

How to Boost Your Strength with Spring Hikes

Washington TRAILS

A Publication of Washington Trails Association | wta.org



On the

Right Path

Giving teens the skills they need to get outside

Perfect Your Waterfall Photos

NW Weekend: Port Townsend Camping

Mar+Apr 2017

\$4.50 US



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





Powered by you

Washington Trails Association is a volunteer-driven membership organization. As the nation's largest state-based hiking nonprofit, WTA is the voice for hikers in Washington state. We engage and mobilize a community of hikers as advocates and stewards—through collaborative partnerships, grassroots advocacy, volunteerism, education and inspiration. WTA is committed to making trails accessible to everyone in Washington and protecting our state's wild places for the next generation.

.....

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](#)

[/washingtontrails](#)

[/wta-hikers](#)

[/wtahikers](#)

[/WTAhiker](#)

FRONT DESK: Executive Director

Jill Simmons / jill@wta.org

A Love for *Trails*

L

et the beauty we love be what we do. — Rumi

Valentine's Day came on my second day as WTA's executive director, so I guess it's not surprising that love was on my mind during my first days in the office. Of course, I was thinking about how much I will love working at WTA, but I was also remembering when I fell in love with hiking.

I've liked hiking all my life. But as a child of the flatlands of Minnesota, I didn't have much experience with the mountains, and love was not on my mind during my first hikes in Washington. I remember grumbling to my companion, "I said I wanted to go hiking; I didn't say mountain climbing!"

But my legs soon grew stronger, and before long I was a regular on mountain trails. Then, about a year after I'd moved to the Northwest, it happened: I was suddenly in love with hiking.

I can still remember the exact moment. I was standing on the High Divide above Seven Lakes Basin in Olympic National Park. From there, everything in front of you is wild—glittering Mount Olympus, the deep green gorge of the Hoh River and—somewhere just beyond view, but you can feel it—the Pacific Ocean. That's when I knew that this thing, hiking, was my true love.

Everyone has their own story. And that's why I'm excited to help WTA spread the love of hiking to newcomers and locals, to folks in the big city and those off the beaten path, to little kids and the young at heart. WTA's mission, in a way, is to be a bit like Cupid: Our aim is getting more people to fall in love with the wonder of Washington's trails.

I hope we get a chance to share our love stories at a WTA event soon. In the meantime, take someone new outside and help them fall in love.



MIX
Paper from
responsible sources
FSC® C006571



Features

Ready to go alone

Five steps to ensure your teen is prepared to safely venture out on trails without you. » **p. 14**

The next generation of trail leaders

Meet three of WTA's youth ambassadors, and learn about the work they are doing to help trails and share their love of hiking. » **p. 18**

New tech for Mount Rainier

Backcountry permits are now requested online, the first step in the park's effort to make the system faster and easier. » **p. 22**

A volatile story

A new book takes a detailed look at the story of the Mount St. Helens eruption, including the land battle it provoked. » **p. 30**

Cover: Ana and Nina, two young backpackers, jump for joy while on a family trip to the Teanaway. Photo by Sarah Gardner.

Community

Let's save trails so we can enjoy them now » p. 6

Hikers offer their tips for a successful hike with kids » p. 7

WTA at Work

3 areas where we hope to restore lost trails in 2017 » p. 8

Q&A: Veteran volunteers talk about WTA vacations » p. 9

Trail News

Roads plan saves access to Mount Baker-area trails » p. 12

Community rallies to protect Methow from mining » p. 13

Trail Mix

Forget that boring bar, make a real brunch on trail » p. 36

Master the art of photographing waterfalls » p. 39

Port Townsend is ideal for year-round camping » p. 40

Hike It!

Five trails to spark the love of hiking in your family » p. 44

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT / Bruce Burger
SECRETARY / Andrea Baines
TREASURER / Joe Gregg
VP, PHILANTHROPY / Susan Queary
VP, BOARD DEVELOPMENT / Wendy Wheeler Jacobs
VP, ADVOCACY / Mason White

Directors at Large

Carole Bianquis / Lisa Black
Perry Burkhart / Michael Dunning
Ethan Evans / Jennifer Faubion
Thomas Goldstein / Jonathan Lau
Geoff Martin / Matt Martinez
Steve Payne / Titti Ringstrom / Stephen Tan

WTA Leadership Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / Jill Simmons
ADVOCACY DIRECTOR / Andrea Imler
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR / Kindra Ramos
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR / Kate Neville
FINANCE & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR / Marjorie Kittle
TRAIL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR / Rebecca Lavigne
YOUTH PROGRAMS DIRECTOR / Krista Dooley

Washington Trails

Staff

WASHINGTON TRAILS EDITOR / Jessi Loerch
HIKING CONTENT MANAGER / Anna Roth
GRAPHIC DESIGNER / Jenica Wilkie
MEMBERSHIP MANAGER / Joey Smith
COPY EDITOR / Cassandra Overby

Volunteers

GEAR TEAM / Doug Diekema, Brittany Manwill
GUEST CONTRIBUTORS / Morgan Cowper, Brandon Fralic, Lindsay Leffelman, Charlie Lieu, Cassandra Overby, Rachel Wood
PROOFREADERS / Jim Cavin, Rebecca Kettwig
TRAIL TEAM / Nate & Jer Barnes, Kelsie Donleycott, Brandon Fralic, David Hagen, Lindsay Leffelman, Mike Morrison, Craig Romano, 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.org

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION / membership@wta.org

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION / volunteer@wta.org

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS / editor@wta.org

MAR+APR 2017 / Volume 52, 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 \$50. 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.

Hope for the *future*

s I was putting this magazine together, my coworkers kept stopping by to look at the page proofs scattered everywhere.

A

They were all exclaiming happily over the photos of WTA's youth ambassadors that we have featured in this issue of *Washington Trails*.

"Oh! Juli! She's great!"

"Look, it's Julian. I've been on a work party with him."

The young people who work with WTA have made a powerful impression on us. For 10 years, we've been working with youth. It's something we find extremely important—and extremely satisfying.

Introducing young people to the outdoors is an important part of our work at WTA. We've all learned for ourselves how the experience of being outdoors can improve our lives. We want to give young people the same experiences.

The skills learned outdoors can help youth gain confidence, as well as boost their team-building and problem-solving skills. And, of course, enjoying time in wild places just feels good.

We're trying to build a new generation of trail lovers who will work to protect the places we all love to play.

One of the many reasons I wanted to work for WTA was because of the commitment to youth. Since I've been here, I've been impressed by the variety of ways we support them. Our Outdoor Leadership Training program empowers groups to get youth outdoors. Our gear library offers the tools youth need to get outside safely and comfortably. Our Youth Ambassador Program encourages youth to really get involved in our community.

My own daughter is 6, and while she's a long ways away from taking a hike on her own, I know it will happen faster than I think.

The stories in this magazine give me hope for the future. I hope you agree and find inspiration in these pages.

When you're done reading, tell me what you think at editor@wta.org. And I'd love to hear your own stories of what inspires you.

Jessi



I Don't Want to Wait

Improve trails today and care for the future, too

Mount Hoquiam.

Photo by John Pickering.

My first steps on a trail were taken when I could barely walk, in the company of my parents. They loved hiking and camping, cherished time spent in nature. And they extended that feeling along to me with an easy grace, an incidental education about the value of public lands and my place in protecting them. I have no idea if they were trying to raise an activist, but they did.

When I think back to that awakening of purpose, I wasn't motivated by thoughts of my future kids or grandkids spending time on trails. I was just psyched to spend time in the wilderness, inspired to learn everything I could about it and give back

to it when I could. My passion for trails has been seasoned and deepened by the idea that my work today, my small contributions to our greater community, could have far-reaching consequences. It's been enriched by all the stories of others who enjoy our lands and lives transformed by trails. But the truth is that nothing inspires me to action more than just time on trail and the memories I've made there.

I want to hike, and so I care for trails. Taking action doesn't have to be some far-off, lofty goal—it can be as simple as writing a trip report, sending an email to my representatives or taking a friend hiking for the first time. The truth is that it is the small, everyday actions of advocates, land managers, trail volunteers, members and

hikers who tip the balance between a trail existing or disappearing forever.

Time, money, muscle, mobility—as they wax and wane throughout our lives, so do our needs for different kinds of trail experiences. Sometimes I want to hike with friends who have toddlers. Occasionally my soul needs a week in the deep backcountry. Those are things I want now, in my lifetime. If they happen to benefit generations in the future, I will be proud of the legacy I've left. But I don't want to wait.

What motivates you to pick up a shovel, speak up for trails or renew your membership? What fuels your passion to fight the good fight? **Tell us at wta.org/perspectives.**

Trail Smarts



Photo by Kristen Sapowicz.

No Matter How Cute It Is, Don't Feed the Wildlife

For hikers, there are few things more enjoyable than spotting unique wildlife on trail. Whether you catch sight of a common bird, a cute pika or something more exotic like a bear, giving the animal plenty of space is important for more than just your own safety. Here's why:

- Getting too close to an animal can disturb its natural behavior. This is especially harmful if the animal learns to associate humans food.
- There may be more than meets the eye. During nesting season, animals can become anxious if you approach their young—even if those babies are hidden from view.
- Loud noises and sudden movements can put stress on animals.
- Getting a better look at wildlife often means going off trail—and damaging foliage and sensitive areas.

One of the best ways to enjoy wildlife from a distance is to carry binoculars or a telephoto lens for your camera. That way you can still get a close look without disturbing their natural behaviors—and help ensure that animals will continue to inhabit those areas in the future.

—Erik Haugen-Goodman

>> What are your tips for having a great hike with kids?



—GISELLE PICHARDO, @GIGIPICHARDO ON INSTAGRAM

"Play a game: This idea actually came from our oldest daughter, Sophia, and now is a must on every hike. A person chooses a number between one and 20; the first one to guess the number gets the chance to pick the next one. It's just a guessing game, but the girls really enjoy it. Twenty Questions is another game that comes in handy, as it keeps the kids distracted during the walk."



—PAIGE REYES, @MRS_PNW ON INSTAGRAM

"Hiking with a baby has certainly slowed my pace, and a few times we didn't make it to 'the top' for various reasons, but the moments we share outside on the trail are so special and so important! Things do and will go wrong (don't let the pretty Instagram squares fool you), but with each adventure—successful and not so successful—my confidence as a parent has grown."



—JENNIFER JOHNSON, WTA MEMBER; @THEHIKERMAMA ON INSTAGRAM

"Bring food. Lots of food. We have the most success packing each kid a bag of food that they can carry with them. I have them help me pack the snacks—crackers, trail mix, apples, cheese, salami, protein bars or whatever else we have on hand. Having plenty of food and taking frequent snack breaks (for us, about once an hour) keeps blood sugar stable and keeps us happy."



Saving Lost Trails

3 places where WTA will be focusing in 2017

Trails around Washington are disappearing, due in large part to steep declines in funding for our public lands. To help tackle the problem, Washington Trails Association started the Lost Trails Found campaign at the end of 2015.

Since then, the Lost Trails Found campaign has been working toward the ambitious goal of rehabilitating at least five lost trails by 2020. In 2016, volunteers contributed hundreds of hours to lost trails like the North Fork Sullivan Trail in the Salmo-Priest Wilderness, the Klickitat Trail in Southwest Washington, the Six Ridge Trail on the Olympic Peninsula and others. The work will continue on these trails in 2017 and beyond.

In the meantime, we're excited to announce our Lost Trails Found focus areas for 2017:

Glacier Peak Wilderness and Milk Creek Trail:

We will advocate for funding for a new Milk Creek bridge across the Suiattle River. The original bridge washed away in the floods of 2003, leaving the Milk Creek Trail inaccessible. The trail provides direct access to remote areas of the Pacific Crest Trail in Glacier Peak Wilderness.

Goat Rock Wilderness Access and Trails:

We will continue our work to improve access to the popular Goat Rocks Wilderness, which is one of the most visited wilderness areas in the state. Miles of trails in the area are not easily accessible to hikers due to undermaintained or inaccessible roads. In addition, miles of trail that could provide high-quality access to the Goat Rocks Wilderness—and help disperse users—are in rough condition. WTA will focus our efforts on advocating for road maintenance funding for those roads that lead to trails in the wilderness.

Additionally, our trail maintenance team will be at work improving lesser-used trails, such as Angry Mountain.

Pasayten Wilderness and Boundary Trail:

We will work to improve trail conditions on a portion of the iconic, 80-mile Boundary Trail, which is part of the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail. The path traverses the length of the Pasayten Wilderness, ending at Ross Lake. Large portions of the western section of the trail need maintenance; tread has nearly disappeared in some areas.

While there is still significant work ahead, volunteers and trail advocates have an incredible opportunity to come together to preserve these icons for the benefit of hikers today and in future generations.

To learn how to help find lost trails in 2017, visit wta.org/losttrails.

Horseshoe Basin in the Pasayten Wilderness. Photo by Mike Warren.

Take a Vacation, Help Out Trails

Each year, WTA offers volunteers a chance to go out on multiday work parties. We interviewed three volunteer veterans to get the inside scoop on the trips.

Have you been
dreaming of a vacation
in the backcountry?
WTA can help!

Read more answers
from past volunteers
and find out how to
register for a trip at
wta.org/volunteertips.



THOMAS MORGAN
Three Volunteer Vacations

How did you prepare for your Volunteer Vacation? I tried to do more day hikes at places like Tiger Mountain. I also used the gear list that WTA provides as a checklist when I was packing for my trip. Though I hadn't been on any WTA work parties prior to my first Volunteer Vacation, I was already an experienced backpacker.

What did you most enjoy about the experience? Everything! Except the rain. What has kept me coming back is the people I've gotten to meet and the places I've gotten to see.

What advice would you give someone considering a WTA backcountry trip for the first time? Start with a trip that includes lodging. It can be hard if all you have to return to after a long day of working on trail is a tiny one-person tent. But either way, I would say "Go for it."

For me, by the third day, my mind and my body have grown accustomed to a new rhythm. By the end of the trip, I feel stronger than ever. It's like a rebirth.



GINA BUA
One Backcountry Response Team

How did you prepare for your BCRT? When I registered for my BCRT, I had just completed physical therapy for a surgery I had had the year before. To make sure I was ready for the trip, I made a conscious effort to take more frequent walks around the neighborhood and went on short hikes in local parks.

I also attended a day work party leading up to my trip to get reacquainted with the type of work I would encounter in the backcountry. Hiking downhill during the day work party reminded me to pack my trekking poles for my backcountry trip.

What was your biggest concern leading up to your trip? My biggest concern was keeping up with the rest of the crew. I was happy to find that there was a diversity of ages and hiking paces, so I fit in just fine.

