

**WE DON'T
TRAIN
THE
BISON**



GETTING YELLOWSTONE VISITORS TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE



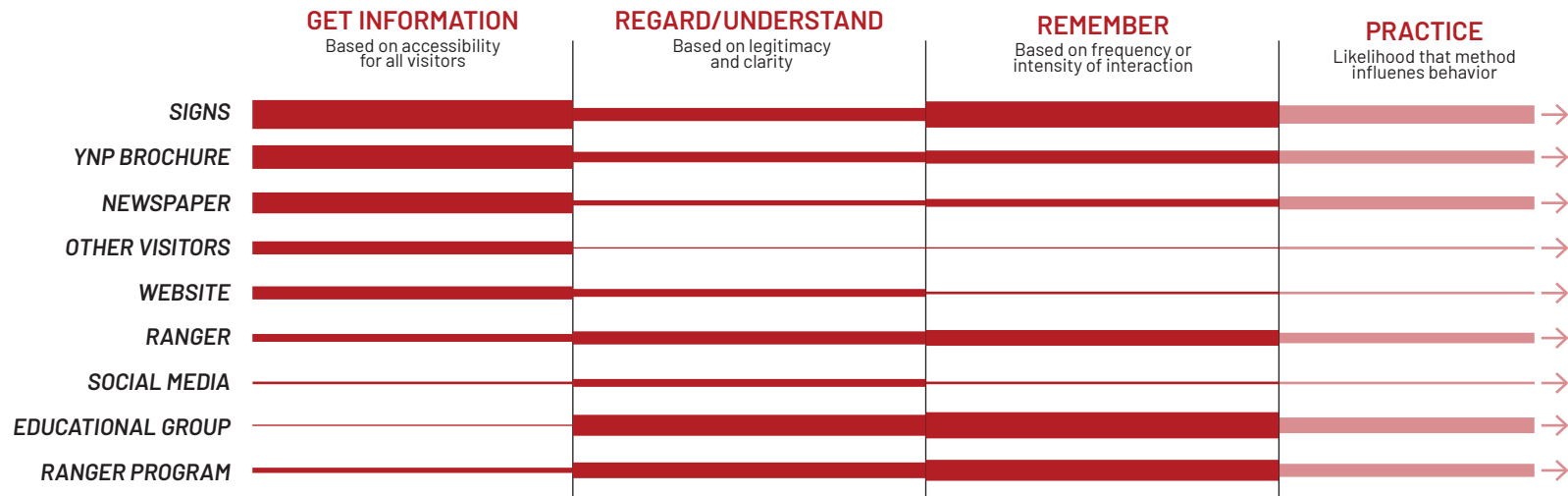
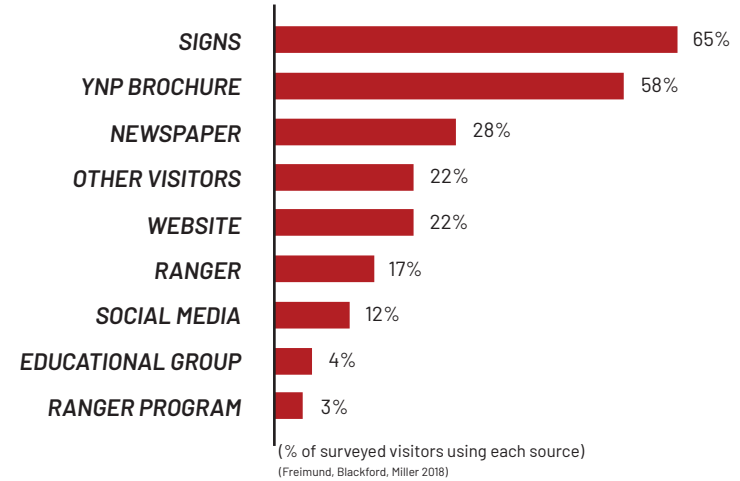
Yellowstone is full of ways to get hurt. Hundreds of people have died and thousands have been injured since the park's founding in 1872. So many natural features of the park are not found anywhere else in the world – even people who are familiar with outdoor recreation may be at risk from the unique dangers of the park. The continuous incidents of dangerous behavior make it clear that the current methods of providing warning are inadequate.

