

# Rocky Mountain National Park



## High Altitude Adventures

Nearly one-third of Rocky Mountain National Park is alpine tundra, the rich and compact ecosystem that results from average temperatures far too low for trees or humans to survive. Forests stop and tundra begins where the average temperature of the warmest month is about 49 degrees Fahrenheit. In Colorado, this occurs at between 11,000 and 11,500 feet above sea level.

The roads through Rocky Mountain National Park were among the first to permit anyone but the most intrepid to experience this wild Rocky Mountain ecosystem. Today, there are countless opportunities in the park for you to discover the treasures tucked into the nooks and crannies of this breathtaking landscape.

**Drive**

Two roads in the park lead you into the "land above the trees." Trail Ridge Road is the highest continuous paved highway in America. Eleven miles of the road stretch out above treeline, topping out at 12,183 feet above sea level.

Old Fall River Road, the predecessor to Trail Ridge Road, is a nine-mile, steeply winding, one-way dirt road that intersects Trail Ridge at Fall River Pass, site of the Alpine Visitor Center.

Both roads offer stunning views and sweeping vistas of the Rocky Mountains. Be forewarned: a quick trip up to the tundra from low altitude will leave you breathless. Plan on taking it slow and easy and don't be surprised when you get winded by walking across a parking lot.

**An interesting fact to ponder:**

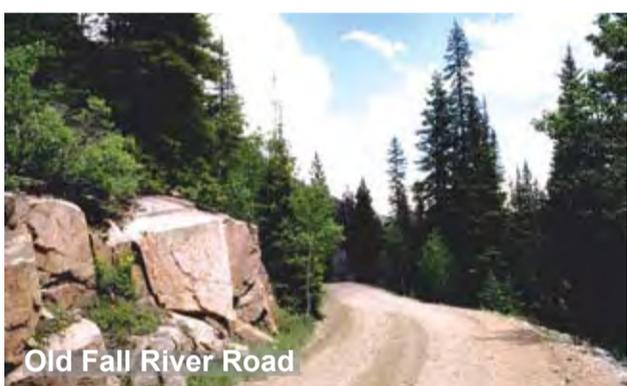
The temperature drops about 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit for every 1,000 feet you travel up or 600 miles you travel north. So, as you move from 7,500 feet in town to 11,796 feet at the Alpine Visitor Center, it is much like driving to the Arctic Circle in an hour!

**Walk**

Driving above treeline gives you a good feel for the vastness of the mountains. However, if you truly want to experience this alpine environment, you must walk through it. Designated trails begin at Rock Cut and the Alpine Visitor Center. With care, you may travel across this community of diminutive, hearty plants and animals in all but a few protected areas. Please stay



alpine avens



Old Fall River Road



walk carefully across tundra



yellow-bellied marmot

on designated walkways at Forest Canyon Overlook, Rock Cut, Gore Range Overlook, and the Alpine Visitor Center. Respect closures and the tiny plants struggling to reestablish themselves in these areas.

When you venture out across these open landscapes, notice the carpet of tiny plants filling the spaces between the rocks. Since the growing season on the tundra is only about 40 days, many of these plants can only grow fractions of an inch every year. Keep in mind that a single step into a seemingly sturdy group of flowers might destroy decades of growth. Stepping from rock to rock spares these plants the damage caused by the hiking boots of over a million hikers per year.

**Road Repair on Trail Ridge**

Sections of Trail Ridge Road will be repaired and resurfaced throughout the summer. Please check at entrances and visitor centers for current work locations and possible delays. More information on page 7.



**Tundra Treasures**

What you find on the tundra depends largely on how much effort you put forth. A quick drive will reward you with amazing landscapes, fields of alpine flowers and perhaps a yellow-bellied marmot or two. A walk on one of the tundra trails will reveal a huge variety of small but vibrant wildflowers and maybe a hamster-sized pika or perfectly camouflaged ptarmigan. Sharp eyes may spot the elusive big-rooted spring beauty or the blur of a long-tailed weasel darting among the rocks.

The tundra is a frigid, forbidding, windswept land most of the year. This summer, take the fleeting opportunity to discover the tiny treasures that thrive in this extreme climate. You can see things that most people will never see. You can see what lives in the land above the trees.



alpine forget-me-nots

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top photo : Mt. Meeker (Peter Allen, NPS)

# You Need to Know

## Visitor Centers



Park visitor centers are the places to find out what you need to know. All have knowledgeable staff, printed information on many topics, and great bookstores stocked with the best books for finding that perfect trail and learning what makes Rocky Mountain such an outstanding national park. Each visitor center has its own special features.

### Grand Lake Area Kawuneeche Visitor Center

Open daily 8-6.  
Features free orientation film, exhibits on what to see and do in the park, bookstore, backcountry permits.



### Holzwarth Historic Site

1920s dude ranch buildings are open daily 10-4. Educational trail guide and staff available.



### Estes Park Area Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

Open 8-8 M, Tu, W, 8-9 Th-Su. Features free orientation film, bookstore, large 3-D park map, backcountry permits in adjacent building.



©Katy Sykes

### Fall River Visitor Center

Open Daily 9-5.  
Features life-sized wildlife displays, a bookstore, and a discovery room where kids can touch objects and dress up as rangers, Native Americans, and pioneers.



### Alpine Visitor Center

Open daily 9-5 (weather permitting).  
Features extraordinary views of alpine tundra, tundra displays, bookstore, adjacent gift shop and snack bar. Call 586-1206 for road information.



### Moraine Park Museum

Open daily 9-5.  
Interactive exhibits on the past and present landscape, bookstore, nature trail with brochure, historic building.



### Sheep Lakes Information Station

Open daily 8:30-4.  
Good wildlife viewing area in Horseshoe Park.



©Jack Dinsmoor

## Stay Together!

Avoid travelling alone in the backcountry and always stay together as a group. Detailed information regarding your trip itinerary should be left with a responsible person so park authorities can be notified if you fail to return. Safety is your responsibility!

## Park Phone Numbers

 Call Park Information (970) 586-1206 with your questions. We are available to assist you from 8 to 4:30 daily.

 Dial 911 or (970) 586-1203 for emergencies.

 Hearing impaired persons may call the TTY at (970) 586-1319 from 8 to 5 daily.

## Lost and Found

Please turn found items in at any park visitor center. To ask about lost items, call the Backcountry Office at (970) 586-1242.

## Pets

Pets are not allowed on park trails or in the backcountry. They are allowed in campgrounds, picnic areas and along roadsides. Pets must be on a leash (6' or less) and attended at all times. Never leave pets unattended in your vehicle.

## Fishing

Obtain specific park regulations at visitor centers or park entrance stations. To fish in Rocky Mountain National Park, you must have a valid Colorado state fishing license.

## No Firearms or Hunting

Hunting and weapons are not allowed in Rocky Mountain National Park.

