



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



GIFFORD PINCHOT NATIONAL FOREST VISITOR GUIDE

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest is a big place! Visit us online to learn more:
www.fs.usda.gov/giffordpinchot



Scan this QR code with your smartphone camera to get a direct link to our website.

Follow us on social media for current conditions, safety, events, jobs and more!

 [Facebook.com/GiffordPinchot](https://www.facebook.com/GiffordPinchot)

 [Twitter.com/gpnf](https://twitter.com/gpnf)

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest is one of the oldest national forests in the United States. Established in 1908, the Forest provides clean water, timber, food, habitat for wildlife, diverse recreation opportunities, and a place to enjoy solitude in a busy world.

No matter the season, there are opportunities for everyone to explore and have fun outdoors. There are campgrounds open in the summer; snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and skiing to historic cabins in winter; looking for seasonal wildflowers while hiking in spring; and gathering mushrooms in the spring and early fall.

Come explore your national forest!

Forest Facts (2022)

Gifford Pinchot National Forest total size.....1,368,300 acres
Cowlitz Valley Ranger District 575,000 acres
Mt. Adams Ranger District 683,000 acres
Mount St. Helens Nat'l Volcanic Monument.. 110,300 acres

Designated Wilderness areas 180,600 acres
Roads open to highway legal vehicles3,285 miles
Trails open to hikers, horses, or trail bikes.....1,475 miles
Developed forest campgrounds.....44
Sno-Parks.....16
Visitors to the forest annually (estimate) 1,210,000

Prehistoric and historic archaeological sites1,735
Historic structures 108

Timber volume sold (million board feet)34.45
Timber volume harvested (million board feet).....29.15
Tree boughs sold1,463 tons
Huckleberries (commercial).....69,511 gallons
Mushrooms (commercial)22,015 gallons
Bear Grass..... 826,000 pounds

INSIDE:
Campground Guide
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Discover Your Northwest, our nonprofit partner, operates bookstores at National Forests and Parks throughout the Pacific Northwest. Visit www.discovernw.org to find books, maps, passes & more.

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Getting to know Gifford Pinchot National Forest

The USDA Forest Service administers national forest lands for outdoor recreation, timber, watersheds, range, fish and wildlife. The forest was first designated as Columbia National Forest in 1908, then changed to Gifford Pinchot National Forest in 1948 honoring the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service.

The forest offers a wealth of resources for humans and the natural world and encompasses diverse ecosystems across its 1.3 million acres. While Douglas-fir trees are prevalent and have provided timber for decades, other common trees include Western hemlock, noble fir, Western redcedar, as well as ponderosa and lodgepole pines.



While there are many places on the forest to enjoy trees, one good location is along the Trail of Two Forests (#233) on the south side of Mount St. Helens. There you can explore an old-growth Douglas-fir forest that stands on top of the remains of an older forest that was engulfed in lava flows over 2,000 years ago, leaving lava casts and imprints of the ancient trees.

Thousands of species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and insects depend on our forest. These species help create a healthier ecosystem.

Preserving Our Cultural Heritage



People have been using the forest for thousands of years. Some of these locations of past human activity or occupation are still identifiable today. Forest archeology crews document our cultural heritage resources through field surveys, historical documentation, or oral tradition.

The Forest Service heritage program works to protect these resources and share the values of these heritage resources with the American people. To date, 1,596 heritage resource sites have been documented on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest!

The forest's heritage story is told through artifacts, historical sites, and buildings preserved and protected by law.

When an artifact is removed or a site damaged, the forest's legacy becomes incomplete, much as a book would be incomplete if words were erased or pages torn out. If you discover a site or object of interest, leave it undisturbed and report your discovery to the nearest Forest Service office.

Look for signs of animals such as fur, tracks, smells, and scat. Check out the Wood Creek Watchable Wildlife Trail (#247) south of Randle on the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District.

Water is an essential resource for us all.

The forests of the Cascade Range provide water for winter and summer recreation, habitat for wildlife, and drinking water for small and large communities alike. The Gifford Pinchot's streams also provide habitat for threatened fish species, including Chinook and coho salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

Recognizing our water resources, Congress designated 20 miles of the Upper White Salmon River and Cascade Creek as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The scenery, geology, and hydrology of these river segments are unique to the area and only a short drive north from Trout Lake on the Mt. Adams Ranger District.

The Forest Service is charged with maintaining and improving the health, diversity, and productivity of the forest through managing vegetation, restoring ecosystems, and reducing hazards. By actively working to improve and conserve our forests, wildlife, and watersheds, we can help sustain this landscape for future generations.

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument

Mount St. Helens erupted in May 1980 and leveled 240 sq. miles of forest, creating a landscape resembling the moon's surface. In 1982 Congress created the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, recognizing its national significance. Scientists worldwide come to this unique environment to study how plants and animals recover after volcanic disturbances. Visit the Monument and witness ongoing changes!

Things to do:

- Drive State Route 504 into the heart of the blast zone up to Johnston Ridge Observatory - *Closed 2023*. (West)
- Forest Roads 25 and 99 provide access to the Monument's vast blown down forest and views of the legendary Spirit Lake. (East)
- Climbing to the south rim of the volcano is open year round. A permit is required when climbing above 4800' via www.recreation.gov. Permits sell out for much of the summer so check ahead.

