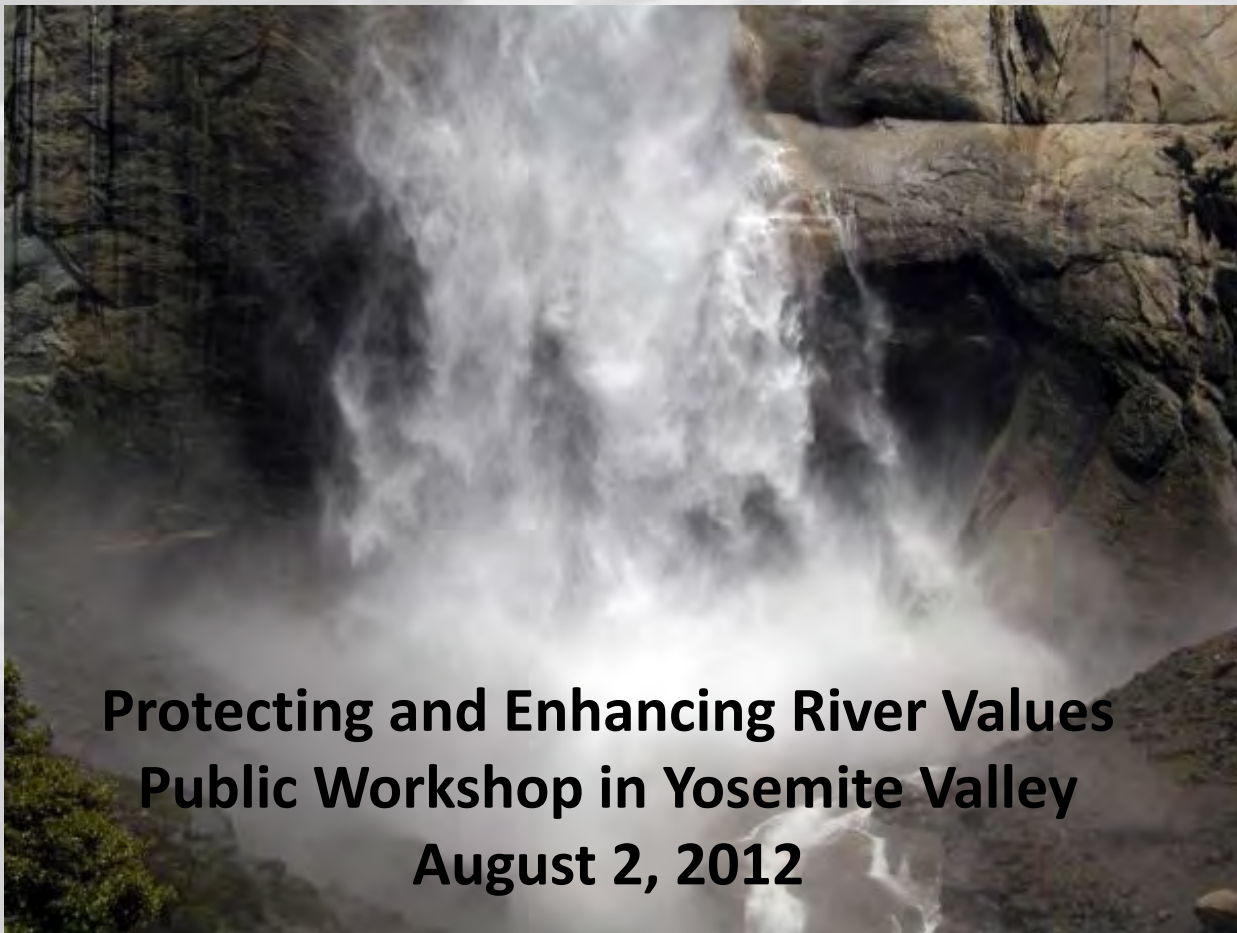




MERCED RIVER

Comprehensive River Management Plan

...Providing Access and Protecting Resources



**Protecting and Enhancing River Values
Public Workshop in Yosemite Valley
August 2, 2012**



Workshop Overview

1. Settlement Agreement and Purpose of Meeting
2. Review Planning Foundational Elements
3. Share Results from River Use Study
4. Discuss Components of the Facilities and Services Analysis
5. Review Background for Addressing User Capacity
6. Show Steps for Determining User Capacity by Alternative
7. Discussion and Dialogue

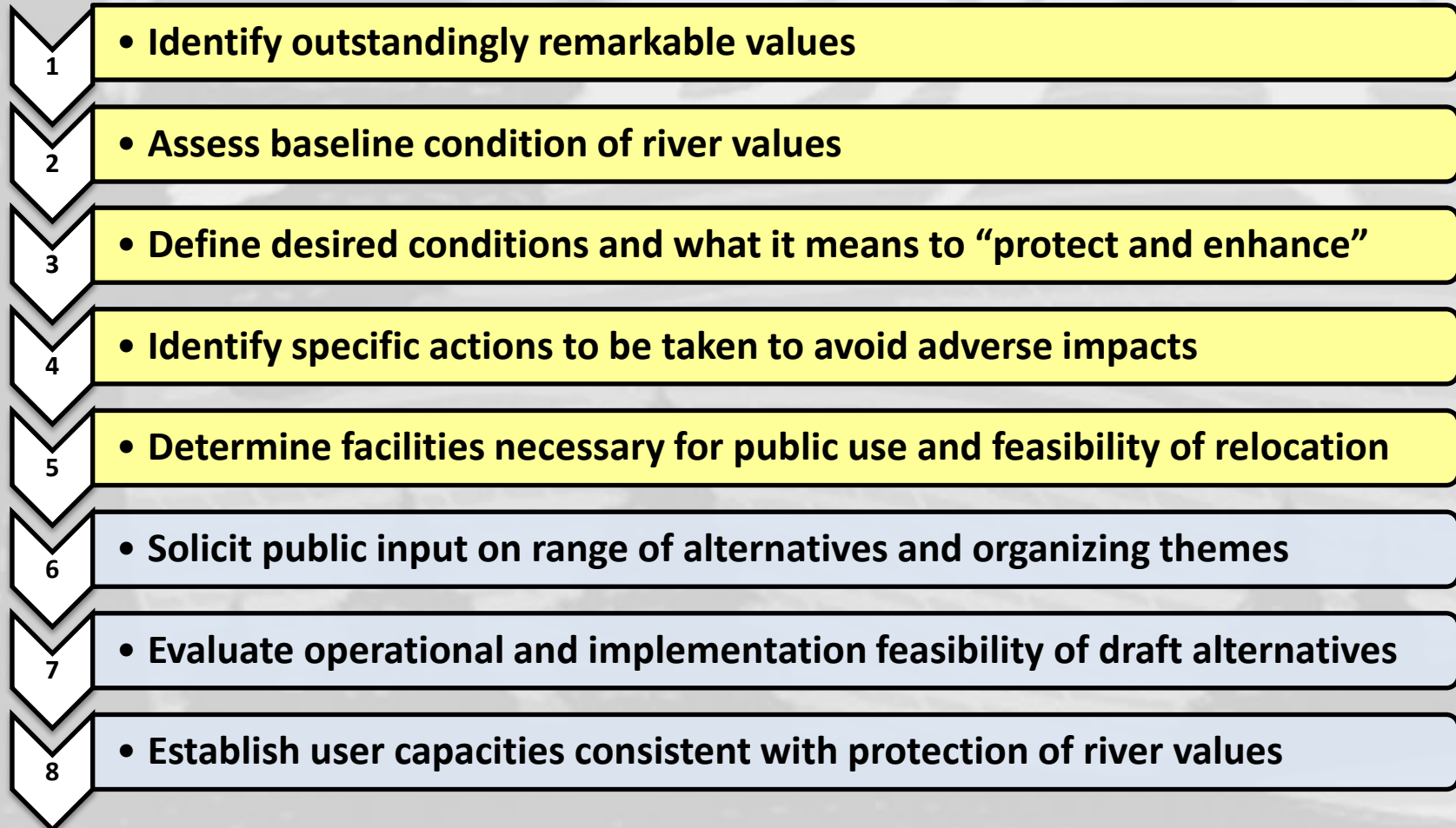


Planning Goals

- ***Determine Programmatic and Site-Specific Actions Needed to Protect & Enhance River Values***
- ***Determine Facilities Necessary for Public Use/Protection of River Values***
- ***Address User Capacity and Management Requirements to Accommodate Different Levels of Visitor Use***
- ***NEPA / NHPA for amending*** the 1992 Concessions Services Plan for the 2014 Primary Concessions Contract Prospectus.
- ***NEPA / NHPA for amending*** the 1980 General Management Plan for Yosemite National Park



Planning Framework





Protecting River Values

“Each component...shall be administered in such manner as to **protect and enhance** the values which caused it to be included in said system.” (WSRA, Sec. 10)

“Each component will be managed to protect and enhance the values for which the river was designated, while providing for public recreation and resource uses which **do not adversely impact or degrade** those values.” (WSRA Guidelines, 1982)



