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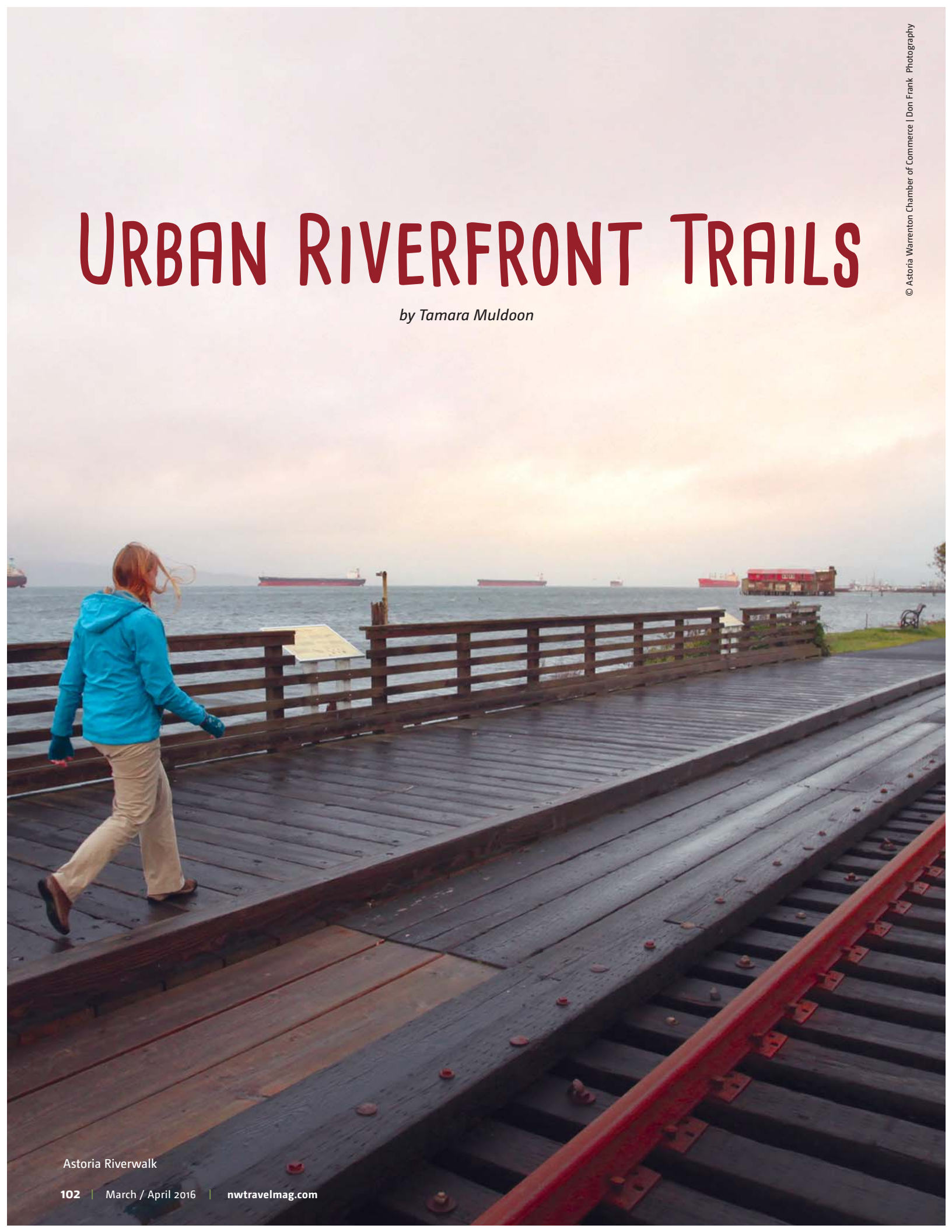
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**MEET OUR
RESIDENT
ORCAS**

URBAN RIVERFRONT TRAILS

by Tamara Muldoon

© Astoria Warrenton Chamber of Commerce | Don Frank Photography





Astoria Riverwalk

I've become reacquainted with an old love—cycling. Once again, I am experiencing that childlike thrill of discovery and adventure while rolling along, wind in my face, exploring some of the Northwest's first-rate bike and pedestrian trails.

It is no coincidence that many of the world's great cities sprang up along rivers, which provide an important natural resource. In some urban areas, defunct waterfront industrial sites and underutilized riparian zones have been transformed into parks and riverside trail systems, such as these favorites.

ASTORIA RIVERWALK, ASTORIA OR

This level paved pathway parallels the south bank of the Columbia River from Port of Astoria's Pier 3 eastward to Lagoon Drive near Tongue Point. You'll find parking and trail access at either end and in the city center. Although Astoria's Riverwalk is only six miles long, there is so much to see in this seaport town that you'll want to take your time and stop often.

