



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

WINTER WOLF DISCOVERY

Itinerary & Details

WINTER 2022/23

Lamar Buffalo Ranch – YNP, WY

The **Winter Wolf Discovery** program package focuses on exploring the world of wolves and other charismatic wildlife along Yellowstone's grand Northern Range. Winter is prime time to view wolves in Yellowstone, and this package is designed to take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity. You will be led by a world-class Yellowstone Forever Field Educator who will share up-to-date information about Yellowstone wolf biology, behavior, ecology, and cultural history. Days will be spent in the field, followed by relaxing evenings at the famed Lamar Buffalo Ranch, where participants will be provided delicious dinners and lively discussions before turning in to their cozy cabins.

The first evening includes an informative orientation and meet-and-greet with fellow guests and a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator. The following three full days involve getting up early and traveling to viewing sites in hopes of observing wolves in the wild. Afternoons are spent exploring wildlife habitats and traveling on snowshoes to examine tracks and other animal sign. Participants will likely encounter many other wildlife species during daily outings, where field educators will discuss the role these other species play in the ecosystem in relation to wolves.

Most sightings of wildlife occur at a distance; the field educator will provide high-powered spotting scopes and binoculars for group use. However, participants are encouraged to bring additional scopes and binoculars if they have them.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- (4) nights lodging at the rustic Lamar Buffalo Ranch
- Catered meals, to include:
 - (4) breakfasts - mixture between dine-in and to-go meals
 - (3) lunches - mixture between dine-in and to-go meals
 - (4) dinners – dine-in
- In-park transportation via a 14-passenger minibus or transit van
- World class educational programming with a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator
- Nalgene water bottle
- Hot beverage service
- Field equipment as needed; ex: snowshoes
- Use of quality optics - scopes and binoculars
- Guest speakers
- Optional shuttle service –
 - Yellowstone Forever will offer an optional shuttle service with pick-up and drop-off from the Bozeman International Airport. There is an additional fee for the shuttle. You can reserve a spot and pay during registration.

Gratuities for the Yellowstone Forever field educators are not included but are recommended and greatly appreciated.

WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAM?

This package has been developed to create an all-inclusive Yellowstone National Park winter experience. From the exclusive opportunity to stay at the famed Lamar Buffalo Ranch, to delicious daily meals, transportation, and world-class educational programming; this program has everything you need to experience the best of Yellowstone's renowned wolf watching opportunities.

Here's why this package stands out:

- **Yellowstone Forever is Yellowstone National Park's only official nonprofit education and fundraising partner.** Yellowstone Forever's mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance Yellowstone National Park through education and philanthropy. Through educational experiences and fundraising efforts, YF provides significant support to Yellowstone National Park each year. To learn more about Yellowstone Forever, visit our website, [yellowstone.org](https://www.yellowstone.org).
- **Support Yellowstone National Park.** Proceeds collected by Yellowstone Forever educational programs are used to preserve Yellowstone National Park and provide more opportunities for people to experience its magic.
- **Yellowstone Forever Field Educators are world class.** The Yellowstone Institute has been providing in-depth educational programs in Yellowstone for nearly 50 years. Yellowstone Forever field educators are among the best experts in Yellowstone. Educational staff are passionate professionals with significant training who are dedicating their careers to this vital work. They live in the Yellowstone ecosystem, work and train alongside park researchers and educators, and thus can provide accurate and exciting behind the scenes perspectives on the park's natural and cultural history. They know where to go and when, and they handle all the details to make the experience as enjoyable as possible.
- **Small group size.** Winter Wolf Discovery programs have a max capacity of 14. The program capacity size allows participants to enjoy camaraderie with fellow participants and receive more attention in a small group setting. It allows the educator to take an inquiry-based approach to learning and tailoring the experience to the group's specific interests.
- **Essential equipment provided.** Yellowstone Forever provides high-quality scoping equipment to bring distant wildlife into crisp, clear view. Educators are at a minimum Wilderness First Aid certified. They carry a first aid kit and handheld radio during all outings and provide bear spray to participants if hiking in bear country. Additionally, they incorporate teaching aids such as skulls, tracks, pelts, and handouts, and field equipment such as temperature guns for thermal features.
- **Exclusive in-park lodging.** All lodging in this package is located at the historic Lamar Buffalo Ranch. The Lamar Buffalo Ranch is in the heart of Yellowstone's famed Lamar Valley where there is no shortage of spectacular scenery and wildlife. In partnership with Yellowstone National Park, Yellowstone Forever provides limited opportunities for guests to stay at the Lamar Buffalo Ranch through a variety of programs, including the Winter Wolf Discovery package. Staying at the Lamar Buffalo Ranch minimizes drive time during daily outings and allows more time to enjoy the park and spend time wildlife watching at a relaxing pace. It also allows more time in the evenings, after daily outings, to relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.
To learn more about staying at the Lamar Buffalo Ranch, please visit [HERE](#).

