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Xanterra Parks and Resorts
Authorized Concessioner of the

Rational Park Service
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Caution: Do not attempt to travel 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.

Current Trail Information
Please visit YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com
or visit the Bear Den Ski Shops at Mammoth Hot
Springs Hotel and Old Faithful Snow Lodge for upto-date trail grooming schedule, trail information,
rentals, lessons, tours and accessories.

5.3 miles (8.3 km), easiest to more difficult The Trail begins at Tower Fall which is 2.5 miles (4 km) from Tower Junction. The trail is easiest if you climb the more difficult section at the beginning of the loop by heading to the right through Tower Fall Campground. More experienced skiers may wish to ski the loop in the opposite direction; however, the "more difficult" portion of the loop can be quite fast if snow is packed. The trail continues through dense lodgepole pine returning to the unplowed Tower-Canyon road. From here the route goes approximately 3 miles (4.8 km) back to Tower Fall. Good views of Mt. Washburn are possible.

**Chittenden Loop Trail** S. ع miles (8.3 km), **easiest to more difficu** 

2.5 miles (4 km), easiest
Begin at the parking area just southeast of Tower Junction.
The trail follows the unplowed Tower-Canyon road up a gradual slope past Calcite Springs Overlook to Tower Fall.
Great views of the Yellowstone River Canyon, occasional bison, bighorn sheep and bald eagles.

Tower Fall Trail

This trail may be skied from either end. Begin 8 miles (13 km) east of Mammoth Hot Springs at a parking area across the road from a self-guiding trail, or at a service road approximately 1 mile (1.6 km) farther east (see map). The trail gradually climbs 900 feet (274 m) in 6 miles (9.7 km) through open meadows to "The Cut". From here the trail descends 2 miles (3.2 km) down a moderate grade through a spruce-fir forest to rejoin the Mammoth-Tower Road 1.4 miles (2.25 km) from Tower Junction. Broad vistas, elk, deer, coyotes, and occasionally bison may be seen.

**Blacktail Plateau Trail** 8 miles (12.8 km), easiest to more difficult

Caution: Remove your skis for the short, steep section at the Lost Creek Bridge.

Start at the Petrified Tree Road, just east of the exit of Blacktail Plateau Drive, or 1.4 miles (2.25 km) west of Tower Junction. The trail follows the road to the Petrified Tree, then leads through a narrow, open valley to Lost Lake. Follow the near shore (on the ice) the trail reaches the head of the lake, then travel through intermittent forest and meadows. After 2.5 miles (4.4 km) to the head of the lake, then travel through intermittent forest and meadows. After 2.5 miles (4.5 km) and a short, steep descent, the trail reaches Calcite Springs Overlook on the Tower Fall Trail, 1.4 miles (2.25 km) from Tower Junction. It DOES NOT follow the maintained summer trail. Watch closely for orange trail tags marking the route because it may be difficult to find. Rolling terrain, some views, and possibly elk may be seen along this trail.

**Lost Lake Trail**4 miles (6.4 km), easiest to more difficult

Trail Descriptions

## 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.

## **National Park Service**

P.O. Box 168

Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190

For emergencies, dial 911

# TOWER AREA SKI TRAILS



Yellowstone National Park