

Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment



Public Scoping Concerns and Responses Report



**National Park Service
Yosemite National Park
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Introduction

This report summarizes public scoping comments submitted on the proposed Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment (EA). Public scoping comments will be used to assist the park in developing a range of reasonable and feasible project alternatives that meet the purpose and need, including a no action alternative, and then analyzing the environmental effects of each alternative. A 30-day public scoping period for this EA extended from January 14, 2009 through February 13, 2009. Comments were invited for submission by mail, fax, email, through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) system, and on comment forms that were available at Badger Pass Ski Lodge and Yosemite Lodge for the duration of the scoping period. Two comment boxes were placed at the central area of the main ski lodge and at the tour activity desk of Yosemite Lodge. In addition, two public meetings were held: a public open house on January 28, 2009 in the Valley Visitor Center Auditorium in Yosemite Valley and a public scoping meeting on Friday, February 6, 2009 in the Snow Flake Room at Badger Pass Ski Lodge. The purpose of these meetings was to inform interested parties about the proposed project and solicit comments from members of the public in order to understand the spectrum concerns, interests, and issues that need to be addressed in the planning process. During the scoping period, 44 letters were received, generating almost 200 individual comments. This draft report provides a summary of concerns expressed in these letters.

Project Background

The project area is located at an elevation of 7,200 feet at the Badger Pass Ski Area, midway between Wawona and Yosemite Valley in Yosemite National Park. The ski lodge is situated in Monroe Meadow on the south side of Glacier Point Road, approximately 5.1 miles east of Chinquapin, and is accessible year round via Glacier Point Road. Since its construction in 1935, Badger Pass Ski Lodge has supported winter recreation at the Badger Pass Ski Area. The Badger Pass Ski Lodge is historically significant as the first downhill ski lodge in California, and for its connection with the introduction of what was then a predominantly European sport to the state. Additionally, the site is a component landscape of the Glacier Point Road Historic District. A Badger Pass Ski Lodge Historic Structure Report and a Badger Pass Ski Area Cultural Landscape Report are currently being prepared to evaluate the properties' eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The draft reports recommend that the Badger Pass Historic Site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to correct structural and design deficiencies that are contributing to the deterioration of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and/or are affecting visitor services, and to support the park management goals for Badger Pass by maintaining opportunities for family-oriented downhill skiing and other forms of winter recreation at Badger Pass. This project is needed to:

- Assure visitor and employee safety
- Maintain and protect the integrity of the historic Badger Pass Ski Lodge and character-defining features of the Badger Pass cultural landscape
- Maintain and protect natural resources
- Maintain ski lodge operations and service functions

- Protect the winter recreation visitor experiences at the Badger Pass Ski Area

This rehabilitation project would repair and stabilize deteriorated structural and exterior elements to prevent further damage, and contribute to full rehabilitation of the ski lodge and associated support facilities.

Public Scoping Comment Review

Public scoping letters received during the scoping period are reviewed and analyzed in a series of stages which require review and assessment by staff. For example, each letter received is read to determine the discrete points expressed by the author, each of which is considered to be a “comment.” Each discrete comment is then “coded” in order to associate that comment with a particular resource topic or element of the plan (such as cultural resources or the plan’s relationship to other projects).

Once all letters have been coded for individual comments, similar comments are grouped together and a “concern statement” is generated, which is intended to capture the main points expressed by the comments. Concern statements are worded in a way that affords the National Park Service the opportunity to respond to a requested action. The National Park Service planning team then screens each concern statement to determine if it is within the scope of the project, and prepares responses presenting the National Park Service’s reasoning as to how and why concerns will be incorporated into the planning process.

The purpose of the screening process is to identify what types of concerns were raised, whether a concern is in or out of a project’s proposed scope of work, and how the planning team should address comments in the environmental assessment. An “In Scope” screening code was assigned to those concerns that will likely be addressed in the environmental assessment. An “Out of Scope” screening code was assigned to those concerns that were determined to be beyond the purpose and need, or “scope” of this project.

Results of Public Scoping

During the 30-day public scoping period, the park received 44 individual letters from 40 individuals and 4 organizations. The analysis of these letters identified almost 200 discrete comments, from which 78 general concern statements were generated. Some of the main public scoping concerns submitted to the National Park Service to consider for this project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Maintain the historic integrity and rustic character of the ski lodge
- Improve the ski lodge to accommodate visitor use
- Protect natural and cultural resources

All comments received during the scoping period have been duly considered and are now part of the administrative record for this project. The public scoping letters can be viewed on the park’s web site at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/badgerlodge.htm>.

How To Use This Document

This Public Scoping Report is divided into two sections. The section titled “In Scope” provides a list of scoping concerns, by topic, that will likely be addressed in the project alternatives

within the environmental assessment. The second section, titled “Out of Scope,” lists all scoping concerns that were determined to be beyond the stated purpose and need, or “scope,” of this project.

Concerns presented under each topic include “supporting quotes,” which are verbatim excerpts from individual public scoping letters. These supporting quotes are followed by comment author attributes, such as whether the comment author was an individual or an organization (if an organization – a general description of the organization type), the city and state of residence of the comment author, and the assigned letter and comment number. For example, “(Individual, Merced, CA - #7-3)” is a letter from an individual in Merced, California – which was the seventh letter received, and the third coded comment from that specific letter.

