



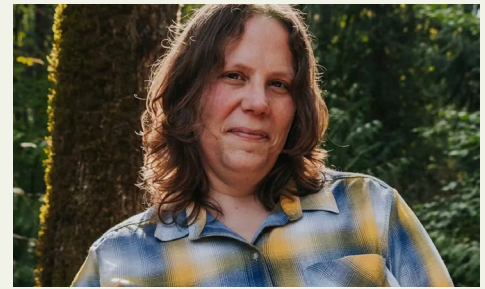
A DISABLED HIKER'S GUIDE TO 5 WASHINGTON STATE PARKS

DASH POINT

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





Dash Point State Park

Overview

Dash Point State Park is one of the largest parks in the area. Its location between Tacoma and Federal Way makes it a great getaway close to the city. It has over 3,300 feet of shoreline on Puget Sound, picnic and day-use facilities, a 460-acre campground, and miles of hiking trails.

The day-use area is on the north side of SW Dash Point Road. There are two main areas: the beach and Picnic Point. To go to the beach and the Thames Creek trail described below, go left once you enter the park and follow the road to the end. To reach Picnic Point, go right and continue to the end.

The campground is on the south side of SW Dash Point Road. Sites 1-51, including the cabins, are on the right once you enter the campground. Sites 52-138 are on interconnecting loops straight ahead – there is directional signage but it may be a bit confusing.

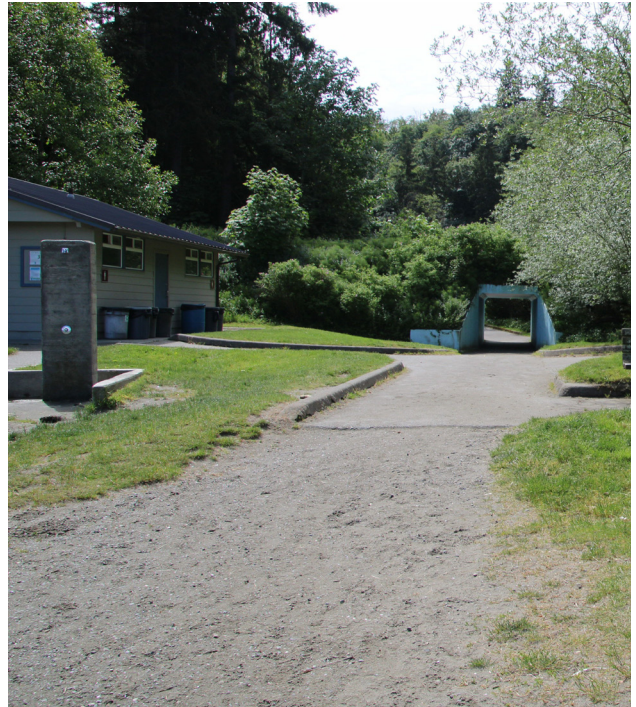


Resources

Park phone number: (253) 661-4955 | [State Park website](#) | [State Park Official Map](#) | [Virtual Park Tour](#)



The historic bridge over Thames Creek.



A view of the path leading to the beach, the restrooms, and picnic table.

Suggested Activities

Visit Dash Point Beach

Dash Point Beach is one of the most accessible south Puget Sound beaches. A paved path leads you from ADA accessible parking to an overlook of the water. The beach access is fairly level with no drift logs in the way and would be accessible with a beach or all terrain wheelchair. You may be able to launch a kayak with assistance across the sand.

What's Accessible?

PARKING

Dash Point Beach: There is a large, paved parking lot with five ADA accessible spots; one is van accessible. The parking spots are directly in front of the trailhead with a paved route from the spots so you can avoid the walking/rolling in the parking lot.

Picnic Point: There is a small paved parking lot with two designated accessible spots that do not meet ADA guidelines; the pavement is very rough, cracked, and uneven and it slopes towards the head of the spot. There is an access aisle, but there is a 3-6" gap filled with loose gravel and grass between the pavement and sidewalk.



The accessible parking at the beach.



The accessible parking and access route to the toilet at Picnic Point.

RESTROOMS AND FACILITIES

Dash Point Beach: There is one building with gendered restrooms past a short tunnel at the beach. The tunnel is approximately 10 feet long and at least six feet wide and eight feet high; there are no lights inside but it is short enough to allow sunlight through. There are three access routes to the restrooms: two from the paved trail and one from the outdoor shower. From the trail, the access route on the women's side is paved but at a 12-15% incline with two 2-3 inch thresholds to reach the building. On the men's side, the access route is paved at a 5% incline with no thresholds. You can travel along the sidewalk at the front of the building to reach the women's restroom, but it may be blocked by trash cans. Both restrooms have a privacy wall in front of the doors that restricts forward-facing access. The women's restroom has one larger stall with grab bars, but does not have a full 60" of clearance. The sinks have push-button-activated faucets. The pipes are not wrapped but there is adequate clearance underneath. There is one soap dispenser on the side wall.

