

Mount Rainier



The purpose of parks is to
*"to conserve the scenery and the natural and
historic objects and the wildlife therein and to
provide for the enjoyment of the same in such
manner and by such means as will leave them
unimpaired for the enjoyment of future
generations."*

United States Congress, National Park Service
Organic Act, August 25, 1916



Stewards of the Mountain

At 14,411 feet, Mount Rainier is the tallest volcano in the 48 contiguous states and the highest mountain in Washington. It dominates the horizon (on clear days) for hundreds of miles and boasts the largest single-peak glacial system outside Alaska. On its slopes lie spectacular meadows of subalpine flowers and a skirt of old-growth Douglas-fir forest found few other places.

When Congress established Mount Rainier as this country's fifth oldest national park in 1899, it was the direct result of a dynamic grass-roots effort by local citizens. These early park advocates took to heart their responsibility as stewards of the mountain they loved and sought protection for its resources through legislative action.

Almost a century has passed since then. The park remains a monument to the awesome and subtle forces of nature and it now also represents our changing attitudes toward nature. Those attitudes linger in the Rustic architecture of the park's early buildings and road features; in trail bridges hand-built by the CCC; in visitor facilities which reflect the eras in which they were designed; in the granting of wilderness status for most of the park; in the efforts to repair fragile subalpine meadows where human use has proved damaging to the environment; and in many more ways.

Mount Rainier National Park has many stories to tell—of the volcano, of the glaciers, of the forests and meadows, of the wildlife, and of its human past. Get to know this spectacular park. Familiarize yourself with its stories. Enjoy its challenges and its opportunities. But also recognize that WE are now the stewards of the mountain. Let our actions testify to an appreciation of park resources and to a respect for our national heritage.

What Will Happen if Mount Rainier Reawakens?

"Ring of Fire" is the popular name for the procession of active, dormant and recently extinct volcanoes which encircle the Pacific Ocean. The Cascade volcanoes, including Mount Rainier, are part of this volcanic zone. Although Mount Rainier may remain quiet for centuries to come, two other Cascade volcanoes--Mount St. Helens and Lassen Peak--have already erupted during the Twentieth Century.

Volcanoes usually provide warning signals days to months before they erupt. As magma pushes its way upward, it shoulders aside the old rocks—producing earthquakes and causing the sides of the affected volcano to deform slightly. Although neither the earthquakes nor the deformation may be apparent to people, sensitive instruments called seismometers will detect these early warning signs.

Earthquake activity near Mount Rainier is continuously monitored by a network of seismometers maintained under the auspices of the U.S. Geological Survey Volcano Hazards Program and the University of Washington Geophysics Program. In a typical year this network detects a few hundred earthquakes that occur near Mount Rainier. At the first sign of an unusual increase in earthquake activity, scientists from the Geological Survey and other institutions will deploy additional instruments around Mount Rainier and notify emergency response agencies.



Unlike an eruptive event, debris flows and glacial outburst floods are much less predictable and can occur without warning--yet the consequences can be equally severe. Stay alert when traveling through valleys with a glacier-fed stream, particularly if the weather has been unusually hot or rainy. If you are near a river and notice a rapid rise in water level or hear a roaring sound coming from upvalley--often described as sounding similar to the rumbling of a fast-moving freight train--move quickly to higher ground! The debris flow may reach your location within one to two minutes! A safe height above river channels depends on the size of the debris flow, distance from the volcano and the shape of the valley. For all but the largest debris flows, areas 50 meters (160 feet) or more above river level should be safe.

Detailed information on volcanic hazards is available from scientists at the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory, 5400 MacArthur Blvd., Vancouver, WA 98661. Telephone (360) 696-7693. URL: <http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/>





Winter Driving & Road Closures

Poor visibility and reduced traction present increased driving hazards during winter. Shady areas and bridge surfaces can be treacherously icy when other sections of roadway are not. Stay alert! Use caution. Carry tire chains. Chains and/or traction tires may be required in the mountains at anytime during winter.

Check at entrance stations or visitor centers for traction requirements and road status.



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 by next May or June.

- Sunrise Road closes nightly at the junction with White River Campground Road 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 closes for winter at its SR 410 junction beginning October 14.
- Washington State Department of Transportation will usually close SR 410 at the northeast park boundary near Crystal Mountain Boulevard and at a point east of Chinook Pass starting in late November or early December, depending on snowfall. (Proposed road work *may* close SR 410 east of Chinook early this year.) SR 123 north of Ohanapecosh closes when Cayuse Pass does.
- Mowich Lake Road closes with the first heavy snowfall or on October 14, whichever is earlier.
- Stevens Canyon Road closes for the season with the first heavy snowfall or on October 14, whichever is later.
- The road between Nisqually Entrance and Paradise closes nightly at Longmire from mid-October through winter. It reopens the following morning when snowplowing activities are complete.
- The portion of the road between Nisqually Entrance and Longmire remains open throughout winter except during extreme weather.

