



Devils Postpile National Monument
Long-Range Interpretive Plan

January 2011

Devils Postpile National Monument

Long-Range Interpretive Plan

January 2011

Prepared by:
Department of Interpretive Planning
Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center

and the Staff and Partners of
Devils Postpile National Monument

and the Pacific West Regional Office

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1911 by presidential proclamation, Devils Postpile National Monument (DEPO) protects and preserves the Devils Postpile formation, the 101-foot high Rainbow Falls, and pristine mountain scenery.

The Devils Postpile formation is a rare sight in the geologic world and ranks as one of the world's finest examples of columnar basalt. Its columns tower 60 feet high and display an unusual symmetry. Another wonder is in store just downstream from the Postpile at Rainbow Falls, once called "a gem unique and worthy of its name" in the 1938 Santa Fe Magazine Article written by John L. Von Blon. When the sun is overhead, a bright rainbow highlights the spectacular falls.

The monument is also a portal to the High Sierra backcountry; nearly 75% of the monument is included in the Ansel Adams Wilderness. At 798 acres, Devils Postpile National Monument may be considered small by some, but its natural and recreational values abound.

VISION FOR THIS PLAN

*When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.
John Muir*

One century ago, Devils Postpile National Monument was set aside as a treasure of our American heritage. Visitors found that the intimate settings of this spectacular landscape offered experiences, which were unique, exhilarating, and memorable. Visitors returned; trails and services were created to meet visitors' basic needs. Monument and forest rangers welcomed visitors and assisted them with having quality experiences in this place of high altitude and high adventure.

Today, Devils Postpile embraces the elements of a traditional National Park experience. It remains a place where natural systems prevail, giving visitors the opportunity to witness ecologic processes first hand. It is a place where the built environment is secondary to the natural and cultural landscape. Visitors return to this place year after year, generation after generation to become immersed in the monument's stunning landscape and to become a part of its rich history. Staffing and other resources have been employed in the perpetuation of the monument's fundamental values, providing for a high quality and safe visitor experience, and protection of this singular place.

In recent years, it has become evident that the resources and values of this site are "hitched" to everything in the surrounding watershed. The significance of the San Joaquin River goes beyond its renowned beauty and outstanding fishing. This river helps sustain communities of plants, animals, and people in California and throughout the United States. The events, lessons, and rewards surrounding the stewardship of Devils Postpile tell an important story – one that transcends boundaries to include people and resources far downstream.

This plan strives to meet goals at two distinct levels. At an operational level this plan identifies some of the current challenges of staffing and funding limitations, and prioritizes work at that level. On a higher level, this plan explores further opportunities for development of on-site visitor services, and looks beyond monument boundaries, and through partnership, outreach, and creativity extend its sphere of influence into the community and beyond.

STATISTICS AND DATA COLLECTION

Unless otherwise noted, the statistical data in this plan came from the University of Idaho Visitor Services Project Study completed in 2006 and published in 2007. Other data sources are listed in the appendices and will be noted in the plan. The analysis of this data is the work of the Monument, Pacific West Region, and Harpers Ferry Staff named in the section titled “Planning Team.”

LONG RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLANNING IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Devils Postpile National Monument is part of the United States National Park System where people and organizations collaborate on teaching and learning about the interconnections of human culture and nature, natural systems, the values of America’s diverse heritage, and the principles of democracy. Parks provide unique and powerful individual experiences that inspire personal values and help shape understanding of our natural and cultural heritage. Interpretation and education are primary duties of the National Park Service (NPS), essential to achieving our mission of protecting and preserving our nation’s natural and cultural resources.

This Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) for Devils Postpile National Monument was created in 2010 primarily with NPS staff and also received input from a variety of monument partners. The LRIP describes visitor experience goals and recommends ways to achieve those goals through interpretive media, education programs, and personal services.

Devils Postpile National Monument also began the process of creating its first General Management Plan (GMP) in 2009, which will guide monument management decisions over a 20-year period. This LRIP is one of a handful of strategic plans that will help fulfill the goals of the GMP.

The LRIP is the keystone of the Comprehensive Interpretive Planning (CIP) process. Once approved, the monument staff will pursue implementation of the LRIP through a series of Annual Implementation Plans. Throughout the CIP process, the monument staff will also compile and maintain the monument’s interpretive database.

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends, Partners, and Colleagues,

Please enjoy sharing some of our history and vision for Devils Postpile National Monument as we embark on the second century of the monument's history. In 2011, Devils Postpile celebrates the designation of the monument, and its poignant place in the early history of public lands and the continuing evolution of the quality of visitor services and protection. Since the early days of the NPS administration of the monument, interpretation has traditionally been the most visible service available to monument visitors. These visitor service traditions continue into the present day within the guidance of national, regional, and local goals of interpretation.

Historically, the work demands of DEPO have required the skills of the "general" park ranger, rather than the strict separation of duties being developed at other parks. For years, interpretation has been provided by the very same rangers who maintained the trails and explained monument regulations. Contact with a ranger has long been an essential part of the visitor experience. Because of the monument's relatively small size, remote location, and complex resources, it has been found that the historic general park ranger is an idea worth preserving, along with the resources and values that the general park ranger has been protecting.

In 2000, the Pacific West Region hired a new superintendent for DEPO. Superintendent Deanna Dulen brought a strong professional background in interpretation to the monument, having worked as an interpreter with both NPS and USFS. She began focusing efforts to develop a professional program with staff and projects in interpretive services for personal, exhibits, media, and Junior Ranger programs. In 2000, the monument staff consisted of one permanent, full time employee (superintendent), four general park rangers, and two maintenance staff. For the next eight years, through the efforts of superintendent and seasonal employees, several key projects were accomplished. Staff developed kiosk waysides, replaced the wayside in front of the Postpile, designed and installed several new waysides at key sites, and conducted bird-banding demonstrations in partnership with PRBO.

In 2008, the first STF GS-9 interpretive ranger was hired to supervise the seasonal interpretive rangers and develop the program. The continuity of this position helped to improve the quality of visitor services and the contributions to the interagency partnerships.

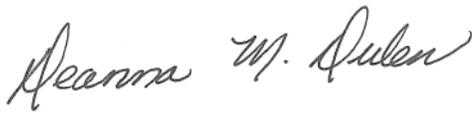
The cooperative and complimentary management of the monument and surrounding national forest land promotes opportunities for a quality visitor experience and enhanced resource protection. This creates both challenges and opportunities. Partnerships and collaboration foster the sharing of resources and creative solutions to issues and problems. The challenge in all of this is to maintain agency identity while providing a quality experience for visitors as they pass between lands managed by two different agencies. Both the monument and the Inyo National Forest are committed to this partnership and to its success.

Funding for the visitor services program continues to come from a patchwork of sources including ONPS, centennial seasonal funding, special project funding, recreation fee money, and external grants such as the First Bloom program from the National Park Foundation. A significant challenge is the need for a relatively stable source of funding for VIS staff and operations. Additionally, complex interagency formal and informal arrangements exist to provide staffing at sites of shared value, in exchange for Inyo National Forest support to managing shuttle bus services and for providing office space to the NPS. Currently, 56% of the VIS staff is centennial funded. Through careful analysis the superintendent and staff have identified OFS request #35722A, which seeks to maintain a basic level of viable base funding for staffing three locations with one permanent STF staff for supervisory oversight and five to six seasonal positions that can provide for basic services for monument and shared partnership responsibilities. Expansion of the current program and special projects would likely necessitate PMIS or grant funding from partners or outside sources.

In 2009, DEPO began work on the development of its first GMP. The monument is working closely with the Inyo National Forest (INF) to develop a shared vision for the monument and Reds Meadow Valley. The GMP will provide a framework for managing many aspects of the monument, including natural and cultural resources, and providing opportunities for visitor experiences.

Important work already completed on the GMP includes drafting of the monument's purpose and significance statements, crafting of primary interpretive themes, and development of preliminary alternatives. These elements have directly informed this LRIP, as in the articulation of the significance of the Rustic Experience: Visitors are offered time-honored park experiences in a setting that emphasizes the enjoyment of natural sights and sounds and promotes a sense of place. This LRIP review and analysis has substantially contributed to the planning efforts underway for the first General Management Plan and describes the importance of interpretation at the monument. This plan will begin to define and clarify desired visitor experiences, and recommend ways to facilitate those experiences through both personal and non-personal services (including facilities, media, landscape, and trails).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deanna M. Dulen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Deanna M. Dulen, Superintendent

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first formal interpretive planning effort for Devils Postpile National Monument. This plan was completed alongside the monument's first-ever General Management Plan and all recommendations in this plan are pending final GMP decisions. As a growing park, the monument has taken this opportunity to look holistically at where the interpretive program has been and where it is going. This plan strives to meet goals at two distinct levels. At an operational level this plan identifies some of the current challenges of staffing and funding limitations, and prioritizes work at that level. On a higher level, this plan explores further opportunities for development of on-site visitor services, and looks beyond monument boundaries, and through partnership, outreach, and creativity extend its sphere of influence into the community and beyond. The recommendations for this plan have been divided into five categories: outreach, media, programs, planning, and information sharing. The following is a summary of the key recommendations made in this plan.

OUTREACH

The monument would like to build and expand upon existing community and educational outreach. This plan recommends expanding partnerships with existing youth organizations to provide stewardship-based educational programs. To expand outreach beyond youth groups, the monument would like to work with local and regional partners to improve and expand publicity about monument programs, opportunities, and events. In concert with this, the monument has identified the need for consistent messaging with partners, particularly regarding topics related to the monument's Climate Friendly Parks Action Plan, such as recycling and green product choices.

MEDIA

Youth and emerging technologies play key roles in the plan's recommendations regarding media. The plan recommends utilizing emerging technology to engage both youth and adult visitors, as well as using those technologies to reach underrepresented populations. The plan has identified the need to incorporate universal design elements in the creation of new media, as well as by updating existing media. The need to not abandon traditional media such as the monument newspaper and Junior Ranger publications was also identified.

PROGRAMS

The primary focus of interpretive programs and operations will be direct visitor contact with uniformed park rangers through formal and informal contacts. Other key recommendations include fostering programs that enable scientists, tribal members, and work groups to share experience and stories to educate visitors. Continuing youth and tribal engagement programs is a key recommendation, as well as maintaining staffing levels to provide high quality visitor service during the field season. Funding is an obvious limiting factor, and this plan has identified ideal staffing levels in order to meet the programmatic goals of the division. Currently, most of the interpretive staffing is funded by the centennial seasonal initiative and project funding. Securing more stable funding sources to support interpretive programming is critical in the completion of many of the task items in this plan.

PLANNING

Collaborative efforts with partners, both government and non-government are a key component of the monument's interpretive planning process. Working with the Inyo National Forest in both valley-wide interpretative planning, implementation, and funding strategies will be critical to the division's progress. This plan recommends looking at the growing needs of special interest groups and how they will be accommodated and engaged in park resources through organized planning efforts. The planning recommendations also look at interpretive facilities, their ADA compliance, and how to work with concessionaires and partners to maintain facilities in a manner consistent with interpretive messaging, particularly with respect to greening efforts and recycling.

INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing with both partners and the public is critical to the success of DEPO's interpretive programming. This plan recommends continuing and expanding outreach to local and regional partners to ensure consistent and accurate information sharing through a variety of personal and non-personal services. Working with resource-based learning projects such as the proposed Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center is also key to improving and expanding information sharing between the monument, scientists, and the public.

These recommendations will guide the planning, funding requests, and operational priorities of the division. They have been based on local, regional, and national interpretive guidance and planning efforts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

- Vision for this Plan
- Statistics & Data Collection
- Long Range Interpretive Planning in the National Park Service
- Message from the Superintendent
- Executive Summary

Foundations

- Administrative Background 1
- Purpose 3
- Significance 3
- Role of Interpretation at DEPO 4
- Background and History of Interpretation at DEPO 5
- Fundamental Resources and Values 6
- Fundamental Resources and Values as Recognized by Visitors 7
- Interpretive Themes 8

Today's Visitor Experience

- Visitor Demography 11
- Visitor Use Patterns 12
- Recreational Activities 14
- Nature-based Experience in a Rustic Setting 18
- Ranger/Visitor Contact 18
- Wilderness Portal 20
- Visitor Satisfaction 22
- Facilities and Services 24
- Overview of Visitor Comments 27
- Visitor Understanding 31
- Access and Transportation 33
- Accessibility 35

Operations

- Personal Services 37
- Interpretive Facilities 38
- Budget 45
- OFS Funding 45
- Staffing 46
- Partnerships 47
- Volunteer Program 50
- Monument Library 51
- Monument Collections 51

Media

- Waysides 54
- Publications 56
- Exhibits 57
- Websites 57
- Other Media 57

Evaluation	58
GPRV Visitor Survey Cards	58
External and Internal Influences and Challenges	58
Current Research	62
User Capacity Management Research	62
Natural History	64
Cultural History	65
Goals	66
Tier of Goals	66
Management Goal	70
Pacific West Region's Interpretation and Education Strategic Goals	70
Division Goals	71
Task Items Related to Division Goals	72
Visitor Experience Goals for Fundamental Resources and Values	81
Recommendations	88
Outreach	88
New Media	88
Traditional Media	89
Programs	89
Planning	91
Non-Task Items	92
Implementation Plan Organized by Subject	93
Implementation Plan Organized by Timeframe	98
Planning Team	102
Appendices	103
2006 Visitor Study	103
Special Populations Guidance	105
NPS Centennial Goals	106
Renaissance for Interpretation and Education	107
NPS Climate Change Response Strategy: Communication Section	

FOUNDATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND

Reds Meadow Valley surrounds Devils Postpile National Monument and lies just east of some of the highest peaks of the Sierra Nevada Crest and just west of the hydrological divide of the Sierra, and thus the San Joaquin River flows to the Pacific. It contains lands managed by two federal agencies, the NPS and the USDA Forest Service (USFS). The USFS manages Reds Meadow Valley and the NPS manages Devils Postpile National Monument. Although the individual lands are managed separately, the NPS and the USFS work cooperatively on many projects and management strategies.

Devils Postpile National Monument has a century-long legacy of addressing conservation challenges. The land

currently protected within the monument and the entire Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River (55,000 acres) was originally part of Yosemite National Park. In 1905, the area now known as Devils Postpile National Monument and the surrounding watershed was removed from Yosemite National Park in what was called the Yosemite Exclusion. This was primarily due to increased pressure from mining companies. Following this exclusion, the area was threatened by a dam proposal that would have destroyed the Postpile and permanently altered this remarkable valley in the Sierra Nevada. The Sierra Club, University of California Professor Joseph LeConte, and forest managers worked diligently to defend the land previously protected under Yosemite National Park. At the time, forest engineer Walter Huber called the potential damming of the Upper



L. Craig

A small cabin stood at the base of Devils Postpile until the mid-1950's

Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River at Devils Postpile a “wanton destruction of scenery.”

The 798-acre Devils Postpile National Monument (DEPO) was established in 1911 by presidential proclamation to protect and preserve the Devils Postpile formation, the 101-foot-high Rainbow Falls, and pristine mountain scenery. The monument also preserves the spectacular scenery along the Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River that would have been drastically altered by the proposed dam.

Recognition of the impacts of vehicle congestion on the visitor experience and resources led to the creation of the shuttle bus system in 1979. Shuttle service continues to effectively limit the number of vehicles on the road, reducing traffic congestion and accidents, while allowing more visitors access to the valley. By limiting the number of vehicles in the valley, the shuttle has also alleviated resource damage.

In 2009, DEPO began work on the development of its first GMP. The monument is working closely with the Inyo National Forest (INF) to develop a shared vision for the monument and Reds Meadow Valley. The GMP will provide a framework for managing many aspects of the monument, including natural and cultural resources, and providing opportunities for visitor experiences.

Important work already completed on the GMP includes drafting of the monument’s purpose and significance statements, crafting of primary interpretive themes, and development of preliminary alternatives. These elements have directly informed this LRIP.

This plan will begin to define and clarify desired visitor experiences, and recommend ways to facilitate those experiences through both personal and non-personal services (including facilities, media, landscape, and trails). **At the time of print, the GMP preferred alternative had not yet been selected.** Although the suggestions in this LRIP may be used to help develop the visitor experience elements of the GMP, it is understood that the recommendations developed by the LRIP will be useful only to the extent that they support the decisions made by the monument’s GMP.

PURPOSE

A park's purpose is a statement of why Congress or the president established the area as a unit of the national park system.

Devils Postpile National Monument's purpose is to preserve and protect the glacially exposed columns of the Devils Postpile, the scenic Rainbow Falls, and the wilderness landscape of the upper Middle Fork San Joaquin River in the Sierra Nevada for scientific value, public interest, and inspiration.

SIGNIFICANCE

Statements of significance define what is most important about the Monument's resources and values. These statements are guided by the Monument's legislation as well as our better understanding of the resources resulting from management activities, research, and civic engagement, and were developed as part of the Monument's General Management Plan.

- Devils Postpile is one of the world's finest examples of columnar jointing, displaying volcanic rock columns polished by glaciers and revealing a mosaic of polygons on its dome shaped top.
- Devils Postpile National Monument is nested in the second largest contiguous designated wilderness in the lower 48 states that includes three national forests and three national parks in the Sierra Nevada.
- For a small area, Devils Postpile National Monument supports and maintains unusually rich ecological diversity reflective of its location at the intersection of three bio-geographic regions. The physical setting and context create exceptional opportunities for scientific study and shared learning.
- Devils Postpile National Monument provides a traditional national park experience in a rustic setting that promotes learning and intimate visitor experiences.
- The establishment of Devils Postpile National Monument provides compelling insight into the history and evolution of national parks and national forests, beginning in the early years of the public lands conservation and preservation movement.

ROLE OF INTERPRETATION AT DEPO

Interpretation has always been a critical part of the visitor experience at DEPO. The Division of Interpretation and Education has gradually increased its presence both within the Monument and in the surrounding community in recent years. Through formal programs and informal encounters, park and forest rangers interpret both the Monument and the surrounding Reds Meadow Valley. Interpretation serves as the vehicle for communicating the Monument's fundamental resources and values, creating opportunities for

visitors to form lifelong stewardship connections to this and other parks. The types of media and personal services that are selected to communicate the Monument's natural and cultural history support the park experience where natural experiences predominate.

The Monument is committed to maintaining a high level of informal visitor contacts and overall visibility of its staff to the public. This will continue to be an integral part of the Monument's interpretive programming and is a key component of visitor satisfaction.



An interpretive ranger works with youth on a stream bank restoration project

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION AT DEPO

Interpretation has traditionally been the most visible service available to Monument visitors. Although the size of the division, and the number of quality personal and non-personal services the division provides has increased significantly over the years, the goals have remained similar: to provide opportunities for visitors to form their own emotional and intellectual connections to Monument resources.

Historically, the work demands of DEPO have required the skills of the “general” park ranger, rather than the strict separation of duties being developed at other parks. For years, interpretation has been provided by the very same rangers who maintained the trails and explained Monument regulations. Contact with a ranger has long been an essential part of the visitor experience. Because of the Monument’s relatively small size, remote location, and complex resources, it has been found that the historic general park ranger is an idea worth preserving, along with the resources and values that the general park ranger has been protecting.

Since those early days, many traditional programs continue. Ranger-led walks to the Postpile formation continue to be a mainstay of interpretive operations just as they were decades ago. Trail patrols and roves throughout the Monument continue to provide opportunities for informal interactions. Evening campfire programs have long been a part of the DEPO camping experience. When shuttle bus service into Reds Meadow Valley began in 1979, disembarking visitors were greeted in person, as they still are today. In addition to providing orientation information, rangers serve as approachable and competent hosts, welcoming visitors to the edge of the wilderness, and helping them to have an enjoyable and safe visit.

These visitor service traditions continue into the present day within the guidance of national, regional, and local goals of interpretation. Over the years, the interpretive staff has increased steadily from one or two general rangers working on a seasonal basis to a combination of permanent and seasonal staff who are trained in interpretation. The Monument has been working to incorporate both national and regional interpretive goals into its programming. In recent years, community and educational outreach has increased, program offerings have become more diverse, and staffing levels and training have increased substantially.

Up to this point, only rudimentary interpretive planning efforts have taken place at DEPO. This LRIP will set goals and guidelines for the future growth of interpretation at DEPO and ground it to the primary interpretive themes and the fundamental resources and values of the Monument.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental Resources and Values are resources and values that are particularly important to park managers and warrant primary consideration during planning and management. They are termed “fundamental” because they are critical to achieving the monument’s purpose and maintaining its significance. The fundamental resources and values used in this plan were developed during the GMP planning process and are consistent in both documents. Following are the fundamental resources and values of DEPO:

- Distinct landscape features: The Postpile, Rainbow Falls, and other geologic features that provide textbook quality evidence of volcanism and mountain building forces of plate tectonics.
- Upper Middle Fork San Joaquin River (corridor): A free flowing river, mineral springs, wetlands, riparian areas and other water-dependent features and communities sustained by naturally functioning, unpolluted surface and ground water system.
- Component of a larger ecosystem: Being a functional part of three converging bio-geographic regions affected by dynamic physical processes that influence a diverse and evolving biota.

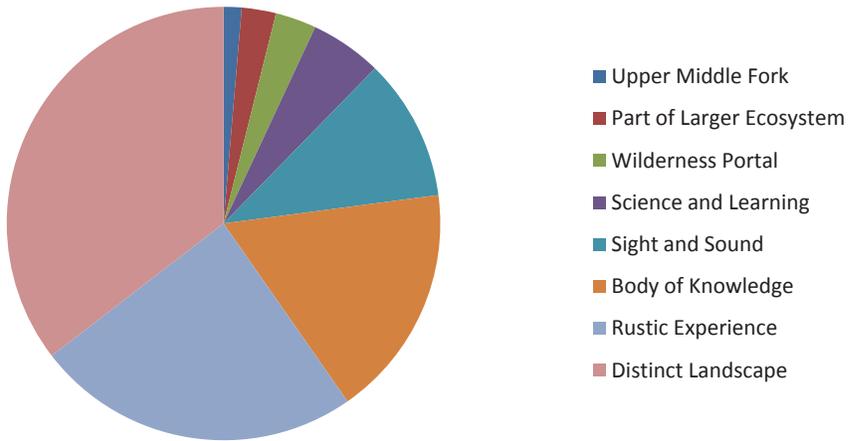


Devils Postpile serves as a gateway to the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness Areas

- Opportunities for science and learning: Opportunities for scientific study and shared learning about past, present and future environmental conditions and connected bio-geophysical processes.
- Body of Knowledge: A body of knowledge and material evidence documenting the monument’s natural and administrative history, cultural significance, and topographic importance in the Sierra Nevada ecoregion.
- Natural Soundscapes and Visual Quality: Natural soundscapes, dark night skies, clean air, clear water, and unspoiled natural vistas.
- Wilderness portal: Approximately 75% of Devils Postpile National Monument designated as wilderness with internationally recognized trails (John Muir Trail, Pacific Crest Trail), it is an entryway to exploration, understanding, and appreciation of wilderness character and values. Experiences range from a glimpse to an immersion into the vast Sierran wilderness.
- Nature-based Experience in a Rustic Setting: Visitors are offered time-honored park experiences in a setting that emphasizes the enjoyment of natural sights and sounds and promotes a sense of place.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES AS RECOGNIZED BY VISITORS

Fundamental Resources and Values as Recognized by Visitors
 Numbers of comments taken from "Significance of Park Resources" responses on visitor survey cards, 2000-2010



INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Primary interpretive themes capture ideas related to resource relevant and compelling stories that can be used as a framework to provide people with opportunities to understand and appreciate the monument's purpose and significance. The Monument's themes fall under the topics of Natural Wonders, Visitor Experiences, Stewardship, and Science. Following are the primary interpretive themes for Devils Postpile National Monument:

Natural Wonders:

1. The Devils Postpile challenges the intellect and inspires the imagination in our efforts to understand how lava, ice, and other forces forged and sculpted this scenic and scientific wonder.
2. Unusually rich ecological diversity, which can be experienced on a smaller scale at Devils Postpile, provides opportunities for intimate understanding and appreciation of the monument's connection to the larger Sierra Nevada ecosystem and the world.

Visitor Experiences:

1. Devils Postpile provides a gateway for a myriad of wilderness experiences, protecting natural processes while providing opportunities for personal renewal, inspiration, artistic expression, connection to the landscape, and the prospect of hope for the future.
2. The rustic setting and traditional park experience at Devils Postpile brings us closer to the land by providing opportunities for solitude, exploration, experiencing simple pleasures, and developing a sense of place.

Stewardship:

1. The establishment of Devils Postpile National Monument provides compelling insight into the ongoing evolution of our relationship to the land, environmental citizenry, stewardship ethic, and the internationally shared heritage of public lands conservation.
 - o Each visitor is part of a proud and enduring legacy of stewardship that catalyzed the creation of Devils Postpile National Monument and inspires us to protect and preserve the environment as a whole for future generations.

