



The Tahoma News



Enjoying Fall Colors on the Mountain

Mount Rainier is famous for its amazing wildflower meadows in summer and for abundant snowfall in winter. Fall is another spectacular season on the mountain with crisp, clear days more the norm than the exception in early- to mid-fall. Bear frequent the meadows to forage on huckleberries. A highlight of the season is the vibrant colors of fall foliage from the old-growth forest up to the subalpine meadows at treeline.

Viewing Fall Colors

- Look for changing vine maple at lower elevations throughout the park
- Photograph the historic rustic buildings accented by autumn hues at Longmire.
- Take the three-mile drive out Westside Road to see fall colors. Hike from there to enjoy more fall foliage.
- Hike Grove of the Patriarchs and Eastside trails to see the reflection of fall colors in the Ohanapecosh River.
- See the subalpine meadows cloaked in the red and orange of changing huckleberry at Paradise, Sunrise, and throughout the park’s backcountry.
- Take a drive on Stevens Canyon Road and the eastside roads (SR123 and SR410), famous for their fall colors.
- Stop at viewpoints to see slopes and avalanche tracks awash in the colors of fall.

Mountain Biking Mount Rainier



Bicycling on park highways has become increasingly popular. However, winding roads, blind curves, heavy traffic, and very narrow road shoulders present safety issues. Here are options for cyclists seeking less crowded routes during the fall season:

- **Carbon River Road:** This gravel road is open only to hikers and bicyclists beyond the park boundary. The road gains approximately 600 feet in elevation along its 5-mile length; some sections are rough and rocky. The road ends at Ipsut Creek backcountry camp, beyond which only hikers are allowed.
- **White River and Sunrise Roads:** After these paved roads close for the season to vehicle traffic (usually in late October, depending on weather conditions), bicyclists and hikers may travel on them from the SR 410 junction to Sunrise (6 miles one-way to White River Campground, 16 miles one-way to Sunrise).

- Road maintenance may require closure of the Sunrise Road at any time.
- **Westside Road:** A popular mountain bike route, this gravel road is 13 miles one-way with an elevation gain of approximately 1,120 feet.

Travel safely, and always wear a helmet, high visibility clothing, and use front and rear lights. ***Bicycles are not permitted on any park trails, or in any off-trail areas.*** Bicyclists are subject to the same laws as motor vehicles. Travel safely.

Welcome ...



...to Mount Rainier National Park, a crown jewel of the northwest and of the National Park System.

While the brilliant colors of autumn are beginning to cloak the landscape, park staff are preparing the park for winter -- utility systems and buildings are being winterized, road signs are removed, snow poles are placed along roads to guide the snowplow drivers, and artifacts and audiovisual equipment are removed from visitor centers for storage. All this and more is happening around the park in preparation for our lengthy winter.

While you are at Paradise this fall you may notice planting underway near the Paradise Inn. In 2018 prior to rehabilitation of the historic Paradise Inn Annex, native seeds were collected from the site and cultivated in the park’s greenhouse. Early this fall park staff and volunteers are replanting 70,000 plants to restore the construction footprint.

Mount Rainier staff work diligently to preserve this spectacular place with its iconic experiences for you and for the enjoyment of generations to come. Through our work, we also strive to ensure that Mount Rainier is a place where all people are welcome to visit and become a part of the park’s story!

Tracy Swartout
Acting Superintendent

Winter Road Closures *Estimated Dates (subject to change)*

Nisqually to Longmire	Open all winter except during extreme weather
Longmire to Paradise	Open all winter. Closes nightly late fall through winter and reopens the next morning or when snow-removal activities and conditions permit.
Westside Road to Dry Creek	November 4 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall
Paradise Valley Road	October 14 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall
Stevens Canyon Road	October 28 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall
Chinook and Cayuse Passes via SRs 410 & 123	TBD by WSDOT. For current status call Washington State Department of Transportation, 1-800-695-ROAD.
White River Road to SR 410	October 28 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall
Sunrise Road at junction to White River Campground	October 28 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall
Mowich Lake Road	October 21 or earlier with the first heavy snowfall

All vehicles are required to carry chains beginning November 1.

