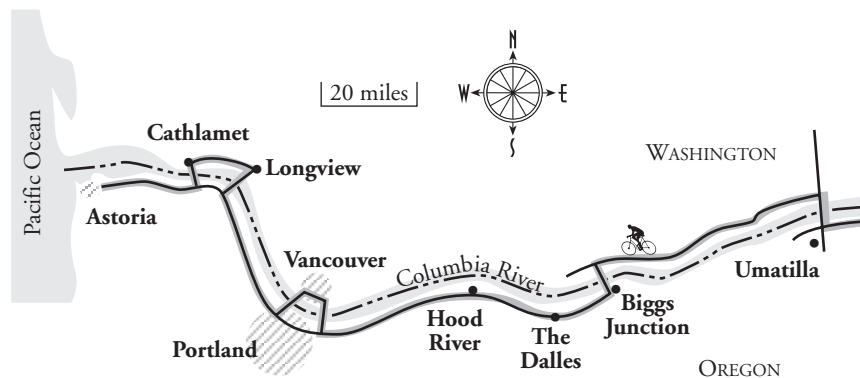




## K. DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

### UMATILLA, OR TO ASTORIA, OR



By the time the Corps of Discovery hit the Columbia River, they must have felt that the end was in sight—at least figuratively if not literally. Although the Columbia had yet to be explored and mapped above Portland, they knew they were on the Columbia River. Very soon they spotted a large volcano they took to be Mt. St. Helens, although it was actually her neighbor volcano—Mt. Adams. On October 19 Clark wrote, “*I ascended a high cliff about 200 feet above the water from the top of which is a level plain extending up the river and off for a great extent . . . from this place I discovered a high mountain of emence hight covered with Snow, this must be one of the mountains laid down by Vancouver, as Seen from the mouth of the Columbia River, from the Course which it bears which is West I take it to be Mt. St. Helens, destant 156 miles.*” Shortly they would spot and recognize the magnificent Mt. Hood.

They must have also felt good about travelling rapidly downstream after fifteen months of struggling upstream and two months of even more difficult struggling over the mountains. In fact, the final 630 miles down the rivers took only one month. There are many stories of the expedition taking significant risks shooting the rapids in their awkward dugout canoes. Sometimes the Indians lined the banks to watch them, perhaps hoping to pick up the spoils from their wrecks.

Lewis and Clark found a big change in both the landscape and the Indians as they moved down the river. The change in the landscape is still very visible today. East of the Columbia River Gorge, around The Dalles, the Columbia Plateau is a relatively dry area. Fourteen inches of rainfall per year is only enough to grow wheat and other crops with the help of irrigation. Thirty five miles west of The Dalles the rainfall is 65 inches per year, and the vegetation is green and lush all the way to the Pacific.

Lewis and Clark also found a big change in the Indians, due partly to the natural barrier formed by the Columbia River Gorge, and partly to the influence of white men. East of the gorge the Nez Perce were honest, friendly, and helpful. The Gorge prevented them from travelling easily to the west, and they had no previous contact with white men.

The Chinooks, who lived west of the Gorge, were similarly prevented from travelling east. The two groups had developed quite independently and spoke very different languages. Furthermore, the Chinooks had had previous contact and experience with white traders, and they expected much more from the Corps of Discovery. Their culture also seemed to allow petty thievery, and this caused many problems for the captains—especially since they were running low on many supplies and trading goods. Several times on the return trip Lewis came close to losing his temper and perhaps taking drastic action against the Indians, which all would have regretted later.

The Columbia River Gorge—designated a “national scenic area” in 1986—is a spectacular stretch that includes about 80 miles between The Dalles and Troutdale. One of the best places to learn more about the Gorge is the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles.

It was difficult deciding which side of the river to use as a bicycle route, but I finally chose the Oregon side for two reasons: the availability of services and camping is more evenly spaced; and the bike trails and sections of the Historic Columbia River Highway provide beautiful riding—especially the new stretch through the Mosier Twin Tunnels that is now open only to bicycles and pedestrians. The trade-off is that it requires 30 miles (three stretches of 5, 15, and 10 miles) of riding on I-84. Although riding the interstate shoulder is noisy, sometimes dirty, and not that pleasant, it is beautiful along the river, flatter, and arguably safer than riding Route 14 on the Washington side as traffic increases towards Vancouver and Portland.



*Maryhill Museum,  
high above the Columbia River,  
across from Biggs Junction, OR*

## Biggs Junction, OR

Although Biggs Junction is little more than an interchange on I-84, you may be very happy to find the services it offers after riding 84 miles from Umatilla. Perhaps surprisingly, this is the longest stretch without overnight services on our whole route. One way to break it up is to camp at Crow Butte State Park 27 miles west of Umatilla (see Camping under Umatilla). Biggs Junction offers several motels, restaurants, and excellent camping at Maryhill State Park just across the river in Washington.

One other little surprise that Biggs offers is an amazing look at the *original* Oregon Trail. Look for a small roadside sign on the south side of the Frontage Road two miles west of Biggs, and walk along the ruts of the old trail parallel to the road. Since this land is not good for commercial development, farming, or grazing, the trail looks very much as it did 150 years ago. Ponder what it must have been like hauling huge Conestoga wagons through this rugged terrain.

Another attraction nearby is Maryhill Museum of Art and the Stonehenge Memorial (509-773-3733). Maryhill was originally built as a family mansion by railroad baron Sam Hill as the start of a Quaker community in 1914. Since he was unable to attract others—including his wife—to the remote location, he abandoned the idea. Later he was convinced to turn it into an art museum, and it finally opened in 1940—eleven years after his death. Stonehenge is a replica of the English monument and is dedicated to local men who lost their lives in World War I. Both are located on Route 14 on the Washington side of the river. It's important to understand they are on the plateau about 500 feet above the river, so plan your visit accordingly. If you're not fascinated by original art, you may be satisfied to enjoy the view of Maryhill from our route along the Oregon side.

The bridge across the Columbia here is about a half-mile long and narrow without any sidewalk. Fortunately, traffic is light, and you can claim your lane for the short distance across.



*Wagon tracks  
on the  
Oregon Trail,  
near Biggs  
Junction, OR*

Zip: 97065

- 1) Dinty's Motor Inn (\$), 541-739-2596
  - 2) Riviera Best Western (\$\$), 541-739-2501
- 1) Maryhill State Park, Maryhill, WA, 800-233-0321; on river, grass, shade, showers
  - 2) Deschutes River State Park, 4.5 mi. west of Biggs on Frontage Rd., 541-739-2322, on river, grass, shade, no showers

## The Dalles, OR

Population: 11,000

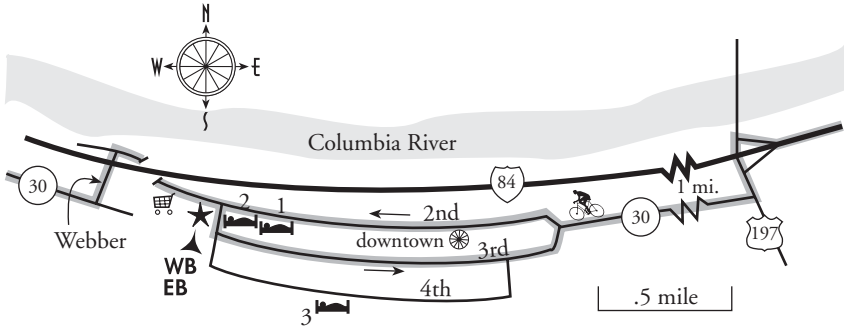
After navigating a difficult stretch of river they named the Short Narrows and the Long Narrows, the expedition camped *“on a high point of rocks, which forms a kind of fortification.”* They spent the next two days here, resting, hunting, and repairing the dugout canoes.

Later French traders named this town The Dalles (rhymes with “pals”) because of the flat flagstones that created the rapids in this area. These rapids, as well as the magnificent Celilo Falls upriver, are now all covered by the lake created above The Dalles Dam. You can visit the dam and see both pictures and a three-dimensional model of the area before the dam was built. The dam also offers a short train ride to view the fish ladders and power plant. West of town is the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center with many exhibits on the geology, history, and culture of this area.

Today's downtown area includes motels and restaurants within walking distance. Near the center of this area are several large interesting murals on the sides of buildings that depict different historical scenes. If you need malls, big food supermarkets, chain restaurants, and more motels, head northwest out 6th St. (Route 30 west of downtown).

Lewis & Clark at  
Rock Fort  
by Robert Thomas.  
One of several  
murals adorning  
the walls of  
businesses in  
The Dalles, OR





### The Dalles, OR — Zip: 97058

- ★ **The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce:** 404 W 2nd, 541-296-2231, 800-255-3385, [www.gorge.net/tdacc](http://www.gorge.net/tdacc)
- 🏠 The Chamber of Commerce lists 16 motels and B&Bs in and near The Dalles. Below is a sample of convenient downtown locations:
  - 1) Best Western Umatilla House (\$\$), 112 W 2nd, 800-722-8277
  - 2) Oregon Motor Motel (\$), 200 W 2nd, 541-296-9111
  - 3) Budget Inn (\$), 118 W 4th, 541-296-5464
- 🌀 Life Cycles, 418 E 2nd, 541-296-9588

**Special Attraction:** Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, 5000 Discovery Drive (541-296-8600)



*Mount Hood towering over the Columbia River*

## Hood River, OR

Population: 4,600

The town of Hood River is located where the Hood River flows into the Columbia. Above town the river formed a large fertile valley now famous for fruit—especially pears. Farther up is forest rich with timber. Above the forest rises the snow-capped peak of Mt. Hood—a magnificent landmark volcano.

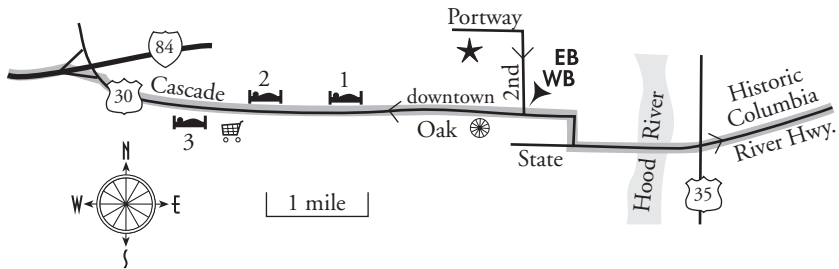
After Lewis and Clark came through here, fur trappers and traders roamed the area before it was permanently settled in the 1850s. Although fruit and timber are still the dominant industries, tourism continues to grow. The wind howling through the confines of the Gorge has made Hood River the wind-surfing capital of the west coast. It is fun to watch them on a windy weekend. Count on a stiff west wind through the gorge during the summer, but sometimes in spring and fall you get a big easterly wind.

The growth of tourism has brought many restaurants and other services to town, and has also raised prices and made reservations more important—especially on weekends. Much as I hesitate to recommend restaurants, we had an excellent creative Italian dinner at the North Oak Brasserie.