What advice would you give someone considering a WTA backcountry trip for the first time? Know your limits. Get some work done, but don't work so hard that you never want to do it again.



KIM STRUIKSMA
Two BCRTs, Four Volunteer Vacations

What did you enjoy most about the experience? The camaraderie and the friendship. When you go on a weeklong Volunteer Vacation, you and your fellow volunteers spend seven days in the wilderness cooking, laughing, telling campfire stories and digging in the dirt. It's an immensely rewarding experience.

What was your biggest concern leading up to your first trip? Oh gosh, there were so many ... Will I survive for a week without a shower? Where are the facilities? What do you do when you gotta "go"? Will I be cold and miserable? Will my tent leak? I can happily report that I did survive and I've joyously gone on several trips since.

What advice would you give someone considering a WTA backcountry trip for the first time? I would first make sure that you like doing trail work. I recommend starting with WTA day trips. From there, if you enjoy trail work, are in decent physical condition and have a desire to spend some quality time in the wilderness, my advice is to go for it!

10 Years & Counting

Thanks to our members and donors, over the past 10 years, WTA's youth engagement has grown into a comprehensive program serving thousands of students. But that's not all. It's also fostering the next generation of environmental advocates.

Although the youth program started with a smattering of one-day work parties for families, it has expanded to include one-day work parties, weeklong Youth Volunteer Vacations and a Youth Ambassador Program (see page 18). The hope is that by exposing young people to trails, they will fall in love with them and then seek opportunities to give back.

That was the case for Anna Silver, a former youth ambassador for WTA.

"As a child of decidedly non-outdoorsy parents, WTA was my gateway to the outdoors," she says. "Because Volunteer Vacations were affordable and extremely fun, meaningful work, I was able to explore many different facets of the state I have come to love so much. The work I did in high school for WTA cemented my love of the outdoors and showed me the value of hands-on labor."

Anna first worked with WTA on a Volunteer Vacation. She enjoyed the experience so much that she volunteered for four more youth vacations. She was also a youth ambassador for WTA for two years. Since then, Anna has graduated

and is attending college in Michigan. She still volunteers with WTA when she comes home to visit. She even volunteered on a Backcountry Response Team last year.

Anna's experience with the WTA youth program isn't unique. The program has been growing steadily. In 2016, more than 1,300 youth joined WTA for youth parties, and 24 high school students were part of our youth ambassador program.

As we begin the next 10 years, we can't wait to see what the next generation of trail advocates can accomplish.

Thank You

WTA's youth programs are made possible through support from individuals, including Steve and Cynthia Hammer, who helped launch the Outdoor Leadership Training program. In 2016, youth program supporters included Jim and Marie Borgman, the Edwin W. and Catherine M. Davis Foundation, the Juniper Foundation, the Peach Foundation, Fred R. Smith, the Treeline Foundation and an anonymous supporter. The program is also supported by a Recreational Trails Program grant from the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office, and through our youth endowment, founded by former WTA board member Ken Mondal.

Checking in

We asked Youth Volunteer Vacation participants from 2007-2016 and their families to tell us about the impact of their week on trail with us. Here is what they had to say.

90%

of youth participants have used WTA experience to apply for schools, jobs or scholarships.

75%

of youth say they learned responsibility and leadership during their trip.

75%

of parents saw an increase in their child's self-confidence after participating in a Youth Volunteer Vacation.



I recommend a Volunteer Vacation to anyone and everyone who is interested in the outdoors. It is very hard work but anyone can do it and it is probably one of the most enjoyable experiences I have ever had.

— KATELYN KNEIB

WTA IS 15,000 STRONG

In early January, after working tirelessly to process all of the membership gifts made by hikers at the end of the year, we learned that WTA had reached a huge milestone: We had welcomed our 15,000th member household.

Less than five years ago, we were crossing the threshold of 10,000 members, a lofty goal that had taken two decades to reach. In those early days, it would have been unimaginable that our small organization

could bring together such a vast, diverse and committed community of trail enthusiasts.

You are a great testament to the significance of trails and reaffirm daily the mission of our founders. Together, we will continue to create a path for future generations to discover the importance of wild Washington.

Thank you for supporting trails.



Clarissa Allen is excited to work with WTA's youth program. Photo by Emma Cassidy.

WTA Welcomes New Youth Program Manager

Washington Trails Association is happy to welcome **Clarissa Allen** as our new youth programs manager. Clarissa is an experienced program manager who brings a rich background in youth education and stewardship to her work with WTA.

After completing an undergraduate degree in philosophy, Clarissa ventured west to work on conservation projects in Washington, Oregon, California and Arizona. In 2009, she had the immense pleasure of spending more than 200 nights sleeping under the stars. That experience was transformative, to say the least!

After leading a youth conservation crew in Petrified Forest National Park, she realized she'd found her calling and moved to Washington to pursue graduate studies in education at the University of Washington. As part of her studies, she completed a graduate teaching residency at IslandWood, an outdoor learning center on Bainbridge Island.

Since completing a master's degree, she's worked as an educator for a diverse group of Washington organizations: Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Pacific Science Center, Nature Vision, Seattle Tilth, IslandWood and Cascade Bicycle Club.

"I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with so many amazing people and really excited for all of the adventures we'll have on trail in 2017," Clarissa says. "Our city parks and wild public lands belong to all of us, and the youth in our programs are a huge part of caring for these special places. Our youth volunteers bring energy, commitment and creative ideas to our stewardship work, and working with them on trail always inspires me to be a better steward myself."



More than 120 hiker advocates raised their voices for trail funding as part of WTA's Hiker Rally Day on Feb. 15 in Olympia. People from across the state spent the day meeting with their lawmakers on behalf of WTA's legislative priorities. Photo by Erik Haugen-Goodman.



WTA kicked off its 2017 Outdoor Leadership Training with snowshoeing workshops in January and February. Educators and program coordinators from around the state joined WTA to learn about planning and leading a snowshoe outing for groups of youth and families. Photo by Emma Cassidy.



Michelle Piñon, (front row, left) program assistant for the Outdoor Leadership Training program at WTA, presented on how gear libraries empower new users at the Outdoor Retailer show. She was on a panel with other Millennials on how to engage diverse communities in the outdoors. Photo courtesy James Edward Mills of the Joy Trip Project.



Church Mountain will still be accessible under a new roads plan for the Mount Baker area. Photo by Emily Spaulding.

Preserving Access to Trails

Plan for roads in Mount Baker area puts focus on recreation

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is one of the most visited forests in the nation. With that in mind, the U.S. Forest Service made recreation considerations a key factor in deciding which roads to keep and which roads to close in the Upper North Fork Nooksack in the Mt. Baker Ranger District.

The travel and access management plan, finalized late last year, shows that the Forest Service and the Mt. Baker Ranger District, under the leadership of District Ranger Erin Uloth, are committed to adapting to a growing demand for recreation opportunities.

The process of coming up with the plan

took months of work in collaboration with those who use the forest, including hikers and other trail enthusiasts. Thanks in part to WTA's work, popular recreation destinations will continue to be accessible.

WTA actively advocated for two elements that made it into the final plan:

- Access to all developed trails will remain open and available to the public, including Church Mountain, Heliotrope Ridge, Welcome Pass, Skyline Divide, Damfino Lakes, Canyon Ridge and Hannegan Pass. Seasonal and scheduled closures may occur on some roads.
- The Church Mountain, High Divide and Nooksack Cirque Trails each have a portion of their mileage accessible only by closed

roads. Those roads will be reclassified as trails, which will maintain access to all designated trails in the Upper Nooksack.

The final plan balances the continuing challenge of shrinking Forest Service budgets with the interests of the many people who use the forest. It also takes into account the health of the forest—removing old, closed or lesser-used roads will help improve water quality by reducing runoff from deteriorating roads. Overall, the plan keeps 118 miles of road open, while decommissioning 36.5 miles of road, 31 miles of which were already closed to access.

For more information on the final plan, visit <http://bit.ly/2jUWLb6>.

JOIN WTA'S BOARD

Would you like to help shape the future of Washington Trails Association? WTA is seeking candidates to serve on our board of directors. WTA's board helps set the strategic direction of the organization, and board members act as WTA ambassadors at sponsored events and in the recreation and environmental communities. A

two-year term includes participation in six annual meetings, committee work and an annual retreat. Residents of Washington state, especially communities outside the Puget Sound region are encouraged to apply. Please see wta.org/about/board for additional information on the position responsibilities, professional qualifications and how to apply.



Photo by Kevin Mack



Views from Methow Valley trails won't be obstructed by mining operations anytime soon, thanks to the work of advocates. Photo by Hannah Dewey.

Many Voices Save Methow From Mining

Due to incredible community support, the Methow Valley has scored a victory for the region's recreation lands. For at least the next two years, and potentially much longer, no new mining claims can be made in the area.

Late last year, the Department of the Interior began evaluating the merits of halting new mining in the 340,000-acre Methow Headwaters region. The action followed massive community involvement and a Senate bill introduced by Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell. Over the next two years, the U.S. Forest Service will work with the Bureau of Land Management to conduct a public outreach and environmental planning process to evaluate the proposal.

After the planning process, the Department of the Interior will decide whether or not to close the Methow Headwaters to new mining for the next 20 years.

The campaign to protect the headwaters was in response to an exploratory drilling proposal on Flagg Mountain, above Mazama. A Canadian mining company wanted to evaluate the area's copper and gold potential. The proposed mining area would have been in sight of the popular Goat Peak Lookout Trail and near Mazama's famous climbing destination, Goat Wall.

Advocates were concerned that a mine in the area could threaten the waters that salmon and area farmers rely on, in addition to negatively impacting the outdoor recreation economy. Outdoor recreation contributes more than \$150 million to Okanogan County each year, supporting hundreds of local jobs.

Washington Trails Association joined more than 135 local businesses and 35 local, state and national organizations in support of the campaign. There will be many opportunities to take action and make your voice heard in this process. Please visit methowheadwaters.org to get involved.



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

IIO W. PENNSYLVANIA AVE,
ROSLYN, WA 98941

BY CASSANDRA OVERBY

LEAVING *the* NEST

5 ways to help your teen adventure independently



All it took was one WTA work party—six hours of fresh air and hard work—for Gaby Gonzalez's 15-year-old son Julian Narvaez to fall in love with the outdoors. And with that, the mother of three went from having a son who simply needed to fulfill school-mandated community service hours to having a son who couldn't wait to get outside.

"After that first day, I picked him up and (he) was happy," Gaby says. "He actually talked about (his day) in the car, which was nothing short of a miracle. Because you know how teenagers get, where they don't want to talk to you? It was great. It just clicked ... A couple of weekends after that, he said, 'Mom, can I do this again?' And that was the end of it."

At first, Julian was happy attending WTA work parties. But before long, he started to crave the idea of going farther. So he signed up for a few Volunteer Vacations. It did help; he did go farther—to Andrew's

Creek, Beacon Rock and Alta Lake. But by the time he was 16, Julian was ready for a different kind of adventure. He wanted to hike with his newfound friends—individually.

Gaby was excited that her son was enjoying the outdoors so much, that he was away from screens and technology and that he loved to hike. It made her think of her own youth and how much she'd enjoyed being outside. But it was also a challenge, parenting a child who was now more outdoorsy than she was.

The unique joy and struggle of parenting an outdoorsy kid is something Josh Gannis, director of youth programs at The Mountaineers, sees all the time. There are now record numbers of kids participating in active youth programs and getting outside. Nearly 1,700 were enrolled in Mountaineers programs last year alone. Eventually, whether they have outdoorsy parents or not, they all want to enjoy

the outdoors on their own or with peers. It's simply part of growing up.

That fact that it's natural doesn't make it any easier on parents. Your son or daughter may not be a child anymore, but they are *your* child. And that means you're destined to worry about everything from your son texting and driving on his way to a hike to your daughter taking a fall while paying more attention to her friends than the trail. How can you keep them safe if you're not there?

As Gaby discovered, there is a way. It starts with building a strong foundation for your child and their love of the outdoors by getting involved in their interests and finding a good youth program for them. Then you can progress to mitigating the risks every hiker, young and old, faces on trail. In the process, you'll help your teen build the independence that will support their life far beyond the outdoors.

1

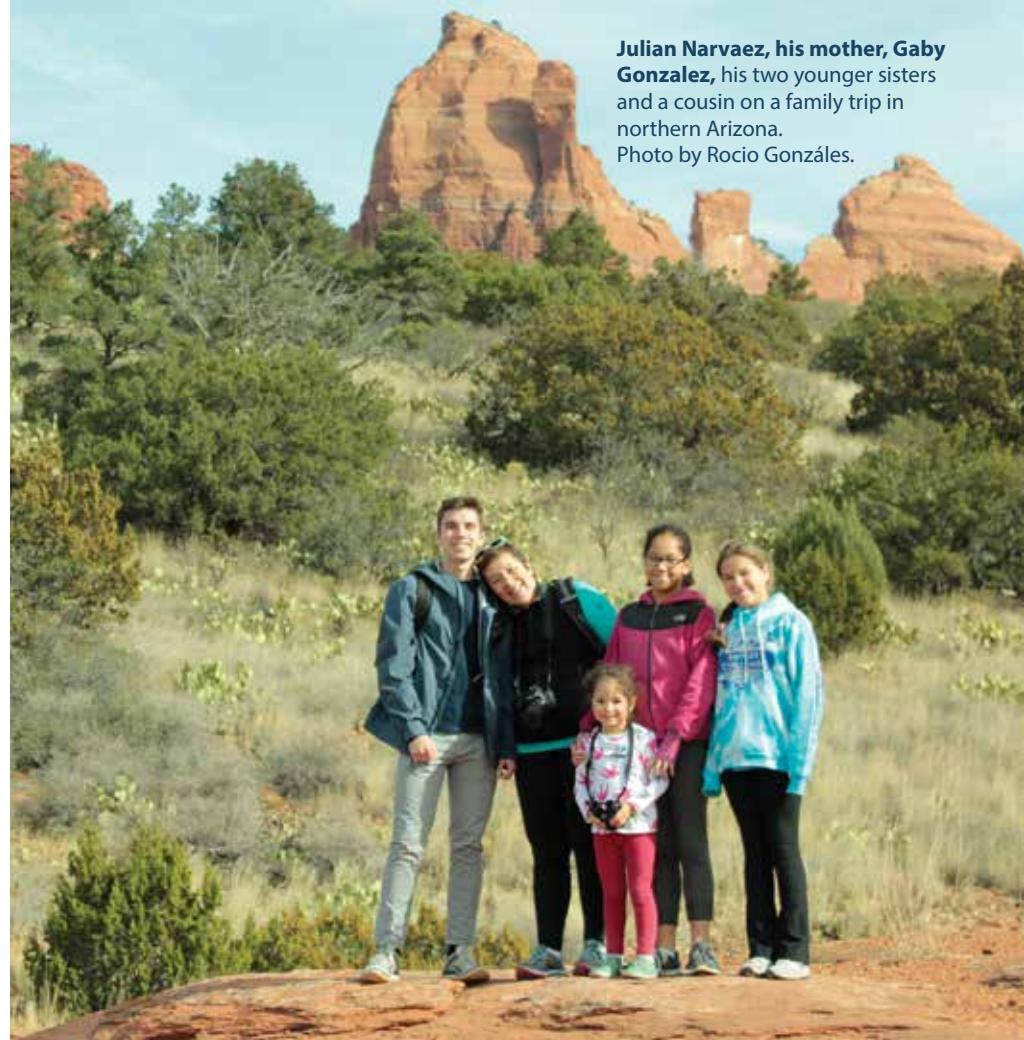
Get involved

It sounds counter intuitive, but as Gaby figured out early on, one of the best things you can do to help prepare your teen to adventure alone is to initially be there—a lot. Especially if your teen can't drive yet, your support and participation—from driving them to the trail and hiking with them to helping them meet up with their friends—can mean the difference between them getting outside and being completely sidelined.

