

# **Wyoming State Agency Eclipse Report**



**Special Report for  
Governor Matthew H. Mead  
State Capitol, Cheyenne, WY 82002**

## Wyoming Department of Agriculture

### Role

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) played a dual role in the eclipse event that swept across the state of Wyoming on August 21, 2017. There were two major areas where the WDA was impacted by the 2017 Eclipse. The first was a regulatory role in the inspection and licensing of numerous food carts and temporary food stands to help ensure a safe food supply during the event. As part of this effort, inspectors from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture Consumer Health Services Division across the state inspected and licensed more than 55 temporary food stands specifically for the event in our areas of coverage. This effort helped ensure the safety of food products sold and served at eclipse festivals and in communities across the state.

The second role the Wyoming Department of Agriculture played was through the Wyoming State Fair (WSF) and Fairgrounds. This year, the Wyoming State Fair officially took place the week before the eclipse on August 12-19. Because of this, we reorganized some of the traditional entertainment offerings of the Fair to remain open for business on Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup> and Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. On Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup>, we had the Wyoming State Finals Ranch Rodeo, a demonstration called the Art of Horsemanship, and we also invited vendors who were on grounds for the fair to stay through the eclipse event. Along with this, we had camping spots available for the event once the attendees of the Wyoming State Fair started to head home.

### Preparation

To prepare for this event from a regulatory standpoint, we attended numerous planning events and communicated with communities, so they knew what food safety regulations were applicable to their events and could share with vendors who were attending. We also made sure we had an adequate number of inspectors to effectively cover the events and festivals that took place across the state.

The Wyoming State Fair event ended on the 19<sup>th</sup> but the grounds remained open on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> to accommodate eclipse visitors. As part of our preparation, in collaboration with the Wyoming Highway Patrol, we allowed livestock and other participants to leave earlier than normal to beat any possible traffic for the eclipse. This way, we would not have any livestock possibly stuck in trailers on the interstate on a hot summer day. We also moved traditional fair entertainment events to the Sunday before the eclipse to provide “western” entertainment options for tourists who may be in the area. Along with this, we invited our WSF vendors to stay on grounds on the 20-21 and had eclipse glasses on hand for anyone who may need a pair for safe viewing of the eclipse. Finally, we tied our theme into some of the activities of other state agencies like the Wyoming Office of Tourism to help have a consistent message for the state. Our theme this year was “Fair Skies” with an eclipse image that melded well with the Tourism message of “WY Skies.”

### What Worked and Why

From a regulatory standpoint, the planning and outreach went very well. We were able to inspect temporary stands and cover the ground necessary to license and inspect temporary food vendors in several communities.

While there weren't as many attendees as we would have liked on the Wyoming State Fairgrounds on those two days, keeping the grounds open during the event went very well. We were prepared for the people and those who attended enjoyed their time on the grounds. Along with this, the theme was very well received by the public and attendees at the fair.

### What Didn't Work and Why

On the Wyoming State Fairgrounds, we didn't have as much participation as we would have liked. While we tried to publicize camping availability on a variety of social media pages, event pages, through radio interviews, and more, we didn't reach out very early because we have no reservation system in place and we were worried the eclipse attendees would occupy all the camping spots generally used by attendees to the Wyoming State Fair. The timing of this event was difficult for the WDA because we still had a responsibility to put on a successful fair. Along with this, the reaction to the eclipse and fear of what it meant for our fair attendees and competitors forced us to shift release times that caused decreased activity on the grounds on Saturday and Sunday. While the early release worked well for the families, it hurt the overall activity on the grounds on the final weekend of the fair.

If we had it to do over again, we would have had better communication with Wyoming State Parks, so they could have shared information about our campground availability and activities with overflow camping at Glendo. Glendo and Orin Junction were packed with viewers but the fairgrounds and the city of Douglas and the fairgrounds were relatively quiet.

### Capitalization on Exposure

To capitalize on the exposure from the eclipse, we could ask to share images taken from the fairgrounds.

## Wyoming Game and Fish Department

### Role

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Department) identified five (5) goals to focus our efforts during this event. These goals were:

1. To provide public information and protection to lands owned or managed under the jurisdiction of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (Commission), such as Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMAs), Public Access Areas (PAAs), Hunter Management Areas and Walk-In Areas.
2. Enforcement of Department statutory authorities governed under Wyoming Statute Title 23 and Title 41 - Chapter 13, and Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Regulations.
3. To provide public safety assistance on the state's waterways.
4. To provide Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) check-stations and personnel to assist the boating public with information and watercraft inspections prior to launching on Wyoming waterways.

5. To provide assistance to other state, county and local agencies in the administration of their duties to the people of Wyoming.

## Preparation

The Game and Fish Department participated in four levels of planning. These planning levels included: participation with the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security (OHS) for statewide emergency response organizations; county (Jackson, Lander, Casper, and Laramie) emergency management planning; statewide planning with the Wyoming Office of Tourism; and an internal Department committee assigned with the task of developing an agency operational plan.

Participation at these four separate levels of planning allowed for administrative and local personnel to interact with a variety of organizations and to design an operational plan for the event. Planning and participation in these meetings began in the spring of 2016 and continued through the event.

A plan for AIS check-stations throughout the state was developed. This concentrated our efforts at most ports of entry into Wyoming in hopes of contacting watercraft operators as they crossed into the state. Several additional check-stations were conducted near larger bodies of water to provide inspections for those who may not have encountered a check-station at one of the ports, and to ensure watercraft owners had multiple opportunities to comply with Wyoming AIS laws.

