

## **Welcome to Ring Lake Ranch!**

Ring Lake Ranch offers its guests and staff  
renewal of body, mind, and spirit  
as they experience and share  
the wonders of this unique  
Rocky Mountain environment.

This non-profit, rustic, renewal center  
offers those who choose to come  
opportunities for spiritual growth, solitude, community,  
intellectual stimulation, horseback riding, hiking,  
and a variety of outdoor experiences.

We hope that you discover something of value for your own life  
in the wildness of the rugged, mountain country surrounding this sacred space.

This manual is designed as a guide to help guests acquaint themselves with the Ranch  
and its workings.

## Daily Schedule

*Session Opening on Sundays:* Ranch guests start arriving after 3:00 p.m. on Sundays. After 6:00 supper, all guests and Ranch staff assemble in the Living Room at 7:30 for introductions and orientation to the Ranch.

- 7:00 am        Coffee and tea available in the Dining Room
- 7:45 am        Morning Prayer in Chapel
- 8:00 am        Breakfast followed by brief meditation
- 9:30 am        Morning activities
- 12:30 pm      Lunch
- 1:30-3:30 pm Quiet time
- 5:30 pm        Sharing Time in Living Room (Guests are encouraged to lead)
- 6:00 pm        Dinner
- 7:30 pm        Scheduled Seminars in Living Room
- Six- day sessions: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
- Twelve-day sessions: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday both weeks
- [NB: Speakers sometimes alter this schedule.]
- 9:00 pm        Tea, snacks and conversation in Dining Room (optional)

The meal triangle (bell) will be rung 15 minutes prior to meals and again at meal times.

Note Well: The triangle ringing at any other time of the day or night signals an emergency. Please, gather quickly at the Ranch kitchen porch area.

## Enjoying the Ranch: Some Helpful Information

*Bird Bath:* If the ‘bird bath’—the water-filled depression in the rock on the lake side of the Dining Hall—becomes empty, please let one of the staff know, so that they can fill it. Enjoy the creatures as they come to drink. The window in the Dining Room is ideal. Sue Beck’s *Birds You May See on Your Walks* is in the Dining Room along with binoculars and other bird books.

*Children:* Parents are responsible for their children. Separate activities for young children are not planned. Arrangements for child supervision might be made in advance. A contribution for this extra service will be expected. Please be sure your children understand the general rules and supervise their behavior.

*Critters:* Let the little ground animals feed naturally, so don’t offer them snacks. This is important in our efforts in maintaining the natural environment. Also, keeping food in your cabin attracts mice and pack rats, so please store treats in the Dining Room (see the head cook). If you have hard plastic or other critter-proof containers, okay, but clean up tempting crumbs.



Pack Rat



Chipmunks



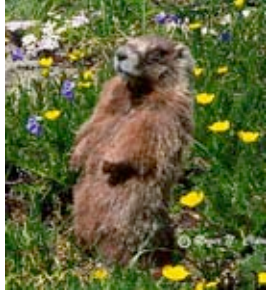
Uinta Ground Squirrel

*Drinking Water:* Take water from the Ranch with you on hikes and rides. Do not drink the water directly from the lakes or streams even in remote areas. *Giardia*, a parasite found in water in the Wind River Range and in many areas in the West, poses potentially serious health problems.

*Energy:* Please help us conserve energy by turning off lights and baseboard heaters when you leave your cabin.

*First Aid:* First aid supplies are kept in the Kitchen. Please ask staff for assistance. For more serious problems, the Dubois Medical Clinic is opens from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. Hospitals are in Lander (72 miles), Riverton (75 miles), and Jackson (100 miles).

*Flowers:* You can see many wildflowers, but please leave them where you find them.



Marmot among the mountain flowers

*Gates:* As a general rule, leave gates as you find them. If you do find a gate open, please let one of the wranglers know just in case it should be closed.

