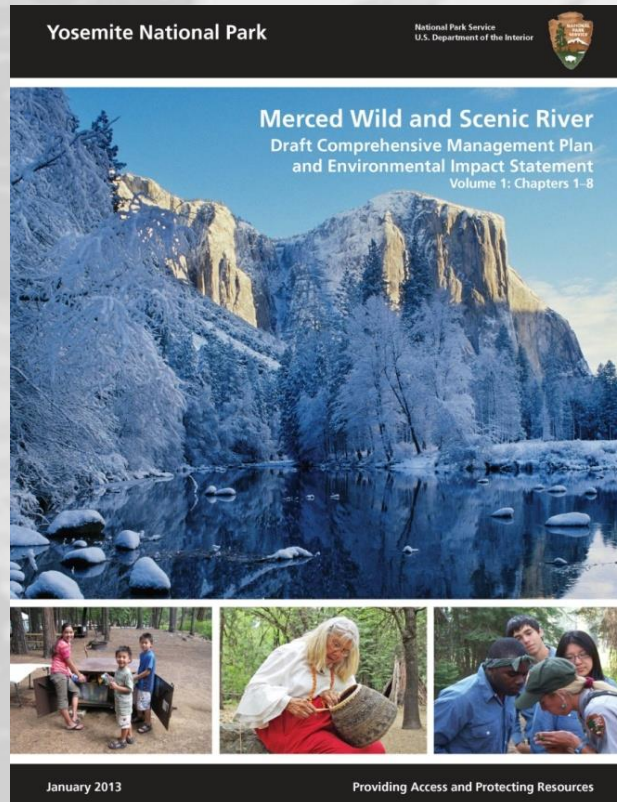




# MERCED WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

## Draft Comprehensive River Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement



**Oakhurst Public Meeting  
March 14, 2013**



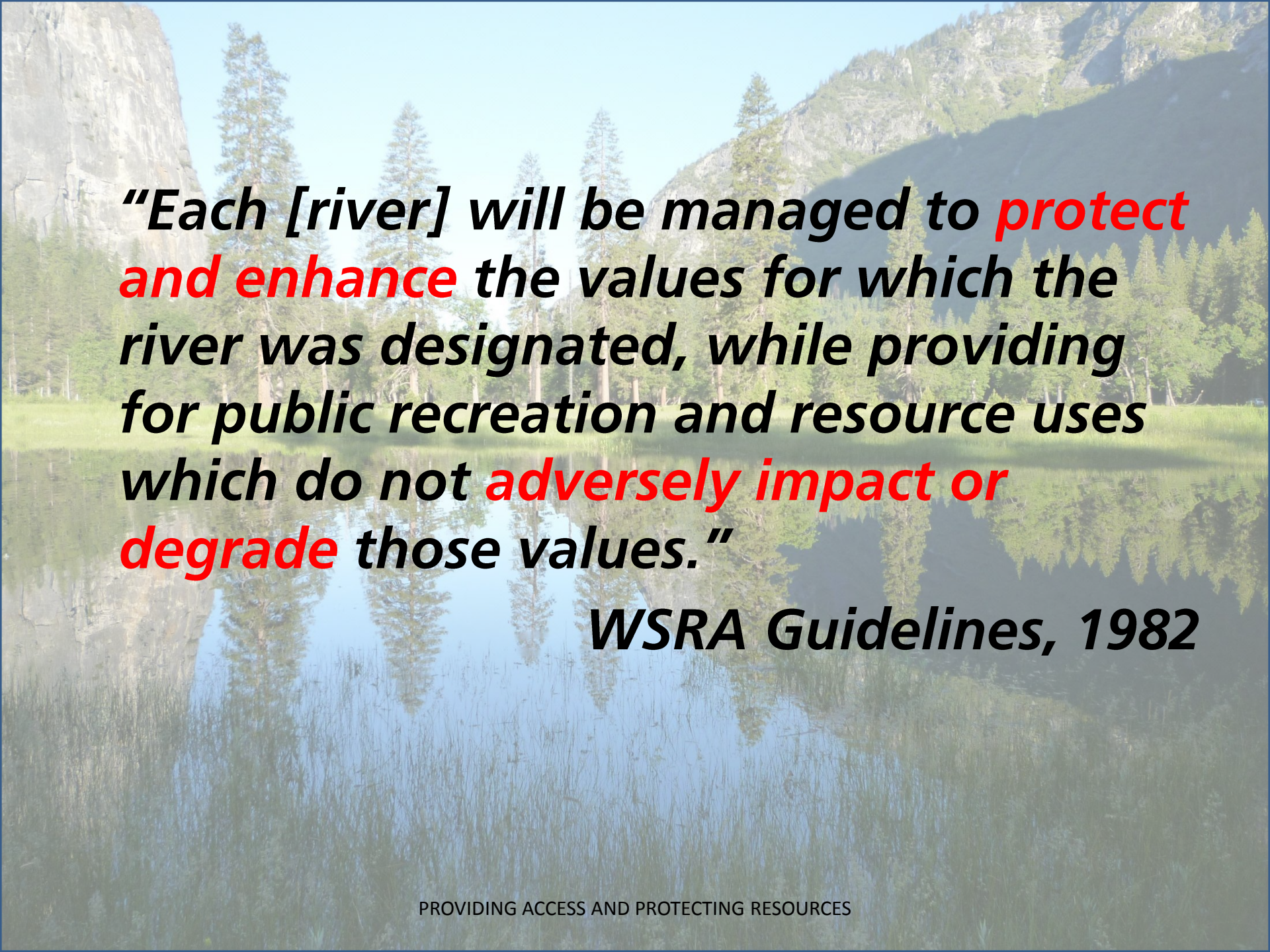
**Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River**

