



Scenic Vista Management Program Work Plan 2014

Yosemite National Park is an icon of scenic grandeur. When set aside in 1864, Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove were the first natural areas in the United States protected for public benefit and appreciation of the scenic landscape. Over three-million visitors come to Yosemite National Park each year to see its natural wonders.

The scenic vista program documents, protects, and reestablishes Yosemite's important viewpoints and vistas, consistent with the natural processes and human influences that created them. The *Finding of No Significant Impact* for the *Scenic Vista Management Plan* environmental assessment was completed and signed in July of 2011 for sites outside of the Wild and Scenic River corridors. The *Tuolumne River Wild and Scenic River Plan, Appendix I*, describes actions for vista management consistent with preserving and enhancing the values of the river. Six of the seven sites proposed for 2014 are within the Tuolumne River corridor. The *Merced River Wild and Scenic River Plan* described actions for vista management within the Merced River corridor.

No more than 93 vista sites throughout the park will be initially managed, and an additional 21 sites monitored and maintained. Following the summary of work completed in 2013, is the work plan for 2014 with projected actions of seven sites for initial management outside of river corridors. This year's work will take place through a grant from the Yosemite Conservancy.

Highlights of 2013

This past fall, while Scenic Vista operations were scheduled to occur, the park forestry crews were occupied with Rim Fire containment, the following clean-up efforts, and removing burned tree that presented public hazards. Given this, the planned 2013 vista management actions were deferred until Rim Fire efforts were completed in Mid-November. At that time crews were able to do initial clearing on four of the eight sites, working until snow and colder temperatures returned. At that time all remaining vista work was postponed because tree work during colder temperatures increases the risk of mortality to hibernating animals.

Initial clearing at the Mirror Lake vista (originally planned for fall 2013) took place in March 2014 after park wildlife staff evaluated the site and determined that the risk to hibernating animals was minimal given the type of trees being removed, and the warmer temperatures in the Valley at that time. Work at the remaining three planned 2013 work sites (Cascade Bridge, Glacier Point Road, and Crane Flat Helibase) will be evaluated and implemented early in 2014 if crews are available and conditions are suitable, but it is likely the three remaining sites will be deferred until the fall of 2014. All of the 2013 actions taken were within limits established in the annual work plan and the FONSI. The work plans note trees over 6" dbh to be removed, but trees under 6" dbh can be removed if necessary as maintenance as per the Scenic Vista Plan EA and park policies.

Summary of 2013 Actions

Site	ID	Name	Planned trees removed over 6" dbh	Actual trees removed over 6" dbh	Actual trees removed under 6" dbh	Trees trimmed
1	15	Mirror Lake	20	18	1	0
2	82	Cascade View, Big Oak Flat Rd.	10	Not completed		
3	141	Crane Flat Tower	34	Not completed		
4	86	San Joaquin Overlook	32	32		
5	77	Glacier Point Rd, G1	46	Not completed		
6	134	Siesta Lake	30	30		
7	117	Mt. Hoffman turnout	19	19		
8	174	Mt. Conness View	46	46		

All of the 2013 tree removal actions went smoothly. Traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups were notified of actions, and park staff and the public were notified via announcement in the daily report, an eNewsletter, and temporary onsite vista clearing road signs. The park received no comments on the work plan or the work in progress.

2014 Work Plan

This work plan is provided to ensure the public is informed and the park's implementation process is transparent. Comments about specific actions in the work plans are welcome. Park staff will review comments submitted to the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website. Individual, site-specific work plans may be adjusted or postponed based on additional information. The final work plan will be posted before any work begins, in the event there are any changes between the draft and final work plans. The park estimates work will begin in September, 2014.

Management Actions Common to all Work Plans

The following proposed site-specific work plans are within all guidelines set out in the *Scenic Vista Management Plan* environmental assessment *Finding of No Significant Impact*. Areas for tree removals are kept to a minimum and are within all set limits. There are numerous mitigations and protections to ensure effects of tree removal are minimized or eliminated.

