

The Castle, Tatoosh Mts, MRNP (6439')

Stevens Pass/ Lumiere Ridge

March 6, 2011

CarlaS, BethB, JanetP & fwb

Weather – Sun to clouds, Little to no wind... felt like spring (temps just under freezing?)

Sunrise 6:39, sunset 17:57, moonrise 6:53, moonset 20:22 (2 days past New Moon)

Avy forecast For Sunday looked great as the recent snow had settled. New issue was the typical of spring type sun warmed snow. Sun was to shine, so we opted for a destination with a grand view. Driving home from Lux Peak we consulted the powers that be and she wanted a trip up the Hurricane Ridge area. We had five takers. Then a call... Hurricane road is closed! Yikes. Some web scanning and a confirmation of up to date report. Road plowed to within five miles of the parking lot. And the parking lot buried under 15-20' snow drifts. Hmmm, that would be different since last time I was there I rode my bike up the hill (from Bellingham...) in the hot sun. Well, a quick change and we opted for the Tatoosh (MRNP). Something PiB could stretch those long legs and new knees, we could ski and dicey could tag the elusive The Castle (and I could hump a rope up, lol). We were down to four with BethB joining. Was nice to see her, last time was at Ragged Ridge when DonB tagged the summits in Teva sandals.

On the road

We crammed skis and packs (and our bodies) into the car for the long drive to Mt Rainier, via the circular scenic route. Went by quick stop to raid the Eatonville bakery (they open at 8am). Then to MRNP. A reminder... ALL vehicles MUST have chains. Doesn't mean you have to use them, but they will turn you around if they push you and you can't show them. The road in the park was freshly plowed with snow still on it. Only four cars as we pulled into the parking at Narada Falls with a few more arriving as we got ready. On skier came out as we prepped. And oh so nice a heated "comfort station" :)

Skis again

Beth, Carla and I skinned up to the road while Janet wallowed up in snowshoes (10:10a, c4550'). The snow was light, soft and deep. A firm track to Reflection Lake first waiting at Inspiration Point (10:20a, c4839). A scenic walking glide in the sun to Reflection Lake where we met some fellow skiers from WA Ski Touring Club doing a weekend of volunteering patrolling and setting poles (10:50a, 1.2m, c4854'). We followed a fresh lightly used skin track up through the trees. At c5370' (11:27a, 1.8m) a track to the right to the field below Pinnacle Peak brought us to a shovel test pit. Back to the main trail taking our time up to keep the group together.

There are others around?

At c6000' a silent snowboarder flew by. Obvious he'd had several runs already. He stuck to the side and it was odd to see the wide bowl under The Castle void of any tracks. We continued up the track on the far left of the bowl near the trees. We gained the east ridge of The Castle with no other people in sight. No tracks as far as the eye could see. I'd heard this place was popular. Wonder what was up? Oh, it was 12:20, 2.3m, c6256' 2h10min from the car.

Party on the Ridge and onward

Soon Janet appeared over the edge followed by the three other skiers. We all relaxed, ate and chatted in the spring like sun. They seemed perplexed that we were planning on summiting The Castle. After a 40 minute break Janet held down the fort as Carla, Beth and I began to storm The Castle. Heading west up the ever steepening slope Beth laid a nice track. I looked for a route on the SSW end of the summit block (13:15, 2.5m, c6330'). Yikes! This summit block is a thin knife, steep on both sides. I could see a nice summer route, but more technical than I preferred in ski boots. Beth and Carla waited at a even more steepening snow finger further east. The snow was soft with a deep ice layer. A bit steep. The left finger offered a better fall zone. I worked up between the snow and rock on the right. Solid rock and good occasional holds. I gained a ledge where I donned harness, set an anchor and tossed the all but an end of

the rope down. Would have been much wiser to put on the harness at lunch... I wasn't really thinking well, duh!

Some good holds, but still dicey in big plastic ski boots. A few rocks to sling and wish I had a cam or two (0.5 range). I grabbed a giant block, pulled myself up. Looking behind it was nothing, just what looked like an eternity of a drop –gulp! Set an anchor and belayed Beth then Carla to the thin ridge. Not much place to wander. SW a small field that lead to the summit (then more rock). We held on to the thin ledge and took in the views. Summit -13:40, 6439'.

And now?

Great views, Rainier popping out, sun and clouds all around. We watched as two snowshoers made it to the east saddle and were talking with Janet. Later it was interesting their comments... The sun warmed rock felt good til the sun was obscured. Time to head down. We'd gone light and hadn't thought if everyone was familiar with rapping sans device. A little re-configuring of gear and we had enough to do a biner-biner rap each. The small Nano23's worked well with the Half rope (20 minutes to setup and all three rap off).

Coiled the rope, pulled the skins off the skis and we were skiing back to the saddle at 14:50.

