

Olympic Olympians

This winter, the global community will focus on Vancouver, British Columbia for the winter Olympic Games. While just over 100 miles away, another community of plants and animals goes about daily life in the sanctuary of Olympic National Park. Over 2,700 years after athletes competed in the original Olympic Games in ancient Greece, English explorer Captain John Meares was sailing off the west coast of North America. In 1788 he sighted the glacier-clad high point of a coastal mountain range and named it Mount Olympus, after the mythical home of the Greek gods. This moniker was later applied to the whole range, the peninsula, a national park, national forest and countless regional businesses, schools and products.

But more than labels and geography tie the winter games to the Olympic Mountains. Just as the games test the endurance, precision, strength and grace of the world's elite athletes, the diverse species in Olympic National Park are tested and shaped by heavy rain, howling winds, pounding surf, avalanching snow, and the voracious mouths of hungry animals. Just as the competition and team cooperation of the games reflect years of training, the biological world reflects millennia of competition, cooperation and shaping by natural forces. But unlike Olympic competitors, many of the Olympic Peninsula's native resident "athletes" compete in both winter and summer games. To win a medal in the natural world is to survive and perpetuate your species.

Citius, altius, fortius

The Olympic motto, which translates to swifter, higher, stronger, could also be the maxim for species in Olympic National Park. To survive—to win their medal—prey need to either outwit or outpace their predators as well as adapt to their environment.

Swifter

For a salmon that means avoiding an orca that can swim over 30 miles per hour. The swiftest human swimmers would be left in the wake of that chase, even at the world record pace of just over 5 mph.

Though the majority of a bear's diet is plants, they can sprint to 35 mph to test the fitness of a black-tail deer. Both species would leave Olympic sprinters—who can reach 22 mph—in the dust, though speed skaters, at 33 mph, might keep up.

Higher

Higher, for a tree, means racing their competitors to the sun to avoid being left in the shadows. Though growth rates slow with age, with enough time a conifer can reach world-record size. In the protected old-growth forests of Olympic National Park, some specimens reach over 200 feet tall and 40 to 50 feet of furrowed girth.

For a cougar higher means being able to bound over 16 feet straight up, much higher than the 7.7-foot leap of the best human high jumper. Snow fleas are even more impressive. Despite its name, this is a tiny springtail that feeds on pollen and other tidbits deposited on the snow surface.



Using a lever-like tail appendage, they catapult themselves to safety, springing an inch or more into the air, a dizzying height for something smaller than a pinhead.

Stronger

What competitor could best an ant for strength? We've all heard of their prodigious feats, how tiny ants can lift 20 or more times their weight as they forage in the old growth forest, while weightlifters struggle to lift four times their weight. But this comparison is unfair to those grimacing human contenders, some of whom manage to hoist nearly 1,000 pounds. The geometry of being small gives ants a natural advantage—physics.

Whether it's a sprinting elk or a limpet clinging to surf-pounded rocks with untiring strength, the rich communities in Olympic National Park ecosystems protect myriad natural athletes. As we gather around televisions this winter to admire the grace and skill of competitors from around the world, perhaps we can also appreciate the other Olympics going on in our back yard every day.



Services and Facilities

A winter visit to Olympic National Park's mountains, coast and forest can be magical, but it takes planning as fewer services and facilities are available. Roads and facilities normally open may close due to snow, high water, downed trees, or reduced staffing. Call (360) 565-3131 for road and weather updates.

Emergencies

Dial 911 in an emergency or to report a crime. For non-emergency help call (360) 565-3000 ext. 0 between 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. or (360) 417-2459 after hours.

Entrance and other Recreation Fees

Entrance fees apply year-round in main spur road areas (Elwha, Heart O' the Hills, Hoh, Ozette, Sol Duc). A single visit receipt (1-7 days) is \$15 per private vehicle or \$5 per person (age 16+) entering by bus, bike, or foot. The Olympic National Park Annual Pass is \$30.

