

Information for Hell Creek Fieldwork 2013

When: We will be driving from Seattle, WA on Sunday, June 30th. We will camp over night near Lincoln, MT and arrive in Jordan, MT on July 1st. By the late afternoon we will be down at the Hell Creek State Park. I expect to start work on July 2nd. We will leave our Hell Creek camp on July 17^h, arriving in Seattle late afternoon on July 18th.

Where: We will be camping mostly at the Hell Creek State Park. The actual spot will be just east of the Main Office near the shore (see attached map). If for some reason, you will be arriving separate from the group, use Google directions from your start point to Jordan, Montana. If you arrive in Jordan after sunset, then I suggest that you stay the night in Jordan. Fellman's Motel (406-557-2209) is on the west side of the north-south road through town. Call with a little advance time. Rates are ~\$45. If there aren't rooms available, try the Garfield Motel or stay in Miles City.

When you take the road from Jordan to the Hell Creek State Park BE CAREFUL. It's 26 miles north to the HC State Park but it will take you between 45 minutes to an hour. The road is gravel and dirt and can be very slick if it has recently rained. It also has a washboard surface that can be dangerous, if you're speeding. Take your time and don't slam on the brakes or turn sharply. To find the road from Jordan, just head north on the main north-south road in Jordan (Rt. 200) and continue north on Rte. 543 (the sign says Hell Creek State Park, 26 miles). If for some reason, we are not in camp check at the Park Ranger's Trailer in the main campground. Craig Putschat is the Park Ranger. His contact number is (406) 557-2362.

Field conditions: We will be doing fieldwork in the Cretaceous and Paleocene exposures of Garfield County. The area near the Hell Creek State Park (Cretaceous exposures) is challenging terrain. It can be quite rugged. There may be some sizeable hikes (up to 2 miles), so know your limits and your level of fitness. It's essential that you have proper equipment (see the "Field Equipment list"). The temperatures are usually very hot (80-100 F) by 10 am and lasting until 5 pm. Early mornings and evenings can be cool (50-70F), but a sweatshirt and at most a fleece should suffice. We will be in rattlesnake territory, but they are rare and easily avoided if you make noise and don't stick your feet or hands places you can't see. From the camp, we will have to drive to our sites, which at times may require off-road travel on two-tracks. We will have SUV 4WDs that can accommodate about 6 passengers each.

Camp conditions: We will sleep in tents in the campground. We will be cooking for ourselves (most likely). Plan to help out with cooking and all things related to camp life and fieldwork. We will be right next to a lake, so bring your swimming suit. If you don't swim, you might want to think about it after a hot day in the field. The state park has porta-potties as well as flush toilets! There are pay showers (~\$1.25 in quarters). There is a marina store that sells some amenities, like basic foods, cold drinks, ice, and supplies (tooth paste, etc.). It also has wireless internet. In the past, we have had access to the Park Utility Building for things like re-charging equipment, refrigeration of food, and getting out of the sun/rain. Cell phone reception varies with your provider, but some people get reception near camp and definitely in Jordan (e.g., Verizon, Sprint).

There is also a pay phone by the showers, so bring a calling card if you need to make calls.

Town days: We will try to make a point of going into town for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or an overnight stay, about once a week. It will depend on fieldwork schedules and the comings and goings of visitors, but it's a good opportunity to do laundry and take a break and enjoy the local flavor. Each of us covers our own expenses in town. Expenses for a room with two-double beds at Fellman's Motel (\$45-\$55) can be shared among 2 to 4 students.