

KRAIG ADAMS

Enchanted Valley Hiking Guide

5 days to the chalet and Anderson Pass in Olympic National Park

2027 season edition · updated September 2026

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Welcome

In June 2022 I spent five days backpacking into the Enchanted Valley in Olympic National Park, Washington: up the East Fork Quinault River from Graves Creek through old-growth temperate rainforest, into the valley under the snowy peaks and the old chalet, up to Anderson Pass in the snow, and back out the same way. It's the trip from my film Hiking 50 Miles Through Washington's Enchanted Valley.

This wasn't a solo hike. It was a guided group trip: my first subscriber group backpacking trip, booked through TrovaTrip, with nine subscribers, me, and two guides from Wildland Trekking, twelve of us in all. The guides took care of the logistics, the tents, the gear and the food, and I got to hike, shoot the video and hang out around the campfire. So this guide gives you my GPS files, maps, photos and notes for every day, and plain, checked facts for everything the company handled for us: the permit, the road in, the food storage rules and the river crossings.

What's inside

- Straight answers to the questions people ask about the Enchanted Valley
- How my trip worked, and what you need to arrange yourself in 2026: the permit, the road in, bear canisters
- When to go, and why June still means snow up toward Anderson Pass
- All five days: my notes, the trail, where to get off, a map with an elevation profile, and links to that day in my film
- Other ways to do it, where we slept, food and water, what I paid and gear for this route
- Weather and safety, one page of things to check before you go, and a printable trip sheet

How to use it offline

Save this PDF to your phone's Files or Books app before you leave home. Load the GPX files and download offline maps before you leave the highway: there's no cell signal on the trail. Each day starts on a new page. The film links need a connection; everything else works in airplane mode.

When I say "I," it's my own trip. Rules, roads and fees change, so they're dated, and the checks are collected on one page: Before you go, check these.



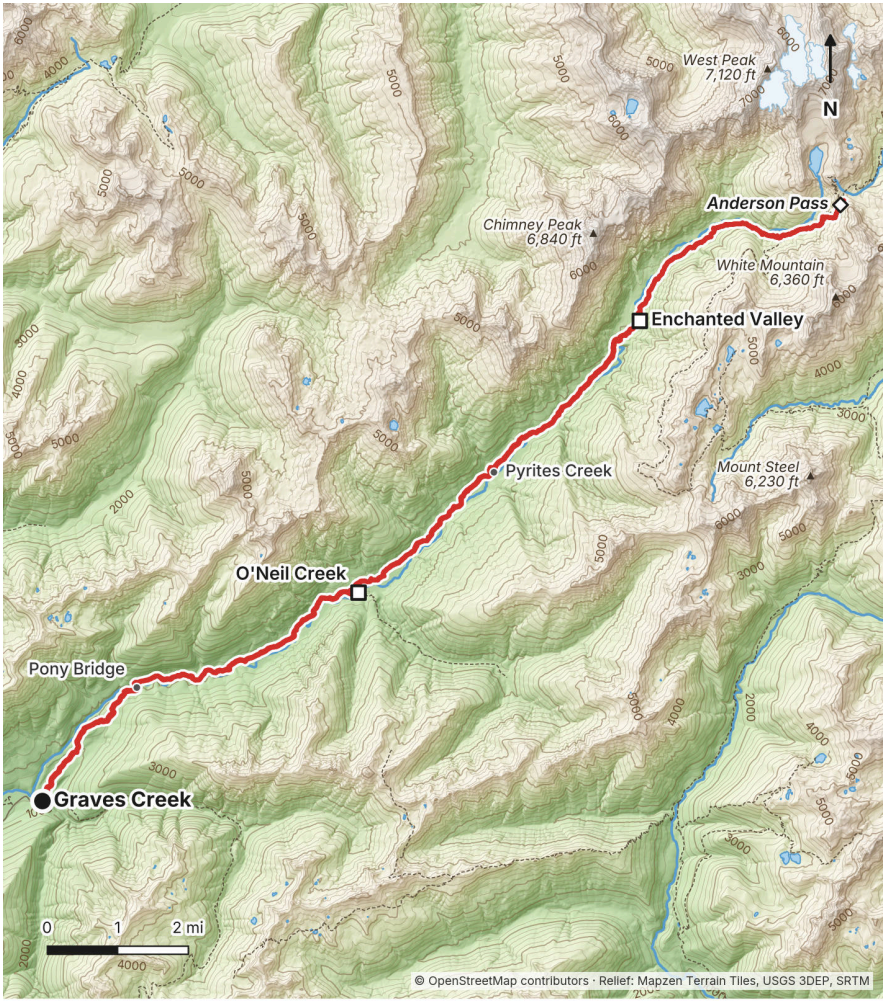
Snowy peaks above the upper Enchanted Valley, on the way to Anderson Pass, Day 3.

At a glance

QUICK FACTS	
Distance	38.3 miles (61.6 km) over 5 days on my GPS, out and back from Graves Creek, with a day hike to Anderson Pass
Climbing	about 5,380 ft (1,640 m) up and down
Days	5 days, 4 nights: two at O'Neil Creek and two in the Enchanted Valley
How	A guided group trip, 12 of us. Everyone carried a pack, with a bear canister and some of the group gear
Start and finish	Graves Creek trailhead, 620 ft (189 m), at the end of Graves Creek Road above Lake Quinault
High point	Anderson Pass, 4,464 ft (1,361 m; my GPS read about 4,510 ft), on Day 3
When	The valley from May to September. Anderson Pass is snow covered into June most years. I went June 6 to 10, 2022
Permit	A wilderness permit from Recreation.gov for every night, and the park entrance fee (2026)

DAY	ROUTE	MILES (KM)	UP / DOWN (FT)	SLEEP
1	Graves Creek to O'Neil Creek	7.6 (12.2)	1,140 / 528	Tent, O'Neil Creek camp
2	O'Neil Creek to Enchanted Valley	7.7 (12.5)	1,053 / 214	Tent, Enchanted Valley camp
3	Anderson Pass and back	9.1 (14.7)	2,492 / 2,484	Tent, Enchanted Valley camp
4	Enchanted Valley to O'Neil Creek	7.0 (11.3)	151 / 1,005	Tent, O'Neil Creek camp
5	O'Neil Creek to Graves Creek	6.9 (11.1)	546 / 1,105	Home

The numbers are from my own GPS, smoothed the same way every day. AllTrails showed more (9.2, 10.4, 11.1, 7.9 and 8.6 miles), and the film title says 50, but in a deep valley under big trees the GPS wanders, and I was zigzagging back for the camera all day. I said it in the film: "take the elevation gain and the length with a grain of salt when it comes to AllTrails." My estimate at the end was "just under 40 miles." The Park Service puts the Enchanted Valley 13 miles from the trailhead and Anderson Pass 18.2.





My route: up the East Fork Quinault from Graves Creek, two nights at O'Neil Creek and two in the Enchanted Valley, and a day hike to Anderson Pass. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Straight answers

How many days do I need? We took five, at a group's pace: about 7 miles a day, plus a day hike to Anderson Pass. On my own I'd have gone faster. See Other ways to do it.

How hard is it? The trail up the valley is long but gentle: a little bump at the start, then a slow grind with not much grade, about 1,400 ft from the trailhead to the valley. The hard part is above the valley. Anderson Pass is about 2,500 ft higher, and in early June that meant snow, steep slopes and making steps.

Do I need a permit? Yes, for every night, booked on Recreation.gov. The East Fork Quinault has been a quota area since 2024, and there are no walk-ups. See Permits and rules.