Visiting Your Park

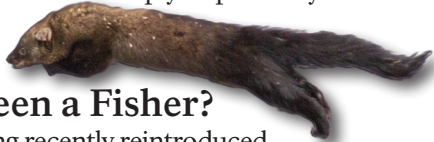


Steve Redman photo

Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 to preserve natural and cultural resources and to provide for public benefit and enjoyment. The following information will help you protect yourself and your park.

Have You Seen a Fisher?

The park is tracking recently reintroduced Pacific fishers by aircraft through signals emitted from implanted transmitters. You can help by reporting fisher sightings to a ranger. Remember that fisher, marten, and mink are very similar looking species. Even the experts can get them confused and photos (even fuzzy ones) are very helpful. One thing to look for is a long, bushy tail (a third of the total length) that is bushy all the way to the base. Marten and mink tails are tapered at the base. Fisher’s ears are also much smaller in profile compared to marten and mink.



Camping

Camp in designated campsites only. Sleeping in vehicles outside of campgrounds is not permitted.

Fires in the Park

Make fires only in established fire grills. Collecting firewood is prohibited.

Marijuana is Illegal

While limited recreational use of marijuana is now legal in Washington State, possession of any amount of marijuana or other illegal drugs remains illegal in Mount Rainier National Park, surrounding national forests, and all federal lands.

Mercury in Park Lakes

Research studies have shown mercury is present in some trout in a few park lakes. Check the Washington Department of Health website <http://www.doh.wa.gov/> for information on fish consumption.

Tree Hazards

Keep a lookout for dead, diseased, or leaning trees that could fall or drop branches. Avoid stopping or picnicking near these hazardous trees. On windy days be especially careful, strong winds and gusts can do great damage even to healthy trees—as well as anything in range of falling debris.

No Drone Zone!

Launching, landing, or operating an unmanned aircraft (drone) within the boundaries of Mount Rainier National Park is prohibited.



Wilderness Camping

Mount Rainier National Park offers outstanding wilderness hiking and camping opportunities. Wilderness camping permits are required for all overnight stays in the park’s backcountry year-round. Permits and backcountry information are available at all wilderness information centers and most visitor centers. Although permits are free, there is an optional, fee-based reservation system for campers and climbers in effect May through September.

Backcountry reservations are \$20 per party (1-12 people) for 1 to 14 consecutive nights. Seventy percent of all backcountry sites and zones are available for reservation. The remaining 30 percent are issued on a first-come, first-served basis the day of or one day before the trip begins. Wilderness permits must be obtained in person at the Longmire Wilderness Information Center, White River Wilderness Information Center, or the Carbon River Ranger Station. See page 4 for hours.

Climbing

Each year, approximately 10,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier. Nearly half reach the 14,410-foot summit. Climbing permits are required for travel above 10,000 feet and/or on glaciers. Climbing information—including fees, routes, and conditions—is available on the park website and at Wilderness Information Centers at Longmire, White River, and Paradise. See page 4 for hours.

Pay your annual climbing fee through [pay.gov](https://www.pay.gov); keep your receipt and print or save it on your phone to serve as proof of payment; and bring a picture ID.

Guided climbs and seminars are available through: Alpine Ascents International (206) 378-1927 International Mountain Guides (360) 569-2609 Rainier Mountaineering, Inc. (888) 892-5462

Ranger-led Programs

Join a park ranger or volunteer for a talk, guided walk, or evening program. These free programs explore the park’s natural and cultural history. Find out who else has come to Mount Rainier and why. Discover what this mountain really is and what it may become. Meet some of the park’s inhabitants—from owls to elk—and find out why they are here. Check at a visitor center for program times and locations. See page 4 for visitor center information.

Citizen Ranger Quests

Has your inner Junior Ranger never really gone away? Try out a Quest! They are designed for older children (12 and up) and adults. Information on Quests is available at visitor centers.

Show Some Love for Your National Parks

By Laurie B. Ward, Washington’s National Park Fund Executive Director

Washington’s National Park Fund (WNPF) provides a clear pathway for people who love Mount Rainier National Park to give back to this special place.

