AROUND & ABOUT
MT HOOD

EXPLORING THE TIMBERLINE TRAIL, ACCESS TRAILS, AND DAY HIKES

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with
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Permission was kindly given by the Oregon Historical Society for the reproduction of the photograph on page 57 of the Summit of Mt Hood, 1896 (Zenus Moody Family, #OrHi 37884). The section on River Crossing Safety Guidelines is excerpted from signs donated by friends and family of Sarah Bishop, a skilled hiker and lover of wilderness, who died tragically when crossing the Sandy River in 2004, with permission from the Bishop family. Our thanks also to Debbie Asakawa and Bill Vollmer for many of the photos in this edition.
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The Timberline Trail is one of the most spectacular hiking trails in the world. Until a massive washout in 2006 destroyed a section of the trail on the north side, the Timberline Trail circled Mt Hood for 41 miles, mostly at about the timberline level, dropping in and climbing out of canyons carved by the rivers that flow from the many glaciers on the mountain. The total elevation gain is approximately 9000 feet with the low point of 3200 feet and the high point of 7360 feet. Most of the trail is in the Mt Hood Wilderness Area. The only developed areas are the two ski areas that the trail crosses, Timberline and Mt Hood Meadows.

The 1st edition of the Timberline Trail book was written to show the accessibility and the stunning beauty of the trails that lead hikers up to, down from, and along the Timberline Trail. The 2nd edition was written because a massive washout in 2006 destroyed a section of the trail on the north side. The 2nd Edition changed Segment 5 to Vista Ridge Trailhead to Elk Cove Trailhead, omitting the section of the Trail that

**History of the Timberline Trail**

**1854:** August 14, William Barlow party made the first recorded ascent of Mt Hood.

**1892:** first recorded circuit of Mt Hood on foot by Will Langille, a climbing guide.

**1934–1938:** construction of the Timberline Trail by the Civilian Conservation Corps.
had slid. Restoring the Timberline Trail has been challenging because the mountainside in the area of the washout is very unstable and necessitated a major re-routing of the Timberline Trail completed in 2017.

In this 3rd Edition we have gone back to the original eight Segments as the Timberline Trail is again complete. As in the previous editions, we describe how to reach the trailheads that will provide access to the Timberline Trail. These access trails vary in length from less than a mile to three miles and vary considerably in elevation gain and loss.

None of the eight Segments can be considered easy hikes: they all entail appreciable elevation gain and loss and all but one also require one or more river crossings. For the hiker who would like to experience the Timberline Trail but is looking for stunning views and alpine flowers without the distance and elevation gain, this edition includes several additional hikes, mostly shorter, that use the same trailheads.
Each segment can be hiked either clockwise or counterclockwise. We use the terms *clockwise* and *counterclockwise* to describe the direction of the segment that is on the Timberline Trail, thinking of the entire Trail as a circle. For example, to hike Segment One *clockwise*, start at Timberline Lodge and hike to the Ramona Falls Trailhead. To hike this segment *counterclockwise*, start at the Ramona Falls Trailhead and hike to Timberline Lodge.

The Timberline Trail is only accessible during the summer months, once the snow melts in late June or early July. In years with late snowfall, the trails may not open until mid-July. Hikers should check with the local U.S. Forest Service (see list on page 119) for information on accessibility of the trails. All of the Segments of the Timberline Trail offer spectacular views, alpine meadows carpeted with wildflowers, beautiful streams lined with flowers, and quiet forests. All but one of the Segments have the challenge of a river crossing; some have two or more. Depending on the snow levels, the elevation, and whether a trail is on the south or north side of the mountain, the wildflower season generally begins in late June or early July and extends into late August or even September.

We wanted to make this a book that tucks comfortably into a pocket. This convenience for hikers imposed constraints on the amount of text we could include and on the size of maps. Inevitably we have had to make compromises about what to include and exclude. Our overriding aim was to be precise and accurate. We hope we have struck a balance that works for most people.