Welcome to Your National Park!

WHETHER YOU ARE LOOKING FOR WILDERNESS SOLITUDE OR HISTORICAL architecture, spectacular drives or challenging hikes, Mount Rainier National Park has something for you. This issue includes information that will help you plan your activities and have a safe and enjoyable visit.

Winter Driving & Road Closures

Poor visibility and reduced traction present driving hazards during winter. Shady areas and bridge surfaces can be treacherously icy even when other sections of roadway are not. Stay alert! Use caution. State law requires that you carry tire chains at all times when in the mountains. Chains and/or traction tires may be required in the mountains at anytime during winter. Check current road status and traction requirements at an entrance station or visitor center.

As autumn progresses toward winter and storms bring increasing amounts of snow to Mount Rainier, roads will close for winter. Look for most roads to reopen in May or June.

- Sunrise Road closes at the junction with White River Campground Road every night beginning in late September. It reopens each morning as conditions permit. Overnight parking is not allowed at Sunrise when the road is closed nightly. The entire road will be closed for winter at the SR 410 junction on October 14, or earlier with the first heavy snowfall.
- Depending on snowfall, Washington State Department of Transportation usually closes the east section of SR 410 and Chinook Pass in late November. They normally close SR 410 at the northeast park boundary in early December, and Cayuse Pass and SR 123 north of Ohanapecosh close at the same time. Call 1-800-695-ROAD for current status.
- Mowich Lake Road closes October 19, or with the first snowfall.
- Stevens Canyon Road closes November 17, or with the first heavy snowfall.
- The road between Nisqually Entrance and Longmire remains open throughout winter except during extreme weather.
- The road between Longmire and Paradise closes nightly from mid-October through winter. It reopens the following morning or when snow removal activities allow.

Paradise Guide House Rehabilitation

On a ridge near Paradise Inn, the Paradise Guide House has served as a climbing center and a dormitory since its construction in 1920. The Guide House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Paradise Historic District and as part of the Mount Rainier National Historic Landmark District. This historic building is an important part of the park’s history and the early history of the National Park Service.

While visiting Paradise, you’ll see evidence of the extensive repairs needed to maintain this historic building, including replacing the existing masonry stone foundation. Last fall and this spring, we installed a temporary water treatment plant (replacing the existing plant in the basement of the Guide House), completed associated trenching and piping work, and salvaged all viable plants from the construction area. This summer and fall the contractor is working on the foundation. This involves lifting the building and excavating underneath. The construction will affect your visit to Paradise as part of the upper parking lot is cordoned off for construction use and the traffic pattern is altered. Parking in the upper loop (Loop A) of the Paradise Picnic Area will also be limited. Please drive with extra caution.

In Case of Emergency
Dial 911
From any phone located in the park.

2 Road Construction
Summer and fall are the seasons for road construction. Check page 2 for road construction locations that may cause traffic delays, driving tips, and more.

3 Wild Encounters
What would you do if you came face to face with a bear or a mountain lion, or encountered bad weather on the Muir Snowfield? Find out how to prepare for an encounter with the wilder side of Mount Rainier.

4 Park Information
Where are the visitor centers? When are they open? Where can I get something to eat? Which campground is right for me? It’s all on the back page!

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Mount Rainier National Park

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Permits Required

Wilderness Permits
Wilderness Permits are required for backpacking in camp and are available at all Wilderness Information Centers and most visitor centers. Permits are free, but an optional, fee-based reservation system for campers and climbers is in effect May through September. Reservations may be made between April 1 and September 30.

Backcountry reservations are $20 per party (1-12 people) for 1 to 14 consecutive nights. Sixty percent of all backcountry sites and zones are available for reservations. The remaining 40% are issued on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of your arrival to camp. A reservation Request Form is available at Wilderness Information Centers and on the park's website at www.nps.gov/mora/recreation/rwpform.htm.

Climbing Mount Rainier

Over 10,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier each year. About half actually make it to the 14,410-foot summit. Climbing information is available at ranger stations and on the park's website at www.nps.gov/mora/climb/climb.htm.

Winter Group Camping

Winter camping at Paradise is permitted when there is sufficient snow (generally mid-December through April). Parties of 13 to 100 must camp in one of the designated group camping areas at Paradise and must pre-register. Please call (360) 569-2211 ext. 6003 (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) at least a week in advance. Provide group name, leader name, party size, date requested, and a call-back phone number. Your pre-registered permit will be available for pickup at the Longmire Museum on the day of your arrival to camp.