Time to rock! –I mean ski :)

The snow was in good shape. Not seep and the new cloud cover made for poor depth perception. At the east saddle Janet was ready to go and took off on her butt glissading the upper bowl while we skied. Again, not deep snow, but consistent. Gathered again and heading down Carla lead to a sweet gulley. I poached the steep sweetness while Janet was pushing herself in the deep fluff to get a glissade on. Ah, sweet turns in pure rich butter:) Below on the flatter area we gathered again for a scenic now sunny again ski/walk to Reflection Lake. There we met Eric. We saw him in the morning ripping a run on his splitboard. I didn't bother skinning the track out. Was slightly up, but was mostly good doing it trade skinny ski style. At Inspiration Point a loast look to say goodbye to the Tatoosh (for now) and some sweet turns with Eric in the surprisingly light fluff to the parking lot (16:18, 4.95m, 1995ascent).

Happy times as we all re-gathered and loaded. Smiles, talked with Eric... A great trip, fabulous destination, sweet views and a great group. For me a relaxing day as far as the physical part, though a little shaky on the climbing in ski boots part. I like this place... "...I'll Be Back..."

Happy Turns!
fwb

Stats:

To summit 2.55m, 4hr (includes 45min break), 1960'ascent.

Return -2.4m, 1h49min,

Total 4.9m, 1995ascent, 5h50min total trip time.

TAY http://www.turns-all-year.com/skiing_snowboarding/trip_reports/index.php?topic=19873.msg84105

Mar 5, 2011, Lux Peak (5650') via Stevens Pass

[b]The Castle, Tatoosh Mts, MRNP (6439')[/b]

Stevens Pass/ Lumiere Ridge

Mar 6, 2011

Dicey, Beth, PiB & fwb

Full TR [url= <http://www.nwhikers.net/forums/viewtopic.php?p=695979>]here:[/url]

We approached via Stevens Pass and Lumiere Ridge. Broke a fresh trail and then used an old one part way into Christmas bowl. Then followed the east ridge up peak 5578 (south end of Lumiere Ridge). Dropped to Swimming Deer Lake Pass then the east slopes of Lux to the south ridge and summit. Good turns in the SE, NE bowls off Lux and the NE slope of the north false summit back to Swimming Deer Pass. A quick skin to near the summit of peak 5578. Another group had followed our skin track up the ridge. We moved to the north of the summit and had nice powder to the col that returns to Lake Susan Jane. The col was consolidated with some good turns on available on the left side. Then the wide open slope to intersect the "Wayback" road and skin to the top of the "Tye Mill" chair. Missed the chair by an hour and a half.

Slopes more stable than expected, sun burned off the clouds. Another great day in the mountains.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011lux-fl/slides/11_0305-030.jpg[/img]

Looking north into Christmas Bowl

Happy turns!

fwb

[b]stats[/b]: 8.9m total, 4.9 to summit, 3088vert in, 4625 total (1310 by lifts)

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011lux-fl/slides/lux_11_0305s.jpg[/img]

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HWHiker.net

<http://www.nwhikers.net/forums/viewtopic.php?p=696127>

Storming The Castle –Tatoosh, MRNP 3/6/2011

[b][size=17]The Castle, Tatoosh Mts, MRNP (6439')[/size][/b]

Stevens Pass/ Lumiere Ridge

Mar 6, 2011

dicey, BethB, PiB & fwb

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-123t.jpg[/img]

[b]Weather[/b] – Sun to clouds, Little to no wind... felt like spring (temps just under freezing?)

Sunrise 6:39, sunset 17:57, moonrise 6:53, moonset 20:22 (2 days past New Moon)

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[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-099.jpg[/img]
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-001.jpg[/img]=Danger!

[b]On the road[/b]

We crammed skis and packs (and our bodies) into the car for the long drive to Mt Rainier, via the circular scenic route. Went by quick stop to raid the Eatonville bakery (they open at 8am). Then to MRNP. A reminder... ALL vehicles MUST have chains. Doesn't mean you have to use them, but they will turn you around if they push you and you can't show them. The road in the park was freshly plowed with snow still on it. Only four cars as we pulled into the parking at Narada Falls with a few more arriving as we got ready. On skier came out as we prepped. And oh so nice a heated "comfort station" :)

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-007.jpg[/img]=janet shoeing up

[b]Skis again[/b]

Beth, Carla and I skinned up to the road while Janet wallowed up in snowshoes –just kidding ;) (10:10a, c4550'). The snow was light, soft and deep. A firm track to Reflection Lake first waiting at Inspiration Point (10:20a, c4839).

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-006.jpg[/img]=The Tatoosh!
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-010m.jpg[/img]=Mt Rainier –Muir area
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-009m.jpg[/img]=Lane Peak
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-014.jpg[/img]=
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-027.jpg[/img]=Beth and PiB on the road to Reflection Lake
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-103.jpg[/img]=Dicey on the road

A scenic walking glide in the sun to Reflection Lake where we met some fellow skiers from WA Ski Touring Club doing a weekend of volunteering patrolling and setting poles (10:50a, 1.2m, c4854').