"(When I started getting outside), my mom was my primary ride for the year," says Julian. "She got me to those (WTA) day trips ... and really let me do what I needed to do."

While rides often make teens' outdoor adventures possible, spending time together on trail can supercharge the growth of your child's outdoor education—and your trust in their skills and decision-making. It's okay to start small. As Gaby says, "Just go out with them. There are many hikes even within the city. Just spend time with them. You don't have to have an entire vacation or an entire day hike planned to go out with them. There are many places where you can just get out there and walk."

When you're out there, your goal is to impart as much of your outdoor knowledge to your teen as possible. Anything from rain to slick rocks to unprepared fellow hikers



Julian Narvaez, his mother, Gaby Gonzalez, his two younger sisters and a cousin on a family trip in northern Arizona.
Photo by Rocio González.

can be a teachable moment. But remember, don't let the conversation be one-sided. You can learn a lot about your teen's abilities by asking open-ended questions like, "What would you do in this situation?" and talking it out.

Chances are, at some point you will discover gaps in your own outdoor education. And that's okay. Ask an outdoorsy friend or family member to tag along on trail and offer their own teachable moments. Or find a class that both you and your child can attend (REI has many great ones that are free)—and learn together.

2

Find a good youth program

Once your teen is getting outside regularly and you've imparted all the knowledge you can, it's time to call in the experts and step back a bit. Your goal is to find a youth program that will continue to build your child's outdoor foundation—and

provide them with like-minded peers. For Gaby and Julian, that organization was WTA. For aspiring climbers, it's typically The Mountaineers. Those who want an epic education farther from home often choose Outward Bound or NOLS.

Regardless of which organization you choose, there are several things to look for. The right program has plenty of quality instruction on everything from the Ten Essentials to Leave No Trace. At WTA, these values are emphasized on all work parties and Volunteer Vacations. The ideal organization also offers mentorship, so your teen will be learning from—and teaching—other teens. At The Mountaineers, all teen trips are kid led and instructor supervised, so by the time high schoolers want to go out on their own, they've already planned three or four group excursions. The right organization will also have opportunities for growth. As your child masters new skills, they will be able to practice them in a controlled environment. At Outward Bound, participants work up to and are supported ▶

in solo time outdoors within the confines of a larger, supervised trip.

From building skills to building confidence, there's no better way to give your child more independence in the outdoors than by encouraging their participation in a high-quality, outdoors-oriented youth program. There's even an added benefit to you: By connecting with a great organization, you'll also be able to connect and swap tips with other parents of outdoorsy kids.

Once you're confident that your teen is ready to tackle the outdoors on their own, it's time to let them go. Luckily, there are things you can do before they leave and while they're gone to keep your worrying to a minimum.

3

Know the plan

Once your teen has a specific excursion in mind, the best thing you can do is drill them on their plan. This includes both Plan A and Plan B (in case the trailhead parking lot is full, it starts to pour rain, etc.). You should have all the details of where they're going, who they're going with and when they plan to be back. Then it's time to look for any weaknesses in the plan—and help your teen overcome them.

According to Gaby, this takes some research on the part of the parent. After she and Julian discuss a potential hiking trip, Gaby gets on the computer and checks out the hike description and an online map. She looks to see how far the trail is from civilization, if there will be cell phone service and if there are any dangers like high cliffs.

The goal, says Josh, is to "make sure their skills match what they want to do." If they've never scrambled, an unchaperoned trip is not the time to start. If they've never hiked in snow, it's best to do it together before they do it alone. Good trails for beginners are those that are well traveled, meticulously signed and close to home.

Once you and your teen have a final plan, write it down on a printable itinerary (wta.org/itinerary) and keep it with you. If anything unexpected occurs, like your teen needs help on trail or hasn't checked in by the agreed-upon time, you'll have all of the information you need to get help.

Teenage hikers Lynnea, Mirel and Steph hike on the Pacific Crest Trail near Wind River Road in southern Washington. The teens tackled long sections of the trail by themselves. Photo by Michael Telstad.



4

Check their gear

Once you're comfortable with the plan, make sure your teen has the right gear to get outside. For Gaby, that meant investing in hiking boots for Julian. It can also mean pulling together a hiking kit that includes a backpack, water bottle and the Ten Essentials. Aside from the standard hiking gear, make sure your teen has gear that's appropriate for the days they're hiking, whether the weather is hot, cold, rainy or somewhere in between.

To make sure nothing gets forgotten, Gaby and Julian do a bag inspection before each hike.

"As the son of a fairly nervous parent, I just have to make sure I show them my packed bag and then I show them all the gear I'm bringing," says Julian. "It's really a matter of if I'm prepared and ready to go. They're pretty understanding that if I have the right goals and I have the right gear, then anything that really comes my way, I'm able to deal with it."

5

Stay in touch

Once the plan is finalized, the gear is packed and your teen is out the door, the best thing you can do to avoid worrying about them while they're gone is to stay in communication when possible. This is pretty simple if there's cell phone service at the trailhead and on the trail. If this isn't the case, consider sending them with a personal locator beacon, SPOT or satellite communicator. Any of these devices can alert search and rescue if your teen is in trouble; with the SPOT and satellite communicator, you also have the ability to follow along with their hike on your computer or mobile device. Depending on the brand and model of the unit your teen carries, they'll even be able to send and receive check-in messages.

Whether your teen is calling via cell phone or messaging from another device, it's important to have established check-in times. For Gaby and Julian, it's when he starts hiking and when he gets back to the trailhead. Aside from regular check-ins,



THEY'RE PRETTY UNDERSTANDING THAT IF I HAVE THE RIGHT GOALS AND I HAVE THE RIGHT GEAR, THEN ANYTHING THAT REALLY COMES MY WAY, I'M ABLE TO DEAL WITH IT.

—JULIAN NARVAEZ

establish what other events require communication, such as changing from Plan A to Plan B, running late or making camp.

Once your favorite hiker is back home, there's still plenty to communicate about. Talk about your teen's favorite part of the trip, how the hike went and what lessons they learned. Ask what they would do differently next time—and then help them follow up. This is a great way to help them grow while still encouraging their independence.

With your help, your teen can do some amazing things in the outdoors. Julian started a hiking club at his high school; one of his friends recently summited Mount Rainier. This past summer, six teens from The Mountaineers hiked the Washington section of the Pacific Crest Trail—by themselves. But helping your teen gain their independence in the outdoors impacts far more than just their hobbies.



Photo by Erik Haugen-Goodman

"The beautiful thing is, this transfers to all aspects of life," says Josh. "You planned a trip and you figured out your logistics; you know everything you need to do to get from here to the top of Rainier. When you're starting to apply for jobs, you apply that same skill set. When you're applying to college, you have your ultimate goal and you can plan. You can, essentially, manage a project ... It preps (kids) to be resilient. It's going to set them up for success." ■

HOW OLD IS OLD ENOUGH?

Considering your child's age and development can help you determine if they're ready to explore the outdoors without parental supervision. According to Josh, the magic age is typically 14 or 15. Before then, thanks to a brain that's still developing, most kids have a feeling of invincibility and take too many risks.

The Ten Essentials

- 1 **Navigation** (map, compass, GPS)
- 2 **Hydration** (water bottle, water treatment for longer trips)
- 3 **Nutrition** (extra food)
- 4 **Insulation** (rain gear, warm layers)
- 5 **Firestarter** (matches, lighter, candle)
- 6 **First-aid kit**
- 7 **Tools** (knife, duct tape, etc.)
- 8 **Illumination** (flashlight, batteries)
- 9 **Sun protection** (hat, sunscreen)
- 10 **Shelter** (bivy, emergency blanket)

Interested in the Solar Eclipse?

Love hiking?
Join Jeff on a 5-day backpacking trip spanning 32 miles in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest for a partial view of the solar eclipse Aug. 19-23.

Hiking With Llamas



Email Jeff | DuraguardWoods@gmail.com

The non-wilderness trail difficulty is considered moderate to strenuous. But we will travel with packllamas who carry most of the load.

Come along to enjoy fresh food and dutch oven meals as we travel across Juniper Ridge near Mt. St. Helens.

Cost is \$999



THE POWER *of* YOUTH

With WTA's help, youth ambassadors share their love for the outdoors

By Rachel Wendling

"How do we reach more teens interested in outdoor volunteer opportunities? Especially those who don't know about WTA?" These questions were asked to a group of WTA board members and two high school volunteers who made up WTA's youth committee. "I love talking to people about WTA," one of the youth said. "Teach me what to say and I'll present to my classmates. My environmental science teacher even gives out extra credit if students volunteer, so I'm sure he will let me present in his class."

And with that, the idea of the Youth Ambassador Program was conceived.

In the four years since Washington Trails Association started a Youth Ambassador Program, we've been amazed and inspired by the young people who have devoted their time to being caretakers for our state's trails. The program provides leadership training and opportunities to young WTA volunteers. The teens share their love of hiking through a project of their choice.

Since 2013, 65 youth ambassadors have talked to more than 2,800 students in more than 30 schools across the state about volunteer opportunities with WTA. The ambassador program has taken our youth in many directions. Take a look at how three different volunteers are making the most of the opportunity.

Julianna Hoza

Now entering her second year as a youth ambassador, Julianna Hoza has made it clear that trails are a life focus for her. After being reluctantly dragged up multiple peaks as a child, she finally started to appreciate the sense of accomplishment she felt after a difficult hike.

In an effort to strengthen her connection to the outdoor community, Juli signed up for her first Youth Volunteer Vacation in the summer of 2015—a weeklong frontcountry trip to Tiffany Lake. Not only did Juli find a new passion for trail work ▶

“

I've found a group of people that care about the same things as me: friendship, environmental conservation, outdoor adventure and hard work. I've found a community that shares my values.

—JULI HOZA

JULIANNA HOZA





THOMAS MEADE

on the trip, she also found a group of people that share her passion. Since then, Juli has accrued more than 25 days on trail and doesn't plan on stopping anytime soon.

"I've learned a lot about organizing and outdoor leadership in the last year," she says. "I've learned to make plans early, to always follow through and to be contactable. But more important than these basic leadership skills, I've learned that other people share my passions. I've found a group of people that care about the same things as me: friendship, environmental conservation, outdoor adventure and hard work. I've found a community that shares my values."

Through the Youth Ambassador Program, Juli has not only become one of our youngest hiking guide correspondents and racked up more than 30 trip reports—she has also created a hiking club at her high school. As club president, Juli plans and leads weekly group hikes across the state and has organized trail work parties with WTA to give back to the trails they use. A nearby high school has even started a hiking club based

on Juli's example. A joint trail work party is already in the works between the two hiking clubs.

"Perhaps the most amazing part of making (the hiking club) has been seeing people who have never been in the mountains go out and have an outdoor adventure for the first time," she says.

Juli has already been working on advocacy this year. In an effort to represent youth trail users and secure proper funding for the trails she loves, she attended the biannual Hiker Rally Day held in Olympia last month.

Thomas Meade

Thomas Meade credits his parents' diverse background in outdoor recreation for getting him involved with the hiking community. As an avid backpacker and skier, Thomas is constantly on the lookout for more ways to fuel his passion for the outdoors. He has spent nearly two weeks volunteering with WTA and devotes his spare time to helping out with King County Search and Rescue.

Thomas was drawn to trail work for its perfect combination of manual labor, beautiful places and great people. After showing his passion for trails during his first weeklong Youth Volunteer Vacation at Ingalls Creek, Thomas was invited to join the 2016 youth ambassador cohort.

"I attended the summit and learned all about WTA's mission, outreach and stewardship," he says. "The experience definitely started me (off) on the right foot, and I can't wait to see what comes of it this year."

During his year as an ambassador, Thomas is hoping to combine two of his passions: trails and photography. He plans to attend several volunteer work parties not only for the trail work but also to document the experience through photojournalism and videography. Be on the lookout for some of Thomas's digital content on the WTA social media feeds throughout the year! Eventually, Thomas dreams of finding a job in the outdoors and hopes to use the experience he gains while serving as a youth ambassador in that pursuit.

Tzuria Falkenburg

Tzuria was part of the first group of youth ambassadors in 2012, and she still maintains a strong connection to WTA, even now that she's graduated.

Tzuria is a longtime WTA volunteer; her first day of trail work took place more than eight years ago, before the youth ambassador program had even begun. Always fond of the natural world and exploring new places, Tzuria felt right at home with the WTA community and joined us for eight youth weeklongs during her high school years. When Tzuria joined us as a youth ambassador, she had already spent more than 300 hours on trail with us.

Being one of the first ambassadors, Tzuria was saddled with a daunting task—figuring out how the Youth Ambassador Program should work. She spent the year designing posters, presenting to peers and making trails in the Issaquah Alps. She even included WTA in her senior project, leading a trail work party for elementary school students and parents in a park near her house.

"Volunteering on trail crews helps hikers like myself build a relationship of responsibility and care for the lands and trails they use," she says. "My experiences on

“

I think WTA has shaped my relationship with the outdoors, giving me greater understanding of the ecosystems I hike through and the trails I hike on.

—TZURIA FALKENBURG

trail crews have made me a more considerate and informed hiker.”

Although her term as an ambassador is over, Tzuria continues to stay connected with WTA through adult Volunteer Vacations over her summer breaks. She's currently majoring in Middle Eastern studies and French at Tufts University. Her recent hiking endeavors include the French Alps and the Moroccan High Atlas Mountains.

“I think WTA has shaped my relationship with the outdoors, giving me greater understanding of the ecosystems I hike through and the trails I hike on,” she says.

Tzuria credits her involvement with the WTA youth program for teaching her the leadership and outdoor skills that helped her land her dream job this past summer as a trip director for a camp in the Cascades, where she led hikes and helped young campers plan hiking and camping trips. After her graduation this spring, Tzuria hopes to become a certified sawyer, learn Spanish and use her free time to travel, hike and volunteer with local trail crews.

Each year, new teens become ambassadors and those who graduate from high school transition to program alumni. At WTA, we are grateful for all that our youth ambassadors have done and continue to do to support our mission.

“The Youth Ambassador Program continues to connect young people to WTA and engage them beyond trail stewardship,” says Krista Dooley, youth programs director. “There is still a lot of work to do, as I hope that one day WTA will have youth ambassadors in every region of the state and young people all across Washington will have access to trails.”

Learn more about WTA’s youth program at wta.org/volunteer/youth. ■

TZURIA FALKENBURG



Tech support for the backcountry

Wonderland permit applications can now be submitted online, the first step to a new system for Mount Rainier

BY JESSI LOERCH

Wilderness rangers at Mount Rainier National Park have endless demands on their time. It's a large and popular park, and helping visitors and caring for park resources is a big job. As the Wonderland Trail has exploded in popularity, an increasingly time-consuming part of that job has been preparing backcountry permits.

Issuing permits is kind of like a logic puzzle:

Backpacking Group A wants to hike the Wonderland Trail, starting at Mowich Lake, going clockwise, covering no more than 12 miles a day and spending two nights in Indian Bar. Group B wants to start at Sunrise Lake, hike counterclockwise, and finish the trail in no more than eight days. Schedule each trip, while accommodating as many other backpackers as possible.

The park is working to create new technology that will relieve the rangers of some of the time and mental gymnastics required to issue permits. Kraig Snure, wilderness district ranger for Rainier, hopes the new technology will take some of that load off of rangers. He wants to get rangers out from behind the fax machines and computers and out helping visitors have a safe and enjoyable time in the park.

A first step in that plan comes online this year. For the first time, if you want to apply for a permit, you won't need to find a fax

machine or mail in your request. Instead, you'll be able to submit a request online, and within one business day you will get confirmation that your information was received. And rangers won't have to spend several weeks answering the question "Did you receive my fax?"

Payments will also be made online, saving rangers from manually processing hundreds of credit card transactions.

Rangers will still do the work, however, of actually booking all the permits and making sure as many people as possible get to hike the Wonderland. Kraig hopes a new system will eventually relieve them of that work as well.

The park is working to build a completely new system that will allow users to create their own trips. Kraig's dream for a permanent system is one that shows people what sites are available, and on what days, giving hikers the ability to make their own trip. Rangers would only have to review and approve the permits. That would give rangers more time to answer questions about the trail and the park, to teach Leave No Trace principles and to make sure visitors are well equipped for their trips.

"I want to best utilize the expertise of my folks," Kraig said. "I want to free up as many resources as we can and give visitors the best experiences we can."





Photo by Svitlana Imnadze

How to request a permit

Reservation requests open at 9 a.m. on March 15 on the park's wilderness permit web page, www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/wilderness-permit.htm. All advance permit requests must be submitted online. (About a third of permits will remain available as first-come, first-served walk-up permits.)

Requests received between March 15 and March 31 will be processed in random order beginning on April 1.

All requests received on or after April 1 will be processed in the order received, after March requests are processed.

Applicants will receive an email confirming the reservation request within one business day.

Once park staff review requests, applicants will be updated via email as to whether or not they received a permit.

Those who receive permits will get instructions on how to pay online.

Wonderland Trail

Hikers are asked to only submit one trip request per trip, although hikers are encouraged to submit several trip alternatives.

As you plan your itinerary, it's important to remember that winter snows and storm damage can affect the availability of campsites. That is especially true for early season itineraries. Be sure to check the latest conditions from the park before submitting your request.

A great resource for planning a trip is Tami Asar's book "Hiking the Wonderland Trail."

University of Washington iSchool students Emmanuel "Izzy" Gambliel, Cassandra Beaulaurier, Alexis Gregerson and Litthideth Phansiri worked on Mount Rainier's reservations system for a capstone project.



Helping and learning

A partnership between UW's iSchool and Mount Rainier gives students real-world experience

BY JESSI LOERCH

National parks are natural spaces known for sprawling views and quiet pockets of wilderness.

"When people think of national parks, they don't think about technology," says Lindsey Kurnath, administration and business management chief at Mount Rainier National Park. "They come to parks to get away from all of that. Yet technology does play an important role in the parks."

As the Mount Rainier looks to improve its use of technology, one way it is doing that is with an ongoing partnership with the Information School at the University of Washington. The park works with interns from the school and teams up with students on capstone projects. The permit system is one of the technology projects where the park has partnered with the iSchool.

SEEKING A BETTER WAY

Kraig Snure, a ranger at the park, first reached out to the iSchool for help with the backcountry permit system in 2015.

At the time, the 15-year-old system, which was created by a volunteer, was still working. The old system required a lot of manual data entry, and users had to submit applications via the mail or fax machine. The park wanted a new system, but there was no need to rush.

Kraig submitted a proposal to the iSchool, and a group of four students volunteered to do the work for their capstone project. Snure wanted to give the students a chance to design a new and better system, and see what they came up with.

Then, a storm at the park caused a power outage that wiped out a server and corrupted the permit system. Suddenly, the park needed a new system much more urgently.

The old system couldn't be resurrected in time for the 2016 season. The park went to a walk-up-only system for that year.

Meanwhile, the students from the iSchool were working to design a new permit system from the ground up.

REAL-WORLD SKILLS

Cassandra Beaulaurier, an informatics student at the school who has since graduated, was part of the team.

The team started with a trip to the park. They visited the Longmire Wilderness Information Center and talked to park employees to learn about every step of the permit process.

Then they got to work. Designing the system was a complicated process, Cassandra said. Every step that rangers did via paper and the old system

needed to be translated to a new system. The students thought a lot about how the process of submitting a permit should work. They even set up a test system. It was decidedly low-tech.

The team printed out the options on pieces of paper and asked test users to "click" through the steps. That work really helped them learn how people would most easily navigate through the system. It gave the students experience solving a real-world challenge. Between the group, they spent at least 500 hours on the project—all of which were counted as volunteer work for the park.

Cassandra said working with the park was a powerful learning experience. She appreciated having a chance to apply her skills while working with a real client. She said the staff at Mount Rainier were extremely helpful and responsive.

Lit Phansiri, a fellow team member, agreed.

"The park was very supportive," he says. "It was really positive for us as students going through a capstone."

Lit is an active-duty Marine studying informatics at the iSchool. He said he learned a lot during the project about the process of collaborating with supportive teammates. He said it's a skill that will serve him well in his future work with the Marines.

Ultimately, the team wasn't able to create a perfect, working system in the time they had. They did, however, give the park a prototype. The team did a lot of work to understand the park's needs and suggest how to meet those needs. The park is continuing to work on a brand new system, using students' work as a foundation, but don't know when it will be ready.

"It was a really positive experience for everybody involved," said park ranger Kraig Snure, who worked closely with the team. "They were really great to work with."

PROBLEM SOLVING

After the capstone team finished their work, a graduate student from the iSchool spent a summer internship working with the park on their reservation system.

Max Carsen spotted the job on the iSchool's job board and was immediately interested.



Rangers work at the Wilderness Information Center at Mount Rainier National Park. Photo by Emily Brouwer / National Park Service.

"I was really impressed," he said. "It was a great experience in a cool setting. But what got me really interested was the level of responsibility associated with the position. At a lot of internships, they think up a job for the intern. This, on the other hand, was an ongoing project, and I was coming on to actually help with the project. There was no low-level work or busywork."

Max evaluated the work the capstone team had done. And while it was a good start, it wasn't a finished system that the park could have ready for the 2017 season. Then Max looked at the old system, the one that been around for more than 15 years. The park wasn't sure whether the old system could ever be fixed.

But Max discovered that, in fact, he could fix it. He moved it to a new virtual server and got it running again. He was even able to resolve bugs that had plagued rangers in past years. Max's improved system is what the park will be using this year, in conjunction with a new system that allows users to submit permit requests online.

Max said he was given a lot of freedom to do the work and to decide how best to use his time.

"That responsibility and kind of a chance to lead and make my own decisions, and kind of get stressed out, was really good. It was a great learning experience," he says.

MORE THAN A JOB

While Max was improving his technical skills, he was also improving as a hiker. As part of his job, he got to travel to many different areas of the park.

"I climbed up to Camp Muir," he says. "That was my crowning achievement for hiking. It was very hard but very rewarding. Up there, you feel like you are on the top of the world."

While he was boosting his hiking chops, Max gained a new perspective on his future career.

"Something great about working at the national park, beside developing my career, was that I found it really satisfying to work toward the mission the park has. It's something worth protecting; it's something worth doing," he said. "I believed in working there. That was a great part of the experience there, and that will stick with me when I look for jobs in the future." ■

WE LOVE* THESE PLACES.

*Love is a verb; without action, it is merely a word.

Green Trails Maps™ has annually donated over \$20,000 in cash and services supporting trail maintenance and development to trail advocacy organizations in the Pacific Northwest and other coverage areas.

Green Trails 'Boots on the Ground' Mapping Crews charted each step of over 2,000 trail miles in 2016 to ensure map users the most accurate and current trail information available for publication & continual revision.



GREEN TRAILS MAPS™



www.facebook.com/GreenTrailsMaps



www.GreenTrailsMaps.com



206.546.MAPS (6277)

GET THE MOST OUT OF

My BACKPACK

My Backpack is your basecamp on [wta.org](#). Here are some tips for setting up and getting the most of your account, so that 2017 is your best year on trail yet.

Organize, update, volunteer.

From your backpack, you'll be able to update your magazine mailing address and manage any trail work parties you've signed up for.



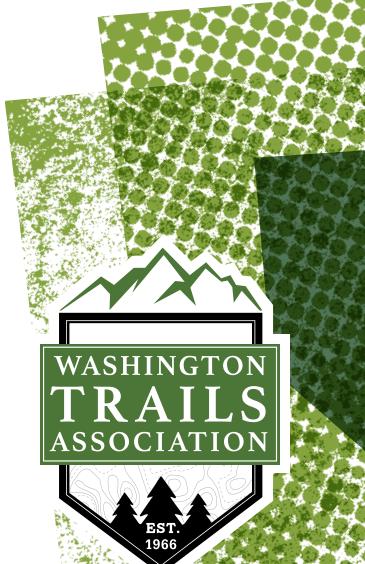
Share, or not.

Toggle on the public view of your saved hikes list, to share the possibilities with hiking buddies. Rather keep your to-hike list private? No problem. You can do that, too.



Earn a merit badge.

Earn merit badges for the number and quality of your trip reports, as well as for being a proud WTA member.



Reward quality.

Recognize quality trip reports—and trip reporters—for sharing the details that help other hikers find their way.



Map your trips.

See where you've been, and picture the possibilities by seeing your trip reports and saved hikes on a map view.



Customize your saved hikes.

Search, sort and make notes on your list of saved hikes. Keep track of which trails you've hiked and what's still left to tackle. On the go? You can also use WTA's Trailblazer app to see hikes you have saved.



Spring Hiking

A season for building strength

By Lindsay Leffelman

Bring along a friend and spring hiking will be even more fun. Even better, introduce a new friend to hiking. Photo by Shae Wyatt.

After a long, gray Northwest winter, the first hints of spring incite frenzy among hikers. We've spent the winter fantasizing about the amazing places we'll go when summer comes, and now we want to hit the trails! The days are getting longer, the sun is peeking out more often and the temperatures are climbing. Summer is coming, but it's not here yet.

Summer hiking adventures are even more fantastic when you spend the spring preparing. Naturally, the best way to ensure you're ready for the longer summer hikes on your wish list is to hit the trails now. Spring hiking in Washington usually means hiking in the rain, though, and winter lingers in the mountains. Here are tips to help you plan your spring trips and take your hiking to the next level.

Planning

As with any hiking trip, planning is key. Choosing the right trail for this time of year is critical, as is choosing the right trail for your experience level. With so many trails, the options can be overwhelming. A good place to start is by drawing on the experiences of other hikers. The trip reports on WTA's website are an invaluable resource. Use the advanced search options to the perfect trail.

When reading trip reports, consider:

Road conditions: Forest roads can take a beating in the winter, and many don't melt out until later.

Use trip reports to determine if the road to the trailhead is snow-free and in drivable condition.

Snow conditions: Most trip reporters will detail whether the trail is completely snow-covered or if there are just a few patches here and there. Assess your comfort level with snow travel and choose a trail accordingly.

Trail conditions: Even trails that have melted out can be covered with downed trees or washed out in sections.

You will find a number of trails that you'd like to tackle, either now or in the summer, when conditions improve. The My Backpack feature on the WTA website helps you keep track of trails you want to visit. After creating an account, it's easy to save trails to My Backpack from the Hiking Guide entry by clicking the "Save Hike to My Backpack" button. Anytime you log in to My Backpack, you'll be able to access information about the trails you've saved.

If you need more personal help, the knowledgeable staff at ranger stations are happy to help you prepare for a trip. Visit wta.org/hiking-info/ranger-station-info for contact information.

Weather

You can count on rainy spring days in the Northwest. Don't let the rain keep you inside. If you do, you'll be missing out on a unique outdoor

► Next Step: Part 1

Washington Trails readers come from a wide range of hiking backgrounds. Some have spent decades exploring the backcountry. Others have just begun to experience the wonders of Washington's wild places. And, of course, many fall somewhere in between.

This is the first of a series for hikers who are looking to take the next step in their hiking journey—hikers who want to learn new skills, get outside more often and make the most of their time in nature. Check back all year for the next step on your hiking journey.

experience and your days on the trail will be limited. With the appropriate gear, you can safely and comfortably hike in the rain.

Any time you go hiking, it is important to carry the 10 Essentials with you. One of the essentials, extra clothing, is particularly important when hiking during the spring months. To stay comfortable, layering is vital.

Base layer: A wool or synthetic base layer worn directly next to the skin wicks moisture away from your body.

Insulation: This middle layer helps your body retain heat and is typically made from fleece or natural fibers, such as wool or down.

