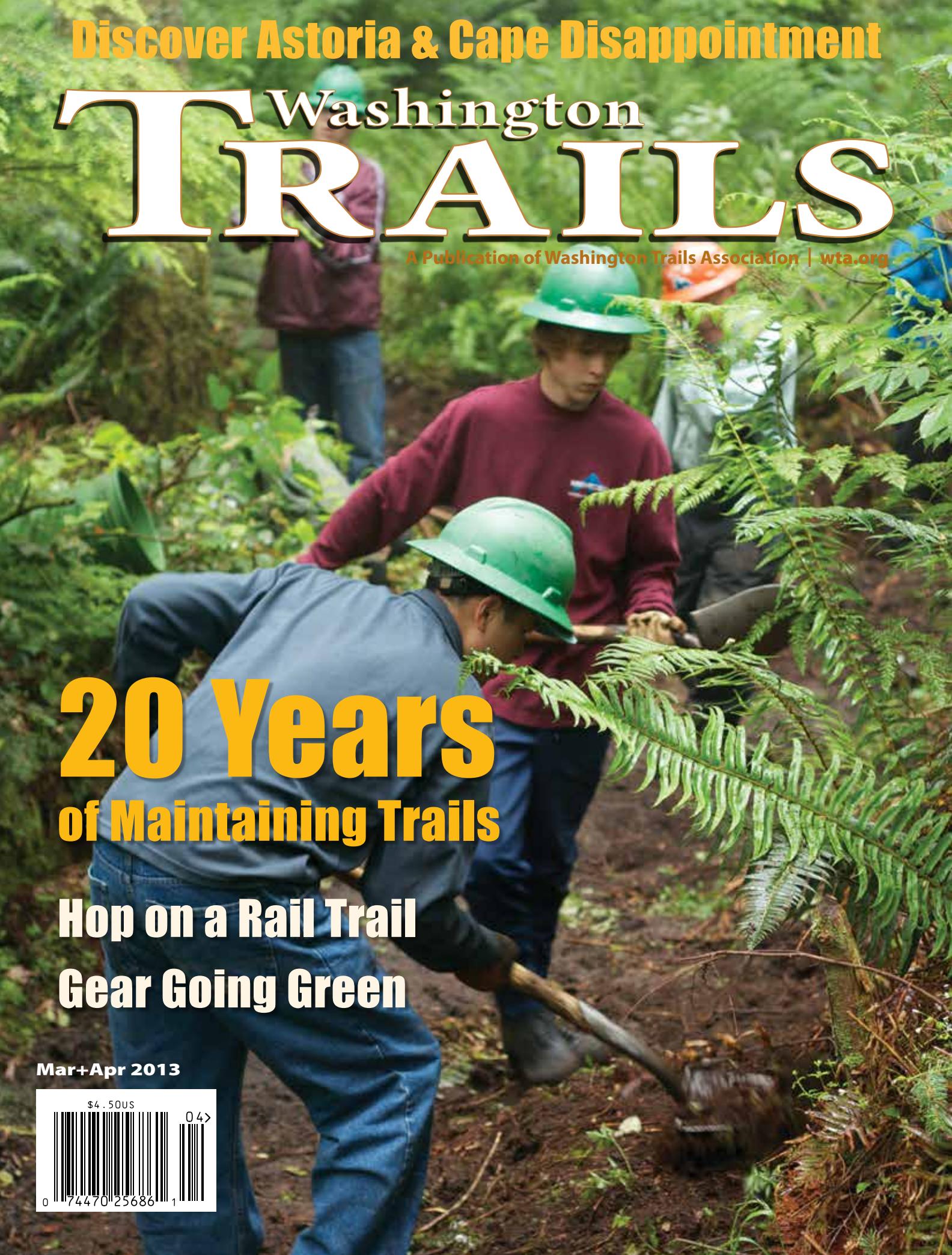


Discover Astoria & Cape Disappointment

Washington **TRAILS**

A Publication of Washington Trails Association | wta.org



20 Years
of Maintaining Trails

Hop on a Rail Trail
Gear Going Green

Mar+Apr 2013

\$4.50 US



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16



48

NW Explorer

WTA Celebrates an Anniversary!

2013 marks the 20th year of WTA's trail maintenance program. Through the voices of many, we retrace its humble beginnings with an inspired leader and a handful of participants to its current status as a statewide juggernaut with an army of trail-loving volunteers. See how we've grown, the trails we've serviced and the friends we've made along the way! » **p.16**

Hiking with Dogs » Loren Drummond

How to hike with your four-legged friends—from where to go, to helpful information for every dog owner. » **p.24**

NW Weekend: Astoria, OR » Eli Boschetto

Travel down the Columbia, from Fort Vancouver to the Pacific Ocean, retracing the path of Lewis & Clark. » **p.28**

Epic Trails: John Wayne » Tami Asars

With more than 100 miles of trail stretching from one side of the Cascades to the other, take a hike or a ride on this rail trail through Snoqualmie Pass. » **p.48**

News+Views

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The new "State of Access" report » **p.11**

WTA at Work

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Trail drainage: how it's done » **p.12**

Action for Trails » Jonathan Guzzo

Where your wilderness user fees go » **p.14**

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Trail Mix

Gear Closet » Gear Going Green

Top brands that reduce, reuse and recycle without compromising quality » **p.32**

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Tips for revitalizing the water repellency of your jackets and boots » **p.35**

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Mountain bikers and the PCT » **p.36**

Nature Nook » Tami Asars

Birds, beasts and blooms in the NW » **p.37**

Hike It » Rail Trails

Take a scenic springtime stroll on one of these rail trails near you » **p.38**

Hiking History » Kim Brown

The Columbia Plateau Trail » **p.51**



Guest Contributors



TAMI ASARS is a writer, photographer and career hiker. At every opportunity, she puts her trail skills to work selecting the perfect spiderweb-whacking sticks, determining time and distance traveled by the position of the sun, and identifying bird calls. Wherever there is trail, Tami always finds something charming—even on the snoozers. As a *Washington Trails* regional correspondent, Tami regularly contributes her trail expertise in both the hiking and nature sections. In this issue, check out Tami's Nature Nook, and her review of the Iron Horse/John Wayne Trail, part of the Epic Trails series.

JOHN FLOBERG was living in New York City 20 years ago when he spread a paper map before him to find the ultimate place to live. Even on paper, Washington's peaks, coastlines, rivers and vast open spaces called to him. He is forever grateful to call this place his home; for the sub-alpine meadows in the late afternoon sun, for the hulking giant trees tucked safe in secret valleys and for more adventures to be had than in a lifetime of wanderings. John is in his happy place, and to give back he serves as Executive Director of the Washington State Parks Foundation. Look for his showcase of state parks through the year in celebration of Washington's State Park Centennial.

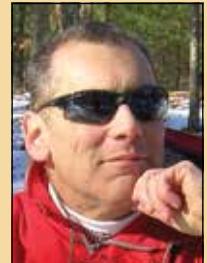


WHITNEY MAASS is the winner of WTA's recent design-a-logo contest for the trail maintenance 20th anniversary (p.16).



She is an illustrator with a degree in graphic design and fine art from Seattle Pacific University. Her most memorable hike was a three-day trip on the High Divide Trail with her dad and younger sister. It was there she learned the importance of sturdy boots—and developed a deep dislike of biting flies. Whitney hails from Snohomish County.

CRAIG ROMANO grew up in rural New Hampshire, where he bonded with the natural world. He is the author of nine books, among them *Day Hiking Olympic Peninsula*, *Day Hiking North Cascades*, *Day Hiking Columbia River Gorge*, *Backpacking Washington*, and *Columbia Highlands: Exploring Washington's Last Frontier*, which was recognized in 2010 as a Washington Reads book for its contribution to the state's cultural heritage. He lives with his wife Heather and feline office assistants Giuseppe and Scruffy Gray in Skagit County.



PAUL RAYMAKER discovered nature photography when he spent a summer in the mountains of Colorado. Since then, he hasn't put his camera down. In 2007, he moved from Wisconsin to Seattle to work as a geologist at an environmental consulting firm, while shooting Washington's trails in every spare moment he had. Nature photography is now Paul's passion, his goal being to show others the beauty that surrounds all of us, and encouraging people to care more for their environment and where they live. He has been a long-time contributor to *Washington Trails*, and has placed several winning images in WTA's Northwest Exposure photo contest.

JANICE VAN CLEVE is a foodie, wine taster and writer, with a focus on Mayan archeology. She was introduced to the joys of hiking in the Cascades in 1994; in 2004, she joined WTA. Janice is now a Fireside Circle member and has earned her saw for more than 50 days of trail maintenance. She enjoys day hiking in the I-90 corridor, but for backpacking she heads for the Teanaways. Her books and research papers can be found at mayas.doodlekit.com.



CORRECTION

For those who received the Northwest Exposure 2013 photo calendar, an unfortunate production error resulted in Earth Day being placed on the wrong date. The correct date for Earth Day 2013 is Monday, April 22.

22

National Park Week ♦
Earth Day



Cover Shot

Tushar Sharma captured this image at the WTA work party on the Cougar Mountain AA Peak Trail in the summer of 2010. It is part of the photo documentary "In search of the Green Man," which documents stories of people who are making our natural environment more accessible and enjoyable for generations to come. When this work party was over, Tushar heard firsthand how much everyone enjoyed working on the trail, and how many keep coming back for work parties because they love participating. "WTA work parties are good for our trails and good for our volunteers!"

What's Your Story?

Have you taken an amazing hike in Washington or the greater Northwest? Captured some gorgeous photos? Perhaps had a riotous good time on a Volunteer Vacation or BCRT? Or maybe you're an expert on marmot behavior, wilderness first aid or repairing gear on the fly? Then we want to hear from you.

Washington Trails welcomes editorial and photography contributions of all sorts. Share with us your adventure, some history, some know-how or some great imagery.

For more information on how you can contribute to *Washington Trails*, email editor@wta.org.

Washington Trails Association



Washington Trails Association

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:
What is the most essential item in
your first aid kit?

Like • Comment • Share

Ruston Weaver Iodine pills and whiskey!

Gregory Fisher Super glue

Amy Becroft Travel-size baby wipes

Brett L. SAM Splint

Dawn Curran Epi-Pen

Erik van Beek Space blanket



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Washington Trails Association is a volunteer-driven nonprofit membership organization working to preserve, enhance and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state through collaboration, education, advocacy and trail maintenance.

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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Washington TRAILS

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WTA Highlights »

A few things we wanted to share



Former Governor Dan Evans (right front) visited WTA staff for a brown bag lunch to discuss his time in the House of Representatives and as Washington Governor, where he advocated for clean air and water, and helped make Washington the first state to establish a Department of Ecology.



Left to right, John Morrow, Lead Wilderness Ranger, Cle Elum Ranger District, Mike Schlafmann, Public Services Staff Office, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Karen Daubert, WTA Executive Director and Gail Throop, USFS Region 6 Trails Program Manager at the recent MBSNF Wilderness and Trails Meeting.



Youth Ambassadors learn how to cross-cut at their first ambassador work party. WTA's 17 Youth Ambassadors will be learning new outreach strategies this spring.

Karen Daubert

Executive Director
karen@wta.org



Fit for a Celebration

It seems like only yesterday I was preparing for my first WTA work party at Grand Ridge. I was excited to be finally giving back after all my years of freely using trails. And I was nervous—about my attire, of all things! How were my paint-stained jeans, plastic garden gloves and holey hiking boots going to work out? My worries were unfounded, of course, as I was greeted warmly by my fellow volunteers and the land manager partners.

I imagined how Greg Ball must have felt as he was preparing for the first-ever WTA work party. He must have been incredibly excited to be starting something that made so much sense. And he must have been nervous—not about attire—but about how the work would be received in the long run by the land managers and by the public.

When Greg first broached the idea of this brand-new program, it was with a U.S. Forest Service of a different era. Budgets were flush, and professional trail crews were plentiful. WTA had been a bit of a thorn in the side of the land managers advocating for more protections, more wilderness, more ORV enforcement, and more trails in general. So when the idea of WTA volunteers doing trail work was raised, it was greeted with lukewarm enthusiasm—and in some cases with outright skepticism.

But what a difference 20 years can make! Every month, we receive calls from land managers—federal, state, county, city and non-profits—asking for WTA's help on trails. Every day, volunteers sign up for fun and productive work parties. And every year, our work has grown in scope and impact. But that is not all that has grown. The sense of community and joy—what Greg first instilled in the program 20 years ago—continues to grow with each work party.

So now, from my first work party with my old garden gloves, to any of my most recent trail work parties, I always return home with a joyous sense of accomplishment. I look forward to celebrating the 20th anniversary of the WTA trail program, Pulaski in hand, with many of you this year—perhaps on a WTA work party! And be sure to follow *Washington Trails* and wta.org all year long as we celebrate 20 years of history, camaraderie and success on hiking trails across the state.

Karen & Daubert



Eli Boschetto

Editor
editor@wta.org

Hot Topics

In the last few issues, we've been inviting you, *Washington Trails* readers, to "join the conversation" by producing topical content and referring you to our social media channels on Facebook and Twitter to open dialogue on various subjects. Not only does this help us gauge your likes, dislikes and opinions, it helps WTA determine how we should proceed on certain issues that are important to Washington's hikers—everything from snack foods to first aid kits to wilderness entry fees.

Well, if you haven't yet, here is your opportunity to really chime in, because we're covering three doozies in this issue on which everyone is likely to have an opinion—dogs, mountain bikes and sustainability.

First, our web content manager, Loren Drummond—an avid dog hiker—has put together a comprehensive look at the basics of dog hiking, with helpful tips and information for both hikers at the end of a leash and those who come upon them. The key is preparedness, and the mutual understanding that we're all on trail to enjoy ourselves in nature, and that with simple courtesies on both sides that can easily be attained. If you're new to, or thinking about becoming a dog hiker, she offers information on dog trail training, and where to go to find dog-friendly tread.

Next, guidebook author Craig Romano looks at the issue of mountain bikes—particularly those who illegally ride the Pacific Crest Trail. Romano is himself a mountain biker and shares the belief that all trail users should have plenty of opportunity to get out and enjoy the outdoors. But where the PCT comes in—particularly as hallowed hiker ground—and mountain bikers "poaching" the trail, he raises the concern of the current situation, and the question of whether it should be addressed or changed.

Finally, the gear team takes a look at "green" gear currently being offered by some of your favorite outdoor brands. These days, "environmentalism" and "sustainability" are buzzwords used to evoke the perception of a company doing something to present itself as a friend of the environment, usually to boost sales among enviro-conscious consumers. But how much of this is real, and how much is simply "green-washing?" Their selection highlights companies that not only talk-the-talk, but walk-the-walk.

So what are your thoughts on these issues? Maybe you have an experience to share, or helpful tips for your fellow hikers? Over the next month, look for the Question of the Week on WTA's Facebook page (facebook.com/washingtontrails), where we'll be asking you about dogs, mountain bikes and "green" gear and giving you the opportunity to join the conversation.

Cheers,

EDITOR'S CHOICE

From Epic to Plasmic

Rain in the Northwest is a fact of life. If we don't want to spend ten months of the year indoors, peering out the windows, willing the clouds to part and the sun to come out, we learn to adapt. Especially since we're hikers. After all, that rain is what gives us the beautiful and unique landscapes we have to explore.

When I came to the Northwest, the first order of business was to find a comfortable, reliable rain shell. I tried many, all which performed decently, but left me wanting. Then I found Mountain Hardwear's Epic Jacket. It wasn't a "top shelf" model, just a lightweight, breathable rain shell—and I probably got it on sale!

The Epic became one of my Ten Essentials and went everywhere with me. From the Sierras to the Canadian Rockies and everywhere in between, it was on my back or in my pack. A few reproof treatments over the years, and it still sheds water and repels wind like new.

During some recent gear testing, however (you'll see in the next issue), I've gotten acquainted with Mountain Hardwear's new Plasmic Jacket. Based on the classic Epic, the Plasmic sports a DryQ EVAP liner, proving to be even more breathable and water repellent, while still being ultra-light, extra-comfortable and easy on the wallet.

Mountain Hardwear's Plasmic Jacket is available in men's and women's sizes.
\$140



Forest Service Wilderness and Trails Coordinator Gary Paull has a long history with WTA. In composing our feature on the 20th Anniversary of the trail maintenance program, WTA staff had an opportunity to reminisce about the program, and Gary's involvement from the very beginning.

How did you start with the Forest Service, and when were you introduced to WTA?

I had been trying to get a wilderness ranger job right out of high school. I wanted to work somewhere in the North Cascades. My first job was on a timber presale crew on the Umatilla National Forest in 1975. In 1977 I accepted a volunteer wilderness ranger position at Chelan, which later turned into a paid seasonal position. I was also the ranger at Holden on occasion and worked there through 1987. During that time, I began working with volunteers including the Back Country Horsemen, Sierra Club and Holden Village folks. In 1988 I was selected for the full-time trails coordinator at Darrington. This was at the same time that all the log stringer bridges across the forest were failing. I moved into my current position in late 1991. As more work needed to be done and funding was shrinking, we began relying more and more on volunteers. I knew of WTA through much of this time, but was not properly introduced until the late 1980s.

How did you receive Greg Ball's proposal to get WTA volunteers to work on trails?

He had a passion for the mountains and really wanted to give something back. He didn't know much about trail work, but was eager to learn!

How did WTA volunteers' work change or affect Forest Service work on trails?

The old model of volunteer work demanded that Forest Service staff be on-site for nearly every volunteer project. This limited the number of volunteers we could manage, and the projects we could put them on. This wasn't effective on many levels. By developing volunteer crew leaders that were trusted by both the Forest Service and WTA, maintenance work could be going on in many places at once, freeing up the staff to work on other projects. Of course,

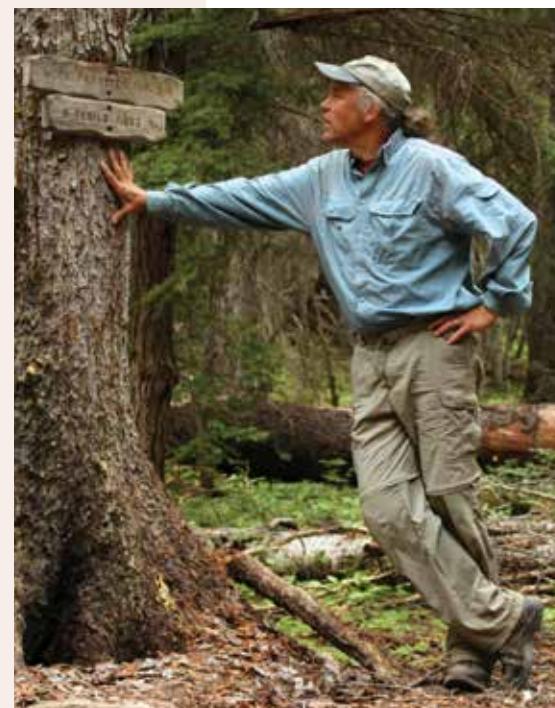
Forest Service folks still came out and worked with the volunteers, and as skill levels of the WTA crew leaders grew, the complexity of projects expanded.

What would be the current condition of trails if not for volunteers?

The trails on the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie would not be what they are today if not for WTA and other volunteer organizations. These groups have become almost totally integrated in the way we accomplish our work. In many ways, the bigger contribution is the expansion and cohesion of the broader trail community, the appreciation of what it takes to be stewards of the incredible resource we have in our backyards, and the advocacy for trails all those volunteer stewards bring.

Do you have a favorite moment from a WTA work party, or a favorite work party project?

There are too many to list. Soggy New Year's Eve log-out trips on the Boulder River Trail. Seeing all of the couples that met through trail work over the years. The Billy Bass mounted inside the outhouse at Green Mountain Pasture. Greg doing the morning tool safety talks. Lunches with Chris Bell, and Loretta Knoke's pancakes. Stealing top-notch volunteers to work on Forest Service crews—and having top-notch trail people stolen by WTA. Many lifelong friends have been made on these work parties.



“At a recent meeting with trail folks from all over the western U.S., Diane Bedell presented what WTA does: the program, the online signups, the volunteer hours. What we saw was so far ahead of the rest of the trail volunteer world.”



WTA MEMBER PROFILE: Bill & Yuri Sunderland

Yuri Sunderland, age 2 ½*, is already a supporter of WTA's work. “I like trail work.”

Last December, Yuri and his father, Bill, went on a work party together at Grand Ridge—Yuri's first day on trail and Bill's 580th. Bill's history with WTA dates back to 1994, when he picked up an issue of *Signpost* magazine (predecessor of *Washington Trails*) while waiting in line at REI. In an era of dwindling funding, WTA's pragmatic approach to trail problems hit home for Bill, and he signed up for his first work party on Earth Day of 1994. Over the years, Bill has continued to support WTA because it has continued to support him. He is still close friends with many land managers and WTA volunteers, traveling with them, inviting them to his Ph.D. dissertation and even marrying one of them. “You look at our wedding picture,” Bill says, “and there are so many WTA people in it.” Bill now passes on to Yuri his love of the outdoors, and with it, a membership in the WTA community.

*WTA's youth maintenance program is designed for ages 10 and up.

REI CEO Sally Jewell Nominated to Head Dept. of Interior

Last month, President Barack Obama nominated Sally Jewell to be the new Secretary of the Interior. A longtime resident of Washington, Jewell served on the board of directors of outdoor retailer REI from 1996 to 2000. In 2005 she became the REI's CEO. During her time at REI, she's been a strong advocate for hiking and youth in the outdoors, and if confirmed (this had yet to occur at press time), will give our state a strong presence in Washington, D.C.

