



The Tahoma News

January 1 - April, 2008

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Mount Rainier National Park is a source of inspiration, providing boundless opportunities for exploration, solitude, and contemplation.

Restoring Paradise

In the upper lot at Paradise a new visitor center has been built and is now completely enclosed for winter. Work on the interior of the building will continue through winter. The building is designed with a steeply pitched roof for shedding the heavy snow loads typical of winter in Paradise. Construction crews will continue to work towards completion of the building by August of this year.

The building is designed in the rustic park architecture style typical of the early 1900s with features similar to the Paradise Inn and is compatible with the park's National Historic Landmark District. The visitor center is being built over the original location of the former Paradise Camp building reflecting the historic landscape.

The new visitor center will be much smaller and significantly more sustainable than the existing Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center which no longer meets present-day fire, safety, or accessibility standards, and is extremely expensive to operate and maintain.

Construction of the new facility began in 2006 with completion expected this summer, opening in fall. What will happen to the existing visitor center at Paradise? It is scheduled for demolition after opening of the new visitor center.

The Paradise Inn, which opened July 1, 1917, was built in 1916 using massive timbers and glacial boulders to blend the building with its natural surroundings. Today, the Inn is a National Historic Landmark and is a contributing feature to the park's National Historic Landmark District.

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Visiting Paradise During Construction

Construction efforts continue on the interior of the Paradise Inn and the new visitor center at Paradise. The current visitor center is open and continues to provide book and gift sales, dining at the Grill, snowshoe walks and interpretive activities. Come on up to enjoy this winter wonderland with its unbeatable backdrops of Mount Rainier, its glaciers, and the Tatoosh Range. The visitor center is open on weekends and holidays in winter.

Construction needs combined with winter conditions have significantly reduced parking in the immediate Paradise area. See the inside pages for more information on winter parking and activities at Paradise.



Above: Rehabilitation of the historic Paradise Inn



Above & below: Construction progress on the new Paradise Visitor Center



Construction Schedule subject to change

Paradise Inn	
Construction Complete	April 2008
Open to Visitors	May 2008
Visitor Center	
Construction Complete	Aug. 2008
New Exhibits Installed	Sept. 2008
New Visitor Center opens	Fall 2008
Existing Visitor Center	
Demolition	Fall 2008

Welcome...

... to Mount Rainier National Park. A winter wonderland waiting for you to explore. Whether you visit by car, snowshoe or cross-country skis you will experience the park at a special time, when the mountain is wrapped in a blanket of pure white snow that muffles sound and sends many of the animals, such as marmots and bear, scurrying into hibernation.



Superintendent
Dave Uberuaga

Winter at Mount Rainier creates a unique environment and traveling on the mountain road to Paradise is an experience in itself! If you are trying out your new SUV, remember that it's the skills of the driver that count more than the type of vehicle being driven. Many visitors become overconfident with all-wheel drive, but driving with caution can prevent many vehicle accidents.

November 2006, the late autumn rains continued for 36 hours overwhelming the rivers and drastically changing some of the landscape. The permanent and seasonal staff, alongside many volunteers, have been dedicated to rebuilding damaged roads and trails, preserving the landscape and protecting our historic landmarks. These efforts will continue until the work is complete.

This is the final year of rehabilitation of the historic Paradise Inn and of construction of the new Paradise Visitor Center. The Paradise Inn is scheduled to reopen in May, just in time for the summer season, and the new visitor center will open this coming fall. I invite you to plan a trip back to the park to see these two exciting building projects after completion.

Enjoy your visit to this special place!

Dave Uberuaga,
Superintendent

2 Winter Activities

Are you here for the snow? Where can you ski, snowshoe, or snow camp? Are there guided snowshoe walks? See the next page for winter recreation information.

3 Avalanche Aware

How are avalanches triggered? What can you do to avoid causing an avalanche? What are the different risk levels? Your introduction to avalanche awareness is on page 3.

4 Park Information

Where are the visitor centers? When are they open? How do I contact the park? It's all on the back page!

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Winter Roads & Driving

Most of Mount Rainier's roads are closed for winter. The road from Nisqually Entrance to Longmire is open year-round, but may close during extreme weather. The road between Longmire and Paradise closes nightly in winter and reopens in the morning once the road has been plowed. The road may close early or remain closed during the entire day due to poor road conditions or severe weather. While you're waiting for the road to open, please park in the parking lot, not in a traffic lane. Drive only on plowed roads in the park. The Carbon River Road to Ipsut Creek Campground is closed due to the November 2006 flood.

