

Benton County at a Glance

- The ancestral homelands of the Kalapuya people
- Population: 95,180
- Highest Peak in the Oregon Coast Range: Marys Peak
- Bike-Friendly: The League of American Bicyclists gave Corvallis a gold rating as a Bike-Friendly Community (BFC)
- Cross the Coast Range: the C2C Trail is the only trail that connects the Willamette Valley to Oregon's coast

Using This Map



LEARN MORE
<https://www.visitcorvallis.com>



Sunrise seeps over the confluence of the Marys & Willamette Rivers. © Siomnie LaFollette

This map covers all of Benton County—from the Oregon Coast Range to the pastoral Willamette Valley—and offers a broad overview of the many outdoor activities you can enjoy in the area.

It's useful for trip planning but is not intended to be a detailed trail map. Depending on the type of recreation you're looking for, there is a wealth of information online: trip itineraries, suggested hikes and rides, digital maps, and information on food, drink, and lodging.

We've collected all of these resources on our website. The QR codes on this map—like the one above—will take you there where you can explore each region in depth. Most phone cameras will automatically detect the QR codes and direct you to the appropriate page, no special app or reader is necessary.

And if you're still itching to find the right adventure, you can also learn more about Benton County outings through *The Right Trail* (<http://therighttrail.org/>).

Permits and Passes

Most of the public lands around Benton County are managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Oregon State Parks, or the Siuslaw National Forest.

Some trailheads and day-use areas on these lands are free of charge, while others require a small day-use fee or valid recreation pass. We've noted where fees are required at popular stops, but

contact the appropriate land manager to learn more. Also note that campgrounds generally require a nightly fee.

And if you're hiking the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail, note that some of the forests along the path are privately owned—and that hikers and cyclists must acquire a permit to pass through those lands.

Logistics



One of the countless back roads bisecting the foothills of the Coast Range. © Laine Photography

Getting There

Corvallis sits along the Willamette River in the heart of the Willamette Valley. From downtown, it's about 45 minutes west to the Marys Peak day-use area and 40 minutes southwest to the Alsea Falls Recreation Site.

The area's major transportation corridors are Highway 99W, which runs north-south through Benton County, and Highways 20 and 34—which head west as one highway before forking in the Coast Range foothills. Just east of Corvallis is Interstate 5, which runs north-south through western Oregon. The closest airport is in Eugene, about 45 minutes to the south.

Seasons

Sitting in the shadow of the Coast Range, Benton County boasts a mild climate all year long.

At lower elevations, rain showers are common between October and April. The sun comes out May through September, with summer temperatures typically topping out at 85°F or so, be sure to pack sunscreen and plenty of water.

Snow may fall in the Coast Range as early as November—and can linger into April. Roads at elevation may not be maintained in winter; look up the latest conditions on TripCheck.com.



The Willamette Valley is one of the world's largest hops producers—sample the local terror at the Block 15 Taproom. © Reed Lane Photography



Whether you're seeking a shady river bank or sunny summit, Benton County is home to countless day-use areas. © Reed Lane Photography



Enjoy an afternoon on the course with friends. © Joey Hamilton

Take Care Out There



Slip your canoe into the bucolic Alsea River. © Laine Photography

PREPARE

Plan Ahead
Prepare before you head out, consider what you want to see and experience, your group's physical abilities and what's realistic to do in the time you have. Can you visit off-peak to avoid crowds?

Be Ready
Check conditions. Pack your Ten Essentials. Got the right shoes for the terrain? Water? Cell phone? You may not always have coverage, so take a picture of the trail map or bring one with you. Consider hiring a guide.

Don't Forget
Let someone know where you're headed and when you plan to be back. Tuck some cash in your pocket for park fees (that help maintain our natural spaces).

CARE

Make Smart Choices
Know your limits and when to stop for the day. Follow the signs; they're there to tell you important stuff like how to avoid injuries and not get lost.

Be Respectful
If you're lucky enough to spot wildlife, use your zoom lens and observe from afar. Share trails with others. Know who manages the land you access and what the rules and regulations are.

Keep It Natural
Stay on designated trails and areas to protect the landscape. Don't take anything home but your trash—and please, please take your trash with you. Make wildfire prevention a top priority.

