

Step Creek Trail, OR

Vicinity Location:

About 30 miles west of Portland, OR. **Directions:**

From Portland, take Highway 26 west for about 20 miles. Continue on Highway 26 towards Seaside/Cannon Beach, past the exit for Hwy 6.

Continue on Highway 26 for several miles from the junction Hwy 26 and Hwy 6, passing through a tunnel. Just past milepost 38 the road comes down a hill and comes to a center turn lane. Turn left onto NW Timber Road and drive 3.1 miles to the community of Timber. Turn right onto Cochran Road and drive 2.5 miles. The first .5 mile is paved and the other 2 miles is dirt road. Drive about .1 mile past Reehers Campground and turn left into the day use area.

No permits are required.

There is an outhouse at the trailhead.

Trail:

Gales Creek Trail, Step Creek Trail with connections to Triple C Trail.

There is at least one geocache for this trail at: **N 45° 36.881 W 123° 22.985** Info at Geocaching.com

Trail Maps:

[Topo Map](#), [State of Oregon Map \(5.03mb\)](#), [Download Garmin .gpx file](#)

Length and Elevation:

5.2 miles round trip. Elevation gain of 440 feet and loss of 195 feet to Rice Road. Elevation at the trailhead is 1,140 feet. Elevation at Rice Road is 1,385 feet.

Review: January 29, 2011, April 26, 2019

The trail starts at the Gales Creek Trailhead and heads downhill on a wide, well drained trail. After a short distance you come to a road and the trail goes over Gales Creek and off to the left. After about .2 mile the trail crosses a small stream on a footbridge and winds gently uphill through the forest. You can see this is a coastal rainforest because all the horizontal branches have moss covering the bark in a thick green carpet.

A mottled green blanket of mosses and ferns cover the ground along the trail. Continuing climbs through the woods for about .2 mile and crosses a seldom used railroad track. The trail climbs for another .2 mile to JCTR at N 45° 42.034', W 123° 20.677'. The right fork of this unsigned junction leads out to a logging road. Make a left at this junction and continue along the trail. The trail will come out to a logging road in about .1 mile. Turn right and walk about 50 feet to find where the trail continues across the road. The trail may be obscured by downed trees over the trail.

It doesn't take long before the trail starts switchbacking down towards Step Creek and comes out to an abandoned logging road. These switchbacks are probably have the gentlest grade of any switchbacks I've ever been on. Turn left onto the abandoned road and head downhill along a small creek. The trail follows the old road for about .25 mile before looping back to cross over the small creek on a nicely built wooden bridge.

You can take a side trip to a large meadow near the turn-around point at waypoint MDWS at N 45° 41.393', W 123° 20.068'. You'll know the spot because it is just as you turn right and head away

from Step Creek. Make your way left through the semi-open forest to the lower edge of the meadow. This meadow is the headwater for Step Creek and is quite muddy in the winter.

Continue up the trail about 750 feet farther to Rice Road. From here, retrace your path back along the trail to JCSTC. At this point an old trail continues along Step Creek down to the railroad tracks. You can choose to follow this trail down to the tracks or continue back along the trail. If you follow this old trail then you will need to make a left at the railroad tracks and walk back to where you first crossed the tracks. From the trail crossing, turn right and follow the trail back to the trailhead.

Follow a trail and old logging roads through verdant forests. This trail is a pleasant walk through the woods and along Step Creek.

Enjoy the photos!

[Gallery Pics](#) - future

Switchback Steve