The America the Beautiful - National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass is \$80. This pass is honored for entrance or standard amenity fees in national park, national forest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bureau of Land Management lands. A \$10 lifetime pass for U.S. seniors (age 62+) and a free lifetime access pass for those with permanent disabilities are also available. Additional recreation fees apply for overnight camping permits. The Senior and Access passes provide a 50% discount on these fees.

Park fees provide critical funding for many projects such as repair of roads, trails, and buildings; printing brochures including the park map and fishing regulations; and providing staff at entrance station and wilderness permit locations. Your support of the fee program is very important. Thank you.

General Park Information

For park information see the park website: www.nps.gov/olymp, call (360) 565-3130, or in the Port Angeles area tune to 530 AM; Lake Crescent or Quinault areas tune to 1610 AM. Wilderness permits, bear canisters and information on wilderness fees are available year-round at the Olympic National Park Visitor Center/ Wilderness Information Center (WIC). The WIC, (360) 565-3100, is staffed intermittently in winter, daily starting in April.

Pets are not allowed in public buildings, on trails, or in winter use areas. They must be on a leash in parking areas or campgrounds. Please do not feed any park wildlife, including birds. It is illegal, harmful to the animal and hazardous to you. Violators are subject to a \$100 fine.

Port Angeles Area

Olympic National Park Visitor Center & Wilderness Information Center: Open 9-4 daily (except Christmas) with exhibits, movie, map and book sales and staff to help you plan a visit. Wilderness camping, hiking and permit information, as well as bear canisters, are also available. Most ranger stations do not have regular winter hours; please call (360) 565-3130 for general park information.

Hurricane Ridge Road

Call (360) 565-3131 for a 24-hour recording. For the winter season, current conditions are also updated daily at www.nps.gov/olymp/planyourvisit/hurricane-ridge-current-conditions.htm.

To improve public safety, all vehicles traveling above Heart O' the Hills on the Hurricane Ridge Road between November 20 and March 28, 2010 must carry tire chains. The road is open weather permitting Friday through Sunday and holiday Mondays, as well as December 21 through January 1 (except Christmas). **Closed Monday through Thursdays** from November 23, 2009 through March 28, 2010. The road usually opens at 9:00 a.m., but times



Road may open as weather, staffing and road conditions allow. By early May the road is usually open 24 hours a day.

Hurricane Ridge Area

Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center: Open 9:30-5 when the road is open, with restrooms, exhibits, movie and warming area. December 19, 2009 through March 28, 2010, an information desk is staffed 10 - 4 weekends and holiday Mondays.

Hurricane Ridge Snack Bar & Rental Shop: December 12, 2009 to March 28, 2010, food service and ski/snowshoe rentals will be available 10 - 4:30 weekends, holiday Mondays, and December 26 to January 3.

Hurricane Ridge Downhill Ski Area: When fully operating there are two rope tows and a Poma lift for beginner to advanced skiers. Vertical rise is 665 feet. Weather and snow permitting, tows operate 10 - 4 weekends from December 12, 2009 through March 28, 2010, as well as January 1 and 18, and February 15. A full day pass for all tows is \$25.00, half-day \$22.00. For rope tows only, full day and half day rates are \$20.00 and \$18.00. The ski lifts are operated by the Hurricane Ridge Winter Sports Club. For more information see www.hurricaneridge.com or call (360) 457-2879 (messages only). Cross country skiers using the ski area must use ski leashes.

Equipment Rentals: Packages include skis, boots and poles. Hurricane Ridge Ski Shop requires a driver's license to rent equipment.

| Location | Cross-Country | Downhill | Snowshoes |
|---|---------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <i>Hurricane Ridge</i> (no phone) (1/2 day rates available) | \$25/day | \$30/day (\$35/day w/ helmet) | \$18/day (\$20 w/poles) |
| In Port Angeles: <i>Brown's Outdoor</i> (360) 457-4150 | none | none | \$15/day \$5/day for poles |
| <i>North by Northwest Surf Co.</i> (360) 452-5144 | | Snowboards & boots (\$25/additional day) | |

Downhill Skiing/Snowboard Lessons: Hurricane Ridge Winter Sports Club offers lessons for ages four and up starting January 30, 2010. Private lessons are available with 24 hours notice. For more ski school information call (360) 452-2667 or 452-6434 or see <http://www.hurricaneridge.com>.

