

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park



Monday, April 2, 2012

'Hawks v. 'Cats



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Yellowstone National Park has been selected as the winner of **Best National Park in the Rocky Mountains** in the About.com 2012 Readers' Choice Awards! The votes have been tallied and readers agree that Yellowstone is the best national park of the Rocky Mountains. Congratulations!

<http://usparks.about.com/od/usnationalparks/ss/Readers-Choice-Top-National-Parks.htm>

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Come wish **Steve and Maurine Cole** a very happy retirement. Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 3:00 – 5:00 P.M. in the Map Room, Mammoth Hot Springs.

Green Team: With spring comes opportunities to leap forward and try something new. Our Carpenters are experimenting with something new and innovative on the Administration Building: composite plastic board! They used the plastic board to refinish the third floor decks and are major impressed by their experience. Why are they so impressed? What are the benefits to plastic board? Read our latest eHint to find out at <http://inpyellshare/EnvMgt/>. Let's spring forward with innovation and make Yellowstone an NPS leader in sustainability!

Mammoth Community Center is looking for someone to cover as a substitute for our regular janitor 2 hours per week from April 9-27th. Routine cleaning duties include vacuuming, wiping down kitchen counters, cleaning

public restrooms and general tidying. We pay \$15 per hour. Possibility of future sub work for special events with a quality showing. Please contact Charissa_Reid@nps.gov or call 307-344-2260 if interested.

MCC Open Gym Help Needed! We have found families to cover Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday afternoons from 4-6PM at the Mammoth Community Center to give school age kids an after school alternative. We are still looking for help with Wednesdays (4-6PM) and maintaining a sub list when regularly scheduled families have a conflict. Thanks to the Heath, Guiles and Reid family for volunteering their time. Please contact the MCC board by emailing board@mammothcommunity.org if you can help.

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MCC Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, Karin Schwartz is BACK at work so call her at x2052. Or just call her to say WELCOME BACK!!

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April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room

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May 29 - Mammoth FC Training Room

June 5 - Mammoth FC Training Room

June 20 - Interior (Old Faithful pending appropriate size room availability)

IN THE NEWS

Talking Bear True Crime With Jessica Grose

By Alex Balk, The Awl, April 2, 2012

Today Slate publishes "A Death in Yellowstone: On the trail of a killer grizzly bear," an 8000-word investigation by Awl pal Jessica Grose about the search for "the Wapiti sow," a 250-pound grizzly bear implicated in the killing of two separate visitors to Yellowstone National Park in 2011. The story is both about the hunt for the bear and the larger implications of man's sometimes fatal interactions with nature. It's a remarkably compelling report that you absolutely need to read. Here's a brief conversation about the piece.

<http://www.theawl.com/2012/04/talking-bear-true-crime-with-jessica-grose>

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A Death in Yellowstone: On the trail of a killer grizzly bear

Jessica Grose, Slate Magazine, April 2, 2012

A grizzly was ambling along the Yellowstone River on a clear day in late September 2011, when she lifted her nose up and smelled something familiar in the air. She couldn't tell quite what it was, but it smelled like food. Maybe the shredded remains of a bison taken down by a wolf pack, its innards sloughing out of its stomach and onto the riverbank. The sow may have spent the day digging up pocket gophers, but a feast like this would really help her to pack on weight. Within eight weeks she'd be taking her two young cubs into a den in the side of a slope for the long Western winter. They needed fat, and soon.

http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/death_in_yellowstone/2012/04/grizzly_bear_attacks_how_wild_life_investigators_found_a_killer_grizzly_in_yellowstone_.html

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 650 AM MDT MON APR 2 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Mostly cloudy early in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 34 to 40.

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows 12 to 18.

Tuesday...Not as cool. Mostly sunny. Highs 45 to 51.

Tuesday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 23 to 29. West winds around 15 mph after midnight.

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Avalanche information at: <http://mtavalanche.com/node>

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SUBMISSIONS

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Tuesday, April 3, 2012



Swans on the Yellowstone River (NPS photo, Jay Elhard)

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RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

April 2, 2012

Yellowstone To Issue 2012 Firewood Collection Permits

Yellowstone National Park will be accepting public requests April 6-8 for those interested in receiving a 2012 firewood collection permit.

Excess firewood periodically becomes available in the park for a variety of reasons including reducing the amount of wildland fire fuel, trees knocked down by high winds, construction projects or hazard tree removal.

Those interested in applying for a permit are asked to phone Yellowstone's Visitor Services Office at (307) 344-2116 between April 6 and 8 to leave their name and daytime telephone number. Permits will be issued in the order phone calls are received. Names left before April 6 will not be accepted. Successful applicants will be contacted as wood becomes available throughout the year.

Firewood permits cost \$25 and allow up to three cords of wood to be collected. There is no guarantee that there will be three cords available for each permittee. Specific site guidelines and regulations, including hours and dates of collection, will be explained at the time the permit is issued.

For further information call the Yellowstone Visitor Services Office at (307) 344-2107.

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IN THE NEWS

Protesters converge on Fort Peck during Montana governor's Monday visit

Louis Montclair, Great Falls Tribune, April 2, 2012

<http://www.greatfallstribune.com/article/20120403/NEWS01/204030301/Protesters-converge-Fort-Peck-during-Montana-governor-s-Monday-visit?odyssey=tab%7Ctopnews%7Ctext%7Cfrontpage>

POPLAR — Protestors gathered at the bison holding site on the Fort Peck Reservation on Monday where 61 bison from Yellowstone National Park have been held since last week.

The animals were transferred there by the state of Montana.

The group was encouraged to protest at the site after a press release was issued by Citizens for Balanced Use and reported on the Northern Ag Network, which reported Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar was to visit with Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer.

Schweitzer visited Monday but officials from the Department of the Interior said Salazar had no plans to visit Fort Peck. According to the Interior website, the secretary is visiting the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota, about a two hour drive from Fort Peck.

Tribal police and fish and game officers were on hand to maintain order and escort Schweitzer and other tribal government officials.

The protestors, who came from Blaine County, Whitefish and the Scobey and Glasgow areas, were not allowed to enter onto the tribal land where the holding site is located, and were told they could be arrested for trespassing if they came onto tribal property. They set up on private land about 30 feet from the holding pen.

"It's scary these buffalo are here," said one protestor, who declined to name herself. "Our beef is not with the tribes, it's with (Montana) Fish Wildlife & Parks for moving them here and creating this hardship."

Protestors wore buttons with red bison drawings with large bold X's through them. Signs adorning a truck read "Impeach Schweitzer" and "Don't Buffalo Me!"

Brucellosis is the main fear of the Protestors, who feel that the Yellowstone bison will bring the disease to the area.

After touring the holding site, the governor met with the Protestors to address their concerns and answer questions.

Linda Prescott, who has a ranch on the reservation, said that she is concerned with private property rights. Prescott said she was worried that there is no long range plan for the animals.

Tribal Chairman Floyd Azure Sr. said that this is not a private property issue; these animals are being kept on tribal lands.

The situation turned tense when one of the Protestors implied that the tribes were incapable of maintaining the herd properly. Azure said that he resented the suggestion that the tribes could not properly maintain the heard, and said the idea was a case of racism.

Schweitzer said that the science of this issue speaks for itself.

"These animals have been tested again and again and again and each test has come out negative for these animals carrying brucellosis," he said.

One of the Protestors challenged Schweitzer to take five of the Yellowstone bison and put them on the land with his cattle.

The bison were transplanted to Fort Peck recently after the tribe and Schweitzer entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on the evening of March 19. A court injunction was filed by District Judge John McKeon of Blaine County who is holding a hearing on the injunction April 11 in Chinook.

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 707 AM MDT TUE APR 3 2012

Today...Mostly sunny. Highs 44 to 50.

Tonight...Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. Lows 22 to 28.

Wednesday...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the afternoon.

Wednesday Night...Partly cloudy. Slight chance of rain and snow in the evening...then slight chance of snow after midnight. Lows 24 to 30. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

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Everyone is invited to the **Good Friday service** at the Mammoth Chapel this Friday, April 6, at 7:30 p.m. as well as the **Easter Sunday service** at the Mammoth Chapel at 9 a.m. on April 8. A breakfast for the entire Mammoth/Gardiner communities will be at the Mammoth Community Center directly following the Easter service.

Please join your co-workers in wishing **Jim Evanoff** a happy retirement on Tuesday, May 1, at noon at the Mammoth Community Center. We will be sending Jim off with a Mexican potluck luncheon so please bring your favorite Mexican dish and join in the festivities.

Join in sending **Colette Daigle-Berg** onto her next Adventure after 33 years of service in the Ranger Division!! April 18th, 6pm, YCC Dining Room. Catered buffet dinner, but brown bags welcome. Please RSVP with dinner plans and menu selection by April 5th to Brian_Chan@nps.gov

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Spring Wellness Massage Special !! 50 minutes for \$50.

Yellowstone employees only. Will travel to your residence anywhere in the park. Call or email Ann Marie for appt. 406-210-1006 or amchytra.3@gmail.com

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Old Faithful Cabin Repurposing and Dormitory Construction Plan Approved

A plan to return 67 cabin units that are presently used for concessioner employee housing in the Old Faithful Lodge Area to visitor use and construct a new dormitory in the Old Faithful Administrative Area has been approved.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) allowing repurposing the cabins to provide an increased number of affordable visitor lodging units at Old Faithful and construction of a new employee dormitory for displaced employees was signed by the National Park Service Intermountain Region Director on April 2, 2012. An Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzed three alternatives was released for public review and comment in January 2012.

Among the highlights of the approved preferred alternative:

- Provide for additional affordable lodging options in Yellowstone National Park.
- Rehabilitating the interior of the cabin units would include new floor coverings, wall coverings, electrical systems, bathroom fixtures, and gas heaters. A portion of the cabins would be made accessible.
- Enhancing safety and improving accessibility of pathways to the cabin area. Many of the asphalt walkways within the cabin area are old and deteriorating with numerous rough spots, uneven surfaces, raveling edges, and missing pavement. These walkways would be replaced or repaired as part of this project.
- Construction of an employee dormitory in the Old Faithful administrative area for employees displaced from the repurposed cabin units.

The project will proceed when funding becomes available, with the cost of the project to be determined when detailed designs are completed.

Copies of the EA and the FONSI are available on the National Park Service Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yell>.

IN THE NEWS

Schweitzer visits Bison Range to consider Yellowstone transplants

By VINCE DEVLIN, missoulain.com | Tuesday, April 3, 2012

http://missoulain.com/news/state-and-regional/schweitzer-visits-bison-range-to-consider-yellowstone-transplants/article_e272c2b2-7df2-11e1-a97d-0019bb2963f4.html

MOIESE – A dozen or so bison, chased by hollering horseback riders, thundered down a hillside at the National Bison Range Tuesday, oblivious to the human battles taking place in their name.

The “mini-roundup,” as Bison Range manager Jeff King explained, had a purpose – to cull out four of the animals for placement in a display pasture near the Visitor Center.

But it was timed to coincide with a visit by Gov. Brian Schweitzer and federal officials the governor has verbally sparred with over wildlife management decisions in recent months.

Specifically, the U.S. Department of Interior in December initially turned down Schweitzer’s proposal to relocate dozens of what the governor called “brucellosis-free, genetically pure” bison captured outside Yellowstone National Park to the Bison Range.

At the time, Schweitzer called the Bison Range herd “genetically impure mongrels” and blocked the Interior Department from transporting fish or wildlife anywhere within the state or across state lines in response.

On Tuesday, the governor reserved confrontational language to Republican legislators who assert that moving the brucellosis-free, genetically pure bison to tribally owned lands violates state law.

“Either they’re not good with reading, or they’re not good with the truth,” Schweitzer said of Rep. Wayne Stahl, R-Saco, and Sen. Rick Ripley, R-Wolf Creek. “These Republicans may want to familiarize themselves with their own legislation.”

While the governor was at the Bison Range Tuesday, his office issued a news release that quoted SB 212’s sponsor, Sen. Austin Knudsen, R-Culbertson, as saying during floor debate that the bill “would have no effect on tribes’ ability to receive buffalo” from the state.

“The intent of the bill had nothing to do with tribal nations,” Schweitzer said.

But that is a different battle, involving 62 bison from the Yellowstone herd that were shipped to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. A state district judge on March 22 blocked further transfers pending an April 11 hearing in Blaine County.

Tuesday was about the possibility of sending other animals to the Bison Range.

Schweitzer was joined by the Department of Interior’s acting assistant secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Rachel Jacobson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service deputy director Gregory Siekaniec, FWS refuge supervisor Dean Rundle, and Steve Doherty, senior adviser for the Northwest to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

“We’re looking at the Bison Range, if appropriate, possibly partnering with us on the bison from Yellowstone,” Schweitzer said. “It has to suit their needs, but those bison possibly could be sent here to enhance their genetics.”

The governor said only 1 percent of bison in North America – about 4,500 – are genetically pure, and most – 3,000 – are in or from the Yellowstone herd.

“If, in the future, we are in position to re-introduce wild bison to public lands, we’d better be sure they’re the native species,” Schweitzer said.

His “mongrel” comment in December, Schweitzer added, was simply meant to point out that the Bison Range herd shows cattle introgression of 1 percent to 2 percent.

“They may look like bison, act like bison, eat like bison and raise their calves like bison, but technically, they’re not the native species,” he said. “Quite frankly, it’s only through serendipity and luck that in isolated places on this planet we’ve been able to maintain genetically pure bison.”

No one knows when cattle genetics were mixed in with the Bison Range herd, King said. It could have been present in 1908, when the National Wildlife Refuge was established, or it could have been introduced as late as 1984, the last time outside bison were added to the herd.

To be fair, Schweitzer noted, the science wasn’t available at the time to detect cattle introgression in a bison’s genetics.

“No one knows when it happened, and no one is blaming anyone,” he said.

Everyone got a chuckle when the 12 or so bison were herded into corrals where the refuge's annual bison roundup takes place each October.

Schweitzer's ever-present traveling companion, Jag – his border collie – came quickly to attention and focused on the commotion.

"He thinks its time for him to go to work," the governor said.

Schweitzer peppered King and Bison Range biologist Amy Lisk with questions ranging from brucellosis testing to the fencing methods employed at the Bison Range.

"What we're trying to understand is the governor's interest, and make sure the governor understands how and why we manage the Bison Range," Siekaniec, the FWS deputy director, said. "Whether the Yellowstone bison have value to what we're doing is what everyone from managers to biologists to veterinarians are kicking around right now."

The two sides did seem to find common ground: Both want to conserve a species that once roamed the continent by the millions, but had fewer than 100 wild animals left when conservation efforts began.

After initially turning down Schweitzer's proposal, Salazar later indicated a bison transfer remained a possibility that would be evaluated by his agency.

"Sometimes things have to get worse before they get better," Siekaniec said, referring to the escalating dispute between the Schweitzer administration and the feds back in December.

"We're all interested in the same thing," he added. "The closer we stay in touch, the better the species conservation will be."

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Grand Teton and Yellowstone rangers go online to videochat with students

Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, April 4, 2012

MOOSE, WYO. — Interpretative rangers in Grand Teton National Park have just completed an innovative distance learning program called Snowdesk. During each program, rangers connected with students from across the county during live webcasts from outside the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center.

Through nine different Snowdesk broadcasts from Feb. 14 to March 15, a total of nearly 650 students from Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois, California and Wyoming were able to chat via live video with rangers using Skype conferencing technology.

This was the second year of Snowdesk interactive broadcasts. During each 30-minute broadcast, students in grades 3-6 learned about how park wildlife survive the harsh winter in Grand Teton National Park and the Jackson Hole valley.

With the Teton mountain range as the backdrop, rangers created a set by leveling out a staging area for demonstrations and by carving a desk out of snow. Two rangers hosted the broadcast from the "snowdesk" while another ranger demonstrated winter wildlife survival skills. To enhance the learning experience and engage different learning styles, participating classrooms were loaned animal pelts, animal photographs, park maps and park newspapers prior to the broadcasts.

Classrooms use their own technology to connect with the Snowdesk program. Grand Teton National Park hopes to expand Snowdesk to additional schools and connect with more students next winter.

Yellowstone Park rangers are preparing for an upcoming series of similar videochats, and have received nearly 20 requests from classrooms so far, according to education ranger Beth Taylor. Students will learn about topics including Yellowstone wildlife, history and geology. Classrooms need a Skype account, a computer with a webcam and a high-speed Internet connection to participate, and teachers may request education materials in advance for use in connection with the chats.

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 230 AM MDT WED APR 4 2012

Today...Breezy. Partly cloudy in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. Occasional sprinkles in the afternoon. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the late morning and afternoon.

Tonight...Cloudy. Chance of rain and snow in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 21 to 27. Southwest winds around 15 mph until early morning. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Thursday...Colder...cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning...then numerous rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Highs 33 to 39. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Thursday Night...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening... Then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 18 to 24. Chance of snow 50 percent.

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It is my sad duty to share with you that we lost a member of the Yellowstone National Park family Wednesday.

Ranger Gary Nelson passed away yesterday morning, apparently of a heart attack. He was 56 years old.

Gary had a long, rich, and diverse career here in Yellowstone. He began working in Yellowstone back in 1982, working various jobs before becoming a permanent LE Ranger. Most recently, Gary had been serving as a patrol ranger based at Madison.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to his many friends on staff and to his family.

We'll pass on additional information once decisions have been made regarding funeral arrangements.

*Dan Wenk
Superintendent*

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Trying to spread the word, GRTE CISM Counselors will be holding a session for folks that worked with Gary Nelson at Old Faithful, Madison, West etc... and for staff, researchers, or VIPs that worked with him through the years. Anyone that worked with or knew Gary (and who didn't?) - whether you responded to the call or not - is encouraged to attend.

Participation not mandatory, but it may be a good place to start processing some of the shock or sadness we are all feeling right now. The session will start at 1300 today at the Conference/Meeting room at the West Yellowstone VC/Chamber building

Please spread the word, and pass this info onto anyone that I mistakenly left off of the mailing list.

Call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Bonnie Schwartz, Deputy Chief Ranger, 307.344.2103

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Bill Hape, who worked in Yellowstone's Maintenance Division for several years, passed away Sunday, April 1 at home in Gardiner. A memorial service will be held Friday, April 13, at 2:00 pm, St. Williams Church, Gardiner.

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TUESDAY VOLUNTEERS (and SUBS) needed for MCC Open Gym!

C'mon people! If we don't get any volunteers for TUESDAY nights from 4-6PM at the Mammoth Community Center we'll be missing a great chance to build community and install ownership in the younger set. It's important!

We have found families to cover Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons. We are still looking for help with Wednesdays (4-6PM) and maintaining a sub list when regularly scheduled families have a conflict. Thanks to the Heath, Guiles and Reid family for volunteering their time. Please contact the MCC board by emailing board@mammothcommunity.org if you can help.

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Residential Radon Testing: Park staff will be entering residences on Thursday, April 12, 2012, to place radon detectors and again on Monday, April 16, 2012, to pick them up. The Mammoth and Gardiner area residential buildings will be tested first. The duration of the work to be done is approximately 20 minutes.

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Please join your co-workers in wishing **Jim Evanoff** a happy retirement on Tuesday, May 1, at noon at the Mammoth Community Center. We will be sending Jim off with a Mexican potluck luncheon so please bring your favorite Mexican dish and join in the festivities.

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Join in sending **Colette Daigle-Berg** onto her next Adventure after 33 years of service in the Ranger Division!! April 18th, 6pm, YCC Dining Room. Catered buffet dinner, but brown bags welcome. Please RSVP with dinner plans and menu selection by April 5th to Brian_Chan@nps.gov

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Come wish **Steve and Maurine Cole** a very happy retirement. Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 3:00 – 5:00 P.M. in the Map Room, Mammoth Hot Springs.

CALENDAR

Heartsaver First Aid and CPR (for anyone)-(Sign-Up at P:\Safety Office\2012 First Aid and CPR sign Up\First Aid and CPR)

April 10th and 11th, 2012 (Tuesday and Wednesday evenings) at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

April 16, 2012 (Monday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 1, 2012 (Tuesday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 3, 2012 (Thursday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 16, 2012 (Wednesday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 24, 2012 (Thursday at the Lake Mess Hall) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May 31, 2012 (Thursday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Health Care Provider-CPR (for EMTs and Paramedics)-(Sign-Up at P:\Safety Office\2012 First Aid and CPR sign Up\Healthcare Provider CPR (for EMTs and Paramedics))

April 25, 2012 (Wednesday) at 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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Wildland Fire Training Refreshers: To sign up for a below listed refresher, please call Laura Dooley at x-2181.