*Gift Shop:* The Ranch Gift Shop offers t-shirts, sweatshirts, Wyoming honey, coffee mugs, disposable cameras, phone cards, puppets, bottles of water, some toiletries, and other gifts. Purchases from the Gift Shop contribute to the operation of the Ranch.

*Gratuities and Gifts:* Gratuities for the staff are appreciated, but not expected. The Ranch gratefully accepts tax deductible contributions to the Ranch's overall mission.

*Internet:* We encourage you to leave your worries behind. But, the Ranch is connected to wireless high speed internet in the Office. Guests have been able to connect to the internet from as far away at the Living Room. Also, if you do not have a laptop, the Library in Dubois offers computer connections.

*Labyrinth:* Our labyrinth – the first built in Wyoming – is found down the hill from the Dining Hall near Trail Lake. Experience this quiet way of walking-meditation. The labyrinth is an archetype, a symbol found around the world. Not a maze, it is a single path, the course meandering its way into the center and returning by the same route. Walking this path may help us reflect on where we are in life. Some walkers report peaceful feelings, inner wisdom, healing, or celebration. When we step into a labyrinth with an open heart, we step into sacred space and sacred time. More information about the labyrinth is available in Appendix A in this Manual.



*Laundry:* A laundry facility for use of guests is located in the lower level of Lake Lodge. We encourage you to use the clothesline just to the north of the building. In this climate, your laundry will dry quickly. Laundry soap is provided, and the fee to cover the cost of operating the machines is posted. Laundry hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

*Mail & Stamps:* A mailbox hangs inside and to the left of the door to the Dining Room for both incoming and outgoing mail. Stamps, note cards, and postcards may be purchased in the Gift Shop.

*Meals:* For safety and the sanity of the cooks, please stay out of the kitchen. Meals are served family style in the Dining Room. Seating is not assigned. We invite you to think of meals as sacred times, times of companionship. So, please allow at least 30 minutes for eating together. We ask that everyone share clearing and wiping tables, washing dishes, pots and pans, and sweeping the Dining Room after meals. The staff will offer directions and assist. With large sessions, we usually divide up into groups; for smaller sessions, most of us need to pitch in at each meal.



*Medicine Wheel:* A medicine wheel has been created on top of the ridge above Top Cabin. Please see Appendix B in this Manual for more information.

*Moose:* As summer progresses they are seldom seen on the Ranch, but may be spotted in the marsh at the head of Trail Lake, especially early in the morning. But, stay back; moose may seem ungainly, but are fast and testy, particularly a mother with her calf.

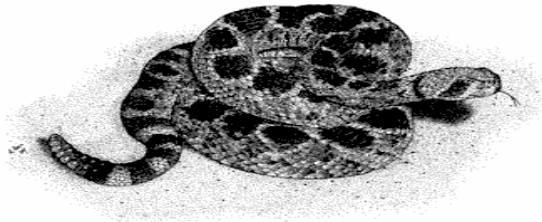
*Neighborliness:* Torrey Lake Ranch is our neighbor to the north. The public road is an easement over that property and sometimes horses and/or cattle will be grazing around the road. Please be aware that you are traveling over private property and use caution in driving. The old Beck complex is privately owned and, Trail Lake Ranch, owned by the

State of Wyoming, adjoins it. We have good neighbors and ask our guests to help us be good neighbors.



*Petroglyphs:* These shallow carving on rock made by ancestors of the Shoshone called the Sheep Eaters can be seen on the Ranch property, in the Torrey Creek watershed, and across the creek above the lakes. Dates for their carving range from 800 C.E. to hundreds of years before that, and little is known of their creators. While you are welcome to visit the petroglyphs, archeologists caution us not to touch them since that will contribute to their deterioration. In addition, should you find ancient artifacts like arrowheads, pot shards, etc., leave these in place, tell the program director who will report the find to an archeologist.