National Park Campgrounds

The following park campgrounds are closed this winter: Altair, Deer Park, Fairholme and South Beach. Others may be closed by snow, storms, high winds, flooding or downed trees. Sol Duc and Queets campgrounds are particularly vulnerable. Several have primitive winter camping, with pit toilets, no running water, and no fees. Most campgrounds fully open by May (see www.nps.gov/olymp for specific dates). Fees at most campgrounds with facilities are \$12 a night, but ranges from \$10 to 18 depending on facilities and season. Check at the Visitor Center or call (360) 565-3131 for current status. The following campgrounds usually have some loops open year-round.

Quinault: North Fork (primitive year-round); Graves Creek (primitive in winter)

Kalaloch: Kalaloch Campground (reservations can be made for Kalaloch campsites between June 16 and September 6, 2010 by calling (877) 444-6777 or www.recreation.gov no more than 6 months ahead.)

Hoh: Hoh Campground

Mora: Mora Campground

Ozette: Ozette Campground (primitive in winter)

Elwha area: Elwha Campground only (primitive in winter)

Hurricane area: Heart O' the Hills Campground (walk-in if it snows)

Staircase: Primitive in winter, walk or bike-in only (1.2 mile hike)



Roads

Some park roads regularly close in winter and others may be closed temporarily by weather. Call (360) 565-3131 for current conditions. *Deer Park Road* is closed at the park boundary (9 miles from Highway 101, 2,000 feet elevation) from October until June 10, depending on snow. *Obstruction Point Road* is closed October 18 until July 2, depending on snow. *Dosewallips Road* is washed out 4 miles from the park boundary. *Staircase Road* is closed to vehicles at the



Snowshoe with a Ranger

Join a park ranger at Hurricane Ridge to experience the wonders of winter on snowshoes. If you can walk, you can snowshoe! The National Park Service provides snowshoes and instructions on this ranger-led program. A \$5.00 donation per participant helps the park provide these snowshoe walks and funds snowshoe repair and replacement.

Participants should be prepared for the rigors of winter, including cold, snow, wind or even rain. Dress in layers so clothes can be added or removed. Wear warm, waterproof boots and bring hats, mittens, sunscreen and sunglasses. If the Hurricane Ridge Road is closed, walks are cancelled.

Snowshoe Walk: Snow permitting, this easy to moderate walk is offered at 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays, and Monday holidays (January 18 and February 15, 2010) from December 19, 2009 through March 28, 2010, as well as January 1). The walk lasts 1.5 hours and covers less than a mile. Group size is limited to 30 people. Sign up starts at the Hurricane Ridge information desk 30 minutes before the walk.

Snowshoe Walks for Community Groups: Clubs, youth groups or schools can schedule a reserved snowshoe walk. Walks for groups of 7 to 30 people are offered at 10:30 a.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and holiday Mondays (January 18 and February 15) from December 19, 2009 through March 28, 2010. Walks last 1.5 hours and cover less than a mile. Reservations **MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE** by calling (360) 565-3136.

Volunteering at Olympic

Last year over 1,100 volunteers donated 63,000 hours to Olympic National Park for projects that ranged from wilderness restoration to orienting visitors at ranger stations and campgrounds. To check out the opportunities or get involved, go to our volunteer webpage at www.nps.gov/olymp/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm.

This April 17-18, 2010, during the annual Washington Coastal Clean Up, volunteers will head to the beach to remove tons of marine debris from Washington shores. Visit www.coastsavers.org to learn more and reserve your spot.



