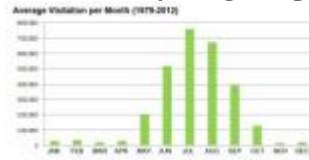


Yellowstone Traffic

Over three million people visit Yellowstone National Park every year. (“main”) Most of the people are going to tour the park and want to see and do everything the park has to offer. July



is the busiest time of year for Yellowstone (“Main”)

First time visitors

are not aware of the traffic jams that occur when you’re trying to drive through the park. There are many reasons this is a huge problem for the visitors and the people just trying to get to a certain destination in the park (the Lake, Canyon or Mammoth Springs to name a few).

What is the Problem?

Most people know when driving in a national park or even on a mountainous road we have to drive the speed limit of forty-five to fifty-five miles per hour. (“Traveling”) The problem in Yellowstone is that people make sudden stops when they see an animal in the wild, which of course we see a lot of, they come to a complete stop right in the middle of the road and just get out of their car to take pictures or videos or whatever. When there are about sixty cars all stopping at once with nowhere to go just to see an animal it causes for many things to occur. For example: car accidents when people just stop suddenly with no warning, people getting ran over by the cars when they are getting out of their vehicle, people getting in screaming matches because they can’t get through. Another problem is animals in the wild just deciding to sit or stand in the middle of road, buffalo are the most common. (“Glen”)

Evidence of the Problems

I have seen firsthand what the traffic in Yellowstone can cause. One trip I went on with my dad and sister we were driving down the park from the high lakes and we got in a long line of cars that was going at speed of maybe five miles per hour. We thought that it was a car accident at first because when it is an animal it’s mostly people stopped, but we were going so slowly for so long that it was getting very frustrating. When we finally got to the point of what the problem was we were in shock. It was a huge buffalo walking down the middle of the road right down the center line. You couldn’t go around because of the oncoming traffic as the roads are very narrow in the park. Everyone was just following the buffalo and the rangers would not help

move it even though they were at the scene as well. The line of traffic was, and I'm not joking,



over ten miles long.

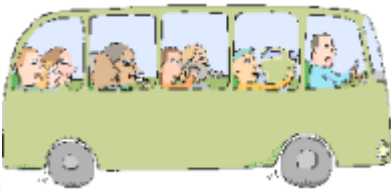
Current Methods

The park administration knows this a huge problem for the visitors because they always have rangers out there trying to get people to move or pull over into the pull over slots. ("Administration") They have even got to the point of giving out citations as they tell you when you enter the park it is illegal to stop in the middle of the road and exit your vehicle. This is not working or solving this problem because people don't care. The tourist are here at the park and want to see whatever they can no matter what the cost or rules are. The park administration also have been trying to build more pullouts for people to pull into, but the problem with this is they are not always where the animal is so again people just stop wherever because they are afraid they will miss the animal, especially if it is a bear or a bull moose.

A Proposed Solution

I have few solutions to a few of the problems that traffic is causing in Yellowstone. Making more pullouts where animals are almost always out and there a quite a few places in Yellowstone where herds of buffalo stay. ("Construction")

If people are going to just tour the park and see the sights I think it would be a good idea to have



a tour bus that people are required to use to visit the park. This way the tour bus will have designated parking areas and would not interrupt the traffic of people trying to just get to a specific place in the park.

I Think This Will Work

Before making in mandatory I think the park administration should give it a trial period of maybe sixty days (August and July would be best because that is when most the tourist are in the park) and see firsthand how the problem will be become much of a less problem. For instance people who have never been in the park would not know the difference of driving in it themselves and

the people who have who are visiting again and just want to go to a specific place will be able to a lot more conveniently and less hectic.

Another solution to the animals stopping in the road is having more rangers out there to help move the animals so people can continue driving and enjoying the park. The rangers won't move the animals and to this day I have no idea why. One of them told me that it is their land and we are in their environment, which I completely respect and understand but it would be less animals getting hit by cars as well if they would help just a little bit more. I mean why are they there?

Another solution would be to do all the road construction, and yes we know Yellowstone roads need a lot of work, during the off season. March and April has way less people than July and August. It may be cold but it would help tremendously on the traffic situation.

Estimated Cost

I believe it would cost a lot less to do the road construction in the off season because you won't have so many people to have to maneuver and so you would not need as many workers and it could get done a lot quicker.

The cost of the tour bus solution would be a more, but keep in mind people would have to buy a ticket per person. The average tour bus costs \$400,000 to \$800,000. Depending on if you wanted a used one, which a used one would be just as efficient as a new one. If this becomes a requirement then the money would get paid back fairly quickly and we would have fewer problems in the park.

Conclusion

The traffic in Yellowstone can get very frustrating very quickly. I believe these solutions could help the situations that I talked about very well. I love Yellowstone National Park and don't like to see animals getting killed or people getting in road rage altercations when there is a better way to handle things.