This rail-to-trail route shares a right-of-way with a vintage 1913 trolley that carries tourists along the waterfront. The conductor narrates a history of Astoria, America's oldest settlement west of the Rockies. Rent gear at Bikes and Beyond (bikesandbeyond.com), or simply stroll. If you ride the trail, watch out for pedestrians and use caution when crossing the trolley tracks.

Astoria's riverfront teems with activity. Oceangoing freighters, fishing boats and pleasure craft plow to and fro along the river channel. Flocks of seabirds decorate disintegrating pilings, all that remains of former fish cannery piers. Take a break at Pier 39, the trolley's eastern terminus. Refresh yourself at Rogue Public House or Coffee Girl, and don't miss the quirky but fascinating Bumble Bee Cannery museum inside.

See travelastoria.com for details.

RUTH BASCOM RIVERBANK TRAIL, EUGENE OR

I spent a leisurely weekend riding Eugene's popular 12-mile Riverbank Trail, where mostly-level, paved pathways line both banks of the Willamette River, extending from west Eugene to Springfield. Five footbridges connect the east, west, north and south trail sections, creating loop routes of various distances to suit everybody.

This easy, family-friendly trail system is well-marked, with trail map signs at many junction points. Downtown Eugene makes a convenient starting point or lunch stop. Rent bikes at Paul's Bicycle Way of Life (bicycleway.com). You can ride right from the shop to the Riverbank Trail via marked bike paths.

Additional parking and access points along the trail include Springfield's Island Park, and Eugene's Whilamut Natural Area, Alton Baker Park, Delta Ponds, Skinner Butte, Owen Rose Garden and Maurie Jacobs Park.

For more information, visit eugencascadescoast.org.

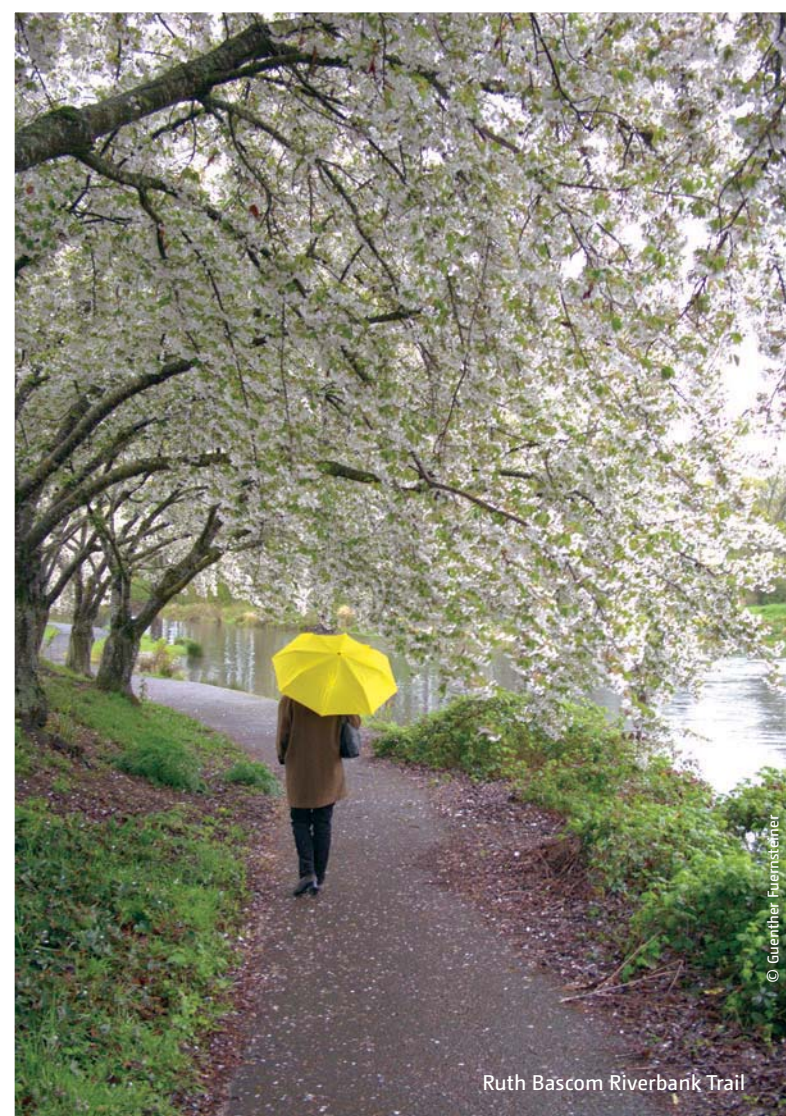
YAKIMA GREENWAY PATH, YAKIMA WA

If you travel to this sunny, Central Washington destination, take time to enjoy the Yakima Greenway Path, a 10-mile, paved trail along the Naches and Yakima Rivers. This nearly-level pathway passes through cottonwood groves, bisects parks and skirts several small lakes popular with fishermen.

