

HIKING TIPS

Mount Rainier National Park contains some rugged terrain. Anyone planning a hike in the park must take the up-and-down character of the land into consideration. People unaccustomed to high elevations or who do not regularly engage in strenuous exercise should take it easy. Don't be too ambitious in your planning. Forcing your pace is both uncomfortable and unsafe.

A good rule of thumb for estimating the strenuousness of a hike is to add a mile to its total distance for each thousand feet of elevation gain and a half mile for each thousand feet of elevation loss. Thus, a 5.0 mile loop trail that includes 2000 feet of ascent and 2000 feet of descent would be the equivalent of 8 miles of level hiking.

The weather can change very rapidly on the slopes of Mount Rainier. Be prepared for the unexpected. Always carry raingear, extra clothing, map, compass, emergency shelter, and extra food.

Bears can sometimes be a problem in the backcountry. One practice that can help avoid attracting them is to store food each night in tightly sealed plastic bags hung high above the ground between two trees. Never feed a bear or leave food or garbage where a bear can get to it. If you do, you will only be teaching the bear to expect food from people. Someday someone may try to deny the bear the food it expects and will get into trouble.

If you are planning a long trip, National Park Service Rangers are willing to receive and keep packages at some of the ranger stations. Ask for details when you write for your backcountry permit.

NO TRACE CAMPING Wilderness is a valuable resource to a great many people, yet it can be easily damaged. Deliberate care is needed to preserve the opportunity to find the beauty and tranquility that so many come here seeking. You can help by.....

- learning techniques of safe and comfortable wilderness travel. Many good classes are available. You are not going to care about preserving beauty if you are wet, tired, or hungry.

- being self-contained. Bring with you all that you need to be safe and comfortable. Do your cooking on a portable stove instead of an open fire. Bring your own shelter; don't rely on finding an available trail shelter.

- taking care of your travel and camp to leave no trace of your visit. Use maintained trails and designated camps as much as possible. Deliberately guide your actions to preserve the wilderness character of Mount Rainier.

- being considerate of others. They may not have come to the wilderness for the same reasons as you. Indiscretion on your part may spoil their experience.

- becoming familiar with park regulations. The rules and the permit system are designed to help backpackers and hikers enjoy their visits to the park and help keep the park a place worth visiting.

Talk to a Ranger about other ways you can help preserve the natural beauty of Mount Rainier National Park.

PARK GUIDELINES Wild lands recreation is one of the fastest growing sports in the nation. Because of the constantly increasing numbers of people hiking the trails of Mount Rainier, some rules are needed to protect the wilderness resource and to ensure that people have pleasant experiences.

- Backcountry permits are required for all overnight backpacking trips.

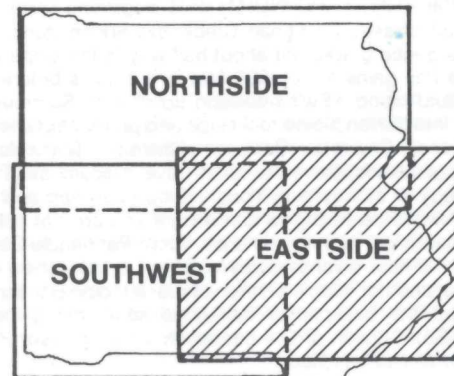
- Climbers must fill out a climbing card in addition to getting a backcountry permit.

- Dogs and other pets are not permitted away from the roads.

- Campfires are permitted only in certain designated camps in the backcountry.