April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room

May 1 - Mammoth FC Training Room

May 8 - Mammoth FC Training Room

May 29 - Mammoth FC Training Room

June 5 - Mammoth FC Training Room

June 20 - Interior (Old Faithful pending appropriate size room availability)

RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

April 3, 2012

Old Faithful Cabin Repurposing and Dormitory Construction Plan Approved

A plan to return 67 cabin units that are presently used for concessioner employee housing in the Old Faithful Lodge Area to visitor use and construct a new dormitory in the Old Faithful Administrative Area has been approved.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) allowing repurposing the cabins to provide an increased number of affordable visitor lodging units at Old Faithful and construction of a new employee dormitory for displaced employees was signed by the National Park Service Intermountain Region Director on April 2, 2012. An Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzed three alternatives was released for public review and comment in January 2012.

Among the highlights of the approved preferred alternative:

- Provide for additional affordable lodging options in Yellowstone National Park.
- Rehabilitating the interior of the cabin units would include new floor coverings, wall coverings, electrical systems, bathroom fixtures, and gas heaters. A portion of the cabins would be made accessible.

- Enhancing safety and improving accessibility of pathways to the cabin area. Many of the asphalt walkways within the cabin area are old and deteriorating with numerous rough spots, uneven surfaces, raveling edges, and missing pavement. These walkways would be replaced or repaired as part of this project.
- Construction of an employee dormitory in the Old Faithful administrative area for employees displaced from the repurposed cabin units.

The project will proceed when funding becomes available, with the cost of the project to be determined when detailed designs are completed.

Copies of the EA and the FONSI are available on the National Park Service Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yell>.

IN THE NEWS

Animal disease zone could expand in Montana

Associated Press | Posted: Wednesday, April 4, 2012 5:00 pm

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/animal-disease-zone-could-expand-in-montana/article_78d6be6a-63b3-517b-97d3-e466a9fa614b.html

Montana livestock officials on Wednesday proposed an expansion of an animal disease zone around Yellowstone National Park after finding elk that had been exposed to brucellosis.

The proposal would require cattle producers south of Dillon to ramp up herd vaccinations and take other precautions to guard against livestock infections. The Blacktail-Sage Creek area west of Yellowstone has an estimated 28,000 cattle.

Other states have imposed trade sanctions on Montana when brucellosis has gotten into cattle. But recent changes in federal regulations have lessened the sanctions when infections occur.

Brucellosis can cause pregnant animals to miscarry. It has been eradicated nationwide but persists in Yellowstone's wildlife.

The five elk that tested positive for exposure were captured over the winter by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, which is trying to determine how far the disease has spread in Montana.

Last year, brucellosis found in elk in the Ruby Range prompted an expansion of the Department of Livestock's so-called Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) for the disease.

State officials said in February that they might not expand the area a second time because no cattle spend winter where the latest infections were found.

But state veterinarian Marty Zaluski said the expansion is needed to demonstrate to other states that Montana is addressing the disease. About 46,000 cattle already are in the surveillance zone, which includes counties to the north and west of the park.

"Other states want to know we're doing everything we can to protect our herd, and theirs, from brucellosis," Zaluski said.

WEATHER

A major spring snow storm is on its way into Southwest Montana and Northwest Wyoming, forecast to bring heavy snow and causing poor travel conditions beginning today and continuing on into the start of the weekend.

The National Weather Service in Great Falls and in Billings has issued a series of **Winter Storm WARNINGS** for areas adjacent to Yellowstone National Park.

The warning for areas including West Yellowstone, Bozeman and Bozeman Pass is in effect now through midnight Friday, with heaviest snow expected late tonight through midday Friday. <http://tinyurl.com/834zk23>

The warning for Livingston and the Paradise Valley is in effect from 6PM tonight until 6AM Saturday, with the heaviest snow expected to develop this evening and continue through Friday night. <http://tinyurl.com/7sso6ja>

The warning for the Abasaroka/Beartooths and Cooke City is also in effect from 6PM tonight until 6AM Saturday, with heavy snow developing tonight and continuing through Friday night. <http://tinyurl.com/7w25mwm>

In general, snow accumulations of 5-9 inches are possible in lower elevation areas, with 10-20 inches in higher mountains.

Between this morning and Saturday morning, West Yellowstone could receive 8-17 inches of snow, Gardiner 6 inches, Emigrant 9 inches, Bozeman 4-8 inches, and Cooke City a foot.

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 231 AM MDT THU APR 5 2012

Today...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 34 to 40. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Cloudy with scattered snow showers. Lows 19 to 25. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Friday...Breezy. Snow showers likely. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 27 to 33. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Avalanche information at: <http://mtavalanche.com/node>

SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 6, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Health screen: Wednesday, April 11, 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Mammoth Clinic. Livingston HealthCare and Mammoth Clinic are offering spring health screen testing. Join us for a blood profile test that checks for diabetes and measures your thyroid function, kidneys, liver, cholesterol and more to ensure your good health for the seasons to come.

Blood Profile Testing* \$40

(Diabetes, Thyroid, Kidney, Liver, Cholesterol Screening and more) *This is a fasting blood test. Please consume nothing but water after 8 pm the night before!

Prostate Specific Antigen \$18

(Optional Blood Screening for Males)

ColoCare Kits \$4

An **amateur park camera operator** captured a grizzly bear traversing the area around Lion Geyser recently. "KCMULE " posted this video clip viewed on the Old Faithful streaming webcam:

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The **Employee Safety Committee** meets next Wednesday, April 11, 2012, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Superintendent's Conference Room in Mammoth. Agenda items will include a sub-committee update on new employee safety orientation, safely clearing rock slides from roadways, wellness plan update, OSHA record keeping training, and discussion on information sharing between employees, work groups and the Committee. To attend via conference call dial 888-930-9220 and enter participant pass code 1885448.

Green Team Meeting, Thursday, 5th April, 9am YCR Conference Room, Everyone welcome! On the AGENDA:

- Questions for Jim! - Jim Evanoff's last Green Team meeting before he retires. An opportunity to ask, "how did you do it Jim?"
- Progress on the Strategic Plan for Sustainability, Climate Friendly Parks, our Student Internship Program and working with our concessioners
- Reports on projects for Energy Management, Water Management, Solid Waste and Green Procurement

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IN THE NEWS

Appeals court: YNP snowmobile rules affect Wyoming

Associated Press, April 6, 2012

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) -- A federal appeals court has withdrawn a recent ruling that said the state of Wyoming wasn't economically affected by restricting snowmobile traffic at each entrance to Yellowstone National Park. The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals on Thursday granted a request from the state to reconsider a court ruling issued in late February.

Wyoming and Park County had protested that court incorrectly ruled in February that the state could only argue it was economically affected by snowmobile restrictions at the park's East Entrance.

The National Park Service is drafting new snowmobile limits for Yellowstone that should be in effect by next winter. The court ruling will be important to the state if it wants to challenge those forthcoming limits.

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National parks, wilderness areas hunt for young visitors

By Judy Keen and Oren Dorell, USA TODAY

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-04-05/national-parks-young/54057448/1>

The average visitor to some of the nation's parks and wilderness areas is getting grayer, prompting a new emphasis on getting young people to unplug and head outdoors.

Without "a generation of kids who have had good experiences with national parks, then in a very short amount of time, we may not have enough people who care about national parks to keep them going," says John Hayes of the Dunes Learning Center at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

For the National Park Service, developing life-long connections between the public and parks — especially for young people — is a priority from now until its 2016 centennial.

That could be a challenge: A 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation study found that people ages 8 to 18 spent an average of 7½ hours a day on digital media. Last month, a study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that three times as many Millennials — born in the 1980s and '90s — as Baby Boomers said they made no personal effort to help the environment.

A "big concern" of the National Park Service "is maintaining 21st-century relevance," says James Gramann, a Texas A&M professor writing a book on people-park links. Visitors ages 16-24 are most under-represented, he says.

The aging of visitors affects wild places across the USA:

- The average age of a visitor to Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area was 26 in 1969, 36 in 1991 and 45 in 2007, says a March report by the U.S. Forest Service. "It's the same people. They got attached, and they keep going back," says co-author Bob Dvorak, a Central Michigan University professor.

- The average age of out-of-state visitors to Glacier and Yellowstone national parks in 2011 was 54, says the University of Montana's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research.

- At California's Death Valley National Park, 49% of spring visitors in 2010 were 46 to 65 years old. Overall visits to national parks fell in 2011 for the second year in a row. The National Park Service counted 278.9 million visits in 2011, down about 1% from 2010.

Some parks have plenty of young visitors. The Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Ill., attracts about 10,000 students a year, Superintendent Dale Phillips says. "It's important that we teach them early," he says.

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Livingston photographer captures Yellowstone Park in time-lapse simplicity

By RUFFIN PREVOST

LIVINGSTON, MONT. — A Livingston photographer has worked for years shooting images across Montana, but hopes to break into the exclusive world of elite Yellowstone photographers by spending more time in the park and adding more video work to his portfolio.

<http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/04/livingston-photographer-captures-yellowstone-timelapse-simplicity/>

WEATHER**NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 303 AM MDT FRI APR 6 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook**Winter Weather Advisory**

Today...Breezy. Numerous snow showers in the morning...then numerous snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 28 to 34. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Numerous snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 3 to 8 inches. Lows 11 to 17. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Saturday...Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs 31 to 37. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Saturday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 14 to 20. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the evening.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 9, 2012



Outta my way, Paparazzi! A habituated lone coyote, oblivious to humans, trots within a few feet of vehicles and buildings through Mammoth Hot Springs Sunday, April 8 in search of a meal. *(NPS Photo Dan Hottle)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Do you live in the interior and get tired of reading only about what's happening in Mammoth? Check out the "Submissions" section at the end on how you can help us change that!

Spring Health screen: Wednesday, April 11, 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Mammoth Clinic. Livingston HealthCare and Mammoth Clinic are offering spring health screen testing. Join us for a blood profile test that checks for diabetes and measures your thyroid function, kidneys, liver, cholesterol and more to ensure your good health for the seasons to come.

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Mammoth Community Center: There will be open gym on Wednesday this week (April 11) from 4-6PM. We are still looking for volunteer adults to either take Tuesdays nights (4-6PM) or be on the sub list. Lots of interested kids...not so many interested adult volunteers!

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Mammoth Inside Clean-up Day, Tuesday, April 17, 1:00 – ? Join together to “sweep in front of our own doors” to clean primarily the public areas of our office buildings. We will be focusing on dusting, and removing fingerprints and scuff marks on walls, baseboards, doors, and window sills. The newly remodeled buildings (Admin, YCR, and Building 38-Telecom/Concessions/CSS) will be our emphasis. Others are welcome to join us. Maintenance will provide cleaning supplies. Touch-up paint is available upon request. Please coordinate with CMO by calling 344-2301.

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7J-FlawYHE>

IN THE NEWS

Residents support plan to allow bison on Horse Butte year-round

CARLY FLANDRO, Chronicle Staff Writer | Thursday, April 5, 2012

http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/wildlife/article_e0c460fe-7eda-11e1-8fcf-0019bb2963f4.html

In what could be a landmark management change, Horse Butte may become home to bison year-round — but not before a public process takes place.

In the meantime, bison will be managed under the current plan. That means sometime this spring, the animals congregated on the peninsula that juts into Hebgen Lake will be hazed back into the park.

Officials are still making plans to initiate the public process, which will likely include an environmental assessment, public meetings and an invitation to submit comments, according to Christian Mackay, executive officer of the Department of Livestock.

How would Horse Butte residents feel about the animals permanently occupying their land?

Ed Millspaugh said he moved to the peninsula so he could see the bison, and he is absolutely in favor of the animals being there year-round.

“They’re on my yard now, there’s about 30 of them,” he said Wednesday. “It’s neat to see the firstborn babies born right out here.”

He said many people who live on Horse Butte are in favor of bison being there, and have signs in their windows that say “Bison safe zone.”

Historically, bison have wintered on the land but are hazed away from it each spring as ranchers bring cattle to summer grazing pastures in the area. The animals aren’t allowed to co-exist because of a fear that bison may spread brucellosis to livestock.

Brucellosis is spread when an infected animal gives birth and another animal comes in contact with its birthing fluid.

A helicopter, horseback riders and ATVs are typically used to herd the bison back into the park.

Mackay said this year’s hazing may take place in late May or early June, but it depends on weather and other conditions in the area.

“We’ll look at it week by week,” he said.

Ariel Overstreet, spokeswoman for the Montana Stockgrowers Association, said the organization is interested to see whether bison stay on Horse Butte or wander farther.

She noted that the stockgrowers association participates in the Citizens Working Group, which recommended bison stay on Horse Butte year-round. Still, Overstreet said she wants to make sure ranchers in the area and their cattle are protected.

She said she knows there are at least two ranchers in that area.

“We just want to wait and see what all happens,” she said. “It’s hard to predict the future, so we’ll see how things go, and evaluate it from there.”

Ann Stovall, another Horse Butte resident, said she supports bison being on the peninsula year-round.

“For every calf born out here, that’s one less that might have been born on somebody’s pasture,” she said.

Stovall added that the bison don’t cause problems when they’re not being harassed or chased, and if she wants them to move, she just claps her hands at them and they oblige.

How Yellowstone National Park Is Becoming More Eco-Friendly

Postconsumer.com, April 9, 2012

<http://www.postconsumers.com/education/how-yellowstone-national-park-is-becoming-more-eco-friendly/>

With the summer coming up, you may be thinking about where you want to go on your summer vacation. Maybe you’ve wanted to take an eco-friendly trip and want to stay in the U.S. Have you ever been to Yellowstone National Park? In the past few years, they’ve started an initiative to begin to make Yellowstone more eco-friendly, from alternative fuels, to reducing consumption, to recycling programs, to selling environmentally-friendly souvenirs in their gift shop.

It’s all part of the Yellowstone Environmental Stewardship (or YES!), which began in 2008 as a way to make the park more environmentally friendly and to hit sustainability goals by 2016, which is the 100th anniversary of the park’s opening. The goals for the park include:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30%
- Reduce electricity consumption by 15%
- Reduce fossil fuel consumption by 18%
- Reduce water consumption by 15%
- Divert 100% of solid waste from landfills

There are plenty of initiatives inside the park that are helping to achieve all these goals. To conserve water, the park is implementing two initiatives to reduce water consumption. One involves modernizing the over 25-year-old irrigation system, while another involves monitoring water usage by installing meters to oversee it in real-time.

Energy-wise, the park has started to install more energy-efficient equipment in its offices and around the park, as well as utilizing hydropower while expanding on their solar panel arrays already in use. The park is also going green with their transportation, having already converted their fleet fueling stations to alternative fuel blends.

They are also making long-term investments in buying hybrid vehicles and investing in replacing the tires on their entire fleet with more fuel-efficient tires. In the gift shop, visitors will be able to take home environmentally-friendly souvenirs like reusable water bottles and greeting cards that are made from recycled materials and – don’t be squeamish! – bison dung.

So with all the different kinds of vacations you can take this summer, why not go to Yellowstone if you haven’t been there yet? You’ll be watching the greening of one of the greatest national parks in the country!

Breeding season and nesting begins for bald eagles

Cavan Fitzsimmons, West Yellowstone News, April 6, 2012

http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_e87debe0-7f51-11e1-ad02-0019bb2963f4.html

This time of year marks the beginning of the breeding season of the bald eagle on the Hebgen Lake Ranger District. Today, the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem supports a dense, healthy population of breeding bald eagles,

with the Hebgen Lake Ranger District being the only district on the forest where bald eagles nest and rear their young.

Bald eagle courtship peaks during the cold winter months of January and February, when adults build and improve upon their nests. In the Hebgen Basin, bald eagles nest in close proximity of Hebgen Lake and Quake Lake, where they can find a steady diet of waterfowl and fish to rear their young.

It can take up to five years for bald eagles to develop their symbolic adult plumage.

Prior to that time, they are often confused with golden eagles, but their yellow bill, legs and eyes are a dead giveaway, despite the lack of the distinctive white head and tail. Bald eagles are long-lived and will typically survive 10-15 years in the wild.

Bald eagle claws are as long as the canine tooth on a mountain lion, and their grasping pressure can be as strong as 1,400 psi. A fish, bird or small mammal doesn't stand a chance once it finds itself in the claws of such a formidable grasp.

Several of the bald eagle nests on the Hebgen Lake Ranger District have already been confirmed as being occupied this spring. One of the nests that have been used for several years fell out of its tree over the winter. We haven't yet determined if the pair has attempted to rebuild a nest yet this year. As you explore the District in the next few months, keep your eyes to the sky and look for the silhouette of these birds overhead.

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Yellowstone ... barely room to move

Lance Richardson, The Age (Australia), April 8, 2012

INCONVENIENCES come in many shapes and sizes. This one was many kilometres wide, a black burn stain with great plumes of smoke drifting through the air like a series of enormous arrows saying: you are not here, or here, or here.

How the fire had started was a matter of debate. Sometimes the national park seems to set itself on fire just to spite the visitors. All I knew was the Thorofare Trail was closed - along with any chance of reaching the most remote corner of wilderness in the lower 48 states of the US.

Having no choice but to re-route or go home, my friend Elspeth and I settled on an alternative path to Heart Lake, hardly remote in comparison, though sufficiently remote that our chances of being fatally wounded by wildlife were high enough to make it feel daring. You are encouraged to carry "bear spray" in places like Yellowstone. This is a small can of concentrated mace that fires off a yellow cloud resembling the defence mechanism of Pepe le Pew, with hopefully the same effect.

We did a controlled test across a creek, though it failed to dispel our skepticism. The bear spray was accompanied by a photograph of a man who had used bear spray in a skirmish and "survived." Blood covered his face where the bear had had a chew on him.

Elspeth and I lasted one night at Heart Lake. We sat around the campfire working ourselves into a perfect storm of paranoia. The tent, when we woke the next morning, had the same sweaty humidity as Papua New Guinea. There was a claw mark on a tree. We were done.

The problem with hiking many miles out of the Yellowstone wilderness is that you inevitably arrive back in civilisation about 5pm, by which time every single hotel room and readily accessible camp site in 8983 square kilometres is gone. The largest hotel in the park had closed the day before in preparation for winter.

I swallowed indignation: didn't they grasp what we'd been through? No, we hadn't seen the bear that made the scratch mark but we could have and it could have eaten us and I once saw a bear in Alaska and it ate my lifejacket. Surely that deserved a room on principle.

Far more level-headed than I, Elspeth decided we would try outside the park. With night quickly setting in, we headed south, through the Grand Teton National Park, where the only hotel was fully occupied by a company who had inexplicably decided to have its conference in the middle of nowhere, perhaps so attendees couldn't leave.

Eventually we pulled up at a dingy inn near Jackson Hole, some two hours' drive from Yellowstone. It, too, was full, but the attendant cut us a deal, giving up a storage apartment that was soon to be converted into office space. Elspeth immediately started a fire, filling the room with acrid smoke (attendant: "I guess the flue is jammed! Sorry!"). As we flung open windows, inviting nature back in, I noted how much we resembled Mary and Joseph in our twist of circumstance.

She handed me a pillow and pointed at the couch. Yes, she said, like Mary and Joseph in every way.

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 214 AM MDT MON APR 9 2012

Today...Mostly sunny. Highs 52 to 58.

Tonight...Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 23 to 29.

Tuesday...Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 56 to 62.

Tuesday Night...Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 25 to 31.

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SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, April 10, 2012



Tori Williams

Imagine that you have always wished to see snow but live in a warm climate and have never felt cold flakes on your face or made snow angels in deep powder. Such was a small, 7-year old girl from Florida's wish, to see snow for the very first time. Last week, Tori Williams, her father Todd and mother Rebecca, from Jacksonville, Florida, traveled to Big Sky, MT and Yellowstone National Park for the first time, sponsored by the "Dreams Come True " organization, similar to "Make a Wish Foundation." Tori was diagnosed with brain cancer (medulloblastoma, a large, fast growing cancerous tumor in the cerebellum) in December of 2010, and has since undergone two brain surgeries, six weeks of proton radiation therapy and eight months of in-patient and out-patient chemotherapy. Tori is cancer-free at this time and her prognosis is good.

Superintendent Wenk met with Tori and her family at the Old Faithful Visitor Center last Monday along with Rich Jehle, their park interpretive guide for the day. They ate lunch at the OFVEC while watching Old Faithful erupt, visited the Center's exhibits, and

then Dan presented Tori with her Junior Ranger patch. He also gave her some stuffed animals, backpacks, educational items, Yellowstone quarters, and clothing items donated by Xanterra, the Yellowstone Association, and Delaware North. Dan also presented the family with an America the Beautiful Pass donated by the Yellowstone Park Foundation so they may visit any national park or area free of charge for the next year.

Rich toured the family through the park from West Yellowstone so they could see bison, elk and other animals. When they arrived back at West Yellowstone at the end of the day, the managers at the Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center were kind enough to allow Tori and her family free admission to the Center so Tori could see wolves and grizzly bears up close and personal! According to the representative from the "Dreams Come True" organization the family had an amazing time in Montana and especially Yellowstone Park.

