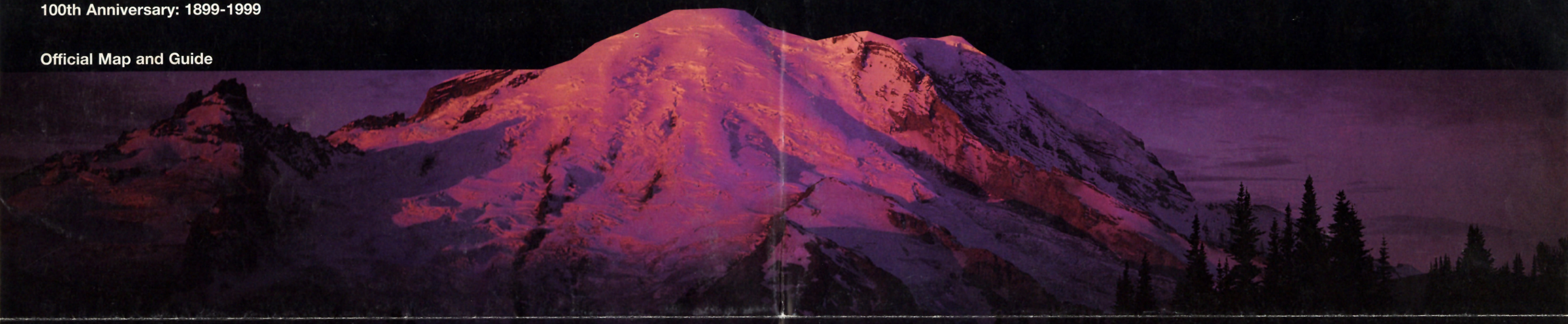
Mount Rainier

100th Anniversary: 1899-1999

Official Map and Guide

Mount Rainier National Park
Washington

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Welcome to a mountain wonderland famous for its for dense forests, dazzling wildflower meadows, tremendous snowfields, and rugged glaciers. If you visit on a sunny day take time to absorb the fresh smell of living trees and soil, the soothing and sometimes deafening sound of falling water, and the intense green of the Pacific Northwest. If you visit on a cloudy day, remember that you are experiencing the park in its most frequent guise: cloaked in moisture and hooded by snow. Moisture-laden weather systems move off the Pacific Ocean, batter the sides of Mount Rainier, and drop record-setting quantities of snow at higher elevations before drifting eastward. The huge amount of total precipitation—about 87 inches each year at Longmire and 126 inches at Paradise—shapes everything you see, from the 25 glaciers that cap the mountain to the dense stands of Douglas fir, red cedar, and western hemlocks that contribute to the old-growth forest at its base. In the subalpine parks, or meadows, on the mountain's shoulders abundant moisture couples with volcanic soils and intense summer sunlight to cultivate some of the most breath-taking wildflower meadows on Earth.

As an active volcano Mount Rainier stands as a reminder of the beauty and power of nature. The Cascade Range has been volcanically active for millions of years, thanks to its location close to the western edge of the North American tectonic plate. The mountain we see today is relatively young in geologic terms: it formed fewer than 1 million years ago. Like Mount St. Helens and other Cascade volcanoes, Mount Rainier has the potential to erupt again at some unknown time. Volcanologists expect the mountain to give ample warning before entering an eruptive period, but the threat of unexpected mud flows exists throughout the park. See Volcanic Hazards *(below)* to better understand how this might affect you. Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 after the enthusiastic and persistent advocacy by American citizens, European dignitaries, and national and local scientific and business groups. The story of the park's establishment and protection shows the power of people who are committed to an idea of national significance. Today, the issues are more complex, but the strength of stewardship still comes from the power of commitment.

October Sunrise *(above)* by Loren E. Lane

Enjoying the Park

Christine Falls

Mount Rainier's roads lead through spectacular mountain scenery at all seasons of the year—from the cool lushness of summer to the wonderlands of winter.

On the Roads

Carefully engineered roads lead through the old-growth forest and up into the subalpine areas. A major road system runs from the southwest entrance through the southern and eastern parts of the park with a spur to Sunrise on the northeast side of the mountain. A separate road leads into Carbon River in the northwest. The roads were designed to make the least impact on the landscape. They are narrow, and, especially in the lower elevations, trees grow close to the road. All but the 18 miles of road between the southwest entrance and Paradise are closed in winter.