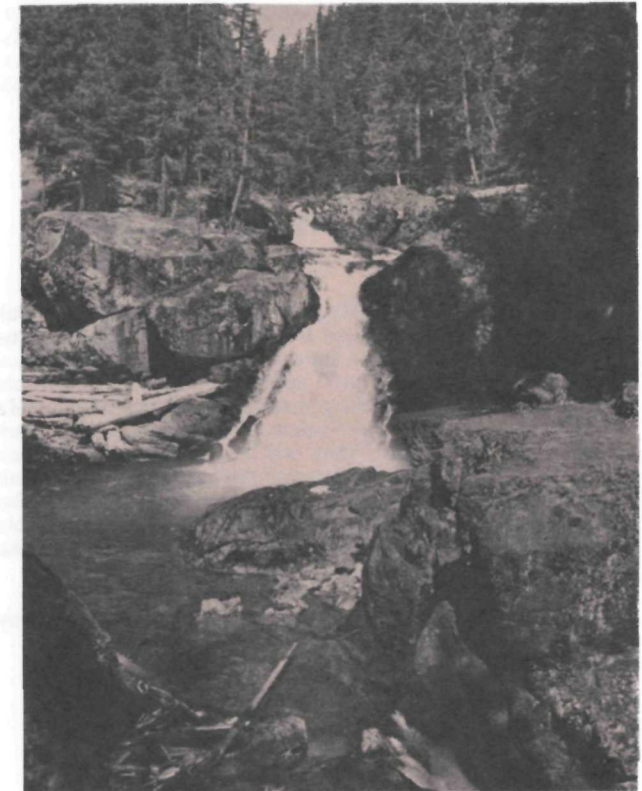
- Groups using the backcountry should not be larger than twelve people. Many backcountry users find encounters with large groups unpleasant. In addition, large groups are generally more likely to cause greater impact on the wilderness.

