

Recreate Responsibly

Mother Nature is the best form of therapy. The sound of **roaring falls** and smell of **blooming wildflowers**. The deafening silence of freshly fallen snow on the ground. No matter which season you visit we wanted to give you a few tips on how you can #RecreateResponsibly on your next trip to the great outdoors.

#RecreateResponsibly



- KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**
Illustration: A signpost with a 'Closed' sign and a person climbing a mountain.
- PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING**
Illustration: A line of people with a double-headed arrow below them labeled '6ft'.
- PLAN AHEAD**
Illustration: A hand holding a face mask, an apple, and a bag of supplies.
- PLAY IT SAFE**
Illustration: A compass, a signpost with 'HARD' and 'EASY' directions, and a checkmark.
- EXPLORE LOCALLY**
Illustration: A house, a mountain range, and a forest.
- LEAVE NO TRACE**
Illustration: A hand holding a bag, a hand holding a piece of trash, and a hand holding a rock.
- BUILD AN INCLUSIVE OUTDOORS**
Illustration: Three hands holding hearts, with trees in the background.

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Not Just Yosemite but ALL Outdoor Lands

Although the main attraction is **Yosemite National Park**, the idea of recreating responsibly shouldn't be applied only to the park. The surrounding Sierra National Forest is just as wild and needs you to follow the same concepts on recreating responsibly. Every year, **multiple search and rescues** happen in these areas too.



Camping in the Sierra National Forest

Know Before You Go

Before you make your way into Yosemite, one of the first and most important things to do to #RecreateResponsibly is to check ahead. Conditions change (trails are under renovation, weather systems can and the rules and regulations continue to evolve. For example, starting on May 21st a temporary day-use reservation system will go into effect through September 30th. Also, it's a good idea to stop by the **Oakhurst Visitors Center** or call us at: **(559) 683-4636**.

For more tips, read our **Know Before You Go** page.

Plan Ahead

Even with being vigilant by knowing before you go, sometimes the best laid plans don't work out. Maybe a facility shut down. The trailhead is packed with tons of people. Instead of getting frustrated, always have alternative options to choose from. Bring essentials like a face covering and even a lunch. As they always say:

"Hope for the best, prepare for the worst, and expect nothing."

Practice Physical Distancing

There's nothing worse than trying to enjoy mother nature with thousands of others. If there is a popular attraction you want to see, get there early or visit later in the afternoon. Or better yet, pick one of the many **hidden gems in Madera County** or take in one of the **lesser known falls**.

Leave No Trace



If it's your first time in the great outdoors or even your 100th, another important rule to follow to #recreateResponsibly is to **Leave No Trace**. The concept is simple. Leave nature as unchanged as possible, or better yet, leave it better than when you came. If you see a piece of trash, pick it up and properly discard it, or take it home with you. To this day, the following quote always applies:

“Take Only Memories, Leave Only Footprints.”

Play It Safe

Last year across the nation, there was a **record number of Search and Rescues** that occurred in the great outdoors. We all want to climb the highest peaks and do the most challenging hikes, but with resources spread thin, consider postponing that big adventure. We're not saying you shouldn't come but rather keep it mellow. Take in the vistas, **smell the lupine**, listen to the park's natural orchestra of birds and animals. You'll come home refreshed and not be a burden to the NPS team.



USFS carry a 29-year-old woman along the trail near Willow Creek in Bass Lake.

Explore Locally

We get it... cabin fever is real. You NEED to travel to get a break from the daily stresses. Instead of stopping cold turkey, why not travel locally. For starters, this will help save money because you're skipping the most expensive part of the trip – airfare. You'll also be helping the local economy by supporting those small businesses in the region. This is a good time to explore new landscapes that you've put off due to time constraints like Shuteye Peak, the [Majestic Mountain Loop](#), or even the [Sierra Vista Scenic Byway](#).

“It is not down in any map; true places never are.”– Herman Melville



Explore the dog friendly Lewis Creek Trail

Build an Inclusive Outdoors



Photo By: Steve Montalto / High Mountain Images

Breathing in the fresh mountain air and taking in the sights are exactly what the doctor ordered to help us relieve some stress. Remember, the more people that join us in the great outdoors, the more voices and advocates it will have for its care and protection. With that being said, be cognizant of other park visitors as well. Let's all go out of our way to provide a safe and welcoming escape so that everyone will appreciate its bounty and beauty.

"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." – John Muir

How to Poop in the Woods by Yosemite National Park



<https://youtu.be/Dk2k1QEyY7U>

Lead By Example

If you want to do your part, lead by example. That means bring a face covering, avoiding crowded or closed areas, and creating an inclusive outdoors community. Visit [RecreateResponsibly.org](https://www.RecreateResponsibly.org) to find out more tips on how to recreate responsibly.



Alex founded [localfreshies.com](https://www.localfreshies.com)® in 2014 to be the #1 website providing the “local scoop” on where to eat, drink & play in mountain towns throughout North America. When he’s not writing and executing marketing strategies for small businesses & agencies, he’s in search of the deepest snow in the winter and tackiest dirt in the summer.