

HISTORY OF THE PARK

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The human history of the Yellowstone region goes back more than 11,000 years. How far back is still to be determined, but humans probably were not here when the entire area was covered by ice caps and glaciers. The last period of ice coverage ended 13,000–14,000 years ago—and some time after that, humans arrived here.

The Earliest Humans in Yellowstone

Human occupation of the greater Yellowstone area seems to follow environmental changes of the last 15,000 years. Glaciers and a continental ice cap covered most of what is now Yellowstone National Park. They left behind rivers and valleys people could follow in pursuit of Ice Age mammals such as the mammoth and the giant bison.

The first people arrived in this region some time before 11,000 years ago. Archeologists have found little physical evidence of their presence except for their distinctive stone tools and projectile points. From these artifacts, scientists surmise that they hunted mammals and ate berries, seeds, and roots.

As the climate in the Yellowstone region warmed and dried, the animals, vegetation, and human lifestyles also changed. Large Ice Age animals that were adapted to cold and wet conditions became extinct. The glaciers left behind layers of sediment in valleys in which grasses and sagebrush thrived and pockets of exposed rocks that provided protected areas for aspens and fir to grow. The uncovered volcanic plateau sprouted lodgepole forests. By about 7,000 years ago, people had adapted to these changing conditions. They could no longer rely on large mammals for food. Instead, smaller animals such as deer and bighorn sheep became more important in their diet as did plants such as prickly pear cactus. They may have also established a distinct home territory in the valleys and surrounding mountains.

HIGHLIGHTS OF YELLOWSTONE'S HISTORY

- People have been in Yellowstone more than 11,000 years, as shown by archeological sites, trails, and oral histories.
- Although Sheep Eaters are the most well-known group of Native Americans to use the park, many other tribes and bands lived in and traveled through what is now Yellowstone National Park prior to and after European American arrival.
- European Americans began exploring Yellowstone in the early 1800s.
- First organized expedition explored Yellowstone in 1870.
- Yellowstone National Park established in 1872.
- Railroad arrived in 1883, allowing easier visitor access.
- The U.S. Army managed the park from 1886 through 1918.
- Automobiles allowed into the park in 1915, making visits easier and more economical.
- First boundary adjustment of the park made in 1929.
- "Leopold Report" released in 1963; its recommendations changed how wildlife is managed in the park.
- 1970: New bear management plan eliminates open-pit garbage dumps in park.
- 1988: "Summer of Fire."
- 1995: Wolves restored to the park.
- 1996: Federal buyout of gold mine northeast of Yellowstone protects the park.
- 2007: Grizzly bear delisted from the federal list of threatened species.
- 2008: Wolf delisted and relisted to the federal list of endangered species.



*B.P. = Before Present
C.E. = Common Era
(replaces A.D.)
B.C.E. = Before
Common Era
(replaces B.C.)*

*Knife (9350 B.P.)
from the Yellowstone
National Park
Museum Collection*

*Yellowstone Resources
& Issues 2009*

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PaleoIndian Period (B.P.= Before Present)

13,500 B.P.

A Clovis point from this period was found near Yellowstone and was made from obsidian obtained at Obsidian Cliff.

Hell Gap Point (shown at right), 9600–10,000 B.P.

10,000 B.P.

Folsom people were in the Yellowstone area as early as 10,900 B.P.—the date of an obsidian Folsom projectile point found near Pinedale, Wyoming.

Sites along the Canyon to Lake Road yielded PaleoIndian artifacts.

9,350 B.P.

A site on the shore of Yellowstone Lake has been dated to 9350 B.P. The points had traces of blood from rabbit, dog, deer, and bighorn. People seem to have occupied this site for short, seasonal periods.



Obsidian Cliff, formerly a major source of obsidian for Native Americans, as seen from the Grand Loop Road, between Mammoth and Norris. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in June 1996.

This favorable climate would continue more than 9,000 years. Evidence of these people in Yellowstone remained uninvestigated, even long after archeologists began excavating sites elsewhere in North America.

Archeologists used to think high regions such as Yellowstone were inhospitable to humans and thus, did little exploratory work in these areas. However, park superintendent Philetus W. Norris (1877–82) found artifacts in Yellowstone and sent them to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Today, archeologists study environmental change as a tool for understanding human uses of areas such as Yellowstone.

Approximately 1,500 archeological sites have been documented in Yellowstone National Park, with the majority from the Archaic period. Sites contain evidence of successful hunts for bison, sheep, and elk.

Campsites and trails in Yellowstone also provide evidence of early use. Some trails have been used by people since the PaleoIndian period.

No scientific evidence conclusively connects prehistoric tribes with historic people such as the Crow and Sioux, but oral histories provide links. For example, the oral tradition of the Salish places their ancestors in this region several thousand years ago. The Shoshone say they originated here.

Increased Use

People seem to have increased their use of the Yellowstone area beginning about 3,000 years ago. During this time, they began to use the bow and arrow, which replaced the atlatl, or spear-thrower, that had been used for thousands of years. With the bow and arrow, people hunted more efficiently. They also developed sheep traps and bison corrals, and used both near the park, and perhaps in it. This increased use of Yellowstone may have occurred when the environment was warmer, favoring extended seasonal use on and around the Yellowstone Plateau.

Archaic Period (7000 BP–200 CE)

7000 B.P.

Vegetation similar to what we find today begins to appear. Projectile points begin to be notched.

Beginning 9000 B.P. until 1000 C.E., people leave traces of camps on shores of Yellowstone Lake.

3000 B.P.

Oral histories of the Salish place their ancestors in the Yellowstone area.

1500 B.P.

Bow and arrow begins to replace atlatl (throwing spear); sheep traps (in the mountains) and bison corrals (on the plains) begin to be used in the Rocky Mountain region.

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Archeologists and other scientists are working together to study evidence such as plant pollen, landforms, and tree rings to understand how the area's environment changed over time. (See also Chapter 8, "Climate Change.")

The Little Ice Age

Climatic evidence has already confirmed the Yellowstone area experienced colder temperatures during what is known as the Little Ice Age—mid-1400s to mid-1800s. Archeological evidence indicates fewer people used this region during this time. Campsites appear to have been used by smaller groups of people, mostly in the summer. Such a pattern of use would make sense in a cold region where hunting and gathering were practical for only a few months each year.

Historic Tribes

Tribal oral histories indicate more extensive use during the Little Ice Age. Kiowa stories place their ancestors here from around 1400 to 1700. Ancestors to contemporary Blackfeet, Cayuse, Coeur d'Alene, Bannock, Nez Perce, Shoshone, and Umatilla, among others, continued to travel the park on the already established trails. They visited geysers, conducted ceremonies, hunted, gathered plants and minerals, and engaged in trade. The Shoshone say family groups came to Yellowstone to gather obsidian, which they used to field dress buffalo. Some tribes used the Fishing Bridge area as a rendezvous site.

