



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park  
Backcountry Information Center

(928) 638-7875 phone  
(928) 638-2125 fax  
[www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)  
[grca\\_bic@nps.gov](mailto:grca_bic@nps.gov)

## Important Hiker Information

Travel in Grand Canyon National Park's backcountry has inherent risks and real hazards. Your safety depends upon your judgment, your experience, and a realistic assessment of your ability to ensure your group's safety. A successful and safe hike may depend on weather, routes, and unforeseen natural occurrences. Routes and trails are susceptible to deterioration due to rockslides and may become obscured. Extreme cold or heat can compromise an individual's ability to cope with the psychological and physical challenges of backcountry travel. You must ensure that you have adequate food, water, and equipment to deal with the unexpected. If you have doubts as to your ability to hike safely in the Grand Canyon, do not attempt to do so! Do not assume that your travels in the backcountry will not develop into a serious situation. Be prepared to acknowledge the risks and the challenges of stepping below the rim in Grand Canyon National Park!

A lack of preparedness coupled with overconfidence can lead to injury, incapacitation, and the need for evacuation; historical and ecological resources being disturbed; citation, wasted vacation days, and outright suffering. Grand Canyon National Park requests detailed information on certain trips to help alleviate some of these unnecessary problems. This information is collected from most solo hikers, hikers traveling in remote areas during the summer, and hikers traveling more than 10 miles in a given day.

Please read this information and discuss the ramifications with other members of your group. If your group has the knowledge and experience to mitigate these challenges and if the itinerary requested still appears reasonable, then complete and return this form to the Backcountry Information Center. Don't hesitate to contact us with questions about alternative hiking possibilities at (928) 638-7875, Monday through Friday, 1 to 5pm MST. If the phone line is busy, please send us an email at: [grca\\_bic@nps.gov](mailto:grca_bic@nps.gov). Remember you are ultimately responsible for the safety of your entire group.

**Heat.** Throughout the summer, temperatures at the bottom of the canyon often exceed 105°F (40°C) in the shade. Throughout most of the canyon shade is nonexistent between 10 am and 4 pm. Radiant heat from the sun blasts down, warming surfaces wherever it reaches. This heating force adds to the difficulty faced by the hiker's body in its attempt to cool itself. Large quantities of liquid and food must be consumed to replace abundant sweating and maintain a proper blood chemical balance. Sweat evaporates quickly and may not even be noticed. Dehydration and other heat-related illnesses are common and set in quickly. Even slight dehydration decreases mental ability and accidents become more common. The most common cause of heat-related illness is hiking between 10 am and 4 pm in the summer.

**Distance and terrain.** Hiking in the Grand Canyon is different from mountain hiking. The hike to the bottom involves descending more than 5,000 feet (1,524 meters) in elevation. The elevation change, combined with carrying a heavy backpack, is very hard on knees, ankles, feet, and toes. Blisters and traumatized toenails are common. The 5,000 foot (1,524 meters) hike out of the canyon occurs at the end of the hike when hikers are mentally and physically drained. Difficulty increases as hikers approach the top reaching elevations of 7,000 to 8,000 feet (2,134 to 2,434 meters). Distances in the canyon are deceiving due to the rugged terrain. People who choose aggressive hikes often end up camping short of their goal. This involves creating new sites, which damages sensitive ecological resources, or negatively impacts other campers by putting too many people in a confined space. It is important to carefully consider your route and be sure it is within your group's ability to safely stay on itinerary and complete the hike.

**Scarcity of water sources.** The list of perennial water sources is short. Finding your next water source may involve endless hours of travel and extra time on top of that to search the drainage for the water. It is not unusual to see experienced Grand Canyon hikers traveling into dry areas to be carrying several gallons of water (water weighs 8 pounds per gallon, 1 kilo per liter). Knowing how much water you will need and exactly where you can find more can be a matter of life and death.

**Remoteness.** In some areas of the canyon, hikers may not cross paths with any other humans. Hikers are responsible for their own safety and must be prepared to deal with emergency situations and know how to prevent them. No one else may be around to provide assistance.

**Changing weather.** Grand Canyon is known for drastic and quick weather changes. Extremely hot, sunny summer days may give way to heavy rains, flash-floods, chilling temperatures, hail, or even snow. Cases of heat stroke and hypothermia have been reported on the same day.

**Safety.** You are responsible for the safety of your entire group. Arrange to check-in with your emergency contact(s) before and after your hike. Checking in and out is your responsibility. If you are carrying a satellite phone know your number. Inform your contact person how and when to contact park personnel in the event you do not check in as planned at the end of your hike. The park's 24 hour emergency phone number is (928) 638-7805. Be aware that rangers may be responding to other emergencies and unavailable to come to your aid. Be sure your group has the equipment and knowledge it needs to deal with emergencies and/or injuries.



