



WINTER RECREATION *Essentials*



BEFORE YOU GO



Always check weather and snow conditions prior to your trip. Plan accordingly.

Check road conditions with the local U.S. Forest Service office. Be prepared for winter driving. Some roads are not maintained in the winter.



GPS systems should not be relied on to provide the safest routes. A GPS system can easily lead you to a route that is impassable due to snow. Bring a paper map, know how to read it, and how to locate your position.



Tell someone where you're going and when you'll return. Check in when you get back.

Pack water and high-energy foods such as nuts, dried fruits, and raisins. Pack more than you think you'll need.



Dress in layers of warm, waterproof clothing. Bring extra – hat, mittens, heavy socks, gloves, and extra outer clothing.



Be avalanche aware! Take part in education and training opportunities with the Northwest Avalanche Center (NWAC).

Practice respect by researching whose ancestral lands you will be recreating on.



ONCE YOU'RE THERE



Maintain situational awareness, follow your map, and know where you are at all times. **Stay on safe routes** and avoid steep or dangerous terrain. **Pay attention to weather conditions** and be prepared to leave quickly if conditions change or worsen.

Be respectful of others and share the trail. When snowshoeing or



hiking, avoid walking in ski tracks. Use extreme caution and stay on the side when following snowmobile tracks. Snowmobiles should operate at minimum speed near skiers or snowshoers.



Leave no trace. Pack out what you carry in, including all trash, leftover food, and litter.

Be sure to hydrate and eat high-energy foods and snacks frequently throughout the day.



WINTER DRIVING ESSENTIALS



cell phone
charger



flashlight
and flares



full tank of
gas



extra water
& food



extra clothes, boots,
gloves, & hat

blankets or sleeping bag



first aid
kit



tire chains
& jumper
cables



cat litter and/or
a mat (to back
onto if stuck)

ice scraper/
snow brush
& shovel



LAYERING BASICS

1

Base Layer

wicks sweat off your skin: wool or synthetic long underwear top and bottom, avoid cotton clothing

2

Middle Layer

retains body heat to protect you from the cold: fleece, sweater, hoodie, down jacket

3

Outer Layer

shields you from wind and rain: waterproof, breathable shell



4

Protect Your Extremities

cover your head and hands: wear a hat that covers your ears, and waterproof gloves or mittens

