

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, January 2



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **unleaded fuel pumps at Madison and Norris** are not working at this time. Please plan your winter trips accordingly. You will all be notified when they are working correctly. Plumbing Shop is looking into the problem and we hope to have things up soon. At this point in time if you make sure your tanks are full before you leave either Canyon, Old Faithful, West or Mammoth and you should be fine for fuel on the snow machines. Thanks, Your Holiday Maintenance Staff

Treecycling Gives Holiday Trees a Second Life

Area residents are invited to recycle live trees and greens after the holidays. NPS staff will collect, chip, and re-use as mulch at the park's Stephens Creek Nursery. Collection dates: Dec. 26 - Jan. 31 Remove all decorations and drop-off at one of these locations:

Mammoth - Beside any dumpster
Gardiner - Designated area behind the
Heritage and Research Center
(Next to Gardiner School) Questions? Call: 307.344.2314

Mid-winter Bald & Golden Eagle Survey: Saturday January 12, 2013. Join us for this national effort to assess population trends and identify important wintering habitat for eagles. Several routes are available along Yellowstone's major river corridors. An optional training session will be held on January 10. All skill levels welcome. See the full announcement at P: Birds/Mid-winter Eagle Survey 2013.jpg. If interested send Lisa Baril (Lisa_Baril@partner.nps.gov) an email or call 307-344-2218. Thanks!

Tower Road Skiing: It was previously announced that the road between Tower Junction and the Old Buffalo Picnic area would be closed to all travel this winter due to the construction zone. After re-consideration we've decided to allow backcountry skiing and snowshoeing through this area. It will not, however, be groomed. Xanterra will still groom an alternate trail on the wagon road to Yancey's Hole as planned. Parking at the junction will be the same as in the past. Sorry for any confusion this may have caused. Brian Chan

Courier Rachel Cudmore's scheduled route is clockwise from Norris just like the past few years. Please let her know if you have any questions and again *If there is something urgent in the mail you need right away please let Rachel know so that it can have priority* in her packing.

With the holidays coming up the schedule will be a little jumbled:

Jan 2- REPLACEMENT RUN

Jan 4- Normal

Electric Peak Arts Council presents Jason DeShaw in concert at the Gardiner Community Center Friday at 7 pm. Dinner provided by the Gardiner Community Center at 5:30.

Jason DeShaw was born and raised on the prairies of Eastern Montana. His genuine, original music is all about "Livin', Lovin', and Leavin'" as Jason blends traditional country with his own new sound. With a back home feelin' and natural stage presence, Jason's music and personality draw in the crowd for a rockin' good time. Whether country fan or not, you will be amazed by the song and show of Jason DeShaw!

Prices: Dinner - Adults \$8, Children \$5; Concert - Adults \$8, Children \$5, Children 5 and under and Seniors 70 and over free

***SAVE THE DATE* Future Mammoth Community Center Potlucks**

Tuesday, January 8, 2013--Boardgame night
Tuesday, February 5, 2013--Chili Cook-Off/Spotlight Sledding
Tuesday, March 12, 2013--St. Patrick's Day Potluck
Tuesday, April 16, 2013--Walking Taco Tuesday
Tuesday, May 7, 2013--Potluck/Ice Cream Social

More details to follow....Stay tuned!

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 210 AM MST WED JAN 2 2013

Today: Partly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 14 to 20.

Tonight: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 6 below to 2 above zero.

Thursday: Not as cold. Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 23 to 29.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Jan Cauthorn-Page has retired! Jan began her NPS career in 1982 in Yosemite National Park and she finished her distinguished career on December 29, 2012 in Yellowstone National Park. In those 30 years she had the pleasure of working and living in Yosemite, Denali, Grand Teton, Glacier, and Yellowstone national parks. She held numerous positions that included Maintenance, Wildland Fire, Fee Collection and the last 22 years in the Protection/Law Enforcement Division. She remained a dedicated field Ranger in all the parks she worked, and was well respected and admired by her peers.

She looks forward to living under the same roof as her husband (also a Law Enforcement Ranger) and skiing from her doorstep in the Canyon District of Yellowstone National Park.

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Newsletter. The focus this month: Review some important self care measures for improving your health; Strength training is for *LIFE*-learn some tips for building strength; Alzheimer's Update; Managing *stress* at work; *Heads Up*-Is it a concussion?; What's eating you?-Hunger vs Emotional eating; and the Quick-Risk Assessment for workplace safety-How *safe* is your work space?.

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Sharepoint site: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> under Documents-Health and Wellness Information, folder Personal Best Documents, folder 2013: Personal Best 4 U Newsletter January 2013

YNP Wellness Incentive Program. Keep those club certification forms coming in to Stacey Gunther (EmSC Chair). The certification forms are due by **January 7th (this month)** for the reporting period of December 1-31 for any employee who participated in any or all of the 5 clubs and met the club goal. Five participants will earn a \$25.00 gift card!! Here's to your health!

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IN THE NEWS**Judge lets wolf season resume near Yellowstone**

By MATTHEW BROWN - Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) -- Wolf hunting and trapping can resume near Yellowstone National Park after a Montana judge on Wednesday blocked the state from shutting down the practice over concerns that too many animals used in research were being killed.

The restraining order from Judge Nels Swandal allows hunting and trapping to resume in areas east and west of the town of Gardiner in Park County.

State officials closed the gray wolf season in those areas on Dec. 10. That came after several wolves collared for scientific research were killed, drawing complaints from wildlife advocates.

The move prompted a lawsuit from sporting groups and a state lawmaker from Park County, Rep. Alan Redfield, who said the public was not given enough chance to weigh in on the closures.

In his order, Swandal sided with the plaintiffs. He said the lack of public notice appeared to violate the Montana Constitution and threatened to deprive the public of the legal right to harvest wolves.

He ordered the state "to immediately reinstitute and allow hunting and trapping of wolves in all areas of Park County."

A Jan. 14 hearing was scheduled in the case. The other plaintiffs are Citizens for Balanced Use, Big Game Forever, Montana Outfitters and Guides Association and Montana Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife.

A spokesman for the state, Ron Aasheim, said Montana wildlife commissioners followed proper public notice requirements before issuing the closures.

Wildlife advocate Marc Cooke said the lawsuit over the 60-square-mile closure area revealed the "irrational hatred" of some hunting and trapping supporters.

"You have 145,000 square miles in Montana, and they're fighting over a measly 60 square miles of land that is critical habitat for these animals. To me, it's very vindictive," he said.

Montana had an estimated 650 wolves at the end of 2011. Through Wednesday hunters reported killing 103 of the animals and trappers had killed at least 30 more.

State officials lifted quotas on wolves across most of Montana this spring in hopes of decreasing a predator population blamed for livestock attacks and driving down elk numbers in some areas.

But park officials said at least seven Yellowstone wolves - including five wearing tracking collars - were shot by hunters in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Also shot were four collared wolves originally from the park but now living outside it. Three more shot in the vicinity of the park had unknown origins and were not wearing collars, park officials said.

The current season marks Montana's first experience with wolf trapping since the animals lost their endangered species protections last year under an order from Congress.

Wolf hunting has also been contentious in Wyoming this season. The state took over wolf management from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Oct. 1, and hunters killed 43 wolves out of a 52-animal quota before Wyoming's hunt ended Dec. 31.

Coalitions of environmental groups have filed federal lawsuits, now pending in Washington, D.C., and Denver, seeking to force the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reclaim wolf management from Wyoming.

The groups say they're concerned that Wyoming's wolf management plan won't ensure long term survival of the species, which the federal government reintroduced into Yellowstone in the mid-1990s.

Wolves in Wyoming are classified as unprotected predators that may be shot on sight in most of the state. They're managed as trophy game animals in a flexible trophy hunting zone on the outskirts of Yellowstone.

Idaho also allows hunting and trapping of wolves, although it allows a maximum of 30 animals a year to be taken in a zone just outside Yellowstone. Through Wednesday, hunters and trappers in Idaho reported killing 154 wolves statewide, including 11 near Yellowstone.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: Last Update: 146 AM MST THU JAN 3 2013

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Funeral services will be held this Sunday for former Yellowstone employee Joe Karnes. They will take place at the Gardiner School at 1:00 p.m. There will be a potluck reception following the service. Condolences may be sent to Sandy Karnes at P.O. Box 485, Gardiner, MT 59303.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES - Take action! Federal Retirement Training. Attend this informational, hands-on, low-cost training to help you understand your government benefits and help you learn how to become financially ready to retire! All courses will be held in the Mammoth Community Center

January 29, 2013	8:00AM - 4:00PM	FERS Regular Retirement
January 30, 2013	8:00AM - 12:00PM	CSRS Regular Retirement
January 30, 2013	12:30PM - 4:30PM	CSRS & FERS FFTR/LEO Retirement
January 31, 2013	8:00AM - 4:00PM	FERS Regular Retirement

To register go to: <http://snowseminars.com/register/YellowstoneNationalPark/1230>

Modest prorated charges (~\$75 - \$150, tbd) will default to your Benefitting Account. Your Division, Budget Staff or Supervisor may make other payment arrangements. All Federal Employees & Spouses are welcome! For more information about these workshops, contact Bernie Adams, 344-2047. For more information about the vendor, please visit www.snowseminars.com

Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

- The Canyon Coach Trip on Saturday, January 12th is FULL. If you'd like to put your name on the waiting list, stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office or call Leigh Ann at x5224. There will be two more trips: February 17th and February 24th. Sign ups for the February trips will begin at the end of January. *Spots for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited.
- Weekly BINGO is every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Aspen Upstairs Lobby. It is \$.25/card for each game. Don't miss out on the fun!
- Pool tournaments are coming up! There will be one on Thursday, January 10th and Thursday, January 17th. Both will be in the Mammoth Employee Pub at 10:30 pm with an entry fee of \$5.
- The Grand Targhee Employee Ski Trip will be February 5 – 7 so start saving your money now. For more information, call Leigh Ann at x5224 or stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office.

Holidays are over, spring is still a few months away. **Want to learn to be a better gardener?** Montana Master Gardener program might be for you. This eight-week course is intended for beginner to intermediate gardeners who want to be more successful in vegetable or flower gardening and to better understand yard and garden maintenance.

Topics covered in the Level 1 Master Gardener Program include: an introduction to Montana State University Extension and the Master Gardener Program, soils and fertility, plant growth and development, flower and vegetable gardening, planting and maintaining trees and shrubs; an introduction to proper pruning and maintaining lawns; and an introduction to integrated pest management.

Course participants must pass an open book exam and satisfy the 20-hour volunteer commitment to receive a certificate of completion, a Montana Master Gardener t-shirt and pin.

The cost of the eight-week class is \$180, which includes the Montana Master Gardener Handbook and other course materials. Included in the cost is a \$70 deposit that is refunded upon completion of 20 hours of community volunteer commitment.

The eight week class for the Gardiner/Mammoth area would meet one weekday evening per week for approximately 2 hours. The course is taught via pre-recorded DVD learning modules presented by MSU Extension staff and MSU faculty. At this point there I am trying to gauge interest in offering such a program in Gardiner/Mammoth.

If this appeals to you, please contact me Temia Keel jomia426@gmail.com

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Newsletter. The focus this month: Review some important self care measures for improving your health; Strength training is for *LIFE*-learn some tips for building strength; Alzheimer's Update; Managing *stress* at work; *Heads Up*-Is it a concussion?; What's eating you?-Hunger vs Emotional eating; and the Quick-Risk Assessment for workplace safety-How *safe* is your work space?.

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IN THE NEWS**Tribes halt bison hunt near West Yellowstone**

LAURA LUNDQUIST, Bozeman Daily Chronicle Staff Writer

Posted: Thursday, January 3, 2013 6:00 pm · Updated: 6:16 pm, Thu Jan 3, 2013

After early season success, some Montana tribes have curtailed their Yellowstone bison hunt.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council agreed this week to close tribal bison hunting a month early in an area around West Yellowstone, effective Thursday.

Tom McDonald, manager of the tribes' Division of Fish, Wildlife, Recreation and Conservation, said he proposed the closure to avoid over-harvesting the West Yellowstone-area bison.

Tribal members with Salish-Kootenai tags can still hunt in the area north of Gardiner until Jan. 31.

Bison that migrate out of Yellowstone National Park near West Yellowstone are mostly from the park's central herd as opposed to the larger northern herd. This year, biologists estimated the central herd had about 1,600 bison, 100 more than the target population set by park wildlife managers.

After seeing that Salish-Kootenai hunters had killed more than half of the surplus bison, McDonald asked the tribal council to close the hunt.

"Other IBMP partners hunt there, and it wouldn't be fair for one partner to take all the bison in that area," McDonald said.

The Salish-Kootenai, along with the Intertribal Buffalo Council and the Nez Perce tribe, joined the Interagency Bison Management Plan partners in November 2009 and have hunted Yellowstone bison since 2006.

The West Yellowstone area is still open to hunters with FWP tags or Nez Perce and Umatilla tribal tags.

A Christmas Day bison-poaching incident was an unfortunate mistake and had no connection to the decision to close the hunt, McDonald said.

A Salish-Kootenai hunter from Billings shot three bison near West Yellowstone but had only two tags, McDonald said. Observers from the Buffalo Field Campaign witnessed the crime and called game wardens, who turned the hunter over to the tribes.

McDonald said the hunter was cited and the incident is being investigated.

The tribes' wildlife division spokeswoman, Germaine White, said mistakes can happen because tribal members haven't been allowed to hunt bison for long.

"There is a learning curve while we phase this back into our culture," White said. "The tribal council is very concerned about doing this right."

Andrea Jones, Region 3 spokeswoman for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, said FWP doesn't track bison kills as closely as the tribes. But she said she was aware of two FWP bison tags that had been filled, and members of other tribes have killed two more bison in the area.

McDonald said the Salish-Kootenai bison season starts and ends earlier than that of the state and other tribes. So most Salish-Kootenai hunters focus on the West Yellowstone area because bison tend to migrate there earlier in response to greater snow accumulation in the park's interior.

"We aren't even on the landscape anymore by the time they come out around Gardiner," McDonald said.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: Last Update: 157 AM MST FRI JAN 4 2013

Today: Mostly sunny. Patchy freezing fog in the morning. Highs 21 to 27.

Tonight: Mostly clear. Patchy freezing fog after midnight. Lows 2 below to 4 above zero.

Saturday: Sunny. Patchy freezing fog in the morning. Highs 21 to 27.

Saturday Night: Clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Patchy freezing fog after midnight. Lows 2 to 8.

