



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Yellowstone National Park  
PO Box 168  
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190

Grand Teton National Park  
PO Box 170  
Moose, WY 83012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 20, 2006 06-96

Nash or Vallie  
307 344-2010 or 344-2012

Anzelmo or Skaggs  
307 739-3415 or 739-3393

---

## Yellowstone/Grand Teton News Release

### **Cooperating Agencies Get Preliminary Draft Of New Yellowstone And Grand Teton Winter Use Plan For Technical Review**

Work on a long-term plan to guide management of winter use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks took an important step forward today as the National Park Service provided a preliminary version of the Draft Winter Use Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for technical review by the ten Cooperating Agencies involved in the planning effort.

Throughout this current winter use planning process, the National Park Service (NPS) has provided the Cooperating Agencies with an opportunity to provide scoping comments, and to review preliminary alternatives, draft monitoring reports, draft modeling reports, and other special studies before they are finalized. The ten Cooperating Agencies participating in the planning process under Memorandums of Understanding with the National Park Service are the states of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho; counties of Park and Gallatin in Montana, Park and Teton in Wyoming, and Fremont in Idaho; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the U.S. Forest Service.

Alternatives contained in the Cooperating Agency review document are a refinement of the preliminary draft alternatives which were made available for public review and comment in March 2006. The technical review draft identifies an agency preferred alternative, which would generally continue the current managed snowmobile and snowcoach program. Technical comments received from the Cooperating Agencies will be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate in the Draft EIS which is expected to be released for public review and comment in March 2007. The NPS intends to complete the EIS process prior to the start of the 2007-2008 winter season.

Under the preferred alternative, up to 720 guided, Best Available Technology (BAT) snowmobiles would be allowed each day in Yellowstone. Snowcoaches would be subject to both sound and emissions requirements, and a daily limit of 78 vehicles. There are currently no sound or emissions requirements or daily limits on snowcoaches. Snowmobile and snowcoach travel remains restricted to existing park roads which are groomed for motorized oversnow travel. The preferred alternative would also close Sylvan Pass to all motorized oversnow travel due to unacceptable risks to visitor and employee safety in this lightly traveled corridor. In Grand Teton, up to 140 snowmobiles would be allowed each day, and most of the snowmobiles would have to meet BAT requirements. Commercial guides would not be required in Grand Teton, and access to adjacent public and private lands would continue.

The temporary plan has addressed most of the concerns regarding the impacts of historic, unregulated winter use. During the last two winter seasons, guided, limited snowmobile access using cleaner, quieter machines has been effective in improving wildlife and resource protection, and in providing safe and more enjoyable visitor experiences in accordance with the 2006 NPS Management Policies.

The NPS is also continuing its commitment to keep the public informed on the progress of the current winter use planning process by posting the Cooperating Agency Review Draft EIS on the web at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/winteruse.htm>. To update those interested in the winter use planning process, the NPS is also hosting a public information fair on Friday, December 8, 2006, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in Cody, Wyoming.

-NPS -