PROGRAM ITINERARY

The itinerary below is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park, but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions, wildlife activity, holidays, and road construction.

Day 1 **Welcome and Evening Orientation**

Guests are welcome to check-in to the Lamar Buffalo Ranch beginning at 4:00 p.m. After checking in, participants will gather at the Ranch Bunk House where you will be joined by other program guests and a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator for a program orientation. Orientation will provide an opportunity to go over the program itinerary, discuss clothing and equipment needed for daily outings, and answer any questions you may have. After the orientation guests will have enjoy a catered dinner together.

5:30 p.m. Orientation and Dinner

Days 2 - 4 **Wildlife Watching and Habitat Exploration**

Each day begins early to catch morning wildlife activity. After viewing wildlife, you will be led on a short snowshoe jaunt in search of tracks and sign while discussing ecology, behavior, recent research, and management. After a day spent in the field, guests will return to the Lamar Buffalo Ranch for evenings filled with camaraderie, discussion, and dinner.

6:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

Breakfast may be in the field (to-go) or served dine-in depending on that day's planned activities. Guests will know in advance.

7:00 a.m. **Depart Lamar Buffalo Ranch**

Hot beverage service provided while out in the field.

Morning and Afternoon Roadside Animal Viewing

Lunch in the field. If weather is bad, opportunity to eat back at the Ranch.

Wildlife Habitat Snowshoe Hike

After lunch snowshoe hike, no more than three miles total.

4:00 p.m. **Return to Lamar Buffalo Ranch**

6:00 p.m. **Dinner**

*A guest speaker will be joining the final night for dinner and presentation.

Day 5 **Check Out and Departure**

7:00 a.m. Catered Breakfast and check out of cabins by 10:00 a.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

How fit do you need to be?

This course is an activity **level 2** and students enrolled in this course are expected to be active participants. Be prepared to hike, snowshoe, or ski on snow-packed trails, up to 3 miles per day, with climbs up to 250 feet. *

Most activities will take place at elevations between 7,200 to 8,000 feet. 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 [our site page](#) on health information.

**All field activities will be conducted as a group. If you cannot meet the activity level expectations during your program, you may be restricted from participation in daily outings. We will not alter program itineraries or activities to accommodate participants who cannot meet the expectations of the stated activity level.*

To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign a health questionnaire and assumption of risk waiver. Registrants receive a link to this form in their confirmation letter which is sent via e-mail. These forms must be completed and returned prior to the program start date.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

Once you register for a program, your registration is subject to the following cancellation policy.

If you cancel:

- 90 days or more prior to the start of your program, 100% of your payment will be refunded minus a \$50 per person processing fee.
- 60 days or more prior to the start of your program, 50% of your payment will be refunded minus a \$50 per person processing fee.
- 30 days or more prior to the start of your program, 25% of your payment will be refunded minus a \$50 per person processing fee.
- If you cancel with fewer than 30 days before the start of your program, your full payment will be forfeited.

To guard against unexpected circumstances, we strongly advise you to purchase travel insurance to protect against loss should you have to cancel your registration.

All programs are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

WHOM TO CONTACT

For any questions, concerns, or additional information please contact the following:

- Reservations and program questions please contact the Yellowstone Forever Institute at institute@yellowstone.org or 406-848-2400 extension 3
- Road updates, park conditions, and general park information please contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY

Yellowstone Forever continues to adopt appropriate sanitization measures as prescribed by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/). Guests are encouraged to refer to this respected resource when making near-term travel plans.

Yellowstone Forever is in frequent contact with local authorities and partners such as county health departments and the National Park Service to continually monitor the situation on a regional level. Both entities are closely monitoring government policy changes, CDC guidelines, government mandates, and public health advancements, and will continue to make changes as necessary and appropriate to operations.

Protocols have been updated as of October 2022, please visit our website:

<https://www.yellowstone.org/covid-19-health-safety/> for up-to-date protocols and information.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST

Much of the program time will be spent outdoors, and guests should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are important. Winter temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 40°Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide clothing choices.

***The field educator will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.**

Equipment:

- Mask, optional
- Daypack, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, etc.
- Water bottle
- Sunglasses
- Lip protector, chapstick
- Journal and pen
- Optics, camera and binoculars
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Clothing:

- Insulating underwear, capilene, polypropylene, wool, or similar wicking fabric
- Midweight insulating layer, a light synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover
- Heavyweight insulating layer, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket
- Waterproof and windproof outer layer, lightweight and breathable, jackets and pants
- Pants, wool, fleece pants are preferred, no cotton
- Hat, an insulating hat that covers ears
- Gloves, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens – waterproof/windproof outer layer is recommended
- Socks, lightweight liner with heavyweight synthetic or wool socks
- Gaiters, knee-high to keep snow out of your boots
- Insulated boots should have water repellent layers outside, thick insulation inside, and be large enough to fit over thick socks. Soles with proper traction or traction devices (i.e. Yaktrax) are essential for icy conditions.

The historic ranch runs on limited solar power with backup generators. For this reason, please do not bring electrical appliances such as radios and crock pots as these items overload the system and can cause blackouts.

SUGGESTED READING

No prior reading is required, but participants might enjoy the following publications that complement the program. Some of the publications are available at Yellowstone Forever's online store at shop.yellowstone.org

Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount and proceeds directly support the park.

- Blakeslee, Nate. [*American Wolf*](#). Broadway Books. 2017
- Smith, D. and Ferguson, G. [*Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone*](#). Lyons Press. 2005
- McIntyre, Rick. [*The Rise of Wolf 8: Witnessing the Triumph of Yellowstone's Underdog*](#). Greystone Books. 2019
- Heinrich, Bernd. *Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival*. Harper Perennial. 2009.
- Halfpenny, J.C. [*Yellowstone Wolves: In the Wild*](#). Riverbend Press, Helena, MT. 2003.

ABOUT YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

Park Stores

Yellowstone Forever park stores feature more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help participants plan their visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount on merchandise online or at any of the locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone.

Visit: shop.yellowstone.org

Supporter Program

Yellowstone Forever supporters directly fund visitor education and park preservation. Benefits include: Seasonal lodging discounts throughout Yellowstone National Park.

- 15% discount on merchandise at all Park Stores locations, including the online store, Yellowstone National Park Lodges gift shop and Yellowstone General Stores. Exclusions apply.
- Discounts at over 400 participating public land stores across the country. For a list of participating organizations visit: www.publiclandsalliance.org
- A library card for the Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center.

If participants are not yet a supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory membership (one year) to Yellowstone Forever is included with the tuition. For more information, visit: yellowstone.org/donate.

Yellowstone Forever Supporters each receive a \$15 discount on education program packages.

CODE OF ETHICS

Yellowstone Forever is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant on a Yellowstone Forever program, participants will adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations, in addition to practicing Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: Groups will do their 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 the group presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. Yellowstone Forever adheres 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. Wildlife will not be enticed 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 educators 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.

