



Northern Rockies Round-Up

Finally! Cleaner & Quieter Winters in Yellowstone

In October the National Park Service announced its final regulation for snowmobile and snowcoach use in Yellowstone National Park. After well over a decade of work shaping winter use in Yellowstone, NPCA is extremely pleased to see a final decision that will significantly reduce air and noise pollution in America's first national park.

Key elements of Yellowstone's final rule:

- Starting in 2015, only the nation's cleanest and quietest snowmobiles and snowcoaches will be permitted into the park;
- No more than 50 snowmobile "transportation events" per day will be allowed in the park with a maximum of 10 snowmobiles per group.
- The rule sets maximum speed limits of 35 mph for snowmobiles and 25 for snowcoaches.

The final winter-use plan will improve conditions for park wildlife and visitors alike. The National Park Service deserves credit for successfully concluding this

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Mixing Business with Pleasure

The Benefits of Living and Working in the Crown of the Continent

By Michael Jamison

So, a banker, a businesswoman and a bureaucrat walk up to the bar. No joke. And they're joined by an outfitter, an economist and an entrepreneur.

Sitting along the wall, shoulder to shoulder, is a line-up of unusual suspects: an economic developer, a national park superintendent, a chamber of commerce president, a city councilor, a wilderness activist.

They're nodding and smiling and listening to the national parks' advocate, and from behind the podium, this unlikely crowd looks a whole lot like success for the National Parks Conservation Association.

Two hundred people attended "Looking Up: Business and Opportunity in the Crown of the Continent"—an NPCA conference held in Whitefish, MT on Oct. 17 and 18. Prior to the conference, NPCA polled chamber of commerce members throughout the region. They asked: *Why do you choose to live and to work in the Crown of the Continent?*

We expected the answers might be all about tax codes and labor costs, about transportation and broadband, about market share and proximity to source vendors.



Instead, we heard all about fly-fishing and hiking, elk hunting and bicycling, about Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake. We heard about wildlife and skiing and rafting and a healthy outdoor lifestyle.

Turns out, most businesses choose to put down entrepreneurial roots here because of Glacier country's world-class outdoor recreation opportunities.

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FIELD REPORT

Winter 2013

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, TIM STEVENS



October 1, 2013, is a day that I will remember for some time. That morning, I found myself at Yellowstone's north entrance bearing witness to the beginning of what would turn into 16 days of government shutdown and closure of every one of our nation's 401 national park units. On that very first morning, I saw the immediate impact of the shutdown. Visitors from Colorado, California, Washington, and Illinois—among many others—who had traveled hundreds of miles to experience the wonders of the world's first national park, spoke about their disappointment at being turned away at the park's entrance. I ran into an educator who was supposed to be leading a group of school-children on a multi-day educational program in the park. Instead, she was scrambling to figure out alternative plans, and was considering canceling the trip altogether. In the days that followed, NPCA connected with nearby business owners in West Yellowstone, Big Sky, Bozeman, Cooke City, Gardiner, Livingston, and Red Lodge—to name a few. The stories were the same: The impact of the shutdown meant canceled trips, laid-off staff, and shuttered doors. During the shut-down, this scenario played out across the country and served as another important reminder that our national parks are vital to the economies of hundreds of communities and thousands of businesses from California to Maine.

Above: Tim Stevens (right), his wife Amy and friend Kevin Wright on the Grand Teton, August 2013.

Although we are all relieved that the government is back up and running, and parks are open, the immediacy of the shutdown masked a more important issue affecting parks for the long term: funding.

While the funding of our national parks represent just 1/15th of 1% of the federal budget, the already strained resources needed to keep our national parks running have nonetheless taken a disproportionate hit through Congressional budget cuts and the so-called "sequester." In fact, the National Park Service budget was cut 8% or \$180 million this fiscal year, the third straight year of budget cuts. Now the funding available to parks is fully 13% below what it was three years ago. That has had a substantial impact on our national parks.

As Congress continues to wrangle over the federal budget, those who care about national parks need to remind their elected leaders that our national parks are already suffering under the weight of the budget cuts already enacted. Our local communities and economies suffer when the National Park Service does not have the funding to hire rangers, patch roads, keep visitor centers and campgrounds open, and provide for visitor safety. Budget cuts have affected Glacier, Grand Teton, Yellowstone and all the other parks in the Northern Rockies Region. Our elected leaders need to be reminded that our parks cannot sustain another hit.

Tim Stevens

Mixing Business with Pleasure

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“If someone has a 10-minute drive to a trout stream after work, “that’s a big draw,” says economist Chris Mehl. “National parks, wilderness areas, national forests, and other public lands play into our quality of life, and high-quality jobs are following.” National parks attract a “creative class of entrepreneurs, employers and employees, sparking job creation and diversifying our overall economy,” he says.

The Montana Governor’s office attended the NPCA forum, as did the head of the state Tourism Department. They were joined by

officials from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor and Industry. Presenters included executives from Orvis, StartUp America, and Xanterra, the giant of national park concessions.

Together, they joined NPCA in asking new questions and sparking a new kind of conversation about parks: How we can grow our gateway communities while ensuring they remain places where people want to live? How we can leverage our natural amenities to bring sustainable jobs into our communities? And how we can invest in places like parks so that we and our children will

benefit from them into the future?

The regional press, reporting on the conference, noted that national parks have a “proven ecologic value that leads to job creation and helps build a skilled workforce,” and that places such as Glacier are the region’s “bread-and-butter enterprise, and the key for continued economic growth.”

So together, we have joined the banker and the businesswoman at the bar, building new partnerships, finding new allies, and establishing our parks firmly at the confluence of landscape, lifestyle, and livelihood.



Above: Flathead Lake, Montana ©JMFuller Photography/ISTOCKPHOTO

Seeing the Forest for the Trees Planning for the Flathead National Forest

By Michael Jamison

A couple years back, staff at NPCA’s Glacier Field Office embarked on what many viewed as a decidedly quixotic experiment. The Flathead National Forest (which borders Glacier National Park to the west) was kicking off a multi-year forest planning process, and NPCA thought that rather than await a government plan we would instead create a plan of our own.

And so we gathered together the forest users—the loggers and mill owners and ski-resort managers, the hikers and bikers and motorcyclists. Snowmobilers, hunters, anglers, and horsemen. Outfitters, realtors, residents and activists. Some three dozen

in all, from all walks of life, participated in what we eventually named the Whitefish Range Partnership.

Then together, we tackled fire and fisheries and forest health. We discussed timber and trails and the tricky business of threatened and endangered species. We worked on weeds, and wildlife, and wilderness too. Recreation—on foot, on horseback, on wheels. Motorized. Non-motorized.

Through it all we shared one important rule: recommendations had to be unanimous, or we would not move ahead. And so it went for more than a year, forward and back, breaking bread, negotiating the finer points,

insisting always that Glacier National Park’s wildlife be connected to the wider world through protected corridors of green.

Certainly, if we shared one common value it was that we all love Glacier Park. And it’s been said that “love conquers all.” But as one of our members said, “When love doesn’t cut it, try hard work.”

The partners set a deadline—Halloween 2013—and finally, with three days to spare, we penned a final draft that includes something for everyone. Collectively, we and our neighbors took responsibility for our shared future, for one another’s interests, and ultimately for stewardship of our national park.

Ed & Shirley Sullivan

By Michael Jamison

“When God takes a vacation,” says Shirley Sullivan, “He comes to Glacier National Park.” And if it’s good enough for God, well, then, it’s good enough for Shirley and her husband, Ed, who have been vacationing—and volunteering—in national parks for more than 20 years.