Can I go without a guide? Yes. It's a national park trail, not a guided-only route. I went on a guided trip, and the guides handled the logistics and the food, but you can do it on your own with a permit, a bear canister and a car. Or hire guides like Wildland Trekking.

Is the road open? The South Shore Road was closed by a washout from the end of 2024, and Jefferson County expected the repair to finish in mid-October 2026. Until it reopens, get to Graves Creek by the North Shore Road. See Getting there.

Will I see bears? Probably. This was probably the most bears I'd ever seen, even compared to Alaska: one or two black bears at least every day. The Park Service says the Enchanted Valley "has a large population of bears." Everything goes in a bear canister.

Will it rain? Plan on it. I feel like it's impossible to go to the Enchanted Valley without rain at least for some of it. We had one full night and day of rain.

Can I have a campfire? In 2022 we had one most nights. In 2026 fires are allowed only in existing fire rings below 3,500 ft, and not during seasonal fire bans. None at Anderson Pass.

When to go

The season. The Park Service gives May through September as the best season for the East Fork Quinault. Above about 3,500 ft, on the way to Anderson Pass, the trail is snow covered from November to June and crosses avalanche terrain. For the pass without snow, aim for July to September. July and August are the busiest months.

What I got. We went June 6 to 10, 2022. It was early summer, so the streams were flowing and there was still a lot of snow on the peaks, even more than the film shows. The first three days were good weather. It rained from the third night through all of Day 4, then the last day was sunny and beautiful. The guides' note before the trip said to expect highs in the high 60s and lows in the mid 40s in June.

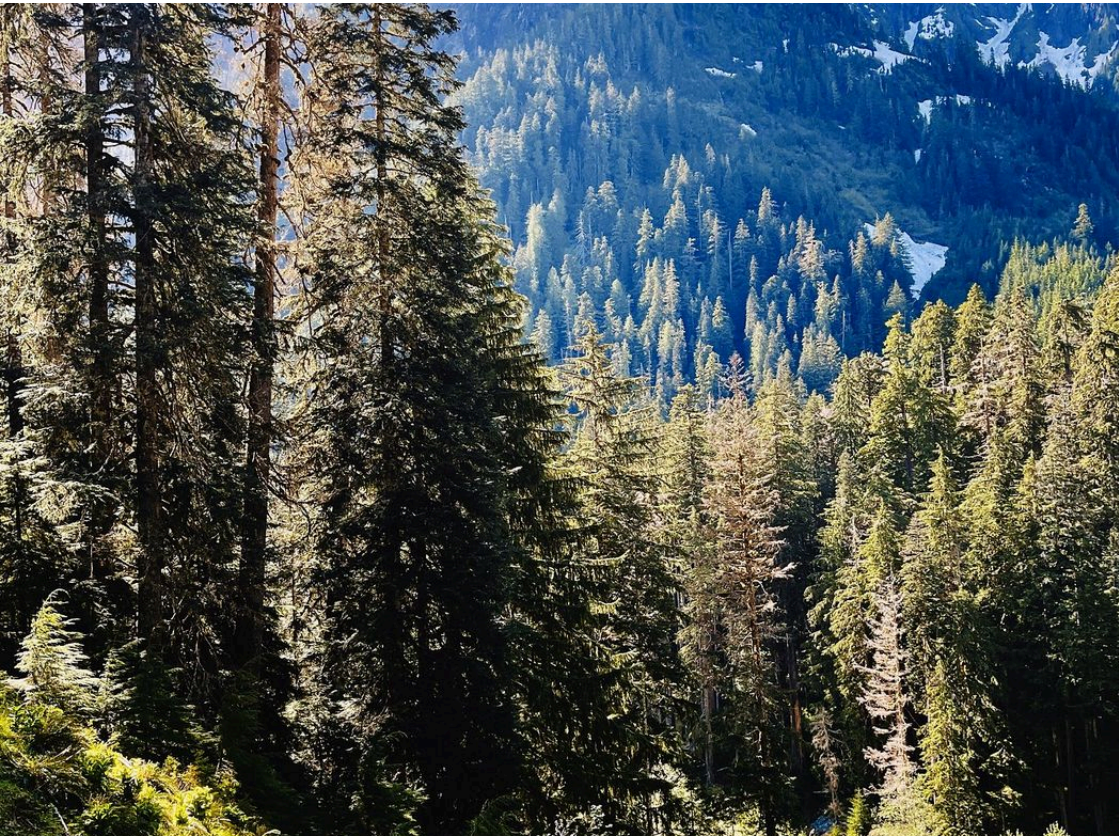


Snow and peaks near Anderson Pass, June 8, 2022.

Snow in June. We hit snow around the big stream crossing above the valley, and the rest of the climb to Anderson Pass was on snow. We'd have been faster that day without it. If you go in June, expect the same, bring traction, and decide on the pass that morning.

Rain. It's a rainforest. Expect rain at least one of the days, whatever the month. Most of the year's rain falls November to April.

Fire season. Late summer can bring fire bans. In 2026 a campfire ban started across Olympic National Park and National Forest on August 7. Check the park's alerts before you go.



Peaks over the forest on the way down from Anderson Pass, Day 3.

Permits and rules

All of this was checked on the National Park Service's and Recreation.gov's pages in September 2026. On my trip the guides handled the permit; this is what you need to do yourself.

Wilderness permit. Required for every overnight trip, all year, booked on Recreation.gov. There are no paper permits at the trailhead and no same-day walk-up sites. Summer permits (May 15 to October 15) are released on April 15 at 7 a.m. Pacific; book that day for summer weekends. Permits booked ahead are issued about 3 days before your trip, and then you print it yourself.

Fees (2026). $8 per person per night for ages 16 and up, plus a $6 reservation fee per permit. Kids 15 and under are free but count toward group size. An annual Olympic wilderness pass is $45 and covers the nightly fee, not the reservation fee.

The quota. Since 2024 the East Fork Quinault and the Enchanted Valley have been a quota area, on a trial of up to three years: at most 30 permits or 208 people a night. In a quota area you have to stick to the camps on your permit. Check whether the quota still applies in 2027.

Camps. On Recreation.gov, from the trailhead: Pony Bridge (2.5 miles), Fire Creek (4), O'Neil Creek (7), Pyrites Creek (10) and Enchanted Valley (14). Above the valley there are smaller camps toward Anderson Pass, and Anderson Glacier Camp, with no campfires.

Group size. At most 12 people. Most sites fit 1 to 6, so a group of 7 or more should call the Wilderness Information Center, (360) 565-3100, before booking. We were 12, the guides had warned us some camps were too small for us, and at the Enchanted Valley we had to take a large space.

Bear canisters. Required in all wilderness camps in the park. Food, garbage and anything scented go in it, and hanging food is not allowed in the Enchanted Valley. You can borrow canisters at Wilderness Information Centers, first come, first served, but the park asks you to bring your own, and the Quinault center, the one nearest the trailhead, was closed for the 2026 season. On my trip everyone carried a bear can with group meals and our own snacks.

Fires. Only in existing fire rings, below 3,500 ft, and never during a fire ban. That rules out fires at Anderson Pass.

Other rules. No dogs on park trails or overnight trips. No drones anywhere in the park. Stay at least 50 yards from bears, elk and all wildlife. Use the pit toilets at Pony Bridge, O'Neil Creek and the Enchanted Valley; elsewhere bury waste 6 to 8 inches deep, 200 ft from water and camp, and pack out your toilet paper. Guided groups need a park Commercial Use Authorization.

Park entrance. $30 per vehicle for 7 days (2026), or the $55 Olympic annual pass or an America the Beautiful pass. The park doesn't take cash.

