



Special Park Conditions

Activity: Guided Hiking – Backcountry

A. Authorized Services

1. The commercial activity authorized by this permit is guided interpretive hiking tours. Hiking is defined as a long, vigorous walk, usually on trails, in the countryside. No overnight backcountry camping is allowed under this permit.
2. The use of ropes, hardware, protection, snow anchors, crampons, and ice axes are not authorized, and activities that would require the use of such equipment are not authorized. If the difficulty of the terrain and/or conditions encountered warrant use of the following equipment: ropes, hardware, protection, snow anchors, crampons, and ice axes then that is outside the scope of the guided hiking permit.
3. **Established Trails:** Participants must remain on established trails and walkways and use only designated routes, especially in tundra areas to minimize impacts to the fragile tundra environment.
 - a. *** Established trails are trails that are maintained by the park and are designated and named on official maps, such as park maps, or the National Geographic Trails Illustrated Map.
4. **Off-Trail Travel:** *** see Additional Requirements for Off-Trail Travel below. These requirements must be met before traveling off established trails in the park.

B. Tour Leader and Guide Certifications

1. Trip 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. Be currently certified in standard first aid and CPR.
 - d. All guides must carry a first aid kit suitable for backcountry emergencies and appropriately sized for the group they are guiding.
 - e. 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.
 - f. Assure that all members of the group are properly clothed and equipped for the trip.
2. A written list of all 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. Must employ staff with the expertise, training, and experience to operate all services authorized under the CUA permit.
4. Guides shall educate the group on Leave No Trace principles and practices.
5. All 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 \(lnt.org\)](#)

C. Conduct of Trip

1. **Established Trails:** All groups must have a ratio of qualified leaders to participants sufficient to permit a safe and meaningful experience. Maximum group size is **20** with a guide to client ratio of **1:9**.
2. The tour leader is responsible for adhering to Leave No Trace practices at all times while in the park.
3. All groups must honor the rights of others and always conduct themselves in a professional manner.
4. A Rocky Mountain National Park Ranger will be permitted to accompany the tour at least once per season to evaluate the program.
5. The CUA holder or guide shall provide all clients with an orientation prior to the trip which emphasizes safe practices while recreating in the park. At a minimum, the orientation should include nature and demands of

the trips, safety and emergency procedures, weather conditions, park regulations, wildlife interactions, and Leave No Trace Practices.

D. Additional Requirements for Off-Trail

1. **Off-Trail Travel:** Participants may travel off established trails and walkways to access summits and remote lakes adhering to ethics of “Leave No Trace Principles” Most of these areas are identified as a Management Class 1 or 2 area and groups shall follow specific guidelines to access these areas. These requirements must be met before traveling off established trails in the park.
2. The use of ropes, hardware, protection, snow anchors, crampons, and ice axes are not authorized. Activities that would require the use of such equipment are not authorized.
3. All groups must have a ratio of qualified guides to participants sufficient to permit a safe and meaningful experience. Maximum group size is **12** with a guide to client ratio of **1:6**.
 - a. **One guide should have Wilderness First Responder or higher emergency certification on the trip.**
 - b. All other guides must have a minimum of first aid and CPR.
4. Any route marking and building of rock cairns are prohibited.
5. Keep noise level to minimum to allow for other visitors’ enjoyment.

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.