

WINTER ACTIVITY GUIDE



Mount Baker Ranger District

North Cascades National Park

Get ready for winter adventure! Head east along the Mt. Baker Highway to access National Forest lands and the popular Mt. Baker Ski Area. Travel the picturesque North Cascades Highway along the Skagit Wild & Scenic River System into the heart of the North Cascades.

Take some time for winter discovery but be aware that terrain may be challenging to navigate at times. Mountain weather conditions can change dramatically and with little warning. Be prepared and check forecasts before heading out.

Travel Tips

- Prepare your vehicle for winter travel.
- Always carry tire chains and a shovel - practice putting tire chains on before you head out.
- Use reflectors in case of emergency.
- Store valuables out of sight when parked at a trailhead or recreation site.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Do not rely on cell service - signal strength may vary depending on location, terrain and weather.

Ask for a free National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Map detailing travel restrictions at a local Forest Service office.

Contacts

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest /Mt. Baker Ranger District
810 State Route 20
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
(360) 856-5700 ext. 515



Glacier Public Service Center
10091 Mt. Baker Highway
Glacier, WA 98244
(360) 599-2714
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/mbs>

North Cascades National Park Service Complex
(360) 854-7200
www.nps.gov/noca



National Weather Service
www.weather.gov

Northwest Weather & Avalanche Center:
Mountain Weather Conditions
www.nwac.us

State Road Conditions:
Washington State Dept. of Transportation
Dial 511 from within Washington State
www.wsdot.wa.gov

Washington State Winter Recreation and State Sno-Park Information:
www.parks.wa.gov/winter

Mt. Baker Ski Area
Ski Area Snow Report:
(360) 671-0211
www.mtbaker.us

Cross-country ski & snowshoe trails along the Mt. Baker Highway:
www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org

For eagle watching information visit:
Skagit River Bald Eagle Interpretive Center
www.skagiteagle.org

Recreation Passes and Permits

Washington State Sno-Parks

Sno-Parks are maintained by Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Sno-Park plowing is secondary to highway plowing, and they are not sanded or graveled.

WA State Sno-Park Permit Prices:

One-Day Permit: \$20 per vehicle
Seasonal Permit: \$40 per vehicle
*A \$2 handling fee is charged when State Sno-Park permits are purchased from retail locations.

Federal Recreation Passes

A Federal Recreation Pass is required at posted recreation sites within the National Forest. Honored are the Regional Northwest Forest Pass and National Parks and Federal Lands Annual, Senior and Access Passes.

NW Forest Day Pass: \$5
NW Forest Annual Pass: \$30
Federal Annual Pass: \$80
Senior Lifetime Pass: \$10
Access Pass: Free with proof of disability.

Heading Out In Winter

Enjoy Your Outing

National Forest & Park lands offer opportunities for sledding, tubing and snow play activities. Outside of developed ski areas there is no regular patrol or maintenance and snow play activities are at your own risk.

Downhill Skiing

Located along the upper reaches of the Mt. Baker Highway in Heather Meadows, the **Mt. Baker Ski Area** has a wide range of runs for snowboarders and skiers of all skill levels.

Day lodges offer spectacular mountain views and a variety of services. There is no overnight lodging and snow camping restrictions apply within Heather Meadows. Daily operating hours are from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm.

Mt. Baker Ski Area strictly prohibits sledding and snowplay within ski area boundaries. For public safety, cross-country skiers and snowshoers must stay off downhill ski runs. Ski and snowboard instruction and mountain safety classes are offered on an annual basis.

Mt. Baker Ski Area Information:
www.mtbaker.us
360-671-0211.

Cross-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing

Along the Mt. Baker Highway, snowshoe trails, ski tracks and skate ski lanes are set at the Salmon Ridge Sno-Park when snow levels are sufficient.

The Sno-Park lot and groomed trails are maintained by the Nooksack Nordic Ski Club and Washington State Parks in agreement with the Forest Service. Visitors not on skis are asked to stay off groomed snow routes. Check out current conditions at the club website www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org

Snowmobiling Know Your Boundaries

Snowmobiles are prohibited in Congressionally designated Wilderness Areas. While snowmobiling, take the time to know your location and stay out of designated Wilderness.

