Pronghorn in the Sawtooth Valley

The Pronghorn (Antilocapra Americana) in Latin means “American goat-antelope,” but it is not a member of the goat or antelope family. The pronghorn is the only large mammal remaining from the Pleistocene, a time period over a million years ago, when saber-toothed cats, woolly mammoths and cheetahs roamed North America. The Pronghorn is the fastest mammal in the Western Hemisphere and they have bursts of speed that are greater than 60 miles per hour. At one time, ancient pronghorns were hunted by cheetahs. Although cheetahs are now extinct, speed is still important because the pronghorn lives in open areas, and there is no place to hide from a predator, such as a wolf pack or a coyote preying on a fawn.

Pronghorns prefer grasslands and deserts. Females and their young will gather in bands of less than a dozen individuals in the summer and will graze on grasses and forbs. Males establish individual territories and in winter, the herd will include males and females of up to a hundred pronghorn. Pronghorns that summer in the Sawtooth Valley migrate to lower elevations to spend the winter. Some migrate to the East Fork of the Salmon River. They return to their summer range as early as April, if the snow on the south slopes has melted. Pronghorns mate in the late summer. The female gives birth to one to two fawns in late May or early June. Fawns are almost odorless at birth and will stay hidden in the grass for a few days and then join the herd when they are a week old. The pronghorn has horns, not antlers and it is the only animal that sheds its horns each year. The sheath falls off every year in the fall and then grows back in the summer.

Pronghorns can be seen on a regular basis along Highway 75 from below Galena Pass to Lower Stanley. Please drive the speed limit and watch for pronghorn crossing the highway.

Fencing

The Pronghorn’s built to run body does not allow it to jump high. Unlike deer, they prefer to slide under fences rather than jump over. Studies have shown that pronghorn will avoid fences they encounter, traveling miles out of their way and abandoning regular migratory routes. Public and private land managers are working on ways to modify fencing or removing fencing in some areas. Wildlife fencing consists of 40 inch high fencing with a smooth bottom wire, at least 18 inches above the ground, allowing pronghorn to pass under and a smooth top wire to allow deer to jump over, with barbed wire in between.

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Road Conditions

Although the motor vehicle use map plan allows for roads to open for vehicular travel on May 1st, some can be snow covered and muddy. Temporary road closure signs are posted on these roads to prevent rutting and other damage as they melt out. Conditions change quickly this time of year and signs will be moved up as the road surface becomes dry enough to support traffic. Traveling on wet, muddy roads causes costly resource damage. Please respect the temporary closures.

Only roads that are partially open or closed will be listed here. Roads not listed are open all the way.

Roads partially open or closed on the south end of the Sawtooth NRA:

- **Butterfield**: Open to picnic clearing. **Boulder View**: Open past 1st house.
- **Cherry Creek**: Open one mile. **Gladiator Creek**: Closed at Hwy.
- **Horse Creek**: Closed at Hwy. **North Cherry Creek**: Closed at Hwy.
- **Owl Creek**: Closed at Hwy. **Pioneer Cemetery**: Open .2 mi.
- **South Cherry Creek**: Closed at Hwy. **Senate Creek**: Open .4 mi.
- **Spring Creek**: Open .4 mile. **Titus Creek**: Closed at the Hwy.

Roads open or partially open north of Galena Summit:

- **Alturas Lake**: Open to trailhead.
- **Beaver Creek**: Open 2.4 miles (log on road beyond).
- **4th of July**: Open 4.5 miles. **Frenchman’s Creek**: Open .5 miles.
- **Galena Summit Comm. Site**: Closed at Hwy.
- **Headwaters**: Open 1.4 miles. **Iron Creek**: Open 1.4 miles past subdivision.
- **Pole Creek**: Open 6 miles. **Rough Creek**: Open .3 miles.
- **Smiley Creek**: Open 3 miles. **Smiley Creek South**: Open 3 miles.

Trail Conditions

Most of the trails in the higher elevations of the mountains are still snow covered and muddy, but don’t let that stop you from getting out. Spring is a great time to explore the area’s trails below 6500 feet and enjoy the wildflower show! The following are partially open:

- **Murdock Canyon Trail**: Open most of the way (3 miles)
- **Harriman Trail**: Mostly dry from Sawtooth NRA HQ to the Wood River CG and Murphy’s Bridge to Easley CG.
- **Boundary Creek**: Trail open to the ridge.

