

# Grand Teton

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton National Park  
John D. Rockefeller, Jr.  
Memorial Parkway



## Backcountry Camping

The North Fork of Cascade Canyon -  
Danielle Lehle photo

## Before Leaving Home

### Planning Your Trip

This guide contains general information regarding Grand Teton National Park's backcountry. For specific information, obtain a topographic map or a hiking guide. The map on the other side of this guide is only appropriate for route planning and campsite selection. As you plan your trip, consider every member of your party. Backpackers should expect to travel no more than 2 miles per hour, add an additional hour for every 1,000 feet of elevation gain. Do not plan to cross more than one mountain pass in a day. There is no free shuttle service in the park. Taxi and car shuttle services are available from the local community. If you have only one vehicle, you may want to plan a loop trip returning to the same trailhead. July and August are busiest because there is less snow in the high country. Weekends and holidays are busiest for boaters on Jackson Lake

### Getting A Permit

Permits are required for all overnight trips. To minimize the impact on park resources, backcountry permits are limited. One-third of the backcountry campsites and all of the group sites may be reserved in advance. The remaining sites are filled first-come, first-served basis at park permit offices no more than one day before the trip begins.

### Reservations

The park backcountry is very popular. Reservations are recommended. Requests are accepted by mail, fax, online or in person from January 5th to May 15th. Requests are processed in the order received. Include your name, address, daytime telephone number, the number of people, and your preferred campsites and dates. It is best to include alternate dates and campsites. Write to Grand Teton National Park, Permits Office, P.O. Drawer 170, Moose, WY 83012 or fax to 307 739-3443. Reservations may be made in person at the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center, open daily. For online reservations go to: [www.nps.gov/grte/planyourvisit/bces.htm](http://www.nps.gov/grte/planyourvisit/bces.htm). We will return a written confirmation in about two weeks. Phone and email reservations are not accepted. Call 307-739-3309 or 307-739-3397 for more information. A non-refundable service fee of \$25 will be charged for successful reservations.

### Picking Up Your Permit

A reservation holds your permit but does not replace your permit. During summer, obtain permits in person at the Craig Thomas and Colter Bay Visitor Centers or the Jenny Lake Ranger Station. During winter, permits are only issued at the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center. You may get a permit as early as the day before your trip begins. Have alternate destinations and dates in mind in case your first choice is full. Pick up your reserved permit before 10 a.m. the morning your trip begins or your campsites will become available to others. You may call to inform us if your will be late. If you will not be using your permit, please cancel your reservation as soon as possible

### Permit Parameters

By signing the backcountry permit, you agree to respect the backcountry. Backcountry regulations are printed on the back of your permit. Read and abide by them. Failure to comply

## In The Backcountry

### Managing Backcountry Use

The permit system helps protect park resources while providing a quality backcountry experience. In popular areas, designated campsites are hardened to increase their durability. Other areas are managed as "camping zones." Campers can camp anywhere in a zone although occupying previously used campsites is strongly encouraged. Zones allow a limited number of campers each night

### Leave No Trace

- No trace means not leaving litter, scraps of food, fire rings, buried trash, or toilet paper.
- Where required, camp in designated sites. In camping zones, where improved sites are not provided, use an existing bare ground site. Stay at least 200 feet from water and the trail, so you are out of sight and sound of others.
- To preserve pristine areas, camp on durable surfaces such as rock, snow or bare ground. Dry grass or bare duff can tolerate some use, but wildflowers and shrubs are fragile. At any campsite, pick bare rock or ground for social gathering and cooking.
- One step leaves little trace, but many steps degrade or destroy resources quickly. Stay on existing trails and do not trample new areas. Feet trample plants and compact soil leading to erosion. One misplaced step can destroy a tiny 100-year-old plant.
- Where no trail exists, walk abreast, not single file. Trampling many plants a little is better than a few plants a lot. Walk on rock, snow, or non-vegetated surfaces when possible.
- Shortcutting switchbacks causes erosion and is prohibited.
- Be aware that loud voices, cell phones and personal audio devices disturb those who are seeking solitude.
- Removing flowers, plants, rocks, and other natural or cultural objects is prohibited. Please leave them for others to enjoy.
- Strive to avoid resource damage. Past damage must be repaired. You may see trails rerouted or campsites closed so scars from overuse may heal. Please respect these efforts by staying out of closed areas and by using existing trails.

