

University Falls Trail, OR



Vicinity Location:

About 35 miles west of Portland, OR. in the Tillamook State Forest.

Directions:

From Portland, take Highway 26 west for about 20 miles. Take the left exit for Hwy 6 towards Banks, Tillamook, and Forest Grove. This road is also known as the Wilson River Highway.

Continue on Highway 6 for several miles from the junction Hwy 26 and Hwy 6. From the junction to Timber/Vernonia and drive 6.3 miles and turn left at the brown sign for Rogers Camp Trailhead, Browns Camp. It about 200 feet past the summit. Drive about 150 feet and turn left at the junction and drive on the dirt road about .2 mile to the Rogers Camp Trailhead day use area parking area. Park in the lot as soon as you see a good place to park. There are a lot of ATVs that use this parking area.

No permits are required.

There is an outhouse near the trailhead.

Trail:

University Falls Trail with connections to Storey Burn 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 (6.89mb), Download Garmin .gpx file

Length and Elevation:

4.8 miles round trip. Elevation gain of 340 feet and loss of 300 feet to University Falls. Elevation at the trailhead is 1,600 feet. Elevation at University Falls is 1,640 feet.

Review: January 29, 2011

From the parking area, walk back almost to Highway 6. The trail goes alongside the concrete barrier surrounding the highway maintenance area. The trailhead for the Gravelle Brothers Trail is right by the big gravel yard for highway maintenance. The first few hundred feet of the trail is shared with ATVs and motorcycles so expect plenty of noise as they race by you.

Walk along the barrier down the shared hiking and ATV trail to the back of the maintenance area. Turn left where the two concrete tubes mark a trail. This is the Gravelle Brothers Trail. The first .5 mile of the trail is an abandoned road and slopes gently downhill and look for the sign on the right where the trail leaves the road. Continue on this trail downhill towards University Falls Trail, 1.8 miles away and Stagecoach Horse Camp 3.3 miles away.

Along this section of the trail you can still hear highway noise along with the occasional noise from the ATVs but it is surprisingly quiet for being so close to all these motorized vehicles. After walking about .1 mile downhill is the junction to the Storey Burn Trail. Stay left here and continue heading downhill along the well maintained trail. You can hear the Wilson River flowing in the distance.

The trail drops down a switchback and crosses over the Devils Lake Fork of the Wilson River on a large log. The far side of the river is a fine place to take a break and enjoy the river. There is a nice grove of red alders with their slender trunks with their light colored bark and dark striations. From there the trail climbs steadily up along the hillside along the river for about .25 mile then turning away from the river. From here the trail levels out along a hillside and eventually climbs up a ridge above Elliot Creek. As you near the end of the ridge and start descending, you can hear Elliot Creek quite well. For the most part this trail is quiet except for occasional engine noise in the distance.

After about 2 miles, you come to an ATV trail and the trailhead for University Falls Hiking Trail. This short trail is open to hikers only. Cross the ATV trail and the trail resumes just across the road and to the right. Follow this trail a short distance to University Falls. University Falls is an 80 foot cascade that is quite wide in the winter. There isn't a really good place to sit and enjoy the falls.

From the falls, retrace your route back to the trailhead.

This is an easy trail and great for kids and dogs. With no mountain views it is a good hike for cloudy days and with a fairly low elevation it can be hiked any time of year, depending on the weather.

Enjoy the photos!

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