

Rocky Mountain National Park
TECHNICAL CLIMBING AND BIVOUAC USE

A technical climb includes all climbing using ropes and other climbing aids. The bivouac permit provides technical climbers with an advanced position on long one-day climbs and/or climbs that require an overnight stay on a rock face. The bivouac permit is issued for a short stay, under improvised shelter or none.

Registration of technical climbs and overnights in the backcountry is required by law, and may be done either by phone or in person. A permit is filled out when you register and is kept on file. If you obtain your permit in person, you will receive a written copy; if by phone, you will not.

Park regulations are designed to maintain the quality of your National Park. Please help us by KNOWING AND OBEYING THE PARK REGULATIONS. Violators of Park regulations will be issued Federal "Violation Notices" requiring an appearance before the United States Magistrate at Estes Park, Colorado and/or a fine. Questions concerning Park regulations should be resolved before starting up the trail.

PERMITS - Permits are required for any climb with or without overnights in the backcountry. A permit for a technical climb may be combined with an overnight permit for a bivouac, cross-country zone, or designated campsite.

SUMMER - (generally June through September). Permits for technical climbing and bivouacs may be obtained by phone or in person, but not more than three days before the climb. Permits for day climbs originating from Longs Peak Ranger Station, Bear Lake Ranger Station, and Twin Owls parking lots are obtained by using the self-registration and trip completion records provided at those trailheads. Permits for technical climbing and overnights other than bivouacs must be picked up when you reach the park.

WINTER - (see WINTER USE INFORMATION SHEET). (Generally October through May). Permits for technical climbs and bivouacs may be obtained by phone or in person not more than one day before the trip or climb.

Permits may be obtained in person at the Backcountry Office at Headquarters, the West Unit Office, and some ranger stations in season. For permits obtained by phone, call 586-2371 any day of the week including weekends. SIGN-IN UPON COMPLETION OF THE CLIMB IS REQUIRED and may be done by calling 586-2371 anytime and giving your name, what you climbed, and whether or not you were successful. After office hours a recorder will take your message. Please do not use this recorder to register before your climb; but call during regular office hours (8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.) PERMITS ARE GOOD ONLY AT THE LOCATION AND DATE LISTED ON THE PERMIT.

CANCELLATIONS - *If you are not going to use your permit, please call (303) 586-2371, or contact a ranger to let us know.*

RESERVATIONS - Reservations for any overnight backcountry camping other than bivouacking are available, but permits cannot be mailed anytime a technical climb is involved. See GENERAL BACKCOUNTRY INFORMATION SHEET AND DESIGNATED SITE INFORMATION SHEET.

BIVOUAC SITES - The location of the bivouac will be in accordance with what is written on your permit. Generally, the bivouac should be on the actual climb or as near as possible to the base of the route. Bivouacking near lakes or in open meadows is NOT a provision of the bivouac permit. All evidence of bivouacking must be erected no earlier than dusk and taken down as soon after sunrise as possible, including tents if used.

On that portion of Broadway beneath the Diamond, no more than three bivouac permits will be issued for any one night. No more than one permit per route per day will be issued for any route on the Diamond.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE - Bivouac parties will be limited to no more than 7 people and will be limited to actual climbers only.

NUMBER OF NIGHTS - There is a limit of 7 nights camping in the Park from June through September, and 15 additional nights October through May per person per year.

HORSES - see HORSE USE INFORMATION SHEET.

FIRES - Not permitted. Containerized fuel stoves may be used.

TRASH - All trash, including aluminum foil and cigarette butts, must be packed out; not burned or buried.

PRIVY - Human excrement on some climbs and bivouac areas has become a very real problem. The burning of toilet paper and burying waste beneath 4-6" of soil is optimum. However, where little soil is available, a shallow trench covered by a large rock will suffice. In any case, waste must be buried well away from water courses and toilet paper destroyed.

PETS - Not allowed in the backcountry.

FISHING - Refer to PARK FISHING INFORMATION SHEET.

TRAILS - The Park maintains a system of trails in the backcountry; however, some cross-country travel may be expected to get to the base of most climbs.

WATER - Should be purified before use. Avoid pollution of lakes and streams. Remove water for washing dishes, hands, etc., from the source in a container and use it away from open water courses. Dispose of this wash water away from the campsite--NOT back in or near the stream.

HAZARDS - In addition to the hazards normally associated with technical climbing, the mountainous backcountry environment contains many other hazards not commonly encountered. A few of these are: Slipping on snowfields, falling into turbulent streams, mountain climbing without proper experience or equipment, continuing to travel in violent lightning, wind, or snowstorms, and encounters with wildlife. Any of these can cause serious injury and ruin your climb.