

PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL FY2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MARKETING EFFORTS REFLECT CONTINUITY

Fiscal Year 2025 marked an exciting evolution in Cody Yellowstone's branding with the launch of WILD Forever. While the "WILD" theme had been central to our identity for several years, it was time for a fresh, bold direction—one that would set the destination apart while staying true to its roots. This pivot not only reenergized the brand but also earned one of the most prestigious honors in the tourism industry.

WILD Forever celebrates the essence of Cody Yellowstone—its breathtaking landscapes, iconic wildlife, authentic Western experiences, and unforgettable attractions—captured through powerful storytelling and imagery that inspires true wanderlust.

Building on the success of this award-winning campaign, the Park County Travel Council continues to position Cody Yellowstone as an authentic, year-round destination offering diverse and immersive experiences.

Our destination pillars remain the foundation of Cody Yellowstone's story—authentic Western experiences, rich history, world-class outdoor recreation, diverse wildlife, and captivating attractions. In FY25, these pillars guided our marketing efforts, ensuring travelers were inspired by the depth and variety of experiences our region has to offer. Some ways we did this were:

- Utilizing a campaign focused on the adventure-seeking millennial market
- Building on our social media platforms
- Developing our #WildWatch program (local ambassadors to showcase our destination)
- Promoting our shoulder seasons and winter through Influencer Campaigns
- Focusing on showcasing our destination using industry trends, specifically utilizing short-form video which has proven to attract a higher audience with more engagement
- Hosting 27 press throughout the year
- Crafting and disseminating 36 press releases

PCTC continues to participate in travel trade shows and events that allow us to market Cody Yellowstone to a variety of media, as well as domestic and international operators, including: Wyoming Hospitality and Tourism Coalition Events, American Bus Association Marketplace, United States International Powwow, International Roundup with the Great American West, American Cup, National Tour Association Travel Exchange, International Media Marketplace, North American Travel Journalists

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUNDS:

For the second consecutive year, FY25 saw additional Destination Development Funds made available by the Wyoming Office of Tourism to be utilized by lodging tax boards around the state. PCTC received these Destination Development Funds for FY25/FY26 and was able to fund several impactful projects around the community, including:

- Cohesive wayfinding signage throughout Cody, Powell and Meeteetse Phase II
- Professional Trail Development at Outlaw Trail System
- Mural in the City Park Bandshell
- Cody Country Visitor Center Refresh
- Investment in community projects: Web Cams at the East Gate of Yellowstone National Park, Meeteetse Museums Roof, Town of Meeteetse Mural, Vinyl Wraps on Power Boxes in Downtown Cody, Outlaw Trail Signage, Continued Restoration of the Heart Mountain Root Cellar, Wyoming Ice Festival Funding for Sled, Signage and Website, Fist Full of Dirt Bike Maintenance Gear



Wayfinding Signs through Destination Development Funds

PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION AND BUDGET

The role of the Park County Travel Council is to administer the 4% Park County lodging tax revenues with the exception of the 10% share returned to the Park County Treasurer. State statutes dictate that the revenues be spent on tourism promotion only. The Park County Travel Council, otherwise known as Cody Yellowstone, is committed to inspiring overnight leisure travel from key markets regionally, nationally and internationally. Cody Yellowstone will continue to optimize countywide economic impact by delivering innovative, effective marketing and partnership programs. This includes leveraging the momentum of the local and statewide industry support and participation, as well as focusing on gap areas, shoulder seasons, and winter. To support these efforts, Cody Yellowstone will deploy a fully integrated marketing campaign and will continue to measure consumer

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You may recognize this logo. In order for grantees to be reimbursed for their advertising expenses, it must appear on all printed ads, TV commercials and other promotional materials. This logo also appears in printed programs and at facilities that host sporting events funded in part by the Park County Travel Council.

CODY YELLOWSTONE IN THE SPOTLIGHT – MEDIA, FILM, AND TRAVEL TRADE

In FY25, Cody Yellowstone made a significant impact in amplifying its story through media and film. From features in premier outlets such as Travel + Leisure and National Geographic to appearances on the Discovery Channel and PBS, the destination’s reach extended to audiences worldwide. Combined with targeted outreach to tour operators, these marketing efforts ensured Cody Yellowstone’s message was both seen and remembered.