Each concern and associated supporting comments are followed by a response that addresses how the National Park Service will address that particular issue in the planning process. For all topics, any actions resulting in changes to existing conditions would be presented as elements of the alternatives. These actions would be evaluated in the environmental consequences section of the planning document.

In Scope Concerns

As part of the project’s planning process, the National Park Service will examine a range of actions to address the project’s purpose and need. The environmental assessment will analyze a set of reasonable alternatives that address repairs to the ski lodge, while protecting and preserving the historic character and use of the building and contributing elements of the surrounding cultural landscape, and minimizing natural resource impacts. All actions relating to the ski lodge rehabilitation will be evaluated in the environmental consequences section of the environmental assessment.

The National Park Service has screened public concerns raised during the public scoping period for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project environmental assessment. Based on this screening, the National Park Service finds the following public concerns, grouped by topic, to be within the scope of the rehabilitation project, and will consider these concerns in the development of a reasonable range of alternatives for rehabilitation of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. Project implementation is contingent on the signing of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by the National Park Service’s Director of the Pacific West Region, and allocation of construction funding.

Planning Process and Policy

Concern 1: The National Park Service should implement the proposed project.

“The NPS proposal to rehabilitate the seriously deteriorated Badger Pass ski lodge to its historic architectural design and function is an action the Committee encourages and supports.”
(Conservation organization, CA, #4-1)

“I wanted to email NPS to offer my support for the Badger Pass Lodge repair/restoration project.”
(Individual, Truckee, CA, #5-1)

“I vote wholeheartedly for the project.”
(Individual, #15-1)

Concern 2: The National Park Service should complete the rehabilitation construction of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge in the off-season so the facility can continue to operate each winter.

"Rehabilitation construction should take place in the off-season so that the ski resort can continue to operate each winter."

(Individual, #27-11)

"Try to finish project by next winter -start in spring and finish in fall."

(Individual, #16-3)

"The Yosemite Winter Club race team has been practicing and racing at Badger Pass since the 1920's. Please phase in rehabilitation work to the off-season to prevent a winter shut down of Badger Pass. Alpine skiers, cross-country skiers, snow-shoers, and day-use visitors would be negatively impacted if Badger Pass closed in the winter."

(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-2)

Concern 3: The National Park Service should clarify wording in the project proposal.

"Some of the wording in the announcement of this project could be interpreted to suggest that previously undeveloped portions of the area might be devoted to accommodating increased use and non-traditional uses ['The rehabilitation would protect areas of primary historical significance, while allowing flexibility to accommodate the needs associated with current and future Ski Area use in non-character-defining areas.']. Conversations with your staff suggest that this might not have been the intent, but the wording does raise the issue and the matter needs to be clarified."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-4)

Concern 4: The National Park Service should carefully consider all public scoping comments in determining the scope of this project.

"One of the functions of a scoping process is to determine the scope of the project. We have found that it has not been unusual for perfectly valid suggestions to be declared to be "beyond the scope of the project". Such a declaration sometimes indicates that the scope of the project had been pre-determined, resulting in the rejection of ideas which a reasonable person would perceive to be worthy of consideration. We urge that "beyond the scope of the project" be used with more discretion than has sometimes been the case."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-15)

Concern 5: The National Park Service should adhere to current NPS mandates and avoid new development in previously non-impacted areas.

"Expansion of development into previously non-impacted areas would not be consistent with current NPS mandates."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA #28-4)

Alternatives

Concern 6: The National Park Service should develop and fully analyze a set of reasonable alternatives in the environmental assessment.

"A set of alternatives should be created and fully analyzed in the EA. We believe that under NEPA and its Guidelines, it is required that alternatives be reasonable; if an alternative is reasonable, then it obviously warrants full analysis."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-6)

Concern 7: The environmental assessment should include an alternative that would result in repairs to the deteriorating infrastructure with no upgrades in capacity or function.

“While additional alternatives could come to mind, we recommend the following...Minimal Action, meaning fixing the deteriorating infrastructure with no upgrade in capacity or function.”

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-7)

Concern 8: The environmental assessment should include and analyze an alternative that would revert use of Badger Pass to exclusively historic uses.

“While additional alternatives could come to mind, we recommend the following...Reverting to Exclusively Traditional Uses, with the focus in upgrading and preservation of historic buildings.”

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-8)

“...the focus should be on restoration of the historical...usage.”

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-3)

Lightscapes

Concern 9: The environmental assessment should analyze current sources of nighttime lighting at the facility that contribute to light pollution, and consider ways to reduce this pollution.

“As part of this project, we ask Park staff to analyze current sources of nighttime lighting at the facility that contribute to light pollution, and consider ways to reduce this light pollution- for example using hooded lights on buildings, snowmobiles, and snow-grooming vehicles as well as reducing road and pathway lighting to a minimum during non-visitor hours.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA #6-9)

Concern 10: The environmental assessment should analyze effects of nighttime lighting on nocturnal wildlife.

