

# **Thru Hiking the Oregon Coast Trail**

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This book describes the author's experiences while traveling and reflect his opinion relating to those experiences. Some names, trail names, and identifying details of individuals mentioned in the book have been changed to protect their privacy. Many of the characters have been combined from a variety people to simplify the overall narrative.

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# Oregon Coast Trail Thru Hiking Guide

This Oregon Coast Trail Thru Hike Guide, originally intended to be a Quick and Dirty Guide, is arranged in thirteen sections. Each section, after the preparation and warning pages, correspond to one of the ten [Oregon Coast Trail maps](#) provided by the Oregon State Parks via the Oregon.gov website.

These ten maps cover the entire trail with some overlap occurring.

Each chapter is further broken down into three sections: The Trail, Where to Stay and Resupply.

While the detailed description of the trail printed on each map is sufficient to get you from the Columbia River to the California border there is often not enough detail to make navigation easy. This includes visible landmarks in place in places where the trail is not readily apparent and trail alternatives.

Where to Stay and Resupply are fairly obvious as to their content with the exception that I do not include any specific hotel or motel options. Both are plentiful along the coast and can make your thru hike extremely easy to plan, however they are often quite expensive and often full to capacity during the summer season.

Each section, hopefully, also includes sidebars with relevant information regarding cities, towns and points of interest. But since this guide has sat for so long on my laptop, and has not been updated since the state of Oregon fixed or updated the maps, and since I am now trying to update all of this using only a cell phone... well, you get the idea.

To get the most out of this Quick and Dirty Oregon Coast Trail Thru Hiking Guide first download and/or print the Oregon Coast Trail Maps from Oregon.gov

These maps are available in PDF format and were meant to be printed in full color and at 11" x 17". For most hikers that is a much too large. What I chose to do was shrink each PDF down until it fit on a normal sized 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper. I then cut away the excess. That is everything except the map itself which is only a small column on the left hand side of each page.

As you read through this guide make notations on the front of each corresponding map. If you printed each of the maps on a one sided piece of paper then the blank backside can be used for more detailed notes.

Because the Oregon Coast Trail is 41% road walking, and knowing how much many hikers despise a road walk, I have included public transportation options where available. Not so much to skip portions of the trail but to experience that section of road safely from the inside of a vehicle.

Much of this Oregon Coast Trail Thru Hiker's Guide was compiled before the Oregon Coast Trail maps were updated and corrected by the state of Oregon, so some details may be different. These will be updated as this website gets built.

Also, since it has been years since much of this was written, many of the details such as contact information and rates for various places to stay may have changed. Many of the website links have been updated where possible, but if you notice any errors or additions that may help other hikers, please feel free to use the comment section on the relevant page to make a suggestion.

Together we can help everyone enjoy this amazing trail.

# Oregon Coast Trail Pre-Hike Planning

In my experience most thru hikers care about two things once a trail has been established. Where to camp and how to resupply.

Luckily the Oregon Beach Bill passed in 1967 works to a thru hikers advantage. The bill guarantees that the public has "free and uninterrupted use of the beaches."

This doesn't mean free beach camping along the entire coast though. There are restrictions in place along several stretches, most notably between Fort Stevens State Park and Gearhart where no camping is allowed. Camping is also not allowed on the beach within Oregon State Parks, which means any land under state park management including State Recreation Areas and State Scenic Viewpoints. And beach camping is also off limits within city limits.

That may sound like a lot of restrictions, but there are still plenty of places to stay along the Oregon coast.

Resupply, as you'll see reading the sections of this very rough, quick and dirty thru hiking guide, is a simple process made easy by the close proximity of towns along the coast.

You can't go hungry on the Oregon Coast Trail. In fact I think this is one of the few hikes that I might have actually gained a couple of pounds from eating too much food in town.

To Thru Hike or to Section Hike?

Section hikers have the advantage of packing a little lighter and avoiding many of the long road walks that make up 41% of the trail.

But a thru hike isn't that much more difficult than a long section hike. Besides, there is something about hiking the whole coast, from Washington, or the Columbia River, to the Oregon/California border in one continuous hike.

**When is the best time to Thru Hike?**

Summer is the short answer.

The rivers are easier to cross and the weather is usually better with less rain and storms. However, for those very reasons, the beaches and coastal towns are very much more crowded. Lodging will be more expensive unless you stick with the hiker/biker camps in the state parks.

But even those can fill up fast.

As early as June the mosquitoes can also get quite bad even as far north as Fort Stevens State Park.

May and October are the outlying months where you will find far less people but will have to deal with more frequent rain storms. However there are also far less mosquitoes to deal with.

My first thru hike was in early April, and while I had more rain and cold than I'd expected it was still a great hike without a single mosquito.

## **What to Pack on the Oregon Coast Trail?**

Obviously you are going to bring maps, that's basically what this whole hiking guide is about.

Despite what some people will tell you the ten free maps provided by the state of Oregon are sufficient enough in detail to get you through the trail. Simply fold your cut up and marked maps in half and seal them in a ziplock bag and store them where you can easily find them for reference. By keeping the current map on top you don't even have to open the bag to check it.

Also a recent tide chart comes in handy as there are a few spots of along the Oregon Coast Trail that need to be done at low tide.

Luckily tide charts can be picked up for free at various visitor centers or purchased for less than a dollar at most stores along the coast. And I'm sure there's an app at this point.

Other than that I don't really like telling people what they "should" bring. Every hiker has different needs and tastes and that is without taking into account the varying gear budgets and experience levels. Sure we'd all like that ultralite cuben fiber tent that

weighs under a pound but for me personally that probably wont happen anytime soon on my hiking budget.

On my thru hike, for instance, I did not bring a pair of pants. Not even rain pants. Could I have used them? Hell yes. Did I need them? That's a matter of personal perspective.

## **The Big Three**

Backpack, sleeping bag and tent.

The backpack should be something that you are comfortable with. Many people go the route of the ultralite bag in the sub 12 oz area as a way to drop some pounds off of their overall base weight, but as long as it can carry your gear without causing and painful rubbing or discomfort then you should be fine.

Sleeping bag, either down or synthetic, it doesn't matter. Rated at what you think you are comfortable with.

Tent?

I took a 5 x 7 foot tarp and despite sleeping through several storms I never got my sleeping bag wet when used in conjunction with my bivy. A lot of people feel more comfortable with a tent, especially when they are camped in the hiker/biker campgrounds in the state parks. If that's what works for you then go with it.

I also almost never sleep outside without my sleeping pad. It not only makes the ground more comfortable but it also helps in keeping me warm by insulating me from the ground.

## **Clothing**

A rain jacket, because this is Oregon and it could rain at anytime.

Thermal underwear, my most prized and cherished piece of gear. A warm layer. Hat and gloves, mostly because they are always in my pack but also because I often wear them while sleeping if it is a little bit cold at night.

A change of clothes?



Once again that is a personal matter which will also be partially dictated by the size of your bag and the amount of weight that you are willing to carry. I chose not to bring a change of clothes. I had extra socks, even a pair of sleeping socks that were never meant to be hiked in, but extra clothes? No. The one item I did concede to was what I called my "Laundry Shorts". They were called this because whenever I felt the need to do laundry they were the only thing I would be wearing besides my rain jacket.

Shoes. I used mesh New Balance running sneakers that would dry quick and they worked great. Another hiker may want a little more ankle support. Once again a personal choice. Just be sure to have something that you are comfortable with and not something new which needs to be broken in while on the trail.

## **First Aid Kit**

You never know what's going to happen out there. So a simple first aid kit should be in your pack.

What should be in it? Band aids, antibiotic ointment, aspirin, sun block and mosquito repellent. Some people have special requirements, ibuprofen over aspirin, saline solution for contacts, personal medications, so you'll have to judge for yourself exactly what you might need in any situation.

Just don't overdo it though as there are towns close enough together that you can pick up most things that you might need at almost any point in your hike.

Like Tum's for that excessively greasy meal that isn't sitting well.

While it isn't exactly considered part of a normal First Aid kit, toilet paper is something that I usually pack in the same pocket. The thing about the Oregon Coast Trail is that you pass so many towns and state parks that have an abundance of bathrooms there is no need for you to be going to the bathroom in the woods or on the beach. In fact I hope that no thru hikers ever drop a deuce on the beach as it does not decompose no matter how deep you think you buried it.

## **Water Treatment**

Though I carried a water filter, the Sawyer Squeeze Mini, I used only a single time on my entire thru hike. And that was to try and remove the soapy taste of the tap water from a public bathroom. Potable water is simply far too plentiful along the trail for much to go wrong. Added on top of this is the fact that I never carried more than a liter of water at a time but frequently packed out liter of Coca-Cola.

## **Cooking**

I carried a stove for almost the first two weeks of my hike before sending it home, unused. Food is just far too plentiful along the Oregon Coast Trail and I found that even when I wasn't eating a large meal in town, the bagels, cream cheese and sliced salami that were in my food bag were more than enough. Never mind the snacks of Chili Cheese Frito's and Peanut Butter M&M's that I consumed in massive quantities to keep up that calorie intake.

Even if you do decide to cook, resupply is easy enough that you can pick up whatever your heart desires and cook after you get to camp.

## **Useful Extras**

Cell phone. I know, who leaves the house without their cell phone, but I thought I just mention it to keep this list fairly comprehensive.

Headlamp, I never go anywhere without my headlamp.

Sunglasses.

A lighter is good if you enjoy those late night campfires. My one complaint about some of the hiker/biker camps in Oregon is that their fire pits are deep, steel walled pits. Not only is it hard to enjoy the heat or the view but the lack of air flow creates a very smokey fire.

Definitely something that needs to be redesigned.

Fire starters are optional but in Oregon it is good to know that you have the ability to start a fire from damp or even wet wood.

One night on Tillamook Head during a section hike I had failed to bring any kind of fire starter and the day had gone more wet than I would have liked or planned on. Luckily the Frito's in my bag also double as fire-starters...

Camera, because you'll want to take pictures of everything along the coast. But for most hikers your cell phone will double as your camera. Besides how else are you going to Instagram your hike?

A book or Kindle. I bring a book ever since I sat on my Kindle.

You'll notice that I didn't mention a knife or any personal self defense weapon. Most long distance hikers that I know do not carry any such item.

Myself I carry one of the smallest Swiss Army knives that they make, and that's usually only for the scissors or toothpick. A girl that I used to hike with carried nothing more than a small pair of nail clippers, and that was what she used to cut open any packaging that gave her fingers trouble.

Anytime I see someone out on the trail with a large knife strapped to their belt or pack I think that they are either very insecure, inexperienced or mentally unstable. But many people will disagree and argue that you need it for emergency situations.

Once again this is a personal choice.

# Dangers on the Oregon Coast Trail

Dangers on the Oregon Coast Trail, or any hiking trail for that matter, should be well researched beforehand. Don't get yourself caught in a situation that you haven't anticipated. You are the only one that you can depend on. And I'd like to remind you that this thru hiking guide is offered for informational purposes only, I'm no expert, and what you choose to do is ultimately up to you.

With that legal disclaimer out of the way...

## Tides and Currents

Tides along the Oregon coast can make all the difference in how you experience your hike and the trail.

On my first thru hike south through Arch Cape, Silver Point and Humbug Point just below Cannon Beach, the tide was at times knee to thigh deep as I pushed my way around the points. The rocks were slippery and I was getting soaked, but at the same time I had a blast. It was a beautiful, clear blue sky kind of day that I will never forget.

On my northbound thru hike I hit the exact same location at low tide. The beach was wider than the length of a football field. Not as exciting as fighting waves, but the low tide exposed all sorts of starfish and other things normally hidden below the oceans surface that I found fascinating.

Keeping an up to date tide chart with you is important and they can be picked up for free or very cheap at many places along the coast. More important than just having a tide chart though is knowing how to read it.

There are also a couple of places along the Oregon Coast Trail where tides are not mentioned on the map as being important in being able to pass that section. Just north of Newport comes to mind, and I'll talk more about that in that section, but since I didn't think tides mattered I was almost trapped by the quickly rising ocean water and had to fight my way through waist deep waves back to safety before the tide could get any higher.

Also a danger are undertows, or so called rip currents, that are fairly common along the Oregon coast. A swimmer can be pulled out to sea and even if they can stay afloat the cold water temperature will eventually cause hypothermia.

Doesn't sound too fun.

If you find yourself being pulled out to sea in an undertow the best thing to do is to swim parallel with the shore until you are out of the rip current before attempting to swim back to the beach.

## **Sneaker Waves**

Not waves of sneakers, but waves that can sneak up on you.

They are more common during the winter months when storms can cause unpredictable ocean activity but can happen at any time. Increasing the danger of sneaker waves are logs and other debris floating in the water or at the waters edge. These things can move unpredictably, and though the logs at the ocean edge may seem massive they can shift and roll causing broken bones and even trapping you under their massive weight.

The best course of action is to always be aware of the ocean.

That sounds simple enough but the one time I was hit by a sneaker wave near Nesika Beach I realized afterwards that I hadn't been paying attention at all. I had been more worried about getting my camera out to take a picture. The waves hadn't gone up to more than my ankle the entire time I was there walking along the waters edge. Under water though the beach dropped off rather quickly. While I was framing my shot a wave hit that was waist high and knocked me to the ground. Luckily it didn't pull me back into the water with my pack on, because that would have gone very, very bad.

## **Tsunamis**

You'll see Tsunami Hazard Zone signs up and down the Oregon coast. Often they will be accompanied with evacuation maps and information.

Tsunamis are waves created by earthquakes and many people believe that Oregon is overdue for a big one.

The waves will come in fast, and if you see one coming it is probably too late to do much about it. If you are hiking along the coast and feel a tremor, or a shaking that wakes you up from sleeping, it would be best to get to high ground, and as far inland as possible.

## Quicksand

Some people warned me about quicksand along the coast. Most of the warnings were centered around the Oregon Dunes Recreation Area and most of the danger seemed to be in the winter months.

I never have come across any personally, but I am told that the low areas without any vegetation between dunes are all potential danger spots as this is where water pools and floats the sand.

If you happen to find yourself stuck, or sinking in quicksand, it is important to remain calm. If you stay still the chances of sinking deeper than your waist are pretty slim. If you struggle against the quicksand and panic you will disturb the sediment making it possible to sink much deeper.

Remove your backpack and toss it to dry ground.

Standing there waiting for help, unless you know that someone else is close, is not a great idea. The cold winter water and sand mix can easily cause hypothermia if you are stuck there for any amount of time.

If you can't reach solid ground from where you are then slowly lean back putting the upper half of your body against the quicksand. You will float much better in the sand than you do in water. This will allow you to slowly free your legs from the sand's grip. Now you can slowly paddle your way to drier ground.

I can't stress the fact that you have to do this slowly enough. Fast movements will help liquefy the quicksand causing you to sink.

So take your time.

Enjoy yourself.

## River Crossings

River crossings are much more common on the Oregon Coast Trail and potentially more dangerous than quicksand.

There are several river crossings, some of which have to be done at low tide, and which can be a bit scary if you are hiking alone. The crossing at Sand Lake comes to mind.

Plan ahead and be there at the right time and that will take care of most of your problems. Also, using trekking poles or a walking stick can help your stability quite a bit.

The currents can be strong and the bottom of the river is hardly ever anything like an even surface. In sand there will be highs and lows formed by the currents beneath the water's surface. You could be knee deep in one spot and step a foot away and suddenly be waist deep. Also the surface of the water can disguise exactly how deep or shallow much of the river crossing can be. On top of all that sometimes the sand itself isn't solid and your foot will sink into it up to your ankles.

Just know your limits, take your time, and hopefully the worst that will happen is that you fall over and get wet.

So pack that cell phone in a Ziploc bag and stuff it inside your pack.

## Traffic

Automobile traffic isn't something you only have to worry about on the road walks. Oregon allows auto traffic on many of the beaches, mostly from October to April, and while it may seem to be an annoyance, it is actually the reason that the beaches were originally made to be public.

The biggest area of concern regarding traffic on the beach is between Fort Stevens State Park and Gearhart. Most people don't drive excessively fast, in fact most people seem to use this section either to get to a place to fly a kite, BBQ, or to let their dog out and run while they drive.

Once, just out of curiosity, I hitchhiked this section and found that the very first pickup stopped and let me hop in the back. That three to four hour hike turned into a 20 minute drive.

For the road walks that comprise at least 40% of the Oregon Coast Trail it is best to have something bright, or even reflective, to put on your backpack to make you more visible to oncoming traffic. I had a portion of a fluorescent green road worker vest with a reflective stripe running down through the middle. It folded up small enough to take up hardly any room in my hip belt pouch, and when it was needed I simply safety pinned it to the outside of my backpack so that it would be visible to traffic coming up from behind me.

Traffic is probably the most dangerous part of hiking the Oregon Coast Trail so stay visible.

## **Wildlife**

While there are black bears along the coast, and there have been cougar sightings, most of the wildlife that you'll have to concern yourself with is much smaller.

For instance, the Snowy Plover. This is a small shorebird that nests in sandy beaches in the dunes near the high tide line. Their nesting season is from March all the way until September, but if a Snowy Plover nest is disturbed in anyway the birds will leave their nest, and perhaps even eggs and baby chicks, behind.

