



“For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People”

A HISTORY OF
CONCESSION DEVELOPMENT IN
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, 1872–1966

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Preface

In 1994, *The History of the Construction of the Road System in Yellowstone National Park, 1872–1966* was published. During the course of that project, I found the research very interesting, voluminous in size, and, surprisingly, to be of interest to many people. When I began researching “*For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People*”: *A History of Concession Development in Yellowstone National Park, 1872–1996*, I already knew that the research would be interesting and that there would be large amounts of material to review. I had no idea, however, of the richness and the possibilities for other projects that this study would present.

“*For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People*”: *A History of Concession Development in Yellowstone National Park, 1872–1996* focuses on the development of the concession operations from before the park was established through the Mission 66 era. Originally, the project was to include concessions history through 1985 and serve as a portion of the administrative history for the park. However, the project was changed to address only the development of the concessions in the park. The collection of documents used for this manuscript will be deposited in the Yellowstone National Park Archives for further uses, including the writing of an administrative history.

The manuscript collection will be beneficial to anyone writing a company or business history of the different concessioners; the collection is rich in material relating to aspects of social history and tourism in the West; the collection offers aspects of visitation to national parks; the history of individual hotels; the history of camping, including early auto camping; foreign appreciation of the natural parks in the United States; or many other related topics.

An additional study, focusing on the history of administration of Yellowstone National Park, is scheduled for future publication. The topics covered range from military, conservation, administration, education, and interpretation, to water.

The main purpose of “*For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People*”: *A History of Concession Development in Yellowstone National Park, 1872–1996* is to develop a historic context in which to evaluate

the significant resources associated with concession development in the park. In addition to fulfilling the main purpose, the study should provide information for the Divisions of Interpretation, Concessions, and Maintenance, and the branches of Cultural and Natural Resources. The information will also be of interest to the park concessioners.

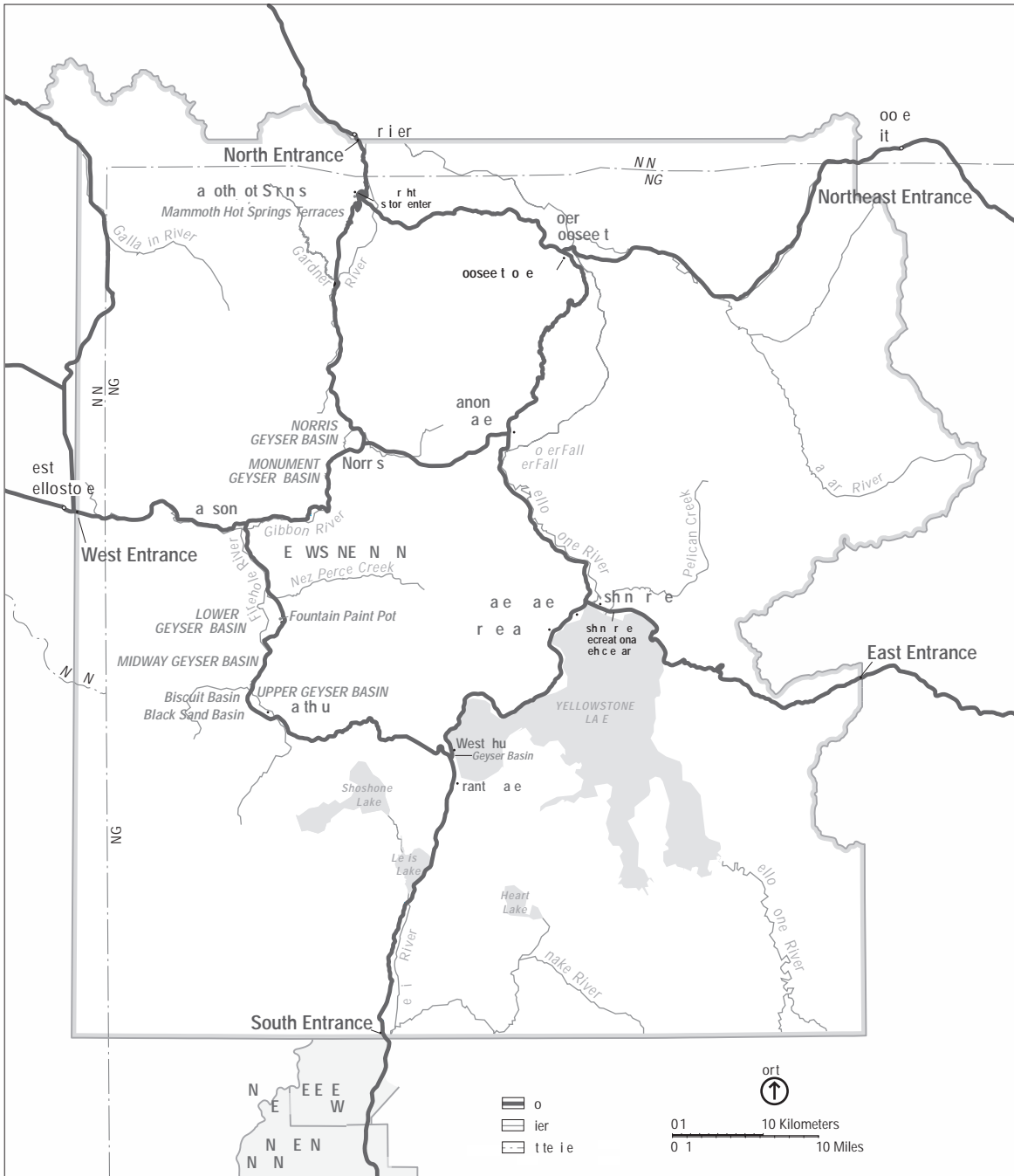
My thanks extend to many across the West. I am indebted to the superintendent and staff at Yellowstone National Park, particularly former employees Laura Joss, Chief of the Branch of Cultural Resources, Cultural Resource Specialist Catherine Lentz, Curator Susan Kraft, and Library/Museum Technicians Vanessa Christopher and Anne Lewellen, and current employees Elaine Hale, Cultural Resource Assistant, Dr. Ann Mary Johnson, park archeologist, and last but certainly not least, Archivist/Historian Lee Whittlesey, who worked with me on research aspects of the project and for his general and willing assistance in many areas. I would like to express my appreciation to the park’s Chief of Business Management, Edna Good and her staff for the interest they have shown in the project and to Barry Cantor, Director of Engineering, Xanterra Parks and Resorts. A very special thanks to the Assistant Regional Director, Cultural Resources and Partnerships, Intermountain Regional Office, Rodd Wheaton, who was always available to offer information from his wealth of knowledge of the park resources. I would also like to thank Joe Swartz of the National Archives, College Park, Maryland, for his assistance in enabling me to complete my research in a timely manner. My thanks go to Beth Kaeding of Yellowstone National Park and to Marti Succac whose editorial assistance contributed greatly toward the completion of this study. In preparing the final version, Yellowstone’s former historic architect Lon Johnson, the current Cultural Resource Branch Chief Sue Consolo Murphy, and editors Roger J. Anderson, Alice Wondrak Biel, Tami Blackford, and Sarah Stevenson contributed editorial and administrative support. Funding from both Yellowstone National Park and the NPS Intermountain Regional Office made this printing possible.

My sincere thanks goes to Marian Albright

Schenck, who was always available for extensive research questions, just a quick call, or for providing an adjustment to one's perspective. Marian knew many of the figures associated with the concession history and her background knowledge was invaluable.

Finally, I wish to extend a special tribute to all

of the major concessioners that over the years added character, humor, architecturally significant buildings, and interesting tales to the Yellowstone story. Their contributions have helped to make the park a special place in the minds of not only the American people, but to many across the world.



Map of Yellowstone National Park.