

# Mt. Spokane State Park Trail Guide

Prepared by The Friends of Mt. Spokane State Park  
Fall 2020

## Primary Trailheads

- 1. Bear Creek Lodge:** The lodge is located outside the park 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. Discover Pass not required.
- 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. A Sno-Park Permit is required during the winter in all parking areas.
- 3. Lower Loop Road:** Trail 100 and the Kit Carson Loop Road can be accessed about 2 miles up the road from the entrance.
- 4. Lower Selkirk (Snowmobile) Sno-Park Parking Lot:** Trails 100, 120, and 131 can be accessed from the lower parking lot at the junction with the summit road.
- 5. Upper Selkirk (Nordic) 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. 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. Turn left at the Lower Selkirk parking lot and proceed through a gate uphill on the paved summit road. Park in a small lot just before the hairpin corner near the site where Cook's Cabin was built in 1912. (Only the lodge caretaker's woodshed, built in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the stone latrine remain.)
- 7. Summit Parking and Vista House:** Continue to the summit on the narrow, paved summit road. Trail 140 can be accessed from the parking area. Trail 290 will also start from here.

## Short, Easier Routes

1. **Entrance Loop Trail** (about 1.5 miles): Moderate. Start at the Park Entrance Trailhead and go up Trail 121 along a peaceful tributary of Deadman Creek. The trail is wide and fairly steep in places, and there is a log bench near the top. 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, a coalition of 25 local women's clubs raised \$1500 to purchase the logging rights in the south half of Section 21 (where much of this trail now exists) to protect it from being cut. Start at the Lower Loop Road Trailhead. Cross the paved road and 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 on another log bridge, 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 rebuild Spokane after the devastating fire of 1889.

3. **Hay Ridge Loop** (about 4.5 miles): Easy. Start at the Lower Loop Road Trailhead and take the Loop Road west 1.25 miles 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. Stop for a break at the Snowshoe Hut and vault toilet at Smith Gap. 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 Trailhead. 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 Trails 130 and 160. At the next junction, where an old unmarked trail heads south to the meadows, follow Trails 130 and 160 to the right. Keep going up where Trail 130 forks right to stay on Trail 160. Continue uphill and go left at the next junction, 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. Continue east to step inside the rebuilt CCC woodshed and the old stone latrine.

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 Trailhead 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 that will soon be owned by the park, and 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 the Snowshoe Hut is located as well as a toilet and picnic table), it descends through a beautiful old growth cedar-hemlock forest to the lower trailhead. 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 Trailhead. 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. It has recently been rerouted. Continue uphill on 131 and follow another rerouted section that switchbacks up to the Bald Knob picnic shelter. Then head towards the restroom 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 (where Trail 110 splits off) and cross the creek on a log bridge. Turn left after the creek crossing and then immediately right at the next junction to stay on the single-track trail. Stop for a break at the bench on dead-end Trail 103. Then just 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 Trailhead 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 Trailhead 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 on a log bridge. Follow Trail 100 over the bridge and turn left at the next junction to follow Trail 110, crossing the Loop Road, down to the park entrance.

10. ***Summit Loop*** (about 4 miles): Moderate. Start at the Cook's Cabin Trailhead. 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 Trailhead 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 wider road (Trail 130 and the B-29 alpine ski run) coming down from the left. Follow the 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 the narrow 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, passing the new lift #6, 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. Head toward the rocks and the view and then turn left, following the meadows to the high point. The trail then descends to cross a small saddle and then 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. Pick up Trail 131 just below the picnic shelter as it heads to the right and switchbacks. Keep following Trail 131, past where it junctions with Trail 132, back down to the parking lot.

12. **Quartz Mountain** (about 6 miles round trip): Moderate. Start at the Selkirk Lodge Trailhead 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. Stay on the main road straight past the NOVA Hut turn-off. 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 Trailhead, 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 6.5 miles one way to the big rocks): 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. Once on top, a short walk down the ridge trail will take you to the big rocks, and a splendid view. The official end of the trail is another 1.5 miles south. 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.

15. **Lower Trail 290** (about 2.75 miles one way): Moderate. Start at the Lower Selkirk Parking Lot, and end at the Park Entrance. This is a special single-track trail primarily for downhill mountain biking. It was built in 2017 by volunteers from the Evergreen East Mountain Biking Alliance, so downhill cyclists have right-of-way on this trail. Those not wanting to encounter high speed cyclists are advised to use Trails 121 and 120 instead. The upper half of Trail 290 will be completed in 2021 so that there will be a continuous downhill run from the summit to the park entrance. It is being professionally constructed by Terraflow Trail Systems of Whitefish, Montana with funding from Evergreen East.