Welcome to the North Cascades

The National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service are happy that you have included the North Cascades in your recreation and travel plans. The mountains, watersheds, forests and wildlife of this unique landscape make these protected areas an outstanding part of your public lands. A vast amount of the region is designated Wilderness; protecting pristine wild areas is critical to the earth’s well being for watershed and air quality, biological diversity, and wildlife habitat. The special meaning of wilderness for many is both cultural and personal; wilderness is part of our heritage and can also provide a needed respite from our hectic lives.

We cooperatively manage and protect federal lands in the North Cascades. By working together, the two agencies recognize that natural processes happen without regard to political boundaries. Even distant activities that generate pollution and utilize natural resources affect wild places. You, too, have a role to play in preserving your national forests and parks.

We hope this publication encourages you to explore beyond the print. We invite you to share your perspective about the North Cascades. Feel free to contact us at the mailing address on the label. Have a safe and rewarding visit!

William F. Paleck  
Superintendent  
North Cascades National Park Service Complex

The North Cascades National Park Service Complex includes three areas of the National Park System totaling 684,000 acres. The three areas are North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan and Ross Lake National Recreation Areas. Ten years ago, Congress designated 90 percent of the Complex as the Stephen Mather Wilderness. These areas embrace the crest of the North Cascades Mountains and are bounded on the west by the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Jon Vanderheyden  
Mt. Baker District Ranger  
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

The Mt. Baker Ranger District of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest includes more than 530,000 acres in northwestern Washington. The District encompasses:

- Mt. Baker Wilderness
- Noisy-Diobsud Wilderness
- Sections of Glacier Peak Wilderness
- Skagit Wild & Scenic River System
- Mt. Baker National Recreation Area and Baker Lake
- Heather Meadows
- Mt. Baker Scenic Byway

Ten Wild Years!

This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the passage of the Washington Park Wilderness Act. Just 200 years ago, the area we now call western Washington was an infinite wilderness, home only to native flora, fauna, and the Native Peoples. Evergreen forests stretched along the wild coastline, surrounded the glacier-laden Olympic mountains, and extended past Puget Sound to the graceful Cascade peaks. Elk, wolf, bear and cougar thrived in this resource-rich community. Tens of thousands of salmon forged their return up the untamed rivers.

With the 1805 arrival of explorers Lewis and Clark to the Pacific and subsequent settling by fur traders and missionaries, the dramatic alteration of this primeval realm began. Today, almost four million people live in western Washington, with another one million expected by 2020. The vast reaches of wild Washington are gone, but the foresight of the American people saved significant remnants of this immeasurable heritage.

To establish national protection for wilderness, Congress passed the 1964 National Wilderness Act “to assure that an increasing population... does not occupy and modify all areas... leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition.”

“Ten Wild Years!” see page 11
What You Need to Know

Coexisting with Wildlife

Your presence can affect plants and animals. For example, once accustomed to human food, a bear may seek it aggressively. Careful planning, travel and sanitation will reduce your impacts on wildlife.

- Cooking. Try to have your sleeping area and personal gear about 100 yards (90 m) uphill or bear may seek it aggressively. Careful planning, ing gear and personal items free of food odors.
- Food Storage. Keep wildlife wild by not toothpaste or any item with an odor.
- Tree trunk. Also hang cosmetics, sunscreen, soap, ground and at least five feet (1.5 m) out from the tree trunk.

SAFETY TIPS

- Use caution on forest and park access roads.
- At trailheads, safeguard your possessions out of sight. Lock your vehicle.
- Bring extra water on hikes. A fine filter may be necessary, since even clean-looking water can carry giardia. Water may not be available near camps; treat and/or boil all water.
- Know your limits and when to turn back.
- Terrain is the primary cause of accidents in the North Cascades. Staying on trails, wearing adequate footwear and possessing a good topographic map can minimize the hazards of this rugged land.
- Be prepared for insects. You may encounter mosquitoes, wasps, bees, biting flies and ticks. After hiking, check yourself for ticks, which are known carriers of Lyme disease.
- Some stream crossings are not bridged. Cross streams in the morning (when they are lowest), scout for the safest crossings, or turn around if the rushing water is unsafe.
- Trails suffer storm damage every winter; please use caution and notify the park or forest if you encounter downed trees or washed out sections of trail.
- When horses are approaching, hikers should make their presence known and step off the trail on the low side.

Backcountry Safety

Don’t let a pleasurable outing turn into an unexpected tragedy by not being prepared. Entering into a mountain experience — even a day hike — should not be taken lightly.
- Be well informed; contact park or forest for most up-to-date conditions.
- Research maps & trail handbooks.
- Carry the "10 Essentials" (see page 3).
- Let others at home know your plans.
- Make the best decision for your safety, including turning around.

Permits

Persons interested in commercial and non-commercial use of the National Park and Forest for purposes such as filming, outfitting and research must apply to the Forest Service or National Park Service.

National Forest permits for firewood and other forest products are available on a limited basis depending on supply. Permits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis and must be prepared in advance.

Christmas Tree permits are available seasonally during the later part of November into December. Please call or stop by the district office for details.

Mushroom Collection

Is prohibited in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex but is allowed on some state and national forests. Check with local ranger station for rules.

Backcountry Camp

National Park Service: Permits are required for all overnight stays in the Park Complex’s backcountry. More than 200 backcountry camps are available for park visitors. All camps have toilets; signs along trails indicate their location. Permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis from ranger stations on the west side at Marblemound, Sedro-Woolley, Hozomeen, Glacier or on the east side at Chelan, Stehekin, Twisp and Winthrop. For permit information contact:

Wilderness Center
North Cascades National Park 7280 Ranger Station Road Marblemound, WA 98267 Phone: (360) 873-4500, ext. 139

Forest Service: Camping in the National Forest does not require a permit. Overnight visitors to the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area, Chain Lakes and Watson Lakes must camp at designated sites. Parking at trailheads requires a National Forest Trail Park Pass (see page 7). Campfires are not allowed in many backcountry areas located in sub-alpine settings. Most backcountry camps are in designated Wilderness where regulations designed to protect the resource apply. Visitors are encouraged to contact the Mt. Baker Ranger District before heading out to their backcountry destination.

Stay

Campground options are listed in the centerfold, pages 8-9, along with the North Cascades Highway Map. Most vehicle access campgrounds are available on a first-come-first-served basis. However, both the Forest Service (1-800-528-CAMP) and Washington State Parks (1-800-452-5867) have expanded their telephone reservation systems. Washington State Parks information line is (1-800-233-0321). North Cascades National Park does not have individual camping reservations.

Remote accommodations in the North Cascades include: Ross Lake Resort, Rockport, WA 98283, (206) 386-4437; North Cascades Stehekin Lodge, Box 457, Chelan, WA 98816, (509) 682-4494; and Baker Lake Resort (1-888) 711-3033.

Many other private accommodations are available in adjacent communities. Listings are available from visitor information or Chamber of Commerce offices.

Hiking with Children

Bring along extra items such as:
- wholesome snack foods
- extra water
- sunscreen
- insect repellent
- a whistle in case they get lost

Activity Ideas for Children:

Have children bring along a friend or sing songs. Watch for birds in the forest or in the sky; identify plants, bugs, or animal tracks on the ground; listen for wildlife, like the chittering of a woodpecker or the shrill "whistle" of a hoary marmot. Encourage kids to explore using eyes, ears, hands, and nose, and then to draw a picture or write a poem about nature.
### Travel Tips

#### Drive

Thousands of visitors drive for pleasure along the scenic roads of the North Cascades. State Route 20 offers east/west access across the mountains (this route closes during the winter from milepost 134 to 171). By mid-April it is normally possible to travel the entire Cascade Loop outlined on page 16.

The Mt. Baker Scenic Byway, State Route 542, leads visitors to Heather Meadows in the divide between Mt. Baker and Mt. Shuksan. The Mt. Baker Ski Area operates here during the winter months.

#### Hike & Climb

Hundreds of miles of trails lead into the North Cascade mountains. Many enter designated Wilderness.

Day hikers do not require a permit. Overnight stays in North Cascades National Park’s backcountry do. Hikers parking at National Forest trailheads in Washington and Oregon need to purchase a Regional Trail Pass (see page 7 for details).

Know rules and regulations and get current trail conditions at all National Park and Forest Service offices. Obtain complete National Park backcountry information at the Wilderness Information Center in Marblemount.

Climbers should choose experienced partners or licensed guides and fill out Voluntary Climbing Registers at Sedro-Woolley, Marblemount, Glacier or Stehekin. Ask for a Wilderness Trip Planner or a list of outfitter guides.

#### Living Lightly on the Land

The following travel tips related to backcountry use are based on principles developed by the national “Leave No Trace” program.

- **Plan ahead.** Prepare mentally and physically. Choose destinations that you are in condition to handle and take suitable equipment. Check with rangers for current conditions.
- **Limit party size.** Keep party size below 12 animals and people. In cross-country zones, travel in groups of six or fewer.
- **Stay on the trail.** Avoid making parallel trails, cutting switchbacks or widening trails; this causes soil erosion and damage to plants. Wear smooth soled shoes in camp. Leave rocks, flowers, trees and mushrooms.
- **Camp only in designated or established sites.** Prevent the spread of bare areas. In cross-country areas without established sites, avoid fragile alpine vegetation and camp on snow, rock, or in a grassy area of the forest. Do not level ground or dig ditches for tent pads.
- **Use campstoves instead of wood fires.** Fires sterilize the soil and use material that would otherwise recycle naturally. Build fires only in existing fire pits when allowed. Do not burn garbage, even as charred debris attract animals. Do not leave until all coals are cool enough to hold.
- **Pack out litter.** It is a good idea to eat all the food you prepare; leftovers may attract animals. Store garbage in the same manner as food.
- **Dispose human waste properly.** Use vault and compost toilets where provided, and deposit only human waste and toilet paper in them. Urinate on a rock or on bare soil. If no toilets are available, dig a 4-6 inch deep hole 100 yards (90 m) away from campsites and water sources.
- **Leave pets at home.** Pets are prohibited in North Cascades National Park. Taking animals into the backcountry disturbs wildlife. Dogs must be leashed in Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas and developed recreation sites in National Forests. Treat animal waste as you would human waste.

#### Accessible Trails: (ask for brochure)

- **Baker Lake: Shadow of the Sentinels**
- **Newhalem:**
- **Sterling Munro and River Loop at North Cascades Visitor Center:**
- **Trail of the Cedars near town:**
- **Rock Shelter near campground:**
- **State Route 20 at milepost 134.5:**
- **Happy Creek Forest Walk nature trail**
- **Rainy Pass:**
- **Rainy Lake Trail, paved one mile route to Rainy Lake**
- **Heather Meadows:**
- **Picture Lake; Fire & Ice; Artist Ridge**

#### More Self-Guided Trails:

- **Newhalem Creek Campground:**
  - **To Know a Tree Trail**
- **Colonial Creek Campground:**
- **Thunder Woods Nature trail**
- **Hozomeen: Trail of the Obelisk**
- **Stehekin:**
  - **Imus Creek and McKellar Cabin**

#### Naturalist Programs:

- **Amphitheaters at Colonial Creek, summer nightly programs, and at Newhalem Creek, weekend only, see schedules**

- **North Cascades Visitor Center, daily walks, talks, and multi-media programs**

- **Heather Meadows, summer programs**

- **Skagit Wild and Scenic River Eagle Watching, winter weekends: slide programs and nature viewing**

- **Golden West Visitor Center, summer daily mini-talks and evening programs**

#### TOP 10 ESSENTIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navigation</strong></td>
<td>Topographic map and compass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>Extra extra food and water. Boiling water kills giardia; treatment pills may not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong></td>
<td>Extra clothing, including rain gear, wool socks, sweater, gloves and hat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Light</strong></td>
<td>Flashlight with spare bulb and batteries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fire</strong></td>
<td>Waterproof matches and fire starter such as a flint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sun Protection</strong></td>
<td>Sunglasses and sunscreen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Aid</strong></td>
<td>Aid kit including any special medications you might need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knife</strong></td>
<td>A folding pocket knife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signal</strong></td>
<td>Audible/visual whistle &amp; metal mirror.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency Shelter</strong></td>
<td>Plastic tube shelter or waterproof bivouac sack.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ride

Stock (horses, mules, donkeys and llamas) are welcome on trails maintained to stock standards. Trails in the National Park and National Forests have different rules and seasons of use. Please check with the ranger station for detailed information and a list of stock trails and their current conditions.

- **Stock in Wilderness:**
  - Stock parties on trails are limited to a total of 12 people and stock combined; for example, five people and seven horses. In National Park areas where stock are allowed off-trail, the limit is six.
  - Grazing is permitted in Ross Lake and Lake Chelan National Recreation Areas. Grazing permits are required and can be obtained with your backcountry permit.
  - Grazing is permitted in national forests but must be at least 200 feet from shoreline of any lake. No permit required.
  - Grazing is prohibited in North Cascades National Park.
  - In Wilderness, pack in sufficient processed feed pellets for your trip. Possessing or transporting any livestock feed other than processed feed is prohibited.

