

Yellowstone

Day Hikes In the Tower Area

Yellowstone National Park
P.O. Box 168
Yellowstone, WY 82190
www.nps.gov/yell



Welcome to the Tower Area

The Tower area was a crossroads for Native Americans, trappers, and explorers—and a campsite for presidents. We invite you to spend a few hours hiking in this historic and scenic section of Yellowstone.

Always carry rain gear, extra food and water, and other emergency equipment when venturing into the backcountry. Be sure to obtain current trail condition and bear activity information at visitor centers.

Cautions

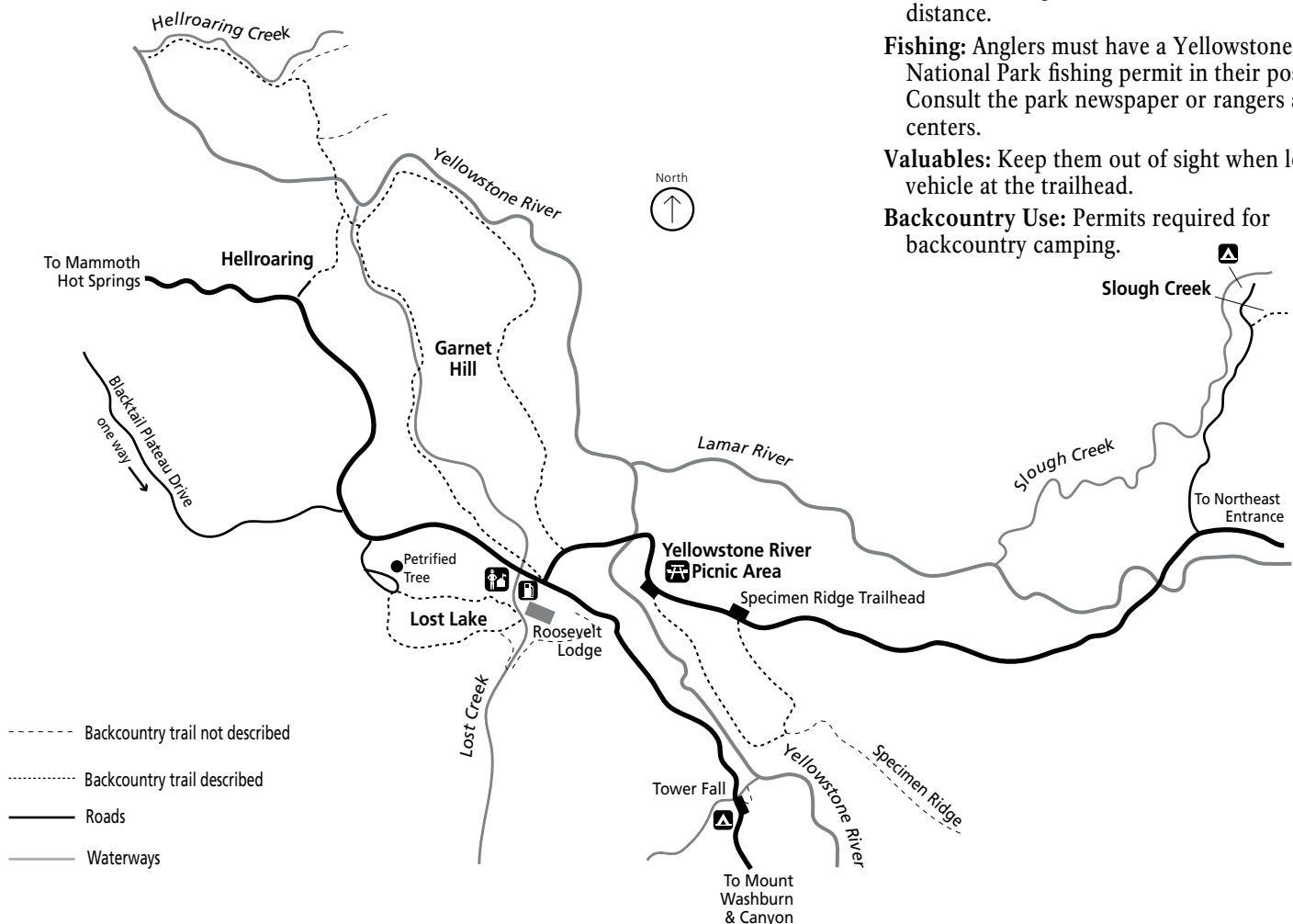
Bears: Although your chance of an encounter is low, your safety is not guaranteed. Minimize your risks by making loud noises, shouting, or singing. Hike in groups and use caution where vision is obstructed. Do not hike after dark. Avoid carcasses; bears often defend this source of food.

All Wildlife: You must stay at least 100 yards (91 m) from bears and wolves, and at least 25 yards (23 m) from all other animals—including birds. It is illegal to disturb animals from any distance.

