

# INTERIOR YELLOWSTONE



Winter 2008–2009

December 15 edition

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## Visiting Yellowstone's Wintry Interior

Snow and cold combine with natural wonders to create an incomparable winter experience deep inside Yellowstone. Prepare yourself well to enjoy your winter visit safely.

- ◆ Use extra care near canyons, waterfalls, hydrothermal areas, overlooks, and wildlife.
- ◆ Watch your children. Your hand and voice may be too far away once your child leaves your side.
- ◆ Before beginning your activities—whether snowmobiling, skiing, or snowshoeing—obtain current weather reports.
- ◆ Dress for winter—wear wool or synthetics, never cotton, and layer clothing. For more

gear tips, see page B or the park's main newspaper, *Yellowstone Today*.

- ◆ Plan outings to match your group's abilities so everyone can enjoy themselves and stay safe. For more safety tips, see page B or *Yellowstone Today*.
- ◆ Keep your distance from wildlife. Stay at least 100 yards from bears and wolves, 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes—and never feed them or other animals, including birds.

For more information about safety and park rules, see page B and the park's main newspaper, *Yellowstone Today*.

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For information about services and activities at Mammoth, and about skiing and snowshoeing, please refer to *Yellowstone Today*.

**WINTER DATES, ACTIVITIES, RULES, ETC. CAN CHANGE UNEXPECTEDLY. ALWAYS CHECK AT THE GATE OR VISITOR CENTERS FOR THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION!**

## Enjoying Winter

**In a snowcoach** Enjoy the warmth and comfort of a snowcoach. You can book a trip with snowcoach operators listed at the park's website: [www.nps.yell/planyourvisit](http://www.nps.yell/planyourvisit).

**On a snowmobile** You can book a snowmobile trip with a guide. A limited number of snowmobiles will be allowed in the park each day. Reservations ensure entrance on the days you prefer. A list of authorized commercial guides is at the website above.

**Staying in Yellowstone** Xanterra Parks & Resorts provides winter lodging in the park. They also offer several lodging and activity packages for Mammoth Hot Springs and Old Faithful. Visit [TravelYellowstone.com](http://TravelYellowstone.com); call 307-344-7311 or toll-free 866-Geyserland (866-439-7375).

**Fun & Adventure** Enjoy a variety of activities in Yellowstone, including ranger-led programs, guided tours, and educational seminars. Look on page C and in the park's main newspaper, *Yellowstone Today*.

## ? Questions?

*Ask a ranger at these locations!*

### Albright Visitor Center, Mammoth

Information, bookstore, and exhibits on wildlife and history. Films on the park and the national park idea. Call 307-344-2263. Open daily, year-round: 9 AM–5 PM

### Old Faithful Visitor Center

Information, bookstore, and geyser eruption predictions. Award-winning film about hydrothermal features. Call 307-344-2750. Open daily, Dec. 15–March 15: 9 AM–5 PM

### West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center

Information, publications. NPS rangers available daily, Dec. 15–March 15: 8 AM–4 PM. Call 307-344-2876

Chamber of Commerce staff available year-round, Monday–Friday, 8 AM–5 PM. Call 406-646-7701.

# Winter in the Park

B

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## Safe & Smart Snowmobiling

### Dress for Extreme Cold

Essential items: helmet, face mask, heavily insulated gloves or mittens, felt-lined boots, and a heavily insulated snowmobile suit. Avoid tight-fitting garments; they restrict circulation and increase the possibility of frostbite.