CONNECT

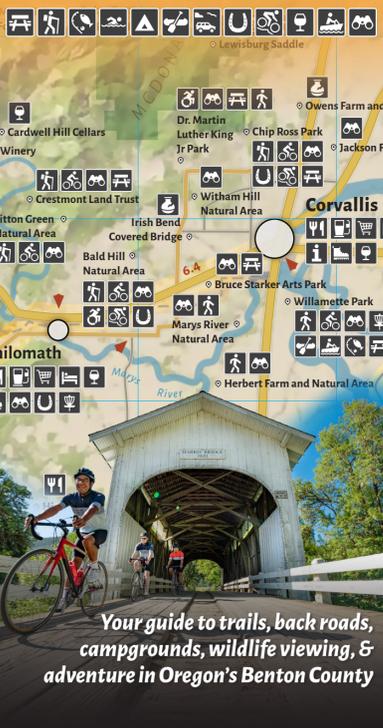
Enjoy Yourself
Experiencing the quiet, awe-inspiring beauty of nature can not only uplift your spirits, it can improve your health. Think of Oregon's vast outdoors as your place to relax and recharge.

Say Hello
Greet fellow adventurers and spark a conversation. Check in at a visitor center, ranger station and/or local business to learn from the locals, grab a map and gather local insight.

Spread Goodwill
Share your knowledge with others if it's helpful. Support the community—eat, drink, shop and stay local. Stop by cultural centers to learn our history and relationship to place.

HEART of the VALLEY

Outdoor Recreation Map



LEGEND

	Accessible		Mountain Bike
	Cabin Rental		Nature Viewing
	Camp		Paddle Sports
	Convenience Store		Powerboating
	Day Use		Quiet Snowsports
	Disc Golf		Restaurant/Bar
	Equestrian		Road & Gravel Bike
	Foraging		Scenic Drives
	Gas Station		Sporting Goods
	Grocery		Swim
	Hike & Backpack		Trailhead
	Historic Site		Visitor Information
	Hunt & Fish		Walk & Run
	Lodging		Winery & Brewery

	Interstate		TRAIL
	U.S. Route		ROUTE
	State Highway		Mileage
	Local Highway		



Welcome to the Heart of the Valley

What does outdoor adventure mean to you? For some of us, it means an epic, multi-day backpacking trip through thick forests. For others, it means a mid-day paddle on a quiet stretch of river. And for some, a day outdoors means an afternoon picnic at the neighborhood park.

However you enjoy the outdoors, we're excited to welcome you to Benton County and Corvallis—in the heart of the Willamette Valley—and share all our region has to offer. Across our county, you'll find rolling hillsides, idyllic farmland, soaring forests, wooded mountains, scenic waterways, verdant parks—basically, the perfect playgrounds for however you'd like to get outside.

There's plenty to choose from—and we'll cover that elsewhere in this map—but we wanted to highlight four of the top outdoor attractions around Benton County. We're loath to play favorites, especially with so much natural wonder around the area, but these are undeniably signature stops for travelers from near and far; consider this our "Outdoor Adventure 101" syllabus.

- Marys Peak:** The tallest peak in the Oregon Coast Range, a mountain range that separates the Willamette Valley from the Pacific Coast, Marys Peak is a regional icon—and is beloved as much for the views from its summit as the recreation opportunities scattered across its forested hillsides and sweeping meadows.

- Alsea Falls Recreation Site:** Take a quick hike to the site's signature waterfall—and then immerse yourself in its many other offerings. Those include hiking paths, mountain bike trails, picnic sites, and a quiet campground—all in the foothills of the Oregon Coast Range.

- Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail:** Our newest backpacking (and bikepacking!) route departs from Corvallis, traverses the Oregon Coast Range, and ends at the Pacific Ocean. Along the way, the 60-mile trail passes through rural communities, family farms, forests, and more.

- Willamette River Water Trail:** The mighty Willamette River ambles northward lazily past downtown Corvallis—and is part of a 187-mile water trail that invites paddlers to enjoy both lazy day trips and multi-day outings throughout the Willamette Valley.

But as big as they are, those experiences just scratch the surface of what Benton County has to offer. We've rounded up some of our favorite sites—popular destinations and local favorites alike—for walking, mountain biking, exploring local history, swimming, picnicking, playing disc golf, and even foraging for wild plants. If you can do it outdoors, chances are good we've covered it here.