Fishing: Anglers must have a Yellowstone National Park fishing permit in their possession. Consult the park newspaper or rangers at visitor centers.

Valuables: Keep them out of sight when leaving a vehicle at the trailhead.

Backcountry Use: Permits required for backcountry camping.



Lost Lake

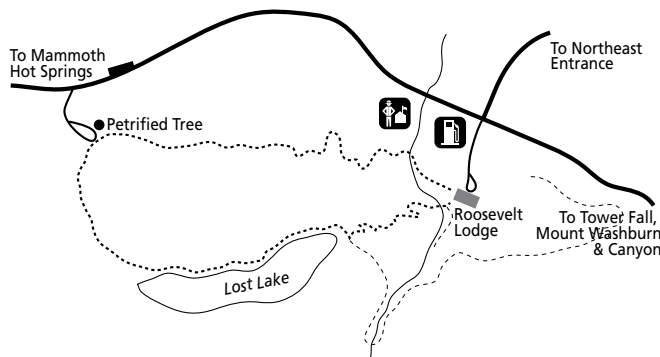
Distance, round trip: 4 miles (6.4 km)

Estimated time: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: moderate

Trailhead: behind Roosevelt Lodge

Offering views of Lost Lake, waterfowl, wet meadows, sagebrush hilltops, wildflowers, possibly beavers and quite often black bears, this trail has a bit of everything.



This trail begins behind Roosevelt Lodge and climbs 300 feet (91 m) onto the bench. Here it joins the Roosevelt horse trail and continues west to Lost Lake. From Lost Lake the trail follows the contour around the hillside to the Petrified Tree parking area, crosses the parking lot and continues up the hill. It loops behind Tower Ranger Station, crosses the creek and returns to the lodge.

Caution: If you encounter horses, move to the downhill side of the trail and remain still until they have passed.

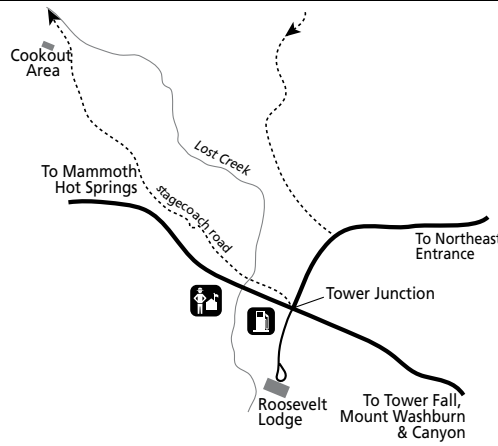
Garnet Hill

Distance, round trip: 7.5 miles (11.8 km)

Estimated time: 4 hours or more

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Approximately 50 yards (45.7 m) north from Tower Junction, on the Northeast Entrance Road. (Park in the large parking area east of the service station at Tower Junction.)



The trail follows the dirt stagecoach road about 1.5 miles (2.4 km) to the cookout shelter. Continues north along Elk Creek until nearly reaching the Yellowstone River. Here the trail divides, with the west fork joining the Hellroaring Trail and the east fork continuing around Garnet Hill and back toward Tower. Close to the road, the trail joins a horse trail that leads you to the Northeast Entrance Road. Walk along the road about one-fourth mile (400 m) back to the parking area.

Hellroaring

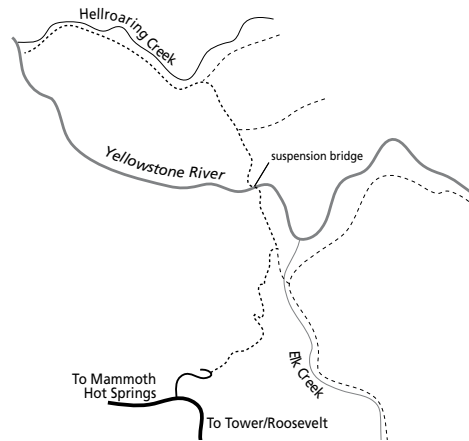
Distance, round trip: 4 miles (6.4 km)

Estimated time: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: Strenuous

Trailhead: 3.5 miles (5.6 km) west of Tower Junction.

Trail begins with a steep descent to the Yellowstone River Suspension Bridge, then crosses a sagebrush plateau, and drops down to Hellroaring Creek. Both the Yellowstone River and Hellroaring Creek are popular fishing areas.



Cautions:

- Take water—this trail can be hot and dry during the summer.
- Watch your footing on river boulders along the river and creek.
- Beyond the bridge is a trailhead for other major backcountry trails. Pay attention; stay on the Hellroaring Trail.
- Hellroaring is a major backcountry trail. This day hike stops at the creek.

