

Northwest Employers Giving Back to the Outdoors

Washington TRAILS

A Publication of Washington Trails Association | wta.org

Big Business

How Recreation is Fueling
Washington's Economy

Mar+Apr 2016



NPS: The Value of Priceless
Choosing the Right Water Filter
10 Trails for After-work Hiking

DON'T MISS OUT!

DON'T WAIT » TRIPS ARE FILLING UP FAST!

Trails all over Washington need your help.

You can give back to trails this summer on a WTA Volunteer Vacation or Backcountry Response Team.

Join us for a multiday adventure with fun and friendly people to accomplish much-needed trail work in beautiful locations across the state.



SIGN UP AT wta.org/volunteer





In 2016 *WTA is celebrating 50*

years of protecting trails. From our humble beginnings as a little newsletter to our current role as a leading voice for trails, our goal to empower hikers continues to drive our work of protecting and promoting trails in Washington state. This year, as we acknowledge the founders, members and volunteers who inspired and led us to this point, we will turn our sights to the future of trails.

As the state's leading hiking resource and the nation's largest volunteer trail maintenance community, WTA serves more than 4 million hikers each year through our bimonthly magazine, online resources, social communities and collaborative partnerships. Through our grassroots advocacy, WTA focuses on trail issues including funding, access and wilderness protection, while our innovative youth and families programs educate and empower families, teachers and youth groups to discover the outdoors.

In a time when more people are looking to get outside, WTA will continue to find new and innovative ways to encourage safe and sustainable hiking and trail systems, while working to improve access to hiking opportunities for all Washingtonians. We invite you to continue this journey with us, as we continue to explore new ways to empower, inspire and engage the hikers of today and tomorrow.

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.

CONNECT WITH WTA:

 /washingtonhikers  /wta-hikers

 /washingtontrails#  /wtahikers

 /WTAhiker

The Legacy of Doug Walker

Early this year, Doug Walker, who was not only one of my favorite hiking partners but also my mentor, friend and former boss, died on Granite Mountain. He left behind innumerable friends and colleagues from all walks of life, his best friends (wife Maggie and daughter Kina) and a legacy of giving back to the outdoors that continues to motivate me every single day.

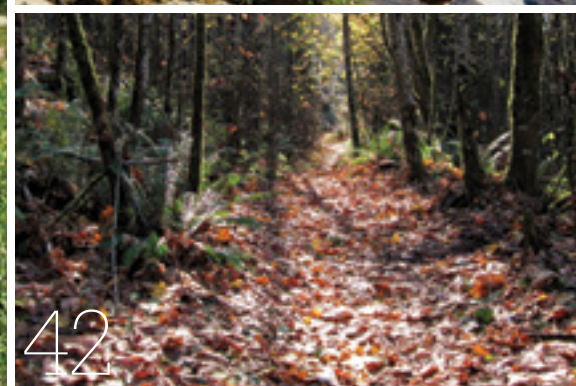
Doug's love of the outdoors was contagious and his generosity legendary. He was always inviting others along on his adventures—it was 15 years ago when he first invited me out. I remember it like it was yesterday: the joy our small group felt as we snowshoed up Commonwealth Basin and slid back down, laughing, yelling and simply enjoying the happiness of being outside on a blustery winter day. It was the beginning of a deep friendship. In the end, Doug and I shared 47 summits together and even more adventures.

Doug lived his life with the same hearty enthusiasm he hiked with, pushing himself and others to go faster, do more, be better informed and act. In his early thirties, he founded a software integration company that he led for the next 25 years until it sold in 2004. Instead of retiring, he started his second career, nonprofit leadership. Doug believed that getting outside had the power to transform lives and his primary passion became introducing youth to the outdoors. He led by example as he helped new people fall in love with hiking, took on leadership roles within recreation organizations and supported programs that addressed change. Doug and Maggie were founding supporters of both WTA's youth program and our Lost Trails Found project. The youth program alone connects more than 2,400 youth to the outdoors each year.

My last hike with Doug was in November as he, Maggie and I hiked the old Mailbox Peak Trail the weekend after a windstorm had downed dozens of trees. As we climbed up and over and around the debris, we talked about the importance of saving trails like the one we were on. Doug expressed his worry that this trail, like many others, would soon be forgotten and lost forever, and he not-so-subtly urged us to do something about it.

It is that passion and tenacity that continue to deeply motivate me. Most recently, I felt it as I returned from Olympia having successfully worked to increase funding for hiking trails—a project WTA has been leading for the past two and a half years. What we do in life defines who we are, and anything worthwhile takes focus and commitment—and that is another lesson learned from my very wise friend.

Karen Daubert



Features

Recreation is Big Business

Move over aerospace and technology, outdoor recreation is driving Washington's economy forward. » **p.14**

More Than Just a Job

Northwest companies are not only at the forefront of the outdoor industry, they're also giving back to the outdoors in big ways. » **p.20**

Membership Matters

From supplying volunteer crews to keeping WTA's website running, your member dollars are working hard for Washington's trails. » **p.28**

COVER: Washington's rugged coast is a popular destination for locals and tourists alike. A stroll along the spectacularly scenic Shi Shi Beach to Point of Arches is a must-do for every outdoor adventurer. Photo by Derrick Peters.

WTA at Work

WTA and SCA team up for youth jobs » p.8

Volunteers step up to winter trail damage » p.9

WTA joins John Wayne Trail committee » p.10

Trail News

National Forests report challenges » p.12

Enchantments permit season extended » p.13

Trail Mix

NW Weekend: Best bookstores » p.34

Gear Closet: Lighten your load » p.36

Camp Kitchen: Quick trail meals » p.39

Camera Bag: Shopping for a trail camera » p.40

Hike It!

Close-in trails for after-work outings » p.42

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT / Stephen Tan
VP, ADVOCACY / Mason White
VP, BOARD DEVELOPMENT / Rob Shurtleff
VP, FUNDRAISING / Titti Ringstrom
CHAIR, COMMUNICATIONS & TECH / Bruce Burger
SECRETARY / Carole Bianquis
TREASURER / Joe Gregg

Directors at Large

Andrea Baines / Lisa Black
Perry Burkhart / Amy Csink
Michael Dunning / Jennifer Faubion
Thomas Goldstein / Damien Murphey
Steve Payne / Susan Queary
Wendy Wheeler Jacobs

WTA Senior Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / Karen Daubert
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR / Kate Neville
FINANCE & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR / Marjorie Kittle
INFORMATION SERVICES MANAGER / Charlie Kahle
MEMBERSHIP MANAGER / Joey Smith

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR / Kindra Ramos
ADVOCACY DIRECTOR / Andrea Imler
DIGITAL CONTENT MANAGER / Loren Drummond
WASHINGTON TRAILS EDITOR / Eli Boschetto
GRAPHIC DESIGNER / Jenica Wilkie

TRAIL PROGRAM DIRECTOR / Rebecca Lavigne
FIELD PROGRAMS MANAGER / Alan Carter Mortimer
FIELD PROGRAMS MANAGER / Tim Van Beek
NW REGIONAL MANAGER / Arlen Bogaards
PUGET SOUND FIELD MANAGER / Jen Gradisher
SW REGIONAL MANAGER / Ryan Ojerio
YOUTH PROGRAMS DIRECTOR / Krista Dooley

Washington Trails Volunteers

COPY EDITOR / Cassandra Overby
GEAR TEAM / Doug Diekema, Brittany Manwill
GUEST CONTRIBUTORS / Mariah Beckman, Deanna Duff
Charlie Lieu, Craig Romano
ILLUSTRATORS / Gabe Adams, Lindsay Holladay
PROOFREADERS / Jim Cavin, Rebecca Kettwig
TRAIL TEAM / Nate & Jer Barnes, Kelsie Donleycott
Brandon Fralic, David Hagen, Lindsay Leffelman
Mike Morrison, Kristen Sapowicz, Ryan Schreiner
Holly Weiler, Rachel Wood

Washington Trails Association

705 Second Avenue, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 625-1367 / wta.org

NORTHWEST OFFICE / (360) 739-2258

SOUTHWEST OFFICE / (360) 722-2657

GENERAL INFORMATION / wta@wta.org

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION / membership@wta.org

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION / volunteer@wta.org

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS / editor@wta.org

ADVERTISING / advertising@wta.org

MAR+APR 2016 / Volume 51, Issue 2

Washington Trails (ISSN 1534-6366) is published bimonthly by Washington Trails Association, 705 2nd Avenue, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98104. Annual membership dues, which include a subscription to *Washington Trails* magazine, are \$40. Single copy price is \$4.50. Periodicals postage paid at Seattle, WA, and at additional mailing locations.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Washington Trails Association, 705 2nd Ave., Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98104.

Walk for Good Health

As a magazine editor and guidebook author, I spend a lot of time sitting in front of my computer. Oftentimes, too much time. It's long days writing, coordinating and editing stories, poring over photos, and following up on countless emails to keep everything running on schedule. It's occasionally during these marathon sprints of staring at my monitor when my eyes start to glaze over and I lose focus. That's when it's time to back away.

To do that, I take a walk. Whether I'm at the office or working from home, I put on my jacket and go outside, if even for just 15 minutes to stretch my legs and breathe some fresh air. The health benefits of simple walking have been known for a long time, for everything from assisting with weight management to relieving stress to helping reduce the risk of heart disease and other ailments. A recent study at Stanford University has also concluded that walking can help boost creativity. Perhaps this is the root of the phrase, "think on your feet."

As hikers, we all probably spend a lot of time thinking about, daydreaming about, our next *big* hike—an escape to wild places far and wide. But between those big hikes—especially for those of us with demanding jobs and schedules—those big hikes can be few and far between. That's where you need to start thinking small, thinking local. On your lunch hour, go for a walk around town, stroll around a city park, or go climb some stairs. After work, instead of heading home, head for a nearby county or state park and knock out a couple miles on some easy trail. You may not get the same experience and stimulation as you would bagging a high peak, but your body, and your mind, will thank you.

To help you get on a fresh track and help yourself stay healthy and reduce stress during the workweek, we've compiled a list of ten close-in parks and trails in this issue's Hike It section that are perfect for a quick after-work outing. To encourage you even more, we've added a few quick meal suggestions on the Camp Kitchen page to help you fuel up for your after-hours explorations. In the next issue of *Washington Trails*, we'll continue to explore the accessibility and benefits of easy weeknight escapes with suggestions for helping you plan your own local microadventures.

Hiking doesn't have to be a weekend-only endeavor. Going for a hike or walk is closer than you think—and the benefits go much farther than the pretty scenery.



Passes, Permits and the Protected Experience

Why do I need a permit?

Passes and permits are a reality of hiking in Washington, and though they serve two different purposes, in the end they both attempt to ensure a quality experience when hiking and recreating in the outdoors.

Why Passes?

Funding for public lands has dwindled in recent decades, and passes, like the Discover Pass and Northwest Forest Pass, are one way land managers try to make up some of the difference. But you may wonder: Where does the money go?

At first glance, it may not seem like fees are necessary to enjoy Washington's parks and forests—much of the work done on trails and campgrounds is invisible. But your pass funds employ backcountry rangers and trail crews. They empty the garbage at trailheads and campsites, build new bridges and clear trails. They replace vandalized signs and improve signs worn illegible by time. In short, they help get you where you'd like to go.

Passes, while a critical part of funding, aren't perfect. They can pose barriers. That's why many trailheads don't require them and why most land management agencies offer fee-free days.

Why Permits?

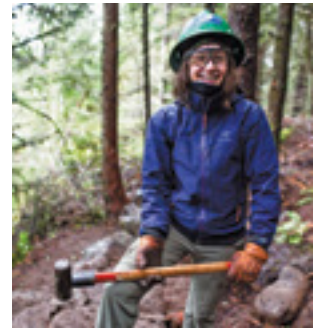
Backcountry permits, like those issued in national parks or quota areas like the Enchantments, serve a different purpose. Permits are a way of regulating the amount of foot traffic in fragile environments that can only handle so much use before they begin to erode. By limiting the number of visitors to an area, permits not only preserve the environment but also the experience of hikers themselves. This allows you to immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of nature—without being overrun with crowds.

Some of these permits are free, while others come with small fees. Some are seasonal, and others are required year-round. The barriers posed by permits are, more often than not, that they can be confusing and difficult to secure. But in the end, they serve a valuable purpose.

Still confused about passes or permits? Visit wta.org/passes-permits.

Share Your WTA

WTA is a community, and our story is your story. Write a trip report and tag us in your social posts to share your WTA.



Getting Dirty

Suzi Erb stopped for a smile, while having a great time working on the Dirty Harry Trail.
— Ramon Domprior, via Instagram

I Heart Rocks

Gathering up a little love on a recent hike at Rialto Beach.
— Erynn Allen, via Trip Report



IF YOUR TAX DOLLARS COULD FUND ONE THING FOR PUBLIC LANDS, WHAT WOULD IT BE?



I would focus on continued acquisition and protection of public lands for wildlife preservation,

environmental and ecological balance, recreational access and the overall well-being of society.

— Micki Kedzierski, WTA Member



I would focus on access and connecting people with the best that public lands have to offer. That means

maintaining roads, keeping parks and gates open, and creating new trails where access is limited.

— Kevin Steffa, WTA Member



Maintaining our trails and recreational facilities. Something so basic, yet so important.

— Andrea Imler, WTA Advocacy Director



Campsite trampolines.

— Rich Allen, Hiker

JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT WTA.ORG/SIGNPOST

Adapting to Protect

Wilderness permits are just one tool employed to protect special places and unique backcountry experiences. But with recreation thriving with record numbers in Washington, will these pressure valves be enough to protect the most fragile places in the coming years? The U.S. Forest Service's Gabrielle Snider, who has the challenge of managing one of Washington's most popular hiking destinations, the Enchantments, suggests that agencies and individuals both have a role to play.

“One of the many tools we, at the Forest Service, use to understand, manage and adapt to recreation impacts is a visitor permit, including limited entry permits like those used for overnight camping in the Enchantments area of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness since 1987.

In places where recreation impacts are degrading wilderness character, land management agencies and individuals have to work together to reduce those impacts to ensure the long-term, unimpaired use and enjoyment of these areas.

In some cases, limiting use is the most effective way to protect unique wilderness environments. And as visitor use patterns change, the management techniques for mitigating these impacts must change in response. Increasing the length of the Enchantments permit season by six weeks this year, for instance, is aimed at protecting the natural resources of the Enchantments over the entire high-use season.

Above all, every visitor to wilderness has the opportunity and responsibility to care for these special places by committing to the highest standard of Leave No Trace and wilderness ethics, as well as sharing their knowledge and practices with those who are still learning to enjoy these areas.”

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE		VISITOR'S PERMIT Enchantment Permit Area Okanogan National Forest Overnight Permit	
PERMIT INFORMATION PERMIT HOLDER'S NAME: JOE HIKER ADDRESS: 123 Main St., Kent, WA 98745 PERMIT ZONE: 01 - CORE ENCHANTMENT ZONE ENTRY DATE: SAT 30 AUG 2014 EXIT DATE: TUE 02 SEP 2014 TRAILHEAD: YES GROUP SIZE: 8 ALTERNATE LEADERS: MOLLY MOUNTAINEER		PAYMENT INFORMATION Total Price Total Paid Amount Owed	
		REMARKS	

KNOWLEDGE OF REGULATION IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. VIOLATION OF PERMIT TERMS OR OTHER FOREST SERVICE REGULATIONS MAY ALSO INVALIDATE AN ISSUED PERMIT, AND MAY TERMINATE THEIR VISIT WITH MAXIMUM PENALTIES OF \$5000 and/or 6 MONTHS IN JAIL.



