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Estes Park Expands Seasonal Free Shuttle Service

Following its first full season of success, Town officials have approved several adding to the free Shopper Shuttle system that begins operations on June 30.

Shuttles will operate daily through Labor Day. After Sept. 3, the Shuttles will operate on Saturdays and Sundays through September, and addition of eight days over regular service in 2006.

Under the contract with Rocky Mountain Transit Company, operators of the system, a third route covering the southern reaches of the area has been added. The new route travels Colorado Hwy. 7 to Peak View Avenue. At Marys Lake Road, the shuttles will travel northbound to National Park Village, then West along Colorado Hwy. 66. With an intermediate stop at Rocky Mountain National Park's Beaver Meadows Visitor Center the shuttle will head for the core downtown area and the Estes Park Visitors Center.

Other minor route variations also have been made. A stop in lower Stanley Village has been added to the Big Thompson Avenue route and the shuttle operating on Elkhorn Avenue exchanges a stop in the Performance Park parking lot for one that services West Park Center.

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To assist riders in knowing which shuttle to board, Estes Park named each route of the Shopper Shuttle. Names of the route will be displayed on the exterior variable signage on the front of the shuttle. “Blue” signifies the shuttle that runs east of the Visitors Center on Big Thompson Ave. The “Red” route travels Elkhorn Avenue and the “Brown” route is the designation for the newest loop.

The Big Thompson and Elkhorn Avenue routes again will operate on 30-minute intervals while the Brown Route makes stops in hour-long intervals. Departure times for each stop are shown on the Shuttle maps as well as on Shuttle bus signage at each stop. Maps showing details of the routes will be available after June 1.

The Town-sponsored shuttles remain connected to Rocky Mountain National Park’s express Hiker Shuttle that transports people from the Visitors Center to the Park & Ride lot on Bear Lake Road. The first Shopper Shuttle departs from the Estes Park Visitors Center at 8 am and the last shuttle of the day will arrive at the Visitors Center at 10 am. Riders can board the shuttles at stops designated on the map.

The express Hiker Shuttle route operates daily from June 30 through Sept. 3, and Friday and Saturday through September on an hourly schedule. First Hiker Shuttle leaves the Estes Park Visitors Center at 6:30 a.m. and the last bus leaves the Park & Ride (inside the National Park) at 8 p.m. on all scheduled days. A park pass is required to enter Rocky Mountain National Park. Park passes can be purchased at automated fee machines located at the Town of Estes Park Visitors Center and the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center. Moraine Park & Glacier Basin campers can use the route to visit Estes Park. To return to those campgrounds, the last shuttle of the day that leaves the Estes Park Visitors Center departs at 7:30 pm. The route to & from the park is the same as last year.

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