

Biking the Idaho Panhandle on the Rails to Trails

Trip Guide
Biking the Idaho Pan Handle



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Idaho Panhandle Rails To Trails Bicycling

The Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes is one of the most spectacular trails in the western United States. This trail along with the Centennial and Hiawatha Trails make for an area full of geology and mining history.

The 73-mile Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes paved trail spans the Idaho panhandle between Mullan and Plummer. It was created through a unique partnership between the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Union Pacific Railroad, the U. S. Government, and the State of Idaho. The trail meanders through the historic Silver Valley, along the Coeur d'Alene River past scenic Lake Coeur d'Alene and through rolling farmlands to Plummer. Twenty developed trailheads provide entry points, and there are twenty scenic waysides along the route with tables to stop for a picnic or a short rest.

The Hiawatha trail, is the crown jewel of our nation's Rails to Trails routes. This special day takes you through nine train tunnels and across seven trestles with views of the towering Bitterroot Mountains.

Enjoy a day cycling around and exploring the lake side town of Coeur d'Alenes on the historic North Idaho Centennial trail. This trail meanders along the waterfront and takes in the history of the town.

Local History

Silver was discovered in the area in 1884 and soon a rail line was constructed to support the growing mining, timber, and supply industries. Much of the trail today follows this original rail line, giving it a gentle grade. When the rail line was built, mine waste rock and tailings containing heavy metals were used for the original rail bed. In addition, the bed was contaminated with accidental ore concentrate spillage.

The trail itself is part of the environmental cleanup in a partnership between the Union Pacific Railroad, the U.S. Government, the State of Idaho and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The thick layer of asphalt and gravel barriers along the trail edge serve as a clean barrier. Please stay on the trail and in designated picnic areas.

The east end passes through a narrow mountain valley once heavily mined for silver and is dotted with numerous small historic mining communities. The middle section follows the tranquil Coeur d'Alene River, passing fifteen small lakes and marshes. The west end lies within the interior boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation and along the shoreline of scenic Coeur d'Alene Lake before crossing the 3,100-foot Chatcolet Bridge/Trestle to Heyburn State Park. The trail then follows the remote forested Plummer Creek Canyon and continues to Plummer.

Weather

Weather temperature ranges between 40 to 80 degrees. We may have rain on any of our days. Weather can be dependent upon the elevations that we will be at. Weather is for Wallace, ID.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Average daytime high temp.	64	71	80	81	71
Average nighttime low temp.	39	46	50	49	42
Average days of rain	10	9	4	4	6

For More Info: For in-depth reading we recommend the following books:

A trail guide, maps and additional information is available for download at

<https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/parks/trail-coeur-d-alenes/>

The Big Burn, Timothy Egan Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (2009)

Describes the beginning of the National Forest Service in preserving much of our natural area as well as the 1910 forest fire that burned much of the area.

John Mullan: The Tumultuous Life of a Western Road Builder, Keith Peterson

Portrays the history of the area in 1850-1870's. Book available at Amazon.com

The Mullan Road: Carving a Passage through the Frontier Northwest. 1859-62, Paul D. McDermott and Ronald E. Grin

Focuses on John Mullan as he worked in the Idaho Panhandle from 1859-62. Book available at Amazon.com

Silver Linings KSPS-PBS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOaC3OzpkT0>

Description: We recommend you watch Silver Linings a 60 minute video produced by KSPS-PBS which provides a good historical perspective of the Silver Valley where we will biking and visiting.



Trip Itinerary

First day:

4:00--5:30 p.m.

Hotel check-in; <https://www.thewallaceinn.com/>

6:15 p.m.

Program Registration: After you have your room assignment, join us at our table in the Wallace Inn Meeting Room to register with the program staff and get your welcome packet.

7:15 p.m.

Welcome Dinner & Trip Orientation; Our trip leader & staff will meet everyone and lead introductions. We will review the program schedule, discuss roles and responsibilities, logistics, safety guidelines, emergency procedures, and answer questions.

