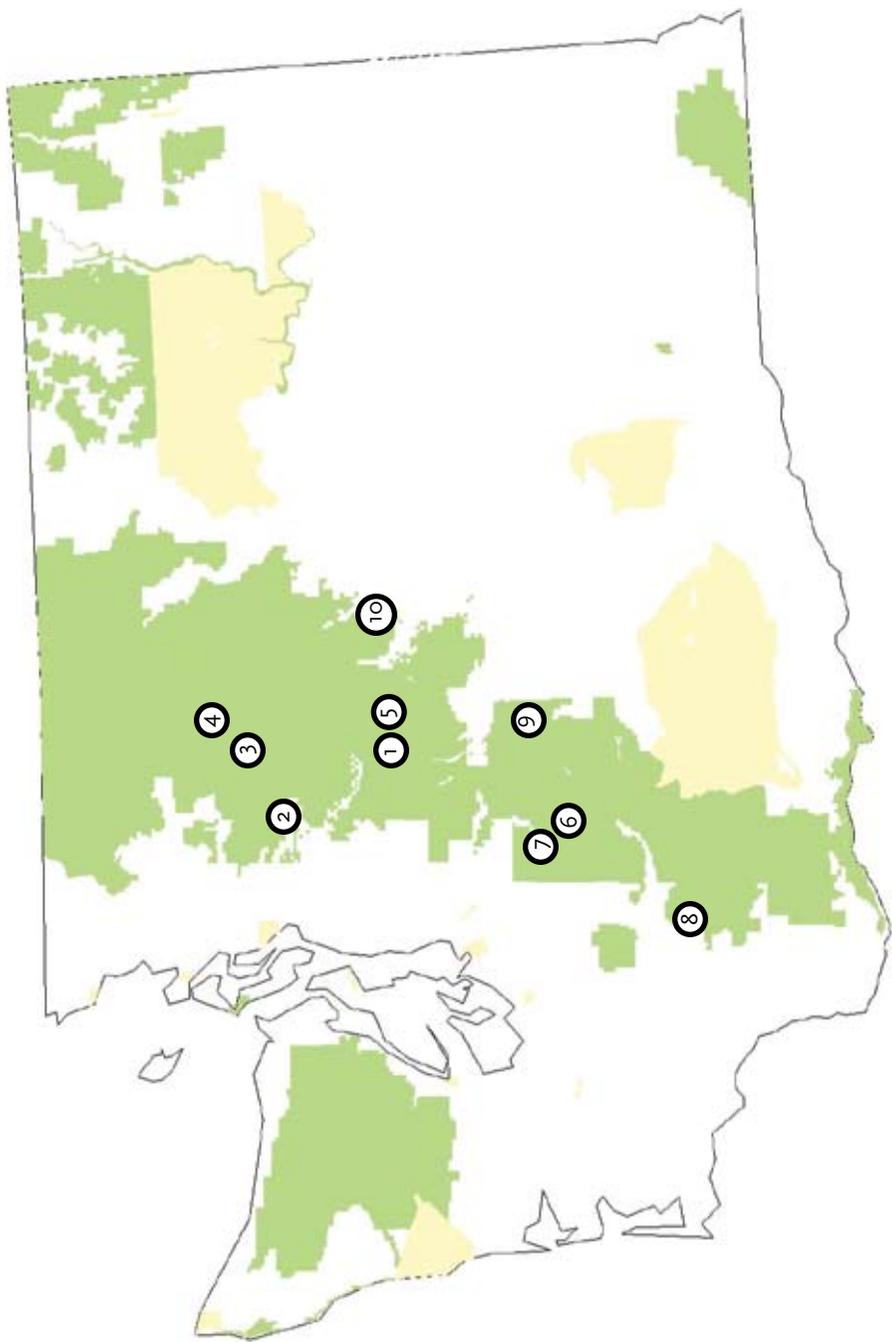


ENDANGERED TRAILS

2007



A Publication of the Washington Trails Association



Cover photo by Justin Willhite

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About Washington Trails Association

Washington Trails Association (WTA) is the voice for hikers in Washington state. We advocate protection of hiking trails and wildlands, take volunteers out to maintain trails, and promote hiking as a healthy, fun way to explore the outdoors.

Washington Trails Association was founded by Louise B. Marshall. Ira Spring was a primary supporter. WTA is now the largest state-based hiker advocacy organization in the country, with over 6,500 members and more than 1,800 volunteers.

Maintaining Washington's Trails

In the past decade, WTA has conducted more than 400,000 hours of volunteer maintenance on public lands in Washington. That's an in-kind donation of more than \$4 million to parks and forests statewide. Fun trail work parties let volunteers give back to the trails they love.

Advocating for Hiking Trails

WTA protects trails through lobbying and grassroots advocacy on issues that impact hikers, like trail funding and wilderness protection. We work closely with federal and state policymakers to advance hikers' interests in forest planning and new recreation projects. We engage hikers in trail protection through our trail reports, potlucks with forest service personnel, and email advocacy network.

Getting People Outdoors

WTA promotes hiking as a fun, healthy way to explore Washington. Events like TrailsFest (www.trailsfest.org) and our Wildland Discovery Hikes series offer an enjoyable and safe environment for families and urban dwellers to explore the outdoors. *Washington Trails* magazine is packed with backcountry advocacy opportunities, gear reviews, hiking tips, and feature stories. Our website, www.wta.org, is a dynamic, interactive resource for hikers to stay informed on the latest trail conditions and backcountry news.

You can help Washington Trails Association protect and maintain your hiking trails by becoming a member today.

Introduction

Hikers in Washington state are ready to give back. In response to both storm damage and a long-term national forest and park funding crisis, volunteers flock to our website to join work parties from the Olympic National Forest to the Methow Valley. Every day we field phone calls and emails from people who want to help.

In October 2003 and November and December 2006, storms blew through Washington state, damaging miles of trails and roads. In 2003, the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest was hardest hit. In 2006, the damage, totalling at least \$70 million, was spread across the entire length of the Cascades and Olympics.

In the face of storm damage and a trail system crumbling from years of budget neglect and diminishing forest and park staff, even the most ardent volunteer corps can only scratch the surface. Many needs, such as extensive bridge and road repairs, are beyond their scope. In many cases, we're scrambling just to keep on top of backlog trail maintenance needs. Fortunately, this year our elected officials have stood up to help. This year every member of our delegation signed on to tell the Interior Appropriations Committee that our trails are important and that hikers want them to be accessible again.

We're fortunate that the Interior Appropriations Committee in the House is chaired by Congressman Norm Dicks, representing the Olympic Peninsula, Olympia and Tacoma. Congressman Dicks has made funding repairs at Mount Rainier and national forests a top priority. We would be remiss if we did not mention the hard work of Senator Patty Murray. She secured \$24 million in this year's supplemental budget to pay for road and trail repairs on national forests and parks.

