

Eugene to Pacific Crest Trail



The corridor of the Middle Fork of the Willamette has been an obvious transportation route for more years than any of us remembers. In 1855 Lieut R.S. Williamson camped on Butte Disappointment, also known as Lowell Butte, while surveying the western United States. Williamson was examining this area to put a railroad in to the Pacific. This survey party came only two years after the first wagon train attempt was made through the upper Willamette Valley. Prior to that valiant effort, Native Americans had been using it for perhaps 8,000 years.

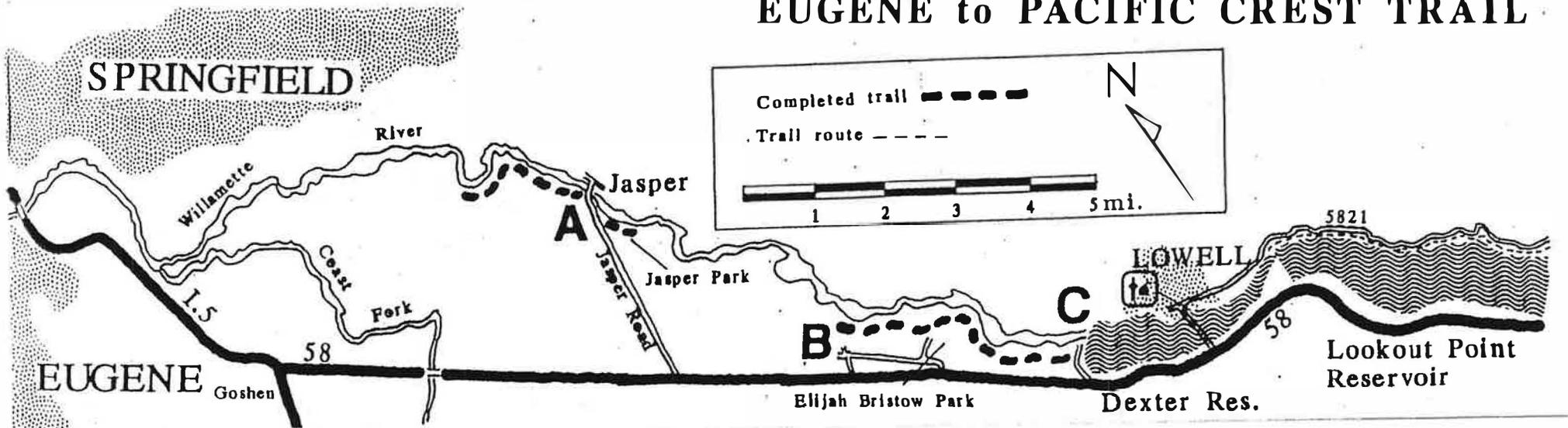
The Eugene to the Pacific Crest trail (E-PCT) is a latecomer, but it permits the traveler to make the journey by very traditional means. This walking and horse trail is part of a network of trails proposed by the Oregon State Parks Division in the 1970's.

The route rises from 400 feet at Eugene to 5,500 feet where it joins the Pacific Crest Trail. It goes alongside the Willamette River and other streams for many miles and passes numerous lakes, mountains and meadows. Along the way are many junctions with other trails. The E-PCT is intended to permit the walker or horseback rider to make day trips or extended journeys from population centers, beginning on his or her doorstep.

Much work of all kinds (digging, brushing and politicking) remains to be done. The reader is invited to contact the USDA Forest Service or the Sierra and Obsidian Clubs to enlist in the work.



EUGENE to PACIFIC CREST TRAIL



Trail descriptions are keyed to the capital letters on the map. Mileage in parenthesis is given from the junction of Highway 58 and Interstate 5 at Goshen.

A.

Jasper: Leave Highway 58 at Jasper Road junction (6 miles). Go north from Highway 58 to the river, 2.7 miles from Highway 58. The "Logjam" segment begins at the south bridge approach. The Jasper Park segment is reached by the access road from Jasper Road, 0.5 mile south of the bridge. Both segments are right on the bank of the Willamette, with the charm of the riparian environment.

B.

Elijah Bristow Park: The park is reached via either Rattlesnack Road (8.8 miles) or Wheeler Road (9.7 miles). As the park crosses Lost Creek the access trail begins on the north bank of Lost Creek. You may also join the trail by continuing to the parking lot and walking toward the river. This segment goes from the mouth of Lost Creek to the foot of Dexter Dam. High water sometimes submerges parts of the trail.

