



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yellowstone NATIONAL PARK

FILE No. 207-02.3

SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT
DECEMBER 1953

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IMPORTANT

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UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Summary of the December 1953 Monthly Narrative Report YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

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WEATHER:	Mild. Precipitation above normal. Mammoth maximum 41°, minimum -6°. Snow depths. Lake largely free of ice.	Page 1
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:	Rogers on leave. Robinson & Abbie to Utah for equipment. Hamilton & Chapman trips to Billings for fire control meeting & re elk. McMullin & Fillmore to Ogden for surplus. Joffe & Condon to Rod & Gun Club meeting. Exec. Order for half-day off December 24 & 31.	1-2
INSPECTIONS:	Wm. Tuller, USGS, in re stream survey.	2
PUBLICITY:	Press release on elk poachings. Broadside dummy sent; 350,000 copies ordered. 6900 broadsides on hand. Marler article in NATURAL HISTORY, "Snowbound in Yellowstone".	2
PLANS & SURVEYS:	Engineers on leave & "as constructed" drawings.	2
MAINTENANCE:	Considerable plowing, sanding. Snow piling up. Bridge repair, etc.	2
CONSTRUCTION:	Closed down except replacing heating plant at hospital.	2
COMPLAINTS:	Two complaint letters.	3
CONCESSIONERS:	Store discontinued deliveries. Y.P.Co. officials met re 5-year program. Y.P.Co. printer on vacation. Nichols left Helena for La Jolla. Y.P.Co. shop at Gardiner closed for winter. Dr. Gilman away on trip; nurse in. Hayneses in. Hamilton	2
DET TOTALIS	annual report received. Sunday School well attended. Christmas program.	3
RELIGIOUS SERVICES.	Youth Fellowship pageant. Church services.	3
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES:	Animal film loaned for camera club. Geyserland film loaned Dr. Bauer. Condon talked to 4-H group.	4
MUSEUMS:	Preparation exhibits for O. F. Museum. Henry Lentfer contributed Indian artifacts.	4

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RESEARCH AND OBSERVATION:	Observations on winter trip to O. F. Two bear dens investigated, one with awake bear.	Page 4
NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION:	Correspondence & work on revision bylaws & constitution. Clerk on 10 hrs. Book sales \$32.65. New tape recorder.	5
TRAVEL:	821 in 251 cars, little more than last Dec. Travel for year 1,326,858 calendar year; 1.7% decrease.	5
RANGER SERVICE:	Buffalo reduction, building fire inspection, wild- life activities, etc.	5
WILDLIFE: FISH:	Proposed revisions fishing regulations.	6
BISON:	62 killed in Firehole area, taken by Indians.	6
ELK:	Gallatin season reopened Nov. 29, closed Dec. 11, total 484; may reopen in January. Migration but few left park Yellowstone drainage. Attempts drive out by horse. Elk classification, calf-cow ratio 33:100	6
ANTELOPE:	485 counted Dec. 15, 27% increase. 370 to be trapped in January.	6
RANGE:	Kittams observations of range.	7
FORESTRY:	Annual Forestry Report done in rough. Hamilton & Chapman to Billings meeting re Indian firefighters.	7
BUILDING FIRES:	Fire hazard inspection, Mammoth, completed.	7
TRAILS:	Trail markers made & work on trail signs.	7
IN-SERVICE TRAINING:	Staff meeting. Weekly news.	7
ACCIDENTS:	3 vehicle accidents. Mattson & McMullin badly injure fingers with electrical equipment.	7
LAW ENFORCEMENT:	3 men tried for killing elk Gallatin area. 3 men held for State Fish & Game for killing moose in closed area; transported through park.	8
DEATHS:	Wm. A. Nyquist, former NPS employee, died Wash. DC following illness. Mrs. Elizabeth Wohlbrandt, mother of Philip Wohlbrandt, died.	8
PERSONNEL:	Mary Rohn & Alice Murphy eod Clerk-Stenos. Helen Tracy & Marjorie Proper terminated seasonal Clerk- Steno & Clerk-Typist. Herman Engelsman eod Guard. Bessie Schmitt, Clerk-Steno, resigned. Helen Tracy appointed Clerk-Steno. Donald Kern, Park Ranger, resigned.	8-9
MISCELLANEOUS:	NFFE & AFGE. School vacations. Christmas program.	9

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

January 6, 1954

Memorandum

To:

The Director

From:

Acting Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park

Subject: Monthly Report for December 1953

Following is the report of activities for Yellowstone National Park during the month of December 1953:

Weather Conditions. Unusually mild weather prevailed throughout the month. The maximum temperature of 41° was recorded on the 17th and the minimum of minus 60 on the 8th for the Mammoth area. Above-freezing temperatures occurred on twelve days. Precipitation, mostly in the form of snow, was recorded on 19 days during the month. Snowfall was of an intermittent nature and was usually accompanied by high winds. The greatest snowfall in one day was 3". The precipitation during December was 1.44" as compared to a ten-year average of 1.12".