You'll also learn about the groups that made this resource possible, how to get around Benton County, how to make the most of each season, which passes and permits you'll need at various attractions, and how to leave the Willamette Valley outdoors better than you find them.

Welcome to Benton County and Corvallis. We can't wait to see you on the trail and in the water.



These Are All Indigenous Lands

The entire lands and waters on which this map is situated are within the territories of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. These are the Tribal nations of whose lands we are a guest on. Visitors, travelers, and locals are encouraged to learn more about both Tribal nations' histories and current endeavors.

You can learn more at <https://www.grandronde.org/> <https://www.ctsi.nsn.us/>

Author Bio: **Luhui Whitebear** (Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation) is an Assistant Professor for the School of Language, Culture, and Society at Oregon State University. She also serves as the Center Director of the Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws on the Corvallis campus.



MARYS PEAK



On a clear day, look to the west from just about anywhere in Corvallis, and you'll spy the 4,097-foot-tall Marys Peak towering over the rest of the Oregon Coast Range. That prominence—Marys Peak is, after all, the tallest peak in the range—makes it a regional icon and a year-round destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

So whether you want to hike through its wide-open meadows, mountain bike its forested slopes, or even drive to a day-use area just below the summit, here are a few ideas for making the most of your next visit to Marys Peak.

- Scenic Driving:** In spring, summer, and fall, the accessible Marys Peak Road ascends to a dramatic day-use area just below the mountain's summit. Enjoy views that extend east toward the Willamette Valley and Cascade Range—or look west into the heart of the Oregon Coast Range. From the parking area, eager hikers can ascend a quick trail to the summit, where—on a clear day—westward views include the Pacific Ocean.
- Hiking:** The quick Summit Trail may offer an easy path to epic views, but it's just one part of an

winding Marys Peak Road—and rewarding themselves with breathtaking views at the road's end.

- Camping:** A handful of rustic tent sites (available on a first-come, first-served basis between May and October) sit amongst a forest of fir and cedar trees on the northern slopes of Marys Peak.

- Nature Viewing:** Marys Peak is a designated *Scenic Botanical Area*. In late spring and early summer, dozens of species of colorful wildflowers dot the open meadows on the slopes of Marys Peak—including purple penstemon, yellow glacier lily, red Indian paintbrush, and more. The meadows are a sensitive area—please enjoy with your eyes and refrain from picking wildflowers.

- Snowshoeing and Cross-country Skiing:** When the snow falls on Marys Peak, a whole new world of outdoor opportunities awaits. Marys Peak Road isn't maintained in winter, making the upper stretch accessible to cross-country skiers; just keep in mind that you may share the road with capable vehicles that can still drive to the day-use area. Away from the road, snowshoers love the challenge of ascending through windy old-growth forests.

Before heading out, keep in mind that there is a day-use fee at Marys Peak—contact the Siuslaw National Forest for more information.

After a day of outdoor fun, stop into Philomath for a well-earned bite and a beer. The Dizzy Hen is acclaimed for locally sourced breakfast and lunch dishes. Gathering Together Farm hosts an on-site market that spotlights locally sourced ingredients and a restaurant that dishes Pacific Northwest-inspired fare, and Dirt Road Brewing pours an eclectic tap list of creative ales and lagers in a comfortable taproom.

Place of Spiritual Power

Chantimaw, also known as Marys Peak, is not just the highest peak in the Coast Range. It is also a "place of spiritual power" to the local Indigenous People, as its name in the Kalapuya language indicates. Since time immemorial, the Kalapuya, Wus'in (Alsea), Yaquin (Yaquina), Siletz, and other local Tribal people have recognized, and continue to recognize, the power of Chantimaw as a sacred place. Visitors can honor the significance of this area by treating the lands, waters, plants, and animals with respect as they spend time at Marys Peak. Historically, the mountain also served as a space of refuge for Kalapuya people when the great floods filled the Willamette Valley with over 400 feet of water. Most recently, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians worked with the Marys Peak Alliance to name many of the creeks on the mountain in an effort to help return Indigenous place names to the area. You can find creek names in Kalapuya, Wus'in, and Yaquin languages. As we hike and appreciate the beautiful views offered from Marys Peak, we must recognize our privilege of being able to have this sacred area protected and shared in current times.

CORVALLIS-TO-THE-SEA TRAIL



When it opened in early 2021, the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail was the culmination of nearly 50 years of work to connect the Willamette Valley and the Oregon Coast with a long-distance hiking trail.

