

Frequently Asked Questions

About the Final Rule for Winter Use Management
in Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone National Park
National Park Service

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This FAQ document addresses questions related specifically to the final rule for winter use management in Yellowstone National Park. For questions regarding the environmental analysis, including alternatives, resource impacts, the Record of Decision, and a background of the winter use process, please reference the Record of Decision, the final Plan/SEIS, or the SEIS FAQs which can all be found here: <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parkmgmt/currentmgmt.htm>.

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General Winter Use Information

Why has this issue taken so long to resolve?

Winter use is a complicated and controversial issue and has been debated for more than 75 years. Concerns have focused primarily on the effect of snowmobiles and snowcoaches (collectively oversnow vehicles or OSVs) on the park’s air quality, wildlife, and soundscapes. We’ve passed through several phases of winter use – from no regulation of OSVs to a managed-use era that sets limits on OSV use, in place since 2004. The NPS has produced three long-term plans and rules (known as “special regulations or rules”) for winter use since 2000, all of which have all been invalidated by federal courts.

Why does the park need a rule to allow winter use?

National Park Service Regulation 36 CFR 2.18 prohibits snowmobile use in parks when there is no specific rule authorizing their use. Colloquially, this is known as the “closed unless open rule.” Without a specific rule, OSVs would be prohibited from entering Yellowstone.

Where can I read more about the history of winter use in Yellowstone?

The webpage <http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/winteruse.htm> contains links to several documents that explain the history of winter use in Yellowstone, including a timeline and links to previous planning documents.

What is the winter use final Plan/SEIS and what does it do?

The final Plan/SEIS analyzes the environmental impacts of a range of scenarios, or alternatives, for the management of winter use at Yellowstone National Park. The final Plan/SEIS provides

the required (by law) environmental analyses that inform the Record of Decision (ROD) and final rule. The final Plan/SEIS was released to the public in February 2013 and the ROD was signed in September 2013.

Where can I find the final Plan/SEIS?

The final Plan/SEIS can be read online or downloaded from this website:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yell>, by clicking on the link entitled “2012/2013 Supplemental Winter Use Plan EIS,” and then clicking on the link entitled “Document List.”

Why do you need a final Plan/SEIS and a final rule? What is the difference between the two?

The final Plan/SEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires that an environmental impact statement be prepared for any major federal action that has the potential to significantly affect the human environment. The final rule is required in order to allow OSV use in the park, and sets forth how the final Plan/SEIS will be implemented. Essentially, the final Plan/SEIS identifies and quantifies the potential impacts of OSV use in the park for a suite of varying management alternatives while the final rule authorizes OSV use in the park.

What is NEPA?

NEPA is a federal law that outlines policies to protect our environment. It establishes policy, sets goals, and provides a means for carrying out policy. The NEPA process ensures that environmental impacts are considered and disclosed to public officials and citizens before an agency makes decisions or takes actions.

How long will the final Plan/SEIS and final rule last?

The final Plan/SEIS and final rule are intended to remain in effect for approximately 20 years. The final rule includes an Adaptive Management Program, which will allow the NPS to make modifications to winter use management that are within the scope of the final Plan/SEIS without the necessity of beginning a new planning process. Should there be an impetus for changing the final rule – the introduction of better technology or a finding of major adverse impacts – the park may find it necessary to begin another planning process. More information about adaptive management is presented later in these FAQs.

Is the analysis contained in the final Plan/SEIS a precursor to examining summer use?

No. A rule is required to be in place before allowing oversnow use. There is no similar rule requirement for allowing summer use.

Overview of the Final Rule for Winter Use

What are the key elements of the final rule?

- Manages OSV use by transportation events. A transportation event equals one group of snowmobiles (maximum group size of 10, seasonal average of 7 beginning in the 2015-2016 season) or one snowcoach. If commercial tour operators use vehicles that meet voluntary enhanced emission standards, the group size of transportation events may

increase from a seasonal average of 7 to 8 for snowmobiles and from a maximum of 1 to 2 for snowcoaches, not to exceed a seasonal average of 1.5 snowcoaches. This flexibility in group size is intended to encourage operators to adopt improved OSV innovations and technologies.

- Up to 110 total transportation events are authorized each day. No more than 50 transportation events each day may be comprised of snowmobiles.
- Contains market-based elements that give commercial tour operators greater flexibility to respond to fluctuations in visitation demand during the winter season. The rule allows commercial tour operators to exchange transportation event allocations within the same entrance, adjust the proportion of snowcoaches or snowmobiles in the park each day (a transportation event could be used for either snowmobiles or snowcoaches, but no more than 50 transportation events each day could come from snowmobiles), increase the size of snowmobile groups on peak days, and increase the size of transportation events if voluntary enhanced emission standards are met.
- Demonstrates the NPS commitment to monitoring winter use and to use the results to adjust the winter use OSV management program.
- Applies the lessons of the last several winters, which demonstrate, among other things, that requiring all snowmobile and snowcoach trips to be guided reduces accidents, law enforcement incidents, and disruption to wildlife, and offers the best opportunity for achieving goals of protecting park resources and allowing balanced use of the park. The final rule allows up to 46 commercially guided snowmobile transportation events per day. Four non-commercially guided snowmobile transportation events of up to 5 snowmobiles per group are also permitted daily, one from each park entrance.
- Noise and air emission requirements for snowmobiles continue unchanged until the 2015-2016 winter season, when the maximum allowable sound and carbon monoxide (CO) emissions are lowered.
- Noise and air emission requirements begin in the 2016-2017 winter season for existing snowcoaches, and apply to all new snowcoaches brought into service starting in the 2014-2015 winter season.

Were changes made between the proposed and final rules? If so, what were they?

A number of changes were made in response to public comments on the proposed rule, including:

- In the definition of “snowcoach,” the requirement that snowcoaches be driven by a track or tracks and steered by skis or tracks was removed.
- Clarified that the Superintendent may establish additional operating conditions, including performance-based emission standards for snowcoaches, after providing public notice.
- Changed the dates that air and noise emission requirements apply to new and existing snowcoaches. For new snowcoaches it will be December 15, 2014 and for snowcoaches

already in service it will be December 15, 2016.

- Clarified that snowcoach noise emissions are measured when operating the snowcoach at 25 mph or its maximum cruising speed if less than 25 mph. Noise emission testing at these speeds is representative of how snowcoaches are operated in the park and allows the NPS to better understand impacts to resources.
- Clarified that the NPS will test and certify snowcoaches for air and noise emissions within Yellowstone whenever possible. Testing in the park allows the NPS to measure impacts under typical operating and environmental conditions.
- Changed the dates that new air and noise emission requirements apply to snowmobiles from December 2017 to December 2015.
- Provided more detail about routes where snowcoaches may be operated in the park.
- Added a requirement that snowmobiles operated by non-commercial guides be clearly marked. Concession contracts require commercial guides to be marked so this change imposes the same requirement on non-commercial guides. Marking aids the NPS with enforcement of the rules.
- Clarified that non-commercial guides must obtain a special use permit from the NPS prior to entering the park with a non-commercially guided group.
- Adjusted the chart of daily transportation event entry limits by park entrance/location to be consistent with modeling conducted as part of the final SEIS.
- Clarified that commercial tour operator reports may be required more than once per month if it becomes necessary to more closely monitor activities to protect natural or cultural resources in the park. This would allow the NPS to better measure compliance with the season average limits on transportation events and give commercial tour operators better information to make informed business decisions.
- Clarified that the Superintendent may determine the start and end dates of a winter season, and decide to close all or certain areas of the park to OSV use after considering appropriate factors.
- Added a 25 mph speed limit for snowcoaches. This ensures that snowcoach use will be consistent with environmental impact models in the final Plan/SEIS. This limit is consistent with the performance capabilities of most snowcoaches.
- Requires that snowmobiles be registered in the U.S. State or Canadian Province of principal use.

How will the final rule be implemented?

The final rule will be phased in over four winter seasons to provide park staff, visitors, and commercial tour operators sufficient time to adjust to the new requirements and the management of OSVs by transportation events.

What will happen during Phase I and how long will it last?

Phase I will occur during the 2013-2014 season:

A one-season transition period will be in place for the 2013-2014 winter season to allow time for the NPS to award concession contracts and for commercial tour operators to prepare for the shift to management by transportation events. During this phase, provisions of the 2012-2013 interim rule will be extended, allowing up to 318 commercially guided snowmobiles and 78 snowcoaches per day.

What will happen during Phase II and how long will it last?

Phase II will occur during the 2014-2015 season for snowmobiles and during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 seasons for snowcoaches:

The park will begin managing OSV use by transportation events instead of strict vehicle limits starting in the 2014-2015 winter season:

- Noise and air emission requirements will apply to all new snowcoaches brought into service starting in the 2014-2015 winter season.
- Commercial tour operators who are allocated snowmobile transportation events will be able to use their allocated transportation events for snowmobiles, snowcoaches, or a mix of both, as long as no more than 50 total transportation events come from snowmobiles on a given day. However, in order to use a snowcoach in lieu of a snowmobile transportation event, the snowcoach would need to meet the air and sound emission requirements that apply to all snowcoaches beginning in the 2016-2017 season.
- The average size of commercially guided snowmobile transportation events for the 2014-2015 winter season may not exceed 7 snowmobiles, averaged daily (i.e., a maximum of no more than 322 commercially guided snowmobiles in the park per day, and an additional 4 non-commercially guided transportation events per day not to exceed 5 snowmobiles each, for a total of no more than 342 snowmobiles). This limit will apply to any snowmobile transportation event that includes a snowmobile that does not meet the new air or noise emission requirements that will apply to all snowmobiles beginning in the 2015-2016 season.
- Commercial tour operators who do not upgrade to New BAT early will be allowed to have up to 10 snowmobiles per single event, provided their average daily snowmobile transportation event size is 7 or less. For example, a commercial tour operator that is allocated 3 snowmobile transportation events per day could meet the daily average requirement through a combination of 3 snowmobile transportation events of 7 snowmobiles each, or 2 snowmobile transportation events of 8 snowmobiles each and 1 transportation event of 5 snowmobiles, etc.
- Commercial tour operators who voluntarily upgrade their snowmobile fleets to meet the new air and noise emission standards (New BAT) during the 2014-2015 winter season (before these limits become mandatory in the 2015-2016 season) will have more flexibility with their group sizes. For commercial snowmobile tour operators who

upgrade at least 10 snowmobiles in their fleets to the New BAT standards for snowmobiles, vehicle numbers will be averaged seasonally for transportation events that consist entirely of the upgraded snowmobiles. This allows commercial tour operators to have events with a maximum of 10 New BAT snowmobiles each, provided their seasonal transportation event size averages 7 or less. For example, a commercial tour operator that is allocated 3 snowmobile transportation events per day may have 3 groups of up to 10 snowmobiles each in a single day, provided there are smaller groups on other days during the winter season that bring the seasonal average group size to 7 or less. This incentive encourages voluntary early adoption of improved vehicle technologies that meet the New BAT emission requirements, and helps ensure that impacts to park resources during the 2014-2015 winter season are minimized.

What will happen during Phase III and how long will it last?

Phase III begins in 2015/2016 for snowmobiles and 2016-2017 for snowcoaches:

December of 2016 marks the beginning of Phase III for all OSVs and is when all elements of the rule, including a requirement that all OSVs, including vehicles that had been operating in the park during prior seasons, must meet the new air and noise emission requirements or be removed from service in the park.

For snowmobiles, all are required to meet the new air and noise emission standards by the 2015-2016 winter season. This is one season before air and noise emission requirements apply to all existing snowcoaches and the NPS believes that this accelerated implementation schedule is reasonably achievable given existing and demonstrated snowmobile technology.

Starting in the 2016/2017 winter season, all snowcoaches must meet the air and sound emission requirements or be removed from service. This staggered implementation schedule recognizes the higher capital cost of investing in snowcoach engines and exhaust equipment and the fact that commercial tour operators replace snowmobile fleets more frequently than snowcoach fleets.

What is the voluntary enhanced best available technology (E-BAT) upgrade and how does it work?

The final rule allows commercial tour operators to voluntarily upgrade their fleets to less polluting vehicles in exchange for an additional OSV per transportation event. As of December 15, 2014, commercial tour operators may voluntarily upgrade their fleets to meet enhanced air and noise emission standards (described as “Enhanced BAT” or E-BAT) that are more stringent than the new mandatory season air and noise emission requirements described above. If these voluntary, enhanced standards are met, the size of a transportation event for that commercial tour operator may increase from a seasonal average of 7 to 8 snowmobiles per event and from 1 to 2 snowcoaches per event, not to exceed a seasonal average of 1.5 snowcoaches per event.

What routes are OSVs allowed on?

Yellowstone’s oversnow routes will remain entirely on roads used by motor vehicles during other seasons and thus are consistent with the requirements in 36 CFR 2.18(c). All main road segments will generally remain open for OSV use, but certain side roads will be reserved for ski

and snowshoe use only. Certain main road segments may be closed to all OSV travel during parts of the winter, including early season closure for plowing at the North Entrance, and seasonal closures of the East Entrance from December 15 – 21 and March 2 – 15.

The final rule allows the Superintendent to open or close oversnow routes after taking into consideration the location of wintering wildlife, appropriate snow cover, public safety, avalanche conditions, resource protection, park operations, use patterns, or other factors.

What is the legal blood alcohol (BAC) content to operate an OSV in Yellowstone?

BAC levels are different for under-age OSV operators, of-age OSV operators, and OSV guides:

- The maximum BAC limit for under-age individuals is .02. Although the NPS endorses “zero tolerance,” a very low BAC is established to avoid a chance of a false reading.
- For snowcoach and snowmobile guides (commercial and non-commercial) the BAC limit is .04.
- For snowmobile operators other than the guide, the BAC limit is .08.

How long can I idle an OSV in the park?

Three minutes.

What are OSV speed limits in the park?

Unless otherwise posted, snowmobiles will be subject to a 35 MPH speed limit and snowcoaches to 25 MPH.

Do snowmobiles need to be marked?

Yes. Snowmobiles operated by commercial or non-commercial guides must be clearly marked so that park personnel can easily determine which snowmobiles in the park are part of a commercially or non-commercially guided group. Other snowmobiles in the group do not need to be marked.

What about non-motorized activities, like dog sleds and snowbikes?

The park will continue to prohibit dog sledding, snowbiking, and ski-joring (the practice of a skier being pulled by dogs, a horse, or a vehicle) to prevent disturbance or harassment to wildlife and for visitor safety.

Transportation Events

What is a transportation event?

A transportation event equals one group of snowmobiles (maximum group size of 10, seasonal average of 7 beginning in the 2015-2016 season) or one snowcoach. The group size of transportation events may increase from a seasonal average of 7 to 8 for snowmobiles and from a maximum of 1 to 2 for snowcoaches, not to exceed a seasonal average of 1.5 snowcoaches, if commercial tour operators use vehicles that meet voluntary E-BAT.

What are the advantages of managing by transportation events?

Transportation events are based on two principles;

- 1) That packaging traffic into groups and limiting the total number of groups reduces impacts to the park and that;
- 2) The impact of one BAT snowcoach and a group of up to 10 New BAT snowmobiles, averaging seven seasonally, are comparable in terms of their impact to air quality, the soundscape, wildlife, and visitors' experiences at Yellowstone. Please see Appendix A in the final Plan/SEIS for more details.

Managing by transportation events is impact-centric rather than vehicle number-centric and is consistent with the science of winter use, particularly the science related to natural soundscape preservation and wildlife disturbance. By grouping OSVs together into discrete groups and by setting a maximum number of transportation events allowed entry each day into the park, the NPS is able to limit and control impacts to wildlife and increase the time that natural sounds predominate the winter landscape. Managing by transportation events also provides OSV manufacturers and commercial tour operators with incentives to produce and use cleaner and quieter OSVs. In return, more visitors can visit Yellowstone while impacts to park resources are further reduced through cleaner OSV performance.

Why does grouping vehicles together make a difference?

Managing by transportation events encourages commercial tour operators to group their vehicles – and therefore disturbances – together. Our modeling suggests that grouping vehicles limits the percentage of time OSVs can be heard throughout the day and reduces the impacts OSVs have on visitors and the number of times wildlife are disturbed. In other words, the same number of vehicles produce fewer impacts to the soundscape or wildlife when grouped together than when traveling individually. Managing OSVs by transportation events results in fewer disturbances to wildlife, the natural soundscape, and to visitors and allows the park to increase the number of visitors that can be accommodated each day without increasing the level of impacts to park resources.

Why have you abandoned managing by absolute numbers of OSVs, as you have in past rules?

In the past, the NPS and interested parties have focused on the total number of vehicles authorized to access the park. However, this emphasis is misleading because impacts to wildlife and soundscapes stem primarily from groups of vehicles, not individual vehicles. By packaging traffic into transportation events and capping the total daily number of transportation events, the park proactively reduces the amount of time vehicles are audible, therefore reducing impacts to natural soundscapes. By limiting the number of daily transportation events in the park, wildlife will be disrupted fewer times. These steps, in combination with continued 100 percent guiding requirements, best available technology (BAT) standards for snowcoaches, and New BAT standards for snowmobiles, will limit impacts on the park's flora, fauna, soundscape, and air quality into the future, while providing opportunities for visitors to experience the park's unique winter resources.

Where did the idea of comparability come from and what is it based on?

Our data shows that when held to New BAT standards, a group of up to 10 snowmobiles, averaging seven for the season, and a single BAT snowcoach have comparable impacts to soundscapes, air quality, and wildlife. Both Appendix A of the final Plan/SEIS and the “Comparability” section of the final Plan/SEIS FAQs are dedicated to fully explaining comparability of impacts between snowmobile and snowcoach transportation events.

How did you come up with the transportation event group sizes?

For the past 8 years, regardless of the total number of snowmobiles authorized for use in the park, snowmobiles have averaged 6.7 snowmobiles per group and 1 snowcoach per group. We used this as the basis for our analysis.

How close together do snowmobiles need to be to be considered a single transportation event?

Snowmobiles must travel within one-third of a mile between the first and last snowmobile while maintaining a safe distance between each machine.

How many daily transportation events will be authorized?

No more than 110; of which no more than 50 transportation events will be reserved for snowmobiles and no less than 60 transportation events for snowcoaches. Four of the 50 daily snowmobile transportation events will be reserved for non-commercially guided groups of snowmobiles.

Why are you capping the number of snowmobile transportation events at 50?

Public comments reflected strong support for placing limits on all OSVs in the park, including the total number of snowmobiles.

How many OSVs will be in the park on a given day?

The total number of OSVs in Yellowstone on a given day will vary depending on how commercial tour operators allocate their transportation events, how visitors choose to enter the park, and the popularity of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program. Depending on whether commercial tour operators use their allocations for snowmobiles or snowcoaches there could be between 480 snowmobiles and 60 snowcoaches, and 20 snowmobiles and 212 snowcoaches (if all snowcoaches meet E-BAT standards) in the park on any single day.

What is the maximum number of New BAT snowmobiles allowed into the park on a given day?

If all commercial tour operators use the maximum available number of transportation events for snowmobiles – 46 for commercially guided groups and 4 for non-commercially guided groups – there could be a maximum of 480 snowmobiles in the park. However, because commercial tour operators will be required to meet a seasonal average of seven New BAT snowmobiles per event or less, this level of use could not happen every day.

What is the maximum number of snowcoaches allowed into the park on a given day?

If all 106 commercial transportation events are used for snowcoaches (leaving 4 transportation events for non-commercially guided snowmobile groups) there could be 106 snowcoaches in the park and 20 snowmobiles (all non-commercially guided snowmobiles). If oversnow vehicles meet the E-BAT standard, the number of snowcoaches could potentially double to 212. However, because commercial tour operators will be required to meet a seasonal average of 1.5 E-BAT snowcoaches per event or less, this level of use could not happen every day.

How will transportation events be allocated across park entrances?

Transportation events will be allocated across the four gates and Old Faithful as follows:

Park Entrance/ Location	Commercially Guided Snowmobiles	Non-commercially Guided Snowmobiles	Commercial Snowcoaches	Total Events
West Entrance	23	1	26	50
South Entrance	17	1	8	26
East Entrance	2	1	1	4
North Entrance	2	1	13	16
Old Faithful	2	0	12	14
Total	46	4	60	110

What are these allocations based upon?

They are primarily based on historic entrance allocations. The final rule allows the Superintendent to decrease the maximum number of transportation events allowed in the park each day, adjust or terminate the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program, redistribute non-commercially guided transportation events, or make limited changes to the transportation events allocated to each entrance, based upon impacts to park resources, utilization rates, visitor experiences, or other factors after providing public notice in accordance with one or more methods listed in 36 CFR 1.7. Before taking any of these actions, the NPS will determine if any additional environmental compliance is required.

Have you considered reducing the number of snowmobiles per group?

We did, but our data shows that it is the number of transportation events (discrete groups), not necessarily the total number of vehicles within a group, that is the primary determinant of impacts to Yellowstone's wildlife and natural soundscapes. For those reasons, the rule caps the total number of transportation events, but allows for some flexibility in the number of vehicles within a transportation event by allowing up to 10 snowmobiles per event but requiring a seasonal average of 7 (8 under E-BAT).

Why would you allow for an increase in numbers of snowmobiles in the park?

Focusing on absolute numbers of vehicle numbers alone is misleading because impacts to resources such as soundscapes and wildlife stem from groups of vehicles (what we have termed transportation events), not individual oversnow vehicles per se. While the rule does allow for

higher numbers of total snowmobiles than authorized under the interim rules, it proactively caps the total number of OSVs at levels lower than the interim rules, thus reducing impacts.

Additionally, future snowmobiles and snowcoaches will not be the same as snowmobiles and snowcoaches today. Each will be subject to more stringent noise and emission standards that will further lessen their impact on park resources. Overall, while the rule will allow a higher number of vehicles in the park on certain days, due to management by transportation events, New BAT requirements for snowmobiles, and BAT requirements for snowcoaches, the impacts to park resources will be less than those allowed under the interim rules.

How will you monitor and ensure that limits are not exceeded?

By requiring commercial tour operators to report their use throughout the winter season while also employing an Adaptive Management Program to ensure that impacts to resources and visitor experience stay within levels predicted in the final Plan/SEIS. Please refer to the Adaptive Management section of these FAQs or the Adaptive Management Program webpage <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parkmgmt/wuamp.htm> for more information.

Is NPS administrative travel factored in the transportation event allocations?

No, administrative travel is not part of the transportation event allocations.

Was NPS administrative travel factored into your modeling for air and noise?

Yes, administrative travel was factored into modeling and impact analysis in the final Plan/SEIS.

Can the limit on the total number of snowmobiles be lifted if all snowmobiles are electric?

Not under this Plan/SEIS and rule. Electric snowmobiles were not evaluated in the final Plan/SEIS because it is difficult to make predictions based on technologies that do not yet exist in the commercial marketplace. In order to increase the number of snowmobile transportation events, new NEPA compliance would need to be completed and the final rule would need to be amended.

Best Available Technology (BAT) for OSVs

What is Best Available Technology (BAT)?

Best Available Technology (BAT) is literally that - the best available technology for OSVs in terms of environmental performance. Snowmobiles currently used in Yellowstone are already subject to a BAT standard that has been in place since December 2004. Under the final rule, snowcoaches will be required to meet BAT standards for the first time by December 2016 and snowmobiles will be required to meet New BAT standards by 2015.

Why do you need BAT?

Requiring BAT helps reduce impacts to park resources from OSVs.

Where did the New BAT standard for snowmobiles come from?

For air emissions, the New BAT standard was primarily based upon on the cleanest snowmobile in the park today, a Bombardier Recreational Products Ski Doo ACE snowmobile with a 600 cc

engine. For noise emissions, the New BAT standard was primarily based on the Arctic Cat T660 snowmobile which produces significantly less noise than older models do.

What are the New BAT standards for snowmobiles?

Snowmobiles will be required to meet a 67 dBA noise emission standard at typical cruising speed of 35 mph (SAE J1161) and emit no more than 90 g/kwh of carbon monoxide and 15 g/kwh of hydrocarbons using standard dynamometer testing procedures no later than December 2015.

How will you measure the noise output of snowcoaches and snowmobiles?

All noise emissions will be measured and reported following a modified version of the Society of American Engineers (SAE) J1161 test standards. This test measures noise emissions of an OSV at cruising speed and has been found to be more representative of actual driving practices in Yellowstone than previous testing procedures such as the J192 (full throttle test). Snowmobiles will be tested and certified by snowmobile manufacturers. Snowcoaches will be tested in the park by Yellowstone staff.

How long does the New BAT certification for snowmobiles last?

Up to six years from the manufacturing date or 6,000 miles, whichever is later.

What is the BAT air emission standard for snowcoaches and when will it be required?

The following air emission requirements will apply to all new snowcoaches brought into service in time for the 2014-2015 winter season and to all snowcoaches already in service by 2016-2017 winter season:

A snowcoach that is a...	must meet the following standard...
(A) Diesel-fueled snowcoach with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) less than 8,500 pounds	the functional equivalent of 2010 (or newer) EPA Tier 2 model year engine and emission control technology requirements.
(B) Diesel-fueled snowcoach with a GVWR greater than or equal to 8,500 pounds	the EPA model year 2010 "engine configuration certified" diesel air emission requirements. Alternately, a snowcoach in this category may be certified under the functional equivalent of 2010 (or newer) EPA Tier 2 model year engine and emission control technology requirements if the snowcoach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Has a GVWR between 8,500 and 10,000 pounds; and (2) Would achieve better emission results with a configuration that meets the Tier 2 requirements.
(C) Gasoline-fueled snowcoach greater than or equal to 10,000 GVWR	the functional equivalent of 2008 (or newer) EPA Tier 2 model year engine and emission control technology requirements.
(D) Gasoline-fueled snowcoach less than 10,000 GVWR	the functional equivalent of 2007 (or newer) EPA Tier 2 model year engine and emission control technology requirements.

What is the BAT noise emission standard for snowcoaches?

A snowcoach may not exceed a noise level of 75 dB(A) when measured by operating the snowcoach at 25 mph, or at its maximum cruising speed if that is less than 25 mph, for the test cycle in accordance with the SAE J1161 test procedures.

I understand the NPS will be developing a snowcoach BAT approval and certification process. What does this mean and how does it affect me?

Through adaptive management and monitoring, the NPS intends to develop a snowcoach BAT approval process. This process is designed to help commercial tour operators design and build the **best possible** snowcoaches and is a process that will be developed in cooperation with commercial tour operators. The NPS will conduct snowcoach BAT certifications inspections when it is mutually convenient for the commercial tour operator and the NPS whenever possible. This could include off-hours, on days the snowcoach is not being used to support concessions operations, or during the snowcoach 'testing days' held annually in the park prior to the opening day of the public winter visitation season. Snowcoaches may also be subject to periodic and unannounced inspections to determine compliance with emission requirements at their typical cruising speeds.

What about a performance air emission standard for snowcoaches?

Due to the limited amount of data on actual in-use snowcoach emissions, a performance-based standard could not be implemented at this time. The NPS will continue to collect data on snowcoach emissions and may investigate the possibility of implementing a performance-based or quasi-technical/performance-based air emission standard through the adaptive management and monitoring program. The final rule allows the Superintendent to establish performance-based emission standards for snowcoaches that would enable compliant snowcoaches to be operated in the park after the expiration of the 10-year BAT certification period.

What about size and weight restrictions for snowcoaches? Why were these removed from the final rule?

There is no maximum vehicle weight, gross vehicle weight rating, or maximum width requirements for snowcoaches. While rutting remains an issue of concern, the park has insufficient evidence to stipulate a maximum size and weight restriction for snowcoaches at this time. In the past, the NPS proposed specifying a maximum size and pounds per square inch weight limit for snowcoaches in order to address issues related to snowroad rutting. However, without detailed study that evaluates variables including pounds per square inch, snow conditions and environmental considerations such as density, snow-water equivalency, hardness, aspect, and other factors such as grooming practices and equipment, snowcoach track design and configuration, it is difficult to determine what specific requirements would lessen the potential for rutting of snow roads.

The NPS acknowledges that some snowcoaches leave ruts on the roads and that these ruts negatively affect the visitor experience and present a potential safety hazard to other OSVs, operators, and passengers. To address this concern, the NPS is currently studying this issue and is working to develop mitigation strategies once the causes of rutting are identified. After further study, should any size, weight, or weight displacement restrictions for snowcoaches be

necessary, these restrictions will be incorporated in commercial tour operators' annual operating plans and through the snowcoach approval process.

What is E-BAT and what will it do?

E-BAT, rewards commercial tour operators for using vehicles that reduce emissions below what is required in the final rule. If snowcoach noise emissions are below 71 dBA they will qualify as E-BAT snowcoaches. This means that commercial tour operators can run two E-BAT compliant snowcoaches as a single transportation event (the seasonal transportation event average must be 1.5 E-BAT snowcoaches).

If snowmobile noise emissions are 65 dBA or less and emit 60 gram/Kw-hr of carbon monoxide or less, they will qualify as E-BAT, meaning their seasonal average group size could increase to 8 snowmobiles per transportation event, provided all snowmobiles in the event are E-BAT compliant. See table below for a summary of BAT and E-BAT requirements for OSVs:

	Snowmobiles		Snowcoaches	
	Air Emissions	Noise Emissions	Air Emissions	Noise Emissions
Existing BAT	120 g/kW-HR CO	73 dBA (SAE J192)	None	None
New BAT	90 g/kW-HR CO	67 dBA (SAE J1161)	Tier 2	75 dBA (SAE J1161)
E-BAT	60 g/kW-HR CO	65 dBA (SAE J1161)	N/A	71 dBA (SAE J1161)
SAE J192 is a full throttle test designed to measure the maximum noise output of a snowmobile				
SAE J1161 is a constant speed cruising test designed to measure noise at cruising speed				

Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program

Is unguided the same as non-commercially guided?

No, they are not. Unguided means the complete absence of any guide. A non-commercial snowmobile guide is someone who has a non-commercial snowmobile access permit as awarded and obtained through the lottery system. Unguided trips will continue to be prohibited from entering the park; however, the park has committed to developing a Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program.

What are the primary components of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program?

1. Lottery Permit System: Non-commercial snowmobile guides will be required to apply for and acquire a permit through a lottery system. There will be one trip per entrance (North, East, West, and South) per day.
2. Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification: The non-commercial guide and all snowmobile operators within his or her group will be required to take an online course and be certified through the education program before they arrive in the park for their

trip.

What are the highlights of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program?

- The program will permit authorized parties to enter Yellowstone National Park without the presence of a commercial guide, and to instead travel with a non-commercial guide.
- The program will allow up to four non-commercially guided snowmobile transportation events – with up to 5 snowmobiles per event (including the guide) – to enter the park daily, one transportation event per entrance.
- Before entering the park, all non-commercial groups must have a Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Permit and have New BAT snowmobiles. Additionally, all snowmobile operators in the group must have successfully completed the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification Program and have a valid driver’s license.
- The non-commercial guide is responsible for managing his or her trip and the actions of all trip participants. Each non-commercial guide may lead no more than two trips per winter season, and must be at least 18 years of age by the first day of the trip. Non-commercial guides will be required to possess a non-commercial snowmobile access permit which will be awarded through an online lottery system and have successfully completed the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification training course.
- Each non-commercial snowmobile operator in a non-commercially guided snowmobile transportation event will be required to have successfully completed the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification training course. Additionally, each must be in possession of a valid motor vehicle driver’s license before entering the park. Trip members without a state-issued driver’s license, or those who do not successfully complete the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification training course, may participate as a passenger in a non-commercially guided trip but will not be permitted to operate a snowmobile in the park.
- The Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program will begin on the first day of the 2014-2015 winter season.
- The Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program may be adjusted or terminated based on impacts to park resources and visitor experiences.
- More information about the program and requirements for becoming a non-commercial guide is available in Appendix C of the final Plan/SEIS.

How will the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program be developed?

The park will work with interested individuals and organizations to develop the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program and supporting Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification Program.

What is the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification Program?

The Snowmobile Education Certification Program is a to-be-developed education program that all snowmobile operators participating in a non-commercially guided group must successfully

complete before operating a snowmobile in Yellowstone.

Can anyone be a non-commercial snowmobile guide?

Yes, any member of the public can be a non-commercial snowmobile guide as long as he or she is at least 18 years of age by the first day of the trip, has working knowledge of snowmobile safety, general first aid, snowmobile repair, and navigational technique, possesses a permit, and has led no more than 2 trips throughout the winter season. Non-commercial guides must also be certified under the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification Program and meet all other requirements under the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program.

What are non-commercial guides responsible for?

Non-commercial snowmobile guides are responsible for the actions of their group. Non-commercial guides must have working knowledge of snowmobile safety, general first aid, snowmobile repair, and navigational techniques. As a result, non-commercial guides will be able to help their groups travel safely through the park, will be familiar with daily weather conditions, and will know how to use hand signals to warn group members about wildlife and other road hazards, indicate turns, and indicate when to turn the snowmobile on or off. They will have knowledge of basic first aid and be equipped with similar supplies as a commercial guide. They will employ a single file “follow-the leader” approach and communicate frequently with group members.

Can commercial guides act as non-commercial guides?

Yes, as long as a commercial guide has completed all requirements of the Non-Commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program and does not charge any fees or accept any form of compensation, they can act as non-commercial guides for their friends and family. These trips will be accounted for under the 4 daily transportation events set aside for non-commercially guided snowmobile groups.

How many trips can a non-commercial guide lead per winter season?

No more than two.

Can I lead an overnight trip into the park under a single non-commercially guided trip?

Yes, but you will need to secure a multiple-day permit through the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program to lead an overnight trip. The maximum trip length is 2 nights/3 days.

Can I bring my own snowmobile into the park?

Yes, as long as your snowmobile is compliant with the BAT standard in effect at the time you enter the park.

Can I change the dates of my trip once I have been successful in the lottery?

Possibly. The NPS plans to address this issue during development of the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program.

What will it cost to take a non-commercially guided snowmobile trip into Yellowstone?

The following are the anticipated costs for a non-commercially guided trip into the park under

the final rule. Please understand the costs below are estimates and subject to change.

Component	Cost	Payment Due
Lottery Application Fee	Anticipated to be \$6.00/application	At time of application
Lottery Selection Fee	Anticipated to be \$40.00/group/trip	At time of lottery award (permit awarded)
Gate Entrance Fee*	Consistent with standard park entrance fee structure	At the entrance gate
* Gate entrance fee will remain consistent with standard park entrance fee structure, and is subject to change		

I want to use the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program - what do I need to do?

1. Secure a non-commercially guided access permit through the online lottery.
2. Ensure that you and all of the snowmobile operators in your group bring documentation on the day of your trip that you have successfully completed the Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification Program and have on your person a valid driver's license.
3. Ensure that all snowmobiles in your group are BAT compliant and that all members of your trip have the necessary safety equipment. If you do not have a BAT-compliant snowmobile you may be able to rent one.
4. Check in with a NPS ranger at the park entrance gate. Rangers will ensure that that all snowmobiles in the group are BAT compliant and that all members possess the necessary safety equipment and documentation (such as access permit, certification of completion for the education course, driver's license, etc.). The NPS ranger will also run an on-site orientation session for all members of your group to reinforce components of the educational program you've completed.
5. Enjoy the park!

Sylvan Pass

Will Sylvan Pass be open under the new winter use management framework?

Yes, Sylvan Pass will be open for both motorized and non-motorized oversnow travel from December 22 through March 1 each year, weather permitting, consistent with the Sylvan Pass Working Group Agreement.

Will the NPS continue to mitigate avalanches in Sylvan Pass?

Yes, likely through a variety of techniques, including helicopter and howitzer-dispensed explosives.

Will administrative travel be allowed over Sylvan Pass if the pass is closed?

No, closed means closed.

Commercial Tour Operators

Who are Commercial Tour Operators?

Commercial tour operators are businesses that have applied for and been granted contracts to provide OSV tours (either snowcoach or snowmobile) in Yellowstone. Commercial tour operators are evaluated on their performance on a yearly basis and their costs and equipment are approved by the NPS.

How are commercial tour operators currently authorized?

Currently, the NPS authorizes guided interpretive snowmobile tour operators by commercial use authorization and guided interpretive snowcoach tour operators by concession contract. There are numerous differences between CUAs and concession contracts. For example, the maximum term of a CUA is two years, but a contract is typically for a term of ten years or less. A CUA generally cannot be transferred but a contract may .

How will commercial tours operators be authorized in the future?

All commercial tour operators will be authorized by concession contracts to provide guided interpretive OSV tours of Yellowstone. Contracts will probably be awarded for a term of ten years. The contracts will be based on concession contract regulations and other regulations, including the final rule for winter use. Contract holders, or concessioners, will pay a franchise fee to the government. Their rates and equipment will be subject to approval by the NPS. They will be evaluated annually on operational performance and contract compliance.

How many snowmobiles can I have per transportation event?

After Phase I, you can have up to 10 snowmobiles per event, with a seasonal average of 7, provided your machines meet the New BAT standards. If you meet the voluntary E-BAT standard, your seasonal average can increase to a seasonal average of 8 per event.

When do my snowmobiles need to meet the New BAT requirements?

No later than December 2015.

When do my snowcoaches need to meet the BAT requirements?'

No later than December 2016.

I've read this rule provides "flexibility" for commercial tour operators, how so?

