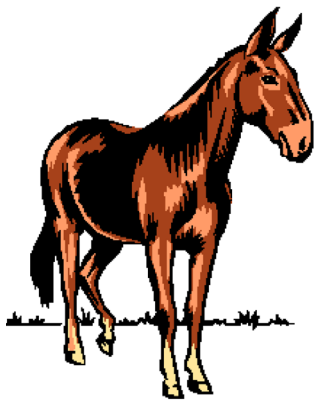




## Horses and Other Pack Animals

Horses have been part of the park's tradition since its designation as a national park in 1915. Recreational pack animal use is balanced with other recreational uses, such as hiking. Packing is managed so as to maintain the natural resources and unique ecosystems in the national park. Horses, mules, ponies, llamas and burros are the types of pack animals allowed on park trails. No goats are allowed on park trails.

### Rules of the Trail



- Stock is only permitted on existing trails.
- Stock travel on park roads is not permitted except on:
  - Bowen-Baker Road.**
  - Fern Lake Road** between the shuttle bus stop and Fern Lake Trailhead.
  - North Inlet Road.**
  - Twin Sisters Road** at Lily Lake Visitor Center.
  - Upper Beaver Meadows Road.**
  - Wild Basin Road.**
  - Kaley Cottage Road.**
- Stock are not permitted in picnic areas and frontcountry campgrounds.
- The park cannot be used as a base camp for hunting.
- Riding of stock at a speed greater than a trot is not permitted.
- Conducting commercial activities requires a park permit.
- Stock must be under physical control at all times.
- Pack out all trash.
- Environmental conditions (snowpack, erosion, flooding) can close certain trails to stock use. Flattop Mountain, Tonahutu Creek, North Inlet, Bear Lake/Fern Lake above treeline are closed to stock use from about mid-October to the first of August.
- Llama users must yield to let other stock pass.
- Only certified weed free forage (hay, straw, mulch) can be used in the park. No forage can be taken beyond a trailhead into the backcountry. Pelletized feed, hay cubes and grain products can be used in the backcountry. Grazing of stock is not permitted. Call the Colorado Department of Agriculture (303-239-4149), for sources of certified weed free hay.
- For day use, the maximum number of stock allowed in a group or string is 20.
- Stock-drawn equipment is not permitted.
- Closure of any portion of the park to stock use can occur at the direction of the park superintendent. Closures will be posted.

### Safety

- Over 90% of the park is managed as wilderness. It is a rare opportunity to experience the wonders and challenges of being in the wilderness. Wilderness does, however, have numerous hazards. Some of the most likely hazards are;
- Bridges and other water crossings.
  - Low branches.
  - Other people and stock on the trail.
  - Packs and other gear used by hikers and backpackers.
  - Wildlife

- Be prepared for sudden changes in the weather. Dismount immediately if lightning and thunderstorms seem imminent. Try to stay below treeline and avoid high rocky areas.
- Carry first aid supplies for yourself and the stock.
- Carry, boil or filter water obtained from park waters before drinking. All park waters may contain *Giardia*, an organism that can cause serious flu-like symptoms in humans.

### Resource Protection & Ethics

- Where no hitchracks exist, tie a "highline," (rope between two trees) away from the trail and hitch the stock to it. The rope should be padded, avoiding damage to trees and their root systems.
- Tie up at least 200 ft. from lakes and streams.
- Maintain a distance of 1/4 mile (or 15 minutes) between pack groups.
- Use only well-broken, properly shod, gentle stock in good physical condition.
- When approaching others, make your presence known.

# Camping with Pack Animals

Stock is permitted at established backcountry campsites designated for stock use. Stock must be securely tied to the provided hitchrack.

A backcountry campsite permit is required. Reservations are advised. Both can be obtained at the Backcountry Office.

The following sites are limited to 6 riders and 8 horses or other stock. ("TH" means Trailhead.)

- Ditch Camp (Colorado River TH)
- Finch Lake (Wild Basin area; livestock loading 1 mile from Wild Basin Entrance)
- Hague Creek (Corral Creek TH)
- Koenig (Corral Creek TH)
- Lawn Lake (Lawn Lake TH)
- Thunder Lake (Wild Basin area; livestock loading one mile from Wild Basin Entrance)

Groups of no more than 16 horses or other stock and 12 riders may use the following locations.

- Bighorn Mountain (Gem Lake TH on Devils Gulch Road)
- Lost Meadow (Dunraven TH)
- North Inlet (North Inlet TH)
- Tonahutu (Tonahutu or Green Mountain TH)

Three backcountry camp sites are designated exclusively for groups with Llamas. (Limit of 5 llamas at each site.)