BASECAMP • BOOKS & BITES •

HIKE ROSLYN!



**BASECAMP BOOKS & BITES IS NOW
OPEN IN THE CENTER OF ROSLYN.
LOCATED JUST 80 MILES EAST OF
SEATTLE ROSLYN OFFERS OUTSTANDING
HIKING, BIKING, & SKIING ADJACENT TO
TOWN. EXPLORE THE ALPINE LAKES
WILDERNESS, THE NEW TEANAWAY
COMMUNITY FOREST & ROSLYN'S
URBAN FOREST.**

BASECAMP ROSLYN OFFERS:

- MAPS •
- PERMITS •
- INFORMATION DESK •
- ESPRESSO •
- BEER, WINE, & SPIRITS •
- FULL MEALS •
- TRAIL SNACKS •

WWW.BASECAMPBOOKS.COM

 www.facebook.com/basecampbooksandbites

**110 W. PENNSYLVANIA AVE,
ROSLYN, WA 98941**

Chandrika Francis Joins WTA's Outdoor Leadership Team

For the community of trip leaders in WTA's Outdoor Leadership Training program, a fresh face joined the program staff in the fall at workshops and around the gear lending library. But Chandrika Francis is no stranger to outdoor programming in the Seattle area.

Hailing from Oakland, Calif., Chandrika came to Washington to pursue her master's degree in education with IslandWood's graduate program, offered in partnership with the University of Washington, where she's a Dudley Edmondson Multicultural Fellow. While at IslandWood, she served as an environmental education instructor for classes visiting the Bainbridge Island campus. And during the summer and fall, she's been leading trips as a mountain school instructor with the YMCA Boys and Girls Outdoor Leadership Development program and leading community crews for the Student Conservation Association.

"She really understands the needs of trip leaders who are planning and facilitating outings," says OLT Program Coordinator Andrew Pringle, "and she draws on so much experience here in Washington, back in California and even

abroad when it comes to successfully introducing young people to the rewards of hiking, camping, backpacking and snowshoeing. She's even an alumni of Bay Area Wilderness Training, another affiliate of the Outdoors Empowered Network."



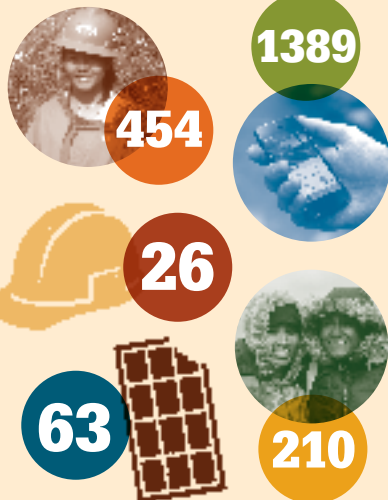
"I really believe in the mission of connecting young people to the outdoors," says Chandrika. "I grew up in urban Oakland and visited family in rural Maine every summer. I spent my time running barefoot, swimming in the ocean and helping to grow our own food in the garden. I quickly noticed that many of my peers never had the opportunity to experience the sense of connectedness and harmony that nature often brings. I strongly believe that connection to nature should be a right for everyone, regardless of where they live or their socio-economic status, and I'm excited to be a part of improving equitable access with WTA's resources for schools and youth-serving organizations."

>> WTA DOLLARS

AT WORK

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Here's a look at how your contributions are being put to work in 2016.



- VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTED
- TRIP REPORTS FILED
- TRAILS WORKED ON
- YOUTH ENGAGED VIA OLT
- BAGS OF CHOCOLATE FOR VOLUNTEERS



WTA and SCA:

Inspiring Youth With Outdoor Jobs

WTA partners with many incredible youth-serving organizations through our trail maintenance program, including the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Up to 10 times a year, teens involved in SCA's Northwest program partner with WTA for local trail maintenance projects.

Meredith Stone, SCA's Northwest program manager, had this to say about the WTA-SCA partnership: "Working with WTA has been of great benefit to SCA's local programs. WTA staff are always very welcoming, accommodating and fun! They are wonderful with SCA's youth, many of whom are experiencing trail work for the first time. At SCA we aim to introduce urban youth to professionals in the conservation field, so that they can imagine themselves continuing in this work. WTA has played a positive role in showing that there are employment opportunities beyond their time with SCA."

We're excited to continue working with SCA, and all of our partners, to inspire the outdoor leaders of tomorrow.

Volunteers Gear Up to Repair Winter Damage

This winter, wind and rain took a heavy toll on roads and trails throughout the Cascades and Olympics, bringing down trees and branches and washing out tread. WTA volunteers invest considerable time each year repairing damage caused by storms, and this season WTA plans to devote additional resources to recovery efforts.

WTA is coordinating with the U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Parks and other land managers to prioritize trail repairs for 2016. Although we won't know the full extent of the damage to high-country trails until the snow melts, plans are already underway for some of the areas we know were hardest hit by storms. WTA Backcountry Response Teams are being called in by the Skykomish Ranger District to address a slide on the West Fork Foss Trail. WTA volunteers are also slated to help Beacon Rock State Park reopen access to the Pool of the Winds after the trail sustained heavy damage from falling trees and branches.

You can help by volunteering for an upcoming trail work party! No experience is necessary, and WTA provides the tools and training you need to make a difference. Find a work party at wta.org/volunteer.

Better Trails are Coming to Spokane's Antoine Peak

SPOKANE – Hikers take note: better trails and improved access are on the horizon for Antoine Peak. This popular outdoor destination for local residents, as well as a critical wildlife habitat on the northern edge of the Spokane Valley, the Antoine Peak Conservation Area was recently protected from development by Spokane County.

Now, Spokane County Parks and WTA are teaming up to improve and expand the existing trail system for hiking, biking and horseback riding. WTA is getting ready to break ground this spring, and trail work is expected to continue through 2017. WTA volunteers are crucial for making the Antoine Peak Public Access Plan, which also includes a new trailhead parking area on the west side, a reality. Work at Antoine Peak is possible in part thanks to a NOVA grant awarded to Spokane County by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

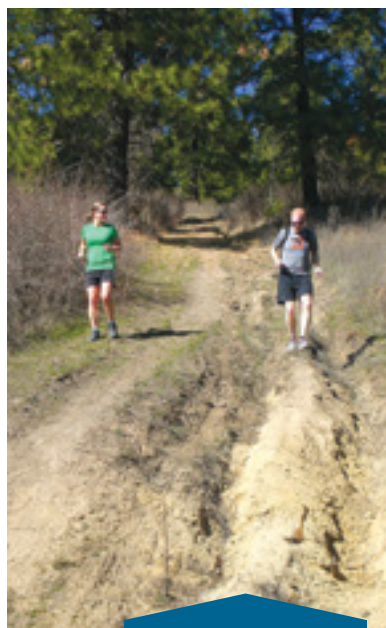


Photo by Holly Weiler

There's still plenty of work to do. WTA is looking for volunteers to help improve the trails on Antoine Peak. Check wta.org/volunteer this April to find upcoming work parties and pitch in.



Highlights Around WTA

TOP: Big Tent Brings Out Big Names

Dan Nordstrom (left), CEO of Outdoor Research, and Jim Whittaker, the first American to summit Mount Everest, at the Big Tent Rally Day in Olympia. The event brought together more than 200 recreationists, Governor Jay Inslee and new outdoor recreation policy adviser Jon Snyder.

MIDDLE: New Trail at Vancouver Lake

WTA volunteers put the finishing touches on a new 1-mile trail at Vancouver Lake in late February. The new barrier-free trail was built in partnership with Clark County Parks, and with support from the Chinook Trails Association.

BOTTOM: Snowshoeing Is Fun!

WTA's first Outdoor Leadership Training snowshoeing workshop kicked off on a wintry day at Mount Rainier's Paradise. Educators and program coordinators joined WTA staff for a fun-filled day of prepping for their own independent trips with youth groups and families.

Make Giving Back Together Your New Year's Resolution



2016

YOUTH & FAMILY WORK PARTIES

WTA's Puget Sound area Youth and Family work parties are intended for youth volunteers ages 10 or older and their friends and families. Join us for shorter, all-ages service projects and fit more fun into your Saturdays!

Spring 2016 Dates:

March 19: Grand Ridge

April 16: Grand Ridge

May 21: Coming soon!

All events are from 9am to 2pm



Find locations
and sign up at
**wta.org/
volunteer**



JIM SPRINGBERG: 1,000 Work Parties! And Counting...

Congratulations are in order for WTA volunteer Jim Springberg. Jim has reached the incredible milestone of 1,000 work parties with WTA! He is only the second volunteer in WTA history to reach this landmark and be inducted into WTA's Golden Rock Bar Club, joining Pete Dewell, who was honored in 2011.

Jim began volunteering his time with WTA back in 2004 and has been an active participant and member ever since. As an assistant crew leader and avid crosscut sawyer, he can be found teaching his skills to volunteers and sharing his passion for trail work year-round throughout the Puget Sound, although his favorite work party locations are Grand Ridge (near Issaquah) and Lake Chelan. Jim is also an active participant on volunteer vacations and work parties with youth groups, helping to lead about 20 youth events each year. No matter where he's volunteering, Jim comes ready and willing to have a good time and to help others do the same with each work party he attends.

Thank you, Jim—and all of the folks who volunteer with us. We truly couldn't do it without you!

WTA Appointed to John Wayne Trail Advisory Committee

Washington Trails Association has been appointed to the John Wayne Pioneer Trail advisory committee. The 12-member committee will assist Washington State Parks in framing trail issues, providing the agency with information from stakeholder groups and working toward collaborative solutions to challenges facing the trail. Other committee members include property owners adjacent to the trail, Washington Bikes, Pullman Chamber of Commerce, equestrians, agriculture and natural resources interests.

The John Wayne Pioneer Trail is Washington's only state trail that crosses Washington from east to west. It offers a unique opportunity to experience the diversity of the state's landscape. The advisory committee will invite input from the public through meetings across the state throughout 2016.

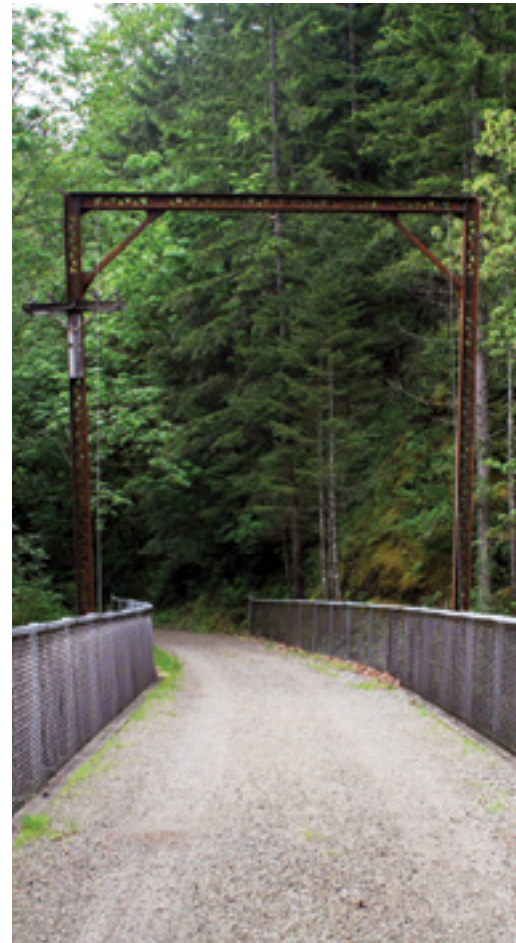


Photo by Joseph Panizzo

Green Mountain Lookout Volunteers Needed

DARRINGTON – Have you ever wanted to be a fire lookout? The Forest Service, Darrington Ranger District, is looking for volunteers to staff Green Mountain Lookout on weekends this summer.

Green Mountain Lookout is one of the premier destinations in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The trail to the lookout is an arduous 4-mile hike through forest and meadow, leading to spectacular views of the North Cascades and unmatched stargazing at night.

This is an extremely popular hike, and the forest service is looking for volunteers to help educate visitors to the lookout on the area's resources and history, and inspire hikers to become strong stewards of this special area. Lookout volunteers should have packing experience, enjoy engaging with a variety of people and have current First Aid or Wilderness First Aid (WFR) training. Volunteers would stay in the lookout select weekends during the summer.

To be eligible you must be selected and attend one of two training sessions, in May or June. To apply, visit wta.org/greenmtsteward, and submit your application by March 31, 2016.



WTA Supports Teanaway Community Forest and Funding for Trails

OLYMPIA – This year's legislative session may be short, but hikers still have an opportunity to support investment in our public lands, a resource enjoyed by 90 percent of Washingtonians each year. This year, the Legislature is in session from mid-January to March.

During the 2016 legislative session, WTA is requesting that the Legislature support these items:

► **Access to the Teanaway Community Forest** through an operating budget request of \$471,000. The Teanaway Community Forest is the first of its kind in Washington, representing a new model that allows the state to partner with communities to conserve the forests they love while ensuring the protection of the landscape's environmental, economic and social benefits. Currently, no designated trails exist within the forest, making this funding critical for recreation planning.

► **The governor's supplemental budget request** to increase spending authority for Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicles Activities (NOVA) funds. This bill would authorize the release of \$2.5 million from the NOVA account to be spent on outdoor recreation. The 2015 state transportation budget included an increase in the percentage of funds collected through the state gas tax for the NOVA program, which provides valuable funding for hiking, biking, horseback riding and motorized recreation trails.

► **Protection for hiking trails and access to trailheads** around the state. In addition to advocating for specific bills and funding, it is essential for WTA to monitor how legislative proposals could impact trails. We evaluate everything from wildfire management to timber sales through the lens of potential proposal impacts on outdoor experiences. We make sure legislators know Washington voters care about our state's great trails, from the iconic, cross-state John Wayne Trail to popular trails like Mount Si to community walking paths.

Investment in our public lands and trails supports community health and enriches our natural heritage. It also promotes exploration of the state's natural wonders. **You can help advocate for trails by signing up for WTA's Trail Action Network at wta.org/action.**



Reports Show Roads, Funding Challenges for National Forest

OLYMPIA – The Mt. Baker–Snoqualmie National Forest, in partnership with Washington Trails Association, The Wilderness Society and more than 20 other recreation groups, released the Sustainable Roads Public Engagement Report. The product of two years of work, it details how the public uses roads and where they go to recreate within the forest.

Simultaneously, U.S. Forest Service officials released the Mt. Baker–Snoqualmie Sustainable Roads Report. This report identifies opportunities for cost reduction in road maintenance and stresses the need to maintain access to trails. It also explores the implications of current budget trends. Currently, Mt. Baker–Snoqualmie National Forest has funding to maintain only about 25 percent of its 2,500-mile road system.

The report recommends reducing maintenance levels on up to 64 percent of forest roads. It also identifies 783 road miles that could be decommissioned, but the data listed within the report is simply a recommendation. Roads have not yet been selected for action. The public will have opportunities in the coming year to comment on any action items generated from the plan.

WTA has analyzed the report and is evaluating the roads identified for possible decommissioning or maintenance reduction. WTA understands the need to create a more sustainable road system but believes this must be balanced with ensuring that hikers and other trail users can continue to access destinations within the forest. **Read more at wta.org/signpost.**



Photo courtesy of North Cascades National Park

New State Park for Eatonville



OLYMPIA – Washington rang in the new year by introducing a brand-new state park. Just a few miles west of Eatonville, **Nisqually State Park** now gives residents of south Pierce County 1,300-acres of park laced with riverside trails to recreate in.

