

The
Chinook Trail



Official Hiking & Backpacking Guide

Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Part 2



Note: This trail guide is a continuation of the Yacolt Burn State Forest & Silver Star Scenic Area Chinook Trail guide. This section of the trail is not designated as part of National Recreation Trail at this time. This is the suggested route from the Chinook Trail Association and is 41 miles in length. Regional Map: National Geographic, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area #821.

Chinook Trail - Route Summary

Start: Bluff Mountain Trailhead, Road 41 junction

Section 8: NF Road 41: 11.8 miles

Section 9: Pacific Crest Trail #2000: 16.3 miles

Section 10: Grassy Knoll Trail #146: 3.4 miles

Section 11: NF Road 68: 7 miles

Section 12: NF Road 66: 1.9 miles

Section 13: Oklahoma Road: 0.6 miles (to Willard Road, bridge)

End: Willard Road, Bridge

Trailhead Information

Road 41, Bluff Mountain Trailhead

Directions:

Latitude: 45.780032 | Longitude: -122.166932

From Vancouver WA, take Highway 503 north to Battleground. Continue north on 503 (NE Lewisville Hwy) for 5.6 miles. Turn right (east) onto NE 152 Ave./Rock Creek Rd. Continue as the road curves south then east and becomes Lucia Falls Rd. After 8.6 miles, turn right on Sunset Falls Rd. Go 7.3 miles on Sunset Falls Rd to Sunset Campground. Turn right and cross the East Fork Lewis River on NF Road 41. Stay on NF 41 for approximately 9 miles to a large parking area atop McKinley Ridge.

Section 8: NF Road 41

Distance

- 11.8: NF Road 502 and Bluff Mountain Trail #172 junction to NF Road 41

Day Hike Access

- Bluff Mountain Trailhead

Trail Summary

- This section of trail follows Road 41 for nearly 12 miles up on a high ridge to the Pacific Crest Trail junction. This road provides spectacular views of the surrounding mountains including Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Rainier, Mt. Adams, and Mt. Hood. Views of the Columbia River come into view as the Chinook Trail continues east through the Columbia River Gorge in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. There are several areas to camp along the road, but many do not have water sources, plan accordingly. There are also several forest road junctions, so read signs correctly. After 11.8 miles on NF Road 41, you'll see a trail junction that brings you on to the Pacific Crest Trail. PCT trail markers should reassure that you are on the correct trail. From here, continue east on the PCT.

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **Bluff Mountain Trail Junction**
 - Latitude: 45.754761 | Longitude: -122.18438
- **3.58** **4th of July Camp**
 - Latitude: 45.799323 | Longitude: -122.118397
- **8.6** **Mowich Camp**
 - Latitude: 45.793172 | Longitude: -122.043132
- **11.8** **Junction with PCT/Sedum Ridge Trail/ NF Road 41**
 - Latitude: 45.793145 | Longitude: -122.001098

Elevation Range

- 2948 ft – 3564 ft

Water

- 4th of July Camp has a seasonal spring drain. Spring and early summer provide the best flow. By summer, this spring may not be flowing so plan accordingly. From the open camping area, head West/ Southwest. You'll see a utility shed, nearby a pipe will have running water. CTA recommends you filter the water. Latitude: 45.799319 | Longitude: -122.119417

Camping

- 4th of July Camp provides a large camping open area with plenty of room for many tents. There are no facilities up here. Water is seasonal. There are firepits for spring campers.
- Mowich Camp consists of a few primitive campsites along Road 41, on the southern side of the road. No water source.

Section 9: Pacific Crest Trail #2000

Distance

- 16.3 miles: Road 41 junction to Grassy Knoll Trail #146 junction

Day Hike Access

- This section has various trailheads that can provide accessibility, including: Trout Creek, Wind River/ Highway, and Panther Creek Campground.

Trail Summary

- This section of the Chinook Trail adopts 16 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail. The trail is well maintained and easy to follow, as the PCT is well marked. There are many river crossings and high ridge views that will bring you through dense evergreen forests. The further you head east the more you'll see the environment change from a temperate forest to a dry forest as you move through the Cascade Mountain range.

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **NF Road 41 & PCT #2000 Junction**
 - Latitude: 45.793145 | Longitude: -122.001098
- **3.7** **Trout Creek Crossing (footbridge)**
 - Latitude: 45.811125 | Longitude: -121.956492
- **6.5** **Wind River Crossing (footbridge)**
 - Latitude: 45.820650 | Longitude: -121.916038
- **6.7** **Wind River Highway Crossing**
 - Latitude: 45.820653 | Longitude: -121.912933
- **8.6** **Panther Creek Road Crossing (near Panther Creek Campground)**
 - Latitude: 45.817622 | Longitude: -121.881162
- **8.8** **Panther Creek Crossing (footbridge)**
 - Latitude: 45.818141 | Longitude: -121.877081
- **12.8** **NF 68 Crossing**
 - Latitude: 45.828183 | Longitude: -121.835693
- **16.3** **Grass Knoll Junction**
 - Latitude: 45.847935 | Longitude: -121.785547

Elevation Range

- 890 ft - 3,980 ft

Water

- This section of trail has many places to filter water from year-round creeks and rivers, as well as many seasonal streams. Trout Creek, Wind River, and Panther creek provide great sources of water.