Accessibility

- Comfort stations and buildings are mostly accessible or accessible with help.
- Accessible overnight accommodations are available both inside the park and in surrounding communities.
- The boardwalk at Kautz Creek leads to an overlook of the 1947 debris flow and a view of the mountain.
- Trail of the Shadows and the Historic District Walking Tour in Longmire are accessible with help.
- The film *Fire and Ice*, presented in the Jackson Visitor Center auditorium, is closed captioned.
- Written information, exhibits, and scripts for uncaptioned audiovisual programs are available at park visitor centers.
- A TDD is available at (360) 569-2177.



Resource Education Activities



Explore a variety of topics addressing the natural and cultural resources of Mount Rainier National Park. Enjoy the unique qualities of this park.

During September, join a park naturalist for a guided walk or evening slide program. Look for program announcements on bulletin boards at Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh Campgrounds, in the Paradise and National Park Inns, in the Museum and Wilderness Information Center at Longmire, and in the visitor centers at Paradise and Ohanapecosh. Activities at Sunrise and White River Campground have ended for the season.

Self-guiding trails are located throughout the park. Mileages are round-trip.

Longmire: *Trail of the Shadows*, 0.7 mile, first half of route follows compacted dirt trail suitable for wheelchairs. Area natural & cultural history. *Historic District Walking Tour*, 1.25 miles via sidewalk and street surfaces suitable for wheelchairs. Historic legacy of Longmire tour.

Paradise: *Nisqually Vista Trail*, 1.25 miles. Geology and glaciers. Paved, steep inclines.

Ohanapecosh: *Grove of the Patriarchs*, 1 mile. Old-growth forest ecology. *Life Systems*, 0.5 mile. Forest, hot springs and history of Ohanapecosh.

Sunrise: *Sourdough Ridge*, 0.5 mile. Panoramic views of four distant volcanoes.

Carbon River: *Rain Forest Trail*, 0.3 mile. Only true inland rain forest at Mount Rainier.



From Autumn Hiking to Winter Snowboarding

No flower starts blooming later in the subalpine meadows of Mount Rainier than mountain bog gentian. Its appearance in the meadows during late August heralds the coming of autumn. Early autumn mornings are often crisp and cool. Morning hikers may find ice covering subalpine trails. Shaded trails at ANY elevation may stay icy well into the day. Where trails are icy or snow-covered: Step carefully and cautiously! Avoid stepping onto rocks and logs. They will be slippery when frosted. Check the weather forecast before starting a long hike. Remember: Sudden, severe storms punctuate the transition from autumn to winter.

Although snow can fall at higher elevations during any month of the year, the winter snowpack usually starts accumulating during late October. A few years ago, during 1994, winter arrived unusually early—over five feet of snow was already on the ground at Paradise by the first weekend of November! Most winters, however, start more slowly.

Once the snow flies and a mere few inches of the white stuff lie on the ground, everyone is anxious to slide, ski, snowboard, snowshoe and build igloos. Such activities must wait, however, until the snow is deep enough to protect fragile underlying vegetation. The following regulations are important for resource protection and will be enforced:

- Sliding is allowed **ONLY** in the designated snowplay area at Paradise. Before the snowplay area is established, there is no sliding anywhere in the park.
- Skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing may be prohibited until there is sufficient snow depth to prevent damage to underlying vegetation. Typically, this means traveling to the Muir Snowfield until well into December. Check with a ranger before you engage in any of these activities.
- Snow camping requires both sufficient snow depth to prevent damage and a camping permit. Permits are available from rangers at visitor centers and ranger stations. Check with a ranger and obtain your permit **BEFORE** you set up camp.

During the winter of 1996-97 a total of 938" of snow fell at Paradise, making last winter the snowiest at Mount Rainier in 23 years! How will the winter of 1997-98 unfold? We shall soon know.





Visitor Services

VISITOR CENTERS

Longmire Museum

Daily: 9am - 4pm

Jackson Visitor Center

Daily thru Sep. 28: 9:30am - 6pm

Daily Sep. 29 - Oct. 13: 10am - 6pm

Sat/Sun/Hol Oct. 14 - winter: 10am - 5pm

Ohanapecosh Visitor Center

Daily thru October 12:

Monday-Thursday: 9am - 5pm

Friday-Sunday: 9am - 6pm

Wilkeson Ranger Station

Daily thru October 13: 8am - 4:30pm

Sat/Sun Oct. 14 - Nov. 16: 8am - 4:30pm

Starting Nov. 17: Closed for the season.

Sunrise Visitor Center

Closed for the season.

