WELCOME

Rugged peaks and deep, wet forests beckon to the adventurous traveler along the Mountain Loop Scenic Byway.

The 55 mile route winds along the scenic Sauk and Stillaguamish River corridors in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. You are invited to enjoy this special place.

Campgrounds, picnic areas and a variety of trails offer opportunities for seasonal recreation.

The byway is paved between the Verlot Public Service Center and Barlow Pass. It then turns into a gravel road with turnouts until reaching the White Chuck River Road junction, where the pavement begins again and continues to Darrington.

Mountain weather conditions can change dramatically and with little warning. Snow levels are dependent on temperature, precipitation, and elevation.
- Check the current weather forecast.
- Let someone know your travel plans.
- There is no cell service along the Mountain Loop.

For current conditions and information:

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs
Darrington Ranger District
1405 Emens Avenue N.
Darrington, WA 98241
(360) 436-1155

Verlot Public Service Center
33515 Mountain Loop Highway
Granite Falls, WA 98252
(360) 691-7791

Snohomish County Road Conditions:
http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/204/Public-Works

TRAVEL ALERTS

Driving the entire Mountain Loop Highway is typically limited to late spring through the fall due to lingering snowpack. The road is both paved and graveled and may have varied conditions. Check on the current status before driving the Mountain Loop and other National Forest roads.

Use caution and be prepared for mountain road travel.
Trail Opportunities along the Loop