### Wild Animals Have the Right of Way!

Your guide will know what to do if you encounter wild animals on the road. Recommendations include:

- ◆ If bison or other wildlife are on the road, stop at least 25 yards away and/or pull your machine as far as possible to the opposite side of the road; give them a chance to move off the road.
- ◆ Do not make sudden or erratic movements; use groomed pullouts where possible.
- ◆ Do not chase animals or cause them to run.
- ◆ If an animal appears agitated, do not attempt to pass—it may charge.
- ◆ If animals run toward you and you can confidently turn around, do so, moving to a safe place while your guide reassesses the situation.
- ◆ If animals walk or run toward you and you cannot turn around, get off your machine and stand to the side of it, keeping the machine between you and the animals.
- ◆ If animals are standing calmly, your guide may inch toward them and assess their behavior. If they remain calm, you may be able to pass on the opposite side of the road at a slow speed.

### Regulations

Your guide knows the regulations; you should be aware of them too:

- ◆ Snowmobile operators must have a valid state motor vehicle driver's license in possession.
- ◆ Roads are open only 7 AM to 9 PM. Snowmobiles are not allowed to operate in the park between 9 PM and 7 AM.
- ◆ Maximum speed limit is 45 mph or less where posted or as conditions warrant.
- ◆ Speed limit is 35 mph West Entrance to Madison, Madison to Old Faithful.
- ◆ Use hand signals when turning or stopping.
- ◆ Allow enough distance between snowmobiles when traveling.
- ◆ Pass only when safe.
- ◆ If you turn around, stay within the road width.
- ◆ Drive on the right side of the road even if the road is rough.
- ◆ Drive in single file.
- ◆ Do not idle your machine more than 5 minutes.
- ◆ When stopping, pull to the far right and park in single file.
- ◆ Stay on designated roads. Sidehilling, bermriding, or any off-road travel is prohibited and carries a fine of up to \$5,000.
- ◆ Report accidents to a ranger.
- ◆ Operating a snowmobile while intoxicated is illegal. Possession of open alcoholic beverage containers, including bota bags, is illegal.

## Warming Huts

Warming huts provide shelter for skiers, snowshoers, and snowmobilers. They are open 24 hours a day, except Mammoth and Old Faithful. All open December 15; Mammoth and Indian Creek close March 1, Canyon closes March 8, the others close March 15. Details on the back page.



## Winter Planning In the Park

The National Park Service (NPS) works with local governments, businesses, concessioners, conservation and other interest groups, industry, visitors, and the public to build a sustainable future for winter use while preserving park resources and providing high quality visitor experience.

### Yellowstone in the Winter

In winter, Yellowstone's landscape transforms into a world of snow, ice, frost, and dazzling sunshine. Wildlife hibernate or migrate to lower elevations, where they are often visible to winter visitors. People have been drawn to the winter wonderland for decades; since 1949, they have toured the park on motorized oversnow vehicles.

### Goals of a Winter Use Plan

In the last twenty years, NPS has led a series of planning efforts to manage winter visitor use. For each of these efforts, NPS has had the following goals:

