

### Snow and Ice Precautions

Many serious and even fatal accidents have occurred on snow and ice fields in the summer. AVOID snow or ice slopes if you lack the proper equipment and experience. A short detour may save your life.

### Falling Rock

Falling rock is a hazard on or below all steep slopes. Avoid slopes and gullies which may be bombarded by rocks loosened by thawing or human passage. Never throw or roll rocks — someone may be below.



### Weather

Mountain weather is often extreme. Beware of sun and wind burn. Small local storms which are merely showers at lower elevations, give way to snow and freezing temperatures in the high mountains. Be prepared.

### Lightning

Do not continue upward into a thunder storm. Retreat to a safe place, a boulder covered slope is best. Get off of ridges or peaks. Stay out of caves and avoid exposed lone objects such as a large rock, tree, or telephone line. If you are riding horseback, get off and away from your horse.

### LOST?

Confucius say: "Much better to note direction of travel and avoid uncertainty of position than to wow female friends with tale of ordeal while lost 30 days in wilderness"

If you did not heed Confucius:

1. Sit down and examine map. Mark place where you left road or trail.
2. Check the directions to points you can see and identify. Use your compass.
3. Listen for sounds of cars (on road) or people (on a trail).
4. Blow three blasts on your whistle (or call). Repeat every few minutes.
5. If you hear someone, call to attract attention.
6. Mark a spot on your map where you believe you are located.
7. Figure how far you must be from your trail or road, and which direction.
8. Calculate how many minutes it will require to reach the trail or road over the **easiest and safest** route.
9. Mark your location on the ground with sticks or rocks so you can easily identify it.
10. If there is time before dark to reach your trail or road, go to it.
11. Keep track of direction by position of sun, landmarks, frequent backsights, and compass bearings.
12. Avoid precipitous areas, dense thickets and rocky gorges if possible.
13. If there is not time to walk out before dark pick a place to spend the night.
14. Remember — Your greatest dangers are from exhaustion, exposure, injury from a fall, or drowning.
15. Seek a place protected from wind and possible rain or snow.

- a. Be sure you can make a safe place for a fire. Scrape away all litter down to mineral soil in a six-foot diameter area.
- b. You will need wood for your fire — conveniently close by.
- c. Pick a dry smooth place for your bed.

16. If your clothes are wet or damp, dry them by the fire — but don't scorch them.
17. If you don't have a sleeping bag or sufficient clothing, paper between shirt and jacket will help to keep you warm.
18. Before you leave your camp put your fire out my mixing with water or mineral soil. Feel with your hands to **be sure** it is out.
19. No matter where you are in the park you can hike out to a road in less than one day — IF — you don't panic. Select the best route, avoiding cliffs and boulder-choked gorges, and **don't lose your clothing or equipment**
20. Immediately when you get out call the Chief Ranger's Office (586-4425) and tell him you are out — safe. Otherwise dozens of men may continue to search for you.

**MOUNTAINS DON'T CARE!  
BUT WE DO, AND YOU SHOULD TOO**

Prepared by park rangers and naturalists of Rocky Mountain National Park for those who love the "back country." Ante by Rocky Mountain Nature Ass'n., Inc.



**BACK  
COUNTRY**

**A booklet to help the hiker, camper, fisherman or mountaineer enjoy the back country of Rocky Mountain National Park**

If the Park back country is beautiful it is because those who used it before were careful to protect its beauty. You should be as considerate of those who will follow you.



## GOOD PRACTICES

### Plan Your Trip Well

Know where you are going, how to get there, and how long it will take. If you don't know, ask! Maps, booklets and information are available at Visitor Centers and Ranger Stations. THEN contact a ranger and inform him of your plans.

### Take the Proper Gear

Be equipped for wet weather, cold weather, and for emergencies.

For any back country trip take at least the following:

- Boots or stout shoes
- Extra sweater and mittens
- Raincoat or poncho
- Waterproof matches
- Flashlight and pocket knife

- First aid kit and insect repellent
- Extra amount of quick energy food (candy, dried fruit, etc.)
- Map
- Compass
- Whistle

### Take It Easy

It takes weeks to adjust to high altitudes, so go slowly. A slow, steady pace is the best way to gain altitude.

Consider elevation gains when planning your trip. Often, it takes twice as long to cover mountain miles as it does level ones. Five to 7 miles is a good day's travel.

Turn back if time is short or weather turns bad. Stay on trails.

## BACK COUNTRY CAMPING

Back Country Camping permits are required for all overnight trips away from roadside campgrounds.

A list of designated campsites is available from Park Rangers, or at information stations.

## REGULATIONS

This is a summary of Federal Regulations which deal with the back country. They are for your protection and the protection of the park. Violations are punishable by a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment of up to six months, or both. If you are in doubt about anything, ask a Park Ranger.

### General

- It is unlawful to cut, remove or deface any tree, shrub or other natural object, or Park signs and buildings.
- It is unlawful to tease or molest wildlife.
- Dogs, cats and pets are not allowed on Park trails or away from roads or parking areas. Where allowed, they must be under physical restraint.

- Firearms and fireworks are not permitted in the Park.
- No wheeled vehicles of any kind are permitted on the trails. This includes snowmobiles.
- A Back Country Camping Permit must be obtained (from Park Rangers) for all camps and/or fires away from roadside campgrounds and picnic areas.
- All unburnable refuse (such as cans, bottles, foil, etc.) taken into the back country must be brought out!

### Fishing

- Colorado State regulations apply, except as noted below:
- A State of Colorado fishing license is required for anyone 15 years of age or older.
- Bear Lake and Black Canyon Creek are closed to fishing.
- Fishing with minnows, chubs, nonpreserved fish eggs, or the use of traps, seines, throw lines or any other method except by hand-held rod and line is prohibited.
- Digging for bait within the Park not permitted.

### Mountaineering

- Climbers must register with Park Rangers before making any technical climbs (using ropes and hardware).
- All overnight winter back country users must register with Park Rangers.

## BACK COUNTRY MANNERS

Many of the following are National Park regulations, but in addition they are just good back country manners wherever you go.

### On the Trail

- Do not smoke while traveling trails. Ashes can cause fires.

- When horse travel approaches, hikers should stand quietly, well back from the trail until the horses pass.
- Do not cut across trail switchbacks. This causes erosion and trails become rougher.

### In Camp

- BUILD FIRES only in designated campsites, using as little wood as possible so there will not be a scarcity. Use ONLY DEAD AND DOWN WOOD.
- NEVER LEAVE A CAMPFIRE UNATTENDED and be SURE it is dead out before you leave.
- THE GRAZING OF LIVESTOCK IS NOT PERMITTED and persons using horses on overnight trips must provide enough feed for their animals. Some areas are closed to horse use. Horses must stay on established trails.

### Leave a Clean Camp

Leave nothing you have brought with you in the back country. Burn refuse and garbage. Flatten tin cans and carry them out with foil and bottles. If you carried a full can in, you can easily carry an empty one out.

- For proper sanitation, dig a toilet hole, and fill it with a little dirt each time it is used. It should be far from camp and water sources.
- Never pollute streams or lakes with fish entrails, human wastes or detergents.

## HIGH COUNTRY SAFETY

### Mountain Climbing

Remember before you leave the trail that mountain climbing is a technical sport requiring extensive training, skill and conditioning. NEVER attempt climbs beyond your proven ability unless accompanied by a qualified leader.