without the support of the Trail Action

Network, WTA wouldn't be nearly as effective in Olympia. So pat yourself on the back, hikers. Your enthusiasm helped make this happen. For more information on how you can advocate for trails, visit wta.org/action.

WTA Thanks Its Corporate Partners

Rainier - \$25,000+



Olympic - \$10,000-\$24,999



Cascade - \$2,500-\$9,999



Alpine - \$1,000-\$2,499

Hilleberg the Tentmaker
Seven Hills Running Shop
Cascade Crest 100-mile Endurance Run

To find out how your company
can support WTA's work for trails,
please call us at (206) 625-1367
or email kate@wta.org.



New Public Transit Routes Service Snoqualmie and Gorge Trails

SEATTLE/VANCOUVER – Two new public transit services have begun offering summer rides to hiking trails in the I 90 corridor and on SR 14 in the Columbia Gorge to help reduce parking congestion at popular trailheads.

In the Seattle area, the SnoValley Adventure Shuttle departs from a downtown North Bend park and ride and transports hikers to popular recreation destinations along the Mount Si Road, including the Little Si, Mount Si and Teneriffe trailheads. The service hopes to expand to the Middle Fork Valley and Rattlesnake Lake in the future. The SnoValley shuttle runs every 30 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays, with round-trip tickets costing only \$5. Get more info at compassoutdooradventures.com/shuttle.

In the Portland-Vancouver area, Skamania County's WET (West End Transit) bus services nine trailheads and communities in the heart of the Gorge, including Beacon Rock, Cape Horn, Dog Mountain, Sams Walker and the Pacific Crest Trail. It even goes as far as the Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood. The WET bus operates on summer weekends out of the Fisher's Landing Transit Center, with tickets costing only \$4 for a day pass. You can even bring your dog or mountain bike. Visit gorgefriends.org for more information.

Try out one of these new shuttle services this summer, and you can help reduce trailhead congestion and parking headaches, in addition to being a friend of the environment by keeping your car at home.



Wild Olympics Legislation Introduced Into Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Last month, Sen. Patty Murray and Rep. Derek Kilmer introduced the Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in efforts to permanently protect more than 126,500 acres of Olympic National Forest as wilderness and 19 rivers and their major tributaries, a total of 464 river miles, as wild and scenic rivers. If enacted, the legislation would designate the first new wilderness on Olympic National Forest in nearly three decades and the first-ever protected Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Olympic Peninsula.

Designated wilderness is the highest level of protection for public lands managed by the federal government. The act would provide lasting protection while also ensuring critical access to trails and recreation sites in the area. It does not affect private property rights. WTA joins more than 500 local businesses, local elected officials, business leaders and recreation and conservation groups in supporting the act.



2 New National Recreation Trails in Washington

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Just days before National Trails Day, this past June 6, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis designated 10 more trails as national recreation trails, adding more than 150 miles to the National Trails System.

"By designating these exceptional trails as part of the National Trails System, we recognize the efforts of local communities to provide outdoor recreational opportunities that can be enjoyed by everyone," said Jewell. "Our world-class network of national trails provides easily accessible places to get exercise and connect with nature in both urban and rural areas while also boosting tourism and supporting economic opportunities in local communities across the country."

National recreation trail designation recognizes existing trails and trail systems that link communities to recreational opportunities on public lands and in local parks across the nation. Each of the new national recreation trails will receive a certificate of designation, a letter of congratulation from Secretary Jewell and a set of trail markers.

Two of the new national recreation trails are located right here in Washington: the Mount Si Trail and the Snoqualmie Valley Trail. The remaining eight trails, located throughout the country, include Nevada's Historic Railroad Trail, New York's Sackets Harbor Battlefield History Trail and the Ohio River Water Trail, which spans Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

H I K E •A• T H O N

Why We Hike

You and I are alike. We're hikers. We hike for the physical challenge, for exercise or to stand on summits. We go out for the breathtaking views, the lucky wildlife encounters and the connection to the natural world. We unplug from technology and recharge our own batteries. We hike to be with each other away from distractions, and we hike to be alone in an increasingly connected world. We seek the stunning photo ops at last light and the thrill of jumping into alpine lakes. Hiking brings so much joy to our lives.

For all the joy, connection and exploration that hiking provides, it's fitting that WTA's annual Hike-a-Thon fundraiser invites hikers to celebrate and show gratitude for trails by doing more of what we already love: hiking!

We live in a place with a strong hiking culture, unparalleled access to wilderness and a rich history of public lands. Washington is special in these regards, and Washington Trails Association continues to be a driving force in ensuring a bright future for hiking opportunities in the state. Hike-a-Thon is a fun way for hikers to directly support this mission by getting out on trail. More than just a fundraiser, Hike-a-Thon offers a chance for the hiking community to come together, celebrate trails and spend even more time outdoors during Washington's sunniest month.



Meet our furriest Hike-a-Thoner yet! **Miles the Marmot** will be logging miles all over Washington with some less-furry companions. Look for updates on Miles' progress on the Hike-a-Thon Facebook page and the WTA website. Miles is relying on his good looks for pledges ... so he might need a little help. You can sponsor Miles by going to wta.org/hikeathon.

Whether you're thinking about doing Hike-a-Thon for the first time this year or the tenth time, it's a great opportunity to reflect on what hiking brings to your life. What motivates you to hike? I love to ask WTA members about their reasons for hiking. Each story is unique, but common threads of joy, connection and exploration link us together.

Recently, I had a nice chat with WTA member Doug Murray about hiking with his daughter. Doug is a lifelong hiker, but taking his daughter to Mount Rainier and the Olympics when she visited from college on the East Coast brought a whole new dimension to hiking for him. By spending time in the mountains together, Doug found that they connected in ways that were elusive outside of this space. As they walked, his daughter opened up and shared stories about college that provided Doug with new insight into her life. She was also entertained by her dad's stories of past adventures and, away from distraction, listened with a keenness that Doug missed in daily life. After spending these days together, Doug felt like both he and his daughter had seen each other in a different light. He is grateful that hiking was able to bring them together in this way and looks forward to taking his daughter out hiking again this summer to connect, away from their busy lives.



Another memorable story comes from WTA member Roxanne Eve. She has been drawn to the outdoors since youth, but in her sixties she is most motivated to get out on hikes to photograph wildflowers. Her favorite memory of wildflower photography is capturing a rock garden of

Tweedy's lewisia in full bloom on Chiwaukum Creek. "It's hard to explain how exciting it was to see. This is an extremely rare flower, and there were literally hundreds of these incredible flowers in bloom in front of us. It was such a special sight, too, because a big wildfire came through a few weeks later and totally changed the landscape." Roxanne says that she hikes for these serendipitous encounters with nature, whether it's a rare flower in bloom or the surprise of sharing a field of huckleberries with a black bear.

Kathy Schneider, a regular Hike-a-Thoner who has logged nearly 200 miles and raised more than \$4,500 for trails since first participating in Hike-a-Thon in 2009, loves the extra motivation to get in shape. "After Hike-a-Thon in August, I'm in the best shape of the year. This further motivates me to stay active in an effort to continue hikes of this caliber and enjoy fall color changes at the higher elevations as well." Getting in great shape through hiking has its payoffs too. "Sulphur Skyline Trail in Alberta was probably the most grueling hike that I've done for Hike-a-Thon. The kudos from local hikers helped keep me going to the top, the 360-degree panoramic views



After Hike-a-Thon ... I'm in the best shape of the year. This further motivates me to stay active. — Kathy Schneider

were stupendous and—better yet—the soak in the hot springs after the hike was the icing on the cake that day. It hurt so good!"

Whether you hike for the summits, the tranquility, the communion with friends or just the excuse for a gourmet picnic, Hike-a-Thon is another reason to get out on trail in August. And it doesn't matter if you plan to hike 3 miles in August or 300—there is a place for you to participate. You can sign up as an individual or create a team (goofy names and silly traditions encouraged!). Families can also join as a team and log their dog's miles as well!

Even if you can't hike, you can participate by sponsoring a Hike-a-Thoner with a pledge. Each year, more than 1,000 fans support Hike-a-Thoners with pledges of either a set amount or a per-mile rate. These pledges motivate hikers to spend more of August on trail and encourage volunteer trail crews to keep their tools swinging. If you don't know anyone who's hiking this year, you can support our bushy-tailed Hike-a-Thoner: Miles the Marmot!

For me, participating in Hike-a-Thon for the first time this year is an expression of gratitude for all that hiking brings to my life. I hope you'll join me by putting in the miles in August or sponsoring a hiker. Now let the fun begin!

See you on the trail!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kayla Bordelon".

Kayla "Dance Party" Bordelon
WTA Membership Assistant





TRAIL BINGO

Ready for a trail challenge?

IT'S EASY!

1. Tear out, copy or print this bingo card.
2. Take it with you when you go hiking.
3. Challenge yourself or play with friends.

Visit wta.org/bingo for details.

Hike with a young person.	Pick up trash on the trail.	Hang a proper bear bag.	Pack the Ten Essentials.	Sponsor a Hike-a-Thon.
Write a trip report.	High-five a ranger.	Spot a raptor.	Share the summit.	Hand another hiker a bingo card.
Find lupine.	Hike on a new-to-you trail.	Register for Hike-a-Thon.	Filter water from a creek, river or lake.	Thank a hiker who has a dog on a leash.
High-five a mountain biker.	Hike with a grandparent or elder.	Carpool or take a bus to a trailhead.	Hike on Washington Trails Day.	Photograph a Leave No Trace campsite.
Yield to uphill hikers.	Sponsor Miles the Marmot.	Improve your map & compass skills.	High-five a WTA trail crew member.	Spot a WTA decal on a vehicle.

Play Trail Bingo during Hike-a-Thon from 7/1/15 through 8/31/15. Only registered Hike-a-Thon participants are eligible for completion prizes. All bingo entries must be received no later than 9/8/15. For complete game rules and requirements visit wta.org/hikeathon.

Register for Hike-a-Thon and compete for great prizes!



A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUMMER ADVENTURE

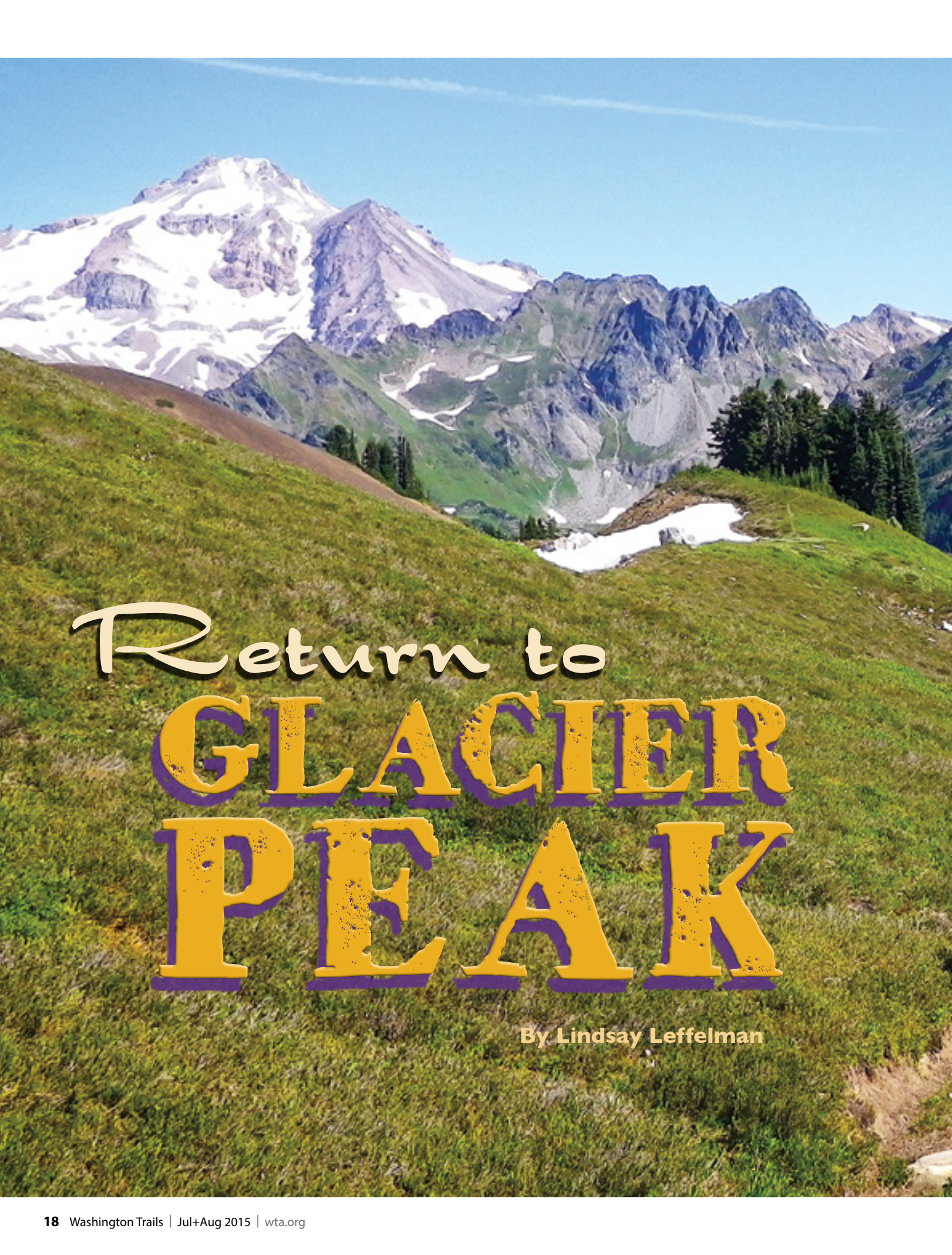
Volunteer with WTA to help accomplish much-needed trail work in beautiful locations. Camp out and make new friends on a 2-day camping event,* or challenge yourself on an extended weekend with a Backcountry Response Team!



- Icicle Creek Canyon trails, Leavenworth (July 17-19)
- Klickitat Trail, Cowlitz Valley (July 25-26)
- Upper Dungeness Trail, Hood Canal (Aug. 1-2)
- Schriebers Meadows, Mount Baker (Aug. 15-16)
- Paradise area trails, Mount Rainier (Aug. 21-23)
- Pacific Crest Trail BCRT, Snoqualmie Pass (Aug. 6-9)
- Bare Mountain BCRT, North Bend (Aug. 27-30)
- Bald Eagle Trail BCRT, Skykomish (Sept. 4-7)

Sign up at wta.org/volunteer

*Not all WTA weekend work parties offer overnight camping. See website for more info.



Return to GLACIER PEAK

By Lindsay Leffelman

A full-page photograph of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, three hikers with backpacks are walking away from the camera on a dirt trail that winds through a green, grassy slope. The middle ground shows a valley with patches of snow and dense evergreen forests. In the background, rugged mountain peaks are partially covered in snow under a clear blue sky.

You don't have to be a PCT thru-hiker to get into the Glacier Peak Wilderness any more. Thanks to the newly reopened Suiattle River Road, views like this are available to dayhikers and weekend backpackers, too. Photo by Cody Sherrodd.

