

Things to remember

- **Park hours** – 6:30 a.m. to dusk.
- **Winter schedule** – 8 a.m. to dusk. Although most parks are open year round, some parks or portions of parks are closed during the winter. For a winter schedule and information about seasonal closures, visit www.parks.state.wa.us or call the information center at (360) 902-8844.
- Wildlife, plants and all park buildings, signs, tables and other structures are protected; removal or damage of any kind is prohibited. Hunting, feeding of wildlife and gathering firewood on state park property is prohibited.
- Pets must be on leash and under physical control at all times. This includes trail areas and campsites. Pet owners must clean up after pets on all state park lands.



The Discover Pass is required for day visits to state parks and access to other state-managed recreation lands. The pass provides access to millions of acres of parks, wildlife areas, trails, natural areas and water-access sites. The annual pass is transferable between two vehicles.

- Annual pass: \$30
- One-day pass: \$10 (transaction and dealer fees may apply)

The Discover Pass can be purchased online, by phone or in person. For details, visit www.discoverpass.wa.gov or call (866) 320-9933.

Thank you for supporting Washington state recreation lands.



Steptoe Battlefield State Park Heritage Site

S. Summit Loop
Rosalia, WA 99170
(509) 337-6457

State Parks information:
(360) 902-8844

Reservations: Online at www.parks.state.wa.us or call (888) CAMPOUT or (888) 226-7688

Other state parks located in the general area:
Riverside, Steptoe Butte and Mount Spokane



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If you would like to support Washington State Parks even more, please consider making a donation when renewing your license plate tabs. You also may place a check in a donation box when you visit state parks.

Donations are a significant part of the State Parks budget and are needed to keep your parks open and operating. For more information, visit www.parks.state.wa.us/donations

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

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All Washington state parks are developed and maintained for the enjoyment of all people.

To request this brochure in an alternative format, please call (360) 902-8844 or the Washington Telecommunications Relay Service at (800) 833-6388. P&R 45-72800-01 (05/17)



Washington State Parks

STEPTOE BATTLEFIELD

State Park Heritage Site



EMBRACE YOUR NATURE

www.parks.state.wa.us

Step toe Battlefield State Park Heritage Site is a 4-acre day-use park in Rosalia. The site commemorates a battle that occurred in 1858 between U.S. Army forces led by Colonel Edward Steptoe and several Native American tribes from what is now eastern Washington.

In the years preceding the battle, tensions between Native Americans and the U.S. Government grew quickly as Euro-American settlers moved into tribal territory in eastern Washington (then part of the Territory of Washington). On May 6, 1858, Colonel Steptoe led a group of 160 soldiers north from Fort Walla Walla across the Snake River and into the Palouse region. The intent was to march all the way to Fort Colville. The move was intended as a show of force.

On May 15, the troops camped along Pine Creek, just south of the present-day town of Rosalia. The next day, as the troops continued northward, increasing numbers of Native Americans ready to defend their territory appeared in the surrounding hillsides including members of the Spokane, Palouse, Coeur d'Alene, and Yakama tribes. Ultimately, Steptoe concluded that his troops were outnumbered and decided to retreat. The full retreat began on May 17. Battles broke out during the retreat and several casualties resulted on both sides (numbers vary between accounts). As the sun set, Steptoe's troops found themselves surrounded and nearly out of ammunition. Under cover of night, the troops managed to slip past their enemies and made a run for the Snake River crossing.

The battle was considered a significant victory for the eastern Washington tribes. Later that summer, however, Colonel George Wright returned to the area with nearly 700 heavily-armed soldiers and defeated the tribes, effectively ending their resistance in that region of the territory.

In 1914, the Esther Reed Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a stone monument commemorating the battle on the present-day park site. The monument's location is where Steptoe's troops

made their final stand. The monument repeats an account of Steptoe's retreat that is now widely discounted in which Chief Timothy of the Nez Perce was said to have aided the U.S. Army soldiers in their escape. Although the soldiers were aided by Nez Perce scouts, there is no evidence to suggest that Chief Timothy was involved.

In 1950, the site became a state park and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

U.S. Army Colonel Steptoe's advance and retreat

On May 16, 1858, U.S. Army Colonel Edward J. Steptoe was en route from Walla Walla to Fort Colville with approximately 160 soldiers, some civilians and several Nez Perce scouts. Just north of the present town of Rosalia, Wash., they encountered an estimated 600 to 1,000 warriors from the Spokane, Yakama, Palouse and Coeur d'Alene tribes.

To learn more about the conflict that followed, take a look at the route map and conflict sequence descriptions.

1. On the night of May 15, 1858, Steptoe's command camps along the west side of Pine Creek.
2. The next morning, May 16, the soldiers advance northward along Pine Creek with angry Indians gathering around them.
3. The troops approach a narrow draw, "The Dangerous Defile," where the Indians pressed closer.
4. Realizing he could not continue, Steptoe orders his command to retreat to a small lake and retrace their steps the next morning, May 17.
5. Sporadic gunfire begins as the soldiers return to the valley of Pine Creek and soon becomes general on both sides.
6. The cannons are briefly unlimbered and a few ineffective shots are fired before the retreat resumes.
7. As Steptoe's men break for higher ground, one company is nearly cut off, extracted only after a sharp engagement.
8. As the retreat continues, Lieutenant Gaston is killed and Captain Taylor is mortally wounded.
9. Taking up a defensive position on a hill, Steptoe's command is surrounded by attackers on all sides, while the ammunition is running low.
10. Late on the night of May 17, Steptoe's men make a break for it, slipping away to safety beyond the Snake River.

U.S. Army Colonel Steptoe's Advance and Retreat

May 15-17, 1858

