

**ZION NATIONAL PARK
COMMERCIAL USE AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM**

**2026 OPERATING PLAN FOR
BICYCLE TOURS:
COMMERCIALLY GUIDED BICYCLE TOURS**

1. Authorized Use Defined:

Commercially Guided Bicycle Tours: Guided Bicycle Tours are organized groups with a maximum group size of 16 guests plus guides not to exceed 18 total riders, (groups of 6 riders or less) on an itinerary which has been packaged, priced, or sold as a “guided bicycle tour” in approved use areas within Zion National Park (Zion) (see Authorized Use Areas Defined below). Tour groups consist of guides/tour leaders, participants, and support vehicles. Tours provide single day guided bicycle trips in Zion that may or may not span multiple days. Bicyclists are required to follow all applicable traffic regulations and safety guidelines. Guides provide safety information and messages that encourage visitors to preserve and protect park resources in conjunction with the management objectives of Zion National Park. Only services defined in this authorized use section may occur under this authorization.

Electric Bicycles (e-bikes): The use of certain e-bikes in the national parks has been approved for the general public by the National Park Service (NPS) through Director’s Order 3376. It should be noted that Sec. 6 of Secretarial Order #3376 Effect of the Order states; “To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.” It should also be noted that Zion National Park will continue to ensure CUA program compliance with 54 USC 101925 Commercial Use Authorizations. A person operating an e-bike is subject to the following sections of 36 CFR part 4 that apply to the use of traditional bicycles: sections 4.12, 4.13, 4.21, 4.22, 4.23 and 4.30(h)(2)-(5). As such, Zion will temporarily authorize Commercially Guided Bicycle Tours to use Class 1 e-bikes (only) for the 2025 operating season in order to evaluate their use commercially, which is not addressed by DO 3376. See: [Zion National Park 36 CFR 1.7 \(b\), Compendium 2024](#)

As per United States Code 16-5966 (USC 16-5966)

(c) LIMITATIONS.—Any authorization issued under this section shall be limited to—

(2) the incidental use of resources of the unit by commercial operations which provide services originating and terminating outside of the boundaries of the unit. And as per NPS policy (Management Policies 2006) 10.3.3 Limitations - the incidental use of resources of the unit by commercial operations that provide services originating and terminating outside of the boundaries of the park unit.

Therefore, guides must originate and terminate guided trips outside the boundaries of Zion National Park. Guides must be present with their clients at all times while in the park.

Only services defined above may occur under this authorization.

Class of e-bikes allowed: Class 1 e-bikes are defined as having an electric motor that provides supplementary power to assist the pedaling of the e-bike by the rider. The rider must be pedaling to engage the electric assist. No throttle device may be present. The motor ceases to provide power when the e-bike reaches 20 mph.

Authorized Times of Operations: Bicycle tours may only operate during daylight hours (sunrise to sunset).

Spacing of Bicycle Riders: The permittee must regulate participant riders so that the entire group is broken into groups of 6 riders or less with groups separated by one quarter mile. Cyclists must ride single file on all park roadways. When stopping to converse, take pictures, or make repairs, participants must pull completely off the roadway and must not bunch up or block traffic in any way.

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2. Authorized Use Areas Defined:

Authorized Areas of Use: Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway (NPS Route 10) through Zion National Park connecting sections of Utah State Route 9, Zion Canyon Scenic Drive, and Kolob Canyons Road.

Roadways Only: In accordance with 36 CFR 4.30, bicycle use within Zion National Park is prohibited except on established paved roads and parking areas. Bicyclists may walk (without bicycles) up to 100 feet off the roadway, using existing disturbances or staying on hardened surfaces.

Pa'rus Trail: Riders are encouraged to use the Pa'rus trail to avoid heavy vehicle congestion on the main park road. The Pa'rus Trail is a paved multiuse trail that originates at the South Campground. The trail which is 1.75 miles in length, follows the Virgin River from the South Campground to the Main Canyon Junction. Bicyclists may then continue up the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive towards the Temple of Sinawava. Bicycle speeds on the Pa'rus Trail must not exceed 15 MPH.

3. Unauthorized Use Defined:

The Kolob Terrace Road is NOT authorized for Commercially Guided Bicycle Tours.

Parking and stopping along park roads is prohibited except at designated paved parking areas or pull-offs. All vehicles and bicycles must be kept on established roadways. Parking and stopping in shuttle bus stops is prohibited during the shuttle season.

This authorization does not allow guided hiking on park trails. You may package, price, and sell multi-adventure tours, for multi-days, or even the same day, but biking and hiking must be separate activities. (i.e., riding a bike to the trailhead to lead a guided hike is prohibited). Leading interpretive talks, walks, or guided hiking under this authorization is a violation of this permit and will result in punitive actions.