Here are some examples of the most impactful projects and successes:

Travel Trade - U.S. Tour Operator Familiarization Tours (FAM): Cody Yellowstone hosted a group from nine tour operator companies to highlight the destination’s motorcoach businesses and points of interest. The six-day itinerary highlighted more than 20 Cody Yellowstone partners. We were also able to host six executives from the top motorcoach companies in an elevated experience throughout Park County.

Travel trade-International Tour Operator FAMs: Thanks to our highly effective partnerships with the state and Rocky Mountain International (RMI), we hosted 39 international tour operators from Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Film: The Park County Film Commission had a tremendously successful year, with a wide range of film projects. They include episodes of “Expedition Unknown” on the Discovery Channel, “Cookin’ with Cowboys,” and “Adventure Cities,” which will premiere on various streaming platforms such as PBS, Discovery+, Apple TV+, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Roku, Sling TV, and Pluto TV. In addition, numerous other production companies partnered with the film commission to shoot content for commercials, documentaries and social media projects.

Earned media: Cody Yellowstone hosted dozens of vetted and qualified travel journalists and influencers for individual and group trips during FY25. As a result of their visits and experiences, there were nearly 400 stories about the destination in print and online outlets, on podcasts and television newscasts.

Influencers/social media: Cody Yellowstone coordinated influencer visits and social media campaigns throughout the fiscal year as well. They invited eight travel influencers to visit throughout the year, showcasing the destination’s unique amenities, attractions, events, and outdoor recreation opportunities.



Filming of ‘Scott Fujita - Fear, Football, and the Theft of Freedom’ at Heart Mountain Relocation Center

PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION AND BUDGET *continued*

conversion paths across the trip planning lifecycle. Understanding the consumer and the trip planning lifecycle allows us to provide more responsive and personalized content to not only inspire visitors to travel to and within Park County, but also to help shift consumer behavior—dispersing visitors to lesser-known attractions and encouraging shoulder season travel. As travelers come to our county, our goal is to have them view our areas outside of the park as worthwhile destinations, being rich in history, authentic western experiences, world-class outdoor recreation, unique attractions, fresh food experiences, vibrant art scene, scenic drives, abundance of wildlife, and the great American adventure.

Our mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within Park County. We strive to fuel market demand and drive a healthy tourism economy.

The Park County Travel Council is a Joint Powers Board comprised of ten volunteer board members. Four members

are appointed by Park County Commissioners, two by the Cody City Council, two by the Powell City Council and one by the Meeteetse Town Council. A representative from the Wyoming Tourism Board

Thank you Park County for passing the additional 2% lodging tax. We couldn’t do this without you!

or a designee, is also on the Travel Council. Budgets created and approved are funded by the previous year’s lodging tax revenue.

Park County Travel Council had four staff members through FY25. They included Ryan Hauck, executive director; Amanda Keyes, executive administrator; Katrina Southern, marketing manager and Carson Rapsilver as brand content creator and coordinator. Hauck and Rapsilver have since departed, and the Park County Travel Council has launched a nationwide search for a new executive director. The gaps in these positions should not impact any functions within the organization, as proper measures have been implemented to keep operations running as normal.

2025 PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL

John Parsons, *Chairperson* | Park County Appt.
Quintin Blair, *Vice Chairperson* | State Tourism Board Rep’s Appt.
Emily Swett, *Treasurer* | City of Cody Appt.
Christine Merz-Gleason, *Secretary* | Town of Meeteetse Appt.
Michael Darby, *Past Chairperson* | Park County Appt.

Jill Hartmann | City of Powell Appt.
Christopher Guyer | City of Cody Appt.
Mike Keller | Yellowstone National Park
Toby Bonner | City of Powell Appt.
Jacob Ivanoff | Park County Appt.

PCTC HELPS COMMUNITIES AND EVENTS PROMOTE THEMSELVES

Park County Travel Council promotes Park County in its entirety under the name “Cody Yellowstone,” which includes the communities of Cody, Powell, Meeteetse and East Yellowstone Valley. In addition to this marketing, individual communities and non-profit organizations within Park County are awarded matching grants to purchase their own advertising. PCTC awards generous grants to support the visitor centers for Cody, Powell and Meeteetse. This includes funding for staff, advertising, marketing, and website maintenance.