The Superintendent's Office thanks the concessioners and the Yellowstone Park Foundation who donated the various items for the Williams' family, the plow drivers who opened the roads so the trip from West to Old Faithful would be possible, Old Faithful Maintenance for readying the sidewalks and visitor center so it would be warm for the group, and especially Rich Jehle for all his preparation and attention to detail that helped to make Tori's dream come true.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Do you live in the interior and get tired of reading only about what's happening in Mammoth? Check out the "Submissions" section at the end on how you can help us change that!*

Spring Health screen: Wednesday, April 11, 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Mammoth Clinic. Livingston HealthCare and Mammoth Clinic are offering spring health screen testing. Join us for a blood profile test that checks for diabetes and measures your thyroid function, kidneys, liver, cholesterol and more to ensure your good health for the seasons to come.

Blood Profile Testing* \$40

(Diabetes, Thyroid, Kidney, Liver, Cholesterol Screening and more) *This is a fasting blood test. Please consume nothing but water after 8 pm the night before!

Prostate Specific Antigen \$18

(Optional Blood Screening for Males)

ColoCare Kits \$4

The **Employee Safety Committee** meets Wednesday, April 11, 2012, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Superintendent's Conference Room in Mammoth. Agenda items will include a sub-committee update on new employee safety orientation, safely clearing rock slides from roadways, wellness plan update, OSHA record keeping training, and discussion on information sharing between employees, work groups and the Committee. To attend via conference call dial 888-930-9220 and enter participant pass code 1885448.

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Information: In conjunction with the Fit in Fitness 2012 Calendars that were distributed to all employees late last year, there are also monthly updates. Check them out <http://www.personalbest.com/2012Calendar/> at the EmSC Sharepoint site at: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> under Documents-Wellness Program, folder Personal Best Documents, folder April where you will find wonderful information provided by Personal Best. Topics include: Nutrition, Fitness, Health Tracks and a great healthy recipe CHICKEN PEPPER STIR-FRY. ENJOY!

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Mammoth Inside Clean-up Day, Tuesday, April 17, 1:00 – ? Join together to “sweep in front of our own doors” to clean primarily the public areas of our office buildings. We will be focusing on dusting, and removing fingerprints and scuff marks on walls, baseboards, doors, and window sills. The newly remodeled buildings (Admin, YCR, and Building 38-Telecom/Concessions/CSS) will be our emphasis. Others are welcome to join us. Maintenance will provide cleaning supplies. Touch-up paint is available upon request. Please coordinate with CMO by calling 344-2301.

IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone Park restoration work progressing

Brett French, Billings Gazette, April 9, 2012

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/yellowstone-park-restoration-work-progressing/article_730f6698-3ac2-595b-9766-90eac81915ca.html

A northern corner of Yellowstone National Park degraded by decades of inappropriate use and overrun with nonnative vegetation is showing signs of recovery following the first four years of a 10-year study.

"We think patience will show it to be successful," said Mary Hektner, who oversaw implementation of the project in the Gardiner Basin for the park and is now retired.

The results of a study published in the 2012 issue of the journal *Yellowstone Science* showed that elimination of nonnative plants with herbicide inside three fenced plots, which were then replanted with barley and winter wheat to rebuild the soil, are responding well. Soil organic matter in the fenced study areas increased 40 percent in two years compared with soil outside the fence, according to a study written by researchers Bill Hamilton, of Washington & Lee University, and Eric Hellquist, of State University New York-Oswego.

The research also showed that soil microbes were more diverse near native species than nonnatives.

Drastically altered

Used by American Indians for centuries, the Gardiner Basin was settled by Euro-Americans in the late 1800s. The town of Cinnabar was established there in 1883, growing up around the rail terminus for those traveling to newly established Yellowstone National Park. Ten years later, the town was moved, buildings and all, to Gardiner as the rail line extended farther south.

The basin was then used for agriculture, with some of the old irrigation canals still visible on the landscape. Then in 1929 and 1932, the Park Service purchased the property to extend its boundary to encompass wintering areas used by park wildlife -- mainly pronghorns, elk and bison.

The Park Service continued to farm the land for awhile, before seeding it to crested wheatgrass in the 1940s and '50s. Crested wheatgrass was well adapted to the area's arid climate, where only about 10 inches of moisture falls a year, but it was a poor forage base for wildlife.

Since the 1990s, the basin has been overrun by desert alyssum, an exotic mustard plant. The alyssum has formed a monoculture, blocking out native grasses and reproducing quickly through vigorous seed production.

Righting past wrong

In 2008, after consulting other agencies and experts, the Park Service launched the current project, fencing off three plots totaling about 30 acres at Cinnabar, Stephens Creek and Reese Creek to keep wildlife out while the soil is regenerated and native plants are re-established.

The 10-year period for the study was chosen because it takes years for the soil to be restored and the natives to establish a strong foothold.

"You can't just seed it and walk away and expect it to come back," Hektner said.

The soil was initially planted with barley and winter wheat to rebuild the organic matter. In the third year, native grasses such as bluebunch wheatgrass and needle and thread grass were seeded.

The native seeds are not easy to get. The Bridger Plant Materials Center, an arm of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, is one of three sites in the nation growing native grass seeds for the park. The Bridger center was the first in the United States to develop a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service, said Susan Winslow, an agronomist at the center. The other two sites growing seed for Yellowstone are in Aberdeen, Idaho, and Meeker, Colo.

Because only seed that is collected in Yellowstone is used to reseed the area, the crops at the plant center are confined to a small area. Winslow said less than an acre is seeded right now with the two grasses. From that, less than 100 pounds of seed will be collected.

The plant center also raised eight other species of native grasses to see how they might fare in the arid climate of the Gardiner Basin. Those species were planted last fall and are already poking out of the ground, Winslow said.

Looking ahead

Hamilton and Hellquist, in their article for Yellowstone Science, referenced previous research that called the Gardiner Basin "the most extensively invaded expanses of grassland in Yellowstone due to its 125-year history of human use, agriculture and disturbance."

Restoring the roughly 700-acre basin will be no quick process.

"The area down there is essentially a desert," Hektner said. "There are only 9 to 10 inches of rain and snow. In some places there is a lot of sodium. And there's a lot of wildlife there in the spring and winter."

Key to restoration is keeping the wildlife out. The 8-foot-high fences are made to be recycled, so once a parcel is restored, the fence can be taken down and moved to a new area where the process can start all over again.

Bit by bit, the area eventually may be returned to a more natural state. Hektner said she can't help but admire the progress of the work she helped start.

"It is a very exciting project," she said. "I go by there and take a lot of satisfaction in having been involved."

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 338 AM MDT TUE APR 10 2012

Today...Partly cloudy. Highs 56 to 62.

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows 26 to 32.

Wednesday...Partly cloudy. Isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 55 to 61. Chance of thunderstorms 20 percent.

Wednesday Night...Numerous rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then numerous snow showers and scattered rain showers after midnight. Snow accumulation up to 2 inches. Lows 27 to 33. Southwest winds around 15 mph after midnight. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

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Wednesday, April 11, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gary Nelson 1955-2012

Long time Yellowstone Law Enforcement Ranger Gary Nelson passed away unexpectedly on April 4. Gary suffered a fatal heart attack while stopped along the West Entrance Road in the park. He was just 56 years old.

Gary was born in Salem, Oregon in 1955 and graduated from Oregon State University. Gary's love of photography and elk drew him to Yellowstone in the late 1970s, and he began working at the Hamilton Stores in 1979 to "support his photography habit" according to his brother Rick Nelson.

Gary began his NPS Yellowstone career in 1982 as a seasonal laborer. Between 1982 and 2012 Gary worked as a laborer, maintenance worker, general park ranger, a dispatcher and in 1994 became a Law Enforcement Ranger. Gary only left Yellowstone one time in his 30 year career when he took a temporary position as a lead forestry technician at the Natchez Trace in 1991 for 3 months.

Gary worked in many park locations through the years, but spent significant amounts of time in the Grant Village, Old Faithful and Madison areas of the park. Gary was a fixture in Yellowstone, and known for his love of underwater diving, his stories about warm trips to tropical dive locations in the middle of the long Yellowstone interior winters, his hunting escapades along the Grassy Lake Road, his expertise with servicing weapons for park staff, and his extensive knowledge and history of Yellowstone.

Gary is survived by his brother Rick Nelson and Rick's wife Sue, by his many friends and "Yellowstone Family," his sister Susan Nelson, and his constant companion- his dog Cooper.

A celebration and remembrance of Gary's life and influence on Yellowstone will be held on Saturday April 14 at 10:00 a.m. in the Madison Amphitheater. A traditional "Ranger Potluck" luncheon will follow the remembrance at the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center.



In lieu of flowers, Rick Nelson requests that donations be made to the Yellowstone Park Foundation in Gary's honor to continue their unwavering support of Ranger efforts to protect Yellowstone. (222 East Main St., Suite 301, Bozeman, MT 59715 or www.ypf.org) Condolences can be sent to Rick Nelson and his family at 55010 Lazy River West, Sun River, OR 97707.

Details regarding the memorial service for Gary Nelson are as follows:

Memorial Service:

DATE: Saturday April 14th

LOCATION: Madison Amphitheater (Weather permitting)- located at the Historic Madison Museum - (entrance to parking just south of Madison Junction)

TIME: 10:00am to 11:00am Memorial Service

LUNCHEON POTLUCK: 12:00 noon to finish, at the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center - **Please bring a dish to share**, we are expecting a good turnout

WEATHER FORECAST: Bring Warm clothes and outwear for cool spring weather, current forecast is for 40% chance of rain or snow, partly sunny with a high of 42.

Alternate foul weather location will be the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center - Final determination for location will be available at the West Entrance and North Entrance the morning of the event and posted at the Madison Museum Parking turnout in the event the venue is moved to the alternate site at Old Faithful

Administrative Travel is authorized for only those attending the service at Madison and the luncheon at Old Faithful. Those traveling from outside the park, plan to enter and exit thru either the West or North entrances only. Let the Ranger working the Entrance know that you are attending the Nelson Memorial Service. Expect to see bicycles and wildlife on or along the roadway. Gate combinations for entry / exit will be available at the North and West Entrances as you enter the park that morning if needed.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Yellowstone Park Foundation, Ranger Fund in honor of Gary Nelson.

We are looking to get a head count of those attending, **please RSVP to nick_herring@nps.gov and bonnie_schwartz@nps.gov** ASAP if you plan to attend with how many in your party so we can get a head count to the family for planning.

Those wishing to say a few words at the memorial service please let Nick and Bonnie know with your RSVP.

Please share this message with anyone you think appropriate who might not otherwise get it.

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Road Work: Craig Pass opened to Administrative Travel TODAY at 8:00 a.m.

ALSO TODAY, maintenance staff are planning on removing the large rock on the West Entrance road, approximately 4 miles west of Madison Junction. Work will consist of drilling the rock in three different locations and placing small amounts of explosives into the drilled holes to reduce the size of the rock. The present size of the rock is 10 feet by 6 feet by 7 feet. With the small charges the rock will be reduced to three pieces which then a loader can handle to load and haul away for disposal. There will be a closure of the road while the explosives are placed and detonated, in which the closure and reopening will be announced by the Communication Center.

While the rock is being drilled, vehicular and bicycle traffic will be allowed to pass with the use of traffic control personnel. There will be signing identifying the work zone and bicycle traffic will be advised as they pass of the closure. The work will commence at approximately 9:00 a.m. with the closure going into effect anywhere from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. depending on how the drilling of the rock goes. Road will be reopened to traffic under traffic control once denotation has occurred and is determined safe for traffic to proceed. In theory, the work should be accomplished by 3:00 p.m. and the road reopened to Administrative traffic and bicycling.

Yellowstone Federal Credit Union Open House: TODAY, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Come have a cookie and sign up for door prize! Calling all Credit Union Members – Annual Business Meeting will be held at 12:30p.m. Election of board members for the coming year includes Candidates up for re-election: Roger Perreault and Dan Rhodes. Call for nominations from the floor. Please come to the meeting and cast your vote!

FISSA Training: The Seasonal/VIP version of the required FISSA+ training is now available on the Intranet home page. Just click on Seasonal / VIP IT Security Training. At the end of the training user is prompted to enter their name and print the certificate. Please do so and send a copy to CSS. Thanks!

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Congratulations!

Jason Ogle, 10 Years of Service



Carin Schneider, 15 Years of Service



IN THE NEWS

Montana bison transfers face courtroom test

KULR 8 TV, April 11, 2012

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — The return of wild bison to tribal lands in northeast Montana will be challenged in state court Wednesday by opponents seeking to block further relocations of the animals.

Judge John McKeon has scheduled a Wednesday hearing in Chinhook over whether the relocations are legal. More than 60 bison from Yellowstone National Park were relocated to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in March. Half are slated to be transferred to the Fort Belknap Reservation, but a coalition of property rights groups, ranchers and state lawmakers are lined up in opposition.

They say bison could spread disease, knock down fences and eat hay meant for cattle. State officials including Gov. Brian Schweitzer support the return of bison to lands they occupied until overhunting almost wiped out the species in the 19th century.

WEATHER**NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 312 AM MDT WED APR 11 2012**Hazardous Weather Outlook**

Today...Partly cloudy. Isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 56 to 62. Southeast winds around 15 mph in the morning. Chance of thunderstorms 20 percent.

Tonight...Numerous rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then numerous snow showers and scattered rain showers after midnight. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the evening. Snow accumulation up to 2 inches. Lows 26 to 32. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the late evening and overnight. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Thursday...Breezy...colder...cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Thursday Night...Breezy...colder. Mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then partly cloudy with isolated snow showers after midnight. Lows 19 to 25. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Gusts up to 35 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

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IN THE NEWS

Judge upholds block on more Mont. bison transfers

Associated Press, April 11, 2012

CHINOOK, Mont. (AP) -- Wild bison transported last month from Yellowstone National Park will remain at northeastern Montana's Fort Peck Indian Reservation, but a judge ruled Wednesday that no additional bison can be transferred in the state for at least 30 days.

Montana District Judge John McKeon upheld a restraining order barring further bison relocations after an eight-hour hearing challenging the state's return of the animals to tribal lands.

More than 60 bison from Yellowstone National Park were relocated to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in March. Half of those bison are slated to be transferred to the Fort Belknap Reservation, but property rights groups, ranchers and some state lawmakers have filed a lawsuit in opposition to the move.

They say bison could spread disease, knock down fences and eat hay meant for cattle.

Before the hearing began, the plaintiffs withdrew a request to send the bison at Fort Peck back to a quarantine facility near Yellowstone National Park.

The Havre Daily News reports that McKeon will come to a final decision on future bison relocations in the next 30 days, and until then a restraining order on additional transfers will remain in place.

Cory Swanson, the ranchers' attorney, said he was encouraged by the ruling.

"The fact that he has taken 30 days to carefully consider this is great," Swanson said. "We're happy that for the next 30 days we are safe."

Defense attorney Timothy Preso of Bozeman-based environmental law firm Earthjustice said that the judge's decision was not a surprise.

"He's basically maintaining the status quo until he makes his final decision," Preso said.

The landowners say that state Fish, Wildlife and Parks officials violated a law passed last year that required FWP to come up with a bison management plan before relocating bison.

The defense responded that FWP drafted agreements with the tribes, which are sovereign nations, so that law did not apply.

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G&F targets 98 wolves

By Cory Hatch, Jackson Hole Daily News and Guide, April 12, 2012

Hunting and other causes of death should reduce Wyoming's wolf population outside Yellowstone National Park to roughly 170 wolves and 15 breeding pairs by next December, officials said Tuesday.

That computation assumes the predator is removed from Endangered Species Act protection in the state next fall as planned. Wildlife managers say there are currently about 270 wolves and more than 19 breeding pairs in Wyoming outside of Yellowstone.

Wyoming Game and Fish officials made the comments before a crowd of about 100 people at a meeting about proposed wolf hunting regulations.

Hunters would be allowed to kill 52 wolves in Wyoming's trophy game area next fall under hunting regulations proposed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Other mortality, including management removals, poaching and vehicle collisions, would bring the total to 98 dead wolves.

About 10 percent of Wyoming's wolf population lives in the state's predator zone where they could be killed at any time without a license.

Harvesting 52 wolves is a conservative approach that ensures the state will keep its commitment to managing for a minimum of 100 wolves and 10 breeding pairs outside of Yellowstone, biologist Ken Mills said.

"Our objective is to manage for wolves with a buffer," Mills said. "What we're doing is managing the population high enough over the minimum recovery level so that we can account for unanticipated mortality."

There are very serious implications for us falling below 10 [breeding pairs] and 100 [wolves].”

Population data show that the requirement to maintain 10 breeding pairs likely will require more than 100 wolves.

“We’re not going to be able to manage for 105 wolves and have 10 breeding pairs,” Mills said. “We have start conservative because we know that 100 wolves does not always equal 10 breeding pairs.”

Some members of the audience said the state should kill more wolves in the 12 hunt areas clustered in the northwest corner of the state, especially in hunt areas north of Jackson where some blame wolves for a declining ratio of elk calves. But most said they supported Wyoming’s wolf management plan and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

“I do have concerns about that quota,” said Jesse Rodenbough, an outfitter and ranch manager based out of Moran. “I have great confidence in you, the red shirt team, managing these wolves and I support you 100 percent.”

Other outfitters said the wolf’s return is hurting the local economy.

“Since the gray wolf has arrived, it’s been going downhill,” Gros Ventre outfitter Glenn Taylor said. “The first thing I do when I get up in the morning is check to see if my dog is still alive. Game and Fish, they’re the best neighbors we have and we need to get behind them and move forward.”

However, conservation groups raised a number of issues with the hunting regulations and Wyoming’s wolf management plan.

Language in both documents that seems to give the state jurisdiction over wolf hunting in the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway — a National Park Service unit — is likely illegal, said Sharon Mader, Grand Teton program manager for the National Parks Conservation Association. Game and Fish officials included the parkway as part of a hunt area, but said hunting would not be allowed on the 24,000-acre park unit in 2012.

“It appears that the state of Wyoming and the Game and Fish Commission has acted beyond their authority in terms of including the JDR specifically in the trophy game management area,” Mader said. “The National Park Service has management authority for wolves within the parkway.”

Grand Teton National Park and the parkway “should be removed from the trophy game management area,” Mader said.

Wolves that reside in Grand Teton National Park for part of the year also could be killed, said Chris Colligan, a wildlife advocate for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

“It would be a good addition to this wolf management plan to have a subunit with a minimum number of wolves that helps protect some of those park wolves that would leave the park and would be subject to hunting,” Colligan said.

Visit www.gf.state.wy.us to see the draft regulations. Public comments will be accepted until April 23. Comments can be submitted to Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Attn.: Wolf Regulation Comments, 3030 Energy Lane, Casper, WY 82604.

Yellowstone Grizzlies Heading for Conflict with Sheep...Uncle Sam's Sheep

by sarah gilman high country news on April 10, 2012

<http://www.adventure-journal.com/2012/04/yellowstone-grizzlies-heading-for-conflict-with-sheep-uncle-sams-sheep/>

The recovery of Yellowstone's grizzly bears has been remarkable. When the species was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 1975, there were just 136 wandering in and around the national park. Now, there are more than 600. And though a federal court confirmed in November that the population should remain protected, it's continued to grow and expand outward.

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A View From The Overlook: Montana Wowzers!

National Parks Traveler, Submitted by PJ Ryan on April 11, 2012

<http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/04/view-overlook-montana-wowzers9720>

NPT Editor's note: To bring you an additional perspective to life in the National Park System, we're happy to welcome occasional musings and insights from PJ Ryan to the Traveler. Though he's retired from a 30-year Park Service career that landed him assignments at places such as Jewel Cave National Monument, Joshua Tree National Park, and even the Washington, D.C., headquarters, PJ hasn't lost interest in observing the world of the national parks. For a more regular dose of his observations, be sure to read [Thunderbear](#).

It seems that the Yellowstone bison herd is the most genetically pure in the United States.
It is also one of the most prolific.

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Confessions of a national park ranger

(BUDGET TRAVEL website [NEW YORK])

<http://www.budgettravel.com/feature/confessions-of-a-national-park-ranger,8487/>

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WEATHER**NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 833 AM MDT THU APR 12 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Rest Of Today...Breezy. Numerous snow showers early in the morning...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. New snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Total snow accumulation up to 4 inches. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Cloudy with scattered snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then partly cloudy after midnight. Lows 19 to 25. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Friday...Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers in the morning... Then cloudy with scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the morning. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Friday Night...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers...rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 20 to 26. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

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SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 13, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Details regarding the memorial service for Gary Nelson are as follows: (NOTE new time and location change below:)

Memorial Service:

DATE: Saturday April 14th

LOCATION: Location has been **CHANGED** from the Madison Amphitheater location to the Old Faithful VEC due to weather.

TIME: Time has **CHANGED** to 10:30 a.m. Memorial Service (vice 10:00 a.m.)

