Yellowstone

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park

Service Animals In Yellowstone National Park

Service animals are allowed in all facilities and on all trails unless an area has been closed by the superintendent to protect park resources.

Definition of Service Animal

The 2010 revision to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a "service animal" as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Dogs that are not trained to perform tasks that mitigate the effects of a disability, including dogs that are used purely to provide comfort or emotional support ("therapy animals"), are considered pets.

Service animals in training and pets are subject to the park's pet regulations and are not allowed on trails or boardwalks. Falsely portraying a pet as a service animal is considered fraud and is subject to federal prosecution.

Service Animal Permit Required

Individuals intending to take a service animal into the backcountry must first obtain a service animal permit. A service animal permit is not needed when visiting frontcountry attractions and thermal areas with boardwalks.

To obtain the free service animal permit please read this brochure carefully and fill in the required information on the reverse. Bring the signed form to a backcountry office within the park or send it to the Central Backcountry Office prior to arriving in the park.

See "Additional Resources" on reverse for Central Backcountry Office address and contact information.

Backcountry Office Locations:
Mammoth Albright Visitor Education Center
Tower Backcountry Office
Canyon Visitor Education Center
Bridge Bay Ranger Station
Grant Visitor Education Center
South Entrance Ranger Station
Old Faithful Ranger Station
West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center
Bechler Ranger Station

Things to Know

Where domestic animals and wildlife overlap there is a possibility of exchanging diseases between the two groups. Domestic dogs can introduce disease into wildlife habitats and the park's canids (wolves, coyotes, and foxes) are vulnerable to domestic diseases such as canine distemper, parvo virus, rabies, mange, etc. Likewise it's possible for domestic dogs to acquire these diseases from wild animals.

The Service Animal Permit provides park managers with reasonable assurance that domestic service animals travelling in the backcountry are free of diseases which could harm wildlife.

To further prevent the spread of disease:

- **Service animals must always be leashed or harnessed, under control, and attended at all times.**
- **Pet food is a bear attractant and should be stored accordingly.** *Food and food containers must never be left unattended and must be kept out of reach of wildlife.*
- **Service animal fecal matter must be picked up and disposed of properly.** *Fecal matter should be disposed of in a trash receptacle, toilet, pit toilet, or if none of those are accessible (such as in the backcountry) it should be buried in a cat hole dug a minimum of 6 inches deep and a 200 feet from water sources, campsites or trails.*

Risks

Please be aware that having a service animal in the backcountry may put you at increased risk for confrontations with wolves, bears, and other wildlife. There are recorded instances of domestic dogs killed by coyotes within Yellowstone and numerous instances of dogs killed by wolves and bears outside of Yellowstone. Wolves are very territorial and may perceive domestic dogs as competitors and act aggressively toward them putting you and your animal in danger.

If you must take a service animal with you in the backcountry keep it on a tight leash at all times and sleep with it in your tent at night.

In addition, thermal features pose a special risk to all animals. Boiling water in pools and thermal channels can cause severe or fatal burns if your animal decides to take a drink or go for a swim.

Your safety and the safety of your animal are not guaranteed.

Additional Resources

"Accessibility in Yellowstone" is available for download at nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm or can be obtained for free from all entrance stations, visitor centers, or via mail by contacting Yellowstone Visitor Services through the park's website.

For information regarding traveling with pets in Yellowstone visit:
www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/pets.htm

For information on planning a backcountry trip in Yellowstone visit www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountrytripplanner.htm

You may also contact the Central Backcountry Office staff directly:
PO Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190
phone: (307) 344-2160
fax: (307) 344-2166
email: yell_backcountry_office@nps.gov

Service Animal Permit

Please complete and bring to a backcountry office or send to the Central Backcountry Office prior to travelling in the backcountry with a service animal.

The signed permit shows you have received the information in this brochure and provides you with a document to show should any questions arise over whether you are with a service animal or pet.

Animal Name: _____ Species: _____ Breed: _____

Sex: _____ Age: _____ Color: _____ Weight: _____

Registration/Microchip/Tattoo Number: _____ State: _____

Work or task animal has been trained to perform: _____

Note: Dogs used purely to provide comfort, emotional support, well-being, or companionship do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

Date(s) of intended visit to the park: _____

Owner/Handler Name: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone number: _____

Your veterinary's name and phone number: _____

☐ I certify the above named dog is individually and fully trained as a service animal to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of permittee with a disability recognized by the ADA.

☐ I certify the above named animal is free from symptoms of contagious or infectious diseases and to the best of my knowledge has not been exposed to any contagious or infectious diseases. The animal is free of internal or external parasites and is current on rabies, canine parvovirus, canine distemper, and infectious hepatitis innoculations or medications.

By checking the above boxes and signing below I hereby certify that I have been informed of and agree to abide by the regulations and information contained within this brochure.

Permittee Signature: _____ Date: _____

This permit applies to the above described animal. It must be carried at all times and is required for taking the animal into the backcountry of Yellowstone National Park. Service animals must abide by the regulations listed in this brocure.

Approved by: _____

Location Issued: _____ Date: _____