

A person wearing a teal jacket and a pink hat is snowshoeing through a deep snowdrift in a forest of snow-covered evergreen trees. The person is seen from the side, walking away from the camera. The background shows a valley with more snow-covered trees and a glimpse of a mountain range in the distance.

SNOWSHOEING IN KAMLOOPS

CONTRIBUTED BY DOUG SMITH

THE HIGH COUNTRY ABOVE THE THOMPSON RIVER VALLEY OFFERS MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SNOWSHOE IN THE WINTER MONTHS. FROM MID-DECEMBER TO THE END OF MARCH SNOW BLANKETS THE HILLS AND WE CAN DRIVE UP TO DOZENS OF TRAILHEADS TO SNOWSHOE THE UPLANDS FORESTS AND OPEN SPACES.

TRAIL SNOWSHOEING

THREE SKI LOCATIONS HAVE SNOWSHOEING TRAILS FOR ALL LEVELS.

STAKE LAKE SNOWSHOE TRAILS' snowfall accumulates early and is reliable all winter. There are 12 km of trails and a \$5 fee is charged. One of the better challenges is to snowshoe to the top of McConnell Hill and stomp around the Bushwacker Trail, a 7km intermediate–advanced route. "The trails are all mapped and rated for difficulty so families and people with various skill and fitness levels can get out and enjoy the fresh air and snow. There is nothing better than getting out in the woods, leaving the city behind and seeing what nature has to offer," Vesta Giles, Overlander Ski Club President. [\(more information\)](#)

HARPER MOUNTAIN has signed trails with a daily trail fee. For under \$10 you can upload on the lift and snowshoe down well-signed trails with magnificent views to the lodge for apres snowshoeing food. Trail-only passes and rentals are available as well. [\(more information\)](#)

SUN PEAKS SNOWSHOE TRAILS start at the village and go to McGillivray Lake and back for about a 10km round trip. [\(more information\)](#)

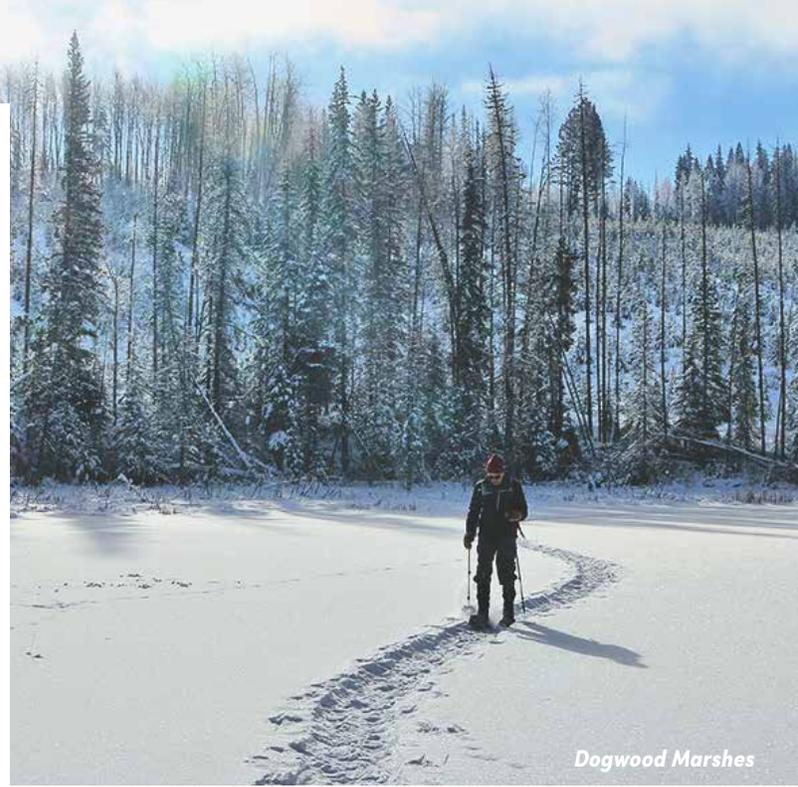


OFF-TRAIL SNOWSHOEING

There are dozens of routes for snowshoe enthusiasts off a few high-country roads. The most reliable access is via Lac le Jeune Road.