Mount Rainier: An Active Volcano

Recent research has improved our understanding of Mount Rainier, an active volcano. Active steam vents, periodic earth tremors, and reported historical eruptions provide evidence that Mount Rainier is sleeping, not dead. Seismic monitoring stations around the mountain should provide days or weeks of advance warning of impending eruptions. However, other geologic hazards like debris flows and rockfall can occur with little warning.

Needless to say, the longer you stay in an area where there are geologic hazards, the greater the chance that you could be involved in an emergency event. While most people consider the danger to be relatively low, you must decide if you will assume the personal risk of visiting these potentially dangerous locations.

If you are near a river and notice a rapid rise in water level, feel a prolonged shaking of the ground, and/or hear a roaring sound coming up valley - often described as the sound made by a fast-moving freight train - move quickly to higher ground! A location 160 feet or more above river level should be safe. Detailed information is available at park visitor centers and from scientists at the U.S.G.S. Cascades Volcano Observatory, 1300 SE Cardinal Court, Building 10, Suite 100, Vancouver, WA 98666, www.vulcan.wr.usgs.gov.

What's New In Park Planning?

Planning for the future of Mount Rainier National Park is a monumental responsibility shared by park managers and the public alike. You have the opportunity to participate in the park's planning process through review and comment on park management plans open for public comment.

The Commercial Services Plan is open for comment through November 24, 2003. The plan provides a vision for managing commercial activities within the park.

The Fire Management Plan and Environmental Assessment are nearly ready for release. Public meetings and a release date in September are planned. Check the park's website for the specific date.

Plans are available on the park's website at www.nps.gov/mora/current/park_mgt.htm.

Please Recycle!

Mount Rainier National Park has been involved in recycling since the late 1960's. We reduce our consumption of resources by reusing and recycling.

We recycle aluminum cans, plastic (no. 1 and 2), glass, office paper, mixed paper, cardboard, scrap metal, used oil, batteries, and a number of other items.

We also purchase recycled plastic products such as plastic bags, picnic tables, and plastic lumber; paper products made of pre- and post-consumer recycled paper; automobile products; and other products.

Plan for Traffic Delays

Long snowy winters mean that most of Mount Rainier's road work must be done during the busy summer and fall seasons. Please allow extra time in your schedule to accommodate construction delays. Use the time to enjoy the views ... and read the Tahoma News!

Roadwork just east of Christine Falls Bridge and on the Nisqually Glacier Bridge is estimated to go through mid-November. Expect one lane closures with 20 minute delays on weekdays.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to improve visitor facilities throughout the park during this busy season. Please drive carefully. Park roads are narrow with numerous tight curves and you'll be sharing them with many other drivers, construction equipment and crews, bicyclists, and even pedestrians. Buckle up, obey speed limits, and please slow down through the construction zones!

Park Smart Driving

During your visit to the park use these guidelines to help assure a safe visit:

• Don't stop in the road; use a pullout

• Buckle up and use car seats for infants or booster seats for children under 80 lbs – it's the law!

• Use pullouts to allow vehicles to pass if traveling under 30 m.p.h.

• Brake gently – don't swerve to avoid wildlife, you could end up in a collision with a tree or a vehicle!

• Never pass another vehicle while in the park

• Use caution when passing bicycles

Please drive courteously and use sound judgement and caution while visiting Mount Rainier!

Looking for that perfect holiday gift? How about a Mount Rainier Annual Pass or a National Parks Pass?

Purchase your National Parks Pass at any Mount Rainier Entrance Station, on-line at www.nationalparks.org, or by calling 1-888-GO-PARKS. Just $50 (plus shipping and handling if you buy on-line or by phone). Good at any national park site for one full year.

If you only plan to visit Mount Rainier National Park, consider the Mount Rainier Annual Pass. It costs $30 and, like the National Parks Pass, is good for one full year. Available at any Mount Rainier Entrance Station or by calling (360) 569-6003.

* A National Parks Pass can be upgraded to a Golden Eagle Pass for $15. This covers additional sites such as Forest Service trailheads requiring a Northwest Forest Pass, Mount St. Helens, and the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA
The Secret to a Great Visit

Mount Rainier National Park offers excellent opportunities for adventure, exploration, learning, and just plain having fun! The secret to a great visit? Stay safe! Reduce the risk of spoiling your trip by following these guidelines.

Protect Yourself and Your Park

Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 to preserve its resources and to provide for public benefit and enjoyment. By observing the rules, you protect your park and yourself.

• Pets must be on leashes no longer than six feet and are not allowed in buildings, on trails, or on snow.
• Do not feed or disturb the wildlife.
• Stay on designated trails.
• Make fires only in a fire grill. Collecting firewood is prohibited.
• Weapons are prohibited in wilderness. Firearms transported through the park must be unloaded, broken down, and stored to prevent use.
• Bicycle only on roads, not on trails.
• Camp in designated campsites only. Sleeping in vehicles outside of a designated campsite, in parking lots, or in pullouts is not permitted.
• Oil leaks and contaminated water are washed into storm drains to waterways and streams. Help prevent pollutants from entering waterways.

