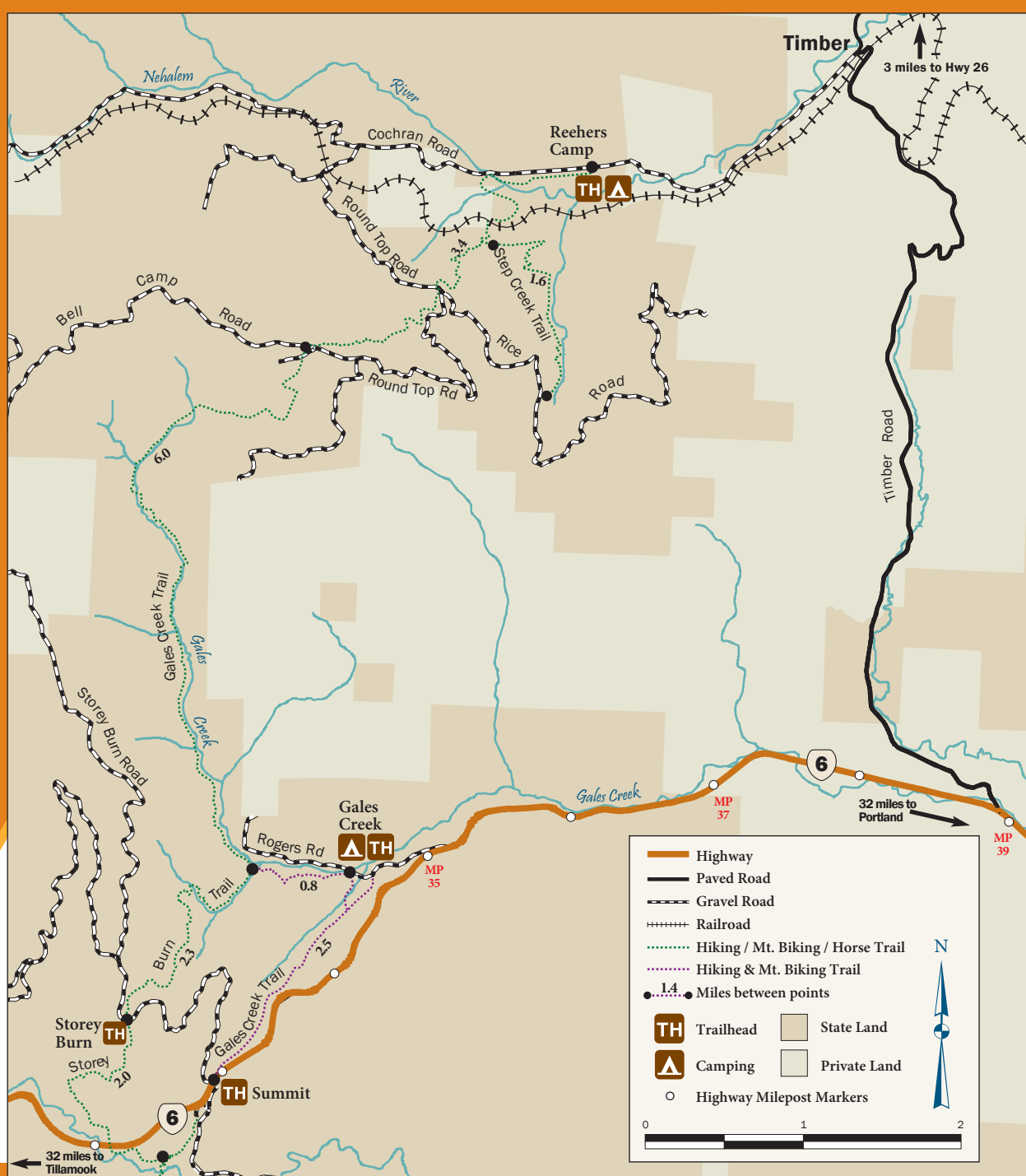


Tillamook State Forest TRAIL GUIDE

Gales Creek Trail



Gales Creek Trail



Be Prepared

- Let someone know your plans
- Lock your vehicle
- Read trailhead signs
- Pack plenty of water

Protect the Forest

- Stay on designated trails
- Share the trail
- Pack it in, pack it out
- Check current fire conditions



For More Information

Oregon Department of Forestry
Forest Grove District Office
801 Gales Creek Road
Forest Grove, OR 97116
(503) 357-2191
www.oregon.gov/ODF

CAUTION

Use extra caution when driving on single-lane gravel roads in the forest. Drive slowly and watch for truck traffic. Be prepared for changing trail and weather conditions, steep terrain and loose rock.

LENGTH: 12.7 miles
DIFFICULTY: Moderate

- Summit Trailhead to Storey Burn Trail junction 3.3 miles
- Storey Burn Trail junction to Bell Camp Road 6.0 miles
- Bell Camp Road to Reehers Camp Trailhead 3.4 miles

TRAIL INFORMATION

Trailhead Access

This trail may be reached from several trailheads. Horseback riders can access the Gales Creek Trail from either Reehers Camp Trailhead or Storey Burn Trail via Storey Burn Trailhead. There is no equestrian access from Gales Creek Trailhead.