WNPF is the only partner providing philanthropic support exclusively to Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic National Parks. 100% of the funds raised in Washington State, stay in the state for the benefit of these parks. Charitable contributions help fund priority projects in four core areas:

- advancing science and research
- improving visitors’ experiences
- expanding volunteerism and stewardship
- providing for youth and family programs.

The Fund provides support for nearly 2,000 volunteers here at Mount Rainier National Park whose efforts are valued at \$1.8 million! Whether you purchase a Washington National Parks license plate for your vehicle, support one of WNPF’s fundraising climbs, ride in RAMROD or include the Fund in your estate plans, they all add up and have a major impact on this beloved place.

For more information please go to the Fund’s website wnpf.org or email them at fund@wnpf.org.

Experience Mount Rainier as a Volunteer Ranger

As you visit Mount Rainier, keep your eyes open for people wearing hats, shirts, and jackets with a “volunteer” logo. You’ll see volunteers working in the visitor centers and assisting visitors in the meadows. Even more are busy behind the scenes, organizing the park’s collection of historic photos and taking care of plants in our greenhouse.

Have you ever dreamed of being a park ranger? You still can—for a day, for a summer, or on winter weekends as your schedule permits. Opportunities abound. Ask how you can become part of our team! www.nps.gov/mora/getinvolved/volunteer.htm

Internet & Cellular Access

Cellular service is spotty at best, and varies with service provider. Public wifi is available in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise.



Park Partners



Washington’s National Park Fund
wnpf.org



Mount Rainier National Park Volunteers
www.nps.gov/mora/getinvolved/volunteer.htm



Washington Trails Association
www.wta.org



Discover Your Northwest
www.discovernw.org



Visit Rainier
visitrainier.com



Mount Rainier National Park Associates
www.mrnpa.org



Mount Rainier Institute
www.packforest.org/mtrainierinstitute/

Know Before You Go



Caroline Meleedy photo

Hazards of the Season

A beautiful day on the mountain can turn into dangerous whiteout conditions in a matter of minutes. Knowing what to do and making the right decision can be the difference between life and death.

While history shows that heavy snowpack conditions significantly increase search and rescue incidents, many hikers are not prepared for the route-finding challenges encountered by early snowpack. Snow may start covering trails as early as October. However, keep in mind that snow is not the only issue when it comes to safe backcountry travel.

Route-Finding Challenges

Trails may be snow-free at lower elevations but anticipate and prepare for snow at higher elevations. Conditions change rapidly during the day and footprints in the snow quickly disappear. This has left many day hikers disoriented upon their return trip, expecting to simply follow their own tracks back to the snow-free trail. This results in many lost individuals, injuries, and fatalities. When route-finding, note important landmarks. If the trail becomes difficult to follow, stop and find where you are on the map before continuing.

Be Prepared

If at any point you feel uncomfortable or unprepared, turn around. If you plan on retracing your route back to the trailhead consider using wands on snow-covered trails. Always carry a good map and compass, and actively use them on snow-covered trails. Also consider supplementing your map and compass with an external antenna GPS for best coverage beneath a forest canopy.

Consider the steep snow slopes, melt holes, thinning snow bridges, and other snow-season hazards that you may encounter, and be honest with yourself in assessing your skills and experience.

Plan Ahead

- Protect yourself by wearing appropriate outdoor clothing including footwear.
- Be prepared for rapidly changing weather.
- Carry the ten essentials even on a short sightseeing hike.
- Always tell someone of your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return.
- If visibility is poor, do not travel at all.
- Plan your route ahead of time, have a backup plan, and never travel alone.

Snow Avalanches

The greatest danger is an avalanche that you trigger by skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or climbing. Be prepared for travel in avalanche terrain. Carry a transceiver, probe, and shovel and know how to use them. Determine if the location you are traveling is avalanche prone. If in doubt, ask questions or don't go. Unstable snow may slide at any time . . . not just in winter! Even small avalanches can be deadly.

Mountain Weather Changes Rapidly

A pleasant outing can quickly transform into a survival ordeal. Proper gear is a must. Navigation in storms can be extremely difficult. If you're ascending and clouds or fog start rolling in, turn around and head back to the trailhead. If that's not possible, stop, dig in, and wait for better weather.