LUNCHEON POTLUCK: 12:00 noon to finish, at the Old Faithful VEC - **Please bring a dish to share**, we are expecting a good turnout.

Administrative Travel is authorized for only those attending the service and luncheon at Old Faithful. Those traveling from outside the park, plan to enter and exit thru either the West or North entrances only. Let the Ranger working the Entrance know that you are attending the Nelson Memorial Service. Expect to see bicycles and wildlife on or along the roadway. Gate combinations for entry / exit will be available at the North and West Entrances as you enter the park that morning if needed.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Yellowstone Park Foundation, Ranger Fund in honor of Gary Nelson.

We are looking to get a head count of those attending, **please RSVP to nick_herring@nps.gov and bonnie_schwartz@nps.gov** ASAP if you plan to attend with how many in your party so we can get a head count to the family for planning.

Those wishing to say a few words at the memorial service please let Nick and Bonnie know with your RSVP.

Please share this message with anyone you think appropriate who might not otherwise get it.

Thank you to everyone who attended **Yellowstone Federal Credit Union's Annual Meeting and Open House**, including all the Board members and Supervisory Committee members for bringing treats as well. The winner of the \$100 door prize was Hank Quintana. We would also like to announce that Dan Rhodes and Roger Perrault were reelected to the board.

FISSA Training: The Seasonal/VIP version of the required FISSA+ training is now available on the Intranet home page. Just click on Seasonal / VIP IT Security Training. At the end of the training user is prompted to enter their name and print the certificate. Please do so and send a copy to CSS. Thanks!

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Mammoth Inside Clean-up Day, Tuesday, April 17, 1:00 – ? Join together to “sweep in front of our own doors” to clean primarily the public areas of our office buildings. We will be focusing on dusting, and removing fingerprints and scuff marks on walls, baseboards, doors, and window sills. The newly remodeled buildings (Admin, YCR, and Building 38-Telecom/Concessions/CSS) will be our emphasis. Others are welcome to join us. Maintenance will provide cleaning supplies. Touch-up paint is available upon request. Please coordinate with CMO by calling 344-2301.

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IN THE NEWS

Western states prepare for dangerous fire season

Associated Press, April 12, 2012

DENVER — The West's 2012 wildfire season exploded in earnest last month with a wind-whipped blaze that killed three people in rugged alpine canyon country near Denver. It took a 700-strong federal firefighting team a week of labor, day and night, to tame the blaze — and other states throughout the West took notice.

Fire experts say this year's drought, low snowpack and record-high temperatures in much of the West portend a dangerous installment of what has become a year-round wildfire threat.

For much of the West, snowfall this winter was disappointing. Snowpack in Colorado and Utah is only half of average and diminishing fast. Salt Lake City reported its fourth-driest March ever; Denver had a trace of precipitation in what traditionally is the snowiest month of the year.

"Things are heating up and drying out," said Jason Curry of the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands in Utah, where fire officials monitor parched high grasses left over from bountiful 2011 precipitation. "We've got our eyes on the hills."

The West's typical wildfire season has run from May to October, peaking in summer months. But climate change and the decades-old practice of putting out fires that nature intended to burn — eliminating fuels — has created a season that starts earlier and sometimes runs longer, said Tim Brown, director of the Western Regional Climate Center in Reno, Nev. Fire managers first noticed the trend in the 1990s.

Idaho is one state that expects a mild wildfire season — at least for now. Its mountain ranges are at normal snowpack levels, reservoir managers are dumping water to make room for snowmelt, and the first weeks of spring have brought more snow and rain, even to the desert-like climate of southern Idaho.

Elsewhere in the northern Rockies, fire officials expect a normal 2012 after last year's cool weather and spring floods all but eliminated fire season. Snowpack in Montana and northern Wyoming is at historically average levels, and barring a rapid warm-up, fire season is expected to start in mid-July, said Bryan Henry, a meteorologist with the Northern Rockies Coordination Center's predictive services.

The exception is the plains of Eastern Montana, where snow was less than usual this winter, and brown grass is standing tall as potential fuel before the spring green-up.

"A couple of dry, windy days, it will be ready to burn," Henry said.

It did already in Colorado. High winds fanned a 37-square-mile grass fire on the eastern plains in March, creating blinding clouds of dust and smoke and injuring three firefighters as they tried to escape a stranded fire truck. The millions of acres of pine forest, from Canada to Colorado, scarred by the telltale red needles of trees killed by the mountain pine beetle pose another fire uncertainty. Residents of small towns worry about firestorms erupting in beetle kill on surrounding mountainsides. But it isn't known whether the red forest canopies pose a more serious threat.

Matt Jolly and Russ Parsons, U.S. Forest Service ecologists, suggested last year that dead needles can ignite up to three times faster than the green needles of a healthy tree. Beetle-killed trees can burn more intensely and carry embers farther, Jolly said.

Jolly and Parsons are using the data to create models to better predict how a fire will act in stands of beetle-killed trees, but those models aren't ready yet, Parsons said.

Jolly said he did observe a fire last year at the Idaho-Montana line that grew by 26 square miles in a single day when the fire danger was moderate at best. The blaze spread quickly in crown fires through stands of beetle-killed trees as though there had been a prolonged drought, he said.

That is a fearsome thought in a region where firefighters and residents are already preparing for what could be another rough year.

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Yellowstone grizzly bear committee set to meet in Jackson

Billings Gazette, April 12, 2012

A team created to monitor the health of the grizzly bear population across the greater Yellowstone ecosystem plans to meet next week in Jackson to discuss new reports on the bear and issues relating to its management. The Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee will hold its spring meeting in Teton Village in Jackson on April 18-19.

The grizzly recovery area includes all of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, as well as portions of northwest Wyoming, eastern Idaho and southwest Montana.

Partners also include the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Bridger-Teton, Caribou-Targhee, Custer, Gallatin and Shoshone national forests.

Members of the committee said federally managed lands make up 98 percent of the grizzly recovery area's 9,209 square miles.

The team is charged with recovery of the grizzly in the Yellowstone ecosystem and adjoining Canadian provinces. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. on Wednesday and 8 a.m. on Thursday and is open to the public.

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 631 AM MDT FRI APR 13 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook
Special Weather Statement

Today...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 36 to 42. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers...rain showers and isolated thunderstorms early in the evening...then scattered snow showers in the late evening and overnight. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds early in the evening. Lows 20 to 26. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 35 to 41. Northeast winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday Night...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening...then isolated snow showers after midnight. Lows 19 to 25. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 40 percent.

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SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 16, 2012



In Memorial: Rangers conduct a flag ceremony at the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center, April 14, in honor of Gary Nelson, who passed away April 4.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY, **Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks** will fly a helicopter survey of the northern range counting bighorn sheep. This is an annual survey done typically by the state on Montana across the northern range from approximately Point of Rocks at the southern end of Paradise Valley to east of Lamar Valley. A state helicopter will fly the survey.

The purpose of the survey is to determine population size of the bighorn sheep herd for the area and to assess recruitment. Sheep are found in rugged, mountainous terrain so to survey them accurately requires the use of a helicopter. The helicopter will avoid developed areas and areas close to the road and the Stephens Creek area. They will be filing a flight plan ahead of time and communicating with the Fire Cache or Comm Center during the flight should communication with them be necessary.

Retirement Party for U.S. Magistrate Stephen Cole. TOMORROW, April 17, 3:00-5:00 p.m. at the Mammoth Map Room. Refreshments will be served. Come and wish Steve and Maureen the best of luck in their retirement!

Thank you to everyone who attended **Yellowstone Federal Credit Union's Annual Meeting and Open House**, including all the Board members and Supervisory Committee members for bringing treats as well. The winner of the \$100 door prize was Hank Quintana. We would also like to announce that Dan Rhodes and Roger Perrault were reelected to the board.

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IN THE NEWS

“Empire of Shadows: The Epic Story of Yellowstone” by George Black

By Bill Gifford, Washington Post, April 13, 2012

For an American, a visit to a national park in another country can be disorienting. Where are the Winnebagos? The air-conditioned visitor center? The paved roads?

If you venture off the main highway in search of a park that is clearly marked on the map, in a place like, say, Baja Mexico, you might find that the paved road simply ends with a bump, leaving you on an unmarked dirt track with potholes the size of dinosaur footprints. That’s how you know you’re in the park: when all traces of civilization, and in some cases law and order, disappear.

Such was the state of [Yellowstone National Park](#) circa 1872, the year that great radical socialist Ulysses S. Grant signed the law protecting it forever from the forces of mining, logging and settlement that were sweeping over the West. Almost immediately, the first two parties of tourists entered the new park — and in short order, at the hands of the last roaming bands of Nez Perce, they learned some hard lessons about its painful prehistory.

The curious creation myth of Yellowstone has always held that this ancient volcanic caldera — larger than Rhode Island or Delaware — was ignored or avoided by native people. Its history, thus, lacks the taint of blood that soaked so much of the rest of the West. It wasn’t “taken” from anyone.

In these 548 epic, essential and often bloody pages, [George Black, the editor of OnEarth magazine](#), painstakingly reveals the truth. In his telling, setting aside the upper Yellowstone Valley was made possible only by decades of conflict whose outcome — the near-extinction of the Plains Indians, along with most of the buffalo — was rarely in doubt. It began with the first contact between the natives and [Lewis and Clark](#), but mass Anglo migration and settlement made conflict inevitable. Opening up remote Yellowstone to exploration and protection, six decades after the Corps of Discovery, meant that, in effect, the job was done.

Far from ignoring the Yellowstone, though, the natives revered the valley, although it proved too harsh to settle. Hunting parties roamed its slopes stalking deer, elk and buffalo, taking fish from its rivers, and quarrying obsidian for their arrowheads and tools. The first white man to explore the Yellowstone was a Lewis and Clark veteran named John Colter, but he was uneducated and inexpressive, and left little record of this “last and most myth-laden white space remaining on the map of the American West.”

Then along came a trapper, trader, tale-teller and diplomat of sorts named Jim Bridger, one of the most compelling characters in a fascinating cast. A true frontiersman, married to a native woman, Bridger was as much at home among the tribes as with whites, and he did much to keep the peace, as long as it lasted. It was his amazing tales of a mysterious realm where steaming jets vented from the earth, waterfalls tumbled off vertiginous cliffs and mountains were made of black glass (obsidian) that first piqued public and political interest in Yellowstone. One early visitor remarked that the steam from the geysers reminded him of Pittsburgh.

Not everyone, though, was so excited; Back in Washington, [Daniel Webster](#) thundered that the mountain West was a “vast, worthless area, [a] region of savages and wild beasts” that should be ignored.

As the Civil War consumed the East, the frontier basically was ignored. As late as 1860, the only whites in what is now Montana were a few determined Jesuits, some enterprising fur trappers and righteous Mormon pilgrims. When gold was discovered in Grasshopper Creek, though, things changed fast. By 1862 the mining town of Bannack (in what is now Montana) was thriving. It was a wild and wooly place, full of rugged individualists who cheered Confederate victories and hated all manifestations of the federal government until they required protection from the “savages.”

Enter the U.S. Army, turning its attentions westward as the Civil War wound down, and led by William Tecumseh Sherman and company. As “good” Indians were wiped out or removed, the “bad” Indians — led by the Blackfoot Sioux — hardened their resistance. Bodies littered the trailsides, and both sides perpetrated massacres, although the whites were particularly unnerved by the Sioux women’s penchant for lopping the heads and other organs off fresh corpses. Meanwhile, some officers summed up their attitudes toward native women and children with the saying “nits make lice.” In the bars of Fort Benton, Mont., you could trade scalps for drinks.

One of the most interesting aspects of this tale is how closely the public debate about the Indian “menace” echoes our current conversation about whether religious freedom and equal protection under law should apply to Muslims. Then as now, Americans were dealing with a supposedly savage Other in our midst, and found it all too easy to choose fear and violence over the high-minded ideals expressed in our founding documents. Some politicians called for outright extermination.

It was the long-term defeat of the natives that made it safe, finally, to explore the upper Yellowstone. The man sent to do that job was a flamboyant yet appealing character, Lt. [Gustavus Cheyney Doane](#), who helped lead the first organized expedition into the little-known area. The wonders they found confirmed Bridger’s wildest tales, which he’d been telling for nearly 50 years. Doane called it “Wonderland,” and nothing else in his life ever equaled the experience. (The book’s title comes from his ecstatic first description of the Black Canyon of the Yellowstone.)

Black’s history is thoroughly researched, with nearly 100 pages of footnotes and sources. But he wears his scholarship with ease, bringing the history of the Northern Rockies to life with a parade of fascinating, well-drawn characters, including con men, cowboys, wayward aristocrats and pompous martinets such as George Armstrong Custer. At times, though, he seems to get lost in the trackless woods, like his early explorers. The going is sometimes slow, but ultimately rewarding. This is a slow-burn kind of book, to be absorbed and savored, not zipped through on the beach.

By the time Yellowstone opened as the first national park in 1872, just two dozen buffalo were left out of herds that had numbered in the millions. The remaining Native Americans were soon moved to reservations or exterminated. The railroad was coming, and with it more tourists. There would be no more attacks in the park. “Empire of Shadows” reminds us that, next time we visit the place, it’s important to see not only the magnificence of what is there, but also what and who is not.

The Deceptively Sweet Bears and Cool Cars of Yellowstone in the '60s and '70s

By Heather Murphy, Brow Beat, Tuesday, April 10, 2012

<http://www.slate.com/slideshows/arts/from-the-yellowstone-archives-hungry-bears-and-cool-cars.html>

WEATHER**NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 238 AM MDT MON APR 16 2012**Hazardous Weather Outlook****Early This Morning...**Mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers. Lows 17 to 23. Chance of snow 40 percent.**Today...**Patchy fog in the morning. Partly cloudy. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.**Tonight...**Cloudy. Scattered snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.**Tuesday...**Breezy...cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning... Then scattered rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.**Tuesday Night...**Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

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Mammoth Community Center: There will be NO open gym this week due to LE Training. We are still looking for volunteers to cover Tuesdays from 4-6PM. Call Charissa Reid at x2260 for information.

Mountain Mobil Auto Glass will be at the Mammoth Garage on Thursday, April 19, 2012 for glass work on Government Vehicles. If you are in need of glass work please call Randy Froelich at 307-344-2322 or Tom Monroe at 307-344-2321 to set up an appointment. For personal work please call Randy Stands at 406-220-7891.

United Blood Services is planning to be at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3 on Monday, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. Call Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 to schedule an appointment....Bring a photo ID with you. Treats are always appreciated by the donors....so if you want to share your baking skills, no one will complain.

There will be a spring "**Drug Take Back Day**" in Gardiner, MT at the YA Bldg on SATURDAY, April 28th, from 10am to 2pm. Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

Personal Development Book Club: Are you interested in personal development training, but you don't have the time or money to travel? Bring your lunch and good ideas to help YCR staff form a personal development book club at a meeting on **Wednesday, April 25th at 11:30 am in the YCR conference room**. This will be a very informal group, meeting 2 -3 times per year to discuss books of varying topics including leadership, communication, team building, health and wellness and more! Have a recommendation for the first book or you can't make the meeting? Contact Bianca Klein (2221) to be put on the book club email list.

Friends of Jerry Mernin

SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2012

Jerry, as you all know, was an extraordinary man who had such a positive impact on so many people that we wanted all who knew him to have the opportunity to come together to honor who he was and what he stood for.

There will be a fall memorial service here in Yellowstone in honor of Jerry. **"Mernin's Rendezvous"** will be held in the Lake area on September 8. Jerry would not have been Jerry without Cindy, who would be delighted by your presence at this rendezvous.

The plan for SEPTEMBER 8, 2012:

11:00 am to 1:45pm -- Open house at Lake Ranger Station

2:00 pm to 3:00pm -- Formal Ceremony –outside Lake Ranger Station – weather permitting. -Bad weather alternate will be Lake Lodge Rec. Hall

3:00 to 3:45 -- Wrap up ceremony and move over to the Lake Lodge Rec Hall

4:00pm -- Rainier Ale Toast at the Lake Lodge Rec. Hall to kick off social gathering including a buffet meal, cash bar, and good conversation.

There will be a cost involved for the food and Rec. Hall rental, which will be \$30 per person required in advance. If you plan on only attending the open house and ceremony there will be no cost, just let us know that when you RSVP.

Jerry was always on the hunt for a good piece of pie and even kept notes on the subject. In tribute, we will be asking many of you to bring a homemade or locally made pie in honor of Jerry's lifelong pursuit of that good slice of pie. See the website for details.

A representative of the Yellowstone N.P. Heritage Resource Center will be on hand at the event for anyone who would like to donate pictures, stories and history for consideration to the park archives. Bring copies of photos, stories or anything you think worthy for consideration. Details to follow later on the website regarding a potential "Jerry Mernin" collection being considered.

Things that you should do soon:

We need an RSVP if you plan on attending along with contact information (email, mailing address, phone number) so we can share the details as they emerge.

Make a room reservation or other accommodations early. We'll post lodging and camping information on the website as soon as we get up and running.

Let us know if you have a desire to speak or make a toast. That information will be invaluable as we schedule the program.

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RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

April 16, 2012

Roads to Old Faithful and Canyon Open to Autos Friday

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<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/roads-to-old-faithful-and-canyon-open-to-autos-friday.htm>

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IN THE NEWS

MSU study compares growth around Yellowstone, Glacier and other national parks

March 28, 2012 -- By Evelyn Boswell, MSU News Service

BOZEMAN - The land around Yellowstone and Glacier national parks might look like it's filling up with people and houses, but it's nothing compared to the rate of development around some other U.S. national parks, according to a new Montana State University study.

<http://www.montana.edu/cpa/news/nwview.php?article=11007>

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Elk-brucellosis working group to meet in Bozeman

by KPAX/KAJ, Apr 16, 2012

HELENA- A working group that's looking to develop elk management options in areas where the transmission of brucellosis between elk and livestock is a concern is set to meet in Bozeman later this month.

The working group is leading an effort to examine effective elk management options and risk prevention efforts in several southwestern Montana hunting districts, generally in the hunting districts near Yellowstone National Park. The meeting is set to begin at 8:30 a.m. on April 26 and continue through noon on April 27 at the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' office in Bozeman on South 19th Street.

Brucellosis is a contagious bacterial infection in domestic animals, wildlife and humans worldwide and FWP reports in a press release that In Montana, brucellosis has been detected in elk, bison and, several years ago, in cattle in areas surrounding Yellowstone National Park.

The disease results in miscarriages in some pregnant animals, including domestic cattle, and bison and elk.

The meetings are open to the public and include time for public comment at the end of each day's meeting. Additional public comment opportunities will be offered if the FWP Commission considers recommendations from the working group.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 229 AM MDT TUE APR 17 2012

Early This Morning...Numerous snow showers. New snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds around 15 mph with gusts to around 30 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Today...Cloudy. Numerous snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Total snow accumulation up to 4 inches. Highs 41 to 47. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the morning becoming southwest around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 25 to 31. West winds around 15 mph early in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Wednesday...Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Wednesday Night...Mostly cloudy. Scattered rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 23 to 29. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

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Mammoth Community Center: There will be NO open gym this week due to LE Training. We are still looking for volunteers to cover Tuesdays from 4-6PM. Call Charissa Reid at x2260 for information.

Mountain Mobil Auto Glass will be at the Mammoth Garage TOMORROW for glass work on Government Vehicles. If you are in need of glass work please call Randy Froelich at 307-344-2322 or Tom Monroe at 307-344-2321 to set up an appointment. For personal work please call Randy Stands at 406-220-7891.

United Blood Services is planning to be at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3 on Monday, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. Call Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 to schedule an appointment....Bring a photo ID with you. Treats are always appreciated by the donors....so if you want to share your baking skills, no one will complain.

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RECENT NEWS RELEASES

April 18, 2012 – Interagency News Release

Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee Signs Whitebark Pine Agreement and Welcomes BLM to the Committee

Jackson, WY – Federal land managers in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) signed an interagency agreement on April 17, 2012 to coordinate inventory, monitoring, and management of whitebark pine and explore new collaborative projects to help protect and restore the species throughout the region.

Whitebark pine is a critical component of high elevation ecosystems and is currently threatened by both insects and diseases. Impacts from non-native white pine blister rust and native mountain pine beetle, combined with effects of altered temperature patterns on beetle population dynamics, have resulted in significant loss of whitebark pine in the GYA.

“We recognize the need to address this issue through interagency collaboration,” said Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC) Chair Steve Kallin. “Actions taken on any jurisdiction affect the long-term status of this important species. It is important for all land managers to work together to promote the long-term viability and function of whitebark pine throughout the GYA.”

