

**CHARTER
WHITEBARK PINE
GYCC SUBCOMMITTEE
JANUARY, 2006**

Introduction

Whitebark pine is a keystone plant species of high elevation, upper subalpine ecosystems. Whitebark pine is one of the least common conifer species found in the Greater Yellowstone area (GYA). It is widely distributed throughout the GYA, though in low densities. Whitebark pine plays an important ecological role in moderating spring floods and intercepting high elevation snowfield runoff. As food, it is an unmatched resource in its distribution and nutritional value to Clark's nutcracker, grizzly bears and red squirrels.

This important species is currently declining throughout its range due to a combination of mountain pine beetle, white pine blister rust and replacement by other conifers due to fire exclusion. Due to the ecological importance of whitebark pine, and its occurrence primarily on public lands, its conservation depends on understanding the biology, threats to its existence and restoration in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

Subcommittee Purpose and Scope

Mission: **Create a collaboration of land managers, scientists and other whitebark pine experts that leads to the long-term viability and function of whitebark pine ecosystems in the Greater Yellowstone Area**

The Whitebark Pine Subcommittee will facilitate overall coordination and collaboration of understanding whitebark pine throughout the public lands of the GYA while providing technical advice and guidance to the GYCC and their staff. The role of the Subcommittee will include:

- Providing information and technical guidance to the 10 GYCC Federal units on matters related to whitebark pine
- Serving as a forum for exchange of information and ideas between the 10 GYCC Federal units about whitebark pine
- Creating a scale for efficient implementation of practices across the region that facilitates the leveraging of resources (including grant writing), expertise and outcomes beyond the accomplishments of any one unit
- Showcasing projects in a variety of areas

The Subcommittee will exist as long as it provides useful service to the GYCC

Subcommittee Organization and Membership

A Chair and a Vice-Chair will be selected from the overall Subcommittee membership. The Chair will have a 3 year term. The Vice-Chair will rotate into the Chair position for consistency. Chair and Vice-Chair positions will be selected by the members. Chair's responsibilities include taking the lead on advancing Subcommittee objectives, facilitating and tracking annual accomplishments, scheduling, developing and facilitating meetings, serve as liaison between Subcommittee and GYCC and coordinating correspondence and communication on behalf of the Subcommittee. Vice-Chair will fill in and support the Chair whenever needed.

The **Membership** for the GYCC Whitebark Pine Subcommittee is open to all agency and nonagency individuals interested in the knowledge and management of whitebark pine in the GYA. Individuals interested in participating with this group are encouraged to attend the annual meetings, and participate on specific working groups and will be included in a GYCC Whitebark Pine Group mailing list to coordinate efforts toward GYA whitebark pine subcommittee mission.

In addition to general participation of the GYCC Whitebark Pine Subcommittee, a **Formal Subcommittee Membership** will include one representative from each GYCC unit. Responsibilities of formal Subcommittee Representatives include voting, final input into Subcommittee decisions and attendance of each annual meeting. Members of varied disciplines are welcome and viewed as strength to the Subcommittee.

Formal Subcommittee Representatives will be limited to GYCC Unit representation unless the Subcommittee membership determines otherwise. It is recognized that other Federal Agencies, private sector businesses, political organizations, or nonprofits already exist with whitebark pine interests. These entities will be essential to the work and overall success of the Subcommittee. Therefore, non-GYCC Unit entities will be able to participate in the Subcommittee as a member and in an informational consulting role.

Working groups necessary to accomplish the Subcommittee goals and implement projects for specific topic areas will be formed and include representation from membership and other entities. Each working group will be expected to work on specific objectives, within specific timelines. It is recognized that these working groups will be integral to exchanging information and ideas across both private and public sectors of the GYA as well as obtaining funding for project implementation.

Subcommittee Logistics

The Whitebark Pine Subcommittee shall meet at least once a year and rotate meeting locations around the GYA. All Formal Subcommittee Members or a designated replacement must attend. Necessary communication will be scheduled as needed to conduct Subcommittee business. Working groups will communicate and meet on an as needed basis.