“Nighttime lighting, especially in such a pristine, wild environment, can have significant negative effects on the abundant nocturnal wildlife of Yosemite National Park...We ask that the EA consider a reasonable range of feasible alternatives that analyze potential mitigation for the biological impacts created by nighttime light pollution at the ski area.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA #6-7)

Concern 11: The environmental assessment should analyze the effects of nighttime lighting on the wilderness experience of visitors interested in stargazing.

“Nighttime lighting can also reduce the enjoyment for visitors hoping to stargaze during their Yosemite wilderness experience.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-8)

Water

Concern 12: The National Park Service should protect the quality of surface and groundwater that feed into the Merced River.

“The large number of visitors concentrated in this area above the Merced River and the expected additional visitors that would be attracted by these renovations may cumulatively contribute to the eventual failing of the present septic system. This may result in contamination of local waterways (surface and groundwater) that feed into the Merced River. We recommend that Park staff consider installation of a

technologically advanced supplemental system that will most effectively remove nitrogen, pathogens, bacteria, and other contaminants from the wastewater before entering the soil.”
(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA #6-2)

Wetlands

Concern 13: The National Park Service should relocate any recent and/or temporary structures and buildings that impact wetlands or other sensitive resources areas to appropriate nearby sites.

“If these more recent structures and temporary buildings were sited where they impact wetlands or other sensitive resources areas they should be relocated to appropriate nearby sites.”
(Conservation organization, CA #4-6)

Cultural Resources

Concern 14: The National Park Service should restore the Badger Pass Ski Lodge so that it is preserved as a historic resource.

“If it should be decided that a winter sports function should be retained at Badger Pass, presumably this would be justified almost exclusively on the basis of history and tradition. In that case, the focus should be on restoration of the historical integrity of the facilities and usage.”
(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-2)

“Once it has been [designated a national historic building], it has to be preserved in its original motif and structure guides.”
(Individual, #1-2)

“Maintain historic character.”
(Individual, San Diego, CA, #18-1)

Visitor Experience

Concern 15: The National Park Service should recognize and strive to maintain the significance of Badger Pass Ski Area in the history and family traditions of park visitors.

“My family has enjoyed skiing at Badger Pass for the past 50 years.”
(Individual, #27-1)

“We love Badger. My father and great grandfather have roots in Yosemite’s history and tradition. Our children and grandchildren have been part of the Yosemite Winter Club tradition and activities...Keep Badger and other lodges open so we can enjoy winter resources and recreate and copy traditions in Yosemite.”
(Individual, San Francisco, CA, #25-1)

“Badger Pass has been a “tradition” for our family. Generations of us have skied here and enjoyed winter recreation on Glacier Point Road. Keep Badger a strong Yosemite tradition.”
(Individual, Truckee, CA, #24-1)

Concern 16: The National Park Service should not abandon the concept of carrying capacity in trying to accommodate future needs of the Badger Pass Ski Area as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“And please clarify that “flexibility” to accommodate future needs does not mean that the concept of carrying capacity is being abandoned.”

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-14)

Concern 17: The National Park Service should maintain the existing level of day use in the Badger Pass Ski Area in order to protect resources.

“The Committee would oppose any expansion of the existing level of day use in the Badger Pass ski area.”

(Conservation organization, #4-7)

Visitor Services

Development/Developed Areas

Concern 18: The National Park Service should maintain visitor services at Badger Pass at or below current levels and reduce visitor amenities if they conflict with or negatively impact the natural resources of the area.

“The levels of visitor services should remain at or below current levels and reduction of service and/or visitor amenities should be made where they conflict with or impact the natural resources of the area.”

(Conservation organization, CA, #4-8)

“Infrastructure upgrades (water and sewer) are welcome to the extent that they do not cut down, alter, or degrade the surrounding landscape of the Badger Pass area.”

(Individual, Sanger, CA, #29-2)

Concern 19: The National Park Service should refrain from building lodging or other non-ski related facilities at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“No lodging or other non-ski facilities should be built at Badger.”

(Individual, #29-3)

“Please do not even consider developing any overnight lodging facilities at Badger Pass.”

(Individual, #30-2)

Building Design

Concern 20: The National Park Service should update the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

“Single pane windows should be replaced with double pane windows that allow visitors to watch the skiers on the hill – the current windows fog up from the excess moisture that seeps into the lodge, obstructing the view.”

(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-6)

“Keep a mountain lodge, but make it modern working for food, rentals, gift shops, etc. and people friendly.”

(Individual, Sugar Pine, CA, #19-2)

“You also need a new lodge.”

(Individual, CA, #23-3)

Concern 21: The National Park Service should maintain the historic design of the original Badger Pass Ski Lodge in this rehabilitation effort.

"We support maintaining the historic architectural design of the original lodge structure in this rehabilitation effort."

(Conservation organization, CA, #4-3)

"The charm of the original lodge is due to its roof line, the breezeway, the snowflake room and how the building looks from the slopes."

(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-6)

"[M]aintain the interior open beam appearance of the structure where possible."

(Individual, #27-17)

"Strip white paint from all natural and wood surfaces and oil or varnish surfaces."

(Individual, CA, #35-2)

Concern 22: The National Park Service should maintain the family-friendly character and rustic charm of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge in this rehabilitation effort.

