

Salmon Watch[®]

NORTH SANTIAM RIVER - PACKSADDLE PARK SALMON WATCH SITE

DIRECTIONS:

The North Santiam River site is located on the north bank of the North Santiam River at Packsaddle Park. To get there from Corvallis, take Highway 20 northeast to Albany and connect with Interstate 5. Head north on Interstate 5 to the junction with Highway 22. Head east on Highway 22 toward Detroit Reservoir, passing through the communities of Stayton, Mill City, then Gates. A short distance east of Gates will be a sign to your right designating the turnoff to Packsaddle Park. Turn slowly as a sharp turn leads you down a switchback to the river shore. The field trip site is the park itself as well as the river bank both upstream and down.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Over 60 miles long, the North Santiam River is a major tributary of the Willamette River. North and South Santiam Rivers meet near Jefferson, east of Highway 99E about five miles North of Albany, just 12 miles from the Willamette confluence. Its headwaters is at Santiam Lake in the southern Marion Lake Basin of Mt. Jefferson Wilderness, Willamette National Forest. Several dams obstruct the flow in the mid-section of the river, the largest forming Detroit Reservoir.

ITEMS OF INTEREST:

A short distance upstream of Packsaddle Park is the fish ladder and trap at Minto Dam. Spring chinook salmon collected at this facility are spawned at Marion Forks Fish Hatchery. Marion Forks is a facility that was intended to mitigate for the loss of habitat available to the salmon due to the construction of Big Cliff and Detroit Dam a few miles upstream of Packsaddle. Neither dam is passable to fish.

REFERENCES:

Gary Galovich, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife