



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore
National Memorial

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2010

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Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Carving Preservation Operations

(Keystone, SD) Mount Rushmore National Memorial will resume annual preservation work on the carving and other areas of the mountain from Monday, April 26 through Sunday, May 9. As part of the annual work done on the mountain, the memorial's preservation team will set up an alpine high line transport system between the base and the top of the mountain. The system will be utilized for logistical support to transport equipment, supplies and materiel during the mountain operations.

The annual preservation work will also serve as preparatory action to better prepare the mountain for a detailed 3D digital laser scanning project in May. As a part of this work done on the mountain, the memorial's preservation team will clean portions of the mountain to bare rock by removing debris and vegetation, removing loose hazardous rock, and inspect sections of waterproof membranes and fracture sealants. This annual preservation work is done to protect the sculpture from erosion when water intrudes into geologic fractures throughout the mountain. This work will also enhance safety of this and other complex projects by improving the ability to transport sophisticated, state-of-the-art survey equipment and multiple teams of technical specialists to the top of the mountain and back again safely.

The annual preservation work is one phase of long-term, comprehensive preservation and conservation efforts for the sculpture. Utilizing new and developing technologies, this systematic approach to preservation builds upon past conservation work dating back to the time of artist Gutzon Borglum's first efforts to seal and protect the memorial. Visitors should anticipate an increased level of preservation activities in the coming weeks as more projects are implemented.

The Mount Rushmore preservation team is composed of a wide variety of specialists from across park divisions as well as park volunteers and advisors to the project. Ropes access technicians round out the preservation team and are trained to use a ropes system to perform work directly on the surface of the sculpture. This team is the only certified industrial ropes team in the National Park Service. Mount Rushmore has also partnered with RESPEC Engineering and Wyss and Associates to provide scientific and engineering consulting and support for the rock block monitoring system and other preservation tools used on the mountain.

The preservation team and alpine high line system will be visible on the sculpture throughout the duration of the project. Seasonal facilities and trails will continue to be fully operational and open to visitors during this time.

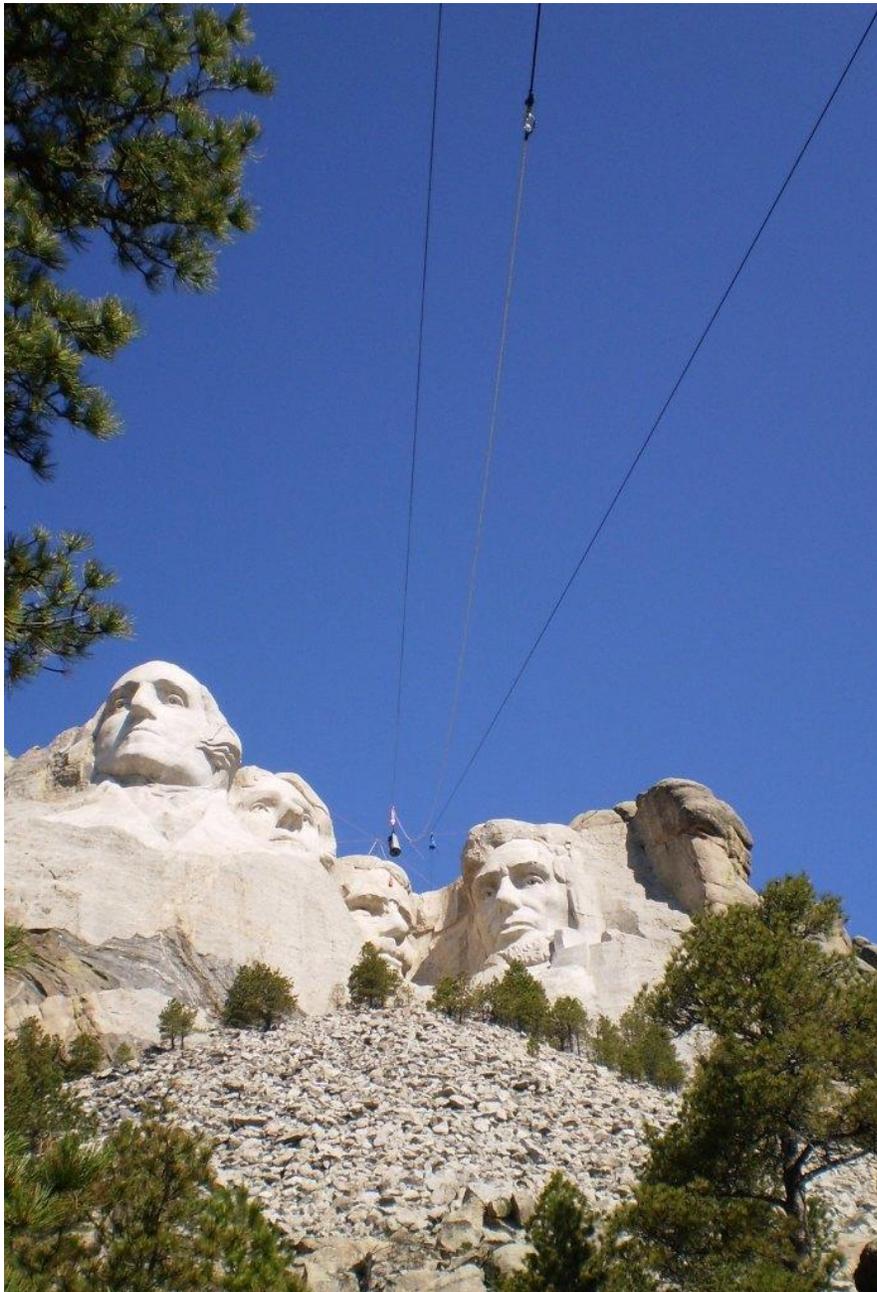


Photo caption: Alpine high line transport system in place. NPS photo

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