Days 2 through 6: Breakfast is served daily at 7:00 a.m. at the Wallace Inn.

We leave the hotel each day by 8:00-8:15 AM.

We typically return to the Wallace Inn each day at around 3:30-4:30 PM.

Lunch is provided each day when our support vans meet us.

***Day 3:** Dinner is not provided this evening. Guests are able to explore the town of Wallace or visit one of the other near-by towns on their own.

***Day 4:** Dinner is not provided this evening. Guests are able to explore the town of Wallace or visit one of the other near-by towns on their own.

***Day 5:** Participants have free time in the town of Coeur d'Alene in the afternoon/evening. Dinner is not provided this evening. We can suggest things to do and places to eat.

Day 7: Breakfast is served at 7:00 a.m. Program concludes. Check out from hotel is 11:00 A.M. Shuttle back to Spokane leaves the Wallace Inn at 10:00 A.M. sharp.

Bicycling Info & Trail Conditions

Bike 10–30 miles at a leisurely pace on trails with minimal traffic and elevation gains. Many rides offer varying distance options. Several bike paths above 3,000 feet. There are options every day to vary the desired length ridden. We will have support vehicles that will be following and meeting throughout the day.

Comfort bike and helmet provided.

Recommended are padded bike pants/shorts, bike gloves, comfortable bike shoes (no cleats), handlebar bag, rain gear.

Bikes: Hybrid (Trek Dual Sport) bikes with upright handlebars, multiple gears, hybrid tires. Bike handlebar bags (10"W x 3.5"D x 7"H) are included on bikes (most Bikes DO NOT have back racks, so back rack bags cannot be attached).

Bikes do not have cleat pedals & are NOT recommended.

Personal bikes are not recommended since we do not have repair tools for your bike & it may get scratched during transit between rides.

E-bikes are only allowed under medically needed circumstances due to trail regulations.

Sample mileages

Day 2: *Start:* Mullan; *End:* Cataldo

May choose to go 7.5 (Kellogg), 18, or 25 miles (Cataldo), depending on personal preference.

Day 3: *Start:* Plummer; *End:* Medimont

May choose to go 16 (Heyburn State Park), 26 (Harrison), or 30 miles (Medimont), depending on personal preference.

Day 4: *Start:* Hiawatha Trailhead; *End:* Hiawatha Trailhead

May choose to go 15 to 30 miles. This is 15 mile out-and-back trail. Option to bike 15 miles to the end of the route of the Hiawatha trail and shuttle back to the trailhead is \$10, not included.

Day 5: *Start:* Higgins Point; *End:* Post Falls; North Idaho Centennial Trail

May choose to go 9 (Coeur d'Alene Park), 13 (Riverstone Park), or 24 miles (Post Falls), depending on personal preference.

Day 6: *Start:* Medimont; *End:* Kellogg

May choose to go 8 (Bull Run), 20 (Cataldo Mission), or 35 miles (Kellogg), depending on personal preference.



Physical Conditioning

We strongly recommend that you prepare yourself physically for the bike ride. You should be comfortable riding a bike on streets with minimal traffic, braking, turning and looking behind. You should be able to bike at least 8 miles/hour. Should be comfortable riding on packed dirt road for one day.

Pre-Trip Details

Essential Eligibility Criteria for River Trips:

Essential Eligibility Criteria for Bike Trips:

The following are the physical and mental eligibility criteria for all participants on any OutRecX LLC, (Oregon River Experiences) bike trip.

1. Ability to remain seated and balanced while on a bicycle. Get on and off of a bicycle.
2. Ability to independently board and disembark a van daily, 2-6 times per day.
3. Ability to independently navigate bicycle without assistance on paved, packed dirt and varied terrain.
4. Pedal, steer, stop and negotiate a bike over a variety of terrain including flat, uphill, and downhill.
5. Wear all required safety gear, such as an approved helmet and reflectors.
6. Ability to follow both verbal and non-verbal instructions given by guides in all situations, including during stressful or dangerous situations, and to effectively communicate with guides and other guests.
7. Ability to manage all personal care independently, or with the assistance of a friend or family member. Including carrying personal day bag.
8. If taking prescription medications, have the ability to maintain proper dosage by medicating independently, or with the assistance of a friend or family member.
9. Ability to remain adequately fed, hydrated, and properly dressed so as to avoid

environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat related illness, and sunburn.