KEY TO TRIP PLANNING GUIDES

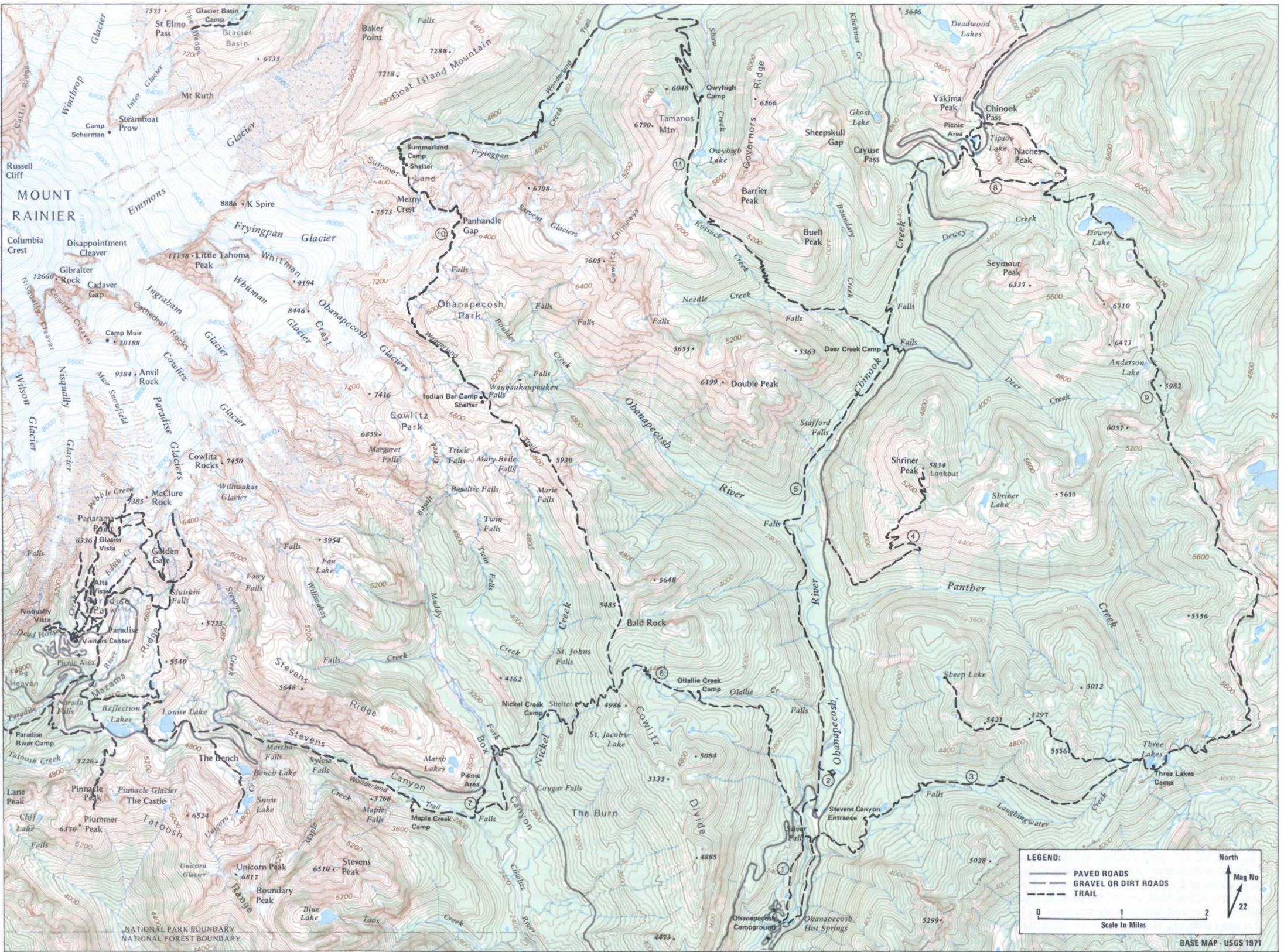


EASTSIDE HIKING GUIDE TO

MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK



PACIFIC NORTHWEST
NATIONAL PARKS AND FORESTS ASSOCIATION
MOUNT RAINIER BRANCH
LONGMIRE, WA. 98397



LEGEND:

- PAVED ROADS
- GRAVEL OR DIRT ROADS
- TRAIL

North ↑
Mag No 22

0 1 2
Scale In Miles

NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY
NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY

BASE MAP - USGS 1971

TRAIL FACTS

The numbers below refer the trails to the corresponding numbers within the circles on the map, and to the trail descriptions in this trail guide. All distances and elevation changes are one-way except for loop trails.

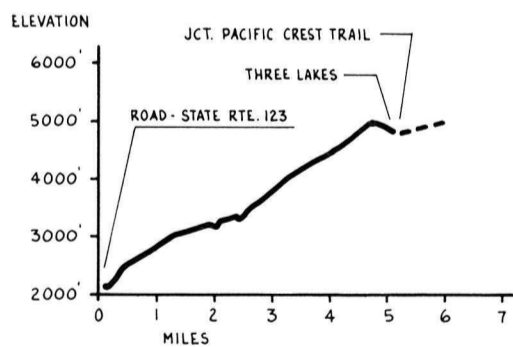
	climb	descent	distance
OHANAPECOSH			
1 Silver Falls Loop Trail	100 ft	100 ft	3 mi
2 Grove of the Patriarchs			1.5 mi
3 Laughingwater Creek Trail	3000 ft		6 mi
4 Shriner Peak, to lookout	3300 ft		4.2 mi
5 Eastside Trail		3300 ft	14.5 mi
COWLITZ DIVIDE AND BOX CANYON			
6 Ohanapocosh to Box Canyon	2900 ft	1700 ft	7.2 mi
7 Stevens Creek		400 ft	1 mi
CHINOOK PASS			
8 Naches Peak Loop Trail	600 ft	600 ft	5 mi
9 Pacific Crest Trail—Chinook Pass to Ohanapocosh		3700 ft	19 mi
WHITE RIVER VALLEY			
From White River Road to			
10 Summerland	1700 ft		4.2 mi
Indian Bar	3000 ft	1700 ft	9.5 mi
11 Owyhigh Lakes	1400 ft		3.5 mi
THE WONDERLAND TRAIL			
White River to Nickel Creek	3800 ft	4200 ft	16 mi
Panhandle Gap route	4200 ft	4600 ft	22.5 mi
Owyhigh Lakes route			
Nickel Creek to Longmire	2100 ft	2800 ft	13.8 mi

OHANAPECOSH

1. SILVER FALLS LOOP This pleasant family hike begins in the Ohanapocosh campground. The route follows the trail along the east side of the river past Ohanapocosh Hot Springs and through forests to a bridge with a good view of thundering Silver Falls. "Stay behind the fences; the rocks are extremely slippery and the river below is cold, deep and swift." After soaking up the beauty of the scene, and maybe a little spray too, cross the bridge and follow the trail uphill. Soon the trail branches, with the right-hand pathway leading upstream toward Stevens Canyon Road and the Grove of the Patriarchs Trail. The left-hand branch will lead back to Ohanapocosh campground. After the short initial climb, the route to Ohanapocosh is downhill all the way winding past small ponds and through open forests until it reaches the campground. Keep an eye out for mushrooms.

2. GROVE OF THE PATRIARCHS Northwest of the Stevens Canyon entrance station is the trailhead for a short and easy hike to a grove of thousand-year-old trees. The trail starts next to the restroom at the north end of the parking area just past the entrance station. The trail, which is almost level for its entire length, follows the west side of the Ohanapocosh River for a little less than a mile, then crosses the river on a suspension bridge, reaching an island with a stand of huge old Douglas-firs and cedars. Along the trail are interpretive signs that explain some of the natural history of the area.

