

# Uinta Highline Trail Ethics and Safety

*Provided courtesy of the US Forest Service*



Please **contact us** for current trail conditions, and any further questions regarding Wilderness safety, ethics, and regulations.

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***Knowing the rules and regulations is your responsibility. This is not an extensive list of the rules and regulations, Contact the local forest service units with further questions and for more information.***

***Your safety is your responsibility. Be prepared.*** Expect to encounter challenges and the inherent risks of mountain weather, wild and rugged terrain, wildlife, and other natural hazards.



## The majority of the Uinta Highline Trail travels through the High Uintas Wilderness



**National Wilderness Preservation System**

***What is Wilderness?*** Wilderness areas are designated by the US Congress to protect places with a unique and primeval character from an ever expanding human civilization. They are managed to preserve natural conditions and their “wildness” and to provide opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation. Wilderness areas offer sanctuary for wildlife, protect watersheds, and are living links to the past. They preserve a piece of a lost landscape and are places of great ecological, historic, scientific, geological, recreational, and spiritual value to many Americans.

# Uinta Highline Trail Ethics and Special Regulations

## Always follow Leave No Trace Ethics!

See Next Page for More Detail or check out:

<https://lnt.org/learn/7-principles>



### Hikers Should Yield to Stock

(Horses, Mules and other pack animals) Hikers should move to downhill side of trail, communicate with stock users, and allow stock to pass.



### When Traveling on the Highline Trail...

#### Stick to the trail or durable surfaces

Why? Much of this trail travels through high alpine tundra ecosystem – one of the most fragile ecosystems in the world. Please avoid trampling delicate plants.

#### Plan on camping below tree line

Why? The weather is fierce and can move in quickly above tree line – particularly in the form of late afternoon thunder storms. Following this also allows campers to stay out of sight from one another and maintain a sense of solitude.

#### Do not use high alpine trees for fire wood

Why? Trees take a very long time to grow at high elevations (above 10,000 feet) and play a critical role in the ecosystem. See the quarter-mile fire ban from designated lakes regulation for further details. Cutting down trees also leaves unsightly stumps for many years and encourages future visitors to further degrade fragile alpine ecosystems.

## Help Keep Wilderness Wild!

### *Most commonly broken and unknown Wilderness rules and regulations*

Commonly Broken Regulations	Reasoning Behind the Regulation
<p>Do not construct a fire or collect fire wood within ¼ mile of lakes closed to these activities. See below for a map with these locations.</p>	<p>Dead and down woody debris (firewood) is a limited resource that regenerates very slowly at high elevations. It is an important component of habitat, soil productivity, recruitment of vegetation and wilderness aesthetics. A high degree of camping pressure around certain lakes depleted this to dangerously low levels. This regulation is in place to allow these areas to recover and prevent this from happening elsewhere.</p>
<p>Camp at least 200 feet from trails, water sources and occupied campsites.</p>	<p>Preserve a sense of solitude for other Wilderness visitors, reduce impacts of human waste and soil deposition on water resources.</p>
<p>Limit group size to 14 or less – larger groups must break into smaller groups and remain 1 mile apart at <u>all times</u>.</p>	<p>Ensures other visitors can experience solitude, minimize impacts of large camps (trampling of vegetation, soil compaction and fire ring scars)</p>
<p>Pack out all garbage</p>	<p>Ensures wilderness remains in a natural condition and free of pollutants and human waste. This also prevents the conditioning of wildlife to be attracted to human scent and food. Burning plastic and metal releases toxins that negatively impact other visitors, wildlife, and general environmental quality.</p>
<p>Bury all human waste in a hole at least 6 inches deep and that is at least 200 feet from water, campsites, and trails.</p>	<p>Protects water quality and Wilderness aesthetics. <u>Packing out your toilet paper is highly encouraged.</u></p>
<p>Do not build or leave structures (fire rings, chairs, shelters, etc.) <u>However, leave historic structures you encounter.</u></p>	<p>Maintains the natural quality of Wilderness. Structures deny other visitors to experience an unaltered and truly wild environment.</p>

# THE LEAVE NO TRACE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

## 1 PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE



Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use. Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups. Repackage food to minimize waste. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

## 2 TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas: Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. In pristine areas: Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.



## 3 DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY



Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

## 4 LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.



## 5 MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS



Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

## 6 RESPECT WILDLIFE

Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.