Science:

1. Complex natural processes shape and support the diverse and dynamic Devils Postpile landscape, creating inspirational scenery and opportunities for significant scientific discovery and understanding.
2. Evidence of powerful physical changes due to past ice ages within the monument, as well as ongoing scientific climate studies, make DEPO an ideal location to teach visitors about the causes and effects of natural and anthropogenic climate change.



Devils Postpile was set aside to preserve both the Devils Postpile formation and Rainbow Falls

TODAY'S VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The primary season of visitation at the monument is mid-June through September. Heavy snows limit access and force closure of the monument in winter; ranger station operations cease after mid-October in preparation for winter closure. In early to mid-October the ranger station and campground operations fluctuate and close when access roads are covered with snow and ice, and re-open when the roads clear. Private vehicle use is regulated in the peak season when a shuttle is available to take visitors in and out of the monument. Average summer use was 143,868 visitors each year 2004-2007 with daily average of 2,000 visitors per day during peak season. The average stay for day use is 4-5 hours and for overnight use is 2.5 days. The monument is used as an access point for backcountry hikers heading for the Pacific Crest Trail and the John Muir Trail. A commercial use operator provides an average of 1,200 day-use stock trips to Rainbow Falls between June and September. There are approximately 200 private stock users on the John Muir and Pacific Crest trails in the monument each year. Personal stock use numbers in the monument are small and have yet to be accurately counted. Visitors who venture out

during the cold winter months are only a few hundred per year, but winter use has been growing more popular in recent years (Mutch, Rose et al. 2007). Legal winter access within the monument is only by ski or snowshoe, although within Reds Meadow Valley snowmobiles are allowed on summer roadways only and occasionally trespass into the monument.

Visitation patterns entering Reds Meadow Valley can be categorized by both known transit and pedestrian-based studies. Most notable in understanding visitor use patterns are the 2006 Visitor Use Study conducted by the NPS Social Science Program's Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho and the VOLPE Transportation Study. Both studies focused on understanding who the visitor is and the use patterns.

In terms of transportation during the summer season, it is not surprising that most visitors (75%) ride the shuttle bus into Reds Meadow Valley. Given the road closures that take place for a substantial time of the non-peak season, visitation is concentrated during July, August, and September.

The Park Studies Unit of the NPS Social Science Program conducted a visitor study for DEPO in July of 2006. In the following section, that data is used to address the visitor experience as it relates to demographics, use patterns, recreational activities, the rustic setting, nature-based experiences, ranger contacts, the concept of DEPO as a wilderness portal, visitor satisfaction, visitor understanding, access and transportation, and accessibility. Summaries of each section are provided to create context for the data that follows.



Mid-summer crowds are common at the Rainbow Falls viewpoint

VISITOR DEMOGRAPHY

Visitor demography plays a significant role in interpretive programming. Understanding who the visitors are, and which groups of people might be underrepresented at the site guides the types and numbers of programs offered and how those programs are presented. Similarly, planning for waysides, exhibits, websites, and publications maintained both by the monument and by other entities not only reflects the current audience base, but can influence visitor demographics.

The following data is an analysis of visitor demographics as of July 2006.

	2009 Total Visitors	2010 Total Visitors
May	32	55
June	17,063	8,688
July	41,324	45,682
August	41,412	39,228
September	24,463	7,788
October	7,991	5,327
Report Totals	132,286	106,749

Thirty-three percent of visitor groups were in groups of five or more, 32% were in groups of three or four and 32% were groups of two. Sixty-five percent of visitor groups were family groups. Fifty percent of visitors were ages 36-65 years and 25% were ages 15 years or younger.

Nine percent of respondents were of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Ninety-three percent of respondents were White and 5% were Asian.

United States visitors were from California (85%), Nevada (3%), Arizona (2%), Ohio (2%), and 20 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors, comprising 6% of the total visitation, were from Germany (14%), Netherlands (13%), France (11%), and 13 other countries.

Analysis:

1. The majority of monument visitors are from the United States, speak English as a primary language, and visit in family groups.
2. Data regarding languages spoken and requests for information in foreign languages should be interpreted with caution as a relatively small sample was taken.

VISITOR USE PATTERNS

As the visitor experience often starts before visitors enter monument boundaries, analyzing visitor use patterns provides a better understanding of how to meet the needs of visitors prior to their arrival. The following section will look at how visitors plan and prepare for their visit to the monument and in what formats information is available to them in that crucial planning stage.

Connection with other nearby destinations

Due to the quality and variety of recreational opportunities in the area, visiting DEPO is often part of a larger, varied recreational experience for visitors, which is tied closely to recreation in surrounding National Parks and the Inyo National Forest. For 47% of visitor groups, their reason for traveling to the Devils Postpile area (which is defined as being within 75 miles of the monument) was to visit other local attractions, while 28% came specifically to visit Devils Postpile. Other most common sites visited within a two-hour drive of the monument were Mammoth Lakes Basin (49%), Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center (46%), and Mono Lake and Mono Basin (44%).

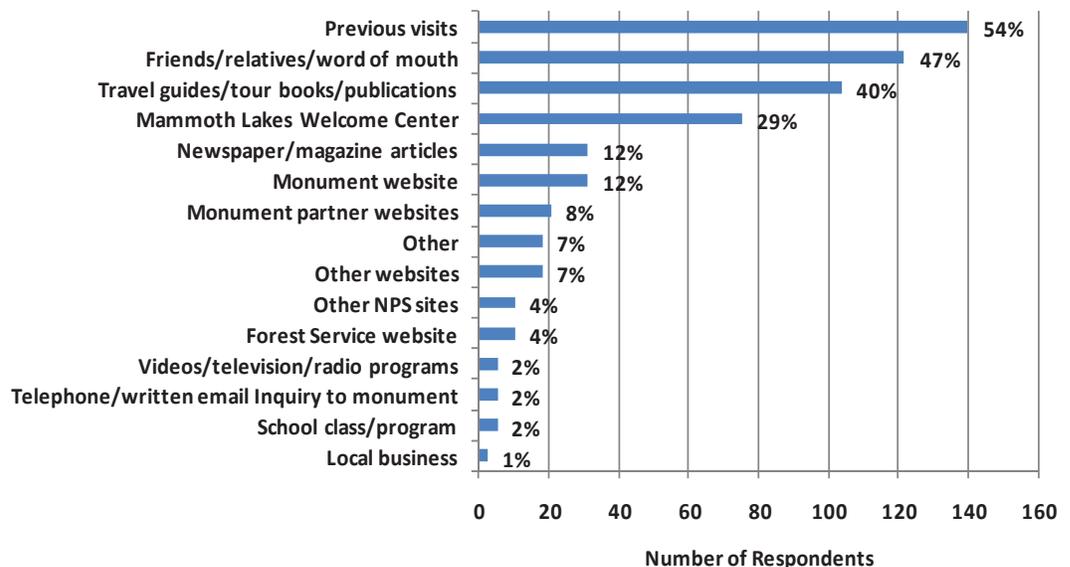
Length of visit

Although many visitors do spend multiple days in the monument, as part of this varied recreational experience, many visitors spend one day or less. Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours at the monument, 35% of visitor groups spent five or more hours, 33% spent three or four hours, and 31% spent up to two hours in the monument. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more at the monument, 38% of visitor groups spent four or more days, 35% spent two or three days, and 27% spent one day in the monument.

Activities in the monument

The most common sites visited in the monument included the bottom of Devils Postpile (83%) and Rainbow Falls (76%). The most common activities in the monument included general sightseeing (92%) and hiking (82%). The most common activities in Reds Meadow Valley area were also general sightseeing (80%) and hiking (64%).

Information Sources Prior to Visit



The “other” category represents a variety of sources including passport books, the Mammoth Times “Community Calendar”, the road sign on Highway 395, posters for special events, press releases, the Bishop Chamber of Commerce and Visitor’s Bureau Visitor Center, the White Mountain Ranger Station, maps, postcards in the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, booths and tables at fairs, partners, the Town of Mammoth Lakes website, marketing by Mammoth Lakes and Mono County, commercial users, including bus tours, pack stations, outfitters/guides, and through organized groups such as the Sierra Club and Boy Scouts of America.

Analysis:

1. The Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center do not have a clear NPS presence.
2. A thorough search of information conveyed by various sources could be conducted, and that information could be improved and corrected where appropriate.
3. Because of the confusion arising from multiple agencies, visitor contact sites, and the non-government location of bus ticket sales, a better pre-visit experience needs to be created for visitors.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

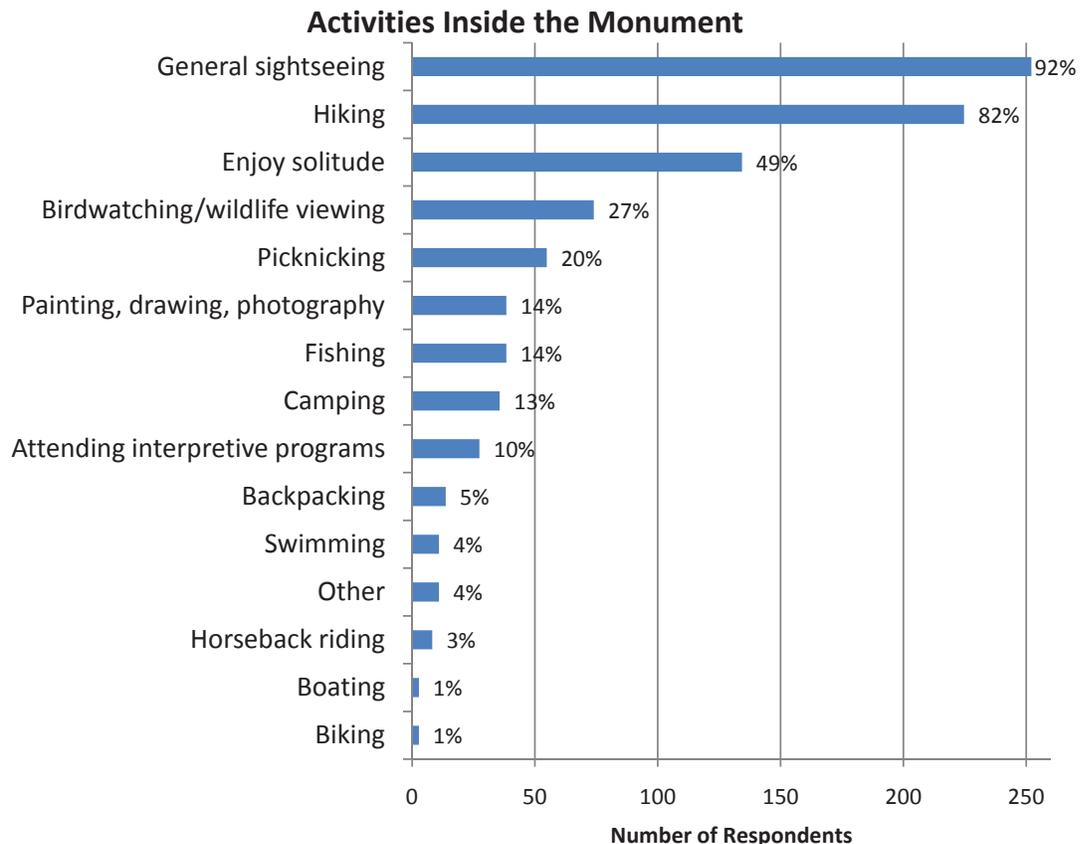
Recreation has proven to be a huge reason visitors come not only to DEPO, but to the surrounding Reds Meadow Valley and Mammoth Lakes area, as well. The Inyo National Forest, which surrounds DEPO, averages between 7 and 9 million recreational visitor days each year (Mammoth Welcome Center Interpretive Plan, 2008). With the John Muir and Pacific Crest Trails meeting in and continuing through the monument, hikers of all abilities utilize monument and valley trails. Day users enjoy short hikes to both Devils Postpile and Rainbow Falls. A variety of experiences is available to visitors in front- and back-country settings. On both a valley and monument scale, hiking and sightseeing are the primary activities in which visitors participate. Looking at recreational visits allows us to prepare services and facilities that meet the needs of these users. All of the data in this section is drawn from the 2006 University of Idaho Visitor Study.

Activities that require specific actions or have issues or management strategies associated with them are described below.

Hikers (82% of visitor groups)

Opportunities: According to data in the facility management software system, there are about 5.3 miles of hiking trails in Devils Postpile National Monument. The trails offer a variety of opportunities for all fitness levels. The John Muir and Pacific Crest Trails join into one trail in the monument. Many through-hikers take advantage of the shuttle system and other amenities at Devils Postpile, in Reds Meadow Valley, and in the town of Mammoth Lakes to refuel and rest.

Issues: Providing adequate facilities and signage to enhance the experience of these visitors is needed. Many of the signs, particularly in the visitor use area are outdated and there are no covered areas under which these visitors can get out of the elements when waiting for buses at valley trailheads and bus stops.



Bicyclists (1% of visitor groups)

Opportunities: Off-road mountain biking is generally not permitted in Reds Meadow Valley and is not permitted anywhere within Devils Postpile National Monument.

Mammoth Mountain, located in the Inyo National Forest, is a ski resort area in the winter and a mountain bike destination in the summer. For visitors wishing to bike on the road in the monument, shuttle buses accommodate bicycles on a space-available basis.

Cyclists taking the shuttle out of the valley have to pay the standard amenity fee on the way out. There may be opportunities to further accommodate cyclists or to provide opportunities that may better meet their needs.

Issues: Cyclist and motorist safety continues to be an issue on the narrow and steep road into the monument. Methods of providing safety and trip planning information to this user group could be evaluated.



Cyclists occasionally ride the narrow, winding road into Devils Postpile from the Minaret Vista

Anglers (19% of visitor groups)

Opportunities: Fishing is a very popular visitor activity in the valley. Easy access to the San Joaquin River, a designated Wild Trout River, provides many front-country opportunities for visitors. Devils Postpile seems to provide the easiest access to the river; however, there are other locations in the valley where river access is possible. In addition, there are two front-country lakes in the valley, Starkweather and Sotcher Lakes. These lakes provide recreational fishing from the shorelines or from non-motorized vessels or float tubes. For the backcountry user, valley trailheads provide access to many creeks and higher elevation lakes that provide fishing and other recreational opportunities. The closest of these “hike to” lakes is Shadow Lake, which is about a 6 mile round trip hike from the Agnew Meadows trailhead.

Issues: Social trails, river bank pollution, and other resource issues associated with river use are concerns. Abandoned fishing hooks and fishing line has caused multiple wildlife injuries and deaths.

Wildlife Watching (27% of visitor groups)

Opportunities: Devils Postpile National Monument boasts over 120 species of birds, as well as an abundance of mammals including black bear, coyote, mule deer, and pine marten to name a few. For wildlife watchers, the best time to visit is early morning or evening.

Issues: Often during peak wildlife watching times, rangers are unavailable, making these experiences largely self guided. Visitor safety and food storage education remain the primary concerns.

Snowshoers and Skiers (No data)

Opportunities: Access into the valley for winter recreational use has become easier due to backcountry access via Mammoth Mountain Ski Area. Due to the interest in winter recreation in this area and the need for some data collection in the winter, consideration of citizen science programs may be a consideration for adequately prepared and trained volunteers.

Issues: DEPO is a true winter wilderness experience meaning that winter travel into the valley can be hazardous. There are no facilities available in the valley during winter and all travelers have to be self-sufficient. With an increase of backcountry skiing and snowboarding in the Mammoth Lakes area and the accessibility of Reds Meadow Valley by skiers using lifts on Mammoth Mountain, lost skiers and snowboarders could become a growing problem.

Site Campers (13% of visitors)

Opportunities: Visitor comments show a relatively high rate of return visitors to the campground at Devils Postpile and although small, the campground is often filled on summer weekends. Opportunities for outreach through roves and programs targeted at campers exist.

Issues: The monument features a 21-site first-come, first-served campground. Only a few of the monument's campsites can accommodate campers and trailers over 30 feet in length. Parking, vehicle maneuverability, and site proximity to the river provide management challenges.

Backpackers (5% of visitor groups)

Opportunities: There are many wilderness and hiker groups that may provide opportunities for partnering and outreach to this user group through stewardship projects and general information dissemination.

Issues: Wilderness permits are required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. Although backpackers are encouraged to acquire their wilderness permits from the Inyo National Forest, the staff at DEPO can issue permits on a first-come, first-served basis for trips beginning at trailheads within Reds Meadow Valley. These permits are free of charge. In 2009, 4,347 visitors began or ended their trip in the monument, or passed through the monument during their trip. Providing adequate transportation information and assistance to these users is a potential concern.

Commercial Users

Anyone guiding, filming, or leading any other commercial trip that operates within or passes through Devils Postpile National Monument must submit a commercial use authorization permit (available on the monument website).

Opportunities: Through the commercial use authorization permit system, the monument is aware of which groups are guiding or otherwise using the monument for commercial purposes. There may be partnership opportunities in order to provide relevant information to these groups prior to their visits to the monument.

Virtual (off-site) Users

Opportunities: Sixty percent of visitor groups prefer to obtain information for planning their next visit through the monument website, and of those groups, eighty percent rate the monument website as “extremely important” or “very important.” Providing access to the monument through emerging technologies through the monument’s website, as well as improving general pre-visit information in a user-friendly format are priorities identified in this plan’s recommendations.

Issues: Coordinating virtual outreach programs with monument partners to avoid confusing or conflicting information is crucial to providing high quality visitor service.

NATURE-BASED EXPERIENCE IN A RUSTIC SETTING

One of the fundamental resources and values as addressed above is preserving a nature-based experience in the monument where a sense of a rustic setting prevails. Rustic can mean many things to many people. In this context, rustic has been identified as preserving the built environment to include subtle, traditional structures that do not affect the viewshed, and keeping visible technology to a minimum. By doing this, the monument hopes to encourage a very personal and nature-based experience for monument visitors.

Devils Postpile National Monument offers many opportunities for visitors to experience the monument through their physical senses. Interpreters encourage visitors to feel glacial polish on the Postpile rocks, to smell Jeffery pine, and to listen for birds and the rushing river. The river is easily accessible for touching and wading, (although early in the season, this is discouraged due to the dangerous and swift nature of the water at that time) and special interpretive programs such as night hikes and solstice programs encourage use of physical senses.

The rustic appearance of facilities in the monument reinforces physical interaction with materials of wood and stone.

RANGER/VISITOR CONTACT

Another important part of the personal and nature-based experience is the availability and presence of uniformed park rangers. The tradition of having rangers greet each arriving shuttle bus has been in place since the buses started running in 1979. This personal contact has spread to daily roves and trail patrols and the availability of rangers in the ranger station. The following data and descriptions summarize formal and informal opportunities for visitors to interact with a ranger.

Formal Ranger-Guided Programs

Guided walks with a ranger to the Postpile are available at 11 a.m. every day starting on opening weekend and on weekends during the fall. Campfire programs have traditionally been offered at least two days each week. Other walks and programs occasionally offered include bird-banding programs, astronomy and star gazing, Summer Solstice programs, night hikes, full moon walks, photography, and stream ecology programs. Eleven percent of visitors attend ranger-led or interpretive programs, and of those groups, sixty-seven percent rate ranger-led programs or talks as “extremely important” or “very important.”

Informal Interpretation

Park rangers meet each bus that stops at the ranger station, contacting about 50,000 visitors each year (2007-2009 Visitor Statistics). In addition, rangers rove to Rainbow Falls each day to offer information and assistance to visitors. Roves and patrols are also completed on other monument trails when staff is available. Destinations for roves and patrols include Minaret Falls and the King Creek trail. Staff also completes daily campground roves, focusing on food storage and safety messages.

Education Programs

National Park Service regulations allow school groups and other *bona fide* national and international educational institutions to obtain a waiver of entrance and access fees, provided that the visit is for educational or scientific purposes, and that the resources or facilities the group proposes to use support those purposes. Occasionally, rangers provide programs both in and out of classrooms during the school year. Rangers provide a variety of educational programs covering basic earth science, geology, wildlife, and others. Two percent of visitor groups learn about the monument through school class programs.

Youth Programs

During the summer months 25% of monument visitors are 15 years or younger. Children can come to the monument's ranger station where a park ranger will give them a free

Junior Ranger booklet to complete. The booklet was redesigned and updated in 2009. The Junior Ranger booklet contains DEPO oriented educational activities such as drawing, word scrambles, puzzles, and writing exercises. During the summer, park rangers assist young visitors with these activities. Upon completion of the booklet, children get to take the Junior Ranger oath with a park ranger and receive an official Junior Ranger badge and certificate. Eight percent of visitors use the Junior Ranger program, and of those, seventy-four percent rate the Junior Ranger program as "extremely important" or "very important."

Other youth programs have included the First Bloom Program, an outreach program working with local Paiute youth focusing on native plants, the Girl Scout Ranger Program, and Library Story Hour for preschoolers at the Mammoth Lakes Library.



Rangers provide a variety of programs to many groups from formal education classes to youth involvement groups such as scouts

WILDERNESS PORTAL

DEPO provides a gateway for a myriad of wilderness experiences while protecting natural processes that provide opportunities for personal renewal, inspiration, artistic expression, connection to the landscape, and the prospect of hope for the future.

The easy access to a front country wilderness experience and the portal to the vast Sierra wilderness provide a spectrum of opportunities for the monument and valley visitor. Wild landscapes predominate as the towering peaks of the west side of the valley and high walls of the eastern ridge encompass the Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River which originates near Thousand Island Lake and flows through the valley.

For many visitors, the 2.5 mile hike from the ranger station to Devils Postpile and Rainbow Falls, which leads them through the Ansel Adams Wilderness, is a rare experience in a wild landscape. Many visitors are from large urban areas, and in addition to being novice hikers, are separated from easy access to their vehicles, as they have ridden the mandatory shuttle bus. Rangers and staff strive to make this a positive experience for these users by conducting frequent patrols to make informal contacts and provide information as needed, to respond to emergencies as quickly as possible, and to ensure that such emergencies are prevented in a multitude of situations. This introduction to wilderness and its values may leave positive experiences to be cherished, encourage future endeavors, and expose them to the stewardship ethic.

For many other users, the monument is a portal to one of the largest contiguous wilderness areas in the lower forty eight states. Visitors experience this wilderness through day hikes, backpacking trips, pack trips, rock climbing ascents of technical peaks, and as part of the experience of hiking the John Muir and Pacific Crest Trails.

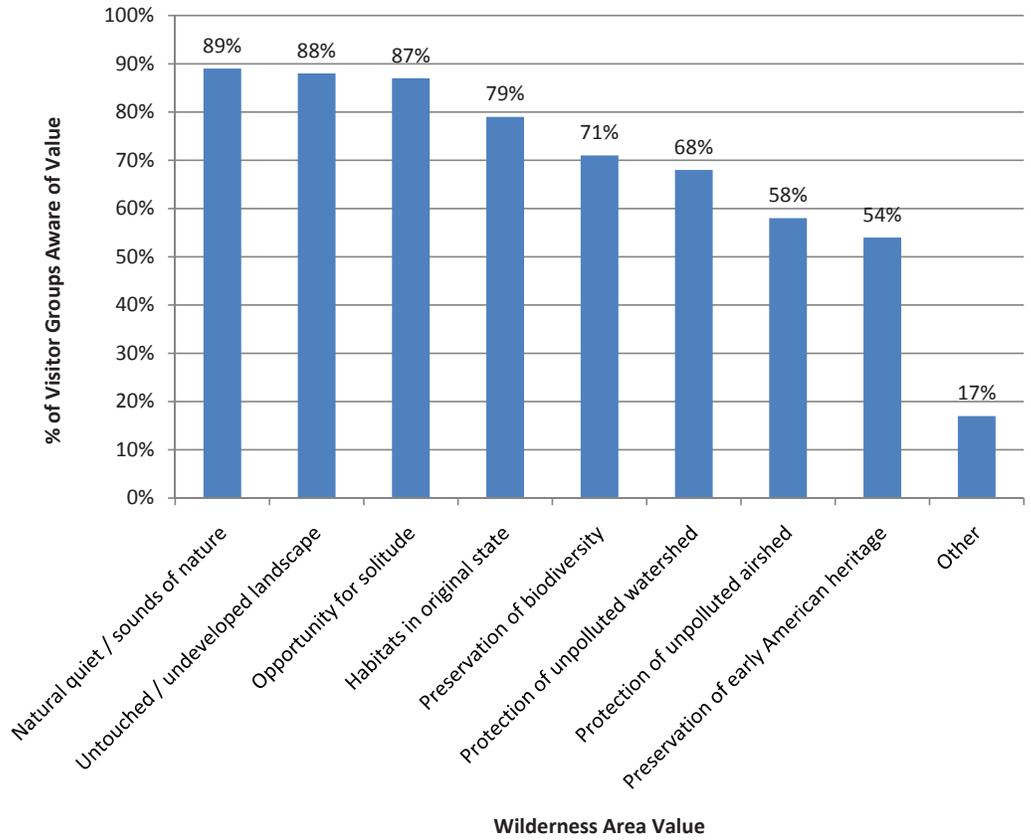
In the 2006 Visitor Study Project, visitors identified what they perceived as “wilderness values.” In the chart that follows, “Other” includes fishing, geological formations, the impact of fire on wilderness, natural/geographical wonders, nature observations, new experience for family, and a diversity of levels of wilderness preparedness.