Illustrations by Patricia Topper
Photo *(left)* by James Randklev

Climbing Mount Rainier

Climbing Mount Rainier is hazardous and requires skill, proper equipment, and excellent physical condition. Climbers must register to climb and pay a fee if climbing above 10,000 feet. Rock and icefalls are a problem—wear a helmet and climb early in the day. Novices and those lacking glacier travel experience are strongly encouraged to climb with one of several guide services authorized to lead climbs on Mount Rainier. Ask at visitor centers for more information.

Wildlife The seasons and elevation help determine where you may see wildlife. In the summer, chipmunks, chickarees, marmots, and pikas are commonly seen mammals; Steller's jays, gray jays, Clark's nutcrackers, and ravens are commonly seen birds. Black-tailed deer are often seen, but black bear, elk, and mountain goats are more elusive. Look for elk on the east side of the park in September. The color of black bears may be brown, tan or blond. Mountain goats stay close to high country cliffs.

Hiking, Walking, and Other Joys of the Wilderness

Trails ranging from less than one mile to the 93-mile Wonderland Trail offer chances for pleasant ambles or overnight backpacks. Short hikes suitable for families include:

Kautz Creek Trail (between Nisqually Entrance and Longmire) This 2-mile roundtrip hike goes along Kautz Creek, site of the 1947 mud flow that covered the highway with 30 feet of cement-like mud. A short spur is wheelchair accessible.

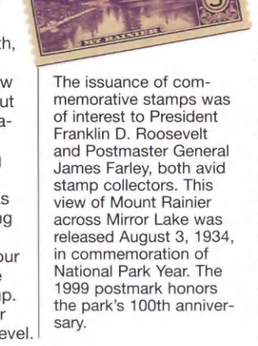
Trail of the Shadows (at Longmire) The 0.7-mile roundtrip trail leads through the site of the Longmire family homestead. The **Rampart Ridge Trail**, a 4.5-mile loop, begins on the Trail of the Shadows and is moderately strenuous.

Nisqually Vista Trail (at Paradise) The 1.2-mile loop begins near the visitor center and leads through wildflower meadows to overlook the Nisqually Glacier—guided walks available in summer.

Grove of the Patriarchs Trail (near Ohanapecosh) This 1.5-mile-roundtrip trail goes through a beautiful old growth forest. It leads across the Ohanapecosh River to an island of ancient giants. Ask about guided walks in summer.

Emmons Vista Trail (at Sunrise) This 0.5 mile roundtrip walk will whet your appetite for more hiking with overlooks of the Emmons glacier and marvelous mountain views. Many trails begin at Sunrise; ask for other suggestions.

Precautions Be prepared for rain in any month, and for snow and freezing temperatures from September through May. Trails are usually snow free from mid-July through early September, but low clouds may hide landmarks at higher elevations. Carry maps and compass, a first aid kit, extra food and water, and appropriate clothing and footwear. Stay on trails; never cut across switchbacks. In the Paradise and Sunrise areas off-trail travel is prohibited. Wilderness camping requires a permit. Fires are prohibited; use a stove. Use designated camps and pack out your trash. Purify water from natural sources before drinking. Bears may show interest in your camp. Keep your camp and clothing clean; hang your food and trash at least 12 feet above ground level.



The issuance of commemorative stamps was of interest to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Postmaster General James Farley, both avid stamp collectors. This view of Mount Rainier across Mirror Lake was released August 3, 1934, in commemoration of National Park Year. The 1999 postmark honors the park's 100th anniversary.

Preserving the Park

Mount Rainier National Park preserves very fragile ecosystems. In 1988 about 96 percent of the park was designated as the Mount Rainier Wilderness. Each year more than 2 million people visit the park. Please help us protect this area by honoring these regulations: • Do not feed birds or animals; they need natural foods to stay healthy. • Collecting plants, dead plant material including firewood, rocks, and historic or cultural items is prohibited by federal law. • Always practice minimum-impact camping, pack out your trash, and use the recycling containers in the park.

These fragile and heavily used areas are easily damaged. Please protect the park for the enjoyment of future generations.

Mountain Wonderlands

Longmire Administration Building

Longmire

Now a national historic district this is the site of Longmire's Medical Springs, developed by James Longmire and his family in 1888 and 1889. After the park was established in 1899, Longmire became the park headquarters. Today the original headquarters building houses a museum with exhibits that tell the story of those early days. The National Park Inn, a concessioner-operated hotel, is open for guests year round. The road from the Nisqually Entrance to Longmire is one of the world's most beautiful forest roads.

