

STARGAZE YURT WINTER GUIDE²⁰¹²

The Stargaze yurt is designed for backcountry Nordic skiers and snowshoers. After skiing or snowshoeing in about 1.2 miles on a marked but ungroomed trail you will find many north and west facing slopes perfect for Telemark skiing. The yurt is located just off a high point overlooking the entire eastern horizon. From the yurt you can see Scott Mountain, Jackson Peak, Wolf Mountain, Steele Mountain, Pilots Peak and the Sawtooth Mountains. At 6600 feet, the view is the most spectacular of all the yurts. The snow is usually powder and very deep. Snow is usually available from early December to mid April.

PLEASE READ THE WINTER YURT MANUAL FOR MORE DETAILS AND HOW TO GET THE YURT CODE

How to get the code:

By email: judy.ditto@idpr.idaho.gov and the Yurt Coordinator will email the code back to you.

Difficulty:

More Difficult. The difficulty of touring trails can increase in poor snow conditions and weather. The route to Stargaze yurt includes three steep but short sections of trail that may require you to remove your traditional skis and walk up. Climbing skins are recommended for those with heavy packs. Individuals should be thoroughly prepared and travel with someone who has been to the yurt and can readily find it. The yurt access trail is named Stargaze trail and it is ungroomed and travels along a road in an old burn. The trail is marked with blue blazes on 4" x 4" posts and trees. Near the top of the mountain along the high ridge, expect blowing and drifting snow that can obscure the trail.

Where to Park:

The Beaver Creek Summit Park N' Ski parking lot is located about 25 miles north of Idaho City on Highway 21, just before mile marker 63. An Idaho Park N' Ski permit is required to park here from Nov 15th to Apr 30th. Please park vehicles as close together if possible. The Department of Transportation snowplow operators become frustrated when they cannot plow a lot because cars are parked all over the lot. You should also bring a shovel because you might have to dig your car out or in, in case of heavy snow. **Do not park on Highway 21 or the snowplow turn around.** If you park in the snowplow turn around we will likely lose access to this new Park N' Ski parking lot. Do not park on Highway 21. You can be fined for parking on the highway or not displaying a Park N' Ski Pass.

How to Get to the Yurt:

The trails are marked with blue or yellow diamond shapes, called blazes, attached to 4" x 4" posts and trees. The recommended approach from the parking lot is to ski/snowshoe northwest towards Lowman along the shoulder of Highway 21 for about 300 yards until you reach the highest point on Highway 21 named Beaver Creek Summit. At the summit turn left on an old roadbed marked with a sign on a 4" x 4" post stating "Stargaze Trail". From there follow the blue blaze marks on posts and trees for 1.2 miles uphill until you come to a two-foot yellow diamond sign. At this point turn left behind the large yellow sign and follow the yellow blaze marks through the trees about .1 mile uphill to the high point. The yurt sits on the highest point on this hill.

Elevation Change and Distance:

The total distance to the yurt is about 1.3 miles and you will have to climb 550 feet in elevation.

Dogs:

Dogs are allowed at this yurt year around.

Solar Power:

This yurt has a solar unit with four lights. 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:

Snow is your only source for drinking water unless you bring it from home. If you melt snow for water, we recommend boiling it for 10 minutes before using it.

Special Equipment Needed:

Several members of the party should carry portable snow shovels.

Bring two (2) onepound propane bottles per each night of your stay; a packet of lantern mantles; 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.

Avalanche and Whiteout Hazard:

Chances of an avalanche are low as long as Stargaze trail is used. Avalanches can occur on nearby slopes. The final .5 mile to the yurt is on a treeless exposed ridge. We do not recommend travel to the yurt in high wind and heavy snow conditions, or at night. Whiteouts are common along this section of trail.

Maps Needed:

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

Other Maps that may be valuable to you.

USFS Forest Road, and USGS 7.5 minute topographic, "Lowman and Pine Flat."

Global Positioning System Locations

UTM (in NAD 83): Note UTM's are rounded to nearest 10 meters
Beaver Creek Summit Parking Lot: 11T0610560E 4875620N
Stargaze Yurt: 11T 0609660E 4874650N

Elevations:

Beaver Creek Summit Parking Lot: 6,015 feet
Stargaze Yurt: 6,569 feet

Safety: The nearest landline is in Lowman. For emergencies call Boise County Sheriff: **1-800-479-0911** or in a medical emergency: **1-800-632-8000**. There is cell phone coverage for most cell phone systems along the Stargaze Trail once you are .5 mile from the parking lot. Some phones can get cell phone coverage from the Stargaze yurt deck but it seems to be sporadic.

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.

REPORT YURT DAMAGE OR MISSING ITEMS TO 208-514-2418 or 208-514-2419

PLEASE, DO NOT FEED ANY WILD ANIMALS IT CAN LEAD TO THE ANIMALS

CHEWING OR TEARING THE YURT SKIN.