Winter Trails

The White Mountains National Recreation Area has over 200 miles of winter trails offering a variety of challenges and scenery to cross-country skiers, snowshoers, dog mushers, snowmobiles, and other experienced winter travelers.

Trailhead parking areas are marked with large highway signs. Trailhead displays provide information on the general area, but are not a replacement for this brochure or topographic maps. The trail routes are intermittently marked with reflective trail markers and have directional signs at trail junctions. In most treeless areas, trails are marked with tripods. Topographic maps for the White Mountains are available from the Map Office located on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus.

Trail Conditions

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) attempts to keep the trails packed throughout the winter, but trail conditions can change on a daily basis. Some trails can be difficult to follow in certain weather conditions. You should always carry topographic trail maps and a compass, and be prepared to break trail.

A weekly trail conditions report is available from the BLM-Alaska Web site (address below) or by calling a recorded message at (907) 474-2372.

Winter Trail Use

Winter trails in the White Mountains National Recreation Area are shared by many types of users such as dog mushers, skiers, snowshoers, and snowmobiles.

Motorized Use

The area is open to motorized vehicles, including snowmobiles, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) under 1500 pounds from October 16 to April 30, except as noted below.

- Windy Creek and Fossil Creek drainages close on April 15 because of critical wildlife areas.
- The Ski Loop Trail begins and ends at the Wickersham Dome Tram Trail at Mile 28 Elliott Highway. This moderately challenging, five-mile trail starts on Summit Trail and climbs above treeline for views of the Alaska Range and Mount McCalla. The trail descends through a forested area before connecting with Wickersham Creek Trail.
- The ski area is on the western side of the range and offers 40 miles of groomed and ungroomed trails. The main trail is the White Mountains Ski Area, which is open to motorized use.
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Non-motorized Trails

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Wickersham Dome is an alpine area suitable for off-road skiing and camping, can be reached via the ski loop and Summit Trails. A small, 10- by 10-foot trail shelter is located about 8 miles from the trailhead. This cabin is minimally furnished and does not have a woodstove. Areas above treeline are often very windy, so be prepared.

Cabin Rules

1. Leave all ELM-supplied items in the cabin and fill the lantern and cookstove for the next person.
2. Do not disturb trapping activities in the area.
3. Leave dry kindling in the cabin and fill the lantern and cookstove.
4. Do not disturb trapping activities in the area.
5. Leave dry kindling in the cabin and fill the lantern and cookstove for the next person.
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Backcountry Etiquette

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The Alaska Spirit

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Ski Loop Trail and Summit Trail are closed to non-motorized use February 16 to April 30, except as noted below.

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