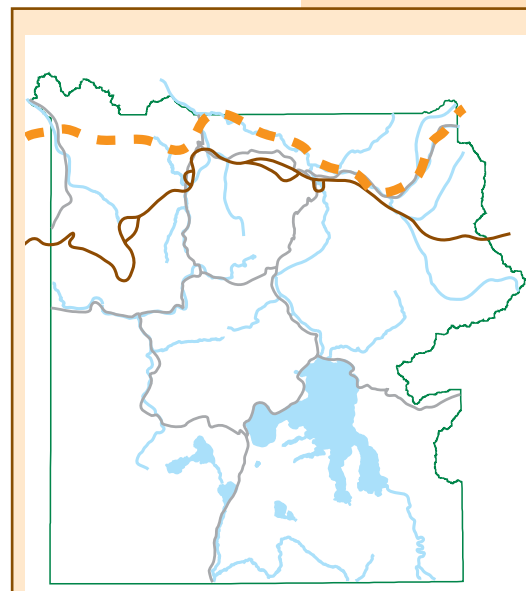
The Crow occupied the country generally east of the park, and the Blackfeet occupied the country to the north. The Shoshone, Bannock, and other tribes of the plateaus to the west traversed the park annually to hunt on the plains to the east. Other Shoshonean groups hunted in open areas west and south of Yellowstone.

In the early 1700s, some tribes in this region began to acquire the horse. Some historians believe the horse fundamentally changed lifestyles because tribes could now travel faster and farther to hunt bison and other animals of the plains. However, the horse does not seem to have changed the tribes' traditional uses of the Yellowstone area.

The "Sheep Eaters"

Some groups of Shoshone who adapted to a mountain existence chose not to acquire the horse. These included the Sheep Eaters, or Tukudika, who used their dogs to transport food, hides, and other provisions.

Sheep Eaters acquired their name from the bighorn sheep whose migrations they followed. Bighorn sheep were a significant part of their diet, and they crafted the carcasses into a wide array of tools



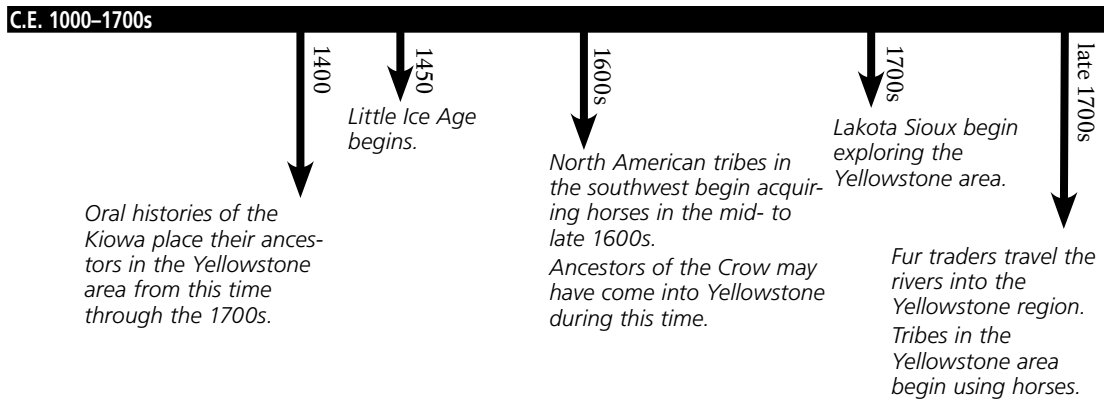
Above: An ancient trail, now called the Bannock Trail, is shown in two possible locations. Physical evidence of the trail is extremely difficult to find; historic maps and journals do not match modern maps; and oral histories of tribes do not always match what little evidence exists of the trail. The solid line shows the trail's location as interpreted in the 20th century. Today, many scholars think the dashed line shows the more accurate location, which is based on an 1869 map by Henry D. Washburn.

Below: Wickiups provided temporary shelter for some Native Americans while they were in Yellowstone. None are known to remain.



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History



Tribes used hydrothermal sites ceremonially and medicinally. The Mud Volcano area is especially significant for the Kiowa. Their tradition says that a hot spring called Dragon's Mouth (above) is where their creator gave them the Yellowstone area for their home. The Crow also have stories about this feature.

and implements. For example, they soaked sheep horn in hot springs to make them pliable for bows. They traded these bows, plus clothing and hides, to other tribes.

European Americans Arrive

In the late 1700s, fur traders traveled the great tributary of the Missouri River, the Yellowstone, in search of Native Americans to trade with. They called the river by its French name, “Roche Jaune.” As far as we know, pre-1800 travelers did not observe the hydrothermal activity in this area but they probably learned of these features from Native American acquaintances.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition, sent by President Thomas Jefferson to explore the newly acquired lands of the Louisiana Purchase, bypassed Yellowstone. They had heard descriptions of the region, but did not explore the Yellowstone River beyond what is now Livingston, Montana.

A member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, John Colter, left that group during its return journey to join trappers in the Yellowstone area. During his travels, Colter probably skirted the northwest shore of Yellowstone Lake and crossed the Yellowstone River near Tower Fall, where he noted the presence of “Hot Spring Brimstone.”

Not long after Colter's explorations, the United States became embroiled in the War of 1812, which drew men and money away from exploration of the Yellowstone region. The demand for furs resumed after the war and trappers returned to the Rocky Mountains in the 1820s. Among them was Daniel Potts, who also published the first account of Yellowstone's wonders as a letter in a Philadelphia newspaper.

Jim Bridger also explored Yellowstone during this time. Like many trappers, Bridger spun tall tales as a form of entertainment around the evening fire. His stories inspired future explorers to discover the truth.

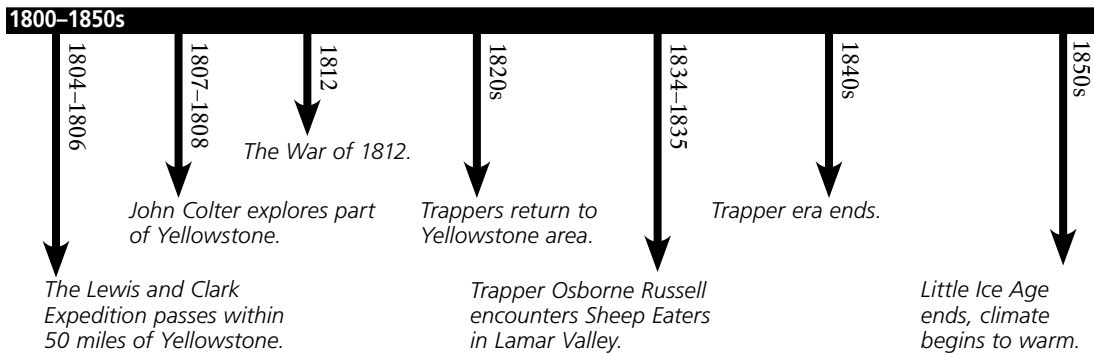
As quickly as it started, the trapper era ended. By the mid-1840s, beaver became scarce and fashions changed. Trappers turned to guiding or other pursuits.