Shell: The outermost layer protects you from the elements. Look for a rain jacket that is waterproof yet breathable. Rain pants or a rain wrap that can be slipped on over your regular hiking pants will keep you even drier.

Footwear: Wearing waterproof boots will keep your feet dry even when the trail isn't.

Prepare your mind

It's hard to have a good time when you're uncomfortable, so gearing up properly for a romp in the rain is essential. Enjoying yourself in less-than-ideal weather requires more than just the right outerwear, though. It also requires a change in your mindset.

Accept the wet weather. Even with the best rain gear, you're going to get a little wet, and that's okay. It's part of the Northwest hiking experience. Keep dry clothes in the car to change into after the hike.

Stay positive. The sky may not be bright, but your outlook can be. Instead of thinking, "I wish this rain would stop," notice how pretty the ferns look when covered in rain.

Enjoy the peace and quiet. Trails that are typically crowded on a clear day will see significantly less use on a rainy day.

Conditioning

One of the perks of hiking through the spring is that when summer arrives, your body will be in tip-top condition. Instead of huffing and puffing up the path, you'll be cruising at a steady clip because you will have prepared your lungs and muscles.

Just like with any fitness regimen, building up your strength and endurance takes time. You may be familiar with the "10 percent rule" that is commonly referenced among runners and other fitness enthusiasts. The 10 percent rule simply states that the intensity, duration or distance of your exercise should not increase by more than 10 percent each week in order to avoid injury. If you hiked 5 miles last weekend, add on an additional 0.5 mile the next week. If your last hike had 1,000 feet of elevation gain, aim for a gain of 1,100 feet on your next outing. Increasing your hiking volume in a slow, steady and safe manner will ensure you are ready for harder hikes in a few months.

Planning and preparation are always worth the effort. Use the change in the seasons as an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a summer of outdoor explorations. When the balmy days of summer arrive, you'll be thankful you did.



Lush green moss is one of the perks of spring hiking. Photo by Lucy Cridland.



If you're well-prepared for the weather—and willing to be a little creative,—rainy spring hikes can be a lot of fun. Photo by Jennifer Johnson.

Introducing new hikers to trails

Off-season hiking is even more fun with a friend. If you are introducing a new hiker to trails, here are five things you can do to ensure your pal wants to keep coming back for more.

1. Pick the right trail. Make sure the trail you choose is not beyond your friend's ability level.

2. Know the weather forecast and share it with your friend. They will appreciate knowing what to expect, even if it may rain.

3. Ensure your friend has the proper gear for the conditions. Being comfortable and dry will make the experience much better.

4. Encourage your friend to bring a change of clothes in the car. Being cozy on the ride home is a nice way to end the day.

5. Surprise your friend with a favorite treat. A candy bar can boost anyone's mood!

Saving Mount St. Helens

Most stories of Mount St. Helens tell the tale of the volatile volcano and the death and destruction it caused. There's another volatile story to tell about Mount St. Helens, however. The fight to save the land around the volcano, both before and after the 1982 explosion, is a fascinating case study of the preservation of public land.

This excerpt is from Seattle author Steve Olson's new book "Eruption: The Untold Story of Mount St. Helens." The paperback of the book is out this month.

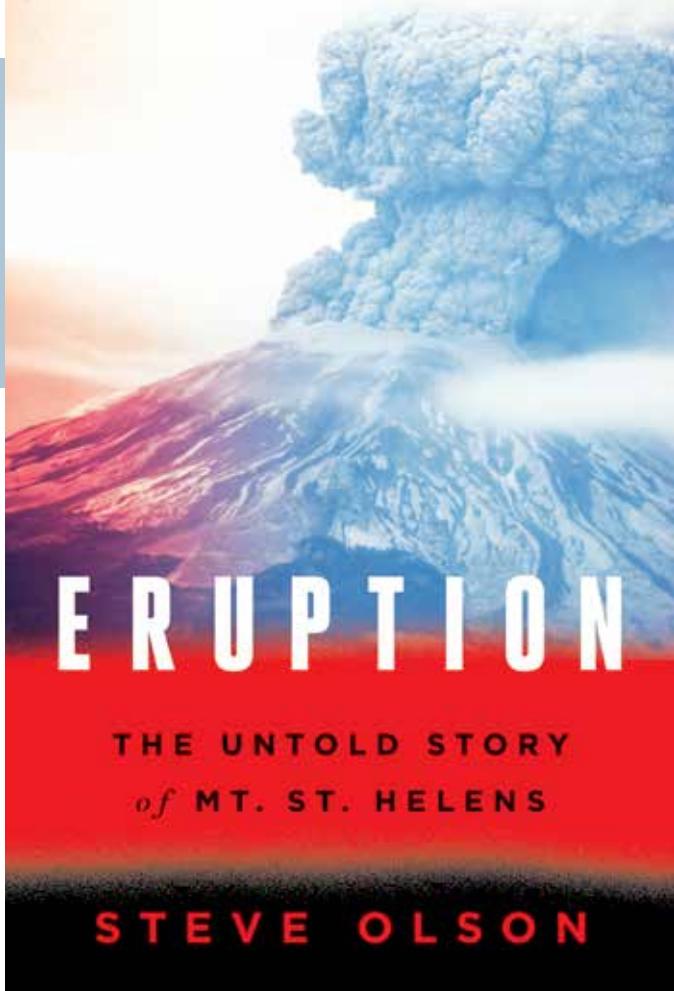
When Mount St. Helens erupted on Sunday, May 18, 1980, Susan Saul, a conservationist in Longview who for the previous two years had been helping to lead the Mount St. Helens Protective Association, was presenting an environmental education workshop for teachers at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. The refuge had no radio or television reception. All that day, she heard nothing about what had happened.

On Monday she got in her car and began driving home. She turned on the radio and started to hear reports of the explosion. But it was not until she reached home that evening and began reading the newspapers that she learned what had happened. Spirit Lake was gone. The mountain was 1,300 feet lower. Dozens of people were dead. Almost everything she had been fighting to preserve had been destroyed.

About two weeks later, Saul, Noel McRae—the co-leader of the Mount St. Helens Protective Association—and the leaders of several conservation groups met to consider what to do next. Should they give up their plans to establish a monument? If they moved forward, what did they want to protect? They decided to spend the summer gathering information, touring the area and meeting with scientists and government officials.

The scientists with whom Saul and her associates talked clearly wanted the area around Mount St. Helens to be preserved. There was nothing like it anywhere in the world. Biologists were eager to watch life recolonize the blast zone to learn how the earth can recover from even the most severe devastation. Maybe the protective association could build a case for preserving the area as a giant laboratory.

Then the association got a break. On a helicopter tour of the mountain, Saul met a young legislative aide to Rep. Don Bonker named Jim Van Nostrand. Saul and the others talked to him about their past efforts to protect the area around the volcano. Van Nostrand was interested. This was something his boss could get behind. Preserving the area would create new jobs, replacing at least some of those lost when logging operations and mills shut down after the eruption. It could bring tourists back to the area.



Two months later, Ronald Reagan soundly defeated Jimmy Carter for the presidency. Reagan's win coincided with a pivotal time for the U.S. environmental movement. Conservation groups had grown dramatically during the 1970s, but the success of the movement had contributed to a conservative backlash.

In the late 1970s, a group of angry westerners formed what they called the Sagebrush Rebellion to oppose what they considered unreasonable restrictions on the use of publicly owned lands for grazing, mining and logging. They urged that land controlled by federal agencies be returned to the states, so that it could be managed in a more economically productive manner.

During his campaign, Reagan had offered his support to the rebellion. As he wrote in a telegram shortly after his election, "I renew my pledge to work toward a 'sagebrush solution.' My administration will work to ensure that the states have an equitable share of public lands and their natural resources."

Five days before Reagan was sworn in, the Mount St. Helens Protective Association held a news conference to announce a new proposal for preserving the area around the mountain. The plan called for a 216,000-acre monument that would protect everything of geological, scenic, recreational and ecological interest around the mountain. It would still allow most of the downed timber to be salvaged, but it proposed that thousands of acres of downed trees, representing millions of dollars of potential profits, be left in place for scientific research and for tourism.

Washington state officials, the U.S. Forest Service and logging companies were united in their opposition to the proposal. They contended that the proposal protected too much harvestable forest, removed too much area from the tax base and eliminated

Susan Saul hikes above Spirit Lake in Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. Photo courtesy of Steve Olson.



jobs. A state committee instead recommended that an area of less than 50,000 acres be set aside for scientific study. The Forest Service called for an “interpretive area” of about 85,000 acres centered on the volcano and Spirit Lake while still leaving land open for geothermal leasing, mineral prospecting and open-pit mining operations.

By the spring of 1982, three separate bills were in play to protect the area around Mount St. Helens. One, introduced by Bonker, called for a Mount St. Helens Volcanic Area of 110,000 acres, which was essentially a compromise between the three separate proposals.

In hearings on the proposed bills that spring, a remarkably diverse array of interests presented their views. The group vice president for western operations of the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, which owned much of the privately held land around the volcano, said that the loss of timber in the compromise proposal “would have serious implications for forest industry jobs and raw material supplied for the region,” though he also expressed Weyerhaeuser’s willingness to trade areas it owned within the Forest Service plan for timbered land elsewhere.

In contrast, the scientists and conservationists who testified argued for a large monument. University of Washington geophysicist Steve Malone expressed his fear “that the temptation—in fact, even the desire—to help Mother Nature out, to fix the broken mountain, would be almost irresistible. Influencing what is naturally occurring is anathema to good science that is trying to figure out what would normally occur.”

After a reconciliation between votes in the House and the Senate, a final bill called for a monument of 110,000 acres.

Weyerhaeuser carried through on its promise to cooperate. It and Burlington Northern traded away about 32,000 acres of land inside the boundaries of the monument in return for 7,400 acres of land outside the protected area. The monument would be under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, but it would be managed as a separate unit and have its own planners and supervisor. Fishing and hunting were allowed in parts of the monument, but road

building was discouraged. Most unusually, the legislation specified that the Forest Service “shall manage the Monument to protect the geologic, ecologic and cultural resources, in accordance with the provisions of this Act, allowing geologic forces and ecological succession to continue substantially unimpeded.”

The bill had made it through Congress, but now it faced a final and perhaps insurmountable hurdle. President Reagan had not forgotten his promises to the Sagebrush Rebellion.

In the final analysis, however, Ronald Reagan was more of a politician than an ideologue. He had more to gain than to lose by signing the monument legislation. In 1982, his administration’s environmental policies were under widespread attack. He risked losing support and seats in the House and Senate if he vetoed a popular bill.

On August 26, 1982, with little fanfare, Reagan signed the bill. It was the first, but hardly the last, public lands legislation adopted in the Reagan administration. By the end of his presidency, Reagan had added 38 million acres to various categories of permanent protection and nearly 5,000 miles to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers program and the national estuarine reserves system. “Preservation of our environment is not a partisan challenge,” he said in 1984. “It’s common sense.”

A few weeks after the signing, Rep. Bonker held a party in his congressional offices to celebrate the monument’s creation. Representatives from all of the relevant groups were there: environmentalists, timber companies, railroads, chambers of commerce. For more than a hundred years, ever since the land around Mount St. Helens was divided into square-mile sections and distributed among eager potential landowners, each group had pursued its own interests in the dense forests, open meadows and rocky slopes surrounding the mountain. Now they had agreed on at least one thing: The land around Mount St. Helens should be saved for future generations.

Excerpt from “Eruption: The Untold Story of Mount St. Helens” by Steve Olson. Copyright © 2016 by Steve Olson. Used with permission of the publisher, W.W. Norton & Company Inc. All rights reserved.

Trails as History and Philosophy

The phrase “don’t judge a book by its cover” has never been so appropriate.

The minimalist jacket of “On Trails: An Exploration” suggests a meditation on the act of hiking, but author Robert Moor addresses trails in a broader context. The result is a good read but not, perhaps, in the way you’d expect it to be.

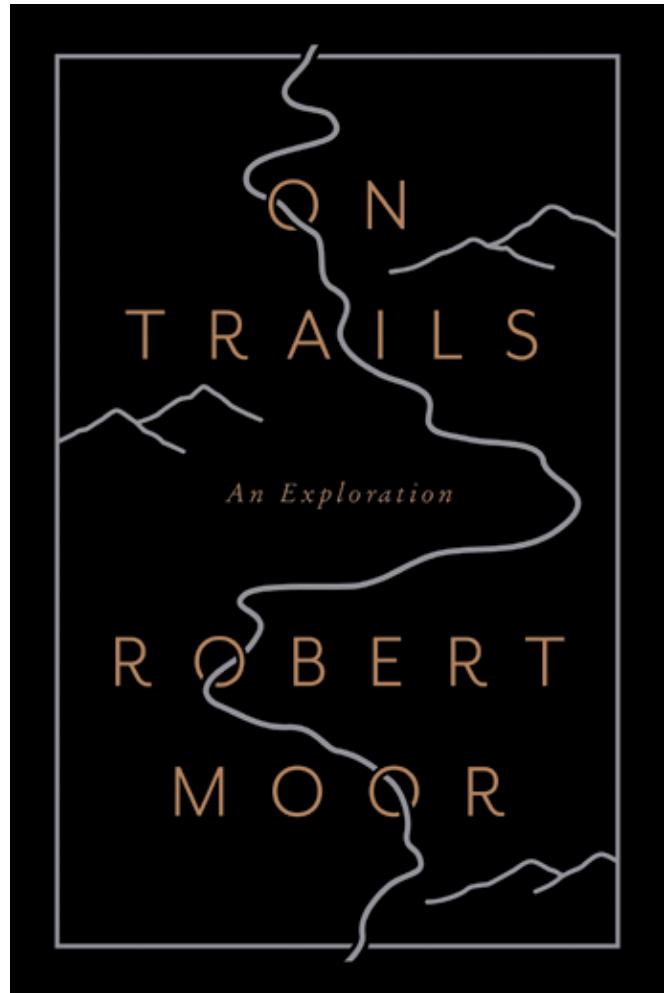
“On Trails” is a meditation, not on hiking and self-realization but on how trails of all kinds have served as connectors. Tackling complex concepts in relatively plain language, Moor dedicates full chapters to fossil traces, insect pheromone trails, the internet and, yes, hiking trails. Indeed, a quote from the prologue aptly summarizes the book’s theme: “... every step a hiker takes is a vote for the continued existence of a trail.”

Moor applies this logic to each chapter of the book. He explores how scent trails of ants utilize positive feedback loops to connect the colony to a food source. He digs back in history to uncover how trails connected Native American tribes to food. He highlights how internet searches improve with every successful hit, better connecting us to the information we seek. But where hiking is concerned, the theme is both concrete and abstract. We are literally connecting to the landscape through our feet and senses, while simultaneously forging connections to the people we share the trail with. Moor, who found inspiration for this book on a through-hike of the Appalachian Trail, lives this, creating strong bonds with his fellow hikers.

