

Staff Meeting Minutes January 27, 2004

Regulars not in attendance:

Lewis
Walker
Good

Sacklin – The park is still awaiting the decision from Judge Brimmer in the 10th Circuit Court of Wyoming on the latest winter use legal action by the Snowmobile Manufacturer's Association and the State of Wyoming. Eight witnesses from Wyoming and Montana were called to testify how the decision from Judge Sullivan was causing their businesses to suffer economically, how many hotel nights were lost due to visitors canceling their reservations, how many employees had to be laid off, and the loss of sales tax revenue, etc. John said that DOI lawyers asked for 48 hours to understand and then implement whatever new regulations the park would have to abide by when Judge Brimmer hands down his decision. That decision could come today or not until later in the week. **Stay tuned.**

Matthews – National Public Radio (NPR) was in the park over the weekend attending a wolf course from the Yellowstone Association. They met with Doug Smith on Monday. NPR is doing a story on the Endangered Species Act and they liked the park so much they decided to do another story on how much visitors enjoy seeing the wolves.

PAO is still receiving calls from media wondering how the public is handling the new winter use decision and asking what other winter activities are available to the public.

Along with doing the Yellowstone caldera story in February, CBS Evening News has informed the park they will be at the West Entrance over President's Day weekend. It is anticipated that ABC Nightly News will be there as well.

Varley – John traveled to Quebec last week to attend the World Heritage Site Meeting. The members of the World Heritage Committee discussed the upcoming Periodic Report that is normally prepared every seven years. The U.S. and Canada will work together to prepare the report this time. Canada has reported that a good portion of international travelers select their travel in part based upon the list of World Heritage Sites.

Brewster – A second herd of cattle in Wyoming has contracted brucellosis and Wyoming has lost its brucellosis-free status. The vaccine issue will again come to the forefront and we can expect to hear a lot more about it in the near future.

Iobst – Maintenance is wrapping up the Servicewide Comprehensive Call submissions with changes and additions given the priorities set last Thursday.

Steve and his staff continue to work on funding and work program strategy for Building 36. \$1 million needs to be cut from the construction budget.

Steve is busy developing contingencies for project management given Peter Galindo's upcoming absence for three to six weeks and John Stewart's absence indefinitely.

Maintenance is finalizing the work program and schedule for EPA's assistance in formalizing an Environmental Management System for Yellowstone modeled after ISO 14001. This includes self-certification, roles and responsibilities, and interdivisional involvement.

Steve will be on leave from Friday, 1/30, through Sunday, 2/8.

Kathy Tustanowski Marsh – Kathy thanked everyone for the help with PMIS last week. She thinks divisions need to sit down and try to clean up the PMIS list; the list is pretty much out of control.

Gauthier – Air sampling was conducted last Thursday-Saturday at West Entrance, Madison Warming Hut, Madison Shop and ranger bays, and with Old Faithful Rangers. The immediate results were the presence of noise; four-stroke snowmobiles are almost as loud as two-stroke machines for the operator.

Brandon suggests that those who drive the 2003 Arctic Cat 660, four-stroke machines wear earplugs. The peak decibel reading was 111 decibels while accelerating. Brandon thanked employees who helped with the sampling and additional testing will be conducted over President's Day weekend. A final report will be available in March.

The Regional Office report concerning the review of the park's lead, asbestos, and hazard communications program is posted on the park's Intranet under Divisions/Safety. A table listing Yellowstone's efforts to meet the recommendations as spelled out in the report will be posted by Friday. If employees have questions about the report, they should contact Brandon in the Safety Office at x2030.

Terry Saucedo's last day in the office will be Thursday, January 29. Brandon will be the only one in the Safety Office for the next few months, so if you need assistance please give him a call.

Riley (Good) – Edna and Mary Murphy are in Denver meeting with Price Waterhouse Coopers on the upcoming concessions contract. They will be back in the office on Thursday.

The 2004 open/close dates have been distributed; comments are due to Business Management by January 29.

Chalfant - Last Friday, Frank and Diane participated in a conference call with our Washington Cooperating Association Program Manager, our regional partnership program manager, and two solicitors to work out questions related to Yellowstone Association's proposed capital fundraising campaign. We are working on a revised fundraising agreement.

Diane is also working on an agreement with Yellowstone National Art Trust regarding the operation of the Old Faithful Haynes Photofinishing Shop as an artist-in-residence program.

Tom Cawley reports that the new Mammoth webcam, funded by the Canon "Eyes on Yellowstone" grant, is drawing enthusiastic e-mail comments from virtual visitors.

People are especially delighted when wildlife are captured "in action."

Linda Young and Jo Suderman met with Rosemary Sucec to review the status of the Nez Perce project and identify priority tasks and next steps. Agreement was reached to complete the CD component of the project; Rosemary is to contact the tribes to determine if the current producer is acceptable or if yet another producer must be found to complete the project. They also discussed other fund sources and timelines.

Linda Young and Jo Suderman also reviewed 26 pages of comments received from Dave Ward and the NASA/Ames team on wayside exhibit proposals for interpreting extremophiles at various locations in the park. Many comments will become reference material for development of other interpretive media. Preparation of final draft proposals is underway and these will next be circulated for internal NPS review in preparation for discussion at a future Resource Council.

On Monday, Janet Ambrose along with Dave Ward, a MSU microbiologist, gave a presentation at Montana State University's Thermal Biology Institute (TBI) on the scope of various thermophile education projects underway at the park that are funded by TBI.

Today, Diane and Mark Davidson will conduct a debriefing with a company that had bid on the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center.

Timmins – Human Resources has started conducting two-hour training sessions that count toward supervisory training. They will also be issuing a supervisory reference manual in the near future.

Obernesser – The park is still busy with road activity, many slide-ins and other road mishaps. No major motor vehicle accidents or major injuries have been reported.

Rangers have been busy assisting Park County deputies this past week with problems in Gardiner, leading to several arrests.

Bison activity is picking up on both the north and west sides of the park. Rangers have been hazing and there's a lot more to come.

Boundary encroachments are continuing at West. Employees from the interior of the park are watching closely and sooner or later these joy riders will be apprehended.

Due to the insurgence of crime in the Mammoth and Gardiner areas, Rick reminded everyone it's just good sense to lock your doors both at home and your work location.

Laye – Superintendent Lewis travels to Cody next week for an Open House discussion on the direction of winter use in the park.

Frank is at FLETC this week and will attend the Superintendent's Information Technology meeting next week in Las Vegas.