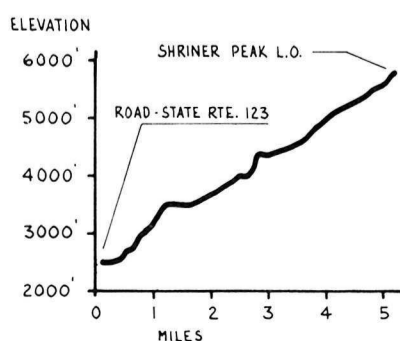
3. LAUGHINGWATER CREEK TO THREE LAKES Less than six miles long, this trail takes the hiker from the dense old growth Douglas-fir, hemlock, and cedar forests up to a much more open subalpine fir, noble fir, and Pacific silver fir forest near the Cascade Crest. The trail begins one mile north of Ohanapocosh campground on Highway 123. The trail to Three Lakes can also be reached by hiking north from the campground on the trail on the east side of the Ohanapocosh River. About halfway to Silver Falls the trail crosses Laughingwater Creek and soon after a trail branches off to the right, leading up to the road and the Laughingwater Trail.



3 LAUGHINGWATER CREEK TRAIL

4. SHRINER PEAK A long slow hike up the slopes of Shriner Peak leads to a spectacular view of Mt. Rainier. Several forest fires occurred many years ago on the west side of the peak, and since then many young trees have sprouted, providing a veritable smorgasbord of delicious young needles for browsing elk. At trail's end on the summit of Shriner Peak is a fire lookout staffed by Park Rangers or volunteers. They will be happy to share their knowledge of the area, but please do not ask them to share their water; they have to pack it up to the lookout on their backs. The Shriner Peak trail can be a hot, dry one. Little water is available along the trail, so bring plenty with you. It is best to start your hike early in the morning before the day becomes too warm.

Backcountry camping is permitted at Shriner Peak. A backcountry permit is required, and is available at any ranger station.



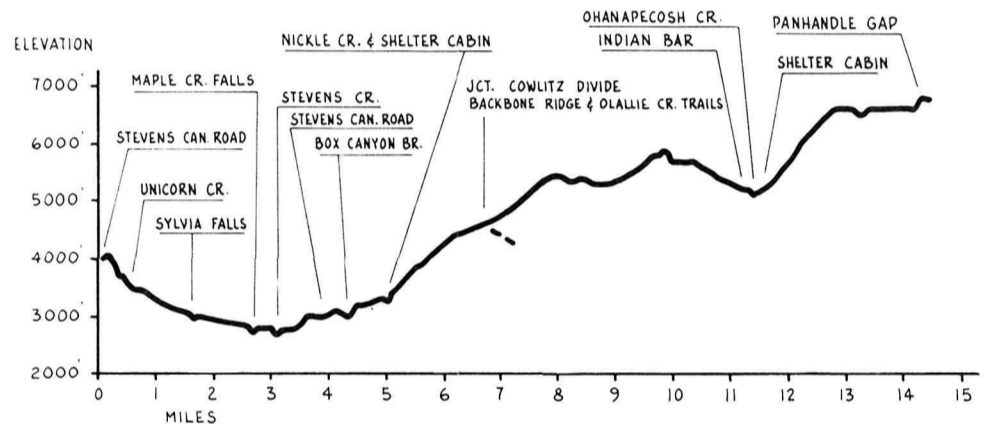
4 SHRINER PEAK TRAIL

5. EASTSIDE TRAIL A trail leads all the way from Tipsoo Lake near Chinook Pass down to Ohanapocosh campground paralleling first Chinook and then the Ohanapocosh River through mile after mile of forest. The trail offers few viewpoints, but what it lacks in grand vistas it makes up for in a richness of detail. The upper portion of the trail can be reached in three ways. The hiker can begin by hiking in past Owyhigh Lakes and then down Kotsuck Creek to where it joins with Chinook Creek. Alternatively, the hiker can begin at Tipsoo Lake or just south of Cayuse Pass and follow the trail that parallels Chinook Creek. Finally, the hiker can follow a trail down from Highway 123. The trailhead for this last trail is located a little less than a mile below where the highway crosses Deer Creek. A backcountry camp is located near where Chinook, Kotsuck, and Deer Creeks join. Once a hiker reaches Chinook Creek, it is a long easy amble downhill to Ohanapocosh.

