

It's all uphill through Metzler Park

By Steven Weldon
The Clackamas Print

I'm a city slicker. My forest is among the downtown Portland scene, and my favorite place to view animals in their traditional surroundings is in the Timbers Army at Jeld-Wen Field. I don't know the difference between poison oak and poison ivy, which is why I chose to take on this hike, getting outside of the comfort zone once in a while is important.

Just outside of Estacada is Metzler Park, a Clackamas County campground located five miles from Milo McIver State Park. Metzler provides beautiful scenery and multiple campgrounds, an ideal spot for a quick weekend trip or just an afternoon visit. Park amenities include a river with a swimming hole, fishing access, picnicking areas, horseshoe pits, a volleyball court, basketball hoop, softball field and even a play structure for children.

Also at the spacious park are multiple hiking trails. The first trail is closest to the campground, and provides two options of a short easy hike from the open field area to a small cul-de-sac of campsites or a steep hike that leads about a mile back to the road towards the park. While the short hike is generally flat and



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one direction, the long hike is completely different. As if leading to the top of the forest, the trail shows off the beauty of the Estacada area. The trek feels longer than it actually is, and seems to be

made for a brisk run; reaching the top of the massive hill feels like an accomplishment, and getting down the trail is quite fun.

Across the way, day-use picnic tables sit near Clear

Creek and a bridge that leads to another hiking trail and a swimming hole. This hiking trail is just as steep, about the same length and has more obstacles to traverse. The foliage is in closer quarters and there is less visibility of where the trail leads. The Clear Creek trail does loop around back where the bridge is, which gives a sense of security after wondering where you're going.

Metzler Park trails are a fun way to get exercise and enjoy the outdoors. With the option of staying overnight in the park, it's a good way to spend a nice spring weekend. Be sure to bring \$21 if you do plan to stay overnight, and there is a \$5 parking fee. It was not enforced during the day I

was there, as no park officials were on hand. Beautiful scenery, a challenging hike; what more could you ask for out of Oregon?

Name: Metzler Park
Location: Estacada, via Redland Road to Springwater Road, right on Metzler Park Road
Type: hillside trails
Length: 1+ mile combined trails
Difficulty: moderate to difficult
Equipment: water bottle, insect repellent, sunscreen and closed toed shoes



Top right: A small bridge leads to another hiking trail near Clear Creek.

Left: Thick forestry throughout Metzler park makes the hiking experience serene.

Bottom left: Clear Creek trail leads you to this beautiful stream.



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