Join us in Yellowstone National Park!

Come join the Yellowstone Forever Institute for a Field Seminar in Lamar Valley, a truly special place to call home, while in Yellowstone! If you are a newcomer to the Yellowstone Forever Institute, you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration on your field seminar. 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 program. Please read it thoroughly and call us at 307.344.8826 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.
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What to Expect

Yellowstone Forever Institute programs and facilities benefit from the hard work and generosity of volunteer program assistants. You will likely meet one, or more, of the program assistants assisting your program. Program assistants receive professional training in Wilderness First Aid, emergency response and procedures, and bus driving. Additionally, they help with program logistics, cleaning and maintenance of facilities, and anything you might need during your time with us.

Your class payment includes lodging, tuition, snowshoe rentals, and transportation during your program. It does not include transportation to the park, park entrance fees, and instructor gratuities.

For specific class details, including a day-to-day agenda, letter from the instructor, class specific equipment, and a recommended reading list see the course letter.
Facilities

Bunkhouse
The communal bunkhouse is open at all times and is the center of activity, where it houses two classrooms, kitchen, and bathroom. Make yourself at home in the bunkhouse by meeting new people, enjoying a midnight snack, and relaxing with classmates. 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. For more information on the kitchen see meals, on pg. 6.

Bathhouse
The ranch has a shared heated bathhouse complete with men's and women's bathrooms and private showers. As there are no bathrooms in the individual cabins the bathhouse is nearby the cabins and has paper towels and hand soap for convenience. You will be provided a code for the bathhouse door per your arrival to the ranch. Students will need to bring their own toiletries and bath towels.
Lodging

Yellowstone Forever Institute students in Field Seminars stay in our comfortable lodging at the historic Lamar Buffalo Ranch as part of their class fee. Participants will stay with up to two other participants, unless an upgrade has been purchased. Double occupancy (lodging with one other person), and single occupancy (cabin to yourself) have limited availability on a first-come, first-served booking.

Each log cabin has 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.

All Lodging is available for check-in at 4 pm on the first evening and lodging check-out is at 9 am on the final course date. On-site lodging is required for Lamar Buffalo Ranch courses, and dates are non-negotiable.

Camping and pets (with the exception of service animals) are not allowed.
Meals

Unless the program includes catered meals, guests bring and prepare all their own food. The kitchen is a community area where everyone does their own cooking and cleans up after themselves. Meals should be kept simple since you will be preparing your meals in a shared cooking facility. It is equipped with gas stoves, a microwave, toaster, plates, silverware, cooking utensils, pots, and pans. Additionally, ranch staff supply spices, coffee, tea, sugar, and creamer.

Please bring only what you will need during your stay as space in the kitchen and refrigerators is limited.

If your course is catered you will have the opportunity during registration to let staff know of any dietary restrictions you may have. We are able to accommodate all food restrictions and diets. Gratuity for caterer is already included in the Field Seminar tuition; tipping is not necessary for caterers.

Catering includes all dinners on the first night (check-in), breakfast through dinner on full days, and a continental breakfast on the last morning (check-out).
Directions to Lamar Buffalo Ranch

Restricted vehicle access and limited services make winter visits far different than the summer experience. Every year in early November, most park roads close to regular traffic to prepare for the winter season. The only exception is the road between Mammoth Hot Springs and the northeast entrance.

To access the Lamar Buffalo Ranch in winter you will need to come through the northern gateway community of Gardiner, MT. The ranch is approximately 1 hour away from Gardiner. You will start in Gardiner and proceed to Roosevelt (Park signs will say Tower Junction.)

- Head south on US-89, through Gardiner, for approximately 1 mile, headed towards the Roosevelt Arch.
- Before the Roosevelt Arch turn left onto S 3rd St. and take another left at the stop sign.
- Head to the North Entrance YNP pay station. Once you have paid for your park permit proceed into the park and drive 5.2 miles towards Mammoth Hot Springs.
- Once in Mammoth, at the first stop sign you come to, turn left and travel 18.1 miles to Tower Junction.
- At Tower Junction turn left and travel 10.5 miles until you reach the Lamar Buffalo Ranch, where you will proceed to turn left and park.

Prior to leaving always check park road conditions and closures at https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/conditions.htm or call 307.344.2117 for recorded information.
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.

### ELEVATIONS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Entrance</th>
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<tr>
<td>West Entrance</td>
<td>6667</td>
<td>2032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Entrance</td>
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<td>East Entrance</td>
<td>6951</td>
<td>2119</td>
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<td>Mammoth Hot Springs</td>
<td>6239</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
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<td>Old Faithful</td>
<td>7365</td>
<td>2254</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canyon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
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### POINT TO POINT DISTANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Miles/Kilometers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs</td>
<td>5 mi/8 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance</td>
<td>29 mi/47 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch</td>
<td>11 mi/17 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs</td>
<td>18 mi/29 km</td>
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Program Preparation

How fit do you need to be?