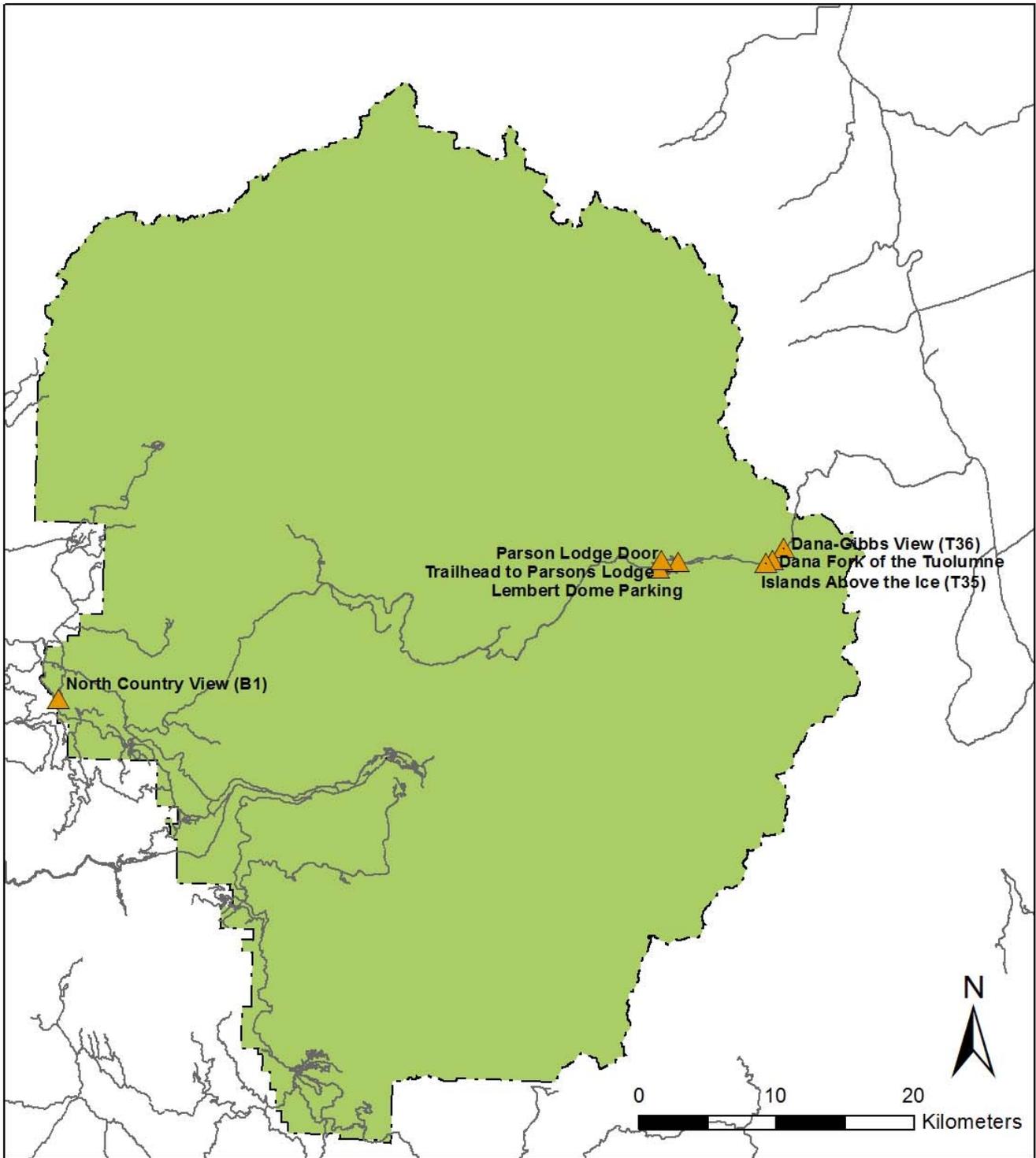
- Park subject matter specialists review the annual work plan to ensure any potential adverse impacts are avoided, and appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.
- Work is scheduled to minimize potential impacts on bird and bat species. In general, September through October would be the best estimated time for vista clearing to take place, subject to site-specific conditions.
- Features with obvious high value to wildlife, such as snags (particularly those with evidence of wildlife use), very large diameter trees, oak trees, large diameter logs, and decaying wood will be preserved in place where possible. In locations such as North Country View, where hundreds of dead trees exist, some larger dead trees will be left in place.
- Key habitat features for Pacific fisher will be retained where possible.
- Special-status plant species and wildlife habitat will be protected. No special status vegetation or wildlife species have been identified in areas proposed for 2014 work.
- Equipment will be inspected before clearing activities commenced to ensure that machinery is clean and free of weed seed and propagules.

