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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yellowstone NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO. 207-02.3

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✓	JOHN	
✓	SCOTT	
	WALTON	
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✓	BAUER	
✓	BARROW	
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	EVANS	
	CHRYSTIAN	
✓	WILLIAMSDT	
	ROBINSON	

MONTHLY REPORT

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

DECEMBER

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IMPORTANT

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NEWTON B. DRURY,

Director.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

January 4, 1944.

MEMORANDUM for the Director:

Following is the report of activities for Yellowstone National Park for the month of December 1943:

Weather Conditions. The weather during the month was relatively mild, with very little precipitation, in direct contrast with the weather a year ago. Only one sub-zero temperature occurred, on December 9, and the light snowfall did not require much opening of roads around Mammoth or between Mammoth and Gardiner and Mammoth and Cooke. The latter section of highway was kept open throughout the month for the benefit of Cooke residents. On December 6 the Old Faithful winter keepers were able to make a trip from Old Faithful to Mammoth and return; on December 13 they made a trip from Old Faithful to West Yellowstone and return and on the 18th they made another trip to Mammoth. On the 23rd the road from Mammoth to West Yellowstone was opened by a push-type plow in order to deliver gasoline to the Bacon Wind Head Camp on the Gallatin road and very little snow was encountered. On Christmas Day a trip was made from Mammoth to Old Faithful and return in a light truck.

The total precipitation for the month was .55 inch, as against 1.15 inches in December 1942, the minimum temperature was -8° on December 9 and the maximum 47° on December 18 and 21. There were 15 clear days during the month, one partly cloudy and 15 cloudy.

Snow depths throughout the park were considerably less than last year. A comparison of snow depths at the end of the month for the past five years at some points in the park follows:

COMPARATIVE SNOW DEPTHS 1939-43

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Achler River	20"	44"	33"	--	26"
Buffalo Ranch	--	--	6.5"	15"	6"
Cascade Creek	28"	64"	--	--	20"
Gallatin	--	--	10"	20"	8"
Lewis River Divide	25"	--	--	--	--
Nadison Junction	10"	20"	16"	--	10"
Mammoth	6.1"	--	3"	10"	4"
Northeast Entrance	--	--	23"	38"	11"
Old Faithful	11"	--	22"	22"	11"
Portersman's Lake	--	15"	--	--	--
West Yellowstone	9"	24"	20"	17"	12"
Lower Falls	9"	--	10"	20"	7.5"
Lake	--	--	--	--	16"
Lake River	14"	41"	22"	--	22"

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Special Activities. Superintendent Rogers was in the park until December 8 when he left for Denver on official business and annual leave. He started on annual leave on the 22nd. He expects to leave Denver on January 6 for special detail in the Director's Office in Chicago. During his absence from the park Assistant Superintendent Johnston was designated Acting Superintendent. Acting Superintendent Johnston, with Messrs. Bauer, Joffe, Darrows and Evans, attended a meeting of the Park County Rod and Gun Club in Livingston on the evening of December 16.

The plaque awarded by Governor Lester C. Hunt of Wyoming in connection with the Third War Loan Drive, which was won by Yellowstone Park as the Wyoming unit exceeding its quota by the largest amount, was received in the park on December 1 and was hung in a prominent place in the Mammoth Post Office. The plaque is of glass, 18 x 22 inches in size, and reads as follows:

YELLOWSTONE PARK

For

Outstanding Achievement
Third War Loan Drive, 1943

136% of Quota

Joseph Joffe, Chairman

Presented by
Lester C. Hunt, Governor

A sketch of the famous Wyoming bucking horse appears above the inscription.

Assistant Chief Ranger Maynard Darrows, who has been Acting Chief Ranger since May 1943, when Chief Ranger LaRoue entered the military service, was appointed Chief Ranger on December 4.

Assistant Chief Buffalo Keeper Thomas Phillips was retired due to disability at the close of December 31. Mr. Phillips served from May 15, 1926 to January 31, 1927 as a four-horse teamster and laborer and since February 1, 1927 he has filled the position of Assistant Buffalo Keeper in the Yellowstone. He was injured in line of duty on November 18, 1939, sustaining a broken ankle. The injury did not heal sufficiently for Mr. Phillips to continue his duties as Assistant Buffalo Keeper and a retirement for disability was requested and approved.

There was considerable absence during the month due to sickness, most of the sickness being the result of flu. The epidemic appeared to be general throughout the country but was much milder than in 1918, during World War I.

Holiday activities carried on in the park were not as elaborate as in former years, due to the War. A Christmas program put on by the Mammoth school children was held in the Canteen on December 17, while Santa Claus made his appearance and distributed candies, nuts, oranges and other edibles to the

children at a special program Christmas Eve. The Sunday School children presented a special Christmas program in the Chapel on December 13, while members of the community enjoyed a dance in the Canteen on Christmas night. The Mammoth school was closed for the holidays from December 17 to January 3.

Inspections. Van Davis and Keith C. Gallimore, U. S. Forest Service, Denver, in December 7 to remove surplus trucks and equipment turned over to the Forest Service; Alvin H. Crane, Civil Service Investigator, Denver, in December 9 to investigate a former Yellowstone employee; C. H. Krabler and H. C. Toy, U. S. Geological Survey, Boise, in December 26 to read water gauges.

Plans, Maps and Surveys. Members of the Engineering Division completed maps and computations for additions to the Yellowstone, rendered assistance in the preparation of data for quarters operations, completed a bridge inspection record for the park, checked computations on acreage of the Devils Tower National Monument and performed work on data for the Project Construction Program.