The internal Department committee identified several key areas to cover in our plan. These included: Department goals and objectives, internal and external communications, media interactions, operational assignments, coordination with other agencies (i.e. Wyoming State Parks and Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments), information stations for Commission owned or managed properties, logistical operations and wildlife/large carnivore/human conflict concerns. These key areas of concern are all included in the Wyoming Game and Fish Department 2017 Solar Eclipse Plan which is available upon request.

Operationally, the plan focused on four (4) geographic areas along the path of totality which included: the Jackson/Teton County area, Fremont County, Casper/Natrona County and the Platte/Goshen/Converse County area. Regional Wildlife Supervisors from the Jackson, Lander, Casper and Laramie Regions were assigned primary leadership responsibilities respectively for these four (4) geographic focus areas. Supervisors from other regions ensured coverage of other areas of the state, but provided additional personnel resources to the four (4) geographic areas along the path of totality.

## What Worked and Why

Incorporating internal, statewide and localized planning was the key to good communication and formulation of a comprehensive work plan. We also benefitted by maintaining flexibility, so we could move personnel into different roles as it became necessary. An example of this was shifting personnel to more remote settings to handle the influx of people heading into the back-country. This flexibility enabled us to educate the public about safety precautions in bear country. Many of the people we contacted had no experience with camping in bear country.

It was advantageous to have several communication plans in case one form of communication failed. We relied on the WyoLink digital radio system for most law enforcement communication, and had our older analog radio system, cell phones and satellite phones as a back-up.

Communication with other state and local agencies was paramount from the early planning stages up through the event. We assigned personnel to the OHS State Operations Center (SOC) and had personnel assigned to county SOCs during the event. This allowed for instant information sharing and was very useful.

The Department also identified the following list of successes:

- Department personnel had a chance to talk about wildlife management with a huge group of mostly non-standard constituents and answer questions about grizzly bears, wolves, nongame animals and big game species. Many of these individuals left with a good appreciation for what the Department does and why we manage the State's wildlife resource.
- After eclipse totality on August 21, many departing people thanked Department employees and asked how they could donate money to the Department. Several people also mentioned it made them feel safe seeing Department personnel around.
- Many Department employees who worked during the eclipse were very appreciative of the opportunity to work this event and enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the thousands of people visiting the area.
- There were three vehicle/moose collisions across the state (Pinedale and Chugwater) at the time when traffic flow increased pre-event. The Wyoming Highway Patrol (WHP) was quick to use dynamic message signs to alert travelers to slow down and watch for wildlife on the roadways. This was greatly appreciated and a consequence of having the ability to quickly interact with WHP through our Department person in the SOC.
- Coordination with other agencies and local communities ensured the event went smoothly.
- The Department likely strengthened relationships with other agencies in the planning and coordinating that occurred prior to and during the eclipse.
- No known or reported damage to Department owned or managed properties.
- No negative human/large carnivore interactions were reported.
- No injuries to Department personnel occurred.
- The vast majority of Department interactions with the public were extremely positive.
- Department personnel were very willing to help whenever/wherever needed and adapted to the changing conditions when asked. Individual regions developed internal work schedules and plans for the weekend. Coordination and communication between Department personnel worked well and changes to plans were made where appropriate.
- Twice daily conference calls with Department staff and area supervisors were very helpful to pass information to all those in supervisory roles.
- Including a Department representative in the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security State Operation Center greatly assisted with communication among other state agencies.
- All Department personnel were issued eclipse glasses to view the event.
- Early Department planning helped to identify items that may be needed and difficult to acquire at the last minute (ice, drinking water, snacks or food items for employees, fuel supplies, radio communications, satellite phones for backup use and more. (The eclipse report— available upon request—contains the complete list.)
- Thousands of personal public contacts with constituents who may never have otherwise had contact with our Department.
- Department personnel from across the state noted the impressive land ethic demonstrated by users of both Commission-owned and other lands. There were very few

reports of abuses of private, federal or state-owned lands (littering, trespass, property destruction). In fact, many areas that were heavily used showed minor impact following the event.

- Wyoming landowners were extremely hospitable and accommodating. Many private landowners across the state invited visitors onto their lands to view the eclipse and were tolerant of high densities of visitors.

## What Didn't Work and Why

The Department underestimated the vehicle traffic concerns experienced on the day of the eclipse. While we had planned for maximum flexibility with our personnel, we would not have been able to move necessary people to certain locations due to severe traffic jams. Even though we had assigned many personnel to designated work sites, we would have been challenged to move our personnel quickly if needed into several locations on the day of the eclipse. The Department did not plan for nor acquire air transport services prior to the event. Department efforts to inform the public about AIS inspection stations and inspection requirements continue to be a challenge. Non-resident watercraft operators are failing to comply with Wyoming AIS inspections at ports of entry, and in some instances, were launching their watercraft on Wyoming waters in violation of Commission AIS regulations. Additional outreach and education is necessary to inform this group of users of our laws and regulations.

