## LEGEND OF APE CANYON

The Mt. St. Helens area is said to be inhabited by large, hairy, ape-like creatures.

In 1924, a group of miners working a mine on the east side of Mt. St. Helens returned to their home in Longview with stories of being attacked by mysterious apemen. It seems that while in their cabin "huge creatures being at least seven feet tall and covered with long black hair" discovered them with their cabin. The next morning they encountered the creatures and shot at them as they ran away. It was believed that, but its body rolled over a cliff and into a deep ravine, destined to be known as Ape Canyon.

Searching parties were immediately mobilized from the Longview area to visit the mountain region to seek out the headquarters of the apemen. These parties, however, found no trace of the apemen but did find a cabin with huge boulders around it and the inside torn to shreds.

Gorg Totzi, editor of the *Red American*, a weekly Hoquiam publication, published an explanation of the legend of the apes several years ago. He said these creatures were the ferocious Sehaltik Indians, a tribe of renegade marauders, much like giant apes in appearance, living like animals in caves in the High Cascades.

Ape Canyon is located on the southern end of the Plains of Abraham, near Timberline Campground, on Mt. St. Helens' north side, follow Timberline Trail #240 over Windy Pass to Pine Creek Trail #238, Follow Trail #254 south for two miles.

*Legendary Ape Canyon starts with this narrow, deep crevice in the rocks.*

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INTEREST

The Mt. St. Helens — Spirit Lake area is probably one of the most photographed areas on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The following are some helpful hints for locating picture vantage points:

For pictures of Mt. St. Helens reflected in Spirit Lake, the best place is on the north shore near the Longview YMCA Camp. The lake is usually smooth and the reflection easy only in early morning, before the north shore is by boat or trail from Duck Bay.

For pictures of both the lake and the mountain area in one scene, the best angle is from Mt. Margaret Area (either side) early morning or late afternoon. Access is by Mt. Margaret Trail #207.

For excellent close-up views of the north side of Mt. St. Helens, the best angle is from Timberline, either in early morning or late afternoon. Access is via Highway 504, approximately 4 miles from the information Center to the Forest Service viewpoint.

For pictures of the Plains of Abraham or Ape Canyon, the best angle is from the trail crossing the Plains. The best time of day is around noon. Access is by either Pine Creek Trail #234 or Timberline Trail #240.

*Easy trails to the Plains of Abraham makes the interesting area accessible to all ages.*

## YOUTH CAMPS AND RESORTS

Spirit Lake provides a memorable experience for many youth groups. There are four youth camps along its shores. Three are on National Forest land and are made available under terms of Special Use Permits. The fourth camp, Portland YMCA, was founded in 1920 and is on private land. The three camps on National Forest land are Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Longview YMCA. Nearly 1,800 boys and girls participate in camp activities each summer.

There are three private resorts in the Spirit Lake area. Spirit Lake Lodge, one mile west of the lake's outlet on Highway 504; Mt. St. Helens Lodge, located at the outlet on Highway 504; and Harmony Falls on the east shore. Services provided at these resorts include rooms or cabins, meals, boat rentals, and some grocery items.

**Remember-**
**only YOU can prevent forest fires!**

## GEOLOGY

Mt. St. Helens (elev. 9,677 ft.) was discovered on May 18, 1792, by Captain George Vancouver. On October 20 of that year he named it St. Helens. The honor of His Majesty's British Ambassador to the Court of Madrid. Because of the mountain's symmetrical shape, it is sometimes called "The Fujiyama of the West".

The Klickitat Indian name for Mt. St. Helens is *Tah-one-lat-clah*, which means "Fire Mountain". The name is probably a result of volcanic activity.

Spirit Lake (elev. 3,199 ft.) on the north side of Mt. St. Helens is a result of volcanic action. The lake developed over a period of centuries as successive eruptions occurred and blocked the headwaters of the Toutle River. The latest deepening probably occurred around 1500 A.D. when volcanic mudflow and glacial outwash dammed the lake's outlet and raised the water level at least 60 feet.

Spirit Lake gained its present size in the early 1920's when the Yale Dam, a man-made timbered structure, was built at the outlet. This structure raised the water level another two feet. The lake now covers 1,265 acres and is about 184 feet at its deepest point.

As you travel around the area you will notice the ground is covered with a light-colored, rocky substance called lapilli or pumice. This pumice, a hardened, volcanic glassy froth, was blown from the crater onto the surrounding countryside. Pumice is a rock, but so light it weighs 35 pounds on water.

The last observed eruption of Mt. St. Helens occurred November 22, 1842. Prior to that time, perhaps about 400 years ago, the mountain passed through a period of violent volcanic activity during which forested areas surrounding the mountain were showered with pumice to a depth of several feet. With the decay of the buried trees, the "tree wells" of today were created. This phenomenon is interpreted by the public in the "Ancient Forest" self-guided tour in Spirit Lake Campground.

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR FOREST LAND

1. Be careful with fire.
   a. Do not smoke while hiking or riding, but rather stop at a safe place and extinguish your smoke before leaving.
   b. Carefully extinguish your campfire with water and mix with mineral soil.
   c. Law requires each party traveling with pack string to carry a water container, a shovel and an ax.
2. Use the existing fireplaces. Building fires elsewhere destroys the attractiveness and cleanliness of the campsite.
3. All burnable refuse and tin cans should be burned in the campfire. Retrieve the cans when cool, smash and sack them, and bottles. If facilities are not provided, pack the sack out with you.
4. Keep water supplies unpolluted. Wash clothing away from springs, streams and lakes.
5. Do not pick or dig wildflowers, ferns, or shrubs without permission from a forest officer.
6. Firearms shall not be discharged within one mile of the campgrounds.
7. Graze your pack and saddle animals outside camp areas. Avoid over-use of meadows. Carry grain or pelletized horse feed.
8. All motorized travel, such as scooters and motorcycles, is regulated. Check with the District Ranger for regulations governing use of motorized vehicles.

*The forest provides areas for family camping and picnicking.*

## CAMPING, PICNICKING AND BOATING

The Mt. St. Helens - Spirit Lake area provides an excellent opportunity for camping, picnicking and boating.

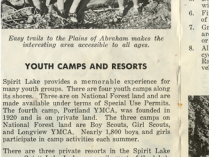
Along the forested shores of Spirit Lake are four camp and picnic grounds. One of these, Spirit Lake Campground, consists of 170 family units and offers opportunities for auto and trailer camping as well as picnicking. Two smaller campgrounds, Donnybrook and Cedar Creek, located on the east shore of the lake, are accessible by boat or trail only. Bear Cove Campground on the north shore is accessible by boat only.

There is a charge for use of campground facilities at Spirit Lake Campground.

Spirit Lake's nearly 1300 acres and 24½-mile length provides for water sports of all types. A public boat launching site is located at Duck Bay, one mile east of the Information Center. To assure continued pleasure and safety, drive your boat in a careful and prudent manner.

Timberline Picnic Ground is located near the end of State Highway 504, four miles south of Spirit Lake. It provides picnicking at the very base of beautiful Mt. St. Helens.

Kalama Spring Campground and Lava Cast Picnic Ground provide recreation facilities for visitors to Mt. St. Helens' south side.



*The lower is splashed after a canoe race — Spirit Lake Boy Scout Camp.*

## HISTORY

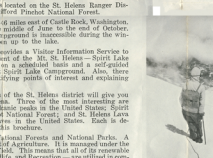
Early accounts of Mt. St. Helens and Spirit Lake are found in Indian legends. Colorful lore relate mountain, people, and spirits to the volcanic activity. One legend tells of two Indian braves who were lost on the lake when a strong gust of wind upset their canoe. When their bodies were not recovered it was believed that spirits rose from the depth and claimed them.

The Indian's superstitious led him to live in constant fear of certain areas. Spirit Lake was such a place. Legends tell of angered Sealtco who were believed to live in and around the lake. The Sealtco were the spirits of dead chiefs who were displeased that the Indians had permitted the white man to encroach upon their lands. In reprisal, the Sealtco forbade the Indians to hunt, fish, or gather berries around Spirit Lake or Mt. St. Helens. Fearful warnings and dire tales of maidens and warriors being seized and dragged to the depths of the lake discouraged the Indians. The lake was named for the spirits that were believed to dwell there.

During the later 1800's widespread interest developed in mineral deposits in the north of the mountain. Several mines were established. Thousands of dollars were invested in the hope of a rich mineral discovery, but very little ever left the area. The only recorded production is credited to the Norway and Sweden Mines. Three cars of low-grade copper ore were shipped for testing purposes in 1929.