Tucked on a spit of land between the Nisqually and Mashel Rivers and Ohop Creek, and just off of Mashel Prairie Road, visitors will find forested valleys and open fields bordering rushing water.

Thanks to efforts of state and federal governments, numerous local organizations, and area citizens, the park—which has been in development for nearly 30 years—opened with a trailhead, restrooms and a parking area. Washington State Parks anticipates that 480,000 people will visit this new greenspace annually.

Spokane Outdoorsman Appointed as Outdoor Recreation Advisor



OLYMPIA – Jon Snyder recently left Spokane during his second term on the city council to become the first-ever outdoor recreation and economic development policy advisor to Gov. Jay Inslee. The position was created as part of a recreation package passed in the state's capital budget in 2015 that also funded the No Child Left Inside program.

Snyder is no stranger to the outdoors. He was the founder and publisher of the magazine *Out There Monthly*, a free resource covering outdoor recreation in the Inland Northwest. During his time on the city council, Snyder emphasized the importance of urban trails and encouraged the expansion of Spokane's network of biking and walking paths.

Snyder told *The Spokesman-Review* he will focus on two questions in his term: "How can we make more jobs in our state out of outdoor recreation? And how can we get more people to participate in outdoor recreation?"

Currently, the outdoor recreation economy supports more than 200,000 jobs in Washington state alone.



Seattle FABRICS

Outdoor & Recreational Fabrics

Special Orders • Shipping Anywhere

- Gore-Tex®
- Ultrtex®
- Supplex
- Polartec®
- Lycra
- Spinnaker

- Taffeta
- Ripstop
- Oxford
- Packcloth
- Cordura
- Ballistics

- Sunbrella®
- Textilene
- Closed Cell Foam
- Mosquito Netting
- Canvas
- Grommets

- Outerwear Patterns
- Zippers
- Hardware
- Webbing
- Heat Sealable Fabrics
- Banner Fabrics

OPEN MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

9 a.m to 6 p.m.

www.seattlefabrics.com

(206) 525-0670

FAX (206) 525-0779

8702 Aurora Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103

Thank You to WTA's Corporate Partners

Rainier - \$25,000+



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



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



GEOCACHING



Alpine - \$1,000-\$2,400

Badger Mountain Challenge ♦ Klahhane Club
 Cascade Crest 100-mile Endurance Run ♦ Leki USA
 Mountaineers Books ♦ Northside USA
 Perpetual Motion NW ♦ Seattle Sports Co.
 Snoqualmie Vineyards ♦ Stumptown Coffee

WTA has several special 50th anniversary partnership opportunities for 2016. To find out how your company can support WTA's work for trails, please call us at (206) 508-6849.

Enchantments Permit Season EXTENDED

LEAVENWORTH – The Wenatchee River Ranger District is expanding its limited-entry, overnight permit season for the Enchantments area in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

Starting in 2016, the limited-entry overnight permit season for the Enchantment Permit Area will increase by six weeks to help manage increased visitor use and resulting resource damage at this popular destination. **Permits for overnight stays will now be required from May 15 through October 31.**

Implementing a longer permit season has been in the works since 1993. The increasing popularity of the Enchantments has led to concentrated and unsustainable use before and after the previously implemented permit season, especially in recent warmer, low-snow years when access has been easier during shoulder seasons. Daily use levels, established to minimize impacts from high recreation use, has frequently been exceeded.

In 1981, the Forest Service enacted the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Plan and established carrying capacities for this unique and sensitive area. To safeguard this fragile environment for future generations, a permit system for overnight camping was enacted in 1987.

Development of new campsites and social trails can appear in as few as one high-use weekend, when a scarcity of durable surfaces or previously impacted sites cause visitors to camp and travel on fragile vegetation. A key consideration in developing permit quotas is to ensure adequate campsite availability and protection of the wilderness resource from overuse. Increasing the length of the limited-entry overnight permit season will ensure protection of the natural resources of the Enchantments for the entirety of the current and projected high-use season.

The lottery for 2016 permit reservations has already taken place, but empty spots can still be reserved by visiting **recreation.gov**.



Photo by Andrew Bertino

Big MONEY

**HOW RECREATION IS DRIVING
WASHINGTON'S ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE**

By Lindsay Leffelman



Shi Shi Beach and Point of Arches on the Olympic Coast are just one of the spectacular landscapes that draw visitors to Washington's great outdoors. Photo by Derrick Peters.



**Hiking, camping,
and kayaking.
Skiing, trail running,
and boating.
Mountain climbing,
snowshoeing, and
biking.**

From the highest peaks of the Cascades to the shimmering waters of Puget Sound, there is no doubt that residents of the Pacific Northwest love to spend time outdoors. In fact, Washingtonians spend an average of 56 days per year engaged in outdoor activities; nearly 80 percent of residents have spent time at a city, county or state park within the last year; and both Seattle and Portland made SmartAsset's Top 10 list of best cities for outdoor enthusiasts.

All of this time spent hitting the trails, slopes and waterways translates into big money for our state. Each year, millions of outdoor enthusiasts spend \$21.6 billion on outdoor recreation in Washington. Statewide, outdoor recreation supports 200,000 jobs, exceeding the number of jobs in both the technology and aerospace industries. In addition, \$2 billion in local and state taxes are collected annually as a result of outdoor recreation.

Each and every region of our state benefits financially from outdoor enthusiasts. In Whatcom County alone, residents and visitors spend about \$705 million on outdoor recreation per year, supporting a total of 6,502 jobs. The nearly 800,000 visitors to the North Cascades National Park Complex in 2011 spent a total of \$26.4 million in the communities surrounding the park, which supported 358 local jobs. Even the most rural counties of Eastern Washington reap the benefits of outdoor recreationists; with a population of just over 2,200, Garfield County in the southeast corner of the state spends more than \$42 million each year on outdoor recreation, which provides 427 jobs. ►►



With statistics such as these, it is impossible to refute the positive impact outdoor recreation has on the livelihood of our state. Perhaps Marc Berejka, the governmental affairs director at REI, sums it up best by saying, "Washington's natural beauty is not just a quality-of-life asset but an economic driver for a wide variety of businesses, big and small, east and west, urban and rural, that bring an unbelievable amount of revenue and jobs to all parts of our state." Increased tax revenue, more job opportunities and happier, healthier residents are but a few of the important benefits of the Northwest's robust outdoor economy.

To get some firsthand insight into the current state of Washington's outdoor economy, I recently had the opportunity to pick the brains of some notable figures in the state's recreation industry.

From tourism agencies to gear companies, from the heart of Seattle to the far reaches of Washington, each of our contributors weighed in with their unique perspective. Here's what they had to say. ►►

From hiking and backpacking, to mountain biking, sea kayaking and cross-country skiing, Washington has outdoor adventure for all interests. Photo by Buff Black.

What is Washington's most valuable asset with regards to natural resources and recreation?



Meidell: Washington state has a diversity of world-class outdoor recreation assets that, as a collection, is unmatched virtually anywhere else I can think of.



Bennett: Responsibly engaged and environmentally aware stewards are Washington's most valuable assets with regard to natural resources and recreation in our state. Without our broad network of partners in both public and private sectors working together, the natural amenities we are known for are at risk.



Shugart: The state's topography allows for a combination of mountains, beaches, rain forests, high deserts and valleys. This translates into a varied menu of recreational opportunities, including mountain climbing, hiking, biking, sea kayaking, whitewater kayaking, skiing (both Nordic and downhill), camping, water skiing, birding and

geocaching, just to name a few.



Fish: I think people who believe in recreation as an important part of their lifestyle and the natural economy are our greatest asset in keeping our public lands open and accessible. It's the belief in the necessity of public lands that is our most valuable asset.

How important is Washington's "natural capital" with regards to supporting the outdoor economy?



Nelson: The natural capital of Washington is highly important. From our waters to our forests to our agricultural land, so much of our outdoor recreation is borne of our state's resources. These resources drive our outdoor recreation economy; we can't have one without the other.



Fish: It's so important. There are few places, if any, with the opportunities to recreate like we do in Washington. From salt water to white water and desert to high

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS:



KEN MEIDELL is an executive at Outdoor Research, a top-rated outdoor apparel and gear company in Seattle.



ANNIQUE BENNETT is the tourism coordinator for Destination Darrington.



MARY KAY NELSON is the executive director of Visit Rainier, the official tourism organization of Mount Rainier.



PAUL FISH is the president of Mountain Gear, a Spokane Valley retailer of outdoor gear and apparel.



KIM SHUGART is the senior vice president at Visit Tri-Cities, an organization that promotes travel and recreation in southeast Washington.

“From salt water to white water and desert to high peaks, we have an abundance of recreation opportunities.”

Mount Rainier's Wonderland Trail is one of the premiere, and most popular, hiking trails in the Northwest. Photo by Colleen Ponto.

peaks, we have an abundance of recreation opportunities that are close to our homes and available for any level of participant.



Meidell: Washington state's natural capital and outdoor economy are inextricably linked. Beyond the obvious linkage of enthusiasts creating economic value in the places they choose to recreate, the outdoor places we have here have helped create and nurture outdoor industry companies like Outdoor Research, REI, Cascade Designs and others that are among the most innovative in the world. This influence extends beyond the outdoor industry and also plays a role in attracting and retaining the kinds of companies in the broader economy that will be critical to the region's success in the future.

What are the biggest hurdles to improving Washington's outdoor recreation economy?



Fish: I think the biggest hurdle is our legislators' belief that recreational lands need to be profitable or

self-supporting, rather than recognizing the value to public health and our economy that would come from supporting these areas and their needed infrastructure.



Shugart: The absence of funding for a state tourism program. The Washington Tourism Alliance is ranked last out of all 50 states for funding; it currently receives no funding at all from the state. A strong tourism program would help attract visitors from outside the state, across the country and throughout the world. This would create an economic boom for privately owned recreation providers, public parks and natural resource agencies.



Meidell: The biggest hurdle is simply to keep increasing the overall recognition that the outdoor recreation economy exists as a viable economic driver and crafting public policy in a way that nurtures and supports it. The other big hurdle is how hard it is for people to manage the various permits and fees required to access some of these outdoor places. The land managers are all

struggling with funding, support and trying to monetize the use of their lands, and as a result there is a lot of overlap and confusion for the general public.



Nelson: There is a certain subset of people that aren't interested in exploring farther than their own back yards because they think they need special supplies or they don't know what to expect, so we are trying to break down those barriers.

What efforts is your agency or industry making to affect improvement of Washington's outdoor economy?



Bennett: The town of Darrington is working hard to connect regionally with neighboring communities, as well as with larger recreation and conservation groups in the state. Destination Darrington's (destinationdarrington.com) message improves Washington's

outdoor economy by inviting visitors to recreate in unique backcountry areas and by inspiring their participation in larger recreation priorities.



Shugart: Visit Tri-Cities will be hosting the Washington State Trails Conference in 2016 and will be sponsoring a portion of the event. Visit Tri-Cities recently launched a new website (visittricity.com), which features a video about outdoor recreation opportunities. We also work closely with local groups that are outdoors oriented, such as Friends of Badger Mountain, the Ice Age Floods Institute, MCBONES Research Center Foundation and the Tapteal Greenway.



Fish: Mountain Gear is making efforts on two fronts. First, we are making sure we have easily accessible recreation areas available to our customers and all participants. Second, we are teaching people how to play in the outdoors and have fun.

Nelson: At Visit Rainier



Outdoor recreation in Washington is not limited by the seasons. We play year-round. Photo by Eden Palmer.

(visitrainier.com), our main focus is encouraging overnight stays around the mountain, mainly in Pierce County. Our website has many pages of information, including driving tours, reasons to go and things to do, in addition to places to stay. We feel we've made an impact in the last 10 years because of the increased availability of information.



Meidell: Being involved and relevant in our state and local outdoor community is probably the best thing we can do, and it is extremely important to us here at Outdoor Research. We proudly support numerous state organizations, such as the Seattle YMCA Bold & Gold program, NWAC, The Mountaineers, WTA and Glacier Peak Institute. In addition, we participate at both the state and national levels in lobbying efforts, to bring an understanding and awareness of the economic benefits of outdoor recreation to policy makers.

What trends are you observing that are helping to promote the health of Washington's outdoor economy?



Shugart: First, people of all ages are drawn to a more active lifestyle compared to 10 years ago. They want hands-on, active, educational experiences rather than sedentary ones. Additionally, baby boomers are more active than the retirees of yesteryear and want to experience the same things as millennials. People are also more open to trying new activities and enjoying multiple types of recreation, rather than focusing on only one sport per season.



Fish: Introducing kids and families to outdoor recreation and play opportunities is getting promoted as healthy and safe.



Meidell: I think recent trends coming out of the governor's office and the Legislature are encouraging. There is increasing awareness, understanding and support for how important the recreation economy is to Washington state. I also feel like the state agencies, such as DNR and state parks, are beginning to understand the importance of the outdoor economy as well.

What can Washington's outdoor recreationists and visitors do to help promote the health of the outdoor economy?



Fish: One way is to support local businesses in the outdoors. My friend, Lee Moyer, from Pacific Water Sports, used to remind me to fill up at the gas station closest to your destination, even if it costs a bit extra. This helps locals say, "This family is supported by recreationists' dollars." Another way is to lobby the legislators statewide to support our state and city parks and to encourage programs that get families outside.



Nelson: Visitors need to follow the rules and know what they are. It's true there are many restrictions in the national park, and we don't want to emphasize what visitors can't do, but regulations are needed. Overuse can be detrimental, and we don't want to lose access to these special places. We want people up there enjoying them, which means we have guidelines that need to be followed. The National Park Service is celebrating its centennial this year. With that in mind, we need to think about how to prepare for another 100 years.



Meidell: We think life gets better when you get outdoors, so I think the best thing people can do is get outdoors more and encourage their friends to do the same. People will advocate for things they care about! Once they care, the single biggest step any individual can take is then to let their elected representatives know that this is something they care about. The folks in Olympia and Washington, D.C. want to know what their constituents care about, and they will listen.

In our conversation with these recreation leaders, it is abundantly clear that the most important contributor to Washington's outdoor economy is you. Without you and your fellow outdoor enthusiasts, the Northwest's economy simply would not be as strong as it is. There is always room for continued growth, and there are many ways you can play a part.

Shop locally and purchase your outdoor clothing and equipment from Washington-owned and -operated gear companies and retail establishments, like Outdoor Research and Mountain Gear. Support local communities, like Darrington and Roslyn, that depend on recreation dollars, by filling up your tank in town or picking up your trail snacks from the local grocer. Be informed by utilizing local tourism agencies such as Visit Rainier and Visit Tri-Cities when planning your next outing. Advocate for outdoor recreation and contact your elected officials to let them know that the health of Washington's outdoor economy is important to you.

But most importantly, just get outside and do what you love to do! There's no better way to ensure continued access and economic support of outdoor recreation than to enjoy the natural wonders of Washington's parks, forests and waters. ■

HOW TO FIND YOUR NEXT WORK PARTY

It is now even easier to give back to trails. Using your ideas and feedback, we've added brand new features to wta.org help you find a work party and use My Backpack, your online basecamp, to get the most out of volunteering.



See upcoming work parties using a list, map or calendar view.

Filter work parties by

date, region or type to find the volunteer opportunity that's right for you.



Learn more about what to expect

before you sign up, whether this will be your first work party or you're a seasoned volunteer.



Earn awards for going above and beyond.

Track which milestone is coming up next, whether it's your 5th or even 25th work party.



See all the trails

you've worked on with the list of completed work parties.

Create a My Backpack account to see all of

your upcoming work parties in one place. Quickly check the list of what to bring or find driving directions.