The Department also identified the following list of areas for improvement at the completion of this exercise:

- The Department's statewide plan should have been finalized and sent out sooner than just prior to the event.
- More information could have been provided to local residents regarding our WHMA plans (gate closures, additional camping areas, etc.) to let them know what was being done to protect these areas.
- For reporting on task force operations and large events such as this eclipse, the Department should develop a smart phone app for personnel to input their miles, hours, contacts, etc. at the end of each day. This will eliminate sorting through paper after a long weekend to meet tight reporting deadlines.
- Knowing what is known now, more attention could have been focused in backcountry areas. However, it would still be important to have resources available on WHMAs and local reservoirs and to respond to large carnivore conflicts.
- Department planning efforts failed to predict the substantial number of people that would end up occupying areas in the Pinedale Region. There was far greater public use in the Upper Green River Basin and Wind River Range trailheads than anticipated.
- The Department's statewide fire ban for Commission-owned or managed properties should have been enacted at least one week earlier, as the last-minute enactment of the fire ban put a significant burden on Services Division personnel to get signs placed on Department properties. The fire ban was a wise decision as it directly minimized fire risks and may also have indirectly led to a safer environment for visitors.
- All budgets absorbed a significant hit from the eclipse event. In hindsight, a separate budget should have been developed to address this statewide issue. The Department spent money on porta-potties, extra dumpsters, bulk fuel tank rentals and bulk fuel, water tank rentals (for fire suppression), and extra food, water, and emergency supplies for

personnel to carry. These unexpected expenses will be realized through the remainder of the fiscal year.

- The problem of boaters failing to stop at AIS check-stations was not unique to this time period. It is an ongoing concern that needs to be addressed with improved signing, education and information efforts. Additional enforcement or possibly even a change of some check station locations may be helpful.
- Specifically targeting and informing people transporting canoes, kayaks and inflatable watercraft over ten (10) feet in length, that they must stop at the check stations, would help reduce the number of watercraft users that fail to stop at established AIS check stations.

## Capitalization on Exposure

Department personnel had the chance to interact with thousands of individuals who were not our usual constituents. This provided an opportunity for us to educate the public about the state's wildlife resources and explain how the Department manages wildlife populations. Many visitors indicated a highlight of their experience was viewing the state's wildlife resources. Additionally, visitors told us that meeting our personnel on Commission properties and interacting with them enhanced their experience and gave them new perspectives. They appreciated the opportunity to camp on these lands without a fee, learn about bear safety and gain a better understanding about hunting as a wildlife management tool. Several visitors asked how they could donate to the Department because of their positive experiences.

For the period August 17-23, 2017, the Department License Section reported a 52% increase in sales of nonresident daily fishing licenses, 56 % increase in sales of nonresident annual fishing licenses and a 44% increase in nonresident AIS decal sales, over the same time period for 2016.

The Department believes the state will benefit from many of these visitors returning to Wyoming to explore the state's unique landscapes and to enjoy the state's world class wildlife resource in a variety of ways.

## Wyoming Department of Health - Public Health Division

### Role

The Department of Homeland Security outlines principles and strategies for emergency response management in the National Response Framework (NRF), including key emergency support functions (ESF). The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program receives federal funding to serve as the lead agency for emergency support function (ESF) #8, Public Health & Medical Services, to enhance preparedness and coordinate federal, state, local, and tribal emergency response to pandemics, natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other public health emergencies. The large influx of visitors to Wyoming expected during the eclipse increased the risk of a public health emergency and/or mass casualty event and served as a test of Wyoming's emergency response management systems.

## Preparation

WDH preparations began internally with completion and distribution of the WDH Incident Action Plan and Communication Protocol, testing of redundant communications systems, implementation of a temporary Tele language account for translation services, and identification of additional staff for the 24/7 WDH Emergency Notification Line. PHEP then distributed public information, coordinated with other agencies, and strategically located supplies across the state to prepare Wyoming for the eclipse event, including staffing of the State Operations Center for five days, twelve hours per day, to respond to emergencies during the eclipse.

### *Distribution of Public Information*

Public information focused on eye safety and hazards unique to Wyoming, such as altitude sickness, and used a variety of distribution channels to maximize reach, including the WDH Public Information Officer (PIO), existing Public Health Division and PHEP networks, local Public Health Response Coordinators, and outreach to community mental health centers and developmental disability providers by the WDH Behavioral Health Division and to senior centers by the WDH Aging Division. The WDH also coordinated with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to access the WYDOT communications system as needed, and with liquor distributors to include safety information with liquor shipments. Finally, pharmacies were encouraged by mail to increase stocks during the eclipse in anticipation of increased demand.

### *Coordination with Other Agencies*

WDH coordinated with federal, state, and local agencies to prepare for the eclipse. Federal partnerships included participation in the Homeland Security Information Network and participation in the Homeland Security all-agency preparatory meetings. State level coordination included staffing the State Operations Center, State Health Operations Center, Incident Management Team, and Joint Information Center for Wyoming, as well as WDH PIO participation in state level meetings and review of tourism web posts, and coordination with WYDOT to receive timely traffic reports. Finally, local level coordination included monthly meetings with local jurisdictions, education on the WDH situational awareness tool, and communication of traffic information and healthcare facility bed availability across the state during the eclipse event.

### *Strategic Location of Supplies*

While increasing communication to prevent an emergency, PHEP also prepared for the worst by strategically locating emergency supplies across the state. PHEP distributed 240 antidote treatment nerve agent auto-injectors (ATNAAs) to regional emergency response teams and replenished mass fatality push packs (pre-packaged, basic medical supplies for use in the initial assessment and triage of patients following a disaster or mass casualty event.) The Wyoming Medical Station, a 45-bed mobile medical facility, was pre-staged in Lander and a morgue trailer repositioned to Shoshoni.

### *Data Summary*

- 45 bed Wyoming Medical Station made available for deployment
- 240 Antidote Treatment Nerve Agent, Auto-Injector (ATNAA) distributed
- 5 CHEMPACK site visits for stock replenishment
- 7 WDH planning meetings, average 37 attendees, 388 man-hours



- State Operations Center staffed 12 hours per day, for 5 days for ESF 8

## What Worked and Why

PHEP used the eclipse as an opportunity to test Wyoming's emergency response management system and to learn what worked and what did not work to make improvements for future events.

Communications were robust and well received. For example, the State Operations Center notified the WDH of a hospital on divert status and staff were quickly able to disprove the claim and relay the correct information to the appropriate entities. The PHEP social media platform also experienced an increase in hits leading up to and during the eclipse. Fiscal and administrative systems functioned well, with staff engaged and well-trained in their positions. For example, the ATNAAs were purchased and distributed state-wide in one week and the Wyoming Medical Station deployed and returned to storage in a timely manner.

## What Didn't Work and Why

Communications could begin earlier, as local Public Health Response Coordinators often had questions early in the process. The eclipse also identified a need for documented safety plans during recovery efforts, specifically in relation to the morgue trailer, and identification of backups for WDH resources such as the morgue trailer, push packs and the Wyoming Medical Station. Additional training and exercise of these plans will enhance future use of these resources.

## Capitalization on Exposure

PHEP will continue to document and exercise administrative preparedness to further hone Wyoming's emergency response management processes in preparation for the next large-scale event or incident. The program also intends to maintain and grow the multiagency partnerships that were enhanced or built in response to the eclipse event, such as the sharing of information and resources with WYDOT and WY 2-1-1.

## Wyoming Office of Homeland Security

### Role

Our agency coordinates state resources in support of local jurisdictions. For this event, we assisted local entities with planning and facilitated planning conversations for state and federal entities.

### Preparation

The Wyoming Office of Homeland Security (WOHS) facilitated planning meetings among local, state and federal partners (in total, over 45 separate agencies) beginning in October of 2016. In addition, we proactively prepared for all identified issues through the following activities:

- To facilitate information sharing and situational awareness among federal, state, local and private sector partners, WOHS initiated and coordinated a "Solar Eclipse

Community” within the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) with multiple subsites for participating states and agencies. This resource provided an overarching framework that could be easily shared by partners across 12 states. This site was used by officials from emergency management, fusion centers, intelligence, law enforcement, public health, transportation, city, county and private sector partners. Federal participants included the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis, FEMA, U.S. Coast Guard, National Weather Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, US Air Force, National Guard and the 84<sup>th</sup> Civil Support Team.

- WOHS deployed state personnel and pre-positioned assets to multiple areas across the state to be available to local jurisdictions for support should there be a need for state assistance. To provide that liaison function with minimal staff the teams were positioned in Platte County, in support of Natrona, Converse, Niobrara, Platte and Goshen Counties; in Fremont County, in support of Sublette, Hot Springs, Fremont and Natrona Counties; and in Teton County for support of Sublette and Teton Counties.
- WOHS implemented the State Operations Plan and followed the Incident Support Plan (including the Statewide Communications Plan) prior to and during the event. This included staffing the State Operations Center(SOC) with WOHS personnel as well as our planning partners.
- In conjunction with Idaho, Utah and Colorado coordinated the suspension of Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) shipments through the three states from August 16-24, 2017. These shipments contain transuranic radioactive waste.

### What Worked and Why

- The Governor’s letters to counties let them know that they should prepare for this event at the local level.
- Implementing a planning process at an early date was critical to coordination among state agencies and with local jurisdictions. This allowed for discussion of the possible issues that could occur across the state that may need a state response.
- Partnership with the National Weather Service for pre-event weather forecasts and dedicated pages on their websites for the event period.
- Activation of the State Operations Center (SOC). This enhanced situational awareness with face to face interaction, monitoring the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), as well as daily conference calls with counties and the State of Colorado.
- Local planning was extensive. Counties along the path of totality as well as others around the state did a wonderful job at looking at their local resources available and making plans for what they would do to obtain additional resources should they need them. This planning even occurred across state lines. For example, Platte County Memorial Hospital worked with Banner Health in Colorado to make arrangements for additional life-flight helicopters should the need arise as they have few resources to handle trauma care in the vicinity.

### What Didn’t Work and Why

- Aircraft landings at small airports across the state were underestimated. For example, the Torrington airport has 11 tie-downs. They were aware that their limit would be

stretched as they were expecting 45 landings. A few days prior to the eclipse the local airport board estimated over 100 landings due to the number of requests they were receiving. Despite the fact this was an unforeseen situation, the local community pulled together and provided landing space, food and port-a-potties for 134 planes.

- Did not utilize public radio and 211 to their full extent. Local jurisdictions had “hot-lines” within their counties for people to call for information. This could be confusing if a visitor is crossing county lines. Many other states use 211 for information, as does Wyoming, but their citizens are more accustomed to using this tool. We should have brought them into the planning at an earlier date to gather local information that could be accessed through 211. One note is that they hired a new director about a month before the eclipse.

## Capitalization on Exposure

- Continue the multi-agency connections for future events.
- Use the HSIN tool for other large events in the state to create more familiarity with using the tool.
- Share lessons learned and after-action reports with other states that will be experiencing an eclipse in 2024 (we already have a request from Indiana).
- Use the success of this event to promote our ability to handle large events in our state.

## Office of State Lands and Investments

### Role

The role of the Office of State Lands and Investments (OSLI) in eclipse planning was two-fold. First, as the agency with management authority for 3.5 million acres of state trust land, our responsibility was to ensure the protection of our state trust land, but at the same time provide information for eclipse visitors regarding our rules and how they could use state trust land to view the eclipse. Second, as an agency with wildfire fighting responsibilities our role was to be prepared to respond should a fire incident occur during the eclipse.

