

Wilderness.net's Cottonwood Forest Wilderness Fact Sheet

Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Cottonwood Forest Wilderness in 2009 and it now has a total of 2,647 acres. All of the wilderness is in Utah and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

Zion National Park's world-famous landscape of soaring cliff walls, forested plateaus, and deep, narrow gorges extends well beyond the boundaries of the park onto surrounding BLM and FS lands including the Cottonwood Forest Wilderness. The area is characterized by deep, narrow red rock canyons with intermittent surface water and seasonal flows. There are no designated system trails in the wilderness and travel is limited due to steep terrain. Seeps in the canyon walls provide water for bouquets of maidenhair fern, scarlet monkeyflower, and columbine. Hawks, falcons, and eagles nest along the sandstone walls, while deer, and cougar live in the canyon bottoms.

Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Cottonwood Forest Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)
6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

For more information on Leave No Trace, [Visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.](#)

Area Management

The Cottonwood Forest Wilderness is part of the 109 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the Cottonwood Forest Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

General Wilderness Prohibitions

Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is generally prohibited on all federal lands designated as wilderness. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the landing of aircraft including helicopters, unless provided for in specific legislation.

In a few areas some exceptions allowing the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport are described in the special regulations in effect for a specific area. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information.

These general prohibitions have been implemented for all national forest wildernesses in order to implement the provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act requires management of human-caused impacts and protection of the area's wilderness character to insure that it is "unimpaired for the future use and enjoyment as wilderness." Use of the equipment listed as prohibited in wilderness is inconsistent with the provision in the Wilderness Act which mandates opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and that wilderness is a place that is in contrast with areas where people and their works are dominant.

Wilderness-Specific Regulations

Wilderness managers often need to take action to limit the impacts caused by visitor activities in order to protect the natural conditions of wilderness as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964. Managers typically implement 'indirect' types of actions such as information and education measures before selecting more restrictive measures. When regulations are necessary, they are implemented with the specific intent of balancing the need to preserve the character of the wilderness while providing for the use and enjoyment of wilderness.

The following wilderness regulations are in effect for this area. Not all regulations are in effect for every wilderness. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed on the 'Links' tab for more specific information about the regulations listed.

ALL VISITORS

- Group size is limited to no more than a combined number of 25 people and pack or saddle stock.
- Do not shortcut switchbacks.
- Do not dispose of debris, garbage, or other waste in the Wilderness. Pack it out.
- As with all designated Wilderness, mechanical transportation (including wagons, game carts, and other vehicles) is prohibited.

STOCK USERS

- All pack or saddle stock feed must be certified weed-free.

Contacts

Pine Valley Ranger District
196 E TABERNACLE
SUITE 38
ST GEORGE, UT 84770

Phone: 435-688-3246

Links to Other Websites

[Dixie National Forest Wilderness Areas](#)

Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
Public Law 111-11	March 30, 2009	2,643

Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 - Public law 111-11 (3/30/2009) An act to designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

NOTE: At present, the wording in the legislation and the legislative map aren't consistent. The legislation specifies that the area is managed by the Forest Service as part of the Dixie National Forest, however, two small portions along the eastern boundary are actually BLM lands.

—: [download 111-11](#) - Relevant legislation found on page(s): 86.