Cross Streams Safely

Many hikers underestimate the power of moving water and some consider their former successful stream crossings as a ticket to the other side. This may not be true. Use these pointers in making wise decisions when crossing streams.

- *Your best option may be turning back.* If conditions do not look safe, do not try to cross.
- Early morning when river levels are generally at their lowest is the best time to cross.
- Find an area where the river is braided into multiple channels; look for an area with a smooth bottom and slow-moving water below knee height, and cross at its widest part.
- Before crossing, scout downstream for log jams, waterfalls, and other hazards that could

trap you. Locate a point where you can exit if you fall in. Swimming may not be possible in the swift flow or if you are swept against submerged rocks or downed trees.

- Use a sturdy stick to maintain two points of contact with the ground at all times.
- Unfasten the belt of your pack so you can easily discard it if necessary.
- Staring down at moving water can make you dizzy. Look forward as much as possible.
- Straddling a foot log may be safer than walking. Consider the consequences of a fall.
- Your safety is more important than your itinerary. Permits or reservations can be adjusted to accommodate safe river crossings.

Classic Backcountry Practices

Leave No Trace

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

*Fires are for emergency use only; they are not allowed in Mount Rainier's Wilderness

Carry the 10 Essentials and know how to use them!

1. Map and compass
2. Sunglasses, sunscreen, and hat
3. Extra clothing (warm!) and rain gear
4. Flashlight or head lamp (extra batteries)
5. First aid supplies
6. Waterproof matches or lighter
7. Repair kit and tools (for gear)
8. Extra food
9. Extra water
10. Emergency shelter

You Can Help Protect Mount Rainier



Before you step off the trail...

... consider this: one careless step can result in bare ground for years, due to the short growing season!

When exploring Mount Rainier's fragile meadows hike only on maintained trails or thick patches of snow.

Keep Wildlife Wild

Human food puts animals at risk and some die as a result. Birds like jays or ravens are effective nest predators—eating the eggs or young of other birds. By feeding birds, visitors concentrate these nest predators near roads and trails and inadvertently contribute to the death of songbirds in the same area.

- Please do not feed the wildlife.
- Store your food in an animal-proof container, or inside your car.
- Do not leave food, beverages, pet food, or toiletries unattended for any length of time.
- Clean up picnic areas after you eat.

Please drive carefully and watch for wildlife.

Facility Hours and Information



Longmire Museum
(360) 569-6575
Ranger programs, exhibits, information, books
September 3–30
9:00 am–5:00 pm daily
October 1–December 31
9:00 am–4:30 pm daily

Longmire Wilderness Information Center
(360) 569-6650
Wilderness camping & climbing permits, general information
May 25–October 14
7:30 am–5:00 pm daily
Closed for the season starting October 15

National Park Inn at Longmire
Open year-round
Lodging, dining room
Front Desk: 7:00 am–10:00 pm daily

Longmire General Store
Open year-round
Food, gifts, books, apparel
September 3–December 31
10:00 am–5:00 pm daily
Ski season, weekend & holiday hours
8:30 am–6:00 pm weekends & holidays

Carbon River Ranger Station (360) 829-9639
Located on the Carbon River Road 5.5 miles east of the Mowich Lake (SR165) junction.
Wilderness camping & northside climbing permits, general information
Call for hours

Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise
(360) 569-6571
Ranger programs, exhibits, books, information, theater, food, gifts
September 3–22
10:00 am–7:00 pm daily
September 23–October 14
10:00 am–5:00 pm daily
October 19–December 31
Saturdays and Sundays only
Hours vary due to conditions
November 28–December 1 and December 21–January 1
10:00 am - 4:15 pm daily

Jackson Visitor Center Snack Bar & Gift Shop
Food, gifts, books
September 3–22
10:00 am–6:45 pm daily
September 23–October 7
10:00 am–5:15 pm daily
October 12–December 31
11:00 am–4:00 pm Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays

Paradise Wilderness Information Center
(360) 569-6641
Wilderness camping and climbing permits, exhibits, general information
September 3–15
7:00 am–4:00 pm daily
Closing for the season starting September 16

