Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to the Yellowstone Forever Institute, you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. If you are a veteran of our programs, you will know the many perspectives from which learning can take place in this diverse place. We are glad that you are able to join us. Our goal is to provide you with an enjoyable, high-quality educational experience and a safe and memorable visit to Yellowstone.

The following information is provided to help you prepare for your course. Please read it thoroughly and call us at 406.848.2400 or email contact@yellowstone.org if you have any questions. We recommend all first time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or www.nps.gov/yell.

Winter Travel
The only road open to wheeled vehicles in the winter (early November to mid-April) is the road from the North Entrance to the Northeast Entrance. All other roads are closed to wheeled vehicles. Because Cooke Pass is closed to wheeled vehicles, it is not possible to enter or exit Yellowstone National Park through the Northeast Entrance. You must enter the park through Gardiner, Montana. Current road conditions are available through the NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117.

Important Information Included in this Document:
- From the Instructor with Program Itinerary
- What’s Included
- How to Prepare for this Program
- Suggested Reading
- Yellowstone Forever Park Store Information
- Yellowstone Forever Supporter Information
- Code of Ethics
- Cancellation Policy
- Travel Information
- Supplemental Lodging Information

From the Instructor
The northern range of Yellowstone is hands-down the world’s best place for watching wild wolves in action. The Lamar Buffalo Ranch serves as a comfortable base camp in the heart of Yellowstone wolf territory, far from other development. It is not uncommon in the winter to hear wolves howling from the cabins at Lamar. This location is the perfect launching-off point to search for and learn about wolves.
The focus of this program is full immersion into the world of Yellowstone’s wolves—searching for wolves and their prey, observing behavior, learning about wolf conservation and management, and interacting with wolf researchers, managers, and other experts both in the field and during evening lectures. Each morning, you’ll hit the road and head out to strategic viewing points to observe wolves. Most sightings of wildlife in Yellowstone occur at a great distance; the Institute provides high-powered spotting scopes and binoculars for group use. If you have your own optics, we encourage you to bring them. Each afternoon, you’ll go off the beaten path, venturing into wolf territory on snowshoe excursions to learn about their habitat and behavior.

In addition to learning about wolves, you’ll get into the rhythms of the park for a true sense of Yellowstone in the winter. Your instructor will arrange the schedule and activities to take advantage of the best observation and learning opportunities. There will be ample free time each afternoon to relax over a cup of coffee, peruse the Lamar library, nap, or explore the Lamar Valley on your own. Each evening after dinner and cleanup there will be an educational program. Two of the evenings feature guest speakers on wolves. At the end of the day, enjoy the stars and the sounds of the wolf world at night from the front porch of your cabin as you settle in for the night.

Institute Staff

Program Itinerary

Day 1
4-5:30 p.m. Check in to the Lamar Buffalo Ranch
5:45 p.m. Welcome and orientation
6:30-7:30 p.m. Dinner

Days 2-4
6 a.m. Coffee and breakfast items available
7 a.m. Depart for the field: watch for wolves in the early morning
10:30 a.m. Return to ranch for mid-morning break and lunch
12:30 p.m. Snowshoe excursions, or more wildlife watching depending on the wolf activity
3-4 p.m. Return to the ranch
5:45 p.m. Dinner
7 p.m. Evening program

Day 5
6:30 a.m. Breakfast
9 a.m. Checkout
What’s Included
Your tuition includes daily outings and transportation during your program. It does not include transportation to the park, park entrance fees, or lodging. Gratuities are not included in the price of programming. If you would like to recognize exceptional service by a Yellowstone Forever Institute staff member, tips are appreciated. Donations to support Yellowstone Forever educational programs are also appropriate and will be used to improve and expand opportunities for people to make deep connections to Yellowstone.

Continuing Education Credit
Many of our Field Seminars are recognized by universities across the country. We are happy to provide a letter of completion and supporting documentation that you can submit to the institution of your choice to request approval for university credit or CEUs.

Lodging Option
Yellowstone Forever Institute students in Field Seminars based out of Lamar Valley have the opportunity to stay in our comfortable lodging at the historic Lamar Buffalo Ranch for an additional charge. Each log cabin has three single beds, chairs, propane heaters, and reading lamps. The ranch has a bathhouse with private showers and a common building with a fully equipped kitchen where you can prepare your own meals. For more information please see the last page of this document. Feel free to call our contact center at 406.848.2400 to make your reservations today.