"Sally Jewell is a Pacific Northwest treasure—a savvy business-woman and a committed conservationist," commented WTA Executive Director Karen Daubert. "We commend the Obama Administration for making such an excellent choice, and look forward to working with an Interior Secretary of such caliber who hails from Washington."

Jewell brings a strong business background to the agency. In addition to her eight years at the helm of REI, where she oversees 11,000 employees, more than 120 retail stores and almost \$2 billion in annual revenue, she had a 20-year career in the banking industry and a few early years as a petroleum engineer. She's a strong conservationist as well. At the time of her nomination, she was a Vice Chair of the National Parks Conservation Association and a board member and longtime leader of Mountains to Sound Greenway. She represents an unconventional choice for Interior, traditionally led by male political leaders from Rocky Mountain states, but one who has shown the ability to forge partnerships and get work done.

The Department of Interior has broad jurisdiction over federal land and natural



REI's Sally Jewell (center front), Congresswoman Maria Cantwell (left front) and WTA Executive Director Karen Daubert (right front) and friends on a hike to Rattlesnake Ledges last summer.

resources across the country. The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geologic Survey and Bureau of Reclamation are just some of the agencies that will be under Jewell's direction. The U.S. Forest Service is managed by the Department of Agriculture.

If confirmed, Jewell will be stepping into a big job with many challenges. From budget cuts to climate change, energy policy and the call for the Obama administration to leave a legacy on public lands, it will be interesting to see our local leader tackle the issues and leave her mark at the agency. We wish her the best of luck. — Susan Elderkin

WTA Welcomes Full-Time Northwest Manager

A familiar face takes on an expanded role for WTA in the northwest

Arlen Bogaards has been leading WTA work parties in the Bellingham and Mount Baker areas for some time now. In the beginning of 2013, Arlen was promoted to WTA's northwest regional manager, working both on trail and doing community outreach. As well as building turnpikes, he will be working on building partnerships with local land agencies, organizations and businesses. He will also be working in the community to engage more people, increase youth participation and help WTA's members and volunteers become more involved with WTA in their own backyard.

Arlen started as a volunteer with WTA in 2005 and was soon hooked. He stepped up as crew leader for an elevated boardwalk project on the Anderson-Watson Lakes Trail, and in 2007 became WTA's seasonal crew leader for the Mount Baker Ranger District. As the opportunities and volunteers in the Northwest grew, Arlen started leading more work parties throughout the year. By 2008 he was leading trips two weekends a month during the

winter at Larrabee State Park. In 2010 Arlen's season stretched again as he helped lead the trail project at Guemes Island in partnership with Skagit Land Trust and the San Juan Preservation Trust.



Arlen is excited about taking on this new role of expanding WTA's regional presence by building a local WTA community in Bellingham and beyond. "It's all about the people," says Bogaards. "Folks who come out on trail work parties or post trip reports on the local trails, giving their time for the good of the hiking community. It's these people, through their membership and contributions, that make WTA and my job truly great." — Kindra Ramos

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The sidebar features a vertical stack of images and text for "Rite of Passage Journeys". It includes a website URL, program details, and three photographs: a young girl smiling, a group of people on a trail, and a young boy wearing a beanie.

Alpine Lakes Wilderness Expansion Reintroduced

Washington Sen. Patty Murray, Rep. Suzan DelBene and Rep. Dave Reichert joined together to reintroduce legislation that would expand the Alpine Lakes Wilderness by 20,000 acres and designate the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers. This legislation has cleared every major congressional hurdle other than Senate passage.

The Alpine Lakes proposal was originally introduced in 2007 by Rep. Reichert, whose district then included the land areas within this proposal. Since then, the legislation has been heard in committees and on the floor of both chambers many times, coming very close to final passage. In that same interim, Washington's congressional districts have changed to reflect a growing and diversifying population.

Now, Rep. DelBene's district covers this section of the forest, so she has taken up the charge to preserve these lands as wilderness. In an admirable display of bipartisanship, Rep. Reichert continues to advocate for expansion of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness as well, both in his public statements and as a sponsor of the reintroduced legislation.

WTA has long supported this legislation. The lands in question were left out of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness due to the presence of harvestable timber. But the decline of the timber industry, combined with a strong distaste for logging on steep slopes, has taken this area out of the mix of timber production. They are natural additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

And WTA is not alone in supporting this proposal. A huge number of federal, state and local elected officials, conservation and recreation organizations and businesses have signed on as supporters of this bill—including the Back Country Horsemen of Washington and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance.

When WTA visited Washington, D.C., last month, we had the opportunity to talk with Rep. DelBene, Rep. Adam Smith, staff from Rep. Reichert's office, and both of Washington's U.S. Senators. We let them know that we appreciate their work on this proposal and are ready to help in any way we can. We will keep you apprised as this bill goes forward. — *Jonathan Guzzo*

The area immediately south of the Little Bandera Trail is slated for inclusion in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness expansion legislation.



Jon Stier

2013 Hiker Lobby Day

Hikers from across the state gathered in Olympia to deliver the message that recreation and state lands are public values—a message that is needed this year, when instead of investing in parks during their centennial, we are fighting to keep them open. WTA's activists made it clear that these special places need to be funded in the general budget, because pass revenues alone are not enough.

More than 60 hikers met with their representatives, sharing stories of recent hikes on state lands and why these public places are so important. Many of Washington's legislators are also hikers, and there was general agreement that state parks should be publicly funded. But concern over the budget deficit means hikers will need to continue speaking out.



TOP: More than 60 hikers from 26 districts gather in Olympia for WTA's Hiker Lobby Day on February 7th.

MIDDLE: WTA's executive director Karen Daubert and her fellow constituents meet with Rep. Eric Pettigrew (37th).

BOTTOM: Vancouver hiker swap trail stories with Rep. Sharon Wylie (49th), an active backpacker and climber.

Alyssa Krieder Says Good-Bye

Ten years and thousands of volunteers later, WTA's longtime volunteer coordinator, Alyssa Krieder, is leaving Washington Trails Association. For trail maintenance volunteers, Alyssa has been the person who has made the whole process work smoothly—emailing details, answering questions on the phone and scheduling events. She's left her mark on the trail, as well. From her first work party at Wallace Falls in 2002 as a MVS volunteer to her most recent at Grand Ridge in December with her son, Alyssa has shared more than 275 days on trail with volunteers. She will be missed very much.



Fortunately, WTA has found an excellent new volunteer coordinator right here in our office—Julie Cassata, who has been WTA's office administrator for the past year. Julie has experience working with volunteers and volunteer organizations as a board member of the Seattle Running Club and at Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater. She's a hiker who has completed both the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail. And she holds a master's degree in landscape architecture, which will resonate well with the work of the trail maintenance team. Since she started at WTA, she has gotten her feet wet with WTA work parties and 2012 Crew Leader College, and she has impressed everyone here with her friendliness, attention to detail and enthusiasm for Washington Trails Association. You'll find that Julie will be an excellent addition to the program. — *Susan Elderkin*

Coyote Wall and Catherine Creek Trail Restoration

Early season hikers at Coyote Wall may have noticed the red and orange survey flags blooming along the Labyrinth Trail like wildflowers out of season. These markers indicate the current rerouting plans to help put it in a more sustainable location.

Last year WTA embarked on an ambitious project to restore and reconstruct many of the user-created paths at Coyote Wall and Catherine Creek. A popular hiking and mountain biking destination, the area has seen a proliferation of unmanaged recreation as people seek trails that are free of snow during the winter and early spring. A unique and prolific wildflower display is also a major attraction, particularly at Catherine Creek.

The Coyote Wall project is funded through a grant from the National Forest Foundation to implement the Forest Service Recreation Plan. The grant fund is supported by Skamania Lodge, to enhance conservation and recreation in the Gorge. The grant was awarded to help train volunteers in trail maintenance techniques and develop partnerships with the local mountain bike community and other trail-user groups. Throughout the project WTA has worked closely with the Columbia Area Mountain Bike Advocates (CAMBA) on project designs and outreach.

This spring WTA and CAMBA will focus on redeveloping the Labyrinth Trail to fix sections that suffer from serious erosion. Other mountain bike clubs are joining the effort as well, including the Hood River Area Trail Stewards (HRATS) and the Portland-based Northwest Trail Alliance (NWT).

Volunteers are needed for weekend work parties on March 2–3, 16–17 and 23–24. Come for one or two days. Saturdays offer an optional campout and potluck on the Klickitat River. — *Ryan Ojerio*

To sign up for a work party, visit wta.org/volunteer, or email the southwest regional manager, Ryan Ojerio, at ryan@wta.org.

WTA and Columbia Area Mountain Bike Advocates (CAMBA) working together to design and construct a reroute on the Upper Labyrinth Trail at Coyote Wall.

Mount Rainier Permits Reservations Open March 15

Where are you hiking on The Mountain this summer: a weekend at the Golden Lakes, the east-side stretch from White River to Ohanapecosh or perhaps the entire Wonderland Trail? Mount Rainier's Wilderness Information Center will begin accepting applications for 2013 trip reservations beginning on March 15.

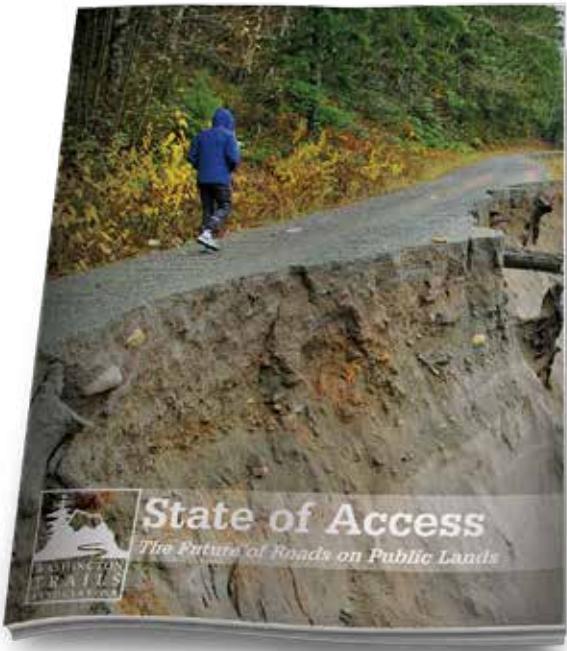
The best way to ensure a reservation is to:

- ▶ Have multiple itineraries planned
- ▶ Be flexible with your entry dates
- ▶ Keep group sizes small

Accepted reservations will begin going out in early May. For more info, visit nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit



Ryan Ojerio



WTA Releases “State of Access”

“Road access to trailheads is critical for hikers. Without sustainable access to trail systems, a whole generation of new wildlands advocates will never discover the joys of the outdoors.”

Last summer, a WTA member survey indicated that hikers care deeply about their recreational road access. As storms have washed out important access roads in the Cascades and Olympics, and budgets and challenges have slowed repairs, many places have been inaccessible to hikers for more than a decade. At the same time, there is a U.S. Forest Service-wide program to streamline the wilderness access road system.

“Outdoor recreation is an \$11.7 billion industry. Road access to trailheads is a critical component of the economy in Washington.”

This issue got the advocacy team at WTA thinking: how should it be determined which roads get fixed and which get let go? After nearly a year of research on the issue, Washington Trails Association has assembled a new report titled ***State of Access: The Future of Roads on Public Lands***. In creating the report, WTA staff and board members developed criteria to evaluate roads, consulted with agency personnel and have determined the following on these eight endangered road systems across the state.

We extend our thanks to WTA's Corporate Partners

Rainier - \$25,000+



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



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



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

The Mountaineers Books
MSR® and Therm-a-Rest®

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

Suiattle River Road (Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest)

Critical access to the heart of the Glacier Peak Wilderness that has been thoroughly studied and is ready for repair.

Middle Fork Snoqualmie Road (Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest)

A successful collaboration of land management agencies and the public to rehabilitate an important recreational area.

Mountain Loop Highway (Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest)

This critical recreation access road has a challenging section, prone to washouts, that needs attention.

Dosewallips River Road (Olympic National Forest)

An important access road that should be reopened as new repair standards can offer access to the west side of the Olympics.

Illabot River Road (Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest)

A well-built road that should remain open, threatened by lack of funding for maintenance.

Mitchell Peak Road (Department of Natural Resources)

Lack of public easement blocks recreational access to a popular day hike in southwest Washington.

Carbon River Road (Mount Rainier National Park)

A dynamic landscape has rendered road realignment unfeasible.

Stehekin Road (Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest)

A little-used mountain road that should not be repaired.

State of Access is a tool WTA can use to look at how roads are used today and how they should be managed moving forward. As the Forest Service begins to examine the future of its road inventory, this tool will help ensure that recreational access is given proper weight during this conversation. WTA believes this report can serve both elected officials and state and federal land managers as they work to understand and manage Washington's deteriorating recreational access system.

“WTA analyzed roads from the perspective of hiker use, cost and environmental consequences. The criteria will result in a smart, sustainable and cost-effective road access system.”

To learn more about the roads in ***State of Access: The Future of Roads on Public Lands***, or read the report in its entirety, visit wta.org/roadaccess.

THE TRAIL IS IN THE DETAILS: DRAINAGES

By Janice Van Cleve

Water wants to go downhill, and hikers want to go up. Inevitably their paths meet and one needs to cross the other. That is where drain dips, ditches, fords and culverts come into use. The purpose of these trail features is to create an intersection where water can easily flow where it wants to go and hikers can pace along without wetting their feet or slogging through slop.

Normally, the tread of any trail should slope from the inside to the outside by several inches across the width of the trail. This is outsloping, the quickest and most efficient way to move water off the tread and prevent erosion. According to Pete Dewell, author of *Tread and Retread the Trails*, it is always best to employ the least difficult solution rather than what is most elaborate. The least difficult method may survive longer, require less maintenance and do a better job.

From Dips to Ditches to Culverts

When outsloping is not possible, drain dips may be the solution. These are also called knicks or swales. The concept is to drop the outside of the tread in a semicircular fashion so water will naturally gather and move off the trail. Drain dips are often used in conjunction with ditches where the ground does not drop off until some distance from the trail. On steeper trails where water typically erodes down the center of the tread, a series of drain dips can help minimize the damage (see blueprint example).

Ditches are used to collect water and move it to a place where it can be shed downhill. One example is a weeping backslope. Spongy mountain soil can "weep" water across a broad area, so a ditch along the inside of the tread can be used to collect the water and move it to a low point where it can be directed across the trail and down the hill. This method is often used on switchbacks. A ditch along the inside of the upper tread collects and moves water beyond the "elbow" so it will not erode the delicate partition between the upper and lower tread. Here, the upper tread is insloped toward the ditch to direct the water to the right location, instead of outsloped as in other applications.

A culvert is the ultimate drainage application at large and frequent intersections of trail and water. As such, culverts usually

take the most effort to construct and maintain. Some culverts are built of stone, and others are metal or plastic tubes. These often get clogged with debris and must be periodically cleaned out. Culverts allow trail tread to continue along evenly as the water drains underneath and off the slope, allowing uninterrupted passage. Similar to a culvert, French drains consist of rock with enough open space to allow water to flow through freely. Nature builds the best French drains by means of avalanches.

There are many more trail features that deal with water. The lay of the land, soil and rock, natural watercourses and typical trail users all figure into which solution will work best. Next time you're hiking along, take notice of the variety of drainages employed along the trail, and then thank a trail maintenance volunteer for your nice, dry boots!♦

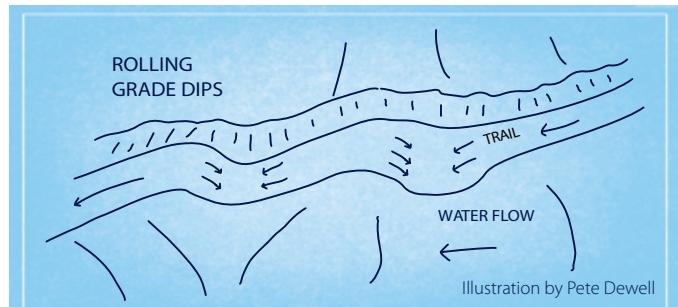
Tread And Retread The Trails by Pete Dewell can be purchased for \$10 plus postage. Send an email to juliancdewell@comcast.net.



Alexa Lindauer

CREWS IN ACTION

Last year, at WTA's first college-age Volunteer Vacation, this group built a rock turnpike with a ditch drain. As water flows down the hill from above, it will be carried off below the turnpike. Without the added drainage, water would seep through the structure and eventually undermine it.





FEATURED STATE PARK:

Palouse Falls

By
John Floberg

2013 celebrates 100 years of Washington State Parks. State parks offer a multitude of recreation opportunities—from hiking and camping to boating and skiing—at 117 destinations across the state. This year, Washington Trails will be highlighting a different state park in every issue—each worthy of visiting for its natural or historical significance. So purchase a Discover Pass and get out and enjoy your state parks this year—some of the finest in the country!

One of Washington's greatest natural wonders, Palouse Falls tumbles nearly 200 feet over a fluted gorge to a deep green pool of the Palouse River that narrows and winds its way south through majestic basalt-cliff canyons to meet the Snake River. "Middle-of-nowhere" is how many visitors describe the fall's location, set off by itself in the wide-open and lonely Palouse country between Spokane and Walla Walla. "You won't believe it's there," say others, as it lies well hidden amongst rolling arid hills and farmland. That's part of what leads to the shock of seeing it.

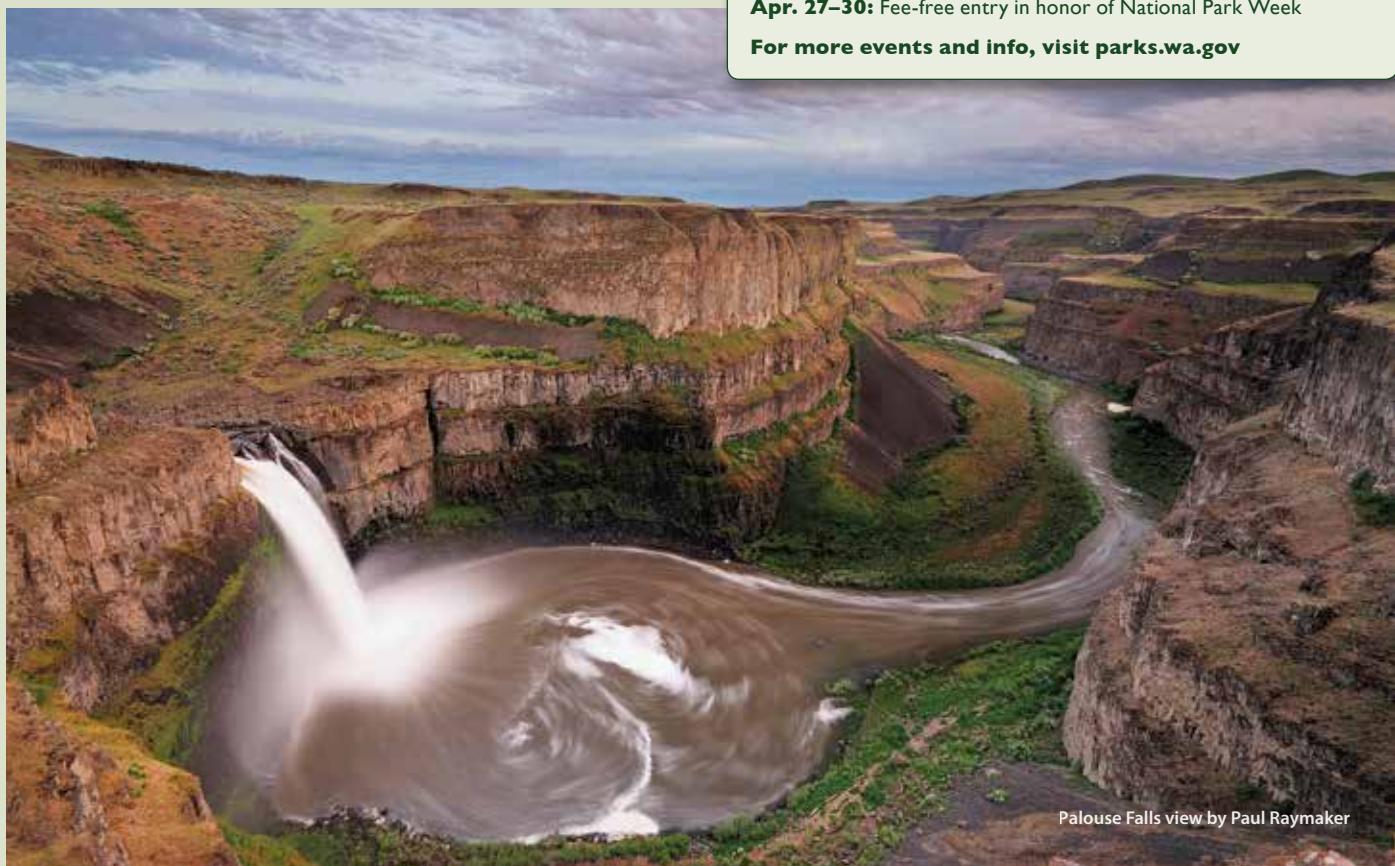
As a state park, Palouse Falls was dedicated to the citizens of Washington on June 3, 1951, and is also steeped in history, both human and geological. It's the last of the great falls remaining that were created by the ice age floods 15,000 years ago, when Glacial Lake Missoula's ice dams ruptured, shaping deep coulees and canyons with a force of water equal to 4,500 megatons of TNT. It was also a site of tribal legend for the Palouse Indians, and discovered by Europeans in the Wilkes Expedition of 1841. Around 1860, the falls area became part of the Mullan Trail, the first wagon road from the Rocky Mountains to the inland Pacific Northwest.

