



Floating the Snake River



The River

The headwaters of the wild and scenic Snake River are on the boundary between Yellowstone National Park and the Teton Wilderness. Floating the river is complex. A tangle of channels and constantly shifting logjams require boaters to anticipate their routes well in advance. Accidents are common. Please use caution and check conditions before each trip. Flow rates vary greatly throughout the year. They are posted at river landings and permit offices weekly or when there is a significant change.

Spring flows are very cold, fast and muddy making the river more difficult. As snowmelt diminishes, volume decreases and water clears. In spite of reduced flow, the current remains deceptively powerful. Strong, upstream afternoon winds may slow your pace.

Safety and Etiquette

- Prepare boats away from launch ramps to reduce congestion at landings.
- Launch when other boats are out of sight, and maintain this interval throughout your trip.
- Excessive noise disrupts the river experience for other boaters and disturbs wildlife. Keep silent during wildlife encounters
- Steer clear of other boaters and anglers, including fishing lines.
- Rangers regularly patrol the river in summer. Contact river patrol rangers for assistance while floating.
- Information and permits are available at the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center, the Jenny Lake and Colter Bay visitor centers.
- Carry the following equipment: an extra paddle or oar, a waterproof container with extra clothes, first aid kit and waste receptacle. Inflatable boats should have an air pump, bailing bucket, and patch kit.
- Attach all gear securely.
- Do not drink river water unless boiled or purified.
- Swimming is not recommended in the river.
- For information on Snake River flows, call 1-800-658-5771 or check: waterdata.usgs.gov/wy/nwis/current?type=flow.

Regulations

- **Park Permit fee: \$10 season, non-motorized**
- Vessels must carry USCG approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) of the appropriate size for each person on board. Passengers under 13 years of age must wear a PFD.
- A non-motorized park boat permit is required for each watercraft. Permits available at: Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center, the Colter Bay or Jenny Lake visitor centers. Display the permit on the port side (left) in the stern (back).
- Boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited.
- Inner tubes, air mattresses, float tubes, and similar flotation devices are prohibited.
- Motors are prohibited on the Snake River.
- Motors may be used on Jackson Lake for the Flagg Ranch to Lizard Creek section with a motorized boat permit.
- No camping or fires on the river.
- Floating is prohibited on all rivers in the park and parkway except the Snake River. The Snake River is closed to floating and public entry each year, December 15 to April 1 from the Buffalo Fork confluence south to Menors Ferry.
- Floating is prohibited within 1,000 feet of the Jackson Lake Dam.
- A concession permit is required for all commercial activity in the park.
- Report any accident with a collision or injury to a ranger within 24 hours.
- Pack out all trash.

Aquatic Invasive Species



- Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are an increasing concern. Many bodies of water are already contaminated. Clean, drain and dry boats, boots, and waders before entering a new body of water.
 - *Never empty containers of bait, fish, plants or animals into park waters.*
 - Any watercraft entering Wyoming March 1–November 30 requires boat inspection prior to launch, and the purchase of an AIS decal. Inflatable craft less than 10 feet long are exempt.
 - Purchase decals at many fishing gear stores, or online: wgfd.wyo.gov.
- | AIS Fees | Non-motorized | Motorized |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|
| Resident | \$5 | \$10 |
| Non-resident | \$15 | \$30 |

Suggested Float Trips

Beginner Level

- **Jackson Lake Dam to Pacific Creek**

This stretch features scenic views, calmer water and few obstructions. At Pacific Creek landing the water is swift, boaters should scout this landing prior to launching.

Intermediate Level

- **Pacific Creek to Deadmans Bar**

This section drops significantly creating swift water and braided channels requiring careful route-finding.

- **Flagg Ranch to Lizard Creek**

Campground

The braided channels make route-finding a challenge. The river winds for 6 miles before reaching Jackson Lake. Once on the lake it is 4 miles to Lizard Creek depending on lake level. Strenuous rowing or paddling may be required. Afternoon thunderstorms and winds produce waves that may swamp canoes. Motors may be used on Jackson Lake.

Advanced Level

- **Deadmans Bar to Moose Landing**

This is the most challenging stretch of river in the park, many accidents occur here. The river drops more steeply and the current increases. Complex braiding obscures the main channel and strong currents can sweep boaters into side channels blocked by logjams.