The outdoor shower is directly in front of the restrooms, facing the beach. A concrete sidewalk takes an 8% decline for a few feet and ends on wet sand. There are two showers – one is six feet tall with a push button activated shower head, the other is about two feet high with a push button activated shower head.

Picnic Point: There is one vault toilet in front of the accessible parking spots. From the sidewalk, there is a 1.5 inch threshold from the sidewalk to the concrete pad. The vault toilet has grab bars.

PICNIC AREAS

Dash Point Beach: Shelter Two is the designated accessible shelter. From the trailhead, follow the paved path for about 20 feet and turn left onto the bridge. There is a 1.5 inch lip onto the bridge and a few soft boards, but it is about six feet wide and has rails with metal mesh to see through. On the opposite side of the bridge, an aging sidewalk curves left and then right, and may be pinched to 24 inches wide due to plant growth. It is a level transfer onto the concrete pad for the picnic



The path leading to the women's restrooms.



The route to the men's restrooms.



The outdoor showers in front of the restrooms.



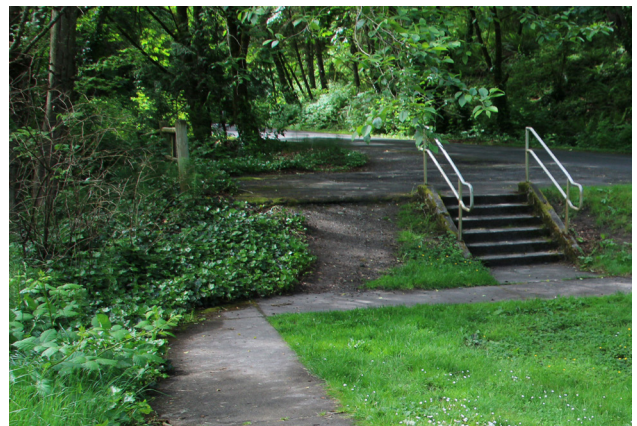
A view of the path leading to the beach, the restrooms, and picnic table.

shelter. There are three tables; two of them have a 24-inch overhang, but access is blocked by the shelter poles. On the far end of the picnic shelter, the sidewalk continues to another accessible table on a pad in the grass. However, there is a 1.5 – 2-inch lip with a 0.5 inch gap between the sidewalk and concrete pad on this end, so it may not be accessible for wheelchair users and could be a trip hazard, so be cautious. Access to the picnic table may also be blocked by a trash can. There are two grills on the more accessible side of the picnic shelter, one is at a lower height.

There are several picnic tables scattered in the grass and sand along the beach. Some of them have an accessible overhang, but they all require traveling over uneven grass and gravelly sand; the two closest picnic tables do not have an overhang. There is one bench with no companion seating on a concrete pad at the end of the path to the beach.



The bridge to the accessible shelter



The sidewalk leading to the accessible shelter



The shelter at Picnic Point.

Picnic Point: The sidewalk from the accessible parking spots leads to a concrete pad with a lowered grill, but at the time of this writing there was no picnic table. There is a picnic shelter (Shelter One), but it has a 4-inch lip from the grass to the concrete pad. Several picnic tables are scattered in the grassy area, which is generally level.

TRAILS

Dash Point Beach

Less than 0.10 mile; flat; paved surface

From the beach parking lot, head to the north-west corner of the lot. There is a large information board and electronic payment machine. Follow the paved path for a couple hundred feet – you'll pass the footbridge to the Picnic Shelter Two, then travel through a short tunnel, and finally pass the restrooms. Another footbridge on the left leads to a few picnic tables on the sand and grass, but the beach access from there is blocked by drift logs. The pavement ends straight ahead with a slight lip on generally firm, compact sand, which continues mostly level for a few more feet onto the beach. There is a nice view of the water from the paved trail. There is a bench on the left, but it does not have adequate space for companion seating without being in the path of travel.

Thames Creek Beach Trail

0.4 mile one-way; maximum 15% grade; compacted gravel and natural surface with some obstacles

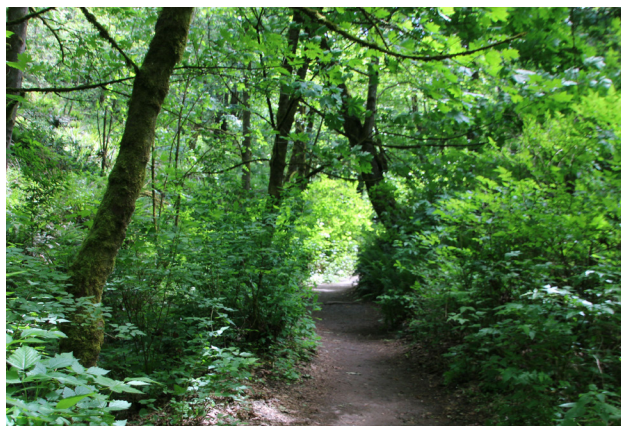
This trail travels along Thames Creek and connects the campground and the beach. If you're out for



Picnic tables under the trees at Picnic Point.



