

# Wilderness.net's Goat Rocks Wilderness Fact Sheet



## Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Goat Rocks Wilderness in 1964 and it now has a total of 108,023 acres. All of the wilderness is in Washington and is managed by the Forest Service.

## Description

The Goat Rocks Wilderness is a portion of the volcanic Cascade Mountain Range in southwestern Washington located between Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams. The Goat Rocks are remnants of a large

volcano, extinct for some two million years. Glaciation and erosion have worn away at the terrain here, leaving moderate summits on both sides of the crest of the Cascades. The elevation in the Goat Rocks ranges from 3,000 feet to 8,201 feet at Gilbert Peak. The deep east-west drainages below the ridges often open into park-like alpine meadows dotted with small lakes and even smaller ponds. Annual snowfall typically equals more than 25 feet, not melting entirely until late July or early August and keeping the ponds and lakes full when it does give in to the sun. Pikas and marmots scurry about above timberline, while the more reserved deer and elk have been spotted lower down. Mountain goats frequently show up in the higher country. Much of the 120-mile trail system stays on the ridges at or above timberline. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) wanders north-south through the middle of the Wilderness for 31.1 miles, past 7,930-foot Old Snowy Mountain, where glaciers persist. Approximately 14 other trails climb to eventually join the PCT.

## Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Goat Rocks Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)
6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

For more information on Leave No Trace, [Visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.](#)

## Area Management

The Goat Rocks Wilderness is part of the 109 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the Goat Rocks Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

## **General Wilderness Prohibitions**

Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is generally prohibited on all federal lands designated as wilderness. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the landing of aircraft including helicopters, unless provided for in specific legislation.

In a few areas some exceptions allowing the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport are described in the special regulations in effect for a specific area. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information.

These general prohibitions have been implemented for all national forest wildernesses in order to implement the provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act requires management of human-caused impacts and protection of the area's wilderness character to insure that it is "unimpaired for the future use and enjoyment as wilderness." Use of the equipment listed as prohibited in wilderness is inconsistent with the provision in the Wilderness Act which mandates opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and that wilderness is a place that is in contrast with areas where people and their works are dominant.

## **Wilderness-Specific Regulations**

Wilderness managers often need to take action to limit the impacts caused by visitor activities in order to protect the natural conditions of wilderness as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964. Managers typically implement 'indirect' types of actions such as information and education measures before selecting more restrictive measures. When regulations are necessary, they are implemented with the specific intent of balancing the need to preserve the character of the wilderness while providing for the use and enjoyment of wilderness.

The following wilderness regulations are in effect for this area. Not all regulations are in effect for every wilderness. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed on the 'Links' tab for more specific information about the regulations listed.

### **ALL VISITORS**

-- Permits are required for day and overnight users, one permit per group. Permits are free of charge and located at trailheads.

-- Group size is limited to no more than 12 per party, in any combination of people and pack or saddle stock. Groups larger than 12 must split into two or more smaller groups and remain least at least 1 mile or 1 hour travel distance apart at all times.

-- Pack out all debris, garbage, or other waste.

-- Caching or storing equipment, personal property, or supplies for longer than 48 hours is prohibited.

## OVERNIGHT VISITORS

-- Overnight visitors cannot occupy any single location longer than 14 consecutive days. The maximum combined total stay limit is 45 days per calendar year.

-- Camping is prohibited at Snowgrass Flats and the Shoe Lake Basin, and within 100 feet of the Pacific Crest Trail and all other lakes.

-- Campfires are prohibited at Dana Yelverton Shelter, within 1/4 mile of Goat Lake, and in Shoe Lake Basin.

## STOCK USERS

-- Certified weed free hay, grain, or other forms of livestock feed is required on all Wilderness trails and at trailheads.

-- Grazing, hitching, or tethering of pack or saddle stock within 200 feet of lakes is prohibited. Watering is permitted.

-- Do not tie pack or saddle stock directly to living or dead trees. The use of highlines, hobbles, and/or movable pickets will help to prevent damage to trees and other vegetation.

## Wilderness Permit System

A wilderness permit system has been implemented for this wilderness. This involves a mandatory permit, which does not limit use. Wilderness permit systems are implemented to collect information on use levels and patterns and as an education and information tool. People interested in visiting the Goat Rocks Wilderness should contact the national forest office or visit the websites listed below for more information about this permit system, which may vary by location or time of the year.

## Fees

The following user fee system(s) have been implemented for this wilderness: TRAILHEAD PARKING. Fees are most often used to offset the operating costs of a permit system or to help fund management activities such as trail maintenance. Contact the national forest office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information on this fee system.

## Contacts

**Cowlitz Valley Ranger District**  
10024 US HWY 12  
PO BOX 670  
RANDLE, WA 98377

Phone: 360-497-1100

## Links to Other Websites

[Air Resource Management Data for the Goat Rocks Wilderness](#)

[Goat Rocks Wilderness: Gifford Pinchot National Forest](#)

[Goat Rocks Wilderness: Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest](#)

## Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

## Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
<b>Public Law 88-577</b>	<b>September 3, 1964</b>	<b>82,680</b>
The Wilderness Act - Public law 88-577 (9/3/1964) To establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes		
—: <a href="#">download 88-577</a>		
<b>Public Law 98-339</b>	<b>July 3, 1984</b>	<b>22,343</b>
Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public law 98-339 (7/3/1984) To designate certain National Forest System lands in the State of Washington for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes.		
<i>NOTE:</i> Added 23,143 acres but removed 800 acres containing significant ski development potential. Since new maps were submitted with this law, no acreages were specified in the legislation. Acreage information comes from Senate Committee Report 98-461.		
—: <a href="#">download 98-339</a>		