

Coast Weekend Road Trip

Cathlamet and Skamokawa

BY ALYSSA EVANS

The name “Skamokawa” is a Chinook word meaning “smoke on the water.” In similar nature, “Cathlamet” originates from the Chinook word “calamet,” meaning “stone,” because the town was situated off a rocky river bed.

The two Washington state towns, located about an hour east of the North Coast, are rich in history. Around 1805, the Lewis & Clark Expedition found the two areas, which

were home to the Kathlamet and Wahkiakum tribes.

About 100 years later, both Skamokawa and Cathlamet were recognized as official towns in Washington state. Now, the towns are each home to roughly about 500 residents.

Throughout Cathlamet, Skamokawa and surrounding areas, you’re sure to find remnants of the area’s history. You’ll also find

See Page 9



Brandon Mackley

A deer jumps through a field on Puget Island.

Morning activity: Look for wildlife

BY ALYSSA EVANS

Wildlife watching is a must when visiting Cathlamet and Skamokawa, Washington. Both of the small towns are rich in nature, with many spots to watch birds, deer and other animals.

One of the best spots to watch deer is the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the White-tailed Deer. The refuge honors Hansen, who was the second woman and first Democratic woman elected to Congress from Washington state.

The refuge was established in the 1970s after a small group of white-tailed deer were found in the area. At the time, the deer species was thought to be extinct, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the refuge.

There are a couple ways to access the refuge but the easiest way is heading out of Skamokawa toward Cathlamet. When you see the signs for the refuge, you can pull off, park your car and either sit idly or go for a walk in the refuge. If you’re up for braving the wind, make sure to get a view of the river from the refuge. The view is beautiful on its own but you may also find another critter or two.

Deer can also be viewed among the farmlands on Puget Island. If you’d rather birdwatch, visit Skamokawa Vista Park and Strong Park and Waterfront Trail.



Brandon Mackley

A view of Cathlamet and the Columbia River, seen off Washington State Route 4.



Alyssa Evans

A view of the Columbia River from the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-tailed Deer.