



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Construction work continues on Grand Canyon's historic Hermit Road *Alternate transportation and recreational opportunities available during construction activities*

Grand Canyon, Ariz. - Construction crews continue work on the rehabilitation of Grand Canyon's historic Hermit Road. Crews began work on Hermit Road, which is located on the park's South Rim between Grand Canyon Village and Hermits Rest, in February 2008. Beginning on April 1, 2008 the National Park Service (NPS) closed the road to all vehicles from Hopi Point west to Hermits Rest to allow for construction on the western end of the road. The Rim Trail, which runs parallel to Hermit Road, also closed April 1, from Hopi Point to Hermits Rest.

Beginning July 7, the entire length of Hermit Road will close to all vehicles from the Hermit Road intersection west to Hermits Rest and will remain closed until completion of the project, which is expected by the end of November 2008. The Rim Trail will also be closed from the first Trailview Overlook west to Hermits Rest beginning July 7. As needed, temporary closures may need to occur on the Rim Trail between the Hermit Road intersection and first Trailview Overlook for construction activities.

Visitors will be able to use all other roadways within the park that are normally open to private vehicles.

Hermit Road is a popular roadway and destination for South Rim visitors and includes nine overlooks, access to the historic Hermits Rest and Hermit Trailhead, seven miles of improved and unimproved rim trails, and many popular spots for viewing sunset. Normally, visitors use a free shuttle bus service provided by the NPS to travel Hermit Road from March 1 through November 30. During winter months (December 1 through February 29), Hermit Road is accessible by private vehicle. Commercial tours are also provided year-round on Hermit Road by Xanterra South Rim, LLC (Xanterra).

The rehabilitation of Hermit Road includes road widening and resurfacing to a consistent width of 24 feet, improvements to shuttle bus stops at each of the overlooks, provision of accessible pedestrian routes from shuttle bus stops to viewing areas, and improvements to approximately five miles of rim trail, including construction of a new three-mile, multi-use greenway trail which will be open to both pedestrians and bicyclists.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

From July 7 through September 5, 2008, during which time the entire length of Hermit Road is closed, a new, temporary shuttle bus route from Canyon View Information Plaza (CVIP) to Desert View will be added so visitors can continue to enjoy the park utilizing the free shuttle bus system. This route will stop at several scenic locations along Desert View Drive (Highway 64) including Grandview Point, Tusayan Ruin and Museum, Moran Point, and Desert View. Buses will run every 20 minutes as follows:

- First bus leaves CVIP at 7:00 a.m.
- First bus leaves Desert View at 8:10 a.m.
- Last bus leaves CVIP at 5:00 p.m.
- Last bus leaves Desert View at 6:10 p.m.

Service on the Desert View Route stops before sunset

Xanterra will continue to provide commercial bus tours, including those provided to passengers of the Grand Canyon Railway, but they will be modified depending on construction activities and closures. Beginning July 7, when the entire Hermit Road is closed, tours provided to Grand Canyon Railway passengers will include stops at Yavapai Observation Station, Yaki Point, and Duck on a Rock. During construction activities on Hermit Road, Xanterra will continue to run daily commercial tours to Desert View and will add tours to its schedule as needed to provide maximum service to park visitors. For more information about guided bus tours on the South Rim, contact Xanterra at 928-638-2631.

The park's free shuttle bus operations, including alternative routes and schedules, and information on alternative visitor activities available during the reconstruction project, will be posted on the park's Web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/> and will be listed in *The Guide*, the park's free newspaper distributed to all visitors.

Access to the Hermit Trailhead will be limited until construction activities are completed. Day hiking is not allowed on Hermit Trail until construction activities have been completed. Visitors who have obtained an overnight backcountry permit from the park's Backcountry Information Center (BIC), for backcountry use areas reached by the Hermit Trail, will only be allowed access to the trailhead during the months of September, October and November. No access will be permitted to the trailhead during the months of June, July and August. During the months that Hermit Trail is accessible, backcountry permit holders will only be allowed to hike down Hermit Trail; an alternate trail must be used to hike out.

To help reduce impacts caused by the construction activities, the NPS will continue to provide early morning free shuttle service to the Hermit Trailhead to overnight backcountry permit holders from September through November. During that time, shuttle buses will leave the BIC as follows:

- September: shuttle buses will leave the BIC at 4:30 and 5:30 a.m.
- October: shuttle buses will leave the BIC at 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- November: shuttle buses will leave the BIC at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

During the closure of Hermit Road, the NPS recommends the following recreational opportunities for day hiking:

- Visitors can enjoy rim hikes of up to 6 miles along the Rim Trail from Hopi Point through July 6, and from the first Trailview Overlook (July 7 – November 30) east to Pipe Creek Vista. This paved rim trail can be reached at several parking lots and up to six bus stops served by the free shuttle bus system.
- Visitors can also enjoy day hikes below the rim using the Bright Angel and South Kaibab Trails. The park's free shuttle buses transport visitors to these trailheads.

Additional trail access and hiking information can be found on the park's Web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/backcountry.htm> or by contacting the BIC at 928-638-7875 Monday through Friday (except holidays) between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. MST.

Additional park information can be obtained by visiting the park's Web site at www.nps.gov/grca or by calling 928-638-7888.

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