**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**

**Merced Wild and Scenic River**





A scenic landscape featuring a calm river in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. The background consists of steep, rocky mountains with patches of green vegetation and several tall, slender evergreen trees. The sky is clear and blue. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

*“Each [river] 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***





# Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values







**Sugar Pine Bridge**



**Stoneman Bridge at high water**



**Flooded informal trail in El Capitan Meadow**

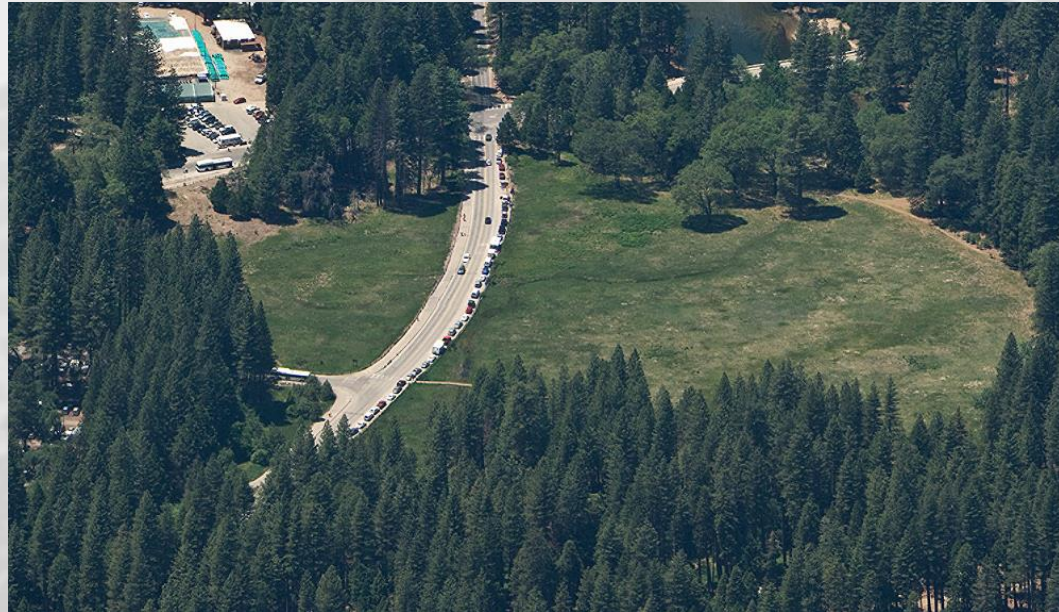




# Removing Informal Trails

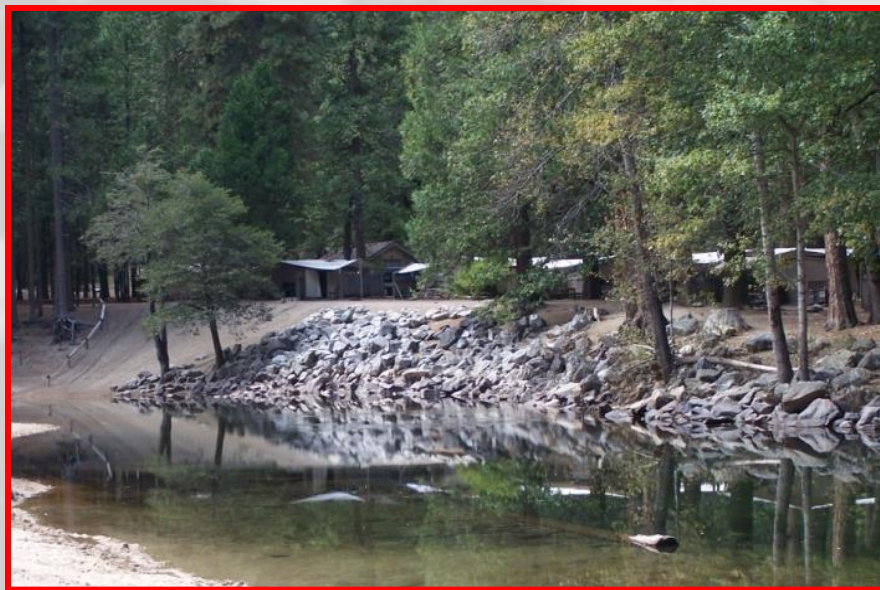


