



## Backcountry Camping



The North Fork of Cascade Canyon  
Danielle Lehle photo

## Before Leaving Home

### Planning Your Trip

This guide provides general information about backcountry use in Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway. The map on the back page is only for general trip planning and/or campsite selection. For detailed information, use a topographic map or hiking guide. When planning your trip, consider each member of your party. Backpackers should expect to travel no more than 2 miles per hour, with an additional hour for every 1,000 feet of elevation gain. Do not plan to cross more than one mountain pass in a day. If you only have one vehicle, you may want to plan a loop trip. There is no shuttle service in the park, but transportation services are available; ask at a permits desk for more information. The high country is busiest in July and August due to less snow. Jackson Lake is busiest on weekends and holidays.

### Getting A Permit

Permits are required for all overnight backcountry stays in the park and parkway. To minimize the impact on park resources, backcountry permits are limited. One-third of the backcountry campsites and all of the group sites may be reserved in advance. The remaining sites are filled on a first-come, first-served basis at park permit offices no more than one day before the trip begins. Plan alternative routes based on availability.

### Fees

\$35 walk-in permit per trip.  
\$45 advance reservation per trip. This fee covers the reservation and permit.

### Reservations

Backcountry camping is very popular, and reservations are recommended. You may secure an on-line reservation between early January and May 15th. For online reservations go to: [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) and search for Grand Teton National Park. The system will allow you to choose available sites and dates in real-time. Call 307-739-3309 for more information.

### Picking Up Your Permit

A reservation holds your permit but is NOT your permit. Pick up your reserved permit before 10 am the morning your trip begins or your campsites will be released. If you will be late, you may call to inform us. If you will not be using your permit, please cancel your reservation as soon as possible. During summer, pick up permits at the Craig Thomas and Colter Bay visitor centers or at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station. All permits involving technical climbing or mountaineering and any permit for Garnet Canyon must be picked up at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station when they are open (early June through early September). During winter, call 307-739-3309 for more information.

### Backcountry Safety Video

Before you pick up your permit, you will be required to watch a backcountry safety video. Please visit the backcountry website ([www.nps.gov/grte/planyourvisit/back.htm](http://www.nps.gov/grte/planyourvisit/back.htm)) or ask at a permits office for more information.

## In The Backcountry

Please help keep Grand Teton's backcountry looking "grand." Preserve the scenery you came to enjoy for your next visit and for generations to come.

### Leave No Trace

- Do not leave litter, scraps of food, fire rings, buried trash or toilet paper.
- Where required, camp in designated sites. In camping zones, if improved sites are not provided, use an existing bare ground site. Camp at least 200 feet from water and the trail, so you are out of sight and sound of others.
- To preserve pristine areas, camp on durable surfaces such as rock, snow or bare ground. Dry grass or bare duff can tolerate some use, but wildflowers and shrubs are fragile. At any campsite, pick bare rock or ground for social gathering and cooking.
- One step leaves little trace, but many steps degrade or destroy resources quickly. Stay on existing trails. Feet trample plants and compact soil leading to erosion. One misplaced step can destroy a tiny 100 year-old plant.
- Where no trail exists, walk abreast, not single file. Trampling many plants a little is better than a few plants a lot. Walk on rock, snow or non-vegetated surfaces when possible.
- Short-cutting switchbacks is prohibited and causes erosion.
- Be aware that loud voices, cell phones and personal audio devices disturb those who are seeking solitude.
- Removing flowers, plants, rocks, and other natural or cultural objects is prohibited. Please leave them for others to enjoy.
- Strive to avoid resource damage. Past damage must be repaired. You may see



trails rerouted or campsites closed so scars from overuse may heal. Please respect these efforts by staying out of closed areas and by using existing trails.

### Water

Untreated water may contain Giardia, Campylobacter or other harmful organisms that cause intestinal disorders with severe diarrhea. Treat ALL backcountry water by boiling, with chemical methods or a portable water filter.

### Sanitation

Prevent contaminated waterways. Urinate at least 200 feet away from any water source in rocky areas that will not be damaged by animals digging for salts and minerals found in urine. Bury feces 6-8 inches deep in soil and at least 200 feet from lakes, streams and wetlands. Pack out toilet paper, used tampons, sanitary napkins and diapers in sealed plastic bags.

On Jackson Lake, a portable toilet system that allows removal of human waste to a dump station is required except at Spalding Bay where vault toilets are available. At the Lower Saddle, carry out all solid human waste. Human waste removal may be recommended for other areas and bags for this purpose are available at several locations. Check at ranger stations and visitor centers for additional information.

### Backcountry Regulations

Regulations help protect resources and ensure the backcountry experience. By signing the backcountry permit, you agree to respect the backcountry. Read and abide by the backcountry regulations printed on the back of your permit. Failure to comply may result in fines and revocation of the permit.

### Group Size

Individual campsites accommodate one to six people. Groups of seven to 12 people must use designated group sites that are larger and more durable. In winter, parties are limited to 20 people.

### Backcountry Conditions

Snow conditions vary annually. Snow usually melts from valley trails, by mid-June but remains in parts of the high country through summer. Safe travel over Paintbrush, Static Peak and Moose Basin divides and Hurricane, Mt. Meek and Fox Creek passes may require an ice axe and knowledge of its use into August.

### Climbing and Mountaineering

Permits are not required for day climbs. Climbers planning to stay in the backcountry overnight must have a permit to camp or bivouac. Current information is available at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station in the summer 307-739-3343. In winter, call 307-739-3309. Check for conditions at [www.tetonclimbing.blogspot.com](http://www.tetonclimbing.blogspot.com).

**From early June through early September, pick up all permits for Garnet Canyon or any trip involving technical climbing or mountaineering at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station.**

### Fishing

There are few fish in backcountry lakes and streams. Anglers must have a Wyoming State fishing license to fish in the park. Obey established creel limits. For specific fishing rules and regulations, ask for the *Fishing* brochure.

- Permits are required for all overnight stays. The permit is valid only for the location and dates indicated.
- Campsite "improvements" such as the construction of rock walls, log benches, tree bough beds, fire rings, and trenches are prohibited.
- Fires are permitted only at designated lakeshore sites and only in the metal fire rings provided. Keep fires small and do not leave them unattended. Downed and dead wood may be collected. Gas stoves are encouraged.
- Pets, bicycles, wheeled vehicles, motorized equipment and explosives including fireworks are prohibited in the backcountry.
- Anglers must have a Wyoming State fishing license in possession.
- Horse, burro, mule and llama use is limited to established trails and stock camps. Use hitch rails where provided. Carry stock feed; grazing is prohibited.
- Short-cutting trail switchbacks is prohibited.
- Maintain a distance of at least 100 yards from bears and wolves and 25 yards from all other wildlife. Feeding wildlife is prohibited, interferes with their natural diet and is harmful to their health.
- This is bear country. Follow food storage regulations.
- Prevent water pollution. Do not wash dishes or bathe in or near streams or lakes.
- Carry out all trash and food scraps. If possible, carry out trash left by others. Never bury or burn trash.

### Boating

Register all vessels annually with the park. Purchase permits at the Craig Thomas, Colter Bay or Jenny Lake (cash only) visitor centers. Lakeshore campsites are located on Jackson and Leigh lakes. Camping is not allowed along the Snake River. Strong afternoon winds occur frequently. For specific information regarding the use of watercraft, ask for the *Boating* brochure.

### Stock Use

Horses, burros, mules and llamas may be used on some established trails; some trails are closed to stock. There are special campsites and rules for overnight stock use. Ask for the *Stock Use* brochure.

Hikers should expect to encounter stock. Yield to stock by stepping well off the trail on the uphill side. Wait quietly until stock passes.

### Stay Limits

Campers may stay in a camping zone or designated site for two consecutive nights. The limit is three nights on Jackson Lake. Between June 1 and September 15, campers are limited to ten nights in the backcountry. In winter, campers may stay up to five nights in one site. Individuals are limited to 30 nights per year in the park's backcountry.

