



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 12, 2016 16-002

Sandra Snell-Dobert 307-344-2015
YELL_Public_Affairs@nps.gov

Yellowstone National Park News Release

Yellowstone Visitation Tops 4 Million for the First Time

In 2015, there were 4,097,710 “visits” to Yellowstone National Park, up 16.6% from 2014, making it the highest visitation year on record. The number of “visits” is always greater than the actual number of individuals who came to the park because people may enter and leave the park repeatedly during a stay in the area.

42.5% of the total visitation came into Yellowstone through the park’s West Entrance in 2015, which also saw the greatest percentage increase in visits among the park’s five entrance gates, up more than 21.2% from 2014 levels.

The National Park Service’s “Find Your Park” public awareness campaign, marketing and tourism promotions by the states of Montana and Wyoming, and lower gas prices contributed to the record number of visits.

The increase in visitation to Yellowstone this year brought an increase in demands on park staff, facilities and resources. Long lines to enter the park, traffic jams, and the resultant frustration of visitors and staff undoubtedly affected the visitor experience.

“Last year’s visitation tested the capacity of Yellowstone National Park,” said Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk. “We are looking at ways to reprioritize in order to protect resources, to provide additional ranger programs, and to keep facilities clean.”

Congress just provided an increase in funding for national parks in 2016, and that is going to help meet some needs related to increased visitation. Congress is also considering separate Centennial legislation which could provide additional temporary increases and permanent authorities that will encourage philanthropy, volunteerism, and allow us to directly improve services.

“We will be asking park visitors to pack their patience for the upcoming summer season, as we expect more record breaking numbers in 2016, the National Park Service Centennial year,” said Superintendent Wenk.

Detailed park visitation information and additional information on how these statistics are calculated is available online at <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/Reports/Park>.

- nps.gov/yell -

About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America’s 409 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.



Follow YellowstoneNPS on

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.