



Hiking & Camping

Également offert en français

Hermit Meadows

Canada

Welcome to Glacier National Park

Deep in the heart of the Columbia Mountains in British Columbia, Glacier National Park is known for steep peaks, moss-draped old growth forests and an annual snowfall of over 14 metres. Stop to enjoy a scenic picnic area, hike the trails of early mountaineers or steep yourself in history at Rogers Pass, the last barrier to the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Packing list

What should you bring? Use this handy checklist as a starting point for a safe and enjoyable day of backcountry hiking. Remember to leave a trip plan and pack spare items; it's always best to be prepared for the unexpected!

DAY HIKING

- Trail guide and map
- Full water bottle or thermos
- High energy food
- Bear spray
- Bug spray
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- First aid kit
- Headlamp or flashlight with spare batteries
- Hat and gloves
- Hiking poles
- Rain/wind jacket
- Extra warm clothing in case of an emergency
- Cell phone or satellite communication device

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

In addition to the gear listed above, be prepared to be self-sufficient during inclement and rapidly changing mountain conditions by packing the right camping gear and clothing such as a light waterproof tent, warm sleeping bag, small portable cook stove, and clothing layers to stay warm and dry.

Trails

Hiking in Glacier National Park offers you the chance to explore the Columbia Mountains whether minutes from your car or hours from the nearest road. Trails range from short, valley-bottom strolls, to steep, tough climbs. Whatever trail you choose, come prepared for travel in a rugged mountain environment and unpredictable weather.

* Many trails in the park can be accessed from either **Illecillewaet Valley** or **Illecillewaet Campground** parking lots. If you are hiking from the Illecillewaet Campground, subtract 2 km from the trail length.

SHORT HIKES

Looking for a shorter outing? These lower elevation trails are snow-free first and just off the Trans-Canada Highway. Several follow the path of former railgrades that were active before the Connaught and Mount Macdonald tunnels routed rail travel underground.

1 Hemlock Grove Boardwalk
350 m (loop) Minimal elevation change 15 min Boardwalk Flat to gently rolling Trailhead: Hemlock Grove day use area
A ramped boardwalk offering a barrier-free rainforest experience amongst devil's club and towering cedar and hemlock. Pavement leading up to the trail is uneven due to root damage.

2 Rockgarden
430 m (loop) Minimal elevation change 30 min Natural trail with uneven stepping stones Steep sections Trailhead: 1.5 km east of Hemlock Grove day use area
A short trail through lichen and moss covered boulders and evergreen forests. On clear days you'll see great views of the nearby peaks and glaciers.

3 Loop Brook
1.7 km (loop) Minimal elevation change 40 min Natural trail Old rail grade with steep sections Trailhead: Loop Brook Viewpoint (just east of Loop Brook Campground)
Interpretive trail highlighting railway history. Walk among giant stone bridge pillars that once carried the rail line across the valley.

4 Meeting of the Waters
3.3 km* (loop) Minimal elevation change 30 min Natural trail Flat Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
Forest walk past the confluence of Asulkan Brook and the Illecillewaet River.

5 1885 Trail
9.2 km* (return) Minimal elevation change 2 hrs Natural trail Flat Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
Interpretive trail along the original Canadian Pacific rail grade connecting the Illecillewaet and Loop Brook campgrounds.

6 Abandoned Rails
Trail currently closed Trailhead: Rogers Pass Summit Picnic Area
Closed until further notice due to slope instability and damaged trail sections.

7 Bear Creek Falls
1 km (return) 95 m elevation change 1 hr Natural trail Steep Trailhead: 9 km east of the Rogers Pass Discovery Centre. If travelling from the east, there is no left turn; turn around at Hermit trailhead and approach from the west.
Short trail leading down to a secluded glacial waterfall. At the bottom of the hill, stay on the main trail to go to the falls.

DAY HIKES

Follow steep trails from dense hemlock and spruce forest to rewarding alpine views. The hiking season is very short at high elevations because of the deep snowpack. See **Planning your trip** for tips on seasonality. Water sources can be limited, especially at higher elevations.

