




Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP)

**North Cascades National Park Service Complex
Washington
January 2024**

A scenic landscape featuring a calm river flowing through a valley. In the background, there are rolling mountains under a clear sky. The foreground is filled with lush green grass and some small plants. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

National Park Service Interior Regions 8, 9, 10, and 12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Cascades National Park Service Complex staff is dedicated to serving all park visitors to help them find meaning in the resources of the park and its stories. Recently, park staff embarked on a journey to ensure that key experiences are available to all visitors, regardless of race, nationality, socioeconomic status, or ability. Park staff conducted an accessibility self-evaluation of park facilities, services, activities, and programs and drafted a transition plan that identifies opportunities for improvement and outlines critical steps towards implementing responsive solutions parkwide.

This accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan (SETP) resulted from the work of a National Park Service (NPS) interdisciplinary team, including planning, design, and construction professionals and interpretive, resource, visitor safety, maintenance, and accessibility specialists. The team developed site plans identifying the location of accessibility barriers and opportunities for each assessed park area and crafted an implementation strategy to assist park staff in scheduling and performing required actions and documenting completed work. The team also assessed park policies, practices, communication, and training needs to improve access to elements of the park that lie outside of direct physical and programmatic access. The goals of the SETP are to (1) document existing park barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities; (2) provide an effective approach for upgrading facilities, services, activities, and programs; and (3) instill a culture around creating universal access.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

North Cascades National Park Service Complex has made many strides to improve physical accessibility throughout the park. A range of facilities and experiences, including the visitor centers and wilderness information center, camping, and hikes, offer accessible opportunities. For example, the visitor centers and wilderness information centers meet many aspects of accessibility, such as counters within reach range, clear maneuvering areas within buildings, accessible seating in the auditorium, and largely accessible drinking fountains and restrooms. The park also offers some accessible campsites and picnic areas. Additionally, the park website contains information about physical accessibility by location, including for buildings, transportation via ferry, overlooks, trails, and campgrounds.

While many experiences meet some accessibility requirements, modifications to meet standards are frequently warranted. Recurring findings related to physical accessibility were identified for parking areas, accessible paths of travel, outdoor recreation routes, hiking trails, and visitor information areas, such as kiosks, bulletin boards, interpretive panels, and waysides. Some facilities and features were incorrectly scoped for accessibility or had surfaces that were not firm and stable, had slopes that exceeded allowable standards, had items out of reach range, or were difficult or heavy to operate. Amenities offered for picnicking and camping, such as tables, fire rings, and water spigots, did not always meet appropriate access route and clearance standards. Some signage had illegible content or had insufficient or misplaced information. While wheelchairs are available at the Golden West Visitor Center, information notifying visitors is not posted.

The park has opportunities to provide access to unique experiences in the park. In particular, the park's partnership with Seattle City Light could result in significant access improvements to remote areas of the park, including Ross Lake. While some aspects of the journeys to these locations are accessible, such as room for wheelchair seating on a ferry, significant barriers remain, particularly to Ross Lake. Improving existing accessible camping opportunities and providing accessible camping with access to wilderness would also be an important improvement. Additionally, the park contains some trails that, with adjustment, could better meet accessibility guidelines.

PROGRAMMATIC ACCESSIBILITY

North Cascades National Park Service Complex has made improvements to programmatic accessibility in recent years. Braille and large-print publications are available in the visitor centers and wilderness information center. A film coming in 2023 will provide closed captioning. The park also offers three topographic models of the mountainous park terrain within reach range. Outdoors, many trailhead signs meet legibility guidelines, and some include information on trail difficulty to allow visitors to identify suitable trails.

Recurring findings related to program accessibility were identified for park publications, waysides, exhibits, and programs. Assistive listening devices were not available and audio description for tours was not available. Programmatic accessibility opportunities were not posted on the park's website or in on-site materials.

Significant ways in which programs could be improved include providing audio descriptions for tours, audio versions of park publications, and assistive-listening devices and adding additional tactile displays in exhibit areas. Additionally, improving trailhead signage to indicate specific information about trail conditions would enable visitors to decide for themselves if a trail is usable to them.

WILDERNESS ACCESSIBILITY

Wilderness is for all, yet travel to and within wilderness can be challenging. Designated Wilderness areas, which are defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964, are natural, offer solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, are undeveloped, are untrammeled, and may have ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. The National Park Service has legal obligations to make available equal opportunities for people with disabilities in all programs and activities. This requirement includes the opportunity to participate in wilderness experiences.

Management decisions responding to requests for special consideration to provide wilderness use by persons with disabilities must be in accord with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended in 1978), and section 507(c) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12207[c]). Such decisions should balance the intent of access and wilderness laws and find a way of providing the highest level of protection to the wilderness resource (NPS *Management Policy 2006*, Chapter 6 Wilderness Stewardship, 6.4.10 Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities).

With that said, access does not necessarily entail flat, even surfaces through wilderness. The wilderness experience may also include a sense of challenge and accomplishment. Congress has designated 94% of the North Cascades National Park Service Complex as within the Stephen Mather Wilderness. As with anyone preparing to visit the wilderness, information is key when planning a trip around an individual's abilities. As the park continues to improve accessibility, it is critical to focus on the visitor's ability to build the appropriate level of challenge into their experience by providing ample information about natural conditions and supporting facilities or site features.

Key locations where visitors can find information about accessible wilderness experiences may be ranger stations, wilderness information centers, backcountry permit offices, visitor centers, and contact stations. A critical component of providing this information is staff education and awareness of the disability community's needs through training opportunities for seasonal and full-time staff and partners as appropriate. The same information should be made available in digital format online. The Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards for outdoor developed areas also requires that trailheads and the facilities and site features that serve them be accessible. The standards also identify five key trail characteristics to provide on trailhead signage that enable people to make informed decisions. The characteristics include: (1) length of the trail or trail segment, (2) type of trail surface, (3) typical and minimum trail tread width, (4) typical and maximum trail grade, and (5) typical and maximum trail cross slope. Importantly, while these components improve wilderness access for those with different abilities, they universally benefit all who seek out a wilderness experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1916, the National Park Service (NPS) has preserved, unimpaired, the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system, while also providing for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of current and future generations.

Many national parks were founded because of their stunning views, extreme and unique geography, challenging and sensitive natural environments, and historic and fragile structures. North Cascades National Park Service Complex and other parks exist because of their history and resources. The NPS mission balances protection of resources (both natural and cultural) with visitation. Facilities, services, and programs were designed and built within parks to accommodate our visitors and help them better understand each park purpose and significance.

However, many facilities were constructed before the passage of laws and policies requiring the National Park Service to provide access to the widest cross section of the public and to ensure compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The accessibility of commercial services in national parks is also governed by applicable federal laws. After 100 years of operation, the National Park Service continues to work towards a more inclusive environment.

Visitors today have unique needs and expectations, and the agency must adapt to meet changing demands. Modern scientific research and visitor trend analysis provide new insights into accessibility opportunities and challenges in the national park system. According to 2020 CDC data, there are approximately 61 million people with disabilities in the United States, and this number is expected to rise in the coming years as more people reach retirement age (65 and older). This information helps the National Park Service understand changing visitation patterns, the nexus between resource stewardship and accessibility, and the impacts of managing visitors, resources, and infrastructure with the reality of unpredictable funding. Planning can help identify solutions to challenges and provide a trajectory full of opportunity for current and future visitors. The National Park Service is committed to making park facilities, services, programs, and employment opportunities accessible to all people, including those with disabilities.

North Cascades National Park Service Complex's existing general management planning documents continue to provide relevant guidance, which may be supplemented through development of additional planning documents such as this one. The accessibility SETP is a component of the park's planning portfolio. This plan documents park barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities and provides an effective approach for upgrading park facilities, services, and programs. In addition, the plan helps inform management decisions regarding project prioritization, funding, and compliance.

ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN

The creation of a transition plan is mandated by regulations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as they apply to the US Department of the Interior, which states that “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance.” The act requires parks to document architectural barriers and identify solutions, time frames, and responsible parties to improve and increase accessibility.

This plan was prepared to provide North Cascades National Park Service Complex with a tool for addressing overall needs associated with making the park accessible when viewed in its entirety. The plan is based on an understanding of key park experiences and establishes a methodical process that identifies, prioritizes, and outlines improvements to park accessibility. The plan proposes strategies for implementation over time and in a manner consistent with park requirements and protocols.

ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN PROCESS

The process for creating a SETP involves seven steps:



1. **Identify Key Park Experiences and Park Areas** – The interdisciplinary team began by identifying the key experiences available to visitors at the park. Key park experiences, which help determine the park areas to assess in step 2, are iconic and important experiences for visitors to understand the purpose and significance of the park. Park legislation serves as the foundation for key park experiences, which are identified through park purpose, significance, interpretive themes, and programs (these can be found in the park's foundation document at <http://www.npshistory.com/publications/foundation-documents/noca-fd-2012.pdf>). Key park experiences ensure that planned improvements are prioritized to best increase overall access to park experiences.

The key park experiences identified for North Cascades National Park Service Complex include:

- a. **Glaciers:** Experience some of the over 300 glaciers within the park and the landscape they helped form over thousands of years, leaving behind ragged peaks, crystal clear lakes, and wild rivers.
- b. **Wilderness:** Experience the extents of your inner and physical strength through the solitude of wilderness and the challenges of one of nature's most untamed landscapes.
- c. **Recreation:** Experience a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities from picnicking to mountaineering.

- d. **Ecosystems and Biodiversity:** Experience the dramatic variability and unhindered natural processes of the North Cascades and the distinct ecological conditions that support a multitude of rare plant and animal communities.
- e. **Culture and History:** Experience how the landscape and plentiful resources of the North Cascades shaped human history.
- f. **Scenery:** Experience the majestic views of unbridled nature towered by jagged glaciated peaks that cradle a rich patchwork of alpine meadows, old-growth forests, and deep river valleys.
- g. **Research:** Learn from the natural and cultural resources of the park, our place in it, and the challenges that lie ahead.

To prepare for step 2, the team then listed all developed areas of the park in which visitors have access.

2. **Determine Park Areas to Assess** – In some instances, not all park areas can be assessed during this process due to time and funding constraints. Therefore, the interdisciplinary team determined which park areas to assess based on the number of key park experiences, level of visitation, diversity of activities and programs, distribution, and unique characteristics. The areas selected for assessment provide the best opportunities for the public to access all key park experiences. Areas not assessed will be assessed and improved as part of future facility alterations or as components of a future planned construction project (see appendix C for areas not assessed).
3. **Identify Facilities, Services, and Programs in Each Park Area** – The team identified all facilities, services, and programs in each park area to ensure that all physical and programmatic visitor amenities in each park area were reviewed for accessibility. The comprehensive lists of facilities, services, and programs were the basis for conducting assessments and documenting barriers.
4. **Conduct Accessibility Assessment** – On-site, the interdisciplinary assessment team assessed each park area and identified physical and programmatic barriers to accessibility. The team then reviewed possible solutions and explored options to provide universal access. In some cases, programmatic alternatives needed to be examined because eliminating physical barriers is not always possible due to historic designations, environmental concerns, topography, or sensitive cultural and natural resources. Therefore, a range of programmatic alternatives was considered to provide access to key park experiences for as many visitors as possible.
5. **Draft Transition Plan** – Following the assessment, the team added field results to an implementation strategy table and drafted conceptual site plans to display the locations of barriers and opportunities. An implementation strategy can be complex because of a large range of coordination efforts associated with scheduling accessibility improvements. All improvement efforts need to consider park activities and operational requirements. Therefore, the team identified an implementation time frame and a responsible park staff member for each barrier and solution.

Implementation time frames are based on a park's ability to complete the improvements within normal scheduling of park operations and planned projects and are as follows:

- a. Immediate (0–1 year)
 - b. Short term (1–3 years)
 - c. Mid-term (3–7 years)
 - d. Long term (longer than 7 years)
6. **Conduct Public Involvement** – The public was invited to provide input on the draft plan from November 8th, 2023, to December 8th, 2023. Staff used a variety of methods to solicit public involvement and review of the plan, including a press release and direct outreach through email.