**Stoneman Meadow in 1987 before restoration, showing informal trail network**



**Stoneman Meadow in 2008 after restoration and boardwalk installation**





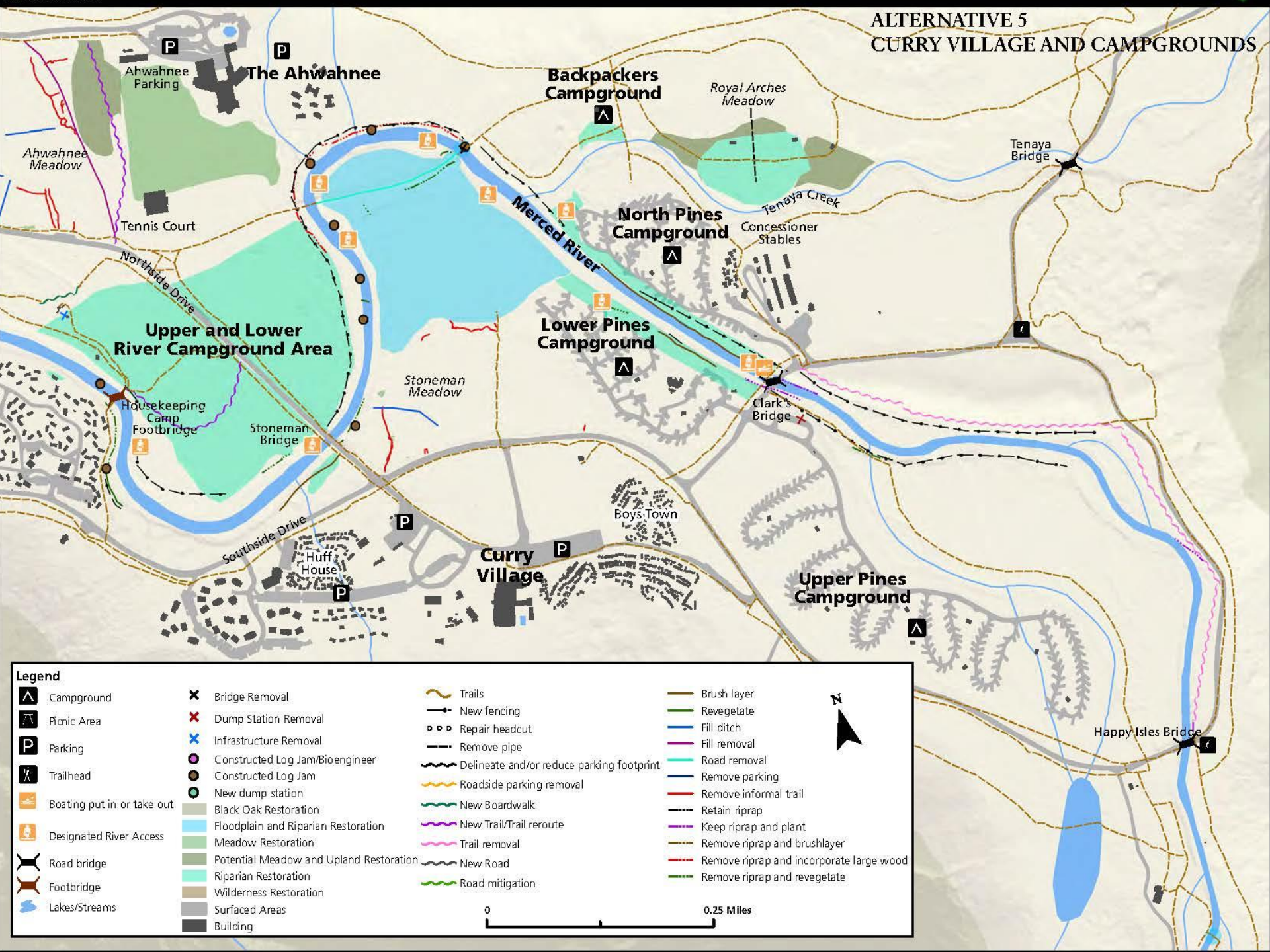
**Devil's Elbow, pre-restoration, 1993**



**Devil's Elbow, post-restoration, 1995**



# ALTERNATIVE 5 CURRY VILLAGE AND CAMPGROUNDS



**Legend**


0 0.25 Miles





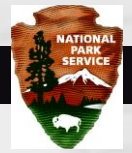


# Draft Preferred Alternative

- Ensures that the experiences enjoyed by generations of families are sustained over time.
- Provides visitors the choice of accessing Yosemite Valley by private vehicle or transit.
- Reduces traffic congestion and crowding with organized and efficient day-use parking.
- Creates a “sense of arrival” with redesign of the primary day-use parking area and removal of industrial and administrative functions.
- Improves circulation, reduces congestion and provides for a more relaxed visitor experience.







