

PRESS RELEASE



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Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary Receives Grants for Interactive Signage

Red Lodge — 31 May 2018 — The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary has received two grants to start an Interactive Interpretive Display project. The new computer-based signage will augment, rather than replace, the existing signs by the animal habitats.



“Interactive displays will really enhance the visitor experience,” said Gary Robson, the Sanctuary’s Education Director, “and we wouldn’t have been able to start up the project without the support of the O. P. & W. E. Edwards Foundation and the Red Lodge Rotary Club.”

About two thousand people each year — mostly children — participate in organized educational programs at the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary, and thousands more take self-guided tours. The goal of this project is to provide a more engaging way to present information about the animals to the self-guided visitors. The audio-visual format appeals to different kinds of learners, and children are more likely to engage with an interactive display than a static sign.

The displays will use touch screens, speakers, and Raspberry Pi 3B+ computers to present the information. Visitors will be able to listen to animal calls, view dynamic range maps, learn to tell related species apart, and more. All of the programming, graphics, and design will be done by the existing Education Department staff.

The grant money received so far will purchase the development system and the equipment for the first display, which will go in the viewing kiosk for Bonnie, the Sanctuary’s long-time resident coyote.

“A huge advantage of interactive electronic displays is that they can be reprogrammed and repurposed,” Robson added, “where printed signs end up being discarded. Electronic displays can also be updated quickly, easily, and cheaply when something changes, like a new animal being added. We are looking for approximately \$2,500 in additional funding to expand the project to other habitats around the Sanctuary, which will require waterproof housings and additional electrical wiring.”

The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the mission of providing lifelong sanctuary to non-releasable native wildlife while sharing a message of conservation and education. The Sanctuary is home to a wide variety of animals native to the greater Yellowstone ecosystem, ranging from carnivores (mountain lion, coyote, bobcat, fox, lynx) to large hoofed mammals (bison, elk), smaller mammals (porcupine, raccoon), and birds (falcon, raven, owl, crow). The bears are some of the most popular residents. The Sanctuary is currently working on a large new wolf habitat and a new sandhill crane/vulture habitat.

For additional information about the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary’s Interactive Interpretive Display Project please contact Gary Robson at 406/446-1133 or Gary@YellowstoneWildlife.org.