

Chimacum Ridge Community Forest

General Access Policy

Purpose

The General Access Policy for Chimacum Ridge Community Forest (Chimacum Ridge) is designed to ensure safe, inclusive, and sustainable public use while preserving the ecological, cultural, and recreational values of the forest. The policy prioritizes accessibility, environmental conservation, and community engagement.

General Access

- **Operating Hours:** The forest and parking lot will be open to the public during daylight hours. No overnight camping or use is allowed.
- **Occasional Closures:** Certain areas or the entire forest may be closed temporarily for safety reasons (e.g., inclement weather, timber harvest, or hunting activities). These closures will be posted in advance at the forest entrance and on the official website.

Access Points

- **Primary Access:** Public access is provided via the **Valley View Forest** entrance at 1717 Center Road. This main access point will include parking for automobiles, bicycles, horse trailers, and school buses.
- **Secondary Access:** Additional public access may be available through partnerships with local agencies, such as the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), for limited parking at **Egg and I Road**.

Parking and Infrastructure

- The main parking area is intended for day-use visitors only, currently, there is parking space for up to 12 cars, including 1 designated van-accessible space.

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- Future infrastructure improvements may include expanded parking with trailer/bus spaces, horse trailer spaces, entry signage, shelter, benches, and designated rest areas.

Inclusive Access

- **Accessibility:** The forest will include trails and features that meet U.S. Access Board's Outdoor Accessibility Guidelines. Special vehicle access may be arranged for visitors with limited mobility to reach viewpoints and trails.
- **Signage:** Signage at entrances and throughout the forest will be designed to accommodate diverse visitors, featuring clear language, symbols, and potentially multilingual information.

Pavilion Use

- The pavilion is available for general use unless reserved.
- Valid uses for the pavilion include educational activities, Chimacum Ridge sponsored events, publicly-accessible events, and for small family gatherings.
- Reservations of the pavilion for educational programs and planned small gatherings can be requested by submitting a use request form. Use requests will be reviewed and granted in a timely manner.

Permitted Activities

Visitors can enjoy various low-impact recreational and educational activities that are compatible with forest conservation:

- Walking and running
- Cycling - only on designated multi-use trails
- Horseback riding - only on designated multiuse trails
- Dog walking is permitted on-leash and on-trail only
- Wildlife observation, photography, and nature studies
- Foraging in accordance with the Foraging Policy

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Prohibited Activities

- Motorized vehicles including e-bikes (except ADA mobility devices)
- Lighting of fires
- Fireworks
- Smoking and vaping
- Overnight camping
- Firewood, bough, and plant collection
- Littering - pack it in, pack it out, including dog poop
- Use of drones
- Amplification of music and speech (includes cell phone speakers)
- Discharge of firearms
- Unauthorized trail creation or maintenance
- Any activities that disrupt conservation efforts
- Unpermitted commercial use
- Groups larger than 50 people

All Other Activities

All other uses not covered by this policy require prior approval by the Community Forest Manager.

Tribal and Cultural Access

Year-round access will be granted to Indigenous communities for gathering, and for traditional practices in specific areas. These areas will be clearly marked, and public access may be restricted during these activities.

Safety and Emergency Access

Trails will include signage with safety information, emergency contact details, and clear markers to assist emergency services in locating specific areas of the forest.

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Monitoring

Regular monitoring of access points, trails, and visitor activities will ensure compliance with conservation goals. Unauthorized trails will be closed.

Off Trail Use

- Personal exploration on foot of areas of the forest off trail is allowed. Users are asked to be respectful and to minimize any impact to vegetation or soil.
- The creation of unauthorized trails is prohibited.
- To protect habitat, streams, areas under restoration, and nesting or denning areas; sensitive areas will be delineated and access is prohibited unless approved by the Community Forest Manager.

Operational Access

Access for research, for local, state and federal agencies, for operations and maintenance by third-party contractors is allowed after notification to the Community Forest Manager.

Policy Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to allow the Board of Managers to respond to user requests, patterns of usage and other changes in the community forest.