Human activity has caused their population to decline until it was declared a protected species. Now many sections of the coast above the high tide line are roped off, usually with a small sign attached, declaring it off limits.

It's great that we are making efforts to protect this wild bird, however, when I was once caught in a storm south of Bandon all I wanted to do was get out of the wind and vicious sand blasting that felt like it was tearing the skin off my legs. There was nowhere to go though as the dunes were all protected habitat. I had to suck it up and deal with the storm instead of taking temporary refuge in the dunes.

I can tell you that I didn't appreciate that little bird that day, lol.

## **Fires on the Beach**

For the most part Oregon allows beach fires as long as they aren't closer than twenty-five feet from a wooden seawall.



The rules can vary though depending your location on the coast. Oregon State Parks will have their own set of rules as to where you can have fires, and if there are fire restrictions in effect from a particularly hot or dry stretch of weather all fires may be prohibited.

Just use common sense when starting a fire on the beach. Don't make it so large that it is going to be hard to put out or keep an eye on as you fall asleep. Use downed branches and small pieces of driftwood for your fire and don't cut down branches from living trees or vegetation. Don't start a fire against huge pieces of driftwood or in a pile of driftwood.

The winds can change at a moments notice so don't build a fire too close to beach grasses or other vegetation where an errant spark could spread your fire.

And most importantly make sure it is out before you leave. Simply covering it with sand is not enough. Make sure you soak it with water and give it sufficient time to cool down before you move on.

You're on the beach, there should be some water nearby.

## **Leave No Trace**

Leave No Trace is an important set of guidelines to follow no matter where you are hiking or camping.

If you pack it in, then you should pack it out.

Towns are fairly close together on the Oregon coast so you will easily be able to get rid of your trash on an almost daily basis.

Also, with towns being so close together you shouldn't really be pooping on the beach. Bathrooms are close enough together so that a little planning ahead will get you to the next one before you'll need it.

By way of an example as to how close the bathrooms are to one another, I never once used the toilet paper that I had in my backpack on either of my thru hikes.

If you have to, if it's an absolute emergency, use the intertidal zone, the sand below the high tide line, and dig a deep hole, at least six to eight inches deep to do your business in. Just remember that poop doesn't decompose the same way in sand as it does in soil, and the colder out it is the longer it will take to decompose.

So please don't poop on the beach.

# Getting to the Oregon Coast Trail

The first part of any hike, no matter the distance, is getting to the trailhead.

The northern terminus for the Oregon Coast Trail is located at the South Jetty of the Columbia River in Fort Stevens State Park. For most people planning a thru hike this will be your starting point.

Getting there via public transportation isn't that hard if you time it right. There is actually a bus that drops you off at the entrance to the park and from there it is a quarter mile road walk to the parks registration office which luckily is also very close to the Hiker/Biker camp.

On my first OCT thru hike the original plan was to use public transportation to get me to the trailhead. As it turned out I was lucky enough to have a trail angel from the Pacific Crest Trail offer to pick me up at Portland Airport and deliver me to the South Jetty.

Not everyone will be so lucky.

## From Portland

From Portland International Airport (PDX) it is easy enough to catch the MAX Red Line, also known as the Airport MAX, which is a light rail line, into the city.

From downtown Portland it is easy enough to catch the NorthWest POINT bus to Astoria. The NorthWest POINT provides daily bus service and leaves twice a day, but in order to connect with a bus going to Fort Stevens you'll need to catch the first bus of the day.

From Portland the NorthWest POINT bus runs into Cannon Beach then north along the coast through Seaside, Gearhart and then into Warrenton where you'll need to disembark to catch the local bus to Fort Stevens.

Of course, you could get off the bus at Cannon Beach to hop on the Oregon Coast Trail, and in fact the hike north towards Astoria is a great way to experience the trail over a short one or two night hiking trip.

Local bus services are provided by Sunset Empire Transportation. They have the Connector Columbia and the 10 Red Cedar bus routes that can get you there.

There is also the option of getting off the NorthWest POINT in Gearhart and simply walking north along the beach into Fort Stevens. Simply turn right at the Wreck of the Peter Iredale and follow the paved road to the Park office.

For some people this will be easier than catching a local connector bus to get to the northern terminus, but it will mean duplicating miles on the return trip.

The NW Connector website is a newer, up to date resource for getting around NorthWest Oregon via local buses, and is invaluable for hikers trying to get to various parts of the trail.

## **From Astoria**

If you happen to be coming into Oregon from the north, as in Washington state, then Astoria is a likely beginning point for making your way to the trail.

Sunset Empire Transportation Services operates the Connector Columbia bus which leaves from the Astoria Transit Center and has a stop at Fort Stevens and the KAO Campground across the street. This bus currently runs three times a day during the week and twice a day on the weekends, and costs \$3.

Just be sure to tell the bus driver that you want to be dropped off at the KOA Camp store, do not simply say Fort Stevens as the first state park stop will put you miles away from the campground.

## **From Salem**

Salem is perhaps the least likely place from which you would be coming from to get to the trail since you'd most likely have to go through Portland anyway.

If you do not want to go directly to the Oregon Coast Trails terminus but simply want to hike some beautiful coastline then there is a very cheap bus out of Salem that takes you directly into Lincoln City. It is called the Lincoln City-Salem Bus.

However, that bus only runs on the weekends. (Which may have changed, check the NW Connector website link above for a current schedule.)

During the week there is another, more expensive, bus that brings you into Newport operating out of the Salem Amtrak station. From the bus stop in Newport it is a short walk, for a hiker, into South Beach State Park.

# Map #1 – Columbia River to Oswald West State Park

## The Trail

The northern terminus of the Oregon Coast Trail is at the South Jetty of the Columbia River in Fort Stevens State Park.

If you are lucky enough to have a ride out to Clatsop Spit there is a parking area there for you to be dropped off, along with a last minute bathroom.

If, however, you have arrived via public transportation, and you were dropped off at the KOA Camp Store, then your best bet is to walk out Peter Iredale Rd. to reach the coast. After getting a campsite at the Fort Stevens Hiker/Biker Camp, of course.

From here you can walk north along the beach, which is also the Oregon Coast Trail, until you reach the South Jetty. Having reached the northern terminus you can follow the trail south back towards the wreck of the Peter Iredale.

From here cut inland and follow the bicycle path back to the campground and call it a day. This is a great way to see how your pack feels and to work out any small changes that may need to be made.

The next day continue your hike south from the wreck of the Peter Iredale. How far you choose to go will depend on your level of physical fitness and the weather.

Following the coastline south you will notice vehicles driving on the beach between the wreck of the Peter Iredale and Gearhart. This is one of the reasons that camping is prohibited along this stretch. Getting run over in your sleep would probably ruin your hike. You will also notice that it is much easier to hike while walking closer to the waters edge. I called it, "walking the foam line," because of the line of foam formed by the receding waves.

Map #1 clearly shows Sunset Beach State Recreation Site and the Fort to Sea Trail. From the beach however these are not readily identifiable. Likewise Del Ray Beach State Recreation Site just before you get into Gearhart is also very hard to locate from the beach. But that isn't much of a concern, simply follow the coast line until you get into

Gearhart, which will be readily apparent by the profusion of condo's and a large beach access road. This is 10th St.

At this point there is a sign prohibiting vehicle access to the beach heading south. This is an important marker because although Map #1 tells you to head inland at the main beach access at Pacific Way St. there is no beach marker telling you where this is located. After the sign prohibiting vehicles it is the fifth main trail heading up into the dunes. There may be more very small trails leading to peoples private homes and there may also be what look like trails but are actually just illusions created by the dunes. If in doubt simply follow one of the trails inland. If you do this before the fifth trail you will end up on a numbered street which you simply follow until it intersects with N. Marion Ave. Take a right and follow this road south until you get to Pacific Way.

If you missed the fifth trail and cut inland you are more likely to end up in someones backyard. Either way you will hopefully end up on Ocean Ave. or E St.

From here Map #1 tells you to follow E St., however at the intersection of E St. and Cottage you will notice a Dead End sign. Simply turn right on Cottage and walk one block before turning left onto F St. This will bring you out to Neacoxie Dr., (there is no sign), which leads directly onto G St. Follow the directions for the road walk into Seaside.

How long will it take? It took me about 6 hours to hike from the South Jetty to Gearhart the first time I hiked this section and that was during a cold rain and headwind.

Just before reaching Seaside, and when following the directions down 12th Ave to the beach, you will notice public restrooms at the corner of 12th and Necanicum Dr.