## BACKCOUNTRY/WILDERNESS USE PERMIT APPLICATION

**Grand Canyon National Park**  
Backcountry Information Center  
1824 S Thompson St, Suite 201  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
Telephone (928) 638-7875, FAX (928) 638-2125



### APPLICANT INFORMATION

First Name <i>(of permittee)</i>		Last Name <i>(of permittee)</i>	
Permit Number (issued by Park)	Contact Phone	Group Size	

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

<input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Colleague	Emergency Point-of-Contact Name	Emergency Point-of-Contact Phone Number
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### MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

**Motor Vehicle(s) (Including ORVs and Motorcycles)** *note: trailhead vehicles only, leave blank if unknown*

State/Province	Make	State/Province	Make
Registration/Plate #	Model	Registration/Plate #	Model
Rental? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Color	Rental? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Color
Parking Location		Parking Location	

### DAILY ITINERARY DETAILS (use additional pages if necessary)

Entry Location	Exit Location
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	Date	Daily Mileage (very important)	Camp Location / Use Area
Night 1			
Night 2			
Night 3			
Night 4			
Night 5			
Night 6			
Night 7			

### EQUIPMENT

<input type="checkbox"/> Climbing Rope(s) (length _____)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climbing Hardware (list below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify below) <i>note: for River Assisted Backcountry Travel / pack raft</i>

U.S. Coast Guard Approved Personal Flotation Devices <i>(note: for River Assisted Backcountry Travel / pack raft)</i>	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/> Flotation Aid - Type III	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Use Device - Type V (includes include work vests, deck suits, and hybrids for restricted use)	_____

### PLEASE PROVIDE DESERT AND/OR GRAND CANYON HIKING EXPERIENCE

Have you read and agree to all need to know information?  Yes  No

Visitor's Signature	Date
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## NOTICES

### Privacy Act Statement

**General:** This information is provided pursuant to Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974), December 21, 1984, for individuals completing this form.

**Authority:** 54 U.S.C. §100101, NPS Organic Act; 16 U.S.C. 1131-1136, Wilderness Act; 43 U.S.C. §1701 et seq., 16 U.S.C. §6801-6814, the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act; 36 CFR Part 71, Recreation Fees; 36 CFR 1.6, Permits; and 36 CFR 2.23 Recreation Fees.

**Purpose and Uses:** To establish and verify an applicant's eligibility for a permit to conduct certain activities within the National Park System and to process permits for individual members of the public and organizations interested in obtaining a permit authorizing an activity. Information collected will be used to provide the public and permittees with permit-related information, to monitor activities conducted under a permit, to analyze data and produce reports to monitor the use park resources, to assess the impact of permitted activities on the conservation and management of protected species and their habitats, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the permit programs. The DOI and NPS may use the information to meet reporting requirements, to generate budget estimates and track performance, and to assist park staff with visitor education, fee collection, resource management and protection, recreational use planning, law enforcement and public safety personnel for such purposes as emergency contact and search and rescue efforts; to provide permit holders and participants with information about parks and their partners; and to provide reports of activities conducted under an issued permit.

Based on the disclosures generally permitted under 5 U.S.C. 552a(b) of the Privacy Act, the National Park Service may share information with first responders and Federal, state, and local governments to provide information needed to locate an individual or render aid in an emergency; to recover debts owed to the United States; to respond to a violation or potential violation of the law; in response to a court order and/or discovery purposes related to litigation; or other authorized routine use when the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were compiled.

**Effects of Nondisclosure:** It is in your best interest to answer all of the questions. The U.S. Criminal Code, Title 18 U.S.C. 1001, provides that knowingly falsifying or concealing a material fact is a felony that may result in fines of up to \$10,000 or 5 years in prison, or both. Deliberately and materially making false or fraudulent statements on this form will be grounds for not granting you a Backcountry/Wilderness Use Permit.

### Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) and 36 CFR 1-7, 12 and 13 which authorize the National Park Service to require applicants to fill out this form to monitor resources and to protect visitors. This information is being collected to allow the park management to make value judgements necessary to enhance the safety and enjoyment of both the visitors and wildlife. All applicable parts of the form must be completed in order for your request to be considered. You are not required to respond to this or any other Federal agency-sponsored information collection unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

### Estimated Burden Statement

Public Reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 8 minutes per response, including the time it takes for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form should be sent to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525. Do not send this application to this address but rather to the park address listed at the top of the first page.