



DAY TRIP TO LIBERTY

From Cle Elum · Kittitas County, Washington



GOLD MINING



Photo: Schazjmd, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0

LIVING GHOST TOWN

A historic district on the National Register since 1974, with about a dozen residents in 2023. Visitors reported it inhabited and open to walk through in October 2026.

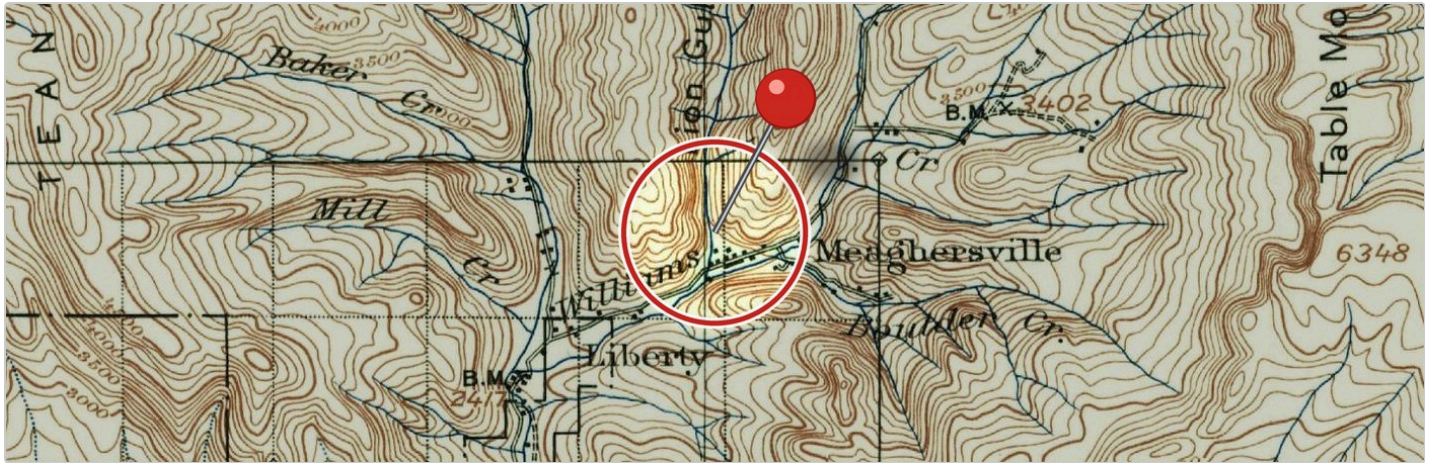
Liberty is 25 minutes from Cle Elum. The street is only about a third of a mile long, so the town makes a short stop; pair it with a picnic or a night at the BLM's Liberty Recreation Site a mile up the road.

A SAMPLE DAY

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| ☐ Morning | Drive from Cle Elum on SR 970 and US 97 to Liberty Road. |
| ☐ Late morning | Walk the street: the cabins, the storefronts, the arrastra, the old power shovel and the mining displays. |
| ☐ Midday | Picnic at the BLM recreation site on Williams Creek. |
| ☐ Afternoon | Back to Cle Elum, or north over Blewett Pass toward Leavenworth. |

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The street.** Shoot down the road to line up the false fronts and cabins.
- **The arrastra.** The round grinding mill under its log-roofed shelter.
- **The town sign.** Liberty's hanging sign, with the Swauk Mining District building behind it.
- **People's homes.** Ask before photographing residents or their yards.



USGS topographic map, 1897 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	17 mi, about 25 min each way from downtown Cle Elum. From Seattle: 100 mi, about 1 h 59 min.
OPEN	Liberty is a town with residents, not a park. The Washington Trails Association suggests parking along the right side of the road as you enter town and respecting residents' private property.
ADMISSION	None.
CAMPING	The BLM's Liberty Recreation Site on Williams Creek has 15 campsites with no fees, two vault toilets and a 14-day limit. Summer weekends are busy.
RESTROOMS	Two vault toilets at the BLM site, a mile up the road.
FOOD AND WATER	None in town. Bring them from Cle Elum.
PHONES	Cell reception is limited.

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Stay out of mine shafts, tunnels and unstable buildings.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 47.25361, -120.66528 • 47°15'13"N
120°39'55"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/washington/liberty/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.