Organizations were notified of the planning effort and availability of the plan for review through e-mails. These communications were sent to all organizations on the park's e-mail contact list, local disability organizations, and Recreate Responsibly Washington. Additionally, park staff plans to continue reoccurring meetings with interested disability organizations to discuss ongoing park projects and ways to incorporate accessibility.

7. **Finalize Transition Plan** – Park staff's efforts led to receiving several relevant comments and suggestions to improve the plan. These included updates to the park's implementation strategy table by providing more detailed scoping information for campground facilities, adding design alternatives for beach access routes, and inserting more guidance for historic structure accessibility. This plan and its recommended action items are not definitive solutions but describe a strategy to help park staff reach a more accessible destination. Park staff welcomes further suggestions from all interested parties who want to continue to improve this important national resource.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The park superintendent is responsible for implementing and integrating the accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan, and the accessibility coordinator assists the superintendent by documenting improvements, keeping the plan updated, and communicating to park employees. The park should employ trained consultants to assist with addressing accessibility improvements to ensure that design and implementation meet the needs of visitors with disabilities. Creating parkwide accessibility requires staff awareness, understanding, and appropriate action. Because of fiscal constraints and limited park resources, staff will need to determine which improvements will benefit the greatest number of visitors with disabilities. Suggested implementation time frames and relative costs need to be factored into all accessibility investment decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX

PARK AREAS ASSESSED

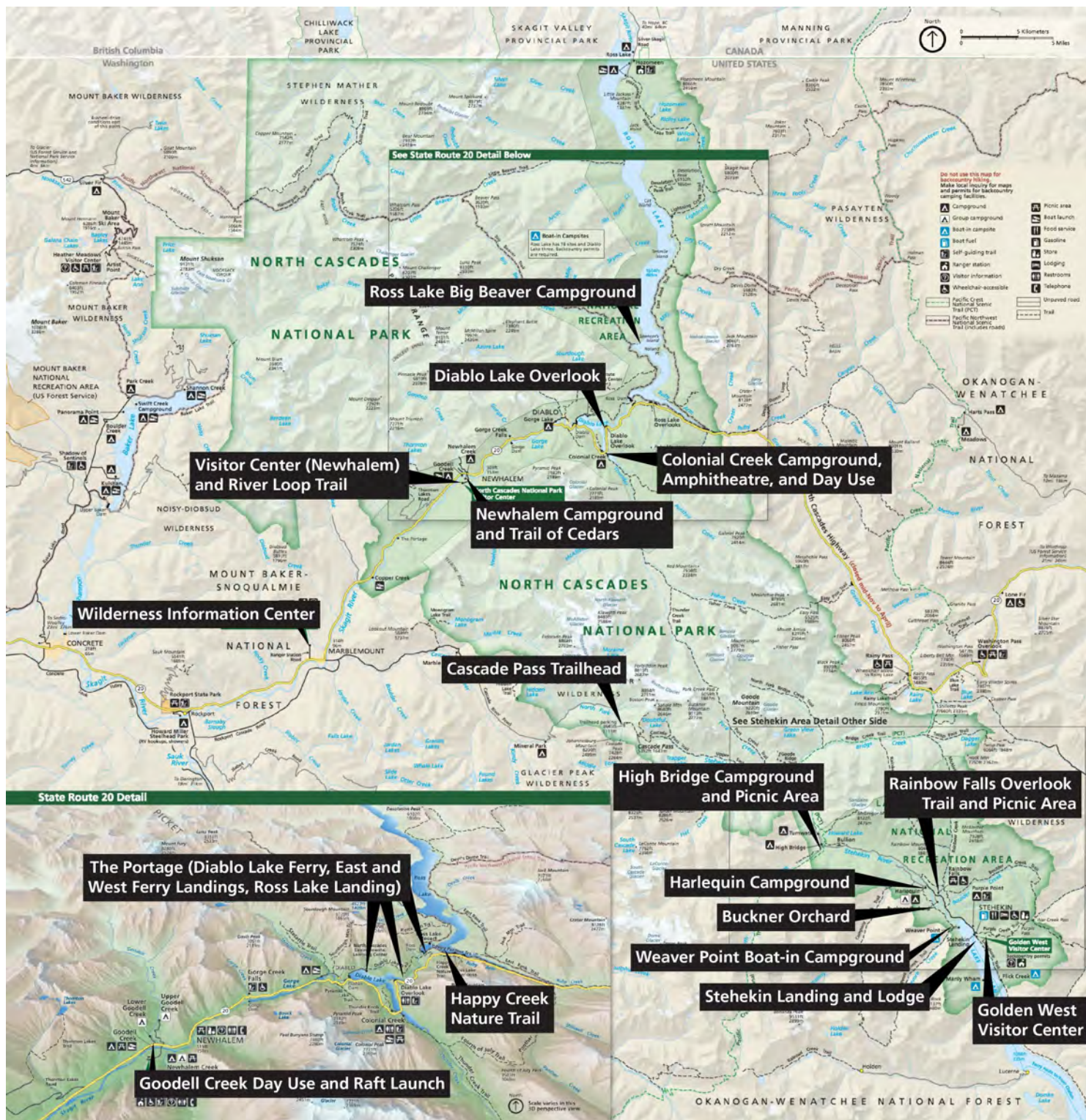
The interdisciplinary team assessed the following park areas for accessibility during the planning effort. Areas not assessed are in appendix C.

Ross Lake Area

- Wilderness Information Center
- Cascade Pass Trailhead
- Goodell Creek Day Use and Raft Launch
- Visitor Center (Newhalem) and River Loop Trail
- Newhalem Campground
- Newhalem Trail of Cedars
- Colonial Creek Campground, Amphitheater, and Day Use Area
- The Portage (Diablo Lake Ferry, East and West Ferry Landings, Ross Lake Landing)
- Diablo Lake Overlook
- Happy Creek Nature Trail
- Ross Lake Big Beaver Campground

Stehekin Area

- Golden West Visitor Center
- Stehekin Landing and Lodge
- Weaver Point Boat-in Campground
- Buckner Orchard
- Rainbow Falls Overlook Trail and Picnic Area
- Harlequin Campground
- High Bridge Campground and Picnic Area



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR PARK AREAS ASSESSED

The Architectural Barrier Act requires that any building or facility designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal funds be accessible and usable by any individuals with disabilities. The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS) were adopted for federal facilities in 1984 and 2006, respectively. Subsequently, in 2011, standards for recreational facilities were incorporated into ABAAS as chapter 10.

Dependent upon the date of a building's construction or alteration, different design standards apply. The interdisciplinary team used ABAAS to conduct the transition plan facility assessments. Although a barrier may be identified by the current assessment for improvement, facilities are only required to follow the standard in place at the time of construction and/or alteration. Therefore, barriers may not be in violation of ABAAS. However, any renovation or upgrade of that building is required to meet the most current standard at the time of work. In addition, Harpers Ferry Center Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media were followed for facility and program assessments.

This document does not include strategies for transitioning employee workspaces to be accessible. In the event that an employee with a disability is hired by North Cascades National Park Service Complex, the supervisor and employee will discuss the employee's needs. The supervisor will then determine what accommodations are reasonable within the given work environment and determine a plan of action to meet those needs.

For each park area, this document provides an overview of findings and recommended solutions in a brief narrative and bulleted list and provides corresponding site plan(s) that illustrate existing conditions. For details on each barrier, solution, and time frame, see the companion implementation strategy table (<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/noca>). It is important to understand that the site plans and recommendations are conceptual and will require further design development and historic and environmental compliance before construction. Consult with cultural and natural resource staff before proceeding with recommended actions. During the implementation phase, the interdisciplinary team must reassess the project site conditions and consult with ABAAS and the local disability community to ensure that specific design and programmatic solutions are correctly addressed.



WILDERNESS INFORMATION CENTER

The Wilderness Information Center is in Marblemount, to the west of the park entrance, and is the primary location for visitors to obtain backcountry permits and speak with staff about wilderness trips. The center features a counter where visitors can interact with staff, access a tactile map of the park, and visit a small bookstore area. Outside the building are trash and recycling bins, restrooms, a paved parking area, and a nearby picnic area with two tables. The building interior has ample circulation space. The tactile map has adequate clear space, shop displays are within reach ranges, and the transaction counter is within accessible height. Outside the building, the restroom signs and permit station are within accessible heights.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Wilderness Information Center include the following:

- **Routes:** Improve slopes on the route from the parking area to the building.
- **Restrooms:** Improve accessible features in the restroom.
- **Site features:** Improve the clear space and operable parts for various site features such as trash and the water hydrant.
- **Building:** Widen routes throughout the bookstore and update tactile exhibits.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Wilderness Information Center Site Plan





CASCADE PASS TRAILHEAD

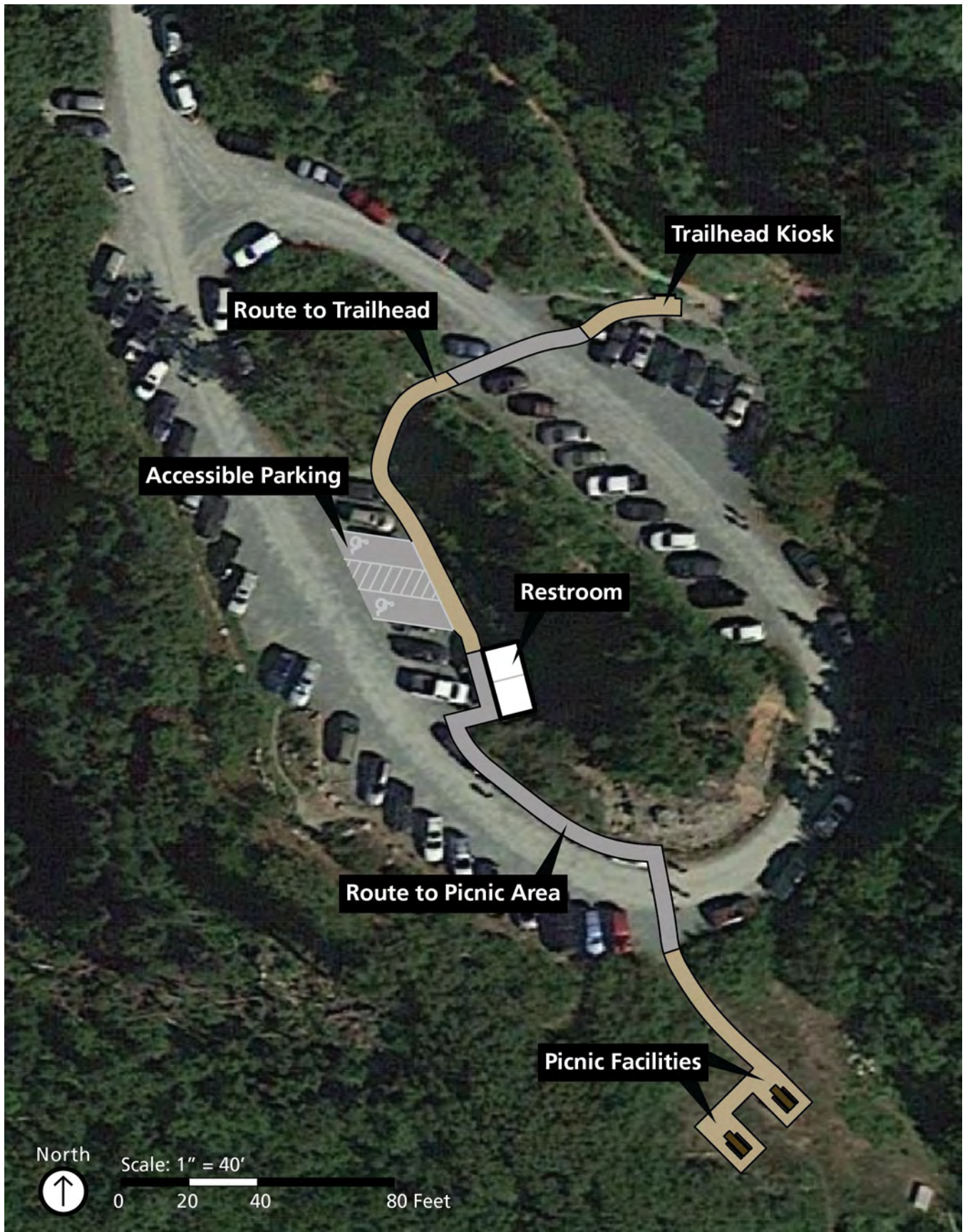
The trailhead includes waysides, a comfort station, an informal grassy picnic area, and a gravel parking area. A backcountry campground is also in the area. The drive to the trailhead leads through dense forest, picturesque creeks, and panoramic views of mountains and glaciers. The views into the wilderness from the trailhead may be the most spectacular views reachable by vehicle in the park. From the trailhead, visitors embark on some of the most popular day and overnight hiking trips in the park.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Cascade Pass Trailhead include the following:

- **Parking:** Add accessible parking, access aisle, and signage.
- **Routes:** Improve slopes and hardened surfaces, and connect parking to the trailhead, picnic area, and restrooms.
- **Restroom:** Improve accessible features in the vault toilet.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve surfaces, and add accessible tables.
- **Trailhead:** Add trailhead signage that outlines trail conditions, and improve the surface in front of existing signage.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Cascade Pass Trailhead Site Plan





GOODELL CREEK DAY USE AND RAFT LAUNCH

The day use area features a paved roadway, a covered and paved picnic area, an accessible parking area, trash bins, and two comfort stations. The picnic area offers views of the Skagit River.

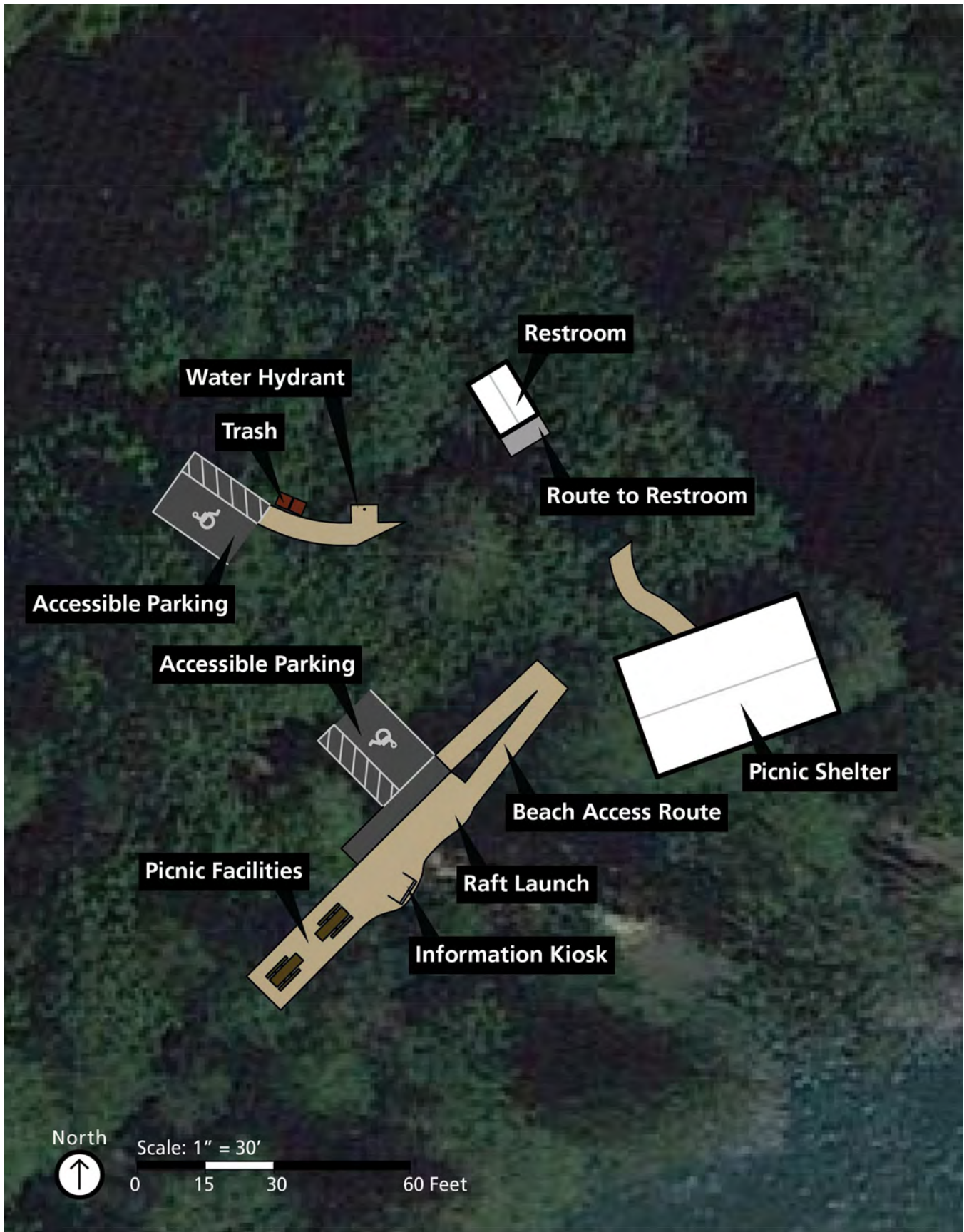
The raft launch area features a natural-surface ramp, an uncovered gravel picnic area with an interpretive kiosk, and a small parking area. Visitors may launch personal watercraft or participate in a guided trip. Approximately 9 miles of class II and III rafting opportunities are available on this section of the Skagit River to Copper Creek.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Goodell Creek Day Use and Raft Launch include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve the accessible parking space, and add an accessible parking space near the raft launch and picnic area.
- **Picnic Facilities:** Improve surfaces, and add accessible tables, trash cans, and a water hydrant.
- **Routes:** Add a beach access route to the raft launch, reduce thresholds on surface transitions, and improve slopes to the restroom.
- **Restroom:** Improve the accessible features in the vault toilet.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Goodell Creek Day Use Site Plan





VISITOR CENTER (NEWHALEM) AND RIVER LOOP TRAIL

Located less than a mile from Highway 20, the visitor center is surrounded by forest. The building has high vaulted ceilings and large windows and contains restrooms, a drinking fountain, gift shop, information desk, auditorium, exhibit area, tactile map, children's nook, and fireplace with seating. An informational film plays every 15 minutes during open hours. In addition to providing visitors with information and interpretation, the building is also used for programming, events, and meetings. The visitor center is typically open May through September. Outside areas feature a front plaza; an information kiosk; a back patio with picnic tables and benches; paved, wide sidewalks; benches; trash bins; and a paved roadway with striped vehicular parking. Many features of the visitor center provide physical and programmatic accessibility. For example, the trailhead/information sign uses graphic contrast and readable font sizes. The kiosk and refuse bins have clear ground space. Benches have companion seating. One of the picnic tables is accessible. Indoors, the gift shop counter is at the right height and provides clearance space under the desk. Binders with braille and large-print versions of exhibit information are displayed at the entrance to the exhibit space. Many of the interpretive exhibits are tactile. The auditorium features sloped seating and aisles that meet slope requirements, wheelchair areas that are well distributed, and a stage that has ramp access.

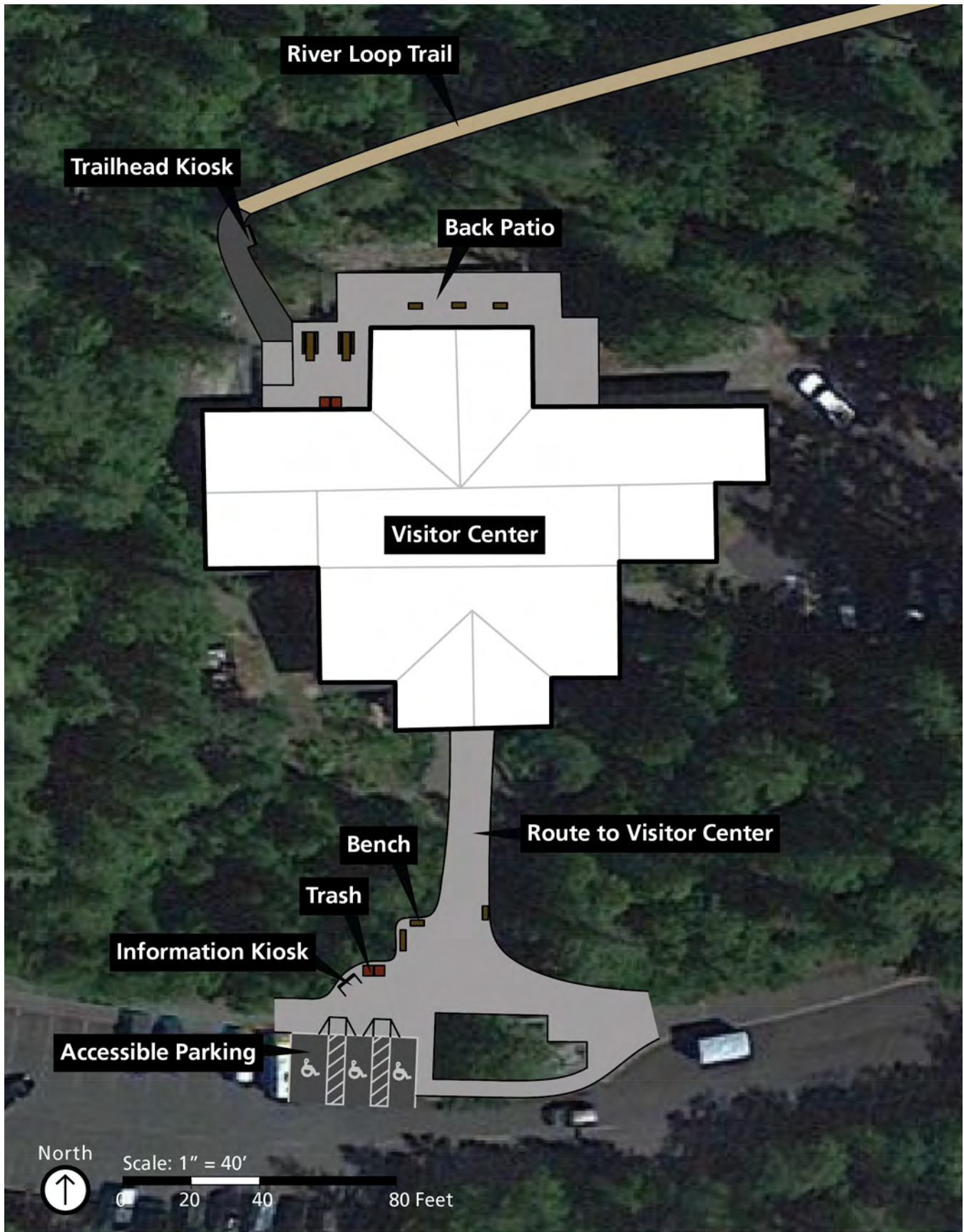
The River Loop Trail connects the visitor center and the Newhalem Campground and includes a river loop portion. The trail leads visitors through forest and has some clearings, which provide long vistas of the terrain. The trail is composed of loose gravel. With adjustments to address steeper slopes, at least a portion of the trail could meet accessibility standards.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Visitor Center (Newhalem) and River Loop Trail include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve accessible parking spaces with reduced slopes, and add signage.
- **Routes:** Improve slopes on the curb ramp from the accessible parking spaces to the route to the visitor center.
- **Site features:** Improve the clear space and operable parts for various site features such as trash cans and the information kiosk.
- **Building:** Widen routes throughout the visitor center and exhibits, update exhibits with assistive listening devices and tactile models, improve restrooms with accessibility features, and improve seating in the theater with wheelchair and companion spaces.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve surfaces, and add an accessible table and trash can.
- **Trail:** Add trailhead signage that outlines trail conditions and hardened surfaces with fewer obstacles on the trail surface.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Visitor Center (Newhalem) Site Plan





