



Bicycling 2014



NPS/Debbie Biddle

Bicycling in Rocky Mountain National Park offers beautiful scenery, a challenging experience, significant elevation gain, winding mountain roads, heavy traffic, arid climate, and changeable weather. Be prepared and use extreme caution when riding on park roads. Remember, safety is your responsibility.

Where Can I Safely Ride?

Bicycles are permitted on all roads that are open to motor vehicles, both paved and dirt, unless otherwise posted. There are no designated bicycle lanes along roads. Park roads are narrow with few or no shoulders, so ride with care.

Bicycles are prohibited on all trails.

Be prepared and use extreme caution when riding on park roads. Many factors contribute to unique and challenging conditions:

- Park roads are consistently narrow, steep, winding, and in some cases traverse altitudes over 12,000 feet in elevation where alpine weather conditions can change quickly and dramatically, including gusty winds and frequent summer thunderstorms.

- Road shoulders are narrow and not designed to accommodate cyclists. There are few guardrails and many steep drop-offs.
- When passing cyclists, motorists often maneuver a considerable distance into the oncoming traffic lane to allow safe passing, particularly in larger vehicles with extended side-view mirrors. In summer, roads are heavily congested, with drivers who are often unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the nature of these high mountain roads and driving conditions. They may be operating rented oversize vehicles and/or pulling trailers. Driver attention may be diverted by scenery and wildlife.

Bicycles are not allowed along the Grand Ditch road.

When Can I Safely Ride?

It is suggested that cyclists on Trail Ridge Road and the Bear Lake Road get an early start. After about 10 a.m. roads become more congested with vehicles of all sizes and the potential for conflict and accidents increases.

High mountain weather can change rapidly, and often includes gusty winds, hail, and severe thunderstorms. It can snow any time of year.

Entrance Fees

Bicycles: Cyclists who ride into the park are charged \$10 per person, valid for seven consecutive days including the date of purchase.

An annual pass or lifetime pass will cover the cyclist and up to 3 additional cyclists. *Passes require photo identification to verify ownership.*

Automobiles: \$20 - Valid for seven consecutive days, including date of purchase.

Rules of the Road

- In Rocky Mountain National Park, federal law requires that cyclists ride single file at all times; riding abreast is prohibited.
- Cyclists should stay to the right side of the road.
- Cyclists cannot exceed posted speed limits.
- Cyclists must obey all traffic laws and signs.
- When traveling between sunset and sunrise or during periods of low visibility, cyclists must ride with a white light or reflector that is visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front and with a red light or reflector visible from at least 200 feet to the rear.
- On roads open to motor vehicles, bicycles must ride in the same direction of travel as other vehicles.

Groups

A Special Use Permit is required when *any of the following conditions exist:*

- Group size exceeds 25 riders
- Aid stations are designated
- Traffic control is required
- Port-a-johns for human waste are necessary

- NPS involvement/oversight/management is necessary.

Any group with over 25 cyclists must plan ahead and contact the Concessions Management Specialist, (970)586-1209.

Always Carry Food and Water

Rocky Mountain National Park is a high elevation environment with a very dry climate, and it is easy to become dehydrated, especially while exercising. Carry plenty of water to hydrate and

help prevent altitude sickness. Water may be available at visitor centers. In summer, the only place to purchase food, bottled water and sports drinks in the park is at the Trail Ridge Store.

Safety Tips

Safety is your responsibility — cycle at your own risk!

See and be seen: it is recommended that you wear high-visibility clothing. Be prepared with layers of clothing and waterproof outerwear. Wear a helmet, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

Weather is extremely variable in the mountains, and snow can occur at high elevations any month

of the year. Be observant of changing weather conditions.

For safety, it is recommended that groups stay together. Let someone know your plans.

Lightning! You do not want to be in exposed areas, especially above treeline, if lightning is around. Plan ahead so you are prepared in case of a storm.

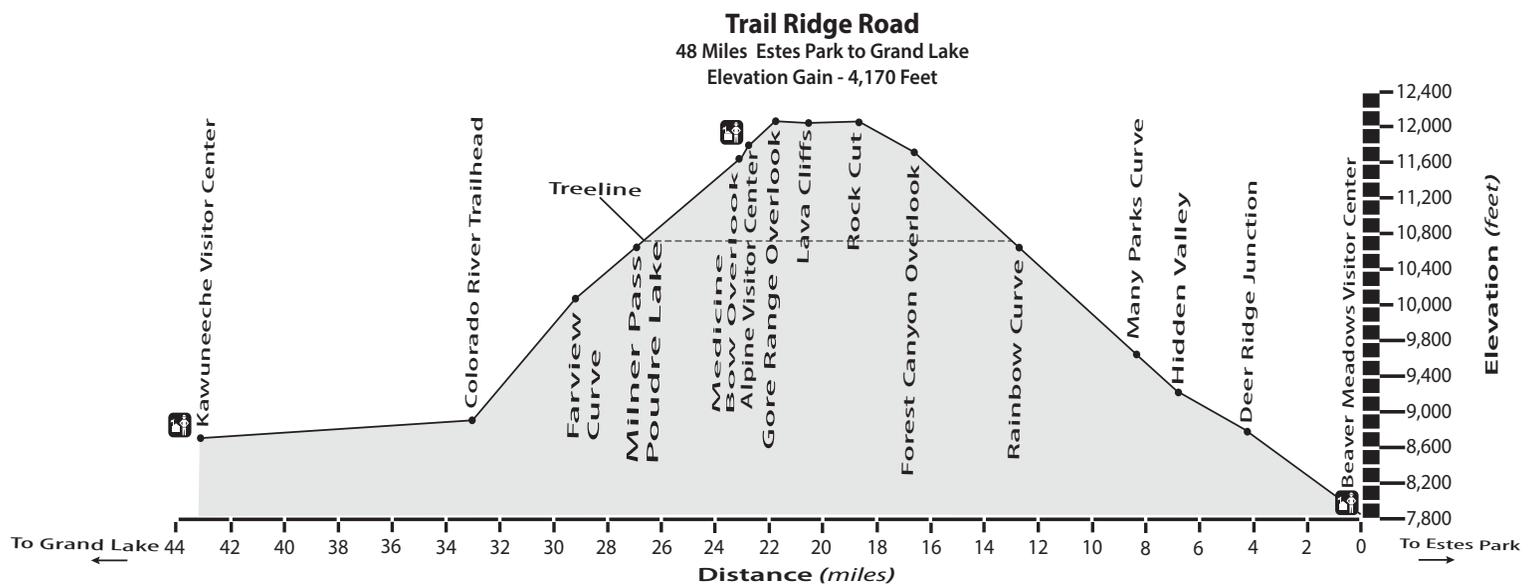
Trail Ridge Road and Old Fall River Road

Please also see "When Can I Safely Ride?"

Paved Trail Ridge Road is US Highway 34, and crosses Rocky Mountain National Park east-west. Elevations range from approximately 7,800 feet to 12,183 feet, with about 11 miles above treeline. Trail Ridge Road has narrow road shoulders and few guardrails. Some drop-offs are steep. Weather permitting, Trail Ridge Road is open to vehicles from Memorial Day weekend until sometime mid-autumn, when it closes due to snow.

Trail Ridge Road is open to bicycles from April 1 through October 31. In April and May it is open to bicycles *as posted* when crews are working to clear the road of snow and for season opening; closures may be posted anywhere along the road corridor. Before and after the road opens to vehicles, bicyclists must exercise caution as the road is not routinely patrolled.

Due to the 2013 Flood, Old Fall River Road and Endovalley Road are closed to bicycle use through 2014.



Other Park Roads

After autumn seasonal road closures have taken effect, the following roads are open to bicycles beyond winter gate or road closures:

- Upper Beaver Meadows Road
- All Park Campgrounds (closed loops)

After autumn seasonal road closures have taken effect, the following park roads are closed to bicycles beyond winter gate or road closures:

- Fern Lake Road
- Wild Basin Road
- Twin Sisters Trailhead Access Road

Lodging & Rentals

There are no accommodations in Rocky Mountain National Park. Lodging is available in local communities. In the park, camping is only allowed in campgrounds.

Bicycles are not available for rent in the park. Bicycle rental, repair, sales, and tours are available in nearby communities.

Park Facilities

There are bike racks at visitor centers. There are no bike racks on park shuttle buses. At trailheads, if no bike rack is available, cyclists may carry their bike into the woods and lock their bike to something out of sight (like a tree) as long as no harm is done to that object. Cyclists are NOT to lock bikes to signs or trailhead bulletin boards.

Be sure to get a dash tag from the Backcountry Office and tape to your bike if it is left overnight. Items left over 24 hours are considered abandoned. Permits are required for all overnight backcountry camping.

The park assumes no liability for bikes or other property left unattended.

Cell Phones

Do not rely on cell phones in Rocky Mountain National Park. Many locations in this rugged park have no service.

Contacts

Park Information 970-586-1206 or online at www.nps.gov/romo

Trail Ridge Road Status 970-586-1222 (recorded & updated messages)

Emergencies 911; tell the Dispatcher you are in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado