



Special Park Conditions

Activity: Guided Climbing Certification

A. Authorized Services

1. The commercial activity authorized by this permit is AMGA Guide Certification and Examination for technical climbing and mountaineering. All technical climbing and mountaineering activities must be conducted in a manner respectful of the park's resources while emphasizing visitor safety.
2. Trips are encouraged to be provided during mid-week to avoid peak use on weekends and holidays.

B. Specialized Conditions

1. Resource Protection/Sanitation

- a. The permittee is responsible for adhering to Leave No Trace practices at all times while in the park.
- b. The permittee shall be responsible for becoming knowledgeable of and complying with all backcountry regulations regarding sanitation.
- c. Guides/instructors are required to practice and promote "clean climbing" techniques, which include the use of removable equipment such as chocks and camming devices which do not deface the rock. The use of chalk shall be minimized. Gear such as slings shall be removed whenever practical. The use of neutral-colored slings and chalk is encouraged.
- d. New fixed anchors may be placed in the park when necessary to enable a safe rappel when no other means of descent is possible or to enable emergency retreat during self-rescue situations. The infrequent placement of new fixed anchors is allowed when ascending a route to connect terrain that is otherwise protected by removable anchors (e.g. one crack system or other natural feature to another), or when there are no features which will accommodate removable equipment but the occasional placement of a fixed anchor may provide a modicum of safety during an ascent (e.g. traditional face climbing). New bolt intensive climbing routes (e.g. sport climbs, bolt ladders) are not appropriate and should not be created. The NPS will not monitor fixed anchors to evaluate their condition or accept any responsibility for fixed anchors.
- e. If the climbing permittee determines the need for anchor placement or replacement, this must be accomplished without using power drills and in compliance with all wilderness regulations. At this time there is no permit or approval system in place, or proposed, regarding the placement of fixed anchors; however, one may be developed and implemented if the park determines it is necessary to protect natural and cultural resources.

2. Wilderness Permits for Overnight Use

- a. A wilderness use permit or bivouac permit is required for all climbing trips that has an overnight stay. All overnight stays must take place in an approved wilderness campsite or bivouac site; the approved site(s) will be listed on the permit by the Park Wilderness Office. Use of the wilderness shall be on a first-come, first-serve basis and may be limited or denied by the Superintendent if it becomes competitive with or excludes the public.
- b. A "trip" is defined as a party of up to 12 persons staying in the backcountry/wilderness for up to 7 consecutive nights.
- c. All trips will be required to abide by the requirements and conditions of the park's wilderness permit.
- d. Reservations for wilderness permits will be reserved through **www.recreation.gov**. All reservations for commercial trips will be reserved under a commercial account with a Rocky Mountain National Park profile.
 - i. Annual Establishment of Commercial Rec.gov Account