If you have thoughts of crossing the Hood River Bridge to Washington, think long and hard. The bridge is very narrow, and almost a mile long with open grate decking. I crossed it once because I felt I had no options, but I will never do it again. It is the most unpleasant and dangerous bridge I have ever experienced, and it's even more dangerous when it is wet and windy.



*Doing flips in a moderate breeze, near Hood River, OR*



### Hood River, OR — Zip: 97031

- ★ **Hood River County Chamber of Commerce:** 405 Portway Ave.,  
800-366-3530, [www.gorge.net/hrccc](http://www.gorge.net/hrccc)
- 🏠 The Chamber of Commerce lists 11 motels/hotels and 7 B&Bs. A sample of convenient locations:
  - 1) Prater's Motel (\$\$), 1306 Oak, 541-386-3566
  - 2) Sunset Motel (\$\$), 2300 Cascade, 541-386-6027
  - 3) Lone Pine Motel (\$), 2429 Cascade, 541-386-8882
- ▲ Viento State Park, 6 mi. west of Hood River, wooded, showers, hiker-biker area
- 🚲 Discover Bicycles, 205 Oak, 541-386-4820



*Historic Columbia River Highway*

## Cascade Locks, OR

Population: 850

The village of Cascade Locks is located in a beautiful place on the banks of the Columbia, where you will find motels, campground, restaurants, and food shopping. During the summer the sternwheeler *Columbia Gorge* offers two-hour cruises on the river (503-223-3928).

Native American legend claims the Great Spirit once built a bridge of stone across the Columbia here. Scientists think a nearby mountain may have collapsed about 1,000 years ago, damming up the river. The river eventually tunneled under the dam and created a bridge of stone. Unfortunately, it's all long gone. Today's Bridge of the Gods is a graceful steel structure built in the 1920s for \$600,000. In the 1990s it was repainted for \$800,000. It is a long narrow toll bridge not recommended for cyclists.

Zip: 97014

★ **Cascade Locks Tourism:** Box 355, 541-374-8619

🏠 1) Columbia River Inn (\$\$), 800-595-7108

2) Bridge of the Gods Motel (\$\$), 541-374-8628

3) Econo Inn (\$\$), 877-374-8417

▲ 1) KOA Campground, 1 mi. east of Cascade Locks on Forest Lane Road

2) Ainsworth State Park, 9 mi. west of Cascade Locks, wooded, showers, hiker-biker area

## Troutdale, OR

Population: 8,000

Troutdale is located at the boundary between the scenic Columbia River Gorge and greater metropolitan Portland. The town includes a downtown with trendy shops, art galleries, restaurants, and a helpful Chamber of Commerce. Although the town is mostly residential, there are several motels and chain restaurants around Exit 17 of I-84 (intersection with 257th St.).

Zip: 97060

★ **Chamber of Commerce:** Box 245, 338 E Historic Columbia River Highway, 503-669-7473, [stateoforegon.com/troutdale/tacc](http://stateoforegon.com/troutdale/tacc)

🏠 Located at Intersection of I-84 and 257th St.

1) Motel 6 (\$), 503-665-2254

2) Phoenix Inn (\$\$), 800-824-6824

3) Inn America (\$\$), 800-469-4667



## VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON, AND PORTLAND, OREGON

When the Corps of Discovery visited this area in 1805, they found scattered Native American villages along both sides of the river that both traded and occasionally fought with each other. The same might be said about the two modern cities of Vancouver and Portland today.

The first white people to establish a settlement here were from the British Hudson's Bay Trading Company, who wanted to expand their fur trading operations inland from the coast. Fort Vancouver was originally built as a trading post, as opposed to a military fortification. Searching upriver from their base in Astoria, the British chose the first relatively flat and open expanse of land they could find on the north side of the river, expecting the Columbia River to become the natural boundary between the British and American empires.

Americans came to this area in the 1840s for very different reasons. They had heard about the fertile farmland in the Willamette Valley, south of today's Portland; and they travelled out the Oregon Trail with their families as permanent farmers and settlers. By 1846 over 5,000 had settled in this area.

In 1846 the international boundary was peacefully agreed to be the 49th parallel, where it still is today; and the British in Vancouver were replaced by Americans. The wide expanse of fertile land south of the river and the limited land north of the river started the trend towards the large city of Portland and the small city of Vancouver. In 1883 the decision of the Northern Pacific to build the railroad on the Oregon side further accelerated this trend. Today greater Portland has almost ten times the population of Vancouver—for better or worse, depending on your point of view.



*Portland believes in bicycles! Bike Trail on I-205 bridge*

Our bicycle route, as shown in the overview map, seeks to offer a scenic and convenient way to travel through this heavily populated area. Vancouver offers cycling with lower traffic and a compact downtown area with a B&B, motels, and restaurants. It is very easy to stay in Vancouver and take a bus to downtown Portland, which provides a great area for walking.

It is also possible to ride into Portland from Vancouver, or directly through Portland on the Oregon side. Portland has two youth hostels, lots of microbreweries, night clubs, and other activities that may be very appealing to some people. If you want to ride in and/or through Portland, I strongly recommend Metro Regional Services' ([www.metro-region.org](http://www.metro-region.org) or 503-797-1510) *Bike There* map for \$6. Portland can be very friendly to cyclists—IF you know what you're doing.