8 Marion Lake
6.4 km* (return) 425 m elevation change 2.5 hrs Natural trail Steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
Steep forested hike to a small subalpine lake along the first leg of the Abbott Ridge Trail.

9 Great Glacier
8.4 km* (return) 320 m elevation change 2.5 hrs Natural trail and rock Moderately steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
Originally leading to the Illecillewaet Glacier, the trail now ends at sloping bedrock out of sight of the receding glacier.

10 Bostock Creek
15.6 km (return) 740 m elevation change 7 hrs Natural trail Moderately steep Trailhead: 4 km east of western park boundary
Hike from the interior rainforest into the subalpine forest.

11 Avalanche Crest
10.2 km* (return) 795 m elevation change 5 hrs Natural trail Steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
One of the best scenic trails in the park. Hike into an open alpine basin nestled between Avalanche Crest to the left and a ridge off Eagle Peak. The nearby left ridge overlooks the highway/railway corridor.

12 Balu Pass
12.8 km (return) 780 m elevation change 4 hrs Natural trail, rock stairs Steep sections Trailhead: Rogers Pass Discovery Centre
Trail through avalanche paths into alpine meadows offering amazing views. Grizzly bears are common here and you must hike in a group of 4 or more adults between July 15 and September 30. Dogs are not allowed on this trail.

13 Asulkan Valley
15.8 km* (return) 870 m elevation change 6 hrs Natural trail Gently rolling to steep moraine ridge after 4 km Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
A glacier carved landscape with lush forest, mountain views and waterfalls. This hike starts as a valley walk and then climbs a steep glacial moraine.

14 Hermit
6.4 km (return) 820 m elevation change 4 hrs Natural trail with rock stairs Very steep Trailhead: 1.5 km east of Rogers Pass Discovery Centre
Known for its epic steepness! Climb many switchbacks, rock stairs, and a rope-assisted scramble to an alpine meadow and backcountry campsite (permits required).

15 Sir Donald
12.2 km* (return) 1010 m elevation change 5 hrs Natural trail Very steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
A mountaineering route created by North America's first recreational climbers, this tough trail switchbacks from valley bottom to alpine. Beyond the turnout to Perley Rock, conditions vary and hikers should have route finding skills. A backcountry campsite at trail's end is an ideal climbing basecamp (permits required).

16 Glacier Crest
13.4 km* (return) 960 m elevation change 6 hrs Natural trail with rocky sections Very steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
This trail climbs a rock ridge between two valleys carved by the Illecillewaet and Asulkan glaciers. Stunning panoramic views of rock and glacial ice.

17 Perley Rock
12.8 km* (return) 1145 m elevation change 6 hrs Natural trail and boulder fields Very steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
An ambitious day hike in the park ending at a high viewpoint overlooking the Illecillewaet Icefield and Abbott Ridge.

18 Abbott Ridge
15.6 km* (return) 1030 m elevation change 6.5 hrs Natural trail Very steep Trailhead: Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground
Trail up to alpine tundra that ends on a narrow ridge. During early season take the marked short cut to avoid a steep snow slope.

19 Lower Beaver Valley
10.2 km (return) 320 m elevation change 3.5 hrs Natural trail Gently rolling with some steep sections Trailhead: 10 km east of Rogers Pass Discovery Centre
This rare valley bottom trail winds through rich old growth forest. Listen closely for the hum of the Mount Macdonald railway tunnel's ventilation fans in the distance. Turn right at junction (5.1 km): maintained trail ends shortly after at the Grizzly Creek bridge. The Upper Beaver Valley Trail beyond Grizzly Creek is no longer maintained and is not recommended. Visitors enter at their own risk. Turn left at junction: A 2.4 km return side trip (unmaintained) is possible up to Copperstain Bridge. The trail is closed beyond this point.

