

YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Happy 140th Birthday YELLOWSTONE!



DID YOU KNOW? IT'S ALSO...

World Compliment Day

Give the best gift of all on this holiday: kind words in the form of a compliment. Make it sincere, refrain from using all of your compliments on one person, and brighten someone's day. According to the holiday's originator, [Hans Poortvliet](#), 50 nations celebrated the holiday in its first year -- 2011. You can create an award to email or print at [World Compliment Day](#).

National Pig Day

In 1973, two sisters, Ellen and Stanley and Mary Lynne Rave, started National Pig Day. The holiday is celebrated annually on March 1 to recognize the pig as an intelligent and useful animal.

- * Give ceramic or plastic piggy banks to family members to encourage savings.
- * Don't eat any pork products on National Pig Day!
- * Enjoy a movie or a book with one of these famous pigs: Piglet, Porky Pig, Miss Piggy, Wilbur from "Charlotte's Web," Babe, King Pig (Angry Birds), Hamm from "Toy Story," and Pumbaa from "The Lion King."

Peanut Butter Lovers' Day

There are few foods that taste better with chocolate, between two slices of bread or in cookies. Smooth peanut butter was first commercially introduced in 1904 at the Universal Exposition in St. Louis, Mo. C.H. Sumner sold the "new treat" at his concession stand, according to the National Peanut Board. Today the largest peanut butter factory produces 250,000 jars of it daily. Get creative in the kitchen with some peanut butter "sushi."

Peanut butter by the numbers:

- * 540 -- Approximate number of peanuts in a 12-ounce jar of peanut butter
- * \$705.11 -- Amount of money Sumner made on peanut butter at the fair.
- * 30,000 -- Number peanut butter sandwiches you could make with one acre of peanuts.

So get out there and compliment your favorite peanut-buttery pig in Yellowstone today!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring is approaching!

March 1 (Thursday), 9:00 PM - East Entrance to Lake Butte closes
March 4 (Sunday), 9:00 PM - Mammoth to Norris Junction closes
March 5 (Monday), after 8:00 AM - plows leave Mammoth
March 6 (Tuesday), 9:00 PM - Norris Junction to Madison and Canyon Junction closes
March 11 (Sunday), 9:00 PM - Canyon Junction to Fishing Bridge Junction closes
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Printed copies of the proceedings from the **10th Biennial Scientific Conference** on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem are now available from the YCR science communication office. CESU partner University of Wyoming Ruckelshaus Institute led the project. Pick up a copy or call to have one sent over to you via interoffice mail. If you were registered for the October 2010 conference, you will receive a copy automatically via US mail or YNP interoffice mail within the next week or two. For more information contact Jen Baseden in the Science Communications Office at x2230.

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The **BLM Colorado State Office** is looking for an effective leader to join our team at the Colorado State Office in Lakewood, Colorado. Please help to spread the word about this great opportunity before it closes on March 19th. Click here for more details: [Branch Chief, Planning & Assessment, GS-301-13](#)

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United Blood Services will once again be hosting their blood drive next Wednesday, March 7, 2012 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM in the Mammoth Community Center - Classroom #3. At this time they WILL NOT be needing AB Positive or AB Negative blood. So, if this is your blood type, please keep it on reserve until it is needed!! United Blood Services did mail out some postcards stating information on this drive, but it erroneously put the Mammoth Community Center Gym as the place....Correct building, just the wrong room. You can also donate snacks. Contact Kathleen Cunningham at x245 for more information or to schedule a time slot. Thank you in advance for giving the Gift of Life!!

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Employee Safety Committee-Wellness Information. In conjunction with the Fit in Fitness 2012 Calendars that were distributed to all employees late last year, there is also an on-line supplement with monthly updates. Check in out here: www.personalbest.com/2012calendar. Also, please go to the EmSC Sharepoint site at: <http://inpyellshare/emsc> under Documents-Wellness Program, folder Personal Best Documents, folder March where you will find wonderful information provided by Personal Best to celebrate National Nutrition Month in March. Topics include: Nutrition, Fitness, Health Tracks and a great healthy recipe for avocado wraps.

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Celebrate **St. Patrick's Day** early at the Mammoth Community Center Potluck and Family Craft Night! Wed. March 7, 2012. Potluck starts at 5:45 p.m. Green Beer, Irish tunes, kids' crafts and cupcakes. Adults: bring a craft you are working on.

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IN THE NEWS**Appeal of Yellowstone snowmobile rule rejected**

DENVER (AP) -- A federal appeals court says Wyoming can't sue the federal government over a 2009 rule that slashed how many snowmobiles were allowed in Yellowstone National Park.

Wyoming and Park County argued the rule arbitrarily restricted snowmobile access, despite evidence that allowing more snowmobiles wouldn't hurt the park. They said the limits would hurt tourism and tax revenue.

The 2009 rule expired last year, but park officials extended it through this winter.

A panel of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Wednesday that the state and county failed to show concrete economic losses from the rule, which would have allowed them to sue. They also said a challenge on procedural grounds is moot because park officials conducted a new analysis before extending the 2009 limits through this winter.

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Visitors to national parks in Rockies spend \$1 billion

Associated Press, missoulia.com | Wednesday, February 29, 2012

HELENA — Recreation in the Rocky Mountains' national parks has provided a boon to their surrounding communities as the economy struggles to recover from recession, with visitors spending \$1 billion in the region's four biggest parks in 2010, a new study found.

More than 11 million people who visited Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Rocky Mountain and Glacier national parks also supported 15,412 jobs, according to the study released Tuesday by the National Park Service.

The biggest beneficiaries were gateway towns in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho within 60 miles of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Those parks drew 6.3 million visitors who spent \$758 million in 2010.

"We're not always in a position to really point to some solid figures of that economic impact," Yellowstone spokesman Al Nash told the Bozeman Daily Chronicle. "(But) when you look at these kinds of figures and realize that every visitor means over \$90 to the area economy, it reinforces the significant role that visitors to the park play."

The study was conducted by a Michigan State University researcher for the park service and analyzed 2010 economic data from 394 parks across the country. It found that nationwide, 281 million visitors spent \$12 billion in so-called "local gateway regions" within about 60 miles of the parks.

A little more than half of that spending went toward lodging and meals and 19 percent toward gas and local transportation. The rest went to retail spending, amusements and groceries.

Those numbers were not broken down by park, but Chuck Curtis, who owns four businesses near Yellowstone's northern entrance at Gardiner, Mont., said they sound about right for Yellowstone.

He estimates that park visitors make up about 70 percent of his business.

"Everybody's very busy in the summertime," Curtis said. "That's when you make your living."

The study found that visitors to all national park units — which includes the parks and historic and national landmarks — spent a total of \$610.6 million in Wyoming; \$292.7 million in Colorado; and \$291.4 million in Montana.

Grand Teton and Yellowstone drew more than \$750 million in tourist spending in 2010

Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, March 1, 2012

CODY, WYO. — Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks and their gateway communities received more than \$750 million in tourist spending that supported more than 11,000 jobs in 2010, according to a new report from the National Park Service.

<http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/02/grand-teton-yellowstone-saw-750-million-tourist-spending-2010/>

Park puts value on quiet

By Cory Hatch, Jackson Hole News and Guide, March 1, 2012

Yellowstone National Park officials have proposed a new option for managing motorized winter use based on limiting noise in the park, instead of limiting the number of snowmobiles or snowcoaches.

http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/article.php?art_id=8302

Parked for a Day — Park your car for the day and do something great in the parks

Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, February 29, 2012

Maybe you've heard the old dictum that "less than 2 percent of Yellowstone visitors venture farther than 100 yards from paved roads and boardwalks," or something like that.

<http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/02/parked-for-day/>

Off-road, on foot, into the real Yellowstone National Park

Sarah Baxter joins the one per cent of visitors who escape the 'bear-jams', and finds the world's first national park bristling with wildlife.

By Sarah Baxter, March 1, 2012

There was something in the air. And it wasn't just the eggy whiff of flatulent mud-pools or the sunscreen-and-perfume fug of the crowds at Old Faithful, the geyser. No, something less obvious but more powerful was pervading this strange, volcanic land. It was history.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/safariandwildlife/holidays/9115225/Off-road-on-foot-into-the-real-Yellowstone-National-Park.html>

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 900 AM MST THU MAR 1 2012

Rest Of Today...Breezy. Numerous snow showers. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Total snow accumulation 1 to 7 inches. Highs 17 to 23. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening... Then isolated snow showers after midnight. Lows 6 below to 4 above zero. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the evening. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Friday...Breezy. Partly cloudy in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. A 50 percent chance of snow. Highs 17 to 23. West winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph in the late morning and afternoon.

Friday Night...Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Lows 6 to 12. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

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

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INQUIRING MINDS!

Have a question about park decisions, operations, or policy - or even the latest rumor going around - but don't know who or even how to ask? Send them to us in the Public Affairs Office!

We'll forward them to the appropriate subject matter experts, and begin sharing these questions and answers in the daily newsletter after the start of the new calendar year.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, March 2, 2012

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Contact Kathleen Cunningham at x245 for more information or to schedule a time slot. Thank you in advance for giving the Gift of Life!!

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RECENT NEWS RELEASES

Yellowstone's Winter Season Drawing To A Close

March 1, 2012

March 1 means two things in Yellowstone: a celebration of the birth of the world's first national park in 1872, and the beginning of the end of motorized oversnow travel in the park's interior for another year.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12010.htm>

IN THE NEWS

Snowmobile season winding down in Yellowstone Nat'l Park; Roads could open to cars by April 20

Associated Press, March 1, 2012

JACKSON, Wyo. — Snowmobile season is winding down in Yellowstone National Park.

Commercial snowmobile and snow coach travel between Fishing Bridge and the park's east entrance will end Thursday night. More roads will be closed to snowmobiles over the next two weeks.

Once all snow travel comes to an end, crews will start clearing snow from roads to get them ready for spring visitors. Park officials hope that work will be done by April 20.

The National Park Service is still studying how many snowmobiles and coaches to allow in Yellowstone, a plan they hope to implement in time for next winter. Public comments are being accepted through March 9 and a draft plan will be released in late spring.

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 804 AM MST FRI MAR 2 2012

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Tonight...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow in the evening... Then snow likely after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 6 to 12. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Saturday...Breezy. Not as cold. Snow likely. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Total snow accumulation 2 to 4 inches. Highs 25 to 31. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Saturday Night...Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Lows 15 to 21. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph.

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Monday, March 5, 2012



Bison are on the move along the North Entrance road! Use caution on the roadways.

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IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone opening dates for spring announced

Associated Press, March 5, 2012

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. - Offering good news for those tiring of winter, the concessioner that runs lodges, restaurants and activities in Yellowstone National Park says it will start opening park facilities in late April.

Xanterra Parks & Resorts says all park operations will up and running by mid-June in time for the summer season.

The Old Faithful Snow Lodge Geyser Grill and gift shop will be first to open on April 20, followed by the Mammoth Hot Springs gift shop and grill on April 27. The major lodging facilities will open throughout May. Campgrounds start to open on May 4 with the Madison Campground, followed by Fishing Bridge RV Park on May 11.

The park itself reopens to automobiles in April when the major roads are cleared of snow.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 835 AM MST MON MAR 5 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Windy. Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Areas of fog in the morning. Highs 34 to 40. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph increasing to 25 to 30 mph late in the afternoon.

Tonight...Windy. Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 19 to 25. Southwest winds 25 to 30 mph. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Tuesday...Breezy. Snow likely in the morning...then numerous snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 3 to 4 inches. Highs 26 to 32. West winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Tuesday Night...Breezy. Much colder. Cloudy. Chance of snow in the evening...then slight chance of snow after midnight. Lows 1 below to 5 above zero. North winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 50 percent.

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

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A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, March 6, 2012



“Tree Hugger” Submitted by Jay Elhard, Yell Visual Information Specialist.

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March 11 (Sunday), 9:00 PM - Canyon Junction to Fishing Bridge Junction closes
March 15 (Thursday), 9:00 PM - All park roads are closed to vehicles

Spring Opening updates will be provided daily by Fleet Maintenance as in the past and then Fleet Maintenance will notify the Comm Center on the time and date the roads will be turned over to District Operations for maintenance operations, then the Comm Center from that point on will announce date and time official

administrative travel will commence and will administer the closures / openings / incidents from District Personnel from that point on.

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Today is the last day to sign up for tomorrow's **blood drive**, March 7th, from 1:00 - 5:00 PM at the Mammoth Community Center, Classroom #3. Photo ID is required. At this time they WILL NOT be needing AB Positive or AB Negative blood. So, if this is your blood type, please keep it on reserve until it is needed!! Contact Kathleen Cunningham at x2455 for more information or to schedule a time slot.

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Mountain Mobil Auto Glass will be at the Mammoth Garage on March 8, 2012 for glass repairs to Government vehicles. If you are in need of glass work please call Randy Froelich 307-344-2322 or Tom Monroe at 307-344-2321 to set up an appointment. For personal work please call Randy Stands at 406-220-7891.

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RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

March 6, 2012

Presenters Sought For Fourth Annual Winter Photo Festival

Photographers are invited to share their favorite winter images of the region with the public during the Fourth Annual Winter Photo Festival to be held next week in West Yellowstone.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12012.htm>

March 5, 2012

Report Released On August Fatal Bear Attack In Yellowstone

The National Park Service investigative report issued by Yellowstone National Park and a Board of Review report issued by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee on the August 2011 fatal bear attack in Yellowstone have been released to the public.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12011.htm>

IN THE NEWS

Man killed by Yellowstone grizzly claimed to be bear expert

Rueters, By Laura Zuckerman, SALMON, Idaho | Mon Mar 5, 2012

(Reuters) - A man killed by a grizzly bear in Yellowstone National Park had been warned about the danger the animals presented but said he was a grizzly "expert" who didn't need the standard safety lecture, according to a report released on Monday.

John Wallace, 59, was fatally mauled in August on a hiking trail in terrain favored by the bears. It was the second fatal mauling in the park last summer and came after officials allowed the mother grizzly behind a deadly attack in July to roam free.

That bear was captured and euthanized in October after DNA and footprint analyses showed it and one of its cubs were likely among grizzlies that ate part of Wallace's body in the 24-hour period between his death and the discovery of his remains by hikers.

The probe by government bear managers shows Wallace set off for a hike on August 25 alone and without bear spray. He was on a trail where a sign warned visitors they were entering bear country, advised use of bear spray and discouraged hiking alone.

A day before, the Chassell, Michigan man had registered at a park campground, where officials gave him a standard lecture about bear safety and food storage.

"He made a statement ... that he did not need to hear that information and that he was a 'grizzly bear expert,'" according to the report released by Yellowstone rangers and federal and state bear biologists.

Officials could not determine what triggered the mauling. An examination revealed Wallace's injuries included bites on his hands, arms and back. Portions of the body were consumed but investigators could not identify the bear that killed him.

The mother grizzly later euthanized by the park had been involved in an attack that killed a hiker on July 6. It was Yellowstone's first fatal mauling since 1986.

In that case, officials determined that the female grizzly was acting in a purely defensive manner to protect its cubs from the perceived threat posed by the hiker, Brian Matayoshi, 58, of Torrance, California, and his wife. But the fact that bear had been involved in a second fatal encounter led to its demise, Park Superintendent Dan Wenk said in October.

"The bear management program in Yellowstone National park is far too important than to risk it on one bear,"

Wenk said after announcing the grizzly had been put down. Its two cubs were sent to a public wildlife refuge.

The park in recent years has stepped up "bear aware" campaigns aimed at equipping visitors with techniques, such as packing bear spray, that might prove life-saving in grizzly encounters.

Wallace's family described him as an experienced and able back country hiker and outdoorsman, the report shows.

"It is not unusual for experienced outdoorsmen to understand and accept the risks associated with hiking alone in bear country. Many hikers in Yellowstone National Park hike alone," the report found.

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Evidence mixed in Yellowstone bear attack

By MARK HEINZ, Cody (WY) Enterprise, Monday, March 5, 2012

It will probably never be known exactly why a man who died in an August 2011 grizzly mauling in Yellowstone Park was attacked.

Nor can it be determined which bear or bears attacked him, according to a recent report from a panel of experts. The body of John Wallace, 59, of Chassell, Mich., had been partially eaten by bears before it was discovered Aug. 26, 2011, an estimated 24 hours after his death, the report states.

The body was found about five miles up the Mary Mountain Trail in the Hayden Valley, where Wallace had been hiking alone, and there were no witnesses to the attack.

Wounds on his hands and forearms indicted Wallace vainly struggled against the bear or bears that attacked him. He died from blood loss from numerous massive bite wounds, including head trauma, according to the report. The report, released Monday, was filed by a panel of bear experts from several state and federal agencies. They include Game and Fish bear expert Mark Bruscino of Cody.

Wallace's death was the second fatal grizzly mauling in Yellowstone during summer 2011.

On July 6, 2011, Brian Matayoshi, 57, of Torrance, Calif., was killed by a sow with two cubs on the Wapiti Lake Trail, only a few miles from where Wallace died.

It was determined the sow had been defending her cubs from a perceived threat, so the Park Service at that time decided to let her go.

But DNA, tracks, scat and other evidence at the site of Wallace's death indicate that same sow and at least one of her cubs had also been there.

The Park Service later decided to kill that grizzly and keep the cubs in captivity.

Matayoshi was hiking with his wife, and neither of them were carrying bear spray.

Investigators also concluded that the couple yelling, screaming and trying to run from the grizzly might have also aggravated the severity of the attack.

Wallace also wasn't carrying bear spray, despite signs at the trailhead advising hikers to carry it, and not to hike alone, according to the report.

