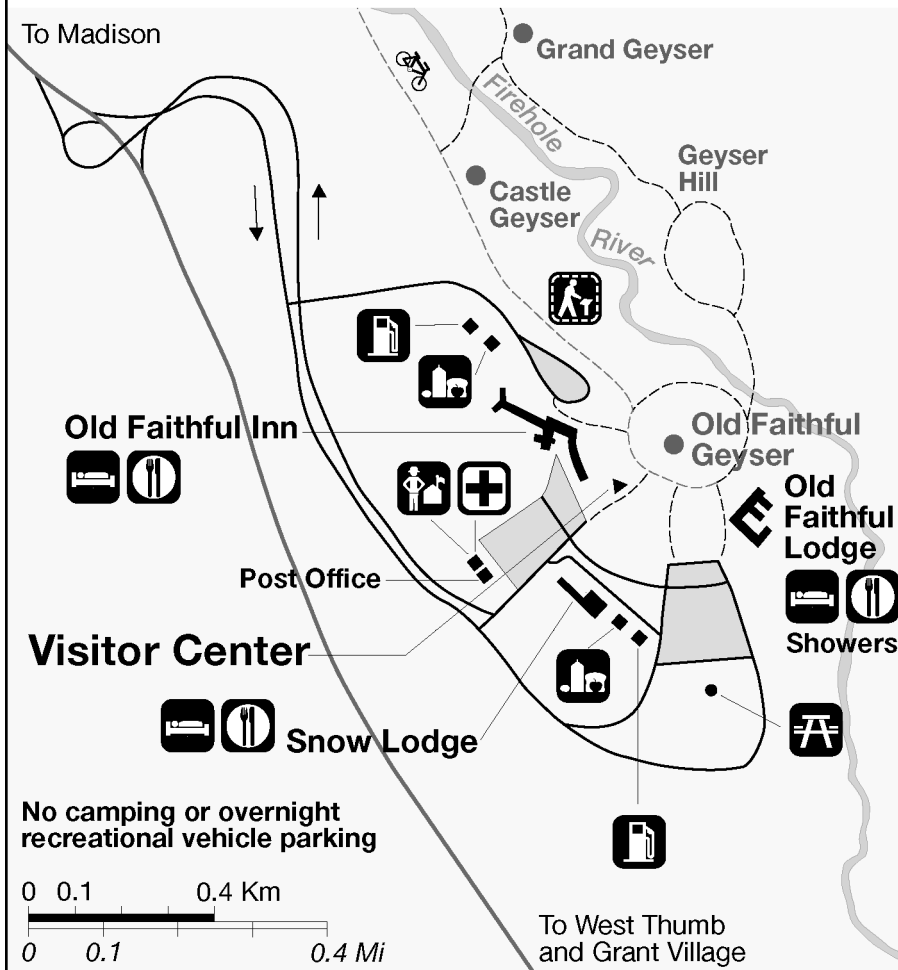


OLD FAITHFUL AREA

7365ft 2254m



Firehole River

The river derives its name from the steam (which they thought was smoke from fires) witnessed by early trappers to the area. Their term for a mountain valley was "hole," and the designation was born. The Firehole River boasts a world-famous reputation for challenging fly-fishing. Brown, rainbow, and brook trout give the angler a wary target in this stream.

Craig Pass/Isa Lake

Both names are used to describe the same location seven miles south of Old Faithful on the Grand Loop Road. At 8,262 feet along the Continental Divide, Isa Lake is a uniquely confusing feature. During spring runoff, it drains into both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at the same time! (And backwards, too!) The west side of the lake flows into the Firehole drainage and, eventually, the Atlantic throughout the year. The east side, during spring, flows toward the Snake River drainage and the Pacific.

Waterfall

Kepler Cascades is the most easily reached waterfall in the district. A marked pullout just south of Old Faithful and a short walk from the car offers the visitor easy access to view this 125-foot cascade.

GEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF THE OLD FAITHFUL AREA

Evidence of the geological forces that have shaped Yellowstone are found in abundance in this district. The hills surrounding Old Faithful and the Upper Geyser Basin are reminders of Quaternary rhyolitic lava flows. These flows, occurring long after the catastrophic eruption of 600,000 years ago, flowed across the landscape like stiff mounds of bread dough due to their high silica content.

Evidence of glacial activity is common, and it is one of the keys that allows geysers to exist. Glacier till deposits underlie the geyser basins providing storage areas for the water used in eruptions. Many landforms, such as Porcupine Hills north of Fountain Flats, are comprised of glacial gravel and are reminders that as recently as 13,000 years ago, this area was buried under ice.

Signs of the forces of erosion can be seen everywhere, from runoff channels carved across the sinter in the geyser basins to the drainage created by the Firehole River.

Mountain building is evident as you drive south of Old Faithful, toward Craig Pass. Here the Rocky Mountains reach a height of 8,262 feet, dividing the country into two distinct watersheds.

Yellowstone is a vast land containing a landscape that is continually being shaped by geological forces.

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OLD FAITHFUL AREA

Old Faithful Historic District

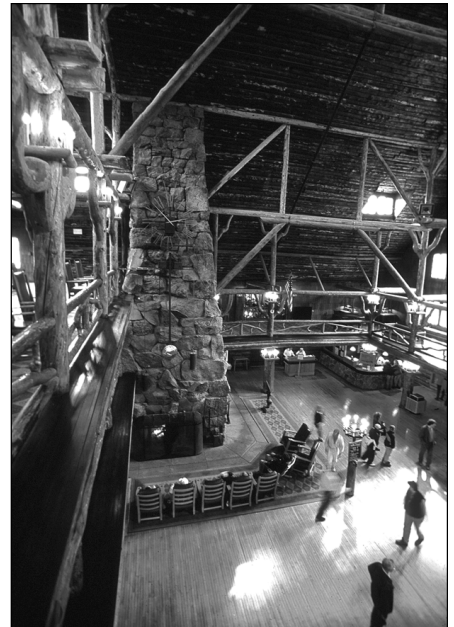
This designation applies to the developed area adjacent to Old Faithful Geysir, which contains many historic structures.



NPS photo

Old Faithful Inn

Built during the winter of 1903-04, the Old Faithful Inn was designed by Robert C. Reamer, who wanted the asymmetry of the building to reflect the chaos of nature. The lobby of the hotel features a 65-foot ceiling, a massive rhyolite fireplace, and railings made of contorted lodgepole pine. Wings were added to the hotel in 1915 and 1927, and today there are 327 rooms available to guests in this National Historic Landmark.



The lobby of the Old Faithful Inn. NPS photo

Old Faithful Lodge

Unlike the Inn, the current Old Faithful Lodge is a result of numerous changes dating back to the early days of tent camps provided by companies like Shaw and Powell Camping Company and Wylie Permanent Camping Company. These camps were erected throughout the park and offered shelter before hotels and lodges were built. Both companies had facilities at Old Faithful. By 1917, auto traffic into the park was increasing, and it was decided that some camps could be eliminated. Yellowstone Park Camping Company