



# Yellowstone

YOUR GUIDE TO AMERICA’S FIRST NATIONAL PARK

**DAY TRIPS:**

Make the most of Yellowstone’s iconic destinations

**KIDS’ PAGES**

PARK FISHING PRIMER

**SAFE PASSAGE**

for Yellowstone’s pronghorn

A century of automobiles in the park





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**PRESERVE** Yellowstone for future generations. Join more than 50,000 supporters who have made a commitment to fund visitor education and park preservation. Yellowstone Forever is proud to support priority park projects such as trail restoration, wildlife research, and visitor safety.

**GAIN** a deeper connection to the park on a Yellowstone Forever Institute program. Our programs range from one day to three weeks in length, and highlight the park's amazing geothermal areas and awe-inspiring wilderness and wildlife.

**SUPPORT** Yellowstone through our educational Park Stores—proceeds directly benefit the park. Visit our locations in Old Faithful, Mammoth, Madison, Norris, Canyon, Fishing Bridge, Gardiner, Grant, West Thumb, Quake Lake, and Bozeman Airport.

**JOIN** our online community of over 300,000 worldwide.



PHOTOS TOP DOWN: TOM MURPHY; TODD KLASSE; MARIA BISPO; NPS; STEVE HINCH



Yellowstone Forever

## 2016 BY THE NUMBERS

Proceeds directly benefit Yellowstone National Park

**OVER 6,000**

Participants in educational programs

Financial aid awarded to youth and teachers

**\$19,304**

**183,204**

Hours of education

Educational products sold in our Park Stores

**772,224**

**OVER 19,000**

Supporters who signed up in our Park Stores

Revenue generated in our Park Stores

**\$5.1 million**

**\$15,653,811**

Cash and in-kind support to Yellowstone National Park

Number of countries our supporters represent

**105**

**OVER 25,000**

Hours volunteered in Yellowstone



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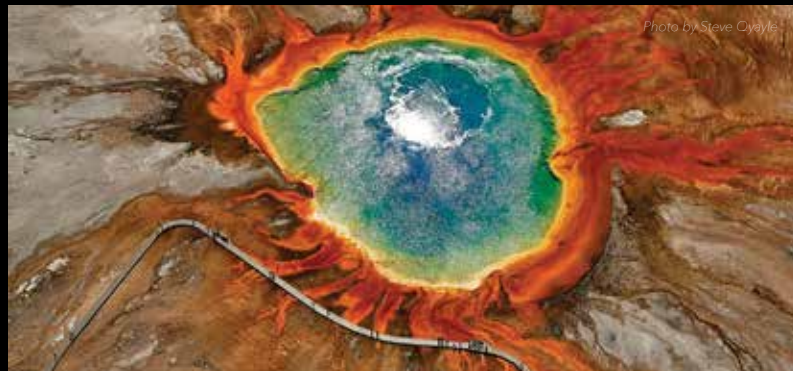
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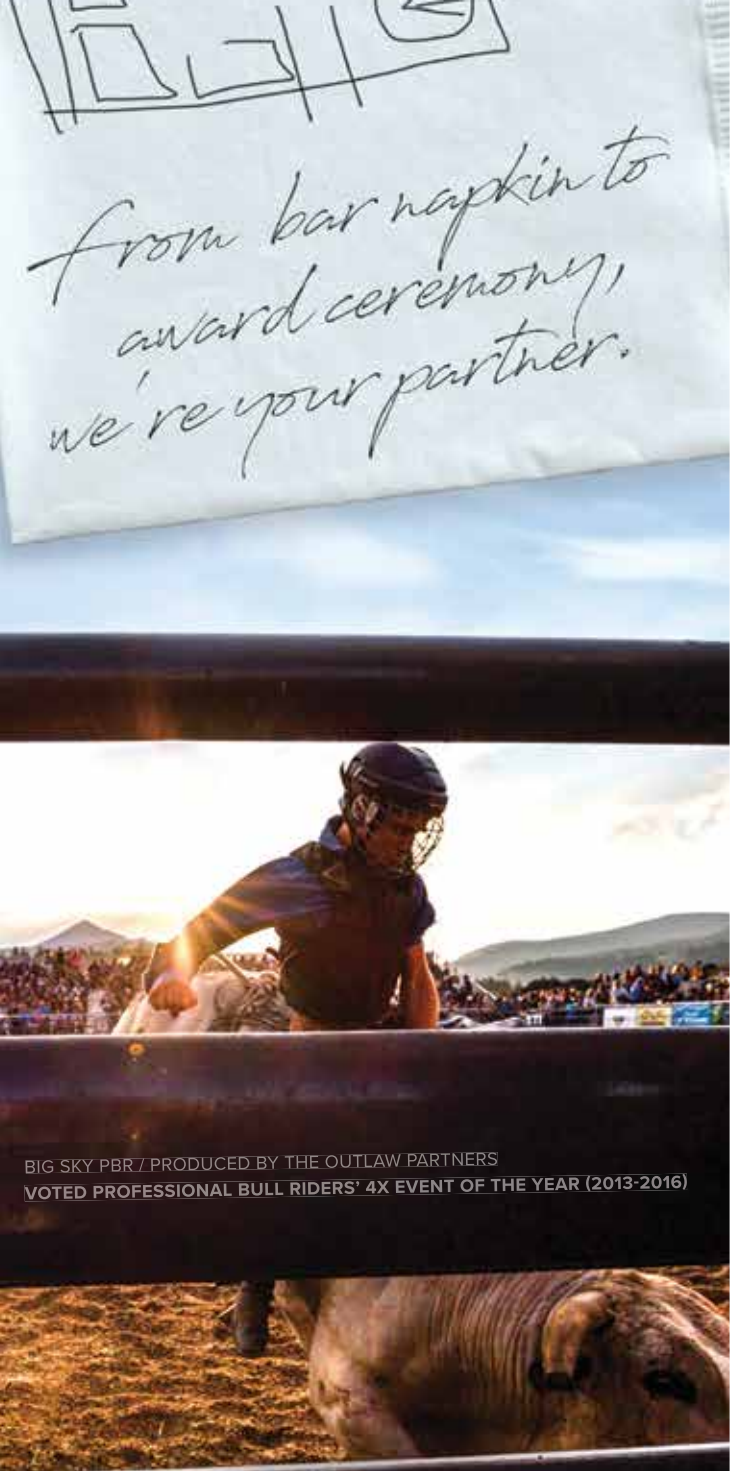
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Explore

JUNE 2017 - MAY 2018

# Yellowstone

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**ON THE COVER:** Gerry Berkeland chooses a fly at Muleshoe Bend on the Firehole River, one of Yellowstone National Park's premier trout streams. This image was shot with Fuji Velvia film.

PHOTO BY JOHN JURACEK

## From the Editor: Find your Yellowstone



In June 2000, after a 2,200-mile drive across the country from our home in Vermont, my girlfriend and I arrived at the doorstep of Yellowstone National Park.

We parked just outside the North Entrance in Gardiner, Montana, and were immediately staring face-to-face with a hulking antlered elk, grazing 100 yards from the towering Roosevelt Arch.

We drove through the massive stone structure on our way to begin our summer jobs at Roosevelt Lodge, tucked in the northeast corner of the park near Tower Fall and the Yellowstone River.

Without leaving sight of our car, I saw snowflakes fall in July and grizzly bears loping across distant meadows. We watched a bighorn sheep give birth on a talus slope and were shocked to see the newborn on its feet, clumsily navigating the steep hillside within minutes.

We spent weekends backpacking through our adopted backyard, camping at locales still burned in my memory after nearly two decades: Grebe Lake, Hellroaring Creek, 7 Mile Hole and Grizzly Lake, among others. It was in these places where we found our Yellowstone, my tiny blue tent the only disruption of the wild scenery that has remained largely unchanged throughout millennia.

They say if you walk a mile down any trail in Yellowstone, the park often seems like it's yours alone. It was true in 2000 and remains so today. Don't miss Old Faithful, the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and Mammoth Hot Springs while you're here, but consider experiencing the vast wilderness that has been preserved for your enjoyment.

This guide is meant to inform and inspire your own explorations of America's first national park. Get off the beaten path and find your Yellowstone.

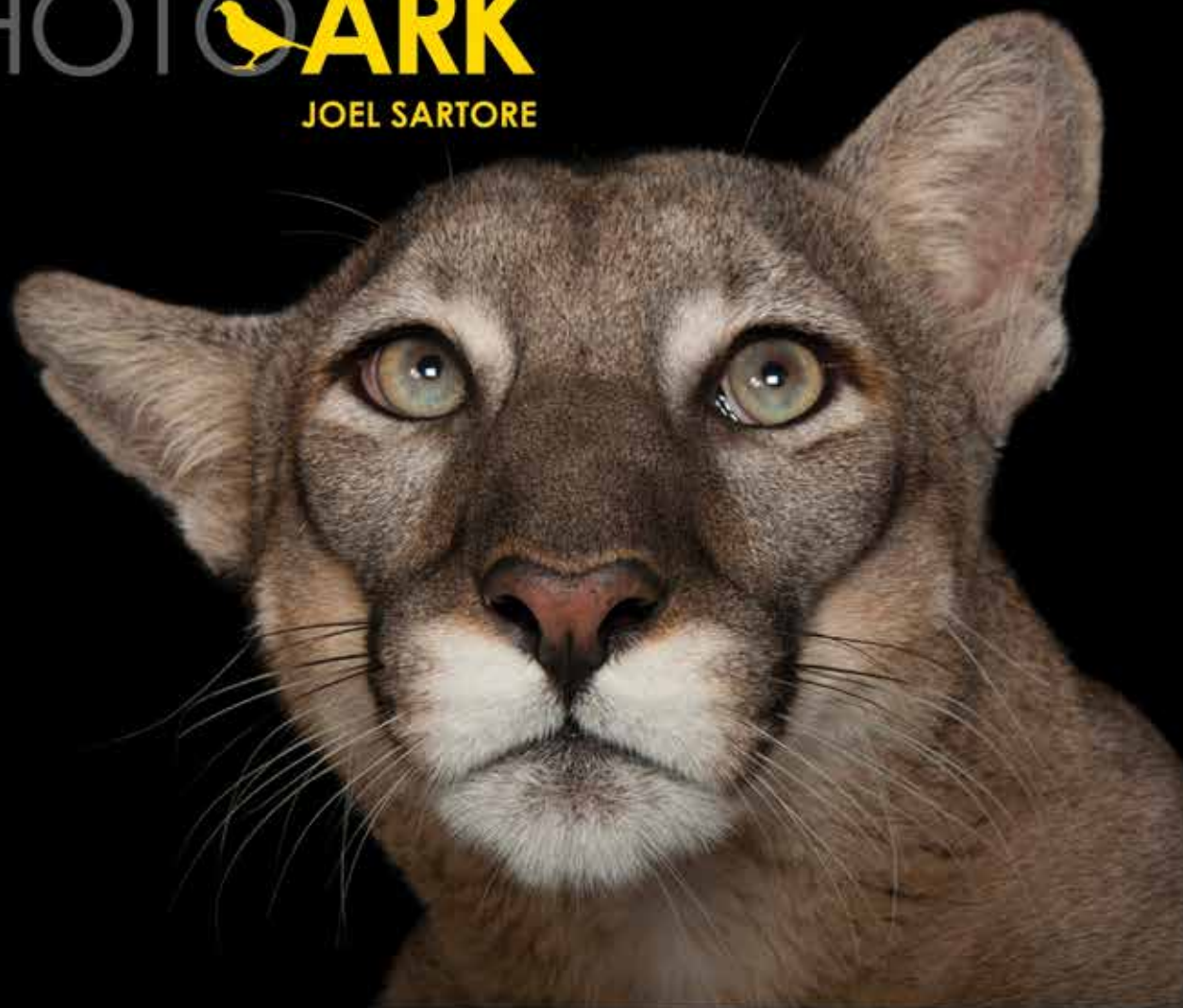
Tyler Allen  
*Managing Editor*





# PHOTO<sup>ARK</sup>

JOEL SARTORE



**Sat, June 10 - Sun, August 20, 2017**

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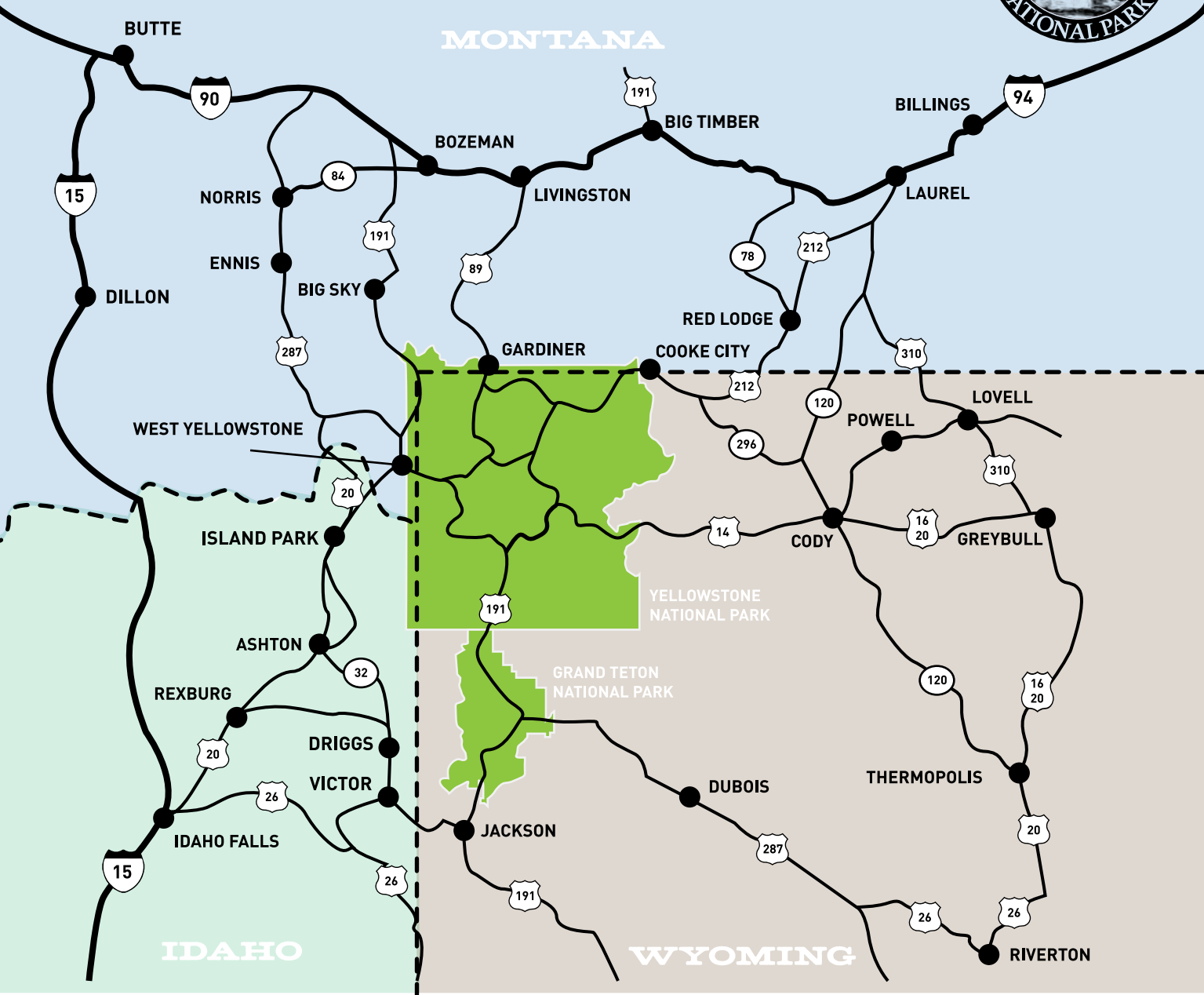