20 Bald Mountain Wilderness Route
Double black trail rating: suitable for well prepared visitors with exceptional trail and navigation experience.
30 km (return) 1125 m elevation change Distance and elevation change varies with route selection Trailhead: Safe access is only available via the Spillimacheen provincial forest service road which begins at Parson, B.C.
This wilderness hiking route crosses rolling subalpine meadows that form the east boundary of the park. The route receives no maintenance. Hikers should have the skills, equipment and experience required for route finding and travel in remote mountain environments.

Huts & cabins

Glacier National Park has huts and cabins operated by the Alpine Club of Canada.

- A.O. Wheeler Hut
- Asulkan Cabin
- Sapphire Col Hut
- Glacier Circle Cabin

With the exception of A.O. Wheeler, all are far from roads in the backcountry, and access is challenging. Sapphire Col and Glacier Circle require mountaineering expertise. All require:

- A reservation: 403-678-3200 alpineclubofcanada.ca
- A national park pass
- A backcountry camping permit (wilderness pass)
- An overnight parking permit

Planning your trip

WHERE TO GO?
Select a trip that best suits your party's abilities, experience, interests, and the time you have available. Estimated time to complete trails ranges depending on trail distances, fitness levels, weather and trail conditions.

EASY

- Suitable for those with little or no trail experience.
- Flat to gently rolling with few obstacles.
- Little or no elevation change.

MODERATE

- Suitable for those with basic trail experience.
- Gently rolling with short, steep sections and infrequent obstacles.
- Moderate elevation change.

DIFFICULT

- Suitable only for those with trail experience.
- Long, steep sections with frequent obstacles.
- Major elevation change.

WHEN TO GO?
Most trails in Glacier National Park are accessed off the Trans-Canada Highway. Some trailheads or day use areas may not be accessible until late June due to avalanche hazard and snow.

Frontcountry camping

These unserviced campgrounds are 2 km apart and located close to the action in Rogers Pass with access to trails and exceptional scenery. See **Planning your trip** for details.

ILLECILLEWAET CAMPGROUND
60 sites Flush toilets Kitchen shelters
The largest campground in the park, this area doubles as a major trailhead. *Illecillewaet* is pronounced ill ah SIL-ah-wet (or ill a silhouette) and comes from a Sinixt First Nation word meaning "big water". Hike to alpine glaciers and tour the adjacent ruins of Glacier House.

LOOP BROOK CAMPGROUND
20 sites Flush toilets
Loop Brook Campground offers a quieter experience with smaller campsites. Follow trails past the ghostly remains of tall stone railway trestles and snowsheds.

Regulations & etiquette

Following park regulations while enjoying national parks helps protect people, landscapes, and wildlife.

- A national park pass is required to visit Glacier National Park and Alpine Club of Canada facilities within the parks.
- Leave no trace. Pack out everything you pack in.
- Leave what you find—it is the law. Natural and cultural items such as mushrooms, wildflowers and rocks must remain undisturbed for others to discover and enjoy.

Drones/UAVs are prohibited in all national parks as they disturb wildlife. Leave your drone at home or in your vehicle.

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

- To prevent damage to vegetation, stay on the trail.
- Show courtesy and yield to others.
- Use privies where available. Where facilities are not available, dispose of human waste at least 70 m from any water source. Bury solid human waste in a hole 15 cm deep. Pack out your toilet paper.

THE CANADA NATIONAL PARKS ACT
Park Wardens are responsible for enforcing park regulations as required by the Canada National Parks Act. To report park violations, call 1-877-852-3100 24 hours, 7 days per week. Violators will be charged, may be required to appear in court, and could pay fines of up to \$25,000.

Spring (early May to late June): High elevation trails are snow-bound and may be subject to avalanche hazard. Trails are muddier at this time and the best hiking is at lower elevations.

Summer (early July to mid-September): Prime hiking season. Some snow may linger on higher elevation trails until mid-July. Subalpine wildflowers typically bloom in August.

Fall (mid-September to early October): Autumn in the mountains brings shorter days and cooler temperatures. Trail bridges are typically removed between late September and early October for the winter.

Rain or snow can fall any time of year in the mountains. Be prepared for unpredictable weather conditions and always check the forecast before embarking on your trip.

PASSES, PERMITS AND RESERVATIONS

A national park pass is required when visiting any national park. Revenues support visitor services and facilities. If you are staying in the park overnight you will also require:

- A camping permit for Illecillewaet or Loop Brook Campground. Fire permits are required.
- A backcountry camping permit (wilderness pass) for Hermit Meadows (reservable) and Sir Donald (non-reservable) backcountry campgrounds and random camping.
- An overnight parking permit to park overnight at Illecillewaet Valley or Illecillewaet Campground trailheads.

Find out how to book at pc.gc.ca/glacier-camping

Backcountry camping

The park's two designated backcountry campgrounds primarily serve as basecamps for mountaineering, and are open for camping only when bear-proof storage and privies have melted clear of snow. While the trails to these sites may appear short, they are extremely steep and grueling ascents, especially with a full pack!

A backcountry camping permit (wilderness pass) is required. See **Planning your trip** for details. Wood fires of any kind are not permitted. Gas stove use only.

HERMIT MEADOWS CAMPGROUND
8 tent sites Privy Bear-proof storage
Designated summer backcountry campground in a rocky area at the end of Hermit Trail. Enjoy panoramic views of many impressive peaks and glaciers of Rogers Pass.

SIR DONALD CAMPGROUND
4 tent spots Privy Bear-proof storage
Designated summer backcountry campground nestled below the impressive Mount Sir Donald and Uto peaks. This is an ideal base camp for climbers, but the ground is rocky and no tent pads are present.

RANDOM CAMPING

Random camping is only permitted in certain remote areas of the park, at least 5 km from trails, roads or designated campgrounds, and 100 m from water bodies. A backcountry camping permit (wilderness pass) is required. For more information, visit pc.gc.ca/glacier-camping.

Safety

PLAN AHEAD, BE PREPARED

Safety is your responsibility. There are always hazards associated with outdoor recreation. Even short trips may have serious consequences. Minimize your risk by planning ahead.

- Visit pc.gc.ca/glaciertrails for trail conditions and information, warnings, closures, and weather.
- Be prepared for emergencies and changes in weather. Mountain weather changes quickly and it can snow any month of the year.
- Travel with a friend or group. Choose a trail suitable for the least experienced member in your group.
- Pack adequate food, water, clothing, first aid kit, bear spray and maps (see **Packing lists**)
- Tell a reliable person where you are going, when you will be back, and who to call if you do not return
- Ticks carrying Lyme disease may be present in the park. It is important to check yourself and your pet after hiking.
- Don't use earbuds or headphones. Be alert at all times.

SNOWY TRAILS

Snow can remain on higher elevation trails well into the summer. When trails are snow covered, route finding can be difficult, and travel through deep snow or on hard snow and ice can be unsafe.

Be prepared and visit pc.gc.ca/glaciertrails to check trail conditions before heading out.

Overview map

Map showing the location of Glacier National Park, Mount Revelstoke National Park, and Rogers Pass Discovery Centre. Includes a scale bar (0, 2.5, 5, 10 Kilometers) and a north arrow.

Wildlife & people

Glacier National Park is home to wildlife including wolves, cougars, grizzly bears and black bears. To successfully raise their young and sustain a healthy population, wildlife need access to as much quality habitat with as few human surprises as possible.

- Give wildlife space. Approaching wildlife causes them to lose their natural fear of people. Help keep them wild by maintaining a distance of 100m for larger species such as bears and 30m for species such as deer.

Dogs are not allowed on the Balu Pass Trail or anywhere within the Connaught Creek drainage.

Visit pc.gc.ca/glacier-wildlife for more information.

