

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, April 1, 2014



Don't be bitter, the bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*) is up. This handsome specimen was found in front of the HRC. Perhaps you would not recognize this distinctive plant without the flower since the leaves dwindle when the bud appears and are gone by the time the plant flowers. The succulent leaves, however, form a basal rosette and are very distinctive too. Bitterroot is the state flower of Montana, first collected by Meriwether Lewis in 1806 in Montana. When Meriwether collected the plant, he wrote, "The Indians eat the root of this near Clark's R. Jul. 1 1806". However, he found them, "naucious to my pallate". Fredrick Pursh, a German botanist described the plant and when he realized it was a new genus, named it after Meriwether Lewis. Usually overlooked, there are two other species of *Lewisia* that occur in the park. Alpine lewisia (*Lewisia pygmaea*) and threeleaf lewisia (*Lewisia tryphylla*), have smaller flowers and occur in more mesic areas than bitterroot.

(photo by Jessi Gerdes, commentary by Heidi Anderson)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Memorial Service for Debi Roberts will be held at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday at the Gardiner School. A reception will be held immediately afterwards at the Gardiner Community Center. Please bring a pot-luck dish to share.

A fund has been set up at First Interstate Bank in Debi's memory. Contributions will go to help community members in need of help with everyday living expenses such as food, rent, propane etc.

Jamey, Nathan, and Alex are appreciative of the NPS family's help and concern for their family during this tragedy.

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As of TODAY, Tina Holland will be handing over the coordination of parkwide uniforms to the division of Resource Education and Youth Programs. **Clare Cloghessy** will be the new contact and can be reached at x2581. The uniform cache will remain in the MABO office at the garage until other arrangements can be made.

There will be a **Basic Aviation Safety Training (B3)** April 10 starting at 9:00 a.m. in the fire cache training room for anyone who believes they will be an air crew member on flights this summer. This means you are more than the incidental firefighter or search and rescue person who may get on a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft. If you have already taken this class in the classroom you are required to refresh every 3 years on line now under the new A100 format. Please set up your IAT profile before coming to class at www.IAT.gov. **Register for the class online through the www.iat.gov website after you set-up your profile. Thank you.**

Don't forget about the fish fry this Friday April 4th at **St. Williams Church** from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Fish, baked potato, coleslaw, roll, dessert and drink: 1 piece - \$8.00, 2 piece - \$9.00, 3 piece - \$10.00



Join us for an Evening of Folk Music with Link Wilmoth and Kurt Prond (as seen performing at Pine Creek Café). **Sunday, April 13** (note date change) in the Gardiner H.S. Multi-Purpose Rm. Southern BBQ begins at 5:00, Silent Auction with GREAT gifts at 6:00 Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission trip to Tacoma, WA

Next MCC Potluck - Taco bar (bring your favorite taco fixings!) April 8th @ 6pm.
Email mammothboardyellowstone@gmail.com with questions and to make reservations for events at the MCC.

Upcoming CPR classes! Heartsaver CPR/First Aid is the class for community members and the lay person.

Date/Time: Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Location: MCC EMS Classroom

Please pick up a Student Workbook for these classes in Supply Center (make sure it is the one for your class, either Healthcare Provider or Heartsaver). Questions, please call Juanita Bueter at (406) 224-2629. To sign up for classes go to: P drive:/safety office/ First Aid and CPR Training

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A Support & Educational Program for Breast Cancer Survivors and a weekend retreat offered at no cost to the participants. For women of all ages and all stages of breast cancer treatment and recovery who live in Wyoming. The weekend provides medical information and counseling and promotes physical and emotional healing while learning to fly-fish. Connect with other women, enjoy the outdoors, and learn a new sport. July 25-27, 2014 at Absaroka Ranch, Dubois, WY. Apply on-line at www.castingforrecovery.org. CFR must receive your form by May 16. Participants are selected at random. We will notify all applicants of their status after the application deadline.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Monday, March 31, 2014
REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: Area plows running at Canyon, Lake and Old Faithful. Plows cleaning up all admin roads.
Present Location: Old Faithful Area
Anticipated Destination: Plowing all admin roads today
Snow Conditions: 10” new snow over weekend.
Equipment: 1 blower down.
Weather: Overcast, 20 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:
Madison to Old Faithful until 4:30 PM today

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:
Mammoth to Norris, Norris to Canyon, Canyon to Lake, Norris to Madison, Madison to West

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS

FWP seeks proposals for disease-free Yellowstone bison living on Turner ranch
16 hours ago • By Brett French

A disease-free herd of Yellowstone National Park bison that was originally envisioned to populate state or tribal lands to return the animals to the Great Plains will soon find a new home.

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks announced Monday that it is seeking proposals from groups and agencies to take the roughly 135 bison for conservation purposes.

"We're waiting to see what kind of proposals we'll get," said Ken McDonald, FWP's wildlife bureau chief. "We expect tribal proposals for sure."

The bison come from a group of 88 that were transferred from quarantine facilities outside of Yellowstone to Ted Turner's Green Ranch in 2010. Under an agreement with the former media magnate, he gets to keep 75 percent of the animals' offspring in exchange for giving them a place to roam. Another 40 animals were moved from quarantine to the ranch a year later.

FWP had expected that by the end of the five-year agreement, the state would have a bison management plan and possibly a place to locate the herd. The Marias River Wildlife Management Area, along the Rocky Mountain Front, and Spotted Dog WMA near Anaconda were two state-owned parcels that were originally considered.

But public opposition and the election of a new governor temporarily shelved the management plan, although tentative talks have restarted, and a meeting is planned on April 15-16 in Lewistown.

"It's just such a hot topic," McDonald said.

The announcement comes only days after the state of Montana and Yellowstone National Park announced that they would be crafting a new environmental impact statement to consider possible changes for managing wild Yellowstone bison and the disease brucellosis.

"They are totally independent," McDonald said. "That was just a timing coincidence."

But Helena conservationist Jim Posewitz said the EIS is a hopeful sign that the state may be reconsidering its treatment of Yellowstone bison.

"It's pretty clear the current treatment of bison around Yellowstone National Park is an embarrassment as far as wildlife management," Posewitz said.

He said it's also important to keep the genetics of such an important herd as Yellowstone's bison separated in case an illness or disease threatens to wipe out the herd.

"They don't want to have all of their bison in one place," he said.

Under the agreement with Turner, he will be able to keep 120 of the 160 Yellowstone bison offspring born on the Green Ranch as pay for keeping the animals. Additional bison will also be born this spring, of which Turner would keep 75 percent.

In 2010, a coalition of wildlife advocates asked a Montana judge to overturn the agreement with Turner, but did not prevail.

The bison were originally part of the Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study, a research project that began in 2004 directed by FWP and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The research was conducted at a facility near Corwin Springs, north of Yellowstone National Park, to produce bison free of brucellosis, a disease that can cause some pregnant bison, elk and domestic cattle to abort their calves.

The brucellosis-free bison have been part of the research herd since 2005 and 2006 from two capture groups. All animals have been tested for brucellosis twice a year, with most tested at least 10 times, some up to 15 times, and have always tested negative, according to FWP. Both Montana Department of Livestock and APHIS consider this group of bison to be brucellosis free.

Proposals to take the disease-free bison must include a bison conservation and management plan, and describe suitable habitat and secure living space for the animals.

More information is available online at fwp.mt.gov. Click Recent Public Notices. Proposals, which are due April 30, can be sent to Bison Translocation, Wildlife Division, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701.

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/fwp-seeks-proposals-for-disease-free-yellowstone-bison-living-on/article_d24656c7-d755-5662-a845-dc3798fb3034.html#ixzz2xeQjOPKd

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Yellowstone quake part of uplifting series

Posted: Monday, March 31, 2014 5:13 pm

[Yellowstone quake part of uplifting series](#) Laura Lundquist, Bozeman Chronicle

Sunday morning's earthquake may have been the largest around Yellowstone National Park in more than two decades, but it wasn't big enough to interrupt anyone's morning slumber, said a park spokesman.

At around 6:30, a 4.8-magnitude earthquake made the area around Norris Geyser basin shudder for a few seconds but resulted in no obvious damage to park structures, said park spokesman Al Nash.

"We're used to this around here so a lot of people slept through it," Nash said. "If we didn't have this, we wouldn't have all these things that make the park what it is."

The quake was recorded at the University of Utah seismograph station as part of the Yellowstone Volcano Observatory. The last quake registering at least 4.8 occurred on Feb. 22, 1980.

Sunday's event was one of a series of more than 25 earthquakes that have occurred since March 27. The largest quake in the series prior to Sunday's was a 3.1 magnitude.

Earthquakes are typically measured on a magnitude scale where each whole number represents a quake that is 10 times stronger than the previous whole number. For example, a 5-magnitude quake is 10 times stronger than a 4.

So Sunday's 4.8-magnitude quake was more than 10 times as strong as any of the previous quakes in the series. But U.S. Geological Survey scientists classify 4- to 4.9-magnitude quakes as "light."

The earthquakes are produced as part of a geological phenomenon called ground uplift.

This particular uplift has been going on for several months, according to the USGS.

The previous period of uplift and increased seismic activity in the area occurred between 1996 and 2003. A USGS team was in the area studying the uplift when Sunday's quake went off. Because the origin of the earthquake was fairly deep, it's not likely that any ground rupture occurred, said USGS geologist Jacob Lowenstern.

"The team was in the area installing GPS receivers so we can study the uplift, and the main thing they're trying to do right now is keep the snow off the receivers," Lowenstern said. "We don't expect to find anything from the earthquake."

The Yellowstone Volcano Observatory site emphasizes that there has been no dramatic increase in earthquake activity.

TV crew to follow 'Bigfoot hunters' in Yellowstone this summer**Yellowstone Gate**

Yellowstone National Park is home to some of the most photographed wildlife in the world, with tourists on constant lookout for everything from grizzly bears and gray wolves to pelicans and pikas. But this summer, a reality show crew will be adding at least one new species to their must-see list: Bigfoot.

As unlikely as it might sound, a four-person production crew is scheduled to spend up to 10 weeks in Yellowstone from mid-June through August taping segments for “Yellowstone Bigfoot Hunt,” a new reality TV show set to debut in October on the Adventure Channel.

The decision by park officials to permit the production is drawing criticism from some environmental groups, while others are praising the project as a great way to draw attention to the park while boosting local gateway economies.

Common sense dictates that finding a previously undiscovered primate in the high country of Yellowstone is about as likely as spotting a unicorn. But park officials say the program has met all necessary requirements for receiving a commercial photography permit.

“So long as the production doesn’t interfere with normal park operations and abides by the terms and conditions of the permit, they will be allowed to tape segments about Bigfoot—or any other-size-footed animals they might find here,” said Yellowstone spokesman Stan Thatch.

[Permit guidelines for the park](#) state that “documentaries filmed specifically for sale to a news station or educational channel are considered a commercial venture and require a permit.”

Thatch said “Yellowstone Bigfoot Hunt” is considered a commercial film shoot, and under park rules, the production company must pay a \$150 daily location fee based on its crew size.

Whenever the crew is operating in an area with thermal features or along roadsides or other sensitive areas, it will be required to have a Yellowstone staff member on site as a monitor, Thatch said. Such a requirement is a standard provision of the park’s permit guidelines. The crew must reimburse the National Park Service at the rate of \$65 per hour for each staff monitor, he said.

Mocks conservation efforts

Sharm Dresden, wildlife policy specialist for the Friends of Yellowstone Alliance, said the quest for Sasquatch in the world’s first national park will make a mockery of efforts to protect and preserve actual threatened and endangered species, and would likely confuse visitors unfamiliar with Yellowstone’s unique ecosystem.

“I can’t imagine this is even being entertained,” Dresden said. “We already have far more compelling real wildlife that people can actually see every day in Yellowstone. Why are we promoting a literal Bigfoot hunt? Literally.”

Wyoming Rep. Teetrick Huddleton, a Republican from Cody, praised the decision to issue the permit, saying it will draw international attention to Yellowstone and its gateway towns. Huddleton, who co-chairs the Wyoming Legislature’s Joint Committee on Film, Television, Rodeos and Parades, said he had met with the “Yellowstone Bigfoot Hunt” crew, and is convinced they will be careful and conscientious.

“These people are trained Hollywood professionals,” Huddleton said. “I have every confidence that they’ll treat Yellowstone with respect. The park has to be open to many uses, and this is a legitimate deal here. I see no reason to exclude them.”

Cable TV already has two Bigfoot-themed programs, with “[Finding Bigfoot](#)” recently completing its fourth season on Animal Planet and “[10 Million Dollar Bigfoot Bounty](#)” premiering earlier this year on Spike. The success of those shows may explain why the fledgling Adventure Channel is looking to make a splash by setting a reality show about Bigfoot in Yellowstone.

“You tend to get a lot of copycat productions whenever a reality show concept pops,” said Don Weaver, president of Dream Factory Productions in North Hollywood, Calif. Weaver’s company is not affiliated with “Yellowstone Bigfoot Hunt,” and efforts to reach representatives from the show were not successful.

“The idea these days is that you have to come up with an outrageous concept if you expect to cut through the clutter of all the shows lined up on basic cable,” Weaver said. “It might work better, actually, as a Bigfoot dating show.”

No reported sightings

Thatch said he was not aware of any recent Bigfoot encounters in or around the park, and that the Park Service does not formally track unexplained animal sightings.

“We do track things like reports of wolves with sarcoptic mange, for instance. Our biologists want to stay on top of that. But there is no [cryptozoologist](#) on staff at Yellowstone, so we don’t keep up with Yetis, dragons or mermaids,” he said.

Dresden said she was concerned that the TV crew or park visitors might chase after bears or other wildlife in an effort to capture Sasquatch on camera, and that it was an inappropriate production to be allowed in the park.

“This flies in the face of the educational and interpretive mission the Park Service is supposed to be carrying out. We wouldn’t allow a crew to film a ‘Leprechaun Search’ show at the Lincoln Memorial, so why is this being permitted?” she said.

Huddleton said the program would be a much-needed shot in the arm for gateway towns like Cody, and that “the jury is still out on whether Bigfeets exist.”

“Can you imagine the tourist traffic we’d see if they even caught a glimpse of one of those things? Where’s the harm?” he said. “I’ve never met anyone who’s actually seen a wolverine in Yellowstone either. Let them film their program.”

Thatch said no final decision has been made on whether Park Service staff would appear on camera as part of “Yellowstone Bigfoot Hunt.”

“To the extent that something like that might happen, I would imagine that it would be only a brief interview to refute the notion that Bigfoot exists, and to rule out that he—or she—might be found somewhere in the park,” he said.

WEATHER**NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 757 AM MDT TUE APR 1 2014

Today Partly cloudy. Scattered snow showers...rain showers and isolated thunderstorms late in the afternoon. Highs 33 to 39. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Tonight Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers and isolated thunderstorms early in the evening...then scattered snow showers in the late evening and overnight. Lows 11 to 17. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Wednesday Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning... Then slight chance of snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 28 to 34. Chance of snow 30 percent.

Wednesday Night Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow showers in the evening...then mostly clear after midnight. Lows 11 to 17.

Thursday Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 34 to 40.

Thursday Night Mostly clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows 15 to 21.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

Yellowstone Safety Recognition Program (SRP)

Do you see something we could do to improve safety in Yellowstone OR do you see a co-worker who has done something positive about safety? Use the [Safety Recognition Program](#) to report a hazard occurring in the park or nominate a Safety Champion. Full program details can be found using the link above. We want to hear from YOU!

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 2, 2014



Beautiful grizzly bear by Midway Geyser Basin (taken with a 400mm lens while on the courier route)
(photo by David Restivo)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a **Basic Aviation Safety Training** (B3) April 10 starting at 9:00 a.m. in the fire cache training room for anyone who believes they will be an air crew member on flights this summer. This means you are more than the incidental firefighter or search and rescue person who may get on a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft. If you have already taken this class in the classroom you are required to refresh every 3 years on line now under the new A100 format. Please set up your IAT profile before coming to class at www.IAT.gov. **Register for the class online through the www.iat.gov website after you set-up your profile. Thank you.**

Wellness Incentive Program:

Did you know that Jane Olson averages 18,953 steps a day working at Supply Center? Do you track your daily steps using a pedometer or phone application? How many steps a day do you take? While studies have shown that walking does not impact muscle strength, agility or balance; walking 10,000 steps a day does lead to improved cardiovascular health, weight loss, lower body fat and overall endurance. Tracking cardiovascular activity is one of the components of the Wellness Incentive Program. Remember to send your completed WIP Forms for the month of March to Stacey Gunther by April 5th to be entered in award drawing. To be eligible, you need to have earned 500 points during March.

Don't forget about the fish fry this Friday April 4th at **St. Williams Church** from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Fish, baked potato, coleslaw, roll, dessert and drink: 1 piece - \$8.00, 2 piece - \$9.00, 3 piece - \$10.00



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Date/Time: Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Location: MCC EMS Classroom

Please pick up a Student Workbook for these classes in Supply Center (make sure it is the one for your class, either Healthcare Provider or Heartsaver). Questions, please call Juanita Bueter at (406) 224-2629. To sign up for classes go to: P drive:/safety office/ First Aid and CPR Training

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SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Wednesday, April 2, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: Main Group remobilized to Lake Area, and plowing in Lake Area today. Area plows running at Canyon, Lake and Old Faithful.

Present Location:
Lake Area

Anticipated Destination:**Bridge Bay****Snow Conditions:****2" new snow added to present snowpack.****Weather:****Cloudy, light snow, 23 degrees, no wind yet!****Communication Center will announce when official "Administrative Travel" is allowed.****CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:****Bridge Bay to Grant Village closes to Administrative over snow travel Thursday, April 3 at 7:00 AM.****OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:****Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM****Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM****Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM****Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM****Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM****Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM**

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

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Today Numerous snow showers. Snow accumulation of 2 to 4 inches. Total snow accumulation 2 to 6 inches. Highs 28 to 34. West winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Tonight Mostly cloudy with chance of snow showers early in the evening...then partly cloudy with isolated snow showers late in the evening. Partly cloudy after midnight. Lows 11 to 17. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Thursday Partly cloudy. Highs 32 to 38.

Thursday Night Partly cloudy. Lows 12 to 18.

Friday Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 33 to 39. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Friday Night Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow showers. Lows 17 to 23.

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Thursday, April 3, 2014

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89

This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor. For this reason, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is urging caution when traveling the southern portion of Highway 89. Drivers should pay particular attention south of Yankee Jim Canyon and reduce speed during nighttime hours.

In addition to bison, elk and deer are abundant within the Highway 89 corridor and frequently cross the highway. It's important that drivers take this risk seriously, slow down, and obey posted signs.

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A Gathering of Naturalists presents The Life & Times of One Tree

Friday, April 18, 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through

dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future.

Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

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Plows: Area plows running at Upper Falls and Old Faithful.

Present Location:

Bridge Bay

Anticipated Destination:

Sand Point

Snow Conditions:

Trace of new snow added to present snowpack. 4 ½' of snow, no ice.

Weather:

Clear, 11 degrees

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

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IN THE NEWS**Quake expert predicts no big bang in Y'stone**

Magnitude 4.8 tremblor doesn't portend disaster, geophysicist says.

Posted: Wednesday, April 2, 2014

[Quake expert predicts no big bang in Y'stone](#) By Mike Koshmrl |

The 4.8 magnitude earthquake that shook Yellowstone National Park this weekend was unremarkable besides the fact it happens around every decade or so, a University of Utah professor says.

The temblor, which struck about 4 miles north-northeast of the Norris Geyser Basin at 6:34 a.m. Sunday, wasn't related to the caldera, University of Utah geophysics professor Bob Smith said. It's not an indication that the supervolcano is set to explode and result in fiery deaths for millions, the seasonal Moose resident said.

"We've had several magnitude 4.8s, 4.9s in the history of Yellowstone," Smith said.

"What we're seeing is kind of the upper end of the Richter scale that we see in Yellowstone," he said. "I think it's just coincidental."

It has been considerably longer than usual since such a powerful event occurred. The last Yellowstone quake as large as 4.8 magnitude rumbled on Feb. 22, 1980 — more than 34 years ago.

As a result, Sunday's earthquake was covered in newspapers around the country. It also grabbed the attention of Yellowstone supervolcano doomsday alarmists.

The Turner Radio Network published a story Sunday warning that the Yellowstone quake may indicate the pending eruption of the “SUPER volcano.”

Shake was outside the caldera

“A total of seven earthquakes have now hit Yellowstone and the pattern is sequential clockwise, around the super volcano caldera!” the Turner radio story said. “It appears the super volcano is “unzipping!”

The caldera is not unzipping, Smith said. In fact the earthquake is outside the bounds of the 55-mile by 18-mile magma chamber.

“It’s really north of the caldera boundary,” Smith said. “So the earthquakes are in a system that’s dominated by faults as opposed to a system that’s dominated by magmatic activity.”

The measurements Smith and colleagues took of the Yellowstone earthquake Sunday, which was one of 31 that day, did not all come in uniform, he said. The U.S. Geological Survey, deemed the authority on the matter, called it a magnitude 4.8.

“We looked at it three different ways,” Smith said.

Different methods, he said, assessed it at magnitudes of 4.3, 4.9 and 5.0.

Yellowstone spokesman Al Nash told the Jackson Hole Daily this weekend that no known human was in the Norris area at the time of the temblor.

Thirty-three people reported having felt the quake, and in places as far away as Big Timber and Belgrade, Mont., according to the USGS’s “Did you feel it?” Web page. One respondent in Jackson Hole who apparently knew of the incident reported having “not felt” the event.

277 quakes recorded in area

“We call it a light earthquake,” Smith said. “It’s very shallow.

“It was caused by a fracture in the ground and the fracture might be a kilometer long,” he said.

Sensors detected 277 earthquakes in and around the Yellowstone in March, a higher than average number, according to a Yellowstone Volcano Observatory monthly report.

The big one is part of a “ground uplift”-related cluster that includes 70 temblors, including four magnitude 3.0 or higher events. The event is still going on, the report said.

Yellowstone's largest quake in three decades did not cause any measurable ground deformation, the observatory report said. Over the last eight months, a GPS station in North-Central Yellowstone has moved about 1.5 centimeters east, 2 centimeters north, and 5.5 centimeters upward.

For Smith, it wasn't surprising that 4.8 magnitude quake has caused such a stir in certain circles.

On Tuesday, talk radio host Alex Jones' website, InfoWars.Com, posted a Youtube video of a herd of Yellowstone bison galloping down a highway. The title: "Animals fleeing from Yellowstone Supervolcano?"

"These periods of time, when they speculate on something, occur all the time," Smith said. "Every three months we get inundated."