NEWHALEM CAMPGROUND

The Newhalem Campground contains A, B, and C loops. Campsites feature fire rings, picnic tables, tent pads, bear boxes, and grills. The campground features one accessible campsite in loop C that is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The picnic table features angled supports that provide adequate knee clearance. The campground also features information kiosks, restrooms, and water hydrants. Many of the elements of the restrooms meet accessibility standards.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Newhalem Campground include the following:

- **Campsites:** Add accessible campsites, and update existing campsites to be accessible.
- **Routes:** Improve slopes on the routes to the restroom.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the restroom features, and add drinking fountains.
- **Trash:** Improve operable parts and the clear ground space.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Newhalem Campground Site Plan





NEWHALEM TRAIL OF CEDARS

The Trail of Cedars begins at a suspension bridge in Newhalem and leads visitors along a forest and river loop. Three accessible parking spaces are available nearby on Main Street. The route to the suspension bridge is generally flat with some sloping. The trail itself is generally a flat route with some sloped sections. Small signs identify plants along the trail. With some minor adjustments, the trail could meet accessibility requirements.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Newhalem Trail of Cedars include the following:

- **Trail:** Add trailhead signage that outlines trail conditions and hardened surfaces with fewer obstacles.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Newhalem Trail of Cedars Site Plan





COLONIAL CREEK CAMPGROUND, AMPHITHEATRE, AND DAY USE

Situated along the turquoise waters of Lake Diablo, Colonial Creek Campground is a large campground spanning both south and north of Highway 20. Beyond campsites, the campground includes restrooms, one boat launch, a fishing pier, day use parking, an outdoor amphitheater, and the Thunder Creek Trailhead. The campground provides accessible campsites. The fishing pier includes some lower guardrails, which provide seated persons with a better view of Diablo Lake. The edge protection on the pier meets accessibility requirements. The paved parking was restriped in the summer of 2022 and improved accessible parking spaces. The Thunder Creek Trailhead sign includes helpful information such as a color-coded rating system (easy, moderate, or strenuous).

Proposed accessibility improvements at Colonial Creek Campground include the following:

- **Campsites:** Add accessible campsites, and update existing campsites to be accessible.
- **Restrooms:** Improve restroom features.
- **Parking:** Improve the accessible parking space near the amphitheater.
- **Amphitheater:** Improve the routes to the amphitheater, and add designated wheelchair and companion seating spaces.
- **Signage:** Add trailhead signage that outlines trail conditions, and improve the surface in front of existing signage.

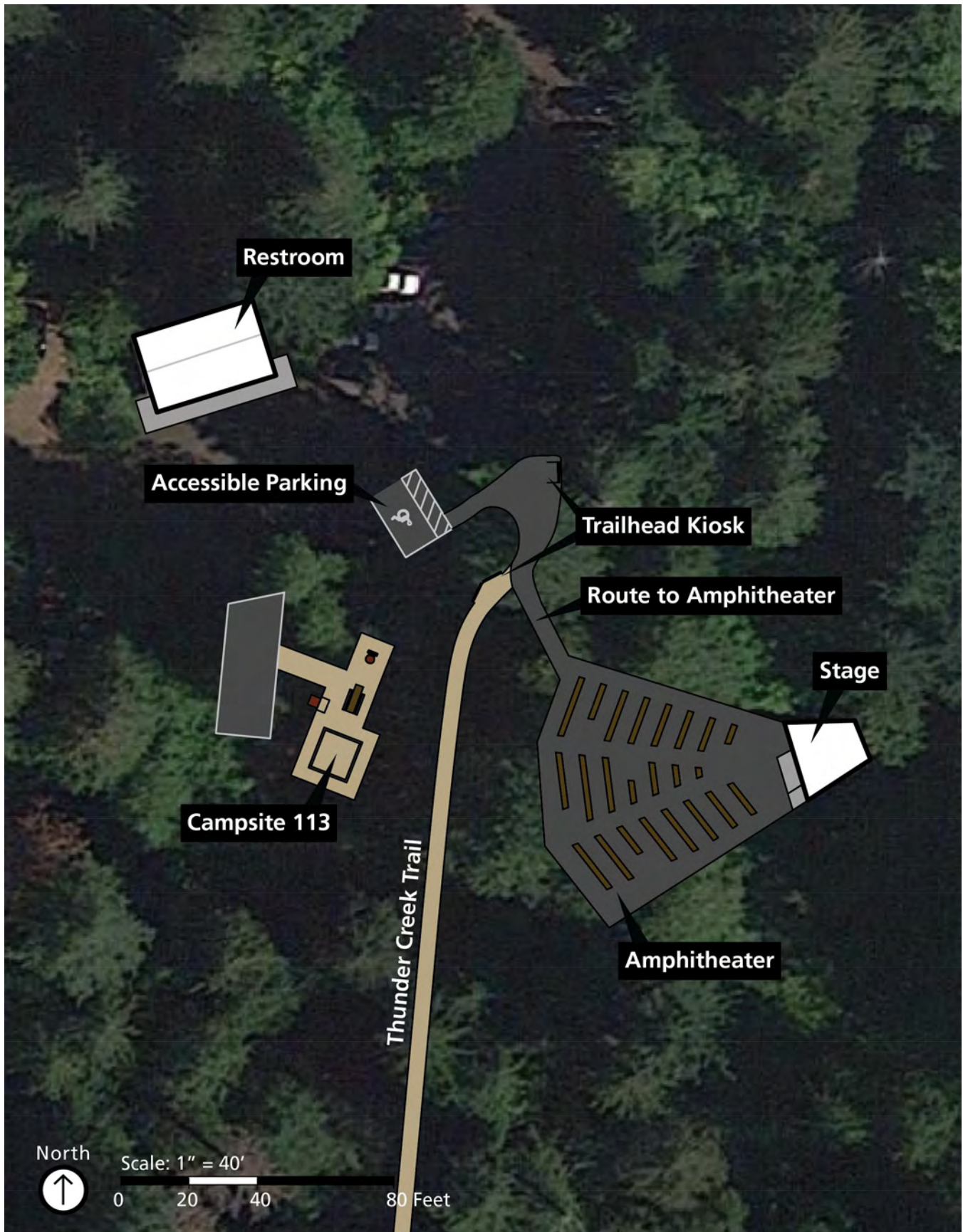
Proposed accessibility improvements at Colonial Creek Day Use include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve the accessible parking spaces, and add an accessible parking space.

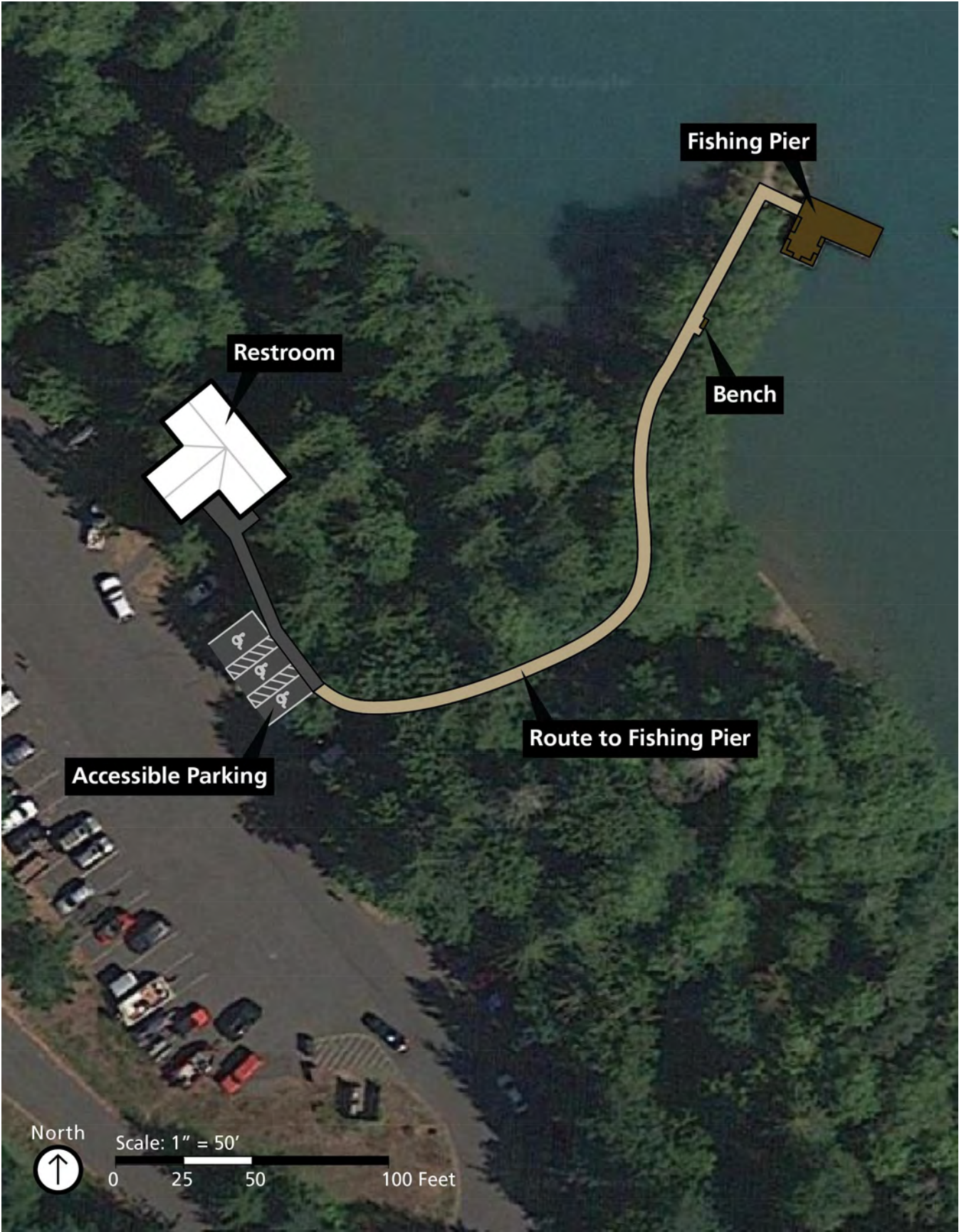
- **Routes:** Improve slopes, reduce thresholds on surface transitions, and harden the surface on the route to the fishing pier and viewing area.
- **Fishing Pier:** Improve benches with designated wheelchair and companion seating spaces, improve the wood surface, and lower the railings for an accessible fishing experience.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Colonial Creek Campground Site Plan



Colonial Creek Day Use Site Plan





THE PORTAGE DIABLO LAKE FERRY

The Diablo Lake Ferry is operated by Seattle City Light, which ferries visitors from the West Ferry Landing to the East Ferry Landing as the first part of the journey to Ross Lake. From the East Ferry Landing, visitors hand luggage to ferry staff over the side of the boat and enter by a 1-foot step up. The ferry carries approximately 50 visitors and their luggage during the half-hour journey. With spectacular views of the surrounding wilderness mountains, canyon walls, and the aquamarine lake, the journey leads visitors away from the more highly developed Highway 20 corridor towards a more rustic experience with opportunities for backcountry and wilderness exploration. The ferry provides areas for wheelchair seating.

Proposed accessibility improvements at the Portage Diablo Lake Ferry include the following:

- **Routes:** Add a movable ramp and handrails to enter the ferry, and widen the route within the ferry.
- **Seating:** Add designated wheelchair and companion seating spaces, and improve the benches on the ferry.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.



THE PORTAGE WEST FERRY LANDING

The ferry landing area includes 21 parking spaces in a paved and generally level parking lot, an interpretive kiosk, stairs, gangway, and the floating pier. The pier provides a viewpoint for Diablo Lake. Seattle City Light runs the Diablo Lake Ferry, which brings visitors to the East Ferry Landing as a first part of the journey to Ross Lake. Travel to Ross Lake from the West Ferry Landing requires taking the ferry and a concession-run truck ride to the Ross Lake Landing.

