Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/superintendentso00uns_22a

10-23
une 1941)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yellowstone NATIONAL PARK

	ROGERS	
✓	JOHNSTON	
✓	JOFFE	
✓	SOULE	
	MACBETH	
	SHOREY	
	QUIST	
	SOMERVILLE	
✓	BAUER	
✓	BARROWS	✓
✓	ELLIOTT	
✓	EVANS	
	CHAPMAN	
✓	WOHLBRANDT	
	ROBINSON	

FILE NO. 207-02.3

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

MONTHLY REPORT

For

FEBRUARY

1945

IMPORTANT

This file constitutes a part of the official records of the ational Park Service and should not be separated or papers thdrawn without express authority of the official in charge. All Files should be returned promptly to the File Room. Officials and employees will be held responsible for failure observe these rules, which are necessary to protect the egrity of the official records.

NEWTON B. DRURY,
Director.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16—22371

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

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

March 5, 1945

MEMORANDUM for the Director.

Following is the report of activities for Yellowstone National Park for the month of February 1945:

Weather Conditions. The Yellowstone is experiencing one of the mildest winters in many years. The extremely mild weather of December and January continued throughout February and there were comparatively few bad days. While last winter December and January were quite mild, with little precipitation, February showed a marked increase in precipitation, comparing favorably with the February of the year previous. However, there was comparatively little precipitation at Mammoth this February and little cold weather, but this same condition did not exist in the interior of the park, where there was at least normal precipitation. Mammoth seems to have missed most of the storms this winter, and there were only two days when sub-zero temperatures were recorded during the month, -2° on February 21 and -5° on the 25th. Only two sub-zero temperatures were recorded in January, -4° on the 20th and -7° on the 21st, and only two sub-zero temperatures were recorded in December, -18° on the 23rd and -5° on the 25th. Another very unusual thing in connection with the weather this winter is that the sub-zero temperatures have been of only one day duration. Always before the cold spells have lasted from 4 to 6 days.

The light snowfall required very little road opening. The section from Gardiner to Mammoth and Cooke was open throughout the month.

Total precipitation for the month was .56 inch, as compared with .38 inch in January and 1.31 inches for February 1944. The mean precipitation for February is .96 inch. The maximum temperature for Mammoth for the month was 43° on the 8th and the minimum -5° on the 25th. There were 11 clear days during the month, 5 partly cloudy and 12 cloudy.

Snow depths increased considerably in the higher areas of the park during February. At Snake River the snow depth increased to 107% of normal, with a water content of 90% of normal. The minimum temperature of -31° recorded at Yellowstone Lake on February 25 was the lowest in the park for the month. West Yellowstone, which usually records the lowest temperature, had a minimum temperature of -29° on the same date.

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYOMING

With the exception of Mammoth, Tower Falls and Lamar, the snow depths at stations in the park were greater than a year ago. A comparison of snow depths at the end of the month for a 5-year period for representative stations follows:

COMPARATIVE SNOW DEPTHS 1941 - 1945

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
Buffalo Ranch	13	18	30.5	10	12.5
Bechler River	57	56	90	46.5	58
Northeast Entrance	16	34	50	18.5	24
Gallatin	19	30	40	13	20
Lake	31	34	68	26	29
Mammoth	2.1	7	22	10	6
Old Faithful	27	35	79	34	30
Snake River	52	43	--	38	51
Tower Falls	14	16	32	15	14.5
West Yellowstone	33	39	76	28	31

Special Activities. Superintendent Rogers continued his stay in Denver on official business until February 4, when he left that evening for Chicago for a conference with the Director and Regional Director Merriam. He left Chicago on the evening of February 11, arriving in Denver the next day, and remained there until February 20, when he left for his return trip to the park. He stopped off for an inspection of Custer Battlefield National Cemetery en route and arrived in the park on the evening of the 21st. Assistant Superintendent Johnston was Acting Superintendent in his absence until February 14, when he left for Chicago for an assignment in the Director's Office. Assistant to the Superintendent Joffe was acting from the 14th to the 22nd. On February 6 Acting Superintendent Johnston and Park Engineer Kohlbrandt made a trip to Livingston to check right-of-way records on the Red Lodge-Cooke highway.

