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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yellowstone NATIONAL PARK

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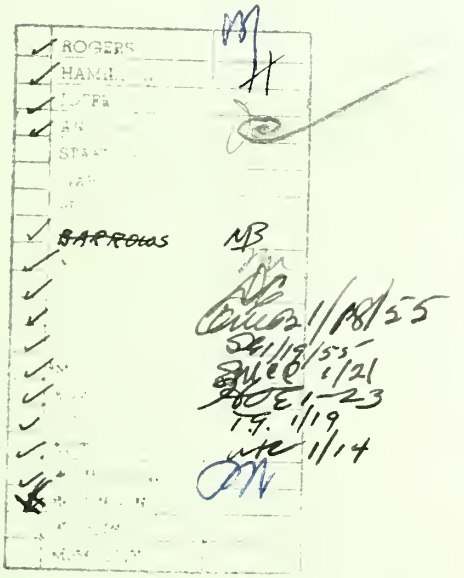
SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER 1954



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Report 1ml

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

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Summary of the December 1954 Monthly Narrative Report
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

A2#23

Report 1ml

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

FICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

January 11, 1955

Memorandum

To: The Director

From: Acting Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park

Subject: Monthly Report for December 1954

Following is the report of activities for Yellowstone National Park during the month of December 1954:

Weather Conditions. Unusually mild weather continued throughout the month. The maximum temperature at Mammoth of 45 degrees was recorded on the 22nd and the low of -15 on the 27th. Above freezing temperatures occurred here on 16 days. Precipitation, mostly in the form of snow, was recorded at Mammoth on 10 days during the month and the total snowfall for the month was 19 inches.

The lowest temperature in the park for the winter was -36° at West Yellowstone on December 28.

Yellowstone Lake was frozen over on the 20th.

A 10-year comparison of tabulated precipitation at Mammoth for December is listed as follows: 1954, 1.05 inches; 1953, 1.44; 1952, 0.94; 1951, 1.59; 1950, 0.83; 1949, 1.03; 1948, 2.01; 1947, 0.74; 1946, 1.11; 1945, 1.15.

Snow depths as of December 31 for field stations are indicated as follows: Mammoth, 8 inches; Tower Fall, 12 inches; Northeast Entrance, 22 inches; Lake, 14 inches; Snake River, 26 inches; East Entrance, 13 inches; and West Yellowstone, 23 inches.

Special Activities. Superintendent Rogers was on annual leave throughout the month of December while on assignment at Denver in connection with his project on the legislative history of areas administered by the National Park Service.

Forester Barrows returned December 6 from a trip beginning November 28 to Missoula where he conferred with Forest Service officials on blister rust and fire control and to Glacier where he assisted with forestry matters. He departed again December 16 for Missoula to attend a meeting of all agencies concerned with spruce budworm control called by the Forest Service for December 17 and returned the 18th.

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On the evening of December 16 Acting Superintendent Hamilton, Administrative Assistant Joffe, Chief Ranger Brown, Assistant Chief Rangers Edwards and Chapman, and Biologist Kittams attended the Park County Rod and Gun Club meeting in Livingston.

Administrative Assistant Joffe, Park Naturalist Condon, Chief Ranger Brown and U. S. Commissioner Brown, Honorary Members of Rotary International in Livingston, attended a meeting of that organization December 20 at which William Henning, resident minister in the park, was the principal speaker, explaining the ministerial setup in the park and bringing a Christmas message to the members.

A meeting on the Project Construction Program was held by various park officials in the conference room on December 9.

A Certificate of Honor Award, Citation for Meritorious Service, medal and lapel button were presented December 7 to District Park Ranger Rudolf L. Grimm in recognition of his fine service in Yellowstone since 1928. Presentation was made by Acting Superintendent Hamilton.

Ruben O. Hart, District Park Ranger, was appointed a member of the Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners in the park effective December 1, to assist particularly in performing records searches and other work on a cooperative basis for the Investigations Division of the Tenth Civil Service Region, Denver, Colorado, including local field investigations of former park employees applying for work in sensitive agencies. The other members of this board are Personnel Assistant Proper, Administrative Officer Anderson and District Park Ranger Reynolds.

The Local Civil Service Board held an examination December 9 for Clerk, GS-4-5-6 with four competitors, Personnel Assistant Proper conducting the examination.

By Executive Order 10580 dated December 4, President Eisenhower excused Government employees from duty all day December 24 and one-half day December 31 in connection with the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays both of which occurred on Saturday.

The roads from Mammoth to West Yellowstone and Old Faithful were closed by snow on the 7th and remained closed to the public. These roads and that to Lake were plowed on several occasions due to the buffalo reduction through the 17th of the month. Due to only light snows the roads on the west side of the park remained passable until the 30th of the month when they were completely closed for the winter by snow.

During the month the large 1½' x 12' sign on the entrance of the Administration Building was repainted.

Kenneth F. Roahen, Special Agent, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Billings, retired December 31. He has been in the park on many occasions and has been very helpful and cooperative with the park organization in law enforcement matters. James C. Evenden, Senior Entomologist, Forest Insect Laboratory, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine and Forest Service, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, who has been closely associated with insect infestation in Yellowstone since 1922, retired at the close of December 31. George A. Grant, Photographer, Rocky Mountain National Park, who served for many years in the National Park Service as Photographer and who started his career in Yellowstone in 1922 as Park Ranger, retired November 26. Burnett Sanford retired December 31 as Regional Forester, Region Four. He has attended fire schools here and participated in some Yellowstone fires.

Inspections. Arthur L. Larson, U. S. Geological Survey, Boise, Idaho, in December 1 for stream gauge reading; out 3rd.

Leroy L. Lilley, Board Advisor, 10th Civil Service Region, Denver, Colorado, in December 6 on inspection and to review Civil Service matters with the Local Board; out 10th.

Frank T. Hirst, Assistant Chief Ranger, Mt. Rainier National Park, and Mrs. Hirst in December 7 on leave; out 9th.

Publicity. On December 16 the dummy for the 1955 Yellowstone boradside indicating slight revisions was mailed to the Regional Director and 400,000 copies requested for the 1955 season.

A total of 68,000 1954 Yellowstone broadsides remained on hand at the close of December.

The January issue of THE READER'S DIGEST contained an article entitled "The Shocking Truth About our National Parks" by Charles Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson spent several days in Yellowstone last August gathering material for his article and also visited several other National Park Service areas.

Plans, Maps and Surveys. Landscape Architect Mattson and the Engineering personnel were off a large part of the month on annual leave. Assistant Engineers Schmid and Ketcham spent all their time on preparing plans for the Lake Lodge cabin area and the main Canyon sewer system. The proposed revisions on the Canyon Comfort Stations were reviewed by Messrs. Mattson, Hamilton and Wohlbrandt to determine just where reductions in cost might be made. Mr. Mattson prepared an overlay of the Gallatin road showing the location which the State of Montana had surveyed and staked and a projection which he believed practical so as to absorb the greater portion of the present highway.

Maintenance. Snow plowing took much of the maintenance men's time, with keeping the roads to Lake and Old Faithful open for the buffalo reduction. Any spare time was spent on repairing road signs.

Construction. On December 10 the Washington Office approved Contract No. 14-10-243-144 with Cop Construction Company of Billings for the construction of nine comfort stationssand one pump house in the Canyon area.

Work on the fire dispatcher's office in the barn, building No. 38, is well along. Delivery of windows is delaying the work somewhat. Other work by the carpenters was repairing storm windows and completing alterations in building No. 16. The painters finished work in building 16 and are well along in redecorating three rooms in the U. S. Commissioner's residence, building No. 49.

Complaints. One letter of complaint was received on condition and uncleanliness of cabins, purchase of ticket necessary to bathe, uncleanliness of toilet facilities and high prices for food.

Concessioners. J. E. Haynes, President, Haynes Inc., and Mrs. Haynes were in the park December 1 from their winter headquarters at Bozeman, Montana.

W. M. Nichols, President, Yellowstone Park Company, and Mrs. Nichols, left Helena December 7 for their winter headquarters at La Jolla, California. John Q. Nichols, Vice-President of the Company, and Mrs. Nichols left the park for La Jolla on December 9. Joe Bill, Yellowstone Park Company Printer, left December 3 for a vacation in the East, expecting to return January 13.

The Yellowstone Park Company repair shop at Gardiner closed December 17 for the winter and is expected to reopen about March 1.

The Annual Report for the Yellowstone Park Company for the year ended September 30, 1954, was received December 27 and transmitted to the Washington and Regional Offices and franchise fee for that period in amount of $5,000 was received and turned over to the Fiscal Accounting Clerk (Cashier) for deposit to Miscellaneous Receipts. On the 30th the Annual Report and franchise fee of $40,396.25 for Hamilton Stores, Inc. for the same period were received and distributed as above.

Religious Services and Chapel Use. The Superintendent's Church Committee held a meeting in the Administrative Officer's office on December 6. The Committee arranged to purchase materials for erecting partitions in the Chapel basement so that a Sunday School room could be arranged therein. The decision was also made by the Committee to investigate the costs of upholstering or padding the pews in the Chapel and as figures have been obtained some action will be taken by the Committee toward getting the job done.

The regular Sunday School services were held in the Yellowstone National Park Chapel each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. The Church services were held at 11:00 a.m. each Sunday. A special type service was conducted by the high school age children on December 19. A special Christmas eve service was held in the Chapel at 6:00 p.m. on Christmas eve December 24. The Junior High Students from the Gardiner High School presented a Christmas play entitled "The Candle in the Window". A large congregation attended this service.

Interpretive Services. The members of the division provided no interpretive programs. A number of items of correspondence were answered which provided interpretive information on the park. In addition to this the movie "Wild Animal Heaven" was used several times by Superintendent Frank H. Anderson at Scotts Bluff National Monument and the movie "Geyserland" was used for a program at West Yellowstone.

Bear pictures with appropriate captions were sent to the Follet Publishing Company for their use in illustrating a book.

Two movies entitled "Trout Fishing in the Tetons" and "Running Hell's Canyon" were shown to the Mammoth community in the Canteen on the 6th. These were movies taken by Drs. Frank and John Craighead.

Two sets of kodaslides were out on loan during the month for use in presenting programs on Yellowstone.

Museum Activities and Exhibits. The headquarters museum was visited by 17 people during December. Early in the month all cases and specimens were cleaned and covered for the winter. The two stage coaches on the museum porch were wrapped in tarpaulins.

The collections of birds, plants and mammals were all thoroughly fumigated during the month and poisons placed to control pests.

The West Yellowstone Information Station exhibit plans were given a final review and are in the final stages of typing. The same type of review was given the remaining Old Faithful Museum exhibit plans and will be submitted to the Museum Branch for review early in December.

Research and Observation. Park Naturalist Watson utilized his time during December to complete the manuscript on the interpretive pamphlet dealing with Norris Geyser Basin. This manuscript was reviewed by Park Naturalists Beal and Condon. It is now ready for final copying and submission to a publisher for an estimate on costs of printing. The publication is sponsored by the Yellowstone Library and Museum Association.

Park Ranger Naturalist Robert Jonas reported that his thesis for the University of Idaho on "Beaver and Their Distribution" is progressing and that it will be submitted for his M. S. degree this spring. Considerable reference material has been supplied Mr. Jonas from the Yellowstone research library.

Mr. Tom McHugh was supplied information for use in his thesis on "Bison Behavior" which is being submitted to the University of Colorado at Boulder, Colorado, as part of the requirement for his M. S. degree.

Natural History Association. The Association purchased a number of books for the research library. The new book "A Field Guide to Animal Tracks" by O. J. Murie has been added to the sales stock.

The Association purchased a dozen rolls of magnetic tape for use in the tape recorders.

In-Service Training. A general staff meeting of division heads and other park officials was held in the Superintendent's Office on December 16.

Yellowstone's Weekly News was issued each Thursday to keep employees, concessioners and others currently informed of park happenings.

Increase or Decrease in Travel. A total of 964 people entered the park in 294 vehicles as compared to 821 visitors in 251 vehicles for the same period last year. This brought the total visitors to 1,328,893 for the calendar year as against 1,326,858 for the calendar year 1953, an increase of 0.2%. This was 21,402 or 1.6% less than the 1,350,295 for 1952, the all-time record travel year. A total of 18,868 of these came to the park by air, bus and rail. The West Entrance again led with 410,379, South took over second place with 333,554, East dropped to third with 322,209, North continued fourth with 179,082, and Northeast fifth with 83,669.

Ranger Service. Activities of Protection Division personnel for the month included buffalo reduction, hunting patrols, elk trapping, building fire hazard inspection and antelope census.

Wildlife and Fish Cultural Activities. ANTELOPE CENSUS. An antelope count was conducted on December 16 in the area from Reese Creek to the top of Mt. Everts in the north end of the park. A total of 334 antelope was counted, only 22 of which were between Stevens Creek and the park boundary, and the remainder between Stevens Creek, Slide Lake and Mt. Everts.

Buffalo Reduction. Buffalo reduction operations ended December 17 when the last Indian trucks from Fort Yates, North Dakota left the park with their allotment of 42 carcasses. A total of 288 were slaughtered by National Park Service personnel with Indian Agency personnel doing the butchering, 62 having been taken from the Firehole herd near Old Faithful and 226 from the Hayden Valley herd between Lake and Canyon. Buffalo furnished various Indian Agencies during the

reduction program was as follows: Flathead Indian Agency, 30 to Dixon, Montana, and 4 to St. Ignatius for tribal ceremony; Flandreau Indian School and Tribe, Flandreau, South Dakota, 12; Fort Berthold Indian Agency, New Town, North Dakota, 11; Blackfeet Indian Agency, Browning, Montana, 26; Northern Cheyenne Indian Agency, Lame Deer, Montana, 60; Fort Belknap Indian Agency, Harlem, Montana, 48, of which Fort Belknap Indian Community received 16, Chippewa Cree Tribe, 25, and Rocky-Boy Sub-Agency, Box Elder, received 7; Fort Peck Tribes, Poplar, Montana, 50; and Standing Rock Sioux Tribes, Fort Yates, North Dakota, 42. Four buffalo were killed for use in the National Park Service mess hall and one animal killed was unfit for food.

On December 14 District Rangers Coleman and Way killed 37 buffalo which was an all-time record for the number killed in any one day in the park by any reduction crews. On one occasion Mr. Coleman killed a buffalo cow and a calf following alongside with a single shot with a 375 Magnum which is the only known incident here of killing two buffalo with one shot on the open range.

DEER. The last open deer season in the vininity of the park (Gardiner, Montana) closed December 11 with a heavy hunter kill reported. Despite the heavy hunter kill of deer in all areas near the park there still remains a large deer population in all the areas.

ELK. The elk hunting season remained open in the Gardiner and Gallatin areas in Montana throughout the entire month. Approximately 210 elk were killed in the Gallatin area and a very light kill in the Gardiner area. The Gallatin area is expected to remain open to hunting until 500 elk are killed. Probably the Gardiner area will be open to hunting through February if elk remain in satisfactory flesh. The North Fork area of the Shoshone Unit, Wyoming, near the East Entrance, closed December 21 with approximately 400 elk killed by hunters as compared with a hunter kill of 276 last year.

Live trapping of elk was attempted without success. The weather was too mild and snow not heavy enough to prevent the animals from grazing; therefore, they were not attracted to the hay in the traps.

