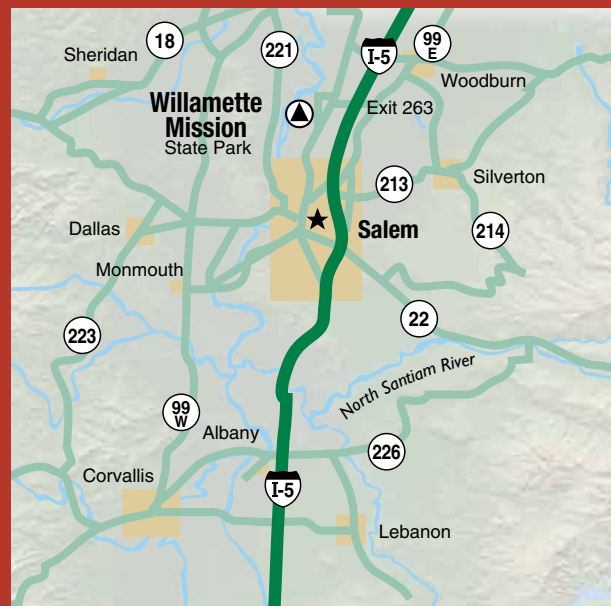


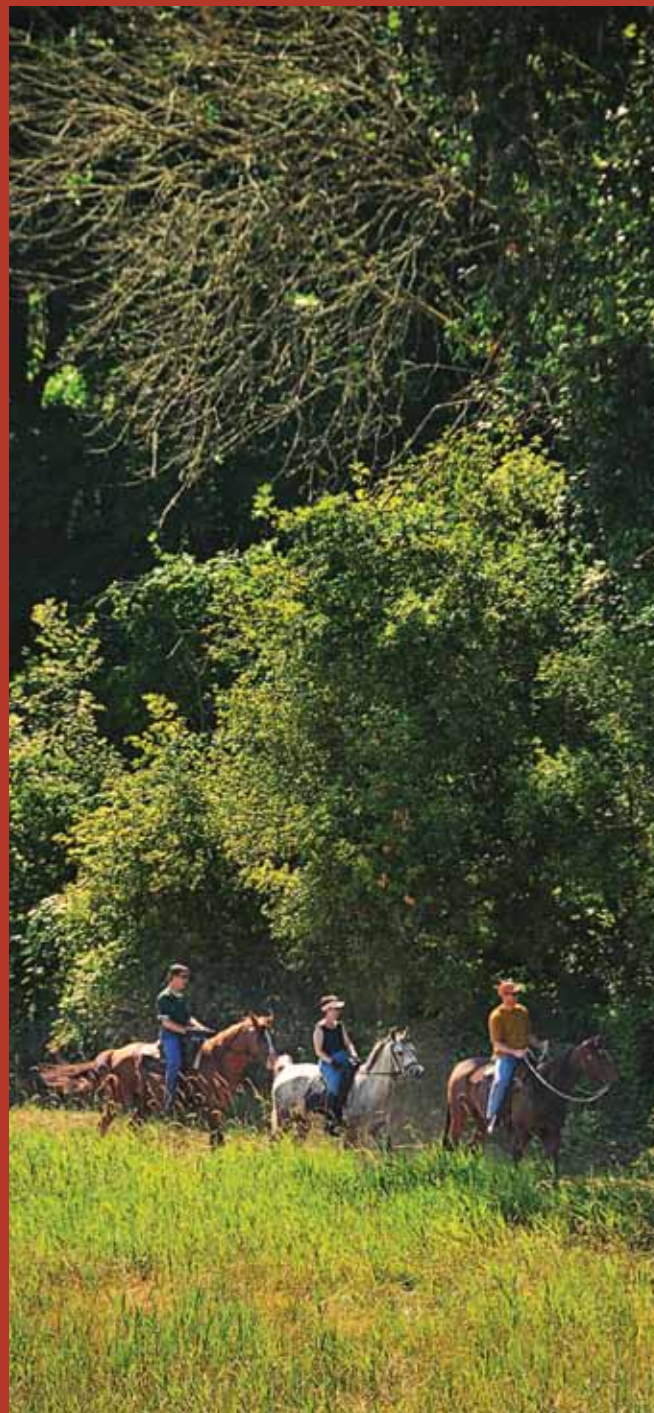
Nestled in the heart of the fertile Willamette Valley, Willamette Mission State Park has more than 1,600 acres of woodlands interspersed with wetlands, rolling meadows and working farmland.

Just eight miles north of Salem and only minutes from I-5, the park's location makes it a convenient retreat for family or corporate outings. Whether your taste leans towards bird watching along the Willamette River, picnicking in a shady walnut or filbert grove, wetting a line or enjoying the scenery from horseback or bicycle, this park has it all.

A day-use parking permit is required. You will need to buy a daily permit at the park entrance, or display a 12-month or 24-month permit.