Hikers, rejoice!

After years of inaccessibility, the Suiattle River Road has been reopened and a key access point to the Glacier Peak Wilderness has been restored. This federally designated wilderness area, named for the 10,541-foot volcano at its core, had been severely restricted from the west for nearly a decade due to serious flood damage along its primary access routes.

Established in 1964, the Glacier Peak Wilderness area spans over 556,000 acres of prime northwest terrain, complete with a glaciated volcano, numerous craggy peaks, lakes and streams, old-growth forests, a substantial wildlife population and countless opportunities for adventure. Bringing travelers right to the doorstep of this magnificent area, the Suiattle River Road has a story that began generations ago and will, hopefully, continue for generations to come.



With eager hikers returning to the Glacier Peak wilderness, the locals, like these marmots on Green Mountain, will have to share the backcountry again. Photo by Norm Buckley.

RIGHT: Thanks to restored access to the Suiattle River Trail, ambitious weekend backpackers can once again access the Pacific Crest Trail and take in the stunning views from Miners Ridge. Photo by Doug Diekema

The Way It Was

Long before the Suiattle River Road (FR 26) existed, the Suiattle River Valley was an important transportation corridor for native people. The Sauk-Suiattle Tribe, a band of hunters, gatherers and fisherman, frequently traveled the Suiattle by canoe. The tribe also used the valley as a trade route across the Cascades. By the early 1900s, mining companies were staking claims and searching for copper, gold and silver throughout the upper Suiattle drainage. A trail paralleling the north side of the river transported workers to active claims in the Miner's Ridge area. Most mining activity along the Suiattle faded away completely before the 1950s.

In 1913, when the Suiattle Guard Station was built by assistant ranger Tommy Thompson, the Suiattle River Road extended just 5 miles upriver from the Suiattle River's confluence with the Sauk River. The construction of the roadway continued in stages over the next several decades, along with the development of campgrounds and trailhead facilities. In 1949, the road reached its farthest point at Milk Creek. However, in 1968, the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness was expanded and the final mile of the road was decommissioned.

Though the floods of 2003 and 2006 are most vivid in our memories, the Suiattle River Road has been no stranger to devastating flooding. Between 1974 and 2003, 14 different floods caused enough damage to qualify for repair funding through the Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads program. In each of these instances, the road was repaired fairly quickly and access to recreational areas was restored.

The flooding that occurred along the Suiattle in 2003 was record-breaking, causing significant damage at three sites along the roadway. Environmental assessments were completed, and the U.S. Forest Service made plans to repair the ravaged roadway once more. Before construction could begin, though, the Suiattle flooded again. An additional four sites were extensively damaged in the flooding of 2006 and 2007. As a result, the Suiattle River Road was closed beyond milepost 12, restricting access to recreation hot spots, including popular trails (especially those leading into the heart of the Glacier Peak Wilderness), campgrounds and hunting and fishing areas.

The rebuilding process was lengthy, complex and wrought with obstacles. Multiple environmental assessments were conducted, legal battles were fought, funding was limited and redesign plans were complicated. In spite of



the struggles, the road prevailed. Washington Trails Association, along with other outdoor organizations and recreationalists, advocated strongly for the repair of the road and for restored access to the wilderness areas within its reach. Funding was secured through grants and stimulus monies. Collaboration between the Forest Service, Federal Highway Administration, tribal governments and a variety of environmental groups ensured that the road was rebuilt soundly and without negative impact to native wildlife or natural resources.

Finally, after being closed for more than a decade, the Suiattle River Road was reopened to vehicle traffic on October 25, 2014, with a celebratory ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by state, local and tribal government representatives, Forest Service employees and excited outdoors enthusiasts. With the Suiattle River Road reopened, it would once again serve as an important transportation corridor, restoring access to 120 miles of hiking trails—including the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)—two campgrounds and culturally significant tribal lands.



Open for Exploration

Washington Trails Association, along with other outdoor organizations and recreationalists, advocated strongly for the repair of the road and for restored access to the wilderness areas within its reach.

With construction complete and the full length of the Suiattle River Road open to motor vehicles again after its decade-long hiatus, hikers immediately began hitting the trails. Within just a week of the road's late-October reopening, six trip reports were submitted on the WTA website for the Suiattle River Trail and two additional reports were filed for the Green Mountain Trail.

As 2014 drew to a close, outdoor recreationalists rang in the New Year with a very mild winter in the Cascades. Hikers who were raring to get back into the Suiattle River Valley and Glacier Peak Wilderness continued to do so throughout the winter and early spring months, trekking to popular locations such as the Suiattle River and Green Mountain, along with less frequently used trails like Downey Creek and Sulphur Mountain.

Despite boots being back on the trails, the going has not been easy. The same storms that destroyed sections of FR 26 also did a number on the area's trails. Even trails that were spared significant damage in the storms of 2003 and 2006 were unreachable for many years due to the road closure. During this time, the trails saw little, if any, maintenance or foot traffic. The blowdowns and drainage issues that a trail typically suffers in one winter season have gone unrepaired for multiple seasons. The compounding effect of winter storm damage, deferred maintenance and inaccessibility means

that many of the popular trails reached from the Suiattle River Road are not yet in the best condition for hiking.

As the spring hiking season was getting under way this year, the Darrington Ranger District reported that the majority of trails along the Suiattle River Road were open; however, the trail conditions at that time warranted cautious trip planning. Downey Creek, Suiattle River, Miner's Ridge and Sulphur Mountain trails had received no maintenance since 2012, and all were reported to have wind-fallen trees across the trails. Huckleberry Mountain, Green Mountain and Sulphur Creek trails had also not received any maintenance in the past three to four years and were heavily overgrown, sometimes so much so that following the trail was difficult. The Milk Creek Trail was the only trail listed as completely inaccessible, due to a washed-out bridge over the Suiattle River. No maintenance had been done on the Milk Creek Trail in more than 10 years. In addition to uncertain or unfavorable trail conditions, other recreational facilities, including both Buck Creek and Sulphur Creek campgrounds and the Suiattle Guard Station, remained closed.

With summer now in full swing and the trails steadily melting out, land managers continue to evaluate conditions, and trail restoration has begun in earnest. WTA, the Darrington Ranger District and the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) have begun working in conjunction with one another to begin the extensive process of restoring, repairing and rebuilding.

The efforts of volunteers at WTA work parties have been instrumental in getting trails along the Suiattle River hiker-ready for the summer season. In cooperation with the Forest Service, WTA hosted several work parties along the Suiattle River Trail in April and May, and a WTA Backcountry Response Team (BCRT) completed a log-out as well. Two BCRTs addressed tread repair, drainage issues, stream crossings and brushing along the Downey Creek Trail in June. Three WTA Volunteer Vacations, including one Youth Volunteer Vacation, rehabilitated a stretch



of the PCT north of its junction with the Suiattle River Trail. The Volunteer Vacation crews tackled tasks such as removing downed trees, building rock fords across streams and repairing damaged tread.

In addition to the collaborative work it has done with WTA, the Forest Service has had its own trail crews logging out the Downey Creek Trail and fixing a variety of problematic issues along Miner's Ridge, the PCT and the Huckleberry and Green Mountain trails. A weeklong PCTA volunteer trip took place in June to attend to maintenance along the PCT heading south from the Suiattle River Trail.

Aside from trail work, construction is underway at Sulphur Creek Campground to reconfigure the campsites, replace damaged campground amenities and restore fish habitat in response to damage sustained during

Volunteer efforts will be crucial to successfully restoring this area to its former glory. It is critical that trail enthusiasts get involved.



Since the Suiattle Road closure, the only way to access High Pass was by multiday approaches from the south or east. Now hikers can reach High Pass from the west using the PCT via the Suiattle River Trail. Photo by Jonathan Reeve.

INSET: Catch a fireworks display of wildflowers and views of Glacier Peak on Pilot Ridge, a moderate dayhike accessed by the North Fork Sauk Trail. Photo by Randy Godfrey.



of their current conditions: Suiattle River Trail, Green Mountain Trail and Downey Creek Trail. No matter where you plan to hike along FR 26, be sure to check out recent trip reports at wta.org/tripreports, visit the Darrington Ranger Station or give them a call at (360) 436-1155.

Be Part of the Recovery

Though much work has already been done and more will be completed throughout the summer, several years of damage and maintenance backlog cannot be addressed in just one season. The Forest Service will continue to assess trail conditions and will perform maintenance and restoration tasks as time, staffing and funding allow. Plans are in place to finish construction on the Sulphur Creek Campground so that it can be reopened in summer 2016. Another major project will be the bridge replacement and restoration of the Milk Creek Trail. Gary Paull, wilderness and trails coordinator with the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, hopes that the Milk Creek Trail can be opened up for access soon, but also states that environmental assessments and planning the scope of the new trail needs to be completed first.

Volunteer efforts will be crucial to successfully restoring this area to its former glory. It is critical that trail enthusiasts get involved. Much of WTA's work in the area is wrapping up for this year, but be sure to stay tuned for future single-day work parties along with Volunteer Vacations and BCRTs. Virtually anyone can volunteer and experience is not necessary. Elliott Skopin, WTA's volunteer coordinator, says it best, "If you can hike to a project, you can volunteer. We have a variety of jobs from lopping to digging to nailing and sawing. There is a job for every volunteer."

Simply hitting the trails and enjoying this stunning area will also help ensure trailheads stay open, accessible and in good condition for many years to come. Without evidence that trails are being used by hikers and campers, funding for maintenance and repair won't be available. In addition to recreating along the Suiattle River Road, be sure to support local communities as well. The economy of Darrington, the closest town to the Suiattle River Road, has taken a major hit in recent years as the tourism industry has declined as a result of the Suiattle River Road closure and the Oso mudslide. If you're headed up the Suiattle, make a pit stop in Darrington to stock up on food and supplies at the IGA, grab a bite to eat at the Burger Barn or plan your trip to coincide with one of Darrington's summer festivals. Check out www.darringtonwatourism.com for more ideas on how you can experience Darrington's local flair while bolstering the town's economy.

Restored access to the Suiattle River Valley and the Glacier Peak Wilderness has been an important accomplishment for so many people and for so many reasons. Members of the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe can reach important cultural lands. A local economy can recover. Fishermen and hunters can responsibly access prime wildlife habitats. Families who have hiked and camped in the area for generations can continue their long-standing traditions. And a hiking community that has continuously lost access to trails in the Darrington Ranger District over the past 25 years can explore this impressive valley's extraordinary trail system once again. The story of the Suiattle River Road began hundreds of years before a road even existed, and thanks to the hard work of so many people, there's no end in sight. ♦

the flooding. Buck Creek Campground did not sustain much damage and was opened for the 2015 camping season.

Trail conditions are changing rapidly as work is done and the winter snows melt. Bill Hawley, the North Cascades regional representative for the PCTA, warns that multiday backpackers planning trips along the PCT are likely to find areas of difficult hiking for at least the next couple of seasons, until the backlog of work is completed. Rebecca Lavigne, WTA's trail program director, recommends the following trails as good choices for this summer because





WILL HIKE FOR FOOD!

Where to go for the best after-trail eats.

Story & Photos by Charlie Lieu | Illustration by Lindsay Holladay

As any outdoors-lover will attest, hiking (or for that matter, any outdoor adventure) and eating go hand-in-hand. Here in the Northwest, “hiker” is practically synonymous with “foodie.” So when we asked Washington hikers for their favorite after-hike eateries, we got literally hundreds of recommendations.

One thing quickly became clear: hikers love the post-hike beer almost as much as the hike. Breweries took the bulk of top mentions, followed by diners and drive-ins. We like our food casual, satisfying and accompanied by a frothy beverage, whether it be a beer or a milkshake.

Not surprisingly, staples like North Bend Bar and Grill in the Snoqualmie Pass corridor and Zeke’s Drive-In in the Stevens Pass corridor got the most mentions, followed closely by other favorites such as Scott’s Dairy Freeze, Rhodies BBQ and Wally’s Drive-In. (See the full list of tried-and-trues on page 27.) These beloved establishments are ubiquitous amongst hikers, and if you haven’t been there, you should certainly check them out to get a taste for yourself. Of note, Sultan Bakery’s cinnamon buns and bear claw are rumored to be the stuff of legends—and often sell out quickly. Wally’s offers old-fashioned car park order stations and is adjacent to a playground, as well as a farm equipment museum that can entertain children and adults of all ages.

While we could devote an entire issue of *Washington Trails* just to tried-and-true establishments, we thought it would be more interesting to profile a few standouts farther from the beaten path. If you are looking for weekend hiking and food destinations, look no further. These three post-hike destinations are situated amongst gorgeous hikes and offer fabulous food, great drinks and their own individual charm. It’s easy to see why they are WTA hiker favorites!



DESTINATION: METHOW VALLEY

OLD SCHOOLHOUSE BREWERY

155 Riverside Ave, Winthrop, WA 98862
oldschoolhousebrewery.com

Nestled in the heart of the Methow Valley, surrounded by the wonders of the North Cascades, is the quaint town of Winthrop. It is the epicenter of a wondrous natural playground that beckons relentlessly, luring outdoors-lovers with its abundant trails, rivers, mountains and adventures.

It is this calling that drew trail runner Casey and hiker Laura Ruud to Winthrop, and in 2008, they took over the Old Schoolhouse Brewery. With the looming recession and the Ruud's lack of experience in beer brewing or restaurantering, the venture had the makings of a disaster. Despite the hurdles, the Ruud family was determined to create a place where hikers and locals could relax and be comfortable, enjoy great food, have great beer and listen to great stories. Today, the Old Schoolhouse Brewery is the center of a community deeply connected with nature, created for people who love trails, by people who love trails.

Despite its humble beginnings and trial by fire, the Old Schoolhouse Brewery has become known far and wide for its award-winning, nationally recognized beers. Of course, no post-hike stop would be complete without yummy food. The robust menu boasts food designed to pair with, or infused with, what else—beer. "From our house-made, beer-infused mustard to our beer brats, everything is either made or sourced locally as much as possible," says manager Joseph Weaver. "And if you're looking for something beyond our best-sellers (burgers and brats), no problem. There is a good selection of healthy standards and veggie-lover favorites."

On the sun-drenched deck behind the signature red schoolhouse building, the sounds of laughter and music mix with the roar of the river below. The amazing ambiance is complimented by personal touches, which include Laura's handmade stained glass windows. When you are here, it feels like you are among family, which is exactly what Casey and Laura had envisioned.

Leaning back in his chair in the brewery room below the restaurant, Casey proudly exclaims that "on any given day, you will find an abundance of storytelling. Tales of adventures bond people together in their shared experiences." Laura nods, "When we're busy, we often seat unrelated parties together at larger tables. It adds to the sense of community and creates lifelong friendships." With a broad smile flashing across his face, Casey adds, "I feel extremely blessed that we have created this little piece of heaven, a community of people who share our love of the Methow Valley."

Music is an integral part of the brewery. Every Friday and Saturday night, patrons can hear great bands while enjoying dinner and a pint. With handcrafted beer, delectable foods and music bookings by Danbert Nobacon (yes, of Chumbawamba fame), you might ask yourself, "Can this get any cooler?" Frankly, we don't know.

