



JOHN MUIR TRAIL

Minimum Impact Wilderness Regulations

The John Muir Trail (JMT) passes through multiple parks and forests. Additional regulations may apply for side trips, alternate routes, or stock travel and grazing.



General Travel Requirements

- Wilderness permits are required for all overnight travel.
- A signed permit must be in the permittee's possession and must be presented to ranger upon request.
- Group size limit is 15 people or less.
- To prevent erosion, please walk in the middle of the trail and do not short-cut trails even if it is muddy or snowy.
- Do not build rock cairns or other trail markers.
- No caching food or gear in the wilderness.
- Pack out all trash, including toilet paper.
- Wheeled vehicles or motorized equipment are prohibited in wilderness.
- Off-trail group size limit is 8 people in Yosemite and 8 or 12 people (location dependent) in Sequoia and Kings Canyon.

Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

- Pets are not allowed.
- Discharge of any firearm or weapon is prohibited. Possession of weapons, including bear spray, is prohibited. Possession of firearms is subject to state regulations.

Food Storage

In all wilderness areas along the JMT, **proper food storage is mandatory**. Properly store food items when not in use to prevent bears and other wildlife from becoming conditioned to human food. Items that must be secured include all types of food, food related trash, and scented items such as toiletries, soap, toothpaste, ointments, and lotions.

Proper Food Storage Methods

- Portable food storage container (bear canister) is the recommended method of protecting your food. Ensure the lid is closed properly and store the canister on the ground 50 feet from your sleeping area.
- Permanent Food Storage Box (limited locations) are for on-site use only, caching a food resupply, or leaving unwanted items is prohibited.

Animal Resistant Food Storage Container Required Areas along the JMT:

- All of Yosemite NP wilderness
- Donahue Pass to Reds Meadow
- Duck Lake to Lake Virginia
- Dusy Basin/Bishop Pass corridor
- Pinchot Pass to Forester Pass
- Kearsarge Lakes/Pass corridor
- Whitney Zone (Inyo NF)
- Rock Creek/Cottonwood Pass/Cottonwood Lakes

***Only allowed canisters can be used.**

Counter-balance hanging technique may be used where portable containers are not mandatory. However, food items must be suspended at least 15 feet in the air and 10 feet out from the trunk of the tree with no rope hanging down. Where trees are not adequate for hanging food you must use a portable food storage container.

Report any wildlife-related injuries, property damage or unusual encounters to a ranger.

Sanitation & Waste Disposal

Please pack out all garbage. Do not burn or bury.

- To protect water quality and public health, move well off-trail, away from camp, and at least 100 feet away from all water sources to urinate.
- Solid human waste must be buried in soil 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 100 feet from trails, camps, and all water sources. Pack out all toilet paper and hygiene products to preserve the wilderness experience for others.
- All soap, including biodegradable soap, can injure fish and other aquatic wildlife. Carry wash water 100 feet from lakes, streams, or other water sources before washing. Strain dishwater and pack out solid particles, scatter grey water 100 feet away from water sources. This includes washing clothes, dishes, and yourself.

Mt. Whitney Area: All visitors are expected to pack out their solid human waste between Guitar Lake and Whitney Portal. All used waste kits must be packed out and deposited in the designated containers next to the restrooms at Whitney Portal trailhead. Waste kits should be picked up with your permit. Additional waste kits are available at Crabtree Ranger Station Junction.

----- Campsite Selection -----

In all wilderness areas along the John Muir Trail (JMT) campsites must be on durable surfaces such as dirt, gravel, or rock a minimum of 100 feet (30 meters/40 paces) away from water sources and the trail. Do not camp on vegetation or in meadows. Campsites should not be visible from the trail. Use legal existing sites where possible. Do not construct rock walls, trenches, new fire rings (or add rocks to existing fire rings), bough beds, camp furniture, etc.

Areas where camping is not allowed or is limited:

Yosemite National Park:

- No camping on Half Dome.
- No camping within four trail miles of Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite Valley, or Glacier Point.

Ansel Adams Wilderness:

- No camping within a 1/4 mile of the outlet of Thousand Island Lake.
- No camping within a 1/4 mile of the outlet of Garnet Lake.
- No camping at Shadow Lake.
- No camping between Shadow Creek and the trail and the south and east side of Ediza Lake.

John Muir Wilderness:

- No camping within 300 feet of the outlet of Duck Lake.
- No camping within 300 feet of the outlet of Purple Lake.
- Legal campsites are very limited in the areas near Squaw Lake and Pocket Meadow.
- There are no legal campsites on the west side of the JMT/PCT for two miles south of the Bear Creek/JMT junction.
- Camping is not recommended in the Blayney Hot Springs area.
- No camping at Mirror Lake and Trailside Meadow on the Mt. Whitney Trail.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks:

- Hiker cannot exceed 25 consecutive nights in Sequoia and Kings Canyon wilderness area.
- Two night camping limit at Dusy Basin (basin-wide).
- Kearsarge Lakes area, no camping within 1/4 mile of Bullfrog Lake.
- Two night camping limit along JMT between Woods Creek Crossing and Vidette Meadow, EXCEPT one night limit per lake between Dollar Lake and Glenn Pass.
- Two night camping limit at Charlotte and Kearsarge Lakes.
- Mt. Whitney/Crabtree area, no camping at Timberline Lake.
- Two night limit at Crabtree/Whitney Creek and Guitar Lake.

----- Campfire Regulations -----

Help to leave no trace of your visit by considering not having a campfire. If you must, please do the following: where fires are allowed, use existing fire rings. Do not build new ones or add rocks to existing fire rings. Leave your ax and saw at home. Use only dead wood found on the ground. Do not chop live vegetation or remove dead branches from trees.

Fires must be attended at all times. Do not burn trash. Drown the fire with water, stir the ashes, feel to make sure it is cold. Do not use dirt to put out fires.

Note that during times of high fire danger, additional campfire restrictions may be implemented. Use of a wood-burning camp stove is not allowed where campfires are prohibited.

Site-specific campfire closures exist outside of the JMT corridor. See agencies for more details if planning a detour.

Yosemite National Park:

- Campfires are prohibited above 9,600 feet in elevation.
- Campfires are prohibited in the Cathedral Lakes Basin.

Ansel Adams Wilderness:

- Campfires are prohibited in all areas above 10,000 feet in elevation.

Additional areas closed to campfires below 10,000 feet:

On the JMT

- Rush Forks
- Thousand Island Lake
- Ruby Lake
- Garnet Lake
- Shadow Lake and Creek

Off the JMT

- Waugh Lake
- Gem Lake (north side)
- Lower Davis Lake
- Clark Lakes
- Badger Lakes
- Emerald Lake
- Ediza Lake
- Iceberg Lake
- Minaret Lakes

John Muir Wilderness:

- Campfires are prohibited for all areas above 10,000 feet north of the Glacier Divide and above 10,400 feet south of the divide.

Additional lower elevation no campfire areas:

On the JMT

- Duck Creek
- Purple Creek
- McGee Canyon
- Pocket Meadow area
- Mt. Whitney Zone

Off the JMT

- Coldwater Canyon
- Blayney Hot Springs area
- Kearsarge Pass/Onion Valley
- N. Fork of Lone Pine Creek
- Within 1,000 feet of Anvil Camp on the Shepard Pass Trail

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks:

- No fires in all areas above 10,000 feet in elevation along the JMT/PCT corridor.