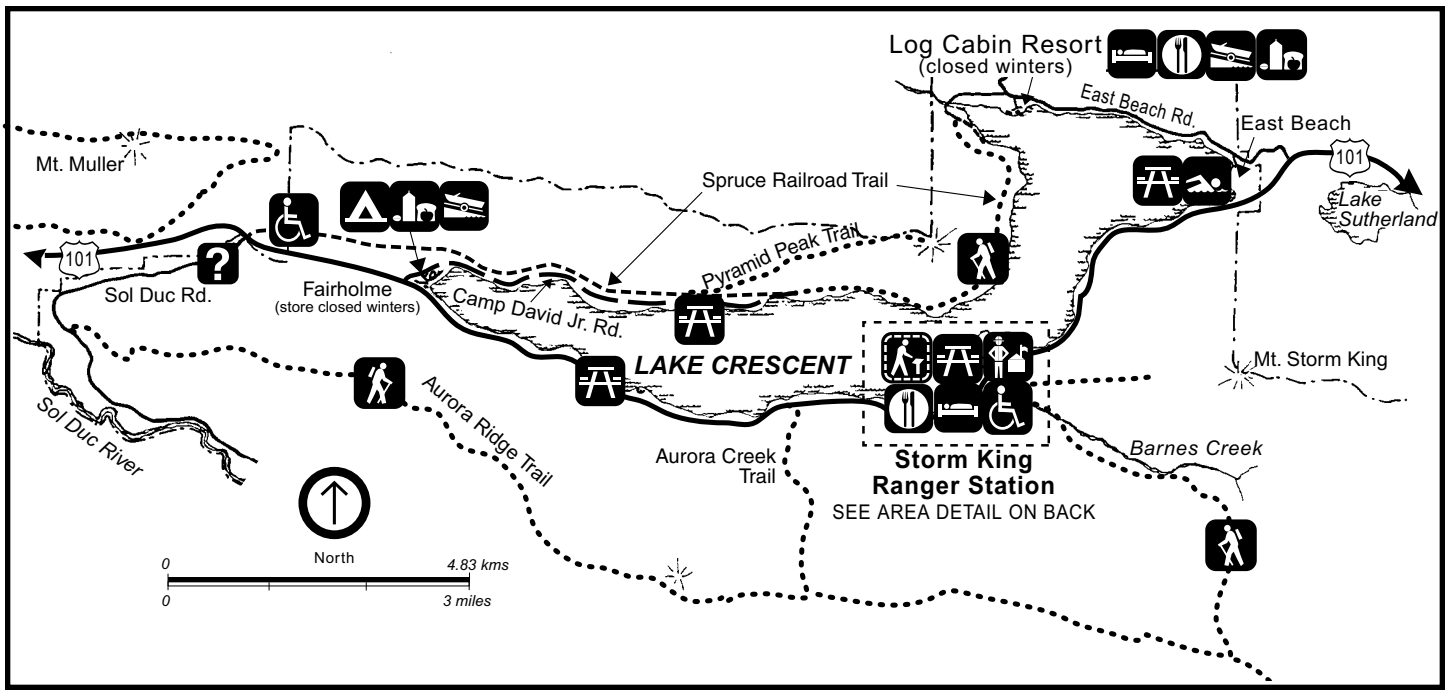
Olympic

Olympic National Park

Lake Crescent Area



Sapphire Setting

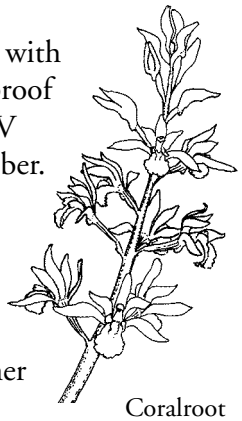
Lake Crescent, a cold, clear, glacially-carved lake, owes its existence to ice. Its azure depths, which plummet to 624 feet, were gouged by huge ice sheets thousands of years ago. As the ice retreated, it left behind a steep valley that filled with the clear blue waters of Lake Crescent.

The lake's waters have very little nitrogen. This limits the growth of phytoplankton, tiny plants (like algae) that float in lake waters. Without them, the water stays clear. In some places you might see as far down as 60 feet. Clarity and reflecting light give Lake Crescent its stunning blue-green color. Its protected waters are home to fish like the Beardslee and Crescenti trout, two types of fish found nowhere else in the world.

Lake Crescent Area Information

Facilities: **Storm King Ranger Station:** If staffing allows, open in summer with information and book sales. **Lake Crescent Lodge and Log Cabin Resort:** lodging, restaurants, boat rentals (both open summer only). **Fairholme Store:** groceries and boat rentals (summer only).

Camping: **Fairholme**: 87 sites (one accessible), fire pits with grates, picnic tables, potable water, animal-proof food storage lockers, accessible restrooms, RV dump station. Open early April to late October. **Log Cabin Resort** runs a summer-only RV campground.

