

Geologic and Historic Hikes of Washington State



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Rank Requirements

Tenderfoot Requirements (1A, 1B, and 1C)

- Show the gear used on an overnight, sleep at least one night in a tent you pitch yourself, and explain the Outdoor Code use on trip

Tenderfoot Requirements (2A, 2B, and 2C)

- Prepare meals on campout with your patrol, clean up after the meal, and eat with your patrol

Second Class Requirements (1A, 1B, and 1C)

- More campouts and Leave No Trace

Second Class Requirements (3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, and 4)

- 5 mile Hike with Map and Compass, and Identify Animals

First Class Requirements (1A, 1B, and 5A)

- More outings or campouts and Identify Plants



Merit Badge Requirements



Hiking Merit Badge

- 10 mile and 20 mile hikes (no overnights)

Camping Merit Badge

- (a) Camp a total of at least 20 nights at designated Scouting activities or events. One long-term camping experience of up to six consecutive nights may be applied toward this requirement. Sleep each night under the sky or in a tent you have pitched. If the camp provides a tent that has already been pitched, you need not pitch your own tent.
- (b) On any of these camping experiences, you must do TWO of the following, only with proper preparation and under qualified supervision.
 - (1) Hike up a mountain, gaining at least 1,000 vertical feet.
 - (2) Backpack, snowshoe, or cross-country ski for at least 4 miles.
 - (3) Take a bike trip of at least 15 miles or at least four hours.
 - (4) Take a nonmotorized trip on the water of at least four hours or 5 miles.
 - (5) Plan and carry out an overnight snow camping experience.
 - (6) Rappel down a rappel route of 30 feet or more.
- (c) On any of these camping experiences, perform a conservation project approved by the landowner or land managing agency. This can be done alone or with others.

U.S. and WA Historic Hikes

- Cougar Mountain (Newcastle, WA)
- Discovery Park (Seattle, WA)
- Ebey's Landing (Coupeville, WA)
- Fort Casey (Coupeville, WA)
- Fort Ebey (Coupeville, WA)
- Gingko Petrified Forest (Vantage, WA)
- Glacier Basin Trail (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Grove of the Patriarchs (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Heybrook Lookout (Index, WA)
- Iron Goat Trail (Scenic, WA)
- Lime Kiln Trail (Granite Falls, WA)
- Mercer Slough Trail (Bellevue, WA)
- Monti Cristo Ghost Town (Granite Falls, WA)
- Padilla Bay (Mt. Vernon, WA)
- Whiskey Dick Wildlife Area (Ellensburg, WA)



Ebey's Landing

Fort Ebey and Ebey's Landing

The History

- Ebey's Landing is a National Historic Reserve that encompasses about 17,000 acres of farmland, coastal bluffs, prairie grasslands, and beach access.
- In 1792 when the explorer Captain George Vancouver was exploring the Puget Sound he named Whidbey Island after his Lieutenant, Joseph Whidbey.
- In 1850 the Donation Land Law came into effect. The law stated that free land would be given to anyone in Oregon territory who homesteaded the land for four years or more.
- Colonel Isaac Neff Ebey was one of the first settlers to make a land claim on Whidbey Island, and he soon brought his family over to settle on the island.
- Ebey constructed a blockhouse to defend his land against the local Indians, and you can still go inside the restored remains of that blockhouse today.
- Ebey died young in 1857 when the local Indians murdered him in revenge for other settlers killing one of their chieftains.
- Farmers continued to settle on Whidbey Island in the coming years, and the seaport of Coupeville, named after Captain Thomas Coupe, sprang up by the end of the 19th century.
- In 1890 Fort Casey was built, and it was part of a three-fort defense system to guard the entrance of Puget Sound. One of these forts was Fort Ebey which lies to the north of the historic reserve.

Fort Ebey and Ebey's Landing

Trail:

- 5.5 mile round trip
- 260 ft Elevation gain
- Open year round, but windy and cold in winter
- Open to hikers from Cub Scout to Venturing
- Wildlife includes: eagles, whales, seals, seagulls, ravens, etc...
- Views of Admiralty Inlet and Puget Sound



Discovery Park

The History:

- Former site of Fort Lawton.
- Fort Lawton opened in 1900 to help protect Puget Sound, and was named after Major General Henry Lawton.
- The garrison remained small, and during the great depression the Army offered to sell Fort Lawton back to Seattle for only one dollar. Seattle declined citing potential maintenance costs.
- During WWII the fort became the embarkation point for thousands of soldiers and materials heading to the South Pacific. There was also a prisoner of war camp at the fort that housed over 1,000 German prisoners during WWII.
- During the Korean War in the 1950s, Fort Lawton became the site for one of many Nike anti-aircraft missile batteries. The fort hosted the control center for the missile sites spread throughout the sound region.
- It was in 1973 that most of the land surrounding the military base was given back to Seattle to become Discovery Park.
- The Army reserve remained on site until 2012.
- The roads in the park are from military era, but are now only traveled by park vehicles.
- You can also see a FAA radar (the big dome thing) that tracks commercial flights for SeaTac (as their primary backup).
- The West Point Sewage Treatment Plant is located near the lighthouse, so some areas of the trail might smell a bit.

Discovery Park

The Trail:

- Difficulty: Easy to Medium
- Recommended Time of Year: Year-round hiking opportunities. Snow is rare in winter.
- How to get there/Where to park: Discovery Park Visitor/Learning Center has the best parking. 3801 Discovery Park Blvd, Seattle, WA 98199
- There is also a south parking lot, some parking at the beach near the lighthouse, and some near the Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center. No park pass or entry fee is required.
- Mileage/Elevation Gain: Depends on route. Recommended route about 3 miles round trip with a 140 foot elevation gain. This is just the main loop trail, but there is a recommended side hike down to the beach and the West Point Lighthouse. If you take the side hike add another half mile to mile to the trek with a further couple hundred feet of elevation gain and loss. Trail maps are available online and at the trailhead.



Iron Goat Trail

The History:

- In late February of 1910 a snow slide blocked the path of two trains on the tracks near the town of Wellington, WA, just below Stevens Pass.
- Passengers had the option to spend the night in Wellington while the tracks were cleared or stay on the trains.
- After the trains had been stuck for days, a few climbed down the steep snowy slopes to Scenic, WA, along the route of Hwy 2 today. Most passengers stayed on the trains and some of the work crew too.
- Late one night it started raining which added more weight to the snow above the tracks, to the point where it could not take in anymore, and it slid down taking the trains with it.
- Nearly 100 lives were lost that tragic day.
- Eventually a new tunnel on the opposite side of the valley was created in 1929, but even to this day the Wellington train disaster is known as the deadliest recorded in the United States.



Iron Goat Trail

The Trail:

- Variable in length and Elevation gain depending on which trailhead is taken.
- Upper trailhead Cubs on up
- Lower Trailhead Scouts to Venturing
- Middle Trailhead Experienced older scouts and Venturing
- Time of year: Summer and early fall once the snow is no longer at Stevens Pass
- Wild Strawberries a plenty in summer so bring a bucket.



Monte Cristo Ghost Town

The History:

- In the 1890s a mining boom helped spur the creation of a railroad line along the South Fork of the Sauk River to the area of Monte Cristo, Washington.
- A town was created to process the iron-silver ore from the mountains, and it prospered for about another decade.
- At its peak the area had over 200 claims, but by 1907 due to funding problems, flooding along the rail line, and mining claims that did not live up to their potential, the town was abandoned.
- An attempt was made to turn the town into a resort, but even that was only ever a dream.
- Today the Monte Cristo Preservation Society helps maintain the ghost town, and leads tours around Halloween for all who care to visit.
- Some of the old buildings still stand, and you can trip over some of the few remaining artifacts if you do not look where you are going.
- There are signs that indicate where streets and houses used to be, and the Harry Potter fan in me was highly amused when I found the site of the Riddle House.



Monti Cristo Ghost Town

The Trail:

- Mileage: 8 mile round trip
- Elevation: 700 foot gain
- Can walk 4-5 abreast
- Difficulty: Cub to Venturing
- Time of year: Spring to Fall (check snow levels)



Washington State Geologic Hikes

- Ancient Lakes (Quincy, WA in Eastern WA)
- Baker River (Mt. Baker area)
- Baker Lake (Mt. Baker area)
- Berkeley Park (Mt. Rainier National Park Sunrise side)
- Beckler Peak (Skykomish, WA)
- Chain Lakes Loop (Mt. Baker National Park)
- Cowiche Canyon (Yakima, WA)
- Gingko Petrified Forest (Vantage, WA)
- Glacier Basin Trail (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Lake Ann (Mt. Baker National Park)
- Lake Twenty Two (Granite Falls, WA)
- Maple Pass/Heather loop trail (Marblemount, WA)
- Mt. Walker (Quilcene, WA)
- Naches Peak Loop (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Nisqually Vista Loop (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Panarama Point (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Park Butte/Scott Paul Trail (Mt. Baker National Park)
- Pinnacle Saddle (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Robinson Canyon (Ellensburg, WA)
- Rosario Head (Deception Pass, WA)
- Spray Park (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Snow Lake (North Bend, WA)
- Summerland (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- The Enchantments (Leavenworth, WA)
- Tolmie Peak (Mt. Rainier National Park)
- Umtanum Creek Canyon (Ellensburg)