"I would like to see a full restoration of the Badger Pass Lodge. I really like that old building. It has more character than all of the other ski lodges I've visited. I love the nooks and crannies of the locker room with its wooden lockers and waxing table...The whole place just has a homey feel to it."

(Individual, Truckee, CA, #5-3)

"Please, please, PLEASE do everything possible to maintain the look of the lodge. It just wouldn't feel the same if it's too modern or 'spiffed up'. We love its retro charm!"

(Individual, Glendale, CA, #39-1)

"The low key, family oriented character of the lodge is important to us. We are supportive of the rehabilitation project, but hope the restoration will maintain the lodge's rustic simplicity and not try to mimic other ski resorts which have become large and impersonal."

(Individual, Santa Barbara, CA, #10-2)

Concern 23: The National Park Service should construct a ski rental shop with the same rustic architecture as the original ski lodge.

"Things I'd like to see: Nordic ski shop with the same rustic historic architecture as the original Badger."

(Individual, #7-1)

"If you feel compelled to make permanent structures for the rental buildings, make near copies of the original lodge, or a mirror image that complements the historic design. Then we would have a little village of Swiss chalets, or whatever style architecture the lodge is."

(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-5)

Concern 24: The National Park Service should replace the temporary buildings and additions to the ski lodge with structures that reflect a contemporary style more appropriate to our western National Parks than the character and design commonly found in the European Alps.

"The temporary buildings and additions constructed during more recent, less historic, times to accommodate an increase in family oriented winter recreation should be removed and replaced with permanent structures that reflect a contemporary style more appropriate to our western National Parks rather than the character and design commonly found in the European Alps"

(Conservation organization, #4-4)

Concern 25: The National Park Service should reestablish the old Badger Pass welcome sign on the western corner of the building.

“Can the old Badger Pass Welcome sign be re-established on the western corner of the building?”
(Individual, #3-4)

Room Design and Amenities**Concern 26: The National Park Service should retain the outside seating and dining areas at the Badger Pass Ski Lodge for visitors to enjoy.**

“I do hope you will still provide for an area to eat outside... Keep the outdoor area where families can gather, watch and enjoy!”
(Individual, Brisbane, CA, #2-2)

Concern 27: The National Park Service should enlarge and improve the outdoor seating and dining areas at the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

“Maintain and expand the indoor and outdoor deck eating and relaxing areas which are key to a family resort.”
(Individual, #27-4)

“Replace the entire first floor front deck with a concrete deck supported by a steel post and beam structure similar to the existing second floor deck.”
(Individual, #27-8)

“Increase outside patios and/or decks to allow for picnicking, warming stations and/or an outdoor BBQ.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-15)

Concern 28: The National Park Service should alter the existing indoor layout of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge to better accommodate visitors as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“Some improvement to indoor layout to maximize space... There are never enough tables inside in inclement weather.”
(Individual, #7-12)

“Improve the interior stairways, tread widths and handrails for greater safety.”
(Individual, #27-16)

“Make it easy for guests burdened with all their gear to get in and around, easy to walk with ski boots on, no bottle necks. Good traffic flow is never noticed until you don’t have it. Flow and ease of movement make all the difference on how you remember a place.”
(Individual, Wawona, CA, #31-3)

“Try to have the restrooms and dining areas on the same level.”
(Individual, Palo Alto, CA, #41-1)

“An overall increase in size of interior space to accommodate the current usage by Park visitors. Increased size would also better accommodate special events like the USSA Silver Ski race.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-10)

“Move the Activities Desk to the existing retail space and incorporate the retail operations into the new ski rental shop. This will create space in the historic structure and re-route congested areas to improve the visitor experience.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-13)

“...make a copy of the original lodge, only larger.”
(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-8)

Concern 29: The National Park Service should retain the Snowflake Room and the Winter Club Room in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“The Snowflake Room and Winter Club room should be retained. In particular, we are interested in preserving and expanding the Winter Club room as a way of telling the story of the Yosemite Winter Club’s history through display of historical events, trophies and current events.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-4)

Concern 30: The National Park Service should provide more, larger, and better functioning restrooms in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“Things I’d like to see: Bathrooms that flush properly.”
(Individual, #7-3)

“As a skier with a family of five, the amenities we find most important are: roomier restrooms – just a bit more space would make the restrooms much more accessible to all.”
(Individual, San Luis Obispo, CA, #13-1)

“Improve the restrooms, quantity and quality.”
(Individual, #27-15)

“Bathrooms and bathroom stalls that are standard-sized; a complete rehabilitation of the bathrooms and sewer system may be necessary to remove the constant consistent odor that permeates from the existing facility.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-11)

Concern 31: The National Park Service should provide wheelchair accessible restrooms in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“In addition to the lack of accessibility for wheelchairs, the main bathroom in the lodge is awkwardly laid out.”
(Individual, #22-1)

Concern 32: The National Park Service should construct bathrooms in the Nordic ski rental building if it is to remain separate from the main ski lodge at Badger Pass.

