



P.O. Box 117 Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190 * 406.848.2400 * YellowstoneAssociation.org

Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to the Institute you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. If you are a veteran of Institute programs you will know the many perspectives from which learning can take place in this diverse place. Since its inception in 1976, the Institute has evolved into a respected educational organization that offers diverse and in-depth study of the Yellowstone area, bringing back students year after year. We are glad that you are able to join us. Our goal is to provide you with an enjoyable, high-quality educational experience and a safe and memorable visit to Yellowstone.

The following information is provided to help you prepare for your program. Please read it thoroughly and call us at 406.848.2400 or email registrar@yellowstoneassociation.org if you have any questions. We recommend all first time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or www.nps.gov/yell.

Winter Travel

The only road open to wheeled vehicles in the winter (early November to mid-April) is the road from the North Entrance to the Northeast Entrance. All other roads are closed to wheeled vehicles. Because Cooke Pass is closed to wheeled vehicles, it is not possible to enter or exit Yellowstone National Park through the Northeast Entrance. You must enter the park through Gardiner, Montana. Current road conditions are available through the NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117.

Important Information Included in this Document:

- Program Overview
- What's Included
- How to Prepare for this Program
- Program Itinerary
- Suggested Reading
- YA Park Store Information
- YA Membership Information
- Code of Ethics
- Cancellation Policy
- Travel Information

Program Overview

The focus of this six-day program is exploring Yellowstone by traveling on cross-country skis. We will incorporate wildlife, history, ecology, geology, into our recreational activities, as well as discuss issues that affect the Yellowstone ecosystem. Our first ski day starts with a bang—we'll travel by ski shuttle into a pristine and quiet part of the park to a backcountry route. During the remaining four days, we will venture into the central part of Yellowstone, on groomed roads in a snowcoach, to ski far from the road corridors past frozen waterfalls; through open pristine meadows; and to expansive backcountry lakes and along the rim of the amazing Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River.

Your naturalist guide will inform you of the departure time for the next day's activities. The schedule for the week incorporates group activities and reserves free time for individual exploring, relaxing, hiking, skiing, ice skating,

soaking in hot springs, and more. All field activities will be conducted as a group. If you are not able to participate in the day's activities, please let your naturalist guide know in advance.

What's Included?

The **Yellowstone on Skis** program includes an educational program by an Institute naturalist guide, in-park transportation, ski rentals (if selected at time of registration), six nights of lodging, hot beverages, snacks on the road, one dinner, and all breakfasts and lunches on full program days. Gratuity is included for all prepaid meals, baggage handling, and the snowcoach driver. Any other gratuities, including gratuities for naturalist guide and ski guide, are discretionary. You will receive a Snowcard that entitles you to a 10 percent discount for dinners. Dinner reservations are required at both the Mammoth and Old Faithful hotels. We recommend that you make dinner reservations before your arrival to Yellowstone by calling 866.439.7375. The attached itinerary gives arrival times at our daily destinations.

Your enrollment in this program also includes a one year subscription to our magazine, *Yellowstone Quarterly*.

We look forward to sharing Yellowstone with you!

How to Prepare for this Program:

How Fit Do You Need to Be?

- This program is rated for brisk aerobic skiing of up to 8 miles per day with climbs up to 1000 feet. Skiing is an aerobic activity—even more so at 6000 to 8000 feet. If you have not already done so, it would be wise to commence a program of moderate aerobic exercise prior to the trip. Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude.
- To ensure an enjoyable experience, all participants should have at least “advanced beginner” cross-country ski skills (see below). If you have not been on cross-country skis in a while, we strongly encourage enrolling in a *Learn-to-Ski* class in Mammoth Hot Springs on the day before your program starts in order to be adequately prepared for the program. Call 307.344.7311 for more details.
- We will be skiing on un-groomed trails. Sometimes these trails will be skier-tracked, other times we may break our own trails. Conditions vary from powder to hard-packed, depending on weather. Downhill ski experience does not equate to proficiency on cross-country skis.
- For your safety and the safety of other participants, please take the time to answer the Confidential Health Information Questionnaire completely and accurately. If you have any questions or concerns regarding physical or medical conditions, please contact us at 406.848.2400.

To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit <http://bit.ly/1xx5H8K>

Advanced Beginner Ski Skills

On cross-country skis, you should be able to do the following on un-groomed trails:

- Snowplow to slow down, ski in control on hills, and stop on demand
- Snowplow to turn while skiing downhill
- Not fall so often that you exhaust yourself or hold up the group for an inordinate time
- Get yourself up with minimal assistance after falling
- Kick and glide on flat ground
- Negotiate normal obstacles that one might find on a trail, like fallen logs or rocks.