Getting there

How my trip got there. On June 5 we met at the Seattle airport (all but one of us made it on time) and took a shuttle to a hotel in Olympia, where our guides met us for a group dinner and a pre-trip meeting. They fitted packs, handed out food, and everyone picked snacks to carry. The next morning we loaded a trailer with everything we needed and drove about two hours into the Olympic National Park area, stopping to see the world's largest Sitka spruce near Lake Quinault. The company arranged all of that.



The world's largest Sitka spruce, near Lake Quinault, on the drive in, June 6.

Driving yourself (2026). Graves Creek is at the end of the road up the Quinault valley, about 3 hours from Seattle to Lake Quinault and another hour of slower road to the trailhead. In 2026 the South Shore Road is closed by a washout about 8 miles from US 101, outside the park, so the only way to Graves Creek is the North Shore Road: about 14 miles of paved and gravel road from US 101 at Amanda Park to the junction, then 6 miles of narrow, winding gravel on Graves Creek Road. No RVs or trailers on Graves Creek Road. A July 2026 trip report said any car can make it if you take it easy. Jefferson County expected the South Shore repair to finish in mid-October 2026; check before you go. Coming from Port Angeles or Forks, US 101 crosses the Hoh River Bridge, under repair until 2028 with one lane and some full closures: check WSDOT before you go.

The big spruce. It's 3.2 miles up the South Shore Road from US 101, on the open part before the washout, then a 0.3-mile walk.

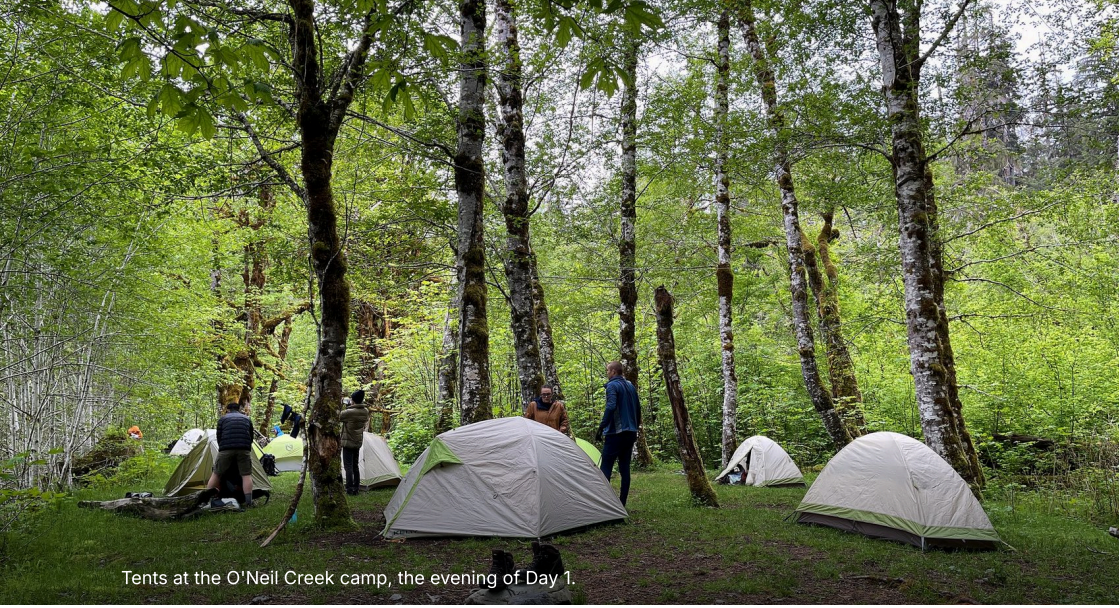
No bus to the trailhead. Grays Harbor Transit's Route 50 (free to ride in 2026) runs from Aberdeen to Amanda Park and the North Shore Road junction on US 101, about 20 road miles short of the trailhead.

Parking and camping at the trailhead. Parking at Graves Creek is limited. The Graves Creek Campground is next to it, with 30 sites and no drinking water, so bring water or a filter.

Ranger station. The Quinault Rain Forest Ranger Station (Wilderness Information Center) is at 913 North Shore Road, (360) 288-2444. It's normally open part-time from Memorial Day weekend to the end of September, but the park said it was closed for the 2026 season, so don't count on borrowing a bear canister there: bring your own. The Port Angeles Wilderness Information Center is open all year, (360) 565-3100.



Lake Quinault Lodge on the morning of the drive in, June 6.



Tents at the O'Neil Creek camp, the evening of Day 1.

DAY 1

Graves Creek to O'Neil Creek

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME WE TOOK
7.6 mi (12.2 km)	**1,140 ft** (347 m)	**528 ft** (161 m)	**4.7 hours** (11:51 a.m. to 4:31 p.m.), at a slow group pace

HIGH POINT

1,286 ft (392 m), the forested bump before Pony Bridge

LOW POINT

610 ft (186 m), near the trailhead

ON THE WAY

Pony Bridge (mile 2.7), Fire Creek (about mile 4), O'Neil Creek camp (end)

SLEEP

Tent, O'Neil Creek camp, 1,190 ft (363 m)

FOOD AND WATER

Carried from the trailhead. Plenty of streams; filter everything

My day

We packed and divided our gear at the trailhead, did some final checks, handed out the bear cans last, and were ready to go. The weather looked good, and as long as it wasn't raining I feel like everyone was pretty happy and excited to hit the trail.

A lot of people weren't used to carrying packs, especially ones this heavy. At the beginning of the hike you're carrying all the food, so it's the heaviest moment, and people were like whoa. We approached the park from the south, going up toward the Enchanted Valley. The first day was not too bad: some elevation gain for a little bump right at the beginning, and everything else was just a slow grind without too much grade, but definitely going up the valley.



The trail through the rainforest, Day 1.

Our pace was gingerly, nice slow and steady, with frequent breaks. We were in the thick of it: temperate rainforest, very thick and covered. You don't really have to worry about the sun here, because you're in a deep valley with lots of water. It was early summer, so the streams were flowing, and there were some river crossings. AllTrails told me about 9.2 miles; my GPS line says 7.6.

We got to O'Neil Creek, I think around five, and it gets dark around nine, so that's a lot of time to set up your tent, hang around, throw a frisbee, cook some food, light a fire and just vibe. It was so nice not to be in a drought or a fire restriction area. With lots of people, it's just fun to sit next to the campfire.

The trail

The East Fork Quinault River Trail leaves the Graves Creek trailhead, crosses a high bridge over Graves Creek and follows an old road grade up about 500 ft to a low saddle, the day's high point at about 1,290 ft, then drops steeply to Pony Bridge at mile 2.7 on my GPS (2.5 on the Park Service's figures), where the trail crosses the river high above a narrow gorge. There's a camp and a pit toilet at Pony Bridge.

From the bridge the trail climbs above the gorge and drops back to the river, in and out of the old-growth forest and along river flats, with small streams to cross. Fire Creek camp is about mile 4. O'Neil Creek camp, our stop, is about 7 miles from the trailhead (6.9 on the Park Service's segment figures), at about 1,190 ft, with a pit toilet.