## Web Sites

[nps.gov/romo](http://nps.gov/romo)

The official Rocky Mountain National Park website—over 1600 pages of detailed information.

[rmna.org](http://rmna.org)

Rocky Mountain Nature Association—the best source for books, maps, and videos of the park.

## Keep Wildlife Wild

Never feed wildlife. A fine may be issued to violators. Animals can kick, bite or gore you. They can become dependent on human food and lose the ability to feed naturally. Wildlife also carry diseases which can be transmitted to humans, like rabies and plague. Photograph animals from the roadside.



## This Park Paper

*High Country Headlines* is produced by the staff of Rocky Mountain National Park in cooperation with—and with funding provided by—the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

Designed and edited by Peter Allen  
Printed on recycled paper



# High Country Survival

## High Elevation

Nearly half of visitors to Rocky Mountain experience some symptoms of altitude sickness, ranging from headache and dizziness to nausea and unconsciousness. Rocky Mountain has the highest average elevations of any national park; even the main road climbs higher than most U.S. mountains, to 12,183'! High altitude can also aggravate medical conditions such as heart and lung diseases. The only cure for altitude sickness is to **go down** in elevation.



## Lightning

People are killed by lightning every year in Colorado. Afternoon storms are frequent and can bring an unhappy end to a hike. Watch for approaching storms and be well below treeline or back to your car before the storm hits.



## Swift Water

Rushing park waters are spectacular during spring runoff, but also very dangerous. Enjoy them at a distance—stay back from stream banks.

## Dehydration

High altitude and the dry climate are both working to dry out your body right now. Carry and drink plenty of water as you hike or travel through the park. Avoid drinking untreated water from streams and lakes as it may be contaminated with giardia, which can make you quite sick.

## Mountain Lions and Bears

Mountain lions and black bears are powerful and potentially dangerous. Some general guidelines for traveling in backcountry areas of Rocky Mountain which may contain these animals:



- 1) **Travel in Groups** and make noise as you hike. Keep your group, especially children, close together.
- 2) **Do Not Approach** a mountain lion or bear.
- 3) **Stay Calm** when you see a mountain lion or bear.
- 4) **Stop**; back away slowly. Never turn your back and run.
- 5) **Stand Tall and Look Large**. Raise your arms. Protect small children by picking them up.
- 6) If attacked by a mountain lion or bear, **Fight Back!**

## Black Bear Country

Never approach a bear. Keep children beside you. There is more safety in numbers; it is best to travel in a close group. If a bear approaches you, stand up tall, and make loud noises: shout, clap hands, or clang pots and pans. If attacked, fight back!



©Phillipe Henry

In campgrounds and picnic areas, if there is a food storage locker provided, use it. Avoid storing food and coolers in your vehicle. If you must, store food in airtight containers in the trunk or out of sight. Close vehicle windows completely. Do not store food in tents or pop-up campers in campgrounds, or in vehicles at trailheads. Food, coolers and dirty cookware left unattended are subject to confiscation by Park Rangers; citations may be issued. Dispose of garbage in bear-resistant dumpsters and trash cans. Human-fed bears usually end up as chronic problems and need to be removed - "A fed bear is a dead bear."

In the backcountry, store food, scented items and garbage in commercially available bear-resistant portable canisters, or carefully hang food 10 feet up and 4 feet out from a tree. Pack out all garbage. Never try to retrieve anything from a bear.

# Camping

	Fee per night	Reservations?	Dump Stations	Elevation (feet)	Stay Limit (nights)	Public Phones	Summer firewood, ice, water
Aspenglen 54 campsites	\$20	no	no	8,230	7	yes	yes
Glacier Basin 150 campsites 	\$20	yes	yes	8,600	7	yes	yes
Glacier Basin Group Camping 15 sites No RVs	special fees	yes	n/a	8,600	7	yes	yes
Longs Peak 26 campsites Tents only	\$20	no	n/a	9,400	7	no	yes
Moraine Park 247 campsites 	\$20	yes	yes	8,150	7	yes	yes
Timber Creek 98 campsites	\$20	no	yes	8,900	7	yes	wood, water

## Campgrounds/Reservations

Two park campgrounds, Moraine Park and Glacier Basin, accept peak-season reservations (May 25 through mid-September). Call (877) 444-6777 to make national park camping reservations up to 6 months prior to your visit. Internet reservations can be made at [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov). Camping at the park's other campgrounds—Aspenglen, Longs Peak, and Timber Creek—is first come, first served.



## Backcountry Camping Permits

Permits are required for all backcountry overnight camping. Camping is allowed only in designated sites and areas. Summer permits require a \$20 administrative fee. Permits may be obtained at the Beaver Meadows Backcountry Office or Kawuneeche Visitor Center. For further information write to: Backcountry Office, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, Colorado 80517 or phone (970) 586-1242.

## Sprague Lake Accessible Backcountry Campsite

Reservations and information are available through the Backcountry Office at (970) 586-1242. This site accommodates 12 campers with a maximum of 5 wheelchair users at the camp. The administrative permit fee is \$20 from May 1 to October 31.



# Ranger Led Programs - Alpine, East

June 17 – August 18



All children must be accompanied by an adult

Wheelchair Accessible Programs

## Alpine

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>Tundra to Trees</b> 9 AM 4 hour hike starts 7/1	•				•			Hike an ancient Ute trail that leads from alpine heights down through old growth forest. Meet at Milner Pass parking area to carpool for this moderate 4-mile hike. Bring warm clothing, rain gear, water, and snacks.
<b>High Country Geology</b> 9 AM 3 hour hike starts 7/4				•				The park's spectacular scenery represents a chapter in a long history of geologic events. Join us on this hike over the tundra and experience the effects of these processes. Meet at the Alpine Visitor Center flagpole.
<b>Hike the Divide</b> 9 AM 4 hour hike starts 7/7							•	A strenuous 2-mile, 1000' vertical climb leads to spectacular tundra. Bring warm clothes, rain gear, water and snacks to Milner Pass.
<b>Tundra Nature Walk</b> 10 AM 1.5-2 hour walk	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Exhilarate your senses with sweeping alpine views and miniature wildflower gardens. Dress warmly and meet at the Alpine Visitor Center, ready to caravan to the location.
<b>All About Lightning</b> 2 PM 30 minute talk	•	•	•			•	•	Learn why lightning can be a hair-raising experience and find out how to minimize your risk of being struck by lightning. Meet at the Alpine Visitor Center.

