

# Day Hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE REGION

## Enjoy These Short Hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail!

**Note:** The Dry Creek and Herman Creek trails were affected by the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire. Please respect the landscape as you reconnect with the area. **To protect public safety, it is illegal for hikers to venture off the newly reopened trails.** The ground may be unstable, particularly in areas where understory plants burned away.

**Also Note:** A Northwest Forest Pass is required for most of these hikes—day use passes available at trailheads.

- 1 Dry Creek Falls:** A popular out-and-back that starts at the Bridge of the Gods trailhead. Hike almost 2 miles southbound from the trailhead to the bridge that crosses Dry Creek, then divert uphill on the dirt road ¼ mile to the falls. You could return to the start for a total of 4.2 miles, or, from the creek bridge continue east on the PCT to the impressive hump-shaped outcroppings known as Herman Creek Pinnacles (another 1.6 miles). With the addition of the Pinnacles, the round trip is 7.4 miles.
- 2 Herman Creek:** This access to the PCT offers several other trail options, as well (such as Gorton Creek Trail). From the Herman Creek TH, hike 2 miles up to the junction with the PCT, then turn right and go ¼ mile to the lofty and delicate Pacific Crest Falls. Another ¼ mile takes you to the Herman Creek Pinnacles. To get there: From Cascade Locks, head east on the main road. After crossing under the interstate, continue east on the frontage road on the south side of the freeway for about 2 more miles to the Herman Creek Campground sign.



Gillette Lake

Photo by Kelly Davis

- 3 Gillette Lake:** Easy hike through forests and harvested clearings among rocky hummocks and ponds made centuries ago by the Bonneville land slide. Starting at the Bonneville TH, hike for ½ mile up the Tamanous Trail to the junction with the PCT, and turn left. Hike 2.4 miles to the tranquil blue-green Gillette Lake, enjoying views of the Columbia River, Bonneville Dam, and Table Mountain. To extend your round trip to almost 8 miles, continue past the lake, across Greenleaf Creek, and up to a small rocky overlook with nice Gorge views. To get there: From the WA side of the Bridge of the Gods, head west and continue approx. 1.5 miles to the Bonneville Dam and look for trailhead sign on the right.
- 4 Trout Creek:** Enjoy this little-used section of the PCT as it travels amid the forested ridges between the Columbia River and the Wind River Valley. The trail includes dense mossy forest with some old-growth, one lovely creek, one excellent viewpoint, and plenty of solitude. Round trip hike covers approx. 4 miles. To get there: From WA side of the Bridge of the Gods, go east for 5.9 mi., then left through Carson on Hwy 30 (Wind River Road) for 8.1 mi. Turn left on Hemlock Road for 1 mile, then right on Forest Rd 43 at Wind River Work Center for 2.5 miles and park in the wide shoulder on the left. Cross the Trout Creek bridge heading southbound on the PCT.
- 5 Snag Creek:** Creekside hike amid towering old-growth. Crowds are deterred by the access, which is along slow-going gravel roads. To get there: From the WA side of the Bridge of the Gods, head east. At 1.5 miles, turn left onto Rock Creek. Take the first left, Foster Creek, becoming Ryan Allen. At .9 miles, turn left on Red Bluff. Keep right just after a small bridge, and as pavement ends, this becomes Road 2000. Set trip mileage counter. Passing many spur roads, stay on the main road, 2000. You will pass a beautiful waterfall. (Stop! Check it out.) At mile 7.4, turn right on Road 2070 (may not be marked). Go about .3 mile and look closely because the PCT crosses inconspicuously. Park 200 feet further up on the left holds. Head southbound on the PCT for a 1.5 mile out-and-back, round trip of 3 miles. For more, return to start and head northbound on the PCT 1 mile, returning for a grand total of 5 miles.

The Pacific Crest Trail, spanning 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada through California, Oregon, and Washington, was first conceptualized in 1926. It reveals the beauty of the desert, spans the glaciated spires of the Sierra Nevada, travels deep forests, and provides commanding vistas of volcanic peaks in the Cascade Range. The trail symbolizes everything there is to love—and protect—in the Western United States.



The Bridge of the Gods is the lowest point on the entire Pacific Crest Trail. This beautiful bridge, completed in 1926, spans the Columbia between Oregon and Washington. An enormous landslide formed the ancient land bridge about 800 years ago, eventually collapsing around 1690 after erosion and earthquakes, creating the Cascade Rapids. Native American legends about the unfolding of these events credit dramatic deities, represented by local volcanoes.

There is an ongoing initiative to improve pedestrian conditions on the bridge. To support, contact [dhendricks@pcta.org](mailto:dhendricks@pcta.org).



Bridge of the Gods



Did you know you can take public transit to Gorge hikes? See [www.gorgefriends.org/WETbus](http://www.gorgefriends.org/WETbus) and [www.columbiagorgeexpress.com](http://www.columbiagorgeexpress.com)

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