### Preparation

#### *Eclipse Map*

Beginning in November 2016, OSLI collaborated with Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT), among several other state agencies, to coordinate and develop the eclipse map for the WOT website. This included developing and providing data on state lands which included only those state lands with public access, and that linked to OSLI’s website where visitors could access more specific information related to the use of state lands.

#### *Local Collaboration*

OSLI field staff participated in and collaborated with local eclipse coordination groups in Fremont County and the city of Casper. This included attending meetings, participating

in conference calls, providing consultation and providing information and input for eclipse literature and websites.

#### *Game and Fish*

Early in 2017, OSLI began collaborating with Game and Fish law enforcement to identify areas of concern for potential state lands violations during the eclipse week. OSLI held several conference calls and surveyed wardens statewide to develop a list of parcels with potential for heightened public use in the path of totality.

#### *Grazing Lessees*

On August 3, OSLI sent grazing lessees of the identified state parcels a letter communicating general information about the ensuing eclipse event. The letter cautioned that increased public use was possible, and provided information regarding law enforcement and reporting/documenting any state lands violations.

#### *State Lands Signs*

During the month leading up to the eclipse event, OSLI field staff visited the identified state parcels to verify appropriate signage was in place, replace signs that had been removed, and add additional signs where needed. A total of over 100 signs were replaced or added.

#### *Field Staff Monitoring*

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, OSLI field staff were traveling through various locations in Fremont, Natrona, Converse, and Platte counties, monitoring state lands for violations related to eclipse event usage while conducting field inspections in those areas. Field staff made contact with numerous visitors, the vast majority of whom were acting in compliance and familiar with the rules governing the use of state lands. Only one instance of unauthorized use was witnessed by OSLI field staff during the three-day time period—a party camping on state trust land subsequently contacted, informed of the rules and asked to move. No other incidents related to state trust lands violations during the eclipse have been reported to OSLI.

#### *Fire preparations*

In preparation for the eclipse, our Forestry Division participated in planning efforts and coordinated disaster preparedness activities. The division regularly attended statewide eclipse planning meetings. During these meetings the division made recommendations on incident management processes and fire preparedness measures in an attempt to keep fires around the state to a minimum. Additionally, the division pre-positioned three fire engines—one in Fremont County, one near Glendo State park and one in Niobrara County; made efforts to patrol State lands for fire violations; and extended helicopter hours to prepare for the possibility of increased human caused fire occurrence. During these operational pre-positional and patrol efforts the Wyoming State Forestry Division (WSFD) kept in constant coordination with other state agencies such as the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security.

## What Worked and Why / What Didn't Work and Why

Overall, OSLI had a great experience with the eclipse. We believe the early preparation efforts led to very few incidents, citations, damage or conflicts on the land itself. Likewise, the pre-positioning of engines, extension of aviation asset hours and patrols around the

State went well. There were very few human-caused fires reported during the eclipse. This was unexpected and can be largely attributed to increased moisture across much of the State in the weeks leading up to the event. The repositioning cost the WSFD nearly \$10,000. These costs can be attributed to overtime, equipment time, and fuel costs.

Repositioning of resources and fire response preparedness is an activity WSFD engages in annually and represented a relatively routine process. The largest takeaway from the event was the importance of interagency cooperation among partners both external and internal to the State when coordinating efforts.

Moving forward OSLI would change very little about the approach taken regarding eclipse preparation. It worked tremendously well.

### Capitalization on Exposure

OSLI had a relatively small role in the eclipse in the whole scheme of things. However, one way we could capitalize on this success is to consider continuing to interface with WOT to link to our website. Continued interfacing will help visitors know about the rules and regulations for using state trust lands and the opportunities to do so.

## Wyoming Military Department

### Role

The Wyoming Military Department (WYMD) was ready to provide aviation support with UH-60 aircraft for wildfire suppression with a UH-60 and Bambi Bucket forward deployed to Camp Guernsey. The rotary wing unit used August 21<sup>st</sup> as a flight training day, so there were multiple aircraft with crews that could have been utilized during an emergency. WYMD also provided standard manning in the Joint Operations Center (JOC) in the event that Mission Ready Packages were needed for contingency operations in response to an incident or event.

Camp Guernsey was in the line of eclipse totality. Camp personnel were actively engaged in providing viewing areas for civilians as well as multiple government agencies.

### Preparation

WYMD participated in eclipse planning meetings with the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security (WOHS.) In addition, Camp Guernsey personnel also participated in eclipse planning meetings with the City of Guernsey, Platte County and Goshen County personnel. Camp Guernsey initiated fire mitigation procedures in the viewing areas.

The rotary wing aviation unit planned flight training on the day of the eclipse to ensure crews and UH-60 aircraft were available in the event of an incident.

JOC personnel trained and registered on Homeland Security Information Network (HISN) to aid in developing the common operations picture.

## What Worked and Why

Pre-positioning the UH-60 aircraft with bucket to Camp Guernsey mitigated some risk of fires. The aircraft was ready and could have responded very quickly to a fire in the area. The aircraft was also available to move key personnel out of the area quickly during an incident.

HISN provided a big picture of events going on throughout the line of totality. Wyoming counties did a good job updating information as the eclipse passed through their areas.

Providing WyoLink radios to aircrew and key personnel allowed for communications when the commercial cell phone service was inundated.