COWLITZ DIVIDE AND BOX CANYON

6. OHANAPECOSH TO BOX CANYON The trail over Cowlitz Divide does not offer many views, but it is a healthy hike through a relatively unused portion of the park. The route begins at Ohanapocosh. Head north on the trail along the west side of the Ohanapocosh River. After a little less than 1.5 miles, a trail branches off to the left, headed for the Cowlitz Divide. After crossing the Stevens Canyon Road the trail climbs northward for awhile then turns westward to parallel Olallie Creek. The Olallie Creek camp is near where the trail crosses the creek. About 1.5 miles past the camp the trail reaches a junction with the Wonderland trail. To the right the trail leads north towards Indian Bar; to the left it descends to Nickel Creek camp and Box Canyon.

7. STEVENS CREEK Just west of Box Canyon is the Box Canyon picnic area where a short, but steep trail leads down to Stevens Creek. The trail winds down through forests to the river, which thunders over huge boulders and swirls quietly through deep pools, a sight worth the hike. Watch the water ouzels; the little gray-brown birds can sometimes be seen walking near and under the water of the rushing stream. They are sometimes called "dippers" because they bob up and down.



WONDERLAND TRAIL—STEVENS CREEK TO PANHANDLE GAP

CHINOOK PASS

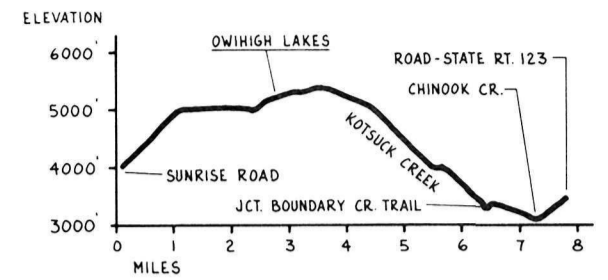
8. NACHES PEAK LOOP Each year thousands of people stop to admire Tipsoo Lake from State Highway 410 near the eastern boundary of the park. Nearby is a pleasant 5-mile loop trail that offers some fine scenery. The trail begins near the south end of Tipsoo Lake, climbs fairly steeply, then levels out and crosses the south side of Naches Peak until it joins with the Pacific Crest trail. At the junction, go left uphill to Dewey Lake overlook. Watch for marmots, pikas, elk, and bear on surrounding hillsides. Return to Tipsoo Lake by heading north from the overlook on the Pacific Crest trail, which crosses the northeast side of Naches Peak to the highway at Chinook Pass, then follow the highway westward to the lake.

9. PACIFIC CREST TRAIL-CHINOOK PASS TO OHANAPECOSH This nineteen-mile hike can be made in one day but is much more enjoyable as a two-day camping trip. Begin at Chinook Pass where the Pacific Crest trail crosses over the highway on a log bridge. Head south on the Crest trail around Naches Peak and Dewey Lake. The trail is well constructed and has few major climbs or descents, remaining at about the same elevation all the way from Chinook Pass to Three Lakes. The trail is high, however, usually more than 5000 feet in elevation, so expect cooler temperatures and thin air. Mount Rainier, huge and far away to the northwest, appears and disappears behind peaks as the hiker travels along the trail. Watch for elk, deer, marmots, bear, and huckleberries. About 9.5 miles from Chinook Pass a trail branches off to the right (west) leading to Three Lakes and Ohanapocosh. The left branch continues southward toward White Pass. From Three Lakes the trail is downhill all the way to Ohanapocosh.

WHITE RIVER VALLEY

10. SUMMERLAND AND INDIAN BAR Beginning where the White River Road crosses Fryingpan Creek, the Summerland trail starts out with a gentle grade, but about half way in the slope steepens. In all, the trail gains about 1600 feet in 4.2 miles before reaching Summerland camp. Switchbacking uphill from Summerland, the trail rises into barren alpine rockfields and permanent snowfields of the Panhandle Gap area. Because of the open, featureless terrain and the snowfields, travelers often have difficulty staying on the trail in foggy or stormy conditions. Keep your map and compass handy. Always be willing to turn back if you are not sure of your ability to safely get through the area. From Panhandle Gap the trail makes an almost level traverse of about a mile, then descends 1400 feet in another couple of miles to reach Indian Bar camp. From Indian Bar, the backpacker can head south along the Cowlitz Divide to Box Canyon or Ohanapocosh, or return over Panhandle Gap to the White River Road.