Beware of poor visibility and reduced traction. Drive with your lights on for safety. Shady areas and bridge surfaces can be treacherously icy even when other sections of roadway are not. Stay alert, use caution, anticipate hazards, and slow down!

Winter Driving Safety Tips

- * All vehicles are required to carry tire chains.
- * Reduce your speed.
- * Keep your headlights on for visibility.
- * Allow extra distance between vehicles.
- * Stay well back when following plows.
- * Use low gears, especially when driving downhill.
- * Never stop or park in a traffic lane. Your life may depend on it!
- * If your RWD vehicle skids: Reduce gas, steer where you want to go.
- * If your FWD car skids: Accelerate slightly and steer where you want to go.
- * Brake sparingly to avoid skidding by locking your brakes.
- * Drive in the appropriate lane for your direction of travel. Avoid the center line.
- * Ensure that your chains fit your tires and practice installing them before you need them.
- * Stop in a chain-up area, pullout, or parking lot to install, adjust, or remove tire chains.
- * When parking, avoid setting your emergency brake. It may freeze.

Follow Traction Requirements

As road and weather conditions change throughout the day, traction requirements may also change. State law requires that you carry tire chains at all times when in the mountains. Obey the posted traction requirement.

**APPROVED
TRACTION TIRES
ADVISED**

The road ahead has patches of snow and/or ice covering the surface. Your vehicle should have approved all-season tires, snow tires, or chains on the drive wheels. Approved traction tires are designated by "M-S", "M/S", "*-*", or "All Season" on the sidewall of the tires.

**CHAINS
REQUIRED
EXCEPT 4WD**

The road ahead is snow-packed or icy and drivers can expect some difficulty. Your vehicle must have tire chains (link, cable, or plastic) on the drive wheels. AWD and 4WD vehicles may proceed without chains if they have snow tires on all four wheels, are in four wheel drive, and carry one set of chains in the vehicle for later installation if needed.

**CHAINS
REQUIRED
ALL VEHICLES**

All vehicles must have chains on the drive wheels including AWD and 4WD.



"Nature Coasting," has been a popular activity at Paradise since the turn of the century.

Climbing & Backpacking

Over 10,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier each year. About half actually make it to the summit. Climbing information is available at ranger stations and on the park's website at www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/climbing.htm. Climbers pay a Cost Recovery Fee of \$30 per person, per calendar year. Climbing Passes are available via fax or mail. For more information go to the above website. Be aware that winter camping and climbing are much more demanding and hazardous than in summer.

Permits are required for all overnight stays in the Wilderness and for travel above 10,000' and/or on glaciers. Rangers issue permits from the Longmire Museum daily and at Paradise on weekends. Self registration is available at the Carbon River Ranger Station and at the winter closure of SR410 near Crystal Mountain.

Overnight parking at Paradise is by displayed overnight parking permit in designated areas only.

Guided climbs and climbing seminars are available through:

Alpine Ascents International (206) 378-1927
International Mountain Guides (360) 569-2609
Rainier Mountaineering, Inc. (RMI) (888) 892-5462

**NEVER SKI, SLIDE OR CAMP ON
PLOWED ROADWAYS OR PARKING
LOTS! Whether the road is open
or closed, snowplows may be
working nearby.**

Snow Camping

Snow camping requires a permit and sufficient snow depth to prevent resource damage. Camp in designated areas well away from buildings, marked trails, and parking lots. When you finish camping, collapse igloos and snowcaves to keep others from falling in. Fires are not permitted. Free permits are available at the Longmire Museum daily and at Paradise on weekends only.

Group camping is allowed at Paradise this winter but due to the ongoing construction project the total number of group campers and available overnight parking spaces will be limited. Groups of 13 or more and organized groups of any size, such as church and scout groups, are advised to pre-register at least two weeks in advance due to limited space by calling (360) 569-2211 ext. 6003. Groups of 13 or more may camp in the Deadhorse Creek group site only. Access to 24 hour restrooms and an emergency phone are available in the upper parking lot near the Guide House. Others should use "blue bags" to remove human waste from the park and/or deposit blue bags in the special barrel provided. The blue bag barrel is located in the tunnel to the Paradise upper parking lot restroom. Do NOT throw blue bags in trash cans!

Overnight parking is by displayed overnight parking permit in designated areas only.

