

In collaboration with the Everett Mountaineers and Casino Road Youth Development Center, OYC sponsored a Backcountry Navigation Clinic at no charge for interested high school students.



Eight students from Mariner and Granite Falls High Schools completed the course, which was offered over two days as a combination of lectures and outdoor exercises.

Students learned about different kinds of maps and their preferred uses. Topographic maps were studied in depth, including identification of terrain features and both natural and man-made landmarks.

The course also covered using a compass as a protractor to measure the bearing between waypoints on a map and to plot a bearing to or from a known position on the map. Students were taught about magnetic declination, proper compass technique and how to navigate off trail with and without a compass.

Advance preparation, off-trail etiquette, and team navigation were discussed and practiced.

Students also were exposed to a variety of route finding tips that they would soon put to use while negotiating a challenging route on a forested ridge near Lake Roesinger.



Successfully completing the route required using many of the skills learned from the lectures. Among them: route planning, traveling by compass, orienting the map, triangulation, identifying landmarks, awareness of cardinal direction, avoiding hazards, and recognizing geographic features. Along the way, students were “invited” to spend some time clearing brush for a stewardship contribution.



While OYC has funded many youth adventures since its inception eight years ago, this is the first one we’ve organized and coordinated ourselves.

We’re excited because it signals a greater level of involvement, positioning us “closer to the action” where we can be even more instrumental in getting kids outdoors.