Sunday: Partly cloudy. Patchy freezing fog in the morning. Highs 25 to 31. South winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Lows 7 to 13.

Monday: Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow. Highs 19 to 25.

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Monday, January 7, 2013



The Tower Gut Road was cleared of downed trees and is ready for skiing.
Sounds like the conditions are perfect! (Photo by Tom Schwartz)

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If you head out to the Tower Road area for some recreation, be aware of a conditioned fox in the area. The fox approached a couple on skis and snowshoes this past weekend and was not easily deterred.



Back by popular demand! MCC **Board Game Night/Potluck**
Tomorrow night, Tuesday, at 6 pm.
Bring a game or we will have some good ones to use.



Shout out for help! This Friday, January 11th, the Mammoth Community Center board members will be moving the **“Women’s Library”** from the Canteen to the MCC. There are thousands of books and truck loads of shelves that need to be moved. We are asking the community to join us for one hour or all day to get these books moved. Mike Laye was kind enough to scrub and wax the floor of the library and we are now set to get things moved. If you have some calories to burn, we can help! Please email Karin Schwartz if you will be able to participate at Karin_Schwartz@nps.gov. Kids are certainly invited to help!

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If this appeals to you, please contact me **BY 5P ON FRIDAY JANUARY 11TH**. Temia Keel
jomia426@gmail.com.

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IN THE NEWS

Study finds small success for whitebark pine

8 hours ago • By [Brett French](#)

Whitebark pine trees have no defense against mountain pine beetles, which recently cycled through an epidemic in the West that was unprecedented in human history.

The tiny beetles, about the size of a grain of rice, have co-evolved with lodgepole pine trees, their preferred food source. Lodgepole pines grow at lower elevations and are quicker to reproduce than whitebark pine, which thrive at high elevations and take about 80 years to produce their first seeds.

Over centuries, lodgepole pine trees have developed ways to fight off the beetle attacks, such as chemicals toxic to the insect as well as ways to disrupt the beetle's chemical communication system.

Yet when the beetles reach a stand of mid-elevation trees where there are both lodgepole and whitebark pine trees, the beetles attack the lodgepole, despite the fact that the whitebark is more defenseless.

"This was one of the eureka moments in our study," said Phil Townsend, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, who has spent six years performing research in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem on pine beetles. "In these transition zones where you have both species, the whitebark pines are surviving.

"The mountain pine beetle hasn't figured out that the whitebark pine is a better host," he added.

"But if you move up in elevation into pure whitebark pine stands, the mountain pine beetle doesn't know the difference and will take them all out," he said.

The results of Townsend's research were recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The findings are a small victory for whitebark pine in what has otherwise been a pretty dour decade. In 2011, the trees were approved as a candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act, meaning they were threatened but the federal government has more pressing species to deal with first.

Whitebark pine is a high-mountain survivor, growing at elevations and in cold conditions conducive to few other tree species. Some of the trees are 1,000 years old. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, about 44 percent of the trees are found in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Washington. The rest live in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada.

Although not a commercial timber, whitebark's seeds provide food for squirrels, birds and grizzly bears. Its canopy also helps shade snow from melting, allowing for slower spring runoff. But warmer winters have allowed mountain pine beetles to climb to elevations they previously avoided, taking a toll on the slow-growing trees. They also are threatened by white pine blister rust, an invasive and fatal disease that has devastated other stands of white pines across the United States.

Because whitebark live in such isolated "islands" high atop mountains, Townsend believes that the genetics between stands may be different. With enough searching, he said, maybe a whitebark pine could be found that has developed defenses against mountain pine beetles.

"Now we need to look more broadly at that whole range," he said. "We're trying to look at the genetics and find a place where whitebark pine is bucking the trend. Then we could use them as a seed source and gain more information to come up with solutions to protect this ecosystem."

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/study-finds-small-success-for-whitebark-pine/article_7304da40-be83-589b-9336-bed8a431705c.html#ixzz2HIoMmL3D

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 219 AM MST MON JAN 7 2013

Today: Breezy...cloudy. Occasional flurries in the morning...then chance of snow in the afternoon. Highs 17 to 23. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Tonight: Breezy. Snow likely in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Areas of blowing snow through the night. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 10 to 16. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Tuesday: Breezy. Cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Areas of blowing snow. Highs 22 to 28. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Tuesday Night: Breezy. Cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Areas of blowing snow. Lows 13 to 19. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday: Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Occasional flurries. Highs 27 to 33. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday Night: Cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Lows 13 to 19.

Thursday: Cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Highs 21 to 27.

Thursday Night: Colder. Cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Lows 3 to 9.

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Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo 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!

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, January 8, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On the evening of Thurs. Dec. 27th, Xanterra employee Jeff Henry **lost a gray Dana design duffel** bag off his snowmobile trailer. It is believed to have fallen off between Madison and Old Faithful, sometime after 6pm.

Strong efforts have been made to attempt to find this duffel, and it is believed that someone picked it up. It contains some clothing, books and medications which Jeff would very much appreciate getting back. If you have located this duffel, please contact the VSO lost and found at 307 344-2107. Thanks for any help you can provide.

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January 29, 2013	8:00AM - 4:00PM	FERS Regular Retirement
January 30, 2013	8:00AM - 12:00PM	CSRS Regular Retirement
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To register go to: <http://snowseminars.com/register/YellowstoneNationalPark/1230>

Modest prorated charges (~\$75 - \$150, tbd) will default to your Benefitting Account. Your Division, Budget Staff or Supervisor may make other payment arrangements. All Federal Employees & Spouses are welcome! For more information about these workshops, contact Bernie Adams, 344-2047. For more information about the vendor, please visit www.snowseminars.com

If you head out to the Tower Road area for some recreation, be aware of a conditioned fox in the area. The fox approached a couple on skis and snowshoes this past weekend and was not easily deterred.



Back by popular demand! MCC **Board Game Night/Potluck**
Tonight at 6 pm.
Bring a game or we will have some good ones to use.



Shout out for help! This Friday, January 11th, the Mammoth Community Center board members will be moving the **“Women’s Library”** from the Canteen to the MCC. There are thousands of books and truck loads of shelves that need to be moved. We are asking the community to join us for one hour or all day to get these books moved. Mike Laye was kind enough to scrub and wax the floor of the library and we are now set to get things moved. If you have some calories to burn, we can help! Please email Karin Schwartz if you will be able to participate at Karin_Schwartz@nps.gov. Kids are certainly invited to help!

Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

- The Canyon Coach Trip on Saturday, January 12th is FULL. If you’d like to put your name on the waiting list, stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office or call Leigh Ann at x5224. There will be two more trips: February 17th and February 24th. Signups for the February trips will begin at the end of January. *Spots for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited.
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The eight week class for the Gardiner/Mammoth area would meet one weekday evening per week for approximately 2 hours. The course is taught via pre-recorded DVD learning modules presented by MSU Extension staff and MSU faculty. At this point I am trying to gauge interest in offering such a program in Gardiner/Mammoth.

If this appeals to you, please contact me **BY 5P ON FRIDAY JANUARY 11TH.** Temia Keel
jomia426@gmail.com.

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Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Newsletter. The focus this month: Review some important self care measures for improving your health; Strength training is for *LIFE*-learn some tips for building strength; Alzheimer's Update; Managing *stress* at work; *Heads Up*-Is it a concussion?; What's eating you?-Hunger vs. Emotional eating; and the Quick-Risk Assessment for workplace safety-How *safe* is your work space?.

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SharePoint site: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> under Documents-Health and Wellness Information, folder Personal Best Documents, folder 2013: Personal Best 4 U Newsletter January 2013

IN THE NEWS

Judge upholds Montana's free-roaming-bison plan

17 hours ago • Associated Press

Montana's decision to let migrating bison roam freely across 70,000 acres outside Yellowstone National Park was upheld by a court ruling Monday that dismissed a pair of lawsuits challenging the policy.

District Judge E. Wayne Phillips issued a 78-page ruling in which he sided with state officials and conservation groups that have sought to ease restrictions on bison movements.

Thousands of bison flood out of Yellowstone during severe winters. In the past, the animals were subject to mass slaughters over fears they could spread the disease brucellosis to livestock.

The slaughters were blocked by Gov. Brian Schweitzer two winters ago after cattle numbers declined outside Yellowstone and federal officials reduced the penalties for states that have brucellosis outbreaks.

But when hundreds of bison were allowed to return to the Gardiner Basin, local officials said they posed a threat to safety and destroyed private property.

Park County and groups representing ranchers sued the state in 2011 with a pair of lawsuits that sought to keep bison out of the basin.

Attorneys for the plaintiffs argued the animals were a threat to public safety and their presence outside the park increased the risk of disease.

In his ruling, Phillips acknowledged the plaintiffs' struggles with bison, but said those were an unavoidable consequence of living in Montana with its abundant wildlife.

State officials "do not have a statutory duty to ensure that no harm is incurred by a Montana resident by a wild animal," he said.

He added that damage done by bison to fences and other private property in the Gardiner Basin "does not rise to the level of an interference that is both substantial and unreasonable."

A lawyer representing conservationists who intervened in the case said the ruling was crucial to efforts to make more room for the animals outside the park.

"This was a key test of the question of will Montana make room for bison," said Tim Preso, an attorney for the group Earthjustice. "After decades of hazing and slaughtering bison and some habitat protection, the state saw there was a better way forward."

Park County Attorney Brett Linneweber said the plaintiffs have 60 days to decide whether to appeal to the Montana Supreme Court.

But Linneweber said it was "nonsensical" to believe more bison in areas where people live would not pose a danger to the public. He also criticized the state for disregarding more acceptable alternatives, such as transporting bison that leave the park to American Indian reservations.

He warned that the expansion of the bison's range will continue regardless of local community concerns.

The state has advocated relocating some Yellowstone bison to reservations and public lands, and last year moved a small batch of the animals to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in eastern Montana. Those efforts have been fiercely fought by ranching groups and others.

Linneweber said he would have to confer with the county's co-plaintiffs, the Montana Farm Bureau Federation and Park County Stockgrowers Association, before deciding whether to appeal.

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/judge-upholds-montana-s-free-roaming-bison-plan/article_408d2a67-d999-5aa0-a761-5068bd7c37f1.html#ixzz2HOb3CwE2

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 228 AM MST TUE JAN 8 2013

Today: Breezy. Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Areas of blowing snow. Highs 20 to 26. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Tonight: Breezy. Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Areas of blowing snow. Lows 12 to 18. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday: Breezy. Not as cold. Mostly cloudy. Occasional flurries. Highs 28 to 34. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday Night: Breezy...cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 15 to 21. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 30 percent.

Thursday: Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Highs 22 to 28.

Thursday Night: Colder. Snow likely. Light snow accumulations. Lows zero to 6 above. Chance of snow 60 percent.

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, January 9, 2013



Dr. Keel and Miya Ross playing chess at the MCC Board Game Potluck!
Thanks for all those who attended and if you didn't make it this time, we hope to see you at spotlight sledding and chili cook-off in February. (photo by K. Schwartz)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



We are in ***dire*** need of help Friday 1/11 moving 1000's of books and 27 large, wooden book shelves from below the Credit Union to the MCC library. Please let Karin Schwartz (Karin_Schwartz@nps.gov) know if you will be able to help for **any amount of time** this Friday. Kids are certainly invited to help! We plan on starting at 10:00 am at the Yellowstone Credit Union.

*****Even if you can't lift and carry, you can help direct and organize.*****

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For more information, contact Darl Williams in HR at x2042.

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Employee Safety Committee-Wellness

Congratulations to all who participated in the **Wellness Incentive Program** during the month of December. Names have been drawn from among those who participated in each of the 5 clubs. The following employees will receive a \$25.00 gift card (or non-monetary award for VIP's) for their participation.

Club #1 (Aerobic Exercise): Pat Bigelow, YCR

Club #2 (Strength Training/Flexibility): Christine Farrar, RVP

Club #3 (Healthy Stress Reduction): Rachel Cudmore, RVP

Club #4 (Healthy Nutrition): Sonya Anderson, Admin.

Club #5 (Lifestyle Choices): Mary Kay Woodin, Admin.

All employees are encouraged to participate in the Wellness Incentive Program (WIP). Full program details can be found here: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> then click on the YNP WIP link in the top left corner of the page. Certification forms for the month of January are due to Stacey Gunther by February 5th. Here's to your health!

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Mark your calendars!

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February 5	Spotlight Sledding/Chili Cook-off
March 12	St. Patty's Day Potluck/Beer tasting
April 16	Walking Taco Potluck
May 7	Potluck/Ice Cream Sundae Night

All are welcome! Hope to see YOU there!

Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

- The Canyon Coach Trip on Saturday, January 12th is FULL. If you'd like to put your name on the waiting list, stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office or call Leigh Ann at x5224. There will be two more trips: February 17th and February 24th. Signups for the February trips will begin at the end of January. *Spots for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited.
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- Pool tournaments are coming up! There will be one on Thursday, January 10th and Thursday, January 17th. Both will be in the Mammoth Employee Pub at 10:30 pm with an entry fee of \$5.
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If this appeals to you, please contact me **BY 5P ON FRIDAY JANUARY 11TH**. Temia Keel
jomia426@gmail.com.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 223 AM MST WED JAN 9 2013

Today: Breezy. Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 30 to 36. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Tonight: Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight.

Lows 15 to 21. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Thursday: Snow likely in the morning...then snow in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 2 to 4 inches. Highs 22 to 28. South winds around 15 mph early in the morning. Chance of snow 80 percent.

Thursday Night: Colder...snow. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 4 to 7 inches. Lows 1 below to 5 above zero. Chance of snow 90 percent.

Friday: Colder. Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Highs 6 to 12.

Friday Night: Colder. Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Lows 4 below to 10 below zero.

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Thursday, January 10, 2013

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We are in **dire** need of help **tomorrow** moving 1000's of books and 27 large, wooden book shelves from below the Credit Union to the MCC library. Please let Karin Schwartz (Karin_Schwartz@nps.gov) know if you will be able to help for **any amount of time** this Friday. Kids are certainly invited to help! We plan on starting at 10:00 am at the Yellowstone Credit Union.

*****Even if you can't lift and carry, you can help direct and organize.*****

The Mammoth Clinic will be closed on Tuesday, January 15.

FOUND! A **winter hat** was left at the MCC Board Game potluck. Call 344-2013 to claim it!

