

Mt. Spokane State Park Trail Guide

Prepared by The Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park

April 2013

All summer trails are multi-use and open to hikers, equestrians and cyclists. In order to ensure an enjoyable experience for everyone and protect the image of your sport, state park trail users should observe the following guidelines:

All Trail Users

Don't cut switchbacks.
Avoid muddy areas.
Leave no trace.
Pets on leashes at all times.
Protect stream quality.
Give animals more space.

Hikers

Yield and announce presence when approaching livestock.
Allow others to pass, and step to downhill side for livestock.
Tread lightly off trail.

Cyclists

Yield to livestock and hikers.
Step to downhill side for livestock to pass.
Ride with a partner.
Know your limits. Wear a helmet.
Maintain control. Don't skid.
Stay on trail.

Livestock Users

Stay on trail.
Maintain control of livestock.
Minimize tree and soil damage.
Leave a clean parking area.

Please note: Yield means to slowdown, establish communication, and be prepared to stop.

Primary Trail Heads

1. Bear Creek Lodge: The lodge is located just before the park entrance. Trail 140 starts at the far end of the main parking lot, to the right of the lodge and north of the road. Trail 120 starts on the other (south) side of the road downstream of the foot bridge and parking area and across the creek on a dirt road. A fee is charged by the lodge owner for parking.
2. Park Entrance: Trails 110, 121, and 122 start 1/4 mile up the road from the park entrance. A Discover Pass is needed for parking here and in all other areas of the park during the summer.
3. Lower Loop Road: Trail 100 and the Kit Carson Loop Road can be accessed about 2 miles up the road from the entrance. A Sno-Park permit is required to park here during the winter.
4. Lower Selkirk Sno-Park Parking Lot: Trails 100, 120, and 131 can be accessed from the lower parking lot at the junction with the summit road. A Sno-Park permit is required to park here during the winter.
5. Upper Selkirk Lodge Sno-Park Parking Lot: The cross-country ski/bike trails can be accessed from the upper Sno-Park parking lot at the Selkirk Lodge. Drive uphill through the lower lot and turn right. A Sno-Park permit is required to park here during the winter. The Lodge is closed during the summer.
6. Cook's Cabin: The Upper Kit Carson Loop Road and Trail 140 can be accessed from the summit road hairpin corner near the site where Cook's Cabin was built in 1912. (Only the lodge caretaker's woodshed and stone latrine, built in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, remain.)
7. Summit Parking and Vista House: Trail 140 can be accessed from the summit.

Short, Easier Routes

1. **Entrance Loop Trail** (about 1.5 miles): Moderate. Start at the Park Entrance Trail Head and go up Trail 121 along a peaceful tributary of Deadman Creek. The trail is wide and fairly steep in places. Turn right onto Trail 120 for a short distance and then go back down to the starting point on Trail 122. Trail 120 is part of the groomed snowmobile trail system, but the machines are not permitted on either 121 or 122. Excellent short snowshoeing route.

2. **Burping Brook Loop** (about 3 miles, with a shorter option): Easy. In 1939, the Spokane Chapter of the Conservation League raised \$1500 to purchase the south half of Section 21 (where much of this trail now exists) to protect it from proposed logging. Start at the Lower Loop Road Trail Head. Go down the Loop Road a short distance and turn right on Trail 103. Turn left at the next junction for Trail 100 and cross the first branch of Burping Brook. Pass two more trail junctions. At the next junction, either continue on Trail 100 or go left for a much shorter route back down to the Loop Road. If this shorter option is taken, turn left on reaching the Loop Road and return to the starting point. Otherwise go right and continue on 100, crossing the third branch of Burping Brook and eventually drop down to the Loop Road at Smith Gap. Turn left on the Loop Road to return to the starting point. Excellent snowshoeing route. Notice the high stumps with the springboard notches scattered along the edges of the trail. These logs were most likely used to re-build Spokane after the devastating fire of 1889.

3. **Hay Ridge Loop** (about 4.5 miles): Easy. Start at the Lower Loop Road Trail Head and take the Loop Road west to Smith Gap. (This makes a good turn-around point for a very nice short hike.) Pass three beautiful stream crossings and 3 picnic tables. There is also a vault toilet and picnic table at Smith Gap. A new winter warming hut is being constructed at Smith Gap for snowshoers and backcountry skiers. Continue on the Loop Road a short distance downhill and turn left on Trail 170. Follow 170 as it gradually winds its way back to the Loop Road. Do not confuse the main trail with the three other old logging roads which head left and uphill off Trail 170. These side trails all lead to the high point of Hay Ridge. Trail 170 is part of the groomed snowmobile route and passes a road to the right which goes downhill through private land to SR 206 and Bear Creek Lodge. On the east side of Hay Ridge, the trail becomes Trail 140 where it junctions the single track trail going downhill to the right to Bear Creek Lodge. Continue north to the Loop Road and turn right to return to the starting point.