The Bush Lakes trail system was built for the 1979 BC Winter Games in Kamloops and was Kamloops' primary cross country ski area until the Coquihalla Highway was built. Stake Lake replaced it, but the old tracks, backroads, skid routes, ponds, and open spaces offer opportunities for exploration all winter. The Bush Lake parking lot is on the east side of the Lac le Jeune Road 18.8km from Copperhead Drive. There are two (free) snowshoeing areas there:

DOGWOOD MARSHES - A gate on the east side provides access from the parking lot down into the bowl below and there always seem to be tracks to follow. The snowshoe tracks wind through stands of red ossier dogwood and aspens in frozen-over swampy areas. Tracks lead up through the forest to more ponds, reforested areas, backroads, and glades. This is a good area for novices and intermediates.

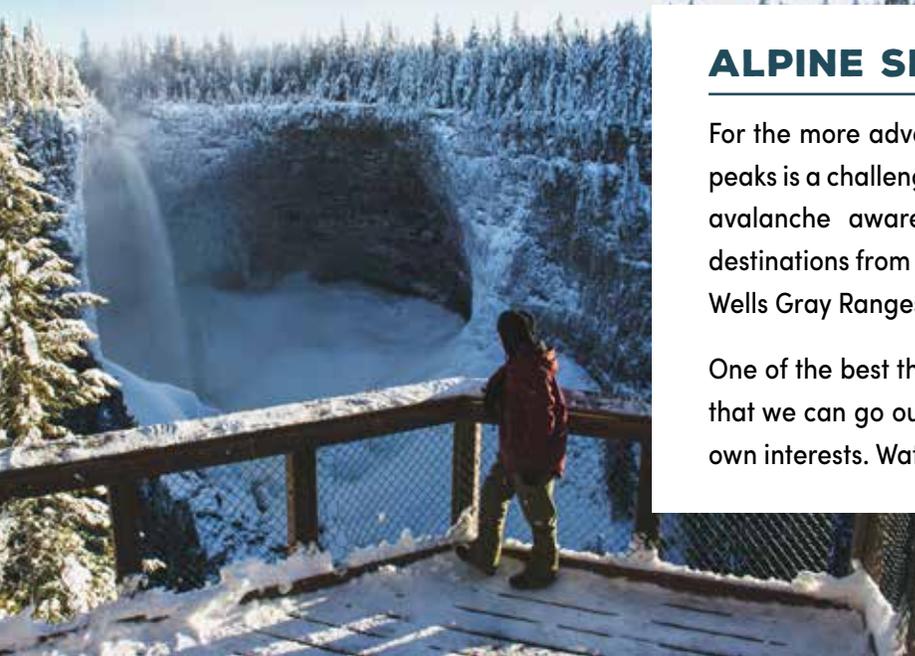


Dogwood Marshes

BUSH LAKE - The area between Lac le Jeune Road and the Coquihalla Highway has about 12 km of routes for intermediate snowshoers. One 4 km loop is marked on the north end. Backroads and old tracks also lead south to cutblocks, marshes, ridges, small lakes, and forests. Some navigation is required in this area, but snowshoers can just follow stomped-in tracks out and back.

Another good area is the upper end of the Lac du Bois Road. The best snowshoeing is in Hanging Valley, Wheeler Mountain, the Upper Grasslands, near McQueen Lake, Opax Mountain and at Isobel Lake. [\(more information\)](#)

*Wells Gray Provincial Park
Helmcken Falls*



ALPINE SNOWSHOEING

For the more adventurous, snowshoeing into the alpine of Interior peaks is a challenge for those with experience, the right equipment, avalanche awareness training, and solid fitness. Backcountry destinations from Kamloops includes the Coquihalla Summit Peaks, Wells Gray Ranges, the Marble Range, and the Monashees.

One of the best things about snowshoeing in the Kamloops area is that we can go out any day and make our own route to match our own interests. Watch for our stomped-in tracks in the hills.