

Fishing Northeast Yellowstone National Park

Upper Yellowstone River – Slough Creek – Lamar Valley –
Soda Butte

Total Estimated Travel around the entire loop (excluding
stoppage time) travel east of YNP heading Home

222 miles 5 hours 22 minutes

Camp Buffalo Bill to Tower Junction

(Fishing License, drinks, snacks, souvenirs)

68 Miles --1 hour 48 minutes

Tower Junction to Junction Butte

(Yellowstone River)

2 miles 3 minute

Junction Butte to Slough Creek

(Slough Creek)

6 miles 16 minutes

Slough Creek to Lamar Valley

(Lamar River)

10 miles 23 Minutes

Lamar Valley to Soda Butte

(Soda Butte Creek)

8 mile 10 minutes

Soda Butte to Chief Joesph Highway

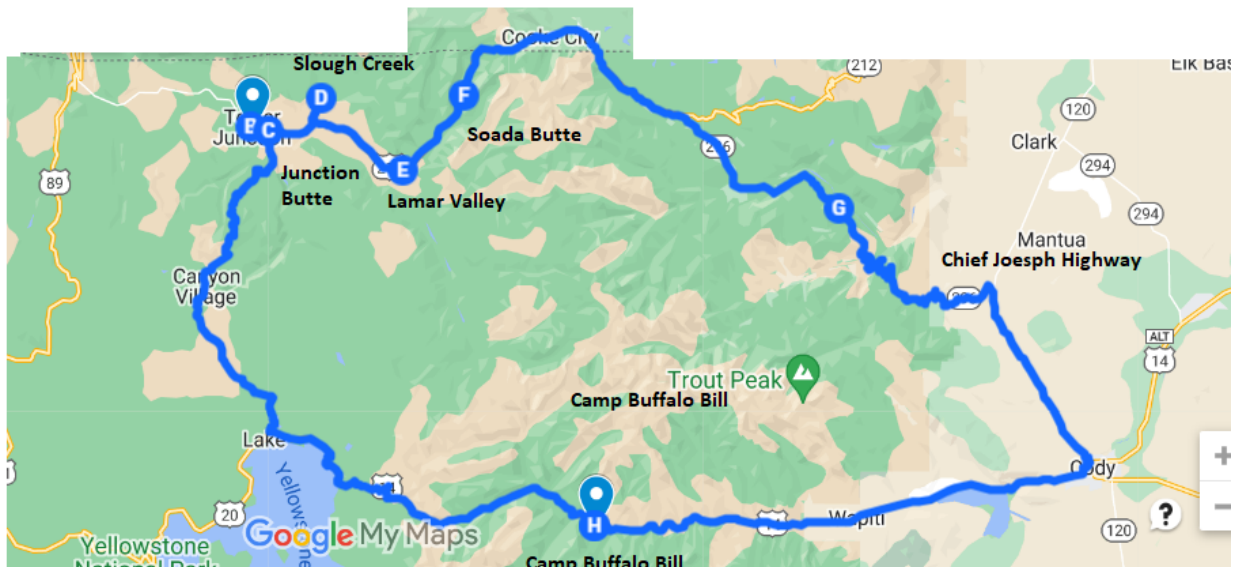
Scenic Way Back

29 miles 38 minutes

Chief Joesph Highway to Camp Buffalo Bill

Rest Of the Way Home

98 miles 2 hours 8 minutes



Tower Junction

Calcite Springs marks the downstream end of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River. The [geothermally altered rhyolite](#) inspired the artist Thomas Moran. His paintings of this scene were among those presented to Congress in 1872, leading to the establishment of the park. The steep, columnar basalt cliffs on the opposite side of the river from the overlook are remnants of an ancient lava flow, providing a window into the



past volcanic forces that shaped much of the Yellowstone landscape. The gorge and cliffs provide habitat for numerous [wildlife](#) species including bighorn sheep, red-tailed hawks, and osprey.

For those looking to stretch the legs, there is the Yellowstone River Picnic Area Trail that

follows the canyon edge on the other side of the river. This trail offers an alternative view of the terminus of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River.



Black Canyon of the Yellowstone

The Black Canyon is the stretch of water from the bridge along the Northeast Entrance Road, just east of Roosevelt Junction, down to the park boundary just north of Gardiner, Montana. Fishing wise, this section of river is nearly identical to the Grand Canyon described above. The same hatches occur here and the same fly selections and techniques apply. The

only minor differences are that this section of river will see hatches begin slightly earlier and the fishing will hang on a little bit longer in the fall. Also, the lower reaches of this section contain significant populations of Browns and Rainbows.

One thing to keep in mind when planning a trip in the Black Canyon is that the Lamar River, which enters just below the road bridge mentioned above, is the largest sediment producer in the Yellowstone River drainage. Summer thunderstorms along the Lamar will muddy the Yellowstone for hundreds of miles downstream. You will want to be aware of current conditions before you commit to a hike into the canyon.

Slough Creek Lower Meadow:

Access to the Lower Meadow and the fast water sections of the lower part of the stream is from parking areas along the Slough Creek Road. Access to the confluence of Slough Creek with the Lamar River and an area called the VIP Pool, is from the parking area at the intersection of the Northeast Entrance Road and Slough Creek Road. It is one-half mile west down the trail formed by an old roadbed to Slough Creek.



Fishing Slough Creek requires some careful thought and planning. The First and Lower Meadows are the only ones that you can feasibly fish during a day trip. The upper two meadows require an overnight trip. The entire stream is usually crowded during the prime season.

Lamar River -Soda Butte Creek to the Canyon:

The Lamar River picks water from the Soda Butte Creek, one of its two largest tributary streams. From there through a huge wide open valley, a distance of about 7 miles, the Lamar River is accessible from the Northeast Entrance Highway.

This is the heaviest fished section of the Lamar but even the fishing is usually great. The stream has some large boulders and plenty of riffles, runs and lots of pocket water.



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Trout in this section and the lower canyon sections are mostly cutthroats averaging 9 to 14 inches with some over 18 inches. They may be a few rainbows and cutbows on the lower end of the Lamar near its confluence with the Yellowstone River.

Soda Butte Creek



Every angler looking for a prize catch goes to Soda Butte Creek in search of native Yellowstone Cutthroat trout. You can find many big rainbows and cutthroat/rainbow hybrids near the mouth of the river, but the headwaters belong to the native cutthroat.

It's not exactly a secret that Soda Butte Creek is a favorite spot for catching Yellowstone Cutthroat, so fishing pressure on the creek can be relatively heavy at times.

You may find you need to hike a little way to find some space, especially if you choose to fish along the waters in the upper meadow. This high-pressure environment can lead to picky feeding by the local trout during high traffic times of the year, but a willingness to wander further afield can help alleviate this.