



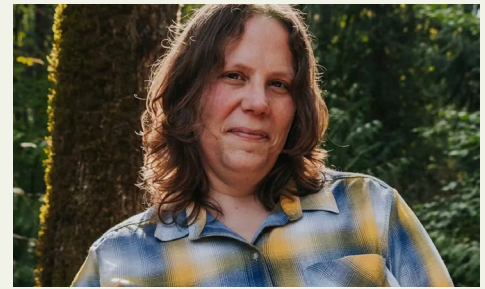
A DISABLED HIKER'S GUIDE TO 5 WASHINGTON STATE PARKS

FEDERATION FOREST

Lake Sammamish | Flaming Geyser | Federation Forest | Dash Point | Saltwater

This assessment and guide were written by Syren Nagakyrie of Disabled Hikers, with funding and collaboration from the Washington State Parks Foundation.





Syren Nagakyrie is the founder of Disabled Hikers, a nonprofit organization building disability community and justice in the outdoors. Syren grew up with multiple disabilities and encounters numerous barriers to outdoor recreation but has always found nature to be a place of belonging. As a long-time disabled activist and community builder, Syren is committed to building a movement of Disabled leadership in the outdoors. They are the author of *The Disabled Hiker's Guide to Northern California: outdoor adventures accessible by car, wheelchair, and foot* (2024) and *The Disabled Hiker's Guide to Western Washington and Oregon* (2022), both published by FalconGuides. They also work with parks, organizations, brands, and government agencies to improve access and belonging for disability community.

www.disabledhikers.com



The Washington State Parks Foundation's vision is to ensure a vibrant and inclusive state parks system for generations to enjoy. This guide to accessibility in five Washington State Parks was developed with the support and collaboration of the Washington State Parks Foundation.

www.waparks.org





Federation Forest State Park

Overview

Federation Forest State Park is near Enumclaw and is the furthest park from the metro areas in this guide. But you can access to the White River and acres of old growth forest, with opportunities for picnicking, hiking, and generally getting a nice nature break away from the city.

The park facilities are open seasonally, from April 1 – September 30, but hiking is permitted year-round. The interpretive center, open on select weekends, provides opportunities for learning about the history and ecology of the park. While the park surrounds both sides of Highway 410, only the south side of the park has day-use facilities and usable trails. It should also be noted that while highway signage indicates there is camping here, there is not. There is only one day-use area, and the majority of trails start from behind the interpretive center.



Resources

Park phone number (360) 886-0148

[State Park website](#) | [State Park Official Map](#) | [Virtual Park Tour](#)