## Weather



The table below summarizes weather at Moose, WY, 6467 feet. Temperatures in the Teton Range can change quickly and be much colder at upper elevations. Check the local area weather forecasts for up-to-date, detailed information before starting your trip.

Moose, WY, 6467 ft	MONTH												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
<b>1958-2012</b>													
<b>TEMPERATURE</b>													
Average Daily High	26	31	39	49	61	71	81	79	69	56	38	27	
Average Daily Low	1	3	12	22	31	37	42	40	32	23	14	2	
Extreme High	50	55	63	78	88	91	97	97	88	83	67	53	
Extreme Low	-46	-42	-25	-10	7	20	26	22	9	-3	-22	-43	
Days above 90°F	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Days below 32°F	31	28	30	28	18	6	1	3	16	28	29	31	
<b>PRECIPITATION</b>													
Average	2.6	1.9	1.6	1.5	2.0	1.7	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.4	2.1	2.6	
Maximum	5.8	5.0	4.2	3.9	4.9	4.8	3.6	4.2	3.9	3.6	5.3	7.8	
Max. 24 hr. precip.	1.5	4.0	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.5	2.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	
Average Snowfall	43	29	20	10	2.4	0	0	0	0	5	23	40	
Days with precip.	16	13	12	9	12	11	8	9	8	8	12	14	
# Thunderstorms	0	0	0	1	5	11	14	12	2	0	0	0	

### Maps and Books

Maps, guidebooks and bear spray are available from the Grand Teton Association, a non-profit organization that supports the park. Call (307) 739-3403 or visit: [www.grandtetonpark.org](http://www.grandtetonpark.org)

## In Bear Habitat



Grand Teton National Park requires the use of Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee approved canisters for food storage in the backcountry. All permit holders may check out a canister, free of charge. Above are two examples of canisters used by the park.

Black and grizzly bears thrive in the park and parkway. Follow these guidelines for your protection and for the preservation of bears, a true sign of wilderness.

### Be Bear Aware

Careless food storage often spells death for bears. Bears that obtain human food, even once, often become aggressive. Aggressive bears threaten human safety and often must be killed. Do not allow bears or other wildlife to ever obtain human food.

### Bear Spray

Carry bear spray and know how to use it. The park offers bear spray demonstrations daily during summer. Keep your bear spray readily accessible at all times, not in your pack. Be careful not to accidentally discharge it.

### Avoid Encounters

Avoid surprising bears. If bears hear you coming, they may move away. To avoid an unexpected bear encounter, hike in groups and make noise such as clapping your hands or calling out. Bear bells are not sufficient. Be aware of your surroundings and watch for signs of bears, especially in dense vegetation, near streams, when it is windy or when cresting a hill. Avoid hiking between dusk and dawn. The use of portable audio devices is strongly discouraged.

### If You Encounter a Bear

**Do not run!** Running may elicit attacks from otherwise non-aggressive bears. Bears can easily outrun any human. If a bear is unaware of you, quietly detour downwind. If a bear is aware of you but has not acted aggressively, slowly back away. Avoid eye contact.

### If a Bear Approaches or Charges

**Do not run!** Most bear attacks result from surprise encounters where the bear is

defending their young or a food source such as a carcass. Some bears will bluff their way out of a threatening situation by charging, then veering off or stopping abruptly. This is the time to use your bear spray. Bear experts generally recommend standing still until the bear stops then backing away slowly.

If you are attacked, lie on the ground flat on your stomach. Spread your legs slightly and clasp your hands over the back of your neck. Do not drop your pack as it can protect your back if attacked. Do not move until you are certain the bear has left.

