## FISCAL YEAR STATISTICS COMPARISON

| | FY2025 | FY2026 |
|---|---|---|
| BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST | 148,319 | 140,419 |
| HEART MTN. WWII INTERPRETIVE CENTER | 12,331 | 12,357 |
| YNP EAST ENTRANCE | 441,830 | 429,002 |
| CODY NITE RODEO | 92,479 | 99,513 |
| BB DAM & VISITOR CENTER | 78,654 | 76,691 |

| CODYYELLOWSTONE.ORG | FY2025 | FY2026 |
|---|---|---|
| WEBSITE SESSIONS | 1,045,386 | 1,273,906 |
| VACATION GUIDE REQUESTS | 107,365 | 104,971 |
| DIGITAL VACATION GUIDE DOWNLOADS | 10,978 | 34,030 |

| PARK COUNTY VISITOR CENTERS | FY2025 | FY2026 |
|---|---|---|
| CODY COUNTRY VISITOR CENTER | 71,889 | 51,624 |
| POWELL VISITOR CENTER | 6,210 | 3,963 |
| MEETEETSE VISITOR CENTER | 7,549 | 6,946 |

Cody YELLOWSTONE WYOMING
Park County Travel Council
FY 2026 Annual Report
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www.CodyYellowstone.org

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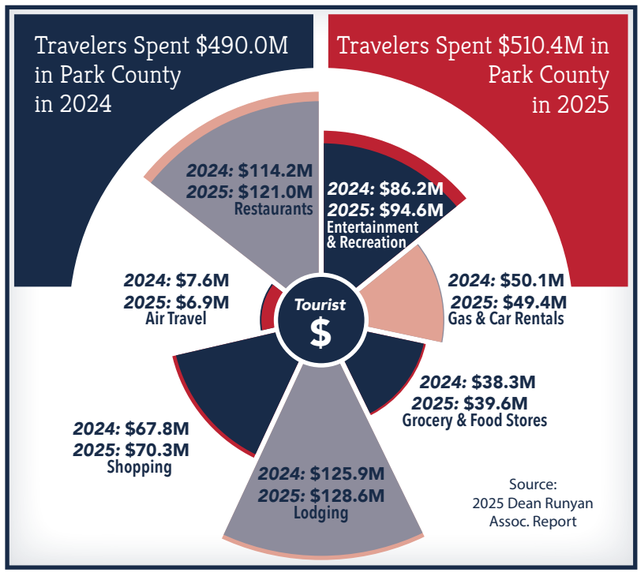
## FY2026GRANTS/PROGRAMS FUNDED BY FY2025 LODGING TAX COLLECTIONS

| | GRANTS | COLLECTIONS |
|---|---|---|
| **CODY COLLECTED** | | **$1,620,634.95** |
| Cody Country Chamber of Commerce | $147,500.00 | |
| *Visitor Center Staffing* | *$84,300.00* | |
| *V.C. Manager* | *$52,675.00* | |
| *Admin. Support* | *$2,500.00* | |
| *V.C. Operations* | *$5,000.00* | |
| *V.C. Training* | *$1,000.00* | |
| Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale | $12,000.00 | |
| Buffalo Bill Center of the West | $47,500.00 | |
| Buffalo Bill Dam & Visitor Center | $2,600.00 | |
| Cody Stampede Board | $30,150.00 | |
| Museum of the Old West & Trail Town | $3,600.00 | |
| Yellowstone Quake Hockey | $1,100.00 | |
| **TOTAL CODY GRANTS** | **$244,450.00** | |
| **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 | $5,500.00 | |
| **TOTAL POWELL GRANTS** | **$90,500.00** | |
| **MEETEETSE COLLECTED** | | **$8,789.87** |
| Meeteetse Visitor Center | $50,000.00 | |
| *Visitor Center Staffing* | *$44,500.00* | |
| *Events, Adv., Digital* | *$5,500.00* | |
| **TOTAL MEETEETSE GRANTS** | **$50,000.00** | |
| **PARK COUNTY COLLECTED** | | **$275,425.99** |
| East Yellowstone Valley Chamber of Commerce | $36,100.00 | |
| Yellowstone Regional Airport | $25,000.00 | |
| **TOTAL COUNTY GRANTS** | **$61,100.00** | |
| **YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK COLLECTED** | | **$1,807,734.00** |
| (YNP Lodging located in Park County Only) | | |
| **Yellowstone is not eligible for PCTC Grants** | | **$0.00** |
| **TOTAL GRANTS** | | **$446,050.00** |
| **UNIFIED MARKETING** | | **$3,055,332.00** |
| **ADMINISTRATION** | | **$542,003.05** |
| **DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUNDS** | | **$396,350.70** |
| **TOTAL GRANTS & PROGRAMS** | | **$4,439,735.75** |