Proposed accessibility improvements at the Portage West Ferry Landing include the following:

- **Parking:** Add accessible parking spaces.
- **Routes:** Reduced thresholds and openings in the boat dock surface, improved slopes on the gangway, and addition of handrails on stairs and pier.
- **Boating Facilities:** Add an accessible kayak launch.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

The Portage West Ferry Landing Site Plan





THE PORTAGE EAST FERRY LANDING

The East Ferry Landing includes a floating concrete pier, gangway, and concrete landing. The pier has an area for the ferry and two smaller areas for hand-powered watercraft to dock. These areas are used by visitors who have paddled Diablo Lake and are portaging to Ross Lake. At the concrete landing, travelers get in line with their belongings to board the truck to Ross Lake. Luggage and personal watercraft are loaded first, with help from the driver. Visitors board the back of the truck using a metal stairway and sit on benches in the truck bed. The dirt roadway rises steeply and is uneven. Visitors using wheelchairs can notify Seattle City Light staff in advance for transportation assistance. Seattle City Light installed a custom-built kayak launch in this location, and it was well received and used by many visitors. However, the launch was destroyed by wave action after three seasons.

Proposed accessibility improvements at the Portage East Ferry Landing include the following:

- **Routes:** Reduce thresholds and openings in the boat dock and gangway surface.
- **Boating Facilities:** Add an accessible kayak launch.
- **Transportation:** Improve the passenger loading zone and portage from the East Ferry Landing to Ross Lake.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

The Portage East Ferry Landing Site Plan





THE PORTAGE ROSS LAKE LANDING

A 20-minute truck drive on a gravel road takes visitors to the Ross Lake Landing. The gangway that connects the landing to the floating wood dock is an informal and narrow wood plank structure. From here, visitors may board water taxis provided by Ross Lake Resort or use personal canoes and kayaks on the lake. A single comfort station is a 10-minute walk down a steeply sloping gravel path. A covered picnic area is located near the comfort station. The picnic platform has a gravel surface and provides another viewpoint for Ross Lake.

Proposed accessibility improvements at the Portage Ross Lake Landing include the following:

- **Routes:** Improve slopes and hardened surfaces to the vault toilet and picnic area, and add an accessible gangway to the boat dock.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the restroom features at the vault toilet.
- **Picnic Area:** Add an accessible table and trash can.
- **Boating Facilities:** Add an accessible kayak launch.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

The Portage Ross Lake Landing Site Plan





DIABLO LAKE OVERLOOK

The Diablo Lake Overlook is a popular destination for visitors, offering sweeping views of the lake's blue-green water against a backdrop of evergreen mountainsides. The area is supported by parking, restrooms, spaces for picnicking, and a series of interpretive waysides that describe the natural and cultural history of the area. While some key destinations in the park require additional modes of transportation, such as ferry transport, the Diablo Lake Overlook is accessible by car. The site steadily slopes downgrade towards the edge of the mountainside, where the surface flattens to accommodate visitors taking in the magnificent views. Due to this layout, site features, such as parking and routes connecting dispersed waysides, become increasingly inaccessible as one moves farther from the primary destination. Future improvements scheduled for the parking area will provide an opportunity to resurface and relocate the accessible parking stalls closer to primary facilities like the restrooms. The picnic sites are located on an uneven natural surface. However, corrections would require minimal effort to meet or exceed specifications for outdoor recreational access routes, making Diablo Lake Overlook an experience with few barriers and many rewards for the visitor.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Diablo Lake Overlook include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve the parking stall and access aisle slopes and signage.
- **Routes:** Improve the slopes on both paved and natural surfaces between accessible parking locations and the restroom, picnic, and interpretive site elements.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the restroom, including signage, clear space, and the location of the sanitizer dispenser.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve the picnic tables and their placement, the operation of and access to the trash and recycling receptacles, and the clear space for benches.

- **Interpretation:** Improve the wayside for contrast, and recommend improvements allowing for a forward approach and knee clearance under units.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

**Diablo Lake Overlook Southeast Corner/Lower Lot (top),
Northwest Corner/Upper Lot (bottom) Site Plans**



Diablo Lake Overlook Southwest Corner/Lower Lot Site Plan





HAPPY CREEK FOREST WALK AND FALLS TRAIL

Happy Creek Forest Walk and Falls Trail begins with a modest trailhead featuring a small asphalt parking area, restrooms, and trailhead signage. Beyond the trail's initial boardwalk surface, visitors can experience moss-covered woodlands and the sounds of trickling water. A past project at the site sought to make Happy Creek Nature Trail physically accessible to the broadest range of abilities. Currently, the most substantial barrier is the immediate access to the trail, where transition areas between the boardwalk and natural surface trail create a vertical barrier. While the site has two identified accessible parking stalls, cross slopes are too steep, and the site needs elements such as marked access aisles and required specifications for signage. Providing trailhead signage with the required information will inform visitors of the work that went into this trail design. As one of the most universally accessible trails in the park, removing these barriers will provide access to a truly unique and intimate visitor experience.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Happy Creek Nature Trail include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve the parking stalls, including the surface, slope, access aisle requirements, and signage.
- **Restroom:** Improve the signage and interior clear space in the restroom.
- **Trailhead:** Improve the informational signage to include required elements, and improve the layout to provide a clear route to the accessible trash and recycling units.
- **Routes:** Improve the surface consistency of the trail, which is being maintained as an outdoor recreational access route, and add handrails in steep sections.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Happy Creek Nature Trail Site Plan





ROSS LAKE BIG BEAVER CAMPGROUND

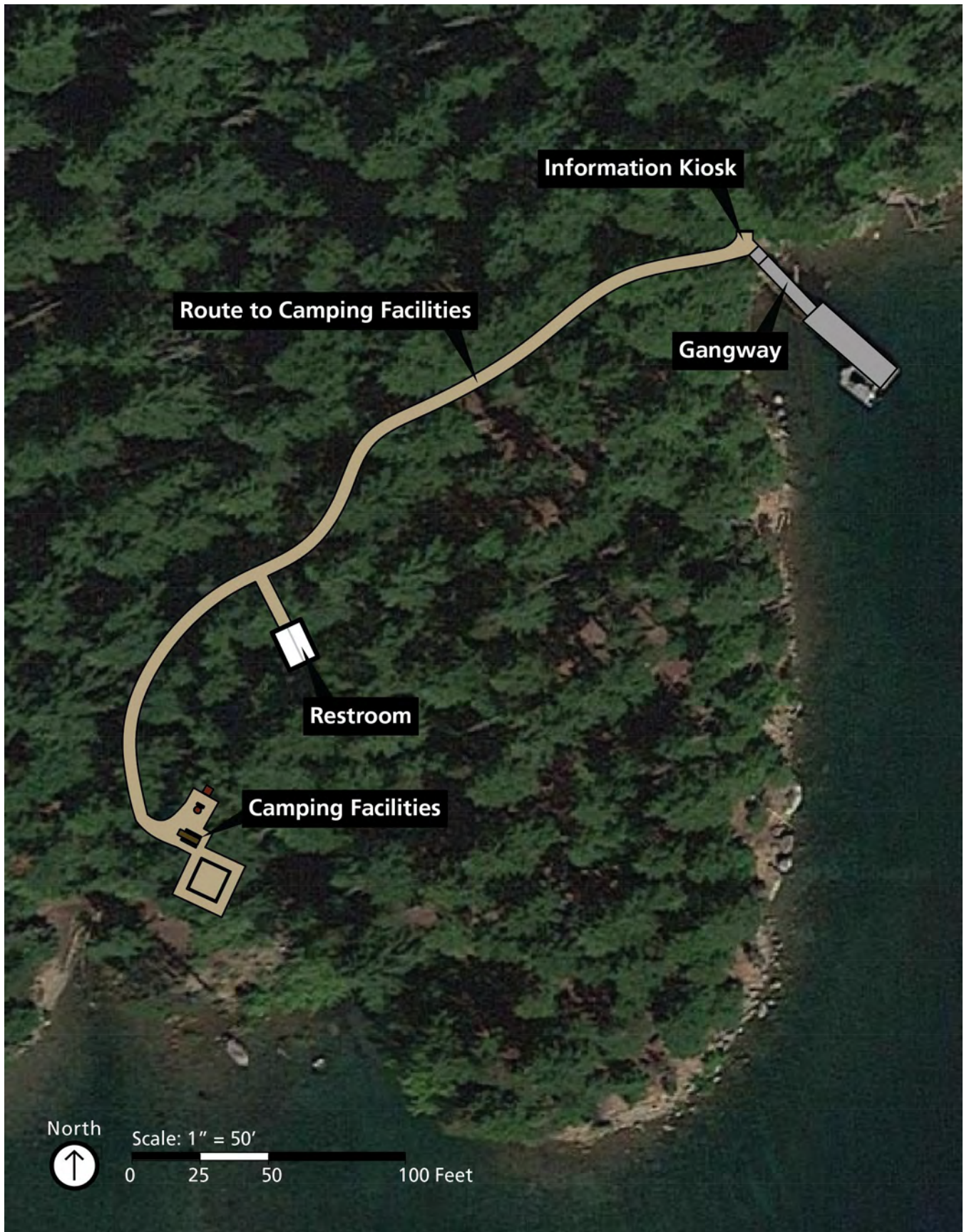
This boat-in campsite is located on Ross Lake. The campsite is fairly undeveloped and features a pier, informational kiosk, dirt trails, comfort stations, and campsites. The pier and many of the campgrounds feature panoramic views across Ross Lake. The pier gangway surface perforations meet the half-inch maximum opening requirement for accessibility. One of the two comfort stations meets most accessibility requirements.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Ross Lake include the following:

- **Routes:** Improve the slopes and width of the route to the campsites, including reducing obstacles and openings of the surface.
- **Campsites:** Add accessible campsites, and update existing campsites to be accessible.
- **Restroom:** Improve accessible features in the vault toilet.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Ross Lake Big Beaver Campground Site Plan





GOLDEN WEST VISITOR CENTER

The Golden West Visitor Center is the central location for interpretation and visitor contact within the Stehekin area. The park strives to reflect and connect with the surrounding community, showcasing local art in a small gallery. The name of the visitor center itself ties back to the historic Golden West Lodge. Visitors come to learn about the cultural and natural history of this unique member of the North Cascades National Park Service Complex and to obtain information as they embark on activities ranging from picnicking and recreational boating to extended backcountry journeys along the Pacific Crest Trail. In general, physical accessibility is one of the biggest challenges facing the visitor center. The center has no personal vehicular access, and the pedestrian route follows up a steep hill along portions of a historic roadbed. The historic nature of the building prohibits access from the primary front entrance, requiring the use of a side route that has been fitted with a ramp. Understanding the critical barrier this poses, the park makes a strong effort to accommodate visitors by offering transportation in a small electric passenger cart. Exhibits in the facility have opportunities for improvement by expanding the multisensory components of the subjects at hand and adding audiovisual support, such as assistive listening devices, and providing audio description and audio tours of exhibits.