## 7 BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS



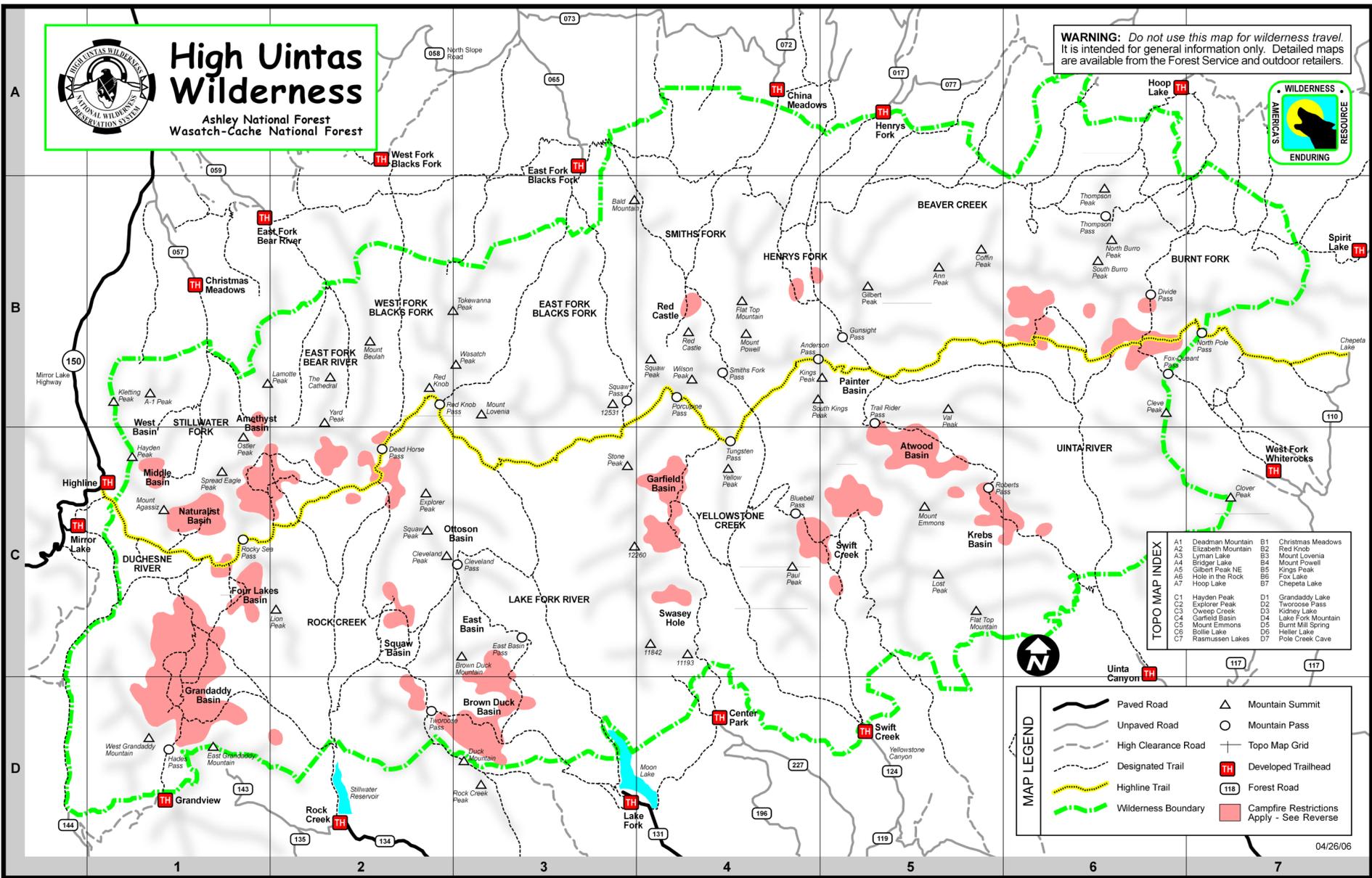
Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.



# High Uintas Wilderness

Ashley National Forest  
Wasatch-Cache National Forest

**WARNING:** Do not use this map for wilderness travel. It is intended for general information only. Detailed maps are available from the Forest Service and outdoor retailers.