Snow depths as of December 31 are as follows: Mammoth 10". Tower Fall 12", Northeast Entrance 18", Lake 16", Snake River 29", East Entrance 18", West Yellowstone 18" and Divide Lake 30".

Yellowstone Lake was largely free of ice at the end of the month.

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.

Mechanical Supervisor Robinson and Automotive Mechanic Abbie left December 4 for Kanab, Utah, and vicinity to obtain surplus equipment and material. returning December 13.

Assistant Superintendent Hamilton and Assistant Chief Ranger Chapman made trips to Billings December 6-8 for Inter-Agency Fire Control Conference conducted by the Office of Indian Affairs and on December 16-17 to meet with Assistant Regional Director McLaughlin to discuss elk reduction program.

Electrical Supervisor McMullin and Storekeeper Fillmore left December 16 for Ogden, Utah, to get surplus equipment, returning the 18th, making the trip via the West Gate.

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Administrative Assistant Joffe and Park Naturalist Condon attended the annual election meeting of the Park County Rod and Gun Club in Livingston December 17.

On December 14 President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10508 excusing Federal employees from duty one half day on December 24 and one half day on December 31 in connection with the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

Inspections. William H. Tuller, U. S. Geological Survey, Boise, Idaho, in December 2 for stream flow survey.

Publicity. A press release was issued December 2 to the Associated Press, United Press and local newspapers on the arrest and conviction of seven men for the killing of elk within the park boundary in the Gallatin area.

On December 18 the dummy for the 1954 Yellowstone broadside was mailed to the Regional Director and 350,000 copies requested for use during the 1954 season.

A total of 6,900 Yellowstone broadsides for 1953 remained on hand at the close of December.

The December issue of NATURAL HISTORY magazine contained a very interesting and well illustrated article entitled "Snowbound in Yellowstone" by former seasonal Park Naturalist George D. Marler. The story records observations made by Mr. Marler of his stay at Old Faithful with his family in the winter of 1951-52. Some unusual winter shots taken by the author were used to illustrate the article.

Plans, Maps and Surveys. A good deal of the engineering time was spent on annual leave. Some time was spent on making "as constructed" drawings.

Maintenance. Light snows and high winds made snow plowing an almost continuous operation during the month. It was also necessary to keep the road open to Old Faithful and West Entrance during the buffalo kill. Sanding of the road from Mammoth to Gardiner was required quite frequently. Although we have had no really heavy snow, the numerous light snow storms are beginning to pile up the snow in the higher elevations. The elk traps are being kept plowed out. The bridge over Glen Creek on the Bunsen Peak loop was repaired and a new deck placed and a few signs were also repaired. All maintenance work is being handled by our three permanent employees and one wage board operator.

Construction. All construction projects are closed down for the winter except Account 231.01, Replace Heating Plant, Building No. 18, Mammoth Hospital. The project is about 60% complete.

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Complaints. Two letters of complaint were handled during the month on unsanitary condition of cabins and rest rooms at West Thumb cabin area and uncleanliness of Fishing Bridge tourist cabins.

Concessioners. Effective December 1, Hamilton Stores, Inc. discontinued house deliveries from their Mammoth general store.

W. M. Nichols, John Q. Nichols, Huntley Child and other officials of the Yellowstone Park Company met in Helena December 3 to discuss the proposed five-year development program for the Company.

Joe Bill, Yellowstone Park Company Printer, left December 5 for vacation in the East, expecting to return to the park January 13.

W. M. Nichols, President, Yellowstone Park Company, left Helena December 8 for winter headquarters in La Jolla, California.

The Yellowstone Park Company repair shop at Gardiner closed the evening of December 18 for the winter and is expected to reopen March 1.

Dr. George Gilman, Resident Physician, left December 21 for Los Angeles to attend the Rose Bowl Game, leaving the park without the services of a doctor. He expects to return January 4. Marie Lebeis, Nurse from the Park Hospital in Livingston, arrived December 29 as resident nurse during Dr. Gilman's absence.