All snowmobiles must be registered through the Washington State Dept. of Licensing, unless registered in another State or Canadian Province. Washington State registration includes a State Sno-Park parking permit.

Be Safe & Aware

Northwest Avalanche Center promotes safe winter travel by providing recent snowpack observations, mountain weather and avalanche forecasts.

Learn more at: www.nwac.us



Washington State Sno-Parks Motorized & Non-Motorized Permit Areas

Baker Lake Area

FS Roads 12, 1230 & 13 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

Groomed roads lead to the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area (NRA) on the south side of Mt. Baker and to Blue Lake, FS Road 1230, below Dock Butte.

Snowmobile use is allowed in the NRA when snow levels are above 24" at the trailhead located at the end of FS Road 13. Snowmobile use is prohibited in the adjacent Wilderness area including the volcanic crater and summit of Mt. Baker.

Anderson-Watson

FS Road 1107 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

East of Baker Lake Road. past dam. 14 mile trail system.

Shadow of the Sentinels Trailhead - No Permit Required

Parking for cross-country skiing,, snow play & snowshoeing in the Baker Lake basin.

South Skagit Area

Finney Creek

FS Road 17 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

From State Route 20 southeast to Concrete-Sauk Valley Road and FS Road 17.

Segelson Creek

FS Road 18 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

East of Darrington; Hwy. 530 to FS Road 18.

Mt. Baker Highway Area

Glacier Creek

FS Road 39 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

3/4 mile east of Glacier, an approximately 15 mile route leads out towards Grouse Butte.

Canyon Creek

FS Road 31 - Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required

1.5 miles east of Glacier, leads into the Canyon Creek drainage..

Salmon Ridge Sno-Park -MP46 east of Glacier on State Route 542 - Non-Motorized Sno-Park Permit Required.

Mt. Baker National Recreation Area



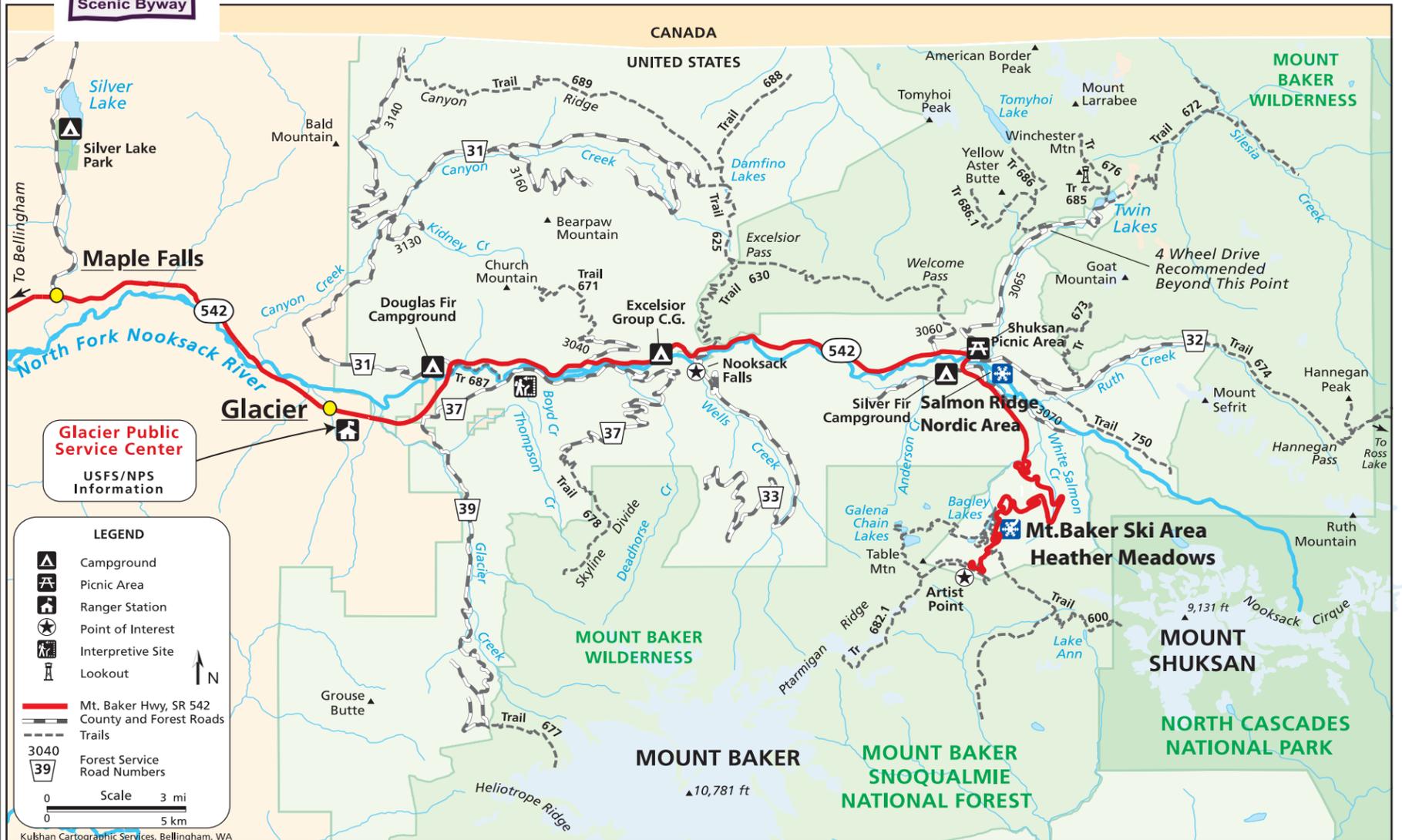
Pieced out of the Mt. Baker Wilderness the Mt. Baker National Recreation Area is open to a wide variety of winter recreation activities including snowmobiling.

