



## SWEETWATER COUNTY TRAVEL & TOURISM PRESS KIT

### About

Sweetwater County, located halfway between Yellowstone and Canyonlands National Parks in southwest Wyoming, is home to 10,500 square miles of pure, high desert adventure. Known as “Flaming Gorge Country” the area is characterized by the 91-square-mile Flaming Gorge Lake, the famed Green River, expansive deserts and rugged mountains. Activities include camping, hiking, biking, fishing, golfing, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, hunting dinosaurs, shopping, and just plain getting away from it all. A perfect place to explore American history, Sweetwater County is also home to petroglyphs, pioneer trails and historical museums. The Rock Springs-Sweetwater County airport was recently ranked 37th on a list of 322 airports from around the country by Travelmath.com.

### Getting Here

**Drive:**

Sweetwater County is located on highways 191 or 530 off the I-80 corridor

**Fly:**

Salt Lake City International Airport – 2.5 hours

Denver International Airport – 5 hours

[Rock Springs-Sweetwater County Airport](#) – 7 miles east of Rock Springs

### Activities

Camping	Ice Fishing
Cross-Country Skiing	Jeeping/4-Wheeling
Driving tours	Kayaking
Events	Mountain Biking
Fine arts	Museums
Fine dining	Shopping
Fishing	Sightseeing
Golfing	Sledding
Hiking	Snowshoeing
Historic sites	Tubing
Hunting	Wildlife Viewing

### Photos

Available for download at <http://www.tourwyoming.com/adventure-gallery.html>

### Online Media Center

<http://www.tourwyoming.com/news-and-media/>

### Social Media

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sweetwater-County-Travel-and-Tourism/63344983318>

**Twitter:** @SweetwaterWY

**YouTube:** <http://www.youtube.com/user/sweetwatertourism>

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## SWEETWATER COUNTY STORY IDEAS – SUMMER

- **Make a Sweetwater County Pit Stop En Route to Yellowstone or Grand Teton National Parks**

With the open highway, endless blue skies and abundant wildlife, a family road trip to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks is among the most quintessential of American summer vacations. For many road trippers, a drive to these parks goes right through a beautiful – yet often undiscovered – corner of Wyoming, [Sweetwater County](#). Here, travelers can stretch their legs at Lake Flaming Gorge, literally trace the footsteps of early settlers by walking the most miles of [still-visible pioneer trails](#) in the country, or check out the cool critters (wild horse herds, rare antelope and more!) of Sweetwater County.
- **Mountain Bike (Nearly) Solo on Spectacular Singletrack**

For the second year in a row, Singletracks.com, a leading website on all things mountain biking, has named [Wilkins Peak Trail System](#) in Sweetwater County the most popular trail in Wyoming. The trail system is not only one of the best in the country, it is also one of the most undiscovered in all the land. That means more solo time on the singletrack when you visit Southwest Wyoming! Wilkins Peak Trails offers several options that can be accessed from various locations on the southeastern side of the town of Green River depending on the length and difficulty of ride desired. The Wilkins Peak Trail System is extensive enough to warrant multiple days of mountain biking and boasts magnificent views of the area's unique landscape. [The Sweetwater Mountain Biking Association](#) offers frequent local trail reports on its Facebook page. For bike repair, gear and local recommendations on other trails to try in the area, the [Bike & Trike/Java Peddler](#) (612 Broadway, Rock Springs) is a perfect place to gear up, as well get a cup of Joe, pre-ride.
- **Rediscover the Wild West**

The wide-open spaces of Sweetwater County bring to life the romance and mystique of the Wild West. Here, visitors can see where outlaw Butch Cassidy earned his nickname (at a butcher shop in downtown Rock Springs); pitch a tent at Hideout Canyon Boat-in Campground, which was once a hiding spot used by Butch Cassidy and his gang; cheer on modern day cowboys and cowgirls at world-class rodeo events; explore the area's still-visible pioneer trails (the most in the U.S.); watch herds of wild horses run; and visit Historic South Pass, which is a cornerstone of the history of U.S. westward migration in the 19th Century.
- **Take a Scenic Drive**