Do not set your parking brake; it may freeze. Stay clear of parking lots and roads until morning plowing activities are complete. Before driving downhill, check with a ranger to be sure the road is open and that your vehicle meets the traction requirement.

Ranger-led Snowshoe Walks

Join a park ranger or volunteer for an exciting introduction to the art of snowshoeing and find out how plants and animals adapt to winter at Paradise. Snowshoe walks are offered daily December 22 - January 2, and on weekends and holidays only through April 1.

Public snowshoe walks are offered at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., traverse 1.2 miles, and last for about 2 hours. Walks are limited to 25 people, eight years old or older, on a first-come, first-served basis. A sign-up sheet is available at the Jackson Visitor Center information desk one hour before each walk.

Organized groups (up to 25 people) may reserve snowshoe walks. These walks begin at 10:30 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. For more information, inquire at the Longmire Museum, the Jackson Visitor Center information desk, or call (360) 569-2211 ext. 3314. The park also offers snowshoe walks to school groups by reservation only. Call (360) 569-2211 ext. 6039 for reservations.

Snowshoes are available for ranger-led snowshoe walks for a \$1.00 donation (per pair). Don't forget sunscreen, sunglasses, layers of warm clothes, hats, mittens, and suitable boots (you will sink into the snow even with snowshoes on).

Snowplay Area

Sliding and sledding is permitted only in the designated snowplay area, located immediately north of the upper parking lot at Paradise.

Runs are constructed when there's sufficient snow depth to prevent resource damage - at least five feet. The snowplay area may remain open into mid-March, depending on snow. Because of the high potential for personal injury and frequency of accidents, no other area of the park is open to sliding (except skiing and snowboarding). Serious injuries and fatalities have occurred elsewhere when people have mistakenly slid over waterfalls, into trees, down steep slopes, or broken through thin snow into stream gorges.

- Snowplay is accessible via the upper parking lot on weekends only.
- Weekdays, access the snowplay area by following 0.25 mile marked trail from the visitor center.
- Use only inner tubes, plastic sleds, saucers, or other soft sliding devices. No wooden toboggans, runner sleds with metal edges, or other hard devices are permitted.
- Compressed air is available on weekends and holidays during snowplay hours at the upper parking lot restroom.
- Be sure the run is clear before starting your slide. Collisions may cause serious injury.

Dress warmly and in layers with a wicking fabric such as wool or polypropylene next to the skin and a waterproof outer layer, not in jeans or T-shirts. Wear a hat, gloves, and snow-sealed boots. Take a warm-up break at the Jackson Visitor Center (open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends & holidays).

The snowplay area normally closes at 4:30 p.m.

Skiing, Snowshoeing & Snowboarding

Before starting out for the day, check the weather forecast and determine the avalanche hazard. Avalanche information, a weather forecast, and winter maps that show marked trails and popular unmarked routes are available from the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise and the Longmire Museum.

In early winter or in years of low snowfall, trees and other plants are damaged by skiers and snowboarders when snow depth is not sufficient to protect vegetation. Ski and snowboard only in those areas where the snow is deep enough to cover and protect vegetation. There should be at least 5' of snow before building jumps.

PARADISE OVERNIGHT PARKING AREAS



Check today's avalanche forecast at an entrance station or visitor center.

Avalanche on Nisqually Glacier.

Avalanche Aware!

Snow avalanches are common in winter and spring. The greatest danger to you is an avalanche that you trigger by skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or climbing in avalanche terrain.

Learn more about safe travel in avalanche country. Consider snowpack, weather, and topography in selecting your route. Ask yourself, "Will this slope slide?" and if it does, "Where will I or my partner go?" Carry an avalanche transceiver, probe, and shovel.

Remember, even small avalanches can be deadly.



Avalanche Level Descriptions

Slopes between 30 and 45 degrees pose the greatest avalanche danger.

Low Risk: Generally stable snow. Travel is usually safe.

Moderate Risk: Human-triggered avalanches *possible*.

Considerable Risk: Human triggered avalanches *probable*.

High Risk: Natural and human-triggered avalanches *likely*. Travel in avalanche terrain is not recommended.

Extreme Risk: Widespread natural and human-triggered avalanches *certain*. Avoid travel in avalanche terrain.

Confine travel to low angle terrain well away from avalanche path runouts.