The start of the path to the beach, from the parking area.



A view of the first portion of the trail.

a hike, I recommend turning around at the very interesting log bridge at 0.4 miles for the most accessible trip. This trail is most accessible for people who walk with a cane, hiking poles, or crutches; it is not wheelchair accessible and may be too narrow towards the end for a large all-terrain chair.

The trailhead is at the entrance to the beach parking lot. Follow the paved path in front of the accessible spots and along the edge of the parking lot. Then carefully cross the entrance road to the sidewalk; there is a curb cut at the end of the sidewalk. The trail starts behind a single wood barricade pole. The trail starts five feet wide with a natural surface and compacted gravel. It may be slightly muddy. Cross a short wooden footbridge over a culvert and then there is a nice, level pull out along the creek on the left. Continue straight ahead and cross another footbridge; this one is 8 feet long and 5 feet wide with 1-inch gaps between the boards and no edge guards.

The trail becomes more uneven on natural soil surface. At 0.1 miles you continue on a turnpike with a slightly raised crown in the middle. Cross another short footbridge that is about 4 feet wide with uneven boards covered in metal grating. The trail crosses a couple more footbridges and continues on a generally 3-5% incline, with one 15% incline for a few feet.

At 0.2 miles there is a 5-8% incline for a few feet then you cross a 30-foot-long bridge with no edge guards, and 0.5 – 1 inch gap between the boards. There are several places where 1-2 inch high roots cross the trail. At 0.3 miles, the trail forks – the right fork leads steeply uphill, so continue straight ahead. The trail surface becomes soft silt and mud up to 1 inch deep, and continues generally level and 4 feet wide.

Take a short 10% incline and cross another 3-foot-wide bridge with a 1-inch rise and 0.5-inch gap between the boards. The trail continues as natural surface with some rocks rising up to an inch. Cross another low log in the trail and then at 0.4 miles you reach the log stairs and bridge. There is a nice place to get close to the creek here. The bridge has 15 steep steps with metal grating on top to the bridge over the creek, and then seven more steep steps to a small deck with a bench, and a few more steps to the trail on the opposite side.



The trailhead for the Thames Creek trail.



An exposed log on the trail.



One of the boardwalks on the trail.

Some of the boards on the steps are soft and the metal grating is coming up, so watch your step if you cross it. I recommend turning around here, though, as it is pretty steep on the other side and just continue uphill to the campground.

CAMPGROUND

Amphitheater: The amphitheater is a bit hidden – it is located on the right at the first intersection when you enter the campground, tucked below a hill. The nearest parking is on the opposite side of the entrance road. There are two access points to the amphitheater: on the right at the corner of Dash Point Park Road and Upper Campground Loop, across the road from the RV dump station, or from next to the first campsite on the left on Lower Campground Loop, across from the cabins.

The upper access route has a sign on the edge of the Upper Campground Road. It is narrow crushed gravel surface on a 20-25% decline for about 20 feet as it approaches and heads down the amphitheater seating area. For the lower access route, you have to travel very steeply down the Lower Campground Road, pass the dumpsters, and continue curving left. The access is on the left. You have to cross grass and take a loose gravel path on a slight incline to the bottom of the amphitheater seating area. There is a picnic table next to the gravel, but the only place to sit in a wheelchair to view the platform is on a steep grassy slope with no nearby seating.

Cabins: As of this writing, the accessible cabin sustained damage and is not available for rent.

Campsites: Site 26 is the accessible campsite. It is an RV hookup site with a paved pad and a narrow, non-wheelchair-accessible route to the nearby shower and restrooms.



A view of amphitheatre from the lower access point.



The sign and upper access route.



The gravel path to the shower building from site 26



View of site 26 and the narrow gravel path to the shower building

Shower and Restrooms: The restroom building located in the center of sites 1-50 is not fully wheelchair accessible. There is a parking area surfaced in loose gravel, and the building has many cracks and raised areas on the surrounding sidewalk. There are gendered restrooms with a shower. The doors are blocked by a privacy wall which restricts forward-facing access. The hallway and restroom stalls are very narrow. The shower is designated as accessible; there are two shower benches with grab bars, but the shower handle is too high to use from sitting and the shower head is six feet high and affixed to the wall.

