



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



## Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail

*Washington*



# Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail

Washington

*Closure Notice: As of December 2025, the trail is closed from Hyak to Easton due to wash outs and will be closed until repairs can be*



as the John Wayne Pioneer Trail, is one of the longest rail-trail conversions in the United States. The 245-mile trail passes through remote and sparsely populated areas of Washington state that are rich in wildlife and natural beauty. The rail trail is also part of the Mountains to Sound Greenway, a 1.5-million-acre landscape surrounding I-90 between Seattle and Ellensburg.

Although there are a few gaps in the trail, they can be connected via on-road detours. However, travelers should note that these on-road connections do not currently have trail signage marking the way. Due to long distances between some of the towns, visitors are encouraged to carry water and snacks.

Anyone traveling the entire length of the trail will experience many landscapes: mountains, dense forests, irrigated farmland, arid scrubland, and the rolling hills of the Palouse region. The route crosses the Cascade Mountains in a 2.3-mile-long, unlit tunnel and traverses numerous canyons and rivers via bridges and trestles that offer spectacular views.

## About the Route

The western segment of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail runs 111 miles between Cedar Falls and the Columbia River. In this section (formerly known as Iron Horse State Park), most of the surface comprises loose gravel, except for the 20 miles of loose sand in the U.S. Army Yakima Training Center. The entire trail is better suited to mountain bikes with suspension and fat tire bikes.

State trailheads are located at Cedar Falls, Twin Falls, Hyak, Easton, South Cle Elum, Thorp, Ellensburg West, Ellensburg East, Kittitas, Army West, and Army East. In this segment, five trailside primitive campsites are also available: two between Cedar Falls and Hyak, two between Hyak and Easton and one between South Cle Elum and Thorp.

Closure Notice: As of December 2025, the trail is closed from Hyak to Easton due to wash outs and will be closed until repairs can be made. The trail is also closed from the Cedar Falls Trailhead to the Snoqualmie Tunnel due to the storm damage and multiple large trail wash outs. For updates, please check the [Washington State Parks website](#).

Notice: Before heading out, it's important to note that to experience the trail east of the Columbia River, travelers are required to [register online](#) with Washington State Parks. When the permits are obtained, trail users will receive the combination of the locked gates on the trail route and a map showing on-road detours.

The Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail, formerly known



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**States:** Washington

**Counties:** Adams, Grant, King, Kittitas, Spokane, Whitman

Length: 245.6 miles

**Trail end points:** Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area (North Bend) to 4962 Lower Crab Creek Rd SW (Royal City) to E 1st St. (Warden) to Washington/Idaho Border

**Trail surfaces:** Ballast, Crushed Stone, Dirt, Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

## Parking & Trail Access

The Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail has two distinct segments from Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area (North Bend), where parking is available, to 4962 Lower Crab Creek Rd SW (Royal City) & E 1st St. (Warden) to Washington/Idaho Border

A Discover pass is required for vehicle access to state parks for day use. Refer to the [Palouse to Cascades Trail page](#) on the Washington State Trails website.

Parking is also available at:

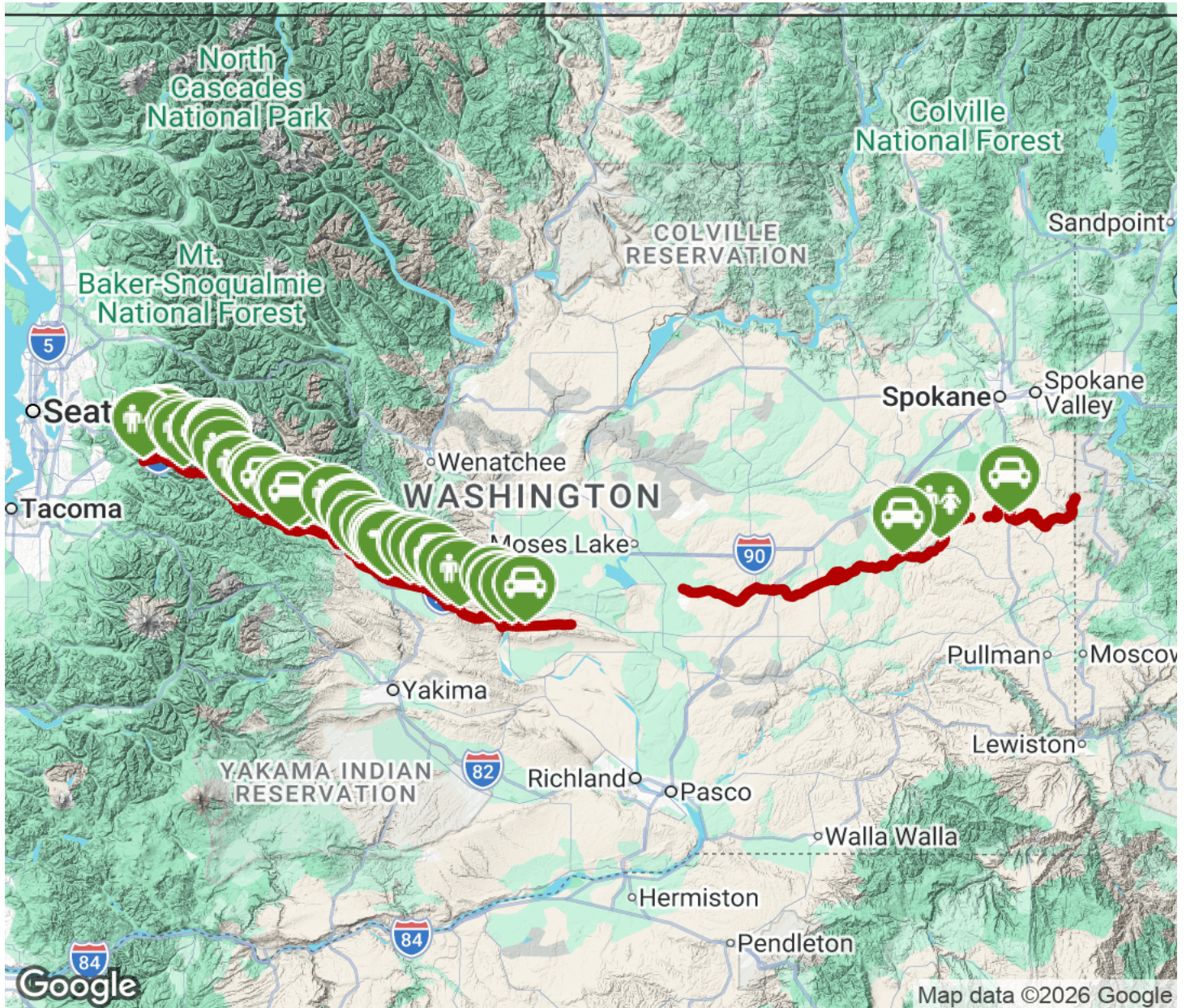
- 50501 SE Homestead Valley Rd. (North Bend)
- 241 Trailside Dr. (Cle Elum)
- Ralston Trailhead, 1787 E. Lind Ralston Rd. and WA 261 (Ralston)

Parking is available at numerous locations along the trail, please see [TrailLink map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



# Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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