

# HIKES & WALKS on MT HOOD

## Government Camp & Timberline Lodge Area

*Sonia Buist & Emily Keller*



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Writer and Editor: Sonia Buist  
Illustrations, Maps and Cover: Emily Keller  
Designer 1st Ed., Judith Rose

**LOLITS** is an acronym for  
**L**ittle **O**ld **L**adies in **T**ennis **S**hoes

Copies of *Hikes and Walks on Mt Hood* can be found at regional book stores, or ordered at the website [www.mthoodhiking.com](http://www.mthoodhiking.com).

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### **Area Maps Rollout**

## INTRODUCTION

Oregon has a well-deserved reputation for its natural beauty. It is less renowned for its hiking trails although few countries, much less states, match them for range and variety. We are particularly fortunate in having two spectacular areas for hiking within 60 miles of Portland—the Columbia Gorge and the Mt Hood areas.

This book focuses on the Government Camp and Timberline Lodge areas on Mt Hood, both close enough to Portland for half-day or day hikes. Both areas offer magnificent mountain scenery, beautiful forests—some with majestic old-growth trees—streams, rivers, wetlands, abundant flowers, huckleberries, birds and glimpses of wildlife.

We hope that this book will serve to introduce you to new walking and hiking trails and areas. We have tried to include hikes that cover a range of difficulty and challenge, from a short walk suitable for those with limited mobility, to trails with appreciable elevation gain and difficult terrain. We encourage you to try some new hikes and venture away from the heavily-used trails.

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

For this second edition, we have revised some of the hikes to include new signage on the trails and have changed some of the directions in response to useful feedback.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We have tried to provide guidance as to the relative difficulty of the trails, and the noteworthy features of each hike. To rank the trails by difficulty, we have taken into account the length, elevation gain, smoothness of the trail and the altitude at which you are hiking. These criteria are reflected in our category designations: **Easy; Moderate; Moderately-Strenuous; Strenuous and Very Strenuous.**

We have also given an approximate time for the hike, recognizing that people vary in their hiking pace and in the time they like to spend enjoying the scenery, identifying the flowers, taking photographs, and just lingering.

Since this book focuses on the Government Camp and Timberline Lodge areas of Mt Hood, we have referenced all of the directions to a central point—the Summit Rest Area at the east end of the Government Camp business loop. This is a convenient meeting place with ample parking, public toilets, a gas station, convenience store and cafe.

Although we have done our best to make this guide as accurate as possible, old signs may disappear and new signs, and road/trail names, may replace them. Also, forest roads may be reclaimed by nature, logged clearcuts will re-grow, and some trails may disappear completely. It's a good idea to take a pedometer and compass—and a map. But most of all, enjoy the hikes.

It takes about 1½ hours to drive the 57 miles from Portland to Government Camp. Take I-84 east from Portland to the Wood Village exit, #16, about 15 miles from the city center. Turn right on 238th Drive at the traffic light, continue on this road for 2.7 miles through Wood Village and part of Gresham, and turn left onto Burnside. In about 1 mile, Burnside becomes Hwy 26. Continue straight (east) on Hwy 26 for 38 miles to Government Camp.



## **IN AND AROUND GOVERNMENT CAMP**

We describe two walks in and around Government Camp village. One is Crosstown Trail that loops through the forest north of the village and connects Glacier View Sno\*Park by Enid Lake—to the west of Government Camp—and Summit Ski Area at the east end of the village. You can access this trail from several places in Government Camp. The other trail connects the Summit Rest Area and Ski Area with Ski Bowl East and West. You can combine the two trails to make a 4 mile loop. There is a gas station, convenience store, public toilets and cafe at Summit, a cafe at Ski Bowl, and plenty of parking at both. Area maps showing the area trails are posted in several places in the village.

It's worth taking the time to visit the Oregon Trail Kiosk in a tiny park in the village. Inside the kiosk, are interpretive plaques with the history of Government Camp, the Barlow Road, and the Oregon Trail. Outside is a picnic table.

Permanent settlement of Government Camp began in the 1880's. The original name was Pompeii and was changed to Government Camp after U.S. Army Mounted Riflemen, traveling west on the Oregon Trail in 1849, lost nearly two-thirds of their livestock on a particularly difficult journey and cached their wrecked army wagons and supplies in the settlement until they could be retrieved in the spring. Also in the tiny park are plaques commemorating Samuel Barlow and his wife Susannah. Sam Barlow, a pioneer from Kentucky, built the first wagon road across the Cascade Mountains in 1845-46.



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*Near Government Camp*

## CROSTOWN TRAIL

**Easy (400 ft elevation gain)**

**3 miles one way, 1¾ - 2¼ hours; 6 miles roundtrip,  
3½ - 4 hours**

**Maps: USGS, Government Camp & Mt Hood South  
Quadrangle**

**Description:** A delightful multi-purpose trail (#755) that loops to the north of Government Camp and links the Glacier View Sno\*Park west of the village and the Summit Ski Area at the east end of the village. This trail can be hiked one way, with a car shuttle, or as a loop. You can also access it from several places in Government Camp.