The park will also join in the Active Trails Program, made possible in part by a grant from the National Park Foundation through the generous support of the Coca-Cola Foundation, a Proud Partner of America's National Parks. This grant will allow the park to start an adopt a trail program focusing on stock education and front country trail work in our gateway communities.

Partners like the Washington Trail Association, Washington's National Parks Fund and Backcountry Horsemen also provide ongoing short and long term volunteer opportunities with projects such as trail maintenance, citizen science monitoring, and internships.

Cross-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing

With its easy access and over 20 miles of trails and routes, Hurricane Ridge is the focus of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in Olympic National Park. Though winter explorers of all abilities can enjoy the area, flat, easy beginner ski terrain is limited to the meadows above the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center. Backcountry skiers can explore several slopes and bowls in the area. No trails are groomed or marked; however, two routes use unplowed roads which can usually be navigated.

NOTE FOR SNOWSHOERS AND SNOWBOARDERS: Skiers, snowshoers and snowboarders can safely share this area. Walkers and snowshoers, please stay to one side to avoid damaging ski tracks on trails, and do not snowshoe or walk through the downhill ski area.

Before heading out on any trip remember to register at the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center and check current avalanche conditions. Below are descriptions of routes in the Hurricane Ridge area.

● Easiest

The Meadows

The meadows above the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center offer gentle, easy terrain for everyone and excellent views in fair weather. Because the meadows are exposed to the wind, they are sometimes icy or wind-packed.

■ More Difficult

Hurricane Hill Road

1.3 miles one way

Beginning just west of the visitor center, this trail first descends steeply, then follows the rolling, moderate ridgeline along the snow-covered Hurricane Hill Road. Experienced skiers can use this trail to reach the Hurricane Hill Route (see Most Difficult), as well as several bowls that are good for backcountry skiing. In clear weather, there are good views to the north and south, especially at the trail's terminus at the Hurricane Hill trailhead. Much of this ridgetop trail is sheltered by a subalpine forest, making it a good choice in windy, inclement weather or when there is elevated avalanche hazard.

Wolf Creek Trail

8 miles one way to Whiskey Bend

This route begins 0.6 miles west of the visitor center along the unplowed Hurricane Hill Road (see above) and winds through meadows and forests into the Elwha valley. There are several south-facing slopes near the beginning which are good for backcountry skiing. The Wolf Creek Trail is seldom snow covered at lower elevations and skiers must often walk the last several miles. Check at the information desk for current conditions.



Backcountry skier nears the west end of the often difficult "steep and icy" traverse enroute to Hurricane Hill (rising in background).

Obstruction Point Road: To Waterhole

3.4 miles one way

A pullout on a curve along the Hurricane Ridge Road 0.5 miles below Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center marks the beginning of this route (park below the curve). After descending a steep but short hill, the trail follows the snow-covered Obstruction Point Road. The first 1.5 miles of the trail are relatively easy and sheltered by forest. Near Steeple Rock the trail crosses steep, exposed slopes which may be icy and difficult to traverse. After Steeple Rock the trail flattens and meanders through subalpine forest. Beyond Waterhole, the trail climbs steeply.

◆ Most Difficult

Hurricane Hill Route

1.6 miles one way

This route starts at the end of the Hurricane Hill Road and climbs 700 feet to the summit of Hurricane Hill. There are several very steep sidehills, so use extreme caution under icy or avalanche conditions. As an alternative, skiers can follow the ridge line. Be careful to stay off cornices. Under good conditions, advanced skiers will find this a rewarding trip with good views and some nice bowls on the north side of the ridge. Check with the information desk before venturing out.

Obstruction Point Road: Waterhole to the end

4.3 miles one way

(Obstruction Point Road is 7.8 miles one way)

This route begins at the midway point on the unplowed Obstruction Point Road. In the first 0.5 mile the route climbs steadily 900 feet to above treeline. In clear weather, views can be spectacular but steep sidehills and exposure to storms make this a difficult route. It is recommended only under good conditions for experienced skiers. Travel beyond Obstruction Point can entail steep terrain with high avalanche potential.

Sunrise Ridge

2.1 miles one way

Begin this route by crossing below the intermediate rope tow and climbing to the right of the ski hill (right of the trees). From the top of Alpine Hill, above the downhill ski slope, this route follows a narrow ridge toward the south side of Mount Angeles. The path crosses avalanche prone areas at several points and is not recommended under unstable conditions. Be especially careful to stay off cornices along the ridge. Several nice slopes on the east side of the ridge descend to the Hurricane Ridge Road.

Other Areas

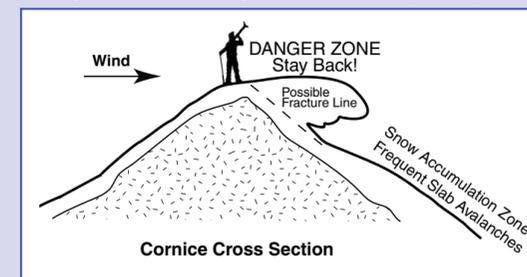
Depending on the snow level, other roads and trails in both the park and in Olympic National Forest may be snow covered. Check at the visitor center for current snow levels. The Deer Park Road may provide skiing or snowshoeing opportunities. For safety, this steep, narrow road is closed at the park boundary, 9 miles from Highway 101, at about 2,000 feet elevation. The road climbs steadily about 9 more miles from the park boundary up to Blue Mountain. If the snow level is low enough the road may be skiable from the boundary; but users will probably need to hike several miles before reaching snow.

For other routes on the Olympic Peninsula, refer to *100 Best Cross-Country Ski Trails in Washington*, by Tom Kirkendall and Vicky Spring or *Snowshoe Routes: Washington* by Dan Nelson.

Avalanche!

Olympic Mountain terrain and weather create ideal conditions for avalanches. Before heading out, call the Northwest Avalanche Center (206) 526-6677, www.nwac.noaa.gov, and check at the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center for current conditions. Wear beacons and carry a probe and snow shovel. The hazard levels range from low to extreme. Even in low hazard conditions avalanches can occur on some slopes. With extreme conditions backcountry travel should be avoided. Certain terrain features, for example steep gullies that funnel snow, unstable cornices (see below), or dark cliff faces on warm spring days, can increase avalanche hazard. The survival rate for avalanche victims is extremely low. If you or a group member are caught in an avalanche, take these steps in your rescue attempt:

- ✱ Ensure the safety of survivors.
- ✱ Mark where victims were caught and last seen.
- ✱ Quickly search downslope from the last seen points for clues.
- ✱ Search the avalanche debris below the last seen points by probing in a grid pattern with probes, ski tails or poles.
- ✱ Keep searching! The victim could be inches away from your boots.
- ✱ Send any extra person for help.
- ✱ If you are caught, make swimming motions and try to keep yourself on top of the snow. As the snow begins to slow down, push the snow away from your face to create an air pocket.



Overhanging shelves of snow called cornices form on the lee side of windblown ridges. They can be unstable, breaking off far from the snow edge. Stay back from ridge lines to avoid traveling on unsupported cornices.



Avalanche of snow released off warming face of Steeple Rock, Obstruction Point Road. Photo by Jack Lange

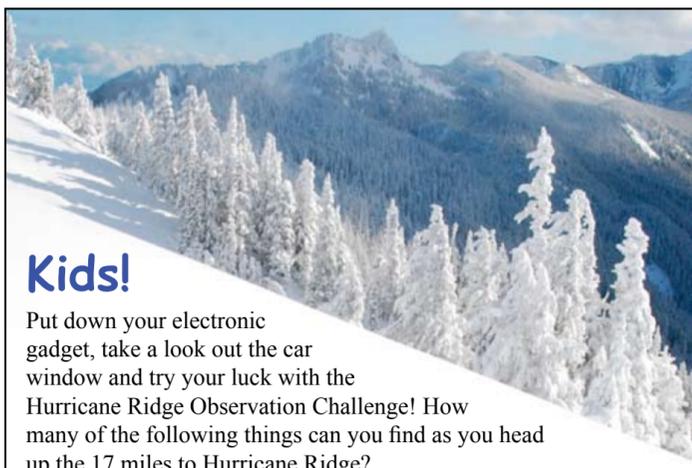
Snow Play

Snow sliding is a favorite pastime for some, but it has also been one of the most dangerous activities at Hurricane Ridge. **Serious injuries, even permanent disabilities have occurred when people collided with trees, other sliders, or lost control and ended up in the road.** For your safety, sliding is permitted only in the Small Children's Snowplay near the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center where children eight and under may slide. **The Sunrise snowplay area has been closed due to hazards associated with the site.** These include:

- ✱ The site's location next to the road, which has led to children and adults actually sliding into the road.
- ✱ The lack of parking, which has resulted in both vehicles and pedestrians using the road's travel lanes for parking and walking, creating extremely hazardous conditions during the icy and snowy winter months.
- ✱ Plowing and sanding operations are impossible when people and vehicles are along or in the road.

If conditions are too icy to allow safe sliding at the Small Children's area, that area will be closed. For the safety of participants, metal or hard plastic runner sleds and wooden toboggans are not permitted. Compressed air for inflating inner tubes is not available. To be as safe as possible, please observe the following rules:

- ✱ Slide only in the designated Small Children Snow Play area. **Sliding is not allowed anywhere else in the Hurricane area or along the Hurricane Ridge road.**
- ✱ For your safety, be sure the path is clear before starting your slide. Collisions can result in injuries. Watch for cross country skiers and snowshoers crossing below the area.
- ✱ Descend one tube at a time and do not put more than one person on a tube.



Kids!

Put down your electronic gadget, take a look out the car window and try your luck with the Hurricane Ridge Observation Challenge! How many of the following things can you find as you head up the 17 miles to Hurricane Ridge?

- ✱ **Avalanche Chutes** – Look on the uphill side of the road for areas with little or no vegetation or broken trees.
- ✱ **Pillow Basalt** – After going through three tunnels, look for outcroppings of this rounded volcanic rock on the right hand side.
- ✱ **Broken Trees** – As you near the top of the ridge, look carefully at the trees. They tell the powerful story of winters past.
- ✱ **Snow Stakes** – Have you spotted tall orange poles along the road? They mark the edge of the road for plow operators.
- ✱ **Glaciers and Ravens** – When you get to the top, if it's not too cloudy, you can see glaciers on Mt. Olympus. Be sure to look up. You may get lucky and hear or see resident ravens.

Exploring Olympic in Winter

Olympic is indeed a park for all seasons. In fact, hikers can experience several seasons in one outing. A trail beginning on a spring-like day in a forest may lead to a blizzard in the mountains. But hikers ready for unpredictable weather can experience the solitude of winter.



It can get very wet here. Snow and rain can swell streams overnight, making crossings treacherous and washing out trail sections. Camp well above flood plains. Bridges or boardwalks are very slippery when wet or icy. On the coast, storms push tides higher, creating huge waves that easily move beach logs or trap hikers on rocks. Winter storms and winds often leave behind many downed trees that may block the trail. Be prepared, always carry the 10 essentials, even for short hikes. They are: **extra clothing, extra food and water, map, compass, flashlight, knife, sunglasses, matches, fire starter/candle, first aid kit.**

But don't let winter chase you inside! There are always some options for winter and spring exploration. Stop at the

Olympic National Park Visitor Center in Port Angeles for maps, tide tables and trail condition reports. For you and your pet's safety, pets are not allowed on trails in the park. If you plan to camp overnight in the park's wilderness, you can get the required permit, bear canisters and information on wilderness fees at the Wilderness Information Center (WIC) in the Visitor Center. May through September some popular spots have limits, including parts of the coast. Call the WIC (360) 565-3100 for details or reservations. Below are options for winter hikes that are often accessible, depending on the snow level and storm damage.