How to Prepare for this Program:

How Fit Do You Need to Be?
This course is an activity level 2-3 and students enrolled in this course are expected to be active participants. This course will include brisk hiking or snowshoeing up to 5 miles per day with climbs up to 500 feet, including some trail-breaking in snow. Snowshoes are available for course participants to borrow while staying at the ranch. We recommend you begin an exercise program right away if you have not already done so. Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude. To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit Yellowstone.org/experience/health-information/

General Clothing and Equipment List
Much of your time will be spent outdoors and all programs are held rain, snow, or shine. You should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are very important. Winter temperatures can range from below zero in the mornings to 35 degrees Fahrenheit in the early afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices. Loose fitting layers allow you to maintain a comfortable and dry body as outside temperatures change and as your own body’s temperature and moisture output changes with different levels of exertion.
Equipment:
Yellowstone Forever field staff assigned to your program will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.

- **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, field guides, etc.
- **Water bottle**, one-quart is the minimum recommended. Camelback or similar hydration systems work well in summer but can freeze in winter.
- **Sunglasses**
- **Sunscreen/lip protector**, sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.
- **Camera, binoculars**
- **Notebook/pencil**
- **Pocket hand and foot warmers**, recommended November through May.
- **Flashlight/Headlamp**, a small light for walking to and from your cabin in the evenings and mornings.
- **Alarm**, so you’re on time for the day’s activities.

Clothing:

- **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, or similar wicking fabric.
- **Mid-weight insulating layer**, light, 200-weight synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover.
- **Heavyweight insulating layer**, can be wool, down, heavy-weight fleece, or other synthetic fabric. In the winter, a heavy winter coat with a water resistant shell will suffice for less active courses.
- **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable. Both jackets and pants are recommended.
- **Short sleeved shirt**, cotton is okay in summer, but synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.
- **Pants**, in the summer, synthetic hiking pants, lightweight pile/fleece pants, tights, or similar. In the winter, wool or fleece pants or tights. Jeans are not recommended.
- **Hats**, both a brimmed sun hat and an insulating hat that covers your ears for cold weather.
- **Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens. A water and windproof outer layer is recommended.
- **Socks**, light wool or synthetic liner sock with heavier wool or synthetic outer sock.
- **Insulated boots, winter**, must have water repellent layers outside, thick insulation inside, and be large enough to fit over thick socks. Tight boots are the surest way to get painfully cold feet. Soles with proper traction or traction devices (i.e. Yaktrax) are essential for icy conditions. General hiking boots will not provide adequate insulation or traction in most cases.
- **Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.

Suggested Reading
No prior reading is required, but you might want something to occupy your flight or car ride. Whether your passion is history, geology, wildlife, or ecology, there’s something for everyone. Most publications are
available from the Yellowstone Forever online Park Store at Shop.yellowstone.org/ or by calling 406.848.2400. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15 percent discount and proceeds benefit the park.


**Park Stores**

Our Park Stores features more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help you plan your visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items to remind you of your visit to Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of our 11 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone. Visit: Shop.Yellowstone.org

**Supporter Program**

Yellowstone Forever’s supporter program includes more than 50,000 people worldwide who have made a commitment to preserving and enhancing Yellowstone National Park. Supporter contributions generously fund educational programs and priority park projects such as wildlife research, visitor safety, and trail restoration. With an annual donation of $35 or more, supporters receive valuable premiums including a subscription to our educational magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration and discounts for Yellowstone Forever Institute programs, and discounts on retail purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not yet a Yellowstone Forever supporter, please visit Yellowstone.org/donate to learn more or to sign up.

**Code of Ethics**

The Yellowstone Forever Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in a Yellowstone Forever Institute program, we ask you to adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever Institute abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations. We also practice Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.
Observing wildlife: We will do our best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Animals will be observed from a distance, using high-powered spotting scopes to help keep our presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. The Yellowstone Forever Institute will adhere to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. We will not entice wildlife with food, animal calls or any actions that change their behavior.

Leave what you find: It is illegal to remove natural or cultural artifacts (plants, animals, bones, rocks, etc.) from Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever Institute instructors have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever Institute groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including wolf howls) prevail.

