

Nordic Patrol Volunteer
Position Description
2017/2018

1. Nordic Patrollers & Candidates

- a. **Patrol Focus** - Nordic patrollers will work independently or with NPS Rangers during weekends throughout the winter use season, and as available during the Christmas holiday period. Nordic patrollers will perform day patrols (ski or snowshoe) of routes primarily in the Paradise and Tatoosh areas. Occasional trips may be scheduled for other destinations, such as the westside road. Patrols will center around visitor contacts with emphasis on providing information to skiers, snowboarders, showshoers and winter campers; preventative search and rescue; avalanche safety and resource protection (i.e. minimum impact winter camping and education of park regulations). Nordic patrollers will place and maintain winter trail signs and markers on selected winter trails in the Paradise area. As needed, patrollers will monitor group winter camping activities in the immediate Paradise area as well as check other parties camped in more remote areas.
- b. **Volunteer Status** - Nordic patrollers are required to be members of Mount Rainier's National Ski Patrol Unit (NSP Unit# P061), age 18 and older only. The Nordic Patrol will complete a group volunteer agreement (Department of the Interior Form, OF301, Volunteer Agreement), making all patrol member's official volunteers of the National Park Service. Patrollers will have to provide the Nordic Patrol Leadership a short biography of their winter skill experience and documentation of advanced skills (Avalanche Courses, Mountaineering Courses, National Ski Patrol, etc). At a minimum, Nordic Patrollers will be required to complete the National Ski Patrol's Outdoor Emergency Care (OEC) program to ensure all patrollers are at an acceptable baseline for medical skills. Volunteers working within the guidelines of their position description retain the option of filing a claim for injuries while patrolling through the Worker's Compensation program rather than any private insurance they may have. Use of a government house in Longmire on patrol days is part of the agreement between Mount Rainier and volunteers of the Nordic Patrol.
- c. **Safety** - Nordic patrollers will be required to patrol as two person teams at a minimum and participate in a patrol risk management session before patrols. If you don't agree with an assignment you can request a different route/duty for the day. Patrollers will be required to have the necessary avalanche response gear to provide assistance to their own party or park visitors (avalanche beacon, probe, and shovel). The Nordic Patrol leadership will work to offer training opportunities throughout the year to improve patrollers' skill levels (National Ski Patrol courses, avalanche awareness, patient packaging, toboggan training, etc).
- d. **Search & Rescue** - Within their documented level of training and certification, volunteers will assist rangers and other rescue personnel on medical and SAR emergencies. Nordic Patrol Leadership will review SAR training of all members and place each member into the following SAR categories.
 1. **PSAR** – preventative SAR with expectations of contacting visitors and educating them about the dangers while they are out. Assist with transporting equipment for rescues.
 2. **SAR** – have the fitness and ability (skills, training, and experience) to assist NPS Rangers with searching for lost visitors throughout the Paradise or Tatoosh area. These patrollers will also develop the skills to assist with the extrication by a litter/sled or staying out overnight with a lost visitor.