Family and friends of Wallace said he was an experienced outdoorsman who had spent considerable time in grizzly country, the report states.

The men's deaths marked the first time in park history there was more than one fatal mauling in a year. Prior to Matayoshi's death, the last fatal mauling in the park was in 1986. Still, there were two fatal maulings on national forest land adjacent to the park in 2010.

"There is no evidence that explains why Mr. Wallace was attacked," the report on his death states.

"It is likely he was not hiking and had stopped for some reason at the time he was attacked because his pack was off with the waist belt unbuckled when his body was found. There is no evidence indicating what bear(s) killed Mr. Wallace, nor is there evidence to determine if the attack was defensive or predatory in nature."

The report may be viewed at www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/grizzly/yellowstone.htm and click on the link, "Wallace Board of Review Report."

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Gazette opinion: Let's protect Yellowstone to keep money flowing

Billings Gazette, March 5, 2012

Yellowstone Park is the crown jewel of our region's tourism industry. Just how much is that jewel worth? More than \$334 million in 2010, according to a new report from the National Park Service.

According to the NPS report, Yellowstone's 3.6 million visitors that year:

Supported 4,881 jobs in the area, including 566 National Park Service jobs.
Added \$135.8 million in labor income to the area.

The report for Yellowstone is based on visitor surveys at Yellowstone. The report also provides estimates of the economic impact of other national park units in the region:

Grand Teton National Park saw 2.6 million visitors who spent a total of \$424 million and supported 6,258 jobs, according to data extrapolated from visitor surveys.

Glacier National Park's 2.2 million visitors spent \$108 million and supported 1,632 jobs.

Little Bighorn National Battlefield logged 320,959 visitors, who spent \$11 million and supported 174 jobs. Devil's Tower in northeastern Wyoming counted 436,000 visitors, who spent \$15.3 million and supported 229 jobs.

Nationwide, national parks pumped \$31 billion into the economy and supported 258,000 jobs. Those numbers represent an increase of \$689 million and 11,500 jobs compared with 2009.

The local region (within 60 miles of the national park) captures 80 percent of all visitor spending as direct sales. The average sales multiplier across all local park regions is 1.47. For every dollar of direct sales, another 47 cents in sales is generated in the local region through secondary effects.

Local visitors represent about 29 percent of all visits but less than 10 percent of all visitor spending.

On a statewide basis, national park visitation supports 5,194 Montana jobs and 9,845 jobs in Wyoming, according to the NPS analysis. Nonlocal national park visitor spending was estimated to total \$291 million in Montana and \$610 million in Wyoming.

Of course, visitors don't come to Yellowstone, Glacier or other parks because they want to spend money. They visit to enjoy the parks' spectacular scenery, abundant wildlife, fresh air and clear lakes. They drive, hike, bike, camp, fish, backpack, take photos and watch wildlife.

Thus, the unending debates over managing park resources must strike a careful balance. We welcome park business; we want it to thrive and grow. But we recognize that tourism exists because the park's unique natural resources are conserved for us and for future generations.

The economic impact of Yellowstone is hundreds of millions annually, but the park itself is priceless.

Wolf deal sweeps past Wyoming Legislature

By Jeremy Pelzer Star-Tribune capital bureau trib.com | Monday, March 5, 2012

CHEYENNE—A landmark compromise plan to remove Wyoming's grey wolf population from the federal endangered species list overwhelmingly passed the Wyoming Legislature on Monday.

The 57-1 vote in the Wyoming House means the legislation now heads to Gov. Matt Mead for his signature.

Under the deal, reached last year by Mead and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wyoming's roughly 243 wolves living outside of Yellowstone National Park and the Wind River Indian Reservation would be placed under state control. Wyoming's the only state with wolves covered under federal endangered species protection.

Wyoming's wolf management plan would allow the animals to be killed on sight in all but the northwest part of the state, where they would be designated as trophy game and could only be hunted with a license.

The plan also establishes a flex zone covering northern Sublette and Lincoln counties, as well as southern Teton County, in which wolves would be protected only from Oct. 15 until the end of the following February.

The deal swept through the Legislature with little debate. State Rep. Lorraine Quarberg, R-Thermopolis, was the only House member to vote against the bill, Senate File 41, during the final House vote on Monday.

If Mead signs the bill as expected, it will then be up to Fish and Wildlife director Dan Ashe to make the final decision whether to enact the agreement. The unofficial deadline to finish the deal is Sept. 30, according to federal and state officials.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department officials have said that if wolves are delisted by September, they would likely set up a hunting season for this fall.

Yellowstone Bison Really Two Distinct Populations

KBTX TV, Abilene, Texas, Mar 5, 2012

The American Bison is an iconic species that conjures up visions of the wide-open prairies characteristic of the Wild West. The spirit of this amazing animal lives on at Yellowstone National Park, home to one of the few populations of bison known to have continually persisted on their current landscape since Pre-Columbian times.

http://www.kbtx.com/national/headlines/Yellowstone_Bison_Really_Two_Distinct_Populations_141431783.html

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 248 AM MST TUE MAR 6 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Winter Weather Advisory

Today...Breezy...snow. Snow accumulation of 5 to 7 inches. Highs 27 to 33. West winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of snow 90 percent.

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. Snow in the evening...then slight chance of snow after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Total snow accumulation 6 to 10 inches. Lows zero to 6 above zero. Northeast winds around 15 mph late in the evening. Chance of snow 90 percent.

Wednesday...Partly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Highs 26 to 32.

Wednesday Night...Clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 1 to 7.

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

INQUIRING MINDS!

Have a question about park decisions, operations, or policy - or even the latest rumor going around - but don't know who or even how to ask? Send them to us in the Public Affairs Office! We'll forward them to the appropriate subject matter experts, and begin sharing these questions and answers in the daily newsletter after the start of the new calendar year.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, March 7, 2012



Facebook Post alerts YNP To Warming Fire Gone Bad.

On March 3, a Yellowstone visitor cross-country skiing on the Slough Creek trail witnessed what she thought was a fire smoldering underneath a tree. On March 4, she posted an entry describing what she saw to an unofficial Yellowstone National Park Facebook page (YNP has no “official” Facebook page), which was forwarded to the YNP Public Affairs Office by the page’s administrator. Joe Krish and Becky Smith of Wildland Fire skied the trail yesterday morning and confirmed the posting was true. Due to the fact no lightning had been recorded in the area, it was determined the fire was human-caused, most likely a warming fire as it was located in a perfect spot adjacent the trail, and was suppressed. (*NPS Photo, Becky Smith*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TONIGHT! Celebrate **St. Patrick's Day** early at the Mammoth Community Center Potluck and Family Craft Night! Potluck starts at 5:45 p.m. Green Beer, Irish tunes, kids' crafts and cupcakes. Adults: bring a craft you are working on.

Spring Road Schedule:

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March 15 (Thursday), 9:00 PM - All park roads are closed to vehicles

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Also, the Concessions Facility Opening and Closing schedule is on the P drive under Concessions Mgmt. The Plowing Schedule is also on the P drive under Special Projects Roads.

- - - - -

The **last full-loop courier trip for the season** will be **Friday**, March 9. The following week Rachel will be stopping with the mail at the plow cuts and meeting folks from the interior to help shuttle mail to interior locations. Please contact her as the time gets closer if you can assist with the shuttles. The last run with the mail for this season will be March 16. After that date the courier duties will be disbursed out to the different divisions.

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TODAY'S Blood Drive Cancelled. United Blood Services' vehicle broke down in Billings late last night and had to be hauled via a wrecker back to Butte. No other vehicles are available to come down here today. Sorry for the inconvenience. Will keep you posted as to the new date.

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The Contracting Office will be minimally staffed starting at 3:00 p.m. on March 12 through COB March 16. The staff will be attending an IMR Contracting Workshop. All staff will still be available via blackberry/email. However, please do not disturb the team members for 'routine' issues. If something comes up, please contact Kelleen Minor at x2080 for more information.

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Mountain Mobil Auto Glass will be at the Mammoth Garage on March 8, 2012 for glass repairs to Government vehicles. If you are in need of glass work please call Randy Froelich 307-344-2322 or Tom Monroe at 307-344-2321 to set up an appointment. For personal work please call Randy Stands at 406-220-7891.

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Spring Forward: Set clocks ahead 1 hour this weekend

Dave Sherman, KBZK TV

It's almost time to return to Daylight Saving Time, which means setting clocks forward one hour.

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Some people enjoy the twice-yearly ritual of tinkering with time, feeling that "springing forward" or "falling back" helps to usher in a more seasonal atmosphere. Other people, however, don't like the idea of trying to trick our bodies and our daily routines by adjusting the clocks.

For instance, in the 2011 Montana Legislature - as in several previous sessions - there was a proposal to take Montana off of the time-changing standard. MT State Representative Kris Hansen (R-Havre) drafted a bill titled "A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME AS THE OFFICIAL TIME FOR MONTANA; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 30-14-1729 AND 71-1-313, MCA." The bill was tabled in committee and no further action taken.

And for folks who rely on their mobile phone for time-telling purposes: most service providers automatically update the time on their cell phones. If you wake up on Sunday and find that yours hasn't updated, a simple power off/power on cycle should set it right.

And for folks who are picky about words, note that the official phrase is "Daylight Saving Time" - there is no letter S at the end of the word "saving."

RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

March 6, 2012

Presenters Sought For Fourth Annual Winter Photo Festival

Photographers are invited to share their favorite winter images of the region with the public during the Fourth Annual Winter Photo Festival to be held next week in West Yellowstone.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12012.htm>

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IN THE NEWS

Spring Burn Preparations Underway, Yellowstone and Gardiner Districts

U.S. Forest Service Press Release, March 6, 2012

Big Timber, Livingston, and Gardiner, MT — Gallatin National Forest fire and fuels managers are carrying out plans to complete multiple prescribed burns this spring dependent upon proper conditions. Three prescribed burns are located in the Main Boulder Drainage, south of Big Timber, near the Main Boulder Ranger Station and Clydehurst Christian Camp, ranging from 45 – 200 acres respectively. Another burn is located on the Gardiner Ranger District, approximately 13 miles north of Gardiner in Cutler Meadows.

The burns in the Main Boulder Drainage are part of the ongoing hazardous fuel reduction project. Burning Cutler Meadows is part of a project utilizing fire to restore native plant communities to acquired lands in the Gardiner Basin. The month of March generally marks the beginning of spring burning season. "The transition from late winter into early spring historically offers us the greatest opportunity to utilize cooler evening temperatures and higher relative humidity to complete some of the Forest's prescribed fire projects," said Ashley Sites, Gallatin National Forest East Zone Fire Management Officer.

Fire personnel also plan to burn several small slash piles around the Forest. These piles are located in the Main Boulder area south of Big Timber, on the west side of the Crazy Mountains in the Smith Creek and Cottonwood Creek areas, and in the Paradise Valley area.

For more information regarding spring 2012 burn plans in the Big Timber/Livingston area, please call Karen Tuscano at 406- 223-2028, the Yellowstone Ranger District, Big Timber office at 406-932-5155, or the Livingston office at 406-222-1892. To contact the Gardiner Ranger District call 406-848-7375, or visit the office at 805 Scott Street in Gardiner, MT. Additional information about the Gallatin National Forest can be found online at: www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin.

Montana hard-rock mining cleanup to continue after government rule change

By ROB CHANEY Missoulian The Billings Gazette | Posted: Wednesday, March 7, 2012

A rule change in Washington, D.C., means Montana's hard-rock mining cleanup work can continue, according to officials at the state Department of Environmental Quality.

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/montana-hard-rock-mining-cleanup-to-continue-after-government-rule/article_c327a114-ddad-5c78-884d-35e01fe08bb8.html

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 855 AM MST WED MAR 7 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Rest Of Today...Mostly sunny. Highs 23 to 29.

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows 4 to 10.

Thursday...Not as cold. Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 33 to 39.

Thursday Night...Mostly clear. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 13 to 19.

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

INQUIRING MINDS!

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As devastating storms and tornadoes have caused widespread damage across the South and Midwest, **Federal Occupational Health (FOH)** would like to remind you that Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available to assist those impacted by the destruction. EAP counseling services are available for those dealing with the emotional aftermath of these recent storms. Our team of professionals is available to provide, support, referrals, and information for a wide range of emergency services. Supporting information documents are located on the P Drive in the EAP Newsletters folder, each with the suffix: *Mar 12*. Contact the EAP today at 1-800-222-0364 or visit www.FOH4You.com.

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CALENDAR

YCR welcomes staff to attend the following presentations:

March 13th, 2012 - 2,400 Years of Changing Drought Conditions in Yellowstone National Park

John King, Lone Pine Research, 12:00 pm, YCR Conference Room

John King is an ecologist with 12 years of experience in watershed management and dendrochronology, including eight years with the University of Arizona Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research. Recent projects have focused on riparian forest dynamics and forest disturbance events. He has assembled over 150 tree-ring chronologies, including 28 records greater than 1000 years and 51 records archived with the International Tree-Ring Data Bank.

March 15th, 2012 - Bryophytes of Yellowstone National Park: exciting new discoveries!

Judy Harpel, Curator, Bryophyte Collection, University of British Columbia, 12:00 pm, YCR Conference Room

Judy Harpel is an internationally recognized expert in bryophyte systematics. After three field seasons working in Yellowstone, Judy has greatly expanded the knowledge of the mosses and liverworts in the park, surprising other experts about the extent of the diversity of the park's flora. Come and hear all the breaking news.

IN THE NEWS

Work continues on Yellowstone winter use plan; public comments due Friday

CARLY FLANDRO , Bozeman Chronicle, March 8, 2012

For the past decade, litigation and court rulings have stymied creation of a Yellowstone National Park winter use plan—which would dictate how many snowmobiles and snowcoaches are allowed in the park each day.

During that time, the park has been operating under temporary plans, causing uncertainty for area business owners, park visitors and others.

This fall, however, that long struggle may culminate in a final plan. Between now and then, though, a number of steps must take place.

Public comments due Friday may influence what is included in a revised draft plan for winter use. That draft plan will then be released to the public, beginning a 60-day comment period. In September, a final use plan will be completed, and in October or November, the plan may be formally adopted.

Clyde Seely is the owner of the Three Bear Lodge and See Yellowstone Tours, both located in West Yellowstone. His businesses depend on park tourism, and a more restrictive use plan – for example, one that allowed fewer snowmobiles and snowcoaches into the park – could hurt his bottom line.

“Once this is resolved and there are no more lawsuits,” he said in a phone interview, “then everybody will sigh a sigh of relief and we’ll be able to have some certainty in our businesses.”

Seely has attended public meetings on Yellowstone winter use and thinks that the National Park Service has been making “a good effort” to make winter use balanced for everybody.

Conservation groups such as Greater Yellowstone Coalition, National Parks Conservation Association and Winter Wildlands Alliance are also weighing in on the draft plan and alternatives.

Mark Menlove, executive director for Winter Wildlands Alliance, said the national organization hopes more oversnow vehicles aren’t allowed into the park, partly because during the past five years, “the park’s made a pretty remarkable recovery.”

“It’s been a long, seemingly endless process, but we also support the park service in their efforts to get (the winter use plan) right,” he said. “We certainly hope that this time around they do get it right.... It’ll be great for anyone who cares about Yellowstone to have a long-term plan in place.”

A draft plan was released for public review and comment last spring. It generated more than 59,000 comments—so many that additional time was needed to assess them.

“Those comments prompted us to look at where we were in the process, and we felt that we didn’t have the time available to adequately answer all of the good questions raised by the public,” Al Nash, park spokesman, said. This season, winter use has been directed by a temporary plan to allow for the comments to be processed. The revised draft will build on last year’s draft and incorporate public comments.

Options for managing winter use might include banning snowmobiles and snowcoaches, continuing use under the temporary plan limits, or allowing snowcoaches, snowmobiles, buses and vans.

Additional options could also call for phasing out snowmobiles and allowing only snowcoaches. So-called “sound events,” which equate to one snowcoach or one group of snowmobiles, could also determine use. The revised draft will be released in late April.

“Our goal is to have a final decision prior to the start of next winter season,” Nash said. “It means that our staff, our neighbors in neighboring communities and visitors would know what to expect when planning for winter trips into Yellowstone.”

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Yellowstone considers 10-acre RV park

by Matthew Frank, Missoula Independent, March 8, 2012

Yellowstone National Park is proposing a patch of pavement about the size of eight football fields to accommodate the ever-growing number—and size—of RVs that roll through.

Under the park's Lake Area Plan, which was released for public review last month, it proposes to put down about 10 acres of pavement within the existing Fishing Bridge RV Park, which is currently the only campground in Yellowstone that offers water, sewer and electrical hookups for RVs. The plan also calls for 2.8 more acres, or 121,000 square feet, of building development in the area.

"We are not proposing expanding the footprint of the RV park," says Eleanor Williams Clark, a Yellowstone planner. "We're proposing all development to be within the boundaries of that [RV] park...and it does not violate any of our grizzly bear conservation measures that are in place."

Clark says Yellowstone received 130 comments during the public review period that ended March 2. Most, she says, were in favor of the larger comprehensive plan, with the size of the RV park being the most contentious component. One of the comments in opposition was a 347-signature petition gathered by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

"We don't think there's tremendous public clamor for a lot more asphalt inside Yellowstone National Park," says GYC Conservation Program Director Mark Pearson. That "may be appropriate in a commercial RV campground in a gateway community, but that doesn't seem appropriate to us inside Yellowstone."

Pearson also says the park shouldn't base the design of its infrastructure on RVs, which he says accounts for a "pretty tiny slice of the visiting public."

Clark can't say what the percentage of Yellowstone visitors arrive in RVs. But it's not the number that's the problem. "It's the fact that some of them are longer and require longer or larger turning radii," she says. "They're not outlawed. They're allowed in the gates at this point in time. I know others have pointed to the possibility of limiting [RV] length, like other parks"—including Glacier National Park—"have done." Yellowstone has studied that before, she says, but decided against it. "That's not to say it can't be explored in the future."

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 145 AM MST THU MAR 8 2012

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Friday...Mostly sunny. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 35 to 41.

Friday Night...Mostly clear. Lows 16 to 22.

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PLOWING: Due to safety reasons and lower staff levels, North District road crews will be maintaining the road from **Mammoth to Norris** last. They will only plow from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be no overtime spent on this stretch of the road until it opens to the public unless there is an emergency or a safety issue.

The **Mammoth to Tower** road will be maintained daily from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. as needed. Crew shifts are from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If there is a Question on whether or not plowing should be completed, contact Tom Cunningham at home (406) 848-7244, at work (307)344-2350, or Jim Knoelke Cell (406) 581-0738.

GET AHEAD OF THE GAME! GET YOUR **TRAINING DONE EARLY**. FISSA+ training is now available on [DOILearn](#) for all permanent employees. Since this is a required course it can be found in DOILearn by clicking on the "Access My Required Training" button. The seasonal version is not quite ready yet so if you are a seasonal please wait for that announcement.

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As devastating storms and tornadoes have caused widespread damage across the South and Midwest, **Federal Occupational Health (FOH)** would like to remind you that Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available to assist those impacted by the destruction. EAP counseling services are available for those dealing with the emotional aftermath of these recent storms. Our team of professionals is available to provide, support, referrals, and information for a wide range of emergency services. Supporting information documents are located on the P Drive in the EAP Newsletters folder, each with the suffix: *Mar 12*. Contact the EAP today at 1-800-222-0364 or visit www.FOH4You.com.

Spring Forward: Set clocks ahead 1 hour this weekend

Dave Sherman, KBZK TV

It's almost time to return to Daylight Saving Time, which means setting clocks forward one hour.

The official change takes place at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 11th, but as a practical matter, many people change their clocks either before going to bed on Saturday night, or upon waking on Sunday morning. The Daylight Saving Time will last until November 4th, 2011, when we will "fall back" and set clocks back one hour.

Some people enjoy the twice-yearly ritual of tinkering with time, feeling that "springing forward" or "falling back" helps to usher in a more seasonal atmosphere. Other people, however, don't like the idea of trying to trick our bodies and our daily routines by adjusting the clocks.

For instance, in the 2011 Montana Legislature - as in several previous sessions - there was a proposal to take Montana off of the time-changing standard. MT State Representative Kris Hansen (R-Havre) drafted a bill titled "A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: 'AN ACT ESTABLISHING DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME AS THE OFFICIAL TIME FOR MONTANA; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 30-14-1729 AND 71-1-313, MCA.'" The bill was tabled in committee and no further action taken.

And for folks who rely on their mobile phone for time-telling purposes: most service providers automatically update the time on their cell phones. If you wake up on Sunday and find that yours hasn't updated, a simple power off/power on cycle should set it right.

And for folks who are picky about words, note that the official phrase is "Daylight Saving Time" - there is no letter S at the end of the word "saving."

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March 13th, 2012 - 2,400 Years of Changing Drought Conditions in Yellowstone National Park
John King, Lone Pine Research, 12:00 pm, YCR Conference Room

John King is an ecologist with 12 years of experience in watershed management and dendrochronology, including eight years with the University of Arizona Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research. Recent projects have focused on riparian forest dynamics and forest disturbance events. He has assembled over 150 tree-ring chronologies, including 28 records greater than 1000 years and 51 records archived with the International Tree-Ring Data Bank.

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IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone to fund trout conservation and other projects with \$1.45 million in new grants

CARLY FLANDRO, Bozeman Chronicle | March 9, 2012

With \$1.45 million in new grants, Yellowstone National Park will fund conservation of a native trout species, purchase horses and mules, and hire rangers to monitor “bear jams” when traffic clogs as tourists snap photos of wildlife.

Several other projects will also be funded.

The Yellowstone Park Foundation, the park’s official fundraising partner, presented the grant, which was comprised of donations from individuals, corporations and other entities “who just care about national parks,” said Karen Kress, president of the organization.

The bulk of the grant will go toward programs to conserve native fish, particularly the Yellowstone cutthroat trout. The park foundation designated \$1 million for the program, and the federal government is matching that to make it \$2 million.

“Yellowstone cutthroat trout represent an important food source for grizzlies, raptors and other species,” Dan Wenk, park superintendent, said in a prepared statement. “Their loss could have dramatic consequences for the entire ecosystem.”

Lake trout, an invasive species, are threatening Yellowstone cutthroat populations in Yellowstone Lake and its tributaries. The cutthroat is a keystone species in the Yellowstone area, and an estimated 42 species of wildlife – including coyotes, ospreys and otters – depend on the fish for food. They could all be impacted if the cutthroat population were drastically reduced.

Lake trout cannot substitute cutthroat trout as a food source because they live in deeper parts of the lake and are difficult to catch.

A program that aims to keep wildlife and visitors in the park safe has been designated \$100,000. The funds will be used to hire rangers to monitor “wildlife jams.” The rangers will make sure tourists stay safe and don’t venture too close to wildlife when stopping to take photos. Written materials will also be made available to visitors.

Another \$100,000 will go toward planning and designing Norris Geyser Basin Access improvements, including accommodation for a larger number of visitors and more protection of fragile hydrothermal features.

New horses, mules and equipment will be bought for backcountry and front-country operations. About \$65,000 has been made available for those purchases.

Another \$50,000 has been allotted for restoring historic roadside kiosks.

More than 15,000 individuals, foundations and corporations donated to the foundation in the past year.

"Private contributions of all sizes make our work possible, year after year," Kress said in a prepared statement.

"As we celebrate our 15th anniversary as Yellowstone's fundraising partner, we are more grateful than ever for the many people who have stepped up to be stewards of Yellowstone."

Sophomores learn that composting is alchemy of an organic sort

BY KIP SIKORA West Yellowstone News, Friday, March 9, 2012

Change was in the air Wednesday afternoon, though it wasn't the turning of the seasons, nor a socio-political paradigm shift.

It was change on a molecular level and it smelled like soil cut with a twist of trash.
It was the earthy aroma of compost.

"That smell is called geosmin and it means the compost is working properly," said West Yellowstone Composting Facility manager John Burns, as he guided teacher Sara Hoovler's sophomore science class through the facility last Wednesday afternoon.

"Composting completes a circle. It's a real natural process that uses bacteria to convert organic waste into a useful product," Burns said.

And, all of the organic waste converted at the composting facility comes from Yellowstone National Park.

"We take everything that comes from the northeast corner to the south gate. It all comes here," Burns said.

Over the course of a year that amounts to more than 2,000 tons of waste.

"From that we get about 800 to 1,000 tons of compost," he told the class.

Burns explained by following a sorting process, organic waste is placed in one of seven tunnels where airflow and heat eradicate pathogens. It is then placed in piles to continue the purification process.

At the end of two weeks time the compost is ready for sale, and the composting facility sells that finished product in bulk for \$15 per yard.

"What's really neat about our relationship with the park is that they end up buying a lot of our product to use for re-vegetation projects. It costs a lot for them to bring their trash here, but in the end they know it's a good thing," Burns said.

Having such a state of the art composting facility so close to the park is not only a way to manage waste, it can also serve as a learning tool, and that is what inspired Hoovler to arrange a tour for her students.

"This is such an advanced facility in our backyard, and we have been discussing bacteria. It's hard to relate to in real life with the exception of illness, and we wanted to take a look at some of the beneficial sides to microorganisms, so I thought it would be a good field trip," Hoovler said.

They received a glimpse into the world of transitioning trash to once again be something useful.

Work continues on Yellowstone winter use plan; public comments due Friday

CARLY FLANDRO , Bozeman Chronicle, March 8, 2012

For the past decade, litigation and court rulings have stymied creation of a Yellowstone National Park winter use plan—which would dictate how many snowmobiles and snowcoaches are allowed in the park each day.

During that time, the park has been operating under temporary plans, causing uncertainty for area business owners, park visitors and others.

This fall, however, that long struggle may culminate in a final plan. Between now and then, though, a number of steps must take place.

Public comments due Friday may influence what is included in a revised draft plan for winter use. That draft plan will then be released to the public, beginning a 60-day comment period. In September, a final use plan will be completed, and in October or November, the plan may be formally adopted.

Clyde Seely is the owner of the Three Bear Lodge and See Yellowstone Tours, both located in West Yellowstone. His businesses depend on park tourism, and a more restrictive use plan – for example, one that allowed fewer snowmobiles and snowcoaches into the park – could hurt his bottom line.

"Once this is resolved and there are no more lawsuits," he said in a phone interview, "then everybody will sigh a sigh of relief and we'll be able to have some certainty in our businesses."

Seely has attended public meetings on Yellowstone winter use and thinks that the National Park Service has been making "a good effort" to make winter use balanced for everybody.

Conservation groups such as Greater Yellowstone Coalition, National Parks Conservation Association and Winter Wildlands Alliance are also weighing in on the draft plan and alternatives.

Mark Menlove, executive director for Winter Wildlands Alliance, said the national organization hopes more oversnow vehicles aren't allowed into the park, partly because during the past five years, "the park's made a pretty remarkable recovery."

"It's been a long, seemingly endless process, but we also support the park service in their efforts to get (the winter use plan) right," he said. "We certainly hope that this time around they do get it right.... It'll be great for anyone who cares about Yellowstone to have a long-term plan in place."

A draft plan was released for public review and comment last spring. It generated more than 59,000 comments—so many that additional time was needed to assess them.

"Those comments prompted us to look at where we were in the process, and we felt that we didn't have the time available to adequately answer all of the good questions raised by the public," Al Nash, park spokesman, said. This season, winter use has been directed by a temporary plan to allow for the comments to be processed.

The revised draft will build on last year's draft and incorporate public comments.

Options for managing winter use might include banning snowmobiles and snowcoaches, continuing use under the temporary plan limits, or allowing snowcoaches, snowmobiles, buses and vans.

Additional options could also call for phasing out snowmobiles and allowing only snowcoaches. So-called "sound events," which equate to one snowcoach or one group of snowmobiles, could also determine use.

The revised draft will be released in late April.

"Our goal is to have a final decision prior to the start of next winter season," Nash said. "It means that our staff, our neighbors in neighboring communities and visitors would know what to expect when planning for winter trips into Yellowstone."

Yellowstone considers 10-acre RV park

by Matthew Frank, Missoula Independent, March 8, 2012

Yellowstone National Park is proposing a patch of pavement about the size of eight football fields to accommodate the ever-growing number—and size—of RVs that roll through.

Under the park's Lake Area Plan, which was released for public review last month, it proposes to put down about 10 acres of pavement within the existing Fishing Bridge RV Park, which is currently the only campground in Yellowstone that offers water, sewer and electrical hookups for RVs. The plan also calls for 2.8 more acres, or 121,000 square feet, of building development in the area.

"We are not proposing expanding the footprint of the RV park," says Eleanor Williams Clark, a Yellowstone planner. "We're proposing all development to be within the boundaries of that [RV] park...and it does not violate any of our grizzly bear conservation measures that are in place."

Clark says Yellowstone received 130 comments during the public review period that ended March 2. Most, she says, were in favor of the larger comprehensive plan, with the size of the RV park being the most contentious component. One of the comments in opposition was a 347-signature petition gathered by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

"We don't think there's tremendous public clamor for a lot more asphalt inside Yellowstone National Park," says GYC Conservation Program Director Mark Pearson. That "may be appropriate in a commercial RV campground in a gateway community, but that doesn't seem appropriate to us inside Yellowstone."

Pearson also says the park shouldn't base the design of its infrastructure on RVs, which he says accounts for a "pretty tiny slice of the visiting public."

Clark can't say what the percentage of Yellowstone visitors arrive in RVs. But it's not the number that's the problem. "It's the fact that some of them are longer and require longer or larger turning radii," she says. "They're not outlawed. They're allowed in the gates at this point in time. I know others have pointed to the possibility of limiting [RV] length, like other parks"—including Glacier National Park—"have done." Yellowstone has studied that before, she says, but decided against it. "That's not to say it can't be explored in the future."

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

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 218 AM MST FRI MAR 9 2012

Hydrologic Outlook

Today...Sunny. Patchy fog early in the morning. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon.

Tonight...Clear. Lows 14 to 20. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the evening.

Saturday...Mostly sunny. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday Night...Mostly clear. Lows 17 to 23. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

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

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FEEDBACK

From a real YNP reader...

"I've been working here throughout the past 4 years in Interpretation at various locations within the Park. I just wanted to express thanks as to the daily newsletter you send out, compiling (the key!) various news/need-to-know info for us has been of GREAT value and much appreciated (at least for me)!"

So in my humble opinion, great job and thank you!"

...and THANK YOU out there! We'll keep typing if you keep reading!

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, March 12, 2012

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IN THE NEWS

Minimal bison migration has tribal hunters turning to elk

By BRETT FRENCH, The Billings Gazette | Saturday, March 10, 2012

A mild winter has slowed bison movement out of Yellowstone National Park this winter, meaning tribal and state hunters have had few opportunities to shoot the shaggy beasts.

"They just haven't been present at the lower elevations this winter," said Al Nash, Yellowstone's chief of public affairs. He added that only a "handful" of bison have left the park this winter.

As a result, Nez Perce tribal members who have driven hundreds of miles from Idaho to hunt bison have chosen instead to shoot elk outside the park's northern boundary near Gardiner, as allowed under their treaty rights, rather than go home with no meat. The tribal elk harvest, which is outside the state's management control, has raised the ire of at least one local resident.

Chris Kelly said tribal members are killing elk from an already severely depressed Northern Yellowstone herd. At last count in December, the herd numbered just over 4,600, a drop from their peak of 19,000 decades earlier. Numbers from this year have not yet been compiled; the count was taken Wednesday.

"It's not the way to handle a fragile herd," Kelly said. "It's not right that they're killing these elk."

The Northern Yellowstone elk herd's population has fallen dramatically since the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park in the 1990s. As a result, the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks has done away with its late-season elk hunt near Gardiner, has limited elk hunters to bulls only and last season issued only 30 cow elk permits for the hunting district.

Bill Hoppe, a Gardiner hunting outfitter who lives on Eagle Creek near where the elk have been shot recently, said there's no point in complaining about the situation.

"They can kiss this northern herd goodbye," he said. "I don't see any way they can come back."

Hoppe said he has seen around 70 bull elk cross the road near his house this entire winter, compared with 100 bulls in one group before wolves were reintroduced.

"It ain't good," he said. "It's not worth arguing about anymore. This northern herd is doomed. It's done."

Hoppe still outfits, but not near his home anymore. He's leasing ground in central Montana.

Sam Sheppard, a Fish, Wildlife and Parks warden captain, said his agency has been monitoring the tribal hunt along with Nez Perce game wardens. That led to citations issued to two tribal members who shot elk recently without a tribal permit.

"We're prosecuting them," Sheppard said. "Fish, Wildlife and Parks continues to work closely with the aboriginal tribes on all aspects of the hunt."

More tribal hunters are expected this weekend since their season ends Sunday, Sheppard added, and wardens will be there to monitor the hunt.

For Montana-licensed bison hunters, the animals' failure to migrate out of the park meant that only 11 bison were shot this winter. Four were bulls and six were cows; one hunter, who won a SuperTag permit that allowed him to shoot a bison, did not report what he killed. As of Feb. 2, FWP had been notified that the Salish-Kootenai tribes had killed seven bison near West Yellowstone. Tribes with treaty hunting rights are not required to report to Montana how many animals they kill.

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 838 AM MDT MON MAR 12 2012

Hydrologic Outlook

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Tonight...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Lows 22 to 28. South winds 15 to 25 mph.

Tuesday...Windy...cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the morning... Then chance of rain in the afternoon. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph increasing to 45 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Tuesday Night...Windy...cloudy. Chance of snow and rain in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 24 to 30. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph with gusts to around 45 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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TODAY - 2,400 Years of Changing Drought Conditions in Yellowstone National Park

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IN THE NEWS

If a snowmobile rides through Yellowstone, does it make a sound event?

By Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, March 13, 2012

CODY, Wyo. — As planners move forward with crafting a new winter-use plan for Yellowstone National Park, they'll be gauging public response to the idea of so-called "sound events," one of the few new ideas in a decade of debate and court challenges over managing winter vehicle traffic in the park.

Under two of the potential winter-use alternatives proposed by the Park Service in February, snowmobile and snow coach travel through Yellowstone would be managed by sound events — the total number of noise-producing trips made each day.

"In a way, calling it a 'sound event' is a bit of a misnomer, because you're really measuring impact by event," said Wade Vagias, the management assistant for Yellowstone Park who is leading the winter-use planning effort.

"It's a different way of thinking about it, and the public may absolutely hate it, or they may not," Vagias said.

The Park Service is operating this winter in Yellowstone under a "one-year rule," designating winter from Dec. 15, 2011 to mid-March 2012 as a "transition year." That means use levels and restrictions on snowmobiles and

snow coaches, for instance, have been the same as the interim rule that has governed use over the past two seasons.

Efforts to nail down a long-term winter-use plan have been complicated by public debate, including court challenges, over issues like snowmobile traffic and avalanche management on Sylvan Pass, between Cody, Wyo. and Fishing Bridge.

The Park Service is seeking additional public comment on specific issues identified in its environmental studies, with a goal of producing a long-term winter-use plan for the 2012-13 season.

Planners will spend the next few weeks reviewing public comments made through March 9 as part of the scoping process for creating a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Even before the scoping comment deadline, more than 65,000 comments had been filed on the broad range of potential proposed alternatives, Vagias said.

The two sound event alternatives outlined in scoping documents would allow businesses flexibility in the mix of snowmobiles or snow coaches allowed into the park, while capping the total number of sound events at 100-120 per day. A sound event would be measured as a single snow coach or a group of up to about seven snowmobile riders.

Market approach

Under what the Park Service calls a “market approach” in one alternative, operators would be required to offer both snowmobile and snow coach tours, letting the public ultimately decide the mix of vehicles in the park by their purchasing decisions. (Currently only guided commercial tour operators may bring visitors into the park.)

Sound event management would reduce overall noise, while also creating practical limits for emissions and stresses on wildlife, Vagias said. It would also give tour operators and visitors more flexibility to choose vehicles and set group sizes and schedules. He said such a management model could result in less noise in the park while potentially allowing more visitors through each day.

The market approach is set up to reward innovation and technological improvements, particularly in designing and adopting quieter snowmobiles and snow coaches, Vagias said.

But it’s also aimed at diffusing the seemingly intractable debate over the specific numbers of snowmobiles and snow coaches to be allowed in the park.

At least a half-dozen different sets of winter-use planning documents dating back more than 10 years have all proposed specific fixed daily limits on a combination of vehicles, such as 318 snowmobiles and 78 snow coaches. None has resulted in a lasting management plan, as local governments and interest groups have inevitably sued to block the plans because they allow either too many or too few vehicles in the park.

‘The Box’

Each successive legal challenge and ruling by the courts — along with existing regulations, scientific findings and visitor expectations — further limits the options available to planners for creating a workable winter-use plan, especially when any new proposal is almost certain to draw another round of litigation.

“We refer to it as ‘the box,’” Vagias said, explaining that sound event management is one possible way to operate inside that box of ever-tightening planning restrictions while adopting a fresh approach.

Early responses to the concept have been mixed.

Gary Fales, whose Gary Fales Outfitting is the only company holding a permit to offer snowmobile tours through Yellowstone's east entrance, said the idea made sense to him.

"I like it better than the other stuff I've heard," Fales said. "It's a way to let the markets decide."

Mark Pearson, conservation program director for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, said he was concerned that "the Park Service is sort of turning over its stewardship responsibility to the marketplace or to tour operators."

Pearson's group supports snow coach travel for winter visitors, but favors phasing out snowmobiles completely.

Park researchers have conducted field studies on winter soundscapes in Yellowstone and looked at how visitors perceive vehicle noise, Vagias said. As part of the planning process, the Park Service evaluates the intensity, duration, location and timing of vehicle noise, and incorporates that data as part of the benchmarks used in its management goals.

Most park visitors can't distinguish the distant sound of a snow coach engine from a group of 7-10 snowmobiles, Vagias said, and the emissions profile and impact to wildlife are also roughly similar between a snow coach and group of snowmobiles.

"If you're standing in the woods and a tree falls, we all agree it makes a noise, but do you care if it's an oak tree or a pine tree?" he said.

If noise from an over-snow vehicle disturbs park visitors who value silence and solitude, it shouldn't matter what machine made the noise, so much as minimizing the noise and managing the effects of the machine on air quality and wildlife, Vagias said.

"What we're trying to do now is get out of that values position of ascribing numbers to a specific method of travel and get ourselves to the most legally defensible position we can," he said.

A draft supplemental EIS — which may or may not include proposed alternatives based on sound events — is expected to be released for public review and comment in late spring.

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Yellowstone: Half-off for kids on glamping trip in national park

By Mary Forgiione Los Angeles Times Daily Travel & Deal blogger
March 13, 2012, 5:45 a.m.

There's camping, and then there's glamping, the luxe version of connecting with nature. Idaho-based Far and Away Adventures offers three-day summer trips to a quiet part of Yellowstone National Park where tents come with carpeted floors and cozy beds with full-sized pillows. And there's one more perk: For a limited time, children go for half price.

The Yellowstone Lake Glamping trip begins at Bridge Bay Marina on Yellowstone Lake on the Wyoming side of the park. A boat takes participants to a remote lake-side camping spot for three days of kayaking, hiking, fly-fishing and wildlife watching. Evenings are spent around the campfire listening to a naturalist and eating four-course candlelight dinners. Wine pairings come with gourmet dining (children have a separate menu).

The deal: The bargain on this trip comes in the \$420 for each child younger than 18. One adult can bring up to three children and two adults up to six children and get the discount rate. Note that children must be members of the family, not unrelated family friends.

When: Trips depart July 11, 13, 19, 21, 27 and 29; Aug. 6, 12, 14, 20, 22, 28 and 30. Participants must reserve by April 15 to get the children's discount.

Price: \$840 per adult and \$420 per child younger than 18 (for reservations made by April 15; price goes up after that date). It includes two nights in a luxury tent, meals with wine, boat ride to camp, sea kayaking and other guided activities. Airfare is extra.

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Hike a national park without leaving home

By Rob Lovitt, msnbc.com, March 12, 2012

No doubt you're familiar with Street View, the Google Maps technology that lets you travel along city streets via your computer or smartphone screen. Now, for those looking to get off the pavement, there's Trail View, a new program that lets you "walk" the trails of three national parks without taking a step.

<http://travelkit.msnbc.msn.com/news/2012/03/09/10625349-hike-a-national-park-without-leaving-home>

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An Army quartermaster's view of Yellowstone National Park in 1905

Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, March 13, 2012

During the early days of Yellowstone National Park, the U.S. Army was called in to protect bison and other wildlife from poachers. Life wasn't easy — but it was interesting — for the soldiers who lived and worked in Yellowstone.

<http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/03/army-quartermasters-view-of-yellowstone-national-park-1905/>

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 246 AM MDT TUE MAR 13 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Hydrologic Outlook

Winter Weather Advisory

Today...Windy...cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the morning...then chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Highs 36 to 42. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph increasing to 45 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Windy. Snow likely in the evening...then numerous snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 3 to 5 inches. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph with gusts to around 45 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Wednesday...Breezy. Numerous snow showers in the morning...then numerous rain showers and scattered snow showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 4 to 8 inches. Highs 39 to 45. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Wednesday Night...Breezy. Cloudy with scattered snow showers. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 40 percent.

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

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YNP@Work

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Wednesday, March 14, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Spring Bear Emergence Reminder

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For your safety and the safety of others please report all bear sightings and wildlife carcasses to the Bear Management Office at x 2162.

Spring Road Schedule:

March 15 (Thursday), 9:00 PM - All park roads are closed to vehicles

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March 15th, 2012 - Bryophytes of Yellowstone National Park: exciting new discoveries!

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Judy Harpel is an internationally recognized expert in bryophyte systematics. After three field seasons working in Yellowstone, Judy has greatly expanded the knowledge of the mosses and liverworts in the park, surprising other experts about the extent of the diversity of the park's flora. Come and hear all the breaking news.

IN THE NEWS

If a snowmobile rides through Yellowstone, does it make a sound event?

By Ruffin Prevost, Yellowstone Gate, March 13, 2012

CODY, Wyo. — As planners move forward with crafting a new winter-use plan for Yellowstone National Park, they'll be gauging public response to the idea of so-called "sound events," one of the few new ideas in a decade of debate and court challenges over managing winter vehicle traffic in the park.

Under two of the potential winter-use alternatives proposed by the Park Service in February, snowmobile and snow coach travel through Yellowstone would be managed by sound events — the total number of noise-producing trips made each day.

"In a way, calling it a 'sound event' is a bit of a misnomer, because you're really measuring impact by event," said Wade Vagias, the management assistant for Yellowstone Park who is leading the winter-use planning effort.

"It's a different way of thinking about it, and the public may absolutely hate it, or they may not," Vagias said.

The Park Service is operating this winter in Yellowstone under a "one-year rule," designating winter from Dec. 15, 2011 to mid-March 2012 as a "transition year." That means use levels and restrictions on snowmobiles and snow coaches, for instance, have been the same as the interim rule that has governed use over the past two seasons.

Efforts to nail down a long-term winter-use plan have been complicated by public debate, including court challenges, over issues like snowmobile traffic and avalanche management on Sylvan Pass, between Cody, Wyo. and Fishing Bridge.

The Park Service is seeking additional public comment on specific issues identified in its environmental studies, with a goal of producing a long-term winter-use plan for the 2012-13 season.

Planners will spend the next few weeks reviewing public comments made through March 9 as part of the scoping process for creating a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Even before the scoping comment deadline, more than 65,000 comments had been filed on the broad range of potential proposed alternatives, Vagias said.

The two sound event alternatives outlined in scoping documents would allow businesses flexibility in the mix of snowmobiles or snow coaches allowed into the park, while capping the total number of sound events at 100-120 per day. A sound event would be measured as a single snow coach or a group of up to about seven snowmobile riders.

Market approach

Under what the Park Service calls a “market approach” in one alternative, operators would be required to offer both snowmobile and snow coach tours, letting the public ultimately decide the mix of vehicles in the park by their purchasing decisions. (Currently only guided commercial tour operators may bring visitors into the park.)

Sound event management would reduce overall noise, while also creating practical limits for emissions and stresses on wildlife, Vagias said. It would also give tour operators and visitors more flexibility to choose vehicles and set group sizes and schedules. He said such a management model could result in less noise in the park while potentially allowing more visitors through each day.

The market approach is set up to reward innovation and technological improvements, particularly in designing and adopting quieter snowmobiles and snow coaches, Vagias said.

But it’s also aimed at diffusing the seemingly intractable debate over the specific numbers of snowmobiles and snow coaches to be allowed in the park.

At least a half-dozen different sets of winter-use planning documents dating back more than 10 years have all proposed specific fixed daily limits on a combination of vehicles, such as 318 snowmobiles and 78 snow coaches. None has resulted in a lasting management plan, as local governments and interest groups have inevitably sued to block the plans because they allow either too many or too few vehicles in the park.

‘The Box’

Each successive legal challenge and ruling by the courts — along with existing regulations, scientific findings and visitor expectations — further limits the options available to planners for creating a workable winter-use plan, especially when any new proposal is almost certain to draw another round of litigation.

“We refer to it as ‘the box,’” Vagias said, explaining that sound event management is one possible way to operate inside that box of ever-tightening planning restrictions while adopting a fresh approach.

Early responses to the concept have been mixed.

Gary Fales, whose Gary Fales Outfitting is the only company holding a permit to offer snowmobile tours through Yellowstone’s east entrance, said the idea made sense to him.

“I like it better than the other stuff I’ve heard,” Fales said. “It’s a way to let the markets decide.”

Mark Pearson, conservation program director for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, said he was concerned that “the Park Service is sort of turning over its stewardship responsibility to the marketplace or to tour operators.”

Pearson’s group supports snow coach travel for winter visitors, but favors phasing out snowmobiles completely.

Park researchers have conducted field studies on winter soundscapes in Yellowstone and looked at how visitors perceive vehicle noise, Vagias said. As part of the planning process, the Park Service evaluates the intensity, duration, location and timing of vehicle noise, and incorporates that data as part of the benchmarks used in its management goals.

Most park visitors can’t distinguish the distant sound of a snow coach engine from a group of 7-10 snowmobiles, Vagias said, and the emissions profile and impact to wildlife are also roughly similar between a snow coach and group of snowmobiles.

“If you’re standing in the woods and a tree falls, we all agree it makes a noise, but do you care if it’s an oak tree or a pine tree?” he said.

If noise from an over-snow vehicle disturbs park visitors who value silence and solitude, it shouldn’t matter what machine made the noise, so much as minimizing the noise and managing the effects of the machine on air quality and wildlife, Vagias said.

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Last Update: 241 AM MDT WED MAR 14 2012

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Thursday...Breezy...cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning...then chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

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RECENT NEWS RELEASES

March 14, 2012

Ward Named Yellowstone Maintenance Chief

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12014.htm>

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She will be responsible for managing more than 2,800 park assets, a \$16 million operational maintenance budget with annual projects averaging \$35 million and more than 200 full time employees – the largest park-based asset management program in the National Park Service (NPS).

Ward began her NPS career as an engineer in 1977 after earning her bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1975 from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and earning a master’s degree in environmental engineering in 1977 from Tennessee. She worked for the Denver Service Center of the NPS and was stationed in Yellowstone from 1977 to 1983. In 1983 she transferred to the Maintenance Division in Yellowstone. Her most recent position was the Assistant Chief of Maintenance (Projects).

Ward’s work throughout her years in Yellowstone has primarily included design and construction project work starting with the rehabilitation of the park’s water systems in 1977 to 1983. She has also managed the Park Road Reconstruction Program since 1985. Other programs include the replacement of employee mobile homes with housing units, the rehabilitation of various wastewater and water systems, the rehabilitation of numerous buildings and structures from backcountry cabins to visitor centers, and the ongoing replacement of miles of boardwalk trails in the park’s thermal areas. She has also supervised Yellowstone’s staff of engineers and landscape architects.

Ward enjoys hiking, fishing and skiing in Yellowstone, participating in sports, following the University of Tennessee Lady Vols and the local Gardiner, Montana, school sports teams.

IN THE NEWS**Guns not safer than bear spray in grizzly country, study finds**

By MARTIN KIDSTON mkidston@billingsgazette.com | Posted: Thursday, March 15, 2012 12:15 am

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/guns-not-safer-than-bear-spray-in-grizzly-country-study/article_8d07f64f-62f6-542d-8c0b-fd158c9cb227.html

CODY, Wyo. — Carrying a gun in bear country doesn't protect hikers any more than not using a firearm, a study released last week by Brigham Young University found.

Conducted by biologist and bear expert Tom Smith, the study found that firing a gun was no more effective in keeping people from injury or death during a bear encounter than not using a firearm.

"It really isn't about the kind of gun you carry, it's about how you carry yourself," Smith said. "We need to respect an animal that could potentially take our lives."

Smith's work emphasizes a theme that Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and conservation groups in the Greater Yellowstone Area have been emphasizing for years: carry pepper spray when in grizzly bear country and know how to use it.

Smith and his team reviewed nearly 270 incidents of bear-human conflicts in Alaska involving 444 people and 357 bears, including 300 brown bears.

The results found no statistical difference in the outcome of the bear encounter when they compared those who had used a gun in an aggressive encounter (229 instances) with those who had firearms but did not use them (40 instances).

Smith said the results suggest that firearms should not be a substitute for doing the right thing to avoid unwanted encounters in bear country. Although a shooter may be able to kill an aggressive bear, he said, injuries to the shooter and others also can occur.

"We're seeing more and more people in bear country with guns," Smith said, with the incidence rising now that people are allowed to carry guns in national parks. "Yet guns, for most people, are not their best option. You don't even need a gun if you behave appropriately."

Those sentiments are echoed by bear ecologist Chuck Neal. The Wyoming resident has encountered dozens of bears in the backcountry and has been bluff-charged 15 times over the past 40 years.

Neal said he's never carried a weapon. If he had and attempted to use it, he said, the outcome of those bluff charges would have been different.

"If you act foolish, the bluff charge won't be a bluff charge, it'll be a real charge," Neal said. "The behavior is a key more than any single thing. It's what's kept me safe up until now."

The study found that using a firearm during a bear encounter requires split-second deployment and deadly accuracy. Nonlethal deterrents, like bear spray, are easier to deploy and have a wider effect.

In a 2008 study, Smith also found that bear spray effectively halted aggressive bear encounters in 92 percent of the cases. The hissing sound and sight of the expanding cloud of spray — not to mention the burning pepper juice — are often enough to frighten bears away.

"If you act appropriately and you carry bear spray, you are much better off than just blundering into bear country with a large firearm," Smith said.

Neal reported his first grizzly sighting of the year east of Yellowstone National Park on Feb. 24 up the North Fork of the Shoshone River. Four miles off the highway, he spotted a large adult male.

With the temperatures warming, Neal said, hikers should expect to encounter more bears.

"There will be more activity as this week goes by," Neal said. "They don't typically come out in a ravenous mood. If they find a carcass, they'll feed on it, but not as enthusiastically as they would in October."

Smith's co-authors on the study are Stephen Herrero of the University of Calgary, Kathryn R. Johnson of the Alaska Science Center and Larsen. Cali Strong Layton, an undergrad biology student at BYU, was also a co-author.

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Last Update: 251 AM MDT THU MAR 15 2

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RED FLAG WARNING from Noon Thursday to 9 PM Friday for **Park County, MT** <http://tiny.cc/dpg7aw>

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Let the Spring Plowing Begin!

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The West District is pleased to welcome **Ranger Mark Wozniak** to our Gallatin patrol staff. Mark will be arriving in early May from Organ Pipe National Monument. Some of you may remember Mark when he worked as a seasonal LE Ranger at Old Faithful from 2003-2006. We are looking forward to the skills that Mark will bring to the park!

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The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

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Mammoth Community Center - Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, please see Kevin Franken (x2514) the week of March 16 - March 23rd. Beginning March 26th, please see Bianca Klein (x2221).

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CALENDAR

Save the Date: Retirement Party for Hank Quintana. Thursday, April 26 -- Supply Center -- 3-5 p.m.

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IN THE NEWS

Young Americans less interested in the environment than previous generations

By Martha Irvine, Associated Press, Published: March 15

CHICAGO — They have a reputation for being environmentally minded do-gooders. But an academic analysis of surveys spanning more than 40 years has found that today's young Americans are less interested in the environment and in conserving resources — and often less civic-minded overall — than their elders were when they were young.