Although Portland is about 100 miles from the end of the Lewis and Clark Trail, it is the logical commercial transportation hub for the western end of the route. The airport is relatively convenient and friendly to bicycles, as shown on the overview map (page 204). Union Station downtown provides Amtrak service both up and down the west coast, and also through Spokane and northern Montana (along the Hi-Line route we follow) to Chicago. Next door to Union Station is the Greyhound terminal.



*U.S. Grant House on Officers' Row in the fort Vancouver Historic Reserve*

## Vancouver, WA

Population: 135,000

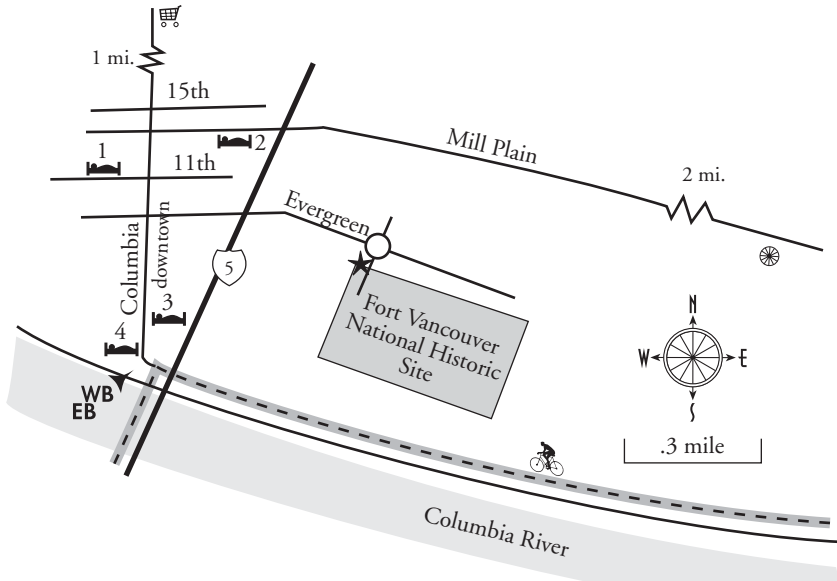
Although Vancouver has a large population, it is very spread out. The relatively compact downtown area on the river near the I-5 bridge makes it seem like a much smaller town. There is a B&B, several motels, and several restaurants within walking distance in the pleasant downtown area. North along I-5 and east along Mill Plain are newer areas with malls and franchise restaurants.

A short bike ride away—and large enough that a bicycle is ideal for getting around—is Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Originally established by the British as a fur trading post, this site has since been the home of Ulysses S. Grant, American troops training for World War I and II, pioneer aviation work, Henry Kaiser's massive ship-building effort for World War II, and current Army and National Guard units. Today you can visit the old stockade, air museum, and restored homes along Officers' Row to get a feel for the rich and varied history of this location.

Lewis and Clark camped downriver from the present site of the I-5 bridge on the night of November 3, 1805. Although they were opposite the mouth of the Willamette River, there was a large island (today's Hayden Island) in the way and they never noticed the river. On their way home the next spring, after they had paddled more than ten miles past today's Portland and Vancouver, Indians told them they had missed the river again, even though they had been looking for it. Clark then took a small group and returned to explore the river for several miles. He wrote in his journal that this flat rich farmland could support 40,000–50,000 souls. By 1850 more than 13,000 people had braved the rigors of the Oregon Trail to settle in the Willamette Valley.



*Doris Hale and her Vintage Inn, Vancouver, WA*



### Vancouver, WA — Zip: 98663

★ **Southwest Washington Visitors Bureau:** 101 E 8th St., 877-600-0800, [www.southwestwashington.com](http://www.southwestwashington.com), [info@southwestwashington.com](mailto:info@southwestwashington.com)

**O.O. Howard House Information Center:** 750 Anderson St., located in Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

🏠 The Chamber of Commerce lists 1 B&B and 14 motels and hotels in Vancouver. A small sample of convenient downtown locations is listed below:

- 1) Vintage Inn B&B (\$\$), 310 W 11th, 888-693-6635, [www.vintage-inn.com](http://www.vintage-inn.com); restored 1903 mansion filled with elegant antiques; walking distance to downtown restaurants and historic attractions; 4 large rooms with queen beds and shared bath; full breakfast.
- 2) Shilo Inn (\$\$), 401 E 13th, 800-888-2244
- 3) Vancouver Lodge (\$), 601 Broadway, 360-693-3668
- 4) Red Lion Hotel at the Quay (\$\$\$), 100 Columbia, 800-222-8733

🚲 Chain Reaction Cyclery, 6503 E Mill Plain, 360-696-9234

### Special Events

International Discovery Walk, 3rd weekend in April

Fort Vancouver July 4th (largest fireworks west of the Mississippi draws 80,000 people)