Prior to visiting the Monument only 41% of visitor groups were aware of wilderness designation. The remaining 59% of Monument visitor groups were not aware that the Monument provides hiking access to the High Sierra backcountry and to the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness areas, or that over 90% of the Monument is designated wilderness.

The wilderness area values visitors learned about and valued during their visit were:

- Preservation of early American heritage (Native American and pioneer) (46% of visitors).
- Untouched or undeveloped landscapes (44% of visitors).
- Habitats in original state (minimum impacts by human activities) (43% of visitors).

Visitor Awareness of Wilderness Values



VISITOR SATISFACTION

Although the natural and cultural resources are often the main reasons people visit a site, the services and facilities provided are an important part of the overall visitor experience. The following are data and analyses of visitor statistics from the 2006 Visitor Study as they pertain to the Government Results and Performance Act (GPRA) goal of visitor satisfaction. Analyses in the following sections have been produced by park staff, using a combination of interpretation of the monument's visitor statistics and internal scoping efforts.

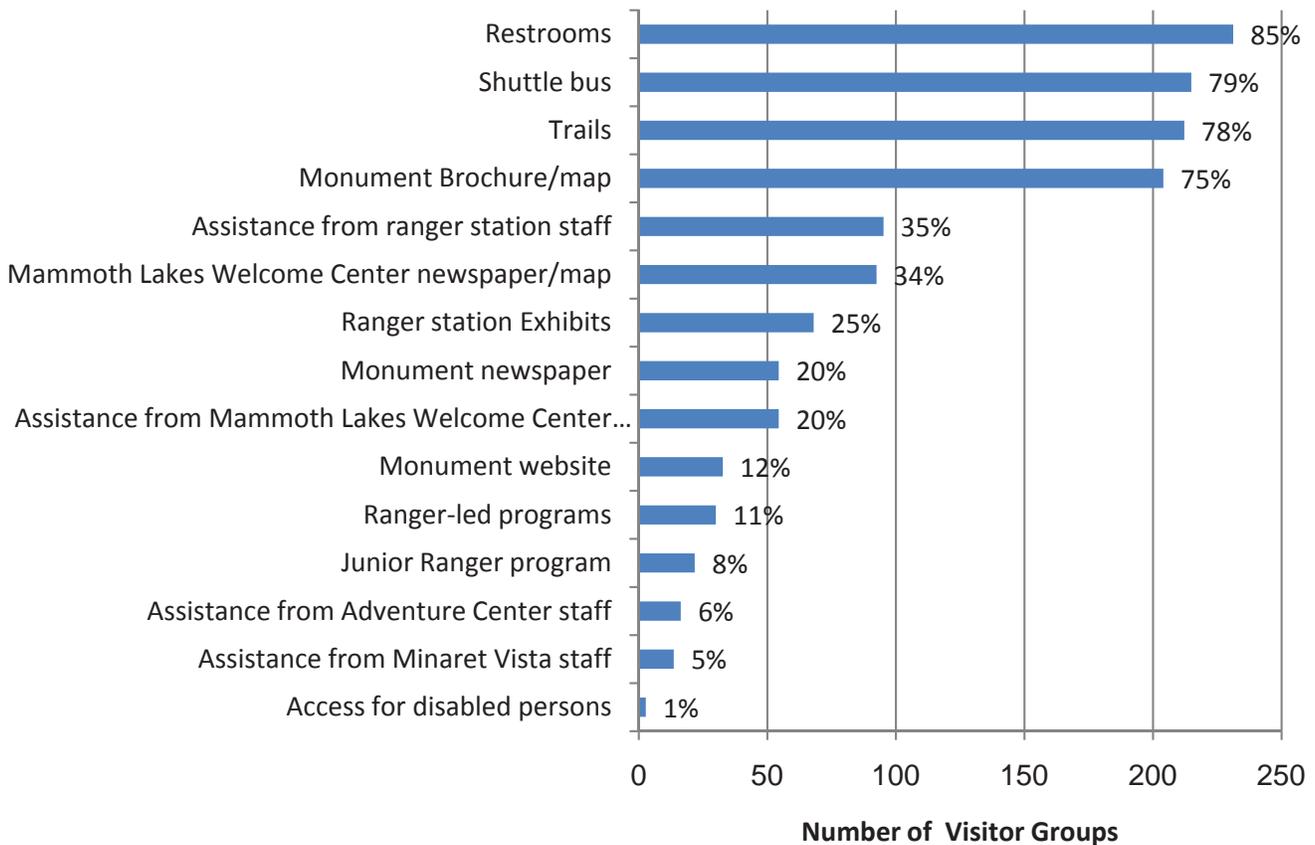
Visitor services and facility use and importance:

From the 2006 University of Idaho Visitor Study, the chart below indicates which services and facilities visitors used the most upon visiting the Monument.

The following data show the level of importance that visitors have assigned to various visitor services and facilities. The graph on the following page ranks combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings for visitor services and facilities. Only services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups during the 2006 Visitor Study are shown.

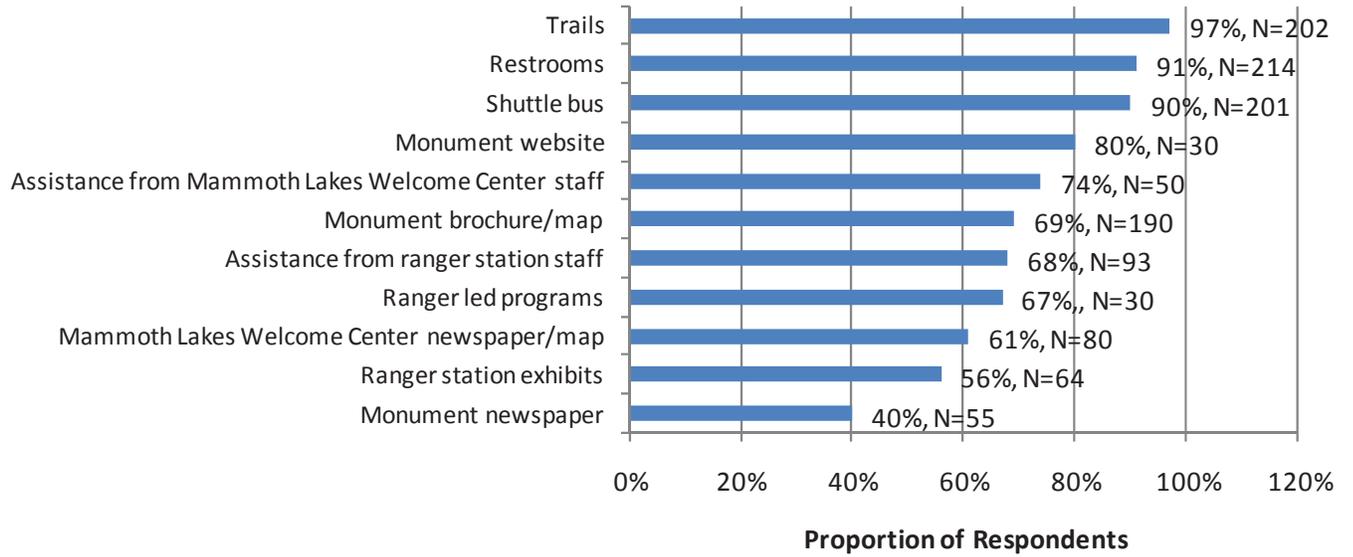
Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Devils Postpile NM as "very good" or "good." Less than 2% of visitor groups rated the overall quality as "very poor" or "poor."

Visitor Services/Facilities Used



Importance Ratings of Visitor Services and Facilities

N= Total number of visitor groups who rated each facility



Prior to new wayfinding signs installed in 2009, visitors often relied on small, rudimentary signs

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Commercial Services

Until 2009 commercial and special use permits for Devils Postpile Monument were administered by Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks staff. Since then monument staff have been responsible for the management of the commercial and special use permit program. Permit holders offer services including mule packing, camp trailer rentals, bus tours, photography workshops, and guiding services. The monument permit holders use NPS resources to provide recreational opportunities to the public that otherwise may not be available. Permit holders must adhere to all monument regulations.

In order to address visitor satisfaction, the following inventory has been drafted to describe facilities and services which are currently available to visitors. The content of the lists, and the associated analyses, were provided by park staff.

Where and how visitors are provided with facilities and services for their comfort:

Personal Services:

- Rangers are always available daily from 9am – 5 pm at the ranger station
- Roving patrols provide orientation, information, interpretation, and help at Rainbow Falls
- Personnel at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center/Main Lodge/Bus Stop provide basic information and services
- Monument staff provides emergency medical services and search and rescue responses.
- Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center and the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center provide off-site information and services
- Drinking water is available at the DEPO ranger station, the Rainbow Falls trailhead, Reds Meadow Resort, and at all valley campgrounds
- Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center provides snacks, drinking water, supplies
- Reds Meadow Resort provides basic supplies including firewood and food



Staff at the ranger station provide information, interpretation, and wilderness permits

Amenities:

- Flush toilets are available at DEPO
- A payphone is available at DEPO
- Reds Meadow cabins
- Campgrounds have tent pads and food storage boxes
- Benches are located in the DEPO visitor use area, at the Rainbow Falls bus stop, and at Reds Meadow Resort
- Picnic areas are located at the Agnew Meadows bus stop, Starkweather Lake, DEPO ranger station area, Devils Postpile, Rainbow Falls trail, Sotcher Lake (several around the lake), and at Reds Meadow Resort
- Bookstores are located at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and at the DEPO ranger station

Analysis: Where needs exist for facilities and services to provide comfort for visitors:

1. Many visitor comments refer to the lack of drinking water along the trail. This was confirmed in a 2009 Visitor Safety Study.
2. 2009 University of Idaho Visitor Survey reports relatively low satisfaction with monument restrooms, as compared to visitor satisfaction with other aspects of the monument. It may be that visitors perceive that the non-use of soap (for resource protection reasons) is related to facility cleanliness.
3. The 2009 Safety Report recommended posting urine color charts in the restrooms to help visitors recognize dehydration as well as providing easier and more affordable access to drinking water.

Where and how visitors are oriented to the monument:**Personal Services:**

- Rangers at the DEPO ranger station: 68% of monument visitor groups consider assistance from ranger station staff to be “extremely important” or “very important”
- Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center: 74% of monument visitor groups consider assistance from Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center staff to be “extremely important” or “very important”
- The Adventure Center staff
- Minaret Vista Station: 54% of monument visitor groups consider assistance from Minaret Vista Station staff to be “extremely important” or “very important”
- Bus drivers of Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA)
- Bus drivers of private tours
- Roving park rangers
- Hotel staff and managers of rental properties

Non-Personal Services:

- Two interagency newspapers containing maps and information
- Trail signs: 5% of monument visitor groups report that directional signs inside the monument are not adequate
- Waysides at Minaret Vista
- Waysides and signage at Adventure Center area and parking lot
- Waysides at Rainbow Falls trail junction
- Bulletin boards contain maps
- Monument website contains maps and information
- Monument map and guide
- Guidebooks created by outside sources

Analysis:

1. There is confusion resulting from multiple agency representatives and occasional inconsistency in information given from each agency at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and other sites.
2. An improved partnership and better communication with Mammoth Mountain is needed to facilitate joint trainings and collaborative solutions to issues at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center.
3. The situation of having shuttle tickets purchased at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center changes from year to year.
4. Coordination of goals and priorities at the Minaret Vista is needed.
5. Information distributed at hotels should be evaluated.
6. Guidebooks may be dated or contain misinformation.

OVERVIEW OF VISITOR COMMENTS

I. Overview of Visitor Comments for Devils Postpile National Monument

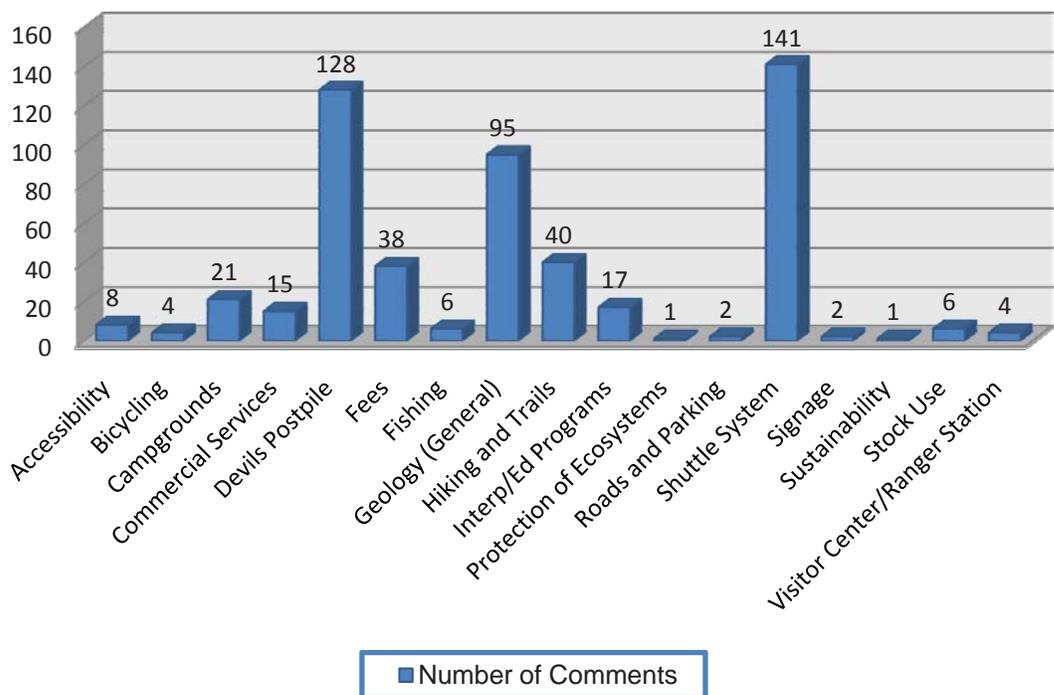
To augment the scoping activities for the Devils Postpile National Monument General Management Plan, the staff of Devils Postpile National Monument coordinated 529 visitor comments that have been collected since 1979. These comments were submitted in several formats. Most of them came in the form of official comment forms. Others were written letters or e-mails. In the past 30 years from 1979 to the summer of 2009, 92 visitor comments were received in those formats. The majority of those comments (90%) were received after 2000. The earliest comments in the collection were from 1979 and were related to the shuttle bus system.

Added to these was an analysis of the comments that were received during our annual visitor surveys from 2000-2009. Of the comments that came in, 437 of them were selected as relevant given the context of the GMP comments. As a detailed analysis of the 2006 University of Idaho Study has already been done, those comments are not included in this summary. Twenty-seven percent of the comments received were related in some way to shuttle bus operations and bus personnel or to fees associated with the shuttle bus. Twenty-four percent were related to the significance of the Devils Postpile formation.

II. Summary of Visitor Comments

The most significant comments received over the last 30 years were divided into 17 categories. The chart and sections below provide brief summaries of each comment category.

Visitor Comments at Devils Postpile: 1979-2009



■ Number of Comments

ACCESSIBILITY (1.5% of all comments)

A total of eight visitors commented on accessibility in the Monument. The overall consensus is that visitors would like to see the Postpile trail fully accessible to visitors with disabilities. Visitors also commented on the parking situation for visitors with disabilities. They suggested that the parking be better defined and marked.

BICYCLING (0.76% of all comments)

Four comments regarding bicycles were recorded. Cyclists believe that the speed bump at the Postpile should be marked better and is a hazard. They also felt that the fees for cyclists should be lower. Visitors would like to see bike paths in the valley.

CAMPGROUNDS (4% of all comments)

Twenty-one visitors weighed in on the issue of campground in the Monument. Generally, visitors are opposed to the campground requiring reservations, although there was one comment that encouraged a reservation system. Visitors also commented that they do not want to see the campground removed from the Monument. Other comments were related to the layout of the campground. Visitors believe that the sites are too close together and the layout of the parking and driving areas is confusing.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES (3% of all comments)

Fifteen visitors commented on commercial services in the valley. Many visitors seemed to appreciate the lack of commercial development, often contrasting it with Yosemite. Visitors who requested more services requested that bottled water be sold and that prices at the bookstore in the Monument and the Reds Meadow Store be more reasonable.

DEVILS POSTPILE FORMATION (24% of all comments)

The 128 comments about the Postpile formation all came from the 2000-2009 visitor surveys. Most visitors viewed the Postpile as the primary resource in the Monument and one that was worth of protection. Visitors appreciated its significance to the history and formation of the national Monument. They also noted the value of it being so close to the trailhead and therefore, accessible to visitors of varying hiking abilities.

FEES (7% of all comments)

Fees seemed to be another big issue for visitors, but more so in the individual written comments. There were 38 comments related to fees. Of those, many were related to the acceptance of the interagency passes. The primary complaints came from Golden Age or Interagency Senior Pass holders. Other visitors felt that the per-person fee was prohibitive for family groups and that fees overall were too expensive. One visitor suggested selling weekly passes to allow visitors to do more in the valley on one pass over several days.

FISHING (1% of all Comments)

Only six comments were recorded relating to fishing. Visitors would like the Monument to consider more strict regulations regarding barbless hooks and artificial bait. Another suggestion was made that the Monument should be catch and release only. Visitors were also concerned with fishing debris (line, hooks, etc.) and social trails detracting from the experience along the river.

GENERAL GEOLOGY (18% of all comments)

From the visitor survey cards, 95 comments were received related to geology and geologic processes outside of the Postpile formation itself. Visitors seemed to view the overall geologic story of the area as an important resource. Comments mentioned glaciology, volcanism, and earthquakes as significant stories in the Monument.

HIKING AND TRAILS (7.6% of all comments)

Forty comments were received related to hiking and trails. The majority of them dealt with improving directional signage and placing mileages on those signs. Other comments indicated that visitors appreciate the “dog-friendly” nature of the trails, but do not appreciate stock and horse use on Monument trails. Visitors also commented that the Pacific Crest and John Muir Trails are significant Monument resources and appreciated the access to the Wilderness areas.

INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS (3% of all comments)

Seventeen visitors commented on formal programs. Most visitors felt that the programs were an asset and helped them understand the primary resources in the Monument. They commented that the staff was generally courteous and that they appreciated the interaction with Monument staff. The Junior Ranger Program was mentioned in several comments as an important program. Visitors would like to see more programs; specifically those geared to children. They would also like program schedules to be more available.

PROTECTION OF ECOSYSTEMS (0.19% of all comments)

One official comment came in regarding the protection of ecosystems, noting that the fencing and other efforts to protect the river and the meadow were effective. There were, however, quite a few comments in the visitor surveys noting ecosystems and a combination of natural features being an important value in the Monument.



Several visitor comments mentioned the monument's Junior Ranger programs as an important part of the visit

ROADS AND PARKING (0.38% of all comments)

Two specific comments were recorded relating to roads and parking. Visitors commented that the roads were bumpy and dangerous and that there was inadequate parking. There were other comments regarding roads embedded in the shuttle bus comments that dealt with the narrow, unsafe nature of the road and a “dangerous” bus ride. One visitor suggested the road be returned to dirt and bus service discontinued.

SHUTTLE BUS SYSTEM (27% of all comments)

A total of 141 comments were received that related in some way to the buses. Many of these were comments about bus drivers. More relevant comments included visitors who raised safety concerns about accommodations for children and elderly riders. Other comments indicated that improved communication between agencies and partners should be improved. Visitors commented that the information regarding the buses was confusing and requested better signage and printed material. Several visitors requested better interpretation on the buses. There were many comments praising the bus service, commenting that it allowed for loop hikes and was ecologically responsible.



Many visitor comments were in some way related to the mandatory shuttle bus, in place since 1979

SIGNAGE (0.38% of all comments)

Two comments specifically mentioned signage that was not related to trail markers and mileages. One of them appreciated the interpretive signs in the Monument and the other requested more informative signage.

SUSTAINABILITY (0.19% of all comments)

One visitor commented specifically on sustainability, although there were several comments about the sustainability of the bus service. This visitor commented that the Monument should consider alternative transit within the Monument including smart cars and golf carts.

STOCK USE (1% of all comments)

There were six comments related to stock use. Stock users commented that the information related to stock use in the valley is confusing and would like better signage or publications related to regulations and stock use. Other visitors commented on the amount of manure on the trails and trail degradation from stock use.

VISITOR CENTER/RANGER STATION (0.76% of all comments)

Only four comments were directly related to the ranger station. Visitors commented that it was too small and that a larger facility would be desirable. They also requested multimedia presentations be available in the ranger station (movies, slide shows, etc.).

VISITOR UNDERSTANDING

Looking at how visitors view the personal and non-personal services offered by the NPS and its partners provides valuable insight into how well the messages and values of the NPS and the monument are being communicated both in and outside of the monument. The following lists and data pertain to the GPRA goal of Visitor Understanding.

Language-based materials and services that provide communication to visitors:**NPS personal services:**

- Formal interpretive programs at DEPO (67% of monument visitor groups consider ranger-led programs and talks to be “extremely important” or “very important”)
- Junior Ranger program (74% of monument visitor groups consider Junior Ranger programs as “extremely important” or “very important”)
- Formal interpretive programs at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center
- Outreach programs (2% of visitor groups learn about the monument through school class programs)
- Informal contacts through roving

Personal services outside the NPS:

- Tour guides (40% of visitor groups learn about the monument through travel guides, tour books, and publications)
- Local businesses (1% of monument visitor groups learn about the monument from local businesses)
- Other NPS sites (4% of monument visitor groups learn about the monument from other NPS sites)
- Bus drivers of ESTA
- Bus drivers of private tours
- Special events and presentations
- USFS roves and patrols
- USFS programs at Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center

NPS non-personal services:

- Monument website (12% of visitor groups learn about the monument through the monument website)
- Inquiries to monument (2% of monument visitor groups learn about the monument through telephone, written, and email communications to the monument)
- GMP outreach efforts
- Annual visitor surveys
- The Post: Devils Postpile and Reds Meadow Visitor Guide
- Devils Postpile Map and Guide
- Species lists
- Waysides
- Signs

Non-personal services outside the NPS:

- Travel/feature articles (12% of visitor groups learn about the monument through newspaper and magazine articles)
- Partner websites (8% of visitor groups learn about the monument through partners' websites. Four percent of visitor groups learn about the monument through the Forest Service website)
- Earth Cache and other websites (7% of monument visitor groups learn about the monument through other websites)
- Television (2% of monument visitor groups learn about the monument through videos, television, and radio programs)
- Inyo National Forest Visitor Guide
- Interpretive exhibits in the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center
- Waysides
- Signs



Visitor information is disseminated at multiple locations, including the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center

ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

The primary season of visitation at the monument is mid-June through September. Heavy snows limit access and force closure of the monument in winter; Visitor center operations cease after October 31, or when access roads are covered with snow and ice, and re-open when the roads clear. Private vehicle use is regulated in the peak season when a shuttle is available to take visitors in and out of the monument. Average summer use was 143,868 visitors each year 2004-2007 with daily average of 2,000 visitors per day during peak season. The average stay for day use is 4-5 hours and for overnight use is 2.5 days. The monument is used as an access point for backcountry hikers heading for the Pacific Crest Trail and the John Muir Trail, as well as approximately 1500 equestrians, 1200 of whom do day trips to Rainbow Falls (Mutch, Rose et al. 2007). Visitors who venture out during the cold winter

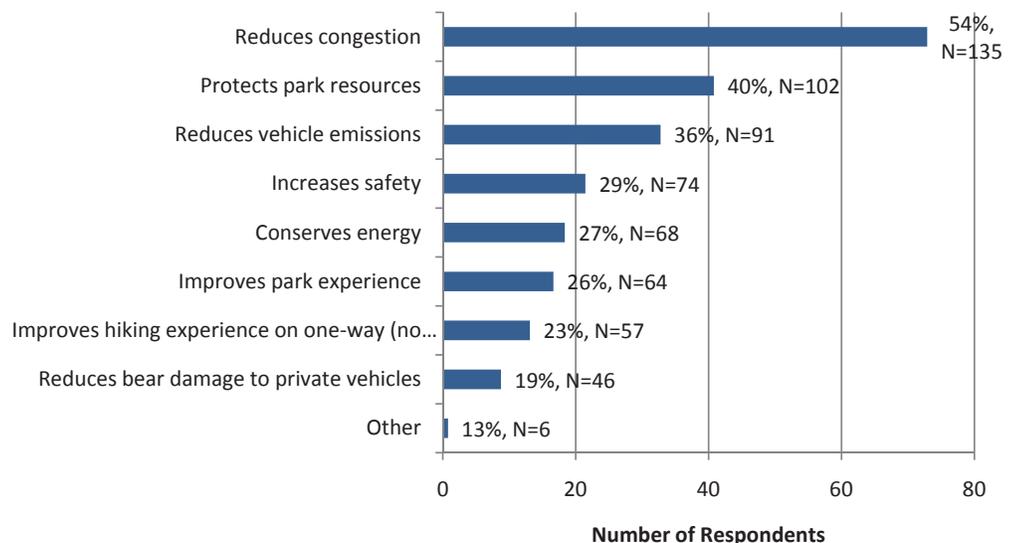
months are only a few hundred per year, but winter use has been growing more popular in recent years (Mutch, Rose et al. 2007); legal winter access to the Monument is only by cross-country ski, although within the Reds Meadow Valley snowmobiles are allowed, and those occasionally trespass into the Monument.