But the work is far from over. Public concern and good intentions in Congress must be translated into results on the ground. And that's where your vigilance as a hiker comes in.

While we're highlighting some amazing hikes in this guide, there is no way to hike many of these. Road access may be out. There may be dangerous water crossings due to bridges or footlogs being damaged. The trail may be completely washed away. It can be disheartening to read about great hikes and lovely wildlands that you can't visit. But it is critical that hikers understand what's been lost. We hope you'll turn your consternation into action and call your elected representatives. They need to hear from you.

Before You Hit the Trail

As always, you should exercise caution when exploring the backcountry. Neither the outing descriptions nor the maps contained in this guide should be considered definitive. Please contact the land management agencies cited in the guide for complete and up-to-date information, trail conditions, road quality, etc. The maps provided are for reference only. WTA's trail damage database is a great resource for finding the status of your desired hike. Go to www.wta.org/traildamage.

Before you leave for *any* hike, no matter how short or simple it seems, stock your pack with the Ten Essentials:

Extra Clothing: Prepare for the worst possible climatic conditions, including insulating layers and wind and rain protection.

Extra Food: Take more food than you think you'll need, so that if you're stuck out overnight, your supplies will see you through.

Knife: Good for first aid or cutting wood.

Firestarter: Candle or chemical fuel for lighting wet wood.

First-Aid Kit: At a minimum, take Band-aids, aspirin and disinfectant.

Matches: Keep them dry with a plastic bag or other waterproof container.

Flashlight: In case you're unexpectedly on the trail after dark, pack an extra bulb and batteries.

Map: Green Trails, TOPO! or USGS Topographical maps are acceptable. The maps in this book are not.

Compass: Know how to at least find north.

Sunglasses: They will protect your eyes on sunny days or when you encounter snow.

Leave No Trace 101

Since the 1970s, the sport of backpacking has boomed. Hikers streamed onto trails all over the country to find quiet and a connection with nature. All that use has had its impacts. People who have been hiking for decades lament the loss of microbe-free mountain water, and government agencies responsible for our wild places have had to limit access to areas like the Enchantments and the Seven Lakes Basin because of environmental damage. For all these reasons and more, it is important to practice leave-no-trace (LNT) principles no matter where you hike.

Water: Treat all water with iodine tablets or use a mechanical water purifier. Parasites such as giardia, found in backcountry water worldwide, can cause serious illness. Camp, cook, and wash dishes at least 100 feet from lakes and streams. Only use soap for personal sanitation—when washing dishes, warm water is usually sufficient.

Campsites: Take care to camp in areas that have seen previous heavy use. Pristine campsites should stay that way. Lightly used ones should be allowed to rebound. High country plants take decades to grow; don't camp on them. Instead, look for bare rock.

Wildlife: Animals are attracted by food smells; prepare meals at least 100 feet from camp, downwind. Either hang all food 12 feet up in a tree, 12 feet from the trunk, or use a bear-resistant container, such as Garcia Machine's product.

Waste: Urine is sterile—but salty! In the mountains, pee on rocks rather than heather, to protect plants from salt-loving mountain goats. Bury solid human waste in holes six inches deep. Tampons should be packed out in a double-sealed ziploc bag. Hang the bag as you would hang your food, as the blood smell can attract smaller animals.

Demeanor: Except during hunting season, choose earth-toned gear, so that you blend in with your surroundings. Respect other's need for quiet; don't make excess noise. If you must bring your cell phone, please keep it turned off, unless it is needed for an emergency. When in the wilderness, don't camp too close to other hikers—one reason we go into the woods is to enjoy the expansive solitude of the outdoors.

Foss Lakes

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Round Trip: (To Copper Lake) 8 miles

Hiking Time: 6 to 8 hours

High Point: 3,961 feet

Elevation Gain: 2,300 feet

Best Hiking Time: July through October

Maps: Green Trails #175 Skykomish, and #176 Stevens Pass

Getting There: Drive US 2 east from Skykomish, 1.8 miles and turn right on Foss River Road #68. You'll pass the East Fork Foss River Trailhead and continue on to West Fork Foss River Road #6835. Follow this road 2 miles to the end and trailhead.

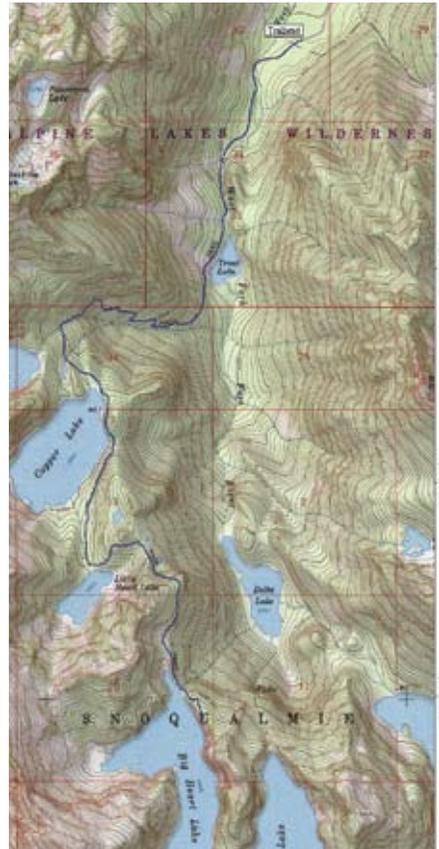
Whom To Contact: Skykomish Ranger District, 360-677-2414

Status: This trail is currently not hikeable due to washouts from storm damage.

A sometimes steep and always lovely trail winds through miles of forest and alpine glory to access a string of jewel-like lakes. This hike is a lake-lover's dream, with miles of shoreline, heather, blueberries, and dramatic mountain scenery.

Start off with an easy 1.5 forested miles to get the legs warmed up. Trout Lake lies at the end of this walk, tree-lined with some glimpses of the higher country to come. From here, the trail follows the West Fork Foss River for another two miles and 2,000 feet of elevation gain, finally arriving at Copper Lake. Surrounded by soaring cliffs, Copper makes an excellent lunch-and-turnaround spot for a dayhike.

Continuing past Copper, the trail climbs streamside to Little Heart Lake, then crosses a ridge and drops to Big Heart Lake. From here, the formal trail peters out, but a boot-beaten path



North ↑

leads to Chetwoot. In fact, almost all of the other lakes in this chain, including Delta, Azurite and Otter can be reached by a little off-trail work. Make sure you are proficient with a map and compass, and please stay off the heather and other fragile subalpine beauties.



