

TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS AT LAVA CANYON & THE MUDDY RIVER GORGE

5/18/1980 - The Mount St. Helens eruption produced a large lahar that scoured vegetation and soil, revealing the Muddy River Gorge.

1982 - Forest Service constructed a parking area, and a short trail to Lahar Viewpoint.

1983 - Forest Service Rangers led guided walks to Lava Canyon.

1994 - Lava Canyon Trail was opened to the public.

5/29/1995 - First fatality at site was Timothy Cameron Jr., age 18, of Vancouver, WA. He left the trail below suspension bridge to get to the water, the rocks were slippery and he fell in and was swept downstream. Timothy was found at bottom of waterfall and airlifted out. He was pronounced deceased on arrival to hospital.

8/20/2000 - First double fatality. A 12-year-old Canadian boy, Yu Ting, left the trail, fell in the river, and was swept downstream. His father, Han Ting, 45, entered the river at metal bridge to rescue his son. Both perished and were recovered by North Country Emergency Services and the Volcano Rescue Team.

2001 - Forest Service installed temporary safety signs, warning of the dangers of being off-trail.

6/15/2002 - Stacy Young Jr., age 5, left trail, went to river's edge and was swept over waterfalls. His father, Stacy James Young, 31, of Bremerton, WA tried to save his son by going in after him. They both lost their lives. They were later recovered by the Volcano Rescue Team.

6/2002 - Forest Service completed installed of new rails to help keep visitors on-trail.

7/13/2003 - Nineteen-year-old Jacob Brown of Springfield, OR, went off the trail and attempted to cross the river. He fell in and was swept over multiple waterfalls. He suffered serious injuries including head laceration, broken ankle, and chipped spine. He was helicoptered out several hours later and taken to hospital. Jacob is the only survivor.

2003 - Forest Service installs over 30 informational, interpretive and permanent safety and warning signs.

2004 to 2015 - No fatalities or major accidents.

2006 to 2009 - Forest Road 83 closed due to a washout during the fall flood of 2006.

7/2016 - Twenty five-year-old Ryan Fowler, of Beaverton, OR, went off the trail and attempted to ford the river. He slipped on the smooth rocks, was swept over the waterfalls, and perished. Ryan was recovered by the Volcano Rescue Team below the waterfalls.

10/2017 - Linda Cawley, age 66, of Vancouver, WA suffered a fatal accident while hiking with a group. She slipped off the trail, fell into the river, and did not survive. She was later recovered by the Volcano Rescue Team.

2018 - Field-going Rangers to Lava Canyon and Mount St. Helens Institute Volunteers are given timeline to help inform the public about dangers of Lava Canyon and leaving the trail.