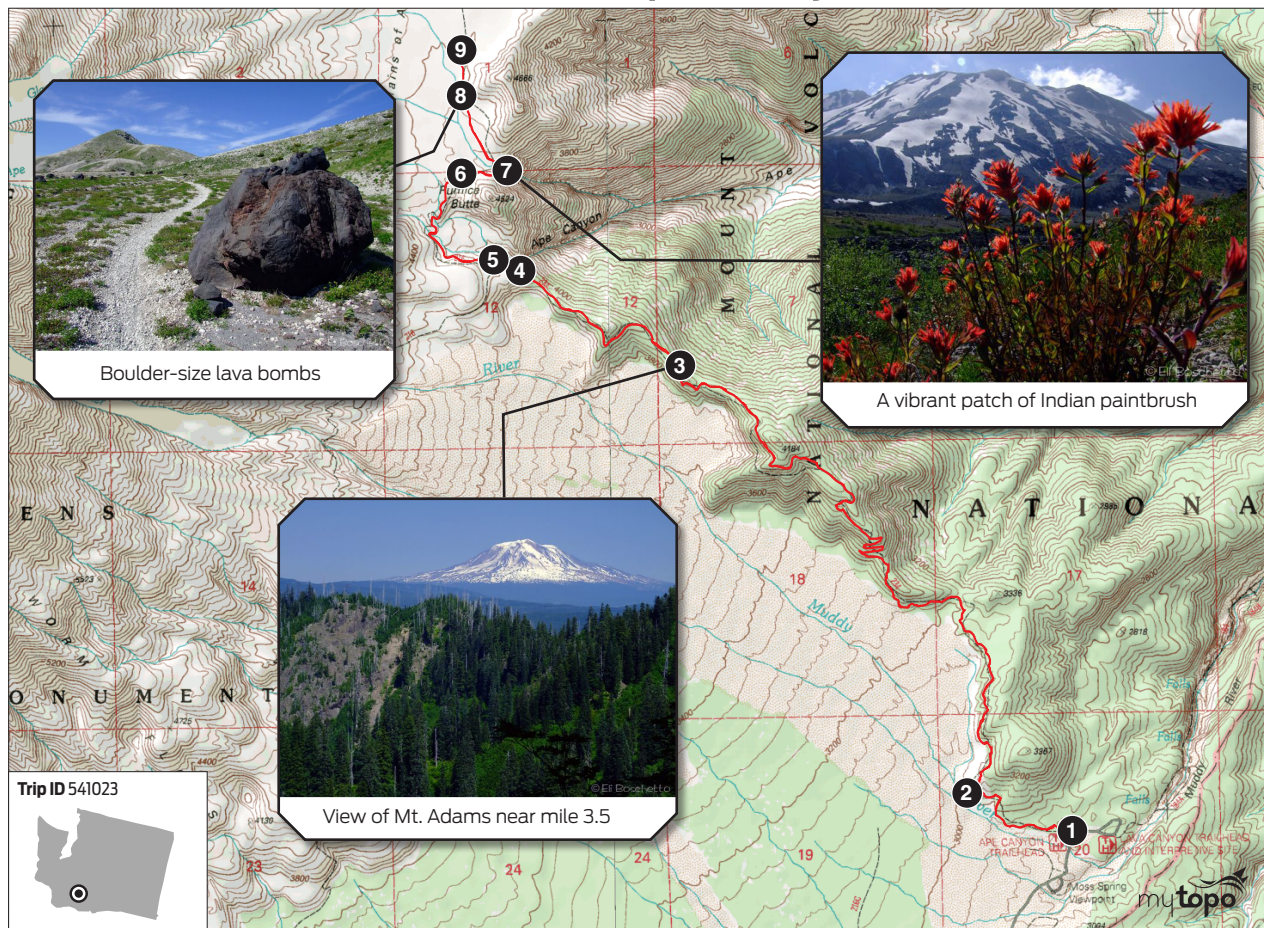


Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument: Ape Canyon

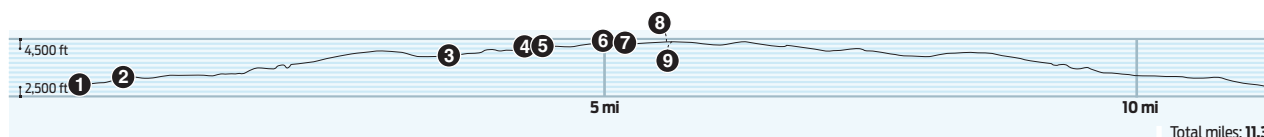


Do it

Traverse the eastern flanks of the most active volcano in the Cascades on this 11.3-mile (round-trip) dayhike in Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. You'll encounter tufts of vibrant wildflowers and postcard views of Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams.

	MILE	DIRECTIONS	UTM (ZONE 10T)
1	0	From the Ape Canyon trailhead, hike west into second-growth maple and alder forest.	0570078E 5112825N
2	.5	A short spur leads to a lookout over the mile-wide lahar, a mudflow of volcanic fragments.	0569525E 5113085N
3	3.5	Ridge views start to open to the east showcasing 12,276-foot Mt. Adams and 14,411-foot Mt. Rainier.	0567794E 5115598N
4	4.3	Look down into Ape Canyon, a pinched gorges flanked by 100-foot-high rock walls. Continue northwest.	0566898E 5116120N
5	4.4	Turn right at the 3-way junction with Loowit Trail. In .2 mile, the trail curves north toward Pumice Butte.	0566750E 5116153N
6	5.1	Stay on course by connecting the four-foot-high rock cairns through the Plains of Abraham.	0566540E 5116658N
7	5.2	This wildflower-filled oasis, on the brink of a cliff, adds a splash of color to the stark pumice plains.	0566787E 5116670N
8	5.6	Skirt the giant lava bombs scattered along the trail. These rocks resemble erratics left by passing glaciers.	0566578E 5117226N
9	5.6	Turn around at the river of rocks roughly 250 feet past WPT 8. The return trip descends 1,500 feet.	0566562E 5117305N

Elevation Profile



BACKPACKER **Ape Canyon**

Plan it