The final rule provides flexibility for commercial tour operators in several ways:

- **Average number of snowmobiles per day:** Commercial tour operators can have as many as 10 snowmobiles in any given transportation event. However, the commercial tour operator will need to average 7 snowmobiles (8 if they are voluntary E-BAT) per event *per day*. However, if commercial tour operators voluntarily upgrade their snowmobile fleets to meet the new air and noise emission standards (New BAT) during the 2014-2015 winter season (before these limits become mandatory in the 2015-2016 season), their group sizes will be more flexible. For commercial snowmobile tour operators who upgrade at least 10 snowmobiles in their fleets to the New BAT standards for

snowmobiles, vehicle numbers will be averaged *seasonally* for transportation events that consist entirely of the upgraded snowmobiles. This allows commercial tour operators to have events with a maximum of 10 New BAT snowmobiles each, provided their seasonal transportation event size averages 7 or less. For example, a commercial tour operator that is allocated 3 snowmobile transportation events per day may have 3 groups of up to 10 snowmobiles each in a single day, provided there are smaller groups on other days during the winter season that bring the seasonal average group size to 7 or less. This incentive encourages voluntary early adoption of improved vehicle technologies that meet the New BAT emission requirements, and helps ensure that impacts to park resources during the 2014-2015 winter season are minimized.

- **Trading transportation events with other commercial tour operators:** The final rule allows commercial tour operators to trade transportation events with other commercial tour operators at the same entrance. For example, a commercial tour operator at the West Entrance who has additional transportation event allocations available may trade those allocations to another commercial tour operator at the West Entrance, but an allocation at the West Entrance could not be traded to a commercial tour operator at the South Entrance. These exchanges provide additional flexibility to commercial tour operators and allow them to respond to visitor demand, while ensuring that the number of transportation events at any particular entrance does not exceed the total number authorized for that day.
- **Choosing the OSV that best meets demand:** Commercial tour operators who are allocated snowmobile transportation events will be able to use their allocated transportation events for snowmobiles, snowcoaches, or a mix of both, as long as no more than 50 total transportation events come from snowmobiles on a given day. During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 winter seasons, in order to use a snowcoach in lieu of a snowmobile transportation event, the snowcoach would need to meet the 2016-2017 season BAT requirements.
- **E-BAT Opportunities:** The final rule offers commercial tour operators an opportunity to voluntarily upgrade their fleets to less polluting vehicles in exchange for an additional OSV per transportation event. As of December 15, 2014, commercial tour operators may voluntarily upgrade their fleets to meet enhanced air and noise emission standards (E-BAT) that are more stringent than the new mandatory season air and noise emission requirements described above. If these voluntary enhanced standards are met, the size of a transportation event for that commercial tour operator may increase from a seasonal average of 7 to 8 snowmobiles per event and from 1 to 2 snowcoaches per event, not to exceed a seasonal average of 1.5 snowcoaches per event.

Does the final rule contain any information regarding the future of concession contracts?

No. Now that the final rule is published, the park will develop the concession contracting process.

How many commercial tour operators per gate will be allocated transportation events?

The park will decide the number of concession contracts per gate when it develops the

concession contracting strategy, anticipated to occur in late 2013 or early 2014. A commercial tour operator may apply for one or more contracts.

Can I trade my transportation events with other commercial tour operators?

Yes, as long as they operate out of the same entrance. Commercial tour operators will not be allowed to trade transportation events between entrances.

How will I track my OSV transportation event size averages to ensure compliance with this rule?

Each commercial tour operator is responsible for keeping track of its daily use on a NPS form, including group size and other variables of interest to the NPS, and reporting these numbers to the NPS on a monthly basis.

What information will the NPS require me to report?

For each transportation event, commercial tour operators will be required to report the departure date, the duration of the trip (in days), the event type (snowmobile or snowcoach), the number of snowmobiles or snowcoaches, the number of visitors and guides, the route and primary destination, and if the transportation event allocation was from another commercial tour operator. Commercial tour operators are required to report their transportation event size averages for the previous month and for the season to-date. In addition to the reporting requirements in the final rule, commercial tour operators are also subject to reporting requirements contained in their concession contracts or commercial use authorizations.

What happens if I exceed the seasonal average of 7 snowmobiles per transportation event?

You may receive an unsatisfactory overall rating. The consequences of an unsatisfactory rating range from loss of preferential right of renewal to termination of the contract.

If weather conditions are poor, can I use unused transportation events later?

No. There are a maximum of 110 transportation events authorized daily. Unused transportation events cannot be transferred to a later date.

If I send in a group of 3 snowmobiles, does that mean I used an entire 'transportation event'?

Yes. There is no minimum transportation event size.

Will a zero OSV day count toward my seasonal average?

Yes. If you do not run any tours on a given day that will allow you to run larger group sizes later in the season provided your seasonal event size average is 7 for snowmobile commercial tours under the New BAT standard (8 under the E-BAT standard) or 1.5 for snowcoach commercial tours under the E-BAT standard.

What about mandating the use of E-10 fuels?

Research indicates that E-10 would only benefit OSVs that do not use modern fuel injection engines. All carbureted OSVs (presently only Bombardiers) would see benefits, but few if any of the other vehicles would, including snowmobiles. Further, all carbureted motors would be prohibited under snowcoach BAT standards to be fully adopted *no later than* December 2017. Since all modern engines fuel inputs are oxygen sensor controlled, when the computer detects

extra oxygen in the exhaust (supplied by E-10 fuel), the computer injects more fuel to bring the fuel trim back to stoichiometry, negating the attempt to lean out the engine. E-10 may also influence the mix of hydrocarbons that would be emitted, most notably a relatively large increase in aldehydes, primarily acetaldehyde and some formaldehyde.

Adaptive Management and Monitoring

What is adaptive management?

Adaptive management is a set of management practices that blends science and public engagement, and is designed to address complex natural resource management challenges. Adaptive management enables natural resource managers to acknowledge uncertainties in the management of natural systems, collect additional information, and respond to changing resource conditions while working with the public and interested stakeholders.