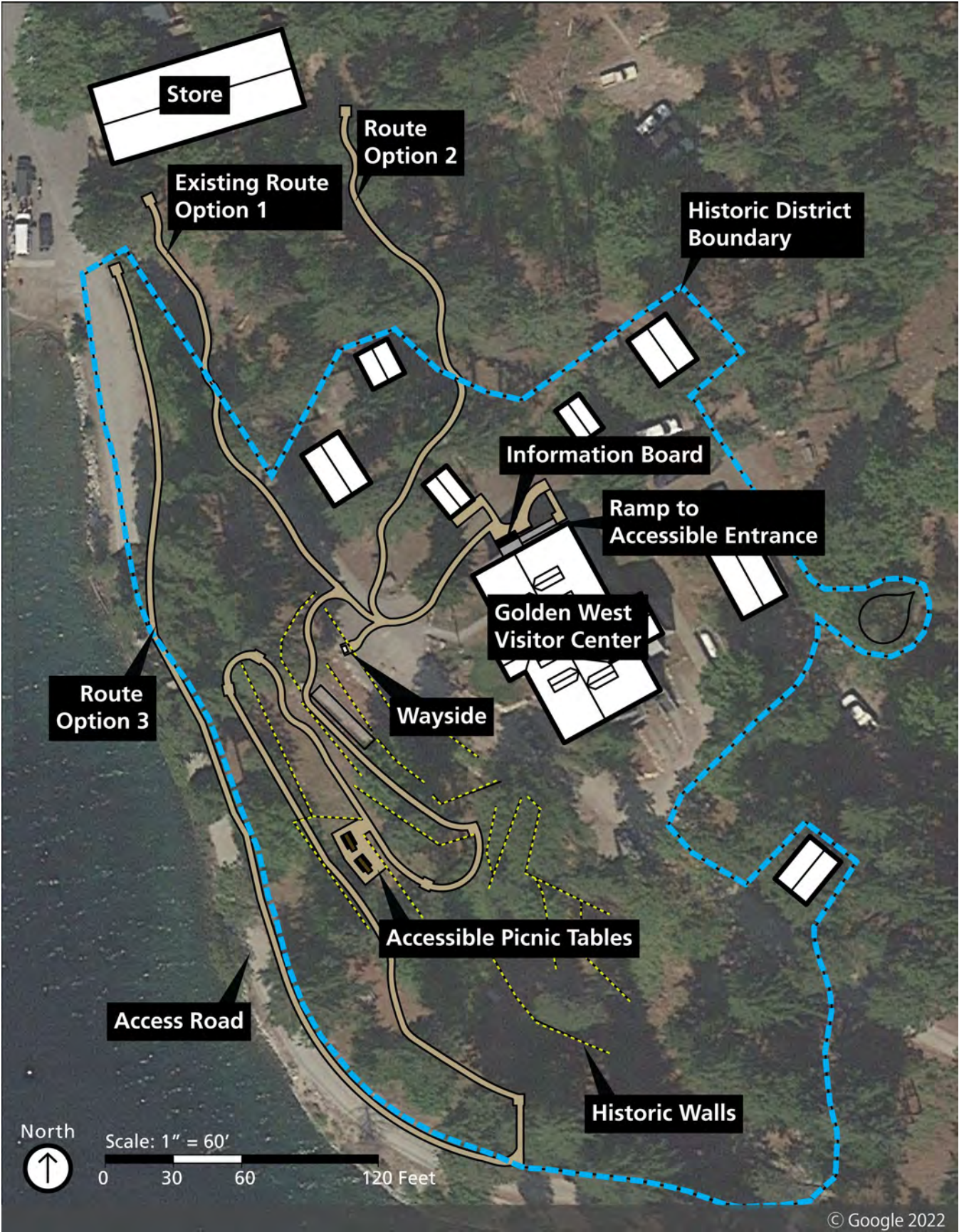
Proposed accessibility improvements at Golden West Visitor Center include the following:

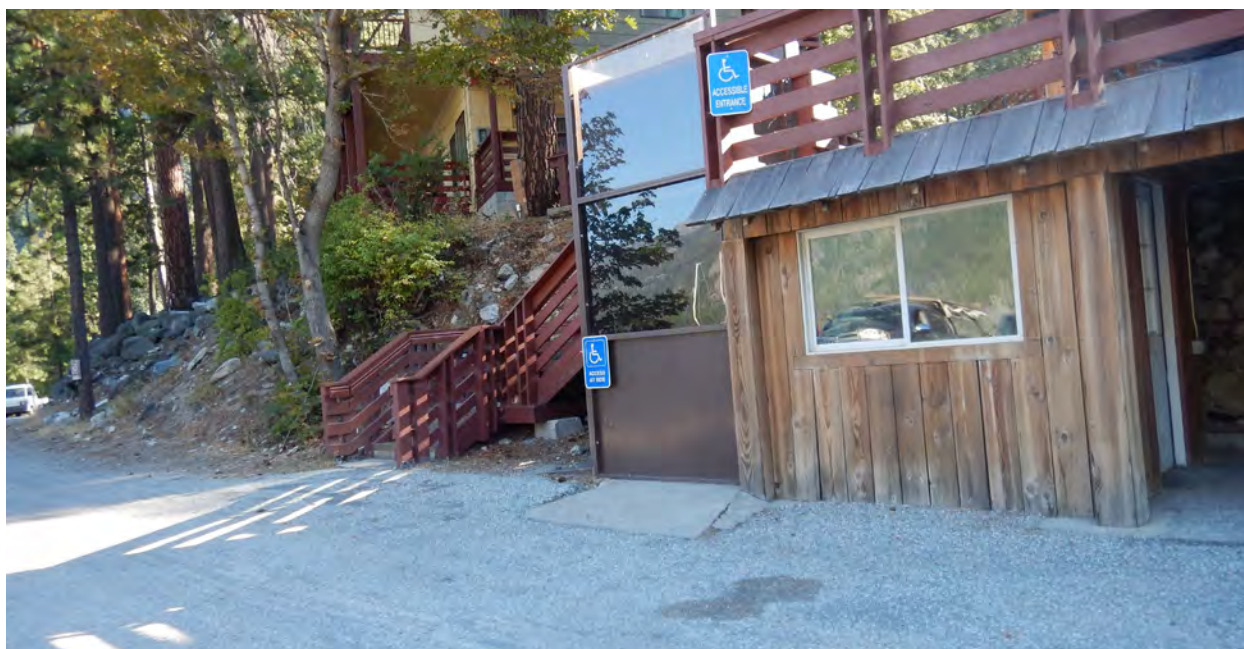
- **Routes:** Improve the slopes and surfaces of the routes leading to the building as practicable in the historic landscape, and improve visitor loading and drop-off procedures.
- **Building:** Improve access throughout the interior spaces of the visitor center, including companion seating in seating areas and service counter dimensions.

- **Interpretation:** Improve the contrast and legibility of text and graphics on exhibits and maps.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Golden West Visitor Center Site Plan





STEHEKIN LANDING AND LODGE

The Stehekin Landing and Lodge area is where visitors can access the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, along with numerous trails, including the Pacific Crest Trail, or relax and recreate locally, taking in the surrounding views and experiencing the area's rich history. Waterfalls, historic orchards, and pristine campgrounds support and enrich the experience of the surrounding valley. Stehekin Landing is accessed via commercial ferries that operate during daytime hours. An eclectic mix of visitors converge on the lodge, from thru hikers, weekend visitors, and locals to the occasional honey connoisseur. Multiple services, both programmatic and physical, are accessible at the site. Accessible buses are usually available but were not in 2022 due to a lack of commercially licensed drivers. Return operation of the buses is expected in 2023. . The lower arrival area is generally flat with slightly high slopes leading to informational signs, bear boxes, and trash and recycling receptacles, most with clear and level landings. A self-operated platform lift allows access to the upper level, where dining facilities, lodge check in, and a gift shop are available. Scheduled decking improvements in this area will improve entry to all interior spaces. The restaurant, retail services, and designated restrooms, while tight, meet the minimum requirements for accessibility. The outdoor area is large, has moveable tables and seating, and offers the same viewing experience from all locations. Accessing the lodge itself presents some challenges related to the accessible route, which is narrow and contains high slopes. One unit is designated as accessible, and another is undergoing improvements for accessibility. While cabins and condo-type units are also available, none of them are currently accessible.

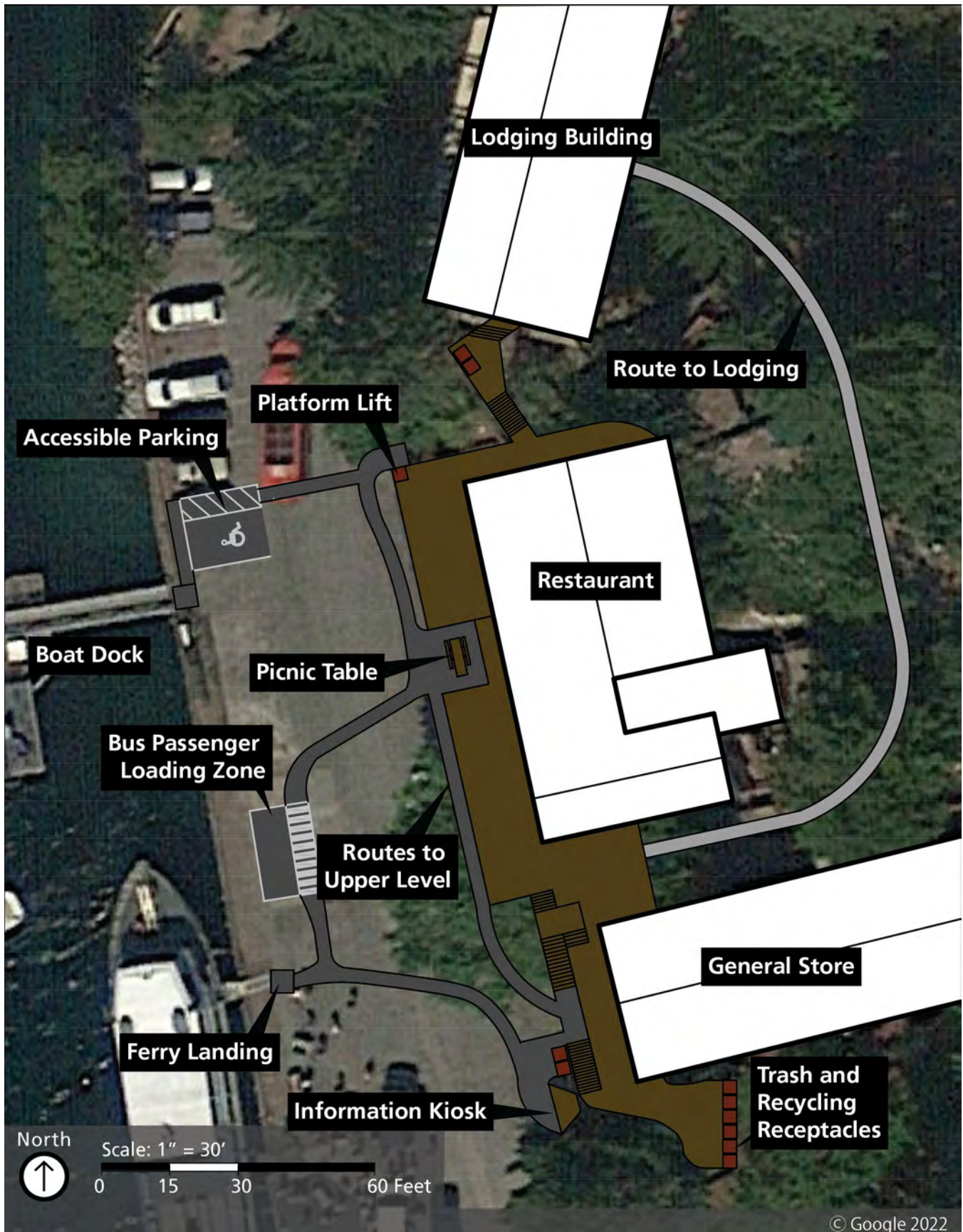
Proposed accessibility improvements at Stehekin Landing include the following:

- **Landing:** Improve the clear space in front of site features at the landing such as the information kiosk, trash and recycling receptacles, and picnic tables.

- **Routes:** Improve the threshold on the portable gangway. Improve accessible routes connecting site features, such as the landing to the platform lift, which would also have improved clear space, signage, threshold clearance at the approach, and the ability to operate independently.
- **Facilities:** Improve access within the historic buildings and to their interior site features such service counters and dining surfaces.
- **Restrooms:** Improve public restrooms, including signage and the location of restroom features such as mirrors, and wrapping of sink pipes.
- **Lodging:** Improve the options for accessible accommodations such as roll-in showers and required communication features.
- **Boat Dock:** Improve the use of the fueling station pump.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Stehekin Landing and Lodge Site Plan





WEAVER POINT BOAT-IN CAMPGROUND

Weaver Point Boat-in Campground offers one of the most unique overnight opportunities in the immediate Stehekin area. Located on the opposite shore of the lodge, visitors can access the campground by trail or by boat, kayak, or canoe. Campsites are in the intimate shelter of the forest or on the shore with breathtaking views of the lake. Surfaces are generally firm but become increasingly soft under the shaded canopy of the forest as natural debris, such as pine needles, cones, and leaves, begin to accumulate. The campground needs repairs, creating an opportunity to improve the experience for all visitors, regardless of ability. Key accessibility improvements include elevating the grade to eliminate the high step down from the dock as it transitions to the natural surface and providing an accessible restroom, which has already been funded.