If you already post trip reports

or save hikes using My Backpack, a single login gives you a dashboard to stay organized.





MORE *than just* A JOB

When it comes to giving back to the outdoors, these companies mean business.

by
mariah
beckman

Getting outside isn't just a passion and a privilege. It's also an impressive economic engine. Thousands of outdoor focused companies in the U.S. create millions of job opportunities that generate billions of dollars in revenue for the economy each year.

Their missions may vary—from outfitting explorers to advocating for natural places—but their contributions to the economy extend beyond simply producing the gear and organizing the outings that get adventure-lovers outdoors.

Washington, Oregon and California are home to many

businesses and organizations dedicated to supporting not just customers but also the environment in which they play. With generous contributions of volunteer hours and sponsorships, and by advocating a culture of stewardship among their employees, these companies make getting out and enjoying nature more than their business—they make it their mission.

Here's a look at just a handful of the local companies and organizations that live up to their values by placing an emphasis on outdoor education, sustainability and conservation. They're companies you can feel good about investing in—or working at. Some of these just might make you consider a career change.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
FOUNDED IN 1938 | REI.COM

■ **An outdoor life is a life well lived.** That's the mission that drives the world's largest consumer cooperative and outdoor retailer, Recreational Equipment, Inc. The team at REI has made it their mission to inspire and equip the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and has been named one of *Fortune's* Top 100 Companies to Work For since the ranking began in 1998. The operations roster is incredible: REI's first CEO was Jim Whittaker, the first American to summit Mount Everest. Sally Jewell also served as CEO of REI before becoming secretary of the interior in 2013.

The co-op prides itself on keeping its employees connected to their outdoor roots. Every team member gets two "yay days" each year, paid time to get outside or volunteer. REI made a big statement in 2015 by initiating the #OptOutside campaign, encouraging staff and customers to go play outdoors on Black Friday instead of shop or work. It proved to be one of the most successful marketing milestones in social media to date.

► WALKING THE TALK

● In 2014, REI volunteers and employees worked with local organizations to build and improve trails in Alaska, Colorado and Washington.

● In 2015, REI invested \$5.9 million in 300 nonprofits across the country to

improve access and stewardship at more than 1,000 outdoor places.

● REI connects the outdoor community with online resources, such as an event finder, free and low-cost in-store classes, field programs and day outings for a variety of activities.

patagonia®

VENTURA, CALIFORNIA
FOUNDED IN 1973 | PATAGONIA.COM

■ **Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis.** Patagonia aims to produce high-quality, responsibly sourced clothing that lasts for years and can be easily repaired by the average consumer. Can't repair it? The company vows to replace your damaged Patagonia products for life. Using business to inspire and implement solutions are values that have been directly etched into the company's admirable charter.

For an employee-focused work environment, Patagonia is hard to beat. The company has never embraced a corporate building structure and today offers job-sharing opportunities, flexible work hours and on-site childcare. Patagonia's thoughtful business practices extend outside its walls and into the outdoors with other efforts. In 2002, the company founded a nonprofit—fittingly called 1% for the Planet—to encourage companies to give 1 percent of their revenue to outdoor stewardship. Together, Patagonia and other members of the partnership have gifted more than \$100 million to environmental groups.

► WALKING THE TALK

● Patagonia employees volunteered more than 10,000 hours in 2015, and all expenses incurred during these volunteer efforts were paid for by the company.

● Since 1985, Patagonia has donated 1 percent of their sales to fund the restoration and preservation of the environment, gifting more than \$70 million

to global initiatives and organizations that pledge to make a difference in the international community and health of the planet.

● Through work with the Conservation Alliance, which Patagonia co-founded, it has helped to protect 420,755 acres of land and 82 river miles, acquired one popular climbing area and removed one dam.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
FOUNDED IN 1970
CASCADE.ORG

■ **Improving lives through bicycling.** With more than 15,000 members, Cascade is the nation's largest locally based bicycle organization. Its goal is to create recreational riding opportunities and promote the development of new and existing bike trails. Cascade advocates for safe places to ride, educates cyclists and organizes nearly a dozen no-cost events and thousands of free rides each year. A recent merger with Washington Bikes—an organization whose advocacy has earned Washington the title #1 Bicycle-Friendly State eight years in a row—promises to promote growth and outreach.

"Our employees feel good about working here," says Brent Tongco, director of communications at Cascade, "because, as a team, we're making it easier for everyone to get outside, whether it's for recreation, transportation or the sheer joy of riding a bike." Cascade's team of nearly 50 employees enjoys incentives for practicing what they preach, including a financial incentive to bike to work, complimentary use of Pronto Bike Share services, access to free classes and programs, and many professional development and networking opportunities. There are even staff fun-ride days, when the team commutes as a group to local destinations for lunch and the occasional happy hour.

» WALKING THE TALK

- Cascade organizes an annual two-day summit for bike advocates across the country to discuss and enact change.
- The club sold more than 6,200 "Share the Road" license plates to benefit

safety education and encourage cycling.

- Each year, 1,800 volunteers donate their time and funding to advocate for cyclist safety and education, as well as to repair donated bikes to gift to underserved communities.



PORTLAND, OREGON
FOUNDED IN 2003
KEENFOOTWEAR.COM

■ **Create, play, care.** Employee Shawn Palko of KEEN shares that working with this outdoor footwear manufacturer, "a business with a conscience," is a genuine point of pride. "I was a KEEN fan long before I started working at KEEN, and it wasn't just because of what KEEN sold. I love working for a company that gives back, educates and inspires us all to be better stewards of the outdoors and creates really fun products to do all of it! Whether we're advocating for the protection of public lands, repurposing materials for products or just encouraging the simplest enjoyment of the outdoors, I'm proud to say I work for KEEN."

KEEN team members receive 40 hours a year of paid volunteer time. Over the summer they take advantage of "hybrid Fridays," when the office closes at 3:00 pm so employees can get out and enjoy the outdoors. And when they work up an appetite, the on-site KEEN Kanteen offers employees access to fresh, healthy and affordable meals, as well as a pantry stocked with prepared take-home dinners and weekend travel meals.

» WALKING THE TALK

- In 2015, KEEN hosted an all-company volunteer day to perform park maintenance, and they provided funding to recruit, train and mobilize more than 900 volunteers to repair 30 miles of trails.
- Through a partnership with the Conservation Alliance, KEEN has contributed to preserving

more than one million acres of land and one climbing area, as well as protecting 13 river miles.

- Since donating its entire marketing budget to earthquake relief efforts in 2004, KEEN's nonprofit, Hybrid.Care, has given more than \$7 million in funding and resources to nonprofit organizations around the globe.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
FOUNDED IN 1906 | MOUNTAINEERS.ORG

■ ***We are a community built around passion for the outdoors.***

An integral part in shaping how the Pacific Northwest explores its natural lands and waterways, The Mountaineers is a nonprofit that has been a part of the outdoor landscape for 110 years. This organization offers courses and activities that are led by a coalition of passionate outdoor advocates.

Staff and volunteers don't shy away from sharing why The Mountaineers is one of the coolest places to work in the country. "I get to work with people like Dr. Tom Hornbein and Jim Whittaker—the first Americans to reach the summit of Everest—and National Geographic-caliber photographers like Florian Schulz," says communications director Lace Thornberg, who has been with the organization for the past two years. "That's not something you get with a normal 9-to-5 job." Staff at The Mountaineers enjoy access to two free courses per year, discounts on outdoor gear, bring-your-dog-to-work days and access to five different climbing walls that are located at the Tacoma and Seattle program centers. They also have access to the organization's lodges at Mount Baker, Stevens Pass and Stampede Pass.

► **WALKING THE TALK**

- In 2015, The Mountaineers organized hundreds of monthly activities, held free courses and regular seminars.
- The Mountaineers produces how-to blogs and publishes books designed to

teach people how and where to recreate responsibly.

- As of February 2016, The Mountaineers offers e-learning opportunities to expand its outdoor-focused teaching and better equip its volunteer brigade.





PORTLAND, OREGON
FOUNDED IN 1938
COLUMBIA.COM

■ *We believe that outdoor education and conservation ensures everyone will be able to enjoy the outdoors for generations to come.* Born and raised in Portland, this family-owned and operated sportswear company employs people who are as passionate about the outdoors as you are. Columbia, along with more than 5,000 of its nature-loving employees, supports organizations that identify with similar passions for the great outdoors. Their operation reduces consumer waste by producing quality products that stand the test of time.

Employees who work at Columbia enjoy the standard benefits of working for a major company—401(k), paid time off, annual reserve of paid volunteer hours—but the staff says that one of the perks they love the most is being a part of Columbia's commitment to improving the outdoor community. Humanitarian partnerships with organizations like Mercy Corps, for example, furnish relief workers with durable gear during times of natural disaster and crisis.

► WALKING THE TALK

● Columbia's LEED-certified offices and environmentally conscious production practices demonstrate its commitment to using green energy and reducing its carbon footprint.

● Columbia's ReThreads program encourages customers to bring in their used clothing and shoes—from any brand—to be reused and recycled responsibly.

● This outdoor retailer supports its friends at the American Hiking Society by providing gear to support National Trails Day.



GEOCACHING

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
FOUNDED IN 2000 | GEOCACHING.COM

■ *Our goal is to make everyone an explorer and make every location an adventure.*

What began as a simple game in May 2000 has become a powerful movement that has introduced outdoor adventure to 10 million players on a global scale. Geocaching's mission is to enable discovery and, as Groundspeak's Chris Ronan explains, to encourage exploration. "The aim is to help everyone be an explorer, whether that's hiking a summit, kayaking to distant shores or checking out your local parks. The community of geocachers that we support loves the outdoors and helps to bring joy to others by creating story-worthy moments in the game."

If you ask any employee at Groundspeak, they will tell you that the biggest reward for working at Groundspeak is that they get to work where they play. Ronan says that the company's fun-loving nature extends beyond the game's mobile apps and website to the company's system of employee incentives. Employees at Groundspeak enjoy unlimited reimbursement for ski and snowboarding lift tickets, free rental for snowshoes, tents, inflatable kayaks, coolers and GoPro cameras—and the list goes on. "You name it," Ronan says, "and it's probably in our stockpile. Renting from the gear closet is like opening the door to Narnia."

► WALKING THE TALK

● In 2015, geocachers across the world cleaned up approximately 40 metric tons of garbage during Cache In Trash Out week.

● An ongoing partnership with the National Park Service has brought millions of players out to explore the nooks and crannies of public

lands, generating park and local revenue.

● With more than 30,000 geocaching events held worldwide, and more than 80 million finds logged in 2015, Groundspeak encourages people to share their love for exploring the world's wild, and not-so-wild, places.



Seattle Children's

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON |
SEATTLECHILDRENS.ORG

At Seattle Children's Hospital, better health is closely linked to the outdoors. The facility hosts events in the Seattle area to outfit children with helmets for bikes and outdoor sports, supported the construction of an outdoor play area on-site and even organizes a weeklong sleepover camp near Mount Rainier for children with serious illnesses. At the Stanley Stamm Summer Camp, kids get a chance to fish, ride horses and take part in traditional summer camp activities every August.



Microsoft

REDMOND, WASHINGTON |
MICROSOFT.COM

Microsoft is consistently ranked among the top places to work in the world by *Fortune* and *Forbes*. The company achieved net carbon neutrality across its global operations in 2012 and continues to invest in a greener infrastructure. Microsoft also made a notable contribution to the outdoor community this past November when it purchased the majority of credits needed to help restore the forest and create habitats for endangered species throughout 520 acres adjacent to Mount Rainier National Park.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON |
WASHINGTONNATURE.ORG

The world's leading environmental

nonprofit is active in every state, as well as in more than 60 countries around the globe. The Nature Conservancy controls the largest network of privately owned nature preserves on the planet and works daily to positively impact the environment. They oversee more than 119 million acres of land and thousands of miles of rivers worldwide and are involved in more than 100 marine conservation projects.



PACIFIC CREST TRAIL
ASSOCIATION

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA | PCTA.ORG

The Pacific Crest Trail Association serves as the primary resource for PCT information, with an aim to protect, preserve and promote the trail, the surrounding landscape and the Pacific Crest Trail experience. In 2014, volunteers donated nearly 82,000 hours to the trail—an in-kind value of just under \$2 million. The PCTA raised another \$1.5 million in private funds from generous individual and group donations to supplement \$900,000 in government grants that same year.



SPOKANE, WASHINGTON |
LIBERTYBOTTLES.COM

Liberty prides itself on doing things

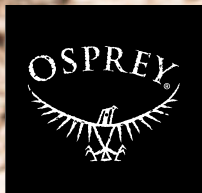
the American way, offering jobs to veterans and fashioning recyclable bottles in an environmentally responsible process from recycled materials. Liberty's factories use less energy, clean their wastewater, conserve the organization's resources and make full use of its scrap. Liberty pledges 1 percent of their sales and working hours to help local, grassroots and national organizations each year and supports active and retired servicemen and women.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON |
ISLANDWOOD.ORG

IslandWood encourages adults and children to explore, learn about nature and discover how they can change the world. The incredible 225-acre learning center at IslandWood boasts a treehouse, floating classroom, suspension bridge, garden, marsh and forest. The staff enjoys lunchtime hikes, outdoor meetings, a community garden and 6 miles of trails. Every year, IslandWood's programs directly impact more than 15,000 elementary school students.

HIT THE TRAIL



Unplug for Nature

An introduction to backpacking empowers young people with new skills, increased confidence and more opportunities to visit Washington's unique destinations. That's why Washington Trails Association is thrilled to have **Osprey Backpacks** as a supporting partner of its Outdoor Leadership Training gear library. With these generous donations, community leaders can outfit their groups with everything needed to introduce young people to the Washington's wildest places.

Learn more at wta.org/olt.

Have you found your place in the universe yet?

Green Trails Boots on the Ground crews mapped nearly 5000 trail miles, updated 90 titles and added 11 new maps of popular areas over the last five years so you could plan, enjoy, and remember your best outdoor experiences!



GREEN TRAILS MAPS

We love these places

Photo: Andy Porter
'Camped Under the Milky Way 3'
www.andyporterimages.com

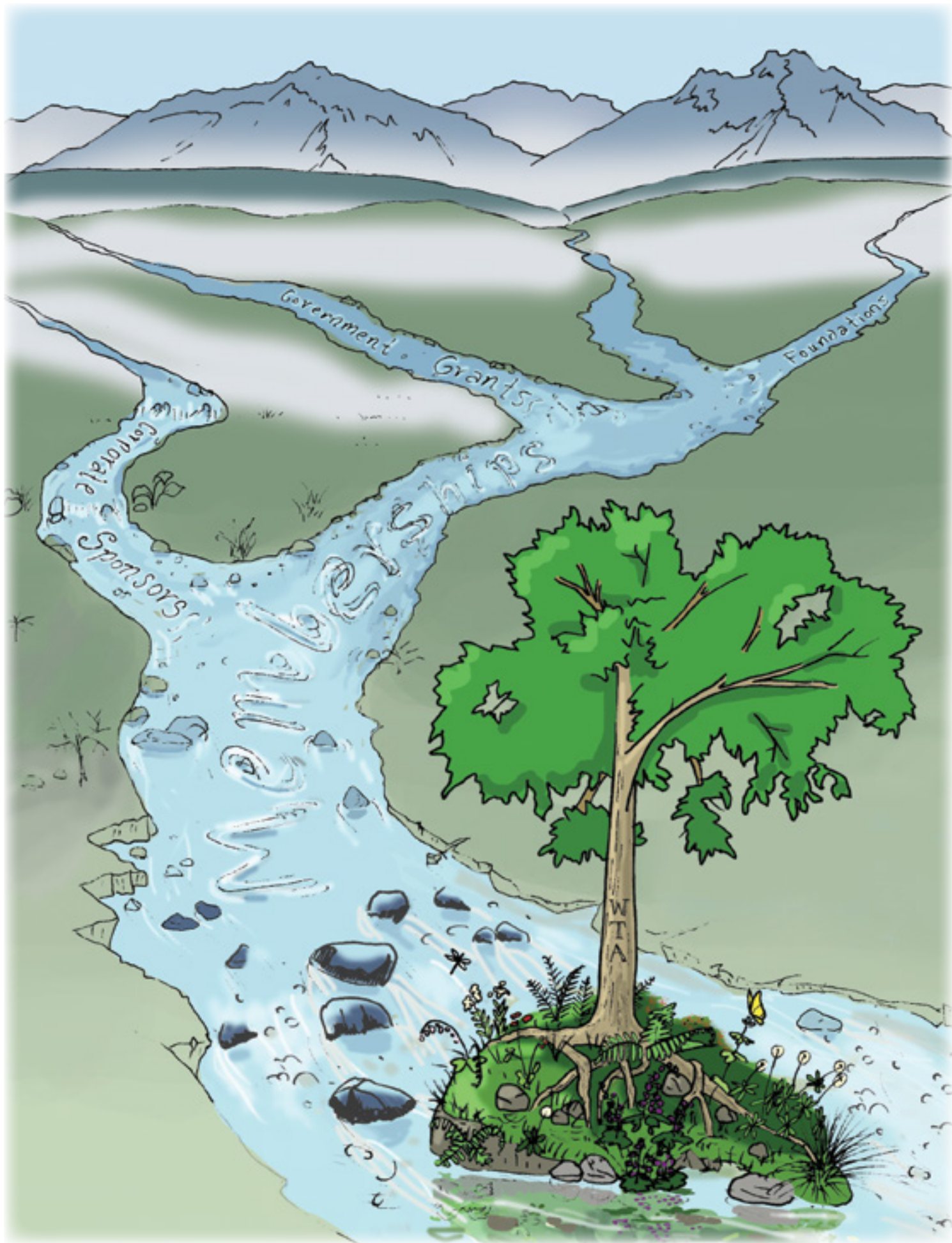


Illustration by Lindsay Holladay

“The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.” — Terry Tempest Williams

IN SUPPORT OF TRAILS

BY KATE NEVILLE

As we celebrate Washington Trails Association's 50th anniversary this year, and marvel at how far we've come, we're already looking to the future. What will the next 50 years bring for Washington's wild places? What will the state of trails be in 2066? Even as record numbers of hikers flock to our state's beautiful natural areas, the future of these places is far from certain.

As more people than ever head for Washington's wild places to find adventure, funding to support and maintain our public lands is falling woefully behind, making the future of the places we love far from certain. That's why Washington's trails need WTA. And why WTA needs members—members who will ensure that the next generation of explorers will still find the wild places in Washington.

Trails in TROUBLE

Nature: Ocean beaches. Verdant rain forests. Remote alpine ridges. Washington's wildlands are home to an astonishing variety of landscapes and climates. Ironically, the same natural forces that have made Washington's trails

so spectacular also challenge their very existence. Rainfall leads to powerful erosion and contributes to rapid growth in vegetation, which can quickly make trails impassable. Raging rivers wash out bridges, and winter storms blow down trees. In 2015, one winter storm alone blew down more than 300 trees across the Olympic Peninsula's Duckabush River Trail. Thanks to Mother Nature, trails across the state are constantly subject to any number of events that can keep trail crews busy for years.

Population: Washington's climate is no deterrent to our state's hearty residents. More than half of Washington's population hikes for recreation—and Washington is projected to grow by 1.8 million people over the next 25 years. Many of them drawn by our state's natural beauty and recreation opportunities. We have seen this increase in enthusiasm here at WTA, with visits to our website up 40% over last year. While we love the thought of having even more hikers in Washington, the increasing popularity of hiking presents new challenges for trails and the sensitive habitats they wind through. And crowded trails can make solitude increasingly hard to find.

Funding: Despite the record numbers of people getting outside and enjoying the best of Washington's wildlands, our public land agencies are vastly underfunded. In decades past, public agencies had more funding to build and maintain trails, with paid trail crews on hand to make the most significant trail repairs. Unfortunately, budgets for trail maintenance are not keeping up with—and in some cases are declining in spite of—the increasing demand for trails. Our public agency trail crews do tremendous work with the resources they have at their disposal, but those resources are not enough. As just

one example, Olympic National Forest has not one single dedicated paid trail crew member to maintain its more than 250 miles of trail. Instead the forest used its limited resources to coordinate efforts with volunteer trail maintenance groups like WTA.

Wildfires: In addition to higher visitation and wear and tear from storm events, land managers have another growing worry: wildfires. The recent (and troubling!) warming trend has translated into declining snowpacks throughout the Pacific Northwest. Last year (2015) was the warmest year on record, and drier forests mean plentiful fuel for wildfires during the summer months. In August 2015 there were more than 100 large, uncontained wildfires raging in 15 western states. As they burn through habitats and communities, fires also consume tremendous funding resources—including those that would normally go toward recreation programs. In 2013 alone, more than \$290,000 in trails projects were deferred.

Enter WTA

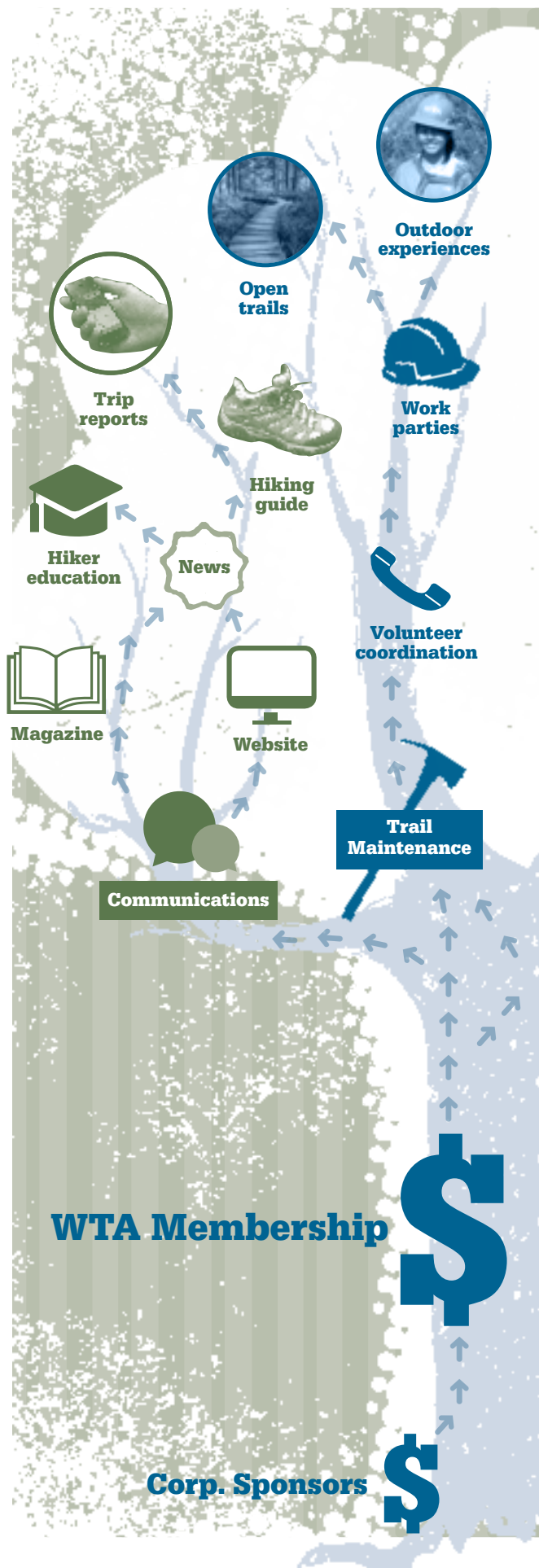
At WTA, we are working for a state where wildfires don't burn up recreation budgets, trails and recreation are fully funded, there are enough well-maintained trails to meet demand and Mother Nature doesn't permanently render our favorite hiker thoroughfares impassable. In the meantime, we are leveraging the support of our members—and a cadre of passionate volunteers—to take action. From powering volunteer trail crews to empowering hikers to explore sustainably to breaking down barriers for young explorers, WTA is tackling big challenges head-on. You, our members, make this possible!

Trail Work: Your membership powers our volunteer crews. When trails need help, WTA volunteers rise to the challenge. Anyone who has been on a hike in Washington has likely come across our hardworking volunteers—or their handiwork. And they're making a difference. WTA crews are creating and maintaining hiking opportunities across the state, including opening the new Margaret's Way Trail on Squak Mountain near Seattle, completing the new Split Creek Trail at Liberty Lake Regional Park outside Spokane and working with the Darrington Ranger District recently to clear downed trees, cut back brush and restore tread on trails in the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

Resources: Your membership ensures that *Washington Trails* arrives in your mailbox every other month, packed full of hiking news, inspirational features, useful tips and seasonal trail suggestions to help you get out and explore. It also powers WTA's website and online Hiking Guide, where you can find the perfect hiking destinations, read trip

“WTA volunteers contributed more than 13,000 volunteer hours in 2015 alone, or about two-thirds of [our] trail maintenance hours last year. Trails on the Olympic National Forest simply would not be maintained without organizations like WTA.”

— Dean Yoshina, District Ranger
Olympic National Forest





reports and save information and photos in a My Backpack account. This is in addition to our Signpost blog and online hiking resources that provide a wealth of information. WTA's website is also where you can learn how to take your love of hiking to the next level by being an advocate for the places you love and learning about issues that impact hikers. Here is where you can make your voice heard by joining WTA at Hiker Lobby Day in Olympia or signing up for our online Trail Action Network. Your membership dollars make these resources possible.

Inspiration: WTA is also inspiring the next generation of explorers. Through our Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT) program, WTA is breaking down barriers that keep young people from experiencing the outdoors by giving them opportunities to discover the joys of outdoor exploration. Through OLT, youth leaders take part in experiential workshops through which they learn how to plan and lead safe, fun outdoor youth trips. To further reduce barriers, youth leaders who graduate from the program gain free access to our gear lending library, where they can borrow the equipment they need to outfit the youth they serve. Members help us spread the word: no matter who you are, if you love trails or wild places, WTA is for you.

Passing the Torch: Once young people discover a love for the outdoors, they want to give back. WTA engages these enthusiastic young people through our Youth Volunteer Program. Whether through day trips or multiday youth Volunteer Vacations, our youth trail volunteers deepen their connection to nature. They build an awareness of the stewardship required to keep our public lands accessible, returning home with a tangible sense of accomplishment and teamwork—and a newfound value for the outdoors.

Member Dollars at WORK

WTA is a volunteer-driven organization, but a statewide organization effecting large-scale change requires funding to operate. Trail crews are an essential ingredient for getting this work done, but without funding from WTA's members, our shovels and Pulaskis wouldn't leave the tool shed, our magazine wouldn't reach your mailbox and future generations of hikers might never discover the wonders of the outdoors. But we can accomplish all these things because we have the trust and financial support of you—our amazing community of members.

As a member, you are part of a vibrant, caring community. And you are sending a powerful message. When WTA's membership grows, lawmakers in Olympia and Washington, D.C., see that you care about trails and want to invest in the future of our public lands. The challenges facing our public lands are great, but you, our members, inspire us with incredible optimism. And as WTA looks to the next 50 years, we are committed to making sure trails and public lands are there for future generations. The challenges that our trails face are no match for a committed group of hikers working together to ensure the future of our public lands.

As with any long journey, the way ahead may seem daunting. But we know that with your support, we can achieve more than we can even imagine today. WTA members are more than 13,000 strong. Yet, if every one of Washington's 1.37 million hikers became a WTA member, think of all we could accomplish. No matter what the future holds, one thing is certain. With your support we can make a transformative difference for Washington's trails. So let's lace up our boots and get ready! ♦

2016

National Park Service
CENTENNIAL

The Value of Priceless

By Charlie Lieu

National Park Free Entry Days

April 16–24 – National Park Week

August 25–28 – NPS Birthday Weekend

September 24 – National Public Lands Day

November 11 – Veterans Day

DID YOU KNOW:

- 🪵 **The Lake Roosevelt area** has seen approximately 9,000 years of human settlement, dating back to the Neolithic era (before the Bronze Age).
- 🪵 **The rare island marble butterfly** was rediscovered in 1998 in San Juan Island National Historical Park after being presumed extinct for 100 years.
- 🪵 **Fort Vancouver National Historic Site** includes the site of a fur trade village. More than 35 ethnic and tribal groups were represented here.

Hiker on the Mount Fremont Trail at Mount Rainier National Park, by Bob Riedlinger; OPPOSITE: Inset photos courtesy of the National Park Service

People don't associate a national park experience with money. It is literally something so precious that you can't put a dollar value on it.

— Cassandra Overby, writer, hiker and WTA volunteer

This sentiment is echoed by Chip Jenkins, Pacific Northwest deputy regional director for the National Park Service: "The experience and memories of being with family and friends at a park are priceless. However, it is important to recognize that every \$1 American taxpayers invest in their national park system returns \$10 in economic activity to communities throughout the state. This is a win-win."

To many of us, reducing the value of the outdoor experience to dollars feels intensely wrong. But in a world driven by value-based decisions, monetary measure matters. The language of economics helps business, civic and government leaders understand the importance of public lands in a tangible way, so they, too can advocate for parks.

Creating Local Value

Dan Foster, the superintendent at Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, spends a great deal of time fostering ties with the area's gateway cities and communities. "The National Park Service is one of the most widely recognized public lands brands in the world. [It sets] a gold standard that draws people in from all over the globe," says Foster. "We want to help communities leverage that by attracting visitors and spurring growth." And that leverage is working. According to the Park Service's Spending Effects Report, the recreation area's 1.2 million visitors spent an estimated \$49.4 million in 2014, supporting 694 jobs and \$58.1 million in economic output.

How the West Won

While absolute economic value is interesting, there are immense regional benefits that are less tangible. Recently, a 40-year study by Headwater Research, titled *West Is Best: How Public Lands in the West Create a Competitive Economic Advantage*, showed that protected federal public lands are directly correlated with faster job growth and higher per-capita income. This is because workers want outdoor recreation, so employers use park access to recruit and retain talent. By extension, cities use national parks and public lands to lure in companies. The study concluded that public lands are a major factor in promoting economic growth. And this is very evident in Washington. Not only did the state bear fruit with \$459.3 million from visitors supporting more than 6,300 jobs and producing \$615.6 million in economic output, but recreation and tourism also propelled the Puget Sound area to become one of the fastest growing economies in the country.

Our Common National Story

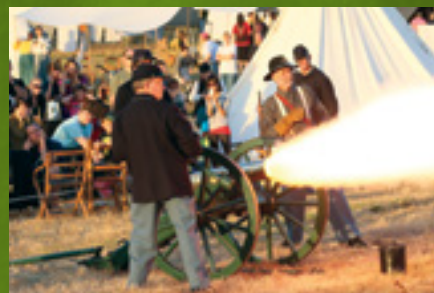
Of course it's not just the West that has won. The nation as a whole has benefitted from national parks. The Park Service had 300 million recreation visits in 2014 across the nation. That translated to \$15.7 billion spent in gateway communities and \$29.7 billion in economic output. The Conservation Lands Foundation directly attributes the \$646 billion U.S. outdoor recreation economy to our strong protected public lands programs. Plus, there's one more—but rarely thought of—benefit of protected lands: carbon sequestration. Plants produce the oxygen we breathe and mitigate climate change through the direct removal and storage of carbon dioxide. In a 2015 study, Harvard University conservatively estimated that the value of the carbon-sequestering plants on national park lands amounts to more than \$700 million per year.

In light of these staggering economic benefits, we must continue to protect and invest in our public lands. This only ensures that our treasured parks, and the memories that we create in them, remain priceless.



LAKE ROOSEVELT NATIONAL HISTORIC AREA encompasses 130-mile-long Lake Roosevelt along with historic Fort Spokane and St. Paul's Mission. Nearby, the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail highlights the significant geologic features that formed when massive floods scoured the landscape.

INFO: nps.gov/laro and iafi.org/trail.html



FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE consists of two sites that highlight the fur trade and military history of the Pacific Northwest. The sites come alive with creative media, costumed programs, educational activities, living history events and reenactments. Visitors can explore the lands and structures at the center of that history and enjoy a world-class archaeology collection.

INFO: nps.gov/fova



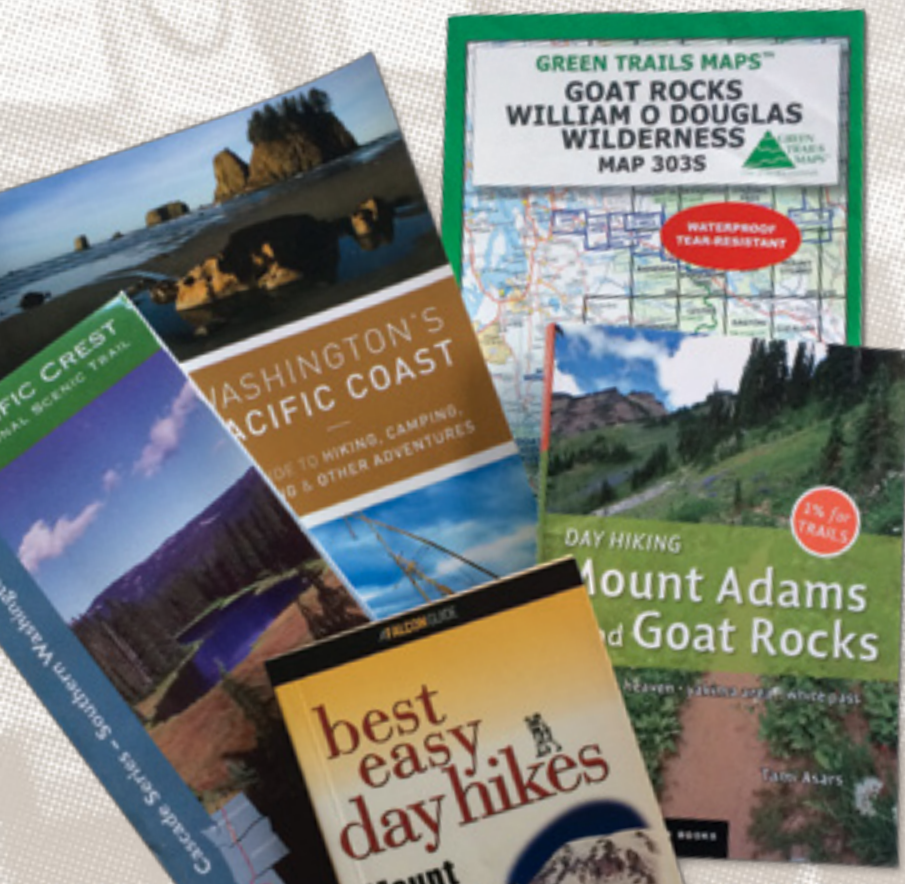
SAN JUAN ISLANDS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK is where the United States and Great Britain clashed over possession of the islands in a conflict known as the Pig War. This island park offers splendid vistas, glistening shores, dense woodlands and a chance to spy local orca pods. It is also home to one of the last remaining native prairies in the region.

INFO: nps.gov/sajh

Choose Your Own Adventure

NW Bookstores Guide the Way

Whether you are a hiking novice or a backwoods trailblazer, one of the best places to begin your adventure is at a bookstore. Learn about new trails, techniques and tips from intrepid fellow explorers. Best of all, many Northwest booksellers can offer firsthand advice that will set you on the right path.



ELLIOTT BAY BOOK COMPANY – SEATTLE, WA

With its exposed wooden beams and natural light, Elliott Bay Book Company is an indoor sanctuary for outdoor spirits. Expert booksellers guide visitors through outdoors sections boasting more than 450 titles. Venture somewhere new thanks to Scott Leonard's *Take a Hike Seattle or Hiking Through History Washington: Exploring the Evergreen State's Past by Trail* by Nathan and Jeremy Barnes. If you're looking for inspiration more than perspiration, consider a narrative option such as John Edward Huth's *The Lost Art of Finding Our Way*, an illustrated travelogue and historical look at personal navigation.

HIKE HERE The staff at Elliott Bay recommend the Copper Ridge and Chilliwack River trails. These are a couple of the higher-elevation trails in North Cascades National Park and are ideal for hardy hikers—but the payoff of enjoying the old-growth valley is worth the effort.

INFO elliottbaybook.com

METSKER MAPS – SEATTLE & LYNNWOOD, WA

This more-than-60-year-old institution is a go-to spot for all things mappable. They have you covered for the entire Pacific Northwest spanning into Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Look for the ever-popular Mountaineers book series. If you plan to go farther afield, Metsker also stocks harder-to-find, smaller presses such as Montana's Beartooth Publishing. The one-stop shop includes trail permits for national parks and U.S. Forest Service lands, as well as Discover Passes for Washington State Parks.

HIKE HERE Snoqualmie's Granite Mountain Trail is a staff favorite.

INFO metskers.com



ORCA BOOKS

– OLYMPIA, WA

When you need to stretch your legs, Orca Books will point you in the right direction. The store has something for everyone. Experts dig into Sasquatch Books' *Day Hike!* series and the *Creaky Knees* guides appeal to those wanting a gentler, less-uphill experience. For adventures with a purpose, peruse the natural history and Pacific Northwest nature sections, with unique options such as *Geology Underfoot in Western Washington* by Dave Tucker.

HIKE HERE Olympia is at the doorway to both Mount Rainier and the Olympic Peninsula. Pick a long or short hike at either and venture forth.

INFO orcabooks.com



TRAIL'S END BOOKSTORE

– WINTHROP, WA

Methow Valley's charming bookshop has been a local institution for over 30 years. The region's natural beauty and diverse terrain make it a mecca for adventurers from hikers to bikers, birders and snowshoers. Craig Romano's *Day Hiking North Cascades* is a perennial bestseller. It offers hyperlocal trail advice for those hoofing it on foot and can also be used for horse trails.

HIKE HERE Go for stunning views of the North Cascades on the loop trail around Lake Ann and Maple Pass, or tackle a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail from Harts Pass.

INFO trailsendbookstore.com



VILLAGE BOOKS

– BELLINGHAM & LYNDEN, WA

The staff at Village Books is passionate about tales and trails. Former and current community members contribute firsthand knowledge to the shelves. Booksellers recommend Ken Wilcox's *Hiking Whatcom County* as the gold standard for getting to know Bellingham. It's perfect for visitors, new residents and as a gift for travelers. The shop also stocks an assortment of Square One Maps.

HIKE HERE The staff at Village Books has traveled the world and agrees that it's hard to beat the local beauty of Chuckanut Mountain and Blanchard Forest. Day hikes and longer backpacking trips are equally enticing.

INFO villagebooks.com



BASECAMP BOOKS & BITES

– ROSLYN, WA

This recent addition to the heart of historic downtown Roslyn is a unique location where you can fuel up for your hike with a variety of sandwiches, soups and salads (made with locally sourced ingredients) while you peruse the hiking guides, map racks and new books by local authors.

HIKE HERE Right from Roslyn, you can take an easy stroll on the Coal Mines Trail, which passes old mining relics. Or, head over to the pass and hike a portion of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail.

INFO basecampbooks.com



AUNTIE'S BOOKSTORE

– SPOKANE, WA

"Near nature. Near perfect." Spokane's official motto beckons outdoor enthusiasts, and Auntie's Bookstore is the go-to spot for expert advice. They stock several hundred new and used books with an impressive selection of camping, hiking and mountaineering titles. Explore the area courtesy of James P. Johnson's *50 Hikes for Eastern Washington's Highest Mountains* or one of the Sierra Club's Spokane trail guides.

HIKE HERE The staff at Auntie's suggests Horseshoe Lake—but skip the waterfalls on hot, busy days and head for the second lake, which is home to beavers, turtles and assorted wildlife.

INFO auntiesbooks.com



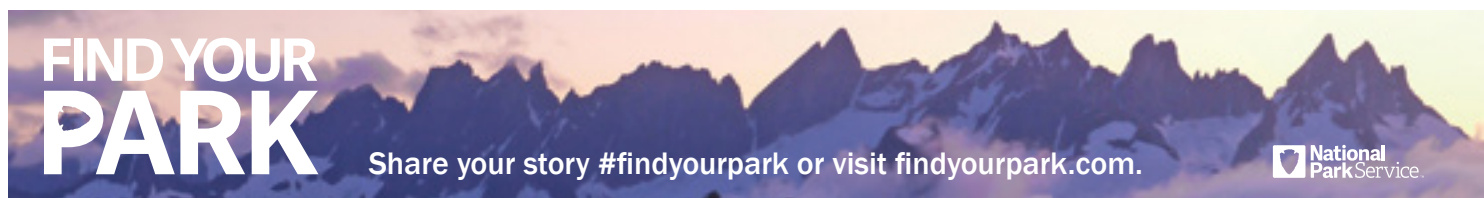
POWELL'S CITY OF BOOKS

– PORTLAND, OR

Lace up your boots and grab a backpack! A day exploring the vast landscape of Powell's flagship store counts as its own hiking adventure. Its Pacific Northwest outdoors section has more than 400 titles, with countless used and hard-to-find offerings. Favorites include *Curious Gorge* by Scott Cook and *I Heart Oregon (and Washington)* by Lisa Holmes, which includes stunning photography and detailed, hand-drawn maps.

HIKE HERE Choose any of the many waterfall trails in the Columbia River Gorge.

INFO powells.com



TIME TO UPGRADE:

LIGHT & EASY

Take a load off. Nearly every hiker has brought an outdated and heavy piece of gear on a trip in lieu of buying something new. But lugging along extra-burdensome gear can weigh you down and make even the easiest hike feel like a slog. You don't even have to go *ultralight* to notice a difference. With just a few key swaps, you'll be skipping down the trail in no time.

Tips for Going Lightweight

You don't need to cut the tags off your clothing and saw your toothbrush in half to reduce pack weight. Here are some simple suggestions to help you get there.

- ❑ **SEEK MULTITASKERS:** Choose items that can serve more than one purpose. Skip the camp bowl and eat directly out of your cooking pot; roll up your puffy jacket and use it as a pillow.
- ❑ **FOCUS ON MATERIALS:** Metal can be heavy. Look for lightweight aluminum or, if you have the budget, titanium. With clothes and sleeping bags, choose down over synthetics.
- ❑ **PRE-PORTION:** Don't bring a whole bottle of sunscreen when a couple of good squirts into a plastic baggie will do. The same goes for toiletries, food and disposable items such as toilet paper.
- ❑ **BE SMART:** In your quest to go lighter, make sure you don't skimp on essentials. Always pack the basics, including the Ten Essentials.





1 Petzl Zipka Headlamp

If you're still lugging around a heavy flashlight, it is past time for you to trade up for a handy head lamp—any one would be an upgrade. But if you want to go extra-light and compact, then choose the Petzl Zipka. It's been around for a while—and for good reason. Rather than bulky head straps and clunky battery packs, the Zipka features a lightweight self-adjusting retractable cord. With a 100-lumen flood beam, it throws off plenty of proximity light for most in-camp purposes. \$40

4 Osprey Exos 48 Backpack

If you're looking to lighten your load, then your pack is the first place you should start. The standard overnight backpack weighs in at 4 to 5 pounds, with older external frame models weighing even more. The Exos, on the other hand, hovers right around 2.5 pounds. Constructed with ultralight materials, this pack is sturdy, comfortable and durable. With nothing extra but everything you need, this is a solid pack choice for easily shedding a few pounds from your load. Also available in sizes 38 and 58. \$190

2 Sawyer Squeeze Water Filter

You should never skim on having clean, safe water in the backcountry—but water is heavy. Manage this conundrum by packing along the Sawyer Squeeze. It removes 99.999 percent of bacteria and protozoa and weighs just 3.5 ounces. Just fill up one of the pouches with water and attach the filter. Either drink directly from the filter's push-pull cap or squeeze into a separate container. Or skip the pouch and attach the filter to your own threaded water bottle. Easy squeeze! A thru-hiker's favorite! \$40

5 NEMO Moonwalk Sleeping Bag

There's no denying it—down sleeping bags are lighter and more compact than synthetics. But what about all of Washington's damp weather? Enter the Moonwalk. The first of its kind, this down bag has a waterproof bottom, keeping its fancy feathers high and dry. There's even a handy sleeve for your sleeping pad. Wanna go super light? Pair it with NEMO's Escape Pod bivy and Apollo shelter for a complete setup. We didn't get to personally test this one, but the reviews coming in are ultra-positive. Check it out! \$280

3 MSR MicroRocket Stove

Stoves have come a long way over the past two decades. For backpacking, old white gas stoves are clunky. Choose a canister stove instead, which runs on pre-pressurized isobutane and propane. The MicroRocket is incredibly compact and weighs just 2.6 ounces. Replacement canisters are readily available, and most brands are interchangeable. This reliable little stove has an adjustable flame with a quick boil time and is sturdy enough to handle both backcountry and car-camp cooking. \$60

6 Big Agnes Fly Creek HV UL2 Tent

When you first take the leap into backpacking, it's easy to just try packing up your old car camping tent and hitting the trail. Trust us—it's not worth it. Lose a bunch of pounds by swapping your camp condo for a lightweight backpacking tent. Big Agnes has mastered the lightweight tent. Including the fly and footprint, the Fly Creek HV two-person tent weighs just under 2.5 pounds. The most recent redesign of this classic model maximizes floor space and gives you more room for keeping gear out of the elements. \$390

Clean Drinking

Drinking cold, clear water directly from a backcountry lake or stream is tempting, but is it worth the risk? While treating water prior to drinking is inconvenient, it's far better than having your trip ruined by a nasty bout of explosive gastrointestinal illness. Any water source visited by animals or humans might be contaminated with infectious organisms, including bacteria, protozoa, parasites and viruses. Better to be safe than sorry. Take a few minutes to protect yourself against this preventable and potentially dangerous nuisance.