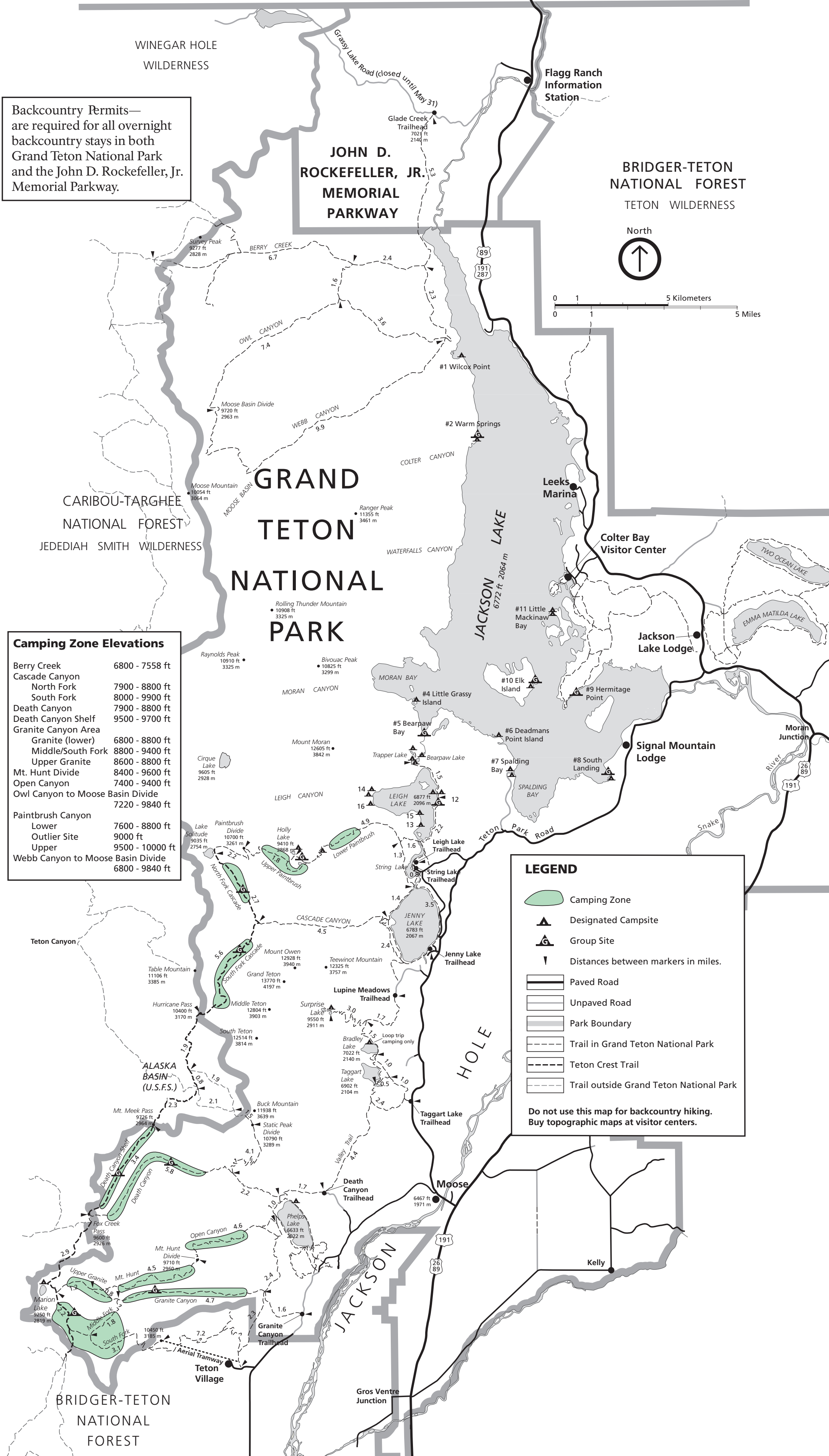
### Camping and Hiking In Bear Habitat

- All persons camping in the park's backcountry are required to use Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) approved canisters for food storage. Canisters may be checked out for free when you pick up your permit. Food storage boxes are available at some sites.
- For a list of all approved portable bear-resistant food canisters please visit the IGBC website: [www.igbconline.org/](http://www.igbconline.org/).
- All food, garbage, toiletries and any odorous item that may attract a bear, must be stored in a bear-resistant food canister when not in immediate use, day and night.
- Prepare food, eat and store your food canister at least 100 yards downwind from your tent. Store your canister and clean cooking gear on the ground hidden in brush or behind rocks. Do not place canister near a cliff or water source.
- Do not store anything odorous in your sleeping bag or tent. Leave packs away from your tent.
- Do not cook in your tent or sleep in the same clothes you wore while cooking.
- Keep a clean camp. Pack out all garbage, do not bury or burn.
- Do not leave food, packs or garbage unattended. Bears are active any time.



# Planning Map

## YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK



Backcountry Permits—  
are required for all overnight  
backcountry stays in both  
Grand Teton National Park  
and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr.  
Memorial Parkway.

Camping Zone Elevations	
Berry Creek	6800 - 7558 ft
Cascade Canyon	
North Fork	7900 - 8800 ft
South Fork	8000 - 9900 ft
Death Canyon	7900 - 8800 ft
Death Canyon Shelf	9500 - 9700 ft
Granite Canyon Area	
Granite (lower)	6800 - 8800 ft
Middle/South Fork	8800 - 9400 ft
Upper Granite	8600 - 8800 ft
Mt. Hunt Divide	8400 - 9600 ft
Open Canyon	7400 - 9400 ft
Owl Canyon to Moose Basin Divide	7220 - 9840 ft
Paintbrush Canyon	
Lower	7600 - 8800 ft
Outlier Site	9000 ft
Upper	9500 - 10000 ft
Webb Canyon to Moose Basin Divide	6800 - 9840 ft

**LEGEND**

- Camping Zone
- Designated Campsite
- Group Site
- Distances between markers in miles.
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Park Boundary
- Trail in Grand Teton National Park