CURRENT SYSTEM

The existing rules and guidelines are actually very effective. The challenge is in getting visitors to remember and actually follow them.

Safety information is available all over the park in various platforms. They have a wide range of detail, accessibility, and type of information offered. But despite nearly every visitor encountering one or more of these sources of information, there are more people getting injured in the park than ever before.

IS IT GETTING TO PEOPLE?





via YNP Photo Archive

PROBLEMS COME FROM BOTH SIDES

It is easy to blame visitors for making poor choices. But park management has an opportunity and a responsibility to create an atmosphere that guides visitors to make decisions that protect themselves and the things they come in contact with.

Regulation Enforcement

Rules that are enforced inconsistently or not at all appear illegitimate. Visitors are more likely to break rules that appear to have little or no consequences

Education

Safety information is posted around the park, but it is oversimplified and easy to bypass. The people who need information the most are the ones who do not believe they need to pay attention to it.

Communicating Intent

Safety warnings are not meant to cause fear. They are a tool that lets visitors go into the wild with the peace of mind that they can protect themselves should they need to. It is a facilitator, not a restriction.

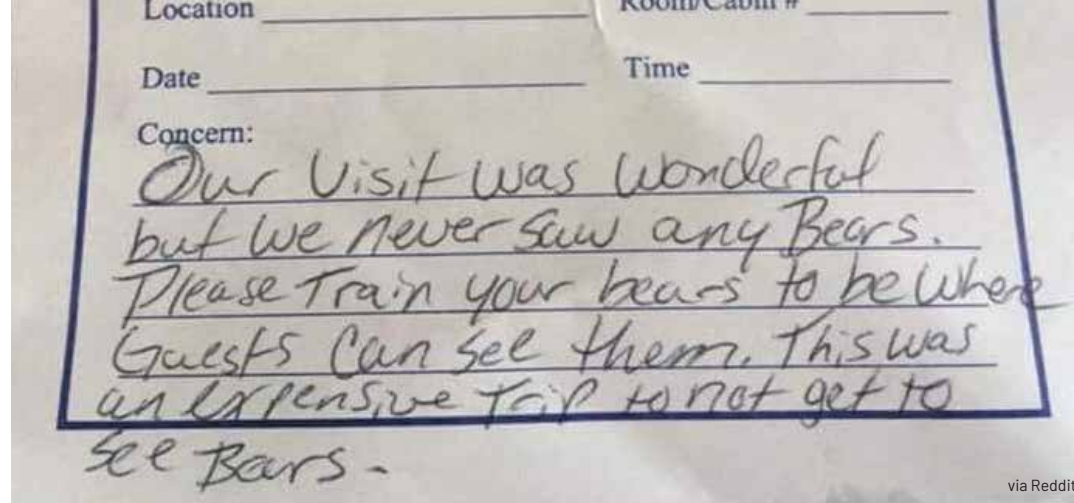
LIKE IT OR NOT, YOU'RE PART OF A GROUP

Efforts to maintain individuality in the experience keeps visitors from seeing the impact they may have on their surroundings. One person breaking a rule might not be a problem, but the people that follow them might be.

Visitors need to be aware that a crowd might make them feel protected or validate risky behavior, but it makes animals feel threatened or overwhelmed.



via YNP Photo Archive



THIS IS NOT AN AMUSEMENT PARK

It is easy to break the rules when you do not believe doing so will put you in any danger.

Most of us live in a very safe world that is designed to keep us protected. It is easy to assume that this park would be no different, especially when surrounded by crowds and infrastructure and traffic. The assumption that the park is a controlled environment makes many visitors see safety guidelines as excessive or illegitimate.



PERCEPTION AS A VARIABLE

A vital step in making a behavior choice is evaluating the external situation. Even those who understand they are in the “wild” may want to decide for themselves whether they are actually at risk of being injured.



