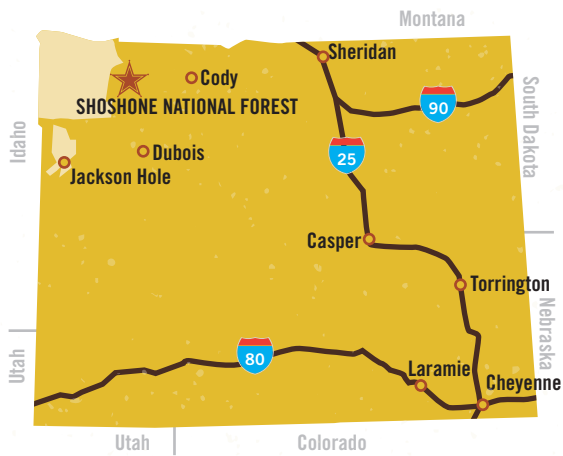


# SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST



## SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST ESSENTIALS:

**Address:** 808 Meadow Lane  
Cody, WY 82414

**Season:** Open year-round, though most campsites and other facilities operate from mid-May through September.

### VISITOR INFORMATION:

**Web site:** <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/shoshone>

**Phone:** (307) 578-1200

**TDD:** (307) 578-1294

### PARK OVERVIEW:

NEARLY 2.5 MILLION ACRES OF SOME OF THE MOST RAW AND RUGGED COUNTRY IN THE LOWER 48, THE SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST, ESTABLISHED IN 1891, IS THE OLDEST OF OUR NATIONAL FORESTS. AND IT REMAINS A CORNERSTONE OF ALL THAT WE VALUE IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILDS—THE NATIVE CULTURES OF ITS PAST, THE HUGE SWATHS OF ROADLESS, UNTRAMMELED WILDLIFE HABITAT OF ITS PRESENT, AND THE CLASSIC OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES WE HOPE IT HOLDS IN ITS FUTURE.

The Shoshone runs south and east from a border it shares with Yellowstone National Park's eastern edge. Its northern quarters trail along the jumbled topography of the Absaroka Range, while its southern reach extends a finger down the east side of the magnificent Wind River Range, a 90-mile stretch of serrated peaks that is a favorite among hikers who've truly rambled far and wide through the Rockies. The forest's alpine heights are drained by rivers that loom very large in the imagination of fly anglers and whitewater paddlers: the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone, the Shoshone River's North and South Forks, and the Wind River. And its expansive backcountry—the canyons, lodgepole forests, alpine meadows, high-mountain tarns, and riparian wetlands—are a linchpin in the conglomerate public lands that have kept the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem the last intact natural community in the temperate climes of North America.

All of this abundant wildness makes the Shoshone one of the best places in America to get into the great outdoors. Hiker, climber, angler, paddler, mountain biker, horse rider—whatever your passion, you'll find a memorable adventure in this park.

### PARK HIGHLIGHTS:

Elevations in the Shoshone range from 4,600 feet at the mouth of the spectacular Clarks Fork Canyon to 13,804 feet on Gannett Peak, Wyoming's highest point. And nearly 1.4 million acres of the forest are designated wilderness areas. There are also more than 1,500 miles of scenic roads traversing the forest. Wildlife on the Shoshone includes deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, grizzly and black bears, as well as numerous smaller animals, birds, and

cold-water fish. Animals in the forest are wild. Enjoy them at a safe distance.

The Continental Divide follows the unbroken heights of the **Wind River Range**, Wyoming's highest mountains and the loftiest in the Rockies outside of Colorado. West of the Divide is Bridger-Teton National Forest and a legendary stretch of the Continental Divide Trail; Shoshone's portion of the Winds is less accessible, wilder feeling, and arguably just as spectacular. Among Shoshone's classic Wind River Range backpacking trips is the **Middle Fork Trail** in the **Popo Agie Wilderness** near Lander, Wyoming; it's a seriously rugged five day or longer backpacking loop into a high country of granite, alpine tarns, and majestic peaks. **Wind River Peak** is a 13,000 foot non-technical but strenuous cross-country climb.

The **Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone** begins just east of Yellowstone National Park, flows southeast, and then curves through a deep, spectacular canyon before converging with the main channel of the Yellowstone near Billings. And in the Box, the sheer-walled canyon that earned it "Wild and Scenic" status, it harbors a whitewater monster that will test the skill and mettle of even the most advanced paddlers. Even at low water levels, some stretches are not runnable and others require hurdling through Class V and VI rapids. But if you're not among the few that are up for wrasslin with this beast, the Clarks Fork corridor offers a lot more—magnificent views of the canyon from the **Chief Joseph Scenic Highway**, treks into the backcountry from the river's northern bank, and quieter stretches of river featuring blue-ribbon trout fishing for cutthroats and rainbows.



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If the kids are clamoring for whitewater excitement, the **Shoshone River** is an exciting, more user-friendly paddle trip. A nine-and-a-half-mile stretch from Wapiti to Buffalo Bill Reservoir makes a good day trip, with rapids topping out at a comfortable Class II.

The glaciers, permanent snowfields, sound rock, and relatively predictable weather in the upper reaches of the Wind River Range have made them a training area for generations of world-class mountaineers. Conditions are particularly favorable for teaching **traditional backcountry rock climbing** at altitude, and numerous famed outdoor schools have long offered summer and winter **mountaineering** programs. The best-known climbing areas are the **Cirque of the Towers** and the **Fremont Peak** areas along the Continental Divide; climbers can find most any level of terrain and challenge they want, from Class 3 scrambling to extremely challenging Class 6 climbs.

Want to see the Rockies as Jim Bridger and Jedediah Smith saw them? Head for the 350,488-acre **North Absaroka Wilderness**; it's vast, truly rugged and remote, and wild in a way no other place in the Lower 48 can today claim to be. Situated along the northeastern boundary of Yellowstone National Park, just north of the North Fork Shoshone River, the North Absaroka still counts grizzlies, bighorn sheep, and elk among its wildlife, making it a crucial part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The few trails through this expanse are steep and narrow, and they traverse long distances with no chance of bail-out. Most people follow the historic example and use horses to pack in. Expect minimum signing, washouts, fallen trees, loose rock, and few if any encounters with other humans, all of which adds up to a relatively high risk factor. Come prepared.

The Shoshone possesses some of the most highly prized blacktop in the national forest system. Among its two-lane treasures is a portion of the scenic **Beartooth Highway**, which runs through rarified air and beauty above 9,000 feet between Yellowstone's northeast corner and Red

Lodge, Montana. Another winner is the **Chief Joseph Scenic Highway**, which crosses spectacular Dead Indian Pass and affords the only view into the canyon of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone. And Teddy Roosevelt proclaimed the **Buffalo Bill Cody Scenic Byway**, the stretch of road between Cody and Yellowstone, "the most scenic 52 miles in the United States" long before it was federally designated in 1996. It follows the North Fork of the Shoshone River through the Absaroka Mountains to Yellowstone's East Entrance; there are unearthly rock hoodoos, nearly as much wildlife as in Yellowstone itself, and some of the finest tent campgrounds in the area.

## NOTES:

