

HENNESSY WINTER YURT GUIDE²⁰¹⁸

The Hennessy yurt is the newest yurt in the Idaho City system and is designed for avid backcountry skiers and snowshoers. The Hennessy yurt replaces the Whispering Pines yurt that was totally burned to the ground during the 2016 Pioneer fire. The new yurt is located on a high, unburned knob with great views. From the large yurt deck you can see Pilots Peak, Sunset Peak, Trinity Mountains, Steele Mountain, Wolf Mountain and the Crooked River Valley. At an elevation of 5,679 in feet, there will be good snow for backcountry skiing and snowshoeing from December to late April. Because of the recent burn near the yurt there are lots of Telemark slopes nearby waiting for first descents. There are good ski slopes offering all directional aspects ranging from north slope powder to south facing corn. Access to the yurt is from the Gold Fork Park N' Ski parking lot located on Highway 21 about 20 miles north of Idaho City.

PLEASE READ THE WINTER YURT MANUAL FOR MORE DETAILS

The yurt door lock has been removed during the winter season. You will find the door closed but not locked and no key code is necessary.

Difficulty:

Intermediate. The difficulty of touring trails can increase in poor snow conditions and weather. The route to the Hennessy yurt includes a long steep section at the end. Snowshoeing is the easiest method to access this yurt. If you ski in, climbing skins are recommended for those with heavy packs. Individuals should thoroughly prepare for the yurt trip and travel with someone who has been to the yurt and can readily find it. The Gold Fork trail is generally groomed Thursday or Friday from December 1 to March 15. You should not count on the trail being groomed, but a freshly groomed trail will substantially reduce the amount of energy necessary to get to the yurt if you choose to ski the Gold Fork loop.

How to Get to the Yurt:

The trails are marked with blue or yellow diamond shapes, called blazes, attached to trees. The recommended approach to take is once at the Gold Fork Park N' Ski parking lot (5243 feet in elevation) walk to the toilet located on the west side of the parking lot and then head up and left up the groomed Gold Fork Loop trail. Ski or snowshoe about 1.3 miles on the groomed Gold Fork trail to the intersection of the Lodge Pole Trail/Gold Fork trail. At this point you should see a 2 foot by 2 foot reflectorized yellow sign on a 4" x4" wood post. From the large yellow sign turn left and immediately cross the creek bed and follow the yellow reflectorized reassurance tree blazes up the hill on an ungroomed trail. You now will follow the yellow tree blazes for .7 mile to the yurt. **This section of the access trail is steep (10 percent plus grade) and winding through an old burn as it climbs 350 feet in elevation.** You will find the yellow blazes nailed to burn trees and on round 10 foot tall treated round posts. The yurt is located on the top of a knob in a grove of large Ponderosa Pines.

Where to Park:

The Gold Fork Park N' Ski parking lot is about 20 miles north of Idaho City on Highway 21. An Idaho Park N' Ski permit is required to park here Nov 15th to Apr 30th. Please park vehicles close together at one end of the parking. The Department of Transportation snowplow operators become frustrated when they cannot plow a lot because cars are parked in the middle. You should also **bring a shovel** because you might have to dig your car out or in case of heavy snow. Do not park on Highway 21. You can be fined for parking on the highway or for not displaying a Park N' Ski Pass.

Elevation Change and Distance:

About 435 feet climbing at just at 2 miles (one-way). About 1.3 miles via the Gold Fork trail and .7 miles on an ungroomed trail. This is the shortest route with one long steep section to climb.

Dogs:

Dogs are allowed at the Hennessy Yurt and on the groomed Gold Fork Loop trail.

Solar Power:

This yurt has a solar panel with four LED lights. Should it be necessary, a brush is provided to remove snow from the panel. Please do not change the panel location. Use the lights when needed, turn them off when not in use and at the end of your stay.

Wood Pile:

Wood for the stove is located under the deck.

Water:

There is no water supply at this yurt. Use the large pot provided to melt snow on the wood stove. We recommend boiling the water before drinking.

Special Equipment Needed:

Several members of the party should carry portable snow shovels. Bring two (2) one-pound propane bottles per each night of your stay; a roll of paper towels, and keep a snow shovel in each vehicle. For a list of recommended items for a yurt trip, please read the winter yurt manual.

Maps Needed:

Idaho City Area Park N' Ski Location Map, Hennessy Winter Trail Route to Hennessy Yurt. (on website)

Global Positioning System Locations

UTM (in NAD 83): Note UTM's are rounded to nearest 10 meters

Gold Fork Parking Lot: N43.9914 W115.6058

Hennessy Yurt: N43.9973 W115.6246

Elevations:

Gold Fork Parking Lot: 5,243 feet

Hennessy Yurt: 5,679 feet

WARNING:

Winter travel and the use of a yurt can be dangerous. Do not undertake yurt trips without careful preparation and a serious discussion of the dangers with ALL members of your group.