

TOWN OF WEST YELLOWSTONE

Dear Governor Bullock,

As you are well aware, the Town of West Yellowstone's economy is 100% tourism driven. West Yellowstone is the main entrance/exit into Yellowstone National Park and accounts for 48% of the tourists visiting the Park. The population of the community goes from 1,300 year around residents to 16,000 in the peak summer months.

Tourism, just in West Yellowstone, directly generates hundreds of millions of dollars for the State of Montana's economy. Almost 75% of all revenue generated in the West Yellowstone economy is received during the months of June, July, August and September. The COVID-19 pandemic quarantine provisions, if left in place, have the potential to decimate our business community, local government operations, and overall economy. The Town of West Yellowstone is humbly requesting the following.

1. As soon as possible, provide the Town an opening date in which you are planning on repeal the 14-day quarantine order allowing our economy to open to tourists from outside the State of Montana. This will allow our local business community to start hiring their seasonal labor force, purchasing supplies, and ramping up their marketing efforts for the upcoming season.
2. The State needs to provide financial assistance to support the testing and triage of community members, seasonal workers and tourists that exhibit symptoms of the COVID-19 virus. This will be key to keep our work force healthy, protect our residents, limit potential community spread, and prevent state wide transmission of the virus.
3. Additional financial assistance is needed to support local quarantine measures for potential COVID-19 suspects and identify patients. The Town of West Yellowstone has limited housing for seasonal workers and staff which leads to congregate housing of employees. Employees who have been identified as suspect or positive will need to be quarantined until cleared by public health officials. This will be done utilizing various property scattered throughout the Town.

Governor Bullock, The Town of West Yellowstone is hereby requesting the lifting of the restrictions on out of state tourists and providing the necessary funding to establish the appropriate protective measures for our community.

Jerry Johnson, Mayor
Brad Schmier, Deputy Mayor
Greg Forsythe, Council Member
Jeff Mathews, Council Member
Travis Watt, Council Member
Daniel Sabolsky, Town Manager

