



Nisqually River Water Trail

Nisqually Park at Yelm Powerhouse to 6th Avenue



Length: About 9 Miles

Time: 4-6 Hours (Note: Check the American Whitewater website for up-to-date information about water flows, skills required and suitable water craft).

Description: This reach features scenic views and calm water through residential areas, forested areas and agricultural lands. Wildlife such as eagles, salmon and even mammals such as seals can be spotted along this stretch! This area is surrounded by the Nisqually Reservation and Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM); be sure to stay in your watercraft until you have reached the 6th Ave access point. The 6th Ave access point is owned and operated by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). It offers an easy take-out location, although there is no ramp leading directly to the river. Boaters can park nearby and drag their gear less than 50 feet from the river to their vehicles. A significant amount of wood can accumulate against the shore, limiting the number of places that rafts could safely take-out if it is not removed from time to time.

The river below 6th Ave is tidally influenced, and in less than 2 miles, it spills into Puget Sound. From there, boaters are faced with a long stretch of open water before reaching Luhr Beach. Ocean crafts are recommended for this final stretch of the river.

Safety Information:



This reach contains hazards including a pier, bridge supports, wood and unpredictable debris. Be aware of your surroundings on the water.



Always wear a life jacket and helmet and **bring all proper gear** for weather conditions. Always bring a first aid kit for emergencies.



Check flow conditions, as seasonal rapids and mudflats appear depending on water flow.



The river is very cold. If exposed to the water, **hypothermia** can set in within minutes. Keep extra clothing on hand to ensure that in the case of capsizing that you can get warm quickly.



Leave No Trace is built on seven core principles that are used to communicate the best available minimum impact guidance for enjoying the outdoors responsibly:

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors

5.



Photo credit: Thomas O'Keefe, American Whitewater

Nisqually Park at Yelm Powerhouse
14024 Yelm Hwy SE
Yelm, WA 98597

Centralia Light and Power:
Phone: 360-458-3901
360-888-2617 (after hours)

Hours: 7:00am-8:00pm
(gate opens from inside)

6.



Photo credit: Morgan Greene, Nisqually River Council

The Tank Crossing Bridge

An undeveloped access point on JBLM that is not open to the general public and requires an access pass. Small dirt ramp leading to the river, but no other amenities. Parking is available for those with an access pass.

For information about the access pass, call (253) 967-6277

7.



Photo credit: Steph Stroud, National Park Service

Riverbend Campground
1040 Clubhouse Ln SE
Olympia, WA 98513
riverbendcampgroundwa.com
Phone: (360) 491-2534

Offers camping, boat launch and picnic areas along the Nisqually River. WDFW fishing licenses located inside the camp office.

\$6 day use fee; \$15 for put in/take out (boats on trailers)

To obtain a Discover Pass, visit: <http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov/>

8.



Photo credit: Susan Rosebrough, National Park Service

Nisqually River Wheelchair Fishing Access (6th Avenue Fishing Pier)
11642 6th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98513

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife:
Phone: (360) 902-2200

Hours: 4:00am-10:00pm

A Discover Pass is required to park here.

Risk Disclaimer: The Nisqually River is dynamic and river conditions and hazards can change at any time. Please use at your own risk. This river can be technical and under many conditions may be dangerous to float and may involve the risk of property damage, serious injury, and possible death.

It is your personal responsibility to be prepared with the right equipment and training and to not paddle above your technical ability level, use common sense, and obey all rules.

Flow and up-to-date information from **American Whitewater:**
<https://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/state-summary/state/WA/>

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