Looking for Gold

During 1863–1871, prospectors crisscrossed the Yellowstone Plateau every year and searched every crevice for gold and other precious minerals. Although gold was found nearby, no big strikes were ever made inside what is now Yellowstone National Park.

Expeditions “Discover” Yellowstone

Although Yellowstone had been thoroughly tracked by trappers and tribes, in the view of the nation at large it was really “discovered” by formal expeditions. The first organized attempt came in 1860 when Captain William F. Reynolds led a military expedition, but it was unable to explore the Yellowstone Plateau because of late spring snow. The Civil War preoccupied the government during the next few years. Afterward, several explorations were planned but none actually got underway.



The 1869 Folsom-Cook-Peterson Expedition

In 1869, three members of one would-be expedition set out on their own. David E. Folsom, Charles W. Cook, and William Peterson ignored the warning of a friend who said their journey was “the next thing to suicide” because of “Indian trouble” along the way. From Bozeman, they traveled down the divide between the Gallatin and Yellowstone rivers, crossed the mountains to the Yellowstone and continued into the present park. They observed Tower Fall, the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone—“this masterpiece of nature’s handiwork”—continued past Mud Volcano to Yellowstone Lake, then south to West Thumb. From there, they visited Shoshone Lake and the geyser basins of the Firehole River. The expedition updated an earlier explorer’s map (DeLacy, in 1865), wrote an article in *Western Monthly* magazine, and refueled the excitement of scientists who decided to see for themselves the truth of the party’s tales of “the beautiful places we had found fashioned by the practiced hand of nature, that man had not desecrated.”

The 1870 Washburn-Langford-Doane Expedition

In August 1870, a second expedition set out for Yellowstone, led by Surveyor-General Henry D. Washburn, politician and businessman Nathaniel P. Langford, and attorney Cornelius Hedges. Lt. Gustavus C. Doane provided military escort from Fort Ellis (near present-day Bozeman, Montana). The explorers traveled to Tower Fall, Canyon, and Yellowstone Lake, followed the lake’s eastern and southern shores, and explored the Lower, Midway, and Upper geyser basins (where they named Old Faithful). They climbed several peaks, descended into the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and attempted measurements and analyses of several of the prominent natural features.

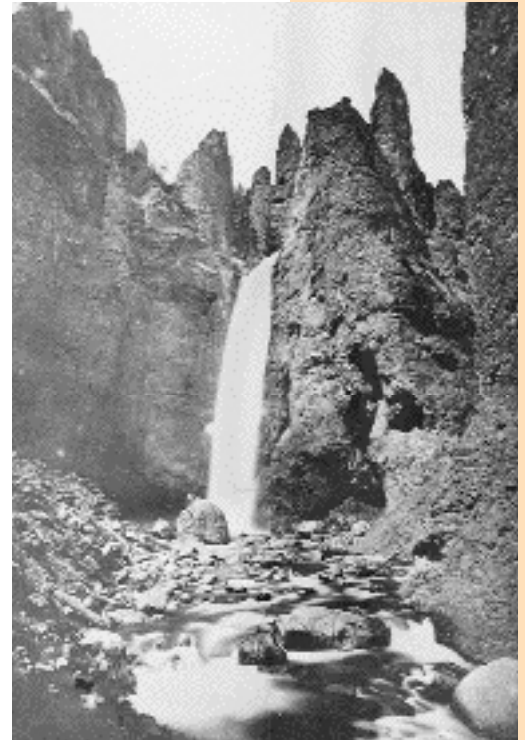
The 1871 Hayden Expedition

Ferdinand V. Hayden, head of the U.S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, led the next scientific expedition in 1871, simultaneous with a survey by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Hayden Survey brought back scientific corroboration of the earlier tales of thermal activity. The expedition gave the world an improved map of Yellowstone and visual proof of the area’s unique curiosities through the photographs of William Henry Jackson and the art of Henry W. Elliot and Thomas Moran. The expedition’s reports excited the scientific community and aroused even more national interest in Yellowstone.

1872—Birth of a National Park

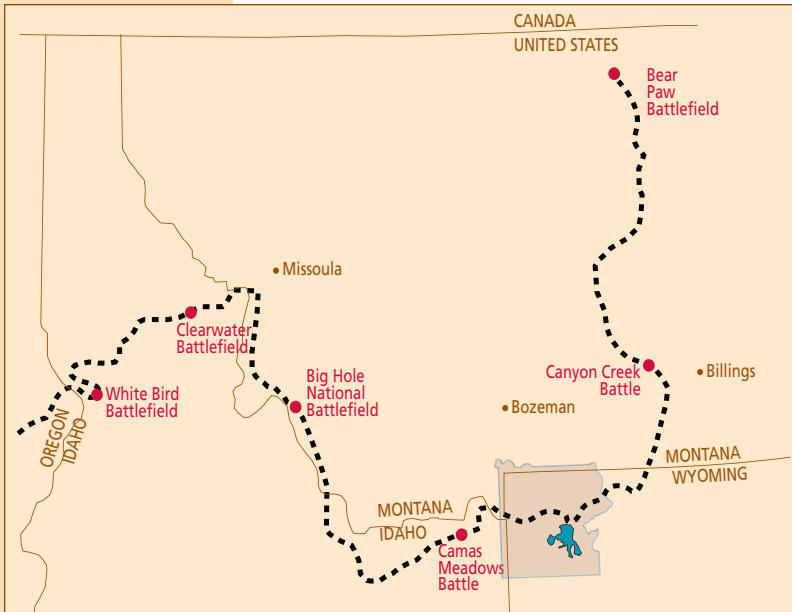
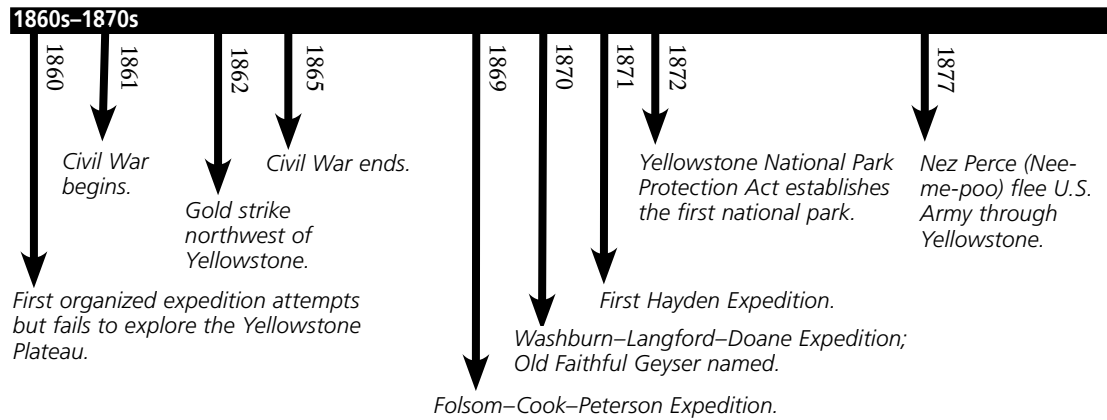
The crowning achievement of Yellowstone’s explorers was helping to save Yellowstone from private development. They promoted a park bill in Washington in late 1871 and early 1872 that drew upon the precedent of the Yosemite Act of 1864, which reserved Yosemite Valley from settlement and entrusted it to the care of the state of California. To permanently close to settlement an expanse of the public domain the size of Yellowstone would depart from the established policy of transferring public lands to private ownership. But the wonders of Yellowstone—shown through Jackson’s photographs, Moran’s paintings, and Elliot’s sketches—had caught the imagination of