Information

HOURS OF OPERATION

Visitor facilities are open from May to October. The Rogers Pass Discovery Centre is open year round except for Christmas Day. Visit pc.gc.ca/glacier for seasonal hours. The Parks Canada Revelstoke Office is temporarily closed for in-person visitor information in 2021. Find out where to purchase a national park pass at pc.gc.ca/glacier-fees

ONLINE

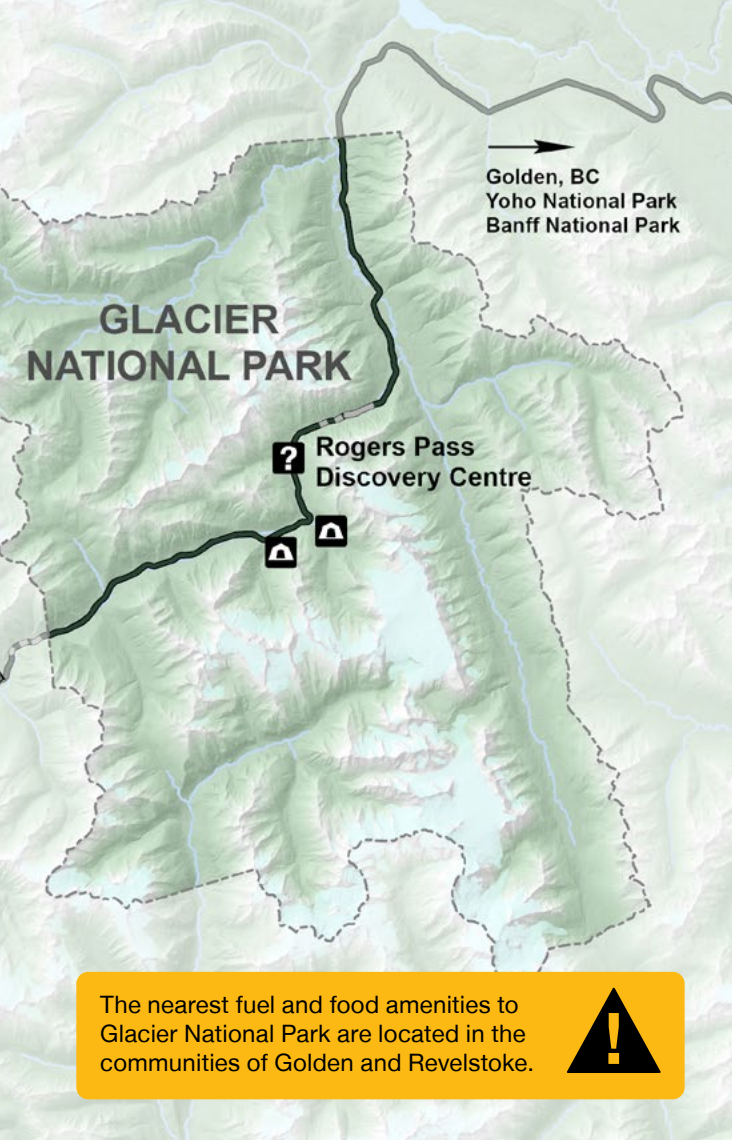
General information: parksCanada.gc.ca/glacier
Trail conditions: parksCanada.gc.ca/glaciertrails
Safety: parksMountainsafety.ca
Social media: facebook.com/MRGNationalParks

TELEPHONE

Camping reservations: 1-877-737-3783
General Parks Canada inquiries: 1-888-773-8888
Revelstoke Office: 1-250-837-7500

EMERGENCY

Call 1-877-852-3100 for Parks Canada Dispatch. Tell dispatchers you have a backcountry emergency and require assistance. Call 911 for Police, Fire or Ambulance. Cell coverage is limited and there is no WiFi in the park. If travelling in the backcountry, other means of communication are recommended.



Trail guide

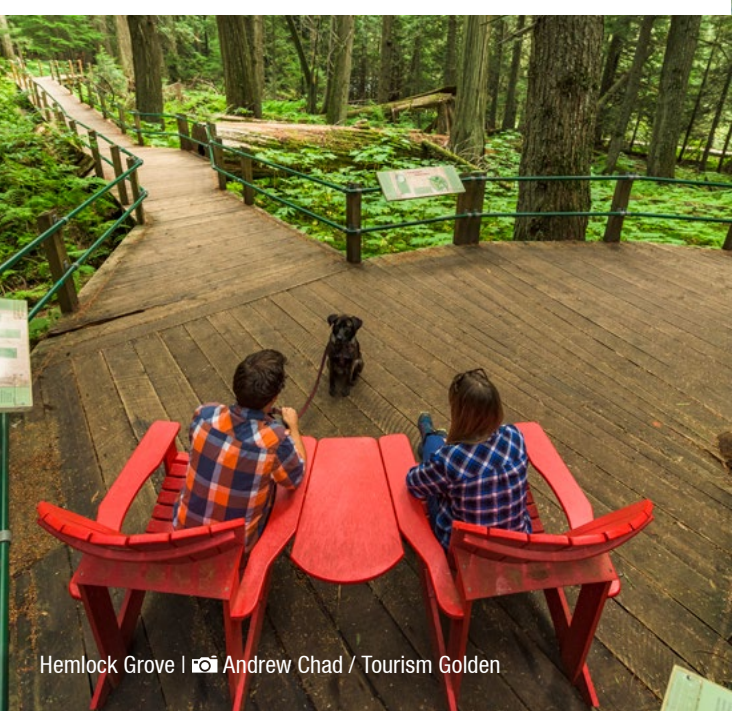
Note: Elevation change means cumulative elevation gain for a return trip.
 * Subtract 2 km if hiking from Illecillewaet Campground

SHORT HIKES

- 1 **Hemlock Grove Boardwalk**
350 m (loop) | Minimal elevation change | 15 min
Boardwalk | Flat to gently rolling
- 2 **Rockgarden**
430 m (loop) | Minimal elevation change | 30 min
Natural trail with uneven stepping stones | Steep sections
- 3 **Loop Brook**
1.7 km (loop) | Minimal elevation change | 40 min
Natural trail | Old rail grade with steep sections
- 4 **Meeting of the Waters**
3.3 km* (loop) | Minimal elevation change | 30 min
Natural trail | Flat
- 5 **1885 Trail**
9.2 km* (return) | Minimal elevation change | 2 hrs
Natural trail | Flat
- 6 **Abandoned Rails**
Trail currently closed
- 7 **Bear Creek Falls**
1 km (return) | 95 m elevation change | 1 hr
Natural trail | Steep

DAY HIKES

- 8 **Marion Lake**
6.4 km* (return) | 425 m elevation change | 2.5 hrs
Natural trail | Steep
- 9 **Great Glacier**
8.4 km* (return) | 320 m elevation change | 2.5 hrs
Natural trail and rock | Moderately steep
- 10 **Bostock Creek**
15.6 km (return) | 1740 m elevation change | 7 hrs
Natural trail | Moderately steep
- 11 **Avalanche Crest**
10.2 km* (return) | 1795 m elevation change | 5 hrs
Natural trail | Steep
- 12 **Balu Pass**
12.8 km (return) | 780 m elevation change | 4 hrs
Natural trail, rock stairs | Steep sections
- 13 **Asulkan Valley**
15.8 km* (return) | 870 m elevation change | 6 hrs
Natural trail | Gently rolling to steep moraine ridge after 4 km
- 14 **Hermit**
6.4 km (return) | 820 m elevation change | 4 hrs
Natural trail with rock stairs | Very steep
- 15 **Sir Donald**
12.2 km* (return) | 1010 m elevation change | 5 hrs
Natural trail with rocky sections | Very steep
- 16 **Glacier Crest**
13.4 km* (return) | 960 m elevation change | 6 hrs
Natural trail with rocky sections | Very steep
- 17 **Perley Rock**
12.8 km* (return) | 1145 m elevation change | 6 hrs
Natural trail and boulder fields | Very steep
- 18 **Abbott Ridge**
15.6 km* (return) | 1030 m elevation change | 6.5 hrs
Natural trail | Very steep
- 19 **Lower Beaver Valley**
10.2 km (return) | 320 m elevation change | 3.5 hrs
Natural trail | Gently rolling with some steep sections
- 20 **Bald Mountain Wilderness Route**
30 km (return) | 1125m elevation change
Distance and elevation change varies with route selection



Hemlock Grove | Andrew Chad / Tourism Golden

North ↑

Kilometers

Information

- P** Parking Area
- A** Frontcountry Campground
- C** Backcountry Camping
- W** Washrooms
- W** Rogers Pass Washroom Building
- H** Alpine Club of Canada Hut
- S** Picnic Shelter
- P** Picnic Area
- B** Mountain Biking
- M** Monument
- N** No Dogs

--- Easy Trail
 - - - Moderate Trail
 - - - Difficult Trail
 - - - Roads
 = Trans-Canada Highway
 - - - National Park Boundary

ROGERS PASS & ILLECILLEWAET VALLEY AREA

Map details include: Balu Pass Trailhead, Rogers Pass Discovery Centre, Summit of Rogers Pass Picnic Area, Illecillewaet Valley Trailhead, A.O. Wheeler Hut, Sir Donald Backcountry Campground, Loop Brook Trailhead, Hemlock Grove Day-Use Area, Rock Garden Trailhead, Bostock Trailhead, Slide Path Picnic Area, Asulkan Hut, and Sapphire Col Hut.

North ↑

Kilometers

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

Map details include: East Gate, Beaver Valley Picnic Area, Beaver Valley Trailhead, Hermit Backcountry Campground, Rogers Pass Discovery Centre, Hermit Trailhead, Cheops Mountain, Bostock Pass, Mount Sir Donald, Sir Donald Backcountry Campground, Asulkan Valley, and various peaks and glaciers like the Illecillewaet and Avalanche.

12 Balu Pass Trail Restrictions

YEAR-ROUND

Dogs are not allowed on the Balu Pass Trail or anywhere within the Connaught Creek Drainage.

JULY 15 TO SEPTEMBER 30 ANNUALLY

Hikers must travel in groups of four or more. More information under [Hiking in bear country](#).

COVID-19 alert

Please note that some visitor services and facilities may not be available.

Visit pc.gc.ca/glacier for updates.

Rogers Pass guide

Designated as a National Historic Site in 1971, Rogers Pass is a 45 km stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway that winds through the heart of Glacier National Park. To learn more about the area, visit these points of interest.



ROGERS PASS DISCOVERY CENTRE

This family-friendly stop is the visitor hub of Glacier National Park and Rogers Pass National Historic Site. The building itself is a replica of an historic railway snowshed. Inside you'll find a theatre and exhibits about avalanches, wildlife and the history of the area.



SUMMIT OF ROGERS PASS PICNIC AREA

Stretch your legs at the second highest point on the Trans-Canada highway. A monument and memory garden tell the story of the triumphs and tragedies behind Canada's first trans-continental railway. Four picnic tables available.

HISTORY OF ROGERS PASS

Once seen as impenetrable by European explorers, the Selkirk mountains have been travelled through and used by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years.

In the early 1880s, Major A.B. Rogers organized several expeditions to find a route for the railway to cross the Columbia Mountains. With local Indigenous support and knowledge, a route was found.

The railway connected the young nation of Canada from coast to coast. In 1962, the Trans-Canada Highway opened, following the same route. Millions of people now travel this scenic corridor each year.

Hiking in bear country



Black bears and grizzly bears both live in Glacier National Park and they need space to lead healthy lives. Some areas of the park are closed off to visitors to allow for this. Other areas have restrictions if bear activity is high. See [Wildlife & people](#) (on reverse) for tips on hiking in bear country.

GROUP OF FOUR RESTRICTIONS

If there are multiple encounters with bears in specific areas, Parks Canada may post a mandatory group of four restriction. Hikers are legally required to travel in a tight group of four or more adults (age 12 and up). Research has shown that grizzly bears are very unlikely to attack or bluff charge this group size. This regulation protects hikers as well as bears.

12 BALU PASS TRAIL

A group of four restriction is automatically in place from July 15 to September 30 every year. For more information, visit parks.canada.gc.ca/glacier-bulletin.

Play Clean Go

STOP INVASIVE SPECIES IN YOUR TRACKS.

Clean your gear before entering and before leaving the recreation site.

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