Willamette Mission State Park



A Park with a Past

This park is on the National Register of Historic Places, and is a great place for history buffs to explore. The park is the site of the former Willamette Mission, established in 1834 by Reverend Jason Lee, who traveled overland from the eastern U.S. to teach the Native Americans in the Oregon Country. Some former French Canadian employees of the Hudson's Bay Company and their families were the only other nearby inhabitants.

When they arrived, the missionaries built a one-room log Mission House to use as a school, chapel, hospital, kitchen and living quarters. A barn was completed soon after, as was a second room in the Mission House. By 1836, the mission was caring for about 20 Native American children, and the farm was becoming self-sufficient.

A small party of reinforcements, including the first white women to enter the Willamette Valley, arrived by ship in May 1837. Among the new arrivals was Anna Maria Pittman, who soon married Jason Lee.

More missionaries arrived in September, and constructed more buildings, including a blacksmith shop, granary and hospital. A combination school and dining hall was added in 1839.



Ghost structure of the old mission

After 1840, Willamette Mission moved from this site on the floodplain to Chemeketa (now Salem). Jason Lee returned to the east in 1844, and died soon after at his birthplace on the Quebec-Vermont border. (In 1906, his

remains were moved to the Lee Mission Cemetery in Salem.)

The great flood of 1861 severely damaged the former mission site and changed the river to its present course. The old channel is now Mission Lake.

Today the old Willamette Mission has been rebuilt as a ghost structure. You can see the structure from the Jason Lee Willamette Mission Monument on the mission trail.



Check out other Oregon State Parks by visiting www.oregonstateparks.org

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Or call 1-800-551-6949 or for the hearing impaired 1-800-735-2900.

All information subject to change without notice.



Mission Lake

Trees, Trails, Wildlife & Camping

The Lakes

The park boasts two oxbow lakes that hold bluegill, crappie, carp and an occasional largemouth bass. Mission Lake has a boat ramp and ADA fishing docks (electric motors only). Fishing Goose Lake requires some trailblazing, but those willing to hike can find some good fishing (bring your float tube). The boat ramp next to Wheatland Ferry at the north end of the park provides access to the Willamette River.

The Trails

- 4 miles of bike paths
- 7 miles of horse trails
- 2½ mile self-guided educational trail
- 1 mile jogging loop

Hikers can use all paths and trails. The bike paths around the Filbert Grove day-use area are accessible to people with disabilities.

Flora and Fauna

This diverse ecosystem ranges from gallery forest of conifer, hardwood, and deciduous trees to farmlands, meadows and wetlands. Look for deer, great blue herons, osprey, ducks, coyotes and raccoons. Two viewing blinds provide vantage points for watching the finches, Canada geese, nuthatches, robins, grosbeaks, and towhees that call Willamette Mission State Park home. Take a walk on the Willamette Vision trail, a 2½-mile self-guided educational trail that winds through acres of riparian plantings and wildlife habitat.

Near the park entrance, visit the beautiful butterfly garden. Please! Take only pictures.

Horseback Riding

The park has four overnight horse camps with corrals, which can handle two groups and four horses each. Water is available. The seven miles of equestrian trails are level and wind in and out of the thick foliage, with views of the Willamette River, Windsor Island Slough, meadows and farmlands.

Call 503-393-1172 for winter closure information.



Equestrian trail



Group picnic area

Group Camping

Camping at the Beaver Island group campsite has room for 100 tent campers, and may be reserved for large groups. Call 1-800-452-5687 for reservations. This is a primitive site.

Private farmers lease part of the park, so you may see corn, beans, filberts or cane berries. This farmland helps maintain a sustainable habitat for wildlife.

The nation's largest Black Cottonwood sits on the shores of Mission Lake. This 265-year-old tree is more than 26 feet in circumference, and stands more than 155 feet tall. It probably started growing around 1735.

History Blooms

Rachel Beardsley Beers, wife of mission blacksmith Alanson Beers, brought with her a cutting of a favorite rose when she came west. She presented it as a wedding gift to Anna and Jason Lee. The roses in Willamette Mission State Park are directly descended from that original start. Today, you can walk to the Jason Lee Willamette Mission Monument and look for the "Mission Rose." These roses are mostly wild now and bloom only once a year. With a little luck, you'll catch a glimpse of a beautiful, subtle violet rose bloom and see the past looking back at you.

Picnicking

Three separate picnic areas offer picnic shelters for large groups of up to 1,000 people. All three areas are reservable, and include volleyball courts and horseshoe pits.

The Willamette River is a short hike from the Filbert Grove day-use area. Turn left where the paved trail T's and look for the large gravel bar. The gravel bar has great skipping stones and families can spend hours skipping rocks.

Fall visitors can gather walnuts or filberts that have dropped. Don't pick them from the trees. They're not ready until they drop.