There is another restroom building with two accessible all gender stalls across from site 135. Access requires crossing loose gravel, and there is a 1-2 inch lip onto the concrete pad.

Other Features

Cell service: spotty to none, especially in the campground.

Water: There are water spigots in the campground. I was not able to find an accessible water fountain.

Trash cans: There are regular size trash cans throughout the park, but the campground dumpsters are very high and not easy to lift.

Maps and signage: There is a print map at the trailhead for the beach, and campground maps at the check in station. There is no directional signage in the day-use park, and I found the directional signage in the campground to be confusing. I recommend downloading a map before you arrive.



The campground shower building and parking area.



The accessible shower at the campground shower building.



The restroom building across from site 135.

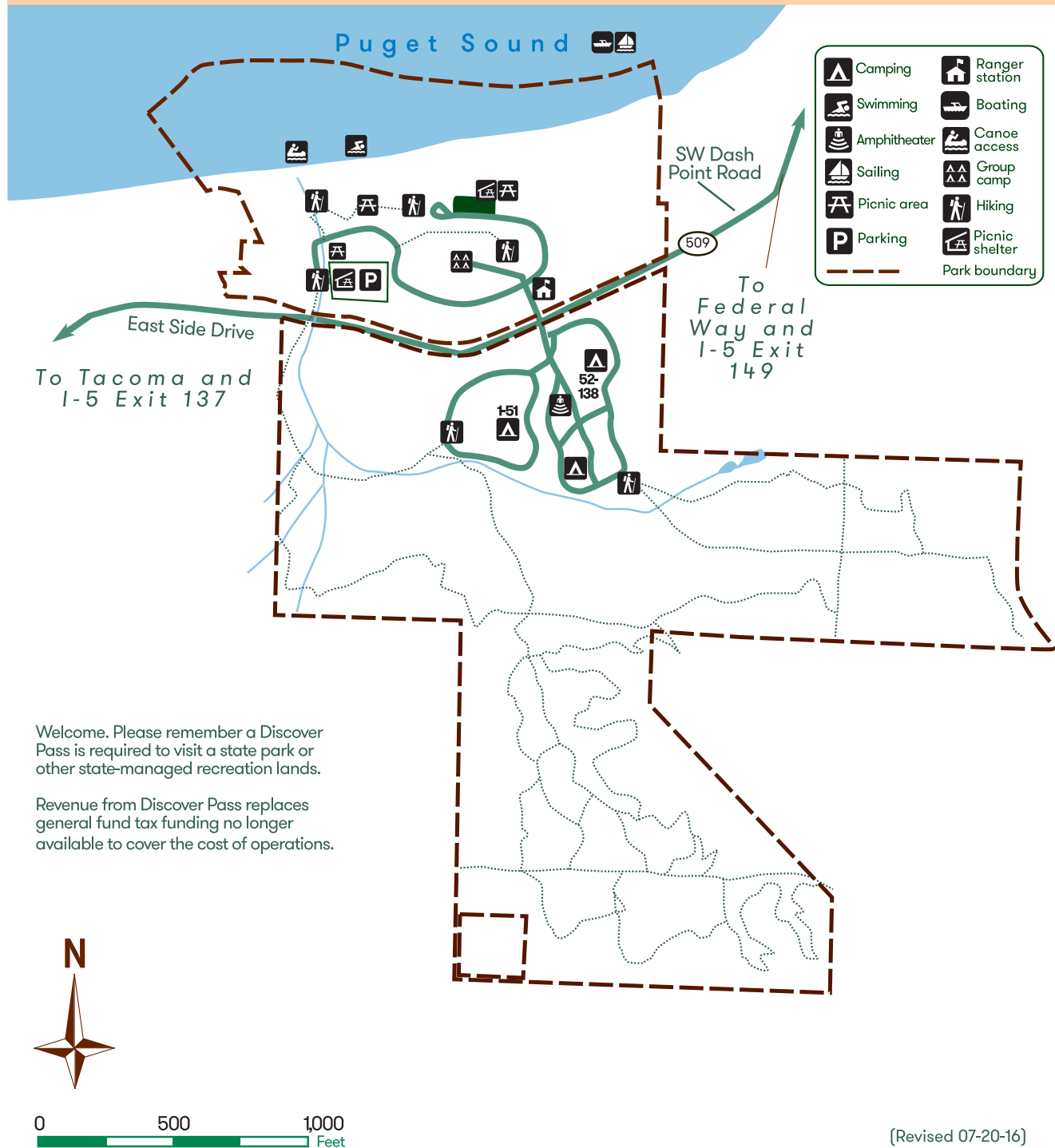


The restroom building and parking area across from site 135.

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