"There are a lot of people out there that truly believe the world's coming to an end," he said, "and they have an enormous following."

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Gardiner Schools seeks funding from Park County

Posted: Wednesday, April 2, 2014 2:27 pm

[Gardiner Schools seeks funding from Park County](#)

By STEVE BROWNE Cody Enterprise

Yellowstone residents whose children go to school in Montana are asking Park County for help in funding their children's education.

A petition with 108 signatures of Mammoth Hot Springs area people recently was delivered to Park County.

The petition asks county officials for:

- The timely procurement of an official opinion from the Wyoming Attorney General about the obligation of the state to provide education for children;
- The timely formation of a school district boundary commission and school district for that part of Yellowstone Park within Park County;
- And that the Park County commissioners, assessor, treasurer and attorney work to procure funding for the children living within the proposed school district.

Thirty-seven children of Mammoth Hot Springs residents have been attending school in the Gardiner School District, just outside Yellowstone and across the state line in Montana.

“Basically Yellowstone Park has been sending kids to Gardiner, Mont., and paying for it,” county commissioner Lee Livingston said. “There’s been some question as to whether Wyoming should be paying for it. Our attorneys are looking into what we should be doing about it.”

Commission chair Bucky Hall says, “Gardiner folks have been all over the place on this issue.

“Sometimes they are pleasant and sometimes they are quite demanding that we form a new school district within Park County for Mammoth students.”

He said the county attorney’s office is consulting with the office of the Attorney General, which also is working toward gaining a full understanding of the complex, multi-jurisdictional financial issue.

Hall said the group of Mammoth residents are convinced by their research of Wyoming state law “that we are obligated to start a school district for them.”

They insist on this course of action for the students from Mammoth who attend school in Gardiner because of the sales tax and PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) revenue Park County receives annually from that northern portion of Yellowstone Park that’s within the county.

Gardiner Public Schools is in one K-12 building, the west end of which is inside Yellowstone Park, and serves about 250 students. Three of the six members of the school board are Park Service employees and a fourth member serves as a representative of Mammoth. Gardiner, with a population of about 900, is an unincorporated community in Park County, Mont.

For many years Gardiner received federal funds from the Forest Service to cover the cost of educating the children of YNP employees who live on untaxed federal land.

But that aid was supposed to end in 1976 when the applicable federal law changed. Somehow that notice fell through the cracks and for many years thereafter the money continued to flow to Gardiner.

A few months ago the Gardiner School District was informed that not only was the money being cut off but the federal government also was asking for about \$7 million in repayment.

The Gardiner School District has reached an agreement with the Wyoming Department of Education that will allow the governor of Wyoming to provide the district with \$500,000 in emergency federal funds to cover the education of Mammoth students this year.

That still leaves the future schooling of the Mammoth students up in the air about whether they will continue to attend Gardiner schools and how those schools will be funded.

“The county has not taken an official position and is working with the state to determine the proper legal resolution,” county attorney Bryan Skoric said.

Bears waking up to a new year

Posted: Thursday, April 3, 2014 4:30 am

[Bears waking up to a new year](#)

By Mike Koshmrl Jackson Hole Daily |

The time of year when people can go about their business without having to think about bears — whether hanging a bird feeder or exploring the backcountry — is over.

It's likely that the many grizzlies and black bears remain holed up in the dens they've hibernated in, but both species have now been confirmed to be out and about in Jackson Hole.

"There's not much going on," Grand Teton National Park biologist Steve Cain said. "We've had reports of three different sets of tracks. One of them could be confirmed as grizzly tracks."

Outside Grand Teton there has been at least one other confirmed bear sighting in the valley.

"I've just had one verified ID, and that was a grizzly bear up in Buffalo Valley," said Mike Boyce, a Wyoming Game and Fish Department large carnivore biologist.

The bruin's tracks were large enough to suggest that it was an adult male, Boyce said.

"It's typically mid-to late April before we start to see a lot" of bears, Boyce said. "We see grizzly bears emerge first, and then we start to see more and more black bears in May. It's usually the adult males that come out first, and then sows, and then sows with cubs."

Yellowstone National Park bears have already been spotted at Old Faithful, in the Hayden Valley and along the Northern Range, park spokesman Dan Hottle said.

"We've seen a few black bears, but mostly grizzlies, and they've been out for a couple weeks," Hottle said.

Yellowstone employees generally see bears emerge a bit earlier than those in Jackson Hole. About half of all adult male grizzly bears in Grand Teton park are out of their dens by March 15.

Once woken from their slumber, slimmed-down bruins look to fill their stomachs by targeting a variety of foods, Cain said.

"They will be looking for winter-killed ungulates," he said. "They will actually predate on animals, and they will kill weakened ungulates."

Some bears will return to places they've successfully dined in past years, Cain said, including the bases of avalanche chutes. Sometimes the carcasses of bighorn sheep or other ungulates can be found there, casualties of wintertime snow slides, he said.

While conflicts between bears and humans are perhaps less likely in spring, they're not impossible, and it's recommended that people carry a bear-deterrent pepper spray.

"I'm a backcountry skier, and I start carrying it around the first week of March," Cain said. "We have the notoriety of having the only Nordic skier ever attacked by a bear in North America."

In March 2001, a Grand Teton employee was bitten on the back of his legs by a grizzly while skiing to a patrol cabin near Upper Berry Creek.

It's also the time of year that Jackson Hole residents should start to think about bear-proofing their homes, Boyce said.

"I'd like to remind the public to store all the attractants that are available to bears," he said.

In portions of Teton County, regulations require bear-proof garbage bins and set limits on bird feeders. The bear priority zones include Buffalo Valley, Kelly, Alta, the north face of Snow King, the Snake River corridor and the east face of the Teton Range between Teton Village and Wilson.

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 828 AM MDT THU APR 3 2014

Today Partly cloudy. Isolated snow showers in the late morning and early afternoon. Isolated rain showers and snow showers late in the afternoon. Highs 31 to 37. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.

Tonight Mostly cloudy in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows 14 to 20. South winds around 15 mph early in the morning.

Friday Partly cloudy. Scattered snow showers and isolated rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 32 to 38. Southwest winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Friday Night Cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening...then numerous snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 17 to 23. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Saturday Numerous snow showers in the morning...then scattered snow showers and rain showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Total snow accumulation 1 to 3 inches. Highs 32 to 38. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Saturday Night Cloudy with scattered snow showers. Lows 14 to 20. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

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

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 4, 2014



With an intense gaze & a stealthy stride, this coyote is on the hunt...but for what?
(photo by David Restivo)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89

This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor. For this reason, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is urging caution when traveling the southern portion of Highway 89. Drivers should pay particular attention south of Yankee Jim Canyon and reduce speed during nighttime hours.

In addition to bison, elk and deer are abundant within the Highway 89 corridor and frequently cross the highway. It's important that drivers take this risk seriously, slow down, and obey posted signs.

Wellness Incentive Program:

Did you know that Jane Olson averages 18,953 steps a day working at Supply Center? Do you track your daily steps using a pedometer or phone application? How many steps a day do you take? While studies have shown that walking does not impact muscle strength, agility or balance; walking 10,000 steps a day does lead to improved cardiovascular health, weight loss, lower body fat and overall endurance. Tracking cardiovascular activity is one of the components of the Wellness Incentive Program. Remember to send your completed WIP Forms for the month of March to Stacey Gunther by April 5th to be entered in award drawing. To be eligible, you need to have earned 500 points during March.

Don't forget about the fish fry **TONIGHT** at **St. Williams Church** from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Fish, baked potato, coleslaw, roll, dessert and drink: 1 piece - \$8.00, 2 piece - \$9.00, 3 piece - \$10.00



Join us for an Evening of Folk Music with Link Wilmoth and Kurt Prond (as seen performing at Pine Creek Café). **Sunday, April 13** (note date change) in the Gardiner H.S. Multi-Purpose Rm. Southern BBQ begins at 5:00, Silent Auction with GREAT gifts at 6:00
Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission trip to Tacoma, WA

Next MCC Potluck - Taco bar (bring your favorite taco fixings!) April 8th @ 6pm.
Email mammothboardyellowstone@gmail.com with questions and to make reservations for events at the MCC.

The next United Blood Services Blood Drive will take place on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 from 1:00 - 4:45pm in the Mammoth Community Center -- Classroom #2.

Give me a call to set up an appointment or go on line at www.bloodhero.com (sponsor code: mammoth). Snack donations are always accepted.

Give the gift of life.....Donate to a great cause!

A Gathering of Naturalists presents The Life & Times of One Tree

Friday, April 18, 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future.

Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

Upcoming CPR classes! Heartsaver CPR/First Aid is the class for community members and the lay person.

Date/Time: Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Location: MCC EMS Classroom

Please pick up a Student Workbook for these classes in Supply Center (make sure it is the one for your class, either Healthcare Provider or Heartsaver). Questions, please call Juanita Bueter at (406) 224-2629. To sign up for classes go to: P drive:/safety office/ First Aid and CPR Training

Be Big! Be the difference in a child's life. Call Big Brothers Big Sisters at 406-222-1930. Volunteers needed! Help a child do better in school, stay out of trouble, and have a better life by spending as little as an hour each week being a positive role model and friend.

Casting for Recovery®

A Support & Educational Program for Breast Cancer Survivors and a weekend retreat offered at no cost to the participants. For women of all ages and all stages of breast cancer treatment and recovery who live in Wyoming. The weekend provides medical information and counseling and promotes physical and emotional healing while learning to fly-fish. Connect with other women, enjoy the outdoors, and learn a new sport. July 25-27, 2014 at Absaroka Ranch, Dubois, WY. Apply on-line at www.castingforrecovery.org. CFR must receive your form by May 16. Participants are selected at random. We will notify all applicants of their status after the application deadline.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Thursday, April 3, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: Area plows running at Upper Falls and Old Faithful.

Present Location:

Bridge Bay

Anticipated Destination:

Sand Point

Snow Conditions:

Trace of new snow added to present snowpack. 4 ½' of snow, no ice.

Weather:

Clear, 11 degrees

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Bridge Bay to Grant Village closes to Administrative over snow travel Thursday, April 3 at 7:00 AM. Admin travel allowed after 4:30 on Thursday 4/3.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS**Sen. Mike Enzi wants closer look at National Park spending**13 hours ago • By KYLE ROERINK Casper Star-Tribune

CASPER, Wyo. — Wyoming Sen. Mike Enzi and two of his Republican colleagues want to put the National Park Service's budget under a microscope.

Enzi and Sens. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, sent a letter to the Government Accountability Office to request a review of the park service's spending in hopes of finding ways to pay for the park service's maintenance backlog, an estimated \$11.5 billion worth of necessary repairs and maintenance upgrades.

The overload of repairs is one of the many budgetary complications facing park officials and politicians. While both sides of the discussion tout the parks as one of "America's best ideas," they remain uncertain on how the parks will be able to address a maintenance gap that's leaving roadways, sewers, paths and utilities in the 401 national park areas in disrepair.

For Enzi, a GAO study could give park managers, administration officials, local interests and congressional leaders a better idea on how to spend money efficiently, said Dan Head, Enzi's spokesman.

"The federal government is notorious for not spending money as efficiently as it could, but there aren't many agencies or branches that you can name that say they have enough money or don't need as much," Head said. "Virtually all agencies and divisions of the federal government including the Park Service want more money. They may have legitimate needs, but the fact is this country is in deep debt."

Enzi and his colleagues hope an overview of the park service's spending will shine light on a solution.

"In the current fiscally constrained environment, effective allocation of resources is especially important and it is our understanding that a formal review of the National Park Service has never been conducted," the letter reads. "... Such a review will allow lawmakers to make informed, fiscally responsible decisions in support of our National Park System, while addressing the systematic issues that have resulted in the current maintenance backlog."

The recession and other fiscal woes prodded Congress to slash the park service's budget in the last decade, contributing to the backlog. And for an agency that draws nearly \$30 billion in consumer spending every year, advocates are hoping Congress will pay special attention to the shortfall facing the park service.

Parks haven't seen an increase in their budgets since 2008 but avoided another 5 percent chop this year when the across-the-board cuts known as sequestration were temporarily paused with the budget Congress passed in December.

Still, the \$2.4 billion operating budget for the park service this year has the equivalent spending power of 2005 dollars, said Joan Anzelmo, spokeswoman for the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees.

"No one expects higher appropriations," she said. "But it would be great if the current appropriation isn't further eroded by sequestration and other reductions."

For advocates who fear that national parks and monuments are on the verge of crumbling, the proof that maintenance and upkeep is long overdue lies in the numbers.

The annual cost to maintain the status quo of the maintenance backlog is \$700 million, Anzelmo said.

In 2012, the park service could spend only \$444 million to hack at the list.

Park service construction counts have declined by two-thirds in the last decade and halved in the last four years, said John Garder, director of budget and appropriations for the National Parks Conservation Association.

“The real issue here is the need for Congress to make a more meaningful investment in addressing the backlog,” he said. “The funds simply haven’t been there to ensure the maintenance that’s needed.”

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/sen-mike-enzi-wants-closer-look-at-national-park-spending/article_0a370347-3472-53fe-b5f1-7d2c21d1cbc6.html#ixzz2xvmM1Op4

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 651 AM MDT FRI APR 4 2014

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Tonight Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers in the evening... Then chance of snow after midnight. Scattered snow showers early in the morning. Lows 17 to 23. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the evening. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Saturday Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow showers. Highs 33 to 39.

Saturday Night Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers. Lows 15 to 21. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Sunday Snow showers likely. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Highs 32 to 38. West winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Sunday Night Mostly cloudy with scattered snow showers. Lows 16 to 22. Chance of snow 30 percent.

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 7, 2014

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim!

This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor. For this reason, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is urging caution when traveling the southern portion of Highway 89. Drivers should pay particular attention south of Yankee Jim Canyon and reduce speed during nighttime hours.

In addition to bison, elk and deer are abundant within the Highway 89 corridor and frequently cross the highway. It's important that drivers take this risk seriously, slow down, and obey posted signs.

All are welcome to a **Crisis Management Briefing** after the loss of Debi Roberts. We will provide information about the symptoms of distress and local resources available for continued support on **Wednesday April 9th at 10:00 am** in the Fire Cache Conference Room. Please pass this information on. For further questions, contact Mike Schell at 344-2571 or Amy Bartlett at 344-2013.

Next MCC Potluck - Taco bar (bring your favorite taco fixings!) **TOMORROW** @ 6pm.
Email mammothboardyellowstone@gmail.com with questions and to make reservations for events at the MCC.

Wellness Incentive Program:

Did you know that Jane Olson averages 18,953 steps a day working at Supply Center? Do you track your daily steps using a pedometer or phone application? How many steps a day do you take?

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The Great Multitasking Lie



DEBUNKING THE MYTHS OF CELL PHONE DISTRACTED DRIVING

Most people may know that texting while driving is a dangerous behavior, but many don't fully grasp the idea that having cell phone conversations in the car is also risky. Below, the National Safety Council helps dispel the illusion of multitasking and the myths that blind the public into believing it is safe to use your cell phone while driving.



Consider This



It's no mystery: Americans today have an unhealthy obsession with their cell phones.



A 2012 survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that **more than two in three** drivers report talking on their cell phone while driving at least once in the past 30 days.



Nearly **one in three** say they did this "fairly often" or "regularly."



Drivers talking on handheld or hands-free cell phones are **4X** as likely to be involved in a car crash.



In addition, the National Safety Council currently estimates that people talking on cell phones while driving are involved in **21%*** of all traffic crashes in the United States.

The average cost of a property damage crash in 2011:

\$9,100

*According to a 2010 annual estimate.

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration | University Of Utah | The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety | National Safety Council



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Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission

trip to Tacoma, WA



I Need A New Home!

I recently lost my owner suddenly and unexpectedly. I now need a new home.

I am about 6 years old, spayed, and an indoor-outdoor cat. I can be very independent at times, but like and need some human attention. I am a good mouser and am used to being outside during the day. I am also used to being around small and medium-sized dogs. I get along

with some cats, others not so well (I am a cat after all...).

If you have an interest in me or questions, please call Jennifer at 406-599-1930.

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IN THE NEWS**Is Yellowstone ready to rumble?**

Posted: Friday, April 4, 2014 12:36 pm | *Updated: 1:13 pm, Fri Apr 4, 2014.*

[Is Yellowstone ready to rumble?](#) By MIKE MOORE West Yellowstone News

The largest earthquake to hit Yellowstone National Park in 34 years struck in the early morning hours of Sunday, March 30, near Norris Geyser Basin.

The quake occurred 23 miles northeast of West Yellowstone at around 6:34 a.m., with approximately 90 smaller aftershocks following through Tuesday morning. Aftershocks ranged from smaller rumbles up to a handful of magnitude 3 quakes.

Earthquakes are a common force in Yellowstone, as the park experiences thousands of earthquakes each year. More than 1,900 earthquakes were located in the park in 2013 alone, with additional smaller quakes not being recorded. Most are too small to feel, and experts say the 4.8 rumble will not precede an eruption of the Yellowstone Supervolcano.

“There were no injuries; there was no damage; some people who lived a few miles away didn’t even feel the earthquake,” Yellowstone National Park spokesman Al Nash said. “It’s just part of the geologic situation we find here in Yellowstone.”

Some residents in gateway communities West Yellowstone and Gardiner reported feeling the earthquake, which was said to feel like a tractor-trailer driving by. Items were also reported to have fallen off the shelves at a local grocery store.

The Yellowstone Volcano Observatory monitors the Yellowstone Caldera, and in September of last year detected a ground deformation near the epicenter of last weekend’s earthquake.

YVO began monitoring the area and recorded approximately 1.4 inches of uplift and .4 inches of southeastward ground movement. The ground deformation is likely the cause of the recent rumbles recorded in the area, but these deformations are common in Yellowstone.

“They appear episodically, and we can’t predict where deformations will occur,” USGS geophysicist Peter Cervelli said.

A similar deformation was recorded in the park from 1996 through 2003, near the Norris Geyser Basin. During that time, the ground rose nearly 12 centimeters before subsiding in 2004.

These ground deformations are common in dormant volcanoes around the world and pose no direct volcanic hazards, nor do they imply that an eruption is pending, according to a Feb. 18 YVO information statement.

“A 4.8 earthquake is interesting, and will help us scientists, but it means nothing in regard to volcanic activity,” Cervelli said. “We’re not worried about an eruption. The system is not poised to erupt; we would see huge changes leading to an eruption.”

Members of a United States Geological Survey field team were in Gardiner when the quake occurred, and were sent to Norris Geyser Basin to look for possible surface changes and changes to hydrothermal systems caused by the rumble. The team didn’t get too far, Cervelli said.

Heavy snow prevented the scientists from performing any in-depth surveying, but Cervelli says any major changes to the area are highly unlikely. The quake was too small and too deep underground – 6 kilometers – to do much surface damage.

Shortly following the earthquake, rumors of an impending eruption were quickly silenced by park spokesman Nash, who put out a YouTube video entitled [“Rumor Control”](#) to explain the earthquake and animal migration outside of the park.

“We do have bison, elk and other animals that have moved outside the park recently, but they’re doing that because it’s the depth of winter and food is hard to find in places in Yellowstone,” Nash said. “They tend to migrate at this time of the winter outside the park to lower elevations where they think there might be something to eat that is easier to get at.”

Nash says earthquakes are common, and that the 4.8 earthquake was just another rumble in the park.

“We have a lot of geologic activity here in Yellowstone,” he said. “We are only a few miles above some really hot magma. That magma serves as the heat that fuels the geysers, hot springs and fumerals in the park. We have seen no signs to suggest that Yellowstone National Park volcano is about to erupt.”

Some of Yellowstone’s underground geothermal piping system was altered in 1959 following a 7.5 magnitude earthquake centered north of West Yellowstone near Duck Creek. The massive quake formed Earthquake Lake after a mountainside gave way west of Hebgen Lake, damming the Madison River from flowing north to Ennis. The slide resulted in 28 deaths and deposited more than 40 million cubic yards of rock, trees and debris.

The historic earthquake briefly affected some of the park’s thermal features. The rumble caused a noticeable increase in activity in hot springs and geysers, while some new geothermal features were formed, according to “The Effects of the 1959 Hebgen Lake Earthquake,” by GeoCorps intern Dianah GrubbWheeler.

Even today, some thermal features in the park haven’t returned to their normal eruption patterns observed prior to 1959.

Earthquake aftermath: Yellowstone bison video goes viral

Published: Fri, 04/04/2014 - 4:07pm | Section:

By Liz Kearney – Livingston Enterprise

Nearly every other news outlet in the world is reporting on it, so we have to, too.

In case you missed it, the rumor du jour circulating all over the Internet yesterday went something like this: “Yellowstone National Park bison are ‘fleeing for their lives’ because they ‘sense’ the supervolcano is about to blow.”

A newly viral Youtube video, shot by Mammoth Hot Springs resident Leo Leckie, of a small herd of bison running down a Yellowstone road, combined with the news of a 4.8-magnitude earthquake in the park earlier this week, seems to be what started it all, theorized Yellowstone Public Affairs Officer Al Nash.

In Leckie’s video, the bison are clearly just a few miles east of Mammoth Hot Springs, headed east on the road toward Tower Junction.

Leckie, in addition to being contacted by legitimate news outlets seeking to dispel the rumor, said his 15 minutes of fame has been interesting.

He was simply posting a video of bison in Yellowstone, and the attention has been “surreal,” Leckie said Friday morning.

A lot of the comments on social media say his video is a CGI fake, citing the “fact” that the shadows don’t match, he said.

Leckie thinks the rumor started on March 20, when a website posted his video. And now, he has seen his video used by companies selling “survivalist gear.”

On Thursday afternoon, all three of Yellowstone’s public affairs staff were talking to people from all over the world, both by phone and social media. On Friday morning, staffer Dan Hottle said the Comm Center had reported 170 calls.

Most of the calls were from news outlets working on stories to dispel the rumors, Nash said.

And some calls were from members of the public, concerned that maybe the rumors they heard about the supervolcano were true.

To help quell the rumors, Nash and his staff posted their own Youtube video, “A Minute Out In It: Rumor Control.” In the video, Nash is shown doing a “stand up” in front of the hot springs terraces at Mammoth. In the video, he slowly and patiently explains that there are no signs that the volcano is going to blow. And yes, the bison are shown running, but bison run for lots of reasons, and sometimes for no apparent reason at all. And the bison, along with other park wildlife, do leave the park, usually in search of food at lower elevations in the spring. When the snow melts and the grass greens up in Yellowstone, bison and elk and other animals head back into the park for the summer, he explained.