Nisqually Vista Loop (Mt. Rainier Nat. Park)

Chain Lakes Loop (Mt. Baker National Park)

The History:

- Mt. Baker is 10,781 feet tall mountain, and is the youngest volcano in the Cascade mountain range.
- Mt. Baker is less than 100,000 years old, which is very young compared to the geologic record.
- Mt. Baker does not have a particularly explosive history compared to say Mt. Rainier, but 6,600 years ago Mt. Baker pulled a Mt. St. Helens and blew its top completely off.
- In my pictures, follow the side of the mountain down from the peak and reach another small peak. If you follow the angle of that small peak up into the air then you can imagine how high Mt. Baker used to be before it blew its old top off.
- The lahar, volcanic mudslide, from that eruption raced down into the Fraser river valley, and has helped to make Whatcom county and especially around the city of Bellingham a very fertile farming area.
- No major eruptions have taken place in recent times, but there has been activity on the mountain as recently as 2007 of shifting gases.



Chain Lakes Loop (Mt. Baker National Park)

The Trail:

- The trail we took started up at the ski areas on Mt. Baker at the Heather Meadows visitor center, and climbed from up the Wild Goose trail to Artist Vista.
- Artist Vista was the first sighting of Mt. Baker on one side and Mount Shuksan on the other.
- We then hiked along the side of Table Mountain until we hiked down into the basin that contained a series of lakes. The first lake we came to was called Lake Mazama.
- The next lake you come to is called Iceberg Lake. This Lake was the biggest of the chain lakes, and actually did have icebergs floating on its surface.
- The next lake we came to was Hayes Lake and it was also a fairly large lake with plenty of camping spots around it.
- We climbed back up to a saddle, and then looked down into the blue Bagley lakes below the Heather Meadows visitor center where we started from.
- The entire loop was called the chain lakes trail loop, and according to the guides was about an 8 mile roundtrip.
- 2,000 foot elevation gain. The trail consisted of a lot of ups and downs, and we traversed one snow field after another.
- 7 hours of hiking +



Rosario Head (Deception Pass State Park)

The History:

- Deception Pass is a stretch of dangerous waters that separates Whidbey Island from the rest of the Puget Sound, and the Rosario Head area is a geologic fascinating area that has been a subject of much debate between the geology departments at Western Washington University (my almmater) and the University of Washington.
- An ocean floor sequence of rocks starts with Pillow Basalt (rock resulting in magma from an underwater volcano hitting ocean water and quickly cooling), Columnar Basalt (result of magma coming up through cracks and hardening), and a layer of Pelagic rock that is the result of crud from the seafloor being pressed over time until it becomes rock.
- Rosario Head has the Pillow Basalt and the Pelagic Rocks, but no Columnar Basalt and it is this mystery that has sparked two theories.
- The UW believes that the reason for the missing layer is that Rosario Head is really different ocean floor sequences that got smashed together and cut out the middleman (or middle layer) so to speak.
- WWU believes that this area is full of folding and faulting, and so the middle layer must have gotten displaced by an earthquake at some point and the missing layer is now in the ocean and thus not seen.
- I side with WWU (I mapped the fault line at one point for a class), but there is no real proof one way or the other so far. Thus the debate.



Rosario Head (Deception Pass State Park)

The Trail:

- Length and elevation gain depend on which parking lot you start at, but figure a couple of miles round trip and a couple hundred feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Year Round. Coastal hike with little to no snow in winter
- Difficulty: Cub to Venturing.
- Combine with Geology Merit Badge, and try to solve a mystery!



The Enchantments (Stuart Mountain Range Leavenworth, WA)

The History:

- The Mount Stuart batholith underlies the Stuart Range and the nearby Wenatchee Mountains.
- The batholith is about 13 by 16 miles in extent.
- Two plutonic masses are separated by a thin screen of Chiwaukum Schist and rocks of the Ingalls Complex.
- The more-eastern pluton is 93 million years old, while the more-western rock mass is between 83 and 86 million years old.
- Exposed rock tends to be quartz diorite and granodiorite



The Enchantments (Stuart Mountain Range Leavenworth, WA)

The Trail:

- Trails vary in length and elevation, but most of the trails gain a large amount of elevation in a short amount of time.
- Time of year: Summer to early fall. Keep an eye on the snow levels
- Difficulty: Older Scouts to Venturing



Pinnacle Saddle (Mt. Rainier National Park)

The History:

- Tallest mountain in Cascade Range at 14,411 feet.
- The last major eruption, on par to that of Mt. St. Helens in magnitude, of Mt. Rainier was about 2,300 years ago though some scientists say that Mt. Rainier erupted as recently as 1894.
- It is for these reasons that Mt. Rainier is still considered active even though it looks very peaceful if you view it today.
- Mt. Rainier is considered one of the most dangerous volcanoes in the world, and it is on the Decade Volcano list.
- Because of its large amount of glacial ice, Mt. Rainier could produce massive lahars that could threaten the entire Puyallup River valley. "About 80,000 people and their homes are at risk in Mount Rainier's lahar-hazard zones."
- In the lead-up to Super Bowl XLVIII, the Washington State Senate passed a resolution on Friday, January 31, 2014, temporarily renaming the mountain Mount Seattle Seahawks until the midnight after the Super Bowl, Monday, February 3, 2014, in response to the renaming of 53 mountains in Colorado after the 53 members of the Denver Broncos by Governor of Colorado John Hickenlooper.



Pinnacle Saddle (Mt. Rainier National Park)

The Trail:

- Pinnacle Saddle is next to Pinnacle Peak on a ridge line across a valley from the mountain.
- The Pinnacle Saddle trail is a 3.5 mile roundtrip with a 1,150 foot elevation gain.
- The trail climbs up along one rockslide after another until it reaches the saddle.
- From the saddle you can look one direction and see Mt. Rainier and all its snow sparkling in the sunlight, and on a clear day in the other direction you can see as far as Mt. Hood in Oregon.
- If you look closely in one of the pictures you can see the ghost of Mt. St. Helens next to a ridge with snow.
- Time of year: Summer
- Difficulty: Scout to Venturing



Harry's Ridge (Mt St Helens Volcanic Monument)

The History:

- Mt. St. Helens became a historic monument when it erupted on May 18th 1980, and off its top in a sideways direction.
- Mt. St. Helens tells the story of devastation followed by the seeming rebirth of the landscape as the wildlife and wildflowers return to the volcanic slopes.
- Mount St. Helens takes its English name from the British diplomat Lord St Helens, a friend of explorer George Vancouver who made a survey of the area in the late 18th century.
- Fifty-seven people were killed; 250 homes, 47 bridges, 15 miles (24 km) of railways, and 185 miles (298 km) of highway were destroyed.
- A massive debris avalanche, triggered by an earthquake of magnitude 5.1, caused a lateral eruption that reduced the elevation of the mountain's summit from 9,677 ft (2,950 m) to 8,363 ft (2,549 m), leaving a 1 mile (1.6 km) wide horseshoe-shaped crater.
- The debris avalanche was up to 0.7 cubic miles (2.9 km³) in volume.



Harry's Ridge (Mt St Helens Volcanic Monument)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 9 mile round trip with 1,300 feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Spring, Summer, and early fall
- Difficulty: Scout to Venturing
- The ridge was named after Harry R. Truman who was a famous local who had decided not to evacuate before the eruption and died during the events that followed.
- Three volcanoes seen from top of Harry's Ridge are Mt. Adams towards Spirit Lake, and Mt. Hood in the shadow of Mt. St. Helens.



Additional Hikes: Padilla Bay (Mt Vernon, WA)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 4.4 mile round trip with 30 feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Year round even in winter
- Difficulty: Cub and older
- Very popular birding trail. Can be combined with the Bird Study Merit Badge.

History:

- Old dock and old barn no longer used
- Padilla Bay is a protected estuary and sea grass bed



Additional Hikes: Ginkgo Petrified Forest (Vantage, WA)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 3 mile round trip with 200 feet elevation gain for main trail next to creek.
- Total Mileage: 20 miles of trails surrounding the canyon (Including to a Winery)
- Time of year: Spring thru Fall
- Difficulty: Cub and older
- Wild flowers in spring

History:

- Fissure eruptions burned the trees around 17 to 6 million years ago due to hot spot.



Additional Hikes: Cowiche Canyon (Yakima, WA)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 3 mile round trip with 20 feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Spring thru Fall
- Difficulty: Cub and older

History:

- Channeled Scablands and Glacial Lake Missoula



Additional Hikes: Gold Creek Basin (Snoqualmie Pass, WA)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 3 mile round trip with 10 feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Winter for Snowshoeing
- Difficulty: Cub and older



Additional Hikes: Big 4 Ice Caves (Silverton, WA)

The Trail:

- Mileage and Elevation Gain: 2.2 mile round trip with 220 feet elevation gain
- Time of year: Winter for Snowshoeing
- Difficulty: Cub and older
- Avalanche Danger