Low-Elevation Hiking

Elwha Valley: Geyser Valley Loop, West Elwha, West Lake Mills, Griff Creek, Cascade Rock trails and lower parts of the Elwha River trail.

Lake Crescent: Marymere Falls and Spruce Railroad trails.

Ozette: Cape Alava or Sand Point trails; to make a 9.3-mile loop, hike the beach between these two trails.

Mora and La Push: James Pond, Second Beach, Third Beach and Rialto Beach.

Kalaloch: Short trails to beaches, beach hikes and the forest nature trail.

Hoh: Hall of Mosses and Spruce Nature trails, or lower Hoh River trail.

Quinault: Nature trails on both sides of the lake, Irely Lake and Cascading Terraces trails, lower stretches of the North Fork and Graves Creek trails.

High Country Trips

A trip into mountains blanketed with snow offers a unique wilderness experience. Snow camping requires a lot of preparation and many safety precautions, but it is a glimpse into a season that few truly experience. Weather can change quickly. Places like Hurricane Ridge and Blizzard Pass earn their names, and whiteout conditions can occur anytime. Be prepared!

Hurricane Ridge offers the easiest access to winter high country. But remember the Hurricane Road is closed Monday through Thursday in winter. For safety, please observe the following rules:

- ❄️ **Overnight campers must get a permit at the WIC, as well as register and check with a ranger at Hurricane Ridge for camping locations.**
- ❄️ Plan trips for Friday or Saturday night, since the Hurricane Ridge Road is closed Monday through Thursday. If a storm forces a road closure at other times, you may need to install tire chains and have a shovel in case of a snowy descent. Use caution as plow operators may not see you! If you are locked in uphill from the gate, call (360) 565-3000 ext. 0 (before 5:30 p.m.) or (360) 417-2459 after hours, from the pay phone at Heart O' the Hills.
- ❄️ Because of the risk of sudden storms, winter overnight parking is not allowed at Hurricane Ridge. You must park 3.3 miles below the ridge at Third Peak. Check with rangers at Hurricane to see if a shuttle is available.
- ❄️ Winter camps must be located away from the Hurricane Ridge parking lot and out of sight of ski/snowshoe trails. Check with a ranger for suggested locations.
- ❄️ Use a camp stove. Campfires are prohibited.
- ❄️ Share the trails—avoid walking or snowshoeing in ski tracks.
- ❄️ In emergencies, dial 911 from the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center foyer.
- ❄️ Check avalanche conditions and carry beacons (see page 7).

Restoring the Elwha

Set to begin in 2011, the largest dam removal in U.S. history will free the Elwha River and allow the return of all five species of Pacific salmon to over 70 miles of pristine river and stream habitat within Olympic National Park. The salmon's return will restore the entire ecosystem and the lifeblood of the Lower Elwha Klallam people, who have lived along the Elwha River for countless generations and are primary partners of the National Park Service in this landmark project. With less than two years left until dam removal begins, the park, tribe and many others are working to be ready.

- A park greenhouse was completed last fall and will produce hundreds of thousands of native plants for restoring over 700 acres of land that will re-emerge after the reservoirs are drained.
- Two water treatment plants to protect the area's water supply during and after dam removal will be finished in early 2010.
- Construction of a fish hatchery for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe to produce salmon and steelhead to help restore the river's fish populations will begin early in the year.

When dam removal is complete, the river will once again be freed to link and enrich plant, animal and human communities from mountains to sea. For more information, check www.nps.gov/olym/ or ask for the park's Freeing the Elwha brochure.



The Elwha River with the Elwha Water Treatment Plant and fish rearing channel in foreground. Photo courtesy Watts-Delhur Joint Venture.