SOCIAL

- Do I trust that the rules are 'right'?
- Are they fair?
- What is my outcome compared to others if I follow this rule?



PROCEDURAL

- Is the ranger making everybody follow this rule?
- Is this a legitimate rule or just an annoying barrier to what I want?
- Is the whole system bullshit?

CHANGE YOUR MIND

To change behavior we need to change perception— both of a specific situation and the whole system that surrounds it.

Pleasure Park

Hellscape

Nature Preserve

Predator

Zoo Animal

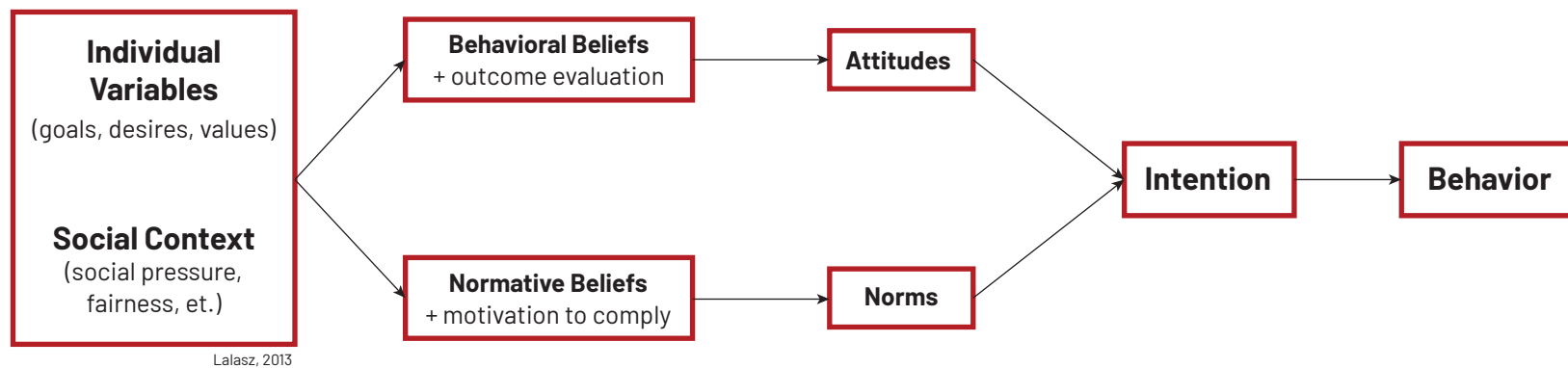
(Wild) Animal

Badass, Daring

Idiotic, Reckless

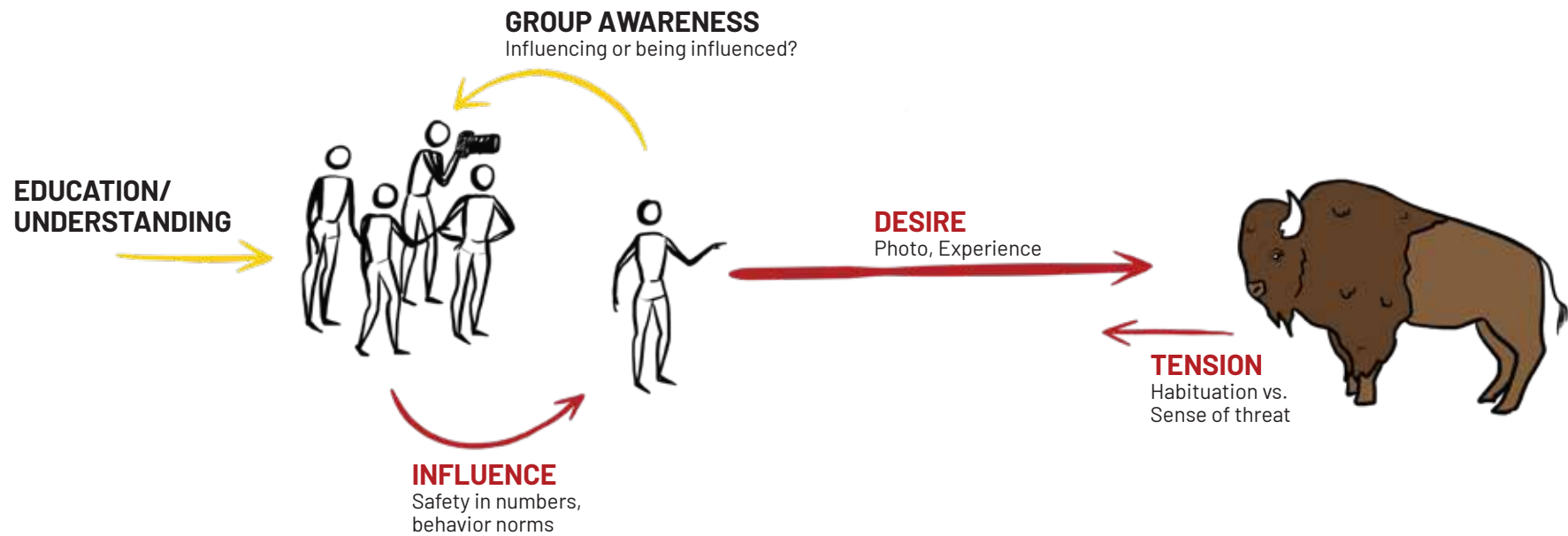
CAUSES OF RISKY BEHAVIOR

Information considered in a decision varies by person despite the process staying relatively the same.

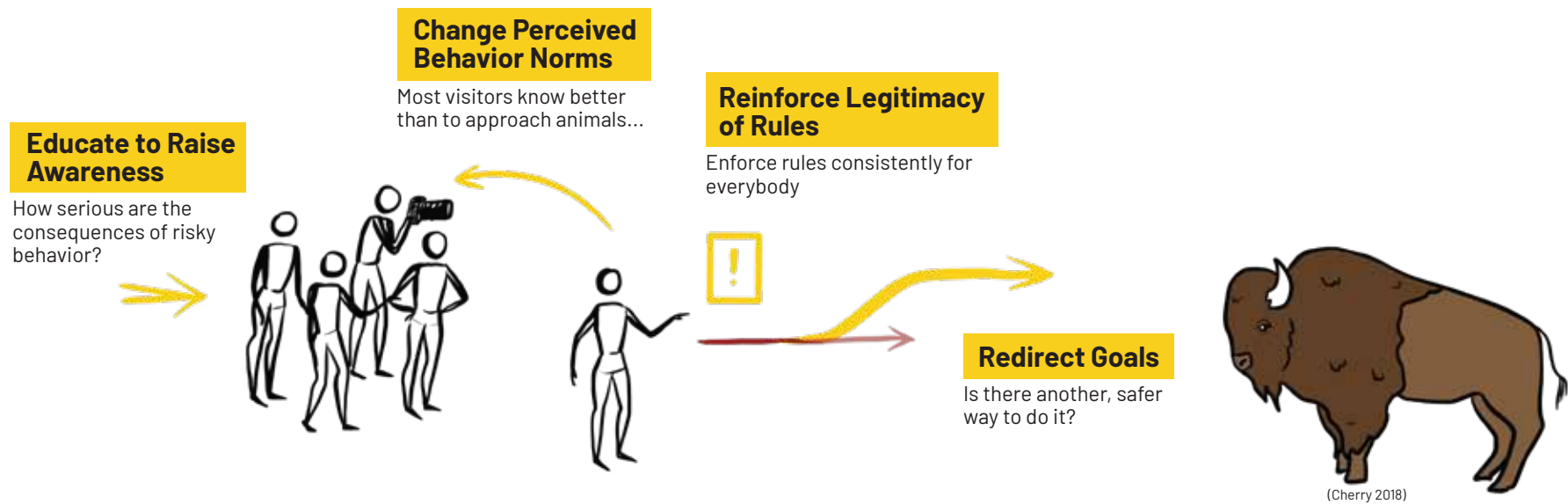


Which parts of the process can we control to encourage better behavior?

