

4. ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming)

This area has a bit of everything, from stunning mountain peaks to desert landscapes. Wooded areas, lakes, otherworldly rock formations, and waterfalls can all be found here. High elevation areas within this region can make great summer trips, as temperatures tend to be cooler with very low humidity. Some of desert areas do get very hot, so as always, do some research on weather patterns when planning a trip. While not quite as wild as Alaska, when it comes to the lower 48, some of the wildest spaces are in these states. Montana and Wyoming do have grizzly bears, so be aware of that and check with officials in the area about recent bear activity before setting out on trails. Be aware some of the places listed are very remote, and don't always have great cell service. One more thing to note, some of the parks in this region with the largest draws for humans (Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Rocky Mountain, Glacier, Zion, Arches, etc.) are not always the most dog friendly, for various safety and conservation of habitat/resource reasons. If visiting one of these big parks is on your itinerary, check into national forests or state parks nearby, as they are usually more dog friendly. That way, your dog can get out and enjoy some hiking and adventure with you and not be stuck in the car the whole trip!

COLORADO:

***Bear Creek Lake Park: Dogs allowed on trails, but are prohibited from sand area of the beach.

***Curecanti National Recreation Area: Dogs are allowed on all trails. Unless in route to or from a boat, they are not allowed at marinas or docks.

***Eldorado Canyon State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Golden Gate Canyon State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Great Sand Dunes National Park: Dogs are allowed in the Preserve (attached to the National Park) and main use areas. They are not allowed in the backcountry beyond the first ridge of dunes, off the Dunes Overlook Trail, north of Castle Creek Picnic Area (except along Medano Pass Primitive Road), north of the Point of No Return (including Sand Ramp Trail), or any backcountry campsites within the national park. The parks website has a map on their pet page showing where dogs are and are not allowed, check it out if planning a visit. Take into account the temperature when visiting, the sand can get extremely hot in summer (up to 150 degrees!) and burn their paws. Pet boots may be a good idea for this area, as there also cactus spines to be wary of in the grasslands around the dunes.

***Lory State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site: Dogs allowed on all trails.

MONTANA:

***Lone Pine State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Missouri Headwaters State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

NORTH DAKOTA:

***Fort Union Trading Post National Historical Site: Dogs are allowed on all trails and grounds. This is one of the few parks that DOES allow dogs in park structures, with the exception of the Bourgeois House Visitor Center. They can explore the other fort buildings and the Trade House alongside of you.

***Knife River National Historical Site: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Theodore Roosevelt National Park: Dogs can be walked along roads, road shoulders, sidewalks, parking areas, and in campgrounds and picnic areas. Be aware there is very little shade at this park, so walks should be kept short in summer heat. The park website suggests campgrounds and picnic areas for exploring in summertime.

SOUTH DAKOTA:

***Jewel Cave National Monument: Dogs allowed at the picnic area and on paved roads and parking areas.

***Mount Rushmore National Memorial: Dogs are permitted in parking garages, outside of the developed monument area, and the pet exercise area. They can go to the main entrance area, but they cannot walk up to the monument itself. This is clearly marked at the entrance. They can be walked on the sidewalks and grassy areas in between the parking garages. There is a trail across from the monument, the Blackberry Trail, where pets are allowed. The Mt. Rushmore NPS park site has a map of the areas dogs are allowed.

Wind Cave National Park: Dogs are allowed on the Prairie Vista and Elk Mountain Campground trails, grassy areas near the Visitor Center, and at the campground.

UTAH:

***Antelope Island State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Bryce Canyon National Park: Dogs only allowed on paved surfaces. This includes campgrounds, parking lots, paved roads, paved viewpoint areas (they are NOT allowed at the Piracy Point viewpoint, as it is not paved), on the Rim Trail between Sunset Point and Sunrise Point, on the paved Shared Use Path between the park entrance and Inspiration

Point. They are also not allowed on shuttle buses. This is a desert area and can become very hot, so take caution if visiting in summer.

***Capitol Reef National Park: Dogs are allowed on the trail from the Visitor Center to the Fruita Campground, on the Fremont River Trail from the campground to the south end of Hattie's Field, in unfenced and/or unlocked orchards, the Chestnut and Doc Inglesby picnic areas, campgrounds, within 50 feet of the center line of roads open to public vehicle travel, and parking areas open to public vehicle travel. This is a desert area and can become very hot, so take caution if visiting in summer.

***Cedar Breaks National Monument: Dogs allowed on paved areas, including parking lots, paved overlooks, and the Sunset Trail. This is a desert area and can become very hot, so take caution if visiting in summer.

***Dead Horse Point State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Goblin Valley State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Kodachrome Basin State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Zion National Park: Dogs are allowed along public roads, developed campgrounds and picnic areas, and the grounds of the Zion Lodge. The only trail dogs are allowed is the Pa'rus Trail, which begins at the Visitor Center. Please be aware: The Virgin River which flows through the park very often has potentially deadly cyanobacteria and cyanotoxins present. The parks website has current conditions that you can check during the time of your visit, but as they can be present at any time, it is best to keep your dogs out of the water. Remember, just because you don't see an algae mat does not mean the bacteria and toxins are not present. Dogs can easily ingest enough of this to be fatal, and it can happen quickly. Please be safe and avoid letting them swim here.

WYOMING:

***Devil's Tower National Monument: Dogs allowed in parking areas and along roadways, including the Belle Fourche campground road and the road to the Joyner Ridge Trailhead. They can be in the Belle Fourche campground and the picnic area near there. They are not allowed on any trails at the monument.

***Fort Laramie National Historic Site: Dogs allowed on trails and grounds.

***Guernsey State Park: Dogs allowed on all trails.

***Shell Falls Interpretive Site: Dogs allowed on trails around interpretive site.

***Yellowstone National Park: Dogs allowed in developed areas only, and must stay less than 100 feet from roads, parking areas, and campgrounds. They are not allowed on any trails, boardwalks, or thermal areas. Take extreme caution and keep a very close watch on your dog here, as there many dangers, including large predators, large mammals who see dogs as threats, and thermal pools that are hot enough to scald or even take the life of your dog if they were to enter them.