

Paddling the Siltcoos River

From your starting point at Siltcoos Lake, you'll feel a sense of adventure as you embark on the Siltcoos River Canoe Trail. Navigate past cattails and willowy thickets enroute to the river. The Siltcoos River outlet lies just beyond the docks and marinas of Westlake. What lies downriver is a fascinating world of forests, dunes and a wide estuary that opens onto the sea. This is your chance to discover the Secrets of the Siltcoos.



Choose to launch from the boat ramp in the community of Westlake, or from the Lodgepole Picnic Area farther downriver. Each site offers picnic tables, restrooms and parking.



Portage



A portage about halfway between the lake and the ocean helps paddlers get around a small dam.

Birding

Part of a vital coastal flyway for migratory birds, the Siltcoos region also supports a year-round population of waterfowl, birds and other wildlife.



What will you notice first along the river? Probably the swallows, flitting to and fro as they build their mud nests under the bridges.

A belted kingfisher — easily-recognized by its curved bill and distinctive black and white "tuxedo" markings — may wing by, leading you downriver.

Farther along, you might pass great blue herons and double-crested cormorants standing perfectly still as they search for food along the margins of the estuary.

Gulls, osprey, red-tailed hawks and bald eagles often float overhead. A closer look on the water may reveal some of the other birdlife. You may spot wood ducks, canvasbacks and common mergansers, as well as marsh wrens, rafters and Virginia rails.

The western snowy plover, a threatened shorebird, nests in open sand in the estuary. Plovers are easily disturbed by humans during the nesting season. See map for restricted areas.

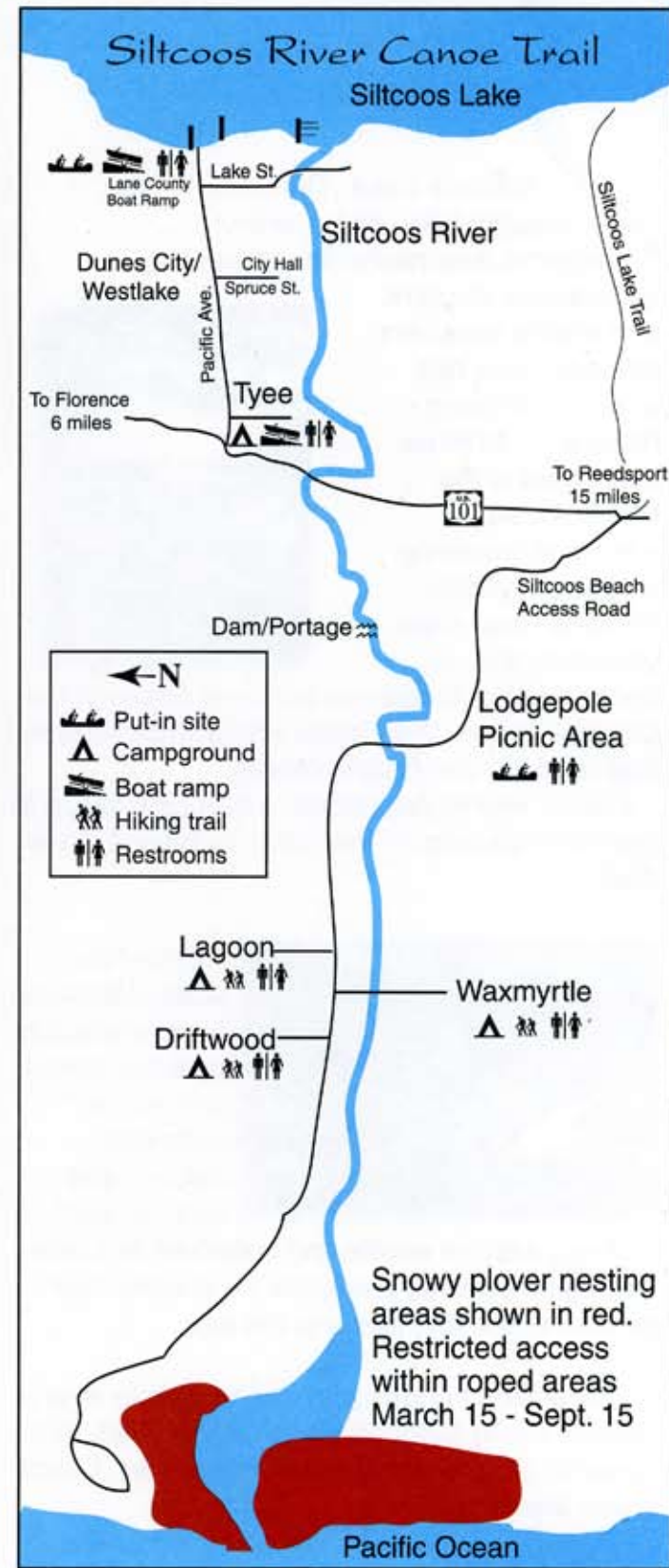
Mammals

A stop along the river's sandy shore-line may reveal more Siltcoos Secrets. Birds are the highest-profile residents, but many mammals live here as well.



Tracks along the river's edge can include those of river otter, mink, black bear, deer, raccoon and beaver. You might even chance upon otters splashing or playing in the water.

As you approach the estuary, you may encounter harbor seals or spot sea lions on the beach.



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