



This Know Before You Go Guide includes the essential information you need to know to have a safe and enjoyable trip into the park's wintertime environment. All participants are responsible for understanding and abiding by park regulations and the program rules.

Know Before You Go
Winter 2014-2015



Yellowstone National Park
 National Park Service
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**Non-commercially Guided
 Snowmobile Access Program
 in Yellowstone National Park**

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What is a non-commercial snowmobile trip?

Highlights of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program (N-CGSAP)

- The permit authorizes parties to enter Yellowstone National Park and travel with a non-commercial guide .
- Up to four non-commercially guided groups are allowed to enter the park daily—one at each oversnow entrance.
- The trips can be one to three days in length and can include up to five snowmobiles.
- The permits require users to have the Best Available Technology (BAT) or New BAT snowmobiles
- All snowmobile operators in the group must complete the online Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification (YSEC) Program, possess a completion card, and have a valid driver's license. The course is located at: <http://eppley.org/elearning/yellowstone-snowmobile-education-certificate>

How do I become a non-commercial guide?

1. Secure a non-commercially guided access permit at: recreation.gov
2. Successfully complete the free online YSEC course and ensure all snowmobile operators in your group have done the same. (If you secure a reservation, you will receive the link to the course.)
3. Be 18 years or older by the first day of your trip.
4. Ensure all snowmobile operators are at least 16 years old and have a valid driver's license and course certification documentation.
5. Ensure all snowmobiles in your group are current best available technology (BAT or new BAT) compliant and all members of your trip have the necessary safety equipment.
6. After you obtain a permit, call to schedule a check-in appointment at least 48 hours ahead of your trip at the park entrance gate. Rangers will ensure all permit requirements are met and run a brief on-site orientation session prior to your departure.



Review the YSEC course to help your group navigate road hazards such as bison and safety messages that will ensure your trip is a good one.

N-CGSAP Guidelines

Who can be a non-commercial guide? Any member of the public can be a non-commercial snowmobile guide as long as he or she is at least 18 years of age by the first day of the trip, possesses a N-GSAP special use permit, and has led no more than 2 trips in one winter season. Non-commercial guides must also be certified under the YSEC course and abide by all N-CGSAP rules and park regulations.

What are the responsibilities of a non-commercial guide? All snowmobile guides are responsible for the actions of their group. Guides should have working knowledge of snowmobile safety, general first aid, snowmobile repair, navigational techniques and park regulations. Guides must be able to lead their group safely through the park and be familiar with daily weather conditions and the park road system. Additionally, all riders should know how to use hand signals to communicate with other riders. Riders should travel in a single file “follow-the leader” pattern and communicate frequently.



How many trips can a non-commercial guide lead per winter season? Up to two. A non-commercial guide may be awarded one trip through the lottery and is able to lead a second trip if they secure a permit after the lottery closes on a first-come-first-served reservation basis.

Can I charge people for my guide services through this program? No, you may not charge anyone to join you on this trip; it is for friends and family groups only.

Can I lead an overnight trip into the park under a single non-commercially guided trip? Yes, non-commercial guides may lead an overnight trip (maximum of 3 days and 2 nights) by securing a multiple-day permit in the N-CGSAP lottery or reservation system.

Is there a group size limit? Yes, non-commercially guided groups may have a maximum of 5 snowmobiles per group.

What do other snowmobile operators have to do to join my trip? All snowmobile operators must be at least 16 years or older by the first day of the trip, have a valid driver's license, have passed the YSEC course, and have a valid and certified BAT snowmobile with proof of registration.

When do I have to know who is coming with me on the trip? You have the opportunity to enter the names of the friends and family you plan to bring when you obtain your permit. Call Recreation.gov at 1-877-444-6777 or wait until you arrive at the entrance on the day of your trip if these names change.

Non-commercial guides are responsible for the safety and compliance of their entire group.

Your N-GSAP Special Use Permit

How do I obtain a permit via the lottery?

Begin the application process at:

www.recreation.gov

The lottery extends from September 3rd–October 3rd. You will be notified by mid-October if you are successful in obtaining a permit.

How do I obtain a permit after the lottery ends? Beginning November 3rd, any remaining dates will become available on a first-come-first-served basis. These dates could be either cancellation dates or dates not allocated during the lottery season. You may also call the reservation line toll free at 1-877-444-6777.

How does the “first come, first served” reservation system work? After November 3rd, interested parties can check on **recreation.gov** to reserve any permits not allocated via the lottery or available due to cancellations. Cancellations may occur throughout the winter season, so check the website often for available permits.

How many trips can I book through recreation.gov? You may book two total trips, but only one trip can be booked through the lottery system. Second trips within the same season can be secured on a first-come-first-served basis throughout the winter season after November 3rd.

If I have a multi-day trip booked, can others begin a trip from that entrance during my second or third day? No. If your group has booked a multi-day trip from a particular entrance, your group occupies that gate's entrance allocation for each day of the trip.