In Morocco, he bonds with his guide and translator (though, notably, not with the locals in the towns they pass). He hikes part of the Appalachian Trail with a Cherokee historian, witnessing unexpected kindnesses from fellow hikers. He spends a week scouting an old route with a conservationist in Alabama and three days hiking highways in Texas with a well-known septuagenarian who’s been hiking pretty much nonstop since 1998.

Through these connections, Moor concludes that trails themselves convey wisdom through their history. But it’s his conversations with Cherokee and Alabamans that shed light on each trail he visits. It’s the people you travel with who provide perspective, insight and wisdom. To paraphrase from the final chapter, without people to tell its story, a trail is just a line left behind.

If you’re looking for a thoughtful, open-minded approach to the concept of a trail in all its many forms, this 2017 Pacific Northwest Book Award winner is likely just the thing.



“The modern hiking trail is an uncanny thing. We hikers generally assume it is an ancient, earthborn creation—as old as dirt. But in truth, hiking was invented by nature-starved urbanites in the last 300 years, and trails have sprouted new shapes to fulfill their hunger. To properly understand the nature of a hiking trail, one must trace the origins of that yearning, back through those early hikers to their ancestors, who set off the chain of innovations and calamities that would gradually distance humans from the planet that birthed them.”

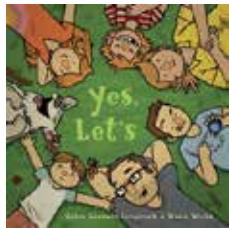
Love Books, Love Nature

A good book can take you away to a new place, make you curious about the world or nature and inspire you to create your own adventures. That's true for all ages. Here are a few books to consider adding to your child's reading list, as well as books to inspire parents to take their kids exploring.

"Yes, Let's"

By Galen Goodwin Longstreth and Maris Wicks; grades PreK-3

Enjoy an ode to the day hike with this book's clever rhymes that you will sing in your head. "Let's wake up extra early,

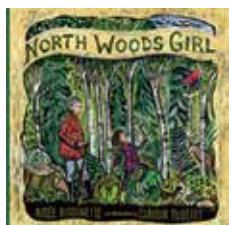


before the day gets hot. Let's pack a picnic, hurry up—ready or not." A mom, a dad, their four kids and their lovable sheepdog set off for an easygoing hike. The enthusiastic beat of "Yes, Let's" will make any reader grab their hiking boots, hop in their car and set out for a carefree day of fun on the trails with their whole family.

"North Woods Girl"

By Aimee Bissonette; grades PreK-2

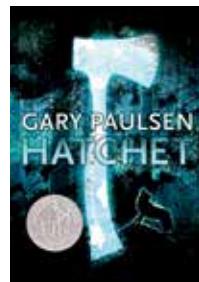
In this picture book, a young girl from the city visits her grandmother in the North Woods, where her unique and quirky grandmother takes her on adventures. She creates memorable moments as each season changes: walking in snow under the moon, watching frogs at the pond during spring, or sharing campfire moments with the neighbors in the summer. This inspiring story is accompanied by extraordinary illustrations that will make you want to read the story over and over.



"Hatchet"

By Gary Paulsen; grades 8-12

A tale of survival and perseverance, "Hatchet" is a young boy's narrative of being the sole survivor of a plane crash in the Canadian bush. With only a hatchet as his means of survival, the story shows not only some failures but progress and self-discovery. "Hatchet" is an essential book for any budding adventurer.

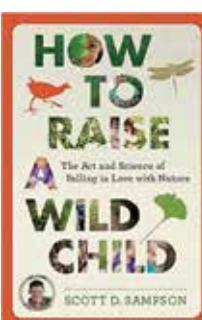


"How to Raise a Wild Child"

By Scott D. Sampson; adults

Sometimes the question is more important than the answer when it comes to getting your kids outside. In "How to Raise a Wild Child: The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature,"

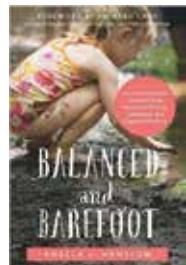
Scott D. Sampson helps parents navigate the world of outdoor play, the curious child and the ability to make lifelong relationships with nature. Sampson's writing is incredibly engaging, with tips and tricks to integrate the outdoors into your life. This book will inspire the most amateur of the outdoorsy and reignite the flame of those with experience. A great read for parents of the 21st-century child.



"Balanced and Barefoot"

By Angela J. Hanscom; adults

"Balanced and Barefoot: How Unrestricted Outdoor Play Makes for Strong, Confident and Capable Children," written by an occupational therapist, dives into the importance of unrestricted play and the cognitive developments of children. The ultimate sensory experiences lay in nature, engaging their mind, body and happiness. Hanscom invites the reader to look back at their own childhood relationships with nature and the differences in today's society. Throughout the book Hanscom gives parents everyday tasks that can help engage kids with outdoor play.



Even more books

"S is for Salmon" by Nikki McClure

"My Wilderness: An Alaskan Adventure" by Claudia McGehee

"Island of the Blue Dolphins" by Scott O'Dell

"The Kids' Outdoor Adventure Book: 448 Great Things to Do in Nature Before You Grow Up" by Stacy Tornio and Ken Keffer

"Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder" by Richard Louv

"I Love Dirt!: 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature" by Jennifer Ward

Chilly Days, Warm Fingers

Spring hiking is challenging to pack for. You might get bright sun and warm temperatures, or you might get rain and snow. Sometimes you'll find both on the same day. To stay comfortable, you need to be prepared. Here are three gloves we've tried recently. Toss one in your pack and cold fingers won't ruin your day on the trail.

HANZ WATERPROOF TAP-KNIT TOUCHSCREEN GLOVE

These gloves are tricky. They don't feel like they should be waterproof, but they are, thanks to a waterproof, breathable inner layer. I took these gloves on a hike with wet sloppy snow, and I tried hard to get my hands wet. I made endless soggy snowballs, but my fingers stayed dry. The textured palms provide grip for wet rocks or logs. The gloves feel stiffer than the other options here, but are the best option for very wet days. The gloves are touch-screen sensitive, although don't work as well once they're wet on the outside. **\$49.95,** hanzusa.com.



SMARTWOOL COZY MITTENS

Smartwool knows how to make things cozy. These mittens are soft and warm and the ultimate comfort for cold hands. Put them on during a break or when you head downhill and keep your hands warm without overheating. These mittens are also great for cold days around town. They slip on and off easily, and fold up small, making them great for commuting on cold days. Only downside: They're not ideal in extremely heavy rain. But for cold days or those with a light drizzle, they're ideal. **\$32,** smartwool.com.



MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT TOUCH SCREEN GRIP GLOVE

These gloves work well on a chilly day on the trail, when you need warm hands, but also want to work up a sweat. They'll keep you warm without being too heavy. The textured grip works well with trekking poles. Try them for activities like cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. The thumb and finger are touch screen sensitive, but like other touch screen gloves we've tried, they lose efficiency if the gloves or your phone get too wet. (Really, though, if it's that wet? Keep the device safely stowed.) **\$27.95,** www.trekkinn.com.



Kaf Adventures and Washington Trails Association present:

Trail to the Top

July 21–24 2017

Join Kaf Adventures for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to climb Mount Rainier and raise money for the trails that get you there. Proceeds from the charity climb will benefit Washington Trails Association.

Visit www.kafadventures.com/rainier for more information or call 206.413.5418.

Register by March 31!



Photo Credit: Kelsey Gurnett

Make Memories



**2017
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 2017 Dates

March 18: Soaring Eagle

April 8: Location to be announced

Join us from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

No experience necessary



Find locations
and sign up at

**wta.org/
volunteer**

Thank You to WTA's Corporate Partners

Rainier - \$25,000+



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



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



Chateau Ste. Michelle



scan | design
foundation

BY INGER & JENS BRUUN



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

AlphaGraphics, Seattle ♦ Black Diamond Equipment, Ltd.

Gregory ♦ Klahhane Club ♦ Mountaineers Books

Perpetual Motion NW ♦ Seattle Sports Co.

Snoqualmie Vineyards ♦ Stumptown Coffee

Therm-a-Rest ♦ Vasque

To find out how your company can support WTA's work for trails,
call us at (206) 508-6849.

By Brittany Manwill

Backcountry Brunch

Brunch is the best. This favorite breakfast/lunch overlap turns everyday eating into a fancier affair by incorporating special ingredients and plenty of options. This lazy-Sunday meal should be a workhorse—hearty enough to take the place of two meals—especially when you're depending on it to fuel a demanding hike.

Topping off an early adventure with a big meal in town is a great idea, but packing food and celebrating midway through is a better one. Try one of these two-person menus for brunch-worthy upgrades on standard hiking fare. Or, cook up all three for a diverse menu robust enough for a small group.

SWEET STACKS

Pancakes + Wild Friends

Chocolate Peanut Butter

This one is dangerous, because it's way too easy and it's basically dessert. Protein-packed peanut butter gives normal hotcakes an instant upgrade. Start with your favorite dry pancake mix and cook on a hot skillet according to directions. Any brand will do, but we like one with extra protein, like Kodiak Cakes. Spread the tops of the pancakes with a thin (or thick) layer of Wild Friends Protein+ Chocolate Peanut Butter. Then, just stack them up as high as you want. Top with syrup and dig in. Available at wildfriendsfoods.com. \$8



WHOLESALE BOWLS

Good To-Go Foods Oatmeal + Granola

While lightweight, those standard little oatmeal packets are boring and puny, calorie-wise. Amp your daily oats up a notch for brunch day. Good To-Go's oatmeal is packed with all sorts of goodies, including pumpkin seeds, banana, currants, coconut, quinoa, chia and hemp hearts. For extra oomph and crunch, top with the company's granola—equally interesting with Turkish figs, dried blueberries and pecans. These breakfast bowls are one of the few backcountry meals that may honestly put your at-home version to shame. Available at goodto-go.com. \$6.50 each.

SAVORY WRAPS

SeaBear Smoked Salmon + OvaEasy Eggs

Since they are often heavy and spoilable, animal-based protein sources can be the trickiest things to build into a hiking menu. But this flavorful and fuss-free scramble comes together easily with dehydrated eggs and smoked salmon. Make dehydrated eggs according to instructions. Flake smoked salmon and fold into the mixture. Tuck a big scoop in a flour tortilla. This is an easily customizable breakfast. If you're just going on a day hike, consider bringing a few add-ins that are normally smart-food-packing no-nos. Avocado and chives pair well with the smoked salmon and make these wraps especially decadent. Available at rei.com. OvaEasy \$10 for 12 servings; SeaBear \$7 for 3.5 oz.

Beverages

Sure, you don't need a mimosa or fancy coffee in the backcountry, but why not live a little? If you have the room, here are two fun, albeit frivolous, items to enhance your outdoor brunching experience:

GSI CHAMPAGNE FLUTES

Wine with breakfast? A little tacky. With brunch, though? Totally acceptable. These Champagne Flutes turn your brunch into a celebration. Toast to good company and amazing scenery by packing a mini-bottle of champagne and OJ for mimosas. Or substitute powdered Tang to save weight. Although if you packed a glass bottle of bubbly, you've probably given up on ultralight packing anyway. GSI, \$7.



SNOW PEAK TITANIUM FRENCH PRESS

Instant coffee is snazzy, but nothing beats a strong cup of your favorite roast. This stand-alone device is constructed of titanium and weighs just 7 ounces. Let the grounds sit for four minutes before plunging and pouring. It makes three cups—plenty to share, but not too much for coffee-loving Pacific Northwesterners to drink all on their own. REI, \$55.



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



LEARN • LEAD • INSPIRE

HIKING WORKSHOPS FOR EDUCATORS

March 4 and April 1
Tiger Mountain, near Issaquah

Did you know that WTA's Outdoor Leadership Training program supports hiking trips for schools and youth-serving organizations? If you're an educator or plan youth group activities, sign up to join WTA staff for a fun-filled workshop with adult peers. Learn how to plan and lead a safe and fun outing for the youth that you work with. We'll bring all the easy-to-use gear you'll need to stay warm and dry. No previous experience is necessary. Once you're trained up, you'll have access to mini-grants to cover trip costs and the gear library to borrow everything your youth group needs.



Learn more and sign up at wta.org/olt

Photo by Sara Ullmer

Wondrous Waterfalls

Photographing waterfalls can be intimidating. Balancing long exposures with tricky light conditions—while also managing composition—is a challenge for any photographer. Here's how to get a great shot.

1 Exposure. To achieve a silky smooth water look in your photograph, shoot with a longer shutter speed. Start with at least a few seconds and experiment with the exposure time until you like the way the water looks. A second or two will give the water a sense of motion, while minutes-long exposure times will make it look almost mist-like. Play around until you find what works well for the given scene.

2 Equipment. A tripod is essential for long exposure. A tripod will keep your photos sharp and it will give you the most flexibility for composition. Neutral density filters (or "ND filters") for your lens are also a useful tool. They significantly diminish the amount of light entering your camera and increase exposure times even in the brightest conditions. ND filters can help achieve a lower depth of field.

3 Composition. While smooth water is cool, composition really sets the best waterfall shots apart. Highlighting details like surrounding trees and plants creates a complete scene. Hike around and look for any pools of water that may create an interesting foreground. Anything from vivid green moss to bold rock textures can be used to amplify your photograph and give it a sense of depth. Great compositions draw viewers in and make them want to study your photo's subtleties.

4 Timing. Photographing at a time of day when your chosen waterfall is completely shaded will give you the most flexibility. Early morning is often ideal—the cool blue hues typical at this time of day lend themselves well to photographing water. Also, darker shade makes it possible to use the longer exposure times necessary to properly expose the scene, if blurred water is what you're after. A calm day with low wind is also helpful to prevent tree movement and blur.

This photo of a waterfall on Sol Duc Falls Trail used a two second exposure. Photo by Lance McCoy.

Packing your bag

Shoes: A pair of high-top waterproof hiking boots or even rubber boots are great for photographing waterfalls. Besides the added comfort and grip, they also give you access to more angles and increase the number of potential compositions.

Bag: Backpack-style bags are preferable when hiking around looking for a waterfall shot—they're more stable and allow you to use two hands to keep your balance as you search for the perfect angle.

Towel: A small microfiber towel is useful to have on hand at a waterfall. Mist can slowly coat cameras and smudge up lenses. At big falls, consider draping the towel over the camera during long exposures.