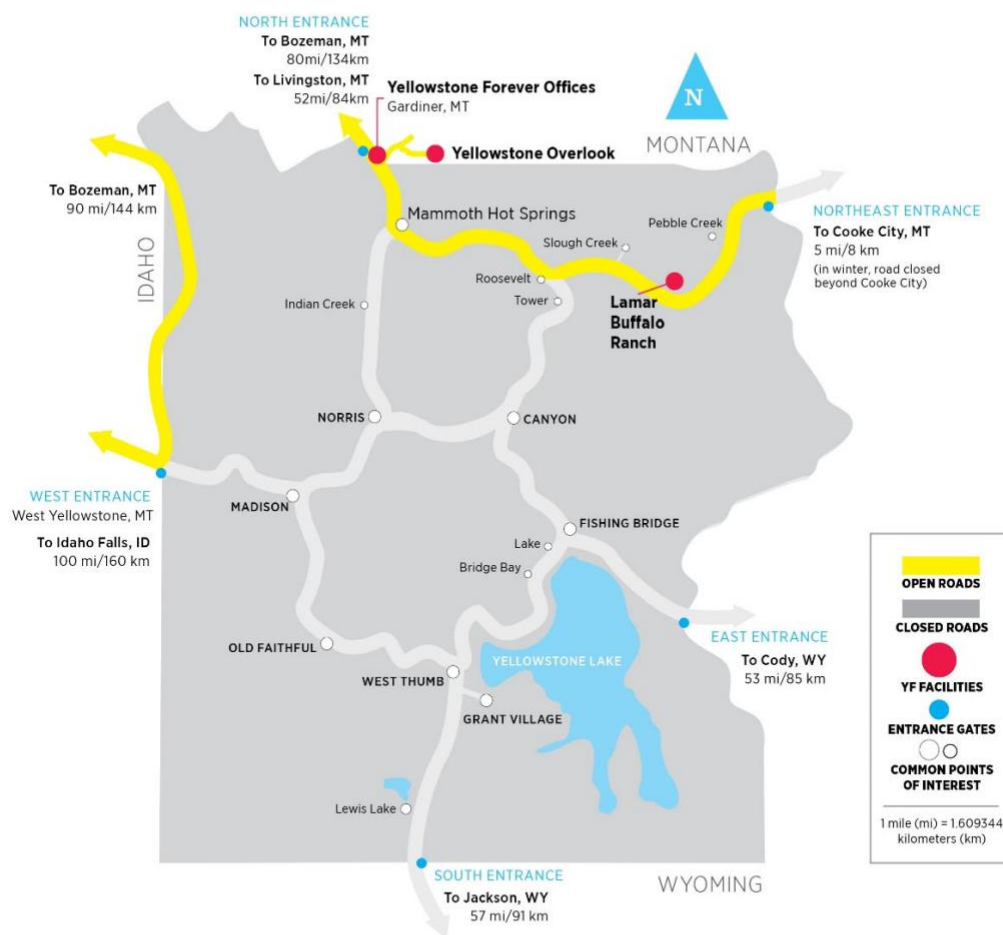
General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including 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, Yellowstone Forever field educators will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, educators will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. Yellowstone Forever will not stop in the middle of the road and should a traffic jam develop because of the group's activities, the activity will cease.

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

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, groups will use existing trails and boardwalks. Hikers 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 the program and should expect to walk through mud, snow, or puddles in the trail.

Yellowstone Winter Map **YELLOWSTONE FOREVER**



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. 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.



POINT TO POINT DISTANCE	Miles/Kilometers
North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	5 mi/8 km
Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance	29 mi/47 km
Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch	11 mi/17 km
Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs	18 mi/29 km

ELEVATIONS	feet/meters
North Entrance	5314 / 1620
West Entrance	6667 / 2032
South Entrance	6886 / 2099
East Entrance	6951 / 2119
Mammoth Hot Springs	6239 / 1902
Old Faithful	7365 / 2254
Grant Village	7733 / 2357
Lake	7784 / 2373
Canyon	7734 / 2357
Roosevelt	6270 / 1911

Plan on extra driving time in the park, the speed limit is 45 mph or lower. There may also be construction delays. Visit www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm, call the recorded NPS Road Report at 307-344-2117, or contact a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.

Participants are encouraged to take advantage of the airport shuttle provided by Yellowstone Forever for a safe and comfortable ride to and from the Lamar Buffalo Ranch from the Bozeman, Montana airport. Those interested should call the Yellowstone Forever Institute at 406-848-2400 (select "3" from the phone directory options).