## History

<b>Native Lifestyles</b> 9:30 AM 1.5 hour walk	•		•		•			Explore what drew prehistoric peoples, and later Ute and Arapaho, to the high country. Meet at the Upper Beaver Meadows Trailhead.
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## Plants

<b>Lily Lake Wildflower Walk</b> 10 AM 1 PM 1.5 hour walk	•				•			Take time to stop and smell the roses, and enjoy learning about the variety of flowers blooming this season. Meet at the Lily Lake parking lot for this easy walk.
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## Children's Programs

<b>Story Time</b> 10 AM 30-45 minute program			•		•	•		Stories are a great way to introduce nature to kids. Come hear stories of critters and high adventure. Meet at the Fall River Visitor Center.
<b>Kid's Adventure</b> 1:30 PM 1-1.5 hour program		•	•		•		•	Join us for a nature adventure! Kids 6-10 (and their parents) should meet at the Sprague Lake parking lot for this fun program.

## Wildlife

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>Birds of Upper Beaver Meadows</b> 7 AM 1.5-2 hour walk	•		•	•		•		Join a ranger to seek bluebirds, woodpeckers, wrens, and flycatchers in a rich mixture of aspen and pine woodlands. Bring binoculars and field guide. Meet at the end of the Upper Beaver Meadows Road.
<b>Birding for Beginners</b> 7:30 AM 1.5 hour walk		•			•		•	Is the extent of your birding skills being able to tell a robin from a chicken? Learn the basics of this popular outdoor activity. Meet at the West Alluvial Fan parking area.
<b>Ballad of the Bighorn Sheep</b> 10:30 AM ----- 2 PM ----- 30 minute talk	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Sheep Lakes is a popular viewing area for bighorn sheep. Meet at the Sheep Lakes kiosk, Horseshoe Park, to learn about this majestic symbol of Rocky.
<b>Skins and Skulls</b> 2 PM 20-30 minute talk			•	•				Want to pet an elk? Cuddle up to a bear? Are you crazy? That's not safe! Come to Beaver Meadows Visitor Center to <b>safely</b> feel skins and skulls while hearing about park wildlife.
<b>Beaver Basics</b> 10 AM ----- 3 PM ----- 1 hour talk	•	•	•		•		•	Beavers drastically change their environment, and they have wonderful adaptations to do so. To see their work first hand, meet at Sprague Lake parking lot.
<b>Lions and Bears, Oh My!</b> 2 PM 30 minute talk	•	•					•	Worried about meeting a bear or mountain lion in the park? Find out what to do and what these animals are up to. Meet at the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center.
<b>Little Critters of Rocky</b> 2:30 PM 30 minute talk	•	•	•					Squirrels, rabbits and bats—Oh my! Find out about the lives of Rocky's smaller animals and the critical roles they play. Meet at Moraine Park Museum.
<b>Coyote Tracks</b> 2:30 PM 20-30 minute talk	•	•	•				•	Coyotes are intriguing animals and play an important role in the circle of life. To learn more, meet at Fall River Visitor Center.

## Special Programs

<b>Art in Paradise</b> 2:30 PM 45-60 minutes ends 8/2					•			Glimpse this beautiful place through the eyes and creative works of an Artist-in-Residence – a painter, musician, writer, or photographer. Meet at the Moraine Park Museum.
<b>Free Concert &amp; Program</b> 7:15 PM 45 minutes 6/27, 7/11, 7/18, 8/15	note dates to left							Join Eco-tones for a musical presentation and lively discussion about healthy places and people. Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Nature Association.

# Ranger Led Programs - East

June 17 – August 18



Wheelchair Accessible Programs

All children must be accompanied by an adult

## General Interest

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>Dream Lake Hike</b> 9 AM 2-2.5 hours					•	•		Explore the breathtaking glacial landscape and lush subalpine forests near Dream Lake on this moderate 2 mile hike. Meet at the Bear Lake parking lot.
<b>Bear Lake Stroll</b> 9 AM ----- 3 PM ----- 1-1.5 hours		•	•		•	•		Enjoy an easy walk around a lovely subalpine lake and learn about the natural and human forces that have shaped this landscape. Meet at Bear Lake.
<b>Hikes Alive!</b> 10 AM 20 minutes			•			•		Want to go on some unique hikes? Learn how to do this using the shuttle bus system. Meet at Park & Ride for this informative talk.
<b>Moraine Park Nature Walk</b> 10 AM 1 hour	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Enjoy an easy 3/4 mile stroll through the Moraine Park landscape. Encounter the dynamic forces that created this valley and discover what lives here today. Meet at the Moraine Park Museum.
<b>Lily Lake Stroll</b> 1:30 PM 1.5 hour walk				•		•	•	Lily Lake lies in a unique natural area between two ecosystems. Take a walk with a ranger which ends in a mysterious, awesome location. Meet at Lily Lake parking lot.
<b>Mountains in Miniature</b> 2 PM 20-30 minutes					•		•	Don't have enough time for the entire park? Explore the park from meadows to lakes to mountains while around the big map at Beaver Meadows Visitor Center.
<b>Geology Rocks!</b> 2:30 PM 30 minutes				•		•	•	Love the scenic views in the park? Come take a closer look at what is rocking at Rocky and the forces behind the park. Meet at the Moraine Park Museum.

## Junior Rangers



Free junior ranger books are available for kids ages 6-12 at park visitor centers. A successfully completed book earns a badge! Los libros de guardaparque juveniles para niños de 6 a 12 años se pueden obtener sin costo en el centro de visitantes del parque. Si se completa el libro con éxito puede recibir una insignia!

## Astronomy

Join a Park Ranger and expert volunteer astronomers on Friday nights (June 15, 22, July 6, 20, August 3, 17) to observe the night sky in Rocky Mountain National Park. In many places, the night sky is not as dark as it once was due to light pollution. National parks in more remote areas help preserve this special resource.

Look for posters at visitor centers, campgrounds and entrance stations for times and locations.

## Evening Programs

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>Beaver Meadows Evening Program</b> 7:30 PM 45 minutes	•					•	•	Enjoy a wide variety of informative and entertaining programs. Meet at the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center.  Science Thursday: Bears, glaciers, butterflies: researchers are out learning more each day about this park. Join a different researcher each Thursday.
<b>Glacier Basin Evening Program</b> 7:30 PM	•				•			Enjoy a wide variety of informative and entertaining programs. Meet at the Glacier Basin Campground outdoor amphitheater, warmly dressed.
<b>Moraine Park Evening Program</b> 7:30 PM			•					Enjoy a wide variety of informative and entertaining programs. Meet at the Moraine Park Campground outdoor amphitheater, warmly dressed.
<b>Moraine Park Evening Program</b> 7:30 PM	•	•		•	•	•	•	Enjoy a wide variety of informative and entertaining programs. Meet at the Moraine Park Campground outdoor amphitheater, warmly dressed.

## Free Park Movie

See the stunning 23 minute park movie at the Beaver Meadows (en español) and Kawuneeche Visitor Centers during normal business hours. Spectacular aerial footage of the rugged high country of Rocky Mountain National Park, as well as wildlife and other park resources.

## At RMNA Bookstores, Your Purchase Makes A Difference

The best Rocky Mountain National Park books, maps and other interesting items are right here, at one of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association (RMNA) bookstores located around the park. And when you make a purchase from our non-profit organization, proceeds are returned to the park, supporting important educational, interpretive and research programs. Drop by today.