“If the Nordic Center is away from main building, give it bathrooms.”
(Individual, #7-4)

“My only complaint is the lack of a bathroom in the Nordic shop.”
(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-4)

Concern 33: The National Park Service should maintain the overnight lockers and daytime cubbies for storage of ski gear in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

“Overnight lockers are a life-saver for families schlepping kids and gear (daytime cubbies help too!). These are the spaces that make a huge difference in the feel of the lodge and can make the day feel like vacation rather than drudgery.”
(Individual, Santa Barbara, CA, #10-4)

“Retain ski lockers for the ski team and coaches.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-8)

Concern 34: The National Park Service should improve the locker rooms below the first floor deck of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Improve the locker rooms below the first floor deck by replacing the floor slabs and maintaining a uniform ceiling height."

(Individual, #27-9)

"Rehabilitate all locker rooms to prevent water intrusion and improve cleanliness."

(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-9)

Concern 35: The National Park Service should restore the original fireplace and accompanying metal plates to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"The fireplace should be put back in its original place with the metal plates above it which are now at the Mountain Room Bar at Yosemite Lodge."

(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #17-1)

"I would like to see the old fireplace back in the lodge."

(Individual, Sugar Pine, CA, #19-1)

"The decorative panels which now adorn the Mountain Room lounge fireplace are a significant historical feature, and they should perhaps be restored to their original location in the lodge at Badger."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-14)

Concern 36: The National Park Service should retain the daycare area in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

"Retain the day-care area for tots."

(Individual, #27-14)

Site Design

Concern 37: The National Park Service should refrain from constructing new buildings at Badger Pass Ski Area that would hide or overwhelm the original lodge.

"Please don't make a new building that overwhelms and hides the original lodge."

(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-9)

Concern 38: The National Park Service should consolidate the temporary buildings at Badger Pass Ski Area into a single integrated structure as part of this rehabilitation effort.

"Clean up all the tacky out-buildings now at Badger – ski shops, rental shops, cooking facilities, and incorporate them into a unified, historic looking structure."

(Individual, #29-5)

"The integrity of the original lodge has been degraded by the addition of multiple new structures over a long period of time, resulting in a tacky and run-down appearance. If the lodge is to be retained, consideration should be given to consolidating the various functions into a single integrated structure."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-10)

"Elimination of temporary structures should be considered, and any new additions should have the appearance of being part of an original design."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-11)

Concern 39: The National Park Service should clarify if there were historically any other buildings in the Badger Pass area and, if so, consider reconstructing them to serve as a ski rental shop and to illustrate the early history of skiing at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“Were there other buildings at Monroe Meadows, or at the actual Badger Pass long ago? A reconstruction of one or more of those buildings might serve as a rental shop and illustrate the early history of skiing there.”

(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-7)

Concern 40: The National Park Service should keep the Nordic ski and snowshoe rental facilities separate from the alpine ski rentals facility.

“I think it is a good idea to keep the XC and snowshoe rentals separate from the alpine rentals. The XC shop is much quieter, and should stay that way.”

(Conservation organization, San Diego, CA, #26-6)

Concern 41: The National Park Service should construct a loading dock outside the kitchen door of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“We need to have a loading dock or a flat level area at the kitchen door so the truck can back in and unload and not block the traffic flow in front of the lodge, and not create a safety hazard for people going in or out the front door.”

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-10)

Concern 42: The National Park Service should construct a loading/unloading area at the entrance to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge that accommodates the needs of visitors.

“Don’t forget moving around the lodge, and arriving. It would be helpful for pack mule parents to have places to set skis, and benches to set kids and bags out where cars and busses are dropping off and picking up.”

(Individual, Wawona, CA, #31-2)

Response: The National Park Service will consider visitor loading and unloading areas in the development of a reasonable range of alternatives.

Health and Safety

Concern 43: The National Park Service should address any public safety problems posed by the rundown state of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

“The original ski lodge, constructed in 1935, has been seriously impacted by decades of heavy snowfall and weather extremes and has become an unacceptable eyesore and public safety problem.”

(Conservation organization, CA, #4-2)

Concern 44: The National Park Service should provide adequate medical facilities at Badger Pass Ski Area to ensure high quality service and continued cooperation among providers.

“The medical facility must contain at least two beds and a seating area for patients. There must be enough storage area for supplies as well as a locking cabinet for drugs. Patrollers should have an area to change and store their equipment...The facility must have running water and bathroom.”

(Individual, Mariposa, CA, #21-1)

“The medical facility needs to be visible to guests...the slope should be visible from the facility...[Patrollers] need to be able to ski the patient to the facility; it cannot be uphill from the slopes.”

(Individual, Mariposa, CA, #21-2)

"The ambulance must have access, preferably covered, where parking traffic doesn't interfere... In order to transfer a patient to the ambulance, the facility must be at the same level or have an appropriately angled ramp (the one behind the A-frame is very dangerous)."

(Individual, Mariposa, CA, #21-3)

"NPS Rangers, DNC ski patrol, and LMH nurses work together as a group, offering mutual assistance to work together as a group...I feel it is essential that whatever happens to that facility should include space for the nurse, NPS, and ski patrol to continue working together. If these functions are separated, the strength that these relationships give to the operation will slowly erode over time."

(Individual, #30-4)

Concern 45: The National Park Service and the concessioner should address the health concern of mold growing in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Please please please do something about the mold growing in the lodge! My eyes start burning, my head gets congested, and you can smell the mold in the walls downstairs. It's bad!"