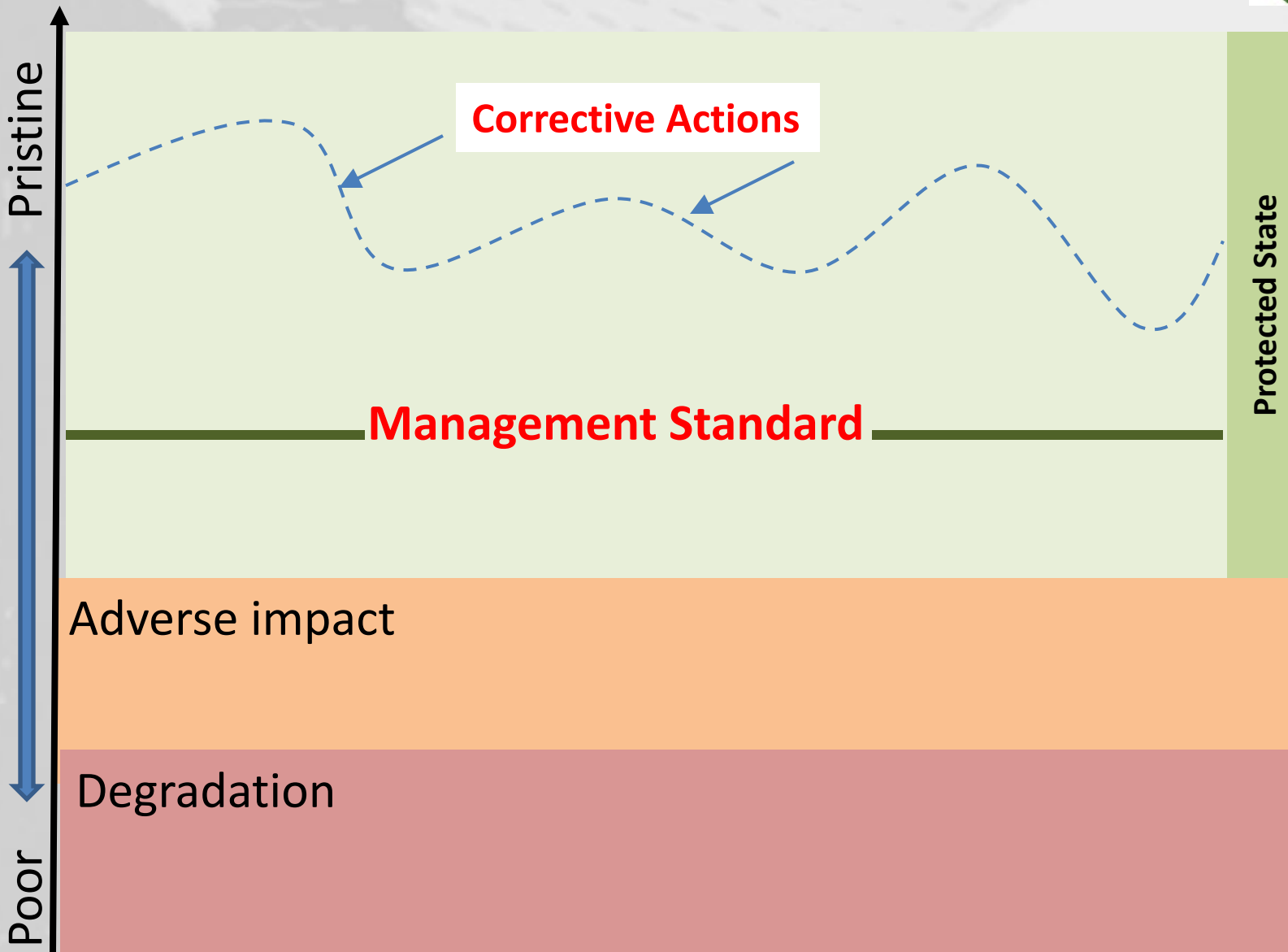
Definitions

Adverse Impact: A significant reduction in the quality of a river value in relation to baseline conditions as a result of public use or development. Adverse impact is determined at a segment-wide scale and requires immediate attention by the agency.

Degradation: The state in which a river value has been fundamentally altered by public use or development to point that its value is lost for at least 10 years. Defined at a segment-wide scale.



