

Big Hole

National Battlefield
Wisdom, Montana
(406) 689-3155

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

THE BIG HOLE VALLEY AND BIG HOLE NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

The Big Hole Valley is a large crescent-shaped mountain park about 75 miles long and at most 20 miles wide. State Highway 43, west of Divide, and County Highway 278, northwest of Dillon, run through about 50 miles of the valley, and intersect at Wisdom. Water is abundant within the valley, and ranchers graze cattle on the fine grass hay. The Big Hole River and its tributaries are some of Montana's best-known fly-fishing streams. Lightly populated and bordered by large tracts of public land, the Big Hole Valley provides excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation. Big Hole National Battlefield is 10 miles west of Wisdom, on Highway 43, and is open year-round.

WEATHER

The Big Hole Valley sits about 6300' above sea level, making for mild summers and frigid winters. The following weather information is based on data collected at Big Hole National Battlefield visitor center from 1971 to 1991. During that period, the extreme high temperature was 97°F, recorded on July 22, 1988. The extreme low temperature was -43°F, recorded on February 13, 1978, and December 20, 1990. The record winter snow was 198" (16 feet!) in 1975-76. The average annual snow fall is 111", and annual rainfall averages 8.4".

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Avg. High Temp.	28	34	41	50	60	72	81	80	69	56	37	28
Avg. Low Temp.	7	10	16	24	31	36	43	41	32	25	15	7
Record High Temp.	51	54	70	78	90	92	97	96	91	79	64	54
Record Low Temp.	-39	-43	-28	-9	8	17	25	22	1	-13	-38	-43
Av. Snowfall (inches)	23	20	15	8	3	tr	0	0	1	4	17	20
Avg. Rainfall (inches)	0	0	0	.3	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.0	0.4	0.2	0
Avg. Total Moisture	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.8	1.6	1.5

AREA ACCOMMODATIONS

The Big Hole Valley provides overnight accommodations for campers and visitors requiring lodging. The United States Forest Service (USFS) operates a number of excellent campgrounds which, at a minimum, provide drinking water and pit toilets. Although area campgrounds rarely fill to capacity, we recommend reservations at area motels and lodges. The following summary of motels, lodges, and campgrounds in the area is as representative as possible. However, prices and other information are subject to change.

Campground codes are as follows:

B=Boat Launch; C=camping; E=Electricity available; F=Fishing; H=Hiking trails; L=Laundry; S=Showers; T=Toilets (vault toilets); W=Drinking water; \$=Fee Area; (USFS=Forest Service); (BLM=Bureau of Land Mgt.) (MT=State of Montana); (AL=American Legion); (PVT=Private)

WISDOM, MONTANA AREA

Nez Perce Motel	689-3254	Double rooms \$35.00+
Sandman Motel	689-3218	Double rooms \$25.00+

There are three moderately priced restaurants in Wisdom.

Area Campgrounds

Coyote Clem's RV Park (PVT) C,E,T,W, \$	Mussingbrod (USFS) C,F,H,T,W
May Creek (USFS) C,F,H,T,W,\$	Steel Creek (USFS) C,F,H,T,W
Twin Lakes (USFS) B,C,F,H,T,W,\$	Fishtrap Creek (MT) B,C,F,H,W
American Legion (AL) C,F,T,W	

JACKSON, MONTANA AREA

Jackson Hot Springs Lodge	834-3151	Double rooms \$32+. Dining room on premises.
The Grasshopper Inn	834-3456 (in Polaris, MT)	Double rooms \$45+. Dining room on premises.
Elk Horn Hot Springs	834-3434 (6 miles north of Polaris, MT)	Double rooms \$45+. Dining room on premises.

Area Campgrounds

Bannack State Park (MT) C,F,H,T,W,\$	Van Houten (USFS) C,F,H,T,W
Miner Lake (USFS) B,C,F,H,T,W	

WISE RIVER, MONTANA AREA

Wise River Club Motel	832-3258	Double rooms \$35+. Meals available.
Sundance Lodge	689-3611 (17 miles southwest of Wise River)	Double rooms \$60+. Dining room on premises.
Big Hole River Inn	832-3103	Rooms \$20+. Meals available.

Area Campgrounds

Dickie Bridge (BLM) C,F,T	Lodge Pole (USFS) C,H,T,W
Mono Creek (USFS) C,H,T,W	Little Joe (USFS) C,F,H,T,W
Lower Seymour (USFS) C,F,H,T,W	Willow (USFS) C,F,H,T,W
Anaconda Sports (PVT)	C,F,T

SULA, MONTANA AREA

Camp Creek Inn (B&B)	821-3508	Rooms \$55+. Some meals available.
Lost Trail Hot Sps. Lodge	821-3508	Double rooms \$50+. Dining room on premises.

Area Campgrounds

Lost Trail Hot Springs (PVT) C,E,S,T,W,\$	Jennings Camp (USFS) C,T,W
Sula Store & Campground (PVT) C,E,L,S,T,W,\$	Martin Creek (USFS) C,T,W
Crazy Creek (USFS) C,H,T,W	Spring Gulch (USFS) C,F,T,W,\$
Indian Trees (USFS) C,T,W,\$	Warm Spring (USFS) C,T,W,\$

OTHER AREA ATTRACTIONS

Bannack State Park is 25 miles west of Dillon and about 50 miles southeast of Wisdom, just off Highway 278. Bannack was the site of the state's first big gold strike in 1862, and the birthplace of Montana's state government. Today it is a quiet ghost town with the remnants of over 60 buildings, showing the extent of development during the town's zenith in 1863. **Bannack Days** take place on the third weekend of July, and feature frontier crafts, music and drama, wagon rides, pioneer food, and demonstrations. Call (406) 834-3413 for more information.

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site is located in Deer Lodge, Montana, about 90 miles northeast of Big Hole National Battlefield. The center of a huge cattle ranch from the 1860s until World War I, the furnished ranch house and out-buildings provide a look at the early ranching industry in Montana. House tours are presented year-round; roping, blacksmithing, and cookwagon demonstrations are given in the summer months. Call (406) 846-2070 for information.