

Crater Lake

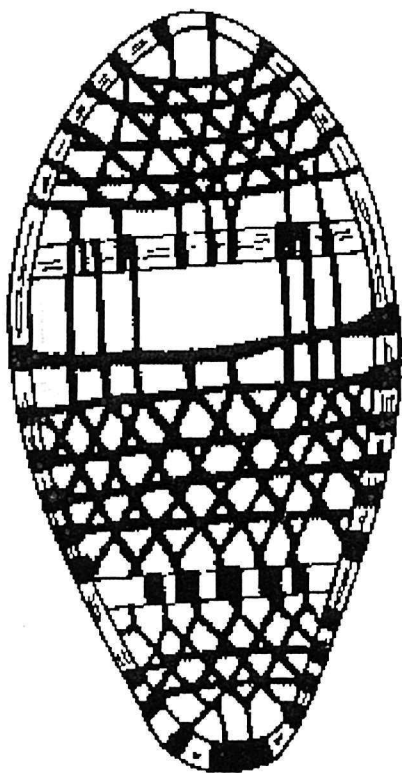
National Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Enjoying Winter Safely in Crater Lake's Backcountry



Crater Lake National Park receives an average of 45 feet of snow annually. A wide variety of trails, former fire roads, and unplowed roads provide winter enthusiasts with access to breathtaking views, open slopes, and dense forests, making Crater Lake ideal for both day-trippers and backcountry tourists. Visitors are reminded that 93% of the park is managed as federal wilderness under the provision of Public Law 88-577, better known as the Wilderness Act.

Regulations



There is no admission fee to enter the park in the winter nor are Sno-Park permits required. Keep in mind that Sno-Park permits are required for skiing in the adjacent National Forests.

Skiing or snowshoeing on any plowed road or parking area is forbidden. Please put on your skis or snowshoes only after leaving the roadway.

There is no overnight lodging nor roadside camping in the park during the winter months. Backcountry camping is allowed. All backcountry campers must register for a free permit in person before camping. Backcountry campers must ski or snowshoe to their campsite. The following areas are closed to camping:

- Within one mile of any plowed road
- Within one mile of Boundary Springs or Sphagnum Bog
- Within 100 feet of any water source
- Within visibility of any other backcountry campers or ski trails

Entering the caldera is extremely dangerous and strictly forbidden.

Stay well back from the edge of any drop-off. Snow overhangs called cornices can fall away without warning.

You are responsible for your own safety. Our volunteer ski patrol operates only on weekends. Even during patrolled periods, not all trails and possible routes can be canvassed.

Pets and firearms are not allowed on any ski routes.

No open fires are permitted during the winter season. This is to protect the exposed vegetation. Only dead and downed wood may be used for campfires; however, it is covered by deep snow.

Camping parties are restricted to no more than eight people per party. Groups larger than eight must break into smaller groups, travelling and camping separately.

Considerations



Skis and snowshoes can be rented at the Rim Village cafeteria. Call the Crater Lake Lodge Company at 503-594-2255 for rates, hours, and availability.

All trails in the park are **ungroomed**. The more popular ski trails are marked. The Rim Drive is closed in winter except for the section connecting Park Headquarters to the Rim Village; this unplowed road is also a popular ski route.

Snowshoers should stay off of and out of ski tracks as a courtesy to skiers.

If you have any questions about skiing or snowshoeing at Crater Lake, or if you would like to know current conditions and weather forecast, call 503-594-2211 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time, or stop at the Steel Visitor Center at Park Headquarters (open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day) or at the Rim Information Desk in the Cafeteria Building (open 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekends and holiday periods)

Skiing or Snowshoeing Around the Lake



For those desiring a winter backcountry adventure in a spectacular setting, skiing around the lake on the unplowed Rim Road is an unforgettable experience. The trip is thirty miles long and typically requires three to five days, longer on snowshoes. Most people start at the Rim Village and proceed clockwise around the lake to Park Headquarters, with a net loss of 600 feet of elevation, although a trip in either direction is possible. For groups with only one car, the Raven Trail offers a connection between Park Headquarters and the Rim Village.

Winter conditions at Crater Lake can be highly variable and can change quickly. As a result, backcountry tourists should be prepared for all conditions. Permits cannot be issued in advance or over the phone. Every member of the group must complete a skills and equipment checklist prior to leaving for an overnight trip.

Avalanches and icy conditions can cause hazards at some points along the Rim Road. Please familiarize yourself with avalanche safety precautions before your trip. You can ascertain current avalanche conditions at the listed phone number and locations.

Rim Road Distances and Elevations

Location	Total Mileage (mi.)	Distance from Last (mi.)	Total Climb (ft.)
Rim Village	--	--	--
Discovery Point	1.1	1.1	50
Lightning Springs Trailhead	2.3	1.2	
Watchman Trailhead	3.8	1.5	200
North Junction	6.1	2.3	200
Cleetwood Cove	10.7	4.6	450
Wineglass	13.5	2.8	350
Skell Head	14.9	1.4	400
Cloudcap	17.9	3.0	600
Kerr Notch	21.4	3.5	0
Dutton Ridge	24.0	2.6	650
Sun Notch	25.5	1.5	0
Vidae Falls	27.0	1.5	0
Park HQ	30.0	3.0	

All mileages and elevation changes are along the Rim Road and do not consider any avalanche detour routes.

Winter Parking for Overnight Users

Backcountry users may park in either the park headquarters area or at Rim Village. You are responsible for ensuring your car is parked in a designated overnight parking area. If your vehicle is left in a non-designated area, you risk having it seriously damaged by snow removal equipment or towed at your expense. You will be required to provide vehicle description(s) and license plate number(s) when you receive your backcountry use permit.

Overnight Parking Locations