Paradise Inn
Lodging, dining, cafe, gift shop
September 3–30
Front Desk open 24 hours daily
Closed for the season after breakfast on September 30

Ohanapecosh Visitor Center
(360) 569-6581
Ranger programs, exhibits, information, books
September 4–15
9:00 am–5:00 pm daily
September 21–October 14
9:00 am–5:00 pm Saturdays–Sundays only
Closed for the season starting October 15

White River Wilderness Information Center
(360) 569-6670
Wilderness camping and eastside climbing permits, general information
September 3–October 14
7:30 am–5:00 pm daily
Closed for the season starting October 15

Sunrise Visitor Center
(360) 663-2425
Exhibits, information, books
September 3–22
10:00 am–6:00 pm daily
Closed for the season starting September 23

Sunrise Day Lodge Snack Bar & Gift Shop
Food and gifts; day use only, no overnight lodging
September 3–8
10:00 am–7:00 pm daily
September 14–22
11:00 am–5:00 pm Saturdays–Sundays only
Closed for the season starting September 23

Mount Rainier National Park

Superintendent
Chip Jenkins

Park Headquarters
(360) 569-2211

Lost and Found
(360) 569-6608

Keep In Touch!
MORAInfo@nps.gov
Mount Rainier National Park: www.nps.gov/mora
North Coast and Cascades Science & Learning Network <http://nwparkscience.org/>

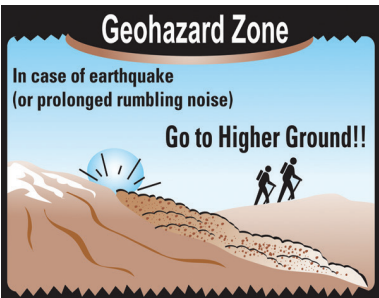
Official Park Social Media Sites
facebook.com/MountRainierNPS
instagram.com/mountrainiernps/
flickr.com/MountRainierNPS
twitter.com/MountRainierNPS
mountrainiernps.tumblr.com/
youtube.com/MountRainierNPS

Emergency: Dial 911 from any phone located in the park



Mount Rainier: An Active Volcano

Active steam vents, periodic earth tremors, and historic eruptions provide evidence that Mount Rainier is sleeping, not dead. Seismic monitoring stations around the mountain should provide days or weeks of advance warning of impending eruptions. Other geologic hazards, however, can occur with little warning. These include debris flows and rockfalls.



If you are near a river and notice a rapid rise in water level, feel a prolonged shaking of the ground, and/or hear a roaring sound coming from upvalley—often described as the sound made by a fast-moving freight train—move quickly to higher ground—200 feet above river level should be safe.

Detailed information is available at park visitor centers or from scientists at the U.S.G.S. Cascades Volcano Observatory, vulcan.wr.usgs.gov.



Gas is not available inside the park.

Food & Lodging Inside Mount Rainier National Park
For reservations contact, Mount Rainier Guest Services at (360) 569-2275 or mtrainierguestservices.com

Services Outside Mount Rainier National Park
Gasoline, lodging, dining, recreation equipment rentals, and other services are available in local communities.

Drive-in Campgrounds

Campground	Open Dates	Elev.	Sites	Group Sites	Toilets	Dump Station	Maximum RV/Trailer Length
Cougar Rock*	May 24 - Oct. 14	3,180'	173	5	Flush	Yes	RV 35'/Trailer 27'
Ohanapecosh*	May 24 - Oct. 14	1,914'	188	2	Flush	No	RV 32'/Trailer 27'
White River	June 21 - Sept. 30	4,232'	112	0	Flush	No	RV 27'/Trailer 18'
Mowich Lake	Primitive walk-in campground, tents only. 10 sites. No fee (must self-register at campground kiosk). Vault toilets, <i>no potable water</i> . No fires allowed. Elevation 4,929'; generally open July through early October, depending on road and weather conditions. Call 360-829-9639 for information.						

***Advance reservations are recommended for individual sites at Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh Campgrounds from June 22 through the night of September 1. These can be made up to six months in advance. Reservations for group sites are recommended and are available throughout the season. These can be made up to one year in advance. To make a reservation online, go to www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777.**