

Backcountry Accessibility

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park



Photo by N. Menschel



Photo courtesy of 2020 Vision Quest / www.2020visionquest.org

Access For All

The backcountry and recommended wilderness of Yellowstone National Park is for all to enjoy, including people with differing abilities. This brochure was assembled to provide guidance to disabled visitors planning on traveling within Yellowstone's backcountry. The National Park Service does not modify the wilderness environment specifically for accessibility; rather, visitors are encouraged to relate to wilderness on its own terms.

Mobility Devices

Although mechanized and wheeled devices are not allowed on park trails and in the backcountry; allowances are made for appropriate mobility devices and wheelchairs.

Wheelchairs (manually-operated or power-driven) are permitted on boardwalks and all park trails (including within recommended wilderness) as long as they are "devices designed solely for use by a mobility-impaired person for locomotion, that is suitable for use in an indoor pedestrian area" per the Ameri-

cans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Gas powered devices (i.e. ATVs) and other power driven mobility devices (i.e. golf carts) may not be used on boardwalks or backcountry trails.

Electric personal assistance mobility devices (EPAMDs), including Segways®, are permitted in some front country areas, but are not permitted on backcountry trails, nature trails, or on boardwalks.

Service Animals

Individually trained service animals which do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability are permitted on the trails and in the backcountry of Yellowstone National Park.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Per the ADA, other species of animals are not considered service animals. Dogs training to become service animals are considered pets and not permitted in the backcountry.

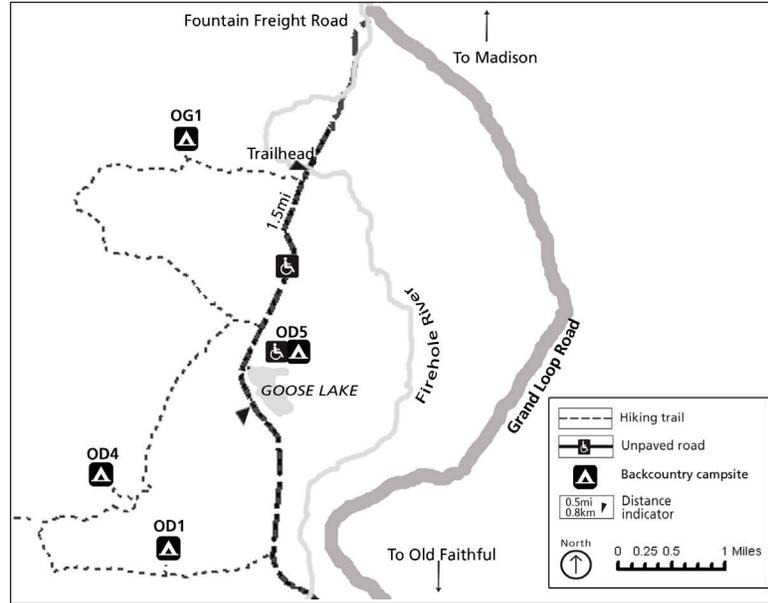
Individuals intending to take a service animal into the backcountry must first obtain a service animal permit which provides details on park regulations and potential risks associated with wildlife encounters.

Service animal permits are available in person at any park backcountry office, online at www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/wheelchairs.htm, or by contacting the Central Backcountry Office at (307) 344-2160 or yell_backcountry_office@nps.gov.

A service animal permit is not required when visiting frontcountry attractions and thermal areas with boardwalks.

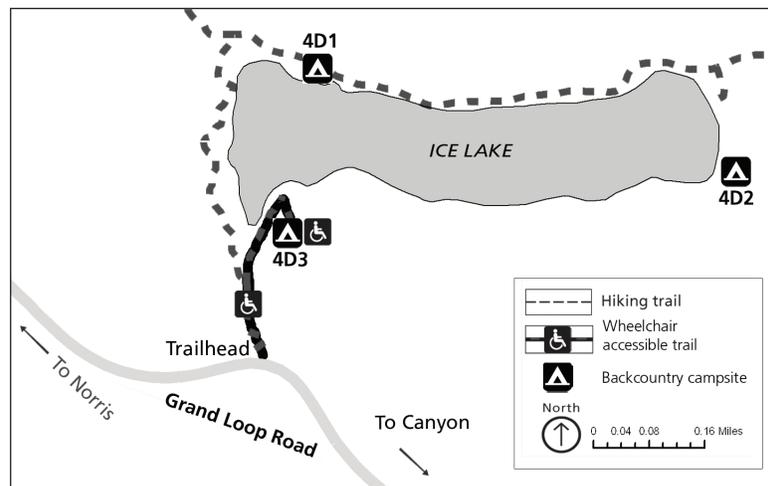
Accessible Trails and Campsites

The following campsites and trails, while not modified for wheelchair access, are some of the more reasonable options for an individual with a mobility impairment to experience Yellowstone's backcountry and wilderness.



Goose Lake

Campsite OD5 is 1.5 miles from the Fountain Freight Road Trailhead which is located between Old Faithful and Madison. The trail is a hard packed dirt bike path (old road). The campsite is ¼ mile from the bike path via a wide, but sometimes, loose dirt trail. The campsite does not have a pit toilet.



Ice Lake

Campsite 4D3 is 0.3 mile from the Ice Lake trailhead which is located between Norris and Canyon. The trail is hard packed dirt and fairly level. Park Rangers try to keep the trail clear, but visitors may occasionally encounter a down tree across the trail. The campsite has a tent pad and accessible pit toilet.

Yellowstone Lake

A number of backcountry campsites on Yellowstone Lake are accessible by motorized and non-motorized boats. Several campsites have pit toilets and there are three campsites with docks. Contact the Central Backcountry Office for information for more information.

Other trails

The Lone Star Geyser trail near Old Faithful and the Natural Bridge Trail near Bridge Bay are a couple of the shorter backcountry trails/bike paths which are accessible by wheelchair. These trails are mostly level and well graded.

General Information

For general information on access in the park's developed areas and boardwalks download a copy of "Accessibility in Yellowstone" at www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm or contact the Visitor Services Office at (307) 344-2107 or yell_visitor_services@nps.gov

For information on backcountry camping and the park's trails contact the Central Backcountry Office at (307) 344-2160 or yell_backcountry_office@nps.gov