Their love affair with wild mountain peaks began back in the early 1980s, when Ed and Shirley started taking summer holidays in Western parks. One park, two weeks, each and every summer. They traveled through Bryce, Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, North Cascades, Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone, and Zion.

“These are beautiful places,” Ed says. “Our national parks are some of the most magnificent places on the face of this earth.”

The Sullivans arrived at God’s favorite park for the first time in 1985, and returned before the decade was out. When Ed retired in 1991, they decided to move west from Chicago’s suburbs. “The closer to Glacier the better,” Ed said.

Immediately after setting up house high in the Crown of the Continent, Ed and Shirley set about some serious hiking—“all those trails we’d never had time for,” Ed says—and then soon settled in to providing some payback.

“We wanted to be involved with a group that does hands-on work,” Ed says. “We thought, ‘OK, now that we’ve hiked so much of the park, let’s find something we can do in the way of volunteering.’” And in that moment, the Sullivans left the well-worn trail chosen

CITIZEN SPOT-LIGHT



by so many “park retirees” and opted instead for a path less traveled.

Ed stationed himself at Glacier Park’s primary visitor center, meeting and greeting people, and sharing his experiences with thousands upon thousands of visitors. Those hikes with his wife suddenly became critical research material including trail times, distances, and difficulties.

Shirley planted herself in the nursery, potting the native flowers and shrubs and seedlings that Glacier Park crews use to revegetate disturbed areas. Her favorite work is with the sapling trees, she says, because she knows they’ll be around long after she’s gone. “My grandkids can see those trees and say, ‘Grandma helped make this happen,’” she says.

So for 21 years they’ve made it happen,

showing up for volunteer duty season after tourist season after growing season. They’ve partnered with every one of the Glacier Park friends groups—including a full 40 years of contributions to NPCA’s work. And, most importantly, they’ve listened to ice crack like rifle shots on winter-bound Lake McDonald, watched peaks rise from valleys of bright white fog, felt the thin warmth of mountain sunlight filtered through autumn’s aspens.

“Those experiences open your eyes,” Ed said. “They make you want to give back, and to share it with other people. So that’s what we do.”

Above: For their 50th anniversary, Ed and Shirley Sullivan’s children purchased for them “something that matters”—10 log benches, placed at key locations along Glacier National Park’s trails. “They knew how much we’ve invested in the park,” Shirley said, “so they found the perfect gift.” ©Sue Brown

Northern Rockies Welcomes New Yellowstone Wildlife Fellow



Above: Stephanie and backpacking companion Tero hiking near Grand Teton National Park. ©Patricia Brennan

NPCA’s Northern Rockies team welcomed its newest member, Stephanie Adams, this past July as the Yellowstone Wildlife Fellow. Prior to joining NPCA, Stephanie worked for Montana’s Fish, Wildlife & Parks on wildlife restoration and citizen engagement. Living in Yellowstone’s communities since 2006, Stephanie has a strong understanding of the social, political, and environmental factors that impact Yellowstone’s wildlife.

With great energy and enthusiasm, Stephanie led the fourth year of NPCA’s Yellowstone Pronghorn Campaign. In four months, roughly 100 volunteers removed 2.5 miles of fencing in eight different projects, the last of which erased a 7-foot-tall fence, opening a critical migration pathway north of Yellowstone National Park. Stephanie has also led two interpretive hikes over Mt. Everts in Yellowstone, following the historic migration path of the pronghorn.

To learn more about the Yellowstone pronghorn projects or to get involved, please contact Stephanie at sadams@npca.org.

Building Community for Heart Mountain

By Sharon Mader

On October 18th, NPCA sponsored an event in Jackson Hole that highlighted the stories of Japanese Americans who were imprisoned at the Heart Mountain Wyoming Relocation Center during World War II. These people had committed no crimes, yet were forcibly removed from their homes and shipped by train from the West Coast to the cold plains of Wyoming, where they would spend the next three years confined behind barbed wire. From 1942 to 1945, nearly 14,000 people of Japanese ancestry lived at Heart Mountain, making it Wyoming's third largest city at the time. Located between Cody and Powell, Heart Mountain was one of 10 War Relocation Authority camps in the United States.

