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The out-and-back section from the hatchery is 4 miles, making the full out-and-back from the campground 7 miles. With so many places to stop and enjoy the creek, this hike could easily be a 3 hour excursion.

A bite to eat

After you've built up an appetite from all that adventuring, grab food at a local eatery. In Westport, stop by The Berry Patch, which serves breakfast, lunch, dinner and of course, pie. The Berry Patch currently offers take-out or dine-in options. Don't leave without a slice of the restaurant's famous huckleberry or marionberry pie.

In Knappa, stop at the intersection off Highway 30. Enjoy a hearty meal at The Logger, open daily. And since there is no

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Photos by Caitlin Seyfried

Big Creek Hatchery.

such thing as too much pie, try one of The Logger's cream pies.

Big Creek Coffeehouse, across the street from The Logger and Knappa Market, serves coffee, sandwiches, salads, and Tillamook ice cream to-go and at a drive-thru window. If pizza and beer is more your style, order a "Knappa Supreme" and hang out in the lounge at Knappa Pizza and Bar.

On a clear day, grab food to-go or pack a picnic and head to Bradley State Scenic Viewpoint, a rest stop with a view. Follow the sign for the entrance, west of Westport on Highway 30. Claim one of the many picnic tables to eat with views of the Columbia River, Puget Island and Cathlamet. The park at the viewpoint is currently closed due to the coronavirus.

Camp out

Gnat Creek Campground is a first-come, first-served site with four available walk-in spots (\$15 a night). Camping here is great for anglers who want to take advantage of nearby fishing holes and those who want to adventure farther into Clatsop State Forest via the Nicolai Mountain OHV Area entrance.

Dispersed camping is also allowed in the Clatsop State Forest, across the highway, from the Nicolai Mountain OHV Area access.

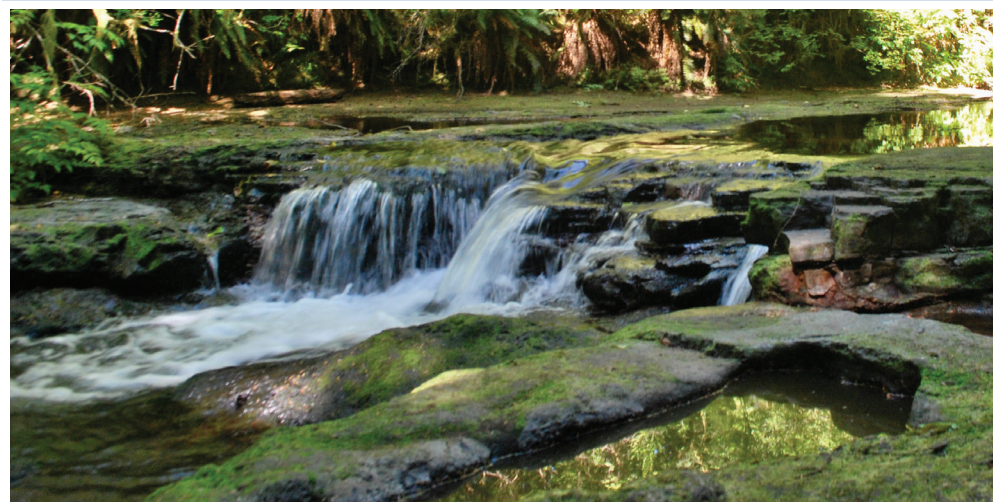
Evening activity: Watch wildlife at Twilight Eagle Sanctuary

BY CAITLIN SEYFRIED

If the sky is cooperating, catch the sunset over the Columbia River on your visit.

One of the best viewpoints is from the Twilight Eagle Sanctuary near Svensen. From Astoria heading east, spot the sign for "Twilight Eagle Sanctuary" on U.S. Highway 30 for the turnoff onto Burnside Loop. On Burnside Loop, drive until you see a wooden lookout platform with informational signs to your left.

Park roadside and hop out to read about the ecology of the Columbia River Estuary, tips for how to spot eagles and information about the Twilight eagle pair that roosts nearby. If you stay a while, you're sure to see some birds and maybe even an eagle.



Barrier Falls.