Help protect the area:

- Pets are not allowed at Johnston Ridge Observatory plaza & interpretive area. Pets must remain on a leash in ALL other areas within the Monument.
- Please help protect this area: stick to established routes, clean your shoes & gear before visiting, and pack out all trash.

Check the *Volcano Review* visitor guide for more details, available at a forest offices.



Chanterelle mushroom

Harvesting Forest Products

Between mushrooms and huckleberries for eating; salal, beargrass and foliage for flower arrangements; tree boughs and cones for wreaths; firewood for heating; posts and poles for fencing; and Christmas trees for the holidays, the Gifford Pinchot National Forest is a big part of people's daily lives.

The forest issues both commercial/charge use permits and personal/free use permits. Certain products have a fee while other products are free depending on whether you harvest for personal or commercial use. Check with a Gifford Pinchot office to ensure you are harvesting legally. More info at: tinyurl.com/gpnfpermits

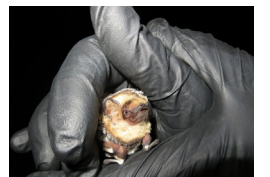
Collecting huckleberries and taking them off the forest requires a permit— for both personal and commercial purposes. A free personal use permit allows visitors to pick up to one gallon of berries per day and up to a total of three gallons of berries per year. Get your huckleberry, or mushroom, free use permit online at: <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/gp>.



Protecting bats & caves on the Forest

White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) has killed over six million bats since 2006. Caused by a fungus, it is often spread by people visiting caves. Nationally, many caves have been closed to protect our bat populations.

While WNS has not yet been found on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, it has been found in Washington State.



You can help prevent the spread of WNS!

- Do NOT wear shoes used in other caves or climbing areas unless completely cleaned.
- Do NOT bring dogs into caves- they can spread the fungus in their fur and paws.
- CLEAN your shoes and clothing of dirt and mud before entering a cave.
- CLEAN AGAIN after exiting a cave or climbing area.
- WASH your hands and exposed skin.
- CHANGE into clean shoes and clothes before getting into your vehicle to leave.
- WASH clothing, hats, or shoes worn in hot, soapy water (at least 131°F) for at least 20 minutes.
- If you see bats, please avoid disturbing them and do not handle live or dead bats.

Find out more at: wdfw.wa.gov/living/bats.html

Know Before You Go

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest is filled with scenic spots and natural beauty. But it is also vulnerable to human actions. Trash, abused dispersed campsites, driving off-road, and improperly disposed of human waste all degrade the landscape, worsen the experience for other visitors, and harm wildlife.

When you visit the forest, please take home everything you brought with you. Learn the principles of Leave No Trace and put them in to action consistently. National forests like the Gifford Pinchot belong to all Americans - both those visiting today and the generations that follow. Help care for the land!

Improve your visit by planning ahead:

- Find out current road and trail conditions.
- Pay attention to the weather.
- Know the limitations of your vehicle.
- Check to see if any restrictions are in effect.
- Bring the ten essentials.
- **Always let someone know where you're going and when you expect to be back!**

Stop in at a forest office to get tips on where to go, conditions updates, maps or passes. Visit us online: www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/giffordpinchot.

Ten Essentials

Whether heading out for the afternoon or a backpacking trip, visitors need to be prepared for safety before heading into the forest.

- Navigation (map, compass, GPS)
- Sun Protection (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen)
- Insulation (extra clothes)
- Extra Food (trail mix/bars)
- Extra Water (water treatment)
- Headlamp/Flashlight (batteries)
- First Aid Supplies
- Fire (matches, lighter)
- Repair Kit/Tools (knife, multi-tool, whistle)
- Emergency Shelter (tent, tarp, emergency blanket)

Leave No Trace Principles

1. Plan ahead and prepare.
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
3. Dispose of waste properly.
4. Leave what you find.
5. Minimize campfire impacts.
6. Respect wildlife.
7. Be considerate of other visitors.

For more info, check out: Int.org/learn/7-principles



Black bear

Wildlife Safety

Bear Safety: Keep your campsite clean to ward off bears. Store all food and scented items in bear-proof containers or in vehicle, covered and out of sight. Do not approach or attempt to feed bears.

If you encounter a bear keep a safe distance and slowly back away. If a bear approaches, scare it away – shout, wave arms, throw stones, deploy bear spray. **DO NOT RUN!**

Cougar Safety: Cougars are secretive and shy. Attacks on humans are extremely rare.

If you encounter a cougar, stop and pick up small children. Face it and make yourself look as big, shout and yell and slowly back away. Be assertive. If the animal attacks, fight back and **DO NOT RUN!**

Wilderness Travel

Wilderness areas are lands designated by Congress to be protected and preserved in their natural condition, without permanent improvements or habitation.

These areas have a few special regulations to help preserve their unique character:

- Permits are required to enter any Wilderness on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. These permits are free and self-issued at trailheads.
- Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is prohibited. This includes: motor vehicles, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the take-off and landing of aircraft and drones.
- Groups are limited to 12 members, including all people and pack or saddle stock.
- Campsites must be at least 100 feet from the shoreline of any lake, stream, and/or the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.

