

EXPLORING THE RESERVE

Frequently Asked Questions

The Reserve is a patchwork of different land-owners and its opportunities are mostly self-guided. Rangers may be on duty at Washington State Parks, but not in most areas of the Reserve. The following tips will help you have a safe, enjoyable visit that respects resources.

Safety, Emergencies and Drinking Water:

If you have an emergency, [call 911](#) for assistance and be prepared to describe your location. When exploring beaches, pay attention to rising tides and wind-driven waves that could affect beach access. Bring adequate water - potable water is not provided at trailheads.

Private Property:

85% of the 17,572 acre Reserve is privately owned. Avoiding private property (including farm fields) helps ensure continued support of our neighbors.

Parking:

Parking is limited at trailheads and carpooling is recommended. Space to park or turn oversize vehicles is especially limited. State Park areas require a Discover Pass. Vehicles obstructing roadways may be ticketed.

Hiking:

Most trails in the Reserve are for pedestrian use - no bicycles, horses, or motorized vehicles. Stay on designated trails. This ensures that fragile areas, private property and farm fields are protected. The Pacific Northwest Trail (PNT) has continuity breaks between Fort Ebey and Fort Casey State Parks. Consult maps or a State Park ranger for more information.

Please tread gently and stay on trails. Many trails receive high volume use. Avoid trampling vegetation. Even sharp hiking staffs can cause damage, especially along erosion-prone bluffs. Leave rocks, plants, animals, driftwood and all other natural features undisturbed so that all can enjoy them, and habitat and landscape are not impaired.

Accessibility:

Hikers of widely ranging skills have enjoyed sections of reserve trails described as “easy,” but all are unimproved dirt and gravel surfaces. The Bluff Trail closely borders a steep bluff edge.

Dogs:

You are likely to encounter other hikers and dogs in the Reserve. Your dog must be socialized for contact with other trail users.

In all areas, dogs must be on-leash and under the control of the owner. This includes all trails and public beaches. There are fines for off-leash dogs. There is an off-leash dog area at Patmore County Park on Patmore Road.

Please help us care for our beautiful trails. In most locations, there is no one to pick up after your pet. Plastic bags of dog waste left on trails or tossed into the bushes degrade the landscape and environment. You might even be tossing that bag onto the private property of

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the person who made your hike possible! Use designated receptacles at trailheads. If there is no receptacle, you must "pack it out."

Camping and Campfires:

Public camping is limited in the Reserve. Contact Washington State Parks or Island County for more information. No camping is allowed at Reserve trailheads or parking areas. None of the public beaches in the Reserve allow campfires.

Bicycling:

The Bluff Trail, Prairie Ridge Trail, Pratt Loop Trail, and Kettle Spur Trail are pedestrian use only (no horses or bicycles). The Kettles Trails offer a network of mountain biking trails.

For suggested routes and detailed maps, see:

http://www.whidbeycamanoislands.com/thingstodo/outdoor_adventure/cycling/

Horses:

The Bluff Trail, Prairie Ridge Trail, Pratt Loop Trail, and Kettle Spur Trail are pedestrian use only (no horses or bicycles). Horseback riding is permitted on certain marked trails in the Kettles Trails. Trailer parking is available at the junction of SR20 and Libbey Road.

Drones and Airborne Activities:

Launching, control or landing of drones and other recreational aircraft are prohibited on National Park Service properties and Nature Conservancy properties. They are also prohibited on State Park property unless an exception is made through a special permit process. Contact the Central Whidbey Area State Parks Headquarters at Fort Casey: 360.678.4519.

Paragliding: Launching and landing is only permitted at the designated site at Fort Ebey State Park. For rules, regulations, and maps of approved launching and landing zones, call the Central Whidbey Area State Parks Headquarters at Fort Casey: 360.678.4519.

Remote Controlled Gliders: Gliders with non-combustion engines are only permitted at designated sites within Fort Casey and Ebey's Landing State Parks. For rules, regulations, and maps of approved flying zones, call the Central Whidbey Area State Parks Headquarters at Fort Casey: 360.678.4519.