## What Didn't Work and Why

WYMD could have been better prepared for the traffic following the eclipse. It would have been difficult to respond by ground vehicle to any location along major highways in the southeast part of the State. Rotary wing aviation would not have been prepared to move large amounts of people off these roadways in the event of an incident.

HISN and Web Based Emergency Operations Center (WebEOC) were both utilized for the event. It would have been better to have one common system to monitor all traffic.

There was not a flight medic available to fly on the UH-60 aircraft. Any transport of patients would have required a ground medic to ride along with the UH-60 and would have reduced the medical capability of the responders on the ground.

## Capitalization on Exposure

Since the Governor and Chief of Staff's intent was for the event to be focused on all the great things that the eclipse would bring to Wyoming and our communities, the WYMD intentionally kept a low profile. The event did provide the healthy opportunity to assess what we would do differently the next time. These items include:

1. Configure some UH-60 aircraft for passenger transport and develop a plan to move large numbers of people off the roads or viewing areas in the event of an incident.
2. Work with one common operations picture instead of utilizing multiple systems.
3. Ensure a flight medic or flight doctor is available to participate in high profile events.
4. Provide satellite phones to key personnel and aircrew. Verizon cell phone service was overwhelmed and could have caused communication problems in the event of an incident.

## Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails

### Role

We provided various venues throughout the path of totality, limited marketing, 65+ events, cross-promotion of private businesses and were on the statewide tourism and logistics committees.

### Preparation

We had two years advanced planning, that mirrored many of our other large events. We had subcommittees with staff leads (i.e. Volunteers and Merchandise). We had a budget plan that coincided with logistics like how many port-a-potties we could afford.

### What Worked and Why

Everything worked other than items out of our control. Having extra camping, putting on events spread over five (5) days, having over 80 volunteers and numerous other items—all came together for a really great event.

### What Didn't Work and Why

There was nothing really that did not work. Traffic was something that we could not really plan any better than we did. We were able to handle the volume of people coming in the day of the eclipse by having a parking plan and opening all lanes of traffic to inflow. Exiting was another story. 20/20 hindsight is it would have been nice to have a live aggregate site of all camping and parking spots in the state.

### Capitalization on Exposure

We are reaching out to all the folks that came camping as we have their contact information. We also are hoping to leverage social media. We sent a boosted Facebook Post (thanking staff, sponsors, volunteers and the visitors) and we got amazing feedback from that. We will continue to find ways to engage the folks that came to see us.

## Wyoming Office of Tourism

### Role

The role of the Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) was to serve as a clearing house for all eclipse-related information to assist the traveling public in trip planning. WOT collaborated with multiple state and federal partners to compile all their eclipse information on [www.travelwyoming.com](http://www.travelwyoming.com). In addition, WOT provided support for community events, training

sessions, planning meetings, social media and communication strategies and served as the consumer-facing voice for the state as a whole.

*\*A highly detailed report that includes all WOT marketing and outreach efforts for the eclipse can be provided upon request.*

## Preparation

WOT started internal preparations for the eclipse three summers ago by creating a staff-led taskforce team that was tasked with developing strategies how to capitalize on this rare occasion. As time progressed, a multi-state agency taskforce was formed with WOT as the lead. With all the players at the table, it was decided that WOT would build a landing page—located at [www.travelwyoming.com/eclipse](http://www.travelwyoming.com/eclipse)—to house all eclipse information broken down into multiple categories: view the eclipse, places to stay, things to do, eclipse road trips, eclipse FAQ and tips for eclipse viewing. In addition, WOT partnered with WYDOT to develop an interactive map that served as a resource for in-state and out-of-state travelers.

To help partners of various sizes throughout Wyoming prepare to welcome a large influx of visitors, WOT created a communication plan titled “Preparing for the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse.” The plan included an overview, dos and don’ts, talking points, social media messaging, customer service and reminders. This was distributed to all Wyoming industry partners, the Visitor Services Network and state and federal partners to ensure we all had one voice. In addition, a Solar Eclipse Toolkit was created for all in-state industry partners and distributed in early 2017, with the toolkit providing suggestions and guidance on how to collaboratively market the total solar eclipse.

From a consumer-facing effort, WOT created, printed and distributed 100,000 special-edition “That’s WY 2017 Eclipse” stickers that were distributed throughout the state at various visitor intersection points. WOT also distributed 7,500 eclipse-viewing glasses in WOT Welcome Centers and through the Visitor Services Network, as well as shipped 3,800 glasses to consumers in key markets via WOT Travelers Journals. To capitalize on the eclipse and promote messaging about our #WYSkies, WOT produced a short video on the eclipse and stargazing with Dr. Samuel Singer of Wyoming Stargazing. Through the video, WOT introduced the eclipse in Wyoming from an expert’s point of view and increased awareness about the state as a multi-day vacation. The video (accessible at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCEaC\\_3iZ9w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCEaC_3iZ9w)) was leveraged on various social and online channels of WOT. With social media playing a major role in consumer-outreach efforts for the eclipse, WOT incorporated specific eclipse messaging (including safety messages, trip planning materials, places to stay, info about live feeds, etc.) on all our social media channels. Prior to and during the eclipse, WOT shared relevant, current and breaking information on social media. In addition, the WOT Facebook page hosted three informational and promotional Facebook live sessions in June, July and August, where we encouraged consumers to ask trip-planning questions. In addition to social media efforts, WOT distributed a dedicated email newsletter to more than 227,000 subscribers.

To be on the forefront of consumer research and analytics, WOT also created—with our reputable research firms—an economic impact study to determine the effect of the solar eclipse on Wyoming. Partners throughout the state assisted with collecting data from consumers to show the positive fiscal impact of an event of this caliber on businesses and communities throughout the entire state.



