



The official newspaper of  
Rocky Mountain National Park  
Winter - 2012/2013  
October 21 - March 23

Photo courtesy Ann Schonlau

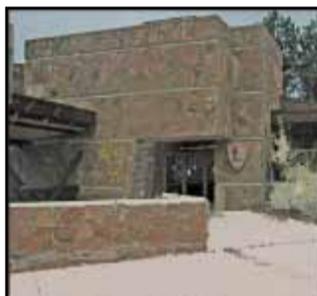
## Visitor Centers

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 all the best books for finding that perfect trail and learning what makes Rocky Mountain such an awesome national park. Each visitor center has its own special features.

### East of the Continental Divide – Estes Park Area

#### Beaver Meadows Visitor Center Highway 36

Open daily 8-4:30 (closed November 22 and December 25). Park information, free park movie and bookstore available. Backcountry camping permits are available by following the footpath just east of the visitor center to the Backcountry Office.



#### Fall River Visitor Center Highway 34

Open Saturdays & Sundays from 9-4 through December 23 (including Friday, November 23). Open daily December 26 - January 1. Features life-sized wildlife displays, a book store and discovery room where kids can touch objects and dress up as rangers, American Indians and pioneers.

### West of the Continental Divide – Grand Lake Area

#### Kawuneeche Visitor Center

Open daily 8-4:30 (closed November 22 and December 25). Park information and maps, free movie and exhibits on how to plan your visit, bookstore, backcountry camping permits.



#### 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.



#### Weather and Road Conditions

Winter driving conditions can change rapidly. For Rocky Mountain National Park daily road and driving conditions, stop at a visitor center or call (970) 586-1206. Snow tires may be recommended during periods of heavy snow. For the most up-to-date status of Trail Ridge Road, 24 hours a day, call (970) 586-1222.

During winter, lower elevation park roads remain open. The high central portion of Trail Ridge Road is closed between Many Parks Curve and the Colorado River Trailhead. The treeless, open central section of Trail Ridge Road experiences strong winds, heavy snow, and blizzard conditions, making it unsafe to maintain through the winter. Closures can be lowered to other points if conditions warrant.

#### Old Fall River Road

Old Fall River Road is closed to motorized travel during the winter. The road is open to hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

#### Pets

Pets are allowed in the park, but only in picnic areas, parking lots, campgrounds and along roadsides, never on trails or meadow areas. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet when outside vehicles.

For the safety of your pet and the benefit of park wildlife and other visitors, pets should not be left unattended. You may not leave your pet unattended in vehicles if it creates a danger to the animal or if it becomes a public nuisance. Pets may not be left tied to vehicles, trees or other objects.

*A Pet Brochure, available at visitor centers and on the park website, lists regulations and trails outside of Rocky Mountain National Park where pets are permitted.*

#### Fishing

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

#### You Are Responsible

You are responsible for knowing and obeying park rules. Check at visitor centers, at entrance stations, on

#### Bear Lake Road Construction

Bear Lake Road is open during the winter, weather permitting. The road is plowed but may be closed for clearing after significant snowfall. No plowing occurs between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

A major road reconstruction project is taking place on Bear Lake Road during 2012 and 2013. The construction has been taking place on Bear Lake Road from the junction of Trail Ridge Road/Highway 36 to the Park & Ride – Glacier Basin Campground intersection, covering 5.1 miles. The work is similar in scope and impacts as the first phase of reconstruction on Bear Lake Road which was completed in 2004, and took place on the upper 4.3 mile section of road. This major project involves construction of significant retaining walls to improve safety and drainage. In addition, a 0.9 mile section is being rerouted away from Glacier Creek, in order to prevent impacts to wetlands and riparian habitat and reduce costs. This summer, repairs were made on the Big Thompson Bridge to improve safety. Structural deficiencies will be corrected in the roadway and inadequate parking and pullout design will be improved. This project will widen the road and improve the road surface to better accommodate park shuttle buses. Safety associated with winter snow removal will be enhanced by the wider road.

#### Will I be able to access Bear Lake?

Weather permitting, road construction will continue through the winter. Visitors may encounter up to two, thirty-minute delays in the work zone. There are no construction delays between Park & Ride and Bear Lake. Evening closures may be in place but will not impact access to Moraine Park Campground. For up-to-date information on road work and evening closures please check the park's website at [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo) or call the park's Information Office at (970) 586-1206.

trailhead bulletin boards, and on the park website [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo) to find out more.

