



Wild Cave Information

There is one wild cave in Great Basin National Park currently open for recreational use, Little Muddy Cave. Due to the threat of White-Nose Syndrome, all wild caves that are utilized by bats are currently closed. Little Muddy Cave has no documented bat use and is still open to recreation caving. Unfortunately, this cave remains closed in the summer due to low oxygen levels. Little Muddy Cave is closed from April 1 through October 1, or if oxygen levels are below 19%. Length: 1014.5 ft. Vertical Relief: 25.4 ft. It consists of mazy crawlways following along joint planes. The cave has a smooth mud floor with scalloped walls. The concrete crawl section behind the Lehman Cave Visitor Center is similar in size to many of the passages in Little Muddy Cave.

All other wild caves are closed except to research and management uses. Permits will be approved for those who can demonstrate cave conservation ethics and experience with caving techniques, and certify that all clothing and gear is clean and disinfected.

Permits must be returned at least two weeks prior to the cave trip. No more than one wild cave permit per week will be issued. Groups entering wild caves are limited to a minimum of three and a maximum of six persons. Those who qualify and are interested can complete the attached Cave Permit application. Applications may be returned via email, letter, or fax at 775-234-7210.

Visitors who are at the park and wish to speak with the Resource Management staff in person can visit the Resource Management office, which is located next to the Maintenance Yard off of the main park road. The Resource Management office is open yearly from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday. For further information please contact Ben Roberts, at 775-234-7331, extension 228 or by email at ben_roberts@nps.gov

GENERAL CAVING GUIDELINES

Permits

- 1) An approved permit is required to enter all wild caves. Only the cave(s) listed on the permit may be entered.
- 2) Cave permits will be issued by the Chief of Resource Management or designated Cave Specialist. Cave research permits will be issued through the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System.
- 3) Permits must be applied for at least two weeks prior to the trip.
- 4) No more than one permit per week will be issued for each cave.
- 5) All permits will be picked up in person and signed by all group members.
- 6) A mandatory pre-trip cave conservation discussion with the cave specialist or designated Resource Management staff is required for entry into the wild caves in the park.

Cave Fauna

- 1) It is the responsibility of all cavers to minimize disturbance to cave flora and fauna.
- 2) Many caves contain important maternity colonies or hibernacula for bats. If a colony is encountered, cavers will leave the area immediately. Cavers may move past solitary bats that are sleeping or resting on a wall or ceiling, but should be quiet, move quickly, and avoid shining their lights on the animal. Note: Lights with red filters have been shown to disturb bats less and may be appropriate in some situations.
- 3) Cave invertebrate and microbe populations are extremely sensitive to disturbance. They can be inadvertently harmed by moving rocks, leaf litter, and other organic matter that provides important habitat to these organisms. Cavers should be very careful to avoid this.

- 4) Cavers must have clean and disinfected clothing, boots, and cave gear in order to prevent contamination of the cave systems within the park. All cavers are required to certify that gear is clean and disinfected.

Rules & Guidelines

The following rules will be adhered to by everyone entering the caves at Great Basin National Park (violations of these rules will result in the loss of future visitation privileges and/or fines or imprisonment, depending on the severity of the infraction):

- 1) No alcohol or tobacco products are allowed in the caves.
- 2) Liquid or solid human wastes may not be left in any cave (in wild caves use pee bottles and burrito bags - double one-gallon zip-locked bags with baking soda).
- 3) No speleothem, cave fauna, plant, fungus, or other natural, historical, paleontological, or archeological artifact may be handled, damaged, or removed from any cave.
- 4) No marks or writing of any kind may be left on any cave wall or feature.
- 5) No carbide lamps or the fuel for them may be brought into the caves.
- 6) No hammering or breaking of cave walls or formations that block leads.
- 7) No camping or campfires are allowed in any cave.
- 8) No domestic animals are allowed in park caves at any time.
- 9) Installing bolts or digging in cave sediment is strictly prohibited.
- 10) Cavers must remove all traces of food that they bring into the caves.
- 11) Clothing that may produce excessive lint is not allowed.
- 12) All equipment, supplies, trash, and clothing that are taken into a cave must be removed by the cavers at the end of the trip. Of particular importance is the removal of all spent batteries due to the toxic nature of these items.
- 13) All cave keys must be returned to park staff within 24 hours after the cave trip.
- 14) Any accident or violation of these rules must be reported immediately to park staff.
- 15) Permission to enlarge a constriction or to dig through breakdown or cave fill must be obtained in writing from the park superintendent or a designee on a case by case basis. Alterations must have a strong justification and permission can only be granted upon demonstration that all impacts can and will be mitigated using the proper NEPA documentation.