The findings go against the widespread belief that environmental issues have hit home with today's young adults, known as Millennials, who have grown up amid climate change discussion and the mantra "reduce, reuse, recycle." The environment is often listed among top concerns of young voters.

"I was shocked," said Jean Twenge, a psychology professor at San Diego State University who is one of the study's authors. "We have the perception that we're getting through to people. But at least compared to previous eras, we're not."

This study, published online this month in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, looked at the life goals, concern for others and civic orientation of three young generations — baby boomers, Generation X and Millennials.

Based on two long-standing national surveys of high school seniors and college freshmen, Twenge and her colleagues found a decline over the past four decades in young people's trust in others, their interest in government and the time they said they spent thinking about social problems.

Steepest of all was a steady decline in concern about the environment and in taking personal action to save it.

Researchers found that, when surveyed decades ago, about a third of young baby boomers said it was important to become personally involved in programs to clean up the environment. In comparison, only about a quarter of young Generation X members — and 21 percent of Millennials — said the same.

Meanwhile, 15 percent of Millennials said they had made no effort to help the environment, compared with 8 percent of young Generation X members and 5 percent of young baby boomers.

Millennials also were the least likely to say they had made an effort to conserve electricity and fuel used to heat their homes.

In the case of heating fuel, 78 percent of young baby boomers and 71 percent of young Generation X members said they cut back, compared with 56 percent of Millennials.

It is important to note that most of the survey data available for Millennials were collected before the country's most recent recession hit.

Mark Potosnak, an environmental science professor at DePaul University in Chicago, has noticed an increase in skepticism — or confusion — about climate change among his students as the national debate has heightened. That leads to fatigue, he said.

"It's not so much that they don't think it's important. They're just worn out," Potosnak said. "It's like poverty in a foreign country. You see the picture so many times, you become inured to it."

A lot of young people also simply don't spend that much time exploring nature, said Beth Christensen, a professor who heads the environmental studies department at Adelphi University on Long Island in New York.

Some of her students volunteer with a group that cleans up trash in the bays that surround the island — one of many examples of young people who are taking environmental issues seriously.

At Babson College in Massachusetts, for instance, there is student housing called the "Green Tower," where residents focus on conserving resources. It is a growing housing trend on many college campuses.

At Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania students are running a biodiesel plant on campus and building "permaculture," or indefinitely sustainable, gardens in their back yards.

They are less likely to write a letter to their member of Congress or to try to change things on a global level, said Richard Niesenbaum, a biology professor at Muhlenberg. They also don't like to label themselves as "environmentalists."

"In a lot of ways, they're more pragmatic," he said.

The analysis was based on two long-term surveys of the nation's youth. The first, the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future project, is an annual survey of thousands of high school seniors, from which data from 1976 through 2008 were used.

Other data came from the American Freshman project, another large annual national survey, administered by the Higher Education Research Institute. Those responses came from thousands of first-year college students, from the years 1966 through 2009. Because of the large sample sizes, the margin of error was less than plus or minus half a percentage point.

More Good News for Yellowstone's Wild Buffalo

Natural Resources Defense Council Blog, March 15, 2012

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/mskoglund/more_good_news_for_yellowstone.html

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 259 AM MDT FRI MAR 16 2012

Red Flag Warning:

<http://forecast.weather.gov/wwamap/wwatxtget.php?cwa=byz&wwa=red%20flag%20warning>

Today...Breezy...cloudy. Chance of snow and rain in the morning... Then chance of snow in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. Southwest winds 20 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Chance of snow in the evening...then snow likely after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 25 to 31. South winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Saturday...Breezy...cloudy. Chance of snow and rain in the morning...then scattered rain showers...snow showers and slight chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 41 to 47. South winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday Night...Breezy. Cloudy with scattered snow showers and slight chance of thunderstorms. Lows 23 to 29. South winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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

SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, March 19, 2012



Two wolves relaxing after an early morning St. Patrick's Day meal
(Snapped by the YNP@Work editor out the back window of his Lower Mammoth home on Saturday morning, 3/17)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Bear Emergence Reminder



On March 12, the Bear Management Office received the first confirmed report of grizzly bears emerging from their winter dens in the park. There have already been reports of grizzly bears being active in Wyoming east of the park. All skiers, snowshoers, hikers and residents are reminded to take the necessary precautions to avoid surprise encounters with bears and to be especially cautious around winter-killed ungulate carcasses. Please remember to carry bear pepper spray when working or recreating in bear country. Bear spray has proven to be an effective deterrent against bears that may react aggressively when surprised.

Park residents and visitors are reminded to keep food, garbage, barbeque-grills, and other bear attractants stored in a manner that makes them unavailable to bears. Bird-feeders are prohibited in the park.

In May and June the Bear Management Office will be giving Hiking and Camping Bear Safety Programs throughout the Park. Attendance is Free! Bear Safety Training will be given at the following locations, dates, and times: Mammoth Rec Hall, May 7 at 7 pm; Old Faithful Rec Hall, May 14 at 7 pm; Lake Lodge Rec Hall, May 21 at 7 pm; Grant Grayling Dorm Rec Hall, May 30 at 7 pm; Canyon Rec Hall, June 4 at 7 pm; Tower Falls Dorm Rec Room, June 11 at 7 pm.

For your safety and the safety of others please report all bear sightings and wildlife carcasses to the Bear Management Office at x 2162.

The West District is pleased to welcome **Ranger Mark Wozniak** to our Gallatin patrol staff. Mark will be arriving in early May from Organ Pipe National Monument. Some of you may remember Mark when he worked as a seasonal LE Ranger at Old Faithful from 2003-2006. We are looking forward to the skills that Mark will bring to the park!

The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

Mammoth Community Center - Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, please see Kevin Franken (x2514) the week of March 16 - March 23rd. Beginning March 26th, please see Bianca Klein (x2221).

CALENDAR

Save the Date: Retirement Party for Hank Quintana. Thursday, April 26 -- Supply Center -- 3-5 p.m.

RECENT NEWS RELEASES

March 16, 2012

Yellowstone To Change Fishing Permit Fees

Anglers in Yellowstone National Park will see a slight increase in fishing permit fees this season to help enhance the park's fisheries management program and to begin implementing conservation actions that were outlined in the 2011 Native Fish Conservation Plan.

The new fee structure will include a three-day permit for \$18, a 7-day permit for \$25 and an annual permit for \$40. Current permit fees are \$15, \$20 and \$35, respectively. Permits for anglers 15 years of age and younger will remain free.

Fisheries management activities are primarily focused on the recovery of the Yellowstone Lake Ecosystem through the restoration of the native Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Other activities include the restoration of cutthroat trout and Arctic Grayling in streams and lakes, exotic aquatic species prevention, fish population monitoring, water quality monitoring, enforcing fishing regulations, interpreting fisheries for park visitors, angler surveys and operational costs such as boat dock maintenance, fuel costs and permit printing and issuance costs.

A fee increase will help support one of the most significant efforts in the lake restoration project -- the removal of non-native lake trout, which prey upon and reduce the population of cutthroat trout. This program is also supported by the park's official fundraising partner, the Yellowstone Park Foundation, which committed \$1 million toward fish conservation for 2012.

Fishing permit fees have been charged in Yellowstone since 1993, with the last change in the fee structure occurring in 2004. The new fees will not only help ensure the viability of the park's fisheries program for future years, but are also in keeping in line with fees charged by neighboring states. On average, fees throughout Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Colorado and Utah run \$15 per day for short-term non-resident permits and \$77 for annual non-resident permits. Yellowstone anticipates approximately 40,000 multi-day permits will be sold this season.

Yellowstone's 2012 fishing season begins May 26 and extends through and includes the first Sunday in November. For more information on season dates, fishing regulations and more, visit <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/fishing.htm>.

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IN THE NEWS

Parks urge caution as bears come out of hibernation

By Chuck Raasch, USA TODAY

Yellowstone National Park rangers are preparing for the upcoming tourist season by updating bear-warning signs and stepping up grizzly-awareness education after two hikers died in separate grizzly attacks in the park last summer.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-03-08/yellowstone-bears-tourists/53556208/1>

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 618 AM MDT MON MAR 19 2012

Today...Breezy. Numerous snow showers. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Total snow accumulation 2 to 4 inches. Highs 26 to 32. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy. Cloudy with scattered snow showers in the evening...then partly cloudy with slight chance of snow after midnight. Lows 6 to 12. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Tuesday...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning... Then slight chance of snow in the afternoon. Highs 27 to 33. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph in the afternoon. Chance of snow 30 percent.

Tuesday Night...Breezy. Not as cold. Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Lows 21 to 27. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph in the evening.

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

SUBMISSIONS

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, March 20, 2012



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The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

Mammoth Community Center - Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, please see Kevin Franken (x2514) the week of March 16 - March 23rd. Beginning March 26th, please see Bianca Klein (x2221).

RECENT PARK NEWS RELEASES

March 19, 2012

Grizzly Bears Leaving Yellowstone Dens

Bears are emerging from hibernation in the Greater Yellowstone Area, so hikers, skiers and snowshoers are advised to stay in groups of three or more, make noise on the trail and carry bear spray.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12016.htm>

IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone bison arrive at Fort Peck

Associated Press, March 20, 2012

BILLINGS, Mont. — Sixty-four bison from Yellowstone National Park were shipped almost 500 miles to northeast Montana's Fort Peck Reservation on Monday, under a long-stalled relocation initiative meant to repopulate parts of the West with the iconic animals.

They arrived Monday night greeted by a crowd of dozens of tribal members whose flashing cameras spooked some of the animals, while others charged straight into the holding pen. A yearling bison died during the trip, leaving 63, said Fort Peck Fish and Game Director Robert Magnan.

The transfer — anticipated for months — came in the middle of a snowstorm and with no prior public announcement, as state and tribal officials sought to avoid a courtroom battle with opponents worried about bison competing with cattle for grazing space.

Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer described the move as a major step in efforts to restore Yellowstone's genetically pure bison across a larger landscape.

"This is where we're going to establish the beachhead of genetically pure bison that will be available as their numbers grow to go to other reservations and other public lands all across the West," Schweitzer said.

Tribal and state officials signed an agreement Friday allowing the transfer to take place, Magnan said.

Caught off guard were landowners and property rights groups that opposed the relocation. They filed a request for a temporary restraining order Monday afternoon to halt the move.

Helena attorney Cory Swanson said moving the animals without public notice following years of controversy amounted to a "sneak attack."

After state District Judge John McKeon in Glasgow did not rule on the request by the close of business Monday, Swanson said he would return Tuesday with a request for the animals to be ordered back to the Yellowstone area.

Fort Peck Chairman Floyd Azure responded Monday night by saying that the state has no jurisdiction now that the bison are on the reservation.

"Now that they're here, they are here to stay," Azure said.

For the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of Fort Peck, tribal leaders said the relocation offers a chance to revive their connection with an animal that historically provided food, clothing and shelter for their ancestors.

The trip from Yellowstone was capped by a welcoming caravan of tribal members who fell into line behind the trailers that carried the bison across the Missouri River and onto the reservation.

A drum group gathered to sing a traditional song of welcome as the bison were unloaded in a field 25 miles north of Poplar.

"This has deep spiritual meaning for us. They are the sole survivors from our ancestors," said Leland Spotted Bird, a Dakota tribal elder and spiritual leader.

Most bison, also known as buffalo, are hybrids that have been interbred with cattle. Yellowstone's animals are said to represent one of the world's last remaining reservoirs of pure bison genetics.

Details of the shipment were kept quiet until it was under way. Magnan said the state and tribes were trying to avoid an injunction after Swanson's clients filed a lawsuit in state District Court in January seeking to block the transfer.

Schweitzer said there was no attempt to keep the relocation under wraps, adding that the state did not finalize the agreement with the tribe until late Friday.

Prior attempts to relocate Yellowstone bison failed because of opposition from cattle producers and difficulty finding public or tribal land suitable for the animals.

State wildlife officials have said the relocation of the Yellowstone bison may help answer the question of whether the species can be successfully reintroduced to some public lands in Montana. Aggressive hunting in the 19th century wiped out the vast herds of millions of bison that once roamed freely across most of North America.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, who oversees most federal lands in the West, applauded Monday's transfer. Salazar has said further Yellowstone bison relocations are under consideration for public lands in Colorado, South Dakota and elsewhere.

About half of the animals heading to Fort Peck could be transferred later this year to the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in central Montana. Fences for those animals have not yet been completed.

For the past several years, the animals have been confined to quarantine just north of the Yellowstone.

They were captured leaving the park during their winter migration and tested extensively to make sure they were free of brucellosis. That disease, which can cause pregnant animals to abort their young, was for many years the primary argument for preventing Yellowstone bison from roaming freely outside the park.

But critics of the relocation have lingering worries about bison competing with cattle for rangeland.

State Sen. Rick Ripley, a Wolf Creek Republican and plaintiff in the landowners' lawsuit, criticized Monday's move and said it was in defiance of a law passed last year that required officials to come up with a statewide bison

management plan before moving the animals.

"They just seem to think they are above the law," Ripley said. "They're going to have a lot of problems with damage to private property that they could have addressed prior to translocation."

Schweitzer aide Mike Volesky said the new law requires a management plan specific to transferred bison, not a statewide plan.

The 63 bison and their offspring will remain inside a fenced compound on the reservation, Magnan said.

The tribes already have about 200 bison in a commercial herd used for meat and hunting. Besides the yearling that died during the trip, a 65th bison that was scheduled to be transferred Monday recently died after getting gored by another bison, Schweitzer said.

Bozeman-area nonprofit working to offer rentable bear spray cans

CARLY FLANDRO, Bozeman Chronicle, March 19, 2012

A local nonprofit wants to offer rentable bear spray cans in communities near Yellowstone National Park. Officials with Keystone Conservation, a people-predator coexistence group, are still in the early stages of developing the program, but said rental cans could be available by mid May.

Last summer, two people were killed in bear attacks inside the park. Neither had bear spray. A sow grizzly bear was later euthanized in connection to the two incidents.

The goal of Keystone Conservation's rental program would be to reduce human injuries and deaths and bear deaths by making bear spray more affordable and accessible, as well as promoting its use and teaching the public how to use it.

"There's a lot of anecdotal evidence that despite all the education, people are still not carrying bear spray," said Tim Bennett, the Northern Rockies Bear Program Director for the group. "It's also evident that it's the most effective tool."

Bennett said he thinks the price of bear spray is a "significant deterrent" in keeping people from buying it. Cans cost about \$40 to \$50.

Further, bear spray is not allowed on airplanes, so some tourists might not buy it because they could only use it for the length of their visit.

Bennett and Lisa Upson, executive director of Keystone Conservation, are still working out the cost of renting a can of bear spray. Bennett said he'd like to see it offered for \$5 a day.

A company based in Jackson, Wyo., has been renting cans and charges \$10 a day, \$25 for three days and \$35 for a week. Keystone Conservation is talking with the group, Teton Adventure Gear HQ, about a possible partnership.

The latter organization offers the cans via retailers in Jackson, Cody and in West Yellowstone. Upson said Keystone Conservation plans to reach out to retailers in West Yellowstone, Big Sky, Bozeman, Livingston, Big Timber, Red Lodge, Cooke City and several Wyoming towns to see if they'd like to carry the rental cans.

Here's how it would work: A local store would partner with Keystone Conservation to offer the cans. Each can would be tested before it was rented to make sure it works. Customers could rent spray in one location and return it in another. Once returned, retailers would weigh the can to make sure it was not used, then rent it out again if appropriate.

"We hope to improve public education and increase the number of people mentally and physically prepared to deal with bear encounters," Bennett said.

Monday, Yellowstone National Park officials announced that bears are emerging from hibernation in the Greater Yellowstone Area. They advised hikers, skiers and snowshoers to stay in groups of three or more, make noise on the trail and carry bear spray.

Last week, park employees observed a grizzly bear in the north central portion of the park, and fresh tracks were spotted in the Old Faithful area.

Bears begin looking for food soon after they emerge from their dens, according to a park news release. They are attracted to carcasses from elk and bison that died during the winter and will sometimes react aggressively when surprised while feeding on them.

Updated bear safety information is available on the Yellowstone bear safety Web page at <http://1.usa.gov/bear-safety> and in the park newspaper, which is distributed at all park entrances.

Increases in Yellowstone National Park fishing permits a good thing

Brett Prettyman, Salt Lake Tribune, March 19, 2012

Fisheries officials from Yellowstone National Park announced Friday an increase in fishing permit fees. What are they thinking? Raising the price to enjoy fishing in a national park at a time when people are still struggling to make ends meet?

<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/blogsfishing/53750324-83/yellowstone-fishing-park-lake.html.csp>

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 300 AM MDT TUE MAR 20 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Breezy. Partly cloudy in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow. Highs 23 to 29. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph late in the afternoon.

Tonight...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of snow in the evening...then chance of snow after midnight. Lows 18 to 24. Southwest winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts to around 40 mph. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Wednesday...Breezy. Not as cold. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow in the morning...then slight chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Highs 33 to 39. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Wednesday Night...Breezy. Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 20 to 26. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

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

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

URGENT: A **Yellowstone Federal Credit Union** remote phone call phishing scheme is currently occurring throughout the park. The Comm Center has experienced these calls being directed to nearly every extension in the park directory, which means calls will more than likely be directed to members' personal phones as well. Bottom line: YFCU is not generating these calls! So if you are a YFCU account holder and receive a call asking you to input personal account information such as account or pin number, protect yourself and your funds and DO NOT provide this information and HANG UP immediately! No need to report the calls.