In May 2011, the National Park Service, US Forest Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service approved the Whitebark Pine Strategy for the Greater Yellowstone Area. The Strategy establishes management objectives, sets priorities, and describes coordination efforts for the agencies that manage federal lands in the GYA. The agreement signed Tuesday documents interagency support of a seed orchard for whitebark pine propagation and continued support of a long-term monitoring program; it also includes the Bureau of Land Management. The Strategy is available online at <http://www.fedgycc.org/WhitebarkPineOverview.htm>.

The GYCC formally welcomed the Bureau of Land Management as a member of the committee during its spring meeting in Jackson, Wyoming. Executives of the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) affirming their desire to work cooperatively in the management of core federal lands within the GYA.

The GYCC was established in the 1960’s among the National Parks and National Forests of the GYA, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service joined in 2000. The BLM manages nearly 1.6 million acres of land in the GYA. “The GYCC members look forward to working with BLM managers at the regional level. We share many issues, and will all benefit from closer coordination,” said Kallin.

Information about the GYCC and links to member agency websites are available at: <http://www.fedgycc.org/>

April 16, 2012

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<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/roads-to-old-faithful-and-canyon-open-to-autos-friday.htm>

IN THE NEWS

Apr. 17, 2012

Where's a Yellowstone bear? Look on your phone

By MEAD GRUVER - Associated Press

For wildlife enthusiasts hoping to catch a glimpse of wolves, grizzly bears and bison at Yellowstone National Park, the best place to be on the lookout may soon be a cellphone.

New smartphone apps enable people to pinpoint where they've recently seen critters in Yellowstone. People who drive to those locations can - at least in theory - improve their odds of seeing wildlife compared to the typical tourist's dumb luck.

One app called Where's a Bear promises "up to the second" animal sightings in Yellowstone. Recently a website called Yellowstone Wildlife began offering a similar app.

Websites long have kept track of animal sightings in Yellowstone. Already this spring the Yellowstone Wildlife site shows signs of life: Mule deer near park headquarters at Mammoth, bison in the area of a landmark petrified tree.

A message on the site warns of grizzlies feeding on a bison carcass near the Yellowstone River Trail. The statement relayed from the National Park Service could save a life. Grizzly attacks killed two tourists in Yellowstone last summer.

But not everybody thinks that making a lot of wildlife sighting information readily retrievable by phone is a hot idea. As it is, the crowds that stop to gawk at roadside wildlife in Yellowstone can grow to hundreds of people, pointed out Vicky Kraft, of Pine Mountain, Calif., who maintains a Facebook group for Yellowstone.

Grizzlies are especially challenging for park rangers who have to both direct traffic and keep people a safe distance away.

"It's crazy. There's no parking. People sideswipe each other because they're looking at the bear," Kraft said Monday.

Wildlife becoming too comfortable around people is another concern. A grizzly habituated to people is even more dangerous than your average bear.

"I think there's a responsibility that a person should have if they really like Yellowstone to say, 'Gee, is this going to be bad for the animals? Is it bad for the ranger? Is it bad for the park?' And I think when you look at a situation with that app, the answer would have to be yes," Kraft said.

Attempts to reach the app developers through their websites Monday and Tuesday were unsuccessful.

Yellowstone officials said the apps could become a problem depending on their popularity.

"If it did take off it would be a concern. It's got other applications but at its worst core it would send more people to wildlife jams," Yellowstone spokesman Dan Hottle said.

One technical problem with the apps is the vast majority of Yellowstone doesn't have cell phone coverage. Also, it's not like anybody is going to persuade a moose, elk, or bald eagle to wait around for the next tourist to show up.

On the other hand, a pack of wolves seen killing a bison might stick around for days while they fed on the meat, suggested Tom Mangelsen, a wildlife photographer who lives in Jackson Hole, just south of Yellowstone.

"I imagine it would be helpful, certainly for tourists or people who aren't familiar with Yellowstone, and I suppose for people like me, too," Mangelsen said.

Mangelsen counts himself among the many photographers and tourists who have been watching a popular grizzly in Grand Teton over the past few years. The grizzly recently emerged from hibernation with her three cubs - big news in Jackson Hole.

Mangelsen said he didn't rush off to share the news online.

"I haven't been on one of those websites more than three times in my life to see what's going on in Yellowstone," he said. "But I know people live by it."

Online:

Where's a Bear app: <http://bit.ly/IvVLlz>

Yellowstone Wildlife site: <http://bit.ly/HGfwXo>

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Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Scattered snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 23 to 29. West winds 15 to 20 mph until early morning. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Thursday...Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning... Then scattered rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 42 to 48. West winds around 15 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

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YNP@Work

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Thursday, April 19, 2012



Looks like they had fun at Colette Daigle-Berg's going away party last night!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Yellowstone National Park and the Yellowstone Environmental Coordinating Committee (YECC) will celebrate the 42nd anniversary of **Earth Day** this weekend with community recycling events, demonstrations, games, information on local and national environmental initiatives, and much more.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, **West Yellowstone** will host a day packed with Earth Day events at the Holiday Inn including demonstrations by the Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center and US Forest Service, craft tables and face painting, and Earth Day snacks and drinks.

On Sunday, Earth Day kicks off in **Gardiner** with a free community electronics collection event at the Yellowstone Association offices from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is an opportunity for any community members to bring in their outdated electronics (TVs, computers, cell phones, etc.) for recycling.

At 3 p.m. there will also be a showing of the documentary "Tapped" which explores the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the proliferation of single-use disposable plastic water bottles. A second screening is set for the Gardiner School on Tuesday, April 24.

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Employee Safety Committee: Minutes from the April 11 Employee Safety Committee Meeting have been posted to the Sharepoint site at: <http://inpyellshare/emsc>

You will find them located under Documents-Agendas and Minutes, folder Meeting Minutes, folder 2012 Meeting Minutes, pdf document Employee Safety Committee Meeting Minutes 4-11-2012

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IN THE NEWS

House Republicans back Homeland Security powers in border parks

The legislation involves 54 national parks within 100 miles of the borders with Mexico and Canada, including Joshua Tree, Saguaro, Acadia and Glacier.

By Julie Cart, Los Angeles Times - April 19, 2012

House Republicans are backing legislation in Congress to give the Department of Homeland Security control of more than 50 national parks and forests within 100 miles of the U.S. borders.

The legislation involves a sweep of land along the frontier with Canada and Mexico, but exempts state land, private property and federal holdings used for mining, livestock grazing and timber harvesting. The new authority would carve through 54 national parks, including Joshua Tree, Saguaro, Acadia and Glacier.

The National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act, sponsored by conservative Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah), would give Border Patrol and Customs agents and other federal officials the right to suspend any federal law on land managed by the departments of Interior and Agriculture. It would give Homeland Security the right to conduct any activity or construct any facility required to secure the border.

Although stalled in the House and with little hope in the Democratic-controlled Senate, the legislation demonstrates the intentions of Republicans as the November elections approach.

Park advocates say the legislation overreaches, calling it unnecessary because Homeland Security already has the power to suspend laws that inhibit its operations. They say the bill will override 36 federal laws that protect cultural and historic sites, wildlife and valued landscapes.

"As American families head to their national parks, we want to sound the alarm about this shocking legislation," said Joan Anzelmo, a board member for the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees. "We think the legislative

proposal is a direct assault on our national parks. It would affect every aspect of the day-to-day park operations. It's unprecedented in the history of the agency."

Some in Congress have argued that environmental laws such as the Wilderness Act, which prohibits motorized access to protected land, impede the ability of border agents to operate freely. Further, proponents say, the few federal departments and multiple jurisdictions along the border make coordination difficult.

But the Border Patrol told Congress last year that it had forged agreements with the National Park Service and other land managers and that the agencies have been working cooperatively. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano testified before Congress last month, saying the bill "is unnecessary, and it's bad policy."

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Friday...Breezy. Not as cool. Partly cloudy. Slight chance of rain showers and snow showers in the morning...then slight chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 51 to 57. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

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A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 20, 2012



The North and West Entrances at Mammoth Hot Springs and West Yellowstone opened to auto traffic at 8:00 a.m. today. (NPS Photo, Dan Hottle)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Yellowstone National Park and the Yellowstone Environmental Coordinating Committee (YECC) will celebrate the 42nd anniversary of **Earth Day** this weekend with community recycling events, demonstrations, games, information on local and national environmental initiatives, and much more.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, **West Yellowstone** will host a day packed with Earth Day events at the Holiday Inn including demonstrations by the Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center and US Forest Service, craft tables and face painting, and Earth Day snacks and drinks.

On Sunday, Earth Day kicks off in **Gardiner** with a free community electronics collection event at the Yellowstone Association offices from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is an opportunity for any community members to bring in their outdated electronics (TVs, computers, cell phones, etc.) for recycling.

At 3 p.m. there will also be a showing of the documentary “Tapped” which explores the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the proliferation of single-use disposable plastic water bottles. A second screening is set for the Gardiner School on Tuesday, April 24.

Employee Safety Committee: Minutes from the April 11 Employee Safety Committee Meeting have been posted to the Sharepoint site at: <http://inpyellshare/emsc>

You will find them located under Documents-Agendas and Minutes, folder Meeting Minutes, folder 2012 Meeting Minutes, pdf document Employee Safety Committee Meeting Minutes 4-11-2012

POSITION OPENING: Travel and Recreation Research Assistant (Cooke City / Beartooth Highway Area)

The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana is currently looking for an individual to conduct nonresident visitor surveys along the Beartooth All-American Road. The position will be temporary full-time with week-on, week-off scheduling. Ideal candidate will live in the Cooke City area and be able to travel to Red Lodge, Northeast Yellowstone Entrance, and MT Highway 212 and WY 296 Junction (Beartooth Highway and Chief Joseph Highway). The candidate will be working together with an ITRR employee to collect data beginning May 22nd through October 16th. The position will extend throughout the winter season beginning in December (with differing hours). The position involves: 1) talking to nonresidents about their travel experiences and recording the data on an iPad (provided), 2) Flagging vehicles to the side of the road for surveying and data collection 3) Setting up and taking down survey site before and after each shift 4) submitting hours worked and miles traveled via e-mail 5) working as a group for multiple hours during the day in varying weather and 6) efficiently communicating with the public. Reimbursement for miles driven will be at the state rate (currently \$0.555/mile). Winter outdoor clothing will be provided for the winter season. Salary is at \$14/hour.

Applicants must have a valid driver's license, access to a reliable vehicle, and be willing to drive within the duty area. Applicants must be willing to work 7 days consecutively (10 hrs./day) with 7 days off following. Shifts will range start between 8 A.M. and 10 A.M. and end between 6 P.M. and 8 P.M for the summer season. Call 406-243-5686 for further information Send letter of application and resume to itr@cfc.umt.edu.

Please join the **Green team and students from the University of Michigan** as they present their parkwide energy saving recommendations on Monday, April 23 at 1:00 pm in the Superintendents conference room. The presentation is 35 minutes long, leaving time for questions afterward. It should conclude within an hour.

If you are unable to meet in person but would still like to sit in, use the link and conference line below.

1. Please join my meeting.
<https://www4.gotomeeting.com/join/700709167>

Dial [+1 \(213\) 289-0010](tel:+12132890010)
Access Code: 700-709-167

Also, their final report is here: [P:\Yellowstone Environmental Program \(YEP\)\Programs and Projects\Energy\Michigan State Project](#)

GSA Vehicles and Fueling: Due to administrative changes that GSA has implemented, we can no longer utilize the Fuelmaster system to fuel GSA vehicles. The cost and paperwork requirements recently mandated by GSA to get reimbursed for fuel administered through Fuelmaster has made it unfeasible.

Effective immediately, please utilize your GSA provided credit card to fuel up your GSA vehicle at any commercial pump. All prokees will be turned off immediately. When using the GSA credit card you may be required to use a PIN. The PIN for each vehicle is the license number minus the alpha characters (i.e., G41-0334A would be 410334). If you have difficulty using your GSA credit card, please call the 1-800 number listed on the back of the credit card. New GSA credit cards were sent out to all divisions in November 2011. If you need assistance with replacement credit cards, please contact Cindy Hoe (x2327).

It is important to remember to send in to the Fleet Administrative Office, all credit card receipts with the license number, odometer reading, and signature on each receipt.

We realize that this will be a significant change for some users and appreciate your cooperation. Please note that all service and repair will be performed at the Fleet Maintenance Facility as has been done in the past.

If you have any questions, please call Holly Long at ext. 2324

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Employee Viewpoint Survey: You might have seen a link to this survey in your email. This is a national survey intended to see how employees feel about the NPS. NPS managers plan to use the information to improve employee relations and satisfaction in the workplace. If you'd like to know more... or like to participate in the survey but don't recall receiving an email, you can find out more information on Inside NPS at <http://go.usa.gov/mPd>.

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This Sunday, April 22nd, the Gardiner School 4th grade class will be holding a **Bake Sale at the Gardiner Food Farm** from 12 noon to 4 p.m. The sale is raise money for KIND - Kids in Need of Desks - an organization that builds desks for kids in Malawi. Please come and support these kids' philanthropic efforts!

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United Blood Services is planning to be at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3 on Monday, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. Call Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 to schedule an appointment....Bring a photo ID with you. Treats are always appreciated by the donors....so if you want to share your baking skills, no one will complain.

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SAVE THE DATE! On Sunday, May 6th from 9AM -1PM, the Mammoth Community Center is holding a **PANCAKE RUMMAGE BREAKFAST SALE** at the MCC. We also invite any lower Mammoth folks to set up their own front yard rummage sales. We'll be selling a sourdough pancake breakfast with bacon, fruit salad, pancakes with all the fixings, juice and coffee to raise money to support the MCC board's efforts. We are always looking for volunteers! Please look for more information about donating rummage soon and contact Bianca Klein with rummage sale questions (x2221). If you'd like to volunteer to flip pancakes or waitress, please contact Charissa Reid (x2260).

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There will be a spring "**Drug Take Back Day**" in Gardiner, MT at the YA Bldg on SATURDAY, April 28th, from 10am to 2pm. Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

Personal Development Book Club: Are you interested in personal development training, but you don't have the time or money to travel? Bring your lunch and good ideas to help YCR staff form a personal development book club at a meeting on **Wednesday, April 25th at 11:30 am in the YCR conference room**. This will be a very informal group, meeting 2 -3 times per year to discuss books of varying topics including leadership, communication, team building, health and wellness and more! Have a recommendation for the first book or you can't make the meeting? Contact Bianca Klein (2221) to be put on the book club email list.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 219 AM MDT FRI APR 20 2012

Today...Breezy. Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers and snow showers in the morning...then partly cloudy with isolated rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 49 to 55. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Isolated rain showers in the evening. Lows 28 to 34. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph until early morning. Chance of showers 20 percent.

Saturday...Partly cloudy. Highs 56 to 62. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday Night...Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 30 to 36. West winds around 15 mph in the evening.

Sunday...Partly cloudy. Slight chance of rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 59 to 65. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Sunday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 33 to 39.

SUBMISSIONS

ATTENTION!! We realize that most of the information contained in YNP@Work is very Mammoth- and Gardiner-centered, which doesn't do a whole heck of a lot of good for our folks deep in the interior. So if you feel you're being left out, or would like to see more info about your area, drop us a line and let us know what's going on in your neck of the woods! Send us photos, announcements or just general updates about life in the interior as we prepare for the summer visitation season. Until the roads fully open to admin travel and we can get out there ourselves, all we can do is rely on YOU to send us information to help make YNP@Work an information source that EVERYONE in the park can enjoy!

Please remember to send submissions for the newsletter to us at YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

Back issues of the newsletter are available at [P:\YNP@Work Published Issues](#)

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 23, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

While the road through Sliding Meadow south of Canyon Junction is closed to visitors, it remains open to Admin travel.

Canyon Rangers ask that you coordinate access through the Comm Center.



The 4th grade class at the Gardiner School raised \$490.81 on Sunday to donate to K.I.N.D (Kid's In Need of Desks); a charity that builds desks for school in Malawi.

The kids read about K.I.N.D. (<http://www.unicefusa.org/kind>), felt moved to act, and organized with the help of Gardiner School counselor Mrs. Bohme.

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IN THE NEWS**Yellowstone and Grand Teton hotels get creative to find sustainability**

By Ruffin Prevost

TETON VILLAGE, WYO. — Environmentally conscious travelers can be an outspoken and passionate group, particularly when it comes to staying in marquee national parks like Yellowstone and Grand Teton. They all want to tread lightly, but they sometimes disagree over the best way to do that, even when it comes to something as mundane as bath soap.

Some prefer liquid soap dispensed from refillable bulk containers, while others like the idea of a bar of soap with a hole in the center, giving bathers the feeling of a bigger bar without as much waste. (An elite few travel with their own soap, thank you very much.)

While eco-friendly soap may seem like a trivial matter, millions of visitors pass through Yellowstone country each year, so the numbers add up. Odd-shaped soap is just one of a wide array of creative innovations local lodging companies are making to operate their properties more sustainably, and to make them more attractive to travelers.

The green travel segment, including ecotourism and geotourism, is growing three times faster than mass market tourism, according to the Center for Responsible Travel, and it could soon make up 25 percent of total travel spending. National Parks typically attract a higher percentage of environmentally conscious travelers than most other destinations, and those guests have high expectations of lodging providers.

“Operating within a national park, the standard is different, and a lot more is demanded of us,” said said Dylan Hoffman, director of environmental affairs in Yellowstone for Xanterra Parks and Resorts.

Which means, of course, that Hoffman pays lots of attention to soap.

Xanterra is the nation's largest national and state park concessioner, and the National Park Service expects the company to follow the best possible sustainability practices. That's part of why Xanterra replaced conventional

hotel soaps a few years back in the dozens of park properties it manages with a bar that's missing its center. The move eliminates much of the waste that goes with millions of discarded soaps after millions of overnight stays.

But longtime visitors to Yellowstone have fond memories of a different kind of soap — one shaped like a cuddly bear. The popular bear soaps are a favorite keepsake of visitors, and Xanterra still supplies them to its Yellowstone guests. But the company recently got rid of the individual cardboard boxes that each bear was shipped in, and instead has its supplier bag them in bulk. Hoffman figures the move has kept a string of cardboard boxes that would have stretched nearly 10 miles long from entering the landfill each year. At the same time, the company switched from a supplier in China to one in Vermont.

At the Old Faithful Snow Lodge during winter, Xanterra must bring in all food and other supplies by snow coach, and take garbage out the same way. So the incentive to reduce, reuse and recycle takes on an extra dimension.

That's why Xanterra managers listened closely when maintenance workers started speculating about whether they could mix used cooking oil with the diesel fuel used to heat hotels. The company serves nearly 2 million meals in Yellowstone each year, producing 52,000 pounds of waste vegetable oil that must be trucked hundreds of miles away for processing and recycling. Now, much of that waste vegetable oil is filtered and then mixed in as a kind of clean-burning biodiesel to keep winter guests warm.

"It saves time and money," Hoffman said. "Sometimes the easiest thing ends up having social and environmental benefits."

That's exactly what managers at Chico Hot Springs Resort realized after taking a closer look at how their plastic was being recycled. The end result was a move that is better for the environment, and even helpful for guests looking to shed a few pounds.

Tracking the plastic

Staff members from the Pray, Mont. resort participated in the Uncommon Sense sustainability leadership program offered by the Yellowstone Business Partnership. As part of that training, they tracked what happened to Chico's recyclables, and found that their plastic bottles were being trucked to Bozeman, Mont. where they were crushed and transferred to Seattle. From there, they traveled by ship to China to be recycled into fleece clothing that was shipped back to the U.S. The long and convoluted carbon footprint of their recycled plastic surprised Chico managers.

"Sometimes you just hear 'recycle' and think, 'great!'" said Chico general manager Colin Davis. "But this turned out not to be so great."

So Chico contacted its soft drink suppliers and had them switch the resort's vending machines to ones that dispense 12-ounce aluminum cans instead of 20-ounce plastic bottles. The aluminum is more easily recycled closer to home, Davis said, and the smaller serving size is healthier for everyone.

"The soda companies thought we were nuts. They didn't want us to go that route," Davis said. "We make less money on our soda machines than we would, but it's the right thing to do."

Chico also uses compostable, corn-based plastic bottles for its guest toiletries, and the resort is working to restart a recycling program that stalled when a change in waste disposal policies by Park County, Mont. made it cost-prohibitive and impractical.

During a recent remodel, Chico had an employee take old drapes and sew them together into custom-made laundry bags that helped streamline housekeeping chores. What would have been trash becomes a favorite new tool for cleaning crews, Davis said.

Like Chico, Grand Teton Lodging Company has opened a new front in the battle against plastic bottles.

"We have eliminated bottled water throughout our entire operations, in food and beverage and in retail," said Gina MacIlwraith, GTLC environmental, health and safety director. The company decided to make the change before the sale of plastic water bottles was halted in Grand Canyon National Park.

MacIlwraith said GTLC, which operates Jackson Lake Lodge and other properties in Grand Teton National Park, has diverted close to 15,000 plastic bottles annually from its waste stream. Guest are encouraged to instead use refillable water bottles, topping them off at “hydration stations” the company has installed in park properties, she said.

