



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Willapa Hills State Park Trail

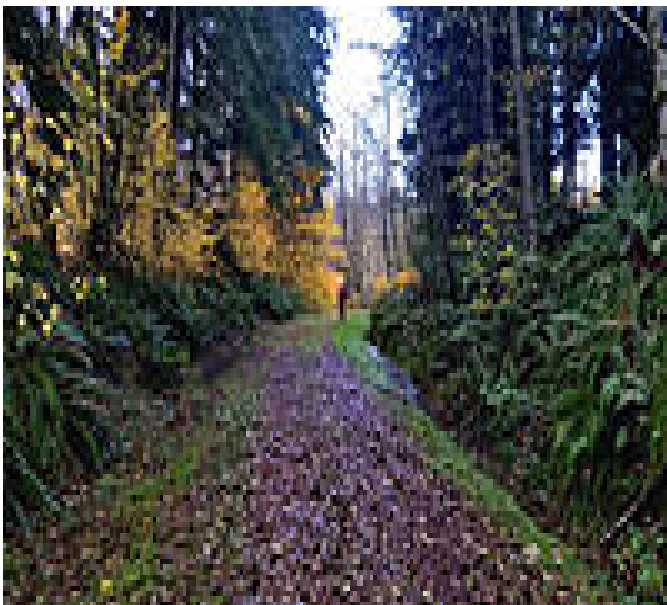
Washington



Willapa Hills State Park Trail

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An adventure awaits those who tackle all, or part, of the 56-mile-long Willapa Hills State Park Trail in southwestern Washington. The former Northern Pacific Railway line rolls through remote farm and forestland as it links Chehalis in the east with South Bend on the coast.

The trail boasts inviting, smooth asphalt for 5.3 miles as it leaves Chehalis. Another paved section rolls for 5.2 miles through the coastal towns of Raymond and South Bend on the tidal Willapa River. Sandwiched in between are about 45 miles of trail surface—including packed and loose gravel, ballast, and grass—posing various degrees of difficulty. That middle section features many century-old trestles, two of which were washed out in the 2007 flood—at Spooner Road and Doty-Dryad Road—that were rebuilt and opened in January 2016.

The route starts in Chehalis near the tourist train headquarters at the Chehalis–Centralia Railroad & Museum. You'll pass through pastures and small woodlots, and cross two trestles, before crossing State Route 6 via the attractive, recently constructed cycling/pedestrian bridge a mile before Adna. A mile beyond Adna, the trail turns to packed gravel. You'll pass whitewater in the river and once-thriving lumber mill towns.

The trail deteriorates to mostly loose gravel about 8 miles out from Chehalis, en route to Pe Ell—an old railway town said to be the mispronunciation of an early trapper named Pierre and where there is a trailhead.

From Pe Ell, the next 12 miles feature a winding grade in the Willapa Hills through timber stands of Douglas fir, cedar, and alder. You might spy deer or other wildlife here as you climb and descend a ballast trail held together by grass.

It's back to rough gravel as you return to the valley and pass the small towns of Frances, Lebam (reversed spelling of Mabel, a settler's daughter), and Menlo. A missing trestle just west of Lebam requires a short detour on Robertson Road.

From there, it's nearly 14 more miles of gravel until the path is paved once again as it rolls along the Willapa River on the outskirts of Raymond. The city is known as the Town of Metal People for erecting more than 100 sculptures of animals and people. The route briefly leaves the railroad corridor to avoid a river crossing. It ends on US 101 at a mountain of oyster shells next to the Willapa estuary in South Bend, known as the Oyster Capital of the World.



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States: Washington

Counties: Lewis, Pacific

Length: 56 miles

Trail end points: Near end of SW Hillburger Rd (Chehalis) to Near US 101 & Montana Ave (South Bend)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Ballast, Crushed Stone, Grass, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline Skating, Fishing, Horseback Riding, Mountain