- Teton Crest Trail
- Trail outside Grand Teton National Park

**Do not use this map for backcountry hiking.  
Buy topographic maps at visitor centers.**

# Camp Site or Zone

A camping permit entitles you to stay within a designated site or a camping zone. In some areas, designated campsites are hardened to increase durability. Other areas are managed as "camping zones" where camping is allowed within a marked zone.

- Signs mark the beginning and end of each zone. If there are indicated campsites inside the zone, they are marked with additional signs.
- Whenever possible, camp at previously occupied sites out of sight of trails and other campers and at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Group campsites may only be used by groups specifically assigned to them. Group sites are marked with signs.
- Fires are prohibited except at designated lakeshore campsites, use a stove.
- Bears are common. Read the "In Bear Country" section on the other side.

## Camping Zone Maps

Maps of most camping zone are available at permits desk or may be downloaded from: [www.nps.gov/grte/playourvisit/bczones.htm](http://www.nps.gov/grte/playourvisit/bczones.htm).

**Berry Creek, Webb Canyon, Owl Canyon & Canyons Without Trails**  
Bears, including grizzlies, frequent these areas. Hiking includes difficult and dangerous stream crossings without bridges. Safe travel requires good physical condition and experience with map and compass or GPS. Hikers must be self-reliant. Stock camping is permitted only at Hechtman Stock Camp. Grassy Lake Road is closed until May 31 for grizzly bear activity. Obtain a permit at any backcountry office. Specify your camping itinerary by indicating the canyon you plan to camp in. Note that the northern canyons have permit limits similar to camping zones.

## Lakeshore Sites

### Jackson Lake

Pets are allowed on boats in Jackson Lake but are not allowed on the shores of Jackson Lake except at designated boat ramps and the Spalding Bay campsites. Pets must be physically restrained on a leash less than six feet in length at all times and are not allowed out of boats.

### Phelps, Leigh, Trapper and Bearpaw Lakes

Pitch tents on tent pads, where provided.