Paradise Inn

Paradise

When James Longmire's daughter-in-law, Martha, first saw this subalpine meadow, she exclaimed, "This must be what Paradise is like." Paradise is world-famous for its glorious views and wildflower meadows. It is also the most heavily visited area in the park. In the summer parking can be difficult, particularly on weekends. Try to visit on weekdays, arrive early, and carpool if possible. Excellent long and short hikes begin here. The park's main visitor center is located at Paradise. Interpretive programs are offered daily through the summer and on weekends and holidays in winter. Fall colors turn the hillsides crimson in late August, and visitation slows after Labor Day. Paradise is also the prime winter-use area in the park; an average of 680 inches of snow falls each winter. Paradise Inn is open only in the summer, but the road is plowed throughout the winter. Snowshoeing, crosscountry skiing, and tubing are the major winter activities here. Some winter sports equipment can be rented at Longmire and at Paradise on weekends and holidays.

Silver Falls

Ohanapecosh

Named for a river-side Taidnapam "or Upper Cowlitz" Indian habitation site, Ohanapecosh is thought to mean "standing at the edge." Ohanapecosh is nestled between the Douglas firs, western red cedars, and western hemlocks of an old growth forest, and demonstrates the complex structure of old growth forest habitat. The Ohanapecosh Visitor Center and campground are open from May through mid-October.

Sunrise

At 6400 feet above sea level Sunrise is the highest point in the park that is reachable by vehicle. These high mountain meadows abound with wildflowers. On clear days Sunrise provides breathtaking views of Mount Rainier, the Emmons glacier, and other volcanoes in the Cascade range. Sunrise is open from July to late September.

A glacier's snout

Carbon River and Mowich Lake

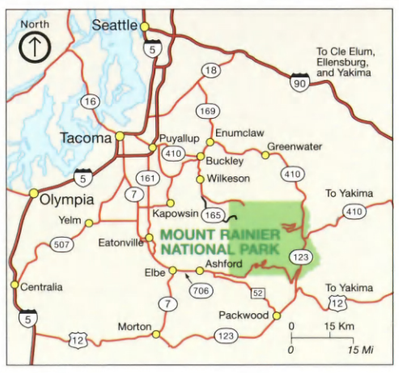
Named for the coal deposits found in the area, Carbon River is in the park's northwest corner. Of all park areas it has the greatest precipitation and hosts an example of a temperate rainforest. Carbon River Road has been damaged by a series of floods. Check with the park for motor vehicle access. The road is usually open to bicyclists and hikers, regardless of motor vehicle restrictions. Mowich Lake is reached by a separate road *(see map on other side)* that leads to wilderness trails and a walk-in campground.

Planning Your Visit

Approaching the Park Mount Rainier National Park is located in west central Washington within an easy drive of Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland.

The Nisqually entrance (southwest corner) is open year-round. Travelers coming from east of the Cascades may enter the park directly during the summer, but the eastern mountain passes are closed in winter.

To reach the Carbon River area of the park, take Wash. 165 from Buckley. Shortly after passing through Wilkenson, the road forks, with Carbon River entrance and Ipsut Creek to the left and Mowich Lake to the right.



Getting Here Airlines, Amtrak, and tour buses serve Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and other cities. Private carriers provide bus or van service spring through fall. Gray Line Tours: 206-624-5813; Rainer Shuttle: 360-569-2331; Rainer Overland: 360-569-2604.

Bikes and Horses Bicyclists share narrow curving roads with vehicles: always wear a helmet. Bikes are prohibited on park trails. Saddle and pack stock are permitted on more than 100 miles of trails. Ask about the rules.

Fees Mount Rainier is a recreation fee demonstration area. Most fees collected remain in the park to help fund long-standing projects. Single noncommercial vehicle passes valid for 7 days cost $10; individual passes for visitors on noncommercial buses or vans or on foot or bicycles cost $5 per person. Other passes are available; ask at entrance stations. For information on commercial fees call: 360-569-2211 ext. 2390.

Volcanic Hazards Volcanic hazards include unpredictable mud flows and glacier-generated floods. Be especially alert in river valleys. If you hear a loud rumbling or notice a rapid rise in water levels, move to the higher ground—fast! Do not run downstream. Longmire and all campgrounds are in potential flood zones. Ask a ranger for details.

Facilities, Services, and Regulations

Visitor Centers Begin at Longmire, Paradise, Ohanapecosh, or Sunrise visitor centers. Rangers can answer questions and help you plan your visit. Ask about the naturalist talks and walks that take place in summer and about the guided snowshoe walks in winter.

