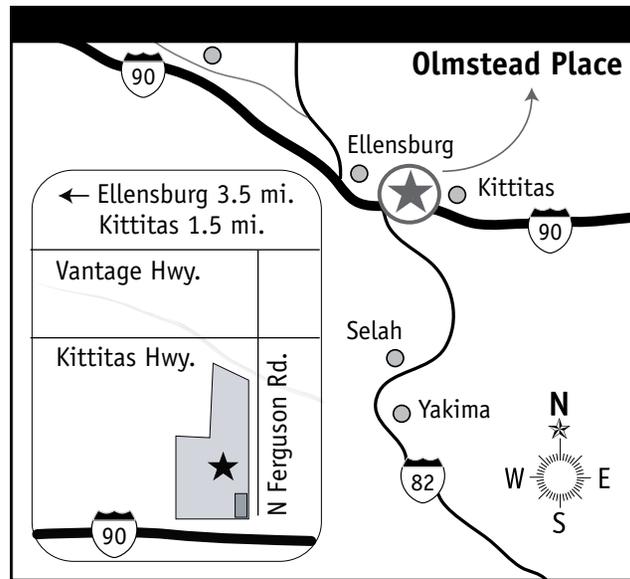


Olmstead Place State Park

Olmstead Place State Park, located four miles east of Ellensburg, is a charming and rustic 217-acre day-use park that celebrates the legacy of the family farm. Open year round, the park's pastoral landscape provides an escape from the hustle and bustle of modern-day life and a rare opportunity to experience a historic pioneer homestead, where part of the work is still accomplished with some of the park's collection of antique implements. Olmstead Place also offers public tours and is perfect for school field trips. The park gives kids an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and learn about rural life. The original 160-acre homestead is a heritage area and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The park's goal is to bring the family farm back to life by allowing visitors to experience a pioneer homestead. The map below illustrates the heritage area, where many historic buildings still stand, complete with original furnishings. As you wander across the park, try to imagine what it was like arriving and settling in the Kittitas Valley in 1875. Try, if for only a moment, to perceive the rewards our ancestors cherished and the hardships they endured.

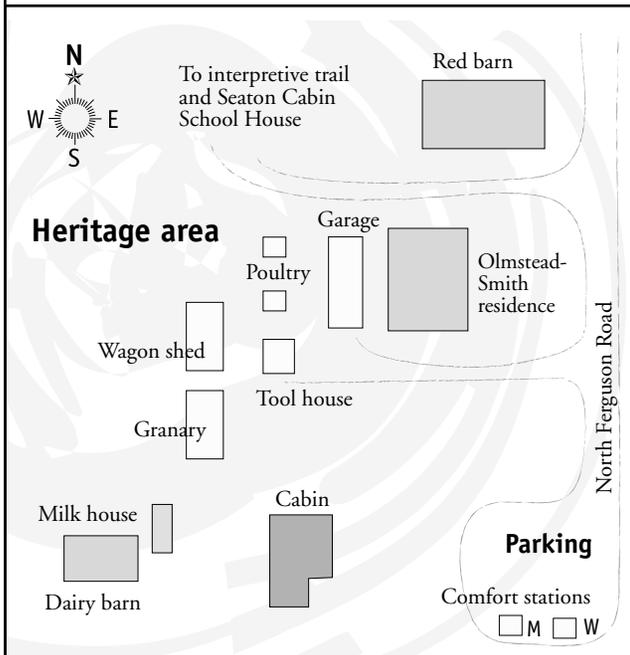
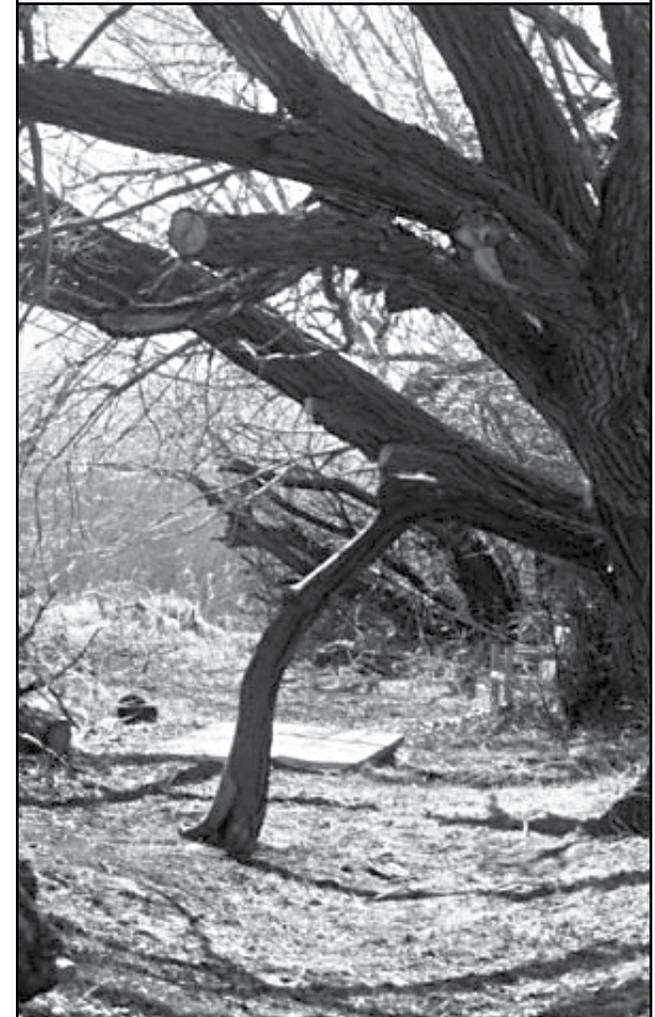