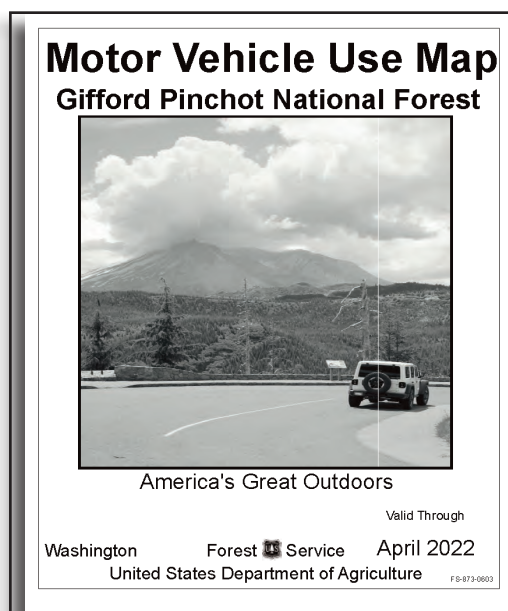
Campfire Alternatives



Prevent human caused wildfires!
Never leave a campfire unattended.

Check to see if **fire restrictions** are in effect at the area you plan to visit!
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/giffordpinchot/fire>

Driving Safely on Forest Roads



The Gifford Pinchot National Forest has thousands of miles of roads. Almost all of these roads are open to highway legal vehicles only. Some examples of vehicles that are highway legal are: passenger cars, pickup trucks, and SUVs, as well as motorcycles that are licensed for general operation on all public roads within Washington.

Examples of vehicles that are not highway legal include: ATVs, UTVs (side by sides), golf carts, off road motorcycles, and any other motor vehicle that by state law is not licensed for general operation on all public roads.

The Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) shows where you can legally drive vehicles, displaying designated roads and trails suitable for motorized use by type of vehicle and time of year.

Many roads are closed for wildlife protection for the winter season. To learn more, consult the seasonal road table in the front of the MVUM.

Pick up your free MVUM at any forest office or online at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/gp/mvum. You can also download the MVUM onto your smartphone.

Most roads are gravel, many are narrow, and some are accessible only by high-clearance vehicles. Drive at safe speeds and respect the limitations of your vehicle.



Camping on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Whether gathering the extended family at a group campsite or just heading out with the dog, there are plenty of campsites on the forest!



Reserve your spot under the stars!

Many forest campgrounds accept reservations. Visitors can reserve campsites up to 6 months in advance.

Some campgrounds are first-come first-serve only. In most reservation campgrounds 30-40% of sites are set aside as first-come first-serve sites. During busy weekends, reservations could get you and your family one step closer to fun, but are not always necessary.

Reservations are available online at [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) or by phone, toll-free, at: (877) 444-6777. [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) does charge a non-refundable transaction fee.

[Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) features: campground maps, a calendar of availability, the ability to reserve specific sites, and uploaded visitor photos.



Dispersed Camping

Camping outside campgrounds, or dispersed camping, is legal throughout most of the forest. You can use existing routes to reach dispersed campsites when it will not cause damage to national forest resources or facilities. Visitors may not drive beyond 150 feet from the main road.

Follow these guidelines:

- Choose sites that are already established.
- Camp at least 100 ft. away from creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes.
- Avoid trenching around sleeping areas.
- Never clean dishes, or clean fish, in a stream or lake.
- Collect only dead or down wood.
- Use camp stoves as an alternative to a campfire, and help conserve ground cover resources.
- Never leave a campfire unattended, and never burn plastic or aluminum cans.
- **Always pack out what you bring in** and leave your site cleaner than you found it!



Answers to frequently asked questions about camping on the Forest:

- Spring campground opening dates are subject to weather and road conditions.
- None of our campgrounds have showers, electrical hookups, or RV holding tank dump stations. There are dump stations available at some local RV parks surrounding the forest.
- Single sites are limited to a max of 8 people.
- If you are traveling into a designated Wilderness keep in mind that there are additional restrictions on where you can build a campfire or designated campsites.

- There is a 14-day maximum stay at campgrounds and in dispersed camping areas.

No open sites? Find alternative campgrounds near the forest by checking out PacifiCorp, Cowlitz County, Lewis County, or Skamania County tourism sites listed on page seven under Other Contacts.

Find camping info. online: www.fs.usda.gov/activity/giffordpinchot/recreation/camping-cabins.

***Change in camping fee to be implemented in 2024, noted in table below.**

Forest Campgrounds								
Cowlitz Valley Ranger District (North)								
Campground	# Sites	Water	Space Length	Single Site Fee	Double Site Fee	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Adams Fork (R)	24	✓	22'	\$22	\$40	2,600'	46.3400	-121.6487
Big Creek (R)	29	✓	24'- 40'	\$22	\$40	1,800'	46.7360	-121.9703
Blue Lake Creek	11		20'- 30'	\$18	—	1,900'	46.4032	-121.7374
Cat Creek	5		18'	\$18	—	2,800'	46.3485	-121.6236
Horseshoe Lake	10		16'	\$18	—	4,150'	46.3007	-121.5444
Iron Creek (R)	98		24'- 40'	\$24	\$44	1,100'	46.4275	-121.9857
Killen Creek	8		22'	\$18	—	4,450'	46.2934	-121.5483
La Wis Wis (R)	100	✓	18'- 40'	\$24	\$44	1,250'	46.6773	-121.5761
North Fork (R)	33	✓	32'	\$22	\$40	1,450'	46.4505	-121.7875
Olallie Lake	5		22'	\$18	\$32	4,250'	46.2908	-121.6222
Soda Spring (Primitive)	7			\$18	—	3,250'	46.7044	-121.4821
Takhlakh Lake (R)	54		22'	\$22	\$40	4,450'	46.2817	-121.5991
Tower Rock (R)	22	✓	22'	\$22	—	1,100'	46.4455	-121.8653
Walupt Lake (R)	44	✓	22'	\$22	\$40	3,930'	46.4227	-121.4750
Mount St. Helens (South & West)								
Campground	# Sites	Water	Space Length	Sing Site Fee	Double Site Fee	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Sunset Falls (R)	16		25'- 40'	\$18	—	1,000'	45.8187	-121.2502
Kalama Horse Camp	27		30'- 60'	\$18	—	2028'	46.1493	-122.3241
Mt. Adams Ranger District (South & East)								
Campground	# Sites	Water	Space Length	Single Site Fee	Double Site Fee	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Beaver (R)	24	✓	25'	\$24	\$44	1,050'	45.8566	-121.9568
Cultus Creek	51		32'	\$15	—	4,000'	46.048	-121.7546
Forlorn Lakes	25		18'	\$15	\$30	3,700'	45.9589	-121.7550
Goose Lake	19		No RVs	\$18	—	3,150'	45.9408	-121.7585
Govt. Mineral Springs	5		18'	\$10	—	1,230'	45.8821	-121.9957
*Lower Falls (R)	43	✓	36'	\$15	\$30- \$35	1,500'	46.1566	-121.8785
Morrison Creek	12		No RVs	Free	—	4,650'	46.1292	-121.5170
Moss Creek (R)	18	✓	32'	\$20	—	1,330'	45.7943	-121.6354
Oklahoma (R)	16	✓	22'	\$20	\$38	1,700'	45.8696	-121.6280
Panther Creek (R)	33	✓	25'	\$22	\$40	950'	45.8201	-121.8795
Paradise Creek (R)	42	✓	25'	\$22	\$40	1,540'	45.9493	-121.9338
Peterson Prairie (R)	29	✓	32'	\$20	\$38	2,900'	45.9692	-121.6562
Tillicum	17		18'	\$10	—	3,900'	46.1235	-121.7791
Trout Lake Creek	17		No RVs	\$15	\$20	2,200'	46.0564	-121.6107
Twin Falls	3		Tent only	Free	—	2,700'	46.2158	-121.6683
Sites with (R) are reservable at www.recreation.gov								
Group Sites	# Sites	Water	Space Length	Site Fee	Site Capacity	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Atkisson (R)	1	✓	40'	\$100	50	2,700'	45.9610	-121.6151
Beaver (R)	1	✓	40'	\$125	60	1,100'	45.8566	-121.9568
Coho (La Wis Wis) (R)	1	✓	24'	\$100	25	1,250'	46.6752	-121.5851
North Fork (R)	3	✓	22'	\$115	25; 35; 50	1,450'	46.4511	-121.7892
Peterson Prairie	1	✓	40'	\$100	50	2,900'	45.9689	-121.6574

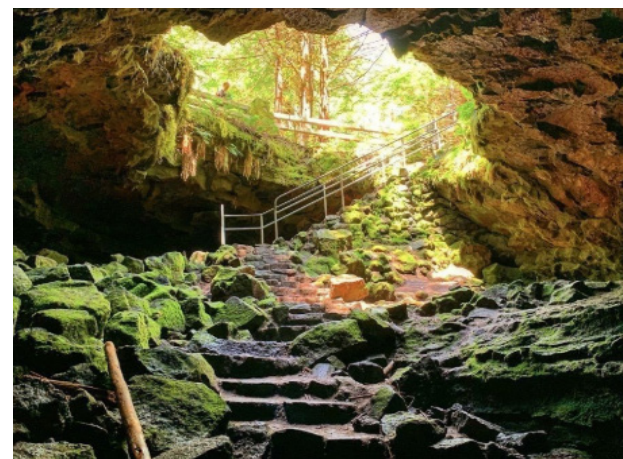
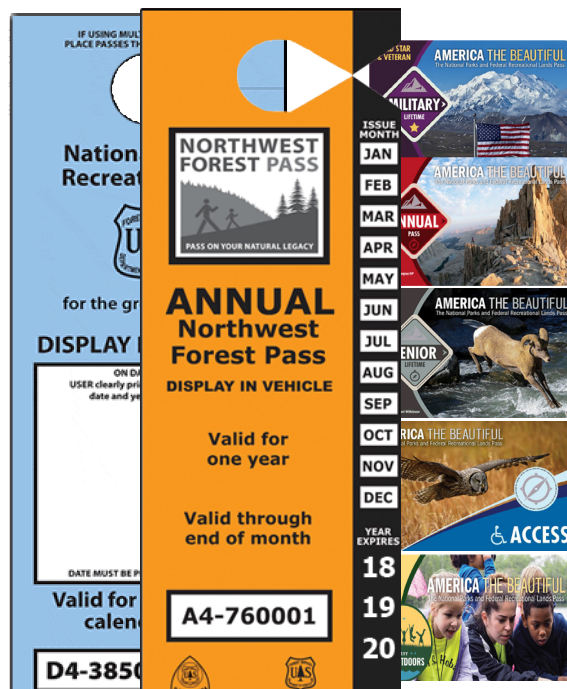
Find Your Pass to Adventure

