



Dear Yellowstone Backcountry Hiker,

About three weeks ago we approached you at [NAME of permitting location] and asked if you would be willing to participate in a study of backcountry hikers. At that time we collected your name and address and promised that you would receive a link to a survey via email.

On behalf of the National Park Service and researchers at Stephen Austin University, I am writing to invite you to participate in this study that is being conducted to understand more about the experience recent backcountry hikers in Yellowstone. We are seeking insights from a select number of visitors that obtained backcountry permits this summer. We hope to provide managers with your opinions to help them to develop strategies to mitigate or prevent safety issues during backcountry experiences.

To take the survey, please click on this link: [url here].

Participation in the study is voluntary and completing the survey indicates your voluntary consent for us to include your opinions in the study results. Your name and email address will not be linked to your responses, and will not be used for any other purposes outside the scope of this study. It should take you about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation is important to us. Your responses will help park managers understand the array of perceptions held by hikers. We will send a gentle reminder by email within the next 7 to 10 days if we have not received your completed survey, after which, we will not contact you again regarding this study. If you do not wish to assist in this project, please reply to this email with the message "opt out of study" and we will not contact you again.

Thank you again in advance for your assistance with this project.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: The National Park Service is authorized by 54 USC 100701 to collect this information. This information will be used by park managers to understand the experiences of backcountry hikers in Yellowstone. Responses to this request are voluntary and anonymous. Your name will never be associated with your answers, and all contact information will be destroyed when the data collection is concluded. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number and expiration date.

Burden estimate statement: The public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response. Please direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection to: Phadrea D Ponds at pponds@nps.gov (email).

Yellowstone National Park Backcountry Survey

Summer 2016

SECTION 1: Backcountry Hiking Experience

Topic Area 3: variation of TBACK 5

1. Where did you receive your backcountry permit?
 - Bechler
 - Bridge Bay
 - Canyon
 - Grant Village
 - Mammoth
 - Old Faithful
 - South Entrance
 - Tower
 - West Entrance

Topic Area 3: Activities

2. Did you watch the video on backcountry trips before beginning your trip?
 - Yes. If you watched the video, how did this video prepare you for your backcountry trip? What additional information or approach would improve the video? _____

 - No. If you did watch the video, how did this video prepare you for your backcountry trip?

Topic Area 3: TBACK

3. Did you receive adequate information from the permit office before beginning your backcountry trip?
 - No. Why not? _____

 - Yes

Topic Area 3: TBACK

4. Before you were issued your backcountry permit, did you know where you wanted to camp?
- No
 - Yes
- a. Did you get a campsite in this area?
- No
 - Yes
- b. If you did not, how did this affect your backcountry experience? _____

Topic Area 3: variation of TBACK10

5. What was your mode of travel on your backcountry trip? (select all that apply)
- Foot
 - Horse
 - Llama
 - Motor boat
 - Non-motor boat

Topic Area 3: TBACK6

6. How many nights did you spend in the backcountry of Yellowstone on this overnight backcountry trip?
- _____ number of nights

Topic Area 1: GR3

7. How many people were in your group, including you?
- _____ number of people

Topic Area 1: variation AGE1

8. How many of these individuals were children (under age 18)?
- _____ number of individuals under age 18

Topic Area 2: TRIPPLAN

9. About how many hours did you spend in pre-trip planning?
- _____ number of hours spent in pre-trip planning

Topic Area 3: TBACK5

10. Please indicate in which area or areas you traveled during your recent backcountry trip. (Select all that apply to your trip)

Area(s) of Yellowstone Backcountry Traveled	No	Yes
Bechler	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canyon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gallatin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heart Lake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lamar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Old Faithful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pebble Creek	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pelican Valley	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shoshone Lake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Slough Creek	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thorofare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yellowstone Lake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yellowstone River/Hellroaring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Topic Area 3: TBACK14

11. Why did you and your personal group choose the trails you did? _____

Topic Area 5: CROWD15

12. About how many hiking groups did you see per day while you were hiking on the trails in the backcountry?
 _____ number of hiking groups per day or
 Did not see any hiking groups

Topic Area 5: CROWD1

13. Please indicate how crowded you felt on your trip?
 Not at all crowded
 Slightly crowded
 Moderately crowded
 Very crowded
 Extremely crowded

Topic Area 5: CROWD5

14. While inside the park, were you able to find parking at all the areas you wanted to visit?
 No
 Yes

Topic Area 5: CROWD16

15. How many nights were you able to see or hear other visitor groups staying overnight near your campsite/cabin during this overnight backcountry trip?

_____ number of nights

Did not occur on any night

Topic Area 5: CROWD19

16. At which times of day did you and your personal group feel crowded? Please mark all that apply

4 a.m. to noon

Noon to 6 p.m.

6 p.m. to midnight

I can't remember

Topic Area: TBACK16

17. What is your opinion of the number of trails in Yellowstone?

Too many

Just right

Too few

Topic Area 5: TBACK15

18. Please indicate if you walked off the marked/signed trails during this overnight trip for any of the following reasons?

I walked off the marked/signed trails ...	No	Yes	Don't Know
To move past or out of the way of others hiking on the trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To move out of the way of a horseback riding group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To "go to the bathroom"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To explore an area that looked interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get around a difficult part of the marked/signed trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To take a photograph/get a better view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To see an attraction or feature up close	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To shortcut a portion of the marked/signed trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accidentally because the trails were poorly marked	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For another reason (please specify)			

Topic Area: TRIPC

19. Did you encounter a ranger during your trip?
 No
 Yes

Topic Area 3: TBACK2

20. Including this visit, how often have you gone into the Yellowstone backcountry?
 Once
 2 to 4 times
 5 or more times

Topic Area 3: Trip Behaviors: variation of TRIPC35

21. Did anything detract from your enjoyment of Yellowstone's backcountry on this trip?
 No
 Yes

How did it detract from your enjoyment? _____

22. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following aspects of your backcountry trip?

Backcountry Feature	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Length of time to obtain permit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courtesy of person providing permit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge of person providing permit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease in finding trailhead	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease in following trail(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of trail(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease in finding campsite(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of campsite(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall level of satisfaction with trip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 2: Backcountry Preferences

Topic Area 6: EVALFEE

1. This is the first year that Yellowstone has charged a backcountry permit fee (\$3 per person, per night for hikers and boaters and \$5 per person, per night for stock parties). Prior to 2015 the backcountry permit was free. The additional revenue from the permit fee will be used to make improvements in the backcountry and backcountry office staffing. Do you support or not support this change?

- Support
- Not Support
- Please explain your answer _____

2. Within Yellowstone’s backcountry, how desirable or undesirable are the following?

Backcountry Features	Very undesirable	Undesirable	Neither	Desirable	Very Desirable
A few trees blown down across the trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aircraft over-flights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bridges across creeks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Orange trail markers on trees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Directional signs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pit toilets at campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food poles at campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing your own bear resistant food canister	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food boxes at campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limiting party size	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prohibiting wood fires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having designated campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hitching rails at campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research equipment in the backcountry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rangers on patrol	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cabins for ranger use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. What is your opinion about commercial use in the backcountry?

a. Commercial use is acceptable?

Why do you believe commercial use is acceptable? _____

b. Commercial use is not acceptable?

Why do you believe commercial use is not acceptable? _____

SECTION 3: Backcountry Safety

Topic Area 2: variation of TPLAN18

1. On this trip, did you feel prepared for common safety situations (such as exposure to sun, heat, access to drinking water, flash floods, lack of proper footwear, etc.) that you encountered in the park?
- No
 - Yes

Topic Area 2: variation of TPLAN6

2. If you visited the park's website, did you find the information you needed?
- No
 - Yes

Topic Area 2: variation of TPLAN6

3. During your trip preparation, did you specifically look at bear safety information on the Yellowstone National Park website?
- No
 - Yes

Topic Area 2: variation of TPLAN1

4. What sources did you use in preparing for your backcountry trip?

Source	No	Yes
Official Yellowstone website (www.nps.gov/yell)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Magazines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yellowstone Staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Topic Area 3: TBACK

5. Did you encounter a bear on your trip?
- No
 - Yes
 - i. Describe your experience _____

Topic Area 1: KNOWLNT

6. We would like to ask you some questions about wildlife.
- a. How far away should individuals stay from bears?
 - 100 yards
 - 50 yards

- 25 yards
 - 10 feet
- b. How far away should individuals stay from bears?
- 100 yards
 - 50 yards
 - 25 yards
 - 10 feet
- c. How far away should individuals stay from other large animals such as bison, elk, deer, and moose?
- 100 yards
 - 50 yards
 - 25 yards
 - 10 feet
- d. Bison can sprint ___ times faster than humans can run.
- Twice
 - Three
 - Four
 - Five
- e. When encountering a bear, one should run away as fast as one can.
- False
 - True
- f. If a bear charges, a person should stand his or her ground.
- False
 - True
- g. If a bear charges and makes contact with a person, the person should fall to the ground and “play dead.”
- False
 - True
- h. If a person observes a bear or bear sign, the information should be reported to a park ranger as soon as possible
- False
 - True
- i. Coyotes can be fed.
- False
 - True
- j. Ravens can unzip and unsnap packs.
- False
 - True
- k. It is recommended that individuals stay in groups of three or more.
- False
 - True

SECTION 4: Demographic Questions

Topic Area 1: Gender

1. What is your gender?

Female

Male

Topic Area 1: ETH2

2. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

No

Yes

Topic Area 1: RACE/ETH4)

3. What is your race?

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

White

Topic Area 1: AGE2

4. In what year were you born? _____

Topic Area 1: ED1

5. Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school

High school diploma/GED

Some college

Bachelor's degree

Graduate degree

Topic Area 1: variation on RES1

1. Where do you live?

City

State

Zip

Use the space below to provide any comments or suggestions pertaining to Yellowstone's backcountry that may help us improve backcountry experiences. (open-ended)