



READING GROUP GUIDE

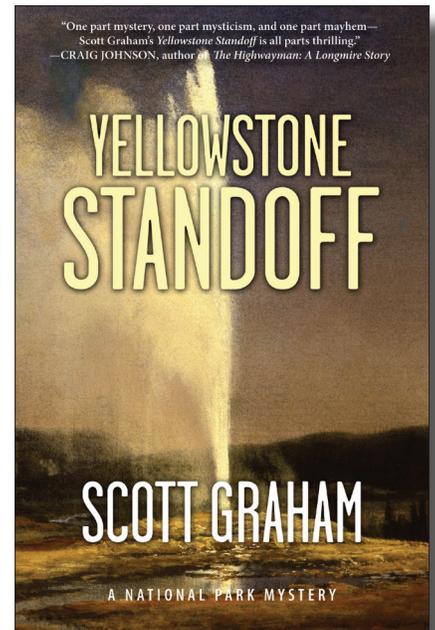
YELLOWSTONE STANDOFF

a National Park Mystery
by Scott Graham

Introduction

When Yellowstone National Park's grizzly bears and gray wolves suddenly and inexplicably go rogue, archaeologist Chuck Bender teams with his old friend, Yellowstone Chief Ranger Lex Hancock, to defend the suspect members of a group scientific expedition. On an archaeological assignment, Chuck has brought his two young stepdaughters and wife, Janelle, along for some family time in the popular park. Soon, however, Chuck finds himself defending the lives of his family as an unforeseen danger threatens deep in the storied national park's remote wilderness.

The third installment in Scott Graham's National Park Mystery series raises the question: how far would you go to protect the places and people you love—and at what expense? *Yellowstone Standoff* explores a side of Yellowstone never before seen, where technology and wildness collide in a spine-tingling page-turner in which no one—man nor beast—is what they seem.



"One part mystery, one part mysticism, and one part mayhem—Scott Graham's *Yellowstone Standoff* is all parts thrilling."

—CRAIG JOHNSON, author of the Longmire Mysteries, basis for the hit Netflix series

"You know when a reader says they couldn't put the book down? *Yellowstone Standoff* is one of those rare books...a *tour de force*."

—WIN BLEVINS, two-time Spur Award-winning author of *The Darkness Rolling*

"Bears and wolves in Yellowstone's backcountry don't hold a candle to the danger posed by the people sent there to study them...[*Yellowstone Standoff* balances] potential danger and shady characters."

—KIRKUS REVIEWS

Yellowstone Standoff

Conversation Starters

- As discussed in *Yellowstone Standoff*, climate change is leaving its mark in Yellowstone National Park in the form of disappearing glaciers and beetle-decimated forests. What, if anything, should be done in response?
- The scientists in *Yellowstone Standoff* go to drastic measures to act on their environmental concerns. What levels and types of protest—legal activities, illegal activities, somewhere in between—are acceptable to call attention to environmental problems in America today?
- Despite the risks in doing so, Chuck Bender clearly favors exposing his stepdaughters to the wilderness as much as possible. In today's world, dominated by indoor work and computer screens, how dedicated should parents be to assuring their children are exposed to the outdoors?
- How does *Yellowstone Standoff* touch upon the often-conflicting issues of energy extraction and environmental preservation? How best should the line be drawn between the two? Who should be allowed to participate in drawing that line—only residents of the West, or all American citizens?
- Many residents of the West favor removing gray wolves and grizzly bears from the protections afforded them through the Endangered Species Act. Should such “de-listing” of wolves and grizzlies be allowed to take place? Why or why not?
- The struggle is ongoing for wilderness sovereignty between wild animals and humans. Should predators such as wolves and grizzlies be allowed free rein in the West, or are certain controls necessary? If the latter, what controls might be necessary? Hunting and culling of predators? Fencing national park boundaries? Other ideas?
- Which character (human or animal!) in *Yellowstone Standoff* did you find yourself sympathizing with the most?
- Yellowstone and other national parks are breaking records, year after year, for numbers of annual visitors. Despite the parks' environmental fragility, however, no limits have yet been set on the number of visitors allowed to visit any particular park. At what point will visitor limitations be necessary to preserve and protect America's national parks? Or is the parks' value to humans so great that no limits should ever be set?
- The manmade hot-spring soaking pool described in *Yellowstone Standoff* is fictional. Indeed, any and all enhancements of natural hot springs for soaking purposes are outlawed in the park, even deep in the backcountry. Is that rule and other rules aimed at halting any and all development in parks' backcountry justified? Why or why not?
- Although *Yellowstone Standoff* is, of course, fiction, the geography in it is mostly real. For those readers who have visited Yellowstone: did you recognize areas of the park as described in the book? Did reading the book bring back any memories?

Praise for *Yellowstone Standoff*

"With sweeping landscapes, engaging characters, and a twisted plot, Scott Graham's *Yellowstone Standoff* is a must-read mystery that's hard to set down."

—MARGARET MIZUSHIMA, author of *Killing Trail: A Timber Creek K-9 Mystery*

"*Yellowstone Standoff* takes man versus nature—and man tangled up with nature—right to the brink of wild suspense."

—MARK STEVENS, Colorado Book Award-winning author of *Lake of Fire*

About Scott Graham

Scott Graham is the author of seven books, including *Canyon Sacrifice* and *Mountain Rampage*, books one and two in the National Park Mystery Series from Torrey House Press, and *Extreme Kids*, winner of the National Outdoor Book Award. Like most visitors to America's first national park, Graham was awestruck by Yellowstone as a child. His fascination with the park has continued in the years since, with numerous visits to Yellowstone's geyser- and wildlife-filled front country and its incomparable wilderness. Graham is an avid outdoorsman and amateur archaeologist who enjoys mountaineering, skiing, hunting, rock climbing, and whitewater rafting with his wife, who is an emergency physician, and their two sons. He lives in Durango, Colorado.



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Scott is available to discuss *Yellowstone Standoff* with reading groups in person or via Skype. For more information, email anne@torreyhouse.com.

Torrey House Press

Conservation through Literature

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