



The Tahoma News

January 1 - April, 2009

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.

Warm Up In The New Paradise Jackson Visitor Center



The exhibits at the new visitor center include dioramas, interactive exhibits and multimedia in addition to traditional exhibits.

On October 10th two years of construction—and many additional years of planning and design—culminated in the opening of the new Jackson Memorial Visitor Center at Paradise. The dramatic new building features a lobby open to the rafters with tall windows framing majestic Mount Rainier and the Tatoosh Range. New exhibits provide ample opportunity to learn about the plant and animal life, geologic setting, and human history of Mount Rainier. The theater showcases a new park film emphasizing the scale and impact of Mount Rainier. Food service and a gift shop round out the offerings to make your visit to Paradise comfortable and rewarding. New seating, including comfy chairs and couches, will arrive this winter to furnish the Great Hall making it a great place to warm up on a snowy day.

The new visitor center is designed to match the rustic architecture style of the park's historic buildings, including the Paradise Inn. Architectural design of park buildings dating from the early 1900s incorporates stone and wood to fit into the natural setting. Early planners designed not only the buildings but also roads and even trails to meld seamlessly with the landscape. Most of the developed areas in the park, including Paradise, are designated as a National Historic Landmark District in recognition of their significance as an example of early national park planning.

A primary reason for replacing the existing Jackson Visitor Center was to create a building more in harmony with this setting.

The new visitor center is also smaller and more energy efficient than the old Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center. Compare the roofs of the two buildings. The existing visitor center collects large amounts of snow in winter, which is removed by running hot water through a system of pipes embedded in the roof. This consumes as much as 500 gallons of diesel per day—acceptable in the 1960s but not any more. The new visitor center has an elegant, steeply pitched roof well suited for the snowy climate at Paradise. The new visitor center also solves problems of accessibility and safety which were present in the older building.



The new Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center opened on October 10, 2008, replacing the former visitor center visible in the background to the right of the new building.

What's happening in the lower parking area? The old visitor center is being demolished and the area will become additional parking or be replanted with native vegetation. Some long-term visitors are sorry to see the original Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center go. They may be nostalgic for a place that figured in their family's experiences, or feel affection for the building's quirky charm. We hope the new visitor center—with its beauty, sustainability, and state of the art exhibits—will develop its own loyal following of people whose visit to Paradise was enhanced by its presence.

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 over confident with all-wheel drive, but driving with caution can prevent many vehicle accidents.

In May, the historic Paradise Inn reopened to the public after a two-year, \$22.5 million major structural rehabilitation project to address the most significant life safety hazards that could be catastrophic in the event of an earthquake or fire. Most of the work was "behind the scenes" involving the foundation, stabilizing the huge rock fireplaces, etc. Seven new accessible rooms were completed near the main lobby, the restrooms were redone, and a new café was created near the gift shop. The Inn is closed in winter and will reopen in May.

On October 10, 2008 the new Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center opened at Paradise. The new visitor center is more sustainable and architecturally compatible with the Paradise National Historic Landmark District. Make sure to stop by the new visitor center, open weekends and holidays in winter, to experience the new park movie and interpretive exhibits and to visit the gift shop and food service.

Enjoy exploring Mount Rainier in winter!

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.

**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 snow caves 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. 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 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.



Join a ranger-led snowshoe walk at Paradise.

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 20 - January 4, and on weekends and holidays only through March 29.

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).

Snow Play Area

Sliding and sledding is permitted only in the designated snow play 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 snow play 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.

- Snow play is accessible via the upper parking lot on weekends only.
- Weekdays, access the snow play area from the main trailhead behind the new 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 snow play 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 snow play 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 snow boarders 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.