Prepare & Take Care

Mount Rainier offers excellent opportunities for exploration and adventure, but sometimes people get lost, injured, or worse. Reduce your risk by following these simple guidelines:

Dress Warmly & Stay Dry

Cold temperatures, wet snow, and wind can easily rob you of body heat. To avoid hypothermia and frostbite, dress warmly and stay dry. Wear layers of wool or synthetics like pile and polypropylene under a waterproof shell. Avoid exposure to wind. Snack frequently, drink lots of water, and take warm-up breaks indoors.

Beware

Pay attention to the weather. It's easy to get lost or fall when the weather turns bad. The trail can quickly cover with snow, or thick fog can blanket your route. You need to know where you are and how to get to safety. You also need to know how to assess avalanche hazards to minimize potential risk.

Prepare

When hiking, climbing, skiing, or snowboarding, bring the "10 Essentials" and know how to use them. In addition, obtain compass bearings to Camp Muir or other off-trail destinations; carry an altimeter; wear rain- and wind-resistant clothing; and take a whistle, a "space blanket," and a snow shovel.

Take Care

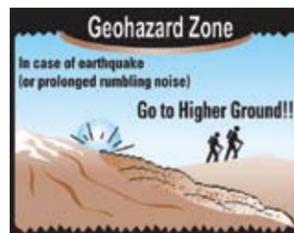
Tell someone your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return. Do not travel alone or in poor visibility.

If you are not truly knowledgeable and prepared, or if the weather is questionable, don't push your luck!

Accessibility

Most comfort stations, visitor centers, picnic areas, and designated campsites are accessible or accessible with help for wheelchair users. Accessible lodging is available inside the park and in local communities. In the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise, written information, exhibits, and scripts for uncaptioned audiovisual programs are available. The Kautz Boardwalk Nature Trail is accessible. The new Paradise Visitor Center is designed for accessibility. TDD: (360) 569-2177

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.

The more time you spend in an area with geologic hazards, the greater the chance that you could be involved in an emergency event. While most people consider the danger to be relatively low, you must decide if you will assume the risk of visiting these potentially dangerous locations. 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! A location 160 feet or more 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, 1300 SE Cardinal Court, Building 10, Suite 100, Vancouver, WA 98661, or visit the U.S.G.S. Cascade Volcanoes website: vulcan.wr.usgs.gov.

Carry the "10 Essentials" and know how to use them!

1. Map of the area
2. Compass
3. Extra food & water
4. Extra clothing (warm!) & rain gear
5. Emergency shelter
6. First aid kit
7. Flashlight or headlamp
8. Sunglasses & sunscreen
9. Pocketknife
10. Matches (waterproof!)*

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

Protect Yourself & Your Park

Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 to preserve its resources and to provide for public benefit and enjoyment. By observing the rules, you protect your park and yourself:

- Pets must be on leashes no longer than six feet and are not allowed in buildings, on trails, or on snow
- Do not feed or disturb the wildlife
- Stay on designated trails
- Make fires only in a fire grill. Collecting firewood is prohibited
- Weapons are prohibited in the park. Firearms transported through the park must be unloaded, broken down, and stored to prevent use
- Bicycle only on roads, not on trails

Statewide Winter Weather Reports

Avalanche Hazard Forecasts:
(206) 526-6677
<http://www.nwac.us/forecasts.htm>
Highway Pass Reports:
(800) 695-7623 or dial direct 511
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/passes/>

Winter Hours January - April 2008



Photo courtesy Daniel Keebler



Visitor Centers

Longmire Museum (360) 569-2211 ext. 3314
Information, exhibits, book sales, climbing permits.
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily

Jackson Visitor Center - Paradise
(360) 569-2211 ext 6036
Information, exhibits, movies, book sales, food service, gifts, showers.
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. weekends/holidays, and daily Dec. 22 - Jan. 2

All other visitor centers are closed for the season.



Food & Lodging

For lodging reservations in the park call Mount Rainier Guest Services at (360) 569-2275 or go to www.guestservices.com/rainier

National Park Inn - Longmire
Lodging, post office, and dining room serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Open year-round.

General Store - Longmire
Groceries, gifts, firewood. Open year-round.
(Ski & snowshoe rentals & tire chain purchases are available in winter.)
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily
During ski touring season:
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. weekends/holidays

Jackson Visitor Center - Paradise
Grill and Gift Shop:
11:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. weekends/holidays and daily Dec. 22 - Jan. 2
Showers in the basement open during building hours.