LifeStraw Personal Filter and Go Water Bottle Developed as a tool to filter water in emergency situations, the LifeStraw Personal Filter weighs only 2 ounces and is easy to use—simply remove the caps, dip into any water source and sip. Blowing back into the LifeStraw expels dirty water and flushes the system. The Go Water Bottle integrates a 23-ounce bottle with the LifeStraw filter, making the system even simpler to use. The LifeStraw Go is a great solution for dayhikers and backpackers who want to refill and drink along the trail without hassle. \$25/\$35



SteriPEN Ultra UV Purifier You can't beat the SteriPEN for simplicity and convenience. Lighter and more compact than most filters, it purifies a liter of water in 90 seconds, killing all potentially harmful microorganisms, including viruses. A convenient LED screen coaches the user to submerge the pen in water and stir, while a timer counts down the time. It's rechargeable via USB, and a full charge can treat 50 liters of water. Warning: UV purifiers are only effective in clear water, so they're best suited for areas where tap water may be suspect, or in combination with a filter system. \$100



Sawyer Complete Treatment System Sawyer's Complete Water Treatment System provides a safe and effective way to filter water using a gravity flow system—no pumping required! Fill up the "dirty" water bag, attach the filter, tubing and "clean" water bag, hang the system from just about anything, and you'll have four liters of drinking water in about 90 seconds. The filter eliminates bacteria and protozoa along with sediment. Weighing less than a pound, the system is ideal for group trips where larger volumes of purified water will be needed. \$140



MSR Guardian Purifier This engineering marvel is one of the only filters that eliminates viruses in addition to bacteria and protozoa. The intake valve is attached to a handy float and prefilter that removes sediment and debris, allowing the Guardian to purify even grossly contaminated water. The Guardian filters about 2.5 liters per minute, is easy to use and self-cleans on every stroke. There's no back-flushing or filter scrubbing, and it doesn't alter the water's taste. This may be the most reliable single method of water purification available. \$350



Which Method Is Right for You?

Finding the ideal water treatment method for your needs can be daunting. At the very least, a system should eliminate potentially harmful bacteria and protozoa from your drinking water. While viruses are less frequently encountered in wilderness areas, you should consider a method that eliminates viruses if you plan to drink from water sources that see high levels of human traffic or where human visitors can't or don't practice responsible hygiene near the water source.

- ☐ BOILING:** PROS: Kills all pathogenic organisms, including viruses. CONS: Takes time and requires a lot of fuel.
- ☐ ULTRAVIOLET (UV) STERILIZATION:** PROS: Kills bacteria, protozoa and viruses; lightweight; compact and easy to use. CONS: Requires clear water; sediment and suspended particles will reduce its effectiveness.
- ☐ CHEMICAL STERILIZATION:** PROS: Lightest and most compact option; disables protozoa, bacteria and viruses (with the exception of *Cryptosporidium*). CONS: Requires up to four hours before water is safe to drink; effectiveness is reduced in cloudy water; may impart a bad taste.
- ☐ FILTER:** PROS: Eliminates protozoa and bacteria; removes sediment and debris; does not require batteries or use of chemicals. CONS: Filters tend to be larger and heavier than other methods.





Quick Dinners

What better way to refresh from a long day than with a quick after-work hike? Hit the trail in a jiffy with one of these easy dinners—they're simple enough to prepare at the office or along the trail and hearty enough to keep your hunger under control.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE CHILI MAC While they're not particularly fresh, it's nearly impossible to beat the convenience of a freeze-dried meal. Just add boiling water, seal and dig in. For a hearty dinner guaranteed to nail that comfort-food craving on the head, try Mountain House's Chili Mac with Beef. Consistently ranked a favorite among backpackers, it's a good standby to keep in your desk drawer for impromptu after-work adventures. Other top selections include Beef Stroganoff and Lasagne with Meat Sauce. **Available at REI.** \$7.50

OVAEASY EGG CRYSTALS Full of protein and easy to prepare, breakfast foods are stellar options for quick dinners after work. Try a hearty scramble using OvaEasy's dried egg crystals, made from fresh whole eggs. The drying process ensures a natural taste and long shelf life. Each bag has the equivalent of 12 eggs, so preportion the amount you'll eat ahead of time. When you're ready, just add water, give it a stir and cook. Make a hearty scramble by adding your own veggies, cheese and meat. **Available at REI.** \$12

TURBOPUP COMPLETE K9 MEAL BAR Taking your pooch on your post-work adventure? He needs to eat too! For an easy doggie dinner on the go, bring along a TurboPUP bar. Each bar is interchangeable with regular dog food, and pups are sure to love both the bacon and peanut butter flavors. Made from U.S.-sourced, human-grade ingredients, this is quality fuel you can feel good that you're giving your best friend. The best part? No bowls or zip-top baggies of loose kibble to deal with! **Available at turbopup.com.** \$3

D.I.Y. CURRY RICE Try this flavorful curry recipe. There's plenty of room to make it your own!

- ◆ 2/3 cup instant rice
- ◆ 1 tsp. onion flakes
- ◆ ½ tsp. garlic granules
- ◆ 2 tsp. curry powder
- ◆ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◆ ¼ cup dehydrated meat or tofu
- ◆ ¼ cup roasted cashews or peanuts
- ◆ ¼ cup dehydrated mixed vegetables
- ◆ 2 tsp. bouillon granules

Pack all ingredients in a zip-top bag. When ready, add 1 ½ cups of boiling water; seal and let sit for 10 minutes. Massage the bag a few times to redistribute water and ingredients. Enjoy!

Piping Hot

There's a lot to organize when it comes to getting a hike in after work, but prepping your trail dinners doesn't have to be complicated. These handy accessories will help you with meals to go.

HYDRO FLASK FOOD FLASK This is the easiest way to skip trailside cooking and still get a hot meal in the backcountry. The Food Flask keeps food hot for 12 hours. Warm up leftovers ahead of time, or just prepare your favorite dehydrated meal in the container. \$35



HUMANGEAR GOTOOB For a mess-free and non-soggy PB&J on trail, scoop your favorite nut butter and fruit jam into the GoToob. Bring bread along and just squeeze the fillings when you're ready to eat. The silicone tube resists stains and can be washed and reused. \$9



JETBOIL ZIP Waiting for water to boil can feel like forever, especially when you're hungry for dinner. Pick a quick-boil system like the Jetboil Zip. Lightweight and portable, the Zip boils a half-liter of water in a speedy 2.5 minutes. With an insulated cooking cup and a drink-through lid, you can leave your camp bowl at home. \$80





Outdoor Cameras

Are you considering a new camera to capture your trail memories? With hundreds of options and a vast array of features, new cameras can make shopping more confusing than a trail junction without a sign. Here is a brief guide to some of your choices.

SMARTPHONE It's convenient, easy to use and you can take decent photos with it—and you've probably got it with you. The smaller sensor means lower-quality images, especially in low light, and most phones don't have an optical zoom. Despite that, your phone can be a great choice if you simply want to remember a trip or post photos to social media.

POINT-AND-SHOOT This category has the most options, from basic beginner to advanced models. In general, they are less expensive, lighter, smaller and easier to use than full-size DSLRs. Video capability is often excellent, and many offer a big zoom range. The higher-end models offer more control, have acceptable shutter lag and usually take very high-quality photos. Many serious photographers use a high-end point-and-shoot as their backup.

ACTION CAM Action cams are designed for video shooting while on the move. Video quality can be amazing, but these cameras should not be relied on for more than the occasional still photo. They are generally designed to provide some weather and "bump" protection and feature optional attachments for use while participating in a variety of action sports.

MIRRORLESS [BRIDGE] While not quite pocket size, these cameras can provide quality and performance that comes close to a DSLR in a smaller, lighter package and retain the ability to change lenses. This has become a popular choice for serious photographers who want lots of control but seek to minimize weight.

DSLR Image quality and performance are hard to beat, and DSLRs give you lots of control over camera functions. The downside is that they're expensive, large and heavy, so they make sense only for those who really take advantage of the added features. Interchangeable lenses further increase choice (and cost) but can also add to bulk on the trail. A DSLR offers little advantage over the high-end point-and-shoots if the user never leaves auto mode.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS Never buy a camera without trying it out first. How does it feel? Is it the right size? Are the controls in convenient places? When you take a photo, how quickly does the camera focus and release the shutter? Decide what features you can't live without, make sure the camera meets those needs and leave some room for yourself to grow.

Focus on Features

There are dozens of features to consider when buying a camera. Here are four that outdoor photographers should pay particularly close attention to.

IMAGE QUALITY Don't focus solely on pixel numbers. Anything beyond a 12–14 megapixel image matters only for those who plan to print photos at poster size or crop them significantly.

WEIGHT & SIZE A fancy DSLR with lots of bells and whistles isn't worth much if you leave it home. Consider a smaller and lighter point-and-shoot or mirrorless if weight and size matter.

CONSTRUCTION If you're going to be using the camera in the wilderness, it needs to be rugged enough to withstand a few bumps and water-resistant enough to tolerate some weather.

FOCAL LENGTH Zoom range is a key decision point if you're buying a point-and-shoot camera. A wide angle (18–28mm) is essential for landscape photography, and if you plan to photograph wildlife, you'll need a range that extends to at least 200mm. Optical zoom is what matters. Digital zoom simply crops in the camera, and you'll lose pixels and resolution.

JUDY STERRY

"I've loved the outdoors all my life. Now, through WTA, I have the opportunity to give back."



WHAT IS YOUR LEGACY?

A lasting impact—by making a legacy gift to Washington Trails Association, you're protecting the trails you love for future generations. Anyone can participate, and no amount is too small.



Learn more: wta.org/legacy | (206) 625-1367

AFTER-WORK ESCAPES

“Stimpson Family Nature Reserve’s moss-strewn, old-growth forest offers wildlife viewing opportunities along rolling trails that are excellent for walking, hiking or running.”

— BRANDON FRALIC



Near **Beaver Pond**, the Stimpson Preserve is notable for its idyllic woods and trickling streams. Wooden bridges, like this one, can be slippery when wet or frosty, so watch your step if it's wet outside!

Stimpson Family Nature Reserve / BELLINGHAM

Take a stroll through 350 acres of undisturbed old-growth forest and thriving wetland ecosystem at the Stimpson Family Nature Reserve.

Head out from the parking area onto the forested gravel path. Dedicated by the Stimpson family in 2003, the reserve's trail system is two connected loops, the shorter of the two circling Geneva Pond. Take a moment to look out at the Beaver Pond before reaching the Main Loop junction at 0.3 miles. Head to the right to continue skirting the pond and surrounding wetland. Beavers are active in the area, so be on the lookout! The 3-mile Main Loop gently climbs through Douglas-fir, western hemlock and redcedar towering above the trail. Small streams run past the trail after heavy rains, and fallen logs and snags attract pileated woodpeckers. At just over a mile, a viewpoint of Lake Whatcom can be made out through a break in the forest. From this high point, the trail continues downhill through a section of forest with picturesque moss formations on the surrounding trees.

At 2.5 miles, a junction with the Geneva Pond Loop leads off to the right. Continue straight to finish the 3-mile loop and head back to the parking lot, or take the Geneva Pond Loop to add another 1.8 miles to your hike (including the 0.4 miles back to your car). The Geneva Pond Loop circles a small pond. With open areas on the southwestern edge of the pond, the sunlight shimmers off of water lily pads and the backs of wood ducks floating along peacefully. Meeting back up with the Main Loop Trail, turn right to reach the parking area in 0.4 miles.

DISTANCE: 4.9 miles // **ELEVATION GAIN:** 300 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 800 ft.
MAP: Whatcom County Parks // **PERMIT:** None // **DOGS:** Not permitted

INFO: whatcomcounty.us/2180/Stimpson-Family-Nature-Reserve

TRAILHEAD: From Bellingham, drive east on Lakeway Dr (I-5 exit 253). Follow the road, which eventually becomes Cable St. Just after the fire station, turn right onto Austin St (signed also for Lake Louise Rd). Continue until it becomes Lake Louise Rd, just after a four-way stop. At 1.5 miles, look for the parking area on the left side.

HIKE & PHOTOS: Brandon Fralic

POST-HIKE PUB

Stop by **Boundary Bay Brewery** after your hike to refuel. Try a beer from the Galbraith Mountain series, named after trails near Stimpson Reserve. Also check out their full food menu consisting of fresh, Northwest-inspired pub grub.





HIKE AT LOW TIDE

Spend some time exploring the pebbly, sandy shores of **Bellingham Bay** at **Little Squalicum Park**. Shells, birds and maybe even a seal or two will keep you lingering, especially on a sunny day.



Photo by Justin Willhite

Bay to Baker Trail / BELLINGHAM

After a long day at the office, the Bay to Baker Trail offers a convenient dose of nature right in the heart of Bellingham.

Although still in its infancy, this rails-to-trails conversion will eventually extend 74 miles from Bellingham Bay to the Mount Baker Ski Area. Currently, three segments of the trail are open, including a 1.5-mile segment from Squalicum Beach to the Northwest Avenue bridge—great for a post-work hike or a quick excursion when time is limited.

Starting from Little Squalicum Park, the route follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way and connects a string of city parks. Leaving the park, the trail turns east and descends to Squalicum Creek Park, a worthy detour, where much work is being done to restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. Continue onward, curving northeast and ultimately ending at the overpass on Northwest Avenue. If you have time for a bit more walking, you can follow Squalicum Way to Cornwall Park, less than a mile away, before retracing your steps to Squalicum Beach.

DISTANCE: 3 miles // **MAP:** Bellingham road map
ELEVATION GAIN: Minimal // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 100 ft.
PERMIT: None // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: whatcomcounty.us/1963/Bay-to-Baker-Trail

TRAILHEAD: From I-5, take exit 258 onto Airport Dr. Turn left on Bennett Dr and make a slight left onto Marine Dr in just over a mile. Find the trailhead at Little Squalicum Park.

HIKE: Lindsay Leffelman // **PHOTO:** David Baker

Fidalgo Head Loop / ANACORTES

Enjoy sunset views of Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands on a series of trails through Washington Park.

The Fidalgo Head Loop is several interconnecting trails that make a complete loop through the park. Start on Trail 522 and head toward the water for great views of the San Juan Islands and Puget Sound. Take binoculars and watch for glimpses of harbor seals and orcas. Turn south on Trail 516, cross Fidalgo Loop Road and continue through dense forest to ascend a hill and cross Fidalgo Loop Road again.

At the top, the trail opens up for a panoramic view of Burrows Island. Head downhill to the left and pass through more dense forest to descend to the water's edge. Here is a great place to take in an evening view over Burrows Pass and Flounder Bay. Continue east on Trail 501, where several trail junctions lead to the water or the park's forested interior. Trail 501 eventually turns north and proceeds through forest back to the park entrance.

DISTANCE: 3 miles // **MAP:** Green Trails 415
ELEVATION GAIN: 100 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 250 ft.
PERMIT: None // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/fidalgo-head-loop-trail-washington-park

TRAILHEAD: In Anacortes, follow signs toward the San Juan Ferry. Stay on 12th, which becomes Oaks Ave, then becomes Sunset Ave. Enter Washington Park on the right.

HIKE & PHOTO: Mike Morrison

Pinnacle Peak / ENUMCLAW

Go for some after-work cardio on this steep, forested 2-mile grinder.

Pinnacle Peak Park is a 314-acre park comprising a curiously tall volcanic cone among Enumclaw's flat farmlands. The peak itself has had many names over time, so you may hear it called Mount Peak or Mount Pete. The hike to the summit offers generous views of Mount Rainier and the White River Valley. It's a popular hike that has two routes to reach the top: from the north via the direct, steep, but beautifully forested Cal Magnusson Trail or from the south via a wide gravel road also suitable for mountain bikers. The two paths converge at the summit, so you can connect the two if you can get a ride from one trailhead to the other.

The south approach requires off-street parking, and since it's a place bustling with families, dog walkers and mountain bikers, get there early to secure a spot. The trailhead is unmarked, but walk past the gate on the gravel road: this is the trail up to the summit, which switchbacks gradually upward. Stick to the road, despite the tempting side paths that cut straight up the mountain; these are meant for the mountain bikers. After about a mile you'll reach two major flat sections that give you ample views of the valley below. The second one is where the trail continues on into the forested section and meets up with the Cal Magnusson Trail at the summit, where you'll see the concrete remains of an old fire lookout tower. Don't forget to also keep your eyes peeled for beautifully symmetrical columnar basalt formations that decorate the sides of the trail along the way!