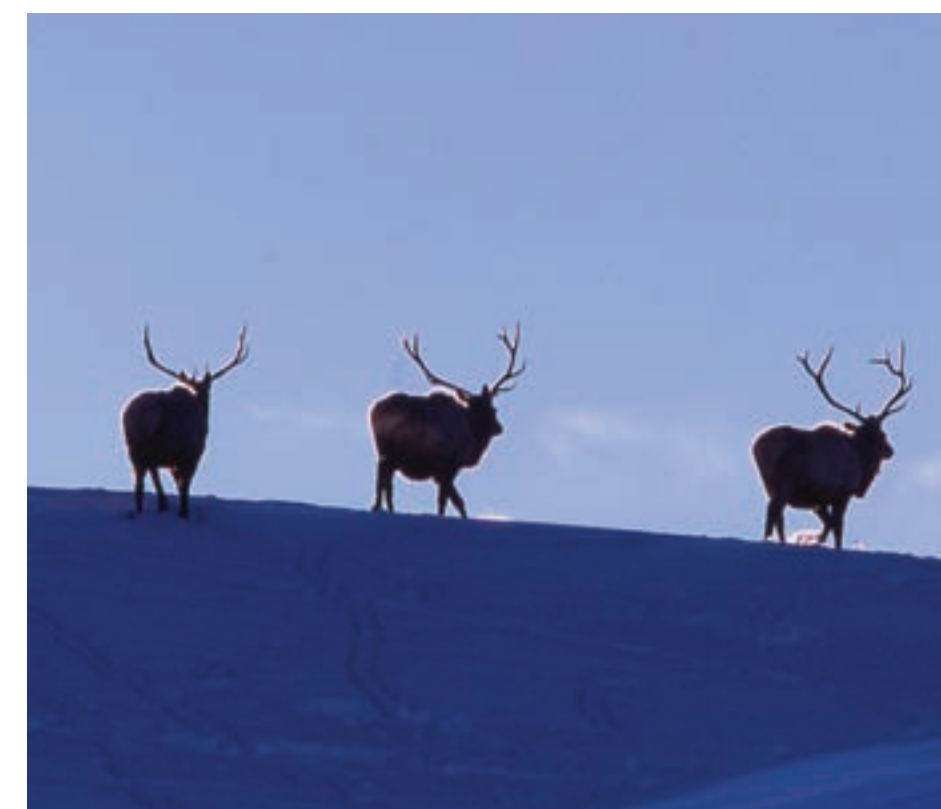
- ◆ Provide a high quality, safe, and educational winter experience for all visitors.
- ◆ Provide for visitor and employee health and safety.
- ◆ Preserve pristine air quality and natural soundscapes.
- ◆ Mitigate impacts to wildlife.
- ◆ Minimize adverse economic impacts to gateway communities.

### Recent Winter Use Management

The parks (Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway) have been consistently open for oversnow visitor use, even though litigation and controversy have been common. Visitors have continually been able to travel via snowmobile or snowcoach to reach Yellowstone's widely spaced wonders such as Old Faithful and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River. Additionally, visitors have always been able to drive their own vehicles to Mammoth from the north, continuing on from there to Lamar Valley, the Northeast Entrance, and Cooke City. NPS expects both oversnow and wheeled vehicle access to continue for the foreseeable future.

### What Will Happen This Winter?

NPS expects operations to continue this winter under essentially the same rules in effect the past four winters. In Yellowstone, this means up to 720 commercially guided, Best Available Technology (BAT) snowmobiles and 78 snowcoaches per day can enter the park. NPS intends to conduct avalanche control operations to allow motorized oversnow travel across Sylvan Pass this winter. For the latest information, see the park's website [www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/winteruse.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/winteruse.htm).



### What About Future Winters?

As long as litigation continues, park managers will be unable to fully predict the future of winter use in Yellowstone. However, they say the following will be certain: The parks will be open for winter and visitors will be able to enjoy them in a variety of ways. Additionally, since 2004 NPS has effectively addressed historic winter use issues by requiring best available technology for snowmobiles, commercial guides for all visitors, and limits on snowmobile and snowcoach numbers. Yellowstone's air quality, wildlife, and soundscapes will remain in very good to excellent condition. Finally, as lawsuits continue, NPS will continue its efforts to produce a long-term winter use plan that protects the parks and provides visitor access to the remarkable resources that make them such special places in the winter.

# Activities

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## Ranger-led Programs at Old Faithful