MAPS USGS quads: *Smith Creek Butte* and *Mt. Saint Helens* (\$8 each, store.usgs.gov).

GUIDEBOOK *Mt. St. Helens: A Guide to Exploring the Great Outdoors*, by Fred Barstad (\$16, falcon.com)

PERMITS Northwest Forest Pass required (\$5 per day; fs.fed.us/gpnf/04passes/)

CONDITIONS For closures, snow levels, and trail work, check fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/current-conditions/trails.shtml. For current weather, check fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/current-conditions/weather.shtml.

CONTACT 42218 N.E. Yale Bridge Rd., Amboy, WA 98601, (360) 449-7800, fs.fed.us/gpnf/mshnvm/

GPS DATA Download tracks and waypoints, order topos, and view more photos at backpacker.com/hikes/541023.

Dayhiking gear list

Wear

- Synthetic T-shirt
- Synthetic shorts or pants
- Synthetic undies
- Wool hiking socks
- Sunglasses
- Hiking shoes or boots
- Sunscreen (SPF 15+)

Pack

- Daypack
- Midweight synthetic or fleece long-sleeve top

- Wool or fleece hat
- Waterproof/breathable jacket and pants
- Map, compass, GPS unit
- Water containers and water treatment
- First-aid kit
- Extra food and snacks
- Firestarting kit
- Lightweight gloves
- Extra pair of socks (optional)
- TP and trowel



- Restaurant/bar
- Gear shop
- Gas station
- Grocery store
- Trailhead

Driving Directions from Portland, OR (74 miles; 1 hr. 55 min.)

- 1) I-405 N to I-5 N (enter Washington).
- 2) Take exit 21.
- 3) Turn right onto WA 503 E/Lewis River Rd. (toward Woodland).
- 4) In 23 miles, continue straight on Lewis River Rd.
- 5) In 8.6 miles, continue onto NFD Rd. 90.
- 6) In 3.2 miles, turn left at NFD Rd. 83.
- 7) Go 11.2 miles to small parking area on the left.