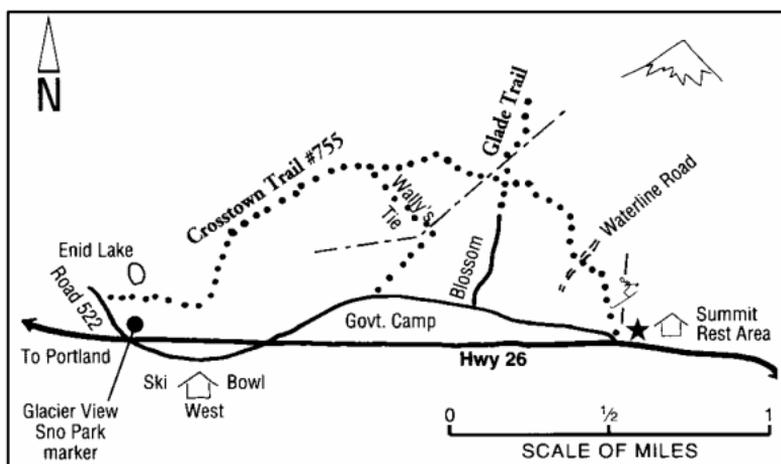
**Car shuttle:** Leave one car at the Glacier View Sno\*Park and the other at the Summit Rest Area.

**Access:** 1) *To hike from west to east*, drive 1½ miles west on Hwy 26 from the Summit Rest Area at the east end of the Government Camp business loop and turn right onto Road #552 between mileposts 52 and 53—almost opposite the west entrance to Ski Bowl West. Glacier View Sno\*Park, about 200 yards from the highway, offers ample parking. Several trails meet here, so take care to find the right one. Look for the Crosstown Trail sign on the right about 50 yards from the parking area. The trail heads north towards Enid Lake—little more than a muddy puddle in summer—and just before it reaches the lake, the trail turns to the right and loops round to the east and north of Enid Lake before curving northeast towards Mt Hood, above Government Camp. At trail forks follow the signs to Summit Ski Area. If you are going to Thunderhead Lodge (west end of village), follow the Wally's Tie sign. The trail to Summit crosses a service road, then continues on over several streams crossed by sturdy bridges. The trail crosses one more service road before reaching Summit Ski Area and the Summit Rest Area. The hike can be shortened by turning right (south) onto Glade Trail and down into Government Camp.

2) **To hike from east to west**, park at the Summit Rest area and walk up the service road on the left side of the main ski run, behind the Day Lodge, to the point where the power lines cross, just above the last house. Crosstown Trail is clearly marked to the left and the start of the trail is easy to see. The trail heads towards the trees and continues into the forest, crosses a service road, several bridges, Glade Trail (to Timberline Lodge), and another service road on its way to Enid Lake and the Glacier View Sno\*Park. You can shorten the hike by turning down any of the roads to the village.

**Features:** This is a most welcome addition to the walks and hikes in the Government Camp area, with a section of exquisite forest of second-growth trees mixed with some majestic old-growth. Moss carpets the forest floor on the western segment of the hike, and several pretty streams cross the trail on the eastern part. Mt Hood keeps popping up through the trees. Lots of flowers and beargrass bloom in the spring and summer, with huckleberries available near Enid Lake in August. On the south side of Wally's tie look for a plaque on a large boulder: "In loving memory of Wally, the best damn dog there ever was 1980-90."

**Optional addition:** This hike can be made into an interesting loop by combining it with the Summit Trail.



## SUMMIT TRAIL TO SKI BOWL

**Easy (almost flat service roads)**

**1¾ miles each way, 1 hour each way**

**Maps: USGS, Government Camp and Mt Hood  
South Quadrangles**

**Description:** A gentle walk along a mostly flat forest service road through a section of majestic old-growth trees and across Ski Bowl East ski area.

**Access:** From the Summit Rest Area at the east end of Government Camp, cross Hwy 26 and follow the paved service road that takes off on the south side of the highway at a brown sign for Timberline Lodge. The paving stops at the substation and the road continues as a forest road. Follow this for almost a mile to Ski Bowl East Day Lodge, and pick up another service road heading in the same direction, just to the right of and below the Day Lodge. This road runs along the bottom of the ski area to the Multorpor Chairlift, then curves up and to the right and heads for Ski Bowl West through the trees. When the road emerges from the trees, it divides—keep straight on to the Day Lodge; the right curves back and meets Hwy 26 at the east end of the Ski Bowl loop.

**Features:** This is an easy walk with beautiful views of Mt Hood, magnificent old-growth trees, and flowers along the way. A car shuttle makes this hike only 1¾ miles. The Alpine Slide at Ski Bowl, or the cafes at both Ski Bowl and Summit may be added enticements.



*Douglas Fir Cone*