### Water

Untreated water can transmit Giardia, Campylobacter and other harmful organisms that cause intestinal disorders with severe diarrhea. To be certain that your water is safe, treat backcountry water by boiling, or with tablets or a portable water filter.

### Sanitation

Prevent contaminated waterways. Urinate at least 200 feet away from any water source in rocky areas that will not be damaged by animals digging for salts and minerals from human urine. Bury feces 6-8 inches deep in soil and at least 200 feet from lakes, streams and wetlands. Pack out toilet paper in a sealed plastic bag or use natural options such as rocks, snow or vegetation. On Jackson Lake, remove all solid human waste from any campsite or shoreline area for proper disposal. At the Lower Saddle in Garnet Canyon, carry out all solid human waste. In Garnet Canyon and other high-use areas, such as Hidden Falls and Inspiration Point, the park recommends hikers carry out all solid human waste. Bags for removal are given out at several locations. Check at ranger stations and visitor centers for additional information. Carry out used tampons, sanitary napkins and diapers in sealed plastic bags.

### Backcountry Regulations

Regulations help protect resources and ensure a high quality backcountry experience. Your cooperation is needed. Please abide by park rules, and hike and camp responsibly.

#### The following key regulations are strictly enforced:

- Permits are required for all overnight stays. The permit is valid only for the location and dates indicated.
- Campsite "improvements" such as the construction of rock walls, log benches, tree bough beds, new fire rings, and trenches are prohibited.
- Fires are permitted only at designated lakeshore sites. Where permitted, confine fires to metal fire grates. Keep fires small and do not leave them unattended. Downed and dead wood may be collected. Gas stoves are encouraged.
- Pets, bicycles, wheeled vehicles, motorized equipment, and explosives including fireworks are prohibited in the backcountry.
- Anglers must have a Wyoming State fishing license in possession.
- Horse, mule and llama use is limited to established trails and stock camps. Use hitch rails where provided. Carry stock feed; grazing is prohibited.
- Shortcutting trail switchbacks is prohibited.
- Keep a safe distance from wildlife. Feeding wildlife is prohibited and interferes with their natural diet and is harmful to their health. Please don't feed the animals.
- This is bear country. Follow food storage regulations in the "In Bear Country" section of this brochure.
- Prevent water pollution. Do not wash dishes or bathe in or near streams or lakes.
- Carry out all trash and food scraps. If possible, carry out trash left by others. Never bury trash or burn aluminum.

with regulations may result in fines and revocation of the permit.

### Group Size

Individual parties consist of 1 to 6 people. Groups of 7 to 12 people must camp in designated group sites that are larger and more durable. In winter, parties are limited to 20 people.

### Backcountry Conditions

Snow usually melts from valley trails, approximately 6,800 feet, by mid-June but remains in parts of the high country through summer. Safe travel over Paintbrush, Static Peak and Moose Basin Divides and Hurricane, Mt. Meek and Fox Creek Passes requires an ice axe and knowledge of its use as late as August. Snow conditions vary from year to year. Check with a ranger for current conditions. Expect to encounter horses. Hikers should yield to horses by stepping off the uphill side of the trail and standing quietly until they pass.

### Mountaineering

Permits are not required for mountaineering, but climbers on overnight trips must have a backcountry permit to camp or bivouac. Current, detailed information is available at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station in the summer, 307-739-3343. In winter, call 307-739-3309. **From June through September, pick up all Garnet Canyon permits and permits for any trip involving technical climbing or mountaineering at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station.**

### Fishing

There are few fish in backcountry lakes and streams. Anglers must have a Wyoming State fishing license to fish in

the park. Obey established creel limits. For specific fishing rules and regulations, ask for the Fishing brochure. Fishing licenses are available at Snake River Anglers in Moose, Colter Bay Marina, Flagg Ranch Lodge, the Timbers gift shop at Signal Mountain Lodge, and Leeks Marina.

