



Backcountry Trip Planner



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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. Visitors obtaining a backcountry permit with trips dates between Memorial Day and September 10 will pay a per-person, per-night permit fee. Backcountry permit fees apply for group members that are 9 years or older. The fee for backpackers/ boaters is \$3 per-person per-night. The group per night fee is capped at \$15 dollars per night. The fee for stock parties (horses/mules/llamas) is \$5 per-person per night. There is no cap on the group per night fee.

Backcountry permit fees are separate from the \$25 fee paid to make an advance reservation and will be collected at the backcountry office when you pick up your permit.

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. 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 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 Backcountry Permit Reservation application. Additional worksheets are available 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 by 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 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 a lottery. Applications received after April 1 will be processed in the order they are received, after the lottery applications are processed.

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 campsites made available for other parties.

Only a portion of backcountry campsites 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, Bechler, or Shoshone lake, 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 campsites.

Please do not submit requests for campsites with an opening date prior to those specified in the site limitations on pages 6–11 and on the Backcountry Reservation Instructions. The opening dates represent the average date that a campsite becomes accessible due to a decrease in snow pack, flooding, or dangerous stream crossings. In some years campsites may not open by the dates that you have reserved. Additionally, we occasionally have to close campsites due to bear activity or wildfire. In these instances, reserved 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 campsites 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.

Where to Get Your Permit

For the best information on trail conditions, obtain your permits from the backcountry office 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
- Canyon Visitor Education Center
- Mammoth Backcountry Office
- Snake River Ranger Station
- West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center
- Bridge Bay Ranger Station
- Grant Village Backcountry Office
- Old Faithful Ranger Station
- Tower Ranger Station

Permits for boating trips must be obtained at Bridge Bay, Grant Village, or Snake River 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.



Those who have packed far up into grizzly country know that the presence of even 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, something sacred in every living thing interconnected with that realm...also dies.

—John Murray

Hiking in Bear Country

Yellowstone Bear Management Areas

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 campsites listings on pages 6–7 for restrictions that may apply to individual campsites. 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. For more detailed maps visit <https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/bear-management-areas.htm>

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.

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.

Gneiss 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).

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.

Blacktail: Area is closed March 10 through June 30.

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.

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.

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.

Pelican Valley: Area is closed April 1 through July 3. From July 4 through November 10, the area is open to day-use only between the hours of 9 AM and 7 PM.

1 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.

2 Clear Creek: From April 1 through July 14, travel is only allowed on the east shore trail from Park Point to Beaverdam Creek. Off-trail travel is prohibited. Open campsites are 5E2, 5E3, 5E4, and 5E6 (no travel away from campsite). All other campsites are closed. On July 15, all campsites open and off-trail travel is permitted.

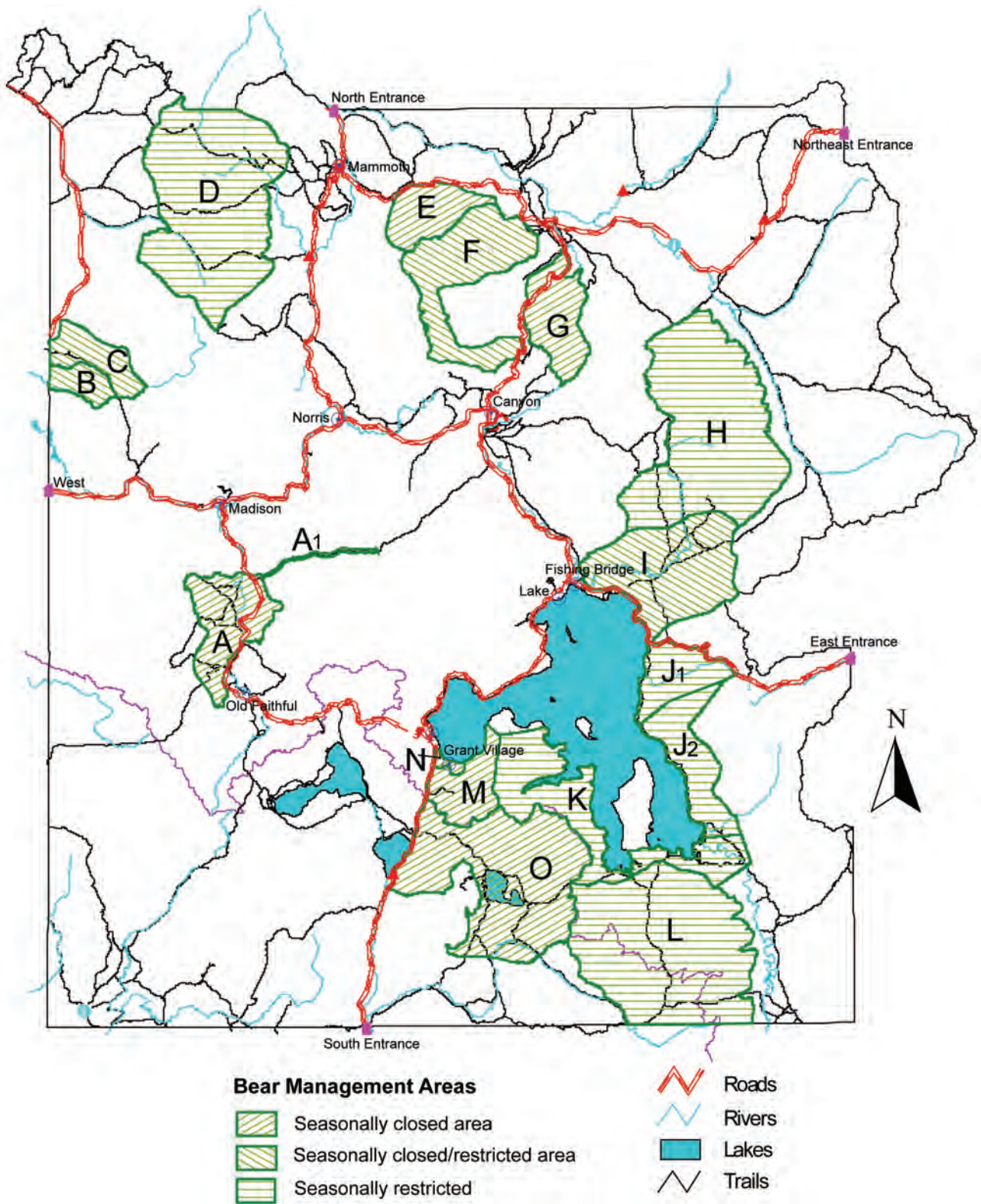
Lake Spawn: From May 15 through July 14, no off-trail travel allowed and the Trail Creek Trail between Cabin Creek and Outlet Creek is closed. Open Campsites are 7L5, 7L6, 7L7, 7L8, 7M3, 7M4, 7M5, 6A3, 6A4, and 6B1 (no travel away from campsite). On July 15 all campsites open and off trail travel is permitted.

Two Ocean: From March 10 through July 14, and August 22 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.

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

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.

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



Yellowstone’s bear management areas are instrumental in minimizing human related impacts on bears in high density grizzly bear habitat. Types of restrictions include area closures, trail closures, and travel limited to daylight hours or to established trails.



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 Yellowstone.org. 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 behavior.

Most attacks are caused by surprising a bear, getting between a mother bear and her cubs, or getting too close to a bear which has 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, diggings or other bear sign. Do not wear headphones while hiking. 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, 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 fresh carcass nearby. It is very risky to approach a carcass; a bear may be out of sight guarding its food. Report dead animals 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
- Do not run or make sudden movements
- Back away slowly
- Talk quietly to the bear, do not shout
- Do not drop 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

the spacing of the branches is right. Climb a tree only if the bear is far away, the tree is nearby, and one in which you can climb at least 15 feet. Running to a tree may provoke a bear to chase you. You cannot outrun a bear!

If the bear charges you, stand your ground and use bear spray if you have it. Some bears may bluff charge, then veer off or stop abruptly, allowing you to slowly back away. If the bear makes physical contact, drop to the ground, lie face down, and clasp your hands behind 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 doesn’t 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.

Grizzly Bear



Black Bear



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 paniers, 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 your stuff sacks.

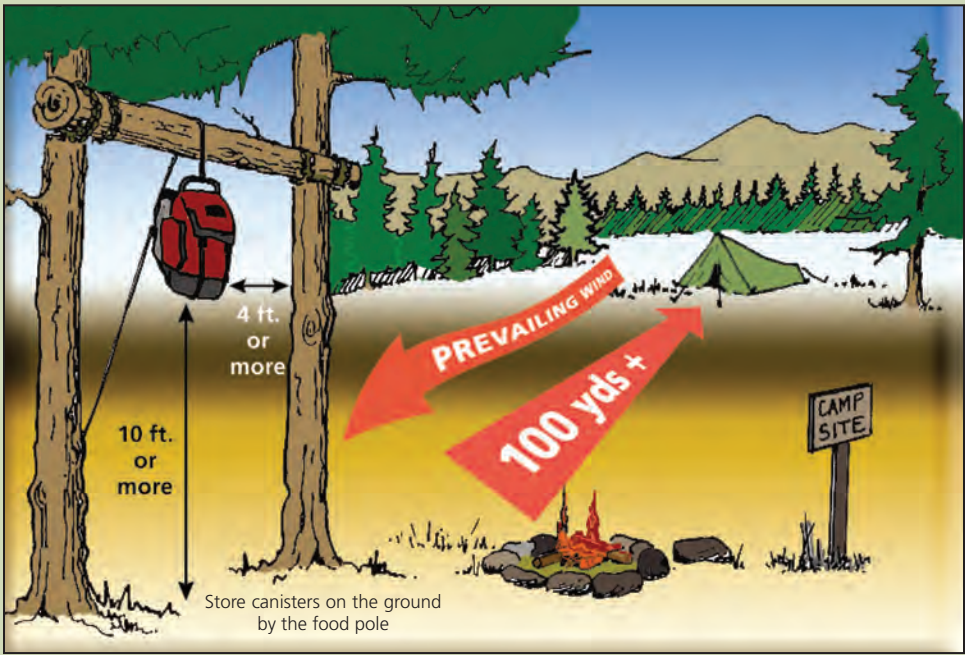
Before starting a day hike or backcountry trip check at a Visitor Center or Backcountry Office for any recent bear sightings or warnings or view the Backcountry Situation Report online at go.nps.gov/yellbackcountryreport. Look for posted warning signs at the trailhead. Report bear sightings or encounters 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.

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

- **Keep your sleeping area at least 100 yards from the cooking and food-storage area.** 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).
- Suspend items 10 feet above ground and 4 feet out from tree trunks. Certain portable bear resistant food containers (BRFCs) may be used for food storage in lieu of hanging. Contact a backcountry office for further information regarding approved containers.
- BRFCs must be left on the ground underneath the food pole or in the cooking area.
- Make sure all food and odorous items will fit into a container before starting your trip
- Store your food immediately upon entering camp and keep all food and trash secured any time they’re not in use.
- Store all odorous items including food, trash, toothpaste, deodorant and lotion.
- Keep a clean camp; remove any food scraps and trash from the fire pit. Pack out all trash
- Strain food particles from dishwater and pack out with trash. 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.
- Avoid placing your tent near dead standing trees.



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 make other arrangements for obtaining your permit.



CDT
The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail (NPNHT) utilize parts of Yellowstone's trail system. For further information on these trails, contact the Central Backcountry office.

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/transbusn.htm. Parking is available at all trailheads. Overnight camping at trailheads is not allowed.

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, 3–6 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. During June through November you can also view current backcountry conditions online at go.nps.gov/yellbackcountryreport. Keep in mind when reading through the time progression that the listing is cumulative.

Early May: 1A, 1Y, 1R and 2H1-6 sites.
Mid- to late May: 3C2, 3C3, 3L1, the 2S sites.
Early June: 1B1, 1G sites, 2C1, 2C2, 2C3, 2H8, 2H9, OG1, OD sites, OA1, OA2, OA3.
Mid- to late June: WF1, WB and WC sites, 1C sites and 1F sites, 3P1, 4F1, 4C, 4D, 4E, 4G, and 4R sites, 8G1, Shoshone Lake sites (8Q3, 8Q4, 8R1, 8R3, 8R4, 8R5, 8S1, 8S0, 8S2), some of Yellowstone Lake except 7M4 shore sites and those closed for bear management, 5E sites, and most Old Faithful area sites except OE1.
Early July: 3P sites, 3C4, 3L, lower 3M, 3F, 3T and 3U sites, 8M1, 8M2, 8Q1, 8R2, 8S4, 8S5, 8S7, 8T1, Heart Lake 8H sites and 8J sites, 8A sites, 9U sites, WA1.
Mid- to late July: WD sites, WE sites, Fawn Pass and Electric Pass, 2Y1, the trail connecting the 2S and 3P sites (Bliss Pass), 4M2, 4B and 4W (Wapiti Lake) sites, 4P1, Specimen Ridge trail, all Yellowstone Lake sites, 6B1, 6B4, 6C and lower 6D sites, 6M and 6Y sites, 8Q6, 8Q7, 8T3, 8T5, some 8B and 8C sites depending on the Snake River ford at 8K7, 7G1, 7G2, OE1, and 9A sites and 9B1–9B6 sites in the Bechler area.
August: Bighorn Pass, Yellowstone River fords south of Yellowstone Lake, 6T sites, 6B2, 6A4 by foot, the upper 6D sites and Eagle Pass, 9B7–9B9, 9D sites (Bechler River Canyon), 8P1, 8P2, most trails & campsites.

Only limited areas are accessible in May and early June. In general, you will encounter fewer closures, dryer trails, lower stream crossings, and fewer mosquitoes if you travel later rather than earlier in the season. For your safety and pleasure, please plan your itinerary to avoid high elevations and major river crossings early in the season. Certain areas may be closed during the early season if conditions are considered unsafe. In addition, please review the list of Bear Management Areas on pages 2-3 for seasonal restrictions and closures.

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 such 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 or in an approved Bear Resistant Food Container.
- 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.
- Tossing, throwing, or rolling rocks or other items inside caverns, into valleys, canyons, or caves, down hillsides or mountain sides, or into thermal features is prohibited.
- Bicycles, wheeled vehicles (except wheelchairs), and operating motorized equipment in the backcountry are prohibited.
- 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.

Interested in a guided trip?

Visit www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/guidedtours.htm for a list of companies permitted to conduct overnight backcountry trips in Yellowstone.

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; back-packing 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, motorized 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.



Party Size and Large Groups

The maximum party size allowed at any one campsite ranges from 4 to 12 persons. Refer to the campsite lists 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.



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 afternoon thundershowers common. High water from spring runoff can make stream crossings hazardous and some trails wet and muddy until mid-July. Check current conditions online at go.nps.gov/yellbackcountryreport.

Thermal Features and Geyser Basins

Burns from thermal features are a common cause of serious injury and death in the park. Following large animal tracks through geyser basins is no insurance of safety. Foot travel in all thermal areas must be confined to boardwalks or trails that are maintained for such travel and are marked by official signs.



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. Doing so may 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, grassy, brushy, low elevation areas (4,000–6,500 feet) are ideal tick habitat in Yellowstone. Wear repellent 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 forbearance are required.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is the major killer of unprepared recreationists. It is the lowering of a person's inner-core temperature, followed by rapid, progressive mental and physical collapse. Each year outdoor recreationists 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 “denial syndrome” in which the victim negates any problems, “I'm OK, really!”

If you cannot stay warm and dry, assess and alter your plans. Remember that you are only as strong as the weakest person in your group. Persistent or violent shivering is a clear warning that you are on the verge of hypothermia. Find shelter from the storm and make camp. Get out of wind and rain. Remove wet clothing. Get into dry clothing and a sleeping bag. Administer warm drinks. Never give alcohol.

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. Satellite Phones typically have better coverage, but even they are not 100% reliable due to varying satellite coverage.

Regardless of whether or not you carry a phone, all backcountry visitors should have a plan for what to do in case of an emergency. The best insurance for a safe and enjoyable trip rests with your ability to exercise good judgment, avoid unnecessary risks, and assume responsibility for your own safety while in 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 backcountry office 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 dangling 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*.



Recommended Publications

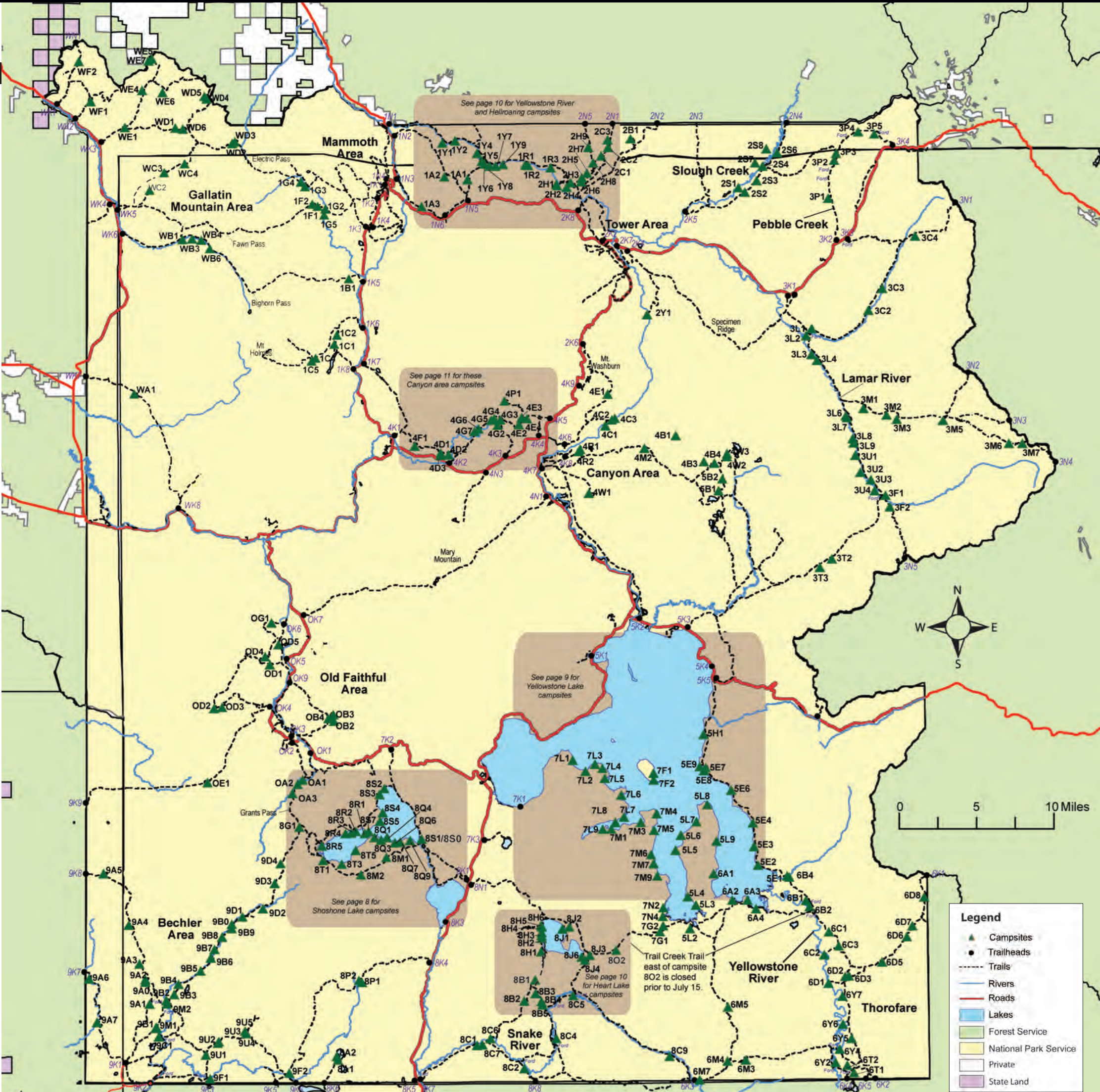
Pre-planning is essential to a successful backcountry experience. Yellowstone Forever, a non-profit educational partner of the park, stocks a number of backcountry guide books and topographic maps.