The Lange Mine was the most prominent. A small community known as Lange became the terminus for a telephone line from Castle Rock in 1906. The Lange Mining operations caused the area's most disastrous forest fire. The blaze started from smudges the miners used to keep flies off the pack stock. The fire burned the south slope of Mt. Margaret.

In 1915 the Forest Service moved the Ranger Station from Toutle to Spirit Lake, and built a fire lookout on the summit of Mt. St. Helens.



*Spirit Lake, under graceful Mt. St. Helens, provides water for recreation, irrigation, domestic and industrial uses.*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Mt. St. Helens — Spirit Lake area is located on the St. Helens Ranger District, one of six ranger districts on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

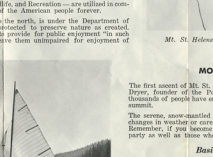
Spirit Lake is located on Highway 504, 46 miles east of Castle Rock, Washington. The recreation season is from about the middle of June to the end of October. Due to heavy snowfall, Spirit Lake Campground is inaccessible during the winter months, but the highway is kept open up to the lake.

During the summer the Forest Service provides a Visitor Information Service to improve visitor appreciation and enjoyment of the Mt. St. Helens — Spirit Lake area. This includes two guided tours on a scheduled basis and a self-guided tour of remnants of an ancient forest at Spirit Lake Campground. Also, there is a self-guided tour at Timberline Campground identifying points of interest and explaining geological history on Mt. St. Helens.

A trip through the nearly 173,000 acres of the St. Helens district will give you a glimpse of many interesting phenomena. Three of the most interesting are Mt. St. Helens, one of the youngest volcanic peaks in the United States; Spirit Lake, largest lake on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest; and St. Helens Lava Cave, some of the most recent lava caves in the United States. Each is described in greater detail elsewhere in this brochure.

There is a definite distinction between National Forests and National Parks. A National Forest is under the Department of Agriculture. It is managed under the principle of Multiple Use and Sustained Yield. This means that all of its renewable resources — Wood, Water, Forage, Wildlife, and Recreation — are utilized in combinations that will best meet the needs of the American people forever.

A National Park, such as Mt. Rainier to the north, is under the Department of Interior. Its resources are managed to preserve nature as created. The law requires they be administered to provide for public enjoyment "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for enjoyment of future generations."



*Beautiful Spirit Lake provides ample room for boating enthusiasts.*

*Mt. St. Helens attracts mountaineers from all corners of the Nation.*

## MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

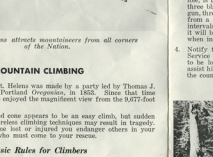
The first ascent of Mt. St. Helens was made by a party led by Thomas J. Dryer, founder of the Portland *Oregonian*, in 1853. Since that time thousands of people have enjoyed the magnificent view from the 9,677-foot summit.

The serene, snow-mantled cone appears to be an easy climb, but sudden changes in weather and treacherous terrain may result in tragedy. Remember, if you become lost or injured you endanger others in your party as well as those who must search for you.

### *Basic Rules for Climbers*

1. Never climb alone. A party of four is the minimum for safety.
2. Always go with competent, experienced leaders.
3. Always carry adequate clothing, food, and equipment.
4. For safety and enjoyment you must be in good physical condition.
5. Do not mistake skill, natural ability, or good physical condition for experience.
6. Register with the Forest Service before climbing, and check out upon return.

Climbing Mt. St. Helens can be an enjoyable experience if the "Basic Rules" are followed.



*The high-mountain lakes, accessible by trail only, provide a backpacker's paradise.*

## LAVA CAVES OF MT. ST. HELENS

The Lava Caves are among the most interesting geological features in the State of Washington. The lava flow in which they are located covers approximately 1,000 acres and extend from Mt. St. Helens to the Lewis River, a distance of about eight miles.

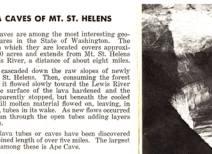
Fiery lava cascaded down the raw slopes of newly formed Mt. St. Helens. Then, consuming the forest in its path, it flowed slowly toward the Lewis River Valley. Eventually, as the lava cooled and the flow of molten material stopped, but beneath the cooled crust the still molten material flowed on, leaving, in some places, tunnels in its wake. As new flows occurred they also ran through the open tubes adding layers to the walls.

