

Elwha Area

Fish out of Water

For millennia, the Klallam people relied on fish nurtured by the Elwha River watershed. That relationship was largely severed in 1913, when the Elwha Dam was built, blocking fish runs five miles from the river mouth. Glines Canyon Dam was completed upstream in 1927. Though a state law required fish passage, both dams were built without it. Thousands of salmon no longer reached most of the Elwha valley.

But in 1992, Congress passed a law requiring restoration of this watershed and its fish. The federal government purchased the dams and steps leading to removal are underway. Freeing the river will reopen over 70 miles of pristine salmon habitat. Restoration plans call for releasing juvenile salmon in their historical habitat to ensure adult returns. Future visitors should be able to witness fish battling the untamed Elwha River. For details, visit the Elwha River Restoration link at: www.nps.gov/olym.

Elwha Area Information

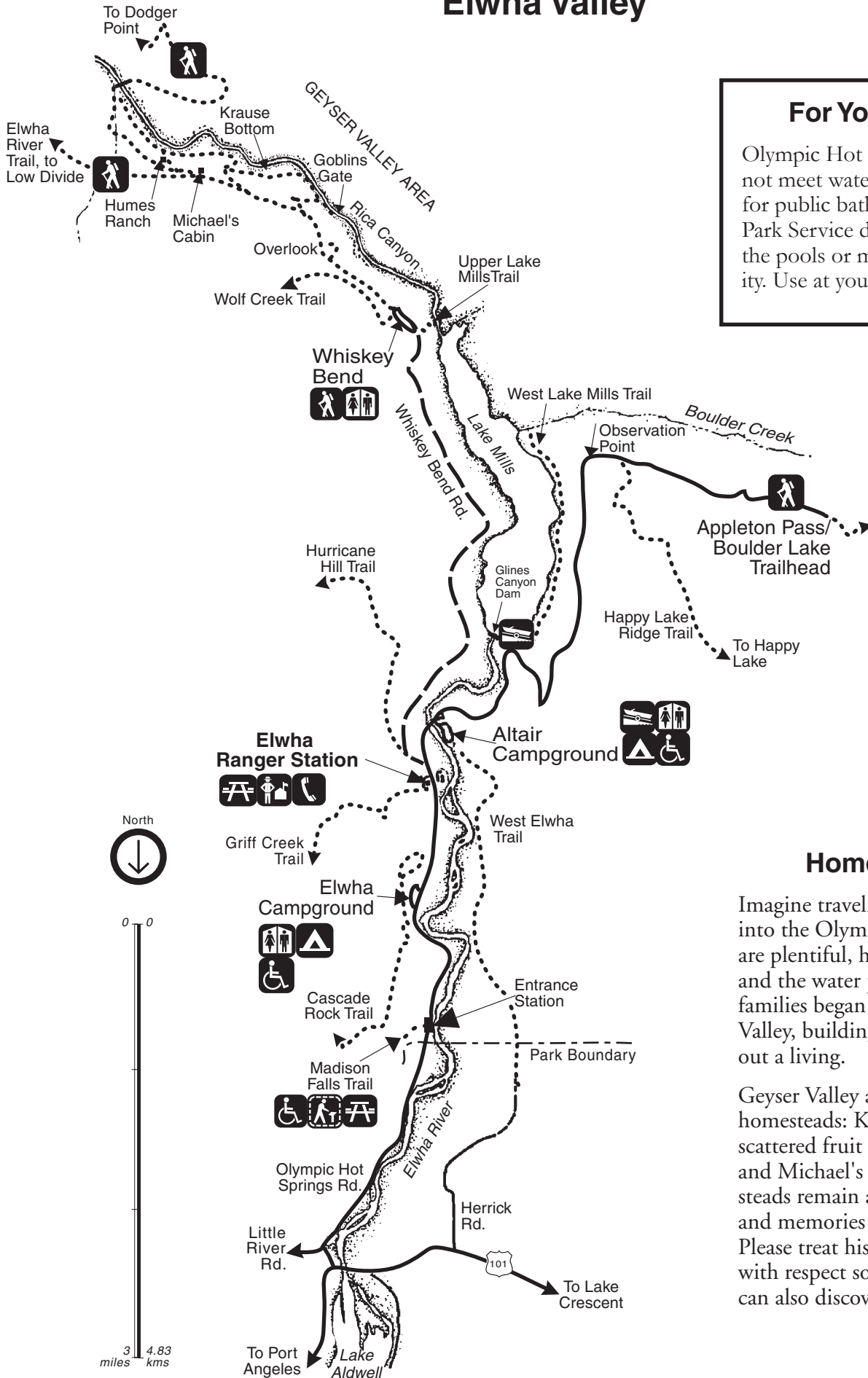
- Facilities:** **Elwha Ranger Station:** self-serve information and wilderness camping permits; staffed intermittently in summer.
- Camping:** **Elwha:** 40 sites (one wheelchair accessible), open year-round (but Nov. thru March: pit toilets, no water.) **Altair:** 30 sites (one wheelchair accessible), open late May thru October. Both have fire pits with grates, picnic tables, animal-proof food storage, accessible toilets, and potable water (summer only).
- Picnic Areas:** **Madison Falls:** tables, accessible vault toilet. **Elwha Ranger Station:** tables 100 yards past ranger station.
- Regulations:** Pets and bicycles are **not** permitted on trails (including trail to Olympic Hot Springs).

Day Hikes Around Elwha

Trail	Description	Miles	Elevation Gain
Madison Falls	Wheelchair accessible, paved trail to a 60 ft. waterfall.	0.1 one way	none
Nature Loop Trail	Forested loop trail from Elwha campground picnic shelter.	0.6 loop	100 ft.
Cascade Rock	Ascends through forest to views of the valley.	2.0 one way	1,300 ft.
Griff Creek	Ascends through forest to views of the valley.	2.9 one way	2,910 ft.
West Lake Mills	Through forest, hugs the west shore of Lake Mills.	1.9 one way	100 ft.
West Elwha	Along forested west bank of Elwha River to Herrick Rd.	3.0 one way	200 ft.
Olympic Hot Springs	Gentle climb through forest to hot springs area. Strong hikers can ascend to Boulder Lake (3.4 more miles one way) or Appleton Pass (5.2 more miles one way).	2.5 one way	300 ft.
Happy Lake Ridge	Steep climb through forest to scenic ridge and lake.	5.0 one way	3,709 ft.
Humes Ranch Loop	Forest loop trail which can be broken down into shorter loops via Krause Bottom or Goblin's Gate.	6.0 loop	500 ft.
Hurricane Hill	Climbs steeply through forest to the top of Hurricane Hill.	6.2 one way	5,360 ft.
Wolf Creek Trail	Climbs to subalpine meadows near Hurricane Ridge.	8.0 one way	3,900 ft.
Upper Lake Mills	Steep descent to the Elwha River above Lake Mills.	0.5 one way	400 ft.



Elwha Valley



For Your Safety!

Olympic Hot Springs water does not meet water quality standards for public bathing. The National Park Service does not maintain the pools or monitor water quality. Use at your own risk.

Homesteaders

Imagine traveling by foot and boat into the Olympic wilderness. Fish are plentiful, hunting is promising, and the water pure. By the 1880s families began settling the Elwha Valley, building homes and carving out a living.

Geyser Valley area trails pass three homesteads: Krause Bottom, with scattered fruit trees, Humes Ranch and Michael's Cabin. These homesteads remain a testament to lives and memories that still linger. Please treat historical structures with respect so future generations can also discover the past.