#### Bike

Many people tour the North Cascades Highway and Mt. Baker Scenic Byway by bicycle. The remote beauty of these routes offers a unique and challenging experience. Be well supplied with water, food, warm, waterproof clothing. Travel single file on the right edge of the road and use reflectors and bright clothing.

Hiking trails are not designed for bike use; most trails are closed to motorists and bicycles. Most side roads are rugged enough for the most avid mountain biker.

#### Boat

Recreation in the North Cascades can be water-oriented. For lake recreation, boat ramps are available at Lake Chelan, Baker Lake, Goose Lake and Diablo Lake, and the north end of Ross Lake at Hozomeen. Boat rentals are offered at Baker Lake, Lake Chelan, and Ross Lake. Passengers travel to Stehekin by cruising up the 55-mile long Lake Chelan. The Lake Chelan Boat Company operates year-round, daily spring to fall. Schedules are available.

River floating is an adventure worth planning. Experienced boaters run the Skagit, Nooksack and Stehekin Rivers. For boating trips, plan in advance and ask for schedules, plus a list of Accommodations and Services or Outfitter Guides from a ranger station.

#### Fish

Fishing in Washington, including in National Parks and Forests, requires a valid Washington State fishing license. The Skagit River (Washington’s second largest after the Columbia) and its impounded lakes are home to seven species of anadromous fish (five are salmon) and trout.

In order to protect spawning fish populations, it is necessary to comply with special regulations including closures, seasons, catch limits and gear restrictions. These are listed in the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife game fish regulations.

Lake Chelan has fresh water cod and salmon. The Stehekin River gives anglers a good chance at rainbow and cutthroat trout. Bait shops and local anglers are the best sources of information and advice.
Just like you, a plant or animal has an "address" that describes its natural home or habitat. Like any close-knit community, the North Cascades consist of different "neighborhoods" of habitat – defined by elevation – called lifezones.

Lively Lifezones: Ridge

Alpine Zone

Rocky Ridges: Life in an Icebox

At high elevations, nature's freezer defrosts drip by drip. Cracking blue clusters of ice bury the tops of treeless rocks. Frigid winds and constant snowfall challenge organisms to adapt. Ice worms and red algae are some of the few life forms nurtured at the summits of the alpine zone.

Where to visit Alpine zones
Elevation 7,000+ feet or 2,100+ meters
- High mountain peaks and ridges can be difficult to reach.
- 200+ peaks offer equipped, experienced mountaineers alpine challenges from scrambles to multi-day climbs.

Subalpine Zone

Mountain Meadows: Winter Welcome Mats

Subalpine creatures nestle down in a habitat that invites chilly weather and nearly shrugs off summer. Stunted trees cluster on humps amid open meadows and rocky outcrops awaiting snow melt for a brief chance to grow after eight months of cold in the subalpine zone.

Where to visit Subalpine zones
Elevation 4,000-7,000 feet or 1,200-2,100 meters
- Hike: Cascade Pass, Heather and Maple Pass, Sourdough Mountain Trails in Mt. Baker NRA
- Drive to: Heather Meadows

White-tailed ptarmigans frequent alpine and subalpine zones and change plumage with the seasons to avoid predators.

Hoary marmots are nicknamed "whistle pigs" because of their high-pitched calls.
to River Neighborhoods of Nature

Silver Fir Zone
Mountain Forests:
Wet and Wooded Mansions

If mountain forest habitat was a many-roomed house, the rivers and streams would be its hallways. Thousands of watery corridors connect the mountain slopes to the sea. These wet and wooded forests of the silver-fir zone provide shelter for many animals, including insects and birds.

Where to visit Silver Fir zones
Elevation 2,000-5,500 feet or 600-1,700 meters
 coch Hike: Cascade Pass Trail
 coch Drive: Mt. Baker Scenic Byway
State Route 20 near Rainy Pass

Seeds from evergreen cones, like the mountain hemlock in the silver fir zone, are the Townsend's chipmunk's favorite food.

Cool running streams provide a path of life and death for five species of salmon and food for the black bear, a casual visitor between silver-fir and hemlock zones.

Hemlock, Redcedar, Douglas-fir Zone
River Valleys:
Forest Floors Thrive on Soil

Most recipes for life in nature's kitchen start on the forest floor with fertile, moist soils teeming with life. The hemlock, redcedar, Douglas-fir forest contains a great diversity of plants and animals, including more than 3,400 species of "bugs."

Where to visit Hemlock, Redcedar, Douglas-fir zones
Elevation: 0-2,000 feet or 0-600 meters
 Coch Hike: Happy Creek Forest Walk - State Route 20
Shadows of the Sentinels - Baker Lake
Thunder Creek Trail - Diablo Lake
Horseshoe Bend Trail - Highway 542

The banana slug is a woodland native that is a key forest recycler. Can you find the opening to its spongy lung on the side of its body?

Black-tailed deer

Each time you take a step, 20,000 arthropods (insects, spiders, etc.) could be beneath your foot.
Points of Interest

Mt. Baker Scenic Byway
The upper 24 miles of the Mt. Baker Highway (State Route 542) is designated a National Forest Scenic Byway and a Washington State Scenic Highway. The route winds along the North Fork Nooksack River, ending at spectacular Artist Point, elevation 5,140 feet, in the Heather Meadows Area. At road’s end, trail systems lead into the Mt. Baker Wilderness. During winter months, motor traffic ends at the Mt. Baker Ski Area.

Glacier Public Service Center (MP 34)
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Jointly operated by the Forest Service and National Park Service during the summer season, mid-May through mid-October.

Mt. Baker Vista
Dramatic viewpoint at the end of Glacier Creek Road (Forest Road 39).

Horseshoe Bend Trail (MP 36)
One-and-a-half mile hiker-only trail wanders along a forested ledge above the North Fork Nooksack River.

Nooksack Falls (MP 41)
Dramatic waterfall plummets more than 100 feet over rocky outcrops. Fence-lined pathway leads to viewpoint.

Heather Meadows Area Trail (MP 53)
Subalpine setting near the summit of Mt. Baker and Mt. Shuksan. Heather Meadows Visitor Center open during July and August. Self-guided interpretive trails, vistas, naturalist programs, and picnicking.

Entering Wilderness

Requires Preparation

The Mt. Baker Ranger District contains two Wilderness areas, Mt. Baker and Noisy-Diobsud, and part of a third, Glacier Peak. When entering Wilderness areas, be prepared for risk and challenge. These lands remain in a wild and natural state, untrammelled and uninhabited by human beings. The terrain can be rugged and the weather unpredictable. Keeping Wilderness intact for future generations requires some regulation. Party size in Wilderness is limited to 12, including saddle and stock animals.