4. **Mt. Kit Carson** (about 4 miles round trip): Moderate. Park at the Cook's Cabin Trail Head. Go around the gate at the top of the Kit Carson Loop Road and follow the Loop Road downhill to Saddle Junction, where there is a vault toilet and several trail options. Then go uphill, following Trail 140. At the next junction, Trail 140 turns left (south) and Trail 160 continues uphill to the top of Mt. Kit Carson where there is a rocky outcropping and a magnificent view. Return to the trailhead by retracing your steps. Once back at the summit road, turn left and follow a short road to what remains of the foundation of the original ski lodge built in 1940. It burned to the ground in 1952 after an addition was completed.

5. **Day Mountain Loop** (about 5 miles round trip): Easy. Start as in route #4 on the Upper Kit Carson Loop Road, but instead of taking Trail 160 to the top of Mt. Kit Carson, follow Trail 130 (past its two junctions with Trail 160) all the way out to the rocky open meadows of Day Mountain. After reaching the largest rocky area, the trail turns north (right) into the trees and heads downhill. Follow the switchbacks down to the Kit Carson Loop Road and turn right to take the Loop Road back to the starting point.

6. **Mt. Kit Carson Loop Road** (about 7 miles one way): Easy. Check with the rangers to be sure the summit road is open. Park a car at the Lower Loop Road Trail Head to use as a shuttle, and drive a second car to the Cook's Cabin Trail Head. The Loop Road was closed to all but authorized vehicles in 1995. It runs generally downhill passing the CCC camp, around the base of both Day Mountain and Mt. Kit Carson, and crosses a logged area owned by Boise Cascade where there are good views to the north. It also passes a gated connector road leading down to the Blanchard Creek Road, and further south it passes the Day Mountain Road (2.5 miles to park boundary gate). After a short climb over Smith Gap (where there is a toilet and picnic table), it descends through a beautiful old growth cedar-hemlock forest to the lower trail head. There are several stream side picnic tables along the route.

More Difficult, Longer Routes

7. **Beauty Mountain Loop** (about 5 ½ miles): Moderate. Start at the Lower Selkirk Parking Lot Trail Head. Go up Trail 131 (just to the right of the summit road intersection), pass the equipment shed, and turn right at the next trail. Trail 131 then forks to the left after a short distance. Continue uphill on 131 until you reach a much wider Trail 130 (the B-29 alpine ski run) and turn left. Walk uphill and cross a small stream and turn left again. Follow this narrower trail up to the Bald Knob picnic area. Walk up towards the campground and cross the paved road for the continuation of Trail 130. Follow this relatively flat trail out to Beauty Mountain. At the next junction, turn left and go out onto the Loop Road (or go straight to stop at the CCC Heritage area). Turn left and proceed down the Loop Road to Saddle Junction, where there is a vault toilet. Turn left onto Trail 110 and descend to the junction with Trail 100. Turn left and stay on Trail 100 past the next junction and a creek crossing. Turn left after the creek crossing and then right at the next junction (single track). Stay on Trail 100, back uphill, until you reach the parking lot.

8. **Burping Brook NFA Loop** (about 5.25 miles): Moderate. This loop completely encircles the Burping Brook Natural Forest Area which includes some of the largest cedar and hemlock trees in the park. Start at the Park Entrance Trail Head and climb up Trail 110 to the Kit Carson Loop Road. Turn left and take the Loop Road to Smith Gap and turn left on Trail 140. Proceed south, downhill and turn left at the 140/170 junction where Trail 140 becomes a single track trail. Follow 140 down along the park boundary to a dirt road and turn left. Go through the Bear Creek Lodge parking area and turn left on State Road 206 and go 1/4 mile on the paved road back to the starting point. The road has no shoulder and can be dangerous to walk on, so be very alert for car traffic!

9. **Deadman Creek Loop** (about 6 miles): Difficult. Start at the Park Entrance Trail Head and go up Trail 121 along one of the tributaries of Deadman Creek. Turn left on Trail 120 and climb along the west side of Linder Ridge. Cross several other branches of Deadman Creek and reach the Lower Selkirk Parking Lot after about 2 miles of often steep travel. At the parking lot, cross the paved road to pick up Trail 100 to the left of the summit road. Follow Trail 100 as it meanders back down across two more branches of Deadman Creek and eventually to its first crossing of Burping Brook. At this junction, one can either go left down to the Loop Road and turn right to Trail 110, or go right across the stream and then turn left down Trail 110 to the Loop Road. In either case, cross the Loop Road and head down Trail 110 back to the starting point.