Resource Condition



Pristine

Corrective Actions

Management Standard

Protected State

Adverse impact


Degradation

Poor



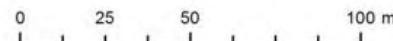
Stoneman Meadow 1978 vs. 2011

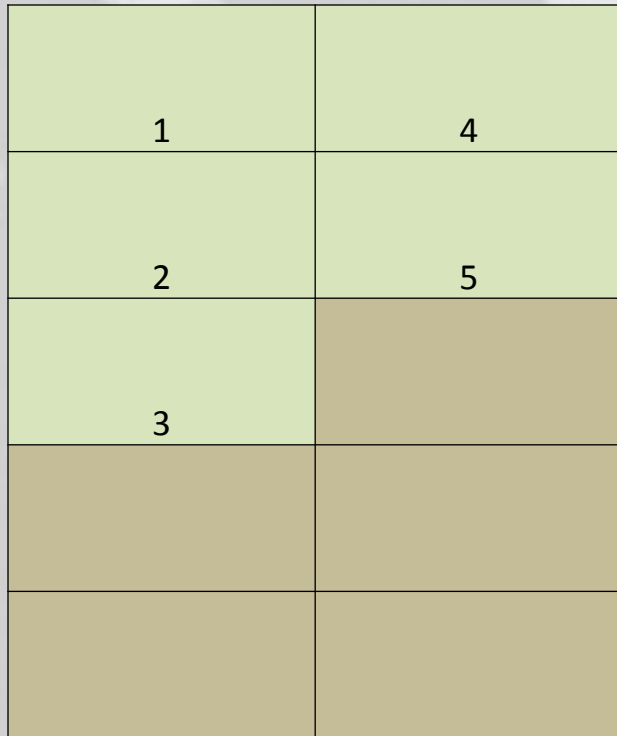
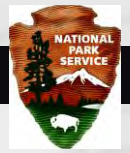


| Informal Trails | LPI-5 | Total length of trails |
|--|-------|------------------------|
|  1978 | 40.40 | 3170 meters |
|  2011 | 99.12 | 327 meters |

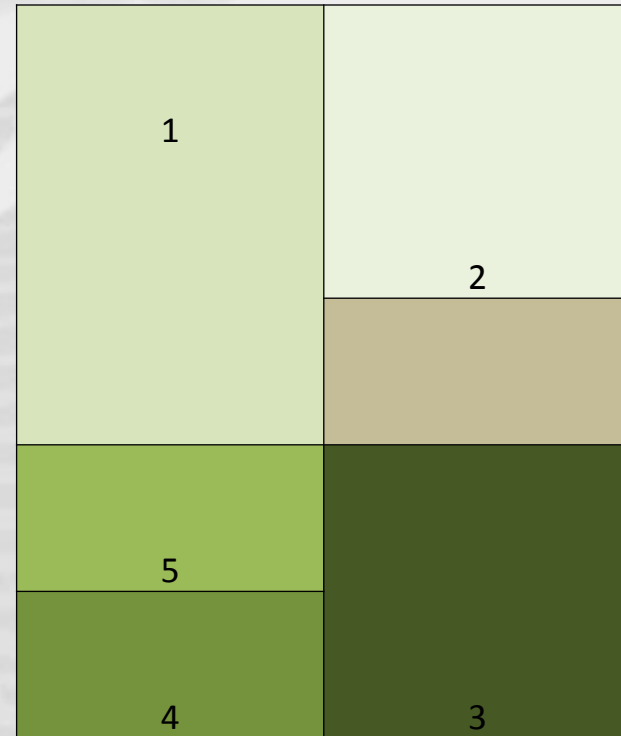
 Current Boardwalk

1978 values calculated based on the presence of trails in this aerial image and giving all trails a width of 12" (the most common trail width currently observed in Yosemite Valley meadows).





