Nordic Patrol Information for MRA Volunteers at Mount Rainier 2019

This information sheet is provided to encourage coordination between Nordic Patrol members and MRA Volunteers who may be in the same areas during the winter season at Mount Rainier. It is also to provide some basic information to MRA so they understand when they encounter members of the Nordic Patrol on the mountain. Finally, there may be times when Nordic Patrol and MRA Volunteers may be asked to work together in response to a SAR incident.

We should be aware of the differences between Nordic Patrol and MRA Volunteers. Nordic Patrol are covered under the NPS Volunteer in Park (VIP) program and organized under the supervision of an NPS Ranger. They have daily morning briefings on patrol days and are given specific duties, generally in the vicinity of Paradise but also in the Tatoosh and other locations. MRA Volunteers sign up on-line in advance for a "proximity patrol" and for using L119, but they are essentially free agents in deciding their days, routes and activities in the Park. MRA members on patrol are not under direct NPS supervision unless they are called into a SAR incident. Nordic Patrol carries park issued radios during patrols, MRA volunteers have their own radios and communicate on the same Park channels.

The Nordic Patrol cabin this season is the Nisqually House, the large house on the left when entering the park's Nisqually entrance, about a 15 minute drive from L119 the MRA Winter Cabin. Nordic Patrollers serve mostly weekends and the holiday season from mid- Dec through April.

Nordic Patrol has about 65 volunteers for the 2018-2019 season with each required to have 4 patrol days. The patrol uses a task book that guides and tracks patrollers through NSP and NPS training to complete Preventive Search and Rescue, Search and Rescue, and Patrol Lead qualifications. This season members of the patrol will be complete NPS Search and Rescue Technician 3 qualifications. The NPS provides red ski patrol vests with the white cross and a Volunteer in Park (VIP) badge for each patroller. MRA members will hopefully be wearing some distinctive insignia on the mountain that could serve the same purpose.

Each Nordic Patroller has a task book they will be working on, and those Nordic patrollers working on the SAR part of the task book are taking every opportunity to work on those skills. A relationship between MRA and Nordic Patrol could also develop into some joint training opportunities. Starting this season, Nordic Patrol will place a white board with the status of Nordic Patrols and the places they are patrolling at the old ranger station at Paradise. When monitoring the radio on the paradise Repeater, you should hear the Nordic Patrol using call signs "Nordic One" and "Nordic Two" etc.

MRA Volunteers are encouraged to stop by Nisqually House whenever they want to make introductions to Nordic patrollers on that weekend. This includes the evenings after a day in the snow. MRA volunteers can stop by Nisqually House during their morning briefing, which starts at 8 AM and before the road to Paradise opens. If MRA volunteers want early access to the Paradise Parking Lot before the gate opens to the public, they may be able to arrange to participate in the "convoy" led by a Park Ranger.

Some contacts for further information:

Nordic Patrol Supervisor: Ranger Matthew Braun Matthew_Braun@nps.gov,
Nordic Patrol Director: Tom Hobbs (425) 766-5135 nordicpatroldirector@gmail.com
Nisqually House Phone Number: 360-569-6788/6789 (This number can be called from the phone in L119)