### Food Storage and Fires

- Bears are common. Proper food storage is required by federal law. Park Rangers regularly patrol these campsites.
- Permanent bear-resistant storage boxes are provided at each site and must be used to store food and any item with an odor. You may check out a bear food canister for excess items. Items may not be hung from trees or left in boats.
- Fires are only allowed in metal grates. When finished, please douse your fire with water until it is cold to the touch.

## Trail Combinations & Mileages

- Tram to Granite Canyon via Marion Lake**  
15.0 miles. Trailhead: Teton Village - 1 night. Fee charged for the tram.
- Cascade Canyon/Paintbrush Canyon loop (Note: This is an extremely busy trail July and August)** 19.0 miles. Trailhead: String Lake - 1 night.
- Granite Canyon/Open Canyon loop via Valley Trail** 20.2 miles. Trailhead: Granite Canyon - 1 night.
- Tram/Death Canyon loop via Valley Trail**  
21.9 miles. Trailhead: Teton Village - 1 to 2 nights. Fee charged for the tram.
- Cascade Canyon/Death Canyon via Static Peak Divide** 25.8 miles (23.4 miles with Jenny Lake ferry). Trailheads: South Jenny Lake and Death Canyon - 1 to 2 nights. Fee charged for the ferry.
- Granite Canyon/Death Canyon loop via Valley Trail** 24.2 miles. Trailhead: Granite Canyon - 2 nights.
- Tram to Cascade Canyon via Teton Crest Trail**  
28.6 miles. Trailheads Teton Village and String Lake. Fee charged for the tram.
- Death Canyon/Cascade Canyon via Teton Crest Trail** 30.1 miles. Trailheads: Death Canyon and String Lake - 2 to 3 nights.
- Death Canyon/Paintbrush Canyon via Teton Crest Trail** 37.1 miles. Trailheads: Death Canyon and String Lake - 3 to 4 nights.
- Granite Canyon/Paintbrush Canyon via Teton Crest Trail** 38.6 miles. Trailheads: Granite Canyon and String Lake - 4 nights.

## Consider Your Safety

*Travel in the backcountry of Grand Teton National Park has inherent risks. Rescue is not a certainty. Cell phone coverage is spotty and unpredictable; text messages may transmit in areas without cell coverage. Your safety is your responsibility and depends on sound judgment, adequate preparation and equipment, constant attention to surroundings and physical conditioning.*

### Lost, Injured or Overdue

Leave your itinerary with a friend or relative. If you do not return on time, they should notify the park. In the event of an emergency, stay calm. If lost, stay where you are, searchers will locate you more quickly. Find a nearby clearing or rocky outcrop for visibility. If someone is injured, provide treatment if possible. Try not to leave the person unattended. Send for help with information including the exact location, age and health of person, nature of the injury, equipment on scene and treatment given. Keep your group together, especially children. Uncontrolled falls on snow and ice and un-roped falls while rock scrambling may cause injury or death.

### Hypothermia

Hypothermia (lowering of body temperature) is a serious condition that may lead quickly to death. Hypothermia is often due to exposure from a storm or a swamped boat. Watch for signs of hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering, incoherent speech and exhaustion. Seek shelter, replace wet clothing and provide warm, nonalcoholic liquids. In serious cases, place the undressed victim in a sleeping bag with another undressed person. Always carry rain gear and extra clothing. Dress in layers and avoid wearing cotton.

### Lightning

Afternoon thunderstorms are common. Plan your trip accordingly; find a safe place before a storm hits. Avoid exposed summits and ridges, open areas and lone trees. Forested areas with trees of similar height are safer. Do not stand on tree roots. If boating, get off the water.

### Altitude

Elevations in the park vary from 6,320 to 13,770 feet above sea level. Altitude sickness may strike anyone regardless of age or physical condition. Symptoms include headache, nausea, sleeping difficulties, and tiredness. Plan your trip to allow a slow ascent. Mild altitude sickness may be treated with rest, fluids and aspirin. If conditions persist or worsen, descend to lower elevation.

### Hydration

Stay hydrated! High elevation and low humidity will drain your body of fluids. Drink water before you start your hike, carry plenty of water with you and drink fluids after your hike.