### Park Phone Numbers



**Bear Lake Road Reconstruction and Trail Ridge Road status: (970) 586-1222**

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



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



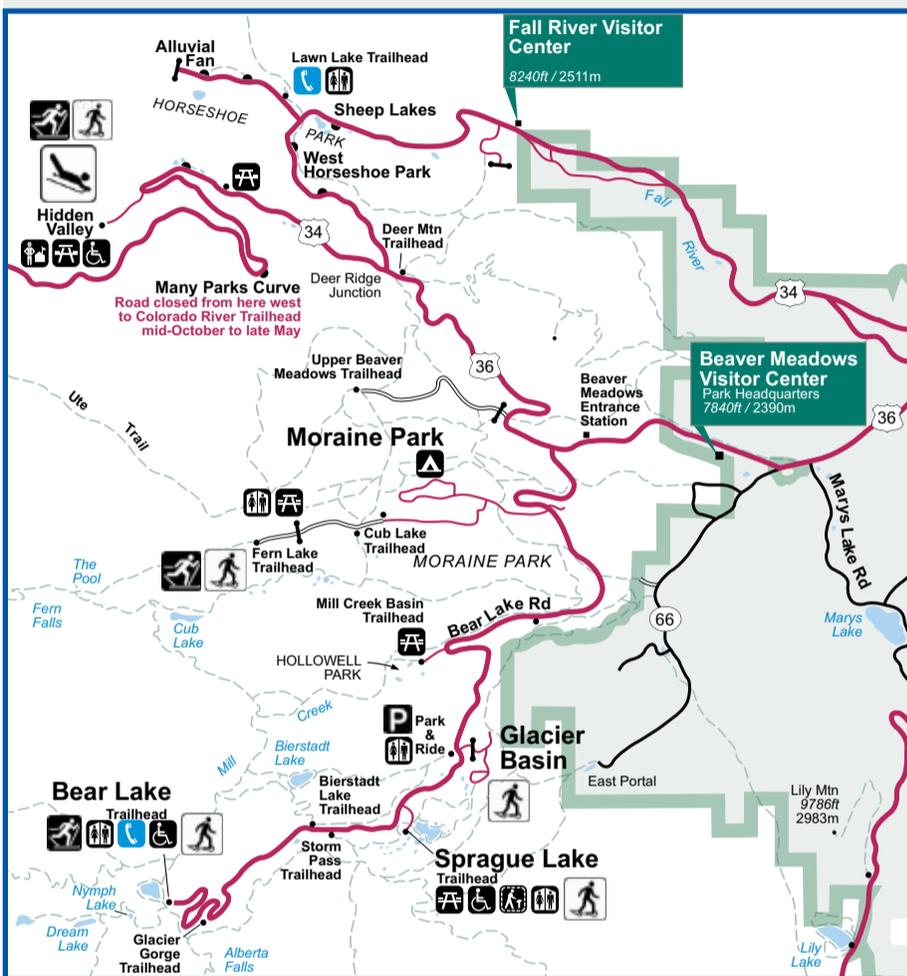
**Dial 911 to report emergencies**

# Winter Fun in Rocky

## East of the Divide – Estes Park Area

### Sledding and Snowplay

There is only one place in Rocky Mountain National Park open to sledding and downhill sliding on snow: Hidden Valley. Snow conditions are sometimes poor to marginal. Check at a visitor center or call (970) 586-1206 for current information. Be aware of cold weather, chilling wind, and the effects of hypothermia. At Hidden Valley the fenced snowplay hill is for the use of sleds, tubes, and saucers. Skiers, snow boarders, and snowshoers must exercise caution when passing through the sledding/snowplay area. Slow down and yield the right-of-way when descending. On weekends and holidays, park staff, often volunteers, are on duty. For your safety and enjoyment, please follow their guidance. Modern restrooms are available.



Winter activities on the east side of Rocky Mountain National Park

## West of the Divide – Grand Lake Area

What makes a perfect Rocky Mountain winter experience? Gliding on skis through a silent forest? Moose lounging in pristine meadows blanketed white? A family on snowshoes enjoying a trek to a frozen waterfall? These dreams and more can be enjoyed on the west side of Rocky Mountain National Park.

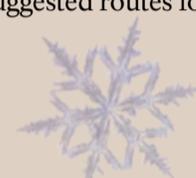
### Skiing and Snowshoeing

Heavy snowfall on the west side of the park results in outstanding cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Visitors strapping on skis or snowshoes for the first time may want to explore the Sun Valley Trail, a loop that meanders through woods and open meadows along the Colorado River and offers breathtaking views of the Never Summer Range.



Another short jaunt leads to ice-shrouded Adams Falls. This 0.6 mile round trip includes a short hill that can sometimes be icy. Beyond the falls, more than a mile of level trail offers spectacular mountain vistas. Experienced skiers and snowshoers can continue up into the mountains on this or other trails.

Many routes are appropriate for both skis and snowshoes, with snowshoers being careful to keep to the side of ski tracks. Stop by the Kawuneeche Visitor Center for information on a variety of suggested routes for all skill levels.



### Ranger-Guided Activities

Learn more about the winter wilderness while you explore. Rangers on the west side of the park offer guided ski and snowshoe tours on winter weekends. See page four for details or call (970) 627-3471. Reservations are required.