DISTANCE: 2 miles // **ELEVATION GAIN:** 1,060 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 1,800 ft.

MAP: King Co. Pinnacle Peak // **PERMIT:** None // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/mount-peak-pinnacle-peak

TRAILHEAD: From SR 410 in Enumclaw, head south on 284th Ave SE. Just past the fairgrounds, head west on SE 456th St, then south on 276th Ave SE. The Cal Magnusson Trailhead is at the corner of 276th Ave SE and SE 472nd St, with a small parking lot and road shoulder parking. The southern trailhead is located on SE Mud Mountain Rd at SE 481st St, with road shoulder parking.

HIKE: Kristen Sapowicz // **PHOTO:** Mark Foree



Download a free trail map
for Pinnacle Peak before
your hike at [kingcounty.gov/
services/parks-recreation](http://kingcounty.gov/services/parks-recreation).



Paradise Point State Park / VANCOUVER

This is the perfect escape after a busy day. Follow trails along the East Fork Lewis River to a hidden little cascade.

From the east end of the picnic area, follow the trail upriver to a forested bluff, then quickly descend back to river level. Then once again head up a bluff, then once again descend, passing a wonderful viewpoint over the river before reaching river level again. Then hike through a tight spot that might be tricky to negotiate when the river is running high.

Beyond this spot, it's pure paradise. Hike across a grassy bank alongside the lazy river. Named not for Meriwether of Lewis and Clark fame but for Adolphus Lee Lewis, an early settler, the East Fork Lewis drains much of Clark County and is the center of a large greenbelt extending from Paradise Point State Park to Moulton Falls.

Saunter along the lazy waterway, searching for kingfishers, eagles, beavers and otters. Cross a feeding stream on a handsome bridge and continue upriver alongside grassy wetlands. At almost a mile, the way turns right, away from the river, to follow a small stream up a ravine. In a grove of cedars a short spur branches left to an overlook of a small cascade. Enjoy the soothing tumble of the waterway, and decompress from the commotion of the hurried world you left behind. Return the way you came, or take the trail left from the junction, past inviting walk-in campsites to the road, then walk the road back to your vehicle.



DISTANCE: 2.2 miles // **MAP:** Paradise Point State Park
ELEVATION GAIN: 250 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 180 ft.
PERMIT: Discover Pass // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: Day Hike: Columbia River Gorge

TRAILHEAD: From Vancouver, head north on I-5 to exit 16. Turn right onto La Center Rd, then left onto Paradise Park Rd. Proceed to the day-use parking and picnic area.

HIKE & PHOTO: Craig Romano



Rock Candy Mountain / OLYMPIA

Capitol State Forest offers hikers a quick getaway fix and an opportunity to stretch their legs during the winter months.

This loop begins at the parking lot and follows the well-maintained North Rim Trail into the woods. Continue along the wide trail to the junction with the Rock Candy Mountain Trail. For the loop, resist turning left and crossing over the bridge, and instead head right on the North Rim Trail and begin climbing up the mountainside. The forest along the trail is fairly young, and evidence of recent logging is never too far off.

The trail steepens and switchbacks as it nears the top of Rock Candy Mountain, ultimately reaching a forest road known as Army Road. This is the highest point on this loop. Though there is little scenery to enjoy, recent logging activity has provided a view of the Black Hills to the south. Head left along Army Road to the Army Road Tie Trail and the shelter of the forest. Find the Rock Candy Mountain Trail almost immediately and follow it back to the trailhead.

DISTANCE: 5.5 miles // **MAP:** Capitol State Forest
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,000 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 1,500 ft.
PERMIT: Discover Pass // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/rock-candy-mountain

TRAILHEAD: From I-5 in Olympia, exit onto US 101 north. After 6 miles, merge onto US 8 for another 4.7 miles to Rock Candy Mountain Rd. Turn left and proceed to the trailhead.

HIKE & PHOTO: Nate & Jer Barnes





“I grew up hiking the trails in Illahee Preserve. I continue to enjoy exploring these trails that have given me so many happy memories.”
— KELSIE DONLEYCOTT

Illahee Forest Preserve / BREMERTON

Explore an undeveloped watershed on well-maintained trails just minutes from town.

Before heading out, download an Illahee Preserve trail map, available at illaheepreserve.org. Numbered markers lead the way, and navigation of the trails is easiest with a map in hand (or on your phone). You can combine numerous small loops and short spurs for a looping, twisting route that circuits the whole preserve.

Begin at the parking lot located off Almira Drive. Head right, past the dedication rock, and follow the trail to marker #21. Turn right and follow to #22. Ignore the path leading right and continue forward to #7. The trail, covered in wood chips, navigates a series of gentle ups and downs through a dense mixed forest. At marker #7, turn right and pass #6 and #5—both part of the Compass Circle Loop. At #5 turn right again, following the Water Tower Trail to #4. Fork left to #3 and proceed to #11. Continue forward to #15. At marker #15 veer left and continue downhill to #16.

Continue on the wide trail, trending right and ignoring all paths leading left as you pass #18, #24 and #25 and arrive at the intersection with #28. If time is short, turn left and follow the path back to the parking lot. Otherwise, continue forward along the east side of the Golf Course Loop to #33. Proceed to marker #32 and on to #34, at the start of the Hall of Cedars Loop. From #34 head either direction to hike the loop. Ignore the side path near #19 and watch out for wayward golf balls along the east side of the loop, which skirts the edge of Rolling Hills Golf Course. Back at #34, retrace your steps back to #32, then fork right to complete the Golf Course Loop. At #31 turn right and return to the parking lot.

DISTANCE: 2.7 miles // **ELEVATION GAIN:** 210 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 530 ft.

MAP: Illahee Preserve Trail Map // **PERMIT:** None // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: illaheepreserve.org

TRAILHEAD: From Bremerton, head north on Warren Ave. Cross the bridge and continue on Wheaton Way for 1.8 miles. Turn right on NE Riddell Rd. Follow for 0.3 miles and turn left onto Almira Dr. for 0.4 mile to the parking area.

HIKE & PHOTO: Kelsie Donleycott

WEEKNIGHT CAMPOUT

Try a midweek getaway by pitching your tent at nearby Illahee State Park. There's restrooms and showers, so you can clean up in the morning before heading to work.



Photo by Brian Hansford



Oaks to Wetland Trail / VANCOUVER

Walk out of work and onto a mystical path that creeps past a Chinook plankhouse and into oak woodlands, fir forests and basalt outcroppings.

Just a few minutes' drive from downtown Vancouver, you can recharge your batteries at the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge, where lush greenery and wise old-growth oaks are complemented by abundant birdsong. More than 5,000 acres of marshes, grasslands and wooded areas are home to more than 100 species of birds, waterfowl and fish. Two trails and a loop road provide public access to this serene area—but stay on the trail, as poison oak is among the plant life that thrives here.

Near the trailhead, a replica plankhouse, built by volunteers, greets visitors. The plankhouse can be toured when it is open seasonally, and it's great for anyone, from grandma to your toddling beginners. From here, an ADA-accessible trail makes its way along the eastern edge of the estuary. Depending on the season, you can view sandhill cranes, migrating Canada geese, swans and even predatory hawks. A viewpoint at the end of the accessible section offers an open vista of the refuge. In the summer sun, this is a great little spot to take refuge under the expansive shade of a giant old oak.

From here, the trail heads into old-growth trees, with a series of oxbow trails that loop back to the main trail. Interpretive signs offer hikers an opportunity to learn about the abundant tree and animal species in the refuge. This trail has no shortage of quiet calm, and you will quickly find yourself gazing out over the refuge and daydreaming about just about anything—but work.

DISTANCE: 2 miles // **ELEVATION GAIN:** 100 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 100 ft.

MAP: Ridgefield Refuge // **PERMIT:** \$3 entry fee // **DOGS:** Not permitted

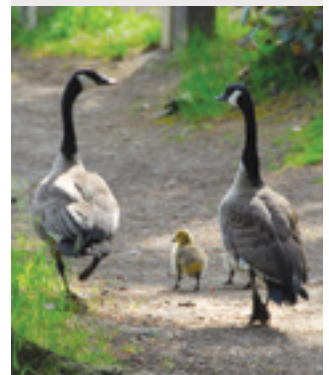
INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/ridgefield-national-wildlife-refuge

TRAILHEAD: From I-5, take exit 14 onto Pioneer St. Go west to a T-junction with N Main St. Turn right and proceed for 1 mile to the refuge entrance. There is a \$3 entry fee, which can be waived by showing one of the many passes they accept.

HIKE: Ryan Schreiner // **PHOTO:** Joy Wagner

GO FOR THE BIRDS

Winter is the best time to view large numbers of ducks, geese, swans and other migratory birds that use the area as a resting place during the long, cold months. Spring offers opportunities to watch songbird migration, and summer is a great time to watch local breeding species of ducks and geese raise their young.



Inset by Kelly Elder



SPRING FORWARD

Spring color comes sooner to the drier central and eastern parts of Washington. If you need to escape the wet, gray doldrums of the west side, just head east—and take your camera for early-season wildflowers.

Cowiche Canyon / YAKIMA

Take a scenic stroll in a small pocket of wild land just minutes from downtown Yakima.

The interconnected trail system at Cowiche Canyon Conservancy provides for a quick and easy escape for an after-work hike. For starters, try the Cowiche Canyon Trail. It winds 3 miles up Cowiche Canyon beneath steep sagebrush slopes and cliffs of basalt and andesite, crossing Cowiche Creek nine times along the way.

If you want more wide-open views, then head for the North and South Uplands Loop trails. Walk the North Uplands Loop Trail counterclockwise until you come to the old two-track running east–west along the uplands. Turn right and come to the South Uplands Loop Trail. Turn left onto this trail and walk the loop either way for views out over the shrub–steppe and surrounding countryside.

You'll find raptors soaring above the cliffs and a host of songbirds in the lush riparian vegetation and sagebrush hillsides. In spring, the uplands and hillsides are ablaze with wildflowers; in fall, the canyon is ablaze with color.

DISTANCE: Up to 7 miles // **MAP:** Cowiche Canyon Cons.
ELEVATION GAIN: 800 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 1,800 ft.
PERMIT: None // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: cowichecanyon.org

TRAILHEAD: Find driving directions at wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/cowiche-canyon

HIKE & PHOTO: David Hagen



Make it a happy hour hike in Cowiche Canyon by detouring to the **Tasting Room of Yakima**, or **Naches Heights Vineyard**, both of which are easily accessible at the top of the canyon.

Split Creek Loop / SPOKANE

Hikers now have a new loop option for Liberty Lake, thanks to Eastern Washington volunteers.

Begin from the main parking lot, following the trail as it skirts the campground before entering the forest. Watch for signs of wildlife in the old beaver ponds at the beginning of the route, where blue herons or moose may be hanging out in the shallow water. As the trail climbs, bear left at the marked intersection with the Edith Hanson Riding Trail.

At the first crossing of Liberty Creek, note the return trail on the left. Continue climbing through the park's dense forest. The creek will occasionally be visible to the left, but the trees are the dominant feature. Recross Liberty Creek, and continue past the Split Creek Trail on the way up in order to visit the Cedar Grove, Spokane County's first Conservation Futures acquisition in 1993. Backtrack to the Split Creek Trail (completed by WTA volunteers in 2015; watch for the 1930s-era car they discovered along the route). The trail eventually rejoins the main trail for a pleasant downhill back to the parking lot.

DISTANCE: 4.9 miles // **MAP:** Liberty Lake Regional Park
ELEVATION GAIN: 720 ft. // **ELEVATION PEAK:** 2,480 ft.
PERMIT: \$2 entrance fee // **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/split-creek-trail

TRAILHEAD: From I-90, take exit 296. Turn right on N Liberty Lake Rd, then left on Sprague Ave. Sprague turns into Neyland Ave, then joins S Lakeside Rd. Follow signs, turning right on Zephyr Rd to the park entrance.

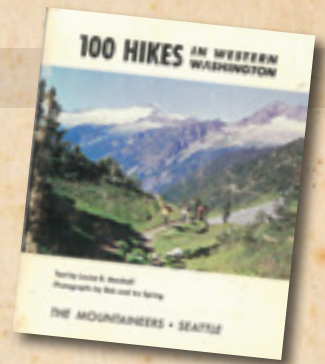
HIKE: Holly Weiler // **PHOTO:** Shane Freeman



By Kim Brown

ORIGIN STORY

From Hiker
to Hiking Hero



When you hear the term “origin story,” it’s often associated with someone rising from obscurity to heroic proportions, be it Iron Man or Luke Skywalker. But not all heroes need to fly or save the galaxy. A hero can just as easily be someone who sparks passions and champions a cause. For hikers in Washington, that champion was Louise Marshall.

Since 1965, Marshall was at the forefront of promoting hiking and outdoor exploration in Washington state. It was then that she self-published the booklet *Trail Trips: An Introduction to Hiking Near Seattle*. Its purpose was to give people ideas about lowland places they could hike year round. The next year, in 1966, she authored *100 Hikes in Western Washington*, published by The Mountaineers Press, even as she continued work on her next volume, *High Trails: A Guide to the Cascade Crest Trail* (now the PCT). Armed with these new guidebooks, more hikers would be pounding tread than ever before. But Marshall was just getting started.

In 1966, she created the *Signpost* newsletter so fellow Mountaineers “Trail Tripper” leaders could share information about trail and road conditions, safety and hiking tips. She would telephone Mountaineers leaders each Sunday evening to get conditions reports; the newsletter would be in their hands in time to plan the following weekend’s outings. Circulation of *Signpost* quickly expanded to the general public, including

gear makers, local industries (logging and mining), various user groups and public lands managers who were happy to have a forum to exchange information.

Signpost was a simple publication, complete with edits inserted by hand, afterthoughts handwritten in the margin and hand-drawn sketches. Its grassroots approach tended to be “chatty and informational,” Marshall wrote, conceding, “It is no literary gem.” As the newsletter progressed, Marshall learned about public lands policies by

punting and asking questions. Multiple adverse issues then affecting Washington’s wildlands frustrated hikers and conservationists, and *Signpost* readers were encouraged to write letters to government and agency officials to support trails and wildlands.

As interest in hiking and backpacking began exploding across the Northwest—fueled by Marshall’s *100 Hikes* volume selling more than 15,000 copies in its first six months of publication—the battles for conservation and recreation versus the development and resource industries were just heating up. Like most heroes, they rarely get any rest leading the charge for the force of good. Louise suddenly became a very busy woman. ♦



Flashback: 1960s

- Helicopters dropped machinery for mining operations in the Cascades at Miners Ridge, Dutch Miller Gap and Vesper Peak.
- Sheep grazed and hooved the high meadows on national forest lands. Logging roads punched deeper into the mountains, and trailheads were buried under slash.
- Dams were planned for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River and Thunder Creek in the Cascades.
- A Dorothy Lake highway was planned, with an eye toward development along Dorothy, Bear, Deer and Snoqualmie Lakes.
- There were few backcountry policies in place. Leave No Trace wasn’t widespread and one could see hundreds of tents in Royal Basin in the Olympics.
- The battle for a North Cascades National Park was ongoing, and the fight for larger boundaries of a proposed Alpine Lakes Wilderness was just about to explode.



Third Beach Sunset

Photo by Iron Scaggs

Spring is the perfect time to explore Washington's coast. Get inspired by more Northwest Exposure photo contest entries at wta.org/gallery.