- Aspen Knoll (Wild Basin Ranger Station)
- Haynach Lake (Tonahutu or Green Mountain TH)
- Ute Meadow (Upper Beaver Meadows TH)

Trails in the following areas are heavily used by sightseers, hikers and stock users. **On the east side of the park:** Deer Mountain, Horseshoe Park, Moraine Park, Glacier Basin, Emerald Mountain, and trails leading from the YMCA. **On the west side of the park:** Colorado River trails.

## Trails Open to Stock

Approximately 260 miles of trails are open to commercial and private horse use, about 80% of the total trail network in Rocky Mountain National Park.

The following trails are recommended for recreational stock use;

- Big Meadows** (9,400' starting elevation). Trailheads: Green Mountain, Onahu Creek and Tonahutu (Haynach Lake Trail is closed to all stock except llamas).
- East Inlet Trailhead** (8,391'): East Inlet.
- Lawn & Ypsilon lakes Trailhead** (8,540'): Lawn Lake.
- Lost Lake Trailhead** (7,960'): Dunraven Glade, US Forest Service.
- Thunder & Finch Lakes Trailhead** (8,470'): Wild Basin; Finch Lake.

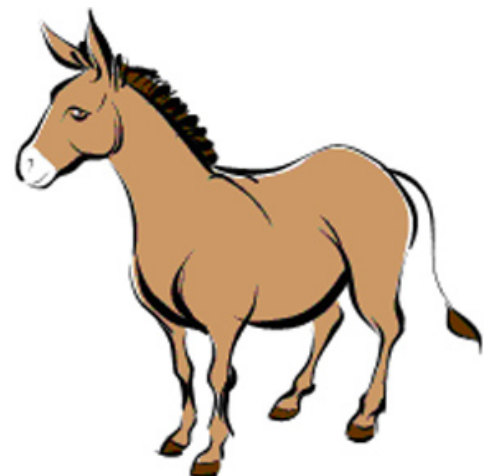
## Areas Closed to Stock Use

### East Side

- Alluvial Fan** trails.
- Andrews Glacier** Trail.
- Bear Lake Area:** Bear Lake Nature Trail; trail to Emerald Lake; trails to Lake Haiyaha; trail between Loch/Mills Junction to and beyond The Loch; trail between Mills and Black lakes.
- Bierstadt Lake** Trail to Park & Ride Shuttle Bus Parking Lot.
- Estes Cone** Trail.
- Fern Lake Area:** Spruce Lake Trail.
- Forest Canyon Overlook** Trail.
- Horsetooth Peak** Trail.
- Lily Lake** Trail.
- Longs Peak Area:** Chasm Lake beyond hitchrack on Mills Moraine; beyond Boulderfield, from hitchrack.
- Mummy Range Area:** Trail beyond Lawn Lake hitchrack at east end of lake; trail beyond Ypsilon Lake hitchrack at south end of lake.
- North Fork Area:** trail beyond Lost Lake hitchrack at east end of lake; area between Stormy Peaks Pass and Mummy Pass.
- North St. Vrain Fire** Trail (open to llamas to Aspen Knoll llama campsite).
- Sky Pond** Trail.
- Sprague Lake Area:** Boulder Brook unimproved trail; Sprague Lake Nature Trail.
- Ute Trail:** Upper Beaver Meadows to Milner Pass, except Llamas can be used between Upper Beaver Meadows and Ute Meadows backcountry site.
- Wild Basin:** Beyond hitchrack at Bluebird Lake; Lion Lakes Trail from Thunder Lake Trail; Lookout Mountain trails.

### West Side

- Poudre River Trail:** Between Chapin Creek to Milner Pass.
- East Inlet Trail:** Beyond west end of Lake Verna.
- East Shore Trail:** One mile north and south of Shadow Mountain Dam (use Ranger Meadows cutoff to avoid this section). All trails above **Grand Ditch**, except Thunder Pass Trail
- Haynach Lakes Trail:** Beyond Tonahutu Creek Trail (open to llama use from Tonahutu Creek Trail to Haynach Lakes llama campsite).
- Long Meadows Area:** Between Onahu Creek and Timber Creek trails.
- Paradise Park.**
- Poudre River Trail:** Between Chapin Creek and Milner Pass.
- Specimen Mountain Trail.**
- Willow Creek Area:** Willow Creek drainage to Long Draw Reservoir (not maintained).



Park information is available at 970-586-1206 or on-line at [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo)