Backcountry Trip Planner

Backcountry Permits
A Backcountry Use Permit is required for all overnight trips in the backcountry. The permit is valid only for the dates, locations, and party size specified. Permits are not required for day hiking; however, day hikers must observe all backcountry regulations.

All Backcountry Use Permits must be obtained in person and not more than two days in advance of your departure. When you obtain your permit, you will receive important information on current trail and campsite conditions, hazards, and any restrictions or closures.

The key to a successful trip is careful planning and preparation. Please read this publication thoroughly. When planning your itinerary, keep in mind the time of year, difficulty of terrain, possible river crossings, closed areas, elevation changes, and the physical condition of everyone in your party. Remember you can only travel as fast as the slowest person in your group. We recommend using topographic maps and reading a good hiking guide to assist you in planning.

Each campsite has restrictions on group size, stock use, boating access, wood fires, and length of stay. (Campsite restrictions are listed on pages 6-11.) The maximum number of nights one can remain at a single site is three unless otherwise indicated. With the exception of four campsites, we allow only one party at each campsite. We join the national Leave No Trace program (see page 12) in urging backpackers to keep their trips small. If your party size exceeds the campsite limit, you will need to obtain a second permit and be prepared to cook and sleep as separate groups.

Advance Reservations
Backcountry campsites may be reserved in advance. The reservation fee for each trip is $25 regardless of the number of nights or number of people in a single trip. Groups that exceed the maximum number of people allowed at a campsite must split into multiple groups and submit a separate reservation request for each group.

A trip is defined as a contiguous itinerary that enters and then exits the backcountry at a trailhead or developed area. An itinerary that requires vehicular transportation between trailheads during the trip would constitute another trip and require an additional reservation and/or permit.

Application Procedures
Reservation requests must be submitted on the Trip Planning Worksheet (enclosed). Additional worksheets are available by mail from the Central Backcountry Office or on the park website at www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm.

A non-refundable processing fee of $25 must be submitted with each application and can be made with check, money order, or credit card. The fee is for obtaining a reservation, not for taking a trip, and will be deposited only upon confirmation of a reservation. Once the reservation has been made the fee is no longer refundable even if the trip is canceled.

Requests for reservations will be accepted by mail, in person, or by fax with a credit card number. We cannot accept applications over the phone, or e-mail. Reservation applications may be submitted anytime after January 1, however, to ensure that your application arrives during a time when the Central Backcountry Office is staffed to process it.

Fees for reservations may be charged in the site limitations on pages 6-11.

Where to Get Your Permit
For the best information on trail conditions, obtain your permits from the ranger station or visitor center closest to where your trip begins. From June through August, Backcountry Use Permits are generally available 7 days a week between 8 am and 4:30 pm (some stations close for lunch) at the following locations:

- Bechler Ranger Station
- Mannenmuth Visitor Center
- Tower Ranger Station
- Grant Village Backcountry Office
- Bridge Bay Ranger Station
- Canyon Ranger Station/Visitor Center
- Old Faithful Ranger Station
- South Entrance Ranger Station
- West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center

Permits for boating trips must be obtained at Bridge Bay, Grant Village, or South Entrance backcountry offices. During the spring, fall, and winter, ranger station and visitor center hours may vary. To obtain a Backcountry Use Permit during these seasons, call (307) 344-2160 or (307) 344-7381.

We recommend waiting until March 1 to submit your application.

We begin processing reservation requests on April 1. All applications received on or before April 1 will be processed in random order. Applications received after April 1 will be processed in the order they are received.

Successful applicants will receive a confirmation letter by email. This confirmation notice is then exchanged for the actual Backcountry Use Permit, which must be obtained in person at a Backcountry Permit Office in the park, not more than two days before the first camping date. Reservations are held only until 10 am on the day of your trip. If you are delayed, you may hold your reservation by calling the phone number shown on the confirmation notice. Reservations that have not been confirmed or exchanged for backcountry permits will be canceled and the campsite made available for other parties.

Only a portion of backcountry campgrounds will be reserved in advance. We leave some sites open in each area each night for people without reservations. Consequently, if you can be flexible in your choice of campsites, you may decide to wait until you arrive in the park to reserve your site(s) and obtain your permit.

We strongly encourage you to develop a second itinerary that may explore some less popular areas, in the event your first choice is not available. If you are camping with stock or requesting sites in one of our more popular areas such as Slough Creek or Yellowstone and Shoshone lakes, your chances of getting your first choices are best if you submit your request by April 1.

Please submit only one request per party per trip. Duplicate applications slow down the reservation process and may result in duplicate charges, overlapping itineraries, and unused campsite requests. We do not submit requests for campsite reservations with an opening date prior to those specified in the site limitations on pages 6-11 and on the Trip Planning Worksheet. The opening dates represent the average date that a campsite becomes accessible due to a decrease in snow pack, flooding, or dangerous stream crossings. If the campsite opens earlier than these dates it is then made available for both walk-in permits and reservations. In some years campsite openings may not be open by the dates that you have reserved. Additionally, we occasionally have to close campites due to bear activity or wildfires. In these instances, reserved campsite itineraries will be modified to the best of our ability when you pick up your permit.

If your plans change and you cannot use any, or part, of your backcountry use permit or reservation, you are encouraged to call (307) 344-2160 to cancel your trip. A refund will not be provided, but you will allow other campers access to those sites.

Undesignated and Winter Camping
Camping in undesignated sites is occasionally allowed under certain circumstances and with special approval on a case-by-case basis. Stringent policies govern this privilege, and adherence to Leave No Trace skills and ethics is required. Camping in designated campites is not required during the winter season. For more information about camping in undesignated sites and/or for a booklet about winter camping, contact the Central Backcountry Office at (307) 344-2160 or e-mail us at YELL.Backcountry.Office@nps.gov.
Eliminating human entry and disturbance in specific areas can prevent human–bear conflicts and provide areas where bears can pursue natural behavioral patterns and other social activities. Types of restrictions include area and trail closures, no-off-trail travel, a recommended party size of four or more people, and travel limited to established trails or daylight hours. Check the campsite listings on pages 6–7 for restrictions that may apply to individual campgrounds.

To reduce human related impacts on bears in high density grizzly bear habitat, we have established the following areas (see map, page 3) and restrictions.

A Firehole: Area (including Firehole Freight Road and Firehole Lake Road) is closed March 10 through the Friday of Memorial Day weekend. The Mary Mountain Trail from the Nez Perce trailhead to Mary Lake is closed March 10 through June 15. Through travel from the Canyon trailhead is not allowed, however, travel is allowed from the Canyon trailhead to Mary Lake and back. Streamside use is allowed from the point where Nez Perce Creek crosses the main road to a point one mile upstream along Nez Perce Creek.

B Richard’s Pond: Area is closed March 10 through the Friday of Memorial Day weekend. From the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend through September 30, Duck Creek, from the park boundary upstream to the Campanula Creek/Richard’s Creek fork, is open to streamside travel. The area upstream from Campanula Creek/Richard’s Creek fork is closed from March 10 through September 30.