- Within riparian corridors white alder trees (*Alnus rhombifolia*) will not be removed unless critical to restoring a vista of high or medium value. No removal of species in the willow family (*Salix*), including black cottonwood trees (*Populus balsamifera*) will occur. None of these species are proposed to be removed in 2014.
- Several vista sites in the 2014 Work Plan are near water bodies, but trees located immediately adjacent to or overhanging the water's edge will not be removed. No removal of in-stream, downed large wood will occur.
- Old growth trees and trees older than the establishment date of a vista will not be removed.
- Employee and visitor safety will be the highest priority during vista clearing operations. Tree felling operations will occur under the direction of the park forester, and will follow all park safety protocols.
- Biomass may be utilized or disposed of in any way that will not require additional compliance. This could be traditional cultural use, historic preservation projects, lop and scatter, onsite mulch, chip and haul, pile and burn, haul to woodlot, or contracted timber removal. Noise levels near residential or visitor use areas will be minimized.
- Work crews will avoid soil compaction when operating trucks or heavy equipment in wet or compactable soils by distributing machinery weight with military landing mats, snow, heavy plywood, or alternatives. Operators will move tracked equipment straight in and out of work sites and avoid turning while off pavement. Disturbed soils will be rehabilitated by restoring slope contour and using other best practices.
- Specific vegetation that is a critical component of a cultural landscape will not be removed.
- California black oaks will be removed only if critical to reestablish a high-value vista in the lower montane forests.
- No operations will take place in wilderness.
- Vehicles will contain equipment for the prevention and cleanup of spills. Any necessary temporary fuel storage and staging areas will be flagged, signed, and monitored. Work crews will use safe and environmentally friendly fuels, lubricants, hydraulic fluid, and other fluids.
- Stumps will be ground down, or flush cut, and buried with debris to hide the obvious cut appearance. Larger stumps may have habitat value, and some may be retained as long as the stump does not appear to be cut and is in keeping with the surrounding area.
- All work that generates noise levels above 76 decibels near residential or visitor use areas will be performed between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- Temporary road closures will generally not exceed one-half hour. Road closures will be scheduled in periods of low visitation when possible.

The seven sites proposed for initial actions this year are most of the remaining higher value sites outside of the Merced River corridor. Actions at these sites will reestablish scenic vistas and restore vegetation. Specific actions are described in more detail in each site's work plan. Information on these sites is compiled into a geographic information system database to track future management and maintenance needs. Work will also be coordinated with the Facilities Management Software System, and park staff will begin to document the need for future cyclic maintenance. All other high priority sites that had initial actions taken, and other high priority sites not obscured, will be monitored and their status and maintenance needs recorded for 2014.

Beginning in September of 2014, forestry crews will take initial management actions at the proposed sites. Final clean-up and vegetation restoration will take place using restoration crews. These crews will take actions such as decompacting soils, implementing erosion control measures and scattering native seed previously collected.

Beginning in 2014, actions within the Merced and Tuolumne Wild and Scenic river corridors can begin following signature of the Records of Decision for the two comprehensive management plans' environmental impact statements.



2014 Vista Management Work Plan YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

number	Name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
1	Dana-Gibbs View (T36)	101	high	10.5
location	The turnout on Tioga Road is 2.6 miles west of Tioga Pass entrance.		X: 300641	Y: 4195812

Vegetation Ecology

Subalpine Sierra Lodgepole Pine- (Whitebark Pine) / (Ross Sedge-Shorthair Sedge) Forest Superassociation

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal			
Tree Species	<6" DBH	20"-30" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	50	9	59
Trim		4	4

- Remove cut trees from site when prescribed woody material density is exceeded at the site.
- Flush cut stumps from newly cut trees when it has been determined that minimal impacts will occur to the surrounding vegetation from the use of stump grinding equipment.
- Chip woody debris and disperse as mulch on site at a rate of no more than 1 inch deep.
- Scatter all large woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.
- Do not cut trees overhanging water.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.



