



# The Tahoma News

September 2 - December 31, 2008

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

## A New Visitor Center for Paradise



*Artistic rendering of Paradise after completion of the new visitor center.*

On October 10th two years of construction—and many additional years of planning and design—will culminate 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.

*“The dramatic new building features a lobby open to the rafters with tall windows framing majestic Mount Rainier and the Tatoosh Range.”*

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 existing 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.

***Plan to visit the new Paradise Jackson Visitor Center after the opening on October 10th. See Page 4 for hours.***

There is still one task to be accomplished before the project is complete: demolition of the old visitor center. In the spring of 2009 it will be removed. 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.



*Artistic rendering of the new Paradise Visitor Center.*

### Welcome

... to Mount Rainier National Park. This has been an exciting year for the park. The historic Paradise Inn reopened to the public in May 2008 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. As you visit the Inn much of the rehabilitation will not be apparent to you, since 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.



**Superintendent Dave Uberuaga**

In October 2008 the park will dedicate the new Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center at Paradise. The new visitor center will be more sustainable and architecturally compatible with the Paradise National Historic Landmark District. It will include a new park movie, interpretive exhibits, gift shop, and food service. A dedication ceremony for the new visitor center is scheduled for October 10, 2008.

Since November 2006 the park has been steadily recovering from a historic flood which heavily damaged roads, trails, utility systems, campgrounds and other facilities. Through our partnerships with the Student Conservation Association, Volunteers-In Parks, Washington’s National Park Fund, Washington Trails Association, The Mountaineers, National Parks Conservation Association, Mount Rainier National Park Associates, REI, and many others, we have made great progress, but much work remains to be done.

Please enjoy your visit to Mount Rainier. We are proud to have the responsibility as caregivers of this special place.

Dave Uberuaga,  
Superintendent

#### 2 Park Partners

Who plays an active role in supporting the park? Where do your entrance fees go? How many people volunteered in the park last year? Find out all this and more about park partners on page 2.

#### 2-3 Hiking & Safety

Where do you get a backcountry camping permit? What should you do in the event of a geohazard? What should you do if you encounter a bear or a mountain lion? See pages 2 & 3 for information on these questions.

#### 4 Facility Hours

How late are the visitor centers open? Where do I find food and lodging inside the park? Where can I buy books and maps? All this and more is on page 4.

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#### Winter Road Closures ... 4

## Plan for Construction Delays

Summer and fall are the seasons for road construction in the park. These few snow-free months give park staff a very short time frame to improve park roads.

If you are traveling on the east side of the park through October 7 expect up to 20 minute construction and traffic delays on SR 123, between Deer Creek and Cayuse Pass, and on SR 410, from Cayuse Pass east along approximately 1.5 miles of roadway. After Labor Day these roads may be closed to through traffic Mondays-Thursdays to facilitate the repaving operation. For current road status call 360-569-2211, extension 3314.

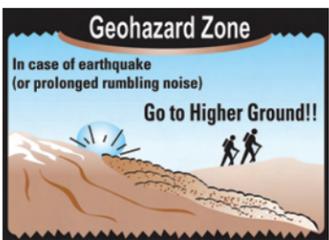
We apologize for the inconvenience but hope you will enjoy the improvements. Please drive carefully. Buckle up, obey speed limits, and slow down in construction zones!

## Protect Yourself, Protect Your Park

Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 to preserve the natural and cultural resources of this area. To protect yourself and your park, during your visit please follow these rules:

- Keep pets on six foot or shorter leashes. Pets 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.
- Camp in designated campsites only. Sleeping in vehicles outside of campgrounds is not permitted.

## 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](http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov).



Knapsack Pass Trail, September 2002  
Photo courtesy Daniel Keebler

## Wilderness Camping Permits

Wilderness camping permits are required for all overnight stays in the park's backcountry. Permits and backcountry information are available at all wilderness information centers and most visitor centers (see page 4 for locations and hours). Although permits are free, there is an optional, fee-based reservation system for campers and climbers in effect May through September. Backcountry reservations are \$20 per party (1-12 people) for 1 to 14 consecutive nights. Sixty percent of all backcountry sites and zones are available for reservation. The remaining 40% are issued on a first-come, first-served basis on the day the trip begins.