Five large lava tubes or caves have been discovered with a combined length of over five miles. The largest and longest among these is Ape Cave.

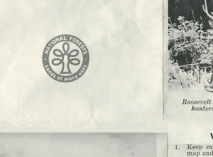
Easily accessible by stairs, the cave is open for exploration. Any volunteers planning to explore the caves should come prepared with warm clothing, heavy shoes, flashlights, lanterns and protective headgear.

To reach the cave, follow State Highway 503 east from Woodland to Cougar (30 miles). Continue east about 6 miles to Forest Road NSS. Follow NSS about 2 miles to Forest Road N816. Then travel on N816 for 2 miles to the cave.

Please protect your caves. Do not mark on the walls or leave litter.



*Inside Ape Cave — longest single lava tube discovered in the United States. It is over two miles long.*



*Roosevelt elk are enjoyed by many people — hunters, photographers, and just you.*

## WHAT TO DO IF LOST

1. Keep calm. Do not walk aimlessly. Trust your map and compass. Shelter and warmth are much more important than food.
   a. To find your position, find a place where you can see the surrounding country.
   b. When you reach a road, trail, or telephone line, follow it. As a last resort, follow a stream downhill.
   c. Before being caught by darkness, select a sheltered spot and prepare camp, shelter, and firewood. Stay in this camp all night.
2. If you are injured and alone, keep calm. Stay where you are, clear an area down to mineral soil and build a signal fire. Green boughs will create heavy smoke. Someone will find you.
3. Three signals of any kind, either audible or visible, is the nationwide S O S call. Examples are three blasts from a whistle, three shots from a gun, three regulated puffs of smoke or three flashes from a mirror or flashlight. Repeat at regular intervals. If it is recognized by a searching party, it will be answered by two signals. Use it only when in need of help.
4. Notify the county sheriff's office or the Forest Service if a member of your party is believed to be lost or in trouble and you cannot find or assist him. Forest Service officers cooperate with the county officials in rescue work.

*Fishing in the Mt. Margaret backcountry. The lakes yield rainbow, cutthroat, and eastern brook trout.*

## HUNTING AND FISHING

One of the largest elk herds in the State inhabits the forest surrounding Mt. St. Helens. Hunting the spring visitors may see Roosevelt elk along the highway; in the summer, elk move into the Mt. Margaret backcountry.

Black bear are common. These animals frequent the berry patches and may be encountered along trails. They are usually harmless but should not be provoked.

Deer are seen frequently in Spirit Lake Campground and along the highways and Forest roads. Drivers must be alert for deer crossing State Highway 504.

Other animals observed include squirrel, rabbit, otter, beaver, marmot (in the Mt. Margaret backcountry) and bobcat. Cougar range through the country but are rarely seen.

Birds commonly seen include ducks, osprey, eagle, hawks, owls, ruffed and blue grouse, and several species of songbirds.

Spirit Lake is stocked annually with rainbow trout. Occasionally large fish, up to 26 inches and 7 pounds, are taken. St. Helens Lake and Harmony Falls in the backcountry provide good fishing.

Salmon trolls through Spirit Lake each fall. The fish cannot be taken, but are interesting to watch working their way upstream to spawn.

Hunters and fishermen must obey State regulations.

## MT. MARGARET BACKCOUNTRY

If you are interested in flower-studded alpine meadows and turquoise-tinted lakes, you will find such a place just north of Spirit Lake. This backpacker's paradise is in the Mt. Margaret backcountry. Accessible by trail only, this area permits its visitors to spend an enjoyable time away from the hustle and bustle of industrial and urbanized living.

The area has more than a dozen high-mountain lakes varying in size from an acre to over twenty acres. The lakes are separated by steep, rock-crested ridges which are generally timbered with upper forest species. Elevation ranges from approximately 3,500 feet to 5,856 feet at Mt. Margaret. The recreation season here runs from about the first of July through October with the snow pack being the controlling factor.

The main trail into this area starts at Duck Bay, Spirit Lake's public boat launching site. Boundary Trail #1 leads from the east side of the parking lot to Donnybrook Campground. At Donnybrook, Lakes Trail #211 continues around the edge of Spirit Lake, over Bear Pass and into the backcountry area. It is 6.5 miles into the Mt. Margaret Grizzly Lake from Duck Bay. Only Grizzly Lake, Obscurity Lake, and Panhandle Lake have improved camp spots.