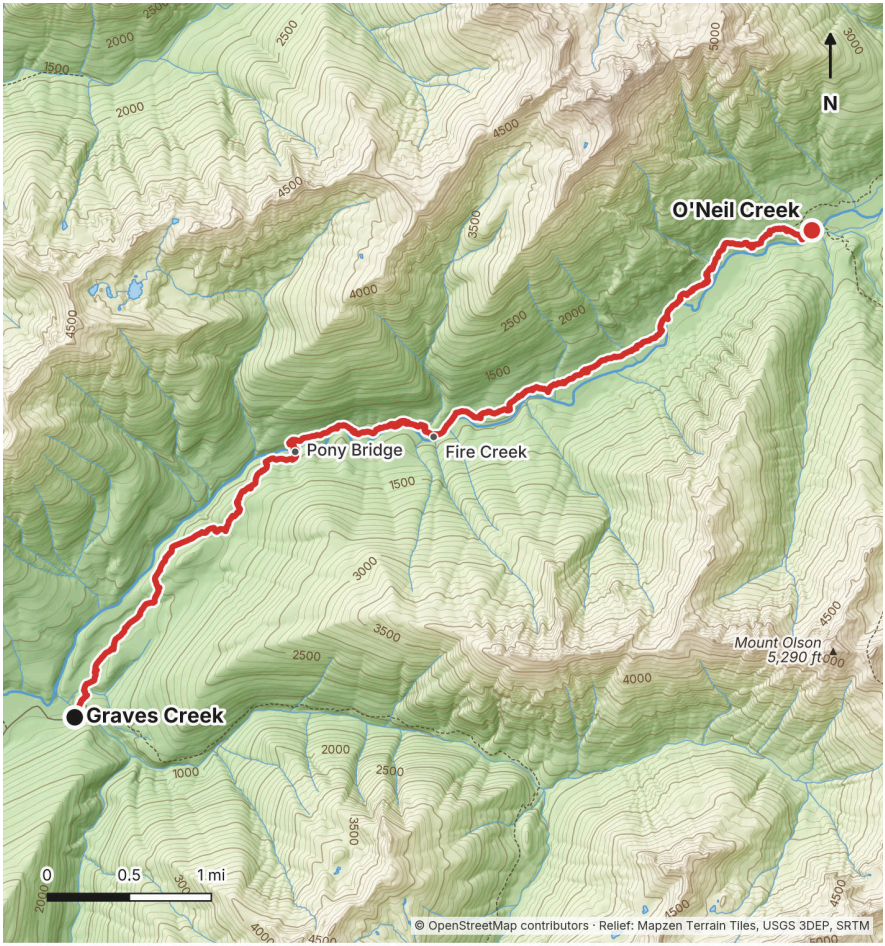
The East Fork Quinault in the gorge at Pony Bridge, Day 1.

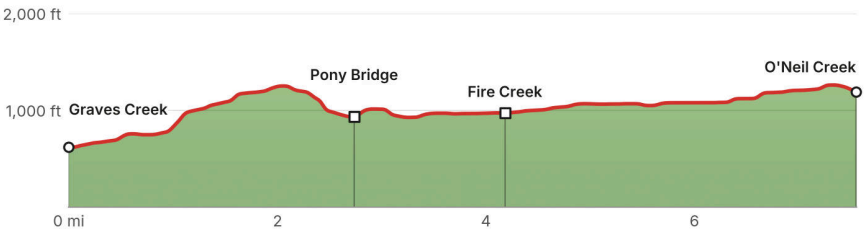
If you need to get off

Go back the way you came. Everything on this trip is out and back on one trail, and the trailhead is the only road.

Watch this day

Film, Day 1 · Hiking guide and behind the scenes





Day 1 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The Enchanted Valley Chalet under the snowy peaks, Day 2.

DAY 2

Contents

O'Neil Creek to Enchanted Valley

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME WE TOOK
7.7 mi (12.5 km)	**1,053 ft** (321 m)	**214 ft** (65 m)	**7.4 hours** (9:12 a.m. to 4:33 p.m.), with long stops

HIGH POINT

2,041 ft (622 m), the Enchanted Valley camp

LOW POINT

1,178 ft (359 m), O'Neil Creek

ON THE WAY

Pyrites Creek camp (about mile 4), the chalet (end)

SLEEP

Tent, Enchanted Valley camp, 2,040 ft (622 m)

FOOD AND WATER

Streams all day; filter everything

My day

Day 2 continued up the valley. I mapped just over 10 miles and just over a thousand feet of elevation gain, and I doubted that was correct: it seemed like too much. My GPS line says 7.7 miles and about 1,050 ft.

We packed up our tents, headed out, and this is when we saw our first bears. There was a bear on the trail ahead of us, a really slow hiker. He was chill, we were chill; he was a little chunky and a little slow, and he held up the whole caravan behind him, looking back over his shoulder like, hurry up, what are you doing.



Mossy trees in a meadow on the East Fork Quinault Trail, Day 2.

We finally made it into a different area: it opens up into the Enchanted Valley. There were one or two river crossings, and then we started to get our first views of white peaks. There was still a lot of snow on the peaks. We passed the chalet and set up camp. We were a large group, so we had to take a large space at the camp, but there were other people hiking, and it wasn't too crazy.

The trail

Above O'Neil Creek the trail keeps climbing gently up the north side of the river, through forest and across side streams, to Pyrites Creek camp, about 3 miles on. From Pyrites Creek it's about 3.2 more miles to the Enchanted Valley. Just before the valley the trail crosses back over the river on a high bridge, and the chalet comes into view soon after. The forest opens into a wide, flat valley floor with cliffs and waterfalls on both sides. The camp is at about 2,040 ft, close to the chalet, with two pit toilets. The Park Service gives 13 miles from the trailhead to the valley; Recreation.gov says 14.

The washout (2026). In September 2026 the Park Service reported a washed-out section of trail shortly before the chalet and the camps: hikers have to either ford the river or find a way up a steep hillside. An August 2026 trip report found a Washington Trails Association crew building a temporary trail through a large washout near the valley, ahead of a permanent detour. Check the trail conditions page before you go.

The chalet. The Enchanted Valley Chalet was built in 1930 and 1931 by the Olympic Recreation Company, whose members included the five Olson brothers, as a backcountry lodge. The river undercut it, and in 2014 the Park Service moved it about 100 ft back from the bank. In 2026 it is closed and boarded up; don't plan on it as a shelter. In 2020 the Park Service's preferred plan was to take it down, and no final decision has been posted.



Old-growth forest above Pyrites Creek, Day 2.

Bears. The canister rule at the Enchanted Valley dates from 2015, when bears there got into human food and the park closed the camp for a month. Keep everything in the can, even during the day.



The upper valley at dusk from the gravel bar by camp, Day 2.

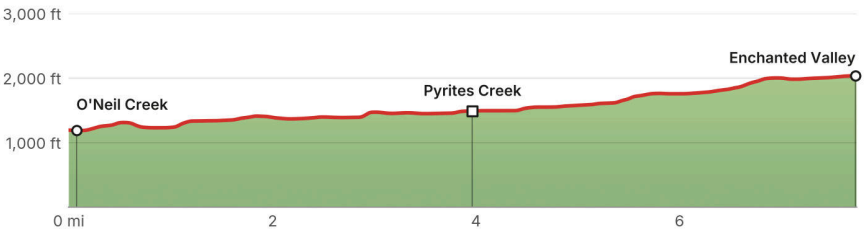
If you need to get off

Back down the valley the way you came: 7 miles to O'Neil Creek, about 13 to the trailhead.

Watch this day

Film, Day 2 · Hiking guide and behind the scenes





Day 2 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Snow below Anderson Pass, Day 3.

DAY 3

Contents

Anderson Pass and back

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME WE TOOK
9.1 mi (14.7 km)	**2,492 ft** (760 m)	**2,484 ft** (757 m)	**9.2 hours** (9:05 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.), at the pass about 3:15 p.m.

HIGH POINT

Anderson Pass, 4,464 ft (1,361 m); my GPS read about 4,510 ft

LOW POINT

2,041 ft (622 m), the Enchanted Valley camp

ON THE WAY

the big stream crossing (about mile 2.9), the O'Neil Pass Trail junction (mile 3.3), Anderson Pass (mile 4.6)

SLEEP

Tent, Enchanted Valley camp, the same as Day 2

FOOD AND WATER

Streams and snowmelt; filter everything

My day

The third day was what it was all about: getting up into some altitude and into the snow, starting to see views, and trying to get to this pass. There's a lake up there, and you can see the glacier higher up if you make it up the switchbacks. But we quickly came to realize that it was more difficult to go up with the snow, and it was a lot more elevation gain.



Morning in the upper valley, with a waterfall coming off the cliffs, Day 3.

I think we hit snow right around a big stream crossing. Most people took off their shoes; I just goated straight across. Then you can start to see the craziness that was us trying to find the path through the snow. Snow is

tough because sometimes you can't see the trail. We made our way across the slope until we reached a very steep area. You might wonder why we didn't use the switchbacks: we couldn't see them, and if there's just a straight slope of snow, it's sometimes easier to make steps and go straight up. So that's what we did. Snow changes everything.



Snow in the trees on the way up, Day 3.

People started to lose gas, because going up in the snow was tiring. If we'd had clean trails with the switchbacks, I guarantee everyone would have made the pass. But it was getting kind of sketchy up there: it was an avalanche area, with a couple of streams under the snow that you didn't want to fall into. I totally understand if people didn't want to go up that sheer ski slope. Half the group, six of us plus a guide, made our way over; it was

so nice having two guides, because we could split up. We'd set a couple of turnaround times: if we weren't at the pass by a certain time, we'd head back. Wildland Trekking gave us microspikes, which was fantastic: we absolutely needed them. We made a lot of snow steps, and toward the end we were chanting "good steps, good steps." The person in front does most of the work, so we traded off, and I'm lucky we had some strong hikers to help.

We pushed up the last slope right into the pass and had somewhat of a view on the other side. It was nice to accomplish it as a goal. By myself I'd have started earlier and gone faster, and might have worked my way higher for the view, but we were running out of daylight and people were tired. So we made our way down, sliding down the snow, which was so fun, and goated all the way back for a hot meal. We stayed safe, we were smart, and we accomplished our little made-up goal of reaching the pass.



Peaks above the valley from the snow on the way down, Day 3.

The trail

From the Enchanted Valley camp the trail heads up the valley past the chalet, gently at first, then climbs through forest above the river. About half a mile below the O'Neil Pass Trail junction is the big stream crossing where we hit snow; the Park Service says White Creek, below the junction, must be forded and can be swift and deep after heavy rain or in snowmelt, and you may not be able to cross. The O'Neil Pass Trail leaves to the right at about 3,260 ft (mile 3.3 on my GPS).

Above the junction the trail climbs by switchbacks to Anderson Pass at 4,464 ft. The Park Service gives about 5.2 miles and 2,500 ft of climbing from the Enchanted Valley to the pass; we went straight up the snow instead of the switchbacks, so my GPS says 4.6. Above about 3,500 ft the trail is

snow covered from November to June and crosses avalanche terrain. On the far side the trail goes down the West Fork Dosewallips; the Anderson Moraine trail leaves near the pass toward the glacier.

Over the pass (2026). In June 2026 the Park Service reported the Dosewallips side snow-free to Anderson Pass, with fords between Diamond Meadows and Honeymoon Meadows, the footbridge above Diamond Meadow out, and the Dosewallips Road still washed out, adding 6.5 miles of walking. We didn't go that way.



A meadow in the upper Enchanted Valley on the way back, Day 3.



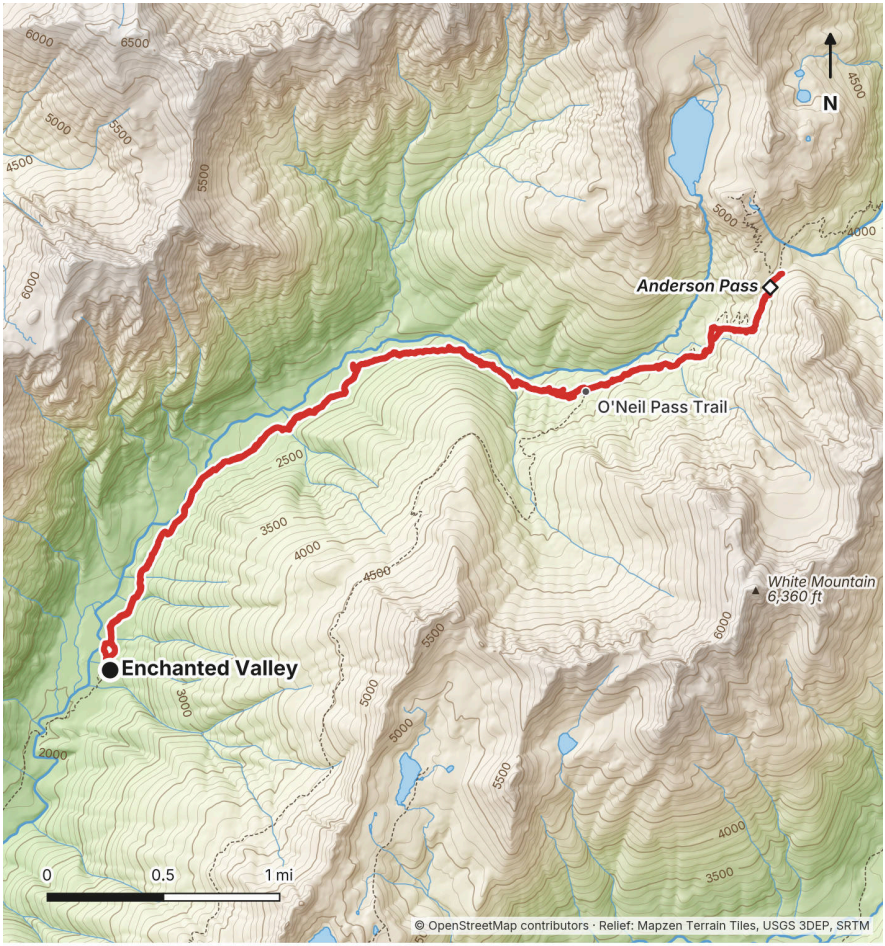
Snow filling the valley below Anderson Pass, looking back down, Day 3.

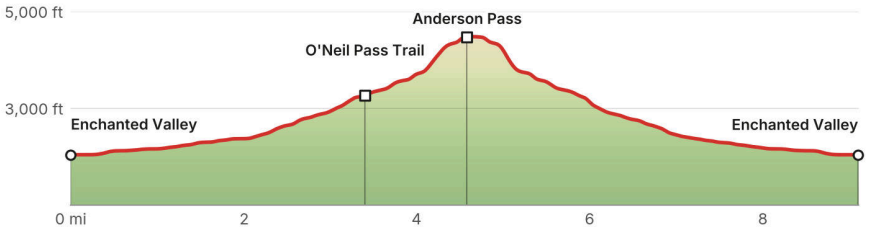
If you need to get off

Turn around and go back down to the Enchanted Valley. Set a turnaround time before you leave camp, and stick to it, as we did. Don't cross White Creek if it looks too high: it's lower in the morning.