Snowy conditions still exist in the high country
Campground Reservations and Opening Dates

**Spring Camping:**

The Sawtooth National Recreation Area has opened Mormon Bend and Salmon River Campground along the Salmon River. These campgrounds are located downriver from Stanley in close proximity to popular fishing areas. Grandjean Campground is open with limited amenities (no water).

On the south end, the loop at North Fork Campground across from the Sawtooth NRA HQ is walk in only. These campgrounds do not have amenities or water and they are "pack it in/pack it out." All other campgrounds on the Sawtooth NRA are currently closed due to snow/mud and wet campsites. Campgrounds without closure gates can be used for walk-in dry camping; no services or restrooms are available. Individual camping sites can be reserved as early as 180 days in advance and group sites 360 days, including five day use picnic sites. To make reservations, call the National Recreation Reservation System (NRRS) at 877-444-6777 or online: www.recreation.gov.

There are 33 developed campgrounds within the Sawtooth NRA. Approximately 27% (159 reservation sites out of 578 fee sites) can be reserved. The remainder are on a first come, first serve basis.

**Dispersed Camping:**

Dispersed camping is any camping outside of developed campgrounds and is allowed with some restrictions. Dispersed camping is becoming available on forest roads that are open and dry. These campsites are free and abundant throughout the Sawtooth NRA. However, dispersed camping is discouraged near all other developed campgrounds.

We ask that you stay on existing roads (see Forest travel map) and camp in areas previously used. Dispose of your waste properly and pack it in, pack it out. Sites should be chosen carefully, as fragile and riparian areas are easily damaged. If a campfire is used, it should be built in an existing fire ring. The camping limit north of Galena Summit is 16 days. You must relocate more than a distance of 10 miles from the original site for 14 days. South of Galena summit the limit is 16 days and you cannot relocate anywhere in the Ketchum RD or the SNRA non-fee areas for 14 days. Along the Salmon River Corridor, the camping stay limit is 10 days. You must relocate more than a distance of 10 miles from the original site.

**Upcoming events and openings:**

**Redfish Lodge Memorial Relay:** May 23rd. Race starts at Redfish Lake Lodge at 10:00 a.m. Expect to see runners on Redfish Lake Road as well as Hwy 75. Drive slowly and use caution. For more information about the race, please go to: www.redfishlake.com or 208-774-3536.

**Sawtooth Relay:** June 13th. Runners and support vehicles will be on Hwy 75 between Stanley and Ketchum from midnight to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Slow down and use caution. For information about the race, please go to: www.sawtoothrelay.com

**Stanley Museum:** Opening May 23, 24 and 25 from 11-5 p.m., and June 6 & 7 from 11-5 p.m. Thereafter, June 13 through September 7, from 11-5 p.m.
Sawtooth National Recreation Area

Contact Information

**Sawtooth NRA Headquarters:**
M-F, 8:30-5:00 p.m. 208-727-5000

**Stanley Ranger Station:**
M-F, 8:30-12:00 & 1:00-4:30 p.m. 208-774-3000

**Redfish Visitor Center**
Opening Date: June 12th, daily from 9:30-5:00 p.m.

[www.fs.usda.gov/sawtooth](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sawtooth)

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**Sawtooth National Recreation Area Private Lands Program**

The 756,000-acre Sawtooth National Recreation Area includes more than 20,000 acres of privately owned land, primarily in the Sawtooth Valley and Stanley Basin, and along the Salmon River for approximately 25 miles downstream from Stanley, Idaho. When the U.S. Congress established the Sawtooth NRA in 1972, it sought to preserve and protect the Area’s “natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and fish and wildlife values and to provide for the enhancement of the recreation values associated therewith.” (Public Law 92-400). Our management goals and commitment for conservation of the landscape are governed by this law.

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**Educational Programs Offered**

We are pleased to offer a variety of educational activities, programs and services to local schools and youth groups. Several traveling “Ed-venture” trunks are available for loan to educators or group leaders. For more information, please call Susan Kranz at 727-5018.

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**Firewood Permits:**

Firewood permits go on sale on Friday, May 15th. (We will be closed on weekends this summer). The minimum purchase is two cords at $25.00, each additional cord is $12.50, for up to 10 cords per household. There will be no free firewood areas this year. For more information, contact the front desk at 727-5000.