

Sylvan Pass Study Group
Meeting on April 24 and 25, 2008
Crowne Plaza, Billings, MT

The next meeting of the SPSG will be June 3, 2008, 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. This meeting is not open to the public. The group will have a conference call at 1:30 p.m. on May 19, 2008.

The meeting on April 24th followed this agenda:

- Introductions
- Review Ground Rules
- An examination of the costs of full forecasting as defined in the Record of Decision and the actual itemized costs of those elements of avalanche hazard mitigation exercised during the winter season of 2007-2008, including, but not limited to, the weather station, the groomer and the use of a howitzer and a helicopter. Presentations will be made on:
 - Actual costs for 2006-2007 winter season
 - Actual costs for 2007-2008 winter season
 - Estimated costs for a season of full forecasting
 - Estimated costs for additions to current (2007-2008) program
 - Estimated costs for other potential avalanche management programs
- A consideration of a potential community education and communications plan; and
- An exploration of potential reasonable limits upon YNP's provision of avalanche hazard mitigation.

The members of the Study Group have all agreed to the following statement as a summary of the meeting on April 25, 2008.

The Sylvan Pass Study Group, comprised of representatives from Yellowstone National Park, the state of Wyoming, Park County and the City of Cody, has been meeting since mid-December 2007. The group has made significant progress toward reaching an agreement about how Yellowstone National Park will continue to allow motorized, oversnow access to the park through the East Gate over Sylvan Pass during winter use seasons beyond 2007-2008.

All members of the study group agree that the safety of visitors and park employees is the primary objective in providing continued oversnow access through avalanche mitigation measures. Significant steps will be taken by the study group to ensure that winter operations are as safe as possible. The study group also agrees another objective is that oversnow winter access to the park should be as regular and predictable as possible given the normal weather constraints.

The intent of the group is to finalize details of the agreement when it meets again on June 3rd in Billings, MT.

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