To preserve the solitude of others, no motorized or mechanized equipment is allowed in Wilderness, and campfires are prohibited in many areas.

Please check with the nearest ranger station for current conditions before entering Mt. Baker Ranger District's Wilderness areas.
Skagit Wild and Scenic River System

Remarkable fisheries, wildlife and scenic qualities led to the designation of segments of the Sauk, Suiattle, Cascade and Skagit Rivers in the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1978.

Winter on the Skagit River has a special kind of magic — the magic of salmon returning from the ocean to spawn and die, followed by the return of one of the largest populations of wintering bald eagles in the Pacific Northwest.

During the winter months of the eagles’ visit to the Skagit, Eagle Watcher Volunteers staff sites along the Skagit River between Rockport and Marblemount. Volunteers help manage visitor use along the river by distributing handouts about eagle watching etiquette, monitoring spotting scopes and sharing reference materials. Interpretive programs are also offered at several locations on eagles and ecology of the Skagit River. The Eagle Watcher Program is sponsored by the Forest Service and North Cascades Institute.

Mt. Baker National Recreation Area
8,600 Acres; established 1984

Hikers and stock parties access the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area at the end of Forest Road 13 or on the Mt. Baker Wilderness trails in the Middle Fork and South Fork Nooksack river drainage. Trails are open to stock parties from August 1 to November 1. Visitors are urged to stay on designated trails and respect trail closure signs. Overnight campers must camp at designated sites established for their use. No campfires are allowed in the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area. In winter, recreationists snowmobile, nordic ski and snowshoe.

Please ask for detailed information on designated campsites and trail systems at the district office in Sedro-Woolley.
Explore the North Cascades Highway:

1 Baker Lake M.P. 82 (off State Route 20)
- Nine mile long recreational reservoir. Developed campgrounds accessible off the Baker Lake Highway. Maple Grove Campground on the lake's eastern shore is accessed by boaters or hikers along the East Bank Trail.

2 Mt. Baker National Recreation Area M.P. 82
- Access via Forest Roads 12 and 13 off Baker Lake Highway. Mt. Baker NRA trailhead camp available for one night, for horse users (after August 1), and for bikers.

3 Rockport M.P. 96-98
- Sank Mt. Trail access off Forest Roads 1030 and 1036. Switchbacks users (after August 1), and for hikers.

4 Skagit Wild and Scenic River System
- Segments of the Skagit, Sauk, Suiattle, and Cascade Rivers. Spawning salmon attract many wintering bald eagles.

5 Marblemount M.P. 106
- Wilderness Information Center (one mile north of SR 20 on Ranger Station Road) and North Cascades National Park Backcountry Permits, (360) 873-4500. Permits are free; available in person only.

6 Cascade River Road
- Cross bridge over Skagit River at east end of town. Rough gravel road leads through National Forest to Cascade Pass trailhead in North Cascades National Park.

7 Ross Lake National Recreation Area M.P. 112
- Thornton Lakes Road/Trail: access 4.7 miles up windy, gravel road (see trail chart on page 13 for details).
- Goodell Creek Campground: Rustic sites along Skagit River, open all year, but without water and services in winter; $7. Raft launch.

8 Colonial Creek Campground M.P. 130
- Campground on Diablo Lake; $10 fee from early May to October.

9 Diablo and Ross Lake Overlooks
- Diablo Lake Overlook — Spectacular views and detailed geology exhibit. Ross Dam Trailhead and Happy Creek Forest Trail; Ross Lake Resort — (206) 386-4437. Floating cabin, boat rentals, postage service and water taxi.

10 East Bank Trailhead M.P. 138
- Panther Creek Trail, East Bank Trail and Ruby Creek Trails converge near here.

11 Rainy Pass Picnic Area M.P. 158
- One-mile accessible paved trail leads to Rainy Lake, waterfall and glacier view platform. Longer hikes to Lake Ann (2 miles) or around Maple Pass loop (7.5 miles). Not snow-free until late July.

12 Washington Pass M.P. 162
- Restroom facilities and accessible viewpoint trail open in July.

13 Upper Methow Valley M.P. 180
- Mazama turnoff to Hart's Pass (22 miles); reaches highest point accessible by vehicles in Washington State (closed to trailers).

Your Map & Camping Guide to State Route 20

Accessibility Opportunities for All
- The National Park and Forest Services have been working hard to make recreational facilities available to everyone. Barrier-free trails, campgrounds, viewpoints, restrooms, and visitor information centers, are being continually upgraded for accessibility throughout the North Cascades.

Car Camping in the North Cascades
- Many public campgrounds in the North Cascades are accessible by road. Most sites are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Some private campgrounds and resorts provide cabins and showers.
- Free campgrounds are primitive, requiring that you bring your own water and pack out garbage.
- Some National Park campgrounds offer ranger/naturalist programs.
- Reservations are taken at most National Forest campgrounds; call 1-800-280-CAMP for details. Call Sedin-Woolley (360-856-5700) to inquire about National Park and National Forest group camp reservations.

Camping Map Legend:
- FS = Forest Service
- SP = WA State Park
- P = Puget Power
- NP = National Park Service
- CP = County Park

For trails information along State Route 20, please see chart on pages 7 and 12.
Wilderness: A Treasured Natural Resource

The Mt. Baker Ranger District joins North Cascades National Park in celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Washington Park Wilderness Act by recognizing the significance of designated Wilderness as a national treasure and enduring resource. National Forest wilderness areas on the Mt. Baker Ranger District include the 117,900 Mt. Baker Wilderness and 14,300 acre Noisy-Diobsud Wilderness and part of the Glacier Peak Wilderness.


The Forest Service and the National Park Service face the challenge of providing for human values and benefits while preserving the wilderness character. These lands represent opportunities for recreational use, scientific study and education. Natural processes are allowed to operate freely within Wilderness in order to ensure their continued integrity.

Discover the Wonder of Waterfalls

Water is the essence of the North Cascades. It falls from the sky. Water melts off of glaciers, rages in rivers and — most dramatically — plunges from high places in spectacular waterfalls, abundant in these mountains.

Where to discover waterfalls: (see map on pages 8-9)

Ladder Creek: Located at milepost 121 on the North Cascades Highway (SR 20) behind the Gorge Overlook. Cross a suspension bridge to the powerhouse then follow sign. The trail's 4.6-mile loop (6.6 km) takes you to beautiful pools, falls, and flower gardens. The trail includes some steep steps and handrails. Flashlights are advisable at night.

Gorge Creek Falls: Located between Newhalem and Diablo on the North Cascades Highway (SR 20). Gorge Creek drops 242 feet (73 meters) in a breathtaking plunge. A large parking area is near the falls.

