



Map by Ann Gunter.

A pair of pleasant loop options on the Waters Creek Trail

BY EVELYN ROETHER

The Waters Creek gem-of-a-trail offers a short, peaceful walk into a classic Siskiyou Mountains temperate forest. In the late 1990s the US Forest Service used proceeds from an adjacent timber sale to create this beautiful little recreation zone along the headwaters of Waters Creek. The shorter, one-mile, barrier-free trail is wheelchair accessible with a graveled surface and is lined with low wooden rails. The hikers-only trail is somewhat more strenuous with a pleasant rolling single track crossing several seasonal tributaries. Well-worn and

- Elevation gain: Barrier-free loop, zero feet. Hikers-only loop, 553 feet.
- Access: Year-round.
- Map: Onion Mountain USGS Quad.

Directions

From Murphy, take Southside Road south toward Wilderville. Continue 4.2 miles, then go left at the stop sign onto Fish Hatchery Road. After 4.6 miles, turn left onto Redwood Highway. Continue 3.8 miles, then turn right onto Waters Creek Road, which is about one-half mile past the Wonder General Store. Go 2.5 miles up Waters Creek Road, the last 0.6 mile of which is graveled. The trailhead is on your right, a parking area and restroom on the left.

Description

Both trails start as one on the right side of the road and follow Waters Creek upstream, past a wildflower meadow of balsam root and bachelor buttons into a mixed hardwood and conifer forest. A canopy of Douglas fir, canyon live oak, tanoak, white oaks, big-leaf maple, madrone, Pacific dogwood, incense cedar, mountain ash, myrtle, ponderosa pine, and yew provide year-round shade and a sampling of the Siskiyou's immense botanical diversity. An understory of sword fern, ocean spray, and a fair amount of poison oak lines the trail, and towering California ginseng shrouds the streambeds.

After a half mile the trail splits. The signed "hikers only" trail heads up and to the left while the all-access trail continues over the footbridge, looping back down the drainage. The hikers-only trail meanders upstream for about a mile, into the quiet folds of the forest. After crossing numerous seasonal creeks and winding around the flanks of the mountainside, it loops back, joining the Barrier Free Trail down by the main stem of Waters Creek. Follow the trail downstream back to the parking area.

Hiking Trails of the Lower Applegate, a trail guide describing 20 trails in the Lower Applegate area, is available for purchase at the Williams General Store and Takubeh Natural Market in Williams, Provolt Store and Whistling Duck Farm and Store in Provolt, Rebel Heart Books in Jacksonville, Oregon Books and Games in Grants Pass, and Northwest Nature Shop and Bloomsbury Books in Ashland.

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A sign marks the Waters Creek Hiker Trail.



A trillium blooms along the trail.
Photos: Evelyn Roether.

mostly readable interpretive signs along the way inform visitors about the area's natural environment. Both trails offer well-placed benches, some in their own little alcoves.

Waters Creek Trail

- Difficulty: Barrier-free loop, easy. Hikers-only loop, moderately difficult.
- Distance: Barrier-free loop, 1 mile. Hikers-only loop, 3.5 miles.

••• BIZBITS •••

Buttercloud Bakery & Café, a Medford brunch restaurant and bakery, has relocated to a larger building at 315 South Front Street. The new location features

more parking, more seating, more baked goods, and a selection of brunch cocktails. Buttercloud is well known for its biscuit sandwiches piled high with everything from eggs and bacon to beef brisket and roasted zucchini. Bakery specialties include gluten-free cornbread, scones, sticky buns, cake by the slice, and mini cream pies. Owners Ellen and Gibson Holub opened Buttercloud on a shoestring budget in late 2011. Buttercloud's light and buttery biscuit was the inspiration for the name and concept of the restaurant. Open daily from 7 am - 3 pm. 541-973-2336 • buttercloudbakery@gmail.com.



In May 2019 **Casablanca Coffee and Grill** opened a "healthy drive-through" restaurant in the Guild Complex in Grants Pass, Casablanca's third location. Owners



Eric Losoya and Andy Baida use the freshest ingredients available (organic whenever possible); no MSG, trans fat, or hydrogenated oils; and earth-friendly containers. Casablanca makes fruit smoothies from 100 percent fruit with no corn syrup or sugar added and offers top quality, locally roasted, organic coffee and espresso. Open Monday-Friday 7 am - 8 pm, Saturday 8 am

- 8 pm, Sunday 9 am - 5 pm (Union location only). 1883 Williams Highway, Grants Pass, 541-956-4111 • 686 Union Avenue, Grants Pass, 541-479-2831 • 6410 Williams Highway, Murphy • 541-846-3131.

Trinator's Oregon Education Center, the first hemp education facility of its kind on the West Coast, opened in White City in November 2019. In collaboration with OM Extracts, an Applegate Valley, family-owned hemp and cannabis company,



the center provides free educational resources and hands-on exploration of all the post-harvest steps necessary to create hemp buds and concentrates. Dana Mosman, founder of Trinator, said that the Oregon Education Center was developed in response to ongoing questions from growers and

farmers, such as how to properly dry hemp, when and how to buck it, best practices for trimming, how to make rosin, etc. The new facility will showcase the latest equipment to help farmers create the best medicinal hemp and cannabis products. Open by appointment only. For a tour, email Mitra Sticklen, COO of education and cultivation, at education@omextracts.com. 541-654-1007 • omextracts.com.

BizBits highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone.
Email gater@applegater.org.