The above criteria, if not met, will disqualify a person from participating in a bicycle trip with OutRecX, LLC (Oregon River Experiences). The criteria exist for your own safety and that of all trip participants. None of the criteria are meant to discriminate on the basis of any physical or mental disability, and are applied uniformly to all potential trip participants, irrespective of the presence or absence of any disability. OutRecX, LLC (Oregon River Experiences) is committed to making reasonable modifications to any trip for any persons with a disability, so long as they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the trip. OutRecX, LLC Guides have absolute discretion in determining guests' fitness for a particular trip.

FURTHER INFO ABOUT EXPECTATIONS FOR TRIP PARTICIPANTS

The following paragraphs are meant to further inform all potential participants of the expectations for all participants in order to promote a safe, enjoyable experience for everyone on a trip. There may be requirements, whether physical or mental, that are not specifically applied "essential eligibility criteria", but that help our guests understand the reality of being on a wilderness adventure trip.

Our primary goal is to minimize the risks associated with adventure trips in a wilderness environment. The trip involves physical exertion and exposure to the elements, including the potential for heat, sun, wind, rain and snow. We have experience accommodating people with a wide range of physical disabilities and/or health conditions. However, individuals who are overweight, lack conditioning, or have other physical limitations or ailments that interfere with the realistic encounters on a wilderness biking trip can endanger themselves, other guests, and the guides. Please consult your doctor if you have medical or health conditions that could impact your ability to participate in this outdoor adventure.

It is very important that each trip participant take an active role in their own safety. You will likely encounter wilderness conditions that you are unfamiliar with, and those conditions may change rapidly. It is critical to pay attention at all times, to be aware of your surroundings, and to avoid taking unnecessary risks. Even a non-life threatening injury in a wilderness setting can become a major emergency for you, and can endanger the entire group. Swimming alone or hiking alone is discouraged. Excessive alcohol consumption or illicit drug use is not tolerated. Using common sense and following both the explicit instruction and the lead of your guides can go a long way towards keeping yourself and the group safe. Some obvious things to avoid are approaching wild animals, not paying attention to what is ahead of you on the trail, not paying attention to hazards such as poison ivy and rattlesnakes, and walking/biking near precipitous ledges.

Biking trips offer some inherent dangers. While the risk of a trip is part of what makes it an exciting adventure, you must be entirely respectful of the risk that such a trip poses. It is important that you are confident in your biking ability, and your ability to stay physically fit for the trip. While our guides are highly trained and will do their absolute best to keep you safe during the trip, a successful rescue is greatly hampered by a person who is unprepared. You will receive a detailed orientation talk at the start of your bicycle trip.

Due to the physical nature of this trip, we highly recommend that you engage in regular exercise for at least three months prior to departure to ensure preparedness. No gym membership required! Simple exercises like push-ups, sit-ups and squats go a long way to improving core fitness. Start with these exercises and do three sets of ten repetitions each, three to four times

per week. Aerobic training is also easy to accomplish without expensive equipment. Take 30 – 40 minutes two to three times a week and go for a brisk walk, easy jog or bike ride around town. If you have access to a pool, lake or the ocean, swimming is obviously an ideal choice for aerobic exercise. It provides a full-body workout and is training that is useful for a trip of this nature. It is important to push yourself in the months leading up to your trip by increasing your strength training repetitions and the pace of your aerobic training. Check with your doctor prior to beginning any exercise program to be sure you are medically safe to participate. Starting an exercise program that is more strenuous than you are ready for may result in injury or risk exacerbating existing health conditions. Getting in shape will certainly add to your enjoyment of the trip.