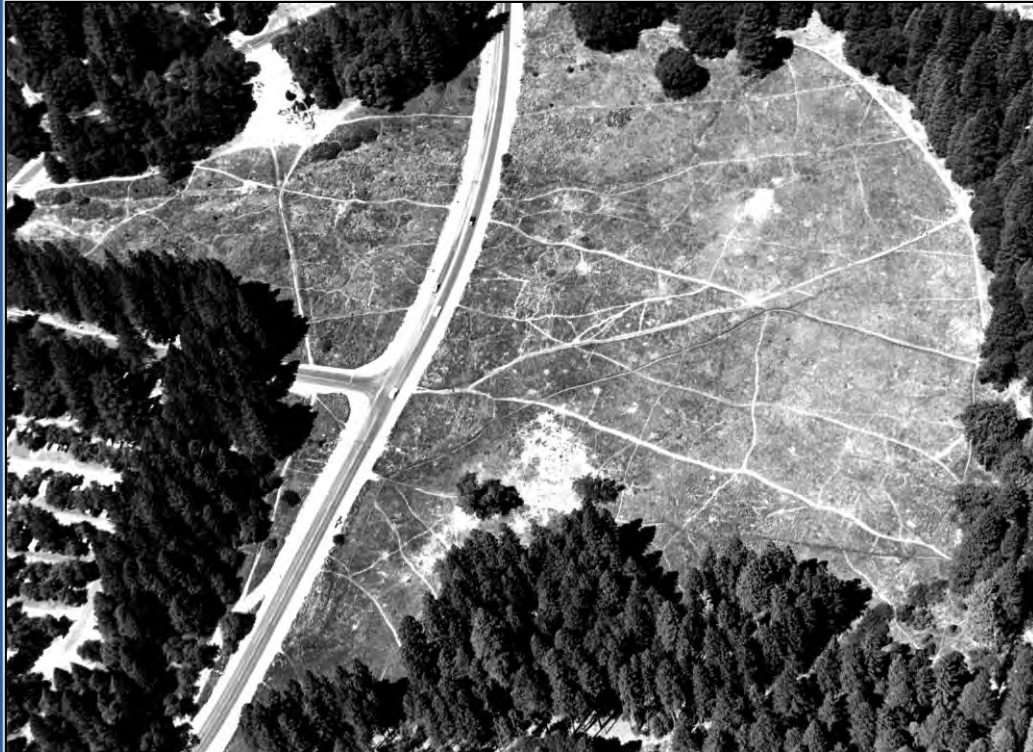
Meadow A
LPI-5 = 50%



Meadow B
LPI-5 = 90%



EXAMPLE: FRAGMENTATION OF
MEADOW HABITAT DUE TO
PROLIFERATION OF INFORMAL TRAILS



1978: Stoneman Meadow informal trails

Management Standard is 93%

weighted mean LPI for
entire segment + no
meadow < 90%

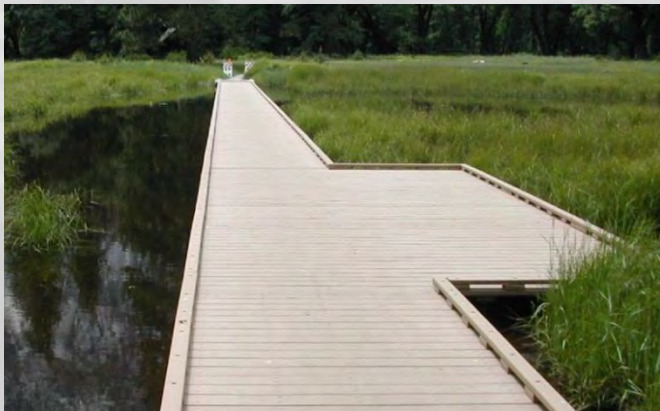
Adverse impact is <81%

weighted mean LPI for
entire segment for 3 years

Degradation is 40% weighted
mean LPI for entire segment



EXAMPLE: FRAGMENTATION OF MEADOW HABITAT DUE TO PROLIFERATION OF INFORMAL TRAILS



Cook's Meadow: Boardwalk added in 2005.

1st trigger point < 95% LPI-5 for an individual meadow

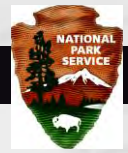
Management Actions: increase monitoring, BMPs and signage

Current Condition = 4 meadows in Yosemite Valley: Slaughterhouse Meadow, Leidig Meadow, El Capitan Meadow, and Cook's Meadow

2nd trigger point < or = 95% LPI-5 for an individual meadow for 3 consecutive years

Management actions = include fencing, boardwalks, fill, de-compaction, trail re-route

Current condition = 2 meadows in Yosemite Valley (El Capitan and Cook's meadows)



Restoration of a “Degraded” State



Stoneman Meadow in 2008 after restoration and boardwalk installation.



Enhancement with Site-Specific Actions

- *Remove riverbank revetment*
- *Remove abandoned infrastructure*
- *Construct log jams on riverbanks*
- *Construct boardwalks & formalize trails*
- *Remove conifers from meadows / black oak communities*
- *Pull development back from river*
- *Guide visitor use to sandbars vs river banks*
- *Remove informal trails, non-essential roads, and infrastructure that impact archeological sites*
- *Selectively thin trees at viewpoints*
- *Prohibit grazing at Merced Lake East Meadow*
- *Construct box culverts for water flows*
- *Restore riparian ecosystems*
- *Restore traditionally-used plant populations*
- *Relocate Residence 1*
- *Restore Greenemeyer Sandpit*
- *Formalize parking along roadways*
- *Require minimum flows on the South Fork*
- *Connect Wawona Campground to wastewater collection system*
- *Relocate dump stations away from river*
- *Remove campsites from areas with known cultural resources*