Spring is the best time for viewing peak water flows. For the adventurous, primitive trails wind down to the falls' edge, as well as to the very bottom. Take these trails to the water at your own risk though, as the only maintained trail is the quarter-mile trail from the parking lot to the fenced viewpoint on the edge of the canyon. To get to the edge of the falls or pool below, you'll need to contend with sketchy footing, narrow paths and, if you go down to the bottom, a little rock shale slide at the end. It's a grand place to spend an afternoon picnic (or stay at one of the 10 primitive campsites), take photos, and brush up on your waterfall painting skills. People come from all over the world to this "hidden" gem, and it's just as awesome for the stars and meteor showers at night, given its remote location.

State Parks Centennial Events in March & April

- Mar. 23–30:** Whale Watching Week at Cape Disappointment
Watch for humpbacks from the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center
- Mar. 30:** Fee-free entry and Centennial Celebration at Cama Beach
Celebrate with outdoor activities and live music
- Apr. 27–30:** Fee-free entry in honor of National Park Week

For more events and info, visit parks.wa.gov



Palouse Falls view by Paul Raymaker

Action for Trails



Jonathan Guzzo

Advocacy Director
jonathan@wta.org

USER FEE PROGRAM TO BE RENEWED IN 2014

For more than a decade, the Northwest Forest Pass (previously the Trail Park Pass) has been a fixture for hikers in Washington. Our national forests started out as a demonstration program. Then in 2005 the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) made the program official, giving each of the 10 National U.S. Forest Service regions the authority to design its own user-fee system under specific parameters. Region 6, comprising Washington and Oregon, worked with the public to create the Northwest Forest Pass.

Since then, the Northwest Forest Pass has provided revenue to Washington's national forests, funding projects on the ground and leveraging the sweat and effort of volunteers to directly benefit a broad range of trail users. Due in large part to support we receive from the Forest Service, Washington Trails

forests in Washington generated \$3,757,602 in user fees and spent \$3,505,631 on a variety of regional projects, including interpretive rangers at Mount St. Helens National Monument, hazardous tree removal at recreation sites in the Colville National Forest and three backcountry rangers on the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. User fees have also funded

► More than 28,000 hours of WTA volunteer work on the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, valued at nearly \$600,000. One of the projects WTA completed was constructing approach trails to the newly built West Fork Foss Bridge, allowing hikers to once again visit Necklace Valley without a dangerous river ford.

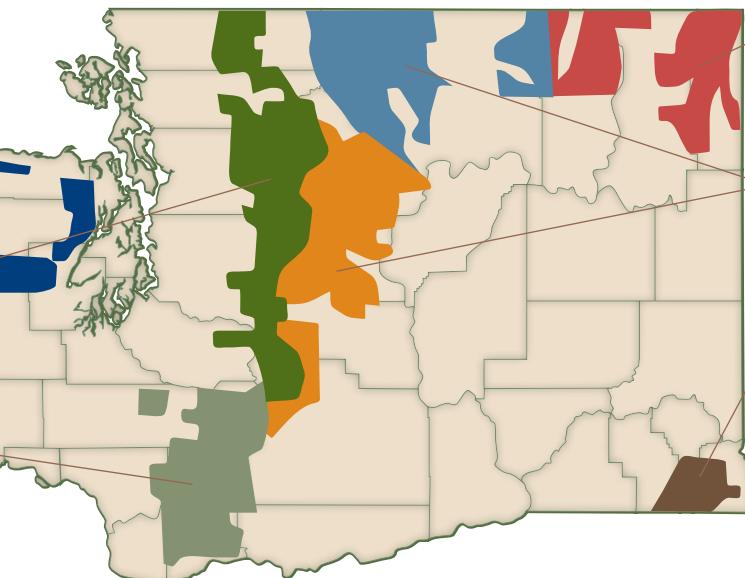
► WTA's work on nearly 700 miles of trail on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, including new bridges at Lone Fir in

2011 U.S. FOREST SERVICE INCOME, EXPENDITURES & MAJOR SERVICE PROJECTS

OLYMPIC
Income: \$340,000
Spent: \$377,000
► Mount Elinor and Big Creek
► Upper & Lower Big Quilcene*

MOUNT BAKER-SNOQUALMIE
Income: \$1,018,000
Spent: \$907,000
► 28,000 hours of trail maintenance*
► Heather Meadows visitor center

GIFFORD PINCHOT
Income: 1,202,000
Spent: \$1,323,000
► Interpretive rangers at Johnston Ridge
► Climbing permit reservation system
► Trail maintenance crews and guides



COLVILLE
Income: \$38,000
Spent: \$29,000
► Curlew Job Corps service
► Conservation education

OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE
Income: \$1,144,000
Spent: \$869,000
► Snoqualmie Pass Visitor Center
► 700+ miles of trail maintenance*

UMATILLA
Managed in cooperation with Oregon

*A portion of this funding came to WTA to help manage work parties, Volunteer Vacations, BCRTs and youth trips.

Association is able to field thousands of volunteer hours each year. Each volunteer hour leverages user fees fivefold.

However, user fees are only part of the Forest Service recreation funding picture. Trails are funded by congressional appropriations, which have been decreasing in each budget in real dollars—not just in failure to keep up with the increasing cost of doing business. WTA believes that Congress must work harder to ensure that user fees supplement rather than supplant appropriated money.

As hikers, we care about our national forests. We also care about how our user-fee dollars are spent. After all, we pay into the system and want to make sure it benefits us. Ninety-five percent of user fee dollars are spent locally. In 2011, national

the Methow, maintenance at Stafford Creek and a new turnpike at the aptly-named Beverly Turnpike in the Teanaway.

► More than 7,500 hours of WTA volunteer labor on Olympic National Forest. Work there included clearing the Upper Big Quilcene Trail and rerouting 500 feet of the Lower Big Quilcene. These efforts were done in conjunction with the Back Country Horsemen of Washington.

Currently, FLREA is set to expire in 2014. WTA will be working with Congress this year not only to ensure FLREA's reauthorization, but to help make the program better and more user-friendly. We will urge Congress to stop the long slide of appropriated funds for recreation programs. ♦

If you'd like to help, contact Jonathan Guzzo at (206) 965-8558.



TIDEPOOLING WITH KIDS

Tidepooling offers an excellent way to get the kids outside and turn them into budding marine biologists. If you live near Puget Sound, you don't need to travel far. City parks offer some of the best tidepooling around. But if you live elsewhere or crave a little more adventure, there are a number of places farther afield to visit.

Because the tidepool environment is so fragile, kids should be old enough to follow directions and be careful about the sea creatures under their feet. Set clear expectations and be a good role model. While beachcombing and collecting may be among your treasured childhood memories, the culture has changed as biologists have witnessed the effect of these actions on the intertidal marine environment. Please do not take home shells or animals; they are all integral components of the ecosystem.



Susan Elderkin

Outfit your kids with waterproof boots, and consider gardening gloves if you are wandering in an area with barnacles. Bring a marine field guide to help you identify what you find, and a camera to carry your memories back home again. Bring dry clothing for the ride home, and don't forget the sunscreen!

TIDEPOOL ETIQUETTE!

- * Step carefully, avoiding sea creatures.
- * Do not collect shells or animals.
- * Touch gently, or simply look.
- * Be aware of tide levels.

KNOW YOUR TIDES

Find a "minus" tide for your tidepooling adventure. Plan your trip by consulting NOAA's Tide Predictor (tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov) or by carrying a tide table. For maximum viewing, time your visit for an hour before low tide.



Krista Dooley

Spring Break Is Coming!

Youth are invited to join WTA on an Alternative Spring Break work party, with two weeks of day work parties especially for them! There are volunteer options for single days or the entire week.

Sign-up begins March 1 for Spring Break 2013. Trip dates are April 8–12 and April 15–19.

wta.org/volunteer

Krista Dooley

Youth Programs Manager
krista@wta.org



HIKE IT: Deception Pass State Park

Rosario Head offers an ideal tidepooling adventure that will be enjoyed by the entire family.

The tidepools are a short walk across the picnic grounds from the parking lot. They are full of a variety of sea life—sea stars, urchins, anemones, small fish, crabs and more—and will delight children. Follow the blue rope strung across the rocks. Because this area is so popular, park officials ask that you follow this route, sticking close to it, to prevent further damage to the tidepools. When you're through with the pools, hike in a clockwise circuit around Rosario Head. The short hike will reveal views across Sharpe Cove and Bowman Bay to Whidbey Island and out to Rosario Strait and beyond. You'll end up on a high bluff above the water—a perfect place to sit and have a snack before returning.

DISTANCE 1 mile round trip

ELEVATION GAIN Minimal

HIGHEST ELEVATION 110 feet

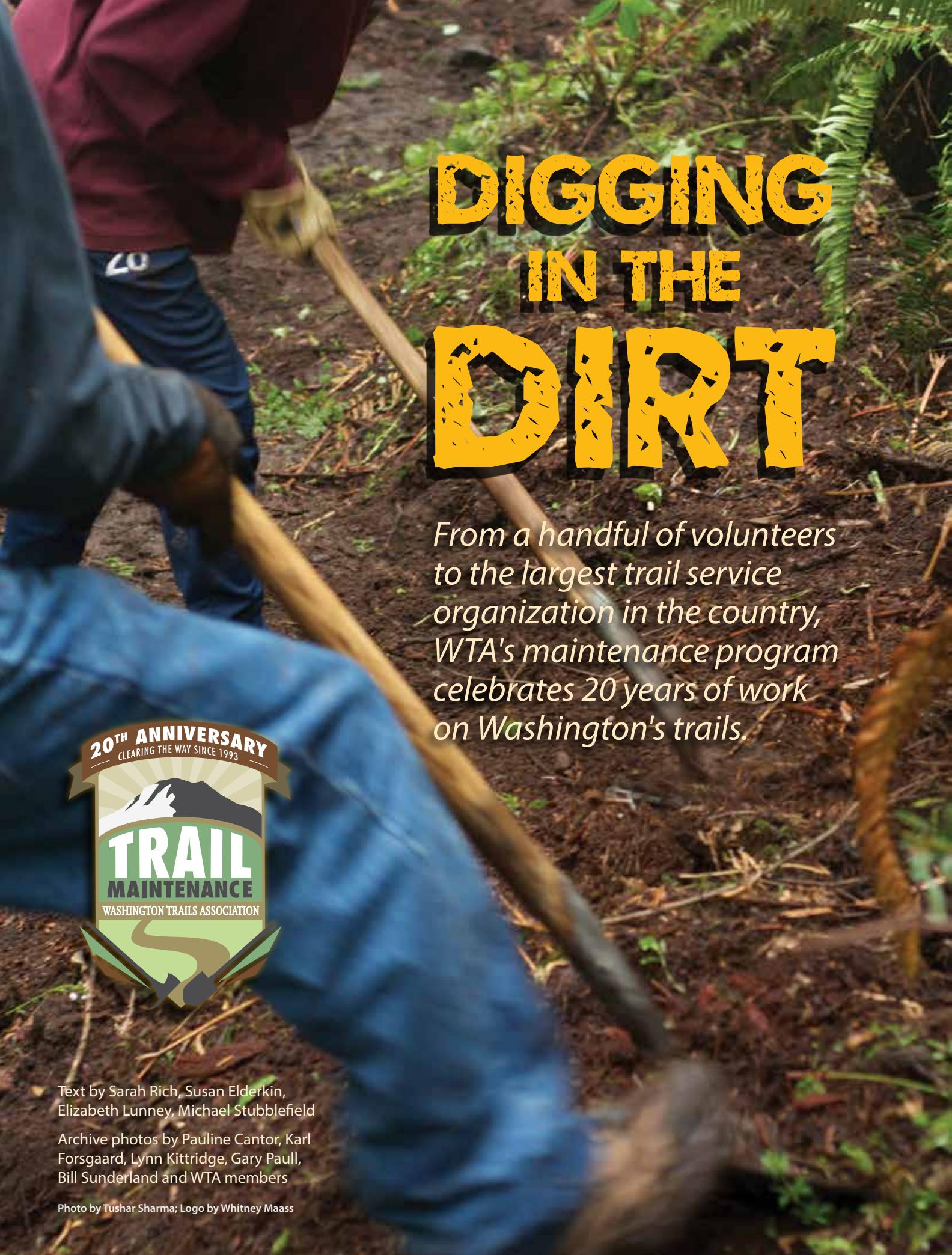
PERMIT Discover Pass

DIRECTIONS From Burlington, drive SR-20 west 17 miles to Deception Pass State Park. Follow signs to the day-use area.

POST-HIKE Hit up Sweet D's Shrimp Shack for hearty portions of delicious seafood!



Susan Elderkin



DIGGING IN THE DIRT

From a handful of volunteers to the largest trail service organization in the country, WTA's maintenance program celebrates 20 years of work on Washington's trails.



Text by Sarah Rich, Susan Elderkin,
Elizabeth Lunney, Michael Stubblefield

Archive photos by Pauline Cantor, Karl
Forsgaard, Lynn Kittridge, Gary Paull,
Bill Sunderland and WTA members

Photo by Tushar Sharma; Logo by Whitney Maass

“WTA enters a new era. Though advocacy and education remain the first responsibilities of WTA, the trail work program allows volunteers, directors and staff a chance to spend a few days maintaining the trails we use.”

— Dan Nelson, December 1993

My ten-year experience with WTA has been a delight and wonder. The development of the trail maintenance program offered so many of us the opportunity to build and nourish not only trails, but friendships. The program fostered the development of new and unusual skills for many of us, and in the midst of sharing, learning and laughing, what appeared in our wild areas were the most perfectly constructed ways in and out. Thank you! — Janice O’Connor – Chief Crew Leader



I t began with a notable 250 hours of volunteer work on two short sections of the Pacific Crest Trail.

Now, 20 years later, those first modest efforts have grown into the largest volunteer trail maintenance program of its kind in the nation. Over the past two decades, thousands of WTA volunteers have contributed 1.1 million hours of labor on more than 550 trails across the state. And the pace is not slowing. This year, we expect that more than 2,500 volunteers will spend 100,000 hours on trails in three national parks, five national forests and numerous state and county parks across Washington.

Yet despite this exponential growth, of swelling and expanding, of bursting its britches and sewing them bigger, there's one thing that has always remained true of WTA's trail maintenance program: it's all about community.

And while WTA's trail maintenance program is a story about trails, it is just as much a story about the people who have maintained those trails. It's about the miles they've hiked and the logs they've cut together, the jokes they've told and the peanut butter sandwiches they've shared. After all, the program has been built on volunteers from the very beginning.

A Seed in the Hand

It began with a man named Greg Ball. Ball was hired as WTA's executive director in 1992, when the WTA bank account contained a mere 92 cents. At the time, WTA's membership was in decline, and Ball realized that if WTA was to survive another year, something had to be done to attract new hikers and a renewed interest in supporting trails.

Dan Nelson, then-editor of *Signpost* magazine (predecessor of *Washington Trails*), convinced Ball to spend a day out of the office working on trails. At that time, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington (VOW) was one of the few groups doing trail maintenance in the state, and its focus at the time was on training volunteers. It turned out that Ball had a great time, soaking up every bit of training he could and seeing the potential for doing more.

Joining Ball on this new venture was John Spring. Together, they pioneered a new trail maintenance program and began a driving force of new enthusiasm and inclusiveness in WTA's work. As the new program leader, Ball taught volunteers what they needed to accomplish the tasks at hand and then stepped back and let them direct their own projects. “Greg had a way of bringing out everybody's potential and making them feel useful,” remembers Bill Sunderland, a volunteer in those early days, who later went on to lead work parties of his own.

Until this point, WTA had focused its efforts on lobbying for better trails and informing the public about trail conditions through *Signpost* magazine and trip reports—efforts that have always been integral to WTA's mission. But by taking a step back, rolling up their sleeves and fixing the trails themselves—instead of just advocating for the government to do the work—WTA made the revolutionary move that showed that they could “walk the talk.” According to Gary Paull, USFS trail coordinator

“The trail maintenance program gave WTA legitimacy.”

1993

First work party on the PCT at Potato Hill

H: 250

Work on the Lake Quinault Rainforest Trail ▶



1995

H: 13,000

- First crew leader college
- Major work parties at Talapus Lake, Tonga Ridge, Kendall Katwalk



◀ Second work party on PCT at Kendall Katwalk

1994
H: 3,000

■ WTA's trail work expands into four Forest Service districts and Olympic Nat'l Park

H: Volunteer Hours V: Total Volunteers

First Agreement with USFS ▶



1996
H: 23,000

▲ WTA wins Caring for the Land Award from USFS

- First Volunteer Vacation at Skyline Bridge

in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie Ranger District, "The trail maintenance program gave WTA legitimacy."

As it happened, this humble step to on-the-ground action ended up propelling WTA's standing to new heights. With the budding trail maintenance program came a whole new flock of volunteers who wanted to work with their hands. And WTA's membership began to swell with hikers who valued the contribution WTA volunteers were making to trails.

The Seed That Sprouted

Ball's idea that WTA might dirty its hands on trail found fertile soil. On September 18, 1993, 11 people attended WTA's first work party on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) at Potato Hill in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This section of the PCT had been damaged by 4-wheel-drive vehicles, and these first WTA volunteers set out to block vehicle access to the trail. A few weeks later, WTA's board held the organization's second work party, also on the PCT, this time north of Snoqualmie Pass. This work party was dubbed a "work-a-thon," with board members securing pledges to support the program.

These first work parties were primarily sponsored by the Forest Service, where agency staff led each work party and instructed WTA volunteers in trail maintenance techniques. But with the burden of demands on land managers, they were unable to lead volunteer groups on a regular basis. So Ball and Spring developed a new model for trail maintenance. They wanted WTA to train its own crew leaders to run work parties instead of being minded by the Forest Service.

"I remember Greg asking me if he could lead a trail maintenance group," recalls Gary Paull. "And I said, 'Hell no.'" But after seeing the capability and determination of Ball and his volunteers, Paull eventually came around. An early partnership with the Student Conservation Association also helped WTA establish standards for its crew leaders that allowed the Forest

After a day of working on the trails, as I drive home, I reflect on the day. I think about the people I met and the conversations we had.



I think about the camaraderie that grew as we worked together. I think about the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment that came with the hard work. I am always filled with a peace and contentment knowing that for one day, in one little corner, I made the trails better for others.

— Jon Nishimura - Volunteer

- WTA hires first paid crew leader
- Begins receiving RTP funds

1998
H: 32,000

■ Year-round work begins



1997
H: 27,000



► WTA begins working with State Parks and King Co. Parks

■ 8,500 hours of service on Olympic's Quilcene District

WTA adopts Annette Lake Trail ▼

1999
H: 47,665

First work party signups on **wta.org**



2000
H: 40,700
V: 1,230



3,700 hours on Denny Creek and Franklin Falls

▲ Helped complete the last link in the Mountains to Sound Greenway

2001
H: 54,510
V: 1,135

Service to feel more comfortable with the idea of volunteer leadership. In 1994, Ball and Spring began leading work parties in the North Bend area with district trail personnel Kathy White and Tom Quinsey.

Even in the era before the Internet, news about WTA's trail maintenance work spread so quickly and was so well-received that WTA almost couldn't keep up with volunteers' enthusiasm. Work party schedules were publicized on flyers that were mailed out to prospective volunteers, who then called the WTA "hotline" to sign up for trips. It wouldn't be until 1999 that Bill Sunderland would develop an online sign-up system that streamlined the entire process.

Before long the program was expanding at such a rate that WTA didn't have enough crew leaders to keep volunteers occupied. Early funding from the Forest Service and the National Recreational Trails program helped WTA hire paid crew leaders to augment its volunteer staff. The late photographer Ira Spring was also a significant funder of WTA's volunteer program and its crew leader base, using royalties from his guidebooks to support a growing number of trail maintenance volunteers.

Being able to field paid crew leaders allowed WTA to be on the ground more, which in turn helped generate more volunteer interest. Soon WTA was able to field work parties year-round and six days a week in more areas. The additional crews and resources allowed for a more intensive work party schedule to take on more involved projects, such as an extensive overhaul and maintenance of popular trails such as Denny Creek and Boulder River.

Blooms of Blue, Orange and Green

From the very beginning, WTA's trail maintenance program has lived by the same mantra: safety, fun, work—in that order. Ball, Spring and Paull had agreed on these priorities, borrowed from VOW, with the idea that the only way to keep volunteers coming back for more was to keep them safe and ensure they had a good time.

Early on, WTA developed a hard hat system that is still in use today. Chief crew leaders were given blue hard hats, assistant crew leaders got orange hats and volunteers wore borrowed green hard hats. Also as today, all volunteers received their very own green hat on their fifth work party. Nicknames on the hats were,

Signature Projects

WTA Trail Maintenance 1993–2013

Rattlesnake Ledge Cedar River Watershed

Partnerships with land management agencies and other nonprofit organizations have long been a cornerstone of WTA's trail maintenance program. One of the most prominent examples is the construction of the Rattlesnake Ledge Trail, dedicated in 2004. WTA partnered with the City of Seattle, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and EarthCorps to build a new 4-mile trail that replaced an unsuitable user-built trail.

For two years, WTA worked the bottom 2 miles; EarthCorps, the top. In sleet, rain and sun, volunteers tackled tenacious old-growth stumps and gigantic boulders in constructing this hardy and remarkable trail to a prominent outcrop overlooking the Snoqualmie Valley. Today the trail is one of the most popular year-round hikes in the I-90 corridor, and its construction stands testament to the sound design and hard work provided by hundreds of volunteers.



HIKE IT!

