

# Salmon Watch<sup>®</sup>

## Tillamook State Forest

### WILSON RIVER

#### Jones Creek & Cedar Creek

Allow approximately 1.5 hours driving time from downtown Portland.

#### DIRECTIONS:

From Portland take Highway 26 West following the signs to Tillamook. Exit onto Highway 6 and continue for approximately 29 miles (23.5 miles East of Tillamook). Turn right onto North Fork Road toward the Jones Creek Day Use Area & Campground from Highway 6, just past Lee's Camp Store.

#### Jones Creek

Immediately after turning onto North Fork Road, turn left into the first parking area, which is the Jones Creek Day Use Area. This is just East of where Jones Creek meets the Wilson River. Take the trail downstream along the Wilson River for about 10 minutes to reach Jones Creek Bridge. There are multiple picnic sites along the river with ample space for all activities.

#### Cedar Creek

- 1) From the day use area continue up North Fork Road approximately 1.3 miles to where the road makes a broad turn to the North (right) and park in the wide area on the left side of road by the yellow gate. Walk down the power line access road (beyond the gate) approximately 100 yards to your right. This is near the mouth of Cedar Creek, where a large gravel bar, located directly under the power lines, usually has spawning fish. There is a log foot bridge across Cedar Creek at the lower end of a large bedrock pool which also often has fish holding in it. They may be viewed from the bridge or the bank. Caution: The foot bridge is narrow with a single handrail and may be slippery if wet, we do not recommend having students on the bridge.

OR

- 2) Continue on Highway 6 past North Fork Road and turn right into the Tillamook Forest Center. Take the trail behind the center to cross over the bridge and then take the trail Southwest (left) about .7 miles to Cedar Creek.

#### NATURE HIKE/RIPARIAN STUDY

The trail between the Jones Creek Day Use parking area downstream along the Wilson River to Jones Creek offers excellent opportunities for a nature hike or riparian study. Avoid traveling by foot on the main road as there will be truck traffic. Another option for the nature walk is on the ODFW land just upstream from the parking area, across the road. A large floodplain is accessible along the Wilson at this site.

#### SALMON VIEWING:

The Wilson is home to both spring and fall Chinook populations. The fall Chinook run begins in October and peaks in November. Look for salmon from the bridge on North Fork Road over the Wilson and further upstream on the Wilson by crossing North Fork Road from the day use area and following the gated dirt road which travels into a field along the river. If salmon are not present at Jones Creek all activities except salmon viewing may be done at Jones Creek Campground. Allow 30-40 minutes at the end of the day to travel to Cedar Creek for salmon viewing.

#### MACROINVERTEBRATES/WATER QUALITY

Macroinvertebrates will be difficult to find in the Wilson itself due to the lack of gravel bars at the site. You can look for macros in Cedar Creek but try to avoid sampling where fish are working redds. A safe, accessible site for a macroinvertebrate study is at Jones Creek, just upstream from the bridge.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The headwaters of the Wilson River are located in a marshy area south of Brown's Camp on Scoggin's Creek Road. Most of the trees in the forest surrounding the Jones Creek Campground are 35-40 years old. They are trees that were replanted in a massive reforestation project after the Tillamook Burns of 1933, 1939, 1945, and 1951. As a part of those efforts, students planted over 1 million seedlings. For more information about the Tillamook Burn, contact the Oregon Department of Forestry. The Wilson boasts both steelhead and Chinook populations, and the Salmon/Trout Enhancement Program is slated to be placing woody debris in the river to improve habitat.

#### ITEMS OF INTEREST:

During the Flood of 1996, water flowed over the top of the bridge that you drive over to reach the camp, and the high scour marks are still visible.

TILLAMOOK FOREST CENTER: The Tillamook Forest Center has great education displays & exhibits. If you are able to build an extra 45 minutes of time into your field trip, it is worth a visit.

#### REFERENCES:

Fishing in Oregon; Eighth Edition, by Madelynne Diness Sheehan and Dan Casali. Flying Pencil Publications, Portland. 1995.

#### CONTACTS:

Oregon Department of Forestry: Diane Vanderzanden & Clyde Zeller 503-359-7494

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#### MEDICAL FACILITIES IN THE AREA:

Tillamook County Hospital 1000 3rd St. Tillamook OR 503-842-4444