



Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Recreation Report

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TREAD LIGHTLY
ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND



Editor's Note: Recreation Reports are printed every other week.

February 17, 2016

Some Snow Is Melting

Recent rain storms and warmer afternoon temperatures have caused snow at lower elevations and in valley bottoms to melt. There is still a lot of snow in the woods, but very low elevation areas are quickly melting out with bare ground, ditch lines, stumps, downed logs and other hidden obstacles rapidly emerging from the snow.

Along with the snow melt comes higher water levels in local rivers, creeks and streams especially in the afternoon. A stream that is easily crossed in the early morning hours may become impassable later in the day when temperatures accelerate snow melt.

Also, snow bridges over waterways may not be sturdy enough to carry the weight of a person or snow machine; always test these areas before using them. Check current weather and avalanche forecasts before venturing out; go to www.nwac.us for current avalanche conditions.

As temperatures increase, snow grooming operations may be sporadic on snowmobile and cross-country ski routes. It is not uncommon for ice to build up overnight and then melt off a bit during the day. Be sure to park in a manner so that your vehicle doesn't sink in the melting snow and then freeze in place as temperatures drop in the evening.

Other signs of spring-like conditions seen in the forest and along local rivers is the abundance of birds migrating back to the area. Chickadees, juncos, finches, sparrows, geese, ducks, and swans are just a few of the birds seen locally.

Even though temperatures may be warm for a few days, there is always potential for snow to fall at higher elevations, so be prepared for all types of weather when recreating in the national forest.

Winter road and trail conditions change quickly, be sure to check for current conditions and closures before you go.

Other Forest Related Information

OFFICE ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS:

Chelan Ranger District, 428 W. Woodin Ave., Chelan, WA 98816; 509-682-4900; hours M-F 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m., closed for lunch 11:30 to 12:30

Cle Elum Ranger District, 803 W. 2nd Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922; 509-852-1100; hours M-F 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed for lunch 12:30 to 1:15 p.m.

Entiat Ranger District, physical address 2108 Entiat Way, (P.O. Box 476), Entiat, WA 98822; 509-784-4700; hours M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Methow Valley Ranger District, 24 West Chewuch Road, Winthrop, WA 98862; 509-996-4003; hours M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Naches Ranger District, 10237 Hwy. 12, Naches, WA 98937; 509-653-1401; hours 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; closed for lunch noon to 12:30 p.m.

Okanogan Valley Office, 1240 South Second Ave., Okanogan, WA 98840; 509-826-3275; hours M-F 7:30-4 p.m.; closed for lunch 11 a.m. to noon

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Headquarters office, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, WA 98801; 509-664-9200; hours M-F 7:45-4:30

Tonasket Ranger District, 1 W. Winesap, Tonasket, WA 98855; 509-486-2186; hours M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; closed for lunch 12:30 to 1 p.m.

Wenatchee River Ranger District, 600 Sherbourne, Leavenworth, WA 98826; 509-548-2550; hours M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

WOODCUTTING INFORMATION:

Woodcutting permits expired on December 31, 2015. New woodcutting permits will be available in spring 2016 once roadways have dried and travel conditions improve.

HAZARDS FOUND IN WILDFIRE AREAS:

Following are a variety of hazards to watch out for when traveling through areas burned in wildfires.

- Snags are not only obviously dead trees, but can also be blackened killed trees or green trees burned through at the bottom.
- Snags can fall at any time. Besides the potential for striking people or property, they can block trails or roads, including your exit even though travel was unimpeded when you entered the area.
- Snags can make travel difficult if a lot of trees have fallen across the landscape.
- Stump holes and root channels can still be burning and often are hidden from sight until stepped upon.
- Steep slopes and loss of vegetation may cause rolling rocks and debris flows off hillsides at any time but the likelihood increases with rain and freeze-thaw events.
- Loss of vegetation increases the potential for erosion to occur with any rain event. Water runoff may cause flooding that impacts or clogs road culverts and storm drains; sediment may move downstream affecting lands a long distance from the burned areas.
- Even with minor precipitation, road culverts can become plugged with material and cause debris flows.
- Recently opened areas may still have areas with smoke and fire. Fire can smolder below ground in root channels and stump holes and pop up above ground as these sources of organic matter reach the surface. If smoke is discovered, report a fire to 911.

Some things to do to be prepared:

- Don't loiter in the burned areas, travel quickly through burned areas to reach your favorite recreation sites outside of the burns
- Carrying a saw or axe with you is a good idea when traveling on forest roads
- Stay current on weather forecasts and avoid areas that have been severely burned
- Do not try to cross an active mud or debris flow
- Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return home

For more information, please call the local national forest office or go to the forest web site at

www.fs.usda.gov/okawen.

INTERAGENCY PASS PROGRAM (America the Beautiful National Parks & Federal Recreation Lands Pass):

This pass combines the benefits of existing recreation passes from five federal agencies into one comprehensive Interagency Pass called "**America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass.**"

- The pass covers recreation opportunities on public lands managed by National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and U.S. Forest Service.
- The pass applies to those locations that currently have entrance or standard amenity fees.

- The annual pass sells for **\$80**, the lifetime senior pass is **\$10**, and the lifetime access pass and the volunteer passes are **free**.
- Passes are valid for **one full year** from the month of purchase.
- Passes provide entrance or access to the pass holder and accompanying passengers in a single, private, non-commercial vehicle at federally operated recreation sites across the country.
- Passes cover the pass holder and three (3) accompanying adults age 16 and older at sites where per person entrance fees are charged. No entry fee for children 15 and under.
- Passes are **NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-TRANSFERABLE**, and **cannot** be replaced if lost or stolen.
- This program replaces the **Golden Eagle, Golden Age, and the Golden Access Passports as well as the National Parks Pass**. **Existing passes will remain valid until expired, lost or stolen.**
- These passes can be used in lieu of the Northwest Forest Pass.

RECREATION PASS PURCHASE INFORMATION:

A \$5 day use fee is required at many trailheads and day use sites across the national forest. The Northwest Forest Day Pass, Northwest Forest Annual Pass, and America the Beautiful Interagency Annual Pass are honored at all Forest Service-operated recreation sites where a day use fee is required. For a complete list of recreation sites where a day use fee is required, please visit <http://go.usa.gov/2YXA> or call your local ranger station.

Passes are available at **all ranger district offices** and the **forest headquarters** office in Wenatchee. The cost is \$30 for an annual pass and \$5 for a day use pass. For information about the Northwest Forest Pass call 1-800-270-7504 or to order it online go to www.discovernw.org.

- **Wenatchee area:** Northwest Forest passes are available at Arlberg Sports Inc., Hooked on Toys, Bi-Mart, and Big 5.
- **Chelan area:** Passes are available at the Chelan Ranger District office.
- **Entiat area:** Passes are available at Cooper's General Store and at the Entiat Ranger District office.
- **Lake Wenatchee area:** Passes are available at Midway Village Grocery, Parkside Grocery and Plain Hardware.
- **Leavenworth area:** In Leavenworth passes are available at Der Sportsman, Icicle Quik Stop 76 gas station, Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat Gift Shop, and Pioneer Market in Cashmere.
- **Cle Elum area:** Northwest Forest Pass vendors include Cle Elum Ranger Station and
 - Sportland Mini Mart Shell Station, 4402 Bullfrog Road, Cle Elum. Located 1 mile north of the Ranger Station on Hwy 903. Their phone number is 509-649-2260.
 - Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce Cle Elum Visitor Center, 312 W 1st, Cle Elum, 509-674-6880
 - Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, 609 N Main, Ellensburg, phone 509-925-2002.
 - Mountain High Sports, 105 E 4th Street, Ellensburg, phone 509-925-4626.
 - Bi-Mart, 608 East Mountain View, Ellensburg, phone 509-925-6973.
 - Mac A Bee Gifts of the Southwest, 1401 Airport Road, Cle Elum, phone 509-674-7055.
 - Stewart Lodge LLC, 805 W 1st St Cle Elum, phone 509-674-4548
- **Methow Valley area:** Passes are available at the **Methow Valley Ranger Station office, 24 W. Chewuch Road in Winthrop, and**
 - Winthrop Mountain Sports, 257 Riverside Avenue, Winthrop, phone 509 996-2886.
 - Methow Cycle and Sports, 19210 Hwy 20, Winthrop, phone 509 996-3645.
 - Valley Hardware/Do-It Center Hardware, 429 E. Methow Valley Hwy., Twisp, 509-997-3355.
 - Mazama Country Inn, 15 Country Road, Mazama, phone 509-996-2681 (Day passes only).
 - Goat Beard Mountain Supply, 50 Lost River Road in Mazama, 509-996-2515.
 - Do It Center Valley Hardware, 309 Highway 20 South in Twisp, 509-997-8541.
 - The Outdoorsman, 170 Riverside Ave., Winthrop, 509-996-2649, (Day passes only).
- **Naches area:** Northwest Forest passes can be purchased at the following locations.
 - Naches Ranger District office, 10237 U. S. Hwy 12, Naches, phone 509-653-1401.
 - Slim's Market, 9951 US Hwy 12, Naches.
 - Rimrock Grocery Store, 34090 U.S. Hwy 12, Naches, phone 509-672-2251.
 - Bi-Mart stores in Yakima, Sunnyside and in Ellensburg.
 - Naches Chinook Center, 10450 Hwy 12, Naches, WA 98937, 509-653-2797

E-PASSES ARE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE: Northwest Forest passes can be purchased online. A day pass is \$5 and an annual pass is \$30. Go to <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/okawen/passes-permits/recreation> to purchase these permits.

CHELAN RANGER DISTRICT

Office phone number: (509) 682-4900

OFFICE HOURS: The Chelan Ranger District office is located at 428 West Woodin Avenue in Chelan with office hours of 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday **with a one hour closure for lunch from 11:30 to 12:30.** The Chelan Ranger District also serves as an information center for the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

SNOW: On Feb. 15, there was 148 inches of snow at Lyman Lake at 5,980 feet elevation.

ECHO RIDGE: All trails at Echo Ridge are open for winter recreation opportunities and are regularly groomed as conditions allow. There is still approximately 12 inches of base snow. Depending on temperature, expect good spring-like skiing conditions. For the latest skiing and grooming conditions at Echo Ridge, please go to http://www.eigenvector.com/ski/Nordic_Report.html or Lake Chelan Nordic Club at <http://www.lakechelannordic.org/>.



ECHO RIDGE NORDIC SKI PASSES: Day use fees are in effect at Echo Ridge Nordic Ski Area. Ski passes are required for both ski and snowshoe trail use at Echo Ridge. Day passes are available on-site for \$10 per adult. Passes are free for skiers or snowshoers age 17 or under. Season passes are available for \$70 at the Chelan Ranger District office or online at www.lakechelannordic.org.

LAKE LEVEL: The level of Lake Chelan is 1,088.97 feet above sea level. For more information on the lake level, please visit the Chelan County Public Utility District website at: <http://www.chelanpud.org/parks-and-recreation/lake-chelan-lake-levels>.

SNOWMOBILING OPPORTUNITIES: Shady Pass Road is a popular groomed area for snowmobiling. Be sure to check avalanche conditions prior to any outing; go to www.nwac.us for current avalanche conditions. For current snow grooming information go to <http://parks.state.wa.us/130/Winter-Recreation>.

ROADS & SNOWMOBILING: Seasonal road closures are in effect that restrict motorized wheeled vehicle use on the Chelan Ranger District.

Annually, these roads are closed to four-wheeled vehicles and open to snowmobiles:

- **Grade Creek Road** (FS Road No. 8200) and **Upper Joe Creek Road** (FS Road No. 8210), are closed beyond Antilon Lake Sno-Park.

- **Washington Creek Road** (FS Road No. 8021) and **Cooper Mountain Road** (FS Road No. 8020) are closed above Echo Valley Sno-Park.
- **Slide Ridge Road** (FS Road No. 8410) and **Shady Pass Road** (FS Road No. 5900) are closed above 25 Mile Creek Sno-Park.
- **Purtteman Gulch Road** (FS Road No. 8010) is used as an ungroomed snowmobile trail and a non-motorized Nordic trail.

Forest roads are snow covered. Please carry tire chains and extra supplies for emergencies.

Remember, there is limited turn around space available on most forest roads. Always travel with plenty of fuel and check on road conditions with district offices before heading out. Four-wheel-drive and high vehicle clearance is always recommended for travel on forest roads. Many forest roads close to four and two-wheeled motor vehicle use during the winter and become open for over the snow recreation.

TRAILS: Snow covers all district trails.

CAMPING: All campgrounds are snow covered with no services available.

DOCK PERMITS: Dock permits are not required during the winter; however, some docks will become inaccessible as the lake level lowers for the winter. Docks are icy—please be careful. All boat-in campgrounds are open except for Lucerne and Refrigerator Harbor which are closed.

CLE ELUM RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is **(509) 852-1100**.

WINTER OFFICE HOURS ARE IN EFFECT: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a 45-minute closure for lunch from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m.

SNOW: Spring weather has arrived bringing rain to the low to mid elevations.

SNO-PARKS: All Sno-Parks on the Cle Elum Ranger District are open and grooming is underway.

Congestion in the Snoqualmie Pass area Sno-Parks continues to be a problem. PLEASE – if the parking area is full, continue on to the next available parking area.

- **NOTE! Gold Creek and Hyak Sno-Parks** have been full by 10 a.m. on weekends. Motorists are reminded not to park outside of designated sno-parks. Parking in I-90 interchange areas (off/on ramps) is prohibited. Congestion resulting from illegally parked cars has impeded snow removal equipment and emergency vehicles. Illegally parked vehicles can be towed at the owner's expense.
- **Price Creek Westbound Sno-Park** was decommissioned last summer due to the I-90 expansion project. Alternative parking is at Kachess Sno-Park.
- **Lake Easton State Park Sno-Park** is a good alternative for non-motorized winter recreation including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snow play. It is located off of I-90 Exit 70, and is 16 miles east of Gold Creek/Hyak Sno-Parks.

When parking in sno-parks, do not block turn around areas. Observe and comply with all posted directions and regulations.

SNOQUALMIE PASS VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Thursday through Sunday for the winter season.

The visitor center offers guided snowshoe walks January through March. The walks are very popular and reservations are required. Call the visitor center at 425-434-6111 for information. **Make reservations online at [discovernw.org/snowshoe-snoqualmie](http://www.discovernw.org/store_winter-snowshoe-program-at-snoqualmie-pass_SNOWSHOE02.html)** (http://www.discovernw.org/store_winter-snowshoe-program-at-snoqualmie-pass_SNOWSHOE02.html). Trips for special events and school groups can be scheduled.

Meet 15 minutes before your scheduled walk at the Snoqualmie Pass Visitors Center off I-90, exit 52. No fee is charged for those participating in the snowshoe walks but a donation to cover the cost of equipment is suggested of \$15 for adults, \$10 for youth 16 and under, and \$25 per person for the extended hikes and photography outings. Snowshoes are provided.

Participants need to be prepared with appropriate clothing and sturdy boots. Remember to dress in layers, avoid cotton clothing, and carry water and snacks.

Five different interpreter-led snowshoe walks are offered:

- ❄ **90-minute Trek.** Learn about winter ecosystem wildlife and safety on this one mile loop walk through old growth forest. The pace is moderate and is intended to introduce folks to the marvels of winter and snowshoeing. These treks take place on Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Group size limit is 20.
- ❄ **Extended Hike** through the Commonwealth Basin in which participants will be able to examine winter ecology, life in the snow, and winter weather. These walks take place at 9 a.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Plan on being out until about 3 p.m. Bring a lunch, a well-stocked day pack, extra clothing, and water.
- ❄ **Winter Photography Outings.** These walks are geared for photography enthusiasts of all abilities. Commonwealth Creek offers intriguing image possibilities with ice falls, cool vapors and swirling dark waters. Your guide will discuss light, composition and exposure. Bring a lunch. This outing lasts four to five hours and will occur at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 13, Feb. 27, March 12, and March 26.
- ❄ **Kids in the Snow.** This trek introduces youngsters to the wonders of winter. Participants will learn to identify tracks, discover which animals turn white in the winter and who sleeps the winter away. At the end of the trek participants will receive a Junior Snow Ranger membership and badge. These walks take place at 1 p.m. on Saturdays.
- ❄ **Avalanche Awareness Walks.** Join the Northwest Avalanche Center and the Forest Service for six snowshoe walks where the focus is entirely Avalanche Awareness. Professionals from the Northwest Avalanche Center will be leading and presenting these walks. Please call for dates and times for the avalanche awareness walks.

ROADS: All Forest Service Roads on the Cle Elum Ranger District **remain closed to wheeled vehicles.**

Even if a road has melted out, please refrain from driving on it. Spring conditions leave roads highly susceptible to rutting and erosion. Road maintenance is costly, budgets are tight, and the damage that you prevent by not driving a muddy road can save dollars for other more critical maintenance and repairs.

Check <http://www.fs.usda.gov/okawen/> or call your local ranger station for current road reports.

- **Forest Service Road No. 4832 Update:** Repairs have been delayed to Road 4832. Original projections were for construction to begin in late January; unfortunately, this date has been postponed. **NEW! The contract for repairs is now open for bid. Construction could begin in early March.**
- **Forest Service Road No. 9737**, also known as North Fork Teanaway Road, will be plowed for winter timber harvest through spring 2016. The road is closed to all wheeled vehicles not associated with harvest activities. The road is closed to snowmobile use from 5 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Snowmobiles are permitted evenings and weekends. If skiing or snowshoeing on the road weekdays, use caution. Step completely off of the road when trucks or other equipment approach. Remember, they are large and heavy and may be unable to stop quickly when traveling on snowy roads.

TRAILS: Trails remain open to non-motorized use throughout the year. All winter recreationists are reminded to check avalanche conditions prior to using national forest trails. Please be aware that weather conditions can change rapidly. Be prepared for extreme conditions at all times. Please check with the ranger station for more information.

All trails on the Cle Elum Ranger District are closed to motorized use until June 15 to prevent rutting, erosion and to protect fragile soils and water quality.

CABIN RENTALS: The Cle Elum Ranger District usually offers the *Teanaway Guard Station* for public rental; unfortunately, it is closed for the remainder of the winter. Flood water in November caused damage that was recently discovered. Repairs will be made once snow melt allows access in the spring. We expect the cabin to be available for use in mid to late May 2016. For more information or to make reservations for later in the year, contact National Recreation Reservation Service at 1-877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

ENTIA T RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is **(509) 784-4700**.

OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

SNOW: Pope Ridge remote Snotel weather station, located at 3,590 feet elevation, reported 43 inches of snow on Feb. 16. Daytime temperatures at Pope Ridge are reaching into the low 40s. The Snotel weather station site is approximately 32 miles up Entiat River Road. Deeper snow has accumulated at higher elevations.

SNO-PARKS: The Entiat River and Mad River Sno-Parks are open and Porta Potties are available. Sno-Park permits are required from December through April. Washington State Parks Winter Recreation Program manages sno-parks (cleared parking areas) in close proximity to groomed and backcountry trails. Check with Washington State Parks Winter Recreation for rules, regulations and maps at <http://parks.state.wa.us>.

- Snowmobile sno-parks are open to both motorized and non-motorized winter recreation.
- Shady Pass Forest Service Road No. 5900 has been groomed from the Twenty-Five Mile Sno-Park to the Entiat River Road Sno-Park.
- Non-motorized sno-parks are only open to winter recreation sports such as cross-country skiing, dog sledding, snowshoeing, and snow play.

SNOW GROOMING: For updates call the Lake Wenatchee/Entiat snowmobile grooming hotline at 509-784-4633. For Lake Chelan/Entiat areas visit the Lake Chelan Snowmobile Club Facebook page or call 509-687-7669. Information is also available at the Entiat Ranger Station. *Remember, snowmobiles are not allowed on plowed roads or any roadway that is open to wheeled motor vehicles unless otherwise posted.*

WOLVERINE AND DUNCAN FIRE AREA CLOSURES TEMPORARILY LIFTED: Duncan Fire closure and Wolverine Fire closure areas on the Entiat Ranger District have been temporarily lifted to allow for winter recreation opportunities. When there is snow on the ground the risk of debris flows and flooding is reduced. Forest users are advised to check the latest conditions as warm winter storms can cause rapid melt off and high water events. Next spring, Forest Service personnel will reassess both closure areas and look at possibilities where they can be reduced to allow more public access in areas where threats to human safety have decreased.

TRAILS: Forest visitors will encounter snow and winter conditions on all forest trails. Good resources to check for recent postings and conditions from fellow hikers are www.NWHikers.net www.WTA.org and www.Cascadeclimbers.com.

ROADS: Winter road conditions now exist. Four-wheel-drive and high vehicle clearance are always recommended for travel on forest roads. If roads are muddy and snowy and your vehicle is damaging the road surface, please turn around to prevent further road damage. Remember, there is limited turn around space available on most forest roads.

Winter road and trail conditions change quickly so check for current conditions and closures before you go. The best way to be prepared is to think ahead about what you would do in a potential emergency situation and have proper equipment and supplies with you. Closed roads include main groomed snowmobile routes and do not reflect all roads and spurs that are closed.

Road Name	Road #	Status
Entiat River Road	5100	From Entiat River Sno-Park (at mile marker 25) on up valley--open only for motorized and non-motorized winter recreation. The seasonal road closure is now in effect which restricts motorized wheeled vehicle use, including UTVs and side-by-sides with tracks, on the Entiat Ranger District. Closed roads include the main groomed snowmobile routes and do not reflect all roads and spur roads that are closed.
Mills Canyon/ Entiat Ridge	5200	Seasonal road closure is in effect which restricts motorized wheeled vehicle use, including UTVs and side-by-sides with tracks, on the Entiat Ranger District. Closed roads include main groomed snowmobile routes and do not reflect all roads and spur roads that are closed.
Forest Service Road/ Dinkelman	5210	
Preston Creek	5501	Open, expect to encounter winter conditions.
Tommy Creek	5605	Seasonal road closure is in effect which restricts motorized wheeled vehicle use, including UTVs and side-by-sides with tracks, on the Entiat Ranger District. Closed roads include main groomed snowmobile routes and do not reflect all roads and spur roads that are closed.
North Fork Road	5606	
Tyee	5700	Open, expect to encounter winter conditions.
Tillicum Creek	5800	Seasonal road closure is in effect which restricts motorized wheeled vehicle use, including UTVs and side-by-sides with tracks, on the Entiat Ranger District. Closed roads include main groomed snowmobile routes and do not reflect all roads and spur roads that are closed.
Forest Service Road/ Moe Ridge	5801	
Forest Service Road	5808	
Shady Pass & Big Hill	5900 & 112	

CAMPGROUNDS: Expect to encounter snow at all district campgrounds. Pine Flats, Fox Creek, Lake Creek, and Silver Falls campgrounds are gated closed, no amenities are available. Call the Entiat Ranger Station for further information.

Campground	Location	Status
Pine Flats	14 miles from Highway 97A, Mad River Road	Closed for the season with no fees. Walk in/walk out access is permitted. No water or garbage services are provided. Campers need to pack out all their garbage. Please use "Leave No Trace" camping techniques.
Fox Creek	27 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	
Lake Creek	28 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	
Silver Falls	30 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	
North Fork	33 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	Closed due to public safety concerns resulting from the Duncan & Wolverine fires.
Spruce Grove	34 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	
Three Creek	36 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	
Cottonwood	38 miles from Highway 97A, Entiat River Road	Closed due to public safety concerns resulting from the Duncan & Wolverine fires. Cottonwood Cabin is not available for reservation rental.

METHOW VALLEY RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is (509) 996-4003.

OFFICE HOURS: Open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

WEATHER: A local weather forecast is available at <http://go.usa.gov/f4y>.

SNOW: On Feb. 15 there was 105 inches of snow at Hart's Pass, at 6,500 feet. Winthrop, at 1,801 feet elevation, had 26 inches, Washington Pass, at 5500 feet elevation, had 118 inches and Mazama, at 2,170 feet elevation, had 32 inches of snow.

SKIING: Cross-country ski trails are being groomed for skiing. For additional Methow Trail conditions for cross-country ski, snowshoe, fat bikes and other winter recreation information go online to <http://www.methowtrails.org/winter-trails>.

The Loup-Loup Ski Bowl is open for downhill skiing and the Loup-Loup Bear Mountain Nordic Skiing trails are groomed for skate ski and touring as well as snowshoeing on designated trails that are open to snowshoers (Flat Loop and multi-use trails). Snowshoers, please check in at the ticket window to purchase a trail pass, and trek along the side of the ski tracks.

South Summit trails are usually groomed on Friday for Nordic skiing. To access the North Summit Sno-Park at the Loup Loup Pass summit, turn off onto forest road 42 and travel north about a quarter mile to the entrance to the parking area. For the South Summit Sno-Park ski area, turn off at the Loup Loup Pass summit and travel south on forest road No. 41 to the sno-park parking area. A season permit, per vehicle, is required for parking.

Remember to purchase a sno-park permit prior to traveling to this area. If the Loup Loup Ski Bowl ticket office is open, a Washington State Sno-Park permit may be purchased at their ticket window. For more details go online at <http://skitheloup.com/>.

SNOWMOBILING: For current online snowmobile trail grooming schedule information go to: <http://mountaintrailsgrooming.blogspot.com/p/schedule.html>.

NORTH CASCADES HIGHWAY 20: Due to avalanche danger, North Cascades Highway is closed for the season from milepost 134 near Diablo to milepost 178 near Early Winters.