Particularly at Devils Postpile, with its mandatory shuttle system, access and transportation are key issues to visitors. How people enter the monument, their experience with the shuttle bus, and how successful that operation is represents a huge part of the visitor experience at the monument. The following table and data, which are drawn from the 2006 Visitor Study, look at a variety of elements related to transportation and access into the monument and Reds Meadow Valley.

The following table summarizes the perceived benefits of the shuttle bus according to Monument visitors.

N=number of groups who rated each benefit

Perceived benefits as most important



“Other” benefits (13%) included:

- Controls number of visitors in monument
- Convenience
- Deters vandalism
- Helps the elderly/disabled to get around in monument
- Improves wilderness preservation
- Obtain information from drivers
- Opportunity to socialize with others
- Preserves habitat
- Reduces accidents
- Reduces noise pollution
- Teaches good values

Seventy-five percent of visitor groups rode the shuttle bus into the monument. The following data addresses some of the aspects of the shuttle operation and transportation as it pertains to visitor services.

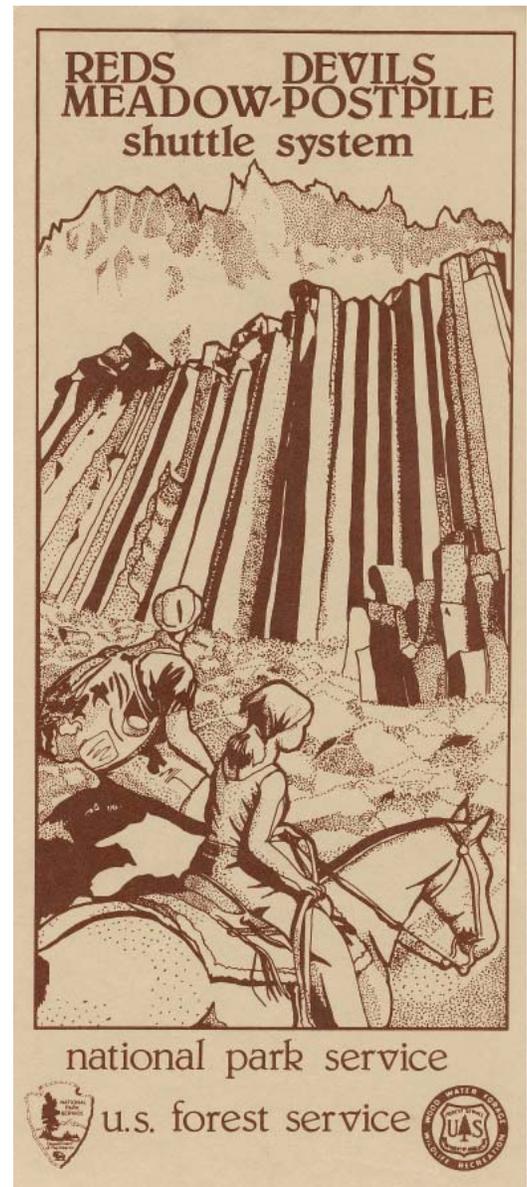
Of those who did not ride the shuttle, 73% of visitor groups used one vehicle to enter the monument.

- Thirty percent of visitor groups had five or more people per vehicle.
- Twenty-nine percent had two people per vehicle.
- Twenty-seven percent had four people per vehicle.

Data was also collected about the impact of raising shuttle bus fees on monument visitors. The following data summarizes those responses:

- Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups were not aware of the operation of the shuttle bus system by the U.S. Forest Service. Thirty-three percent were aware.
- Eighty-two percent of visitor groups rated the cost of the shuttle bus fee for adults as “about right”. Sixteen percent rated the fee as “too high”.
- Eighty-three percent of visitor groups rated the cost of the shuttle bus fee for children as “about right”. Fifteen percent rated the fee as “too high”.

Fifty-six percent of visitor groups reported they would likely be willing to pay a \$3 increase in shuttle bus fees for adults and children. Twenty-five percent were unlikely to pay a fee increase. Nineteen percent were “not sure.”



The Reds Meadow Shuttle System is the longest federal shuttle system in the country and has undergone many changes since 1979

ACCESSIBILITY

The monument deals with many challenges relating to creating accessible experiences for monument visitors. Many of these stem from the rustic character of the facilities and infrastructure. The following provides a summary of accessible programs and facilities and areas for improvement.

Shuttle Buses

As of the publication of this plan, the shuttle buses were not accessible to visitors with disabilities. Visitors who can provide proof of physical disability are permitted to drive down to the monument. They must still pay the standard amenity fee unless they possess an Interagency Access Pass.

Day Use Area, Campground, and Ranger Station

As of 2010, there were two ADA-compliant comfort stations (bathrooms) within the monument's day-use and campground areas. A variety of wheelchair-accessible picnic tables and campfire pits are provided throughout the day-use area. The monument's campground features one ADA-compliant site. A wheelchair-accessible ramp facilitates entrance to the ranger station for visitors with disabilities; however, the layout of the building does not provide adequate access to exhibits, publications, or merchandise. The office area and medical supplies are also not accessible.

Trails

Although the monument's day-use and campground facilities are equipped with ADA-accessible features, the 0.4 mile trail to the Postpile formation is not yet fully accessible.

The start of the trail, which is a hard-packed gravel path leading from the ranger station to the eastern edge of Soda Springs Meadow, is wheelchair-accessible. Beyond this point, however, the trail continues uphill towards the Postpile formation and a series of tree roots, uneven surfaces, and pumice soil make wheelchair access difficult and unsafe in some areas. Although not ADA-compliant, the trail does provide the opportunity for wheelchair access with assistance to the viewpoint before the stairs near the base of the Postpile. There are several steep grades along the trail, which makes navigating the trail without assistance unsafe. At the time of publication, a trail consisting of one long switchback was under construction in order to enable visitors with disabilities access to the base of Devils Postpile. It will not be officially ADA-compliant, but will offer safer access to visitors with assistance.

The trail to Rainbow Falls, located within the wilderness, is not accessible.

See accessibility guidelines in the appendix for directions in planning future services and facilities.

Waysides, Exhibits, and Publications

Some of the waysides in the day-use area are accessible to visitors with mobility impairments; however, the surface is uneven in many locations. The waysides do not all meet accessibility guidelines for typography and readability.

Waysides in the rest of the monument are in areas that are not technically accessible to visitors with mobility impairments due to the nature of the trails. The waysides on the beginning on the Postpile trail are accessible to visitors with mobility impairments with assistance. They were not necessarily designed to meet accessibility guidelines for typography.

Waysides at the Minaret Vista are currently not accessible to visitors with disabilities, but may become accessible to visitors in wheelchairs if that area is rehabilitated. There is a ramp up to the viewing point; however, it is not in good condition.

There are currently no waysides or publications with information available in Braille or large print text.

Not all exhibits in the ranger station are accessible to visitors with mobility impairments due to the layout and placement of the exhibits and other furniture.

Transcripts of interpretive programs are not currently available.

OPERATIONS

The “Operations” section of this plan provides a basic assessment of current conditions in the monument as of the publication of this plan. It covers personal services, interpretive facilities, reports, budget, staffing, partnerships, and volunteerism. This material provides a framework for the recommendations section of this plan. Unless otherwise noted, data in this section are drawn from the 2006 Visitor Study. Assessments were developed through review of visitor comments and internal scoping.

PERSONAL SERVICES

Formal Programs

Monument staff offers a variety of interpretive programs throughout the summer. Traditional offerings have included daily interpretive walks to Devils Postpile and weekend campfire programs. These programs have been identified as core programs and are the longest running interpretive programs in the monument. Other formal programs that have been recently added to the schedule include astronomy talks, special event programs such as the Summer Solstice Hike, and interpretive talks at Rainbow Falls. As part of the formal program offerings the monument has developed a strong coaching system to ensure program adherence to primary interpretive themes and the standards of the Interpretive Development Program. Coaching and development of a professional interpretive program are priorities for the division.

Informal Interpretation

As part of the traditional visitor experience, informal interpretation is a significant part of the interpretive operation. In 2009, nearly 90% of monument visitors were contacted by a ranger (2009 NPS visitor use statistics).

Visitor comments dating back to 1979 indicate that visitors generally appreciate the visibility and accessibility of rangers in the monument. Key elements of informal interpretation at DEPO include the monument’s Junior Ranger program, greeting buses as they arrive, roves to Rainbow Falls and other popular destinations within the monument, and informal interpretive programs on the deck of the ranger station.

Educational and Community Outreach

In recent years, Devils Postpile National Monument has committed and is striving to sustain an educational outreach program in times of difficult budget climates. In recent years, monument staff has presented educational programs in local schools covering a variety of topics including geology and basic ecology. Students have also visited the monument for geology and bird banding programs. It should be noted, however, that the monument does not offer any officially curriculum-based educational programs. Community outreach has also increased in recent years. The most successful programs have been the First Bloom project, a partnership with the Bishop Paiute Tribe, the Mammoth Lakes Library Story Hour, and the Girl Scout Ranger Program. These projects and programs have increased the visibility of the monument in the community and provided educational opportunities, both on and off-site for a diversity of youth. They have also helped to strengthen partnerships and build sustainable programs.

INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

For the purposes of this plan, all of the interpretive facilities and opportunities in Reds Meadow Valley and areas that affect the visitor experience there have been included. Other areas that have been identified as critical to the visitors' overall experience at DEPO or in the valley have also been identified.

Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center

In the town of Mammoth Lakes, the Mammoth Welcome Center (a state of California Welcome Center) provides the first point of contact for visitors to Mammoth Lakes, the Inyo National Forest, and DEPO. Both Devils Postpile and the Inyo National Forest offer interpretive programs. Throughout the summer months interpretive programs are offered at least twice daily at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center. The topics of these programs vary, but they are generally talks given in the interpretive plaza.

This site is staffed by USFS employees year round. That staffing is augmented throughout the year by staff from the NPS, town of Mammoth Lakes, and the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association. This site provides visitors with wilderness permits, area information, a bookstore, and interpretive exhibits. Other staffing includes employees from the Mammoth Lakes Tourism Destination Marketing Organization and ESIA. Twenty-nine percent of visitor groups use this site as a source of monument information.

Assessment of current conditions:

As with any interagency operation, management challenges exist. Duties and assignments of staff need to be clearly defined to avoid confusion and to improve training efforts. An organized chain of command should be established and clearly communicated to staff. Operational leads need to be clearly identified. A stronger NPS presence is needed, and is proposed in the VIS OFS base increase. Twenty



National Park Service rangers provide interpretive programs at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center during the summer months

percent of visitors obtain assistance from Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Staff. Seventy-four percent of visitors rate “Assistance from Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center staff” as “extremely important” or “very important.” NPS staff should receive training and resources in order to effectively answer questions related to USFS areas and DEPO in order to continue high quality visitor service. Joint training for both NPS and USFS staff should be provided as a means to this end.

Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center

Current conditions: The visitor experience on a valley-wide scale starts for most visitors at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center, located near the Mammoth Mountain Main Lodge about 1 mile east of the Minaret Summit. From there, visitors proceed either by private vehicle or shuttle bus over the Minaret Summit into the Reds Meadow Valley. A variety of recreational activities are available starting at the Adventure Center.

Because ticket sales are now managed by Mammoth Mountain, there is no longer federal presence at this complex sales area, where bus tickets to the monument are sold. Although the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center is a complex location that can be complicated for visitor navigation, selling tickets from that location contributes to the sustainability of the shuttle system. The Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center is also a central location for Mammoth Mountain visitors and is a critical part of the welcome experience for monument visitors. It may not be clear to many visitors where they are, where they are going, or what they are to do there due to confusing signage and a mixture of NPS, USFS, and Mammoth Mountain activities and facilities. There is a lack of agency identity at this site. Twenty-one percent of visitor groups are not aware that the monument is a unit of the NPS.

Six percent of visitors use assistance from Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center staff and 57% of those visitors rate “Assistance from Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center staff” as “extremely important” or “very important.”

Assessment of current conditions: Improved signage and federal presence are both needed at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center. This will ideally address both visitor information and orientation deficiencies as well as safety issues (2009 Visitor Safety Study). Improving communication with Mammoth Mountain will enhance the overall visitor experience at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center.

Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center Parking Lot

Current conditions: This location provides parking for the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center. Orientation waysides are slated to be installed in the summer of 2010 at two separate locations in and near the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center Parking areas.

Assessment of current conditions: During a busy day, parking requires a long walk, and the parking experience is not intuitive. The site requires visitors to walk alongside the road to the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center, which creates unsafe conditions. Traffic speed is also a concern at this location. Improved signage would be valuable.

Top of the Sierra Interpretive Center

Current conditions: A geology exhibit shows the history of volcanic flows in Reds Meadow Valley. In addition to a small panel with information and some information on a computer, viewing tubes identify major peaks and geologic features.

Assessment of current conditions: This is an excellent vantage point of the Sierra and allows visitors a glimpse of the geologic features surrounding the monument.

Minaret Vista Station

Current conditions: For visitors driving into the valley, the Minaret Vista Station provides basic monument and valley information. This is strictly a drive up information station. It is staffed by both NPS and USFS employees and is also a fee collection station.

Assessment of current conditions: NPS presence is crucial at this location. The site is fully functional as a fee collection station and as a basic information station, but is not ideal for lengthy and complex visitor contacts. The majority of visitors never make contact with the Minaret Vista staff unless they are driving their personal vehicles into the valley or were turned back to ride the shuttle bus.

The fee structure can be hard to understand and hard to explain to visitors. Collaborative training and messaging could alleviate some of the issues at this site. Five percent of visitor groups use assistance from Minaret Vista staff, and of those groups, fifty-four percent rate that assistance as “extremely important” or “very important.”

Minaret Vista

Current conditions and services:

Located on the Sierra Crest, Minaret Vista offers one of the most breathtaking viewpoints in the Sierra Nevada. The site consists of upper and lower areas. NFS and NPS waysides both exist in the upper area, as well as a cut-metal horizon exhibit, and a metal “scope” for viewing the Ritter Range. Informal interpretive roves are occasionally conducted USFS outside the monument to both the Minaret Vista and to Minaret Falls. The NPS has also conducted formal astronomy programs at the Minaret Vista.

Assessment of current conditions: Although exhibits have been replaced, the stonework, steps, and ramp are deteriorating. Trails are also in need of maintenance. The USFS is funding a formal site survey of Minaret Vista in 2012 (Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Interpretive Plan, 2008).

Agnew Meadows

Current conditions: Agnew Meadows is a primary entry point for hikes on the Pacific Crest and John Muir Trails. This scenic meadow also features a wildflower trail where visitors can view prolific summer displays of wildflowers. A self-guided wildflower walk map used to be available for this site, but is not currently printed. Wilderness trailhead signs are present here, as this is where hikers access many long-distance trails. This area is in the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Exhibit plan with potential waysides planned for 2012.

Starkweather Lake

Current conditions: One wayside is present at this location.

Assessment of current conditions: The wayside is outdated. It seems that interpretation of/at this area is not an NPS priority at this point.

Trailhead to Upper Soda Springs Campground

Current conditions: Basic USFS information is available at this site.

Assessment of current conditions: This area is not a priority, although some interpretive material could be provided on the origin of the lava flow through the valley.

Pumice Flat Group Campground

Current conditions: A cabin (with utilities) and amphitheater exist at this location, but only the campground is currently being used.

Assessment of current conditions: There could be a different use for this than trail crew housing and many options will be explored in the GMP.

Minaret Falls Campground

Current conditions: Basic USFS information is available at this site. Riverbank erosion is a concern.

Assessment of current conditions: Exhibits on riverbank erosion and restoration could be added.



Waysides were installed at the Minaret Vista viewpoint in the summer of 2010

Devils Postpile Bus Stop and Trailhead

Current conditions: The ranger station is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the summer season. The building is divided into a front and back room. The front room includes a Sequoia Natural History Association bookstore and interpretive displays. Wilderness permits can be obtained at this location. The back room serves as office space for interpretation, resource management, law enforcement and contains most of the monument's medical resources. There is an outdoor seating area, amphitheater area, and a bulletin board nearby.

Soda Springs Meadow, located adjacent to the main visitor area, is the largest meadow within the monument. The meadow is filled with perennial sedges, grasses, and wildflowers and is bisected by the Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River. The trail to the postpile traverses the meadow providing monument visitors with visual access to wildflower displays and wildlife that frequent the meadow.

Assessment of current conditions: Signage in the visitor use area is outdated and does not seem to meet visitor needs. In addition, the wording is very small, does not meet accessibility standards, and has become faded by the sun. Exhibits are outdated. The bookstore needs more space. Office space is inadequate for productive development and planning of interpretive programs and products. Visitors who arrive by shuttle come in groups. There may be 60 visitors on a bus, but only 7-10 can fit into the ranger station at a time. Amphitheater area and equipment is outdated and the amphitheater itself is not accessible to visitors with disabilities.

Thirty-five percent of visitors obtain assistance from ranger station staff, and of those visitors, 68% rate assistance from ranger station staff is "extremely important" or "very important."

Fifty-six percent of visitor groups consider the ranger station exhibits to be "extremely important" or "very important."

Devils Postpile Campground

Current conditions: This first-come, first-served campground has 21 mostly shaded sites, with several being riverfront sites. There is one ADA-accessible site in the A-loop. This campground is a popular family destination and often sees visitors returning year after year. The campground fills most weekends during the busiest part of the summer season. Visitors who stay at this campground may choose to attend interpretive programs in the evening.

Assessment of current conditions: Parking and traffic flow in the campground is confusing. Signage and posting of regulations is not clear. Interpreters who rove in this area may provide useful information as well as informal interpretation to visitors.

Sotcher Lake

Current conditions: The small and scenic Sotcher Lake provides opportunities for paddling, fishing, and viewing wildlife. The area is home to several beaver dams. A self-guiding nature trail exists at this site. Brochures are produced by the USFS, but are out-of-print.

Assessment of current conditions: The switchbacks on the pumice hillside need work. Some picnic areas are not well defined or in easy-to-use locations. Old interpretive trail markers are sporadic and some are missing.

Base of Postpile

Current conditions: The main attraction at the monument is the Devils Postpile, a scenic outcrop of volcanic basalt composed of parallel, multi-sided columns that reach 60 feet in height.

The basalt covers a large area of the adjacent Inyo National Forest, but the Devils Postpile formation is exceptional for its regularity and symmetry. The Devils Postpile is considered one of the top geological sites in California.

Visitors can experience the majesty of the geometric columns from the base of the formation and can hike to the top to view the regularity and symmetry where the columns were sheared by glaciers.

The site includes one wayside. Several benches, a picnic area, and waste and recycling facilities are available.

Interpreters rove this area during the middle part of the day, providing orientation and safety information, as well as informal interpretation.

Assessment of current conditions: The trail is usually dusty. The wayside is reasonably new and in good condition. At least partial accessibility is a priority for this site.

Top of Postpile

Current conditions: A wayside was installed mid-September of 2009.

Assessment of current conditions: The wayside was placed in a way to be least distracting from the natural landscape. The new wayside explains basic geologic processes that formed the hexagonal pattern on top of the Postpile. The platform for the wayside could be too close to the resource and could be distracting, but the DEPO staff arrived at a consensus decision to its location to balance the quality of the experience and the protection of the resource.

Bus Stop at Reds Meadow

Campground

Current conditions: A turn out and bus stop are located at this site which provides access to the campground.

Assessment of current conditions: In general, all bus stop signs could be updated. There is a potential for interpretive media to address the Reds Meadow Cabin and historic hot spring area. This is an opportunity that will be looked at in the GMP.

Junction of Trails

Current conditions: An orientation wayside exists at this point.

Assessment of current conditions: Waysides were installed summer 2009. Directional arrows and explanation may not be noticed, and way finding may still be challenging from some visitors.

Rainbow Falls Trailhead

Current Conditions: This trailhead is on USFS land, the trail to Rainbow Falls winds in and out of Monument boundaries. USFS waysides provide basic orientation, safety, and backcountry information. Small bench exists at road.

Assessment of current conditions: More benches or other seating options are needed. Information directing visitors from trailhead to the bus stop would be helpful.

Rainbow Falls Upper Viewpoint

Current conditions: The 101 foot waterfall cascades down to a shallow pool at the bottom where visitors are often treated by rainbows that form in the spray of the waterfall. New waysides were installed summer 2009. Mid-day roving assignments are performed during the summer months.

Assessment of current conditions: Roves and patrols at this location are a priority due to safety concerns.

Rainbow Falls Middle Viewpoint

Current conditions: Interpreters rove this area during the middle part of the day, providing orientation and safety information, as well as informal interpretation.

Assessment of current conditions: Roves and patrols at this location are a priority due to safety concerns.

Base of Rainbow Falls

Current conditions: Steep stairs take visitors to the base of Rainbow Falls. Despite efforts to discourage visitors, this remains a popular swimming location.

Assessment of current conditions: This area provides serious safety issues. Drowning of visitors have occurred beneath the falls and medical incidents have occurred as a result of visitors walking out into the river on rocks and logs (2009 Visitor Safety Report). More efforts at this location, whether personal or non-personal in nature, could be valuable.

Reds Meadow Resort

Current conditions: This site includes a restaurant, rental cabins, a store, and pack station. Evening campfire programs are given to resort guests.

Assessment of current conditions: Fire and food storage messages are valuable to campers and visitors to the store. This site provides supplies to through hikers and visitors to Reds Meadow Valley.



Over the years, several YCC crews have improved the viewpoints at Rainbow Falls

BUDGET

Interpretive Expenditures*

	ONPS Base Funds	Servicewide Fee Funds
2010	\$105,191	\$25,214
2009	\$123,290	\$78,813
2008	\$54,085	\$34,640
2007	\$57,759	\$30,004
2006	\$42,451	\$19,556

* Fortunately, interpretive expenditures were relatively high in 2009 due to a law enforcement vacancy that was not filled until August, but also provided an excellent level of service for the visitors, our local community, our outreach, and interpretive media program. Roving and patrol assignments were backfilled by interpretive personnel.

OFS FUNDING

Devils Postpile National Monument has submitted an OFS request to help with interpretive staffing needs, as follows:

25722A: Provide CORE Operations for Visitor Services and Interpretation. \$340,000. FTE requested: 3.9

Funding will provide sustainable base funding to cover core operations of staffing two Visitor Centers, an Entrance Station and the visitor services needed to coordinate the mandatory shuttle bus service in peak season. DEPO's current yearly visitation averages 150,000 that is expected to grow dramatically, as the gateway Town of Mammoth Lakes Final General Management Plan expands lodging PAOT availability from 35,000 to 60,000, and the new startup of 8 daily commercial flights into Mammoth beginning in summer 2010. This combines with increased pressure from the local community to extend the field season due to the declining snow/ski resort season. The Long Range Interpretive Plan identifies the need for eight positions and one supervisor. Currently, base funding covers three positions. Annual visitor contacts are 100,000 at DEPO VC. Providing sustainable funding secures

an NPS contribution at Interagency Welcome Center from a summer seasonal to a year-round presence will build community support and will reach an additional 100,000 visitor contacts/year. Consistent staffing at Minaret/DEPO Station will improve visitor understanding of the NPS mission including the whys of regulations and safety messages by an additional 40,000 NPS contacts/year.

24065A: Address Critical Resources Through Launch of Sierra Nevada Network's Research Learning Center

Funding is requested to launch the Sierra Nevada Networks Research Learning Center (RLC). The NPS has already developed partnerships with the United States Geological Survey, University of California at Merced's Sierra Nevada Research Institute, the Yosemite Institute, and the Yosemite Association to support an integrated approach to involve students in science activities in the three Sierra Nevada parks (Yosemite NP, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM) and to make scientific information readily available to the public.

29833A: SIEN: Communicate Climate-Change Information to Diverse Audiences via Emerging Technologies & Interpretive Media

Through interpretive media services, this Sierra Nevada Network (SIEN) request responds to public outreach needs identified in the NPS Climate Change Strategy. Media services will take advantage of, and remain current with, emerging technologies upon which most demographic groups now depend for information. Products will include podcasts, virtual tours, enhanced websites, exhibits, publications, and other digital and non-digital media.

STAFFING

As a result of the Monument being closed during the long winter months, off-season operations are drastically different than in-season operations. Potential expansion of staff is challenging even if funding is available due to the unavailability of usable work and office space.

Interpretive Staffing for the Monument is shown in the chart below.

The Sequoia Natural History Association currently provides a summer employee to work at the Ranger Station bookstore five days per week.