C.

Dexter Park: This access point is the eastern end of the Elijah Bristow segment (above). Leave Highway 58 at the road to Dexter Park (11.4 miles). Bear left on the park road and you reach the base of Dexter Dam, where the trail comes up from Elijah Bristow Park. This portion is on the right of way administered by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

D.

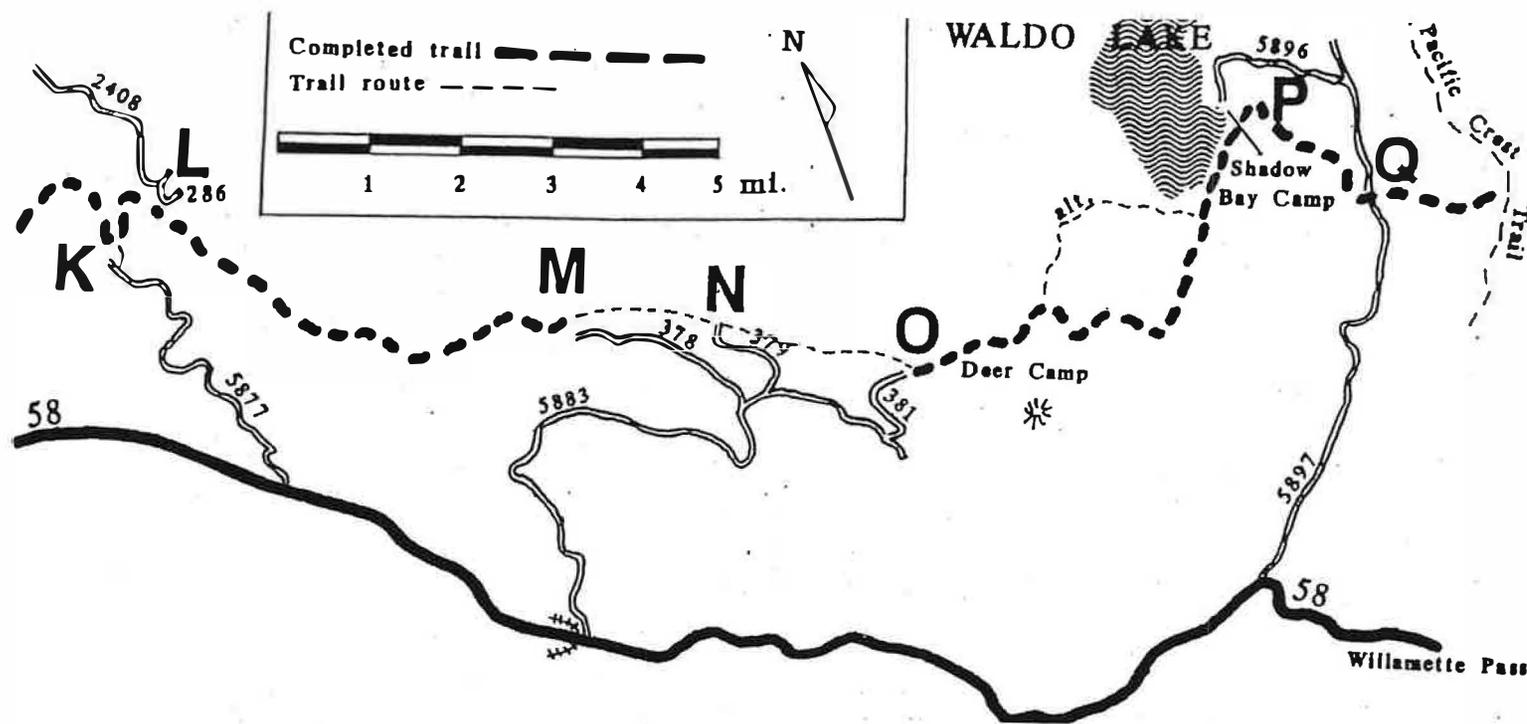
West Boundary: Leave Highway 58 at Lowell Jct. (13.5 miles). Turn right onto West Boundary Road (North Shore). 12.7 miles from the highway, turn left on Road #5823. Continue on road for 4 miles till you reach the trailhead in saddle. This is the resurrected Winberry Divide Trail.

E.