ROADS: District roads not listed below are not plowed and are blocked by winter snow accumulation. For the most current trail information go online to <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprd3820244>.

Road Name and Number	Conditions	Updated
Hart's Pass Road 5400	Closed to wheeled vehicles Dec. 1 to April 1. Open to snowmobiles.	2/15/16
McFarland Creek Road 1020-200	Snow covered.	2/15/16
Finley Mountain 1590-300	This is a snowmobile route through a closed area. The road is CLOSED to wheeled motorized travel from Dec. 1 through April 1.	2/15/16
Finley Canyon 1590-370	Road access is blocked by winter snow accumulation.	2/15/16
Black Canyon 4010	CLOSED for the winter to all vehicles, including snowmobiles , due to a road wash-out. The road will reopen when repaired.	2/15/16
Black Canyon 4010-050	CLOSED to all vehicles, including snowmobiles for the winter due to a road wash-out. The road will reopen when repaired.	2/15/16
Black Canyon 4010-100	CLOSED to all vehicles, including snowmobiles for the winter due to a road wash-out. The road will reopen when repaired.	2/15/16
Yockey Creek 4150-200	This is a snowmobile route through a closed area. The road is CLOSED to wheeled motorized travel from Dec. 1 through April 1.	2/15/16

Road Name and Number	Conditions	Updated
North Summit 42	The road is a groomed snowmobile route Dec. 1 through April 1, and is closed to motorized wheeled vehicles. The road is CLOSED to all methods of travel from Buck Pass in the southeast quarter of section 17, T35N, R24E, to the junction with Road 4200-300 in T35N, R24E, sec. 22.	2/15/16
Starvation Mountain 4235	The road is a groomed snowmobile route Dec. 1 through April 1, and is closed to motorized wheeled vehicles.	2/15/16
Beaver Mountain 4235-100	Access blocked by winter snow accumulation.	2/15/16
West Fork Buttermilk 4300-550	CLOSED --The bridge is condemned and unsafe. The road is damaged near the bridge from a 2011 washout. The road is snow covered.	2/15/16
West Fork Buttermilk 4300-560	CLOSED --The bridge is condemned and unsafe. The access road is damaged near the bridge from a 2011 washout. The road is snow covered.	2/15/16
South Fork Gold Creek 4330	CLOSED to wheeled vehicles. The road is groomed and open to snowmobiles Dec. 1 to April 1.	2/15/16
South Fork Gold Creek 4330-600	CLOSED to wheeled vehicles. The road is groomed and open to snowmobiles Dec. 1 to April 1.	2/15/16
North Fork Gold Creek 4340	CLOSED to wheeled vehicles. The road is groomed and open to snowmobiles Dec. 1 to April 1.	2/15/16
Middle Fork Gold Creek 4340-100	Closed by winter snow accumulation.	2/15/16
Foggy Dew 4340-200	Closed to motorized wheeled vehicles and snowmobiles, Oct. 1 through April 1 for deer winter range.	2/15/16
Crater Creek 4340-300	Closed by winter snow accumulation.	2/15/16
Long Creek 5200-500	CLOSED – the road is washed out.	2/15/16

WOODCUTTING: Most forest access roads become groomed snowmobile routes, closed to wheeled vehicles December 1 to April 1. Firewood permits expired December 31. Firewood gathering season is May 1 through December 31.

CAMPGROUNDS: Most district forest roads become groomed snowmobile routes, closed to wheeled vehicles December 1 to April 1, blocking motorized wheeled vehicle access to all campgrounds.

Campfires are allowed. For current campground information go online to

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprdb5308308> .

TRAILS: Most district forest access roads become groomed snowmobile routes, closed to wheeled vehicles December 1 to April 1, with winter snow accumulation blocking access to district forest trails.

For current trail information go online to <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=stelprdb5371608> .

NACHES RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is (509) 653-1401.

OFFICE HOURS: The Naches Ranger Station foyer is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week with handouts and forest information available to the public during non-office hours. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The office is closed daily for lunch from 12:00 to 12:30. No permit sales after 4 p.m.

SNOW: The snow level has dropped to approximately 3,000 feet. White Pass Ski Area reported 68 inches of snow at the base on February 12. To view the grooming schedule for the Naches Ranger District and Yakima County area visit <http://parks.state.wa.us/465/Greenwater-Yakima>.

NEW! CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAILS: Naches Ranger District employees have set track for cross-country skiers on the North Fork Trail located on White Pass/U.S. Highway 12, on Pleasant Valley Trail and Bumping Trail, both located on Chinook Pass/State Route 410. Snowshoers using these trails are asked to step to the side of the set tracks.

SNO-PARK PERMIT VENDORS: The Naches Ranger District office is selling Sno-Park permits. Sno-Park permits are required for parking at any designated sno-park area. Following is a list of local vendors also selling sno-park permits.

- In the Naches area--Slim's Market and The Little Red School House
- Chinook Pass area--Whistlin' Jack Lodge

ROADS: Snow grooming and berming continues on seasonal winter recreation routes. U.S. Highway 12 is open to traffic, Washington State Department of Transportation crews are working adjacent to the traffic light that is directing traffic through a single lane near the repaired areas both east and west of White Pass. Drivers can expect delays at the signals. The rockslide at milepost 155 has been cleared.

Please check with the Washington State Department of Transportation for more up to date information on mountain pass roads. The most current updates on mountain pass conditions are available at <http://www.Wsdot.com/traffic/passes>.

SNOWMOBILERS BE AWARE -- FLOOD DAMAGED ROADS THAT REMAIN CLOSED:

Road Name and Number	Flood Damaged Roads that are CLOSED
Wildcat Road No. 1306	Closed to all motorized traffic because of a 30 foot slump in the road and a large culvert that is eroded and damaged.
Indian Creek Road No. 1308	Closed due to flood waters and large debris that washed out and blocked the last portion of the road to the trailhead.
Little Rattlesnake Road No. 1501	The road has been decommissioned 5.1 miles from the junction of Forest Road 1500/1501 to the junction of Forest Road 1501/1503.
Gold Creek Road No. 1703	The road has been decommissioned from Milepost 2.0 to 2.1. Areas below the decommissioned area can be accessed via Forest Road 1703. Areas above the decommissioned area can be accessed via Forest Road No. 1705. The road is open to trail users and snowmobiles.
McDaniel Road No. 1502	Closed to all traffic due to bridge damage and road washout.
FS Road No. 1040 (Bear Creek area)	Road damage due to a washout.

TRAILS: Due to snowfall, motorized use trails are now closed. Grooming for snow travel continues. Sno-park permits will be required at all sno-park parking areas. Before leaving home, always leave a detailed written trip itinerary with a responsible family member or friend. Washington Trails Association web site (www.wta.org) is also an excellent site for obtaining updates on current trail conditions.

WILDERNESS TRAILS: The snow level has dropped to around 3,000 feet making access to and hiking on wilderness trails difficult. Be prepared for winter conditions while visiting any area of the forest. Crow Lake Way Trail is closed until further notice due to extensive flood damage.

CLOSED--BOULDER CAVE, BOULDER CAVE DAY USE SITE and TRAIL: Boulder Cave, Boulder Cave Day Use Site, and Trial No. 962 leading to Boulder Cave are closed until further notice to protect the Pacific Western Big-Eared bats that live in the cave. **People will be ticketed entering or using these sites.**

This highly beneficial species is in rapid decline due to disturbance during hibernation. The big-eared bat is extremely intolerant to human disturbance. Bats must survive the winter months on a limited supply of stored fat; any disturbance that may awaken bats will deplete this food supply resulting in their death. Humans within sight or sound of the bats create sufficient disturbance to awaken them. These bats eat a large amount of mosquitoes which is very beneficial.

Boulder Cave is home to the only known population of Pacific Western Big-Eared bats in this part of Washington State. A small population of 50 bats use Boulder Cave as a winter roosting area. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Boulder Cave bat population numbered in the thousands.

The earliest date the cave will be open to the public is May 27, 2016 depending upon weather and trail conditions.

CLEAR LAKE DAY USE SITE and trails are closed for the winter.

CAMPGROUNDS: All Naches Ranger District campgrounds are closed for the winter. Soda Springs Campground is closed to all public access. Soda Springs Campground has over 70 trees that fell across campground facilities during a fall wind storm. Major damage has occurred to the shelter and campsites.

Campgrounds that accept reservations are now taking reservations for the summer season on www.recreation.gov. Campers may reserve sites up to six months before their planned stay date.

CAMPGROUND HOSTS NEEDED: The Naches Ranger District is seeking campground hosts to work in local campgrounds during the 2016 camping season, usually May through September. To apply, please contact Kevin Hill at the Naches Ranger District office; his phone number is 509-653-1436 and his email is kehill@fs.fed.us.

GROUP RESERVATION SITES: American Ridge Lodge and American River Guard Station group reservation sites are open year-round; there is **no** access by motorized vehicles to American Ridge Lodge during the winter season due to unsafe road conditions for vehicles. The other group sites have closed for the season. Reservations for group camp sites need to be made through the National Recreation Reservation Service by calling their toll free number 877-444-6777 or by going online to their web site at www.recreation.gov.

Area	Group Reservation Sites	Daily Fee	Registration Fee
Chinook Pass State Route 410	American Ridge Lodge - Open	\$100	\$10
	American River Guard Station - Open	\$ 50	\$10

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS: Always be prepared for any kind of weather and/or road conditions. Snow levels have dropped to around 3,000 feet. Bring extra clothes, food and water, map, compass and/or GPS, matches, fire starter, pocketknife, first aid kit, sunglasses, flashlight, and extra batteries. Please have extra blankets, a shovel, flares, tire chains, basic tools, and toilet paper in your vehicle.

WOODCUTTING: Woodcutting season is closed until May 2016.

TONASKET RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is (509) 486-2186.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a 30-minute closure for lunch from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m.

SNOW: On February 16, there was 23 inches of snow at Salmon Meadows at 4,460 feet elevation and 21 inches at Muckamuck snotel site located at 4,470 feet elevation.

SNO- PARKS: Sno-park information is available at <http://parks.state.wa.us> . Parking in a designated sno-park requires a sno-park permit. Permits are available at the Tonasket Ranger District office. This permit is typically sold to cross-county ski and snowshoe enthusiasts. Annual sno-park permits are \$42 and one-day permits are \$22.

- **Highlands Nordic Sno-Park** has about 25 miles of trails groomed for classic Nordic skiing and skate skiing. Whitetail, Hej Bue, Straight Edge, Sunshine Loop, Pomme du Pin, Windsong, and Antoine Wooded Loop routes are all newly groomed and in perfect condition.
- **Kerr Sno-Park:** Roads No. 3, 4, 5, 37, 38, and 39 have been groomed. No new information available.
- **Peacock Meadows Sno-Park:** Roads No. 7 and 10 have been groomed, no new information available.
- **Sitzmark Ski Area:** Now open to skiers and snowboarders, rental services are also available at the Ski Shop. Open Thursdays, weekends, and holidays. For more information, please visit; www.skitheloup.com

CAMPGROUNDS: All district campgrounds are closed for the season. Those which are not gated or closed with a physical barrier can be used until snow prevents access. No amenities are provided, so remember to bring drinking water and toilet paper and pack out all garbage. Please do not park vehicles in front of the locked gates at campground entrances.

The group site at Lost Lake Campground is closed until May 2016. Reservations may still be made for dates after that time. This site is generally booked far in advance. Please make your reservations early. Go online at www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777 to reserve the Lost Lake group campsite. All other campsites on the Tonasket District are available on a first-come, first-serve basis with no reservation needed.

AREA CLOSURES: Two area closures are in effect due to hazards resulting from the North Star Fire and the Okanogan Complex Fires. Road closures, trail closures and campgrounds are affected; go to the forest interactive closure map at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/okawen/alerts-notice/?aid=30418> for closure locations. Please call 509-486-2186 for more information or please visit our website <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/okawen/home>.

ROADS: Use caution when traveling on narrow forest roads. Most forest roads are now snow covered. Annual road closures went into effect on December 1, please call the Tonasket Ranger District office for additional information or visit Washington State Department of Transportation's website www.wsdot.wa.gov.

Be sure to look at the free Okanogan National Forest Travel Plan Map for more information (available at national forest offices or online at <http://go.usa.gov/64Kk>). Some closures are year round and this Travel Plan can help you know where you can go.

Road Number and Name	Condition
3200 Bonaparte Lake to Beaver Lake	Closed
3200-050 Strawberry Mountain	Closed
3230 Henderson Creek/Mill Creek	Closed
3235 Phoebe Mountain (Burge Mtn.)	Closed
3300 Meyers Creek and 3300-100 Spur Mountain Road to Lost Lake	Closed
34 Four Corners to Chesaw	Closed
30 Aeneas/Crawfish	Closed to motorized wheeled vehicle use, open to snowmobiles. Expect snowy conditions.
3000	Expect to encounter logging truck traffic; please drive slowly.
3000-200 Aeneas Valley to Tunk Mtn.	Closed. It skirts an area closure due to the Tunk Fire.
3000-285	Closed for logging
3000-290	Closed for logging
3000-100 Dugout Mountain Road	Closed, an area closure is in effect
3115-100 West Fork Sanpoil Road	Closed coming off of the end of Aeneas Valley Road to the Colville Indian Reservation on the east side of the ranger district.
3120 Coco Mt Road	Closed
3125 Gardner Creek Road	Closed
3575-120 Cow Camp Road	Closed
37 Middle Salmon-Boulder Creek to 3700 West Fork	Closed
3800 North Fork Salmon Creek	Closed
3800-025 Ray Road/Muckamuck	Closed
3810	Closed
3820 Lone Frank Pass	Closed
39 Toats Coulee to Long Swamp	Closed
3900-100 14 Mile	Closed
3900-500 Iron Gate	Closed
4200 southwest of Conconully	Closed. This road is normally used for snowmobiling activities in the winter but this year it will not be accessible due to hazards from last summer's fires.

WOODCUTTING PERMITS: The district firewood cutting program is currently under review. Firewood permits will not be available before April 1, 2016. More information will be provided as it is received.

TRAILS: Snow now covers all district trails. A portion of the Pacific Northwest Trail No. 340 is closed until further notice due to Newby Lake Fire damage. This trail is in the extreme northeast corner of the Pasayten Wilderness. Please call 509-486-2186 for more information. Go to the forest website at <http://go.usa.gov/8fKA> for a complete list of trails and directions.

WENATCHEE RIVER RANGER DISTRICT

The office phone number is (509) 548-2550.

No updated information was provided.

ENCHANTMENT PERMITS: To protect the core Enchantments area from overuse, the Wenatchee River Ranger District is expanding its limited entry, overnight permit season for the Enchantment Permit Area within the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Permits for overnight stays will be required from **May 15 through October 31**. For more information please go to <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/news-events> .

The 2016 Enchantments lottery application period started on **Feb. 15, 2016 at 12:01 a.m. Pacific Time and ends March 2, 2016 at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time**. Please go to www.Recreation.gov to apply and for additional information.

Wilderness self-registration permits are still required and available at trailheads.

A Northwest Forest Pass for your vehicle is required at trailheads accessing the Enchantments; these permits are not available at trailheads but may be purchased at the ranger station in Leavenworth. Wilderness party size is limited to eight and no overnight camping in excess of 14 days is allowed. ***Be prepared for winter conditions.***