- e. **Emergency Medical Services** - Volunteers who have completed OEC and have additional EMS certifications (EMT, Paramedic, Nurse) and are willing to provide EMS care to their level of training will be operating under the Washington Good Samaritan Law (RCW 4.24.300 – Immunity from liability for certain types of medical care).
 - f. **Vehicle Usage** - Winter driver training will be required by the NPS yearly in order to have use of a government vehicle. A list of patrollers completing the training will be maintained at the Longmire house and with the Nordic Patrol Leadership. Drivers of government vehicles will also be required to sign a document that self certifies their driver's license to ensure all on the list have a valid, unexpired license. Duty day starts at Longmire if using a government vehicle, which is allowed on road before gate opening. Duty day starts at Paradise if personal vehicles are used, which are not allowed on road before gate opening. Volunteers on duty involved in accidents causing damages to visitors or property are covered by the National Park Service for potential Tort Claims.
 - g. **Equipment** - Volunteers will be issued NPS radios and will serve as a communication link in reporting ski and avalanche conditions, backcountry emergencies, and potential violations of park regulations (e.g. dog in the backcountry). Patrollers are expected to have the proper equipment and food to stay out overnight should they be injured or unable to make it back to the pick-up point by dark. The patrollers will not be required to carry additional gear for an injured visitor.
- 2. Time Requirements** - Minimum recommended numbers for the Nordic Patrol to have four patrollers every weekend and holiday.
- a. Patrol Leads – two weekends as leads + NPS training day(s)
 - b. Patrollers – 4 days patrolling + NPS training day(s)
 - c. Patrollers who register and are unable to make it are expected to give as much notice as possible and make an effort to find another patroller to fill their scheduled patrol days. Personal conflicts are understandable and we try to work around them while filling as many patrol slots as possible.
- 3. Nordic Patrol Leads** - Responsible for coordinating the minimum number (four) of patrollers for their scheduled weekend/weekday(s). Serve as the field leadership for their scheduled weekend and responsible for the following duties:
- a. **Responsibilities:**
 - 1. Patrol Risk Manager (complete Green/Amber/Red cards) – complete before daily patrols
 - 2. Check in with Rangers on duty or the JVC front desk staff
 - 3. Update Nordic Patrol board at L130 (Names, Teams, Routes, SAR category)
 - 4. Evaluates individual patroller abilities (including not allowing someone to patrol for the day)
 - 5. Divide group into two+ person teams (skill match up)
 - 6. Ensure individual patroller equipment is operational (Avy equipment, radios, etc)
 - 7. Assists skill instructors with designated training time and equipment
 - 8. Assign routes and goals for the day (reset poles, specific locations, today's message)
 - 9. Coordinate group pick-up and drop-off locations with the patrol truck
 - 10. Check on groups throughout the patrol via radio
 - 11. Mentor new members of Nordic Patrol to routes and duties
 - 12. House Manager (may be delegated)
 - 13. Ensure completion of volunteer sign in form at house in Longmire

- b. **Search and Rescue (SAR) Coordination** - At the beginning of each shift, the Patrol Lead for the day will update the white board at L130 with the following information: All patroller names, patrol group (Nordic 1, 2, 3), patrol route and desired SAR response for the day – PSAR or SAR (ex: PSAR – 4, SAR – 2). This will provide Rangers responding to a SAR in the Paradise Area an idea of available patrollers for assistance and provide the following benefits; reduce our response time with a Nordic hasty team or plus up a NPS litter team. Radio call to dispatch of SAR resources each day.
- c. **End of Patrol Report** - Patrol Leads will complete a brief weekend report which summarizes events of each day's activities'.
 - 1. Pole and sign status (placement, damage, etc).
 - 2. Summary of snow/ski conditions
 - 3. Training conducted
 - 4. Routes/areas patrolled
 - 5. Visitor contact highlights
 - 6. Vehicle issues
 - 7. Patrol house issues

4. Nordic Patrol Leadership - Coordinate all needs with the Mount Rainier Nordic Patrol Supervisor (NPS). Examples include: vehicle usage, cabin usage, equipment needs, etc. The Nordic Patrol Leadership will be required to maintain volunteer hours for the Nordic program and document the nights of cabin usage to be turned in monthly to the NPS. Nordic Patrol Leadership duties will include the following:

- a. SAR Coordination – Field leadership and training implementation of all skills that are required for Nordic patrollers to safely participate in winter search and rescue operations. Examples include: white out navigation, patient packaging, rescue sled techniques, beacon practice, avalanche rescue, etc.
- b. PSAR Coordination – Field leadership and training implementation of all skills that are required for Nordic patrollers to safely maintain and patrol the marked routes and contact park visitors. Examples include: sign maintenance, marked route locations, visitor messaging, etc.

Honoring this agreement is a condition of volunteering and volunteers can be released upon a joint review of their performance or conduct by the NPS Supervisor and Nordic Patrol Leadership.