

National Park Service
2013 Environmental Achievement Awards

Award Winner

Delaware North Parks & Resorts, Concessioner
Yosemite National Park
Fryer Truck and Waste Vegetable Oil Fuel Station

Two years ago, Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts (DNC), concessioner at Yosemite National Park, initiated a project to look into using relatively clean burning waste vegetable oil (WVO)—taken directly from their restaurant fryers—to power a diesel truck. Research was conducted to determine the pros and cons of running diesel engines on WVO and to assess the availability and reliability of kits to convert diesel engines to use this biofuel.

After the viability of the project was confirmed, DNC purchased a Ford F350 diesel truck and a WVO conversion kit from a California company specializing in WVO technology. The truck was converted by DNC's mechanics in winter of 2012. During this period, a WVO dispensing station—the first of its kind in the park—was set up at DNC's Garage. Two WVO collection points were established at DNC restaurants: Curry Village Grill and Yosemite Lodge Food Court.

To promote the use of WVO and educate DNC staff, DNC invited employees to participate in a contest to name the WVO truck and create a logo. The winning name, "Fryer Truck," and a specially designed logo were applied to the truck.

In 2012, 300 gallons of WVO were diverted to power Fryer Truck, helping to offset the total 8,000 gallons of WVO generated. DNC's Recycling Department now uses the truck to collect recyclable materials at DNC operations throughout the park. In addition, WVO is provided to NPS Roads and Trails Branch staff and others who operate vehicles powered by biodiesel. The process of using a locally derived waste product makes this fuel as close to carbon neutral as possible.

DNC's efforts to provide a locally-derived alternative fuel to power their fleet should be considered a model for other concessioners with operations that generate significant amounts of WVO.

DNC's commitment to waste reduction and environmental protection has led to significant environmental benefits to Yosemite National Park and the surrounding communities.