Pay Attention to the Weather

Think about all the ways weather can outsmart you. It's easy to get lost or injured when the weather deteriorates, the trail is covered with snow, and you don't know where you are. You might be in an avalanche zone and not even know it.

Eyes on the Trail

You may be hiking before trail crews have a chance to clear away fallen trees or replace missing foot logs at river crossings. Be especially careful at river crossings. Many people underestimate the power of the water and are unaware of the large, rolling boulders it carries. If you must cross, go in the morning when rivers are generally lower.

Prepare and Take Care

Bring the "10 Essentials" with you and know how to use them (see bottom of page). Tell someone your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return. Do not travel alone. If visibility is poor, do not travel at all. Taking these few precautions could save your life.

Hiking the Muir Snowfield?

The Muir Snowfield, a permanent field of snow, ice, and rock outcrops, is located north of Paradise between 7,000 - 10,000 feet in elevation. Thousands of people hike on the Muir Snowfield each year en route to Camp Muir. On a clear day, the hike is spectacular. But when the weather deteriorates, as it often and unpredictably does, crossing the Muir Snowfield can be disastrous. More hikers, climbers, and snowboarders get lost on the Muir Snowfield each year than in the rest of the park combined. While many find their way out, searches must be initiated for others, and some are never found.

What makes the Muir Snowfield such a dangerous place? The snowfield is made up of snow and rocks. In whitout conditions, snow, rocks, and sky look the same, making it extremely difficult to stay oriented. Even experienced hikers, with limited visibility - you could become quickly lost!

Don't Become a Muir Snowfield Statistic!

• Avoid the snowfield in questionable weather, especially if you are alone or unprepared. Weather conditions can change suddenly and drastically.
• If you're ascending and clouds or fog start rolling in, turn around and head back to Paradise. If that's not possible, stop moving, dig in, and wait for better weather.
• Without a compass, map, and altimeter, it is extremely difficult to find your way to the trailhead in a whitout. Carry these items and know how to use them!
• Do not attempt to descend from Camp Muir in poor weather. Do not descend on skis or a snowboard in limited visibility — you could become quickly lost.
• When hiking to Camp Muir, be sure to carry emergency bivouac gear so that you can spend the night out if you have too.
• While it may be disappointing to abandon your hike to Camp Muir, remember that the snowfield will be there for you next time, in better weather.

Ask a ranger for tips on other areas to explore during your visit.

“Leave No Trace” of your Wilderness trip

• Plan ahead & prepare
• Travel & camp on durable surfaces
• Dispose of waste properly
• Leave what you find
• Minimize campfire impacts
• Respect wildlife
• Be considerate of other visitors

* For emergency use only; fires are not allowed in Mount Rainier's Wilderness.

Wilderness camping permits are required for all overnight stays in the park’s backcountry. Climbing permits are required for travel above 10,000’ and/or on glaciers.

Carry the “10 Essentials” and know how to use them!

• Map of the area
• Compass
• Extra food and water
• First aid kit
• flashlight or headlamp
• Sunglasses & sunscreen
• Pocketknife
• Extra clothing & rain gear
• Emergency shelter
• Matches in a waterproof container*

Animal Encounters

The beauty and wonder of Mount Rainier National Park doesn't just come from the scenic grandeur of a single, towering mountain. The presence of wild creatures remains an essential part of the experience of wilderness. Being in the home of large creatures like bear and mountain lion can make Mount Rainier an exciting and sometimes scary place to visit. You are not likely to see them, more people die annually in the U.S. from bee stings than bear and cougar attacks combined. If you do meet one of these larger mammals, learning more about them serves as your best defense and theirs.

Avoiding Mountain Lion And Black Bear Encounters

• Do not run or panic
• Do not approach it or come between the animal and its young.
• Talk loud to make sure the animal is aware of you; if the animal sees you, back away slowly while facing the animal.
• Pick up and hold small children to avoid rapid movements.
• Avoid trail running.
• Stand upright to make yourself appear larger - wave your arms and make a noisy commotion if the animal stops or moves toward you.
• If attacked, fight back aggressively.

Please report bear and mountain lion sightings to the nearest ranger station.

Explore Mount Rainier From Home!

Learn more about park resources, recreation opportunities, facilities, and much more on the web at www.nps.gov/mora or go directly to one of the following websites:

Education Page
www.nps.gov/mora/education/index.htm
Information on teacher workshops, professional development and more.

