



Santiam River

The Santiam River, including the North and South Fork Santiam, drains a basin of some 1,818 square miles. Discharge from the Santiam into the mainstem Willamette provides an abundance of relatively clear, cold water that is beneficial to the health of the overall river. The upper sections of both the North and South Fork Santiam are very scenic, and each of these rivers provides many opportunities for whitewater paddling. The flow of water in this system is largely controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with dams on both the North Fork Basin (Detroit and Big Cliff) and the South Fork Basin (Foster and Green Peter).

From Jefferson down to the confluence with the Willamette, the Santiam is much like the mainstem Willamette in terms of flow and relative ease of paddling.

Like other Willamette tributaries with source waters from the Cascades, the Santiam system is home to multiple native fish species, including Steelhead, Spring Chinook Salmon, and Cutthroat Trout. The Three-Basin Rule, which helps protect the two forks of the Santiam, as well as the McKenzie River, seeks to limit industrial discharges into the upper reaches of these rivers.

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1/4 mile

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