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-4)

Restaurants and Food Service Facilities

Concern 46: The National Park Service should improve the food service facility in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Improve the food service in the Lodge. Years ago, a small cafeteria provided prompt food service."

(Individual, #27-3)

"A full service bar would be most appreciated!"

(Individual, Pacific Grove, CA #36-1)

Interpretive Exhibits

Concern 47: The National Park Service should retain and add interpretive displays and artifacts to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Can educational exhibits about the watershed be incorporated to the outside sun deck?"

(Individual, #3-3)

"It would be nice to include some interpretive displays of Badger's history and perhaps some artifacts from its earlier days."

(Individual, Santa Barbara, CA, #10-4)

"Interpretive exhibits on the history of the area and winter sports in Yosemite should be prominently displayed."

(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-5)

Concern 48: The National Park Service should retain the historic photographs and memorabilia in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Please retain the photographs hanging on the walls, the skis and sled (and any other historic item I may have missed)."

(Individual, Willits, CA, #11-1)

"Retain historic pictures and fixtures. Retain Winter club room historic items."

(Individual, CA, #35-1)

“Keep/replace old photos, skis, snowshoes, etc.”
(Individual, Los Angeles, CA, #43-5)

Interpretive Services, Facilities, and Programs

Concern 49: The National Park Service should utilize the Badger Pass Ski Area on a year-round basis.

“I would like to see the area used year round. It could be used as a wilderness/hiking center in the summer.”
(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #12-2)

“All improvements and changes should be thought of as benefitting people year-round not just in winter.”
(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-15)

“The lodge could sell maps, food, hiking gear and house the Mountaineering School [in the summer].”
(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #12-4)

Concern 50: The National Park Service and the concessioner should place more emphasis on the Nordic skiing program at Badger Pass.

“Things I’d like to see: More emphasis on Nordic skiing rather than the ‘bastard child’ left out in the parking lot.”
(Individual, #7-2)

Transportation

Concern 51: The National Park Service should improve parking at the Badger Pass Ski Area.

“...better parking would be good.”
(Individual, #7-7)

Concern 52: The National Park Service should maintain the existing parking and circulation areas.

“Maintain the existing parking and circulation area without infringement of new buildings.”
(Individual, #27-14)

Employee Housing

Concern 53: The National Park Service should incorporate additional employee housing in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge to benefit winter and off-season operations.

“Incorporate some additional employee housing in the new structure. This would benefit both the winter and off-season operations.”
(Individual, #27-12)

Concern 54: The National Park Service should provide better employee housing at Badger Pass Ski Area as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“There is a strong need for better housing at Badger Pass for groomers and night cleaners. It could be a separate building if needed.”
(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #40-1)

Facility Operations

Buildings

Concern 55: The National Park Service should address drainage issues at and surrounding the Badger Pass Ski Lodge as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“Repair the large drainage culvert in front of the Lodge and block infiltration into the existing locker room.”

(Individual, #27-7)

“We need better drainage in front of the building to prevent the build-up of ice and the puddles and slush people have to walk through getting in and out of the lodge and to and from the busses.”

(Individual, Mariposa, CA, #32-2)

“The roof needs much better drainage to avoid ice on the decks.”

(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #17-2)

Sewers and Wastewater

Concern 56: The National Park Service should renovate the onsite wastewater treatment system at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“As a part of this lodge renovation project, we ask that Park staff consider renovating the ski area’s onsite wastewater treatment system in order to bring the system up to the highest efficiency to fully protect biological resources”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-1)

“Our center asks that the EA include pertinent information regarding the current status of the ski area’s onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) and that the EA appropriately consider a reasonable range of alternatives for the upgrade or renovation of the OWTS with the installation of a technologically advanced supplemental treatment system.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-4)

“Improve the on-site septic disposal system or export sewage to El Portal for treatment. The existing utility right of way for the underground electric power line could be used for the sewer transmission line.”

(Individual, #27-5)

Concern 57: The National Park Service should renovate the wastewater treatment system at Badger Pass Ski Lodge to comply with new regulations proposed by the California State Water Board.

“The California State Water Board is currently working to finalize new regulations for onsite wastewater treatment systems on private lands in the State in accordance with AB 885. Due to the information being accumulated and distributed to the public about [onsite wastewater treatment systems], it seems timely for Park staff to take this opportunity to renovate its wastewater system at Badger Pass, utilizing the suggested advanced criteria and regulations proposed in these new state regulations.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA #6-3)

Environmental Sustainability of Operations

Concern 58: The National Park Service should make every effort possible to use green building practices in restoring the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

“Can the decking be replaced with recycled plastic lumber?

Can solar panels be utilized on the building?

Can low flow toilets be installed in all the lavatories?”

(Individual, #3-2)

“We ask that Park staff incorporate feasible, appropriate mitigation measures to help offset [greenhouse gas emissions]. This might include installing solar panels to provide clean, renewable energy to heat and power the buildings, creating a more efficient and effective (or perhaps mandatory) shuttle system, building to high, energy efficient standards, and buying carbon offsets.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-5)

Concern 59: The environmental assessment should analyze greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced by this project and operation of the ski area, and develop mitigation measures to offset these GHG emissions.

