



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia and Kings Canyon
National Parks

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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

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Snow Limits Memorial Day Camping, Trails, in Sequoia and Kings Canyon

Winter has yet to surrender to spring in much of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, but visitors are urged to visit the parks during the day to take in the wildflowers in the foothills and the lingering snow under giant sequoia trees.

At higher elevations, snow is significantly limiting camping options. In Sequoia Park, at Lodgepole Campground, only 70 sites are available and all of those have been reserved. In the foothills (below 5000' elevation), first-come, first-served camping is open at Potwisha, Buckeye Flat, and South Fork campgrounds. Dorst Campground remains closed, under snow, until its usual opening in late June.

The Mineral King Road in southern Sequoia National Park will be open only as far as Silver City and Atwell Campground (which is mostly snow-free but quite wet); Cold Springs Campground remains closed. The road is partially clear beyond that point, but visitors will need to snowshoe or cross-country ski several miles to get to the Mineral King Valley itself. Commercial facilities in the private community of Silver City are open.

In Kings Canyon National Park, all four campgrounds in the Cedar Grove area are open first-come, first-served, and are snow free. In the Grant Grove area, many campsites are available, but some remain closed due to snow or flooding, including the tent loop in Azalea and group sites A and B in both Crystal and Sunset campgrounds.

Visitors wishing to camp in the parks are strongly advised to arrive early in the weekend, due to these limitations. Camping in the surrounding national forest is also limited by snow. Commercial campgrounds in neighboring communities provide another option.

Snow affects camping and hiking at higher elevations, but other activities are still available. The beautiful Crystal Cave is open daily starting at 10:30 a.m. Tickets to tour this marble cavern must be purchased at least 1-1/2 hours in advance at the Foothills or Lodgepole visitor centers; they are not sold at the cave.

Visitor centers are open in the Foothills, Giant Forest, Lodgepole, Grant Grove, and Cedar Grove; visitors can get information, see exhibits and films, and purchase park-related materials there. The General Sherman Tree and General Grant Tree trails are partially clear, partially packed snow. The road to Moro Rock is open, allowing visitors to climb the historic staircase on this granite monolith. The reward is spectacular views of the Great Western Divide and the high Sierra.

(more)

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Snow-free, the Cedar Grove area of Kings Canyon National Park offers easy day hiking. In addition, the Cedar Grove Pack Station will be open for horseback riding: (559)565-3464. Markets, restaurants, and/or gift shops – are open at Wuksachi, Lodgepole, and Grant Grove.

Rangers will be offering free programs at Lodgepole, Mineral King, Grant Grove, and Cedar Grove. Check park bulletin boards for posted schedules.

In neighboring Sequoia National Forest just outside the parks, campgrounds are open at Hume Lake, Ten Mile, Landslide, Camp 4, Camp 4-1/2, Green Cabin Flat, Mill Flat, and Eshom. The Big Meadows Road and campgrounds, as well as Converse Basin and Stony Creek, are closed to camping due to snow. The Millwood area may be open; check with the Hume Lake Ranger Station. Campfire permits are required for dispersed camping on national forest lands; they are available at the Hume Lake Ranger Station in Dunlap (1-559-338-2251), the Kings Canyon Visitor Center in Grant Grove, and from forest rangers on patrol.

The free Giant Forest shuttle begins its fifth season of operation in Sequoia National Park on Thursday, May 26. Changes this year include closing the narrow Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road on weekends and holidays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Visitors must use the shuttle during those hours to access Moro Rock and Crescent Meadow over Memorial Day weekend. The City of Visalia operates a for-fee shuttle system from Visalia (reservations required), through Three Rivers, to the Giant Forest Museum. For information, go to <http://www.sequoiashuttle.com/>.

At all elevations, black bears have come out of hibernation and are actively seeking food. They may break into vehicles and raid tents or picnic tables in their efforts to find it. If bears are successful in obtaining human food, they may become aggressive in their attempts to get it; when this happens, they must be killed. The only solution is to keep food away from them. Campers, backpackers, and lodge guests are required to remove all food and scented items from their cars and store it properly any time they leave vehicles unattended. Bulletin boards have instructions on proper food storage.

A road reconstruction project is causing some traffic delays on the Generals Highway south of the Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park. On Saturday through Monday, traffic will be delayed by 20 minutes at automated signal lights on either side of a road-reconstruction project. This allows uphill then downhill traffic to pass safely where the road narrows to one lane. On Thursday night before the holiday, no traffic can pass through from 12 midnight to 5:00 a.m. On Friday from 5:00 to 7:00 a.m., there are 20-minute delays. From 7:00 a.m. to noon, traffic can pass on the hour, as directed by flaggers. After Friday at noon, 20-minute delays are standard until the following Tuesday morning at 7:00 a.m.

Motorists are reminded to fill their gas tanks outside the parks or at the two locations in the surrounding national forest. There are no gasoline stations within the park boundaries.

The \$20 entrance fee is good for 7 days and covers both Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and portions of the Hume Lake District of Sequoia National Forest. An annual pass may be purchased at the entrance stations, along with senior and accessibility passes.

For information on road and weather conditions in the parks, visit www.nps.gov/seki or call (559)565-3341.

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