Suggested Activities

Visit the interpretive center and hike the Whispering Hemlocks Trail

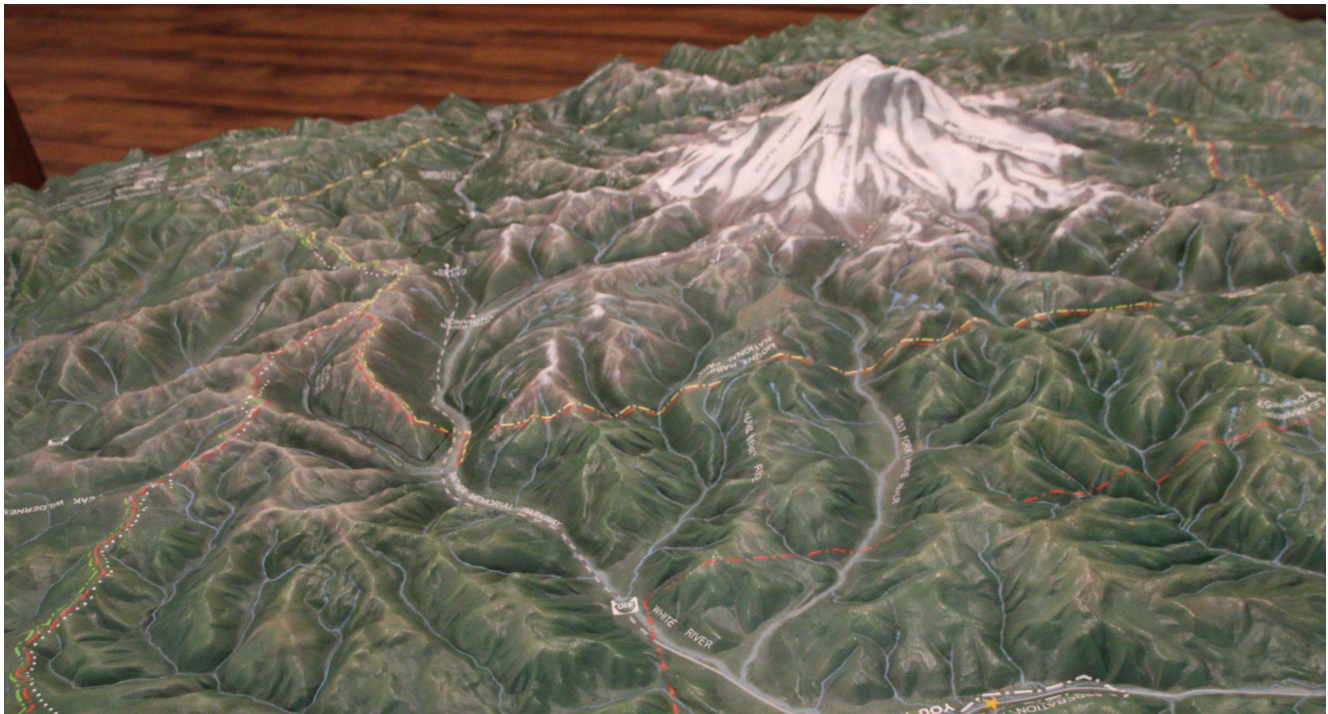
The Catherine T. Montgomery Interpretive Center is open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from July through August. In April, May, September, and October it is open on weekends depending on weather and staffing. There is a three-dimensional tactile map of Tahoma / Mount Rainier and the surrounding landscape. There are many print interpretive panels about the history of the park and the Indigenous people of the region, including the Muckleshoot tribe. The contrast for text on the signage is generally high, but the signs are over six feet tall and may be difficult to read from sitting height. A children's area features found forest objects, plants, animal bones, and other tactile items.

The Whispering Hemlocks Contemplative Loop / East Interpretive Loop begins behind the interpretive center. It travels along the old river terrace amidst large trees. There are several benches and print interpretive signs along the way that encourage enjoying the forest through multiple senses.

These activities will be most accessible to people who can walk or navigate across loose gravel. There is no wheelchair accessible route.



A narrow section of the interpretive trail.



The tactile map inside the interpretive center the tactile map inside the interpretive center.

What's Accessible?

PARKING

There are two designated van-accessible spots near the interpretive center, but only one has an access aisle and the curb cut does not meet ADA guidelines. The curb cut is 36 inches wide and about 55 inches long with a 7.5% incline along the length and 9% cross slope on either side, with no level area to turn. There is a textured plate on the curb cut. The sidewalk is 58 inches wide but it is rough and cracked. There is no other curb cut from the parking lot. There are approximately 30 standard diagonal and parallel parking spots in the parking lot.

The parking area at the end of the entrance road does not have any designated accessible parking spots. Most of the parking spots are on gravel and tucked in between trees. There are two paved parking spots in front of the group picnic shelter, and two in front of the restrooms.

RESTROOMS AND FACILITIES

Interpretive Center: To reach the interpretive center, follow the sidewalk along the edge of the entrance road. Alternatively, you can walk across small, loose gravel and an area of concrete pavers with a 0.5 – 1.5-inch threshold at the transition points. There are two shallow steps up to the interpretive center, or you can follow the concrete ramp from the sidewalk to the restrooms and along the side of the building; however, this may be blocked by a trash can. The door has two triangular paddle-style handles and is a bit heavy to open. There is no automatic door opener. There is a level transition at the threshold.

Interpretive Center Restrooms: There are gendered restrooms with accessible stalls, accessible sinks with motion activated faucets in the women's restroom and push faucets in the men's restroom, soap, and hand dryers. In the women's restroom, the accessible stall door swings out in front of one of the sinks.



The designated accessible parking spot near the interpretive center.



The area of small, loose gravel in front of the interpretive center



The door handles at the interpretive center.

Picnic Area Restrooms: At the end of the entrance road, there is one building with two all-gender restrooms. Both are large enough to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility devices, but only one has grab bars on all sides. However, the route around the building is a bit narrow. Both restrooms have push faucets, soap, and hand dryers.

Group Picnic Area: The group picnic area along the river has one vault toilet, but it is not wheelchair accessible.



The access route around the restroom building at the end of the entrance road



The accessible route between the restrooms and the interpretive center entrance



The parking area in front of the restrooms at the end of the entrance road.