As of Friday morning, the video had been seen by nearly 123,000 people.

Nash said he can understand how people who are not familiar with Yellowstone could have become concerned, especially after last week’s earthquake, the largest to occur in the park since 1980.

“If you don’t know Yellowstone gets 1,000 to 3,000 small earthquakes every year, hearing about a 4.8-magnitude earthquake sounds surprising,” Nash said.

Barbara Shesky, the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce's executive director, said her office had received a few phone calls, too. She spoke with a reporter from Los Angeles.

"He didn't buy into (the rumor), but wanted some information to counteract it," she said, from her office on Gardiner's Park Street.

Nash said in his eight years with Yellowstone, a rumor that takes a couple of days to run its course comes up every couple of months.

Shesky said she does a lot of rumor control as well.

But on Thursday afternoon, she was reassuring anyone who called that all is well in Yellowstone.

"I feel confident in my office overlooking the caldera," she laughed.

Read more: <http://www.livingstonenterprise.com/content/earthquake-aftermath-yellowstone-bison-video-goes-viral>

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 646 AM MDT MON APR 7 2014

Today Mostly cloudy. Isolated snow showers in the morning. Highs 38 to 44. West winds around 15 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Tonight Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 20 to 26. Southwest winds around 15 mph early in the evening.

Tuesday Not as cool. Sunny. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Tuesday Night Clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Wednesday Breezy. Mostly sunny in the morning...then partly cloudy with chance of rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Wednesday Night Mostly cloudy with chance of rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then partly cloudy with slight chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 23 to 29. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

Yellowstone Safety Recognition Program (SRP)

Do you see something we could do to improve safety in Yellowstone OR do you see a co-worker who has done something positive about safety? Use the [Safety Recognition Program](#) to report a hazard occurring in the park or nominate a Safety Champion. Full program details can be found using the link above. We want to hear from YOU!

WE WANT YOUR SUBMISSIONS!

Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

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

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, April 8, 2014



She scored a prime parking spot for the Comm Center!
(photo by Lori Wilkinson)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim!

This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor. For this reason, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is urging caution when traveling the southern portion of Highway 89. Drivers should pay particular attention south of Yankee Jim Canyon and reduce speed during nighttime hours.

In addition to bison, elk and deer are abundant within the Highway 89 corridor and frequently cross the highway. It's important that drivers take this risk seriously, slow down, and obey posted signs.

All are welcome to a **Crisis Management Briefing** after the loss of Debi Roberts. We will provide information about the symptoms of distress and local resources available for continued support **TOMORROW at 10:00 am** in the Fire Cache Conference Room. Please pass this information on. For further questions, contact Mike Schell at 344-2571 or Amy Bartlett at 344-2013.

Next MCC Potluck - Taco bar (bring your favorite taco fixings!) **TONIGHT** @ 6pm.
 Email mammothboardyellowstone@gmail.com with questions and to make reservations for events at the MCC.

The next United Blood Services Blood Drive will take place on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 from 1:00 - 4:45pm in the Mammoth Community Center -- Classroom #2. Give me a call to set up an appointment or go on line at www.bloodhero.com (sponsor code: mammoth). Snack donations are always accepted.
 Give the gift of life.....Donate to a great cause!



trip to Tacoma, WA

Join us for an Evening of Folk Music with Link Wilmoth and Kurt Prond (as seen performing at Pine Creek Café). **Sunday, April 13** (note date change) in the Gardiner H.S. Multi-Purpose Rm. Southern BBQ begins at 5:00, Silent Auction with GREAT gifts at 6:00
 Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission



I Need A New Home!

I recently lost my owner suddenly and unexpectedly. I now need a new home.

I am about 6 years old, spayed, and an indoor-outdoor cat. I can be very independent at times, but like and need some human attention. I am a good mouser and am used to being outside during the day. I am also used to being around small and medium-sized dogs. I get along

with some cats, others not so well (I am a cat after all...).

If you have an interest in me or questions, please call Jennifer at 406-599-1930.

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Friday, April 18, 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future. Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

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The Great Multitasking Lie



DEBUNKING THE MYTHS OF CELL PHONE DISTRACTED DRIVING

Most people may know that texting while driving is a dangerous behavior, but many don't fully grasp the idea that having cell phone conversations in the car is also risky. Below, the National Safety Council helps dispel the illusion of multitasking and the myths that blind the public into believing it is safe to use your cell phone while driving.



Consider This



It's no mystery: Americans today have an unhealthy obsession with their cell phones.



A 2012 survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that **more than two in three** drivers report talking on their cell phone while driving at least once in the past 30 days.



Nearly **one in three** say they did this "fairly often" or "regularly."



Drivers talking on handheld or hands-free cell phones are **4X** as likely to be involved in a car crash.



In addition, the National Safety Council currently estimates that people talking on cell phones while driving are involved in **21%*** of all traffic crashes in the United States.

The average cost of a property damage crash in 2011:

\$9,100

*According to a 2010 annual estimate.

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration | University Of Utah | The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety | National Safety Council

Casting for Recovery®

A Support & Educational Program for Breast Cancer Survivors and a weekend retreat offered at no cost to the participants. For women of all ages and all stages of breast cancer treatment and recovery who live in Wyoming. The weekend provides medical information and counseling and promotes physical and emotional healing while learning to fly-fish. Connect with other women, enjoy the outdoors, and learn a new sport. July 25-27, 2014 at Absaroka Ranch, Dubois, WY. Apply on-line at www.castingforrecovery.org. CFR must receive your form by May 16. Participants are selected at random. We will notify all applicants of their status after the application deadline.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Tuesday, April 8, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: Pulling toward Grant Village from Lake, Area Plows at Old Faithful and Lake.

Present Location:

Hard Road to Travel

Anticipated Destination:

West Thumb Area

Snow Conditions:

5 Feet hard pack snow, no ice on pavement

Weather:

Overcast, 22 degrees, light wind

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Bridge Bay to Grant Village.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS**Hazing to be regular event in Gardiner basin**

Posted: Monday, April 7, 2014 5:35 pm

[Hazing to be regular event in Gardiner basin](#)

LAURA LUNDQUIST, Bozeman Chronicle

Yellowstone bison have gotten too close to the historic haunts of Yankee Jim, so hazing has begun in the Gardiner Basin.

Over the past few days, riders from the Department of Livestock and Fish, Wildlife & Parks made a handful of slow trips down the Gardiner Valley, each time pushing 100 or more bison back into Yellowstone National Park. That will probably be the routine for the next few weeks until the bison are hazed back into the park for good on May 1.

“Our plan is to haze as needed to respond to any bison moving beyond the northern boundary,” said FWP Region 3 supervisor Pat Flowers. “We don't want them moving into the Paradise Valley.”

This is the second winter that Montana agencies have allowed bison to roam a larger area north of Gardiner and Yellowstone National Park, and more bison have taken advantage of it this year due to the deeper snows inside the park.

The expanded area — about 70,000 acres of mostly public land surrounding the Gardiner Basin extending 15 miles north to the mouth of Yankee Jim Canyon — is part of a 2011 adaptive adjustment to the Interagency Bison Management Plan to provide more territory for park bison at a time when brucellosis is not a threat.

A Montana district judge upheld the change in January 2013 after livestock producers and Park County sued the state. Last month, the Montana Supreme Court found Park County had no grounds to appeal.

This year, bison started migrating north to find food in late January, but most hesitated inside the park border until a few weeks ago, when the tribal hunt outside the park ended.

Since then, hundreds of bison have wandered as far north as Yankee Jim Canyon, which is where riders started pushing them back on Friday. Riders were also working on Saturday and Monday.

Flowers said bison have migrated into some of the drainages extending from the valley floor but not to the extent expected. But the agencies were prepared for the higher number of animals.

“We are still kind of learning where they want to go,” Flowers said. “We're learning how to manage them under this scenario, and it's going to take some flexibility. But there's good cooperation between all the agencies.”

Department of Livestock executive director Christian MacKay said a helicopter was used on Saturday mainly to find bison that had managed to wander outside the approved zone into the Tom Miner Basin.

The IBMP partners — DOL, FWP, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture — are working together to limit the bison outside the park to about 300, MacKay said.

“They haven't been hard hazes,” MacKay said. “We've gone slow — it doesn't take a lot of encouragement to get them to move.”

FWP warden Sam Sheppard said the riders are hazing targeted groups of bison that either pose property-damage or human-safety issues or are too near the tolerance border.

Flowers said wardens have been able to respond to the complaints FWP has received.

As the month goes on, riders will look outside the park for places to leave the bison where they might not pose a risk. Riders recently left about 100 bison in the Eagle Creek area, Sheppard said.

Around 100 bison remained outside the park after a couple of hundred were moved in Monday's haze.

“We're responding to a fluid situation,” Sheppard said. “It's not a concerted effort to bring them all down. The other day we were bringing some down, and around 100 just went along with us.”

With three weeks to go until all bison must return to the park, riders are down in the Gardiner area for the duration.

Sheppard said the Gardiner FWP warden was working every day, keeping an eye on the bison boundaries, staying in touch with landowners and working with the other IBMP partners.

Sheppard said a couple of landowners called Monday interested in the bison fencing offered by the Defenders of Wildlife.

In addition, the speed limit along U.S. Highway 89 through the valley was reduced this weekend to 55 mph while bison are in the area.

“We’re using every tool we have to be proactive,” Sheppard said.

No cost to Park County in Gardiner?

Posted: Monday, April 7, 2014 3:22 pm

[No cost to Park County in Gardiner?](#)

By STEVE BROWNE | Cody Enterprise

Funding the education of 37 students from the Mammoth Hot Springs community in Yellowstone Park probably won’t cost Park County anything in the long run.

But, according to the state Department of Education, the bad news is that reimbursement could take a while.

“The state sets a standard for how much money is required per student to insure a decent education and makes up any shortfall of local revenue” School Foundation Supervisor Jed Cicarelli said. “But it could take a full year for them to be reimbursed.”

Mammoth students have gone to school in Gardiner, Mont., for many years and the Gardiner School District was reimbursed by the Park Service for the cost of educating them.

That recently changed when Yellowstone Park officials began looking at the budget and found that funding was supposed to have ended in 1977.

The immediate result was the elimination of almost \$500,000 for the Gardiner School District in the 2013-14 school year.

In February a petition signed by 108 Mammoth residents was delivered to Park County officials asking for help resolving the issue. The petitioners ask that either Park County extend its school district boundary into the park, or help establish a new school district in the park.

“How it got confused was the park was making payments to the Gardiner School District under an agreement that only applied to Yellowstone Park,” said Al Nash, Yellowstone’s chief of public affairs, and a petition signer. “In the ’70s a bill was passed that applied to the whole nation, providing for payments from the federal government to local counties. We realized we could no longer authorize payments from entrance fees to school districts.”

Wyoming law requires the entire state be divided into school districts, but YNP had somehow been missed, although there had been a school district there prior to statehood.

According to Nash, research by the Mammoth group found the state has a mechanism for cross-border agreements, but can only provide funding through a school district. Lack of a school district has tied the hands of Wyoming state government in providing emergency funding to Gardiner for the school year.

According to Dan Rhodes, a non-voting representative from Mammoth on the Gardiner School Board, sending Mammoth students to Gardiner is the only realistic alternative, given the geography of the area.

“We cannot overstate the importance of a timely resolution,” Rhodes added. “We’ve already been dipping into reserves just to complete the school year, and it’s not only this year, it’s the uncertainty of funding for next year. There’s been a huge impact on the school district and the morale of the community.”

According to Park County Attorney Bryan Skoric the funding issue has not yet been discussed between Park County and the state.

“We’re still in the phase of determining if it’s Park County’s responsibility or the state’s or both,” he added.

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 557 AM MDT TUE APR 8 2014

Today Mostly sunny. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the late morning and afternoon.

Tonight Breezy...clear. Lows 26 to 32. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday Breezy. Mostly sunny in the morning...then mostly cloudy with chance of rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 46 to 52. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Wednesday Night Breezy. Mostly cloudy with chance of snow showers with possible showers and thunderstorms in the evening...then partly cloudy after midnight. Lows 23 to 29. West winds 15 to 20 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Thursday Mostly sunny. Highs 42 to 48. West winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

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

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 9, 2014

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MONTANA LINDSTROM is retiring and riding off into the sunset! Save the date for a party. Thursday, June 26th at the MCC. Details to come.

The next United Blood Services Blood Drive will take place on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 from 1:00 - 4:45pm in the Mammoth Community Center -- Classroom #2. Give me a call to set up an appointment or go on line at www.bloodhero.com (sponsor code: mammoth). Snack donations are always accepted. Give the gift of life.....Donate to a great cause!



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Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission trip to Tacoma, WA

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back** will be held **Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...



I Need A New Home!

I recently lost my owner suddenly and unexpectedly. I now need a new home.

I am about 6 years old, spayed, and an indoor-outdoor cat. I can be very independent at times, but like and need some human attention. I am a good mouser and am used to being outside during the day. I am also used to being around small and medium-sized dogs. I get along

with some cats, others not so well (I am a cat after all...).

If you have an interest in me or questions, please call Jennifer at 406-599-1930.

Gardiner FFA will be hosting a **Donkey Basketball extravaganza on Tuesday, April 15th @ 7 PM**. Everyone attending the game will need to purchase a ticket, including players. Advance tickets are: Adult \$8, Student (7-12) \$6, Children (K- 6) \$4. Tickets for the game can be purchased from FFA members. Please contact Lori Hoppe at lhope@gardiner.org or (406) 570-4368 or Austin Dreyer at adreyer@gardiner.org if you have any questions. A community dinner will also be served in the multi-purpose room from 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM with proceeds going towards Gardiner School Activities, cost is \$7. Please contact Ben Johnson if you have any questions regarding the dinner at bjohnson@gardiner.org.

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Sponsored by Trout Unlimited: **Annual Yellowstone River Clean-up is this Saturday 8AM**. Meet at the Civic Center in Sacajawea Park, Livingston.

Things to bring: your boat, waders, gloves for handling heavy metal and garbage, suntan lotion, hat, sunglasses, and warm weather gear (just in case).

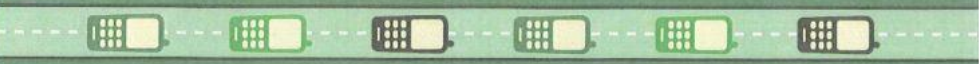
Things not to bring: Fishing equipment, (no need to break it) and trash bags, (no need – heavy duty bags will be supplied).

Walkers are also welcome. If you can't find someone with empty spots in their boat, we will be sending people to Fishing Access sites.

Kids are always welcome and encouraged to join in the fun. There will be a BBQ (supplied by our friends at Altria) to follow. There will also be a power washer located on the side of the Civic Center as well as a crew to wash your boat out after dumping whatever trash you've found in the bins. Thanks for your support, with your help the Yellowstone River is a more beautiful place!

For more info: Jeff Ladewig: 406-224-7837 jeffrey.p.ladewig@gmail.com or Amy Schilling: 406-223-2244 aschilling@hotmail.com

The Great Multitasking Lie



DEBUNKING THE MYTHS OF CELL PHONE DISTRACTED DRIVING

Most people may know that texting while driving is a dangerous behavior, but many don't fully grasp the idea that having cell phone conversations in the car is also risky. Below, the National Safety Council helps dispel the illusion of multitasking and the myths that blind the public into believing it is safe to use your cell phone while driving.

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It's no mystery: Americans today have an unhealthy obsession with their cell phones.



A 2012 survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that **more than two in three** drivers report talking on their cell phone while driving at least once in the past 30 days.



Nearly **one in three** say they did this "fairly often" or "regularly."



Drivers talking on handheld or hands-free cell phones are **4X** as likely to be involved in a car crash.



21%

The average cost of a property damage crash in 2011: **\$9,100**

In addition, the National Safety Council currently estimates that people talking on cell phones while driving are involved in **21%*** of all traffic crashes in the United States.

*According to a 2010 annual estimate.

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SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Wednesday, April 9, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: Pulling toward Grant Village from West Thumb, Widening from Hard Road to Travel to West Thumb, Area Plows at Old Faithful and Lake.

Present Location:

West Thumb

Anticipated Destination:

Grant Village

Snow Conditions:

5 Feet hard pack snow, no ice on pavement

Weather:

Overcast, 30 degrees, light wind

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Bridge Bay to Grant Village.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS

Judge: Bison are wildlife, not livestock

Posted: Tuesday, April 8, 2014 6:00 pm

[Judge: Bison are wildlife, not livestock](#)

Laura Lundquist, Bozeman Chronicle

A judge has ruled that wild bison do not become livestock just because they have been held in quarantine.

In a follow-up to last summer's Montana Supreme Court ruling allowing disease-free bison from Yellowstone National Park to be transported to reservations, Blaine County District Judge John C. McKeon ruled that the bison remained wild even though they'd spent years in quarantine to ensure they didn't carry brucellosis.

Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, not the Department of Wildlife, retains authority over the animals. Starting in 2011, the Citizens for Balanced Use had challenged the authority of FWP to transport bison to the Fort Peck and, later, the Fort Belknap reservations under a Montana law that required the approval of surrounding landowners before wild bison could be brought onto public or private land.

Last June, Chief Justice Mike McGrath ruled that tribes were sovereign entities, so reservations didn't count as public or private land and landowner approval was not required.

In the ruling, he also commented that the bison had been in quarantine for several years and therefore were arguably not "wild buffalo or bison."

The attorney for Citizens for Balanced Use seized upon that comment, claiming that the Department of Livestock should have authority over quarantined bison because they are no longer wild. The Department of Livestock would probably limit or stop any shipments of Yellowstone bison.

That would have created a significant change, especially now that FWP has recently announced that it would be accepting applications from those interested in taking the remaining bison that were part of the first quarantine feasibility study. Those bison are currently on the Green Ranch belonging to Ted Turner.

A recent scientific paper dubbed the quarantine process a successful method for producing brucellosis-free Yellowstone bison, creating the potential to export more park bison in the future.

A number of tribes and organizations want to own Yellowstone bison because of their fairly direct relationship to the plains bison of the American West. The park's founding population hadn't experienced much hybridization with cattle.

Earthjustice attorney Tim Preso, who represented Defenders of Wildlife and the National Wildlife Federation in opposing the Citizens for Balanced Use argument, didn't know if CBU would appeal the ruling. But challenging the chief justice over his own comment could be difficult.

"This ruling rightly discredits what amounted to a stealth attack on future efforts to restore wild bison in Montana," Preso said. "Wild bison are classified as wildlife under Montana law. Now it is time to restore wild bison as wildlife on the Montana landscape."

More bison transplants worry the Citizens for Balanced Use.

CBU spokesman Chuck Denowh was surprised at McKoen's ruling but didn't know if CBU would appeal. "They should be livestock – it's the letter of the law," Denowh said. "There are groups out there that want to restore bison to public land. We don't want to see landowners be forced to play host to bison that they don't want. Some are restoring bison on private property and that's working. Why reinvent the wheel?"

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 807 AM MDT WED APR 9 2014

Today Breezy. Partly cloudy early in the morning...then mostly cloudy with isolated thunderstorms early in the afternoon. Mostly cloudy with scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms early in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the afternoon. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20

mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Tonight Breezy. Mostly cloudy in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening. Scattered snow showers late in the evening. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail in the evening. Lows 23 to 29. West winds 15 to 20 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Thursday Partly cloudy. Highs 42 to 48. West winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Thursday Night Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 23 to 29. West winds around 15 mph in the evening.

Friday Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph.

Friday Night Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow after midnight. Lows 24 to 30.

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YNP@Work

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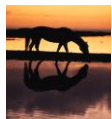
Thursday, April 10, 2014



I see yoooooooo!
(photo by David Restivo)

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MONTANA LINDSTROM is retiring and riding off into the sunset! Save the date for a party. Thursday, June 26th at the MCC. Details to come.

The next United Blood Services Blood Drive will take place on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 from 1:00 - 4:45pm in the Mammoth Community Center -- Classroom #2. Give me a call to set up an appointment or go on line at www.bloodhero.com (sponsor code: mammoth). Snack donations are always accepted. Give the gift of life.....Donate to a great cause!



Join us for an Evening of Folk Music with Link Wilmoth and Kurt Prond (as seen performing at Pine Creek Café). **Sunday, April 13** (note date change) in the Gardiner H.S. Multi-Purpose Rm. Southern BBQ begins at 5:00, Silent Auction with GREAT gifts at 6:00

Concert at 7:00. All donations go towards the Gardiner Youth Group's Inner-city Mission trip to Tacoma, WA

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back** will be held **Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

Employee Safety Committee-Wellness

Thanks to all who participated in the Wellness Incentive Program during the month of March! Names have been drawn from among the employees who participated. The following employees will receive an award for their participation:



John Cataldo-RVP
Kristie Wiederholt-Maint
Kathy Cunningham-Admin
Clare Cloghessy-REYP
Beth Coombs-RVP

Full Wellness Incentive Program details can be found here:<http://inpyellshare/emsc> then click on the YNP WIP link in the top left corner of the page. All employees are encouraged to participate. If you would

like to schedule a program overview with your staff, contact Stacey Gunther (x2239). Certification forms for the month of April are due to Stacey Gunther by May 5th.

Here's to your health!

There are seats available for **the April 22-23 FERS Retirement Planning in Billings**. Registration closes April 17th at 12:00 pm. The classes are scheduled for Billings at the Hampton Inn on Soutgate Drive:

Mid-Career Retirement Planning for FERS Employees	April 22-23, 2014	Billings, MT	\$400.00
Retirement Planning for CSRS & FERS Employees	September 9-10, 2014	Billings, MT	\$400.00

If you need additional assistance you may contact:

Mary Jo Catalano, PMP Manager, Washington Learning Center DOI University, 202-208-3757 Direct Phone Number or Mary_Catalano@ios.doi.gov



I Need A New Home!

I recently lost my owner suddenly and unexpectedly. I now need a new home.

I am about 6 years old, spayed, and an indoor-outdoor cat. I can be very independent at times, but like and need some human attention. I am a good mouser and am used to being outside during the day. I am also used to being around small and medium-sized dogs. I get along

with some cats, others not so well (I am a cat after all...).

If you have an interest in me or questions, please call Jennifer at 406-599-1930.

Gardiner FFA will be hosting a **Donkey Basketball extravaganza on Tuesday, April 15th @ 7 PM**. Everyone attending the game will need to purchase a ticket, including players. Advance tickets are: Adult \$8, Student (7-12) \$6, Children (K- 6) \$4. Tickets for the game can be purchased from FFA members. Please contact Lori Hoppe at lhope@gardiner.org or (406) 570-4368 or Austin Dreyer at adreyer@gardiner.org if you have any questions. A community dinner will also be served in the multi-purpose room from 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM with proceeds going towards Gardiner School Activities, cost is \$7. Please contact Ben Johnson if you have any questions regarding the dinner at bjohnson@gardiner.org.