# Providing Access



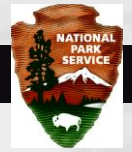




# Yosemite Village Day-Use Parking Area (Camp 6)







# Yosemite Village Day-Use Parking Area



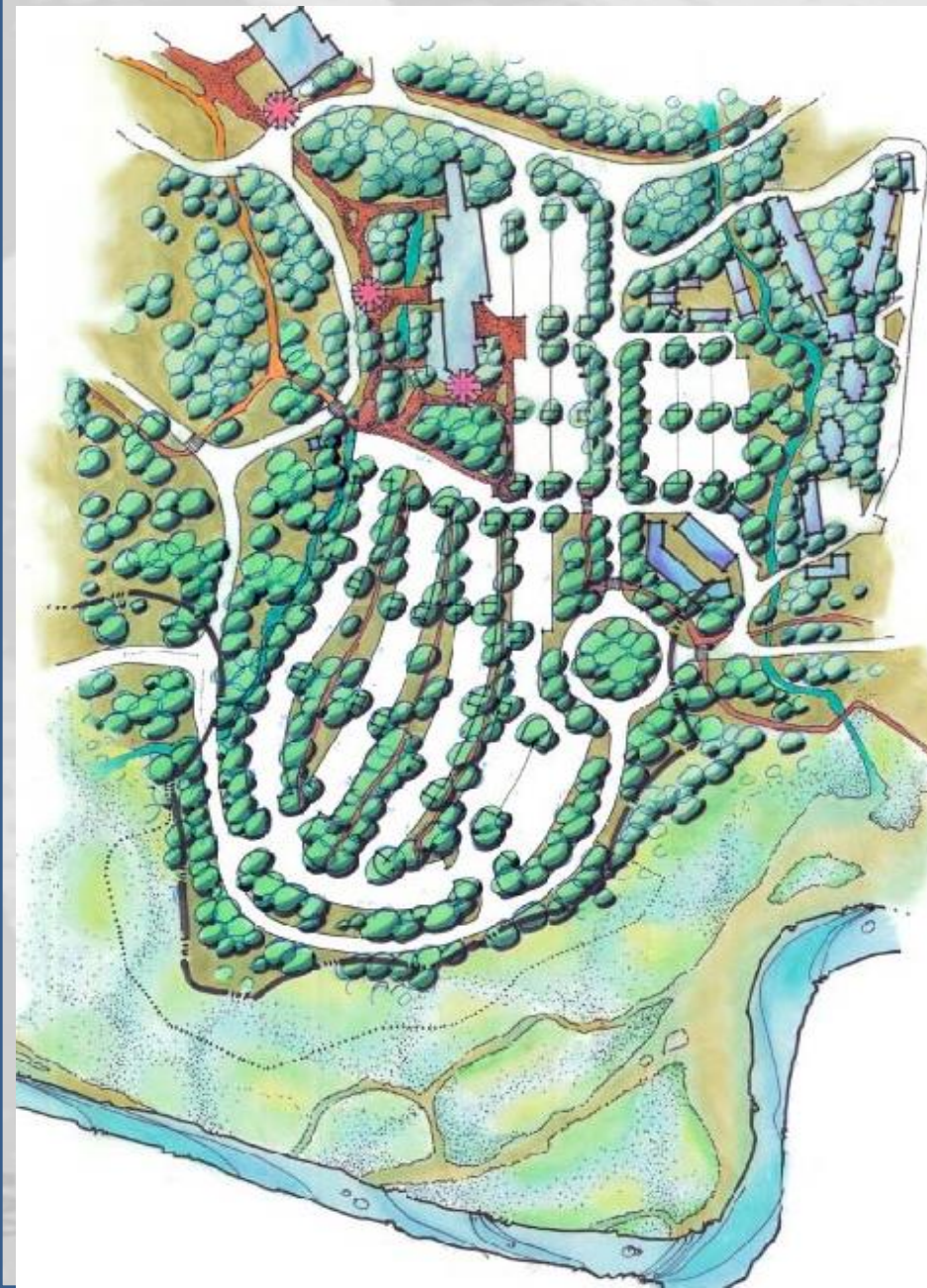
Parking Pulled Back from River





# Yosemite Village Day-Use Parking Area

## Draft Preferred Alternative







# NPS Valley Maintenance

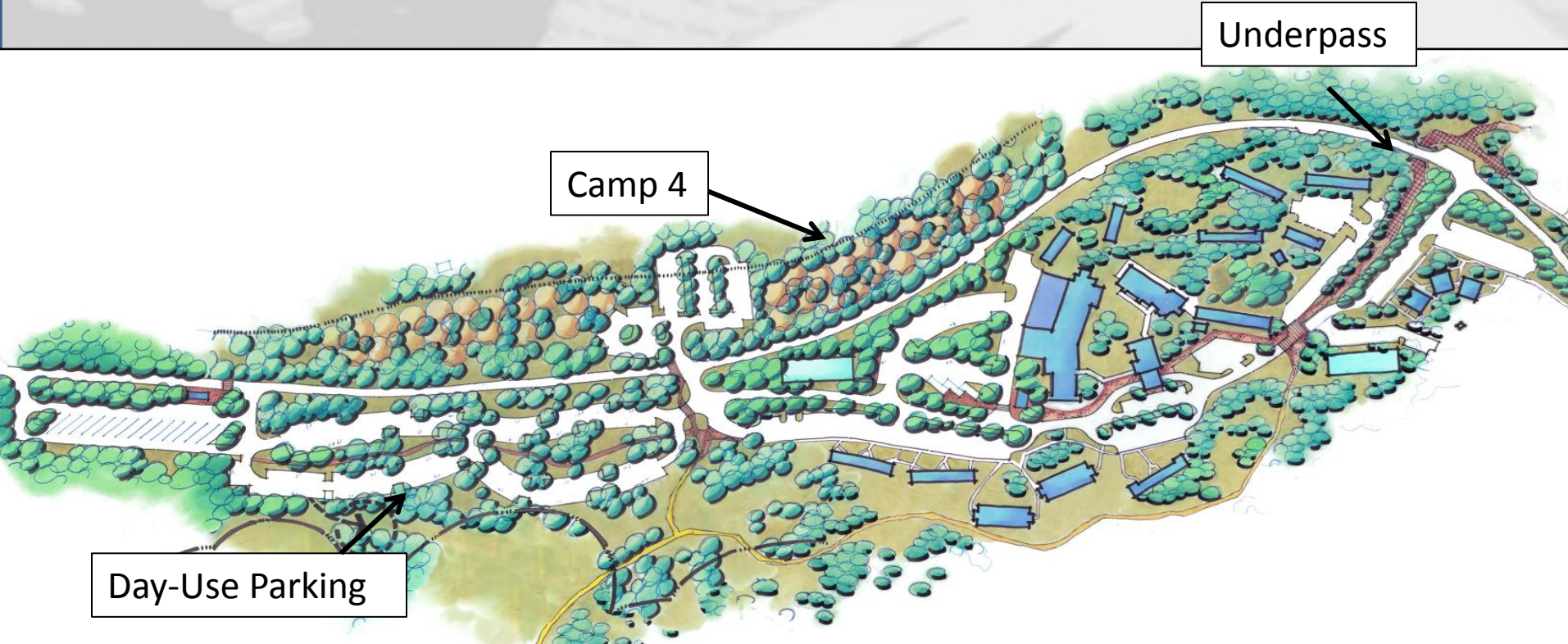


## Draft Preferred Alternative





# Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4



## Draft Preferred Alternative



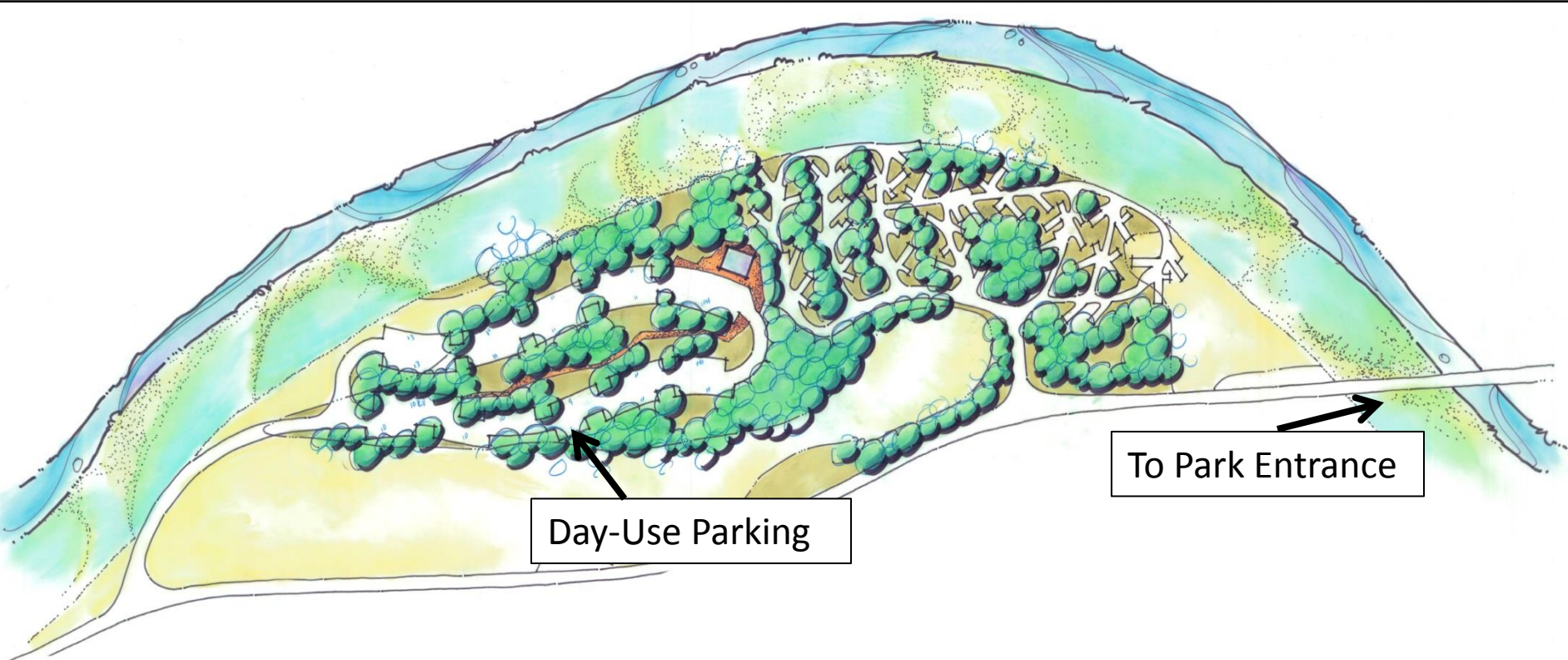


PROVIDING ACCESS AND PROTECTING RESOURCES





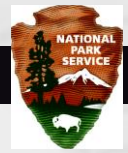
# El Portal - Abbieville



## Draft Preferred Alternative

PROVIDING ACCESS AND PROTECTING RESOURCES





# West Valley Staging



## Draft Preferred Alternative

PROVIDING ACCESS AND PROTECTING RESOURCES





# Camping Units

	Alt 1	Alt 5	Details
<b>Yosemite Valley</b> (No Action)			
Backpackers	25	10+16	16 walk-in sites outside of the 100 year floodplain
Camp 4	35	35 + 35	No change to this National Historic Register site, 35 walk-in sites constructed east of Camp 4
Lower Pines	76	71	5 sites within 100 feet of the river removed
North Pines	86	72	14 sites within 100 feet of the river removed
Upper Pines	240	238 + 87	36-site RV, 49 walk-in, 2 group sites
Yellow Pine Admin Site	4	4	Group administrative sites
Former Upper River	0	30	30 walk-in sites
Eagle Creek	0	42	40 auto sites and 2 group sites
<b>Wawona</b>			
Wawona Campground	99	86	Sites removed within 100 feet of river or culturally sensitive areas
<b>Total Camping in Corridor</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>726</b>	





# Lodging Units

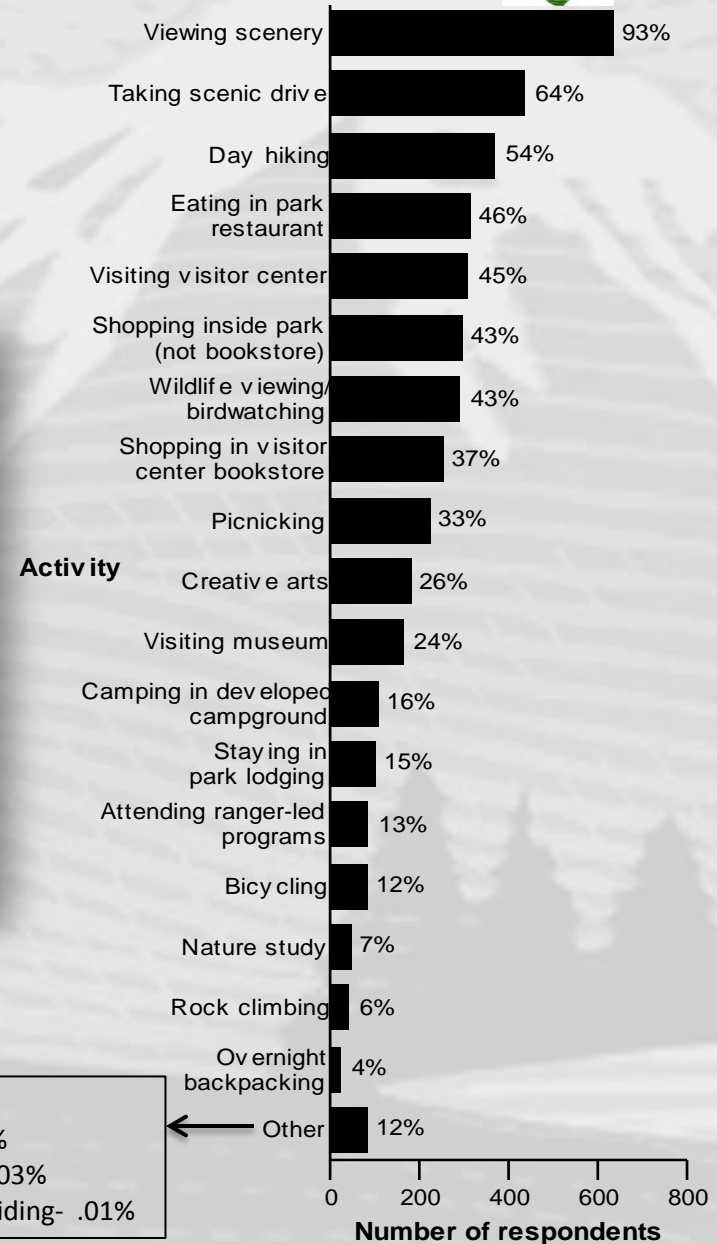
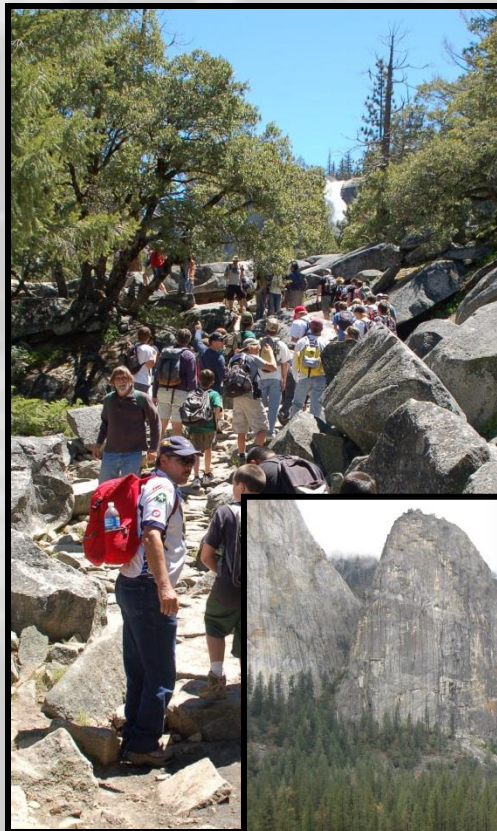
	Alt 1	Alt 5	Details
(No Action)			
Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	22 (60 beds)	11 (42 beds)	Remove 18 beds
The Ahwahnee	123		No change to National Historic Landmark
Housekeeping Camp	266	232	Remove 34 units from bed and banks
Curry Village	400	453	290 tents and 163 hard-sided units
Yosemite Lodge	245	245	No changes
Total Valley Lodging	1,034	1,053	
Wawona Hotel	104		No Change to this National Historic Landmark
Total Lodging in Corridor	1,160	1,168	