MacIlwraith said she heard far fewer complaints from guests than she had expected. Staffers are quick to remind guests that tap water in the park is as pristine as any they’re ever likely to drink — including from bottled water producers — and gift shops offer a wide range of refillable bottles, she said.

Though concessioners are limited in the changes they can make to historic properties owned by the Park Service, a 2009 remodel at Jackson Lake Lodge allowed GTLC to make some big strides in sustainability, MacIlwraith said.

Upgrades focused on energy efficiency and water conservation through new lighting and plumbing fixtures, and all new materials like carpet and drapes were manufactured with little or no volatile organic compounds like formaldehyde, she said.

MacIlwraith said an astounding 97 percent of the waste from the remodel was recycled, reused or donated to charities, including every old mattress from 385 rooms. Historic but battered old case goods like headboards and nightstands were refinished on site by company workers, she said.

Meaningful changes

Outside the parks, such exhaustive sustainability efforts are rare, but many hotels are moving in smaller but meaningful ways toward greener operations. Many hotels use eco-friendly bulk cleaning supplies, including the Chamberlin Inn in Cody, Wyo. Others, like The Cody or The Pollard, in Red Lodge, Mont., work to reduce or eliminate use of disposable items like paper cups or plastic cutlery.

Wood flooring reclaimed from the Old Faithful Inn during a remodel is found throughout The Cody, where it was used in baseboards and trim along the walls and floors. The hotel loans bicycles to guests and its courtesy shuttle is a hybrid gas/electric SUV.

Sustainable practices matter to some guests, said Doug Williams, general manager of The Cody, but “it matters to Europeans more than Americans.”

European guests are typically more likely to do research online to find out about a hotel’s sustainability practices, “and they tend to rely on that more when making reservations,” he said.

The Alpine House in Jackson, Wyo. also provides bikes for guests, and follows a number of other rigorous sustainability practices, earning it a certification from Sustainable Travel International, a rarity in Wyoming.

Certifications by independent, third-party organizations are an important way for properties to clearly communicate their policies and practices, said Janice Brown, executive director of the Yellowstone Business Partnership, a regional nonprofit group that promotes sustainable business practices.

Brown said that guests have a growing awareness of — and affinity for — sustainable practices, with Europeans and U.S. travelers from the West Coast leading the way.

“There is a growing interest in sustainability in travel, but this region is behind California, Oregon and Washington in that,” including in how property owners operate, Brown said.

Forty-eight percent of Yellowstone Gate readers in a recent non-scientific poll said they strongly favor businesses with solid sustainability policies.

Red Rock Ranch in Kelly, Wyo. has been improving Crystal Creek over a series of years to create an ideal cutthroat trout habitat, said ranch manager Douglas Hare. Crystal Creek flows through the Gros Ventre Mountains and feeds the Snake River. The dude ranch has worked to refine a stretch of water that has tiered pools, long fishing runs and a variety of fishing spots, each with its own style. Hare said improvements to the creek have helped spawning and reduced erosion.

The gateway community hotel perhaps most clearly defined by its sustainable practices is Hotel Terra, in Teton Village, Wyo.

Opened in 2008, the newly constructed property was conceived from the start as a showcase for eco-friendly practices, said JuliAnne Forrest, director of marketing communications for the property.

The hotel received a silver certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) from the U.S. Green Building Council. Guests of Hotel Terra sleep in rooms with paints and fabrics that have little or no VOCs. They dry off after a shower with organic cotton towels and sleep on organic cotton sheets. The sheets top a mattress made with recycled steel springs and natural latex rubber.

Low-flow water fixtures and efficient LED lights are among the typical and expected green building mainstays at Hotel Terra, but the property also sports dozens of other touches like chairs made with recycled seat belts, reused pickle barrel tops in balcony construction and recycled glass used in bathroom countertops.

It might be impossible to list all of the eco-friendly touches at Hotel Terra, but it's also hard to miss at least a few of them by the end of a stay.

"When we do get guests who aren't aware of all that we do, and maybe they find out we're LEED certified or learn about the extra steps we take, they're always very pleased," Forrest said.

Like Williams and Brown, Forrest said European visitors tend to be more aware of and interested in environmental issues at the hotel. The property's web site has a lengthy list of key sustainability points.

Brown said many business owners are learning that being good to the environment can be good for business, saving money and helping the bottom line.

Some practices like purchasing green power offsets — as Hotel Terra and Alpine House do — cost a little more. But not so much more as to make their rates uncompetitive, Forrest said.

Davis, the general manager at Chico Hot Springs, said his staff has found success in meeting sustainability goals by working together, being creative and staying open-minded. After all, he said, Chico has a long history of sustainability.

"We don't make a big deal of it, but we're fiercely proud of it," he said.

When the hotel had only 20 rooms, it drew water from a pond on a nearby hill to turn a wheel and generate electricity.

"Now that really was a big deal," Davis said with a laugh. "We were the first hotel in Montana with electricity."

RECENT NEWS RELEASES

April 30, 2012

Washout Prompts Temporary Closure Of Road South Of Canyon Junction

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12023.htm>

Just hours after opening for auto travel for the summer season, a section of road in Yellowstone National Park has been temporarily closed because the roadbed has given way.

A basketball-sized hole was discovered Friday afternoon in a section of Yellowstone's Grand Loop road south of Canyon Junction. Upon further inspection, park staff members discovered a large section of the roadbed beneath the pavement has washed out.

Visitors can take in views of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone by traveling on the North Rim Drive. However, viewing locations along the South Rim Drive such as Artist Point won't be accessible until road repairs are completed.

There is no estimate on the scope of the necessary repairs of the length of the temporary closure of this section of road.

After being closed to automobiles all winter, Friday morning some interior park roads opened to motorists for the start of the busy tourist season.

Visitors may enter Yellowstone through the park's North Entrance at Gardiner, Montana, and West Entrance at West Yellowstone, Montana, to Norris, Madison, Canyon and Old Faithful. The road from Gardiner, Montana, through Mammoth Hot Springs and Tower Junction to Cooke City, Montana, is open all year.

The road south of the Canyon area to Fishing Bridge and the East Entrance is not scheduled to open for the season until May 4. The park's South Entrance to West Thumb, Old Faithful, and Lake Village is scheduled to open on May 11.

Information on park road conditions is available 24 hours a day by calling the park's road information hotline at 307-344-2117.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 227 AM MDT MON APR 23 2012

Today...Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. Isolated dry thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the afternoon. Highs 63 to 69. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon.

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. Isolated dry thunderstorms in the evening...then occasional sprinkles after midnight. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the evening. Lows 34 to 40.

Tuesday...Cloudy. Isolated rain showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers and isolated dry thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the afternoon. Highs 61 to 67. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

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YNP@Work

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Tuesday, April 24, 2012



Visitors awaiting the eruption of Old Faithful this weekend. (Photo by Jay Elhard)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you were thinking the past two days were unseasonably warm....

The automated weather station at the Old Faithful Ranger Station recorded a high of 67.8° F on Sunday, and 70.8°F Monday afternoon. The official record high for both dates is 67° F, with the April 22 record dating back to 1906, and the April 23 record set in 2006.

The automated weather station in Mammoth topped out at 72.5° F on Sunday, shy of the record of 74° F set in 1994. The mercury in Mammoth reached 75.5° F Monday afternoon, with the record high of 72° set back in 2006.

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While the road through Sliding Meadow south of Canyon Junction is closed to visitors, it remains open to Admin travel. Canyon Rangers ask that you coordinate access through the Comm Center.

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FYI, the **last courier run** is this Friday, April 27. The USPS will begin mail delivery the end of the following week. If you have staff in Mammoth, they can pick up USPS mail at the post office and should check in at Supply and the Mailroom for your area mail.

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All Employee Notice—Safe Practice When Encountering/Clearing Rock Falls. During this time of year, we experience increased frequency of rock slides and rocks on the roadway in canyon areas due to rain/snow and freeze/thaw events. All Yellowstone employees are very proactive and want to lend a helping hand, but rocks on roadways do pose several safety issues to employees and therefore must to be addressed properly. In 2004, the National Park Service tragically lost a family member when they were struck and killed by a rock while clearing a rock slide in Haleakala National Park. Let us ensure that this does not happen again through education and implementation of proper procedures when clearing rock slides. If an employee comes upon a rock slide or rocks in the roadway, the Communication Center should be notified. If warranted, an employee may park in a safe area and turn on vehicle flashers to notify passing vehicles of the hazard until District staff can respond to clear the roadway. Based on location, Comm Center will notify the proper District staff to respond and handle removal of debris. The best practice is to remove debris with machinery. The second option is to remove debris by an employee with the proper PPE (a hard hat and reflective vest). Prior to entry into the area, assess the scene for safety and minimize your risks. A spotter is a good addition to aid in watching for traffic and falling rocks. Consider weather conditions present at the time of rock falls when making decisions about removal options. Moisture laden ground contributes to the probability of additional rock slides making machinery a better option for clearing the road. If you do not have either machinery or PPE, for your safety, please do not attempt to remove rocks or remain in the area exposed to falling rock.

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The 4th grade class at the Gardiner School raised \$490.81 on Sunday to donate to K.I.N.D. (Kid's In Need of Desks); a charity that builds desks for school in Malawi.

The kids read about K.I.N.D. (<http://www.unicefusa.org/kind>), felt moved to act, and organized with the help of Gardiner School counselor Mrs. Bohme.

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United Blood Services is planning to be at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3 on Monday, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. Call Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 to schedule an appointment....Bring a photo ID with you. Treats are always appreciated by the donors....so if you want to share your baking skills, no one will complain.

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SAVE THE DATE! On Sunday, May 6th from 9AM -1PM, the Mammoth Community Center is holding a **PANCAKE RUMMAGE BREAKFAST SALE** at the MCC. We also invite any lower Mammoth folks to set up their own front yard rummage sales. We'll be selling a sourdough pancake breakfast with bacon, fruit salad, pancakes with all the fixings, juice and coffee to raise money to support the MCC board's efforts. We are always looking for volunteers! Please look for more information about donating rummage soon and contact Bianca Klein

with rummage sale questions (x2221). If you'd like to volunteer to flip pancakes or waitress, please contact Charissa Reid (x2260).

There will be a spring "**Drug Take Back Day**" in Gardiner, MT at the YA Bldg on SATURDAY, April 28th, from 10am to 2pm. Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

In addition to the above location drop off time, people can bring their unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics, to Boone Vandzura's office on second floor of the admin office on the HR side of the building on Wednesday, April 25, from 8 am to 11 am.

Personal Development Book Club: Are you interested in personal development training, but you don't have the time or money to travel? Bring your lunch and good ideas to help YCR staff form a personal development book club at a meeting on **Wednesday, April 25th at 11:30 am in the YCR conference room**. This will be a very informal group, meeting 2 -3 times per year to discuss books of varying topics including leadership, communication, team building, health and wellness and more! Have a recommendation for the first book or you can't make the meeting? Contact Bianca Klein (2221) to be put on the book club email list.

POSITION OPENING: Travel and Recreation Research Assistant (Cooke City / Beartooth Highway Area)

The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana is currently looking for an individual to conduct nonresident visitor surveys along the Beartooth All-American Road. The position will be temporary full-time with week-on, week-off scheduling. Ideal candidate will live in the Cooke City area and be able to travel to Red Lodge, Northeast Yellowstone Entrance, and MT Highway 212 and WY 296 Junction (Beartooth Highway and Chief Joseph Highway). The candidate will be working together with an ITRR employee to collect data beginning May 22nd through October 16th. The position will extend throughout the winter season beginning in December (with differing hours). The position involves: 1) talking to nonresidents about their travel experiences and recording the data on an iPad (provided), 2) Flagging vehicles to the side of the road for surveying and data collection 3) Setting up and taking down survey site before and after each shift 4) submitting hours worked and miles traveled via e-mail 5) working as a group for multiple hours during the day in varying weather and 6) efficiently communicating with the public. Reimbursement for miles driven will be at the state rate (currently \$0.555/mile). Winter outdoor clothing will be provided for the winter season. Salary is at \$14/hour.

Applicants must have a valid driver's license, access to a reliable vehicle, and be willing to drive within the duty area. Applicants must be willing to work 7 days consecutively (10 hrs./day) with 7 days off following. Shifts will range start between 8 A.M. and 10 A.M. and end between 6 P.M. and 8 P.M for the summer season. Call 406-243-5686 for further information Send letter of application and resume to itr@cfm.umt.edu.

IN THE NEWS**Wyoming snowpack below average; experts predict hot, dry summer**

By CHRISTINE PETERSON Casper Star-Tribune

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/wyoming-snowpack-below-average-experts-predict-hot-dry-summer/article_df8b0bf8-6ef7-5f0f-b429-49497a72b463.html

CASPER, Wyo. — If you think it's been hot and dry this April, that's because it has been, and it's showing in the snowpack.

Last year, cities and towns across the state prepared for flooding. This year it's drought.

Each of the nearly 20 drainage basins in the state has below-average snowpack this year, according to the Water Resources Data System.

The North Platte River drainage is sitting at 50 percent of average and may be getting worse, said Lyle Myler, deputy area manager for the Bureau of Reclamation. Northwest Wyoming is sitting with the best snowpack but is still about 10 to 20 percent below normal.

Large sections of northeast Wyoming in the Belle Fourche and Cheyenne river basins are already at zero percent.

On average, about 770,000 acre-feet runs off from April through July into Seminoe Reservoir, which is the top of the North Platte drainage. This year it may be closer to 150,000 acre-feet, Myler said.

The bright spot, if there is one, is that Wyoming's reservoirs still have plenty of water from last year. Anticipating a possible dry summer, the Bureau of Reclamation has been keeping the water stored.

"Last year we opened the gates at Guernsey the last day of February," Myler said. "This year we are holding onto every drop."

By the end of March, the North Platte River system reservoirs were sitting at about 140 percent of average. Boysen Reservoir was at 118 percent of average and Buffalo Bill Reservoir was at 110 percent.

The high reservoir levels mean some ranchers on the North Platte aren't too worried — yet.

Doug Curtis ranches and irrigates below Glendo Reservoir and said one dry year doesn't have much of an impact. The problem starts when there are several dry years in a row.

The dry, hot spring has a larger impact on irrigators operating off of small tributaries, Curtis said.

That includes ranchers like Jim Wilson, who irrigates several miles southwest of Glendo in the Horseshoe Creek Valley.

He has water rights to Horseshoe Creek and still has some water running through his ditches, but he doesn't expect it to last long.

With almost no snowpack in the Laramie Mountains, his ditch water will run out soon, leaving him with a few small wells and a little creek.

The past two years gave some relief from the drought that persisted on and off for nearly 12 years.

"We're used to tightening our belts in bad times," Wilson said.

He and others hope for spring rains and a better winter this year.

Unfortunately, weather predictions call for more of the same with above average temperatures and below average precipitation, said Chris Jones, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service.

Storms can still develop and drop a couple of feet of wet snow in the mountains, but people shouldn't expect much this season, he said.

"It's much different than the last few years," Jones said. "Whether it will be prolonged will be tough to say."

RECENT NEWS RELEASES

April 23, 2011 – Grand Teton National Park

Facilities Opening Dates for Grand Teton National Park & John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway

The official 2012 opening dates for various facilities in Grand Teton National Park and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway are as follows:

Roads

The Teton Park Road will open to vehicle traffic on Tuesday, May 1. The Grassy Lake Road in the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway opens on June 1; however lingering snow drifts may limit the extent of accessibility. Due to pre-season work, the Moose-Wilson Road will have a delayed opening.

Motorists are advised to drive cautiously and be alert for migrating wildlife throughout the park. Animals are crossing park roads, especially from dusk to dawn. In addition, springtime repair work may be underway on any park roads. For current road conditions, call the information hotline at 307.739.3614.

Entrance Stations

The Moose, Moran and Granite Canyon entrance stations are open. Fee options include:

- \$12 7-day permit for foot/bicycle entry into Grand Teton & Yellowstone national parks
- \$20 7-day permit for motorcycle entry into Grand Teton & Yellowstone national parks
- \$25 7-day permit for vehicle entry into Grand Teton & Yellowstone national parks
- \$50 Grand Teton/Yellowstone Annual Pass valid for one-year entry into both parks
- \$80 Interagency Annual Pass valid for one year entry to all fee areas on federal lands

Bicyclists are reminded that they must stop and show an entry pass before proceeding through the gates, just as vehicles are required to do. **NOTE:** an automated self-serve machine is located on the multi-use pathway adjacent to the Moose Entrance Station. People traveling on the paved pathway by foot, bike, or rollerblade will be required to stop and pay \$12 for a 7-day entry permit, or have a previously purchased pass in possession. Personal identification is required with any pass that requires a signature. The new multi-use pathway that parallels Highway 26/89/191 from the Gros Ventre River to Moose Junction will not open until early summer.

Visitor Centers

The Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center is open daily, year-round. Other visitor information centers open on the following dates:

Jenny Lake Visitor Center	May 18
Jenny Lake Ranger Station	May 26
Colter Bay Visitor Center	May 26
Laurance S. Rockefeller Ctr.	May 27
Flagg Ranch Information Sta.	June 4

Ranger-led activities begin Monday, June 4. An activity schedule can be found in the park's newspaper, *Grand Teton Guide*, or online at www.nps.gov/grte.

Campgrounds

The following campgrounds open:

Gros Ventre	May 4
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Signal Mountain	May 11
Jenny Lake	May 11
Coter Bay	May 24
Headwaters Campground & RV Sites	June 1
Lizard Creek	June 8

With the exception of the RV parks, all concession-operated campgrounds within Grand Teton National Park operate on a first-come, first-served basis.

Group sites are available at the Colter Bay and Gros Ventre campgrounds; to reserve a group site, call 307.543.3100 or 800.628.9988. Reservations can also be made for RV camping at either Colter Bay or the Flagg Ranch area. To secure reservations, call Colter Bay RV Park at 307.543.3100 or 800.628.9988 or Headwaters Lodge & Cabins at Flagg Ranch at 800.443.2311.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 938 AM MDT TUE APR 24 2012

Rest Of Today...Breezy...cloudy. Slight chance of rain showers and isolated thunderstorms late in the morning...then scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds...small hail and frequent lightning in the afternoon. Highs 61 to 67. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms after midnight. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the evening. Lows 32 to 38. West winds 15 to 20 mph early in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Wednesday...Mostly cloudy. Chance of rain showers and isolated thunderstorms. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 56 to 62. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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SUBMISSIONS

ATTENTION!! We realize that most of the information contained in YNP@Work is very Mammoth- and Gardiner-centered, which doesn't do a whole heck of a lot of good for our folks deep in the interior. So if you feel you're being left out, or would like to see more info about your area, drop us a line and let us know what's going on in your neck of the woods! Send us photos, announcements or just general updates about life in the interior as we prepare for the summer visitation season.

Please remember to send submissions for the newsletter to us at YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

Back issues of the newsletter are available at [P:\YNP@Work Published Issues](#)

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS



The special projects crew has finished spring clearing on all park roads except over Dunraven Pass.

Snow removal equipment is being mobilized to complete Dunraven and to work clearing Beartooth Pass.

Fishing Bridge to East Entrance, Grant Village to South Entrance and Craig Pass from West Thumb to Old Faithful opened to Administrative travel at 8:00 a.m. today.

Members of the Maintenance Division staff are working to mobilize a crew and materials in order to replace a failed culvert and repair the roadbed at Sliding Meadows, south of Canyon

Junction. Thanks to Shelby Coy for the photo of the hole in the asphalt!

Work on that project is expected to begin next Monday. Look for additional details on the project later this week.

Yep, it's that time of year again! **Boiling River** is closed due to high water.

FYI, the **last courier run** is this Friday, April 27. If you have staff in Mammoth, they can pick up USPS mail at the post office and should check in at Supply and the Mailroom for your area mail.

The Old Faithful Post Office opens Monday, May 7 - beginning that day the USPS mail courier will also begin delivering area mail to the NPS winter mail drops until the post offices open in each area. Employees should plan to pick up mail in Mammoth next week - if Mammoth employees are traveling to other park locations, do your co-workers a favor and check the post office and mail room for their area mail.

REMINDER: Hank Quintana's retirement party is TOMORROW from 3-5 p.m. at the Supply Center.