## What Worked and Why

WOT worked collaboratively with other agencies and partners on a communication outreach plan and multi-agency meetings, which enabled all partners—from small businesses to other state agencies—to share, promote and utilize one clear consumer-facing message. The implementation and use of one landing page for all state agencies to use—found at [travelwyoming.com/eclipse](http://travelwyoming.com/eclipse)—also helped ensure consumers were directed to one key source of information.

WOT worked closely with the Governor’s Office on a kick-off press conference and daily press phone briefings prior to and after the eclipse. As part of this effort, WOT send out daily email recaps from the press briefings to ensure that members of the media had the latest information and were able to share breaking news, events, etc. with their audiences. WOT was also very proactive with storytelling to major media outlets that included telling stories beyond the eclipse, like where to stay, play, dine, road trip stories and more. In addition, our use of owned social media channels reached thousands of people with our specific Wyoming-centric messaging. Plus, social provided us the opportunity to provide real-time updates leading up to and during the eclipse.

Through our survey gathering, WOT was able to create—with our partners—an economic impact study that helped gauge the direct economic impact of the total solar eclipse on Wyoming.

## What Didn’t Work and Why

One challenge WOT faced was keeping an up-to-date list of available places for visitors to stay, whether it was lodging or campsites. It would have been an asset to visitors if there was a central location with all lodging opportunities throughout the state.

WOT’s primary PR efforts included supporting partners, other agencies and communities. Looking back, we would have liked to do more targeted outreach in our drive markets of Salt Lake City and Denver. In addition, WOT would have liked to have a richer follow-up plan in place for communicating with consumers after the eclipse and encourage them to return and explore more of Wyoming.

From a research-gathering perspective, WOT would have liked for more active partners to participate in survey collection. In the future, WOT will be more proactive in determining research needs and conduct proactive outreach ahead of time to find research fielders/ambassadors for locations lacking the manpower to garner higher engagement among in-state partners.

## Capitalization on Exposure

From August 2016 – August 2017, WOT’s dedicated PR team assisted with 61 editorial stories about the eclipse, with the program having an ROI of more than 221 million in circulation. In total, media coverage included 19,603 mentions of Wyoming in eclipse-related coverage and a circulation of more than 51 billion.

As an additional follow up, WOT did the following efforts: deployed a post-eclipse mini-campaign on Facebook, with promoted posts and ads targeted on Colorado and Utah residents, encouraging them to further explore Wyoming; engaged users on social by asking them to share their #WYEclipse photo. In addition, WOT will utilize the 650 shareable leads gathered from the surveys to encourage those consumers to engage with WOT and our partners. WOT will continue to transition eclipse messaging to promoting #WYSkies to stay top-of-mind for consumers who are specifically interested in these types of experiences.

The economic impact analysis conducted for the total solar eclipse estimated the event’s economic impact (during a five-day period from August 19 – 23, 2017), including direct spending in the state generated by the eclipse, as well as consequent tax receipts collected by the State of Wyoming and its localities. Key findings included: a total of 261,100 persons travelled in Wyoming, with every county in Wyoming welcoming visitors; visitation represented 674,900 visitor days; a total of \$63.5 million was spent on travel-related expenditures (travel, lodging, meal and shopping); and tax revenues of \$3.8 million.

*\*The full report with additional information can be found within the Wyoming Office of Tourism 2017 Eclipse Economic Impact Study.*

**Findings at a Glance:**

<b>Wyoming Visitor Spending Generated by Eclipse (in \$000)</b>	\$63,450
Out-of-state visitors:	\$59,840
Wyoming residents:	\$3,610
<b>Eclipse-related Earnings (in \$000)</b>	\$11,540
<b>Eclipse- related Tax Receipts and Earnings (in \$000)</b>	\$3,780
Tax receipts to State of Wyoming:	\$2,340
Local tax government receipts:	\$1,440
<b>Visitor on Eclipse-related Trips:</b>	261,100
Out-of-state visitors:	197,600
Wyoming residents:	63,500

Key findings from the survey showed: a majority (77.4 percent) of out-of-state visitors stayed overnight in Wyoming on their trip and spent four days and three nights in Wyoming; over half of out-of-state overnight visitors stayed in a Wyoming hotel, motel, bed-and-breakfast or resort on their trip (50.2%); the solar eclipse was important to visitors’ decision to make their trip to Wyoming (more than 78 percent noted it was “important” on their decision to come to Wyoming); and visiting travel parties spent an average of \$930.93 in Wyoming over the course of their trip.

*\*The full report with additional information can be found within the Wyoming Office of Tourism 2017 Eclipse Economic Impact Study.*

## Wyoming Department of Transportation

### Role

Pre-eclipse role included:

- Creation of map for Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) and subsequent addition of that layer to the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) Travel Information Map.
- Interagency planning - supported meetings with Wyoming Office of Homeland Security (WOHS) and WOT.
- Community level planning support in counties and cities—including communication plans.
- Internet service provider (ISP) and Cellular planning with Verizon and AT&T.
- Trucking Association coordination.
- Airport and fixed-base operator (FBO) coordination.
- Interagency law enforcement cooperation.
- Contractor/Construction planning.