Tire Mountain Trailhead: Leave Highway 58 at Lowell Jct. (13.5 miles). Turn right on West Boundary Road (North Shore). 13.6 miles from the highway turn left on Road #5824. Continue 4.5 miles, then 0.5 miles on #124 brings you to trailhead. The trail climbs a dissected ridge over several bridges to spur leading to 4330' Tire Mtn. Just past Tire Mtn. spur the trail traverses meadows that are the site of an ancient volcano. The trail merges with the Alpine Trail and turns south.

F.

Buckhead Saddle: Leave Highway 58 at Westfir Jct. (31.7 miles) opposite Middle Fork Ranger Station. Go through Westfir and along the North Fork for 5.1 miles to jct. with road #1910. Continue for 5.5 miles to jct. with #683 and continue for 1.9 miles to trailhead in saddle. This site is an ancient camping spot with a spring just up the road (treat water). An old Forest Service trail shelter once occupied the spot. Descent to Westfir is very attractive, with many views of high cascades.



M.

Big Bunchgrass Meadow: Leave Highway 58 to left at Eagle Creek Road (50.8 miles) just after passing under RR viaduct. Go up Road #5883 for 5.5 miles to Road #378 on left. Go 2.5 miles northwest to dead end and trailhead. This rather steep access trail reaches Big Bunchgrass Meadow in about ¼ mile. The E-PCT Trail route traverses the large meadowland (follow the "X" sign boards). You may go westward 6 miles to Little Bunchgrass Meadow, but the trail is not completed from this point eastward. Big Bunchgrass Meadow is a special place for views and historical associations with the sheep herding of an earlier era. A variable source of water is found at dead end of Road #378 (always treat water before use).

N.

Eagle Camp Trailhead: Leave Highway 58 at Eagle Creek Road as in M above. Go up Road #5883 for 6 miles to jct. with Road #379 to left. Climb up to ridgetop on #379, in 1 mile. You can go west and east from this point for a few miles, but trail is not finished in either direction. Historic Eagle Camp was just south of jct. of #5883 and #379 on trail to Mt. David Douglas.

O.

High Divide Trailhead: Leave Highway 58 at Eagle Creek Road as in M above.

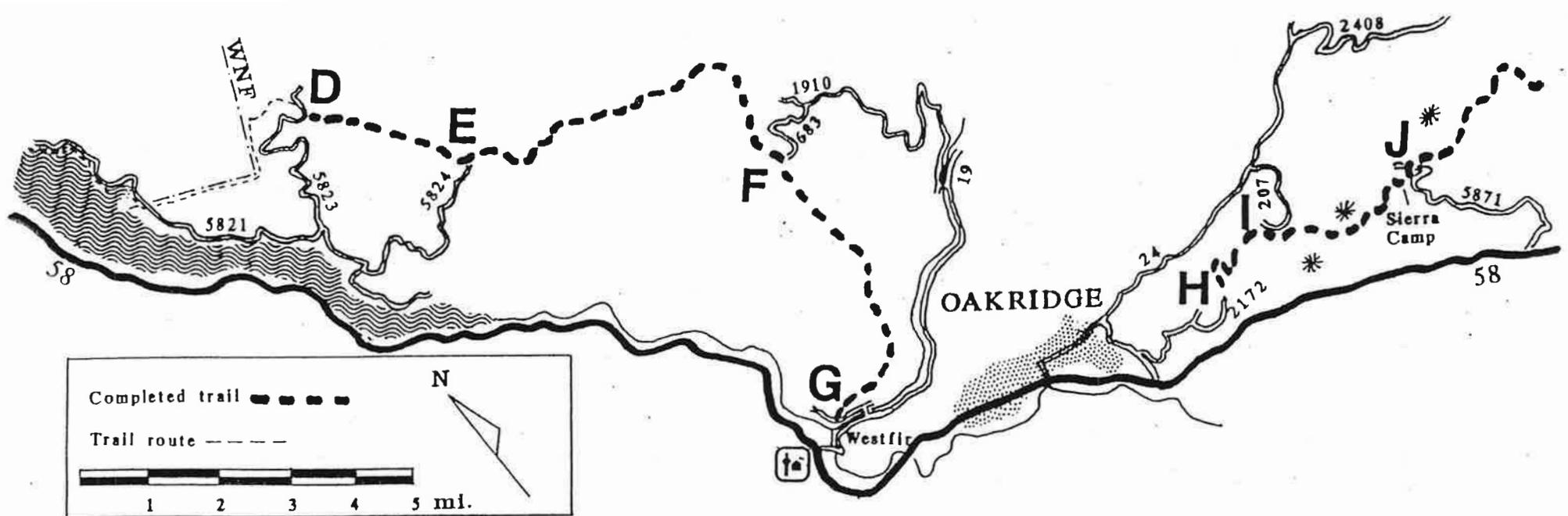
Go up Road #5883 for 7.2 miles to jct. with Road #381. Go north for 1 mile to dead end in clearcut. Walk downslope and gradually right until you intercept trail dropping down the ridge to the right. The trail is not finished westward from this point, but it is continuous eastward all the way to the Pacific Crest Trail east of Waldo Lake. This section offers great variety: many small lakes, camp sites, meadows and both easy walking and steep climbs. You have the option of going to South Waldo via Bingo Lake or the preferred route via the meadow at the foot of Fuji Mtn. Upon reaching South Waldo Shelter, the route follows the Waldo Lake perimeter trail to Shadow Bay.

P.

Shadow Bay Campground: Leave Highway 58 at Waldo Lake Road (58.8 miles). Go north on Road #5897 for 6.5 miles to Shadow Bay Campground. At this point you may go west to South Waldo and toward the Bunchgrass Ridge or east to the Pacific Crest Trail via Betty Lake.

Q.

Bobby Lake Trailhead: Leave Highway 58 at Waldo Lake Road (58.8 miles). Go north on Road #5897 for 5.5 miles to Bobby Lake Trailhead on right. A level trail leads through alpine hemlock forest to jct. with the Pacific Crest Trail, a little less than 2 miles from the Waldo Lake Road. Bobby Lake is about ¼ mile beyond the junction.



H.

Aubrey Mountain Trailhead: Leave Highway 58 to left at Fish Hatchery Road, just east of Oakridge (37.5 miles). Go north past mill site to Dunning Road on right. 1.3 miles up Dunning Road turn right onto FS Road #2172. This spur road is graveled for about 0.5 mile; leave car and walk along road until it merges with trail. Trail is steep at beginning until you reach meadow at top of Aubrey Mtn. Trail here is following historic sheepman's route along Bunchgrass Ridge for many miles eastward.

I.

Salmon Creek Trailheads: Leave Highway 58 to left at traffic light in middle of Oakridge (35.9 miles). Cross overpass and turn right through old downtown Oakridge. Continue onto Salmon Creek Road for 4.5 miles from highway to FS Road #207 on right. Road 207 gives access to trail at two points. The first trailhead is 1.7 miles from Salmon Creek Road; then 0.7 miles more takes you to a ridgetop trailhead. You may walk west to Aubrey Mtn. or east along Bunchgrass Ridge. Eastward the trail goes through heavy forest until you reach meadows near Heckletooth Mtn., then later the extensive meadow country beginning as Little Bunchgrass, about 10 miles to the east.

J.

Kwis Kwis Butte: Leave Highway 58 to left at Squaw Butte Road (43.5 miles). Go up Squaw Butte Road (FS #5871) for 4.3 miles to ridge top and trailhead. About ¼ mile to the west is Sierra Camp, a small meadow campsite with water available in

Pepper creek (treat water before using). Heckletooth and Baby Rock Meadows are westward from Sierra Camp. Eastward from Squaw Butte the trail goes through heavy forest until Little Bunchgrass is reached. Trail climbs steeply up the old Owl Cabin Way just west of Little Bunchgrass Meadow.

K.

Owl Cabin Way: Leave Highway 58 to left at Warner Creek Road (47.4 miles). Go up Road #5877 for 5.5 miles to trailhead on right. This old "way trail" goes along a skid road at beginning then climbs sharply to Bunchgrass Ridge. Once you attain the ridge, Little Bunchgrass Meadow is a relatively level walk ½ mile eastward. Water from Warner Creek and potholes to the west make this a potential campsite (treat water before using).

L.

Little Bunchgrass Meadow: Leave Highway 58 to left at light in middle of Oakridge (35.9 miles). Turn right upon crossing overpass, going through old downtown Oakridge. Continue for 6.5 miles from highway to Road #5871 to right. Continue for 2.7 miles to jct. with Road #2408. Continue for 7 miles. On a sweeping curve at that point, go right on spur road for 3/8 mile to trailhead. This trailhead is a few steps from Little Bunchgrass Meadow. The trail goes eastward along the deservedly well known Bunchgrass Ridge. A series of meadows grace the ridge for several miles until you drop into the forest again before climbing back up to Big Bunchgrass Meadow, about 6 miles eastward.