Alternative Route: Begin at Garnet Hill (above) and continue west on Hellroaring Trail; return to the Garnet Hill trailhead. Distance: 10 miles (16 km)

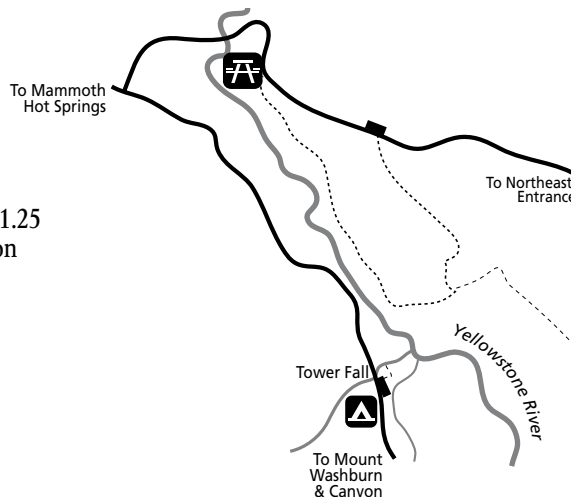
Yellowstone River Picnic Area

Distance, round trip: 3.7 miles (5.9 km)

Estimated time: 2–3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Yellowstone River Picnic area, 1.25 miles (2 km) northeast of Tower Junction on the Northeast Entrance Road.



Trail climbs steeply to the east rim of the Narrows of the Yellowstone and then follows the rim. Look for peregrine falcons and osprey, which nest in the canyon, and bighorn sheep along the rim. View the Overhanging Cliff area, the towers of Tower Fall (the fall is not visible), basalt columns, and the historic Bannock Ford. The trail heads northeast; at the next trail junction turn left and descend to the road. (The Specimen Ridge Trail, strenuous and poorly marked, continues northeast.) Walk west along the road for 0.7 mile (1.1 km) to the Yellowstone River Picnic Area.

Slough Creek

Distances, one way:

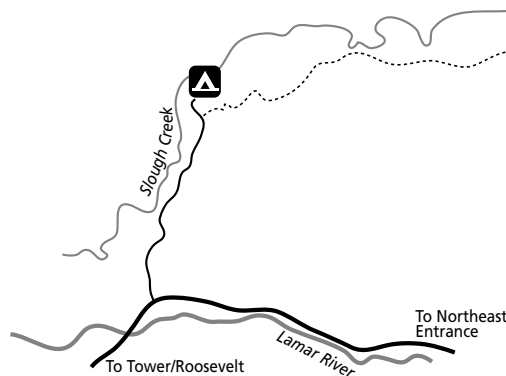
First meadow: 2 miles (3.2 km)

Second meadow: 4.5 mi (7.2 km)

Estimated time: 1–3 hours one way.

Difficulty: Moderately strenuous for first 1.5 miles (2.4 km); then easy.

Trailhead: On the dirt road toward Slough Creek Campground; where the road bears left, park beside the vault toilet.



This long-distance trail follows a historic wagon trail into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness beyond Yellowstone. It begins with a steep climb then descends to the first meadow. Stop and relax here or continue to the second meadow. Be alert for bears and moose.

Caution: If you encounter horses, move to the downhill side of the trail and remain still until they have passed.

Mt. Washburn

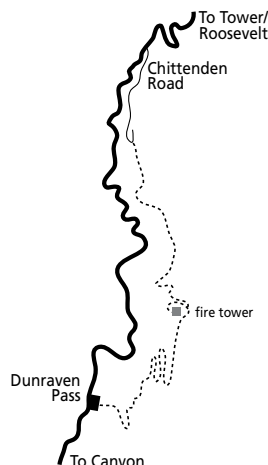
Distance, one way: from Dunraven Pass, 3.1 miles (5 km); from Chittenden Road, 2.5 miles (4 km)

Estimated time: 3–6 hours

Difficulty: strenuous; 1,400 feet (425 m) vertical rise

Trailheads: Chittenden Road Parking Area, 8.7 miles (13.9 km) south of Tower Junction; Dunraven Pass Parking Area, 13.6 miles (21.8 km) south of Tower Junction on the Tower-Canyon Road.

Note: More parking is available at the north trailhead; bicycles and park vehicles also use this route.



Either trail ascends Mt. Washburn on a wide path with spectacular views. Look for bighorn sheep and wildflowers. Stay on the trail to avoid destroying fragile alpine vegetation. At the top, enjoy the view and interpretive exhibits inside the shelter at the base of the fire lookout.

Caution—high elevation trail:

- Storms are common; bring rain gear, wool hats, and gloves.
- Not recommended for persons with heart and/or respiratory problems.

For more information

www.nps.gov/yell

www.yellowstoneassociation.org

Each major area of the park has a free hike handout. The Yellowstone Association bookstores also sell a “Dayhike Sampler” with a hike or two per area plus several guides for trails throughout the park. Proceeds from all sales support Yellowstone National Park’s interpretive ranger programs.