



Tioga Road Rehabilitation Project - Update

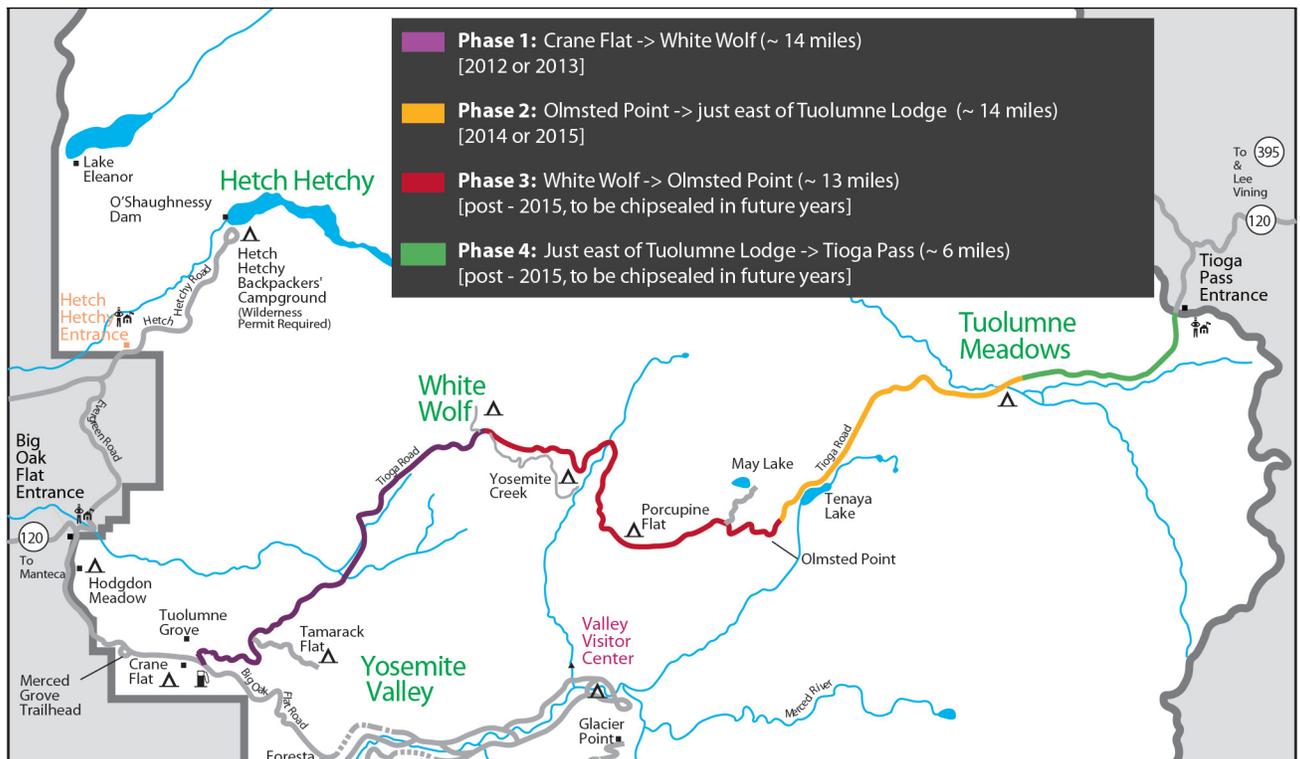
The National Park Service is developing an environmental assessment (EA) to study rehabilitating approximately 40 miles of the Tioga Road. The primary goal of this project is to make safety improvements, while preserving the natural and cultural resources along the road corridor. This road provides access to Tuolumne Meadows, Tioga Pass, U.S. Route 395 and numerous popular trailheads including: John Muir, Pacific Crest, Yosemite Creek, Lukens Lake, and others beginning in Tuolumne Meadows.

Following the public scoping period in winter 2010 comments were analyzed. A scoping report is available on the park's website: www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/tioga_rehab.htm

In June 2010 an internal field review was conducted and it was determined that an additional section of roadway should be rehabilitated within this project. This proposed section is located east of Olmsted Point and extends to the east end of Tuolumne Meadows (indicated below for Phase 2).

This additional section is located through the Tuolumne Meadows corridor and will solely address the resurfacing and repaving of the current road, and will not alter or affect roadside parking. Decisions made through the Tuolumne River Planning effort will determine what specific actions will be taken throughout the Tuolumne Meadows area.

Location



Project

The proposed project includes restoring the roadbed, repaving, restoring ditches and shoulders, and replacing undersized or failing culverts to facilitate drainage. Historic stone culvert headwalls would be maintained or carefully removed and reconstructed to accommodate culvert replacement. In addition to culverts, drainage ditches along this segment are in need of reconstruction to help facilitate proper drainage of the roadway. Selective thinning of roadside trees would improve sight distance and prevent root penetration into the roadway, which is currently causing upheavals in the shoulder and paved roadway surface. Thinning of trees would also reduce ice build-up on the road, and reduce snow plow damage and interference.

Why

This road is a primary east-west scenic route across the Sierra Nevada with high traffic volume during the peak summer and fall seasons, providing access to Tuolumne Meadows, Tioga Pass, U.S. Route 395 and numerous popular trailheads including: John Muir, Pacific Crest, Yosemite Creek, Lukens Lake, and others beginning in Tuolumne Meadows.

Rehabilitation of this scenic road is necessary to make safety improvements, while preserving natural and cultural resources along the road. This segment of the Tioga Road has not been fully repaved in over 40 years and has significantly deteriorated due to poor drainage and subsurface erosion. Visitor safety would be improved by resurfacing, replacing failing culverts, making minor grade adjustments to steep cross slopes, and cleaning and restoring shoulders to their original width. The project will consider methods to improve driving visibility along the roadway.



Cracking and deteriorating asphalt on the Tioga Road can undermine the road's structure and cause potential safety hazards.

Project Elements

Project alternatives are currently being developed. Public scoping for this project occurred during February and March 2010. Issues and concerns identified during scoping are being utilized to develop up to three reasonable and feasible action alternatives, to be analyzed in detail in the Tioga Road Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment (EA).

The public review and comment period for the environmental assessment is scheduled for the spring 2011. Comments on the EA will be used to prepare a final document. If approved, the rehabilitation of the Tioga Road would likely begin in the Summer 2012 and continue through 2016.

Your Part in the Process

Public participation is essential for the success of this and all other park improvement projects.

You can learn more about this and other projects online at the National Park Service Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) site. This site provides access to current plans, environmental impact analyses, and related documents on public review. Access the site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yose/>.

Public review of the environmental assessment will occur spring 2011.
To stay involved with this project:

Attend a public site visit on October 29, 2010. The meeting will be held over the course of the day in two different locations to discuss the different aspects of this project.

10:00 - 11:00 am: Meet at the South Fork Bridge turnout (approximately seven miles east of Crane Flat)
12:00 - 1:00 pm: Meet at the Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center parking lot

Please join us to learn what the park has planned for the road and share your ideas about future improvements. Bring water, comfortable walking shoes, and a lunch or snacks if you plan to stay for both portions of the meeting. Plan to dress in layers as the weather in October can vary, especially at the high elevations along the Tioga Road.

Visit online: www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/tioga_rehab.htm