The Forest Service collects fees at developed day-use sites, trailheads, and campgrounds. Around 90% of recreation fees go right back into maintaining the trails, lands, and facilities you use. Keeping sites in good condition takes planning, person-power, and, of course, money. Every year your recreation fees go towards:

- maintaining restrooms
- repairing erosion
- replacing old or damaged signs
- repairing trail bridges
- fixing old or installing new picnic tables
- maintaining/clearing trails
- ensuring campgrounds are clean

For sites that have a fee, you can use a valid Interagency Pass, a Northwest Forest Pass or pay with cash or check on site. You can obtain a pass at any Forest Service office.

Annual and day passes are also available for purchase online. Annual passes are mailed to you while day passes can be purchased and printed on your home printer. For more details, visit: www.discovernw.org.



Special Recreation Passes, Permits & Reservation Tickets

Ape Cave Timed Reservation Ticket

Timed reservations are required to visit Ape Cave during the open season, May 18 through October 31. Choose a two-hour time slot for your desired day at Recreation.gov.

Lewis River Recreation Area Reservation

The Lewis River Recreation Area is a 10-mile corridor, situated along the Lewis River and Forest Road 90. This area provides access to the popular Lewis River Trail #31, and associated waterfall viewing.

Advanced reservations for parking at trailheads and day use areas are required during the busy visitor season June 15 - September 06. Reserved Parking tickets must be purchased online and printed before you travel. Go to Recreation.gov for tickets.

Mount Adams Climbing Pass

A Mt. Adams Climbing Pass is required if you are climbing above 7,000 feet elevation in Mt. Adams Wilderness between May 1 and September 30. Purchase a pass at Recreation.gov.

Mount St. Helens Climbing Permit

Climbing permits are required year-round to climb Mount St. Helens. Between April 1 and October 31 climbing permits are limited and must be purchased online in advance at Recreation.gov.

Mount Margaret Backcountry Permits

Permits are required for overnight camping in the Mount Margaret Backcountry between May 1 and November 30. Permits are available online at Recreation.gov.

Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument Wrist Band

Buy onsite for entrance to Johnston Ridge Observatory and surrounding area, \$12 per person.



Scan this QR Code with your Smartphone camera to get a link to our Recreation Passes and Permits web page.

Day Use Fee Sites on the Forest

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Ape Canyon Trailhead | Lava Canyon Interpretive Site |
| Ape Cave Interpretive Site | Lower Falls Day Use Site |
| Bear Meadow Interpretive Site | Meta Lake Interpretive Site |
| Berry Patch Trailhead | Miners Car Interpretive Site |
| Blue Lake ORV Trailhead | Norway Pass Trailhead |
| *Cascade Peaks Trailhead | Packwood Lake Trailhead |
| Climbers Bivouac Trailhead | Smith Creek (#99D) Trailhead |
| Cold Springs #72 Trailhead | Smith Creek Interpretive Site |
| Crest Trailhead | South Climb #183 Trailhead |
| Cultus Creek #108 Trailhead | Sunset Falls Day Use |
| Falls Creek Falls Trailhead | Taklakh Lake Day Use |
| Goose Lake Boating & Day Use | Thomas Lake #111 Trailhead |
| Harmony Falls Viewpoint | Trail of Two Forests Interpretive Site |
| Ice Cave Picnic Site | Trapper Creek #192/#194 Trailhead |
| Independence Pass Trailhead | Walupt Lake Day Use |
| Indian Heaven #33 Trailhead | Whistle Punk #59 Trailhead |
| Johnston Ridge Observatory | Windy Ridge Interpretive Site |
| Lahar Viewpoint Interpretive Site | Woods Creek Watchable Wildlife Site |

* New day use fee to be implemented in 2024.

Operating Seasons Across the Forest

Recreation Site	Season (approximate)	Ranger District
Ape Cave	mid-May — October	Mount St. Helens
Johnston Ridge Observatory	mid-May — October	Mount St. Helens
Iron Creek	mid-May — September	Cowlitz Valley
La Wis Wis (Closed in 2023)	June — Labor Day	Cowlitz Valley
Taklakh Lake	June — mid-September	Cowlitz Valley
Lower Falls	April — November	Mt. Adams
South Climb Trailhead	June — October	Mt. Adams
Forest Road 25	May/June — November	Mount St. Helens
Forest Road 99 Sites	May/June — November	Mount St. Helens
Hemlock Picnic Area	April — October	Mt. Adams
Panther Creek	mid-May— mid-Sept.	Mt. Adams

Recreation Fee Changes

In 2022 the Gifford Pinchot National Forest solicited public feedback on proposed changes to recreation fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. An amended proposal was then reviewed by a Resource Advisory Committee and their final fee recommendations were approved by the USDA Forest Service.