Chetwoot Lake offers great views and unparalleled off-trail rambles. Until tread damage on this trail is repaired, those opportunities are lost. Photo by Chuck Davis

A classic, inaccessible hike

The trailbed of the West Fork Foss River Trail is washed out just beyond the trailhead. Another 1.5 miles in, the trailbed is severely damaged, rendering Foss Lakes inaccessible for this season. This is the result of the winter 2006 storms, which caused a huge amount of damage to trails and roads in the Mount-Baker Snoqualmie National Forest. Repairs to this trail are expected to cost \$299,400. To put this in perspective, the total storm damage allotment to the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest this year totaled \$15,000.

This is just one area that saw damage in 2006. The Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest does not have the funds that it needs to deal with regular trail maintenance, much less to deal with major damage caused by storms. If you'd like to see this situation change, please contact your elected officials and let them know that you care about the US Forest Service's recreation mission, and that they need to fully fund forest recreation in our region.

Big Four/Ice Caves

Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest

Round Trip: 2 miles

Hiking Time: Around 2 hours

High Point: 1,900 feet

Elevation Gain: 200 feet

Best Hiking Time: May through November

Maps: Green Trails #110 Silverton

Getting There: From Verlot, follow the Mountain Loop Highway 15 miles east to the Big Four parking area.

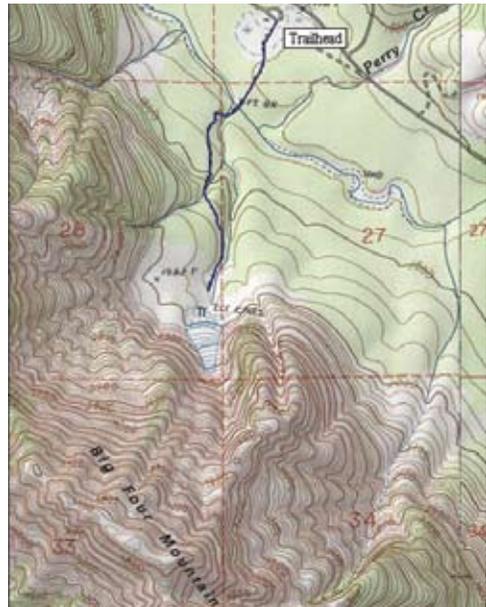
Whom To Contact: Darrington Ranger District, 360-856-5700

Status: Trail closed. Not hikeable due to damaged bridges at dangerous water crossings. Do not attempt to hike this trail.

An extraordinarily beautiful (and easy) hike, Big Four/Ice Caves takes hikers along a very well-maintained trail to a collection of ice caves at the foot of Big Four Mountain. Even the most novice hikers can experience remarkable natural beauty at a saunter on this hike. Sadly, as noted above, this trail cannot be hiked at this time.

Once upon a time, a well-marked trailhead led you across marshlands dotted with marsh marigold and skunk cabbage. Sunbeams from the canopy of cathedral forest are shot through with songbirds, and larger avia, such as kingfishers, hunt in the surrounding wetlands. Two bridged crossings took you across the South Fork Stillaguamish and Ice Creek, one right after the other. Again, please note that the bridge over the Stillaguamish has been destroyed. You'd climb briefly and gently after these crossings to the grand view of Big Four, with the ice caves nestled at its base in a huge field of talus.

The ice caves are fascinating on their own, huge tunnels of compacted year-round ice and snow with crenellated roofs, exhaling frigid gasps of cold air into the sunlight. Sunlight tints



North ↑

the snow of the ice caves a rich, robin's-egg blue. Although it's tempting to go in to the caves, particularly on a hot summer day, don't! The cave roofs are unstable, particularly in late summer, and have been known to collapse. This is an extraordinarily popular trail, particularly with families and occasional hikers.



*The ice caves at the foot of Big Four Mountain are a unique scenic resource for hikers and a great opportunity to introduce children to nature. The loss of this bridge puts the ice caves out of reach.
Photo by Pam Roy*

Once an easy outing, now a threatening adventure

The 2006 storms raised the level of the North Fork Sauk well above flood stage, sending a massive tangle of downed trees on a collision course with one of the bridges crossing the Stillaguamish. This bridge is currently damaged to the point that it is uncrossable. The damage is extensive enough that it will likely require replacement, which is projected to cost \$478,000.

This damage turns an easy, scenic family hike into a dangerous adventure—one that we strongly advise no one take. Bridges of this kind are expensive and technically difficult to build, beyond the scope of volunteers. We do not expect this trail to be reopened this season.

To put this in perspective, this trail is in the Darrington Ranger District, which has been rendered largely unhikeable due to the 2003 and 2006 storms. Seventy percent of the trail miles in this once easily-accessible district cannot be hiked, either due to trail damage or lost road access. Please contact your member of Congress, and let him or her know that you value dayhikes like Big Four.

Circle Peak/Crystal Lake

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Round Trip: 8 miles to Crystal Lake, 8 more to Circle Peak

Hiking Time: Around 6 hours

High Point: 5,983 feet

Elevation Gain: 2,800 feet

Best Hiking Time: July through November

Maps: Green Trails #111 Sloan Peak

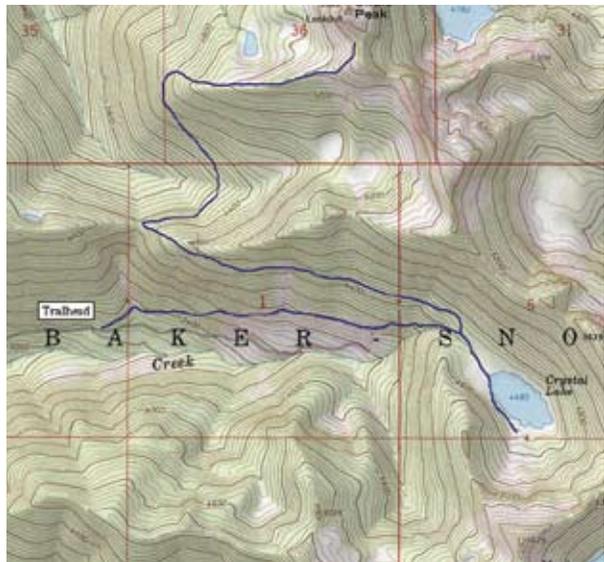
Getting There: Drive the Mountain Loop Highway south from Darrington and cross the Sauk River. 0.2 miles after the crossing, turn left on the White Chuck Road #23. Follow the White Chuck Road for 6 miles, then turn left on Forest Road #2700. Follow this road for 2.4 miles to the Meadow Mountain Trailhead.

Whom To Contact: Darrington Ranger District, (360) 436-1155

Status: The White Chuck Road is washed out at 1.7 miles, rendering this trailhead inaccessible. Access is still theoretically possible to Circle Peak via Rat Trap Pass, except that the Boundary Bridge, which crosses the Suiattle River to connect to Rat Trap Pass, is also washed out, as is the Suiattle River Road. Even if the bridge is repaired, the road access is failing, and may not be a long term solution.