Wine and Jazz Festival, late August

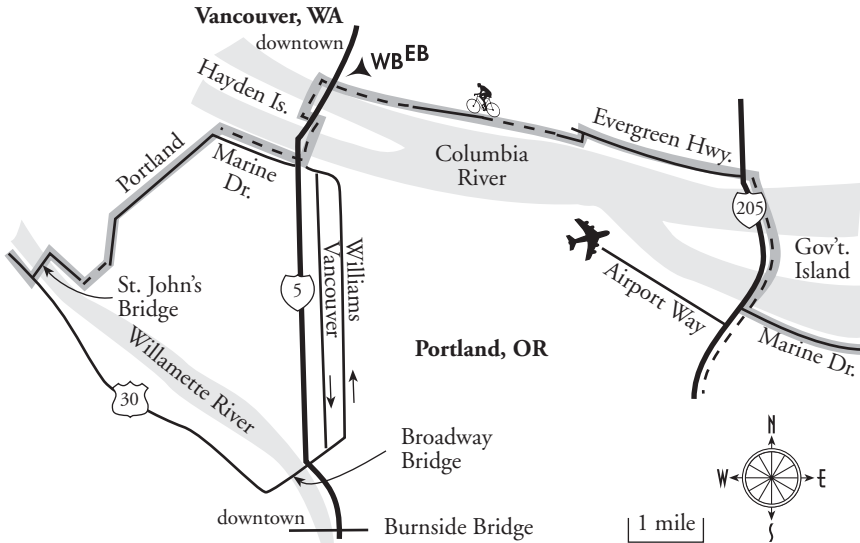
## Portland, OR

Population: 500,000

In 1844 the first two settlers each wanted to name their new town after their hometown back east—Boston and Portland. Portland won in a coin toss. If you're ending or beginning your trip by air, Portland Airport is ideal—good airline connections, convenient location, and reasonable traffic on the access roads for cyclists.

Today the city straddles the Willamette River just south of its confluence with the Columbia River. Major industries include manufacturing and electronics.

The downtown area on the west side of the Willamette River offers pleasant walking along the river and shopping in the blocks just west of the river. Saturdays bring an active crafts market to the area near Burnside Bridge, which is a good bridge for bicycles to cross.



### Portland Overview

★ **Portland Visitors Association:** 877-678-5263, [www.travelportland.com](http://www.travelportland.com)

#### Hostels

- 1) Northwest Portland International Hostel (\$), 1818 NW Glissan, 503-241-2783
- 2) Portland International Hostel (\$), 3031 SE Hawthorne, 503-236-3380

#### Motels near Airport

- 3) EconoLodge Airport (\$\$), 9520 NE Sandy, 503-252-6666

4) Super 8 Motel Airport (\$\$), 11011 NE Holman, 800-800-8000

5) Travelodge Airport (\$\$), 9727 NE Sandy, 800-621-4358

**Special Events:** Portland Rose Festival, month of June ([www.rosefestival.org](http://www.rosefestival.org))

## Rainier, OR

Population: 1,700

Rainier is located on the south side of the Columbia River opposite Longview. There are a couple of restaurants, a medium supermarket, and one motel. If you're in a hurry, you could spend a night here, stay on Route 30 on the Oregon side to Westport, and save 12 miles plus a ferry ride.

Zip: 97048

 Rainier Budget Inn Motel (\$), 120 A St., 503-556-4231

## Longview, WA

Population: 32,000

Longview is a relatively new city, planned and developed from scratch by the Long-Bell Lumber Company in 1919. Long-Bell, already well established in Kansas City, wanted to build a large mill in a seaport so they could export lumber from their newly purchased timber lands in southwest Washington. Chairman Robert A. Long's friend, J.C. Nichols, convinced the company to plan and build a beautiful city as a home for their new lumber mill. Hence the name "Longview."

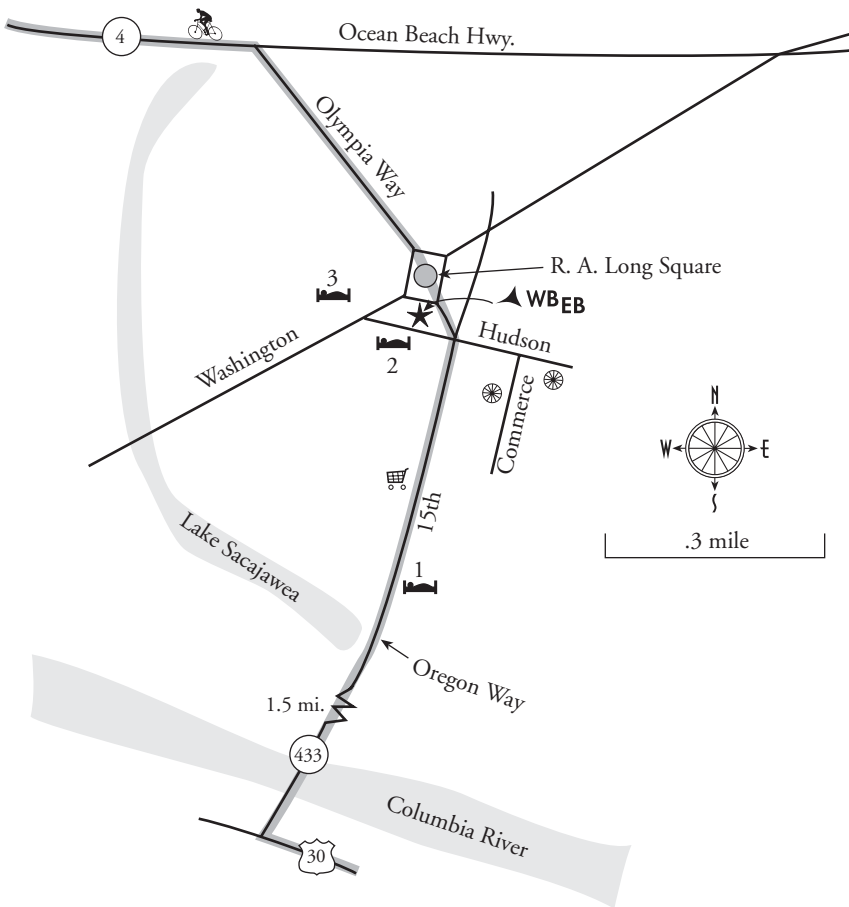
While walking your bike across the sidewalk of the high Lewis and Clark Bridge, you can see that paper, lumber, and shipping are still important parts of life



*Lewis & Clark Bridge into Longview, WA*

in Longview. The city spreads out with boulevards, esplanades, and wide avenues from its central core in R. A. Long Square. Animal lovers will want to check out the Nutty Narrows Squirrel Bridge across Olympia Way near the northwest corner of the square. To the east of Long Square is the commercial area. To the south is the industrial area and the seaport on the river. To the west is mostly residential, built around natural looking parklands and Lake Sacajawea, also planned and developed from a marsh area known as Fowler's Slough.

I had been to Longview twice before and never understood or appreciated that it was a planned city with definite organizing principles. The Chamber of Commerce has excellent information and a walking map of the central city.



**Longview, WA** — Zip: 98632

★ **Longview Area Chamber of Commerce**

1563 Olympia Way, 360-423-8400, [www.ci.longview.wa.us](http://www.ci.longview.wa.us)

🏠 The Chamber of Commerce lists 8 motels and 2 B&Bs. Below is a sample of convenient locations:

- 1) Travelodge (\$\$), 838 15th, 800-578-7878
- 2) Hudson Manor Hotel (\$), 1616 Hudson, 360-425-1100
- 3) Town Chalet (\$), 1822 Washington Way, 360-423-2020

- 🕒 1) Byman's Bikes, 1156 Commerce, 360-577-4481
- 2) Bob's Pedal Power, 1111 Hudson, 360-425-3870

## Cathlamet, WA

Population: 550

Originally the home of the Kathlamet Indians, part of the Chinook tribe, the name comes from the word “calamet,” meaning “stone.” This stretch of river with a rocky river bed was first sighted by the British Lieutenant William Broughton in 1792, while he was verifying the American Captain Robert Gray’s earlier discovery of the Columbia River. Legend has it that Lewis and Clark drank from Queen Sally’s Well (180 South 2nd St.), but their journals suggest they were in a hurry by this time of their trip, smelling the salt water and the end of their journey.

The first permanent white settler was James Birnie of the Hudson’s Bay Company, who established a trading post at Birnie’s Retreat in 1846. Today Cathlamet is the county seat of Wahkiakum County. A very pleasant town of 550, it has many services because it serves as a regional center. There are several restaurants, and the Wahkiakum County Historical Museum (65 River St.) is a small museum that tells many stories of this area.

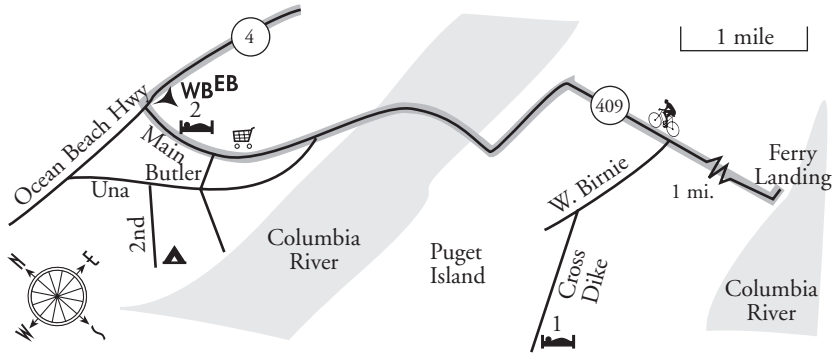
Just south of town is Puget Island, named by Broughton for his friend, Lt. Peter Puget. This flat two- by five-mile island is sometimes called “Little Norway,”

because it was settled by Scandinavians in 1884. A fifteen minute ferry ride connects the island with Westport, Oregon. The ferry leaves Puget Island every hour on the hour and leaves Westport every hour at fifteen minutes past the hour.



*Puget Island ferry*





### Cathlamet, WA — Zip: 98612

- ★ **Lower Columbia Economic Development Council**  
Skamokawa, 98647, 360-795-3996, lcedc@tdn.com
- 🏠 1) Redfern Farm B&B (\$\$), 277 Cross Dike Rd., Puget Island, 360-849-4108; quiet rural farm four flat mi. from town and ferry; two rooms with queen beds and private baths; full breakfast; best call 4-6 pm.
- 2) Bradley House B&B, 61 Main, 800-551-1691
- ▲ Elochman Slough Marina, RV, Camping, 500 2nd St., 360-795-3501; open camping near marina, little privacy or shade, clean restrooms with showers, easy walk to downtown.



Skamokawa, WA

## Skamokawa, WA

Population: 400

Skamokawa is a tiny hamlet on a sheltered estuary 4.5 easy miles west of Cathlamet. Although not really on our route, it's well worth considering a detour here to the Skamokawa Center ([www.skamokawapaddle.com](http://www.skamokawapaddle.com), 888-920-2777), which includes a B&B, general store, café for breakfast and lunch, and a kayak operation. It's possible to rent kayaks or join a tour to explore miles of sheltered waters and see many birds among the islands in the Columbia River. Among their many kayak offerings is a moonlight tour and a two-day Lewis and Clark tour. An easy walk east, the Duck Inn serves dinners.

Skamokawa Vista Park (206-795-8605) is a quarter mile farther west on the river. It offers pleasant camping with shade, a beach, and clean restrooms without showers.

## Westport, OR

Population: 75

Westport is an intersection where the road from the ferry landing connects with Route 30 on the Oregon side. There is a motel, restaurant, deli, and grocery store, and it's possible to spend a night here.