BUDGET AND STAFFING SUMMARY

The monument has identified ideal staffing levels that maintain high quality visitor service and enable the monument to meet some of its core visitor services goals such as greeting shuttle buses. That staffing level consists of a combination of GS-4 and GS-5 seasonal employees (equivalent to between 2.2 and 2.5 FTEs), SCA-interns and a permanent STF supervisor. The permanent supervisory position is furloughed, however, funding that position for approximately 22 pay periods has been identified as ideal for the program (approximately 0.7-0.8) FTE. Currently, that position is largely project funded or funded by the centennial seasonal initiative, which is not always sustainable. A large portion of the seasonal work force is project or funded by the centennial seasonal initiative as well. In 2011, all of the seasonal positions were funded by the centennial seasonal initiative. In FY10, 56% of the VIS staff was funded by the centennial seasonal initiative. Ideally, a budget increase for VIS would put the monument in a position to have these positions sustainably funded and maintain high quality visitor services. Expansion of the current program and special projects would likely necessitate PMIS or grant funding from partners or outside sources.

	Permanent FTE (Base Funded)	Permanent FTE (Project Funded)	Temporary FTE
2010	0.5	-	1.7
2009*	0.4	0.4	2.5
2008	0.4	-	0.8
2007	0	-	1
2006	0	-	0.09

*Again, staffing was relatively high in 2009 due to a law enforcement vacancy. That money was used to fill non-commissioned positions in interpretation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are an important focus for the Monument. The dual-agency management of Reds Meadow Valley resources and the small size of both the monument and its staff make partnerships critical to the success of many of its programs and projects. Unless otherwise noted, data in this section are drawn from the 2006 Visitor Study.

Scientific Research Entities

DEPO is an area of scientific interest across different agencies/entities, including USGS, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California Department of Water Resources, USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station, CalTrout, University of Nevada Desert Research Institute, University of California, University of Washington, and the University of Arizona.

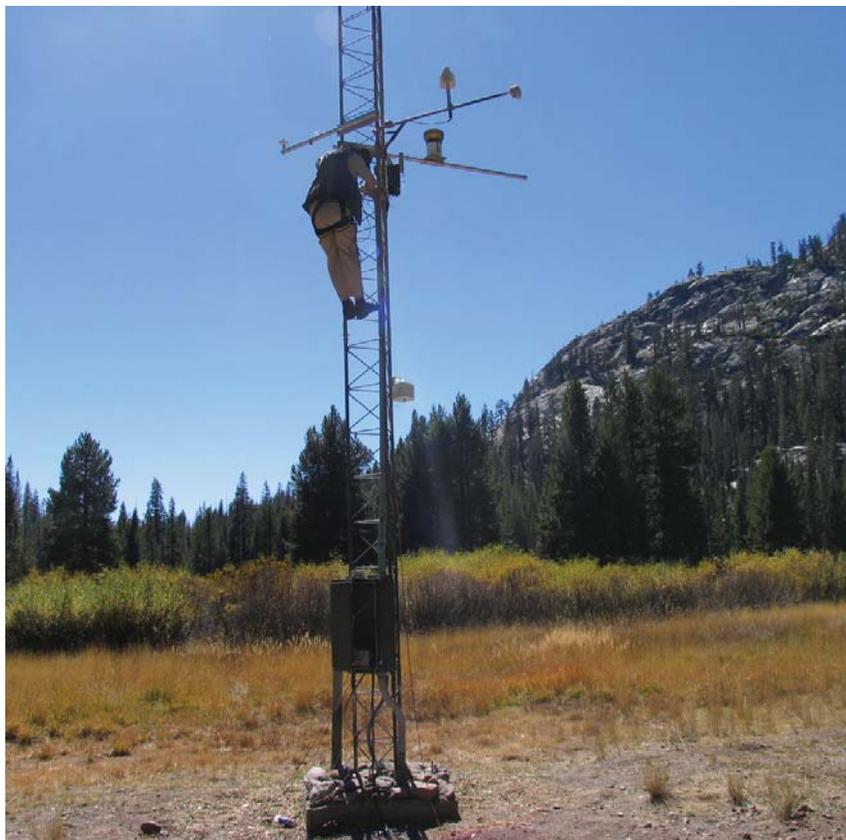
Tribal Relations

The Owens Valley Paiute tribes and the North Fork Mono tribes have tribal history within current monument boundaries. Members from the Owens Valley Paiute Tribes have been active participants in GMP scoping efforts and that partnership is evolving. The First Bloom Program and the Owens Valley Environmental Youth Camp are programs in which the youth of the tribes have been engaged in monument resources. Outreach to North Fork Mono and North Fork Rancheria tribes began in 2010, and there is interest in developing opportunities for interpretation and tribal youth environmental education.

Eastern Sierra Transit

The Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) currently operates the shuttle service in Reds Meadow Valley. This is a critical link in the information dissemination chain (2009 Visitor Safety Study). Working with ESTA to provide quality interpretive, safety, and trip planning information will be crucial to the success of the shuttle bus system.

Visitors have identified that they want a better explanation of the bus system and trails, including information on where to obtain the bus tickets, boarding locations, and shuttle stops. Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups were not aware of the operation of the shuttle bus system by the U.S. Forest Service. Ninety percent of Monument visitor groups consider the shuttle bus to be “extremely important” or “very important.”



Partnerships with organizations such as the SCRIPPS Institute have opened up research and learning opportunities at Devils Postpile

Inyo National Forest

The USFS manages Reds Meadow Valley which surrounds the Monument and partners with DEPO in facility staffing, interpretive planning, and wayside and publication development. There has been limited collaborative interpretive planning on a valley-wide scale in years past. Formal planning efforts include the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Interpretive Plan and The Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center Exhibit Plan, both produced by the Inyo National Forest in 2008. The interpretive plan identifies key interpretive themes and opportunities throughout the Mammoth Ranger District, of which the Reds Meadow Valley is a part. The exhibit plan identifies strategies for waysides and exhibits including those in the valley. Both of these plans have been referenced and incorporated into interpretive planning in the monument in order to provide shared themes and opportunities for valley visitors. Collaborative exhibits that have been developed after the plans were released in 2008 have incorporated themes from both the Mammoth Ranger District and Devils Postpile National Monument.

The Devils Postpile Ranger Station can issue walk-in, first-come, first-served permits on behalf of the Inyo National Forest. Reserved wilderness permits must be picked up at a USFS ranger station or visitor center.

Thirty-six percent of visitor groups were not aware of the difference between a national park area and a forest service area prior to their visit to DEPO.

Sequoia Natural History Association

During the summer months, the Monument's ranger station features a bookstore, operated by Sequoia Natural History Association (SNHA), a non-profit organization that provides vital services to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and DEPO, which are not otherwise available through federal funding. SNHA provides a wide range of books and educational materials in their bookstore at Devils Postpile. Sales items are also available at www.nps.gov/depo. SNHA provides an employee that manages the bookstore full-time during the field season.

Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association

The Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA) is a non-profit organization which works in cooperation with the Inyo National Forest to promote and enhance the visitors' understanding and enjoyment of the natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources of the National Forests. Proceeds from bookstores and donations support interpretive programs, printed materials and visitor center displays. ESIA operates an outlet in the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center. Although this is an interagency operation from a staffing standpoint, DEPO receives support from ESIA only in the printing of interagency publications.

Town of Mammoth Lakes

The Town of Mammoth Lakes provides a connection to monument visitors through the visitors' bureau, recreation programs, and other means. The town advertises monument functions and activities in a variety of publications and has provided assistance in the GMP process through advertisements and participation.

Owens Valley Paiute Tribes

Members from the Owens Valley Paiute Tribes have been active participants in GMP scoping efforts and that partnership is evolving. The First Bloom Program and the Owens Valley Environmental Youth Camp are programs in which the youth of the tribes have been engaged in monument resources.

Mammoth Lakes Library

The Mammoth Lakes Library has provided the monument with an outreach venue through its weekly Story Hour and has helped advertise and publicize other monument programs.

Girl Scouts of Mammoth Lakes

Members from the Girl Scouts of Mammoth Lakes have participated in service projects in the monument and have committed to being active partners in future service and educational projects and opportunities.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The monument's Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program is one that is slowly growing. Most volunteer hours are contributed by Student Conservation Association volunteers. Generally those contributions are between 1,200 and 1,500 hours per season. Total volunteer contributions have tended to hover between 1,300 and 1,700 hours per season. Other successes in the volunteer program have included the Point Reyes Bird Observatory bird banding program, the Girl Scout Ranger program, and occasional special projects. Sustainability, organization, and centralization of the VIP program have been challenges over the years.

The monument is looking towards partnerships to recruit and train volunteers. Housing, however, is a huge limitation for long term volunteers that live out of the local area. The monument has very limited housing which is usually occupied by seasonal staff and no RV sites for VIPs. Another priority for the monument is to develop work plans, standard position descriptions, and job hazard analyses for each VIP position. This will help the monument formulate funding requests and create a more sustainable VIP program.



Volunteers provide service hours in interpretation, maintenance and resource management

MONUMENT LIBRARY

DEPO has a small library located in the back room of the ranger station/visitor center. The library does not currently use the Dewey Decimal system and is organized primarily by topic. There is no system for checking out or returning books to the library and some books are on loan to the library from seasonal employees. A greater diversity of topics covered and an increase of cultural resources in the library are both needed. A searchable database of books available as well as a check in/out system is also needed. One obstacle for expanding the library is space since the library already shares the limited bookshelf space with many binders containing important operational, administrative, and interpretive information.

MONUMENT COLLECTIONS

The museum collections of the Devils Postpile National Monument are relatively small, but they include materials important both to the history of the Monument and for baseline documentation. The collections are dispersed: some are kept at the Postpile, others at the support office in Mammoth Lakes, and the rest housed in the museum facility at Ash Mountain in Sequoia National Park.

2010 Scope of Collection Statement

The museum collections of the Devils Postpile National Monument preserve and reflect the natural and social history of a significant region of the central Sierra Nevada mountain range. The monument's fundamental resources and values are identified in a draft Foundation Statement (2009). The collections document the monument's "textbook quality evidence of volcanism, glaciations, and mountain building forces of plate tectonics." They also document the biotic environment of the river corridor of the Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin. Lastly, they provide opportunities for science and learning and help to document "the monument's natural and administrative history, cultural significance, and topographic importance in the Sierra Nevada ecoregion."

Natural history collections

Biological collections include a small number of mammal skins on loan to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley; the remainder is the monument's herbarium. The herbarium is stored in two cabinets and in recent years has overwintered at the monument. The geological specimens were collected by Clow and Collum during the production of their report on the geology of the monument and surroundings. This collection is stored in one tall cabinet, formerly kept in the workroom of the ranger station at the monument. It has recently been moved

to the Mammoth Lakes office. The only existing backlog is the 13 cubic feet of aquatic invertebrates collected during the river study of the mid-1990s. Funds are expected this year to catalog this collection and the associated archival material (PMIS 123419).

Cultural resource collections

The archeological collections consist of nine obsidian tools. These are stored in the archives at Sequoia. The historical objects are a series of reports and maps. The majority of these are stored in a map case in the superintendent's house at the monument. Two of the most important documents are kept in the archives at Sequoia: the 1934 boundary report by Cronyn and Hoffmann's 1972 plant checklist. Of the maps at the Monument, at least half are available electronically through the Technical Information Center (<http://etic.nps.gov>). The archival collection is a small collection of primary and secondary historical material, organized by subject. It is stored in the upper map cabinet in the superintendent's house at the Monument.

There are in the archives at Sequoia, an estimated two hundred un-cataloged obsidian tools, flakes, and fragments. A funding request is in preparation for 2012 (PMIS 156751). The archival backlog consists of the following: the field notes associated with the river survey (scheduled for cataloging this year); three linear feet of ranger logs; and approximately forty binders of slides from the early 1970s to 2000. Both of these last collections could be added to existing Sequoia backlog for multi-park funding requests.

Recommendations

The collections will surely grow in the next few years. The general management plan process is underway, as is an historic resource study; both will generate records that will eventually need to be curated. Now that the Monument has reliable, high-speed data access, the existing historical and archival collections should be relocated to the Sequoia museum facility. After relocation, material can be made easily available through eTIC. For the natural history collections, unless they are used regularly, they should also be brought over to Sequoia. As long as the responsibility for the collections remains with the Sequoia curator, it should be expected that the curation of the Postpile material (including planning, cataloging, drafting requests for funding, and annual reporting) will occupy at least one pay-period per year. This year the regional curator is expecting to see a scope of collections statement, a first for the Monument. Production of this might take another pay-period.

MEDIA

Many forms of interpretive media, such as wayside exhibits, bulletin boards, orientation signs, etc, serve to alter the physical environment at the same time that they interpret it. It is critical that physical media at this site supports the rustic character of the built environment of Devils Postpile National Monument.

The bulk of the built environment of the Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin watershed consists of foot and stock trails supporting visitor access and resource protection within the context of legally-designated wilderness. These originally comprised trails used by American Indian peoples for trade, trans-Sierran travel, seasonal habitation, and resource procurement. By the mid-1800s, Euro-Americans established developed equestrian trails to provide transportation for mining activities and access for high elevation stock grazing. One example of this is the French Trail, built in 1878 as a toll trail across Mammoth Pass, connecting Indian and stock trails between the west-slope mining town of Fresno Flats (now Oakhurst) and the “new” strikes on the eastern Sierra slope in the vicinity of Mammoth Lakes. The military also built and used trails to access to remote forts and camps in the Owens Valley during the western Indian wars. Many of these developed trails followed earlier Indian trails except where terrain or other conditions forced them to follow more stock-friendly routes. Recreational use in the area began in the late 1800s, and continued to grow into the early 1900s. As greater numbers and less-experienced riders were taken into remote areas, the more rugged trails were gradually improved by stockmen and government agencies to provide safer and more comfortable passage. The historic John Muir and Pacific Crest trails are especially popular hiking venues for wilderness enthusiasts.

Built facilities in the Reds Meadow Valley reflect its rustic regional and local history of mining, grazing, federal land management, and recreation. Trails such as those noted above provided the earliest access to the valley and the monument area. The one- and two-lane road providing vehicle access to the valley was first built before 1939, and rebuilt in 1949 by the USFS (NPS nd). Other facilities include the Reds Meadow Cabin and Bathhouse, Reds Meadow Pack station complex, USFS residential facilities, campground amenities, and small-scale features such as informal log benches, and directional and interpretive signage. The majority of these facilities are built in the federal government’s Rustic Style, characterized by use of natural materials such as log, wood shake and stone, low horizontal profiles, dark or neutral colors, and design, scale and siting to harmonize with the natural environment.

The built environment in the monument also reflects this Rustic Style. Facilities here include the Ranger Station, residential cabins and bathhouse, a public restroom building, a campground with associated amenities, picnic tables, trail signs, trail alignments and footbridges.

The following is an assessment of current conditions of interpretive media in Reds Meadow Valley. It includes waysides, publications, exhibits, websites, and non-Monument media. Unless otherwise noted, data in this section are drawn from the 2006 Visitor Study.

WAYSIDES

There are a number of interagency wayside exhibits. The monument has collaborated with the Inyo National Forest on wayside projects at the Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center, the Minaret Vista, and at the Rainbow Falls trail junctions.

Several generations of wayside signs exist in the Monument. A wayside plan is needed for the Monument, as well as for Reds Meadow Valley as a whole.

Language, location, and graphics of Monument way-finding signs are not currently consistent, although plans are currently in the works to update way-finding signs. Some, such as the signs at Rainbow Falls, have already been completed.

In 2009 a conditions assessment was begun for inclusion of waysides in Reds Meadow Valley and Devils Postpile in FMSS.



Since 2004, the monument has replaced many of its outdated waysides, like these, newly installed in 2010

At the time of this plan, waysides/signs exist or are in production for the following locations:

- All USFS/DEPO campgrounds provide basic campground information.
- All wilderness trailheads have upright displays providing wilderness and leave-no-trace information.
- Mammoth Mountain Adventure Center: Two large-scale waysides in development.
- Minaret Vista: Six 24" x 36" low profile wayside panels were installed in 2010
- Starkweather Lake: One black and white wayside near parking area
- DEPO visitor use area: Waysides are wooden framed and are in need of updating
- Soda Springs meadow trail: two waysides installed late 2000s
- Base of Devils Postpile: One wayside put in mid-2000s
- Accessible viewpoint: Triptych scheduled for installation summer 2010
- Top of Postpile: One wayside installed fall 2009
- Rainbow Falls trail Junction: Way-finding wayside installed summer 2009
- Rainbow Falls upper viewpoint: One way-finding and two interpretive waysides installed summer 2009.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications and interpretive media related to the valley tend to be interagency in nature. There are two interagency newspapers, The Inyo National Forest Visitor Guide, published by the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, and The Post: Visitor Guide to the Reds Meadow Valley, Produced by Devils Postpile National Monument in cooperation with the Inyo National Forest, the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, and the Sequoia Natural History Association.

Thirty-four percent of visitor groups use the Visitor Guide, and sixty-one percent of those groups rate the Visitor Guide as “extremely important” or “very important.” Twenty percent of visitor groups use the Monument newspaper “The Post,” and 40% of those groups rate the Monument newspaper as “extremely important” or “very important.” The Post is available in hard copy, as well as on-line through both the DEPO and USFS websites.

Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Recreation department produces a publication called “The Mammoth Insider.” They also produce the readily available and often used shuttle map which include the valley shuttle route and shows visitors how to connect the various shuttle routes. Monument and Inyo National Forest programs are often listed in town-produced publications such as the Mammoth Lakes Recreation Guide.

Unigrid: Seventy-five percent of visitor groups use the Monument brochure/map, and 69% of those groups rate the Monument brochure/map as “extremely important” or “very important.”

Monument maps are available in hard copy, as well as online through both the DEPO and USFS websites.

Other site bulletins and wildlife/plant checklists are available upon request at the ranger station and at the Mammoth Welcome Center. USGS publications about volcanic activity in the Mammoth Lakes area are handed out regularly.

EXHIBITS

No formal exhibit space exists in the valley, although a few small exhibits are placed in the Ranger Station. Twenty-five percent of visitor groups use the ranger station exhibits, and fifty-six percent of those groups rate the ranger station exhibits as “extremely important” or “very important.” A broader range of exhibits and larger exhibit space is available at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center.

WEBSITES

Both the Inyo National Forest and the monument maintain websites that provide valley information. Although there is overlapping information, particularly related to the shuttle bus system, both websites also provide distinct information related to the individual agencies. There are links on both websites that reference shared information and allow visitors to navigate back and forth between the Inyo National Forest site and the monument site.

Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Recreation department maintains a website at www.visitmammoth.com. Devils Postpile and Rainbow Falls is listed in the section “Popular Walks and Hikes.”

Twelve percent of visitor groups use the Monument website. Eighty percent of visitor groups rate the Monument website as “extremely important” or “very important.” Efforts to include emerging technology on the Monument website and provide better opportunities for visitors to gain trip-planning information are a priority for the website.

OTHER MEDIA

Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Destination Marketing Organization produces a publication called “The Mammoth Insider.” They also maintain a website at www.visitmammoth.com. Devils Postpile and Rainbow Falls is listed in the section “Popular Walks and Hikes.” They also produce the readily available and often used shuttle map which include the valley shuttle route and shows visitors how to connect the various shuttle routes.

The Monument is working with Monument partners to explore opportunities to develop and utilize emerging technologies such as podcasts and social networking sites. These will ideally appear on both Monument and non-Monument websites.

Thirty-eight percent of visitors prefer to obtain information for planning their next visit through travel guides, tour books, or publications, and 11% through newspaper and magazine articles. Twenty-seven percent of visitors prefer to obtain information for planning their next visit through the Forest Service website.

California Tourism and Trade Commission and California Welcome Centers represent the Mammoth Lakes (California) Welcome Center and provide some information about DEPO. Information can be found at www.visitcwc.com.

EVALUATION

GPRA VISITOR SURVEY CARDS

Each August, Devils Postpile National Monument participates in an NPS survey through the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit. Visitor Survey Cards are distributed to park visitors, with questions designed to measure visitor satisfaction, and visitor understanding and appreciation (GPRA Goals IIa1 and IIb1). For detailed information on the survey process and results, refer to www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.htm.

In FY09, the percentage of Monument visitors satisfied overall with appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities was 92%. This percentage, an average score of the following satisfaction measures, is down from 96% in FY08.

	FY08	FY09	FY10
Visitor Center	81%	89%	90%
Restrooms	86%	70%	75%
Campgrounds and/or picnic areas	92%	88%	84%
Exhibits	89%	85%	91%
Walkways, trails, and roads	94%	89%	98%
Assistance from Monument employees	95%	91%	91%
Ranger programs	83%	81%	100%
Monument map or brochure	93%	84%	95%
Learning about nature, history, or culture	82%	88%	86%
Outdoor recreation	94%	92%	98%

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL INFLUENCES AND CHALLENGES

This brief section provides a list of some of the external and internal issues affecting overall Monument planning efforts that are relevant to the Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

Staffing and Operations:

- Staffing three locations and roving patrols require more baseline staffing than is provided by ONPS budget. A significant challenge is the need for a relatively stable source of funding for VIS staff and operations. The moderately small monument budget relative to the complexity of the operation for a small staff with a high density visitation and the need for versatility in staff skills evidences the annual challenge of finding a patchwork of funding sources to support basic VIS staff, support for VIS, EMS/SAR, and project funding. Although centennial seasonal funding has been a boost to VIS operations, this funding source is not guaranteed. There is a lack of stability in the division of interpretation resulting from only one permanent position on the staff, with the seasonal positions open to annual change.
- There is often a shortage of office work space.
- There is need for more training and development for both permanent and seasonal staff.

Additionally, complex interagency formal and informal arrangements exist to provide staffing at sites of shared value, in exchange for services and office space. Thus seasonal VIS staff has varied from 3-4 seasonals to nearly a dozen when project funding and lapses in staff occur. OFS request #35722A seeks to address the need for continuity in a skilled and permanent STF staff that can provide for basic services for monument and shared partnership responsibilities.

An additional challenge is the USFS-INF varying level of ability to provide staffing at the Minaret entrance station and Welcome Center, and support to the shuttle bus boarding operations, that changes annually.

- Interagency scheduling and supervision (at the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and Minaret Vista Station) involves a great degree

of coordination, cooperation, and communication between agencies and this can sometimes be challenging.

- Annual site closure: The monument’s opening and closing dates vary every year due to snow and are dependent on USFS opening and closing of the road, which is typically between October 15 and October 31. This also complicates the issue of housing for seasonal staff.
- Shuttle bus system: As of summer 2009, in spite of consistent attempts through various media to inform visitors that although the monument was free, access to it was not, visitor were sometimes still unaware that to get to the monument you had to pay to ride the shuttle bus operated by Eastern Sierra Transit Authority under an agreement with the USFS.
- Off-season operations are drastically different than in-season operations.



The San Joaquin River within the Monument and throughout the Upper and Middle Fork has been identified as eligible for consideration for designation as a Wild and Scenic River

There is a high interest in engaging NPS in community and partnership opportunities that exceed the staff capacity to respond in a substantive way. This compromises our ability to provide needed quality control about some of the messaging about services, safety, and appropriate uses of NPS areas in a mosaic of multi-jurisdictional and mission of both agency and private sector partners.

Some visitor uses may not complement a mutually beneficial recreational experience. While some visitors are seeking natural soundscapes, others are seeking more active recreational experiences. This can impact monument management activities, interpretive activities, and other visitor activities.

Signage, Exhibits, Waysides and Programs:

- No formal exhibit space exists in the valley.
- Services are scattered throughout the valley. More than one shuttle stop is required for trail access, food, etc.
- Language, location, and graphics of Monument way-finding signs are not consistent.
- Trail markers lack mileage information.
- Boundaries between DEPO and the National Forest: what is the desired level of perception- does the Monument want visitors to be aware of the boundaries and the difference in agency regulations, or to have a quality experience? In particular, issues related to hunting, fire closures, and dogs off leash vary by agency.

Science and Resource Communication

Issues

Tremendous opportunities and needs exist to inform visitors and partners about resources, values, and challenges, but there is not a funded resource management program to develop this potential other than in isolated opportunities with basic efforts. OFS request #28781 has been prioritized by PWR but due to current fiscal constraints may not be funded in the near future. In this era of unprecedented challenges and extraordinary opportunities, DEPO will dedicate efforts to areas that strengthen the monument's scientific management partnerships; contribute to regional efforts in science, education and landscape management; and develop opportunities for youth, students, communities, and the public to participate in interpretive, educational, and stewardship opportunities.

Tasks

- DEPO will focus climate change interpretation on monument, Sierra Nevada network wide, and PWR effort. DEPO will work with monument partners and researchers to gather and share the most current information related to climate changes—natural and anthropogenic, past and present. DEPO will offer thought-provoking and scientifically credible interpretation about climate change effects
- If funded, DEPO will participate in the creation of the proposed Sierra Nevada Resource Learning Center (RLC). This project is an integrated approach for involving students in science activities in the three Sierra Nevada parks (Yosemite NP, Sequoia and Kings Canyon NPs and Devils Postpile NM) and to make scientific information readily available to the public. If funded, the RLC will facilitate communication and cooperation between scientists,

students, and park partners working together to gather data for various park-needed science studies. This will make natural and cultural resource management-related research meaningful to the public and useful for future park management actions. The RLC will also involve a full spectrum of ages, from kindergarten through post-graduate students, as well as adults locally and from around the world.