### Boating

Register all vessels annually with the park. A fee is required. Purchase permits at the Craig Thomas, Colter Bay or Jenny Lake Visitor Centers. Lakeshore campsites are located on Jackson and Leigh Lakes. Camping is not permitted along the Snake River. Boaters should be aware of frequent strong afternoon winds. For specific information regarding the use of watercraft, ask for the Boating brochure.

### Horses and Llamas

Horses, mules and llamas may be used on some established trails. Some trails however are closed to stock. There are special campsites and rules for overnight stock use. Ask for the *Stock Use* brochure

### Stay Limits

Campers may stay in a camping zone or designated site for two consecutive nights. On Jackson Lake, the limit is three nights. Between June 1 and September 15, campers may stay in the backcountry a maximum of 10 nights. In winter, length of stay is 5 nights in one site. Individuals are limited to 30 nights per year in the park's backcountry.

Please help keep Grand Teton's backcountry looking "grand." Preserve the scenery you came to experience for your next visit and for generations to come.

## Weather



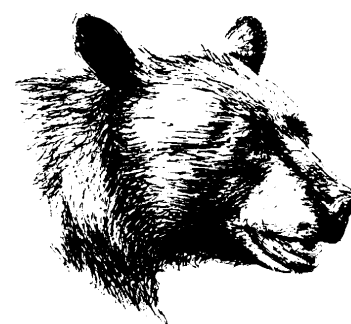
This table characterizes weather at the lower elevations in the park. Most of the park is at higher elevations and temperatures are usually at least 5 degrees cooler. Precipitation will be much greater especially on high leeward slopes where totals can be double that shown here. Be aware that mountain weather changes quickly. Check the extended weather forecast before starting your trip.

Grand Teton Climate	MONTH											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>TEMPERATURE</b>												
Normal Daily Maximum	26	32	38	48	60	70	80	78	68	56	38	28
Normal Daily Minimum	5	8	10	24	31	38	42	41	34	26	16	7
Extreme High	55	60	64	75	85	98	95	96	93	84	65	58
Extreme Low	-60	-63	-43	-28	0	18	24	18	7	-20	-36	-52
Days above 90°	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Days below 32°	31	27	30	26	19	6	2	4	14	26	28	31
<b>PRECIPITATION</b>												
Normal	1.4	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.9	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2
Maximum	3.8	1.8	3.0	2.8	2.9	4.0	2.2	3.9	3.7	2.6	2.5	4.1
Max. 24 Hr. Precip	0.9	0.7	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.5	0.7	0.9	1.7
Max. Snowfall	42	30	32	24	14	6	6	2	8	18	23	31
Days with measurable Precip.	14	12	12	10	10	10	7	8	8	9	10	13
Average No. Thunderstorms	0	0	0	1	5	11	14	12	2	0	0	0

### Maps and Books

Maps and guidebooks are available from the Grand Teton Association, a non-profit organization that supports the park. Call 307-739-3403 for details

## In Bear Country



The three types of bear resistant food canisters provided by Grand Teton National Park  
Summer 2010- NPS photo

Black and grizzly bears live in the park and parkway. Follow these guidelines to make your hike and camp safer. They are for your protection and for the preservation of the bears, a true sign of wilderness.

### Be Bear Aware

Careless food storage or feeding spells death for bears. Bears that obtain human food, even once, often become aggressive. Aggressive bears threaten human safety and often must be killed. Do not allow bears or other wildlife to obtain human food. Help keep bears wild and humans safe.

### Avoid Encounters

Avoid surprising bears. Be alert and look for bears and bear sign when hiking. Make bears aware of your presence by making noise. Bear bells are often not sufficient. Calling out and clapping your hands at regular intervals are better ways to make your presence known. Be particularly careful near streams, when it's windy, in dense vegetation, or in any circumstance that limits line of sight (i.e. a blind corner or rise in the trail).