Learn more about this process, and what the approved Recreation Fee changes are at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/gp/fees.

Trails and Hiking

There are almost 1,500 miles of trails on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Many are multi-purpose trails open to hikers, bicycles, trail bikes, and horses. Others might be developed for Off Highway Vehicles or restricted to non-motorized users. All are great ways to get to know the forest a little better.

Find specific trail information on our recreation pages: www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/giffordpinchot/recreation.



Designed for All

The forest can be a rugged place. Some recreation sites and trails have been designed to be accessible to as many users as possible.

Pacific Northwest Accessible Adventures videos provide ideas of where to go for accessible recreation in the Pacific Northwest. Check out the videos highlighting Mount St Helens: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r6/accessibleadventures.

Washington Trails Association Hiking Guide has a new accessibility filter to help users determine whether a trail is wheelchair-friendly: www.wta.org/go-outside/hikes.



Fishing & Hunting

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest has more than 20 species of fish in 1,360 miles of streams and over 100 lakes. Excellent opportunities for bait, hardware, and fly-fishing abound. Hunting is also popular on portions of the forest.

The State of Washington manages and regulates all hunting, fishing, trapping, and other capture of animals across the forest.

For information about licenses, open areas, and regulations visit the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/>

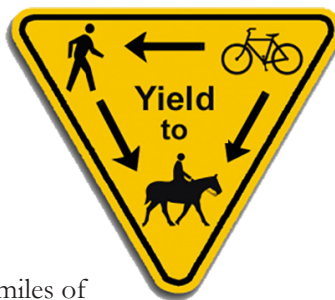


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Adventure Tips

A few things to keep in mind when planning your next trail adventure:

- Trails in Wilderness are non-mechanized, meaning that while pedestrians and pack animals are allowed, trail bikes, OHVs, and bicycles are not.
- Some trails have seasonal closures and many high elevation trails are inaccessible throughout the winter and spring due to snow or road closures.
- Popular map apps may not have the most current information. Never rely solely on your phone for navigation. Bring a trusted map & the ten essentials.
- Check conditions reports on the forest website or contact a forest office for latest conditions.
- When hiking during hunting season, wear bright colors like blaze orange and always be aware of your surroundings.
- **Remember:** Some forest roads may only be passable by high clearance vehicles.



Horses

There are hundreds of miles of trails open to horseback riding on the forest. For safety, hikers and cyclists should remember to yield to horses on trails. Popular trails for equestrians include portions of the Boundary Trail #1 and Packwood Lake Trail #78.

Gifford Pinchot National Forests offers 11 horse camps, several of which have stock water troughs, manure bins, tethering area, and loading ramps. Ask for a horse camp map and brochure at forest offices. View a list of sites online here: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/gp/horsecamping.

To help reduce the spread of invasive species, riders are reminded that weed-free feed is required in national forests in the Pacific Northwest. Weed-free feed includes commercially processed pellets, steamed and rolled grains, or state certified weed-free feed.



Scenic Drives

Looking to spend an afternoon enjoying tall trees and dramatic views? Going for a scenic drive is a popular way to enjoy the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Here are a few routes for a relaxed drive that really showcase the national forest.

State Route 504: State Route (SR) 504 is a paved road that ends at Johnston Ridge Observatory (*closed 2023*). Along the way there are several viewpoints of Mount St. Helens and the Toutle River Valley, as well as three visitor centers along the way.

Cougar to Carson: Take Forest Road (FR) 90, Curly Creek Rd, and FR 30 to drive through the south part of the forest with plenty of recreational sites at which to stop. Bring a picnic lunch and stop at McClellan Viewpoint.

Biking & OHV

There are lots of great trails woven throughout the Gifford Pinchot National Forest open to mountain bikers.

How you rate trail difficulty will depend on your riding experience, the kind of bike you use, your goals, along with the ever-changing factors of weather and trail conditions.

Trail conditions often change. By visiting a Ranger District office on your way out of the forest and letting a Forest Service representative know about a change in trail conditions—such as a fallen tree or washout—you can help bring attention to safety issues.

Road biking: Most roads through the forest are not paved or may have rough surfaces, logging trucks, and/or blind curves. Please use extreme caution.

E-bikes (electric assisted bikes): E-bikes have motors and as such, are only allowed on motorized trails and roads.

OHV: Consult the current Motor Vehicle Use Map for trails open to ATVs and trail bikes. Pick up a free Motor Vehicle Use Map at any ranger district office.



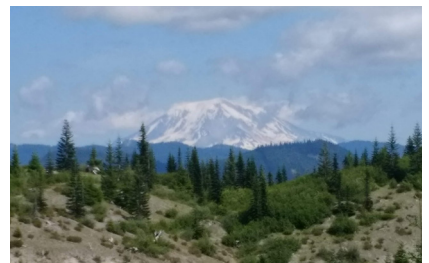
Special Uses

Between guided trips, research studies, outfitters, organized races, large group gatherings like weddings or reunions, commercial filming, communications sites and fund raisers, there are many commercial and large group activities happening on national forests.

