

Wilderness.net's Mount Olympus Wilderness Fact Sheet



Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Mount Olympus Wilderness in 1984 and it now has a total of 15,290 acres. All of the wilderness is in Utah and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

Credit:

Utah Wilderness Association

Mount Olympus is one of three wilderness areas that form a spectacular backdrop for the Salt Lake Valley. Located southeast of Salt Lake City, Mount Olympus Wilderness consists of narrow canyons and rugged terrain varying from moderate to severe. Elevations range approximately from 5,000 feet to 10,000 feet. High peaks include Mount Raymond, Gobbler's Knob, and Mount Olympus itself, topping off at 9,793 feet. The higher country is characterized by large, alpine cirque basins and bare rocky ridges. The higher elevations can often have snow until the midsummer. Patches of various firs and aspen grow in stands, mainly on north-facing slopes. Lower elevations are covered in dense mountain brush mixed with sagebrush and grass. State Route 190 follows the scenic canyon of Big Cottonwood Creek along the southern boundary, and the canyon separates this wilderness from Twin Peaks Wilderness to the south. Mill Creek Canyon and its county road form the northern boundary. From both of these roads, you can enter the wilderness from several trailheads. The trails are often easy to follow, but several are rigorous and difficult. Crowds from the Salt Lake City area flood into here, especially on weekends. Mount Olympus Wilderness area has about 20 system trails totaling approximately 42 miles. The Big Cottonwood side of the wilderness is within the Salt Lake City Watershed and has restrictions on dogs, horses and swimming.

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 Mount Olympus 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 Mount Olympus Wilderness is part of the 110 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 Mount Olympus 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 10 people.

-- Campfires are prohibited in portions of the Wilderness which fall within 1/2 mile of mill creek canyon county road or big cottonwood canyon highway.

-- Do not shortcut switchbacks.

- Do not dispose of debris, garbage, or other waste in the Wilderness. Pack it out.
- Dogs are prohibited within the Big Cottonwood side of the Wilderness.
- Dogs must be under verbal control or leashed on the Mill Creek Canyon side of Mount Olympus and leashed on even numbered days in Salt Lake County. This is not a Forest Service special order, it is a Salt Lake County ordinance.
- Swimming and/or bathing are prohibited in any stream or body of water on the Big Cottonwood side of the Wilderness.

OVERNIGHT VISITORS

- Overnight visitors cannot occupy any single location longer than 3 days.
- Camping is prohibited at the following locations:
 1. in portions of the Wilderness which fall within 1/2 mile of mill creek canyon county road or big cottonwood canyon highway
 2. within 100 feet of other campsites
 3. within 200 feet of any trail or water source
 4. at non-designated sites

STOCK USERS

- Possessing or storing hay, straw, or mulch, which has not been certified by any authorized state or county officer is prohibited on the Mill Creek side of the Wilderness.
- Pack or saddle stock cannot be restrained within 200 feet of water source on the Mill Creek side of the Wilderness.
- Pack or saddle stock are prohibited in the Big Cottonwood side of the Wilderness.

Fees

The following user fee system(s) have been implemented for this wilderness: DAY USE. Fees are most often used to offset the operating costs of a permit system or to help fund management activities such as trail maintenance. Contact the national forest office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information on this fee system.

Contacts

Public Lands Information Center
Recreational Equipment Inc.
3285 E. 3200 S.

Phone: 801-466-6411

Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Phone: 801-733-2660

Salt Lake Ranger District
6944 SOUTH 3000 EAST
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84121

Phone: 801-999-2103

Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest
857 WEST SOUTH JORDAN PARKWAY
SOUTH JORDAN, UT 84095

Links to Other Websites

[Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Wilderness](#)

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 98-428 | September 28, 1984 | 16,000 |
| Utah Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public law 98-428 (9/28/1984) To designate certain national forest system lands in the state of Utah for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System to release other forest lands for multiple use management, and for other purposes | | |

[download 98-428](#)