Zip: 97016

 Westport Motel (\$), 503-455-2212

## Astoria, OR

Population: 10,000

*“Ocian in view! O! the joy.” (Nov. 7, 1805, Clark)* You, too, can experience the joy of reaching your goal—the Pacific Ocean. Although the Corps of Discovery was still almost twenty miles from the actual ocean when Clark wrote this in his journal at Pillar Rock, near Altoona, Washington, this was the goal they had all been working toward. They were tantalizingly close, but it would be another month of struggling in and around the mouth of the Columbia River before they set up their winter quarters at Fort Clatsop—six miles south of Astoria.

What they really saw that day was the broad expanse of the Columbia River near its mouth. Over the next fifteen days the expedition spent most of the time pinned down by wind, waves, and terrible weather at two campsites near the north end of today's Astoria Bridge. On November 28 Clark wrote, *“This is our present Situation, ! truly disagreeable. aded to this the robes of our Selves and men are all rotten from being Continually wet, and we Cannot precure others, or*

*blankets in their places . . . at maney times it blew for 15 or 20 minits with Such violence that I expected every moment to See trees taken up by the roots, Some were blown down. Those Squals were Suckceeded by rain, O! how Tremendious is the day.”*

During this period they were able to walk overland to Cape Disappointment and what is now Fort Canby State Park on the north side of the mouth of the river. They explored this area and several miles up the coast near Long Beach, Washington, always hoping to find a ship from back home. A ship could have replenished their supplies and equipment, provided them with manufactured goods for trading, and offered transportation home for their journals, specimens, and some or all of their men.

Finding no sign of trading ships, little game for food, and paying high prices to Chinooks for basics, they voted to search for winter quarters on the south side of the river, where the Clatsops were more friendly, there were more elk, they could make salt, and they could keep a lookout for a trading ship. Much has been made of this decision—where everyone had an equal vote, even a black slave and an Indian woman. They worked their way back upriver to find a safer place to cross, and then spent ten days camped on today’s Tongue Point (just east of downtown Astoria) while searching for a good location for their winter camp.

On December 7, one month after their joyous arrival, they arrived at the site of Fort Clatsop and began building their home for the winter. The Native Americans in this area were indeed friendly, in fact sometimes too friendly. They liked to hang around the fort, trade food for manufactured goods, and occasionally steal something. The captains revived the army discipline of standing watch and closing the fort each night.

The expedition remained at Fort Clatsop until March 23, always hoping to hail a ship near the mouth of the river while waiting for the snow to melt in Idaho and Montana so they could re-cross the Rockies. It was another difficult winter, but much different from the previous winter at Fort Mandan. Instead of cold weather, they had wet weather; it rained almost every day. Clothing rotted, fleas infested their bedding, and many men were suffering from a variety of diseases. Game was scarce, their goods available for trading were running low, and their days were filled with monotony. The previous winter they were excited about proceeding westward from Fort Mandan; this winter it must have been difficult wondering if this was the end of their journey or only the halfway point.

Although it was difficult for everyone, it was also a very productive period for the captains. They wrote a great deal in their journals, Clark updated his maps, and they made important decisions about their return routes.

Thirteen years before Lewis and Clark, the American Captain Robert Gray was the first white man to discover the Columbia River. The British, Spanish, and Russians were also sailing this part of the coast and making rival claims to the land. Lewis and Clark were the first white men to arrive by land in 1805. In 1811 John Jacob Astor’s group of fur traders arrived by sea and established the first American settlement here. Their fort was sold to the North West Company of Montreal when

the British arrived during the War of 1812, but it was returned to the Americans for good in 1818.

Astoria languished in the shadow of Fort Vancouver farther upriver, until the American-British boundary was established along the 49th parallel, and the British started moving out of Vancouver. As the Oregon Territorial government was established, American pioneers were pushing farther west from the Willamette Valley to settle permanently in this area.

In 1864 the first salmon cannery was built, and a new industry developed. The area prospered from salmon canneries until the 1960s. It has also been a port for grain and lumber exports, and more recently tourism has become an important industry.

Today Astoria is the home of the excellent Columbia River Maritime Museum, many pleasant Victorian homes and B&Bs, and several interesting restaurants. Some local favorites that have been around a while: Home Spirit Bakery (1585 Exchange) serves homemade bread and scones, and lunches and dinners by reservation. The Columbian Café (1114 Marine) serves unique breakfasts and lunches. The Rio Café (125 9th St.) offers good value in creative Mexican food.

For a better view of the whole area, you can ride 600 feet up Coxcomb Hill, just south of downtown, and walk up the 125-foot Astoria Column. Wound around the outside wall of the column is a spiral mural depicting the history of the lower Columbia River area. From here you can look southwest over Youngs Bay to the Fort Clatsop area, west to Warrenton and Fort Stevens, and northwest over the mouth of the Columbia River and “the bar”—graveyard for more than 200 ships.

Although Astoria is the official end of our bicycle route, you will probably want to spend at least a day or two here to

savor your accomplishment and enjoy the Lewis and Clark sites and other special attractions in this area. Stop at the Astoria Chamber of Commerce to get more details about each site and riding directions.