Hikers who venture into this country will encounter evidence of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest's logging history. The trail leads through miles of logging road which dwindles to a trail into the Glacier Peak Wilderness. Intrepid hikers can find a recently reconstructed trail over Skaar Pass to Circle Peak.

The Meadow Mountain trail climbs 450 feet, offering views of Meadow and Mt. Pugh, and then abruptly loses 300 feet of elevation. At 1.3 miles is a junction with the Crystal Lake Trail. Find the old Crystal Creek Road at 1.3 miles and turn left.



North ↑

The road continues climbing and passes a nice campsite. The trail enters an old clear cut at 3.5 miles from the trailhead and deteriorates further. At the east end of the clearcut, the trail ascends 500 feet along an old fireline. The trail levels off and enters the Glacier Peak Wilderness and ends at the untouched forest on the shore of Crystal Lake.

To find the currently unsigned trail from Crystal Lake to Circle Peak go straight up-hill at the Glacier Peak Wilderness sign 0.25 mile west of Crystal Lake. You will come across the trail within 200 yards. You can follow the trail for approximately four miles to an old lookout site at the summit of Circle Peak. The trail contours for about one mile before dropping about 300 feet to Skaar Pass, crossing into the Circle Creek drainage and climbing for about 1.5 miles to reach the first of several meadows. Follow switchbacks up through forest and meadow another 1.75 miles to the summit ridge of Circle Peak. Don't bother scrambling the final 200 yards, as the trail is sketchy and somewhat dangerous. Do linger below the lookout, soaking in views that include White Chuck, Glacier, Sloan and Pugh.



Circle Peak has seen several seasons of steady work by the Forest Service, but with access cut off, hikers cannot benefit Photo by Gary Paull, US Forest Service

Reclaiming Washington's logging history

The Forest Service has been working steadily for the past several seasons to reconnect the historic trail system in this area which accessed both Circle Peak and Crystal Lake. Washouts on the White Chuck and Suiattle Roads in 2003 rendered this hike inaccessible. Hikers are now faced with two poor choices to reach this area and the best current access is by climbing around the washouts on the White Chuck Road.

If the White Chuck Road is not repaired, one other option exists. Alternate access must be found from the Suiattle River Road if we are to keep this as a dayhike opportunity.

Green Mountain

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Round Trip: 8 miles

Hiking Time: Around 6 hours

High Point: 6,500 feet

Elevation Gain: 3100 feet

Best Hiking Time: Late June through October

Maps: Green Trails #80 Cascade Pass

Getting There: Prior to the 2003 floods, you would take Highway 530 east from Darrington to the Suiattle River Road and turn right. Follow the Suiattle almost 19 miles to Green Mountain Road #2680. Turn left and drive to the road end.

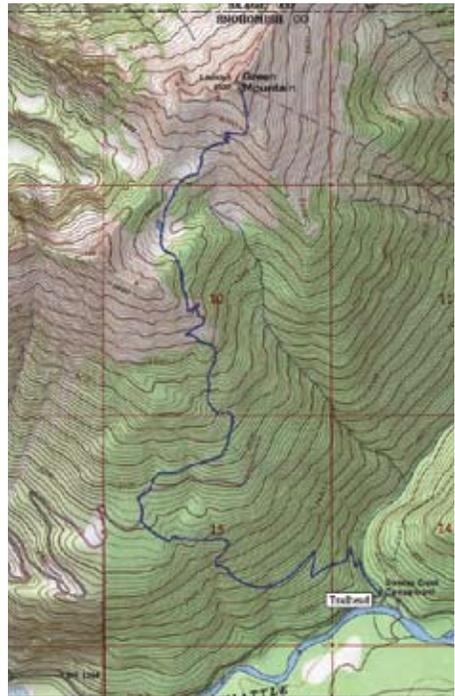
Whom To Contact: Darrington Ranger District

Status: This trail is inaccessible due to washouts on the Suiattle River Road. A washout at milepost six adds at least 40 miles round trip to the top of Green Mountain.

Tackling the steep climb up Green Mountain yields wide-open views of Mount Buckindy, the Downey Creek Valley, Milk Creek, and the Ptarmigan Traverse. The massive Ptarmigan Glacier, on Glacier Peak is visible, along with a grand display of North Cascades peaks. Of course, this is what you would see could you reach the lookout.

If you could begin at the trailhead, the first mile of this hike heads up through forest, and then heads into seemingly endless meadowlands, with views of White Chuck and Glacier Peak. As you progress—upward, naturally—views of Sloan Peak and Mount Pugh break out. At 2.5 miles, the trail drops briefly to a small group of tarns surrounded by more meadows. The last campsites on the hike are here. Don't camp on the heather!

Continuing beyond the camps, you'd enter a larger basin, and head up



North ↑

along the ridgeline to the summit of Green Mountain and those fabled views.

Green Mountain was included in Ira Spring and Harvey Manning's *100 Classic Hikes in Washington*, a testament to its enduring beauty



Green Mountain, one of our premiere lookout hikes, is just one of the trails lost due to washouts on the Suiattle River Road. Photo by Ed Giecek

Breathtaking views, major damage

Trailhead access here has been lost due to multiple washouts on the Suiattle River Road, a result of the 2006 storms. We do not expect access to this trail to be open any time soon.

Unless a portion of this road is reopened, we can expect to lose this, and other dramatic hikes, from the dayhike repertoire of most hikers. Senator Patty Murray's (D-WA) work here will be essential, as she labors on the Transportation Committee to find critical funds for these roads. But she needs to hear from all Washingtonians who support her work.

Necklace Valley

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Round Trip: 16 miles

Hiking Time: 2-3 days

High Point: 4,600 feet

Elevation Gain: 3,000 feet

Best Hiking Time: Late-July through October

Maps: Green Trails #175 Skykomish and #176 Stevens Pass

Getting There: Drive US 2 east from Skykomish 1.8 miles, turning right on Foss River Road #68. Pass the Tonga Ridge turnoff at 3.5 miles. At 4.2 miles, find the East Fork Foss River Trail.

Whom to Contact: Skykomish Ranger District, 360-677-2414

Status: A destroyed bridge at milepost 4.5 and a washed-out footlog at 5 miles make hiking this trail dangerous. River crossings can be hazardous and are not recommended.

This is companion country to the West Fork Foss Lakes hike described earlier in this guide. The route to Necklace Valley is steep and rocky, so these lakes see fewer visitors.

The steep-and-rocky starts later, however, so your first five miles will be spent gaining an easy 600 feet and passing through cool and gentle forest land. Under normal circumstances, at the end of this five miles, you'd cross a bridge and then a log. This year, both are out, and the East Fork Foss River can be a brawler, dangerous to cross even in the best of circumstances.