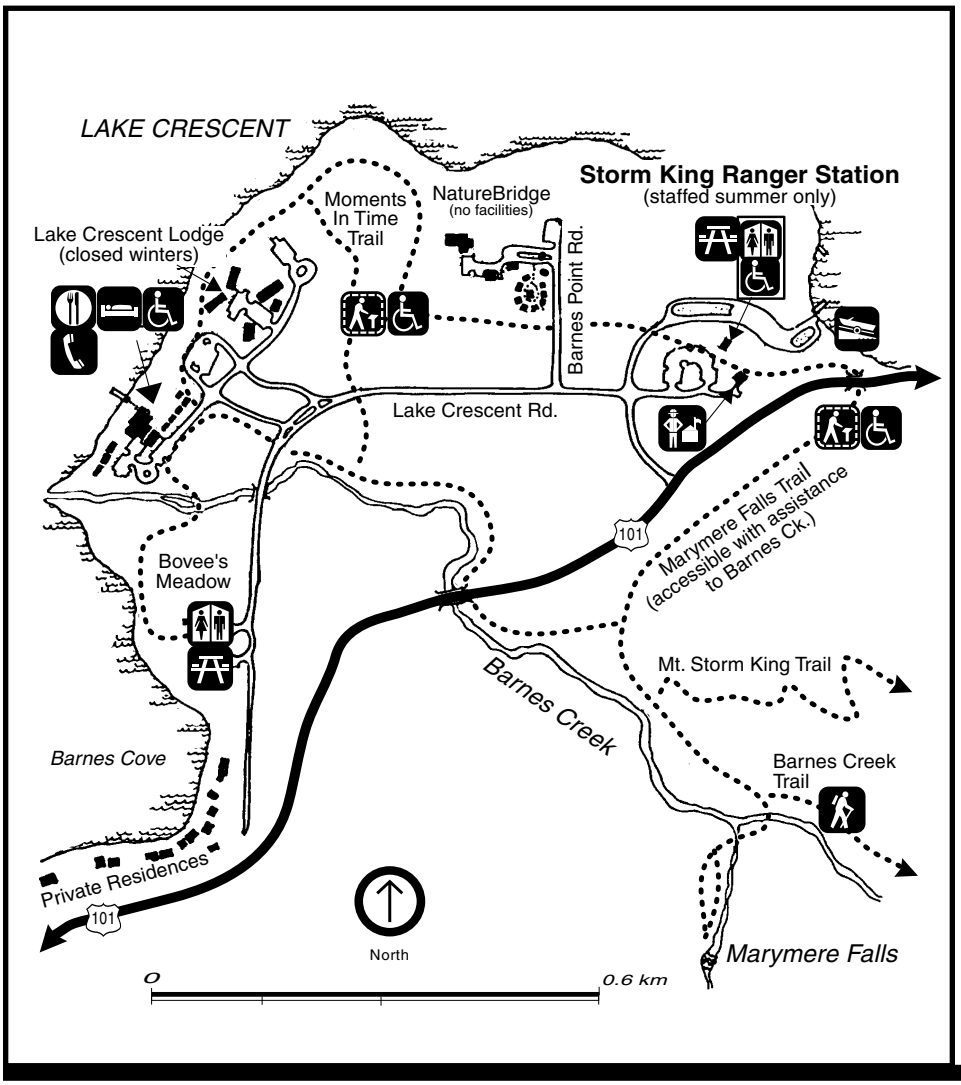


Coralroot

Picnic Areas: **East Beach:** beach, accessible vault toilet, fire pits, tables. **Bovee's Meadow:** beach, accessible vault toilet, tables. **La Poel** (summer only)**:** firepits, tables, accessible vault toilet. **North Shore:** accessible vault toilet, firepits, tables.

Regulations: Pets and bicycles are not permitted on trails, except on the Spruce Railroad Trail. Alcohol and glass are not permitted on public beaches.

Safety: Please respect the speed limit on the winding roads. The lake is very cold and deep; always wear life jackets on the water.



Mount Storm King

An Indian legend tells us of the creation of Lake Crescent... There was much fighting between the Klallam and Quileute tribes along a small river that flowed through the present site of Lake Crescent. The disagreements escalated into a great battle that lasted three days. The mountain spirit of the area became very upset at the foolish fighting. He hurled a gigantic boulder down at them, killing all of the warriors. The boulder was so big that it dammed the river and the water backed up, forming Lake Crescent. For many years, tribal members did not visit the area where their relatives were killed.

Geological records support the idea of a large-scale disturbance affecting Lake Crescent. There is evidence that landslides from surrounding mountains divided what was once a larger lake into two separate lakes, Lake Crescent and its neighbor Lake Sutherland.

Day Hikes Around Lake Crescent

Trail	Description	Miles	Elev. Gain (ft.)
Marymere Falls	Old growth forest to a 90 ft. waterfall.	0.9 one way	400
Moments in Time	Self-guided nature trail through forest and by the lake, accessible with assistance.	0.6 loop	none
Mt. Storm King	Steep switchbacks climb part way up Mt. Storm King.	2.2 one way	2,000
Spruce Railroad	Hugs north shore of Lake Crescent on old railroad bed. Bicycles and pets permitted. Paved extension leads west to Highway 101; wheelchair accessible from 101 end only.	4.0 one way (6.5 extension one way)	100 500
Fairholme Campground Loop	Old growth forest. This trail has entrances at the top of Loop B and the campground access road.	0.8 loop	100
Pyramid Peak	Climbs steeply to a World War II spotting tower with views of the lake. One section crosses a steep landslide.	3.5 one way	2,600
Aurora Creek	Climbs steeply up rocky terrain through old growth forest to Aurora Ridge.	3.4 one way	3,220
Barnes Creek	Climbs up to Aurora Ridge through old growth forest, only first 4 miles maintained.	7.5 one way	4,200