C Geiss Creek: Area is closed March 10 through June 30. From July 1 through November 10, travel is allowed only on designated trails (off-trail travel is prohibited).

D Gallatin: From May 1 through November 10, travel is allowed only on designated trails (off-trail travel is prohibited). A minimum group size of four or more is recommended for hiking and camping.

E Blacktail: Area is closed March 10 through June 30.

F Washburn: Area is closed August 1 through November 10. From March 10 through July 31, the area is open by special permit only. Contact the Tower Ranger Station for permit information.

G Antelope: Area is closed March 10 through November 10. The Dunraven Road and related turnouts are open. From May 25 through November 10, foot travel is allowed on the Old Road Trail from Tower Falls Campground to the Buffalo Picnic Area.

H Mirror Plateau: From May 15 through November 10, the area is open to day use only with the exception that from July 1 through August 14 overnight camping is permitted for a combined total of 14 nights per summer.

I Clear Creek: From April 1 through August 10, travel is only allowed on the east shore from Nine Mile trailhead to Park Point. Off-trail travel is prohibited. On August 11 all trails open and off-trail travel is permitted.

J Clear Creek: From April 1 through July 14, travel is only allowed on the east shore trail from Park Point to Beaversdam Creek. Off-trail travel is prohibited. Open campites are SE2, SE3, SE4, and SE5 (no travel away from campsite). All other campsites are closed. On July 15 all campsites open and off-trail travel is permitted.

K Clear Creek: From April 1 through July 14, no off-trail travel is allowed and the Trail Creek Trail between Cabin Creek and Outlet Creek is closed. Open Campsites are 7L5, 7L6, 7L7, 7L8, 7M3, 7M4, 7M5, 6A3, 6A4, and 6B1 (no travel away from campsite).

L Two Ocean: From March 10 through July 14, and August 2 through November 10, travel is allowed only on designated trails (off-trail travel is prohibited). From July 15 through August 21, a permit is required for persons wishing to travel away from designated trails. Contact the South Entrance Ranger Station for permit information.

M Riddle/Solution: Area is closed April 30 through July 14.

N Grant Village: Campground opens June 25 or earlier if bear use of the area spawning streams is over prior to that time. If bears are still frequenting the spawning streams after June 20, the campground loops adjacent to the stream(s) will remain closed until bear activity ceases. Campground closes October 16.

O Heart Lake: Area is closed April 1 through June 30. Access to the area on July 1 may be delayed if conditions warrant.

Those who have packed for up into grizzly country know that the presence of one grizzly on the land elevates the mountains, deepens the canyons, chills the winds, brightens the stars, darkens the forest, and quickens the pulse of all who enter it. They know that when a bear dies, another dies. The Dunraven Road and related turnouts are open. From May 25 through November 10, foot travel is allowed on the Old Road Trail from Tower Falls Campground to the Buffalo Picnic Area.

Backpacking and Bears

To learn more about bears, read one of the numerous books that are available at visitor centers in the park or from the Yellowstone Association. It is quite reasonable to fear bears, but be aware that many bear stories are greatly exaggerated. Your chances of being injured on the way to Yellowstone are actually far greater than being injured by a bear. However, people have been injured and killed by bears in Yellowstone. Your safety is not guaranteed. Read the information below to learn good bear avoidance practices.

Most attacks are caused by surprising a bear, getting between a mother bear and her cubs, or getting too close to a bear with food. The chances of being attacked by a bear can be reduced by avoiding the above situations and taking the following precautions:

• Be alert. Watch for tracks, excrement, duggings or other bear sign. Carry binoculars and scan ahead periodically. If you see a bear cub, the mother is close by.

• Don’t hike alone or at night. Bears travel (often on the trails) and feed mainly at dawn, dusk, and at night. Statistics show that parties of three or more are safer than solo hikers. Groups tend to make more noise and appear more formidable to a bear. Also, if there is an attack, members of the group can assist the injured while others go for help.

• Make noise. Talk, sing, clap your hands, shake pebbles in a can, anything to let a bear know you are present. Don’t rely on bells; usually they are too quiet. Shout often, especially when traveling upwind, near streams, or in thick brush.

• Stay on designated trails. You increase your risk of surprising a bear when hiking off-trail.

• Avoid carcasses. Never camp in a campsite that has a carcass nearby. It is very risky to camp near a trail or campsite to the nearest ranger station.

• Avoid bringing smelly food. A bear’s acute sense of smell can detect odors from great distances. Leave bacon, tuna, ham, scented deodorants and other odorous items behind. Dry foods are lighter to carry and not as aromatic.

• If you encounter a bear:
  • Stay calm
  • Back away slowly
  • Talk quietly to the bear, do not shout
  • Do not run or make sudden movements
  • Do not pop your pack
  • Avoid looking directly at the bear

If you encounter a bear and it does not see you, keep out of sight and detour as far away as possible behind and downwind of the bear. Climbing a tree is popular advice, but not always practical. All black bears, all grizzly cubs, and some adult grizzlies can climb trees if they are not threatened. If the bear makes physical contact, drop to the ground, lie face down, and clasp your hands between your neck; your pack may shield your body. It may take all the courage you have, but lie still and remain silent, resistance will only provoke the bear. Before moving, listen and look around carefully to make sure the bear is no longer nearby.

In exceptionally rare circumstances a bear may come to view humans as prey. This is often a hiker’s biggest fear, but this type of encounter is extremely rare. If you feel that a bear has been following you, be firm and aggressive, look big, yell, throw rocks or sticks, and use bear spray.

Night attacks on tents are extremely rare, but if this happens you should defend yourself aggressively. Any bear entering your tent at night does not have good intentions; if it attacks fight back with any resource you have available to show that you are not easy prey.

Do You Know Your Bears?

A line drawn under the big toe across the top of the pad runs through the top half of the little toe on black bear tracks and through or below the bottom half of the little toe on grizzly tracks.
Food and Bears

Don’t let your actions cause a bear or other animal to be destroyed. A bear has an acute sense of smell. If you leave food out and unattended, you are inviting a bear into your camp. Just one incident of a bear obtaining human food may mean a dead bear. Why? A bear conditioned to human food is more likely to be aggressive and, subsequently, to injure or kill people in an attempt to obtain this easy source of food. When such a bear poses a risk of injuring someone, it is often necessary to destroy that bear.

Samples of odorous items which you are required to hang include all food, garbage, empty or full beverage cans, coolers, lip balm, sunscreens and lotions, toothpaste, food pans, horse feed, some medications, clothes worn while cooking, eating utensils which have not been properly cleaned, and any article that has an odor. Keep all food and odorous items out of sleeping bags, tents, and their stuff sacks.

Before starting a day hike or backcountry trip check at a Visitor Center or Ranger Station for any recent bear sightings or warnings. Look for posted warning signs at the trailhead. Report bear sightings or encounters to the nearest Ranger Station or Visitor Center.

