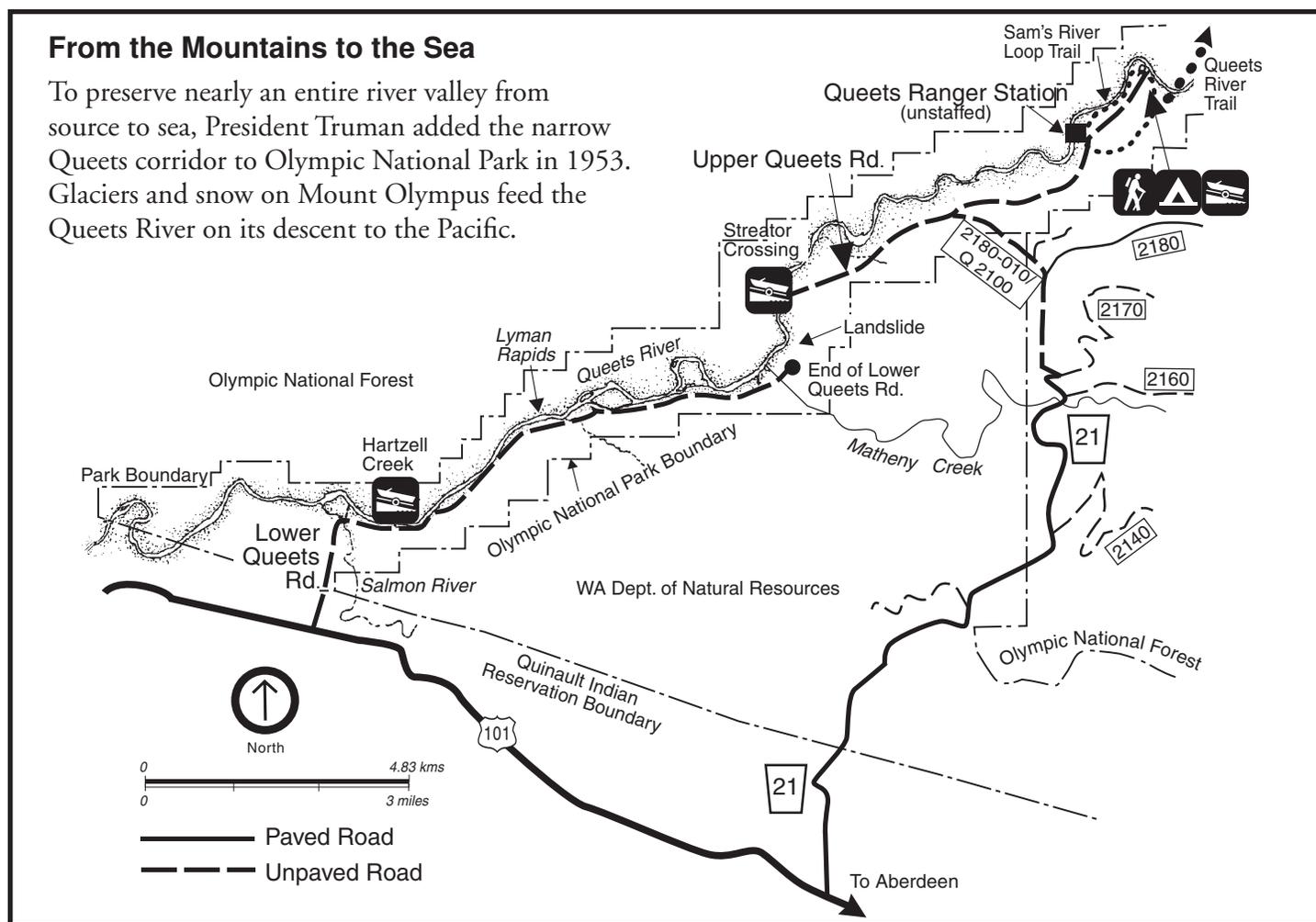


### Queets Area

#### From the Mountains to the Sea

To preserve nearly an entire river valley from source to sea, President Truman added the narrow Queets corridor to Olympic National Park in 1953. Glaciers and snow on Mount Olympus feed the Queets River on its descent to the Pacific.



### Primitive Wilderness

With few visitors and over 11 miles of winding road to reach the Upper Queets, this glacially-carved, rain forest valley is perfect for quiet solitude. Look for elk under moss-draped bigleaf maples and towering Sitka spruce, watch salmon spawn in a side channel, or examine the old barns, scattered fruit trees and old pastures left as evidence of early homestead families who attempted to carve a new life from this remote valley.

The original Queets road was severed by a landslide in 2005. By working with Olympic National Forest and the Washington Department of Natural Resources, the park opened a new route to the upper valley using neighboring forestry roads. Watch for active logging traffic on these narrow routes, which are not suitable for trailers or large RVs.

### Queets Area Information

**Facilities:** NOTE: storms that severed the road also damaged the campground, trails and boat launch. Expect rough conditions until repairs are done. Queets Ranger Station is not staffed. No phone.

**Boat Launches:** Depends on river level and erosion damage: Hartzell Creek, Streator Crossing, Queets Campground.

**Camping:** About 20 sites, open year round, pit toilets, no potable water, no hookups. Trailers not advised.

**Regulations:** Pets must be leashed and are **not allowed on trails**. To get bear canisters and required wilderness camping permits, backpackers should call the Wilderness Information Center (360) 565-3100.

### River-Wise

To head up the Queets River trail, hikers should first ford Sam's River and then the Queets River. The crossing can be hazardous. It is usually best to wait until late summer or early fall, when water levels are lowest, to explore the upper Queets Valley. Search for the slowest, shallowest section to cross. Even then, the water may be thigh to waist high. Try crossing in the morning when flows are often lower. Watch for storms, which can quickly swell this large river. Use a sturdy pole to help keep your balance.

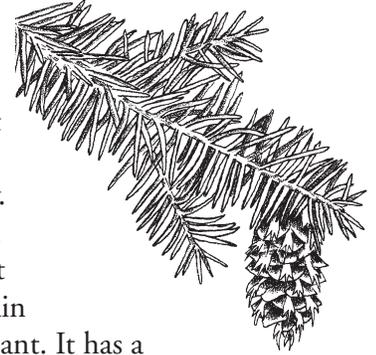
### Sam's River Loop:

Flat 2.8 mile loop through temperate rain forest. Trail begins at the end of the Upper Queets Road. Storms in 2006 and 2007 damaged this trail, expect rough conditions.

### Queets River Trail:

16.2 miles, with elevation fluctuating between 240 and 800 feet. Trail starts at the end of the Upper Queets Road. Hikers must ford the Queets River (see left).

One of the park's biggest Douglas-fir trees stands about 2.4 miles up valley. Just before Coal Creek, a small way trail on the left leads 0.2 mile through rain forest to the humbling giant. It has a diameter of 14 feet, and towers 212 feet.



Douglas-fir

## Wild Salmon, Return and Renewal

*...great salmon threshed in the water all night long...every few yards was to be seen the remains of a fish where cougar, coon, otter, or eagle had made a meal.*

Queets Valley, Private Harry Fisher, 1890 O'Neil Expedition

Five species of Pacific salmon, including steelhead, spawn in the Queets River. Salmon are a gift from the sea, distributing nutrients among the forests, wildlife, and people who live along the rivers. Area tribes continue to depend on these great fish for their livelihoods. Their ancestors watched closely for the return of salmon. A *First Salmon Ceremony* honored and gave thanks to these fish—supernatural beings who lived beneath the sea. The first salmon caught in spring was prepared in a prescribed manner, and shared with each member of the village. If shown proper respect and gratitude when they visited, the salmon would return in great numbers. They would continue to bring the gift of their flesh to the villagers, thus ensuring the people's survival. Tribal members continue to honor the return of the salmon.

Researchers discovered that salmon also provide important nutrients to a river valley's wildlife and forests. Most Pacific salmon die after spawning. Historic runs with hundreds of thousands of fish returning to area rivers provided a wealth of spawned out carcasses throughout the year. Biologists found that dozens of species of birds and mammals feed on salmon carcasses—everything from tiny winter wrens to raccoons, otters, eagles, and bears benefit. Research also revealed that carcasses provide essential nutrients to streamside forests and fuel the growth of future generations of fish hatching from their gravel nests.

Today, most of the Queets River watershed is protected. Its salmon runs are among the most productive in the country, indicating a healthy, intact ecosystem. Olympic is the only national park outside of Alaska that supports so many generous runs of wild anadromous salmon.

