

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Complete Multiple Property Document and Determinations of Eligibility for Backcountry Trails in Yellowstone National Park

**Discipline:** Cultural Resources  
**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** University of Wyoming  
**Effective Dates:** 7/30/2014 - 12/31/2017  
**Funding Amount:** \$50,000

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

NPS Contact: Tobin Roop, PO Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190; Ph: (307) 344-2224  
Fax: (307) 344-2211; tobin\_roop@nps.gov

Investigator: Marcia Peterson, University of Wyoming, Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist, Department 3431, 1000 East University Avenue, Laramie, WY, 82071; marcia.peterson@wyo.gov; 307-721-0882

**Project Abstract:** This project will complete phase two of the National Register evaluation of the backcountry trails in Yellowstone National Park. The park is currently completing the development of a historic context, which covers the periods of trail construction and the history of trail development. Phase 2 of this project will entail:

- a) completion of a multiple property documentation form per the National Register regulations,
- b) completion of cultural property site forms (specific to the state/s in which the various trails lie),
- c) associated determination of eligibility for the National Register for each trail using the criteria established in the Multiple Property Document.

The principal investigator (Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist), with help from the researcher, will provide for YNP's selection a minimum of two alternative solutions/approaches to best document 1000+ miles of diverging and converging trails, including concepts based on historic era, hierarchy, geography, and other groupings. They will also provide for YNP's selection a minimum of two concepts for the level of documentation. The principal investigator will also facilitate a dialog with the Wyoming and Montana SHPO regarding trail documentation level.

Evaluations of National Register integrity of the seven aspects of the trails will be developed in conjunction with Yellowstone National Park Cultural Resource and Trails staff. Aspects of integrity of location, as discussed above, will concentrate on providing backcountry access to campsites, scenic areas such as water falls, rivers and streams, high mountain vistas, and unique geologic features and not actual past location of trails. Aspects of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship will concentrate on rustic and natural style, which involves the use of logs, rock, and soils from the immediate surroundings and the use of rough lumber to continue to provide the historic feeling and association with the trails as they have been originally constructed.

This work will entail use of the draft historic context and additional research to complete the multiple property document, GIS documentation of the existing Google Earth "windshield survey," documentation of the trails, and site forms, and for recommendations on eligibility determinations for the National Register of Historic Places. Research will primarily be at the Heritage and Research Center in Gardiner, Montana or electronically at the researchers' primary location.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

Multiple Property Document- December 31, 2015  
DOE and Cultural Property Inventory Forms - July 30, 2016  
Project End Date - December 31, 2017

**Keywords:** National Register, Backcountry trails, Yellowstone National Park, University of Wyoming