To order, contact:
Yellowstone Forever, P.O. Box 117,
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190,
www.Yellowstone.org
406-848-2400

Backcountry Campsites

NWF=No Wood Fires
BMA=Bear Management Area (see pages 2–3)
EA=Easy Access Site (site is within 2 miles of trailhead)

| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions | Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|---|----------|-------|---|--|----------|-------|---|
| Mammoth Area (see page 10 for Yellowstone River Trail & Rescue/Lava Creek area campsites) | | | | | | | |
| 1B1 | 10 | 0 | Big Horn Pass Trail • EA | 6A3 | 12 | 0 | Trail Point • Trail or non-motorized boat access only • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Can anchor sailboat |
| 1C1 | 10 | 0 | Straight Creek South | 6A4 | 12 | 0 | Trail Bay • Trail or non-motorized boat access only • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Can anchor sailboat |
| 1C2 | 10 | 6 | Straight Creek North • Stock=llamas only | 6B1 | 12 | 20 | Lower Ford • No off-trail travel 5/15–7/14 • 1 night limit for stock • River may not be fordable until late July/early August |
| 1C4 | 10 | 6 | Winter Creek | 6B2 | 8 | 0 | Upper Ford • Closed 5/15–7/14 • River may not be fordable until late July/early August |
| 1C5 | 10 | 6 | Winter Creek SW | 6B4 | 12 | 20 | Beaverdam Meadow • Closed 4/1–7/14 |
| 1F1 | 12 | 20 | Fawn Creek • Stock Only • Unavailable if 1G5 occupied. | 6C1 | 12 | 15 | Colter Meadows • Keep stock from spring source |
| 1F2 | 10 | 0 | Fawn Lake | 6C2 | 12 | 25 | River's Edge • 1.5 miles west of main trail |
| 1G2 | 10 | 0 | Gardner's Hole | 6C3 | 10 | 8 | Turret View • Stock=llamas only |
| 1G3 | 10 | 0 | Gardner River | 6D1 | 12 | 10 | Lower Mountain Creek |
| 1G4 | 10 | 0 | Upper Gardner River | 6D2 | 12 | 0 | Mountain Creek Ford |
| 1G5 | 12 | 25 | Soldier's Corral • Stock Only • Unavailable if 1F1 occupied | 6D3 | 12 | 25 | Mountain Creek Stock • Stock Only |
| Tower Area Campsites (see page 10 for Hellroaring Creek area campsites) | | | | | | | |
| 2B1 | 10 | 16 | Buffalo Plateau | 6D5 | 12 | 20 | Mountain Creek |
| 2C1 | 8 | 0 | Lower Coyote Creek | 6D6 | 12 | 25 | Howell Creek |
| 2C2 | 8 | 0 | Coyote Creek | 6D7 | 12 | 0 | Table Mountain |
| 2C3 | 10 | 16 | Coyote Creek Meadow • Stock Only | 6D8 | 12 | 10 | Upper Howell Creek • Often has snow until July • No stock after 9/1 |
| 251* | 8 | 12 | Lower Slough Creek | All 6M sites except 6M7, no off-trail travel except from 7/15 through 8/21. Must obtain a permit for off-trail travel at the South Entrance. See Two Ocean BMA (p. 3). | | | |
| 252* | 6 | 0 | Hornaday Creek | 6M3 | 8 | 0 | Mariposa Lake • NWF |
| 253* | 8 | 0 | Slough Creek | 6M4 | 12 | 25 | Two Ocean Trail Jct • No stock before 7/20 |
| 254* | 8 | 0 | Elk Tongue | 6M5 | 12 | 25 | Upper Passage Creek • No stock before 7/20 |
| 256* | 8 | 0 | Upper Slough Creek | 6M7 | 12 | 0 | Fox Creek |
| 257* | 12 | 20 | Upper Slough Ck Stock S. • Stock Only • 1 party per night in either 257 or 258 | 6T1 | 12 | 20 | South Thorofare • Creek may not be fordable until mid- to late-July |
| 258* | 12 | 20 | Upper Slough Creek Stock N • Same as 257 | 6T2 | 12 | 0 | North Thorofare • On north side of Thorofare Creek |
| *Only three nights allowed per permit for all 25-sites from June 15 to Sept. 15 | | | | | | | |
| 2Y1 | 8 | 0 | Agate Creek | 6Y2 | 12 | 0 | South Yell River • River may not be fordable until mid- to late-July |
| Lamar River & Pebble Creek Area Campsites | | | | | | | |
| 3C2 | 12 | 20 | Lower Cache Creek • 2 night limit for stock | 6Y4 | 12 | 25 | East Confluence • Limited picketing for stock |
| 3C3 | 12 | 25 | Cache Creek | 6Y5 | 12 | 0 | Cliff Creek |
| 3C4 | 12 | 0 | Upper Cache Creek | 6Y6 | 12 | 25 | Three Mile Bend |
| 3F1 | 6 | 0 | Cold Creek | 6Y7 | 12 | 25 | Yellowstone Meadows • Stock Only |
| 3F2 | 12 | 25 | Lemon City | 7G1 | 12 | 25 | Grouse Creek • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Unavailable to stock if 7G2 occupied by stock |
| 3L1 | 12 | 8 | Cache Creek Ford N • Stock=llamas only | 7G2 | 12 | 25 | Lower Grouse Creek • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Unavailable to stock if 7G1 occupied by stock |
| 3L2 | 12 | 0 | Cache Creek Ford S. | Snake River Area (see page 10 for Heart Lake and Basin Creek area campsites) | | | |
| 3L3 | 12 | 0 | Lower Lamar | 8A1 | 8 | 0 | Beula Lake South |
| 3L4 | 12 | 0 | Lower Lamar Bench | 8A2 | 6 | 0 | Beula Lake |
| 3L6 | 12 | 20 | Middle Lamar Stock • Stock Only • 2 night limit | 8C1 | 8 | 0 | Snake Hot Springs • May not be fordable until mid-July |
| 3L7 | 12 | 0 | Middle Lamar | 8C2 | 12 | 25 | Nine Mile Meadow |
| 3L8 | 12 | 0 | Timothy Creek | 8C4 | 12 | 6 | Snake River |
| 3L9 | 12 | 20 | Warm Spring Meadow | 8C6 | 8 | 0 | Snake River Ford |
| 3M1 | 12 | 25 | Appaloosa Meadows • 2 night limit for stock | 8C7 | 12 | 25 | Snake Hot Springs Stock • Stock Only |
| 3M2 | 12 | 0 | Lower Miller Creek | 8C9 | 12 | 25 | Crooked Creek |
| 3M3 | 12 | 20 | Miller Creek | 8G1 | 6 | 8 | Shoshone Meadows • 1 night limit • NWF • Stock=llamas only |
| 3M5 | 12 | 0 | Canoe Lake Junction | 8O2 | 6 | 0 | Outlet Creek • No travel east of Outlet Lk. before 7/15 |
| 3M6 | 12 | 0 | Hoodoo Basin | 8P1 | 8 | 6 | Pitchstone • Stock use not recommended |
| 3M7 | 12 | 20 | Boundary • No stock before August 1 • 1 night stock limit | 8P2 | 8 | 0 | Phantom |
| 3P1 | 12 | 0 | Lower Pebble Creek | Bechler Area Campsites | | | |
| 3P2 | 12 | 0 | Pebble Creek | All Bechler area campsites are not reservable for camping dates prior to 7/10. Before July 10, these campsites may be available for in-person permits as conditions allow. | | | |
| 3P3 | 6 | 0 | Bliss Pass Jct | 9A0* | 12 | 25 | Upper Boundary Creek • Stock Only |
| 3P4 | 12 | 20 | Upper Pebble Creek | 9A1* | 12 | 20 | Boundary Creek Meadows |
| 3P5 | 12 | 0 | Upper Pebble Creek Ford • EA | 9A2 | 12 | 0 | Upper Boundary Creek |
| 3T2 | 12 | 12 | Mist Creek Meadows • 2 night limit | 9A3 | 12 | 0 | Dunanda Falls • 2 night limit |
| 3T3 | 12 | 25 | Mist Creek Pass • 2 night limit | 9A4 | 12 | 25 | Talus Terrace |
| 3U1 | 12 | 25 | Willow Creek Stock | 9A5 | 12 | 25 | Buffalo Lake |
| 3U2 | 12 | 0 | Willow Creek | 9A6 | 12 | 25 | Robinson Creek |
| 3U3 | 12 | 0 | Little Saddle Creek | 9A7 | 12 | 0 | Little Robinson Creek |
| 3U4 | 12 | 25 | Cold Creek Jct • Stock Only | 9B0* | 12 | 25 | Three Rivers Meadow • 2 night limit • Stock Only • NWF |
| Canyon Area Campsites (see page 11 for more campsites in the Canyon Area) | | | | | | | |
| 4B1 | 6 | 0 | Joseph's Coat Spring • Off-trail travel required • 2 night limit | 9B1 | 12 | 0 | Lower Boundary Creek • 2 night limit • NWF |
| 4B3 | 12 | 6 | Broad Creek • Off-trail travel required | 9B2 | 12 | 0 | Bechler Ford • 2 night limit • NWF |
| 4B4 | 12 | 10 | Wapiti Junction | 9B3* | 12 | 25 | Trail Spring • Stock Only • 2 night limit |
| 4C1 | 8 | 0 | Old Seven Mile Hole • NWF | 9B4 | 12 | 0 | Ouzel Falls • 1 night limit |
| 4C2 | 8 | 0 | Sulphur Creek • NWF | 9B5 | 12 | 0 | Colonnade Falls • 1 night limit |
| 4C3 | 8 | 0 | Seven Mile Hole • NWF | 9B6 | 12 | 0 | Lower Bechler Canyon Ford • 1 night limit |
| 4E1 | 8 | 0 | Washburn Meadows | 9B7 | 12 | 0 | Talus Spring • 1 night limit |
| 4M2 | 12 | 6 | Moss Creek | 9B8 | 12 | 0 | Upper Bechler Canyon Ford • 1 night limit |
| 4R1 | 8 | 0 | Ribbon Lake West • EA | 9B9 | 12 | 0 | Albright Falls • 2 night limit • NWF |
| 4R2 | 8 | 0 | Ribbon Lake North • EA | 9C1 | 12 | 0 | Rocky Ford • 2 night limit |
| 4W1 | 12 | 6 | Wrangler Lake | 9D1 | 12 | 0 | Ferris Fork • 1 night limit • NWF |
| 4W2 | 8 | 0 | Wapiti Lake Point | 9D2 | 12 | 0 | Gregg Fork • 1 night limit |
| 4W3 | 8 | 0 | Wapiti Lake | 9D3 | 12 | 25 | Douglas Knob Meadow • 1 night limit • NWF |
| 5B1 | 12 | 25 | Fern Lake | 9D4 | 12 | 0 | Continental Divide • 1 night limit • NWF |
| 5B2 | 12 | 15 | Upper Broad Creek | 9F1 | 12 | 0 | Lower Falls River |
| Lake East Shore & Thorofare Campsites (see page 9 for Yellowstone Lake boat-ing campsites) | | | | | | | |
| 5E1 | 12 | 0 | Beaverdam Trail • Trail Access Only • Closed 4/1–7/14 | 9F2 | 12 | 0 | Upper Falls River • 1 night limit |
| 5E3 | 12 | 0 | Brimstone Point • No off-trail travel 4/1–7/14 • Trail or boat access • Boats must be entirely removed from water | 9M1* | 12 | 25 | Lower Boundary Creek Stock • 2 night limit • NWF |
| 5E4 | 12 | 0 | Brimstone Bay • Restrictions same as those for 5E3 | 9M2* | 12 | 25 | Bechler Ford • Stock Only • 2 night limit • NWF |
| 5E6 | 12 | 25 | Columbine Meadow • Restrictions same as those for 5E3 • One night limit | 9U1 | 12 | 25 | Falls River Cutoff |
| 5E7 | 12 | 25 | Meadow Creek • Closed 4/1–7/14 • Trail access only | 9U2 | 12 | 0 | Mountain Ash Creek |
| 5E8 | 12 | 0 | Park Point S • Restrictions same as those for 5E3 | 9U3 | 12 | 0 | Mountain Ash Creek Ford • NWF |
| 5E9 | 12 | 0 | Park Point N • Restrictions same as those for 5E3 | | | | |
| 5L2 | 8 | 10 | Monument Camp • Trail or Boat Access • Closed 5/15–7/14 | | | | |



| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions | Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions | Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|---|----------|-------|---|------|----------|-------|---|------|----------|-------|---|
| 9J4 | 12 | 0 | Union Falls • 2 night limit | OG1 | 8 | 0 | Sentinel Meadows East • EA | WE1 | 12 | 10 | No stock before 7/15 |
| 9J5 | 12 | 12 | Warm Fork • 2 night limit • NWF | WA1 | 10 | 20 | Gneiss Creek • Closed 3/10–6/30 • No off-trail travel | WE4 | 12 | 0 | Specimen Creek Jct • 2 night limit • EA |
| *No overnight stock use allowed prior to July 15th. | | | | | | | | WE5 | 8 | 0 | Specimen Creek |
| Old Faithful Area Campsites | | | | | | | | WE6 | 8 | 0 | Shelf Lake • NWF |
| OA1 | 12 | 10 | Lone Star • EA | WB1 | 10 | 0 | Gallatin River | WE7 | 8 | 0 | Crescent Lake |
| OA2 | 6 | 0 | Upper Firehole | WB3 | 12 | 25 | Gallatin River Stock • Stock Only • Unavailable if WB4 occupied • No off-trail travel | WF1 | 10 | 10 | Black Butte Creek • EA |
| OA3 | 6 | 0 | Firehole Springs | WB4 | 12 | 25 | Upper Gallatin River Stock • Stock Only • Unavailable if WB3 occupied • No off-trail travel | WF2 | 10 | 10 | Upper Daly Creek • EA |
| OB2 | 6 | 0 | Mallard Lake SE | WB6 | 10 | 0 | Upper Gallatin River • No off-trail travel • Opens July 15 | | | | |
| OB3 | 6 | 0 | Mallard Lake E | WC2 | 10 | 0 | Lower Fan Creek | | | | |
| OB4 | 6 | 0 | Mallard Lake Outlet • NWF | WC3 | 12 | 25 | Fan Creek • Stock Only | | | | |
| All OD and OG sites are closed from 3/10 until Fri. before Memorial Day. See Firehole BMA (p. 3). | | | | | | | | WD1 | 10 | 0 | E Fork Specimen Creek |
| OD1 | 6 | 0 | Fairy Meadows • NWF • EA | WD2 | 12 | 20 | Sportsman Lake Meadow • No off-trail travel • No stock before 7/15 | WD2 | 12 | 20 | Sportsman Lake • No off-trail travel • No stock before 7/15 |
| OD2 | 10 | 0 | Firehole Meadows | WD3 | 10 | 0 | Sportsman Lake • No off-trail travel | WD3 | 10 | 0 | High Lake Outlet • NWF |
| OD3 | 6 | 0 | Firehole Falls | WD4 | 10 | 0 | High Lake • NWF | WD5 | 10 | 5 | High Lake • NWF |
| OD4 | 12 | 0 | Imperial Meadows | WD6 | 12 | 25 | High Lake/Sportsman Jct • Stock Only • | | | | |
| OD5 | 6 | 0 | Goose Lake • Handicapped accessible • Reserveable by special needs or bicycle parties only • EA | | | | | | | | |
| OE1 | 6 | 6 | Summit Lake • Multiple party site | | | | | | | | |