Visit the Rocky Mountain Nature Association bookstores at:  
**Beaver Meadows Visitor Center • Alpine Visitor Center  
 Moraine Park Museum • Fall River Visitor Center  
 Kawuneeche Visitor Center**

Rocky Mountain Nature Association • P.O. Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517 • (970) 586-0108 • rmna.org



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN FIELD SEMINARS**  
 IN  
 ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK  
**LEARN~EXPLORE~ADVENTURE**

**Family Fun in Nature**  
 June 6, 30, July 14, 21

**Wild Discoveries for Kids**  
 July 5, 12, 19, 26, Aug. 2, 9

**Identifying Wildflowers**  
 July 5

**Art Adventures for Kids**  
 July 6, 13, 20, 27

**Identifying Ecosystems**  
 July 12

**History of the Estes Valley**  
 July 13

**Exploring the Park: Map & Compass**  
 July 13

**History of Mining**  
 July 14

**Hummingbirds: A Day in the Field**  
 July 21

**Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep**  
 Aug. 11



Ask at park visitor centers for more information.

Or call: 970-586-3262

Sign up online: [rmna.org](http://rmna.org)



# Ranger Led Programs - West

June 17 – August 18



All children must be accompanied by an adult

## Walks and Hikes

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>High Country Birding</b> 7:30 AM 1-1.5 hours ends 7/28			•				•	Enjoy a 1 mile bird walk across meadow and woodland habitats. Bring a bird guide and binoculars. Meet at the Holzwarth Historic Site parking area.
<b>Hike through History</b> 9 AM 3 hours, 3 miles			•					Hike along the river to discover what led people to try mining, homesteading, and early dude ranching. Meet at Colorado River Trailhead.
<b>Cross-Country to Chickaree</b> 9 AM 3-4 hour hike starts 7/6						•		View this seldom-seen lake on a strenuous, half-day, off-trail hike. Bring snacks, water, hiking boots and raingear. Meet at Onahu Creek Trailhead.
<b>Mountain Wildflowers</b> 10 AM ----- 2:30 PM ----- 2 hour walk ends 7/28			•				•	Lovely montane flowers have unusual modes of adaptation. Meet at the Kawuneeche Visitor Center flagpole for directions to this week's flowers. Location varies.
<b>Coyote Valley River Walk</b> 2:30 PM 1 hour walk			•				•	Explore the valley ecology and history on this easy walk along the Colorado River. Meet at Coyote Valley Trailhead.
<b>Seeing Red!</b> 2:30 PM 1 hour walk			•				•	What's killing the pine trees? Walk through a lodgepole forest to discover the mighty impact of a tiny beetle. Meet at the Onahu Trailhead.
<b>Rocky Mountain Heritage Walk</b> 2:30 PM 2 hours, 1 mile walk	•						•	Learn about prehistoric Indian people, miners and valley settlers while revisiting the Old West at an historic guest ranch. Meet at the Holzwarth Historic Site parking area.
<b>Life at the Source</b> 2:30 PM 1.5 hours, 1 mile walk				•			•	Just downstream from the source of the Colorado River, habitats provide homes for hardy plants and animals. Meet at the Colorado River Trailhead.
<b>A Glimpse of Paradise</b> 2 PM 2.5 hour walk	•		•					This easy 3 mile hike passes Adams Falls and leads to spectacular views of mountains surrounding the meadows of the East Inlet. Meet at East Inlet Trailhead.

## Talks and Activities

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>Ranger's Flyfishing School</b> 8:30 AM 3 hour activity starts 7/2		•						Learn about the park's fish management program, stream ecology, and flycasting. Bring your flyfishing gear or borrow the ranger's. Meet at Timber Creek Amphitheater parking.
<b>Holzwarth Historic Site</b> 10 AM - 4 PM Drop-in tour	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Buildings are open 10 AM–4 PM daily. Discuss early settlement with staff. This is a great family activity!
<b>Porch Talk</b> 11 AM 30 minutes	•	•			•	•	•	Meet at Kawuneeche Visitor Center for a variety of short, informative and fun programs. For topics, ask at the front desk.
<b>Never Summer, Ever Summer</b> 10 AM 50 minutes starts 7/1	•							View the sun through a telescope and learn of potential effects of climate change on this park. Meet at Coyote Valley Picnic Area.
<b>Skins and Things</b> 3 PM 40 minute activity	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Examine the skins, skulls, antlers, teeth and bones of many park mammals. Meet at Kawuneeche Visitor Center.
<b>Exploring with a Camera</b> 10 AM 1-1.5 hour activity ends 7/30		•						Join a ranger for a photography walk. Focus on composition, light, and basic tips to improve your pictures. Meet at Timber Lake Trailhead.

## Evening Programs

<b>Beaver: Super Mammal!</b> 5:30 PM 2.5 hour hike		•						The beaver can, and does, dramatically change its landscape. Learn about this forester, engineer, architect, landscape planner. Meet at Colorado River Trailhead.
<b>Old Ranch Campfire Stories</b> 7 PM 2 hours, 1 mile walk							•	Roasting marshmallows (bring 'em), tall tales, and campfire songs bring back the old days. Dress warmly and meet the old wrangler at Holzwarth Historic Site parking area.
<b>Sunset Chat at Fleshut's</b> 7 PM 45 minutes							•	Enjoy an outdoor program at Fleshut's Cabin. Bring a lawn chair or blanket. Meet at Holzwarth Historic Site parking.
<b>Saturday Night in the Park</b> 7 PM 1 hour presentation							•	Enjoy an evening program in the Kawuneeche Visitor Center auditorium. For topics, inquire at the front desk.
<b>Walk Into Twilight</b> 8 PM through 7/31; then 7:30 PM 2 hour walk			•				•	Enjoy a leisurely stroll as darkness, night sounds and wildlife fill the valley. Bring warm clothes, good hiking shoes, and a flashlight. Meet at Onahu Creek Trailhead.
<b>Timber Creek Evening Program</b> 9 PM through 7/14; then 8:45 PM 1 hour presentation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	starts 6/29 Presentation nightly at Timber Creek. Check at the campground or Kawuneeche Visitor Center for topics.
<b>Celestial Wilderness</b> 9 PM thru July 8:45 PM in August 1-1.5 hour activity starts 7/5					•			Explore the universe and the astronomy of Rocky's night sky. Meet at Harbison Meadow parking area.

## Children's Programs

Program & Time	Days Offered							Description
	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
<b>A Walk Backwards</b> 9:45 AM 2 hour activity Registration required at Kawuneeche V.C.						•		Step back in time and experience life on a 1920s dude ranch—chores, games, period costumes. For children 6-12. Meet at the Holzwarth Historic Site parking lot.
<b>Come Bug a Ranger</b> 10 AM 1 hour activity				•				Learn fun facts about insects. Puppets, stories and activities for children 4-10 years old. Meet at the Holzwarth Historic Site parking lot.
<b>Web Walkers</b> 10 AM 1 hour activity			•		•			Explore a section of the Colorado River. Activities are designed for children 6-12 years old. Meet at the Coyote Valley Trailhead.