General Clothing and Equipment List

Much of your time will be spent outdoors and all programs are held rain, snow or shine. You should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are very important. Winter temperatures can range from below zero in the mornings to 35 degrees Fahrenheit in the early afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices. Loose fitting layers allow you to maintain a comfortable and dry body as outside temperatures change and as your own body's temperature and moisture output changes with different levels of exertion.

Equipment:

YA field staff assigned to your program will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.

- ☐ **Personal Skis**, if you choose to bring your own, should be hot waxed prior to arrival. All skis, even “no-wax” skis, need to have tips and tails hot waxed on a regular basis. The ski shop in Mammoth Hot Springs is able to provide this service if you are unable to do it before leaving home.
- ☐ **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, field guides, etc.
- ☐ **Water bottle**, one-quart is the minimum recommended. Camelback or similar hydration systems work well in summer but can freeze in winter.
- ☐ **Sunglasses**
- ☐ **Sunscreen/lip protector**, sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.
- ☐ **Camera, binoculars**
- ☐ **Notebook/pencil**
- ☐ **Pocket hand and foot warmers**, recommended November through May.
- ☐ **Flashlight/Headlamp**, a small light for walking to and from your cabin in the evenings and mornings.
- ☐ **Alarm**, so you're on time for the day's activities.

Clothing:

- ☐ **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, or similar wicking fabric.
- ☐ **Mid-weight insulating layer**, light, 200-weight synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover.
- ☐ **Heavyweight insulating layer**, can be wool, down, heavy-weight fleece, or other synthetic fabric. In the winter, a heavy winter coat with a water resistant shell will suffice for less active programs.
- ☐ **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable. Both jackets and pants are recommended.
- ☐ **Short sleeved shirt**, cotton is okay in summer, but synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.
- ☐ **Pants**, in the summer, synthetic hiking pants, lightweight pile/fleece pants, tights, or similar. In the winter, wool or fleece pants or tights. Jeans are not recommended.
- ☐ **Hats**, both a brimmed sun hat and an insulating hat that covers your ears for cold weather.
- ☐ **Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens. A water and windproof outer layer is recommended.
- ☐ **Socks**, light wool or synthetic liner sock with heavier wool or synthetic outer sock.
- ☐ **Insulated boots**, must have water repellent layers outside, thick insulation inside, and be large enough to fit over thick socks. Tight boots are the surest way to get painfully cold feet. Soles with proper traction or traction devices (i.e. Yaktrax) are essential for icy conditions. General hiking boots will not provide adequate insulation or traction in most cases.
- ☐ **Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.

Program Itinerary

The itinerary is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park, but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions, wildlife movements, holidays, and road construction.

- Day 1 Welcome and Orientation**
 If renting skis, and if time permits, get skis at Mammoth Hot Springs Bear Den Ski Shop prior to orientation.
 Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard discount
 7:00 p.m. Orientation in the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel Conference Room
 Introduction to Yellowstone, program preview, clothing and equipment review, and question and answer session.
 Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs
- Day 2 Indian Creek Ski Tour**
 Breakfast on your own (with coupon)
 Ski fitting for those who were unable to get skis previously (the Mammoth Hot Springs Bear Den Ski Shop opens at 7:30 a.m.).
 9:15 a.m. Meet in lobby with day's gear (skis, pack, water, and appropriate clothing)
 Depart for ski tour via snowcoach
 Interpretive ski tour
 Deli lunch on the trail
 4:30 p.m. Return to Mammoth Hot Springs
 Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard discount
 8:30 p.m. Optional evening program or free time
 Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs
- Day 3 Ski Tour in the Old Faithful Area**
 Breakfast on your own (with coupon)
 7:00 a.m. Leave tagged luggage for Old Faithful outside of your room
Check-out required from Mammoth Hot Springs
 7:45 a.m. Meet in hotel lobby with gear for the day (pack, water, and appropriate clothing), ready to load
 8:00 a.m. Depart for Old Faithful area via snowcoach, with interpretive stops along the way
 Interpretive ski tour
 Deli lunch on the trail
 4:00-5:30 p.m. Arrive at Old Faithful Snow Lodge
 Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard discount
 Overnight at Old Faithful
- Days 4 and 5 Ski Tours in the Old Faithful Area**
 Breakfast on your own (with coupon)
 8:45 a.m. Meet at snowcoach with day's gear (skis, pack, water, and appropriate clothing)
 Depart for ski tour(s)
 Deli lunch on the trail
 3:00-5:00 p.m. Return to Old Faithful
 Day 4: Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard discount
 6:30 p.m. Day 5: Group dinner with naturalist guide—reservations have been made for you (bring coupon)
 Days 4 and 5: Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge
- Day 6 Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone Ski Tour**
 Breakfast on your own (with coupon)
 Leave luggage for Mammoth Hot Springs inside of your room