Rainbow Falls (Baker Lake): Located in the Baker Lake Basin, Rainbow Creek cascades down a steep gorge with more than a 100 foot drop (30 meters). On a sunny day you will see a colorful rainbow from the viewpoint on Forest Service Road #1130.

Rainbow Falls (Sthekin): From high above Sthekin Valley in the snowfields of Rainbow Ridge, the waters of Rainbow Creek plunge 312 feet (94 meters) in a misty cascade and end their journey in the Stehekin River. Nooksack Falls Located at milepost 41 on the Mt. Baker Highway (SR 542) past the town of Glacier, the North Fork Nooksack River drops more than 100 feet (30 meters) into a roaring mass of boiling water. One of the first hydroelectric power plants in Washington uses this drop to generate power.

Visit Under a Canopy of Ancient Forests

A abundant rain and mild winters provide the perfect environment for trees in the Pacific Northwest to grow very large and old. Not so long ago ancient forests of Douglas-fir and redcedar blanketed nearly all of the Pacific Northwest. These trees were so big that a wedge cut in a trunk could hold a dozen or more timber workers as they posed for a picture. Early settlers would sometimes make homes out of hollow stumps just by building roofs over them. Now most of these old giants are gone, but in the wilds of the North Cascades, you can still visit forests that have never been cut and still retain all the characteristics of an old-growth forest.

How can you tell if you are visiting an old-growth forest? Look for a forest canopy of multi-levels, like Douglas-fir towering over shade-tolerant hemlock struggling upward with downed logs and standing dead trees, called snags. To be considered an ancient grove, these trees must be at least 200-300 years old.

Where to visit ancient forests:

State Route 20 — Thunder Creek and Big Beaver trails in the Ross Lake National Recreation Area offer long hikes through outstanding western slope, low elevation old-growth forest.

State Route 542 — Horseshoe Bend Trail across from Douglas Fir Campground at milepost 36.15 mile hike on a forested ledge above the North Fork Nooksack River.

Baker Lake Area — Shadow of the Sentinels is a barrier-free loop trail; East Bank Trail follows the east shore of Baker Lake and enters the Baker River drainage at the upper end.

Old-growth forests are not defined solely by trees. Ancient forests are a magnificent and complex strand in the web of life where all things are connected. Lichen in the forest canopy absorb the surrounding air's nitrogen, which is washed into the soil and used by forest vegetation; symbiotic fungi attached to plant roots supply their host with water and nutrients and, in return, take in carbohydrates; animals eat plants and help spread seeds across the forest to begin a new cycle of growth.

When ancient forests are cut, it takes years to rebuild the severed connections. "When we try to pick it out anything by itself, said conservationist and nature writer John Muir, "we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."
North Cascades National Park: Discover the Essence

To discover the special qualities of the North Cascades National Park, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, is to uncover a treasure chest of countless stories. Years ago, would you have had the spirit to spend days finding simple treasures like food, gold or chert for arrowheads? Many people have walked these paths before you for as many different reasons. Preserved in these lands are clues to our future in a wealth of stories of the past.

Your adventure begins with a story about wilderness. You will find that 93 percent of the 684,000-acre park is designated Wilderness (see related article on page 1). The land has been preserved for you to explore, enjoy and experience the gift of solitude.

Wilderness lands surround the park and provide a cushion of habitat for wildlife like the grizzly bear that need large tracts of land to survive. These remote lands offer sanctuary for numerous rare and sensitive plants and animals. Reach around you and down for a tale about diversity. Touch the corky bark of an old-growth tree or smell the musty aroma of the moss-covered soil around its roots.

Park biologists found more than 300 species of beetles in the Big Beaver Valley. Seventy-five mammal species and at least 200 bird species inhabit the park. More than 1,700 flowering plant species live amid the wet westerly winds and dry eastern slopes of the North Cascades. With a variety of climates and great vertical heights, the park preserves some of the most diverse life systems in the northern latitudes.

Look about you and up for the epic about glaciers. Do you see the jagged snow-covered peaks scraping the sky? Glaciers, thick sheets of moving ice, shaped the mountains and valleys and still sculp the land today.

Ten Wild Years, continued from page 1

Protection of Washington's crown jewels began with the establishment of Mount Rainier National Park in 1899, Olympic National Park in 1938, and the North Cascades National Park Service Complex in 1968. But concern remained that national park status would not fully secure preservation of these parks' pristine areas.

This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the passage of the Washington Park Wilderness Act.

In March 1988, Senators Dan Evans and Brock Adams and Congressman Rod Chandler introduced legislation to designate a total of 1.7 million acres of wilderness within the three parks. Evans stated before the Senate that "we want the wilderness lands around the park and provide a cushion of habitat for wildlife like the grizzly bear that need large tracts of land to survive. These remote lands offer sanctuary for numerous rare and sensitive plants and animals. Reach around you and down for a tale about diversity. Touch the corky bark of an old-growth tree or smell the musty aroma of the moss-covered soil around its roots.

Park biologists found more than 300 species of beetles in the Big Beaver Valley. Seventy-five mammal species and at least 200 bird species inhabit the park. More than 1,700 flowering plant species live amid the wet westerly winds and dry eastern slopes of the North Cascades. With a variety of climates and great vertical heights, the park preserves some of the most diverse life systems in the northern latitudes.

Look about you and up for the epic about glaciers. Do you see the jagged snow-covered peaks scraping the sky? Glaciers, thick sheets of moving ice, shaped the mountains and valleys and still sculpt the land today.

McAlester Pass — Rainbow Lake Loop (via Bridge Creek - Pacific Crest Trail)

Loop trip: 25.5 miles (41 km)
Hiking time: 3 days
High Point: 6,500 feet (1,950 m)—McAlester Pass
Snow free: Mid-July to October

Hannegan Pass — Ross Lake
One-way trip: 46 miles (74 km)
Hiking time: 5 - 6 days
High Point: 5,206 feet (1,562 m)—Whatcom Pass
Snow free: Mid-July to October

Colonial Creek Campground — Stehekin Valley
One-way trip: 29.4 miles (47 km)
Hiking time: 3 days
High Point: 6,040 feet (1,812 m)—Park Creek Pass
Snow free: Late-July to September

Walk on the Wild Side!
Multi-day Backpacking Hikes in the North Cascades

Day hikes are a great way to see the North Cascades, but there is nothing like a multi-day trip to really experience wilderness.

Below are several ideas for hikes you may want to try (backcountry permits required).

Two excellent trail books, Popular Trails and Backpacking from Stehekin, list dozens of other long hikes in the North Cascades. Both are available at all ranger stations.

On day 3 of this hike you can take a worthwhile side trip to one of the most scenic areas at this elevation in the park. Wildflowers, views of glaciers and about a dozen waterfalls are all part of the upper Little Beaver Valley around Twin Rocks Camp.

The first 10 (16 km) miles wind through spectacular old growth forest. Terrific views of glaciers and the national park at the upper end of the Thunder Creek Valley. This valley drains 10 percent of all the glaciers in the contiguous United States.

Archeological finds tell us that human habitation followed receding glaciers of the last ice age. North Cascades glaciers supply water for fish, wildlife, plants and people in the Puget Sound Region.

Now listen for a memoir about falling water.

Can you hear the sound that suggests the name of these mountains? Melt water dripping from glaciers collects and then cascades into alpine lakes and thunders through gorges and into river valleys.

Lakes and streams within the North Cascades provide abundant habitats for wildlife, settings for outdoor recreation and sites for three dams.

Water has provided pathways into the mountains for Native People for at least eight thousand years. Native People pioneered the mountain trails of today along with trappers, prospectors, engineers, loggers and settlers in the last century.

Take time to think of the stories of those who came before you. Imagine, believe and discover, then tell your own story of the essence of the North Cascades.

Please ask a park employee for information about a safe and enjoyable stay in the North Cascades. We appreciate your help and ideas in protecting some of the grandest national treasures.

Always check with rangers for detailed hiking information and current conditions.
Ross Lake National Recreation Area

Thirty miles of State Route 20 access Ross Lake National Recreation Area, offering much of the region's camping, hiking and boating opportunities. Three reservoirs provide power for Seattle City Light and recreational activities for visitors. The three dams vary in height: Gorge – 300 feet, Diablo – 389 feet, and Ross – 540 feet, with corresponding differences in lake size.

Diablo Lake's name is adopted from a Chinook word influenced by early Spanish explorers meaning "devil." Diablo Lake is open year round to fishing and boating. Camping and boat landing is available at Colonial Creek Campground or by backcountry permit (see page 2) at three boat-in sites.

The uniquely-colored waters of Diablo Lake are due to the high concentration of glaciers upstream. The glaciers grind rock into a fine powder that stays suspended in the lake. Light reflecting off those rock particles causes the intense turquoise lake color. Thunder Creek is the major stream contributing glacial sediment to the lake.

Diablo Lake is the largest of three reservoirs created by the impounded waters of the upper Skagit River. Ross Lake winds and twists almost 25 miles from the dam north to the Canadian border at Hope, British Columbia. Hozomeen Campground is primitive, and it is necessary to pack out all litter and refuse. Ross Lake's limited access helps protect the pristine quality of the lake and its environment.

Ross Lake has a quality sport fishery of naturally reproducing trout that opens for fishing July 1 each year. The catch limit is three rainbow trout (13 inch minimum) per day. No bait or barbed hooks are allowed. If a catch is not taken, they must be carefully and immediately released. A Washington State fishing license is required.

Ross Lake's natural fishery is unique, since the pressures of over-fishing have made stocking other lakes and creeks with hatchery fish unnecessary. Natural spawning occurs in the Skagit River above Ross Lake and in the tributary streams like Big Beaver, Lightning, Roland, Dry, and Ruby Creeks. All of Ruby Creek and 1/4 mile upstream from the mouth of Big Beaver are closed to fishing. All other tributaries are closed for one mile upstream.

The North Cascades Visitor Center, near Newhalem, interprets the North Cascades wilderness through exhibits and theater programs. Models, photographs, and videos demonstrate the variety of plants and animals of the mountain life zones (see page 4.5 for related article). Wall maps and the relief model at the center of the lobby provides information about the region's geology. Explore both the natural and human history of the area on trails near the visitor center. The new Rock Shelter trail highlights Native American life. To Know a Tree and River Loop trails allow you to examine the varied habitats along the Skagit River. Check with rangers about local hikes and ranger programs at local hikable lobbies and highlights.

Newhalem Area Map: State Route 20(MP120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Route 20 Trails</th>
<th>State Route 20 Milepost</th>
<th>Distance (Round-trip)</th>
<th>Elevation Gain</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thornton Lakes</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>10.4 miles</td>
<td>2,300 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>Long day hike; permit needed for overnight backcountry camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterling Munro</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>660 feet</td>
<td>level</td>
<td>very easy</td>
<td>Boardwalk; view into the Picket Range; universally accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Loop</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1.8 miles</td>
<td>50 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>Forested walk to river; accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Shelter</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td>30 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>Accessible boardwalk to campsite used thousands of years ago by native peoples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyramid Lake</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.2 miles</td>
<td>1,500 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>Steep forest; stream; small lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diablo Lake</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>7.6 miles</td>
<td>400 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>Trailhead across Diablo Dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder Creek</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1.6 - 38 miles</td>
<td>6,300 feet</td>
<td>easy-difficult</td>
<td>Easy 1.6 miles round-trip to suspension bridge; permit needed for overnight backcountry camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth of July Pass/ Panther Creek</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td>2,900 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>Access trail by hiking 1.8 miles up Thunder Creek Trail; steep to pass; permit needed for overnight backcountry camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross Dam</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>1.5 miles</td>
<td>-500 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>Short, steep trail from State Route 20 to dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Creek Forest Walk</td>
<td>134-5</td>
<td>.3 miles</td>
<td>level</td>
<td>very easy</td>
<td>Accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bank</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>.5 - 34 miles</td>
<td>1,500 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>Trail east (Canyon Creek) or west (Ross Lake); permit needed for overnight backcountry camping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lake Chelan National Recreation Area

Stehekin, in the heart of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, is a remote community situated along the lower few miles of the Stehekin River. It is a small community with no road connections to the rest of the world, making it a pleasant escape from life's frantic pace.

Visitors and residents arrive by passenger ferry or private boat, hiking, horseback, or float plane. Boaters using docks on Lake Chelan need to purchase a dock site pass to utilize any of the 16 public docks provided there. A $5 daily or $40 season pass is available to help defray dock and lakeside campground maintenance expenses.

When you arrive at Stehekin, come to the National Park Service's Golden West Visitor Center for information.

In the Golden West Gallery, the Arts and Humanities of Stehekin presents arts, crafts and programs by local and regional artists. Shows change every three weeks from May through October.

What to do when visiting Stehekin

Hour Stay

- Visit Golden West Visitor Center, which has exhibits, an art gallery, programs, books and naturalist talks.
- Learn about homesteading along the McKellar Cabin Trail. Allow 15 minutes walking time.

Three-Hour Stay

- Walk the Imus Creek Nature Trail, a 3/4 mile self-guided loop with views that starts at Golden West Visitor Center.
- Pedal a bike 3.5 miles to Rainbow Falls, Old School and Buckner Orchard.