If you could get past this, though, you'd start a steep climb into a glacier-carved hanging valley. So steep, in fact, that by the time you've made the three miles to Jade Lake, you'd have gained 2,400 feet.

The gain is worth it, since you've now made the Necklace Valley, and can roam at will through the high country that makes up this trough.



North ↑

Continue along the trail to Emerald Lake, strewn with fine campsites. After Emerald, a quick and easy up and over to the west takes you to Jewel and Locket Lakes. You can also take a ridge crossing to Ilswoot.

Or you can go from Emerald to Opal and do a short climb next to a creek bed to Cloudy Lake.

For very experienced mountaineers, a trip to Labohn Lakes can be rewarding. Only those with sufficient skill to scramble and travel off trail should consider the off-trail route at the head of Necklace Valley.



Necklace Valley takes hikers to such alpine gems as Opal Lake. Under ordinary conditions, this trail is difficult due to drainage issues. Destroyed water crossings have rendered it virtually impassable. Photo by Bryce Wigodsky

Lonely, wild, and deteriorating

Necklace Valley takes you to some amazing country, but each year, conditions on this trail get a little worse. As a function of the steepness and the rockiness of this hike, it needs frequent maintenance, which it does not often receive.

With bridges and footlogs out on this trail, the entire prospect of trail maintenance becomes infinitely more difficult. In this case, storm damage and backlog trail maintenance combine to create a situation in which one of the finest trails on the Skykomish District could be unhikeable for years to come. Contact your member of Congress and Senators and let them know that the US Forest Service needs adequate funds to maintain classic hikes like Necklace Valley.

Wonderland Trail

Mount Rainier National Park

Round Trip: 93 miles

Hiking Time: 10-14 days

High Point: 6,750 feet

Elevation Gain: 20,000 feet

Best Hiking Time: Mid-July through August

Maps: Green Trails #269 Mount Rainer West and #270 Mount Rainier East

Getting There: From I-5 take SR 512 east. Turn right on SR 7. Turn left on SR 706 in Elbe. Follow SR 706 through Ashford to the Nisqually entrance of Mount Rainier National Park and continue until you reach Longmire.

Whom To Contact: Mount Rainier National Park 360-569-2211

Status: While some sections will be open and hikeable this season, Mount Rainier National Park is not issuing permits for the Wonderland this year, as multiple bridge and trail washouts have rendered a thru-hike of this trail dangerous or impossible.

The aptly-named Wonderland Trail is a hiker's chance to get to know Washington's highest peak from all its faces. This hike traverses long, rich meadowlands, acres of huckleberries in season, wild rivers, glittering lakes and view-studded ridgelines. It's also an intimidating journey. There's hardly a flat moment on this trail—you're either burning your thighs up hill, or your knees down hill. But the rewards are worth every bit of work. When this trail is reopened, perhaps in a season or two, you'll need permits to camp. They go fast. Contact Mount Rainier National Park early in the year to apply for your summer outing.

This hike can be divided into three distinct segments: Longmire to Mowich, Mowich to White River, and White River back to Longmire. We don't have the room here to describe these sections in detail. We suggest a good guidebook for richer information.



North ↑

Longmire to Mowich:

This 32.5-mile leg starts out in forest and climbs into meadowlands near the Tahoma and Puyallup Glaciers. After the Glaciers, it drops back into forest, and begins to rise again into more wildflower meadows. These rises and drops are continuous throughout this section, which traverses the entire west side of Rainier.

Mowich to White River:

This northern section of the Wonderland runs 30.5 miles passes under enormous cliffs, winds through meadows, and traverses the flanks of many a small peak in the shadow of Rainier. Along the way, you'll pass (in order) Ipsut Pass, lovely Mystic Lake with great views of the mountain and abundant tadpoles, and the high redoubt of Berkeley Park, resplendent with constant views of Mount Rainier.

White River to Longmire:

The final section of the Wonderland takes hikers into some of the most scenic country on the trail. Traversing from White River to Summerland up to Panhandle Gap—the highest point on the trail—and on to Longmire takes hikers through magnificent wildflower meadows.



The Wonderland Trail is one of the Pacific Northwest's finest long-distance hikes. Due to washed-out bridges and trail sections, it will not be hikeable in its entirety this season. Photo by Bill Graham

A wounded northwest icon

The road to Longmire and Paradise is now open. This is a dramatic improvement over the situation hikers faced this winter, but even so, don't expect this trail to be open any time soon. Park managers expect to find numerous examples of trail and tread damage and down trees, and it is expected that virtually every stream crossing has been washed out. Across the park, road and trail combined repairs will likely top \$36 million.

WTA will be working on the Wonderland and other damaged Park trails throughout this summer. To volunteer on this trail, go to www.wta.org.

Carbon Glacier

Mount Rainier National Park

Round Trip: 7 miles

Hiking Time: Around 3 hours

High Point: 3,450 feet

Elevation Gain: 1,200 feet

Best Hiking Time: July through October

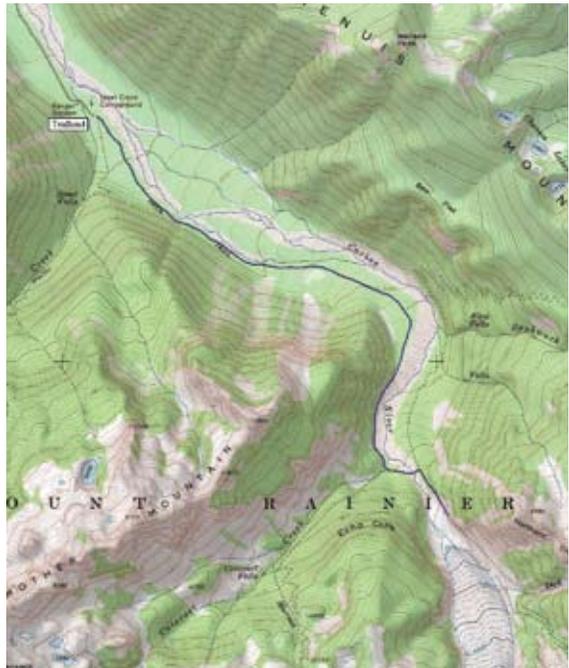
Maps: Green Trails #269 Mount Rainier West

Getting There: From I-5, take Highway 410 east to Buckley, and follow SR 162 and 165 south through Wilkeson and Carbonado. You'll come to a fork after the Fairfax Bridge. If you could continue past the washout 4.5 miles prior to the trailhead, you would bear left and continue to the road end and Ipsut Creek Campground.