Camera: All you really need to photograph waterfalls is a camera capable of shooting in full manual. The flexibility to control depth of field and shutter speed is key to creating memorable images of water in motion.

Port Townsend

Visit the charming peninsula for year-round camping, lots of hiking options and a glimpse into the military history of the Northwest

By Jessi Loerch



Fort Worden was a military base designed to protect Puget Sound. The area is now a state park with year-round camping. The remnants of the military base spread across the property, begging for exploration. The lighthouse on the point is popular with photographers. Photo by Brandon Fralic.



Proximity to the Salish Sea is an important part of the Port Townsend culture. The ferry from the city runs to Coupeville on Whidbey Island. Photo by Lorna and Darrell Smith.

My life needs more camping. I've hiked year-round for many years, but my tent hasn't gotten a lot of use aside from the summer months. This year, I've made it my goal to camp at least once a month.

So, on a recent winter morning, I found myself sitting around a campfire with my family and eating s'mores for breakfast, months earlier than we would normally dream of camping.

I've always loved Port Townsend. It's surrounded by water, the people are friendly, the setting is beautiful. Our inaugural camping trip of 2017 was a simple and lovely trip to this charming little city.

We stayed at Fort Worden, which had something to keep each of us entertained. My husband, Jerry, loved crawling around on the old military structures. My 6-year-old daughter, Hazel, liked playing on the beach and scrambling on the large rocks around the old base. I liked the winding trails and fantastic bird watching opportunities.

We also took the chance, while we were in the area, to swing by Fort Flagler on Marrowstone Island. The park looks across the water to Port Townsend. It's excellent for history buffs, bird watchers or kids who want to play on the beach or the little playground near the beach campground.

Hazel scrambled over the playground while I wandered the beach, watching a number of shorebirds, ducks and even a few bald eagles. I was fascinated to look at the remnants of a huge net that once stretched across the mouth of Port Townsend Bay, protecting the bay from the possibility of hostile submarines or missiles during World War II. Later, while we checked out the higher part of the park, we enjoyed watching the paraglider who was floating above a bluff, taking in what must have been a stunning view.

That evening, rather than cooking dinner in camp, we took advantage of the many restaurants in Port Townsend for a lazy meal at The Old Whiskey Mill. Dining out felt a little like cheating, but I got a lot of buy-in from my family by splurging on dinner in a nice, warm restaurant. When my daughter asked for hot cocoa, the waitress asked if she should put a



Dunlin. Photo by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

marshmallow on it. When she came back, it was with a huge cup of cocoa with several toasted marshmallows on top. Those marshmallows made one kid very happy.

That night, we checked out the beach in the dark, then slipped into our tent when it started to sprinkle. I listened to the waves as I fell asleep. In the morning, I woke to the sound of a bald eagle calling somewhere above our tent, followed by many small birds twittering in the bushes.

Hazel dragged us out of the tent earlier than I would have liked. I emerged bleary and slightly cranky. However, when I saw the sunrise lighting up the sky in brilliant pinks and oranges, I forgave her. We made a fire and huddled around it with our morning coffee and cocoa. And we all ate s'mores for breakfast.

I think I could get used to this year-round camping thing.



Map by Lisa Holmes. Photos by Lorna Smith, Darrell Smith, Jessi Loerch.

What to know if you go

Lodging

Fort Worden is just north of Port Townsend and has two campgrounds. The lower camp is more exposed but has some protected sites at the back. Both camps have sites for tents or for RVs. The park has heated restrooms and showers. If you don't feel like sleeping outside, there are a number of historic buildings, small and large, that can be rented. Note: The sites in the lower campground are full utility and are more expensive. fortworden.org.

Fort Flagler also has two campgrounds. The beach camp is open year-round; the upper campground opens on May 1. The lower camp has excellent, wide-open views. Most sites are exposed, but a few are tucked toward the back with more protection and would be suitable for tents. The upper camp is good for tents and has a few sites for RVs as well. Fort Flagler also offers historic buildings for rent. parks.state.wa.us/508/Fort-Flagler

Fort Townsend State Park: Camping is available beginning April 1. parks.state.wa.us/510/Fort-Townsend

Hiking

Fort Worden State Park: 11 miles of hiking trails, including 2.5 miles of ADA-accessible trails. The park also has more than 2 miles of beachfront. At low tide, you can walk from Fort Worden to Port Townsend on the beach. Trails wind through the forest and around the many historic military structures on the site. The beach and trails offer particularly good bird watching.

Fort Townsend: About 6.5 miles of trails criss-cross the park, some with beautiful water views and some winding through the forest. wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/fort-townsend-historical-sp

Fort Flagler: 2 miles of beach trails and 5 miles of hiking and biking trails. Look for paragliders hanging out high in the sky. A loop hike offers a good sampling of the park: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/fort-flagler.

Note: Bring your binoculars. The bird watching is excellent, and you may see some marine mammals if you are lucky.

Food

Port Townsend is a short distance from Fort Worden. Consider walking into town or riding a bike. Here are a few places to try:

Sirens: A pub that's popular with locals and visitors alike. It has great drinks and food and a lovely view of the water. 21 and over.

The Old Whiskey Mill: A family-friendly pub with a varied menu. Try the poutine with truffle béchamel and parmesan cheese.

Better Living Through Coffee: Perfect for coffee lovers. Excellent coffee, cozy atmosphere and a view of the water. (Bonus: You can paddle a kayak up to it.)

Propolis Brewing: Unique beers created using foraged ingredients and wild fermentation. The result is almost more like drinking wine or cider than beer.

Port Townsend Food Co-op: Local groceries.

Chimacum Corner Farmstand: This isn't in Port Townsend, but it's well worth a stop on your way. It's a tiny store that features fruits and vegetables, as well as lots of local food and drink, including some excellent cider.

HIKE IT: Family-friendly

Bring Your Whole Family

These trails are great for kids or anyone
craving a leisurely walk with plenty to see



Lakes Trail / Mount St. Helens

The Lakes Trail offers a good day hike along Coldwater Lake, with shore access for young hikers.

Step onto a trail skirting the northwest edge of Coldwater Lake. It climbs first, then plateaus, leveling out above the lake. After a half-mile, reach a junction where a trail leads uphill. This heads to the Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center, and is occasionally used by school groups on educational trips at Coldwater.

Continue straight, passing a structure at about 1.25 miles housing a composting toilet—a convenient surprise, if somewhat unusual. Take a break, if needed, and then continue on. The trail weaves through forest, but you do get peek-a-boo views of the large lake and the peaks of the Mount Margaret backcountry ahead of you.

Views improve at 2.1 miles from the trailhead, where a point sticks into Coldwater Lake. This is a good stopping spot for lunch, where kids can get to know their surroundings a bit better before heading back. If you still have energy, continue on to a junction a mile away with the Coldwater Trail.

Seasonal Tip: There may be snow on this trail—having a walking stick and holding hands will help new hikers stay confident and safe.

DISTANCE: 4.2 miles ◆ **ELEVATION GAIN:** 200 feet
PEAK ELEVATION: 2,700 feet ◆ **PERMIT:** None
MAP: Green Trails 332 Spirit Lake ◆ **DOGS:** No

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/lakes-trail-1

TRAILHEAD: From Castle Rock, drive Hwy 504 east 43 miles. Stay right where Hwy 504 forks towards the Johnston Ridge Observatory, and continue for one mile, turning left at Coldwater Lake.

HIKE: Anna Roth ◆ **PHOTO:** Sarah Hillebrand

ALTERNATIVE NEARBY TRAILS

BIRTH OF A LAKE NATURE TRAIL: At the same trailhead as the Lakes Trail, this ADA-accessible, half-mile concrete path and boardwalk features interpretive signage about the creation of Coldwater Lake.
0.5 miles ◆ No elevation gain

HUMMOCKS TRAIL: The Hummocks are small hillocks of land that create the perfect landscape for little ones to play in. And with a loop that's just 2.8 miles, it's also the perfect length for many families.
2.8 miles ◆ 100 feet of elevation gain

SILVER LAKE-SEAQUEST STATE PARK: Much farther west from Coldwater, Silver Lake features yet another boardwalk for kids, as well as great volcano views.
3 miles ◆ 100 feet of elevation gain



Turnbull Wildlife Refuge Pine Lakes Loop / Spokane

Turnbull Wildlife Refuge comes alive in the spring, as migratory birds descend on the wetlands and the fields explode in wildflowers.

Don't forget to pack your binoculars for this kid-friendly hike that's sure to please anyone who loves watching nature. Stop at the kiosk at the entrance on South Smith Road to pick up a vehicle permit, and then proceed to the first parking lot a short distance before the park headquarters. The paved portion of the hiking trail follows the edge of Winslow Pool and encircles Pine Lakes.

While there's plenty of activity for those who remain on the trail around the lake, there is also an option to extend the hike via the adjoining Stubblefield Trail. This trail includes views of Cheever Lake and Stubblefield Lake and also passes through open grasslands and pine groves, where spring wildflowers should be visible in March and erupting by April.

You're guaranteed to see birds on this hike, and quiet visitors may be rewarded with deer, coyote or even elk sightings. Post-hike, visitors can stop in at headquarters when it's open or complete the Pine Creek Auto Tour Route, which makes a large loop through the public area of the refuge before rejoining the main road near the refuge entrance.

Seasonal tip: The only downside of a spring visit to Turnbull is the potential for acquiring tick stowaways. Be sure to do a tick check after your hike.

DISTANCE: 1 mile ◆ **ELEVATION GAIN:** Minimal ◆ **PEAK ELEVATION:** 2,300 feet
MAP: www.fws.gov/refugee/turnbull ◆ **PERMIT:** \$3 per vehicle entrance fee ◆ **DOGS:** No

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

TRAILHEAD: From Spokane, take I-90 west to Cheney. Near the west end of Cheney, turn left onto South Cheney Plaza Rd. Proceed 4.3 miles and turn left onto South Smith Rd and the refuge entrance.

HIKE: Holly Weiler ◆ **PHOTO:** Dick Thiel

► ALTERNATIVE NEARBY TRAILS

DISHMAN HILLS, CAMP CARO: Camp Caro boasts a nice playground and multiple options for accessing the looped trail system in the natural area, where hikers of all ages will enjoy the wildflowers and unique geology.
4 miles ◆ Minimal elevation gain

LIBERTY LAKE SPLIT CREEK TRAIL: The parking area is adjacent to both a playground and the beach. Hike toward the cedar grove, taking in the interpretive signage about the rebounding beaver population and its beneficial influence on wetland ecosystems.
4 miles ◆ 300 feet of gain

ILLER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA: Iller Creek is good for kids who are ready for a more challenging trail. The payoff is the view, where hikers can see all the way to Steptoe Butte.
5 miles ◆ 1,200 feet of gain



Shadow of the Sentinels

North Cascades

This interpretive trail is a great one for visitors of all ages and abilities. The educational signs along the trail teach visitors about the purpose of our forests and the need to preserve them.

The trail's dedicated parking area and a large wooden sign make it easy to spot, just on the right side of Baker Lake Road. A large portion of this trail is a boardwalk, which helps preserve the ecosystem and allows visitors with strollers or wheelchairs to enjoy the area.

And there's much to enjoy. Gaze in awe up the massive trunks of old-growth Douglas firs, western redcedars and other giants along this trail. Some of the trees are estimated to be nearly 700 years old.

Springtime should give you unobstructed access to this trail. When you're done here, head on up the road to its end to find several other longer, but relatively easy, hikes to do in the same day.

Seasonal tip: In winter, the trailhead is a Sno-Park that is infrequently plowed and the trail is impassable for wheelchairs or strollers. While this trail is at a low elevation, it's nestled into the Cascade mountain range and snow can stick around well into spring. Read trip reports to figure out if you'll need to prepare for snow.

DISTANCE: 0.5 mile ◆ **ELEVATION GAIN:** None

PEAK ELEVATION: 1,000 feet ◆ **PERMIT:** NW Forest Pass

MAP: Green Trails 46 Lake Shannon ◆ **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/shadow-of-the-sentinels

TRAILHEAD: From I-5, exit for Hwy 20 and drive east for 17 miles, to milepost 82. Then turn left on Baker Lake Rd. Head north for 15 miles until you spot the sign on your right for Shadow of the Sentinels. There is a cut-away section of an old-growth tree on display at the beginning of the trail.

HIKE: Mike Morrison

» ALTERNATIVE NEARBY TRAILS

EAST BANK BAKER LAKE TRAIL:

This trail is located at the end of Baker Lake Rd, about 10 miles away from Shadow of the Sentinel and features lots of old-growth trees.

9 miles ◆ 500 feet of gain

RASAR STATE PARK: Less than 20 miles from Shadow of the Sentinels, this park has a nice trail near the Skagit River. If you're lucky, you might see a herd of Roosevelt elk.

3 miles ◆ 20 feet of gain

ROCKPORT STATE PARK: This park boasts a good selection of trails that wend through old-growth forest, as well as by the Skagit River.

3 miles ◆ 250 feet of gain



Living Legacy Trail / Olympic Peninsula

Enjoy a lightly traveled, family-friendly loop along the Hamma Hamma River and to a historic CCC-built guard station.

Starting near campsite number 12 in the Hamma Hamma Campground, follow the Living Legacy Trail east. The trail begins on wide tread that can accommodate wheelchairs. This section is short but it's graced with several interpretive panels pointing out the role of the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in this corner of Olympic National Forest.



Soon the trail hugs a bank above the Hamma Hamma River, granting good views of the tumbling waterway. Scan the rapids for dippers. These and other birds are a delight to watch, and you can spend considerable time admiring their antics. The trail eventually turns north to cross Forest Road 25. It then follows alongside cascading Watson Creek, climbing to a bench overlooking the creek.

Soon, turn west to arrive at the Hamma Hamma Guard Station. This eloquently rustic structure can be rented out for overnight stays. Please respect any guests staying there by not walking on the grounds. After admiring the historic structure, traverse a mature second-growth forest. The way then descends into a ravine before recrossing Forest Road 25. Reach the campground loop road near campsite number 6. Then walk the loop road back to your starting point.

Seasonal tip: Spring is a great time for observing harlequin ducks in the Hamma Hamma River that are returning from the Salish Sea.

DISTANCE: 1.8 miles ◆ **ELEVATION GAIN:** 125 feet ◆ **PERMIT:** None

PEAK ELEVATION: 700 feet ◆ **MAP:** Green Trails 1685 Olympic Mountains East

DOGS: Leashed

INFO: "Day Hiking: Olympic Peninsula" (second edition)

TRAILHEAD: From Hoodsport, travel north on Hwy 101 for 14 miles to turn left onto FR 25 (Hamma Hamma River Rd). Then continue west for 6 miles, turning left into the Hamma Hamma Campground. The trailhead is near campsite number 12.