Favorite local trails: Laura & Casey: Patterson Lake; Joseph: Cutthroat Pass

On the sun-drenched deck behind the signature red schoolhouse building, the sounds of laughter and music mix with the roar of the river below.





We are very hiker-friendly. If you are tired from a long day on the trail, if you have dirty pants and dirtier boots, no problem, come on in. We will take care of you.

DESTINATION: NORTH COAST

NEXT DOOR GASTROPUB

113 W First St, Port Angeles, WA 98362
nextdoorgastropub.com



The northern coast, with its rugged shoreline, gemlike Crescent Lake and gateway to the Olympic Mountain peaks, is home to some of the most diverse hiking you can find in the state. But long-time hikers of the peninsula knew there was something missing in Port Angeles.

There were nice restaurants in town but no relaxed casual place that served good post-hike grub. It was a gap that Jake Oppelt wished to remedy. In 2010, he and his partners Angela "Ange" Oppelt and Justin Tognoni started transforming an old coffee shop into a pub and eatery similar to what you might find in Seattle or Portland. Sitting alongside each other, the trio recalls how the idea for Next Door Gastropub began, "Before I knew what a gastropub was," Jake starts, "I had this harebrained idea of a place where you could serve good food and craft beers in a casual environment. I quickly brought my sister [Ange] into the project, then [our friend] Justin."

Ange continues, "We wanted to build a place that we wanted to eat at and hang out in, basically a gastropub." Justin jumps in: "It took the better part of two years, and we did nearly all the remodel ourselves." Jake adds, "Most of the stuff you see in here is built by hand, either by one of us or one of our friends."

There were doubts as to whether Port Angeles could support a hip gastropub, but looking at it today, the popularity of the Next Door Gastropub is undoubtedly a welcome surprise. The resulting labor of love is an intimate space that is not only a peninsula hiker favorite but a popular local hangout with a rustic atmosphere, heated patio, Sunday live music, quality food and rotating microbrews on tap.

"We spent a lot of time thinking about the food and, as much as possible, we try to make everything in-house so we can control the taste and quality," says Ange. "You can say we have craft beer and craft food to go with it." Jake adds with a chuckle, "According to regulars of the Next Door Gastropub, the burgers here are not to be missed." Justin explains, "The beef comes from Painted Hills, which is not local, but we had to find a farm that could deliver us the consistency in quality and taste while at the same time raising their cows with ethics we are comfortable with."

Jake and Ange, being Northwest-bred and avid outdoors people, wanted this to be a place where everyone feels welcome. "The Northwest is in our blood. It's a beacon of who we are, and it permeates through the way things operate," says Jake. Ange finishes the sentiment. "We are very hiker-friendly. If you are tired from a long day on the trail, if you have dirty pants and dirtier boots, no problem. Come on in. We will take care of you."

Favorite local trails: Ange: Storm King; Jake: Bailey Ridge Traverse; Justin: Obstruction to Deer Park

ABOVE: Next Door Gastropub owners Jake Oppelt, Ange Oppelt, and Justin Tognoni invite hikers in to take a load off and relax with one of their rotating microbrews.

OPPOSITE: The front of the Old Schoolhouse Brewery is deceptively small, but behind the red door are large dining areas that can handle the busiest weekend crowds. Their signature Guacamole Burger and crispy, delicious herb fries are not to be missed.





Double Mountain is a place where you can delight your taste buds and rest your tired feet.

Following a good hike in the Gorge or on Mount Hood, pull up to Double Mountain's margherita pizza and one of their refreshing craft beers.



DESTINATION: COLUMBIA GORGE

DOUBLE MOUNTAIN BREWERY

8 Fourth Street, Hood River, OR 97031
doublemountainbrewery.com

In the heart of the outdoor mecca that is the Columbia River Gorge, Matthew Swihart spent 13 years at Full Sail Brewery nursing a vision of brewing an “unrushed” craft beer he wanted to drink. On St. Patrick’s Day in 2007, he made that vision a reality when he opened Double Mountain Brewery in a building that had once been a car dealership. It turned out that a lot of other people wanted to drink the same kind of beer Matt did. The brewery hasn’t won any national accolades, but people as far away as Montana tout the brew from Double Mountain as “the best beer I’ve ever had.” Suffice it to say, it has a cult following.

“While we have extraordinary passion for beer, our vision was to create a community-oriented space that provides a laid-back experience centered on great local people, great local beer, great local food and great local music,” says Jon Warszynski, taproom manager for Double Mountain. “We make it a goal to hire people who are aligned with the vision, and just by the virtue of where we are located, we have a ton of hikers on staff.”

Double Mountain prides itself on a food menu that is carefully thought out, from the housemade sausage and meatballs to the greens. An attempt is made to keep all of the food in-house and in the Gorge by working with Zion Organic Farm, which is located just a few miles from the brewery. While the menu is small, it is known far and wide for its authentic New York-style pizza, which are lovingly referred to as “pie.” A local hiker and transplant from New York went as far as to say that she has not found a pie as close to the taste of home as the pies offered at Double Mountain. Specialty pies are particularly well-known, and often the brewery will get calls asking, “Are you doing your [fill in the blank] pie today? I want to plan my hike around when I can get my favorite pie.”

Brewery tours are offered every Saturday at 1 pm, and there’s free music every Thursday and Saturday night. In the summer, music starts at 9 pm on Saturdays, which gives hikers just enough time to get off the trail, grab a bite, sit down with a pint and enjoy. Double Mountain is a place where you can delight your taste buds and rest your tired feet. In two words, says shift manager Matt Bynum, “It’s magic.”

Favorite local trails: Jon: Dog Mountain; Matt: Wind Mountain



TRIED & TRUE

Rounding out the top of your favorites list are these classic pit stops for everything from big, juicy burgers and crispy fries to cold brews and good ol' softserve ice cream. But the list doesn't end here. For more favorites, including some honorable mentions and hidden gems, visit wta.org/foodmap.



ZEKE'S DRIVE-IN

44006 US Highway 2, Gold Bar, WA 98251
(360) 793-228



SCOTT'S DAIRY FREEZE

234 E North Bend Way, N. Bend, WA 98045
(425) 888-2301



SULTAN BAKERY

711 W Stevens Ave, Sultan, WA 98294
(360) 793-7996



NORTH BEND BAR & GRILL

145 E North Bend Way, N. Bend, WA 98045
northbendbarandgrill.com



SNOQUALMIE BREWERY

8032 Falls Ave SE, Snoqualmie, WA 98065
fallsbrew.com



WALLY'S DRIVE-IN

282 WA-410, Buckley, WA 98321
(360) 829-0871



SHERI'S SWEET SHOP

207 Riverside Ave, Winthrop, WA 98862
sherissweetshoppe.com



RHODIE'S SMOKIN BBQ

30375 SE High Pt Way, Preston, WA 98050
rhodiesbbq.com

On your mark...
Get set...
Click!



2014 *Hikers in Action* 1st Place winner, by Isaac Gautschi

Northwest Exposure 2015

Washington Trails Association's annual photo contest is coming. That means it's time to get out on your favorite trails and start capturing those beautiful landscapes that make us so proud to live and hike here in the Northwest.

Trailsapes – Incredible landscapes and the trails that take you through them

Hikers in Action – Capture the experience with hikers on trails

Flora & Fauna – Woods, wildflowers and all things four-legged and furry

Camp Life – Fun picnicking, camping and sitting around the campfire

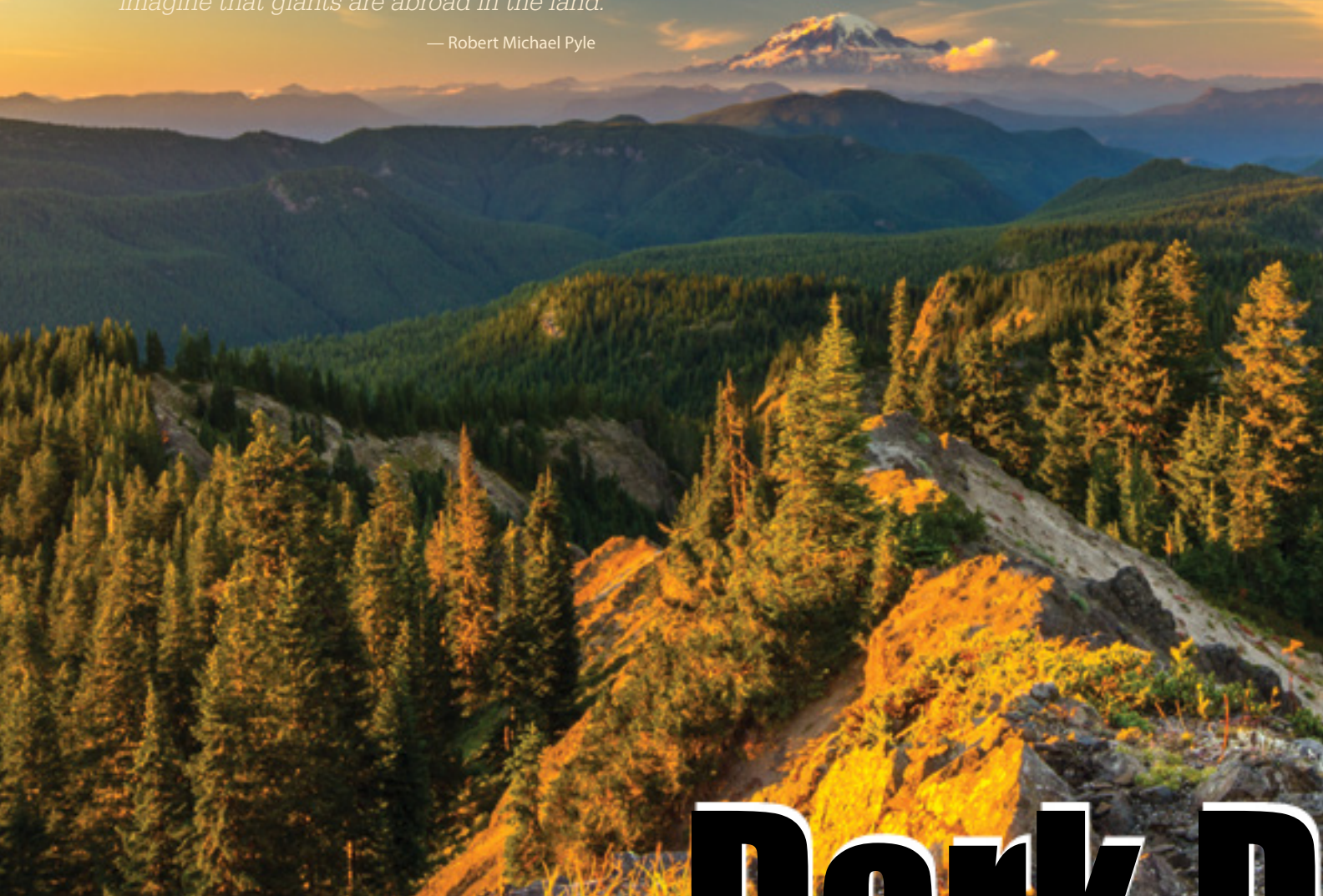
Fun on Trail – Show us how you have fun and celebrate hiking and the outdoors

Contest kicks off August 17.
Look for more info in the next issue of *Washington Trails* or online at wta.org/northwestexposure

Seeing the Light

For the very wildness from which the Bigfoot myth emanates is disappearing fast. The struggle for the leavings—the roadless zones, the old growth—is vigorous and current. But when the topography is finally tamed outright, no one will anymore imagine that giants are abroad in the land.

— Robert Michael Pyle



From Badger Peak, sunset lights up the ridges and valleys of the Dark Divide and distant Mount Rainier. Photo by Aaron Theisen.

in the Dark D



Dark Divide

Helped in no small part by its name, the 76,000-acre Dark Divide Roadless Area retains an air of mystery that, at only a three-hour drive from Portland and just south of Mount Rainier, belies its proximity to the bulk of the Northwest's population.

With a hushed voice, a hiker might ask another, "Have you been to the Dark Divide?" Not many can say they have. The Dark Divide, neither as dark nor ominous as the name implies (it was named for the 19th-century miner and settler John Dark), is a lonely, wild country filled with high meadows, lush old-growth trees and vistas among the best of what Washington has to offer, all with an added bonus: solitude.

What value is there in an unprotected place that few visit, compared to its neighbors with impressive titles like national park, national monument and national scenic area? The answer seems as elusive as Bigfoot, rumored to roam the recesses of the Pacific Northwest left untrammelled by man. And like Bigfoot, there isn't any data to settle the matter once and for all—you just have to go looking for the answers yourself.

A Rugged Country

As you look for the answers, you may truly be all alone.

"[The Dark Divide] is often less populated than our wilderness areas, especially the Goat Rocks Wilderness," says Andrea Durham, recreation manager for the Cowlitz Ranger District of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, which administers the northern half of the Dark Divide. "There's a lot of opportunity for solitude. You might run into some folks on Sunrise or Tongue Mountain because they're fairly accessible, but all the times I've hiked [in the Dark Divide] I've encountered only a handful of people."

Hikers have historically skipped over the Dark Divide because of its reputation as a motorcycle mecca: of the nearly 100 miles of trail that navigate the ridgelines and deep valleys of the Dark Divide, all but 10 are open to motorized use. But great trails still beckon hikers. And steep trails and challenging access keep users of all kinds light, rewarding hikers willing to work for big trees and big volcano views.

Those who make it into the Dark Divide will indeed find a rugged country that remains much the same as it was when John Dark and Will McCoy panned for gold there in the late 1800s.

The tallest peaks in the Dark Divide scrape the 6,000-foot mark, standing alongside their neighbors like canine teeth in a bear's jaw. Sunrise Peak's 5,892-foot prominence is the first to catch the morning rays. The light touches a metal railing and steps, the only remainder of a fire lookout built by Gifford Pinchot's disciples, known as the "Little GPs." There, the Little GPs watched over the nation's forests. But who watches now—perhaps Bigfoot himself?

Far on the horizon, the fin of 5,262-foot Shark Rock plows through the sea of ancient blue-green trees pushed into massive waves of rock by the long winds of geologic time. The ridges are steep, their crests turned red

by Andrea Imler & Ryan Ojerio

and orange in the fall by fields of huckleberries, as if reflecting the flames of the Cispus Fires that brought the Little GPs to Sunrise Peak, Badger Peak, Summit Prairie and other vantages with their lookouts, to watch and practice the hubris of fire suppression.

Down in the valley bottoms, giants live on in the form of noble fir, western redcedar, hemlock and Douglas-fir trees. The woody giants live long centuries and survive the cycles of fire that visit the wet side of the Pacific Northwest. Walk among the old growth and notice how the black fire scars on the thick bark climb above your head, sometimes as high as a two-story house. But to these giants it is just a dusting of soot on their shins from yesterday's fire.