To update the latest safety message on the Intranet home page, please click on the refresh button.

**SAVE A LIFE
HANG UP & DRIVE!**



**DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH
Brought to you by your Employee Safety Committee**

Sponsored by Trout Unlimited: **Annual Yellowstone River Clean-up is this Saturday 8AM**. Meet at the Civic Center in Sacajawea Park, Livingston.

Things to bring: your boat, waders, gloves for handling heavy metal and garbage, suntan lotion, hat, sunglasses, and warm weather gear (just in case).

Things not to bring: Fishing equipment, (no need to break it) and trash bags, (no need – heavy duty bags will be supplied).

Walkers are also welcome. If you can't find someone with empty spots in their boat, we will be sending people to Fishing Access sites.

Kids are always welcome and encouraged to join in the fun. There will be a BBQ (supplied by our friends at Altria) to follow. There will also be a power washer located on the side of the Civic Center as well as a crew to wash your boat out after dumping whatever trash you've found in the bins. Thanks for your support, with your help the Yellowstone River is a more beautiful place!

For more info: Jeff Ladewig: 406-224-7837 jeffrey.p.ladewig@gmail.com or Amy Schilling: 406-223-2244 aschilling@hotmail.com

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 714 AM MDT THU APR 10 2014

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Friday Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the late morning and afternoon.

Friday Night Breezy. Partly cloudy. Lows 26 to 32. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the evening.

Saturday Partly cloudy with chance of snow in the morning...then mostly cloudy with chance of snow and rain in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday Night Colder. Snow likely. Light snow accumulations. Lows 16 to 22. Chance of snow 70 percent.

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A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 11, 2014

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IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone considers new bison quarantine

LAURA LUNDQUIST, Bozeman Chronicle

Yellowstone National Park is taking the lead on two potential changes to bison management in the greater Yellowstone area.

At Thursday's meeting of the Interagency Bison Management Plan partners, Dave Hallac, chief of the YNP Center for Resources, formally announced that the park was working with the state of Montana on the development of an updated Interagency Bison Management Plan to replace the guidance that has been in place since 2000.

Around 100 people from the greater Yellowstone area and seven tribes packed a conference room in the Homewood Inn in Bozeman to hear the IBMP updates and comment on current operations. Because such a large change takes a few years to complete, Hallac said, the park was considering a plan to restart the bison-quarantine project in the interim.

“We are in the process of discussing the potential to do an environmental analysis of an operational bison quarantine,” said YNP superintendent Dan Wenk. “The purpose of a quarantine would be to move bison from the landscape of Yellowstone into conservation herds on public land in other areas of the West.”

Hallac said the park isn't initiating the environmental assessment yet.

But it is considering an interim quarantine program that would test bison captured during the winter slaughter operations and place the disease-free bison into a quarantine area.

Wenk said the intent would be to gather bison on an opportunistic basis and not conduct extra capture operations. However, the park may increase the number of bison it captures in order to get the sex and age ratios needed to create a viable disease-free herd, Hallac said.

Over the past year, park managers have consulted with 26 tribes that want disease-free Yellowstone bison. The InterTribal Buffalo Council has volunteered to partner with the park to assist with the quarantine.

Hallac said the proposal is just in the initial planning stages, so Hallac couldn't give specifics on how many animals would be involved, where they would go and how receiving groups would be selected.

The quarantine facility could be inside the park or on private land outside the park. Several tribes, including those on the Fort Peck Reservation, have offered their facilities for such a project.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and state agencies conducted the first experimental Yellowstone bison quarantine project using 200 young bison starting in 2005.

A scientific paper published a month ago on the quarantine project concluded that young bison could be qualified as brucellosis-free after less than three years of quarantine.

Almost 70 of those bison were moved to Fort Peck and Fort Belknap reservations in the past two years, and FWP will move the remaining 135 this year.

Hallac said the new IBMP might incorporate the quarantine as a tool, but it is also just in the early planning stages.

Last week, YNP and the state of Montana announced they would be conducting an environmental impact statement study on a new IBMP that would incorporate all the new information that has surfaced since 2000. Montana Gov. Steve Bullock recently signed a memorandum of agreement for the Department of Livestock and Fish, Wildlife & Parks to partner with the park on development of the plan.

The park's proposal hit a speed bump Thursday when APHIS district director Don Herriott suggested that elk brucellosis be added as an element of the new IBMP.

“With the old record of decision being reopened, we could bring in more things to lower the brucellosis prevalence in bison,” Herriot said.

Wenk said adding elk would compound the bison issue. Hallac said the park didn't seek to lower the brucellosis prevalence in bison.

Gallatin National Forest supervisor Mary Erickson said other states would probably have to be brought onboard if elk were added.

Wyoming has feedlots that are believed to increase the spread of brucellosis because they congregate elk. Wenk said the park planned to publish a notice of intent by July 1 so the partners needed to decide the elk question by June 1.

The U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and several tribes will cooperate with the state and the park but will no longer be lead partners.

Gallatin National Forest supervisor Mary Erickson said the Forest Service didn't need to be a partner. It hasn't had to weigh in on federal issues related to bison management because bison are a native species. But the Forest Service would still stay actively involved because bison presented multiple-use issues on public land, Erickson said.

The Forest Service may revisit its role with respect to bison as it rewrites its forest plan.

“Don't see this as a lessening of our role,” Erickson said. “There are impacts on forest lands that we haven't dealt with before.”

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

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Tonight: Breezy. Partly cloudy. Lows 25 to 31. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph in the evening.

Saturday: Partly cloudy with chance of snow in the morning...then cloudy with scattered rain showers with possible snow showers and thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 39 to 45. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Saturday Night: Colder. Snow and rain likely in the evening...then snow likely after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 1 to 4 inches. Lows 15 to 21. Northeast winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow. Highs 28 to 34. North winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 10 to 16.

Monday: Not as cool. Mostly sunny. Highs 39 to 45.

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Monday, April 14, 2014



No, honey, it was just another day at the office.
(photo by Courtney Eberhardy)

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IN THE NEWS

Yellowstone plow crews labor to open park for spring visitors

April 13, 2014 12:00 am • By Brett French- Billings Gazette

YELLOWSTONE LAKE, Wyo. — Spring is finally coming to this snowbound high country, but don't assume that it's a gentle transition from winter.

The roar of straining diesel engines is deafening, vibrating bystanders' chests. Linked by what seem to be insignificant strands of green synthetic rope, two 20-ton bulldozers pull a 27-ton road grader with a plow. The strain can at times be so great that the 4-inch diameter rope is stretched to only an inch-and-a-half thick. It takes this extensive effort, and much more, to break the snow's firm grasp on Yellowstone National Park's remote mountain roads.

Lance Tyson grins as he watches the work, his large grease-stained hands grasped together as he leans through the window of his mechanic's truck. The smell of diesel exhaust hanging in the air.

"It doesn't get any better than this," he says. "There's no tourists, nobody bothers us, and the buffalo and elk calves are being born."

Mechanical challenge

Tyson is just one of the park's hardy 14-member plowing crew. Their task is to clear snow off the park's 466 miles of roads so they can be opened to spring visitors. It is no easy feat, taking about 1,000 gallons of fuel a day, buckets of hydraulic fluid, tubes of grease and — when needed — a little baling wire.

“You’d be surprised what we hold together with wire,” Tyson says as he pulls off an arm-long length, snips it with wire cutters and folds it over to increase its strength. He then winds it around a snow tire chain clasp on the grader to ensure it stays closed.

“It’s a shoestring operation we’ve got going here,” he jokes, the wire required because someone didn’t pay their taxes.

“Nothing but the best for you,” he tells the grader driver before walking back to his truck.

Earlier in the day, a \$2 bolt had worked loose on a snow blower and pierced the machine’s radiator. One or two such mechanical breakdowns a day are common.

“Banging iron on ice, you’re going to loosen bolts,” Tyson says.

So he unhooked the radiator fins and crimped the punctured tube closed as a quick fix.

“In the real world we probably would have taken it to the shop and put in a new radiator, but out here we’ve got to fix it so it can get down the road,” Tyson says.

“Out here” on this day is about 7 miles north of West Thumb along the shore of a still-frozen Yellowstone Lake. That’s about an hour’s drive south from the plow crew’s headquarters at Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo. Although the sun is shining intensely, the entire landscape at this elevation of about 7,700 feet is still buried under several feet of sound-stifling snow, like a huge cotton ball stuffed inside Yellowstone’s volcanic caldera ear. And even though today is warm and sunny, the crew has frequently suffered through days with temperatures bottoming out at 20-below zero or colder, or had storms or wind blow snow back on top of just-cleared pavement.

Opening roads

Yet by April 18, Yellowstone will unlock part of its circular road system — known as the Grand Loop — to auto traffic. The first to open is the stretch from Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo., to Old Faithful.

After that, Canyon to Lake and Lake to the East Entrance will open on May 2.

On May 9, Lake to the South Entrance, West Thumb to Old Faithful and Tower to Tower Falls will be cleared for travel. The last stretches to be plowed are the high Dunraven and Beartooth passes, which open on May 23.

In the end, Tyson and his fellow snowplow workers will have spent about three months blowing, pushing and plowing untold tons of snow and ice.

It’s a slow task, made all the more difficult where the snow has been densely packed by snowmobile and snowcoach travel like the section between West Yellowstone and Old Faithful.

“The most ground I’ve ever covered in a day is 10 miles,” says Kenny Whitman, a 29-year plow crew veteran. He leans up against the grader as he talks, sipping coffee that came from a metal thermos as dented and battered as a dimpled driving range golf ball. “The least is seven-tenths of a mile. You get in snow 14-feet deep, and you stay all day long.”

That’s not the deepest snow Whitman has encountered, though. On the top of the Beartooth Pass is a drift — called the Bar Drift, because in the 1930s Cooke City residents set up a bar in the snowbank for passing travelers — that once measured 39 feet deep.

Plowing ballet

To bust through the packed road snow, dozers are usually the first sent down the road to push some of the frozen moisture out of the way. Then the dozers hook on to the grader to plow down to the roadbed. Snow blowers follow, making the path gradually wider.

“It’s just like a big Toro snow blower on steroids,” Tyson explains of the churning augers mounted on the front of the heavy machinery.

The snow flies out from the top of the augers in a high white arc, a beautiful sight against the deep blue sky. Although it may look fluffy, though, snowplow operator Dana Riley said it falls so heavily that it will easily crush a snowmobile. Pieces of pine tree limbs lie scattered across the forest floor where they’ve landed after being broken off by the steady stream of snow.

On this day, Riley is driving a plow truck that requires a second man to operate the vehicle’s wing blade that trims off the top of the roadside snowpack to keep it from falling back onto the pavement.

When done, the only signs of the plows' and snow blowers' work are the webbed tracks in the snow made by the machines' heavy tire chains and arcs etched into the sides of the hard snow walls by the augers.

Calm after the storm

As Riley waits to begin plowing again, he says it’s “kinda nice to have the park to yourself.” He once saw a bison cow give birth to its calf in the middle of the road. Whitman said he’s marveled at the way bison calves can swim the park’s cold waters so skillfully, with their mothers always downstream to keep them from drifting away.

“It’s pretty neat nature has figured that out,” Whitman says.

Compared to the summer, when the road crews face throngs of tourists impatiently bustling through, the springtime is pretty enjoyable, the crew agrees.

“This time of year, being out here by yourself, it’s the only time when you can stand in the middle of the road without getting run over,” Whitman says with a chuckle.

“When everything shuts down at the end of the day, it’s pretty peaceful,” Ryan says. It’s a quiet that the crew appreciates all the more after clanging, roaring and bouncing through snow for 10 hours a day.

Tyson agrees.

“We were out here this morning and you could hear your heart beat it was so quiet.”

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/yellowstone-plow-crews-labor-to-open-park-for-spring-visitors/article_2d67ea8b-3bb8-5f41-a008-e8791341c9d1.html#ixzz2ysFO5eDB

Deadline looms for funding resolution

Published: Wed, 04/09/2014 - 3:00pm | Liz Kearney – Livingston Enterprise

GARDINER — The clock is running down for Gardiner school officials who will soon have to issue — or not — teaching and coaching contracts for the upcoming school year in the face of a \$500,000 budget shortfall.

The Gardiner school board met Tuesday evening for a special workshop meeting on the latest news in its scramble to find a new source of the nearly \$500,000 it expected to receive from Yellowstone National Park this school year. The funds have been provided to the Montana-based Gardiner school district since at least 1948, to educate the children of park staff, who are Wyoming residents.

The Wyoming Department of Education, which had been prepared to distribute \$500,000 in emergency funding, told school officials they had since learned they could not make a payment to a non-Wyoming school district, Gardiner Schools Superintendent JT Stroder announced.

With the Wyoming funds rescinded, the school is preparing for the possibility the school might have to dip into its reserves, eliminate programs and positions, or a combination of the two to come up with \$500,000 in budget cuts for the upcoming school year.

“Wyoming has an obligation to educate Wyoming students,” Dan Rhodes, nonvoting board member and Mammoth Hot Springs resident, said at the meeting.

Board members expressed confidence a solution will eventually be found that includes funding from Wyoming.

School officials and Mammoth-area parents petitioned Park County, Wyo., for assistance in either redrawing a Park County, Wyo., school district to include Mammoth or to create a new Mammoth Hot Springs school district.

In the short term, the board discussed budget cutting options presented by Stroder, including eliminating next year all extracurricular activities and elective classes not required for accreditation. The cuts could potentially eliminate five to nine teaching and administrative positions, Stroder said. One of Stroder’s three budget scenarios included eliminating his own position.

Meeting attendees, which included a number of teachers, suggested funding be sought from the resort tax, if Gardiner’s pending resort tax ballot is passed by voters. Another suggested legal action against the Department of Interior, asking that the board, which includes a number of National Park Service employees, not shy away from legal action against their employer.

In February, Yellowstone officials notified the school that due to an overlooked section of federal law, they were no longer able to provide funds to the school for the 37 children who live at Mammoth Hot Springs and are legally residents of Wyoming. The park did not make a payment for the current school year. Yellowstone has made payments to the Gardiner school since at least 1948, when federal law established Yellowstone’s payments to the school district. A 1976 law superseded the 1948 law, which no one caught until last year’s federal budget sequestration, when Yellowstone analysts were tasked with finding \$1.75 million to cut from the park’s budget.

Stroder said the school should be issuing contracts to teaching and coaching staff sometime in April. With the funding uncertain, leaving those staff without contracts is a hardship for them, board member Patricia Baltzley said.

The board will hold more discussions and possibly act on spending cut suggestions, at its next regular board meeting on Wednesday, April 16. The meeting is held at 7 p.m. at the school.

Read more: http://www.livingstonenterprise.com/content/deadline-looms-funding-resolution?cookie_check=1

WEATHER**NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 740 AM MDT MON APR 14 2014

Today Mostly sunny until late afternoon then becoming partly cloudy. Patchy fog in the morning. Highs 35 to 41. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Tonight Partly cloudy. Patchy fog after midnight. Lows 16 to 22. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Tuesday Partly cloudy in the morning...then mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Tuesday Night Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Lows 15 to 21. West winds around 15 mph.

Wednesday Cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow showers. Highs 29 to 35.

Wednesday Night Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow showers. Lows 13 to 19.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

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

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, April 15, 2014



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The United Blood Services Blood Drive is **TODAY** from 1:00 - 4:45pm in the Mammoth Community Center -- Classroom #2. Give the gift of life.....Donate to a great cause!

Gardiner FFA will be hosting a **Donkey Basketball extravaganza on TONIGHT @ 7 PM**. Everyone attending the game will need to purchase a ticket, including players. Advance tickets are: Adult \$8, Student (7-12) \$6, Children (K- 6) \$4. Tickets for the game can be purchased from FFA members. Please contact Lori Hoppe at lhope@gardiner.org or (406) 570-4368 or Austin Dreyer at adreyer@gardiner.org if you have any questions. A community dinner will also be served in the multi-purpose room from 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM with proceeds going towards Gardiner School Activities, cost is \$7. Please contact Ben Johnson if you have any questions regarding the dinner at bjohnson@gardiner.org.

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back** will be held **Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim! This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor.

A Gathering of Naturalists presents The Life & Times of One Tree

Friday, April 18, 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future. Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

Everyone is invited to share in the Holy Week services this week:

Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 4/17 at 7 pm, at Gardiner Community Church

Good Friday Service, 4/18 at 7:30 pm at Mammoth Chapel

Easter Sunday, 4/20 at 9 am at Mammoth Chapel with a community Breakfast immediately following the Easter service at the Mammoth Community Center.

IN THE NEWS

-- Yellowstone plow crews labor to reopen park for spring visitors

(BILLINGS [MT] GAZETTE)

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/yellowstone-plow-crews-labor-to-open-park-for-spring-visitors/article_2d67ea8b-3bb8-5f41-a008-e8791341c9d1.html

-- Wandering Yellowstone bison cause property damage in Gardiner, MT area

(BKZK-TV [BOZEMAN, MT])

<http://www.kbzk.com/news/wandering-bison-causing-property-damage-in-the-gardiner-area/>

-- Columnist's update: About those park wolves in Yellowstone . . . (editor's commentary)

(THE DENVER POST)

http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci_25546281/about-those-park-wolves

Bad weather, lack of chopper stalls northern Yellowstone elk count

Brett French, Billings Gazette, April 14, 2014

Poor flight conditions and the loss of a helicopter to repairs hampered this year's count of the much-watched Northern Yellowstone elk herd, according to Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.

As a result, the data is not considered thorough enough to be compared to previous years to detect a rise or fall in the herd's numbers.

The survey dates back to 1986 and is closely monitored by hunters and wildlife advocates as a sign of the elk population's vitality in the face of disease outbreaks and a predator-rich environment.

The numbers are also used by FWP officials to guide regulation setting for hunter harvests.

Although incomplete, a classification survey flight conducted on March 24 north of Yellowstone counted 4,372 elk, of which 2,772 elk were classified by age and sex. Based on the sample, the population was estimated at 24 calves and 12 bulls per 100 cows.

"These ratios aren't representative of the entire herd, but I'm guessing we were able to survey most of the herd," said Karen Loveless, FWP wildlife biologist in Livingston, noting that about 70 to 80 percent of the Yellowstone elk migrate into Montana.

This year's ratios are higher than recent survey results within the same area. The 2013 count observed 19 calves and 10 bulls per 100 cows, and 11 calves and five bulls per 100 cows in 2012. A total of 3,915 elk were observed last year.

Twenty calves per 100 cows is considered the survival threshold for elk. Below that wildlife managers are concerned and above that the herd should grow.

“Actually, it’s really encouraging,” Loveless said, considering that not all of the elk were counted. “It’s on the low end to see an increase, but it’s close to stable.”

The other thing of note, Loveless said, is that the bull ratios remain dominated by young spikes, the reason for FWP’s restrictive permit-only hunts in the districts north of the park.

The Cooperative Wildlife Working Group — made up of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Geological Survey, Yellowstone National Park and the Forest Service — conducts the two annual surveys of elk: an elk count that estimates abundance, and a classification survey that estimates sex ratios and calf-cow ratios.

In past years the classification flight was conducted across the entire Northern Range, including elk winter range within Yellowstone National Park and north of the park in Montana.

The annual winter count of the northern herd was attempted on Feb. 26. The surveyors, using three airplanes, encountered windy conditions over Dome Mountain — a popular elk winter range — and a portion of Yellowstone National Park.

In the abbreviated flights, 2,063 elk, including 476 elk within Yellowstone National Park and 1,587 elk north of the park in Montana, were counted.

A follow-up abundance survey by helicopter was not possible as the state’s aircraft was being repaired and that’s the only one equipped with a radio that can communicate with Yellowstone, which the park requires for safety’s sake. To rent a helicopter would have cost three times as much.

Although the traditional abundance survey could not be completed, data collected during the Yellowstone elk classification survey suggest that the Northern Range elk population is at least similar to 2013.

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/bad-weather-lack-of-chopper-stalls-northern-yellowstone-elk-count/article_05c912c3-9731-5778-85c5-faf17a3c13b5.html#ixzz2yyHcKUXR

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 729 AM MDT TUE APR 15 2014

Today: Breezy. Partly cloudy early in the morning then becoming mostly cloudy. Chance of rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Tonight: Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow and rain early in the evening...then chance of snow in the late evening and overnight. Lows 15 to 21. Northwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Wednesday: Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow. Highs 30 to 36.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow in the evening. Lows 14 to 20. Chance of snow 40 percent.

Thursday: Partly cloudy. Highs 35 to 41.

Thursday Night: Partly cloudy. Lows 18 to 24.

Friday: Not as cool. Cloudy. Slight chance of snow showers in the morning...then chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 43 to 49. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Friday Night: Cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then slight chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 22 to 28. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

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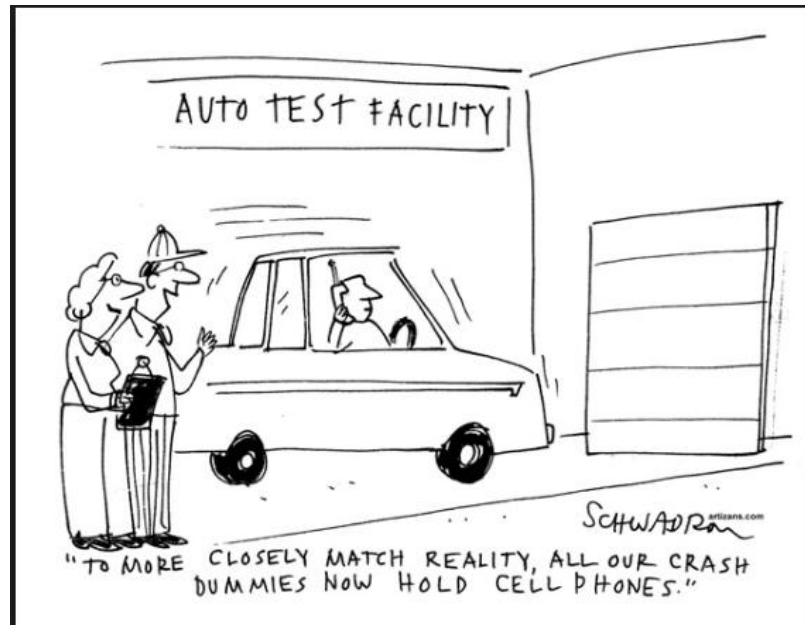
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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 16, 2014

DON'T BE A DUMMY!



