

GREATER YELLOWSTONE SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Introduction

Conservation and sustainability of the earth's natural resources are inherently embedded in the missions of the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC) agencies. The GYCC has a tremendous opportunity to set an environmental stewardship example on 14 million acres of public land through coordinated and strategic operational activities such as water and energy conservation, fleet and transportation management, and waste prevention and recycling.

Greater Yellowstone Sustainable Operations Subcommittee

The Greater Yellowstone Sustainable Operations Subcommittee (SOS) was chartered in 2005 by the GYCC to facilitate overall coordination and collaboration of sustainable operations practices throughout the public lands of the GYA while providing technical advice and guidance to the GYCC and their staff.

The SOS meets at least once a year and conducts periodic conference calls. Its role is to:

- Provide information and technical guidance to the 10 GYCC Federal units on matters related to sustainable operations.
- Serve as a forum for exchange of information and ideas between the 10 GYCC Federal units about sustainable operations.

- Create a scale for efficient implementation of practices across the region that facilitates the leveraging of resources (including grant writing), expertise and outcomes beyond the accomplishments of any one unit.
- Develop monitoring, inventory and assessment protocols for operational activities.
- Showcase sustainable practices and projects in a variety of operations areas.

Committee Representation

- Yellowstone National Park
- Grand Teton National Park
- National Elk Refuge
- Red Rock Lakes Refuge
- Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF
- Bridger-Teton NF
- Caribou-Targhee NF
- Custer NF
- Gallatin NF
- Shoshone NF
- Rocky Mountain Region USFS
- 1 GYCC Manager representative as liaison

Challenge

The SOS draws from a variety of disciplines where SOS may not be part of day-to-day duties.

Dedicated time for members and an SOS position would improve speed, coordination, and consistency in project management, coordination and grant applications.

Past Accomplishments

1. Identified ten initial focus areas.
2. Significant information sharing of all sustainable operations areas.

2007 Accomplishments

- Distributed GYA all-employee letter with sustainable fleet and transportation management expectations.
- Developing expanded propane cylinder recycling.
- Solar panels installed & operating at Madison Ranger District Office.
- Separating and composting grass and yard clippings at BTNF SO and Jackson Ranger district.

Current Committee Focus

- Investigate EPA Climate Leaders program for greenhouse gas emissions inventory and emissions reduction plan.
- Reduce waste stream.
- Expand alternative fuel use.
- Fuel, fleet and transportation management. Assess carpooling/fleet right sizing software and develop an MOU for fleet sharing.
- Purchase and use biodegradable materials, in bulk if possible. Develop Top 10 list of “bad” products, develop standard language for cleaning contracts, communicate purchasing guidelines including recycled content standards for paper products.
- Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy actions.
- Communicate the importance of sustainable operations internally. Develop series of all employee letters for GYCC line officers.

- Produce public/employee handouts and brochures regarding “what you can do” and the connection to public lands.
- Standardize public messages/interpretation on sustainable operations endeavors.
- Explore needs and opportunities to reduce federal agency footprint with shared housing, administrative and public-contact facilities.
- Increase technology applications that implement sustainable practices.
- Improve participation by FS/NPS/FWS in SOS projects in local communities.
- Research feasibility of recycling bear spray canisters.
- Perform a fire cache/camp assessment
- Survey GYCC employees to determine desires for future SOS projects and to foster employee buy-in and participation.

For additional information contact

Jim Evanoff, Environmental Specialist
Yellowstone National Park
Committee Co-Chair. 307-344-2311
Jim_Evanoff@nps.gov

Deidre Witsen, Resource Assistant
Bridger-Teton National Forest
Committee Co-Chair. 307-739-5434
dwitsen@fs.fed.us

Becky Aus, Forest Supervisor
Shoshone National Forest
GYCC Liaison. 307-578-5187
raus@fs.fed.us