Safety Requirements

- 1) Trip leaders must be at least 18 years of age. They are responsible for the safety and actions of their group members, and should gear activities towards the least experienced member of the team. All cavers must be at least 12 years of age.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 6 people. Single person cave trips are not permitted within the park for safety purposes.
- 3) Each person must have a UIAA approved helmet with a four-point suspension, and chin strap.
- 4) Each person must have a primary mounted light source, a secondary light source that can be mounted if required, and a third backup light. Spare batteries and bulbs are recommended for each light source.
- 5) Lug-soled, ankle-supporting boots with non-skid soles are required, and kneepads are recommended for all caves.
- 6) For vertical caves, each person must have their own descending and ascending gear, and should be able to demonstrate their knowledge upon request. (Note: Gear should not be passed up and down rope drops).
- 7) Dust masks should be worn in any cave that contains significant amounts of dust or feces.
- 8) Any climb with more than 10 feet of exposure will be belayed.
- 9) Each group entering a park cave will have a surface watcher who knows where they have gone and when they will be expected back. The surface watch will have contact information for cave management staff so the park can be notified immediately in case of an emergency.



Information for caves in and around Great Basin National Park

Cave Regulations and Permits

National Caving Organizations

Local Caving Groups

More information on grottos can be found
at the NSS website, www.caves.org

National Park Service

Great Basin National Park
Attn: Ben Roberts
100 Great Basin National Park
Baker, NV 89311
Phone: 775-234-7331 ext 228
Fax: 775-234-7210
GRBA_Cave_Management@nps.gov
Ben_Roberts@nps.gov

National Speleological Society

2813 Cave Avenue
Huntsville, AL 35810-4431
256-852-1300

<http://www.caves.org>
nss@caves.org

Southern Nevada Grotto

c/o Steve Deveny
9032 Black Elk Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89143-1222

Northern Nevada Grotto

c/o Donald Kellenbarger
2425 Mammatus Drive
Sparks, NV, 89441

United States Forest Service

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests
Attn: Deanna Stever
PO Box 539
350 East 8th Street
Ely, NV 89301
775-289-3031

American Cave Conservation Association

PO Box 409
Horse Cave, KY
270-786-1466

<http://cavern.org/acca/accahome.html>
acca@cavern.org

Timpanogos Grotto

c/o Richard Downey
380 N 600 E
Orem, UT 84097

Color Country Grotto

c/o Kyle Voyles
38 W Harvest Ln
Washington, UT 84780

Bureau of Land Management

Ely District Office
Attn: David Jacobson
HC 33, Box 33500
702 N. Industrial Way
Ely, NV 89301

Salt Lake Grotto

c/o Dale Green
4230 Sovereign Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84124

Wasatch Grotto

c/o Paul Kemp
2821 Ksel Dr
Sandy, UT 84092



Permit Package

GRBA Cave Permit # _____

Permit Approved: Yes _____ No _____

By: _____ Title: _____ on: _____

Explanation/Additional Requirements: _____

Permission is requested to enter the following cave: _____

Purpose of Trip: Recreation _____ Management (describe) _____

Date of trip: _____ Expected Time Underground: _____

Trip Leader: _____ Phone: (h) _____ (w) _____

Address: _____

Party Members:

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

4.) _____

5.) _____

Vehicle License Number(s):

1.) _____ State: _____

2.) _____ State: _____

Emergency Contacts (Names and Phone Numbers)

1.) _____

2.) _____

I, the signed participant, agree to the following conditions:

- 1.) Participants on this trip will abide by the wild cave permit restrictions and guidelines for Great Basin National Park.
- 2.) Those entering the cave system(s) at Great Basin National Park are doing so at their own risk.
- 3.) The National Park Service will not be held liable for any personal injury, damage, or death resulting from the cave trip.
- 4.) Participants who damage natural resources (including, but not limited to, graffiti, permanent marks, destruction and/or removal of natural and cultural resources) will be subject to prosecution under the 1988 Federal Cave Resources Protection Act and will receive penalties of up to one year in prison and a maximum fine of \$10,000.

Name

Signature

Date

TRIP LEADER.) _____

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

4.) _____

5.) _____

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (To be completed by *each* group member):

NAME: _____

Each member of the group should write a detailed summary of their caving experience below (make photocopies of this sheet if necessary and include cave names, locations, and duration of cave trips). Cave resumes are an acceptable alternative.

Commercial Caves/CaveTours _____

Wild Cave Systems _____

Do you have any vertical caving experience? _____

If so, please describe _____

Certification (To be completed by *each* group member):

Please read the following and provide certification about the status of your gear (includes clothing, footwear, and all caving gear).

Incoming Gear

Gear that has been used in any cave, other than the one you will be entering on the current trip, must be cleaned and disinfected before entering the cave. If gear has ever been in a WNS or *Geomyces destructans* area, it is not allowed inside any GRBA cave, regardless of disinfection.

Disinfection of Gear between Park Caves

Gear that has been used in any cave in the park must be cleaned and disinfected before being used in any other cave in the park.

Disinfection of Outgoing Gear

Gear that has been used in any cave in the park must be cleaned and disinfected before leaving the park.

Certification:

I, _____, certify that I have read and understand GRBA procedures for minimizing the risk of spreading WNS to, from, and among the caves of GRBA and that all clothing, footwear, and gear I will be using during cave activities I am participating in is clean and disinfected. I understand that if any gear is found that does not meet these standards, it will not be allowed into the cave and may result in revocation of permit or access.

Signature: _____

Date: _____