*Rattlesnakes:* Yes, rattlesnakes infrequently make an appearance and shake their rattles on the Ranch. While they might spook us, they do keep the mouse and pack rat populations in check. Often found on rocks or under them and in brush, they just want to be left alone; so do so. When you hear a rattle, spot the snake and back away out of range. Tell a staff member. We safely remove rattlers off the property.



### Back Off! Western Rattlesnake

*Recycling:* Please help us recycle. Place aluminum, tin cans, glass, plastics, and paper in their proper barrels in the Recycle enclosure near Cabin 7.

*Releases:* A signed liability release is required of all guests. Please sign your release and return it to the Office before participating in any Ranch activities.

*Rocks & Trees:* Given the dangers, don't throw rocks. And, please don't climb trees.

*Smoking:* Help us maintain a smoke-free environment, so please do not smoke in any of the Ranch buildings. As Smokey says, “Help prevent forest fires” by extreme caution when you smoke outside and by proper disposal of butts (get a tin can from the kitchen).

*Telephone:* The telephone for staff and guests’ use is located on the back porch of the Dining Hall. In order to keep the Office line free for Ranch business, guests are asked to use and to give out the guest telephone number for any in-coming calls: (307) 455-2603. Please call collect or use a telephone calling card and try to keep your calls to about 10 minutes so other staff and other guests may use the phone, too.

*The Rocky Ledge* on the Trail Lake side of both the Dining Hall and Living Room has a dangerously sheer drop-off. Parents, please alert your children that they are not to climb or play around this area.

*Trash:* Empty trash into the bear-proof dumpster near the Office. The doors at the back are most readily opened; slide your hand into the handle, push the lever, and lift the door.

*VCR/DVD:* The VCR/DVD in the Living Room may be used when other activities are not scheduled there. The Ranch has a small video library. Please check with the Program Director before bringing in other videos. They should be appropriate for the audience.

*Volunteering to Work:* Some kind of maintenance or building project is always going on at the Ranch. We welcome help from guests if they are willing and able. However, this is your time for renewal. If you would find working enjoyable and refreshing, please volunteer to the Caretaker.

*Worship & Sharing:* Guests are invited to participate in morning worship at 7:45 a.m. in the Chapel. Sometimes guests organize a Sunday worship service, but we do not schedule one. Church services are available in town. If an appropriate and willing priest or minister is available, an ecumenical Eucharist may be celebrated at some point during the session.

## Useful Information about Your Cabin

*Housekeeping:* We want you to be comfortable while at the Ranch. And, as has been our tradition in an effort to keep costs affordable, you are asked to do your own housekeeping. Brooms and cleaning supplies are in either the closet or bathroom. Your room should be supplied with linens and soap. Extra blankets may be found in the closet. Linens and extra cleaning supplies are kept in the Linen Room behind the Gift Shop. Please let the housekeeping staff know if you need anything. If you find linens that are either tattered or stained, please give them to the housekeeping staff.

*Maintenance Needs:* If anything in your room or cabin needs repair or attention, please note it on a Maintenance Request slip and leave it attached to the clipboard in the Dining Room.

*Fire Extinguishers:* Please note the location of the extinguisher in your cabin and in each building. Hoses—for fire protection--have been placed at the hose bib on the outside of each cabin.

*Baseboard Heaters:*

- Do not place furniture or bed linens directly against the electric baseboard heaters.
- Please turn off the heater when you leave your cabin.

*Wood-burning Stoves:* We live in a part of the country highly prone to wildfires. So, please use these stoves only in severe cold. To use the wood-burning stoves you will need to ask Maintenance Staff for supplies.

If you should have to build a fire, observe these fire safety measures:

- Open the draft. When vertical, the draft is open.
- Lay a crumpled newspaper in bottom of stove and crisscross kindling on top. Then put on a small scoop of sawdust fire-starter from the can nearby.
- Light papers and sawdust fire-starter from back to front.
- Close stove door and open bottom draft on door.
- When kindling has caught, add a log or two, leaving air space between logs.
- Shut bottom draft and turn upper draft slightly closed. When completely horizontal, the draft is shut, and the fire will die out.
- NEVER BURN A FIRE IN THE STOVE WITH THE STOVE DOOR OPEN.
- Please do not burn rubbish in your stove.