Challenging Trails

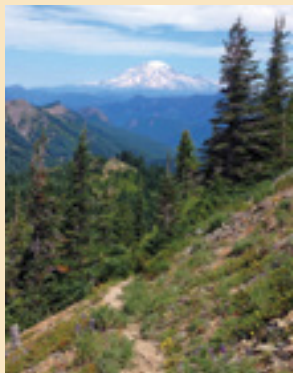
Despite its unbelievable history and breathtaking views, many hikers shy away from the Dark Divide because of its challenging trails. Like many routes in the region, the Forest Service constructed the Dark Divide trails for functionality, not recreation. "Generally, trails were built to get from point A to point B," says Durham. "So if the quickest route was the steepest route that was okay."

Throughout the years, there has been discussion of creating less challenging and more sustainable routes, but funding has always been a limiting factor. Therein lies the conundrum of the Dark Divide. Due to its isolation and lack of visitors, the scarce federal dollars that are allocated to keep up the roads and trails within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are primarily directed to more populated areas, like Mount Adams and the Goat Rocks, leaving the roads and trails into the heart of the Dark Divide in less-than-ideal shape.

Giving the trails of the Dark Divide the TLC they need is hampered by more than just money. Trail maintenance efforts are also complicated by the dynamics of slope and soil composition, which necessitate the construction and annual maintenance of drainage structures, not to mention a shorter maintenance season.



Hike the Dark Divide

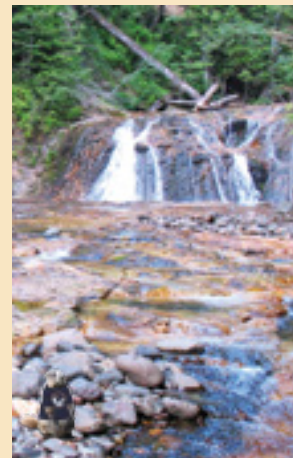


SUNRISE PEAK Visit Sunrise Peak at the right time, and you'll see how it got its name. Take the steep and rutted Sunrise Trail to the east flank of Sunrise Peak and a great view of Mount Adams. Climb through a meadow to the junction with the Sunrise Peak Trail to the precipitous perch of the former fire lookout. Return the way you came, or drop down to the Juniper Ridge Trail. Turn left to head south, eventually linking up to the Sunrise Trail that will take you back to the trailhead. At a little more than 3 miles round trip, this route delivers the best bang for the buck with incredible 360-degree views.

QUARTZ CREEK



This 10-mile nonmotorized trail is one of southwest Washington's most spectacular old-growth valley treks. It is also one of the most rugged and undeveloped. The route has a few bridges and steep grades, but the solitude makes it worth the effort. At 1.6 miles, cross Straight Creek on fallen trees, the only passage until late summer, when it can be safely forded. The best old growth is found in the next couple of miles, making for a nice 4–5 mile hike round trip. More intrepid hikers can backpack in to French Creek and circumnavigate Dark Mountain via the French Creek and Boundary Trails.



"July to about October is when we can do maintenance in the area," says Durham. "White Pass Ski Area [about 30 air miles northwest of the Dark Divide] sits at 4,500 feet, if that's any indication of snow levels!"

WTA and the Dark Divide

Despite these challenges, WTA has long been committed to the Dark Divide, first with advocacy to protect the roadless area and now with volunteer crews that have started to reclaim trails. Starting in 2012, several Backcountry Response Teams cleared the first 5 miles of the nonmotorized Quartz Creek Trail. In 2014, the Forest Service directed more staff to the Dark Divide. Their saw teams cleared the remaining 5 miles of the Quartz Creek Trail, in addition to opening up several other routes that had been virtually impassable, including Snagtooth and French Creek trails.

This year, WTA crews will be working on the Blue Lake Trail, another nonmotorized route, which ties into the Craggy Peak Trail and leads to one of the best vistas on the spine of the Divide. Additionally, several WTA volunteers are planning scouting missions to assess trail conditions at McCoy Peak, Langille Ridge, Juniper Peak and Badger Peak to inform our fall 2015 planning meetings for 2016 volunteer trips.

Advocate With Your Boots

In researching his book, *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide*, naturalist and author Robert Michael Pyle didn't encounter the creature, but he did discover the value of wild places. For Pyle, wild places are more than physical spaces; they are a canvas for the human imagination, suggesting that even those who never set foot in the Dark Divide have a stake in protecting its wild character.

Legendary guidebook author and photographer Ira Spring would have agreed. He frequently beat the drum for hiking-boots-on-the-ground advocacy and spent many a day walking trails in the Dark Divide. Spring believed that for citizens to care about protecting wild places, they had to first set foot in them.

Therefore lies the dilemma of the Dark Divide: It's a delicate balance between "off the beaten path" and "off the map." As a hiker and WTA member, you can support trails in the Dark Divide by visiting the area and hiking it for yourself. Discover the views, the meadows and the quiet solitude of this remote area. The alternative is the loss of these trails for everyone. And that would truly be the darkest outcome of all.

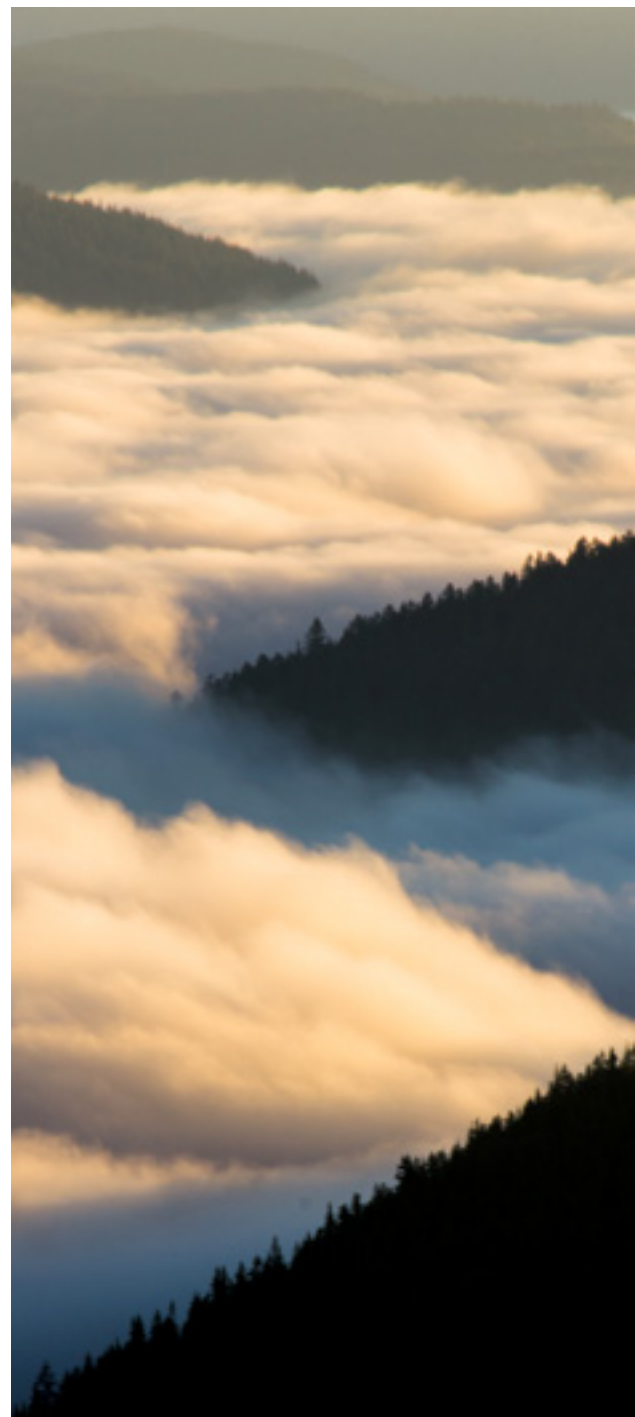
Learn more about the Dark Divide at wta.org/darkdivide.



Trail photos by Ryan Ojerio

BADGER PEAK & LAKE

Scramble to round-the-compass volcano views on this 10-mile round trip trek. Along the way, admire open forests of old-growth hemlock and Pacific silver fir. Mycologists will marvel at the variety of mushrooms crowding the forest floor. At the peak, fused glass and scraps of metal are all that's left of a former Forest Service lookout, but the views remain. Due north is Mount Rainier, followed in clockwise succession by Mounts Adams, Hood and St. Helens. Just below the peak, small and shallow Badger Lake is a good place to shake the pumice out of your boots.



Legendary guidebook author and photographer Ira Spring ... frequently beat the drum for hiking-boots-on-the-ground advocacy and spent many a day walking trails in the Dark Divide.

The mystery of the Dark Divide, from Council Bluff.
Photo by Aaron Theisen.



The Other Vancouver



Got the travel bug but don't want to hassle with extensive planning and logistics? Just a short ferry ride from Washington, Vancouver Island offers visitors a bounty of flavors and experiences to satisfy any interest. Explore world-renowned museums and gardens, savor a variety of international cuisine and take a hike in a lush provincial park. With so much to do, you'll need more than a weekend for this Canadian island adventure.

BY ELI BOSCHETTO



Whether you want to hike a rugged coastline, discover historic cultural sites or just pull up a barstool for a mound of poutine, Vancouver Island is a great place to spend a long summer weekend.

In fact, Vancouver Island boasts more protected parkland than developed areas, as well as an abundance of old-growth forest, sparkling lakes, mountain meadows and an epic coastline; it's an ideal destination for outdoors enthusiasts. And no matter whether you tread by boot or bike, there is adventure and discovery to be had around every corner.

DAY ONE: Get Acquainted With Victoria

Once you arrive in Victoria, you'll want to get your bearings, get settled and pick up any necessities for your visit. From Victoria's Inner Harbor, where the ferries disembark, you'll find yourself at the gateway of British Columbia's capitol, a city that melds local and cultural history—of both its founders and the native people—with modern cosmopolitan flavor. Taking center stage are **Victoria's Parliament Buildings** and the **Fairmont Empress Hotel**. Completed in 1898, the majestic Parliament Building combines ornate Baroque and Romanesque Revival architectural styles. Its imposing size is impressive during the day, but it takes on a romantic softness at night when lit up by hundreds of tiny lights. Across from the Parliament Building, the Fairmont Empress Hotel (fairmont.com/empress-victoria) has been a Canadian

landmark since 1908 and is known for hosting celebrities, royalty and dignitaries from around the world. Its luxurious services and accommodations are renowned among the travel industry. If you have the means, it's worth splurging for a few nights. Otherwise, at least walk the grounds, view the artwork and consider enjoying Afternoon Tea or going for a cocktail in the Bengal Lounge.

CAPITOL TOURS: Free 45-minute guided tours are offered daily through the summer season and present a fine introduction to the history and culture of Canada's westernmost province (leg.bc.ca).

From the Empress Hotel, a walk north on Government Street puts you into the heart of Victoria's retail and dining center. Start with a visit to **Munro's Books** (munrobooks.com), between Fort Street and View Street. Established in 1963, Munro's offers a large selection of Vancouver history and tour books—including a good selection of area hiking guidebooks. Look for *The Essential Vancouver Island Outdoor Recreation Guide* by John Kimantas, which details everything from hiking and mountain biking to camping, kayaking and even spelunking. If you forgot your trekking poles or need a new pair of Thorlos, continue north on Government Street to **Mountain Equipment Co-op** (mec.ca), on the corner of Johnson Street. Canada's equivalent to REI, MEC stocks everything you need to hit the trails, the rocks or the water.

After browsing a while, head over to Wharf Street and place an order at **Red Fish Blue Fish** (redfish-bluefish.com). This food



Getting to Victoria

There are three ferry lines that run between Washington and Vancouver Island. The **Victoria Clipper** operates directly from the Seattle waterfront to Victoria. This passenger-only ferry service takes approximately 3 hours each way. (You can bring bikes.) To take your car to the island (and for a shorter ferry ride), the **Black Ball Ferry** operates between Port Angeles and Victoria. The passage takes about 90 minutes each way. If your trip originates north of the Seattle area, the **Washington State Ferry** operates between Anacortes and Sydney and also services the San Juan Islands. Following the 3-hour passage, arriving in Sydney requires a half-hour drive south to Victoria.

All three ferry services ask that you arrive for your passage at least one hour prior to departure (to Canada) to clear customs and board the ferry; return trips (to the U.S.) often require you to arrive at least 90 minutes prior to departure. Be sure to bring passports or enhanced Washington driver's licenses for every traveler. Check ferry websites for passage schedules and rates.

- ▶ **Victoria Clipper:** clippervacations.com
- ▶ **Black Ball Ferry:** cohoferry.com
- ▶ **WA State Ferry:** wsdot.com/ferries

counter is a Victoria institution, offering the freshest fish and seafood right on the waterfront. Go for the classic fish and chips, or try one of the tasty tacones, a selection of grilled, wrap-like tacos stuffed with seasoned seafood, slaw and pickled onions. Take your food, sit by the water and watch the seaplanes come and go.

HAUNTED HISTORY: For a different kind of tour, take the Ghostly Walk. Offered nightly during the summer season, this 2-hour walking tour uncovers Victoria's supernatural side—the stuff you don't read about in guidebooks. Visit discoverthepast.com.

Top off your acquaintance with Victoria with an evening stroll around **Beacon Hill Park** (beaconhillpark.ca). Head east out of downtown on Dallas Street; park on the roadside, or take Circle Drive to Beacon Hill Road and into the center of the park. Established in 1882, this 200-acre park—once the site of its namesake navigation beacons—is adorned with landscaped bridges, ponds and rock gardens and is home to a variety of flora and fauna. On clear evenings, watch the sunset paint alpenglow over the Olympic Mountains across the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

DAY TWO: Get Out and Play

Before you head for the outdoors, start your day with a good breakfast. For that, head to **Jam Cafe** (jamcafevictoria.com) on Fisgard Street. Go for the chicken and waffles or one of their special Bennies. If you've got a raging breakfast appetite, take on the full Charlie Bowl: a giant mound of hash browns, crumbled biscuits, ham, eggs and cheddar, all topped with gravy—yum! Once you've filled up, pack your boots or bike and drive just 20 minutes west of downtown on the Trans-Canada Highway to **Thetis Lake Regional Park** (crd.bc.ca). An extensive network of easy and moderate mixed-use trails explores 500-year-old Douglas-fir forest and circuits Upper and Lower Thetis Lake and Prior Lake. More challenging trails climb to Scafe Hill and Stewart Mountain. Cross the highway into **Mill Hill Regional Park** and take the short hike to Mill Hill's summit for panoramic views over Victoria and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Mill Hill was once the native area of the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples, and several artifacts have been discovered here.

For the avid hiker, **Goldstream Provincial Park** (env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/) is not to be missed. This wilderness gem in Canada's park system offers a variety of walking and hiking trails near the head of Saanich Inlet, ranging from barrier-free paths to the challenging ascent of 419-meter **Finlayson Mountain**. Views from the summit take in the Olympic Mountains to the south and Mount Baker to the east. A less-strenuous trail leads to 47.5-meter **Niagara Falls**, which is not as wide but nearly as tall as its East Coast namesake. The park offers a large campground if you're more inclined to rustic accommodations over a hotel or B&B. (Reservations are recommended in summer.)