Figure 1. Dana Gibbs Viewpoint. NPS 2009.

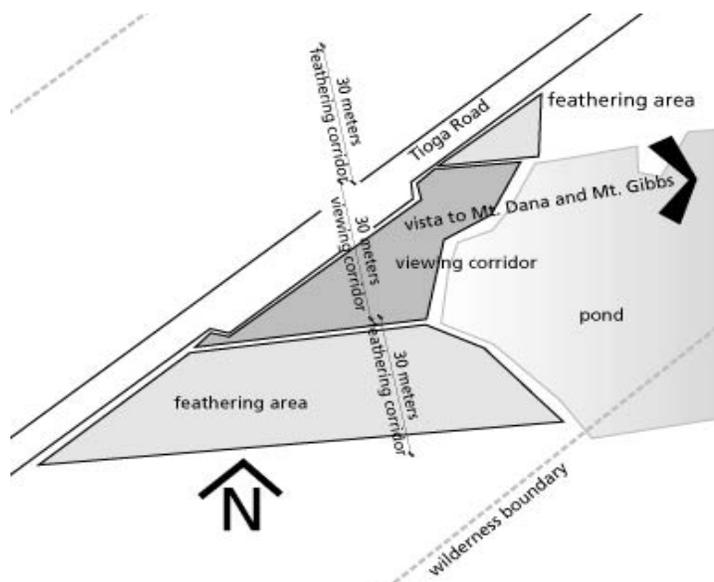


Figure 2. Dana-Gibbs View site diagram. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
2	Dana Fork of the Tuolumne	102	medium	9.5
location	The turnout on Tioga Road is 3.2 miles west of Tioga Pass entrance.		X: 299874	Y: 4194916

Vegetation Ecology

Subalpine Willow spp. /Meadow Shrubland and a Seasonally Flooded Meadow.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	<6" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	12	12

- No trees over 6" dbh are obscuring the view at this time.
- Some lodgepoles have grown into the road bank and should be removed.



Figure 3. Dana Fork of the Tuolumne. NPS 2009.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every 3 years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.

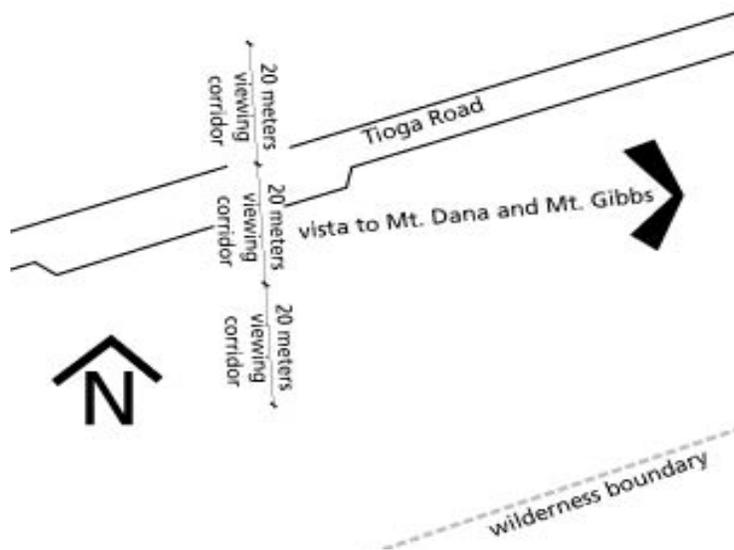


Figure 4. Dana Fork of the Tuolumne site diagram. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
3	Islands Above the Ice (T35)	103	high	11.0
location	The turnout on Tioga Road is 3.6 miles west of Tioga Pass entrance.		X: 299360 Y: 4194751	

Vegetation Ecology

Subalpine Sierra Lodgepole Pine/(Bog Blueberry) Forest

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal				
Tree Species	<6" DBH	<12" DBH	<20" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	380	83	10	473

- Remove cut trees from site when prescribed woody material density is exceeded at the site.
- Flush cut stumps from newly cut trees when it has been determined that minimal impacts will occur to the surrounding vegetation from the use of stump grinding equipment.
- Chip woody debris and disperse as mulch on site at a rate of no more than 1 inch deep.
- Scatter all large woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.



