



Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) Program Dude Ranch Amenities

Category Defined:

Dude Ranch Amenities are defined as services that accommodate visitors of all-inclusive dude ranches directly adjacent to park lands of Grand Teton National Park (GTNP). Wrangler guides provide an immersive, educational western experience by guiding visitors on established, commercially authorized trails through park landscapes long associated with western horseback riding and dude ranching traditions. Guides provide messages that encourage visitors to preserve and protect park resources in conjunction with the management objectives of GTNP and the mission of the National Park Service (NPS).

Specific Statement of Appropriate Use:

Dude Ranch Amenities is an appropriate use because it provides a means through which visitors can enjoy and gain inspiration from the fundamental resources and values of GTNP. Dude ranching is an integral part of the park's fundamental cultural history, and as the 2017 Foundation Document states, "Significant historical contexts tell the history of homesteading, environmental conservation and dude ranching and tourism (significant to the establishment of Jackson Hole National Monument)." ¹ In "A Place Called Jackson Hole," an authoritative NPS publication detailing the history of the valley, dude ranching is described as significantly influencing the character and history of the valley, stating that "[In the 1920s] More dude ranches than hotels existed in the valley... Jackson Hole dude ranches were mountain ranches situated in the midst of spectacular mountain scenery." ² Authorizing amenities for dude ranches directly adjacent to GTNP (Area) with a history of operating in the park allows for modern activities to continue to promote significant historical context, and is in keeping with the park's purpose and significance.

Management Objectives:

Dude Ranch Amenities adhere to the management objectives of GTNP and the NPS. Working with other organizations to extend the benefits of resource conservation and outdoor recreation is part of the NPS mission. Supporting dude ranching is in keeping with NPS efforts to preserve local history and celebrate local heritage.³ Use will be maintained at a maximum of historical levels. In accordance with Director's Order #48B and NPS Management Policy 10.3.1–10.3.3, the allocation of riders for the purposes of this authorization will not obtain any contractual or other rights to continuation of a particular allocation level pursuant to the terms of this authorization or otherwise. Such allocations will be made, withdrawn, and/or adjusted by the Superintendent as needed in furtherance of CUA program management.

¹ Vela, D. and Masica, S. 2017. "Foundation Document: Grand Teton National Park, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway." Moose, WY: Grand Teton National Park, National Park Service.

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=68&projectID=64729&documentID=90287>

² Daugherty, J. 1999. "A Place Called Jackson Hole." Moose, Wyoming: Grand Teton National Park, National Park Service. Chapter 14: https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/grte2/hrs.htm

³ National Park Service. 2018. "About Us" Webpage: <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/index.htm>



Dude Ranch Amenities Operating Plan

Dude Ranch Amenities Operations:

- Dude Ranch Amenities include the following Activities:
 - Guided Horseback Rides, and
 - Guided Nature Walks, and
 - Guest Transportation
- Activities must be conducted as part of a traditional dude ranch operation that meet dude ranch industry standards (i.e., an all-inclusive stay, typically 7 days on the ‘American Plan’ with all lodging, meals and activities included in a package rate). Activities in the park must be incidental to the trip offering.
- Guided Horseback Rides and Guided Nature Walks must meet, begin, and terminate outside the park. Dude Ranch Amenities CUA holders must own the ranch land directly adjacent to the park Area so as to have a primary means of accessing designated, commercially authorized park trails from origin points outside the park Area.
- All business transactions must take place outside of GTNP.
- Only one Dude Ranch Amenities CUA is permitted per operator.
- A Risk Management Plan must be submitted by mail to the Grand Teton Business Resources office or email to grte_business_resources@nps.gov with all new and renewal applications. The plan must outline the CUA holder’s policy for minimum age to participate in Activities and assessment of participant abilities.
- The holder must operate in accordance with GTNP’s Backcountry Management Plan and other applicable park plans, laws, and the Superintendent’s Compendium.
- Guided Horseback Rides and Guided Nature Walks must remain on approved, designated, commercially authorized horseback riding trails per the attached trail map for Dude Ranch Amenities. Use of other unmaintained, unofficial or social trails or travelling off-trail, or the creation of new trails in the Area is prohibited. Groups may not shortcut switchbacks and must follow best practices for mitigating backcountry resource impacts.
- The maximum group size is twelve including wranglers and/or guides. Groups using the same trail must be spaced a minimum of 15 minutes apart.
- Activities must not be conducted at night; activities are prohibited from ½-hour after sunset to ½-hour before sunrise. Activities are not permitted to have an overnight camping or backpacking component in the Area.
- All activities must provide accurate and unbiased park information, education, and interpretation of Park resources. Visitors must be informed of park rules and regulations.
- All Wranglers and Guides must retrain current CPR and First Aid certifications.
- All guided activities will include a safety briefing, including safe wildlife distances, appropriate audio levels to not disturb wildlife, and bear food storage education prior to activities. Guides and guests will remain on horses when near wildlife unless it is necessary to dismount for safety reasons.
- Activities must be conducted following Leave No Trace principles. In areas when toilet facilities are not going to be available, clients will be informed of backcountry sanitation procedures. During ‘all day’ activities, guides will carry Rest-Stop bags or equivalent.
- Erecting tents, canopies, hitching rails, cooksites, or tables along the trails for the purpose of providing rest stations or refreshments is not permitted. Fires are prohibited.
- CUA employees are prohibited from entering or conducting activities in areas that could be considered residential in nature to include administrative areas, service areas employee housing areas, lodging/cabin areas, campgrounds and along campground entrance roads.