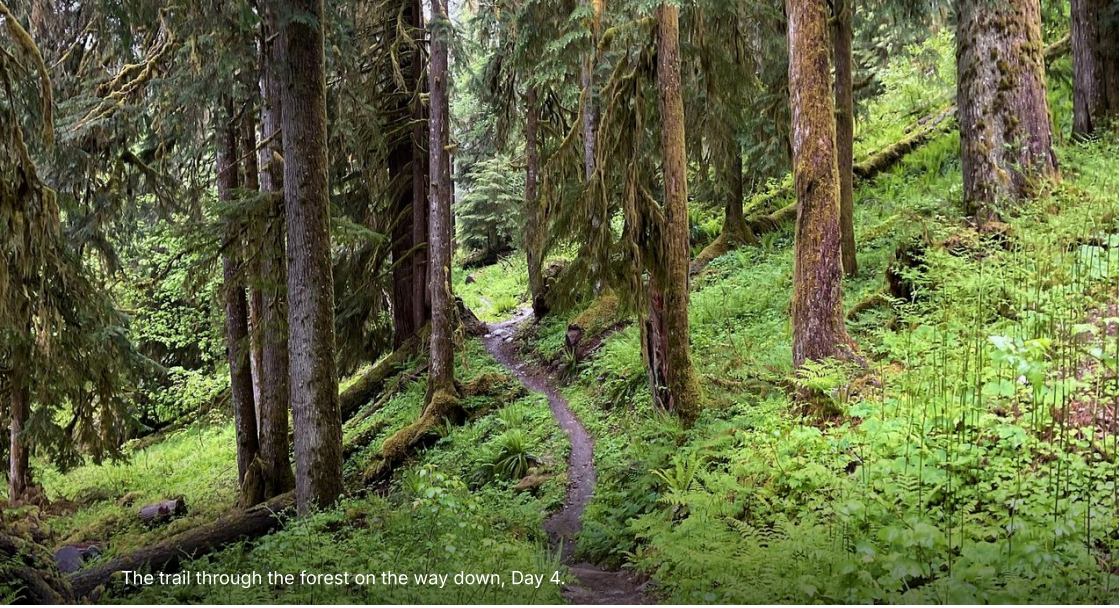
Watch this day

Film, Day 3 · Hiking guide and behind the scenes





Day 3 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



The trail through the forest on the way down, Day 4.

DAY 4

Contents

Enchanted Valley to O'Neil Creek

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME WE TOOK
7.0 mi (11.3 km)	**151 ft** (46 m)	**1,005 ft** (306 m)	**3.9 hours** (12:21 to 4:17 p.m.), in the rain

HIGH POINT

2,044 ft (623 m), the Enchanted Valley camp

LOW POINT

1,181 ft (360 m), O'Neil Creek

ON THE WAY

Pyrites Creek camp (about mile 3.6)

SLEEP

Tent, O'Neil Creek camp, the same as night 1

FOOD AND WATER

Streams all day

My day

The bears were waiting for us. When I woke up and opened my tent, people were like, you know there's a bear behind you, right? They were hanging around that whole area, and we were careful not to leave any food out and to do the whole bear can thing.

The last two days were the escape. It started raining that night, and Day 4 was a whole day of rain. We had breakfast under the trees with tarps to stay dry, then reluctantly set off in the rain, the entire way down, just under 8 miles back to O'Neil Creek, the first camp we stayed at. My GPS says 7.0.

It was still raining, so we set up tents in the rain and tarps in the rain. It was the first day we couldn't have a fire: we'd set the tarps over the sitting area, and everything was too wet to burn, so we didn't even try. It was a bit cold and a bit sad. Setting up a tent in a downpour is no fun, because everything is wet and you just have to get it done as quickly as you can. We huddled around our fake, nonexistent fire, ate our food, and went to bed with it still raining.

The trail

The same trail as Day 2, downhill: about 1,000 ft down over 7 miles, past Pyrites Creek camp. In rain the side streams rise and the trail gets muddy.

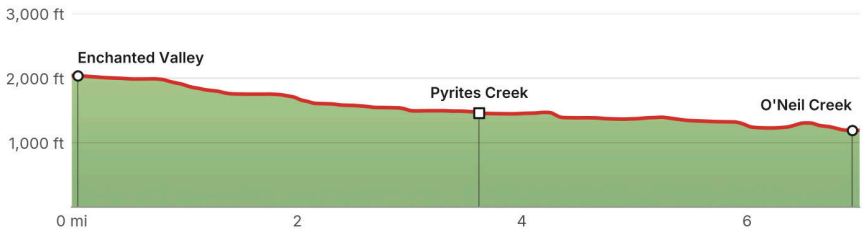
If you need to get off

Keep going down the valley: the trailhead is about 13 miles from the Enchanted Valley.

Watch this day

Film, Day 4 · Hiking guide and behind the scenes





Day 4 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.



Under the tarps at the O'Neil Creek camp, the morning of Day 5.

DAY 5

Contents

O'Neil Creek to Graves Creek

DISTANCE	CLIMBING	DESCENT	TIME WE TOOK
6.9 mi (11.1 km)	**546 ft** (166 m)	**1,105 ft** (337 m)	**4.1 hours** (9:30 a.m. to 1:36 p.m.)

HIGH POINT

1,286 ft (392 m), the forested bump between Pony Bridge and the trailhead

LOW POINT

623 ft (190 m), the trailhead

ON THE WAY

Fire Creek (about mile 3.3), Pony Bridge (about mile 4.4)

SLEEP

Home

FOOD AND WATER

Streams; nothing to buy until Lake Quinault

My day

We woke up and it was sunny and beautiful. We were so happy not to have rain. We dried things off as much as we could, and I think we had eggs and hash browns, which will brighten anyone's day. Then we made our way down, about 8.5 miles by my count in the film (7 on my GPS line), down, down, down, with the little hump again near the end.

We made it. It was very nice to complete this thing. Five days is a lot to be out there.

The trail

The same trail as Day 1, downhill: past Fire Creek camp, over Pony Bridge, up over the forested bump and down to Graves Creek.



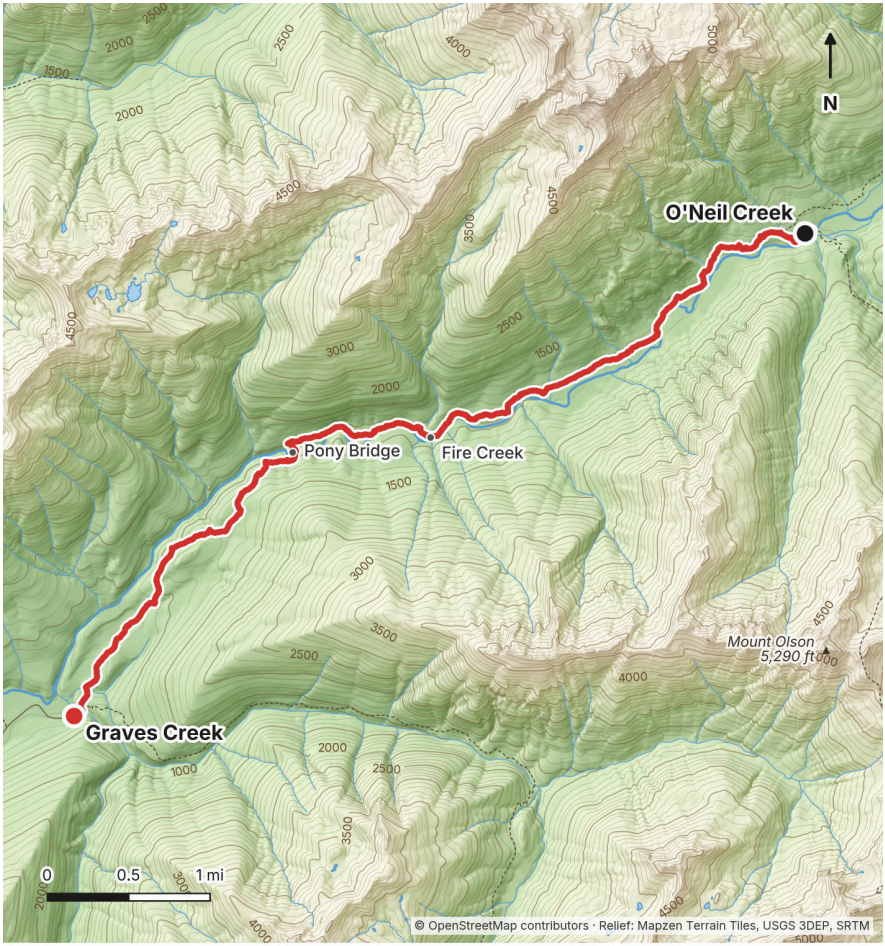
The trail beside the East Fork Quinault, Day 1.

