L1 sc 9/24

"Kathy Broesamle"
[redacted]
09/09/2007 11:12 AM
MST

To: <Yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne plan

[redacted]

Yosemite Planning
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
Yose_planning@nps.gov

Dear Members of the Planning Staff:

This letter is written as a response to the *Tuolumne Planning Workbook* , July, 2007.

First, let us congratulate you on the comprehensiveness of the document, and of its Alternative Concepts. We shall respond to these concepts sequentially. As a frame of reference, we are including as an attachment our earlier statement in reply to your request for recommendations regarding Tuolumne Meadows. We hope you take both it and this newer, more focused response into account in tandem.

Concept 1. We question whether it is feasible to carry it out in view of the many constituencies Tuolumne has.

Concept 2. This option scarcely appeals to us at all. We do not like the reference to "high" levels of use or accommodating "concentrations of visitor use." People do not come to Tuolumne to re-experience Yosemite Valley. They come to get away from the hordes there in summer and to experience the park in a relatively pristine form.

Concept 2 makes the first reference to "hardened trails." This we regard as an abomination. During our 65 years in the park we cannot recall ever seeing a person in a wheelchair using a paved trail. We feel that bicycle use in the high country should be discouraged, not encouraged. And we are delighted to see

previously paved trails, such as that from Glacier Point to the top of Nevada Falls, or the road around Wawona Meadow, being allowed to deteriorate back into soil, as they should always have been. People do not visit Yosemite to see ribbons of asphalt. Only in such places as the base of Yosemite Falls or the trail to Vernal Falls does pavement make sense.

Concept 3. Turning practically the whole Tuolumne Meadows area into a historic district has a certain appeal. We surely like the proposal to provide for similarities in intergenerational experience: that kind of experience is what has brought our parents, ourselves, our children and grandchildren back year after year. We think the spirit of a historic district should serve as one guideline for Tuolumne, together with resource conservation and restoration. Concept 3 contains another disturbing reference to paved trails.

Concept 4. We appreciate this option's emphasis on ecosystem restoration, as well as the depreciated emphasis on hardened trails, day use facilities, and the like. It is hard to imagine how the store could be any more constricted than it presently is, however; but certainly the historically noisome snack bar could be eliminated. Any plan for Tuolumne Meadows should be "consistent with the priority on research and resource management activities," as Concept 4 specifies.

Based on the reasoning above, **we favor Concept 4**, feel that Concept 1 is unfeasible, dislike Concept 2, and view concept 3 more as a sentiment than as a plan.

One important observation: Each of the concept maps shows a little "High Country Base Camp" triangle in an area that looks very much like the road toward Gaylor Creek. A few inquiries have determined that there is a helicopter pad behind the locked gate. Just beyond the helicopter pad, it appears as if the area is being allowed to return, as much as possible considering past desecration, to its natural state. We hope that this is true. The area around the Lower Gaylor Lake trailhead has had unbelievable disturbances in the past 50 years: dirt mining, dumping, a surreptitious horse camp, and late-night employee parties, to name a few. It is now, finally, beginning to regain its peaceful and glorious atmosphere, which we hope will continue.

Another important observation: On page 20 of the Tuolumne Planning Handbook we see a column labeled "Soundscapes and Lightscapes." Remote Wilderness and Day-Use Wilderness designations prescribe natural soundscapes

which are intact. High-Country Experience, High-Country Base Camp, and Historic Tuolumne Designations refer to intermittent noise and light because of visitor and administrative activities, which is understandable .

What we don't understand, is the almost constant din of airplanes and helicopters overhead, in remote wilderness and elsewhere. For instance, in a 2-hour span of time on September 2, 2007, we recorded the sounds of 4 aircraft overhead while at Polly Dome Lakes.

On September 4, 2007, we were standing on the hillside above Helen Lake, which is about a 5 mile hike from the highway. At 10:10 in the morning, a pink and white helicopter swooped down toward the lake, close enough that we could see the passengers inside the helicopter, with all the attendant noise . It then banked to the left and headed in the direction of Mono Pass. This destroyed all sense of remote quietude we had previously experienced.

During the late 1950s, legendary ranger-naturalist Will Neely predicted during a Tuolumne campfire program, that someday it might be necessary to proclaim our National Parks "havens of quiet," due to the noise inevitably made by airplanes above pristine wilderness. At the time it seemed like only a remote possibility because there was, perhaps, one instance a day of overhead flight, and a helicopter was rare, indeed. But, we feel the time for aircraft noise restriction has arrived. Why are there so many airplanes and helicopters overhead? Has there been permission granted by the Bush Administration? Something needs to be done. We hope that the National Park Service will take action.

Katharine Broesamle
John Broesamle

[redacted]

Tuolumne plan.doc

L10 Sx 9/24

Ruth Fiala
[redacted]

To: Yose_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

09/09/2007 05:25 PM
MST

Concept 1: This concept allows for Tuolumne Meadows to retain the most wilderness character, and that is a very important concept to me. I have reservations about removing too much of the accommodations, because I think that it is important for people to be able to enjoy the area for more than just day use.

Concept 2: This concept allows too much development, such as hardened trails.

Concept 3: I think it is important to keep the character of Tuolumne Meadows by recognizing the importance of the historic buildings, and making any new architecture compatible with the old. However, I am opposed to more development, such as hardened trails.