Plan an easy out-and-back ride, or stroll the path through Sarg Hubbard Park and Yakima Arboretum. Restrooms and picnic tables are located at frequent intervals, as are benches strategically positioned for admiring scenic views. Youngsters delight in the log fort play structure at McGuire Playground.

An extension of the Greenway Path is underway in the nearby town of Naches, which ultimately will double the trail's length to 20 miles. Only about 3.5 miles of this rail-to-trail project are completed so far, from the Naches railroad depot to Low Road.

Learn more at visityakima.com.



Ruth Bascom Riverbank Trail



Yakima Greenway Trail



Deschutes River Trail at the Old Mill District

© Nate Wyeth | Visit Bend

DESCHUTES RIVER TRAIL, BEND OR

Central Oregon's Deschutes River Trail offers varied terrain for hikers, runners and cyclists. Its five "reaches" extend more than 15 miles. Before hitting the trail, check Bend Park and Recreation's Urban Trail Map at bendparksandrec.org. You can arrange bike rental from The Hub Cyclery (thehubcyclerybend.com).

To the north, the packed gravel surface and few short hills of Awbrey Reach and River Run Reach require some effort to walk or ride, but panoramic views make it worthwhile. Watch for posts sporting trail emblems, which help you stay on the right track. Approaching the city center, paved paths connected by quiet streets characterize Pioneer Reach. The trail passes through several city parks, including Drake Park with aptly-named Mirror Pond, and skirts Bend's lively downtown.

The trail continues through the Old Mill District, a bustling center of restaurants, shopping, entertainment, hotels and recreation outfitters – the perfect hub for your visit. Here, paved paths along both riverbanks, connecting bridges and city parks make this section a family playground. Upriver from Farewell Bend Park, the South Canyon Reach offers a three-mile pedestrian-only loop trail

through a forested canyon along a free-flowing stretch of Deschutes River.

Farther south, a separate section of trail on National Forest land follows the Deschutes River from Meadow Camp picnic area to Dillon Falls, where connecting trails lead to Sunriver Resort or Lava Lands Visitors Center. This single-track trail is recommended for experienced mountain-bike riders due to some rough, technical sections.

Go to visitcentraloregon.com to plan your Bend trail adventure.



Mountain biking the Deschutes River Trail high over the river

© Tamara Muldoon

SAMMAMISH RIVER TRAIL, BOTHELL WA

Stretching nearly 11 miles between Bothell and Redmond, the Sammamish River Trail is among King County's most popular pedestrian and cycling paths. This easy, paved trail follows the bank of the canal-like river through quiet residential areas, city parks and natural areas. Enjoy views of the river, active with waterfowl, and vistas across a broad valley to the Cascade foothills.

Rent bicycles at Bothell Ski & Bike (bikesale.com) located adjacent to the Burke-Gilman Trail, which connects with the Sammamish River Trail at Blythe Park a short distance away. Part of an extensive regional trail system, Sammamish River Trail also connects to Redmond's Bear Creek Trail, Power Line Trail, East Lake Sammamish Trail and others.

Located away from busy highways, and passing through a peaceful river greenway, the Sammamish River Trail provides a pleasant escape from the bustling urban environment. If the spirits lead you, take an off-trail detour at NE 145th Street, where restaurants, a Redhook Brewery and a number of wine tasting rooms can be found, including the well-known Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery.

Check out explorebothell.com to plan your visit. 🚲

Other Northwest Urban Riverfront Trails

- >> **Waterfront Park / Eastbank Esplanade Loop**, Portland, OR, travelportland.com
- >> **River Front Trail**, The Dalles, OR, thedalleschamber.com
- >> **Centennial Trail**, Spokane, WA, visitspokane.com
- >> **Sacagawea Heritage Trail**, Tri-Cities, WA, visittri-cities.com
- >> **Apple Capital Recreation Loop Trail**, Wenatchee, WA, wenatchee.org
- >> **Columbia River Waterfront Renaissance Trail**, Vancouver, WA, visitvancouverusa.com
- >> **Boise River Greenbelt Path**, Boise, ID, boise.org
- >> **Clearwater and Snake River Recreation Trail**, Clarkston, WA & Lewiston, ID, visitcvalley.com



Sammamish River Trail

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