Summit Trailhead

Travel on Highway 6 to milepost 33. The trailhead is located on the north side of the highway.

Gales Creek Trailhead

Travel on Highway 6 to milepost 35, and follow the signs one mile to Gales Creek Campground. Please drive with caution on the single-lane gravel road. The trailhead is located on the left before entering the campground.

Reehers Camp Trailhead

Travel on Highway 6 or Highway 26 to the Timber Road junction. Follow Timber Road to the town of Timber. Turn west onto Cochran Road and travel 2.5 miles to the trailhead just past Reehers Camp Campground.

Storey Burn Trailhead

Travel on Highway 6 to milepost 33 and turn north onto Storey Burn Road. Follow Storey Burn Road 1.8 miles to the trailhead sign, and take the short spur road to the left to reach the trailhead.

About the Trail

The Gales Creek Trail is 12.7 miles from Summit Trailhead to Reehers Camp Trailhead. The trail may also be accessed from Gales Creek and Storey Burn Trailheads. Hikers and mountain bikers can enjoy a loop trail option by combining sections of the Gales Creek Trail with the Storey Burn Trail.

From Summit Trailhead to Gales Creek Trailhead

This section is open to hikers and mountain bikers, and offers a moderate 2.5 mile descent to Gales Creek Campground. The beginning section of trail drops into the creek canyon as it crosses the slope above Low Divide Creek. The trail winds through a young forest lush with undergrowth even after the driest summer. Much of this area was burned by the first and largest fire of the Tillamook Burn in 1933, which started east of Gales Creek Campground. In the spring and summer, devil's club, a shrub with giant leaves and thorns covering its stem, lines the path. Near the campground, visitors may choose to go left downhill to the Low Divide Loop Trail, reaching the Gales Creek Trailhead in 0.1 mile, or continue straight and end on Rogers Road near the day-use area. Along either route, remnants of a railroad trestle that extended one-half mile across the valley are present. The trestle supported tracks for trains that hauled burned, blackened trees during the salvage effort after the fires that once devastated this area.

From Gales Creek Trailhead to Reehers Camp Trailhead

Hikers and mountain bikers will find this section of trail beginning at the west end of the trailhead near the bridge. For the first 0.8 mile, the trail traverses a fern-covered slope above Gales Creek. After crossing two bridges, Gales Creek Trail meets Storey Burn Trail where the use changes to include horses. Visitors may choose to continue on Gales Creek Trail toward Reehers Camp, or for a loop option take Storey Burn Trail (see Storey Burn Trail Guide).

The route from the Storey Burn Trail junction runs north 6.0 miles to Bell Camp Road, and continues from there another 3.4 miles to reach Reehers Camp



Devil's Club

Trailhead. Visitors will enjoy this remote and scenic section of the Tillamook State Forest. Over the next two miles sections of the trail are located on an overgrown road grade used to haul timber during the salvage operations following the Tillamook Burn fires. It stays close to Gales Creek, gradually gaining elevation and crossing several side creeks that offer views of small waterfalls. At the 3.0 mile point the trail meets a large landslide covered with a thick grove of young alder trees. The landslide occurred during the winter flood of 1996. Beyond the slide, the trail continues to weave through the forest, pulling away from Gales Creek in places to cross small tributary streams that offer scenic views of small waterfalls. During the driest part of the summer, look for segments of the creek through here that disappear underground and reappear 100 feet downstream. After passing the last waterfall, the trail begins to climb more steeply as it pulls away from the headwaters of Gales Creek and makes the 1.0 mile ascent to Bell Camp Road.

From Bell Camp Road it is 3.4 miles to Reehers Camp. Watch for black-tailed deer grazing on shrubs. After passing an open area, visitors will find themselves in a land of snags. These standing dead trees are both young and old. The large, charred snags are old survivors of the Tillamook Burn, while the younger trees were topped with a saw to provide additional

wildlife habitat.

At 1.7 miles from Bell Camp Road the trail levels off in a grove of alders, crosses Round Top Road and intersects with the Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad line. The last 1.7 miles weave through shaded, moist areas and cross a small stream before emerging onto a side road. Follow this to Cochran Road and continue over the bridge to pick up the final 0.4 mile to Reehers Camp Trailhead.

Check out the easy Step Creek Trail near Reehers Camp Campground.

Tillamook Treasures

Riparian Areas

Forest riparian areas include streams, rivers and the land on either side. These areas are important due to the variety of plants and animals living in and near the water's edge. Plants growing near stream banks provide erosion control, filter sediment, stabilize banks and create shade. The Oregon Department of Forestry manages riparian areas to maintain water quality and fish habitat.