Paradise Inn & Sunrise Lodge
Closed for the season.



Gasoline, lodging, dining, recreation equipment rentals, and other services are available in local communities. Religious services are available in local communities outside the park.

GAS IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE PARK

Restoring Paradise

Continued from page 1

It was determined that the structure needed extensive rehabilitation to enable it to remain intact for the enjoyment of future generations. Rehabilitation includes earthquake retrofitting, the addition of a foundation, stabilization of the grand chimneys and hearths in the main lobby and dining hall, and upgrading guest rooms to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



One of the new sheer walls, which are part of the seismic retrofitting, and rehabilitation of one of the three stone chimneys on the Paradise Inn.

Rehabilitation of the Paradise Inn began in summer 2006 with visitor use scheduled to resume this May. Contact Guest Services Incorporated for reservations at the Paradise Inn for this coming summer season and for year-round reservations at the National Park Inn at Longmire.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rainier National Park

Superintendent: Dave Uberuaga

Contact Information

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Park Headquarters
(360) 569-2211
(360) 569-2177 TDD

Website
www.nps.gov/mora

Publisher: Northwest Interpretive Association
909 1st Ave., Ste. 630
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 220-4140
www.nwpubliclands.com



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Please Recycle!

Mount Rainier National Park has been recycling since the late 1960s. We recycle aluminum cans, plastic (no. 1 and 2), glass, office paper, mixed paper, cardboard, scrap metal, used oil, batteries, and a number of other items.

We also purchase recycled plastic products such as plastic bags, picnic tables, and plastic lumber; paper products made of pre- and post-consumer recycled paper; automobile products; and other products.

Be part of the effort! Please deposit aluminum cans, plastic bottles and glass in the recycle cans provided.

Park Partners

Who's responsible for protecting Mount Rainier National Park? Everyone!
Here are some people who deserve special thanks:



Visitors Like You! Just by paying the entrance fee, you make a difference. Eighty percent of the fees collected at Mount Rainier are kept in the park, while twenty percent are made available to other parks in need. Your money is helping several projects right now:

- Rehabilitating park trails
- Meadow restoration at Sunrise and Reflection Lakes
- Upgrading exhibits and media
- Rehabilitating picnic areas

As you explore the park, look for signs of your fees at work!



Northwest Interpretive Association NWIA operates bookstores in the park's visitor and information centers. As a nonprofit organization benefitting educational programs in the national parks and forests of the Pacific Northwest, NWIA plays an important role in making interpretive and educational publications available to travelers. It also funds special interpretive projects in the areas it serves. For more information or membership, call (360) 569-2211, ext. 3320, or visit NWIA on the web at www.nwpubliclands.com.



Volunteers Each year more than 85,000 volunteers donate over 3,000,000 hours of service in the national parks. They come from every state and nearly every country in the world to help preserve and protect America's natural and cultural heritage for the enjoyment of this and future generations. At Mount Rainier National Park, 1,724 volunteers contributed a total of 84,038 hours in 2007, an increase of approximately 90%. We express our deep appreciation to them and to all who are volunteering in 2008! If you are thinking about volunteering, contact Volunteer Coordinator, 55210 238th Avenue East, Ashford, WA 98304, (360) 569-2211 ext. 3385.



Washington's National Park Fund Every year millions of people visit Washington state's spectacular national parks: Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic. Since 1993, Washington's National Park Fund has connected people to parks and inspired contributions of time, talent and money. The Fund helps ensure that visitors have high quality, memorable experiences by sponsoring educational, trail and wildlife projects. By securing funding from individuals, corporations, foundations and businesses, the Fund supports park restoration, enhancement and preservation. For information about how you can help Washington's national parks, call 206-770-0627 or visit www.wnppf.org.



Student Conservation Association SCA is a nationwide force of high school and college-age volunteers who are committed to protecting and preserving the environment. Through internships, conservation jobs and crew experiences, SCA members are rising to meet environmental challenges while gaining real, hands-on field experience. They complete projects in every conservation discipline - from archaeology to zoology - and everything in between. In January 2007, SCA was named to direct volunteer flood recovery efforts at Mount Rainier National Park. SCA worked collaboratively with park officials to assess backcountry damage caused by torrential rains, devised a restoration strategy, and organized a multi-year volunteer work plan to engage trail coalitions, friends groups, and individual volunteers. For more information about SCA or to get involved visit www.thesca.org.