MILEAGE: 4 miles
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,160 feet
ELEVATION TOP: 2,079 feet
MAP: Green Trails 205S
GUIDE: Day Hiking: Snoqualmie Region
PERMIT: None
DOGS: Leashed

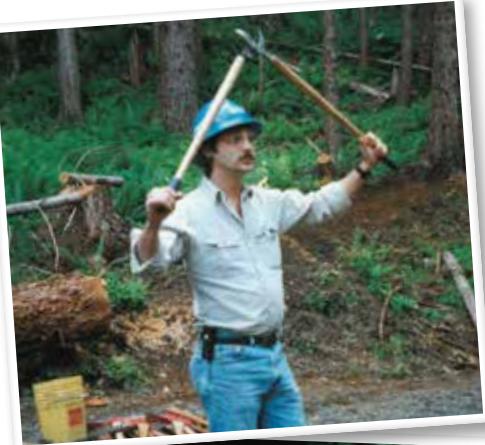
Glacier Basin Trail Mount Rainier National Park

The Glacier Basin Trail has long been one of Mount Rainier National Park's most popular trails. Unfortunately, it has also been subject to the whims of the Inter Fork of the White River. During fall 2006, severe floods decimated significant portions of the lower trail. Rather than repair the damage, park authorities opted to build a new portion of trail—one that would not be subject to the river's frequent flooding.

A replacement trail, carved into the mountainside high above the river, required a herculean effort. Over four summers WTA led 121 single-day work parties and six Volunteer Vacations at Glacier Basin. More than 400 individuals spent more than 17,450 hours constructing the new route. A true feather in WTA's cap, the new trail is a broad, winding route with smooth tread and beautiful rock walls. Built to the highest standards, it will be around for a long time to come.

HIKE IT!

MILEAGE: 6 miles
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,600 feet
ELEVATION TOP: 5,900 feet
MAP: Green Trails 269S
GUIDE: Day Hiking: Mount Rainier
PERMIT: Nat'l Park Fee
DOGS: Not permitted



TOP TO BOTTOM: Crew leader Bill Sunderland giving a tool safety talk; WTA's first bridge project at Boulder River; Work party on the Lake 22 Trail

Photos by Bill Sunderland and Gary Paull

Work begins
on Grand
Ridge Trail ▼

2002

■ Work on Olympic's
Bogachiel Trail

H: 66,340

■ First BCRT on
the Suiattle River





Greg Ball Trail Fund

Greg Ball's legacy lives on in WTA's trails program through the Greg Ball Trail Fund, an endowment dedicated to supporting the work of WTA's trail maintenance volunteers. The Greg Ball Trail Fund fills in the gap needed to fully fund WTA's trail work and leverages other funding sources, including federal funding and individual donations.

Over the past eight years, more than 400 individuals and businesses have contributed in excess of \$770,000 to the Greg Ball Trail Fund. While the principal continues to be invested for the future, income earned from the Trail Fund is put on the ground where it is needed most. This year, \$30,000 will be invested in fire damage recovery on the Duckabush Trail in the Olympics, restoration of the Quartz Creek Trail in the Dark Divide Wilderness and several trails in the Mount Baker Ranger District. The Trail Fund will also ensure that WTA volunteers have the tools, training and support they need to maintain trails in Washington State Parks during its centennial anniversary. And the fund is making it possible for WTA to invest in a new effort to attract young adult volunteers who will become the next generation of trail stewards.

The Greg Ball Trail Fund continues to grow thanks to the foresight of hikers and volunteers who make a special endowment gift or leave a bequest through their estate. To make a gift to Washington Trails Association that will be put to work on trail right away, go online to wta.org and click "Donate."

and still are, derived from funny incidents on the trail—the fun that is part of every work party.

As the program grew, WTA stepped up to other challenges as well. Budget cuts and retirements began taking a toll on agency trail staff. WTA's volunteer crews commenced filling the increasing void of technical expertise once filled by Forest Service crews and career staff. From crosscut certifications to tool sharpening, WTA crew leads and volunteers trained with some of the agency's best, and now it is an art that is passed down, volunteer to volunteer, through WTA's growing ranks. WTA's standards are high. A hiker should see no difference between a volunteer-maintained trail and one tended by professional crews. Each year since 1995, WTA has held a Crew Leader College to provide leadership training and skills-building workshops for volunteers. Not only does WTA train its own volunteers, but many land managers now send their staff to WTA to learn best practices on trail.

It was the bonding of time on the trail together and the collaborative commitment to the work that helped with the transition of the program following Greg Ball's illness and passing in 2004. Ball had built the program from scratch and seen it through to its success. Fortunately, the program continued to thrive, due to the strength of the volunteer leadership and the continuity provided by long-time volunteer Chris Bell, who stepped up and took the helm.

Branching Out Even Further

Bigger opportunities for trail volunteers began in 1996 with the advent of "Volunteer Vacations." With the first on the PCT in the Glacier Peak Wilderness, these weeklong trips offered several advantages. They allowed WTA volunteers to reach beyond the first few miles of a trail and to work on more involved projects. In addition, they permitted WTA to work in new places normally out of reach for volunteers coming out for just a single day.

During those first few years, WTA crews were limited to working mostly in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, since that was the primary agency they had partnered with. "Greg was bummed by limits on where he and his volunteers could work, and I made one of the biggest mistakes of my career," jokes Paull. Paull told Ball that he should call up the land managers in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest to see if they might have some opportunities for WTA's volunteers to work on the east side of the Cascades.

WTA did just that and forged new partnerships with both of these districts in 1997. Fast-forward to today. WTA is working in five national forests, three national parks, Washington State Parks and DNR land, several counties and cities and even a land trust. WTA's Volunteer Vacation schedule—26 weeks, from March through September—now reads like a bucket list of places to hike: the Pacific Crest Trail, Mount Rainier, the Pasayten, the Olympics, Goat Rocks and more.

This year, 17 of WTA's Volunteer Vacations will be for high-school students, a development that came about after young people from local high schools

"Bigger opportunities for trail volunteers began with the advent of 'Volunteer Vacations.'"

2003

H: 67,350
V: 1,610

■ Storms take out Suiattle and White Chuck Roads; PCT wiped out in Glacier Peak Wilderness

Greg Ball passes away; memorial trail fund established



■ Storms wipe out Glacier Basin Trail

2007

H: 83,170



2006

H: 74,940
V: 1,640

▲ Volunteer Vacation at Bird Creek Meadows; first for Yakama Nation

2004

H: 67,030
V: 1,510

■ WTA Youth Program begins at Wallace Falls State Park

2005

H: 66,450
V: 1,490

■ Rattlesnake Ledge Trail completed
Beacon Rock State Park projects begin ▶



▲ Volunteer Vacation at Bird Creek Meadows; first for Yakama Nation



Over the years I have said many times that State Parks could not complete such a skilled level of trail maintenance and trail building without the help of WTA. As an agency, we don't have the capacity any longer, and the WTA trail maintenance program not only keeps our existing trails in good shape but builds new and wonderful trails. The Greg Ball Trail would have never come about if it had not been for the hundreds of volunteers and thousands of hours of labor they gave.

— Shawn Tobin – State Park Manager, Wallace Falls



Going all the way back to the beginning: Above, Dan Whitaker and Steve Dean working on the PCT at Kendall Katwalk; Right, a young Anders Forsgaard gets a lesson in tool safety from Greg Ball.

Photos by Karl Forsgaard



In the last 20 years, WTA volunteers have worked on the **Pacific Crest Trail** from the Columbia River to Holman Pass, 13 miles from the Canadian border, and on more than 50 locations in between.

REI and Boeing partner with WTA to repair Glacier Basin Trail; more than 300 volunteers ▼

■ Barnes Creek Bridge rebuilt in Olympic National Park

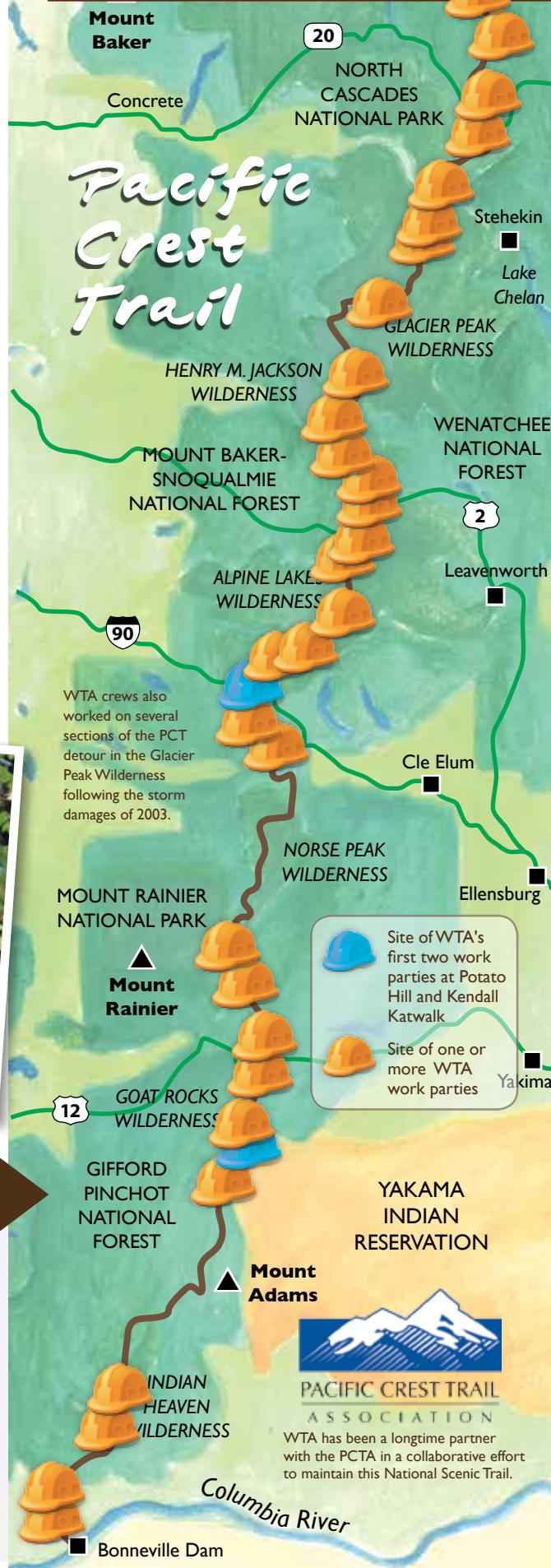
2008

H: 81,160
V: 1,800

WTA starts work in Larrabee State Park ►



Signature Projects



Signature Projects

WTA Trail Maintenance 1993–2013

Greg Ball Trail Wallace Falls State Park

WTA's youth program today owes its existence to a group of pioneering young adults. The three-tiered Wallace Falls has always been popular, but in 2002 the park hatched a plan with WTA to build a new trail to Wallace Lake. The first shovel of duff was thrown that summer, followed by a series of day trips. Then groups of youth volunteers from national programs spent their summer building the first third of the trail.

It was so successful that the next year WTA created a formal summer youth program at Wallace Falls. Funded largely by the Spring Trust for Trails, the youth program's energy and enthusiasm breathed new life into an overgrown forest. With the effort of 23,000 hours of volunteer labor (20,000 from youth crews), a beautifully constructed trail emerged. In August 2006, a gleeful group of volunteers cut the ribbon on the Greg Ball Trail, named for the late Greg Ball, who spearheaded the project for WTA.

HIKE IT!

MILEAGE: 8.2 miles

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,500 feet

ELEVATION TOP: 1,800 feet

MAP: Green Trails 142

GUIDE: Day Hiking: Central Cascades

PERMIT: Discover Pass

DOGS: Leashed



Chelan Lakeshore Okanogan-Wenatchee NF

If there is one trail that WTA has "adopted" over the years, it's the Chelan Lakeshore Trail. To date, WTA has tallied 35 weeks of volunteer vacations over 13 years—and we'll be back for two more weeks in 2013. It's the perfect spring break for volunteers. They get to do something they love in a stunning location along Lake Chelan.

This 17-mile trail hugs the shore of Lake Chelan and is only accessible by boat, making it an incredibly distinctive hike. But it was a trail that was almost lost. Being in a remote location, it was extremely difficult for the Forest Service to maintain. In 2001, and then again in 2006, forest fires ravaged the area. WTA volunteers took on hundreds of downed trees, reopening the trail and clearing side trails as well. They have worked every foot of more than 13.5 miles, clearing burned and windblown trees, fixing drainages, brushing and doing treadwork.



HIKE IT!

MILEAGE: 10 miles

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,000 feet

ELEVATION TOP: 1,700 feet

MAP: Green Trails 82

GUIDE: Don't Waste Your Time in the North Cascades

PERMIT: None

DOGS: Leashed

I have gained a great appreciation for the work and effort that goes into maintaining trails through volunteering with WTA. My favorite memories range from making my first culvert to endless laughs huddled in a tarp to avoid the mosquitoes. Every one of the trips I have experienced with WTA has allowed me to see the beauty of Washington and has given me an understanding of how important it is to maintain these trails for others to use.

— Charlie Gliniak – Youth Volunteer



The Saw: Excalibur

This 5'5" Simmons Bucking Saw was Greg Ball's pride and joy. While he had many other crosscuts that saw plenty of action, this saw remained in its carrier. When Greg passed, his wife Susan, decided to donate the saws to WTA, to be auctioned. Excalibur was purchased by longtime member/volunteer Matt Leber. Matt also bought Jack the Ripper and Chewbarks. Matt doesn't get on trail much any more, so he recently decided to donate the saws back to WTA. Jack and Chewy will be put in service, but Excalibur will remain a showcase piece at the WTA office in Seattle.



◀ First
Volunteer
Vacation
in Colville
National
Forest

2010

H: 94,760
V: 2,250

2009

H: 94,175
V: 2,090



■ New trail
on West Fork
Foss River
constructed

■ National Forest Foundation
supports Methow trail work

discovered that a weeklong work party with WTA was a great way to fulfill their service-learning requirements for graduation. For many years, WTA's youth work parties were staged at Wallace Falls State Park, where volunteers built a new trail to Wallace Lake—now aptly named the Greg Ball Trail. When students kept coming back year after year, WTA increased the diversity of its high-school trips to include everything from basic car camps to advanced backcountry trips. These opportunities have also proven to be a good farm team for WTA's crew leader base: several high-school volunteers have since "grown up" to blue hat status, and now, ten years after the first teen put shovel to dirt, youth and teens make up 15 percent of WTA's overall trail work.

In recent years, Washington Trails Association has made a concerted effort to fully realize its name, expanding its work on trails to encompass all of Washington. In 2007, WTA hired a regional manager in Vancouver to field trips at places like Cape Horn and Beacon Rock State Park in the Columbia River Gorge. This year, WTA has hired its first full-time staff member to lead more work parties around Bellingham and Mount Baker. WTA has grown toward its eastern border in the past few years as well, working on an expanding network of trails in Spokane County and hosting backcountry trips in the Colville National Forest and the Methow, while at the same time supporting a strong volunteer base on the Olympic Peninsula.

Flourishing Into the Future

As WTA's trail maintenance program grows into its next 20 years, there will be no shortage of work. Major storms over the past 10 years have demonstrated that access roads, trails and structures are vulnerable to floods, winds, fire and erosion. With ever-shrinking recreation budgets, agencies will be looking even more to volunteer organizations like WTA to help keep trails open to hikers.

Increasingly, WTA is asked for more help with trails in several areas across the state than it has the current capacity to deliver. As a result, WTA is revisiting its recruitment and training of volunteers and crew leaders, working to equip more people with the skills needed to expand its leadership base. WTA is also looking to the next generation, exploring ways to develop the youth program in new communities and with new partners. Part of these efforts will be examining the structure and locations of work parties to make them more accessible and appealing to the broader public. And finally, WTA is looking to expand its regional scope to more areas of the state and offer more service to the locations in need.

In every aspect, WTA's trail maintenance program has exceeded its expectations time and again over the last 20 years. But just because the program has reached such gigantic proportions doesn't mean that its sense of community has diminished. WTA's work schedule might seem thoroughly ambitious, perhaps even a little zealous, but volunteers still take Mondays off. The Thursday crew eats breakfast in Issaquah. Santa still shows up on trail every Christmas to hand out gifts.

Most of all, Greg Ball's keen emphasis on fun flourishes in the day-to-day conversations between volunteers as they dig in the dirt and cut back brush, working side by side, investing themselves in the very trails they aim to improve. Together, WTA and its volunteers have relived the trail maintenance story again and again over the last 20 years—and there is every confidence that they will continue to do so over the next 20 as well.♦



TOP TO BOTTOM: Work party at Sehome Arboretum; Youth volunteers working on the PCT at the Suiattle Crossing; Work party at Gibralter

OPPOSITE: Youth work crews on the Greg Ball Trail in Wallace Falls State Park



2012
H: 99,550
V: 2,840



- SW Office opens
- 630 youth volunteers
- ◀ Grand Ridge completed



▲ First BCRT
on Mount
St. Helens'
Loowit Trail

2011
H: 93,760
V: 2,630
Glacier Basin trail completed ▲

Continuing work
on Mount Rainier's
Wonderland Trail ►

2013
H: 100,000+
V: 3,000+

First
Volunteer
Vacation
sells out in
20 seconds!





Wagging the Trail

When you hike with a dog, each huff and snuffle of his snout pressed to the dirt decodes another layer of the trail's story: an overnight rainfall, a hiker ahead eating a granola bar for breakfast, a doe crossing to the creek below.

Hiking with a dog—and being a great dog ambassador on trail—can help awaken your senses to the wonders of Washington's wilderness. But it adds layers of complication and responsibility, too. Whether you've hiked with dogs for years or are just starting out, we've got hints for picking great trails in the season ahead and tips for ensuring your four-legged buddy stays safe and shows the best side of dogs on trail.

**By Loren
Drummond**

Dogs require hiking and wilderness training the same as people. Above, grown hiker dog, Summit, with companion, Vilnis, explore the Horseshoe Basin in the Pasayten Wilderness. Right, Summit as a pup when first learning to hike near Flaming Geyser State Park.

Photos by Tami Asars

Choosing a Hike

With so many options, choosing a hike is hard enough. When a dog is your hiking companion, you'll need to consider a few more factors.

Before choosing where you're going to hike with your dog, take their size, age and overall fitness into account. Practically any breed of dog can hike, but they need to train as much as you do. Ease in with short hikes and minimal elevation gain. "A dog that's used to only walking around the block may have a difficult time climbing Mount Si," cautions Redmond veterinarian and avid hiker Chelsea Hightower, who teaches classes on wilderness first aid for dogs and does most of her hiking in the Central Cascades and on the perimeters of the national parks.

Next, you need to be aware of where you can and can't hike with your dog. On most state lands (state parks and DNR) and national forest lands, you and your dog are good to go. Washington's three national parks and a few ecologically sensitive areas—the Enchantment Lakes Basin, Mount St. Helens National Monument and some alpine areas near Mount Baker—are off-limits. If you're dying to tackle a section of the Wonderland Trail, Grand Basin or Norway Pass, arrange for a sitter and let your pup sit those out.

Your dogs' biology makes them more susceptible to overheating and dehydration than human hikers, so you need to consider seasonal factors. In summer, consider how much of the hike is shaded by forest canopy. Are there creeks and lakes along the way? On cold, rainy or snowy hikes, your dog may need a jacket or booties as protection against hypothermia. During hunting season, dress your dog in bright colors (ideally hunting orange), and make absolutely certain they stay on-leash.

Finally, be aware of the trail conditions of the hike you select and if the tread you'll encounter will be easy on the paws (cushy loam vs. sharp scree). Paw wounds and tendon sprains or tears are the most common injuries Hightower treats in hiking dogs. "Avoid travel on abrasive surfaces or areas where your dog has to jump up or down quite a lot," she suggests. "Especially if your pup isn't yet conditioned for this."

Now that you know what you're looking for, and what to be aware of, hundreds of great hikes are out there for you and your pup to explore together. You may miss the alpine splendor of the Chain Lakes, but you'll discover some new favorites off the beaten track.



Daisy and Nathan on the Lake 22 Trail. Practicing good dog hiker etiquette ensures that everyone stays safe, and that all enjoy their day on trail.

Photo by Doug Diekema



A good dog ambassador sticks close, yields right of way and leaves no trace.

Leash up. It's the law. On many lands and trails, dogs are required to be on leash, even if they are trained for voice control. The patchwork rules are confusing, so it's best to assume leashes are required.

Yield. Hikers with dogs have a responsibility to yield to other hikers, to horses (on the downhill side) and to mountain bikers.

Pack it out. The only waste atop the forest floor should be from the animals who live there. Pack a trowel and bury the waste as you would your own. Better yet, pack it out in a plastic baggie.

Respect wildlife. Keep your dog a safe distance from wildlife. Prevent dog-wildlife encounters where your dog could easily get lost or hurt chasing after a chipmunk or trying to sniff a surly mountain goat.

Protect vegetation. One great reason to keep dogs close is to prevent them from straying off trail and impacting fragile ecosystems like meadows and lakes. These places usually get more impact from hikers anyway, and dogs compound the problem. Pay extra-close attention to your pets the higher you get, where vegetation gets even more fragile.

Training for Success and Safety

Just as you prepare and train yourself to hit the trail, you should do the same for your pal. Proper preparedness and trail etiquette will ensure an enjoyable hike for you, your dog and those you meet along the way.

Before hitting the trail, you'll want to add a few items, like canine first aid supplies, to your Ten Essentials packing list (see below). The most reliable way to keep dogs safe on the trail, though, is to keep them leashed.

"Prevention is always the best medicine," advises Hightower. "Leashes can prevent skin and muscle trauma, as well as heat stroke, by simply restricting your dog from excessive activity. They can also avert an accidental encounter with potentially hazardous wildlife and other mishaps, such as crossing a fast stream or going off of a cliff."

