

Grand Teton National Park



Located in northwestern Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park protects stunning mountain scenery and a diverse array of wildlife. The central feature of the park is the Teton Range — an active, fault-block, 40-mile-long mountain front. The range includes eight peaks over 12,000 feet (3,658 m), including the Grand Teton at 13,770 feet (4,198 m). Seven morainal lakes run along the base of the range, and more than 100 alpine lakes can be found in the backcountry. Originally, Native Americans occupied this area during spring, summer and fall, but during the winter they moved to other places to avoid the cold climate. After 1884, European settlers occupied the area and stayed year-round.

Elk, moose, pronghorn, mule deer, and bison are commonly seen in the park. Black bears are common in forested areas, while grizzlies are occasionally observed in the northern part of the park. More than 300 species of birds can be observed, including bald eagles and peregrine falcons.

The birth of present-day Grand Teton National Park involved controversy and a struggle that lasted several decades. Animosity toward expanding governmental control and a perceived loss of individual freedoms fueled anti-park sentiments in Jackson Hole that nearly derailed establishment of the Park. By contrast, Yellowstone National Park benefited from an expedient and near universal agreement for its creation in 1872. The world's first national park took only two years from idea to reality; however Grand Teton National Park evolved through a burdensome process requiring three separate governmental Acts and a series of compromises.

- The original Grand Teton National Park, set aside by an Act of Congress in 1929, included only the Teton Range and six glacial lakes at the base of the mountains.
- The Jackson Hole National Monument, decreed by Franklin D. Roosevelt through presidential proclamation in 1943, combined Teton National Forest acreage, other federal properties including Jackson Lakem, and a generous 35,000-acre donation by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The Rockefeller lands continued to be privately held until December 16, 1949, when an impasse for addition to the national park was resolved.
- On September 14, 1950, the original 1929 Park and the 1943 National Monument (including Rockefeller's donation) were united into a "new" Grand Teton National Park, creating the present-day boundaries.

Today, GTNP is not only a recreational site, but an educational one as well. The Teton Science School teaches about the environment with hands on science activities year-round. People of all ages learn while having fun studying geology, plants, animals, birds, and photography.

For a more detailed history of the Park, go to: www.nps.gov/grte/cult/50th/history.shtml.

The map of the park on the next page is located at:

www.jacksonholewy.net/images/content/maps/map_gtnp_lowrez.pdf