Figure 5. Islands Above the Ice Turnout. NPS 2009.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

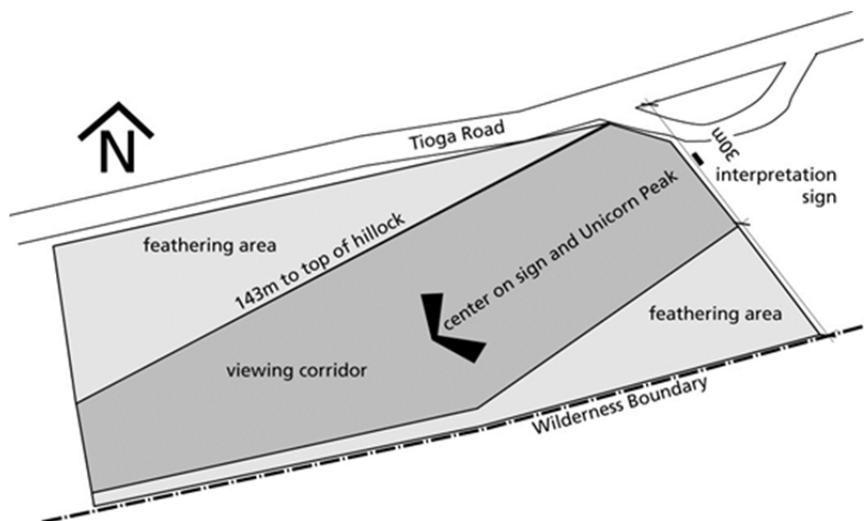


Figure 6. Islands above the Ice Turnout. Not to Scale.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
4	Lembert Dome Parking	106	medium	8.75
location	On the eastern edge of Tuolumne Meadow, just north of Tioga Road at the base of Lembert Dome.		X: 292985 Y: 4194816	

Vegetation Ecology

Subalpine Intermittently to Seasonally Flooded Meadow and roadbed

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal				
Tree Species	<6" DBH	<12" DBH	<20" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	31	49	25	105

- Remove cut trees from site when prescribed woody material density is exceeded at the site.
- Flush cut stumps from newly cut trees when it has been determined that minimal impacts will occur to the surrounding vegetation from the use of stump grinding equipment.
- Chip woody debris and disperse as mulch on site at a rate of no more than 1 inch deep.
- Scatter all large woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.
- Do not cut trees overhanging water.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.



Figure 7. View from Lembert Dome Parking. NPS 2009.

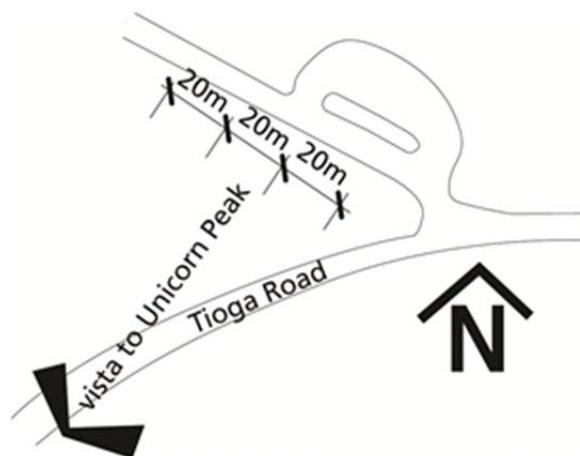


Figure 8. Lembert Dome Parking. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
5	Tuolumne Meadow trailhead	107	high	10.5
location	The turnout on Tioga Road is 2.6 miles west of Tioga Pass entrance.		X: 291557 Y: 4194317	

Vegetation Ecology

Intermittently to Seasonally Flooded Meadow and roadbed

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	<20" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	10	10

- Remove cut trees from site when prescribed woody material density is exceeded at the site.
- Flush cut stumps from newly cut trees when it has been determined that minimal impacts will occur to the surrounding vegetation from the use of stump grinding equipment.
- Chip woody debris and disperse as mulch on site at a rate of no more than 1 inch deep.
- Scatter all large woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.
- Do not cut trees overhanging water.



Figure 9. Tuolumne Meadows trailhead. NPS 2009.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.