*Other Important Reminders:*

- Shut stove door and draft doors when leaving cabin.
- Keep everything clear of the stove. Nothing should be near the stove area, especially the sawdust can, wood, paper, furniture or clothing.
- One small scoop of fire-starter is plenty.

- Never overheat the stove: the chimney will catch fire. It should never be so hot the chimney rattles or becomes discolored on the outside. If it does, shut off all drafts. Use water only as a last resort—it will crack the iron.



## THE OTHER RANCH BUILDINGS

*Bathrooms:* Guest bathrooms are located on the Trail Lake side of the Dining Hall and on the Lake side of the Office building.

*Chapels:* The Indoor Chapel, located to the right of the Living Room, is always open for quiet reflection. A peaceful spot up the hill past Cabin #4 has been set aside as an Outdoor Chapel. Have a seat on a bench, gaze out over the valley, journal, pray, read, be still.

*Corral & Tack Shed:* The Corral is located below the Living Room in the Fly Pasture. Follow the path across the yard outside the Dining Hall, past the Chapel, over the low ridge toward Shop and Hay Barn. Go through the green gate on the left, and you will see the Tack Shed and Corral.

*Dining Room:* The Dining Room is the “heart” of Ranch life. In the hutch at the back, games, puzzles and books, especially on local habitat, flora and fauna, are available. Please do not linger in the Dining Room during the 30 minutes before meals; the kitchen staff needs to prepare for meals.

*Gift Shop:* This source of gifts and supplies is part of the Office building. Open times will be announced after meals.

*Library:* Located in Top Cabin, it has a collection of books on theology and philosophy, classic literature, some fiction and reference materials. This library is open from after breakfast until 1:30, and then from 3:30 until 5:30. Please return borrowed books before you leave the Ranch.

*Linen Room:* The Linen Room is located to the left of the Gift Shop. You will find towels, sheets, toilet paper, trash bags, soap, and housekeeping materials stored here. Plastic barrels for used linens and towels are also kept in this room.

*Living Room:* This is the main gathering place for guests. Most organized programs—Seminars, Sharing and Worship—take place here. Guests are encouraged to use the Living Room for visiting and reading. A portion of the Ring Lake Library is located in the Living Room, including books of current interest, the environment and wilderness, western life and lore, some fiction and other light reading. Maps and informational brochures about activities in the surrounding areas may be found, too.

## GUEST ACTIVITIES

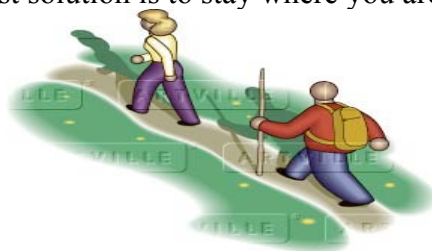
*Boating:* Canoes and a rowboat can be found below Cabin 8 on the beach of Trail Lake. Paddles, oars, and lifejackets are stored under the porch of Cabin 8. State law requires that life jackets be worn while in a boat. CAUTION: Strong winds come up suddenly, particularly in the afternoon, so steer clear of the middle of Trail Lake where cross currents can pull a boat in circles. Boating close to shore invites you to see more wildlife and is safer. Avoid Torrey Creek and the Lily Pond near the Ranch; the water is too shallow. Please let someone know if you take out a boat.