## Free Park Movie



See the stunning 23-minute park movie at the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., and at the Kawuneeche Visitor Center during normal business hours. Available in Español (translation headsets available upon request) and English at Beaver Meadows. English only at Kawuneeche. Features spectacular aerial footage of the rugged high country of Rocky Mountain National Park, as well as wildlife and park history. Captioned version available at Kawuneeche Visitor Center. Captioned and Audio Description versions available at Beaver Meadows Visitor Center.

### Firearms

A federal law allows people who can legally possess firearms under federal, Colorado, and local laws, to possess firearms in Rocky Mountain National Park. It is the visitor's responsibility to understand and comply with all applicable state and federal firearms laws.

- Hunting, recreational shooting, and target practice are not allowed in Rocky Mountain National Park.
- Federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in this park; those buildings are posted with signs at public entrances.
- If you have questions, please contact the park Information Office at (970) 586-1206.

### Sightseeing

Experience the charm of winter from the comfort of a vehicle. Ten miles of road through the Kawuneeche Valley are plowed for travel. Take the time to enjoy spectacular views of the snow-clad Never Summer Range. Watch for wildlife along the banks of the Colorado River.



NPS Photo by John Marino

# Winter Survival Tips



NPS Photo by John Marino

## Falling Trees

Falling trees are an ever-present hazard. When traveling or camping in the forest, trees can fall without warning. Be particularly watchful when it's windy, or following a snowstorm when branches are heavy with snow. Avoid parking where trees could fall.

## High Elevation

A large number of the visitors to this park each year experience symptoms of altitude sickness. Symptoms range from headache and dizziness to nausea and eventually unconsciousness. Rocky Mountain has the highest average elevation of any national park -- even the main road climbs to 12,183 feet! The road is higher than most U.S. mountains. High altitude can also aggravate existing medical conditions such as heart and lung diseases. Take your time and be sure to drink plenty of water. The only cure for altitude sickness is to **go down** to a lower elevation.

## Mountain Lions

Mountain lions are powerful and potentially dangerous. Some general guidelines for traveling in backcountry areas of Rocky Mountain where wildlife may be encountered:

- 1) **Travel in Groups** and make noise as you hike. Keep your group, especially children, close together.
- 2) **Do Not Approach** a mountain lion.
- 3) **Stay Calm** when you see a mountain lion.
- 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 approached, **make loud noises**, shout, clap hands, clang pots and pans.
- 7) If attacked by a mountain lion. **Fight Back!**

## Can I take antlers?

The simple answer is no. Dropped antlers provide valuable minerals for other park animals. It is illegal to collect or possess antlers, animal parts or natural features (rocks, pinecones, etc.) from Rocky Mountain National Park.



## Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a serious and sometimes fatal condition brought on by exposure to wet and cold. The core body temperature drops to a level that impairs normal muscle and brain activities. Symptoms include drowsiness, loss of judgment or coordination, slurred speech, and uncontrolled shivering. If these symptoms occur, warm the chilled person with dry clothing and warm, nonalcoholic liquids. Get back to your car and seek medical attention. Carry a windproof/snowproof outer shell and extra layers of clothing. Drink plenty of water; high elevation, wind, and cold can dry us out and chill us.

Most importantly, stay dry!

## Park Entrance Fees

**Automobile Entrance Fee** - Single-family vehicle entrance fee is valid for seven consecutive days, including date of purchase. \$20

**Rocky Mountain National Park Annual Pass** - Provides unlimited entry to this park for one year from the date of purchase. \$40

**Rocky Mountain National Park/ Arapaho National Recreation Area Annual Pass** - Provides unlimited entry to both areas for one year from the date of purchase. \$50

**America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass** - Available to everyone which provides access to, and use of, federal recreation sites that charge an entrance or standard amenity fee for one year from date of purchase. \$80

**America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Senior Pass** - A lifetime pass for U.S. citizens or permanent residents age 62 or older. \$10

**America the Beautiful Military Pass** - Free unlimited entry to federal recreation sites (including national parks) for active duty military personnel and dependents with required proper identification (CAC Card or DD Form 1173) for one year.

**America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Access Pass** - A free lifetime pass for U.S. citizens or permanent residents with a permanent disability.

Fees may be paid by check, cash, or credit card.

## Avalanches

Colorado has more known avalanches than any other state. Avoid skiing or snowshoeing in steep gullies where avalanches could occur. Open slopes of 30 to 45 degrees can be loaded with dangerous masses of snow, easily triggered by backcountry travelers. Wear an electronic transceiver when traversing avalanche terrain. If you are caught in an avalanche, make swimming motions and try to stay on top of the snow.