This photo of Tower Fall was one of many taken by W.H. Jackson during the 1871 Hayden Survey. His photos helped to bring public attention to the wonders of Yellowstone. Both the 1870 and 1871 expeditions spread the word through newspaper and magazine articles, speaking tours, and other publicity.

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Flight of the Nez Perce

Summer 1877 brought tragedy to the Nez Perce (or, in their language, Nimiipu or Nee-Me-Poo). A band of 800 men, women, and children — plus almost 2,000 horses — left their homeland in what is now Oregon and Idaho. Settlers were moving into their homeland and the U.S. Government was trying to force them onto a reservation. At Big Hole, Montana, many of their group, including women and children, were killed in a battle with the Army. The remainder of the group continued fleeing, and entered Yellowstone National Park on the evening of August 23rd. During the two weeks they crossed the park, the Nez Perce encountered all 25 visitors in the park, some more than once. Warriors took hostage or attacked several of these tourists, killing two. The group continued traveling through the park and over the Absaroka Mountains into Montana. The Army stopped them near the Bear's Paw Mountains, less than 40 miles from the Canadian border. Some Nez Perce escaped into Canada, but after fierce fighting and a siege, the rest of the band surrendered on October 5. This is where it is believed Chief Joseph said, "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever." The 1,170-mile flight had ended.

Their flight is commemorated at 39 sites in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Yellowstone National Park as part of the Nez Perce National Historical Park. To learn more about the Nez Perce National Historic Trail, visit the website at www.fs.fed.us/npnht.

Congress. On March 1, 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the Yellowstone National Park Protection Act into law. The world's first national park was born.

The Formative Years

The park's promoters envisioned Yellowstone National Park would exist at no expense to the government. Nathaniel P. Langford, member of the Washburn Expedition and advocate of the Yellowstone National Park Act, was appointed to the unpaid post of superintendent. (He earned his living elsewhere.) He entered the park at least twice during five years in office—as part of the 1872 Hayden Expedition and to evict a squatter in 1874. His task was made more difficult by the lack of laws protecting wildlife and other natural features.

Political pressure forced Langford's removal in 1877. Philetus W. Norris was appointed the second superintendent, and the following year, Congress authorized appropriations "to protect, preserve, and improve the Park."

Norris constructed roads, built a park headquarters at Mammoth Hot Springs, hired the first "gamekeeper," and waged a difficult campaign against hunters and vandals. Much of the primitive road system he laid out remains today as the Grand Loop Road. Through constant exploration, Norris also added immensely to geographical knowledge of the park.

Norris's tenure occurred during an era of warfare between the United States and many Native American tribes. To reassure the public that they faced no threat from these conflicts, he promoted the idea that Native Americans shunned this area because they feared the hydrothermal features, especially the geysers. This idea belied evidence to the contrary, but the myth endured.

Norris fell victim to political maneuvering and was removed from his post in 1882. He

1883

Northern Pacific Railroad reaches the North Entrance of the park.

1886

The U.S. Army arrives to administer the park. They stay until 1918.

1894

Poacher Ed Howell captured; National Park Protection Act (Lacey Act) passed.

was succeeded by three powerless superintendents who could not protect the park. Even when ten assistant superintendents were authorized to act as police, they failed to stop the destruction of wildlife. Poachers, squatters, woodcutters, and vandals ravaged Yellowstone.

1886—The Army Arrives

In 1886 Congress refused to appropriate money for ineffective administration. The Secretary of the Interior, under authority given by the Congress, called on the

Secretary of War for assistance. On August 20, 1886, the U.S. Army took charge of Yellowstone.

The Army strengthened, posted, and enforced regulations in the park. Troops guarded the major attractions and evicted troublemakers, and cavalry patrolled the vast interior.

The most persistent menace came from poachers, whose activities threatened to exterminate animals such as the bison. In 1894, soldiers arrested a man named Ed



Touring the Park

At first, travel to and within the park was difficult. Visitors had to transport themselves or patronize a costly transportation enterprise. In the park, they found only a few places for food and lodging. Access improved in 1883 when the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Cinnabar, Montana, a town near the North Entrance.

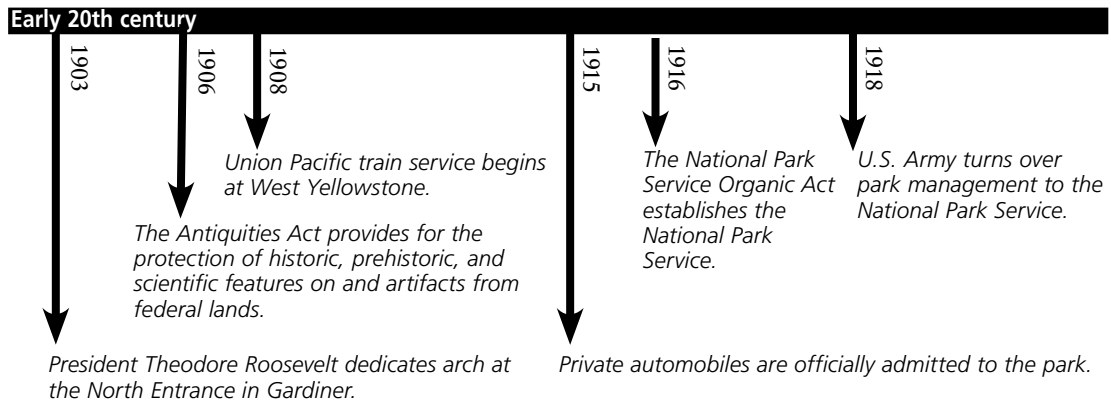
A typical tour began when visitors descended from the train in Cinnabar, boarded large “tally ho” stagecoaches (above), and headed up the scenic Gardner River Canyon to Mammoth Hot Springs. After checking into the hotel, they toured the hot springs. For the next four days,

they bounced along in passenger coaches called “Yellowstone wagons,” which had to be unloaded at steep grades. Each night visitors enjoyed a warm bed and a lavish meal at a grand hotel.

These visitors carried home unforgettable memories of experiences and sights, and they wrote hundreds of accounts of their trip. They recommended the tour to their friends, and each year more of them came to Yellowstone to see its wonders. When the first automobile entered in 1915, Yellowstone truly became a national park, accessible to anyone who could afford a car.

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Soldiers pose with bison heads captured from poacher Ed Howell. When Howell returned to the park later that year, he was the first person arrested and punished under the new National Park Protection Act, passed in 1894.

The National Park Service Organic Act

Passed in 1916, this law created the National Park Service and established its mission:

“to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Updated mission statement on p. 29.

Yellowstone Resources & Issues 2009

Howell for slaughtering bison in Pelican Valley. The maximum sentence possible was banishment from the park. Emerson Hough, a well-known journalist, was present and wired his report to *Forest & Stream*, a popular magazine of the time. Its editor, renowned naturalist George Bird Grinnell, helped create a national outcry. Within two months Congress passed the National Park Protection Act, which increased the Army’s authority for protecting Yellowstone’s treasures. (This law is known as the Lacey Act, and is the first of two laws with this name.)

Running a park was not the Army’s usual line of work. The troops could protect the park and ensure access, but they could not fully satisfy the visitor’s desire for knowledge. Moreover, each of the 14 other national parks established in the late 1800s and early 1900s was separately administered, resulting in uneven management, inefficiency, and a lack of direction.

1916: The National Park Service Begins

National parks clearly needed coordinated administration by professionals attuned to the special requirements of these preserves. Accordingly, in 1916, Congress passed the National Park Service Organic Act, creating the National Park Service.

Yellowstone’s first rangers, which included veterans of Army service in the park, became responsible for Yellowstone in 1918. The park’s first superintendent under the new National Park Service was Horace M. Albright, who served simultaneously as assistant to Stephen T. Mather, Director of the National Park Service. Albright established a framework of management that guided administration of Yellowstone for decades.

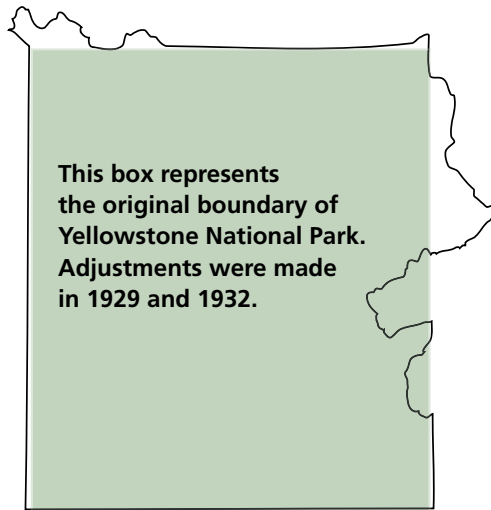
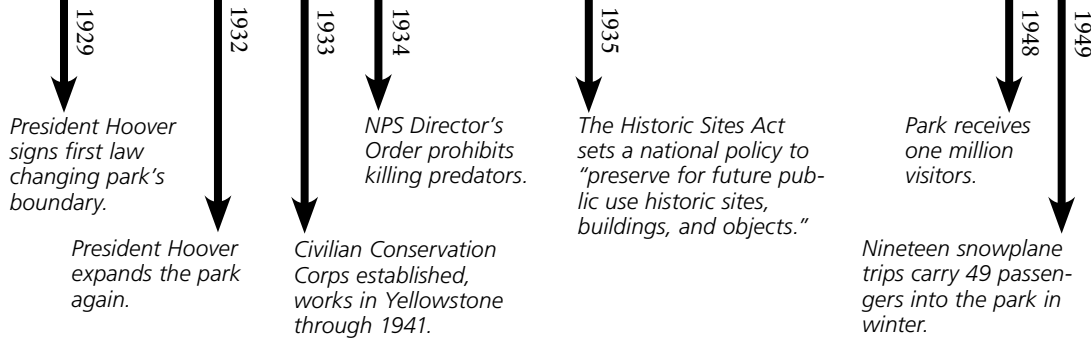
Boundary Adjustments

Almost as soon as the park was established, people began suggesting that the boundaries be revised to conform more closely to natural topographic features, such as the



When Frances Pound applied for a law enforcement position in 1926, Superintendent Albright suggested she use her nickname, “Jim,” because she would be one of the first women hired to do law enforcement in Yellowstone.

1920s–1940s



ridgeline of the Absaroka Range along the east boundary. Although these people had the ear of influential politicians, so did their opponents—which at one time also included the United States Forest Service. Eventually a compromise was reached and in 1929, President Hoover signed the first bill changing the park's boundaries: The northwest corner now included a significant area of petrified trees; the northeast corner was defined by the watershed of Pebble Creek; the eastern boundary included the headwaters of the Lamar River and part of the watershed of the Yellowstone River. (The Yellowstone's headwaters remain outside the park in Bridger-Teton National Forest.)

In 1932, President Hoover added more than 7,000 acres between the north boundary and the Yellowstone River, west of Gardiner. These lands provided winter range for elk and other ungulates.

Efforts to exploit the park also expanded during this time. Water users, from the town of Gardiner to the potato farmers of Idaho, wanted the park's water. Proposals included damming the southwest corner of the park—the Bechler region. The failure of these schemes confirmed that Yellowstone's wonders were so special that they should be forever preserved from exploitation.

The 1940s

World War II drew away employees, visitors, and money from all national parks, including Yellowstone. The money needed to maintain the park's facilities, much less construct new ones, was directed to the war effort. Among other projects, the road from Old Faithful to Craig Pass was unfinished.

Proposals again surfaced to use the park's natural resources—this time in the war effort. As before, the park's wonders spoke for themselves and were preserved.

Visitation jumped as soon as the war ended. By 1948, park visitation reached one million people per year. The park's budget did not keep pace, and the neglect of the war years quickly caught up with the park.

Mission 66

In 1955 the National Park Service initiated a program to address backlogged construction and maintenance and to provide modern facilities for the traveling public. The program was targeted for completion by 1966, the golden anniversary of the National Park Service, and was called Mission 66.

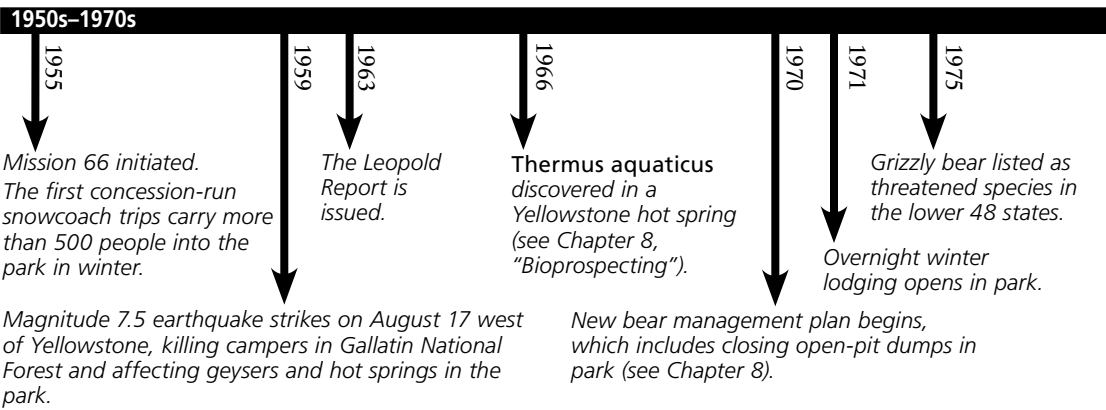
In Yellowstone, the Canyon Area was redeveloped as part of Mission 66. Visitor facilities were designed to reflect American attitudes of the 1950s: Anything "old" had no value or relevance in "modern" times, and convenience was paramount. Visitor services were arranged around a large parking plaza with small cabins a short distance away. Canyon Village opened in July 1958, the first Mission 66 project completed by the National Park Service.



This Mission 66 era visitor center was renovated and remodeled into the Canyon Visitor and Education Center, which opened in 2006.

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From Managed to “Natural”

Until the mid-1960s, park managers actively managed the elk and bison of Yellowstone. Elk population limits were determined according to formulas designed to manage livestock range. When elk reached those limits, park managers “culled” or killed the animals to reduce the population. Bison were likewise heavily managed.

In 1963, a national park advisory group, comprised of prominent scientists, released a report recommending parks “maintain biotic associations” within the context of their ecosystem, and based on scientific research. Known as the Leopold Report, this document established the framework for park management still used today

throughout the National Park System.

By adopting this management philosophy, Yellowstone went from an unnatural managing of resources to “natural regulation”—today known as Ecological Process Management.

The Leopold Report’s recommendations were upheld by the 2002 National Academy of Science report, *Ecological Dynamics On Yellowstone’s Northern Range*.

Involving Native Americans

Yellowstone National Park has 26 associated tribes (see map next page). Each tribe has evidence of its ancestral presence in Yellowstone National Park through ethnohistoric documentation, interviews with tribal elders, or ongoing consultations. Many places and resources remain important to these tribes’ sense of themselves and in maintaining their traditional practices.

In addition, tribes are sovereign nations whose leaders have a legal relationship with the federal government that is not shared by the general public. Consequently, representatives of Yellowstone’s associated tribes participate in periodic consultation meetings with park managers. They bring tribal perspectives to current issues such as bison management. Tribes also comment on park projects that could affect their ethnographic resources.

Complex Times

Although change and controversy have occurred in Yellowstone since its inception, the last three decades have seen many issues arise. Most involve natural resources; some of these issues are presented in Chapter 8.

One issue was the threat of water pollution from a gold mine outside the northeast corner of the park. Among other concerns, the New World Mine would have sited waste storage along the headwaters of Soda Butte Creek, which flows into the Lamar River and then the Yellowstone River. After years of public debate, a federal buyout of the

A Decade of Environmental Laws

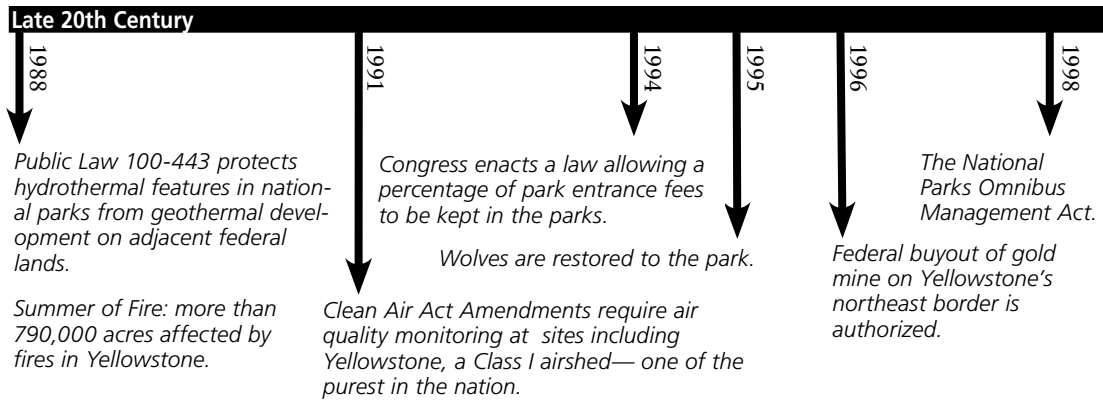
Beginning in the late 1960s, the U.S. Congress passed an unprecedented suite of laws to protect the environment. The laws described here particularly influence the management of our national parks.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), passed in 1970, establishes a national policy “to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment . . . stimulate the health and welfare of man . . . and enrich the understanding of ecological systems . . .” It requires detailed analysis of environmental impacts of any major federal action that significantly affects the quality of the environment. Environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs) are written to detail these analyses and to provide forums for public involvement in management decisions.

The Endangered Species Act (1973) requires federal agencies to protect species that are (or are likely to become) at risk of extinction throughout all or a significant part of their range. It prohibits any action that would jeopardize their continued existence or result in the destruction or modification of their habitat.

The Clean Water Act (1972) is enacted to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters” by prohibiting the discharge of pollutants.

The Clean Air Act (1970) mandates protection of air quality in all units of the National Park System; Yellowstone is classified as Class 1, the highest level of clean air protection.



mining company was authorized in 1996.

In an effort to resolve other park management issues, Congress passed the National Parks Omnibus Management Act in 1998. This law requires using high quality science from inventory, monitoring, and research to understand and manage park resources.

