

Snow Peak Cabin: 9.6 kilometer (6 mile) round trip ski

The ski is a touring opportunity to a cabin about three miles south of Sherman Pass in northeast Washington's Kettle Range. The cabin is maintained by the Backcountry Horseman and is very comfortable. It will house a party of five comfortably. Its use must be pre-reserved with the Three Rivers Ranger District of the Colville National Forest.

The trailhead is at the top of Sherman Pass. Sherman Pass is reached by driving Highway 395 north from Spokane to Colville. At Colville you will junction with Highway 20, which is followed west through Kettle Falls, across the Columbia River and up the Kettle Range.

Parking is available north of the Highway 20. The trail is found on the south side of the highway. It begins by switchbacking up Sherman Peak about 1.7 miles (approx. 1 mile) climbing 600 feet in elevation. Skins are pretty much required for this part of the trip. You will want them on the climb, but you will also want them to brake you as you return on the descent. The trail is narrow. If you are expert enough you can ski down through the fairly thick timber, but I would recommend the slow descent along the trail. A fire in the area, since my last visit, may have cleared the slope out a bit.

The trail will reach a small flat that holds a wetland beneath the winter snow. From this point, the trail is typically flagged. From the flat, the route side slopes for 1.4 kilometers (0.9 mile) around Sherman Peak and into the saddle between Sherman and Snow Peak to the south. In years past a shelter complete with a wood stove is located in this saddle. The shelter is a wall tent and tarp affair typically seated well down in a deep snow pack.

From this point the route leads southwest around the western flank of Snow Peak. It side slopes for 1.7 kilometers (approx 1 mile) through sparse timber into a small saddle on the western flank of Snow Peak. As you approach this saddle you will see the cabin. Snow Peak rises to your left in front of the cabin, while a small hill backs the cabin on your right. The small hill is a great hill to climb up and telemark ski down. There are also many ski trips out from the cabin.

Your return trip is over the same route. Just remember to put your skins on for the descent down the switchbacks to Sherman Pass, unless you want a wild ride.



Snow Peak Cabin Ski Tour

Parking Area

Shelter

Cabin

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