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# Getting to Yellowstone



## YELLOWSTONE & GRAND TETON NP ENTRANCE FEES

### Vehicles

\$30 per vehicle to visit each individual park or \$50 for a two-park vehicle pass, for one to seven days

### Motorcycles

\$25 for each park or \$40 for both parks, for one to seven days

### Foot/bicycle/vehicle of 16+ people

\$15 for each park (16 and older) or \$20 for both parks, for one to seven days

### Annual passes

\$60 for each individual park. An \$80 Interagency Pass is valid for entry to all fee areas on federal lands. Valid for one year

### Interagency Senior Pass

\$10 lifetime pass available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents age 62 and older

### Military Annual Pass

A free annual pass available for active duty military personnel, and their dependents, with proper identification

### Free Entrance Days

August 25:  
National Park Service Birthday

September 30:  
National Public Lands Day

November 11-12:  
Veterans Day Weekend

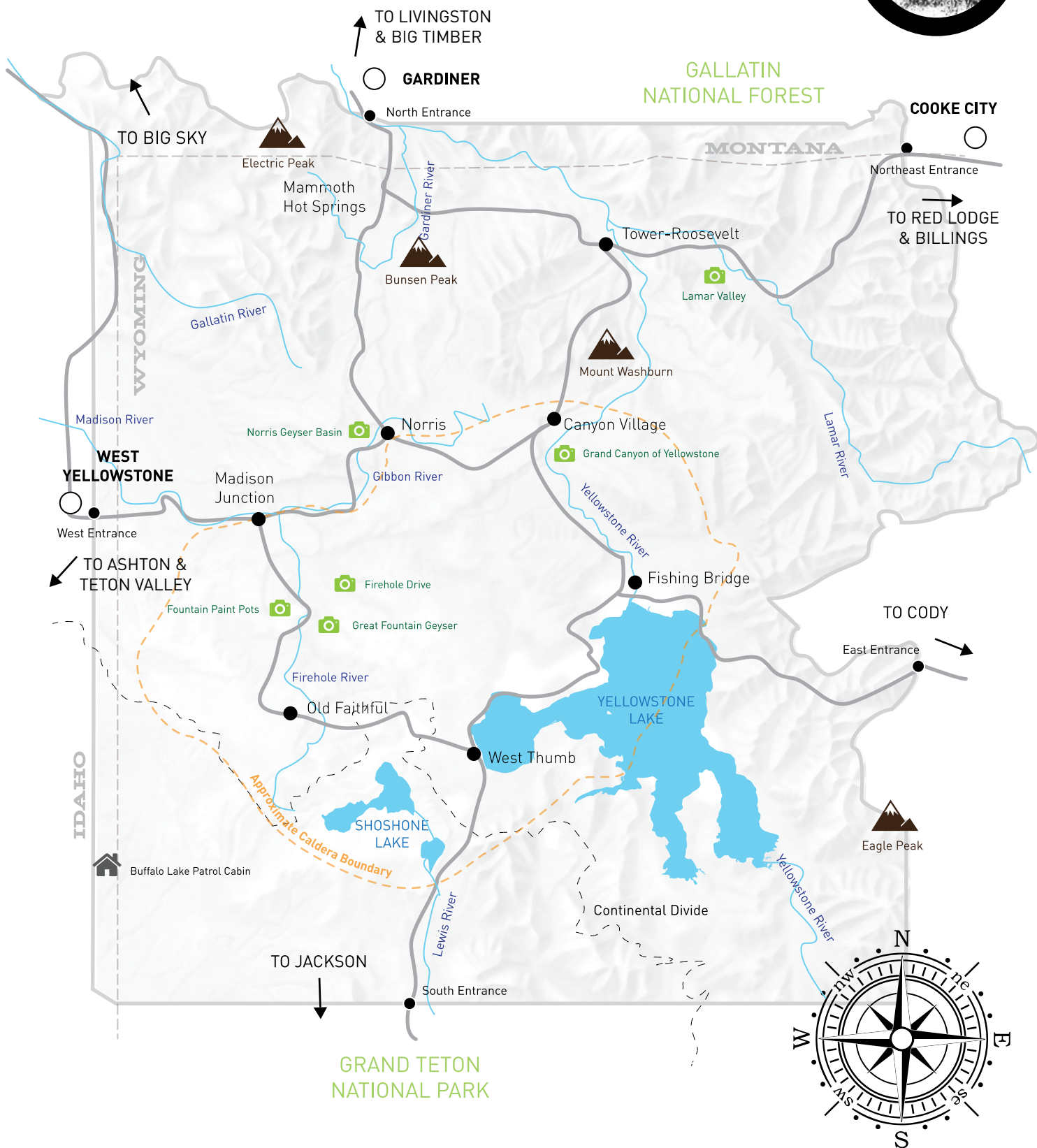
January 15, 2018:  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 19, 2018:  
Presidents' Day

Two weekends TBD in April, 2018:  
National Park Week



# Exploring Yellowstone





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Livingston is surrounded by four beautiful mountain ranges that offer an abundance of outdoor activities year round. Whether it's fly fishing on the Yellowstone, dogsledding or cross-country skiing, taking a wild outfitting trip on horseback, river rafting on a famous river or a hike in the most breathtaking, wild and natural place on earth, we have it here in Livingston Montana.

For a relaxing day, visit our historic museums, wander through our many art galleries or sit along the river with a great cup of local coffee and take in the view. Golf on the edge of the mighty Yellowstone River or just walk through the late 1800's history of our downtown streets with great shops and a very diverse local restaurant scene from casual to fine dining. Our night life is a mix of local entertainment at the pubs or breweries or a live show in one of our two historic theatres.

Livingston is the historic "Original Gateway City to Yellowstone National Park" where adventure, beautiful scenery and authentic friendly folk await you at the edge of the Yellowstone River.

Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitor Bureau  
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# SUMMER EVENTS

## AROUND THE PARK

### JUNE

- **PARTY IN THE PASTURE  
ANTIQUE TRACTOR & TRUCK RALLY**  
JUNE 3 | Meeteetse, WY
- **CUTTHROAT CLASSIC**  
JUNE 3 | Cody, WY
- **BECK LAKE CHALLENGE**  
JUNE 10 | Cody, WY
- **YELLOWSTONE HALF MARATHON**  
JUNE 10 | West Yellowstone, MT
- **JAKE CLARK'S MULE DAYS**  
JUNE 14-18 | Ralston, WY
- **1ST ANNUAL SUMMER SHRED FEST**  
JUNE 16-18 | Beartooth Basin, WY
- **GARDINER RODEO**  
JUNE 16-17 | Gardiner, MT
- **36TH PLAINS INDIAN MUSEUM POWOW**  
JUNE 17-18 | Cody, WY
- **NIKE JUNIOR GOLF CAMPS**  
JUNE 25-29 | Big Sky, MT

### JULY

- **98TH ANNUAL CODY STAMPEDE**  
JULY 1-4 | Cody, WY
- **WILD WEST EXTRAVAGANZA**  
JULY 2-4 | Cody, WY
- **FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**  
JULY 2-4 | Livingston, MT
- **ROUNDUP RODEO**  
JULY 2-4 | Livingston, MT

- **BIG SKY FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION**  
JULY 4 | Big Sky, MT
- **BEARTOOTH RALLY & IRON HORSE RODEO**  
JULY 14-16 | Red Lodge, MT
- **NATIONAL DAY OF THE AMERICAN COWBOY**  
JULY 15 | Meeteetse, WY
- **TARGHEE MUSIC FESTIVAL**  
JULY 14-16 | Grand Targhee Resort, WY
- **TETON COUNTY FAIR**  
JULY 21-30 | Jackson, WY
- **RED ANTS PANTS MUSIC FESTIVAL**  
JULY 27-30 | White Sulphur Springs, MT
- **BIG SKY PBR**  
JULY 26-29 | Big Sky, MT
- **BIG SKY ART AUCTION**  
JULY 27 | Big Sky, MT



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## AUGUST

- **SWEET PEA FESTIVAL**  
AUGUST 1-6 | Bozeman, MT
- **LIVINGSTON CLASSIC PBR**  
AUGUST 5 | Livingston, MT
- **CODY AIR FAIR**  
AUGUST 5 | Cody, WY
- **RENDEZVOUS MOUNTAIN HILLCLIMB**  
AUGUST 5 | Jackson, WY
- **BIG SKY CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL**  
AUGUST 11-13 | Big Sky, MT
- **GRAND TARGHEE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL**  
AUGUST 11-13 | Grand Targhee Resort, WY
- **WILD WEST RIVER FEST**  
AUGUST 18-20 | Cody, WY

## SEPTEMBER

- **THE RUT MOUNTAIN RUN**  
SEPTEMBER 1-3 | Big Sky, MT
- **HOMESTEADER DAYS**  
SEPTEMBER 9 | Powell, WY
- **36TH ANNUAL BUFFALO BILL ART SHOW**  
SEPTEMBER 22 | Cody, WY
- **JACKSON HOLE WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL**  
SEPTEMBER 24-29 | Jackson, WY

## ONGOING EVENTS

- **JACKSON HOLE RODEO**  
MAY-SEPTEMBER | SELECT DATES  
Jackson, WY
- **BIG SKY FARMERS MARKET**  
JUNE-SEPTEMBER | WEDNESDAYS  
Big Sky, MT
- **MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS**  
JUNE-SEPTEMBER | THURSDAYS  
Big Sky, MT
- **WILD WEST YELLOWSTONE RODEO**  
JUNE-AUGUST | SELECT DATES  
West Yellowstone, MT
- **GRAND TETON MUSIC FESTIVAL**  
JULY-AUGUST | SELECT DATES  
Jackson, WY

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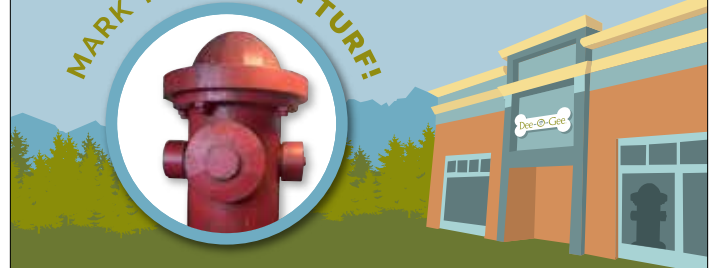
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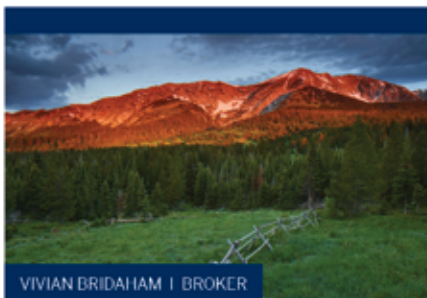
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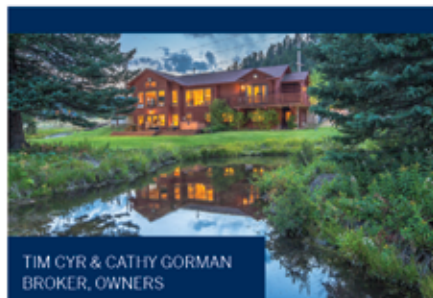
## NORTH RIDGE RANCH

Bozeman, MT \$5,995,000  
MLS 209593  
6 BEDS 5 BATHS 640 ACRES 4,500 SQ FT



## CAMP WEST FORK

Big Sky, MT \$3,500,000  
MLS 215816  
5 BEDS 6 BATHS 13.2 ACRES 7692 SQ FT



## 48042 GALLATIN ROAD

Gallatin Gateway, MT \$1,795,000  
MLS 215827  
5 BEDS 3 BATHS 3.6 ACRES 3,690 SQ FT



## 75 LOWER LUTHER ROAD

Luther, MT \$535,000  
MLS 218305  
2 BEDS 2 BATHS 9.5 ACRES 1,177 SQ FT



## ASPEN GROVES LOT 25

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MLS 213519  
1.2 ACRES



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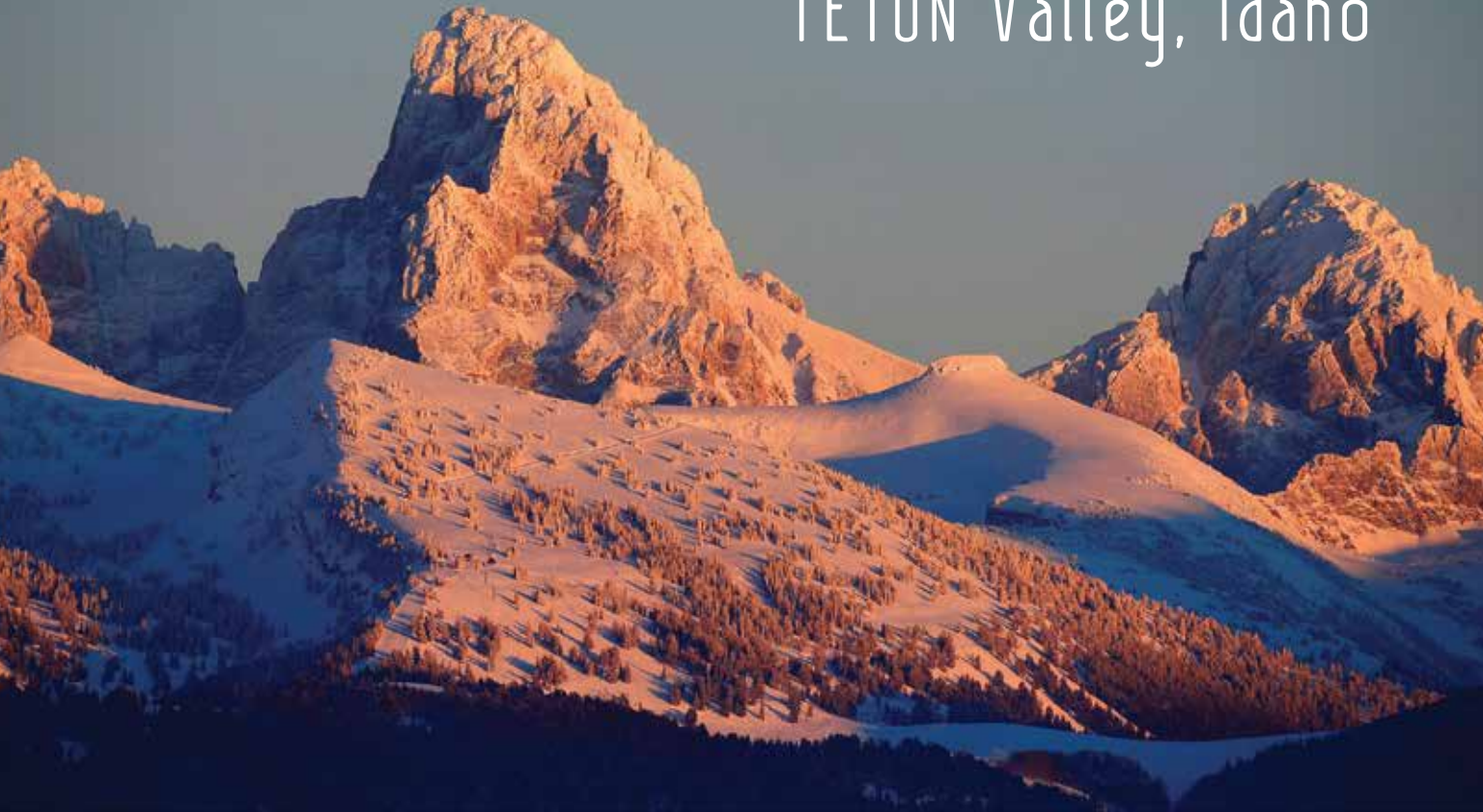


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## Record Numbers

Turn out for NPS Centennial

*EXPLORE YELLOWSTONE STAFF*

The National Park Service celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2016, and it was another record-breaking year for visitation in Yellowstone National Park.

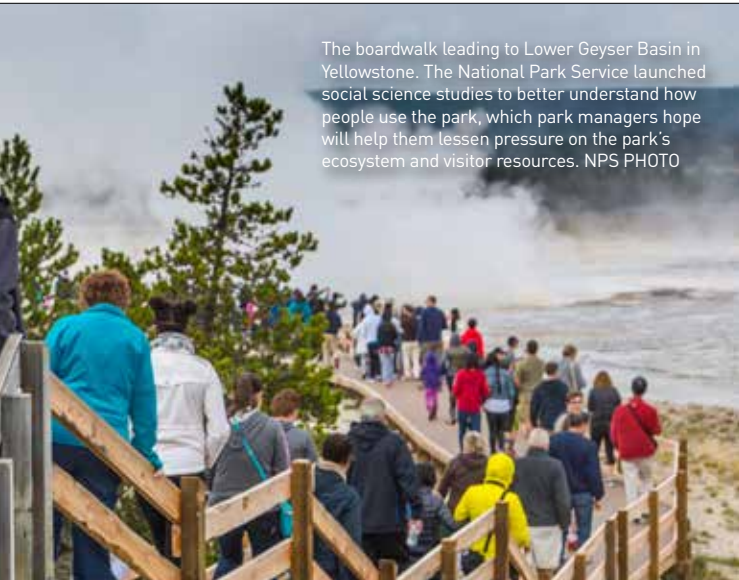
The park tallied a total of 4.25 million visits, a 3.9 percent increase from 2015 when nearly 4.1 million people visited the park and a whopping 21 percent increase over 2014 numbers.

National park visitation was strong in Montana and Wyoming throughout the Park Service's centennial. Glacier National Park to the north of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park to the south also posted record years—2016 was the third consecutive year that both parks set visitation records.

One of the most notable trends in recent years is the marked increase of commercial tour buses entering Yellowstone's gates. In 2016, nearly 13,000 commercial bus tours were counted, a 21 percent increase over 2015 entries and a 46.5 percent increase from 2014 figures. Park management is currently considering options for commercial tour bus management.

Although the park does not include visitor nationality in its statistics, it's significant that the park hired three interpretive rangers who speak Mandarin Chinese in 2016.





The boardwalk leading to Lower Geyser Basin in Yellowstone. The National Park Service launched social science studies to better understand how people use the park, which park managers hope will help them lessen pressure on the park's ecosystem and visitor resources. NPS PHOTO

Yellowstone spokeswoman Linda Veress said unexpectedly high visitation in 2015 led the park to make changes in 2016 that included increased signage in multiple languages, more bathroom facilities in high-use areas and the creation of the Yellowstone Pledge, a 10-point standard of conduct designed to protect Yellowstone's resources and keep visitors safe.

The Yellowstone Pledge directs people to refrain from approaching wildlife to take selfies; stay on boardwalks in

thermal areas; and travel safely in bear country by carrying bear spray, making noise and hiking in groups.

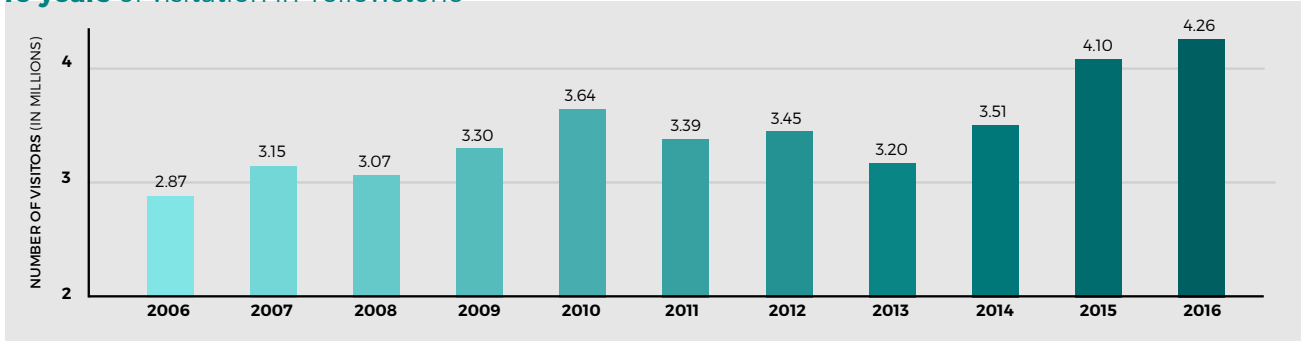
Veress said she expects the increased visitation trend will continue in 2017.

"During the busiest times of the year, visitation levels in the park have led to long lines, traffic congestion, diminishing visitor experiences, and impacts on park resources," said Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk in a press release. "It's our job to recognize the trend, how it's affecting this magnificent park, understand our visitors, and what we may need to do to protect Yellowstone for future generations. All options are on the table."

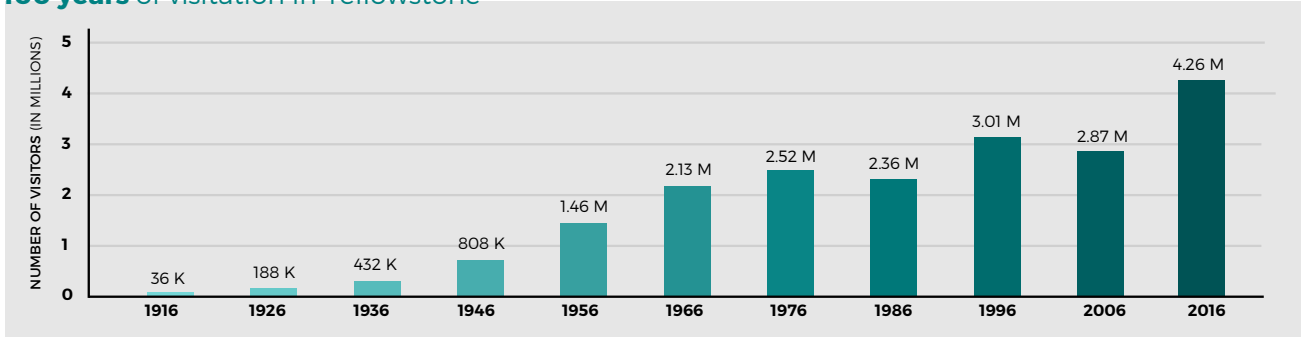
In August 2016, the park conducted social science studies to better understand visitors including their demographics, experiences, opinions and preferences. The data will help park managers make decisions that reflect the experiences and needs of visitors both in the present and into the future. The results of the study are expected the summer of 2017.

Taking a longer view, the growth of visitation over the last century is impressive. In 1916, shortly after automobile travel was first permitted in Yellowstone, approximately 36,000 visitors came to the park. Fifty years later, the park saw 2.13 million visits and since then visitation has grown 99.8 percent.

## 10 years of visitation in Yellowstone



## 100 years of visitation in Yellowstone





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# Time Well Spent

## Essential day trips in Yellowstone

■ BY WENDIE CARR

Yellowstone is an incredible place filled with awe-inspiring landscapes and incredible wildlife watching. It's also much larger than most people imagine, over 2.2 million acres. Instead of spending the whole day in the car, dedicate a day to exploring one of these incredible areas.



Old Faithful erupts every 60 to 110 minutes and reaches an average height of 130 feet.  
PHOTO BY MATT LUDIN

### OLD FAITHFUL

The key to visiting Old Faithful in the summer? Go early! Beat the crowds and arrive first thing in the morning, while everyone else is just starting to think about their plans for the day. When you arrive, check for the next predicted eruption of Old Faithful Geyser at either the **Visitor Education Center** or at one of the lodges. Grab a trail guide and spend some time wandering the boardwalks of the Upper Geyser Basin without having to jostle for a view.

**Observation Point** is one of the best, and most scenic, places to take in an eruption of Old Faithful. Time your hike with the predicted eruption, and follow the Geyser Hill Trail across the Firehole River. The trail climbs 160 feet (with switchbacks) to Observation Point.

Plan for an early lunch in the **Old Faithful Inn**—a National Historic Landmark—and take in the towering lobby and its massive stone fireplace before making your way into the dining room. Completed in 1904 and built with logs and stone, the inn is considered to be the largest log structure in the world, and one of the most iconic buildings in the park.

After lunch, escape the crowds and drive to **Lone Star Geyser**. Walk or bike the 5-mile roundtrip, mostly paved trail along the scenic Firehole River. Lone Star Geyser erupts approximately every three hours, shooting water up to 45 feet high.





The Lower Falls is a major draw for visitors to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.  
PHOTOS BY WENDIE CARR

## CANYON AREA

Just like Old Faithful, the Canyon area can quickly swell with people. And just like Old Faithful, a visit to the **Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone** is on most people's "must-see" list. Start your day early here as well, and take advantage of the gorgeous early morning light to snap some postcard-worthy shots. Take in spectacular views of the 308-foot-high Lower Falls from **Artist Point**, and see firsthand why the Grand Canyon has been inspiring park visitors since the 1800s.

Just south of Canyon Village, **Hayden Valley** is an excellent place to spend cooler morning or early evening hours wildlife watching. From the safety of one of the many overlooks, scan the valley floor with binoculars and you may be lucky enough to spot a grizzly bear or a wolf. Bison roam the valley as well, and in late summer Hayden Valley is a great place to observe the annual bison rut.

After grabbing a picnic lunch at Canyon Village, stretch your legs on the **Cascade Lake Trail**. This relatively easy (4.4 miles roundtrip) hike passes through open meadows rich with wildflowers, and the lake makes both a pretty destination and a great picnic spot.

Don't miss a side trip to **Mud Volcano**, a thermal area right off the road that features oozing, bubbling mud pots. Check out Dragon's Mouth Spring, a steamy cave that sounds like a dragon hissing, gurgling and roaring as it spits out water.



A grizzly bear crosses a stream in the Canyon area.



## YELLOWSTONE LAKE

Start the day by visiting **West Thumb Geyser Basin**, located right on the shore of the lake. Grab a trail guide from the donation box, and explore the boardwalks and thermal features, including the often-photographed Fishing Cone and the vibrant Abyss Pool.

After leaving West Thumb, travel east along the shoreline and turn onto **Gull Point Drive**. This scenic, short drive follows the shore of the lake, providing great views of not only the landscape but also **Lake Yellowstone Hotel** in the distance.

In 2016, the majestic Lake Yellowstone Hotel celebrated its 125th anniversary. Nestled on the shores of Yellowstone Lake—the largest high-elevation lake in the lower 48 states—this National Historic Landmark features massive white columns and harkens back to a time when early visitors traveled in style. Plan to stop here for a leisurely lunch in

the elegant dining room, or relax in the sunroom with a beverage, taking in the stunning views from either room.

After lunch, explore one of the many hiking options in this area. **Storm Point** is a short (2.5 miles roundtrip), easy hike that travels through wildflower-covered meadows and old growth forests before reaching the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake. Keep your eyes peeled: marmots are often seen racing through the grass or sunning themselves on rocks.

A more moderate hike, **Elephant Back Mountain**, climbs 800 feet through the trees. On this 3.6-mile loop (I prefer to stay right at the junction), hikers will be rewarded with gorgeous views of Yellowstone Lake and the Absaroka Range. An added bonus on a warm day: most of this hike is shaded until you reach the top.

**Above:** A hike up Elephant Back Mountain affords views of Yellowstone Lake and the Absaroka mountains in the distance. PHOTO BY WENDIE CARR

**Below:** A bus waits for passengers outside of Lake Yellowstone Hotel. NPS PHOTO



*Wendie Carr is the vice president of marketing and communications for Yellowstone Forever, the park's official nonprofit partner.*



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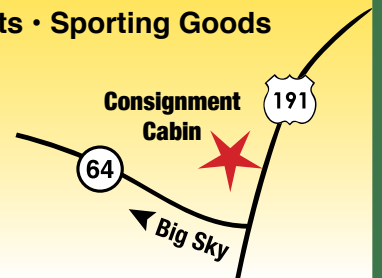
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# Cross-country skiing in Yellowstone for beginners

YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

A cross-country skier enjoys the sunrise at Grotto Geyser.  
NPS PHOTO

Yellowstone visitors new to cross-country skiing, as well as families looking for easier trails for children, have plenty of choices that pass through beautiful areas of the park. Here are Yellowstone Forever's picks for beginner-friendly trails:

## Mammoth area:

Less experienced skiers will enjoy the 2.2-mile Indian Creek Loop, which is not groomed, but is tracked by skiers. Another good option is the 1.5-mile Upper Terrace Loop, which passes several hydrothermal features. Start on the left and travel clockwise for the easiest route.

## Northeast entrance:

If you're hoping to spot wildlife on your winter trip, the Lamar Valley is your best bet. The Bannock Trail (2 miles) and Barronette Trail (3.5 miles) each parallel and connect to the Northeast Entrance Road on both ends.

## Tower area:

The Tower Fall Trail is a fantastic route for skiers of all levels. You can park your vehicle at the entrance to Roosevelt Lodge at Tower Junction, and ski the snow-covered road 2.5 miles to Tower Fall.

## Old Faithful area:

The Lone Star Geyser Trail is a favorite choice for an easy, groomed trail. The trail is flat most of the way and follows the Firehole River for 2.5 miles to Lone Star Geyser. Be sure to check the visitor center for estimated eruption times. Or hop on the Upper Geyser Basin Trail right at the Old Faithful Inn to see several geysers and hot springs on your way to Biscuit Basin, a 2.5-mile trip one way.

Skier shuttles from Mammoth and Old Faithful are available.

Download and print maps and descriptions of these and other winter trails at [nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/skiyellmaps.htm](https://nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/skiyellmaps.htm).

*Yellowstone Forever is the park's official nonprofit educational and philanthropic partner. Visit [yellowstone.org](https://yellowstone.org) for more information.*

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## Skype with a Ranger

This park ranger uses an iPad and tripod to give a middle school class a glimpse into Yellowstone's outdoor classroom.

PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

### EXPLORE YELLOWSTONE STAFF

While the best way to learn about and appreciate Yellowstone is to visit the park in person, this isn't always an option for everyone. Luckily, thanks to technology, Yellowstone still has so much to offer those who want to explore its fascinating geology, wildlife and history. Since 2011, Yellowstone National Park has offered the opportunity for classrooms to visit with a park ranger virtually, and it's been a huge hit.

Classrooms can Skype with a Yellowstone National Park ranger to learn about geological features including geysers, hot springs and volcanoes; facets of park ecology like wildfire; wildlife such as bears, bison, elk and wolves; the cultural history of Native Americans; and Yellowstone's rich history as the world's first national park.

Students can also interview a ranger about their job, or even participate in a "guess that park" mystery Skype. The subject matter and format can be adapted to a wide range of ages. Many teachers host the session in conjunction with the National Park Service "Expedition Yellowstone" curriculum, or integrate it into Yellowstone-related lessons in their own curriculum.

A YouTube clip of a Skype session between a ranger and a classroom shows the ranger filming a group of bison grazing in a snowy field. The classroom, viewing the encounter remotely, responds with a collective "whoa." One kid says, "Go touch one!"

Another student responds, "No, you can't touch them!" >>



Middle school students connect with Yellowstone National Park remotely to learn about Yellowstone's geology, wildlife and history, and what it's like to be a park ranger. NPS PHOTO

The ranger explains visitors have to stay 25 yards or more from bison in the park. She goes on to share facts about the animals, such as their weight (up to 2,000 pounds) and how they sometimes sidle up to geothermal features in the winter to stay warm.

Together, the ranger and students watch as the herd ambles near a sidewalk through a snow-covered playground at the Mammoth Hot Springs community center. "I think one's trying to get on a swing," the ranger says, prompting a round of giggles from the kids.

The Skype with a Ranger program has been growing each year to meet demand from teachers who want to share the wonders of Yellowstone with their students, and help foster park preservation and stewardship. Between October 2015 and December 2016, 17,300 students in 44 states and 17 countries participated in the program.

More information about the program can be found at <https://education.microsoft.com/Story/VirtualFieldTrip?token=4c5ec>



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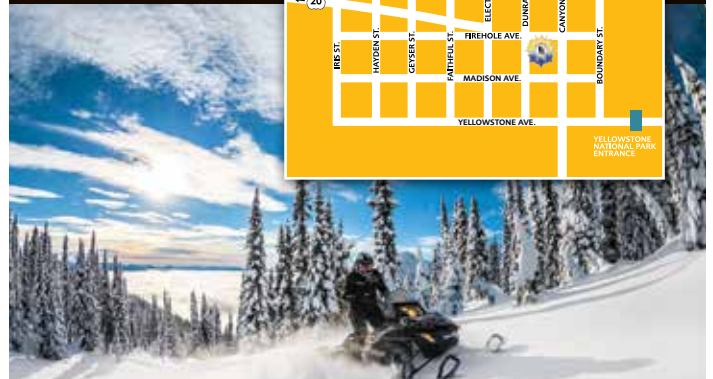


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# ANIMAL GUIDE

Which animals have you encountered? Check them off as you see them!



■ **Coyote**

They weigh less than their wolf relatives, between 25-35 lbs.

They will eat almost anything, from rodents to fish, to fruit.

Coyotes can run up to 40 mph.

In the fall and winter, they form packs for more effective hunting.



■ **Bald Eagle**

Adult eagles' wingspan can reach up to 7 feet!

Eagles primarily eat fish, carrion, birds and rodents.

Their distinctive white head doesn't develop until they reach 4-5 years old.

They may use the same nest year after year.



■ **Gray Wolf**

Adult males can weigh between 100-130 lbs, making them the largest member of the dog family.

Elk is their favorite winter meal, and a wolf can eat 20 lbs. of meat in a single sitting.

Wolves are known for their distinguishable howl, used to communicate.



■ **Elk**

Adult males stand about 5 feet high at the shoulder.

They can run up to 45 mph.

A bull elk's antlers can reach up to 4 feet high, so that the animal towers up to 9 feet tall.

Elk lose their antlers each spring, but grow them back a few months later in preparation for breeding.



■ **Pronghorn**

Both males and females have horns, but males' horns are pronged.

They can run for sustained sprints of 45-55 mph.

Pronghorns live in grasslands and eat sagebrush and other shrubs.

There were 445 in the park in 2015, the highest number since 1992.



■ **Otter**

Their long tail takes up 1/3 of their 40- to 54-inch body.

Otters eat mainly crayfish, fish, frogs and other aquatic creatures.

Otters can stay underwater for up to eight minutes by closing their ears and nostrils to keep water out.

Their pelt is waterproof and allows them to regulate their temperature.







■ **Grizzly Bear**

Adult males can weigh between 200-700 lbs.

Grizzlies lose up to 40 percent of body fat during hibernation.

Grizzlies can locate food from miles away. They have a better sense of smell than a hound dog!

They eat about 35 lbs. of food in a typical day.



■ **Moose**

Average adult males can weigh between 850-1500 lbs.

Fewer than 200 live in YNP.

Moose can run up to 35 mph.

Their antlers can spread up to 6 feet from end to end.

A moose can keep its head underwater for three minutes!



■ **Beaver**

Beavers transform unsuitable habitats by building dams.

They have webbed rear feet, and large, flat tails that aid in swimming.

Beavers can stay underwater for up to 15 minutes, and have a set of transparent eyelids they use like goggles.



■ **Bison**

Adult males can weigh up to 2000 lbs. That's a TON!

Bison can live from 18-22 years.

Bison are known for roaming great distances and grazing on grasses and sedges where they roam.

A bison's fur coat is so thick that snow can cover their back without melting!



■ **Red Fox**

Adult males average 43 inches long, but weigh only 10-12 lbs.

They have a very diverse diet from rodents and birds to vegetation, fish and worms.

Foxes use their tails for balance, as a blanket, and to signal other foxes.

Red foxes have such good hearing, they can hear rodents underground.



■ **Bighorn Sheep**

Their horns can weigh up to 40 lbs, making up 8-12 percent of their total body weight.

Bighorns are herbivores and eat grasses, sedges and woody plants.

They are known for their ability to climb steep, rocky, mountain areas.

Counting the rings on their horns can determine the animals' age.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Yellowstone National Park has 67 mammal species, 285 bird species, 16 fish species, 6 reptile species, 5 amphibian species, and 2 threatened species.

SOURCES: NPS.GOV, ANIMALS.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM, NWF.ORG, DEFENDERS.ORG PHOTOS: NPS

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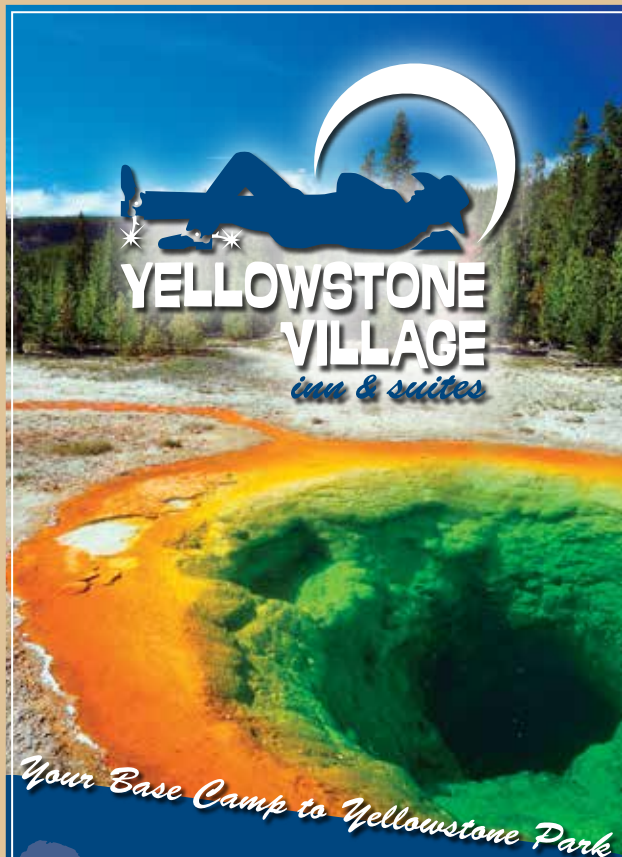
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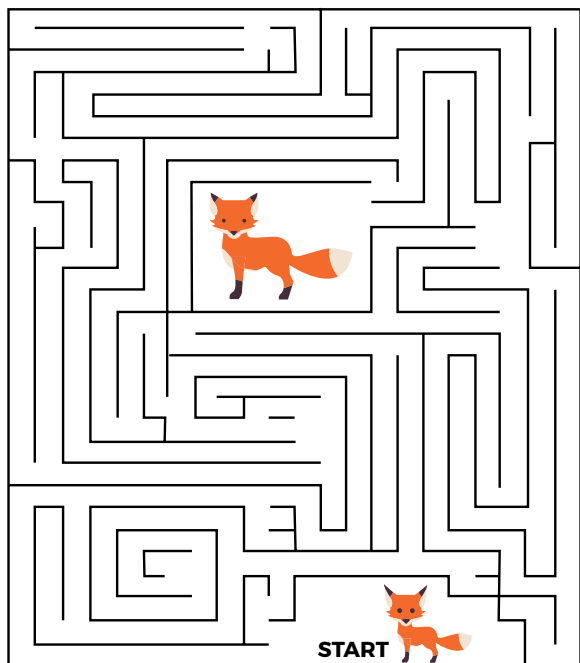
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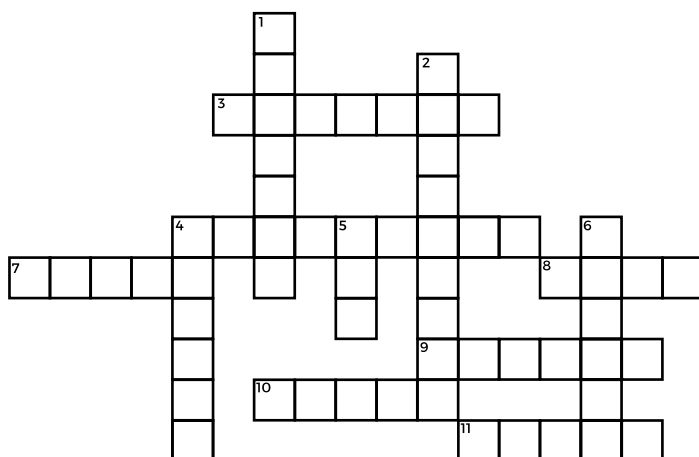
FLOWER



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## YELLOWSTONE ANIMAL CROSSWORD

Use the knowledge you gained from the animal guide on pages 34-35 to complete the puzzle below.



### ACROSS

- 3 Known for their ability to climb up steep hills
- 4 Eat fish, carrion, birds and rodents
- 7 Can keep their heads underwater for 3 minutes
- 8 The largest member of the dog family
- 9 Use their tail for balance
- 10 Can weigh up to a ton
- 11 Has a waterproof pelt

### DOWN

- 1 Eats up to 35 pounds of food in a typical day
- 2 Both males and females have horns
- 4 Have large, flat tails to aid in swimming
- 5 Can reach up to 9 feet tall
- 6 Form packs in the fall and winter



# SAFE

In the late fall, Yellowstone National Park's pronghorn population migrates from snowier, high-elevation habitat in the park to lower elevation valleys—provided their movement isn't inhibited by fences and other barriers.

NPS PHOTO

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# PASSAGE

## Fence modifications bolster pronghorn population

BY AMANDA EGGERT

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem's pronghorn—sometimes mistakenly referred to as antelope—have at least two notable second-place distinctions.

They are the world's second-fastest land animals after cheetahs, and prior to European settlement pronghorn were one of the region's most prolific land mammals, second only to bison.

But for all of the distance they can cover at speeds up to 60 mph, pronghorn are quite literally tripped up by fences.

“Pronghorn evolved way back in the Pleistocene [so] they're used to unbroken habitat, just running for miles,” said Robb Krehbiel, a Yellowstone wildlife fellow with the National Parks Conservation Association who's worked on pronghorn habitat improvement. “They're runners, not jumpers.”

Unlike deer and elk, pronghorn—a faster North American ungulate than the true antelope species of Africa and Asia—generally prefer to crawl under fences rather than jump over them.