Wildland Fire Training Refreshers: Here is the schedule for this year. Please call Laura Dooley to save a spot as class sizes are limited. Anyone attending should plan on doing the pack-test that day as well. Some people will need to have a physical exam prior to taking the pack test. LE personnel and most permanent employees do not, but new permanent (non-LE) and all seasonals (non-LE) will. The physicals are costly, therefore anyone needing a physical to be arduous duty red-carded, must have supervisor approval to complete at least one 2-week long assignment this fire season. For information and to sign up for the physical exam, please call Georgia McAdams at x-2196. To sign up for the refresher, please call Laura at x-2181.

April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room
May 1 - Mammoth FC Training Room
May 8 - Mammoth FC Training Room
May 29 - Mammoth FC Training Room
June 5 - Mammoth FC Training Room
June 20 - Interior (Old Faithful pending appropriate size room availability)

Mammoth Community Center Newsletter: Having an event? Have something to sell? Looking for a babysitter? Visit the message boards on our website (www.mammothcommunity.org) OR send an email to Charissa Reid before Friday to put an announcement in the MCC March newsletter.

MCC Kids Pizza Party: All Mammoth/Gardiner kids 12-18 who are interested in having a say in how the Mammoth Community Center operates are invited for pizza on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the MCC – Bring a parent if you can! We want to know what you think!

The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

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Mammoth Community Center - Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, please see Kevin Franken (x2514) the week of March 16 - March 23rd. Beginning March 26th, please see Bianca Klein (x2221).

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IN THE NEWS

2nd Yellowstone grizzly could be killed in mauling

Associated Press, March 20, 2012

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. (AP) -- A second grizzly bear could be killed in connection with the fatal mauling of a Michigan man at Yellowstone National Park last summer.

Park superintendent Dan Wenk discussed the possibility on KODI-AM earlier this month. Park spokesman Al Nash said Tuesday that no date has been set for a decision.

One grizzly was euthanized last fall after it was linked to the scene of 59-year-old hiker John Wallace's death. DNA tests show the bear killed a California hiker and also fed on Wallace but officials aren't sure if the sow killed Wallace.

Hair from the second bear at issue was found about 22 yards away from where Wallace died but test results didn't come back until after bears entered hibernation. That bear, which has a radio collar, is still in its den.

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Montana FWP starts moving bison & upsets landowners

Marnee Banks, KBZK, March 20, 2012

A recently signed agreement between Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and the Fort Peck Indian Reservation has prompted landowners to try and stop the movement of 64 bison onto tribal lands.

According to FWP, the bison were loaded onto trucks early Monday morning to begin their journey to the Reservation.

This move comes just days after FWP signed a contract which outlines the protocol for transferring the bison from the Corwin Springs quarantine facility near Gardiner onto the Fort Peck Reservation.

In December, the FWP Commission approved moving the bison to Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Reservations. However, the Commission required FWP staff sit down with reservation leaders and hash out the details first. The recently signed agreement is a product of those discussions.

However, local landowners are upset and say the agreement was drafted in secret. They are concerned the bison will wreak havoc on their land by trampling fence, eating their hay, and risk spreading brucellosis to their livestock.

On Monday, they asked Blaine County District Court Judge John McKeon to issue a temporary restraining order against the move. McKeon left the office before ruling on the order.

In the meantime the bison are in transit.

The attorney for the landowners, Cory Swanson, says FWP seems to be pushing a bigger agenda than just relocating these 64 bison.

"We think this Fish, Wildlife Parks move is just part of the beginning of a full scale, full court press to putting a large, wild free ranging bison herd in a huge part of northeastern Montana," Swanson says.

The group which including landowners, Valley County Commissioners, and Citizens for Balanced Use, filed suit in January challenging the state's decision to move the bison.

Swanson says Monday's relocation ironically comes just days before the state is required to file its response to the lawsuit. He says this shows the state's blatant disregard for a transparent and public process.

He says Montana law requires the state to consult with the counties before moving the bison. He says that never happened.

On Monday, the Governor's Office refused to comment on this.

House lawmakers question agency plan to reduce number of rangers

Laura Petersen, E&E, March 21, 2012

House appropriators yesterday expressed concern that the proposed National Park Service budget for fiscal 2013 could send the parks back to the era of "endangered rangers."

The \$2.6 billion budget includes a \$21.6 million decrease to park operations, which would result in the loss of about 200 rangers and other park staff.

"I don't want to see us get back to the 'endangered ranger' thing, where we keep cutting back, cutting back, cutting back, and all of sudden it adversely affects the visitor experience," said Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.) during a House Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee hearing.

National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis said that while there will be an impact, most of those positions would likely be seasonal staff, which is a small portion of the 8,000 to 10,000 employees the agency hires during the peak summer season each year.

And the nation's 397 park units will have flexibility to implement budget cuts to minimize impacts, whether that means shifting hours or filling gaps with volunteers, he added.

"I don't think that's going to be visible for the most part," Jarvis said of the staff reductions.

However, he stressed that there could be a more significant impact if these sorts of cuts were to continue multiple years in a row. "It is a cumulative effect," Jarvis said.

While generally supportive of the Park Service and its budget blueprint, lawmakers questioned why the agency requested a \$17.5 million increase in land acquisition funding, when it has trouble keeping up with the needs of

its current holdings. The agency's maintenance backlog now stands at roughly \$11 billion.

"It seems to me we ought to be addressing the long-term maintenance and repair needs as well as meeting the needs of the visiting public before making additional land acquisitions," said Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho), chairman of the subcommittee.

Jarvis defended his agency's land purchases as "smart" investments, especially when it connects urban youth to the great outdoors and helps build the next generation of park stewards.

Dicks called for the Appropriations Committee to secure funding for the service while finding necessary budget cuts elsewhere.

"The Park Service is the crown jewel, is one of the greatest things our country has ever done, and we need to continue to be defenders of the Park Service," he said. "And if we have to make adjustments in other places, let's do that, but let's protect the Park Service."

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Collaborators close in on lake trout

Gib Mathers, Powell Tribune, March 20, 2012

Yellowstone Lake cutthroat trout may be increasing ever so slightly, and that is welcome news. But efforts to decimate lake trout must continue with dogged determination, experts say.

According to rough estimates, between 300,000 and 400,000 non-native adult lake trout dwell in Yellowstone Lake. To save cutthroats, the lake must be rid of the intruding lake trout and their spawn.

A new telemetry project is aiding in that effort. Using telemetry to track lake trout to their spawning beds was the No. 1 recommendation by a scientific panel convened by the Park Service in 2008.

Before lake trout, an estimated 4 million cutthroats lived in the Yellowstone River system. Now the estimate has dwindled down to 10 percent of that, or perhaps as low as 1 or 2 percent, according to a 2012 Save the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout brochure from Trout Unlimited.

There are a number of theories of explaining lake trout's uninvited arrival, first noted in 1994, but there is no conclusive evidence supporting any particular hypothesis. To date, approximately 800,000 lake trout have been captured using gill nets since 1995.

Cutthroats are crucial to the Yellowstone ecosystem, providing food for large birds, small mammals and grizzly bears that fish the tributaries in the spring for spawning cutthroats.

At an East Yellowstone chapter of Trout Unlimited meeting in Cody earlier this month, member Dave Sweet provided an update of the telemetry study at Yellowstone Lake. Sweet is chairing the cutthroat preservation campaign for Trout Unlimited.

A telemetry study was launched last year to monitor lake trout movement patterns, particularly leading to spawning beds, Sweet said.

Last summer, 141 hydroacoustic tags were surgically implanted in lake trout bellies. Forty receivers were attached to buoys around the lake to track signals from the tags.

Roughly two-thirds of the tagged fish are males, because they visit multiple spawning beds while females tend to stick to one bed, Sweet said.

With a computer image, Sweet displays a map of Yellowstone Lake. Red dots around the lake indicate receiver locations. At a relatively narrow corridor entering West Thumb, red dots appear in three rows like a naval blockade.

The intent is to install a curtain of receivers to ascertain the lake trouts' direction of travel, Sweet said.

The transmitters can lead to the beds. If spawning beds are found and the eggs destroyed, the lake trout population can be substantially reduced.

The receivers also can record lake trout locations, thus directing locations for gill nets that snag lake trout by the thousands. The scientific panel also recommended more gill-netting, which the service has done.

On an average day, 11 miles of gill nets were laid last summer by a commercial fishing boat and two boats manned by Park Service employees, Sweet said.

Approximately 220,000 lake trout were caught in 2011. Of those, 103,000 were netted by a commercial fishing boat. Although many of the 220,000 were juvenile fish, it nonetheless took a big bite from the population, Sweet said.

Preliminary data shows a lot of lake trout activity near Wolf Point, which is located roughly at the entrance to West Thumb.

One dot bounces around the map just outside West Thumb, indicating the travels of a male lake trout. Sweet said he believed the trout was a spawner.

"He is on the prowl," said Unlimited member Duane Anderson, drawing chuckles from his colleagues.

Beneath Yellowstone Lake's ice, the receivers are still collecting data.

Scientist Jackson Gross of the U.S. Geological Survey is developing ways to destroy eggs. One method, electroshock, was recently tested. Gross still is trying to evaluate its effectiveness, Sweet said.

The amount of data downloaded from the receivers is massive. At a February meeting in Bozeman, Mont., Robert Gresswell, a research biologist at the U.S.G.S., who initiated the telemetry study, said he did not have time to analyze it. Gresswell suggested hiring an individual to analyze the data would cost \$100,000, Sweet said.

Yellowstone Park Superintendent Dan Wenk has said he would provide money from a Yellowstone Park Foundation grant.

"That's the kind of commitment Dan Wenk is making," Sweet said.

The foundation committed \$1 million to help the park launch a comprehensive native fish conservation program, which is based on a service plan approved in 2011. The top priority of the program is to take proactive steps to restore the Yellowstone Lake cutthroats by removing lake trout.

The project to rid Yellowstone Lake of lake trout is a joint effort by the National Park Service, Trout Unlimited, U.S. Geological Survey, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, National Parks Conservation Association and the Yellowstone Park Foundation.

Trout Unlimited donated \$40,000 last year to get the project started. This year they are seeking \$85,000. A portion of that has been raised, Sweet said.

Yellowstone Park fishing licenses include a postcard asking anglers to report the location, number of fish caught, the species and the amount of time spent fishing. Survey results from thousands of anglers over the years said they caught on average 1.5 to 2 cutthroats per hour on Yellowstone Lake in the 1970s and '80s. By the early to mid 2000s, anglers were catching 0.5 cutthroats per hour. However in the last two years, anglers were landing 0.7 to 0.8 cutthroats per hour. A small, but heartening cutthroat rebound. "It's an indication that maybe things are getting a little better in the lake," Sweet said.

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 223 AM MDT WED MAR 21 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Early This Morning...Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Lows 18 to 24. Southwest winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts to around 55 mph.

Today...Breezy. Mostly cloudy with slight chance of snow in the morning...then partly cloudy with slight chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Highs 34 to 40. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Tonight...Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 19 to 25. South winds around 15 mph.

Thursday...Mostly sunny. Highs 40 to 46. South winds around 15 mph.

Thursday Night...Mostly clear. Lows 22 to 28.

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

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Yellowstone Public Affairs has redesigned its **Park News** Web page! Thanks to Tami Blackford and Craig Johnson and crew in the Interp Web office for making our page a little easier to navigate and find news and information that visitors and park staff can use. Note there is a new addition about Twitter and Facebook. In case you didn't know, YNP has a Twitter account with a very respectable and growing following. But we currently DO NOT have an official Facebook page! There are many out there which "look" like they're official, but they are not. Stay tuned for an official one to be created in the near future as we try our hand in reaching out to our visitors through social media. Our goal is to disseminate valuable park information, especially road closures and delays, and other park management news more quickly and efficiently. Visit the new page at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/index.htm> and give us your feedback.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, March 22, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS

URGENT: A **Yellowstone Federal Credit Union** remote phone call phishing scheme is currently occurring throughout the park. The Comm Center has experienced these calls being directed to nearly every extension in the park directory, which means calls will more than likely be directed to members' personal phones as well. Bottom line: YFCU is not generating these calls! So if you are a YFCU account holder and receive a call asking you to input personal account information such as account or pin number, protect yourself and your funds and DO NOT provide this information and HANG UP immediately! No need to report the calls.

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Wildland Fire Training Refreshers: Here is the schedule for this year. Please call Laura Dooley to save a spot as class sizes are limited. Anyone attending should plan on doing the pack-test that day as well. Some people will need to have a physical exam prior to taking the pack test. LE personnel and most permanent employees do not, but new permanent (non-LE) and all seasonals (non-LE) will. The physicals are costly, therefore anyone needing a physical to be arduous duty red-carded, must have supervisor approval to complete at least one 2-week long assignment this fire season. For information and to sign up for the physical exam, please call Georgia McAdams at x-2196. To sign up for the refresher, please call Laura at x-2181.

April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room
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Mammoth Community Center Newsletter: Having an event? Have something to sell? Looking for a babysitter? Visit the message boards on our website (www.mammothcommunity.org) OR send an email to Charissa Reid before Friday to put an announcement in the MCC March newsletter.

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MCC Kids Pizza Party: All Mammoth/Gardiner kids 12-18 who are interested in having a say in how the Mammoth Community Center operates are invited for pizza on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the MCC – Bring a parent if you can! We want to know what you think!

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The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

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Mammoth Community Center - Fitness Center Memberships: If you are interested in signing up for a fitness center membership, please see Kevin Franken (x2514) this week. Beginning March 26th, please see Bianca Klein (x2221).

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IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone bison return to tribal land

Great Falls Tribune - 10:00 PM, Mar. 21, 2012 - Written by RICHARD PETERSON

POPLAR — The transfer of 63 genetically pure bison from Yellowstone National Park to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation prairie will help heal some of the wrongs inflicted on Native Americans by the U.S. government over past centuries, tribal leaders said Wednesday.

"When we signed the Fort Laramie Treaty in 1851, we were told we would be able to hunt as long as the buffalo roam," Assiniboine and Sioux Tribal Chairman Floyd Azure said at a press conference at Fort Peck Community College. "That was taken from us, but the return of these bison will help heal some of the wounds gone by with the U.S. government."

The herd arrived on the reservation Monday night through a cloud of controversy after the state and tribe came to an agreement late Friday. The bison are being held in a 2-acre temporary corral until an 8-foot fence is completed around a 2,100-acre game preserve 25 miles north of Poplar.

The last recorded buffalo hunt at Fort Peck was in 1873, tribal historians said. In the following years, bison on the northern plains were nearly wiped out by hunters and the government during the westward expansion. The Fort Peck Tribes brought back a commercial herd in 2001, but those animals have cattle genes and are not as genetically pure as the transplanted Yellowstone herd.

Part of the new Fort Peck herd will eventually be given to the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, so the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre tribes there can start their own genetically pure herd.

Gov. Brian Schweitzer, who attended a press conference with tribal officials Wednesday, said the transfer is an historic opportunity to begin the buildup of a genetically pure herd of bison that can be used for expansion across the West.

"This will be the place that will be the supplier of those bison," he said of Fort Peck. The transplant also mends some of the bad feelings that existed between the government and tribes.

"It's the right thing to do. When we took the buffalo from Indian people, we took part of their soul," Schweitzer said. "They are back now, and are a symbol of pride for people in Indian Country. They are here to stay."

On Wednesday, the tribes held a traditional pipe ceremony at the bison holding site, where a drum group sang a welcoming home song for the bison.

"The creator sent these to us for the betterment of our people," tribal elder Leland Spotted Bird said.

The bison transplant has come under fire from local farmers and ranchers worried that the Yellowstone bison, which have a migratory nature, will bust loose and possibly spread disease to their cattle, or damage farm and pasture land.

The Fort Peck Fish and Game Department already has constructed a fence around its game reserve, but officials have decided to build a taller fence to address concerns about escape.

Schweitzer said he talked with U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar on Monday, and the agency promised to pay for the new fence, which is expected to be completed in two months. The Interior Department also will pay for a fence on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

Fort Belknap Tribal Council President Tracy King said most of the criticism about the transplant of the Yellowstone bison to the reservations reeks of racism.

"There are people that hate us because of this. But the bottom line is, it's racism. There's no sense in lying about it," King said. "We just have to be like the buffalo and face the storm."

Fort Peck tribal members who attended the event Wednesday said the return of the bison to the reservation signals a spiritual awakening, especially in a community that experienced a rash of teen and young adult suicides two years ago.

"We're in the process of healing, and the buffalo is the one that is leading the way. This is a big event for the Indian people — and we're taking our power and identity back," tribal elder Iris Greybull said.

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Bear experts: Electricity as repellent gets more effective, creative

By ROB CHANEY of the Missoulian | Posted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012 10:30 pm

The video makes dramatic evidence: A big sow grizzly and her cub approach a freezer in a Flathead County garage. The night before, they'd scored a load of frozen fish. They were back for more.

But this time, the sow steps on an electrified cattle mat placed in front of the freezer. She gives a startled "Woof!" and wheels away.

"I love the look on the cub's face," said Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Region 1 bear manager Tim Manley.

The little bear gapes at mom for a second and seems to say 'Yikes, wait for me!' The family group was soon trapped and relocated, and hasn't been in trouble since.

The use of electricity as a bear repellent has reached a level of effectiveness and creativity far beyond what was first deployed about 20 years ago, Manley said. Outfitters have charged horse trailers to protect grain supplies. Communities have wired garbage cans. Family ranchers have fenced play yards to ensure their children are safe from both bears and zaps.

"There's lots of ways people can electrify things," Manley said. "You're just limited by your imagination."