10. **Summit Loop** (about 4 miles): Moderately difficult. Start at the Cook's Cabin Trail Head. Go around the gate and down the Upper Kit Carson Loop Road a short distance to the first trail junction. Turn right and then immediately right again on single track Trail 140 and head uphill. Climb steeply to the summit of Mt. Spokane and enjoy the view of three states. To make a loop, follow the paved road back down to the starting point. The road is quite narrow with no shoulder, so be very alert for car traffic!

11. **'Round the Mountain Trail** (about 13 miles): Difficult. Start at the Lower Selkirk Parking Lot Trail Head and take Trail 131 from the crossroads up past the equipment shed and turn right at the next junction. Pass a trail to the left and continue straight on 132 until it joins a road (Trail 130 and the B-29 alpine ski run) coming down from the left. Follow this narrow run downhill a short distance, and then contour around the bottom of two other runs on a narrow rough road. At the edge of a grove of trees on the left, proceed slightly uphill, crossing another large, open run. Follow the trail, slightly uphill, through the trees. Then cross another run and go under chair lift #1, again a little uphill, to another narrow run (Rulon Run). Follow this run downhill through the trees and out under chair lift #2. Follow the road as it switchbacks down the slope, goes under the short chair lift (#5) and turns right down to the bottom of the ski area. Once at the bottom, turn left and go under chair lift #3. Just uphill from the base of chair 3, Trail 130 continues up through the woods as a fire road. Follow 130 up to a saddle and the junction with Trail 150 (which goes back to the condos). Continue straight north as the trail gradually descends and passes the gated Axford Road and then a short road that leads to the base of chair lift #4. From here, the trail gradually climbs through mature and old growth forest to join the Kit Carson Loop Road. At the Loop Road, go straight across and find the single track Trail 130 heading uphill to Day Mountain. Once to the subalpine meadows of Day Mountain, the trail may be hard to find.

Go out toward the rocks and turn left, following the meadows to the high point. The trail then descends to cross a small saddle and continues, on a nearly level course, along the northeast flank of Mt. Kit Carson. At the junction with Trail 160, turn left and go downhill to the saddle junction where there is a vault toilet. Then follow the Loop Road uphill (east), around the switchback, and to the single track Trail 130 coming down from the right. Turn right here and right again to follow Trail 130 to Bald Knob Campground. Cross the paved road and continue down toward the picnic shelter. Trail 130 heads down through the trees on the left to rejoin the B-29 ski run. Turn right on the ski run and then right again onto a single track Trail 131. Descend to the next junction and turn right. Turn left just before the paved road, where you came up before on 131 to return to the starting point.

12. **Quartz Mountain** (about 6 miles round trip): Moderate. Start at the Selkirk Lodge Trail Head and go out the Mountain View cross country ski trail to Junction 1. Follow the Alpine Trail to Junction 2 and the Lodgepole Trail to Junction 3. The NOVA Hut is just past Junction 3 to the right. Go straight past the NOVA Hut, continuing on the old Quartz Mountain Road. Soon the road will steepen as it climbs to the area where quartz was mined. At this first bench, follow the road as it continues left and uphill. Immediately turn right again at the next junction. This trail gradually winds its way all the way around the mountain to the exposed 5120' summit where climbers are rewarded with one of the best views of the park. Either return the same way or follow a different combination of Quartz Mountain trails and ski trails. The fire lookout on the summit is available to rent.

13. **Base to Summit** (about 5 miles one way): Difficult. From the Park Entrance Trail Head, follow Trails 110 and 140 to the summit of Mt. Spokane. Total elevation gain is 2,643 feet. Watch for cyclists coming down.

14. **Ragged Ridge** (about 6 miles one way to the summit): Difficult, all day hike. Follow the route to the NOVA Hut as in #12. Instead of heading up the Quartz Mountain Road, turn right towards the NOVA Hut and then left downhill on the Quartz Mountain Loop ski trail. Follow the ski trail about 2 miles and turn right on a single track trail heading steeply downhill. Cross an old road at the saddle and climb steeply up the single track trail to the open sub-alpine meadows of Ragged Ridge. Since Ragged Ridge is a Natural Area Preserve, cyclists and equestrians are not permitted past the saddle, and hikers are required to stay on the maintained Ragged Ridge trail. Return the same way.

Watch for the publication of the Friends of Mt. Spokane's Complete User's Guide to Mt. Spokane State Park in 2013!