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
- 1K6 Mt. Holmes
- 1K7 Solfatara North
- 1K8 Grizzly Lake
- 1N2 Rescue Creek
- 1N3 Lava Creek
- 1N4 Beaver Ponds
- 1N5 Blacktail Creek
- 1N6 Lava Creek Picnic Area
- 1N7 Yellowstone River (USFS)
- 2K2 Tower Junction
- 2K4 Specimen Ridge
- 2K5 Slough Creek
- 2K6 Mt. Washburn North
- 2K7 Yellowstone River Picnic Area
- 2K8 Hellroaring
- 2N1* Coyote Creek
- 2N2* Buffalo Plateau
- 2N3* Buffalo Fork
- 2N4* Upper Slough
- 2N5* Upper Hellroaring
- 3K1 Lamar River
- 3K2 Pebble Creek
- 3K3 Thunderer
- 3K4 Warm Creek
- 3N1* Republic Pass
- 3N2* Canoe Lake
- 3N3* Bootjack Gap
- 3N4* Hoodoo
- 3N5* Frost Lake
- 4K1 Solfatara Creek
- 4K2 Ice Lake
- 4K3 Grebe Lake
- 4K4 Cascade Creek
- 4K5 Cascade Lake
- 4K6 Glacial Boulder
- 4K7 Wapiti Lake
- 4K8 Artist Point
- 4K9 Dunraven Pass
- 4N1 Mary Mtn. East
- 5K1 Bridge Bay Marina
- 5K2 Fishing Bridge
- 5K3 Pelican Valley
- 5K4 Sedge Bay (Boat)
- 5K5 Nine Mile
- 6K1* Eagle Pass
- 6K2* Hawk's Rest
- 6K3* Fox Creek
- 6K4* Bridger Lake
- 6K5* Thorofare
- 7K1 Grant Village Boat Ramp
- 7K2 DeLacy Creek
- 7K3 Riddle Lake
- 8K1 Doghead/Lewis Channel
- 8K3 Lewis Lake Dock
- 8K4 Pitchstone
- 8K5 South Boundary West
- 8K6 Beula Lake
- 8K7 South Entrance
- 8K8* Wolverine
- 8N1 Heart Lake
- 8N1 Bechler Ranger Station
- 9K2 Cave Falls
- 9K3 Fish Lake
- 9K5 Cascade Creek
- 9K6 Grassy Lake
- 9K7* Robinson Creek
- 9K8* Buffalo Lake
- 9K9* Summit Lake
- OK1 Lone Star
- OK2 Howard Eaton
- OK3 Mallard Lake
- OK4 Biscuit Basin
- OK5 Fairy Falls
- OK6 Freight Road
- OK7 Mary Mtn. West
- OK9 Mallard Creek
- WK1 Daly Creek
- WK2 Black Butte
- WK3 Specimen Creek
- WK4 Bacon Rind
- WK5 Fawn Pass
- WK6 Bighorn Pass
- WK7 Gneiss Creek
- WK8 Seven Mile Bridge
- WN1* Sky Rim





Boating

The leading cause of death in Yellowstone's backcountry is cold-water drowning. Water temperatures on Yellowstone, Lewis, and Shoshone lakes are in the 40s (Fahrenheit) and only get up into the 60s by late summer. Survival time is minimal in frigid waters. In addition, sudden strong winds can 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 water; often storms subside in the late afternoon and evening.
- Take time to properly pack and balance your load; overloaded boats are dangerous. Use dry bags rather than plastic bags to keep contents dry and provide flotation. A properly loaded boat may float if capsized, while an improperly loaded boat could sink if capsized.
- Always carry a bailing device, extra paddle, throw ring buoy and / or rope and a sound-producing device such as a whistle or air-horn.
- Practice capsized 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.

The boating season begins on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, and extends through the first Sunday in November. 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 watercrafts are permitted only on Lewis Lake, and most of Yellowstone Lake except in portions of the South, Southeast, and Flat Mountain arms.

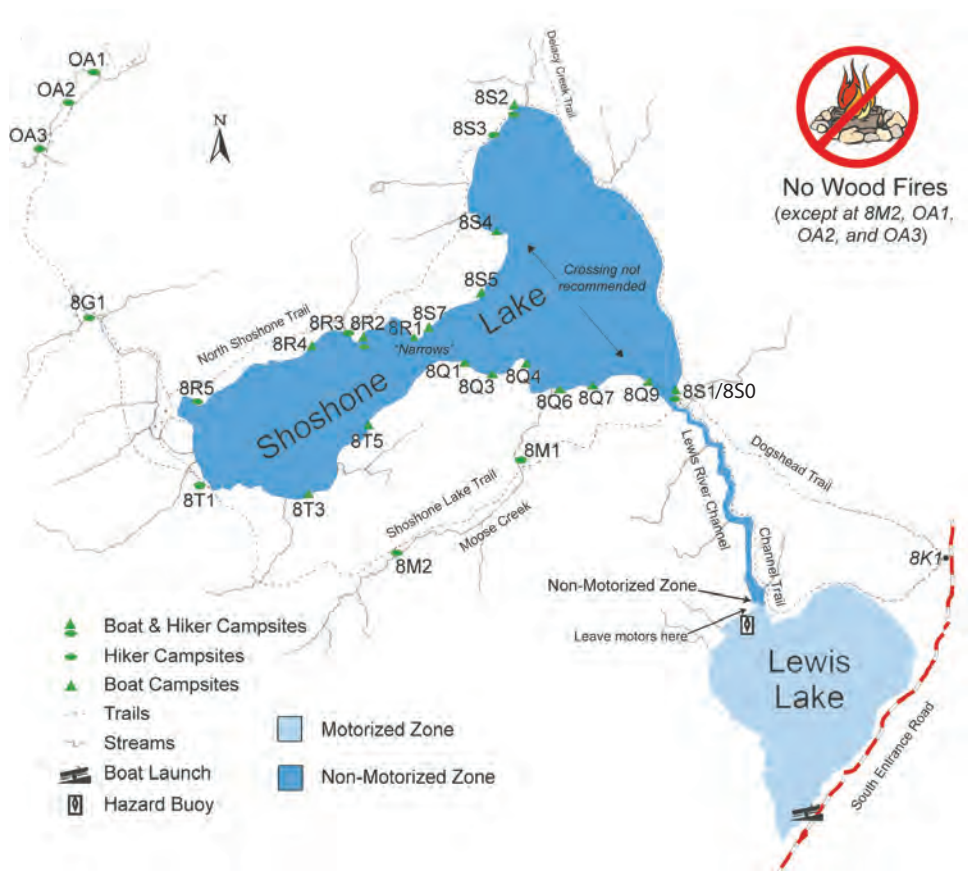
Boats can be launched at Bridge Bay, Grant Village, and Lewis Lake boat ramps. Additionally, hand carried boats may be launched and removed at Sedge Bay. Towing water skiers and using jet skis are prohibited on park waters. There is currently a ban on watercrafts with sealed internal ballasts. Sailboat users should contact the Central Backcountry Office for more information.

Boat permits and Aquatic Invasive Species Inspections are required for all boats and float tubes. Permits can be obtained at any of the following locations: South Entrance, Grant Village Visitor Center, and Bridge Bay Marina. In addition, float tube permits are available at a few other locations. Further information is available at: www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/boat-ing.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 geyser basins 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. Foot travel in all thermal areas must be on maintained trails. 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. 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 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 (PFD) 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 capsized 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 flooding at some sites. Shoshone Lake's Ice is off typically in the first week of June. To avoid making reservations that we most likely won't be able to honor, sites 8Q1, 8Q6, 8Q7, 8R2, 8S4, 8S5, 8T3, 8T5 and 8T1 have delayed opening dates, see the Backcountry Permit Reservation Application Instructions for specific dates. 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 used to cross Lewis Lake are not allowed in the river channel or Shoshone Lake. They must be removed and left at the south end of the channel.

