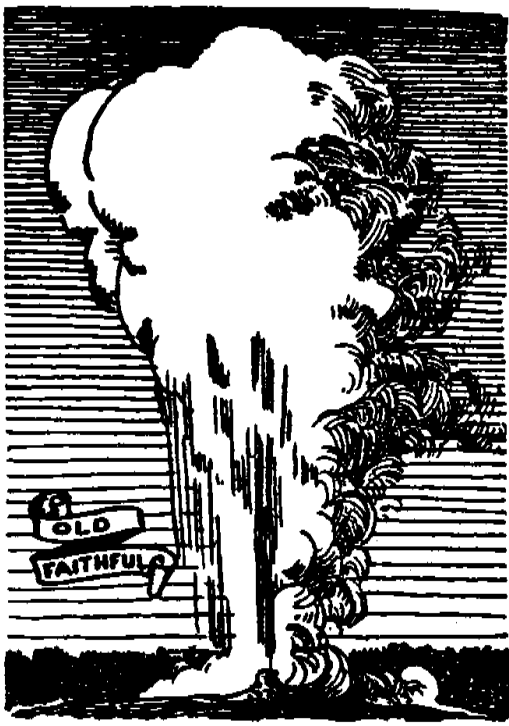


OLD FAITHFUL AREA SKI TRAILS



Yellowstone National Park

Welcome

Yellowstone offers a variety of enjoyable and challenging trails for skiers. Trails are marked for summer use and may not have ski tracks. On some trails, the difficult sections can be avoided by skiing part way in and returning by the same route. The quality of your experience will depend upon the amount of planning and preparation you do prior to your trip. We suggest that you stop at a visitor center or ski shop and discuss your trip. The staff will be happy to provide current information on weather, trail, snow conditions, and alert you to any special winter hazards.

Backcountry trails in Yellowstone are in the wilderness. These trails are maintained and marked for summer use. Many of them are difficult to find and follow, as they are not well marked for winter. Only experienced parties with appropriate equipment should attempt them. Overnight camping requires a free backcountry use permit that must be obtained in person from the Mammoth or Old Faithful visitor centers, the West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center, or the south entrance station. Wood fires are not permitted.

Trail Etiquette

- Do not snowshoe or walk directly on ski tracks.
- Skiers/snowshoers going uphill yield to those going downhill.
- Fill in depressions in the snow after falling to reduce hazards to others.
- Ski within your ability. If you find the trail too difficult, turn back.

Safety

Trails may have natural hazards such as animals, avalanches, thermal features, downed trees, steep slopes and cliffs. When skiing near thermal areas, stay on marked trails. Approaching thermal features is dangerous and prohibited. The snow in these areas is often icy and what appears to be bare ground may be a thin crust over boiling water.

Winter weather in Yellowstone changes rapidly and can be severely cold and windy. Wear proper clothing layers. Watch yourself and other members of your party for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. For your safety, always ski with someone else. Tell someone where you are going, by what route, and when you plan to return. Carry extra clothing, food, water, map and compass, matches, flashlight, and a whistle.

Consider elevation when deciding on a ski trail. Many ski trails are at high elevation, above 6000 feet (1,829 m) and may require you to move slowly when you are out of breath. Always drink plenty of water.

Avalanche danger: avalanches can occur on any slope and hazards will not always be marked. In avalanche-prone areas carry a shovel, avalanche transceiver, probe, and first aid kit—and know how to use them. Cross slopes one at a time, while others watch from safety.

Wildlife

Do not approach wildlife. Large mammals survive on stored fat and low quality food during winter. Causing them to move will cost them precious calories vital for survival. Park regulations require you to remain *at least* 75 feet (23 m) from bison and other large animals; 300 feet (91 m) from bears and wolves. You are travelling through essential winter habitat. Never approach animals, give them time to move away from you. Travel around a herd, not through it. Always allow animals an escape route through shallow snow or on a packed trail. Pets are not allowed on ski trails or in backcountry areas.

Trail Ratings

Trails are rated by the National Park Service with trail ratings specific to Yellowstone National Park. We strongly encourage all skiers to inquire at a visitor center or Xanterra Ski Shop before beginning their first ski trip. Weather conditions may cause icy trails, deep snow, or barren sections, and in some instances make trails difficult to follow, increasing the difficulty of a trail. Trails are not groomed or checked daily.

Easiest - "Green"

Skiers need basic knowledge and limited experience in the diagonal stride, snow plow, and side stepping. Trails may have short downhill and uphill stretches.

More Difficult - "Blue"

Skiers need to be able to ski varied terrain requiring turning, snow plowing, herringboning, and diagonal stride.

Most Difficult - "Black"

Skiers need to be experienced. Trails are hazardous and terrain is frequently extreme. Turns are often sharp and linked together with no room to snow plow or herringbone.

National Park Service

P.O. Box 168

Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190

For emergencies, dial 911

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Trail Descriptions

Lone Star Geyser Trail

6.8 miles (10.9 km) round trip with ski drop.
8.5 miles (13.7 km) round trip from Old Faithful Snow Lodge, machine-groomed part of the way.

Beginning at the snow vehicle road above Kepler Cascades, the trail follows a service road through the forest and along the Firehole River to Lone Star Geyser. Lone Star Geyser erupts about every 3 hours with activity lasting approximately 20 minutes. Choose the snow vehicle road all of the way back to the lodge for **easiest** return. Choose Kepler Cascades trail on return trip for a **more difficult** trail with hills. For a **most difficult** return route, take the Howard Eaton Trail (below).

Fairy Falls Trail

10 miles (16.1 km) with ski drop, round trip, **easiest to more difficult**, skier-tracked.

Ski 1.3 miles (2.1 km) on the Fountain Flats Drive, then turn left on the Fairy Falls Trail. Most of the Fairy Falls Trail is level, but there are hills and bends in the trail near the falls. Return via the same route, then take the Powerline Trail or the snow vehicle road to Old Faithful. To reach the **more difficult** Powerline Trail, ski about 0.25 miles (0.4 km) south (right) along the snow vehicle road to the Mallard Creek trailhead on the left. Follow the Mallard Creek Trail and turn right at the first junction onto the Powerline Trail, which has rolling hills. The Powerline Trail leads to the Upper Geyser Basin Trail and Morning Glory Pool. Where the trail crosses near thermal areas, you may need to remove your skis due to lack of snow.

Divide Trail

2.5 miles (4.0 km) round trip from Spring Creek Trail Junction, **more difficult**, skier-tracked.

The trail climbs up to a saddle on the Continental Divide. On a clear day, you may have views of Shoshone Lake and Mt. Sheridan. Return to Old Faithful via the Spring Creek Trail.

Mallard Lake Trail

3.6 miles (5.8 km) one way, **more difficult**, skier-tracked.

Beginning near Snow Lodge, the trail follows Mallard Lake/ Kepler Cascades Trail across the Firehole River bridge. At the trail junction, the trail goes left through the forest and climbs to Mallard Lake, with some steep sections and sidehills. Beware of avalanches. This trail is not recommended in very icy conditions. The Mallard Creek trail junction is approximately 0.2 miles (0.3 km) before the lake. Return downhill to Old Faithful the same way.

Kepler Cascades Trail

1.7 miles (2.7 km) one way, **more difficult**, skier-tracked.

The trail follows the Mallard Lake/Lone Star Geyser Trail across the Firehole River bridge. At the trail junction, the trail goes to the right. In approximately 25 yards (23 m), the trail goes left and uphill through a narrow gap in the trees. Once you see the main snow vehicle road, you have the option of skiing facing traffic on the road. The road has more gradual uphill sections, while the trail has steep hills. The trail ends at the main snow vehicle road. To view the cascades, cross the road to the large pullout. Go past Kepler Cascades pullout to find the beginning of the Lone Star Trail.

Spring Creek Trail

8.3 miles (13.4 km) returning via Kepler Trail, **most difficult**, skier-tracked. **Snowcoach drop at Divide Trailhead.** The trail starts with a short uphill climb. At the junction, turn right and go down a steep narrow trail through dense forest. Excellent speed control and turning skills are required.

6.6 miles (10.6 km) returning via Kepler Trail, **more difficult**, **Snowcoach drop at the Spring Creek Picnic Area.** The trail traverses rolling hills, level terrain, forests, canyons, and many small bridges over Spring Creek. There are additional areas where you may need to sidestep up and also sidestep down a steep hill. Please do not take your skis off as it creates a hazard for other skiers. The trail ends at the Lone Star Geyser Trail. Turn right to return to Old Faithful via the snow vehicle road or Kepler Cascades Trail. Turn left to reach Lone Star Geyser. The Howard Eaton Trail starts immediately beyond Lone Star Geyser.

Mallard Creek Trail

13.8 miles (22.2 km) round trip from Old Faithful, most difficult, skier-tracked (7,320' - 8,120', 800 ft. elevation gain/loss).

This trail branches off the Mallard Lake Trail 0.2 miles (0.3 km) before the lake. From the junction, the trail climbs steeply up switchbacks to a ridge overlooking Mallard Lake and then heads northwest for approximately 4 miles (6.4 km). The trail has many challenging turns and crosses numerous deep gullies. Sections of the trail may be hard to follow and may not be well marked. Only advanced skiers should attempt this trail. The return to Old Faithful is another 4 miles (6.4 km) over gently rolling terrain along the Powerline Trail and through the Upper Geyser Basin.

NOTE: Start time for this trail should be no later than 8:00 a.m. Bring along a headlamp and let someone know where you are going.

Howard Eaton Trail

3.5 miles (5.6 km) one way to Lone Star Geyser, **most difficult**, skier-tracked.

Attempt this steep trail only if you have excellent speed control and turning skills. Most of the trail is through a narrow gap in a dense forest and can be very dangerous. The trail starts at the Bear Den Ski Shop exit and angles towards the Snow Lodge cabin area. Then the trail passes through trees and crosses small bridges to reach the main snow vehicle road. Cross the snow vehicle road and go left at the Howard Eaton Trail sign. The trail climbs steeply for about 1.5 miles (2.4 km), then descends to Lone Star Geyser. Please yield to downhill skiers. Where the trail crosses near thermal areas, you may need to remove your skis due to lack of snow.

Skier-Tracked Trail - A trail that has been made/broken by a person skiing through deep snow.

Machine-Groomed Trail - Mostly level trail with machine set tracks; ideal conditions for beginners. Groomed areas are for both classic and skate skiing. Most of these are practice loops that follow summer roads. In addition the Upper Geyser Basin Trail from the lower store to Morning Glory Pool is groomed but often has bare patches due to thermal heat. Lone Star Geyser Trail is also groomed.

Snowshoe Trails - Observation Point is the only designated snowshoe trail in the Old Faithful area. The Upper Geyser Basin Trail is also popular for snowshoeing. Please talk to the ski shop or visitor center staff for other ideas of where to snowshoe. Please do not snowshoe in ski trails as it creates hazards for skiers. Snowshoers and skiers need to maintain separate tracks, which may mean you will need to break trail.

Caution: Bison frequent all trails in the Old Faithful area. Do not attempt to travel any backcountry trails without good topographical maps and first inquiring at the ski shop or visitor center about trail conditions. Many trails are difficult to find and follow as they may not be well marked for winter travel and may not have been skied recently. Trails may go through areas with avalanche risk.

Current Trail Information

Please visit YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com or visit the Bear Den Ski Shops at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Old Faithful Snow Lodge for up-to-date trail grooming schedule, trail information, rentals, lessons, tours and accessories.