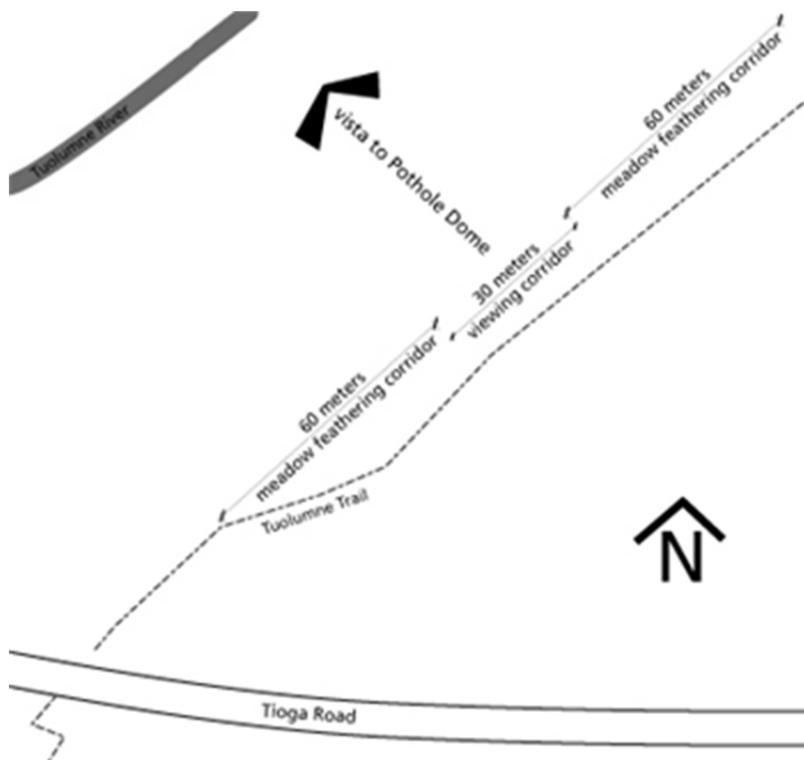


Figure 10. Tuolumne Meadows trailhead. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
6	Parsons Lodge	176	medium	7.5
location	Parsons Lodge is a National Historic Landmark on the north edge of Tuolumne Meadow		X: 291792 Y: 4194953	

Vegetation Ecology

Intermittently to Seasonally Flooded Meadow and roadbed

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal				
Tree Species	<6" DBH	<12" DBH	<20" DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	20	15	8	43

- Remove cut trees from site when prescribed woody material density is exceeded at the site.
- Flush cut stumps from newly cut trees when it has been determined that minimal impacts will occur to the surrounding vegetation from the use of stump grinding equipment.
- Chip woody debris and disperse as mulch on site at a rate of no more than 1 inch deep.
- Scatter all large woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.
- Do not cut trees overhanging water.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year. Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.



Figure 11. Parsons Lodge. NPS 2009.

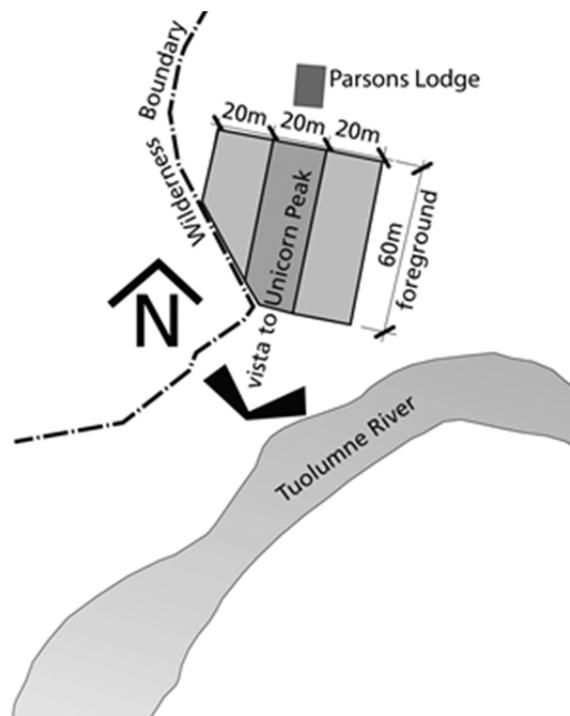


Figure 12. Parsons Lodge. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
7	Pothole Dome turnout	108	high	13
location	The turnout is on Tioga Road to the west of Tuolumne Meadow, immediately south of Pothole Dome.		X: 289735 Y: 4194686	

Vegetation Ecology

Intermittently to Seasonally Flooded Meadow and roadbed

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

- No tree are obscuring the vista at this time.