\* El Portal: Private accommodations exist but are not on NPS land; therefore, they are not listed here.





# Visitor Activities: Summer Use



Including:  
Rafting- .03%  
Swimming- .03%  
Horseback Riding- .01%

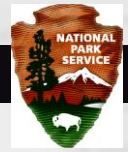




# Visitor Activities: Winter Use







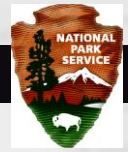
# Merced River Plan Facilities Analysis

5 “To illustrate the level of degradation already experienced in the Merced and maintained under the regime of interim limits proposed by NPS, we need look no further than the dozens of facilities and services operating within the river corridor, including but not limited to, the many ...

-- (*Friends of Yosemite v. Kempthorne*, 9<sup>th</sup> Circ., 2008)

... swimming pools, tennis courts, mountain sports shops, restaurants, cafeterias, bars, snack stands, and other food and beverage services, gift shops, general merchandise stores, an ice-skating rink, an amphitheater, a specialty gift shop, a camp store, an art activity center, rental facilities for bicycles and rafts, skis and other equipment, a golf course and a dining hall accommodating 70 people.”



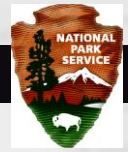


# Merced River Plan Facilities Analysis

## Proposed for Removal:

- Curry Village and Yosemite Lodge temporary employee housing
- The Ahwahnee Swimming Pool and Tennis Court
- Yosemite Village Concessioner Garage and Concessioner General Office
- Yosemite Lodge Swimming Pool, Snack Stand, Bike Stand, and Post Office
- Yosemite Art Activity Center
- Happy Isles Snack Stand
- Curry Village Ice Rink, Bike Stand, and Raft Stand
- Commercial Horseback Day Rides in Yosemite Valley
- Odgers Bulk Petroleum Storage in El Portal
- Old Wastewater Treatment Plant in El Portal



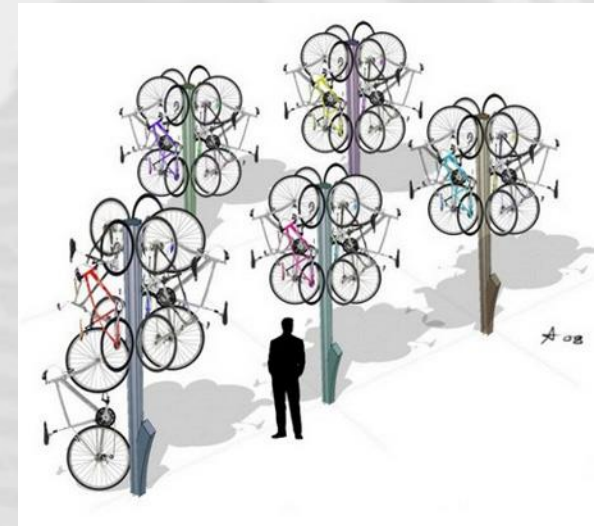


# Merced River Plan Facilities Analysis

## Opportunities for bike rental relocation within and outside river corridor



- Consider "safe" spots outside the river corridor
- Reduce scale and function to accessory uses outside other facilities (lodging, retail outlets, food service, commercial stables)
- Use self-service kiosks activated by charge cards or cell phone payment
- Concessioner maintains bicycles with a mobile service vehicle





