

Climbing Mt. Hood

Risks in Wilderness

- * There are inherent dangers and risk involved in the activity of mountain climbing. Weather and conditions can deteriorate rapidly on Mt. Hood.
- * Mt. Hood is a congressionally designated wilderness and is managed to preserve its primitive and natural character. Associated with wilderness is challenge and risk, a characteristic of Mt. Hood appealing to many.
- * One of the objectives of the Wilderness Act is to provide for unconfined recreation opportunities. The Forest Service works to allow for public access while providing for public safety.

Safety and Preparation

- * The Forest Service actively works with climbing organizations to promote safety. Please see more safety related information on the Mt. Hood National Forest climbing web page.
- * The Forest Service encourages climbers to notify a key personal contact of their climbing plans including the planned route, planned return, and type of equipment to be used. The national forest has a mandatory wilderness permit for mountain climbing.
- * Winter and climbing safety are emphasized by the Forest Service in safety education messages. Please see more safety related information on the Mt. Hood National Forest climbing web page.

Background Information

- Each year, approximately 95% of climbers scale the slopes of Mt. Hood during the period April – July.
- Although a technical climb requiring ropes, ice axes, and cramp-ons, the southern slope of Mt. Hood is the most popular climb, while the northern face of Mt. Hood is more technically challenging.
- Climbers are also encouraged to register at the climber's registration site located at Timberline Wy'East Day Lodge.
- Climbers are urged to carry a mountain locator unit, similar to a "wildlife collar" tracking device which emits a signal when activated. Searchers can hone in on the signal thereby expediting search and rescue efforts. Rental of this important piece of equipment is available through several local vendors.
- See other locations on Mt. Hood NF website climbing page for links to web sites of the Portland Mountain Rescue, Hood River Crag Rats, and the Mazamas. All of these web sites post educational messages related to safety and climbing.
- The Forest Service encourages climbers to check short-term and extended weather forecasts as well as the avalanche danger forecast (link also available to avalanche center website: www.nwac.us from Mt. Hood National Forest web site).
- A basic premise of the Forest Service's recreation strategy is to provide a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities on the national forest. The public demands and expects this.