TOPO MAP INDEX			
A1	Deadman Mountain	B1	Christmas Meadows
A2	Elizabeth Mountain	B2	Red Knob
A3	Lynnan Lake	B3	Mount Lovenia
A4	Bridger Lake	B4	Mount Powell
A5	Gilbert Peak NE	B5	Kings Peak
A6	Hole in the Rock	B6	Fox Lake
A7	Hoop Lake	B7	Chepeta Lake
C1	Hayden Peak	D1	Granddaddy Lake
C2	Explorer Peak	D2	Twooses Pass
C3	Owsep Creek	D3	Kidney Lake
C4	Garfield Basin	D4	Lake Fork Mountain
C5	Mount Emmons	D5	Burnt Mill Spring
C6	Bollie Lake	D6	Heller Lake
C7	Rasmussen Lakes	D7	Pole Creek Cave

MAP LEGEND			
	Paved Road		Mountain Summit
	Unpaved Road		Mountain Pass
	High Clearance Road		Topo Map Grid
	Designated Trail		Developed Trailhead
	Highline Trail		Forest Road
	Wilderness Boundary		Campfire Restrictions Apply - See Reverse

04/26/06

## Uinta Highline Trail Safety

### Research current conditions

The severity of snowpack, stream crossings and rock slides can vary drastically from year to year. **To get the latest information on the condition of the Highline Trail please contact the Forest Service Offices listed above.**



### Prepare for extreme weather conditions and natural hazards

Regardless of the time of year, the High Uintas can experience a wide range of temperatures and rapidly changing weather conditions. **Afternoon thunder storms are common and there is a potential for snow storms any day of the year.** In short, plan for the summit of Kings Peak and not the weather at the trailhead. **In high water years, stream crossings can be an impassable hazard.** Avoid crossing streams where there is fast moving and/or deep water.

### Be prepared for wildlife encounters

The High Uintas serve as habitat for a diverse array of wildlife species including mountain lions and black bears. While encounters with these predators are rare, it is important to know how to best handle a potential encounter.

#### **Mountain Lion Safety:**

<http://www.mountainlion.org/portalprotectencounters.asp>



#### **Bear Safety:**

<https://bearwise.org/bear-safety-tips/bear-encounter/>

Although bears are rarely found above tree line, we do advise you to carry your food in a bear proof canister or ursack. This is as much to protect your food from rodents and birds as bears. Please note there are very few places to hang food along the Highline Trail and this method should not be relied on.



### Establish a backup plan and an emergency contact

Plan out your trip before you go, where you will camp, where you will get water, etc. **Share your plan with a trusted person. Let them know when they can expect to hear you are out safely. Also establish who they should call if you don't contact them or in case of an emergency.**

## Uinta Highline Trail Safety

### Be intimately familiar with your gear

It is essential that you know your tents rainfly can stand up to an afternoon deluge, your sleeping bag can keep you warm when the temperatures drop into the teens, and that your **hiking boots are broken in and don't give you blisters**.



It rains very frequently in the High Uintas. Expect to get wet and have a dry place (dry bag or garbage bag) that you can store a set of **warm clothes**. Avoid wearing cotton. When it gets wet it stays wet and will drop your body temperature. Remember – **cotton is rotten!** Clothing made of wool or synthetic materials will keep you warm even when the material itself is wet and will dry quickly.



### Plan out your food and water consumption

Planning your food and water consumption is critical when entering the backcountry. There are significant portions of the Highline that don't have water. Be sure to have the capacity to carry at least 3 Liters and always know where your next source of water is located. It is highly advised you **filter or purify all water**. While many water sources in the High Uintas are potable, **some can make you very sick and caution is advised**.



Keep foods light-weight, calorie-dense and packable. Avoid canned and fresh foods as they are heavy and attract wildlife. Bring meals that can be prepared in under 15 minutes. Have easy access to snack foods like jerky, trail mix, dried fruit and sweets for quick energy on the trail.

### Prepare for medical inconveniences and emergencies

The most common ailments people experience on the trail are **dehydration and blisters**. Be sure you are properly hydrating and have blister care provisions in your **first aid kit**.

The highline trail largely travels between 10,000 and 13,500 feet above sea level. **ALTITUDE SICKNESS** is relatively common especially among those who are coming from lower elevations. Headache, flue-like symptoms, dizziness and disorientation are some of the common signs of this condition. Side effects can be mitigated by staying well hydrated and eating foods rich in carbohydrates. **The only way to completely treat altitude sickness is to go down in elevation**. Ensure everyone in your group knows the signs and symptoms of altitude sickness as **severe and untreated cases have been fatal**.