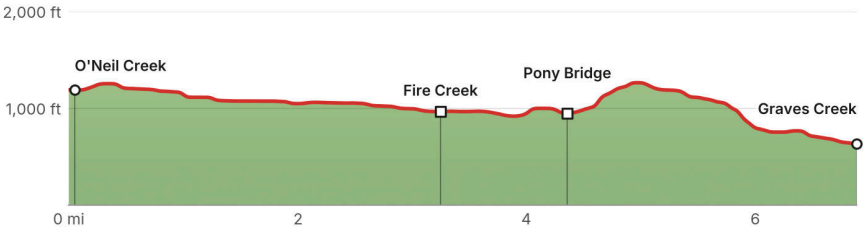
If you need to get off

You're on the way out. The trailhead is the end.

Watch this day

Film, Day 5 · Hiking guide and behind the scenes





Day 5 map and elevation profile. Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Other ways to do it

How I'd do it on my own

If I was doing this by myself, it would have been quicker: it's always easier to go at your own pace, and without campfires and people to talk to, I've got nothing else to do but hike. I'd push all the way up to the Enchanted Valley from the trailhead on the first day, probably past it, because that's when it starts to get really beautiful. I'd try to get a campsite up there, then go over the pass and down and around, weather and snow permitting. The snow would have slowed me down. And I'd definitely exit from the Enchanted Valley, the chalet, back to the trailhead all in one day: it's under 20 miles and downhill. With the quota, your permit has to name every camp, so plan this before you book.

The valley only, 2 to 4 days

Most people go to the Enchanted Valley and back: about 13 miles each way, with a night at O'Neil Creek or Pyrites Creek on the way in, or a long first day straight to the valley. Add a day in the valley if you can. Anderson Pass is a big extra day from there, and in early summer a snow climb.

Over Anderson Pass

From the pass, the trail continues down the West Fork Dosewallips to the east side of the park. It's a through-hike that needs a car shuttle, and in 2026 the Dosewallips Road was still washed out, adding 6.5 miles of walking. We didn't do it, and it isn't in this guide.

With a guide

I went with Wildland Trekking on a trip I hosted through TrovaTrip. In September 2026 Wildland Trekking listed an Enchanted Valley trip of 4 days and 3 nights from Olympia, from $1,942 a person, without the Anderson Pass day. The price includes the tents, sleeping gear, packs, food, the wilderness permit, the park entrance fee and transport from a hotel in Olympia.

Where we slept, food and water

Where we slept

NIGHT	WHERE	HEIGHT (MY GPS)
Before Day 1	A hotel in Olympia, arranged by the company	
1	Tent, O'Neil Creek camp (about 7 miles in)	1,190 ft (363 m)
2	Tent, Enchanted Valley camp (about 13 miles in)	2,040 ft (622 m)
3	Tent, Enchanted Valley camp	2,040 ft (622 m)
4	Tent, O'Neil Creek camp	1,190 ft (363 m)

The company supplied the tents, sleeping pads and sleeping bags. Book your own camps on your permit; with a quota there's no switching on the trail.

Food

I did not expect our two guides to pack fresh fruit, vegetables and meat every day, for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We had sandwiches, charcuterie, Middle Eastern food, lentils, chicken salad, spinach wraps, pasta with pine nuts, pancakes, oatmeal and coconut yogurt. Every meal was something you were really looking forward to. The star of the trip was a last-minute purchase at REI that the guides picked up: a hot sauce. We almost went through the entire bottle, because everyone was adding it to everything.

There was also a big selection of snacks, and we grabbed whatever we wanted to carry for ourselves. On your own, carry everything you'll eat, and plan for it all to fit in your bear canister. There's nothing to buy on the trail.

Water

There was so much water, almost too much: you can stop at any stream to fill up and filter water to drink, which is what I did. Filter or treat everything.

Stream crossings

The big river crossings have bridges, but the streams coming down from the slopes into the river you have to cross. I never took my shoes off: on a bright, sunny, dry day, trail runners and socks dry within half an hour if you just keep hiking. That's what I'm used to and what I like. The mud was probably the most annoying thing: it's a rainforest. Try to stick to the trail as much as you can, even when it's a muddy minefield, to keep erosion down.



Mud on the trail, Day 4.

What I paid

ITEM	WHAT I PAID IN 2022
The guided trip	I was the host, so my costs aren't a guide to yours; the guests booked through TrovaTrip
Flight to Seattle	Not in my records
Permits and park entrance	Handled by the company
Food	Supplied by the company

For your budget (2026). Wilderness permit $8 per adult per night plus $6 per permit: for one person on a 4-night trip, $38. Park entrance $30 per vehicle. A guided trip with Wildland Trekking from $1,942 a person (4 days, September 2026 listing). Bear canister loans are free at Wilderness Information Centers while they last.

Gear for this route

What this trip needs

- A wilderness permit for every night, and an approved bear canister
- Rain gear for you and your pack, and an umbrella if you like one. The guides also said to bring broken-in shoes, warm layers for the evenings, a headlamp, camp shoes for creek crossings, and bug spray or a head net
- Traction (microspikes) and the skills for steep snow if you're going to Anderson Pass before July
- A filter, a stove, and all your food
- A satellite messenger: there's no cell service on the trail

Paid links: I earn a commission if you buy through these links, at no extra cost to you. As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.

What I carried in 2022

From the film and my photos. The company supplied the tents, sleeping pads and bags, packs for anyone who wanted one, trekking poles, cooking gear, water filtration, food and microspikes.

- **Pack:** my own Hyperlite pack. The company's packs were very large, and that helped, because we carried a lot. Mine was smaller, so I had to strap the bear can on top.
- **Bear canister:** a bear canister. Everyone carried one, with group meals and our own snacks.
- **Rain:** an umbrella. So clutch. In the alpine, with exposure, the wind gets you wet from the side and breaks umbrellas, but under the trees it keeps you dry, and I mostly stayed dry.
- **Feet:** trail runners. I never took them off at the stream crossings.
- **Snow:** microspikes from the company. We absolutely needed them on the way to Anderson Pass.
- **Water:** a filter. The company provided water filtration.

- **Phone:** AllTrails. Recording every day.

What I'd take now

My current kit for what this trip needs, if you go on your own.

- **Umbrella:** Six Moon Designs Silver Shadow Carbon (Amazon). Plan on rain at least one of the days.
- **Rain shell:** Arc'teryx Beta AR Jacket (Arc'teryx). For the open snow toward Anderson Pass.
- **Warm layer:** Arc'teryx Cerium Hoody (Arc'teryx). The guides said: warm layers for the evenings.
- **Camp shoes:** Crocs Classic Clog (Amazon). The guides said: camp shoes for creek crossings.
- **Traction:** Yatta Life Ice Spikes (Amazon). If you're going to Anderson Pass before July, with the skills for steep snow.
- **Water:** Katadyn BeFree AC · 1L (Amazon)
- **Stove:** Jetboil Stash (Amazon). No fires above 3,500 ft or in a fire ban.
- **Navigation:** AllTrails+ (AllTrails, 30% off). Import my GPX files and download them offline: there's no cell service on the trail. Offline maps need the paid plan.