Su M Tu W Th F Sa

Su M Tu W Th F Sa

# Family-Friendly Trails and Tours

While many visitors enjoy a longer and more adventuresome hike, others prefer a different experience. The following list includes short walks and scenic drives in Rocky Mountain National Park. Many of these have an interpretive brochure, available at visitor center bookstores, and interpretive signs. Some are accessible by wheelchair. Pets are not permitted on any park trail.

## West Side

Coyote Valley Trail — level, gravel trail, interpretive signs, 1 mile round-trip, accessible, strollers permitted.

Lulu City Colorado River Trail — fairly level hiking trail, brochure (\$1.00), 7.4 miles round-trip, or take a shorter walk on this trail.

Holzwarth Historic Site — level gravel trail, interpretive signs, historic buildings, brochure (\$2.00) at trailhead, 1 mile round-trip, accessible, strollers permitted.

## East Side

Sprague Lake — level, hardened trail around the lake, 0.5 miles, accessible, interpretive signs, strollers permitted.

Moraine Park Museum Nature Trail — signs and brochure (\$2.00), 0.6 miles dirt trail.

Bear Lake Nature Trail — around the lake, 0.6 miles, brochure (\$2.00), accessible to those able to climb short, steep grades, strollers permitted.



Lily Lake in April

©Peter Allen

Lily Lake — level, gravel, 0.7 miles, accessible trail around the lake, strollers permitted, fishing pier.

Alluvial Fan — paved steep trail on both east and west sides, interpretive signs, approximately 0.2 miles from either side, strollers permitted.

Old Fall River Road — scenic, dirt road, 9 miles, one-way uphill motor nature drive, exits at Alpine Visitor Center, brochure (\$2.00). Road opens in early July.

Trail Ridge Road — The best access of any national park to treeless alpine tundra.



Picnicking at Hidden Valley

©Katy Sykes

## Your Fees Improve the Park

New restrooms, picnic areas, educational displays, bus shelters, refurbished campsites, rebuilt trails, and many other improvements have been made to this park through use of your entrance and camping fees. A far-sighted program authorized by the U.S. Congress allows National Parks to keep the majority of entrance fees (80%) collected at their sites, and to use these fees to address huge repair, rehabilitation, and renovation needs. Since the beginning of this program, over \$23 million dollars has been spent to make repairs, renovations and improvements throughout Rocky Mountain National Park. Examples include:

**Restrooms:** All 33 roadside vault toilets have been replaced with modern, well-vented, solar-assisted structures.

**Campgrounds:** 300 campsites in park campgrounds have new tables, grills, restrooms, graded tent platforms, graded parking, and graded walks. Much bare earth has been revegetated with native plants.

**Trails:** Many miles of degraded trail sections have been rebuilt in all parts of the park, to a standard that will last a lifetime.

**Picnic Areas:** Hidden Valley (pictured above) has new picnic tables, a covered shelter, restrooms, and an interpretive trail.

**Free Shuttle Buses:** As part of free summer shuttle buses, bus shelters, restrooms, parking have been built throughout the Bear Lake Road area,

**Displays and Films:** 81 new roadside panels provide information on the park's natural and cultural highlights, as well as on recreation and use. All 42 park trailheads have new information boards. A spectacular orientation movie can be enjoyed at Beaver Meadows and Kawuneeche Visitor Centers.

## Road Repair on the Nation's Highest Through-Road

Trail Ridge Road, the highest continuous paved road in the continental United States, is 75 years old this year. This awe-inspiring road needs work that is long overdue. Critical repairs began this spring and include resurfacing the road from Deer Ridge Junction to Rainbow Curve, and repairing six roadway slumps between Forest Canyon Overlook and the Colorado River Trailhead.

Through the summer, work will take place on a number of locations along Trail Ridge Road. Motorists can expect 20 to 30 minute delays. There may be multiple areas of construction occurring concurrently and in that case the combined delay time will not exceed 60 minutes.

From July 5 through the end of the season, **night closures** will occur from Forest Canyon Overlook to Alpine Visitor Center. Night closures will be from 10:00 p.m. through 6:00 a.m., beginning Sunday evenings and ending Friday mornings — no closures on Friday and Saturday nights.

All closures apply to cyclists as well. Cyclists should be prepared for rough road conditions.

Conditions permitting, Old Fall River Road should open in early July. Old Fall River Road will remain open at night with current one way status allowing travel from east to west only.

Please check at a park visitor center, entrance station, or by calling (970) 586-1206 for up-to-date information on road delays.



Tundra wildflowers abound along Trail Ridge Road in summer.

# Pine Beetles Kill Trees

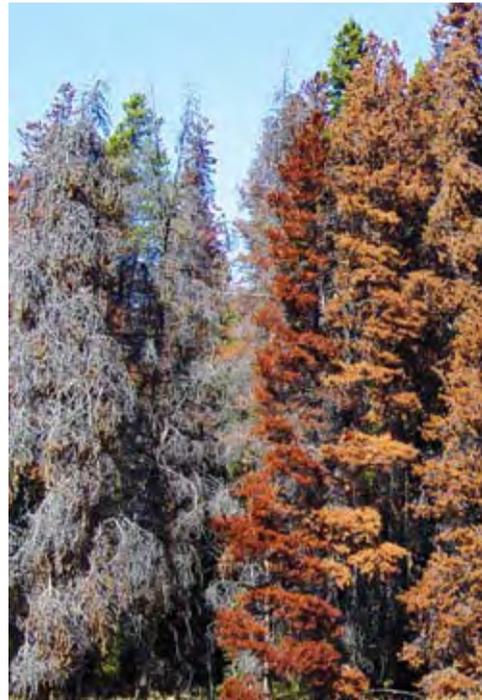
## Throughout the West

Throughout western conifer forests, trees are slowly being eaten alive. From Montana through New Mexico, pine forests are being impacted by wood-eating beetles. When you see western pine forests, especially lodgepole pine, with many reddish or gray trees, you may be seeing the effect of beetles and other stresses to pines. 17 species of native bark beetles are known in Rocky Mountain National Park and surrounding national forests; all have evolved with local forests. Burrowing through the outer bark of conifers, these bark beetles lay eggs which hatch into hungry beetle larvae which consume the living inner bark of trees.

Recent warm winters and prolonged low precipitation have combined to favor beetles and weaken many evergreen trees. Hard winters with cold low temperatures can kill beetle eggs and larvae wintering under a tree's outer bark.

Perhaps due to general climate warming, average winter temperatures in the Rocky Mountains have been higher than normal over the past ten years. These milder temperatures have aided an outbreak of beetles during a time when trees were weakened by drought.