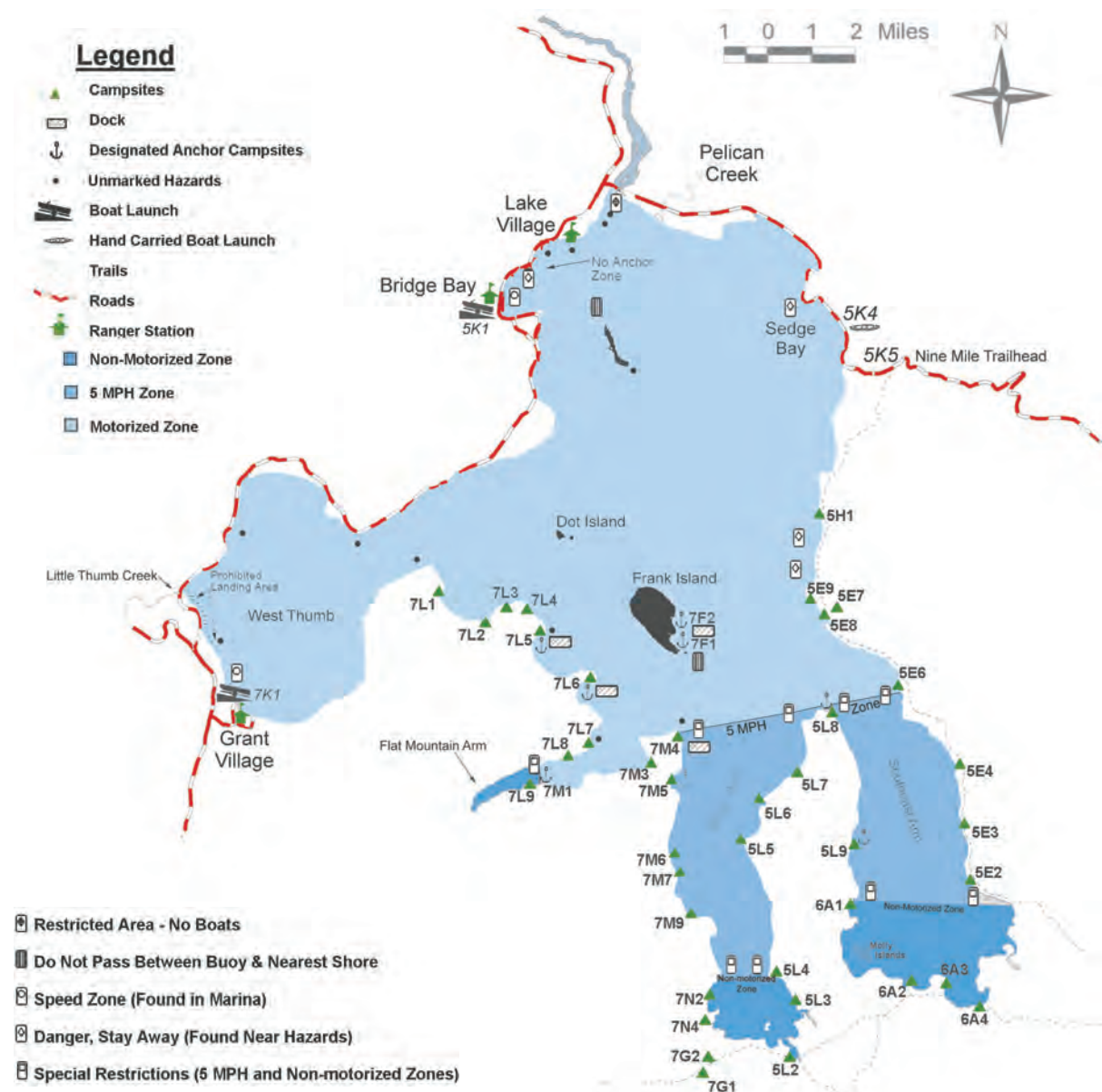
| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|---|----------|-------|--|
| All 8Q sites and the 8S1 boat site are available for only the first and last night of a trip. | | | |
| Wood fires are prohibited at all these sites except: 8M2, OA1, OA2, and OA3. | | | |
| 8G1 | 6 | 8 | Shoshone Meadows • Site located on Shoshone Lake Trail and isn't visible from the Bechler–Old Faithful Trail • 1 night limit • Stock=llamas only |
| 8M1 | 8 | 15 | Moose Creek |
| 8M2 | 8 | 15 | Moose Creek Meadow • 2 night limit |
| 8Q1 | 8 | 0 | S Narrow Point • Boat access only |
| 8Q3 | 8 | 0 | S Narrow Beach • Boat access only |
| 8Q4 | 8 | 0 | Moose Creek Point • Boat access only |
| 8Q6 | 8 | 0 | Moose Creek Outlet • Boat access only |
| 8Q7 | 8 | 0 | Moose Creek Beach • Boat access only |
| 8Q9 | 8 | 0 | Channel • Boat access only |
| 8R1 | 8 | 0 | Windy Point • Boat access only |
| 8R2 | 8 | 0 | Bluff Top • Trail or boat access |
| 8R3 | 8 | 0 | Cove • Trail access only |
| 8R4 | 8 | 0 | Flat Top • Boat access only |
| 8R5 | 8 | 0 | Basin Bay Point • Trail access only |
| 8S0 | 8 | 0 | Outlet (Hiker site)• 2 Party site |
| 8S1 | 8 | 0 | Outlet (Boat site)• 2 Party site |
| 8S2 | 8 | 0 | DeLacy Creek • Trail or boat access |
| 8S3 | 8 | 0 | Coyote • Trail access only |
| 8S4 | 8 | 0 | N Grizzly Beach • Boat access only |
| 8S5 | 8 | 0 | S Grizzly Beach • Boat access only |
| 8S7 | 8 | 0 | North Narrows • Boat access only |
| 8T1 | 4 | 0 | Basin Beach • Trail access only • Limit of 1 tent |
| 8T3 | 8 | 0 | Hillside • Boat access only |
| 8T5 | 8 | 0 | Tranquility • Boat access only |
| OA1 | 12 | 10 | Lone Star |
| OA2 | 6 | 0 | Upper Firehole |
| OA3 | 6 | 0 | Firehole Springs |

Yellowstone Lake

Yellowstone Lake is the second largest freshwater lake in the world that is above 7,000 feet. It encompasses 136 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. 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



| Site | Capacity | Campsite name/restrictions | Site | Capacity | Campsite name/restrictions |
|------|----------|---|------|----------|--|
| 5E2 | 12 | Terrace Point • No travel from campsite 4/1–7/14 • Boat access only • Boats must be entirely removed from water | 7F1 | 8 | Frank Island Bay South • Anchorage site only • Boat must be farther than 100 feet from shore, 300 feet from dock, and within land points defining double cove 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 |
| 5E3 | 12 | Brimstone Point • No travel from campsite 4/1–7/14 • Trail or boat access • Boats must be entirely removed from water | 7F2 | 8 | Frank Island Bay North • Same as 7F1 |
| 5E4 | 12 | Brimstone Bay • No travel from campsite 4/1–7/14 • Same restrictions as 5E3 | 7L1 | 12 | Breeze Bay North • Caution for shallow water • First and last night only |
| 5E6 | 12 | Columbine Meadow • No off-trail travel 4/1–7/14 • Trail or boat access • Boats must be entirely removed from water • One night limit • Allows 25 stock | 7L2 | 12 | Breeze Bay • First and last night only • Boat must be entirely removed from water |
| 5E7 | 12 | Meadow Creek • Closed 4/1–7/14 • Trail access only • Allows 25 stock | 7L3 | 12 | Breeze Bay South • Boat must be entirely removed from water |
| 5E8 | 12 | Park Point South • Closed 4/1–7/14 • Same restrictions as 5E3 | 7L4 | 12 | Ravine |
| 5E9 | 12 | Park Point North • No off-trail travel 4/1–7/14 • Same restrictions as 5E3 | 7L5 | 8 | 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, or anchored. • No more than one canoe/kayak party |
| 5H1 | 6 | Midshore • No travel from campsite 4/1–8/10 • Boat access only • First and last night only • Boats must be entirely removed from water • Limited tent space | 7L6 | 8 | Eagle Bay • 3 party dock site • Same restrictions as 7L5 |
| 5L2 | 8 | Monument Camp • Trail or boat access • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Site is 1/4 mile from lake shore | 7L7 | 12 | Bodego Bay • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Boat must be entirely removed from water • Caution for shallow water in cove east of site |
| 5L3 | 12 | Chipmunk Creek Outlet • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Non-motorized boats only • Boat must be entirely removed from water | 7L8 | 12 | Flat Mtn Arm N • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • |
| 5L4 | 8 | South Arm Cove • Temporarily closed | 7L9 | 8 | Flat Mtn Arm S • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Non-motorized boats only • Boat must be entirely removed from water • Limited tent space |
| 5L5 | 12 | Promontory Point | 7M1 | 8 | Grizzly Bay • 2 vessel site • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Self-contained* anchored boats only • No cooking or sleeping on shore |
| 5L6 | 12 | Promontory Shore • Boat must be entirely removed from water • Boat access only | 7M3 | 12 | Flat Mtn Bay • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Good anchor site |
| 5L7 | 12 | Promontory Bay | 7M4 | 8 | Plover Point • 3 Party dock site • Same restrictions as 7L5 |
| 5L8 | 8 | Promontory Tip • Rocky beach, boat must be entirely removed from water or anchored offshore • Not advisable to anchor boats over 20 feet • Limited tenting area • Boat access only | 7M5 | 12 | Plover Bay • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Rocky beach, boats must be removed from water or anchored off shore |
| 5L9 | 12 | Promontory Saddle • Rocky beach, boat must be entirely removed from water or anchored off shore • Boat access only • Not advisable to anchor boats over 20 feet | 7M6 | 12 | South Arm Meadow • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Recommend boats be removed from water |
| 6A1 | 12 | Promontory SE • Non-motorized boats only • Can anchor sailboat | 7M7 | 12 | South Arm • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Recommend boats be removed from water |
| 6A2 | 10 | SE Arm Inlet • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Non-motorized boats only • Can anchor sailboat | 7M9 | 12 | South Arm Bay • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Recommend boats be removed from water |
| 6A3 | 12 | Trail Point • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Trail or non-motorized boat access only • Can anchor sailboat • Trail access may be restricted during early season due to inability to ford the Yellowstone River | 7N2 | 12 | Gowdy Camp • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Off-trail or non-motorized boat access only |
| 6A4 | 12 | Trail Bay • No travel from campsite 5/15–7/14 • Trail or non-motorized boat access only • Can anchor sailboat • Trail access may be restricted during early season due to inability to ford the Yellowstone River | 7N4 | 12 | Southwest Bay • Closed 5/15–7/14 • Access may be difficult in periods of low water • Off-trail or non-motorized boat access only |

* 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.



