



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park

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Yellowstone National Park News Release

Yellowstone Completes Winter Use Environmental Impact Statement

Yellowstone National Park will issue a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Friday that ensures the park opens for motorized oversnow travel as scheduled on December 15.

This Final EIS will be available online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. The National Park Service intends to issue a Record of Decision selecting only the transition year from the preferred alternative, and then publish and implement a "One-Year Rule" for the upcoming 2011-2012 winter season.

These actions will allow the park to open for winter use on December 15, and provide for managed motorized oversnow travel over groomed, snow-packed park roads in the same manner as allowed the past two winters under a temporary plan. Under the One-Year Rule, up to 318 commercially guided, Best Available Technology (BAT) snowmobiles, and up to 78 commercially guided snowcoaches a day will be allowed this winter into Yellowstone National Park.

After the Record of Decision and One-Year Rule are published, the National Park Service will begin working on a Supplemental EIS, which will contain the further analysis of the issues raised during the public comment period.

Some of the more than 59,000 public comments received on the Winter Use Draft EIS raised additional questions as to long-term effects and options regarding winter use in Yellowstone.

Among the subjects identified for further analysis are variable use limits, a 10:30 a.m. entry requirement, air quality and modeling assumptions, proposed Best Available Technology standards for snowcoaches, cost of avalanche hazard mitigation on Sylvan Pass, and opportunities for non-commercially guided snowmobile access.

A draft Supplemental EIS will be completed and released for public review and comment in early 2012. The National Park Service intends to have a final Supplemental EIS, a Record of Decision, and a long-term regulation in place prior to the start of the 2012-2013 winter season.

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