Locally, bark beetles have been a significant factor in the death of most of the larger lodgepole pines in Grand County. Bark beetles are spreading throughout the pine forests of the upper Colorado River drainage in this national park.



*Gray in map shows extent of bark beetle infestations, from Canada to Mexico.*

Much has been done here in Rocky Mountain National Park, surrounding national forests, and on private lands to mitigate the effect of bark beetles. In high-use areas, individual trees are being treated with insecticide to control beetle infestation. Where numerous trees in busy front-country sites have already been killed by insects, areas, hazardous dead trees are being removed for visitor safety.

Bark beetle outbreaks are part of a much larger concern, effects of global warming throughout the Rockies. Scientists suspect that earlier snowmelt, prolonged drought, and standing beetle-killed trees are all related to human-influenced climate change. All may increase the risk of wildfire throughout this region. Just cutting down insect-infested trees will not change the causes of this outbreak.

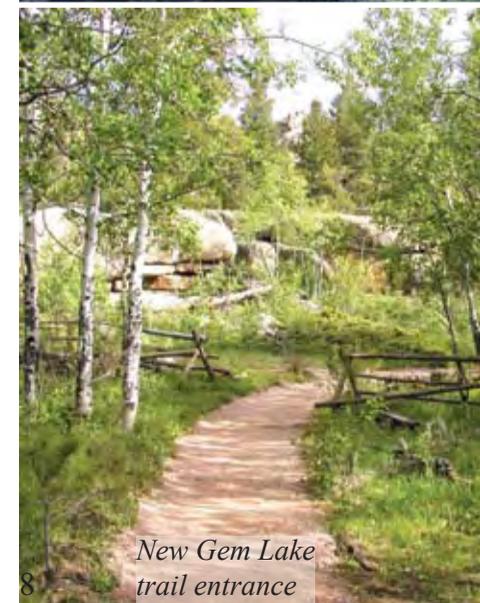
In a very real sense, the air we breathe and the lifestyles we live are related to the health of our forests.

### Recycling Available in Major Park Locations



Glass, plastic #1 and #2, and aluminum may be recycled in all park campgrounds, and more than fifteen other major park locations. Please inquire at any visitor center or campground.

## New Lumpy Ridge Trailhead



A new parking area off Devils Gulch Road accesses popular destinations north of Estes Park: the Gem Lake, Twin Owls, and Black Canyon areas. This new parking replaces two trailheads: Twin Owls at MacGregor Ranch and Gem Lake along Devils Gulch Road. Both former trailheads are permanently closed and will be restored. For more information, please ask at a park visitor center.

*New Gem Lake trail entrance*

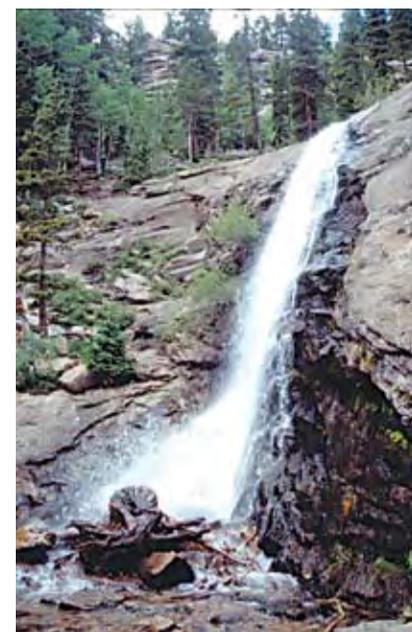
# Hiking Trails



©Chris Kennedy

With over 350 miles of trails, the park offers a vast array of choices. A small selection of trails is described below.

When properly equipped, hiking at Rocky Mountain National Park is often inspiring and invigorating. Trails are typically less crowded on the west side of the park (Grand Lake entrance) than on the eastern slope. Even for short day trips, be sure to pack gear for all types of weather (sun, rain, wind). Windproof/waterproof clothing is essential gear to wear or carry. Snow may remain on some trails; check at a visitor center for current conditions.



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Trail	Trailhead Location	Round Trip Distance	Elevation Gain	Cool Stuff
<b>West-side Trailheads</b>				
<b>Adams Falls</b>	<b>East Inlet</b> , located on the far east end of Grand Lake.	.6 miles	80 feet	A beautiful short hike near Grand Lake. The trail continues beyond the falls to lush meadows.
<b>Onahu Creek/Green Mountain Loop</b>	<b>Onahu Creek Trailhead</b> or <b>Green Mt. Trailhead</b> in Kawuneeche Valley	7.6 miles	1100 feet	Excellent loop trail through quiet forest and meadow, along flowing mountain creeks.
<b>Granite Falls</b>	<b>Green Mountain Trailhead</b> in Kawuneeche Valley	10.4 miles	1046 feet	Quiet forest and flowing mountain waters await. A longer loop (13.6 miles) is possible, coming out on the Onahu Creek Trail.
<b>Coyote Valley Trail</b>	<b>Coyote Valley</b> in Kawuneeche Valley	1 mile 	10 feet	Follows the bank of the Colorado River, with views of the Never Summer Mountains. Look for moose, songbirds, and wildflowers.
<b>Timber Lake</b>	<b>Timber Lake Trailhead</b> in Kawuneeche Valley	10.6 miles	2060 feet	Strenuous hike to a beautiful backcountry lake.
<b>Lulu City</b>	<b>Colorado River Trailhead</b> , north of Timber Creek Campground	7.4 miles	350 feet	A gentle trail to an historic site. A longer return loop is via the Grand Ditch to Red Mountain Trail.
<b>Little Yellowstone Canyon</b>	<b>Colorado River Trailhead</b> , north of Timber Creek Campground	9 miles	990 feet	An extension of the Lulu City hike, deeper into park wilderness
<b>Red Mountain</b>	<b>Colorado River Trailhead</b> , north of Timber Creek Campground	11 miles	2565 feet	A steep trail featuring some great views of mountains and valleys in the park.
<b>Lone Pine Lake</b>	<b>East Inlet</b> , on the far east end of Grand Lake.	11 miles	1494 feet	A longer hike near Grand Lake to a high lake. The trail continues beyond to other lakes.
<b>Cascade Falls</b>	<b>North Inlet Trail</b> off Tunnel Road in Grand Lake	6.8 miles	300 feet	A relatively level walk to Cascade Falls.
<b>Shadow Mountain Lookout</b>	East side of <b>Shadow Mountain Lake</b> , just south of Grand Lake	9.4 miles	1533 feet	Strenuous hike to an historic fire lookout with spectacular views.
<b>East Shore Trail</b>	East side of <b>Shadow Mountain Lake</b> , just south of Grand Lake	5.2 miles	100 feet	2.6 miles to Green Ridge CG; a side loop trail to Ranger Meadows reconnects with main trail, adding 1.4 miles.
<b>Trail Ridge Road Trailheads</b>				
<b>Poudre River Trail</b>	<b>Poudre River Trailhead</b> just northeast of Poudre Lake and Milner Pass on Trail Ridge Road	1-16 miles	up to 1000 feet	Gentle downstream walk through open meadows along the headwaters of a major river. Return walk is uphill.
<b>Ute Trail</b>	Across the road from <b>Alpine Visitor Center</b> , as well as other access points	1-8 miles	up to 1038 feet	Tremendous, open views above treeline; start and finish early before lightning and thunderstorms!
<b>Toll Memorial</b>	<b>Rock Cut</b> high on Trail Ridge Road	1 mile	260 feet	Beautiful displays of tundra flowers during mid-summer. Walk slowly, as this trail starts at 12,110' elevation!