WILDERNESS INFORMATION CENTERS

Longmire

Thru Sep. 28: Sun-Thu: 8am - 4:30pm

Fri/Sat: 7:30am - 6pm

Starting Sep. 29: Closed for the season.

White River

Thru Sep 30: Sun-Thu: 8am - 4:30pm

Fri/Sat: 7am - 7pm

Starting Oct. 1: Closed for the season.

All persons who plan to backpack in Mount Rainier National Park must obtain a Wilderness Permit. Permits are required year-round. After wilderness information centers close for the season, permits may be obtained at ranger stations and visitor centers.

POST OFFICES

Longmire - National Park Inn

Open year round.

8:30am - 5pm Mon-Fri; 8:30am - 12n Sat

Closed Sundays & holidays.

Paradise - Paradise Inn

Open thru October 4:

8:30am - 5pm Mon-Fri; 8:30am - 12n Sat

Closed Sundays & holidays.

Closed for season effective October 5.



FOOD and LODGING

For lodging reservations at either the National Park Inn or Paradise Inn, call Mount Rainier Guest Services at (360) 569-2275.

Longmire National Park Inn

Lodging & dining--open year round.

Front desk: 7am - 10pm

Restaurant: 7am - 7pm Sunday-Thursday
7am - 8pm Fri/Sat/Hol

Longmire General Store

Groceries, gifts, firewood--open year round.

10am - 5pm daily

When ski touring equipment rentals are available (usually by early Dec. depending on snow) the hours of the General Store are

10am - 5pm Monday - Friday

8:30am - 6pm Sat/Sun/Hol

Paradise Inn

Lodging, dining, snack bar, gifts, & lounge.

Closes for the season after breakfast on Oct. 6

Dining Room:

Breakfast: 7am - 9am

Lunch: 12n - 2pm

Dinner: 5:30pm - 8pm

Sunday Brunch: 11am - 2:30pm thru Sep. 28

Glacier Lounge: 12n-11pm

Gift Shop: 8am - 8pm

Jackson Visitor Center

Grill & Gift Shop:

10am - 6pm daily thru Oct. 13

11am - 4:45pm Sat/Sun/Hol Oct. 14 - winter

Showers: Open during building hours

Sunrise Lodge - Closed for the season.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Lodging, dining and a variety of other services are available at businesses located in the communities surrounding Mount Rainier National Park. A listing of these services is available at all park visitor centers.

CLIMBS - GUIDED

Rainier Mountaineering, Inc.

Guide House Guided summit climbs, climbing instruction, & gear rental.

Thru Sep. 28: 9am - 5pm (360) 569-2227

Closed Sep. 29 - winter (206) 627-6242

CLIMBS - INDEPENDENT

All persons who plan to climb above 10,000 feet elevation or travel onto glaciers must register. Climbers may register at any ranger station or visitor center.

GROUND

TRANSPORTATION

Rainier Express: (360) 569-2331

Rainier Overland: (360) 569-0851

Grayline of Seattle: (800) 426-7532

CAMPGROUNDS and PICNIC AREAS

Sunshine Point: Open year-round. Located .25 mile east of the Nisqually Entrance (SW corner of park). 18 sites campsites. Camping fee: \$10 per night.

Cougar Rock: Closes for season Oct. 14. Located 2.5 miles above Longmire at 3180' elevation on the road toward Paradise. 200 individual campsites. Dump station. Camping fee: \$10 per night. Firewood sales: 4pm - 9pm Fri/Sat/Sun thru Sep. 21.

Ohanapecosh: Closes for season Oct. 14. Located 11 miles north of Packwood on Hwy 123 (SE corner of park) at 1914' elevation. 205 sites. Dump station. Fee: \$12 per night. Check bulletin board for firewood sales times.

White River: Closes for season Sep. 15. Located 5 miles west of the White River Entrance, off Hwy 410 (NE corner of park) at 4400' elevation. 117 campsites. Camping fee: \$10 per night.

Ipsut Creek: Open for backpackers only. (Wilderness Permit required for camping.) Road to campground is closed due to storm damage.

PICNIC AREAS ONLY

Paradise: Closes Oct. 14 or earlier by snowfall. Located south of the Jackson Visitor Center.

Box Canyon: Closes Sep. 22 or earlier if snowfall dictates. Located 10 miles east of Paradise on the Stevens Canyon Road.

Sunrise: Closes Oct. 14 or earlier if snowfall dictates. Located north of the visitor center.

Tipsoo Lake: Closes as snowfall dictates. Located on SR 410 near Chinook Pass.

GASOLINE

Available at gas stations outside of the park in the nearby communities of Elbe, Ashford, Packwood, Greenwater, American River & Wilkeson.

CARBON RIVER

Carbon River Road remains closed to vehicles due to extensive storm damage. Bicycling & hiking on the road are allowed.