When snowmobiling in the Mt. Baker NRA, take the time to map your location and keep out of the Wilderness where motorized equipment is prohibited.

Large crevasses exist on the glaciated slopes of Mt. Baker. In winter crevasses may be hidden by snow bridges and not readily visible.



Mt. Baker Scenic Byway, SR 542



Explore the Byway

Forest Roads & Trails

During winter, access to National Forest lands around Mt. Baker may be limited. Trails are typically snow covered as they ascend to higher elevations and are not marked. Orienteering skills and knowledge of backcountry travel in avalanche terrain is needed. Be prepared and check avalanche and weather forecasts before heading out.

Glacier Creek Rd. #39

Road is groomed for snowmobiles, but all users are welcome. Leads to Heliotrope Ridge Trailhead and climbing access for Mt. Baker.

Deadhorse Creek Rd. #37

Drive until you reach snow level and then head out towards Skyline Divide Trailhead. Travel through fairly open terrain along road.

Canyon Creek Rd. #31

Road is groomed for snowmobiles, but all users are welcome. Leads into Canyon Creek drainage. Nice alternative for dog sleds & skijouring.

Wells Creek Rd. #33

Head out from the seasonal road closure gate to the switchback with a view at one mile. Beyond one mile there are typically avalanche run out zones that cross the road.

Twin Lakes Rd. #3065

The road is usually bermed up at junction with the Mt. Baker Hwy. If snow is at that level the road can be followed, but does cross through avalanche terrain. Leads to Yellow Aster Butte TH and Twin Lakes / Winchester Mountain.

Hannegan Pass Rd #32

Hannegan Pass Road is a good multi-user snow-play area when snow levels are low enough. Located 13 miles east of Glacier, the road is signed and parking is available at the Shuksan Picnic Area at the base of the road. A Federal Recreation Pass is required for parking at the picnic area where there is a vault toilet, picnic tables, trash and recycling.

Winter recreationists can head up the road 1.4 miles to a junction with FS Road 34 enjoying breakout views of Mt. Shuksan and Ruth Creek along the way. Travel this side road 1 mile to it's terminus at Ruth Creek and the Nooksack Cirque Trailhead.

Hannegan Pass Road follows an easy forested route past the junction with FS Road 34, leading to the Goat Mt. Trailhead at MP 2.5. The road then narrows and there are avalanche run-out zones that cross the road after the Goat Mt. Trailhead.

Razorhorne Rd. #3070 & Anderson Creek Rd. #3071

Located 13.5 miles east of Glacier. Parking is available on both sides of the highway at the Salmon Ridge Sno-Park (permit required). This area is groomed for cross-country skiing when snow levels are low enough. Snowshoers are asked to walk off to the side of groomed routes and dogs are discouraged in this area

White Salmon Rd #3075

Located 18 miles east Glacier off of a switchback about ¼ mile before the Mt. Baker Ski Area's White Salmon Day Lodge. The road is not signed, but is the only spot meeting the description.