At the beach you have the option of walking the coastline or follow the boardwalk which runs the length of Seaside. Personally I always opted for the boardwalk as there is plenty of beach walking on the rest of the trail. The boardwalk ends at The Tides by the Sea Hotel. Here you can turn right and walk out to the beach to continue south, or turn left and walk to the intersection of Beach Dr. and turn right. You can follow Beach Dr. to the end or make a slight right onto Ocean Vista Dr. and follow that to the end, either way you will end up at a T intersection. Turn right and the road name changes into Sunset Blvd. as you pass Seltzer Park.

Seltzer Park, though small, has restrooms and an outdoor shower on the men's side of the restrooms.

Captain William Clark, of the infamous Lewis and Clark Expedition, when he climbed the north slope of Tillamook Head, exactly as you will be doing when you head south out of Seaside, called it, "the steepest worst and highest mountain I ever ascended."

I know of one Oregon Coast Trail thru hike that was aborted after hiking out of Seaside with the intention of pushing all the way to Cape Falcon. The climb up Tillamook Head, with the muddy trail and obstacles formed by fallen trees ended up being too much for them to handle physically. From Cannon Beach they returned to the hostel in Seaside spending a few days recuperating.

For me the climb up Tillamook Head was one of the highlights of the Oregon Coast Trail, so much so that I have done this section several times. Don't push yourself so hard that you end up hating it. If, when you have reached the top of Tillamook Head and the Hikers Camp there, and you think that it has taken too much out of you, there is an alternative to the official trail. Simply follow the level walking trail down to the parking lot at Indian Beach where you will rejoin the Oregon Coast Trail. You will miss out on some great views but it is a much easier trail to follow.

Following the trail south out of Ecola State Park there is a short road walk into the town of Cannon Beach before you return to the ocean's edge to head towards Arch Cape. In the right weather this is an amazing stretch of the trail passing, among other things, Haystack Rock.

Map #1 cautions hikers to pass Silver Point, Humbug Point and Hug Point headlands at low tide. The first time I hiked through I could have sworn that I read the tide charts correctly, and yet I had to time my run around the headlands between waves. I was soaked and knocked around by waist deep waves, but I also had a great time doing it. On my second hike through I caught low tide on accident and couldn't believe the difference. Where I had fought the waves before was now a large empty expanse of open beach and tide pools filled with starfish gripping the exposed rocks.

Coming to the end of Map #1 it tells you to leave the beach just north of Arch Cape Creek. But if you haven't seen it how do you know that you are just north of it? All the more confusing if you have hiked during low tide and aren't sure if you have passed two or three headlands. On my first thru hike I wasn't sure if Arch Cape was just another headland or not until I got half way across Arch Cape Creek and decided that the cape looked a little treacherous.



In all the times that I have hiked through here I have always left the beach at Leech Lane. The beach access path from E. Shingle Mill Lane, which the maps call Mill Rd., appears to lead to the back of a private residence.

Follow Leech Lane out to 101 and cross the road going towards the left. Here you will see the wide turning area onto E. Beach Rd. with a sign that says it leads to Shingle Mill Lane. Follow this until it turns left onto E. Shingle Mill Lane, once again the road labeled Mill Rd. on Map #1.

Look for the trail on the right leading to Oswald West State Park.

Just be ready for a climb.

## **Where to Stay**

Many hikers worry about camping along the Oregon Coast Trail through Map #1.

This is mostly due to the no camping restriction between the Columbia River and Seaside.

Generally there are three areas where most thru hikers end up staying.

Fort Stevens State Park has a hiker/biker camp which puts you in a good position, as I've already mentioned, to hike from the northern terminus to Peter Iredale on your first day. Staying at the campground your first night helps you ease into your hike. Unfortunately Fort Stevens is also a bit swampy so unless you are hiking very early or very late in the season be prepared for hordes of mosquitoes. This is where a screened in tent will prove to be invaluable.

The last two times I stayed at the hiker/biker camps there I spent most of my time on the beach to escape the mosquitoes, returning to camp only well after sunset.

The bathrooms near the hiker/biker camp are also not that great. Cross the road and use the bathrooms, and large private showers you'll find there for a much better experience. Or use the ones by the registration office.

Because of the camping restriction along the beach, partly due to the fact that vehicles can drive in the sand, you will have to hike from the wreck of the Peter Iredale into at least Seaside. Though it may be tempting to sneak into the dunes for the night most of

the area along this stretch is a live fire impact area. But the walk is anything but strenuous and the hike into Seaside won't take as long as you'd think.

The one alternative is to stealth camp in the dunes in Gearhart. Not allowed, but an option in a pinch.

In Seaside you have the option of staying at the Seaside Hostel, which is only two blocks off the OCT. Instead of turning right onto 12th Ave and crossing the bridge continue following N. Holladay Dr., labeled Holliday Dr. on Map #1, two more blocks south to 10th Ave. and the hostel will be on your right.

Seaside International Hostel

930 N Holladay Dr

Seaside, OR 97138

(503) 738-7911

I have both stayed at the Seaside Hostel and stealth camped in Seaside on many occasions. The problem with stealth camping is that Seaside is a tourist town, and it also draws a lot of homeless people who travel along 101 and panhandle on the boardwalk. So there is some competition for out of the way spots to sleep. Most of the homeless usually sleep in the dunes or a few places out by Safeway, but I have never had a problem in Seaside. Don't think that just because someone is homeless and camping on the beach, and maybe drunk, that they are a threat. After all, isn't that what you will be doing?

Hiking out of Seaside you have the short but strenuous climb up Tillamook Head going into Ecola State Park. At the top of Tillamook Head are three hiker cabins, each with four bunks. There is also a covered picnic area and bathrooms available but no running water. It is a great place to stop for the night, and not just because it is free.

Each of the cabins is on a first come, first serve basis. But I have never had any problems with over crowding. Just get there early enough and claim a bunk, then head out to watch the sunset, or explore the abandoned bunker like some people do, which I cannot recommend because that area is off limits, and not known to very many people anyway.

Is it possible to hike from Fort Stevens all the way to the shelters at Tillamook Head?

Yes, is the short answer.

If you are in shape, and the weather holds, and you get an early enough start.

On a northbound hike I was trying to save money and planned to hike from the shelters on Tillamook Head to Fort Stevens to avoid spending the money on a hostel stay in Seaside. The hike got off to a bad start when I failed to realize just how much light the canvas roll down doors on the shelter actually blocked. Instead of setting my alarm and getting an early start I didn't get on the trail until 10am. Then for some reason I decided to take a long, four hour lunch in Seaside to charge my cell phone and upload pictures. By the time I left Seaside it was getting late.

I would have made it to Fort Stevens by sunset at the latest had I continued hiking. Still enough time to get in by headlamp and setup for the night. But the long break in Seaside had me feeling lazy, and maybe for the sheer novelty of it, I stuck out my thumb while walking the beach. The very next pickup truck stopped, and I hopped in the back. That 10 or 20 minute ride at 40 mph saved me at least an hour or two of hiking and I got into camp early enough to hike back out to the beach for sunset.

Heading south on the Oregon Coast Trail from Ecola State Park is a long stretch that will hinder many peoples thru hike because of the lack of a place to legally camp. Why the Oregon State Parks Department hasn't set up some kind of official option for hikers in Oswald West State Park is beyond me. Though I have been told that they overlook hikers who camp off the trail, out of the way, and using Leave No Trace principles, it would be nice to have an official place to stay.

That isn't to say that there aren't many places to stealth camp, and one of the more popular choices from other hikers I have talked to is on top of Cape Falcon. If you choose to use this option, doing so is at your own risk, and please be discreet and respectful of the park.

Since there is no official camping in Oswald West there is an alternative, but far less attractive, option to use the bus that runs along Route 101 to get back to the Seaside Hostel where you could stay a night before returning to tackle the climb up Arch Cape and Cape Falcon at the beginning of the next day.

Or you could use the same bus to return to Cannon Beach and hike back up to the shelters on Tillamook Head. That would require hiking back down to Cannon Beach the next morning to catch the bus to the point where you left the trail.

Either way you would have to call ahead or try to flag down the bus from Manzanita heading north at E. Shingle Mille Land, aka Mill Rd. on the map, where it meets Route 101.

The North by Northwest Connector Route 3 bus only runs twice a day from Manzanita into Cannon Beach, but at least it runs seven days a week. The Route 20 bus, aka Gray Seagull, only runs into Manzanita once a day, Monday through Friday, but continues on through Cannon Beach into Seaside.

## **Resupply**

Resupply along the entire Oregon Coast Trail is never a problem and Map #1 is a good example of this.