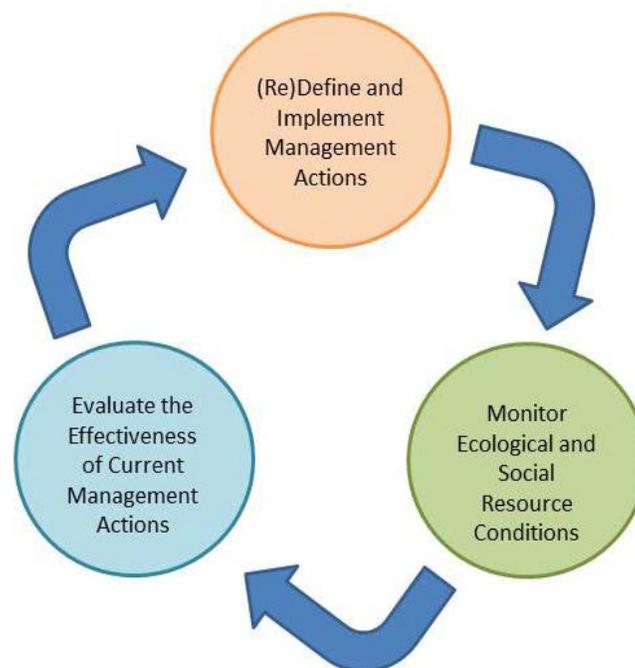
What does adaptive management seek to do?

Adaptive management is designed to:

1. Help managers meet a project's environmental, social, and economic goals;
2. Increase scientific knowledge; and
3. Reduce stakeholder tensions.

How does adaptive management work?

Figure 1. The Adaptive Management Process



Adopted from *Williams and Brown 2012*

Adaptive management is a three-step process involving management, monitoring, and

evaluation. Managers repeat these three steps over time to improve resource management and protection. The first step in Yellowstone's Adaptive Management Program involves defining and implementing management actions that are based on resource conditions and the objectives outlined by the winter use final Plan/Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The second step, resource monitoring, will provide data to assess resource impacts, and the effectiveness of winter use management actions over time. The third step, evaluation, involves analyzing monitoring data and using the results to assess and modify winter use management actions accordingly going forward.

How will adaptive management be applied to winter use in Yellowstone?

Adaptive management describes both the program and the management process the National Park Service (NPS) will use to assess the implementation of the new management strategy for winter use as outlined in the final rule. Yellowstone managers will initiate an Adaptive Management Program that will oversee the adaptive management process, including public and stakeholder engagement, the design of monitoring tools, and the preparation of an adaptive management plan.

Why is adaptive management important for winter use in Yellowstone?

Adaptive management will allow the NPS to continuously improve winter use management in a manner that considers the visitor experience and seeks to reduce environmental impacts. If ecological and social monitoring shows that the impacts to the park are not what the NPS expected - as described in the winter use final Plan/SEIS - adaptive management will allow the NPS to learn from and modify its management actions and implement better management strategies with public input.

What are the goals of the Yellowstone Adaptive Management Program for winter use?

The ultimate goal of the Adaptive Management Program is to continuously improve the management of winter use in Yellowstone National Park. Specifically, there are three main objectives guiding the winter use Adaptive Management Program:

1. To evaluate the impacts of oversnow vehicle (OSV) use and help managers implement actions that keep impacts within the range predicted under the final Plan/SEIS.
2. To gather additional data regarding the comparability of impacts from a group of snowmobiles versus a snowcoach.
3. To reduce impacts on park resources after implementation of the final rule by gathering additional data regarding the overall social and ecological impacts of winter use and using those data to guide future management decisions.

Hasn't the NPS gathered enough data on winter use already?

Yellowstone has a lot of information about winter use and its effects on visitors and the park's resources. However, a new rule is being implemented and the park's natural and cultural resources are constantly changing, so it is prudent to continually evaluate the rule's effects on resources and the visitor experience and consider adjustments to maintain high quality visitor experiences and minimize impacts on the park's resources.

What is the role for the public in Yellowstone's Adaptive Management Program for winter use?

Yellowstone will work with all interested members of the public, stakeholders, and any other individuals or organizations to define what resources are most important to monitor going forward, to identify what the highest priority knowledge gaps are related those resources, and to determine the most appropriate indicators and methods for assessing resource conditions.

What will the public be asked to do?

The NPS will ask the public and interested stakeholders for their input and recommendations on the monitoring strategy and evaluative steps in the Adaptive Management Program. The NPS may ask the public to join working groups to evaluate key affected resources, such as wildlife, and to design monitoring strategies for them. These recommendations would then be incorporated into the adaptive management plan.

Who can be involved in the Adaptive Management Program?

Anyone with an interest in the park and winter use is invited to participate. There will be a number of opportunities for public input and engagement. If you have questions or would like to be added to the mailing list for adaptive management and monitoring, please contact Rebecca Garvoille, Adaptive Management Program Coordinator at Yellowstone, at rebecca.garvoille@contractor.nps.gov or (307) 344-2265.

What kinds of issues can the public comment on through the Adaptive Management Program?

Any public feedback on what resources or topics need to be monitored and how they should be monitored as part of an Adaptive Management Program will be welcome. Public input will also be sought as the NPS analyzes monitoring data and evaluates the effectiveness of its management strategies.

How might adaptive management change winter use in the future?

Through the adaptive management process, the NPS may find that we should change the way we manage OSV use in the park. Those changes could include, for example, establishing timed-entry requirements or staging at the entrance gates for OSVs, adjusting speed limits, or closing certain OSV areas, routes, or entrances.

What is your timeline for the Adaptive Management Program?

The NPS will engage stakeholders in the fall of 2013 to begin work a long-term, collaborative, and sustainable adaptive management plan for winter use management in Yellowstone National Park. The timeline for the program is as follows:

1. A kick-off public meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 23, 2013 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mammoth Community Center in Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming.
2. The NPS may work with the public and interested stakeholders to form working groups, depending on the level of interest, to determine which affected resources require the closest evaluation as well as what resource indicators and monitoring methods are most appropriate for assessing resource conditions.

3. During the winter of 2013 and the spring of 2014, the NPS will incorporate public input into the preparation of a draft adaptive management plan, and the design of any monitoring pilot projects.
4. The NPS expects to present a draft adaptive management plan and any associated pilot projects to the public in July 2014.
5. The NPS expects to implement a preliminary final adaptive management plan no later than the winter season of 2015-2106.
6. The NPS will continue to work closely with stakeholders and the public to refine the plan, and expects to complete a final adaptive management plan by March 2016.
7. The NPS expects to begin implementing the final adaptive management plan during the winter season of 2016-2017.
8. Upon completion and implementation of the final adaptive management plan, the NPS expects to hold regularly scheduled stakeholder meetings to discuss its data and findings, and obtain feedback from stakeholders on NPS recommendations.