Filming kit

What I filmed with in 2022. No drones anywhere in the park: see Permits and rules.

- **Camera:** Sony a6600 (Amazon)
- **Phone:** an iPhone 12 Pro Max

What I film with now

- **Camera:** DJI Osmo Pocket 4 (Amazon)
- **Mic:** DJI Mic 3 · 1 TX + 1 RX (Amazon). It pairs with the Pocket 4.
- **Tripod:** SmallRig Carbon Fiber Tripod (Amazon)

Weather and safety

Emergencies. Call 911. Don't count on your phone: the Park Service says coverage is very patchy, and there's none on most of this trail. Carry a satellite messenger. The nearest emergency room is in Aberdeen, more than two hours from the trailhead.

Rain and cold. It's a rainforest, and a soaking day can chill you even in summer. We had a full day and night of rain. Keep a dry set of clothes for camp, and pitch quickly.

River crossings. The Park Service's advice: cross in the morning, before snowmelt raises the water; unbuckle your pack straps; never tie yourself in. White Creek, on the way to Anderson Pass, may be impossible to ford after heavy rain or in snowmelt. Turn back.

Washouts. The river moves. In 2026 a washout before the Enchanted Valley meant a ford or a steep scramble. Read the trail conditions page the week you go, and don't follow the "cutoff routes" some GPS maps show (the Hart Lake and Lacrosse Lake routes): the Park Service says they aren't trails.

Snow and avalanches. Above about 3,500 ft, the trail to Anderson Pass is snow covered into June and crosses avalanche terrain. Steep snow needs traction and an ice axe and the skills to use them. Set a turnaround time.

Bears. One or two black bears every day for us, and very chill: lumbering around minding their own business, looking at you, then getting back to munching on berries and roots. Stay 50 yards away, keep everything in the canister, and if a bear comes into camp, don't give up your food: bang pots and pans, and tell a ranger.

Elk and cougars. The Park Service calls elk one of the most dangerous animals in the park, especially bulls in the fall rut. Give them space. If you meet a cougar, don't run: face it, look big, back away, and fight back if it attacks.

Leave a plan with someone at home: your permit, your camps and when you'll be out.

Using the GPX files

My own GPS recordings from June 6 to 10, 2022, with all timestamps removed.

FILE	WHAT IT IS
enchanted-valley-day-1.gpx	Day 1: Graves Creek to O'Neil Creek
enchanted-valley-day-2.gpx	Day 2: O'Neil Creek to Enchanted Valley
enchanted-valley-day-3.gpx	Day 3: Anderson Pass and back
enchanted-valley-day-4.gpx	Day 4: Enchanted Valley to O'Neil Creek
enchanted-valley-day-5.gpx	Day 5: O'Neil Creek to Graves Creek
enchanted-valley-full-route.gpx	All five days, with waypoints for the camps, the chalet, the junction and the pass

The tracks show where I actually went, wander and all: under the big trees the GPS drifts, and on Day 3 we went straight up the snow instead of the switchbacks. They're a record of my trip, not an official trail line. Follow the trail and the Park Service's current conditions, not the line.

AllTrails: on alltrails.com, create a new map and use Import (offline maps need a paid plan). **Gaia GPS:** open the file on your phone and choose Gaia GPS, or Import on gaiagps.com. **Garmin:** Garmin Connect on the web, Training, Courses, Import, then send it to your watch. **Organic Maps** (free): download the offline map for Washington, then open the GPX file with it.

Before you leave the highway, download offline maps for the whole area, turn on airplane mode, and check that each day and your location show up.

Before you go, check these

These change every year. Everything else in this guide stays the same.

Permits and rules

- Your Recreation.gov permit: release date (April 15 at 7 a.m. Pacific in 2026), fees, and whether the East Fork Quinault quota continues after its 2024 to 2026 trial
- Any fire ban: the park's alerts page (nps.gov/olym)
- A bear canister: your own, or a loan from a Wilderness Information Center

Getting there

- Whether the South Shore Road has reopened, or use the North Shore Road
- Graves Creek Road: open, no RVs or trailers. The park's road line: (360) 565-3131
- Your park entrance pass

Conditions

- The East Fork Quinault entry on the park's wilderness trail conditions page: the washout near the Enchanted Valley, downed trees, the White Creek ford
- Snow toward Anderson Pass, if you're going there
- The forecast: rain, and river levels after heavy rain

Your stuff

- Rain gear, an umbrella, warm camp layers, camp shoes for the streams
- Microspikes for snow, a filter, a stove, a satellite messenger, and the GPX files and offline maps on your phone

One-page trip sheet

DAY	MI (KM)	FROM, TO	SLEEP	NOTES
1	7.6 (12.2)	Graves Creek to O'Neil Creek	Tent, 1,190 ft	Pony Bridge mile 2.7, Fire Creek about mile 4
2	7.7 (12.5)	O'Neil Creek to Enchanted Valley	Tent, 2,040 ft	Pyrites Creek. Check the washout before the chalet
3	9.1 (14.7)	Anderson Pass and back	Tent, 2,040 ft	White Creek ford. Pass 4,464 ft. Snow into June
4	7.0 (11.3)	Enchanted Valley to O'Neil Creek	Tent, 1,190 ft	Same trail down
5	6.9 (11.1)	O'Neil Creek to Graves Creek	Home	Same trail out
Total	**38.3 (61.6)**			**About 5,380 ft up and down**

Trail: East Fork Quinault River Trail, out and back, with the trail up to Anderson Pass on Day 3.

Camps: Pony Bridge (2.5 mi) · Fire Creek (4) · O'Neil Creek (7) · Pyrites Creek (10) · Enchanted Valley (13 to 14)

Rules (2026): Recreation.gov permit for every night, $8 per adult per night plus $6. Quota area: stick to your camps. Bear canister required. Fires only in existing rings below 3,500 ft, and not during bans. No dogs, no drones. Groups of 12 or fewer.

Getting there (2026): North Shore Road from US 101 at Amanda Park, then 6 miles of gravel on Graves Creek Road. Park entrance $30 per vehicle.

Emergency: 911. No cell service on the trail.

About this guide

Enchanted Valley Hiking Guide: 5 days to the chalet and Anderson Pass in Olympic National Park, by Kraig Adams. 2027 season edition, updated September 2026.

I hiked this trip from June 6 to 10, 2022, on a guided group trip I hosted through TrovaTrip, run by Wildland Trekking, and made a film about it: Hiking 50 Miles Through Washington's Enchanted Valley. Everything in first person comes from that trip: the film and what I said in it, my GPS recordings and my photos. Permit, rule, road and safety facts were checked in September 2026, and anything that changes yearly is dated.

Updates and contact. If something has changed, or you spot a mistake, email me at kraig@kraigadams.com.

Paid links, no sponsors. The gear links in Gear for this route are paid links: I earn a commission if you buy through them, at no extra cost to you. Nobody paid for a mention in this guide.

Safety. The Enchanted Valley has real risks: river fords, washouts, snow and avalanche terrain above the valley, bears, cold rain, and a remote trailhead. This guide describes my trip and what I found, not current conditions. Trails, rules and roads change. Check with the National Park Service and the weather, and turn back when conditions aren't right. You're responsible for your own safety.

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