First, if you are taking public transportation out to Fort Stevens State Park chances are that you will be stopping off at the Fred Meyer in Warrenton. A great place to pick up as much food as you want to carry. Not that you need much. Even if you got all the way out to Fort Stevens and realized that you forgot to pack a dinner or snacks for the next day there is a KOA Campground store across the street from the entrance to the park. A little more expensive than the Fred Meyer, but only a quarter mile from the hiker/biker camp in the state park.

And a dinner and a few snacks will get you through the short hike into Gearhart where you can easily resupply, or even stop and eat lunch.

Seaside is only a bit further, and has not only a large Safeway and several other smaller stores, but tons of restaurants and fast food. I have spent hours in both the Safeway and McDonald's charging my electronics and utilizing their wifi.

Just remember to pack water for your hike up Tillamook Head if you plan on staying the night as there is no potable water up there.

Two or three days worth of food leaving Seaside is more than enough to get you well into Map #2.

And you have the option to pick up a few extra things in Cannon Beach the next day if you wanted to add a little variety.

The Mariner Market on N. Hemlock St., which is the main street through town, is a small grocery store with a deli.

Also while in Cannon Beach you can stop by the visitors center for free Oregon Coast Trail maps and tide charts.

## Map #2 – Oswald West State Park to Cape Lookout State Park

### The Trail

Map #2 starts in Oswald West State Park, which includes the climb up Arch Cape at the beginning.

Leaving E. Shingle Mill Lane, aka Mill Rd. on the state map, the trail climbs Arch Cape. Somewhere near the top you will have to cross 101 and locate the Oregon Coast Trail marker on the other side.

If the climb was more difficult than you thought it would be, or if you simply don't want to go back in the woods for a quarter of a mile of up and down hill climbs only to end up back on 101, simply follow 101 south for a short distance to a side dirt road. Walk down this a bit to reconnect with the OCT.

Following the trail over and down Cape Falcon is a twisting and turning adventure. At several points you'll start to doubt that you are even on the right trail as the trail markers all but disappear, and the trail itself seems to be going in the wrong direction. It seems to be a never ending, very muddy trail, but eventually you will come out to the bottom, most likely seeing the first signs of people near the beach and bathrooms in Oswald West State Park.

That being said it is still a very nice hike if you don't allow yourself to get stressed out about potentially being lost.

Because you aren't.

The climb out of Oswald West is nice with some decent views of the ocean and cliffs just off to your right.

Soon enough you'll be crossing 101 again, this time to climb Neahkahnie Mountain. After the climb the trail continues as a road walk along 101 until you take a right on Nehalem Road, which turns into Ocean Rd. as it rounds the bend. The last time I hiked through there was no road sign, but it is fairly obvious which road you should take to bring you back to the beach.

Once you are back on the beach follow this south, which means the water is on your right, into Nehalem Bay State Park.

The trail continues along the coast until you get to the end of Nehalem Spit. This is the north jetty of Nehalem Bay. On the south jetty is where you will find the Jetty Fishery, which offers ferry rides for hikers. Look for a bright yellow building, which you'll most likely have to hike up the bay for a while before you can spot it.

Call for a ride, the price is \$10, cash. (503) 368-5746

From the Jetty Fishery you can follow the railroad tracks into Rockaway Beach if you don't want to road walk. Otherwise there is also a bus which will take you not only into Rockaway Beach, but also through Garibaldi and on into Tillamook if you'd like to avoid a lot of road walking.

You can also try to flag down a fisherman or crabber on Tillamook Bay before you get to Garibaldi, perhaps by waving a \$5 bill, and asking for a ride across to Crab Harbor. Though not an official part of the Oregon Coast Trail it is still a nice way to see the coast.

Crossing to Crab Harbor means that you will be skipping Tillamook which is a long road walk anyway, both going into Tillamook and hiking out to Cape Mears.

Which way you go is entirely up to you but the one benefit of going into Tillamook is that it can be a major resupply point.

Either way, after hiking south on the OCT from Cape Mears you will be returning to more road walking, this time on Three Capes Highway until you get into Oceanside. Just be sure to check out the tunnel through the cliff at Oceanside before you start your trek south along the beach.

It isn't long before you are once again on the road, this time all the way to Cape Lookout State Park.

## **Where to Stay**

Map #2 starts off with very little in the way of official camping options as it has been restricted in Oswald West State Park. As I mentioned many hikers choose to stealth camp in this area, the top of Cape Falcon being one of the most popular.

Oswald West State Park is one of the major gaps or setbacks in planning a thru hike of the OCT. They used to have a campground but I was told by several people that it was closed due to abuse by locals more than anything else.

There is a popular surfer beach in the park and it is unofficially known as a nude beach from what I was told by locals. It was unclear if this was simply due to the fact that they liked to go down and watch the surfers change out of their wet suits, or if there was more to it than that.

After that Nehalem Bay State Park has a terrific hiker/biker camp. It is close enough to the beach, and like all Oregon State Parks, it has unlimited free hot showers. As you hike south along the beach look for a small brown sign on a post in the dunes that says ABC. Follow the trail next to it up and over the dunes to come into the back of the campground.

Just south of that is the Sea Haven Motel. At one point they had a hostel option that was cheap, but it is now under new management. That doesn't mean it isn't a good place to stay if it is in your budget.

Sea Haven Motel & Guest House

520 North Hwy 101 (520 Coast Highway), Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136

503-355-8101

If you chose to ferry across Tillamook Bay there is plenty of free camping available in Crab Harbor and perhaps even at the Bayocean Peninsula County Park further down the peninsula closer to Cape Meares. Just don't expect potable water or bathrooms.

Following the Oregon Coast Trail inland, heading into Tillamook, you'll have no legal camping options but plenty of hotels to choose from.

## **Resupply**

Even if you left Oswald West State Park without any food left in your pack the town of Manzanita is an easy downhill walk. After hiking up and over Neahkahnie Mountain that is, unless you skipped that.

Following Ocean Rd. along the beach south until it comes to an end is the best way to find Laneda Ave, the main thoroughfare in town. Go left onto Laneda Ave and a little



way up on the left hand side of the road is a small market, called The Little Apple or the Manzanita Market, with plenty for resupply as well as freshly prepared foods like breakfast sandwiches and pizzas.

Continuing down Laneda Ave. on the right at 5th St. are public restrooms. Further up on the left is the public library, and if you continue on Laneda until you get to 101 you can take a left to go to another supermarket, Manzanita Fresh Foods.

Resupply in Manzanita really depends on what your plans are for the rest of Map #2. Are you staying at Nehalem Bay State Park? Do you plan on catching a ferry across Tillamook Bay to camp at Crab Harbor? Or doing the road walk through Garibaldi into Tillamook? Or the bus from Garibaldi to Tillamook to avoid the long road walk?

If you go the ferry route you'll need more than if you plan on taking the bus to skip the road walk. Tillamook is easy enough to reach by the inland route, even if you decide to do the road walk, that you wont need much more than a few snacks. Even leaving Nehalem Bay State Park in the morning you will still have resupply options in Rockaway Beach and Garibaldi.

Rockaway Beach has plenty of restaurants and pizza places as well as the Rockaway Beach Market, which is just off 101 at S. 2nd Ave. Garibaldi has the Food Basket Market Place grocery store as well as a Dairy Queen.

Heading into Tillamook there are plenty of options as soon as you hit town, including a Fred Meyer Supermarket and plenty of fast food. Further into downtown there is a Safeway one block off the OCT route where it turns right onto Third St./Netarts Highway, as well as plenty of dining options.

Tillamook should be a major resupply as the road walk out to Cape Meares, then down to Cape Lookout State Park, has very few options for food with the exception of a cafe in Oceanside. You'll also have to plan on packing food out of Tillamook to get you at least to Pacific City, halfway through Map #3.

## Map #3- Cape Lookout State Park to Lincoln City

### The Trail

Hiking out of Cape Lookout State Park the trail is well maintained and well marked.

The trail takes you up and over the Cape, without taking you out to the end, before dropping you back off on the beach.

Follow the beach south until the mouth of Sand Lake, which should be forded at low tide. During the summer months this is a bit easier. At high tide it is impassable. If this is the case you'll have to hike out the alternate route, which is a road walk out Galloway Rd back to Three Capes Highway.

At some point you will be able to return to the beach just north of Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area.

After climbing up and over Cape Kiwanda the trail follows the beach south, though you will see stores and restaurants on your left tempting you away from the beach. Follow the beach until you see a beach access road that will bring you back towards the main road, crossing a short bridge for the long road walk back out to 101 and south to Winema Beach.

An option here is to take the bus.

From Pacific City there is a bus that will take you directly to Winema Beach, or further into Neskowin, or even further into Lincoln City.