DISTRACTED DRIVING KILLS!

Brought to you by your Employee Safety Committee

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
- Understand the dangers of the cognitive distraction to the brain
- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving

Thanks to ALL the responders, medical and otherwise, that came to our aid last Monday, April 7, at the truck roll-over adjacent to Yellowstone picnic area. The care and handling I recieved was top shelf and could not have been more professional or caring.
Again, thanks to ALL! Bennett Rees

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back** will be held **Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

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SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Wednesday, April 16, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: One crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road. Area Plow at Lake.

Present Location:

East Crew is at Sedge Bay.

South Crew is at Lewis River Bridge

Anticipated Destination:

East Crew should make Stink Lake.

South Crew hoping to make head of Lewis River Canyon.

Snow Conditions:

South, 10 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 4 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

Weather:

Overcast, skiff of new snow, 24 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 - Lake to Grant Village 11 AM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

RECENT NEWS RELEASES

Yellowstone National Park Celebrates Earth Day 2014

Yellowstone National Park, the Yellowstone Environmental Coordinating Committee (YECC) and community partners in and around Gardiner, Montana, will celebrate the 44th anniversary of Earth Day starting April 19, with community cleanups, waste collection and recycling events, demonstrations, games, information on local and national environmental initiatives and much more.

Gardiner, Montana, events:

Saturday, April 19 at Arch Park and the Yellowstone Association:

- 9 a.m. -4 p.m.: “Trash Amnesty Day” at the Gardiner Green Boxes. (Call 406-223-2135 for details.)
- 9 a.m. -Noon: Drop donations at Community Closet truck located at the Yellowstone Association.
- 10 a.m.-Noon: Community Clean-up Opportunities and E-waste collection at Arch Park.
- Noon: FREE community BBQ at Arch Park.
- 1-2:30 p.m.: Eco-themed educational opportunities at the Yellowstone Association, including recycled crafts, puppet show, story time and face painting, Master Gardener information and demonstration, compost giveaway (bring your own bucket or bag!) and a bear-proof trash can giveaway.

Saturday, April 26

- 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.: In collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Medcor and the National Park Service will host a National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in the Yellowstone Association Building.

All Earth Day activities are free of charge and take place in several of Yellowstone's gateway communities over the course of the weekends surrounding Earth Day. For questions or volunteer opportunities, please call Dylan Hoffman at (307) 344-5204.

The YECC is a collaborative environmental committee consisting of National Park Service, Xanterra Parks & Resorts, Delaware North Companies, Medcor, Yellowstone Park Service Stations, Yellowstone Association, and Yellowstone Park Foundation representatives that focuses on sustainability issues in and around Yellowstone National Park.

Yellowstone Issues New Contracts For Guided Interpretive Oversnow Vehicle Tours

The National Park Service has selected the businesses which will provide guided interpretive oversnow vehicle tours in Yellowstone starting this winter. The new contracts implement the October 2013 Final Rule for Winter Use by requiring concessioners to provide tours as transportation events.

A prospectus soliciting contract bids was issued in November 2013. A total of 23 new ten-year concession contracts have been awarded to 9 businesses. They will be in effect starting with the upcoming 2014-2015 winter season.

Back Country Adventures, Buffalo Bus Touring Company, Two Top Snowmobile Rental and Yellowstone Winter Guides were selected to provide service through the park's West Entrance. DTRS Jackson Hole, Forever Resorts and Teton Science Schools were awarded contracts to provide trips through the South Entrance. Yellowstone Year-Round Safaris will offer tours through the North Entrance, while Gary Fales Outfitting will provide oversnow trips through the East Entrance.

The rule replaces the former concept of a fixed maximum number of snowmobiles and snowcoaches allowed in the park each day with a new, more flexible concept of transportation events. Under the new contracts, concessioners will be able to use their allocated number of transportation events for snowcoaches or, within limits, a mix of snowcoaches and snowmobiles.

Competitive selection of bidders was based on responses to five selection factors: protecting park resources, providing services at reasonable rates, experience, financial capability, and the proposed franchise fee return to the federal government.

Roads From West Yellowstone And Mammoth Hot Springs To Old Faithful And Canyon Open Friday

For the first time since fall, visitors to Yellowstone National Park will be able to drive to see Old Faithful and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone starting Friday morning, April 18. The road segments from West Yellowstone and Mammoth Hot Springs to these popular visitor destinations open for the season at 8:00 a.m.

Each spring, Yellowstone National Park plow crews clear snow and ice from 198 miles of main road, 124 miles of secondary roads and 125 acres of parking lots inside the park as well as 31 miles of the Beartooth Highway outside the park's Northeast Entrance to prepare for the summer season.

Additional road segments in the park will open during May as road clearing operations progress.

Yellowstone's East Entrance is scheduled to open to travel on Friday, May 2. The park's South Entrance is set to open to the public on Friday, May 9. The road from the park's North Entrance at Gardiner, Mont., through Mammoth Hot Springs to the Northeast Entrance, Silver Gate and Cooke City, Mont., is open all year. The road east of Cooke City to WY-296 typically opens by mid-May. Crews from the National Park Service and the Montana Department of Transportation strive to open US-212 over the Beartooth Pass to Red Lodge, Mont., in time for the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

As an added incentive for spring visitors, park entrance fees will be waived April 19 and 20 to kick off National Park Week. A seven-day pass to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks is normally \$25 for a private, non-commercial vehicle.

Visitors should be aware that spring in Yellowstone is very unpredictable and often brings cold temperatures, high winds and falling snow. Even cleared sections of roads can be narrow and covered with a layer of snow, ice and debris. Visitors should use extreme caution when driving as road clearing operations can be ongoing at any time throughout the park. In the case of extreme weather conditions, temporary road closures are also possible with little or no advance warning.

Due to the snow present in the park's interior, walking on trails or on boardwalks through thermal areas may also be difficult or impossible for some time. Bears have emerged from hibernation in the Greater Yellowstone Area and are on the hunt for food. If you plan to hike, ski or snowshoe in the park you are advised to stay in groups of three or more, make noise on the trail and carry bear spray. Yellowstone regulations require visitors to stay 100 yards from black and grizzly bears at all times. The best defense is to stay a safe distance from bears and use binoculars, a telescope or telephoto lens to get a closer look.

Very limited visitor services will be available during the next several weeks. For updated information, go to <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/index.htm> or consult the park newspaper you receive at the entrance station.

Construction is underway north of the entrance to the Norris Campground on the road to Mammoth Hot Springs. A 5.4 mile section of the road is being rebuilt, as is the bridge over the Gardner River. Visitors should expect daytime delays of up to 30 minutes, with nightly closures between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. beginning June 1. This section of road will be closed to all traffic from 11:00 p.m. September 14, to 7:00 a.m. on September 30.

Work will also begin this year to replace the Isa Lake Bridge, which is on the road between Old Faithful and West Thumb Junction. This section of road will close to through travel for the season at 6:00 a.m. on September 2.

Details on both of these projects and updated Yellowstone National Park road information is available 24 hours a day by calling 307-344-2117, or on the Web at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/roadclosures.htm>.

IN THE NEWS

Four local operators receive 11 winter use contracts

Posted: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 4:07 pm

[Four local operators receive 11 winter use contracts](#)

By Mike Moore - West Yellowstone News

On Monday, the National Park Service announced 23 new 10-year concession contracts awarded to nine operators throughout the park's main entrances. Of the 11 contracts awarded for the West gate out of West Yellowstone, four local concessionaire businesses were awarded contracts.

The new contracts replace the previous 13 concession contracts and 21 commercial use authorizations for guided interpretive snowmobile tours that were in place for the 2013-14 winter season in Yellowstone. This comes after the publishing of the Plan/Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement in the Federal Register in March 2013, and the release of Final Rule of Winter Use that was published in the Federal Register in October 2013.

The rule replaces the former method of a fixed maximum number of snowmobiles and snowcoaches allowed in the park each day with a new, more flexible concept of transportation events. Under the new contracts, concessioners will be able to use their allotted number of transportation events for snowcoaches or, within limits, a mix of snowcoaches and snowmobiles, according to a Yellowstone Public Affairs press release.

New contracts for the West Entrance were awarded to Back Country Adventures, Buffalo Bus Touring Company (Yellowstone Vacations), Two Top Snowmobile Rental doing business as Yellowstone Winter Tours, and Yellowstone Winter Guides (Yellowstone Alpen Guides).

Yellowstone Winter Guides received two contracts; Back Country Adventures was awarded one contract. Two Top Snowmobile Rental was given five contracts, while Buffalo Bus Touring Company received three.

Outside of West Yellowstone, DTRS Jackson Hole, Forever Resorts and Teton Science Schools were awarded contracts through the park's South Entrance. Yellowstone Year-Round Safaris will serve the North Entrance, while Gary Fales Outfitting will provide oversnow trips through the East Entrance

The 10-year contracts take effect at the start of the 2014-15 winter season.

According to park spokesman Al Nash, a panel of National Park Service representatives outside of Yellowstone scored the prospectuses. Competitive selection of bidders was based on responses to five selection factors: protecting park resources, providing services at reasonable rates, experience, financial capability, and the proposed franchise fee return to the federal government, according to a press release.

"Our goal is to provide a stable opportunity both for the visitors and surrounding communities to access Yellowstone in winter in a way that protects the park and serves visitors," Nash said. "This is another step in our effort to make that happen."

In regard to proposed franchise fee return, Nash says Yellowstone typically has a franchise fee, where a percentage of concessionaire gross revenues go back to the park. In each prospectus submitted, local concessionaires could offer higher percentages to pay back to the park; however, Nash says it was only one of the 29 questions asked in the prospectus.

“There was an open bidding process where anyone with an interest had the opportunity to submit competitive bids,” the park spokesman said.

Back Country Adventures was one of the local concessionaires to be awarded with a contract, and owner Jerry Johnson says he’s relieved.

“I’m happy I was awarded one, but the process was a large strain on all of us,” he said.

Johnson’s business received one contract, allowing the operation to take two snowcoach and two snowmobile events into the park daily. The new restriction is “really close” to what he was allowed to take in the park in previous years, he says.

With the loss of business for some local operators, Johnson says business owners in West Yellowstone are resilient, and will succeed with whatever path they choose.

“(Local concessionaires) are good, successful business people,” he said. “I think it’s going to move our local economy around. In the long run, I don’t think it will have a negative impact, and it may even help the local economy.”

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Jardine man shoots bull bison

Posted: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:00 pm

[Jardine man shoots bull bison](#)

Laura Lundquist, Bozeman Chronicle

Gardiner-area resident Bill Hoppe last week killed a bull bison outside his home in Jardine.

Riders with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the Department of Livestock had hazed bison away from Hoppe's residence several times prior to the shooting, said FWP spokeswoman Andrea Jones.

Bison are allowed to wander outside of Yellowstone National Park until May 1, but riders haze the animals away from private property where owners don't want them.

On Friday, Hoppe's wife saw three bison in the yard and was worried for the safety of her dog, which was chained to the side of the house.

She called Hoppe, who came home and tried to disperse the bison, Jones said.

Hoppe said one of the bison charged him so he shot it, Jones said.

Hoppe then killed the bison and called FWP wardens, who surveyed the scene. They hazed the other two bison back into the park.

The bison was field-dressed and the meat was sent to be processed for local food banks. The gut pile was left in the yard.

Jones said the bison might have been more on edge because they've been repeatedly hazed. Bison aren't normally aggressive except when protecting young.

FWP encourages landowners to request help when dealing with bison. But bison are not protected as an endangered species, and people can shoot bison to protect themselves.

Last spring, Hoppe shot one of two wolves that were suspected of killing sheep that he placed on a pasture he leased a few weeks before near Corwin Springs.

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Groups claim traffic study doesn't address wildlife collisions

Posted: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 5:28 pm

[Groups claim traffic study doesn't address wildlife collisions](#)

Laura Lundquist Bozeman Chronicle

A Highway 89 traffic study suggests changes to improve driver safety, but some groups want those safety concerns to extend to the wildlife in the Paradise Valley.

The Montana Department of Transportation is about to issue the final version of its Paradise Valley Corridor Planning Study after releasing its initial draft for public comment two months ago. Work on the study began in May.

The initial draft identified wildlife conflicts as a primary cause of accidents on the highway, a fact well known to those who regularly drive the road.

"Locals know where to look and slow down for wildlife at night. But out-of-staters don't know to look," said Bart Melton, National Parks Conservation Association spokesman. "We need safe infrastructure for wildlife and visitors."

The traffic study's authors found that collisions with wildlife accounted for half of the 286 crashes reported from July 2007 through June 2012, based on MDT Traffic and Safety Bureau crash data.

More than half of the crashes also occurred in darkness or low-light conditions, when animals tend to move around.

FWP Region 3 supervisor Pat Flowers said it was likely that wildlife were involved in even more collisions because those that cause little or no vehicle damage are probably under-reported.

While the MDT data averages to 28 wildlife crashes a year, an average of 151 animal carcasses are retrieved from the roadside each year.

Two-thirds of the carcasses collected between 2002 and 2012 were mule deer.

The two-lane road between Livingston and Yellowstone National Park hasn't changed much since Interstate 90 became a four-lane highway in the 1970s.

It traverses one of the more species-rich areas of Montana, home to deer, bighorn sheep and antelope in addition to species that migrate out of Yellowstone National Park, including bison, elk, wolves and many smaller species. But in recent decades, more people have moved in to the valley, and more tourists visit the park every year. So the highway carries a lot more traffic, especially in the summer, when the number of cars can double.

About 4,000 vehicles a day can pass through Gardiner during peak times, and the higher density is taking a toll on wildlife.

For that reason, a number of wildlife groups and agencies that have submitted comments encouraging more detailed study of how the highway aligns with wildlife corridors and crossing points. In letters to MDT, Flowers and Yellowstone National Park supervisor Dan Wenk said the traffic study was inadequate.

“We observed much of the current plan is designed to make traffic move faster, which may have the unintended consequence of additional wildlife mortality within this corridor,” Wenk wrote.

While the study went into detail identifying mile markers where passing lanes and turn lanes should be installed to improve traffic flow, the discussion of wildlife crossing sites and signage identified no locations or recommendations.

Flowers listed several sites where deer are often hit, pointing out that highway projects that increase traffic volume and speed would do nothing to lessen such collisions.

He outlined stretches of the highway where speed limits should be reduced or where wildlife underpasses should be installed, independent of traffic-improvement projects.

Melton said the study was too big-picture when it came to the wildlife aspects.

“We ask that they look at these known hotspots and do a full study with FWP,” Melton said.

Tom Martin, MDT environmental services bureau chief, said the traffic study was intended to be more of an overview of the situation.

Martin said wildlife recommendations would have to look at much more of the valley and bring in topography and adjacent land use. The MDT technical team did a limited survey of the highway and a three-quarter-mile strip on either side.

“It requires more boots-on-the-ground analysis. You don't want to recommend a wildlife crossing where adjacent landowners would not allow wildlife to even use it,” Martin said.

Once the final corridor study is issued, MDT will initiate various projects and bring in strategies that would fit with each to preserve the wildlife resource, Martin said.

The MDT project team will meet with Montanans 4 Safe Wildlife Passage on April 24 to discuss the issue, Martin said.

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 714 AM MDT WED APR 16 2014

Today Mostly cloudy. Scattered snow showers...then isolated snow showers and rain showers late in the afternoon.

Highs 32 to 38. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Tonight Mostly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Lows 16 to 22. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Thursday Not as cool. Mostly cloudy. Highs 40 to 46. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon.

Thursday Night Mostly cloudy in the evening...then partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 21 to 27.

Friday Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the morning...then chance of rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs 43 to 49. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Friday Night Mostly cloudy with chance of rain showers...snow showers and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then partly cloudy with slight chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 21 to 27. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

Yellowstone Safety Recognition Program (SRP)

Do you see something we could do to improve safety in Yellowstone OR do you see a co-worker who has done something positive about safety? Use the [Safety Recognition Program](#) to report a hazard occurring in the park or nominate a Safety Champion. Full program details can be found using the link above. We want to hear from YOU!

WE WANT YOUR SUBMISSIONS!

Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

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

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Thursday, April 17, 2014



Yesterday the staff of the HRC participated in a fire drill followed by fire extinguisher training. Mike Schell instructed staff on proper fire extinguisher usage as demonstrated by Staffan Peterson - YELL Archaeologist.
(photo by Brandon Sexton)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
- Understand the dangers of the cognitive distraction to the brain
- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving



Did you know...

Distracted driving is not just related to talking or texting while driving. It is anything that takes a motorist's eyes off the road for 1-2 seconds or more, Such as eating, sightseeing, controlling children and/or pets, etc.

Do your part...and DRIVE SMART!

The 4-H Easter Egg hunt is **TODAY at 4:30 p.m. at the Gardiner School for babies through Kindergarten!**

Thanks to ALL the responders, medical and otherwise, that came to our aid last Monday, April 7, at the truck roll-over adjacent to Yellowstone picnic area. The care and handling I recieved was top shelf and could not have been more professional or caring.

Again, thanks to ALL! Bennett Rees

Half hour delays are possible, seven days/week, on the road construction project starting from the Gardner River Bridge (near Indian Creek Campground) to the Gibbon River Bridge (near the Norris Campground). Please drive carefully and watch for flag personnel, surveyors, etc.

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back will be held Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the **REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim!** This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor.

A Gathering of Naturalists presents The Life & Times of One Tree

Friday, April 18, 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future. Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

Everyone is invited to share in the Holy Week services this week:

Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 4/17 at 7 pm, at Gardiner Community Church

Good Friday Service, 4/18 at 7:30 pm at Mammoth Chapel

Easter Sunday, 4/20 at 9 am at Mammoth Chapel with a community Breakfast immediately following the Easter service at the Mammoth Community Center.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Thursday, April 17, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: One crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road. Area Plow at Lake and Old Faithful.

Present Location:

South Crew is at Pitch Plateau Trailhead.

East Crew is at Stinky Lake.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew will plow 1 ½ miles.

East Crew should make Cub Creek.

Snow Conditions:

South, 14 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 5 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

Weather:

Overcast, 24 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

Be advised that the South Entrance Road has 1 ½ lane plowed to South Gate for emergency use only – use with extreme caution!

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 - Lake to Grant Village 11 AM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS

Firefighters burn old Yellowstone cabins for training

Published: Wed, 04/16/2014 - 8:45pm | Section: Liz Kearney -Livingston Enterprise

CANYON VILLAGE, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WYO. — Smoke and flames reached high into the sky as lodgepole pines flared like torches and fire engulfed a four-plex of abandoned guest cabins.



Cooke City Fire Department volunteers and a Yellowstone National Park firefighter man the hoses in a fire training held at abandoned tourist cabins at Canyon Village in Yellowstone National Park, Tuesday. Firefighters staged a fire training in the cabins, which are slated to be demolished and replaced by new lodges in a \$70 million

Firefighters stood back and enjoyed the show, leaning against the edges of plowed snowbanks, still 4 feet high

on the level at Canyon Village, elevation 7,734, in Yellowstone National Park.



The fire was planned.

Several of the cabins, more than 50 years old, were slated to burn. With the burn, park staff turned the blaze into a training op for area firefighters, providing them with valuable live-fire training.

Cabins in Row K at Canyon Village are engulfed in flames during a training fire on Tuesday

With a \$70 million makeover in the works at this developed area near the park's iconic Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone, more than 500 tourist cabins, many of them dilapidated and long past their best years, will be demolished. They will be replaced by five new 80-room

lodges, which will be built in the area of the cabin compound.



Most of the tourist cabins slated for removal, like the one above, are being torn down with heavy equipment. This partially demolished cabin shows the interior, with the carpeting and curtains still intact, in Yellowstone National Park's Canyon Village, Tuesday.

Cabin destruction is already underway. Crews have plowed out the looping roads through the cabin area. Empty lots and half-demolished cabins with showers and vacant rooms open like full-sized dollhouses dot the landscape. Piles of recyclables are stacked neatly on the side of the roads.

On Tuesday, firefighters gathered at Mammoth Hot Springs to convoy the 42 miles to Canyon Village in an assortment of rigs, including pumper trucks and pickups. Interior park roads are closed to visitors, with a few roads scheduled to open Friday, but the roads are plowed and clear, allowing access for maintenance crews and the first spring employees.



Firefighters unpack bags of shredded paper from a truck at Canyon Village, Tuesday. The paper, along with discarded wooden pallets, was used to start fires inside abandoned tourist cabins. The cabins were burned to provide firefighters an opportunity to train under live-fire conditions.

Because the park roads were closed to the public, an Enterprise reporter was escorted to Canyon by Public Affairs Office staffer Amy Bartlett. Bartlett, ironically enough, had started her Yellowstone career at Canyon in the early 1990s, cleaning cabins.

The plan was to meet at Canyon and burn three four-unit cabin groupings called “quads,” located in Row K, as a training operation. Firefighting staff from Yellowstone and volunteer firefighters from the Cooke City Fire Department would gain valuable training experience, especially in how to safely enter a burning building.

Yellowstone’s fire chief, Britton Gray, said the training is important for volunteers, who get little opportunity to practice on live fires, much less on burning buildings.

“A lot of volunteers will never get inside a burning building and experience the heat and smoke,” Gray said.

And burning a few of the cabins will help prevent some of the debris from reaching a landfill, he said.

And Gray has had relatively few chances to burn a building down for practice, estimating he’s held eight “burns” in his 11 years with Yellowstone National Park. He held a burn at Canyon earlier this winter, inviting the Cooke City volunteers to participate.

Gray said he’s taken the remote town’s firefighter crew under his wing, remarking there had been a history of hard feelings between some town residents and Yellowstone after the 1988 fires.

Gray said he sent firefighters to Cooke City in April 2011, when the town’s Hoosier Motel burned to the ground. His crew relieved the volunteers on site so they could check in with their employers and take a break. Gray said they were surprised to see him, but appreciated the help. The park and Cooke City have a mutual aid agreement, and the park provides a truck for the volunteer fire department.

One of the Cooke City crew members said Tuesday the park’s professional crew is like a “big brother” to its volunteer force.

Fire crews, using wood pallets and trash-bags full of shredded paper, started fires inside a cabin. Soon, black smoke was billowing out the windows and up under the eaves.

Yellowstone firefighter Mike Shell pointed out the heavy snow load on top of the flat-roofed cabins. He said the snow would actually act to insulate the building. As the building burned, the roof could collapse under the weight of the snow load, which he said could easily weigh 600 to 700 pounds. Gray pointed out that nearby defunct utility poles could burn, as well as trees.

“If a tree torches, it’s OK because all this (cabin area) is coming out,” Gray said.