For current avalanche conditions, check at a visitor center, call (970) 586-1206, or see the Colorado Avalanche Information Center website at [www.avalanche.state.co.us](http://www.avalanche.state.co.us)



### Leave No Trace

With approximately 3 million visitors every year, the wild lands of Rocky Mountain National Park are heavily used. While hiking, camping, and all your park activities, do your part to preserve this national treasure by following the seven easy Leave No Trace Ethics:

- 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

For more information visit <http://www.lnt.org/>

### Please Use Your Own Waterbottle

Help us limit the use of plastic water bottles! There is limited potable drinking water in the park. Please remember to bring your own reusable water containers and refill them at park visitor centers.



## Stay Together!

Avoid traveling 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!

## Backcountry Travel

Be prepared for all types of weather, no matter what activity you are enjoying in the national park. Unforeseen weather conditions can change a hike, ski, or snowshoe trip into an unpleasant experience.

Severe storms can impose life threatening hazards only one or two miles from your car. Carry a stormproof outer shell and extra clothing. Be equipped with detailed topographic maps and a compass. Obtain a required backcountry permit for any overnight trip.

Don't depend upon a cell phone for emergency help; many locations in this rugged park are not serviced.

Permits are required for all overnight backcountry camping. Camping is allowed only in designated sites and areas. 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.

The administrative permit fee of \$20 is required for backcountry permits between May 1 and October 31; there is no charge in winter.

## International Sister Parks

Rocky Mountain National Park and the Tatra National Parks (Slovakia and Poland) have formally renewed their sister park relationship. With similar rugged, beautiful mountain terrain and ecosystems, the three parks are exchanging information and expertise to better manage these great preserves for the benefit of all who may visit them.



# Free Ranger Led Programs - East Side, Estes Park

All children must be accompanied by an adult

• Programs may be cancelled in the event of high winds •

**Length Location SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT**

**Skins and Skulls** - Want to pet an elk or cuddle up to a bear? Come to Beaver Meadows Visitor Center to *safely* feel skins and skulls while learning about park wildlife.



20-30 minute talk

Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

2 p.m. 2 p.m. 2 p.m.

**Animals in Winter** - Discover the amazing adaptations that allow animals to survive the long winter in Rocky Mountain National Park.



20-30 minute talk

Beaver Meadows Visitor Center

2 p.m. 2 p.m.

2 p.m. 2 p.m.

**Snowshoe Ecology Walk** - Take a beginner level snowshoe tour with a ranger and explore the natural world of a subalpine forest. No previous experience needed. January 5 – March 23

2 hours

by reservation

12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m.

## Making Reservations – Snowshoe Walks

Reservations are necessary and may be made no more than seven days in advance.

Call (970) 586-1223 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily.

There is a limit of six people per reservation for this two hour program. For safety reasons, children under eight years old are not allowed on this activity. Sleds, skis, hikers, and children in backpacks are not permitted. You must provide your own snowshoes. They can be rented at Estes Park sporting goods stores.

## Groups

Part of an organized group? Please call (970) 586-3777. Reservations can be made in advance for groups.



**Full Moon Walk** - 1 to 1.5 hour walk. November 28, December 28, January 26, February 25. Explore the park by the light of the full moon. Times and locations will vary each month.

Reservations are necessary and may be made no more than seven days in advance.

Call (970) 586-1223 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily. There is a limit of six people per reservation for this program. Outdoor gear appropriate for the conditions will be required.

## Holiday Programming



Join us over the holiday season for a calendar full of fun family activities. December 26 - January 1, the park will be offering special

programs to celebrate the winter season. Please stop by a visitor center or call (970) 586-1206 for specific topics and times.



# Free Ranger Led Programs - West Side, Grand Lake

All children must be accompanied by an adult

• Programs may be cancelled in the event of high winds •

**Length Location SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT**

**Ski the Wilderness in Winter** – Join a ranger for a mostly-level cross country ski tour. Bring your own skis and poles with large baskets. Ages eight through adult only. **Reservations required.**

1.5 hours

Kawuneeche Visitor Center

9 a.m.  
12/29 -  
1/26

**Beginner Snowshoe** – Join a mostly-level snowshoe hike with a ranger. Bring your own snowshoes and ski poles with large baskets. Ages eight through adult only. **Reservations required.**

2 hours

Kawuneeche Visitor Center

9 a.m.  
2/2 -  
3/16  
**1 p.m.**  
12/8 -  
3/16

**Intermediate Snowshoe** – A more rigorous tour with elevation gains of up to 500 ft. Requires the ability to maintain a good pace over uneven terrain at high altitude. Bring your own snowshoes and ski poles with large baskets. Ages eight through adult only. **Reservations required.**

2 hours

Kawuneeche Visitor Center

1 p.m.  
12/9 -  
3/10

Reservations are required for all west-side winter tours, and may be made no more than seven days in advance.

Park entrance pass required for all programs. Call (970) 627-3471 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to make reservations.

## Junior Rangers



Los libros de guardaparque juveniles son para niños que tiene 12 años o menos. se pueden obtener sin costo en el centro de visitantes del parque. Si se completa el libro con éxito puede recibir una insignia!

Free Junior Ranger books are available at park visitor centers for children ages 12 and under. A successfully completed book earns a badge! You are an important part of this park. Stay in touch. Contact us anytime at: [romo\\_junior\\_ranger@nps.gov](mailto:romo_junior_ranger@nps.gov)

# Camping Winter 2012/13

PARK CAMPGROUND	Elev (feet)	# sites	Reservable	Max RV/Trailer Length	Water	Notes
<b>Longs Peak</b> Closed from November 1 until Memorial Day	9405	26	Always first-come, first-served	Tents only	No	Located off of Highway 7 south of Estes Park. Vault toilets winter.
<b>Moraine Park</b> Open year-round. First-come, first-served in winter. Summer reservations late May - early October	8160	245 Summer 77 Winter	Summer Only	Limited # of RV/trailer sites up to 40'	Yes	Vault toilets during the winter on B & E loops.
<b>Timber Creek</b> Open year-round	8900	98 Summer 19 Winter	Always first-come, first-served	30'	No	The only west side campground.

Overnight stays in Rocky Mountain National Park must be in a campground (or a backcountry site). You may not stay overnight in your car or RV along a road or at a trailhead.

## Campgrounds

Longs Peak is tent camping only, first-come, first-served, and open through October 31. The cost is \$14/site/night. Timber Creek and Moraine Park campgrounds are first-come, first-served in winter, and cost \$14/site/night. Water is off in Timber Creek campground and it's best to bring your own. Water is available at Moraine Park Campground and as well as open visitor centers. Park dump stations are closed in winter. There are no electric hookups at any park campsites. All campsites, including RV sites, have a tent pad, picnic table and fire grate.

Firewood may not be gathered in the park, but may be purchased in local communities. Portable grills are permitted in all park campgrounds.

Moraine Park has a limited number of RV/trailer sites up to 40'; Timber Creek has a 30' maximum. Where allowed, generators can run from 7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. -

8:30 p.m. Reservations for summer season are available for Moraine Park and Aspenglen Campgrounds. Call (877) 444-6777 to make national park camping reservations up to six months prior to your visit. Reservations can be made on the internet at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)

## Fees to Camp

- When the water is on (summer), all campgrounds are \$20.00/site/night.
- When the water is off (winter), Timber Creek, Longs Peak, and Moraine Park campgrounds are \$14/site/night.
- America the Beautiful Senior and Access Pass holders receive a 50% discount on camping fees.
- Park entrance fees and camping fees can be paid by cash, check or credit card.

## Stay Limits

The maximum length of stay is seven nights between June 1 and September 30, with an additional 14 nights allowed October 1 - May 31. Stay limits are on a parkwide basis rather than on a per campground basis.

## At All Standard Campsites

- No more than eight people may camp at a given site.
- All campsites, including RV sites, have

a tent pad, picnic table and fire grate.

- Tents must fit on the tent pad; two or three tents are allowed, as long as they fit.
- There are no electric, water or sewer hookups at any park campsites.
- None of the campgrounds have showers. Portable showers are prohibited. Public showers are available in nearby communities.

## Pets

Pets are allowed in the park, but only in picnic areas, campgrounds and along roadsides, never on trails or meadow areas. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet when outside vehicles. For the safety of your pet and the protection of park wildlife and other visitors, pets and their food should not be left unattended. You may not leave your pet unattended in vehicles if it creates a danger to the animal or if it becomes a public nuisance. Pets may not be left tied to vehicles, trees or other objects.

*A Pet Brochure, available at visitor centers, lists all regulations.*

## Service Animals

Service animals that have been individually trained to perform specific tasks for the benefit of persons with disabilities are allowed in the park. A service animal that is allowed in park facilities, trails, etc., must be doing so in the service of a disabled person. Emotional support ("therapy animals")

are not service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but are pets, and may not access trails or other non-motorized areas, nor park buildings. Service dogs-in-training are not service animals under ADA, but are considered pets.

## Food Storage

Do not attract wildlife, including black bears, to your campsite or parked vehicle. Keep a clean camp! Never leave food items unsecured or unattended. Improperly stored or unattended food items will result in a violation notice. "Food items" include food, drinks, toiletries, cosmetics, pet food and bowls, and odoriferous attractants. Garbage, including empty cans, food wrappers, etc., must be stored or disposed of in trash or recycling receptacles.

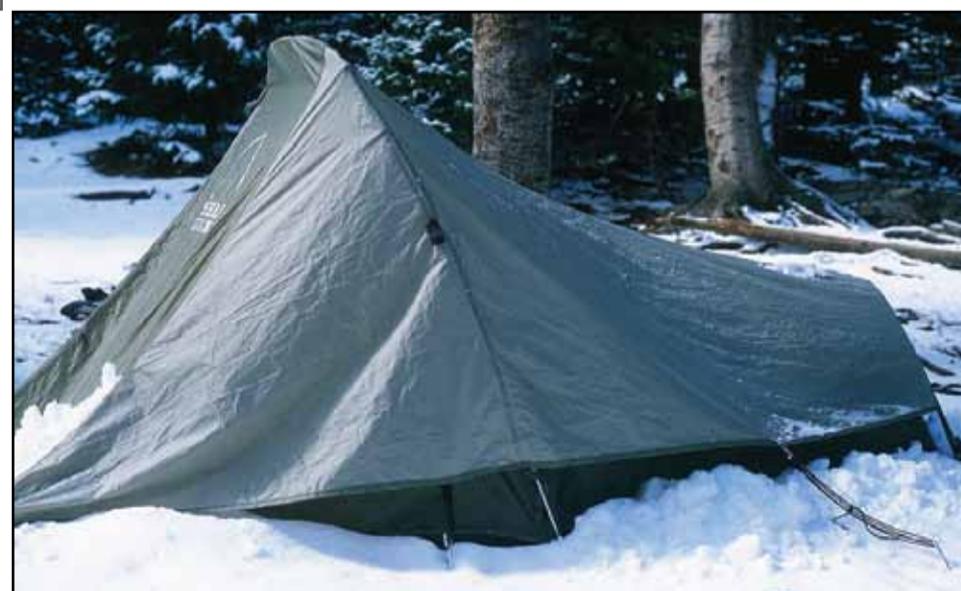
Store food items by one of the following methods:

- Inside vehicle trunks; be sure windows are closed and doors are locked.
- In vehicles without trunks, items should be placed as low in the vehicle passenger compartment as possible and covered from sight, with windows closed and doors locked.

## Heart of the Rockies

Teachers, Parents, Students!

Rocky Mountain National Park's "Heart of the Rockies" education program provides an outdoor classroom to children throughout this region. Teachers who are interested in participating in this program may contact the park's Education Specialist at (970) 586-3777, or through the website at [www.heartoftherockies.net](http://www.heartoftherockies.net)



## This Park Paper

The park newspaper is produced by Rocky Mountain National Park in cooperation with -- and funding provided by -- the Rocky Mountain Nature Association. Printed on recycled paper.

# Winter Trails by Snowshoe, Ski and Foot

With over 350 miles of trails, the park offers a vast array of choices. A small sampling of trails are described below. When properly equipped, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing at Rocky Mountain National Park are often inspiring and invigorating. Cross-country skiing is typically better on the west side of the park (Grand Lake entrance), as snow depths are greater, and terrain gentler than on the eastern slope.

**Trail Tips:** Conditions in the backcountry can change at anytime, so you must be prepared. Even for short day tours, be sure to pack gear for all types of weather (sun, snow, wind). Strong winds are quite common, and it is essential to wear or carry windproof clothing. Know and understand avalanche safety.

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. Know park regulations. Pack it in, pack it out - including remains of all your food (pits, peels, etc.), as well as facial tissues. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects where you find them. Let nature's sounds prevail; avoid loud voices and noises. No pets are allowed on park trails.

Check on-line for trail conditions at [www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/trail\\_conditions.htm](http://www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/trail_conditions.htm) and road conditions at [www.nps.gov/romo/plan\\_your\\_visit/road\\_conditions.htm](http://www.nps.gov/romo/plan_your_visit/road_conditions.htm) or call (970) 586-1206, or stop by a park visitor center.

Don't travel alone - Leave a note where you are going.



NPS Photo by John Marino

**Falling trees are an ever-present hazard when traveling or camping in the forest. Be aware of your surroundings. Dead trees can fall without warning.**

## Trails on the East Side of the Park

Trail	Trailhead Location	Round Trip Distance	Elevation Gain	Highlights
Upper Beaver Meadows	Upper Beaver Meadows Road (gated) off Trail Ridge Road open to pets on leashes & bicycles beyond winter gate	3-4 miles	140 feet	A fine winter hike along a gated dirt road, with an option for making a 3.5 mile loop by taking a trail just inside the barricade, which joins the end of the road in 1.5 miles.
Sprague Lake	Sprague Lake on Bear Lake Road	.5 mile	Relatively Level	A good place for a short winter walk, or to try those cross-country skis on a frozen lake. Good views of the Continental Divide.
Chasm Falls	West Alluvial Fan at gated end of Endovalley Road off Hwy 34	4.4 miles	640 feet	Follows summer roads which are closed to winter traffic. At 1.5 miles, take the right fork up Old Fall River Road to beautiful Chasm Falls.
Lily Lake	Lily Lake on Highway 7, south of Estes Park	.7 mile	5 feet	The trail around the lake is often suitable for walking in boots, or as a short snowshoe or ski. Beautiful views of high park peaks.
Dream Lake	Bear Lake on Bear Lake Road	2.2 miles	425 feet	A good snowshoe tour to one of the most photographed lakes in the park.
Emerald Lake	Bear Lake on Bear Lake Road	3.6 miles	605 feet	An excellent intermediate snowshoe tour. Tour ascends to an alpine lake.
Bierstadt Lake	Bear Lake on Bear Lake Road, 10 miles from Beaver Meadows Visitor Center	3.2 miles	235 feet	A nice snowshoe or ski tour, if started at Bear Lake. Also possible as a steeper snowshoe/hiking tour from the Bierstadt Lake Trailhead.
Mills Lake	Glacier Gorge on Bear Lake Road	5.6 miles	730 feet	An excellent winter snowshoe trail to a spectacular peak-rimmed lake. Magnificent views abound.
The Loch	Glacier Gorge on Bear Lake Road	6.2 miles	970 feet	An excellent winter snowshoe trail to a beautiful mountain lake. Wonderful mountain views.
Mill Creek	Hollowell Park on Bear Lake Road	3.2 miles	600 feet	A quiet winter snowshoe on a lesser-used trail.
Cub Lake	Cub Lake in Moraine Park off the Bear Lake Road	4.6 miles	540 feet	A moderate hike/snowshoe; lower sections are often hikeable. The last mile often has ice or snow. Bring snowshoes, even if it looks open at the beginning.
The Pool	Fern Lake on Cub Lake Road off the Bear Lake Road	4.8 miles	245 feet	Meadows, aspen groves, ponds and conifer forests highlight this easy, nearly level trail. A snowshoe or hike, depending on snow conditions.

## Trails on the East Side of the Park

Trail	Trailhead Location	Round-Trip Distance	Elevation Gain	Highlights
Sandbeach Lake	Wild Basin off Highway 7, south of Estes Park	8.4 miles	1970 feet	Trail ascends steeply through sunny forest; a steady uphill hike. Snowshoes are often not needed for the lower trail sections.
Ouzel Falls	Wild Basin off Highway 7, south of Estes Park	7.4 miles	950 feet	Frozen waterfalls and beautiful views await on this snowshoe tour. Often some icy patches on the trail.
Trail Ridge Road	The gated winter closure at Many Parks Curve on Trail Ridge Road	2+ miles	200+ feet	Follows the summer road which is closed to winter traffic. Beautiful views; often windy, can be very drifted. Snowshoes usually best.
Deer Mountain	Deer Ridge Junction at the intersection of Highways 34 & 36 on Trail Ridge Road	6 miles	1075 feet	A strenuous snowshoe or hike to the windblown top of Deer Mountain. The lower portion tends to be open and hikeable; upper switchbacks snowy.
Lawn Lake	Lawn Lake Trailhead on Fall River Road	12.4 miles	2250 feet	A strenuous snowshoe to a high mountain lake. After a mile, the trail follows scenic Roaring River.

## Trails on the West Side of the Park - Where snow conditions are generally better

Trail	Trailhead	Round-Trip Distance	Elevation Gain	Highlights
Tonahutu Creek Trail	The Kawuneeche Visitor Center, north of Grand Lake	4 miles	300 feet	From the visitor center, an easy two mile ski to Grand Lake. A longer option is an eight mile round trip to Big Meadows (700' elevation gain).
Adams Falls	East Inlet, on West Portal Road, at the far east end of Grand Lake village	.6 miles	80 feet	A beautiful snowshoe or intermediate-level ski tour. The trail continues to First Meadows (two mile round trip), with a great view of Mt. Craig.
Sun Valley Trail	Harbison Picnic Area one mile north of the Kawuneeche Visitor Center	2.5 miles	50 feet	An easy ski or snowshoe loop through woods and open meadows. Be sure to look for orange trail markers at trail junctions.
Green Mountain Trail	Green Mountain Trailhead three miles north of the Kawuneeche Visitor Center	4 miles	600 feet	An intermediate ski or snowshoe to Big Meadows. A longer, more difficult loop is also possible.
Coyote Valley Trail	Coyote Valley Trailhead in the Kawuneeche Valley	1 mile	10 feet	A level trail adjacent to the Colorado River. An easy choice to test those skis or snowshoes.
Colorado River Trail (Lulu City)	The end of the plowed road in the Kawuneeche Valley ten miles north of the Kawuneeche Visitor Center	7.4 miles	350 feet	A gentle ski tour with some views of the Colorado River. Historic sites of Shipler Cabins and Lulu City add to the natural attractions of this tour.

## Rocky Mountain Nature Association



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**Coyotes: The Song Dogs of the West:** February 16

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# Park Resources

## Tell Me More About the Fences

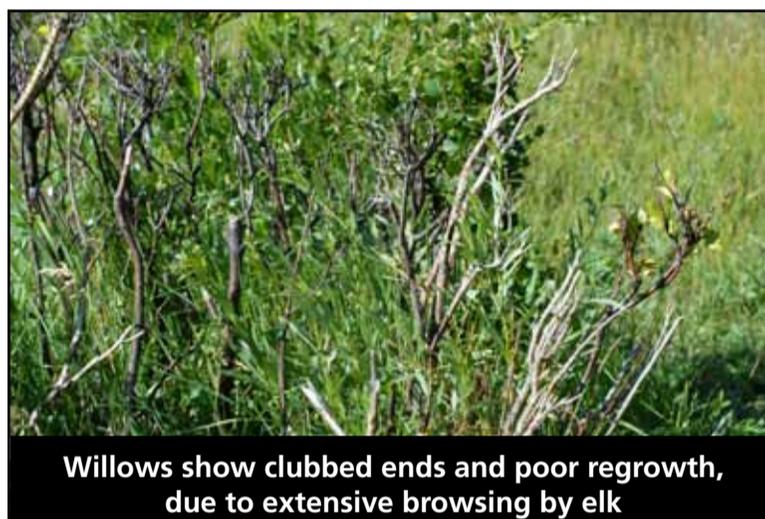
An important part of implementing the 2008 Elk and Vegetation Management Plan has been to install temporary elk enclosure fences to begin restoring aspen and willow habitat and protect those habitats from elk browsing. After only one to three growing seasons, vegetation response has been impressive inside many of the fences. Young aspen suckers are now six to ten feet tall in some areas, willow that have been suppressed for many years are emerging through tall grasses, and new growth on existing willow is beginning to transform short hedged plants into taller plants.

The enclosures provide many beneficial outcomes such as improving degraded riparian habitat and providing for a diversity of other species dependent on willow such as beaver, Wilson's warblers, Lincoln's sparrows, fox sparrows, and butterflies. Because the enclosures protect aspen and willow in high elk-use areas, we are able to manage for a larger elk population (600-800 during winter). The fences have gates to allow access to park visitors. The fences have a 16 inch gap along the bottom of the fence and a height just greater than six feet, so other species (except elk and moose) are able to access areas inside the fences. Perhaps you will see wildlife inside the fence or their tracks in the snow?

Beginning in 2008, park staff protected approximately 45 acres of aspen and up to 165 acres of willow (including the new 2012 enclosures in Upper Beaver Meadows)



Elk enclosure fence - Moraine Park



Willows show clubbed ends and poor regrowth, due to extensive browsing by elk

## Why do elk in Rocky Mountain National Park have radio-collars? Research on Chronic wasting disease

Elk with radio-collars have become a common sight in Rocky Mountain National Park over the past 15 years. The reason is that elk are an important wildlife species to study for the protection of habitats and biological diversity at Rocky Mountain National Park. Since 1995, three major elk studies have occurred. The first focused on learning about elk movements and population size to provide critical information for the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan that was implemented in 2008.

The second study began in 2008 and had two goals: test the effectiveness of a new fertility control drug; and, test the accuracy of a new live-animal test for chronic wasting disease. Chronic wasting disease is caused by prions (abnormal infectious proteins) and leads to neurological disease and death in elk. The second study found that the new test could accurately identify most elk with chronic wasting disease before they physically looked sick, but the test missed elk that were only recently infected and in an early disease state. Several findings from this study brought up new questions about the role of this disease in this elk population. In particular, chronic wasting disease appeared to infect at least 10% of adult female elk in the park and was observed to cause relatively high rates of mortality.

In response to these concerns, National Park Service managers decided to initiate a third radio-telemetry study, beginning in December 2011, to gain reliable information on the effects of this disease in Rocky's elk population. National Park Service veterinarians and researchers are leading this effort, and the goals of the current study are to: determine if chronic wasting disease is increasing or not in this elk population; and measure the impacts of the disease on elk survival and population size. The study focuses on adult female elk because their survival and reproduction are important to population size. For the first year, 67 female elk were captured, sampled, and fitted with a brown radio/collar. Beginning this winter, additional elk will be captured, sampled, and radio/collared to maintain a total of 100 radio-collared elk for this study. During the five-year research project, some of the collared elk will be recaptured each year to help determine how many elk get the disease annually. Elk with radio/collars will be allowed to live out their natural life and will not be removed for research or management purposes, unless they appear very ill.

In addition to research in the park, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is also conducting elk research on movements, survival rates, and chronic wasting disease. They are using white radio collars with green or purple patches. CPW will capture elk outside the park, but some of these elk can and do move into the park throughout the year. Park staff will be working collaboratively with Colorado State University and CPW to gather and use data from all the radio-collared elk to better understand elk use of the park winter range related to frequent movements across the park boundary.



## Toward a Greener Park Recycling Available in Major Park Locations



Glass, plastic #1 and #2, and aluminum may be recycled in park campgrounds and at major park locations. Look for our distinctive recycling containers or ask at any visitor center or campground for their locations.