Whole Day

- Take the shuttle bus and narrated tour up valley.
- Stroll down the Lakeshore Trail with a picnic lunch.

Overnight

- Ride a bus to a trailhead and day-hike or backpack one of the many trails listed below.
- Attend a naturalist program at the Golden West Visitor Center. Check at the front door for program schedule.

Creatures of Habitat

Beavers, the largest North American rodent, can chew bark off wood underwater without drowning, thanks to watertight closures behind their incisors and epihlotis.

Stechkin Trails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trailhead from Landing</th>
<th>Distance (One Way)</th>
<th>Elevation Gain</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lakeshore</td>
<td>Golden West Visitor Center</td>
<td>17.2 miles</td>
<td>500 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple Creek</td>
<td>Golden West Visitor Center</td>
<td>7.5 miles</td>
<td>5,700 feet</td>
<td>strenuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Loop</td>
<td>2.6 miles</td>
<td>4.4 miles</td>
<td>1,000 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stehekin River</td>
<td>4.4 miles at Hartsoquin campground</td>
<td>4 miles</td>
<td>level</td>
<td>easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coon Lake</td>
<td>11.1 miles at High Bridge</td>
<td>1.2 miles</td>
<td>600 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGregor Mountain</td>
<td>11.1 miles at High Bridge</td>
<td>7.7 miles</td>
<td>6,525 feet</td>
<td>very strenuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnes Gorge</td>
<td>11.3 miles</td>
<td>2.5 miles</td>
<td>400 feet</td>
<td>easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge Creek</td>
<td>15.9 miles</td>
<td>14.3 miles</td>
<td>2,600 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goode Ridge Lookout</td>
<td>16.1 miles</td>
<td>5 miles</td>
<td>4,800 feet</td>
<td>strenuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cascade Pass</td>
<td>20.1 miles</td>
<td>8.1 miles</td>
<td>3,000 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoe Basin</td>
<td>20.1 miles</td>
<td>6.6 miles</td>
<td>2,000 feet</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 13
Volunteer Service Helps Forest Trails

As visitation to the National Forests rises, maintenance needs on the Mt. Baker Ranger District often exceed the agency's resources. Combined efforts between the Forest Service, private individuals and organizations like Washington Trails Association (WTA) and Volunteers for Outdoor Washington (VOW) have moved forward to protect trails, promote education and enhance recreational opportunities.

Skagit River Gains Momentum

Effective management of the Skagit Wild & Scenic River System depends on cooperative stewardship of the outstandingly remarkable values recognized in its designation. Local communities, private individuals, the Forest Service and North Cascades Institute (NCI) work together to protect, maintain, and restore these values. The crux of these efforts are focused on education. Organized activities associated with North Cascades Institute's Skagit Watershed Education Project explore the river as a whole system with an emphasis on the relationship between healthy watershed and fisheries populations. The Eagle Watcher program coordinated by the Forest Service and NCI trains volunteers to provide bald eagle information to visitors during winter months along the Skagit. Offshoots to these two established programs are efforts focused on river monitoring by a new cadre of volunteers called the Skagit Stewards and interpretive planning for the river system begun this year. For more information, please feel free to contact Skagit Wild & Scenic River Manager, Jim Chu at the Mt. Baker Ranger District.

Ross Lake Enhancements Underway

Visitors and the natural and cultural resources of Ross Lake National Recreation Area will be the beneficiaries of innovative agreements reached through the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project relicensing, approved in 1995. The Project includes three dams and associated power facilities owned by Seattle City Light within Ross Lake National Recreation Area. The agreements were negotiated among Seattle City Light, tribal conservation groups, and various state and federal agencies, including the National Park Service. They provide project funding of more than $100 million over the 30 years of the license.

The projects are designed to mitigate the effects of the dams in five categories: fisheries, recreation and aesthetics, wildlife, erosion and cultural resources. Under the agreements, Seattle City Light will fund the North Cascades Environmental Education Center, one of many exciting projects.

Environmental Education Center Destined to Expand Discovery and Understanding

The North Cascades Institute, North Cascades National Park and Seattle City Light are putting their talents together to design a residential Environmental Education Center on the shore of Diablo Lake in Ross Lake National Recreation Area. The Environmental Education Center (EEC) will be a great support for field-based education about the natural and cultural environments of the North Cascades Region.

The EEC, to be constructed on the site of the old Diablo Lake Resort, will include dorms, classrooms, labs, staff housing, cafeteria, library and trails.

The three-group partnership will collaborate on the EEC throughout its development. North Cascades Institute (NCI) will provide educational programming and operations at the center. The National Park Service will dedicate the land for environmental education and provide additional support. Seattle City Light will provide the funding through the relicensing agreement.

Learn with North Cascades Institute

North Cascades Institute is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to increasing understanding and appreciation of the natural, historical and cultural landscapes of the Pacific Northwest. The primary focus is field-based, environmental education for children and adults; from Elderhostel for seniors to Mountain School for child. NCI's Mountain School recently won the first national Wilderness Education Leadership Award presented by the National Park Service. This award recognizes NCI's Mountain School program for educating young people in ways that honor the spirit and values of wilderness.

Nearly a thousand people are involved in this program and annually learn to appreciate the wild lands and watersheds of the North Cascades.
Coexisting with Wildlife

Your presence can affect plants and animals. For example, once accustomed to human food, a bear may seek it aggressively. Careful planning, travel and sanitation will reduce your impacts on wildlife.

• Cooking. Try to have your sleeping area and personal items free of food odors.
• Food Storage. Keep wildlife wild by not feeding them. Store food, garbage, cooking gear and toiletries properly at all times. Lock items in your car trunk if you are in the frontcountry. Otherwise, place them in a plastic-coated dry bag or backpack and hang it from a branch in your cooking area at least 15 feet (5 m) above the ground and at least five feet (1.5 m) out from the tree trunk. Also hang cosmos, sunscreen, soap, toothpaste or any item with an odor. Bear-resistant canisters are available commercially and for loan from National Park Service offices where you get backcountry permits.

• Horses. Store horse pellets the same as food. For information about horse and trail safety and minimum impact riding, ask for a Stock Use bulletin from the ranger station or call the Backcountry Horsemen of Washington (360)876-7739.

• Bear Sightings. If a bear comes close to your campsite, you may be able to frighten it away by shouting, blowing pots and pans. A bear accustomed to campground food may not be as easily discouraged. If you see a bear, report it to an agency biologist at (360)856-5700 or the nearest ranger station.