Today, the 60-mile trail begins near downtown Corvallis and, on its way to the coast, stitches together city streets, rural roads, logging roads, and—of course—many single-track paths through the Oregon Coast Range. Springtime wildflowers dot the path, and wildlife sightings (from migrating waterfowl to black bears) aren't uncommon.

Interested in checking out some (or all) of the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail? Here's a bit about what to expect along your hike but don't forget to peruse the website (ccztrail.org) as well.

- Scenery:** The rich scenery begins at the trail's eastern terminus—at the confluence of the Willamette and Marys rivers near the southern edge of downtown Corvallis—and doesn't get any less beautiful. You'll pass quiet creeks, young forests of fir and cedar, family farms, and more—and that's to say nothing of the trail's western endpoint at the stunning Oregon Coast.

- Different types of trail:** Given the patchwork nature of the path, it's no surprise you'll cover a variety of trail surfaces—including gravel logging roads, rural paved roads, dirt-covered Forest Service roads, single-track dirt trails, paved paths, and more. Even with the disparate surfaces, the trail is remarkably well-signed.

- Cycling:** Yes, it's possible to bike the entirety of the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail—though doing so requires a bicycle that can handle paved, gravel, and dirt surfaces. Still, with the right bike, it's possible to ride to the coast in a single day, or enjoy the scenery with an overnight stop at Big Elk Campground in the Oregon Coast Range to rest and recharge. Just be sure to check on seasonal closures, and do a little research on alternate routes where bikes aren't allowed on the trail before heading out.

Back in Corvallis, celebrate your day hike, overnight outing, or successful cycling trip with a locally crafted refreshment. Just south of town, the veteran-led 4 Spirits Distillery crafts a creative mix of small-batch spirits (including a habanero spiced rum) while supporting regional veteran



ALSEA FALLS RECREATION SITE



Sitting along the South Fork Alsea River in the foothills of the Oregon Coast Range, the Alsea Falls Recreation Site has a bit of everything for outdoor enthusiasts of all stripes—from opportunities to splash about in the chilly river to overnight outings in a popular campground.

Here's a quick breakdown of what to expect at the site:

- Waterfall viewing:** It only makes sense to start with the site's namesake waterfall. Alsea Falls might only tumble 30 feet, but that sells short the magic of seeing it cascade over smooth rocks in the river—which creates a staircase-like flow that's unique among waterfalls in the region. A short path from the day-use area leads to a viewpoint at the base of Alsea Falls.
- Hiking:** Still need your waterfall fix? Set out on the Alsea Falls and Green Peak Falls loop hike—which can range from four to six miles, depending on what you're up for. The hike heads through a mossy forest of Douglas fir, maple, and alder—and includes views of the 45-foot Green Peak Falls.

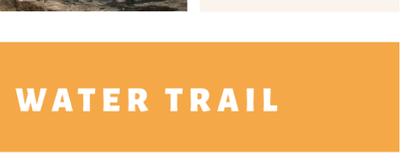
drinking water, and vault toilets. Reservations are available online (www.recreation.gov).

- Foraging:** If you're making dinner back at your campsite, the forests around Alsea Falls are an excellent place to forage for fresh huckleberries in late summer and mushrooms in fall; just be sure you have the proper permits, read up on requirements for foraging on BLM land, and be able to positively identify edible mushrooms and berries.

- Mountain biking:** Away from the popular waterfall and day-use area, the Falls Creek Trailhead hosts several downhill, flow-style mountain bike trails that challenge riders with rolling terrain, berms, rock gardens, hips, rock chutes, banked turns, and exposed roots.

Marker of Place

Alsea Falls, located on the South Fork of the Alsea River, holds much beauty and history in connection to the local Indigenous People. The Wus'in (Alsea) people are known to have lived from along the Alsea River to the Yachats area of the Pacific Coast. Through acts of Congress and treaties signed between 1853-55, coastal Tribes were removed from their traditional areas and villages to the Coast Reservation, then to the Siletz Agency to open lands for settlement. The Wus'in people were part of the Indigenous Peoples that were impacted by these removals and are now primarily part of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. The Wus'in people, and Kalapuya people from the Willamette Valley, would have frequented the Alsea Falls area following the river systems for travel and trade. The falls offer a marker along the river for travel as well as cultural significance. As we enjoy the sounds of the falls and the trickle of the streams flowing into the river system, it is important to remember that these histories are also carried along this area and with the Tribal nations the Wus'in people are now a part of.