- a. The permittee is required to fill out the [Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness Permits Commercial Account Information Form](#).
 - b. Once submitted, the Permit holder, Commercial Services Office, and Wilderness Office will receive an automated email with proof of submission.
 - e. CUA wilderness site reservations can be made through www.recreation.gov after March 1st through the CUA commercial account.
 - f. **ADVANCE RESERVATIONS** may be made for designated wilderness campsites through the Wilderness Office prior to March 1st under the following specific conditions.
 - i. Shall have an approved CUA for Guided Backpacking.
 - ii. Reservations are for the current calendar year.
 - iii. Each trip reservation is required to have the company name, contact name for each trip, date, location, number of days, and trailhead(s).
 - iv. For pre-booked trips, each company is limited to 12-nights at the following groups sites: Boulder Brook Group, Finch Lake Group, Sandbeach Lake Group, Thunder Lake Group, and Gray Jay Group to spread the use to other group sites. Concessions staff will review the trip reservations prior to submitting to the Wilderness Office.
 - v. Reservation requests must be emailed in advance to the romo_fees_permits@nps.gov by February 20th each year. **Subject Line: Year-Company-Wilderness Permits** Ex: 2025-Sunshine Company-Wilderness Permits
 - vi. Use the form provided by the Commercial Services Office to submit trips.
 - vii. If the Commercial Services Office does not receive the reservation requests by February 20th, your reservation requests will not be booked.
 - viii. Trip itineraries will be forwarded to the Wilderness Office and each company's name will go into a random draw in the last week of February for the order that the reservations are booked.
 - ix. Wilderness Office will reach out to the designated point of contact to review and reserve your trips the weekdays prior to March 1st.
 - x. Wilderness Sites are subject to availability, administrative closures, and use limits.
 - g. Reservations for trips that will not be used must be canceled at a minimum of 7 days in advance of the first day of the trip to open reserved sites to other users. If reservations have not been cancelled within 7 days, it will constitute a No-Show.
 - h. Companies that have **more than 10 permit (trip) cancellations** in a single season may lose the option to pre-book the next season.
 - i. Reserved permits not picked up by 10 am the first day of the trip (from May through October) will be canceled in entirety and will be considered a No-Show unless the Wilderness Office has been contacted with additional instructions.
 - j. Companies that have **more than 2 No-Show** in a single season will not be able to pre-book in the next season.
 - k. Permit holder must take the reservation confirmation to the Wilderness Office to obtain the physical site permit. Verify the trip leader and guides on the Wilderness Permit.
 - l. Contact the Wilderness Office at (970) 586-1242 for all information related to wilderness camping in the park.
 - m. Trips shall be subject to the normal administrative charges related to wilderness permits.
 - n. Checkout time from campsites is noon.
3. **Food Service**
- a. Food service provided shall be in accordance with current U.S. Public Health Service Food Code.
4. **Approved Guide Client Ratios**
- a. Maximum Group Size 12
 - b. Standard Ratios for Groups and Courses
 - i. Single Pitch: 1:5
 - ii. Multi-Pitch Climbing 1:2
 - iii. Basic Alpine Days 1:3
 - iv. Advanced Alpine Days: 1:2

5. Search and Rescue of Other Parties

- a. Guides must always ensure the safety of their clients before participating in any search and rescue operation.
- b. Guides will not be paid by the Park for search and rescue operations initiated by themselves or others.

6. Equipment

- a. The permittee is responsible for the operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of all equipment used in the operation. Mountaineering equipment provided or rented to clients shall be of such quality and maintained in such condition as to be adequate and safe, in terms of strength and durability, for the use intended.
- b. Guides/instructors shall carry adequate equipment to perform emergency repairs to mountaineering equipment in the field. All equipment shall be subject to inspection by the Superintendent or his/her representative.
- c. The placement of fixed anchors using power drills is prohibited.

C. Trip Instructors and Guide Certification

1. Trip Leaders and Guides must:

- a. Be familiar with the park, know and obey park regulations and area closures, and assure compliance with regulations and area closures from participants.
 - b. Understand the hazards involved and prepare participants for conditions and situations which may be encountered.
 - c. Required to have one guide on the trip current in Wilderness First Responder (WFR) or higher emergency certification. Other guides shall have a minimum of current certification in standard first aid and CPR.
 - d. Guides shall carry first aid equipment adequate for emergency treatment of common mountaineering injuries in the field.
 - e. Assure that all members of the group are properly clothed and equipped for the trip.
 - f. All guides are required to have and carry a cell phone at minimum. Cell phone coverage is limited in the park. A Guide may need additional reliable emergency communication device which could include a GPS locator beacon, satellite messenger, or satellite phone.
2. A written list of instructors/guides, with description of basic qualifications, must be provided to the park prior to beginning operations. Copies of all certifications must be on file at the base of operations and may be requested by the Superintendent at any time.
 3. Guides shall be familiar with local climbing areas. They shall be responsible for their group's behavior. They shall know and communicate to their clients' applicable park regulations and policies relating to backcountry management. Guides shall provide clients with information regarding NPS mission, safety, Leave No Trace outdoor skills and ethics, climbing in designated Wilderness Areas, and local resource protection and regulations. Additional suggested topics include geology, natural and cultural history, and the climbing history of the Rocky Mountain region.
 4. Must employ a staff with the expertise, training, and experience to operate all services authorized under the CUA permit.