The trainees were geared up in their full gear, called “turnouts,” which included masks, helmets and oxygen tanks. The tanks, called SCBA, look similar to those used by divers, and includes parts of the same acronym, “scuba,” for self-contained breathing apparatus.

Cooke City volunteer Josh Snyder estimated a full turnout weighs nearly 40 pounds.

The turnout includes a device that monitors movement of the wearer. As firefighters stood quietly in line waiting their turn to enter the building, their suits emitted loud electronic chirps. The chirps are meant to alert other firefighters that one of their team members has not moved. Gray said they are trained to jostle one another whenever they hear a beep, so they don’t get used to hearing it and learn to ignore the chirp.

Later, as the cabin interiors burned and the fire moved to the outside walls, crews took turns staffing the fire hoses. The hoses were hooked up to pumper trucks, which were filled at nearby hydrants. Gray estimated the

crews pumped 3,000 gallons of water on the fires. And trees did indeed “torch,” going up with a rush of sound like a high wind, creating a bonfire-like warmth for observers, grown chill under a gray sky and snow flurries.

The cabins

The cabins in the Canyon Village area were considered “temporary” when they were built in the late 1950s, explained the park’s Branch Chief For Cultural Resources Tobin Roop, Wednesday. But today, the cabins are considered historic as they reflect an early example of what is known as “Mission 66” architectural style.

The lodge building, restaurant and lounge at Canyon is an example of Mission 66, so named by the National Park Service in the late 1950s as it prepared to update and improve national parks in advance of the NPS 50th anniversary in 1966.

Roop said whenever historic structures have to be demolished — which is avoided whenever possible, he emphasized — efforts are made to “mitigate” the loss.

To mitigate the loss of the Canyon Village cabins, Roop said a Historic Structures Report and a Historic American Buildings Survey were prepared. And interpretive signs will be installed in the Canyon “horseshoe” — the developed area near the visitor center — depicting the cabins and discussing Mission 66.

Many find the Canyon area architecture “kitschy” and out of date, while others argue that even so, now it’s historic.

“I won’t argue with you on any of that,” Roop laughed about the “kitschy” look, adding, “The ‘recently historic’ is hard.”

The project

Yellowstone’s largest concessionaire, Xanterra Parks & Resorts, as part of its contract with the park, is investing nearly \$70 million into the remodeling of the Canyon area, said NPS manager Mary Murphy, branch chief of Concessions Facilities Management, who had stopped in to visit the site Tuesday.

The project replaces most of the older cabins with seven new lodge buildings, while leaving in place more recent Western cabins. The number of rooms will remain the same, at 588, Murphy said. The project is slated to be completed by 2016, the centennial year of the National Park Service.

Murphy emphasized that the new lodging units will maintain a similar “rate stratification,” which will include rooms in the mid-range.

“Keeping that rate stratification is very important to us,” she said.

Earlier in the day, Gray had said he enjoyed helping out the smaller fire departments, with both gear and training ops.

“If we’ve got bigger and better toys we can share and help the local communities,” Gray said, “why not?”

At the end of the training Tuesday, fire crews rolled up their hoses and called it a day as fire-heated snow melted and the blazes died down.

Park study finds high levels of mercury in fish

Posted: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 8:00 pm

[Park study finds high levels of mercury in fish](#)

Laura Lundquist, Bozeman Chronicle

A new government study has found that, even in the pristine waters of western national parks, fish can carry enough mercury to endanger wildlife and, in some cases, people.

Scientists from the U.S. Geological Service and the National Park Service teamed up to sample fish in 21 national parks found that even fish in regions as remote as Glacier National Park and Alaska high levels of mercury.

Two regions of the West where mercury levels appear to be the biggest concern are northern parks — Alaska and Glacier National Park — where mercury levels in large predator fish approached or exceeded human consumption guidelines, and parks in the Southwest, where small fish had some of the highest mercury levels of the study.

These high levels cause problems not only for the fish themselves but also for the wildlife and birds that eat them. Toxic chemicals become more concentrated in higher-level predators because they eat a lot of fish.

So toxic levels of mercury could endanger isolated populations of species that depend on the safety of national parks.

Plus, in Alaska, some indigenous tribes still subsist on the fish in the study areas, so their health could also be in jeopardy. Mercury is a carcinogen and acts as a neurotoxin, interfering with reproduction and causing learning disabilities in children.

Study lead author Collin Eagles-Smith said the scientists chose national park sites to eliminate most of the human-caused contributions to mercury levels, such as mining. In remote areas, mercury comes mainly from natural geological sources and industrial emissions in the air.

“We wanted to see what's out there when you get away from most human-induced sources,” Eagles-Smith said.

“The variation suggests it's a combination of environmental and human-influenced atmospheric deposition.” Mercury in the atmosphere comes from natural sources such as volcanic eruptions and oceans. But since the industrial revolution, mercury also has come from human-generated emissions, especially coal-burning power plants.

That mercury doesn't become a problem for fish unless the right conditions cause bacteria to process it into a biological form that fish absorb.

Some preliminary studies are showing that rising air temperatures associated with climate change may ramp up the bacterial activity.

While scientists don't know all the factors that go into that bacterial process, study co-author Colleen Flanagan Pritz said the more mercury that is added to the atmosphere, the more is likely to enter the lakes to become toxic.

Mercury concentrations in the bull and lake trout of Lake McDonald exceeded government-approved levels for human health, as well as the levels at which reproductive problems are seen in fish-eating birds. The toxic mercury levels could also diminish the populations of the threatened bull trout.

This is not the first study to find high levels of mercury in remote environments commonly considered untouched. Mercury levels that exceed human and wildlife health thresholds have been reported during the past decade in national parks, as well as in Canada and Alaska.

It is the first study to find that mercury levels can vary from lake to lake within a park, raising questions about how myriad factors interact to introduce toxic mercury into lake systems.

For example, the only Glacier Park lake surveyed in the study was Lake McDonald. Other studies have sampled two other park lakes and found low mercury levels.

One site sampled in Yellowstone National Park — Spillway Lake — had fish with low mercury levels, while fish in Mildred Lake had mercury levels two times higher than the study average. Only one fish in Yellowstone Park exceeded the human-consumption guidelines.

Eagle-Smith has found that watersheds that have higher densities of pine trees have fish with higher levels of mercury, possibly because the pine needles capture more of the mercury in the air.

Eagle-Smith said the study didn't analyze the contribution of different sources, and people shouldn't assume that lakes with higher mercury levels had received more atmospheric mercury.

Scientists will research the reasons for that variation in the future, Eagle-Smith said.

“If we know the characteristics that lead to high mercury levels, we could predict where problems might be,” Eagle-Smith said.

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Fales to increase sledding in Yellowstone Park

Posted: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 3:50 pm

[Fales to increase sledding in Yellowstone Park](#)

By Ruffin Prevost - Yellowstone Gate

The business landscape for winter tour operators in Yellowstone Park saw a shake-up this week as the Park Service awarded a series of concessions contracts for the next decade.

Some longtime snowmobile and snow coach operators were selected to continue guiding winter visitors into Yellowstone, while others with decades of experience were not among those awarded new contracts

A total of 23 new 10-year concession contracts were awarded to nine businesses, according to the park's public affairs office. That's a consolidation that has left less than half as many permitted businesses as had been operating for several previous years under earlier winter-use plans.

Gary Fales Outfitting was the only company selected to operate at the park's east gate, west of Cody. The Wapiti-based company has long been the only operator taking snowmobiles over 8,524-foot Sylvan Pass.

Fales said he has operated for many years without knowing whether snowmobiles or access over Sylvan Pass would be allowed the following year, so the 10-year contract offers a welcome degree of certainty.

“We will expand our snowmobile fleet, there’s no question about that,” he added. Hiring more staff and expanding marketing also will be easier under a 10-year plan.

Fales said he did not propose running a snow coach across Sylvan Pass, mainly due to the high operating costs and long distance from the east gate to prime attractions at Canyon and Old Faithful.

If new snow coach technology is eventually approved that allows for greater reliability and lower capital and operating costs, that could provide an option for the addition of snow coach trips from the east gate, Fales said.

The new contracts will take effect starting with the 2014-15 winter season, which also marks the start of the park’s new winter-use plan that allocates specific numbers of “transportation events” for each gate.

The rule replaces the previously used concept of a fixed maximum number of snowmobiles and snow coaches allowed in the park each day with a new, more flexible approach based on transportation events. Under the new contracts, concessioners will be able to use their allocated number of transportation events for a mix of snow coaches and snowmobiles, subject to certain limits.

In West Yellowstone, Mont., the busiest gate for winter travel into the park, four companies were selected: Back Country Adventures, Buffalo Bus Touring Co., Two Top Snowmobile Rental and Yellowstone Winter Guides.

Absent from that list was See Yellowstone, a winter tour company owned by Clyde Seely and partner Bill Howell who have been a offering winter tours since 1971.

“We were disappointed, especially after all the years we’ve been doing this and working to keep the park open for winter access,” Seely said. “But all we can do now is congratulate those who are winners and wish them the best.”

Selected to provide trips through the south gate were Forever Resorts, Teton Science Schools and Four Seasons Hotel and Resort. Yellowstone Year-Round Safaris will offer tours through the north gate, while Xanterra Parks & Resorts will continue to offer tours under a separate contract previously finalized.

Self-guided snowmobile tours also will be allowed this winter under a plan to be finalized in the coming months. That may create a market for up to five daily best-available technology snowmobile rentals at each gate.

Park officials said selection of bidders was based on protecting park resources, providing services at reasonable rates, experience, financial capability and the proposed franchise fee return to the federal government.

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 655 AM MDT THU APR 17 2014

Today Partly cloudy. Highs 44 to 50. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Tonight Breezy. Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow showers early in the morning. Lows 22 to 28. South winds 15 to 20 mph.

Friday Breezy...cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning. Chance of rain showers through the day. Snow showers likely early in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 43 to 49. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Friday Night Breezy. Cloudy with chance of rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then partly cloudy with slight chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 20 to 26. West winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Saturday Partly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Highs 44 to 50. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Saturday Night Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 22 to 28.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 18, 2014

*Yes, as a matter
of fact we are...*



ANNOUNCEMENTS (Ok, well not EVERYTHING is open!)

TRAIL/BOARDWALK CLOSURES IN THE UPPER GEYSER BASIN - AKA OLD FAITHFUL AREA

There are at least 12 carcasses between OF Geyser and Biscuit Basin with at least 3 grizzly bears and several wolves feasting on them. We are unable to move the carcasses because of their location, so in the interest of everyone's safety we are closing numerous trails and boardwalks in the Upper Geyser Basin. This decision was made in consultation with the Bear Management Office.

Trail/Boardwalk Closures, in addition to normal BMA Closures, include the following:

- Morning Glory/Artemisia Trail from the Lower Store Area to the Grand Loop Road at Biscuit Basin.
- Biscuit Basin parking area and boardwalk.
- Daisy Cut-off trail from the Morning Glory Trail to the Grand Loop Road
- Black Sand Basin to Daisy Geyser Trail

Black Sand Basin parking area and boardwalk remains open with a STRONG Bear Warning posted. As conditions change we will update the OF VEC Staff with the latest information. Please contact the OFVEC or the OF Ranger Station for the latest updates.

Don't forget your bear spray.

We all have access to myaccount.doi.gov, a site that allows users to update their individual Phone and Address information. Many users have blank contact information in Bison Connect and can use this site to correct that. If everybody fills in their info, this might help users select the correct individuals when looking for somebody with a very common name.

There are fields for Latitude and Longitude. If you click on the "magnifying glass" next to those fields, a map will appear. Typing in an address in the top box will display a Lat / Long and mark the map for confirmation.

This app also allows users to see what distribution groups they are in and what other members are in those groups as well.

One other feature - if you place your mouse on "account status" in the upper right, the number of days before your password expires will display.

April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
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- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving



Did you know...

Distracted driving is not just related to talking or texting while driving. It is anything that takes a motorist's eyes off the road for 1-2 seconds or more, Such as eating, sightseeing, controlling children and/or pets, etc.

Do your part...and DRIVE SMART!

Half hour delays are possible, seven days/week, on the road construction project starting from the Gardner River Bridge (near Indian Creek Campground) to the Gibbon River Bridge (near the Norris Campground). Please drive carefully and watch for flag personnel, surveyors, etc.

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back** will be held **Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

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A Gathering of Naturalists presents The Life & Times of One Tree

TONIGHT 7:00pm at the Track & Education Center, #9 Jardine Road. Join John King as he tells about his relationship with one tree in Yellowstone National Park. The tree has lasted hundreds of years and John, through dendrochronology (study of tree rings), got to know it intimately. Those years tell the story of the climate of Yellowstone ... and hint to the future. Get to know one of the longest known living members of the Yellowstone Ecosystem!

- - - - -

Everyone is invited to share in the Holy Week services this week:

Good Friday Service, TONIGHT at 7:30 pm at Mammoth Chapel

Easter Sunday, 4/20 at 9 am at Mammoth Chapel with a community Breakfast immediately following the Easter service at the Mammoth Community Center.

WEATHER**NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 1006 AM MDT FRI APR 18 2014

Rest Of Today: Breezy. Numerous rain showers and snow showers late in the morning...then scattered rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Little or no new snow accumulation. Highs 43 to 49. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight: Breezy. Mostly cloudy then becoming partly cloudy in the late evening and early morning then becoming mostly clear. Scattered rain showers early in the evening...then scattered snow showers and isolated rain showers late in the evening. Lows 19 to 25. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Saturday: Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 45 to 51. Southwest winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy. Lows 22 to 28. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. Highs 47 to 53. Southwest winds around 15 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy. Lows 20 to 26.

Monday: Partly cloudy. Isolated rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 49 to 55. Chance of showers 20 percent.

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Monday, April 21, 2014



It must be ok to return to the park because all these guys were coming back this morning.
(Lori Wilkinson)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Enjoy small group discussions and skills practice that are based upon adult learning principles. **Feel challenged and safe. Learn suicide first aid.** Contact Juanita Bueter at (406) 848-7563 or bueterj@gardiner.org



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SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Monday, April 21, 2014

[REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”](#)

Plows: One crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road. Area Plow at Lake.

Present Location:

South Crew is at the Fire Exhibit Overlook.

East Crew is at Teton Point.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew should make the top of the canyon.

East Crew should make Eleanor Lake.

Snow Conditions:

South, 14 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 5 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

Weather:

Clear, 23 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM
Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM
Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM
Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM
Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM
Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM
Tuesday, April 15, 2014 - Lake to Grant Village 11 AM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS**Were early visitors to Yellowstone Lake fish eaters?**

April 19, 2014 12:00 am • By Brett French

Technology offers great tools for archaeologists, such as analyzing the residue in ancient ceramic containers to reveal what they contained, or testing proteins on stone artifacts to find what animals were butchered or killed with the tools.

Doug MacDonald, an associate professor of archaeology at the University of Montana, found out the hard way that at least one of these laboratory tests couldn't be trusted.

MacDonald has worked with a crew of students and representatives from Yellowstone National Park for the previous eight years examining archaeological sites, many of them around the 139 square miles of Yellowstone Lake. The lake is the largest above 7,000 feet in North America.

The university and park crews have recovered more than 24,000 stone tools or pieces of tools from more than 100 sites around the lake. One artifact has been dated back 9,500 years, not long after a huge 3,500-foot deep ice cap finally melted off Yellowstone. "Far and away" most of the excavated sites date from the last 3,000 years, MacDonald said.

Of the tools sent in for testing, the most common proteins found were from elk and deer. Other proteins that showed up in descending order were bear, rabbit, cats such as mountain lion or bobcat, bison, sheep, dog and rodents like squirrels or gophers. None of the tools came back positive with fish proteins, yet early Euro-American accounts talk about plentiful trout in the streams feeding into and out of Yellowstone Lake, once considered the stronghold of native Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

Fishing evidence

In their study of American Indian use of Yellowstone National Park, Peter Nabokov and Lawrence Loendorf write that fish were second only to bighorn sheep for Shoshone people – called "Sheep Eaters" – known to inhabit the park.

The researchers point to what are believed to be stone net sinkers collected from Yellowstone and housed in the Smithsonian as further evidence of a fishing culture. Similar artifacts have been found at nearby sites, they point

out, and excavations near the Gardner River just outside the north boundary of the park recovered fish bones from cooking pits.

But as Yellowstone archaeologist Elaine Hale pointed out to an overflowing crowd at the Livingston Public Library in a Thursday night presentation on the prehistory of Yellowstone Lake with MacDonald, there's very little detail on where such earlier gathered artifacts were found.

Hale showed a photograph of one net stone, collected by the Bureau of Ethnology in 1884, which has been listed as a sinker.

"Turn it the other way up and I call it wearable art," Hale said, possibly a pendant on a necklace. "It is the only one I've ever seen in the collection of Yellowstone National Park."

Testing the test

Seeking a definitive answer on whether early visitors ate fish, MacDonald decided to run a test. He used a stone tool to cut up a Yellowstone cutthroat trout and then sent it to the lab that had been testing the other Yellowstone artifacts for animal proteins. He did not inform the lab of what he'd done. The test came back negative for fish proteins.

"Needless to say the lab was shocked," MacDonald said. "Here we have pretty good evidence that the antiserum wasn't working."

But at a cost of \$300 a test, it will be a while before the university can afford to have the artifacts properly retested.

Despite the failed tests, MacDonald is fairly convinced that early people weren't visiting Yellowstone Lake to fish.

"That's pretty crazy, huh?" he said. "Because when we go to Yellowstone Lake, we go to fish."

Instead, he believes the main draw was a plentiful supply of nearby plants used for medicine and food. Artifact sites near the lake are concentrated on the northern end, closer to large meadows.

"There are more than 200 different plant species in Yellowstone," MacDonald pointed out. "Sixty of them are edible or medicinal.

"We know that plants were just as much of a draw as animal. Gathering plants was huge, hugely important."

Nabokov and Loendorf agree: Hunting and gathering groups in the Great Basin – which extends into Yellowstone – had a diet that consisted of 30 to 70 percent of roots, seeds, nuts and berries.

Little evidence

Still, Nabokov and Loendorf note that the Sheep Eaters were well schooled in capturing fish with weirs or baskets placed in rivers and streams.

"Although the Sheep Eaters were familiar with hooks and lines, they probably caught more fish with dams, weirs and fish baskets traps. Wherever the water channeled through a narrows, at lake inlets or stream shallows, they

positioned temporary weirs or brush dams. Driving the fish into them, it was easy to spear or scoop them out with basket nets,” they write.

“It makes perfect sense that the Shoshone and Bannock did fish,” MacDonald said of the two related tribes. He noted that the Blackfeet and Crow tribes may have not, since they recount legends of a large monster in Yellowstone Lake.

But MacDonald said his crew’s excavations have found no weirs and no native fish remains at any lake site. The problem is that the acidic soils around the lake don’t preserve bone well, so small fish bones could have deteriorated.

So he posed the question: “Does the absence of evidence equal the evidence of absence?”

The weirs could easily have been swept away in high water or, since they were made of plant materials, could simply have disintegrated. Or maybe the ancient visitors to Yellowstone Lake utilized tools that archaeologists aren’t recognizing as fishing tools, MacDonald further speculated.

“I don’t think they were fishing that much, but it still remains to be seen,” he said. “We need to dig a little deeper.”

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/were-early-visitors-to-yellowstone-lake-fish-eaters/article_c2a5f1b5-25c4-57b5-a35a-53947c444c49.html#ixzz2zXSfQ5OS

Gardiner school trims budget

Published: Thu, 04/17/2014 - 3:00pm

Liz Kearney – Livingston Enterprise

The Gardiner School Board, in the face of a possible \$500,000 shortfall, voted Wednesday night to cut \$200,000 from next year’s budget.

Superintendent JT Stroder said money will be saved by allowing three soon-to-be vacant positions to go unfilled, with some of the duties absorbed by other positions.

The board is also considering offering early retirement packages, but the details have yet to be arranged, Stroder said.

The school’s supplies budget will be cut, and field trips will no longer be free. If any field trips are planned, parents will be expected to pay, he said.

And Stroder expects there will be savings when the school switches to a four-day school week next year.

The cuts are less severe than the mildest of potential cuts Stroder presented to the board in a public workshop held last week.

The school board learned of the shortfall earlier this year. The school had received annual payments from Yellowstone National Park since 1948, based on the number of schoolchildren attending from nearby Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyo. The Mammoth students are the children of National Park Service and concession company employees who are legally Wyoming residents.

Park officials learned that a 1976 law had superseded the previous payments, but the law was not discovered until the federal budget freeze late last year. An expected payment based on last year's enrollment figures was never made. Montana senators Jon Tester and John Walsh are asking the Department of the Interior to forgive the overpayments, which some estimated at \$7 to \$10 million dollars.

Meanwhile, board members appeared confident last week that funding will eventually come from the state of Wyoming, either through creating a new school district at Mammoth or annexing Mammoth to a nearby Park County, Wyo., school district.

Depending on how long it takes to secure Wyoming funds, the Gardiner school could have to continue to cut and dip into its cash reserves of about \$1.4 million.

Read more: http://www.livingstonenterprise.com/content/gardiner-school-trims-budget?cookie_check=1

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 659 AM MDT MON APR 21 2014

Today Mostly sunny in the late morning and early afternoon then becoming partly cloudy. Highs 50 to 56.

Tonight Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of rain showers in the evening...then chance of rain showers and snow showers after midnight. Lows 29 to 35. South winds around 15 mph late in the evening becoming south around 15 mph early in the morning. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Tuesday Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Slight chance of snow showers and rain showers early in the morning...then chance of rain showers late in the morning. Rain showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds in the afternoon. Little or no snow accumulation. Highs 49 to 55. South winds 15 to 25 mph with gusts to around 40 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tuesday Night Breezy...colder. Rain showers...snow showers likely and slight chance of thunderstorms in the evening...then snow showers likely after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 22 to 28. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Wednesday Breezy...colder. Snow showers likely. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Highs 29 to 35. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 70 percent.

Wednesday Night Breezy...colder. Mostly cloudy. Snow showers likely in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Light snow accumulations. Lows 15 to 21. Chance of snow 70 percent.

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Electric shop and Radio shop will be trenching between the **YCR and Fire Cache tomorrow** Wednesday April 23. There will be a temporary closure of the road between the two buildings. This should last no longer than one hour. If there are any questions or problems please contact Trent Coppinger.

Radio Training has been set up for the following dates.

May 5 9am - 11am

May 8 9am - 11am

If you have a portable radio, please bring it with you when you come to training.

Please sign up on the SharePoint site.