Biologist Kittams observed that elk in the Yellowstone drainage gradually moved downward during the month, noting on a trip from Lamar Unit down the Yellowstone River to Gardiner in mid-month evidence of elk movement as far down as Crevice Creek. About 800 elk were near the mouth of Slough Creek, 100 near Little Buffalo, 300 on Hellroaring Slope, 200 or more in Little Cottonwood and scattered bands too distant for an accurate count in a snowstorm in Big Cottonwood drainage. Elk numbers near the north boundary have increased noticeably but only a few animals have crossed to open hunting territory. In the Gallatin area the main movement of elk across the boundary was beginning at the end of December so the harvest should be completed in early January.

Classification of 4,089 elk in the Yellowstone herd during late 1954 revealed a calf to cow ratio of 23:100, much below the average of 31:100 for the previous six years.

Range. Biologist Kittams observed precipitation of 1.05 inches during December was slightly below the normal of 1.30 inches at Mammoth, but temperatures were generally low and there was little wind so the Yellowstone range was entirely covered with snow at the end of the month. Snow in the Lamar Valley below the canyon was about six inches deep and in the Gardiner area about two inches deep. The snow was granular and loose so grazing animals had little difficulty in foraging. In the Gallatin area snow was unusually shallow, being only about eight inches deep near the ranger station and about two inches deep on the slopes which are windswept. Utilization of grass on these slopes varied from light to moderate.

Forest Fire Protection. During December a large amount of the work of building the room to be used as the Dispatcher's Office at the Mammoth barn, building No. 38, was accomplished. A large overhead door was installed, the room was framed, insulated and sheeting put on and the base floor put down. The overhead door was put on to replace the sliding barn doors adjacent to this room in order to conserve space in the office.

Tool marking and maintenance work was carried on during the month.

Building Fire Protection. Fire hazard inspections were made in all Government buildings in the Mammoth area. This also included fire extinguisher inspections of all extinguishers in these buildings. Necessary maintenance work was done in defective extinguishers wherever possible and a list made of all types and makes of defective extinguishers that it will be necessary to replace. This work was done by protection personnel.

Trails. Work continued on the manufacture of trail markers at odd times when manpower was available. To date approximately 1,300 markers have been completed and enough sheet metal has been salvaged to make at least 1,000 more. This work will be continued as time and labor permit.

Ranch and Corral Operations. Horses at Lamar Unit were taken off pasture on December 28 at which time they were confined to the corrals for winter feeding.

Repair of saddles and related equipment was continued at Lamar Unit.

Forest Insects. At the spruce budworm meeting attended by Forester Barrows in Missoula on December 17 it was suggested that the Yellowstone-Gallatin unit be included in the spray program for 1955. A report on the meeting has been submitted to the Region and we are awaiting further information from the Forest Service regarding the proposal to control the infestation on some 2,184,000 acres in Montana and Idaho.

Blister Rust Control. At a meeting in Missoula on November 29, attended by Division of Blister Rust Control personnel and Assistant Chief Ranger Cannavina of Glacier, Chief Ranger Field of Teton and Forester Barrows of this area, a number of proposals were made for new control areas at Glacier, Grand Teton, Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone. The inspection and survey work necessary was outlined and a report has been submitted to Region Two with copies to the parks concerned.

A request for additional blister rust funds in the amount of $6,428 for operation and surveys at Yellowstone during the balance of the 1955 Fiscal Year has been submitted to the Region.

Supervision of blister rust control in Yellowstone has been transferred from the Protection Division to the Forester and this transaction is complete except for transfer of the property inventory. Arrangements for operation of blister rust automotive equipment on a regular rental basis have been completed and one of the blister rust trucks will be used for horse transportation in exchange for a stake body vehicle.

Authority to recruit blister rust personnel at Yellowstone has been requested and a job sheet for checkers needed on survey work has been prepared.

Accidents and Public Safety. One motor vehicle accident occurred in December involving two Government vehicles at an intersection in the utility area at Mammoth, neither being able to stop soon enough on the snow-packed road after the other was visible around a building, resulting in minor damage to one vehicle and no personal injuries.

