

FRANCIE'S CABIN SUMMER USE INFORMATION

Francie's Cabin in the summertime offers wonderful opportunities for hiking, mountain climbing, fishing, cycling, and relaxing. To ensure that the impacts to wildlife and the fragile high altitude environment surrounding Francie's Cabin will be minimized, please familiarize yourself with the following information.

Ownership

Francie's Cabin is owned and operated by Summit Huts Association, a not-for-profit organization based in Breckenridge, Colorado, under special use permit with the Forest Service, USDA.

Occupancy

Summer occupancy of Francie's Cabin is 20 people. Please do not exceed the capacity of the cabin.

Hutmasters' Quarters

There is no resident hutmaster at Francie's Cabin in the summer. However, guests may encounter volunteers or maintenance staff staying in the downstairs hutmasters' quarters.

Hut Amenities

Francie's Cabin sleeps 20 people in the summer, divided among six bunk rooms (downstairs: 1 bedroom with 1 single bunk and 2 single beds; upstairs: 5 small bedrooms: 2 have 2 single beds and 3 sleep 4 each in bunks). Huts are booked to capacity and may be occupied by more than one group. Overflow camping around the hut is not permitted. Francie's Cabin offers propane cooktops, a wood burning heat stove, fire wood, cooking and eating utensils, mattresses and pillows on bunk beds, solar-powered lighting, a wood-burning sauna, and hut supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning supplies, and soap. Please note that there is no oven, no water cistern, no double beds, no refrigeration, no outdoor fires and no gear carts.

Your Responsibilities

The success of the hut systems depends on the care provided by the guests. You are responsible for leaving the cabin cleaner than you found it, including sweeping floors, cleaning the kitchen, washing your dishes, etc. You are also responsible for hauling out all your food and trash (trash bags are provided). Other instructions and rules are posted in the hut.

Dogs

Dogs are not allowed at the huts.

Arriving at the Hut

The confirmation letter that was emailed to the trip organizer has the door lock combination, please print this document and take it with you on your hut trip. Huts are locked with padlocks so combinations are necessary for entry. Please post the confirmation letter on the board upon arrival. Users must have a valid reservation or face eviction either by those who do have a reservation or by any onsite staff.

Check-In/Check-Out Time is 1:00 p.m.

Please time your travels so you arrive at the cabin after 1:00 p.m. Upon departure, please have your bags packed, the kitchen and hut clean, and other items on the Before Departure - DO list, which is posted in the cabin, and prepare to vacate the cabin by 1:00 p.m. A designated check-in/check-out time allows groups staying at the cabin to have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Water

Water is available from a creek 50 feet to the north of the cabin. Water should be treated by boiling, filtering or with chemical treatments before using. The creek is not a guaranteed water source, especially in the fall. The next closest water source is Crystal creek 250 yards to the south of the hut. There is no cistern.

Fires

Due to potential forest fire danger, campfires are not permitted. Outdoor cooking is also not permitted because it attracts bears and other wildlife. It is illegal to discharge fireworks in the National Forest.

Mountain Biking/Hiking

The Forest Service roads and trails near the hut are great for mountain biking and hiking. Please tread lightly. Please do not ride or hike off designated trails and roads to protect the fragile high altitude environment. Helmets are recommended for cyclists.

Horses

Horses are not permitted at Francie's Cabin. There are no facilities for horses near the cabin.

Backcountry Preparedness

Francie's Cabin is located at 11,300 feet in elevation. Be aware that going to a hut requires long climbs at high altitude. Weather in the mountains can change rapidly. A warm summer morning at a trailhead can turn into a cold storm with lightning at 11,000 feet. Snow and hail are possible at high elevations in the summer and temperatures can drop below freezing. Plan to bring warm clothes and sufficient food and water. See also our [summer suggested equipment list](#).

Emergencies/First Aid

Communication, even in an emergency, may not be possible from Francie's Cabin. Cellular phones may not work. If a member of your group is injured or becomes ill on the trail or at the hut, you cannot rely on outside help. Plan ahead and be prepared to execute a self-rescue. Your group should be equipped with first aid supplies and have experience in emergency first aid. Call 911 as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

Group Leader

Since the trip organizer may not be experienced in the backcountry, we recommend that your group discuss how decisions will be made in the field and who will be the leader, particularly if problems arise. Be honest when assessing each member's strengths, skills and experience.

Route Finding

You are responsible for finding the route to the hut. We strongly recommend that someone in your group have experience in route finding in bad weather conditions, reading topographic maps and using a compass. Routes to Francie's Cabin may not be marked or maintained. The map on the brochure shows general directions and should not be relied upon for route finding. Please purchase and bring with you a current topographic map of the area, such as the map available for sale through 10th Mountain Division Hut Association (970-925-5775) or Mountain Outfitters, 112 S. Ridge Street, Breckenridge (970-453-2201). See also access options below.