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WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

The National Weather Service in Riverton has issued a **Winter Weather Advisory** until 5PM Friday for **Yellowstone National Park** until 5PM Friday. Snow will spread across the park this morning and continue through the day Friday. there could be a lull this afternoon and early evening with snow increasing again later this evening through Friday. The heaviest snow will likely fall tonight and Friday morning. Snow accumulations: 6 to 12 inches in southern portions of the park with lesser amounts to the north.

The National Weather Service in Great Falls has issued a **Winter Storm Warning** until 11PM Friday for much of Southwest Montana including **West Yellowstone, Bozeman and Bozeman Pass**. Snow... heavy at times... will develop over the region this morning. Accumulating snowfall will continue through tonight and into Friday. Areas of blowing snow... especially on Friday... will also reduce visibilities. Expect roadways to gradually become snow and ice covered today. Snow accumulations: at lower elevations, expect total snow accumulations of 7 to 12 inches, with isolated amounts up to 15 inches. In the mountains, expect total snow accumulations of 1 to 2 feet, with isolated amounts up to 3 feet.

The National Weather Service in Billings has issued a **Winter Storm Warning** from noon today until 6AM Saturday for much of Central Montana including **Paradise Valley, Livingston, and Cooke City**. Snow will develop this afternoon and will become heavy at times tonight into early Friday. Snow will taper off Friday evening. Snow accumulation: 8 to 12 inches of snow is expected by the time the snow ends Friday night. 1 to 2 feet of snow is expected over northeast facing slopes, including the mountains near Red Lodge. Lesser amounts can be expected over west facing slopes and mountains around Cooke City.

The National Weather Service in Riverton has issued a **Winter Storm Warning** until 5PM Friday for **Jackson Hole**. Snow accumulations: .5 to 9 inches, with the highest amounts in the northern portion of the Jackson Valley.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 252 AM MST THU JAN 10 2013

Today: Snow in the morning...then numerous snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 2 to 4 inches. Highs 27 to 33. South winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow near 100 percent.

Tonight: Snow. Snow accumulation of 5 to 8 inches. Lows 1 below to 5 above zero. Chance of snow near 100 percent.

Friday: Colder. Snow in the morning...then snow likely in the afternoon. Areas of blowing snow through the day. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 8 to 16 inches. Highs 4 to 10. North winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow near 100 percent. Wind chill readings 12 below to 22 below zero.

Friday Night: Colder. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow in the evening. Lows 8 below to 16 below zero. North winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of snow 30 percent.

Saturday: Partly cloudy. Highs 1 to 7. Lowest wind chill readings 17 below to 27 below zero in the morning.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy. Lows 7 below to 13 below zero.

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Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo 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!

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, January 11, 2013



NPS Aquatic Ecologist Jeff Arnold receiving his 10 year service award.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fee Free Days: FYI - West Entrance staff recently asked if MLK weekend (3 days) would be fee free; this year only MLK Day, Jan 21 is free. The 2013 fee free dates are posted on Inside NPS at the following link - <http://www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm>

Other changes include the length of free entry during National Parks Week, it used to be 9 days (Sat to Sun), this year it's 5 days, Mon to Fri. April 22-26. We are also going back to a free day on Aug 25, which will be the only free day during the summer.

If you have any questions, please call VSO.



The assistance needed at Yellowstone Credit Union to help move the “woman’s library” to the MCC has been changed to **next Friday Jan. 18** at 10:00 am. Any **amount of time** will help. Kids are certainly invited to help!

Even if you can’t lift and carry, you can help direct and organize.

The **Employee Rec Center** has spots available for tomorrow's Canyon coach trip – Saturday, January 12th!! Stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office or call Leigh Ann at 344-5224 to sign up or for more information.

Traveling out of the park into Montana? Check out the state's road Web cams before you go at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis_google.shtml

The Mammoth Clinic will be closed on Tuesday, January 15.

FOUND! A **winter hat** was left at the MCC Board Game potluck. Call 344-2013 to claim it!

My Green Parks Video Contest: This past August, the Sustainable Operations and Climate Change Branch of the Park Facility Management Division sponsored the Second Annual National Park Service - My Green Parks Video (MGP) Contest. The contest encourages parks, regions and programs to develop a short 2 to 3 minute video sharing their "green" accomplishments. Since 2011, twenty-six NPS entities including parks, programs and regional offices participated in the contest. This year's videos were evaluated based on three criteria, including (1) quality and innovation of the project, (2) community and /or partner engagement, and (3) interpretation of these projects to our visitors.

And the winners are:

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Topics covered in the Level 1 Master Gardener Program include: an introduction to Montana State University Extension and the Master Gardener Program, soils and fertility, plant growth and development, flower and vegetable gardening, planting and maintaining trees and shrubs; an introduction to proper pruning and maintaining lawns; and an introduction to integrated pest management.

Course participants must pass an open book exam and satisfy the 20-hour volunteer commitment to receive a certificate of completion, a Montana Master Gardener t-shirt and pin.

The cost of the eight-week class is \$180, which includes the Montana Master Gardener Handbook and other course materials. Included in the cost is a \$70 deposit that is refunded upon completion of 20 hours of community volunteer commitment.

The eight week class for the Gardiner/Mammoth area would meet one weekday evening per week for approximately 2 hours. The course is taught via pre-recorded DVD learning modules presented by MSU Extension staff and MSU faculty. At this point I am trying to gauge interest in offering such a program in Gardiner/Mammoth.

If this appeals to you, please contact me **BY 5 TODAY**. Temia Keel jomia426@gmail.com.

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To register go to: <http://snowseminars.com/register/YellowstoneNationalPark/1230>

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Employees may access the January edition of the Wellness Newsletter by clicking on the website link below OR by going to the Employee Safety Committee SharePoint site where this and all previous editions are saved as pdf documents. Feel free to print and share this information with your family.

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Mark your calendars!

TODAY	Library moving day
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IN THE PRESS**FWP expects to revisit wolf trapping closures near Yellowstone Park**January 13, 2013 6:30 am • By EVE BYRON Independent Record

HELENA — A plan to close two areas to wolf trapping just north of Yellowstone National Park will be the topic of a special Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission conference call, with commission members trying to "short circuit" a legal challenge to the closure.

Commissioner Dan Vermillion said a hearing is set for Monday on a lawsuit filed over the trapping closures east and west of the town of Gardiner in Park County. The primary concern of the closure's opponents is that there wasn't a proper public process associated with the FWP decision.

Vermillion was the only one of the five commissioners to vote against the motion, saying he didn't think the change was necessary.

"I suggest the commission look at having a January meeting by phone, where we put the matter out for public notice now so that the commission can revisit this and allow people time to weigh in," Vermillion said. "I opposed the decision but I think the public process was correct. But maybe we can short circuit the judge's decision and have more time for public comment."

The commission tentatively set the date for the conference call for Jan. 29. Commissioner Bob Ream noted, however, that if the judge rules in their favor there's no need for the extra January meeting. Montana's wolf hunting regulations allow the commission can close the wolf season at any time.

Earlier this month, District Court Judge Nels Swandal ordered FWP to reopen wolf hunting and trapping immediately, saying that the commission may have failed to offer sufficient public notice about the closure at its Dec. 10 meeting.

The lawsuit was filed by four sporting groups and a rancher, who alleged their right to participate in government and right to know about deliberations, under the Montana Constitution, were violated.

Montana statute 2-3-103 provides that a state agency "may not take action on any matter discussed unless specific

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/fwp-expects-to-revisit-wolf-trapping-closures-near-yellowstone-park/article_136e944e-6ab9-5e8a-bd55-f109f4f1cdf2.html#ixzz2HxvsfOyO

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Tonight: Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Lows 6 below to zero.

Tuesday: Not as cold. Cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning...then slight chance of snow in the afternoon. Highs 13 to 19. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 1 to 7.

Wednesday: Not as cold. Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 20 to 28.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 1 below to 7 above zero.

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FOUND! Someone left a **glasses case** at CSS sometime in the last couple of weeks. It is hard sided, brown and says "lafont" on it. Call to claim - 2062.

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Saturday, January 19th is the National Day of Service which corresponds with the Presidential Inauguration and the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. This promotes the spirit of volunteerism and serves to build a sense of community, as people work together to make a difference.

There are several opportunities in the Bozeman area to volunteer this Saturday – Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter, Eagle Mount (a non-profit organization that works with disabled individuals), etc.

You can register at the following link: <http://www.2013pic.org/service/serve>

What a great opportunity to give back.

Tom Mazzarisi at the Northeast Entrance has a number of furniture items, exercise equipment, washer/dryer, etc for sale. Contact Tom; Thursday-Monday at 307-344-2635.

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SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS – Yellowstone Association Institute

The Yellowstone Association, in partnership with the National Park Service, connects people to Yellowstone National Park and our natural world through education. We are now seeking applicants for our summer seasonal instructors who share their passion for Yellowstone while working in the field. Think you might be a good fit? Check out www.yellowstoneassociation.org/jobs for a complete position description!

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Modest prorated charges (~\$75 - \$150, tbd) will default to your Benefitting Account. Your Division, Budget Staff or Supervisor may make other payment arrangements. All Federal Employees & Spouses are welcome! For more information about these workshops, contact Bernie Adams, 344-2047. For more information about the vendor, please visit www.snowseminars.com

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Newsletter. The focus this month: Review some important self care measures for improving your health; Strength training is for *LIFE*-learn some tips for building strength;

Alzheimer's Update; Managing *stress* at work; *Heads Up*-Is it a concussion?; What's eating you?-Hunger vs. Emotional eating; and the Quick-Risk Assessment for workplace safety-How *safe* is your work space?.

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Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

- There will be two more Canyon Coach trips: February 17th and February 24th. Signups for the February trips will begin at the end of January. *Spots for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited.
- Weekly BINGO is every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Aspen Upstairs Lobby. It is \$.25/card for each game. Don't miss out on the fun!
- Pool tournaments are coming up! There will be one on Thursday, January 10th and Thursday, January 17th. Both will be in the Mammoth Employee Pub at 10:30 pm with an entry fee of \$5.
- The Grand Targhee Employee Ski Trip will be February 5 – 7 so start saving your money now. For more information, call Leigh Ann at x5224 or stop by the Parkwide Recreation Office.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 153 AM MST TUE JAN 15 2013

Today: Cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning...then slight chance of snow in the afternoon. Highs 13 to 19. West winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of snow 40 percent. Lowest wind chill readings 15 below to 25 below zero in the morning.

Tonight: Mostly cloudy then becoming mostly clear after midnight then becoming partly cloudy. Patchy fog early in the morning. Lows 1 to 7.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 20 to 26. West winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 4 below to 6 above zero.

Thursday: Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 23 to 29.

Thursday Night: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 2 below to 6 above zero.

WE WANT YOUR SUBMISSIONS!

Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo 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!

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, January 16, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOUND! Someone left a **glasses case** at CSS sometime in the last couple of weeks. It is hard sided, brown and says "lafont" on it. Call to claim - 2062.

FOUND! A girl's **winter hat** was left at the MCC Board Game potluck. If I don't hear something by Thursday, the hat will be turned into the Park Service Lost and Found and can be claimed at 307-344-2107. Call today at 344-2013 to claim it!



The assistance needed at Yellowstone Credit Union to help move the "woman's library" to the MCC has been **changed** to **next Friday Jan. 18** at 10:00 am. Any **amount of time** will help.

*****Even if you can't lift and carry, you can help direct and organize. *****

Saturday, January 19th is the National Day of Service which corresponds with the Presidential Inauguration and the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. This promotes the spirit of volunteerism and serves to build a sense of community, as people work together to make a difference.

There are several opportunities in the Bozeman area to volunteer this Saturday – Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter, Eagle Mount (a non-profit organization that works with disabled individuals), etc.

You can register at the following link: <http://www.2013pic.org/service/serve>

What a great opportunity to give back.

Tom Mazzarisi at the Northeast Entrance has a number of furniture items, exercise equipment, washer/dryer, etc for sale. Contact Tom; Thursday-Monday at 307-344-2635.

Hello all! This is a reminder that the **Grand Targhee sign up deadline is TOMORROW**. Sign up as soon as possible! For more information or to sign up, please stop by or call Leigh Ann in the Parkwide Recreation Office at 344-5224.

SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS – Yellowstone Association Institute

The Yellowstone Association, in partnership with the National Park Service, connects people to Yellowstone National Park and our natural world through education. We are now seeking applicants for our summer seasonal instructors who share their passion for Yellowstone while working in the field. Think you might be a good fit? Check out www.yellowstoneassociation.org/jobs for a complete position description!

Fee Free Days: FYI - West Entrance staff recently asked if MLK weekend (3 days) would be fee free; this year only MLK Day, Jan 21 is free. The 2013 fee free dates are posted on Inside NPS at the following link - <http://www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm>

Other changes include the length of free entry during National Parks Week, it used to be 9 days (Sat to Sun), this year it's 5 days, Mon to Fri. April 22-26. We are also going back to a free day on Aug 25, which will be the only free day during the summer.

If you have any questions, please call VSO.

Traveling out of the park into Montana? Check out the state's road Web cams before you go at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis_google.shtml



My Green Parks Video Contest: This past August, the Sustainable Operations and Climate Change Branch of the Park Facility Management Division sponsored the Second Annual National Park Service - My Green Parks Video (MGP) Contest. The contest encourages parks, regions and programs to develop a short 2 to 3 minute

video sharing their "green" accomplishments. Since 2011, twenty-six NPS entities including parks, programs and regional offices participated in the contest. This year's videos were evaluated based on three criteria, including (1) quality and innovation of the project, (2) community and /or partner engagement, and (3) interpretation of these projects to our visitors.

And the winners are:

1st Place- Grand Canyon National Park - "Green is Grand"

2nd Place- Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park - "Glacier Powered Vehicles"

3rd Place- Yellowstone National Park - "Protect Yourself and Yellowstone: "Carry and Recycle Bear Spray"

To view all of the videos, including the contest winners, please visit the **My Green Parks Bulletin Board** at <http://mygreenparks.nps.gov>.

Important Payroll Tax Change: Last week, Congress passed a bill that protects the majority of Americans from an income tax hike. However, most Federal employees will see less money in their paychecks due to the end of the payroll tax holiday. As you may recall, the government reduced the payroll tax funding Social Security from a rate of 6.2 percent to 4.2 percent in 2010 and 2011 to help stimulate the economy. The rate has now reverted to 6.2 percent which means most employees will see a reduction in their paychecks. The change in the payroll tax is effective during Pay Period 1 and will be seen in paychecks that are issued on Tuesday, January 8, 2013. You can find the change on your leave and earnings statement under the OASDI (Old age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance) category.