These activities fall under a category called Special Uses and may require a permit. For more information about Special Uses permits, visit: www.fs.usda.gov/main/giffordpinchot/passes-permits/event-commercial

Randle Loop:

Make a loop on Forest Roads 23, 76, and 25. The forest surrounding the Cispus River is beautiful and lush. Stop at one of the trails for a hike, or continue south on Forest Road 25 to Forest Road 99 to explore Windy Ridge and views of Mount St. Helens.



Keep in mind that most roads on the forest are unpaved and many are closed in the winter season. Roads are also subject to heaving and pot holes, thanks to a lot of freezing and thawing throughout colder months, as well as our abundance of loosely packed soils from volcanic eruptions. Drive slowly and stay safe.

Mountain Climbing Basics

Thousands of people climb Mt. Adams and Mount St. Helens every year. While considered “non-technical” climbs, both can be dangerous and require careful preparation, good physical fitness, and attention to safety and weather before and during the climb.

- Both mountains require permits year round for summit climbing.
- Winter permits are self-issued and free.
- Mt. Adams climbers need to purchase a Mt. Adams Climbing Pass, May through September, for trips above 7,000 ft. at Recreation.gov.
- Mount St. Helens climbers need to purchase permits through Recreation.gov for trips April–October above 4,800 ft.
- Climbing is pack-in, pack-out– including all solid human waste. Visitors should come prepared with a WAG bag. Some may be available at the trailhead, but this is not guaranteed.
- To lessen over-crowding, climbers are encouraged to plan a weekday trip.

Contact the Mt. Adams Ranger District or Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument office for more information.



Contact Us

Need a forest map, recreation pass or a recommendation for how to spend a day or the weekend on the forest? Forest offices have you covered!

[Cowlitz Valley Ranger District](#)

10024 US Hwy 12
Randle, WA 98377
(360) 497-1100

[Mt. Adams Ranger District](#)

2455 Hwy 141
Trout Lake, WA 98650
(509) 395-3400

[Mount St Helens National Volcanic Monument](#)

42218 N.E. Yale Bridge Rd.
Amboy, WA 98601
(360) 449-7800

Forest Headquarters
(360) 891-5000

From a TTY call 711 to be connected to a Forest Service office.



Volunteers

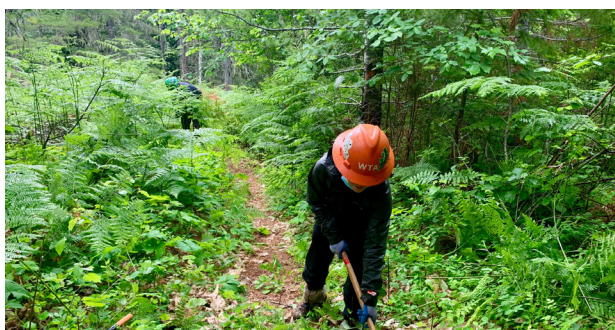
Did you know that volunteers contribute tens of thousands of hours of service to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest annually? That is an amazing amount of critical work that could not have happened without their commitment!



Most of our volunteer projects are led by our valued partner groups. These partners increase recreation opportunities, preserve historic structures, and improve natural habitat on the forest.

Volunteer opportunities include trail maintenance, serving as Wilderness stewards or campground hosts, and helping at events and with education programs.

If you would like to pitch in and improve your public lands consider volunteering! You can find more information at: www.fs.usda.gov/main/giffordpinchot/workingtogether/volunteering



Other Contacts

EMERGENCY (Police, Medical, and Fire)	911
Johnston Ridge Observatory	(360) 274-2140
Recreation Reservations (recreation.gov)	(877) 444-6777
PacifiCorps (campgrounds along SR 503)	(503) 831-6666
Washington State Parks (parks.wa.gov)	(360) 902-8844
Washington Tourism (www.experiencewa.com)	(800) 544-1800
Cowlitz Co. Tourism (www.visitmtsthelens.com)	(360) 577-3137
Lewis Co. Tourism (discoverlewiscounty.com)	(800) 525-3323
Skamania Co. Tourism (www.skamaniacounty.org/visiting)	(509) 427-3980

Winter Recreation

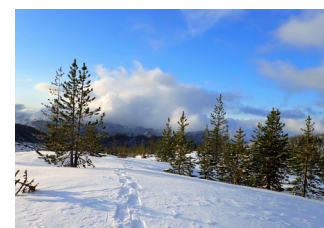
Winter is a beautiful time on the forest. Snow blankets the woods and creates a sense of peace and solitude.



Animals such as some frogs, bears, and snakes hole up to rest out the winter in dens, burrows, or nests. Winter is a good time to look for wildlife tracks in the snow!

For humans the winter season offers several ways to explore the forest. There are groomed cross-country ski trails as well as trails and roads open to snowmobiles throughout the forest.

Snowshoeing is a great way to enjoy winter without having to worry about trails. Trekking in the woods with snowshoes doesn't require trailers or racks and allows visitors to travel to places off the beaten path.