“Our center asks that the EA consider a reasonable range of feasible alternatives that includes the analysis of greenhouse gas emissions produced by this project and the ski area, as well as feasible ways to mitigate for these GHG emissions.”

(Conservation organization, Twain Harte, CA, #6-6)

Out of Scope Concerns

The following concerns, though relevant to the management of Yosemite National Park, will not be affected by the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project, and therefore the National Park Service finds them to be out of scope. An explanatory response to each concern is provided in this section.

Beyond the Purpose and Need of this Proposed Project

Concern 1: The National Park Service should address the A-frame medical facility at Badger Pass Ski Area as part of this rehabilitation project.

“It is unclear to me whether or not the A Frame building is being considered as a part of the project, but given the integral nature part it plays in the Badger Pass operation, I feel it should be included.”

(Individual, #30-3)

“The A-frame could use a little more space...”

(Individual, #30-3)

Response: The project will address the readiness of emergency services at Badger Pass Ski Area as part of the rehabilitation effort. However, physical changes to the A-Frame and adjacent maintenance facility buildings are outside the scope of this ski lodge rehabilitation project.

Law, Policy, or an Approved Plan Already Decides the Action

Concern 2: The National Park Service should appoint a Yosemite Winter Club board member to the Badger Pass Core Team.

"The YWC would appreciate the opportunity to participate in core team discussions as the project moves forward. As such, we respectfully request that a YWC board member be appointed to the committee, ensuring an official voice in all future meetings during the environmental assessment and planning process."

(Recreation organization, Yosemite, CA, #44-1)

Response: The National Park Service values input and ideas from organizations such as the Yosemite Winter Club. However it is NPS policy that members of the public may not be appointed to internal planning teams. Forming advisory committees that include non-federal employees is strictly regulated under the 1972 Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) and administrative guidelines developed by the General Services Administration (GSA). The National Park Service appreciates comments submitted during public scoping and encourages members of the Yosemite Winter Club to comment on the draft environmental assessment when it is made available during the public review period.

Concern 3: The National Park Service and the concessioner should better advertise Badger Pass Ski Area to the public and place more emphasis on marketing to families.

"DNC doesn't work hard enough to advertise Badger Pass to the public."

(Individual, Truckee, CA, #5-5)

"Marketing more to families would be good."

(Individual, #7-7)

"I'd like to see Badger Pass regain some of its former glory."

(Individual, Truckee, CA, #5-6)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Operational activities such as advertising and marketing for Badger Pass Ski Area are beyond the scope of this project. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the park concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Inappropriate Planning Level

Concern 4: The National Park Service should provide amenities such as boot dryers and outdoor firepits at the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"Oh yea and don't forget the boot dryers."

(Individual, #31-4)

"Add outdoor firepits (e.g., stone) in character w/ building."

(Individual, Los Angeles, CA, #43-4)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Certain amenities, such as boot dryers and firepits, are secondary to more major design concepts. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this

concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 5: The National Park Service should replace the current furniture in the Badger Pass Ski Lodge with new but historic looking furniture.

“The removal of the tacky furniture and replacement with new but historic looking furniture would do wonders to enhance the overall feel of the Lodge.”

(Individual, Livermore, CA #34-4)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Certain amenities, such as furniture, are secondary to more major design concepts. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 6: The National Park Service should retain and expand educational programs about Badger Pass and the park at the Badger Pass Ski Area.

“Maintain educational programs regarding lodge and park.”

(Individual, San Diego, CA, #18-1)

“Ranger-led snowshoeing is great; maybe expand to have other guides.”

(Individual, San Diego, CA, #18-2)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its current affiliated services. Current ranger and interpretive activities are not conducted from the ski lodge, therefore this concern is beyond the scope of the project. The NPS Division of Interpretation is responsible for maintaining and expanding educational programs throughout the park.

Concern 7: The National Park Service and the concessioner should supply the Badger Pass Ski Lodge with board games for visitor use while in the lodge.

“Supply games like Scrabble, Chess, etc.”

(Individual, Vista, CA, #16-5)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Amenities such as games are secondary to more major design concepts. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 8: The National Park Service should address the condition of Badger Pass ski slopes as part of this project.

“Additionally, I’d like to see Badger Pass ski area get some attention. When I last skied there, Rail Creek was in need of brush trimming, the terrain park was pretty sorry.”

(Individual, Truckee, CA, #5-4)

“More jumps and better longer terrain park.”

(Individual, #37-1)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Physical changes to ski lifts, runs, and out-of-boundary ski terrain are outside the scope of this project.

Concern 9: The National Park Service and the concessioner should discontinue spending on the alpine ski lifts at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“Things I don’t want to see: More money spent on downhill lifts.”
(Individual, #7-6)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Ski lifts and runs are outside the scope of this project. Providing opportunities for family-oriented downhill skiing is a General Management Plan goal for the Badger Pass Ski Area. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 10: The National Park Service should reconfigure the Red Fox ski lift.