Because Yellowstone National Park is not eligible for grant money, the park’s collections are used to enhance the grants awarded to each community and to fund the countywide marketing plan. Many Park County conventions, events and sports tournaments received sponsorships from the Park County Travel Council, including 23 events for FY25: The Devilstone Run, Cody Stampede Parade, Rocky Mountain Songwriters Festival, Plaza Diane - Plaza@5:30, Wyoming American Legion Baseball, Cody Romance Roundup, Plaza Palooza

Summer Arts Fest, Run the Runway, Powell Sample the Season, Santa Fly-in, The Haunt, Wyoming Craft Brewing Summit, Downtown Trick-or-Treating, Cody Cowboy Christmas, CCSA Avalanche Training, Wyoming Trucking Association, Park County Youth Hockey Association, Cody Figure Skating Spring Classic, Yellowstone Fire Soccer, The Barbell Club, WY Wildlife – Beer, Bucks & Brookies, Cody Shooting – Clay Shoot, Puckers Past Their Prime

STRIVING FOR THE BEST

As we all know, Cody Yellowstone is one of the best destinations in the country, but it’s not just the locals or Park County Travel Council saying this. It’s the readers of USA Today and Newsweek, who were so adamant about their appreciation for Cody that they voted for it time and again in “Readers’ Choice” polls that seek out readers’ opinions of the best of the best.

These achievements didn’t happen overnight. PCTC has built success through a disciplined, comprehensive marketing strategy and coordinated efforts to showcase the destination. Combined with the charm of local shops, welcoming accommodations, and unique attractions created by Park County’s dedicated business owners, the result is an unforgettable vacation experience that appeals across generations.

Here is a sampling of the awards received by the destination or its partners:

- USA Today:
 - Best Small Town in the West
 - Best Summer Travel Destination
 - Top Small Town Arts Scene
 - Best Small Town Beer Scene
 - Newsweek
 - Best Art Museum
 - True West Magazine
 - Top Western Town
 - Best “Who Slept Here” (Irma Hotel)
 - Best Place to Live Like an Old West Cowboy
 - Best Historic Town Tour (Cody Trolley Tour)
 - American Bus Association Destinations Magazine
 - Best of the Best Award (Cody Cattle Company)
- TripAdvisor Travelers Choice 2025
 - Cody Dug Up Gun Museum
 - Buffalo Bill Center of the West
 - Sitti’s Table - James Beard Award Nominee
 - Print Excellence Award
 - Best Uncoated Paper for WILD Forever Vacation Guide

Even the hospitality and tourism industry has taken notice in Park County. The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMIA) awarded Cody Yellowstone and its digital agency, Verb, with eight Adrian Awards this year. With more than 500 industry and agency executives attending its annual awards ceremony, they were recognized for multiple campaigns and awards, including:

- Women’s Hiking Retreat
 - Bronze Award for Advertising, Influencer Marketing
- Cody Yellowstone Social Media
 - Gold Award for Digital, Social Media/Social Networking
- WILD Forever Integrated Campaign
 - Gold Award for Business to Consumer
 - Platinum Award for Business to Consumer
- WILD Forever Audio
 - Silver Award in Best of Category
- Heartbeat of the Rodeo
 - Silver Award for Communications/Special Event
 - Silver Award for Digital, Video Multiple Channels
 - Bronze Award for Digital, Social Media Campaign



Women's Hiking Workshop

COMMUNITIES, COUNTY USE LODGING TAX DOLLARS

Park County generated \$38.7 million in sales taxes in 2024. Over 31.8% of those taxes, \$12.3 million, was generated by travelers. The local & state travel generated taxes relieved the tax burden on Park County residents by \$1,854 per household.

Park County residents benefit from the lodging tax in another way. Park County and its municipalities receive 10% of the Park County lodging tax collected. The collections are distributed by the Park County Treasurer back to the communities and county at the same ratio they were collected. There is no restriction on how this 10% can be spent.

In FY25, a total of \$433,434.55 was returned to Park County for distribution to the City of Powell (\$6,440.83), the City of Cody (\$162,065.09), the Town of Meeteetse (\$884.33) and Park County (\$264,044.30).