Olmstead Place State Park

921 N. Ferguson Road
 Ellensburg, WA 98926
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Altapes Creek Trail

Olmstead Place
 State Park Heritage Area



Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

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Welcome to the Altapes Creek Trail

Olmstead Place State Park Heritage area was settled by Samuel and Sarah Olmstead in 1875 and is one of the first Kittitas Valley farms. Visitors can tour the eight buildings filled with old farming equipment, including a granary, dairy barn, wagon shed, and an old schoolhouse. The three-quarter-mile **Altapes Creek Trail** is the main trail in the park and leads from the red barn to the Seaton Cabin School House, originally located farther away in a meadow; the kids didn't trudge miles through blizzards - they rode horseback along the trail.

Altapes Creek comes from a Native American word that means "most beautiful creek in the valley." The creek has beautiful waterfalls in the foothills, then winds across the valley, joining other mountain streams to reach the Yakima River. The fish, plants and wildlife found along the creek provided the Native Americans with an abundance of food. In the late 1870s, log cabins replaced the Native American tepees as pioneers began to settle in this area.

When the Olmsteads came to the Kittitas Valley in 1875, trout and salmon were plentiful in the creek; it soon began to supply irrigation for the early settlers' crops. The creek was later named Coleman Creek, after Charles Coleman, who settled the land nearby.

Things along the trail

1. **Red barn:** The red barn was built in 1908 to store hay and grain grown on the farm. It now houses some of the old farm equipment once used at Olmstead Place.
2. **Granary and wagon shed:** The granary was built in 1892, tight and secure to store grain. When the farm changed from cattle to a dairy farm, the building was used as a creamery.

3. **Milk house and dairy barn:** The milk house is where the cream was separated from the milk each morning and night. It was built in 1920, when the dairy operation included only six cows. The cows roamed the pasture around the dairy barn, which appears today much as it did in 1892. When the farm was in operation, the Olmsteads sold prize butter at the market in Seattle.
4. **Red osier dogwood:** The bark of this tall shrub has a unique red color. The wood, tough and flexible, was used by American Indians to make bows and baskets. The Y shaped branches were used as cooking racks and kettle hangers.
5. **Currant:** Pioneers were pleased when these tasty berries ripened. The currants were enjoyed straight from the bush or made into jelly and pies. Please note: Today, picking and eating the berries is prohibited.
6. **Fallen trees:** Beavers occasionally settle along the creek. They make a dam out of trees, branches and mud to create a deep pond in which to live. They eat the inner bark of branches during the winter months.
7. **Ditches and dams:** Farmers also dam the waters of the creek for irrigation. Water was channeled from the creek into these ditches and then onto the field to water the crops. This practice is still used today, no sprinklers are needed - gravity does all the work.
8. **Wild rose:** At one time, American Indians gathered the roots and leaves of the wild rose. They made tea from the roots that helped cure fevers and colds. The fruit of the shrub is an excellent source of vitamin C.
9. **Willows:** There are several species of willow found along the creek. They are fast-growing trees that do well in moist areas. This one has a branch that is becoming a new tree.
10. **Seaton Cabin School House:** More than 100 years ago, this cabin served as a home and schoolhouse in the Kittitas Valley. It was reconstructed at Olmstead Place State Park in the fall of 1979 for visitors to enjoy.

Altapes Trail was constructed in the summer of 1980 by youth with disabilities. Their accomplishment was made possible by a Comprehensive Employment and Training Act grant from the Employment Security Department.