*Hiking & Walking:* Guided Hiking opportunities led by a staff member are offered each day, usually after breakfast, however, individuals and groups who know the trails do hike independently. Here are some pointers to make your walks more enjoyable and safer:

- Most of the areas in which we hike are in National Forest Wilderness areas. A topographical map with the trails marked is on page 15. PLEASE LEAVE THIS MAP IN YOUR GUEST MANUAL; LAMINATED COPIES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE DINING ROOM.
- Wildlife guides are available in the Dining Room.
- Feel free to request food for a packed lunch, preferably the night before.
- We ask that guests always let someone know where they are hiking and when they expect to arrive back. Write your name(s), trail, and return time on the chalkboard on the back porch of the Dining Hall.
- Take:

- Plenty of water: at least 2 quarts for longer hikes; some water bottles are available in the Dining Room.
- A lunch for hikes of longer duration.
- A hat and sunblock – and please use them.
- Sturdy, rough-soled boots or shoes.
- A warm fleece or waterproof jacket since weather can change quickly.
- First aid materials and matches.
- Common sense is the best guide. Guard against sunburn, fatigue and altitude sickness. Remember that it takes time to become adjusted both to altitude and exercise. Heed the Forest Service advisories. Always hike with a companion, especially in high country. When with a group, don't wander off, and avoid off-trail hiking. Should you become lost, the best solution is to stay where you are.



Some Popular Trails: There are several pleasant, short hikes right around the Ranch site.

**Fossil Ridge:** This prominent ridge overlooks the meadow near Cabins A & B. It is a former seabed, 250 million years old, containing abundant brachiopod fossils. The trail angles off the road near the Shop/Hay Barn area. Round trip is about a quarter of a mile.

**Trail Lake:** The walk around Trail Lake is pleasant and mostly flat, and takes about 75 minutes to complete the 3 mile walk. Start near the boat beach below Cabin 8; proceed through the gate beyond the dock and along the shore to the upper side of our adjoining neighbor's property (though the sign says "No Trespassing" the trail is open for RLR guests). Follow the trail outside their fence, not through the residential area; it joins their private road and continues over Torrey Creek to the main road. Turn right to return to the Ranch entrance and home.

**Ridge Trail:** This moderate-to-steep hike starts at Top Cabin and has several confusing junctions, so going with someone who knows the trail is best. However, Trail Lake, Ring Lake, and Torrey Lake should always be in sight, so you can always head towards them and then find your way back to the Ranch. The Trail hike is about 4 miles. The top of the Ridge offers superb views.

**Little Whiskey or Torrey Rim Trail:** For this more strenuous, 4-mile hike, leave the Ranch and walk toward town on Trail Lake Road. About .1 mile before the cattle guard near the top of the first hill, the Trail leaves the road on the left (look for a prominent dead tree where the trail begins). The well-traveled Trail climbs rather steeply for about

1000 feet to an open meadow that stretches toward Whiskey Mountain. Up here you have great views all around.

Lake Louise: This picturesque glacial lake is approximately 3 miles beyond the Glacier Trail trailhead and takes approximately 2 – 3 hours each way. It involves a drive to the trailhead and then a climb of about 1000 feet over some fairly rough terrain. The rewards are great views and good fishing!



Beware!

Badgers are not cuddly creatures.

*Fishing:* A fishing license is required and may be obtained in person in Dubois at several locations. Because of WY Health Department regulations, the cooks may not prepare fish caught by guests. So, please follow a catch-and-release policy. More detailed suggestions about fishing in the area may be found in Appendix C in this Manual.

*Swimming:* Hardy guests do swim occasionally in Trail Lake or Ring Lake. Ring Lake is the warmer and more shallow of the lakes. Ask the staff for directions to the best swimming spot. Trail Lake is colder and has a dangerous shelf and undertow. All swimmers should remember the potential for *giardia* infestation and not ingest the water.



## Horseback Riding

Our horses and riding them have been important parts of Ranch life for over 40 years. The wranglers announce trail rides usually at the end of breakfast - Monday through Friday. Longer rides may be announced at supper the night before.

*Safety Guidelines and Etiquette around Horses:*

- For the safety of riders and horses, we cannot allow guests or staff weighing over 250 lbs. to ride. A scale will be available in the Tack Shed in case it is necessary to determine someone's weight. This weight limit is standard in the national parks and at other guest ranches, though some set the limit at 240.
- After years of experience, the Ranch has a no cantering policy. Given the rough terrain, steep grades, and wide variety of riding experience among guests, we have found that a steady walk provides not only a margin of safety, but also a better pace to enjoy the sights all around.
- What to Wear:
  - Long pants are required to prevent abrasions from the saddle or brush. Denim jeans are best; no nylon wind pants.
  - Riding boots with heels are recommended; however, sneakers are allowed. No heavy boots with thick soles. No slip-on shoes like loafers. No open heeled/toed sandals.
  - Depending on the weather, a warm jacket, sweatshirt or sweater are desirable. Always try to dress in layers. Rain jacket, possibly rain pants. No floppy ponchos or coats, please—these can spook a horse.
  - A helmet supplied by the Ranch [highly recommended even for experienced riders]; if you decide not to wear a helmet, a hat that will stay attached to your head. Hats help give protection from the sun at these high elevations.
  - Leather to keep your hands warm and protect them from rope/leather burns and abrasions.
  - Don't forget sunblock always.
  - Water for longer rides.

NB: Do not bring a fanny or back pack. The wranglers will supply you with a saddlebag for water or cameras.
- When you come to the corral to ride, take a seat on the Tack Shed porch.
- Please do not reach through the fence and try to pet the horses as you pass the horses tied to the hitching posts. Many horses snooze; petting can startle them, making them pull back and jerk the lead rope.
- Pay close attention to the instructions of the wrangler in charge. The wranglers' role is to teach you about our horses and to be attentive to the needs and safety of each rider. The wranglers know the horses and trails and want your ride to be enjoyable and safe.
- If you have questions or concerns about riding, please ask the wranglers.
- When the horses are saddled and instructions have been given, the wranglers will call your name to mount. Go down the steps at the end of porch and approach the mounting block. Once on your horse, the wrangler will adjust your stirrups, tie your gear on the saddle, and give directions on where to go.
- Stay alert while riding. As much as possible, keep your horse one length behind the horse in front of you: no closer and no further back. If a horse get behind they may want to trot to catch up. Don't let them. Walk please.

- Stay on the trail.
- Keep your steed from eating while you are riding. Give a tug on the reins to stop their snacking.
- If you want to take a photo, remove a piece of clothing or put something on, always ask the wranglers to stop and assist you. Flapping clothes and fiddling with a camera may spook your horse or another rider's.
- Wait in your place in line when wranglers are opening or closing gates.
- Upon returning to the corral, the wrangler may allow you to unsaddle and brush your horse if you would like. Assistance and direction will be given about how to proceed.



## **END OF SESSION HOUSEKEEPING LIST**

As part of our community experience, we ask that you leave your cabin as clean as it was when you arrived. We deeply appreciate your assistance in preparing the cabin for its next occupants. Please use this checklist as you prepare to leave:

1. Return books to their proper location—Living Room, Dining Room, or Top Cabin.
2. Strip the beds, collect used linens (towels, bath mats and sheets only) and place in the laundry receptacles located outside the Linen Room. If the mattress pad becomes stained please bring it to the linen shed and obtain a replacement.
3. Take used drinking glasses to the kitchen and pick up replacements there.
4. Separate trash and recyclable materials and place in appropriate receptacles.
5. Clean the bathroom sink, toilet, shower, mirrors, and floor. (Cleaning supplies are in each cabin.)

6. Sweep and/or dust-mop the room and porch, paying particular attention to corners and under the bed. Give the room a careful inspection and remove any cobwebs or dust that may have accumulated. If necessary wet mop areas.
7. Remake the bed with fresh sheets and pillowcases from the linen shed. Clean towels should be left on the bed and a clean bathmat placed on the shower stall.
8. Turn off all lights and baseboard electric heaters.
9. If any portion of the cabin or equipment needs repair, please fill out a Maintenance Request form and leave it in the clipboard in the Dining Room. Please note if the cabin needs replacement light bulbs.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION!

Peace and All Good!