## Climbing

Each year, approximately 9,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier. Nearly half reach the 14,410 foot summit. Climbing permits are required for travel above 10,000 feet and/or on glaciers. Climbing information - including fees, routes, and conditions - is available at ranger stations. Guided climbs and climbing seminars are available through:

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

## Winter Group Camping

Winter camping at Paradise is permitted when there is sufficient snow (generally mid-December through April). Parties of 13 to 100 must camp in one of the designated group camping areas at Paradise and must pre-register. Please call 360-569-6003 (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) at least 2 weeks in advance. Provide group name, leader name, party size, date requested, and a call-back phone number. Your pre-registered permit will be available for pickup at the Longmire Museum on the day of your arrival to camp.

## 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 captioned audiovisual programs are available. The Kautz Boardwalk Nature Trail is accessible. The new Paradise Visitor Center is designed for accessibility. TDD: (360) 569-2177

## Park Partners

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

 <p>Your Fee Dollars at Work Entrance fees were used to produce this exhibit.</p>	<p><b>Visitors Like You!</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitating park trails</li> <li>• Meadow restoration at Sunrise and Reflection Lakes</li> <li>• Upgrading exhibits and media</li> <li>• Rehabilitating picnic areas</li> </ul> <p>As you explore the park, look for signs of your fees at work!</p>
	<p><b>Northwest Interpretive Association</b> NWIA operates bookstores in the park's visitor and information centers. As a nonprofit organization benefitting educational programs in the national parks and forests of the Pacific Northwest, NWIA plays an important role in making interpretive and educational publications available to travelers. It also funds special interpretive projects in the areas it serves. For more information or membership, call (360) 569-2211, ext. 3320, or visit NWIA on the web at <a href="http://www.nwpubliclands.com">www.nwpubliclands.com</a>.</p>
	<p><b>Volunteers</b> 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 <a href="http://www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm">www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm</a>.</p>
	<p><b>Washington's National Park Fund</b> 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 <a href="http://www.wnpf.org">www.wnpf.org</a>.</p>
	<p><b>Student Conservation Association</b> 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 <a href="http://www.thesca.org">www.thesca.org</a>.</p>

## Hiking the Muir Snowfield

The Muir Snowfield, a permanent field of snow, ice and rock outcrops, is located north of Paradise between 7,000 and 10,000 feet in elevation. Thousands of people hike on the Muir Snowfield each year en route to Camp Muir. On a clear day, the hike is spectacular. But when the weather deteriorates, as it often and unpredictably does, crossing the Muir Snowfield can be disastrous.

Don't Become A Muir Snowfield Statistic:

- Avoid the snowfield in questionable weather, especially if you're alone or unprepared. Weather conditions can change suddenly and drastically.
- If you're ascending and clouds or fog start rolling in, turn around and head back to Paradise. If that's not possible, stop moving, dig in, and wait for better weather.
- Without a compass, map, and altimeter, it is extremely difficult to find your way to the trailhead in a whiteout. Carry these items and know how to use them.
- Do not attempt to descend from Camp Muir in poor weather. Do not descend on skis or a snowboard in limited visibility — you could quickly become lost.
- When hiking to Camp Muir, be sure to carry emergency bivouac gear so that you can spend the night out if you have to.
- While it may be disappointing to abandon your hike to Camp Muir, remember that the snowfield will still be there in better weather.
- To protect fragile alpine vegetation, hike only on trails or snow.

Ask a ranger for tips on other areas to explore during your visit

### 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!)\*

### Leave No Trace

- Plan ahead & prepare
- Travel & camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of others

Fires are for emergency use only; they are not allowed in Mount Rainier's Wilderness

### Before you step off the trail...

... consider this: each step into a meadow crushes an average of 20 plants!



When exploring Mount Rainier's fragile meadows... Please hike only on maintained trails or on thick patches of snow.

## Black Bear and Mountain Lion Encounters

Mount Rainier National Park provides habitat and territory for many animal species. Among the largest and most feared are the black bear and the mountain lion. Though you are not likely to see them, if you do meet one of these larger mammals, your best defenses are awareness and knowledge. Be aware of how these animals might respond to your presence and know what to do in the unlikely event of an encounter with a bear or lion.

Hike in a group rather than alone because groups generate more noise and have more defensive capabilities. Keep children close and in view at all times. Avoid running as it may stimulate the animal's natural instinct to chase. Pets should never be left unattended anywhere in the park or taken on any trail.



Black bear (*Ursus americanus*)

### Close Encounters With Black Bears

Black bear attacks are extremely rare in the United States and have never occurred in this park. Bears respond to people in different ways – take time to understand the signals. Be aware of aggressive signals and know how to respond to prevent close encounters.