Bear Pepper Sprays

The best way to avoid being injured by a bear is to take all the necessary precautions. However, if these measures fail and you are charged by a bear, your reactions can, in many cases, defuse the situation. Bear spray is a good last line of defense that has been highly effective in the reported cases where it was used. The use of bear spray is especially appropriate if you are attacked in your tent at night. If you successfully use pepper spray to stop a bear, leave the area immediately. The spray is effective for a short time and is less effective the second time around. Bear spray is effective only at distances of 10–30 feet and is adversely affected by wind, cold temperatures, and age. Carefully read the instructions, know how to use the spray and be aware of its limitations. Be sure to check the expiration date. If you decide to carry bear spray, the canister must be immediately available, not in your pack.

In choosing a pepper spray please consider the following: Purchase only products clearly labeled “for deterring attacks by bears.” Concentration should be between 1 and 2% capsaicin. The minimum net weight should be 225 grams or 7.9 oz. The spray should be delivered in a shotgun-cloud pattern at a minimum range of 25 feet and EPA approved.

Although bear sprays have been highly effective at stopping charging bears, there are some indications that the residue from some oil-based sprays may possibly act as a bear attractant. Use your spray only as a last ditch deterrent on the bear. Do not spray around your campsite, tent, camping gear, or in any bear habitat.

Recommended camp setup in bear country

A food storage pole is provided at most campsites, so that food and other attractants can be suspended. You need to provide your own rope (35 feet recommended).

- Suspends items 10 feet above ground and 4 feet out from tree trunks.
- In addition to food and garbage, suspend all odorous items including toothpaste, deodorant and lotion.
- Hang your food and odorous items at night and at any time which they are unattended or not being used.
- Keep a clean camp, remove any food scraps and trash from the fire pit. Pack out all trash.
- Don’t sleep in the same clothes worn while cooking.
- Store food in airtight containers.
- Keep your sleeping area at least 100 yards from the cooking and food-storage area.
- Strain food particles from dishwater and pack out. Scatter dishwater at least 100 yards from tent site.
- Never eat or store food in your tent.
- Sleep in a tent, not under the stars.

www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm
**Trails and Trailheads**

Maintained trails are marked by orange metal tags on trees and posts. Some trails may be hard to follow due to infrequent use, missing markers, recent fires, or large meadows where the trail tread is not clear. We strongly recommend that you carry a compass and topographic map and know how to use them. Distance and directional signs are at most trail junctions. Yellowstone has very few designated loop trails; however, loops can be devised by combining several existing trails. Doing this generally requires some segments of backtracking or entering and exiting at different trailheads. Leaving a vehicle at one trailhead and coming out at a different trailhead requires two vehicles or a shuttle. For a list of licensed shuttle providers contact the Central Backcountry Office or go online to www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/transbush.htm.

Parking is available at all trailheads. Overnight camping at trailheads is not allowed.

**Entering the Park From a National Forest**

When possible permits should be obtained in person from the backcountry office nearest the start of your trip. However, if you are entering the park via a national forest trail and cannot stop at a permitting office, please contact the Central Backcountry Office in advance to a permitting office, please contact the

**Where and When To Go**

When planning your backcountry trip, remember that many of Yellowstone's trails are more than 7,000 feet above sea level. Most areas have some snow until late May or early June, and some areas (especially mountain passes) are snow-covered until mid- to late July. In addition, many routes require fording rivers and creeks. In spring and early summer, some of the creeks and streams in the park can be 25 feet wide, 3-4 feet deep, extremely cold, and swiftly running. It's hard to tell by the map whether or not a drainage stream, or river will be a raging torrent or merely a swollen creek.

Following is a breakdown of when many areas in the park are typically free of snow or standing water and can be reached safely (refer to campsite map on pages 6-11). To be sure that a route can be accessed at the time you plan to take your trip, call the Central Backcountry Office or talk to a ranger who is familiar with the area you plan to visit. Keep in mind when reading through the time progression that the listing is cumulative.

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*Based on data from the Western Regional Climate Center 1948-2007

**Be Prepared**

**Weather in Yellowstone is Highly Unpredictable**

Many warm, sunny days abruptly turn into fierce stormy afternoons. Strong, gusty, south-to-southwest winds are common each afternoon in Yellowstone. Sudden high winds, rain, and lightning storms can follow. If you are hiking or boating when these storms approach, get off the water, shores, ridges, and open places. Thick forests of equal height offer better protection than meadows.

Backpackers in Yellowstone may be surprised to experience winter-like weather any time of year. Rain, wind, sleet, and snow can be deadly if proper precautions are not taken. Always bring rain gear and extra clothes for warmth. Nighttime temperatures can drop into the 30s and 40s. Depending on elevation, temperatures may even fall into the 20s with a light freeze in July. Summer daytime temperatures are usually in the 70s and 80s. June can be cool and rainy, July and August tend to be drier, with extremely acidic or very alkaline; only a small number are neutral. Backcountry lakes are typically free of snow or standing water and can be reached safely (refer to campsite map on pages 6-11). To be sure that a route can be accessed at the time you plan to take your trip, call the Central Backcountry Office or talk to a ranger who is familiar with the area you plan to visit. Keep in mind when reading through the time progression that the listing is cumulative.

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*Based on data from the Western Regional Climate Center 1948-2007

Don’t approach or shortcut through geyser basins after dark when there is greater danger of stepping into a hot spring. For your safety and for the protection of thermal features in Yellowstone, it is illegal to swim or bathe in any water that is entirely of thermal origin. Many springs and pools in Yellowstone are extremely acidic or very alkaline; only a small number are neutral. Many thermal features also contain algae, bacteria, and fungi that are found nowhere else in the world. Soaking or wading in the pools can destroy these delicate life forms. Altering the status of any thermal feature is prohibited. Please don’t put rocks, sticks, or any objects into them. Do not even try to clog the vents and cause their extinction. Food and smoking are not allowed in thermal areas. Be alert for bears in geyser basins in spring and early summer. Stock are not permitted in thermal areas.

**Ticks and Mosquitoes**

From mid-March to mid-July, grayish, brushy, low elevation areas (4,000-6,500 feet) are ideal tick habitat in Yellowstone. Wear repellant even on shoes, socks, cuffs, and pant legs. Tuck your pant legs into your socks and your shirt into your pants. Check your clothes and your body often.

During the summer season, mosquitoes are common and widespread around lakes and streams, especially in wet areas. They are most intense during June and July and tend to diminish in mid-to late August. Repellents, netting, and wearing clothing with long pants and sleeves are your best options. After that, patience and bearrness are required.
Hypothermia
Hypothermia is the major killer of unprepared recreationalists. It is the lowering of a person’s inner-core temperature, followed by rapid, progressive mental and physical collapse. Each year outdoor recreationalists die from it. Most of these deaths could have been prevented with prior knowledge and appropriate action. To avoid hypothermia: Stay dry, stay out of the wind, avoid getting chilled. Put on rain gear before you get wet and warm clothes before you start shivering. Use a hat and gloves to conserve vital body heat.

When a person is wet, the body cools rapidly as moisture evaporates; a breeze increases the rate of heat loss dramatically. When clothes get wet, they lose much of their insulating value; cotton and down lose the most, wool loses less, synthetic materials such as fleece lose the least and dry out quickly. Most hypothermia cases happen in air temperatures of 30–50° Fahrenheit.