WILLAMETTE RIVER WATER TRAIL



Corvallis sits along the 187-mile-long Willamette River Water Trail, which follows its namesake river as it twists and turns through the Willamette Valley before emptying into the Columbia River near Portland.

Along the way, it passes through towering forests, peaceful farmland, wetlands, and even a few urban areas—including the heart of Corvallis.

The water trail traces its roots to the 1960s, when the idea of creating a continuous park along the banks of the river was first discussed. The plan never came to pass, but the seeds were planted. As the 1980s unfolded, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department began acquiring parcels of land and laid the groundwork for the eventual trail.

Today, the Willamette River Water Trail covers the mainstem Willamette River, as well as the Coast Fork Willamette, Middle Fork Willamette, and the McKenzie rivers—allowing paddlers to enjoy easy day trips or longer overnight outings, thanks to campsites in meadows, islands, former farms, and other parcels of land. (And if you're wondering what exactly a water trail is, think of it like a hiking trail—only one you paddle, rather than walk.)

Overnight outings: In all, more than 50 campsites line the banks and islands of the Willamette River—making it possible for intrepid paddlers to string together an overnight or multi-day trip.

Check out the full breakdown of campsites on the official Willamette River Water Trail website (www.willametterwater-trail.org) to start planning your trip today.

- Wildlife sightings:** Far from the highways, hustle, and bustle of the Willamette Valley, you may spot a mind-boggling number of wildlife species—even on a quick, half-day paddle. Depending on the season, you may see western pond turtles, black-tailed deer, beaver, osprey, otters, and more.

- Easy gear rentals:** No gear? No problem! Several outfitters call Corvallis home—including Peak Sports, which boasts a well-stocked rental inventory that can help you comfortably get on the water in no time.

After a peaceful day on the water, keep the relaxing vibes going with a trip to some of Benton County's celebrated wineries. The tasting room at Lumos Wine Co. sits in a converted barn atop the winery's vineyard, boasting views of Marys Peak and the Oregon Coast Range—the perfect setting to enjoy Lumos' selection of acclaimed varietals. Since opening in 2003, Cardwell Hill Cellars has earned plaudits for sustainable agricultural practices and a selection



This map wouldn't have been possible without input from (and collaboration among) a variety of groups working to boost the outdoor opportunities around Benton County—including Visit Corvallis and the Willamette Valley Visitors Association.

RECREATING IN BENTON COUNTY

We've covered a few highlights elsewhere in this map, but the fun doesn't stop there. Here's a look at the wide range of outdoor recreation around Benton County.



Get a feel for late-19th century life at Owen's Farm Natural Area, home to a historic farmhouse, barn, and schoolhouse that date back to the 1850s. Take time to marvel at the area's oak savanna, the likes of which once covered the Willamette Valley.

Bezell Memorial Forest and Education Center, meanwhile, is one of Benton County's newest parks—and offers an exciting look at the area's past with hiking trails and tours of the historic Plunkett family barn.

Dozens of miles of walking and running trails offer access to all corners of Benton County.

Crestmont Land Trust boasts several trails through towering forests, oak savannas, sweeping meadows, and other scenic ecosystems. And in Corvallis, Willamette Park and Natural Area (the city's largest park) hosts walking and running trails alongside the scenic Willamette River.

And just a short drive from Corvallis, the McDonald and Dunn Research Forests—both used for Oregon State University research—offer several miles of well-graded paths for hikers and trail runners.

The university's Peavy Arboretum is another popular spot to stop and stretch your legs—boasting a 30-mile system of trails through forests of sequoia and western red cedar, fields of purple camas blooms in spring, and more.

Along the Willamette River, meanwhile, Hyak Park hosts a boat ramp and moorage, along with excellent river views and wheelchair-accessible amenities.

Elsewhere, Fittin Green Natural Area hosts more than 16 miles of dog-friendly hiking trails through oak savanna, upland prairie, and wetlands.

Of course, the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail is the region's premier backpacking route; the 60-mile trail begins in downtown Corvallis, traverses the Oregon Coast Range, and ends at Ona Beach.

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Historic Sites

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Walk & Run

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