Old Faithful Visitor Center • 9 AM–5 PM • Daily, Dec. 17–March 15

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Weds.	Thurs.	Friday	Sat.
<b>Geysers Galore!</b> <i>Starts Dec. 19, ends March 15</i> As you wait to watch Old Faithful erupt, discover why Yellowstone has so many geysers. Look into Yellowstone's restless geologic past (and present!) for a story that includes volcanoes and earthquakes. Meet at the benches in front of Old Faithful. Talk starts 20 minutes prior to a predicted mid-day eruption of Old Faithful. Times are posted daily at the temporary Old Faithful Visitor Center. 20 minutes &	Inquire at temporary Old Faithful Visitor Center 12/21–3/15					Inquire at temporary Old Faithful Visitor Center 12/19–3/13	Inquire at temporary Old Faithful Visitor Center 12/20–3/14
<b>Evening Program</b> <i>Starts Dec. 26, ends March 14</i> Join a park ranger for an illustrated program highlighting a fascinating aspect of Yellowstone's natural, cultural, or scenic wonders. Weekly program descriptions and locations will be posted in the temporary Old Faithful Visitor Center and the Old Faithful Snow Lodge. 45 minutes &	7:30 PM 12/28–3/8					7:30 PM 12/26–3/13	7:30 PM 12/27–3/14

& = Accessible

If you need a sign language interpreter for National Park Service interpretive programs, please make arrangements three weeks in advance by calling 307-344-2251.

Ranger-led programs are also available at West Yellowstone and Mammoth Hot Springs. Junior Ranger programs for children ages 5–12 are available at Old Faithful, West Yellowstone, and Mammoth. See *Yellowstone Today*, the park's newspaper.



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## Xanterra Parks & Resorts

December 17–March 15

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>INTERPRETIVE SNOWCOACH TOURS</b> Full and half-day adventures in heated over-snow vehicles.							
From West Yellowstone to Old Faithful: \$55	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM	12:30–3:30 PM
From Old Faithful to West Yellowstone: \$55	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM	8–10:30 AM
From Mammoth to Old Faithful: \$68	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON	8 AM–NOON
From Old Faithful to Mammoth: \$68	2–6 PM	2–6 PM	2–6 PM	2–6 PM	2–6 PM	2–6 PM	2–6 PM
From Old Faithful to Flagg Ranch: \$68	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM	9–11:45 AM
From Flagg Ranch to Old Faithful: \$68	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM	1–4:45 PM
Canyon Day Tour, from Old Faithful: \$126 <i>You may want to order a box lunch the evening prior</i>	8:30 AM–6 PM	8:30 AM–6 PM		8:30 AM–6 PM	8:30 AM–6 PM		8:30 AM–6 PM
Canyon Day Tour, from Mammoth: \$120 <i>You may want to order a box lunch the evening prior</i>	8:30 AM–5 PM		8:30 AM–5 PM		8:30 AM–5 PM		
Firehole Basin Adventure, from Old Faithful: \$31.50	1–4 PM	1–4 PM	1–4 PM		1–4 PM	1–4 PM	
Norris Geyser Basin Tour, from Mammoth: \$57 <i>Strenuous, if you choose to walk around the geyser basin</i>		12:30–5:30 PM		12:30–5:30 PM	12:30–5:30 PM		12:30–5:30 PM
Old Faithful Photo Safari, from Old Faithful: \$145 <i>You may want to order a box lunch the evening prior</i>			8 AM–2 PM			8 AM–2 PM	
Steam, Stars, & Winter Soundscapes, from Old Faithful: \$34	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM	6:45–9 PM
<b>SKI AND SNOWSHOE TOURS</b>							
Grand Canyon Ski Tour, from Old Faithful: \$134			8 AM–6 PM			8 AM–6 PM	
Grand Canyon Ski Tour, from Mammoth: \$134							8 AM–6 PM
Afternoon Ski-Daddles, Old Faithful to Fairy Falls: \$45							NOON–5 PM
Afternoon Ski-Daddles, Old Faithful to DeLacy Creek: \$45				NOON–5 PM			
Cooke City See and Ski, from Mammoth: \$73.50						8:30 AM–5 PM	
Guided Snowshoe Tour, Old Faithful: \$32 tour with snowshoe rental \$25 without snowshoe rental	8:30–11:30 AM				8:30–11:30 AM		

### EXPRESS SNOWCOACH TRIPS

Old Faithful Express to West Yellowstone: \$52.50 one way, daily, 6:45–8:30 AM and 2–3:45 PM • For the early express, you may want to order a box breakfast the evening prior

