



SANTIAM WAGON ROAD

Old growth, history and waterfall at low elevation

Combining history and outstanding hiking, the Santiam Wagon Road from Mountain House to House Rock passes through impressive old-growth Douglas fir forest and passes a waterfall and a large boulder that both Native Americans and American settlers used for shelter.

The hike starts out at a small pullout next to a gated bridge across the South Santiam River. The trailhead would hold about five cars, but don't expect to see many other people. Shortly after you cross the bridge you enter into an almost pure stand of red alder. Pure stands of red alder in this area typically mean there is frequent disturbance that destroys conifer forest.

After traveling for .6 miles you will come to a small step-across creek ford, and not long after at .8 mile you will come to another. Near these step across-fords you will see some very impressive old-growth Douglas fir near the trail. Elk Creek is the next creek you will

cross at mile 1.2 and this will require getting your feet wet. At mile 2.1 you will come to a junction; keep left on the Santiam Wagon Road. You will be returning to the Santiam Wagon Road on this trail after a short loop to House Rock Falls. Near mile 2.4 you will come to a T-junction. Follow this right to reach House Rock Falls. After enjoying the falls, return to this junction. To continue on to House Rock, follow the trail that you have not been on at the T-junction. House Rock is found at mile 2.8. Continue uphill past House Rock to return to the Santiam Wagon Road, turn right to return to the Mountain House trailhead.

House Rock was used by travelers to keep out of the rain. Far from being one of four roadhouses that were once along the Santiam Wagon Road, it served its purpose as emergency shelter.

The Santiam Wagon Road could easily be hiked or biked and be combined with the McKenzie River Trail for a longer experience. ■

HIKE STATS

Directions from Sweet Home: Follow Highway 20 east for 25.5 miles, turn right into the small parking area. The turn is just after a gate along Highway 20.

Trailhead elevation: approximately 1,424 feet.

Hike distance: 5 miles.

Hike type: out and back with short loop to House Rock/House Rock Falls.

Elevation gain: approximately 300 feet.

EVENTS CALENDAR

 Ker Cleary, LPC, BFRP
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EVENTS

ENTRANCING EVENING Relax into guided hypnotic trance for physical, emotional, mental well-being. November group focus: Holiday Self-Care. 11/21/13: 7-8:30. \$10-\$20. Info: Willow Rose CHT: 541 461-5424; www.spirit-well.com.

HOLY SHIT! THE PIE'S IN THE WHIT!

Sweet Potato Pie has moved to 775 Monroe Street - 2 doors down from Sweet Life. Tons of new pie arriving daily! M-Sat 12-7. Sun 12-5

Thurston High School Choir's **HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIRE THANKSGIVING WKND:** Friday Nov. 29, 10am-6pm and Saturday Nov. 30 10am-5pm. FREE admission. 333 N. 58th St., Springfield, OR 97478.

FOR SALE

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Pets

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SHELTER ANIMAL RESOURCE ALLIANCE S.A.R.A.'s Treasures Gift & Thrift Shop. Volunteer, Donate, Shop, **ADOPT!** 871 River Road, Open Daily 10am-6pm. 541-607-8892 sarastreasures.org **LOOK FOR THIS WEEK'S RESCUED CAT.**

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