MAMMOTH AREA SKI TRAILS

Yellowstone National Park

Trail Descriptions

Snow Pass Trail
4.2 miles (6.76 km), **easiest to most difficult,**
Begin 0.4 miles (0.6 km) south of the Upper Terrace parking area on the west side of the Mammoth-Norris road or a short connector trail joins from the upper end of the Upper Terrace Loop. The heavily forested trail ascends 700 feet in 1.5 miles (213 m in 2.4 km) through a series of very steep grades along the trail to Snow Pass. From Snow Pass the trail continues 0.5 miles (0.8 km) down over rolling terrain to a trail junction at which the ski route turns left (south) and follows Glen Creek over fairly level terrain for 2.2 miles (3.5 km), returning to the road just south of Rustic Falls. From here, you can either continue across the road to the Bunsen Peak Road (see description) or turn left and ski down the main road back to the Upper Terrace parking lot.

Bunsen Peak Road Trail
6 miles (9.6 km), **easiest to most difficult,**
Begin on the Mammoth-Norris road, just south of Rustic Falls and across from the upper end of the Snow Pass Trail. The upper 3 miles (4.8 km) are mostly level and suitable for all levels of skiing ability. On the northeast side of Bunsen Peak, the road becomes steep and winding, dropping 960 feet in 2.5 miles (292 m in 4 km) to Glen Creek. **Caution:** some curves have steep drop-offs and can be hazardous when icy. From Glen Creek the trail climbs 0.5 miles (0.8 km) to a plowed road in an employee housing area YCC Facility 0.8 miles (1.3 km) below the Upper Terrace parking area and 1.3 miles (2.1 km) above Mammoth. This trail provides fine views of the Gallatin Mountains and the Gardner River Canyon.

Indian Creek Loop
2.2 miles (3.5 km), **easiest,**
Begin at the Indian Creek Warming Hut and follow the campground road north, then west through the campground along Indian Creek. About 0.5 miles (0.8 km) west of the campground, the trail turns left (south) through gently rolling, timbered terrain, past the cutoff and on toward Obsidian Creek where it follows an old wagon road north back to the hut. This trail is mostly very gentle. It offers glimpses of the Gallatin Range to the west and travels through the forest.

Upper Terrace Loop Trail
1.5 miles (2.4 km), **easiest to more difficult,**
This loop begins at the Upper Terrace parking area. It is easiest if skied beginning to the left (clockwise). A moderate climb leads to views of hot springs, terraces, and the surrounding mountains. At the top of the climb, a trail veers off to the southwest, which connects with the Snow Pass Trail. The Terrace Loop Trail descends past more hot springs before completing the circuit. Since snow depths here are less than in the mountains above, wintering elk and deer are occasionally sighted. **Caution:** There are thermal areas along this trail; stay on the groomed trail.

Bighorn Loop
5.5 miles (8.85 km), **easiest to more difficult,**
Begin at the Indian Creek Hut and follow the Indian Creek Loop for the first mile. Continue west, making a loop through rolling terrain with outstanding views of the Gallatin Mountains, Gardners Hole, and the surrounding country. After completing the loop, return to the Indian Creek Warming Hut by the same route. There is also a cut-off which heads west from the Indian Creek Hut and the Indian Creek Loop 0.12 miles (0.2 km) from the hut.

Sheepeater Trail
5 miles (8 km), **easiest,**
Begin at the Indian Creek Warming Hut, ski along the road 0.5 miles (0.8 km) north to Sheepeater Cliffs picnic area. The trail skirts the east side of Swan Lake Flats through interspersed forest and meadow with views of the Gallatin Range and the Gardner River Canyon. The trial connects with the Bunsen Peak Trail and continues approximately 1.6 miles (2.5 km) west to the Mammoth-Norris road.

Skier Shuttle to Mammoth
Shuttle services are available from Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel to the Swan Lake and Indian Creek areas on a prearranged basis only. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the front desk in the hotel lobby. Arrangements need to be made for pickup ahead of time. If you miss your shuttle pickup, notify the front desk upon your return to prevent initiation of a search.

Caution: Do not attempt to ski any backcountry trails without good topographical maps and first inquiring about trail conditions. Backcountry trails are marked on this map with dashed black lines. Many of them are difficult to find and follow as they are not well-marked for winter travel and have not necessarily been skied recently. Many go through avalanche-prone areas that are not marked.

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Welcome
Yellowstone offers a variety of enjoyable and challenging trails for skiers. All trails are marked but may be untracked. On some trails, the difficult sections can be avoided by skiing part way in and returning by the same route. The quality of your experience will depend upon the amount of planning and preparation you do prior to your trip. We suggest that you stop at a visitor center or ski shop and discuss your trip. The staff will be happy to provide current information on weather, trail, snow conditions, and alert you to any special winter hazards.

Some backcountry trails are suitable for travel, but should only be attempted by experienced parties with appropriate equipment. Overnight camping requires a free backcountry use permit which must be obtained in person from Mammoth or Old Faithful visitor centers, or West and South entrance stations. Wood fires are not permitted.

Trail Etiquette
- Do not snowshoe or walk directly on ski tracks.
- Skiers/snowshoers going uphill yield to those going downhill.
- Fill in depressions in the snow after falling to reduce hazards to others.
- Ski within your ability. If you find the trail too difficult, turn back

Safety
Trails may have natural hazards such as animals, avalanches, thermal features, downed trees, steep slopes and cliffs. When skiing near thermal areas, stay on marked trails. Approaching thermal features is dangerous and prohibited. The snow in these areas is often icy and what appears to be bare ground may be a thin crust over boiling water.

Winter weather in Yellowstone changes rapidly and can be severely cold and windy. Wear proper clothing layers. Watch yourself and other members of your party for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. For your safety, always ski with someone else. Tell someone where you are going, by what route, and when you plan to return. Carry extra clothing, food, water, map and compass, matches, flashlight, and a whistle.

Consider elevation when deciding on a ski trail. Many ski trails are at high elevation, above 6000 feet (1,829 m) and may require you to move slowly when you are out of breath. Always drink plenty of water.
Avalanche danger: avalanches can occur on any slope and hazards will not always be marked. In avalanche-prone areas carry a shovel, avalanche transceiver, probe, and first aid kit—and know how to use them. Cross slopes one at a time, while others watch from safety.

Wildlife
Do not approach wildlife. Large mammals survive on stored fat and low quality food during winter. Causing them to move will cost them precious calories vital for survival. Park regulations require you to remain *at least* 75 feet (23 m) from bison and other large animals; 300 feet (91 m) from bears and wolves. You are travelling through essential winter habitat. Never approach animals, give them time to move away from you. Travel around a herd, not through it. Always allow animals an escape route through shallow snow or on a packed trail. Pets are not allowed on ski trails or in backcountry areas.

Trail Ratings
Trails are rated by the National Park Service with trail ratings specific to Yellowstone National Park. We strongly encourage all skiers to inquire at a visitor center or Xanterra Ski Shop before beginning their first ski trip. Weather conditions may cause icy trails, deep snow, or barren sections, and in some instances make trails difficult to follow, increasing the difficulty of a trail. Trails are not groomed or checked daily.

Easiest
Skiers need basic knowledge and limited experience in the diagonal stride, snow plow, and side stepping. Trails may have short downhill and uphill stretches.

More Difficult
Skiers need to be able to ski varied terrain requiring turning, snow plowing, herringboning, and diagonal stride.

Most Difficult
Skiers need to be experienced. Trails are hazardous and terrain is frequently extreme. Turns are often sharp and linked together with no room to snow plow or herringbone.

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For emergencies, dial 911

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