- DEPO will interpret the value of protecting natural soundscapes, viewsheds, and night skies and visual quality.
- DEPO will communicate current and evolving understanding of the ecological importance of the biodiversity within the monument, and the past, present, and possible links within and through the UMFSJ as a migratory corridor has not really been addressed in current interpretive programming due to the need for more research and documentation.
- DEPO will work to communicate management topics and future management strategies as they pertain to resource issues.

Tribal Relations

The monument staff has been committed to outreaching to the nearby Tribes and to engaging youth. DEPO staff would like to engage the tribes of the area to find culturally sensitive ways to interpret their heritage and culture. There is sparse information and a high level of interest to develop this relationship in a respectful manner. Staffing capacity is key to continuing and developing this relationship.

CURRENT RESEARCH

This section provides a summary of the current research projects occurring in or around the Monument that may affect the content and form of programs and non-personal media used by the Division of Interpretation. This includes a formal user capacity research project as well as numerous efforts to learn more about both the natural and cultural history of the area.

USER CAPACITY MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

The User Capacity Management Monitoring Team from Yosemite National Park's Division of Resources Management and Science is collecting visitor use related data to inform the identification of a suite of indicators and standards that will be used to monitor the conditions of natural and experiential resources over the life of the DEPO GMP. This is a project-funded study, and products from this work include:

- A) Suggested indicators for a long-term monitoring program
- B) Monitoring protocols for those indicators
- C) Data collection results from 2009/2010 seasons

People at One Time (PAOT)

Crowding and congestion at attraction sites can heavily influence the quality of the visitor experience in national parks. Collecting a statistically significant sample this season will document existing conditions prior to taking additional management actions outlined in the GMP. Additionally, visitor-based standards were collected in 2010 to be used to inform management decisions as to the appropriate conditions to which DEPO should be managed.

Objectives: (1) To document current use conditions at Rainbow Falls and the Postpile. (2) Conduct normative research to understand visitor-based standards for crowding at these two attraction sites.

Trail Use Estimation

TraffX brand counters have been deployed for data collection on trails at DEPO. These instruments are able to provide use data on trail segments with robust season-wide results. These trail use results will be correlated to boarding and alighting data collected by the shuttle concessionaire.

Objectives: (1) Understand the amount of use taking place on various trail segments and the fluctuations across both the time of day and throughout the Monument's high use seasons. Identify the correlational potential of transportation access and delivery to use on trails.

Riverbank Condition (RBC)

Riverbank erosion and the resulting changes in channel morphology can often be attributed to visitor use. Through assessments of substrate condition characteristics, channel morphology, and vegetation condition, data from 2009 will determine the effectiveness of these measures for monitoring trends in riverbank condition. Resulting analyses will inform important management decisions at DEPO.

Objectives: To assess the status of and to detect change in riverbank condition, and to identify potential relationships between visitor use, channel morphology and riverbank vegetation.

Water Quality

Water quality testing is a vital component of any visitor impact monitoring program. At DEPO baseline water quality data will be collected along the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River corridor by sampling sections of river above and below heavy use areas in the Monument. The following constituents will be measured: E. coli, nutrients (total dissolved nitrogen, nitrate and nitrite, total dissolved phosphorus, orthophosphate, and total phosphorus), and total petroleum hydrocarbons.

Objective: To collect high quality data that is comparable to data collected in other parks and in the Sierra Region as a means to protect water resources from human-use impacts.

Extent and Proliferation of Informal Trails

Informal trailering is a constant challenge to resource managers at parks and protected areas. Understanding their distribution, level of degradation to the resource, and impacts to ecological integrity are important tools to implementing management actions. Through baseline data collection on the occurrence and proliferation of informal trails at visitor destinations and in meadows, management will be informed on the overall extent of these impacts and be provided with tools to track changes as management actions are implemented. Studying informal trail networks in meadows allows a better understanding of the impacts and condition of resulting trails and can be analyzed to assess the degree of habitat fragmentation caused by such uses.

Objective: 1) To understand informal trail use at destination areas in order to form a baseline for overall extent and condition of informal trails at high use sights. 2) To quantify informal trail networks in meadows and analyze to determine the degree of resulting habitat fragmentation.



Studies looking at crowding and visitor use in areas like Rainbow Falls and Devils Postpile were conducted in 2009 and 2010 as part of a user capacity project

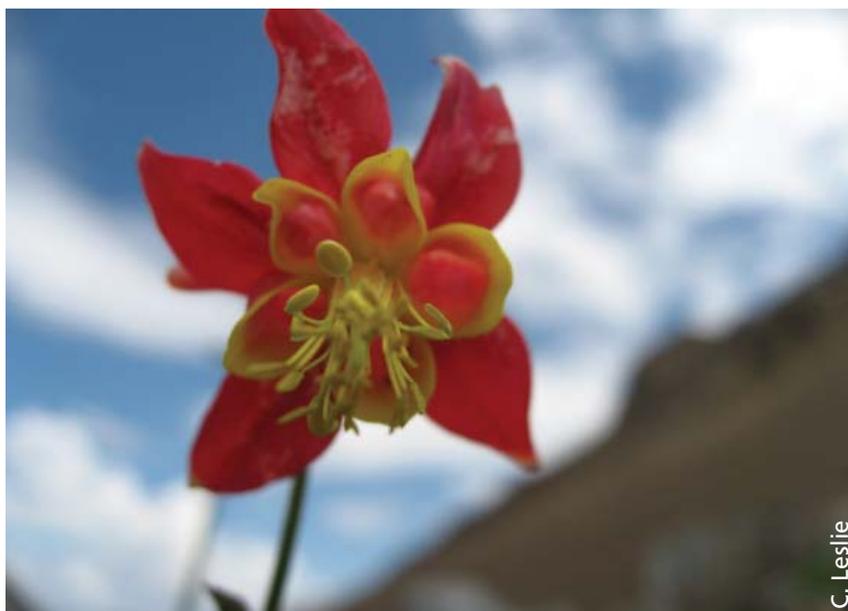
NATURAL HISTORY

DEPO has completed a variety of natural resource-based inventories and has some monitoring projects underway:

- Fire history
- Floristic inventory and vegetation mapping
- Fauna inventory including birds, bats, and some mammals, amphibians, and reptiles
- Invertebrate inventories in meadow and portions of UMF SJ River
- Inventory and initiating monitoring of avian nesting productivity in Soda Springs Meadow and fall migrants
- Annual point counts of birds throughout the monument with established protocol
- Wetlands inventory and condition assessment
- Riverbank Condition Assessment
- Air Quality studies
- Soundscape Inventory and initiate monitoring
- Meteorological Station with live internet connection via www.nps.gov/depo website
- UMF Stream Gage with live internet connection via www.nps.gov/depo website

The Monument has a baseline of natural resource monitoring information primarily focused at the monument, however, due to the small scale of the projects and size of the Monument, the interconnection to the watershed is recognized as interdependent to the condition of resources at the monument concerns exist involving impacts from the larger watershed and external influences. Areas of concern that are relevant to interpretation include the following research needs:

- Expand species inventory and ecological knowledge and monitor for changes.
- Increase scientific understanding of site specific conditions and impacts in the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin watershed, and define actions needed to maintain the healthy functioning and dynamic capacity of the watershed to respond to change.
- Work with the completed wetlands inventory to develop adaptive meadow management strategies to protect meadow integrity.
- Develop scientific knowledge to develop scenario and adaptation planning to respond to the impacts of climate change on resources.
- Increase scientific understanding of weather and climate with emphasis on cold air pooling. This includes the potential role of the Monument as a CAP that could buffer the locality from warming and serve as a refugium for species that require cooler temperature or benefit from a shorter growing season.
- Monitor and manage to mitigate impacts on natural soundscapes from activities of management, transportation, recreation, and overflights.



C. Leslie

One of the natural resource based projects that has been completed at DEPO is a floristic inventory

CULTURAL HISTORY

Devils Postpile National Monument recognizes the importance of research for understanding the monument's cultural history. Some areas of interest include:

- The monument's creation offers compelling stories about the early conservation movement and ongoing management between two agencies.
- There is a large gap of knowledge about the cultural significance of the monument and surrounding valley.
- Eleven archeological sites are known, and three contain evidence about early sheepherding and mining. Condition Assessment is completed.
- The monument contains evidence of Basque sites.
- No structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Monument is located at the crossroads of several Native American cultures.
- Collections are widely scattered, but an inventory and action plan/needs assessment are underway.
- Administrative history and Historic Resources Study is underway and planned for completion in 2011.

GOALS

This section takes what we know about visitor demographics, needs, use patterns, satisfaction, and understanding, and combines that knowledge with national, regional, and local goals and visions to create specific visitor experience goals for the Monument. It describes not only national and regional goals, but also specific goals for the Monument and the Division of Interpretation. These goals form the foundation for the visitor experience goals that were developed during internal scoping efforts. This section provides an overarching management goal, the Pacific West Region's (PWR) goals for interpretation and education, and Monument specific visions for interpretation and education (which support the PWR goals). These goals and visions all set the framework for the "Visitor Experience Goals for Fundamental Resources and Values."

TIER OF GOALS

PWR Strategic Goal #1 Oceans: Engage visitors, partners, and communities to become active ocean stewards.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Upper Middle Fork San Joaquin River (corridor): A free flowing river, mineral springs, wetlands, riparian areas and other water-dependent features and communities sustained by naturally functioning, unpolluted surface and ground water system.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #1, Watershed: Help monument visitors to understand and appreciate the connection between monument resources and the ocean, agriculture, and cities downstream.

PWR Strategic Goal #2: Climate Change: Immediately engage all people to daily transform their impact on the planet to reduce their carbon footprint and become more climate-friendly.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Opportunities for Science and Learning: Opportunities for scientific study and shared learning about past, present and future environmental conditions and connected bio-geophysical processes.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #2, Climate Change: Work with monument partners and researchers to gather and share the most current information related to climate changes—natural and anthropogenic, past and present—and offer thought-provoking and scientifically credible interpretation about climate change effects and responses throughout the Sierra.

PWR Strategic Goal #3: Engaging Youth: Release the power of the parks to invigorate youth to embrace the heritage of our country and health of the planet through a revitalization of citizenship and science.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Opportunities for Science and Learning: Opportunities for scientific study and shared learning about past, present and future environmental conditions and connected bio-geophysical processes.

DEPO Significance: For a small area, Devils Postpile National Monument supports and maintains unusually rich ecological diversity reflective of its location at the intersection of three bio-geographic regions. The physical setting and context create exceptional opportunities for scientific study and shared learning.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #3, Youth Involvement: Provide science-based learning opportunities for youth, and to help fulfill park goals, as a means of investing in future generations of citizens and resources.

PWR Strategic Goal #4: Bold and Positive Leadership: Embrace the Interpretation and Education Renaissance through bold positive leadership to stimulate strategic changes in how we do business.

Renaissance for Interpretation and Education Tenet #1: Engage All Americans

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Body of Knowledge: A body of knowledge and material evidence documenting the monument's natural and administrative history, cultural significance, and topographic importance in the Sierra Nevada eco-region.

DEPO Significance: The establishment of Devils Postpile National Monument provides compelling insight into the history and evolution of national parks and national forests, beginning in the early years of the public lands conservation and preservation movement.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #4, Civic Engagement through Inclusion: Enhance access for audiences with diverse backgrounds, needs, and interests in order to foster civic engagement with the monument's resources, values, and preservation ethic.

Renaissance for Interpretation and Education Tenet #3: Embrace Partners

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Component of a Larger Ecosystem: Being a functional part of three converging bio-geographic regions affected by dynamic physical processes that influence a diverse and evolving biota.

DEPO Significance: Devils Postpile National Monument is nested in the second largest contiguous designated wilderness in the lower 48 states that includes three national forests and three national parks in the Sierra Nevada.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #5, Partnership: Serve as a model of interagency cooperation, and provide an enduring legacy through integration of park programs, activities, and management with those of the USFS and other partners.

PWR Strategic Goal #5: Centennial: Demonstrate exemplary environmental leadership and provide experiential opportunities that empower diverse communities to care for America’s Treasures beyond 2016.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Natural Soundscapes and Visual Quality: Natural soundscapes, dark night skies, clean air, clear water, and unspoiled natural vistas.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Distinct Landscape Features: The Postpile, Rainbow Falls, and other geologic features that provide textbook quality evidence of volcanism, glaciations, and mountain building forces of plate tectonics.

DEPO Significance: Devils Postpile is one of the world’s finest examples of columnar jointing, displaying volcanic rock columns polished by glaciers and revealing a mosaic of polygons on its dome shaped top.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #6, Environmental Leadership: Become—and be recognized as—a leader in integrating science, management, and interpretation on a watershed scale.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Rustic Experience: Visitors are offered a time-honored park experience in a setting that emphasizes the enjoyment of natural sights and sounds and promotes a sense of place.

Primary DEPO Fundamental Resources and Values addressed by this goal: Wilderness Portal: With over 90% of Devils Postpile National Monument designated as wilderness with internationally recognized trails (John Muir Trail and Pacific Crest Trail), it is an entryway to exploration, understanding, and appreciation of wilderness character and values. Experiences range from a glimpse to an immersion into the vast Sierran wilderness.

DEPO Significance: Devils Postpile National Monument provides a traditional national park experience in a rustic setting that promotes learning and intimate visitor experiences.

DEPO Goal for Interpretation #7, Experiential Opportunities: Honor the important NPS tradition of place-based adventure by continuing to promote a rustic, nature-based park experience for visitors, including a highly visible ranger presence.

MANAGEMENT GOAL

The cooperative and complimentary management of the monument and surrounding national forest land promotes opportunities for a quality visitor experience and enhanced resource protection. This creates both challenges and opportunities. Partnerships and collaboration foster the sharing of resources and creative solutions to issues and problems. Interagency cooperation creates opportunities to share ideas and fund programs to achieve common goals. The challenge in all of this is to maintain agency identity while providing a quality experience for visitors as they pass between lands managed by two different agencies. Both the monument and the Inyo are committed to this partnership and to its success.

The 2006 University of Idaho Visitor Study provided the following information related to the issue of agency identity:

Seventy three percent of visitor groups were aware Devils Postpile National Monument is a unit of the National Park Service, while 21% were not. Five percent were not sure. Regarding the difference between a national park area and a national forest, 54% of visitor groups were aware of the difference between the two agencies, while 36% were not. Ten percent were not sure.

As the majority of visitors understand and were aware of the difference between National Forests and National Parks, yet rely heavily on services provided by both agencies, cooperatively managing the lands in Reds Meadow Valley while maintaining agency identity will be key.

PACIFIC WEST REGION'S INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION STRATEGIC GOALS

The Pacific West Regional Office aims to provide bold and positive leadership that links communities and leverages resources to nurture innovation and facilitate change. Strategic goals include:

1. Oceans: Engage visitors, partners, and communities to become active ocean stewards.
2. Climate change: Immediately engage all people to daily transform their impact on the planet to reduce their carbon footprint and become more climate-friendly.
3. Engaging youth: Release the power of the parks to invigorate youth to embrace the heritage of our country and health of the planet through a revitalization of citizenship and science.
4. Bold and positive leadership: Embrace the Interpretation and Education Renaissance through bold positive leadership to stimulate strategic changes in how we do business.
5. Centennial: Demonstrate exemplary environmental leadership and provide experiential opportunities that empower diverse communities to care for America's Treasures beyond 2016.

DIVISION GOALS

Umbrella Goal:

By providing opportunities for visitors to experience the monument's fundamental resources and values in meaningful ways, Interpretation at Devils Postpile will strive to increase stewardship of the monument and the Planet.

Watershed: Become a leader in integrating science, management, and interpretation on a watershed scale, in order to help visitors understand and appreciate the connection between monument resources and the ocean, agriculture, and cities downstream.

Climate Change: Influence the personal choices made by visitors through thought-provoking and scientifically credible interpretation of current research related to climate changes—natural and anthropogenic, past and present.

Youth Involvement: Provide science-based learning, stewardship, and recreational opportunities for youth, as a means of meeting park goals by investing in future generations of citizens and resources.

Civic Engagement through Inclusion: Enhance relevancy and access for audiences with diverse backgrounds, needs, and interests in order to foster civic engagement with the monument's resources, values, and preservation ethic.

Partnership: Recognize the monument's special relationship with the USFS by serving as a model of interagency cooperation, and leave a lasting legacy through integration of interpretive programs, activities, and management with those of the USFS and other partners.

Environmental Leadership: Exemplify environmental leadership by demonstrating, interpreting, and celebrating the monument's efforts at sustainability.

Experiential Opportunities: Honor NPS history by continuing to promote a rustic-facility, nature-based park experience for visitors, including a highly visible ranger presence.

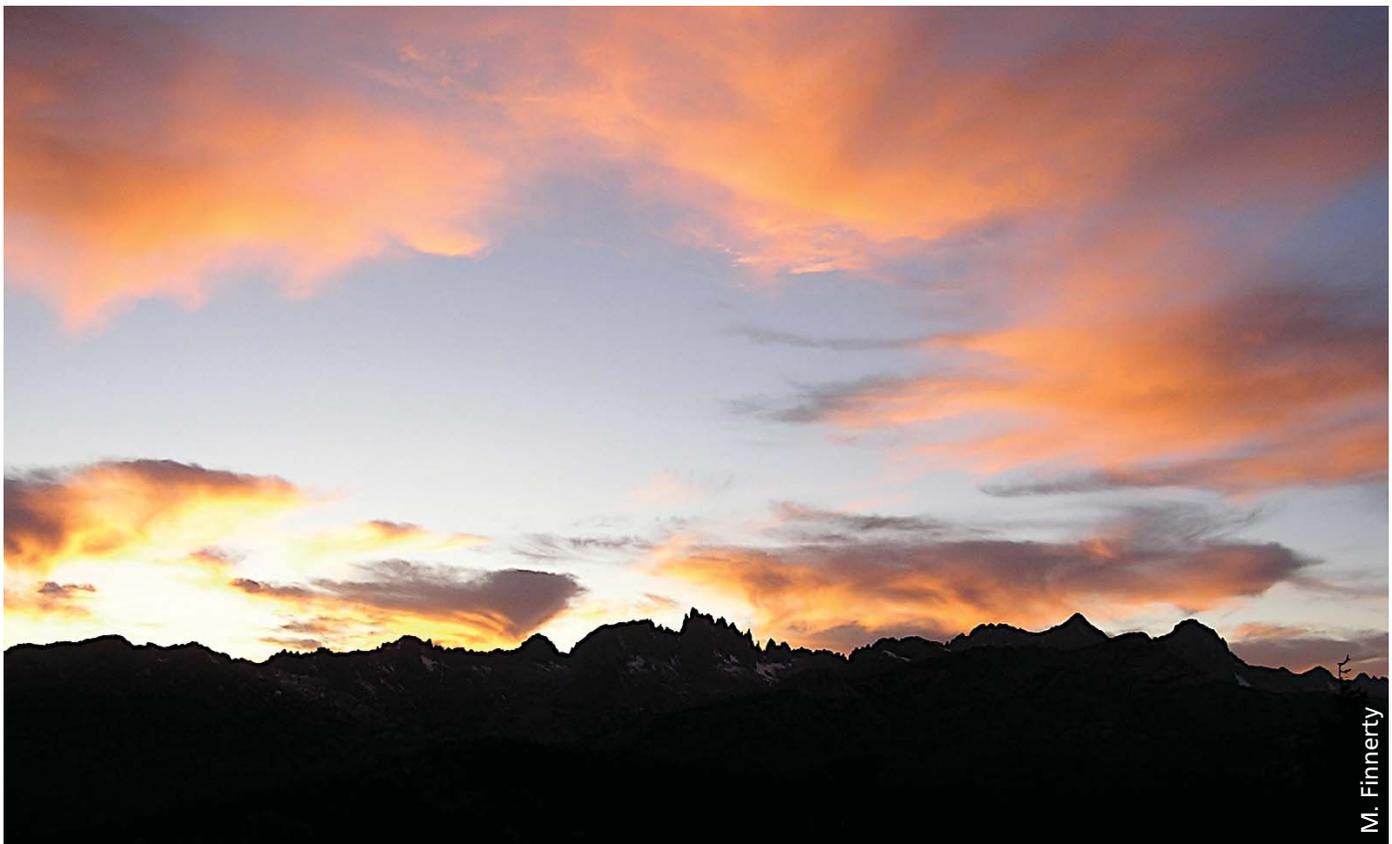


Providing science-based learning through programs like the PRBO bird banding demonstrations is an important division goal

TASK ITEMS RELATED TO DIVISION GOALS

Watershed:

- A. Develop Minaret Vista as a central location from which to interpret the “Big Picture”
 - Develop an interpretive plan for Minaret Vista (2013-2016) (based on GMP alternative selected; refer also to October 5, 2009 Landscape Architect site visit recommendations) to include ranger-led programs, development of an interpretive trail, use of emerging technologies, and roving interpretation by agencies and/or partners. Design new interpretive media for Minaret Vista to be temporary, adaptable, and moveable.
- B. Interpret the Watershed
 - Develop 3D models of watershed (either portable for classrooms, or stationary)
 - Develop visual media for connecting DEPO to the larger San Juan River watershed / San Francisco Bay / big picture
 - Use the monument website to post stream gauge information, with an interpretive message
 - Utilize emerging technologies for interpretation of the watershed
 - Incorporate messages about watershed protection into interpretive programming
 - Work with the Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center and other entities to interpret the watershed in an all-inclusive manner



The Minaret Vista provides a great place for astronomy programs and interpreting watershed resources

Climate Change:

- A. Stay up-to-speed with network, regional, and national climate change developments
 - Tie to the NPS Climate Change Response Strategy and the national strategic plan on climate change
 - Contribute to and consult with the Pacific West Region climate change communications strategy
 - Incorporate elements from the Climate Friendly Parks Action Plan into monument planning efforts
 - Work with network partnerships (SEKI and YOSE) to develop shared information vectors, such as the climate change communication network proposal (see OFS proposal)
 - Continue work with monument partners and researchers to gather and share the most current information related to climate changes
- B. Offer thought-provoking and scientifically credible interpretation about climate changes—natural and anthropogenic, past and present (from GMP)
 - Develop and produce media that interprets Climate Change that is easily updated with new information (including science, mitigation, and adaptation)
 - Incorporate interpretive messages pertaining to climate change into programming where appropriate (including science, mitigation, and adaptation)

Youth Involvement: Work Groups

- A. Foster life-long connections between participants of YCC, CCC, and other work groups, and the monument
 - Offer interpretive programs to work groups
 - Provide follow-up activities (such as a post-experience “club”)
 - Celebrate work groups’ accomplishments online and through news media
 - Consider having work groups develop their own film about their experiences
- B. Promote the work groups’ understanding of the stewardship value of their work
 - Present environmental education programs to work groups
 - Offer opportunities for work groups to interpret their own work to visitors
 - Celebrate the work of previous groups through media, to demonstrate legacy
 - Develop a yearbook for each years’ work
- C. Provide internship opportunities, including SCA
 - Promote internship opportunities to diverse groups including Native American communities
 - Explore funding opportunities that are available for partnerships with tribes
 - Consider using internships to provide cultural demonstrations to visitors
- D. Work with Youth Groups including Scouts on earning Ranger and other patches
 - Continue to promote scout programs through contacts with scout group leaders and by attending offsite functions
 - Seek funding to sustain work group programs

- E. Work with partners' youth programs
 - Interface with INYO YCC groups
 - Offer logistical support, expertise, or interpretive programs to partners' youth groups, including Big City Mountaineers, Athenian School, Wonderful Outdoor World (WOW), Mono Lake Committee Outdoor Experience Program

Youth Involvement: Learning

- A. Strengthen learning opportunities for youth on-site
 - Work with Resource Management and other divisions to create opportunities for youth learning
 - Seek funding for a "summer field institute"
 - Encourage monument access for local schools
 - Consider participation in a community "drop in" program
 - Continue Junior Ranger program

- B. Strengthen learning opportunities for youth off-site
 - Present programs to schools highlighting projects (in-person locally, or through electronic media for distance learners)
 - Consider "adopt-a-class" or other long-term program
 - Continue community outreach programs
 - Develop an outreach program to the community college
 - Continue school programs
 - Consider hiring a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher
 - Use the Junior Ranger booklet as an outreach tool
 - Develop Web Ranger site
 - Continue programs that bring the monument to tribal areas
 - Continue participation in First Bloom program
 - Develop a program that draws on multi-generational learning for Tribal members

Youth Involvement: Technology

- A. Develop focused interpretive and environmental education opportunities using emerging technology targeted toward youth
 - Engage youth in helping to develop emerging technology media for monument
 - Upgrade monument website to include e-field trips, multi-media, podcasts, webcams and stream gauge readings