Permits

Persons interested in commercial and non-commercial use of the National Park and Forest for purposes such as filming, outfitting and research must apply to the Forest Service or National Park Service. National Forest permits for firewood and other forest products are available on a limited basis depending on supply. Permits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis and must be prepared in advance. Christmas Tree permits are available seasonally during the later part of November into December. Please call or stop by the district office for details.

NOTE: Collection of any item in quantities considered more than personal use is strictly prohibited without appropriate permits.

Mushroom Collection

is prohibited in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex but is allowed on some state and national forests. Check with local ranger station for rules.

SAFETY TIPS

• Use caution on forest and park access roads.
• At trailheads, safeguard your possessions out of sight. Lock your vehicle.
• Bring extra water on hikes. A fine filter may be the only filter necessary, since even clean-looking water can carry giardia. Water may not be available near camps; treat and/or boil all water.
• Know your limits and when to turn back.
• Terrain is the primary cause of accidents in the North Cascades. Staying on trails, wearing adequate footwear and possessing a good topographic map can minimize the hazards of this rugged land.
• Be prepared for insects. You may encounter mosquitoes, wasps, bees, biting flies and ticks. After hiking, check yourself for ticks, which are known carriers of Lyme disease.
• Some stream crossings are not bridged. Cross streams in the morning (when they are lowest), when you can see around turns and watch for the safest crossings, or turn around if the rushing water is unsafe.
• Trails suffer storm damage every winter; please use caution and notify the park or forest if you encounter downed trees or washed out sections of trail.
• When horses are approaching, hikers should talk to make their presence known and step off the trail on the low side.

Backcountry Safety

Don’t let a pleasurable outing turn into an unexpected tragedy by not being prepared.

• Be well informed; contact park or forest for most up-to-date conditions.
• Research maps & trail handbooks.
• Carry the "10 Essentials" (see page 3).
• Let others at home know your plans.
• Make the best decision for your safety, including turning around.

Backcountry Camp

National Park Service: Permits are required for all overnight stays in the Park Complex’s backcountry. More than 200 backcountry campsites are available for park visitors. All camps have toilets; signs along trails indicate their location. Permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis from ranger stations on the west side at Marblemount, Sedro-Woolley, Hozomeen, Glacier or on the east side at Chelan, Stehekin, Twisp and Winthrop. For permit information contact:

Wilderness Center
North Cascades National Park
7280 Ranger Station Road
Marblemount, WA. 98267
Phone: (360) 873-4500, ext. 139

Forest Service: Campers in the National Forest do not require a permit. Overnight visitors to the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area, Chain Lakes and Watson Lakes must camp at designated sites. Parking at trailheads requires a National Forest Trail Park Pass (see page 7).

Campsites are not allowed in many backcountry areas located in sub-alpine settings. Most backcountry camps are in designated Wilderness where regulations designed to protect the resource apply. Visitors are encouraged to contact the Mt. Baker Ranger District before heading out to their backcountry destination.

Stay

Campground options are listed in the centerfold, pages 8-9, along with the North Cascades Highway Map. Most vehicle access campsites are available on a first-come-first-served basis. However, both the Forest Service (1-800-280-CAMP) and Washington State Parks (1-800-452-5687) have expanded their telephone reservation systems. Washington State Parks information line is (1-800-233-0231). North Cascades National Park does not have individual camping reservations.

Remote accommodations in the North Cascades include: Ross Lake Resort, Rockport, WA 98283, (206) 386-4437; North Cascades Stehekin Lodge, Box 457, Chelan, WA 98815; (509) 682-4494; and Baker Lake Resort (1-888) 711-3033.

Many other private accommodations are available in adjacent communities. Listings are available from visitor information or Chamber of Commerce offices.

Hiking with Children

Bring along extra items such as:
• wholesome snack foods
• extra water
• sunscreen
• insect repellent
• a whistle in case they get lost

Activity Ideas for Children:

Have children bring along a friend or sing songs. Watch for birds in the forest or in the sky; identify plants, bugs, or animal tracks on the ground; listen for wildlife, like the drumming of a woodpecker or the shrill “whistle” of a hoary marmot. Encourage kids to explore using eyes, ears, hands, and nose, and then to draw a picture or write a poem about nature.
North Cascades National Park; Mt. Baker Ranger District; Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
SEDRO-WOOLLEY
2105 State Route 20, 98284
Sat. - Thurs., 8:00am-4:30pm
Fri., 8:00am-6:00pm
Weekends in summer only
(360) 856-5700
TDD (360) 856-5700 x-310

MARblemOUNT
Wilderness Information Center (NPS)
Backcountry Information/Permits
*Fri. & Sat., 7:00am-8:00pm
*Sun.-Thurs., 7:00am-6:00pm
(360) 873-4500 (ext. 37 or 39)

NEWHALEM
North Cascades Visitor Center (NPS)
Daily, 8:30am-6:00pm
(206) 386-4495

STEHEKIN
Lake Chelan National Recreation Area (NPS)
Golden West Visitor Center
Daily, 8:00am-4:30pm
(360) 856-5700 x-340 then 14

* July & August

Okanogan National Forest;
Methow Valley Ranger District
WINTHROP Methow Valley Visitor Center
8:00am-5pm daily
(509) 996-4000

TWISP Office
Mon. - Fri., 7:45am - 4:30pm
Closed Saturday and Sunday
(509) 997-2131

Wenatchee National Forest
CHELAN Ranger District
Lake Chelan National Recreation Area
Daily, 7:45am-4:30pm
(509) 682-2576 (USFS)
(509) 682-2549 (NPS)

LEAVENWORTH Ranger District
Mon. - Sat., 7:45am-4:30pm
Sunday morning permits only
(509) 548-6877

LAKE WENATCHEE Ranger District
Mon. - Sat., 8:00am-4:30pm; closed Sundays except for holidays
(509) 548-3703

Outdoor Recreation Information Center
(For help in planning trips)
(206) 470-4060

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
Supervisor's office: (425) 775-9702
1-800-627-0062 or TDD 1-800-272-1215

GLACIER PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER
Daily, 8:30am-4:30pm
(360) 599-2714

HEATHER MEADOWS Visitor Center
*Daily, 10:00am-5:00pm

DARRINGTON Ranger District
Daily, 8:00am-4:30pm
(360) 436-1155

VERLOT (Darrington Ranger District)
Daily, 8:00am-4:30pm
(360) 691-7791

SKYKOMISH Ranger District
Daily, 8:00am-4:30pm
(360) 677-2414

NORTH BEND Ranger District
Mon. - Fri., 8:00am-4:30pm
(425) 888-1421

SNOQUALMIE PASS Visitor Center
Thurs. - Sun., 8:30am-4:45pm
(425) 837-1411