- Never feed a black bear, either intentionally or by leaving food unsecured.
- Do not approach bear cubs. An adult may be nearby to protect and defend the cubs.
- Back away from a nearby bear, even if it appears unconcerned with your presence.
- Do not run. Back away slowly. Talk loudly.
- A defensive bear will appear agitated and will often give visual and vocal warnings like swatting or stomping the ground, exhaling

loudly, huffing, snapping teeth, or lowering the head with ears drawn back while facing you. This response may escalate to a bluff charge or actual charge.

### If Charged by a Black Bear

- If the bear charges and then stops its approach, back away and vacate the area.
- If the approach continues, drop to the ground just before the charging bear makes contact. Tuck into a ball face down with your hands over the back of your neck.

### Close Encounters With Mountain Lions

Mountain lions usually do not like confrontation. If you see one, give it plenty of space so it can get away. Never approach cougar kittens. Leave the area immediately.



Mountain lion (*Felis concolor*)

- Do not run or turn your back on a lion.
- Make yourself look large, intimidating and in control: stand up tall, open your jacket, yell, throw things.
- Stand in a group with your companions.
- Quickly pick up and hold small children.
- If the lion moves toward you, wave your arms and make noise.
- Back away slowly while facing the animal.
- If attacked, fight back aggressively. Stay standing. Hit as hard as possible especially to the head. Use a stick or rock as a weapon. Throw dirt in the eyes. Protect your head and neck.

Report all bear and mountain lion encounters at the nearest ranger station or call park dispatch (360) 569-2211 ext. 2334.

## Secrets to a Safe and Enjoyable Hike

Hiking at Mount Rainier National Park can mean adventure, exploration, learning, or just plain having fun! The secret to a great hike? Staying safe!

Hikers, more than ever, need to emphasize personal safety as they journey by foot through the backcountry and along many of the popular trails to waterfalls and special features. For trail information, talk with a ranger at any visitor or wilderness information center. Use the following tips to keep your journey safe.

### Use Caution Along Trails

The effort to repair and rebuild sections of trails that were damaged by the November 2006 flood and a subsequent wind storm may take several years. Get current information about the trails before heading out and be mindful of the following information:

- Rerouted trails are identified by yellow caution tape. The tape guides hikers through the easiest and shortest path around existing obstructions. However, the reroutes can be rough, involve steep side hills or require climbing over logs and river banks.

### Use Common Sense

- Protect yourself by wearing appropriate outdoor clothing including footwear.
- Be prepared. Carry the ten essentials even on a short sightseeing hike.
- Always tell someone of your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return.
- Do not travel alone. If visibility is poor, do not travel at all.

### Pay Attention To The Weather

At Mount Rainier, the weather can change rapidly. Hikers who aren't prepared for weather conditions increase their risk of becoming lost or injured. Avoid problems: know and plan for Mount Rainier's changeable weather.

### Crossing Streams Safely

Many hikers underestimate the power of moving water and some consider their former successful stream crossings a ticket to the other side. Regardless of your knowledge, skills, experience or abilities, these pointers should help you in making a wise decision about a stream crossing.

- The best time of day to cross is in the early morning when river levels are generally at their lowest.
- Look for a straight, wide area with a smooth bottom and slow moving water below knee height.
- Before crossing, scout downstream for log jams, waterfalls and other hazards that could trap you and locate a point where you can exit if you fall in.
- Use a sturdy stick to maintain two points of contact with the ground at all times.
- Unfasten the belt of your pack so you can easily discard it if necessary.
- Staring down at moving water can make you dizzy. Look forward as much as possible.

*Taking these few precautions could save your day...and your life!*

## Visitor Facility Hours

### Visitor Centers

<b>Longmire Museum</b> (360) 569-2211 x3314	<b>September 2 - December 31</b> 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily	Information, exhibits, book sales, climbing permits
<b>Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise</b> (360) 569-2211 x6036	<b>September 1 - September 28</b> 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. daily	Information, exhibits, movie, book sales, food service, gifts
<b>The New Visitor Center at Paradise opens October 10</b>	<b>Opening Weekend October 10 - 12</b> 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Fri, Sat & Sun	
	<b>October 13 - December 31</b> 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Sat, Sun, Holiday	
<b>Ohanapecosh Visitor Center</b> (360) 569-2211 x6046	<b>September 1 - October 13</b> 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily <b>Closed for the season starting Oct 14</b>	Information, exhibits, book sales.
<b>Sunrise Visitor Center</b> (360) 663-2425	<b>September 1 - September 7</b> 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily <b>Closed for the season starting Sept 8</b>	Look for the roving ranger in the Sunrise area for assistance through Oct 13.