## 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 Yellowstone National Park Lodges, 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, Best Western Ivy Inn & Suites, The Irma Hotel and Restaurant, Yellowstone Regional Airport, Ranches of Cody Yellowstone, Trailhead Bar and Grill, 2 Mules Chuckwagon, Out West Adventures, Sitti's Table, and The Chamberlin Inn – just to name a few of our 2025/2026 partners.**






PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL

# FY2026 ANNUAL REPORT

## UNTAMED AND TRUE: A NEW VOICE FOR CODY YELLOWSTONE

**A New Expression of the Story.**

For several years, WILD Forever carried Cody Yellowstone's message — the breathtaking landscapes, iconic wildlife, authentic Western experiences and unforgettable attractions that inspire true wanderlust. It did its work, and it earned real recognition along the way, including Adrian Awards and a Print Excellence Award. But we knew we could do better. WILD described what our destination looks like. It never quite said what our destination is.

So after two years of careful planning, we launched Untamed and True.

The name does more than describe the place. In the campaign's own words, it is the place — an invitation to "dive into an adventure that's West of Worry, and North of Hurry, in the Untamed and True, Cody Yellowstone." Park County becomes somewhere you go to find a quality that has grown scarce everywhere else. The ads and videos carry a deliberate grain, so the grit and history of this place come through like a memory you are reliving rather than an ad you are watching.

Watch the campaign video here:

Untamed & True

WATCH VIDEO

The campaign found its voice in a song. While planning, we reached out to local songwriter and performer Kalyn Beasley and to Ryan Martin of the Triple C Cowboys to write a theme song for the destination. From its lines and stanzas, we drew the taglines and copy that now run across the top of every asset — three of them sounding like they were sung before they were written: Where the map ends, adventure begins. Here's to the wild and unbridled. Something's out there, calling me to roam.

The song is out on Spotify alongside a companion playlist and the Cody Yellowstone Uncovered Podcast, both built around the new branding. Engagement since launch has been strong, and we expect the campaign to keep building recognition in the year ahead.

Though the branding has changed, our destination pillars have not. Authentic Western experiences, rich history, world-class outdoor recreation, diverse wildlife, and captivating attractions remain the foundation of Cody Yellowstone's story. In FY26, these pillars guided our marketing and inspired travelers with the depth and variety of our region. That inspiration drives travel, and travel drives real economic impact for the people who live here.

### 2026 PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL

Quintin Blair, *Chairperson* | Park County Appt.
Emily Swett, *Vice Chairperson* | City of Cody Appt.
Mike Keller, *Secretary* | Yellowstone National Park
Jill Hartmann, *Treasurer* | City of Powell Appt.
Michael Darby, *Past Chairperson* | Park County Appt.
Christine Merz-Gleason | Town of Meeteetse Appt.
Christopher Guyer | City of Cody Appt.
Toby Bonner | City of Powell Appt.
Jacob Ivanoff | Park County Appt.
Bruce Sauers | Wyoming Tourism Board Appt.

IN COOPERATION WITH THE PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL
PCTC

*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.*

**FY26 Highlights**

- Launched the Cody Yellowstone Uncovered Podcast to reach new listeners and build excitement for the year ahead
- Promoted shoulder seasons through influencer engagement and workshops
- Hosted press and distributed press releases featuring partners across the county
- Continued developing the #WildWatch program
- Grew our social media platforms
- Developed international guides and expanded our international presence
- Supported the new Chicago flight market with digital ads, influencers, and media

**Trade Shows and Events**

PCTC continues to market Cody Yellowstone to media and to domestic and international operators at events including the Wyoming Hospitality and Tourism Coalition events, American Bus Association Marketplace, United States International Powwow, International Roundup with the Great American West, American Cup, International Media Marketplace, and more.

**Destination Development Funds:**

Destination Development Funds were made available by the Wyoming Office of Tourism to be utilized by lodging tax boards around the state in FY25/FY26. With these funds, PCTC 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**

Now that we are finished with these projects, we are expected to see another round of Destination Development Funds for FY27/F28.

# AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

America turned 250 in 2026, and Park County made the most of it. Rather than confining the semi quincentennial to a single weekend, the local committee chose to stretch the celebration across the entire year — making Independence Day bigger while also funding patriotic events in the months leading up to it. Anticipating a larger crowd for the anniversary, the goal was straightforward: give travelers who could not be here on the Fourth a reason to come anyway.

PCTC played a pivotal role in that effort alongside the 250th event committee. We built a microsite and a marketing strategy to carry word of the celebration far beyond our borders, and supported the Cody Stampede and Stampede Parade with sponsorships and provided event sponsorships to organizations that requested marketing aid for their own anniversary programming.

# THE STORY TRAVELS: MEDIA, FILM, AND TRAVEL TRADE

In FY26, Cody Yellowstone amplified its story through media, film, and trade. Features in USA Today, Forbes, Fox News, and The New York Times, plus appearances on the Discovery Channel and PBS, carried the destination's message to audiences worldwide. Targeted outreach to tour operators ensured it was both seen and remembered.

**Highlights**

**Travel Trade (FAMs):** Working with the Wyoming Office of Tourism, our PR and marketing agencies, and Rocky Mountain International (RMI), we hosted 24 FAM trips for 52 tour operators from around the world.



*Travel Media and Influencers Visit Cody Yellowstone*

**Film:** The Park County Film Commission had a very successful year. Projects include episodes of "Cookin' with Cowboys" and "Adventure Cities," which will premiere on platforms such as PBS, Discovery+, Apple TV+, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Roku, Sling TV, and Pluto TV. Production companies like GMC also shot commercials, documentaries, and social content with the commission.

**Earned Media:** We hosted dozens of vetted travel journalists and influencers, resulting in more than 284 stories across print, online, podcasts, and television. At least 45 came directly from media or influencer visits, and many more from PR outreach at events such as SATW, Travel with Words, the International Media Marketplace, and the North American Travel Journalists.

**Influencers and Social Media:** Twelve travel influencers visited throughout the year, showcasing our amenities, attractions, events, and outdoor recreation. Together, they generated $667.4k in earned media value.

FY26 also brought the end of a long partnership. After 21 years of dedicated work, our PR agency, Mesereau Travel PR, retired. They have carried us through destination disasters, changes in leadership, as well as some of the best years PCTC has ever seen. We are grateful for all the hard work they have put into this destination to bring it to where it is today in the media world. But with every closed chapter, a new one emerges, and we are excited to bring on our new PR agency, B Public Relations (BPR). BPR was started by a Cody local, and since grown into a well established PR agency. Through multiple rounds of interviews, they have already shown their dedication and enthusiasm to our destination, and we are excited to see where this new partnership takes us. Even so, we will have overlap with the Mesereau's and BPR so that the transition is flawless.

# SHOWING OFF

Cody Yellowstone is one of the best destinations in the country, and it's not just locals saying so. Readers of USA Today and Newsweek have voted for Cody again and again in "Readers' Choice" polls.

This recognition is the result of PCTC's disciplined, comprehensive marketing strategy and coordinated efforts to showcase the destination. Paired with the charm of local shops, welcoming accommodations, and unique attractions built by Park County's dedicated business owners, it makes for an unforgettable vacation that appeals across generations.

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

- Best in the Wild West, USA Today Top 10 small towns to visit in the Western US
- Top 20 True Western Towns, True West Magazine Top 10 True Western Towns
- Blackwater Creek Ranch, USA Today 10 best dude ranches in the United States
- Wyoming River trips, Newsweek, Best Whitewater Rafting 2026 - Newsweek
- 7D Ranch – Reviewed Readers' Choice Awards Best Guest Ranches of 2026 - Reviewed
- "Cody Yellowstone's Social Media is WILD Forever - Owned media" HSMAI AdrianAward entry has been crowned PLATINUM, which is the top honor in that category
- ESTO Award for Photography Workshop
- Cody Stampede was named 2025 PRCA Small Rodeo of the Year




*Michael and Katrina Accepting the ESTO Award*



# PCTC HELPS COMMUNITIES AND EVENTS PROMOTE THEMSELVES

Park County Travel Council promotes the entire county under the name "Cody Yellowstone," which includes Cody, Powell, Meeteetse, and the East Yellowstone Valley. Individual communities and nonprofits also receive matching grants to purchase their own advertising, and PCTC provides generous grants to the Cody, Powell, and Meeteetse visitor centers for staff, advertising, marketing, and website maintenance. Because Yellowstone National Park is not eligible for grants, its collections are used to enhance each community's grant and to fund the countywide marketing plan.