Restoration Actions

- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.



Figure 13. Pothole Dome turnout. NPS 2009.

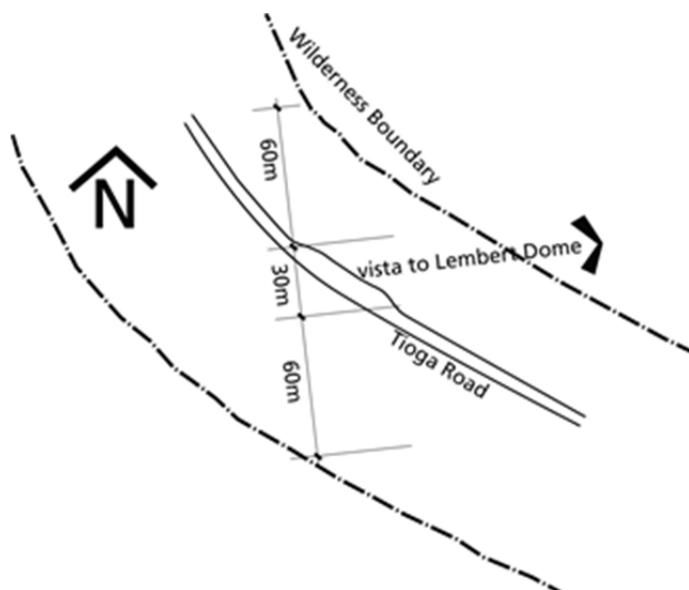


Figure 14. Pothole Dome turnout. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
8	North Country View	87	high	10.25
location	The turnout is on Big Oak Flat Road, approximately 1.5 miles from the Big Oak Flat entrance.		X: 248008 Y: 4184804	

Vegetation Ecology

Trees are in the road bank above intermittent meadow.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal			
Tree	<12" DBH	<24" DBH	Total
Conifer (dead or dying)	58	93	151
Deciduous (dead or dying)	29	11	40
Trim – 3 conifers, dead or dying, under 40"DBH, may have limbs removed			

- Trees removed at this site are dead or dying due to the 2013 Rim Fire.
- Trees removed at this site will be hauled out to reduce potential fuels.
- Some woody debris will be left on site to reduce visual impacts.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Reseed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every year.
- Maintenance may include felling trees <6" DBH.



Figure 15. North Country View. NPS 2009.

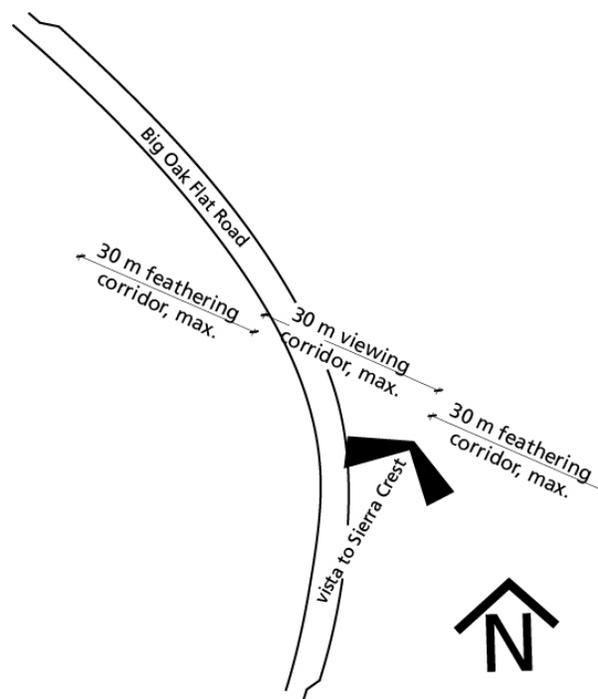


Figure 16. North Country View turnout site plan. Not to Scale.