In an effort to reach Native American youth, the monument has participated in programs such as tribal youth camps

Youth Involvement: Recreation

- A. Encourage urban and disadvantaged youth groups to experience the monument through special activities
- Identify youth recreation groups and what may interest them about the site
 - Develop podcasts relevant to the various disadvantaged youth groups
 - Identify funding sources for transportation to the monument
 - Tie in with the Mono Lake Committee in their efforts to bring in students from the LA area
 - Develop DVDs or other media to send to schools that target younger populations
- B. Develop and/or disseminate Leave-No-Trace messaging
- Design LNT messages that are specific to the monument and its resource concerns
 - Identify funding sources to support the development and acquisition of LNT materials
 - Develop a site-specific LNI (invasives) message
 - Improve resource protection messages on attachments to permits
 - Include resource protection and LNT messages, as well as interagency publications/media in mailings to backpacking groups
 - Identify ways or locations in which to communicate with backpackers, who typically travel as individuals or in small groups



Providing interpretation to backpacking groups may provide an opportunity for youth involvement in the monument

- C. Develop a list of special interest groups (such as cross-country runners) which may or may not be appropriately encouraged to use the monument for their pursuits
- Consider how/when/where special interest groups should best be encouraged to use the monument for their pursuits, and explore how these groups may (or may not) detract from the traditional park use experience
 - Prepare a list of alternatives for user groups who may best pursue their activity of choice in other places

Civic Engagement through Inclusion (outreach)

- A. Develop media which will increase public understanding of the monument
 - Utilize emerging technologies to encourage conversations about monument planning, etc.
 - Encourage research partners to present demonstrations and programs about their work to the public
 - Develop an e-newsletter
 - Develop and distribute a DVD or other media to encourage awareness of monument
 - Consider use of emerging technologies to inform the public regarding road openings, rare bird sightings, etc.
 - Work with town of Mammoth Lakes, hotels, and B&Bs to get correct info out to visitors
 - Look into including timely DEPO topics on the Mammoth Mountain website weekly video
- B. Participate in community events
 - “Get on the agendas,” rather than just attend, community meetings
 - Participate in Mule Days, parades, and other community events
 - Represent the monument at school sporting events, career days, science fairs, etc.
 - Bring back the Ribbon-Cutting event with the Chamber of Commerce
 - Consider building a Postpile character (similar to Smokey Bear)
- C. Develop opportunities for the public to participate in monument activities
 - Provide for opportunities for the public to observe science in progress such as continuing bird banding demonstrations (from GMP)
 - Outreach to potential researchers and partners by identifying priority research needs and making this info available on DEPO website and other opportunities (from GMP)
 - Develop Citizen Stewardship opportunities for involvement in monitoring, restoration, and control of invasive plants that includes learning about agency efforts and challenges in addressing strategies for resilience and restoration of ecosystems (from GMP)
 - Create an “open house” event for local leaders and tourism staff

Civic Engagement through Inclusion (under-represented audiences)

- A. Encourage use of monument by under-represented audiences
- Explore if there is a way to allow free entrance, or seek funding for transportation for under-represented audiences
 - Utilize the Hispanic newsletter to promote monument visits
 - Draft press releases in Spanish
 - Outreach to the children in order to reach the parents
 - Work with “special needs” kids to provide field trips to the monument
 - Create a DVD or other media designed to outreach to under-represented audiences
 - Develop media in multiple languages, with multiple perspectives
- B. Create opportunities for engagement with Native American groups
- Continue to develop Environmental Educational opportunities for Owens Valley Paiute Tribes and other minority or at-risk groups as a means of investing in future generations of citizens and resources (from GMP)
 - Meet with tribal representatives about their interests and needs, and inquire how we can fit into their activities
 - Explore job programs and/ or internships with Native American groups
 - Produce monument literature in Native American languages
 - Sponsor guest speakers or performers from tribes



The First Bloom program is one way to engage under-represented populations in monument resources. These First Bloom participants are involved in a streambank restoration project.

- C. Continue to expand accessible options
- Explore whether it is feasible to make the trail to the Postpile accessible
 - Consider making the ranger station more functionally accessible (even though it is already ADA)
 - Seek funding for a study to analyze the accessibility (mobility, sight- and hearing-impaired, etc) of current and potential interpretive exhibits
 - Consider a virtual tour at the ranger station for those that are unable to see, hear, or travel to the monument features
 - Incorporate tactile exhibits/ universal design into interpretive exhibits and media

Partnership (USFS)

- A. Where appropriate, continue to work with USFS in staffing, planning, and training efforts
 - Utilize “Service First” agreements
 - When feasible, respond to USFS strengths and needs, including physical resources, staffing, and expertise
 - Plan activities to commemorate upcoming shared centennial
 - Celebrate and share the partnership model through media, conferences, etc.
 - Look at current and future opportunities for NPS collaboration on all interpretive functions in the Valley
 - Consider providing interpretive talks on shuttle buses

- B. Craft shared vs. quality identities
 - Develop a messaging plan for partners’ waysides, exhibits, and media which integrates logos and design elements yet provides for individual identity standards
 - Be aware of topics which would be appropriate for partners to interpret, such as “collaborative history”, vs. topics that are agency-specific such as “multiple use”
 - Identify locations where agency-specific interpretation is needed vs. where shared-agency interpretation is needed
 - Develop themes and programs/projects related to individual and shared-agency topics
 - Are there opportunities to tell the shared-agency stories together?

Partnership (non-USFS)

- A. Continue to work with partners in planning and training efforts
 - Participate in trainings for all partners to ensure consistent messaging and information dissemination
 - Look into the Sierra Nevada Geotourism organization for possible inclusion on the Yosemite Gateway/Byway Geotourism Webmap or other programs
 - Improve and coordinate signage across all partners
 - Work with partners to develop a monument-wide or valley-wide wayside and publications plan to better and more consistently communicate through non-personal media

- B. When feasible, respond to partner strengths and needs, including physical resources, staffing, and expertise
 - Maintain open lines of communications with all shuttle bus partners including Mammoth Mountain, the Inyo National Forest, and Eastern Sierra Transit Authority

Environmental Leadership

- A. Interpret both the value of, as well as management contributions to, preserving natural soundscapes, night skies, and other critical resource issues
 - Develop media which interprets both the value of, as well as management contributions to, preserving natural soundscapes, night skies and other critical resource issues
- B. Promote appreciation of the monument's efforts to seek reduced environmental impact in transportation systems
 - Hire an SCA transportation interpreter
 - Develop a list of talking points
 - Improve transportation-impact messages in media and publications
 - Develop interpretive panels for inside the shuttles and at the shuttle stops
 - Consider audio programs (multi-lingual) on the buses?
 - Experiment with ranger-guided bus programs
 - Develop Shuttle Bus PSA on the Mammoth cable channel
- C. Promote recycling within and outside of the monument
 - Create recycling panels for inside the shuttle buses
 - Look into placing recycling bins on the buses
 - Explore creating a partnership with Mammoth Mountain to develop consistent recycling messages
 - Identify opportunities to work with other local concessions on recycling
 - Work with sales associations and other local vendors to encourage more sustainable practices

- D. Promote water conservation within and outside of the monument
 - Interpret the values of water conservation at strategic locations
 - Develop take-home messages for visitors to conserve water within their own home watersheds

Experiential Opportunities

- A. Continue to prioritize personal contact between Park Rangers and visitors
 - Continue interpretive operations that use uniformed park rangers, including greeting bus, roving, and formal programs
 - Staff ranger station all levels which allow Park Rangers to greet the shuttle buses
- B. Utilize technology thoughtfully
 - Develop on-site technological media only as a portal for immersive, place-based experiences
 - Consider identifying areas which are more appropriate for use of technology
 - Encourage visitors to “unplug” and have sensory-based experiences
 - Create media which interprets the value of natural soundscapes and invites visitors to turn off cell phones or put on vibrate during their time at the monument
 - Invite visitors to utilize their senses during programs
 - Contact the NPS natural sounds program for more ideas
- C. Provide user-friendly wilderness experience (drawn from 2009 Safety Study recommendations)
 - Develop a sign plan to lead visitors to Rainbow Falls, including distance and direction
 - Install interpretive signs at bus stops informing visitors of

- shuttle schedule, safety, and emergency information
- Consider developing an outdoor exhibit plaza near the ranger contact station to increase level, access to, and quality of interpretation available at that site
- Develop a page on the monument website that is updated every day to inform visitors of current conditions, upcoming events, weather, and any safety information
- Schedule staff member to work at the Adventure Center during peak visitation times, to ensure accurate information is disseminated
- Develop sign program for the Adventure Center and shuttle loading area
- Place urine color charts in the DEPO bathrooms



Maintaining personal contact between monument visitors and rangers will provide for experiential interpretive opportunities

VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS FOR FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental Resources and Values are particularly important to park managers and warrant primary consideration during planning and management. Identifying and preserving resources and values are fundamental to achieving the monument's purpose and maintaining its significance. This section includes visitor experience goals, as they relate to the monument's Fundamental Resources and Values.

Distinct landscape features: The Postpile, Rainbow Falls, and other geologic features that provide textbook quality evidence of volcanism, glaciations, and mountain building forces of plate tectonics

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Understand the unique geologic processes involved in the creation of monument, landforms, and water features.
- Learn about the role that climate change has had, and will have, on monument features.
- Learn about monument resources through a variety of interpretive services and media.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Feel a sense of place.
- Sense today's place in geologic history.
- Feel intrigued by distinct landscape features in the monument, and curious to learn more.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Access the distinct landscape features, regardless of physical or mental abilities.
- Engage in park resources in respectful and low-impact ways.
- Attend interpretive programs.
- Participate in hands-on activities such as floating pumice in water.
- Participate in acts of stewardship.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Gently touch and feel basalt and glacial polish.
- Safely touch stone and/or water at the sites of distinct landscape features.
- Compare features of various types of rocks, such as color, weight, and shape.
- Feel the difference in weight between basalt and pumice.
- Feel the mist and hear the water rushing over Rainbow Falls.
- Observe where distinct lava flows meet and overlap.

Upper Middle Fork San Joaquin River (corridor): A free flowing river, mineral springs, wetlands, riparian areas and other water-dependent features and communities sustained by naturally functioning, unpolluted surface and ground water system

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about the values inherent in a Wild and Scenic River.
- Understand the watershed concept and its connection to human use.
- Comprehend the ecological richness of a riparian corridor.
- Understand that there are complex geologic and hydrologic processes that create seeps, springs, and wetlands.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Feel relaxed and refreshed by the river.
- Appreciate the scenic and unpolluted beauty of the river.
- Appreciate the role of mosquitoes in supporting wildlife near wetland and riparian areas.
- Gain an increased appreciation of water conservation.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Create and share river-side memories with family and friends.
- Safely wade in, swim, or just touch the river.
- View wildlife attracted to and or living in the river.
- Fish in a responsible way.
- Refrain from littering.
- Participate in a stewardship activity related to the river and the watershed.
- Sit and quietly observe, listen, and smell the meadow and riparian ecosystems.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Feel bubbles at Soda Springs.
- Feel varied temperatures and hear various water sounds at different water sources.
- Notice and enjoy the wildflowers and birds that thrive near streams and wetlands.



The San Joaquin River provides an opportunity for visitors to experience a wild and free flowing river with relatively easy access

Component of a larger ecosystem:

Being a functional part of three converging bio-geographic regions affected by dynamic physical processes that influence a diverse and evolving biota

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about the three regions, what an ecosystem is, and what life forms and physical processes are at work within them. (In the 2006 Visitor Study 46% of monument visitor groups stated that they would like to learn about the preservation of biodiversity, and 39% stated that they would like to learn about habitats in their original state, on a future visit.)
- Understand the topographic differences between the Eastern and Western Sierra.
- Learn about landscape ecology, including how monument ecosystems and surrounding ecosystems rely on each other for sustainability.
- Realize the DEPO is located within a national forest.
- Understand the dynamic natural landscape, and how forces such as geo/hydro morphology and fire have changed, and will continue to change, the landscape.
- Understand how climate change has impacted DEPO historically and continues to do so in the present, as well as the role that visitors play in climate change.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Feel inspired by, and curious about the connectedness of monument surroundings and ecosystem diversity.
- Be surprised to find the headwaters of the San Joaquin River on the west side of the Sierras.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Be involved in bird-banding programs.
- Participate in restoration projects.
- Change their daily actions to reduce their carbon footprint and be more environmentally sustainable.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- View the ecosystem from vistas.
- Experience the natural world through unspoiled viewsheds, odorscapes, and soundscapes.
- Notice the difference between the Eastern Sierras (where they parked) and the Western side (DEPO).

Opportunities for science and learning: Opportunities for scientific study and shared learning about past, present and future environmental conditions and connected biogeophysical processes.

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about current research, studies, and discoveries made in the area through interpretive media and programs.
- Understand the importance of the monument as a place where research and studies can take place.
- Understand the range of recreational and learning opportunities available.
- Understand the connection between science and its real-life applications.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Develop an increased enthusiasm for science-based learning.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in youth-oriented programs.
- Access science and learning opportunities from home.
- Participate in the collection of scientific data and Citizen Science activities.
- Earn credits for in-park learning.
- Participate in Teacher-Ranger-Teacher programs.
- Apply knowledge and ethics acquired in the monument to places outside of the monument.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about monument resources through lessons that incorporate smell, taste, see, hear, and touch.
- Witness staff and/or partnering researchers conducting experiments or monitoring resources within DEPO.

Body of Knowledge: A body of knowledge and material evidence documenting the monument's natural and administrative history, cultural significance, and topographic importance in the Sierra Nevada ecoregion

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Realize the scope of the monument's preserved body of knowledge.
- Gain a basic understanding of past uses and preservation efforts.
- Learn about the roles of citizens, scientists, and federal agencies in the history of preservation in DEPO and the surrounding wilderness areas.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Feel inspired by a legacy of conservation.
- Appreciate the NPS as a repository of critical knowledge.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Have on-line access to studies and collections, including stream gauge, species lists, and weather patterns.
- Contribute to material evidence as appropriate, though citizen science, internships, etc.
- Ask questions.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- View and/or touch collection items.

Natural Soundscapes and Visual Quality: Natural soundscapes, dark night skies, clean air, clear water, and unspoiled natural vistas.

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Understand why natural soundscapes are integral to healthy ecosystems, cultural legacy, and the human spirit (2006 Visitor Study indicated that 25% of monument visitor groups would like to learn about natural quiet/sounds of nature on a future visit).
- Learn about the common and imminent threats to natural soundscapes and visual quality (2006 Visitor Study indicated that 53% of monument visitor groups would like to learn about the protection of an unpolluted airshed and watershed on a future visit).
- Know where the viewsheds are and what they will find when they get there.
- Learn about the conditions that inhibit the ability of visitors to see viewsheds of the mountains or the night sky.



The legacy of conservation and history of public lands management is an important story in the Reds Meadow Valley

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Develop an appreciation for dark night skies.
- Feel as if they are part of a vast universe.
- Feel a separation from the human buzz of the city, and appreciate the natural sensory stimuli of monument surroundings.
- Be awed by beauty and grandeur of the viewsheds.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Attend sensory programs or stations, or “crafted” quiet areas.
- Experience the night skies in a safe and educational environment.
- Virtually experience dark night skies through AV/planetarium programs.
- Easily find a quiet place to site, watch, and listen.
- Attend formal interpretive programs at night, solstice, and other special times.
- Develop a sense of place through direct sensory experiences.
- Participate in a range of facilitated programs, self-guided activities, or subtly-facilitated suggestions that promote appreciation of natural soundscapes and visual quality.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Experience the natural world through unspoiled viewsheds, soundscapes, and odorscapes where natural prevails over machinery and/or technology.
- See a landscape unadulterated by modern infrastructure.
- Expand sensory faculties for a heightened experience of the sights, sounds, smells, and textures of the natural world of the Sierra.
- Hear silence and natural sounds, without cell phones, traffic, or other modern sounds.

Wilderness portal: With over 75% of Devils Postpile National Monument designated as wilderness with internationally recognized trails (John Muir Trail and Pacific Crest Trail), it is an entryway to exploration, understanding, and appreciation of wilderness character and values. Experiences range from a glimpse to an immersion into the vast Sierran wilderness.

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Understand the legal and experiential concepts of wilderness (2006 Visitor Study indicated that 33% of monument visitor groups would like to learn about untouched/undeveloped landscapes).
- Learn about the opportunity for solitude on a future visit (A 2006 Visitor Study indicated that 16% of monument visitor groups would like to learn about this).
- Understand the significance of a wilderness gateway.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Value recreational experiences that take place in wilderness.
- Appreciate the un-measurable value of this world-class wilderness, even if only viewing the wilderness from a distance.
- Develop wilderness stewardship ethics and values.
- Enjoy shared wilderness experiences with family and friends.
- Appreciate wildlife in their natural habitats.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Obtain and use maps.
- Obtain wilderness permits and bear canisters.
- Honor rules and regulations associated with wilderness.
- Be in the wilderness.
- Acquire wilderness safety, survival, and experience skills.
- Have a safe wilderness experience and “Leave No Trace.”
- Keep wildlife wild by not feeding it.
- Find places to experience solitude and personal renewal.
- Use a safe, convenient, and comfortable shuttle bus system to gain access into the monument.
- Obtain a stamp for hiking a portion of a National Wilderness Trail.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Experience wilderness through solitude, quietness, and primitive use.



Devils Postpile is a gateway to many wilderness experiences for visitors

Rustic Experience: Visitors are offered time-honored park experiences in a setting that emphasizes the enjoyment of natural sights and sounds and promotes a sense of place.

Knowledge Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Benefit from well-marked trails, signs, and bus stops which communicate needed information such as times, distances, and safety issues.
- Access monument information prior to their visit, via phone, internet, and mail.
- Understand pet regulations and opportunities.
- Understand the fee structure between the shuttle and the monument.
- Learn cultures and traditions of early user groups, including Native Americans and settlers.

Attitude Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Know what to expect before arriving in the valley.
- Appreciate the low-key scale and harmonious design of facilities to complement the natural experience.
- Feel engaged and mindful.
- Feel proud of the protected natural and cultural resources of the United States.
- Feel a part of nature and creation.
- Enjoy a shared rustic experience with family and friends.
- Develop a sense of tradition from or leading to multiple visits.

Behavioral Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Have positive, pleasant, and meaningful contact with park rangers.
- Be prepared with proper shoes, water, sunscreen, etc.
- Participate in traditional ranger programs, including guided walks and campfire programs.
- Experience backpacking.
- Participate in youth-oriented programs.
- Choose self-guided learning activities.
- Protect monument resources and values.
- Comply with monument regulations, knowing that they are justified and fairly enforced.
- Support the NPS/DEPO/SNHA through purchases, donations, and volunteering.
- Utilize emerging technology in a way that enhances their experience and does not detract from a nature-based experience at the monument.
- Camp in a campground with minimal noise and visual intrusion.

Sensory Experience Goals: Visitors will have the opportunity to:

- Smell the flowers, Jeffrey Pine, fresh rain, and other natural scents.
- See rustic and old architecture.
- Experience key features without the distractions of modern technology.
- Have fun in a basic, primitive, elemental way.
- Breathe fresh air.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OUTREACH

Youth Groups

1. Short Range: Work with scout programs, tribal youth programs, and other local youth both in the monument and in the community to provide stewardship-based programs.
2. Medium Range: Expand efforts by partnering with existing groups such as Big City Mountaineers and the Mono Lake Committee Outdoor Experience Program, and Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education.
3. Long Range: Develop a long term outreach strategy to reach youth from urban communities and rural “at-risk” youth.

Publicity

1. Short Range: Work with town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain, hotels, and B&Bs to get correct information out to visitors both in print and through digital media and emerging technologies.
2. Medium Range: Look at regional partners such as Sierra Nevada Geotourism to expand publicity of events and programs.
3. Long Range: Develop products targeting underrepresented audiences including multiple language publications and media.

Messaging (See also PLANNING)

1. Short Range: Design messaging and publications consistent with Leave No Trace principles that is specific to the monument and its resource concerns, including invasive species, transportation impacts, recreation impacts, and climate change.
2. Medium Range: Develop take-home messages for visitors to conserve water and energy, within their own home watersheds.

3. Long Range: Work with Mammoth Mountain and other area partners to develop consistent recycling messages, signage, and publications.

NEW MEDIA

Youth

1. Short Range: Celebrate the work of previous groups through media, to demonstrate legacy, particularly through publications and web site features.
2. Medium Range: Utilize media and emerging technologies to engage youth work groups through publications, online forums, digital photo albums, or film. Celebrate work groups’ accomplishments online and through news media.
3. Long Range: Develop podcasts, DVDs or other media relevant to the various youth groups or schools and consider engagement of those youth in the creation of that media.

Other Products

1. Short Range: Utilize emerging technologies for interpretation of the watershed and climate change that is easily updated with new information (including science, mitigation, and adaptation).
2. Medium Range: Consider audio programs (multi-lingual) on the buses.
3. Long Range: Consider a virtual tour, podcasts or other media at the ranger station for those that are unable to see, hear, or travel to the monument features.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Printed Materials

1. Short Range: Use the Junior Ranger booklet as an outreach tool
2. Medium Range: Produce literature and media in Native American languages

Exhibits and Signage

1. Short Range: Develop interpretive panels for inside the shuttles and at the shuttle stops that address valley resources, safety, and orientation.
2. Medium Range: Develop media which interprets both the value of, as well as management contributions to, preserving natural soundscapes, night skies and other critical resource issues.
3. Long Range: Incorporate tactile exhibits/universal design into interpretive exhibits and media and consider developing visual media for connecting DEPO to the larger San Juan River watershed / San Francisco Bay / big picture including watershed models.

Website

1. Short Range: Develop a page on the monument website that is updated every day to inform visitors of current conditions, upcoming events, weather, and any safety information.
2. Medium Range: Outreach to potential researchers and partners by identifying priority research needs and making this info available on DEPO website and other opportunities (from GMP).
3. Long Range: Upgrade monument website to include e-field trips, multi-media, podcasts, webcams and stream gauge readings.

PROGRAMS

General Interpretation

Continue interpretive operations that use uniformed park rangers, including greeting buses, roving, and formal programs.

Presenting On-Site Programs

1. Short Range: Foster programs that enable youth work groups, scientists, and tribal members to present their experiences, stories, and research to park visitors and to create opportunities for public engagement and learning.
2. Medium Range: Consider using internships or a guest speaker program to provide native cultural demonstrations and programs to visitors.
3. Long Range: Develop Citizen Stewardship opportunities for involvement in monitoring, restoration, and control of invasive plants that includes learning about agency efforts and challenges in addressing strategies for resilience and restoration of ecosystems (from GMP).

Youth

1. Short Range: Continue Junior Ranger program and expand its overall availability.
2. Medium Range: Continue to develop Environmental Educational opportunities for Owens Valley Paiute Tribes and other minority or at-risk groups as a means of investing in future generations of citizens and resources (from GMP).
3. Long Range: Offer interpretive and environmental programs to work groups or special interest groups.

Off-Site Education

1. Short Range: Continue community and educational outreach programs in a variety of formats and consider expanding to community college and other age groups.
2. Medium Range: Represent the monument at school sporting events, career days, science fairs, etc.
3. Long Range: Consider “adopt-a-class” or other long-term program.

Community

1. Short Range: Prioritize involvement in community events, meetings, and programs as well as inviting community members to NPS events.
2. Medium Range: Increase involvement in community youth organizations such as scouting and after school programs.
3. Long Range: Consider participation in a community “drop in” program.

Tribal

1. Short Range: Continue programs that bring the monument to tribal areas such as the First Bloom program.
2. Medium Range: Meet with tribal representatives about their interests and needs, and inquire how we can fit into their activities.
3. Long Range: Develop a program that draws on multi-generational learning for Tribal members.

PLANNING

With Forest Service

1. Short Range: Identify locations where agency-specific interpretation is needed vs. where shared-agency interpretation is needed.
2. Medium Range: Develop themes and programs/projects related to individual and shared-agency topics and seek opportunities to tell the shared-agency stories together while maintaining agency identity.
3. Long Range: Utilize “Service First” agreements and other ways to look at current and future opportunities for NPS collaboration on all interpretive functions in the Valley in order to maximize strengths and needs, including physical resources, staffing, and expertise.

Special Interest Groups

1. Short Range: Identify youth recreation groups and what may interest them about the site
2. Medium Range: Consider how/when/where special interest groups should best be encouraged to use the monument for their pursuits; explore how these groups may (or may not) detract from the traditional park use experience and provide alternatives if use is not compatible with other recreational users.
3. Long Range: Identify ways or locations in which to communicate with backpackers, who typically travel as individuals or in small groups

Formal Plans

1. Short Range: Work with partners to develop a monument-wide or valley-wide wayside, signage, and publications plan to better and more consistently communicate through non-personal media. This would include logo and design element guidance.