Sweetwater County boasts wide-open vistas and views at every turn. Ramble across the same high deserts and rugged mountains that were once traversed by Native Americans, mountain men, pioneers and even outlaws. Scenic overlooks allow many opportunities to stretch your legs. Highways 191 and 530 encircling Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area are designated state scenic byways. In addition to the notorious untamed horses of Wyoming, big game animals like moose, elk, deer, antelope and big-horn sheep also roam free. The Flaming Gorge-Green River Basin Scenic Byway is accessible from the towns of Green River and Rock Springs via Interstate 80. The 160-mile loop dips into Utah and takes about three hours. The Pilot Butte Wild Horse Scenic Tour north of Green River is only 24 miles long – about one hour of road time, depending on how many stops you make to check out the herds of wild horses.
- **Attend a Summer Event**

Family-friendly festivals reign supreme in Sweetwater County. Here's just a sample of what's in store. For a full event list visit the [Sweetwater County Events Calendar](#).

  - Flaming Gorge Days (June)
  - Red Desert Roundup Rodeo (July)
  - Wyoming's Big Show (July-August)
  - Sweetwater Blues N' Brews (August)
  - River Festival (August)
  - Run with the Horses Marathon (August)
  - Sweetwater Downs Horse Racing (August-September)
  - Race on the Rock (August)

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## SWEETWATER COUNTY STORY IDEAS – FALL & WINTER

- **View Wildlife & Fall Foliage**

Sweetwater County is home to wild horses, rare desert elk found nowhere else in the U.S., and a national wildlife refuge. The landscapes in Sweetwater County range from high desert plains to colorful canyons and majestic mountains, which become even more multi-hued in the fall. The blazing autumn colors play against the plentiful wildlife in their natural habitats for a remarkable viewing experience. Visit Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge to see a variety of bird species, deer, moose and other animals. Take the Pilot Butte Wild Horse Scenic Loop Tour for a glimpse of the wild horse herds that call Sweetwater County home. Head to Killpecker Sand Dunes to see the largest migratory herd of pronghorn antelope in the lower 48 states and a rare desert elk herd, said to be the world's largest, which live in Sweetwater County's Red Desert.

- **Ice Fish for a Big Catch**

Sweetwater County is one of the region's premier ice fishing destinations. Ice fishing on the Flaming Gorge can be very good for burbot and rainbows, beginning in mid-December. Anglers also target lake trout through the ice. Smaller lake trout range freely and are often caught by anglers fishing for rainbows. Burbot were illegally introduced into the Green River drainage in Wyoming. These fish have made their way into the Gorge. Burbot compete with other native fish, but they also provide great ice fishing. Burbot look somewhat like a cod, and they get active under the ice during the winter.

- **Visit One of Sweetwater County's Museums**

From the open plains where Wyoming's wild horses run to the historical sites where their dinosaur predecessors are offered in hulking replica, the untamed spirit of the West beckons visitors to Sweetwater County to experience touches of the past. Sweetwater County's [three museums](#) offer a comprehensive study of the area's fossils, photos and artifacts in a range of permanent and rotating exhibits.

- **Rock Springs Historical Museum:** Showcases the area's coal mining and multinational heritage, but the largest artifact is the building itself, constructed in 1894.
- **Sweetwater County Historical Museum:** Set on one of the few historical sites still preserved in the state, this museum offers snapshots of the county's history through its large photograph collection.
- **WWCC Natural History Museum:** Located at Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs this museum houses life-size dinosaur replicas, fish and plant fossils, pottery and other prehistoric artifacts.

- **Eat Your Heart Out**

[Sweetwater County](#) serves up a heaping helping of fun food that is the perfect "side dish" after working up an appetite exploring the 10,500-square miles of pure desert adventure. Java Peddler (612 Broadway St., Rock Springs), serves up the best coffee in town, as well as info on the best biking trails in Sweetwater County. Cowboy Donuts (1573 Dewar Dr., Rock Springs) serves up "Dang Good Donuts" that were featured on Food Network's *Donut Showdown*. At Bitter Creek Brewing (604 Broadway St., Rock Springs), you can get legendary microbrews and a delectable menu of dishes created from the finest ingredients. Don't let the modest exterior of Hitching Post Restaurant & Saloon (580 E Flaming Gorge Way, Green River) fool you. This place was recently remodeled inside and serves some of the best food in town. Open Range (1630 Elk Street, Rock Springs) features food that is as exceptional as the service.

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