Distance to the end of the road is 2 miles one way. There are great views of Mt. Shuksan, the Nooksack River, and peaks to the north. This road follows a route with pretty open

Heather Meadows

The Mt. Baker Ski Area operates in Heather Meadows during winter months. Backcountry travel outside of the Mt. Baker Ski Area is at your own risk as these areas are not controlled for avalanches.

Artist Point

Travel to Artist Point is in an uncontrolled landscape outside of the Mt. Baker Ski Area boundaries and is at your own risk. If you head out to Artist Point be aware of avalanche and weather forecasts, and prepared for backcountry travel through avalanche terrain.



Hiking Opportunities

Horseshoe Bend Trail, located approximately one mile east of Glacier across for the Douglas Fir Campground offers year round hiking along the North Fork Nooksack River. Church Mt., Excelsior Pass (from the highway) Welcome Pass and Goat Mt. Trails often have little or no snow at the trailheads.

Be Prepared

Heading outdoors in the winter takes some preparation. Hypothermia, caused by the lowering of body temperature, can come on quickly. Protect yourself and carry the proper equipment:

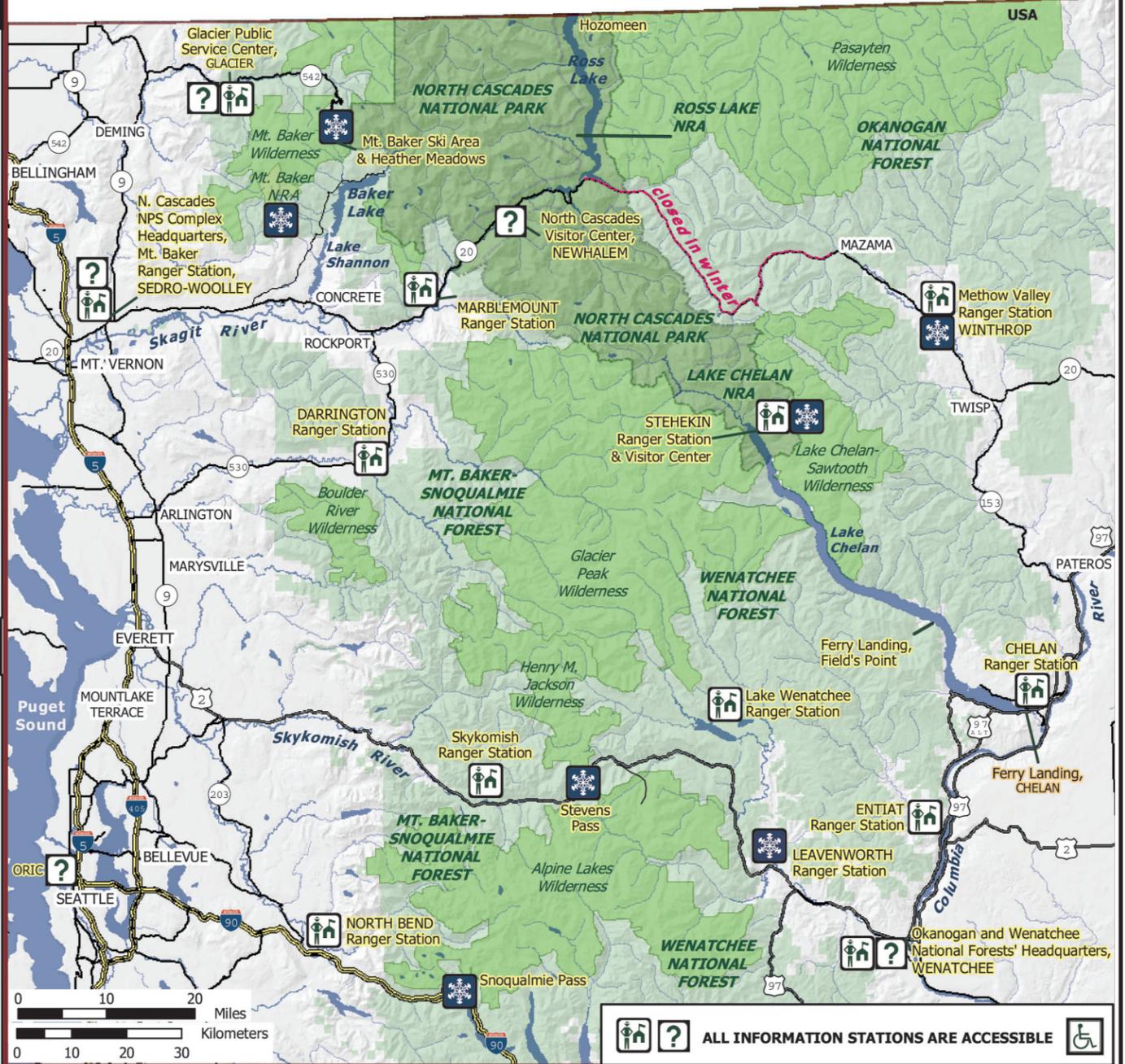
- Navigation-map & compass.
- Extra Clothing-hat & gloves.
- Plenty of drinking water.
- Nutrition-energy foods.
- Illumination-xtra batteries.
- UV Protection
- First Aid Supplies
- Fire Starter
- Repair Kit Tools-knife,cord.
- Emergency Shelter

