

Overnight Caboose Information

Dear Overnight Caboose Patron;

Thank you for visiting historic Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. We want your visit to be as enjoyable and safe as possible, and for that reason suggest you read this information carefully.

Cass Scenic Railroad owns very little property atop Cheat Mountain, limited only to the 50 foot rail corridor and limited tracts at Bald Knob and Whittaker Station. The train will be transporting you into what is essentially a large backcountry area within the Monongahela National Forest, with elevations ranging from 3,200 feet to 4,800 feet. This area will be devoid of homes, paved roads, and other trappings of civilization to which we have become accustomed. Cell phones and pagers are generally inoperable in this area. Emergency help will be difficult to contact, and then may have difficulty reaching you if the need arises. The closest emergency squads are located at Snowshoe Ski Resort and the town of Cass. You must plan ahead and make provisions for all of your foreseeable needs during the time you will remain on Cheat Mountain. It is strongly recommended that you carry with you good maps of the area, and be prepared for weather much colder and wetter than what you would expect at lower elevations. Train staff will attempt to check on you daily during your visit, and will bring you fresh water. Caboose #311, normally stationed at Bald Knob, is equipped with a 4.5 cf refrigerator/freezer. Other cabooses do not have refrigeration. Items you may need during your visit and which are your responsibility to provide include:

Bedding, such as a sleeping bag

Camping light and fuel

Food and personal hygiene items

Cooking and eating utensils, plates, cups, etc.

Camping stove and fuel (The caboose has a coal heating stove, but it is more difficult to cook on)

You will be riding on our passenger cars to reach your destination, which when full have limited space to transport your belongings. While we are committed to transporting the items you will need for your adventure, we ask that you please refrain from bringing excess and bulky luxuries that may be difficult for us to fit on the available space on the train.

You are entering bear country and the home of many other types of wildlife, and you should be prepared to properly store your food to avoid confrontations with the local residents. Proper procedures include: *Eat inside the caboose, or eat at least 100 yards from it. Store your food inside the caboose in sealed containers, or else bag your food cache, and using a rope thrown over a limb, store food and other smelly items such as toothpaste by hoisting at least 10 feet from the ground and 4 feet from the nearest tree trunk, and at least 100 yards from the caboose. Don't bring particularly smelly items, such as sardines, certain lunch meats, or perfumes. Practice good housekeeping and do not burn or bury trash, as bears will use their keen sense of smell to find the remnants anyway. Other recommendations include not surprising bears or staying in the vicinity of a sow with cubs, making noise when you hike, speaking quietly and moving your arms when in the presence of a bear to let him know you are human, walk in groups when possible, and carry a bear repellent spray. Don't run if charged (they can outrun you).* Black bears are not generally aggressive toward humans, and following these guidelines should go a long way toward keeping you on the good side of any you see or get near.

There are rules pertaining to proper use of state and federal lands. Violation of these rules will be prosecuted. Firearms are prohibited on the train, and uncased or loaded firearms are not permitted on state park property. Outdoor fires, fireworks, trenching, digging or damage to living vegetation are not permitted. We request that you practice *Leave no trace* principles, packing out all trash. Please use the restroom facilities provided. Please respect private property and any *No trespassing* signs you may encounter. If you stay at Whittaker Station, be aware that private property surrounds much of that area. **Do not trespass on private property at Whittaker Station.** By following these rules the privilege of camping in this beautiful area can be preserved for all.

Bicyclists will encounter steep descents and rough terrain. Please make sure that you and your cycle are ready to handle the stress. Also, be aware that state law requires those under 15 years of age to wear a helmet when cycling. Snowshoe Ski Resort requests that bicyclists utilizing their property check in with them at the Mountain Adventure Center in the village some time during their visit, and such use may require the payment of a nominal user fee.

You must be at your caboose on the scheduled day of departure at the appropriate time in order to re-

board the train for your return trip to Cass. The train must keep its appointed schedule, and others likely have the caboose reserved for the night of your departure. The following time table is provided for your convenience, and is an estimation only. Be aware that sometimes during inclement weather the Bald Knob or Spruce train returns to Whittaker early for the comfort of the passengers.

Please take proper care of the caboose, its equipment and furnishings. This is an historic caboose, and it should be treated respectfully. Do not drink water from the bathroom facilities or other non-potable sources. Drink only water you have purified by accepted means or that provided by train personnel for your use.

For your safety and that of the caboose, take great care with the heating stove. Do not leave it unattended without being sure the fire is completely out. Use the paper and kindling provided to start your fire.

Lift the lid off of the stove, place your paper in first, loosely crumpled. Next closely arrange your kindling on top of the paper. Light the paper, then as heat builds place several lumps of coal on top of the kindling, being careful not to smother the fire. As that coal begins to burn additional coal can be added as desired. Keep in mind that the output of the stove is best regulated by the amount of coal you add, so be careful not to put too much in at one time. During the night it will be necessary to add small amounts several times to keep the fire going.

#311's refrigerator should require little or no attention during your stay. It is lit prior to your occupancy. If you must load a lot of relatively warm items into it, it may take several hours or possibly overnight to catch up again, and during this time you should refrain from opening the door unnecessarily. When loading the refrigerator try not to restrict free air flow within the cabinet. If you suspect a problem with the unit, check the flame indicator on the front control panel. The indicator will be in the green zone when a flame is present. If it is not, relight the unit:

1. Make sure the valve on the propane tank is open (turned counterclockwise). The tank in use is indicated by the black plastic handle on the crossover valve on the front of the tanks. If you suspect that the tank in use has gone empty, turn the black plastic handle to point to the second tank, and open that tank's valve.
2. Turn the thermostat to the 5 position.
3. Make sure the selector switch is in the propane gas (flame) position.
4. Push and hold the safety valve button (located adjacent to the selector switch) while pushing the piezo igniter button several times in rapid succession. **Do not push the safety valve button for more than 30 seconds, as this can cause a potentially explosive accumulation of gas in the burner.**
5. When a flame is present and the flame indicator moves to the green zone, count to five seconds and release the safety button.
6. If no flame is indicated, wait one minute and perform step 4 again.