

Clatsop

STATE FOREST



Driving forest roads

Most of the recreation sites on the forest are reached over maintained gravel roads, but drivers should be aware that gravel roads require more caution, slower speeds, and higher clearance. Carry a forest map, water, check your spare tire, and be alert for log trucks and other vehicles. Stay to the right and expect a vehicle around every corner.

If you're looking for a detailed forest map or more information on forest activities, stop by our district office or click through our website: oregon.gov/odf.

Stay current on forest updates

Camping fees and sites that require fees may be subject to change. Trails, roads, and campsites are subject to closure due to weather, maintenance, and active timber sales. To view closures and other updates, visit oregon.gov/odf/recreation.

Forest Contact Information:

Astoria District Office
Oregon Department of Forestry
92219 Hwy 202
Astoria, OR 97103
Phone: (503) 325 - 5451



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Recreation Guide



Lost Lake

*"Today I behold the
grandest and most
pleasing prospects which
my eyes
ever surveyed."*

At the end of his continental trek with Merriwether Lewis, William Clark wrote these words in his journal in 1805 to describe the panorama of forests in Clatsop County in the northwest corner of Oregon.

Much has changed since Lewis and Clark explored this region two centuries ago. A significant portion of the forestland they described is now managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry as the Clatsop State Forest.

If you are looking for a place for family fun and adventure in the outdoors, then follow in the footsteps of Lewis & Clark and plan your own expedition to the Clatsop State Forest.



Soak up the summer sun and then cool off in the Nehalem River, or saddle up your horse for a ride out of Northrup Creek Horse Camp. Pitch your tent under the shade of large conifers or take a short hike to one of the forest's small lakes. Try your luck at hooking a bright steelhead.

Take a quick detour off the busy highways through the area—Hwy 30 or Hwy 26—and quickly find yourself in the quiet forest. There are many miles of gravel roads leading to upland forests or high viewpoints above the fog.

History



Early logging with ox team



Snag Falling in Clatsop County, 1938



The first all-female tree planting crew in Oregon; Clatsop County, 1943



Before the 1930's, nearly all of the land that is today part of the Clatsop State Forest was in private ownership. During the period around World War I, a shipping boom was underway and Clatsop County was buzzing with logging camps, railroads, and lumber mills.

As tracts of timber were cut, many owners of the logged land abandoned and defaulted the land to the counties instead of paying taxes. In 1936, Clatsop County became the first county in Oregon to deed lands to the state.

The 1939 Forest Acquisition Act further encouraged counties to deed foreclosed lands to the Oregon Department of Forestry in exchange for a share of future timber harvest revenue, giving rise to today's state forest system. By 1957, Clatsop County had transferred 141,000 acres to the state. Since then, the Oregon Department of Forestry has managed the land. In 1973, the Oregon Board of Forestry formally dedicated 154,000 acres of forestland as the Clatsop State Forest.



Today the Clatsop State Forest is a mix of mostly second growth hemlock, Douglas-fir, and western redcedar with many associated hardwoods, shrubs, ferns, and flowers. Elevations range from near sea level at Gnat Creek to 3,000 feet on Nicolai Mountain. Today, the Oregon Department of Forestry manages the Clatsop State Forest for a range of social, environmental, and economic benefits. The health of the forest, from wildlife to water quality, is a driving force behind a forest management plan adopted in 2001. The plan calls for a sustainable level of timber harvesting designed to improve the forest's health and contribute revenue to local schools and counties.

Depending on what part of the forest you visit in the summer, you will often find warm and sunny weather. October can be a transition month with dry weather or rain. The rainy season usually starts in November and can soak you to the bone through early spring. Winter snow occurs occasionally in the higher elevations.

A variety of new or recently upgraded facilities are now available for visitors. You will find trails, campgrounds, fishing access, and horse riding opportunities. Many of the Clatsop's facilities are rustic and lightly used.

Campgrounds in the Forest

Campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis; no reservations, except for Northrup Creek*

Limit per site: 8 people, 2 vehicles

Maximum stay: 14 days

Fees: \$20/night drive-in sites**
\$15/night walk-in sites**
(**includes 2 vehicles)

All pets must be on leash



Note: Campground amenities may vary throughout the season.

Henry Rierson Spruce Run Campground

Henry Rierson Spruce Run Campground is located on the Lower Nehalem River and offers a cool retreat for those hot summer days. This campground is designed for tents and small RVs and is a favorite place for visitors to play in the river or relax under the large Douglas-fir trees. Fishing at nearby Lost Lake is a popular pastime for visitors. Garbage service and firewood sales are available seasonally.



Season of use: Year-round
Number of sites: 32 drive-in, 5 walk-in



Gnat Creek Campground

This primitive tent campground is located on the banks of Gnat Creek. A one-mile hiking trail connects the campground to the nearby Gnat Creek Fish Hatchery. You can continue along the trail for another 2.5 miles up Gnat Creek, a tributary to the mighty Columbia River. Several salmon and steelhead runs attract anglers throughout the year. Native trout are also present, but are catch-and-release only.

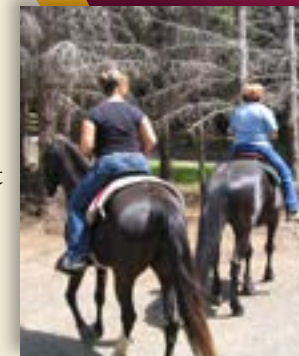


Season of use: Year-round
Number of sites: 4 walk-in, day-use area



Northrup Creek Horse Camp

This facility lies among the lowland meadows of Northrup Creek. The site accommodates equestrian, RV, and tent campers and provides a picnic area along the creek as well as the Big Tree Trail hiking path. The area also serves as a trailhead with over nine miles of developed trails.



*Reservations required through [reserveamerica.com](https://www.reserveamerica.com).

Season of use: May - November
Number of sites: 11 drive-in (8 with corrals)



Viewpoint Campground

The Viewpoint Campground is located at the heart of the Nicolai Mountain Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Area. With trail access, Viewpoint Campground offers an outstanding stay-and-play opportunity for forest visitors interested in OHV recreation. Amenities include picnic tables, fire rings, and a vault toilet. In addition, there are six designated campsites nearby that also provide OHV access.

Season of use: Year-round
Number of sites: 4 drive-in



Beaver Eddy Campground

South of Henry Rierson Spruce Run Campground, you will find another primitive tent campground. This campground offers visitors an opportunity to play in the Nehalem River or test their luck at capturing crayfish. Visitors can also enjoy the mature flora and fauna that these sites offer.

Season of use: May - September
Number of sites: 8 walk-in





Pack it in and Pack it out.

Since many areas within the Clatsop State Forest are managed for primitive recreation experiences, visitors are asked to practice Leave No Trace ethics. When trash receptacles are not present, please Pack it in and Pack it out.

Nicolai Mountain

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area

This riding area is located 25 miles east of Astoria, off Hwy 30. Nicolai offers opportunities for all classes of OHVs with easy to moderate trails that meander through some 30 miles of working forest. The area has one campground and six designated campsites, a staging area complete with a learners loop, and day-use picnic sites. Cool creeks, scenic vistas, and a family-friendly riding opportunity are all part of the experience.



Bloom Lake Trail

Bloom Lake trailhead offers easy access from Hwy 26 to tiny Bloom Lake located 1.25 miles from the highway. This tranquil lake offers an ideal destination after a relaxing afternoon hike through the forest. The trail is a moderate climb that can be enjoyed by the whole family. Along the way, experience a variety of plants and animals found in coastal forests.



Lost Lake Day-Use Area

Lost Lake is a 14-acre natural forest lake nestled in the Coast Range. It makes a great day trip for fishing or just relaxing in a quiet place. Lost Lake can be accessed from Lost Lake Road near the entrance to Henry Rierison Spruce Run Campground and from Quartz Creek Forest Road off Hwy 26 at Milepost 27. Lost Lake is periodically stocked with trout by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Astoria Demonstration Forest

The self-guided demonstration forest is a seven-acre parcel located at the Oregon Department of Forestry office in Astoria. Over a mile of hiking trails help visitors learn about basic forestry practices and enjoy interpretive exhibits that explain how active management of timber stands benefit state forests. School groups are welcome. Please contact the Astoria District Office to set up an appointment.



Steam Donkey Trail

Located at the Sunset Highway Rest Area (Hwy 26, mile 28.5), this 0.8-mile trail consists of two short loops in the form of a figure eight. The lower trail, the Springboard Loop, offers an easy, gravel-surfaced route that passes the remnants of an old steam donkey. The upper loop, called Dooley Spur, follows a portion of an old railroad grade used to haul logs to the mill.

Spruce Run Creek Trail

The Spruce Run Creek Trailhead is located at the popular Henry Rierison Spruce Run Campground. This two-mile trail offers a moderate-to-difficult climb as it traverses over Coast Range ridges while hikers make their way to the final destination of Spruce Run Lake.