The mill operated briefly during the Depression, using winches from the battleship USS Oregon, but folded after two of the mill's lumber trucks fell off the narrow canyon road. Now a camping area for backpackers, the mill site has one small empty building that can serve as emergency shelter. A short side trail behind the building leads to Sawmill Falls, a 30-foot cascade pouring into a deep green pool ideal for swimming. The road forks 0.2 mile beyond Merten Mill, offering two options. Day hikers interested in the area's mining history may wish to continue straight on the main road 1. The Central and Southern Cascades span several physiographic provinces in Washington and Oregon, including the southern Cascades, the Western Cascades, and the High Cascades (Franklin and Dymness 1973:21-26). This ecoregion extends from Snoqualmie Pass in Washington to just north of the California border. The region is characterized by accordant ridge crests separated by steep, deeply dissected valleys (Franklin and Dymness 1973:21), strongly influenced by historic and recent volcanic events (Mt. Saint Helens).