All Employee Notice—Safe Practice When Encountering/Clearing Rock Falls. During this time of year, we experience increased frequency of rock slides and rocks on the roadway in canyon areas due to rain/snow and freeze/thaw events. All Yellowstone employees are very proactive and want to lend a helping hand, but rocks on roadways do pose several safety issues to employees and therefore must be addressed properly. In 2004, the National Park Service tragically lost a family member when they were struck and killed by a rock while clearing a rock slide in Haleakala National Park. Let us ensure that this does not happen again through education and implementation of proper procedures when clearing rock slides. If an employee comes upon a rock slide or rocks in the roadway, the Communication Center should be notified. If warranted, an employee may park in a safe area and turn on vehicle flashers to notify passing vehicles of the hazard until District staff can respond to clear the roadway. Based on location, Comm Center will notify the proper District staff to respond and handle removal of debris. The best practice is to remove debris with machinery. The second option is to remove debris by an employee with the proper PPE (a hard hat and reflective vest). Prior to entry into the area, assess the scene for safety and minimize your risks. A spotter is a good addition to aid in watching for traffic and falling rocks. Consider weather conditions present at the time of rock falls when making decisions about removal options. Moisture laden ground contributes to the probability of additional rock slides making machinery a better option for clearing the road. If you do not have either machinery or PPE, for your safety, please do not attempt to remove rocks or remain in the area exposed to falling rock.

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Due to safety concerns about students driving home from Emigrant after Saturday's prom, the school will be providing a bus for kids to ride home at 12:15AM. from Chico to the Gardiner School. The bus will be provided at no charge. Sign up at the school office is required in advance. Students will meet the bus just outside the Chico annex and be safely delivered to the Gardiner High School parking lot at approximately 12:45 a.m.

Parent volunteers, the Bruin Booster Club, the Mammoth Community Center and local businesses have offered to provide refreshments, music and raffle prizes for students who chose to use this safe alternative. Please contact Shannon Robinson at 406-223-3708 if you are willing to contribute to this effort with a raffle donation. **ONE LUCKY STUDENT WILL WIN AN IPAD!**

The prom begins at 7:30 PM and the Grand March will take place at 8:00PM. If your family needs help shuttling a vehicle back from Chico, please call Julie Reamer and the parent group will try and help you arrange for a driver. **Thanks for helping all our kids have a fun AND SAFE prom experience.**

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The 4th grade class at the Gardiner School raised \$490.81 on Sunday to donate to K.I.N.D. (Kid's In Need of Desks); a charity that builds desks for school in Malawi.

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Pancake Rummage Breakfast Sale Extravangza!!! On Sunday, May 6th, 2012 the MCC invited all area families to attend a pancake breakfast (Morey sourdoughs, bacon, fresh fruit, juice, coffee and great company for a donation to the MCC) and browse the local rummage. Great way to start what we hope is a beautiful spring Sunday! The breakfast will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m. – rummage sales at individual homes are encouraged. **If you want to participate in an indoor yard sale at the MCC (you sell – you keep the profits), please contact Bianca Klein at 344-2221.** We hope to see you there!

There will be a spring "**Drug Take Back Day**" in Gardiner, MT at the YA Bldg on SATURDAY, April 28th, from 10am to 2pm. Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

In addition to the above location drop off time, people can bring their unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics, to Boone Vandzura's office on second floor of the admin office on the HR side of the building **today** from 8 am to 11 am.

IN THE NEWS

Bison in "no tolerance zone" set to be hazed back into park

(KBZK-TV Bozeman) Posted: Apr 24, 2012 9:51 PM

More than a hundred bison expected to be hazed back toward Yellowstone National Park after wandering onto private property west of the park.

State of Montana Veterinarian, Marty Zaluski tells our news team that the bison have moved onto a section of land with a "no tolerance for bison."

After hazing them back onto nearby land, the bison continue to move back onto private property where cattle are being raised.

The department of livestock, working with other members of the Interagency Bison Management Plan, decided the best course of action would be to move the bison back toward the park.

"The decision was to try to remove the bison that are in a non-tolerance area, and move them inside the perimeter of Yellowstone National Park. Because of the continued conflict or continued migration into non-tolerance areas," says Zaluski.

Zaluski adds the state plans on moving the bison later this week.

RECENT NEWS RELEASES**News From Arbor Day Foundation****Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee Receives National Award From the Arbor Day Foundation**

Nebraska City, Neb. (April 24, 2012) – The Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee is the recipient of a 2012 Arbor Day Award in honor of its outstanding contribution to tree planting, conservation and stewardship, the Arbor Day Foundation announced today.

The Montana, Wyoming and Idaho-based Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee is one of 16 individuals and organizations being recognized by the Foundation at the annual Arbor Day Awards. The ceremony will be held at Lied Lodge & Conference Center, located at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, Nebraska, on Saturday, April 28.

The Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee will receive a Forest Lands Leadership Award in honor of its leadership in advancing sustainable forestry efforts on public forestland.

Whitebark pine trees are critical to the ecosystem of the Greater Yellowstone Area, but the species faces several threats, including white pine blister rust, increasing mountain pine beetle outbreaks and competition from other forest species. The Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee formed in 2000 as a subcommittee of the federal Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee to address these threats. Whitebark pine was recently determined to be warranted for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The interagency Committee released a comprehensive Whitebark Pine Strategy to guide protection and restoration in 2011. The Strategy continues a robust monitoring program; has planted hundreds of acres in rust resistant whitebark pine and has collected over two million seeds for future planting.

“This innovative, multi-agency partnership is a true collaboration around a high-stakes challenge,” said John Rosenow, founder and chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation. “Because of the work of the Greater Yellowstone Whitebark Pine Committee, some of most precious forestland in the western United States will be preserved for the next generation.”

Since 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has recognized the inspiring and life-changing work of leading environmental stewards and tree planters through the annual Arbor Day Awards.

Award winners from previous years include the late Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, veteran newsman Bill Kurtis, Enterprise Rent-A-Car and Mary Kay, Inc. This year, in addition to honoring Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley with a Vision Award, A Legacy of Partnership Award will be presented to the United States Forest Service.

About the Arbor Day Foundation: The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization of one million members, with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees. More information on the Foundation and its programs can be found at arborday.org, or by visiting us on Facebook, Twitter or our blog.

Press release - April 24, 2012, 1:33 p.m. EDT

Michelin, Yellowstone Park Foundation Publish First Michelin Travel Guide To U.S. National Park

Proceeds from Guide to Support Projects and Programs in Yellowstone

GREENVILLE, S.C., April 24, 2012 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- As record numbers of drivers flock to America's national parks this week to enjoy free admission, Michelin is celebrating a first for the U.S. National Park Service and visitors to Yellowstone. Today Michelin joined officials from the Yellowstone Park Foundation to launch the inaugural edition of "The Yellowstone Park Foundation's Official Guide to Yellowstone National Park."

The new Michelin travel guide, which debuts on the heels of Earth Day during National Park Week, marks an expanded relationship between the park and the tire company.

In 2009, Michelin became the official tire of the Yellowstone Park Foundation, after announcing a multi-year commitment (representing more than \$350,000 in tire donations to date) to help equip the park's fleet of industrial trucks, earth-moving vehicles, passenger cars and light trucks.

Michelin is helping Yellowstone reach its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the park up to 30 percent by 2016.

"Michelin has provided Yellowstone's vehicle fleet with fuel-saving tires for the past three years in an effort to help the park reduce its carbon footprint by up to 30 percent," says Pete Selleck, chairman and president of Michelin North America. "The introduction of this guide presents yet another Michelin commitment to support Yellowstone and further enhance the experience for visitors to the park."

The new 106-page guide captures the magic of a visit to Yellowstone as only a Michelin Travel & Lifestyle publication can do, with in-depth, carefully curated content that includes tours, time-maximizing itineraries, insider tips from park experts and reliable recommendations for sightseeing and shopping. The guide enables visitors to plan in advance an efficient trip to the park, make the most of time spent on-site and enjoy a vivid keepsake from an unforgettable trip to one of the world's most astonishing and enduring natural wonderlands.

"Michelin is taking an already successful sustainability partnership and boosting its impact to the next level by providing a valuable asset that not only enriches a visit to Yellowstone, but also helps benefit the park through proceeds from the sale," says Karen Kress, president of the Yellowstone Park Foundation. "As the publisher of our first official park guide, Michelin will help engage a larger portion of Yellowstone's 3.3 million annual visitors in the foundation's sustainability efforts while heightening awareness of environmental stewardship in the park."

In addition to the new travel guide and ongoing tire donations, Michelin regularly deploys field engineers to consult with the park's fleet managers to optimize tires for better fuel economy through proper care and inflation, meeting the demands of the harsh Yellowstone environment across more than 420 miles of roadways.

"The Yellowstone Park Foundation's Official Guide to Yellowstone National Park" can be ordered online beginning today at www.shopmichelin.com and will be available for sale on-site at the park beginning on May 15, 2012.

About the Yellowstone Park Foundation: The nonprofit Yellowstone Park Foundation (www.ypf.org) has been Yellowstone National Park's official fundraising partner organization since 1996. The foundation works in cooperation with the National Park Service to fund projects and programs that protect, preserve and enhance the natural and cultural resources and the visitor experience of Yellowstone. The foundation receives no annual

government funding; it relies instead upon generous contributions from private citizens, foundations and corporations to help ensure that Yellowstone's great gifts to the world will never diminish.

About Michelin: Dedicated to the improvement of sustainable mobility, Michelin designs, manufactures and sells tires for every type of vehicle, including airplanes, automobiles, bicycles, earthmovers, farm equipment, heavy-duty trucks and motorcycles. The company also publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Greenville, S.C., Michelin North America (www.michelin-us.com) employs more than 23,000 and operates 18 major manufacturing plants in 16 locations.

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April 24, 2012

Yellowstone Lake Area Plan Approved

A long-term plan for limited development in the Lake area of Yellowstone National Park has been approved.

More at: <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12024.htm>

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 210 AM MDT WED APR 25 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook for NW Wyoming... Isolated to scattered thunderstorms are expected this afternoon and evening. Wind gusts could exceed 45 mph near shows and thunderstorms, impacting high profile vehicles and lightweight articles left outside in the wind.

Today... Mostly cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 55 to 61. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight... Mostly cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms after midnight. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the evening. Lows 33 to 39. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Thursday... Cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the morning...then numerous rain showers and scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 50 to 56. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

A SUGGESTION FROM ONE OF OUR READERS...

The photos of animals and visitors are fun, but wouldn't it be great to see photos of actual YELL employees at work or play in the park?

I would like to suggest that employees snap quick pics of each other in action - behind the desk, on the phone, on the radio, at the entrance station greeting visitors, plowing snow, on boundary patrol, on boat patrol, in the backcountry, in the front country, fixing equipment, hauling equipment, burning piles, picking up garbage, on the river, on a mountain, on a horse, etc., and send it in.

Your editors LOVE this idea.

For instance.... here's one submitted today by Jay Elhard... a screen shot of a Social Media class taking place in Glacier... using social media!

Now, this is a bit like a "Where's Waldo?" image! Can you spot Tami Blackford? (Hint: Think Pink!)



Now, we'd prefer smaller images with the subjects more readily identifiable. But you get the idea!

So how about it, folks?

Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at [YELL Public Affairs @nps.gov](mailto:YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov) (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

Back issues of the newsletter are available at [P:\YNP@Work Published Issues](#)

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, April 26, 2012



Red Williams & Mike Laye repairing the North Entrance roof Wednesday. Photo by Tonya Mathews.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The special projects crew has finished spring clearing on all park roads except over Dunraven Pass.

Snow removal equipment is being mobilized to complete Dunraven and to work clearing Beartooth Pass.

Fishing Bridge to East Entrance, Grant Village to South Entrance and Craig Pass from West Thumb to Old Faithful opened to Administrative travel at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday.

Members of the Maintenance Division staff are working to mobilize a crew and materials in order to replace a failed culvert and repair the roadbed at Sliding Meadows, south of Canyon Junction. Thanks to Shelby Coy for the photo of the hole in the asphalt!

Work on that project is expected to begin next Monday. Look for additional details on the project later this week.

REMINDER: Hank Quintana's retirement party is TODAY from 3-5 p.m. at the Supply Center.

Boiling River is closed due to high water.

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FYI, the **last courier run** is TOMORROW. If you have staff in Mammoth, they can pick up USPS mail at the post office and should check in at Supply and the Mailroom for your area mail.

The Old Faithful Post Office opens Monday, May 7 - beginning that day the USPS mail courier will also begin delivering area mail to the NPS winter mail drops until the post offices open in each area. Employees should plan to pick up mail in Mammoth next week - if Mammoth employees are traveling to other park locations, do your co-workers a favor and check the post office and mail room for their area mail.

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Due to safety concerns about students driving home from Emigrant after Saturday's prom, the school will be providing a bus for kids to ride home at 12:15AM. from Chico to the Gardiner School. The bus will be provided at no charge. Sign up at the school office is required in advance. Students will meet the bus just outside the Chico annex and be safely delivered to the Gardiner High School parking lot at approximately 12:45 a.m.

Parent volunteers, the Bruin Booster Club, the Mammoth Community Center and local businesses have offered to provide refreshments, music and raffle prizes for students who chose to use this safe alternative. Please contact Shannon Robinson at 406-223-3708 if you are willing to contribute to this effort with a raffle donation. **ONE LUCKY STUDENT WILL WIN AN IPAD!**

The prom begins at 7:30 PM and the Grand March will take place at 8:00PM. If your family needs help shuttling a vehicle back from Chico, please call Julie Reamer and the parent group will try and help you arrange for a driver. **Thanks for helping all our kids have a fun AND SAFE prom experience.**

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United Blood Services is planning to be at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3 on **Monday**, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM. Call Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 to schedule an appointment....Bring a photo ID with you. Treats are always appreciated by the donors....so if you want to share your baking skills, no one will complain.

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Pancake Rummage Breakfast Sale Extravangza!!! On Sunday, May 6th, 2012 the MCC invited all area families to attend a pancake breakfast (Morey sourdoughs, bacon, fresh fruit, juice, coffee and great company for a donation to the MCC) and browse the local rummage. Great way to start what we hope is a beautiful spring Sunday! The breakfast will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m. – rummage sales at individual homes are encouraged. **If you want to participate in an indoor yard sale at the MCC (you sell – you keep the profits), please contact Bianca Klein at 344-2221.** We hope to see you there!

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There will be a spring "**Drug Take Back Day**" in Gardiner, MT at the YA Bldg on **SATURDAY**, April 28th, from 10am to 2pm. Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

IN THE NEWS

Wolf regulations pass in Wyoming, move to feds

By CHRISTINE PETERSON and JEREMY PELZER, Casper Star-Tribune staff writers | Posted: Thursday, April 26, 2012 8:00 am

One of the most contentious animals in Wyoming moved one step closer to being hunted, with very little fanfare.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission on Wednesday approved a hunting season for wolves that would begin Oct. 1, if the animals are removed from the endangered species list. It also approved rules on how to manage the wolves in and outside of the hunt areas. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service could decide on the listing by Oct. 1.

The plan would allow 52 wolves to be harvested this fall in northwest Wyoming. It also would create three types of management areas:

A trophy game management area that would be most of northwest Wyoming outside of federal lands such as Yellowstone National Park. Here wolves could only be hunted according to hunting regulations.

A seasonal trophy game management area in northern Lincoln and Sublette counties where wolves would be trophy animals from Oct. 15 to the end of February. The rest of the year they would be predators similar to the rest of the state.

A predator area, which would be all of the state outside of northwest Wyoming and the Wind River Indian Reservation where wolves would be classified like coyotes.

Rick Kahn, a wildlife biologist with the National Park Service, wants the commission to consider creating smaller hunt areas around Grand Teton National Park if the packs that live in the park are facing too much hunting pressure. It's not something the commission needs to change right now, but something it can consider in the future, he said.

Some questioned the requirement to report a wolf kill in the hunting area within 24 hours to the statewide hotline instead of the standard 72 hours for other trophy carnivores.

Officials chose 24 hours because they were not sure how many and how early wolves would be killed, said Mark Bruscano, large carnivore management section supervisor with the Game and Fish Department. That time frame could be changed in the future.

Representatives from some groups, including the Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, said they supported the plan.

The management plan now rests with the Interior Department.

Gov. Matt Mead said he expects the department to publish a final rule by Oct. 1, in time for the fall hunting season.

The biggest threat to the wolf plan now is likely the prospect of lawsuits by environmental groups claiming the deal would decimate Wyoming's wolf population to the point that it's no longer viable.

U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., tried in vain last year to insert a clause in an Interior appropriations bill to ban any legal challenges to the wolf deal. Congress passed a similar clause in a budget bill last year to prohibit lawsuits against wolf delistings in five other Western states.

Mead said Wednesday at a media conference in Cheyenne that he and Wyoming's congressional delegation are working to try again for a Wyoming no-sue clause, though he said he wasn't yet sure if they would draw up another budget clause or introduce stand-alone legislation.

Mead urged environmental groups to think twice about suing, saying they should recognize that the plan is scientifically sound, has been agreed to by top Interior officials, and has been worked on for more than a year with input from a wide variety of groups.

"It is not just something that we came up with that is just good for Wyoming," Mead said. "It's an agreement by a lot of parties who have worked on it."

WEATHER

The National Weather Service in Great Falls has issued a [Winter Storm WATCH](#) beginning late tonight and running through Saturday afternoon for all of Southwest Montana. Locations below 5,000 feet like **Bozeman** can expect to receive a rain/snow mix and 1-3 inches of snow; 3 to 6 inches of snow are possible for places between 5,000 and 7,000 feet like **West Yellowstone** and **Bozeman Pass**, and up a foot of snow is possible in locations above 7,000 feet.

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 236 AM MDT THU APR 26 2012

Today...Breezy...cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the morning...then numerous rain showers and scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce small hail in the afternoon. Highs 49 to 55. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Numerous rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then numerous snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation around 1 inch. Lows 23 to 29. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Friday...Breezy...colder. Snow in the morning...then snow and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 28 to 34. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 90 percent.

A SUGGESTION FROM ONE OF OUR READERS...

The photos of animals and visitors are fun, but wouldn't it be great to see photos of actual YELL employees at work or play in the park?

I would like to suggest that employees snap quick pics of each other in action - behind the desk, on the phone, on the radio, at the entrance station greeting visitors, plowing snow, on boundary patrol, on boat patrol, in the backcountry, in the front country, fixing equipment, hauling equipment, burning piles, picking up garbage, on the river, on a mountain, on a horse, etc., and send it in.

Your editors LOVE this idea.

Jay Elhard provided us a photo for Wednesday. Tonya Matthews shared a photo with us featured in today's edition. So how about YOU?

Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at [YELL Public Affairs @nps.gov](mailto:YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov) (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

Back issues of the newsletter are available at [P:\YNP@Work Published Issues](#)

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 27, 2012

*Happy
Retirement,
Hank!*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Beginning **Monday**, April 30 at 9:00 a.m. National Park Service Maintenance forces will **close the road south of Canyon** between North Rim Drive and South Rim Drive for a culvert replacement.

The culvert has failed and washed out to the point it requires replacement. This area of the Grand Loop road has a history of movement and this will be one more phase to stabilize the area. The work will consist of replacing approximately 100 feet of culvert that is up to 15 feet deep under the road, with a water main and sewage line that runs down the middle of the road. Maintenance Forces hope to have the road back in service by Wednesday afternoon, May 2, 2012.

We will advise the Communication Center on the reopening of the road once the replacement is complete. During this time of closure, to access Lake and Grant Village, traffic will have to use Craig Pass.

To the organizers and planners, the decorators and delicious food caterers; To the awesome quilt makers, story tellers and crazy skit players; To the set-up and clean-up crews and of course **ALL** of you there to laugh with me: A HUGE THANKS!! You made my party a night to be remembered!!!

Colette Daigle-Berg

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Sponsored by the DEA, Medcor, and Yellowstone - we will be "taking back" your unwanted, unused, and/or expired over the counter or prescription medications, even narcotics. Take advantage of the opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet - and get rid of all that stuff that you have been unsure of HOW to dispose of. (Please, no needles) Call Bonnie Schwartz in CRO with any questions, x2103.

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Just a reminder that the United Blood Services Blood Drive will be held this coming **Monday**, April 30th from 1:00 - 5:00 PM at the Mammoth Community Center. If you have not already scheduled an appointment please feel free to call or email me. Walk-In's are always welcome also. I will try to call everyone Monday morning with a reminder.....Don't forget to bring a photo ID. Thank you all in advance for your donations of blood, treats, and drinks!!

IN THE NEWS

As Bison Return to Montana Prairie, Some Rejoice, and Others Worry

By NATE SCHWEBER of The New York Times - Published: April 26, 2012

WOLF POINT, Mont. — Sioux and Assiniboine tribal members wailed a welcome song last month as around 60 bison from Yellowstone National Park stormed onto a prairie pasture that had not felt a bison's hoof for almost 140 years.

The historic homecoming came just 11 days after 71 pureblood bison, descended from one of Montana's last wild herds, were released nearby onto a swath of untilled grassland owned by a charity with a vision of building a haven for prairie wildlife. Some hunters and conservationists are now calling for bison to be reintroduced to a million-acre wildlife refuge spanning this remote region.