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<tr>
<th>VERLOT TRAILS</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Trail Use</th>
<th>Length 1-way (miles)</th>
<th>Beginning Elev. (feet)</th>
<th>Gain</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashland Lakes, WA, State Dept of Natural Resources (DNR)</td>
<td>A series of popular lakes. Enters Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA).</td>
<td>FS RD 4020, 4021</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2400'/800'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barlow Point 709</td>
<td>Leads to former site of Barlow Point Lookout.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2400'/840'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear &amp; Pinnacle Lakes 703</td>
<td>Bear Lake: short, easy hike. Pinnacle Lake: steep and muddy hike.</td>
<td>FS RD 4020, 4021</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>0.3 – 1.9</td>
<td>2700'/120 – 1100'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Four Ice Caves 723</td>
<td>Leads from Big Four Picnic Area to the Ice Caves Viewpoint.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1700'/200'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Four Picnic Area Trails</td>
<td>Loop trail connecting Big Four Picnic Area and Ice Caves Trailhead. Wetlands view.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking Accessible</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>1700'/10'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardman Lake 704</td>
<td>Short hike to lake with 5 campsites.</td>
<td>FS RD 4020</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2800'/200'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Lake 632</td>
<td>Small lake, great for a family outing.</td>
<td>FS RD 4060</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3600'/0'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glacier Basin 719</td>
<td>Beautiful historic basin with great views/waterfall. Enters Henry M. Jackson Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 4060</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3200'/1300'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Basin Millpond</td>
<td>Short Interpretive Trail at site of old mill.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking Accessible</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1100'/0'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gothic Basin (Weden Creek) 724</td>
<td>Steep historic miners trail. Enters Morningstar NRCA.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2300'/2700'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Lake 701</td>
<td>Glacier-carved lake in subalpine meadow.</td>
<td>FS RD 42</td>
<td>Hiking/Fishing</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1400'/1000'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence &amp; North Lake 711</td>
<td>Easy hike to Independence Lake. More difficult trail leads to North Lake.</td>
<td>FS RD 4060</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3600'/500'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelecma Lake 718</td>
<td>Short hike to small lake in the Boulder River Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 4052</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3011'/100'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Twenty Two Trail 702</td>
<td>Forested trail to lake. Enters Lake Twenty Two Research Natural Area. Waterfalls along trail. NO CAMPING.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1000'/1500'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallard Ridge (Walt Bailey) 706</td>
<td>Popular trail with many small tarns, large lakes and wild mountain blueberries in fall. Enters Morningstar NRCA</td>
<td>FS RD 4030, 4032</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>4.5 to Cuthroat Lakes</td>
<td>5000'/1200'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marten Creek 713</td>
<td>Steep climb on rough trail.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1400'/1400'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monte Cristo Road</td>
<td>Open to public with alt. access 1.0 mi. past Barlow Pass.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking/Bicycles</td>
<td>4.0 - 5.0</td>
<td>2349'/450'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Dickerman 710</td>
<td>Switchback up forested slope to Mt. Dickerman.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2000'/3700'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mt. Pilchuck Lookout 700</td>
<td>Enters Mt. Pilchuck State Park. 360 degree view from the fire lookout at summit.</td>
<td>FS RD 42</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3100'/2224'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry Creek 711</td>
<td>Enters Perry Creek Research Natural Area.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2000'/3000'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poodle Dog Pass 708</td>
<td>Enters Henry M. Jackson Wilderness.</td>
<td>Monte Cristo Road</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>2800'/2000'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunrise Mine 707</td>
<td>Hike to Headlee Pass. Enters Morning Star NRCA</td>
<td>FS Rd 4065</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2200'/2400'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Fingers/Goat Flats 641</td>
<td>ROAD CLOSED AT CANYON CREEK BRIDGE. WALK OR BICYCLE BEYOND</td>
<td>FS RD 41 - West of Verlot PSC</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3000'/3800'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DARRINGTON TRAILS</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Access</th>
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<th>Beginning Elev. (feet)</th>
<th>Gain</th>
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<tr>
<td>Boulder River 734</td>
<td>Hike through large timber, waterfalls at 1.2 miles. Enters Boulder River Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 2010 - West of Darrington</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1000'/400'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliott Creek (Goat Lake) 647</td>
<td>Loop trail. Enters Henry M. Jackson Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 4080</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1900'/1300'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight Mile Creek 654</td>
<td>Access to Squire Creek Pass and rock climbing areas. Enters Boulder River Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 2060</td>
<td>Hiking/Steep, rugged trail, rock climb</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1600'/2400'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Eagles Trail 642</td>
<td>Short easy walk through grove of large cedars. Named after Darrington District Ranger 1920’s – 1950’s.</td>
<td>FS RD 49</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1800'/0'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Creek Ridge 646</td>
<td>Steep trail to Bingley Gap, Round Lake and beyond. Enters Glacier Peak Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 49</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1800'/3900'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Pugh 644</td>
<td>Hike to Stujack Pass. Climbers scramble beyond pass. Enters Glacier Peak Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 2095</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1900'/3100'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Fork Sauk 649</td>
<td>Accesses Pacific Crest Trail and Glacier Peak Wilderness.</td>
<td>FS RD 49</td>
<td>Hiking/Stock</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>2100'/3900'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Fork Sauk Falls</td>
<td>Short viewpoint trail.</td>
<td>FS RD 49</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>1600'/0'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Sauk Trail 748</td>
<td>Gentle trail along the Sauk River – a segment of the Skagit Wild &amp; Scenic River System.</td>
<td>Mountain Loop</td>
<td>Hiking Accessible</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>600'/0'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Whitechuck Bench Trail 731</td>
<td>Pleasant hike along north side of the White Chuck River. Currently washed out at mile 2.5.</td>
<td>FS RD 23</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1000'/300'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Federal Recreation Passes
A Federal Recreation Pass is required at posted trailheads and recreational sites in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Federal Recreation Passes honored are the Northwest Forest Pass, America the Beautiful Pass, the Interagency Senior, Access and Military Pass. Passes may be purchased online and in person at the Darrington Ranger District, Verlot Public Service Center and other local vendors.

WHERE TO CAMP

National Forest Campground reservations can be made online at www.recreation.gov or at (877) 444-6777. Group sites can be reserved a year in advance and family sites may be reserved six months ahead. Sites are also available at the campgrounds on a first-come, first-served basis.

Forest Service Developed Campgrounds

Bedal 22 Tent/Trailer sites.
Clear Creek 13 Tent/Trailer sites.
Gold Basin CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
Red Bridge 16 Tent/Trailer sites. Drinking Water.
Verlot 18 Tent/Trailer sites. Drinking Water.
Verlot 26 Tent/Trailer sites. Flush toilets, Drinking Water.

Forest Service Group Campgrounds

Beaver Creek 25 Maximum People Capacity. Tent/Trailer sites
Boardman Creek Tent/Trailer sites
Coal Creek 25 Maximum People Capacity. Tent/Trailer sites
Esswein 25 Maximum People Capacity. Tent/Trailer sites
Tulalip Mill Site 60 Maximum People Capacity. Tent/Trailer sites
Wiley Creek 20-24 Maximum People Capacity. Tent/Trailer sites

Dipsersed Camping is allowed in the National Forest. There are no toilets, garbage cans or drinking water provided at undeveloped camps.