Check-out required from Old Faithful Snow Lodge

- 7:30 a.m. Meet at snowcoach with day's gear (skis, pack, water, and appropriate clothing)
 Depart for Canyon area
 Interpretive ski tours
 Deli lunch on the trail
- 6:00 p.m. Return to Mammoth Hot Springs
 Drop off rental equipment behind activities desk
 Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard discount
 Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

Suggested Reading

No prior reading is required, but you might want something to occupy your flight or car ride. Whether your passion is history, geology, wildlife, or ecology, there's something for everyone. Most publications are available from the Yellowstone Association's online Park Store at www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop or by calling 406.848.2400. Yellowstone Association members receive a 15 percent discount and proceeds go directly back into the park for education and research.

- Eversman, S., and Carr, M. 1992. *Yellowstone Ecology: A Road Guide*. Mountain Press Publishing Co., Missoula, MT 242 pp.
- Halfpenny, J.C. 1987. *A Field Guide to Mammal Tracking in North America. Second Edition*. Johnson Books, Boulder, CO. 176 pp.
- Halfpenny, J.C. and Ozanne, R.D. 1989. *Winter: An Ecological Handbook*. Johnson Books, Boulder, CO. 273 pp.
- Henry, J. 1998. *Yellowstone Winter Guide*. Roberts Rinehart Publishers, Boulder, CO. 104 pp.
- Schullery, P. 1995. *Yellowstone's Ski Pioneers: Peril and Heroism on the Winter Trail*. High Plains Publishing Co., Worland, WY. 163 pp.
- Schullery, P. 1999. *Searching for Yellowstone: Ecology and Wonder in the Last Wilderness*. Houghton Mifflin Co., NY, NY. 338pp.
- Smith, R.B. and Siegel, L.J. 2000. *Windows into the Earth: The Geologic Story of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks*. Oxford University Press. 242 pp.
- Smith, D and Ferguson, G. *Decade of the Wolf 2005*, Lyons Press, NY 212 pp.

Park Stores

Our Park Stores feature more than 900 books, maps and videos to help you plan your visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items to remind you of your visit to Yellowstone. Yellowstone Association members receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of our 12 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support education and research in Yellowstone. Visit: www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop

Membership

Yellowstone Association members directly fund education and research, provide scholarships for teachers and help expand programming for underserved youth. Member benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration and discounts for Institute programs, and discounts on retail purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not a member of the Yellowstone Association, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information about membership, visit www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/join

Code of Ethics

The Yellowstone Association Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in an Institute program, we ask you to adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Institute abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations. We also practice Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: We will do our best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Animals will be observed from a distance, using high-powered spotting scopes to help keep our presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. The Institute will adhere to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. We will not entice wildlife with food, animal calls or any actions that change their behavior.

Leave what you find: It is illegal to remove natural or cultural artifacts (plants, animals, bones, rocks, etc.) from Yellowstone. Institute naturalist guides have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

General etiquette: Institute groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including wolf howls) prevail.

Roads and vehicles: Expect wildlife on the road, and drive at or below the posted park speed limits. When stopping to observe wildlife or other park features, the Institute will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, we will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. We will not stop in the middle of the road, and should a traffic jam develop as a result of our activities, we will cease the activity.

Properly dispose of waste: We will pack out all trash, leftover food and litter. Your naturalist guide will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their program and should expect to walk through mud, snow or puddles in the trail.