From 1942 to 1945, nearly 14,000 people of Japanese ancestry lived at Heart Mountain, making it Wyoming's third largest city at the time.

The October program featured a film and panel discussion with Norman Mineta, a Heart Mountain internee and former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Transportation, and his boyhood friend of approximately 70 years, former U.S. Senator Alan Simpson; a Cody resident. The two met as Boy Scouts at a jamboree held within the camp. Their shared experience was instrumental in forging their commitment to protect and preserve the camp as a legacy to the Japanese Americans whose lives were irreparably altered during this tragic time in America's history.

The program also included a photography exhibit, "Colors of Confinement," featuring rare Kodachrome photographs by Japanese-American internee Bill Manbo taken at the Heart Mountain camp from 1943 and 1944 and edited by Eric L. Muller.

NPCA and our partners, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and the National Museum of Wildlife Art, were thrilled with the community's interest and believe that the event brought a greater public awareness about the Heart Mountain story. The Foundation has constructed and operates a



state-of-the-art interpretative center on the site. This stop is a must-see destination for everyone visiting Yellowstone National Park. The Heart Mountain Camp has been designated as a National Historic Landmark and has been nominated for inclusion in

the National Park System.

The event was made possible by generous grants from the Wyoming Community Foundation and Collaborating for a Creative Community.

Above: From COLORS OF CONFINEMENT: RARE KODACHROME PHOTOGRAPHS OF JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION IN WORLD WAR II edited by Eric L. Muller. Copyright ©2012 by the University of North Carolina Press. Photographs by Bill Manbo copyright ©2012 by Takao Bill Manbo. Published in association with the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. Used by permission of the publisher. <http://www.uncpress.unc.edu>.



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longstanding issue, just in time for the National Park Service's Centennial celebration in 2016. Here's to the next 100 years of cleaner and quieter winters in Yellowstone!

Grand Teton: Secretary Jewell Commits to Permanent Protection for Threatened Lands

After years of work to protect state-owned lands within Grand Teton National Park, NPCA had cause to celebrate this past August when Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell made an important announcement: The Interior Department would fulfill an agreement with Wyoming to prevent any development on 1,280 acres of state lands within the park. With the Grand Teton as her backdrop, Secretary Jewell discussed the merits and challenges of the land exchange and said that although "creativity and flexibility" would be required, she was absolutely committed to seeing these lands preserved. NPCA welcomes this announcement and the tenacious efforts by the Interior Department, Grand Teton Park Superintendent, Mary Gibson Scott, the

Bureau of Land Management, and the Wyoming government to work cooperatively towards making this vision a reality. This will truly be a win-win for the American public and the people of Wyoming, and NPCA applauds Secretary Jewell for her leadership and commitment. We look forward to continued progress toward final completion of the agreement.

Glacier: Bill to Protect 400,000 Acres Advances

For more than 30 years, a transboundary coalition of partners from Montana and British Columbia has been working hard to ensure protection of lands adjacent to Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

Recently, the coalition has met with some success, including finalizing a conservation purchase of 28 square miles of critical private lands in Glacier National Park's Canadian headwaters. Additionally, our partnership has worked with Montana's congressional delegation to introduce the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, which would protect some 400,000 acres adjacent to Glacier from future leasing for



mining or drilling. In recent months, this bipartisan legislation has passed through a Senate committee and received a welcome hearing in the House.

We ask that you urge Congress to protect our parks and to complete this long-term transboundary conservation package. Write in support of S. 255 and H.R. 2259. Go to: <http://www.contacting-thecongress.org> to connect with your Members of Congress.

Above: Sunset at Snake River Overlook in Grand Teton National Park WY ©Dean Fikar/BIGSTOCKPHOTO