The new system of recording leave was not put into effect until February 1, as the necessary report forms were not received until about the middle of January. This park has failed to find a simplification in this new leave recording, as now some 10 or more employees are involved in keeping leave records, whereas previously it was handled by the file and personnel office. The new forms do not appear to be an improvement over the old forms used by the National Park Service. In our opinion this new leave recording will present increased difficulties during the summer operating season and will result in the wasting of a large amount of time. As there are not sufficient clerks in the various divisions to keep leave records, it is now necessary for plumbers, electricians and others, not qualified in clerical work, to keep these leave records, taking valuable time which could be used for more important work. The final results accomplished now, with so many employees engaged in leave recording, is no different than under the old system.

The application of the "lump sum payment" law has likewise caused considerable confusion and has been the subject of numerous conferences. The mere fact that some 8 Comptroller General Decisions have been rendered within one month on this new law is evidence that it is not clearly understood and many errors will result in its application.

The park lost another of its employees to the armed forces when Clerk Evelyn S. Kumor departed for service in the Waves. Miss Kumor had orders to report in New York on February 22, but they were later changed to March 8. She left the park on February 23 and will be carried on leave without pay until she actually enters on duty with the Waves. District Park Ranger DeLyle R. Stevens received induction orders to report on February 15. He had previously passed his pre-induction physical, but was rejected this time on account of a foot injury suffered a number of years ago in a mine accident. He returned to duty on February 28. Rex A. Madson, who had been carried on military furlough since July 17, 1942, when he was inducted into the armed forces, was discharged on November 24 and expressed the desire to return to duty in the park on April 1. His plans have since changed due to his desire to continue his education, and he tendered his resignation effective February 21, 1945. Assistant Chief Ranger Hugh Peyton has been discharged from the U. S. Coast Guard and expects to return to duty in the Yellowstone after the middle of March. It was reported in our January monthly report that District Park Ranger Lloyd J. Astle was inducted into the armed forces on January 23. Mr. Astle's induction was delayed and he did not actually enter on duty in the U. S. Navy until February 9.

On February 24 information was conveyed to the Yellowstone operators that the Director had decided that the park would operate during the 1945 season on an informal basis, as during the past two years, that no hotels or lodges would open and that there would be no bus service available. The Yellowstone Park Company will be expected to furnish meals in the cafeterias and lodgings in the tourist cabins at Old Faithful and Fishing Bridge, whereas last year meals were furnished entirely by Hamilton Stores, Inc. at these two locations. Mr. Hamilton will take care of pre-season and post-season visitors for meals and lodgings, as in former years.

Inspections. L. J. Baranowski, Radio Mechanic, Isle Royale National Park, in February 1 on assignment to inspect radio equipment and radio service. He departed on the 9th.

Plans, Maps and Surveys. Some time was spent on the Canyon campground layout, working out true curves and establishing grade to conform to the new proposed one-way road system. A check was made of the right-of-way for the Red Lodge-Cooke road across private lands. Several C.C.P. proposals were revised and the assembling of data for the shuttle cards was continued during the month.

General Publicity. No general press releases were sent out during the month, but a special article on the park was prepared by Assistant to the Superintendent Joffe for the special edition of the Casper Tribune Herald, to be issued in March. Park Naturalist Bredrick showed motion pictures of the park in Bozeman on February 1 at a meeting of the Gallatin County

Sportsmen's Association. Some 200 persons were present. On February 27 Chief Naturalist Bauer showed the moving picture reel "A Trip Around Yellowstone National Park," at the high school auditorium in Bozeman that evening. The Rotary Club, through the program chairman, J. E. Haynes, had put on such a good advertising campaign that the picture and lecture had to be given twice during the evening. There were 1,260 persons at the first showing and 250 at the second showing. An 800 foot film of the larger animals of the park was left by Dr. Bauer with B. A. Anderson, Forest Supervisor, to be shown a few days later at the Rosary School in Bozeman.

Road Maintenance. Routine road maintenance consisted chiefly of rock patrol, thawing out several culverts which had frozen shut, and sanding operations. The push type snowplows made 3 trips to Cooke, and their use has resulted in our being able to keep the snow pushed back the full width of the road.

There are numerous frost boils developing and many of them are on the section from the Lamar Canyon to Cooke, on which very few frost heaves have previously developed.

One of our push type snowplows is in the shop for repair, and repairs are extremely hard to make for this machine because of the difficulty of obtaining parts.

Other Maintenance. In accomplishing routine painting, papering and redecorating, necessary for our older buildings, an equal amount of patching and preparation is required.

Park Operators. Mr. J. E. Haynes visited the park on February 2[illegible], and departed the next day.

The park is expected to open for the 1945 season and operations will be carried on as during the past two years with informal accommodations available.

The general store at Mammoth was open throughout the month to take care of the needs of local residents.

