

Lake Quinault and the Quinault Rain Forest

Hiking Trails, Activities and more...

Lake Quinault, Higley Peak
A. Norman photo

Bunchberry on forest floor
Larry Workman photo

Trail to Three Lakes and Skyline Trail

Irely Lake Trail

Irely Lake is reached by a moderate 1.1 mile hike through stately forest. The lake is a haven for waterfowl and amphibians. This trail continues on for backpackers to Three Lakes, approximately six additional miles each way, and to the Skyline Trail.

Bald Eagle
Sharlene Gillies photo

North Fork Quinault River Trail

The North Fork trail follows the banks of the Quinault River through majestic stands of both conifers and big-leaf maples. A day hike here gives a good feel for the river valleys that make up the Olympic Peninsula. Watch for salmon migrating upstream in the fall, river otters, bald eagles, and Roosevelt elk.

The North Fork Trail continues into the heart of Olympic National Park, crossing Low Divide at 16 miles and continuing all the way across to the northern boundary of the park to Whiskey Bend on the Elwha River, 45 miles.

Graves Creek Nature Trail

Experience the temperate rain forest from the wild and isolated Graves Creek area. The one mile loop nature trail begins at Graves Creek Campground. This trail meanders near the river and is flat.

Pony Bridge Hike

Graves Creek is a portal to the backcountry wilderness of Olympic National Park. A moderate day hike can be experienced by hiking the first 3 miles (one way) of trail through large stands of old growth forest to Pony Bridge. There is a lovely canyon of the East Fork Quinault River there. Backpackers often continue an additional 10 miles to the Enchanted Valley (and beyond).

Other destinations from the Graves Creek trailhead include Sundown Lake, which is a steep primitive trail and is 8 miles each way.

Bunch Fields

These open fields have a story to tell. Not only are they one of the best places to find herds of Roosevelt elk grazing, but it is the site of early homesteads in the Quinault valley. Settlers inhabited this area of land in the early 1900's. Look for remnants of orchards near the west end.

Maple Glade Rain Forest Trail

This 1/2 mile loop trail leads you through large big-leaf maples hanging with rain forest mosses. Elk are commonly seen here. Mushrooms are abundant in the fall.

Kestner Homestead Trail

This 1.3 mile loop trail invites you take a journey back in time to the daily life of a pioneer family in the early 1900's in the rain forest wilderness.

Higley Peak Trail

You can drive most of the way up Higley Peak on US Forest Service gravel roads. The .5 mile trail has a 500 foot elevation gain, and is well maintained. At the top there are views into the Quinault Valley. To access the trail drive north on Highway 101 to the Prairie Creek Rd. Turn right and proceed 10 miles to the trailhead.

Quinault Big Cedar Trail

Travel .2 mile on the Quinault Big Cedar Trail to one of the worlds' largest Western Red Cedars. This trail is a lot of fun for kids (of all ages!) because it is short and has many stairs and boardwalks on the way to the destination. This forest is awesome!

Lake Quinault

South Shore Trails

These trails truly do have something for everyone. So you're not a hiker, or don't have much time, or just want to learn about the temperate rain forest? Take the Quinault Rain Forest Nature Trail. It is a .5 mile loop with interpretive signs highlighting interesting information about our Quinault Rain Forest.

You want to enjoy a sunny day at the lake? Take the Lakeshore Trail. The Lakeshore Trail meanders for one mile along the South Shore of Lake Quinault. It connects Falls Creek Campground or the Lake Quinault Lodge to Willaby Campground or the Rain Forest Nature Trail. Be sure to look for ospreys, eagles, or trumpeter swans (in the winter).

Loops of many lengths can be found -- all starting and ending on the South Shore of Lake Quinault. For the hardy hiker, there are enough trails on the South Shore to keep you busy for days.

The forest and waterway scenery is awesome! These trails are very well maintained and have directional signs at every junction. For more details on these trails see the fold-over flap.