# Merced River Plan Facilities Analysis

## Opportunities to keep ice skating as a seasonal recreation activity



- Replace the existing facility elsewhere with a seasonal installation
- Consider Winter use of a temporary rink over existing parking facilities or paved areas
- Consider temporary rink as an overlapping Winter use of Curry Village swimming pool
- Concessioner is responsible for annual installation and operation







# Replace Substandard Housing



**Replace temporary, substandard housing with code compliant residences**



# User Capacity/Visitation

## East Yosemite Valley Peak-Day:

**Current free-flow visitation:** **14,800 people**

2011 Facility Capacity 14,836 PAOT

+ "capacity of extra cars on road" 3,480 PAOT

= Total 2011 Capacity 18,316 PAOT

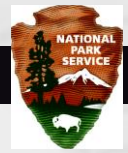
**2011 Observed Visitation** **20,900 people**

Alternative 5 Planned User Capacity: 16,683 PAOT

**Alternative 5 managed peak-day visitation:** **19,900 people**

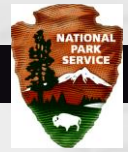
**Range of Alternatives – Peak-Day Visitation** **13,200 – 21,800 people**





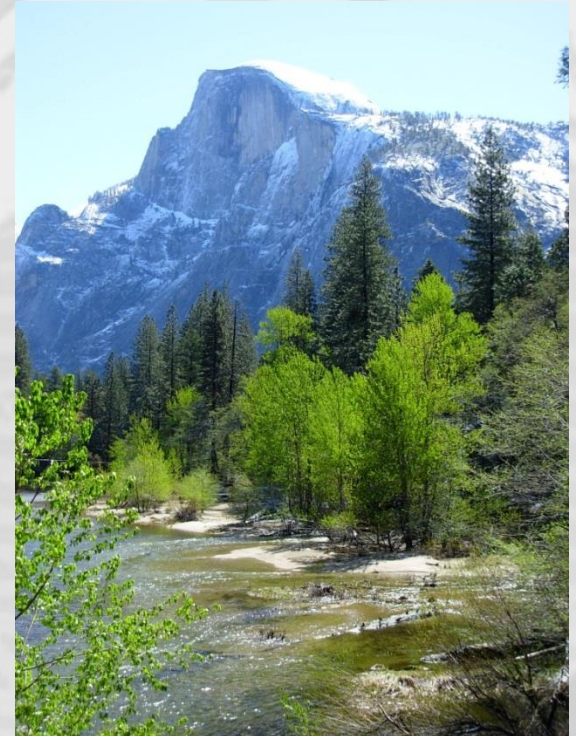
# Merced River Plan's Range of Alternatives

Actions	No Action	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6
Acres Restored	0	347	302	223	203	170
<b>Peak East Valley Visitation</b>	<b>20,900</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>13,200</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>19,900</b>	<b>21,800</b>
Day Visitors	14,800	9,400	8,500	10,500	12,800	13,700
Overnight Visitors	6,100	4,500	4,700	6,500	7,100	8,100
<b>Yosemite Valley Lodging Units</b>	1,034	556	621	823	<b>1,053</b>	1,248
<b>Yosemite Valley Campsites</b>	466	450	477	701	<b>640</b>	739
Parking Spaces for East Valley	5,200	4,000	4,300	4,905	5,600	6,099
<b>Total Project Cost (\$M)</b>		<b>\$263</b>	<b>\$187</b>	<b>\$223</b>	<b>\$235</b>	<b>\$418</b>

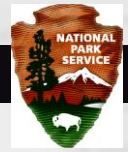


# Merced River Draft Plan

- **Public Meetings**
  - Feb. 27: Yosemite Valley
  - March 6: El Portal
  - March 7: Mariposa
  - March 14: Oakhurst
  - March 15: Wawona
  - March 20: Groveland
  - March 21: San Francisco
  - March 26: Los Angeles
- **Comment Analysis** – April and May 2013
- **Final Plan/Record of Decision:** July 2013







# Merced Public Review & Comment Periods

## Merced River Plan

- 100-day review period
- Comment period closes April 18

## Comment

Online:

[http://parkplanning.nps.gov/mrp\\_deis](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/mrp_deis)

Mail:

National Park Service

Merced River Plan

P.O. Box 577

Yosemite, CA 95389

Email: [yose\\_planning@nps.gov](mailto:yose_planning@nps.gov)

Fax: 209 / 379-1294