Each course is classified in difficulty with a 1 to 5 rating. To see the difficulty level and fitness expectations for a particular course, see that class' course letter. 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/
Winter Temperatures

Much of your time will be spent outdoors and programs are held rain, snow, or shine. Be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures by bringing appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear.

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.
General Clothing and Equipment List

Below are suggested items to bring to all winter Field Seminar Programs. For equipment and clothing specific to a course, please see the corresponding course letter. Additionally, Yellowstone Forever field staff assigned to your program will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.

**Equipment**
- **Day Pack** – *Enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, field guides, etc.*
- **Water Bottle** – *One-quart minimum. Backpack hydration systems can freeze in winter.*
- **Sunglasses/Sunscreen/Lip Protector** – *Sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.*
- **Optics** – *Camera, binoculars, and scopes, if wanted. YF does provide optics for all programs.*
- **Notebook/Pencil**
- **Pocket Hand & Foot Warmers**
- **Flashlight/Headlamp** – *For walking to and from your cabin in the evenings and mornings.*
- **Alarm** – *Nothing that needs plugged in.*
- **Calling Card** – *There is no cell phone reception or internet service in the Lamar Valley.*
- **Toiletries/Towel**
- **Food/Snacks** – *Shared kitchen; see above listed under meals for more information.*

**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** – *Wool, down, heavy-weight fleece, or other synthetic fabric.*
- **Waterproof & Windproof Outer Layer** – *Lightweight and breathable. Both jackets and pants.*
- **Short Sleeved Shirt** – *Synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.*
- **Pants** – *Wool, 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.*
- **Waterproof/Windproof Gloves** – *Lightweight glove liners and wool/fleece gloves or mittens.*
- **Socks** – *Light wool or synthetic liner sock with heavier wool or synthetic outer sock.*
- **Insulated Boots** – *Water-repellent layers outside, thick insulation inside, and fit over thick socks.*
- **Off-Duty Shoes** – *Sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.*

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.
PLEASE READ THIS POLICY BEFORE REGISTERING FOR YOUR PROGRAM

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.
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 program and should expect to walk through mud, snow, or puddles in the trail.
Our Mission

Yellowstone Forever is the official nonprofit partner of Yellowstone National Park.

We partner with Yellowstone National Park to create opportunities for all people to experience, enhance, and preserve Yellowstone forever.

Supporter Program & Retail Stores

Yellowstone Forever Supporters directly fund priority park programs and projects. Supporters also provide scholarships for teachers and help expand programming for under-served youth. Benefits include a subscription to our 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 supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine Yellowstone Quarterly is included with your tuition. For more information, visit: yellowstone.org/donate

Our Park Stores feature 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. To make purchases, visit: shop.yellowstone.org
Q. What airport should I fly into?
A. During the winter the only road open to cars in the park is the northern road between Gardiner, MT and Cooke City, MT. The closest large airport to Gardiner is the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport located in Bozeman, MT.

If you are flying in there are a number of car rental places located in Bozeman and Belgrade. For winter weather it is advised to have all-wheel or four-wheel drive.

Q. Does YF offer a shuttle service?
A. Yellowstone Forever does not currently have a shuttle service available.

Q. Is alcohol allowed at the ranch?
A. Yes, however it is BYOB and you must be 21+ years of age to consume.

Q. Are tents or trailers allowed at LBR?
A. No, all participants must stay in a designated cabin.

Q. How do I communicate with the instructor before the class?
A. All questions and communication about the program shall be directed at Yellowstone Forever Staff and we will provide the information you seek. Additionally, information from instructors will also be provided via Institute staff.

Q. Do I need to tip my instructor and/or LBR staff?
A. Gratuity is not included in price of program. If you wish to tip, you are welcome to do so, however it is not required.

Q. What is an emergency number I can give family to reach me?
A. 307.344.8826
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What kind of food should I bring for non-catered programs?
   A. The kitchen has everything needed to make any basic meal. Breakfast and dinners typically take place at LBR and participants are able to cook full meals, however remember you are sharing fridge room and will have a large plastic tub (of your own) to put non-perishable items in. For many of the programs plan on bringing sack lunch items, that do not need heated, for lunch in the field.

Q. Does YF provide linens for the cabins?
   A. We do not, please bring your own.

Q. Can I rent equipment from YF?
   A. Snowshoes are provided on all winter programs as part of your package. All other items are on your own. YF does not have rental gear however there are locations in Bozeman, Gardiner, and Mammoth Hot Springs where gear can be reserved; such as cross-country skis.

Q. Can my spouse/partner stay with me and not take the class?
   A. No, all participants must register in the class if they are utilizing lodging at the ranch.

Q. Can dietary restrictions be accommodated for catered classes?
   A. Yes, we will ask you to provide restrictions and we will pass that on to our caterer.

Q. Can CPAPS be accommodated?
   A. In most cases, yes. Please reach out to YF directly for more information.