"Populations of all native Montana wildlife have been allowed to rebound except bison; it's time to take care of them like they once took care of us," said Robert Magnan, 58, director the Fort Peck Indian Reservation's Fish and Game Department, who will oversee the transplanted Yellowstone bison program.

But with several groups now navigating a complex and contentious path to return bison to these plains, the agribusiness community is fighting back. Many farmers and ranchers fear that bison, particularly from Yellowstone, might be mismanaged and damage private property, and worry that they would compete for grass with their own herds.

"Bison are a romantic notion, but they don't belong today," said Curt McCann, 46, a Chinook rancher who drove four hours in April to a public meeting in Jordan to speak against bison reintroduction.

When the explorer Meriwether Lewis followed the Missouri River through this region in 1805, he came across bison herds he described as "innumerable." Just eight decades later, a young Theodore Roosevelt noted that all that remained were "countless" bleached skulls covering the Montana badlands.

Scientists estimate that tens of millions of bison once roamed America, but by 1902 there were only 23 known survivors in the wild, all hiding from poachers in a remote Yellowstone valley. For decades, attempts to transplant bison from the rebounding Yellowstone herd were thwarted, despite requests from tribes to steward some of the animals.

"I call them my brothers and sisters because they are a genetic link to the same ones my ancestors hunted," said Tote Gray Hawk, 54, a Sioux, who has brought the Fort Peck bison hay and water each day since their arrival. Their meat, lower in cholesterol than beef, will feed elderly tribal members and their skulls will be used in traditional sun dance ceremonies, he said.

The last hunt for indigenous bison on the Fort Peck reservation happened in 1873. In the 1880s, hundreds of tribal members starved to death on the barren land. Around them homesteaders from Europe began wrenching an agricultural living from this windswept expanse of rolling amber in northeast Montana. Most of the neighboring farmers and ranchers today are descendants of those pioneers, and they safeguard their traditions with generational grit.

"Bison is a big issue that could really impact our livelihood," said Brett Dailey, 52, who ranches near Jordan.

Today there are three million cattle in Montana and agribusiness is the state's biggest industry, but not a single bison roams free. A 2011 survey commissioned by the National Wildlife Federation showed that a majority of state residents support reintroducing huntable bison to the vast Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, similar to a Utah herd created in 1941 from the last few bison allowed out of Yellowstone.

"Within this sea of agriculture there is room for small islands of conservation," said Sean Gerrity, president of the American Prairie Reserve, the charity that brought another group of genetically pure bison back to a pasture just north of the refuge.

The arrival of Yellowstone bison was welcome news around the troubled Fort Peck reservation. When the first calf was born on Sunday, a rust-colored baby bull, tribal flags still hung at half staff for a teenage boy who had

committed suicide days earlier. Rates of poverty, unemployment, disease and addiction hover stubbornly above national averages here.

Census data shows that around Northeast Montana, a prairie expanse almost the size of Indiana, most county populations peaked in the early 1900s and have since dropped by almost half.

The region's fastest growing economic engine, oil production, is proving a mixed blessing. In 2010 the Environmental Protection Agency reported that toxic chemicals from nearby drilling contaminated drinking water supplies for Poplar, a reservation town of around 3,000. Earlier this year a schoolteacher from Sidney, near the North Dakota border, was kidnapped during her morning jog and murdered. The suspects are two Colorado roughnecks.

"These bison represent healing," said Iris Greybull, 62, of Poplar.

The bison debate has dredged up old tensions between tribes and their neighbors. Before Ms. Greybull, a Sioux, spoke in favor of the animals last fall at a fractious meeting in Glasgow, dozens of farmers and ranchers walked out in protest.

She and other tribal members say they see an ugly double standard in the fact that there are more than 130 private bison ranches in the state, including one belonging to the mogul Ted Turner housing dozens of the controversial Yellowstone bison, and yet only the Fort Peck herd has been visited by protestors.

But some say the bison on the ranches do not pose the threat that the wild ones do.

"Unless they have the German wall and a moat with a bunch of crocodiles and piranhas, they're not going to contain those wooly tanks," said State Senator John Brenden, of nearby Scobey, who has long battled bison in the state Legislature.

Around a century ago some Yellowstone bison contracted disease from domestic livestock and in recent decades thousands have been slaughtered in an effort to protect ranchers' herds. At the direction of Gov. Brian Schweitzer of Montana, a few of these bison were quarantined for years and certified healthy. Some may soon go to the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, about 170 miles west of Fort Peck, pending the outcome of a lawsuit filed by opponents.

"I took a lot of arrows for this, but it was the right thing to do," Mr. Schweitzer said. "If you want to get into a fistfight in Montana, go into a bar and share your opinion about bison or wolves."

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Feds move closer to first tribal national park

Associated Press - April 27, 2012

By KRISTI EATON

As the National Park Service and Department of Interior move closer to creating the nation's first national park managed by an American Indian tribe, new details about what the park could look like are being released, including plans to establish a free-roaming bison herd.

The National Park Service and the Interior Department on Thursday released the final version of a plan that would establish the first national tribal park at the South Unit of Badlands National Park, which is entirely within

the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Congress must still approve the establishment of the park, but Thursday's announcement means the National Park Service and the Oglala Sioux tribe can begin implementing parts of the plan and identifying what a tribal national park looks like.

"As we seek to tell a more inclusive story of America, a tribal national park would help celebrate and honor the history and culture of the Oglala Sioux people," Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar said in a statement.

The U.S. government's War Department took what is now the South Unit from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to establish a practice bombing range in the 1940s. It was returned to the Oglala Sioux tribe in 1976 and has since been co-managed with the Park Service. The tribe began pushing for greater control of the unit's 133,300 acres about a decade ago, after they disagreed with the Park Service's plans for the land.

The plan released Thursday recommends Congress create a new designation for a tribal national park. Depending on Congressional action, it could be administered several different ways, including as a unit of NPS managed by tribal members who work as NPS employees or by tribal members who work for the tribe.

Eric Brunnemann, superintendent of the Badlands National Park, said one goal is to create a free-roaming, economically viable herd of bison at the park as part of the Park Service's plan to establish and sustain at least three wild bison herds in the central and western United States over the next 100 years.

"We have tried for many years to put buffalo into the South Unit, but because the parcels are so small, you can't really succeed," Brunnemann said.

He said officials are working with non-governmental organizations to test and study the viability of piecing together parcels to allow for a free-roaming herd in the area and working with donors for funding.

"No one wants to go down the path of a good idea if it's going to unravel," he said. "We need to have the science and the economics at the table, hand in hand."

The plan calls for the Park Service and Oglala Sioux tribe to enhance the wildlife habitat and improve roads and trails for visitors in the park.

At least 95 percent of the facilities for visitor use and park management are located in the North Unit, which is connected to Interstate 90 and draws more than 900,000 visitors annually. The South Unit draws around 9,500 visitors, according to the National Park Service.

Oglala Sioux tribal president John Yellow Bird Steele has said he looks forward to the park adding one thing much sought after among reservation residents: jobs.

"For a few of our people, it would be creating careers in archaeology, anthropology, paleontology," he said.

The tribe recently hired Gerard Baker, the former superintendent of Mount Rushmore National Memorial, as executive director of the Oglala Sioux Parks and Recreation Authority. He has created a new Department of Tourism within the organization and said he has many plans for increasing visitors to the South Unit, including with guided tours, more events and extended hours.

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Feds prepare for another busy US fire season

By SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN - Apr 26, 3:01 PM EDT

TIJERAS, N.M. (AP) -- The chief of the U.S. Forest Service says he expects this year's fire season to be just as active as last year, when historic fires charred hundreds of square miles in Arizona, New Mexico and elsewhere.

Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell tells The Associated Press that the Southwest continues to be dry but the middle part of the country could be in for a more severe season this year.

Tidwell says federal scientists are monitoring weather patterns and trying to make accurate predictions so resources can be placed in the areas where they'll be needed most.

Tidwell joined U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and other officials for a conference call Thursday to address the nation's preparedness.

Vilsack says the agencies are taking their responsibility seriously given that lives and property are at stake.

RECENT NEWS RELEASESApril 26, 2012**Wade Vagias Named New Yellowstone Management Assistant**<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12025.htm>

Wade Vagias has been named to the Management Assistant position for Yellowstone National Park.

Vagias had been on a detail assignment as Acting Management Assistant since April 2010, focusing his efforts primarily on the park's Winter Use Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, before applying for and being accepted into the position permanently earlier this year. He previously worked in the Wilderness Stewardship Division at the National Park Service (NPS) Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Most recently, Vagias served as Co-Chair of the NPS Wilderness Character Integration Team, an 18-member team from across the park service that seeks ways to integrate wilderness character into NPS planning, monitoring and management. He also served as guest editor for the recently released Wilderness Edition of Park Science, and oversaw the Wilderness Fellows Program.

"It is an honor to be selected for this position," Vagias said. "Yellowstone National Park is the idea that became the ideal, and I look forward to working with park staff and the park's many partners and stakeholders to help preserve and celebrate the values that make this park so special."

Prior to working for the NPS, Vagias was a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management at Clemson University in South Carolina. He earned his Ph.D. in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management at Clemson, where his dissertation evaluated the Leave No Trace visitor education program in three NPS units.

Vagias' professional experience includes faculty appointments with Lock Haven University and Butler County Community College, both in Pennsylvania; river ranger with the Bureau of Land Management in Maupin, Ore.; raft guide with the Nantahala Outdoor Center in Long Creek, S.C.; mountain operations at Snowbird Ski Resort in Utah; as well as research projects for the National Audubon Society and the NPS.

Vagias and his wife, Jenna, who is a program manager with the Yellowstone Association Institute, have a daughter, Brooke. They look forward to further integrating into the Mammoth community and sampling all of the wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities available in northwestern Wyoming.

WEATHER

West Yellowstone and areas above 6,500 feet in Gallatin, Madison, and Beaverhead counties in Montana are under a [Winter Storm WARNING](#) until noon today.

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 251 AM MDT FRI APR 27 2012

Today...Breezy. Numerous snow showers in the morning...then numerous snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 28 to 34. West winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Snow likely in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Snow accumulation around 2 inches. Lows 16 to 22. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Saturday...Snow likely. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Total snow accumulation 5 to 9 inches. Highs 30 to 36. West winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

A SUGGESTION FROM ONE OF OUR READERS...

The photos of animals and visitors are fun, but wouldn't it be great to see photos of actual YELL employees at work or play in the park?

I would like to suggest that employees snap quick pics of each other in action - behind the desk, on the phone, on the radio, at the entrance station greeting visitors, plowing snow, on boundary patrol, on boat patrol, in the backcountry, in the front country, fixing equipment, hauling equipment, burning piles, picking up garbage, on the river, on a mountain, on a horse, etc., and send it in.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 30, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today at 9:00 a.m. National Park Service Maintenance forces are **scheduled to close the road south of Canyon** between North Rim Drive and South Rim Drive for a culvert replacement.

The culvert has failed and washed out to the point it requires replacement. This area of the Grand Loop road has a history of movement and this will be one more phase to stabilize the area. The work will consist of replacing approximately 100 feet of culvert that is up to 15 feet deep under the road, with a water main and sewage line that runs down the middle of the road. Maintenance Forces hope to have the road back in service by Wednesday afternoon, May 2, 2012.

We will advise the Communication Center on the reopening of the road once the replacement is complete. During this time of closure, to access Lake and Grant Village, Admin traffic will have to use Craig Pass.

Two other road-related items:

- Crews will begin plowing the road east of Cooke City later today. Travel is not yet possible over Cooke Pass.
- The road from the South Entrance to West Thumb is now open for bicycle traffic. The road is set to open to auto travel May 11.

In May and June, the Bear Management Office will be giving **Hiking and Camping Bear Safety Programs** throughout the Park. Attendance is Free!

Bear Safety Training will be given at the following locations, dates, and times: Mammoth Rec Hall, May 7 at 7 pm; Old Faithful Rec Hall, May 14 at 7 pm; Lake Lodge Rec Hall, May 21 at 7 pm; Grant Grayling Dorm Rec Hall, May 30 at 7 pm; Canyon Rec Hall, June 4 at 7 pm; Tower Falls Dorm Rec Room, June 11 at 7 pm.

Come play Rugby (touch, not tackle) on Mondays at 6:00 PM at the Gardiner School field. Fun and fitness for all ages and abilities. We'll teach you to play. More info, contact Mel @ 406-848-2393.

Just a reminder that the United Blood Services Blood Drive will be held **TODAY** from 1:00 - 5:00 PM at the Mammoth Community Center. If you have not already scheduled an appointment please feel free to call or email me. Walk-In's are always welcome also. I will try to call everyone Monday morning with a reminder.....Don't forget to bring a photo ID. Thank you all in advance for your donations of blood, treats, and drinks!!

To the organizers and planners, the decorators and delicious food caterers; To the awesome quilt makers, story tellers and crazy skit players; To the set-up and clean-up crews and of course **ALL** of you there to laugh with me: A HUGE THANKS!! You made my party a night to be remembered!!!

Colette Daigle-Berg

IN THE NEWS

YellowstoneGate.com

Park Service approves long-term plan for Yellowstone Lake area

<http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/04/park-service-approves-longterm-plan-for-yellowstone-lake-area/>

CODY, WYO. — The National Park Service has approved a modified version of the preferred alternative proposed by Yellowstone Park managers for long-term development and management of the Lake area.

A finding of “no significant impact” for the plan was signed April 17 by the National Park Service Intermountain Region Director. An environmental assessment that analyzed three alternatives for guiding development around Lake Village, Fishing Bridge and Bridge Bay was released for public review and comment in February 2012.

In response to public comments, the National Park Service selected the preferred alternative, with modifications, including a reduction in sites and in the paved area originally proposed for the Fishing Bridge RV park. The plan takes a zoning approach to limiting the development footprint, setting design standards and outlining infrastructure projects.

Among the projects addressed are replacement of 70-year-old water lines, seismic stabilization for Lake Hotel and adaptive use of some historic structures.

“This plan may be different than some in the past,” lead planner Alicia Murphy told a small gathering at a February meeting in Cody.

Comprehensive plans include design standards, zoning and other elements that haven’t always been a part of environmental reviews of developed areas in Yellowstone, she said. The Tower-Roosevelt area was the first in the park to undergo a comprehensive plan, while Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs and Lake are in that process now.

The idea is to consider a wide range of factors and potential future possibilities and changes over a relatively broad developed area, said Eleanor Clark, chief of comprehensive planning for Yellowstone. As environmental factors or visitor use patterns change, the plan should give managers options for addressing those changes.

The 700-acre planning area hugs the northern shoreline of Yellowstone Lake and covers six distinct zones: Fishing Bridge, an administrative area at Lake, Lake Lodge, Lake Hotel, the lakeshore itself and Bridge Bay and its marina.

The iconic yellow Lake Hotel takes center stage in the minds of many frequent Lake area visitors.

Built in 1889 by the Northern Pacific Railroad as a plain, clapboard structure, Lake Hotel is the oldest surviving hotel in any national park. It was expanded and remodeled in 1903 by architect Robert Reamer, who also

designed the Old Faithful Inn built that same year. Reamer added large porticoes supported by ionic columns, transforming Lake Hotel into a Colonial Revival landmark.

Murphy said in February that some cabins would be moved away from Lodge Creek, where planners are hoping cutthroat trout will be spawning in increasing numbers as efforts continue to reduce predatory lake trout numbers.

Planning documents do not include cost estimates or funding details. Improvements and capital construction are expected to occur over the next 10-15 years as specific funding becomes available from a variety of public and private sources.

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"Human Events" magazine - 04/27/2012 ET

Panel tells Park Service banning recreation defies common sense

by Audrey Hudson

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The National Park Service is pursuing a political agenda to eliminate recreational opportunities to appease their environmental allies without regard to local needs or its economic impact, Republican lawmakers said during a Friday hearing.

From new prohibitions on fishing, walking, driving, kite-flying and pets in many areas of the Outer Banks beaches of North Carolina to proposed rules in Florida to ban fishing and boating in key parts of the Biscayne Bay, the Interior Department's park agency drew the ire of the House Resources subcommittee on national parks, forests and public lands that conducted the oversight hearing.

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah), panel chairman, said it's "unfortunate that federal authorities have acquiesced to lawsuits by environmental activists," but that pending legislation would restore public access to the public lands.

"Someone has to bring reality back to the Interior Department," Bishop said. "Good grief! This is a recreation area and the only thing you seem to prohibit is recreation."

"The Park Service has an attitude that makes it uninviting for people to go there.

It's totally inconsistent with reality, it defies common sense and it's simply inappropriate," Bishop said.

"This looks wrong, it smells wrong, it's bad. When you go back to your colleagues, tell them once again they've screwed up. Fix it!" Bishop told the park service official testifying before the panel.

Rep. Walter Jones (R -N.C.) said he has authored legislation that would reopen 26 miles of beach that are now permanently closed to motorized access, and give seashore managers flexibility to implement more balanced measures that maximize both recreational access and protect certain bird species.

"Mr. Chairman, the bottom line here is that the federal government is unnecessarily blocking the public from a national seashore created for their recreation, and in so doing, it is destroying jobs," Jones said. "This bill is about jobs, it's about taxpayers' right to access the recreational areas they own, and it's about restoring balance and common sense to park service management."

Herbert Frost, associate director of Natural Resource Stewardship and Science at the park service, told the committee his agency "strongly opposes" Jones' bill to overturn the agency's decisions in North Carolina.

In devising the new rules, Frost said they balanced "appropriate public use" to the "greatest extent possible" while protecting the environment.

As to the effects of the rules already imposed on the Outer Banks, Frost said visitation numbers at the seashore are “stable.”

Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.), defended the park service’s actions and said “certain people don’t agree with the balance the park service” strives for to maintain dueling mandates to protect access and as well as the environment.

“Summer vacations are being planned as we speak and (visitors) will think there is no place to visit this summer. The last thing we want is conflict – we get enough of that with the kids in the back seat,” Grijalva said.

Both the Biscayne Bay proposal to protect the coral reef as well as the new rules on the Outer Banks is based on “sound science” in a “nonpartisan” manner, Grijalva said.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R –Fla.) said the proposed marine reserve zone in her home state would cover 10,000 acres “would close all fishing” and is “overly restrictive.”

“The loss of fishing opportunities, and their associated economic impacts, would be significant,” Ros-Lehtinen said.

“These park users consider the closure of the most popular and productive fishing waters draconian and based on flimsy, outdated and or simply feel-good speculation of perceived benefits,” Ros-Lehtinen said.

“We all share the same goal of ensuring healthy, vibrant, and sustainable park and fishery,” Ros-Lehtinen said. “With careful management our beloved Biscayne National Park will remain a jewel of our community and available for generations of visitors to respect and enjoy.”

Frost said that studies they have reviewed show the reef’s coral and fish resources have diminished, and that the biological integrity of the coral reef is suffering.

The Park Service’s proposal for the marine zone would give the coral reef “a reprieve to recover its health” while allowing snorkelers the opportunities to see an unfished coral reef system, Frost said.

“Coral reefs contain some of the most diverse ecosystems in the world, forming important habitat for thousands of corals, algae, fish, and other marine organisms,” Frost said. “They also serve as natural areas for recreation, boost the marine tourism economy, support recreational and commercial fisheries, protect coastlines from storm damage, and function as rich warehouses for genetic and species diversity.”

The Park Service has received 18,000 comments from the public on their plans, which they are still analyzing. However, Frost said their “initial analysis” indicated that 90 percent of those comments support the creation of a marine reserve zone.

Bishop warned that before making the same mistake in Florida as they did in North Carolina, they should listen to local concerns or they will find themselves “marching along a path that will lead to another conflict.”

Rep. John Duncan (R –Tenn.) said that in both cases, the park services “wants to turn these areas into their own personal playground and restrict access to ordinary people. It’s a very elitist type of attitude and it’s just disgusting to me.”

WEATHER**NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 252 AM MDT MON APR 30 2012

Today...Breezy...cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 42 to 48. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Isolated thunderstorms early in the evening. Numerous rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 27 to 33. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Gusts up to 35 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tuesday...Breezy...cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the morning... Then scattered rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

A SUGGESTION FROM ONE OF OUR READERS...

The photos of animals and visitors are fun, but wouldn't it be great to see photos of actual YELL employees at work or play in the park?

I would like to suggest that employees snap quick pics of each other in action - behind the desk, on the phone, on the radio, at the entrance station greeting visitors, plowing snow, on boundary patrol, on boat patrol, in the backcountry, in the front country, fixing equipment, hauling equipment, burning piles, picking up garbage, on the river, on a mountain, on a horse, etc., and send it in.

Your editors LOVE this idea.

Jay Elhard provided us a photo for last Wednesday. Tonya Matthews shared a photo with us featured in last Thursday's edition. So how about YOU?

Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at [YELL Public Affairs @nps.gov](mailto:YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov) (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

Back issues of the newsletter are available at [P:\YNP@Work Published Issues](#)