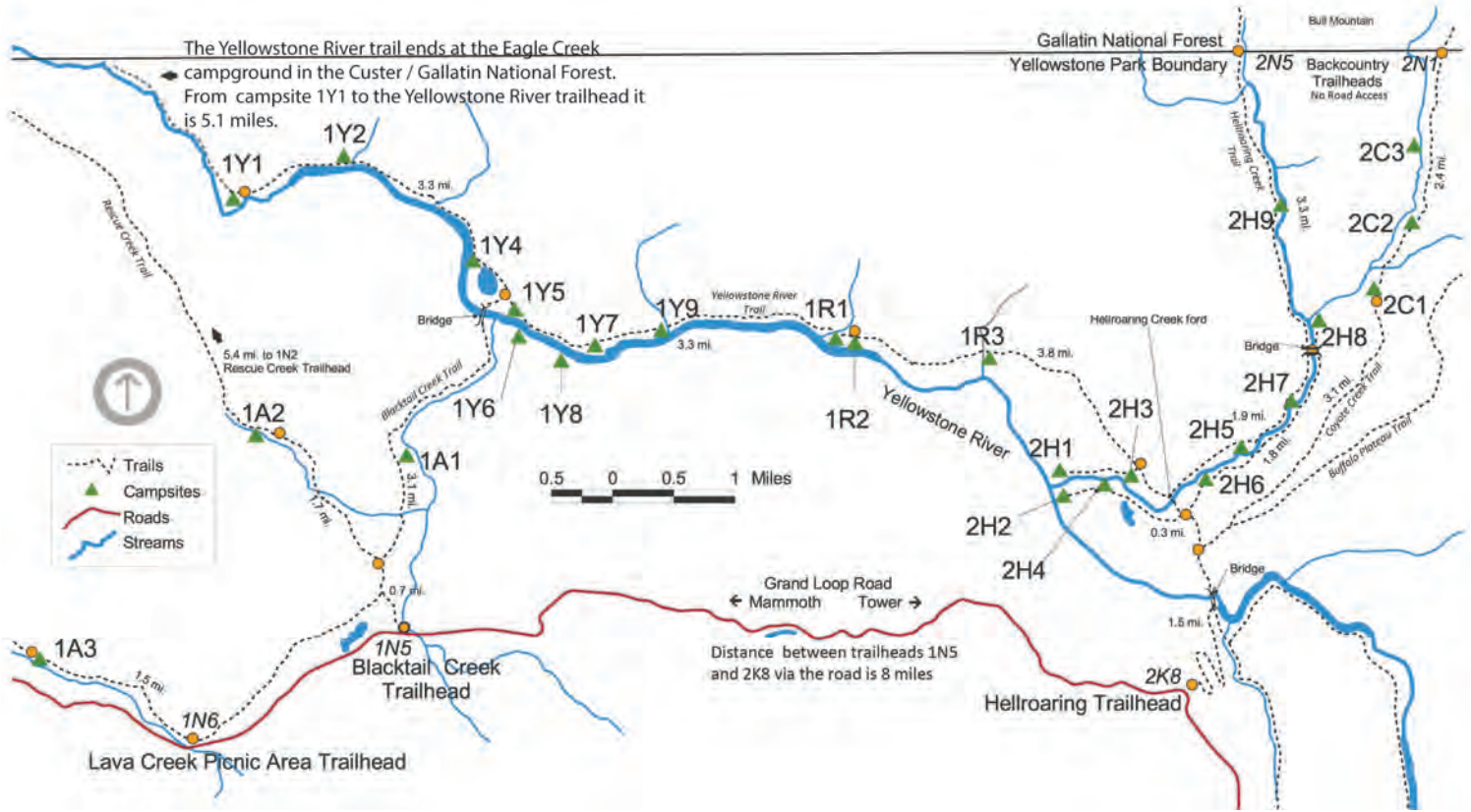
| Shoreline Mileages | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------|
| From Sedge Bay to: | From Grant Village to: | 7M6 = 27 |
| 5H1 = 3.8 | 7L1 = 8 | 7M7 = 27.5 |
| 5E9 = 6 | 7L2 = 9 | 7M9 = 28.5 |
| 5E8 = 6.5 | 7L3 = 9.8 | 7N2 = 31.5 |
| 5E6 = 9 | 7L4 = 10.5 | 7N4 = 32.5 |
| 5E4 = 11.5 | 7L5 = 12 | 5L3 = 35.5 |
| 5E3 = 13.3 | 7L6 = 15 | 5L5 = 39.8 |
| 5E2 = 14.8 | 7L7 = 17 | 5L6 = 41 |
| 6A4 = 18.5 | 7L8 = 17.8 | 5L7 = 42.3 |
| 6A3 = 19.5 | 7L9 = 19 | 5L8 = 44.3 |
| 6A2 = 21 | 7M1 = 20 | |
| 6A1 = 24 | 7M3 = 22 | |
| 5L9 = 26.5 | 7M4 = 24 | |
| 5L8 = 30 | 7M5 = 25 | |

Xanterra Parks and Resorts operates a shuttle service for boaters and hikers between the Bridge Bay Marina and locations on Yellowstone Lake. The drop-off and pick-up locations are at backcountry campsites 7L5, 7L6, 7M4, 5L8, and near 5E6. For more information and to make reservations contact the Bridge Bay Marina at (307) 242-3893.

Campsites (continued)

Yellowstone River/Hellroaring Creek Area

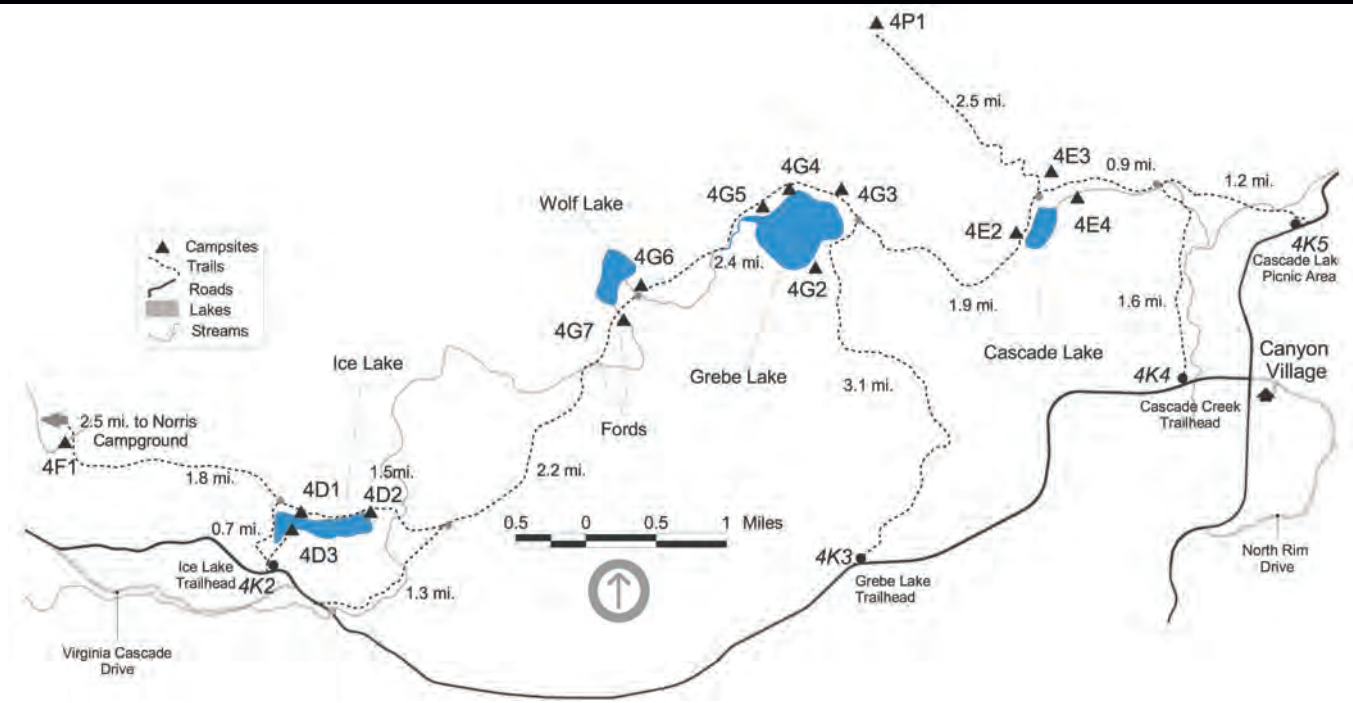
This trail is typically dry enough for hiking by mid-May. However, Hellroaring Creek remains too swift and deep to ford until August. When traveling to campsites 2H1, 2H3, 2H5, and 2H7 from trailhead 2K8, hikers must use the bridge north of campsite 2H7 to cross the creek. By mid-August, hikers are usually able to ford southeast of campsite 2H3. Fords can be dangerous, especially in high water, and not recommended. Also, during the spring and early summer, this area has a healthy population of ticks so hikers should take appropriate precautions. A report of current conditions is available at go.nps.gov/yell-backcountryreport. All the campsites along this trail system prohibit wood fires except 1A1–3, 2C1–3 and 2H9.