Warning signs of hypothermia include uncontrollable shivering, immobile, fumbling hands; slow, slurred speech; stumbling, lurching gait; exhaustion, memory lapses, incoherence, and drowsiness. Watch yourself and others for symptoms. Be aware of the “de-durching gait; exhaustion; memory lapses, incoherence, and drowsiness” that can happen in air temperatures of 30–50° Fahrenheit.

- Tossing, throwing, or rolling rocks or other items inside caverns, into valleys, canyons, or caves, down hillslides or mountain sides, or into thermal features is prohibited.
- Bicycles, wheeled vehicles (except wheelchairs), and equipment not dubbed are prohibited in the backcountry.
- Feeding or intentionally disturbing wildlife is prohibited.
- Collecting or disturbing natural features, plants, rocks, antlers, cultural, or archaeological resources is prohibited.
- Impeding or disturbing horses or pack animals is prohibited.

Campfires
Open wood fires are permitted only in established fire rings at designated campsites. Use only dead and down wood which is wrist size or smaller so that it can be burned completely before you leave the campsite. Make certain the fire is cold before leaving your site. Restrictions may be in place due to dry conditions and forest fire danger. At some sites fires are not permitted any time of year, backpacking stoves are allowed at all campsites. Those sites which do not allow wood fires are specified with the initials NWF on pages 6–11.

The Following are Prohibited in the Backcountry:
- Weapons other than legally permitted firearms, traps and nets, pets, and non-dubbed equipment, wheeled vehicles, and hay are prohibited in the backcountry. We do allow wheelchairs and trained service animals in the backcountry. Due to personal safety concerns, please contact the Central Backcountry Office for further information before taking a wheelchair or service animal into the backcountry.

Stream Crossings
Few of Yellowstone’s rivers or streams have bridges, and many are not fordable until July or later. Even in late summer, water levels can rise quickly after rainstorms or from snowmelt in the high country on warm afternoons. The water can be cold, fast, and more than thigh deep, making any attempt to ford perilous. Trying to ford deep, swift water has resulted in loss of gear, injury, and death. Carefully check your itinerary on a topographic map for stream crossings, and ask about ford conditions at a ranger station before beginning your trip. Don’t be afraid to turn around if conditions are dangerous. Before you cross make sure all members (especially smaller members) of your party are comfortable with fording.

- During spring and early summer, stream depths are likely to change from morning to afternoon. Streams which can be crossed in the morning may rise and become dangerous to cross by afternoon as snow melts in higher elevations.
- Seal important items in plastic bags and put danger items inside your pack before crossing.
- Search up- and downstream to find the safest place to ford. You don’t have to cross where the trail meets the river. Wider sections are generally slower and shallower.
- Do not ford barefooted, stay sideways to the current, and beware of deceptive currents. Don’t look at moving water when crossing, keep your eyes on the opposite bank.
- Use a long sturdy stick to make your crossing safer. If you are part of a group, hold hands or interlock arms.
- Use extreme caution if you use a fallen tree or logjam; they can be very slippery and trap you if you fall.
- Undo the waist and chest straps of your pack; a full pack could drag you down. If you fall while fording in deep water, release your pack and swim.

Water Treatment
Backcountry waters may look clean and refreshing, but contaminants such as the microscopic protozoan Giardia lamblia may be present. Ingesting Giardia can cause Giardiasis, an intestinal disorder which appears weeks after your trip. As a safeguard against Giardiasis, other parasites and bacteria, we recommend that you boil, filter, or chemically treat all drinking water. Any water brought to a boil, even at high altitudes, should be safe. For additional assurance boil water for one minute. Filters should be capable of removing particles of 1 micron or smaller and stated as being effective against Giardia.

Emergency Communication & Cell Phones
Cell phone coverage throughout the park is variable and intermittent. Several different companies provide coverage, each in different areas. Your ability to transmit a call depends on your carrier and your location. Coverage in the backcountry is even more unpredictable. Backcountry cell phone users should not count on their cell phones as a reliable means of communication in case of an emergency.

Recommended Publications
Pre-planning is essential to a successful backcountry experience. The Yellowstone Association, a non-profit educational partner of the park, stocks a number of backcountry guide books and topographic maps. To order, contact: Yellowstone Association, P.O. Box 117, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190, www.YellowstoneAssociation.org (877) 967-0090

Interested in a guided trip?
Visit www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm for a list of companies permitted to conduct overnight backcountry trips in Yellowstone.

Regulations
The National Park Service is required by law “to preserve” park resources and the values and purposes for which the park was established, as well as “to provide for the enjoyment” of those resources and values by means as will leave them “unimpaired for future generations.” You can help us by obeying the following regulations:

- Camping outside designated sites, at sites for which you are not permitted, or within 100 feet of a water source is prohibited. Digging a trench or leveling the ground is prohibited.
- Food, garbage, cooking gear, and other odorous items must be suspended at least 10 feet above the ground at night and when unattended.
- Carry out your trash, if you pack it in, pack it out.
- Bury human waste at least 100 feet from a water source, campsite, or trail. Putting items other than human waste and toilet paper in composting or pit toilets is prohibited.
- Bathing, soaking or swimming in water entirely of thermal origin is prohibited.
- Polluting or contaminating any water source (with any soap, waste, food, etc.) is prohibited.
- Tossing, throwing, or rolling rocks or other items inside caverns, into valleys, canyons, or caves, down hillslides or mountain sides, or into thermal features is prohibited.
- Bicycles, wheeled vehicles (except wheelchairs), and equipment not dubbed are prohibited in the backcountry.
- Feeding or intentionally disturbing wildlife is prohibited.
- Collecting or disturbing natural features, plants, rocks, antlers, cultural, or archaeological resources is prohibited.
- Impeding or disturbing horses or pack animals is prohibited.

Party Size and Large Groups
The maximum party size allowed at any one campsite ranges from 4 to 12 persons. Refer to the campsite lots on pages 6-11 to determine the maximum occupancy of each campsite.

The national Leave No Trace program encourages small group size. This also increases your chances of obtaining your itinerary. It is typically difficult for large groups to obtain an adequate number of campsites. If a large group cannot be broken up and your party exceeds the maximum number of people allowed at a campsite, you must obtain a permit for an additional site(s). Reservation requests for groups should be submitted on separate forms broken up into suitable party sizes, but may be submitted together.