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Haynes visited at Mammoth December 23 from their winter headquarters at Bozeman, Montana.

The Annual Report for Hamilton Stores, Inc. was received December 28 and transmitted to the Washington and Regional Offices.

Religious Services and Chapel Use. The regular Sunday School services of the community were held each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the Yellowstone National Park Chapel. The Sunday School attendance has been exceptionally good with an average of about 70 persons in attendance. There was a special Christmas program held by the Sunday School on December 20. The Youth Fellowship group and the Gardiner Sunday School put on a pageant entitled "Shining Candles" on December 20 in the Yellowstone National Park Chapel and music was provided by the Youth Choir. This service was held at 7:30 p.m. The Reverend E. A. Syms, of Livingston, Montana, conducted the special Christmas eve services at the Chapel at 7 p.m. The Children's Choir of Mammoth provided special music and a large number of local residents were in attendance. On December 27, at 7:30 p.m., Reverend Dennis of Pine Creek conducted the bi-weekly church services in the Yellowstone National Park Chapel.

Interpretive Services. A 16mm motion picture film entitled "Wild Animal Heaven" was sent out on loan to Dr. Alan Norton and was shown to two camera groups in the Detroit area. About 160 camera club members studied the movie.

On December 26, the motion picture "Geyserland" was sent on loan to Dr. C. Max Bauer at Orlando, Florida. On December 14, Chief Park Naturalist Condon presented a talk to the annual 4-H Club awards meeting at Pray, Montana. There were about 120 persons at this program.

Museum Activities and Exhibits. Park Naturalist Elmore devoted most of his time to continued preparation of the rough drafts of the exhibits being revised for Old Faithful Museum. These were reviewed by Chief Park Naturalist Condon and suggestions made for some changes. Two of these were sent to the Museum Branch during the month for their use in preparing exhibits. On December 8, part of the exhibit in Old Faithful Museum on New Zealand Geysers was removed so that it could be included on the new panel which is being prepared on that case. On December 17, Mr. Henry Lentfer of Livingston, Montana, contributed to the Yellowstone archeological collection a number of arrowheads, scrapers, knives and other items which he had found in Yellowstone through the many years of his association here. This is a splendid addition to the Indian material which we have.

Research and Observation. On December 8, Park Naturalists Condon, Watson and Elmore made a field trip to Old Faithful for the purpose of observation of wildlife and hydrothermal phenomena and to get some exhibits from the Old Faithful Museum. On this trip a number of interesting observations were made. In listing the animals observed, there were seven coyotes seen in the course of the trip, one bull moose observed on the Firehole River, Rocky Mountain mule deer were seen on the terraces at Mammoth and in the Old Faithful area. Elk were observed in the Roaring Mountain area, near Nymph Lake, and the Gibbon Meadows, near Terrace Spring and in the vicinity of Old Faithful. One herd of 192 animals was counted on the Swan Lake Flat. A herd of 78 bison was seen near the junction of the Nez Perce Creek in the Firehole River. Three bulls were seen across the Firehole River near the confluence of Sentinel Creek with that stream. Two other large bulls were seen down the Firehole near the cascades and seven animals were seen on the Fountain Flats.

Chief Park Naturalist Condon investigated two bear hibernation dens; the one on the Gibbon River was unoccupied but the one near Gem Pool in the Upper Geyser Basin contained a bear which was very much awake. After crawling part way into the den and shining a flashlight in the back portions of the den, the bear sat up in its nest and swayed back and forth growling and upon Condon's attempting to move a little closer, the bear growled ferociously and began to move forward with the result that Condon retreated from the den. Attempts to get the bear to come out of the den so that photographs could be made were to no avail.

Natural History Association. The Executive Secretary of the Association corresponded with other Natural History Associations and received splendid cooperation from them in obtaining copies of their constitution and by-laws. A committee, composed of Commissioner James Brown, Chief Ranger Otto Brown, and Chief Park Naturalist Condon are working on a revision of the constitution and by-laws of the Yellowstone Library and Museum Association. They will have their recommendations for revisions ready for the board of directors some time in January.

Mrs. Alice Quist, clerk of the Association, worked only ten hours during the month of December. The book sales for the month were \$32.65. The Association purchased, as a piece of equipment, a Webcor tape recorder which will be used to record talks given at the evening programs.

Increase or Decrease in Travel. Continued light travel was recorded during the month of December but slightly higher than during the same month during 1952. A total of 821 visitors in 251 vehicles entered the park as compared with 738 visitors in 184 vehicles during December last year. The hunting conditions in the area were again poor this year which accounts for the low tabulation of visitors into the park as compared with two years ago when the hunting was good in that area. There were no snow plane trips in the park during the month due to the insufficient snow depths.

The final travel figure for the calendar year was 1,326,858 as compared to 1,350,295 for the calendar year 1952, a decrease of 1.7%. The total number of visitors for the calendar year 1951 was 1,163,957, which was less 14% of that for 1953. The year just closed is the first time since World War II that the park failed to show an increase in its travel.

Ranger Service. The buffalo reduction program started near Old Faithful in late November was continued to December 5 with Rangers Chapman, Stevens, Grimm, Ela, Way and Murphy carrying out the activities. Two rangers continued building fire inspection until about the middle of the month at which time the work was finished at Mammoth. Ranger Murphy assisted Biologist Kittams in wildlife studies at Slough Creek from the 21st to the 23rd. Other wildlife assignments included an antelope census on the 15th, attempted elk drives on the 28th and 29th in the Stevens Creek area, and elk trapping operations. The Chief Ranger made a number of inspection trips including several to Old Faithful during the buffalo reduction operation and to Tower Fall and Lamar Units on the 10th. District Ranger Hart assisted in the quarters rentals work, which assignment was completed on the 4th. Other work consisted of preparing cases brought before the U. S. Commissioner, inventory of Chief Ranger's Office property, travel and other reports and routine correspondence and office work.

Wildlife and Fish Cultural Activities. FISH. Several proposals were forwarded on the 16th changing the Special Fishing Regulations to provide adequate protection for spawning population, and to more accurately define closed areas and limits of catch.

BISON. The buffalo reduction in the Firehole River area was completed on December 5 with 62 animals taken from this herd. Rangers Chapman, Stevens, Grimm, Ela, Way and Murphy carried out the operation and "Weasels" from the War Department Arsenal at Pueblo were used in handling the carcasses. Indians from Standing Rock Agency, Fort Yates, North Dakota, and from Ogallala Agency, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, butchered the animals, handled the carcasses and transported them to their respective agencies.

ELK. The Gallatin elk season which was reopened November 29 to complete a harvest of 400 elk was closed December 11, after a two-day notice, with 484 taken. A kill of near 100 was made on the first two days, then the kill was light until near the end of the season. Biologist Kittams observed when driving through the Gallatin drainage on the morning of December 7 there were about 300 elk between the ranger station and Snowslide Creek and reports indicate a number of elk moved out of the park a few days later. Recently the State people counted at least 2,100 elk and expect to ask the Fish and Game Commission to reopen elk hunting there again.

Thus far, very few elk in the Yellowstone drainage have crossed the boundary although many bands have moved north and west. Early in the month, there were few elk in the Horseshoe area and it was presumed they had crossed toward Hellroaring where there was a build-up to about 450 elk. Toward the end of December there were about 700 elk in the Hellroaring area and more elk had drifted into the Horseshoe. Recently about 500 have appeared by Stevens Creek and there are probably 200 or 300 more between there and Mammoth, within a few miles of the boundary.

An attempt to drive elk out of the park in the Stevens Creek area to outside hunting territory by using saddle horses was made on two different occasions but was not successful as the elk were determined to reach the safety of the hills above the Stevens Creek Ranger Station. When they had the advantage of the terrain to prevent further attempts to drive them they no longer appeared too harassed and soon stopped running.

A total of 4,061 elk was classified by Mr. Kittams during November and December. Calf:cow ratio was 33:100 in this sample, about the same as the average for the past five years.

ANTELOPE. The count of 485 antelope on December 15 indicates an increase of 27 per cent over the herd of last February. Since trapping of the surplus of about 370 animals cannot be done until January, utilization of sagebrush for the 1953-54 season will be rather heavy.

RANGE. Biologist Kittams observed that snow depths increased during the month so that there was about six inches in the Gardiner area and approximately twelve inches in Lamar Valley. The snow was loose and easily pawed aside by grazing animals. On the north end of Mt. Everts, sagebrush, which is in poor condition, had been browsed moderately by mid-December, probably by antelope. Definite selection of winterfat by antelope was apparent on the Target Flat on December 15. Several spot checks of aspen groves on the Intermediate Range indicate moderate use of aspen reproduction by elk.

Forestry. The rough draft of the Annual Forestry Report was written and it will be ready for transmittal shortly after the first of January.

On December 7, Messrs. Hamilton and Chapman attended a meeting in Billings sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The meeting was for the purpose of laying definite plans for the recruitment of Indian fire fighters in the Billings area.

Building Fire Protection. Building fire hazard inspections of the Government buildings in the Mammoth area were completed during December.

Trails. A total of 1,550 metal trail markers were cut and painted. Trail sign production was started but at only irregular intervals was much work accomplished due to the small amount of labor available. About 50 signs were in various stages by the end of the month but none completed. Lists of needed signs are being received from the various districts.

In-Service Training. A general staff meeting of division heads was held in the Superintendent's office on December 10.

The Yellowstone Weekly News was issued each Thursday during the month to keep employees, concessioners and others informed of park happenings.

Accidents and Public Safety. Three Class "A" motor vehicle accidents involving five vehicles were reported during the month. Two occurred on the Gallatin Road north of West Yellowstone, and the third occurred on the Mammoth-North Entrance Road. No injuries were reported. Winter conditions of ice and snow contributed to the cause of each accident.

Frank Mattson, Resident Landscape Architect, cut off the end of the index finger of his right hand on December 3 while working with a power jointer at his home. George McMullin, Electrical Supervisor, badly injured the index finger of his left hand while operating a router machine during the holidays.

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Law Enforcement. Raymond O. Hagen, 31, Walter R. Ditsworth, 26, and Robert W. Daley, 28, Bozeman, who were apprehended November 30 for the killing of three elk within the park in the Gallatin area, were tried December 1 and Hagen, who killed the elk, fined \$300 and his rifle and the elk confiscated and the other two each fined \$50.

Jule F. Boeck, Theodore J. Boeck and Jack Albert Mizer were questioned at the Chief Ranger's Office on the 13th regarding transporting a moose carcass through the park without a permit. It was learned that Jule Boeck had killed the moose in a closed area. Montana State Game Warden Joe Gaab was contacted and at his request the moose was held for him and the hunters were asked to report at the Sheriff's office at Livingston. Mr. Jule F. Boeck was required to post a bond of \$50 to appear for trial, which bond was later forfeited when he did not appear for hearing.

Deaths. William A. Nyquist passed away December 17 in a Washington, D. C. hospital following a lingering illness. A military funeral was held at Arlington Cemetery on December 22. Mr. Nyquist was a District Park Ranger in Yellowstone prior to his transfer to the Washington Office in April 1950 and subsequent retirement due to illness.

Mrs. Elizabeth Wohlbrandt, mother of Park Engineer Philip Wohlbrandt, died in Lincoln, Nebraska, December 28. Mr. Wohlbrandt left the following morning to attend the funeral services.

Personnel. Mrs. Mary Blanchard Rohn entered on duty December 2 as Clerk-Stenographer, GS-4 in the Naturalist Division, by Indefinite Appointment.

On December 2 Mrs. Alice B. Murphy received Indefinite Appointment (In Lieu of Reinstatement) as Clerk-Stenographer, GS-4 in the Personnel Office.

Mrs. Helen B. Tracy, seasonal Clerk-Stenographer, GS-3, was terminated at the close of December 4.

Mrs. Marjorie C. Proper was terminated at the close of December 7 as seasonal Clerk-Typist, GS-3.

Herman Engelsman entered on duty December 16 as Guard, CPC-4 by Indefinite Appointment.

Mrs. Bessie B. Schmitt, Clerk-Stenographer, GS-4 in the Protection Division, resigned at the close of December 18.

Mrs. Helen B. Tracy received Indefinite Appointment as Clerk-Stenographer, GS-4 in the Protection Division on December 21.



Donald G. Kern, Park Ranger, GS-5, submitted his resignation to be effective at the close of January 2, to further his schooling in electrical engineering at Montana State College.

Miscellaneous. The regular monthly meeting of the National Federation of Federal Employees was held December 7 in the Canteen.

On December 14 the regular monthly meeting of the American Federation of Government Employees was held in the Canteen.

The Mammoth School vacation was from the close of December 18 to January 4 and that of the Gardiner School from the close of December 22 to January 4.

The Mammoth Grade School Christmas program was presented in the Canteen the evening of December 18 with Santa Claus distributing gifts to the children.

> Warren F. Hamilton Acting Superintendent

In duplicate

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