Driving on the forest in the winter season requires planning ahead and a willingness to turn back if conditions prevent safe travel. It is not uncommon for some areas to have more than 12 feet of snow on the ground. Some of this snow may not melt off roads or trails until mid-June, depending on elevation.

Several roads have seasonal closures beginning in late fall, consult your Motor Vehicle Use Map for maps and a full list. Roads that are legally open may still be inaccessible due to snow or require chains.

Parking at designated Sno-Parks requires a Washington state Sno-Park permit, which can be purchased at forest ranger district offices, local businesses, or online:

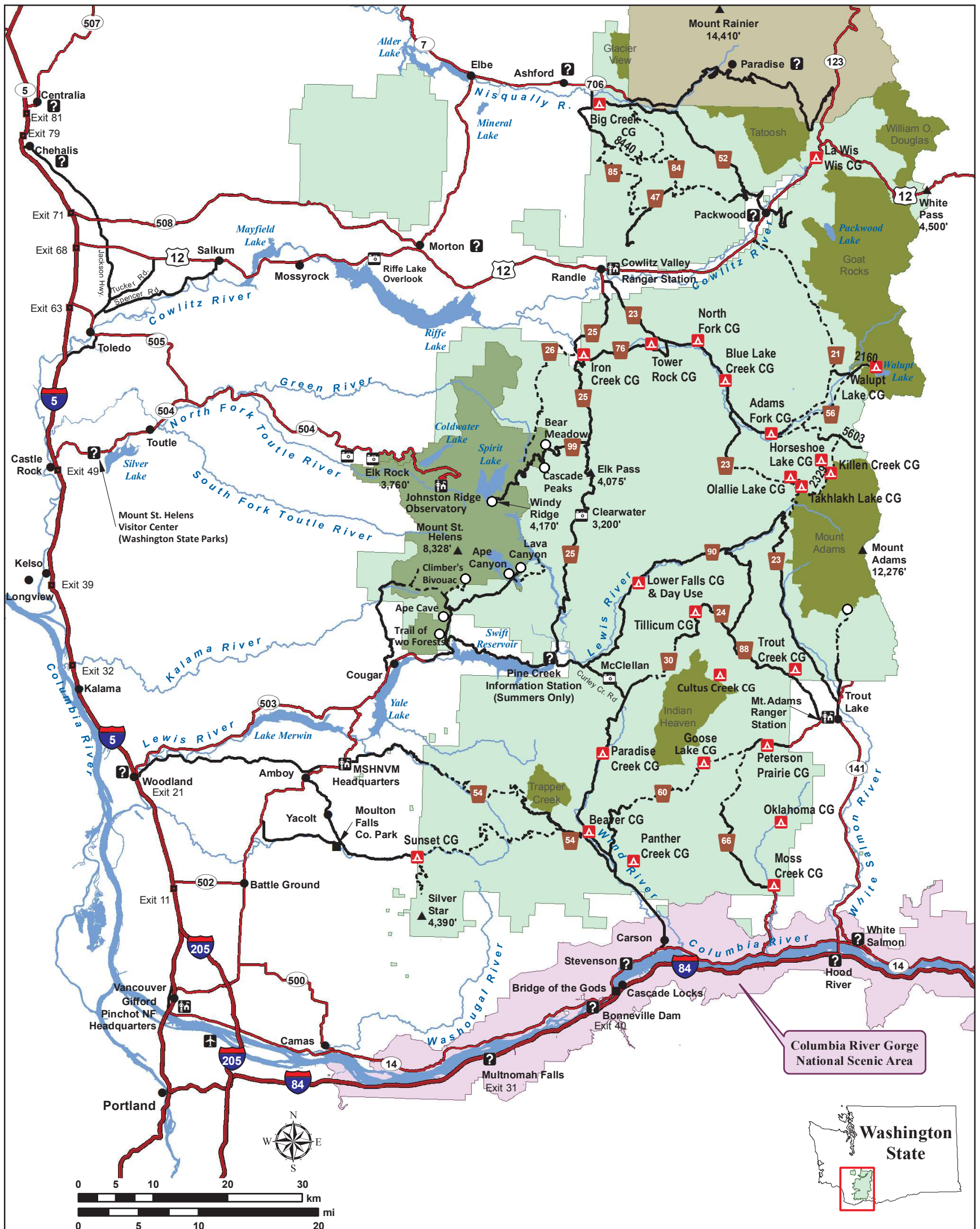
parks.state.wa.us/130/Winter-Recreation

When venturing onto mountain slopes in winter always remember to check the avalanche and weather forecasts at the Northwest Avalanche Center:

www.nwac.us



Gifford Pinchot National Forest Vicinity



For more information, visit our website at:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/giffordpinchot>

or call (360) 891-5000

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|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Forest Boundary | Summit | Interstate Hwy. |
| Mount St. Helens NVM | City, Town, Community | US, State or County Hwy. |
| Wilderness Area | Airport | Paved Road |
| Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area | Recreation Sites | Gravel Road |
| Forest Service Office | Campground | Lakes and River Areas |
| | Information | Rivers |

This map is intended for general reference and is approximate in general proportions.
 Elevations are in Feet