Employment Page
www.nps.gov/mora/employment.htm
Great information on jobs within the park.

Nature and Science Page
linked from www.nps.gov/mora
Learn more about the park's natural resources.

Wildlife Notes
www.nps.gov/mora/wildlifenotes/nm-wildlife.htm
Learn about park wildlife, including beavers, black bears, mountain lions, and more.

Nature Notes
www.nps.gov/mora/naturenotes/nm-naturenotes.htm
Nature Notes are issues of the early park newsletter from 1923 through 1939.
Visitors Like You

Just by paying the entrance fee, you make a difference. Eighty percent of the fees collected at Mount Rainier are kept in the park, while twenty percent are made available to other parks in need. Your money is helping several projects right now:

- Planning for the new Education Center
- Rehabilitating park trails
- Meadow restoration at Sunrise and Reflection Lakes
- Upgrading exhibits and media
- Rehabilitating picnic areas

As you explore the park, look for signs of your fees at work:

User Fee

improves this park

Northwest Interpretive Association

NWIA operates bookstores in the park's visitor and information centers. As a nonprofit organization benefiting educational programs in the national parks and forests of the Pacific Northwest, NWIA plays an important role in making interpretive and educational publications available to travelers. It also funds special interpretive projects in the areas it serves. For more information or membership, call (360) 569-2221, ext. 320, or visit NWIA on the web at: www.nwpubliclands.com.

Accessibility

Most comfort stations, visitor centers, picnic areas, and designated campgrounds are accessible or accessible with help for wheelchair users. Accessible lodging is available inside the park and in local communities. In the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise, written information, exhibits, and scripts for uncaptioned audiovisual programs are available. An accessible boardwalk at Kautz Creek (3 miles west of Longmire) overlooks the 1947 debris flow and a view of the mountain.


td: (360) 569-2177

Drive-in Campgrounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Elev.</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th># of sites</th>
<th>Flush Toilets</th>
<th>Pit Toilets</th>
<th>Dump Station</th>
<th>Nearby/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Point</td>
<td>2000'</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SW corner of park, 0.25 miles E of the Nisqually Entrance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cougar Rock</td>
<td>3180'</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td>173 + 5 group sites</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SW corner of park, 2.3 miles NE of Longmire.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohanapecosh</td>
<td>1914'</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td>188 + 1 group site</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SE corner of park, 11 miles NE of Packwood on SR123.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White River</td>
<td>4400'</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>E side of park, 5 miles W of White River Entrance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipsut Creek</td>
<td>2300'</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>28 + 2 group sites</td>
<td>X NO POTABLE WATER</td>
<td></td>
<td>NW corner of park, 5 miles E of Carbon River Entrance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowich Lake</td>
<td>4950'</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>30 walk-in sites</td>
<td>X NO POTABLE WATER</td>
<td></td>
<td>NW corner of park, at the end of SR165. Unpaved road. NO FIRES.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Advance reservations are required for Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh Campgrounds from the last Friday in June through Labor Day (group sites from May 23 - October 12). Call 1-800-365-CAMP up to 5 months in advance, or reserve your site online at http://reservations.nps.gov. The nightly fee during the reservation period is $15 per site. All other campgrounds are operated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Park Partners

Washington's National Park Fund

The Fund was created to restore, enhance, and preserve Washington's national parks. The Fund is a private, independent, not-for-profit organization that works with individuals, businesses, foundations, and others to secure financial and volunteer support for projects to improve the parks. If you'd like to help, look for donation boxes at park visitor centers, or contact Executive Director, Washington's National Park Fund, 303 Third Avenue, Suite 501, Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 770-0677 www.wnpfund.org.

Volunteers

Each year more than 125,000 volunteers donate over 4,500,000 hours of service in the national parks. They come from every state and nearly every country in the world to help preserve and protect America's natural and cultural heritage for the enjoyment of this and future generations. At Mount Rainier National Park, 856 volunteers contributed a total of 31,932 hours in 2002. We extend our deep appreciation to them and to all who are volunteering in 2003! If you are thinking about volunteering, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Tahoma Woods, Star Route, Ashford, WA 98304-9752. Tel. (360) 569-2211 ext.3585.

Interpretive Programs

Stop by a visitor center for information on interpretive activities being offered during your visit. Park rangers and volunteers may be offering talks, guided walks, evening slide programs, or snowshoe walks. These programs explore the park's natural and cultural history and are free.

Hey Kids! Ask for a free Junior Ranger Book at any visitor center. Complete it and you'll earn a badge and certificate. You'll also learn lots of cool stuff about your park!