5

Suitable Footwear

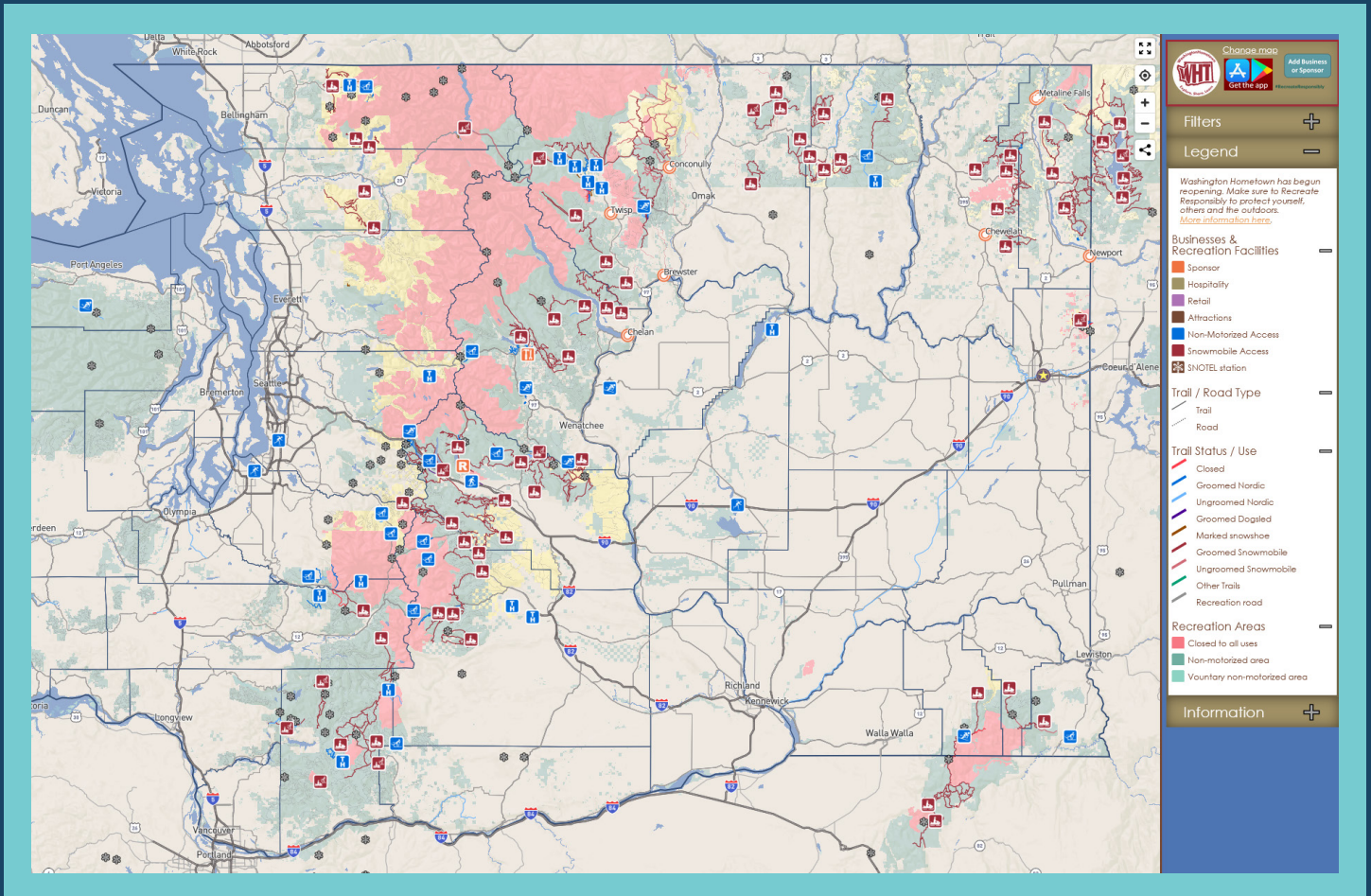
wear warm socks (wool or synthetic) and waterproof boots with good tread to prevent falls

6

Accessorize

wear sunglasses and apply sunscreen to exposed skin.

WHERE TO GO IN THE SNOW



WINTER RECREATION MAPS

If you are looking for maps to help you navigate winter recreation, Washington Hometown offers two free web maps for winter recreation: one just for snowmobiles and one with all winter recreation, plus a free app for Apple and Android. Get all of the information you need in one place to plan your trip and navigate while on the trails and download regions on the app for offline navigation. You'll find information on the pass required, details on the sno-park, links to the avalanche forecast and grooming, and even snow depth stations. As of December 2021, the maps and app include all winter recreation in Washington, plus snowmobile trails in Oregon and parts of Idaho.

CHECK THE CONDITIONS

Weather and avalanches present unique risks in the winter. Before heading out, be sure to do your research to understand current conditions. Expand your backcountry knowledge by taking avalanche courses through the Northwest Avalanche Center (NWAC). Check the mountain weather and avalanche forecasts via NWAC, and local/area forecasts via NOAA. Research current road conditions, carry chains for your car, and learn how to use them before you need them.

You should also choose an appropriate location and route for your outing. Summer destinations may present different hazards with snow cover. Recent trip reports can help to paint a picture for what you can expect. Turn back if you're unsure and don't delay calls for help if you find yourself in trouble.

Helpful Resources for Checking Conditions:

Northwest Avalanche Center

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

Washington State Parks

Washington Trails Association (WTA)



HOW TO VISIT A SNO-PARK

Sno-parks offer some of the most accessible and safe winter recreation opportunities across Washington. Before you grab your snowshoes or cross-country skis, there are a few things to know about visiting a sno-park. Go equipped with the right permit, knowledge of trail etiquette and the right winter safety gear, and you'll have a great time exploring one of these winter wonderlands.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click or tap to view each item!

Education and Safety

Places to Go