<http://inpyellshare/Calendars/Lists/Radio%20Training/Calendar1.aspx>

If these two dates fill up, we will schedule more training dates.

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Status as of Tuesday, April 22, 2014

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Plows: One crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road. Area Plow at Bridge Bay.

Present Location:

South Crew is at Top of the Canyon.

East Crew is at Eleanor Lake.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew should make Twin parking lots.

East Crew should make Sylvan Pass. Avalanche training this morning.

Snow Conditions:

South, 14 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 4 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

Weather:

Snowing with a skiff of accumulation, 27 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

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IN THE NEWS

Researchers look at key Yellowstone area elk migrations

1 hour ago • By CHRISTINE PETERSON Casper Star-Tribune

Tens of thousands of elk move in masses from low, hilly country outside Yellowstone National Park into forested mountains and high meadows.

They dot the landscape near Cody, Jackson and portions of Idaho and Montana. They spend the winter scraping by on feedgrounds and ranches, in sage brush and grassy plains. They give birth in the spring, and teach their young to follow similar paths from winter to summer and back again.

Nearly everything in and around Yellowstone National Park revolves in some way around the elk. They feed the eagles, wolves and grizzly bears so many people travel to see. They support a tourism economy through hunting and wildlife viewing that's critical to surrounding cities and towns.

Elk are a barometer of the health for the entire ecosystem, said Arthur Middleton, a Yale ecologist who is also a research associate with the Wyoming Migration Initiative at the University of Wyoming. As they change, so will other populations in and around the top quarter of the state.

But unlike many other migrations in the West, their paths are not in immediate peril.

Their ranges are largely protected by sprawling ranches and federal lands. Their numbers have adjusted to more predators, and wildlife managers have even increased hunting licenses in some areas.

“The greater Yellowstone is a relatively intact ecosystem, but even there we tend to study elk one by one or on their winter range or summer range,” Middleton said. “We tend to take a fragmented approach, even in our heads. We tend to study these migrations according to jurisdictional or administrative boundaries.”

Middleton wants to look at the entire ecosystem including when grass greens, where and when elk migrate and how climate change could alter their habits.

But first, he and other researchers need a baseline. Middleton and Wyoming-based National Geographic photographer Joe Riis received a \$100,000 grant in February from the Camp Monaco Prize started by the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's Draper Natural History Museum, the University of Wyoming's Biodiversity Institute and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation-USA. They will spend two to three years studying elk in the greater Yellowstone area.

They started tracking the Cody elk herd in March with GPS collars that send signals every 45 minutes, giving the researchers precise locations along the animals' entire journey. Riis will set cameras along routes, recording the migration for both scientists and the public. In the end, Middleton and Riis should be able to map the herd's path by time and location.

Middleton will also collect all existing information for other herds in the Yellowstone area gathered by myriad groups including the Wyoming and Montana wildlife agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park services, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

“Am I worried a migratory population is going to go extinct in this immediate area? I don’t think so,” he said. “But we’re kind of fortunate here. In other places not too far away, including other areas of the West, there aren’t even migrations to study to understand what might change it down the road.”

Middleton wants to understand how and why the massive elk migrations work. He also wants to know how much flexibility elk have in changing the way they migrate -- if leaving earlier, for example, would help or hurt their numbers.

Yellowstone National Park serves as a melting pot for the handful of elk herds surrounding the area, said Doug McWhirter, wildlife biologist with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

“They mix on the summer range and go to different winter ranges,” he said. “To me the juxtaposition of the protected areas like Yellowstone, the National Forest and (Bureau of Land Management) and super, super important private lands. The migrations show these animals make use of all of that and need all of that.”

Each herd migrates between 30 and 100 miles between their winter and summer ranges, Middleton said.

Riis will set camera traps along the migration route for the Cody elk herd to show the scientists and the public how and when the animals move. The images and information will not only help people better understand the importance of elk migration, but may allow Game and Fish to monitor the herds remotely without costly and potentially dangerous survey flights, Middleton said.

And all of the information will ultimately help wildlife managers like McWhirter better understand, and plan, for Wyoming’s critical elk migrations.

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/researchers-look-at-key-yellowstone-area-elk-migrations/article_d8f7fedd-4503-5339-b024-d2bd69fc2ede.html#ixzz2zd6zMleb

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Gardiner voters approve 3-percent resort tax

Published: Wed, 04/16/2014 - 3:00pm

Natalie Storey — Livingston Enterprise

The Gardiner resort tax has passed by a margin of 3 to 1, according to the Park County Clerk and Recorder.

Denise Nelson said 337 votes were cast in the election, which ended April 8. Of the votes cast, 251 voted for the resort tax, while 76 voted against.

The measure imposes a 3-percent tax on the “retail value of goods and services sold within the resort area for lodging, camping facilities, food service, luxuries and gift items during the months of June, July, August and September,” according to a petition for the tax.

The tax would take effect June 1 for 20 years, the petition says.

People who live inside the resort area where the tax will be collected, which is roughly the Gardiner-Park County Water and Sewer District, voted in the special election.

Items like groceries, medicine, hardware, appliances and gas — things that locals buy on a regular basis — will not be taxed. The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce worked with an MSU economist, who determined the tax would bring at least \$1 million to Gardiner each year.

The funds will be administered by the Park County Commission to start off, in coordination with a local advisory board. But Bierschwale said eventually organizers would like to create a resort district, which would allow a local board of elected members to handle the resort tax money.

To be designated as a resort area, a community must prove it has a population of less than 2,500 and that a major portion of the area's economic well-being is derived from tourism. The resort area designation is separate from a resort community, which includes incorporated towns like Whitefish and West Yellowstone.

The resort area designation applies to communities that are not incorporated, such as Gardiner. Other resort areas that have taxes include St. Regis, Big Sky and Seeley Lake.

The 3 percent tax in Big Sky, passed in 1992, has raised more than \$30 million for the community, according its website, www.resorttax.org.

Read more: <http://www.livingstonenterprise.com/content/gardiner-voters-approve-3-percent-resort-tax>

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 814 AM MDT TUE APR 22 2014

Today Breezy. Numerous snow showers early in the morning. Numerous rain showers through the day. Scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon. Some thunderstorms may be severe with damaging winds and small hail late in the afternoon. New snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 51 to 57. South winds 15 to 25 mph in the late morning and afternoon. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tonight Breezy. Rain showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the evening. Snow showers likely through the night. Some thunderstorms may produce gusty winds and small hail early in the evening. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 20 to 26. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Wednesday Breezy...colder. Snow showers likely in the morning... Then snow showers likely and chance of rain showers in the afternoon. Snow accumulation around 1 inch. Highs 32 to 38. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Wednesday Night Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Snow showers likely in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Total snow accumulation 2 to 6 inches. Lows 16 to 22. West winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent.

Thursday Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning...then chance of rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 38 to 44. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Thursday Night Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 22 to 28. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the [Wellness Incentive Program](#) (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply

complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

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Do you see something we could do to improve safety in Yellowstone OR do you see a co-worker who has done something positive about safety? Use the [Safety Recognition Program](#) to report a hazard occurring in the park or nominate a Safety Champion. Full program details can be found using the link above. We want to hear from YOU!

WE WANT YOUR SUBMISSIONS!

Have something to share with other NPS employees in the park? We're especially interested in items occurring outside Mammoth, and in getting digital photos of employees at work! Please remember to send your text or photo submissions for the newsletter to us at YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov (not individual's email), so that whoever is doing the newsletter that day has access to it. Thanks!

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

YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 23, 2014

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRAIL/BOARDWALK CLOSURES IN THE UPPER GEYSER BASIN - AKA OLD FAITHFUL AREA

There are at least 12 carcasses between OF Geyser and Biscuit Basin with at least 3 grizzly bears and several wolves feasting on them. We are unable to move the carcasses because of their location, so in the interest of everyone's safety we are closing numerous trails and boardwalks in the Upper Geyser Basin. This decision was made in consultation with the Bear Management Office.

Trail/Boardwalk Closures, in addition to normal BMA Closures, include the following:

- Morning Glory/Artemisia Trail from the Lower Store Area to the Grand Loop Road at Biscuit Basin.
- Biscuit Basin parking area and boardwalk.
- Daisy Cut-off trail from the Morning Glory Trail to the Grand Loop Road
- Black Sand Basin to Daisy Geyser Trail

Black Sand Basin parking area and boardwalk remains open with a STRONG Bear Warning posted. As conditions change we will update the OF VEC Staff with the latest information. Please contact the OFVEC or the OF Ranger Station for the latest updates. Don't forget your bear spray.

We all have access to myaccount.doi.gov, a site that allows users to update their individual Phone and Address information. Many users have blank contact information in Bison Connect and can use this site to correct that. If everybody fills in their info, this might help users select the correct individuals when looking for somebody with a very common name.

There are fields for Latitude and Longitude. If you click on the "magnifying glass" next to those fields, a map will appear. Typing in an address in the top box will display a Lat / Long and mark the map for confirmation.

This app also allows users to see what distribution groups they are in and what other members are in those groups as well.

One other feature - if you place your mouse on "account status" in the upper right, the number of days before your password expires will display.

Electric shop and Radio shop will be trenching between the **TODAY**. There will be a temporary closure of the road between the two buildings. This should last no longer than one hour. If there are any questions or problems please contact Trent Coppinger.

Radio Training has been set up for the following dates.

May 5 9am - 11am

May 8 9am - 11am

If you have a portable radio, please bring it with you when you come to training.

Please sign up on the SharePoint site.

<http://inpyellshare/Calendars/Lists/Radio%20Training/Calendar1.aspx>

If these two dates fill up, we will schedule more training dates.

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Gardiner-Yellowstone Park Residents; Friday and Saturday April 25 and 26 an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshop will be offered to available residents at the **Mammoth Community Center**. The ASIST workshop is for people who want to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

The ASIST training is sponsored by The Help Center, Inc & the Department of Health and Human Services/Suicide Prevention Office. The curriculum takes both days from 9-5. Participation in the full two days is required. There is no fee for this training.

Enjoy small group discussions and skills practice that are based upon adult learning principles. **Feel challenged and safe. Learn suicide first aid.** Contact Juanita Bueter at (406) 848-7563 or bueterj@gardiner.org

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April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
- Understand the dangers of the cognitive distraction to the brain
- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving

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Get this outstanding community event on your calendar: 35th ANNUAL PARK to PARADISE

TRIATHLON! Race Day: Saturday, May 10th. RACE DAY REGISTRATION at **YANKEE JIM RIVER ACCESS (8:45-9:45)**. Parking is tight, please carpool. Boaters, drop your boats at Brogan's before arrival at registration. You will be bussed to the start. Race meeting at 10 AM at Yankee Jim River Access. Race begins at 10:30 AM. Boating from Brogan's Landing to Yankee Jim River Access (7 miles); running from Yankee Jim River Access North on HWY 89 to the Carbella green boxes (4 miles); biking across the Carbella bridge turning back south onto the Old Yellowstone Trail Road and continuing through Yankee Jim Canyon to finish at Arch Park in Gardiner (17.5 miles). Not racing but want to help on race day? Great, contact Stacey Gunther at 406-848-7941.

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Half hour delays are possible, seven days/week, on the road construction project starting from the Gardner River Bridge (near Indian Creek Campground) to the Gibbon River Bridge (near the Norris Campground). Please drive carefully and watch for flag personnel, surveyors, etc.

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back will be held Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim! This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Wednesday, April 23, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: One crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road. Area Plow at Grant Village.

Present Location:

South Crew is at South Gate.

East Crew is at Sylvan Lake.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew will be widening the road coming back toward Grant, should make Lewis Lake.

East Crew should make Brown Drift.

Snow Conditions:

South, 4 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, going through avalanche zone, snow levels could be up to 22 feet snow.

Weather:

28 degrees with intermittent spring snow storms, a skiff of new snow accumulation.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

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Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 726 AM MDT WED APR 23 2014

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Tonight Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow showers. Lows 16 to 22. Southwest winds 15 to 25 mph.

Thursday Breezy. Not as cool. Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning...then chance of rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon. Highs 39 to 45. West winds 15 to 25 mph. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Thursday Night Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers and rain showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 22 to 28. Southwest winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of precipitation 40 percent.

Friday Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning... Then rain showers likely in the afternoon. Little or no snow accumulation. Highs 42 to 48. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Friday Night Cloudy. Chance of rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 25 to 31. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

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In you have employees without access to computers, please work with your them to cover topics that interest them at your weekly tailgate safety sessions.

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A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

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Present Location:

South Crew is at Top of the Canyon.

East Crew is at Brown Drift.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew will be widening the road coming back toward Grant, should make Lewis Campground.

No East Crew today.

Snow Conditions:

South, 4 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 10 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

Weather:

27 degrees, cloudy.

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IN THE NEWS**FWP boss announces scaled-back Montana bison plan**

17 hours ago • By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

Expectations for a statewide bison-conservation plan were scaled back by Montana's top wildlife official on Wednesday following backlash from ranchers opposed to restoring the animals to parts of their historical habitat.

Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director Jeff Hagener said in an interview with The Associated Press that it was no longer considered viable to establish a herd of free-roaming bison without any fencing or other limitations on where they can go.

A pilot project to restore a small herd of 50 to 100 bison is a potential first step in the conservation plan, Hagener said. That's a far more modest goal than one earlier proposal to create a new herd of roughly 1,000 animals somewhere in Montana as a way to help preserve their genetics.

Hagener said he hopes to compile a range of new alternatives before the Legislature meets in January. Timing on a final decision is uncertain. State officials originally hoped to have a plan in place by the end of this year.

"Free-roaming is unrealistic," Hagener said. "There's going to have to be some level of containment."

State officials last week cancelled a long-scheduled, two-day meeting on bison that was planned in Lewistown. The move came after ranchers pledged to protest the event.

Those involved in the meeting decided it would be counter-productive given the strong antipathy to the animals that's emerged in many eastern Montana ranching communities, Hagener said.

The opposition centers on worries that bison will destroy fences and other property and compete with cattle for grazing space on an arid landscape that can support only so many animals.

"They want them to roam like elk and antelope," said Vicki Olson, a rancher south of Malta. "I have those (elk and antelope) on my ranch and live with them, but I don't think I can live with bison."

Tens of millions of plains bison roamed much of North America before overhunting drove them nearly to extinction in the late 1800s. Conservationists, including hunters and wildlife advocates, have pushed for decades for the animals to be restored to parts of their range.

However, there's been a tendency to disregard the fact that Olson and other ranchers now occupy the landscape, former state wildlife commissioner Ron Moody said.

"That's been a fatal flaw of the advocacy for the reintroduction of bison," Moody said. "Yes, we would like an opportunity to hunt bison some place out on the plains in eastern Montana, but we don't want to do that as adversaries of ranchers."

Restoration of the animals in Montana would rely on surplus bison from Yellowstone National Park., which has the largest surviving wild herd of genetically pure animals. The park has struggled to keep the population in check as required under a federal-state agreement intended to prevent the spread of a disease that can spread to livestock.

About 60 bison captured from the park were relocated beginning in 2012 to Montana's Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Indian reservations. The animals had gone through a lengthy quarantine to ensure they were disease-free, yet the move was widely condemned by ranchers and some state lawmakers.

An additional group of about 135 to 150 quarantined bison are being held on a ranch near Bozeman owned by media mogul and bison advocate Ted Turner. They are scheduled to be moved by November. The prospects of the animals ending up on public lands appear increasingly slim given the delays in the statewide conservation plan.

Those animals could end up on tribal land or under the care of a private conservation group at least temporarily until the plan is finalized, Hagener said.

Read more: http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/fwp-boss-announces-scaled-back-montana-bison-plan/article_ea4efdf9-2042-5d08-9238-dcda07353fa3.html#ixzz2zoofu2z1

WEATHER

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Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

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Tonight Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Chance of rain showers and snow showers early in the evening...then chance of snow showers in the late evening and overnight. Lows 22 to 28. Southwest winds 15 to 20 mph until early morning. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Friday Cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning...then rain showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 41 to 47. Southeast winds around 15 mph late in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Friday Night Cloudy. Chance of rain showers and snow showers in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Lows 25 to 31. Southeast winds around 15 mph shifting to the northwest after midnight. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Saturday Snow showers and rain showers likely in the morning... Then rain showers...snow showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 39 to 45. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Saturday Night Snow showers...rain showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Light snow accumulations. Lows 23 to 29. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

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YNP@Work

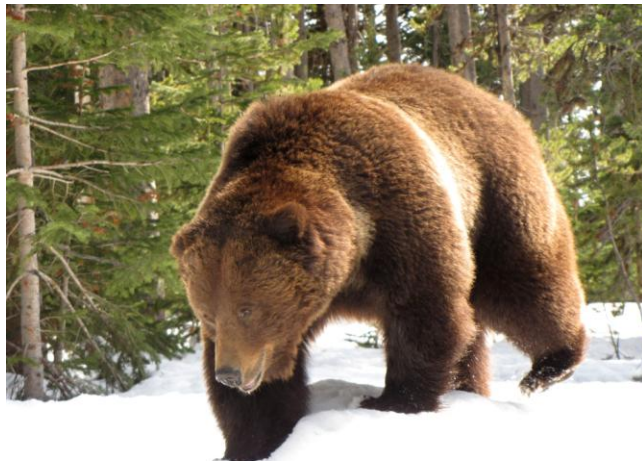
A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Friday, April 25, 2014



Chug Chug Chug! Spring may still be a few miles away on Sylvan Pass! (Brad Ross, photo)

But not for THIS guy!
(Dan Hottle, photo)



Check out these links to two stories about spring opening that aired on Bozeman's KBZK TV:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U9yN34eBrQ&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veNu-1ovriA>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Half hour delays are possible, seven days/week, on the road construction project starting from the Gardner River Bridge (near Indian Creek Campground) to the Gibbon River Bridge (near the Norris Campground). Please drive carefully and watch for flag personnel, surveyors, etc.

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TRAIL/BOARDWALK CLOSURES IN THE UPPER GEYSER BASIN - AKA OLD FAITHFUL AREA

There are at least 12 carcasses between OF Geyser and Biscuit Basin with at least 3 grizzly bears and several wolves feasting on them. We are unable to move the carcasses because of their location, so in the interest of everyone's safety we are closing numerous trails and boardwalks in the Upper Geyser Basin. This decision was made in consultation with the Bear Management Office.

Trail/Boardwalk Closures, in addition to normal BMA Closures, include the following:

- Morning Glory/Artemisia Trail from the Lower Store Area to the Grand Loop Road at Biscuit Basin.
- Biscuit Basin parking area and boardwalk.
- Daisy Cut-off trail from the Morning Glory Trail to the Grand Loop Road
- Black Sand Basin to Daisy Geyser Trail

Black Sand Basin parking area and boardwalk remains open with a **STRONG** Bear Warning posted. As conditions change we will update the OF VEC Staff with the latest information. Please contact the OFVEC or the OF Ranger Station for the latest updates. Don't forget your bear spray.

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The Yellowstone Association Institute will be hosting a **Wilderness First Aid certification course** taught through Wilderness Medical Associates of NOLS. The course will take place May 14 and 15 at the headquarters classroom in Gardiner. Some spots are available for NPS staff at a reduced rate of \$140. Please call (406) 848-2400 for more information or to enroll.

- - - - -

There will be a **Wildland Fire Refresher and pack test** on Tuesday, April 29. For those wishing to take the pack test, please meet at the Fire Cache at 0900. The classroom portion will begin at 1030 in the Cache training room. Please call or email Laura Dooley if you would like to attend, as there is still room available.

- - - - -

We all have access to myaccount.doi.gov, a site that allows users to update their individual Phone and Address information. Many users have blank contact information in Bison Connect and can use this site to correct that. If everybody fills in their info, this might help users select the correct individuals when looking for somebody with a very common name.

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One other feature - if you place your mouse on "account status" in the upper right, the number of days before your password expires will display.

GOT DRUGS ?? The semi-annual **DEA Drug Take Back will be held Saturday April 26th** at the Yellowstone Association Building in Gardiner, MT from 10am til 2pm. Bring your un-used, expired, unwanted over the counter meds, prescription meds, pet meds, vitamins, etc..to be collected and safely disposed of by the DEA. (no needles please) Keep these meds from falling into the wrong hands or ending up in our water supply or in a landfill. Please call Bonnie at x2103 with questions...

Radio Training has been set up for the following dates.

May 5 9am - 11am

May 8 9am - 11am

If you have a portable radio, please bring it with you when you come to training.

Please sign up on the SharePoint site.

<http://inpyellshare/Calendars/Lists/Radio%20Training/Calendar1.aspx>

If these two dates fill up, we will schedule more training dates.

April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
- Understand the dangers of the cognitive distraction to the brain
- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving

Get this outstanding community event on your calendar: 35th ANNUAL PARK to PARADISE

TRIATHLON! Race Day: Saturday, May 10th. **RACE DAY REGISTRATION at YANKEE JIM RIVER ACCESS (8:45-9:45)**. Parking is tight, please carpool. Boaters, drop your boats at Brogan's before arrival at registration. You will be bussed to the start. Race meeting at 10 AM at Yankee Jim River Access. Race begins at 10:30 AM. Boating from Brogan's Landing to Yankee Jim River Access (7 miles); running from Yankee Jim River Access North on HWY 89 to the Carbella green boxes (4 miles); biking across the Carbella bridge turning back south onto the Old Yellowstone Trail Road and continuing through Yankee Jim Canyon to finish at Arch Park in Gardiner (17.5 miles). Not racing but want to help on race day? Great, contact Stacey Gunther at 406-848-7941.

BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim! This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving

the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor.

- - - - -

IN THE NEWS

U.S. News names top-ranked Montana high schools

GREAT FALLS -- U.S. News & World Report has released its annual report of top high schools across the nation and also in each state.

<http://www.kbzk.com/news/u-s-news-names-top-ranked-montana-high-schools/>

The methodology used to determine the rankings are as follows:

- *Step 1: The first step determined whether each school's students were performing better than statistically expected for the average student in the state. We started by looking at reading and math results for all students on each state's high school proficiency tests. We then factored in the percentage of economically disadvantaged students - who tend to score lower - enrolled at the school to identify the schools that were performing better than statistical expectations.*
- *Step 2: For those schools that made it past this first step, the second step determined whether the school's least-disadvantaged students - black, Hispanic and low-income - were performing better than average for similar students in the state. We compared each school's math and reading proficiency rates for disadvantaged students with the statewide results for these student groups and then selected schools that were performing better than this state average.*
- *Step 3: Schools that made it through the first two steps became eligible to be judged nationally on the final step - college-readiness performance - using Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate test data as the benchmarks for success, depending on which program was largest at the school.*

Here are the top-ranked high schools in Montana, according to the report; [click here](#) to see the full listings. [Click here](#) to read more about the methodology.