PICNIC AREAS

Interpretive Center: the nearest picnic tables to the interpretive center are along the north side of the parking lot as you exit. They are placed parallel and very close to the parallel parking spots. There is no accessible route to them.

Picnic Area: at the very end of the entrance road, there are several tables placed under the trees and one group picnic shelter. Two picnic tables near the restrooms can be accessed on generally level ground, but the route may be pinched by roots or have tree debris. The group picnic shelter is directly in front of two paved parking spots on the south side. A short, paved path takes an 8-10% decline to the shelter, and there is a slight gap between the pavement and the concrete pad. There are two picnic tables and one has an accessible overhang. The grills are approximately 4 feet high.

Group Picnic Area: There is a picnic area along the White River that can only be accessed by hiking in. It is on a wide, grassy area with several picnic tables along the river and one small picnic shelter in the trees.

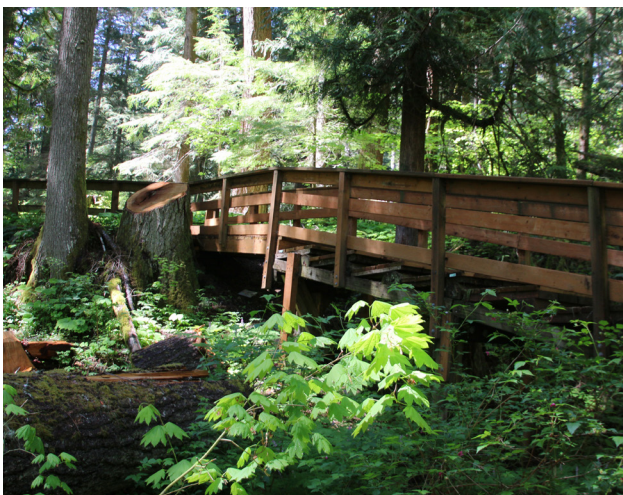
It is about 0.25 miles from the picnic area parking lot to the picnic area. Head towards the far right or southeast corner. There is a picnic table on the left and a wooden fence just beyond it. Take a 20% decline for a few feet then come to sets of stairs – there are 17 steps approximately 8 inches high on a roughly 20% slope. Continue onto a metal grate boardwalk at the bottom – it is pretty



One of the picnic tables under trees at the end of the entrance road



The group picnic shelter at the end of the entrance road



The stairs from the parking area to the group picnic area.



The metal grate boardwalk to the group picnic area



The benches on a gravel area at the trailhead

long and slightly bouncy, with no edge guards. Transition to a packed gravel trail and continue a short distance to the picnic area.

The other option is to take the White River trail from the interpretive center loop. It is 0.8 miles to the picnic area. The trail is generally narrow and uneven with lots of roots and other obstacles.

TRAILS

Most of the trails in the park are pretty rugged. They are narrow, with lots of roots, rocks, and logs to navigate, and several steep sections. The most accessible is the East Interpretive Trail, and the first 0.5 miles of the Old Naches Trail (the riverside portion of the Land of the Giants Loop).

East Interpretive Trail / Whispering Hemlocks Contemplative Trail

0.35 mile loop; flat; loose gravel and natural surface

This is the designated accessible trail in the park, however, it is not fully wheelchair accessible. The interpretive trail starts to the left of the interpretive center. To reach the trailhead, you have to travel across small, loose, deep gravel and a circle of concrete pavers (mentioned above in the Interpretive Center section). The trail begins 40 – 42 inches wide with small, loose gravel up to 0.25 inches deep. Go left at the T-intersection, continuing on the same type of surface. You almost immediately come to the first bench with a print interpretive panel on a log. All of the benches along the trail are angled steeply backwards and may be difficult to sit or stand from. The trail surface transitions to firmer packed gravel and soil with hemlock needles and other tree debris.

At the 0.1 mile mark, continue towards the right past a narrow access trail from the parking lot, where you will come to an overlook on the left with a bench and view from the top of the old river terrace. Continuing to the right on the main trail, there are a couple of sections that are pinched by roots and stumps to 36 -



One of the benches and interpretive signs on the trail



Part of the trail as it winds through the forest

38 inches, and a sharp drop-off on the left that is partially protected by a log. At 0.25 miles, the trail curves slightly and there is an uneven section with a steep cross-slope on the outer edge. Pass a couple more benches, then at 0.3 miles you come to a potentially confusing fork in the trail – continue towards the right and straight ahead to complete this loop and return to the interpretive center. There may be some larger gravel and rocks rising up to an inch above the surface of the trail. You return to the interpretive center at 0.35 miles.