Trails are awkward spaces. When it comes to meeting others on trail—hikers, horses or other dogs—yielding and passing is one of the most fraught spaces of misunderstanding. With some basic training and leash skills, it doesn't have to be.

"Some people assume that because their dog is friendly, all dog greetings will go well," says Grisha Stewart, a hiker and animal behaviorist who founded Seattle's Ahimsa Dog Training. She recommends keeping your dog on leash to successfully manage encounters with others. Good recall and a trail-tested "heel" are also well worth the effort.



Easing Fears and Educating Kids

Imagine hiking through thick old growth, turning the corner and finding your way blocked by a 60-pound spider. You try for all you're worth not to scream as the enormous, beady-eyed creature leans in towards you.

Maybe that's a little over the top, but some people—especially children—are deeply afraid of dogs. Some of those fears stem, justifiably, from having been bitten by dogs. For small children, even a medium-sized dog can seem huge and frightening—especially with their wet noses and tongues right at face-level. In the quest for a more dog-friendly trail culture, every restrained, polite dog who quietly steps out of their way is one dog closer to breaking down that fear.

"I like to pull off trail downslope for other hikers" says WTA member Jared Pearce, who day hikes and backpacks with his shepherd mix dog ambassador, Domino. "Not everyone is keen on dogs, and this puts humans at ease just like it does for horses." Pearce also ties a brightly colored kerchief on Domino, especially if she isn't wearing a pack, to help distinguish her from wildlife.

Dog owners aren't the only ones with a responsibility for amicable greetings. Teaching curious kiddos, just like adults, to ask if they may approach or pet a dog or puppy is an absolute must. If your child is afraid of dogs, there are many online resources to coach your children about how to act around an unfamiliar dog. It's just as important to their safety as holding their hand near a cliff.

Hiking dog essentials:

- Obedience training
- Leash & collar w/ tags
- Water & bowl
- Food & treats
- Canine first aid kit
- Plastic bags & trowel

Where to Hike with Your Dog

Olympics: Lower Grey Wolf River – A low woodland hike through the Buckhorn Wilderness to a river bottom that ends in a narrow gorge.

Eastern/Wenatchee: Ancient Lakes – Hike to a desert waterfall where spring wildflowers abound—and ticks and rattlesnakes stay scarce.

Eastern/Palouse: Kamiak Butte – A short hike that climbs through April wildflowers to sweeping views of rolling hills that go on forever.

North Cascades: Old Sauk River Trail – Old-growth forest, moss and sounds of rushing water keep you company on this river hike.

Snoqualmie Pass: Cedar Butte – Go for miles on the Iron Horse Trail or take this steep offshoot for views that rival the more crowded Mount Si and Mailbox Peak.

Columbia Gorge: Hamilton Mountain – Go for spring wildflowers or waterfalls and a view of Dog Mountain in Beacon Rock State Park.

For more great hikes with dogs, visit wta.org/dog-hikes.

Keeping your dog properly leashed will ensure that they won't run ahead and startle other hikers. Here, Panda greets a fellow hiker just before yielding on the Maple Pass Trail. Photo by Steve Witt

Good Gear for Great Dogs

Hands-Free Leashes Originally developed for runners, and handy if you use trekking poles, the options in hands-free leash systems are growing. Choose a system that's comfortable with your pack's hip belt. If you have a larger dog, get a model with a quick-release buckle, in case you get in a tangle you need to get out of quickly.

Packs Handy for wearing out young dogs or for carrying treats, extra water and having your pup pack out her own poop, dog backpacks come in all sizes. Purchase a bright-colored pack for safety.



Granite Gear's Alpha Dog Pack was designed for dogs to carry their loads in comfort. \$63-\$73

Booties and jackets Every dog handles weather differently, and not all dogs will need booties. A lot will depend on your hike choices. Booties will help protect their paws from roots, rocks and snow.



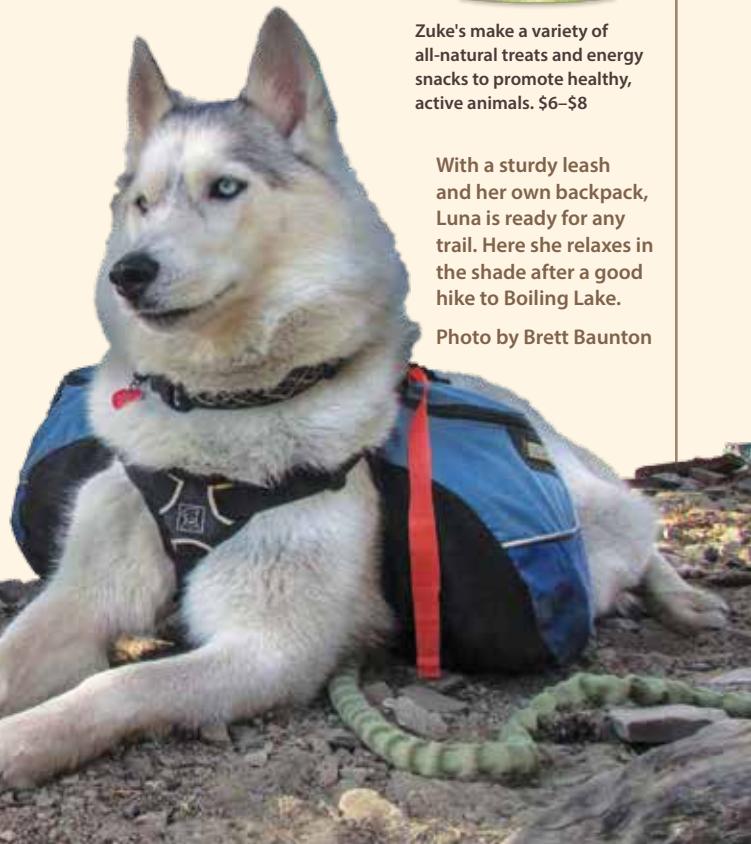
Ruffwear Grip-Trex Dog Boots keep dirt and debris out of their toes while providing maximum traction. \$70

Overnight gear Dogs should sleep in your tent and be insulated from the ground. Look into a light dog bed and sleeping bags if your dog is prone to the cold, but if you're not ready to invest yet, donate an old down jacket or fleece to the cause.



Zuke's make a variety of all-natural treats and energy snacks to promote healthy, active animals. \$6-\$8

Don't forget the treats! Best for training are soft treats; break up small pieces of Zuke's Hip Action, Z-Filet or Super Berry treats. String cheese or peanut butter sandwiches make people snacks that can double as backup treats for your dog.



With a sturdy leash and her own backpack, Luna is ready for any trail. Here she relaxes in the shade after a good hike to Boiling Lake.
Photo by Brett Baunton

Because Hiking With a Dog Is Worth It!

To properly hike with your dog—to take on the additional responsibilities and risks of bringing your buddy with you—can be a bit of a challenge. You end up skipping the glories of Spray Park for a more modest Summit Lake. On summer weekends, you step off a busy trail maybe 30 times or more to let people pass. You stuff plastic bags full of doggie poo in your backpack beside your rain shell and water bottle.

But when it comes down to it, those extra burdens that make a great, safe hiking dog don't end up feeling like burdens at all. Because your dog, an ambassador for all of her kind, does more than give dogs a good name on trail. Whether shepherd, dachshund or mutt, your dog heightens your own awareness of the sights, sounds and smells along the trail—from the trickling creek where she stops for a drink, to the hums of a spruce grouse hidden in the undergrowth. And at the end, she shows you the virtue of a good long nap when you've finally made camp.♦

You may hold the leash, but she leads by example—her enthusiasm, good nature and unapologetic ecstasy on trail will deepen both of your experiences in the outdoors.

What's Your Dog Tale?

Whether you hike with dogs or not, do you have great tips, advice, favorite dog-friendly hikes or a fond memory to share?

Share it with us on Facebook,
Twitter or at dogs@wta.org.



Discovery Weekend!

The Northwest along the Columbia River is rich in history, from a vibrant Native American past and a thriving trading post, to the completion of the famed Lewis and Clark Expedition, a military encampment and many maritime disasters where river meets ocean. Discover the locations, tales and artifacts from the Age of Discovery, before Washington and Oregon were states, when the region was brimming with exploration and opportunity.

By Eli Boschetto



Discover the charm of Astoria, where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean. And take in panoramic views across to Washington's Cape Disappointment from atop the Astoria Column.

Photos by Buff Black

Kick off your discovery weekend with a visit to the **Fort**

Vancouver National Historic Site (nps.gov/fova). Established in 1824 and named for English Captain George Vancouver, it was once a bustling fur trading outpost for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Surrounded by rich farmland and offering a variety of wares, it served a variety of European, Native American and early settler communities throughout the region. The U.S. Army later set up camp there in 1849 as an outpost during the Indian Wars. Not wanting to get caught between the brewing English and American territorial dispute, the HBC moved north to Canada. The original fort burned in 1866, but was rebuilt and remained in active service through World Wars I and II.

View an abundance of historical buildings, artifacts and interpretive displays on a self-guided tour of the grounds, where period furnishings adorn several structures, and catch one of the cultural demonstrations at the old blacksmith's or baker's shop. Presentations and enactments with costumed volunteers portray life as it was during the fort's booming years. And be sure to plug your ears during the musket and cannon demonstrations, as professionals armstrong reveal how the fort defended itself before the advent of modern weaponry. Aviation enthusiasts should check out the nearby **Pearson Air Museum** (pearsonairmuseum.org), where young and old alike will delight in close-up views of classic airplanes—including a replica of the Red Baron's Fokker triplane. Or try your hand at a takeoff or landing in their interactive flight simulator.

Following the Columbia

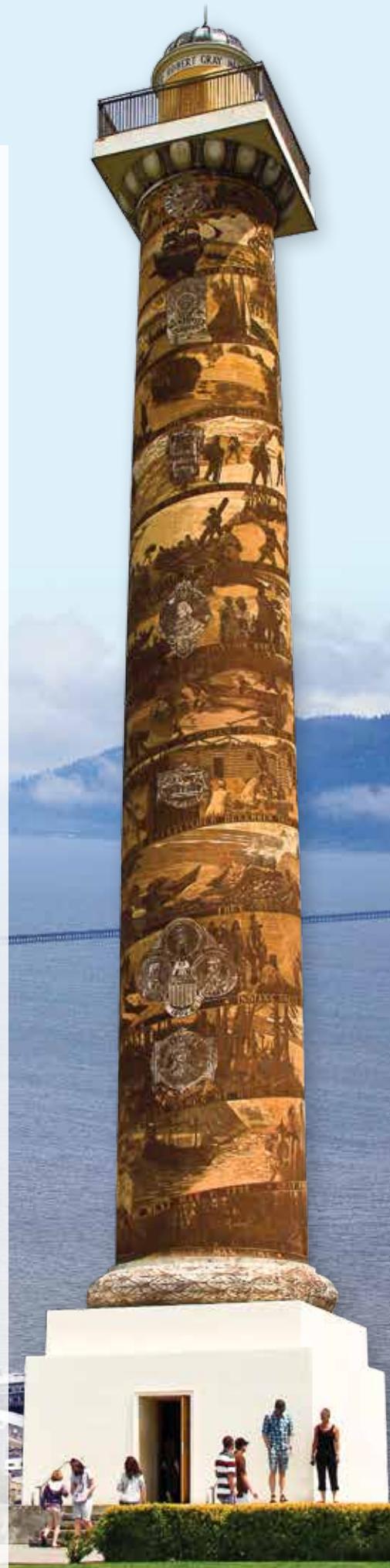
After your morning history lesson, hop on I-5 south and cross the Interstate Bridge into Oregon. The northbound lanes are the original (albeit upgraded) bridge over the Columbia River, first opened in 1917. The southbound lanes were added, and traffic divided, in 1958. This is the only vertical-lift drawbridge on the entire length of I-5, and it was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Continue into Portland and onto westbound I-405/US-30 and cross another historic bridge, the Fremont. This is the second-largest tied arch bridge in the world and was completed in 1973. If you're in need of any outdoor essentials, the downtown **Portland REI** (rei.com) store is easily accessed right off of I-405. Otherwise, merge onto US-30 west toward St. Helens. Pass one more historic river crossing along the way, the St. Johns Bridge. Opened in 1931, it held a short-lived record as the longest suspension bridge west of the Mississippi until the Golden Gate Bridge was opened in 1937.

The tree-covered slopes along the south side of the highway belong to Portland's famous **Forest Park**. Part of the Tualatin Mountains and covering more than 5,100 acres, Forest Park contains more than 70 miles of hiking and biking trails—worth a visit on another trip. Before leaving the Portland area, depending on the season, consider a side trip to Sauvie Island. One of the largest river islands in the U.S., it is located at the convergence of the Willamette River, Columbia River and Multnomah Channel. The north side of the island is a wildlife refuge with good bird watching and several miles of riverfront beaches; the south side of the island is farmland with several opportunities to purchase locally grown produce and berries.

Continuing west on US-30, pass through the small towns of Rainier, Clatskanie and Marshland. When the highway comes alongside the Columbia again, this is Cathlamet Bay. Offshore is the **Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge** ([1; fws.gov/lc](http://fws.gov/lc)). Accessible only by boat, this chain of 20 islands stretches for more than 27 miles and

is home to a wide variety of sea- and shorebirds, songbirds and raptors; otters, seals, sea lions and migratory salmon can often be spotted in the river. Hiking opportunities are limited due to accessibility and the islands' natural wetlands, marshes and mud flats, but viewing opportunities are available from points along the highway or by visiting the **Twilight Eagle Sanctuary**. Count how many eagles, gulls and waterfowl you can spot in the trees and offshore. When you're ready, Astoria is just a few miles farther west.

Historical note:
this was one of
the many camp
sites of Lewis and
Clark's westward
expedition.



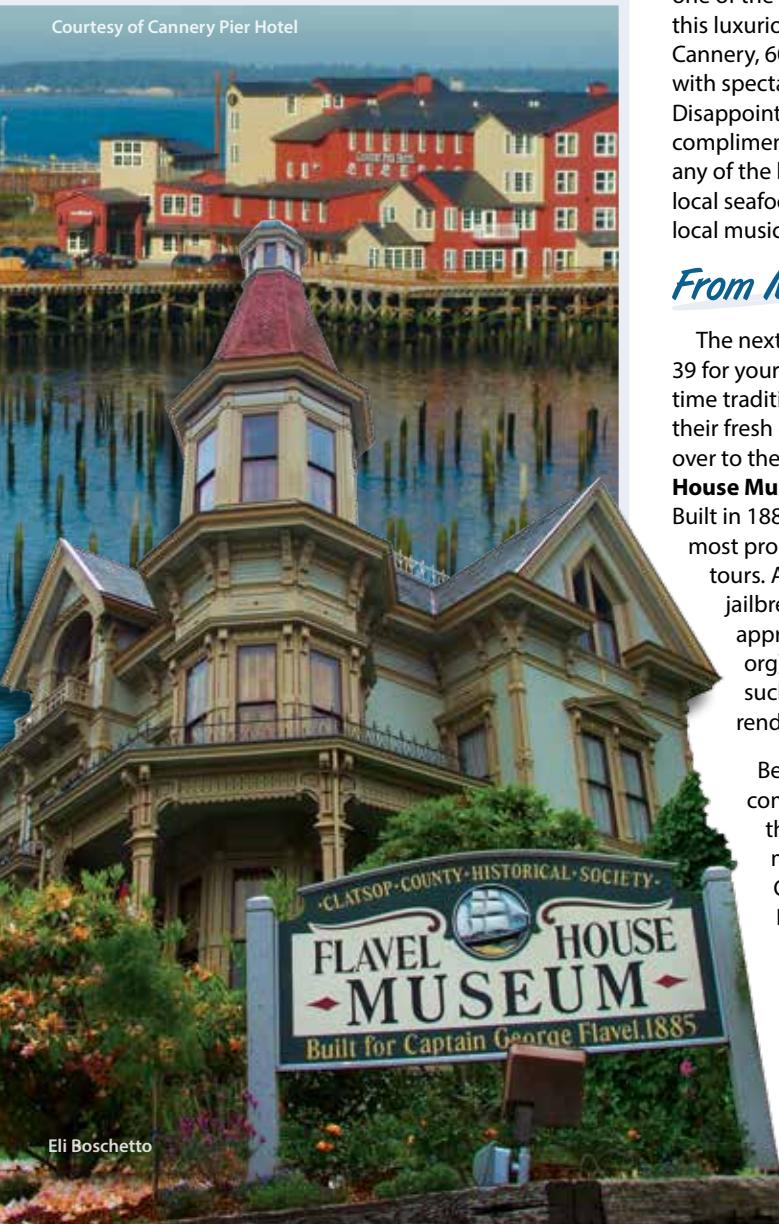


Dave Nagel; Fort Vancouver



Robert Holcomb; Pearson Field

Courtesy of Cannery Pier Hotel



Eli Boschetto

Where River Meets the Sea

Founded in 1811 and named for wealthy investor John Jacob Astor, **Astoria** (2) sits on the shore and hillside above the Columbia River's confluence with the Pacific Ocean. Nearby is **Fort Clatsop National Monument** (3; nps.gov/lewi), where the Corps of Discovery spent a frigid winter just a handful of years before Astoria's establishment. The fort, part of the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks, is worth a visit—plus, you're probably ready to stretch your legs.

Hiking Tip: Pack a lunch or snack and take it hiking with you, then enjoy it from the viewing deck at Sunset Beach.

The visitor center offers information on the area's natural and historical significance; a replica structure of the original Fort Clatsop is open for exploration. Then, follow in the footsteps of the original expedition by taking a walk on the **Fort to Sea Trail**. The 6.3-mile (one way) trail begins at the fort and climbs gently to a viewpoint atop Clatsop Ridge. From there, descend through forest to coastal pastureland. A tunnel crosses under the highway, then a bridge over Neacoxie Creek, to reach the dunes and shoreline forest of Sunset Beach. Explore at will and return by the same route.

After a day well spent, head back into Astoria, where an abundance of eateries, galleries, bookstores, hotels and B&Bs await to entice. Stroll through downtown and peruse the many quaint shops offering everything from local baked goods and art to nautical memorabilia and kitschy knickknacks.

For a unique lodging experience, indulge in a room at the **Cannery Pier Hotel** (cannerypierhotel.com). Selected as one of the "Best Hotels in the West" by *Sunset* magazine, this luxurious hotel sits on the pier of the former Union Fish Cannery, 600 feet into the Columbia River. Enjoy cocktails with spectacular views across the Columbia River to Cape Disappointment, or take a ride along the waterfront with complimentary vintage bicycles. For dinner, choose from any of the local restaurants and brewpubs serving up fresh, local seafood and Northwest cuisine, then check out the local music and theater offerings to finish off the evening.

Summer Tip: Wander the Astoria Sunday Market and browse a wide assortment of local produce and seafood, arts, crafts and treats.

From Movies to Murals

The next morning, drop into **Coffee Girl** (thecoffeeegirl.com) at the end of Pier 39 for your favorite morning concoction and a fresh pastry, served in the old-time tradition of the Bumble Bee Cannery. While you're there, order up one of their fresh deli sandwiches to take with you on the day's adventures. Next, head over to the corner of Eighth and Duane Streets to the **Captain George Flavel House Museum** (cumtux.org), famously known for its appearance in *The Goonies*. Built in 1885 and once inhabited by Flavel, a river bar pilot and one of Astoria's most prominent citizens, the lavish Queen Anne-style home is open for daily tours. A block away, you can also see the **Clatsop County Jail**, used for the jailbreak scene in *The Goonies*. A functioning jail from 1914 to 1976, it now—appropriately—houses the **Oregon Film Museum** (oregonfilmmuseum.org) which showcases the cinematic history of Oregon, including favorites such as *Short Circuit*, *The Black Stallion*, *The Ring* and the silver-screen rendition of Jon Krakauer's haunting *Into the Wild*.

Before you head for more rural ground, no visit to Astoria would be complete without first climbing the 164 spiraling steps to the top of the **Astoria Column** (astoriacolumn.org). Completed in 1926 and modeled after Trajan's Column in Rome, Italy, the 125-foot Astoria Column sits perched atop Coxcomb Hill, 600 feet above the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean. On the exterior of the column, a winding mural—more than 500 feet in total length!—depicts the history of the region, reaching all the way back to pre-Native American days and progressing forward through the ages of discovery, exploration and industrialization. From the viewing deck on top, take in a 360-degree bird's-eye panorama. Watch below as bar pilots—one of the most hazardous jobs in the Northwest—navigate boats and ships past the

Columbia Bar, the treacherous confluence of the Columbia River with the Pacific Ocean. Known as the "Graveyard of Ships," the Columbia Bar and surrounding area is responsible for the sinking of more than 2,000 ships since the late 1700s.

From Disappointment to Discovery

Now it's time to put the hiking legs back on and continue the weekend's journey. Hop on US-101 north and cross the 4.1-mile-long **Astoria-Megler Bridge**. Opened in 1966, it was the final connection on US-101 linking Los Angeles, California, to Olympia, Washington. The longest continuous cantilever through truss bridge in North America, and built to withstand 150 mph winds and 9 mph currents, it begins more than 200 feet above the water on the Oregon side, and drops to a mere 20 feet above the water for the final span to the Washington side. Continuing north, pass through **Fort Columbia State Park** (4), the small fishing village of Chinook and into the town of Ilwaco, then follow signs to enter **Cape Disappointment State Park** (5; parks.wa.gov). Named by a "disappointed" Lt. John Meares, who was unable to find the entrance to the Columbia River on his 1788 coastal exploration, the prominent headland has a storied history, including Native American culture, tragic shipwrecks, an encampment for Lewis and Clark and a defensive battery emplacement. The Cape Disappointment Lighthouse was constructed in 1856 and is the oldest working lighthouse on the West Coast.