- **Moose to South Park Boundary**

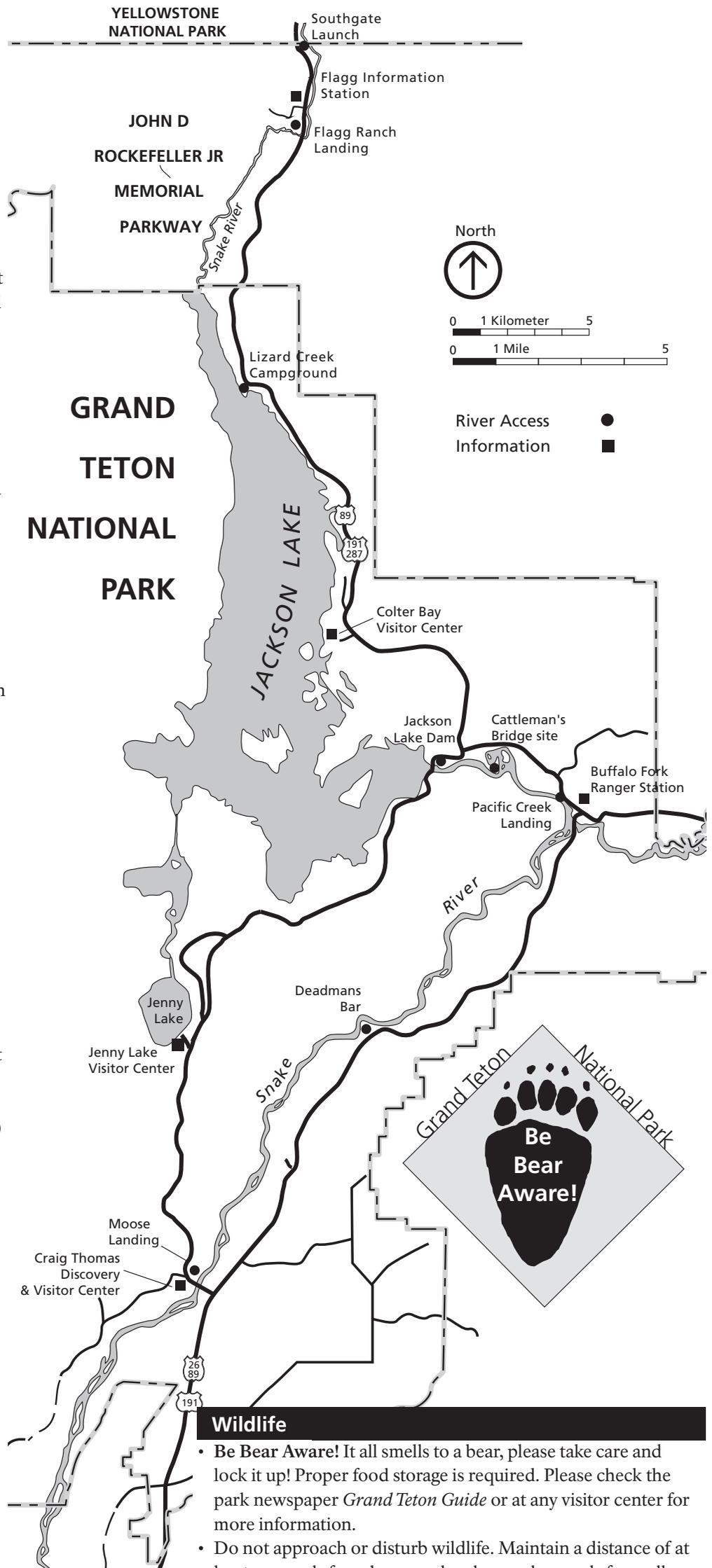
This section of the river is as difficult as the preceding section. Advanced boating skills are required due to fast current, braided channels and logjams. The park extends 5 miles downstream of Moose on the west bank and 2 miles downstream on the east bank; there is no take out or access to the river at the park boundary. The next take-out is at the Snake River Bridge east of Wilson, WY, 14 miles downstream from Moose.

- **Southgate to Flagg Ranch (Flagg Canyon)**

Southgate Launch is 1/2-mile south of the South Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Flagg Canyon is steep and narrow with challenging white water for rafts and kayaks. Heavy spring water flows create standing waves, haystacks, laterals, and large holes capable of flipping rafts. Scout the river by walking the Flagg Canyon Trail on the west bank of the river. At over 4000 cfs flow the rapids are Class III (not recommended for canoes). Below 4000 cfs, canoeing requires advanced white water skills.

Mileages

Southgate Launch to Flagg Ranch	3
Flagg Ranch to Lizard Creek	10
Jackson Lake Dam to Pacific Creek	5
Pacific Creek to Deadmans Bar	10
Deadmans Bar to Moose Landing	10
Moose to Wilson	14



Wildlife

- **Be Bear Aware!** It all smells to a bear, please take care and lock it up! Proper food storage is required. Please check the park newspaper *Grand Teton Guide* or at any visitor center for more information.
- Do not approach or disturb wildlife. Maintain a distance of at least 100 yards from bears and wolves and 25 yards from all other wildlife.
- Bald eagles nest near the main channel. To protect this species, nest areas are signed and closed to stopping and river bank use.
- Ospreys and great blue herons nest near the Snake River. Do not stop near nests as these birds are also susceptible to disturbance.