After the road walk you return to the beach at Winema Beach, which is best hiked at low tide, until you get to Neskowin Beach State Recreation Site. Here you will have to return to 101 for short road walk to the Falls Creek Trailhead, which will take you over Cascade Head.

Following the OCT at this point will not give you the best views from Cascade Head however, so you may consider hiking off trail a bit to see some spectacular views.

Once you are back on the 101 follow that south into Lincoln City, returning to the beach at NW 39th St. just south of the Safeway. Follow the beach south until you get to the Siletz River where you'll have to hike back in to the 101.

If you plan on staying at the hiker/biker camp at Devil's Lake State Recreation Area, you'll have to get off the beach before that. The best landmark for finding the campground from the beach is to hike south until you hit D River about halfway through Lincoln City. Looking to your left you will see 101 crossing a short bridge over the river. Return to 101 here and Devil's Lake SRA is just a short distance north.

Right near where the OCT returns to 101 at Siletz Bay on the southern end of Lincoln City is a bus stop at Taft IGA. From here you can catch either the Lincoln City Loop bus or the bus heading south towards Newport. If you'd like to skip the long road walk south of Lincoln City heading through Depoe Bay, a great place to get off is the Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural Area. Just tell your bus driver first so they'll know to stop. From there you can hike down to the beach and either enjoy a good days hike to South Beach State Park, or take it easy and stay at Beverly Beach State Park.

Otherwise it's a road walk right off Map #3 into Map #4.

## **Where to Stay**

Cape Lookout State Park has one of the best hiker/biker camps in the state. (In my opinion.)

From Cape Lookout State Park to Devil's Lake State Recreation Area it is 51 miles along Sand Lake Rd. and 101. For a thru hiker that means that you will most likely have to stealth camp somewhere in between for at least one night, maybe two if you can't manage two 25 mile days.

For a short hike after Cape Lookout:

Sandbeach Campground by Sand Lake, which is mostly for dune buggies might be an option, but I have never personally stayed, nor known anyone who has.

There are also campgrounds on the other side of the alternate route around Sand Lake, Near Pacific City:

Webb County Campground - has tent sites and a hiker/biker option - call to be sure  
33005 Cape Kiwanda Dr, Cloverdale, OR 97112

(503) 965-5001

Cape Kiwanda RV Resort - has ten tent sites, but is more expensive  
33305 Cape Kiwanda Dr  
Pacific City, OR 97135

Further inland: Woods County Campground/Park., (503) 965-5001 - which says that it has a hiker-biker option on the Tillamook county website, but could find no information on tent sites. Their address is 34060 Brooten Road, Cloverdale, OR 97112

Further south in Neskowin camping might be an option at the Neskowin Creek RV Resort, but again, I have never stayed there, so call to find out if they still take hikers. Their address is 50500 South Highway 101, Neskowin, OR, 97149, (503) 392-3355

## **Resupply**

Hopefully you did a major Resupply in Tillamook so that you still have food left when entering Pacific City.

Coming off Cape Kiwanda and back down to the beach there is a small market place for the Cape Kiwanda RV Park which offers some light resupply.

Stock up here with enough food to make it the rest of the way to Lincoln City. This will vary depending on whether you plan on doing the road walk or taking the bus.

There is also Ben and Jeff's Burgers and Tacos and Doryland Pizza in this same block.

Further south on the OCT you'll have to head inland back to 101. This brings you past a Shell Gas Station and a Mexican food restaurant, and these are your last options until Lincoln City with the possible exception of the Cafe at Hawk Creek in Neskowin.

Luckily in Lincoln City it is possible to do a major resupply. Right on 101, and the OCT before you turn on 39th St., is not only a Safeway, but a Grocery Outlet, a Rite Aid, a Walgreen's, a McDonald's and a Pig 'N Pancake.

There are more options throughout the city and closer to Devil's Lake State Recreation Area. Just before leaving Lincoln City there is also Kenny's Food Market just before SW 50th St. near where the the OCT leaves the beach and returns to 101.

But you won't need much food to make it to Newport. A two day supply early in the day will get you through your first day in Lincoln City and the next into Map #4.

## Map #4 – Lincoln City to Waldport

### The Trail

Following the Oregon Coast Trail south out of Lincoln City the trail is essentially a 20 mile long road walk to Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural Area along Route 101. The road walk is broken only by a short section between Glenden Beach State Park and Fishing Rock State Recreation Site.

After that the trail follows Route 101 through Depoe Bay before returning to the beach at Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural Area, just before Beverly Beach State Park.

That is a solid days worth of hiking.

The alternative to this long road walk is to take the bus from Lincoln City to Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural Area. You'll have to tell the driver where you want to get off though as this isn't a regular stop. Even then they may insist on dropping you off at the turnoff across from Beverly Beach State Park. If this is your choice then catching an early morning bus makes it possible to walk the beach from Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural Area into Newport for lunch and then on to South Beach State Park for the night.

Leaving Beverly Beach State Park the trail follows the beach and briefly returns to Route 101 at what the state maps call 62nd Ave. but which is actually named 68th St. Though there are no street signs on the beach you will notice a small stream, Schooner Creek, and an obvious trail up to a dirt road with a small parking area.

The only problem I ever had along this stretch was during a northbound hike. The tide was moving in and I had hiked down to the beach at 68th St., aka 62nd Ave. Since there was no warning on the state maps about doing this section at low tide I wasn't prepared for the tide to be so high. From there it was impossible to get very far up the beach as the waist deep waves were pushing me up against the rocks. I chose to return to Route 101 and hike north until I could get back to the beach at Moolack Shores Motel.

Heading south from 68th St. along Route 101 the trail soon returns to the coast at Agate Beach State Recreation Site. The state maps tell you to follow the signs to Yaquina

Head Lighthouse and return to the beach. I have never had this work for me as beach access seems to be blocked at every point by private property. It's best to follow Route 101 a few hundred more feet to a little grassy area and a sign that says Lucky Gap Trail. Follow this trail down to the beach, then follow the beach until you get into Newport, where the trail crosses the Yaquina Bay Bridge.

On the other side of the bridge there are steps that descend down to a paved road and the route to the south jetty is pretty obvious. Getting to South Beach State Park however, you can choose between three different routes.

First you could hike all the way out to the jetty and down to the beach to walk along the waters edge.

Second, you could take the paved South Beach Day Use Trail and follow that to a junction with a sign that points you left into the campground.

Or you could enjoy something a little different and follow the Old Jetty Trail through the shore pine trees and the beach grass.

The Oregon Coast Trail continues heading south out of South Beach State Park following the beach pretty much into Waldport.

Labeled as Ona Beach State Park on the map this park had its name changed in 2013 to Brian Booth State Park. It is here that I have never been able to cross Beaver Creek as the map mentions. I have always had to walk a little inland to use the wooden pedestrian bridge.

After that the trail briefly returns to Route 101 at Seal Rock State Recreation Site for a short road walk, then back to the beach at Collins Creek State Recreation Site.

Does Collins Creek State Recreation Site exist? IDK, the only mention I could ever find was on the maps.

## **Where to Stay**

Beverly Beach State Park and South Beach State Park break up Map #4 pretty evenly and both have hiker/biker campsites available making them the most obvious and cheap options available.

This makes it pretty easy to get through Map #4 without having to resort to stealth camping or renting an overpriced hotel room.

There is also the Newport Lost Buoy Hostel, which if it isn't already obvious, is in Newport.

Newport Lost Buoy Hostel  
946 SW 8th St, Newport, OR  
(541) 961-0659

Listed on the map further south is Ona Beach State Park, which is now called Brian Booth State Park, but there is no camping available there. It is a day use only park.

But just beyond that on Map #5 is yet another state park hiker/biker camp.

## **Resupply**

From Lincoln City you don't have to pack more than a day or two worth of food as it is a short hike into Newport. Also there is a small store near the entrance of Beverly Beach State Park, most likely your next destination. There are also ample restaurants in Depoe Bay as well as the Whistle Stop Mini Mart, which is a Shell gas station convenience store.

Just before you get into Newport, and before you return to the beach from Route 101, you will pass an Izzy's Pizza. If you have been thru hiking do yourself a favor and go in for the all you can eat buffet and chow down.

If you've returned to the coast at Agate Beach but need to resupply in Newport it is best to leave the waters edge at Nye Beach. You'll notice the large opening and parking area as well as the public restrooms. Hiking much further will most likely mean that you'll just have to backtrack along 101 to do your shopping.

Just a couple of blocks in, taking a left on NW Coast St. will put you in front of the Nye Beach Market. If you're looking for a larger grocery store follow NW 3rd St. up to the 101 and there will be a Thriftway supermarket on your right. There are plenty of options along 101 including a Fred Meyer, McDonald's and Burger King to the north and a Walgreen's to the south.