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-021.jpg[/img]=Bridge over Reflection Lake
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-023.jpg[/img]=Shadows... No reflections

We followed a fresh lightly used skin track up through the trees. At c5370' (11:27a, 1.8m) a track to the right to the field below Pinnacle Peak brought us to a shovel test pit. Back to the main trail taking our time up to keep the group together.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-029.jpg[/img]=Pinnacle Peak
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-030.jpg[/img]=Mt Rainier
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-108.jpg[/img]=dicey checking the group catching up
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-109.jpg[/img]=fwb taking in the sites

[b]There are others around?[/b]

At c6000' a silent snowboarder flew by. Obvious he'd had several runs already. He stuck to the side and it was odd to see the wide bowl under The Castle void of any tracks. We continued up the track on the far left of the bowl near the trees.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-112.jpg[/img]=The Castle
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-039.jpg[/img]=dicey heading to the ridge
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-116.jpg[/img]=The east ridge

We gained the east ridge of The Castle with no other people in sight. No tracks as far as the eye could see. I'd heard this place was popular. Wonder what was up? Oh, it was 12:20, 2.3m, c6256' 2h10min from the car.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-042.jpg[/img]=janet gaining the ridge
[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-121-pan.jpg[/img]=party on the ridge

[b]Party on the Ridge and onward[/b]

Soon Janet appeared over the edge followed by the three other skiers. We all relaxed, ate and chatted in the spring like sun. They seemed perplexed that we were planning on summiting The Castle. After a 40 minute break Janet held down the fort as Carla, Beth and I began to storm The Castle.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-123.jpg[/img]=dicey and BethB heading to the summit block

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-125.jpg[/img]=Skinning up the ridge

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-139m.jpg[/img]=The south ridge of the summit block

Heading west up the ever steepening slope Beth laid a nice track. I looked for a route on the SSW end of the summit block (13:15, 2.5m, c6330'). Yikes! This summit block is a thin knife, steep on both sides. I could see a nice summer route, but more technical than I preferred in ski boots. Beth and Carla waited at a even more steepening snow finger further east. The snow was soft with a deep ice layer. A bit steep. The left finger offered a better fall zone. I worked up between the snow and rock on the right. Solid rock and good occasional holds. I gained a ledge where I donned harness, set an anchor and tossed the all but an end of the rope down. Would have been much wiser to put on the harness at lunch... I wasn't really thinking well, duh!

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-142.jpg[/img]=BethB checking out the right snow finger

Some good holds, but still dicey in big plastic ski boots. A few rocks to sling and wish I had a cam or two (0.5 range). I grabbed a giant block, pulled myself up. Looking behind it was nothing, just what looked like an eternity of a drop –gulp! Set an anchor and belayed Beth then Carla to the thin ridge. Not much place to wander. SW a small field that lead to the summit (then more rock). We held on to the thin ledge and took in the views. Summit -13:40, 6439'.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-046.jpg[/img]=belaying the others to the ridge

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-064.jpg[/img]=Paradise

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-069.jpg[/img]=Shot of summit

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-066.jpg[/img]=Summit shot

[b]And now? [/b]

Great views, Rainier popping out, sun and clouds all around.

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-135-pan.jpg[/img]=Pinnacle Peak

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-070.jpg[/img]=Dicey on rappel

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-074.jpg[/img]=BethB at the skis

We watched as two snowshoers made it to the east saddle and were talking with Janet. Later it was interesting their comments... The sun warmed rock felt good til the sun was obscured. Time to head down. We'd gone light and hadn't thought if everyone was familiar with rapping sans device. A little re-configuring of gear and we had enough to do a biner-biner rap each. The small Nano23's worked well with the Half rope (20 minutes to setup and all three rap off).

Coiled the rope, pulled the skins off the skis and we were skiing back to the saddle at 14:50.

[b]Time to rock! –I mean ski :) [/b]

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[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-165.jpg[/img]=dicey wondering where the sun went

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-168.jpg[/img]=Last view of The Castle disappearing in the clouds.

Again, not deep snow, but consistent. Gathered again and heading down Carla lead to a sweet gulley. I poached the steep sweetness while Janet was pushing herself in the deep fluff to get a glissade on. Ah, sweet turns in pure rich butter:)

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-086.jpg[/img]=below the sweet gulley

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-090.jpg[/img]=Sun again

Below on the flatter area we gathered again for a scenic now sunny again ski/walk to Reflection Lake. There we met Eric. We saw him in the morning ripping a run on his splitboard. I didn't bother skinning the track out. Was slightly up, but was mostly good doing it trade skinny ski style. At Inspiration Point a loast look to say goodbye to the Tatoosh (for now) and some sweet turns with Eric in the surprisingly light fluff to the parking lot (16:18, 4.95m, 1995ascent).

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-092.jpg[/img]=The group heading out to Reflection Lake

[img]http://www.fwbdesign.com/hike/2011thecastle-fl/slides/11_0306-095.jpg[/img]=End of day time for Lane Peak to slip into the clouds

Happy times as we all re-gathered and loaded. Smiles, talked with Eric... A great trip, fabulous destination, sweet views and a great group. For me a relaxing day as far as the physical part, though a little shaky on the climbing in ski boots part. I like this place... "...I'll Be Back..."

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[b]stats[/b]:

[b]To summit[/b] 2.55m, 4hr (includes 45min break), 1960' ascent.

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[b]Total[/b] 4.9m, 1995ascent, 5h50min total trip time.

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