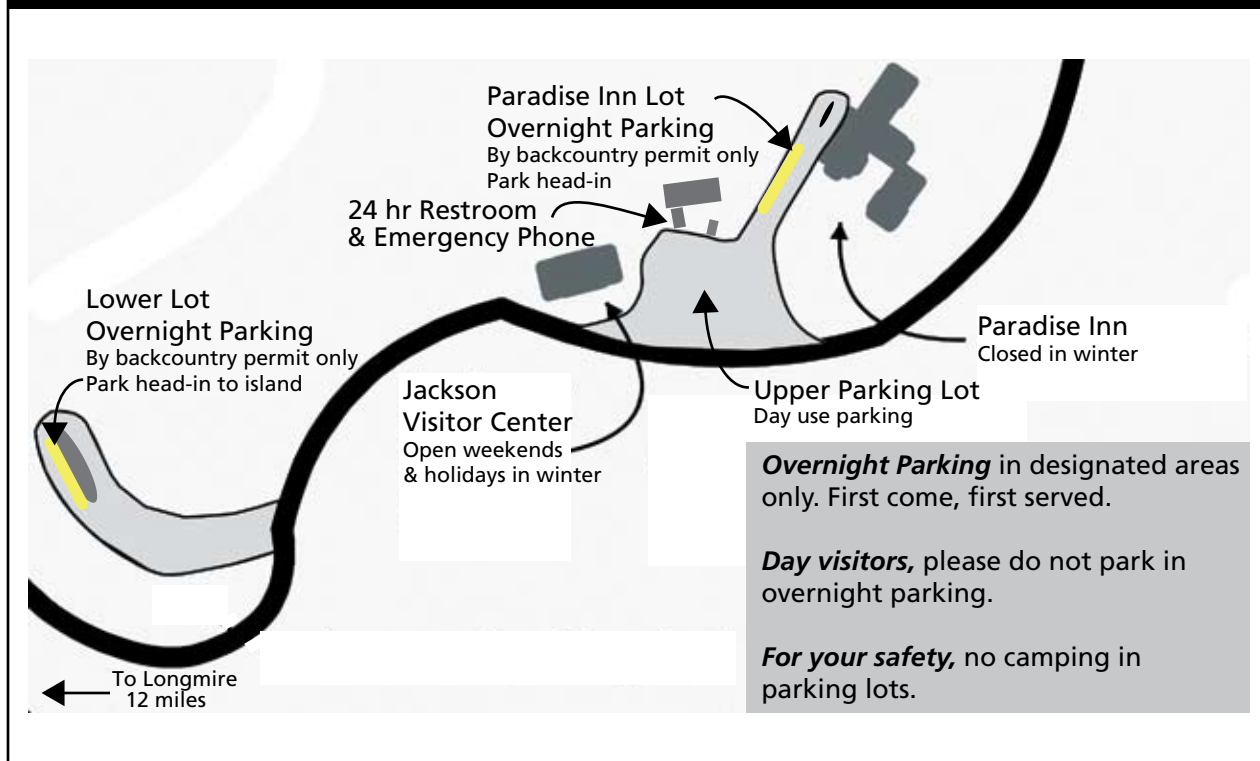
Longmire - Paradise Road Schedule

The road from Longmire to Paradise closes nightly at Longmire. Plan for normal winter road conditions which are snow covered and icy. Always carry tire chains when driving in mountainous terrain in winter and spring. Traction tires or chains may be required at any time in winter. Please use extra caution on your drive to Paradise.

Effective Dates	Uphill Gate	Gate Locked
Jan 1 - 23	5:00 pm	6:00 pm
Jan 24 - Feb 13	5:30 pm	6:30 pm
Feb 14 - March 7	6:00 pm	7:00 pm
March 8 - 27	7:30 pm	8:30 pm
March 28 - April 17	8:00 pm	9:00 pm
April 18 - May 1	8:30 pm	9:30 pm

Road opening and closing times may change daily due to weather and road conditions.

PARADISE OVERNIGHT PARKING AREAS



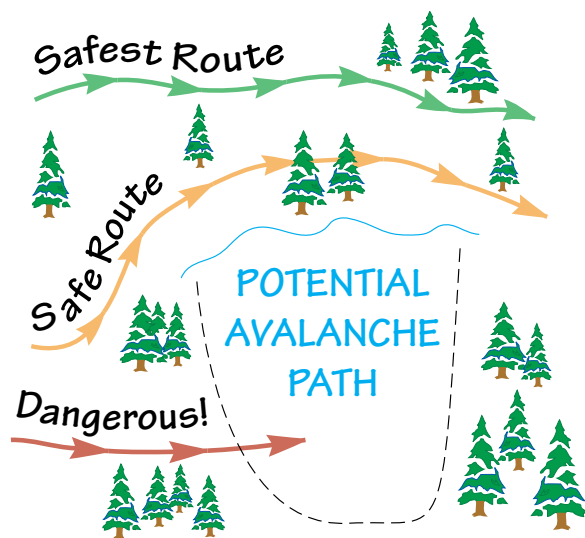
Avalanche on Nisqually Glacier.

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

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

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 2009



Early visitors to the Longmire Museum and "Charlie" the mountain lion.



Visitor Centers

Longmire Museum (360) 569-2211 ext. 3314
Information, exhibits, book sales, climbing permits.
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily

New Jackson Visitor Center - Paradise, Upper Parking Lot
(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. 20 - Jan. 4



The Paradise Inn during a heavy snow year.



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
Food Service and Gift Shop:
11:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. weekends/holidays and daily Dec. 22 - Jan. 2

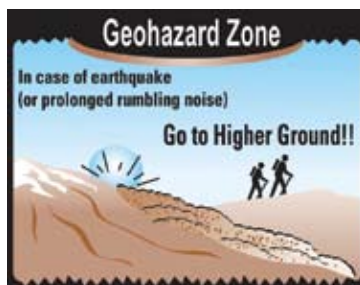
Paradise Inn & Sunrise Lodge
Closed for the season.



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

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.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rainier National Park

Superintendent: Dave Uberuaga

Contact Information

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www.nps.gov/mora

Publisher: Discover Your Northwest
164 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 220-4140
www.discovernw.org



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
- Upgrading exhibits and media
- Rehabilitating picnic areas

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



Discover Your Northwest (formerly Northwest Interpretive Association) provides resources like travel guides, maps, educational books, DVD's, and other materials for visitors to public lands. They generate funding every year for projects and programs that enhance visitor experiences through retail sales in bookstores located in visitor and information centers across the Northwest. As a nonprofit partner benefiting educational programs in national parks, Discover Your Northwest plays an important role in making interpretive and educational publications like this available to visitors. To find out more, visit one of their locations in the Park, call the Mount Rainier location at (360) 569-2211, ext. 3320, or visit them online at www.discovernw.org.



Volunteers Each year more than 137,000 volunteers donate over 5,200,000 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, earning for their efforts the national George B. Hartzog Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. We express our deep appreciation to them and to all who are volunteering in 2008! Both short and long-term opportunities are available. For information on how to join our team, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (360) 569-2211 ext. 3385, or visit our website at www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm.



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.wnpf.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. Since January 2007, SCA has directed volunteer efforts at Mount Rainier National Park in response to the floods of 2006, for which it recently received the Department of the Interior's Cooperative Conservation Award. For more information about SCA or to get involved, visit www.thesca.org.