HIKE: Craig Romano ◆ **PHOTO:** Craig Romano



Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park / Central Washington

Learn about the natural history of Central Washington and one of the most diverse petrified forests in the world, then hike easy trails with wildflowers and expansive views, as well as 22 excavated petrified logs.

Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park near Vantage provides a perfect introduction to the shrub-steppe ecosystem and the natural history of Central Washington. The park preserves the largest variety of petrified trees on the planet. The grounds of the interpretive center, just off I-90, feature large petrified logs, expansive views of the Columbia River and a picnic area. A short path on the south side of the center leads to some Native American petroglyphs moved from the banks of the Columbia River when Wanapum Dam was built. The interpretive center has an extensive display of petrified wood, both raw and polished, a video presentation and exhibits on the natural and geologic history of the area.

The Ginkgo Petrified Forest Interpretive Trails are three miles west of the interpretive center on old Vantage highway. The first quarter-mile is a paved loop, but beyond this there are a number of interconnected trails offering up to 3 miles of walking through sagebrush. Along the way there are 22 pits in protective cages exposing excavated, labeled examples of a variety of petrified logs. A kiosk at the trailhead has a map with the locations of the cages. The trail features a beautiful display of wildflowers in the spring.

Seasonal tip: In the spring and summer there can be ticks and rattlesnakes. Keep children and pets on the trails.

DISTANCE: 3 miles ◆ **ELEVATION GAIN:** 200 feet
PEAK ELEVATION: 2,600 feet ◆ **MAP:** DNR Yakima
PERMIT: Discover Pass ◆ **DOGS:** Leashed

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/ginkgo-petrified-forest-interpretive-trails

TRAILHEAD: East of Ellensburg, take I-90 Exit 136 for Huntzinger Rd and turn left at the end of the exit ramp. Drive 1 mile to the interpretive center and another 2.3 miles on the Old Vantage Hwy to the parking area for the interpretive trails.

HIKE: David Hagen ◆ **PHOTO:** David Hagen

► ALTERNATIVE NEARBY TRAILS

WILD HORSES MONUMENT: This trail climbs to 18 metal sculptures and broad views of the Columbia River.
0.4 mile ◆ **150 feet of gain**

FRENCHMAN COULEE: This is a nearly level trail beneath towering basalt cliffs to a waterfall in the desert.
4 miles ◆ **200 feet of gain**

WILD HORSE RENEWABLE ENERGY CENTER: Drive to the Wild Horse Wind Farm Visitor Center for displays explaining wind and solar technology and the natural history of the area. A network of trails showcases wildflowers and broad vistas of the Whiskey Dick area.
Length and elevation gain varies.

AS PERPLEXING AS OUR FEDERAL TAX CODE.

Utah canyon country is a sensational puzzle.

After writing the region's best-selling guidebook, it took us years to decrypt the routes we now guide in this marvelous labyrinth. Join us for up to a full week of transcendent dayhiking. Write nomads@hikingcamping.com for details.

authors & guides Kathy & Craig Copeland
Don't Waste Your Time in the Canadian Rockies
Hiking from here to WOW: Utah Canyon Country

hikingcamping.com 

SCOUTING CHALLENGE

Daily, hikers use wta.org to plan the best hike for their ability. Our database includes thousands of hikes, but some haven't been updated in a while, so potential visitors don't know what current conditions are like. WTA is asking responsible, confident hikers to do some on-the-ground research for us and report back.

Hike this trail and post a trip report and photo on our website.

» BLACK HOLE FALLS

WHERE IT IS: Lewis River Region, near Cougar

WHAT WE KNOW: Black Hole Falls squeezes through a narrow basalt canyon on North Siouxon Creek. The area is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, so you'll need a Discover Pass to park. The hike to the falls is a solid 10 miles round trip.

RECON REQUEST: Our last trip report, in 2014, claimed most of the obstacles on trail could be easily hopped over but others required creative maneuvering. We want to know if those obstacles have worsened and what the overall trail condition is. Photos

will be really helpful here. Bonus: If you get a good trail shot, we may feature it in the next issue of *Washington Trails* magazine.

The driving directions could use an update, too—while we have a GPS point for the trailhead, we want to be able to offer tips for navigating the unsigned forks leading to the unsigned trailhead.

Remember to stay safe. While it'd be nice to get updated information, if conditions are dicey, don't sacrifice safety for the info.

When you're back, head here to file your trip report: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/black-hole-falls-hike.

RECON REPORT



WTA member Colleen Donovan took us up on our last Scouting Challenge and went exploring at the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge. She found some beautiful scenery and even saw some wildlife.

She found that the trail was interesting and beautiful but in rough condition. The black weed barrier under the gravel is coming apart and the trail is overgrown with wild roses and cheat grass.

Thank you, Colleen, for your trip report and your lovely photos.



Francesca Hill, Halimo Maie and Danielle Benavides borrowed gear from WTA's gear library for a trip to the North Cascades with Young Women Empowered. Photo by Adiza Ameh, Y-WE Program Coordinator.

Gear library

AT WTA, we believe getting youth outdoors to play, learn and grow provides opportunities to increase their confidence and expand their horizons.

With our gear library, we support groups that take youth outdoors. We provide gear, training, help with funding and a supportive community. The groups provide the personal connection to the youth. We hope that each time a rain jacket or pair of boots goes out the door that a young person discovers the benefits of nature. Throughout this year, we will be telling the stories of some of the groups who make use of our gear library.

To learn more, go to wta.org/olt.

Gear Up & Get Outside

Danielle Benavides loves to help other young women and girls get outside. On a recent trip to the North Cascades, Danielle savored walking in silence for a time, reflecting and soaking in the surroundings.

Danielle is a first-year mentor for Young Women Empowered. She's jumped into the program with enthusiasm, rarely missing a trip. When the group gets out, they always take advantage of WTA's lending library to get the gear they need.

Young Women Empowered provides mentorship and leadership programs for girls and young women in the greater Seattle area. The organization is open to young women from all walks of life. More than 70 percent of the youth are immigrants and 80 percent of the youth and 50 percent of the adults are women of color.

Y-WE Nature Connections, one of the group's programs, creates opportunities for young women to build a personal relationship with nature through education, experience and reflection. They offer opportunities for youth to experience natural places firsthand and emphasize the importance of sustainable living and protecting natural places.

The trip: In October, Y-WE took a group of eight youth and five mentors to the North Cascades.

"During our hike, we crossed the Ross Lake dam, stood in awe of the changing fall colors and discussed what the experience of being in this place—fully in our bodies and removed from our usual environment—was like," says Anna McCracken, program specialist for Y-WE's Nature Connections program. "We talked about how healing and calming the experience of being out amongst the trees and mountains was. For many of our participants and mentors, this was their first trip to North Cascades National Park."

Francesca, one of the teens on the trip, says the best part of the trip was the views of the mountains and the waterfalls.

The gear: For this trip, Y-WE borrowed fleece jackets, rain jackets and pants, boots, gloves and hats for the eight youth and five mentors.

Danielle says that the rainy weather was a challenge, but the raincoats kept everyone dry.

"The jacket worked out really well for me—the shell itself kept the rain from getting in. When it stopped raining, the jacket did not take long to dry, which was really great," she says.

TRAIL MYSTERIES: Spiral Trees

By Kim Brown



Photo by Kim Brown

Why Do Trees Grow in Spirals?

Trail Mysteries

Kim Brown is an aficionado of the weird and the wild. If it's bizarre, she wants to know about it. All year long, she'll be demystifying trail mysteries.

Learn more: The study of wood grain in trees is vast, complicated and riddled with math equations. If you'd like to learn more, the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station and the Washington Department of Natural Resources have articles on their websites.

Washington is full of beauty—summits, mountain lakes, shrub-steppe, the Salish Sea, the Pacific Ocean and forests—that beckons us outdoors. Along with this pronounced beauty comes a plethora of natural oddities. I found one such oddity when I tripped over it. Once I was on the ground, I noticed that the log that had tripped me up had a beautiful corkscrew pattern.

I wanted to know why. I contacted Kevin James, ecologist and botany program manager with the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. James was happy to share a peer-reviewed article about spiral grain in trees. Though dated, this article is cited in many newer publications and websites. Here's what I learned.

This spiral pattern is a clever adaptation for survival. Because the bark and wood of trees do not grow together, the spiral pattern is not usually evident until bark drops off the tree.

The wood cells in trees growing in a windy area or on an unusually uneven substrate—such as shore

pines that grow in both windy and sandy areas—can begin to grow in a spiral pattern to give the tree and branches more strength. A spiral pattern can also develop to strengthen tree trunks tasked with supporting an unusually heavy or uneven canopy.

A spiral grain also efficiently delivers sap and food throughout the tree when a straight grain isn't sufficient. In a model tree (straight grain, living in ideal conditions), sap and food travel up and down a tree as if on a highway, delivering sustenance to branches and roots located in their straight line of travel.

However, conditions rarely match the ideal, and so the tree must adapt. Perhaps a root is located in poorly drained soil. The tree's wood cells then form a spiral pattern that allows sap and food to be distributed to all roots and branches of the tree.

Next time you see a spiral-grained snag, think about why it grew that way. Was it challenging conditions, the necessity for more strength, or both? Either way, you will know that spiral grain is not a tortuous freak of nature. Rather, it is a wonderful adaptation.



Back row, from left: Erica's son Isaiah, Erica Abel, Marie Lambert, Kelly Shepherd, Angie Beran and Amy Smith Simonson. **Front row:** Jen Landry, Jennifer's son Caleb, Jennifer Tran Van Winkle and Amy Carson. Photo by Kara Hollenbeck.

Making Time for Hiking

Erica Abel grew up hiking and backpacking with her family. Then life happened. She got caught up in school and her career. Her life felt so busy that she told herself she didn't have time to get outdoors anymore. But she felt like something was missing from her life.

So she did something about it.

Erica and her partner, Marie Lambert, started a Facebook group called PNW Happy Hikers and Backpackers. They schedule adventures every weekend and invite others to join them.

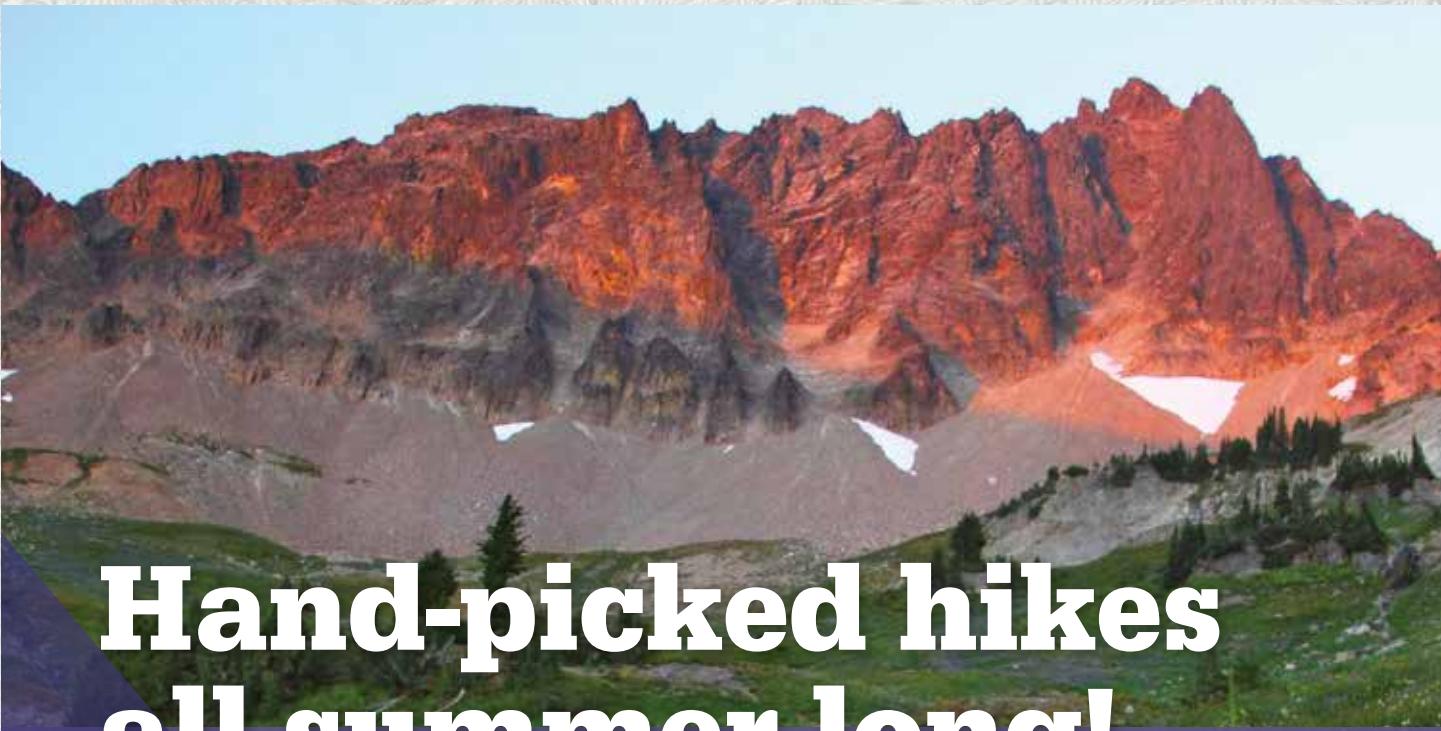
"After a significant amount of time feeling lost and as if I were going through the motions of life but not truly living it, I found my heart and soul again through the trails all over Washington," Erica says. "Now I don't have time for things such as vacuuming, grocery shopping and mowing the lawn!"

Erica knows all of the people in this photo through her Facebook group. On this trip on the Chain Lakes Trail at Mount Baker, the group snacked on berries, watched goats and ate lunch among the clouds with a sweet view of Mount Shuksan.

"Many friendships have been formed through our shared love of the outdoors, and we really have so much fun on every trip. I am really thankful that I have been able to find such an awesome tribe of adventure lovers," she says.

Northwest Exposure

Every year, WTA invites photographers to share their favorite photos for our annual contest. The contest opens in August, but there's no need to wait. Start shooting now. Show us the amazing diversity of our state, all year-round.



Hand-picked hikes all summer long!

WTA members who donate \$100 or more annually receive a weekly newsletter from Memorial Day to Labor Day with hand-picked hikes across the state. Upgrade your membership today and get ready for a summer full of adventure outside.

Upgrade today at wta.org/donate

Photo by Tim Nair

