Klickitat Rail Trail

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By Steve Jones

This week I went on the upper portion of the Klickitat Rail Trail from the Harms Road Trailhead. This is a great time of the year to take this hike because the top portion of the trail has little shade.

The creek gently flows along the converted railroad grade as it descends towards the town of Klickitat. The trail is either level or downhill all the way to the Columbia River at Lyle.

I think this trail is becoming more popular because I met several people on the trail on a weekday. The day was most pleasant with an occasional light wind. I stopped for lunch at a wide spot on the creek and watched the ground squirrels in on the rock cliffs across the stream.

Pine trees are growing in several spots along the trail and are beginning to shade parts of the trail. There are several places where rocks have tumbled off cliffs and down hills into the trail. I stopped several times to toss or roll rocks off the trail.

Spring wildflowers are blooming, most of them are desert parsleys with either yellow or purple flowers. I saw a few ducks resting in river pools and hawks circling overhead.

The trail crosses over several railroad trestles that have

decking on them so you can safely walk over them. None of them are very far above the creek and there are really no cliffs to fall off of as you're walking along the trail.

After a few hours I turned back and returned to my truck at Harms Road. I didn't see any snakes and I didn't get any ticks on me. This portion of the trail closes between July and October due to wildfire danger and the difficulty accessing the canyon.

Many people choose to mountain bike this trail. If you want to hike the canyon one way you can create a car shuttle.

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