



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier National Park
International Peace Park
Biosphere Reserve
World Heritage Site

P.O. Box 128
West Glacier, MT 59936
www.nps.gov/glac

406 888-7800 phone
406 888-7808 fax

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Amy Vanderbilt 406 888- 5838
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Apgar Transit Center Receives LEED® Gold Certification

Environmentally sensitive design and construction includes landscaping, visitor education, transit

WEST GLACIER, MONT. – Officials at Glacier National Park have received formal notification from S. Richard Fedrizzi, President, CEO and Founding Chairman of the U.S. Green Building Counsel (USGBC) that the Apgar Transit Center (ATC) has achieved the Gold certification level under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for New Construction program from the USGBC. The LEED Green Building Rating System is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.

According to the congratulatory correspondence received by Park Superintendent Chas Cartwright from Fedrizzi, “LEED certification identifies the ATC as a pioneering example of sustainable design and demonstrates your leadership in transforming the building industry. In honor of this impressive achievement and in appreciation of your participation in LEED, we are pleased to present you with the enclosed certificates recognizing your accomplishment. “

“We are very pleased and proud of this certification,” said Cartwright. “The design and construction team was diligent to incorporate sustainable design and construction practices and technologies throughout the project.”

The National Park Service (NPS) opened the new 5,400 square foot transit center in July 2007 to serve visitors utilizing the new Going- to- the- Sun Road shuttle system that operates between July and Labor Day between the ATC on Glacier’s west side and the St. Mary Visitor Center on the east side.

As a first step toward the LEED Green Building certification, park managers registered the project with the USGBC. To achieve LEED certification, documentation demonstrating that the project has successfully met the sustainable design and performance criteria set forth within the LEED Green Building Rating System™ was submitted, reviewed, and approved by USGBC.



Using energy analysis early in the design process, space heating was determined to be the project's largest potential energy consumption, followed by lighting.

The architects responded by integrating day lighting and shading strategies into the passive design of the building form. The location and size of windows and shading devices were tuned to the Northern Montana climate to optimize daylight and allow heat gain when it is most needed in winter, while keeping the building shaded and cool during the summer. Envelope insulation, high- performance glazing, and daylight sensitive lighting controls further reduce the energy building's energy load. Much less heat is required and is provided through an efficient radiant baseboard system. In summer months, the dry climate lends itself to the effectiveness of efficient evaporative cooling.

The site design includes onsite storm water treatment, and native landscaping which eliminates the need for irrigation. Seeds of native plants in the construction site area were harvested and cultivated in an outstanding effort to replicate the exact microclimate of native vegetation creating a landscape that supports local ecology. Live plants were also salvaged, stored, and replanted after construction, including grasses, bushes, and trees up to 10 feet tall.

Cartwright further noted, "The ATC extends the park experience through its educational signage program, pedestrian paths connecting visitors to trails and the Apgar Campground, and free shuttles that have drastically reduced the operation of vehicles within the park. Beyond this LEED certified building, the park staff has continued to demonstrate its commitment to pursuing green solutions through a park- wide transportation plan, recycling, various initiatives fostered by the park's Green Team and investigation of potential energy efficiencies and retrofits for existing park buildings."

The ATC was designed by DHM Design Corporation of Denver, Colo. and was constructed by James Talcott Construction of Great Falls, Mont.

The LEED certification plaque will be placed on permanent display in the ATC." LEED® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Green Building Council.

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Editor's Note: Digital images of the construction, native landscaping and educational signage are available upon request from the Public Affairs Office.