Herald A. Vernon, park visitor from Villi Park, Illinois, was awarded payment of $90.38 in December on his tort claim against the Government resulting from the accidental spraying of his automobile by a National Park Service road oil distributor on June 23, 1954.

Law Enforcement. Two more elk, a cow and a spike, were poached, this time in the vicinity of Reese Creek, in the north end of the park. Investigation has developed no leads so far.

Deaths. Frank A. Kittredge, 71, who retired as Chief Engineer of the National Park Service on May 31, 1952, passed away December 10 at his home in Palo Alto, California, after more than a quarter of a century of outstanding work in the national parks part of which was as Superintendent of Yosemite National Park. He visited the park on a number of occasions, last visiting here in August 1951 with Mrs. Kittredge.

Births. A son, Lawrence Elliott, was born to Personnel Clerk and Mrs. Rolla D. Everett at the Park Hospital in Livingston on December 6.

A daughter, Lee Ann, was born December 17 to Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Thomas of Gardiner. Both Mr. and Mrs. Thomas (formerly Betty Jane Lauer of Gardiner) were employees of the National Park Service in Yellowstone before entering in business in Gardiner.

Marriages. DeLyle R. Stevens and Ardis Adeline Arnold were married at Palo Alto, California, December 19. Mr. Stevens is District Ranger of Lake District and Mrs. Stevens was employed the past two summers at the Hamilton Store at Fishing Bridge.

Personnel. Advice was received December 1 of the selection of Ruben O. Hart, District Park Ranger, GS-7, as Assistant Chief Ranger, GS-8, Rocky Mountain National Park, to be effective February 13.

Merrill D. Beal, Park Ranger, GS-5, was promoted December 5 to the position of Park Naturalist, GS-7, vacated by the transfer of Francis H. Elmore to Natchez Trace Parkway. The Beal family moved in to Mammoth on the 3rd from Snake River Ranger Station and Robert J. Murphy, Supervisory Park Ranger, GS-6, and Mrs. Murphy moved the 6th to that station.

On December 6 Thomas E. Close received an indefinite appointment as Storekeeper (General) - Truck Driver, GS-3 in the garage.

William V. Gates entered on duty December 13 as Fiscal Accounting Clerk, GS-4, selection having been made from the register of the Tenth Civil Service Region, and replaces Raymond C. Easton who transferred to Mt. Rainier in October.

W. Verde Watson, Park Naturalist, GS-9, left December 29 for Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area in North Carolina on promotion and change of headquarters to the position of Park Naturalist, GS-11 in that area.

Mrs. Viola B. Roylance, seasonal Clerk-Typist, GS-3, was terminated at the close of December 17.

Miscellaneous. The regular monthly meeting of Local 465 of the National Federation of Federal Employees was held in the Canteen December 6.

The Yellowstone Park Skiers held its annual meeting and election of officers on December 7 with the following elected for the coming year: Harold Edwards, President; Dan Nelson, Vice-President; Dixie Rae McMullin, Secretary-Treasurer; and Thomas Garry, Jr. and Thomas Schoder, Board Members.

On December 13 the regular monthly meeting of the American Federation of Government Employees was held in the Canteen.

The Mammoth Grade School Christmas Program was presented in the Canteen the evening of December 21 with Santa Claus distributing gifts to the children. On the 22nd a similar entertainment was presented at the Gardiner School.

The Mammoth School vacation was from the close of December 22 to January 3 and that of the Gardiner School from 2 p.m. December 23 to January 3.

Boy Scout Troop No. 151 gave a farewell party December 27 for Verde Watson who has been their Scoutmaster for a number of years and presented him with a going-away gift. It was announced that Merrill Beal will succeed him as Scoutmaster and that Thomas Schoder will continue as Assistant Scoutmaster.

Warren F. Hamilton
Acting Superintendent

In duplicate

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