

The Greening of Yellowstone

In recent years, Yellowstone has been developing ways to protect and improve environmental quality in the region through partnerships with local communities, private industry, and other federal and state agencies. In October 1996 and May 1998, workshops on the "Greening of Yellowstone" were held to discuss topics such as recycling, energy use, transportation, water and waste management, and the use of alternate fuels and biodegradable materials. The workshops, which were jointly sponsored with the states of Montana and Wyoming, Montana State University, the U.S. Department of Energy, and private groups were designed to spur sustainable resource use among participants and generate local markets for recycled materials.

Yellowstone has recently begun using all "green" cleaning products with naturally derived ingredients. Employees recycle batteries, motor oil, used paint thinner, and materials such as glass, aluminium, tin cans, cardboard, office paper, and newsprint.



⊗ A biodegradable diesel fuel alternative provided by the University of Idaho is used in a truck donated to the park by the Dodge Truck Corporation.



⊗ Alternative snowmobile fuel and lube oils were tested to assess their impacts on emissions and engine performance in a joint project with the state of Montana.



⊗ Regional recycling and composting programs were made possible through partnerships with adjacent counties in Montana.



⊗ Recycled plastic lumber were provided at reduced cost by Unilever Corporation of America and used to reconstruct boardwalks around Old Faithful Geysir.



⊗ Recycled timbers were used in construction of the new Snow Lodge at Old Faithful.



AN ENERGIZING PARTNERSHIP

In May 1998, Yellowstone formed a partnership with the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL), a Department of Energy office with experience in developing alternative energy sources and technologies to reduce energy consumption and impacts. By evaluating Yellowstone's electric power grid, the INEEL has helped the park make more cost-effective use of its high voltage power lines.

The INEEL has also supported the effort to maintain air quality in the region through the Greater Yellowstone Clean Air Partnership, a consortium of federal and state agencies, and a proposal to include an area encompassing Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Glacier national parks in the Clean Air Initiative, a nationwide program. In addition to being given use of INEEL surplus busses, Yellowstone has benefitted from the agency's expertise and computer resources on collaborative research projects ranging from DNA-based detection of brucellosis to a thermal area inventory.

Program Needs

- CORRECTING UNSAFE CONDITIONS. In addition to the park's cultural history, the old ways of doing business have left a legacy of unsafe conditions that need to be rectified. Lead paint, radon, asbestos, and leaky underground fuel storage tanks are but a few of the environmental and human health concerns the park is legally required to address without additional funding.

- NEW WAYS OF DOING BUSINESS. Additional staff and funds would help the park use new technologies to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials; to improve energy efficiency and design of old and new facilities where possible; and to address the growing demands placed on the limited resources of the park. New ways of doing business will be expected of park staff and others who work in Yellowstone National Park.



THE GREENING OF YELLOWSTONE

STEWARDSHIP GOALS



All park staff and programs strive for sustainable use of resources, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship aimed at enhancing the park's conservation mission.



Total energy consumption within the park is reduced from 1995 levels; generation of waste from within Yellowstone is minimized, and comprehensive recycling programs are in place.



The park and its public and private partners work together to use the best available technology for waste management, pollution control, construction, and operation of park infrastructure.

CURRENT STATE OF RESOURCES/PROGRAMS



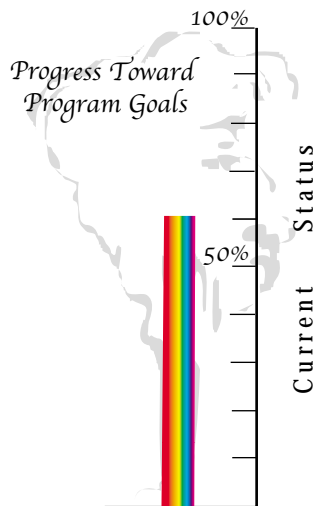
A new "greening" initiative has begun to educate park staff in sustainable principles and techniques; much broader education and acceptance is needed among park staff and visitors.



In recent years, the park has increased its efforts at recycling and experimented with alternative fuels, composting, and cleaner, safer products for everyday maintenance work.



Public and private partners joined the park at greening workshops in 1996–1998 and are aggressively pursuing new technology to apply in park operations.



1998 FUNDING AND STAFF

Recurring Funds	
Yellowstone N.P. Base Budget	\$ 3,200
Non-Recurring Funds	
Fee Demonstration Program Projects	\$ 30,000
Staff	0.5 FTE

The human resources and funding necessary to professionally and effectively manage the park to stewardship levels will be identified in the park business plan.