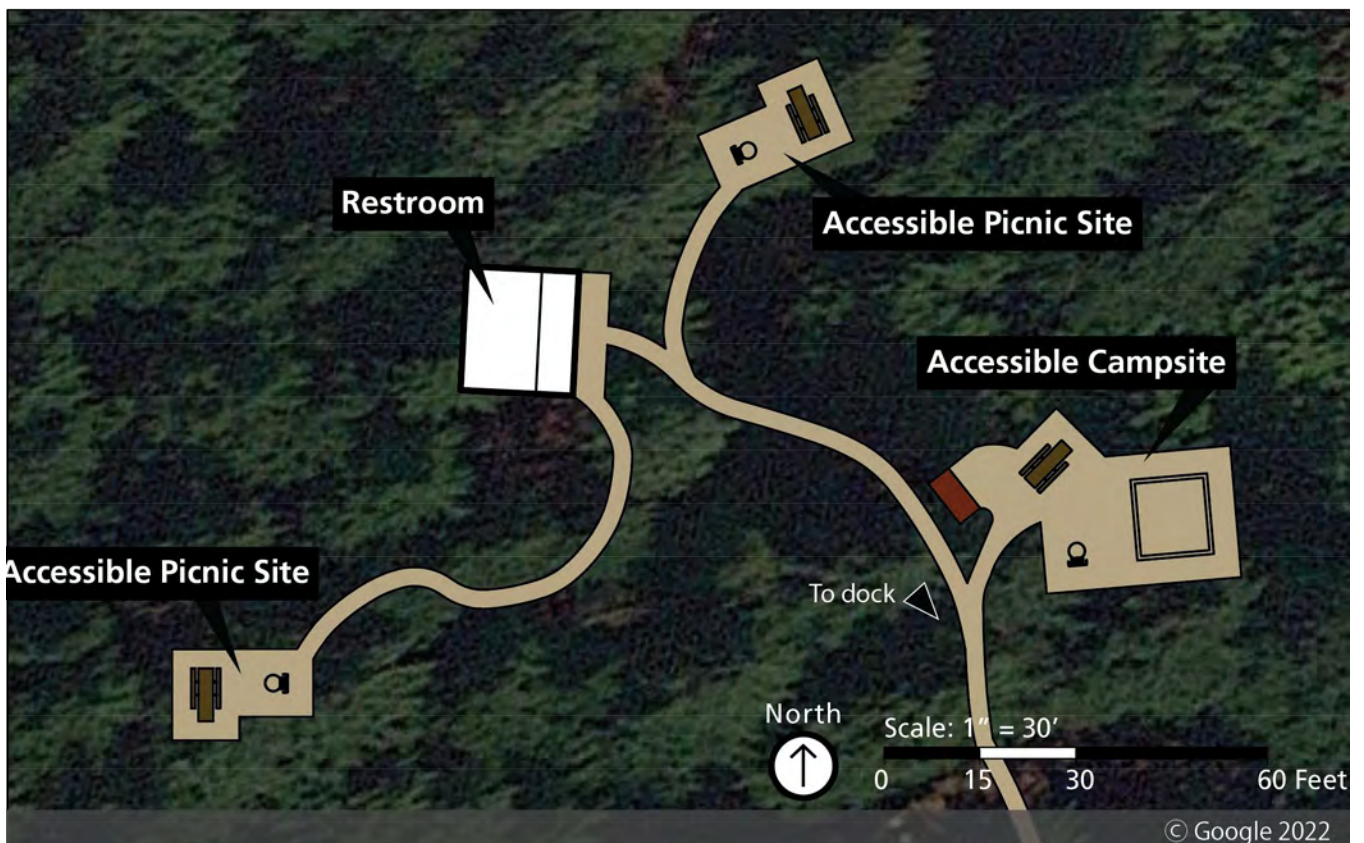
Proposed accessibility improvements at Weaver Point Boat-in Campground include the following:

- **Routes:** Improve transition thresholds at the gangway and changes in height between dock sections. Improve the slope and surfaces along outdoor recreational access routes between site features such as signage, bear lockers and receptacles, fire rings, and the restrooms. Improve surfaces and slopes of the beach access routes to the water's edge.
- **Campsites:** Improve the number of designated accessible sites with features that include required clear space such as picnic tables, fire rings, trash receptacles, and bear lockers.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve the number of designated accessible sites with features that include required clear space such as picnic tables, fire rings, trash receptacles, and bear lockers.

- **Restroom:** Replace the existing closed facility with one that is accessible (planned).

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Weaver Point Boat-in Campground East (top), West (bottom) Site Plans





BUCKNER ORCHARD

Buckner Orchard is a historic homestead and functioning apple orchard that the park manages as a historic site. The rustic intimacy of the area is surrounded by commanding views of mountaintops. While open to visitors for interpretation, the area is also known for hosting public and private special events such as weddings and seasonal harvest festivals. While the area is fairly level, key facilities and features, such as the route to the accessible restroom and the replica apple shed foundation, where many events are centered, are not accessible and create a barrier for members of the disability community. The park has been proactive in exploring opportunities to improve access soon.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Buckner Orchard include the following:

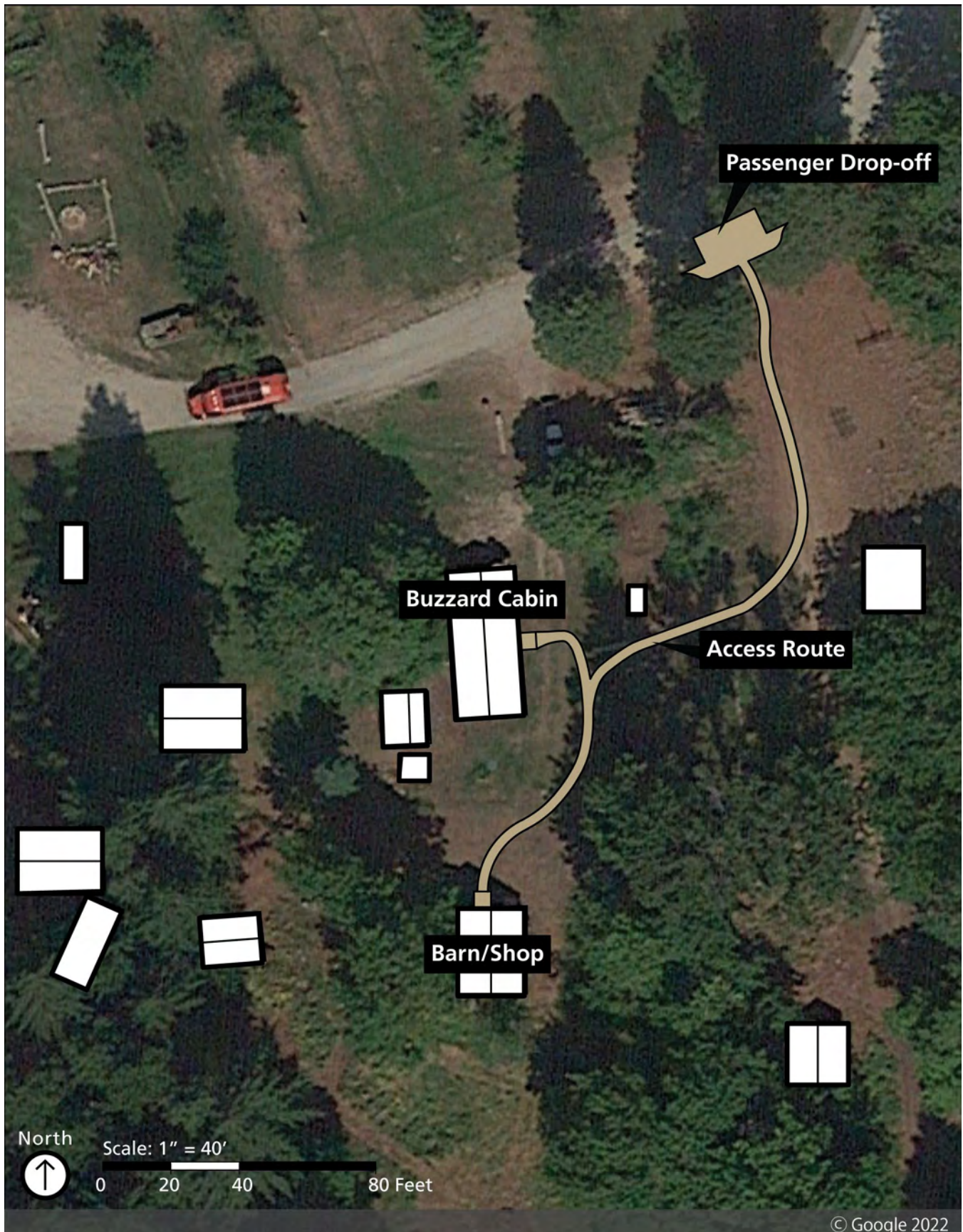
- **Parking:** Add accessible parking, access aisle, signage, and accessible loading and unloading areas.
- **Routes:** Improve slopes and surfaces, particularly connecting parking or loading areas, to the apple shed foundation and through the you-pick orchard, as practicable.
- **Features:** Improve gated access to the orchard area, accessible spigots, brochure holders, and guest logs.
- **Buildings:** Improve access into historic structures as practicable, add an accessible restroom, and improve access to the visitor contact station.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Buckner Orchard – Buckner Orchard Area Site Plan



Buckner Orchard – Buckner Homestead Site Plan





RAINBOW FALLS OVERLOOK TRAIL AND PICNIC AREA

The Rainbow Falls Trail is a popular visitor destination, offering stunning photography opportunities both down valley and in front of a 300-foot curtain of glacial snowmelt. The trail increases in grade as it nears the falls. An area midway along the trail offers bench seating and a resting spot before the final push to the trail's end. A flat and open circulation space with a guardrail fence overlooking the falls greets visitors, along with cascading views of the falls and fleeting rainbows visible in the waves of mist and spray. The trail surface has been well compacted with occasional rock debris that is easily maintained. The surface may become slippery where mist is heaviest. The park has made considerable efforts to stabilize the trail from alluvial processes. Well-seated rock armoring and trail outslopes have ensured firm and stable surfaces.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Rainbow Falls Overlook Trail and Picnic Area include the following:

- **Parking:** Identify an accessible parking area with access aisle and required signage, along with corrections to the slope and surface.
- **Restroom:** Improve signage, and remove the threshold at the entrance.
- **Trailhead:** Improve signage at the trailhead to include required information.
- **Routes:** Improve the trail surface and outdoor recreational access routes between site features such as picnic tables, waysides, and trash and recycling receptacles.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve picnic table heights for eating surface height, and add accessible trash and recycling receptacles.

- **Interpretation:** Improve the contrast and legibility of wayside graphics and text, and create a clear approach with knee clearance underneath the unit.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Rainbow Falls Overlook Trail and Picnic Area – Rainbow Falls Trailhead (top), Rainbow Falls Trail (bottom) Site Plans





HARLEQUIN CAMPGROUND

The Harlequin Campground is situated alongside the Stehekin River as it starts to slow and meander its way down the last 2.5 miles to the mouth of Lake Chelan. The campsites sit amongst old growth cedars, and the loose, sandy floor speaks to the annual flooding in the area. Despite the challenges with the surfaces, the terrain is mostly flat with slight undulations due to vegetation and roots. Opportunities exist to relocate campsites onto firmer substrate or to use mobility mats at existing locations. Information signage has adequate font size and contrast. The sugar-fine sand, abundant shade, and low cubic feet per second water flow make this campground ideal for visitors seeking rest and relaxation.