Begin your park exploration with a tour of the **North Head Lighthouse**. Put into service in 1898 because ships continued to be shattered on the Columbia Bar, this second lighthouse was meant to assist those who could not see the Cape Disappointment beacon on the other side of the bluff. Still in operation—though now automated instead of manned—the lighthouse continues to serve its navigational duty. Next, pay a visit to the **Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center**.

Perched high above the Pacific with stellar views, the center tells the story of the Corps of Discovery expedition through displays, artwork and a short film, and there are interactive exhibits for the kids. There is also information on the area's maritime and military history. From the visitor center, short paths lead to the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse and the nearby Battery Harvey Allen. In winter and spring, the high viewpoints are ideal for spotting migrating humpback whales.

When you're ready to hit the trail, you have 8 miles of established routes to choose from. Starting at the **Beard's Hollow Trailhead**, hike north and retrace the steps of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through windswept and salt-sprayed coastal forest, then coastal dunes. The trail continues all the way to Long Beach, where several monuments commemorate the northernmost reach of the

Westwind Trail traverses forest and marshes to the North Head Lighthouse—an alternative to driving. The route continues south as the **North Head Trail** to McKenzie Head, a high bluff where the expedition once camped, and later the site of a military emplacement. Staying the night after your hike? Pitch your tent in one of the many campsites in the park—one of the most popular in Washington's state park system. Or, if you made reservations, stay in one of the cozy yurts or cabins. If home and "real life" beckons, take an alternative route by way of SR-4 east to the I-5 junction in Longview.

A quick weekend isn't nearly enough time to explore everything there is to do and see as you follow history down the Columbia River. But on your own weekend of discovery, you'll get a sample of what opportunities await—and discover some new ones for next time. ♦



OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: Take a tour of the Fort Vancouver historic village, then browse among vintage aircraft at the Pearson Field Museum. Spend a luxurious evening at the Cannery Pier Hotel on the Columbia River, then take a tour of the 17th century Flavel House Museum.

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: Visit the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse, the oldest maritime navigational beacon on the West Coast, then walk in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark on trails through coastal forest at Cape Disappointment State Park.



Gear Closet



Big Agnes' Helinox Passport Trekking Poles utilize DAC's lightweight aluminum and Green Anodizing; they offer both twist-lock and tension-lock models.



GoLite's Jam 50 Backpack is made partially from recycled materials. This light-weight pack has all the functionality and durability needed for all your outdoor adventures, while still being light on your back, your wallet and the earth.



Patagonia's Arborist Trench Coat utilizes all-recycled polyester fibers in a feminine and fully water-repellent coat for spring strolls.

Gear Going

When shopping for new gear, we typically consult our friends, outdoor publications and retail experts, then weigh the cost and value and practical application. These days, there are so many outdoor gear options that we can lose track of what we're even shopping for. But once we choose our new gear, do we consider how our selections affect the environment that we cherish?

In recent years, many outdoor gear brands have been thinking about this for us, and leading the industry in producing responsibly made gear with thoughtful manufacturing processes. Now you can find the same gear you would normally use, only constructed using recycled and upcycled or natural and sustainable materials. Some even offer customers the opportunity to return worn-out products for repair or repurposing in lieu of disposal. In addition, a growing number of companies have started manufacturing their products in the U.S., reducing the costs and environmental impacts of transporting their products from abroad—and providing jobs here at home. Since many of these companies have operations right here in the Northwest, this means more opportunities for our friends and families.

In honor of Earth Day on April 22, the *Washington Trails* gear team is highlighting a selection of companies and products that are leading the way with "green" and domestically produced gear. We found everything from head lamps to boots, jackets to packs and water bottles to outerwear. So the next time you set off on a gear-buying adventure, consider factoring in not only the impact you will have on your gear, but also the impact your gear has on the wild places you enjoy.



Made of 100% recycled aluminum—and fully recyclable!—Liberty Bottlesworks bottles are completely BPA-free and manufactured in Yakima, WA.



ReForge recycled fabric can be found in **Mountainsmith's Swift TLS** (Technical Lumbar System) lumbar packs. Perfect for short hikes, trail runs or urban adventures, this series of small packs is appealing for hikers and photogs alike.



A unique sleeping bag, **Feathered Friends' Rock Wren Nano** uses NanoSphere fabric. Designed with a center zip intended for big wall climbers, it is also a great choice for side-sleepers and hammock campers.

Green

Green Up!



In recent years, **Patagonia** has established itself as the industry leader in premium environmentally responsible outdoor gear—and challenges its customers to do the same. As part of their Common Threads Initiative, Patagonia retailers candidly ask their consumers to rethink purchase habits and pledge to buy only what's needed, reuse as much as possible and send old items back to the factory for repair or recycling. Patagonia's view past dollar signs and toward a sustainable planet is a brave one in today's competitive marketplace. patagonia.com

Korean company **DAC** exemplifies green and clean practices. They have long been leaders in tent pole production and more recently developed environmentally friendly Green Anodizing to minimize toxic chemical use. Anodizing aluminum promotes durability and corrosion resistance. Their process eliminates the use of nitric and phosphoric acid traditionally used in the anodizing process. DAC also reduces the process's water consumption by recycling it. These clean manufacturing processes result in both a cleaner environment and healthier employees. DAC tent poles are utilized by Big Agnes, Marmot, REI and many others. dacpole.com

Reduce, reuse, recycle. The sustainability mantra for a healthier planet is the same one that is fully incorporated by Boulder, Colorado-based **GoLite**. Their simple, lightweight designs reduce material usage, while robust construction ensures many years of reuse. More than two-thirds of their product line is manufactured using Environmentally Preferred Materials (EPMs), with a goal of 100 percent EPMs by 2015. And in 2010, they launched an industry-first "I'm

What Does "GREEN" Mean?

We hear the terms "green," "sustainable" and "eco-friendly," but what do they mean to us in a practical sense when choosing to buy gear?

Remember, every little bit counts.

Being green is getting easier than ever before. Manufacturers and consumers alike are learning that "eco-friendly" doesn't only mean using recycled materials or avoiding toxic chemicals in the manufacturing process. The myriad factors in the green equation are all present in each phase of the lifecycle of that new piece of gear you've been eyeing.



New tools developed by the Outdoor Industry Association (ECO Index) and the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (Higg Index) are starting to help companies find ways to "green" their products—and report their successes to the public. More companies are earning business by providing customers with visibility into the ways they are striving to reduce their environmental impact.

So when you're researching new gear, here are a few questions to think about:

- Where do the raw materials come from?
- How are those materials produced?
- Where is the product manufactured?
- How is it packaged/shipped?
- Is the product repairable?
- Can the product be reused, or disassembled and the materials reused?
- Is the product recyclable?

Again, every bit of improvement counts!



▲ Norwegian manufacturer **Norrøna** has recently partnered with **Polartec** to create the wind-resistant, water-repellent and highly breathable **/29 warm4 upcycled fleece jacket**—made from 40 recycled water bottles.

Ibex' Wool Aire Jacket combines all-natural Zque-certified Merino wool insulation with a 100% recycled nylon shell. The result is a lightweight puffy that continues to insulate, even when wet. ►



◀ Made in the U.S., **BearVault** canisters are approved by both the Sierra Interagency Black Bear Group and the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee.



Hikers will enjoy **Goodhew's Taos Crew**. These lightweight, breathable socks combine lambswool and alpaca yarns with spandex to keep them in place mile after trail mile with no slipping or bunching. ►



the first effort to incorporate post-consumer materials into their products. The result is their signature material, ReForge. Made entirely out of discarded post-consumer plastic bottles, ReForge is a durable, water-resistant and flexible fabric, now utilized in an array of Mountainsmith's products, including backpacks, tents and sleeping bags. mountainmith.com

Polartec has been producing synthetic performance fabrics since 1979. Polartec's new REPREEVE 100 fabric is made completely from post-consumer recycled water bottles instead of the petroleum products used in traditional fleece fabric. Today, more than 50 percent of all U.S.-made Polartec fabric is made with REPREEVE 100, and since Polartec fabrics can be in everything from the beanie on your head to the boots on your feet, you may already be wearing it and not even know it. And that sweet Polartec jacket you're wearing is a lot more functional and attractive than a pile of discarded water bottles. polartec.com

Seattle-based **Feathered Friends** has been well known among the Northwest mountaineering crowd since the 1970s. Not only do they design and manufacture all of their sleeping bags and most of their clothing right in their Seattle facility, but they also employ

"Not Trash" program to help consumers repair, repurpose or recycle their GoLite products. golite.com

Who knew that plastic bottles could be so functional—even in their afterlife? From the base of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, **Mountainsmith** saw more than just something that belonged in the recycling bin and launched

Schoeller NanoSphere fabric in many of their products. This material is not only highly durable, repelling water, dirt and oils, but is certified by bluesign to have no toxic or environmentally harmful processes in its manufacture. featheredfriends.com

Before synthetic fabrics existed, hikers relied on wool for warmth during cold, wet weather. In recent years, wool has been making a comeback, with improved performance—and **Ibex** has been one of the industry leaders. Ibex wool is Zque certified, which assures environmental, social and economic sustainability, animal welfare, and traceability back to its source. By using sustainable wool and recycled nylon, Ibex offers an eco-conscious combination that combines incredible warmth and long-lasting durability. shop.ibex.com

Made in the U.S.A.

Seeing a bear in its native habitat can be a thrilling experience. But if it's eating the food that you were counting on for the next several days on trail, the thrills can turn to chills in a hurry. **BearVault's** canisters are lightweight at 2 and 2.5 pounds, and strong enough to keep bears out of your food supply. With wide openings that don't require additional tools, the BV450 can hold four days' worth of food, the BV500 seven days', through black and grizzly bear habitat. bearvault.com

By producing socks made from natural renewable materials such as wool, bamboo and alpaca and by reducing their carbon footprint, **Goodhew** is committed to a lower environmental impact. The Chattanooga, Tennessee, company states that they "look at every aspect of [their] operations to find ways to reduce [their] impact on the environment." This includes using low-bulk recycled and recyclable packaging. goodhew.us.com



◀ Built for high performance and long life—and no battery waste!—Princeton Tec's Apex Rechargeable is a lighting powerhouse, with up to 150 hours of burn time on a single charge.

The SealLine EcoSee Bag is PVC-free and transparent, so you can see what's inside without opening, and it's available in sizes from 5 liters to 30 liters. ▼



Right in Washington's own back yard, **Liberty Bottleworks** has been offering affordable, BPA-free bottles made of 100-percent recycled aluminum since 2010. The young Yakima company has also created the unique "Liberty Cap" bottle topper that closes with a simple quarter turn, and has engaged artists from across the country to develop the wide variety of artwork that adorns each bottle. And if the bottle takes a beating or gets damaged—it's recyclable! libertybottleworks.com

Since 1975, **Princeton Tec** has been proudly manufacturing quality head lamps in New Jersey, bolstering the local workforce and economy. For the creative individualists, Princeton Tec is offering the option of designing your own unique head lamp. Currently available in the Fuel model, the Remix is coming soon. For those more interested in reducing battery waste, they have also started producing a line of high-performance rechargeable models. princtontec.com

Hiking in Washington can be a wet affair. Even if it's not raining or snowing, there are plenty of lakes and rivers that gear and electronics seem drawn to. The easiest solution, other than staying indoors, is to ensure you have truly waterproof storage. **SealLine** bags and cases range from merely splash-proof to fully waterproof—ideal for protecting your costly outdoors electronics. Headquartered in Seattle, they also make most of their bags right here in the U.S. cascadedesigns.com/sealline

So the next time you're shopping for a new gear item, consider some of these brands—or many of the others with similar goals—and help promote a cleaner, healthier environment that we can all enjoy.

Re-Proof Your Rain Gear



We all know spring means rain in the Pacific Northwest—but it certainly doesn't need to keep us inside. A good water-repellent jacket and pants can keep you dry and humming down the trails as the water falls from the sky and pools around your Gore-Tex boots. But that doesn't mean you have to rush out and buy a bunch of expensive new gear. You can add or restore water repellency to the gear you have with a few simple products from Gear Aid. The ReviveX line treats shells, down jackets, fleece, ponchos, pants, hats, boots, even that canvas workwear, in three easy steps:

1) Remove dirt and oils by first washing the garment with a gentle cleaner like ReviveX that won't leave behind softeners, fragrances or other harmful residues.



2) Treat with ReviveX Spray-On Water Repellent or Waterproofing Soak. The Soak is fluorine-free (good for the trees) and treats the entire garment. If you have a garment with a wicking layer, use the Spray-On so you don't inhibit the wicking layer!



3) Tumble dry as instructed, which heat-sets the formula for the best performance.



4) Go hike in the rain!

And you can feel good about using ReviveX products because they're nontoxic and made right here in Bellingham, Washington.



For a short video on how to use ReviveX to re-proof your outdoor gear, visit wta.org/how-to.

ReviveX Best-Use Guide



Detergent



Fleece



Leather

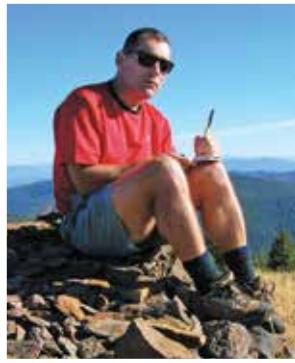


eVent & Gore-Tex
Down & Soft Shells



Suede

How-To tip courtesy of Gear Aid, of Bellingham, WA. Gear Aid produces a variety of cleaning and repair products for outdoor gear enthusiasts to help prolong the lives of their gear and avoid costly replacements. Find Gear Aid products at your favorite outdoor retailer, or online at gearaid.com.



Poaching the PCT

Tales from the Trail with Craig Romano

Located along the Pacific Crest Trail, tucked between the Columbia River Gorge and the Indian Heaven Wilderness, Sedum Point is a wonderful, yet little-known destination. Perhaps because it is not in a specially designated area is the reason most hikers don't find it, for its trailhead is just a few miles from Carson.

I like this hike not only for its solitude but also for its remnant pockets of old growth that survived the Yacolt Burn of 1902, Washington's Big Burn. There are excellent views down the Wind River Valley to the Columbia Gorge, and peeks of Mount Hood and Mount Adams too! And yes, sedums—along with myriads of other wildflowers carpeting a picturesque knoll just west of Sedum Point.

However, you often need to be aware of poachers on this section of trail. No, not gun-toting types looking to bag out-of-season game, but mountain bikers illegally riding the PCT. When the PCT was officially recognized, the National Trails System Act dictated that it remain true to its nature as a footpath and horse trail, thus banning bicycles and motorized users. However, here at Sedum Point, they can be fairly common—and on my last visit, I came upon two of them.

At first I gave them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps they came up one of the nearby feeder trails open to bikes and didn't realize they were now on the PCT. I asked them if they knew they were on the PCT, and they responded "yes."

I stood perplexed. I was dismayed that these two 30-something Portland lawyers (which I found out through the course of our conversation) were deliberately breaking the law here on hiker

sacred ground. They asked me if I minded if they kept biking on the trail. Of course I minded. What they were doing was wrong. Yet in a calm voice I suggested they ride back on a nearby decommissioned road. They weren't interested in that.

Next thing I knew we were having a debate. We all kept our cool, and they even complimented me that I wasn't like other hikers—I seemed reasonable! I was genuinely interested why these two were flagrantly defying the sanctity of the PCT. I quickly became enlightened to their

thinking. This is public land and they were entitled to ride here, they said. They argued that the Wilderness Act of 1964 is flawed because bikes weren't in the picture when the law was drafted, and referred to the shortage of mountain biking trails in the area. I countered, listing numerous trails in the Gorge and Hood River area open to bikes. But there was no ethical dilemma here for them. They felt they were entitled to enjoy the PCT the same as others.

We parted civilly. I hiked out mentally dissecting our exchange. Bikes are banned on the PCT, but should they be? I'm a mountain

They argued that the Wilderness Act of 1964 is flawed because bikes weren't in the picture when the law was drafted"

biker too, but I've never felt the urge to poach this trail. I cherish wilderness areas and trails where bikes aren't allowed, because as much as bikes may or may not be an environmental concern, their presence does change the entire ambience of the trail.

There's a strong movement going on to open up nonwilderness areas of the PCT to mountain bikes. **What do you think?**

HIKE IT: Sedum Point

MILEAGE: 10 miles

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

ELEVATION GAIN: 2,125 feet

ELEVATION TOP: 3,275 feet

GUIDE: Day Hiking Columbia River Gorge: Hike #29



Photos by
Craig Romano

The comments and opinions expressed by guidebook author Craig Romano are his own and do not necessarily reflect the positions of Washington Trails Association.

WTA has a long-standing and strong partnership with the mountain biking community, and has worked to maintain trails open to hikers and mountain bikers alike. Together with several mountain biking organizations, WTA has advocated for legislative and land management issues that affect both foot- and pedal-powered trail users. The mountain biking community has become a savvy, thoughtful partner across a range of WTA's programs, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with them in the future.

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.



NATURE NOOK

Text and photos by Tami Asars

BIRD: Cliff Swallow

You've likely heard of the swallows' annual return to Capistrano. Well, we have our own return of the cliff swallows right here in the Northwest! The high basalt cliffs of central Washington come alive with them after they make their way back to their breeding grounds in early April. As the temperatures warm, the graceful flyers dip and swirl through the air, eating a variety of insects. Observers with good binoculars might see little heads popping out of feather-lined mud-ball nests, built by rolling tiny balls of mud piece by piece in their beaks, then securing them onto sheltered cliff walls. There are many good places to see cliff swallows; Dry Falls Lake in Sun Lakes State Park offers excellent viewing opportunities.



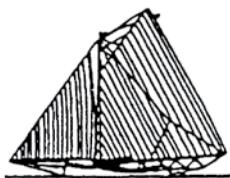
BEAST: Black-Tailed Deer

If you live on the west side of the Cascade crest and deer wander through your yard, it's likely your four-legged friends are black-tailed deer. These casual grazers feed on just about anything they can find, including native grasses, salal, salmonberry, pearly everlasting, huckleberry and, yes, your prized petunias. Look for newborn fawns from late May into June after a gestation period of six to seven months from the fall rut. Fawns have no scent for approximately the first week or so, giving the mother an opportunity to leave the youngster hidden as she hunts for nourishment to recover from its birth. Look for black-tailed deer during dawn and dusk in wooded areas or grassy meadows.



BLOOM: Sword Fern

Most of us know the sword fern from the moist coniferous forest floors of the rainy Northwest. The rain provides a perfect climate of consistent moisture for these plants, which serve as natural ground cover happily growing in the acidic soils at the feet of evergreens. Look for fiddleheads unrolling in mid- to late spring, looking at times like seahorses as they uncurl. Not only do sword ferns make for nice landscaping, these tough plants are fire resistant and even somewhat drought tolerant in hot summers. Also, they have one other interesting use. The next time you get stung by a stinging nettle, grab a sword fern leaf and rub its underside against the affected area. It helps alleviate the burning sensation!



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Hike It!



Hop a hike on one of these Rail Trails!

Spring is just around the corner, and your hiking feet are probably twitching to taste some trail. But with our favorite trails still under many feet of snow, we need to set our sights on lower-elevation options—a perfect time to check out a rail trail near you!

You can find rail trails in all parts of Washington. Many of them are long-distance, with multiple access points, allowing you to jump on and jump off for as long as you like. Here's a selection of rail trails across the state. So grab your boots, your bike or your dog, and go hit some (t)rail!

- ❶ **Spruce Railroad:** Olympic Nat'l Park; 8 mi. day hike
- ❷ **Chehalis Western Trail:** South Puget Sound; 22 mi.* day hike
- ❸ **Iron Goat Trail:** Stevens Pass; 6 mi. day hike
- ❹ **Old Robe Canyon:** Mountain Loop; 2.4 mi. day hike
- ❺ **Cascade Trail:** North Cascades; 22.5 mi.* day hike
- ❻ **Centennial Trail:** Spokane; 27 mi.* day hike
- ❼ **Columbia Plateau Trail:** Spokane; 130 mi.* day hike
- ❽ **Cowiche Canyon:** Yakima; 5.8 mi. day hike
- ❾ **Klickitat Rail Trail:** Columbia Gorge; 31 mi.* day hike

*Indicates complete mileage of trail with multiple access points and options.

Since most rail trails have little to no elevation gain, elevation profiles have been omitted from the hike selections in this issue.

A New Legacy

At one time, railroads crisscrossed Washington, hauling all manner of goods and materials—timber, mining ore, settlers from the east—both near and far. As these railroads began to be decommissioned or fall into disrepair, their legacy lived on in the silent, rusty rails and splintered tracks they left behind, solemnly cutting routes over mountains and across windswept plains.

The 1976 Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act stipulated that these abandoned rail routes could make ideal multi-use trails for hikers, bikers and snowshoers. The routes were already graded, their gentle slopes made them accessible for all ages and skill levels, and they often passed through some of the most scenic landscapes around.

This opened the door for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in 1986 and their efforts to convert many of these old rail routes into public recreation paths. What started with only 200 miles of trails almost 30 years ago has since grown into a nationwide network of scenic and historic rail trails numbering more than 20,000 miles.

SAFETY NOTICE Neither *Washington Trails* magazine, the Washington Trails Association, nor their personnel or agents accept any liability for accidents or injuries in connection with articles, trail or road reports published in *Washington Trails* magazine. The reports provide updated information of interest to the region's trail users; readers are cautioned to supplement the reports with detailed trail maps and other sources of information when planning a trip. Additionally, readers should be aware that reported conditions may change, that there may be errors in the reports, and that certain hazards are inherent in backcountry travel.