### If You Encounter A Bear

**Do not run.** Running often elicits attacks from non-aggressive bears. Bears can easily outrun any human. If a bear is unaware of you, quietly detour downwind. If a bear is aware of you but has not acted aggressively, slowly back away. Avoid eye contact.

### If a Bear Approaches or Charges

If a bear approaches or charges you, **do not run.** Most bear attacks result from surprise encounters where the bear is defending their young or defending a food source such as a carcass.

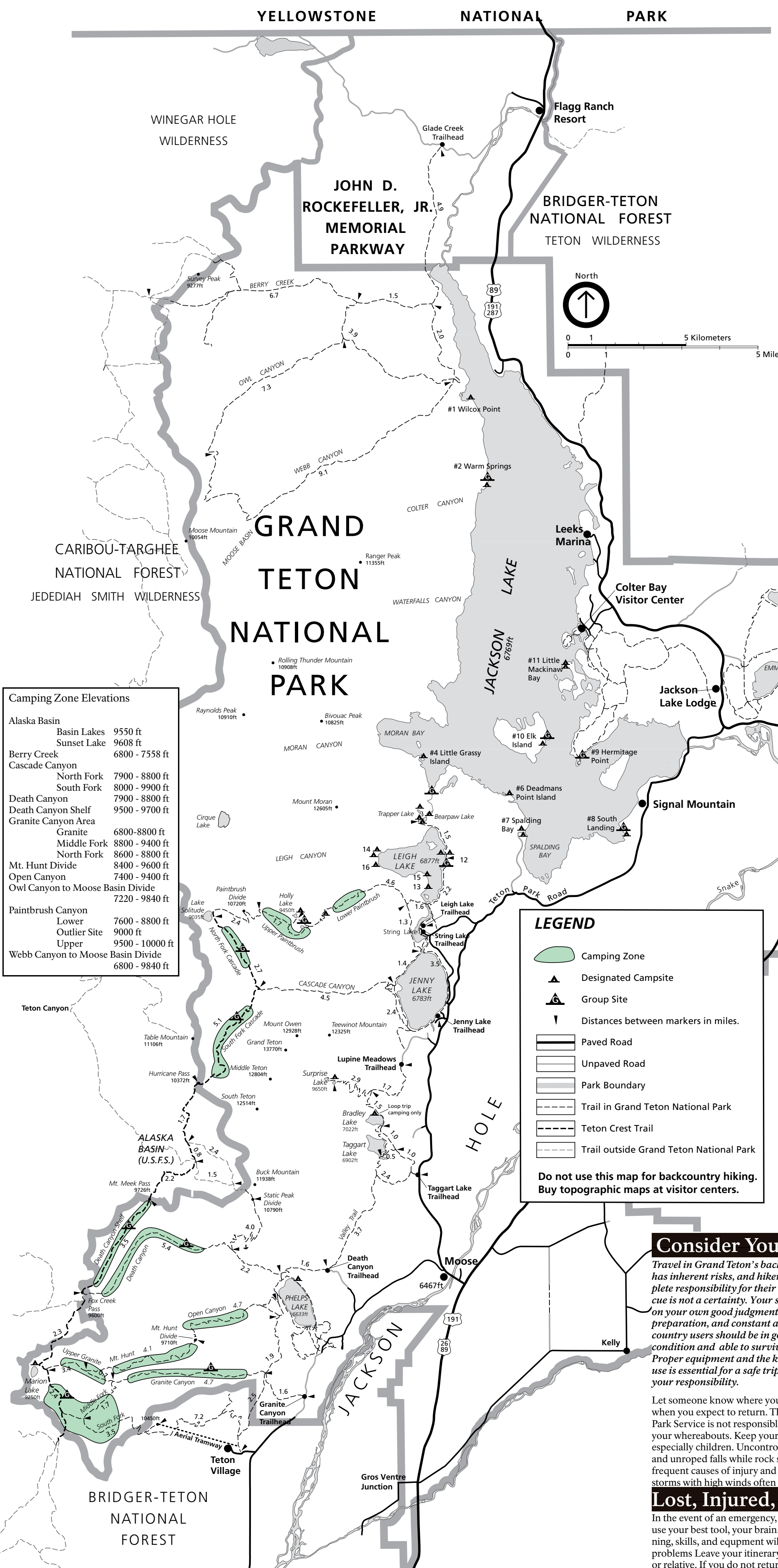
Some bears will bluff their way out of a threatening situation by charging, then veering off or stopping abruptly

