

How to Experience Mann Gulch

Reaching Mann Gulch today is nearly as difficult as it was in 1949. There are still no roads in the area and one must still boat, hike or ride horseback to reach the site.

For those who choose to hike or ride horseback to visit the area, there are three main Forest Service trails leading from north, east and south of Mann Gulch. These trails range in length from seven to 18 miles and offer over-night or day hike opportunities.

By far the easiest way to reach Mann Gulch is by boat. Many visitors take a commercial tour boat originating at the Gates of the Mountains Boat Club. This tour offers seasonal transportation to and from Meriwether picnic area with boats arriving and departing every two hours. By taking the morning tour boat and returning on the last tour boat of the day, many people visit Mann Gulch by hiking from Meriwether picnic area. Visitors choosing this two-mile route will need to maintain a brisk walking pace to visit the site and return to the picnic area in order to catch the tour boat.

Private or rental boats can also reach the mouth of Mann Gulch from launching facilities located on both Upper and Lower Holter Lakes. Visitors choosing to boat to the mouth of Mann Gulch should be advised that there are no docking facilities provided and that landing and launching are done at the operator's risk. Once beached at the mouth of the canyon, a two-mile hike up the bottom of the gulch will take a visitor to the area of the firefighters' memorials.

FOR YOUR SAFETY

Visitors to Mann Gulch should be prepared for a backcountry experience with all its inherent risks and dangers. In keeping with the rugged and wild character of the area, there are no trails or directional signs in Mann Gulch. The footing is sometimes treacherous, the slopes are steep, and boulder fields are numerous. Watch for rolling rocks from above as you approach the ridge between Mann Gulch and Rescue Gulch. Wear good hiking shoes and carry a map. There is no water and temperatures in the canyon frequently exceed 100 degrees during the summer months, so take along plenty of drinking water.

Among the wild creatures that call Mann Gulch home are rattlesnakes and ticks. Be prepared to encounter both critters during your hike. Wearing tight-fitting clothing will keep the ticks on the outside of your clothes—where they belong—and closely watching where you place your hands and feet during the hike will help prevent you from waking a dozing snake.