

When You Work in Yellowstone...



'More Is Expected of You' Says Jim Evanoff

Environmental Specialist at Yellowstone National Park Jim Evanoff takes his job seriously. "When you work at the world's first and most famous national park, it is incumbent upon you to do everything you can to be innovative in protecting the Park's sensitive environment," he says.

Each year the Park has nearly 3 million visitors, and virtually all of them arrive by personal automobile or bus. Yellowstone alone has a fleet of 700 vehicles. It is no wonder then that Jim's first environmental concern centered around vehicular transportation in general, and biodiesel fuel, in particular.

"I first became aware of biodiesel in 1995 through a proposed project with the University of Idaho and the State of Montana," he explains. "It just seemed like something we should investigate and try."

Out of that interest grew Jim's idea to run his now-famous diesel pickup truck on B100 (100% biodiesel). Now 160,000 miles and nine years later, Jim is still driving his pickup truck, and it's still running on B100--all year around no matter how cold it gets in the winter.

The truck became the symbol for use of biodiesel not only in Yellowstone but also in other National Parks as Jim spread the biodiesel gospel throughout the system whenever and wherever he could at meetings and symposiums. "Over the years, I've probably made or supplied dozens of presentations on the advantages of biodiesel use within the National Park System (NPS) and beyond."

Jim likes to tell this story about one of the beneficial effects of biodiesel--the elimination of the well known diesel fuel exhaust odor. When operated on B100, vehicles produce an aroma much like that of cooking french fries. "There became concern that this smell might attract some of our well known bears. To ensure that the truck was not a bear attractant, it was driven to Washington State University where tests were conducted with captive bears that were being used for research. Eventually, researchers concluded that the bears really had no interest in the exhaust fumes, one way or the other," he chuckles.



Jim Evanoff's pickup led the way for biobased products with the use of B100 biodiesel. Now, almost 10 years and 160,000 miles later, the pickup is going strong and Jim is leading the way at Yellowstone National Park with other biobased products.

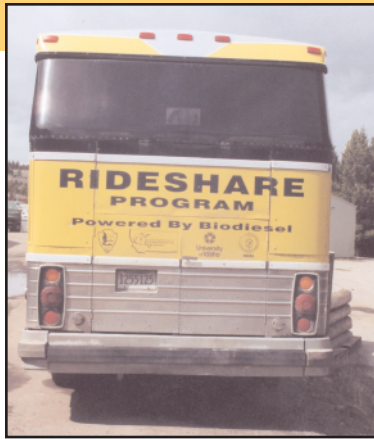


Today, all of the Park-owned diesel engines ranging from trucks to generators to snow trail groomers are powered by biodiesel. The American-made fuel is also currently available at public stations located just outside the Park's gates, and in the spring of 2005, it is hoped that service stations within the park will begin selling biodiesel. "Not only will this help keep the Park's environment clean, we think it will also introduce diesel car and truck owners to the advantages of biodiesel," he says. "We've offered ethanol blended unleaded fuel for several years so this is just a natural extension for us."

Also, the Park is in the early stages of reviving an old tradition. In the 1930s and 1940s, Yellowstone had a fleet of famous yellow, 16-passenger buses to move people around the Park. During the last year, a replica of the



Biobased lubricants are used by maintenance crews throughout Yellowstone Park's 2.2 million acres. These products include hydraulic fluid, grease, bar and chain oils. Because of Yellowstone's temperature extremes these products have to work in all weather conditions.



old bus was made. Today, it is powered by biodiesel and operated in the park. Jim expects that the fleet will be expanded to six by the summer of 2005. In the beginning, their main use will be to transport people from areas of interest that are connected by narrow, winding roads, thus reducing congestion and traffic in general. The new yellow bus can

be converted from wheels to tracks so that it can be used in winter as well.

Another important area of biobased products use in the park is cleaning products. "We have to keep all of our facilities clean and neat, and it's a tremendous job," Jim says. "Harsh cleaning chemicals are hard on those who do that type of work and could pose a threat to our sensitive environment.

"A few years ago, our custodial and maintenance crews were using more than 130 different cleaning products. As a result of a NPS study here in the Northwest, we've now switched to

biobased products and cut the number of products to around 15, saving money and time while protecting our employees and the environment," he says. (Ask the United Soybean Board (USB) for Volume 1, Number 3 of *Biobased Solutions for Government*, for more details on biobased cleaning products in article on the Department of Energy's **Buy Bio** program used at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, page 3.)

Like other NPS facilities, Yellowstone was an "early adopter" of a number of other biobased products such as hydraulic fluids, bar oil and other machinery lubricants.

"Again, I'll end where started: If you're the first and most well known national park, finding innovative ways to protect it becomes a priority and a responsibility," says Evanoff. "And it's not just the history that makes Yellowstone so unique," he adds. "We have the world's largest concentration of geo-thermo features, and they present a unique environmental challenge. Just think, during the summer 15,000 tourist a day, most of them driving their own automobiles and using Park facilities, visit Old Faithful, alone. These and the many other well known natural resources of Yellowstone make us do everything we can to protect."

FACT FILE

America's farms are just beginning to tap their potential as a source for natural, renewable biobased products that offer benefits to worker health, the environment, America's economy and energy security. To learn more about the many biobased products made from soybeans such as those used at Yellowstone National Park go to the Soy Products Guide catalog at www.unitedsoybean.org/newuses.

Because of the potential for biobased products to create new markets for soybeans, U.S. soybean farmers have invested more than \$50 million to research, test and promote biobased products. Much of this work was done through the United Soybean Board (USB), which is composed of 62 U.S. soybean farmers appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to invest soybean checkoff funds.



Biobased cleaning products play an important role in helping protect Yellowstone's extremely sensitive environment as well as the health and well being of its cleaning staff. Based on a National Park Service study for all of its facilities in the Northwest, Yellowstone was able to reduce the number of cleaning products from more than 130 to 15, thus saving money and time.

Awards & Recognition

Yellowstone National Park has garnered multiple environmental stewardship awards, including:

- EPA's Environmental Achievement Award
- The Department of Interior's Environmental Excellence Award
- The White House Closing Circle Award (2001)

For more information on various uses of biobased products in Yellowstone National Park, contact Jim Evanoff, at 307-344-2311, or at Jim_Evanoff@nps.gov.

photo credits:
National Park Service

16640 Chesterfield Grove Rd., Suite 130 • Chesterfield, MO 63005-1429
1-800-989-USB1 • (1-800-989-8721) • FAX: 636/530/1560

E-mail: merker@smithbucklin.com

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