



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore
National Memorial

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Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Mount Rushmore Installs Temporary Highline for Celebration

(Keystone, SD) Beginning Sunday, June 28, the Mount Rushmore National Memorial technical ropes access team will begin the installation of a temporary highline system on the mountain to prepare for the annual Independence Day Celebration. The state-of-the-art temporary rope system is used to ferry supplies to the top of the memorial and replaces helicopter long line loads as the preferred method to transport the fireworks up the steep mountainside.

The highline system consists of a 1350-foot highline rope and trolley pulley system. It will be temporarily connected to the Presidential Trail at the base of the memorial and reach the top of the mountain where a tripod will be installed on the top of Theodore Roosevelt's head. Firework loads and equipment will be secured to the pulley and pulled to the top of the sculpture using an electrical winch. Parts of the Presidential Trail may be temporarily closed while loads are lifted up the mountain.

The highline system is primarily used at the memorial for the long-term preservation of the sculpture. The technical ropes team uses the highline system throughout the year to check rock monitoring systems, to check and repair crack sealant, and for other systematic approaches to preservation. The technical ropes team is also trained to use the highline system as a rescue device for medical incidents on the mountain.

The highline rope and trolley system will be clearly visible to visitors during their stop at the memorial. The system is being set up in the same location where a tramway existed in the 1930s during construction of the sculpture. The highline system will remain in place through Tuesday, June 30. Following the celebration, the highline will be reinstalled on July 5 to remove firework material from the top of the memorial on July 6 and 7. The Mount Rushmore National Memorial Society donated the funding for the tramway in 2006.

Additional information on the Independence Day Celebration is available on the park web site at www.nps.gov/moru or by calling (605) 574-2523 and pressing extension 5.



Photo Caption: National Park Service trained technical ropes access technicians haul fireworks to the top of the mountain using a temporary tramway. NPS Photo by Rhonda Buell Schier

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