### If a Bear Approaches or Charges (cont.)

Bear experts generally recommend standing still until the bear stops then backing away slowly. If you are attacked, lie on the ground completely flat on your stomach. Spread your legs slightly and clasp your hands over the back of your neck. Do not drop your back as it can protect your back if attacked. Do not move until you are certain the bear has left.

### Camping and Hiking In Bear Country

- All persons camping below 10,000 feet in the park's backcountry are required to use Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee approved canisters for food storage. Bear-resistant food storage boxes are available in some areas. Additional information is available at ranger stations and visitor centers where canisters are available for use.
- For a list of all approved portable bear-resistant food canisters please visit the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee website at <http://www.igbconline.org/>
- All food, garbage, toiletries and any odoriferous item that may attract a bear, must be stored in a bear-resistant food canister when not in immediate use, day and night.
- Prepare food, eat, and store your bear-resistant food canister at least 100 yards downwind from your tent. Store your canister and clean cooking gear on the ground hidden in brush or behind rocks. Do not place canister near a cliff or any water source.
- Do not store anything odorous in your sleeping bag or tent. Leave packs away from your tent with zippers and flaps open.
- Do not cook in your tent or sleep in the same clothes you wore while cooking.
- Keep a clean camp. Pack out all garbage, do not bury or burn. Store garbage the same way you store food.
- Do not leave food, packs, or garbage unattended, even for a minute. Bears are active day and night.



**Camping Zone Elevations**

Alaska Basin	
Basin Lakes	9550 ft
Sunset Lake	9608 ft
Berry Creek	6800 - 7558 ft
Cascade Canyon	
North Fork	7900 - 8800 ft
South Fork	8000 - 9900 ft
Death Canyon	7900 - 8800 ft
Death Canyon Shelf	9500 - 9700 ft
Granite Canyon Area	
Granite	6800-8800 ft
Middle Fork	8800 - 9400 ft
North Fork	8600 - 8800 ft
Mt. Hunt Divide	8400 - 9600 ft
Open Canyon	7400 - 9400 ft
Owl Canyon to Moose Basin Divide	7220 - 9840 ft
Paintbrush Canyon	
Lower	7600 - 8800 ft
Outlier Site	9000 ft
Upper	9500 - 10000 ft
Webb Canyon to Moose Basin Divide	6800 - 9840 ft

**LEGEND**

- Camping Zone
- Designated Campsite
- Group Site
- Distances between markers in miles.
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Park Boundary
- Trail in Grand Teton National Park
- Teton Crest Trail
- Trail outside Grand Teton National Park

**Do not use this map for backcountry hiking. Buy topographic maps at visitor centers.**

A permit entitles you to stay within the indicated camping zone or designated site.

- Signs mark the beginning and end of each zone. If there are indicated campsites inside the zone, they are marked with signs.
- Whenever possible, camp out of sight of trails and other campers. Camp at previously occupied campsites.
- Camp at least 200 feet from lakes and streams, where possible.
- Group campsites may only be used by groups specifically assigned to them. Group sites are marked with signs.
- Fires are prohibited, use a stove.
- Bears are common. Approved bear-resistant food storage canisters must be used for overnight storage at all elevations. Food storage boxes are available at some sites, including all group sites.