Overnight stays in the National Forest are limited to 14 consecutive days.

Please pack out your trash, ensure your site is clean and make sure campfires are completely out before leaving the area.
VISITING BIG FOUR

Stop by Big Four and enjoy a piece of the area's history. Hike for approximately one mile from the Ice Caves Trailhead or Big Four Picnic Area to view Big Four Mountain. A shorter loop trip can be made through the wetlands by following an old railroad grade connecting the Ice Caves Trailhead and the Big Four Picnic Area. This section of trail is designed for persons of all abilities.

On a clear day, see magnificent 6,135-foot (1,870 m) Big Four Mountain standing sentinel over the area. Avalanches tumble down the steep rock face during the cooler part of the year and accumulate in a bowl-shaped cirque. Sheltered from direct sunlight, a glacier-like avalanche debris pile at the base of the mountain creates ice caves that shrink and grow from season to season.

The snow and boulder field below the mountain are extremely dangerous. The ice caves that form are an incredible sight but should only be viewed at a distance from the trail.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Mt. Pilchuck State Park

From Verlot travel one mile east and turn right onto FS Road 42. Continue 6.9 miles to the trailhead. The trail begins at 3100 feet and winds 3 miles through old growth forest, alpine heather and large rocks reaching the summit of Mount Pilchuck (5324 feet) and an old fire lookout tower. The hike is strenuous, but offers incredible panoramic views of the Cascades, Olympics and Puget Sound. The trail is usually covered with snow until midsummer.

Old Sauk Trail

This easy 6 mile round trip trail is located near the town of Darrington. There are two access points. The first is a small parking lot 3.6 miles southeast of Darrington. 1.8 miles further is the main trailhead with picnic tables, a toilet, an informational kiosk and access for the 1.0 mile gravel ADA portion of the trail. This is a perfect trail to take family and friends any time of the year.

BE SAFE - USE CAUTION

Know the Facts About Big Four Ice Caves

- People have been injured and killed at the Ice Caves over the years – Please do not endanger yourself or others, view the caves from a distance and stay on the trail.
- Avalanches tumble down the steep-sided face of the mountain creating snowfields at it's base.
- Do not walk on snowfields as they can hold dangers such as deep holes and crevasses.
- Rock and ice collapse unexpectedly inside and outside the ice caves.
- Do not enter the ice caves as they can collapse at any time, leaving you injured, trapped or killed.

WILDERNESS TRAVEL

Many trails accessed from the Mountain Loop Highway enter designated Wilderness boundaries. Help preserve and protect valuable Wilderness resources designated by Congress over 50 years ago for present and future generations. Observe the following Wilderness area regulations in effect within the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest:

- Obey all fire closures.
- Group size is limited to 12 heartbeats; this includes any combination of people, livestock and pets.
- Use of motorized or mechanized equipment is prohibited, including bicycles, hang gliders and the take off or landing of drones.
- Caching, leaving, or storing equipment, personal property or supplies unattended for more than 48 hours is prohibited.
- Use processed feed for livestock. Unprocessed feed can introduce undesirable non-native plant species into Wilderness environments.
- Grazing any pack or saddle animal within 200 feet of any shoreline is prohibited.
- Please do not hitch, tether, or hobble any pack or saddle animal directly to trees or within 200 feet of shorelines.

Hiking Safety During Hunting Seasons

- Wear bright clothing, avoid blacks, browns, earth-tones and animal-colored clothing.
- Make yourself known. If you hear shooting, raise your voice and let hunters know you are in the vicinity.
- Be aware of when hunting seasons are scheduled. Grouse and bear hunting season is typically August - December, sometimes earlier. October hunting seasons, include deer and elk.
- Discharging firearms within 150 yards of a developed and/or occupied area, or across a body of water is prohibited in National Forests.
- Hunting rules and regulations are governed by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Check annually for updates to policies.

*Circulation produced in partnership with Discover Your Northwest Interpretive Association.
Check out sale items at Forest Service outlets or on-line at www.discovernw.org

CARRY THE TEN ESSENTIALS


RECREATION ETHICS

- Plan Ahead and Be Prepared.
- Pack it in; pack it out.
- Dispose of all waste properly.
- Respect wildlife.
- Camp on durable surfaces.
- Minimize campfire impacts, use a stove.
- Leave what you find.

Learn more about how to minimize impacts and practice Leave No Trace ethics at: www.LNT.org or call: (800) 332-4100.