Camping

- All of the rivers and creeks mentioned above have areas that are durable to camp nearby. Panther Creek Campground is also a great place to camp for the night, though reservations well in advance are recommended as it's a popular campground in the Columbia Gorge. Remember to practice Leave No Trace principles.

Section 10: Grassy Knoll Trail #146

Distance

- 3.4 miles: Pacific Crest Trail junction to NF Road 68 junction

Day Hike Access

- Grassy Knoll Trailhead

Trail Summary

- From the junction with the PCT, the trail descends nearly 1,000 feet to the trailhead and junction with NF Road 68. This pleasant downhill gives you wonderful views of the Columbia Gorge as well as glimpses of Mt. Adams. Through the open wild flower fields, you'll see Mt. Hood standing south of you as you wind your way down to the trailhead. Of course, a large grassy knoll, as the name implies, will give you some of the greatest views during this unique and enjoyable hike.

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **Pacific Crest Trail Junction**
 - Latitude: 45.847935 | Longitude: -121.785547
- **1.5** **Cold Springs Camp**
 - Latitude: 45.833951 | Longitude: -121.769124
- **3.4** **Grassy Knoll Trailhead/ NF road 68 junction**
 - Latitude: 45.797708 | Longitude: -121.741422

Elevation Range

- 2,880 ft - 3,980 ft

Water

- Cold Springs Camp: A short trail leads to the spring just north of the camp, about 300 feet. Filter your water.
 - Latitude: 45.83414 | Longitude: -121.77008

Camping

- Cold Springs Camp: a shady area suitable for a few tents and water access.
 - Latitude: 45.797708 | Longitude: -121.741422

Section 11: NF Road 68

Distance

- 7 miles: Grassy Knoll junction to NF Road 66 junction

Day Hike Access

- This section is not recommended for a day hike.

Trail Summary

- NF Road 68 is a gravel Forest Service road through the southern region of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The road for the most part parallels Lost Creek through dense forest. The road does see light traffic on the weekends, be cautious.

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **Grassy Knoll Trailhead/ NF road 68 junction**
 - Latitude: 45.797708 | Longitude: -121.741422
- **3.4** **Lost Creek (creek runs under road)**
 - Latitude: 45.792922 | Longitude: -121.727096
- **7.0** **NF Road 68/ NF Road 66 junction**
 - Latitude: 45.795396 | Longitude: -121.668766

Elevation Range

- 1,706ft - 2,850 ft

Water

- Around mile 3.4 on the road, Lost Creek flows year-round and may provide water if needed, though there is no easy way to the water. Filter your water.

Camping

- Camping is available in pull outs and down a few old logging roads. Be cautious of vehicles driving down the road. Use Lost Creek for water.

Section 12: NF Road 66

Distance

- 1.9 miles: NF Road 68 junction to Oklahoma Road junction

Day Hike Access

- This section is not recommended for a day hike.

Trail Summary

- NF Road 66 is a paved road through the forest. This short section of road will bring you through patches of logged forest until you reach Oklahoma Road. This road may at times be heavily used. Be cautious and get off of the road when vehicles are approaching.

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **NF Road 68/ NF Road 66 junction**
 - Latitude: 45.795396 | Longitude: -121.668766
- **1.9** **NF Road 66 junction/ Oklahoma Road junction**
 - Latitude: 45.788604 | Longitude: -121.634137

Elevation Range

- 1,282 ft - 1,706ft

Water

- Water not available

Camping

- Camping not available

Section 13: Oklahoma Road

Distance

- 0.6 miles, Road 66/Oklahoma Road junction to Willard Road Bridge

Day Hike Access

- This section is not recommended for a day hike.

Trail Summary

- Head south on Oklahoma Road (take a right). This paved road will take you down to the small unincorporated town of Willard, WA. In 0.6 miles, Willard Road crosses the Little White Salmon River on your left/ east side. There are no stores to shop for food/ supplies in Willard. ***This is the end of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest section of the Chinook Trail route.***

Miles & Directions

- **0.0** **NF Road 66 junction/ Oklahoma Road junction**
 - Latitude: 45.788604 | Longitude: -121.634137
- **0.6** **Willard Road Bridge**
 - Latitude: 45.780092 | Longitude: -121.629650

Elevation Range

- 1,253 ft -1,282 ft

Water

- Lava Creek and Little White Salmon Creek can provide water along Oklahoma Road. Moss Creek Campground has water available as well. Filter your water.

Camping

- Camping is not available along this road, however from the Junction of NF Road 66 and Oklahoma, head north (take a left), for 0.5 miles to Moss Creek Campground. This campground is managed by the Forest Service and includes fresh water and pit toilets. Reservations are recommended.

Chinook Trail Association

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CTA Board Member, Logan Forgey, 2019