Passage through the Zion-Mt. Carmel Tunnel by bicycles or pedestrians is NOT permitted. It is required that all bicycle riders with the permittee's tour be shuttled through the Zion-Mt. Carmel tunnel. The permittee shall make its support vehicle available for shuttling of its participants. The support vehicle may park in the large pullout 100 yards east of the tunnel and in the large pullout approximately a half mile west of the tunnel.

Public Use Obstruction: Permitted groups are sharing visitor facilities with the general public. This permit does not convey any priority use of any park areas including road side pullouts, parking areas, picnic areas, etc. **Permittees are responsible for the conduct of their clients and must advise clients to stay on roadways, ride single file, and allow the public to pass.** Commercially Guided Bicycle Tours must not interfere with the general visiting public.

Laws and Policies: A Commercial Use Authorization does not authorize permittees to facilitate any activities or actions that are prohibited in the park. As such, river tubing and associated transportation or like activities is prohibited in the park. For more information on park regulations visit: <http://www.nps.gov/zion/learn/management/lawsandpolicies.htm>. Permit violations can result in punitive action (fine, revocation of permit and or arrest) against both the representative (guide), and the permittee.

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4. Guide Requirements:

Guides must be identifiable as employees of the permittee: This can be accomplished by nametags and/or company identifiable clothing/accessories/hats. Company vehicles must also be identifiable.

Acknowledgement of Permit Conditions: All guides and drivers are required to submit an online acknowledgement of CUA permit conditions before leading and/or driving tours into Zion National Park. This form is available online by visiting: <https://www.nps.gov/zion/getinvolved/commercial-use-authorization.htm>

Commercial Use Form: (formerly known as Attachment "E") Guided Bicycle Tours will be required to submit park use data. The Park will collect bicycle use data to inform future determinations of bicycle (including e-bikes) use in the park. Guides are required to fill-out the online Commercial Use Form prior to entering the park. The online form is located at <https://www.nps.gov/zion/getinvolved/commercial-use-authorization.htm>

Medical Certifications: All guides must have a valid driver's license and current medical certifications at minimum in basic first aid and CPR. These certifications must be on file with the Commercial Services Office. It is the permittees responsibility to keep this information up to date.

Guides are responsible for making sure clients have sufficient drinking water and nourishment for the duration of the planned activity and related weather conditions.

5. Speed Limits, parking, and vehicle requirements:

Speed Limits: Permittee and permittee's employees must follow all applicable traffic laws and posted speed limits throughout the park. Operating a vehicle at a speed in excess of the speed limit is prohibited. **The passing of motor vehicles is prohibited throughout the park.**

Parking: No Commercially Guided Bicycle Tour Commercial Use Authorization holder is permitted to park at the Human History Museum or the Canyon Junction (junction of the Scenic Drive and Zion Mt. Carmel Highway). Parking and stopping along park roads is prohibited except at designated parking areas or pull-offs. All vehicles must be kept on established roadways, and there must be no interference with pedestrians or other traffic in the park. All vehicles must park in designated parking spaces. **Parking and stopping in shuttle bus stops is prohibited during Zion shuttle bus operating season.**

15 passenger vans without trailer: May park in any authorized parking space designated for a standard sized vehicle (excluding Zion Scenic Canyon Drive unless in possession of overnight lodging reservations).

15 passenger vans with trailer: May only park in the oversized vehicle parking lot adjacent to the Zion Canyon Visitor Center (37.201240, -112.985378), or in the town of Springdale.

Vehicle Requirements: Gear may be tied to the top of the support vehicle, carried inside of the support vehicle, or transported in a trailer, but must not be attached to the sides of the support vehicle.

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Support Vehicle: A support vehicle and/or guide must accompany each tour and be accessible to the needs of the bicycle riders. **Support vehicles are prohibited from traveling up the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive during shuttle operation season.**

Support vehicles used while conducting guided bicycle tours must have company identification visible on the driver's side of the vehicle. The park reserves the right to refuse entry to any previously undeclared driver or vehicle.

Vehicles must not idle their engines when parked. Vehicles that sit with engines idling create unacceptable amounts of noise and air pollution within Zion National Park.

6. Closures and Public Use Limits:

During the park shuttle operation season (including limited holiday service) the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive is restricted to pedestrians, bicyclists, park shuttle buses, private vehicles driven by Lodge guests with lodging reservations, and 16+ capacity passenger buses with lodge activity reservations. Travel in Zion Canyon above the Lodge is restricted to all motor vehicles except Zion National Park shuttle buses and administrative traffic. Permittee's vehicles that do not meet the above criteria are prohibited from traveling on the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive (unless in possession of overnight lodging reservations as stated above, a valid Red Permit must be displayed and visible in windshield). For more information on the park's shuttle system visit: <https://www.nps.gov/zion/planyourvisit/zion-canyon-shuttle-system.htm>

Additional Area Closures: Behind administrative offices, employee housing areas, behind locked gates, near water tanks, beyond fences, on service roads, and in construction areas. Any addition official seasonal or emergency closures of roads, trails, or public areas must be observed by permittee.