| Trailheads: |
|---|
| 1N7–Yellowstone River USFS (not shown) |
| 1N2–Rescue Creek (not shown) |
| 1N3–Lava Creek (not shown) |
| 1N5–Blacktail Creek |
| 1N6–Lava Creek Picnic Area |
| 2K8–Hellroaring |
| North boundary trailheads in the national forest with no road access: |
| 2N1–Coyote Creek |
| 2N5–Upper Hellroaring |

| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|------|----------|-------|--|
| 1A1 | 10 | 6 | Lower Blacktail Creek • EA |
| 1A2 | 10 | 0 | Rescue Creek • EA |
| 1A3 | 6 | 0 | Lava Creek • NWF • EA |
| 1R1 | 12 | 6 | W Cottonwood Creek • NWF • Stock limit 2 nights |
| 1R2 | 6 | 0 | E Cottonwood Creek • NWF |
| 1R3 | 10 | 10 | Little Cottonwood Creek • NWF • Stock limit 2 nights |
| 1Y1 | 10 | 0 | Yellowstone River Trail • NWF |
| 1Y2 | 10 | 0 | Yellowstone River Trail • NWF |
| 1Y4 | 6 | 0 | Crevice Lake • NWF |
| 1Y5 | 6 | 0 | Yellowstone River Bridge • NWF |
| 1Y6 | 6 | 0 | E of Blacktail Cabin • NWF |
| 1Y7 | 10 | 6 | Yellowstone River Trail • NWF • Stock limit 2 nights |
| 1Y8 | 6 | 0 | Oxbow Creek • NWF |
| 1Y9 | 8 | 0 | Yellowstone River Trail • NWF |

| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|--|----------|-------|---|
| 2C1 | 8 | 0 | Lower Coyote Creek |
| 2C2 | 8 | 0 | Coyote Creek |
| 2C3 | 10 | 16 | Coyote Creek Meadow • Stock Only |
| 2H1 | 8 | 0 | N Yell/Hell Confluence • NWF |
| 2H2 | 6 | 0 | S Yell/Hell Confluence • NWF |
| 2H3 | 10 | 0 | Hellroaring Creek Ford • NWF |
| 2H4 | 6 | 0 | Lower Hellroaring Creek • NWF |
| 2H5 | 8 | 0 | Hellroaring Creek Bench • NWF |
| 2H6 | 8 | 0 | Hellroaring Creek • NWF |
| 2H7 | 10 | 0 | Hellroaring Mountain • NWF |
| 2H8 | 8 | 0 | Hellroaring - Coyote Creek Confluence • NWF |
| 2H9 | 8 | 0 | Upper Hellroaring Creek |
| NWF = No Wood Fires | | | |
| EA=Easy access sites within 2 miles of the trailhead | | | |



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.



| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|--|----------|-------|--|
| 4D1 | 6 | 0 | Ice Lake North • EA • NWF |
| 4D2 | 8 | 0 | Ice Lake East • EA |
| 4D3 | 4 | 0 | Ice Lake South • Reservable only by parties with special needs. Wheelchair accessible with assistance • EA |
| 4E2 | 4 | 0 | Cascade Lake West |
| 4E3 | 8 | 0 | Cascade Lake North |
| 4E4 | 8 | 12 | Cascade Creek • EA |
| 4F1 | 8 | 0 | Norris Meadows • EA |
| 4G2 | 8 | 0 | Grebe Lake Southeast |
| 4G3 | 8 | 6 | Grebe Lake East • NWF |
| 4G4 | 8 | 6 | Grebe Lake North |
| 4G5 | 8 | 6 | Grebe Lake Outlet |
| 4G6 | 8 | 12 | Wolf Lake |
| 4G7 | 8 | 0 | Wolf Lake Outlet |
| 4P1 | 8 | 0 | Observation Peak • NWF |
| EA=Easy access sites within 2 miles of the trailhead | | | |
| NWF=No Wood Fires | | | |

Horsepacking

Plan Ahead

Due to the limited number of campsites that allow stock we strongly suggest making an advance reservation if you’re planning an overnight trip with stock. For riders not intending an overnight stay, free day ride permits are available online at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/playourvisit/horseride.htm> or by calling the Central Backcountry and can be made up to two weeks in advance. In planning for your trip keep these things in mind:

- Prior to July 1 most park trails are closed to stock use due to range readiness and wet conditions. Overnight trips with stock are not allowed before July 1. If you are planning an overnight trip or day ride contact the Central Backcountry Office for information on trail conditions, restrictions, and regulations pertaining to stock use.
- Stock users must possess proof of a negative Coggins test dated within the last 12 months for all equine stock entering the park. Be prepared to present a copy of the certification—signed by a licensed veterinarian—at an entrance station, when obtaining a backcountry permit, or in the backcountry.
- To prevent the spread of non-native weeds and grasses, hay is not permitted in the backcountry or at the trailhead. Stock trailers should be free of excess manure and all loose hay when entering the park. Only 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.

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 the trailhead, parking area, and hitch rails must be removed or scattered elsewhere before leaving the trailhead.
- 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 guidance.
- 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 mature or dead trees.
- If you picket stock, use only dead and down wood for picket pins and drag logs. 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 (kick) 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.

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

Fishing Regulations

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 backcountry offices, 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

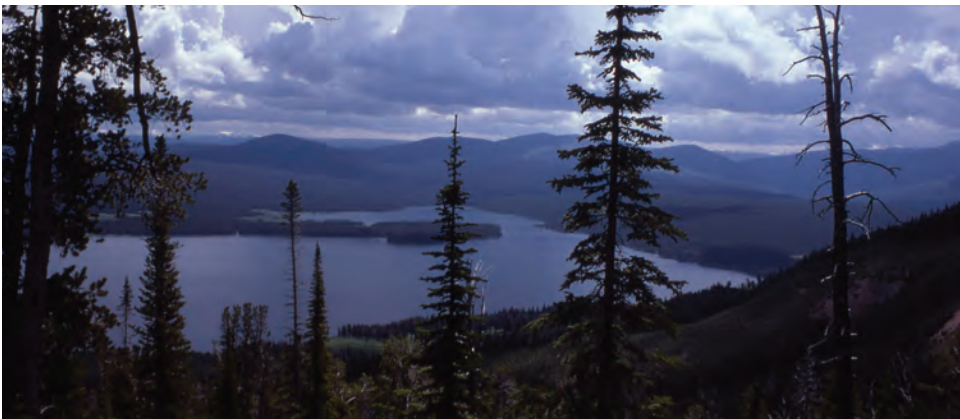
With some exceptions, Yellowstone’s fishing season begins on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend and continues through the first Sunday of November. More information is available at www.nps.gov/yell/playourvisit/fishing.htm.

Non-Toxic Fishing & AIS Protections

Yellowstone National Park has implemented a non-toxic fishing program. 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. In 2018 , felt soled footwear were banned to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasives. Help us protect our fisheries by making sure to CLEAN • DRAIN • DRY all of your equipment.

Further Information

www.nps.gov/yell/playourvisit/fishing.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 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 five 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 of some campsites might be delayed. The Trail Creek Trail east of campsite 8O2 remains closed until July 15. Near the northwest shore of the lake are several thermal areas one of which is home to Rustic Geyser. Stay on maintained trails and use caution around all thermal areas where 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. During the summer you can view current conditions at go.nps.gov/yellbackcountryreport.

| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|---|----------|-------|--|
| All sites listed below are closed 4/1–6/30. (Heart Lake Bear Management Area - O) | | | |
| 8B1 | 4 | 0 | Basin Creek |
| 8B2 | 12 | 6 | Basin Creek Lake |
| 8B3 | 12 | 25 | Basin Creek • Stock Only • Unavailable if 8B4 occupied |
| 8B4 | 12 | 25 | Basin Creek • Stock Only • Unavailable if 8B3 occupied |
| 8B5 | 8 | 0 | Basin Creek |
| 8C5 | 12 | 25 | Snowy River |
| 8H1* | 8 | 0 | South Bay • NWF |
| 8H2* | 6 | 0 | Sheridan Creek |
| 8H3* | 4 | 0 | Hideaway |

| Site | Capacity | Stock | Campsite name/restrictions |
|--|----------|-------|---|
| 8H4* | 8 | 0 | West Shore • NWF |
| 8H5* | 6 | 0 | Sheridan Trail • NWF |
| 8H6* | 6 | 0 | Rustic • NWF |
| 8J1* | 8 | 0 | Beaver Creek |
| * All 8H sites and 8J1 have a limit of 2 nights per trip from 7/1 to 9/1 | | | |
| 8J2 | 12 | 25 | Beaver Creek Meadow • Stock Only • 2 night limit |
| 8J3 | 8 | 0 | Surprise Creek |
| 8J4 | 8 | 0 | Heart River |
| 8J6 | 4 | 0 | E Shore |
| 8O2 | 6 | 0 | Outlet Creek • No travel east of Outlet Lk. before 7/15 |
| NWF = No Wood Fires | | | |



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park
PO Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190



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YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Backcountry Trip Planner



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Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and restrictions for the area you visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Select terrain and mileage based on what your group can handle.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- As you look through the campsite list in this planner, please note the party size limit that pertains to each campsite. If your group size exceeds these limits, you will need to camp and

- cook as smaller groups in separate campsites with separate permits.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- 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.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Never bury it or dump it in pit toilets. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- 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.

Respect Wildlife

- Do not approach wildlife. All wild animals are potentially dangerous. Observe wildlife from a distance. If your presence causes an animal to move away, you are too close.
- Never feed or harass animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.



- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound 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.

Leave What You Find

- 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.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- 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.