General Publicity. A press release was sent out to newspapers nearby the park on December 13 in connection with the arrest of two poachers on the West Gallatin road in the park. The 1933 Annual Report, which had been mimeographed in November, was distributed on December 3.

Road Maintenance. Maintenance for the month was very light, consisting principally in the removal of loose rock from the roadway and replacement of snow stakes that had been broken by buffalo and elk.

Snow was removed in the Mammoth area and on the road between Mammoth and Cooke. The push-type plows were used, the snow depth average being about one foot. This required the use of one plow for approximately one week, which left the road in good condition. The road between Mammoth and West Yellowstone was opened on December 23 in order to deliver gasoline to the Bacon and road camp.

In general, the roads are in good condition, as they were the corresponding period a year ago. With the shortage of labor and the labor available being either too young or too old, we have been fortunate in keeping our roads in as good condition as they are. One of our biggest problems is the replacement of the wooden guard rails which have rotted and in many cases fallen from their own weight.

Other Maintenance. The regular maintenance work on buildings at Mammoth was carried on by the carpenters, painters and plumbers.

Park Operators. The general store at Mammoth remained open to take care of park residents. Park photographer J. H. Haynes made three trips to the park from Bozeman during the month. He was here from December 1 to 11, 12th to 18th and came up again on the 30th to remain until January 2.

Margaret Jelinek, nurse, resigned on December 1. Mrs. Dwight Richards carried on the nurse duties during the month as it was impossible at the time

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for Dr. Windsor to obtain a successor to Miss Jelinek. Mrs. Richards, who is a Registered Nurse, is the wife of one of our permanent employees. Miss Elsie H. Kane, whom Dr. Windsor was fortunate to obtain for the nurse position, arrived on December 29 and will take over the nurse duties on January 1.

Increase or Decrease in Travel. One hundred fifty-one persons entered the park during December, as compared with 480 for the same month in 1942. The total persons entering the park for the travel year is 3,071, as compared to 5,424 persons for 1942, a decrease of -43.3%.

Fifty-two cars entered the park in December as compared with 156 for the same month in 1942. The total cars for the travel year is 987, as compared to 1,913 for 1942, or a decrease of -48.4%.

Visitors. There were no special visitors in the park during the month.

Ranger Service. Mild winter weather continued throughout the month, therefore, no movement of elk into the open hunting country occurred. In the Gallatin area a constant night patrol was maintained and on December 11, 1943 two violators were arrested. This released the pressure in that area and the night patrols were not maintained continuously during the remainder of the month. This released two rangers for duty elsewhere.

Several patrols were made into the more remote sections to check on game and range conditions.

A park ranger was used one night a week to relieve the regular watchman on his night off.

All remaining compensatory time which had been earned through August on forest fire suppression duty was given to those members of the protection force who had earned overtime.

Police Protection. On December 11, District Ranger Jacobson and Park Ranger Warren K. Leland arrested Deway Parker and Ronald E. Stratton of Rexburg, Idaho, for attempting to kill elk with a rifle in Yellowstone National Park. These men arrived in the Daly Creek area about 2:15 a.m. and stopped near Daly Creek to let a herd of about 200 head of elk cross the highway in front of their car. Ranger Jacobson saw that the two men were out of the car and heard one shot fired. The poachers were stopped and a .32 special Winchester rifle, a skinning knife and an axe were found in their possession. Three empty and three loaded .32 special rifle shells were found where the men stopped and shot at the elk. Mr. Parker and Mr. Stratton were brought before U. S. Commissioner T. Paul Wilcox and pleaded guilty to the charges. Mr. Deway Parker was fined \$200, and Mr. Stratton was fined \$100 and given 30 days in jail. The car, a 1939 Plymouth sedan belonging to Stratton, as well as a Winchester rifle used for the shooting and a skinning knife, were confiscated by the Government.

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Accidents. One minor automobile accident occurred during December.

Wildlife Administration. Bison. Preparations for the bison reduction were carried forward as rapidly as possible during December. Facilities at Lamar were repaired and put in working order and baiting of bison was started on the 19th. Approximately 450 bison were counted in the Lamar Valley during mid-December and 81 of these were trapped on the 29th and 30th. The herds then moved down country and at the end of the month few were in the vicinity of the Lamar Station.

Considerable effort was required to secure the services of a contractor qualified to butcher 400 bison but a satisfactory bid was finally secured and accepted. Arrangements for shipping the meat to the several Indian Agencies present serious difficulties which are being overcome.

Elk. Snow depths at Tower Falls and Lamar averaged six inches at the close of the month and the light, granular snow permitted elk to forage freely over the higher winter range and portions of the summer range. The elk were well distributed over the intermediate and higher ranges and were utilizing forage on areas unavailable to them a year ago. The lower and critical portions of the range received very light use by elk during the month. The excellent distribution referred to has avoided excessive utilization of any range areas.

Hunting Season. The elk hunting season in Gallatin County closed on December 1 and yielded a total kill of 305. The desired hunters' take had been set at 350 to 400. A total of 114 deer was taken in the Gallatin area this year.

It is estimated that 90 elk had been taken in Park County, Montana by the end of December. Most of those taken were from bands which spent the summer outside the park. Few elk have migrated from the park to open hunting territory and little change can be expected until increased snow depths or other related factors make forage less available in the park.

Range Studies. The 1943 Winter Range Studies report was submitted on December 14.

Miscellaneous. The regular monthly meeting of the Federal employees Union No. 465 was held in the Canteen Building on December 6.

Fred T. Johnston,
Acting Superintendent.

cc- Region Two

JJ/san