The park has been the recipient of copies of numerous letters between the Director and members of Congress concerning the removal of the Old Faithful swimming pool after the war. The contract covering the operation of this swimming pool has now expired.

Increase or Decrease in Travel. Three hundred twenty-eight persons entered the park during February, as compared with 272 for the same month of 1944. The total persons entering the park for the travel year is 4,934, as compared with 3,729 for 1944, an increase of 32.3 per cent.

One hundred fourteen cars entered the park in February 1945, as compared with 94 for the same month in 1944. The total cars for this travel year is 1,632 as compared with 1,194 for 1944, an increase of 36.6 per cent.

Ranger Service. Rangers made regular patrols along the park boundaries and to the remote areas of the park, conducting snow surveys and making wildlife observations. Patrols were particularly intensive along the north boundary adjacent to the areas of Park County, Montana, which remained open to the hunting of elk. Alternate day and night patrols of the road through the Gallatin section of the park were effective, as no poaching activities were detected during the month.

Considerable time was spent in preparing revisions for the Park Ranger's Report Manual and the Park Ranger's Administrative Manual. A large number of rustic wood signs to be used along trails, at checking stations, and elsewhere were made up during the month. These signs will be placed next summer.

Chief Ranger Barrows made inspections of the West Yellowstone and Bechler River Districts during the month.

Police Protection. C. C. Bridges, of Bozeman, Montana, appeared before U. S. Commissioner T. Paul Wilcox on February 19 and entered a plea of guilty to a charge of shooting a coyote in the Gallatin section of the park. He paid a fine of $15 which was assessed by the Commissioner. The delay in the hearing of Bridges resulted from the absence of the Commissioner, who was on extended leave. He returned to the park on February 10.

Accidents. Mrs. Carlisle Kenyon, of Bozeman, Montana, sustained a broken ankle as a result of stepping on a small rock and falling, while attempting to take pictures of bighorns near Mount Everts on February 11. She was given First Aid treatment and removed to the road by horseback.

Two minor automobile accidents occurred during the month.

Wildlife Administration. Bison: The snow in the Lamar area became packed and crusted, making it necessary to begin feeding the bison on February 24. Three days later, Lamar District personnel counted a total of 386 bison, consisting of 171 cows, 127 bulls, and 88 calves. Some additional bison, mostly bulls, are known to be on the northern winter range.

Rangers counted 323 bison in the Pelican area. This is 101 more than were found there last year at the same time. It is planned to conduct a census of all bison in the park during March.

Pronghorn. Pronghorns on the northern winter range were counted on February 21 and 22 by Park Rangers, Montana Deputy Game Wardens, the District Forest Ranger of the Gardiner District, Absaroka National Forest. A total of 773 animals were counted and of this number 726 were inside the park and 47 outside. The count was well organized and conditions for counting were favorable. It is estimated that a total of 800 pronghorn inhabit the northern winter range.

Hunting Season. The elk hunting season in Park County, Montana, will remain open through March 1, but the Hanigan checking station, operated by the Montana Fish and Game Department, closed on February 28. At that time, 283 elk had been checked through. The local deputy game warden completed checking early season and local kills which brought the total reduction of the northern Yellowstone elk herd, by hunting, to 403 elk.

Range Conditions. The average depth of snow over the northern winter range, in the Tower Falls District, was 14 inches. There was but little more snow along the Lamar River to the mouth of Soda Butte Creek, while much of the lower range along the Yellowstone River and in the vicinity of the Game Ranch was entirely free of snow. Snow, in areas exposed to wind and sun, became packed and wind-crusted and although it was comparatively shallow, the animals experienced difficulty in pawing through it to secure forage. The elk were generally using lower portions of the range than a year ago although, in protected sections, the snow remained loose and granular, which allowed the animals to forage without difficulty.

Grasses and sedges provided the bulk of the forage for the game animals Aspen and willows were browsed upon to varying degrees, depending upon the location. Where these browse species occurred on range utilized by large numbers of elk, the utilization was heavy while in other areas, equally accessible, the use was very light. Much good forage remained on snow-free range and, due to the desirable wide distribution of the animals over the range, utilization was generally moderate.

The portions of the winter range used by pronghorns were heavily utilized by these animals.

Miscellaneous. The regular monthly meeting of the Federal Employees Union No. 465 was held in the Canteen on February 5. A Dutch Lunch was served following the meeting.

Edmund B. Rogers,
Superintendent.

cc: Region Two
File (2)
JJ/san