



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Yellowstone National Park
P.O. Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190



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NOV 22 2011

Dear Interested Party:

Yellowstone National Park proposes to update and improve its Fire Management Plan (FMP) as recent fire program management guidance and policy has changed. Fire management policy has evolved since the last FMP prepared in 2004 and the last Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared in 1992.

The 2012 FMP EA will describe the alternatives and their consequences relative to implementation of a comprehensive fire program including wildland fire response, fire prevention, and fuels management utilizing prescribed fire and mechanical treatments.

Natural systems contain communities that are fire adapted or fire dependent and may require periodic fire to retain their ecological integrity. Loss of fire (suppression) can result in diminished integrity including unnatural succession, loss of species, and vulnerability to intense wildland fire based on fuel loading. To comply with NPS policy, Yellowstone needs to have a comprehensive fire management program that protects natural and cultural resources, the public, and employee and park facilities.

An Environmental Assessment will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that: 1) analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives to meet project objectives; 2) evaluates potential issues and impacts to park resources and values; and 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts.

Two alternatives are currently being proposed for the 2012 FMP EA. Both alternatives would be a continuation of active management of fire and fuels within Yellowstone. The main difference between the proposed alternatives would be the inclusion of one-half mile diameter fire suppression zones centered over frontcountry developed areas to help manage and mitigate risk to values.

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 Environmental Assessment. We are currently in the scoping phase of this project, and invite you to submit your written comments online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>.

A public scoping meeting will be held on December 6, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. place in the Barling Room at the Park County Courthouse in Cody, Wyoming. There will be a brief presentation about the project followed by questions and comments.

If you are not able to submit comments electronically through the website or attend the public meeting, then you may also submit written comments to Doug Madsen, Fire Management Plan, at the address on the letterhead. Please provide all comments by December 20, 2011. These comments will be considered during preparation of the Environmental Assessment. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,


 Daniel N. Wenk
Superintendent