For more information, contact Darl Williams in HR at x2042.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES - Take action! Federal Retirement Training. Attend this informational, hands-on, low-cost training to help you understand your government benefits and help you learn how to become financially ready to retire! All courses will be held in the Mammoth Community Center

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- The big screen movie next week will be “Ted”. This will be on Friday, January 25th at 7:00 pm in the Aspen dorm upstairs lobby.

IN THE PRESS

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to leave cabinet position in March

POSTED: 01/16/2013 12:01:00 AM MST UPDATED: 01/16/2013 08:11:24 AM MST

By Allison Sherry *The Denver Post*

WASHINGTON — Interior Secretary Ken Salazar will step down from his cabinet position in the Obama administration and return to Colorado to spend time with his family, his office has confirmed to The Denver Post.

Salazar is expected to broadly announce his departure Wednesday. He has told President Barack Obama that he intends to leave his job by the end of March.

Salazar, 57, will have served a little more than four years in Obama's cabinet after being plucked from his beloved U.S. Senate seat serving Colorado in 2008.

His decision on whether to stay on at the helm of Interior or return to Colorado — and likely the less-glamorous but more-lucrative private sector — has been weighing on Salazar for a long time.

The president and the vice president have indicated they would like him to stay on at Interior. Obama, at a campaign event in Pueblo last year, called Salazar "one of the finest senators that the state of Colorado ever had, who is now doing a great job looking after the natural resources of this beautiful country of ours."

Last fall, Salazar spent much his personal time campaigning for Obama in Colorado. When badgered about his future by local and national reporters, he usually demurred, saying he wanted to get the president re-elected before thinking about it.

The secretary is not shy talking about how much he loves his job as steward of the country's public lands. He often says the Department of Interior is really the Department of America.

"As I think about my role as secretary of the Interior, it is perhaps the most wonderful job of any cabinet position in the United States," Salazar said in December. "I would not trade it for attorney general or Housing and Urban Development or Transportation because I would find those jobs a little boring."

But the pull of family obligations — he and his wife are primary caretakers of their 5-year-old granddaughter who has autism and is enrolled in a special school — was too great to commit to four more years, Salazar's office said.

His days in Washington are long. Some weeks he spends 16 hours a day traveling from one far-flung location to the other — from some pristine causeway in California to the Hurricane Sandy-ravaged New Jersey coast.

Salazar has said in his four years he is most proud of improving the relationship the federal government has with American Indians, cleaning up the oil and gas program after former departments were plagued with scandal and nepotism, and broadening a clean energy agenda.

The secretary established seven new national parks and 10 new wildlife refuges. He also launched 18 utility-scale solar energy projects on public lands. Before 2009, there were hundreds of pending applications but no construction projects approved.

He has also dealt with several natural and environmental disasters, including the explosion of a BP-operated deep water oil well, Deepwater Horizon, in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010.

Roughly 53,000 gallons of crude poured into the sea a day for nearly three months. While weathering criticism, Salazar issued a moratorium on new offshore drilling leases and launched an aggressive overhaul of safety standards for offshore oil and gas development.

In his push to grow regulations for domestic energy production on federal lands — particularly post Deepwater Horizon — he often tangled with House Republicans, many of whom have called him one of the worst Interior secretaries in the history of the United States.

Salazar usually fired back. In an April 2012 speech at the National Press Club, he called House Republicans "charter members of the Flat Earth Society" who lived in an imaginary energy world of "fairy tales."

"It's a place where up is seen as down, where left is seen as right, where oil shale seems to be mistaken every day in the U.S. House of Representative for shale oil, where record profits justify billions of dollars in subsidies," he said.

Salazar's future in politics — at least in Colorado — is unclear.

Many old Democratic hands would love to see him seek statewide office again, though the high-profile seats are tied up with other Democrats, Gov. John Hickenlooper and Sens. Mark Udall and Michael Bennet.

Should Hickenlooper decide to run for — and win — a second term, he would be governor until 2018. Udall has already announced his 2014 re-election campaign and Bennet doesn't have to run again until 2016.

Read more:[Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to leave cabinet position in March - The Denver Post](http://www.denverpost.com/politics/ci_22382151/interior-secretary-ken-salazar-leave-cabinet-position-march#ixzz2I9VfUj3i)http://www.denverpost.com/politics/ci_22382151/interior-secretary-ken-salazar-leave-cabinet-position-march#ixzz2I9VfUj3i

Y'stone wolves down 25%

Loss of collared wolves complicates tracking and research, internal park correspondence shows.

By Mike Koshmrl, Jackson Hole, Wyo. January 16, 2013

Natural deaths, run-ins with humans and hunting have combined to cut Yellowstone National Park's wolf populations by about a quarter.

The latest count shows 15 wolves that ventured into Yellowstone over the past year were legally killed in Idaho, Montana or Wyoming hunts.

Eight to 11 of those animals spent the majority of the last year in the park and would likely have been counted toward official 2012 year-end population tallies.

At least six and as many as nine wolves from packs that sometimes roam into Grand Teton National Park had been killed through Nov. 7, reports show.

Information on wolf kills over the last eight weeks of the season, however, is unavailable, Grand Teton spokeswoman Jackie Skaggs said.

In Yellowstone, where a legal debate swirls over trapping in Montana north of the park, there are now an estimated 20 to 28 percent fewer wolves than the 98 counted at this time last year, said Dan Stahler, a wildlife biologist with the Yellowstone Wolf Project.

"We're looking at an estimate between 71 and 78 wolves right now," Stahler said in a phone interview. "That's in nine wolf packs. Out of those wolf packs, six will be considered a breeding pair for the coming year."

Despite the drop, Yellowstone's wolf population is still well above recovery goals laid out in the Wyoming wolf management plan.

Under the plan, the national park is expected to have a minimum of 50 wolves and five breeding pairs.

Had it not been for hunting-related losses, Yellowstone would have had a mostly stable wolf population, Stahler said.

A substantial human impact on Yellowstone's wolves is inconsistent with the National Park Service's goal of "managing biological resources" to "minimize human intervention," a report about wolf hunting on Yellowstone's website shows.

Yellowstone officials tried to minimize the impact of hunting on park wolves, email and other correspondence between park and state officials shows. Information included in this story uses documents the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Before the 2010 and 2011 hunting seasons, Yellowstone officials lobbied for a buffer zone with reduced quotas in hunt areas adjacent to the park in Montana.

A June 17, 2011, letter from Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk to Joe Maurier, director of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, shows park managers' efforts.

Wenk wrote that the state's proposed 2011 subquota of three wolves in a deer and elk hunting district that is part of Wolf Management Unit 390 "adequately protects packs along the northern boundary of the park."

But, he said, a 19-wolf quota in the state's Wolf Management Unit 310 in the Gallatin and Madison mountains, "could substantially impact packs that venture from Yellowstone National Park into areas around Gardiner and West Yellowstone, Mont., that are open to hunting."

The park superintendent asked Montana officials to lower the unit 310 quota. But a year and a half later, the hunting quota for the unit still stands at 19 wolves.

A number of collared animals used for research were harvested in the unit this past hunting season.

Stahler said similar requests were made to Idaho and Wyoming.

"Both in 2009 and 2011, we met with the states," he said. "In 2011, we specifically made formal requests to look at reduced-harvest strategies near the park lines."

Stahler said Yellowstone personnel met with Wyoming Game and Fish Department officials to discuss reduced-harvest strategies before the state's hunt began in October. No changes were made after the meeting, he said.

"I think that the state of Wyoming already had their quotas in place," he said.

Yellowstone officials have not yet decided whether to formally ask for reduced harvest quotas in the upcoming Wyoming hunting season, Stahler said.

Three wolves that roamed Yellowstone over the last year were killed in the Wyoming hunt this year. That includes the alpha and beta wolves from the Lamar Canyon Pack and a collared 5-year-old male from the Snake River Pack.

The Snake River Pack kill eliminated the only collared wolf in the pack, Stahler said.

"That pack now is untrackable," he said.

One other Yellowstone wolf pack, the Junction Butte Pack, is currently untrackable after collared wolves were lost to hunting, Stahler said.

The rash of lost research animals "pretty much caught everyone off guard," he said.

"One individual, the only time he stepped outside of the park over the last year, was the day he was shot," Stahler said. "There's no doubt about it, the loss of those wolves to the hunt had a negative impact to our research."

Because of a Wyoming state statute, the status of wolves that use Grand Teton National Park is less clear.

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance's Freedom of Information Act request shows that through Nov. 7, hunters took nine wolves from seven packs in the Jackson Hole area. Some of those wolves rarely if ever used the park over the past year.

More recent and specific information hasn't been provided to Grand Teton biologists by the Wyoming Department of Game and Fish, Skaggs said.

"We used to have more free flow of information," Skaggs said. "It's definitely taken a turn since the wolf hunt started."

Wyoming state law bars state Game and Fish officials from sharing specific information, including age, sex, breeding status, location and other details about any wolf that's been legally killed. The statute is intended to protect the wolf hunters' identities.

The statute states: "Any information regarding the number or nature of wolves legally taken within the state of Wyoming shall only be released in its aggregate form and no information of a private or confidential nature shall be released without the written consent of the person to whom the information may refer. Information identifying any person legally taking a wolf within this state is solely for the use of the department or appropriate law enforcement offices and is not a public record."

Cory Hatch, wildlands director for the alliance, said that findings from his employer's Freedom of Information Act request is proof of the need for more transparency with Wyoming's wolf hunt.

"I think the documents clearly show that research efforts in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks are clearly suffering because of these wolf hunts," Hatch said. "That's thousands of dollars, if not more, wasted."

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 242 AM MST WED JAN 16 2013

Today: Mostly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Occasional flurries in the morning. Highs 17 to 23.

Tonight: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 4 below to 6 above zero.

Thursday: Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 22 to 28.

Thursday Night: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 3 below to 7 above zero.

Friday: Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 22 to 28.

Friday Night: Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows zero to 10 above.

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, January 17, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS



We only have a few volunteers for tomorrow and really need **YOUR** help! Meet downstairs at the Yellowstone Credit Union **TOMORROW** at 10:00 a.m. to help move the “woman’s library” to the MCC. Any **amount of time** will help. We are providing two different kinds of chili and cornbread...what more do you need for a bribe!

Even if you can’t lift and carry, you can help direct and organize.

----- **2nd Annual K9 9K**

Event: K9 9K run OR walk- about 5.5 miles! Also 1 mile fun run/walk for young puppies, elderly or disadvantaged dogs. Come start your spring training right by running with your best friend - **your DOG!**

When: Saturday, May 18, 2013. 9K run starts at 9:00am. 9K walk starts at 9:15am. One mile fun run/walk starts at 10:00am. All runs/walks end in Bogert Park with a great community dog festival afterward. Rain, snow or sunshine!

Where: 9K Run/Walk starts at S. 3rd and Goldenstein and travels along subdivision roads and ends with the last three miles on Bozeman's trails! Finish is at Bogert Park with a big dog festival with booths, demonstrations, food, and more fun for all! One mile event starts and ends in Bogert Park and also enjoys scenic views along the course!

Why: Proceeds benefit the following organizations: Southwest Montana animal shelters, K9 Care Montana, and National Canine Cancer Foundation. Support our Montana animal shelters, therapy assistance dogs, and research into finding a cure for canine cancer!

Registration: Register NOW for this great event! Registration is \$35 if registered by Friday, May 4. \$40 between May 4 and event day. There will be registration on the day of the event. But why wait?!

This **Saturday, January 19th** is the **National Day of Service** which corresponds with the Presidential Inauguration and the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. This promotes the spirit of volunteerism and serves to build a sense of community, as people work together to make a difference.

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What a great opportunity to give back.

Quilt Raffle for Tiny Tails Rescue in Montana

Tiny Tails Emergency Medical fund will receive 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the tickets for this amazing Quilt donated by Anna Craver. Tickets can be purchased for \$1.00 each or 6 tickets for \$ 5.00. Tickets can be purchase via paypal using zipdogma@msn.com, by snail mail P.O. Box 257, Manhattan, Montana 59741 or by contacting Tiny Tails directly. Tickets will also be available for purchase at several banks and retail stores and from all our Tiny Tails volunteers. If you purchase via pay pal make sure to provide your contact info (phone number) so if you win they can get in touch with you. Drawing is July 4th, 2013. No need to be present to win. Thank you.



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IN THE PRESS

NATIONAL PARKS:

NPS spokesman announces retirement

Jessica Estepa, E&E reporter

January 16, 2013

National Park Service spokesman David Barna will retire on Feb. 1, the agency announced today.

Barna, 62, has served as NPS's chief spokesman since 1995, working on a range of projects from Ken Burns' documentary "The National Parks: America's Best Idea" to the annual White House Easter Egg Roll.

He has worked for the federal government for 38 years, including stints as spokesman for the National Science Foundation and the Bureau of Mines.

"I've worked for many federal agencies, and this is absolutely the best place to work," he said. "I don't know why it doesn't show up in the ratings. It's been an honor."

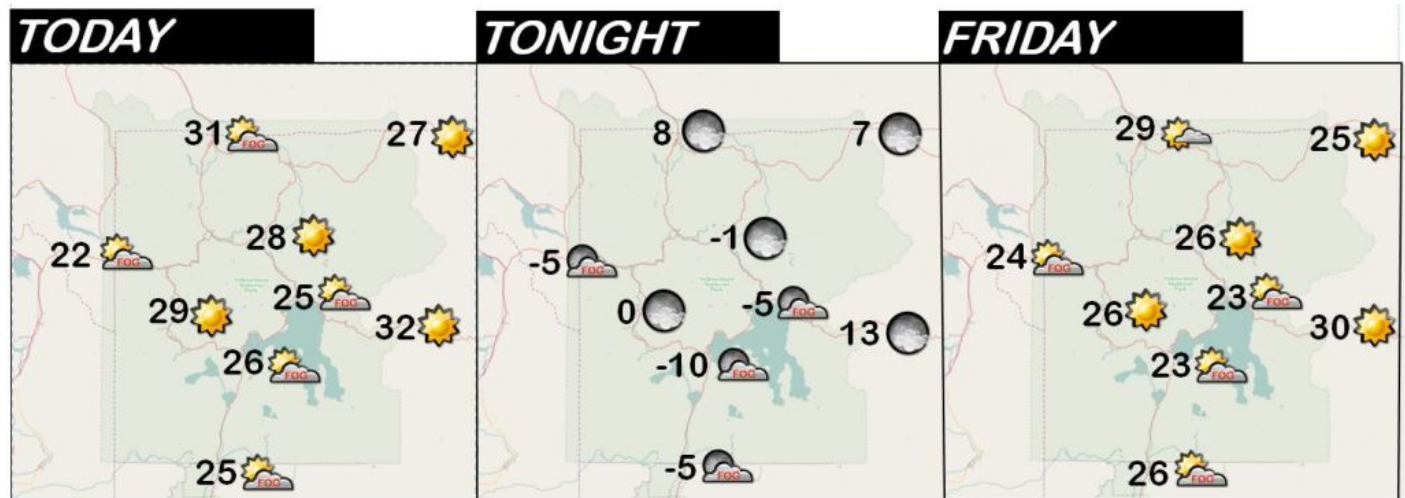
The Park Service will conduct a nationwide search for Barna's replacement, a process that could take up to five months, Barna said. Until then, spokesman Jeff Olson will act as chief with help from regional staff.

Barna's public announcement comes on the same day Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced his own plans to leave. That, Barna said, was a coincidence; he first told staff he was leaving in December.

"It's not true that he's leaving because he can't go on without me," Barna joked. "This has been a long time coming."

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, January 18, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Hurry! Run over to the Yellowstone Credit Union **TODAY** at 10:00 a.m. to help move the “woman’s library” to the MCC. Any **amount of time** will help. [We are providing two different kinds of chili and cornbread...what more do you need for a bribe!](#)

*****Even if you can’t lift and carry, you can help direct and organize.**

VPN is switching over to SmartCard use ONLY within the month. If you need to use the VPN, you **MUST** have and use a SmartCard. To get a SmartCard, call Jenny Hill or Darl Williams. To get a SmartCard reader, or learn how to use the one you have, call CSS, 2062.

If you don't know what the VPN is or whether or not you'll need to use it - all you need to do at this time is to get a SmartCard and know your pin. Then you will be ready if and when the time comes that you need it.

SmartCard is the official gov't id that is acquired from HR, not the one used for opening doors.

Please be advised that the **Yellowstone Research Library and Archives** will be closed TODAY due to lack of staff. The library and archives will open on Tuesday, January 22 at 9 a.m. Thank you and we apologize for any inconvenience.

----- **2nd Annual K9 9K**

Event: K9 9K run OR walk- about 5.5 miles! Also 1 mile fun run/walk for young puppies, elderly or disadvantaged dogs. Come start your spring training right by running with your best friend - **your DOG!**

When: Saturday, May 18, 2013. 9K run starts at 9:00am. 9K walk starts at 9:15am. One mile fun run/walk starts at 10:00am. All runs/walks end in Bogert Park with a great community dog festival afterward. Rain, snow or sunshine!

Where: 9K Run/Walk starts at S. 3rd and Goldenstein and travels along subdivision roads and ends with the last three miles on Bozeman's trails! Finish is at Bogert Park with a big dog festival with booths, demonstrations, food, and more fun for all! One mile event starts and ends in Bogert Park and also enjoys scenic views along the course!

Why: Proceeds benefit the following organizations: Southwest Montana animal shelters, K9 Care Montana, and National Canine Cancer Foundation. Support our Montana animal shelters, therapy assistance dogs, and research into finding a cure for canine cancer!

Registration: Register NOW for this great event! Registration is \$35 if registered by Friday, May 4. \$40 between May 4 and event day. There will be registration on the day of the event. But why wait?!

- - - - -

TOMORROW is **the National Day of Service** which corresponds with the Presidential Inauguration and the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. This promotes the spirit of volunteerism and serves to build a sense of community, as people work together to make a difference.

There are several opportunities in the Bozeman area to volunteer this Saturday – Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter, Eagle Mount (a non-profit organization that works with disabled individuals), etc.

You can register at the following link: <http://www.2013pic.org/service/serve>

What a great opportunity to give back.

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SAVE THE DATE!!

Jim Monk is Arkansas bound! Please join us to wish him well in his new job, January 24th at 3:00 p.m. at the Telecommunications Shop. Cake and light refreshments will be served.

And...

After 20+ years at YNP, **Electric Shop Supervisor Harold Anderson** is heading for new horizons. Join us in wishing him Happy Trails! Thursday, January 31, 2013, 3:30pm to? at the MCC Gymnasium. Come with or without a favorite dish or snack; food and drinks will be provided. Watch for the invitation flyer and plan to join us in the MCC Gym!

- - - - -

Quilt Raffle for Tiny Tails Rescue in Montana

Tiny Tails Emergency Medical fund will receive 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the tickets for this amazing Quilt donated by Anna Craver. Tickets can be purchased for \$1.00 each or 6 tickets for \$ 5.00. Tickets can be purchase via paypal using zipdogma@msn.com, by snail mail P.O. Box 257, Manhattan, Montana 59741 or by contacting Tiny Tails directly. Tickets will also be available for purchase at several banks and retail stores and from all our Tiny Tails volunteers. If you purchase via pay pal make sure to provide your contact info (phone number) so if you win they can get in touch with you. Drawing is July 4th, 2013. No need to be present to win. Thank you.



SEASONAL INSTRUCTORS – Yellowstone Association Institute

The Yellowstone Association, in partnership with the National Park Service, connects people to Yellowstone National Park and our natural world through education. We are now seeking applicants for our summer seasonal instructors who share their passion for Yellowstone while working in the field. Think you might be a good fit? Check out www.yellowstoneassociation.org/jobs for a complete position description!

Fee Free Day this Monday, January 21st in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day. Encourage people to come and enjoy their National Park!

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Newsletter. The focus this month: Review some important self care measures for improving your health; Strength training is for *LIFE*-learn some tips for building strength; Alzheimer's Update; Managing *stress* at work; *Heads Up*-Is it a concussion?; What's eating you?-Hunger vs. Emotional eating; and the Quick-Risk Assessment for workplace safety-How *safe* is your work space?.

Employees may access the January edition of the Wellness Newsletter by clicking on the website link below OR by going to the Employee Safety Committee SharePoint site where this and all previous editions are saved as pdf documents. Feel free to print and share this information with your family.

Website: <http://www.personalbest.com/PersonalBest4U/Login.aspx?login=yellowstone&password=healty95&issue=539>

SharePoint site: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> under Documents-Health and Wellness Information, folder Personal Best Documents, folder 2013: Personal Best 4 U Newsletter January 2013

Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

- There will be two more Canyon Coach trips: February 17th and February 24th. Signups for the February trips will begin at the end of January. *Spots for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited.
- Weekly BINGO is every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Aspen Upstairs Lobby. It is \$.25/card for each game. Don't miss out on the fun!
- Architect Seminar! There will be a seminar on some of the early architects of the park – Reamer & Willson – on Monday, January 21st at 6:00 pm in the Mammoth Conference Room. It will be presented by Ruth Quinn.
- The big screen movie next week will be “Ted”. This will be on Friday, January 25th at 7:00 pm in the Aspen dorm upstairs lobby.

IN THE PRESS

Montana environmental groups sue to protect whitebark pine trees

ROB CHANEY, Missoulian, January 17, 2013

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/montana-environmental-groups-sue-to-protect-whitebark-pine-trees/article_9e5e1e35-6a69-537f-8ab8-858833a1c640.html#ixzz2IFWtARrx

MISSOULA — A pair of Montana environmental groups have accused the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of stalling efforts to give federal protection to whitebark pine trees, which are disappearing from the northern Rocky Mountains.

“Whitebark pine isn’t on their radar, as far as the commitment it’s going to take to maintain or recover it,” said Steve Kelly, a board member of Alliance for the Wild Rockies. That group joined with WildWest Institute to sue FWS Director Daniel Ashe and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in Missoula District Court on Tuesday.

The lawsuit complaint notes that the Great Bear Foundation first sought federal Endangered Species Act protection for whitebark pine in 1991. The request was denied in 1994. The Natural Resources Defense Council made another application for protection in 2008. That set off a back-and-forth debate that wound up with FWS declaring whitebark “warranted but precluded” from protection in 2011.

The group’s legal brief also states that while FWS committed to finishing reviews of 155 candidate species by 2016, the agency didn’t include whitebark, even though it had a higher priority status than many of the other species. The brief accuses the agency of abusing its discretion by working on other species while claiming it didn’t have enough money to add whitebark. It also cited a 9th U.S. Circuit Court ruling that declared whitebark declines as the only reason it could not delist grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

“People who spend time in the high country realize that whitebark pine are dying at alarming rates due to impacts associated with climate change,” WildWest’s Matthew Koehler stated in an email. “We cannot sit back, do nothing and watch a critically important component of our high-country ecosystem just disappear and go extinct before our eyes. This isn’t just about the whitebark pine, but about the future viability of these high-country ecosystems, including the species that rely upon that habitat such as grizzly bears and Clark’s nutcrackers.”

Whitebark pine trees grow at high elevations and are generally considered unprofitable for logging. Mature trees produce protein-rich seeds that grizzly bears and other animals feed on.

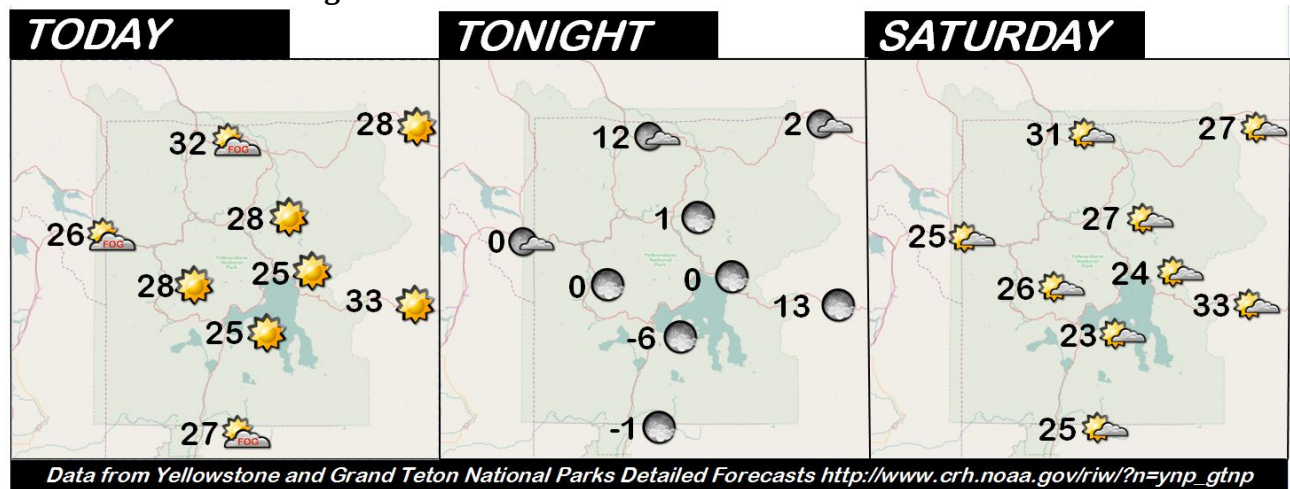
Over the past century, a fungus known as blister rust killed a huge percentage of the trees. In the past decade, mountain pine beetles have started attacking the remaining stands. Changing snow and temperature patterns also have reduced its viability. It’s now estimated to occupy about 3 percent of its former habitat.

Alliance for the Wild Rockies had previously sued the U.S. Forest Service over logging whitebark stands without considering the ecological consequences in the Helena National Forest. Kelly said the group wanted federal agencies to put more effort into helping whitebark survive, instead of letting it disappear by neglect or mismanagement.

FWS officials did not have a response to the lawsuit on Wednesday.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.



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The Mammoth Community Center Board would like to send out a **BIG THANK YOU** to our hero's last Friday who helped move the library. It was a full day job. We have the books down at the MCC and will be spending some time getting them shelved but it will be wonderful when it is complete. Anyone who would like to help organize and shelve books, please let Karin Schwartz know.

Those we wish to thank are:

Rick McAdam
Judy Jensen
Mary Hoodack
Frank Albrecht
Molly Nelson

Amanda Boyd
Mike Laye
Keith Young
Christine Miller
Tom Schwartz

Quilt Raffle for Tiny Tails Rescue in Montana

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IN THE PRESS**Snowshoeing offers unique way to see Yellowstone in winter**

By Mike Moore West Yellowstone News

With temperatures dipping below zero, Yellowstone National Park ranger Coral Moser strapped on her trusty snowshoes before embarking on a two-mile guided walk along the Madison River via the Riverside Trail at the eastern edge of West Yellowstone last Saturday.

The walk was part of Yellowstone National Park's ranger-led programs, where visitors can learn about the park first-hand from a ranger.

By hosting these programs on various features at all of the major developed areas in the park, visitors get the opportunity to learn about their surroundings through face-to-face contact with rangers.

The trail began by winding through towering lodgepole pines caked in fresh white snow before it opened up into a straightaway that eventually dropped down to the frosty banks of the Madison River.

According to the ranger, these programs are important because they help park visitors recognize the importance of the park, and why it should be protected.

"Park rangers are here to help people understand the reason why we have a park," Moser said. "We help people know why the park is here and why it needs to be preserved for future generations."

According to Moser, topics covered during the weekly snowshoe walks depend on which ranger is leading the program. In her first season as a park guide, Moser spends her walks educating visitors on the adaptations of different animals during winter in the park.

"We all have our own programs we research and create," she said.

Along the trail, Moser stopped and talked about the different animal tracks that are frequently seen in the area. She also spoke about coyotes, and how they are the biggest animal people are likely to see on the Riverside Trail.

Later in the hike, she stopped and discussed the physiological and behavioral changes animals go through to survive the harsh winter conditions that exist in Yellowstone.

In the case of physiological changes, Moser explained the importance of winter coats, and how animals have undercoats that serve as insulation and guard hairs that work as a windbreak for the animals.

“Because of guard hairs, the moose has one of the best insulations,” she said. “They have large, extra thick guard hairs.”

When it comes to behavioral changes, the ranger explained how smaller animals like squirrels and beavers cash their food during the summer and fall so they have a ready supply of food nearby to feed them during the winter.

Moser also touched base on migration in the park, describing how various animals in the park migrate in the winter. Most of the park’s elk population migrates each winter, while pronghorn antelope have a conditional response.

“There are some seasons when pronghorn antelope don’t leave the park,” she said. “There have been times when only 20 percent leave; it all depends on food.”

As the hike neared the halfway point, the trail slopes down a small hill before opening up to a scenic vista of the Madison River. At that point, the ranger talked about the historic 1988 fires, and how the snow makes it easy to see areas of new tree growth from the fire, compared the older stands of lodgepole pines that have dropped their lower boughs, or limbs.

According to Moser, the massive fire was a convergence of 40 wildfires that scorched a large portion of the park.

“You can see the effects and the new growth from the fire,” she said. “This is a really cool place to have a hike and see all of the history.”

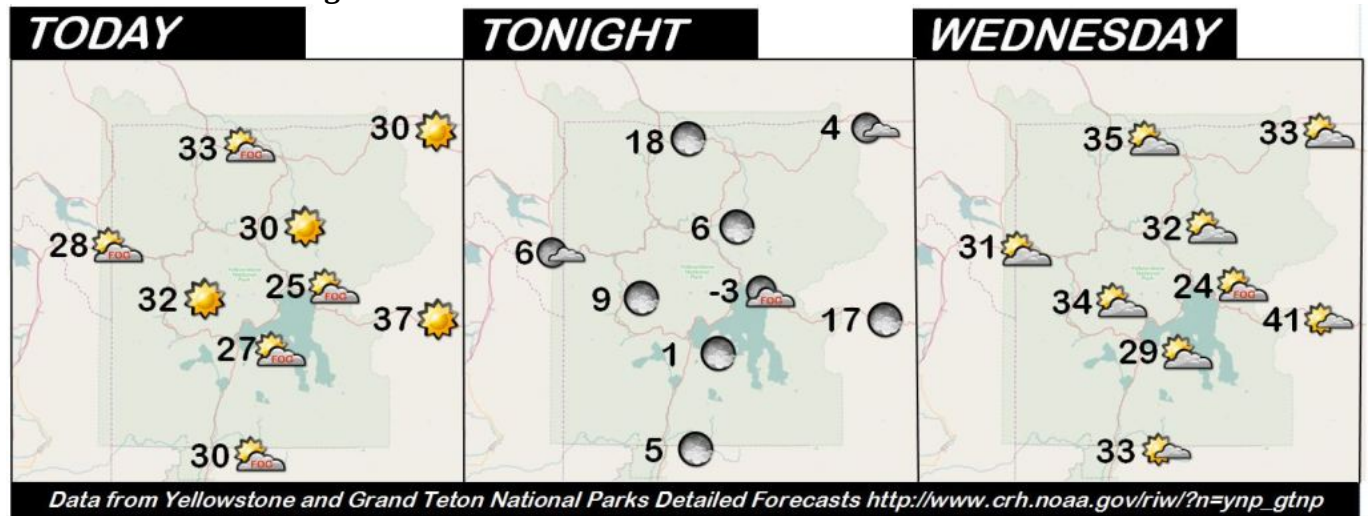
Along with the snowshoe walk, the park also offers ranger-led programs at Old Faithful and Mammoth Hot Springs in the winter, along with a morning ranger talk program in West Yellowstone held each Saturday. The programs are free to all visitors, and will continue until the beginning of March.

The next snowshoe walk will be held Saturday, Jan. 19 at 1:30 p.m. Those interested in participating should meet at the West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center with a pair of snowshoes, water and a snack.

For more information, visit <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/rangerwinter.htm>, or call (307) 344-2876.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

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Friday, January 25, 2013

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Free Lecture

What: **BADGERS OF LAMAR VALLEY** By: Dr. Jim Halfpenny

When: January 31, 2013 at 7:00 pm

Where: Track Education Center, #9 Jardine Road, Gardiner

Questions? call Leo Leckie (research assistant) at #406-224-3424,
or email questions to: yellowstone.leo@gmail.com

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Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

The 2012-13 Winter Employee Photo Contest is coming up! Categories are Scenic, Wildlife and People and you may only turn one picture in for each category. The deadline to turn your photos in is Monday, February 11th. Photos will be displayed for employee judging in the Mammoth EDR and the Old Faithful Employee Pub. Those dates will be announced later. Blank entry forms are in an envelope outside the Parkwide Recreation Office

2012-13 Winter Staff Shirt Sales will be starting Friday, February 1st and will go through Thursday, February 14th. You can order a shirt from the Parkwide Recreation Office or you can call Leigh Ann at 344-5225.

There are two more Canyon Coach Trips coming up – one on Sunday, February 17th and one on Sunday, February 24th. Signups for these trips will begin Wednesday, January 30th. Spaces for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited!

The BIG GAME will be shown on the BIG SCREEN in the Mammoth Employee Pub on February 3rd. Watch the Baltimore Ravens and the San Francisco 49ers battle it out for the championship. Pre-game will begin at 3:30 pm.

We have more historical seminars for you! The first will be: *Dashing Through the Snow: A History of Motorized Winter Travel in Yellowstone* presented by Leslie Quinn on Wednesday, February 20th at 6:00 pm in the Mammoth Rec Hall. The second will be: *Yellowstone Then, Yellowstone Now* also presented by Leslie Quinn on Wednesday, February 27th at 6:00 pm in the Mammoth Conference Room.

Weekly BINGO continues every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Aspen Upstairs Lobby. It is \$.25/card for each game. Don't miss out on the fun!

Check your location activity calendars posted in the rec hall for more activities.

IN THE PRESS

Yellowstone Park completes new micro-hydro power plant near Mammoth

Ruffin Prevost for Billings Gazette, January 24, 2013



MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS — For centuries, various waters and thermal features across Yellowstone National Park have spouted steam, sulfur and silica during countless eruptions. Now, one stream in the park is emitting dimes.

At least that's how Yellowstone project engineer Peter Galindo saw it on Wednesday, as park officials showed off a new hydro-electric power system that is expected to save the National Park Service at least \$73,000 a year in electricity costs.

"I just think of this thing as spitting out a dime every minute or so," Galindo said with a smile, gesturing as if he were plucking an imaginary coin from the air. "Oh, there's another dime."

Completed in October and brought online last month, the \$1.1 million power plant taps into an existing 12-inch water main about a half-mile north of Mammoth, capturing the energy of water as it travels more than 500 feet downhill from Swan Lake Flats.

About the size of a two-car garage, the power plant building is located far from public view in the woods beside a settling pond where water diverted from the Gardner River, Panther Creek and Indian Creek are treated for use as drinking water in Mammoth hotel rooms, restaurants, staff housing and public buildings.

Deputy Superintendent Steve Iobst said the system relies only on water already diverted for treatment as drinking water, and that it will operate reliably around the clock for decades, with only a few days of downtime each year for routine inspections.

Based on projected trends in electric power rates, the system could pay for itself within about 12 years, Galindo said. That amounts to approximately a dime's worth of savings about every 40 seconds.

Stimulus funding

That projected savings and payback helped secure stimulus funding for the project under the 2009 Recovery Act. Work was done by Dick Anderson Construction of Bozeman, with project design and supervision by CTA Architects Engineers of Billings. According to documents filed at recovery.gov to track stimulus spending, two to four full-time jobs were created or preserved for most quarterly reporting periods when work progressed.

"It was really the right project at the right time," Galindo said.

In fact, it had been a project park officials wanted to do since the mid-1980s, Iobst said, but funding had never been available before.

Small-scale "micro-hydro" power makes perfect sense in Mammoth, something U.S. Army engineers realized in 1903 when they installed a 100-kilowatt turbine to provide electricity to Fort Yellowstone when no commercial power plants existed in the area.

Mammoth continued to use hydro-electric power until 1966, when commercial power was abundant and cheap, Iobst said.

No additional employees are needed to work on the new system, and annual operating costs are well under \$5,000, Iobst said.

“It’s very low maintenance,” said Ralph Jerla, who oversees drinking water treatment for Mammoth. Jerla checks on the system for a few minutes each day, monitoring water flow and temperature. He lubricates the bearings when necessary, a simple procedure that doesn’t require shutting down.

The new system ties directly into the regional power grid, providing a maximum of 230 kilowatts per hour, but averaging about 175 kilowatts per hour. That’s enough to cover about one-third of the staff housing and administrative power use (excluding concessions-related needs) in Mammoth, reducing the park’s carbon dioxide emissions by more than 700 tons a year. In keeping with an agency-wide initiative, Yellowstone has set a goal to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent by 2016, the Park Service’s centennial year.

Complex negotiations

One reason the project took longer than planned, Iobst said, was because Park Service managers were negotiating more than 30 other grid-connected projects nationwide over the last couple of years.

Negotiations with power provider NorthWestern Energy were also complex and time-consuming, Iobst said, because no state public utilities commission oversees how the Montana provider delivers electricity to the Wyoming community of Mammoth.

That meant operating in a regulatory and legal limbo that required starting from scratch, but that yielded what Galindo said was “a good deal for the Park Service,” which is credited at the default provider rate for all power produced.

Because the system requires incoming electricity for initial start-up, it can’t be used to provide emergency power to Mammoth in the event of a grid outage, Galindo said.

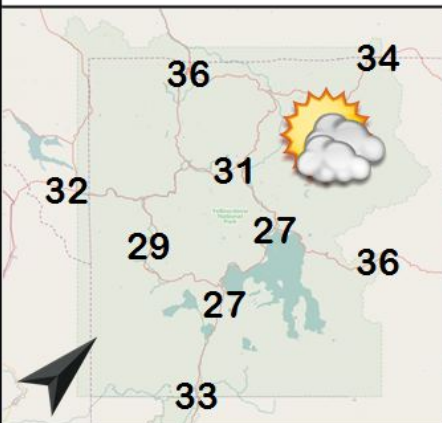
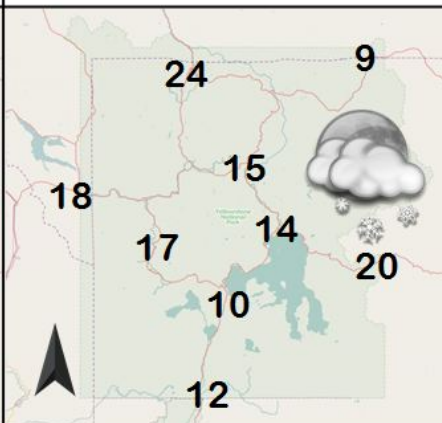
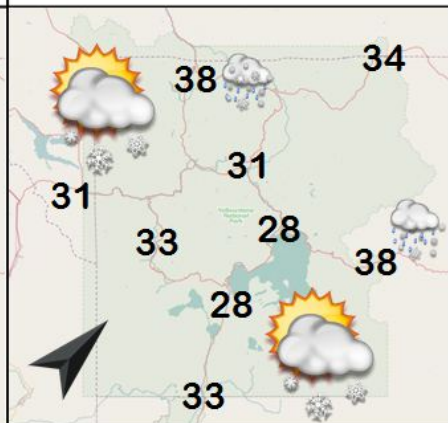
Iobst said the system is fairly simple, using the same basic Pelton-wheel design as employed in the original hydro-electric generator installed at Mammoth in 1903.

Negotiations for that original project were also complex, requiring an act of Congress to allow Yellowstone to sell excess power for private use, according to an unpublished account by Yellowstone historian Lee Whittlesey.

In 1911, the Army completed a new power house that still stands in lower Mammoth, but is no longer in use. The total cost for that project was \$45,889, or adjusted for inflation, approximately \$1.1 million in today’s dollars.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

TODAY	TONIGHT	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Southwest winds 7-17 mph., with gusts into the 20s.	Mostly cloudy with a 20-30 percent chance of light snow. South winds 7-15 mph with higher gusts possible.	Mostly cloudy with a 20-50 percent chance of snow or rain and snow at lower elevations. South-Southwest winds at 10-15 mph with higher gusts possible. Snow accumulations one inch or less.
		
Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Lows 10 to 25. Southwest winds around 15 mph. Sunday: Snow likely. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 26 to 33. Chance of snow 60 percent. Sunday Night: Colder. Snow likely. Light snow accumulations. Lows 2 to 17. Chance of snow 70 percent. Monday: Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Highs 12 to 28.		
Prepared using NWS data from http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?zoneid=WYZ001 and http://www.crh.noaa.gov/riw/?n=ynp_gtnp		

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Sylvan Pass is temporarily **CLOSED to ALL oversnow travel** due to avalanche danger. ALL travel by snowmobile, snowcoach, skis and snowshoes over Sylvan Pass is PROHIBITED. It is planned to do a howitzer mission today.

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IN THE PRESS**Snowcoach Samplers provide a peek at winter in Yellowstone**

By Abbie Tumbleson West Yellowstone News

It was an ideal time to tour Yellowstone last Saturday and Sunday with clear, blue skies and temperatures in the mid-20s for most of the weekend.

Families from across the country signed up to take a ride on a snowcoach and had the opportunity to experience winter in Yellowstone as part of last weekend's Kids 'N' Snow program event lineup.

The Snowcoach Sampler offers families with children to take a free ride into the park. On their journey they observe and spot wildlife, learn about the ecosystem, history and all the magical aspects of America's first national park.

All six of the sampler trips were completely filled up, with Yellowstone Alpen Guides taking in three groups of people each day on both Saturday and Sunday.

"We could have easily taken in another six trips," said Jan Stoddard, who manages the Kids 'N' Snow program.

Seats for the Snowcoach Samplers were filled up two weeks in advance this time around, according to Stoddard.

"And we are seeing repeat visitors that come back for Kids 'N' Snow events," she said."

Two families from Idaho Falls, Idaho both signed up for trips on Saturday and when they got in their coach they realized that they were sitting next to their neighbors.

"That ended up being a funny little story," Stoddard said. "That day the coach dropped people off and we had another family walk in and say that that was the best experience of their weekend in West Yellowstone."

Brenda Goltz, a guide with Yellowstone Alpen Guides, took in three tour groups on Sunday for the samplers, including the Barrett and the Ellsworth families, also from Idaho Falls. The families filled the coach with four adults and seven children in their group.

As the group climbed into to the red oversnow vehicle named "Cygnet," Goltz informed them that they were riding in a very special snowcoach.

"We're traveling in the oldest snowcoach in Yellowstone today," she said.

Cygnet is a 1952 Bombardier vehicle and a treasured member of the Yellowstone Alpen Guides fleet.

The group also spotted more cygnets, which are baby swans, on their trip. Trumpeter swans migrate to Yellowstone during the winter season and the adults and the cygnets were seen swimming and searching for food in the warmer waters of the Madison River.

When a bald eagle was spotted perched on a tree across the river, Goltz explained that it can take up to five years for an eagle's tail and head to turn white. She said that because of the eagle's white head, that's how they knew that the bird they saw on Sunday morning was at least five years old.

From the back of the snowcoach, five-year-old Nate Barrett quickly pointed out that he was the same age as the bald eagle.

His parents, Jimmy and Stacy Barrett, said that they had been snowmobiling in Yellowstone a long time ago, but their kids had never been in the park in winter before Sunday.

“It’s awesome and beautiful,” Jimmy Barrett said.

Twelve-year-old Riley Ellsworth added that he liked the trip a lot.

The group also spotted more swans, another bald eagle, several coyotes, elk and bison on their two-hour tour before returning to West Yellowstone.

“This is a once in a lifetime experience,” Stacy Barrett said.

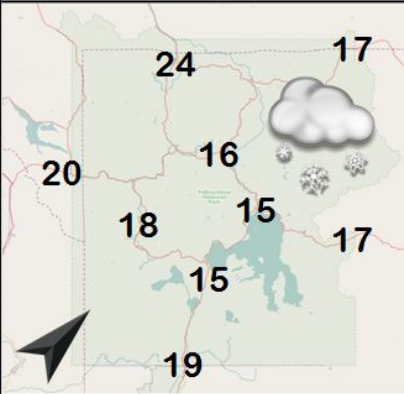
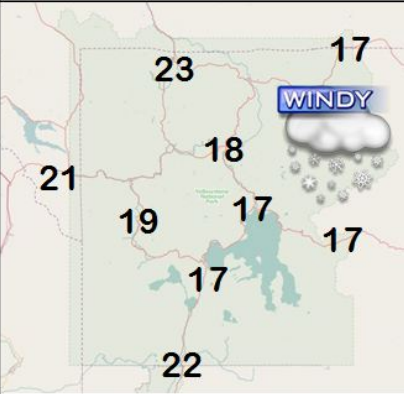
Stoddard gave a special shout out to Yellowstone Alpen Guides for all their help during a busy weekend for snowcoach and snowmobile concessionaires in town as they were booked full with tours.

“They went out of their way this weekend to make sure that we could still offer the Snowcoach Samplers and the guides do a great job,” she said. “At this point, we’re still planning for Snowcoach Samplers in February and March and we’re working with all our partners to try and make it happen.”

More information about the Snowcoach Samplers and upcoming Kids ‘N’ Snow events can be found by visiting www.kidsnsnow.org.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

TODAY	TONIGHT	TUESDAY
Cloudy. Snow likely in the morning...then scattered snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation around 1 inch. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon. Chance of snow 60 percent.	Areas of blowing snow in the evening. Snow likely. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. South winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.	Breezy. Snow likely. Areas of blowing snow in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Shifting winds with gusts to 33 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.
		
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Prepared using NWS data from http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?zoneid=WYZ001 and http://www.crh.noaa.gov/riw/?n=ynp_gtnp		

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Free Lecture

What: **BADGERS OF LAMAR VALLEY** By: Dr. Jim Halfpenny

When: January 31, 2013 at 7:00 pm

Where: Track Education Center, #9 Jardine Road, Gardiner

Questions? call Leo Leckie (research assistant) at #406-224-3424,

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Employee Safety Committee-February Wellness Newsletter

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IN THE PRESS**Montana won't limit Yellowstone-area wolf hunts**

21 hours ago • Associated Press

Montana wildlife officials said Monday that they were abandoning their efforts to shut down gray wolf hunting and trapping just outside the gates of Yellowstone National Park, citing a recent court ruling that threatened to drag out the issue until the season was almost over.

Hunting and trapping were briefly suspended last month on about 60 square miles north of Yellowstone over concerns that too many wolves wandering out of the park were dying. That included the shooting of several wolves collared for scientific research and management purposes.

But after a judge issued an injunction saying not enough notice was given before the closures were enacted, wildlife officials said they would no longer seek to reinstate the closure. A Tuesday meeting in which commissioners had planned to take action on the issue was cancelled.

Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission Chairman Bob Ream said agency personnel decided it would take several weeks at a minimum to get an order from state District Judge Brenda Gilbert dissolving her injunction. Montana's wolf season ends on Feb. 28.

"To try and lift the order, at most, there would have been a week left in the season, so there wasn't any sense in doing it," Ream said.

Ream added that his concerns over collared wolves being shot or trapped had not gone away, but he said there was unlikely to be harm to the park's overall wolf population even if some of the animals were killed.

Wildlife advocates had pressed the state to give special protections to Yellowstone's wolves, which draw throngs of tourists from all over the world.

Several of the predators that were well-known among wolf watchers were killed in recent months, prompting advocacy groups to lobby state wildlife commissioners to create a no-kill buffer zone east and west of the town of Gardiner.

Wolf killing was prohibited in those areas in early December, although commissioners rejected the idea of making the buffer permanent. A lawsuit from hunting groups blocked the closures just a few weeks after they went into effect.

State lawmakers have since stepped in with a proposal to prohibit commissioners from creating such buffers around either Yellowstone or Glacier National Parks.

Commissioners only would be able to close down hunting and trapping in such areas if a wolf harvest quota that had been previously established was met.

The Legislative measure, which has received strong bipartisan support in Helena, also would let hunters and trappers buy multiple tags and use electronic wolf calls, reduce the price of a non-resident tag from \$350 to \$50 and eliminate the requirement that hunters wear fluorescent orange outside of elk and deer season.

Hunters have killed 108 wolves in Montana this season and trappers have killed 66, for a total of 174.

That's already exceeded the 2011-2012 harvest, when 166 wolves were killed, with four weeks still to go in the current season.

Wildlife officials are hoping to reduce the animals' population from about 650 wolves to around 450.

The goal is to reduce wolf attacks on livestock and help some elk herds that have been in decline due to wolf attacks. Wildlife advocates contend that the state is being too aggressive against a species only recently restored to the Northern Rockies after it was widely exterminated last century.

Families come to explore the area's winter activities

By Mile Moore - West Yellowstone News

Since beginning back in 2010, the popular Kids 'N' Snow event has put West Yellowstone on the map as a go-to winter destination for young families looking for an affordable way to explore various winter activities.

Last weekend, the monthly winter event brought in more than 250 parents and children from as far away as Utah and Idaho to participate in the weekend-long schedule of events.

"It was just great," accommodations marketing director with the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Jan Stoddard said. "We continue to get more people from farther and farther away every time."

The Call family came all the way from Ogden, Utah to vacation in a condo, and decided to check out the IMAX and the new Arctic Cat M120 snowmobiles that were available for children to ride. Before calling it a night, the family of six strapped on ice skates for the first time.

"Today has been great," mother Staci Call said. "It's so neat to do these things for the first time."

Jennie Holzworth brought her family down from Belgrade to ice skate and venture into Yellowstone on a guided snowcoach tour to Seven Mile Bridge and back as part of the Snowcoach Sampler trips.

"It's been a lot of fun," Holzworth said. "We saw bison and a wolf (in the park)."

Many of the families who attend participate in the majority of the activities offered, so they know what to do when they come back for another visit, Stoddard added.

"It's also for families who are looking for winter destination travel," she said. "We have people try everything to see if they like it."

Each Kids 'N' Snow weekend is different, as the monthly events try to tie in with other local happenings that are also going on.

"We try to layer on new events every year," Stoddard said. "This year we added ski games and snowmobiles."

According to Stoddard, the new snowmobile rides came from a special project, where Arctic Cat let the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Snowmobile Events Committee buy two of the M120 machines at cost for the event. The small sleds were a big hit, with close to four dozen children signing up to ride them at one of two oval tracks in town.

"We're going to raffle one of them off and keep the other one for Kids N' Snow next year," she said.

Sysco Food Services and the Marketplace and Food Roundup grocery stores donated needed supplies for s'mores, while other local businesses and grants helped by putting on the operations part. The event receives funds from the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Marketing budget, the West Yellowstone Tourism Business Improvement District, the Town of West Yellowstone Marketing and Promotions Fund, Three Bear Lodge marketing fund, the West Yellowstone Foundation and other local businesses.

Kids 'N' Snow is also partnered with the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, Yellowstone National Park, the U.S. Forest Service and the West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation to host events throughout the winter season.

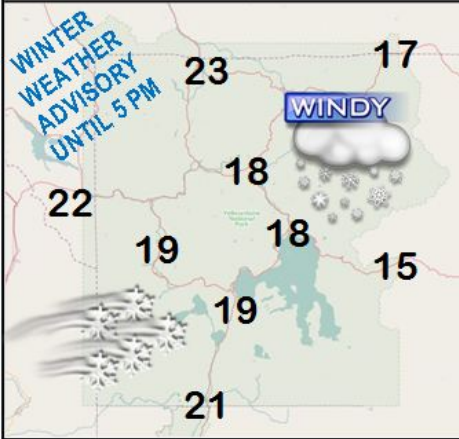
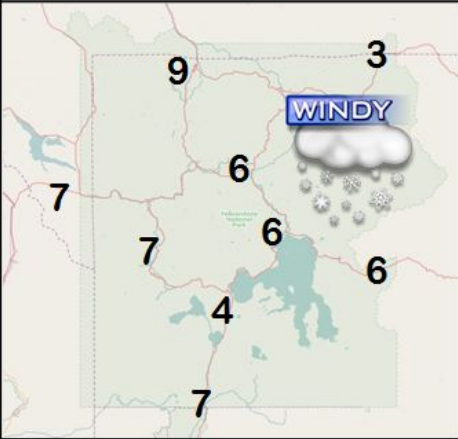
"Everyone does a little piece, and we couldn't do it without them," she said.

The next Kids 'N' Snow weekend of events will be held on Feb. 2 and Feb. 3, and will feature an ice fishing camp for youngsters.

"I think Kids 'N' Snow represents the best of West Yellowstone by combining a beautiful place and all of the activities you can do," Stoddard said. "Along with a small town coming together (to make it all happen)."

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

TODAY	TONIGHT	WEDNESDAY
Breezy...snow. Areas of blowing snow in the afternoon. Snow accumulation from a trace up to 2 inches. Winds south @ 15 mph shifting to the west, with gusts to 28 mph. Chance of snow 90 percent.	Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening...then snow likely after midnight. Snow accumulation of less than an inch to 2 inches. NW winds @ 15 mph @ shifting to the south with gusts to 20 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.	Breezy...snow. Areas of blowing snow in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 4 inches. West winds 15 to 20 mph, with gusts 20-40 mph. Chance of snow 80 percent.
 WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY UNTIL 5 PM 23 17 18 15 19 18 21 22 WINDY	 9 3 6 6 7 7 4 7 WINDY	 33 25 24 22 26 26 27 26 WINDY
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When: **TOMORROW** January 31, 2013 at 7:00 pm

Where: Track Education Center, #9 Jardine Road, Gardiner

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Six Weeks, February 20-March 27.

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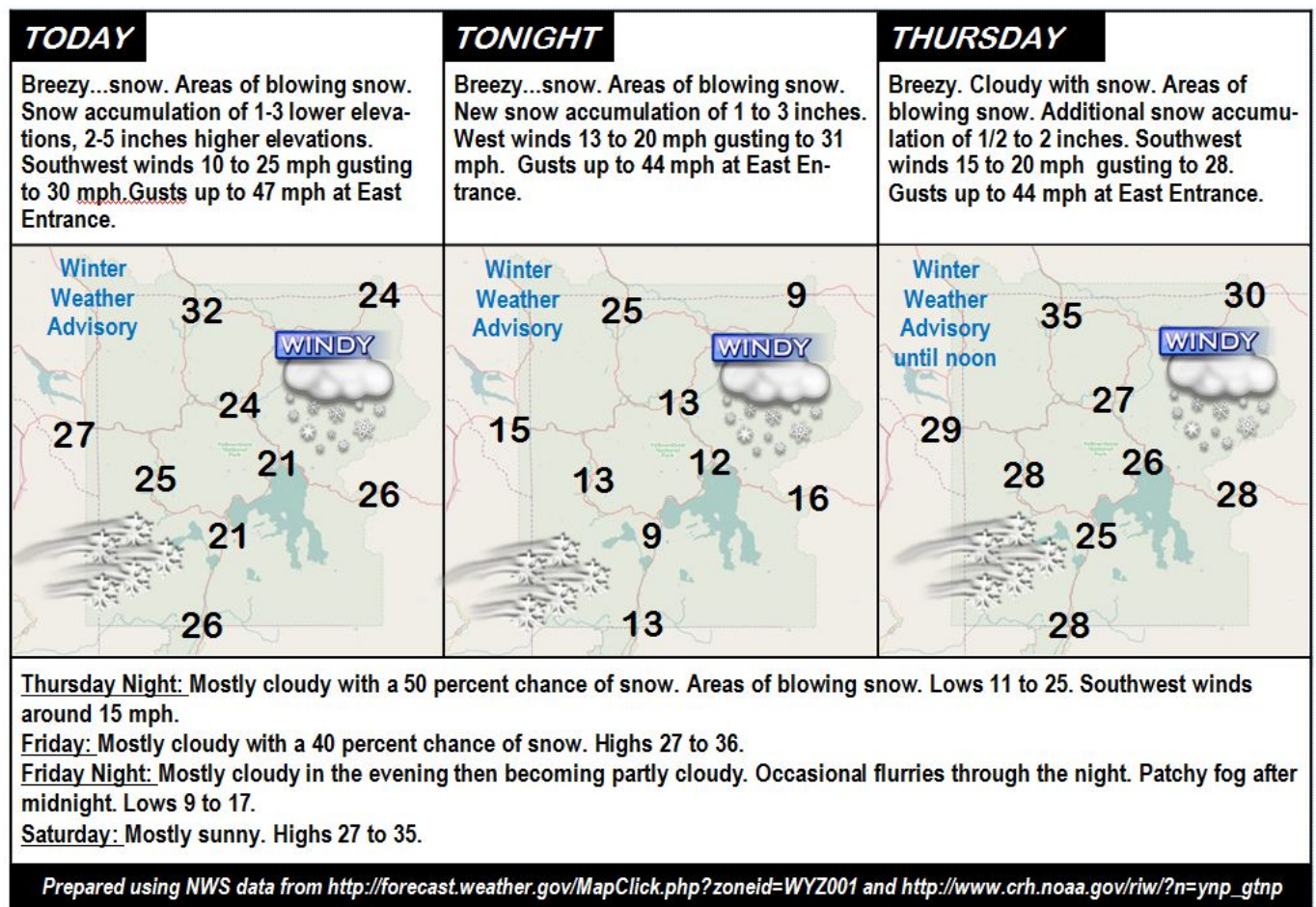
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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, January 31, 2013

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Robert W. Flather, former backcountry ranger and long-time volunteer, passed away on Sunday, January 27, in Santa Barbara, CA. He began working summers in Yellowstone in 1974 and, after retiring, continued to return each summer to volunteer for various programs and projects, including the Fire Cache, GIS, Archeology and the Archives, Library and Museum Collections at the HRC. Bob willed his estate to The Nature Conservancy and, in recognition of his long-time service to Yellowstone, we thought it would be very fitting to collect contributions from interested park staff and make a donation in Bob's name to The Nature Conservancy. If you are interested in contributing, please send a check to Colleen Curry at the HRC (you can make the check out to either her or The Nature Conservancy) by Friday, February 8.

Don't Forget

Electric Shop Supervisor Harold Anderson is heading for new horizons after 20+ years with the park service. **TODAY** 3:30 pm to? at the MCC Gymnasium. What better way to send him off than with a **live Bluegrass Band** from Gardiner who will be performing from 4 pm- 5:30 pm. Join us in wishing him Happy Trails! Come with or without a favorite dish or snack; food and drinks will be provided.

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The Yellowstone Bird Program would like to extend a warm **thank you** to everyone who participated in the 2013 Mid-winter Bald and Golden Eagle Survey on January 12th and 19th. During the count, 28 volunteers surveyed 220 miles of riparian habitat in and around Yellowstone observing eagles and other raptors. In all, volunteers counted 53 eagles (35 bald eagles; 15 golden eagles; 3 unidentified eagles). Six of the bald eagles were observed in the park. They were found along the Madison R., Lamar/Soda Butte area, and Gibbon Meadows. The remaining 29 bald eagles were observed north of the park, mainly in the Paradise Valley.

Four of the golden eagles were observed in the park between Mammoth and Cooke City and one at Old Faithful. A northern harrier was spotted in Lamar Valley. In the Paradise Valley, several rough-legged hawks, a red-tailed hawk and American kestrel were noted. Fewer bald eagles were observed in the park this year than in the past, but similar numbers of golden eagles were seen in the park. Variability from year to year is expected since this survey is typically done on just one day during the winter. Only with long-term surveys will we be able to determine trends in Yellowstone's winter eagle population.

Thanks again to all who participated:

Shawn Bawden, Eric Bindseil, John Cataldo, Dyane Catford, Beth Coombs, Eleanor Clark, Dennis Clark, Katy Duffy, David Gilbert & Boy Scouts, Temia Keel, Joe Keel, Bianca Klein, Leif Kopietz, Woody Martyn, Molly Moore, Matt Nagel, Barbara O'Grady, Bill Price, Brian Suderman, Jo Suderman, Ginger Townsend, Laurie Tuohy, Darl Williams.

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Winter Activities Update from the Yellowstone Co-Op Employee Recreation Program

The 2012-13 Winter Employee Photo Contest is coming up! Categories are Scenic, Wildlife and People and you may only turn one picture in for each category. The deadline to turn your photos in is Monday, February 11th. Photos will be displayed for employee judging in the Mammoth EDR and the Old Faithful Employee Pub. Those dates will be announced later. Blank entry forms are in an envelope outside the Parkwide Recreation Office

2012-13 Winter Staff Shirt Sales will be starting Friday, February 1st and will go through Thursday, February 14th. You can order a shirt from the Parkwide Recreation Office or you can call Leigh Ann at 344-5225.

There are two more Canyon Coach Trips coming up – one on Sunday, February 17th and one on Sunday, February 24th. Signups for these trips will begin Wednesday, January 30th. Spaces for non-Xanterra employees are extremely limited!

The BIG GAME will be shown on the BIG SCREEN in the Mammoth Employee Pub on February 3rd. Watch the Baltimore Ravens and the San Francisco 49ers battle it out for the championship. Pre-game will begin at 3:30 pm.

We have more historical seminars for you! The first will be: *Dashing Through the Snow: A History of Motorized Winter Travel in Yellowstone* presented by Leslie Quinn on Wednesday, February 20th at 6:00 pm in the Mammoth Rec Hall. The second will be: *Yellowstone Then, Yellowstone Now* also presented by Leslie Quinn on Wednesday, February 27th at 6:00 pm in the Mammoth Conference Room.

Weekly BINGO continues every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Aspen Upstairs Lobby. It is \$.25/card for each game. Don't miss out on the fun!

Check your location activity calendars posted in the rec hall for more activities.

IN THE PRESS**Avalanches swept skiers against trees
Collisions believed to have killed two in separate slides Sunday.**

*By Benjamin Graham, Mike Koshmrl, Johanna Love and Lindsay Wood, Jackson Hole, Wyo.
January 30, 2013*

The avalanche that killed Nick Gillespie on Survey Peak in Grand Teton National Park on Sunday broke along a 230-foot crown up to 26 inches deep and pinned him against a tree, park officials said.

Trauma from being swept into a tree also killed Liza Benson in another slide on the same day about 60 miles south near Clause Peak.

She was carried by a slide with a crown depth of only eight inches.

The Survey Peak avalanche carried Gillespie 220 feet down the 9,277-foot peak and ran twice that distance. Up to 21 inches of snow fell in parts of the Tetons from Saturday morning to Monday morning, accompanied by an average 17 mph wind, the Bridger-Teton National Forest Avalanche Center said.

Benson was skiing with four partners on a ridge near Clause Peak in the Cliff Creek drainage, off Hoback Canyon in Sublette County, when she was swept 120 feet. In both instances, other members of the parties could do nothing to save their companions.

The news shocked the Jackson Hole skiing community. The incidents were the first avalanche deaths of the winter in the area.

Gillespie, 30, and Benson, 28, were both skiing with groups but on their own at the time they were caught in the slides. Both were carrying recommended safety equipment. They were experienced in the backcountry, investigators and friends said.

At their respective elevations, the avalanche danger Sunday was low for Gillespie and moderate for Benson. Avalanche experts used Sunday's fatalities as a reminder to be constantly vigilant.

"Low danger is a pretty good sign, but our forecast is something you should look at from home," avalanche center forecaster Jim Springer said. "Once you're out of your car and it's blowing like crazy and snowing and you see snow drifting, you need to throw our forecast out and make your own."

Gillespie, a trail crew worker in Grand Teton National Park, had been skiing the park's northern backcountry since Thursday. The four-person group on the excursion included his girlfriend, sister and a close friend, all bunking in the Berry Creek patrol cabin.

The foursome had already skied Survey Peak once Sunday when Gillespie, Elizabeth Koutrelakos and Chance Burelson climbed a slope for a second time. Gillespie's sister, Heidi Gillespie, sat out the run.

Members of the group skied at one-minute intervals, and Gillespie was the last to descend, said Grand Teton ranger Dan Stark, the incident commander.

At about 8,400 feet, Gillespie triggered a soft-slab slide on a 38-degree slope, investigators determined.

The Bridger-Teton Avalanche Center characterized the Survey Peak avalanche as "destructive" and said it was triggered by Gillespie.

The slide carried him down the mountain's southeastern slope into a stand of conifers, photographs show.

Burelson, on his way down to the group's next meeting point, encountered avalanche debris, Stark said.

Yelling out, Burelson found Koutrelakos. He then activated the tracking feature on his beacon and began climbing the slide path in search of his missing friend.

Koutrelakos went to retrieve Gillespie's sister, who was about a mile away at the backcountry patrol cabin, she said.

Only about 15 minutes elapsed between the time when the avalanche broke and Burelson discovered his friend. Gillespie's head and arm were above the snow, but he wasn't breathing, Stark said.

"As far as the cause of death, we have no idea," Stark said. "We're waiting for the coroner."

Gillespie's friends tried CPR for about an hour, Koutrelakos said. They then hauled his body down to the patrol cabin, she said.

"We got there super fast and he just was not alive," Koutrelakos said. "I think that the group generally did everything we could do to save him. Just sometimes, you can't."

Emergency authorities received a call from Burelson at around 9 p.m. Because of the remoteness — Survey Peak is at least eight miles from the nearest road — he had to ski for a distance to reach cellphone coverage.

Four park rangers flew to the scene by helicopter at about 11 a.m. Monday to retrieve the party and Gillespie's body. Because of heavy fog, they were unable to return with the body and the last of the group until around 5 p.m., Grand Teton spokeswoman Jackie Skaggs said.

Skaggs was surprised by the fatal incident.

"The elevation of the crown was in the zone that was actually still considered low [avalanche danger], even in the afternoon," she said.

The avalanche that killed Benson was smaller. The crown stretched about 130 feet and the snow ran 165 feet, said Steve Smith, Sublette County Sheriff Department spokesman.

Benson had been skiing with four friends, including Dr. James DeMetriou, who practices in Pinedale, and her boyfriend Jason Ray, an administrator with Sublette County's Tip Top Search and Rescue.

The group used snow machines to reach the Clause Creek area, starting from the Cliff Creek trailhead. They were skiing on a ridge about a mile northeast of the peak when the slide occurred.

The Sublette County Sheriff's Department released few details, saying the investigation is continuing.

Benson's sister, Adrienne Benson, said DeMetriou relayed the following account to the family.

Sunday afternoon, Benson, DeMetriou and Ray prepared to make their third lap. Ray descended first and waited below to watch Liza Benson, Adrienne Benson said. DeMetriou could not quite see her start. She apparently sliced a hard turn and the snow broke above her, Adrienne said.

The Avalanche Center reported Tuesday that the avalanche was skier-triggered and began on a 41-degree to 45-degree slope at about 9,200 feet.

It was classified as a soft slab avalanche of small size with a low potential for damage or injury. The snow that collapsed was on top of sun crust, the center said.

The long dry spell that preceded last weekend's snowfall led to slick surfaces in many places, avalanche forecaster Springer said.

"When you have that and put new snow on it, it slides fast and easy," he said. "If you run into something or fall into a terrain trap, you don't really need much to get you in trouble."

Search and rescue team members reported the terrain at the slide site was steep, Smith said. It included a wind-loaded slope with a cornice above, he said.

Benson skied on top of the slough much of the way until she lost her balance, Ray told Adrienne Benson.

The slide took her about 120 feet and slammed her into a tree, resulting in chest and head trauma.

Ray skied down to her in about 30 seconds.

She was unconscious and had a hard time breathing when he took her in his arms.

The Sublette County Sheriff's Department received a call at about 3:25 p.m. from the group.

The initial report was that a skier had been injured. But during the course of the call DeMetriou, after performing CPR, determined that Benson had died.

She breathed her last in Ray's arms.

He wasn't ready to talk about the tragedy Tuesday night, only about his love and admiration for Benson.

"We were skiing and doing what we loved together when the tragedy struck," Ray said.

Sublette County's Tip Top Search and Rescue could not send a team Sunday because it was too late in the day, Smith said.

The remaining four in the group were able to make it out of the backcountry late Sunday afternoon by skiing down to their snow machines, he said. A deputy met them at the trailhead.

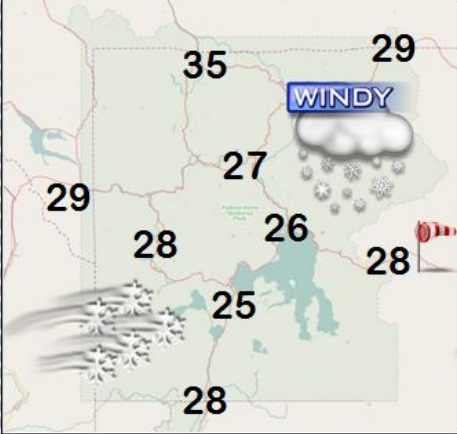
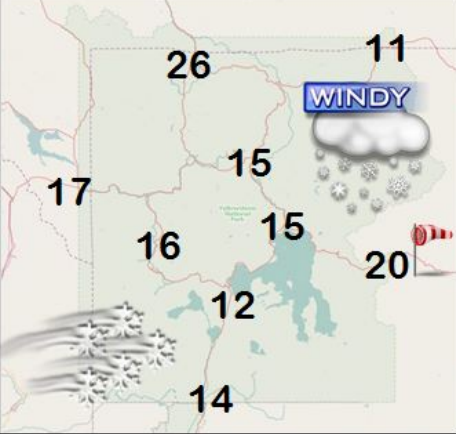
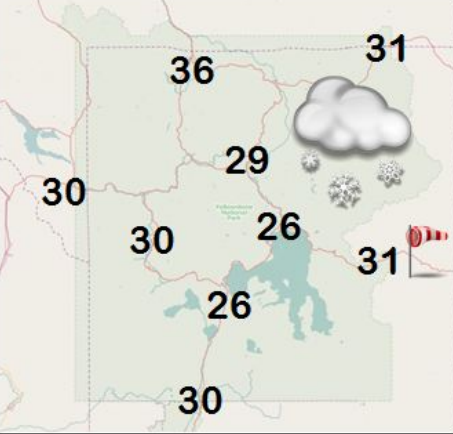
Early Monday morning rescuers left to retrieve Benson's body. They were able to get within 875 yards of the avalanche field on snow machines and covered the rest of the distance on foot.

They were out of the backcountry with Benson's body by nightfall.

The avalanche deaths were the first in Jackson Hole since Steve Romeo and Chris Onufer died last March after being swept nearly 3,000 vertical feet down a slope near Ranger Peak.

WEATHER

Admin Travel recording 344-7115.

TODAY	TONIGHT	FRIDAY
Areas of blowing snow in the morning. Snow. New snow accumulation of less than 1/2 up to 2 inches. Southwest winds 10-15 mph gusting to 21 mph, with gusts to 37 mph at the East Entrance. Chance of snow 90 percent.	Cloudy with snow likely. Areas of blowing snow. Snow accumulation of less than an inch up to 3 inches. Southwest winds 8-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph and up to 33 mph at the East Entrance. Chance of snow 70 percent.	Cloudy. Snow likely in the morning...then scattered snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of less than 1/2 up to 2 inches. W/SW winds 5-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph and up to 30 mph at the East Entrance.
		
Friday Night: Colder. Mostly cloudy in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Occasional flurries. Lows -4 to 15. Saturday: Mostly sunny. Highs 27 to 34. Saturday Night: Mostly clear. Lows 0 to 16. Sunday: Partly cloudy. Highs 26 to 36. Sunday Night: Partly cloudy. Lows 11 to 22. Monday: Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Highs 27 to 37.		
Prepared using NWS data from http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?zoneid=WYZ001 and http://www.crh.noaa.gov/riw/?n=ynp_gtnp		

WE WANT YOUR SUBMISSIONS!

Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo 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](#)