D. Conduct of Trip

1. All groups must honor the rights of others and always conduct themselves in a professional manner.
2. A Rocky Mountain National Park Ranger will be permitted to accompany a trip at least once per season to evaluate the program.
3. All trips are required to utilize and promote Leave No Trace hiking and camping practices to minimize impacts on the resource.
4. Guides shall educate the group on Leave No Trace principles and practices.
5. Guides are required to take the Online Awareness course on Leave No Trace. It is free. [Leave No Trace: Take Action to Protect the Outdoors - Overview \(lnt.org\)](#)
6. Minimum General Business Liability insurance is \$1,000,000 per person per accident.

E. General Provisions for All Permits

1. Guide Passes and Entrance Fees for Clients

- a. Guide passes are to be used solely by the Permittee and designated employees to conduct official business under a Commercial Use Authorization or Concessions Contract and are not for personal use. **Guides must always carry this pass while in the park.**
- b. Guide passes must be always kept with guides in the park, to be presented as requested to park staff to confirm appropriate use and entry to the park. Permittee is responsible for ensuring that its guides comply with this requirement. ID is required.
- c. Guides are required to present the guide card at the entrance stations along with their driver's license when entering the park to show that they are on official business. Guides are required to inform the entrance station staff of clients entering for the trip; for example, which vehicle, number of clients, etc.
- d. Clients of the Permittee are not admitted free entrance to the park. The clients' options are:
 - i. Buy an entrance pass – pay when they enter with the Permittee
 - ii. Have a current entrance receipt
 - iii. Have a current pass - Rocky Mountain National Park Annual Pass or America the Beautiful Pass (pass is valid & in the name of the client)
2. CUA Permit Holders and their clients are not authorized to use the fast pass lane for any commercial activities in the park. All CUA Permit Holders (i.e. guides) and clients must enter via a staffed entrance kiosk. Use of the fast pass lane by a CUA Permit Holder may result in revocation of their CUA permit.
3. Frontcountry camping is available on a first-come, first-serve basis at Longs Peak Campground and by advanced reservation at Moraine Park, Glacier Basin, Aspenglen, and Timber Creek Campgrounds. Normal camping fees and regulations, including length of stay, will apply to the Permittee and its participants.
4. Prior to initiating each trip, guides are encouraged to contact Park Headquarters (970) 586-1206 for information on current conditions.
5. Proof of adequate general liability and automobile insurance coverage must be provided to the park prior to operating under this permit.
 - a. Commercial General Comprehensive Liability coverage is required in the amount of \$500,000 per person per accident.
 - b. Commercial Vehicle Insurance coverage is required for all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles used by the Permittee who transport clients.
 - c. Minimum limits for Commercial Vehicle Insurance are \$1,500,000 for 15 or fewer passengers and \$5,000,000 for 16 or more passengers. Rocky Mountain National Park must be listed as additional insured.
6. All incidents involving overdue parties or accidents involving property damage or personal injury must be reported to Park Dispatch at (970) 586-1204 as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the incident and to the Commercial Services Office.
7. All advertisements/brochures which make reference to Rocky Mountain National Park must be approved by the Superintendent prior to publication, distribution, or broadcasting. All such publications must include a statement that the operator is authorized by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, to conduct services in Rocky Mountain National Park.
8. Prior to engaging any commercial filming or still photography using model(s) (posed or on camera talent), set(s), or prop(s) that are not part of the location's natural or cultural resources or administrative facilities consultation with the Commercial Services Office is required. This activity may be subject to a separate permit.
9. Violation of park regulations or the terms of this permit may result in the suspension of privileges granted by this permit and could lead to appropriate fine or citations, as well as non-renewal.