User Ethics

- Pack it in; pack it out.
- Dispose of all waste properly.
- Be courteous to other recreationists.
- Avoid disturbing wildlife and stay out of areas posted as closed for their protection.

Learn about “Leave No Trace” principles at: www.lnt.org

NORTH CASCADES WINTER RECREATION



Winter Travel in North Cascades National Park

The North Cascades backcountry abounds with challenge and adventure in winter. Day trips may include a relaxed drive up the Skagit River valley to view wildlife and scenic vistas or an energetic snowshoe trek along the lake shores.

State Route 20 is open from the west through the majority of North Cascades National Park in winter. The road closes by the Ross Lake trailhead at Milepost 134, for thirty miles east over Washington Pass. The closing date is typically sometime in November depending on snow depth and avalanche hazards, with a mid-April opening. Check current road conditions at: www.wsdot.wa.gov.

National Park lands on the east side of the Cascade Range include the scenic community of Stehekin at the north end of Lake Chelan. The Lady of the Lake ferry provides round-trip service between Chelan and Stehekin. For an up-to-date schedule and visitor information on this remote area visit: www.stehekin.com.

Learn more about North Cascades winter activities, visitor services, current conditions, and lodging options in Stehekin and the State Route 20 communities at: www.nps.gov/noca or call 360 854-7200.



Wildlife Viewing Eagle Watching along the Rivers

Every winter, hundreds of bald eagles fly in to feed on the dying salmon that spawn in the Skagit and other Northwest rivers. This seasonal migration provides excellent bird watching and photography opportunities from mid-December to late January.

Skagit River Eagle Viewing Sites are often staffed with Eagle Watcher Volunteers on weekends in December and January. Sites are located in Rockport at Howard Miller Steelhead County Park, Milepost 100 along Hwy. 20 and at the Marblemount Hatchery.

On weekends, local visitor services include presentations at the community based Skagit River Bald Eagle Interpretive Center, located in Rockport at Howard Miller Steelhead County Park. Further up river, visit the Marblemount Hatchery where a self-guided tour is available year round.

Along the North Fork Nooksack River there are eagle viewing opportunities at the Washington State Fish Hatchery west of Kendall and the Truck Road area adjacent to State Route 542 near Deming.

You can also get a different view of the Nooksack and Skagit Rivers by getting on the waterways and taking a trip with permitted guides. Check out the list of outfitter guides on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie website under Permits and Passes or ask at a Ranger Station to find out more about operating seasons and trip details.

Wildlife Viewing Tips

- Be prepared with warm clothing and rain gear.
- Best viewing may be between dawn and 11 am when eagles are feeding.
- A car is a great viewing blind.
- Please avoid startling eagles. They need to conserve energy. Keep noises low and avoid sudden movements. Keep pets at home or leave them in the car.
- Do not go out on gravel bars or try to approach wildlife.
- Be considerate of private property and cautious about highway traffic.
- Take time to enjoy your outing!