

# Permits and Planning

## Permits, How and Why

The backcountry use permit is free but is required for all overnight camping in the backcountry. If you intend to stay overnight in the backcountry, you will need a permit. The backcountry permit system is designed to protect the park and its solitude, both the quality of the natural environment and the quality of your experience. The National Park Service is charged with protecting the Smokies for present and future generations to enjoy. The permit system is an attempt to enable you and others to love this wild place without loving it to death.

**How to get your backcountry permit.** You may self-register for a permit at any ranger station by following posted instructions, but your itinerary may require access to a public pay telephone, as explained below.

Some sites are rationed—see chart at right—because of heavy use. You must telephone the Backcountry Reservation Office to obtain permission for the use of those sites. Failure to do so invalidates your permit and puts you in violation of regulations and subject to a fine.

If your itinerary includes at least one rationed site, we encourage you to make advance reservations up to a month ahead of the trip's start. To do so, you must plan your trip before your call and indicate exactly which site you intend to occupy for each night of your trip. If no rationed sites are involved, you may obtain your permit via self-registration upon your arrival in the park. The backcountry reservation office is open 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The telephone number is (423) 436-1231.

The following rules relate to trip planning: 1. Maximum party size is eight. 2. You may stay no more than one consecutive night at a shelter, three consecutive nights at a campsite. 3. You must stay in designated sites and follow your identified itinerary. In addition, certain courtesies help make the permit system work for all of us: 1. Do not reserve more space than you intend to occupy; to do so prohibits use by other backpackers. 2. Please call the reservations office to cancel any nights that become available because of changes in your plans.

## Rules and Regulations

- 1 You must possess a backcountry permit while camping in the backcountry.
- 2 Camping is permitted only at designated sites and shelters.
- 3 Use of rationed sites and shelters must be confirmed through the Backcountry Reservation Office.
- 4 You may stay up to 3 consecutive nights at a site. You may not stay 2 nights in a row at a shelter.
- 5 Maximum camping party size is 8 persons.
- 6 Open fires are prohibited except at designated sites. Use only wood that is dead and on the ground.
- 7 Use of tents at shelters is prohibited.
- 8 Food storage: When not being consumed or transported, all food and trash must be suspended at least 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the nearest limb or trunk, or shall be stored as otherwise designated. See Bears and You.
- 9 Toilet use must be at least 100 feet from a campsite or water

## Backcountry Campsites

Site #	Rationed Capacity	Elev (feet)	Map Key
<b>Cades Cove Area</b>			
1		1200	2D
2		1320	2D
3		1360	3D
4		1930	3D
5		3400	3D
6		3400	4D
7		1680	3C
9		3200	4E
10		3000	4E
11		1530	2D
12		2800	3E
13		4640	2F
14		2050	2E
15		1550	2F
16		1700	2E
17		1240	2D
<b>Elkmont/Tremont Area</b>			
18		1600	4D
19		2880	5D
20		2520	5D
21		3780	6D
23		3200	6D
24		2850	6D
26		4400	6D
27		3520	5D
28		3490	5D
30		3400	6E
<b>Greenbrier/Cosby Area</b>			
29		4560	9C
31		3400	8D
32		2280	8C
33		1960	8B
34		2240	10D
35		2680	10B
<b>Cataloochee/Big Creek Area</b>			
36		3040	11C
37		3000	11C
38		5820	11C
39		3040	11D
40		3100	11D
41		3380	11E
42		5490	10D
<b>Oconaluftee Area</b>			
44		5040	10D
45		3820	10D
48		3320	9D
49		3080	9D
50		2360	9E
<b>Deep Creek Area</b>			
52		5000	8E
53		3000	8E
54		2600	8E
55		2410	8E
56		2405	8F
57		2380	8F
58		2360	8F
59		2320	7F
60		2120	7F
<b>Noland Creek Area</b>			
61		3560	7E
62		3180	7F
63		2920	7F
64		2540	7F
65		2040	6F
66		1720	6C
67		1840	6B
<b>Forney Creek Area</b>			
68		3960	6E
69		2800	6F
70		2400	6F
71		2180	6F
74		1720	6G
75		2800	5F
<b>Hazel Creek Area</b>			
82		2720	5F
83		2280	5F
84		2180	4F
85		2000	4F
86		1680	4F
<b>Twentymile Area</b>			
88		2200	4F
89		1880	4F
90		1880	4F