Accommodations The National Park Inn at Longmire is open all year. Overnight lodging is available at Paradise Inn during the summer only. For reservations write: Mount Rainier Guest Services, P.O. Box 108, Ashford, WA 98304. Call: 360-569-2275. The nearby communities have restaurants, motels, gas stations, and grocery and camping supply stores.

Access Limited facilities and trails are accessible for people with disabilities. Ask for more information. Call: TDD: 360-569-2177.

Winter The winter landscape reflects the longest season at Mount Rainier. Weather permitting, the road from the Nisqually entrance to Paradise remains open year-round. Driving to Paradise in midwinter offers a rare opportunity to experience a winter landscape shaped by tremendous snowfall. You'll find great opportunities for snowshoeing, crosscountry skiing, and tubing around Paradise. Extra preparedness is essential. Carry chains, drive carefully, and obey all traffic directions. The road to Paradise closes for the night at dusk in winter; check the closure time before leaving to ski or snowshoe. Paradise Visitor Center is open and staffed *only* on weekends and holidays from mid-October until early May.

Regulations • Pets must be leashed whenever they are outside your vehicle. They are not permitted on trails, on the snow, or in the wilderness. • Collecting plants, dead plant material, firewood, rocks, and historic or cultural items is illegal. Leave wildflowers for everyone to enjoy. • Help keep wildlife wild. Do not feed or harass wildlife, including birds. • Permits are required for all overnight stays in the wilderness. • Climbing permits are required for all climbs above 10,000 feet and for all glacier travel. • No hunting is permitted within park boundaries. Firearms must be unloaded, broken down, and cased; they are not permitted in the wilderness. • Do not drive or park off roads. • Fishing requires no license or permit, but certain waters are closed, or open to fly fishing only. Ask at visitor centers for limits and information.

More Information Write: Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, Ashford, WA 98304-9751. Call 360-569-2211; TDD 360-569-2177. Internet: www.nps.gov/mora.

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	RVs Sites/Rooms	Tents	Fee	Limit of Stay	Drinking Water	Flush Toilets	Sanitary Dump	Food	Groceries	Gifts	Reservations/Summer	Accessible Site/Room
Cougar Rock campground	200	●	●	●	14	●	●	●			●	●
Cougar Rock group camp	5		●	●	14	●	●					
Ipsut Creek campground	29	●	●	●	14							
Ipsut group camp	2		●	●	14							
Jackson Memorial Visitor Center						●	●		●		●	
Mowich Lake Campground (walk-in only)	30		●		14	●						
National Park Inn	25			●		●	●		●	●	●	●
Ohanapecosh campground	205	●		●	14	●	●	●			●	●
Paradise Inn	126			●		●	●		●		●	●
Sunrise Lodge						●	●		●	●	●	
Sunshine Point campground	18	●	●	●	14	●						●
White River campground	112	●	●	●	14	●	●					

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Nisqually Entrance
Sunshine Point
Westside Road
(road open May to November)
Kautz Creek
Longmire
Wilderness Information Center
Cougar Rock
Rampart Ridge Trail
Trail of the Shadows
Paradise
Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center
Paradise Valley Road
(road open year-round)
Stevens Canyon Entrance
Ohanapecosh Visitor Center
Grove of the Patriarchs Trail
Carbon River Entrance
Carbon River Road
(road open June to October)
Sunrise Visitor Center
White River Entrance
White River Campground
Sunrise Day Lodge
Sunrise Point
Mather Memorial Parkway
(road open May to November)
Crystal Mountain Ski Area and Resort
Fairfax
Ashford
To Elbe and Packwood via Nisqually Entrance
To Park Headquarters via Nisqually Entrance
To Wilkeson and Wilderness Information Center 15mi 24km from Carbon River Entrance
To Packwood and 123
To 125
To Cayuse Pass

Pacific Crest Trail
Other hiking trail
Wonderland Trail
Waterfall
Paved road and pullout
Unpaved road and pullout

Winter road closures: All roads are CLOSED IN WINTER except the following: the road between Nisqually Entrance and Paradise (weather permits); the section of state highway 123 from the southern park boundary to Ohanapecosh; and the Carbon River Road.

Ranger station
Wilderness patrol cabin
Interpretive trail
Campground
Lodging
Restaurant
Picnic area
Groceries
Fire Lookout

0 1 2 Kilometers
0 1 2 Miles
North