**Berry Creek, Webb Canyon, Owl Canyon & Canyons Without Trails**  
Bears, including grizzlies, frequent this area. Hiking includes difficult and dangerous stream crossings without bridges. Safe travel requires good physical condition and experience with map and compass. Hikers must be self-reliant. Horse and llama camping is permitted only at Hechtman Stock Camp.

**Lower Paintbrush Canyon Zone**  
The lower boundary is 3 miles above the Leigh Lake Trailhead, before the first Paintbrush Creek crossing. The upper boundary is 1.5 miles below the lower Holly Lake Trail Junction. The "Outlier" campsite is 1 mile below Holly Lake and is a designated site.

**Upper Paintbrush Canyon Zone**  
The lower boundary is about 0.1 mile above the lower Holly Lake Trail Junction and the zone ends at the Paintbrush Divide headwall on the main trail. From the lower end of the zone to the upper Holly Lake Trail Junction, camp only on the south side of the trail (the left side as you hike up the canyon). From the upper Holly Lake Trail Junction to the Paintbrush Divide headwall, you may camp on either side of the trail.

**Holly Lake Designated Sites**  
Follow the Holly Lake Trail to the trail marked "Holly Lake Campsites." This trail leads north to three designated campsites, each marked with a sign. Group and stock site is 0.25 mile below Holly Lake.

**North Fork Cascade Zone**  
The lower boundary is at the second bridge above the fork and the zone ends where the trail crosses the stream draining Mica Lake. Camping is prohibited at Lake Solitude. Group site is 0.5 mile above the lower boundary of the zone on terraces east of the trail.

**South Fork Cascade Zone**  
The lower boundary is 1 mile above the Cascade Canyon trail fork and the zone ends 0.5 mile below Hurricane Pass. Group site is 1.75 miles above the

**Lakeshore Sites**  
Bears are common. Permanent bear-resistant storage boxes are provided at each site and must be used for food storage. Coolers are not bear-resistant and must never be left unattended.  
Fires are only allowed in grates.  
Beware of waves caused by afternoon winds.

**Trail Combinations & Mileages**

- Tram to Granite Canyon via Marion Lake**  
17.1 miles. Trailhead: Teton Village - 1 night. Fee charged for the tram.
- Cascade Canyon/Paintbrush Canyon loop (Note: This is an extremely busy trail July through August)**  
19.2 miles. Trailhead: String Lake - 1 night.
- Granite Canyon/Open Canyon loop via Valley Trail**  
19.3 miles. Trailhead: Granite Canyon - 1 night.
- Tram/ Death Canyon loop via Valley Trail**  
23.1 miles. Trailhead: Teton Village - 1 to 2 nights. Fee charged for the tram.
- Cascade Canyon/Death Canyon via Static Peak Divide**  
24.8 miles. Trailheads: South Jenny Lake and Death Canyon - 1 to 2 nights.

trail fork, east of the trail.

**Alaska Basin (US Forest Service)**  
Camping is allowed in Alaska Basin without a permit. Camping is permitted once you pass the park boundary signs on the north or south end of Alaska Basin. Excellent campsites exist in the Basin Lakes and Sunset Lake area. Camping is not permitted within 200 feet of lakes or streams, and fires are not allowed.

**Death Canyon Zone**  
The lower boundary is 4.5 miles above the Death Canyon Trailhead, 1/4-mile above the bridge crossing Death Canyon Creek, 0.6 mile west of the Death Canyon Patrol Cabin (not staffed). The upper boundary is 0.5 mile below Fox Creek Pass. Group site is between the trail and creek, 2 miles west of the patrol cabin.

**Death Canyon Shelf Zone**  
The zone extends from just above Fox Creek Pass to Mt. Meek Pass. Group site is 2 miles north of Fox Creek Pass.

**South of Fox Creek Pass (US Forest Service)**  
Camping is allowed without a permit in the U.S. Forest Service area south of Fox Creek Pass outside the park boundary. Although there are many scenic campsites, little or no water is available. Fires are not allowed.

**Marion Lake Designated Sites**  
Three sites are located east of the lake. A spur trail leads east from the lake. Please camp on tent pads.

