

SWITMO

BLANCHARD MOUNTAIN TRAVERSE from Summerland Road to Chuckanut Drive

The Pacific Northwest Trail, PNT, crosses Blanchard Mountain from the Summerland Road south of Lake Samish to near milepost 10 on Chuckanut Drive, WA State Route 11, a distance of 10 miles. The Summerland Road access is gated. The Chuckanut Drive trailhead is right off of the road, south of the Oyster Bar Restaurant.

This is a Whatcom/Skagit County hike.

Data: This 10 mile traverse with an elevation gain of about 2000 feet is partly on logging roads on the east end but most of the route is on trail. The eastern part is on private logging company property. From the north end of the British Army Trail to Chuckanut Drive the hiker is on WA Department of Natural Resources, DNR, land. Please respect the rights of the land owners/managers. The forest on Blanchard, except for those portions in the DNR Conservation Area, is a working forest and from time to time logging operations and road closures occur. To check out logging operations and road closures, call the DNR office in Sedro-Woolley at 360-856-3500. Because of the distance and elevation gain, SWITMO rates this as a moderate to strenuous hike. SWITMO helps maintain all of the trail sections of the PNT over Blanchard Mountain.

2013 note: The B-2000 road to the Overlook is scheduled to be closed for a time during the summer of 2013 for a logging operation. This logging operation will also affect the route of the PNT on the western part of the Larry Reed Trail. Once the logging operation is over, the PNTA and SWITMO will be able to go in and rebuild the trail.

The protected route of the PNT (that part that lies in the Conservation Area) that descends from the Oyster Dome area on the Samish Bay Connector is currently very steep at the outset—we call that area “The Wall”. The PNTA will work with the DNR to determine the best way to improve the trail in this area as well as other areas on the Samish Bay Connector.

The hike will be described from east to west, beginning at the gate off the Summerland Road and ending near milepost 10 on Chuckanut Drive.

Driving Instructions: From I-5 take the Nulle Road Exit, #242. Go west on Nulle Road. Nulle Road will change into Summerland Road; continue straight ahead on Summerland Road. In about 0.5 mile look for a gated logging road on the left. Park off to the side so as to not block the road.

Hike Description:

- Begin hiking westerly on the logging road. Look for white blazes. Stay left in a short distance at the first intersection.
- Keep to the main line logging road. The logging road will go southwesterly then westerly. Go left near a high pile of stumps (if the pile is still there) and in a short distance Cross Bear Creek on a sturdy bridge built for trucks.
- On the far side of the bridge, continue straight and uphill. Stay left at any forks, going uphill. The logging road becomes an old caterpillar track and then trail.

- The trail will come out onto a logging spur. Go RIGHT here and walk westerly a short distance to another logging road.
- At this logging road, go LEFT, uphill. This will change into a trail that climbs through the woods and comes out onto yet another logging spur.
- Go RIGHT on this spur to its intersection with a main logging road which is Road B-1000. Turn LEFT, uphill, on this main road.
- In about 0.1 mile the B-1000 road will turn left; do not turn left but continue uphill on the B-1600 Road.
- Hike up the B-1600 Road for about 0.1 mile to the well-maintained entrance to the British Army Trail. A unit of the British Army built this trail in the 1990's; they came over for some R&R to work on the PNT.
- From this point on the hiker is on DNR land. Go LEFT into the woods, climbing and following the trail to Lizard Lake.
- Follow the trail, which is on an old railroad grade, along Lizard Lake. Past the Lake a short distance the hiker will pass a trail on the left, which is the Incline Trail that leads down to the B-1000 road on the east side of the Mountain.
- The old railroad grade trail will curve southwesterly and intersect the Lily Lake Trail which is on the left. The Lily Lake Trail descends from here down to a parking lot on the B-1000 Road on the south side of the Mountain.
- Continue past the Lily Lake Trail and hike, still on the old railroad grade, to the Lily Lake area. The hiker will come to an intersection, which is the top of Max's Shortcut. Now the hiker has some decisions to make:
 - (a.) Descend on the PNT from Max's Shortcut to the Larry Reed Trail and then on to the Overlook and then down to Chuckanut Drive. This route will be closed if the logging operation is underway. See below.
 - (b.) Go straight ahead to the Lily Lake junction and then go right on the Lily Lake trail to Lily Lake itself and perhaps on to the North Butte view point.
 - (c.) Go straight ahead to the Lily Lake junction and keep going straight ahead, going westerly toward the Oyster Dome, taking the side trip to the Oyster Dome and returning to Max's Shortcut and then continuing on down **OR**, after visiting the Oyster Dome, descend "The Wall" on the steep trail at an obvious junction. See below.
- (a.) above: Taking Max's Shortcut down to the Overlook if the Larry Reed Trail is not blocked by logging. Go southerly on Max's Shortcut following the old railroad grade. The trail will then descend and intersect the Larry Reed Trail. Along this section of trail the hiker will pass Ship Rock, a good spot for lunch if it is raining. At the Larry Reed intersection, go RIGHT on the Larry Reed Trail. Follow the Larry Reed Trail. It will cross the B-2000 road and continue on the other side. After hiking a short distance, the hiker will come out at the Overlook. The Overlook has toilet facilities, an asphalt parking lot, hitching posts for horses, benches, and hang glider jumping off spots. Cross the parking area in a northwesterly direction and find the signed trailhead for the trail that descends in 2 miles to Chuckanut Drive, 10 miles from the Summerland Road.
- (c.) above: Taking "The Wall" route, also known as the "Samish Bay Connector" route down to Chuckanut Drive. Once the hiker is ready to leave the Oyster Dome area, carefully descend "The Wall". The trail will lessen in steepness, even level out some, and intersect with the main, well-maintained trail descending from the Overlook at the first switchback below the Overlook. Continue down the main trail to Chuckanut Drive, 10 miles from the Summerland Road.