Whom To Contact: Mount Rainier National Park

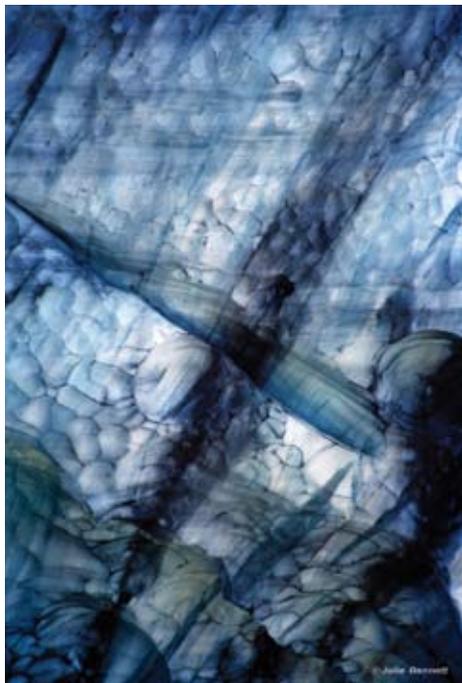
Status: Due to the Carbon River Road washout and multiple areas of damaged tread, this trail is unhikeable. The road washout adds nine miles to this hike.

There are very few dayhikes to glaciers in the Lower 48. Until the Carbon River Road and the trail washouts are repaired, there is one less. In light of our warming climate, preserving existing access to our glaciers is critically important, as they comprise important laboratories for studying the damage we are doing to our planet. This particular dayhike takes one to a truly spectacular glacier—the Carbon—allowing hikers of almost all abilities and experience levels to view the snout of an enormous mountain chewer. The huge prominence of the Carbon Glacier dwarfs everything else around it, and the rumble of enormous rocks tumbling off its surface fills the valley.



North ↑

The trail starts at the Ipsut Creek Campground at the terminus of the now washed-out Carbon River Road. You'll start in an epiphyte-laden forest of Douglas fir and Alaska cedar. In 2.5 miles, Mount Rainier and the Carbon Glacier break into view, along with Liberty and Curtis Ridges. In another half-mile, you'll pass the Carbon River Camp at Cataract Creek and stroll river side to the suspension bridge crossing the Carbon. The crossing is fun, as the bridge tends to wobble under the weight of hikers. Here you'll see the Carbon in all its power. Go no further, though—approaching closer to the glacier is a dangerous proposition, since the aforementioned tumbling boulders issue no warnings on their descent. You can see plenty from this vantage.



The Carbon Glacier Trail is a unique daytrip to a glacier. The loss of this popular family hike means that many people this summer will not be able to experience the splendor of up-close glacier views. Abstract photo of Carbon Glacier by Julie Bennett

A rare glacier dayhike—but you can't get there

Multiple sections of tread on this trail are damaged, and the Carbon River Road is out 4.5 miles before the trailhead. From mile 0.2 to 1.7 (Lake James junction) approximately 800 ft. of graded trail tread is damaged or missing. Between mile 1.7 and 2.4, just up valley from the Lake James junction, extreme damage has been done to several sections of trail with approx. 1,500 ft. of trail gone. A footlog is out at milepost 2.6. All of this damage renders the Carbon Glacier Trail unhikeable.

Congressman Dicks has made repairing Mount Rainier National Park one of his top priorities. We need to make sure that every hiker who loves Mount Rainier lets him know how important this Park is to our hiking base. Give him a call or write him a letter, and thank him for his support.

Goat Mountain Trail

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Round Trip: (To Deadmans Lake) About 10 miles

Hiking Time: 5.5 hours

High Point: 5,300 feet

Elevation Gain: 1,900 feet in, 100 feet out

Best Hiking Time: July through mid-October

Maps: Green Trails #332, Spirit Lake

Getting There: From Randle, drive 8 miles south on Forest Service Road 25. Just after crossing the Cispus River, turn right (west) onto Forest Service Road 26 (paved). Continue until a junction with Forest Service Road 2612; turn right. The Goat Mountain trailhead is 0.5 mile up this road on the right.

Whom to Contact: Cowlitz Valley Ranger District, 360-494-0600

Status: Access from Highway 99 is cut off by slides on Forest Road 26. The trail itself is hikeable and still desirable, at least as long as Idaho General Mines does not get its way.

The Goat Mountain Trail combines high views with a lesson in natural history. This lonely ridge walk will allow you to witness nature's destructive power as you stagger the boundary that once meant the difference between survival and devastation on May 18, 1980. The blast zone exposes views up the deep Green River valley, the wild Mount Margaret backcountry, Quartz Creek valley, Mount Rainier, and of course the ever unpredictable Mount St. Helens, still threatening to remind us that it is very much alive and well. Take a closer look at its slopes. The mudflows and debris scattered across its flanks are a not-so-subtle hint of the geological forces at play. Far in the distance on a clear day loom Adams and Hood. From a quick scramble up Goat Mountain, these giants seem even closer.

Closer to your feet in the right season, discover lupine, paintbrush, wild strawberry, mountain arnica, orange agoseris, tiger lily, phlox, huckleberries and bunchberries. Deadman's Lake is a quiet, forested spot to



North ↑

soak your feet and set up camp. You can also get distracted by a side trip to Vanson Peak or Vanson Lake. Either way, this is an opportune way to discover both the beauty of the high alpine meadows, lakes and forest countered abruptly against the devastation of the Helens blast zone.

Follow the trail for a gentle 0.75 miles over salvaged area of the 1980 blast zone before climbing steeply out of the Blast area. Reach the summit of Goat Mountain, 4,600 feet, at 1.75 miles. Follow the crest by lakelets at the 2 mile point, hike around a 5,600-foot high point before crossing the south side of the ridge to the north above two lakelets at 3.75 miles, 5,200 feet. Descend 900 feet, reaching Deadmans Lake at 5.5 miles. Stop for a swim and set up camp (there's a toilet!), or continue 2.75 miles to 4,948-foot Vanson Peak to check out a former lookout site and take a short hop over to Vanson Lake.



Goat Lake is an amazing place to see the post eruption grandeur of Mount St. Helens. Storm damage restricts access, and mining in this area could destroy its wild values. Photo by Susan Saul

Mining Goat Mountain

If you have our Endangered Trails Guide from last year, you may recognize this hike. We included Goat Mountain in 2006 due to potential impacts from a major open-pit copper and molybdenum mine planned for the area. Sadly, in the face of massive public outcry against the proposal, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is still entertaining the possibility of granting a lease to Idaho General Mines, going so far as to open a public comment period that culminated on May 14. Add to that threat the fact that access to this hike via Highway 99 is cut off due to washouts on Forest Road 26, and this trail is more threatened than ever.

