



CRYSTAL SPRINGS SNO-PARK

Description:

The Crystal Springs Sno-Park has been through many changes over the years from the very early days when we used to park on the freeway interchange, to the lake of a parking lot on the North side of the freeway to today where they have built five separate parking lots in the old gravel pit half a mile south of the freeway. This sno-park provides access to three different trail networks: the first is a non motorized back trail access to the Iron Horse ski trail, the second is the Erling Stordahl (ski for light) trail loops southeast of the parking lot and the third is the Meany Lodge and the Sled Dog trails to the south. On the sled dog trails please step well off the trail to yield to the dog teams that may pass. There is a lot of activity at this sno-park but it is not too bad at each individual trailhead as it is currently laid out.

Directions:

To get to this sno-park head east on I-90 (Snoqualmie Pass Hwy) from Seattle driving over the pass and past Keechelus Lake to exit #62. Exit the interchange and turn south not north. North leads to the Kachess Lake Sno-Park. Turning south go about half a mile over a concrete bridge over the Yakimah River, the road goes up a small hill and swings right into the gravel pit area. Entering the gravel pit parking area either park in the first lot on the left or the last (fourth) lot on the left, which are the non motorized parking lots. On exiting from this area continue around the gravel pit parking area in a counter clockwise manner to the exit road and back to the freeway. This lot has been set up as a one way road system to prevent opposing traffic on the same roadway.

Permits or Fees Required:

This parking area requires a Washington State Sno-Park permit with a grooming tag. A seasonal permit is \$80 (including the \$40 grooming tag). A day use permit is also fine here which is \$20 for one to three consecutive days (2021) and works at either groomed or non groomed sno-parks.

Winter Snow Driving:

A. Clothing:

1. Be sure to bring proper clothing for a winter drive, old jacket and gloves for shoveling & chains, bring extra layers and a blanket if stuck on the highway for a while.

B. Winter Driving equipment:

1. Chains: Link, Cable, Fabric Sock, Plastic. Link chains best for deep snow, cables for convenience.

2. Traction aid: Sand or kitty litter, rock salt, old rug, add weight (sand bags), use momentum.

3. Shovel, blocks

C. Trip Preparation:

1. Check pass report for closures or restrictions, if pass will be closed for avalanche control this will usually be posted.

a. Snoqualmie Pass is usually the first pass to close because the commercial truck traffic goes this way; Stevens tends to get more seasoned drivers, but road maintenance is not as good.

2. Check weather before you go. If a big storm is predicted for the afternoon you don't want to get stuck on an unplowed back road after a long day of skiing or snowshoeing.

3. Check avalanche forecast before you go:

a. Five levels: 1-Low, 2-Moderate, 3-Considerable, 4-High, 5-Extreme. There are safe places to go in most all conditions, but you do not want to be near potential avalanche terrain during hazardous conditions (<https://www.nwac.us>).

D. Covid-19 precautions:

1. Bring your own food drinks, hand cleaner, face mask, Kleenex etc. so you do not have to stop.

2. If you have to stop for gas/bathroom bring disposable gloves or wash hands after touching gas pump or other high touch points.

3. Always wear face filter mask over nose and mouth at trailheads, when passing people or when indoors.

4. Washing with soap and water is best as this virus is lipid (oil) encased and soap breaks down this encapsulation. Alcohol hand jell or aerosol or alcohol/clorox hand wipes are next best, if contact time and concentration is sufficient.