

Mount Rainier

Mount Rainier National Park
Washington

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



“Of all the fire mountains which, like beacons, once blazed along the Pacific Coast, Mount Rainier is the noblest.”

John Muir, 1901

A mountain of immeasurable inspiration, Mount Rainier is the center of the nation’s fifth national park. It is a place of discovery and of personal triumphs, where family traditions endure.

At 14,410 feet, the mountain is the tallest volcano in the Cascade Mountain Range and the most glaciated peak in the contiguous United States. Basalt columns and other remnants of early eruptions and lava flows reveal Mount Rainier’s ancient geologic history.

Glaciers, massive rivers of ice up to 750 feet deep, flow down the rocky slopes. Yet, on the summit,

steam escapes from deep within the mountain’s core, a reminder that it is still an active volcano.

Above Mount Rainier, millions of stars illuminate the night sky. The park minimizes the use of artificial light. This preserves darkness, through which constellations and planets are remarkably visible.

In spring, snow melts first in the foothills. Beneath the old-growth forest, flowers bloom and ferns unfurl. Across the subalpine region, summer may only last two months. Adaptations that have taken centuries to develop prove crucial in a race for survival.

Profuse wildflower displays and pollinating insects bring life to the meadows. Birds and mammals forage on the abundance before winter quickly returns.

Entering the park is a step back in time—a portal into Mount Rainier National Historic Landmark District. Roads, buildings, and other structures were designed nearly 100 years ago. Massive logs and round river boulders characterize early national park rustic architecture, which harmonizes with the park’s natural scenery.

For thousands of years, Mount Rainier has been an important place for Pacific Northwest Indigenous people. Nearly two million people from around the world now visit Mount Rainier National Park each year. As global development increases, this mountain remains steadfast, a place where people can reconnect with what is important in their lives.

Moving up Mount Rainier’s glaciers and lava ridges, their routes illuminated by headlamps, climbers travel steadily toward the summit under a star-filled sky (above).
© JEFF BERRIS

Unforgettable Destinations

Longmire



Longmire is a year-round destination.

Accessible year-round. Snowshoe or cross-country ski during winter. Stroll the edge of a meadow where history meets nature. Day hike to expansive vistas. Step back in time; discover rustic park architecture along the Longmire Historic Walking Tour. Stay a night at the historic National Park Inn. From the porch, admire the sunset’s glow on the mountain.

Paradise



Visit Paradise meadows when they are at their most spectacular.

In summer, hike the maintained trails around meadows, streams, and waterfalls. Watch and listen for wildlife—bears, grouse, butterflies, marmots, and more. Explore exhibits at the visitor and wilderness information centers. Rest a night or have a snack at the historic Paradise Inn. Grab a sled and head for Paradise’s winter snowplay area, set up a snow camp, ski, or snowboard.

Ohanapecosh



Camp, hike, and explore beneath towering old-growth trees.

Old-growth forest is the signature of Ohanapecosh. Ancient trees, wildlife, waterfalls, spring wildflowers, and fall mushrooms abound. The Ohanapecosh River—transparent green or blue depending on the light and your perspective—surrounds the Grove of the Patriarchs. Many day hikes begin at Ohanapecosh. Camp or picnic in the campground.

Sunrise



Enjoy unsurpassed panoramic views while hiking amid resplendent subalpine meadows.

Sunrise, the highest point in the park reachable by car, offers a panoramic view of Mount Rainier and surrounding peaks. Day hikes lead to glaciers, lakes, and meadows. Dig into geology at the visitor center. Discover the rustic architecture and history of Sunrise. Enjoy a snack at the day lodge. Camp nearby at White River Campground.

Carbon River



Capture the lush vegetation and giant old-growth trees of the rainforest.

Meander moist, moss-carpeted paths through temperate rainforest. Discover the dynamic forces of a glacial river. Mountain-bike a historic road. Spend a night in the backcountry. Visit Mowich Lake—the park’s largest and deepest lake. Camp near the lake or enjoy its serenity from a canoe. Fish the deep waters. Hike to subalpine meadows.