### Wilderness & Climbing Information Centers

<b>Longmire WIC</b> (360) 569-4453	<b>September 1 - October 13</b> 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily <b>Closed for the season starting Oct 14</b>	Wilderness camping & climbing permits
<b>Climbing Information at the Paradise Visitor Center</b> (360) 569-2211 x6009	<b>September 1 - September 27</b> 6:00 a.m. - noon Saturday	<b>Self registration is available.</b>
<b>White River WIC</b> (360) 569-2211 x6030	<b>September 1 - October 12</b> 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily <b>Closed for the season starting Oct 13</b>	Wilderness camping & eastside climbing permits
<b>Carbon River Ranger Station</b> (360) 829-9639	<b>Call for hours</b>	Wilderness camping & northside climbing permits

### Food & Lodging

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

<b>National Park Inn at Longmire</b>	<b>Open year-round</b>	Lodging, post office, and dining room serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner
<b>General Store - Longmire</b>	<b>September 1 - December 31</b> 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily	Groceries, gifts, firewood
<b>Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise - Snack Bar/Grill &amp; Gift Shop</b>	<b>September 1 - September 28</b> 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. daily	
<b>Opens in the New Visitor Center on October 10</b>	<b>Opening Weekend October 10 - 12</b> 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Fri, Sat & Sun	
	<b>October 13 - December 31</b> 11:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. Sat, Sun & Holidays	
<b>Paradise Inn</b>	<b>September 1 - October 5</b> Front Desk open 24 hours daily <b>Closed for the season starting Oct 6</b>	Dining room open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Post office, gift shop, & cafe
<b>Sunrise Lodge Snack Bar &amp; Gift Shop</b>	<b>September 1 - September 7</b> 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. daily <b>Closed for the season starting Sept 8</b>	Food and gifts. Day use only/ no overnight lodging

*Gasoline, lodging, dining, recreation equipment rentals, and other services are available in local communities. Religious services are available in local communities.*  
**GAS IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE PARK**



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

### Mount Rainier National Park

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## Winter Road Closures

As autumn progresses toward winter and storms bring increasing amounts of snow to Mount Rainier, roads will close for winter. Look for most roads to reopen in May or June.

- **Sunrise Road** closes at the junction with White River Campground Road every night beginning in late September. It reopens each morning as conditions permit. Overnight parking is not allowed at Sunrise when the road is closed nightly. The entire road will be closed for winter at the SR 410 junction on October 14, or earlier with the first heavy snowfall.
- Depending on snowfall, Washington State Department of Transportation usually closes the east section of **SR 410** and **Chinook Pass** in late November. They normally close SR 410 at the northeast park boundary in early December, and Cayuse Pass and SR 123 north of Ohanapecosh close at the same time. Call 1-800-695-ROAD for current status.
- **Mowich Lake Road** closes October 20, or with the first snowfall.
- **Stevens Canyon Road** closes November 1, or with the first heavy snowfall.
- **The road between Nisqually Entrance and Longmire** remains open throughout winter except during extreme weather.
- **The road between Longmire and Paradise** closes nightly from November 1 through winter. It reopens the following morning or when snow removal activities allow.

Poor visibility and reduced traction present driving hazards during winter. Shady areas and bridge surfaces can be treacherously icy even when other sections of roadway are not. Stay alert! Use caution.

## Drive-in Campgrounds

Campground	Open Dates	Elev.	Sites	Fee	Group Sites	Group Fees	Toilets	Dump Station	Maximum RV/Trailer Length
Cougar Rock*	June 6 - Oct. 13	3,180'	173	\$12/15*	5	\$40-64	Flush	Yes	RV 35'/Trailer 27'
Ohanapecosh*	May 23 - Oct. 13	1,914'	188	\$12/15*	1	\$40	Flush	Yes	RV 32'/Trailer 27'
White River	June 27 - Sept. 28	4,400'	112	\$12	0	N/A	Flush	No	RV 27'/Trailer 18'

Sunshine Point **Closed** due to flood damage. Sunshine Point campground will not reopen this year.

Ipsut Creek Road to campground **closed to vehicles** (flood damage). Open to walk-in & bike-in use. Wilderness Camping Permit required or overnight stay. No fires or pets allowed. No fee.

\*Reservations are available for individual sites at Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh Campgrounds from June 26 through the night of August 31 and can be made up to 6 months in advance. Reservations for group sites at Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh are available from May 23 through the night of October 12 and can be made up to one year in advance. To make a reservation on-line, go to [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or call 877-444-6777.