Colonel Bob Trail

Round trip hike to the top is 14.5 miles from the north side. This hike is best completed as a backpack. The lower reaches of the trail, however are good for day hiking without a destination. Travel on a well maintained trail along the steep mountainside. Grand stands of old growth conifers lure you further ahead. Listen for the elusive birds that make these forests their home.

Fletcher Canyon Trail

Fletcher Canyon is an enchanting place even on a rainy day! The trail follows the canyon for 2.4 miles (one way) through lush shrub, moss, and fern enshrouded forests. To find the trailhead travel on South Shore Road 3.6 miles past the end of the pavement. Turn right on a short dirt drive to a small primitive parking area.

Colonel Bob -Pete's Creek Trail

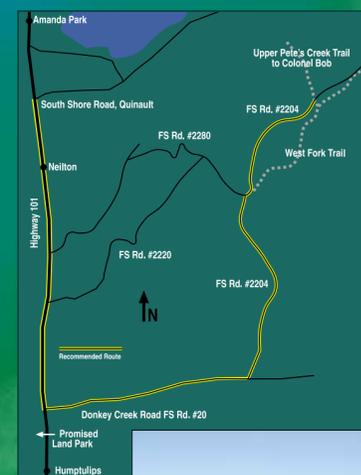
Most Day Hikers choose this route to reach the summit of Colonel Bob 4,492 feet. Round trip hike is 8.25 miles on a steadily steep and rocky trail that climbs 3,300' from the trailhead. The views are awesome on a clear day. One can see many peaks of the Olympic Mountain range and Lake Quinault below. Be prepared for any weather, bring a topo map, and carry plenty of food and water, as the trip is strenuous. To reach the Pete's Creek Trailhead travel south on Highway 101 to Donkey Creek Road (see map below for further instructions). Note: much of the route to the trailhead is on gravel roads.

Quinault Loop Drive

The Quinault Loop Drive is a 31 mile loop around Lake Quinault, up the Quinault River into Olympic National Park, and back around the other side. It is a great way to experience the Quinault Valley. There are many opportunities along the way for viewing waterfalls and wildlife, and taking walks, hikes or photographs. You gain many views of the surrounding mountains, giant trees, and the Quinault River. Leave two hours minimum to complete the trip.

Key to Symbols

- Trail suitable for kids or elderly
- Interpretive Trail
- Golf Course
- Waterfall
- Groceries
- Restaurant
- Hotel/Motel/Cabins
- Camp Ground
- Ranger Station
- Gas Station
- Post Office



On top of Colonel Bob peak
Luke Oswald photo

Backpacking
Luke Oswald photo

View from Pony Bridge, East Fork Quinault River
Marc Sterling Photography

View of Mt. Olympus from Colonel Bob upper trail
Larry Workman photo

View of Lake from top of Colonel Bob
Larry Workman Photo



One of the many falls, upper Quinault River valley
Larry Workman photo

Merriman Falls, South Shore Road
Sharlene Gillies photo

Lake Quinault
Sharlene Gillies photo

Rafting
Don Mullins Photo

Bull Elk
Stuart May Photography

Trillium
A. Norman photo

Colonel Bob Trail, Quinault Valley
Larry Workman Photo

Olympic National Park

Quinault Indian Reservation

Maple Glade

Olympic National Park Ranger Station

Higley Peak

Quinault Big Cedar Trail

Colonel Bob Trail

Merriman Falls

Colonel Bob Trail

Mulkey Shelter

Colonel Bob -Pete's Creek Trail

Colonel Bob Peak 4,492 feet

Fletcher Canyon Trail

Bunch Falls

Bunch Fields

Upper Quinault River Bridge

North Fork Trail

Graves Creek Nature Trail

Sundown Lake Trail

Trail to Pony Bridge & Enchanted Valley

View of Mt. Olympus from Colonel Bob upper trail

View of Lake from top of Colonel Bob

View from Pony Bridge, East Fork Quinault River

One of the many falls, upper Quinault River valley

Backpacking

On top of Colonel Bob peak

Rafting

Bull Elk