Where and When to Meet

We will meet at 4:00 PM on the day your trip begins, at the Wallace Inn, in Wallace, Idaho.

Wallace Inn
100 Front Street
Wallace, ID 83873
800-643-2386 info@thewallaceinn.com



Getting To and From Wallace, ID

✓ If you Drive

From Spokane: Take I-90 East towards Couer d'Alene and Kellogg. Stay on

I-90 to exit 61, Wallace, Idaho. Turn right on s. Frontage Road for 0.8 mile, then 1st left onto Front St. drive 0.8 mile to Wallace Inn on the right side.

✓ If you Fly

The closest commercial airport is Spokane, WA. Plan your flight to arrive the day before your trip begins.

Car rentals are available at the Spokane Airport.

Only ONE shuttle option:

To Reserve: Please phone 503-563-1500 up to 2 weeks prior to Trip Start date to place reservation and pay for. At pickup time a large van, marked w/ Oregon River Experiences decal will arrive. Pickup day problems call 503-740-7282 Pickup: 3:00 PM Sunday Spokane Airport-GEG; Meet shuttle at metered parking lot across street from north end of terminal where car rental booths are located. Cost is \$80 per person; roundtrip.

If you miss the shuttle, the only good option is to rent a car. No other affordable shuttle options are available. To ensure you do not miss our shuttle, we recommend staying the previous night in Spokane lodging that has a free airport shuttle. Spokane is a pleasant city to spend a day.

Trip Shuttles

Your trip fare includes transportation daily in vans to and from our trailheads.

Accommodations

All rooms are booked at a double occupancy, with 2 queen beds per room. If you wish to have a single room upgrade please contact us directly so we can check on availability and etc. Single room upgrade cost is \$300.

Wallace Inn-Nestled in the heart of North Idaho's breathtaking Silver Valley, at the foot of the towering Bitterroot Mountains, the Wallace Inn offers a unique experience for visitors. Come explore all the natural beauty, [history](#), and year-round [recreation](#) that abound in the area. Comfortable, well-appointed [rooms](#), friendly, personalized service, and an array of amenities await your arrival. Stay with us and enjoy our indoor [pool and spa, steam room, dry sauna, exercise facilities, restaurant, lounge](#), and much more.

What to Bring

Most of the time the weather is warm and pleasant. But cool wet weather is a possibility, too. So please pay close attention to selecting your clothes and gear for your bicycle trip. Hopefully, you'll never need most of the cool-weather gear we recommend that you bring. But please do bring it, just in case!

What to wear

On cool or rainy days

Appropriate clothing for these conditions is clothing that dries quickly, and

keeps you warm even when the garment is wet. Modern high-tech synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene and polyester fleece do both. (Wool provides warmth when wet, but does not dry quickly and is less comfortable. Wool is often less expensive, however, especially when purchased from Thrift or Military Surplus stores, and modern wool/synthetic blends can be a good choice.)

Think in terms of layers of clothing for changeable and cool weather. As conditions change you can add or subtract layers as needed. The first layer in cool weather should be long underwear made of synthetic materials such as polypropylene which provide warmth and wick moisture away from your skin. The middle layer should consist of polyester fleece (or wool), and will provide further warmth. The outer layer consists of a rain jacket and rain pants, or (as a second choice) a poncho. Rain gear made of modern waterproof, breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are best. But for a less expensive option coated nylon will work, too.

On warm or hot days

Shorts and a T-shirt may be worn, as well as a hat to keep the sun out of your eyes. But you may wish to wear a long-sleeved cotton shirt and lightweight pants that are not too loose fitting, in order to ward off sunburn and brushes things.

On your feet

Good athletic shoes or non-clipping cycling shoes are best for during days on the trail. You should have another pair of comfortable walking shoes for other times during the trip.