Park County is entitled to the portion of the funds that are collected outside Park County municipalities. These properties are guest and dude ranches and Yellowstone National Park lodging that is located within Park County.

FISCAL YEAR STATISTICS COMPARISON



Park County Travel Council
FY 2025 Annual Report
1306 Sheridan Avenue - Cody, WY 82414
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	FY2024	FY2025
BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST	153,071	149,971
HEART MTN. WWII INTERPRETIVE CENTER	12,248	12,331
YNP EAST ENTRANCE	459,291	441,830
CODY NITE RODEO	105,689	92,479
BB DAM & VISITOR CENTER	80,596	78,654

	FY2024	FY2025
CODYYELLOWSTONE.ORG		
VACATION GUIDE REQUESTS	90,152	107,365
DIGITAL VACATION GUIDE DOWNLOADS	2,357	8,752

	FY2024	FY2025
PARK COUNTY VISITOR CENTERS		
CODY COUNTRY VISITOR CENTER	88,612	71,889
POWELL VISITOR CENTER	6,731	6,210
MEETEETSE VISITOR CENTER	4,253	7,549

POSTAL PATRON

FY2025 GRANTS/PROGRAMS FUNDED BY FY2024 LODGING TAX COLLECTIONS

	GRANTS	COLLECTIONS
CODY COLLECTED.....		\$1,620,634.95
Cody Country Chamber of Commerce	\$149,680.00	
Visitor Center Staffing	\$95,000.00	
V.C. Manager	\$43,680.00	
Admin. Support	\$2,500.00	
V.C. Operations	\$8,000.00	
V.C. Training	\$500.00	
Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale	\$10,000.00	
Buffalo Bill Center of the West	\$40,690.00	
Buffalo Bill Dam & Visitor Center	\$3,000.00	
Cody Stampede Board	\$29,994.00	
Museum of the Old West & Trail Town	\$5,017.50	
TOTAL CODY GRANTS	\$238,381.50	
POWELL COLLECTED.....		\$64,467.58
Powell Valley Chamber of Commerce	\$65,000.00	
Visitor Center	\$55,000.00	
Promotional Videos	\$10,000.00	
Heart Mountain Interpretive Center	\$20,000.00	
Homesteader Museum	\$3,000.00	
TOTAL POWELL GRANTS	\$88,000.00	
MEETEETSE COLLECTED.....		\$8,789.87
Meeteetse Visitor Center	\$45,540.00	
Visitor Center Staffing	\$36,540.00	
Events, Adv., Digital	\$9,000.00	
TOTAL MEETEETSE GRANTS	\$ 45,540.00	
PARK COUNTY COLLECTED.....		\$642,017.62
East Yellowstone Valley Chamber of Commerce	\$68,190.00	
Yellowstone Regional Airport	\$25,000.00	
TOTAL COUNTY GRANTS	\$93,190.00	
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK COLLECTED...\$1,998,435.44		
(YNP Lodging located in Park County Only)		
Yellowstone is not eligible for PCTC Grants		\$0.00
TOTAL GRANTS	\$465,111.50	
UNIFIED MARKETING	\$2,753,096.00	
ADMINISTRATION	\$514,641.83	
DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUNDS	\$589,168.61	
TOTAL GRANTS & PROGRAMS	\$4,322,017.94	

LOCAL PARTNERS

The Park County Travel Council could not host and assist with as many media groups as we do without the continued support of local businesses. This support – discounted or donated lodging, meals, admissions, and tours – allows the Travel Council to spend more on advertising, partnerships and transportation for travel writers and television crews. Members of the council understand that these donations cost businesses and truly appreciate our local partners' cooperation.

Special thanks to the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody Nite Rodeo, Cody Firearms Experience, Cody Trolley Tours, Old Trail Town, The Cody Cattle Company, Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, Wyoming River Trips, North Fork Anglers, Blair Hotels, The Cody Hotel, the Best Western properties, The Irma Hotel and Restaurant, Yellowstone Regional Airport, Ranches of Cody Yellowstone, Proud Cut Saloon, Trailhead Bar and Grill, Buffalo Bill Dam & Visitor Center, 2 Mules Chuckwagon, Out West Adventures, Meeteetse Chocolatier, Wyoming Trout Guides Fly Shop, and The Chamberlin Inn – just to name a few of our 2024/2025 partners.

