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Brothers seriously injured after bear attack in Yellowstone National Park

Hikers airlifted, remain in hospital in 'serious' and 'critical' condition.

By Christina MacIntosh / Environmental Reporter
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As Craig Lerman approached Mystic Falls on Monday afternoon he started seeing bear paw prints in the mud and snow. Then he saw a bloody hat. And a watch.

“I was very alert after that,” Lerman said. “I knew that something was going on.”

Lerman continued up the trail, which is about a mile from the Biscuit Basin Trailhead in Yellowstone National Park, and encountered an injured hiker lying in a pool of blood, with his face and body “torn up.”

The hiker was one of two brothers attacked by at least one bear on Monday afternoon, the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem’s first bear attack of the season. The two brothers were airlifted to Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, where one is in critical condition and the other is in serious condition.

The News&Guide pieced together the brothers' names through social media posts and obtained a status report from the hospital, but is not reporting their names until they are released by family members or officials.

The park has been scant on details thus far. Officials have not released the ages of the victims or the subspecies of bear involved. Yellowstone press officials declined to answer questions about the attack.

The incident is the first bear attack in Yellowstone since September 2025, when a bear injured a 29-year-old man on the Turbid Lake Trail. That was the first attack since May 2021.

In Grand Teton National Park, a man was attacked by a grizzly on Signal Mountain in 2024. All of those people survived.

Stumbling onto the scene

Lerman happened upon one of the brothers around 4 p.m. Monday. The man yelled for help when he heard Lerman approaching.

Lerman never saw the other brother, though that man was close enough that Lerman saw the helicopter that came to rescue him.

The injured hiker was already on the phone with emergency responders when Lerman arrived. Emergency responders were having a hard time hearing Lerman on the man's speakerphone, so he called them on his phone.

The responders told Lerman to keep the hiker responsive, to keep talking to him and to reassure him that help was on the way. The hiker, who was cold and wet, asked Lerman for his jacket. He didn't have a jacket and laid his shirt on the hiker.

"I have never encountered that before," Lerman said. "I didn't want to make anything worse, so all I did was keep reassuring him that help was on the way."

"Luckily, he wasn't bleeding out," he added. "Because if he was bleeding out, he probably wouldn't have made it."

Lerman waited with the hiker for about 30 minutes, staying on the phone with dispatch the entire time. Lerman, who was not carrying bear spray, was keeping watch and making noise to try to deter the bear from returning.

“It was definitely a learning experience,” Lerman said. “Usually, when I go out hiking, I don’t have anything on me. I’m potentially having to rethink that.”

The injured hiker Lerman found was carrying bear spray and said he deployed it, Lerman said.

Concerns substantiated

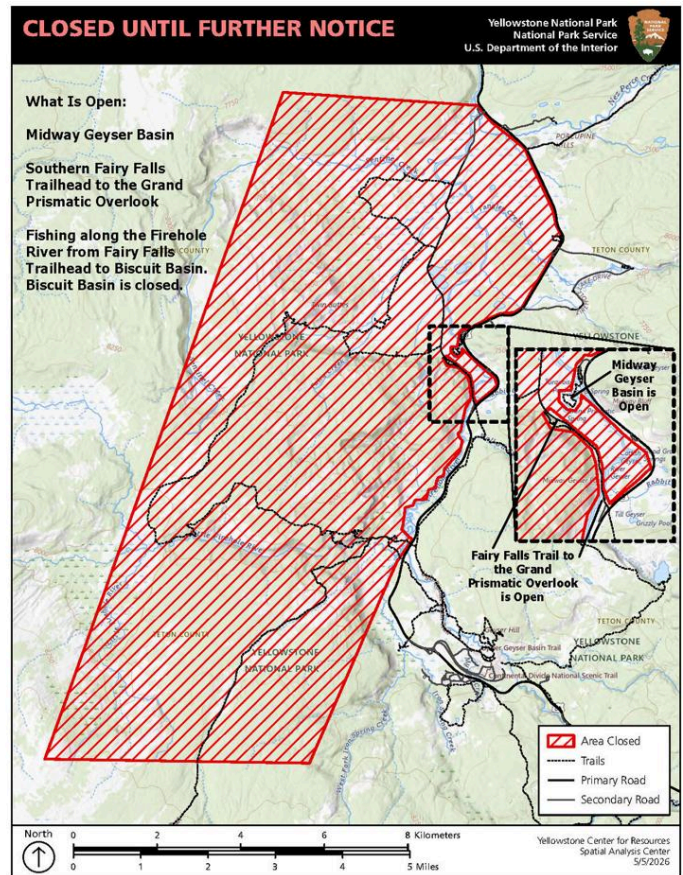
Marie Jaskula, who works for a business in the park and lives in an employee RV park near the incident, witnessed the rescue from the frontcountry.

First, Jaskula saw seven ranger cars with lights and sirens speeding through the park, which is unusual even when there’s a car accident, she said. Then, three helicopters arrived. The choppers proceeded to fly around the area for about two hours. The helicopters were staging on the main loop road.

“It’s definitely early in the season for an attack to happen out here,” she said. “And unusual. But there are babies and bears are coming out hungry, so it’s kind of a perfect recipe right now for dangerous hiking.”

The attack substantiated the concerns of employees who live in the same RV park as Jaskula. Residents have been nervous to walk their dogs at night due to grizzly sightings.

“It’s a little close for comfort,” she said.



A swath of Yellowstone National Park remains closed following a bear attack on Monday.

COURTESY PHOTO

Employees who live in the park see visitors getting too close to wildlife, being unsafe and not carrying bear spray, Jaskula said. There are bears on boardwalks and roadways, not just in backcountry areas, though some visitors don't carry bear spray in the frontcountry.

"We see it and hope that nothing happens," she said. "We're all fans of the wildlife. We don't want to see a person hurt or see that a bear was put down."

Lerman was shocked by what he saw. He said he had a sleepless night following the attack.

"You see this stuff on TV, you see it in the news, but it doesn't prepare you," he said.

Takeaways

Yellowstone officials emphasized the park's general bear safety guidelines following the attack.

The park recommends that visitors stay 100 yards away from bears at all times; carry bear spray and know how to use it; make noise; hike in groups of at least three people; avoid running from bears; and avoid hiking at dawn or dusk, when grizzlies are most active.

Park officials also recommend that visitors look for signs of bears, including tracks, scat and feeding sites. Signs of digging, rolled rocks, torn-up logs and ripped open anthills indicate that a bear might be feeding nearby.

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