Crossing the Yaquina Bay Bridge there is also the South Beach Fish Market a little further south on 101 but off the Oregon Coast Trail. They have a good lunch counter as well as a small grocery store which makes them ideal if you plan on staying at South Beach State Park for more than one night.

Heading south from here a days worth of food is enough as Waldport isn't that much further down the coast.

## Map #5 – Waldport to Florence

### The Trail

Whoever was in charge of Map #5 screwed up big time. (\*This is regarding the older version of the state maps.)

Map #5 has three inset maps to show greater detail of the trail. Each one of them is not only mis-cropped, but they are taken from Map #4 and have nothing to do with the trail on Map #5.

The text itself is correct, just don't waste your time trying to make sense of the pictures.

Getting back up to 101 from the beach is the most important part of getting into Waldport. Twice I have hiked south through here and both times I have taken a different way back to 101, once because what seemed like a storm on the beach was merely a drizzle once I got back to the road.

### Where to Stay

Not listed on the Oregon Coast Trail Map #5 as a camping option is Beachside State Recreation Site, which is most likely due to the fact that camping isn't available year round. However, for thru hikers the camping season of March 15th to November 4th is perfect.

Also it's position is perfect as it is only 17 miles from South Beach State Park on Map #4.

From South Beach State Park it is only another 17 miles to the next camping option, Carl G. Washburne State Park.

The hiker/biker camp there is in the trees so mosquitoes can become a problem depending on the weather, but it is close to the bathrooms and the camp hosts have always been very friendly. Often offering to drive bundles of wood up to your campsite for you instead of making you carry it from the front entrance.

The hotels in Yachats all tend to be on the pricey side for most hikers. Any time a hotel has Spa, Lodge or Resort in the title it usually means that it is going to be slightly more expensive.

South of Carl G. Washburne State Park camping on the beach is an option before you get into Florence on Map #6. That would make for a short hiking day but set you up nicely to walk into Florence early and resupply.

## **Resupply**

Just before getting into Waldport there is a small convenience store with a few tables inside to take a break and have a snack, and which also has limited wifi.

But the real resupply is across the Alsea Bay Bridge, about a half mile off the trail. Just up OR-34, also known as Hemlock St., to Rays Food Place, a decent size grocery store.

There is also a Subway near the base of the bridge as well as Grand Central Pizza a little further down 101.

You wont need very much as there is a small grocery store in Yachats which you'll most likely be going through the next day.

In Yachats the C&K Market is a great place to resupply, and you'll need at least two days worth of food to get you into Florence on Map #6 unless you plan on beach camping north of Florence, in which case you'll need a bit more.

In Yachats is also LeRoy's Blue Whale, a great place to have breakfast if you left Beachside State Recreation Site early in the morning. There is also the Green Salmon for breakfast, lunch and coffee. Or if you're looking for fish and chips try the Luna Sea Fish House, Yachats Underground Pub & Grub or the Ona Restaurant & Lounge.

Just remember, you will need at least two days of food to get you into Florence.

# Map #6 – Florence to North Bend

## The Trail

Coming Soon

## Where to Stay

Although William M. Tugman State Park is listed on the state maps as an available camping option it is too far out of the way for a hiker.

Not that I haven't stayed there when hitchhiking through.

## Resupply

How you resupply in Florence depends on how you plan to hike through to Coos Bay.

If you are going to be beach camping through the Oregon Dunes and hitchhiking through Reedsport you'll miss an important resupply point and be spending a lot of time on the beach.

Figure four to five days of food.

If you plan on hitting the resupply options in Reedsport you'll only need a day or two worth of food.

Either way as soon as you enter Florence on 101 there is a Fred Meyer and a Dollar Tree. Then there is a Subway, A McDonald's, a Taco Bell, an A&W, a Pizza Hut and more importantly Kathleen and Nina's Pie and Specialty Restaurant. But if you're following the Oregon Coast Trail directions you will miss all of that unless you turn left off Rhododendron Drive onto 35th St. and follow that out to 101. You will see Rhododendron Dr. clearly on the inset of Map #6.

If you don't care about pie, and that's a shame, you can still continue on the OCT down Rhododendron Drive, just be sure to take a left on 9th St., passing the public library and back to the 101 to resupply before you miss your chance and have to backtrack. There

you will find a Safeway, a dollar store, Subway, Starbucks and Los Amigos Burrito or Los Compadres if you're in the mood for Mexican.

On the way out of town there is one last place to eat before crossing the bridge and entering the Oregon Dunes, and one last bathroom with running water. It is the Dairy Queen.

Then, further south, as far as eating in Reedsport there is a McDonald's, Dairy Queen, Subway and Bedrock's Pizzeria if you're not into chain food and want something more local.

In Reedsport there is also a Safeway and a Price 'N Pride right off of 101, both of which will get you resupplied. And there is the Reedsport Natural Foods if that is more of your thing. Here you'll have to resupply as much as you think you'll need to get you Coos Bay as there isn't much in Winchester Bay besides the Winchester Bay Market, a very limited resupply option.

## Map #7 – North Bend to Bandon

### The Trail

Coming Soon

### Where to Stay

Coming Soon - but there are plenty of hotel/motel options available.

### Resupply

What can I say?

North Bend and Coos Bay have it all.

The problem is that you won't need much to make it to Bandon.

Then again it depends on your route.

Taking the side trail of the OCT out to Sunset Bay State Park and Cape Arago and spending a few days camping is a great way to experience the Oregon coast, but it will require more food.

Skip the long walk down Seven Devil's Road and take a bus from Coos Bay to Bullards Beach State Park and you are there in an hour or two.

So, when in Coos Bay, decide what you plan to do. A bunch of road walking, a side trip, or maybe take the bus. This will affect what your resupply in Coos Bay ends up being.

Heading south you'll first pass through North Bend, where the public library is right off of 101 as you come into town, and there is a Walmart if you follow Newmark St. to the west. Every time I've come through this way though I always end up resupplying in Coos Bay. McKay's Markets on 7th St, which is off the 101 behind city hall, is what I use when I'm staying in town. Otherwise there is a Fred Meyer and a Safeway at the southern end of town on 101 which is also conveniently located close to the bus stop.

However you decide to get into Bandon, resupply there is also very easy. Right on 101 is Ray's Food Place and Price 'n Pride as the major supermarkets. But you also have Mother's Natural Grocery right in between the two if you were looking for something more natural. These are both roughly equidistant from the Oregon Coast Trail where you turn off of Riverside Dr. onto 1st St. heading into Old Town. Ray's and Mother's to the north along 101 and Price 'N Pride to the south. There is a Subway next to Ray's and a Dairy Queen next to Price 'N Pride.

There is also the Station Restaurant, a great place to have breakfast, if you walk a half block straight ahead instead of turning right onto 1st St. as you enter Bandon.

Resupply in Bandon has to get you to Port Orford, and there are literally zero options to get food or to even get off trail between Bandon and Cape Blanco State Park. So depending on your hiking speed, I would suggest two to three days worth of food. Even though it is possible to make it to Cape Blanco from Bullards Beach in a single day, why push it if the weather is nice?

# Map #8 – Bandon to Humbug Mountain State Park

## The Trail

Coming Soon

## Where to Stay

Coming Soon

## Resupply

Map #8 is a tricky one as the only resupply option on it is Port Orford.

That's why I suggest that you bring plenty of food and water from Bandon to make it there safely.

The best place to resupply in Port Orford is Ray's Food Place. From the Oregon Coast Trail, instead of turning right onto Arizona St. from 12th St., as you see on the map, simply follow 12th St. all the way out to 101. Ray's will be on your left, three blocks north on 101.

If you don't need much except for a few snacks you can continue on the OCT to where 9th St. meets 101, and there across the intersection is a Circle K.

Those are pretty much your only options in Port Orford, and on Map #8.

Technically resupply in Port Orford has to get you to Gold Beach. That can mean two or three days worth of food depending on your speed and whether or not you plan on spending an extra day climbing Humbug Mountain.



# Map #9 – Humbug Mountain State Park to Pistol River State Scenic Viewpoint

## The Trail

My suggestion for Map #9 is to take the bus from Humbug Mountain State Park, through Gold Beach, all the way to Cape Sebastian. From the top of Cape Sebastian descend to the beach and hike through the Pistol River State Scenic Viewpoint. While this will cause you to miss the opportunity to explore Sisters Rock, but it will avoid a ton of road walking.

## Where to Stay

Coming Soon

## Resupply

Like Map #8, Map #9 has only one real resupply option, and that is in Gold Beach.