Roads and vehicles: Expect wildlife on the road, and drive at or below the posted park speed limits. When stopping to observe wildlife or other park features, the Yellowstone Forever Institute will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, we will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. We will not stop in the middle of the road, and should a traffic jam develop as a result of our activities, we will cease the activity.

Properly dispose of waste: We will pack out all trash, leftover food and litter. Your instructor will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their course and should expect to walk through mud, snow or puddles in the trail.

Thank you for helping us set a good example in Yellowstone!

Cancellation and Refund Policy
If you cancel within seven calendar days of your registration date, your payment is refundable less a $50 per person per course processing fee. On the eighth calendar day from the date of registration, 100% of registration payments will be forfeited. We reserve the right to cancel a course up to 30 days before the first class day. If we cancel, you will receive a full refund of your payment. We regret that the Yellowstone Forever
Institute cannot make exceptions to the refund policy for any reason, including but not limited to illness, travel delays, emergencies, or weather. We urge you to take out accident, baggage, and trip cancellation insurance through a travel agent or website such as www.TravelGuard.com. Travel insurance can help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip.
Lamar Buffalo Ranch Information

If you need to be reached during your class, the number at the ranch is 307.344.7749.

Directions
Proceed to “Roosevelt” on the map; road signs say Tower Junction, on the northeast side of the Grand Loop Road. Signs at Tower Junction — “Yellowstone Inst 11” — direct you to turn onto the Northeast Entrance Road (opposite the Roosevelt Lodge) heading towards Cooke City. From Mammoth, it’s a left turn; from Canyon, it’s a right turn. The campus is located approximately 11 miles from the intersection, can be seen from the Lamar Valley road sign as you enter the valley and is the first and only group of buildings on that road. If driving from the Northeast Entrance, the campus is approximately 18 miles from that entrance.

What to bring
Shared cabins have three single beds, chairs, propane heaters and reading lamps. Bring a sleeping bag, pillow, extra blankets if you like, a flashlight for getting around at night and a non-electric alarm clock (cabins do not have outlets). Stoves, lanterns and candles cannot be used in or around the cabins, and smoking and food are not permitted in the cabins. The heated bathhouse is nearby and has hand soap and paper towels. You need to bring towels and toiletries.

Meals should be kept simple since participants will prepare their own meals in a shared cooking facility. The kitchen has gas stoves, a microwave, toaster, plates, silverware, pots and pans and spices, as well as coffee, tea, sugar and creamer. Please bring only what you will need during your stay as space in the kitchen and refrigerators is limited. There is no cell phone reception in the Lamar Valley and there is no Internet service. Please bring a calling card to use with the common phone.

What not to bring
The historic ranch runs on limited solar power with backup generators. For this reason, please do not bring electrical appliances such as radios, hair dryers and crock pots as these items overload the system and can cause black-outs. Camping and pets (with the exception of service animals) are not allowed.

When you arrive
Check-in is anytime between 4 and 8 p.m. the day of your arrival. We strongly encourage you to arrive before dark. Come to the bunkhouse (the building with the Yellowstone Forever Institute sign on it). During normal check-in hours, a staff member will greet and orient you to the ranch. If you must arrive after 8 p.m., please call us at 307.344.7749 so we know when to expect you. If no one is there to greet you, please find your cabin assignment and the code to the bathhouse on the bulletin board in the kitchen — located at the back of the building — and we'll be happy to greet you the following morning. Check-out is by 9 a.m. the day of your departure.

During your stay
Yellowstone Forever Institute programs and facilities benefit from the hard work and generosity of a team of seasonal volunteer program assistants. You'll likely meet one or more of our program assistants hosting your
program. Our program assistants receive professional training in Wilderness First Aid, emergency response and procedures and bus driving. They help with course logistics, cleaning and maintenance of facilities and anything you need during your time with us. The bunkhouse is open at all times and is the center of activity, housing classrooms, the kitchen and bathrooms. Make yourself at home in the bunkhouse; meet new people; enjoy a midnight snack; relax with classmates and enjoy your experience. The kitchen is a community area where everyone does their own cooking and cleans up after themselves. In the winter, the first classroom is used as a mudroom where coats and boots can be left by the door. Be sure to bring a pair of slippers or moccasins to wear in the bunkhouse.