- Gardiner High School: 81 students, 7 teachers
- Bozeman High School: 1,825 students, 106 teachers
- Chinook High School: 123 students, 9 teachers
- Anaconda High School: 355 students, 20 teachers
- Joliet High School: 136 students, 11 teachers
- Plains High School: 162 students; 12 teachers
- Sunburst High School: 69 students; 10 teachers

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 521 AM MDT FRI APR 25 2014

Today: Numerous snow showers through the day. Numerous rain showers in the late morning and early afternoon...then scattered rain showers and isolated thunderstorms late in the afternoon. Snow accumulation up to 1 inch. Highs 40 to 46. South winds around 15 mph. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Tonight: Rain showers and snow showers likely in the evening... Then chance of snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches. Lows 26 to 32. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.

Saturday: Snow showers likely in the morning...then rain showers... Snow showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches. Highs 39 to 45. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Saturday Night: Snow showers...rain showers likely and isolated thunderstorms in the evening...then chance of snow showers after midnight. Snow accumulation of 2 to 3 inches. Total snow accumulation 4 to 10 inches. Lows 21 to 27. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy. Chance of snow showers in the morning... Then chance of snow showers and rain showers in the afternoon. Highs 36 to 42. West winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation 50 percent.

Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow showers. Lows 18 to 24.

Monday: Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of snow showers. Highs 31 to 37.

Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

All employees are encouraged to participate in the Wellness Incentive Program (WIP). Full program details can be found by clicking the link above. You may begin participation at the beginning of any month. Simply complete a certification form and submit it to Stacey Gunther by the fifth day of the following month (i.e. send by April 5th for wellness participation during March). Five names will be drawn each month for an award.

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Monday, April 28, 2014

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SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Monday, April 28, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – "SAFETY FIRST"

Plows: One Crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road, One Crew on Craig Pass. Area Plow at Grant Village.

Present Location:

South Crew is at Top of the Canyon.

East Crew is at Brown Drift.

Craig Pass Crew is at West Thumb.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew will be widening the road to West Thumb Junction.

East Crew should make East Gate.

Craig Pass Crew should make Delacy Picnic Area.

Snow Conditions:

South, 4 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 4 feet snow, 3" ice on pavement.

Weather:

27 degrees, cloudy.

Communication Center will announce when official "Administrative Travel" is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 - Lake to Grant Village 11 AM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

IN THE NEWS

Park officials update community on summer plans

Posted: Sunday, April 27, 2014 8:27 pm

By Melea Burke West Yellowstone News

A year ago, Yellowstone National Park administrators were scrambling to deal with effects of a federal budget sequestration that delayed the West Gate's summer opening for a week, but this year, transitioning to the warm season is going much more smoothly, according to park superintendent Dan Wenk. After a tough 2013, the park budget has returned to 2012 levels, Wenk said, and Yellowstone will be able to offer adequate visitor services this year.

"Budget travails continued last (fall) with the government shutdown, which hit especially hard in the gateway communities," he explained.

But now, "we're pretty comfortable," Wenk said.

He and colleagues Steve Iobst, the park's deputy superintendent, and chief of concessions George Helfrich visited with community members Tuesday afternoon at the West Yellowstone Visitors Center, offering updates road closures and construction plans for the summer ahead.

More than 6,000 people visited Old Faithful last weekend over the park's opening three days, which was a success despite delays in plowing park roads, Wenk said. Crews continue clearing roads near the South Entrance, but 12 to 14 feet of snow is making for slow going.

"It may not look like it (in West Yellowstone), but in the park, snow levels are in the top five — or even the top two or three — (that we've seen) in the last 15 to 20 years," he added.

Detailed snowpack history for the park can be found at climateanalyzer.org, but Wenk said Yellowstone is sitting at about 150 percent of its average water content.

"We're expecting a large runoff," he said. "It all depends on how it comes off."

Bison were a hot topic at Tuesday's discussion, and Wenk said bison migration on the north end of Yellowstone has been a "success story" this year. Over 1,100 of the large ungulates roamed outside the park's northern boundary this spring, and now "almost all the bison are back in the park," Wenk said. As of Tuesday, there were about 100 bison outside the park in the Eagle Creek area and around 50 north of the park. In the Hebgen Basin

west of Yellowstone, snow levels are such that the National Park Service and the State of Montana will need to have a “serious discussion” about whether the park is ready to receive bison before any bison in Montana are hazed back into Yellowstone, Wenk added. In response to a question asked later in the meeting, Wenk explained that the last big snow year for the Yellowstone area was 2011, and hazing on the west side did not begin until May 29.

“I’m confident we have a good relationship with the state to make that as easy as possible, especially on the bison,” he said.

Summer visitors will be especially interested in several road construction projects planned this year in Yellowstone. The first is already under way between Norris Geyser Basin and Golden Gate, where a 5.5-mile stretch of road is being widened from 22 feet to 30 feet and a bridge over the Gardiner River — the park’s “other” Seven Mile Bridge — replaced. Travel is restricted to one lane, which will continue for two years, Iobst said, and this June, nighttime closures will also take effect (the park service will release specifics as the date nears). The road will be fully closed Sept. 14-30 for bridge work; Dunraven Pass will remain open for travel between Tower and Canyon.

A project to replace the Isa Lake Bridge on Craig Pass will be awarded in the next couple of weeks, Iobst noted, and work should begin on the bridge in early June, with possible half-hour delays. The road between Old Faithful and West Thumb will close for the season at 6 a.m. Sept. 2 and won’t reopen until June 11, 2015.

The park is also moving forward with several construction projects to improve visitor services and lodging. On Dec. 1, Yellowstone began a 20-year contract with concessions management company Xanterra, terms of which require Xanterra to complete a slew of improvements to concessions throughout the park.

This summer, Helfrich estimated park lodging will provide 28,000 fewer room-nights than usual due to construction on the Lake Hotel and on Canyon-area lodging. That could be good news for West Yellowstone business owners, as travelers will have to look outside the park for rooms.

Notably for RV travelers, the Fishing Bridge RV sites will be enlarged and updated to accommodate the modern house-on-wheels. The project is expected to wrap up by 2019, and will leave Fishing Bridge with 328 RV sites down from the current 358.

Read more: http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_b1a34b5c-ce7c-11e3-a073-001a4bcf887a.html

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Kids study park at Expedition Yellowstone

Posted: Sunday, April 27, 2014 8:45 pm | *Updated: 8:59 pm, Sun Apr 27, 2014.*

By MIKE MOORE West Yellowstone News

[Kids study park at Expedition Yellowstone](#)

Stormy skies began to break as caravans full of eager sixth-grade students from West Yellowstone rolled into Norris Geyser Basin Tuesday for an afternoon of testing thermal features and water pH levels.

Students spent the week in Yellowstone for the annual Expedition Yellowstone trip, a five-day event highlighting geology, ecology and human history. Students visited various areas of the park to conduct research, learn about the park first-hand from rangers and have fun at the same time.

Sixth-grade instructor Sarah Hanson and a fleet of chaperones led 19 students on the trip.

At Norris Geyser Basin, Yellowstone Park ranger and education technician Michael Breis, who was their guide and geothermal specialist for the afternoon, greeted the students. The ranger took the students around the Black Basin loop to collect water samples, water temperatures and test pH levels. Students then ventured to Mammoth Hot Springs the following day to compare their results to a different area of Yellowstone.

According to Hanson, several weeks of lessons in the classroom helped the students prepare for the three major subject areas. For a refresher course, students attended class daily during the expedition to prepare for the following day's adventure.

"The Park Service put together a neat curriculum binder that teaches lessons before, after and during trips," Hanson said.

Students were based out of the Lamar Buffalo Ranch in the Lamar Valley. They split into smaller "clans" during the week and were required to rotate responsibilities such as making meals and cleaning up. The "clans" also made it easier for the group to stay together and in an orderly fashion while walking the park's boardwalks. Hanson said the group really came together during the week, which she said was neat to see as a teacher.

"We get up at 6:30 a.m. and they have chores to do in the morning; we are busy," she said.

Along the boardwalk at Norris, Breis stopped periodically by thermal features to teach students about what they're viewing, and why those thermal features exist.

After spending some time at Steamboat Geyser, students ventured down the boardwalk to test the water where it was more easily accessible in a stream-like area. Breis used a long stick with a cup attached to gather the geyser's water for students to test pH levels. Students also observed color and water temperature to determine microbes present.

Clans showed off their creative skills on Thursday evening around a campfire at the ranch with originally-penned legends, where they had to act out skits about something in Yellowstone.

Hanson says the expedition is conducted with the sixth grade each year, as it is a good age for students participate in the program.

The trip is made possible through the Reid Sanders Outdoor Education Memorial Foundation, which sends the groups on the trip to the Lamar Buffalo Ranch each spring.

The fund was established by Kelli Sanders after the tragic death of her late husband, Reid, who fell from his death in a climbing accident near the summit of Mount St. Elias in 2002.

Sanders says she received money and donations from people following the incident and wanted to put it toward something for children that involved being outside.

At that time, Janice Carsley was the sixth-grade teacher at the school and had always wanted to do the program with her students, Sanders said.

“She thought it was a great idea but couldn’t raise the money for it,” Sanders said. “Someone told me about the West Yellowstone Foundation, which enabled me to mark (the money) for the sixth grade every year. As the money whittled away, the West Yellowstone Foundation started an endowment that was earmarked for Expedition Yellowstone.”

The trip costs \$40 a person per night, coming to around \$4,200 for 24 people to attend.

Hanson says the trip is an eye-opening experience for her students, as they live next to a national park that sees visitors from around the world.

“They live so close to the park, and it is a neat opportunity for the students to learn about the park,” she said.

“They get a deeper understanding of the park and appreciation of where we live. People come from all over the world to experience this and it’s in our back yards.”

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Yellowstone wildlife captivates photographers, ignites passion

Posted: Sunday, April 27, 2014 8:16 pm | Updated: 8:25 pm, Sun Apr 27, 2014.

By MIKE MOORE West Yellowstone News

[Yellowstone wildlife captivates photographers, ignites passion](#)

By MIKE MOORE West Yellowstone News

Local photographer Mike Burdic first became interested in photography more than 30 years ago, teaching himself using a camera his father gave him. When that camera was stolen, Burdic let his passion for photography fade throughout the following 20 years.

It was during a trip to Yellowstone 12 years ago with his wife Lanette that Burdic was reminded of his love for photography.

“I was using mom’s point-and-click and it didn’t show the beauty,” he said. “I knew I had to get a camera again.”

It was also a realization that his Portland, Oregon, home wasn’t where he wanted to live anymore, informing his employer that he was “moving to the Rocky Mountains” as soon as he returned from vacation.

Now a year-round resident, Burdic enjoys driving around the backcountry of Yellowstone. He often decides with his wife on a specific location to venture to and just waits to see what happens. In the past 10 years he says there have only been a handful of instances where he didn’t find something worth photographing.

“I pick an area and see what comes along,” he said. “Sometimes it is just a mountain bluebird, but you never know. You have to have a camera to be ready. We live in an amazing area.”

Burdic enjoys photographing wildflowers such as western c root orchid, spotted choral, Indian paintbrush, elephant head orchid and white bog orchid. He also has a keen eye for capturing unique wildlife photos and has recently started experimenting with low-light images and black-and-white photography.

“I’ve been getting into low-light; it’s all trial and error photography and is an ongoing experiment,” he said. “I’m focusing hard on wildlife portraits; I’m trying to capture the essence of the animal without intruding on its space.”

Burdic says he connects with an animal before snapping a single photo to communicate to the animal that he is not a predator. This often results in more personal images captured of the animals, he says.

“It’s a living soul and shares that moment with you,” he said. “The feeling is almost impossible to describe.”

The photographer says his parents told stories without photos, and that if his grandchildren question his stories, he will have the photographs to back them up.

Burdic says he gained his appreciation for wildlife and land through his grandparents, most notably his grandmother.

“She is the one who instilled respect and love of life and land,” he said. “I give all credit for my talents and gifts to ‘the man upstairs.’ All I do is click the shutter.”

Burdic is one of many photographers who flock to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to explore the abundance of wildlife opportunities that exist.

According to Yellowstone National Park South District Resource Education Ranger Rich Jehle, Yellowstone's wildlife is unique, in that it has the largest concentration of native wildlife in the lower 48 states.

"Just about every native species of wildlife since the 1872 founding (of the park) are still here, with very few exceptions, especially since wolves were reintroduced," Jehle said.

The park ranger says visitors can see wildlife in big numbers year-round in Yellowstone; however, the seasons of spring fall and winter are the best times.

The first few weeks following the spring opening of the park's roads make for incredible wildlife viewing, as ungulates roam at lower elevations hugging the river corridors. Since a number of the park's roads follow these corridors, visitors can often see nearby wildlife from the road.

"Spring is, in some ways the best time of the year to see wildlife on the west side of the park," he said. "This is a good time to see grizzly bears, especially along the Firehole drainage. There is a fair amount of winter-kill bison between Fountain Paint Pots and Old Faithful. There has been some significant bear activity in that corridor."

The area between Madison Junction and Old Faithful usually has high bear activity in the spring, as heat from the geyser basins keeps snow levels at a minimum, and animals like elk and bison flock to the area to forage during the harsh winter. The Firehole area is closed from March 10 through the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend to allow bears to feed and to protect park visitors.

Jehle added that bison calves are starting to emerge, and will start to emerge in larger numbers in the next three weeks.

Along with the more commonly-seen animals in the park, there are quite a few rare animals that have been eluding photographers and visitors for years: mountain lions, bobcats, Canada lynx and wolverines.

"Bobcats are commonly seen along the Madison River in the winter, but as we progress into spring we don't see bobcats as much," Jehle said. "Once the snow is gone the sightings are rare."

When it comes to what the visitors want to see most, the ranger says he is frequently asked where the bears are.

"Most people want to see grizzlies, black bears and wolves," he said. "Wolves are primarily in the northern part of the park and that is a great place to look for wolves since the landscape is wide open and you can see for miles. (However) you can see wolves just about anywhere in the park; they are a wide-ranging animal."

Yellowstone has regulations to protect both the animals and visitors. Visitors are required to stay 25 yards from any park wildlife, and a minimum of 100 yards away from more dangerous predators like bears and wolves.

"You have to gauge the animal's behavior," he said. "If an animal charges because of your presence, you need to be farther away. This is for the safety for yourself and allowing the animal to not be disturbed."

Jehle added that if animals are on the road, it is acceptable to be within the required distance but only if you remain in the vehicle. When passing wildlife on the roadway, Jehle recommends trying to not make the animals run.

“It’s still winter for (the animals),” he said. “They are on the edge of their reserves and any energy expended will make it that much harder for them to survive the spring.”

Spring visitors are reminded to carry bear spray along with them on their trip and to be prepared for a wide range of weather conditions and limited resources in the park until after Memorial Day weekend.

WEATHER

NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 658 AM MDT MON APR 28 2014

Today Cloudy with scattered snow showers. Highs 28 to 34. Northwest winds around 15 mph. Chance of snow 50 percent.

Tonight Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Lows 16 to 22. Northwest winds around 15 mph early in the evening. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Tuesday Not as cold. Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs 37 to 43. Northwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Tuesday Night Partly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Lows 16 to 22. North winds around 15 mph in the evening. Chance of snow 20 percent.

Wednesday Mostly sunny. Highs 41 to 47.

Wednesday Night Mostly clear. Lows 19 to 25.

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Yellowstone Wellness Incentive program (WIP)

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YNP@Work

A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Tuesday, April 29, 2014



Even the wienermobile goes on vacation!
(photo by Lori Wilkinson)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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May 8 9am - 11am

If you have a portable radio, please bring it with you when you come to training.

Please sign up on the SharePoint site.

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Free to a good home - one large Ficus tree. Can be viewed on Admin Bldg 3rd floor. If interested, contact Colleen Athas at x2039.

Yellowstone Badger Project

Be a Citizen Scientist

Your help
is
needed

Report a
Badger

Jim Halfpenny
Leo Leckie
Bonnie Quinn

(406) 848-9458



www.YellowstoneBadger.info

Project goals

Yellowstone Badger: A Citizen Naturalist Project seeks to:

- Recognize the observations made by citizen naturalist scientists including wildlife observers, photographers, and other Yellowstone National Park visitors.
- Create a venue for citizen naturalist scientists to contribute long-term data collection on Yellowstone badgers.
- Collect reports of badgers and

accompanying data including date, time, location, and photographs made observers and to facilitate biological and ecological studies such as distribution and population numbers and trends of badgers.

- Create a dynamic and engaging educational tool for the general public and those studying wildlife by providing access to photos, distribution maps, literature, and research reports and papers.

Why your input matters

The abundance of observers, supplemented by the emergence of quality digital image recorders and modern optics makes observations more common but to date little opportunity existed to collect observations. Now with the internet, we're able to undertake a dedicated and systematic effort to collect information. To understand badgers we need to be able to obtain, consolidate and analyze the plethora of hidden records. Using these record there are many questions that may be approached including for example:

What is the distribution of badgers in Yellowstone and what might their numbers be?

What is the reproductive history including number of females and young (called kits)?

What are long-term population trends?

Do long-term trends respond to wildlife disease patterns?

What behaviors are observed?

What are types and rates of interactions with other species?

In addition to these scientific discoveries, we anticipate this site being a source of discovery and education for the public. An informed and invested public is the key to the success of conservation efforts throughout the region.

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The Challenge.....Bike to work 4 times during the month of May.

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Don't want to participate in the challenge but still want to bike to work? Let us know if you did – we would like to hear. It is good for the body, the spirit and the environment. **Don't forget your helmet!**

.....

JOIN A GROUP RIDE ON TUESDAY MAY 13th:

(No need to register just show up! Please bring helmet and dress for the weather!)

***Gardiner to Mammoth via the Old Road meets at 6:15a.m. at North Entrance Gate**

***Gardiner to Mammoth via the Main Road meets at 6:00a.m. at North Entrance Gate**

***Mammoth to Gardiner via the Main Road meets at 6:40a.m. at Mammoth Community Center**

***Lower Mammoth to Mammoth meets at 7:45a.m. at Mammoth Community Center**

***YCC to Mammoth meets at 6:45a.m. at the Recycling Boxes**

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BE AWARE OF BISON ON HIGHWAY 89 and the REDUCED speed limit (55 mph) from Gardiner to Yankee Jim! This is the time of year bison migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in greater numbers leaving the snow and higher elevation behind them to roam adjacent lands in Montana. Right now, bison are distributed throughout the Gardiner basin, and many are foraging within the Highway 89 corridor.

SPRING OPENING UPDATE

Status as of Tuesday, April 29, 2014

REMEMBER TO THINK – “SAFETY FIRST”

Plows: One Crew on South Entrance Road, One Crew on East Entrance Road, One Crew on Craig Pass.
Area Plow at Grant Village.

Present Location:

South Crew is at Lewis Lake.

East Crew is at Mohn’s Corner.

Craig Pass Crew is at the Continental Divide.

Anticipated Destination:

South Crew should be joining Craig Pass Crew.

East Crew should make East Gate.

Craig Pass Crew should make Shoshone Lake Overlook.

Snow Conditions:

South, 8 feet snow, no ice on pavement.

East, 2 feet snow, 3” ice on pavement.

Weather:

Clear, 7 degrees.

Communication Center will announce when official “Administrative Travel” is allowed.

CLOSED TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL DURING PLOWING HOURS:

Grant Village to South Entrance.

Pelican Trailhead Gate to East Entrance.

OPEN TO ADMINISTRATIVE TRAVEL:

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Mammoth to Norris at 11 AM

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 – Norris to Canyon at 11 AM

Monday, March 17, 2014 – Canyon to Lake at 8 AM

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 – Norris to Madison at 8 AM

Thursday, March 20, 2014 – Madison to West at 5 PM

Wednesday, April 1, 2014 – Madison to Old Faithful 4:30 PM

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 – Lake to Grant Village 11 AM

Be advised that there will be heavy equipment including plows on all Administrative roadways. Advise the Snow Crew by radio if you are in the area. Remember no Administrative traffic on roads being plowed without prior notification.

WEATHER**NWS Forecast for: Yellowstone National Park**

Issued by: National Weather Service Riverton, WY

Last Update: 813 AM MDT TUE APR 29 2014

Today Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow. Highs 36 to 42. Northwest winds around 15 mph in the afternoon.

Tonight Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Lows 17 to 23. North winds around 15 mph early in the evening.

Wednesday Mostly sunny. Highs 42 to 48.

Wednesday Night Clear. Lows 20 to 26.

Thursday Sunny. Highs 48 to 54.

Thursday Night Partly cloudy. Lows 26 to 32.

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A Newsletter for NPS Employees of Yellowstone National Park

Wednesday, April 30, 2014



Fish meeting in Jackson had about 50 people in attendance.
(photo by Al Nash)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The glass man cometh. **Mountain Mobile Glass** will be at the Mammoth garage on the morning of Thur. May 8th. If you need rock chip repair or glass replaced call me, Bob @ 2322 or Tom @ 2321 to schedule your glass work.

Half hour delays are possible, seven days/week, on the road construction project starting from the Gardner River Bridge (near Indian Creek Campground) to the Gibbon River Bridge (near the Norris Campground). **11 pm to 7 am Night Closures are anticipated to begin after June 1st.** Please drive carefully and watch for flag personnel, surveyors, etc.

The Yellowstone Association Institute will be hosting a **Wilderness First Aid certification course** taught through Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS. The course will take place May 14 and 15 at the headquarters classroom in Gardiner. Some spots are available for NPS staff at a reduced rate of \$140. Please call (406) 848-2400 for more information or to enroll.

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Hitting the trail? If you have been hiking the trails in Yellowstone, please email the Central Backcountry Office at Yell_backcountry_office@nps.gov with current trail conditions so that we can start compiling our backcountry situation report. Thanks and remember to carry bear spray!

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Present Location:

East Crew is widening the road and cleaning up the ice.

Craig Pass Crew is at the Continental Divide.

Anticipated Destination:

East Crew should complete East Entrance Road.

Craig Pass Crew should make Old Faithful.

Snow Conditions:

East, 2 feet snow, 3" ice on pavement.

Craig Pass, 8 feet snow, 3" on pavement.

Weather:

Clear, 10 degrees.

Be advised: Crew is hauling wide loads to Cooke City today from Old Faithful.

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Thursday Mostly sunny. Highs 48 to 54.

Thursday Night Partly cloudy. Lows 26 to 32.

Friday Partly cloudy. Highs 51 to 57.

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