There is one possible exception, the Nesika Market on Nesika Rd., mislabeled Nesika Beach Rd. on the map. This is on the Oregon Coast Trail and is next to the post office and bus stop in Ophir before you get into Gold Beach. It is about 15 miles south of Humbug Mountain State Park and roughly 8 miles north of Gold Beach.

In Gold Beach there is McKay's Market and Ray's Food Place, both fairly close together and on 101.

To get to them from the trail turn left off the beach at or near the end of the airport runway and before crossing Riley Creek. Cross Oceanside Dr. onto 5th Pl. and follow this out to 101. Mc Kay's is left, or north from this point, and Ray's, a Dairy Queen and a Subway are to the right, or south on 101.

There are plenty of restaurants to choose from in Gold Beach as well.

Resupply here has to get you to Brookings as there are no other options in between.

# Map #10 – Pistol River State Scenic Viewpoint to California

## The Trail

The first thing you'll notice about Map #10 is that it starts with Gold Beach at the top even though the section of the OCT from Gold Beach to Pistol River Scenic Viewpoint has already been covered on Map #9.

Map #10 really starts half way down the page where the road walk along 101 enters the Samuel H. Boardman State Scenic Corridor.

## Where to Stay

Harris Beach State Park has a great hiker/biker camp and is a decent days hike from either Gold Beach or Cape Sebastian. Two nights here allows you plenty of time to hike in and get a good night's rest. Then the next day hike down to the Oregon/California border to finish your hike, then either walk, hitch, or catch a bus back to the park for lunch.

## Resupply

Between Gold Beach and the end of the Oregon Coast Trail at the California border Brookings is your only option for a resupply.

But Brookings has a couple of major supermarkets to choose from as well as fast food and restaurant options as well. You will find everything you need here.

But if you are hiking southbound you wont need much as the Oregon/California border is less than eight miles away from Harris Beach State Park. An easy enough round trip to do before lunch if you plan on returning to Brookings.

So that leads us to the question, "Now What?"

## You've finished the Oregon Coast Trail, Now What?

Okay, so you just finished your thru hike of the Oregon Coast Trail, now what do you do?

Standing there at the Oregon/California border you have many options. What you actually do depends on your pressing personal matters. Do you have to go back to work? Do you have to catch a flight back home out of Portland? Have you ever wanted to see the Redwood Forests of northern California?

You can walk back into Brookings, or catch a bus. From there you can connect buses all the way back to Portland, the easiest way being through Eugene, OR.

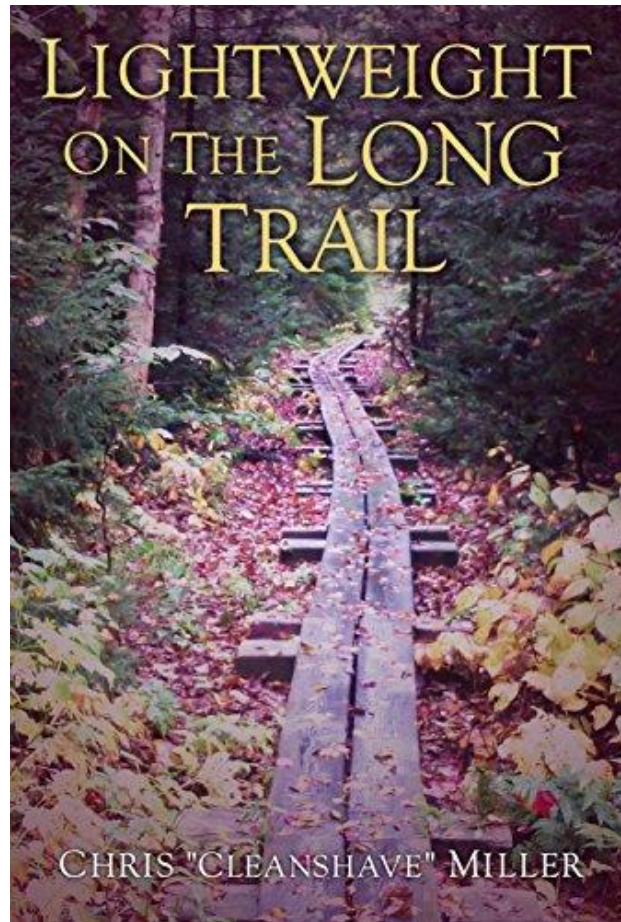
The same bus which can bring you back into Brookings also runs south into Smith River, CA. From there it is easy enough, via public transportation to connect through Crescent City, and on through to the Redwoods.

Or, from Crescent City, it is easy enough to head inland to explore Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, and then using public transportation to explore Grants Pass and Ashland, Oregon.

And out of Ashland you could pick up the Pacific Crest Trail, if one was so inclined.

The point is there are a lot of options, unless you have to be somewhere else.

## Also Available

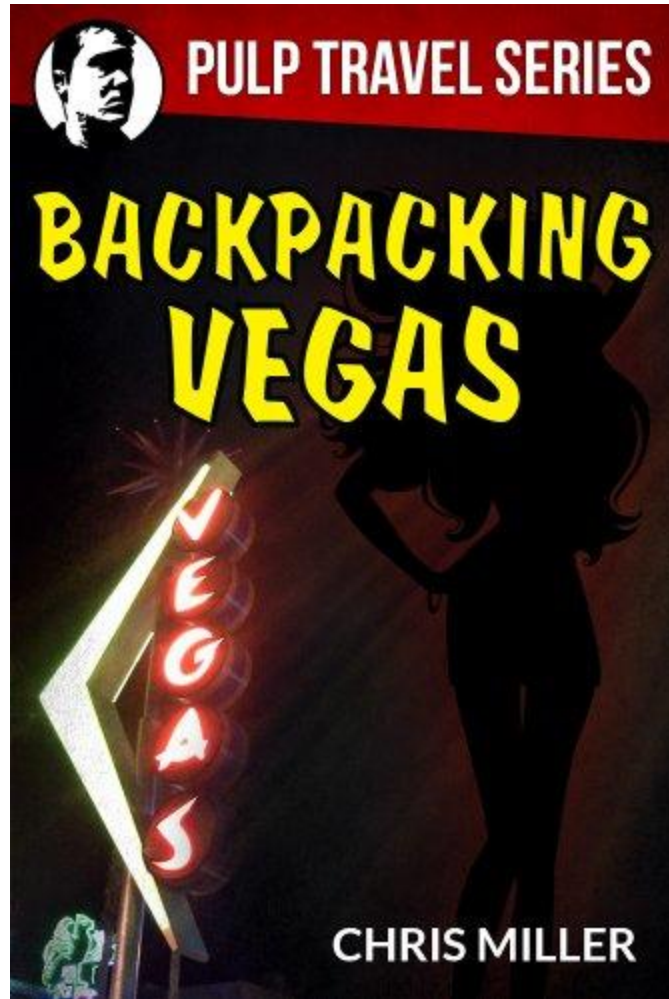


What would you do if you had just given up your apartment and donated all of your belongings to charity? For Chris "Cleanshave" Miller the answer was simple: *Go Hiking!*

Armed with only a twelve pound backpack and a sense of adventure he chose to hike the entire 272 miles of Vermont's Long Trail in what is known as an End-to-End hike.

The Long Trail, which runs along the main ridge of the Green Mountains, is the oldest long-distance trail in the United States. His hike would take him southbound, from the United States border with Canada to Vermont's southern border with Massachusetts. Along the way he would face numerous obstacles, usually brought on by poor resupply habits and questionable personal challenges, including hiking 65 miles of the trail without toilet paper, and another 100 miles without food.

So put yourself out on the trail today and read [Lightweight on the Long Trail](#)



A trip to Las Vegas doesn't have to break the bank.

When someone is killed in a car accident down the street from where he worked Chris Miller decides to get out of town and see Las Vegas. Despite having very little money in the bank, and with only a few things in a backpack he hops the first flight west.

At \$10 a night the Hostel on the Strip becomes a temporary home away from home where he shares a dorm room with strangers and searches for meaning in the first post industrial city on Earth.

This is the true story of how one person found themselves and experienced a personal transformation in Sin City.

Read [Backpacking Vegas](#) Today!

## About the Author



**Chris "Cleanshave" Miller** is an avid hiker and low budget traveler. He has bicycle toured the East Coast Greenway to raise money for Meals on Wheels, jumped off the Stratosphere Hotel in Las Vegas, taken the Polar Bear Plunge in Newport, RI, hiked the Appalachian Trail, Vermont's Long Trail, and the Oregon Coast Trail among many others, and more recently cycled Adventure Cycling's Southern Tier on a fixed gear bicycle.

He is currently traveling the United States living out of his backpack.

Read the Blog: [Cleanshave.org](http://Cleanshave.org)  
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