Paradise Autumn Recreation

Welcome to Paradise! Due to its location on the slopes of Mount Rainier, Paradise often receives significant amounts of snow in autumn. Recreating in early season snow offers challenges and hazards unique to this time of year. Here is some information to help you get the most out of your visit. A map of the Paradise area is on the reverse side.

Safety First!

The arrival of colder weather and early snowfall creates hazards specific to this time of year. The following information will help you prepare for current conditions:

- Hypothermia and frostbite are cold weather hazards which can lead to serious injury or death. If you are spending time outside, dress sensibly, drink lots of fluids, and take warm-up breaks indoors.
- You will need a reliable map and compass skills in many areas of the park because snow-covered trails can be difficult to follow.
- Avoid crossing steep, snow-covered slopes where a fall could be disastrous. Turn around instead. Pinnacle Peak Trail and other higher trails often have hazardous slopes. Take an ice axe if you know how to use it.
- Falling through thin snow bridges is a hazard anywhere streams are snow-covered. Stay alert for the muffled sound of running water.
- Falling into snow moats around trees, and adjacent to logs and rocks, can cause injury. Avoid getting too close.
- Avoid stepping on wet, slippery rocks, especially near rivers and waterfalls.
- Avoid stepping onto snow cornices. They may collapse under your weight.
- Beware of avalanches!
- Before starting your hike, stop by a Wilderness Information Center or park visitor center for current trail conditions, or visit the park's website at **www.nps.gov/mora**.
- Winter storms can hit here any month of the year with unpredictable and rapidly changing weather. Obtain a current weather forecast and be prepared for winter-like weather.

Protect Your Park

Vegetation in Paradise meadows is fragile and easily damaged at any time of the year. To protect these meadows, it is essential that you hike only on constructed trails or on snow that is deep enough to protect the plants underneath.

Keep your pets on a leash. In order to protect wildlife and visitors, pets are not permitted outside the parking lot. Do not take your pet on the trails or meadows.

Enjoy wildlife at a distance and keep human food properly stored. Do not feed wildlife, including birds. Pack out all litter.

Sledding and Sliding

The Paradise Snowplay Area is closed until mid-December (or until snow depth is sufficient). Sledding is not allowed anywhere in the park until sliding runs are constructed.

Dangerous Terrain

Avalanches occur with frightening regularity. Check the maps for avalanche zones and ask a ranger for the forecast before you start. Backcountry travel is not recommended when avalanche conditions are high to extreme. Carry **the ten essentials** and know how to use them. Notify a responsible person of your plans so they can contact rangers if you fail to return.

Ten Essentials

- map of the area
- compass
- extra food & water
- first aid kit
- headlamp or flashlight, extra bulb & batteries
- sunglasses & sunscreen
- pocketknife
- extra clothing & rain gear
- emergency shelter
- matches in a waterproof container—*for emergency use only; fires are not allowed in Mount Rainier's Wilderness*

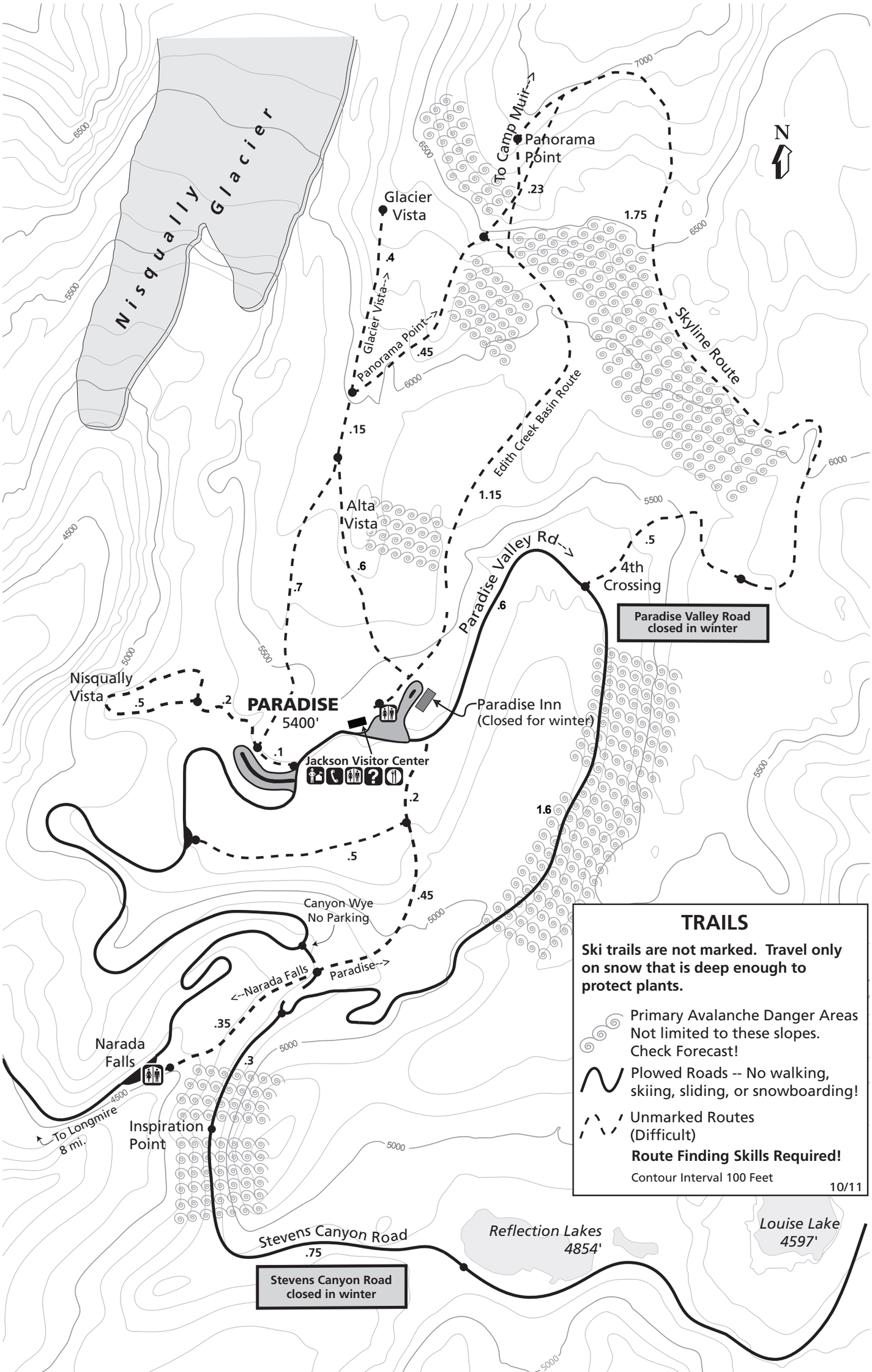
Skiing and Snowboarding

A minimum of 5 feet of snow is advised for skiing and snowboarding. Avoid damaging exposed vegetation. *Do not cross snow-free areas*. Obtain further information at the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise or the Longmire Museum.

Do I Need a Camping Permit?

If you are camping in the Paradise area or backcountry, you need a wilderness permit. If you are traveling above Camps Muir or Schurman (i.e., above 10,000 feet) or on any glacier, you need a climbing permit.

Permits are available at the Longmire Museum and at the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise. Wilderness permits are free; annual climbing passes are $43 per person, per year, and $30 per year for climbers 24 years old and younger.

Mount Rainier National Park

National Park Service
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