Emergency: 911

TDD: (360)569-2177

24-hour information: (360)569-2211

Website: www.nps.gov/mora/



Regulations Help Protect Your Park

The rules and regulations in national parks help protect their special qualities. Please honor these rules even though they may differ from the ones you are accustomed to following at other outdoor recreation areas and city parks. Your cooperation is appreciated and shows respect for fellow park users, for future visitors and for our national heritage.



- Collecting ferns, fungi and plant materials is prohibited.
- A permit is required year round for backpackers and climbers.
- Make fires only in a fire grill at picnic areas and campgrounds.
- Park animals are wild; observe them only. Feeding is prohibited.
- Collecting of berries for personal consumption is allowed in small quantities (one liter per day). Commercial collecting is prohibited.
- Walk only on constructed trails at Paradise, Sunrise and Tipsoo Lake.
- The use of skateboards, roller skates and similar devices is prohibited.
- Camping is not allowed along any park road. Do not drive off any road.
- Pets must be leashed. They are not allowed in buildings or on trails (seeing-eye and hearing-ear dogs excepted; Sunrise Pet Loop and Pacific Crest Trail excepted).
- Bicycles are prohibited on all trails. Ask a ranger to recommend good roads for bicycling.
- Firearms must be unloaded, broken down, and cased. Weapons are prohibited in the wilderness.



Thank You Volunteers!

From those of us who recognize both the value of your time and the value of Mount Rainier National Park, a heartfelt THANK YOU! to each of the hundreds of volunteers who contributed a total of nearly 50,000 hours last year to make a difference at Mount Rainier.

For information about the volunteer program, visit the National Park Service's Volunteer in Parks area at <http://www.nps.gov/volunteer> on the Web. To apply for volunteer service at Mount Rainier or to receive more information on the volunteer program in this park, contact a park ranger at any visitor center or ranger station. Or contact: Clay & Dixie Gatchel, Lead Volunteer Coordinators, Mount Rainier National Park, Tahoma Woods - Star Route, Ashford, WA 98304. E-mail: dixie_gatchel@nps.gov

Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund

The Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic 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 like you--as well as businesses, foundations and allied organizations--to secure financial as well as volunteer support for specific projects to improve the parks.



This year's projects at Mount Rainier include:

- Rehabilitating the Tolmie Peak fire lookout
- White River patrol cabin restoration work
- Producing Nisqually River roadside exhibits

- Purchasing "Don't Be a Meadow Stomper" resource awareness buttons
- Funding an educational CD-Rom project
- Producing a multimedia program on the General Management Plan

For detailed information about how you can help with these and other projects, contact: Jennifer Benn, Executive Director, The Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund, 1221 Second Ave., Suite 350, Seattle, WA 98101. Or telephone: (206) 621-6565. Look for donation boxes and contribution envelopes at park visitor centers.

Why New Park Fees?

Our nation's parks, wildlife refuges and public lands are for everyone to enjoy. They will always be places that people of every income can visit at low cost. But the parks and other public lands are suffering from inadequate funding, as many experienced travelers have seen. In response to this situation, Congress set up a three-year pilot fee program to see if people are willing to make a small additional investment in their parks. The answer, accord-

ing to public opinion surveys, is a resounding yes! More than 78% of Americans surveyed said they would pay a little more to visit a park if the money was going directly to that park.

It is! Eighty percent of the new revenue (above the base amount collected during fiscal year 1994) will be used for specific improvements at the park where it was collected. The remaining 20% of the money collected will go into a special fund to help other parks that don't charge fees. At Mount Rainier, an estimated \$500,000 of additional money will be available for these targeted projects:

- rehabilitation of heavily used trails
- repair of campground facilities
- upgrading waysides and exhibits
- ecologically restoring the former Sunrise Campground site

Your investment in Mount Rainier is paying off! This is a program where everyone wins. The public gets healthy, accessible parks to enjoy and a family of four will still pay less to visit Mount Rainier than they would to see a first-run movie. Park managers win because public support and participation in this program will help provide needed resources and repairs. And our children win because they will inherit parks that are in better shape than they are now.



Thanks NWIA!

Enhance your knowledge of the park. Increase your educational opportunities while visiting Mount Rainier. Books and maps are available for purchase at all park visitor centers and wilderness information centers.

These sales outlets are operated by the Mount Rainier Branch of the Northwest Interpretive Association (NWIA), a non-profit organization benefiting educational programs in the national parks and forests of the Pacific Northwest. The four editions of the park newspaper, booklets for all the self-guiding trails in the park, and the *Oh, What A Paradise!* audiovisual program are all examples of these benefits. We invite you to become a member of the Association. For membership information or mailorder catalog, write to the Northwest Interpretive Association, Longmire, WA 98397. Or telephone: (360) 569-2211 x3320.