PCTC also sponsored 32 conventions, events, and sports tournaments in FY 2026, including:

**Run the Runway, WY Trucking Association, WY Wildlife - Beer, Bucks & Brookies, Stampede Parades, Cody Shooting - Clay Shoot, Cody Romance Roundup, Cody Legion Baseball - Summer Slam, YRA - Santa Fly-In, Wings n' Wheels, Plaza Diane Events, Powell's Oktoberfest, Cody Downtown Trick-or-Treating, Powell's Christmas Fest, Cody Cowboy Christmas, 2026 Winter Fiesta Swim Meet, The Haunt - CodyArts, Frontier Festival - 2026, Festival of Trees, Avalanche Training - 2026, WSSA Convention "Fun Day" - 2026, Wyoming Music Educators Conference, Wyoming Ice Festival , Cody Youth Basketball, Devilstone Run, Wild West River Fest, Yellowstone Fire Soccer, Cody Stampede Parade Committee, WY Sheep & Wool Festival, West Central Wool Growers Conv.,Summer Kickoff Street Dance, Summer Slam Baseball Tournament, Yellowstone Film Festival**

## PARK COUNTY TRAVEL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION AND BUDGET

The Park County Travel Council, known as Cody Yellowstone, administers the 4% Park County lodging tax, less a 10% share returned to the Park County Treasurer. State statute limits these funds to tourism promotion. Cody Yellowstone inspires overnight leisure travel from regional, national, and international markets, maximizing countywide economic impact through innovative marketing and partnership programs. These build on local and statewide industry support and focus on gap areas, shoulder seasons, and winter.



*Michael Wambolt*
*Executive Director*

Through a fully integrated campaign and ongoing measurement of consumer conversion paths across the trip planning lifecycle, we deliver responsive, personalized content that inspires travel to and within Park County. It also helps disperse visitors to lesser-known attractions and encourages shoulder season travel. We want travelers to see our areas outside the park as destinations in their own right, rich in history, authentic western experiences, world-class outdoor recreation, unique attractions, fresh food, vibrant art, scenic drives, and abundant wildlife.

Our mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within Park County, fueling market demand and a healthy tourism economy.

The Travel Council is a Joint Powers Board of ten volunteer members: four appointed by the Park County Commissioners, two each by the Cody and Powell city councils, one by the Meeteetse Town Council, and a Wyoming Tourism Board representative or designee. Budgets are funded by the previous year's lodging tax revenue.

Since 1896, Cody and Park County have welcomed travelers on their way to Yellowstone National Park. In Fiscal Year 2026, the Council named Michael Wambolt executive director, succeeding Ryan Hauck (2021–2025). Wambolt brings more than twenty years of tourism and hospitality experience across European and domestic markets, including five years as sales director for Visit SLO CAL and a term as executive director of Visit Morro Bay. He oversees marketing and sales strategy, the budget, regional partnerships, and administration. He and his wife, Jessica, enjoy the local trails, rafting, and mountain biking.

Katrina Southern was promoted to director of marketing in Fiscal Year 2026 after joining as marketing manager in 2022. She sets the direction of Cody Yellowstone's marketing program and oversees its execution, including campaign strategy and creative direction, agency coordination with Verb Interactive, social media, content and photo/video production, brand standards, website oversight, and public relations.

Amanda Keyes, executive administrator, supports the Executive Director and keeps daily operations running. Her work includes bookkeeping, board coordination, partner communications, event support, tourism information and digital resources, visitor guides and brochures, and help with grants, audits, and public relations.

# COMMUNITIES, COUNTY USE LODGING TAX DOLLARS

Park County generated $39.7 million in sales taxes in 2025. Over 32.6% of those taxes, $12.9 million, was generated by travelers. The local & state travel generated taxes relieved the tax burden on Park County residents by $1,910 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 FY2026, a total of $457,388.77 was returned to Park County for distribution to the City of Powell ($5,890.23), the City of Cody ($161,774.23), the Town of Meeteetse ($851.78) and Park County ($288,872.53).

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.

If you would like to find out more, please visit our YouTube channel and view our new lodging tax videos: **https://www.youtube.com/@yellowstonecountry**

SCAN ME