Cancellations/Changes

Cancellations and changes must be made to 10th Mountain 30 days prior to your trip start date in order to receive an 80% credit for a future trip. Cancellations made less than 30 days prior to your trip start date will result in forfeiture of your payment. No refunds.

Waivers

An [electronic or paper waiver](#) form must be submitted to 10th Mountain by each participant before the trip. The huts may not be occupied by any person who has failed to submit a waiver to 10th Mountain.

Handicap Accessibility

Francie's Cabin was built in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but the trip to the cabin is a backcountry experience. Contact SHA at 970-453-8583 for more information.

Questions/Information

For more information please contact 10th Mountain Division Hut Association at 970-925-5775 (summer hours 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday - Friday), or Summit Huts Association at 970-453-8583.

Spruce Creek Trailhead Option

A variety of access options are available from the Spruce Creek Trailhead. Directions: From the intersection of Main Street and South Park Avenue in Breckenridge, note your mileage. Proceed south on Main Street (Highway 9) for 2.3 miles. Turn right onto Spruce Creek Road. Follow it through the neighborhood, bearing left at major intersections. The trailhead parking area is marked with several Forest Service signs, one saying "Spruce Creek Portal." From the Spruce Creek Portal Trailhead & Parking Area you have several options for hiking and or mountain biking.

- **Hike Spruce Creek Road to Crystal Lakes Road** (shortest, steepest option): Follow Spruce Creek Road as it exits the west side of the parking lot. At the fork, go right toward Crystal Lakes. After 1.1 miles, you'll see a gate on your left. Shortly after that, turn right onto the driveway to Francie's Cabin and follow it about 600 feet to the cabin. **This route is very steep and rocky and is not recommended for mountain biking (see also motorized access warnings).**
- **Hike or Mountain Bike Spruce Creek Road to Aqueduct Road to Crystal Lakes Road** (middle distance, less steep option): Follow Spruce Creek Rd as it exits the west side of the parking lot and bear left at the fork. After about 1.25 miles, turn right onto the aqueduct road where the sign says "Wheeler Trail". Francie's Cabin is ¾ mile from here – follow the aqueduct road to the creek, cross the cement bridge, and turn left on Crystal Lakes Rd. After about 50', turn right onto the driveway to Francie's Cabin and follow it about 600' to the cabin.
- **Hike or Mountain Bike Spruce Creek Trail to Wheeler Trail** (longer, more scenic route – not shown on map below): From the parking area, take the Spruce Creek trail that exits the parking lot on the south side. Follow it to the intersection with the Wheeler Trail, turn right, and take the Wheeler trail to the Spruce Creek Rd where it intersects with the aqueduct road. Follow the aqueduct road to the creek, cross the cement bridge, and turn left to follow Crystal Lakes Rd. After about 50', turn right onto the driveway to Francie's Cabin and follow it about 600' to the cabin.

Motorized Access

Motorized access to Francie's Cabin is not guaranteed. The US Forest Service prohibits motorized travel in the Crystal Lakes and Spruce Creek areas except on routes marked with white arrow symbols. Motor vehicles are not permitted near Francie's Cabin. There are two options to access Francie's Cabin with motorized assistance; one gets you within ¾ of a mile of the hut (Spruce Creek Road), one within 600 feet (Crystal Lakes Road). A high clearance vehicle and experience are recommended, driving conditions vary depending on the weather.

- **Spruce Creek Road:** Follow Spruce Creek Road west from the parking area. At the fork, stay left. After about 1.25 miles, there is a right turn onto the aqueduct road where the sign says "Wheeler Trail". This is as far as you may drive on this route, from here it is a ¾ mile hike or mountain bike to the cabin. Park here, being careful not to block either road or the aqueduct gate. Hike/mountain bike on the aqueduct road to the creek, cross the cement bridge, and turn left to follow Crystal Lakes Rd. After about 50', turn right onto the driveway to Francie's Cabin and follow it about 600' to the cabin.
- **Crystal Lakes Road:** This road is very steep, rocky, and difficult and is recommended only for high clearance four-wheel drive vehicles and experienced drivers. Parking is not permitted along the roadside or anywhere except in designated areas. Follow Spruce Creek Road as it exits the west side of the parking lot. At the fork, go right toward Crystal Lakes. After 1.1 miles, you'll see a gate on your left. Shortly after that, turn right onto the driveway to Francie's Cabin. If you are able to drive the Crystal Lakes Road to access Francie's Cabin, drop gear and people at the driveway gate (no gear carts are provided), but please park at the parking area approximately 1/8 mile below the driveway at the flat clearing next to the Crystal Road. Plan in advance to be able to carry all of your gear and equipment in case the road is closed.

Questions/Information

For more information please contact 10th Mountain Division Hut Association at 970-925-5775 (summer hours 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday - Friday), or Summit Huts Association at 970-453-8583.