Equipment Checklist for bicycling

When we leave for the day please be sure to carry the following:

Personal Bike water bottle (One provided if you want one)

- ☐ Day pack or fanny pack to carry personal items while biking. Extra food and water will be accessible every couple of hours.
- ☐ Comfortable shoes with stiff soles for biking.
- ☐ Bright colored windbreaker or vest to wear over jacket to help drivers see us better.
- ☐ Synthetic or wool socks will keep your feet warmer and drier
- ☐ Rain gear (jacket, pants)
- ☐ Extra duffel bag to carry change of shoes and clothes during outings
- ☐ Bike pants/shorts with extra padding in bottom
- ☐ Optional gel seat or similar to go over standard bike seat.
OR personal seat attached to seat stem that do NOT require installation tools
- ☐ Bike gloves (optional)
- ☐ Gloves for biking on cold days
- ☐ Ear muffs or head band to wear under helmet on cold days.
- ☐ Bike helmet (optional, if you do not bring one, a helmet will be provided upon bike rental)
- ☐ Bike helmet mirror (optional, only bring if used to these mirrors)
- ☐ Sweat pants with side zippers for extra warmth when riding thru tunnel
- ☐ Optional personal bike lock & cable if you want to use bikes on personal time
- ☐ Optional extra light (headlamp, lightweight flashlight duct taped to handlebar)(Cygolite-Metro 750 recommended). 1 light PROVIDED.
Past riders preferred a 2nd light for tunnels on Hiawatha trail.

Alcohol is prohibited during the day, but is okay once we arrive at hotel/no longer riding on bicycles.

Please do not bring pets, guns, or valuable jewelry

Additional Information

Your trip fare includes the following

- The services of our professional trail and support staff.
- 6 nights of lodging at the Wallace Inn.
 - *Trip prices assume double occupancy. Extra fee for singles.*
- Transportation daily to/from trailheads from the Wallace Inn.
- All breakfast provided by Wallace Inn (6)
- All lunches provided by Wallace Inn & O.R.E. (5)
- Dinner at the Wallace Inn and other local restaurant (3 provided)
 - *3 dinners guests are on their own to explore the local areas
- Bike rental, helmet and bike light.
 - Rental bikes come from Coeur d'Alene Bike Co in Kellogg.
 - <https://cdabikeco.com/>

Gratuities

Our guests sometimes ask whether it is appropriate to tip the guides. Tipping is optional, but if your guides did a great job then feel free to thank them with a gratuity. The amount is up to you, but tips between 8% and 20% of trip cost are typical. Gratuities are customarily presented to the Lead Guide and will be shared equally among all guides on your trip.

Nearby attractions

Wallace, Idaho is a gem of a Wild West mining town perched in the legendary Silver Valley of North Idaho. Conveniently located just off Interstate 90 in the Panhandle of North Idaho, between Washington and Montana, Wallace boasts breathtaking mountain views, a beautifully-preserved downtown of Queen Anne buildings, and a homespun friendliness that captivates today's visitors - just as it always has throughout Wallace's spirited history on the frontier of the American West.

No wonder that visitors -- from the town's founder, Colonel W. R. Wallace, to Teddy Roosevelt in 1903, to Hollywood moguls in the 1970's and 1980's looking to capture the unique imagery of the American West -- have found their way to the unique outpost of Wallace, representing something indigenous, special and even grand about small-town America. Wallace truly is what America once was.

With its recent evolution from bustling mining town to recreation and tourism center for the Inland Empire, Wallace and the Wallace Inn beckon to serve as your base camp for year-round Northwestern adventures in recreation and in unearthing the area's remarkable history.

Cancellations and Travel Insurance

The size of our trips is strictly regulated by law, and your reservation means we cannot sell the spaces to others. So we strictly adhere to the cancellation and refund policies we explain in our reservation materials. For this reason we strongly recommend that you consider the purchase of travel insurance, which will reimburse you if you must cancel your trip due to illness.

Emergencies

It may be difficult for family and friends to reach you while you are on the trail. They should also call the O.R.E. office at 503-563-1500.

