



North Entrance & Park Street (Gardiner, MT) Improvement Plan

Project Scoping

May 19, 2010

Dear Interested Party:

Yellowstone National Park is in the process of developing an improvement plan for the North Entrance to the park, which encompasses the Roosevelt Arch and Park Street, bordering the town of Gardiner, Montana. This project presents an opportunity to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation, visitor experience, promote local businesses, restore vegetation, and educate and orient visitors at one of the more popular entrances to Yellowstone. Steps shall be taken to preserve the historic context of the area and promote re-development in a responsible, coordinated and comprehensive approach.

Proposed design elements include:

- Vehicular congestion and circulation
- Pedestrian safety and delineation
- "Way-finding" and orientation
- Shade and picnicking opportunities
- Universal accessibility
- Revegetation and protection of vegetated areas
- Repairs to drainage systems and erosion
- Preserve the national significance of the Roosevelt Arch
- Fix deteriorated facilities
- Construct safe viewing and photographic opportunities
- Expand, delineate, and "harden" parking
- Install new signage
- Improve queuing of traffic at the North Entrance

An environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that, 1) explores a reasonable range of alternatives to meet the project objectives; 2) evaluates potential issues and impacts to park resources and values; 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts; and 4) describes an approach for conservation decisions over the coming decades.

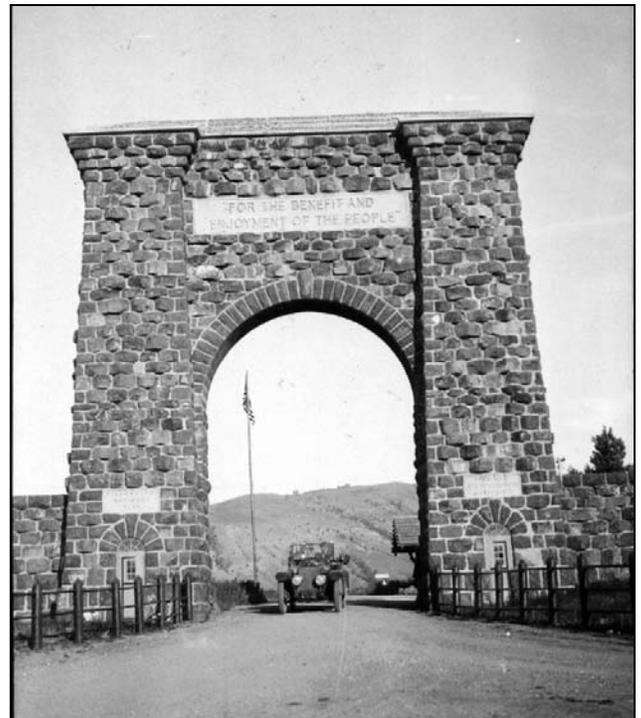
The National Park Service encourages public participation throughout the NEPA process during which the public has two opportunities to formally comment on the project; once during initial project scoping and again following release of the Plan/EA. We are currently in the scoping phase of this project, and I invite you to voice your ideas, comments, or concerns in this effort. These comments will be considered during preparation of the EA. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Suzanne Lewis
Superintendent
Yellowstone National Park*

Objectives

The North Entrance/Park Street Improvement Plan/Environmental Assessment will evaluate a strategy which attempts to reduce traffic congestion, organize parking, and address visitor & employee safety at the North Entrance of the Park.



Project Goal

Measures of success could include:

- Improved visitor experience
- Pedestrian safety, sidewalks, crossing, pathways, surfaces and ADA compliance
- Improved vehicular circulation
- Elimination of social trails and deteriorated facilities
- Organized pedestrian and vehicular flow in proximity of the Roosevelt Arch

Resources and Concerns

The Plan/EA will analyze potential impacts to a number of resources including:

- Geology, soils, and vegetation
- Wildlife and species of special concern
- Non-target species (amphibians, aquatic insects)
- Cultural resources
- Air quality, lightscapes, soundscapes
- Socioeconomics
- Visitor use and experience
- Park operations
- Human health and safety

Overview of the Process

Project milestones include:

- Public Scoping Open House – June 8th;**
- Public scoping- Closes June 18th ;**
- Preparation of Plan/EA- Summer 2010;
- Public review of the Plan/EA- Fall 2010;**
- Analysis of public comment- Fall 2010;
- Preparation of decision document; and
- Expected announcement of decision - Winter 2010;
- Construction- Winter 2011

** Milestones with opportunity for public comment

Ideas to Consider

Following are a few ideas to keep in mind as you develop your comments on this proposal:

- Do you have any issues/concerns about the project that you think we should consider?
- Are there other actions that you think should be considered?
- Do you have other ideas, comments, or suggestions for us to consider during the development of the North Entrance & Park Street Improvement Plan/EA

NEPA PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD

Public comments will help the NPS identify issues, develop alternatives, and guide the analysis during preparation of the EA. Comments may be submitted on-line to:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yell>

This link provides access to the website for the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) database. Comments may also be hand-delivered to the park's headquarters in Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming, or mailed to:

**North Entrance/Park Street Improvement Plan
Yellowstone National Park
P.O. Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190**

Comments must be received by June 18, 2010.

Please note that names and addresses of people who comment become part of the public record. We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

One public scoping open house will be held during the scoping period:

**June 8th – Yellowstone Association Headquarters
308 Park Street, Gardiner, Montana
6:00 – 8:00 PM**