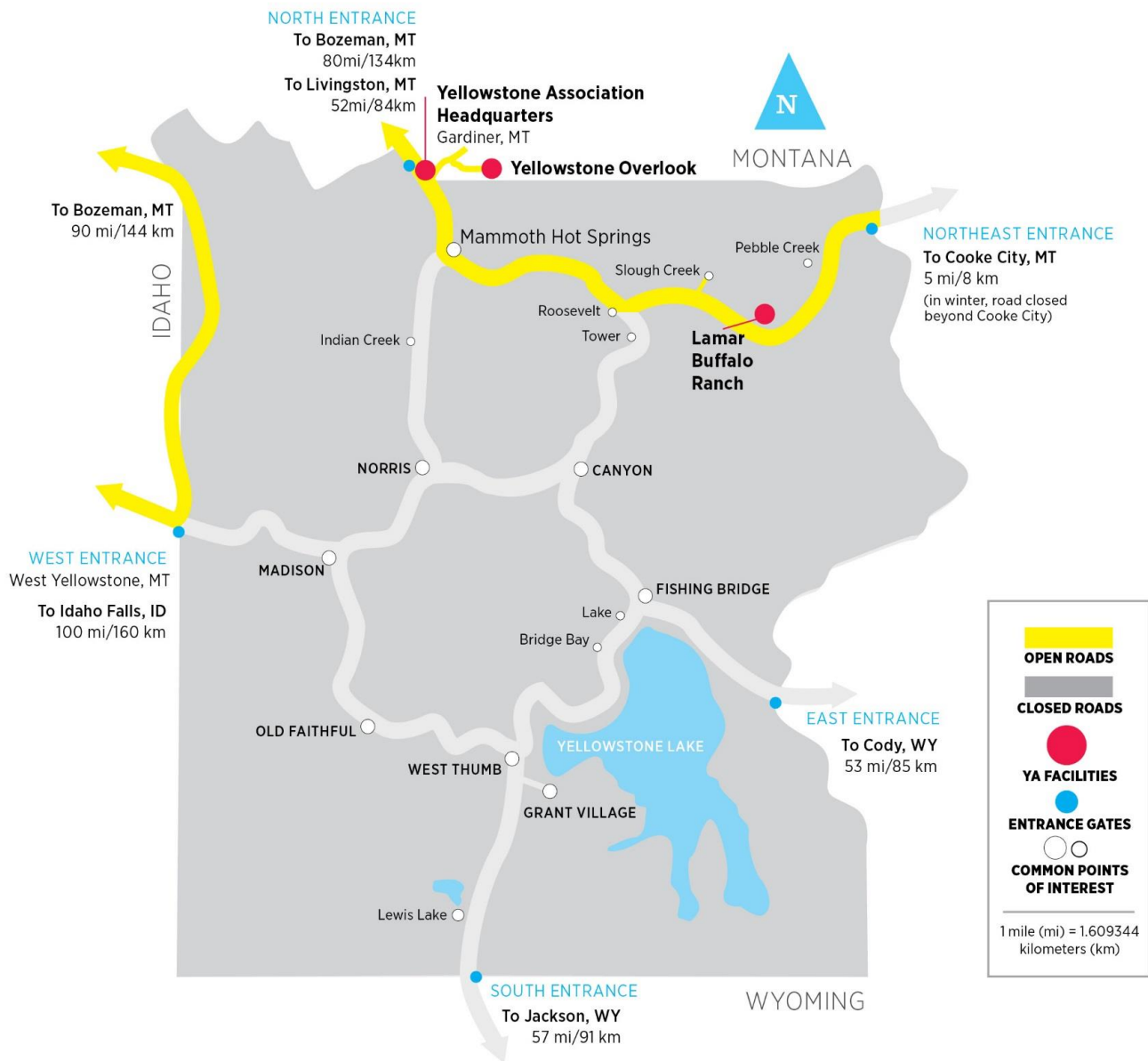
Thank you for helping us set a good example in Yellowstone!

Cancellation and Refund Policy

For packages, 60-day notice is required to receive a full refund of your deposit amount. Cancellations made between 30-60 days will result in 50 percent forfeiture of package cost. Cancellations made within 30 days of arrival result in 100 percent forfeiture of package cost. We recommend the purchase of travel insurance to help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to unforeseen circumstances. For more information about travel insurance, please ask our representative when booking your reservation.



Yellowstone Winter Map **YELLOWSTONE ASSOCIATION**



The only road open to wheeled vehicles in the winter (early November to mid-April) is the road from the North Entrance to the Northeast Entrance. Because Cooke Pass is closed to wheeled vehicles, it is not possible to enter or exit Yellowstone National Park through the Northeast Entrance. You must enter the park through Gardiner, Montana. Current road conditions are available through the **NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117**.



POINT TO POINT DISTANCE		Miles/Kilometers
Noth Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	21 mi/34 km	
Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance	29 mi/47 km	
Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch	11 mi/17km	
Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs	18 mi/29 km	

ELEVATIONS		feet/ meters
North Entrance	5314 /1620	
West Entrance	6667 /2032	
South Entrance	6886 /2099	
East Entrance	6951 /2119	
Mammoth Hot Springs	6239 /1902	
Old Faithful	7365 /2254	
Grant Village	7733 /2357	
Lake	7784 /2373	
Canyon	7734 /2357	
Roosevelt	6270 /1911	