West Yellowstone Express to Old Faithful: \$52.50 one way, daily, 9–10:45 AM

### SKI/SNOWSHOE SHUTTLES


Old Faithful Snow Lodge to either Divide or Fairy Falls: \$14.50 one way, daily, 8 AM, 9 AM, 10 AM, 11 AM • No pickups, you must return by ski or snowshoe

The Yellowstone Association Institute and private companies also offer guided tours. See *Yellowstone Today* for Association tours. For other certified guides and outfitters, including for backcountry tours, write to Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190, call 307-344-7381, or visit [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell).

# INTERIOR YELLOWSTONE

**SPEED KILLS**  
more than  
**100**  
deer  
moose  
bears  
elk  
bison  
wolves

**each year**



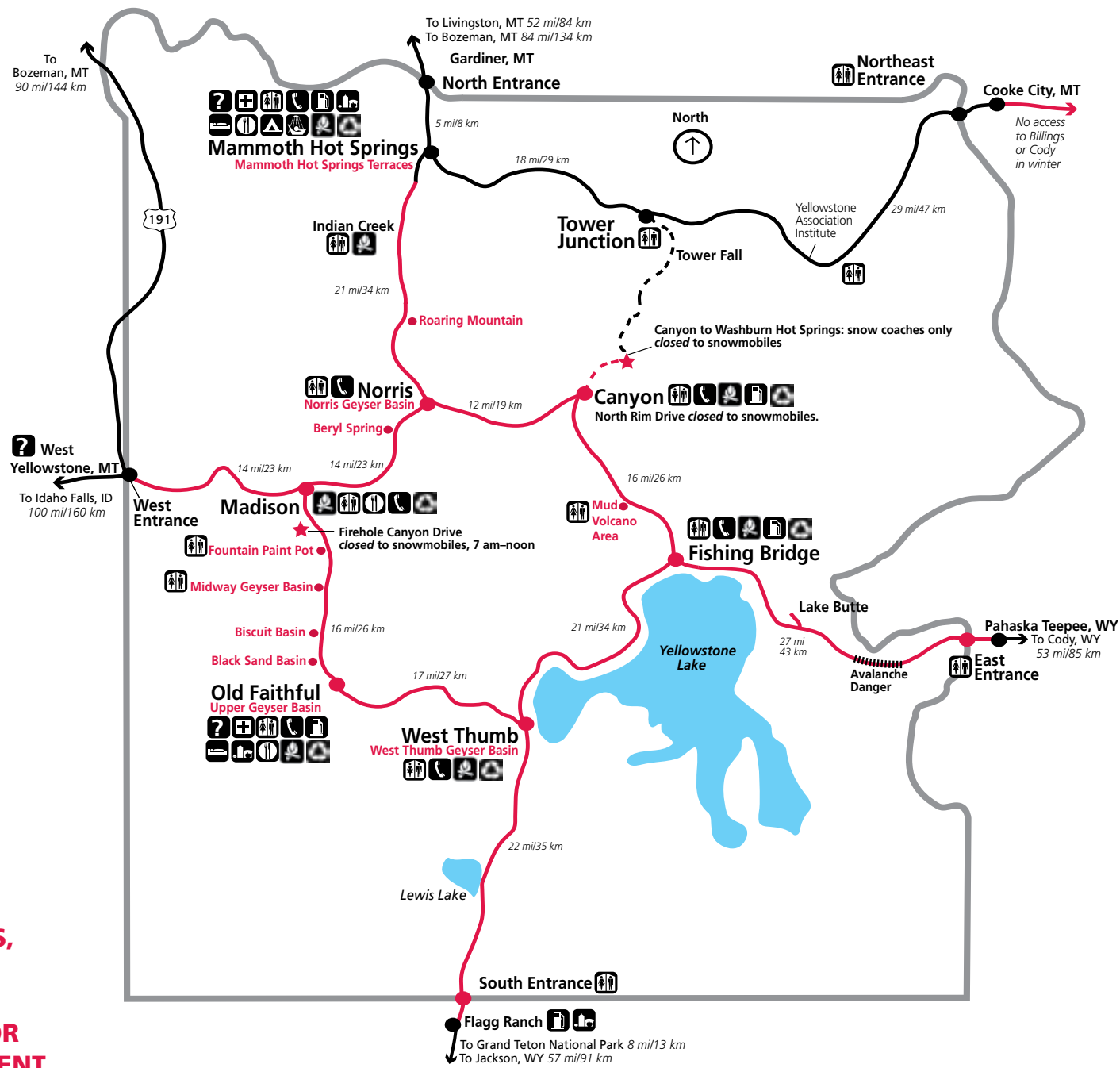
**SLOW DOWN**  
and save a life

Open to wheeled vehicles; snow tires or chains may be required

Open to guided oversnow vehicles, with restrictions

Closed to all vehicles

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## Winter Services

	Mammoth Hot Springs	West Entrance & Madison	Canyon Village	Fishing Bridge	Old Faithful	West Thumb
<b>Visitor Information</b>	Albright Visitor Center Year-round, except Thanksgiving. 9 AM-5 PM	West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center NPS rangers available daily, 8 AM-4 PM Dec. 15-Mar. 15			Visitor Center Daily, 9 AM-5 PM Dec. 15-Mar. 15	
<b>Book Store</b> <i>books, videos, maps, other educational items</i>	Book Store books, videos, maps, other educational items	Chamber of Commerce Monday-Friday 8 AM-5 PM			Book Store books, videos, maps, other educational items	