7. Accidents/Injuries/Illness:

All accidents involving property damage, injuries, and/or medical problems must be reported to the park immediately at a ranger contact station or by calling (435) 772-3322. All such information must also be relayed by the permittee to the Commercial Services Office within 24 hours via email to zion_commercialservices@nps.gov.

8. Resource Protection:

All permittees are required to communicate the following messages to clients receiving interpretive service:

- Group leaders should be aware of current local conditions, flood levels, and flash flood warnings. This information can be obtained by stopping at the Visitor Center.
- Collecting or removing from the park any natural or cultural resource, or damaging or defacing any natural or cultural resource is prohibited.
- Stay on the road in order to protect delicate vegetation and soils.
- In developed areas, the disposal of human waste anywhere other than in designated locations or fixtures provided for that purpose is prohibited. In non-developed areas, the disposal of human waste within 100 feet of a water source, high water mark of a body of water, a campsite, or within sight of a trail is prohibited (36 CFR 2.14). The preferred option for human waste disposal is a removal system such as a "[Restop 2](#)."

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If a removal system is unavailable a 4- to 8-inch deep “cat hole” can be used. Toilet paper must be carried out.

- Take only pictures - leave no evidence of your visit.
- All food scraps (fruit peels, nut shells, etc.) are considered trash and must be disposed of properly. It is a violation to feed the wildlife, including squirrels.
- Smoking on trails is highly discouraged. Smokers must use caution when smoking to prevent igniting a wildfire. Cigarette butts are trash and must be packed out for proper disposal. Trip leaders/guides should check fire conditions for current restrictions.

9. Safety Precautions:

Permittees must post a safety notice and advise all participants to read this notice (and/or provide a safety talk before activities begin). Information contained in this notice must include, but not be limited to, water safety, environmental hazards (weather, floods, sun, temperature, etc.) and resource protection. Leaders should remind participants that heatstroke is a real danger in the desert. Participants should be advised to drink lots of water, eat snacks, and wear hats/sunscreen to minimize sun exposure. Safety information and weather conditions are available at park visitor centers and by visiting www.nps.gov/zion

Tour Leaders: An employee designated as a tour leader must ride at the rear of the group to assist with bike adjustments and other touring concerns. Tour leaders shall brief the participants of each ride on safety concerns relevant to each day's ride on the morning of that riding day.

Yielding for Trailing Motor Vehicles: Should more than three motor vehicles be following a bicycle rider or group of riders; the individual rider or group must safely pull to the side and allow the motor vehicles to pass.

Each guide must carry and maintain a kit for emergency medical care. The kit must be appropriate for group size and the nature of the activity and include a flashlight.

10. Camping:

If the permittee requires camping within the park, reservations must be made through <http://www.recreation.gov> or by calling 877-444-6777. Permittee's groups of 7 or more people are limited to Group sites in the E Loop of Watchman Campground and group sites A, B, C and D in the South Campground. Each company regardless of the number of CUA permits held is restricted to one group site per campground, per night. **Group campsite maximum capacities are strictly enforced. Arriving with a group beyond the maximum capacity for the site reserved will result in the cancellation of your reservation.**

Permittee's groups of 6 or less people may reserve one individual campsite at either campground per night, per company.

Group size is defined by the itinerary the group is traveling on. Splitting of groups is not permitted.

Violations of camping regulations will be considered a violation of this permit and may lead to the revocation of your company's campsite reservation and/or Commercial Use Authorization.

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11. Monitoring:

The Superintendent shall have the right to monitor permittees activity for compliance with all aspects of this permit.

12 Entrance Fees:

Upon entry to the park CUA holders must identify themselves at a park entrance station or at the Kolob Visitor Center and must present a valid Commercial Use Authorization (CUA signature page and complete CUA conditions) to park staff.

CUA holders are charged the per-person entrance fee for each client onboard. Clients may present personally held America the Beautiful Passes for their entrance fee, in accordance with pass guidelines. Guides are exempt from entrance fees when facilitating a commercial activity.

Fee Schedule (subject to change): <https://www.nps.gov/zion/planyourvisit/fees.htm>

(c) Tunnel permit fees are required for any large vehicle driving through the Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway Tunnel. Pay \$15.00 for the tunnel permit at the entrance station before proceeding to the tunnel. Beginning in mid-2026, large vehicles will be rerouted from the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway to improve safety and protect resources. The maximum vehicle size that will be allowed to drive the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway will be no more than 7' 10" (2.39m) wide, 35' 9" (10.9m) long and 11' 4" (3.45m) tall and 50,000 pounds. Visit Zion's website at <https://www.nps.gov/zion/index.htm> for more information.

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