Park facilities are seeing some improvements due to a change in funding. In 1994, as part of a pilot program, Yellowstone National Park was authorized to increase its entrance fee and retain more than half of the fee for park projects. (Previously, park entrance fees did not specifically fund park projects.) In 2004, the U.S. Congress extended this program until 2015 under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement

Act. Projects funded in part by this program include a major renovation of Canyon Visitor Education Center, campground and amphitheater upgrades, preservation of rare documents, and studies on bison.

Preserving the Park's History

Adding to the complexity of management, Yellowstone's mission includes preserving historical materials and sites.

More than 1,500 prehistoric sites exist in Yellowstone. The oldest known site is on the shore of Yellowstone Lake, and is eroding. Rather than stopping that natural process, archeologists excavated the site in 2000 and 2002. They found evidence of early North American people considered typical of



Associated Tribes of Yellowstone National Park as of January 2009

- | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Assiniboine & Sioux | Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation | Nez Perce | Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa |
| Blackfoot | Crow | Northern Arapaho | Yankton Sioux |
| Cheyenne River Sioux | Crow Creek Sioux | Northern Cheyenne | |
| Coeur d'Alene | Eastern Shoshone | Oglala Sioux | |
| Comanche | Flandreau Santee Sioux | Rosebud Sioux | |
| Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes | Gros Ventre and Assiniboine | Shoshone-Bannock | |
| Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation | Kiowa | Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux | |
| | Lower Brule Sioux | Spirit Lake Sioux | |
| | | Standing Rock Sioux | |

Note: Map shows each tribe's reservation; it does not show their historic territory.

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History

Early 21st Century

2002

National Academy of Sciences confirms effectiveness of Ecological Process Management (aka natural regulation).

2004

The park fee program, begun as an experiment in 1994, is reauthorized until 2015.

2006

The Canyon Visitor Education Center opens with two floors of exhibits about Yellowstone's supervolcano.

2007

April: Yellowstone's grizzly bears removed from the federal threatened species list.
December: A new winter use plan approved for winters beginning in 2008.

2008

The gray wolf is delisted and relisted to the federal endangered species act. Judges rule against the new winter use plan; access remains as it has since 2004.

YELLOWSTONE'S CULTURAL RESOURCES



- More than 300 ethnographic resources (animals, plants, sites)
- Approximately 1,600 prehistoric and historic Native American archeological sites and historic European American archeological sites
- More than 2 dozen sites, landmarks, and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places; many more eligible for listing
- More than 900 historic buildings
- 1 National Historic Trail
- Museum collection of more than 379,000 cultural objects and natural science specimens available to researchers
- Archives containing thousands of historic documents
- Thousands of books and periodicals available to the public; plus manuscripts and rare books available to historians and other researchers
- 90,000 historic photographs used by staff, scholars, authors, and filmmakers

Right: Albright Visitor Center, in the Mammoth Hot Springs Historic District and Ft. Yellowstone Historic Landmark District, housed the first "information office" (visitor center).

lower, more open lands. They probably used this Yellowstone site in the summer while hunting bear, deer, bighorn, and rabbits, and perhaps making tools and clothes. Archeologists speculate these people may have also made rafts to visit islands in Yellowstone Lake.

Cultural landscapes also reflect the park's history, development patterns, and the relationship between people and the park. They include areas significant to European American culture, such as Fort Yellowstone, and areas significant to Native American cultures, such as sacred sites.

Additionally, Yellowstone National Park has more than 300 ethnographic resources identified by tribal peoples. These include animals such as bison, plants, hydrothermal areas, mineral paints from hydrothermal areas, Yellowstone Lake, vision questing sites, obsidian, rendezvous sites, and hunting sites.

These and thousands of other materials, documents, and photographs are cared for in the Heritage and Research Center.

Historic Structures & Districts

Mammoth Hot Springs/Fort Yellowstone

The Mammoth Hot Springs Historic District includes Fort Yellowstone, where 35 structures remain from the 1890s and early 1900s when the U.S. Army administered the park. Significant conservation policies were developed here that led to the origin of the National Park Service. Fort Yellowstone is also listed as a National Historic Landmark District, the highest designation.

Lake Hotel

The Lake Hotel is the oldest operating hotel in the park. When it opened in 1891, the building resembled other hotels financed by the Northern Pacific Railroad. In 1903, the architect of the Old Faithful

Inn, Robert Reamer, designed the ionic columns, extended the roof in three places, and added the 15 false balconies, which prompted it to be known for years as the "Lake Colonial Hotel." By 1929, additional changes—dining room, portecochere (portico), sunroom, plus interior refurbishing—created the landmark we see today.



Historic Park Buildings still in use						
1891	1903	1903-04	1906	1908	1909	1918-28
Lake Hotel, National Historic Site	Roosevelt Arch, in the Ft. Yellowstone Historic Landmark & North Entrance Road Historic District	Old Faithful Inn, National Historic Landmark; in the Old Faithful Historic District	Lamar Buffalo Ranch, National Historic District	Norris Soldier Station, now the Museum of the National Park Ranger, in Ft. Yellowstone Historic Landmark District	Albright Visitor Center, in Mammoth Historic District & Ft. Yellowstone Historic Landmark District	Old Faithful Lodge, in the Old Faithful Historic District

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service. Currently 73,000 listings have been nominated by governments, organizations, and individuals because they are important to a community, a state, or the nation.

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, fewer than 3,500 historic places bear this national designation. The National Historic Landmarks program draws upon the expertise of National Park Service staff who evaluate potential landmarks and provide assistance to existing landmarks.



Lake Hotel

Roosevelt Arch

The Roosevelt Arch rises in the North Entrance Road Historic District and part of the Fort Yellowstone Historic Landmark District. This soaring stone structure was conceived by U.S. Engineer Hiram Chittenden; Robert Reamer may have contributed to the design, and architect N.J. Ness also worked on it. President Theodore Roosevelt placed the cornerstone for the arch in 1903. The top of the arch is inscribed with a line from the Yellowstone National Park Act of 1872: "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people."

Roosevelt Area

Diners at Roosevelt Lodge (President Theodore Roosevelt had camped nearby) view much the same landscape seen by visitors when the lodge opened in 1920. The area is registered as the Roosevelt Lodge Historic District.

The Buffalo Ranch

The Lamar Buffalo Ranch Historic District overlooks Lamar Valley. The ranch, which operated from 1906 until the 1950s, was the center of an effort to increase the herd size

of bison in Yellowstone. Remnants of irrigation ditches, fencing, and water troughs can still be found, and four buildings from the original ranch compound remain (*photo right*)—two residences, the bunkhouse, and the barn. New cabins, which blend with the historic buildings, house students at the Yellowstone Association Institute or the National Park Service's residential education program.



