

Oregon Camping Trip July 2015

July 13 Monday

Leave Kirkland 12:45 pm. I-5 south to Vancouver WA. Arrive 4:0 (took a 30-minute cat nap at a rest area en route). New friends Debbie Fischer and Paul Lambshead live in a townhome with a view of the Columbia River, and a terrace garden filled with colorful flowers. They served us a delicious meal of grilled rosemary chicken breasts, palak paneer, naan, and tomato cucumber salad. We provided coleslaw. Then they showed us their Scandinavia trip pictures (we're thinking of going next summer).

July 14 We crashed in their driveway and awoke about 6:30. They weren't up yet so we walked down to the trail, which runs about 5 miles along the river. It was lovely. Debbie & Paul met us on the way back. We had breakfast on their patio, looking out at the river (PDX is on the other side), and talked travel. They have been many places.

Today is my 56th birthday.

We drove along the Columbia River to Hood River and picnicked at Waterfront Park while watching windsurfers and kiteboarders. It's very windy there.

Hiway 35 goes south through the Hood River Valley. It looks like Chelan and there are many orchards.

Drove the 6-mile road up to Timberline Lodge. There is almost no snow on Mt Hood. The lodge is pretty, but not spectacular. There were people skiing on one of the few remaining snowfields.

Grant got a headache and climbed in the back to lie down. I drove down to Trillium Lake, parked him in the shade, and walked down to the lake to write. Beautiful view of the mountain. Lots of people swimming and boating. Windy here.

Drove south on hiway 26 to Clear Lake CG. The lake was very low and the sites were nothing special, so we continued on. We had stopped at the ranger station at the north end of hiway 35 and they had recommended a more remote CG called Forest Creek. Road and CG signage is kind of minimal but we managed to find it.

Take FS road 43 north to 48 (a main road but unsigned) and turn right/south. After a while we saw a sign for Forest Creek CG. The road instantly forked three ways and we kept left because that was downhill. A pretty short while later we arrived. (The road is dirt, but not too rough.)

The CG is perfect. There's no one else here and our site is right on a babbling brook. It's shady,

with a light breeze, perfect temp (75°) and no bugs. Arrived at camp about 4:30.

Sat by stream & read. Hobo stew for dinner. Built a nice fire using some of our wood and two big pine logs we found. Three dirt bikes came by about 7:30 and asked for directions - we feel very remote and it was somewhat of a shock to see vehicles.

Went to bed about 9:30 when it got dark. It's a very dry year with high fire danger so we doused the fire with a lot of water.

We slept like logs. Grant slept all night - care for him. Left some windows open and it was the perfect sleeping temp.

Wed. July 15

Up at 6:30. Coffee by the stream. This is a pine, cedar, fir forest. We're on the east side of the Cascade crest. 44° but it doesn't feel cold. Sun in the tree tops.

Back on 48 & 43 to 26 south. Gorgeous view of Mt. Hood. Warm Springs reservation is high desert with views of Hood, Jefferson, Sisters. Juniper, pine, black volcanic rock

75° & blue sky

Stop at gas station in Warm Springs for gas, ice. Then drove to Warm Springs tribal museum. \$7 entrance fee, \$6 seniors. It's a very nice museum, with beautiful clothing, dioramas & tribal history & culture.

Next stop Crooked River Gorge scenic overlook south of Madras. 300 ft. drop to the river, columnar basalt canyon walls, beautiful bridges, views of the Sisters & nearby cinder cones.

Smith Rock State Park, dramatic rock outcroppings, lots of climbers, hot here. Picnic in the car with AC running!

Redmond wifi break - not! Then head west through Sisters (cute "old west" town) and into the beautiful pine forests of the Cascade foothills.

Hiway 20 through the Cascades to Corvallis. 89° in Corvallis. Hiway 34/1010 Newport.

Camps on the coast are full, even mid-week. There are only State Parks. Finally found a spot at Devil's Lake SP in Lincoln City about 6 pm. The sites for tents are \$21. Our neighbors are loud,

obese smokers with two dogs... Is this a lesson from the Universe? Patience, tolerance, acceptance...

Leftover hobo stew for dinner, then sit by fire & read. With earplugs.

To bed about 9 for more reading. Neighbors were quiet. Owls hooting - we saw ~~one~~ fly - not a big one.

Thursday July 16

Up at 6 for a hot shower - delightful. CG very quiet. 55°, feels perfect.

Leave at 7:20 and head north to Muskowin Beach for a nice walk. Light drizzle, a little fog, mixed with pink clouds & blue sky.

Three Capes Scenic route to Tillamook Cheese Factory. Fun to see how they make cheese, and eat ice cream!

Picnic lunch at Tolovana Beach in Cannon Beach. Perfect beach day with blue sky, sunshine, breeze, happy people, Haystack Rock.

North to Astoria and over the bridge at the mouth of the mighty Columbia River. Nice river trail (paved) that we'll walk sometime.

Stop at Visitor's Center in Long Beach for maps and camping info. No camping at Leadbetter S.P. — only option is Cape Disappointment S.P. on south tip of peninsula. They have spots and it's nice. \$25 for tent site. Oceanfront spots are long gone but we have #225, fairly private in a shady glen.

Drove north to Willapa Wildlife Refuge and did a 1-mile loop up the beach on the Willapa Bay side and back through the woods. Next time hike the slightly longer trail to the ocean. We also took a nice siesta in the van with the front windows open and the mosquito screens on (new feature!) to keep flies out.

On the way back to camp stopped at Jacks in Oceanside. It's a big grocery / hardware store with all kinds of cool stuff.

Quesadillas for dinner. Drive to North Head lighthouse & walk to lookout to see sweeping view of Long Beach to the north. Stop at North Jetty but there's no place to walk. Back to camp at 8 to read & snooze. No fires allowed (drought burn ban). A few mosquitoes.

Friday July 17

Up at 6. Long walk down CG road toward ocean while Grant snoozed more. On the road at 7:30. 101 north along Willapa Bay. Pit stop at a lovely park in South Bend. 107 to Montesano, then 12 to Olympia. Peaceful green back roads, lots of fireweed blooming.

Home at noon.