Event day role included:

- Providing daily updates on traffic counts to the media and other agencies and to others upon request.
- Dynamic message signs (DMS) and Mobile DMS Signing.
- Daily traffic count information provided at press conferences.
- Responding to media calls throughout the day—TV, print and radio.
- Monitoring WyoLink usage and outages.
- Maintenance personnel on extended shifts and on-call all weekend.
- Wyoming Highway Patrol Provided:
  - Interagency Law Enforcement Coordination.
  - Shutting down interstate for helicopter/medivac and reopening in record time.
  - Training to law enforcement on traffic control methods.
  - Every trooper on the highway (some out 20+ hours) while Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel were at the command post.
  - Passing out water and granola bars to individuals.
  - Daily internal conference call for coordinating.
  - Overwhelmingly positive feedback from public while on the road.
  - Delivery of gas to stranded motorists.

### Preparation

- Gathering historic traffic count data to use as a baseline during the event.
- Rest Area Preparation included cleaning and pumping septic, mowing in the Right of Way to prevent fire and helping Wyoming Highway Patrol navigate shoulders.
- Stopping Construction Projects.
- Paper Highway Map - Wyoming Skies.
- Pre-positioning portable DMS Signs.
- Pre-staging equipment for responding to crashes in bottleneck areas, such as Wind River Canyon.

- Sending notification to fuel providers and trucking association to prepare for increased traffic.
- WyoLink Training and Outreach to communities and optimized towers to facilitate usage spikes.
- Providing eclipse glasses for employees.

## What Worked and Why

- Interactive Travel Map linked to Web Cameras assisted traveling public in identifying congested routes and minimized questions from the public during the event.
- We experienced minimal outages on WyoLink, and believe training leading into the event helped this.
- Cellular was spotty at times but mostly reliable—Verizon and AT&T both brought in Cell on Wheels (COWs).
- Training for employees was good, especially in field. Everyone was on board, prepared to help, and positive. The director set this expectation ahead of time, and encouraged employees to remember that they may be the only people visitors from out of state talk to that day so make sure we make a good impression.
- Equipment checks were performed prior to event day to ensure optimal uptime.
- Dynamic Message Signs were beneficial to maintenance and patrol personnel.
- Assigning lead agencies was a good move—Tourism and Homeland Security. This made coordination easier, more organized, and more focused.
- City of Torrington had citizens blocking roads with their trucks to create a corridor through town—a cost effective barrier method.

## What Didn't Work and Why

Only about 5-6 complaints were received, related to porta-potties and traffic waits.

- More porta-potties would have been valuable. Maybe a few at each interchange, and/or extras at rest areas. May also need to pump them while being used, as we had to close a rest area that was overfilled despite having been emptied the previous week. Additional porta-potties would have also benefited the regional airports.
- Received feedback that we weren't providing enough real-time traffic data. Recommend providing "Time to travel from point to point" updates throughout the day to states doing this in the future. They could monitor Waze or Google Maps to provide those updates. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) provided some updates which calculated the highway capacity and then suggested planning a certain amount of time for travel (8-10 hours) based on that calculation. WYDOT did not provide any messages on travel time.
- WYDOT could have shut down projects on only the day before and after the event instead of for 5 days. Restricting oversize vehicle movements wasn't needed for as long as it was in place either, so it was lifted early. Not everyone understood what "oversize" meant so we fielded some calls on that.
- Additional parking at rest areas could have been obtained by mowing adjacent fields where feasible and where landowners were agreeable.
- Dispatch was very busy that day. Patrol recommends that states handling this in the future staff up dispatch to account for additional users in the field.

- Satellite phones were very difficult to use and did not add value.
- WYDOT could have done more frequent updates to the Highway Advisory Radio (HAR). Perhaps we over-focused on social media and failed to push that update to the HARs. WYDOT did do live interviews with radio stations throughout the event. In hindsight, people could have been staged around the state and real-time information and updates could have been given to local radio stations. Old-school media is still very strong in Wyoming.
- Needed to check traffic counter equipment and get it updated before the eclipse, and give some training to people on how to report and interpret those numbers.

### Capitalization on Exposure

Overall this was a good test of the efficiency and capacity for highways and airports and proved that the system can handle a large influx of traffic. WYDOT built valuable partnerships with all state agencies that will assist in dealing with large-scale events and issues in the future. Combined-agency news conferences were valuable. The pre-calls added value, and having them led by the Governor's office created organization.

## Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

### Role

There was no formal partner agency role for the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) in preparation for potential emergencies nor for tourism benefits. DWS was represented at a planning meeting between the governor's office and staff from several partner agencies - participating in the general discussion regarding preliminary emergency preparedness and subsequent meetings for the agencies with an active role.

### Preparation

DWS preparation consisted solely of preparing our office locations for the influx of people into the several communities along the path. This included minimum staffing required at the offices on the day of the eclipse, contacts and familiarity with local plans, safeguarding of personnel and clientele at the offices on the day of the event and the awareness that our personnel should be on the alert in case spectators needed help.

While our role was internal preparation, the event was seen as going off with very minimal effect on the operations of DWS. In the Jackson, Riverton/Lander, Casper, Douglas, Wheatland and Torrington offices, personnel beyond a minimum required staffing level were allowed to use vacation leave time rather than report to work. Managers in each region and location were given the responsibility and authority to make decisions to adapt to any exigencies and back-brief their chain of command. The volume of service demand and customer traffic in the offices was minimal during event day, as anticipated.

### What Worked and Why

Not applicable; DWS did not have a role in the state agency efforts to manage the public impacts of the eclipse.

### What Didn't Work and Why

Not applicable; DWS did not have a role in the state agency efforts to manage the public impacts of the eclipse.

### Capitalization on Exposure

Not applicable; DWS did not have a role in the state agency efforts to manage the public impacts of the eclipse.