

Capitol Reef National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Horse and Pack Animal Use

Recreational horse and pack animal use is a traditional means of viewing and experiencing Capitol Reef National Park. “Pack animals” are defined as horses, burros, and mules. Stock use in any part of the park may be prohibited when necessary to protect park resources or visitors.

General Information and Regulations

For all trips involving horses and/or pack animals (day use or overnight), the following regulations apply:

- Stock use within the park is limited to horses, burros, and mules.
- Stock use in the park’s backcountry is limited to 12 people and no more than 12 head of riding or packing stock.
- Stock animals may not be ridden or kept overnight in any campground, picnic area, orchard, or roadside pullout, with the exception of the equestrian staging area at the Post Corral (see below).
- Horses and pack animals must be picketed in locations where there will be little or no vegetation damage.
- Grazing or loose herding is not permitted.
- All feed must be carried in and must be certified weed-free feed.
- Riders will slow to a walk when passing hikers.
- Manure must be removed immediately if dropped in or near any spring or non-flowing water source.
- Human waste must be buried 6 inches deep and at least 100 feet from non-flowing water; 200 feet from flowing water. All trash, including toilet paper, must be carried out. Burning or burying toilet paper is prohibited.
- Fires are not permitted in the backcountry.
- Dogs may not accompany recreational stock trips.
- Generators are not permitted.
- All commercially guided horse or pack animal trips must be provided by an outfitter that is authorized and permitted to operate under the commercial use procedures of the park. Commercial groups are not permitted to use the Post Corral equestrian staging area.
- Report all accidents or injuries to a park ranger or at the visitor center as soon as possible.
- Area closures may be enacted to protect park resources or visitors.

Backcountry Camping with Stock

Additional regulations for backcountry camping with stock are described below:

- A free backcountry use permit, available at the visitor center, is required for each party with horses or pack animals staying overnight in the park. Parties must obtain their permits in-person and must possess it while camping.
- Backcountry camping is prohibited within one half mile of roads or trailheads (except at the Post Corral). Camping is also prohibited within sight of established roads or trails, or within sight or sound of other campers.
- Campsites and tethering areas must be a minimum of 300 feet from water, archeological/historical sites, and backcountry trail junctions, and at least 100 feet from any water course (wet or dry).
- Parties camping with horses or pack animals must camp in a new location each night (except when camping at the Post Corral).
- Manure must be scattered before vacating a campsite. Manure must be removed immediately if dropped in or near any spring or non-flowing water source.

(continued)

Post Corral Equestrian Staging Area

The equestrian staging area at the Post Corral is located in the park's Waterpocket District, about 35 miles (57 km) south of Utah Highway 24 via the Notom-Bullfrog Road and Burr Trail Road. Check at the visitor center for current road conditions, since stormy weather may impact access to this site. This is the park's only developed overnight facility for stock users. It is also available for day use, under the same conditions as for overnight users:

- Use of the Post Corral equestrian staging area is permitted only for non-commercial horse users.
- All parties must obtain advanced reservations by phone or in-person, and must also obtain a backcountry permit in-person from the visitor center, prior to use.
- All vehicles, camping units, and trailers associated with groups camping at the site must be parked within the large (west) side

of the corral, and horses must be kept in the adjacent pens of the corral. (The corral is not adequate to hold horses, but they may be tied to existing corral fences.)

- Camp use is limited to one group of 12 riders and 12 horses. Up to two camp tenders may also accompany the group, and may remain in camp as needed.
- Generator operation is prohibited.
- Ground fires are prohibited unless contained within a portable fire pan or grill. Ashes must be removed out of the park. Wood gathering is prohibited.
- There is no water available at the corral site.
- Riders not camping at the equestrian staging area must use this area for staging day-use trips. Vehicles and trailers must be parked in the area marked by signs that are located adjacent to the corral, and not at the trailhead.

Restricted Areas

Horses and pack animals are allowed throughout the park **are not allowed in the following** areas:

- Trails starting on Utah State Route 24 or the Scenic Drive
- Capitol Gorge and Golden Throne trail
- Grand Wash

- Upper Spring Canyon and Lower Spring Canyon
- Halls Creek narrows
- Halls Creek Overlook

Recommended Rides

- **Halls Creek**—access from the Post Corral south through Halls Creek drainage; **Halls Creek Narrows is closed to all stock use**—however, the narrows can be bypassed with stock via the Hall Divide route
- **South Desert**—access from Upper or Lower South Desert Overlooks

- **South Draw Road**—access to Tantalus Flats and Boulder Mountain or return down Pleasant Creek

Additional Information

Contact Capitol Reef National Park at 435-425-3791.

www.nps.gov/care/planyourvisit/horsepack.htm