Hike: Spruce Railroad Trail

Enjoy scenic views of Lake Crescent and the surrounding Olympic Mountains while hiking the historic and family-friendly Spruce Railroad Trail.

One of the more popular destinations of Olympic National Park, the 600-foot-deep and 9-mile-long Lake Crescent is most often experienced from viewpoints along Highway 101. The Spruce Railroad Trail, which travels along the lake's north shore, offers visitors a less crowded, and more charming, impression of the area's splendor.

Built during World War I to transport Sitka spruce for use by the aircraft industry, the Spruce Railroad Trail was completed in 1919, a year too late for its intended purpose. The track did not go unused, however, and was utilized by commercial logging until 1954. In 1981 Olympic National Park converted 4 miles of the track to trail. Today, the former railroad grade offers a gentle, usually year-round, hiking destination that is suitable for the entire family. With eastern and western trailheads, there are two ways to begin your hike. If coming from Port Angeles, consider starting at the eastern trailhead to eliminate the long drive around Lake Crescent.

Begin on a slight uphill grade, one of only a few along the entire trail. Drop to the lakeshore and continue through a forest of fir, hemlock and madrones. During the spring months, enjoy various wildflowers such as bunchberry, Indian paintbrush, chocolate lily and stonecrop. Views of the lake and surrounding peaks, such as Mount Storm King, can be taken in at numerous locations. At 1 mile, the first of two tunnels is visible. Devil's Punchbowl, just beyond, is crossed on an arched bridge. A picturesque setting with water depths of 300 feet, Devil's Punchbowl is often busy during the summer months. Past the bridge, at about 3 miles, the trail rounds a rocky bluff through which exits the second tunnel. At 4 miles, reach the western trailhead.

With changes to the Spruce Railroad Trail looming in the future, now is a good time to get to know a more natural version of the trail. Olympic National Park's plans to make the trail more accessible will result in an 8-foot-wide paved walkway and reopening of both historic tunnels.

— Hike and photo by Kelsie Donleycott

► OLYMPIC PENINSULA

TOTAL MILEAGE: 8 miles round trip

ELEVATION GAIN: 700 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,500 feet

MAP: Green Trails 101: Lake Crescent

PERMIT: None

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/spruce-railroad

DIRECTIONS: From Port Angeles, drive US-101 west for 17 miles. Turn right on East Beach Road for 3.2 miles, then left on Boundary Creek Road for 0.8 mile.

POST-HIKE: Take a stroll to cascading Marymere Falls on the nearby Barnes Creek Trail.





► SO. PUGET SOUND

TOTAL MILEAGE: 22 miles one way

ELEVATION GAIN: minimal

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 500 feet

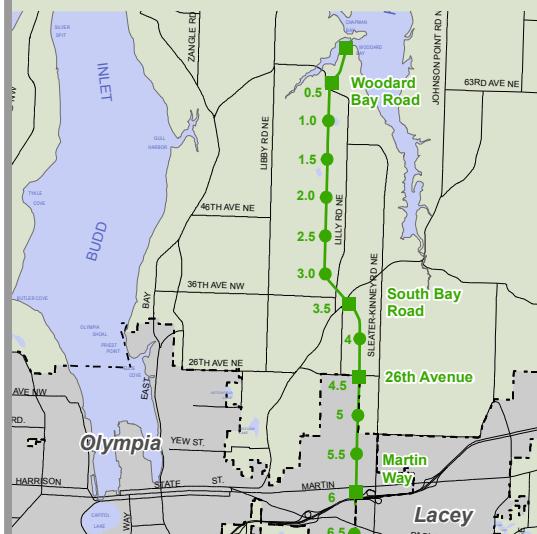
MAP: Thurston Co. Chehalis West Trail

PERMIT: None

INFO: co.thurston.wa.us/parks

DIRECTIONS: From I-5 exit 109, turn right on Martin Way, then left on College Street. Pass Lacey Blvd. and turn right on 14th Ave. to the parking area.

POST-HIKE: Hit up the Fish Tale Brew Pub in Olympia for after-hike food, and sample some Fish Tale Organic Ale.



Hike: Chehalis-Western Trail

Log some easy trail mileage by hopping on this family-friendly trail anywhere between Woodard Bay and Vail for a relaxing stroll any time of year.

The Chehalis-Western Trail is located in the heart of Washington, near the capital city of Olympia. Once the Weyerhaeuser-owned Chehalis Western Railroad (1926 to mid-1980s), it transported logged trees from Vail, southeast of Tenino, all the way north to a log dump on Woodard Bay. Today, the corridor exists as a 22-mile multi-use trail, now frequented by walkers and cyclists instead of logging trains.

Bike, stroller and dog friendly, the Chehalis Trail makes an excellent get-out-of-the-house stroll. Not your typical hiking trail, this mostly paved trail winds through diverse ecosystems in both urban and rural parts of Thurston County, providing views of Mount Rainier and access to more than 170 acres of park land, and includes access to the Deschutes River, Puget Sound and Chambers Lake.

And the long span means you can hop on the trail just about anywhere and travel as many miles as you like, with convenient mileage markers every half-mile. The trail also intersects with the 14.5-mile Yelm-Tenino Trail, leaving even more options for add-on mileage. Near this juncture, the trail passes through the Monarch Contemporary Art Center and Sculpture Park.

Each stretch of trail winds through different ecosystems, including wetlands, forests, farmland, rivers, lakes and prairies. Views will vary depending on what part of the 22-mile span you start at, and how far you travel.

— Hike by Brittany Manwill; Photo by Andy Lin, courtesy of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



Hike: Iron Goat Trail

Whether a summer hike or a winter snowshoe, the former grade of the Great Northern Railway, and Seattle's first railroad connection to the East, makes a pleasant mountain ramble easily accessible from either side of the Cascades.

More than 100 years ago, the Empire Builder railroad rumbled west from Minnesota through a narrow gap in the Cascades named for railroad engineer John F. Stevens. The trains are long gone, but the route remains, offering hikers the opportunity to walk in the path of this relic transit line and witness some of the artifacts of a mountain-crossing railway—and visit the site of a 1910 disaster.

Beginning at the Iron Goat Scenic Trailhead and Interpretive Site, you have the choice of following the grade westward to the workcamp site known as Cornea or taking the Windy Point Cutoff to the upper grade. The Cutoff trail is only about a mile, but is very steep. If you're snowshoeing, this trail can be difficult to navigate, so we recommend you skip the Cutoff in winter and take the normal route.

Although the roar of Highway 2 never fully recedes, the forest is welcoming and pleasant. Volunteers have put an incredible amount of effort into adding signs and information to explain the remaining vestiges of the railroad. You'll quickly encounter impressive concrete retaining walls built to anchor snowsheds to the mountainside and replicas of mileposts marking your distance from St. Paul. Crumbling tunnels yawn invitingly along the route, necessitating more than a few side trips to peer cautiously into the darkness—but do not enter!

With nine miles of trail and three different trailheads, the Iron Goat Trail has more than enough to explore. The trail sections between the Martin Creek Trailhead and the Scenic Trailhead and between the Wellington Trailhead and Windy Point are ADA accessible and stroller friendly in the summer months.

—Hike by Nate & Jer Barnes; Photo by Doug Diekema

► STEVENS PASS

TOTAL MILEAGE: 6 miles round trip

ELEVATION GAIN: 700 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,800 feet

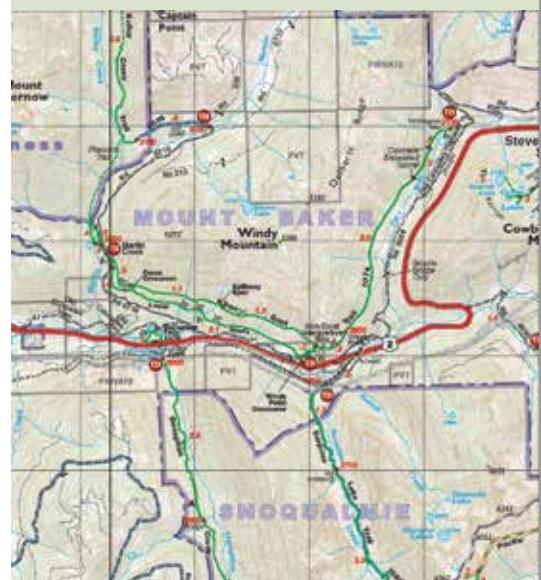
MAP: Green Trails 176S: Stevens Pass

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

INFO: irongoat.org

DIRECTIONS: From east or west, drive US-2 to the trailhead and historic site near MP58.

POST-HIKE: Spend the weekend in Steven's Pass and grab a campsite at nearby Beckler River or Money Creek Campgrounds.





► NORTH CASCADES

TOTAL MILEAGE: 22.5 miles one way

ELEVATION GAIN: 60 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 230 feet

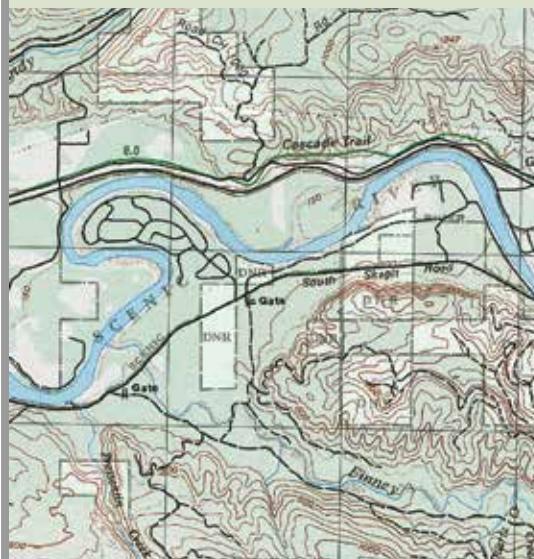
MAP: Skagit Co. Cascade Trail

PERMIT: None

INFO: skagitcounty.net

DIRECTIONS: The trail can be accessed from several points along SR-20 in Sedro Woolley, Birdsview and Concrete.

POST-HIKE: Sample some of the region's flavors at the Challenger Ridge and Eagle Haven wineries.



Hike: Cascade Trail

This 22.5-mile rail trail follows the abandoned Burlington Northern grade connecting the towns of Sedro Woolley and Concrete, and can be accessed from three trailheads off of the North Cascades Highway.

The trail from Sedro Woolley starts in the fertile farmland of the Skagit Valley to the south of the North Cascades Highway. The route meanders back and forth between the Skagit River and the highway, sometimes closer to the river, other times right next to the highway, but always with scenic views of farmland and foothills. In winter one can see tundra swans and snow geese poking about in the fields. Near Lyman, the trail hugs the banks of the Skagit before the river begins a southerly meander. At Hamilton, users pass near log yards and over backwater sloughs where one can spy blue herons, red-winged blackbirds and kingfishers.

Just east of Hamilton, the trail crosses the North Cascades Highway and continues its travels on the north side of the valley. The bit of elevation gain on the trail occurs here, as the trail ascends to traverse forested slopes above the banks of the Skagit River as it meanders back north. One can spy eagles along the river, or look east to Sauk Mountain and peekaboo views of peaks of the North Cascades.

Near milepost 19 the trail passes through land designated to protect the Skagit River population of the North Cascades elk herd. Here, elk trails crisscross the grade, and Hurn Field, the meadow they call home, is visible below. Shortly thereafter, one comes to a small park recently built by Skagit County Parks. It abuts Challenger Ridge Winery. One can either have a picnic lunch and enjoy the small fish pond or wander down to the winery for such wonders as wood-fired pizza, chowders and wine tasting.

—Hike and photo by Dawn Erickson



Hike: Old Robe Canyon

Historically significant and naturally beautiful, the trail through Robe Canyon is a worthy hiking destination any time of year.

120 years ago, railroad crews faced the daunting challenge of building tracks along a flood-prone river to connect the mines at Monte Cristo with the smelters in Everett. A narrow canyon east of Granite Falls proved to be a particularly challenging spot to lay tracks; frequent floods and rock slides destroyed not only the tracks, but also the settlement of Robe. The repair costs were high, and the line was eventually abandoned. Fortunately, today's hikers can still enjoy the area thanks to a Boy Scout troop, who built the trail in the 1960s, and the Snohomish County Parks Department, who created the Robe Canyon Historic Park in the 1990s.

The well-maintained trail quickly leaves the Mountain Loop Highway behind as it descends 300 feet down a steep bluff toward the Stillaguamish River. A series of gentle switchbacks makes the trip down (and back up) easy on the knees. The river bottom is wide and lush with maples and cottonwoods, making this an ideal place to soak your feet while soaking up the sun.

Paralleling the river, the trail begins to show signs of the flooding that made this stretch so problematic for workers more than a century ago; undercut banks and eroded trail are prevalent, but easily manageable for hikers today. The roar of the river soon rises as the water is funneled through narrowing canyon walls, creating frothy rapids and churning eddies. Here, too, is the first tangible evidence that a railroad once ran this way. Walking atop the old railroad ties, it is easy to imagine the mining days of yore and to conjure up images of rusty railroad cars chock-full of ore rolling down the bumpy tracks.

At 1.2 miles, a rockslide blocks the path, marking the official end of the trail, and once again confirming the difficulties that railroad engineers faced so long ago. Beyond the rockslide, the trail leads to several tunnels, but for now it is not safe to venture that far.

— Hike and photo by Lindsay Leffelman

► NORTH CASCADES

TOTAL MILEAGE: 2.4 miles round trip

ELEVATION GAIN: 350 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 1,000 feet

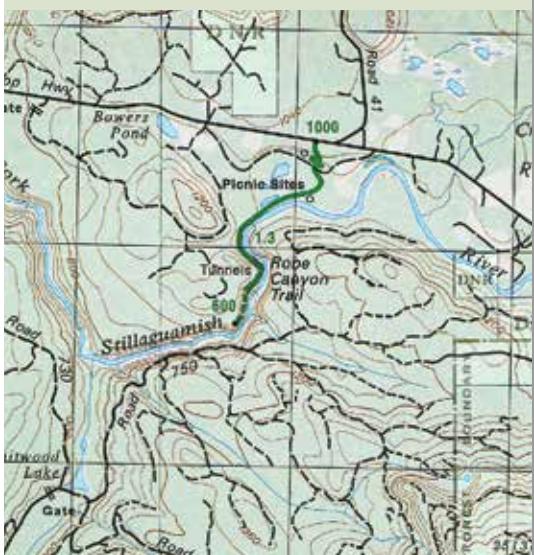
MAP: Green Trails 109: Granite Falls

PERMIT: None

INFO: robecanyon.org

DIRECTIONS: From Granite Falls, drive the Mtn Loop Hwy. east for 7 miles. The trailhead is marked by a brick sign.

POST-HIKE: Go for a margarita and some south-of-the-border flavor at Playa Bonita Mexican Restaurant in Granite Falls.





► SPOKANE

TOTAL MILEAGE: 27 miles one way (WA)

ELEVATION GAIN: 600 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,200 feet

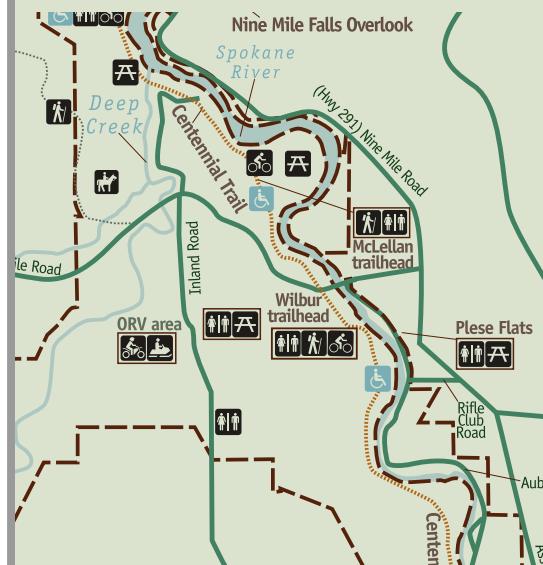
MAP: Riverside State Park

PERMIT: Discover Pass

INFO: spokanecentennialtrail.org

DIRECTIONS: The Centennial Trail can be accessed at Riverside State Park, or by various trailheads along I-90.

POST-HIKE: Visit the amusement park at Riverfront Park, site of the 1974 World's Fair, and ride the 1909 Looff Carousel.



Hike: Centennial Trail

Spokane's Centennial Trail started as a pedestrian- and bike-friendly route along the Spokane River, coinciding with the Washington State Centennial celebration, hence the name. Now, users can follow the Spokane River from Riverside State Park west of Spokane all the way to the Idaho border.

With numerous access points along its 37-mile length (WA & ID), there is plenty to see along this casual route created by the combination of converted roadway, former timber company lands and old railway routes. Start by exploring the first two miles of trail (I-90 at exit 299) and the darker history of the region at the Horse Slaughter Camp monument, site of the 1858 slaying of more than 700 Native American horses along the banks of the river.

Next, pick up the Centennial Trail at the trailhead for the Denny Ashlock Bridge along Upriver Drive in the Spokane Valley. Cross the bridge and explore the trail east, with views upstream of Antoine Peak. The mansion at the top of the cliff is the former Royal Newton Riblet Mansion, now the Arbor Crest Winery. A mile upstream from the bridge, look for the statue of Antoine Plante on the far bank; this is the location where Plante operated his ferry across the Spokane River from the 1850s until the 1870s, and where the historic Mullan Trail crossed the Spokane River.

The best of the Centennial Trail can be found at the western end where it crosses into Riverside State Park. Create loops by connecting the Centennial Trail to the Riverside State Park trail system. From the Wilbur Trailhead, follow the Centennial Trail upstream to the former camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps, now an interpretive site. Or continue on the highway to Nine Mile Bridge to access the Carlson Road Trailhead near milepost 36, and follow the trail a mile upstream to the impressive rock formations of Deep Creek Canyon. And no trip to the Centennial Trail is complete without exploring its urban core. Explore the site of the 1974 World's Fair. The prominent park clock tower was built in 1902 and was originally part of the Great Northern Railroad Depot.

— Hike and photo by Holly Weiler



Hike: Columbia Plateau Trail

Survey wetlands, working farms and Western-movie vistas on this 130-mile rail trail through Eastern Washington's channeled scablands.

The Spokane, Portland and Seattle rail line represented the last major triumph of railroad magnate James J. Hill, the "Empire Builder." Today, recreationists can survey the Inland Empire of eastern Washington on this 130-mile route, now maintained as the Columbia Plateau Trail State Park. Through much of its length, the Columbia Plateau Trail passes through the channeled scablands, the canyon-carved remains of cataclysmic ice age floods caused by the breaching of ancient Glacial Lake Missoula.

Users can access the route from multiple trailheads along its length; currently, 23 miles between Lincoln County and Cheney and another 15 miles near Tri-Cities between Ice Harbor Dam and Snake River Junction are developed for public use. Much of the rail trail remains crushed railway ballast, but the 3.75-mile stretch from Fish Lake Regional Park to the Cheney Trailhead is smooth blacktop and makes a fine introduction to the trail for hikers, bikers, skaters and, in the winter, snowshoers and Nordic skiers.

Beginning at Fish Lake Regional Park, the rail trail skirts the southeast side of the lake. At 1 mile the trail begins chugging slowly but steadily uphill amidst ponderosa pines and basalt columns. At around 2 miles, pass the first of several large tracts of agricultural land. On either side, shallow "pothole" wetlands, scoured into the basalt bedrock by the swirling Lake Missoula floodwaters, provide oases for migratory birds and belie eastern Washington's dry reputation. Bring plenty of water for yourself, though; the trail, shade-free for much of its length, can be mercilessly hot in the summer, and there is no water along the route.

At 3.75 miles, reach the trailhead at Cheney-Spangle Road. Beyond this point the trail surface reverts to crushed gravel before passing through the Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and points beyond.

— Hike by Aaron Theisen; Photo courtesy of Washington State Parks

► SPOKANE

TOTAL MILEAGE: 7.5 miles round trip

ELEVATION GAIN: 200 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,277 feet

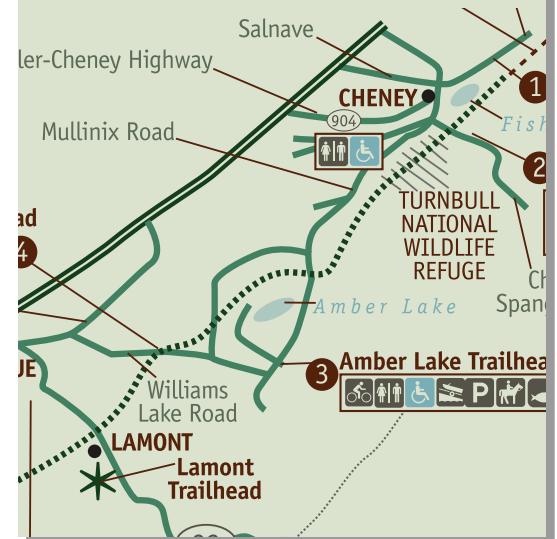
MAP: WSP: Columbia Plateau

PERMIT: Discover Pass

INFO: parks.wa.gov

DIRECTIONS: From Cheney, drive NE on First St. for 1 mile. Turn right on Cheney-Spokane Rd. for 2.9 miles. Turn right on Meyers Park Rd. to the trailhead.

POST-HIKE: Indulge in enormous portions of tasty pasta and chicken parmesan at Lenny's American & Italian in Cheney.





