

PORCUPINE LANDSLIDE

2018

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Office of Tourism

OVERVIEW

The Porcupine Landslide occurred in early February, approximately 17 miles up the Greys River Road near Alpine, Wyoming in the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The slide has constricted the Greys River and is retaining around 13 feet of vertical water, with the slide causing the river to re-route on the west bank.

A closure order is in place for 10 miles of the road (beginning seven miles outside of Alpine to the slide area).

The latest news can be found at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/news/btnf/news-events>.

LANDSLIDE DOS + DON'TS

The Dos

- Focus on what is open and accessible for recreation in the Bridger-Teton National Forest and Wyoming's Star Valley.
- Do be as helpful and positive as possible.
- Do remain updated on the latest information, especially as it relates to what portions of Greys River Road are open, as well as alternative routes.
- Do share information and updates from WOT, USFS and other agencies with all front-line employees.
- Do focus on the positive: activities and places to do and see, your local favorite spot for coffee, best local hikes, etc.
- Do focus on creating a positive visitor experience.
- Do smile, especially when talking with travelers.
- Do let the visitors know that you've heard and understand their frustrations regarding road access; then focus on a solution and redirect them to other open areas within the valley.

The Don'ts

- Don't get frustrated.
- Don't provide false information. If you don't know something, say you don't know it. Don't speculate.
- Don't focus or dwell on the negative experience.
- Don't blow the closure out of proportion.

TALKING POINTS + PREPARING TO TALK TO THE PUBLIC

Below are some potential questions (and their suggested answers) that you may receive about the current closure on Greys River Road, as well as landslide questions.

Q1: I always recreate on areas along Greys River Road. Now where am I supposed to travel?

A1: Portions of the Grey River Road, about 7 miles up from Alpine, are open for recreation travel. You can still access the Bridger-Teton National Forest by three other routes, including the Smith's Fork Road (it's called Forest Service Road 10072) and is located south of Afton; through Big Piney (head down to Ryegrass Junction to Forest Service Road 10125 – the locals call it North Cottonwood) and then over McDougal Gap to Greys River Road; or on La Barge Road, which is easily accessible from the town of La Barge.

Q2: How much danger am I in if I hike in the Greys River Drainage?

A2: The areas that could create danger to travelers are currently closed to ensure visitor safety. Be sure you're not entering closed roads, closed trails, etc.

Q3: Is it even worth coming to Alpine and Afton if this road is closed?

A3: You bet! There are incredible recreational opportunities throughout the valley and in the Bridger-Teton National Forest that provide so many options for travelers.

SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGING

WOT is recommending that all pertinent parties (state agencies, local agencies, private businesses, chambers of commerce, etc.) use social media to share the most current information with perspective and current travelers to Western Wyoming.

While WOT will help with sharing messaging, we will rely on following the lead of the Bridger-Teton National Forest to ensure that the latest information is being pushed out via our channels. In addition, we'll monitor local partners channels to share additional things to do, places to explore, etc.

We are anticipating that many of our consumer travelers will be looking to WOT and specifically the Bridger-Teton National Forest, as well as local visitor-engagement entities for the latest information. (For context, the Twitter account is @BridgerTetonNF; the Facebook channel is @BridgerTetonNF.) All parties should also monitor #BTNF on social media channels.

Below are some suggested social media posts:

**Please feel free to adjust as needed.*

Recreating in #Wyoming's beautiful Star Valley? Good choice. For things to do, visit <http://starvalleychamber.com/>. #ThatsWY #ExploreMore

Travel update: 10 miles of Greys River Road in the @BridgerTetonNF are currently closed to travelers, but the first 7 miles of the road are accessible, with abundant hiking options available. Discover more here: www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/btnf/recarea/?recid=71395. #Wyoming #ThatsWY

Looking for info on the current road closures on Greys River Road? Follow @BridgerTetonNF on Twitter + Facebook for the most up-to-date information. #BTNF #Wyoming

ICYMI: One of the best places for mountain biking is the @BridgerTetonNF in Star Valley. Explore trails here:

www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/btnf/recreation/bicycling/recarea/?recid=71545&actid=24.

#Wyoming #ThatsWY #BTNF

*(*ICYMI is an acronym for "in case you missed it" and is used frequently on social media)*

Meet #Wyoming's best-kept secret: Star Valley. Home to Alpine, Afton and more, this lush valley is home to abundant activities and charming locally owned businesses. Top picks include visiting Intermittent Spring, seeing the world's largest elk antler arch in Afton and exploring local museums. #ThatsWY #Wyoming

6 CUSTOMER SERVICE TIPS

While we know that the travel and tourism industry is known for its customer service skills, we want to be sure that travelers are still staying, recreating and dining in Lincoln County and Star Valley, even though a small portion of Greys River Road is closed.

And since your frontline staff will interact with our visitors, we've put together **6 customer service tips** to help ensure our travelers have the best experience possible.

1. Smile and say hello. Be helpful with finding other areas that they can explore in the area, as we want travelers to stay in the county and valley. Share with them some of your favorite things to do or places to go during this time of year.
2. Thank them for their patronage and/or for coming into your place of business.
3. Anticipate customer needs; if they feel uncertain about the impact the road closure is having, be ready to proactively offer them other areas to explore, like rafting/fishing the Snake River, strolling through local shops, exploring museums, hiking on a different trail, visiting Intermittent Spring, etc.
4. Be as helpful as possible and always focus on the positive and the areas that are open and unaffected.
5. Be prepared for frustrated customers, especially if their travel plans included the currently closed portion of Greys River Road.
6. Prep your frontline, backline and management staff. Consider giving them a pep talk and reminders before you open for the day and sharing with them the latest updates from the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

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