2. Medium Range: Develop an interpretive plan for Minaret Vista (2013-2016) (based on GMP alternative selected; refer also to October 5, 2009 Landscape Architect site visit recommendations) to include ranger-led programs, development of an interpretive trail, use of emerging technologies, and roving interpretation by agencies and/or partners.
3. Long Range: Consider developing an outdoor exhibit plaza near the ranger contact station to increase level, access to, and quality of interpretation available at that site.

Facilities

1. Short Range: Work with concessions, cooperating associations, and partners to coordinate recycling, sustainability, and greening efforts.
2. Medium Range: Identifying areas of monument which are more appropriate for use of technology and what areas might focus on a more low-tech experience.
3. Long Range: Consider making the ranger station more functionally accessible (even though it is already ADA). Implement GMP recommendations.

Funding

1. Short Range: Explore ways to allow free entrance or transportation for under-represented audiences, work groups, or tribes.
2. Medium Range: Seek funding for a study to analyze the accessibility (mobility, sight- and hearing-impaired, etc) of current and potential interpretive exhibits.
3. Long Range: Seek funding for a “summer field institute”.

NON-TASK ITEMS

Staffing

1. Short Range: Staff ranger station at levels which allow Park Rangers to greet the shuttle buses.
2. Medium Range: Schedule staff member to work at the interagency locations such as the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Adventure Center, and Minaret Vista during peak visitation times, to ensure accurate information is disseminated.
3. Long Range: Promote internship opportunities to diverse groups including Native American communities and explore alternative hires such as the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program in order to provide positive work experiences to diverse groups.

Management Tasks

1. Short Range: Explore whether it is feasible to make the trail to the Postpile accessible, per GMP decisions.
2. Medium Range: Consider routing shuttle buses through Minaret Vista in order use the viewshed to interpret the watershed.
3. Long Range: Outreach to local community college for interns and/or explore housing possibilities.

Information Sharing: General

1. Short Range: Work with all partners in trainings and publication preparation to ensure open lines of communications and consistent messaging and celebrate those partnerships through media, conferences, and best practices.
2. Medium Range: Utilize emerging technologies to encourage conversations about monument planning, etc.
3. Long Range: Work with the Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center, network parks, and other entities to interpret the watershed, climate change, and other resource issues in a way that adheres to and supports national and regional goals.

Information Sharing: Science and Resource Communications

1. Short Range: DEPO will focus climate change interpretation on monument, Sierra Nevada network wide, and PWR effort. DEPO will work with monument partners and researchers to gather and share the most current information related to climate changes—natural and anthropogenic, past and present.
2. Medium Range: Work with the Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center (if funded), network parks, and other entities to interpret the watershed, climate change, and other resource issues in a way that adheres to and supports national and regional goals.
3. Long Range: Communicating current and evolving understanding of the ecological importance of the biodiversity within the monument, and the past, present, and possible links within and through the UMFSJ as a migratory corridor has not really been addressed in current interpretive programming due to the need for more research and documentation.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ORGANIZED BY SUBJECT

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
Task Item	Time	Funding
OUTREACH (Youth Groups)		
Work with scout programs, tribal youth programs, and other local youth both in the monument and in the community to provide stewardship-based programs.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS/YPP
Expand efforts by partnering with existing groups such as Big City Mountaineers, the Mono Lake Committee Outdoor Experience Program, and Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding
Develop a long term outreach strategy to reach youth from urban communities and rural “at-risk” youth.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
OUTREACH (Publicity)		
Work with town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain, hotels, and B&Bs to get correct information out to visitors both in print and through digital media and emerging technologies.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Look at regional partners such as Sierra Nevada Geotourism to expand publicity of events and programs.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	None
Develop products targeting underrepresented audiences including multiple language publications and media.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
OUTREACH (Messaging: See also PLANNING)		
Design messaging and publications that are specific to the monument and its resource concerns, including invasive species, transportation impacts, recreation impacts, and climate change.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Develop take-home messages for visitors to conserve water and energy, within their own home watersheds.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	None
Work with Mammoth Mountain and other area partners to develop consistent recycling messages, signage, and publications.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Partners, ONPS
NEW MEDIA (Youth)		
Celebrate the work of previous groups through media, to demonstrate legacy, particularly through publications and web site features.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Utilize media and emerging technologies to engage youth work groups through publications, online forums, digital photo albums, or film.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding
Develop podcasts, DVDs or other media relevant to the various youth groups or schools and consider engagement of those youth in the creation of that media.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
NEW MEDIA (Other Products)		
Utilize emerging technologies for interpretation of the watershed and climate change that is easily updated with new information.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Consider audio programs (multi-lingual) on the buses.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Partners, Project Funding
Consider a virtual tour, podcasts or other media at the ranger station for those that are unable to see, hear, or travel to the monument features.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
Task Item	Time	Funding
TRADITIONAL MEDIA (Printed Material)		
Use the Junior Ranger booklet as an outreach tool	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Produce monument literature and media in Native American languages.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding, Partners
TRADITIONAL MEDIA (Exhibits and Signage)		
Develop interpretive panels for inside the shuttles and at the shuttle stops that address valley resources, safety, and orientation.	Short Range (1-3 years)	Partners, Project Funding
Develop media which interprets both the value of, as well as management contributions to, preserving natural soundscapes, night skies and other critical resource issues.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding
Incorporate tactile exhibits/universal design into interpretive exhibits and media and consider developing visual media for connecting DEPO to the larger San Juan River watershed / San Francisco Bay / big picture including watershed models.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
TRADITIONAL MEDIA (Website)		
Develop a page on the monument website that is updated every day to inform visitors of current conditions, upcoming events, weather, and any safety information	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Outreach to potential researchers and partners by identifying priority research needs and making this info available on DEPO website and other opportunities.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Upgrade monument website to include e-field trips, multi-media, podcasts, webcams and stream gauge readings.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS		
Continue interpretive operations that use uniformed park rangers, including greeting buses, roving, and formal programs		
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS (On-Site Programs)		
Foster programs that enable youth work groups, scientists, and tribal members to present their experiences, stories, and research to park visitors and to create opportunities for public engagement and learning.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Consider using internships or a guest speaker program to provide native cultural demonstrations and programs to visitors.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding
Develop Citizen Stewardship opportunities for involvement in monitoring, restoration, and control of invasive plants that includes learning about agency efforts and challenges in addressing strategies for resilience and restoration of ecosystems (from GMP).	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
Task Item	Time	Funding
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS (Youth)		
Continue Junior Ranger program and expand its overall availability.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Continue to develop Environmental Educational opportunities for Owens Valley Paiute Tribes and other minority or at-risk groups as a means of investing in future generations of citizens and resources (from GMP).	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding, ONPS
Offer interpretive and environmental programs to work groups or special interest groups.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding, ONPS
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS (Off-Site Education)		
Continue community and educational outreach programs in a variety of formats and consider expanding to community college and other age groups.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Represent the monument at school sporting events, career days, science fairs, etc.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	None
Consider “adopt-a-class” or other long-term program.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS (Community Outreach)		
Prioritize involvement in community events, meetings, and programs as well as inviting community members to NPS events.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Increase involvement in community youth organizations such as scouting and after school programs.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Consider participation in a community “drop in” program.	Long Range (5-7 years)	ONPS
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS (Tribal)		
Continue programs that bring the monument to tribal areas such as the First Bloom program.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS, Project Funding
Meet with tribal representatives about their interests and needs, and inquire how we can fit into their activities.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Develop a program that draws on multi-generational learning for Tribal members.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
PLANNING (USFS)		
Identify locations where agency-specific interpretation is needed vs. where shared-agency interpretation is needed.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Develop themes and programs/projects related to individual and shared-agency topics and seek opportunities to tell the shared-agency stories together while maintaining agency identity.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Utilize “Service First” agreements and other ways to look at current and future opportunities for NPS collaboration on all interpretive functions in the Valley in order to maximize strengths and needs, including physical resources, staffing, and expertise.	Long Range (5-7 years)	ONPS, Project Funding, Fee

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
Task Item	Time	Funding
PLANNING (Special Interest Groups)		
Identify youth recreation groups and what may interest them about the site .	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Consider how/when/where special interest groups should best be encouraged to use the monument for their pursuits; explore how these groups may (or may not) detract from the traditional park use experience and provide alternatives if use is not compatible with other users.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Identify ways or locations in which to communicate with backpackers, who typically travel as individuals or in small groups.	Long Range (5-7 years)	ONPS, Project Funding
PLANNING (Formal Plans)		
Work with partners to develop a monument-wide or valley-wide wayside, signage, and publications plan to better and more consistently communicate through non-personal media. This would include logo and design element guidance.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Develop an interpretive plan for Minaret Vista (2013-2016) (based on GMP alternative selected; refer also to October 5, 2009 Landscape Architect site visit recommendations) to include ranger-led programs, development of an interpretive trail, use of emerging technologies, and roving interpretation by agencies and/or partners.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS, Project Funding, Fee
Consider developing an outdoor exhibit plaza near the ranger contact station to increase level, access to, and quality of interpretation available at that site.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
PLANNING (Facilities)		
Work with concessions, cooperating associations, and partners to coordinate recycling, sustainability, and greening efforts.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS, Project Funding
Identify areas of monument which are more appropriate for use of technology and what areas might focus on a more low-tech experience.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Consider making the ranger station more functionally accessible. Implement GMP recommendations.	Long Range (5-7 years)	ONPS, Project Funding
PLANNING (Funding/Fees)		
Explore ways to allow free entrance or transportation for under-represented audiences, work groups, or tribes.	Short Range (1-3 years)	None
Seek funding for a study to analyze the accessibility (mobility, sight- and hearing-impaired, etc) of current and potential interpretive exhibits.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding
Seek funding for a “summer field institute.”	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding, Fees

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
Task Item	Time	Funding
STAFFING		
Staff ranger station at levels which allow Park Rangers to greet the shuttle buses.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Schedule staff member to work at the interagency locations such as the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Adventure Center, and Minaret Vista during peak visitation times, to ensure accurate information is disseminated.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS
Promote internship opportunities to diverse groups including Native American communities and explore alternative hires such as the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program in order to provide positive work experiences to diverse groups.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding
MANAGEMENT (Per GMP Decisions)		
Explore whether it is feasible to make the trail to the Postpile accessible.	Short Range (1-3 years)	Project Funding
Consider routing shuttle buses through Minaret Vista in order use the viewshed to interpret the watershed.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	ONPS, Project Funding, Fees
Outreach to local community college for interns and /or explore housing possibilities.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding, ONPS
INFORMATION SHARING (General Communications)		
Work with partners in trainings and publication preparation to ensure open lines of communications and consistent.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Utilize emerging technologies to encourage conversations about monument planning, etc.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding, ONPS
DEPO will work to communicate management topics and future management strategies as they pertain to resource issues.	Long Range (5-7 years)	ONPS
INFORMATION SHARING (Science and Resource Communications)		
Focus climate change interpretation on monument, Sierra Nevada network-wide, and PWR effort.	Short Range (1-3 years)	ONPS
Work with the Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center (if funded), network parks, and other entities to interpret the watershed, climate change, and other resource issues in a way that adheres to and supports national and regional goals.	Medium Range (3-5 years)	Project Funding, ONPS
Communicating current and evolving understanding of the ecological importance of the biodiversity within the monument, and the past, present, and possible links within and through the UMFSJ as a migratory corridor has not really been addressed in current interpretive programming due to the need for more research and documentation.	Long Range (5-7 years)	Project Funding

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ORGANIZED BY TIMEFRAME

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
2011-2013	2014-2016	2017-2020
Work with scout programs, tribal youth programs, and other local youth both in the monument and in the community to provide stewardship-based programs.	Expand efforts by partnering with existing groups such as Big City Mountaineers, the Mono Lake Committee Outdoor Experience Program, and Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education.	Develop a long term outreach strategy to reach youth from urban communities and rural “at-risk” youth.
Work with town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain, hotels, and B&Bs to get correct information out to visitors both in print and through digital media and emerging technologies.	Look at regional partners such as Sierra Nevada Geotourism to expand publicity of events and programs.	Develop products targeting underrepresented audiences including multiple language publications and media.
Design messaging and publications that are specific to the monument and its resource concerns, including invasive species, transportation impacts, recreation impacts, and climate change.	Develop take-home messages for visitors to conserve water and energy, within their own home watersheds.	Work with Mammoth Mountain and other area partners to develop consistent recycling messages, signage, and publications.
Celebrate the work of previous groups through media, to demonstrate legacy, particularly through publications and web site features.	Utilize media and emerging technologies to engage youth work groups through publications, online forums, digital photo albums, or film.	Develop podcasts, DVDs or other media relevant to the various youth groups or schools and consider engagement of those youth in the creation of that media.
Utilize emerging technologies for interpretation of the watershed and climate change that is easily updated with new information.	Consider audio programs (multi-lingual) on the buses.	Consider a virtual tour, podcasts or other media at the ranger station for those that are unable to see, hear, or travel to the monument features.
Use the Junior Ranger booklet as an outreach tool	Produce monument literature and media in Native American languages.	
Develop interpretive panels for inside the shuttles and at the shuttle stops that address valley resources, safety, and orientation.	Develop media which interprets both the value of, as well as management contributions to, preserving natural soundscapes, night skies and other critical resource issues.	Incorporate tactile exhibits/universal design into interpretive exhibits and media and consider developing visual media for connecting DEPO to the larger San Juan River watershed / San Francisco Bay / big picture including watershed models.

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
2011-2013	2014-2016	2017-2020
Develop a page on the monument website that is updated every day to inform visitors of current conditions, upcoming events, weather, and any safety information	Outreach to potential researchers and partners by identifying priority research needs and making this info available on DEPO website and other opportunities.	Upgrade monument website to include e-field trips, multi-media, podcasts, webcams and stream gauge readings.
Foster programs that enable youth work groups, scientists, and tribal members to present their experiences, stories, and research to park visitors and to create opportunities for public engagement and learning.	Consider using internships or a guest speaker program to provide native cultural demonstrations and programs to visitors.	Develop Citizen Stewardship opportunities for involvement in monitoring, restoration, and control of invasive plants that includes learning about agency efforts and challenges in addressing strategies for resilience and restoration of ecosystems (from GMP) .
Continue Junior Ranger program and expand its overall availability.	Continue to develop Environmental Educational opportunities for Owens Valley Paiute Tribes and other minority or at-risk groups as a means of investing in future generations of citizens and resources (from GMP).	Offer interpretive and environmental programs to work groups or special interest groups.
Continue community and educational outreach programs in a variety of formats and consider expanding to community college and other age groups.	Represent the monument at school sporting events, career days, science fairs, etc.	Consider “adopt-a-class” or other long-term program.
Prioritize involvement in community events, meetings, and programs as well as inviting community members to NPS events.	Increase involvement in community youth organizations such as scouting and after school programs.	Consider participation in a community “drop in” program.
Continue programs that bring the monument to tribal areas such as the First Bloom program.	Meet with tribal representatives about their interests and needs, and inquire how we can fit into their activities.	Develop a program that draws on multi-generational learning for Tribal members.

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
2011-2013	2014-2016	2017-2020
Identify locations where agency-specific interpretation is needed vs. where shared-agency interpretation is needed.	Develop themes and programs/projects related to individual and shared-agency topics and seek opportunities to tell the shared-agency stories together while maintaining agency identity.	Utilize “Service First” agreements and other ways to look at current and future opportunities for NPS collaboration on all interpretive functions in the Valley in order to maximize strengths and needs, including physical resources, staffing, and expertise.
Identify youth recreation groups and what may interest them about the site.	Consider how/when/where special interest groups should best be encouraged to use the monument for their pursuits; explore how these groups may (or may not) detract from the traditional park use experience and provide alternatives if use is not compatible with other users.	Identify ways or locations in which to communicate with backpackers, who typically travel as individuals or in small groups.
Work with partners to develop a monument-wide or valley-wide wayside, signage, and publications plan to better and more consistently communicate through non-personal media. This would include logo and design element guidance.	Develop an interpretive plan for Minaret Vista (2013-2016) (based on GMP alternative selected; refer also to October 5, 2009 Landscape Architect site visit recommendations) to include ranger-led programs, development of an interpretive trail, use of emerging technologies, and roving interpretation by agencies and/or partners.	Consider developing an outdoor exhibit plaza near the ranger contact station to increase level, access to, and quality of interpretation available at that site.
Work with concessions, cooperating associations, and partners to coordinate recycling, sustainability, and greening efforts.	Identify areas of monument which are more appropriate for use of technology and what areas might focus on a more low-tech experience.	Consider making the ranger station more functionally accessible. Implement GMP recommendations.
Explore ways to allow free entrance or transportation for under-represented audiences, work groups, or tribes.	Seek funding for a study to analyze the accessibility (mobility, sight- and hearing-impaired, etc) of current and potential interpretive exhibits.	Seek funding for a “summer field institute.”

Interpretive Implementation Plan for Devils Postpile		
2011-2013	2014-2016	2017-2020
Staff ranger station at levels which allow Park Rangers to greet the shuttle buses.	Schedule staff member to work at the interagency locations such as the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Adventure Center, and Minaret Vista during peak visitation times, to ensure accurate information is disseminated.	Promote internship opportunities to diverse groups including Native American communities and explore alternative hires such as the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program in order to provide positive work experiences to diverse groups.
Explore whether it is feasible to make the trail to the Postpile accessible.	Consider routing shuttle buses through Minaret Vista in order use the viewshed to interpret the watershed.	Outreach to local community college for interns and /or explore housing possibilities.
Work with partners in trainings and publication preparation to ensure open lines of communications and consistent.	Utilize emerging technologies to encourage conversations about monument planning, etc.	DEPO will work to communicate management topics and future management strategies as they pertain to resource issues.
Focus climate change interpretation on monument, Sierra Nevada network-wide, and PWR effort.	Work with the Sierra Nevada Research Learning Center (if funded), network parks, and other entities to interpret the watershed, climate change, and other resource issues in a way that adheres to and supports national and regional goals.	Communicating current and evolving understanding of the ecological importance of the biodiversity within the monument, and the past, present, and possible links within and through the UMFSJ as a migratory corridor has not really been addressed in current interpretive programming due to the need for more research and documentation.

PLANNING TEAM

Devils Postpile National Monument Staff

Deanna Dulen, Superintendent

Aimee Hanna, Interpretive Park Ranger

David K. Scott, Park Ranger / Biological Science Technician

Leonard Hanna IV, Interpretive Park Ranger

Maureen Finnerty, Supervisory Interpretive Park Ranger and LRIP Assistant

Other National Park Service Staff

Sheri Forbes, Chief of Interpretation, Pacific West Region

Tom Medema, Chief of Interpretation, Yosemite National Park

Victoria Mates, Deputy Chief of Interpretation, Yosemite National Park

Partners

Jon Kazmierski, Recreation Officer, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth and Mono Basin Ranger Districts

Mike Schlafmann, Deputy District Ranger, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Ranger District Ranger

Paula Brown-Williams, Eastern Sierra Institute of Collaborative Education

Pennie Custer, Public Affairs Specialist, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth and Mono Basin Ranger Districts

HFC Staff

Peggy Scherbaum, Interpretive Planner

Sam W. Vaughn, Director of Interpretive Planning

APPENDICES

2006 VISITOR STUDY

Visitor Services Project Devils Postpile National Monument Report Summary

This report describes the results of a visitor study at Devils Postpile National Monument (NM) during July 19-25, 2006. A total of 376 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 276 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 73.4% response rate.

This report profiles a systematic random sample of Devils Postpile NM visitors. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

- Thirty-three percent of visitor groups were in groups of five or more, 32% were in groups of three or four, and 32% were groups of two. Sixty-five percent of visitor groups were family groups. Fifty percent of visitors were ages 36-65 years and 25% were ages 15 years or younger. Nine percent of respondents were of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Ninety-three percent of respondents were White and 5% were Asian.
- United States visitors were from California (85%), Nevada (3%), Arizona (2%), Ohio (2%), and 20 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors, comprising 6% of the total visitation, were from Germany (14%), Netherlands (13%), France (11%), and 13 other countries.
- Eighty-three percent of visitors had not visited the monument prior to 2002. Seventy-two percent of visitors visited the monument for the first time in 2002 and after.
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Devils Postpile NM through previous visits (54%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (47%), and travel guides/tour books/publications (40%). Six percent of visitor groups did not obtain any information about the monument before their visit. Most groups (83%) received the information they needed about the park.
- For 47% of visitor groups, their reason for traveling to the Devils Postpile NM area (within 75 miles of the monument) was to visit other local attractions, while 28% came to visit Devils Postpile NM. Other most common sites visited within a two-hour drive of the monument were Mammoth Lakes Basin (49%), Mammoth Lakes Visitor Welcome Center (46%), and Mono Lake and Mono Basin (44%).

- Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours at the monument, 35% of visitor groups spent five or more hours, 33% spent three or four hours, and 31% spent up to two hours. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more at the monument, 38% of visitor groups spent four or more days, 35% spent two or three days, and 27% spent one day.
- The most common sites visited in the monument included the bottom of Devils Postpile (83%) and Rainbow Falls (76%). The most common activities in the monument included general sightseeing (92%) and hiking (82%) while the most common activities in Reds Meadow Valley area included general sightseeing (80%) and hiking (64%).
- Regarding use, importance, and quality of visitor services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used services/facilities by visitor groups included the restrooms (85%), shuttle bus (79%), and trails (78%). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included trails (97%, N=202), restrooms (91%, N=214), and shuttle bus (90%, N=201). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings included assistance from ranger station staff (94%, N=90), trails (92%, N=196), and assistance from Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center staff (90%, N=49).
- Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Devils Postpile NM as “very good” or “good.” Less than 2% of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>

SPECIAL POPULATIONS GUIDANCE

Harpers Ferry Center has recently revised the Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for NPS Interpretive Media. It clarifies how to provide programmatic access to people with disabilities and those from special populations. The document is written for media specialists, interpreters, rangers, superintendents, and other National Park Service employees and contractors who approve or develop interpretive media and programs. It provides guidance regarding personal services programs, audiovisual programs, audio tours, exhibits, publications, and web-based media. Topics include:

- New chapters on the laws, regulations, and policies that govern accessibility interpretive media.
- Highlights of the new Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (ABAAS), which takes the place of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS).
- Useful links to laws and best practices in accessible media.
- Park and Harpers Ferry Center accountability for accessible media.
- The latest pictographs and links for pictograph downloads
- How to plan and scope for accessibility.
- Accessibility for web-based media.
- Updates on new technology.
- How to prepare a report or document so that computers can read the text content aloud.
- How parks can get the word out about their accessible sites and programs.
- Lots of diagrams to help NPS employees and contractors understand the specifications.

Successful programmatic accessibility begins with comprehensive parkwide interpretive planning so that all media and personal services can work together. Where one may not be accessible to all persons, other services can fill the gaps. Early recognition of, and sensitivity to, accessibility issues will result in the most successful visitor experience.

The new guidelines are available now in PDF format at www.nps.gov/hfc.

NPS CENTENNIAL GOALS

The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service provides the agency an unprecedented opportunity to increase public awareness of national parks and ensure their preservation for future generations. As we move into our second century, then National Park Service will focus on five centennial goals:

1. **Stewardship:** Lead America and the world in preserving and restoring treasured resources.
2. **Environmental Leadership:** Demonstrate environmental leadership to the nation by showcasing sustainable practices and inspiring an environmental conscience.
3. **Recreational Experience:** Ensure that national parks are superior recreational destinations, where visitors have fun, explore nature and history, find inspiration, and improve health and wellness.
4. **Education:** Foster exceptional learning opportunities that connect people with parks.
5. **Professional Excellence:** Demonstrate professional excellence worthy of the treasures entrusted to its care.

RENAISSANCE FOR INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

The 2006 Renaissance for Interpretation and Education is tied to the NPS Centennial Program. The Action Plan features five pillars. Each of these will be acted upon within the Devils Postpile Interpretation program to the degree possible with available staffing and funding.

Engage All Americans

- Work in partnership with others to tell inclusive stories relevant to all members of society.
- Increase skills and abilities of parks to reach underserved or new audiences.
- Engage in ongoing dialog with the public demonstrating openness, sensitivity, and honesty.

Use Appropriate New Technologies

- Establish a Technology Innovation Fund for park pilot projects.
- Enhance and expand Web Rangers, the on-line Junior Ranger program.

Embrace Partners

- Leverage our skills and standards through others.
- Enhance our skills and abilities in leadership, coaching, training, facilitation, and partnership.
- Practice true collaboration.

Professional Standards

- Develop core operating standards and measures for delivering quality interpretation and education programs.
- Develop core function statements for a healthy and effective interpretation operation.
- Multi-year OFS Program to restore and sustain seasonal and permanent positions for interpretation and education.

Integrate Evaluation

- Achieve greater accountability and confirmation of success.
- Conduct an Evaluation Summit.
- Conduct pilot evaluation projects.
- Use evaluation to learn what underserved and new park audiences expect and desire.

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Devils Postpile National Monument

PO Box 3999
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

(760) 934-2289

www.nps.gov/depo