NATURE IN ACTION: In the fall, the annual salmon run draws crowds from near and far and it's a sight to see, as countless salmon return from the ocean to migrate up Goldstream River to their spawning grounds—a good time for spotting eagles and bears.

Once you're done playing for the day, head back downtown for a cold pint and comfort food at one of Victoria's pubs. **Irish Times** (irishtimespub.ca), on the corner of Government and View streets, serves up perfect pints of Guinness and a tasty dish of corned beef and cabbage. On the opposite corner, **Garrick's Head Pub** (bedfordregency.com/pub.htm), established in 1867, offers a variety of microbrew and imported taps, along with English pub food selections. Visit either one of these establishments on a hockey or soccer night (in season) for a rousing good time.

DAY THREE: Play More

The next day is a busy one, so start your morning with a kick at **Serious Coffee** (seriouscoffee.com) on Menzies Street, across from Irving Park. Sip a hot cup of joe or another coffee (or tea) concoction while munching on a fresh muffin, scone or the hearty lumberjack wrap. After breakfast, take a 30-minute drive north on Highway 17 to the world-famous **Butchart Gardens** (butchartgardens.com). Home to more than a million native and exotic plants, it's touristy but definitely worth a visit. If you have an hour to spare in the area, also check out the **Victoria Butterfly Gardens** (butterflygardens.com), which showcases up to 75 different types of butterflies and moths in forestlike, walk-through exhibits.

For your afternoon outing, head west of Victoria on Highway 14 to **Juan de Fuca Provincial Park** (env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks) and the **Juan de Fuca Marine Trail**. This 47-km trail alternates between rugged coast and inland forest and rivals the more publicized West Coast Trail in scenic amazingness—without the permit quotas. Four access points let you tailor a hike to your length and liking; moderate hiking sections start at the China Beach and Sombrio Beach trailheads. Try to spy sea lions or pods of whales in the strait, and look skyward for bald eagles. If you're up for a big adventure, you can backpack the entire trail from China Beach to Port Renfrew. (The average hiking time is 4 days.) The camping fee is just \$10 (Canadian) per person per night.

After your hike, on your way back to Victoria, stop into **Yeung's Halibut House** for dinner. Located in Saanich, in a tiny space on the corner of Cloverdale Avenue and Quadra Street, Yeung's serves up large portions of delicious Chinese dishes (much better than what you'll find in downtown's Chinatown) with delightfully friendly service. Try something from their specials board. If you haven't already, head to the Empress Hotel for live music and an after-dinner cocktail in the Bengal Lounge.

DAY FOUR: Come Back Again

On your last day in Victoria, before catching the ferry, spend your morning exploring the **Royal B.C. Museum** (royalbcmuseum.bc.ca), conveniently located near the ferry terminal, between the Capitol Building and the Empress Hotel. This world-class museum presents a variety of exhibits on Vancouver Island's natural and human histories, as well as special touring exhibits. Don't miss the totem pole park outside.

At this point, you're probably feeling like you've barely scratched the surface of everything that Vancouver Island has to offer. You're right—and that's just in the Victoria area. There are countless more parks to be explored, trails to be hiked and seafood to be savored. On your next visit, up the ante and spend some time in **Strathcona Provincial Park**, Vancouver Island's oldest and largest park, which resembles Washington's own North Cascades—from wet, forested valleys to glacier-capped alpine peaks. How could you not want more of that?

PREVIOUS: The historic Fairmont Empress Hotel greets visitors in Victoria's Inner Harbor. Photo courtesy of Destination B.C.; A mosaic orca adorns the Inner Harbor waterfront. Photo by Eli Boschetto.

OPPOSITE: Hike the misty primeval forests of Goldstream Provincial Park. Photo by German Poo-Caamano; Take in the Parliament Buildings at night, or dine on tasty pub grub at Irish Times; Photos by Eli Boschetto.

BELOW: Adventure awaits hikers on the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia.



Where to Stay

HOTEL: Hotel Grand Pacific (hotelgrandpacific.com)

Enjoy Inner Harbor views at this upscale waterfront hotel within walking distance of everything downtown. Amenities include a full-service spa and complimentary bike rentals.

HOTEL: Hotel Zed (hotelzed.com)

Go for something out of the ordinary at this funky-chic hotel just outside of downtown. Located near the Galloping Goose urban trail, walk or bike to shopping and dining.

B&B: Dashwood Manor (dashwoodmanor.com)

This elegant 1912 English Tudor mansion is located right on the waterfront next to Beacon Hill Park, perfect for sunset strolls. Choose from 11 spacious, ensuite rooms.

CAMPING: Goldstream Provincial Park

(env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks)

Pack your tent and camp stove and stay away from the urban bustle. This 159-site campground offers running water, restrooms, picnic shelters, summer interpretive programs and is within walking distance of several hiking trails.

The Art of

Heading outdoors isn't always about bagging peaks and racking up trail miles. Sometimes it's just as good to chill out in camp with a refreshing beverage and just watch the clouds roll by.

To help you in your pursuit of peacefulness, there's no shortage of camp creature comforts available for you to pack along to your campsite or into the backcountry for some well-deserved downtime. The biggest challenge: finding the perfect view to drift off to.



The Therm-a-Rest Treo Chair (front) is small and packable enough to take anywhere. Or, kick back in campy comfort with REI's Stowaway Chair (right), or the you-won't-want-to-get-out-of-it Helinox Sunset Chair (left).

Stay Grounded

When it comes to kicking back in camp, there's nothing quite as good as a comfy chair. These convenient and compact selections have proven their worth. Give them a sit for yourself.

LOW RIDER: REI Stowaway Chair

For chilling out by the river or lakeside, nothing beats a classic camp chair. REI's version of the folding camp chair sports a low-profile design so you can stretch your legs out and keep your drinks and snacks within easy reach. Padded armrests add to the comfort, and mesh paneling dries quickly. When it's time to go, just pack it up in the convenient carry sack for compact transport. \$45

TAKE IT ANYWHERE: Therm-a-Rest Treo Chair

This camp chair is so compact you can pack it along to the lake, the backcountry or the summer concert in your local park. From the time you open the sturdy composite casing (which forms the chair's legs), setup takes less than a minute—that way you're spending more time lounging and less time fussing with parts. Takedown is just as simple; wrap it up, close it up and off you go. \$100

CAMP LUXURY: Helinox Sunset Chair

If you really want to make your camp friends envious, just bust out the high-backed Sunset Chair. Setup is easy with its shock-corded DAC pole structure. Just unload it from its compact carry sack, snap the legs and supports into place stretch the chair panel into place and voila! This one's so comfortable, you'll be looking for other excuses to get it out and kick back. \$150

HOW TO:

The Perfect Camp Kickback

- Pick a site with a great view.
- Slip into some cozy camp shoes.
(See page 40.)
- Grab your favorite cold drink.
(In the backcountry, chill your drink in a stream)
- Set up your chair or hammock.
- Watch the day pass by without a care in the world.

Kicking Back



Hang out in breezy comfort with Therm-a-Rest's Slacker Hammock (upper) or ENO's SingleNest Hammock (lower). Or, take hammocking to the next level with TENTSILE's Connect Tree Tent (right). If lazy water time is your thing, float away on Klymit's LiteWater Dinghy (right).

Hang Out

If your idea of outdoor serenity is hanging in the trees and swaying to a gentle mountain breeze, then a hammock is calling you. Just take one of these selections for a swing and drift off.

SINGLE OR DOUBLE: ENO SingleNest Hammock

The tried-and-true SingleNest all but guarantees both front- and backcountry bliss. This high-strength nylon hammock sets up easily between two trees, poles or other standing objects so you can hang out just about anywhere. And with its light weight and compact stuffed size, you'll be taking it everywhere. Also available in the DoubleNest model for lounging with a partner. \$60/\$70

BE A SLACKER: Therm-a-Rest Slacker Hammock

Increase the hammocking comfort factor with this soft-touch polyester option. Designed with just one solid piece of material, the Slacker is extra-durable for all of your camping and trekking downtime. The integrated stuff sack ensures that it won't get lost, and was smartly designed to hold a book or tablet when you decide it's time to close your eyes and enjoy the sounds of nature. \$80

ABOVE AND BEYOND: TENTSILE Connect Tree Tent

Is it a hammock? Is it a tent? The answer is both. Large enough for two people, the Connect uses ratcheting tensioners to create a secure hanging surface for lounging and sleeping. Leave it fully open for views and ventilation, or put up the flysheet for more coverage. And if it rains on your parade, no problem—it also comes with a rain fly. This will change the way you camp! \$495

Float Away

How's this: drifting lazily on your favorite backcountry lake or river? Here are a couple of lightweight inflatables you can take anywhere.

SO EASY: Klymit LiteWater Dinghy

Paddling around on the water is no longer just a frontcountry luxury. This ultra-light, ultra-durable packraft weighs in at just 2.5 pounds and packs down as small as your Nalgene bottle. The dry sack pump makes inflation a breeze, and double valves make packing up quick and easy. Plus, it features an ergonomic seating platform so you can paddle around in comfort—when you're not just lying back and counting clouds. \$200

OMG!: Sevylor River Tube w/ Cooler

Remember the days of drifting the lakes and rivers in an old innertube? Now do it in style with this durable river tube with integrated cup holder and mini cooler. Have your lazy-cake and eat it too! It also includes a nylon cover to protect the tube from underwater rocks and debris. Toss a couple of these in your car, or stuff one into your pack, and go find some water—it's tube time! \$50

Treat Your Feet

At the end of a long hiking day—especially when you're on a multiday backpacking trip—the best thing you can do to preserve your feet is get them out of your hot, sweaty hiking boots. So you're not walking around barefoot on twigs and stones, or wearing holes in your Thorlos, pack along a lightweight pair of camp shoes to change into. Something breathable is best, so your feet can dry out while you set up camp and make your dinner. If your hike requires water crossings, you may even be able to change into them to keep your boots dry. Here are three top choices by WT's editor.

CAMP SHOE TIPS:

- ▶ **Flip-flops:** The simplest and lightest camp shoe you can get; they don't offer much protection from rocks and twigs, but they're light and let your feet breathe nicely.
- ▶ **Slip-ons:** Usually cloth or canvas, these shoes are usually lightweight and compact nicely; keep them accessible in your pack to change out easily when you get to camp.
- ▶ **Water Shoes:** These often have full coverage, good tread and a protective toe cap. They're heavier, but are good for river fords or as alternate trail shoes when you need a break from your boots; heel loops let them hang on your pack.

ALL-TERRAIN Chaco Outcross Evo 2

Lightweight and sturdy, these durable crossover trail shoes can take on just about any terrain—on trails, crossing creeks, across sandy beaches and even mountain biking. Okay, maybe not mountaineering. They're even light enough to pack along on multiday trips for use as spare trail shoes or comfy camp shoes. Designed to be worn sockless, the upper mesh paneling allows maximum ventilation for keeping feet cool and dry (on land), and quick-drying after treading through water. The rugged Outcross Evo outsole has good tread for handling a variety of tough surfaces, so if you need to ditch your boots to cool your feet, these will do the trick—as well as keep you on your feet through slippery water crossings. Plus, the Luvseat footbed makes them trail-comfy right out of the box. M/W \$110

Bonus Points: The neoprene sock liner keeps debris out.



ULTRALIGHT Columbia Bahama Vent II

Perfect for slipping into when you roll into camp, these ultralight canvas shoes let your feet breathe and relax after long days on trail. The unique Techlite mesh footbed works in conjunction with midsole ventilation ports to keep air flowing through the shoe, keeping your feet dry and comfortable. You just may find yourself wearing them around town as much as in camp—we did. M \$70

Bonus Points: The Omni-Grip outsole keeps you steady on wet surfaces.



DARE TO BE DIFFERENT KEEN Uneek

Years ago, KEEN revolutionized the water shoe. Now they've done it again with the Uneek Sandal. This truly unique trail and water shoe combines KEEN's uber-comfy metatomical footbeds and high-traction outsoles with a laced paracord upper. Loop them on a carabiner and carry them along with you for creek crossings, water play or just lounging around in camp. M/W \$100

Bonus Points: The bungee lacing system makes in and out easy.

More suggestions for pampering your feet on trail.

Blisters can be one of a hiker's worst enemies. One of the best ways to avoid blisters and worn feet is to change your socks midway through your hiking day. Another way is to wear sock liners. These ultra-thin baselayers for your feet provide an extra layer of breathable, moisture-wicking protection to reduce friction and help keep your feet dry and comfortable.



◀ Injinji Liner Crew

If you're prone to getting blisters on or between your toes while hiking, slip on a pair of these CoolMax baselayer socks under your normal hiking socks and kiss those blisters goodbye. \$9



◀ Icebreaker Lite Liner

Increase comfort and reduce hot spots with these ultralight merino wool liners. The seamless toebox ensures there won't be any blister-causing friction on your sensitive digits. \$15

WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS PICTURE?

(besides the top of the mountain.)

ANSWER: YOU

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TRAIL MIX

Nature Nook

By Tami Asars

Northwest forests are teeming with life—much of which may go overlooked or unseen. On your next hike, look out for the little things and discover something new on your favorite trails.

BIRD: Western Tanager

When you catch a glimpse of a western tanager, you might think someone's tropical pet bird got loose. The spectacular yellow, orange and black western tanager makes its summer nests in coniferous areas, preferring juniper or pine habitat, often on the east side of the Cascade Crest. Occasionally they are found on the west side in thick forests, orchards or gardens. During courtship, male tanagers may perform a dance in which they tumble past a female, displaying their bright colors and flashing their vibrant feathers. During the warmer months, they dine on insects such as ants, stinkbugs, beetles, crane flies and grasshoppers. They are also drawn to fruit such as serviceberries, elderberries and blackberries. Look for western tanagers in the Methow Valley or in the outskirts of Yakima.



BEAST: Pika

If you happen to be hiking near a talus field and hear a loud “eeeeppppppppp,” a pika is most likely to blame. Because they tend to overheat, pikas thrive in cool, moist mountain climates, where they can regulate their body temperature in protected rocky outcroppings. Roughly the size of guinea pigs, but more closely related to rabbits, American pikas construct small burrows where they gather what is known as a “haypile” of grasses, shrubs and moss to put into their primitive pantries. Unlike marmots, pikas do not hibernate during cold winter months; they spend the summer gathering tasty tidbits to eat when food is unavailable in winter. Look for them at middle to high elevations in the Cascade and Olympic mountains, on small talus slopes or in large boulder fields.



BLOOM: Giant-Head Clover

The first time you see this plant, it might just take your breath away. As delicate as a rose, the gentle beauty of this low-growing ground cover causes hikers to pause and enjoy. Found on the eastern side of the Cascade Crest in late spring or early summer, this grand perennial boasts thick leaves and a wide, large blossoming head upwards of 1 to 2.5 inches in size. The pale to deep pink hues on the blooms are further showcased by the often neutral-colored rocky soil where these plants sink their roots. Look for giant-head clover, also known as large-head or big-head clover, along shrub steppes, sagebrush desert landscapes and ponderosa pine woodland habitat. One of the best displays in the state can be found at Snow Mountain Ranch just outside of Yakima.