**Trail Tips:**

Stay Together as a group. Your trip itinerary should be left with a responsible person so Park Rangers can be notified if you fail to return. Safety is your responsibility!

Be prepared for the rigors of high elevation - drink plenty of water, and travel at a pace where you can still talk and breathe easily. If you feel poorly, descend to a lower elevation. Pack it in, pack it out- including remains of all your food (pits, peels, etc.), as well as facial tissues. Let nature's sounds prevail; avoid loud voices and noises.

**No pets** are allowed on park trails.



**Leave No Trace**

In hiking, camping, and all your park activities, do your part to preserve this national treasure by following the seven easy Leave No Trace principles:

- Plan ahead and prepare**
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces**
- Dispose of waste properly**
- Leave what you find**

- Minimize campfire impacts**
- Respect Wildlife**
- Be considerate of other visitors**



©Chris Kennedy

<b>Trail</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Round Trip Distance</b>	<b>Elevation Gain</b>	<b>Cool Stuff</b>
<b><u>East-side Trailheads</u></b>				
<b>Deer Mountain</b>	<b>Aspenglen Campground</b>	9 miles	1700 feet	Great views of beautiful peaks and deep valleys as you hike to the top of a peak.
<b>Deer Mountain #2</b>	<b>Deer Ridge Junction</b>	6 miles	1083 feet	A busier trailhead; also offers great views of beautiful peaks and deep valleys.
<b>Lawn Lake</b>	<b>Lawn Lake Trailhead</b>	12.4 miles	2249 feet	A challenging hike to a beautiful lake; site of a failed dam, and a restored area.
<b>Ypsilon Lake</b>	<b>Lawn Lake Trailhead</b>	9 miles	2180 feet	A steep hike to a beautiful lake.
<b>Cub Lake</b>	<b>Cub Lake</b> on Cub Lake Road near Moraine Park Campground.	4.6 miles	540 feet	Meadows, aspen groves, ponds and conifer forests highlight this walk.
<b>The Pool</b>	<b>Fern Lake Trailhead</b>	3.4 miles	245 feet	An easy, shaded hike along a stream. Continues up to Fern and Odessa Lakes.
<b>Nymph Lake</b>	<b>Bear Lake Trailhead</b>	1 mile	225 feet	Beautiful views abound on an easy hike to a small lake.
<b>Dream Lake</b>	<b>Bear Lake Trailhead</b>	2.2 miles	425 feet	Excellent short hike to a very scenic backcountry lake.
<b>Alberta Falls</b>	<b>Glacier Gorge Trailhead</b>	1.6 miles	210 feet	Easy hike to a waterfall.
<b>Mills Lake</b>	<b>Glacier Gorge Trailhead</b>	5.6 miles	750 feet	Classic day hike to a lake rimmed by mountains.
<b>The Loch</b>	<b>Glacier Gorge Trailhead</b>	6.8 miles	990 feet	A beautiful lake surrounded by tall peaks.
<b>Lily Lake</b>	<b>Lily Lake</b> on Highway 7 south of Estes Park	.8 miles 	20 feet	Wildflowers, waterfowl, and greenback trout may be seen on a level walk around the lake.
<b>Estes Cone</b>	<b>Lily Lake Trailhead</b>	7.4 miles	2369 feet	Great views are a reward of this strenuous hike to the top of a peak.
<b>Twin Sisters</b>	<b>Lily Lake Trailhead</b>	7.4 miles	2338 feet	A wonderful hike to a mountain top, for those seeking a vertical challenge.
<b>Sandbeach Lake</b>	<b>Wild Basin</b> Ranger Station off Highway 7, south of Estes Park.	8.4 miles	1971 feet	A good early-summer hike, as the first part is south-facing.
<b>Chasm Lake</b>	<b>Longs Peak Trailhead</b>	8.4 miles	2390 feet	A steep hike to a spectacular lake beneath the diamond of Longs Peak.
<b>Longs Peak</b>	<b>Longs Peak Trailhead</b>	16 miles	4855 feet	A difficult climb to the top of the park's tallest mountain. Best in mid-to-late summer. Start by 3 AM!
<b>Eugenia Mine</b>	<b>Longs Peak Trailhead</b>	2.8 miles	508 feet	An uphill hike to an abandoned mine site.

# Rocky Mountain National Park

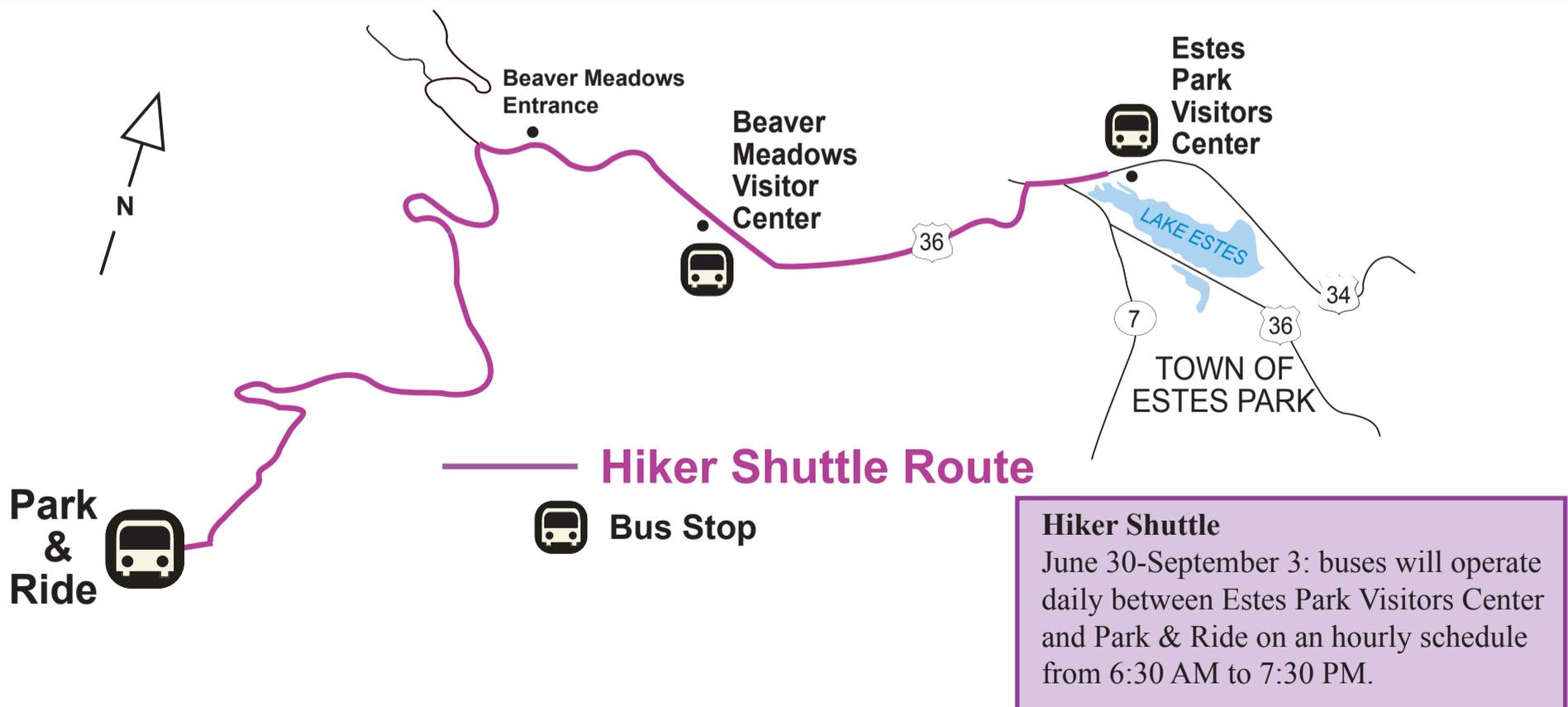
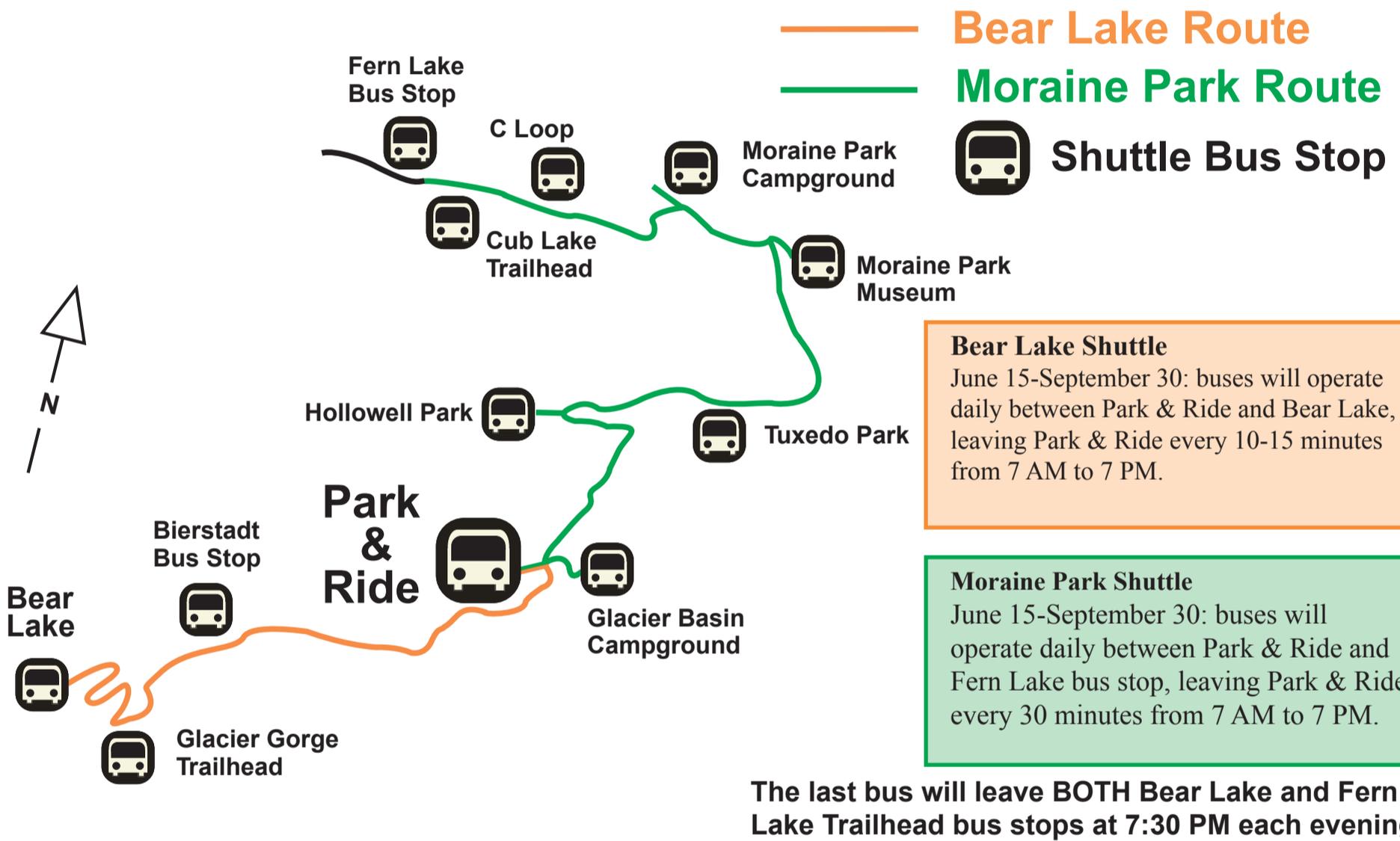
## Free Shuttle Bus



The popular hiking trails along Bear Lake Road are served by free shuttle bus service through the summer. Park your car at Park & Ride and hop onto a free bus to the trailhead of your choice. From June 15 through September 30, shuttle buses will operate every day.

Buses operate on the Bear Lake loop (Park & Ride to Bear Lake) every 10-15 minutes. Buses will run on the Moraine Park Loop (Park & Ride to Fern Lake Trailhead) every 30 minutes. The first bus departs from Park & Ride at 7 AM and the last bus leaves at 7 PM. The last bus of the day leaves Bear Lake and Fern Lake Trailhead at 7:30 PM.

From June 30 through September 3, a shuttle will travel from the Estes Park Visitors Center to Park & Ride, with one stop at the park's Beaver Meadows Visitor Center. This bus runs on an hourly schedule, leaving Estes Park from 6:30 AM until 7:30 PM. A park pass is required for this bus, which may be purchased at automated machines at Estes Park and Beaver Meadows Visitor Centers. The last bus leaves Park & Ride bound for Estes Park at 8 PM.



Estes Park Shuttles  
Ask at the Estes Park Visitors Center about two additional shuttle routes that operate in Estes Park.