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS



HOW TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR



METHODS

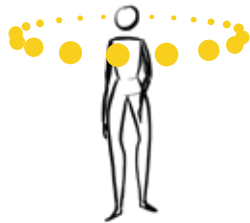
Simplicity

The fewer details there are, the easier they are to understand and remember.



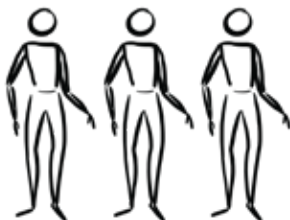
Accessibility

Information needs to be available to everyone, especially those who do not know they need it.



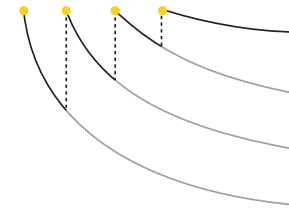
Demonstration

Safe behavior is easier to replicate when a visitor has seen or practiced it before. (Kok 2018)



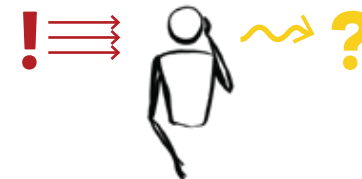
Repetition

Learned material is retained significantly longer the more it is reviewed (Ebbinghaus, 1885)



Attraction

Material is more likely to have a more positive response when visitors have a desire to interact with it (and do not feel it is being forced on them). (Kok 2018)



Caution, Not Fear

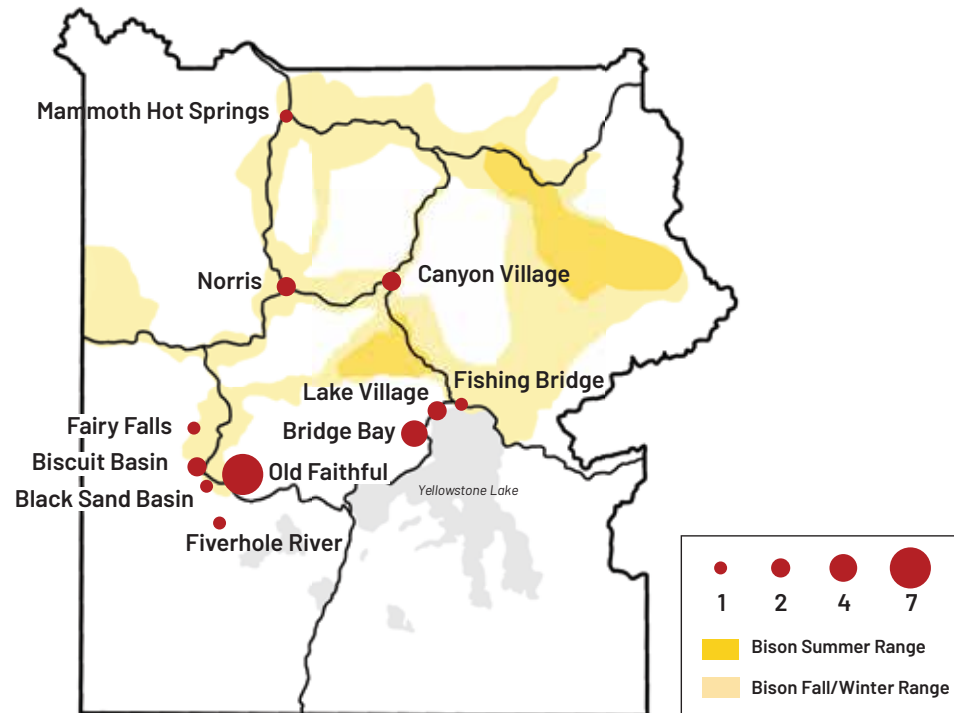
The rules should facilitate a safe experience, not intimidate visitors so badly they never leave the car.