Aversion to fences becomes problematic when the pronghorn of Yellowstone National Park attempt to migrate north to lower elevation winter forage in Paradise Valley, or west toward Centennial Valley. >>



Pronghorn graze in Gardiner Basin, near the North Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. NPS PHOTO

Some fences they encounter were installed long ago by land management agencies like the Custer Gallatin National Forest. Others belong to private landowners. But both hinder the movement of pronghorn, which have one of the farthest land migrations in North America.

Since 2010, the National Parks Conservation Association has worked with public land managers and private landowners to remove fences that are no longer needed, and to make necessary fences more wildlife-friendly.

Modifications typically go in one of two directions: raising the lowest wire so it's 18 inches off the ground and replacing it with a smooth wire, rather than barbed; or dropping the top section of the fence so there's less height for animals to clear.

Trina Smith, the guest services supervisor at the B Bar Ranch, worked with NPCA in Paradise Valley the summer of 2016 to remove one section of fence on a 20-acre plot south of Emigrant, and to lower fencing on a nearby parcel.

Under the new system, the top two wires can be dropped down and clipped in place to facilitate wildlife movement when cattle are grazing other pastures, and clipped back up to standard height when cattle are present.

Smith said the migrations tend to work well with their operation. Typically B Bar doesn't graze cattle in that area—known as the Old Yellowstone property to distinguish it from the ranch's larger spread in Tom Miner Basin—in the late fall and spring when pronghorn are traveling to and from winter forage.





Robb Krehbiel (left) of the National Parks Conservation Association works with a volunteer to build a wildlife-friendly fence.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NPCA

During the summer, pronghorn eat their fill in the park and in Gardiner Basin, but by winter their survival often depends upon successful migration to lower pastures.

“Bison, elk and deer [also] graze [Gardiner Basin] all summer, and when you add a bunch of ice and snow on it, pronghorn are essentially digging through a freezer for leftovers,” Krehbiel said. “When that happens, their population crashes and they’re not able to sustain much more than 150, 180 individuals.”

But as they head north to Paradise Valley, pronghorn encounter a “pinch point” as they attempt to pass through Yankee Jim Canyon, a rocky and steep piece of topography dissected by the Yellowstone River.

By pinpointing their efforts on targeted sections of the landscape near Yankee Jim Canyon, NPCA has yielded outsized results.

Prior to their efforts, pronghorn were often getting hung up in Yankee Jim Canyon, but now they’ve successfully traveled as far north as Big Creek, nearly 10 miles from the canyon as the crow flies.

but still markedly diminished from a historic standpoint. European settlement of the West resulted in habitat loss and unregulated hunting, which drove populations of pronghorn down significantly, much like bison populations.

Smith has noticed an increase in wildlife sightings since the modifications were made. “I have seen pronghorn further north than I have historically, and we’re in that corridor not far from Yankee Jim Canyon,” she said.

Erin Clark, the Yellowstone Program project manager with Ecology Project International, has been working with Krehbiel by supplying student volunteers. During the summer of 2016, 49 EPI volunteers from all over the country participated in fence projects for pronghorn conservation.

Clark said involving youth in conservation can be difficult because the process often happens on a long-term timeline and young people like to see immediate results. This project provides that—the fence that was there is now changed, or gone.

“That ends up being very powerful for them,” she said.

Yellowstone's short-tailed weasels, also known as ermine, turn from brown to white during the winter.

PHOTO COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE FOREVER



# HOW MIGHTY MUSTELIDS SURVIVE WINTER

YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

Most park enthusiasts know a thing or two about how Yellowstone's more visible animals survive winter, but what about the smaller creatures that also have a lengthy cold season to endure?

Yellowstone is home to the largest concentration of mammals in the lower 48 states, and more than 60 different mammal species live here—many of them smaller and less visible.

The family Mustelidae is made up of remarkably fierce carnivores commonly known as the weasel family. Of the 57 species of mustelids, Yellowstone is home to eight of them: badgers, fishers, martens, mink, river otters, long-tailed weasels, short-tailed weasels and wolverines.

Worldwide, the various species share some characteristics, but also differ greatly. For example, the least weasel is not much larger than a mouse, while giant otters can measure up to nearly 8 feet in length.

“Badgers, martens, and weasels are the most common mustelids seen from park roads,” says Kerry Gunther, YNP bear management biologist. “River otters are frequently seen, but not as often from roads—they usually require a short hike [to view].”



Gunther notes that fishers are the least likely to be spotted anywhere in the park, while wolverines are also rare and have a very limited distribution—a fact that prompted Yellowstone Forever (formerly the Yellowstone Park Foundation) to fund a Wolverine Conservation Study in 2008.

The wolverine diet is unique in that it includes scavenging of mostly large animals like mountain goats and elk. This is in contrast to river otters, which according to Gunther are specialists that eat “mostly fish, but also crustaceans, insects, amphibians and birds.”

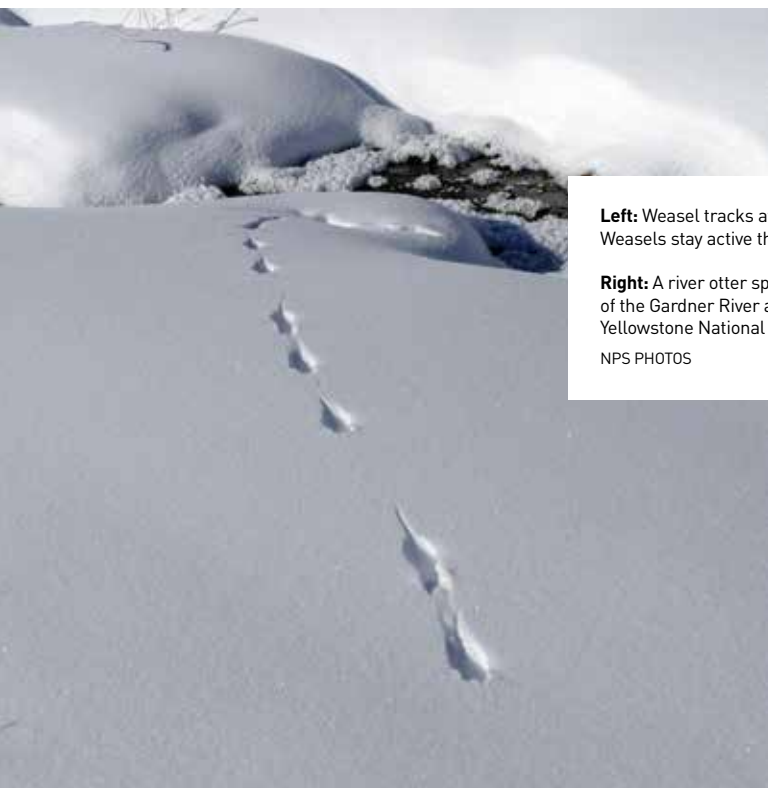
Weasels are active all winter long, despite commonly lacking the impressive body fat stores that other mammals active in winter rely on. Long and short-tailed weasels, both of which turn from brown to white in winter, have a resting metabolism that is often twice that of other animals their size. Because of this, they have to eat more food per day than other winter-adapted animals, according to Bernd Heinrich, author of the book “Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival.”

Heinrich writes that these weasels need to be small and skinny to enter a rodent’s tunnel (one of their main food sources), and balance their energy needs with their behavior.

“Radio tracking studies show that most of their time in a typical 24 hours in winter is spent eating and resting,” Heinrich says. “Weasels need no permanent den, nor do they need a large stomach, because after reaching the rodent nest they use their victim’s nest for their own and curl up into a ball to conserve energy while feeding about five to 10 times per day. After finishing their meal and again in need of energy supplies, they sally forth on their next hunt.”

Keep an eye out for this interesting and diverse family of mammals the next time you visit the park.

*For more information about the many wildlife-focused programs Yellowstone Forever supports or to find out how you can help preserve the park visit [yellowstone.org](http://yellowstone.org).*



**Left:** Weasel tracks at the top of Snow Pass. Weasels stay active through the winter.

**Right:** A river otter spotted at the confluence of the Gardner River and Obsidian Creek in Yellowstone National Park.

NPS PHOTOS



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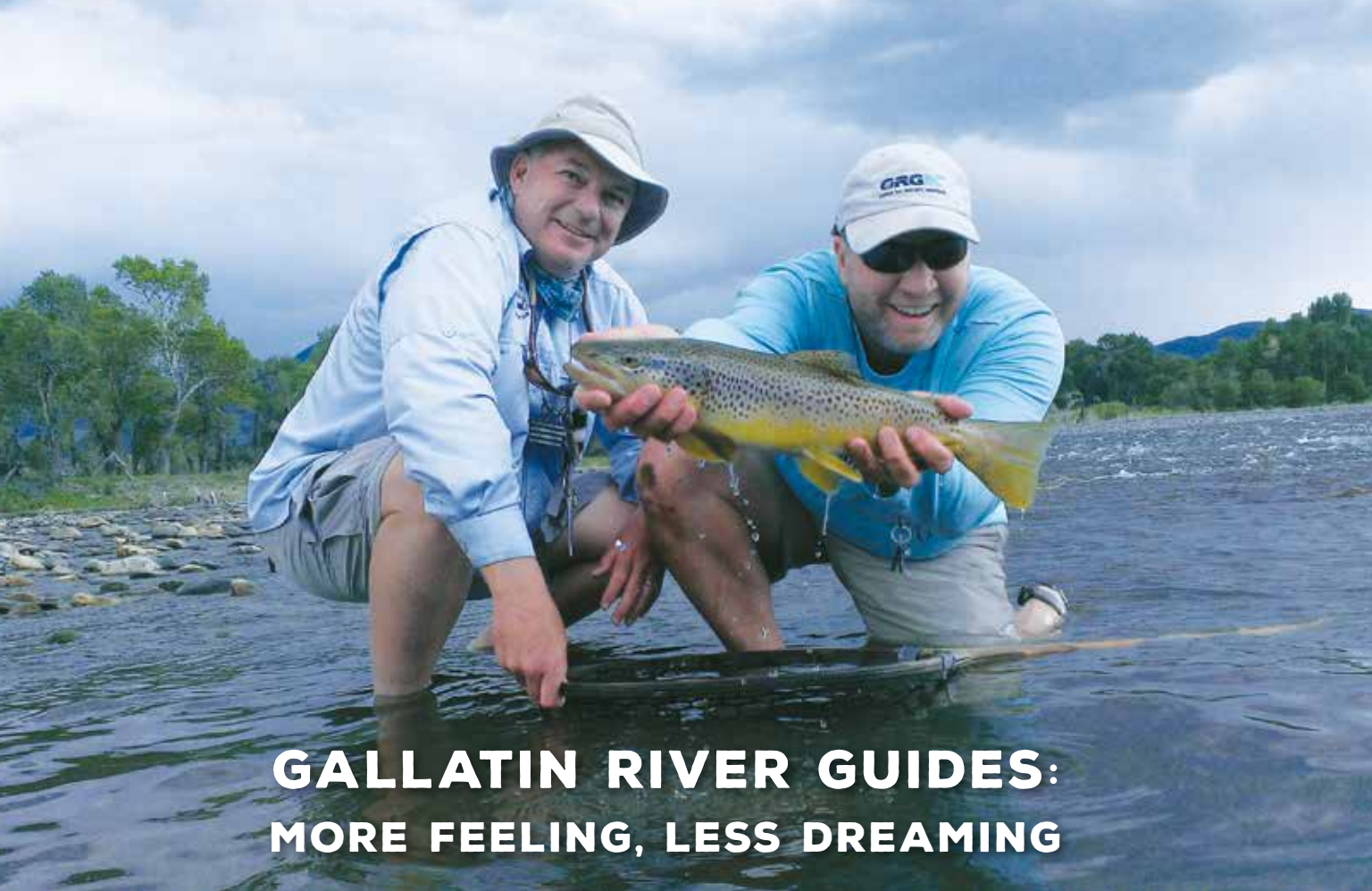
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# A YELLOWSTONE FISHING PRIMER

BY PATRICK STRAUB

It's officially been 100 years since the National Park Service was created and its duties include managing the first national park in Yellowstone National Park, home to some of the best fishing I've experienced during the 20-plus years I've been guiding.

Local anglers have been eagerly awaiting the Saturday, May 27 opening of the park's fishing season since the park closed to angling last November.

Many of us will venture to Yellowstone the weekend preceding Memorial Day and fish the world's highest concentration of trout-filled accessible waters. The idea to create Yellowstone National Park wasn't driven by anglers, but it sure could have been given the angling wonders that exist within its boundaries. Here are a few of the reasons Yellowstone tops my list of fishing destinations:

---

## MILES OF ACCESSIBLE WATERS.

---

Yellowstone National Park is just that—a park, with 2.2 million acres of public lands. Within those boundaries exist hundreds of bends, riffles, pools and undercut banks where four species of wild trout and Arctic grayling lie in wait to eat your well-presented fly.

A valid Yellowstone fishing permit is required and they can be obtained at most local fly shops. Armed with your fishing permit, some local knowledge and a good sense of adventure, the fishing opportunities in Yellowstone are potentially endless. >>







Cutthroat trout are one of the most sought-after species of fish in Yellowstone. NPS PHOTOS

### CLEAR WATER OPTIONS TO FISH THROUGH THE SUMMER

Many of southwest Montana's freestone rivers are high and muddy as runoff peaks in or near June, but there are a variety of fishing options in the park that circumvent this issue. The Firehole, Gibbon and Madison rivers typically run clear during late May and through the summer.

In addition to their clear waters, the Gibbon and Firehole flow through geyser basins. Every angler should experience casting a fly near the rising steam of a hot spring or erupting geyser. These rivers are also easily wadeable, making them user-friendly for all levels of wading ability.