“I would like to see the Red Fox chair pulled out and put to use over on Beaver. The tower bases are there (we used to have a T-bar all the way to the top of Beaver). It doesn’t make any sense to have 2 chairs going to the same place and it would help utilize the Beaver Run more proficiently.”
(Individual, Oakhurst, CA, #8-1)

“A lift that stops at the top of Red Fox will expand the hill without changing anything. Don’t eliminate the Red Fox lift, just shorten it. This is the single best thing that can be done to improve Badger Pass.”
(Individual, Wawona, CA, #31-1)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Physical changes to ski lifts and runs are outside the scope of this project. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 11: The environmental assessment should analyze the social equity of requiring families to rent sledding devices from the concessioner as part of this rehabilitation effort.

“The matter of social equity should be taken into account. For example, thought should be given to the reasoning behind the prohibition of the use of privately-owned tubes and sleds from certain areas where rented equipment is permitted. Why should the appropriateness of the use be dependent on whether or not the equipment has been rented from the concessionaire?”
(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-15)

Response: The environmental assessment is focused on rehabilitation of the ski lodge and will not address programmatic operations of the ski area. Sledding at the designated snow play area at Badger Pass Ski Area will not be addressed as part of this planning effort. However, the National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 12: The National Park Service should run shuttle buses from Badger Pass Ski Area to Glacier Point during the summer and close Glacier Point Road to private vehicles.

"I would like to see the area used year-round. Shuttle buses could run from Badger Lodge to Glacier Point and the road could be closed to private vehicles."

(Individual, Yosemite, CA, #12-3)

Response: The environmental assessment is focused on rehabilitation of the ski lodge and its affiliated services and will not address year-round visitor use of the facility or road closures, except as they pertain to the design of the ski lodge.

Concern 13: The National Park Service should run more frequent shuttles to Badger Pass Ski Area from Yosemite Valley to include earlier and later trips that coincide with scheduled programs.

"More frequent shuttles from valley (earlier and later) to match with guided programs."

(Individual, San Diego, CA, #18-4)

Response: The environmental assessment is focused on rehabilitation of the ski lodge and its affiliated services and will not address transportation issues, except as they relate to the design of the ski lodge. The timing of shuttles between Yosemite Valley and Badger Pass is a programmatic issue that is beyond the current scope of the proposed project.

Concern 14: The National Park Service and the concessioner should address maintenance issues pertaining to the bathrooms at Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

"The lack of cleanliness is often notable but that is an operational matter. Unfortunately the bathroom experience is often so negative that in all of the experiences my friends and I have on a given day at Badger, the restroom is one of the most 'memorable'."

(Individual, #22-2)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. Certain amenities, such as restrooms, will be considered in the development of alternatives. However, maintenance of these facilities is an operational responsibility of the concessioner and not within the scope of this project. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner.

Personal Opinion or Statement of Fact with No Request for Action**Concern 15: The National Park Service should recognize that were the Badger Pass area pristine today, it is highly improbable that a winter sports development would be allowed.**

"We believe that the foundational approach to this project should be to recognize that, were the Badger Pass area to be pristine, it is highly improbable that a winter sports development such as presently exists would be allowed."

(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-1)

Response: The National Park Service acknowledges that if the land at the Badger Pass Ski Area were undeveloped, development of a winter sports facility on this site would be inconsistent with current park resource management objectives. However, the ski lodge, built in 1935, and its surrounding cultural landscape now represent a piece of Yosemite history that is important to maintain. The National Park Service is committed to preserving the historic character of the area, while protecting natural resources to the fullest extent possible.

Concern 16: The National Park Service should determine the eligibility of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

“Has this building been designated a national historic building?”
(Individual, #1-1)

Response: A Badger Pass Ski Lodge Historic Structure Report and a Badger Pass Ski Area Cultural Landscape Report are currently being prepared to evaluate the properties' eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The draft reports recommend that the Badger Pass Historic Site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Upon completion of the Historic Structure Report and Cultural Landscape Report, Yosemite National Park will submit a request to the California State Historic Preservation Office for a consensus determination of eligibility.

Concern 17: The National Park Service should offer special weekday and senior rates at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“Keep special weekday and senior rates.”
(Individual, Los Angeles, CA, #43-7)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. This concern is beyond the current scope of the project. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Concern 18: The National Park Service should retain the new snow cat at Badger Pass Ski Area.

“Loving the new snow cat. I think it is better than Deer Valley! Better than Sierra Summit!”
(Individual, CA, #23-1)

Response: The project is focused on structural and design issues pertaining to the ski lodge and its affiliated services. This concern is beyond the current scope of the project. The National Park Service appreciates this feedback and will forward this concern to the concessioner, who is responsible for this level of operations at Badger Pass Ski Area.

Out of Scope, but Forwarded to NPS Management for Consideration**Concern 19: The environmental assessment should include and analyze an alternative that would result in demolition of the existing facilities and a full ecological restoration of the site.**

“While additional alternatives could come to mind, we recommend the following...Complete Demolition of Facilities with full site Restoration.”
(Conservation organization, Fresno, CA, #28-9)

Response: The environmental assessment will analyze a reasonable set of alternatives that address the purpose and need of the project and that are compatible with the visitor use goals established in the park's General Management Plan. These goals include maintaining Badger Pass as a ski area for visitors to enjoy. Although this concern is beyond the current scope of this proposed project, it has been forwarded to park management for consideration.