Is there a waiting list? No, there is no waiting list.

How much does it cost to participate in program? To apply for a permit through the lottery system, there is a \$6.00 non-refundable application fee. The reservation fee is \$40.00.

Do I also need to pay the park entrance fee? Yes, all snowmobiles groups must also pay the park entrance fee for each snowmobile or show your annual park pass(es).

Can I change or reschedule the dates of my trip?

After the lottery closes, days not filled are available on a first-come-first-served basis through the last day of the season. You will need to cancel your first permit and apply for a second permit. Reservation fees are refunded if you cancel at least two weeks before the start of your trip. The park is not responsible for rescheduling your trip in the event of poor weather or closures.

How do I cancel my trip? To cancel your reservation or lottery entry, visit recreation.gov or call their reservation line at 1-877-444-6777.

Can my fees be refunded? If you cancel your trip at least two weeks before your entrance date, you will be issued a full reservation fee refund (the \$6 application fee is not refundable). Fees cannot be refunded in the event of poor weather, road closures, or under other any other circumstances.

With special permissions, come special responsibilities.

N-GSAP Logistics

IMPORTANT: ON YOUR FIRST DAY YOU MAY NOT ENTER THE PARK UNTIL AFTER YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR SCHEDULED CHECK-IN.

Do I need to check in at the entrance before I start my trip?

Yes, you will need to call the entrance associated with your permit **within 48 hours in advance of your trip** to schedule a time to check-in. Entrance phone numbers are listed at the bottom of this page.

- **South & West Entrance Stations begin check-in appointments at 7 a.m.**
- **East Entrance begins check-in appointments at 9 a.m.**
- **North Entrance check-in appointments are available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Albright Visitor Center in Mammoth Hot Springs.**

Check-ins are **NOT** available without an appointment.

During which hours may I enter the park and operate a snowmobile within the park?

Once you have completed your first day check-in, you may travel in the park from 7:00am–9:00pm. On the last day of your trip, you must exit the park by 9:00 p.m. If you secure a permit for a one-day trip, you must exit the park on that day.

Can I enter through one entrance and exit through another, or exit and re-enter?

Yes, and you can exit and re-enter the park while your permit is valid. Be prepared to provide all documentation upon re-entry.

What if the weather is bad on the day of my trip? Winter weather in Yellowstone can be harsh, and in the event of a winter storm, it may be prudent to delay or cancel your trip. The East Entrance Road which crosses Sylvan Pass may close due to avalanche danger for hours or even days at a time.

What if there is a closure in effect on the day of my trip?

You can either wait for the closure to be lifted later in the day, obtain another available permit, or cancel.

Where can I get snowmobile fuel?

Snowmobile fuel is available within the park using a credit card at Canyon Village, Fishing Bridge, Mammoth Hot Springs, West Thumb (Grant Village), and Old Faithful. Fuel is also available in some border communities.

Where can I stay in the park?

Visitors can stay at the Mammoth Hotel and Cabins or the Old Faithful Snow Lodge and Cabins during the winter months. Visit: yellowstonenationalparklodges.com for availability and reservations.

Where can I eat in the park?

Winter dining opportunities include the Mammoth General Store (lunch–weekdays only); the Mammoth Hotel Dining Room; the Old Faithful Snow Lodge Geyser Grill; or the Old Faithful Snow Lodge Dining Room. Some of these options open late or close early in the season, so inquire at the park when you arrive to verify availability.

Do I need to check out at the entrance at the conclusion of my trip?

No, but you must exit the park by 9:00 p.m. on the last day your permit is valid.

North Entrance (Albright VC) : (307) 344-2263
South Entrance: (307) 543-2800



East Entrance: (307) 587-2682
West Entrance: (307) 344-2867

BAT & New BAT Snowmobiles

A BAT snowmobile refers to a snowmobile that meets the park's Best Available Technology (BAT) standard. Snowmobiles must be certified as meeting existing BAT standards. This means that emissions can have no greater than 15 g/kW-hr for hydrocarbons, 120 g/kW-hr for carbon monoxide, and noise levels can not exceed 73 dB(A). A list of BAT snowmobiles is available at: go.nps.gov/current_batlist

What is a New BAT snowmobile? As of December 15th, 2015, all snowmobiles entering the park must operate at or below 67 dB(A) and must be certified to a Family Emission Limit (FEL) no greater than a total of 15 g/kW-hr for hydrocarbons and 90 g/kW-hr for carbon monoxide. Snowmobiles will be certified for six consecutive winter seasons following its manufacture or until the snowmobile travels 6,000 miles, whichever occurs later. These requirements are known as New BAT. A list of New BAT snowmobiles is at: go.nps.gov/newbatlist

Can I bring my own BAT or New BAT snowmobile? Yes, you may bring your own snowmobile provided it has been certified as meeting the BAT or New BAT standards listed above.