**North Fork Granite Canyon Zone**  
The lower boundary is 0.25 mile above the Middle/North Fork trail junction. The upper boundary is where the trail crosses the North Fork Creek.

**Middle Fork Granite Zone**  
The lower boundary is 0.75 mile above the upper Middle/North Fork trail junction. The north boundary is the ridge between the North and Middle Forks. The east boundary is 1.3 miles from the park boundary at Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. Group site is 1.4 miles south of Marion Lake in the trees, 150 yards east of where the trail crosses Middle Fork Creek.

**Lower Granite Canyon**  
The lower boundary is 0.5 mile west of the Granite Canyon/Valley Trail junction and the zone ends just below the Middle/North Fork trail junction. Group site is 3.4 miles west of the Granite Canyon/Valley Trail junction on the south side of the trail.

**Mt. Hunt Divide Zone**  
The lower boundary is Upper boundary is 0.75 mile above the Granite Canyon trail and the zone ends just south of Mt. Hunt Divide.

**Open Canyon Zone**  
The lower boundary is where the trail crosses Open Canyon Creek and the zone ends just north of Mt. Hunt Divide.

**Jackson Lake**  
Pets are not allowed in Jackson Lake campsites except at Spalding Bay. Pets must be physically restrained on a leash less than six feet in length at all times and are not allowed out of boats.

**Leigh Lake & Phelps Lake**  
Pitch tents on tent pads, where provided.

**Consider Your Safety**

Travel in Grand Teton's backcountry areas has inherent risks, and hikers assume complete responsibility for their own safety. Rescue is not a certainty. Your safety depends on your own good judgment, adequate preparation, and constant attention. Backcountry users should be in good physical condition and able to survive on their own. Proper equipment and the knowledge of its use is essential for a safe trip. Your safety is your responsibility.

Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. The National Park Service is not responsible for monitoring your whereabouts. Keep your group together, especially children. Uncontrolled falls on snow and unroped falls while rock scrambling are frequent causes of injury and death. Sudden storms with high winds often capsize boats.

**Lost, Injured, Overdue**

In the event of an emergency, stay calm and use your best tool, your brain. Adequate planning, skills, and equipment will prevent most problems. Leave your itinerary with a friend or relative. If you do not return on time, they should notify the park. If lost, stay where you

**Hypothermia**  
Cold, wet, windy conditions can occur at any time. Carry rain gear and warm clothing at all times. A sudden mountain storm or a swamped boat can lead to hypothermia, (the lowering of body temperature), a serious condition that can quickly lead to death. Watch for the early signs of hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering, incoherent speech, and apparent exhaustion. Help the victim immediately. Give warm, nonalcoholic liquids, remove wet clothes, and dress in warm dry clothes. In serious cases, place the undressed victim in a sleeping bag with another undressed person. Keep the victim awake, warm and dry.

**Lightning**  
Afternoon thunderstorms are common plan

your trip accordingly. Think ahead and find a safe place before a storm hits. Avoid exposed summits and ridges, open areas and lone trees. Forested areas with trees of similar height are safer. Do not stand on tree roots. If boating, get off the lake.

**Altitude**  
Elevations in the park vary from 6,356 to 13,770 feet above sea level. Altitude sickness can strike anyone regardless of age or physical condition. Symptoms include headache, nausea, sleeping difficulties, and tiredness. Plan your trip to allow a slow ascent with breaks for altitude adjustment. Mild altitude sickness can be treated with rest, fluids and aspirin. If conditions persist or worsen, the only cure is descending to a lower altitude.

are, searchers will locate you more quickly. Stay in a clearing or on a large rock outcrop where you will be most visible. Attract searchers by making noise and signaling with colors or a mirror. If someone is injured, provide whatever treatment you can. If possible,

do not leave the injured person alone. Send for help with information on the exact location (mark on a topo map and/or provide GPS coordinates if possible), injuries, equipment on scene, treatment given, and any plan of action. BE CAREFUL!  
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