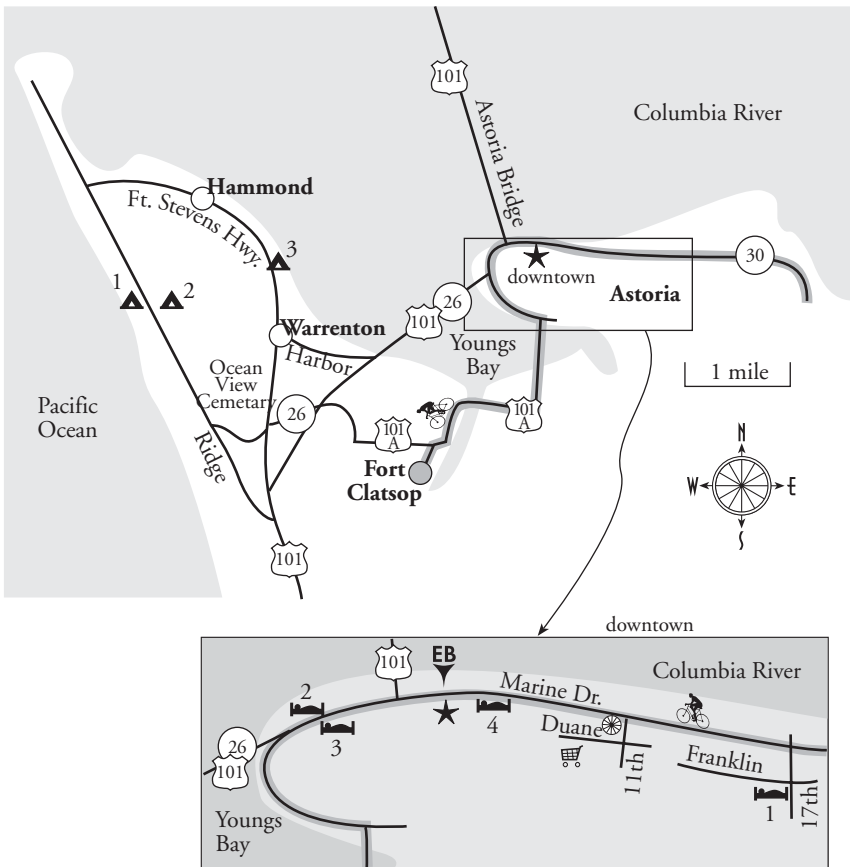
About six miles from Astoria is Fort Clatsop ([www.nps.gov/focl](http://www.nps.gov/focl), 503-861-2471), where the local residents built a replica of the original fort. The National Park Service operates a very informative visitor center there. If you're lucky, you might visit on a rainy day and get a feel for what it must have been like living there during a wet winter.



*Astoria Bridge at the mouth of the Columbia River,  
Astoria, OR*

About eighteen miles north and west from Astoria is the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Fort Canby State Park, Washington ([www.parks.wa.gov/ftcamby](http://www.parks.wa.gov/ftcamby), 360-642-3029). They have a good overview of the entire expedition, and a spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean and the mouth of the Columbia River from high on the cliffs. This excursion requires riding over the four-mile Astoria bridge, which demands both competence and confidence because of its length. Just east of the north end of the bridge is the spot where the Corps of Discovery was trapped by weather from November 10–15, 1805. If you make the decision to cross the bridge, you might consider combining this trip with a return trip up the Washington side of the river to Cathlamet.

About sixteen miles southwest of Astoria is Seaside—and a reconstruction of the site where Lewis and Clark established their Salt Works. You might also consider combining this trip with a ride farther down the spectacular Oregon coast and a loop back to Portland by another route.



**Astoria, OR** — Zip: 97103

★ **Chamber of Commerce:** 111 W Marine Dr., 503-325-6311, [www.oldoregon.com](http://www.oldoregon.com)

■ The Chamber of Commerce lists 8 B&Bs and 10 motels. A small sample of convenient locations is shown below:

- 1) Columbia River Inn (\$\$), 1681 Franklin, 800-953-5044, [www.moriah.com/Columbia](http://www.moriah.com/Columbia); restored 1870 Victorian “Painted Lady” with river views; walk to downtown; 4 rooms with queen beds, private baths, and various special amenities; bike storage; full breakfast.
- 2) Dunes Motel (\$\$), 288 W Marine, 800-441-3319
- 3) Lamplighter Motel (\$\$), 131 W Marine, 800-845-8847
- 4) Economy Lodge (\$), 495 Marine, 503-325-4211

▲ This area is very popular for camping during the summer. Call for reservations!

- 1) Fort Stevens State Park, Warrenton (97146), 800-452-5687
- 2) KOA Campground, 1100 NW Ridge, Hammond (97121), 800-KOA-8506
- 3) Kampers West Kampground, 1140 NW Warrenton, Warrenton (97146), 503-861-1814, primarily for RVs, expensive for tenters

⊙ Bikes & Beyond, 1089 Marine, 503-325-2961



Fort Clatsop, near Astoria, OR



## **Bicycle Guide to the Lewis & Clark Trail**

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### **Disclaimers**

The author and publisher of this book, and the government agencies on whose roads you bicycle, are not responsible for your riding habits, bicycle condition, and any accidents which might occur while following this route. They urge users of this Guide to wear a certified bicycle helmet, wear highly visible clothing, use reflectors and lights, obey all traffic laws, watch for pedestrians and motorists, and generally use good common sense and courtesy.

Road and trail conditions change. The routes suggested in this book may be altered due to road and trail maintenance, changes in state and local roads, and road and trail surface conditions. Surface conditions of roads and trails may change due to weather, construction, and other local factors. Every effort has been made to provide accurate information in this book at the time of publication.

Updates will be posted on the author's website at [www.deerfootpublications.com](http://www.deerfootpublications.com) as they are received and verified. Readers are invited to send suggested updates to [Tod@deerfootpublications.com](mailto:Tod@deerfootpublications.com).

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