On the Trail of the Yellowstone Hot Spot  
Summer Session 2007

General trip route

This trip was run from Spokane, WA to the western end of the Snake River Plain in Idaho, to Craters of the Moon National Monument and to Yellowstone National Park. The route from Spokane was I-90 west to Ritzville, I-395 south to the Tri-Cities, through Kennewick and into Oregon via Route 82 and Route 730 to I-84 eastbound to Boise, ID. Our first stop was at Bruneau Dunes State Park, south of Mountain Home, ID. We continued our exploration of the Snake River Plain via Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, Craters of the Moon National Monument, Menan Buttes and entered the west entrance of Yellowstone National Park.

Physiographic provinces and areas covered

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<th>Columbia Plateau</th>
<th>Snake River Plain</th>
<th>Rocky Mountains</th>
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<td>Blue Mountains</td>
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Geology of the Pacific Northwest  
Physiographic Provinces

Cartography by Frank D. Granshaw  
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Note:  
Boundaries are approximate

Reference  
Suggested geology topics for discussion during trip

- Physiographic provinces of Washington State and Idaho
- Columbia River flood basalts
- Channelled Scablands
- Snake River Plain evolution
- Aquifers in the Snake River Plain
- Rift volcanism on the Snake River Plain
- Volcanic edifices and eruptive styles
- Bimodal volcanism
- Lava types and properties
- Pyroclastic rock classification
- Lava tube formation
- Supervolcanoes
- Caldera formation
- Yellowstone glaciation
- Hydrothermal features - Geysers, hot springs, fumaroles and mudpots
- Thermophiles and water temperature

Columbia Plateau – Outcrops of columnar jointed basalt and pillow lavas are abundant in the area.

Snake River Plain – suggested stops

- Bruneau Dunes State Park – a large single structure dune
- Melon gravels from Lake Bonneville – Hagerman area, Idaho
- Hagerman Fossil Beds and visitor center
- Niagara Springs – Thousand Springs area, Idaho
- Big Lost River

Craters of the Moon – suggested stops

- Craters of the Moon Visitor Center
- North Crater Flow Trail
- Broken Top Trail to the Lava Trees
- Indian and Boy Scout caves
- Lava Cave trail

Menan Butte (in the Snake River Plain) – hike to the top of the tuff cone!

Yellowstone National Park – suggested stops

- Upper Geyser Basin – Old Faithful geyser – hike the trials from the Inn to Morning Glory using the Old Faithful Area Trail Guide
- Old Faithful Visitor Education Center (new facility open in 2010)
- Biscuit Basin hike
• Midway Geyser Basin – Grand Prismatic Spring
• Firehole Lake Drive
• Lower Geyser Basin - Fountain Paint Pot
• Firehole Canyon Drive – spectacular scenery and brecciated rocks
• Artist Point – Upper Falls view
• Hayden and Lamar Valleys – wildlife viewing
• Specimen Ridge
• Norris Geyser Basin – Including Porcelain and Back Basins
• Mud Volcano and Sulphur Cauldron
• Roaring Mountain
• Obsidian Cliff
• Mammoth Hot Springs
• Mount Washburn hike

Hebgen Lake earthquake area – be sure to visit this site west of Yellowstone National Park.

National Park Service ([http://www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)) is an excellent resource for planning your trip.