



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore
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Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Fireworks Eliminated from Independence Day Celebration

(Keystone, SD) – Superintendent Cheryl Schreier announced today that planning is underway for the 2012 Independence Day Celebration at Mount Rushmore National Memorial. The successful outcomes from the 2010 and 2011 celebrations, along with continued resource concerns, have prompted National Park Service (NPS) officials to base the 2012 celebration on the same model, and will not include a fireworks component.

Over 21,000 people visited the Memorial on July 3 in 2011, exceeding the 2009 and 2010 numbers. The event model of the past two years has allowed all visitors an opportunity to enjoy the Memorial on July 3, and event planners were pleased that no visitors had to be turned away, as was common in previous years.

The unacceptable risk of wildfire prompted the suspension of the fireworks for the 2010 and 2011 celebrations. Efforts are on-going throughout the Black Hills to combat the Mountain Pine Beetle and reduce fire danger, however, the condition of the forest in the surrounding area continues to deteriorate and will remain a concern for the foreseeable future.

“Mount Rushmore has successfully proven they can provide an outstanding July 3 celebration, in collaboration with Black Hills communities that can safely offer fireworks shows,” said NPS Regional Director Michael Reynolds. “The park service is committed to being responsible stewards of the land, as well as responsible neighbors, and to do that we need to take every conceivable precaution to mitigate the fire danger. Providing a celebration without fireworks for the 2012 Independence Day Celebration is the prudent course of action,” added Reynolds.

It is expected that the 2012 celebration will again offer a schedule of events that highlight patriotism, cultural celebrations of American heritage, and features the true meaning of Independence Day, while at the same time protecting the park’s resources and encouraging visitor safety. Once again, park officials will collaborate with surrounding communities and organizations to plan and promote events available throughout the Black Hills over the July 4 holiday.

Additional information about the 2012 celebration will be available in the coming months.

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