- The Conservation Easement over the Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve (“the Preserve”) prohibits any commercial activities on the Preserve property.
- CUA holders are responsible for the legal conduct of their employees and clients in the Area while conducting commercial activities and must report any infractions immediately to Teton Interagency Dispatch Center. All representatives and employees of CUA holders must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
- For the purposes of determining gross receipts, the reported revenue for each activity will be comparable to the price charged by other operators for similar activities within the local area.

Horseback Ride Operation Specific:

- Rides must initiate directly adjacent to park lands with direct access to existing commercially authorized horseback riding trails.
- The holder will use only those trails and areas approved for commercial use by the Superintendent. The holder will not exceed authorized use levels.
- Routes may be removed from use at any time the Superintendent deems necessary.
- Portions of trail rides occurring in the Area must be part of a multi-hour (2+ hour), half-day, or full day ride. One hour horseback rides are not permitted.
- Holders must be assigned one of three commercial horse trail areas. A map of authorized commercial horseback riding trails is provided with each authorization.
 - Moose-Wilson Corridor
 - Antelope Flats-Kelly
 - Eastern Valley Trails
- Trailering horses to utilize official horseback riding trails other than those trails specifically designated on the authorized commercial horseback riding trails map shall be limited to no more than 10% of total number of trips conducted each month. Trailers must be parked in designated parking areas.
- All horse use will comply with the provisions of the Superintendent’s Compendium 36 C.F.R. Section 2.16, “Horses and Pack Animals.”
- Horses must be even-tempered, gentle, and well trained to accommodate inexperienced riders. Wranglers must match stock to the experience of the rider. Stock must be familiar with the terrain and capable of safely handling the types of terrain and obstacles to be encountered.
- Horses will be properly shod and must appear healthy and fit to the public. Only healthy animals will be in use. All sick or injured horses must be promptly treated and removed from use until determined well. If an animal has an infectious disease the holder must notify the GTNP Business Resources office immediately.
- When being used on area trails, horses must be groomed daily and have their hooves picked daily. All burrs, dirt and manure that might harbor seeds must be removed from the horse prior to entering the Area. No livestock feed may be brought into the park.
- Dude Ranch operators will follow Wyoming regulations on Coggins testing.
- Current health records and immunization records for each horse will be on hand and made available for inspection by the Superintendent or his/her designated representative upon request.
- The holder will maintain all equipment/tack in a safe, operable, and clean condition, and will establish procedures for evaluating equipment/tack condition and properly maintaining it.
- Grazing horses in the Area is prohibited.



- All riders age 12 and under must properly wear helmets when on horseback. The chin strap must be fastened for the helmet to be considered properly worn. Helmets must be available in a range of sizes for any rider desiring to wear one. Helmets must be in an operable and clean condition. Helmets must be cleaned between being worn by different riders.
- *Wrangler/Guide Qualifications and Requirements:*
 - Wrangler and Guides must be identifiable during activities, either through name tags, apparel, tack, or other means as approved by the park.
 - Wranglers and Guides guiding visitors in the park must be current with CPR and First Aid. Expiration dates and any changes or updates must be submitted to the GRTE_Business_Resources@nps.gov as changes occur.
 - Wranglers and guides must be provided with adequate interpretative training.
 - Wranglers will be trained to provide for safe road crossings and will wear a highly visibility colored vest and carry a flag to use at crossings.
- *Horse Trail Use and Maintenance:*
 - Stopping or hitching horses in riparian areas is prohibited. Watering horses must be done in single file, not along a large swath of streambank with multiple horses side by side.
 - The operator will not use Area trails when they are muddy or unstable. Prior to operating each season, the holder must coordinate with the Trails Office and the District Ranger through the Business Resources office to ensure trails are dry enough for horse use. Trails may be temporarily closed during the season due to wet or unstable conditions.
 - Riders must slow their horses to a walk when approaching and passing persons on foot. When horse rides pass each other on the trail, one group will step off the trail and remain stationary until the other group has passed.
 - CUA holders may remove downed trees and branches that obstruct authorized trails. Groups may only go around down trees once if it is safe to do so and immediately report the tree to Business Resources. Once the obstacle has been identified, the trail must not be used until it has been removed. CUA holders must not cut new trails. CUA operator must report trees they are unable to remove to the Business Resources office.
 - River crossings, where authorized, must be single file.
 - When stopped, horses will be tied to hitch rails in all areas where they are provided. In areas without hitch rails, horses may be tied to a high line between two trees. At no time will horses be tied to any natural features. If a highline is used, the operator must submit a request for placement of a highline, which will be reviewed by the NPS on a case by case basis.

Guest Transportation Operation Specific:

- CUA holders may transport Dude Ranch guests into the Area in order to provide unguided, ‘pick-up’ or ‘drop-off’ of guests at Area locations of official trailheads, visitor centers, points of interest, restaurants, or other services.
- Company vehicles must be identifiable while providing Guest Transportation.