



P.O. Box 117 Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190 \* 406.848.2400 \* [YellowstoneAssociation.org](http://YellowstoneAssociation.org)

Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to Institute programs, you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. If you are a veteran of our 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 field school that offers diverse and in-depth study of the Yellowstone area, bringing back participants year after year. We are glad that you are able to join us. As Yellowstone National Park's primary nonprofit partner in education, our goal is to provide you with an enjoyable, high-quality educational experience and an exciting 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](mailto:registrar@yellowstoneassociation.org) if you have any questions. We recommend that first-time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell).

To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign our health questionnaire and assumption of risk waiver. Registrants receive a link to this form in their confirmation letter which is sent via e-mail. These forms must be completed and returned at least 30 days prior to your program start date.

### **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 five-day program is exploring Yellowstone by traveling on cross-country skis. The serenity and beauty of Yellowstone in winter is unlike anywhere else, and this will provide the setting for discovery, reflection, and fascination. We will ski far from the road corridors and through open pristine meadows to explore frozen waterfalls, expansive backcountry lakes, backcountry geyser features, and the amazing Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. We will incorporate wildlife, history, ecology, and geology into our recreational activities, as well as discuss issues that affect the Yellowstone ecosystem. Your Institute instructor will guide you to the most scenic and awe-inspiring features in the park, and share the stories behind the rare magic of Yellowstone.

Beginning at Mammoth Hot Springs, we'll travel via chartered snowcoach deep into the interior of the park, to Old Faithful Snow Lodge, our warm and cozy base for four full days of outings and activities. The first full day will involve a ski fitting, professional cross-country ski instruction, and a ski outing in the Old Faithful area. The next day we will venture further out to remote and spectacular winter gems like the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, skiing the most scenic trails along the route. The following two full days will be spent exploring more of Yellowstone's fascinating landscapes on skis, along the most exciting ski trails the park has to offer. As time and conditions allow, we'll aim to ski trails such as DeLacy Creek to Shoshone Lake, Spring Creek, Lonestar Geyser, Fairy Falls, and more. On the last day we will return to Mammoth Hot Springs via chartered snowcoach.

Your instructor 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, 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 instructor know in advance.

We encourage you to take advantage of the airport shuttle provided by Yellowstone National Park Lodges for a safe and comfortable ride to and from Mammoth Hot Springs from the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport. This program itinerary has been developed to coordinate seamlessly with airport shuttle arrival and departure times. Please call the Yellowstone National Park Lodges Reservations Office at 866.439.7375 (select "winter packages" from the phone directory options) for more information.

## What's Included?

*Yellowstone on Skis* includes:

- Educational programming and guide services by an Yellowstone Association Institute instructor
- All in-park transportation
- 5 nights of Premium Room lodging at Old Faithful Snow Lodge
- Ski rentals (optional pricing)
- Scopes and binoculars
- Professional cross-country ski instruction
- 5 hot breakfasts at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge Obsidian Dining room
- 1 hot lunch at the Mammoth Hot Springs Terrace Grill
- 4 deli lunches
- 1 dinner at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge Obsidian Dining Room (with instructor)
- Hot beverages and snacks on the road

Gratuities for food and beverage staff are included in all prepaid meals. Gratuities are also included for baggage handling and the snowcoach driver. Any other gratuities, including gratuities for the Institute instructor, are discretionary. You will receive a Snowcard that entitles you to a 10 percent discount for dinners. Dinner reservations are required at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge. We recommend that you make dinner reservations before your arrival to Yellowstone by calling 866.439.7375. The attached itinerary gives estimated arrival times at our daily destinations.

If you are not a Yellowstone Association member, 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.
- To ensure an enjoyable experience, all participants should have at least “advanced beginner” cross-country ski skills (see below).
- 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 (alpine) ski experience does not equate to proficiency on cross-country skis.

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 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.

- 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 Clock**, so you're on time for the day's activities.

### Clothing:

- Insulating underwear**, wool, 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 courses.
- 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, road conditions, wildlife movements, holidays, and road construction.

### Day 1 **Group Welcome—Depart for Old Faithful**

- 12:00 p.m. Lunch at the Mammoth Hot Springs Terrace Grill (with coupon)  
 1:00 p.m. Meet your instructor at the Terrace Grill in Mammoth Hot Springs  
 Introductions and brief orientation  
 2:00 p.m. Depart for Old Faithful Snow Lodge via private chartered snowcoach  
 Sightseeing along the way  
 Stop at Madison Warming Hut for a short break and hot drinks (included)  
 Continue south to Old Faithful along the Firehole River  
 6:00 pm Arrive Old Faithful Snow Lodge, check in  
 Dinner on own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard  
 Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge

### Day 2 **Introductory Ski Touring in Old Faithful**

- 8:30 a.m. Breakfast on your own (with coupon)  
 Meet in lobby with gear for the day (pack, water, and appropriate clothing)  
 Ski fitting at the Old Faithful Bear Den Ski Shop  
 Professional cross-country ski lesson  
 Board private chartered snowcoach for ski outing  
 Deli lunch in the field  
 4:00 p.m. Return to Snow Lodge  
 Dinner on your own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard  
 Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge

### Day 3 **The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone**

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast on your own (with coupon)  
 Meet at lobby with gear for the day (skis, pack, water, and appropriate clothing)  
 Board snowcoach and depart for the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone  
 Sightseeing and wildlife watching along the route  
 Deli lunch in the field  
 Ski select trails along the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone  
 6:00 p.m. Return to Snow Lodge  
 Dinner on your own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard  
 Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge

### Day 4 **DeLacy Creek Trail to Shoshone Lake**

- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast on your own (with coupon)  
 Meet in lobby with gear for the day (pack, water, skis, and appropriate clothing)  
 Board snowcoach and depart for the DeLacy Creek trailhead  
 Ski DeLacy Creek trail to Shoshone Lake  
 Deli lunch in the field  
 5:00 p.m. Return to Old Faithful Snow Lodge  
 Dinner on your own (advanced reservations required) using Snowcard  
 Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge

**Day 5      Spring Creek and Lonestar Geyser**

Breakfast on your own (with coupon)

8:00 a.m.      Meet in lobby with gear for the day (pack, water, skis, and appropriate clothing)  
Board snowcoach and depart for the Spring Creek or Lonestar Geyser trailhead  
Ski Spring Creek and Lonestar Geyser trails

Deli lunch in the field

4:00 p.m.      Return to Old Faithful Snow Lodge

5:00 p.m.      Dinner with Instructor—reservations have been made for you (with coupon)

Overnight at Old Faithful Snow Lodge

**Day 6      Return to Mammoth Hot Springs**

Breakfast on your own (with coupon)

Leave luggage bound for Mammoth Hot Springs inside of your room

7:45 a.m.      Meet in lobby with day's gear (pack, water, and appropriate clothing)

Depart for Mammoth Hot Springs

12:00 p.m.      Arrive 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](http://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 12 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support education and research in Yellowstone. Visit: [www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop](http://www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/shop)

## Membership

Yellowstone Association members directly fund education and research, provide financial aid for teachers, and help expand programming for underserved youth. Member benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration, discounts for Institute courses, 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 *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information about membership, visit: [www.YellowstoneAssociation.org/join](http://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 instructors 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 instructor will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

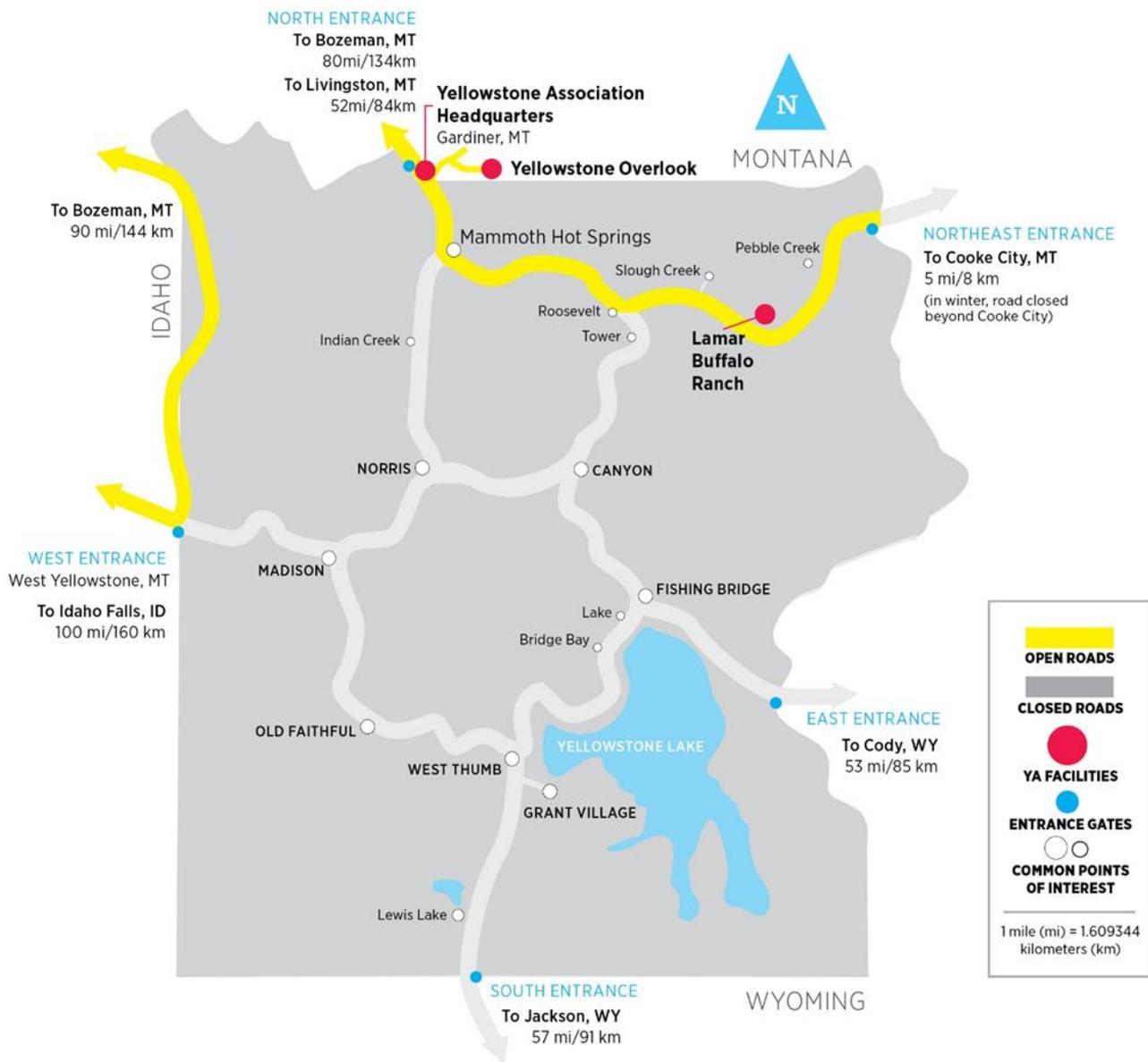
**Traveling lightly:** When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their course 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% forfeiture of package cost. Cancellations made within 30 days of arrival result in 100% 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
North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	5 mi/8 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