Parking & Trail Access

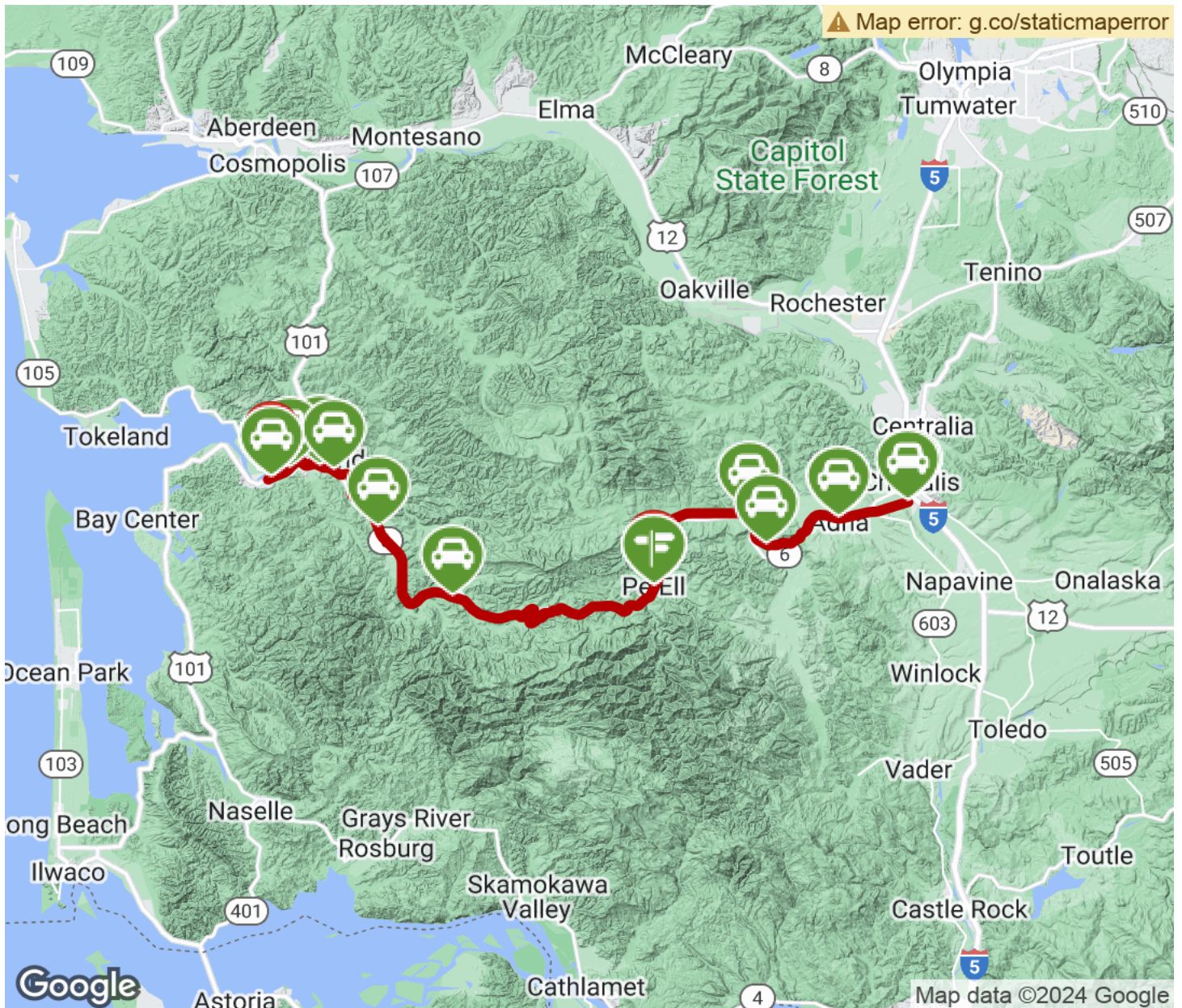
To reach the Chehalis trailhead, take Interstate 5 to Exit 77. Turn west onto W. Main Street, and then immediately turn left onto SW Riverside Drive. In 0.5 mile, turn left onto SW Sylvenus Street, and then turn right onto SW Hillburger Road in 0.3 mile. At the end, in 0.4 mile, is a county parking lot for the trail; a left turn heads to a state parking lot with toilets and drinking water (Discover Pass required).

To reach the South Bend trailhead from I-5, take Exit 104. Continue on US 101 for 5.5 miles, and keep left to stay on SR 8. In 21 miles, continue straight on US 12. In another 10 miles, take the exit for SR 107/Montesano/Raymond. Turn left onto SR 107 S, and go 8 miles. Turn left onto US 101 S, and travel 21.3 miles. Turn right onto Summit Avenue, and park at the trailhead.



Willapa Hills State Park Trail

Washington



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
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