► YAKIMA

TOTAL MILEAGE: 5.8 miles round trip

ELEVATION GAIN: 200 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 1,500 feet

MAP: Cowiche Canyon Conservancy

PERMIT: None

INFO: cowicheckcanyon.org

DIRECTIONS: From I-82 take exit 31A to get on westbound US-12. Take the second exit, signed "N 40th Ave. and Fruitvale Blvd." Drive under the freeway, across Fruitvale, and in 1.5 miles turn right onto Summitview Ave. Continue 7.1 miles and turn right on Weikel Rd., signed for the Cowiche Canyon Trail.

POST-HIKE: Indulge in a little off-trail wine tasting at the Tasting Room of Yakima or Naches Heights Vineyard.



Hike: Cowiche Canyon

Walk beneath stunning basalt and andesite cliffs along a beautiful creek with wildflowers in the spring, stunning color in the fall and a side trip for a glass of wine and snacks.

The Cowiche Canyon Trail may be short, but it sure is sweet. From the trailhead just off Weikel Road, you'll wind beneath steep sagebrush slopes and cliffs of basalt and andesite splotched with colorful lichens, crossing Cowiche Creek numerous times along the way. The creek is always close at hand, and the lush riparian vegetation and sagebrush hillsides are home to numerous species of songbirds, while raptors and vultures circle above the cliffs. If you're lucky, you'll hear a canyon wren or spot a yellow-bellied marmot or a lucia azure butterfly. In the spring, a wide array of wildflowers dot the hillsides.

As you make your way down the canyon, just past bridge 5 you'll come upon some reddish basalt columns reminiscent of the statues on Easter Island. A little farther along, soaring above the trail between bridges 7 and 8, is an andesite formation known as the Mayan Sunrise. Just prior to bridge 8 is a junction with the Winery Trail, which climbs the north side of the canyon to the Wilridge Vineyard and the Tasting Room of Yakima, while just beyond bridge 8 is a junction with the Uplands Trail that climbs the south side of the canyon to the uplands with broad vistas of Mount Cleman, Cowiche Mountain, and the surrounding countryside.

Beyond here the main trail leaves the railroad bed and follows an old county road to bypass two trestles that were illegally removed when the rails and ties were salvaged. Here the vegetation crowds the trail, at times almost forming a tunnel as the trail follows a bend in the creek back to the railroad bed below some impressive basalt cliffs. After crossing the creek for a final time, the trail passes a grove of aspen, then a house and small orchard. Beyond this is the hop yard that is the source of Fremont Brewing's Cowiche Canyon Fresh Hop Ale, and finally the trailhead at the end of Cowiche Canyon Road.

—Hike and photo by David Hagen



Hike: Klickitat Rail Trail

Hop aboard for an early-season wildflower bloom amid remote terrain and open air. At a healthy clip or a slow meander, this rail trail is fun at any speed!

Purchased by the Rails to Trails Conservancy in the early 1990s and then donated to Washington State Parks, this rail trail almost didn't happen. Land-use conflicts stalled the project, but the trail opened to the public soon after the creation of the Klickitat Trail Conservancy. Currently, the U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Parks and the Klickitat Trail Conservancy cooperatively manage this trail.

The Klickitat Trail runs 31 miles, with multiple access points placed in unique areas, from grass plains and the rugged Swale Canyon along the Wild and Scenic Klickitat River, to oak-filled valleys dropping down to Lyle and the Klickitat's mouth at the Columbia River. Bring your sense of adventure, as you'll cross old railroad trestles, encounter some very large cows, and stumble across a strange mixture of artifacts, from discarded equipment and railroad spikes to bleached white animal skulls.

What sets this rails-to-trails selection apart from others in the state is its unique landscape and the quickness in which that landscape changes from mile to mile along the way. You can find native grassland openings, endless rolling hills of gold flowers and sprinklings of purple larkspur. Although you pass in close proximity to private property in a few places, where a denser vegetation of dogwood, pine and various deciduous trees is thick, you quickly feel far removed, as the trail opens and falls in sync with the remote sections of the Klickitat River.

Listen for the variety of songbirds, and watch the hills on either side for deer, grouse, marmots and turkeys. Many ponds can be found in certain areas, brimming with amphibians, turtles and red-winged blackbirds gliding from the cattails. From north to south, and anywhere in between, the Klickitat Trail will delight any hiker.

— Hike by Ashley Morrison; Photo by Eli Boschetto

SOUTHWEST

TOTAL MILEAGE: 31 miles one way

ELEVATION GAIN: 200 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 1,550 feet

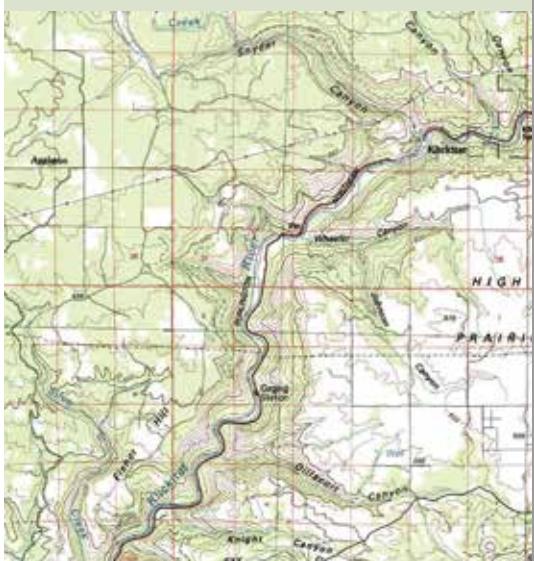
MAP: USGS Quad: Lyle, Klickitat

PERMIT: Discover Pass

INFO: klickitat-trail.org

DIRECTIONS: From Lyle, drive north on SR-142. Trailheads are accessible at Lyle, Harms Road, Pitt and Klickitat Town Park.

POST-HIKE: Head to Trout Lake for some spring camping, and enjoy a weekend outdoors under ponderosa pines.





HIKING THE IRON HORSE

Crossing the Cascades on the John Wayne Pioneer Trail

By Tami Asars

Take in big views from high trestle crossings on the Iron Horse Trail. Photo by Tami Asars

one are the locomotives that once traversed the Cascades from east to west. Gone are the tracks and train stations which serviced passengers for much of the twentieth century. In their place, with only a few shreds of evidence indicating its previous life, is a recreational pathway through the mountains—appropriately named the John Wayne Pioneer Trail.

Managed by the state of Washington as Iron Horse State Park, the trail extends from Cedar Falls near North Bend to the Columbia River near Vantage. It offers more than 100 miles of hiking, biking, rock climbing, cross-country skiing and equestrian opportunities, and is open year-round.

From the trail, feasts for the eyes are never far off. On the west end, fractured metamorphic rocks protrude from the corridor's sidewalls. These sheer ramparts not only indicate where the route was blasted up the mountainside, but offer a great place for rock climbers to test their skills. Nearer the Snoqualmie Summit, however, is perhaps the most interesting man-made feature on the trail: the Snoqualmie Tunnel.

Of the numerous tunnels along the route, the Snoqualmie Tunnel is the grandest of all. Constructed in 1914 by boring straight through the mountain, the 2-mile-long structure is nearly completely dark, with only a tiny dot at the other end, giving the cliche "light at the end of the tunnel" a physical meaning. Insulated by mountain stone, the tunnel is chilly, even on hot summer days. Bikers and hikers alike enjoy the thrill of having only the limited light of a flashlight or head lamp to make their way through the connecting link.

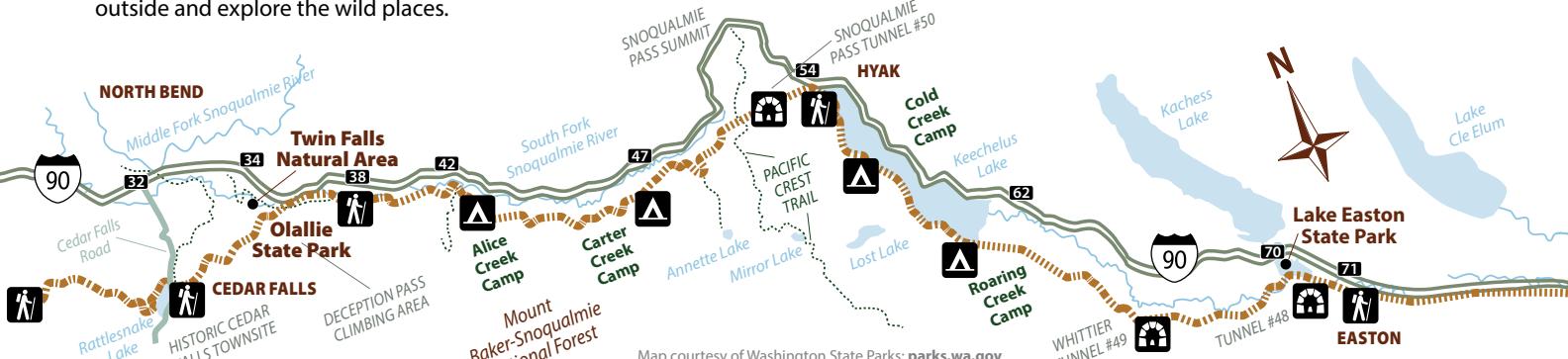
East of Snoqualmie Summit, the trail meanders its way around Keechelus Lake, an ideal destination for pleasant walks in the summer or cross-country skiing in the winter. Continuing east of the Cascades, the trail flirts with Lake Easton before eventually descending into homestead country and sagebrush landscapes, to the southward-flowing waters of the Columbia River.

The builders of the great railway probably didn't visualize their pathway being used for anything other than rumbling freight and passengers; however, thanks to their efforts we are left with a fantastic place to get outside and explore the wild places.

TUNNEL TIP:

Currently, several tunnels along the Iron Horse Trail are closed due to safety concerns. There are detours in place to get hikers around the tunnel closures to continue the trail. The Snoqualmie Tunnel is closed seasonally, and is usually open May 1 through late October. Never enter a closed tunnel or mine shaft, as potential dangers lurk within.

Before heading out,
check the state parks
website for the latest
info at **parks.wa.gov**.



BITS & PIECES

You can enjoy the John Wayne Trail in a variety of ways. Go for a day hike from one of many trailheads, or set out for an overnight backpack and stay at one of the many campgrounds.



Jer Barnes



Marty Witt



Pam MacRae

HIKE IT: Snoqualmie Tunnel

The 5.2-mile hike through the Snoqualmie Tunnel from the Hyak is practically level from one end to the other, making this an enjoyable romp for all skill levels. Head west through the tunnel to the opposite end, and take in panoramic views of the South Fork Snoqualmie River Valley. Get to the trailhead using exit 54 off I-90 and follow signs to Iron Horse State Park. To explore the tunnel, pack flashlights with spare batteries and a warm jacket, along with your other Ten Essentials. Open seasonally, May 1 through late October; Discover Pass required.

BACKPACK IT: Campgrounds

Tailor your own backpack along the Iron Horse, for a weekend or a week. Four first-come, first-served backcountry campgrounds are available along the route at Alice Creek, Carter Creek, Cold Creek and Roaring Creek. Each campground has three or four sites, picnic table and a vault toilet. See kiosks at each location for registration and fees. Camping is also available near the trail at U.S. Forest Service campgrounds at Tinkham, Denny Creek, Lake Kachess and Crystal Springs, and at Lake Easton and Wanapum state park campgrounds.

SHUTTLE IT: Summit Express

Leave the car behind and try something new—shuttle service! For a small fare a shuttle bus will pick you up (and, if you like, your bike) from Cedar Falls and drive you to the top of Snoqualmie Pass. From there, you can take your time hiking or biking back down to Cedar Falls along the John Wayne Trail on 20.5 miles of downhill, crushed-stone trail. Along the way you'll get to experience the Snoqualmie Tunnel, wildlife viewing, bridges, trestles, waterfalls and mountain and valley views. For more information, visit busup90.com.

John Wayne Trail Stats

SIZE: Iron Horse State Park 1,613 acres

DISTANCE: John Wayne Trail 110 miles

RECREATION: Hiking, biking, rock climbing, camping, horseback riding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, dog sledding

HIGHEST POINT: Snoqualmie Pass, 3,022 feet

LOWEST POINT: Columbia River, 548 feet

BEST SEASON: Year-round

PERMITS: Discover Pass; Sno-Park Pass

INFORMATION: parks.wa.gov

AREA WILDLIFE: Bears, coyotes, elk, deer and a variety of year-round and seasonal birds

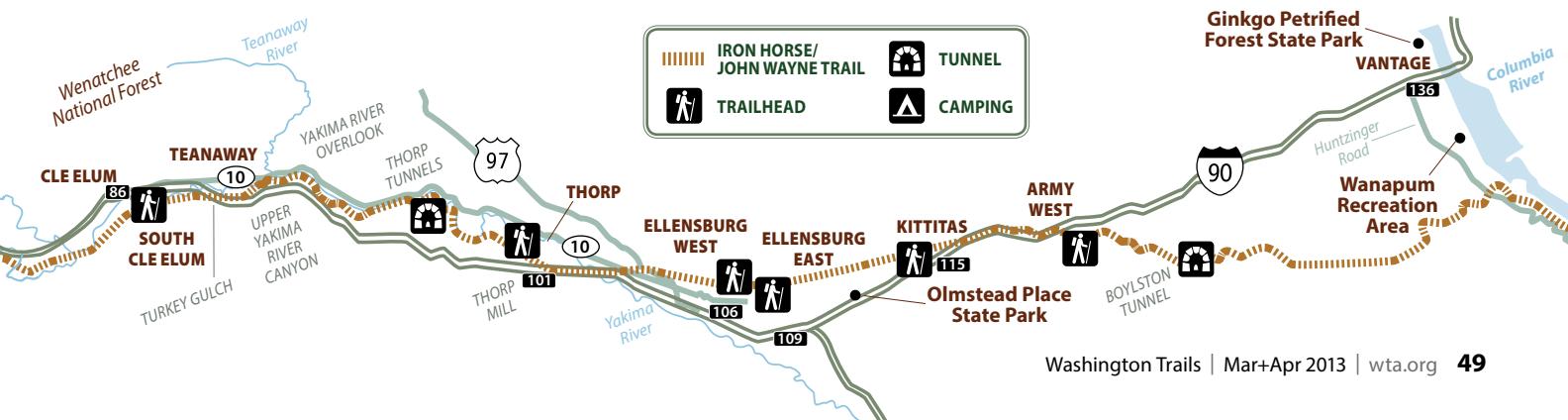
AREA VEGETATION: Cedar, fir, yew, alder, maple, thimbleberry, salmonberry, ferns, coltsfoot, salal, sagebrush

IRON HORSE TRAIL FUN FACTS:

- During construction, a crew of 2,500 men removed 180,000 cubic yards of rock
- The first train went through in January 1915; the last in April 1980
- The John Wayne Trail and PCT cross at Snoqualmie Pass, but don't intersect



pxpunk03



Sharp Shooting

Spring is just around the corner, and you're ready to hit the trail with your brand new, top-of-the-line digital camera, featuring 20 billion megapixels to give you extra sharp and detailed photos. But getting crisp photos takes a lot more than a bunch of pixels. Tack-sharp photos come from good technique and a thorough understanding of your equipment. Here are a few tips that can help make your photos razor sharp:

Know your focus

Don't spend hours hiking to shoot your favorite locale and find that you don't know how to use your camera's focus properly. Today's digital cameras come with complicated autofocus systems. If your camera is new and you are just learning to use it, begin by reading the autofocus section of the manual, and do a lot of experimenting to see which mode works best for your style of shooting.

Use a fast shutter speed

If you manage to get your subject in focus, using too slow of a shutter speed can still make your photos blurry. This can really be a problem on dark, cloudy days, as Washingtonians know all too well. If your shutter speed is dipping below 1/60th of a second, use a larger aperture on your lens to let more light into your camera or increase your ISO to increase the sensitivity of your camera's sensor.

Support your camera

Using a tripod is probably the best way to take sharp photos, but as a hiker trying pack light, you might not want to lug around the extra weight. Good hand holding technique is key to keeping your camera steady and capturing sharp photos. Always use two hands to support your camera, and keep your camera close to your body by using the viewfinder instead of live view. Breathe slowly when focusing and then hold your breath as you press the shutter button to snap your shot.

Many new cameras and lenses have image stabilization (IS, VR, OS, etc.) that can help keep your image steady too, but it's still important to practice good technique and not rely entirely on your camera's features to do the work for you.

Tips and photos by photographer Paul Raymaker

Don't miss a great shot by having your focus out-of-whack. Good handholding or a tripod, spot-on focus, and a fast shutter speed all make for sharp, keeper shots !



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CROSSING THE COLUMBIA PLATEAU

Accessible from the Tri-Cities area, the Columbia Plateau Rail Trail offers hikers and bikers the opportunity to enjoy some of central Washington's high-prairie flora and fauna, as well as a look into the area's natural and human history.

~ KIM BROWN

Spiny tumbleweed skeletons huddle in glades under towering, lichen-crusted basalt cliffs. Pines, grasses and flowers carpet the countryside among meandering creeks and rippling ponds, all under wide-open skies, often dotted with puffy clouds. Among the wildlife roaming, swimming and flying the area, eagles, salmon, swallows, deer and elk abound. This living landscape tells a fascinating geologic tale of nature's might through fire and water.

More than 15 million years ago, repeated basalt lava flows poured across central and eastern Washington, flowing all the way to the Pacific coast. In the Palouse region, Steptoe and Kamiak Buttes towered too high for the flows to cover, leaving the quartzite country rock exposed above the sea of volcanic rock. Long after the last basalt deposit settled, loess (silty sand from eroding rock) covered the area in drifts and swales.

To the east, an ice dam created Glacial Lake Missoula, 186 miles long and covering 3,000 square miles. This dam burst, re-formed, and burst again, up to 40 times over millions of years. Each time it burst, 600 cubic miles of water were unleashed across the landscape. The first floods easily wiped away the thick layer of sedimentary loess. Subsequent floods scoured more and more weakened basalt fragments from more-resistant sections. This created the landmark canyons and coulees across the eastern portion of the state and left behind giant ripple marks in the terrain. The lovely, undulating Palouse hills are ancient loess deposits that lay outside the floodwaters' path.

Fast-forward to the early 1900s. Railroad magnate James Hill built the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway (SP&S) line to connect Spokane to Portland for its parent companies, Northern Pacific and Great Northern.

Typical of railroad magnates, he promised riches to citizens living along the proposed route, including private irrigation projects, which floundered miserably. Eventually, after the line was in operation, towns did flourish. SP&S's slogan, "The Northwest's Own Railway," is testament to how proud the communities along the railway line were. For many years, crops were freighted westbound and lumber

to the east. During World War II, aluminum and chemicals were frequently freighted goods. A line to Seattle was also promised, but never materialized.

The SP&S operated until 1970, when it was rolled into Burlington Northern, which abandoned the line in 1987. In 1991, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquired 130 miles of right-of-way for a trail conversion. So far, 38 of those miles have been developed for recreation.

John Tillison of Washington State Parks highly recommends the trailhead at the Turnbull Wildlife Refuge near Cheney and Sprague. "Ponds throughout Turnbull are at various depths and sizes, so they provide a rich array of habitat and vegetation that attract the large variety of wildlife," Tillison says. He has seen elk, deer and moose at Turnbull Refuge and is often delighted at the tremendous variety of bird species.

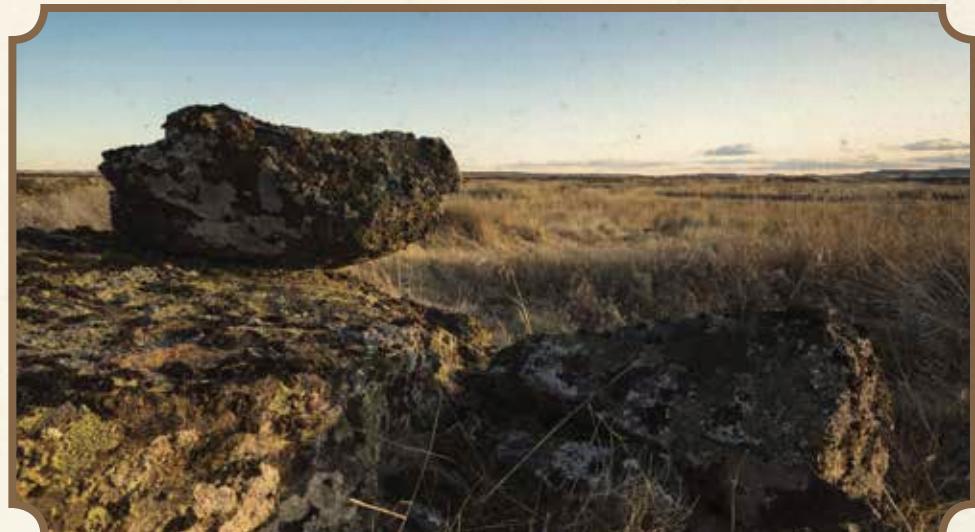
Tillison cautions about exploration of some undeveloped portions of the trail—the trestles are not planked and can be dangerous. The Ice Harbor Dam trailhead near the Tri-Cities can be a scorcher on warm days. This segment has river views, and swallows dart among the colorful basalt cliffs. The undeveloped trailhead in Kahlotus boasts a spooky walk through a short railroad tunnel. This section is not suitable for bikes and is less used than the fully developed portions.

So grab a map and trace the line from Ice Harbor to Cheney. Note the names of the tiny whistle-stops along the railway—Farrington, Wacota, Washtucna—and thank Washington State Parks for helping to preserve a part of their history.

For more information on the Columbia Plateau Rail Trail and other state parks, visit parks.wa.gov.

Grasses and sagebrush mingle with volcanic remnants and floodwater formations across the Columbia Plateau's high prairie landscape.

Photo by Aaron Theisen



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Tushar Sharma