



## Architecture Backgrounder

**Built: 1994**

**Architect: Fentress Architects**

**Size: 51,000 square feet**

In 1984, 10 founding trustees chose Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with its abundant wildlife, beautiful mountain setting, and high tourism, as a unique and appropriate setting for an art museum focused on images of wildlife. The original museum opened as Wildlife of the American West Art Museum on May 16, 1987, on Jackson's Town Square.

By 1992, the Museum had outgrown its three-gallery, 5,000-square-foot storefront. A capital campaign was launched to raise \$10 million for a new facility and \$2 million for an operating endowment. In September 1994, the new facility opened under the National Museum of Wildlife Art name in a 51,000-square-foot state-of-the-art building designed by award-winning Denver-based Fentress Architects ([FentressArchitects.com](http://FentressArchitects.com)); the new space allowed for expanded exhibition space, museum programs, and educational programming.

Situated on a dramatic bluff overlooking the Jackson National Elk Refuge, the National Museum of Wildlife Art appears to emerge from the earth like a natural outcropping of rock. The Museum's location provides a rare opportunity to view wildlife in its natural habitat, as does the artwork that pays tribute to it.

Constructed of rough sandstone to blend seamlessly into Jackson Hole's native terrain, the building captures and reflects the area's natural beauty in a structure that is original, contextually relevant, and timeless. Green design highlights include the use of timber salvaged from the Yellowstone fire in construction of the building, "earth sheltering" to reduce exposure to the harsh winter climate, careful siting to minimize impact on the land and maximize blending with the native rock outcropping, and all storm water retained and treated on-site.

Although the red Arizona sandstone and low profile of the building are reminiscent of the ancient architecture of the desert Southwest, the profile of the Museum's building was inspired by the ruins of Slains Castle in Aberdeenshire, Scotland

Media Contacts: Darla Worden, WordenGroup Strategic Public Relations, 307.734.5335, [darla@wordenpr.com](mailto:darla@wordenpr.com); Zeenie Scholz, National Museum of Wildlife Art, 307.732.5437, [zscholz@wildlifeart.org](mailto:zscholz@wildlifeart.org)