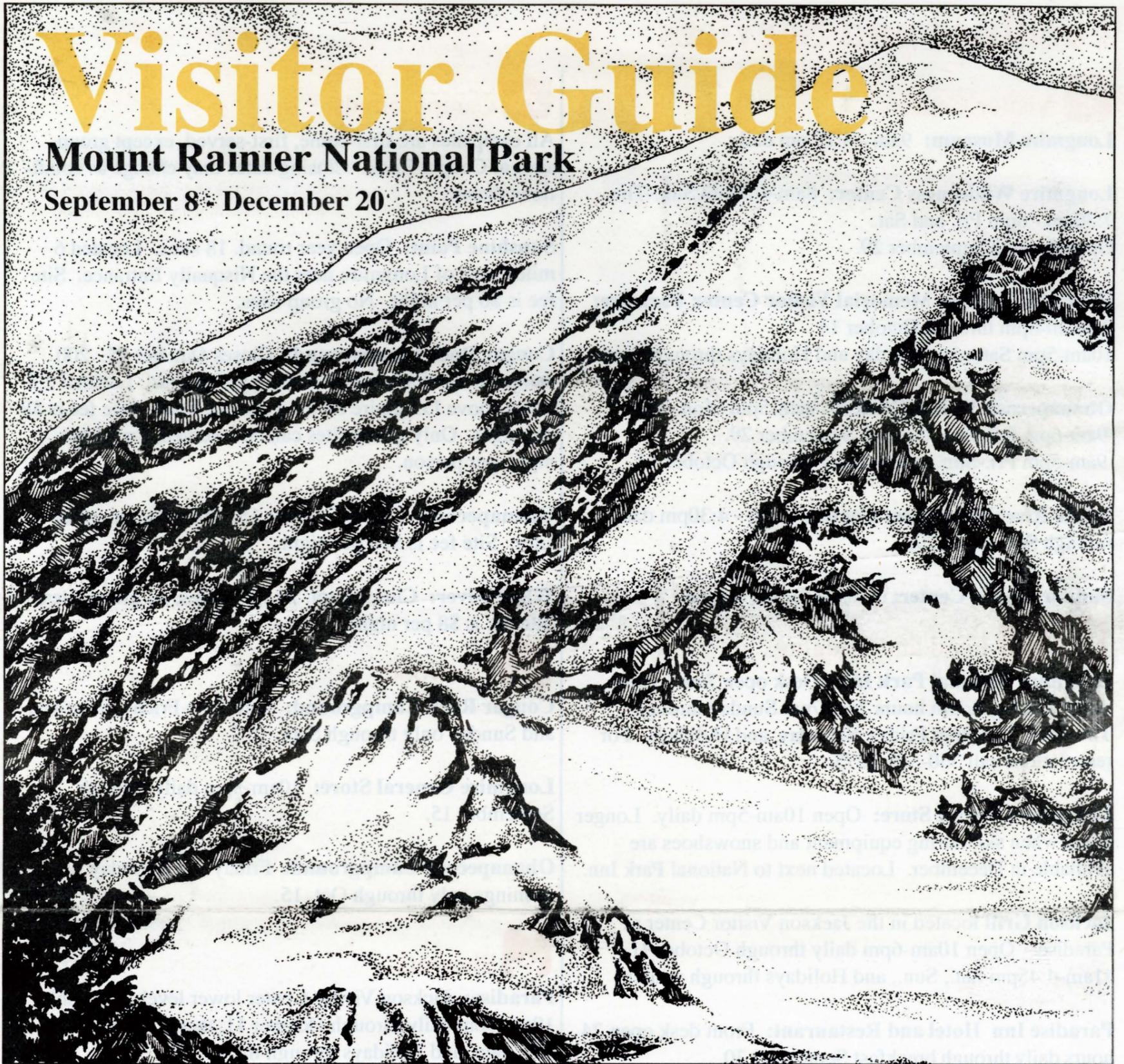


Visitor Guide

Mount Rainier National Park

September 8 - December 20



Autumn: A Time For Change

Autumn is a time of significant change on the mountain. While the leaves are turning colors the roads and trails are turning icy.