Discoveries Await



Explore Wilderness

Home to animals seen and unseen, Mount Rainier’s wilderness is an evolving landscape of forests, meadows, glaciers, and craters. Wilderness performs functions essential to life on Earth. Melting snow produces fresh water. Plants pump oxygen into the atmosphere. Protecting the mountain’s wild places, and the wildlife and the natural processes they support, will become ever more essential in our developing world.

Beyond the roads and parking lots is wild land, a place to recreate and find solitude. Over 97 percent of the park is managed as wilderness. Wilderness preserves large and relatively undeveloped landscapes for ecological, social, and cultural benefits.



Snowshoeing in the park (above). The park’s wilderness is habitat to wildlife like this spotted owl (right).
SNOWSHOEING—© JOHN T. STROTHER;
OWLS—NPS / KEITH BAGNALL



Meet the People

People have been coming to Mount Rainier for over 9,000 years. Archeological findings suggest that Native Americans hunted, gathered, and conducted spiritual and ceremonial activities on the mountain. Their descendants maintain a special connection with the mountain to the present day.

In the late 1800s, miners, entrepreneurs, and tourists recognized the mountain’s potential to provide wealth and recreation. They came with the hope to prosper, recreate, and simply breathe the clear mountain air.

Inspired, mountain clubs, scientists, and communities successfully lobbied Congress to create Mount Rainier National Park in 1899.



These projectile points, made 2,500 years ago, reveal a chapter of the park’s history.
NPS

Witness Change

Though the mountain may convey a sense of permanence, Mount Rainier is anything but permanent. Ice and rock continually break away from the peak. Glaciers and rivers transport debris and water down the mountain and often wreak havoc with roads and park buildings. Subalpine meadows, buried beneath deep snow most of the year, rapidly bloom once the snow melts. Animals must adapt to this ever-changing environment, migrate, or die.

As Earth’s temperature rises, it is unclear how such a change will affect the mountain’s dynamic forces, its plants and animals, or ourselves.



Wildlife habitat and ecosystems shift with changes in climate.
RIVERS—© JAY THOMPSON;
MAMMOT—© THORSTEN SCHEUERMAANN



Visiting the Park

Bikes and Motorcycles

Roads are narrow and shoulderless. Beware of rough roadways. Bikes and motorcycles are prohibited on park trails. Wear your helmet!

Protect Yourself and the Park

Follow posted speed limits and use pullouts on the park's winding roads.

- Pets must be on leashes no longer than six feet and are not allowed in buildings, on trails, in off-trail or backcountry areas, or on snow.
- Do not feed, approach, or disturb wildlife.
- Stay on designated trails.
- Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the park.
- You must have a permit to travel above 10,000 ft. and for any overnight wilderness stay.
- Fishing does not require a permit or license, but some waters are closed to fishing or are fly-fishing only.

Firearms

The use of firearms is prohibited within Mount Rainier National Park. People who can legally possess firearms under federal, Washington state, and local laws may possess them in the park. However, federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in this park; those places are posted with signs at public entrances.

Fees

Mount Rainier collects fees from visitors who use the park. Recreation fees enhance visitor experience.

Lodging

National Park Inn at Longmire is open all year. Paradise Inn is open in summer only. Visit the park website for lodging and camping information.

Accessibility

Most visitor centers, restrooms, picnic areas, and designated campsites are accessible or accessible with help for wheelchair users.

- Find accessible lodging at Longmire and Paradise.
- Paradise Jackson Visitor Center, audiovisual programs, and exhibits are accessible.
- Sunrise Visitor Center and exhibit area are accessible with help via the north entrance.
- Find fully accessible trails at Kautz and Paradise.
- Some trails at Paradise and Longmire are accessible with help.

Emergencies call 911 from any phone in the park

Winter Driving All vehicles must carry tire chains when traveling in the park November 1 to May 1.

Explore More

Use the official NPS App to guide your visit; download the park to use offline.