At the fourth International Human-Bear Conflicts Workshop in Missoula, more than 300 bear experts got an update on the state of the electrifying art on Wednesday afternoon. Mike Madel, who manages bears along the Rocky Mountain Front for FWP, said a five-year effort with the U.S. Forest Service and Blackfoot Tribe worked out many of the bugs for using electric fencing in the field.

"They were using livestock carcasses for attractant," Madel explained. The research showed how tight wires must be to get under the fur of a curious grizzly bear. It tested the usefulness of chicken wire good for sheltered coops — bad in breezy places where it catches windblown brush and shorts out. It worked out the kinds of solar panels that can keep a 12-volt battery fully charged 24 hours a day.

Fence design also faced challenges. Wires need to run across the top to deter adults, but should also be strung close to the ground to stop crawling cubs. Entries vary. Sheep herders like gates, while beekeepers like panels. Portable systems need to be lightweight but not so flimsy that wires twist together.

The fence systems use pulses of electricity, so the victim gets shocked but can let go and get away. Madel said it's much different from a set of jumper cables or sticking a finger in a light socket.

"That would kill something," Madel said. The fence systems deliver about 7,000 volts of electricity per zap — enough to scare off big bears, wolves and cattle.

Electrifying has become a tactic for homeowners in bear country. Kevin Wright of the Colorado Division of Wildlife said many residents in the hills around Aspen have started placing mats below their windows and doors to keep bears from breaking in. In years when natural food supplies fall short, Wright said his wardens can field more than 20 incidents a night.

Fencing systems cost around \$300 and up, depending on the size and complexity. The nonprofit group Defenders of Wildlife has contributed more than \$200,000 to subsidize private fencing projects, and currently offers grants paying 50 percent of the project cost up to \$500.

Ranchers and sheep herders have been quick to adopt the fences, while smaller operations like the ones that raise chickens or goats have been slowly coming along, according to Erin Edge, the group's Bear Aware coordinator. In addition to solar cells, some people have had success with wind turbines in places with less sunlight.

"Every single fence is a different situation," Edge said. "It's picking up each year since we started the program."

Reporter Rob Chaney can be reached at 523-5382 or at rchaney@missoulain.com.

Mount Rainier officials to review safety procedures

JEFFREY P. MAYOR; Staff writer - Tacoma News-Tribune -Wednesday, March 21, 2012

A board of review will meet today at Mount Rainier National Park to study a series of searches this winter in hopes of improving visitor safety.

Such reviews are held after each incident at the park. This one is unusual because it will involve five incidents, Chuck Young, the park's chief ranger, said Tuesday.

The board will be park superintendent Randy King, mountaineering district ranger Stefan Lofgren, Young, climbing rangers, commercial climbing guides, an expert in studying visitor risk-management and an interpretive ranger who works at the Longmire Museum.

Interpretive rangers issue wilderness permits and often are the only contact a visitor has with a ranger in the winter, Young said.

The group will review investigations of:

- The disappearances of snow campers Mark Vucich and Michelle Trojanowski, and climbers Sork "Eric" Yang and Seol Hee Jin.

All are missing and presumed dead after heading up the mountain in mid-January despite being warned about approaching storms. The storms were so bad it was a week before an intensive search could be mounted.

- The December search for snowshoer Brian Grobis, who died after getting lost, and the January search Yong Chun Kim, who survived two nights alone after falling while snowshoeing.

- Snowshoers Josephine Johnson and Jim Dickman, who walked out on their own after being lost for two nights at the same time as Kim.

Young expects the board to issue a report in two weeks.

"I'm sure we'll come up with some good ideas that will help people come up here and recreate and not put themselves at high risk," he said. "We're not thinking we're going to save everyone, but how can we improve what we are doing."

Young said he wants to look at the decision-making process of visitors as well as the quality and delivery of mountain condition information.

"I expect we'll look at how can people make better decisions with the information they have," he said. "People were given pretty good information on what weather to expect and decided to go ahead."

An intern ranger cautioned the campers and climbers about the approaching storms, but the four went ahead with their plans.

"How do you get people to process the information that we and other sources are able to give them?" Young asked. "Are they really understanding what that can mean for their weekend trip up to Paradise?"

The bureaucratic tradition of the National Park Service also will be reviewed, Young said.

In the past, information was available on a handout at visitor centers. Now updates are posted on park websites. Young speculated the review will look at ways of using social media to share information.

Someone has suggested the park create a YouTube video to show what conditions can be like at Paradise when the wind and snow create blizzard conditions. The discussion likely will touch on the debate over improved Cell phone coverage on the mountain versus maintaining a quality park experience.

"We'll look at how do you make it so people can access that information, not only so they read it but also understand it," Young said.

Once the review is completed, Young said, the park will be able to use the recommendations to improve visitor safety in and around the developed areas such as Sunrise and Longmire.

"We have people getting lost and injured in front-country areas in the summer that are not far off the road and trail," he said. "There is no definitive line out there. You don't have to go too far off to find yourself in true wilderness.

"The bottom line is we want to find ways to help visitors who love coming to the park have a safe and enjoyable experience."

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 225 AM MDT THU MAR 22 2012

Today...Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 42 to 48. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows 26 to 32. South winds around 15 mph.

Friday...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs 45 to 51. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

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

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Friday, March 23, 2012



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Admin Travel: As of 8:00 a.m. the road from Norris to Madison, Madison to West, Madison to Old Faithful is OPEN for administrative travel for the season. On Monday, March 26 there will be a small crew working in the Gibbon Falls area cleaning the ditches of snow and rock to hopefully prevent excessive rock from falling on the road as we have seen in the past at this time of year.

URGENT: A **Yellowstone Federal Credit Union** remote phone call phishing scheme is currently occurring throughout the park. The Comm Center has experienced these calls being directed to nearly every extension in the park directory, which means calls will more than likely be directed to members' personal phones as well. Bottom line: YFCU is not generating these calls! So if you are a YFCU account holder and receive a call asking you to input personal account information such as account or pin number, protect yourself and your funds and DO NOT provide this information and HANG UP immediately! No need to report the calls.

The **Heartsaver First Aid and CPR and Health Care Provider CPR** (for EMTs and Paramedics) trainings will be held at the Mammoth Community Center in lower Mammoth. Sign-up sheets for both trainings are located on the P drive under the Safety Office folder. Please pick up a study guide from the Supply Center prior to the class and bring the booklet with you to the class. If there is interest in a class at a different time or location, please contact Juanita Bueter at 406-224-2629. (Schedule in CALENDAR below)

Wildland Fire Training Refreshers: Here is the schedule for this year. Please call Laura Dooley to save a spot as class sizes are limited. Anyone attending should plan on doing the pack-test that day as well. Some people will need to have a physical exam prior to taking the pack test. LE personnel and most permanent employees do not, but new permanent (non-LE) and all seasonals (non-LE) will. The physicals are costly, therefore anyone needing a physical to be arduous duty red-carded, must have supervisor approval to complete at least one 2-week long assignment this fire season. For information and to sign up for the physical exam, please call Georgia McAdams at x-2196. To sign up for the refresher, please call Laura at x-2181.

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CALENDAR

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

April 5, 2012 (Thursday) at 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
April 10th and 11th, 2012 (Tuesday and Wednesday evenings) at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
May 3, 2012 (Thursday) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
May 31, 2012 (Thursday) 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Health Care Provider-CPR (for EMTs and Paramedics)-(Sign-Up at P:\Safety Office\2012 First Aid and CPR sign Up\Healthcare Provider CPR (for EMTs and Paramedics))
April 25, 2012 (Wednesday) at 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

IN THE NEWS

Mont. judge blocks more Yellowstone bison moves

MATTHEW BROWN, Associated Press, March 22, 2012

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A Montana judge granted a restraining order Thursday blocking further relocations of Yellowstone National Park bison following objections from ranchers and property rights groups.

State District Judge John McKeon's order came after Gov. Brian Schweitzer's administration transferred 62 Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck Reservation on Monday.

Four more bison were en route to the reservation Thursday. Opponents tried to get the shipment turned around, but state officials claimed the transfer started before the restraining order was issued. Officials suggested turning the bison around could be harmful to the animals, according to court documents.

Despite the new shipment, McKeon's ruling presents a significant stumbling block in the longstanding effort by tribes and agencies to reintroduce bison to parts of their former range.

Half of the Fort Peck animals were to be transported from a holding pen in coming months to the Fort Belknap Reservation. Another group of bison was being held temporarily on the Bozeman-area ranch of billionaire Ted Turner, awaiting future relocation to an undetermined location.

The judge blocked those transfers, at least for now, and turned down a request to return the animals to the Yellowstone area while setting a hearing for April 11 at the Blaine County Courthouse in Chinook.

Ranchers and others who filed a lawsuit seeking to halt the relocation program argue that wild bison damage fences, eat hay meant for cattle, and potentially could spread animal diseases.

Members of the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap tribes have pledged to keep the bison in fenced pastures for several years and monitor them for disease.

The 62 bison shipped to Fort Peck were moved without prior public notice and during a snowstorm — a maneuver by the Schweitzer administration and tribes that was meant to get the bison to Fort Peck ahead of a possible court ruling such as the one handed down Thursday.

Opponents of the relocation complained the tactic violated requirements under state law that the transfers be part of an open and transparent process.

Cory Swanson, an attorney for the plaintiffs in the lawsuit, said Thursday's ruling was a huge victory and freezes the state's relocation program until the case can be heard by the judge.

"There's no more stealthy movement of bison anywhere. No more secret agreements that are not fully part of the process," Swanson said. "The trust factor is really low here and the judge recognized that."

Fort Belknap Game and Fish Department Director Mark Azure said the reservation hopes to get half the bison at Fort Peck by this summer, although that could be derailed if Thursday's restraining order is not lifted.

McKeon's restraining order was issued against Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and its director, Joe Maurier. Although the tribes are not named as defendants in the case, any future agreements between the tribes and state were put on hold by the order.

The Fort Belknap Reservation is located in north-central Montana and is home to the Assiniboiné and Gros Ventre Indians.

Bison once numbered in the millions on the Great Plains and played a central role in American Indian life, providing meat for food, and pelts for clothing and shelter. The animals also feature prominently in many Native American religious ceremonies.

As the Fort Belknap tribes seek to reclaim that connection, Azure said the tribal officials have been working with neighboring ranchers to address their concerns over the animals.

Bison from a commercial herd on Fort Belknap have escaped in the past, raising tensions between the tribes and livestock producers after the animals ate hay and caused other problems.

Azure said the tribes intend to repay those who suffered losses but is waiting for an insurance adjuster to determine the damages.

"We've put that olive branch out I don't know how many times to say what happened in the past, we can try to right some of that stuff," Azure said. "The frustrating part is that we've reached out to these guys and for whatever reason they don't want to grab that branch."

Two conservation groups that have worked with the tribes, the National Wildlife Federation and Defenders of Wildlife, are seeking to intervene in the lawsuit. Jonathan Proctor, with Defenders of Wildlife, said Thursday that it was wrong for opponents of the transfers to interfere with efforts to restore bison to tribal lands.

"How can anybody want to relive the mistakes of our past and take the bison away from these tribes a second time?" Proctor asked. "These are tribal lands. For others to tell the tribes they can't restore bison to their land is unbelievable."

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Rethinking recreation in grizzly country

By Heather Hansen, High Country News, March 20, 2012

In far north-central Glacier National Park (GNP), on the U.S.-Canadian border, is a spot called Goat Haunt. It's a remote area on the U.S. side, accessed by most people via a ferry across Upper Waterton Lake from Canada.

<http://www.hcn.org/blogs/range/rethinking-recreation-in-grizzly-country>

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WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 604 AM MDT FRI MAR 23 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Partly cloudy. Isolated snow showers in the morning...then isolated thunderstorms and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 46 to 52. South winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Tonight...Partly cloudy. Slight chance of rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms early in the evening...then slight chance of snow showers in the late evening and overnight. Lows 22 to 28. South winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Saturday...Breezy. Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 46 to 52. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Saturday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 24 to 30. South winds around 15 mph.

Sunday...Partly cloudy. Highs 49 to 55. South winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Sunday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows 27 to 33.

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, March 26, 2012



Cycling in the Lamar Valley (NPS Photo, Jay Elhard)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Heartsaver First Aid and CPR and Health Care Provider CPR** (for EMTs and Paramedics) trainings will be held at the Mammoth Community Center in lower Mammoth. Sign-up sheets for both trainings are located on the P drive under the Safety Office folder. Please pick up a study guide from the Supply Center prior to the class and bring the booklet with you to the class. If there is interest in a class at a different time or location, please contact Juanita Bueter at 406-224-2629. (Schedule in CALENDAR below)

Wildland Fire Training Refreshers: Here is the schedule for this year. Please call Laura Dooley to save a spot as class sizes are limited. Anyone attending should plan on doing the pack-test that day as well. Some people will need to have a physical exam prior to taking the pack test. LE personnel and most permanent employees do not, but new permanent (non-LE) and all seasonals (non-LE) will. The physicals are costly, therefore anyone needing a physical to be arduous duty red-carded, must have supervisor approval to complete at least one 2-week long assignment this fire season. For information and to sign up for the physical exam, please call Georgia McAdams at x-2196. To sign up for the refresher, please call Laura at x-2181.

April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room

May 1 - Mammoth FC Training Room

May 8 - Mammoth FC Training Room

May 29 - Mammoth FC Training Room

June 5 - Mammoth FC Training Room

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

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In an effort to allow more access to the **Mammoth Community Center gym**, we are offering some OPEN GYM times this week for SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN when adult supervision will be available. Today (Monday) and tomorrow (Tuesday) there will be an adult at the gym from 4-6PM. In May, the MCC will begin offering supervised gym use from 1-5PM on Sundays - look for more information soon! We are LOOKING FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS to supervise open gym time on Monday-Thursday afternoons (4-6PM). Please contact Charissa Reid to add your name to the schedule. Sign up for a day or as a weekly offering - every little bit helps!

The **Mammoth Rec Hall gym** closed March 12 for repair and maintenance. It will open again on April 17.

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

CALENDAR

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

IN THE NEWS**Yellowstone efforts make room for native fish**

By KELSEY DAYTON Casper Star-Tribune, Saturday, March 24, 2012

LANDER — Decades ago it wasn't uncommon to stock lakes and streams with nonnative fish to create ample opportunities for people to catch the big one.

Today, Yellowstone National Park staff are working to reverse the negative impacts those fish have had on the area's native Yellowstone cutthroat trout, westslope cutthroat trout and Arctic grayling. To help those efforts, the Yellowstone Park Foundation has awarded the park's Native Fish Conservation Program \$1 million.

The 15-year-old foundation works to support park projects, said foundation President Karen Bates Kress. Native fish restoration is one of the biggest priorities in Yellowstone, she said. The decline of native fish, such as Yellowstone cutthroat, affects other species that rely on them for food, she said.

The park created a native fish conservation plan last year to not only enhance native species populations, but also rid streams and lakes of nonnative species, said David Hallac, chief of the Yellowstone Center for Resources. The goal is to increase Yellowstone cutthroat trout population numbers to mid-1990s numbers, as well as restore westslope cutthroat trout and Arctic grayling in the park.

Hallac said it appears Arctic grayling were unable to compete with nonnative rainbow and brown trout. Nonnative lake trout, which number in the hundreds of thousands, compete with Yellowstone cutthroat trout, whose numbers are dramatically declining, he said.

In order to save Yellowstone cutthroats, the lake trout need to be removed quickly and aggressively, Hallac said. Many species evolved together in Yellowstone National Park, developing a dependency on each other.

Yellowstone cutthroat trout are a keystone species, Hallac said. They make enormous contributions to the ecosystem. When they spawn, they swim upstream and become a major food source for grizzly bears. Bald eagles also feast on them, Hallac said.

Lake trout don't go upstream to spawn and also live deeper in the water, making them harder for eagles to catch. Hallac said it isn't clear how and when lake trout arrived in Yellowstone. The fish are found naturally in the Great Lakes region, such as in Lake Michigan, he said.

More than 200,000 lake trout were caught during last year's operation, park officials said. The fish aren't fresh enough to sell and can't be dumped in the park because of bears, so once dead they are put back in the lake, Hallac said.

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

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 255 AM MDT MON MAR 26 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers and isolated rain showers in the morning...then numerous snow showers...rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Highs 43 to 49. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Snow showers likely in the evening... Then chance of snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation around 1 inch. Total snow accumulation 2 to 4 inches. Lows 17 to 23. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph with gusts to around 40 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Tuesday...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs 35 to 41. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Tuesday Night...Mostly clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows 22 to 28. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

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

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Depending on weather the survey could begin in the early morning any day this week (March 26) or next (April 2). The helicopter will flight follow with either the Fire Cache or Comm Center at 15 min intervals and avoid developed areas, roads, Stephens Creek and housing areas. Locations covered will be from the Gardiner YNP region, Blacktail, Hellroaring, Tower, Slough Creek and Lamar Valley areas.

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Congratulations Pat Krause, Maintenance Equipment Operator, on 5 years of service!

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RECENT PARK PRESS RELEASESMarch 26, 2012**Investigation Leads to Child Porn Conviction**

A joint investigation by several law enforcement agencies, including the National Park Service, has resulted in the arrest and conviction of a man for possession of child pornography.

<http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/12018.htm>

IN THE NEWS**Opinion: Bison transfer should be allowed, with conditions**

Great Falls Tribune, March 27, 2012

The story of Yellowstone National Park's bison has taken so many twists and turns, followed by more twists and turns, again and again, that everyone involved may be a little dizzy.

And we're not talking just about this past week when the state essentially smuggled 66 of the shaggy beasts across the state to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in order to get the jump on any legal action against the move.

We're talking about the decades of animus surrounding the animals — so long-running and convoluted that we can't resist imagining what the *bison* would think if they could understand the multi-level, three-dimensional tug-of-war that has taken place among humans over their future and health.

Within a couple of days of the bison taking their cross-state truck ride, right on cue, a state judge from Malta granted the request of some area ranchers and property rights groups, blocking further movements of these and other bison, including a planned move of about half of this group to the Fort Belknap Reservation later this year.

The Yellowstone bison are among the only genetically pure descendants of the millions of bison that roamed North America until *Westward ho* Europeans slaughtered most of them in the 19th century. Those bison herds historically had been at the core of the culture of many North American Indian nations.

The effort to relocate a small fraction of the Yellowstone herd to Indian reservations to enable residents there to re-establish those cultural links is just one aspect of the issues surrounding the bison. The moves also reduce, even if by a small amount, the size of the herds crowding the park.

Explaining the sudden Monday transfer, Gov. Brian Schweitzer called it a first step toward bringing back the big herds elsewhere.

"This is where we're going to establish the beachhead of genetically pure bison that will be available as their numbers grow to go to other reservations and other public lands all across the West," Schweitzer said.

Ironically, the bison have overpopulated Yellowstone Park for years, with the result that they do what comes naturally whenever the snow gets too deep, the predators too numerous or the forage too scarce: They wander.

Unfortunately for the bison, some of them carry the disease brucellosis, and when brucellosis infects cattle, it can cause them to abort their calves.

It apparently doesn't matter that no one has connected brucellosis in bison to brucellosis in cattle — brucellosis is brucellosis and, in this country, the cattleman is king.

Even so, the disease argument has been rendered largely irrelevant in the current kerfuffle because the relocated bison have been quarantined on private land outside the park for several years and tested extensively for brucellosis.

That leaves mostly arguments about the quality of fences and the undesirability of making cattle share range with bison — issues that hardly seem insurmountable.

It is true that wild bison aren't as docile as cattle, and that they have a tendency to bust down fences — especially standard three-strands — and when they do that, they wander onto land owned by folks who don't want bison on their land.

That's exactly what happened a few years ago in the Fort Belknap area, and the ranchers there are still awaiting compensation for the damage they caused.

Still, the tribes say it will be different this time. Indeed, if they watch the critters closely, reinforce their fences and move quickly to rectify problems, these bison transfers should be allowed to continue.

Electricity gives a jolt to bear repellent efforts

Associated Press/Bozeman Chronicle, Sunday, March 25, 2012

Advances in using electricity to deter bears have made the technique more effective in the last 20 years, bear experts say.

http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/ap_news/montana/article_487c5c5c-363d-57be-8051-b1d6f48d7d71.html

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 743 AM MDT TUE MAR 27 2012

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Tonight...Mostly clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows 21 to 27. South winds around 15 mph.

Wednesday...Breezy. Partly cloudy in the morning...then mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 43 to 49. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday Night...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 24 to 30. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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Hungry bears out: A grizzly on a carcass at Blacktail Ponds, 3/27. (NPS Photo, Dan Hottle)

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Everyone says "we don't know what we'll do without you," but in Ann's case it couldn't be more true. Telecommuting from her home in Indiana for the past several years, Ann has been an invaluable foundational member of a team working both at the park and servicewide level on implementation of benefits-sharing (a program that could return monetary or other benefits to parks in the event a discovery or invention is based on park-permitted research). She will be greatly missed!

In addition to her time at Yellowstone and Mammoth Cave, Ann also worked at Carlsbad Caverns, Everglades, Denali, and at Biscayne as a volunteer in resource management. Here's how Ann summed it all up:
"I enjoyed the seasonal life bouncing among parks and nature centers as an Interpreter and Naturalist (and sometimes a Program Director) from 1977 through 1987. The opportunity to become intimate with some of the most powerful landscapes in America inspired and fed my calling to share the love of nature and the comprehension of people's role in what some now call 'ecosystem services.' Then Tom and I met in the Firehole River area in Yellowstone and fell helplessly in love with a work-place for the first time. Between the extraordinary geo-ecology and the land's reaction to the Great Fires of 1988, we were compelled to stay in Yellowstone's Firehole River valley (a.k.a. Old Faithful area) from 1988 through 1998. In 1998, I traded direct visitor contact as a seasonal for a permanent desk job as research permit coordinator. Tom retired from work and in 2001 we relocated to Indiana, his family's home for generations."

If you'd like to sign Ann's retirement card or contribute to a gift for her, the card and envelop are currently at the Chief of Interpretation Office or contact Sue Mills at x2515.

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IN THE NEWS**Major Yellowstone elk herd keeps declining**

By MATTHEW BROWN — Associated Press, March 27, 2012

BILLINGS, MONT. — A major elk herd that migrates between Yellowstone National Park and Montana suffered another steep decline last year due to a hard winter, predator attacks and hunting, state and federal scientists said Tuesday.

New data from wildlife agencies show the Northern Yellowstone elk herd is down to about 4,174 animals, or a 10 percent drop from the prior year's count. That follows a 24 percent drop in 2011.

Yellowstone biologist Doug Smith said the herd remains healthy despite its smaller size. The number is more in line with historic levels since wolves were reintroduced and grizzly bears and mountain lions returned naturally, he said.

The herd peaked at about 20,000 animals in 1992, a few years before wolves were brought back from Canada after being absent from the region for decades.

The Park Service has no set population target for the herd, but the latest counts have fallen below the target range of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.

Some outfitters and others who live outside the park say officials have not done enough to curb predator attacks, particularly by wolves. The Yellowstone herd supported a thriving hunting industry, with several thousand elk killed in some years, before the numbers started to drop.

Smith said it was inaccurate to heap too much blame for the elk herd's decline on wolves.

Wolf numbers, too, have been dropping in recent years, from 94 in 2007 to 38 last year in the area populated by the Northern Yellowstone herd.

"That's some bad news, a 25 percent decline last year and 10 percent this year. But the elk are looking really good," Smith said. "This was one of the hardest winters we've had in decades ... We've got a leaner, meaner elk herd."

Conservationists credit wolves with helping restore balance to the ecosystem, in part by reducing the size of a herd that some had said was far too large at its peak.

To keep the herd from declining too far, Montana wildlife commissioners in February approved a new permit system for Northern Yellowstone elk. Although there are unlimited numbers of \$9 permits, the requirement is expected to reduce the number of hunters who come to the area, said Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks spokesman Ron Aasheim.

"Those folks who don't have a permit won't head that way," Aasheim said.

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Wyoming: Reconsider Yellowstone snowmobile limit

By BEN NEARY — Associated Press, Idaho Statesman (Boise), March 27, 2012

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — Gov. Matt Mead said Tuesday he disagrees with an appeals court ruling that bars Wyoming from suing the federal government over a rule limiting the number of snowmobiles and other snow machines allowed in Yellowstone National Park.

Wyoming last week filed papers asking a three-judge panel at the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver to grant the state a new hearing.

The judges ruled in late February that the state, as well as Park County, Wyo., had failed to show concrete economic losses from the limit on snowmobiles. The judges said a challenge on procedural grounds would be moot because park officials conducted a new analysis before extending the 2009 limits through this winter.

In its court filing, Wyoming argued it should be allowed to argue its case again, with state lawyers claiming judges incorrectly determined the East Entrance to the park was the only one at issue in the appeal.

"Wyoming is injured by the economic losses which occur within Yellowstone regardless of which gate the public is turned away from, and by the economic losses which occur outside the Park from lost snowmobiling opportunities in both Cody and Jackson," the state lawyers wrote.

The Park Service's 2009 rule had limited daily snowmobile traffic in Yellowstone to 318 machines while setting the limit on snow coaches, larger machines, at 78.

Mead, in an interview with The Associated Press, said Wyoming still has an interest in challenging the court's ruling on the 2009 rule even though the Park Service is developing a new winter use plan which will spell out limits on snowmobiles for the 2012-13 season.

Mead said Wyoming needs to preserve its standing in the event future challenges are required. He said he's hopeful the state will be able to work with the Park Service to reach an agreement.

"The court decision said that Wyoming didn't have standing to participate," Mead said. "I respectfully think we were right to ask for reconsideration of that because if any state has standing to have concerns about economic impact with regard to Yellowstone, it would be Wyoming."

"As everyone knows, Yellowstone is largely in Wyoming," Mead said. "And regardless of which entrance into Yellowstone may be impacted by the reduction of snow machines, it all has, I believe, an impact on the economics of Wyoming."

Mead said he didn't know what the daily snow machine limit in Yellowstone should be. However, he said he sees a danger that setting the limit at 318 snowmobiles a day would send the message that a prospective visitor doesn't stand a good chance of being able to get into Yellowstone on any given winter day.

Mead, who grew up in Jackson Hole, said he believes snowmobiling gives people a greater appreciation for Yellowstone. "It's really a special way to view the park," he said. "And the park is for the benefit of the public, and for the wildlife. And I think that opportunity to snow machine in there is a good one."

Yellowstone spokesman Al Nash said Tuesday the Park Service intends to develop a new winter use plan by this winter.

"There's no question that it is our desire to have this process result in a long term, winter use plan for Yellowstone," Nash said. "And we're working to present a broad range of alternatives to the public. We look forward to a robust discussion. And we're hopeful that we will be able to put forward a plan that addresses the variety of concerns that people have and ultimately provide access for visitors and protects the park and recognizes all the important interests in this issue."

The National Parks Conservation Association has clashed with Wyoming for years over the snowmobile issue. The association has raised concerns about noise and pollution from snowmobiles harming wildlife and having other adverse effects in Yellowstone.

Tim Stevens, Northern Rockies regional director for the NPCA, said Tuesday the association hasn't decided how it will respond to Wyoming's request that the appeals court reconsider its ruling.

"What's most important and what has been most important for NPCA in this whole process is that the Park Service is able to make a decision based on the best available science, and supported by policy and law," Stevens said. "The Wyoming challenge wouldn't have allowed the Park Service to do that, and that's why we intervened."

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Tonight...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Numerous snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 24 to 30. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Thursday...Breezy. Partly cloudy. Slight chance of snow showers in the morning...then chance of snow showers and slight chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Thursday Night...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 28 to 34. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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Dr. Norman Fox who served as the MD at the Mammoth Clinic in the 1970s and who had a practice in Bozeman died January 27. A memorial service will be held at Grace Bible Church in Bozeman on Saturday, April 7th at 10 am. Grace Bible is located on S. 19th several blocks south of Kagy. For more information, you can contact Rev. Merv Olson at 406-219-3636.

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

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CALENDAR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

April 10 - Mammoth Fire Cache Training Room

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June 5 - Mammoth FC Training Room

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

IN THE NEWS

Meetings planned in Choteau to discuss bison relocation

Great Falls Tribune, March 28, 2012

Citizens for Balanced Use, a group that works to protect public land from closure or mismanagement, has scheduled two informational meetings Friday in Chinook on the state of Montana's efforts to relocate bison from Yellowstone National Park to other areas.

The group also says it plans to collect donations during the meetings for its legal fees to help in its court fight with the state over moving the bison, which the group contends is illegal.

The state shipped 64 bison to Fort Peck Indian Reservation on March 20, but a Montana judge later granted a restraining order blocking further relocations of Yellowstone National Park bison following objections from ranchers and property rights groups.

Half of the Fort Peck bison were to be trucked to the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation once a fence is in place there.

Ranchers and others, including Citizens for Balanced Use, filed a lawsuit seeking to halt the relocation program, arguing that wild bison damage fences, eat hay meant for cattle and could potentially spread disease to cattle.

Members of the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap tribes have pledged to keep the bison in fenced pastures for several years — and to monitor them for disease.

The meetings are from 5 and 7 p.m. A pork dinner will be served at 6.

What's killing Yellowstone-area elk?

JOLENE KELLER Lone Peak Lookout, March 29, 2012

In a report released by Northern Yellowstone Cooperative Wildlife Working Group (Working Group) on March 27, the number of elk in and around the northern section of Yellowstone National Park is down 10 percent from a count conducted the year before.

http://www.lonepeaklookout.com/news/article_4734c88a-791b-11e1-98db-001a4bcf887a.html

WEATHER

NWS Zone Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park, WY

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 743 AM MDT THU MAR 29 2012

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers in the morning...then mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Tonight...Windy...cloudy. Scattered rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then scattered snow showers after midnight. Lows 29 to 35. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Friday...Windy...cloudy. Chance of rain showers and snow showers in the morning...then chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 42 to 48. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Friday Night...Windy. Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of rain showers and snow showers. Lows 32 to 38. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph.

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

SUBMISSIONS

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

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YNP@Work

A Daily Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, March 30, 2012



(left to right) Dylan Heath, Kate Reid and Lilly Short perform *Celtic Suite* as part of the Spring Dance Concert at the Gardiner School, March 29.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

Elk Classification Survey by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks: Sometime during the week of March 26 (or possibly the next week depending on weather) a helicopter from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) will be flying in the park on the northern range to classify sex and age of elk. This is an annual and long-term survey conducted either by FWP or staff from YNP and is important to assess the composition of the northern Yellowstone elk herd. It is not a count but is designed to identify (cow, calf, spike, bull) a significant number of

elk across the range (both in and out of YNP). The survey involves low level flying by a helicopter near elk in order to correctly identify them.

Depending on weather the survey could begin in the early morning any day this week (March 26) or next (April 2). The helicopter will flight follow with either the Fire Cache or Comm Center at 15 min intervals and avoid developed areas, roads, Stephens Creek and housing areas. Locations covered will be from the Gardiner YNP region, Blacktail, Hellroaring, Tower, Slough Creek and Lamar Valley areas.

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

Dr. Norman Fox who served as the MD at the Mammoth Clinic in the 1970s and who had a practice in Bozeman died March 27. A memorial service will be held at Grace Bible Church in Bozeman on Saturday, April 7th at 10 am. Grace Bible is located on S. 19th several blocks south of Kagy. For more information, you can contact Rev. Merv Olson at 406-219-3636.

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

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IN THE NEWS

Study Shows Development Around National Parks Increasing

By Lauren Maschmedt, NBC Montana, March 29, 2012

BOZEMAN, Mont. -- Andrew Hansen and colleague Cory Davis have been studying land use around 57 of the largest national parks in the lower 48 states.

"The point of the study was to try to understand the types of challenges that park managers face in keeping our parks healthy" Hansen said.

The pair looked at population growth and density from 1940 to 2000.

An MSU ecologist, Hansen wanted to see the impact of economic development around parks on the national parks themselves.

What they found, he said, was surprising.

"These ecosystems immediately around national parks" he said "were actually undergoing faster rates of population growth."

Land around national parks has become hot real estate.

When it came to Montana, Hansen said the growth was significant- Glacier National Park spiked by 210 percent, and Yellowstone National Park by 246 percent.

But that increase didn't come close to other parts of the country.

Around Colorado River Parks, density grew by 2,900 percent. At the Mojave National Preserve in California, development increased by over 3,000 percent.

"The proportion of public land around these parks has a big influence on how many people can live there" he said. YNP is mostly surrounded by National Forest land, Hansen said, so it can't be developed. Whereas around other parks, private land has free reign.

"For developers to come in- there has been interest" said West Yellowstone resident and real estate broker John Costello. "But because of the scarcity and because of the cost, it just does not make it financially feasible to make {development} happen."

Costello said, for West Yellowstone at least, the inability to develop due to being surrounded by National Forest land and YNP has been a hindrance for their economy.

The West Yellowstone 2010 Capital Improvement Plan calls for buying a \$1.6 million chunk of NF land southwest of town, but Costello said that has yet to happen.

"Purchase of that land by the town could really open up a number of avenues" Costello said. "Be it commercial, industrial, and residential."

While West Yellowstone craves more development, Hansen said there is such a thing as too much. In areas where land was significantly more developed around parks- like in California and Florida- there were more issues with nature conservation, he said.

Finding a balance between development and preservation could be key in moving forward, Hansen said. "The more we learn about these interactions between where we live, and the surrounding nature, the more we can come up with strategies" Hansen said.

Rebounding Grizzlies Still Face, and Pose, Risks

Yellowstone's rebounding grizzly bear population is an undeniable success. But figuring out how to manage the threatened omnivores—in light of potential food shortages and deadly human-grizzly interactions—isn't so easy.
By Jeff Hull, Audubon Magazine, March-April 2012

The grizzlies came over the ridge in the setting sunlight, a female and two cubs. The female's harvest gold coat rippled like it consisted of two layers, one that floated above the other on a layer of oily muscle. From a distance, she looked like a 300-pound bundle of power flowing over the meadow. The cubs ambled along in a teeter-totter gait, roly-poly goofballs as big as St. Bernards, but chubbier. They crossed a grassy bench in Yellowstone National Park's Lamar Valley, skirting a pocket of bison.

<http://www.audubonmagazine.org/articles/conservation/rebounding-grizzlies-still-face-and-pose-risks>

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 239 AM MDT FRI MAR 30 2012

Red Flag WARNING

<http://forecast.weather.gov/wwamap/wwatxtget.php?cwa=byz&wwa=red%20flag%20warning>

Hazardous Weather Outlook

Today...Windy. Numerous snow showers in the morning...then numerous snow showers and rain showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Highs 41 to 47. Southwest winds 20 to 30 mph with gusts to around 45 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight...Breezy...cloudy. Numerous rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then scattered rain showers and snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Total snow accumulation 1 to 7 inches. Lows 31 to 37. Southwest winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts to around 40 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Saturday...Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Scattered rain showers and snow showers in the morning...then scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 48 to 54. South winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday Night...Breezy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then numerous snow showers and rain showers after midnight. Snow accumulation up to 2 inches. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Gusts up to 40 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

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