Winter Driving

The arrival of regular snow on the mountain roads heralds a warning to drivers: watch for reduced traction, uncertain braking, and poor visibility. Traction tires and/or tire chains may be required at any time. Be particularly cautious when driving in shaded areas which stay wet and icy well into the day.

Hikers, Backpackers and Climbers

Sudden, severe storms punctuate the transition from fall to early winter. Be prepared to survive winter conditions in any season. Besides intermittent storms, the upper mountain is icier and more heavily crevassed, making climbing more difficult and hazardous. Remember, a little snow can hide a big hazard. Hikers should beware of icy areas.

Be sure to check with a ranger before heading out into uncertain conditions. Weather forecasts are posted daily at all visitor contact stations. It is a good idea to carry the 10 essentials and know how to use them. What are the 10 essentials? Ask for a copy of the Wilderness Trip Planner and find out!

Road Closures

Highway 123, between Cayuse Pass and Stevens Canyon entrance will be closed to all traffic from September 9 through the end of winter.

Highway 410 over Cayuse and Chinook Passes, the Stevens Canyon Road and the Paradise Valley Road will close for the season at the first heavy snowfall.

The road between Longmire and Paradise will close nightly after mid-October when weather conditions dictate, reopening each morning when the roadway is safe for travel.

The Sunrise and White River Road will remain open daily as weather permits. As of September 28, the gate at the junction with the White River Campground Road will be locked nightly, re-opening each morning as conditions permit. Check with park staff before leaving your vehicle at Sunrise overnight. The entire White River Road from Highway 410 will close for the season on October 15, or earlier as conditions dictate.

Check at entrance stations or visitor centers for updated road closures!



Facilities and Services

? Visitor Centers

Longmire Museum: 9am - 4:15 pm daily.

Longmire Wilderness Center: 8am-4:30pm Sun.-Thu.
7:30am - 6pm Fri. and Sat.
Open through September 29.

Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center, Paradise:
9:30am-6pm through October 14
10am-5pm Saturday, Sunday and Holidays through winter.

Ohanapecosh Visitor Center: 9am-5pm Mon.-Thu.
9am-6pm Fri.-Sun. through September 29.
9am-5pm Fri.-Sun. and Holiday through October 14.

White River Wilderness Center: 8am - 4:30pm daily
through September 29.

Sunrise Visitor Center: Closed for the season.

🍴🛏 Food and Lodging

Longmire National Park Inn: Desk open 7am - 10pm daily. Dining Room hours 7am-7pm Sunday through Thursday, 7am-8pm Friday, Saturday, and Holidays. For reservations call 360-569-2275.

Longmire General Store: Open 10am-5pm daily. Longer hours when ski touring equipment and snowshoes are available in December. Located next to National Park Inn.

Jackson Grill located in the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise: Open 10am-6pm daily through October 11 11am-4:45pm Sat., Sun., and Holidays through winter.

Paradise Inn Hotel and Restaurant: Front desk open 24 hours daily through breakfast September 30.

🛢 Gasoline

There is NO gasoline available in Mount Rainier National Park. Service stations are located in Ashford, Packwood, Greenwater, American River and other nearby communities. Be prepared and check your guage.

⛺ Campgrounds

All campsites are first-come, first-served, except group sites at Cougar Rock. Closing dates may change as conditions dictate.

Sunshine Point: Open year round. 18 sites. Located 6 miles west of Longmire near the Nisqually Entrance. Site fee is \$6 per night. No group sites.

Cougar Rock Campground: Closes October 15. 200 campsites for tents and trailers, 5 group sites. Located 2.5 miles above Longmire on the Paradise Road. Site fee is \$8 per night. Only group sites can be reserved, for \$3 per night, per person.

Ohanapecosh: Closes October 15. 205 sites, no group sites. Site fee is \$10 per night.

White River: Closes Sept. 30. 117 sites, no group sites. Site fee is \$8 per night.

🔥 Firewood

Cougar Rock Campground: 4pm-9pm Friday, Saturday, and Sunday only through Sept. 15.

Longmire General Store: 10am-5pm daily through September 15.

Ohanapecosh Campground: Friday and Saturday evenings only through Oct. 15.

🚿 Showers

Paradise: Jackson Visitor Center lower level. Available 10am-6pm daily through October 11, then 11am-4:45pm, Sat., Sun. and Holidays through the winter.

✉ Post Offices

Longmire Inn: 8:30am-5pm M-F, 8:30am-12 noon on Sat.

Paradise Inn: 8:30am-5pm M-F, 8:30am-12 noon Saturday. Closes September 30.

HENRY M. JACKSON MEMORIAL VISITOR CENTER



MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK

Climbing and Wilderness Travel



All backpackers and climbers must obtain a permit before beginning a trip.

Wilderness Permits

Wilderness Permits may be obtained at any Visitor or Wilderness Information Center. Permits are free of charge and issued on a first-come, first-served basis. If planning a trip, call or write for a copy of our Wilderness Trip Planner.

Climbing Permits

Climbing Permits may be obtained at Longmire and White River Wilderness Information Centers, Longmire Museum, Paradise Ranger Station, and Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center. See opposite page for dates and times of operation.

Climbing Permits are \$15 per person, per climb, or \$25 for an annual pass. Climbing permits are required for anyone traveling on glaciers and/or above 10,000 feet. Climbing fees are directed entirely to programs benefitting climbers, including climbing ranger staffing, safety and education, and human waste removal. For more information, write: Wilderness Desk, Mount Rainier National Park, Tahoma Woods, Star Route, Ashford, WA 98304, or call (360) 569-2211 ext. 3317.

Early Season Skiing, Sliding, Snowboarding, and Snow Camping

Once the snow flies, everyone is anxious to head out and get the first turns of the winter. Skiers, snowboarders, snowshoers and sliding enthusiasts flock to Mount Rainier for its early snow.

Unfortunately, much of this activity takes place when there is insufficient snow depth to protect fragile sub-alpine plants. To help protect these important natural features, the following regulations will be in effect and will be enforced:



*Sliding is only allowed in the established Snow Play Area. This area will not open until snow depths are sufficient to build the sliding hills. This depth may not be reached until January.

*A closure on skiing and/or snowboarding in the park may be in effect until sufficient snow depth is attained (usually 3-4 feet, by some time in December). Typically, this means travelling to the Muir Snowfield until well into December. Check with a ranger before you engage in these activities.

*Snow camping requires a permit. Please visit a park information desk to get your permit. Snow camping is not allowed outside of drive-in campgrounds and other designated camps until there is at least two feet of snow, minimum for tent camping on snow. Igloos and snow caves cannot be constructed until snow depths are much greater, usually by January.

Support our Partners



Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund

The Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund was created to restore, enhance and preserve Washington's National Parks. The Fund is a private, independent, not-for-profit organization which 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.

Within the Fund's first year, it had funded 8 projects. At Mount Rainier these projects included revegetation of a portion of Paradise Meadows; Emergency Road Assistance program; and development of an interactive computer program about minimal impact hiking in wilderness areas. By October 1995, the Fund had generated \$64,000 for park projects.

Several projects now need your help:

- To end poaching of vegetation and animals.
- To educate children about ecosystem preservation.
- To restore Paradise Meadows.

For detailed information about how you can help, contact: Kim M. Evans, Executive Director, Mount Rainier, North Cascades & Olympic Fund, 1221 Second Ave., Suite 350, Seattle, WA, 98101, or call (206) 621-6565. Look for donation boxes and envelopes at all park visitor centers and at the National Park and Paradise Inns.



Northwest Interpretive Association

The Northwest Interpretive Association provides books and maps to help with your trip planning and enjoyment. Stop in at any visitor center as well as Wilderness Information Centers and Longmire Museum to purchase books and maps that will enhance your enjoyment of the park from road and trail.

The Northwest Interpretive Association is a non-profit organization benefiting naturalist programs in the national parks and forests of the Pacific Northwest. This paper is an example of these benefits. We invite you to become a member of the Association. For membership information or a mail-order catalog write NWIA, General Delivery, Longmire, WA 98397. Or call (360)569-2211 ext. 3320.

New CD-ROM

The educational CD-ROM "Where The Rivers Begin" explores with interactive animation, games, slides and videos, the rivers, old-growth forest and glaciers of Mount Rainier National Park. Users learn about the natural and human history of the park, and the social and political concerns affecting the management of natural resources. Ultimately, you develop an understanding of the management of rivers and forests of Mount Rainier National Park for today and tomorrow.

Educators and students use the CD-ROM and educator's guide in their studies of the resources of Mount Rainier National Park. Educators interested in information on the education program may contact the Education Office at (360) 569-2211 ext. 3313 for information about workshops, guides and the CD-ROM for the class room. Experience the CD-ROM for yourself in the lobby of the Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center at Paradise.

Autumn Activities

Ranger Guided Programs

Guided Walks

Saturday & Sunday through 9/29

Carter Falls: 10:00am, 2 hours, 2 miles. Experience old-growth forest along the Paradise River en route to Carter Falls. Meet at the Ranger Station bulletin board at Cougar Rock Campground.

Nisqually Vista: 3:00pm, 1.5 hours, 1.25 miles. Discover the geology and glaciers of Mount Rainier on this easy walk to an excellent view of the Nisqually Glacier. Meet at the Jackson Visitor Center flagpole at Paradise.

Sunday Only through 9/29

Meadow Stroll: 10:30am, 2 hours, 1.5 miles. Explore subalpine meadow life on this hike to a knoll overlooking the Paradise Valley. Meet at the Jackson Visitor Center Flagpole at Paradise.

Ancient Forest: 10:30am, 1.5 hours, 1.5 miles. A quiet walk along the Ohanapecosh River to the Grove of the Patriarchs. Meet at the Grove of the Patriarchs trailhead near the Stevens Canyon Entrance.

Evening Programs

Friday & Saturday through 9/28

Join a ranger naturalist for an evening discussion and slide program on various topics related to Mount Rainier. Topics vary, check local bulletin boards. *Cougar Rock Campground* - 8pm 45 minutes
Ohanapecosh Campground - 8pm 45 minutes
Paradise Inn - 9pm 45 minutes

Guided Snowshoe Walks

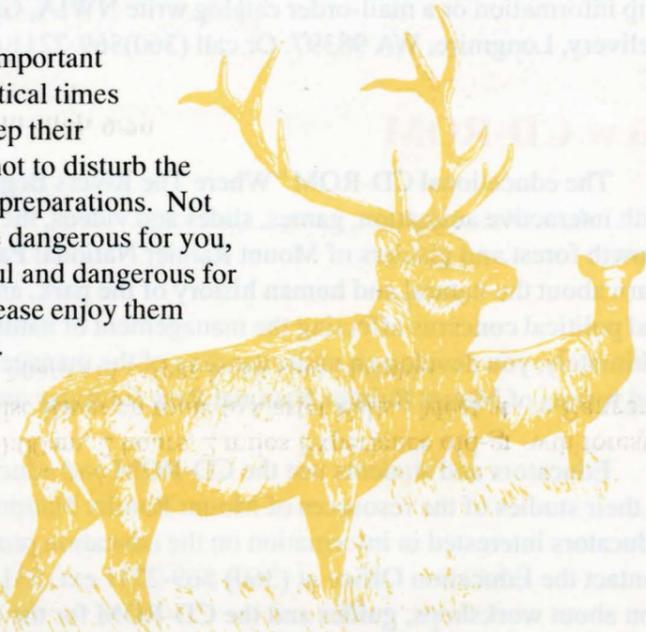
Ranger guided snowshoe walks do not begin until December 26. However, beginning November 1st, we will start taking reservations for group walks. Group walks are offered at 12:30pm Saturdays and Sundays beginning December 28. Call for more information, (360) 569-2211 extension 3314.

Wildlife Viewing

Autumn is always a good time of year for viewing wildlife, whether it be migrating birds or rutting elk. During this season, many animals are actively preparing for the long winter. Bears are foraging the subalpine meadows for berries, pikas are busily gathering "hay" for their winter stash, and elk are going through the "rut" or mating season.

Elk can be seen in low elevation meadows, such as those near the town of Ashford, while black bear may be seen foraging through the huckleberries near Reflection Lakes and in the Paradise Valley. Those wishing a glimpse of Mountain Goats might hike to Van Trump park in the early fall, while in late fall they can be seen on the cliffs of Tum Tum Peak.

It is very important during these critical times that humans keep their distance so as not to disturb the animals winter preparations. Not only can this be dangerous for you, but also stressful and dangerous for the wildlife. Please enjoy them from a distance.



Self-guiding Trails

Enjoy one or more of these short self-guided walks throughout the park. Wayside exhibits may be removed if snow depths dictate.

LONGMIRE:

Longmire Historic District Tour: 1 hour, 1.25 miles. Witness firsthand some of the park's most architecturally significant structures. Tour maps available at Longmire Museum or Wilderness Information Center.

Trail of the Shadows: 30 minutes, .7 mile. View historic mineral springs, beaver dams, 400 year old trees, and the oldest cabin in the park on this walk around Longmire meadow.

PARADISE:

Nisqually Vista: 1 hour, 1.25 miles. See how weather affects the landscape, plants and animals of these high country meadows. Excellent views of the mountain and Nisqually Glacier. Begins near Jackson Visitor Center.

OHANAPECOSH:

Life Systems: 30 minutes, .5 mile. Explore the forest and hot springs of Ohanapecosh on this short walk. Begin at the visitor center.

Grove of the Patriarchs: 1.5 hours, 2 miles. Walk among 1,000 year old tree giants of the old-growth forest. Begins at the Grove of the Patriarchs trailhead near Stevens Canyon Entrance.



Where can I hike if I have...

1-2 hours

Longmire: Carter Falls - 2 miles
Paradise: Alta Vista - 1.5 miles
Pinnacle Saddle - 2.6 miles
Ohanapecosh: Silver Falls - 2 miles
White River: Emmons Moraine - 3 miles
Sunrise: Sunrise Rim Trail - 3 miles

3-5 hours

Longmire: Eagle Peak - 7 miles
Rampart Ridge - 4 miles
Paradise: Skyline Trail - 5 miles
Lakes Trail - 5 miles
Ohanapecosh: Shriners Peak - 8.4 miles
White River: Glacier Basin - 6.5 miles
Sunrise: Mount Fremont - 5.6 miles

6-8 hours

Longmire: Rampart Ridge to Van Trump Park - 11.8 miles
Paradise: Camp Muir - 10 miles
Ohanapecosh: Three Lakes - 12 miles
Sunrise: Grand Park - 13 miles

(All mileages shown are round trip)

The above hikes are merely suggestions from staff members around the park. There are dozens more options you can take advantage of. Stop in any visitor center for detailed maps of these and other trails.

Remember that many of these trails, as well as the roads which service them, will close for the season at various times. Check the front page of this publication for expected closing dates. Lower elevation trails, such as those at Longmire and Ohanapecosh will remain free of snow much later into the fall than those at Paradise and Sunrise.