<b>Medical clinic</b>	8:30-5, Monday-Thursday 8:30-1, Friday 307-344-7965				Intermittent. Call Mammoth for appointment.	
<b>Warming Hut</b>	Mammoth: Dec. 15-March 1: 8 AM-5 PM Vending machine snacks and cold drinks.  Indian Creek: Dec. 15-March 1: Not staffed.	Madison Dec. 15-March 15: Light snacks and hot drinks sold during the day; vending machine snacks available any time.	Dec. 15-March 8: Vending machine snacks and cold drinks; restrooms in visitor center building.	Dec. 15-March 15: Vending machine snacks and cold drinks.	Dec. 15-March 15: Daytime only. Vending machine snacks and cold drinks.	Dec. 15-March 15: Not staffed.
<b>Supplies &amp; Gifts</b>	<b>General Store</b> daily except for some Sundays & holidays. groceries, souvenirs, outdoor gear				Gift Shop, Old Faithful Snow Lodge Dec. 17-March 15	
<b>Dining</b>	<b>General Store</b> lunch available on weekdays  Mammoth Hotel Dec. 19-March 1				Old Faithful Snow Lodge Dec. 17-March 15  Old Faithful Snow Lodge, Geyser Grill Dec. 17-March 15	
<b>Hotel</b>	Dec. 19-March 1				Dec. 17-March 15	
<b>Snowmobile Gas</b>	Dec. 15-March 1 8-5 daily		Dec. 15-March 8 Credit Card Fueling	Dec. 15-March 15 Credit Card Fueling	Dec. 15-March 15 Credit Card Fueling	
<b>Campground</b>	Year-round				Primitive only Dec. 17-March 15	

**All winter services are subject to change. Call the park or check the website.**

**EMERGENCY: 911**

**Lodging, dining, activities:**  
307-344-7311 or TDD 307-344-5395

**Park Information:**  
307-344-7381

**Road Updates**  
307-344-2117

**Park Tip Line**  
307-344-2132

Call the tip line to report criminal activity. Leave as much detail as you can—who, what, where, when. Leave your name and number, or you can remain anonymous.