Groups may travel together, but should be prepared to cook and camp separately. Multiple parties are not allowed to congregate at a single site.
## Backcountry Campsites

### Mammoth Area
- **Site**
  - 5L2 8 10
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - Montoon Camp • Trail or Boat Access • Closed 5/15–7/14
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6A3 12 0

### Tower Area Campsites
- **Site**
  - 5E3 10 0
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - Two Ocean Trail A • No stock before 7/20
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6D3 12 25

### Lamar River & Pebble Creek Area
- **Site**
  - 5C2 12 20
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - 4C3 • Closed 6/20 through 7/15
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6T2 20 20

### Canyon Area Campsites
- **Site**
  - 5A3 12 20
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - 4B2 12 20
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6A2 12 0

## Lake shore & Thorefare Campsites (See page 9 for yellowstone lake boat-launch campsites)
- **Site**
  - 5E1 12 20
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - 6B1 20 20
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6A4 12 0

## NWF = No Wood Fires

### Bechler Area Campsites
- **Site**
  - 5G2 12 25
- **Campsite name/restrictions**
  - 6B1 12 10
- **Site Capacity/Stock**
  - 6D1 12 25
**Backcountry Campsites**

OE1 6 6 Summit Lake
- Special needs or bicycle parties only
- 1 night limit
- EA

OD5 6 0 Goose Lake
- Handicapped accessible
- Reserveable by

OD4 12 0 Imperial Meadows
OD3 6 0 Firehole Falls
OD2 10 0 Firehole Meadows
OD1 6 0 Fairy Meadows
- NWF
- EA

Firehole BMA (p. 3).

OB3 6 0 Mallard Lake E
OB2 6 0 Mallard Lake SE
OA3 6 0 Firehole Springs
OA2 6 0 Upper Firehole
OA1 12 10 Lone Star
- EA

- Old Faithful Area Campsites

9U4 12 0 Union Falls
- 2 night limit

**Gallatin Mountain Area Campsites**

OG1
- Capacity
- Stock
- No stock before 7/15

Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions
---|---|---|---
OG1 | 8 | 0 | Sentinel Meadowlows East • EA
WA1 | 10 | 20 | Gneiss Creek • Closed 3/10-6/30 • No off-trail travel
WB1 | 10 | 0 | Gallatin River
WB3 | 12 | 25 | Gallatin River • Stock Parties Only • Unavailable if WB4 occupied • No off-trail travel
WB4 | 12 | 25 | Gallatin River • Stock Parties only • Unavailable if WB3 occupied • No off-trail travel
WB6 | 10 | 0 | Gallatin River • No off-trail travel
WC2 | 10 | 0 | Fan Creek
WC3 | 12 | 25 | Fan Creek • Stock Parties Only
WC4 | 12 | 25 | Fan Creek/NE Fork • Stock Parties Only
WD1 | 10 | 0 | E Fork Specimen Creek
WD2 | 13 | 20 | Sportsman Lake • No off-trail travel • No stock before 7/15
WD3 | 10 | 0 | Sportsman Lake • No off-trail travel
WD4 | 10 | 0 | High Lake • NWF
WD5 | 10 | 5 | High Lake • NWF
WD6 | 12 | 25 | High Lake/Sportsman Jt • Stock Parties Only • No stock before 7/15

**Other Campsites**

WF2 | 10 | 0 | Specimen Creek Jt • 2 night limit • EA
WF1 | 10 | 0 | Black Butte Creek • EA
WF2 | 10 | 10 | Upper Daisy Creek • EA

- This maps in this publication are intended for trip planning and should not be substituted for a good topographic map. See the enclosed Yellowstone Association publications list (or visit www.YellowstoneAssociation.org) for information on topographic maps with our trails and campsites. Except when otherwise indicated, all campsites have a three-night limit, allow one party per site, allow wood fires, and have a food storage pole.

- **Trailheads**

  **Trailheads** on this list with an asterisk (*) are on the park boundary and are not accessible by road.

  1K1 * Sepulcher Mountain
  1K2 * Snow Pass
  1K3 * Glen Creek
  1K4 * Bunsen Peak
  1K5 * Bighorn Pass–Indian Creek
  1K6 * Mt. Holmes
  1K7 * Solfatara North
  1K8 * Grizzly Lake
  1N2 * Rescue Creek
  1N3 * Lake Creek
  1N4 * Beaver Ponds
  1N5 * Blacktail Creek
  1N6 * Lake Creek Picnic Area
  2K2 * Tower Junction
  2K4 * Specimen Ridge
  2K5 * Stough Creek
  2K6 * Mt. Washburn North
  2K7 * Yellowstone River Picnic Area
  2K8 * Hoboing
  2N1* * Coyote Creek
  2N2* * Buffalo Plateau
  2N3* * Buffalo Fork
  2N4* * Upper Slough
  2N5* * Upper Hellspring
  3K1 * Soda Butte/Lamar River
  3K2 * Pebble Lake
  3K3 * Thunderer
  3K4 * Warm Creek
  3N1* * Republic Pass
  3N2* * Canoe Lake
  3N3* * Bootjack Gap
  3N4* * Hoodoo
  3N5* * Frost Lake
  4K1 * Softfataw Creek
  4K2 * Ice Lake
  4K3 * Grebe Lake
  4N1 * Specimen Creek
  4N5 * Cascade Lake
  4N6 * Glacial Boulder
  4N7 * Wapiti Lake
  4N8 * Artist Point
  4N9 * Dunraven Pass Parking Area
  4N11 * Mary Mtn. East
  5K1 * Bridge Bay Marina
  5K2 * Fishing Bridge
  5K3 * Pelican Lake
  5N4 * Sagey Bay (Boat)
  5N5 * Mine Mill Post
  6K1* * Eagle Pass
  6K2* * Hawk’s Rest
  6K3* * Snake River/Fox Creek
  6N1* * Bridge Lake
  6N5* * Thorsfjare
  7K1 * Giant Village Boat Ramp
  7N1* * Ralston Creek
  7N3* * Riddle Lake
  8K1* * Shoshone/Doghead
  8K3* * Lewis Lake Dock
  8N1* * Phantom/Pitchstone
  8N5 * South Boundary West
  8N6 * Boar Lake
  8N7 * South Entrance
  8N8* * Cotter/Wolverine
  8N9* * Heart Lake
  9K1* * Bechler Ranger Station
  9K2* * Cake Falls
  9K3* * Fish Lake
  9K5* * Cascade Creek
  9K6* * Grassy Lake
  9K7* * Robinson Creek
  9K8* * Buffalo Lake
  9K9* * Summit Lake
  9K10* * Lone Star
  9K11* * Howard Eaton
  9K12* * Mallard Lake
  9K14* * Biscuit Basin
  9K15* * Fairy Falls
  9K16* * Freight Road
  9K17* * Mary Mtn. West
  9K20* * Mallard Creek
  9K21* * Daisy Creek
  9K22* * Black Butte
  9K23* * Specimen Creek
  9K24* * Bacon Ridge
  9K25* * Focus Pass
  9K26* * Bighorn Pass
  9N7* * Greese Creek
  9N8* * Seven Mile Bridge
  9N11* * Sky Rim

- www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm
Shoshone Lake

Shoshone Lake is a magnificent wilderness resource. It has primitive campsites, no road access, and only non-motorized boats may reach its waters. One of the park's amazing geysers lies near the northwest shore. With the freedom to experience a thermal area without fences and boardwalks comes the responsibility to use great care to protect the fragile features and yourself. Remember that it takes only seconds to destroy what took nature hundreds of years to make, and that there is no 911 or rapid rescue in the backcountry. Please exercise consideration and caution.

Considering the beautiful qualities of this backcountry lake, it is no wonder that the campsites along its shores are occupied almost every night of the summer. In order to protect the vegetation, soil, water, wildlife, and delicate thermal features, and to provide for the enjoyment of all the lake’s visitors, regulations are strictly enforced. Below are restrictions and recommendations specific to this area.

- Permits for boating parties must be picked up at the South Entrance, Grant Village, or Bridge Bay backcountry offices.
- Party size is limited to eight people per campsite. This helps alleviate disturbance to wildlife and other campers, reduce soil compaction, and cut down on the amount of human waste. Groups larger than eight must secure multiple sites and be prepared to cook and camp at their individual sites. They are encouraged to paddle together, but they may not congregate at a single site.
- Wood fires are not allowed. Past use of campfires and wood-gathering practices, combined with high levels of visitor use, caused significant and lasting impacts. Gas stoves, lanterns, and heaters are allowed. Charcoal fires are allowed in fire pans or grills elevated above mineral soil. All coals and ashes must be packed out.
- Maintaining an acceptable level of sanitation is a challenge in an area as heavily used as Shoshone Lake. Primitive pit or composting toilets are provided at all campsites around the lake. Please do not put food or garbage in these toilets.
- United States Coast Guard (USCG) regulations apply to Yellowstone waters. USCG approved wearable personal flotation devices (PFDs) are required for each person. Boats must be sound and have a suitable bailing device.
- High winds are an almost daily occurrence on the lake. Arrange your itineraries to avoid open-water crossings in the afternoon. Travel in early morning or late afternoon for easier and safer conditions. We suggest you select a site on the southern shore of the lake for the first night of any trip. Travel close to shore and within sight of other party members. Limit wind and wave exposure by using protected bays. If a crossing is necessary, evaluate conditions wisely and cross only at “the Narrows” (see map). Place at least one experienced paddler in each boat and consider practicing capsize recovery techniques with all party members prior to your trip.
- Lewis and Shoshone lakes usually lose their ice by the first week in June, and there is a high probability of early-season flood- ing at some sites. Reservations for Shoshone Lake sites may not be made for camping dates prior to June 15. To avoid making reservations that we most likely won’t be able to honor, sites 8Q1, 8R2, 8S4, 8S5, 8S7, and 8T1 may not be reserved for camping on days before July 1. Sites 8Q6, 8Q7, 8T3, and 8T5 may not be reserved for camping on dates before July 15. If conditions allow, these sites may be available for “walk-up” permits prior to the listed dates.
- Paddling upstream on the Lewis River channel is not possible for about the northernmost mile of the channel. Prepare to wade in cold water while dragging your boat through a rocky-bottomed stream. Water shoes are strongly recommended. In early to mid-June, during spring runoff, expect depths of up to 3–4 feet and extremely cold temperatures. In mid-July and August depth ranges are lower. Motors crossed to Lewis Lake are not allowed in the river channel. They must be removed and left at the south end of the channel.

Boating

The loading cause of death in Yellowstone's backcountry is cold-water (hypothermic) drowning. Over 100 people have lost their lives in the park's cold lakes and streams. Water temperatures on Yellowstone, Lewis, and Shoshone lakes are in the 40s (Fahrenheit) in June, and the 60s by late summer. Summer storms often produce 3–5-foot waves. Boaters in canoes, kayaks, and other small craft must be aware of these hazards and plan accordingly.

Recommendations for a safe trip:

- Travel close to shore and within sight of other party members. Begin early in the morning before the winds come up and avoid open-water crossings. If crossings become necessary, use good judgement and evaluate conditions.
- Get off the water during strong winds and lightning storms. Wait out rough winds until the morning before the winds come up and avoid open-water crossings.
- Taking a break for a snack on land is the best way to avoid hypothermia.
- When considering a break on land, do not labor up a steep slope. Take time to properly pack and balance the load. Allow time for a good stretch and evaluation of possible hazards in the area. Remember that it may be cool at the lake, but it can be much warmer at 10,000 feet.
- Make sure your watercraft is in good condition. Children 12 and under and non-swimmers should fit properly and be in serviceable condition. A U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) is required for each person on board and should be worn while on the water. PFDs -
- Maintain an acceptable level of sanitation is a challenge in an area as heavily used as Shoshone Lake. Primitive pit or composting toilets are provided at all campsites around the lake. Please do not put food or garbage in these toilets.
- United States Coast Guard (USCG) regulations apply to Yellowstone waters. USCG approved wearable personal flotation devices (PFDs) are required for each person. Boats must be sound and have a suitable bailing device.
- High winds are an almost daily occurrence on the lake. Arrange your itineraries to avoid open-water crossings in the after
- Take time to properly pack and balance the load; overloaded boats are dangerous and against regulations. Use dry bags rather than plastic bags to keep contents dry and protect from moisture. A properly loaded boat may float if capsize, while an improperly loaded boat could sink if capsized.
- Always carry a baiting device, extra paddle, throw ring buoy and/or rope and a sound-producing device such as a whistle or air horn.
- Practice capsizing recovery techniques with all party members prior to your trip.
- A U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) is required for each person on board and should be worn while on the water. PFDs should fit properly and be in serviceable condition. Children 12 and under are required to wear their PFD at all times.

All park rivers are closed to boating except the Lewis River Channel between Lewis Lake and Shoshone Lake where non-motorized boats are permitted. Motor-driven vessels are permitted only on Lewis Lake, and most of Yellowstone Lake except in portions of the South, Southeast, and Flat Mountain arms. Boats too large to be carried can be launched only at Bridge Bay, Grant Village, and Lewis Lake boat ramps. Hand carried boats may be launched and removed at Sedge Bay. Towing water skiers and using jet skis are prohibited on park waters. Water shoes are strongly recommended. In early to mid-June, during spring runoff, expect depths of up to 3–4 feet and extremely cold temperatures. In mid-July and August depth ranges are lower. Motors crossed to Lewis Lake are not allowed in the river channel. They must be removed and left at the south end of the channel.

Site Capacity Stock Campsite name/restrictions

All 8Q sites and the 8S1 boat site are available for only the first and last night of a trip. Wood fires are prohibited at all these sites except: BM2, OA1, OA2, and OA3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Stock</th>
<th>Campsite name/restrictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BM1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Moose Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moose Creek Meadow 2 night limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>S Narrows Point  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moose Creek Point  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moose Creek Outlet  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moose Creek Beach  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Channel  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Winding Point  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bluff Top  Trail or boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cowl  Trail access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flat Top  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Basin Bay Point  Trail access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Outlets 2 Party site (1 Trail access only and 1 Boat access only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Delacy Creek  Trail or boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Catyphee  Trail access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>N Grizzly Beach  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>S Grizzly Beach  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>North Narrows  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Basin Beach  Trail access only  1 limit of 1 tent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hillsides  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BM22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tranquility  Boat access only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OA1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lone Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OA2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Firehole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OA3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Firehole Springs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm
Yellowstone Lake is the second largest freshwater lake in the world that is above 7,000 feet. It encompasses 134 square miles, with 20-mile stretches of open water. Its 110 miles of shoreline provide access to some of the most beautiful wilderness in the park. There are only two backcountry trails near its shores, the Thorofare Trail along the east shore and the Trail Creek Trail which connects the Thorofare and Heart Lake Trails south of the South and Southeast arms. Power boats can be launched from ramps at Bridge Bay and Grant Village. If the water is calm, boaters can reach the arms in a relatively short time. In keeping with the serene and wild nature of the arms, boaters must reduce their speed to a maximum of 5 miles per hour once they enter the South and Southeast arms. Additionally, the last 2 miles of the South, Southeast, and Flat Mountain arms are restricted to hand-propelled craft only.