Photos by Tami Asars



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Mount Adams Sunset This photo of Mount Adams, taken from Snowgrass Flat in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, was straightened just slightly and cropped to eliminate some empty sky. The spot-removal tool was used to remove a couple of unwanted dust spots, levels were adjusted, saturation was increased a small amount, the shadows slider was used to bring out some detail in the darker areas of the volcano, and modest sharpening was applied before exporting the final image. — Doug Diekema



6 Tactful Touch-Ups

Even when you've done a great job optimizing composition, exposure and focus with your camera, the judicious use of a basic editing program on the computer or tablet can improve the final appearance of your photos, more accurately capture the scenes that your eyes viewed and enhance your chances of getting into the final round of WTA's photo contest. On the other hand, it's easy to overdo it, leading to a photo that appears unreal or "processed." Try these six simple digital editing techniques to bring out the best in your images.

1. Straightening & Cropping

The sense of imbalance created by a tilted horizon line can ruin an otherwise fine photograph. Unless your creative expression seeks that imbalance, fix this problem with the straighten tool. Cropping a photo can enhance composition, eliminate unwanted elements (like too much sky or a stray branch) and creatively frame a scene. And don't be afraid to uncheck the "constrain proportions" box!

2. Spot Healing

Digital cameras, especially those with interchangeable lenses, will inevitably have dust settle on the sensor. This is most apparent when unsightly spots appear in an otherwise pristine sky. Use the spot-removal or healing brush tools to remove these obvious flaws.

3. Levels Adjustment

Optimizing contrast and exposure can make a photo "pop." There are advanced tools for accomplishing this task, but many editing programs have an "auto-levels" feature that will give you a starting point. The levels and exposure adjustments usually include three sliders (left, middle and right). Generally, you'll want to move the left slider to the right and the right slider to the left to meet the edges of the histogram. Adjust from there to get the best result.

4. Shadows & Highlights

These tools selectively adjust the dark and light areas of your photo. The shadow slider will lighten the dark areas of a photo without changing the lighter areas, allowing you to bring detail out of the shadows. The highlights slider darkens the white areas of a photo without altering the darker areas. This can sometimes help recover some of the detail in clouds and snow.

5. Saturation

Adding some saturation will usually improve a landscape photo and allow it to more closely correspond with the colors you saw in the original scene. Just don't overdo it! Too much saturation will make a photo appear unnatural and scream "fake." Modest adjustments are usually all that is required to improve the image.

6. Sharpening

The nature of a digital image is to appear a bit "soft." Some subtle sharpening will increase contrast around the edges of objects, making the photo appear more crisp. This should be the last adjustment you make before saving a photo, and don't over-sharpen. Perhaps most importantly, sharpening *will not* fix a photo that is out of focus.

Not all six adjustments will be necessary for every photo, but learning and practicing these techniques will help you optimize your photographic vision and improve your photos. Be sure to always save a copy of the unadjusted original file before doing any editing. That way, if something goes wrong, you always have the original stored in a safe place.

WTA's Northwest Exposure Photo Contest starts on August 17.
Get the details at wta.org/northwestexposure.

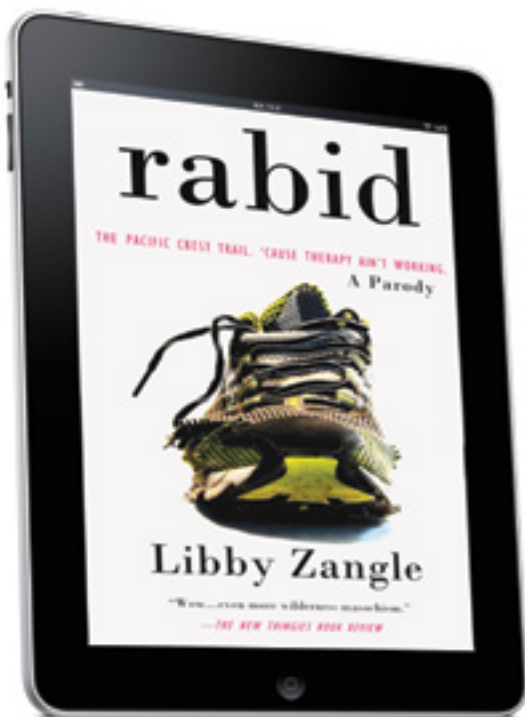
Wild About *Rabid*

The trees were tall. They actually were taller than me. Probably taller than most humans I have met. I mean, people don't usually reach a hundred feet tall, and if they did, it would be super hard to find boots that fit ...

I was alone ... I was unemployed ... My mom was still alive. The only thing that had to die to get me out here were five percent of the federal budget and a child's down coat ...

In the days before ... I'd stolen myself and thrown me over a cliff too. Figuratively. My cliff had brought me to a world that was 2,669 miles long and between one and twenty-four feet wide, but that was only if I never left the trail. A world that would somehow inexplicably give me a brain makeover and cure my depression ... without the assistance of conventional healthcare providers ...

A world called the Pacific Crest Trail. Dun dun dun!



And that's just part of the prologue. If you like your trail literature served up with a hearty portion of tongue-in-cheek sass, a side of biting sarcasm and a dash of hilarious vulgarity, then *Rabid* is the breath of fresh air you're looking for. It's like this: *Rabid* is to *Wild* what *Spaceballs* is to *Star Wars*. And who didn't love that rollicking adventure with Lone Star and Barf?

I was not a fan of Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*. Neither are many of the Pacific Crest Trail hikers I have met, talked with and camped in the company of. For us, *Wild* was a perfect approach of how *NOT* to hike the PCT. Despite its story of personal awakening and redemption on one of the world's most spectacular trails, the "Wild Effect" has prompted large numbers of inexperienced and unprepared hikers to try their hand at following in Strayed's footsteps, only resulting in more trash on the trail, more abuse of the trail environment, and more rescues of hikers than ever before.

Now that *Wild*-mania is finally beginning to fade, a self-proclaimed "real" PCT hiker (as in, wore the proper shoes, packed the right kind of stove fuel, and completed the whole trail) has come forward to poke fun at the hype surrounding Strayed's story. Enter Libby Zangle's *Rabid: The Pacific Crest Trail. 'Cause Therapy Ain't Working*.

Beyond the snarky rebuttal to that other book, *Rabid* takes a genuine look at the world of the Pacific Crest Trail—in all its beautiful, dirty, enchanting, challenging, humorous, waterless, breathtaking, agonizing, stinky glory. It paints a vivid and entertaining picture of the community, scenery, triumphs and struggles of hiking this truly epic trail. Follow—and giggle—along with Zangle as she braves the ups and downs, food and friends, and life and living on the PCT in chapters titled, "Does Every Tragic Heroine Do Heroin?" "Cow Attack," "The Trash in Hiker Trash," and "Giant Frickin' Collapsed Volcano."

If you're looking for an armchair adventure on the PCT that will have you reaching for the tissues to wipe up tears of laughter, instead of reaching for a bottle of Zolof, then take a hike with Libby Zangle.

Rabid is available as a digital download on Amazon.com and Apple's iBook store.

Recommendation:

5/5



REFRESH YOUR TRAIL MENU

Are you in need of some new menu options to change up your trail menu? Check out these three new flavor options to add some spice and kick to your backcountry dining.

"This is good stuff!"

— Eli Boschetto
Editor, Washington Trails



MOUNTAIN HOUSE: Italian Style Pepper Steak

If you like your quick and easy backcountry dinner hearty and full of flavor, give this one a try. This filling dish combines beef strips, bell peppers, rice and onions in a zesty, tomato-based sauce. It's all the calories, carbs, protein and good fats a hiker needs to keep going. Just add boiling water, wait 10 minutes and dig in. Take along a packet of Cholula hot sauce for some extra spice! For some Asian flavor on trail, also try Mountain House's new Chicken Fried Rice. mountainhouse.com



TRAIL BUTTER: Expedition Espresso – Peanut butter is a staple for most hikers and backpackers as it packs tons of fuel for the trail. Take your ordinary nut butter up a notch with one of the tasty flavors from Portland, Oregon-based Trail Butter. Expedition Espresso combines a triple-nut butter blend with dark chocolate, sea salt and ground coffee beans. Can you say YUM?! Slather some on a bagel or tortilla for breakfast or a quick pick-me-up and you're good to go! Each 4.5-ounce squeeze container contains 3–4 servings. Check out Mountaineer Maple, too! trailbutter.com



PACKIT GOURMET: Cheddar Jalapeno Biscuits with Sausage Gravy

When it comes to comfort food, good ol' biscuits and gravy is in the top ten. Austin, Texas-based Packit Gourmet has perfected this spicy recipe so you can have flavor-packed, diner-style biscuits and gravy in camp or on trail with little effort. Just skillet bake the biscuits over your camp stove for a few minutes on each side until flaky and golden, remove, then heat the rich, creamy gravy for a couple minutes in the same pan. Add a sprinkle of salt and cracked pepper and dig in. So good! Be warned: these are so tasty you're not going to want to share. Better order extra! packitgourmet.com

10 Top Loops

Trails are good. Loop trails are better. Here are 10 stunning loop trails, picked by WT's trail team, to add to your summer to-do list. Want more loops? Visit WTA's Hiking Guide— wta.org/go-hiking/hikes—and enter “loop” in the search field.

HIKE IT: Spray Park Loop

DISTANCE: 16.4 miles, RT

ELEVATION GAIN: 5,400 ft

ELEVATION PEAK: 6,400 ft

PERMIT: Nat'l Park Entry

DOGS: Not permitted

MAP: Green Trails 269S



1 **SPRAY PARK** *Discover tumbling waterfalls, massive glaciers, rugged mountain passes, remote fire lookouts and lush parklands on this unique loop on the north side of Mount Rainier National Park.*

From the Mowich Lake camping area, begin by descending into a dense forest of cedar and fir. After 0.3 mile, at the Wonderland Trail junction, veer right, off the Wonderland, toward Spray Park and Eagle's Roost Camp; after another 1.2 miles the Eagle Cliff viewpoint is a good place to drop your pack for a short rest and nice a view of Mount Rainier. From here it's just a short distance to Eagle's Roost Camp and then 0.5 mile to the spur trail leading to Spray Falls. This short side trip to a spectacular waterfall adds less than a half-mile of hiking and is well worth the additional mileage.

Back on the main trail, climb up a series of tight switchbacks to the edge of Spray Park. As you enter the meadows the trail continues to open up, with views improving with every step. Press on to the high point that divides Spray Park and Seattle Park, about 4 miles from the trailhead. Here you'll find big views of both parks and a side trail that leads to Observation Rock. No need to follow that trail too far; a short scramble will get you face-to-face with The Mountain. Take in the vast panorama, then head down toward the Carbon River, where you'll reach Cataract Valley Camp at 6.8 miles and the trail to Carbon River Camp at 8.4 miles. Cataract Falls is just beyond Carbon River Camp (before crossing the Carbon River Suspension Bridge) and it's worth the short side trip.

From the bridge, the loop continues left, but 0.3 mile to the right are close-up views of Carbon Glacier. Head left from the bridge through mossy old growth and over endless streams and creeklets to the Northern Loop junction at 9.7 miles. Veer downhill and cross the rocky riverbed over temporary log bridges to rejoin the Wonderland Trail at 10.1 miles; turn right toward Ipsut Pass. At 11.8 miles, a short spur leads to Ipsut Falls, just a few hundred feet beyond the junction; Ipsut Creek Campground is just 0.3 mile away.

The loop continues up the Wonderland Trail toward Ipsut Pass, where the route is up, up, up. Some portions are steeper than others, but expect the next 3.6 miles to be an uphill battle. Initially you are confined to the forest, but as you climb, the trees give way to open expanses of greenery and underbrush, allowing increasingly better views of the valley below. As you near the top, the trail begins to steepen and switchback steadily upward. Once you attain the pass, continue a few hundred feet to the Mowich Lake Trail. If you have time, take a left to climb the 1.8 miles up to Eunice Lake and Tolmie Lookout for a stunning panorama of Mount Rainier. Afterward, return to the Mowich Lake Trail, and follow it down to the lake and back to Mowich Lake Campground where you started.

TRAIL TIP: Do this loop in a long day, or turn it into an overnight. For an overnight, try to book your campsite(s) well in advance and budget enough time to explore other destinations just off the main route.



INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/spray-park

TRAILHEAD: Just south of Buckley, take SR 165 for about 10 miles through Wilkeson and Carbonado to the Carbon River–Mowich Lake junction. Veer right onto Mowich Lake Rd and continue 16.2 miles to the end of the road and the trailhead.

Hike and inset by Nate & Jer Barnes; photo by Andrew Bertino

SERENITY NOW: Summer weekends are the busiest times for trails. You can often avoid crowded trails and packed trailheads by hiking midweek.

2 SKYLINE LOOP *This moderate loop offers meadows bursting with wildflowers, roaring waterfalls and up-close glacier views, and it culminates with jaw-dropping vistas from aptly named Panorama Point—all giving meaning to the area's name: Paradise.*

This route circuits the Edith Creek basin in one big swoop and can be hiked in either direction. For a clockwise route, start at the Jackson Visitor Center and take any of the paved paths upward through lush meadows and conifer groves toward the Glacier View Trail. At this point the trail turns to dirt and you climb 850 feet over 1.25 miles to Panorama Point, with views getting more incredible with every step; on your way to the point you'll see Nisqually Glacier from a high, rocky ridge.

From the Point, take in the sweeping southern view of Mounts Adams and St. Helens and far-off Mount Hood, as well as the craggy peaks of the nearer Tatoosh Range and farther Goat Rocks. To continue, choose your path depending on the lingering snow conditions. If the snow is low, take the Lower Skyline Trail (and cut off 0.5 mile off the hike). If the snow is still high, use the safer route on the Upper Skyline Trail, which cuts up and over the basin.

Hike ahead 0.5 mile to the Golden Gate Trail junction. If you decide to go right, this cuts the loop in half; it cuts directly downhill back to the parking area. To continue with the full loop, continue on to Sluiskin Falls, where you'll pass over a small bridge before heading south along Mazama Ridge. Close the loop by dropping down to the road or cutting across to the Alta Vista Trail.

TRAIL TIP: The Paradise area sees *a lot* of traffic on summer weekends. Plan to arrive early in the day (before 9 am) or try visiting midweek.



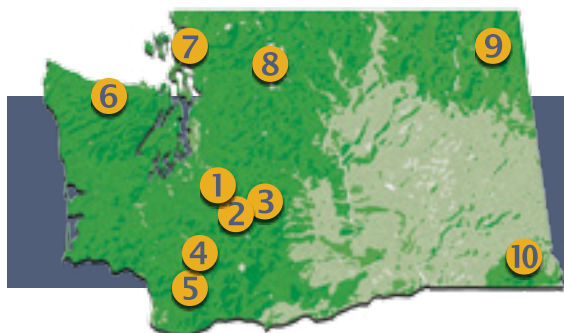
DISTANCE: 5.5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,700 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,800 ft

PERMIT: Nat'l Park Entry
DOGS: Not Permitted
MAP: Green Trails 269S

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/skyline

TRAILHEAD: From the southwest park entrance at Longmire, drive 11.3 miles to the Paradise visitor area.

