



Bear Lake Winter Trail Guide



Exploring the outdoors in winter is undeniably magical. It is also challenging. Use this map and guide to plan a safe, enjoyable trip.

Tips for a Great Hike

Navigating in Winter Can Be Hard

Park trails are not marked or maintained for winter use. Route-finding skills are important. Don't rely on others' tracks, which can lead you astray. To find your way in winter:

- Cell service is unavailable in much of the park. Don't depend on a cell phone for emergency help.
- Discuss your plans with park staff at visitor centers or, when staffed, trailhead kiosks.
- Have and know how to use a topographic map and compass. When used correctly, GPS units can also be helpful.
- Snow-covered landscapes look very different than in summer. Snow can be deep once you are off-trail.
- Streams and lakes can have thin ice and be very dangerous.

Be Avalanche Aware

Avalanches can be easily triggered by back-country travelers.

- Visit avalanche.state.co.us/ for the latest avalanche forecast. If danger is high, consider another activity.
- Avoid traveling in steep gullies and on ridge tops. Open slopes of 30 to 45 degrees can be loaded with dangerous masses of snow.
- If you choose to travel in these areas, carry an avalanche beacon, probe, and shovel, and know how to use them. However, don't take extra risks because you are carrying this equipment.
- If caught in an avalanche, make swimming motions and try to stay on top of the snow.

Pay Attention to Weather and Conditions

Expect snow, gusty winds, and cold temperatures at any time. Winter days are short—start early and plan conservatively.

Watch for Hypothermia

When your body loses heat faster than it can produce it, your body temperature begins to drop. This is an emergency medical condition called hypothermia. It is serious and can be fatal.

Symptoms include shivering, drowsiness, exhaustion, loss of coordination, impaired judgment, and slurred or incoherent speech.

Wear warm, quick-drying layers of clothes. Stay dry. Take frequent stops to warm up. If symptoms occur, warm the chilled person with dry clothing and warm, non-alcoholic liquids. Get back to your car, and promptly seek medical attention.

Bring the Right Gear

- ✓ Wear layers of synthetic or wool clothing that wick moisture, not cotton.
- ✓ Take extra layers of clothing (socks included).
- ✓ Bring windproof outer layers, a warm hat, and warm gloves or mittens.
- ✓ Wear sunglasses and sunscreen. Sunlight can damage your eyes and skin even on cold or cloudy days.
- ✓ Drink lots of water and eat high-energy snacks.

Stay Safe and Plan Ahead

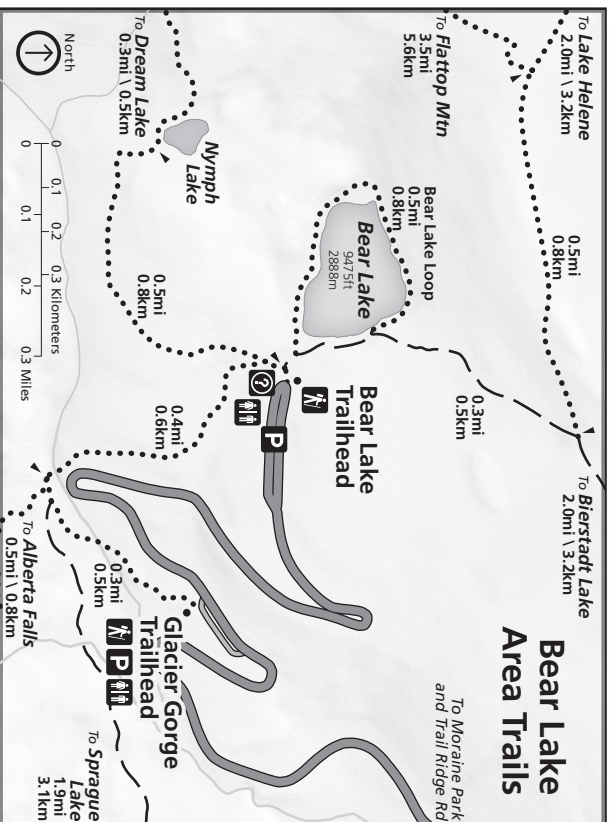
Sledding is not allowed at Bear Lake.

Hidden Valley Snowplay Area is the only place in Rocky where sledding is permitted.

For More Information

Park Information	www.nps.gov/romo or (970) 586-1206
Trail Ridge Road Status.....	(970) 586-1222
Hidden Valley Snowplay Area Status.....	(970) 586-1333
Emergencies	911. Tell the dispatcher you are in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado

Bear Lake Corridor Trails

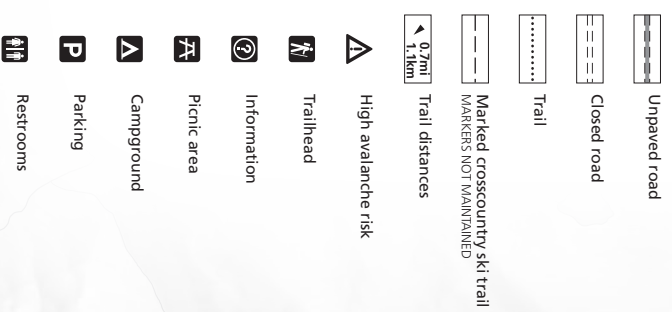


DESTINATION one way from nearest TH	DISTANCE mi km	ELEVATION GAIN ft m
Alberta Falls	0.8 1.3	160 49
Bear Lake Loop	0.5 0.8	20 6
Bierstadt Lake <small>from Bear Lake Trailhead</small>	2.3 3.7	-34 -10
Cub Lake	2.3 3.7	540 165
Dream Lake	0.8 1.3	425 130
Emerald Lake	1.5 2.4	605 184
Fern Lake	3.8 6.1	1,375 419
Lake Helene	2.9 4.7	1,215 370
Mills Lake	1.8 2.9	750 229
Nymph Lake	0.5 0.8	225 69
Sprague Lake Loop	0.5 0.8	20 6
The Loch	2.1 3.4	990 302
The Pool	2.5 4.0	245 75

All Glacier Gorge trails can be accessed from Bear Lake. Add 0.1 miles to trail distance.

Shuttle buses do not operate in winter.

High risk avalanche areas are marked, but avalanches can happen almost anywhere in this area.



Rocky can be busy on winter weekends. Congestion on roads, in parking areas, and along popular trails is possible. Parking areas can fill by mid-morning. Consider carpooling to the trailhead.

