

Changeable Weather and Conditions

Weather conditions in Rocky Mountain National Park can change quickly. The wilderness, though beautiful, can be harsh. Expect snow, gusty winds and cold temperatures at any time. Allow for winter's short daylight hours. Be aware of your surroundings – safety is your responsibility.

Streams and lakes can have thin ice and be very dangerous. If you choose to cross, first test your steps with a pole. Attempt off-trail travel only if you are extremely familiar with the area and remember that the snowy landscape looks a lot different than summer. Snow can be very deep once you are off-trail.

Appropriate Gear

Dress appropriately to prevent chills or overheating by wearing layers of warm, insulating clothing such as synthetic or wool. Take extra layers of clothing including socks. A windproof outer layer is ideal in the mountains, and a warm hat and gloves or mittens are important. Remember your sunglasses and sunscreen – they are essential on bright days. Drink lots of water, and eat high energy snacks as you go. Most trails are not marked for winter use, so take a map and compass or other navigational aid. Do not rely on cell phones in Rocky Mountain National Park. Many locations in this rugged park have no service.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a serious and sometimes fatal emergency medical condition that results when your body loses heat faster than it produces it, and can happen when you are cold, overly tired, wet and hungry. Symptoms can include uncontrolled shivering, drowsiness, exhaustion, loss of judgment or coordination, and slurred or incoherent speech. Protect yourself with warm, adequate clothing layers and frequent stops to warm up. If symptoms occur, warm the chilled person with dry clothing and warm, nonalcoholic liquids, get back to your car and promptly seek medical attention.

Regulations and Etiquette

Sledding is NOT allowed at Bear Lake. The only place in Rocky Mountain National Park where sledding is permitted is at the Hidden Valley Snowplay Area. Snowshoers, hikers and cross-country skiers should try to maintain separate tracks. Slower-moving individuals should yield the way to those traveling faster. Skiers must be in control at all times and give plenty of notice of their approach when coming upon others on the trail.

Further Information Emergencies

Information Office 970-586-1206
Call 911 or 970-586-1203

See us on the web at www.nps.gov/romo

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Rocky Mountain

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Rocky Mountain National Park



Bear Lake Winter



NPS Photo courtesy John Marino

Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are exhilarating ways to enjoy the beauty. Be prepared and you can have a great day in the Bear Lake area.

Be Safety Smart: Use Good Judgment, Be Prepared and Be Aware

Stay Together!

Do not travel alone nor split up your group so someone is alone in the backcountry. Leave detailed plans about your day with someone, and stick to your plan.

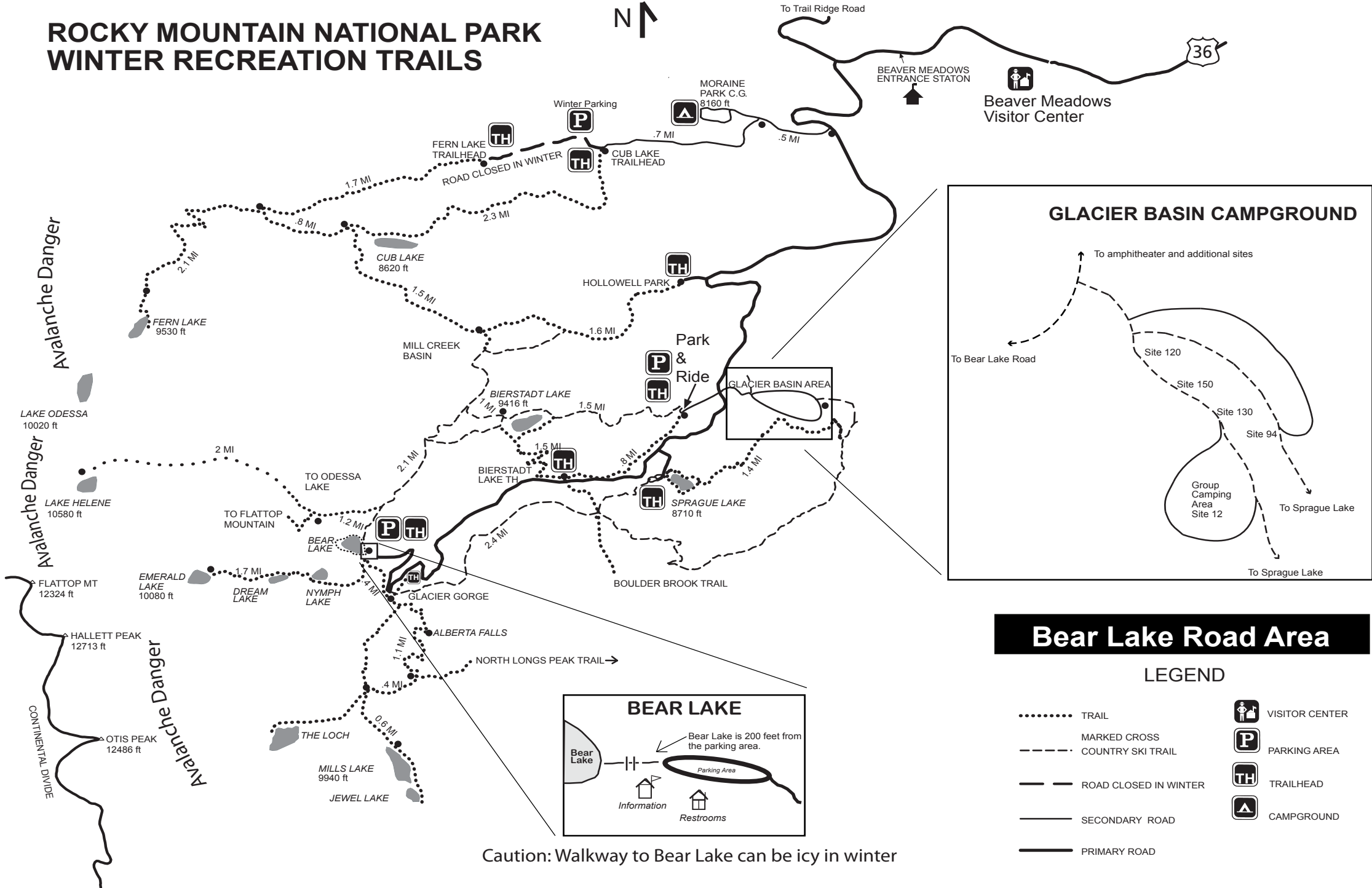
Beware of Falling Trees

Falling trees are an ever-present hazard. When traveling or camping in the forest, trees can fall without warning. Be particularly watchful when it's windy, or following a snowstorm when branches are heavy with snow. Avoid parking or camping in areas where trees could fall.

Avalanches

Avoid snowshoeing or skiing in steep gullies and along ridge tops where avalanches could occur. Open slopes of 30 to 45 degrees can be loaded with dangerous masses of snow, easily triggered by backcountry travelers. If traveling in these kinds of areas, take and know how to use an avalanche beacon and shovel. Do not take extra risks because you are wearing a beacon. If caught in an avalanche, make swimming motions and try to stay on top of the snow.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WINTER RECREATION TRAILS



Bear Lake Road Area

LEGEND

.....	TRAIL		VISITOR CENTER
- - - - -	MARKED CROSS		PARKING AREA
- - - - -	COUNTRY SKI TRAIL		TRAILHEAD
---	ROAD CLOSED IN WINTER		CAMPGROUND
---	SECONDARY ROAD		
---	PRIMARY ROAD		