Proposed accessibility improvements at Harlequin Campground include the following:

- **Parking:** Improve the parking area to provide signed, designated accessible parking spaces connected to routes.
- **Restrooms:** Improve the signage and thresholds up to the restroom unit, and correct the installation of restroom features such as sanitizer dispensers and toilet height.
- **Campsites:** Identify the accessible standard and group sites with improved surfaces throughout and the access to site features such as fire rings, trash and recycling receptacles, and food lockers.
- **Routes:** Improve the slopes and surfaces of routes between site elements and beach access routes connecting to the river, as practicable, and consider providing beach wheelchairs.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

Harlequin Campground Site Plan





HIGH BRIDGE CAMPGROUND AND PICNIC AREA

The High Bridge Campground lies northwest of Stehekin Lodge, just past the South Fork Agnes Creek Bridge. The sound of water dominates the senses for most of the year as one walks along an old roadbed to secluded campsites nestled amongst the towering pines. The campsites provide a degree of intimacy not found at other sites in the Chelan area. While the campsites have many loose surfaces, most of the terrain is flat, and the lack of impervious surfaces adds to the charm of the location. A quaint trail leads to a pit toilet that has accessibility challenges inherent with the remoteness of its location. The trail to the nearest water source descends steeply to the creek edge below the sites. One shelter structure with picnic tables provides reprieve from the elements but is accessed by stepping over a large timber. The three sites all offer the same types of camping experience, with a mix of shade, open sun, and expansive valley vistas.

The High Bridge Picnic Area lies near the north end of Stehekin Valley Road. Visitors traveling by foot or by vehicle experience a broad riparian corridor, in stark contrast to the treeless vistas across Lake Chelan 10 miles to the southeast. Historic corrals, employee housing, and rough-hewn picnic tables add to the character of the site. The picnic area is a convergence of multiuse activities. The area is relatively flat but does have natural obstacles consisting of loose pine duff, roots, fist-sized cobbles, and large boulders. Clearing a level landing at the existing waysides and picnic tables would require minimal effort. Trailhead signage and the information board have a high-contrast font and would only require minor alterations to meet accessibility requirements. The ability to access this remote area of the North Cascades by vehicle brings this tranquil riparian experience to a broad spectrum of visitors.

Proposed accessibility improvements at High Bridge Campground and Picnic Area include the following:

- **Campsites:** Identify accessible sites with improved surfaces throughout and access to site features, such as fire rings, trash and recycling receptacles, and bear lockers, as practicable in the historic district.
- **Routes:** Improve surfaces and slopes to routes between site features, such as waysides and trailhead signage and historic buildings, to the extent practicable.
- **Restrooms:** Improve restroom signage, entry thresholds, door widths, door handles, and the location of restroom features such as toilet paper dispensers.
- **Picnic Area:** Improve tables for knee clearance and surface heights, access to trash and recycling receptacles, and other features such as the bear sighting log.
- **Trailhead:** Improve the signage at the trailhead to include required information.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

High Bridge Campground and Picnic Area – High Bridge Campground East (top), High Bridge Campground West (bottom) Site Plans



High Bridge Campground and Picnic Area – High Bridge Picnic Area East (top), High Bridge Picnic Area West (bottom) Site Plans





NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX PROGRAMS

North Cascades National Park Service Complex showed strengths in its publications, as some are provided in large print and in Braille. Additionally, the park provides physical accessibility information on its website. The park does not currently offer audio versions of park publications, provide assistive listening devices, or provide audio description for on-site videos. Unique opportunities exist for the park to offer accessibility information and remove barriers for walks, talks, tours, and events to engage staff and further support visitors with disabilities. North Cascades National Park Service Complex is aware of these areas for improvement and is committed to addressing them.

Proposed accessibility improvements to parkwide programs include the following:

- **Publications:** Provide audio versions and audio descriptions of park publications. Provide contact information for the park accessibility contact in relevant publications. Add to the publications that are provided in large print and braille.
- **Audiovisuals:** Provide options for assistive listening for audiovisuals. Provide audio descriptions for on-site park videos. Notify visitors of the availability and type of assistive listening devices and how to access audio descriptions.
- **Website and Social Media:** Provide accessibility information on the park website for visitors with blind/low vision, who are deaf/hard of hearing, and who have cognitive disabilities. Provide the park accessibility contact information for visitors who have questions or concerns or who want to submit accessibility requests. Provide accessibility information regarding programs and special events on social media platforms.
- **Walks, Talks, Tours, and Special Events:** Provide sign language interpretation, if requested, for talks and special events. Provide options for assistive listening. Notify

visitors on-site and in relevant publications of the availability and types of assistive listening systems. When requested, provide live audio descriptions on guided walks and tours. Provide real-time captioning, when requested. Provide relevant and educational tactile maps and models.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table



NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX POLICIES, PRACTICES, COMMUNICATION, AND TRAINING

North Cascades National Park Service Complex showed strengths in its proactive approach to providing accessibility training to park staff. The park does not currently offer many standard operating procedures related to visitors with disabilities. The park has unique opportunities to offer park protocols and communications to engage staff and further support visitors with disabilities. North Cascades National Park Service Complex is aware of these areas for improvement and is committed to addressing them.

Proposed accessibility improvements to policies, practices, communication, and training include the following:

- **Staff Training and Park Protocols:** Provide ongoing accessibility training to all staff. Develop standard operating procedures that outline methods for law enforcement to communicate with a person with a disability. Develop standard operating procedures for assisting people with disabilities in emergencies. Develop standard operating procedures for offices, conference rooms, theaters, and meeting spaces so that all room elements have adequate clear space and accessible routes. Post maps in appropriate areas with accessible layout. Develop standard operating procedures for equipment, including check out and return, pre- and post-inspection, cleaning, and wheelchair maintenance.
- **Communications and Partnerships:** Provide guidance outlining the use of other power-driven mobility devices. Provide guidance for having service animals within the park. Notify visitors on-site and in relevant publications that wheelchairs are available.

Details of the identified accessibility barriers and their recommended solutions and target time frames can be found in the implementation strategy table.

CONCLUSION

North Cascades National Park Service Complex is committed to providing all visitors with the opportunity to connect with and learn about the park's unique natural, cultural, and recreational resources. Accessibility improvements identified in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex SETP will make it easier for individuals with cognitive, hearing, vision, and mobility disabilities to discover, understand, and enjoy the range of experiences available at the park. Park staff will continue to work toward accommodating all visitors while sustaining the park legacy to preserve and protect alpine ecosystems, wilderness, and recreation.

The primary goal of the plan is to consider universal design strategies and document modifications needed to provide access to park facilities, services, activities, and programs for all visitors. As park staff works towards implementing the plan, physical access to and within assessed park areas will be improved, and park information and programs will be enhanced or created for all visitors across the breadth of key experiences at North Cascades National Park Service Complex. Improved interpretive opportunities; access to remote locations, including Stehekin and Ross Lake; and general improvements to parking and routes will allow visitors with disabilities to fully participate in and enjoy all park locations.

The North Cascades National Park Service Complex SETP is a living document intended to be used as a guiding reference for the park as park staff implements accessibility upgrades and documents accessibility accomplishments. As barriers to accessibility are removed and/or improved, changes will be updated in the implementation strategy table. Park staff will conduct periodic reviews to evaluate and update conditions to reflect accomplishments and document new programs or other changes that occur over time. Revisions to the plan may include conducting additional assessments for areas not originally conducted as a part of this plan.

Over time, the results of this collective effort will make North Cascades National Park Service Complex a truly welcoming and accommodating place for all visitors and will provide equal opportunity to access the places, resources, stories, and experiences at the park.

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APPENDIX A: ACCESSIBILITY LAWS, STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, AND NPS POLICIES APPLICABLE TO NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX

As a national park unit, North Cascades National Park Service Complex is required to comply with specific federal laws that mandate that discriminatory barriers be removed to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities. The following laws, design guidelines, and director's orders pertain to North Cascades National Park Service Complex.

LAWS

- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 – <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides/>
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.550>
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – <http://www.section508.gov/>
- Effective Communication – <http://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>
- Reasonable Accommodations – <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disability-employment/reasonable-accommodations/>
- Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices – <https://www.ada.gov/opdmd.htm>
- Service Animals – https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- 43 CFR, Section 17.549 Program Accessibility: Discrimination Prohibited – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.549>
- 43 CFR, Section 17.550 Program Accessibility: Existing Facilities – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.550>
- 43 CFR, Section 17.551 Program Accessibility: New Construction and Alterations – <http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/43/17.551>

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DIRECTOR'S ORDERS AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- Director's Order 16A – <http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DOrder16a.html>
- Director's Order 42 – <http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DOrder42.html>
- National Park Service *Management Policies 2006*: Section 1.9.3 – Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities – <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1548/upload/ManagementPolicies2006.pdf>

GUIDELINES

- Draft Accessibility Standards for Public Rights-Of-Way – <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>
- Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media – <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/accessibility.htm>

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

Many of the resources listed below for trainings, accessibility assessments, project development, and implementation are currently located on the Pacific West Region Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Planning SharePoint site (<https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-PWR-AccessibilitySETP?CT=1649343052705&OR=OWA-NT&CID=204c2563-b913-0894-1cae-52bc8f021fcf>). In the near future, this information will be available to all NPS staff and will be uploaded to the Park Facility Management Division's "Accessibility for Visitors and Employees with Disabilities" web page (<https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/nps-pfmd/SitePages/Access-for-Visitors-and-Employees-with-Disabilities.aspx>). This information includes specific accessibility resources for concessions, facilities and maintenance, interpretation and education, and law enforcement staff. Resources include the following:

- A glossary of accessibility terms
- Reference information and links to laws and policies
- Accessibility assessment checklists and videos
- Accessibility training links and materials
- Templates that help track and document accessibility actions and an accessibility guide
- Guidance for making historic sites accessible
- Guidance for service animals in parks, accessible publications and programs, signage, and audio description
- Disability dialogue information and trainings
- Guidance for preparing PMIS packages for accessibility improvements
- Trail assessment protocols and summary sheets

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APPENDIX C: PARK AREAS NOT ASSESSED

The following park areas were not assessed for this plan. The selection process determined that key park experiences provided in these park areas were available in an equivalent way in the areas that were assessed. If any park area not assessed is improved by new construction or alterations in the future, the area will be assessed and improved to comply with current accessibility standards. These areas will be improved as a part of future facility alterations or as a component of a future planned construction project.

- Copper Creek Boat Launch
- Damnation Creek Boat-in Picnic Sites
- Diablo Lake Boat-in Campsites
- East Bank Trailhead/Ruby Creek Trailhead
- Flick Creek Boat-in Campground
- Gorge Creek Falls/Gorge Overlook
- Gorge Dam Overlook/Pullout
- Gorge Lake Campground
- Hozomeen
- Jackson Picnic Area
- Lakeview Campground
- Manly Wham Boat-in Campground
- McKellar Cabin and Trail
- North Cascades Environmental Learning Center
- One Mile Picnic Area
- Pyramid Lake Trailhead
- Red Buses
- Ross Dam Trailhead
- Ross Lake Overlook
- Sourdough Mountain Trailhead
- Stehekin Landing Resort
- Stetattle Creek Trailhead
- Thorton Lake Trailhead
- Thunder Creek Trailhead
- Thunder Knob Trailhead and Lake Access
- Tumwater Campground and Picnic Area

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APPENDIX D: CONTRIBUTORS

NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX

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NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX ACCESSIBILITY SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN JANUARY 2024

This accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan has been prepared as a collaborative effort between North Cascades National Park Service Complex staff, Regional Office staff serving Interior Regions 8, 9, 10, and 12, and Denver Service Center staff and is recommended for approval by the superintendent.

DONALD STRIKER

Digitally signed by DONALD
STRIKER

Date: 2024.01.03 16:58:30 -05'00'

Approved

Don Striker, Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex

Date



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

NOCA 168/191773
January 2024



Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP)

**North Cascades National Park Service Complex
Washington
January 2024**

Produced by the NPS Denver Service Center Planning Division

