



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Great American Rail-Trail, West

Idaho, Montana, Washington, Wyoming



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The western portion of the Great American Rail-Trail is diverse in landscapes and geographic features as it travels from eastern Wyoming to the Pacific Ocean at La Push. While the varied and rugged topography of the region made railroad development challenging—resulting in fewer rail corridors and, therefore, fewer rail-trail conversions today—the route through the West offers the expansive openness one might envision in less-developed terrain.

Through the four states, many trails highlight the forested backdrops, stunning waterside views, rich histories, and

geological wonders of the West, with opportunities for solitude, community connections, and cultural exploration throughout. The trail traverses charming small towns and cities, including Casper, Greybull, and Cody in Wyoming; Bozeman, Three Forks, Butte, Deer Lodge, and Missoula in Montana; and Wallace and Kellogg in Idaho. Toward the western endpoint of the Great American, you can experience the hustle and urban bustle of Seattle.

Of the 12 states hosting the Great American, Wyoming had the smallest percentage of completed trails; however, advocates continue to seek funding and harness support for new sections, and Casper embraces its place, both past and present, as a trail hub. Long before its incorporation in the 1880s, the town was a convergence point for four of America's prominent westbound foot, horse, and wagon routes—the California, Mormon, Oregon, and Pony Express Trails—which served an estimated half a million people seeking opportunities out West. This history is captured at the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. Today, the [Casper Rail Trail](#) and [Platte River Trail](#) welcome a new type of trail user to the city's trailside businesses and amenities.

The West's geography, including the Rocky Mountains, Northern Plains, Columbia Plateau, and Pacific Coastal region, made it a center of activity for Indigenous tribes for thousands of years, before westward expansion resulted in their forced displacement. As expansion grew, white settlers and surveyors often relied on Indigenous peoples to help them navigate rough terrain. In Three Forks, along the [Headwaters Trail System](#), markers commemorate a Lemhi Shoshone woman who is arguably the most well-known cultural guide in history: Sacagawea, who served as interpreter and diplomat for the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806).

Heading from Montana into Idaho, the Great American is hosted by two connected trails that follow the former



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States: Idaho, Montana, Washington, Wyoming

Counties: Benewah, Big Horn, Deer Lodge, Douglas, Gallatin, Granite, Hot Springs, Jefferson, Kootenai, Madison, Mineral, Missoula, Natrona, Park, Powell, Shoshone, Silver Bow

Length: 503.3 miles

Trail end points: Washington to Wyoming

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete, Crushed Stone, Gravel, Metal

Parking & Trail Access

There are numerous parking options along the western portion of the Great American Rail-Trail. Please check the individual trail records to see all waypoints including parking, restrooms, and water.