Old Naches Trail

0.6 mile one-way; generally flat; natural surface with lots of roots and rocks

This section of the Old Naches Trail is generally flat, except for a short, 20% decline at the end where the trail connects with the West Interpretive Trail – just turn around before that point. The majority of the trail has roots and rocks that you have to step up, over, and around – some are over six inches high. If that is not an obstacle for you, then this is the most accessible of the rugged trails in the park. It is mostly isolated from the road noise of Highway 410 and has some nice views of the White River.

Start at the Interpretive Trails trailhead behind the interpretive center. Go right at the T-intersection, then left at the next fork. Continue straight ahead, then go right at the fork where the White River trail starts heading downhill, following the signs for Old Naches Trail. Continue straight along the Old Naches Trail for up to 0.4 miles, navigating several areas of roots and rocks. You'll come to a fork, with the Old Naches Trail continuing straight and the West Interpretive Trail on the right; turn around here. (The Old Naches Trail continues for another 0.5 miles or so, but I did not hike the length of it).

Other Features

Cell service: There is no cell service.

Water: One water fountain next to the restrooms. There is a knob to turn on the water and approximately one foot of clearance beneath the fountain.

Maps and Signage: There is no directional signage when you enter the park. The information board with a trail map and printed brochures is located next to the loose gravel path. There is a trail map and brochures inside of the interpretive center. There are wood post directional signs at most of the trail intersections.

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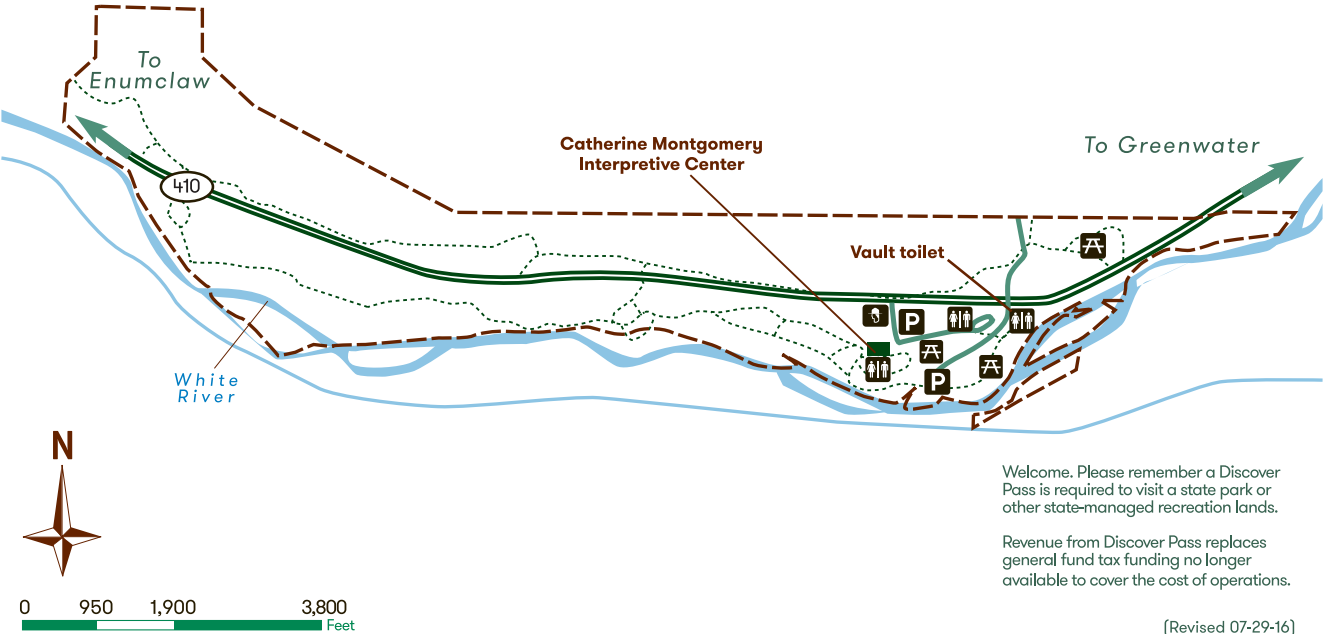
Picnic area

Ranger office

Parking

Restroom

Park boundary



49201 Highway 410 E. Enumclaw, WA 98022 • Information Center (360) 902-8844