11. OWYHIGH LAKES The trailhead for Owyhigh Lakes is 2.5 miles past the White River entrance station. The trail gains about 1400 feet in the 3 miles between the road and the lakes. Tamoson Creek camp, formerly Owyhigh camp, is located about .5 miles north of the lakes. Energetic hikers can continue southward past the lakes and down the valley of Kotsuck Creek to Chinook Creek, from which a short trail leads up to State Highway 123. When hiking through the Owyhigh Lakes basin, keep a sharp eye out for mountain goats on the steep surrounding slopes; one of the largest herds of goats in the park makes its home in this area.



11 OWYHIGH LAKES TRAIL

THE WONDERLAND TRAIL WHITE RIVER VALLEY TO LONGMIRE

In the course of its 93 miles, the Wonderland trail travels through dense forests, climbs to alpine meadows, and passes close to frigid glaciers. The trail completely circles the mountain, offering a rewarding recreational experience. For the hiker considering doing the trail, however, a word of caution: these are 93 very long miles. Very little of the trail is level. Elevation losses and gains of more than a thousand feet a mile are common. Because of the constant ups and downs of the trail, many hikers find that 8 to 10 miles per day is plenty. The National Park Service recommends that you allow 10 to 14 days for the entire loop. Remember, if you cannot do the entire trail at once, the Mountain will be around next year, still waiting for you to discover the rest.

WHITE RIVER VALLEY TO NICKEL CREEK Wonderland trail backpackers who have reached the Sunrise-White River area face a choice. The Wonderland trail route is up Fryingpan Creek, through Summerland, over Panhandle Gap, past Indian Bar, and down the Cowlitz Divide to Nickel Creek. However, early in the season much of this route remains buried under snow and some travelers choose the lower, but longer, Owyhigh Lakes route to reach Nickel Creek. The Panhandle Gap route takes the hiker into rugged alpine scenery with spectacular views of glaciers, jagged peaks, and Mount Rainier. Going by way of Owyhigh Lakes offers a continuous panorama of forests, streams, and rivers.

VIA PANHANDLE GAP The Wonderland trail follows Fryingpan Creek from the White River Road for 4.2 miles up to the meadows of Summerland. Passing Summerland camp, the trail climbs through alpine rockfields to Panhandle Gap, then begins the descent to Indian Bar camp. From Indian Bar, the Wonderland trail climbs a short distance before beginning the long grade down Cowlitz Divide to the junction with the trail to Nickel Creek and Box Canyon.

VIA OWYHIGH LAKES The Owyhigh Lakes route begins 2.5 miles west of the White River entrance and 3.5 miles east of the White River campground. Climbing through forests, the trail soon passes Owyhigh camp and another .5 mile down the trail, skirts the Owyhigh Lakes. South of the lakes, the trail crosses a low divide and descends the valley of Kotsuck Creek to join the Eastside trail near Chinook Creek, not far from Deer Creek camp. The route then follows the Eastside trail south 1.0 mile north of Ohanapocosh. A trail there branches off the Eastside trail headed uphill. Following that trail, the traveler passes Olallie Creek camp, crosses Cowlitz Divide and then descends to Nickel Creek.

NICKEL CREEK TO LONGMIRE The hike to Box Canyon takes only a few minutes from Nickel Creek camp. After looking at the narrow gorge of the Muddy Fork of the Cowlitz River, cross the road bridge to the west side of the gorge. North of the road a short distance is a continuation of the Wonderland trail, which climbs to the ridge, crosses over the road tunnel, and heads south. The trail descends to Stevens Creek, crosses it, and follows the creek upvalley toward Reflection Lakes. Not far upstream from the bridge is Maple Creek camp, nestled between the trail and Stevens Creek. Slowly the trail climbs out of the deep canyon, skirts Louise Lake and finally comes out at the road just east of Reflection Lakes. Follow the road to a trailhead about 30 yards west of the lakes on the southside of the road. The trail parallels the road briefly then crosses a ridge and descends steeply into the Paradise River valley. Passing Paradise River camp, the trail crosses Paradise River, winds through forests next to several cascades and waterfalls, and reaches Nisqually River near Cougar Rock campground. After crossing the Nisqually, the trail turns left and parallels the river down to Longmire and the end of the round-the-mountain journey.