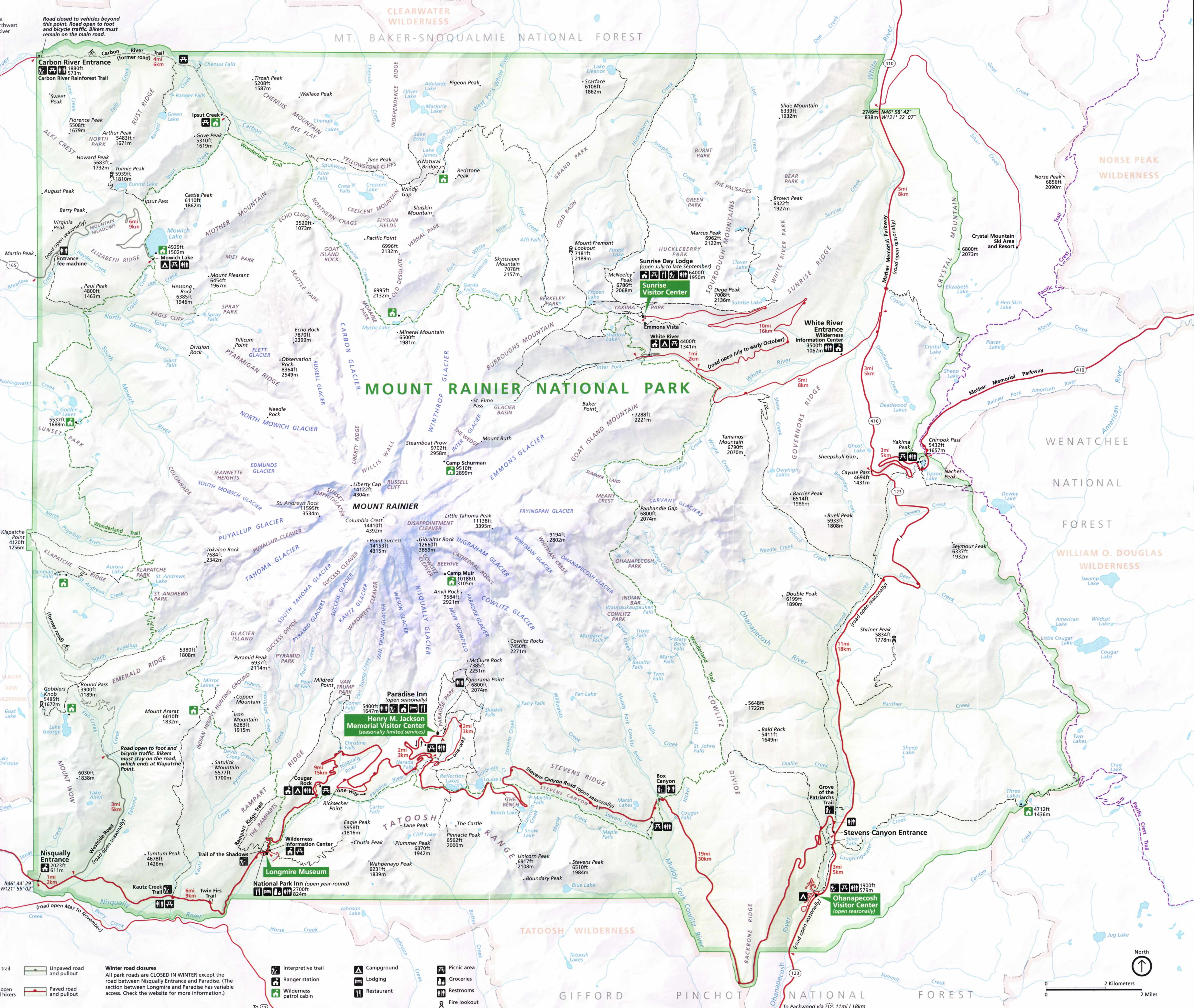
More Information

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Mount Rainier National Park is one of over 430 parks in the National Park System. Learn more at www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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Winter road closures
All park roads are CLOSED IN WINTER except the road between Nisqually Entrance and Paradise. (The section between Longmire and Paradise has variable access. Check the website for more information.)

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|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Interpretive trail | Campground | Picnic area |
| Ranger station | Lodging | Groceries |
| Wilderness patrol cabin | Restaurant | Restrooms |
| | | Fire lookout |



0 2 Kilometers
0 2 Miles