

Gorge Hikes: West

1 Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Distance: 2.8 miles round trip.
Elevation: Flat.
Difficulty: Easy. Gravel path.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Great birding.

2 Cape Horn Loop

Distance: 8.3 miles round trip.
Elevation: 1,500-foot gain.
Difficulty: Strenuous, steep.
Usage: Heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Sweeping Gorge views, stunning wildflowers, greenery, waterfall. Part of the hike is on a county road with blind corners so take extra care. Not great for children; no dogs.

3 St. Cloud Loop

Distance: 0.5 miles round trip.
Elevation: 150-foot gain.
Difficulty: Easy. Universal-access trail.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? N.W. Forest Pass.
Highlights: Old apple orchard alongside the Columbia River. Wildlife and river views.

4 Sams Walker Loop

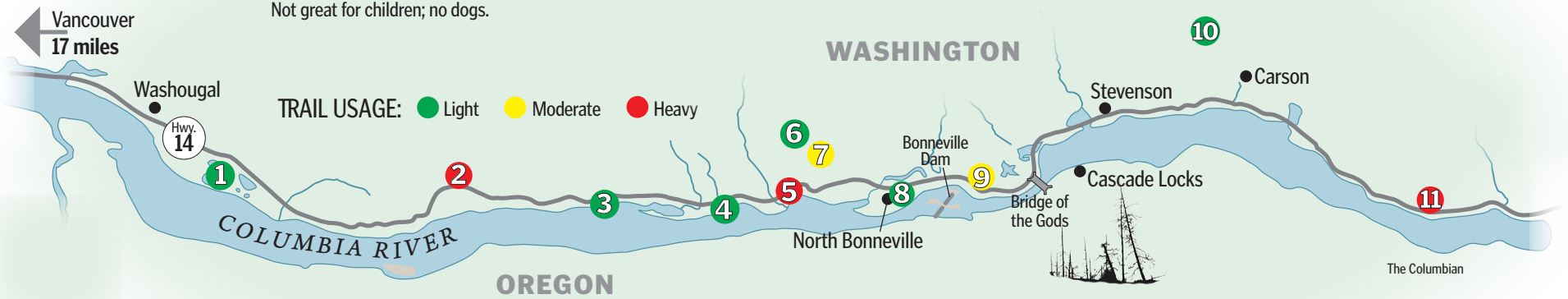
Distance: 1.1 miles round trip.
Elevation: 50-foot gain.
Difficulty: Easy.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? N.W. Forest Pass.
Highlights: Stroll through former farmland. Gravel trail, beautiful views, river access, picnic area. Near Skamania General Store.

5 Beacon Rock Trail

Distance: 1.8 miles round trip.
Elevation: 680-foot gain.
Difficulty: Doesn't look like it, but easy.
Usage: Heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Edgy but protected staircase climb to spectacular 360-degree views. If parking is crowded, try the mostly overlooked Doetch Day Use Area, about one mile west of Beacon Rock, and walk the easy, interpretive River-to-Rock Trail back to the Beacon Rock trailhead.

6 Hadley Trail

Distance: 1.2 miles round trip.
Elevation: 138-foot gain.
Difficulty: Easy.
Usage: Wheelchair accessible.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Fir forest, Bonneville Dam views.



Entry permits/fees

- WA Discover Pass for state parks and recreation lands: \$10 for one-day pass (can be bought onsite), \$30 for annual pass.
- N.W. Forest Pass for many (but not all) federal and Forest Service lands: \$5 or \$10 for one-day pass, \$30 for annual pass. Purchase online or check website for retail locations.
- Dog Mountain: Site-specific permit for \$1.50, plus \$5 parking fee.

Getting there

- Dog Mountain Shuttle: Weekends only, now through July 1, \$2 round-trip shuttle service between the Skamania County Fairgrounds in Stevenson and the Dog Mountain trailhead.
- Summer trailhead bus: Weekends only, starting July 7, Skamania County's West End Transit bus makes several trailhead stops between Vancouver and Washougal transit centers and Stevenson.

7 Hamilton Mountain Loop

Distance: 9.4 miles round trip.
Elevation: 2,100-foot gain.
Difficulty: Strenuous.
Usage: Moderate to heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Cliffs, waterfalls, deep forests, stunning views. Links to equally strenuous Hardy Ridge Trail, others.

8 Strawberry/Hamilton Island Loop

Distance: 4 miles round trip.
Elevation: Flat.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: No.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Trailhead in North Bonneville. Woods, open meadows, wildflowers. Also, don't miss the historic, easy Fort Cascades Loop stroll, nearby to the east.

9 Gillette Lake via Pacific Crest Trail

Distance: 5.4 miles round trip.
Elevation: 648-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Moderate.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? N.W. Forest Pass.
Highlights: Starts at the gravel Tamanous Trail at Bonneville trailhead, joins Pacific Crest Trail. Stocked trout lake, waterfowl. Links to expert-level Table Mountain Trail.

10 Whistle Punk Loop

Distance: 1.5 miles round trip.
Elevation: Flat.
Difficulty: Easy. Wheelchair accessible.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? N.W. Forest Pass.
Highlights: Near Stabler, north of Carson. Follow Wind River Highway, Hemlock Road, Forest Service roads 41, 417. Historical information, boardwalks, benches, marsh bird viewing.

11 Dog Mountain Loop

Distance: 6.9 miles round trip.
Elevation: 2,820 feet.
Difficulty: Strenuous.
Usage: Heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? N.W. Forest Pass; Dog Mountain permit on weekends through July 1; parking costs additional \$5. Shuttle service from Skamania County Fairgrounds on weekends through July 1.
Highlights: Tough but popular due to easy trail access and great wildflowers. About a mile east is Dog Creek Falls, a short, easy trail and viewpoint.

SOURCES: Friends of the Columbia Gorge, WA State Parks, U.S. Forest Service

— Compiled by Scott Hewitt

Gorge Hikes: East

1 Weldon Wagon Trail

Distance: 5 miles round trip.
Elevation: 1,340-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Remote but worth it; unique oak conservation area, great wildflowers, great mountain biking. Follow Highway 141 north to Husum; right onto gravel Indian Creek Road, left onto Indian Cemetery Rd.

2 Coyote Wall/Labyrinth/Catherine Creek

Distance: Miles and miles.
Elevation: As much as 1,700-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate to challenging.
Usage: Heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Hugely popular thanks to the Gorge's best wildflowers and vastest views; very tough parking. Three trailheads, mazelike trails. Don't get lost!

3 Catherine Creek Universal Access Loop

Distance: 1.4 miles round trip.
Elevation: 50-foot gain.
Difficulty: Easy. Wheelchair accessible (but rough parking lot).
Usage: Heavy.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Wildflowers, views, interpretive panels.

4 Balfour-Klickitat Loop

Distance: 0.75 mile round trip.
Elevation: 150-foot gain.
Difficulty: Easy.
Usage: Moderate.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Universal access trail is great for families; year-round birding (and bald eagles in winter). West side of Klickitat River in Lyle.

5 Klickitat State Park Trail

Distance: 31 miles long, one way, with many access points.
Elevation: Gently rolling.
Difficulty: Easy to moderate.
Usage: Moderate.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Former rail corridor; first two miles are packed gravel, the rest more primitive. Consider car drop-off at the trailhead and pick-up up the trail. Wildflowers, riverside picnic spots, oak and pine forests.



6 Lyle Cherry Orchard Trail

Distance: 5 miles round trip.
Elevation: 1,500-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Moderate.
Restroom: No.
Pass or fee? No.
Highlights: Not much historic cherry orchard left, but great views and uniquely scenic, sculptural oak conservation area.

7 Columbia Hills State Park/Horsethief Butte

Distance: 1.5 miles round trip.
Elevation: 150-foot gain (more if you climb up and through the butte).
Difficulty: Easy (unless, etc.).
Usage: Heavy.
Restrooms: Yes.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Views of massive outcropping and Columbia River. Walking around is easy; climbing up and through is strenuous.

8 Columbia Hills State Park/Crawford Oaks to Dallas Mountain Ranch Loop

Distance: 9 miles round trip.
Elevation: 1,300-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Heavy.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Meandering trails ascend rolling hills to historic ranch and nearby paragliding launchpad. Upper trailhead too; can make further ascent to Stacker Butte. Awesome birding.

9 Maryhill Museum of Art

Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, admission \$12. Outdoor sculpture garden is free.
Highlights: Eclectic collection of modern art and Indian artifacts. Onsite cafe, vast Gorge views.

10 Stonehenge Memorial

Open 7 a.m. to dusk daily, free. Uneven gravel.
Highlights: Exact reproduction of English monument; river views; Sam Hill's tomb.

11 Brooks Memorial State Park

Distance: 9 miles of hiking trails.
Elevation: 1,000-foot gain.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Usage: Light.
Restroom: Yes.
Pass or fee? WA Discover Pass.
Highlights: Wildlife and birds, mountain biking and horseback riding, camping, cabins.

SOURCES: Friends of the Columbia Gorge, WA State Parks, U.S. Forest Service

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