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outdoor recreation and unique places to visit. While you can fit a lot into a day trip, you'll likely want to come back again soon, if not stay a night or two.

Where to explore

Both Cathlamet and Skamokawa are situated off the Columbia River, making for a fun combination of on-land and off-land activities.

How you get to the area will determine how you should spend your time. If you take the Wahkiakum County Ferry from Oregon, you'll start your day at Puget Island, south of Cathlamet. If you drive from the Long Beach, Washington, area (or from western Washington), you might be better off to start your day in Skamokawa.

Once you're in Skamokawa, stop by Skamokawa Vista Park. The park is full of

fun activities to enjoy like lounging at the beach, playing basketball or camping. There also are historical ships available to view.

Farther east into town, pull off the road by the General Store Hotel. The store is worth a stop on its own but even better, you can stop by Skamokawa Gardens next door, which is home to a lively variety of plants. In this same area, you can rent a kayak from Columbia River Kayaking or go hiking in the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the White-tailed Deer. Either activity will be worth your time as you'll see wildlife and nature.

Another worthwhile feature is the Skamokawa Creamery, where you can buy locally-made goat products (and hopefully see some baby goats from afar).

Once you've finished up in Skamokawa,

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Afternoon activity: Park it in a park

BY ALYSSA EVANS

There aren't many parks around Skamokawa and Cathlamet, Washington. But the few that exist are well worth visiting.

If you're in Skamokawa, head over to Skamokawa Vista Park. The park has just about anything you could want — camping, historical monuments, a beach, basketball and volleyball courts, a couple playgrounds and a view of the Columbia River. Day-use of the park costs \$5 and is well worth it. You'll be entertained for hours.

In Cathlamet, choose between Erickson Park or Strong Park and Waterfront Trail. Erickson is a traditional park, with a playground for children to enjoy and some spots for picnicking. Strong Park will give you a bit more of an adventure. You can still picnic or enjoy a view from a bench, but you can also view historical ships and unique features (the park is next to the Wahkiakum County Museum). You can also go for a walk and explore some great views of the Columbia River.



Alyssa Evans

A broken ship, seen from Strong Park and Waterfront Trail.



Alyssa Evans

Birnie Creek is connected to the Columbia River. The creek can be viewed from Strong Park and Waterfront Trail in Cathlamet.