



WASHINGTON

● Seattle

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

SEASIDE

WESTPORT

PORTLAND

CASCADE LOCKS

BIGGS

CROW BUTTE

UMATILLA

WALLA WALLA

CLARKSTON

CUL DE SAC

KAMIAH

CLEARWATER

LOLO

MOUNT HOOD NATIONAL FOREST

● Eugene

OREGON

IDAHO

● Boise

● Twin Falls

● Reno

NEVADA

● Sacramento

4. On-the-Job Training

AS JIM'S VEHICLE PULLED AWAY, another reality hit home: we were on our own. An interesting assortment of anxiety, adventure, excitement, and satisfaction swept over me. We had a monumental task in front of us. But we had no magical, one-size-fits-all guidebook on how to have a great trip and get home safely. We had chosen to throw that out when we signed up for this trip. Although left to our own devices, we were not alone. We had each other—we were in this together! Accompanied by our modest stash of gear and aids, we could figure this journey out along the way. Debbie and I are both resourceful, task-driven individuals. What better opportunity was there to bond as a team while having the experience of a lifetime? It was a magnificent backdrop to marital bonding, if not bliss—just perfect!

Touring Begins

It was a cloudy day in Seaside, Oregon. This small ocean-side resort town had a summer beach ambiance highlighted by the aqua color of the world's largest ocean. As my wheels began their first turns, I looked down and noticed that the front one was slightly out of true. I had never trued a wheel before. Neither had Debbie. The bike shop where we'd purchased this bicycle had advised me that new bicycle wheels soon fall out of true and would require service well before our journey was completed. Although this minor shimmy was a little sooner than I had expected, I already knew of a good bike shop a hundred miles to the east. The wave of panic soon subsided. I wasn't ready to begin worrying about things I couldn't control. I also wasn't going to make the problem worse by attempting my first repair while we were still in the starting gate.

With our first map displayed clearly through the transparent cover atop my handlebar bag, I plotted the course out of town. We