Hike by Kristen Sapowicz; photo by Mitzi Sugar



3 NACHES PEAK *Go for big views on this kid-friendly loop trail that showcases two small lakes, fields of wildflowers and a magnificent view of Mount Rainier.*

This loop can be done in either direction but clockwise is recommended because Mount Rainier is in your face rather than at your back. From the parking area just east of Chinook Pass, walk south on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), crossing the highway on the wooden overpass. About 100 yards beyond the overpass, the trail enters forest and traverses the north slopes of Naches Peak. After 0.5 mile, the forest gives way to meadows and then a small, flower-filled basin with an unnamed lakelet. From here the trail climbs moderately under cliffs and presents views north to Sourdough Gap and the Norse Peak Wilderness.

The route then crosses a saddle with nice views over Dewey Lake to Nelson Ridge and Mount Aix. Shortly beyond the saddle, the trail enters the national park and comes to a junction. (At this point, dogs are no longer permitted on trail.) Here, the PCT goes left,

dropping down to Dewey Lake. Instead, continue straight ahead, climbing to a sudden, jaw-dropping view of Mount Rainier amid another flower-filled basin with a small lakelet. The trail continues through meadows, climbing at first, then gently descending the south slopes of Naches Peak back to the highway and Tipsoo Lake. To complete the loop, walk around the lake and follow the trail uphill to Chinook Pass.



DISTANCE: 5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 900 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,000 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Partial Use
MAP: Green Trails 270, 271

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/naches-peak

TRAILHEAD: From either east or west, drive Hwy 410 to Chinook Pass and park in either the parking area at the pass or the one at Tipsoo Lake.

Hike and inset by David Hagen; photo by Marty Witt



BE COURTEOUS: During summer, you will have plenty of company on popular trails. Have patience with others and share the trails and summits to ensure that everyone has a good time.



4 GOAT CREEK LOOP *Escape the crowds on this two-day backpacking adventure into the less-traveled areas on the north side of Mount St. Helens.*

Your first day is a big one, so try to get an early start—you have 11.6 miles and 2,600 vertical feet to tackle. Begin on the Goat Creek Trail, which rises and falls like a mild roller coaster. You'll cross a few mossy creeks and hike through red alder and western hemlock before coming to 150-foot Leona Falls, a little more than a mile in. As the trail gets closer to Goat Creek, you'll have views of several small waterfalls. Near 2.3 miles is the junction that marks the start of the loop; veer left, cross a babbling brook and continue upstream along Goat Creek before fording it at 2.9 miles. This is a good spot to top off your water bottles before the climbing starts.

Continuing on, ascend steeply through shaded forest before a viewpoint opens up at 4.5 miles. Take a breather here before ascending again for another mile. Through the next several miles, the trail crosses wildflower fields and skirts a shallow (sometimes dry) lake. At 11.4 miles is the junction with the Goat Mountain Trail. Turn left and proceed for about 200 yards, then head right at the junction for about 0.1 mile to Deadman's Lake. Find a designated camping spot, drop your gear and relax and enjoy the serenity of this scenic pool.

The hike out is easier than coming in, with just 8.6 miles and 600 feet of elevation to complete the loop. From Deadman's Lake, set off along the forested ridgeline. This up-and-down section boasts large wildflower and huckleberry displays in the summer and offers a few tiny peeks of Mount Rainier. At 14 miles, reach a junction and turn right to descend through the woods for another mile. Following that, you'll pass through a meadow, and then reach a small and somewhat hard-to-access lake around 15.8 miles. When you meet up with the Goat Creek Trail again, stay left and hike the final 2.3 miles back to your vehicle.



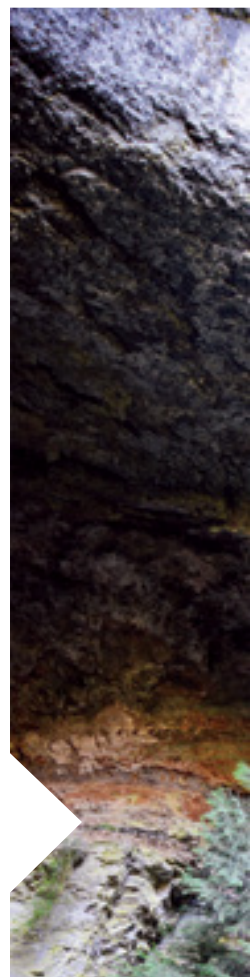
DISTANCE: 20.2 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 3,200 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 5,250 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Not Permitted
MAP: Green Trails 332

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/goat-creek-1

TRAILHEAD: From I-5, take exit 68 and continue on SR 12 for 37 miles. Near milepost 103, turn left on Kosmos Rd. After 0.1 mile, turn left on Cowlitz Rd and proceed for 4.3 miles. Turn right on FR 2750 and drive another 0.9 mile. At the unsigned fork, veer left to remain on FR 2750 for another 3.7 miles. Find the parking area on the left.

Hike by Brittany Manwill; photo by Ken Giesbers



DON'T GET FRIED: Hiking in the mountains often means more exposure and proximity to the sun. Use sunscreen, wear a hat and sunglasses, and stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water.



5 SIOUXON PEAK LOOP *This strenuous trek from creek to peak offers up-close views of impressive waterfalls and far-off views of Cascade volcanoes.*

Start by heading upstream on the Siouxon Creek Trail for 3.2 miles to the Wildcat Trail. Turn left to check the water level on Siouxon Creek; you'll be fording on your return. Continuing on the Siouxon Creek Trail, cross the slick-rock base of 14-Mile Falls at 3.9 miles, then turn left at the signed junction. Cross a sturdy wooden footbridge over Siouxon Creek's narrow chasm, and parallel Chinook Creek to the plunge pool below 50-foot Chinook Falls. Negotiate the ankle-deep ford at the outlet, and pick up the trail. Turn right at the signed junction, and begin climbing up the Chinook Creek drainage.

At 7.1 miles, join FR 6403 and bear left. Pause for views of Mounts Adams, St. Helens and Rainier. Continue to a clearing with stellar views of Mount St. Helens and the Swift Reservoir before picking up real trail again. One last bit of climbing gains the shark-fin summit ridge of Siouxon Peak at 8.1 miles. Take the narrow, brushy side trail to the 4,170-foot summit. From this former lookout site, spy Swift Reservoir, framed by Mount Rainier and Mount Adams.

Descend back to the main trail and turn left. It's an easy amble from here to Wildcat Trail at 9.3 miles. Climb to a forested knoll surrounded by ghostly snags from the Yacolt Burn, and steel yourself for a knee-fatiguing descent—more than 2,000 feet in 2.5 miles. Your reward, at 11.9 miles, is 225-foot Wildcat Falls. From the viewpoint, descend 0.25 mile to the ford at Siouxon Creek. Rejoin the Siouxon Creek Trail, and turn right for the 3.2-mile return to the trailhead.

TRAIL TIP: If the creek is running high (often in spring and early summer), save Siouxon Peak for a later date and try nearby Horseshoe Ridge instead.



DISTANCE: 15.3 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 5,120 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 4,170 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 396

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/upper-siouxon-horseshoe-falls

TRAILHEAD: From Amboy, drive east on NE Healy Rd, which turns into FR 54. At 9.1 miles, bear left on FR 57 for 2.1 miles, then left again on FR 5701. Continue 3.7 miles to the trailhead.

Hike and photos by Aaron Theisen

KNOW LIMITS: If you're taking new hikers out this summer—especially young children—choose easy trails with low mileage and little elevation gain. Work them up to more challenging trails as they gain experience.

6 **HAPPY LAKE RIDGE** *Enjoy a mix of solitude and company along a ridgetop with two backcountry lakes and sweeping alpine views.*

Begin your hike at the Appleton Pass trailhead, descending to the Happy Lake trailhead via a 1.3-mile road walk. Once at the trailhead, the route wastes no time ascending to Happy Lake. At 0.25 mile reach a small creek. This is the last reliable water source prior to Happy Lake, so it's a good place to top off. Continue climbing for 3 miles, reaching the ridge crest at 4,500 feet. Views expand along the ridge; at 4.8 miles a viewpoint looks out at the Elwha Valley and surrounding peaks of Mounts Appleton and Angeles.

At 5.8 miles is the side trail to Happy Lake. The 0.5-mile path drops 400 feet to the lake's grassy shores, where a few established campsites can be found. This makes a good destination and turnaround point for dayhikers, as well as a good water source. Back at the ridge, continue traveling west while taking in views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Mount Olympus and the Bailey Range.

At about 8.3 miles, arrive at the Aurora Divide Trail junction. Continue left to Boulder Lake, following ups and downs along the ridge. The trail climbs to an overlook at 4,900 feet with views of Boulder Peak and Lake. Drop 500 feet—steeply at times—to the side trail to Boulder Lake. Well-established campsites can be found in the basin.

Continue the loop from Boulder Lake by descending 2.9 miles along the Boulder Lake Trail to a junction with the Boulder Creek Trail. Continue left, arriving at Boulder Creek Campground and the side trail to Olympic Hot Springs. Finish with 2.3 miles on old roadbed to the trailhead.

TRAIL TIP: Much of Happy Lake Ridge lacks water. Be sure to top off your bottles at the lakes.



INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/happy-lake-ridge

TRAILHEAD: From Port Angeles, follow US 101 west for 9 miles. Turn left onto Olympic Hot Springs Rd and drive 10 miles, passing the park entrance station and Elwha Ranger Station, to the trailhead at the end of the road.

Hike and photos by Kelsie Donleycott



HIKE IT: Happy Lake Ridge

DISTANCE: 18 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 4,400 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 5,280 ft

PERMIT: Nat'l Park Entry
DOGS: Not permitted
MAP: Green Trails 133S

BE PREPARED: Even in summer, weather can change quickly and dramatically, especially in the high country. As part of your Ten Essentials, always carry rain gear and insulating layers.



Hiking in Fire Season

Wildfire season got off to an early start this year, due in part to our mild winter and warm spring, with fires already burning in the North Cascades and southern Olympics. With a warmer than average summer forecast, and much of the winter snowpack melted off early, forest and fire agencies are expecting this summer to see above average fire activity. A statewide burn ban has already been implemented on all Washington DNR lands, and campfire restrictions are already in place in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest in Chelan County.

When you're hiking and camping in both front- and backcountry areas this summer, especially during high-risk fire season, it's best to avoid having campfires altogether. Before heading for your favorite trails, check to see if there are any fire closures or burn bans in effect. If you are camping in an area without a burn ban, make sure your campfire is built and put out responsibly.

- Use existing fire rings where it is safe to do so.
- Keep campfires small and under control.
- Keep tents and other materials away from the fire.
- Completely drown the campfire with water.
- If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave!

Wildfires can often smolder undetected for days before blossoming into a conflagration. If you're hiking in the backcountry and you suddenly notice smoke or fire in the vicinity, take the appropriate safety measures.

- Hike away from the fire, into the wind and downhill.
- Try finding open, rocky terrain with little tinder.
- Look for deep water sources, such as lakes or rivers.
- Avoid narrow canyons and gullies that can funnel wind and fuel fires.
- Use your cell or satellite phone to call for information and help.

The best way to avoid a close encounter with a wildfire is to exercise caution and good judgement. Know the weather forecast. Check for fire notices. Always carry your Ten Essentials and extra water.

For more information, and to check current fire conditions, visit inciweb.nwcg.gov/state/49/.

7 LILY LAKE LOOP *This strenuous uphill climb leads to big-payout views of the San Juans from Oyster Dome before visiting tranquil Lily Lake.*

Start out on the Pacific Northwest Trail, at the northwest corner of Samish Overlook. At the first junction, head straight onto the Samish Bay Connector and begin a steep ascent through heavy tree cover; there are level sections that will allow you to catch your breath. Tall cedars and pines shade the hillside, while ferns and berry bushes create thick brush on the forest floor.

At 1.5 miles, the trail branches right to Lily and Lizard lakes or left to Oyster Dome. Head left to Oyster Dome, crossing a stream before taking on the last steep 0.25 mile of trail. At the top, stunning views of the San Juans—and on clear days the Olympics—make a great backdrop for this popular picnic spot. When you're ready to continue, head back down the hill to the junction and veer left for the lake.

The trail is an easy walk next to a stream and past marshlands. At a 3-way intersection, turn left before Lily Lake comes into view. In the summer months, the edges of this small lake are blanketed by eponymous yellow waterlilies. Backcountry

campsites are located on both sides of the lake, and a fire pit with benches offers a perfect snack spot.

After a rest, continue back to the signed junction. Turn left, then immediately right for Max's Shortcut. Winding gently downhill for just about a mile, the trail then meets up with the Larry Reed Trail. Stay right at this junction and cross a logging road before arriving back at Samish Overlook, just another mile away.

TRAIL TIP: Extend your hike another mile by returning on the alternate Lily Lake Trail.