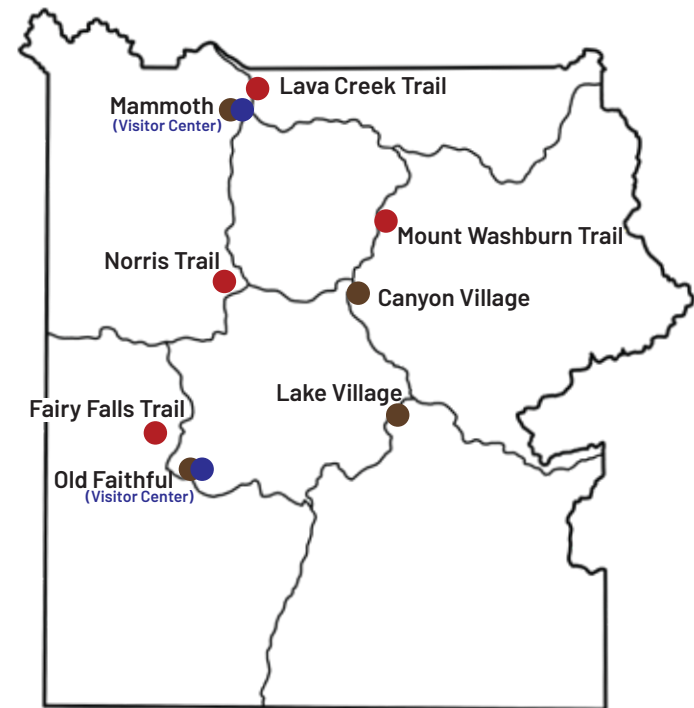
LOCATIONS

The system needs to be accessible to the people who need it the most.

Placement of interventions is based on locations where bison and other animal attacks have been or are more likely to happen. Almost every attack from the past decade has been in a crowded area, generally away from regular bison migration routes – suggesting that the concentration of people is more cause for concern than a concentration of bison.



via Cara Cherry and YNP



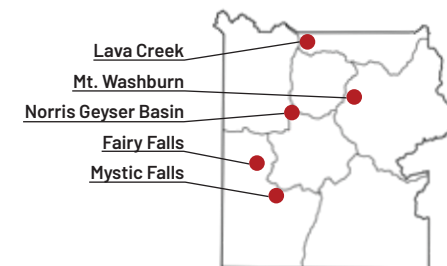
A short, simple introduction to the 25-yard rule. A sign at the beginning of a trail instructs visitors to stand and look for a second sign that is 25 yards down the path. They are reminded that this is the distance they should keep from animals.

Signs are double-sided so even if they are bypassed on the way in, there is a second opportunity to draw a visitor's attention on the way out.



via YNP Photo Archive

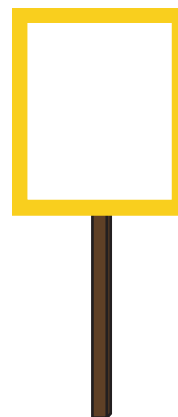
LOCATIONS



- Simple activity lets visitors engage without significant commitment of time or effort

- Distance measurement encourages familiarity with what 25 yards actually looks like in a different setting every time it is encountered

- Position on trailheads is more likely to reach visitors who may not be traveling to the more crowded areas



Aluminum Sign

Easily available, inexpensive, and maintains bright color.

Note: Alupalite is a more durable version, but is more expensive

18" x 22"

Wood Post

Easily available, inexpensive, and convenient to repair or replace when needed.

3" x 1.5" x 3'



Steel Sign

Larger for visibility at trailheads, extremely sturdy.

Note: At trailheads only, as it is more intrusive to the landscape

EXTENSION

Addition of a farther sign at 100 yards to show the distance measurement for bears. Only available for straight or high-visibility trails

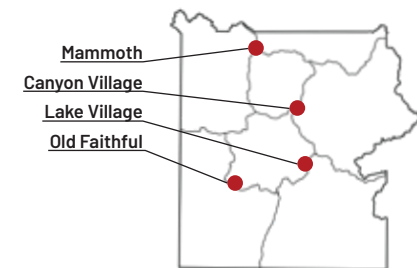
02 SIDEWALK

A colored stretch of sidewalk around more developed areas of the park. Along the path are signs with yard measurements as well as small facts related to each distance. The sign at 25 yards is a reminder of the distance rule.