Canoeing and kayaking on Yellowstone Lake is a memorable experience but not without its dangers. The water temperature during summer is typically 40–50° Fahrenheit. Almost daily, sudden winds can create waves as high as 4–5 feet that are choppy and very close together, making it especially hazardous for small boats. Most commonly the winds are out of the southwest but at high altitudes and in thunder storms, the winds can shift at any time.

The ice on Yellowstone Lake normally does not leave until late May or early June. In addition to site-specific restrictions, some sites may be closed in the early season when lake levels rise and may flood sites.

Bears are frequent visitors along the lake and its more than 100 tributaries. Three Bear Management Areas have closures and restrictions on travel that are in effect until July 15. See pages 2 and 3 for details.

Yellowstone Lake is the home of the premier surviving inland cutthroat trout fishery in North America. To protect this exceptional fishery, the National Park Service has established special regulations. See the park’s fishing regulations and information on page 11 for further information.

Xanterra Parks and Resorts operates a shuttle service for boaters and hikers between Bridge Bay Marina and locations on Yellowstone Lake. The drop-off and pick-up locations are all backcountry campsites 5E6, 5L1, 5L6, 5L8, and near 5E5. For more information and to make reservations contact the Bridge Bay Marina at (307) 242-3893.

Shoreline Mileages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Sedge Bay to:</th>
<th>From Grant Village to:</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Campsite name/restrictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5L1 = 24</td>
<td>5M3 = 22</td>
<td>71L 8</td>
<td>Frank Island Bay South • Anchorages site only • Boat must be further than 100 feet from shore, 300 feet from dock, and within land limits defining double caves of the island • Boat must be self-contained* • No shore landings allowed prior to 8/15, except at dock and picnic area • No camping on shore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L2 = 24</td>
<td>5M4 = 24</td>
<td>712 8</td>
<td>Frank Island Bay North • Same as 71L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L3 = 24</td>
<td>5M5 = 24</td>
<td>713 8</td>
<td>Breeze Bay North • Caution for shallow water • First and last night only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L4 = 24</td>
<td>5M6 = 24</td>
<td>714 8</td>
<td>Breeze Bay South • Boat must be entirely removed from water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L5 = 24</td>
<td>5M7 = 24</td>
<td>715 8</td>
<td>Raine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L6 = 24</td>
<td>5M8 = 24</td>
<td>716 8</td>
<td>Wolf Bay • 3 party dock site • Max. 8 people per party • No travel from site 5/15-7/14 • Only two parties may camp on shore • Dock parties must be self-sufficient • Only 1 boat per party at dock, additional boats must be entirely removed from water • No more than one canoe/kayak party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L7 = 24</td>
<td>5M9 = 24</td>
<td>717 8</td>
<td>Eagle Bay • 3 party dock site • Same restrictions as 71L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L8 = 24</td>
<td>5M10 = 24</td>
<td>718 8</td>
<td>Edsdeep Bay • No travel from campsite S5/1-74 • Boat must be entirely removed from water • Caution for shallow water in east-cave of site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L9 = 24</td>
<td>5M11 = 24</td>
<td>719 8</td>
<td>Flat Mtn Arm H • No travel from campsite S5/1-74 • Only 2 parties may camp on shore • Dock parties must be self-sufficient • Only 1 boat per party at dock, additional boats must be entirely removed from water • No more than one canoe/kayak party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L10 = 24</td>
<td>5M12 = 24</td>
<td>720 8</td>
<td>Goosey Camp • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Off-trail or non-motorized boat access only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5L11 = 24</td>
<td>5M13 = 24</td>
<td>721 8</td>
<td>Southwest Bay • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Access may be difficult in periods of low water • Off-trail or non-motorized boat access only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Definitions for dock and anchor sites: Self-sufficient is a boat with a galley and a berth; Self-contained is a boat with a galley, berth, toilet, and anchor. Self-contained boaters must stay at a designated campsite and have a backcountry permit for that site.

www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm
Heart Lake Area

Located at the base of Mt. Sheridan, Heart Lake is a popular destination with much competition for the campsites along its shores in July, August, and early September. Campsites on the west shore have a limit of two nights per trip. A day hike up Mt. Sheridan is an option for hikers who do not have the time and energy. The hike to the summit is strenuous as the trail climbs over 2,700 feet in 3 miles. Of the six sites at the base of Mt. Sheridan only 8H2 and 8H3 permit fires.

The Heart Lake area is prime bear habitat and part of a Bear Management Area that does not open before July 1. Depending on trail and bear management conditions, the opening might be delayed a day or two. The Trail Creek Trail east of campsite 802 remains closed until July 15. Near the northwestern shore of the lake are several thermal areas which are home to Rustic Geyser. Use caution around all thermal areas that are boiling water and unstable ground can cause serious injury or death. Remember there is no 911 in the backcountry. Soaking in thermal features that are entirely of thermal origin is illegal, dangerous and can cause serious damage to the feature.

Along Heart and Snake rivers to the south and southeast of Heart Lake there are several significant river fords that are high, swift, and often impassable in the early season. In addition, there are two fords of the Snake River between the South Entrance and campsite 8B2. In a typical year, hikers should plan trips for after mid-July to minimize the chances of encountering dangerous ford conditions. Contact the Central Backcountry Office for current conditions.

Campsites (continued)
Campsites (continued)

At the Trailhead and on the Trail

Yellowstone's backcountry. Due to the limited number of campsites and population of mosquitoes may persist into wet and muddy conditions with a healthy remains in the area through mid-June and Solfatara Plateau at an average elevation 3,400 feet in less than 3 miles. Campsite 4P1, atop Observation Peak, has no nearby source of water after the snow drifts disappear in mid-summer. Site 4D3, on the shore of Ice Lake, can be reserved only by campers with special needs. Only one-half mile from the trailhead, site 4D3 can be reached by wheelchair (with assistance) and has an accessible pit toilet.

Horsepacking

Plan Ahead

Traveling on horseback is a traditional and exciting way to see Yellowstone's backcountry. Due to the limited number of campsites permitted in the backcountry or at the trailhead. Stock trail and the frontcountry, but must be bagged when entering the park. Certified weed-free hay is allowed in your trailer and the frontcountry, but must be bagged when entering the park. Processed, weed-free feed (hay cubes, pellets, trailer and the frontcountry, but must be bagged when entering the park. Certified weed-free hay is allowed in your trailer and the frontcountry, but must be bagged when entering the park. Processed, weed-free feed (hay cubes, pellets, oats, etc.) is allowed in the backcountry, but must be securely stored, per food storage regulations, when not in use. Spilled or leftover feed must be cleaned up and packed out.