Where can I rent a BAT or New BAT snowmobile? You can rent a BAT or New BAT snowmobile from local operators in the gateway communities. You can find information about renting snowmobiles in the gateway communities by visiting: go.nps.gov/BATsnowmobilevendors

Can I use a side-by-side machine with tracks instead of a snowmobile? No, they do not meet the definition of a snowmobile under current park regulations.



It is YOUR responsibility to ensure that all snowmobiles in your group meet the BAT or New BAT standards to minimize sound and noise pollution in the park.

Safety Considerations



What should I wear? Dress warmly. Wind chill becomes a huge factor on a moving snowmobile. Suggested clothing items include: a helmet with a face shield, sunglasses and/or goggles, heavy gloves, boots and heavy wool or synthetic socks, a moisture wicking under layer, an insulating layer, a protective outer layer or snowmobile suite, and a ski mask/balaclava or neck gaiter.

What equipment should I consider carrying? In addition to warm clothing, you should consider bringing food, water, a shovel, avalanche beacons, extra layers, map, snowmobile drive belt, a basic tool kit or multi-tool, a first aid kit, a flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries, sunglasses, and a survival kit.

What should be included in my emergency kit? Suggested first aid contents include: gauze, bandage or sling, antibiotic salve, aspirin, adhesive dressings, cotton swabs, hand sanitizer, hot packs, latex gloves, moleskin, needles, hydrocortisone cream, adhesive tape, safety pins, scissors, sterile eyewash, thermometer, and tweezers. Suggested survival kit contents should at minimum include a thermal foil blanket, rope, whistle, fire starter kit, water purification system, and signal flares.

Where can I find current weather and road conditions and forecasts? Visit [go.nps.gov/winterweather](https://www.nps.gov/winterweather) for weather reports and forecasts. Weather can change quickly, and is often different in different parts of the park, so **be prepared for the most extreme conditions**, even if they're not forecasted. Overnight, temperatures can drop to more than 20 degrees below zero. Hazardous weather conditions like snowstorms, whiteouts, and fog are common.

Call **307-344-2117** for current road conditions. Travel during daylight hours is recommended.

Wildlife always have the right of way. Expect to encounter them on park roadways.



LEFT TURN



RIGHT TURN



SLOWING



STOP

saferiderssafetyawareness.org

Trip Check List

Trip Leader

- ___ Printed permit
- ___ Valid driver's license proving that you are at least 18
- ___ BAT or New BAT Snowmobile with current registration
- ___ N-GSAP Snowmobile Decal
- ___ Warm clothing & helmet
- ___ Suggested emergency gear
- ___ Additional water for your group

All Other Operators

- ___ Valid driver's license proving that you are at least 16
- ___ Printed YSEC certificate
- ___ BAT or New Bat Snowmobile with current registration
- ___ Warm clothing & helmet

NOTE: Cell phone coverage is not available in most of the park and cold temperatures can cause cell phone batteries to fail quickly. Do not rely on them as a safety device.

Leave your itinerary with a trusted friend or family member and check in with them when you leave the park or reach your overnight destination.

Park Regulations

Park regulations are strictly enforced for the protection of visitors and the park's fragile resources.

The regulations below are of special interest to N-CSAC users.

- You **must** stay on groomed oversnow roads, which are clearly marked. Off road travel is strictly prohibited.
- Obey all posted speed limits within the park. The maximum speed limit is 35mph.
- Do not drink and operate a snowmobile. Open container laws also apply to snowmobile operators.
- Non-commercial guides have a limit of .04 blood alcohol content (BAC); all other operators have a BAC limit of .08.
- Do not approach wildlife. Do not feed wildlife.
- Do not travel off marked paths in thermal areas.
- Do not idle your snowmobile for more than three minutes.

If Your Snowmobile Breaks Down...

You are responsible for your actions and equipment. In the event your snowmobile breaks down, you are responsible for towing it out of the park, either through the operator from which you rented the snowmobile or a through an approved towing company located in the gateway communities. A list of approved companies is available at: [go.nps.gov/snsproviders](https://www.nps.gov/snsproviders)

It is your responsibility to know and understand all park regulations.

Miles Between Destinations

Location	Canyon	East Entrance	Lake/Fishing Bridge	Madison	Mammoth	Norris	Old Faithful	South Entrance	West Entrance	West Thumb
Canyon										
East Entrance	43									
Lake/Fishing Bridge	16	27								
Madison	26	69	42							
Mammoth	33	76	49	35						
Norris	12	55	28	14	21					
Old Faithful	42	65	38	16	51	30				
South Entrance	59	70	43	55	90	69	39			
West Entrance	40	83	56	14	49	28	30	69		
West Thumb	37	48	21	33	68	47	17	47	47	

Side Road Special Considerations

Roadway	Open Hours	One-Way Traffic Direction
Firehole Canyon Drive	7AM to 12NOON	SOUTHBOUND
Riverside Drive	12NOON to DARK	WESTBOUND

For more information: [nps.gov/N-CGSAP](https://www.nps.gov/N-CGSAP)