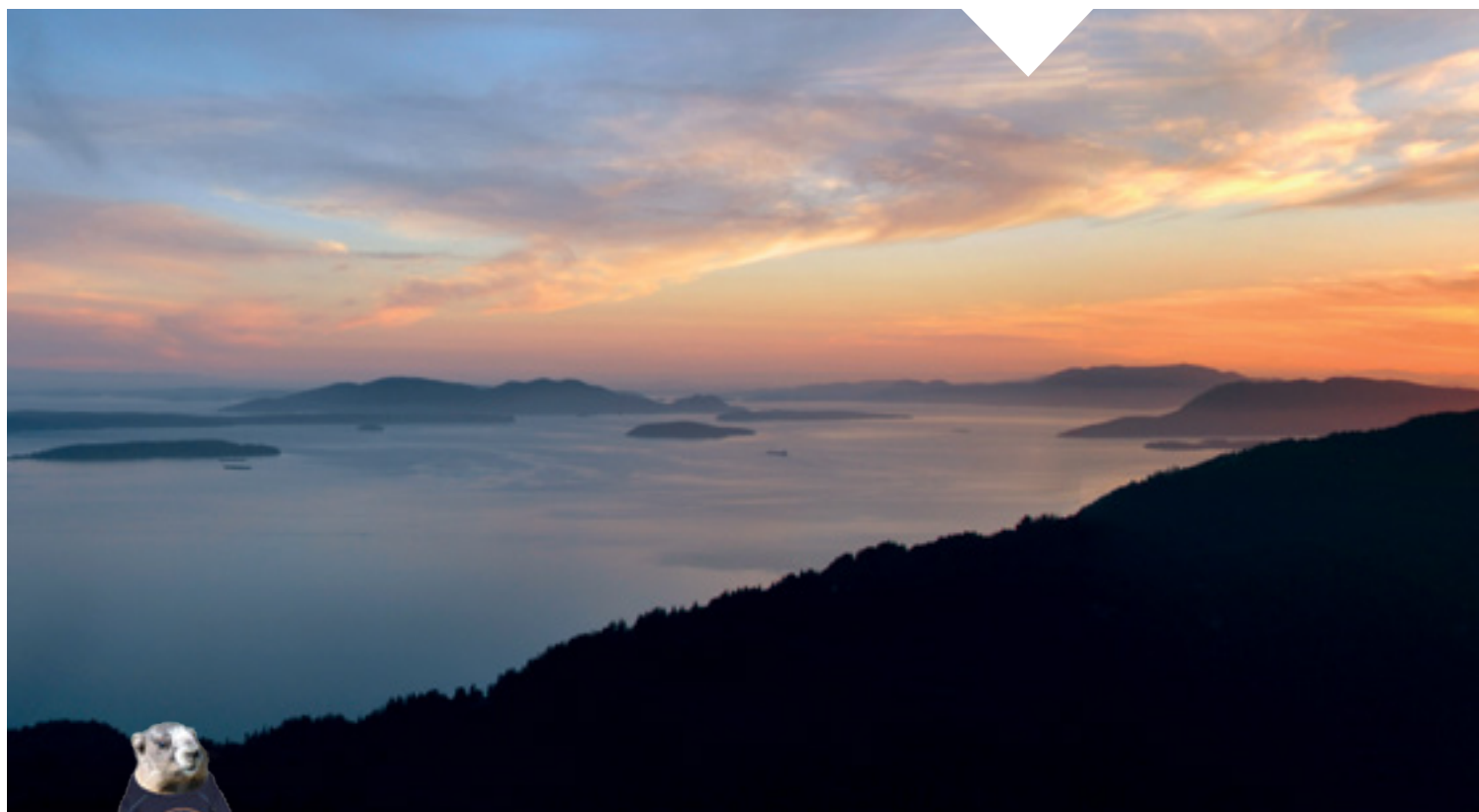
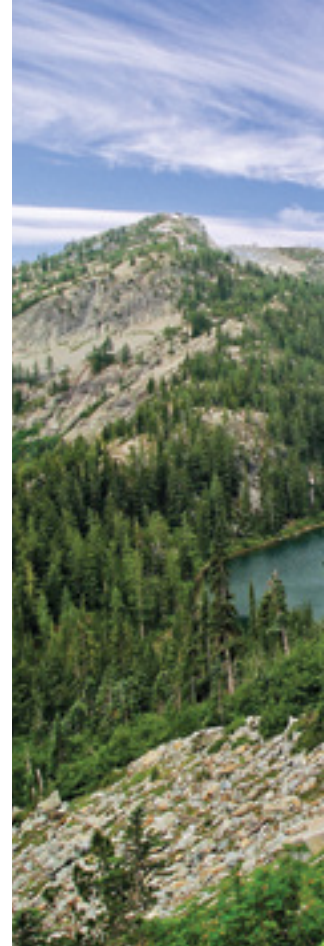
DISTANCE: 5.5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,200 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 2,225 ft

PERMIT: Discover Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: South Chuckanut

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/oyster-dome-samish-overlook

TRAILHEAD: From I-5, take exit 240 and head west. Turn left on Barrel Springs Rd for 0.7 mile, then right on Blanchard Hill Rd for 1.6 miles. Turn left at the next junction and continue for 2 miles to the trailhead.

Hike by Rachel Wood; photo by Brandon Fralic



MAKE YOUR MILES COUNT: Join WTA and hikers across the state by supporting trails in this year's Hike-a-Thon. The fun starts August 1, so sign up today! Learn more and register at wta.org/hikeathon.



8 RAINBOW-MCALESTER LOOP

Sample the best the North Cascades has to offer—subalpine lakes, forested valleys and rugged mountain passes—on this multiday trek.

By connecting a series of trails, the Rainbow–McAlester Pass Loop lets you experience the natural splendor found in the heart of the North Cascades National Park Complex. With numerous campsites along the way, you can plan an itinerary to suit your own hiking preferences.

Start by heading south on the Bridge Creek Trail (part of the Pacific Crest Trail) and enter the national park at 1.4 miles. This stretch gently loses elevation as it follows Bridge Creek through patches of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine. At 3.1 miles, reach the junction with the Twisp Pass Trail; continue right to stay on the Bridge Creek Trail. Still paralleling the creek; the junction with the Rainbow Lake Trail is reached near 5.6 miles.

Follow the trail south to Rainbow Lake, climbing the rough, steep pass on the back side of 7,895-foot Bowan Mountain before reaching the azure waters of Rainbow Lake at 13.6 miles. Proceed through wildflower-filled meadows—complete with views of jagged Rainbow Mountain—before reaching an intersection with the Rainbow Creek Trail at 17.4 miles; head north and prepare to be greeted with sweeping views of Lake Chelan and the surrounding mountains.

At 21.9 miles, reach McAlester Pass, and just a half-mile beyond, come to peaceful McAlester Lake. Enjoy the boggy subalpine meadows and forest of mountain hemlock and larch before continuing on. At 26.9 miles, reconnect with the Bridge Creek Trail and retrace your steps to complete your journey.

TRAIL TIP: If traveling before August, an ice ax may be needed to traverse the steep snow at Bowan Pass on the Rainbow Lake Trail.



DISTANCE: 31.5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 6,650 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,300 ft

PERMIT: Nat'l Park Pass
DOGS: Not Permitted
MAP: Trails Illustrated: N. Casc.

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/rainbow-ridge

TRAILHEAD: Drive SR 20 to milepost 159. The parking lot is located on the north side of the highway. Cross the road to reach the trailhead.

Hike by Lindsay Leffelman; photo by Tami Asars

STAY HYDRATED: This summer is forecast to be warm and dry, and many seasonal water sources have already run out. Carry extra water on your hike and stay hydrated, especially at higher elevations.

9 MIDNIGHT MOUNTAIN LOOP

Take in lots of scenic diversity, including fragrant alpine meadows, parkland forests and recovering fire-scorched hillsides, on the Kettle Crest.

Start by rock-hopping across Lambert Creek to a junction at 0.3 mile. You'll be returning from the left, so continue right on the Old Stage Trail. Originally constructed in 1892, this old wagon road was an early attempt at constructing a northern east-west route across the state.

In the 1990s much of the surrounding forest went up in flames. The route meanders for several miles within the burn zone, where new greenery continues to colonize the scorched slopes. Flowers are dazzling in spring and autumn colors are brilliant thanks to the blueberry bushes, cascadas and currants. Birds are profuse. Look for woodpeckers among the snags and spruce grouse feasting on the buds of new greenery. The grade is gentle with wide, sweeping switchbacks.

After passing a grove of large fire-spared larches, the trail rounds a ridge to grant a view of Midnight Mountain. Continue on easier grade through a thicket of lodgepole pines. At 5.8 miles, intersect the Kettle Crest Trail at a high pass just north of Copper Butte, the highest summit in the Kettles. Continue left, ascending a little more and topping out at 6,150 feet. Enjoy a good view south to Copper Butte; views are even better from the 6,660-foot summit of Midnight Mountain, an easy off-trail hike.

The loop continues north, reaching a junction with the Midnight Ridge Trail at 6.1 miles. Bear left and descend across meadows and through patches of aspen. Continue losing elevation, while traversing young pine forest before coming to groves of impressive old Douglas-firs, ponderosa pine and western larch. At 10.3 miles, come to a familiar junction with the Old Stage Trail. Turn right to return to the trailhead.



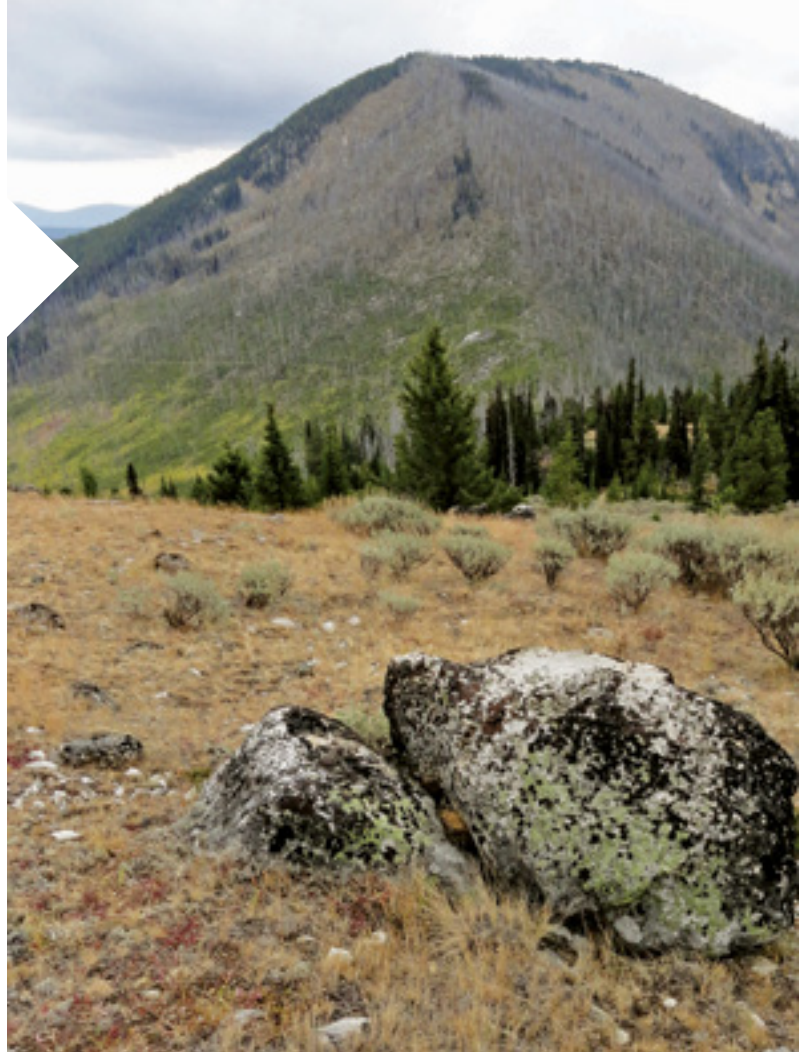
DISTANCE: 10.6 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 2,250 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,150 ft

PERMIT: None
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: USGS: Copper Butte

INFO: *Day Hiking Eastern Washington* by Craig Romano

TRAILHEAD: From Republic, follow SR 20 east to SR 21. Head north on SR 21 for 9 miles, then turn right onto CR 546 (Lambert Creek Rd.). At 6.0 miles, bear right onto FR 2156 and continue another 1.2 miles to the trailhead at Lambert Creek Campground.

Hike and photo by Craig Romano



HIKE IT: Misery Mountain Loop

DISTANCE: 48.5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 4,000 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,387 ft

PERMIT: None
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Wenaha-Tucannon

KICK BACK: Don't forget to build in some downtime on your favorite trails. Check out this issue's Gear Closet for suggestions on how you can enjoy chilling out this summer.

10 MISERY MOUNTAIN

From mountain peak to Wild and Scenic River, this long loop takes in a range of terrain, wildlife and views.

Start from the Diamond Peak trailhead outside Pomeroy, where it's a scant mile to the Mount Misery Trail intersection. Consider the optional side trip to 6,379-foot Diamond Peak before dropping down the Melton Creek Trail. Melton Creek eventually joins the Crooked Creek Trail, crossing into Oregon and losing more than 3,000 feet of elevation during its descent to the Wenaha Wild and Scenic River.

Follow the river upstream for 3 miles to its intersection with the Weller Butte–Smooth Ridge Trail, then begin the arduous climb to regain all the lost elevation. The trail ascends more than 16 miles through desert terrain, old-growth forest, wildflower meadow and open grassland. Giant western larches, ponderosa pines and western junipers adorn the route—and don't forget to keep an eye out for deer, bighorn sheep, elk, bears and cougars.

Don't miss the side hike to the fire lookout at Oregon Butte when Smooth Ridge rejoins the Mount

Misery Trail, where on a clear day one can see the Cascades to the west and Oregon's Willows to the south. Complete the loop by following the Mount Misery Trail back to Diamond Peak. The views along the route are fantastic, so there's no reason to be miserable except that each step brings you closer to the end of the trek. Note the location of springs on the map as water is hard to find, especially on Smooth Ridge and Mount Misery.

TRAIL TIP: The loop is best done in early summer, when wildflowers are at their peak and seasonal springs still hold water. In fall wear blaze orange, as hunters may outnumber hikers.



INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/mount-misery

TRAILHEAD: From Pomeroy, turn right on 15th St, which becomes Peola Rd and then Mountain Rd. Continue 15 miles to pavement's end, where it becomes FR 40. At 7.7 miles, turn right on FR 4030 to the trailhead at 4.5 miles.

Hike and photos by Holly Weiler



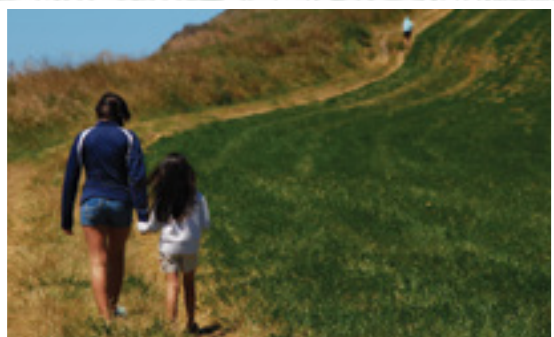
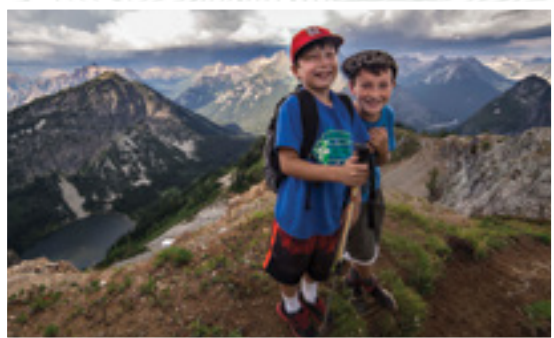
GO OLD SCHOOL: With the modern conveniences of technology and gadgets, many hikers don't carry, or know how to read, a trail map. Learn how to navigate by map and compass, and leave the GPS at home.



Celebrate HIKING with WTA on August 1



In recognition of all that Washington's great outdoors has to offer, and for all the work that WTA does to promote, advocate and maintain trails across the state, Governor Jay Inslee has declared August 1, 2015 the third annual **Washington Trails Day**!



Photos by Andy Porter, James Crouch and Rayner DSouza



There's plenty of fun to be had on Washington Trails Day on August 1. Take a hike. Join Hike-a-Thon. Sponsor Miles the Marmot! Watch wta.org/watrailsdays for more news and info.

THESE BOOTS LEAD TO A WHOLE NEW WORLD

*WTA believes it's important
for everyone to have the
opportunity to access the
outdoors.*

— Andrew Pringle, WTA OLT Manager

At WTA, we're committed to reducing barriers to hiking trails and public lands, especially for youth that might not have the opportunity to explore our shared back yard. That's why it's so important that we're able to offer equipment lending to youth groups, thanks in part to the generous support of partners like **Keen**, who donated 75 pairs of waterproof hiking boots to the Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT) program's Gear Library.

**Find out more
at wta.org/olt.**





There's only one way to get WTA's 2015 Hike-a-Thon shirt.
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