

Before There Were Parks: Yellowstone and Glacier through Native Eyes

Screening and Discussion: Bozeman's Emerson Cultural Center, 111 S. Grand Ave., Bozeman, MT

Saturday, January 30th

Screening: 7:00 PM

Discussion: 8:00 PM

BEFORE THERE WERE PARKS: YELLOWSTONE AND GLACIER THROUGH NATIVE EYES

**Monday, February 1, 2010
10:30-11:00 p.m. ET on PBS**

– Efforts by National Park Service and Native Peoples to Bring Disparate Visions Into
Greater Harmony –



*The stars above Divide Mountain;
Blackfeet Reservation/Glacier
National Park.
Credit: Rick F. X. Smith*

From time immemorial, Native Americans have regarded the lands now called Yellowstone and Glacier as significant and sacred. Today, nearly 30 tribal nations maintain official ties to these national parks, and many tribal leaders consider ongoing Native involvement in these areas necessary to the long-term health of America's endangered indigenous cultures.

In **BEFORE THERE WERE PARKS: YELLOWSTONE AND GLACIER THROUGH NATIVE EYES**, narrated by N. Scott Momaday, more than a dozen of these leaders and experts from across the region offer a respectful introduction to the knowledge that tribal people here have passed down for at least the past 12,000 years. Viewers discover why Glacier and

Yellowstone are so important to American Indians — for reasons far beyond their recent status as National Parks. **BEFORE THERE WERE PARKS** airs **Monday, February 1, 2010, 10:30-11:00 p.m. ET** ([check local listings](#)) on PBS.

The film follows Eastern Shoshone youth and elders from Ft. Washakie, Wyoming, as they spend three days in Yellowstone as part of the park's cultural exchange program. Vernon Finley, the Kootenai spokesperson, explains the limitations of human perception and how a respectful person might gain knowledge. Alan Pard, a Piikani traditionalist, explains what the sun, moon and stars mean to the Blackfeet people. Grant and Linda Bulltail, Crow Nation Lodgekeepers of the Tobacco Society, offer their perceptions of what Yellowstone means to the Crows. Germaine

White, information specialist for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, explains the importance of place names, and Carol Murray, tribal history project director, Blackfeet Community College, describes what President Grant's executive orders meant to the Blackfeet people.

The film reveals why, as the Northern Rockies became increasingly settled by European Americans, "Yellowstone" was probably a mistranslation of the Crow name for that river; viewers also hear how the Bannocks felt about returning home to find the Oregon Trail in their wintering grounds.

Filmed in all seasons in gorgeous high-definition cinematography, **BEFORE THERE WERE PARKS** carefully navigates the cultural divide that separates modern times from this not-so-distant past, as it introduces the idea of how America's national parks remain one of the last and best ties to an ancient indigenous past.

From an indigenous perspective, a person can never own land, but it is always a person's responsibility to care for land and to protect it for future generations. From far different places, the goals of the Park Service and that of Native Americans meet in America's national parks. In **BEFORE THERE WERE PARKS**, viewers discover the beginning of that complex and ongoing story.

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Underwriters: Montana Office of Tourism, Greater Montana Foundation, Gilhousen Family Foundation and Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Producer: KUSM Bozeman

Executive producer: Aaron Pruitt

Producer/director/writer/editor: Charles Dye

Co-executive producers: Chris Seifert and Drew Jenkins

Cinematography/timelapse photography: Rick F. X. Smith

Original music: Lissette Norman and Reid Loessberg

Format: CC Stereo HD

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