• The only pack stock permitted in Yellowstone are: horses, burros, mules, ponies, and llamas. Take only enough stock to accommodate your party and equipment. Fewer animals make for less work, worry, and impact.

At the Trailhead and on the Trail

The only overnight boarding of stock in the park is at backcountry campsites. Stock may not be kept at trailheads or any of the roadside campgrounds overnight. Plan to arrive at the trailhead, pack up, and depart the same day. Call the Central Backcountry Office for information on campgrounds that allow stock outside of the park.

• Manure from around the trailhead, parking area, and hitch rails must be removed or scattered elsewhere before leaving on your trip.

• Keep stock off roadways, except at designated trail crossings.
• When approaching other parties on the trail, exercise caution and have your animals under control. Give the right-of-way when possible. If backpackers seem unsure of what to do, politely offer solutions for safe passage.
• Food or equipment caches are prohibited.
• Riders and pack strings should travel single file on the established tread, cutting across switchbacks is prohibited.
• All non-ridden stock must be led. Stock in excess of those needed for the trip are prohibited.

Managing Stock in Camp

Each backcountry campsite has a limit on the number of people and stock allowed per night. Consult the campsite list to find a site that will accommodate your stock and party size.

• Manure must be completely removed from the core camp, which is the area within a 100-foot radius of the fire ring or cooking area.
• Stock must be kept out of the core camp, except for short periods during packing and unpacking.
• Use care in watering stock to prevent stream bank damage. Avoid soft or marshy areas.
• Tying stock in a manner that damages trees or vegetation is prohibited. If stock must be tied for a brief interval, use only natural means of tying.
• If you pick up picket stock, use only dead and down wood for picket pins and hobbles. We recommend that you carry picket pins and hobbles as part of your equipment. Locate picket sites well away from camp and at least 100 feet from the nearest water or trail. Rotate picket sites frequently to avoid overgrazing. Highlines should be used only for short-term retention, not for holding stock overnight. If you use one, be sure to pad the anchor trees and situate it well away from the core camp in an area where there will be minimal impact.
• Campsites and their surroundings must be returned to a natural condition before you leave. Remove picket pins and drag logs from meadows. Repair any trampled areas with a rake or shovel. Scatter (kicked) manure in stock retention areas.
• Whatever retention method you use, it must be moved often enough to prevent damage to the resource. Even if you use an electric fence, you need to monitor and move it before resource damage occurs.

Canyon Area Lakes

Cascade, Grebe, Wolf, and Ice Lakes are popular destinations for day-hikers and overnight backpackers. These lakes sit atop the Solfatara Plateau at an average elevation of 8,000 feet. At this elevation, snow often remains in the area through mid-June and wet and muddy conditions with a healthy population of mosquitoes may persist into early July. The ford of the Little Gibbon River (east of site 4G7) is slow-moving, but can be 3–4 feet high throughout June. The trail to Observation Peak is strenuous, climbing 1,400 feet in less than 3 miles. Campsite 4P1, atop Observation Peak, has no nearby source of water after the snow drifts disappear in mid-summer. Site 4D3, on the shore of Ice Lake, can be reserved only by campers with special needs. Only one-half mile from the trailhead, site 4D3 can be reached by wheelchair (with assistance) and has an accessible pit toilet.

For more information or for assistance in planning your horsepacking trip, call the Central Backcountry Office or go online to www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/horseride.htm.

Fishing Regulations

Yellowstone National Park offers some of the finest trout fishing in America. But as important as fish are to anglers, they are even more important to the park's native residents. Bald eagles, ospreys, pelicans, otters, grizzly bears and other wildlife depend on fish for a major portion of their diet. Additionally, all fish are wild (there is no stocking), so populations must have sufficient numbers of adult fish to reproduce and maintain populations, and assure genetic diversity. Cutthroat trout, graying, and mountain whitefish—the native sport fish—are catch and release only in all park waters. More information is available at www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/fishing.htm. A current Yellowstone Fishing Permit is required. Anglers 16 years of age and older are required to purchase a three-day, seven-day, or a season permit. Anglers 12 to 15 years of age are required to obtain a non-fee permit. Permits are available at all ranger stations, visitor centers, general stores in the park, and many vendors in our gateway communities. State fishing licenses are not required in the park and are not a substitute for a Yellowstone Fishing Permit.

Fishing Seasons

With some exceptions, Yellowstone’s fishing season begins on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend and continues through the first Sunday of November. Some exceptions to these dates are Yellowstone Lake’s tributary streams and the Yellowstone River (above the falls), which open July 15. (continued on page 12)

www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm
Non-Toxic Fishing

Yellowstone National Park has implemented a non-toxic fishing program. Nationwide, over three million waterfowl die each year from lead poisoning through ingestion. Fishing tackle such as leaded split-shot sinkers, weighted jigs (lead molded to a hook), and soft lead-weighted ribbon for nymph fishing are no longer allowed.

Exotic Threats

In 1994, the discovery of non-native lake trout in Yellowstone Lake caused great alarm among biologists throughout the Greater Yellowstone Area. Because of the lake trout's history of displacing species such as cutthroat trout in other western lakes, an expanding lake trout population has ominous implications for the continued viability of the native cutthroat trout. Additionally, other species that depend on the cutthroat as a significant food source could be adversely affected.

Two other potentially damaging exotic organisms threaten Yellowstone's fisheries. Whirling disease has been implicated in the decline of numerous wild trout populations, and the New Zealand Mud Snail, which occurs in the Firehole and the Madison rivers, may harm aquatic insect communities. Please help prevent further spread of these invaders by thoroughly cleaning mud, plants, and debris from your fishing equipment, and inspecting footwear before leaving your angling site.

Drain livewells and only clean fish in the same body of water in which they were caught.

Schedule

Prepare

Know

Be considerate of other visitors

Respect wildlife

Minimize Campfire Impacts

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Dispose of Waste Properly

• Repackage food to minimize waste.

• To prevent erosion, avoid shortcuts and switchbacks.

• Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.

• Camp in designated campsites.

• Protect riparian areas by camping at least 100 feet from lakes and streams.

• Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. Avoid leveling the tent site.

• Pack in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Never bury it or dump it in pit toilets.

• To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 100 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

• Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 100 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.

• Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.

• Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mounding fires. Campfires are only permitted in specified campsites in designated fire rings.

• Keep fires small. Burn only small diameter dead and down wood. Do not break, cut, or saw branches from any standing tree (dead or alive).

• Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely. Fires must be completely extinguished before you leave the site.

• Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.

• Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

• Federal law prohibits: collecting antlers; removing any plant, animal, or mineral substance; and disturbing or removing archeological or historical items. Leave natural objects as you find them.

• Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.

• Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.

• Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.

• Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.

• Let nature’s sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.