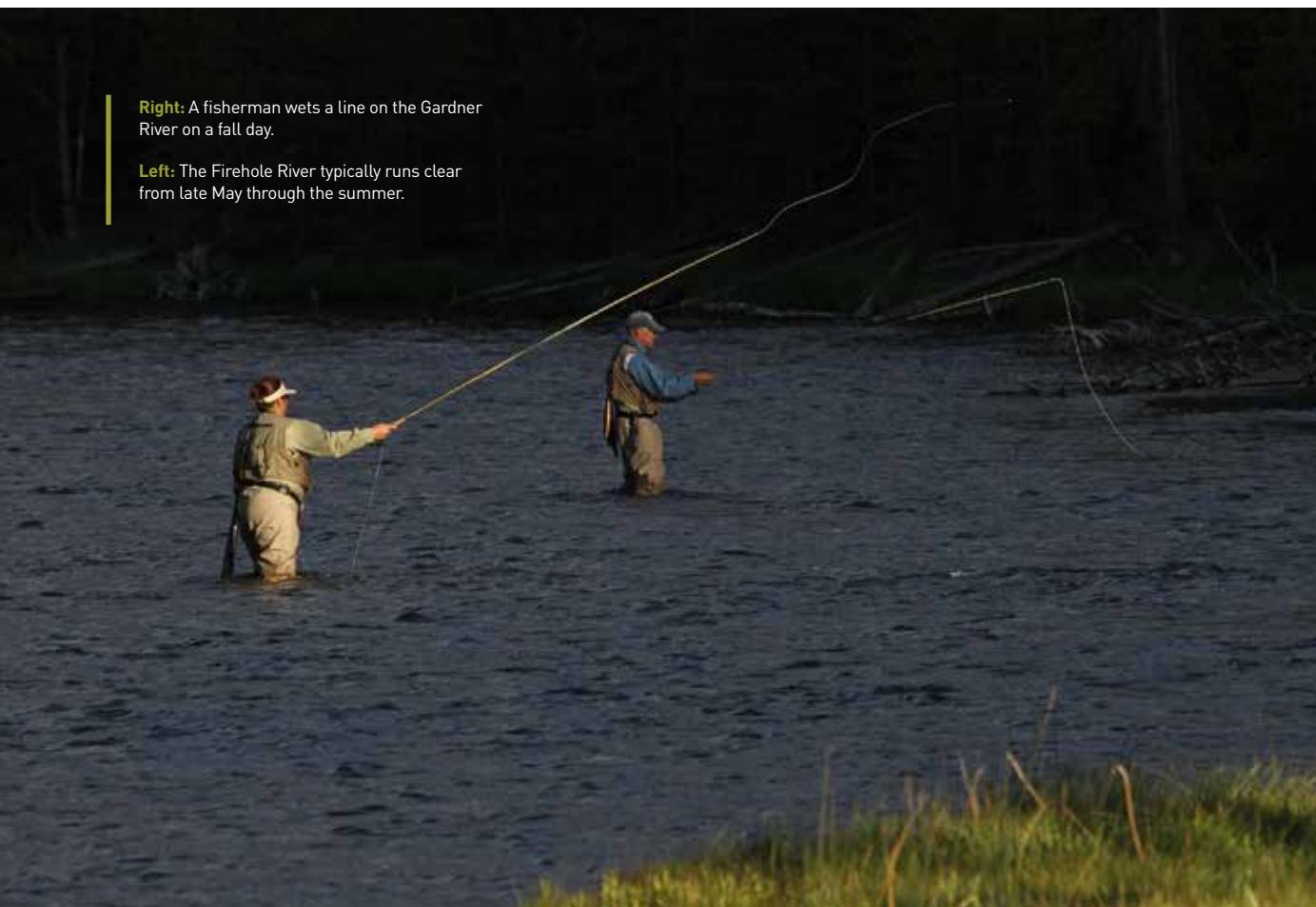
### DRY FLY ANGLER'S PARADISE

The Firehole River flows gently through bends and riffles over much of its course. Above Old Faithful geyser basin the river is small and characterized by downed timber and rock cliffs. Below the geyser basin the gradient slows and its currents create an idyllic setting for rising trout and long drifts. Home to abundant populations of mayflies and caddis, the Firehole River is the river to break in a new three-weight rod or work on your reach cast.

Despite a few meadow sections, the Gibbon River flows faster than the Firehole. It has plenty of pocket water and riffle corners, ideal for anglers who enjoy fishing attractor dry flies to opportunistic trout. The Madison River, created by the Gibbon and Firehole, mirrors its two source rivers with its ample angling opportunities.

**Right:** A fisherman wets a line on the Gardner River on a fall day.

**Left:** The Firehole River typically runs clear from late May through the summer.







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### NATIVE YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT

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Yellowstone Lake opens to fishing in early June and is home to the world's largest population of native Yellowstone cutthroat trout. This species is only found in the Yellowstone River drainage and in the lake—they often cruise the shallows of the lake, making them catchable from shore.

As runoff subsides later in the summer, these fish can also be caught in the main stem of the Yellowstone River and its major tributaries, such as the Lamar River, Slough Creek and Soda Butte Creek. Known for their willingness to rise to a dry fly, these fish are as enjoyable to catch as they are unique.

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### WILD ANGLING COMPANIONS

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While fishing on any water in Yellowstone, you're likely to encounter the park's varied wildlife. Bison are most commonly seen as they enjoy grazing on the lush riparian vegetation. Elk and moose are often spotted near rivers as well. Be wary of moose as their poor eyesight can cause them to mistake you for a predator, and a moose charge is not to be taken lightly.

If you choose to fish in areas frequented by grizzly bears, fish with a companion and carry bear spray. If you do spot a grizzly, give the bear plenty of room and choose another place to fish for the day.

I've been fortunate to have fished in several exotic locations—for massive brown trout in Patagonia; tigerfish in southern Africa; bonefish, permit and tarpon in several Caribbean locations; and for steelhead and salmon in Alaska. They've all burned permanent memories in my angling psyche; however, the most vivid memories occurred two hours from my home in Yellowstone National Park.

---

*Pat Straub is the author of six books, including "The Frugal Fly Fisher," "Montana On The Fly," and "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fly Fishing." He and his wife own Gallatin River Guides in Big Sky, he is co-director of the Montana Fishing Guide School, and co-owns a guide service on the Missouri River.*



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# Equine adventure in Yellowstone

**A day in the park with Lone Mountain Ranch** | BY MARTHA CROCKER

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With a deep breath, heave ho, and a little help from the wranglers, the guests are fitted comfortably into their saddles. Starting down a gentle trail, they feel the horses' easy motion beneath them and are somewhat mesmerized by the steady pace and sway of the animals' stride.

The air is clear and crisp. Willow, sagebrush and quaking aspen flutter in the breeze. In the distance, a larger canvas of pine, spruce and fir provide the mountain backdrop to complete the view.

The ride is freeing; the warmth of the sun, amazing. A gentle tug on the reins is all that's needed to get their horse back to walking, rather than browsing on the trailside grasses. Eventually the ride winds through two small stream crossings where the willows are shoulder height and the horses begin to gradually climb.

Farther upstream, on the edge of the forest, the party may run into a cow moose with spindly-legged twins, which are small and anxious to stay with their mother. The ride continues uphill through the sage meadows with purple larkspur and lupine, and yellow splashes of arrowleaf balsamroot.

The horses are content, familiar with the trail and ready for a break at the top of a rise. They graze as guests take in the views and enjoy a gourmet



**The air is clear and crisp. Willow, sagebrush and quaking aspen flutter in the breeze. In the distance, a larger canvas of pine, spruce and fir provide the mountain backdrop to complete the view.**

lunch, while the ravens entertain with their aerial play, swooping and diving with the currents. After a pleasant rest, it's time to mount up again and ride down the hillside; the horses pay attention to the bony trail, careful not to stumble.

As the trail levels out at the river, the group breaks into an easy lope. The Gallatin River's crystal-clear water meanders and bends, evidence that the raucous spring runoff is slowing down. After another couple of miles, guests return to the trailhead.

With an apple saved from lunch, a guest can feed it to their horse and give their mount a pat. It's a small thank you for a steady ride and beautiful sights.

Whether crossing a stream or negotiating steep slopes, the horses know the way in Yellowstone National Park.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF LONE MOUNTAIN RANCH





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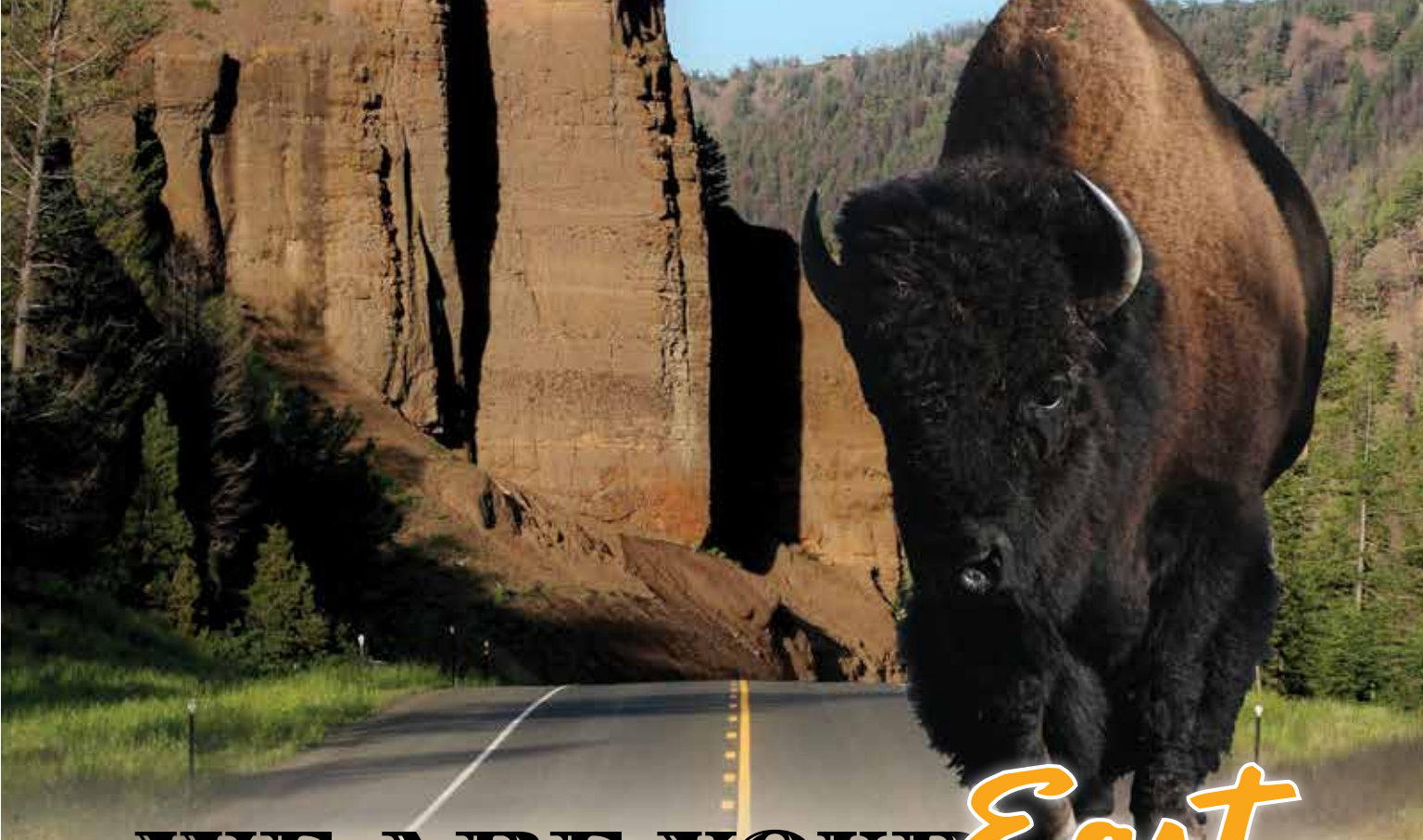


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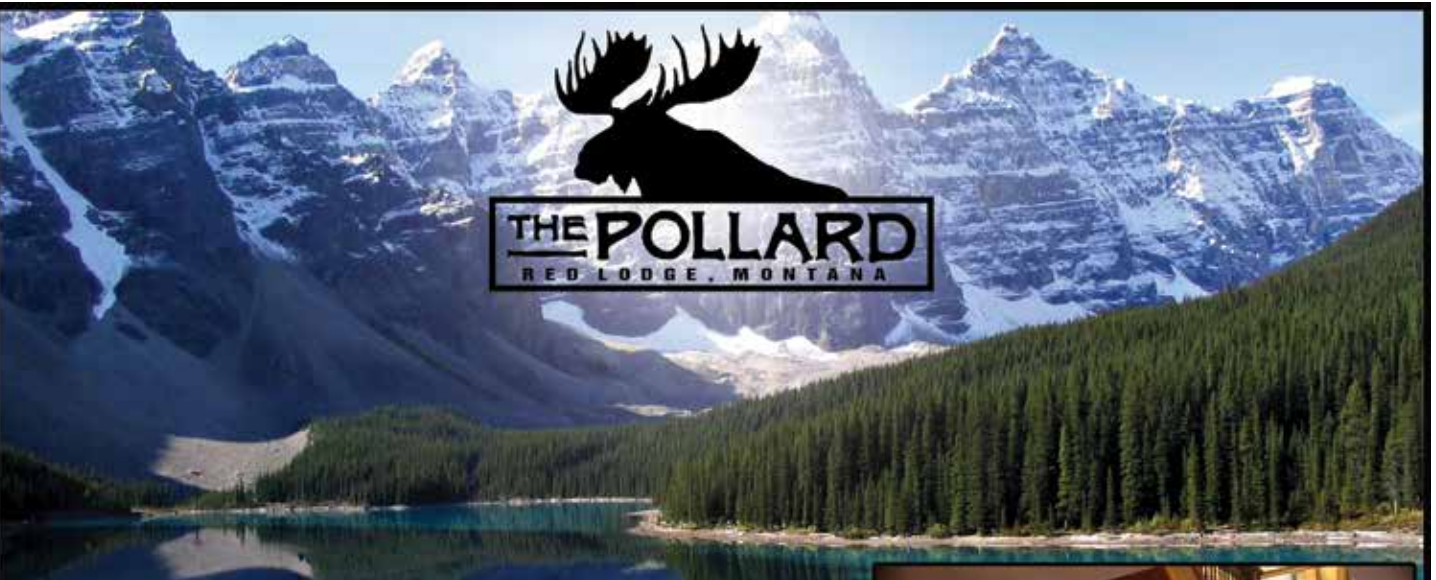


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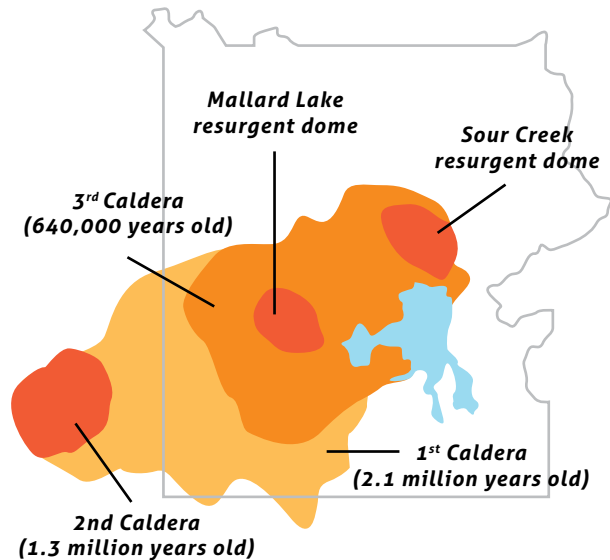
# THE YELLOWSTONE CALDERA

BY TAYLOR-ANN SMITH

## WHAT IS IT?

The volcanic caldera and supervolcano located in Yellowstone National Park is also known as the Yellowstone Supervolcano.

Measuring about 34 by 45 miles, the major features of the caldera were created by a massive eruption approximately 640,000 years ago. Its rim can best be viewed from the Washburn Hot Springs overlook, south of Dunraven Pass. Gibbon Falls, Lewis Falls, Lake Butte and Flat Mountain Arm of Yellowstone Lake are all part of the rim.



## FACTS

- Yellowstone is one of the largest known volcanoes in the world and is the largest volcanic system in North America.
- The giant caldera is the product of a large-scale collapse of the crust after three supervolcano eruptions—large explosive events that released several hundreds to thousands of cubic kilometers of magma. These eruptions took place 2.1 million, 1.3 million, and 640,000 years ago.
- Yellowstone National Park contains half of the Earth's geothermal features.
- More than 300 geysers in the park make up two-thirds of all of the planet's geysers.



NPS PHOTO

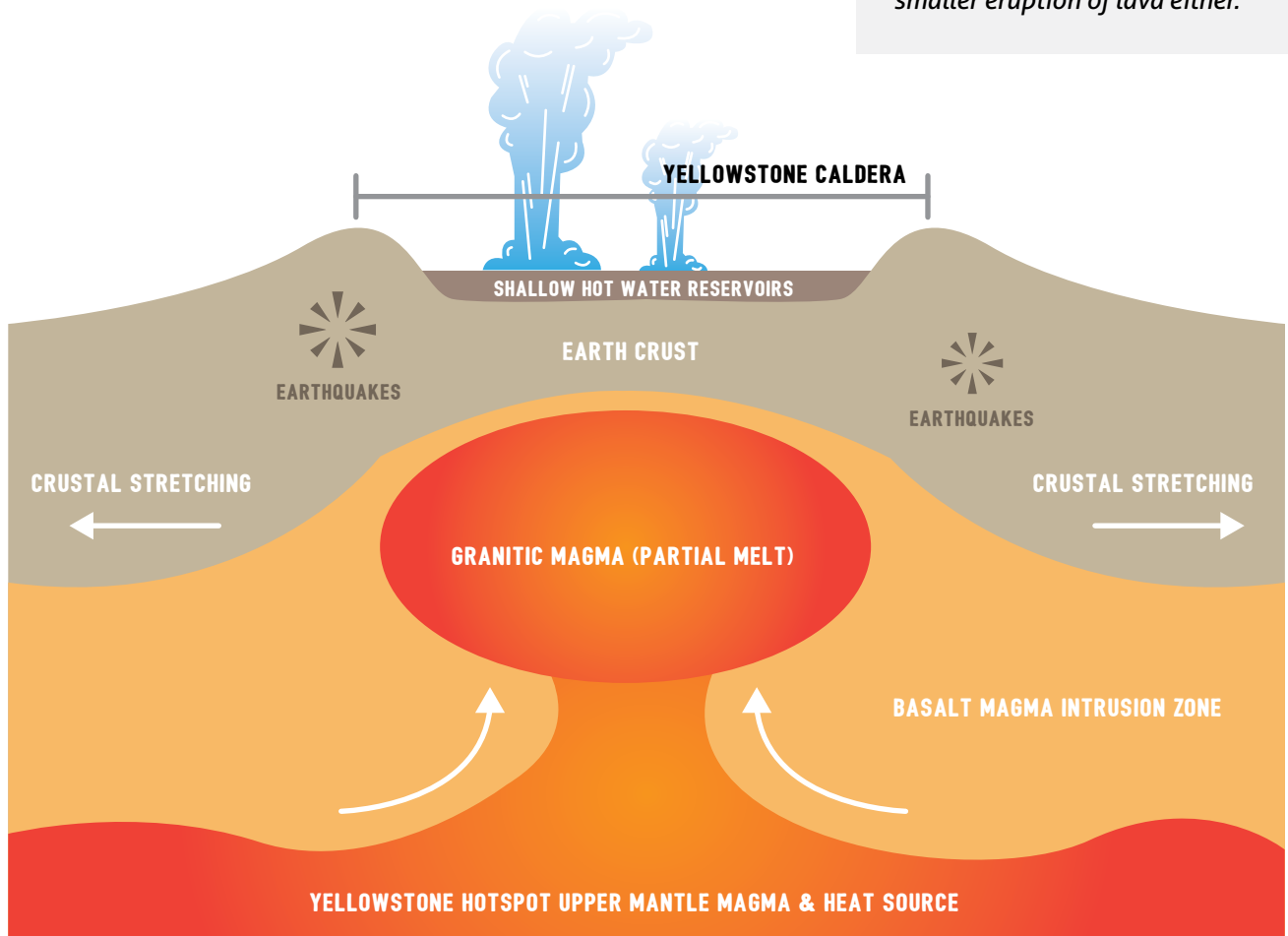


## IMPACT ON THE PARK

- The last eruption was approximately 174,000 years ago and created what is now the West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake. The last lava flow was about 70,000 years ago.
- Earthquakes—1,000 to 3,000 per year—reveal activity below ground from crustal stretching created by the expansion of granitic magma.
- The park's many hydrothermal features were created from the caldera's impressive heat.
- If another caldera-forming eruption occurs, it's estimated that the explosion would be equivalent to a force 1,000 times more powerful than the Mount St. Helens eruption of 1980.

### DON'T WORRY!

*Current geologic activity at Yellowstone has remained relatively constant since monitoring began more than 30 years ago. Another caldera-forming eruption is theoretically possible, but is highly unlikely in the next 1,000 or even 10,000 years. Scientists have not found any indication of an imminent smaller eruption of lava either.*



**SOURCES** [nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/volcanoqa.htm](https://nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/volcanoqa.htm) [volcanodiscovery.com/yellowstone.html](https://volcanodiscovery.com/yellowstone.html) [traveltips.usatoday.com/interesting-yellowstone-volcano-102611.html](https://traveltips.usatoday.com/interesting-yellowstone-volcano-102611.html)

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# AERIAL PHOTOS AID PARK BIOLOGISTS





Sunrise on Swan Lake flat  
NPS PHOTOS

## YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

Digital photography has changed the way most of us take pictures when we're on vacation, and today it is also revolutionizing wildlife research.

Observing wolves, bears and other animals can be challenging because researchers don't want to get so close that they alter the animals' natural behavior, and details are difficult to capture with the naked eye. But now Yellowstone is eliminating those challenges with a powerful data collection method.

For the past few years, Yellowstone biologists have been capturing close-up digital photographs of wildlife from an aircraft several hundred feet above the ground. They use high-powered zoom lenses with image stabilizing capabilities, which produce startlingly clear images. Canon U.S.A. helps make these images possible with their Eyes on Yellowstone program.

Aerial images have enabled researchers to identify individual wolves in a pack, determine the presence and number of pups in a litter, and observe strategies packs use to surround and kill prey. In the process of photographing wildlife, researchers have also taken some pretty stunning images of Yellowstone's landscape, from an unusual perspective.

Here are a few images park biologists have taken over the years. >>

## AERIAL PHOTOS AID PARK BIOLOGISTS



**Above:** Pups from the Druid wolf pack with their mother on a ridge near Cache Creek **Below:** "Cloud Snakes" in Pelican Valley

*Yellowstone Forever is the park's official nonprofit educational and philanthropic partner. Visit [yellowstone.org](http://yellowstone.org) for more information.*



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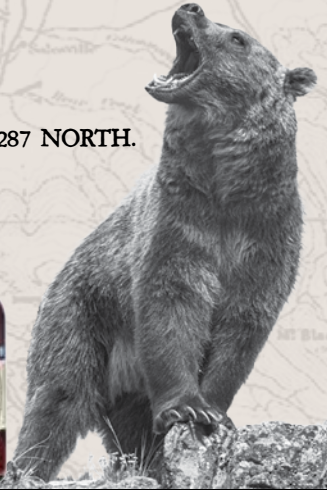
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According to the Park Service, native Yellowstone cutthroat trout are spawning in increased numbers since lake trout gillnetting began in 1995. NPS PHOTO

# Yellowstone Turns the Tide Against Lake Trout

## The fate of native cutthroat trout hangs in the balance

■ BY CHRISTINE GIANAS WEINHEIMER

For 10,000 years, Yellowstone cutthroat trout thrived in Yellowstone. At one point, it was estimated that more than 4 million of these fish—native to the Northern Rockies and unique in the entire world—existed in the park. Over time, Yellowstone became a bucket-list destination for dedicated fly fishermen, and cutthroat trout were the prize.

However, by the late 1990s, Yellowstone cutthroat were being caught less frequently. It signaled the start of an ecological crisis and eventually generated a monumental response.

To understand why saving the Yellowstone cutthroat trout is a top priority for park management, it is important to understand this: it's not just about the fish.

In Yellowstone, more than 20 species, including bald eagles, otters and grizzly bears, depend on Yellowstone cutthroat trout as a primary food source. This native fish, largely unseen by the typical park visitor, could trigger the unraveling of the entire ecosystem.



## THE MAKING OF A CATASTROPHE

As Yellowstone's popularity grew among anglers in the 1890s, the U.S. Fishing Commission introduced non-native lake trout into a few park waterways. Biologists theorize that someone illegally moved lake trout from a smaller lake to Yellowstone Lake. Decades later, the consequences have been devastating.

The situation became a crisis in 1994 with the first confirmed lake trout discovered in Yellowstone Lake, where the majority of Yellowstone cutthroat trout live. Shortly thereafter, the cutthroat population plummeted.

Lake trout populations have boomed by preying on Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Biologists estimate that each lake trout, which can grow to 50 pounds or more, eats 40 to 50 cutthroats every year. Lake trout have already consumed over 90 percent of the lake's cutthroat, and are believed to be capable of wiping them out completely.

To make matters worse, non-native lake trout are not an adequate food substitute for the species who eat cutthroats. The lake trout are too large, and live too deep in the lake, to be caught by bears, raptors and other predators.

## THE WAR ON LAKE TROUT

In 1995, after a panel of expert scientists concluded that physical removal of lake trout was the only solution, gillnetting commenced on Yellowstone Lake. The race was on to save the Yellowstone cutthroat trout before it was too late, but the lake trout proved to be tenacious.

Yellowstone Forever, the park's official nonprofit partner, launched a fundraising effort in 2012 to help Yellowstone double down on their commitment to eliminate lake trout. For each of the past five years, Yellowstone Forever has contributed \$1 million toward the implementation of the park's Native Fish Conservation Plan, matched dollar for dollar by federal funds.

This infusion of additional funds pays for more frequent operation of better-equipped gillnetting boats. To date, the National Park Service reports that more than 2.4 million lake trout have been removed—366,000 in 2016 alone—with the majority caught during the past five years of increased funding.

A private, contracted fishing company does almost all of the netting, with crews on four boats working six-day weeks. On any given day from May through October, some 30 to 40 miles of net are set in the lake.

It appears to be working. According to the Park Service, an increase in spawning cutthroat in tributaries, a three-fold increase in juvenile fish in the lake, and higher catch rates by anglers, are strong evidence that cutthroat trout numbers are up.



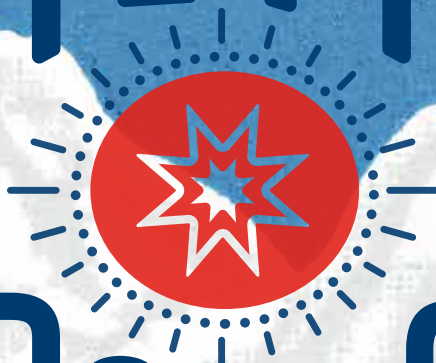
National Park Service Fisheries Biologist Brian Ertel holds a lake trout caught in Yellowstone Lake as part of an eradication plan to restore native fish populations. NPS PHOTO

Despite the program's apparent success, the Park Service concedes they may never get all of the lake trout out of the lake. Instead, their stated goal is to dramatically suppress the population so that cutthroat can continue to increase their presence. Meanwhile, the existence of an integral native species hangs in the balance.

*Christine Gianas Weinheimer is a freelance writer from Bozeman, Montana.*



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# OLD FAITHFUL INN

## 8 FUN FACTS



NPS PHOTO

Old Faithful Geyser and other natural features draw visitors from around the world to the Upper Geyser Basin, but there's also a legendary man-made feature that is not to be missed: the Old Faithful Inn.

The Old Faithful Inn was designed by Robert C. Reamer, who is said to have wanted the asymmetry of

the building to reflect the chaos of nature. Completed in 1904 at a cost of \$140,000, the enormous wood structure with its soaring, 76-foot tall lobby is considered a masterpiece of rustic "Parkitecture." The hotel remains one of the largest log-style structures in the world and is a National Historic Landmark.





## THE YELLOWSTONE VOLCANO HELPED CREATE THE OLD FAITHFUL INN.

The building's foundation and enormous fireplace were constructed from rhyolite, the rock produced by Yellowstone's volcanic eruptions. The fireplace alone is made from 500 tons of this native stone.



## EVERY YEAR ON AUGUST 25, GUESTS AND EMPLOYEES CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST.

The tradition dates back to the 1930s when park employees celebrated "Christmas in July" with homemade ornaments, visits from Santa, and a holiday feast. By 1955, "Savage Christmas" was celebrated by employees and guests on Aug. 25.

## ON TOP OF THE INN'S ROOF IS A LOFTY LOOKOUT, REFERRED TO AS THE "WIDOW'S WALK"

At one time it flew colorful pennants and had a U.S. Navy searchlight to illuminate nighttime viewings of Old Faithful eruptions, but the light was removed in 1948.

## A PRINTING PRESS LOCATED IN THE INN'S BASEMENT PRINTED DAILY MENUS FOR EACH MEAL THROUGH AT LEAST THE 1950s.

Meals were served family-style at long tables and could be purchased for around 75 cents during the inn's early days.



## FOR EARLY VISITORS TO THE INN, EVENING MEALS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY A STRING QUARTET AND DANCING WAS CUSTOMARY SIX NIGHTS A WEEK.

After dinner, the musicians would climb up a staircase from the second balcony and continue to play from the "Crow's Nest," a small, treehouse-like landing near the roof. Today, music can be heard in the main lobby each evening.

## THE BEAR PIT LOUNGE WAS ADDED TO THE INN IN 1936, NOT LONG AFTER PROHIBITION WAS LIFTED NATIONALLY.

Original inn architect Robert C. Reamer designed the addition and commissioned Chicago artist Walter Oehrle to etch cartoon-like bears and other animals in fir panels to decorate the lounge.

## THE ORIGINAL INN, NOW CALLED THE "OLD HOUSE," INCLUDED 140 GUEST ROOMS, EACH WITH ITS OWN CHARACTER AND ACCENTS.

First-floor rooms featured peeled log walls, and some rooms had cushioned window seats. When the inn opened, a room with a bath down the hall could be booked for \$4 a night. After expansions completed in 1914 and 1927, the inn now has 300 rooms. But the 87 Old House rooms still available for rent—most of which without a private bath—are always in demand.



## THE WILDFIRES OF 1988 DESTROYED SOME SMALL BUILDINGS NEAR THE INN, AND THE HOTEL WAS EVACUATED.

But the Old Faithful Inn was preserved by the heroic work of firefighters, assisted by the roof sprinklers installed the previous year and a favorable shift in wind.

*A version of this story first appeared on Yellowstone Forever's website [yellowstone.org](http://yellowstone.org). To learn more about how early visitors experienced the Old Faithful Inn and get a behind-the-scenes look at its construction, take a free tour of the inn. Tours are offered several times a day through early October.*

*The inn is open from early May through October and reservations are accepted beginning May 1 for the following summer season.*



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# A CENTURY OF AUTOMOBILES IN YELLOWSTONE

End of the stagecoach era and start of the great American road trip

■ BY MARK WILCOX



Touring Yellowstone National Park by auto in 1924.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF YELLOWSTONE HISTORIC CENTER

It may have been a backfire, but it sounded more like the end of the world.

At least that's what one historian likened it to when the first automobile chugged its way into Yellowstone National Park, beginning to trace over the lines made by stagecoaches throughout the park.

"The best of all possible worlds came to a shaking, rattling, backfiring end at exactly 7 p.m. on the evening of July 31, 1915," wrote historian Richard Bartlett in the summer 1970 issue of *Montana the Magazine of Western History*.

The erasure of the coach lines didn't come until a year later, when commercial transportation switched from dust-encrusted stagecoaches to motorized vehicles, at the end of the 1916 season.

Historians diverge in their acceptance of the change, but all agree that it was a major transition making access to the park more affordable and altered the nature of who came to Yellowstone.

"The automobile democratized the park—made it so anyone could get here," said Leslie Quinn, an interpretive specialist and historian for Xanterra Parks & Resorts, the current hotelier in Yellowstone.

Author and avocational historian Robert Goss said the change untied people from strict travel schedules and allowed them to avoid high prices from monopolistic hotels and railroads.

"Common folks could eventually enjoy the wonders of nature along with the upper crust," Goss said.



## COACH CLASS

Today, "taking coach" is synonymous with roughing it, but in the early days of Yellowstone it was the only way to travel. It was very expensive and coach-class travelers had to be pretty wealthy.

From relatively nearby Salt Lake City, a round-trip rate to Yellowstone in 1899 was \$58, including rail and stage travel on the Monida & Yellowstone Stage Line. For comparison, hotel stays in the park were \$4 per night.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' inflation calculator only converts dollars as far back as 1913, but at that time \$58 equated to nearly \$1,400 in today's dollars. At that price, flying coach from Salt Lake City today could take a traveler to London and back.

Stagecoaches, while seen in a romantic light now, were anything but.

"The stagecoach experience was a slow, really dirty, kind of arduous trip," said Marin Aurand, a historian who manages the Yellowstone Historic Center Museum in West Yellowstone. "It was a hard way to travel through Yellowstone." >>

Dust pulverized by steel-rimmed wagon wheels and iron-shod horse hooves clung to the air, a miasma that coated everything and never seemed to settle. It was the kind of dust that coated lungs and made people long for open water and fresh air. The omnipresent dust was by far the chief complaint of wagon tour riders, most of whom came from high socioeconomic backgrounds.

Author Rudyard Kipling visited the park in 1889 and called the dust “as dense as fog,” despite spacing of at least 500 yards between each stagecoach.

The few who lived close enough to Yellowstone to take their own buggies into the park were derisively referred to as “sage brushers.” This name came from their tendency to camp in the sagebrush rather than frequenting establishments like Lake Hotel, which celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016.

While the rides themselves may not have been glamorous, the company was colorful. Riders often mentioned their drivers stashing whiskey under the driver’s seat. That was before open-container laws were in effect.

In the coach, camaraderie developed between the riders and the coachmen were the original interpreters of the park. They shared stories that could only be gotten from a tour—even if some of them were patently false. Kipling wrote of one driver who went by “Geyser Bob” Edgar. The man would drop a handkerchief in one geyser before “retrieving” it from another miles down the trail, creating the illusion of an underground network of thermal features.

Robert Goss has adopted the name “Geyser Bob” for his website documenting Yellowstone’s history, though he hasn’t carried forward the handkerchief trick.



Touring Yellowstone National Park by auto in 1924.

### SHARING THE ROAD

Getting cars on the road in Yellowstone represented no small challenge, especially since most of the roads weren’t paved until the 1930s. Opponents argued that cars on the road would spook horses and create logistical problems and they weren’t entirely wrong.

Goss said no deaths resulted from cars and stagecoaches sharing the dirt roads, but the Livingston Enterprise told of one incident in July 1916 shortly before the commercial swap to automobiles.

A commercial four-horse stagecoach from the Wylie Permanent Camping Co. left Mammoth headed toward the train depot in Gardiner. A mile or so into the short, but steep descent it came upon a stalled automobile.

“The horses panicked and cut loose down the hill, almost going over the edge into the canyon,” Goss said. “The coach flipped on its side and all the passengers were thrown from the coach, crushing many of them between the coach and a rock outcropping. All were injured to some extent and three of the people suffered serious fractures.”

Aurand of the Yellowstone Historic Center said that regulations had progressed slowly before cars came into the park, and Yellowstone ended up being one of the last parks to allow automobiles. When cars came in it marked the “end of the world,” but the start of a new era.

“Essentially this is the start of the great American West road trip,” Aurand said. “It feels more American almost to be able to go by car.”



## RATTLING INTO HISTORY

The end of the 1916 season marked the end of commercial stagecoach access to Yellowstone. While sage brushers could still come, and did so for decades longer, concessionaires flipped the historic switch. The results mostly speak for themselves.

“There is a sense that the relative peacefulness and tranquility of stage travel mostly disappeared when the noisy and smoke-belching autos arrived on the scene, signaling the end of a sometimes romanticized travel era,” Goss said. “The increasing reliance on private automobiles over commercial transportation has led to significantly over-crowded roads, huge swaths of land paved over for parking lots and probably a greater disturbance to the wildlife.”

But that is not entirely a bad thing, as millions of people now enjoy a national treasure each year compared to the 20,000 visitors the park had in 1914, the last year before cars were allowed. The following year, visitation jumped to more than 52,000.

“It’s always a toss-up between allowing access and preserving the landscape,” Aurand said. “It’s a really tough balance.”

She predicted a time when the finite space in the park will be overwhelmed and some sort of limit will be placed on the amount of people coming through the gates. But for now, “those infernal internal combustion machines,” as the historian Bartlett called them, have given relatively free access to a natural wonder.



A Tally-Ho stagecoach loaded with Yellowstone visitors in 1904.



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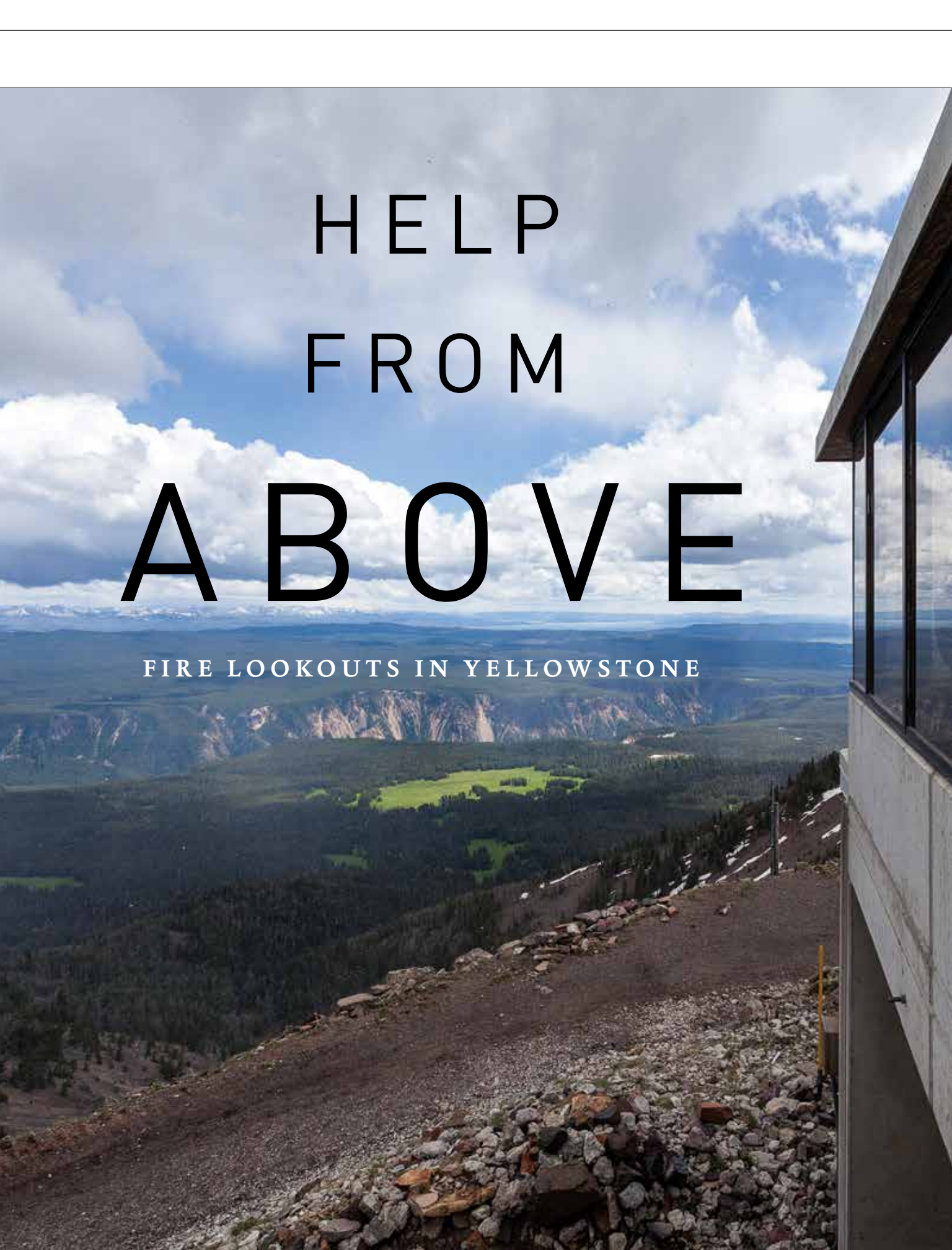
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# HELP FROM ABOVE

FIRE LOOKOUTS IN YELLOWSTONE





Mount Washburn is the only routinely staffed fire lookout in Yellowstone still in operation.  
PHOTO BY MATT LUDIN

## YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

At one time there were as many as 10 fire lookout stations staffed each summer in Yellowstone National Park.

Strategically placed on the highest mountaintops throughout the park, they served as the primary method to detect and monitor wildfires. Over the years, that number has been greatly reduced, but the stations—and the people who staff them—still have a critical role to play.

Currently, there are four fire lookouts in the park: Mount Washburn, Mount Sheridan, Pelican Cone and Mount Holmes. Washburn is the only one inhabited for the full summer season, and the others are used only if there is an active fire in the vicinity to monitor. In an average year, lightning ignites approximately 25 fires and an additional six to 10 are caused by humans.

Yellowstone Fire and Aviation Management Officer John Cataldo explains that it is both a large expense and a potential risk to keep a fire lookout stationed in a remote location, since pack animals and helicopters are needed to drop off supplies.

This expense and risk led to the elimination of some of the park's lookout stations—such as Purple Mountain and Divide Mountain—and to cease full-time staffing of the others except Washburn. While visitors must hike to reach the summit of Mount Washburn and its 360-degree views of Yellowstone, the peak can be accessed by administrative vehicles. >>

The Cygnet Fire burns in the background of this 2012 photo of Mount Washburn lookout.

NPS PHOTO



Aerial monitoring and, more recently, technology like webcams and cell phones, have reduced the need for multiple full-time lookouts. Though aerial monitoring is expensive, the large number of wildlife research-related flights in Yellowstone—such as wolf pack observation flights—serve double duty by helping detect and monitor fires.

Yet Cataldo is quick to point out that fire lookouts still play an important role in wildland fire management.

“Humans observing a fire for an extended period of time can offer more information on the character and behavior of a fire than a webcam or quick flight,” Cataldo said. “They can often see smaller fires or night-time fires first, before a camera would pick them up.”

Lookouts can also help fire personnel quickly investigate a fire that has been called in by a visitor. In many of these cases, the reported fire is actually a “water dog,” a columnar cloud of vapor indicating recent rain that appears above



PHOTO BY MATT LUDIN

the treetops. In such cases, the fire lookout helps conserve resources by reducing the need for ground response.

Not that the reports by visitors aren’t appreciated.

“We have 3.5 million amateur fire lookouts helping us, and they do a pretty good job. It is rare to have a fire in Yellowstone that isn’t reported immediately,” Cataldo said.

.....  
*Yellowstone Forever is the park’s official nonprofit educational and philanthropic partner. Visit [yellowstone.org](http://yellowstone.org) for more information.*



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Robert Seabeck (b. 1945). *Untitled, buffalo*, 1990. Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, Wyoming, USA. Gift of the artist. 16.04

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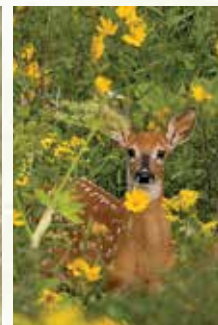


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