Although the deadline for comment on this proposal is past, please continue to write to the BLM official leading this process, Fred O' Ferral, at: U.S. Department of Interior, Attn: Fred O'Ferrall, Chief of Lands & Mineral Resources, BLM, Oregon State Office, P.O. Box 2965, Portland, OR 97208.

Clear Fork

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Round Trip: 19 miles

Hiking Time: 1-2 nights

High Point: 3,600 feet

Elevation Gain: 4,800 feet

Best Hiking Time: July through October

Maps: Green Trails #303 White Pass

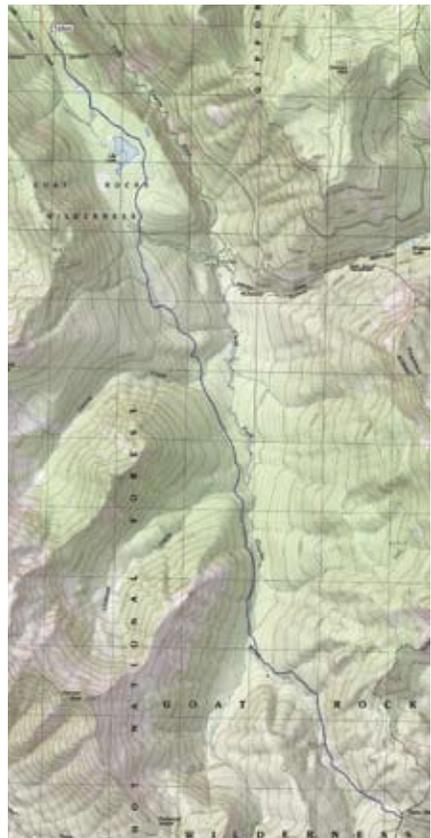
Getting There: From Packwood, take US 12 east 5 miles to Forest Road 1406. Turn right on 1406 and stay on it until it turns into Forest Road 46. Follow 46 until it ends at the trailhead.

Whom To Contact: Cowlitz Valley Ranger District, 360-497-1100

Status: Access to trailhead lost due to a washout on Forest Road 46.

The Clear Fork Trail follows the Clear Fork of the Cowlitz River to Tieton Pass. It is typical of most other Goat Rocks Wilderness hikes, as it stays in Forest for its entire length, all the way to Tieton Pass. Although you'd catch some tantalizingly brief hints of the glaciated ridges and cliffs typical of the Goat Rocks, for the most part, you'll find yourself hiking in a lovely, almost eerie montane forest of Douglas fir, hemlock, cedar and noble fir.

The first 2.3 miles of this hike are easy and relatively flat, passing through the above mentioned montane forest landscape, then passing tiny Lily Lake. Just past the junction of the Clear Lost Trail, you'd encounter a quick stream crossing, followed by slightly less maintained trail. Expect to clamber over significant blowdown, particularly this year. In another 2 miles, the trail crosses Coyote Creek, which has jumped its channel in the past and is now quite wide in spots. This crossing requires a river wade, which can be deep but not terribly dangerous. Unbuckle the hipbelt on your pack and use poles or a stick to augment your



North ↑

balance, and you should be fine. In another half-mile or so, cross Chimney Creek. Chimney is significantly easier, as it is a more narrow channel and has some log-crossing options. At nearly seven miles in, the trail crosses the Clear Fork River, which requires a ford. Again, be careful here, as the Clear Fork is more brawly than the streams encountered up to this point. There are numerous good camps here if you'd like to end the trip with a dayhike to Tieton Pass the next morning. Although only another scant 1.5 miles, visiting Tieton Pass requires an elevation gain of 1,200 feet.

At Tieton Pass the trail intersects with the Pacific Crest Trail. From here, the PCT leads to the higher redoubts of the Goat Rocks Wilderness, including lovely Shoe Lake to the north, 3.6 miles further and 1,300 feet higher, or Egg Butte to the south, 4.8 miles further and 1,900 feet higher.



Not only does lost road access to the Clear Fork keep hikers from enjoying this trail, it keeps them from maintaining it. Photo by Phil Hansten

Lost access for both hikers and volunteers hits hard

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest was hit hard by the November 2007 storms, experiencing extensive road damage—just repairing the road system will top \$18 million. The Gifford Pinchot provides significant overflow for Mount Rainier National Park, for both campers and hikers. Unfortunately, the Gifford Pinchot does not always get the attention that it deserves, since many parts are off the beaten track and it is overshadowed by Mount Rainier and Mount St. Helens.

The loss of road access to many of these hikes does more than just preclude hikers. As of this writing, WTA has had to cancel a week-long volunteer vacation scheduled for the Clear Fork Trail, since we could not access the trailhead with tools and supplies—and volunteers! As road access issues pile up, the ability of our land managers and volunteers to maintain these recreation opportunities diminishes rapidly.

Larch Lakes

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

Round Trip: 18 miles (loop trip)

Hiking Time: 2-3 days

High Point: 5,742 feet

Elevation Gain: 2,600 feet

Best Hiking Time: Mid-July through September

Maps: Green Trails #114 Lucerne

Getting There: From Entiat, drive to the end of the Entiat River Road #33.

Whom To Contact: Entiat Ranger District

Status: While this trail is not closed for the season, hikers can expect to find multiple burned trees over the trail, and should exercise extreme caution when making camp. Dead trees left by wildfire can topple onto tents with disastrous results.

These little-visited gems of the Entiat are a lake-lover's dream. Tucked away cliffside, they are surrounded by subalpine meadows, and the path to them affords great views of the Entiat Range. Hikers will have to clamber over some sooty, blackened blowdown this year and place tents carefully to avoid burned-out widowmakers.

Start the trip by taking the Entiat River Trail #1400 for 3.5 miles. Turn left on the Cow Creek Trail #1404, and reach Myrtle Lake in a very short hike. This is a great rest stop, and perhaps an overnight camp before tackling the steeper country ahead. Campsites dot the shores of Myrtle, and in the setting sun, the lake sometimes takes on a deep emerald glow.

One third mile beyond Myrtle Lake, take a right onto Larch Lakes Trail #1430. In short order, the trail starts switchbacking relentlessly up a 2.5 mile, 1,900-foot slope. There is no shade or water here, so it is best to do this leg after the sun has disappeared from the slope.

The trail flattens and follows the shore of Lower Larch Lake, surrounded by meadows



North ↑

and good camps. Continue south along the lake. The trail becomes indistinct here, so choose your path carefully. The correct trail to continue the loop heads into the woods at the base of the slope about 200 feet from a large island of granite in the meadow.

From here, you'll climb a little more than a mile, gaining views down into the lake basin with each step. Just as you contour Fifth of July Mountain, you'll reach the junction with the Cow Creek Trail. Follow Cow Creek to steeply downward two miles to the Myrtle Lake Trail, and continue along Myrtle Lake another two miles to the junction with the Entiat River Trail, and retrace your steps back to the Entiat River Trailhead.



Smoke from the Tinpan Fire rises over the Entiat Glacier. Larch Lakes will be more difficult and potentially dangerous this year due to fire impacts.

Photo by David Weir

Wildfire's legacy

Larch Lakes is one of the few hikes in the Entiat area that is reliably free of motorized vehicles like ORVs. As such, it's an important resource for hikers who love the Entiat country. This year, due to the Tinpan Fire, which blazed through in the summer of 2006, there will be a great deal of deadfall, and campers will need to be aware of widowmakers (trees that topple or lose limbs without warning) when they pitch their tents.

The US Forest Service has money to fight fires, and even to restore burned areas. However, except for a set of narrow circumstances, that fire recovery money cannot be used on trails. Only when a burned-over trail threatens an aquatic resource can those funds be used for trail recovery. Hikers who care about these fire-ravaged areas and the trails that thread through them should call their member of Congress and ask them to do everything in their power to set aside adequate funds for repair of burned-over national forest routes.

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TOPO! maps were created using National Geographic TOPO! Washington State Series with 3D Shaded Relief. Support WTA by purchasing TOPO! on our website.

Additional copies of this guide are available online at www.wta.org. Thanks to Adobe for donating Adobe PageMaker and Acrobat Distiller to make that possible.

Where are They Now?

WTA has been publishing its annual guide to threatened trails since 2002. That's six guides in as many years, totaling 60 trails that need some attention from volunteers, land managers, or policy makers—or all three. This year, we decided to take a look back and assess how far we've come. A few hikes come to mind:

Golden Horn, 2002: The Bush administration turned back the Clinton administration's Roadless Area Conservation Policy, but just this year, a federal judge decided that the Bush administration had failed to follow environmental and public comment rules in promulgating its own plan for roadless areas. The Bush administration's policy would have allowed the states to decide how to manage roadless areas, which could have allowed road building and logging in these wild areas. The Golden Horn is located in the Liberty Bell Roadless Area, so the current ruling places this and other roadless areas off limits to new road construction and its attendant damage.

Andrews Creek, 2004: Fire ravaged the Andrews Creek valley, making this trail dangerous enough to require administrative closure. Then-Congressman George Nethercutt secured \$800,000 to repair trails in the Pasayten Wilderness, resulting in the reopening of the Andrews Creek Trail.

Barclay Lake, 2006: As of this writing, the Wild Sky Wilderness Act has passed the House for the first time. Although the final votes in the Senate have not been cast yet, we are hopeful that the Wild Sky Wilderness will be a reality in the not-too-distant future.

Gothic Basin, 2006: We've been concerned for many years that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has not had adequate funds to manage its system of Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCAs). This last legislative session, WTA was successful in doubling DNR's budget to manage these areas. DNR now has \$982,000 to build new trails and trailheads in their NRCAs.

All of these victories are due to the hard work of hikers, who either got out and worked on trails or contacted their legislators and the land managers who are charged with caring for our public lands. We thank you for these and the many other victories we've had over the years. Your help makes a difference.

Speaking Out for Washington Hikers

WTA works closely with elected officials and government staff to secure trail funding, protect wilderness areas, initiate new trail projects, and more.

Up-to-Date Trail Information:

You can visit www.wta.org for the latest trail conditions. Find your favorite trail in our “Freshest Trip Reports” and learn which flowers are blooming and where the snow level is. Hikers like you file more than 2,000 online Trip Reports each year.



WTA advocates for hikers like you, so you can spend more time enjoying the trails. Photo by Dave Schiefelbein

Don't wait. Join today! Your membership gift will help maintain old trails, build new trails and ensure that WTA continues speaking out on behalf of hikers like you.

To join, use the envelope provided with this guide, or join online at www.wta.org.

Our Volunteer Trail Maintenance Program

Washington Trails Association has an extensive volunteer trail maintenance program. Statewide, we do about 74,000 hours of volunteer work every year. Over the years we've worked on trails from Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument to the North Cascades.



Trail maintenance leaves hikers with a sense of accomplishment and the knowledge that they've spent a great day in the woods. Photo Bill Sunderland



WTA introduces young people to the joys of trail maintenance and Barclay Lake. We hope to instill an ethic of service in the next generation of hikers. Photo courtesy of WTA

This summer, we have an impressive schedule of day and weekend workparties, as well as our ever-popular volunteer vacations, on which you'll have the opportunity to work and camp in the woods, spend time with great people, and be very well-fed. We post our work parties on our website—www.wta.org—as they're scheduled, and we encourage you to visit and join one. Volunteer trail maintenance is a fun way to give back to the wild places you love.

We get a lot of great work done on Washington's public lands. Come join us and find out for yourself. **Sign up for a work party at www.wta.org.**

Important Contacts

After your outing, you might want to contact the following people, and let them know why this area is so special to you. Legislators and US Forest Service staff enjoy hearing from the public, especially when they're doing a good job.

Senators

Name: Patty Murray
Phone: (202) 224-2621
Fax: (202) 224-0238

James McDermott—7th Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-3106
Fax: (202) 225-6197

Name: Maria Cantwell
Phone: (202) 224-3441
Fax: (202) 228-0514

Dave Reichert—8th Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-7761
Fax: (202) 225-4282

Representatives

Jay Inslee—1st Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-6311
Fax: (202) 225-1606

Adam Smith—9th Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-8901
Fax: (202) 225-5893

Rick Larsen—2nd Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-2605
Fax: (202) 225-4420

Brian Baird—3rd Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-3536
Fax: (202) 225-3478

Doc Hastings—4th Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-5816
Fax: (202) 225-3251

Cathy McMorris-Rodgers—5th Dist.
phone: 202-225-2006
fax: 202-225-3392

Norman Dicks—6th Dist.
Phone: (202) 225-5916
Fax: (202) 226-1176

National and State Public Land Managers

North Cascades National Park

810 State Route 20
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284
(360) 854-7200

Olympic National Park

600 East Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA 98362
(360) 565-3130

Mount Rainier National Park

55210 238th Ave East
Ashford, WA 98304
(360) 569-2211 XT 3314

Colville National Forest

765 S Main St
Colville, WA 99114
(509) 684-7000

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

10600 NE 51 Circle
Vancouver, WA 98682
(360) 891-5001

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

21905 64th Ave W
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
(425)775-9702

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

215 Melody Lane
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 664-9200

Olympic National Forest

1835 Black Lake Blvd SW
Olympia, WA 98502
(360) 956-2402

Bureau of Land Management

333 Southwest 1st Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97204
(509) 536-1200

Washington State

Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 47001,
Olympia, WA 98504-7001
(360) 902-1004

Washington State

Parks and Recreation Commission

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