Signs are again double-sided so they may be read while walking either direction. Text is short enough that most visitors will not have to stop walking to read.



LOCATIONS

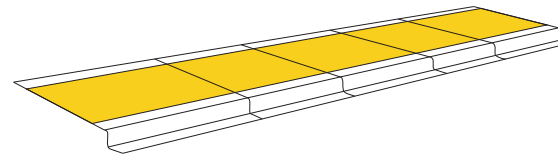


- Bright color change in walkway draws attention to activity

- Measurement comparisons help visitors to relate distances to things they are already familiar with

- Some signs reference consequences of breaking rules, so visitors can visualize them

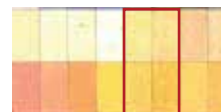
- Public display is more likely to start a conversation about safety among larger groups



Concrete Path

Standard sidewalk concrete dyed with integral color to be a bright yellow.

4' wide



Aluminum Signs

Signs are constructed with the same materials as Part 1 and are posted alongside the sidewalk.

10" x 12"

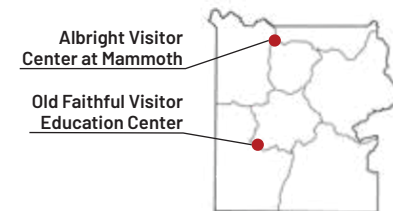
EXTENSION

Signs may be edited to include multiple languages, and some locations may include a 100-yard version.

03 VISITOR CENTER

A full-scale statue of a bison located outside the visitor centers in Mammoth and Old Faithful. The walkway is marked for 25 yards leading away from the statue with four red circular marks at 10, 20, 25, and 30 yards. The intent is for visitors to choose one of the points on the path that they believe is 25 yards, or their idea of a safe distance from the animal. In the busier summer season the installation is staffed by a ranger who facilitates the game and answers questions. In slower season or off hours when there may not be staff available, a sign posted next to the statue gives instructions for visitors to try the game on their own.

LOCATIONS



- Bison statue gives visitors a realistic sense of the animal size at a safe distance

- Guessing game points out how a visitor's assumption of distance compares to reality

- Posting a ranger at an interactive game provides a point of contact for them to share more detailed information

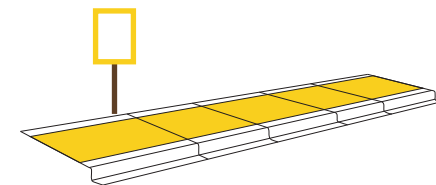
- Reward for guessing correctly incentivizes visitors to actually learn the distance measurement



Fiberglass + Resin Bison Statue

Durable, weather-resistant cast material. Maintains paint color well and allows for sculptural detail. Representative of an adult male.

6' x 8'



Path + Sign

Similar construction to Parts 1 and 2. Circular points are 2' in diameter and dyed red.

EXTENSION

Mammoth installation may have an elk rather than a bison, as they are more common in that area. Photo stand may be added for later visual reference.



A logo and phrase, “We Don’t Train the Bison” that can be distributed on a wide variety of platforms. Minor adjustments can be made based on product, but branding is meant to spark curiosity and trigger memory as needed. This gives visitors another opportunity to engage with the entire system and to continue interaction with it outside the park boundaries.

A version of the logo on a sticker acts as the reward for the game at the park visitor centers.



- Simple graphics are easy to replicate on a wide range of products

- Product platform facilitates memory triggers for learned behavior, and acts as a gateway to others who are unfamiliar with the message

- Popularity outside the park contributes to a cultural perception shift about wildlife



Main Logo

Standard version is a red square, with white lettering and a bison illustration. Bison is in an action pose as a warning. Lettering is bold and simple so it is easy to resize while remaining legible.



Minimized Graphic

Simplified illustration, to assist making the branding more flexible.

EXTENSION

Branding can be extended to the other parts of the platform, to create more repetitive association and memory triggers.



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