Buffalo Ranch



Old Faithful Inn

Old Faithful Inn & Historic District

Most people who step into the Old Faithful Inn for the first time stop as their eyes follow thick rustic logs up to the soaring peak of the ceiling. Robert Reamer designed this

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History

Historic Park Buildings still in use

1919-20; 1925-26	1920	1929-32	1937
Lake Lodge, part of Lake Fish Hatchery Historic District	Roosevelt Lodge, in the Roosevelt Lodge Historic District	Four trailside museums built; three are still used: Madison, Norris, and Fishing Bridge. They are National Historic Landmarks.	Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, part of the Mammoth Hot Springs Historic District



National Historic Landmark, which opened in 1904. It is the centerpiece of the Old Faithful Historic District. Nearby, the Old Faithful Lodge is a result of numerous changes made until 1928 when the lodge reached its present configuration.

Trailside Museums

Four trailside museums were built in Yellowstone as part of a national idea that a national park is itself a museum. An interpretive structure should blend in with its surroundings and its exhibits explain but not substitute for the park experience. The museums here are well-known examples of the architectural style, National Park Rustic

Yellowstone on the National Register of Historic Places

This is a partial list.

National Historic Landmark District:
Fort Yellowstone

National Historic Landmarks:
Fishing Bridge, Madison, and Norris Trailside Museums

Northeast Entrance Station

Obsidian Cliff

Old Faithful Inn

National Register Historic Districts:

Lake Fish Hatchery

Mammoth Hot Springs

North Entrance Road

Old Faithful Area

Roosevelt Lodge

National Historic Sites:

Lake Hotel

Lamar Buffalo Ranch

Obsidian Cliff Kiosk

Queen's Laundry Bath House

Mammoth Post Office

(also called “parkitecture”).

The Old Faithful Museum was the first trailside museum in Yellowstone, and the only one no longer standing. It opened in 1929 to acclaim for its quality materials and construction, and for the way it blended into its surroundings.

The Norris Museum, built in 1930, still serves as a gateway to the Norris Geyser Basin. Visitors first glimpse the area's hydrothermal features from a breezeway; they learn about the area from exhibits in the wings as well as from trailside exhibits and a trail guide.

The Madison Museum (*photo above*), overlooking the junction of the Gibbon and Firehole rivers, features many elements associated with National Park Rustic: stone and wood-shingled walls, and rafters of peeled logs. Built in 1930, it now serves as an information station and bookstore.

The Fishing Bridge Museum, built in 1932, retains many of its original exhibits as an example of early National Park Service displays. On the south side of the museum, visitors can cross a flagstone terrace overlooking Yellowstone Lake and descend steps to the shore.

Lodging No Longer Standing

Marshall's Hotel, which stood near the present-day intersection of Fountain Flats Drive and Grand Loop Road, was built in 1880 and was the second hotel in the park. Later renamed the Firehole Hotel, it was razed in 1895.

Fountain Hotel opened in 1891 north of Fountain Paint Pot. This was one of the first Yellowstone hotels where bears were fed for the entertainment of guests. The hotel closed after 1916 and was torn down in 1927.

Four lodging facilities were built at Norris. Three were built between 1886 and 1892; the first two burned. The last hotel at

Norris, which overlooked Porcelain Basin, served the public from 1901 to 1917.

Three hotels were built in succession at Canyon, the last being the largest hotel in the park. Sited where the horse stables are now, the Canyon Hotel was closed in 1958 due to financial and maintenance problems and burned in 1960.

These and other sites of former park facilities are historic archeologic sites. They are studied and documented for what they reveal about the history of visitor use in the park.

The Legacy of Yellowstone

The years have shown that the legacy of those who worked to establish Yellowstone National Park in 1872 was far greater than simply preserving a unique landscape. This one act has led to a lasting concept—the national park idea. This idea conceived wilderness to be the inheritance of all people, who gain more from an experience in nature than from private exploitation of the land.

The national park idea was part of a new view of the nation's responsibility for the public domain. By the end of the 19th century, many thoughtful people no longer believed that wilderness should be fair game for the first person who could claim and plunder it. They believed its fruits were the rightful possession of all the people, including those yet unborn. Besides the areas set aside as national parks, still greater expanses of land were placed into national forests and other reserves so the country's natural wealth—in the form of lumber, grazing, minerals, and recreation lands—would not be consumed at once by the greed of a few, but would perpetually benefit all.

The preservation idea, born in Yellowstone, spread around the world. Scores of nations have preserved areas of natural beauty and historical worth so that all humankind will have the opportunity to reflect on their natural and cultural heritage and to return to nature and be spiritually reborn. Of all the benefits resulting from the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, this may be the greatest.

Cultural Resource Laws

These laws guide the management of historic and cultural resources in national parks:

The Antiquities Act (1906) provides for the protection of historic, prehistoric, and scientific features on and artifacts from federal lands.

The Historic Sites Act (1935) sets a national policy to “preserve for future public use historic sites, buildings, and objects.”

The National Historic Preservation Act (1966) authorizes the creation of the National Register of Historic Places and gives extra protection to national historic landmarks and properties in the national register. National parks established for their historic value automatically are registered; others, such as Yellowstone, must nominate landmarks and properties to the register.

The Archeological and Historic Preservation Act (1974) provides for the preservation of significant scientific, historic, and archeological material and data that might be lost or destroyed by federally sponsored projects. For example, federal highway projects in Yellowstone include archeological surveys.

The Archeological Resources Protection Act (1979) provides for the preservation and custody of excavated materials, records, and data.

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) assigns ownership or control of Native American human remains, funerary objects, and sacred objects of cultural patrimony to culturally affiliated Native American groups.

American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) protects and preserves American Indian access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonies and traditional rites.

Executive Order 13007 guarantees access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and that these sites not be adversely affected.

Construction Dates for Other Park Buildings

Tower General Store 1932, 36, 61

Lake General Store 1920

Lake Ranger Station 1922–23

Mammoth Chapel 1912–13

Mammoth Gas Station 1920

Old Faithful Gas Station (Lower) 1920, 1925

Old Faithful Lower General Store 1897, 1921 addition

Old Faithful Upper General Store 1929–30

South Entrance Ranger Station Duplex 1928

West Thumb Ranger Station 1925; now an information station

For More Information

www.nps.gov/yell

www.greateryellowstone-science.org/index.html

Yellowstone Science, free from the Yellowstone Center for Resources, in the Yellowstone Research Library, or online at www.nps.gov/yell.

Yellowstone Today, distributed at entrance gates and visitor centers.

Site Bulletins, published as needed, provide more detailed information on park topics such as trailside museums and the grand hotels. Free; available upon request from visitor centers.

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