Concept 4: Scientific research should be an important component of any national park and Tuolumne Meadows is no exception. I think it is very important to make the greatest possible use of green technologies in any new building.

I would like to see the area preserved as much as possible, while still allowing for people to enjoy the experience. There should still be opportunities for overnight stays. If the developed areas need to be changed to help protect the area (such as removing the A loop of the campground to preserve the river) the latest in green technology should be used, but also the character of the building should be maintained.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on the plan.

Ruth Fiala
[redacted]
Santa Monica, CA 90405

LH Sc
9/21

[redacted]

09/10/2007 10:35 AM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning session comments...

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to put forth some comments on the upcoming planning session for Tuolumne Meadows and the Tuolumne River Corridor.

I am primarily concerned with the possibility of more horse and pack stock traffic in these areas. These are fragile environments, and from what I have seen firsthand pack stock and equestrian traffic do as much damage or even more than some forms of motorized traffic. The trenches dug by steel-shod hoofs, tree roots cut, soil pulverized to powder, meadows and native plants chewed down to tufts…and most alarming of all is the water pollution. The vast amounts of animal waste as well as how the horses churn up small springs and meadows makes a significant impact on the local environment.

It seems that the Draft Management prescriptions should not include equine transport at all, as these activities serve a small minority of visitors while encouraging a disproportionate amount of ecological damage. Going along with this, since apparently most hoofed transport use and service the High Sierra Camps, there should be an alternative to these facilities, or outright removal. The surrounding area is adversely affected by the present state of affairs, with large amounts of waste water, sewage and kitchen waste being introduced to the surrounding area.

Please consider a plan which limits the damage and associated pollution that these destructive animals include in their footprint. It may not be realistic to keep the area as pristine as it once was, but if intelligently managed the area can be enjoyed by people for years to come.

Thank you,

David Anthes

September 10, 2007

Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
Attn: Tuolumne Planning
PO Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to put forth some comments on the upcoming planning session for Tuolumne Meadows and the Tuolumne river corridor.

I am primarily concerned with the possibility of more horse and pack stock traffic in these areas. These are fragile environments, and from what I have seen firsthand pack stock and equestrian traffic do as much damage or more than even some forms of motorized traffic. The trenches dug by steel-shod hoofs, tree roots cut, soil pulverized to powder, meadows and native plants chewed down to tufts…and most alarming of all is the water pollution. The vast amounts of animal waste as well as how the horses churn up small springs and meadows makes a significant impact on the local environment.

It seems that the Draft Management prescriptions should not include equine transport at all, as these activities serve a small minority of visitors while encouraging a disproportionate amount of ecological damage. Going along with this, since apparently most hoofed transport use and service the High Sierra Camps, there should be an alternative to these facilities, or outright removal. The surrounding area is adversely affected by the present state of affairs, with large amounts of waste water, sewage and kitchen waste being introduced to the surrounding area.

Please consider a plan which limits the damage and associated pollution that these destructive animals include in their footprint. It may not be realistic to keep the area as pristine as it once was, but if intelligently managed the area can be enjoyed by people for years to come.

Thank you, [redacted]

David Anthes

LS 9/24 Sc

"ROBT. BENEDETTI" [redacted]
et>
07/16/2007 02:11 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolomne Concepts

1. I wish there was a concept that REDUCED even further the infrastructure in the Meadow area Concept One is the closest. I DO, however, favor continued use of Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp

2. Concept One is by far the best.
Concept Two is not a good compromise, with too much "Base Camp" area and pavement.
Concept Three turns the Meadow into something like a theme park and is the least attractive alternative by far.
Concept Four is attractive but would depend on the extent and quality of research and ecosystem management. Where Concept Three creates a sort of theme park, this concept might create something like a laboratory.

3. The most important elements of a preferred alternative are
1. To reduce transient vehicular impact and pavement
2. To support staging of backcountry use with as little infrastructure as necessary, especially to avoid more pavement and utilities.

4. I wonder if the corridors indicated for the management zones are wide enough to protect the river fully

5. I feel strongly that the O'Shaughnessy Dam should be removed and the river should be restored to a free-flowing state within the park, and Hetch Hetchy be allowed to restore itself

Hetchy out of scope

Thanks!

Dr. Robert Benedetti
[redacted]

26 SC 9/24

Carol Toney
[redacted]
09/01/2007 12:25 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject:

yose_planning@nps.gov
Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Attn: Comments for the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan

Dear Superintendent, Yosemite National Park:

I would like to comment on the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan. I have visited Yosemite and the Tuolumne River for more than 40 years and I care deeply about this region.

There are several important, relevant issues that have not been adequately considered in developing the preliminary concepts for the draft Tuolumne River Plan. One of these is climate change induced by global warming. The next decades will bring significant warming to the Tuolumne River inside Yosemite Park, most importantly through a decrease in the annual precipitation. This will reduce, potentially dramatically, the amount of water in the Tuolumne River. This deduced rain and snow fall, and other consequences of global warming, must be included when considering the effects of the Tuolumne River Plan on the outstandingly remarkable values of the river.

Furthermore, the Tuolumne River Plan must to address the currently excessive impacts due to pack and saddle stock throughout the Tuolumne River watershed. One specific aspect of this is that the riding stables located at Tuolumne Meadows result in contaminated water in the Tuolumne River – both upstream and downstream of Tuolumne Meadows – and in damage to the extensive meadows along the Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne. The use of pack stock also results in eroded trails that are polluted by offensive manure, urine, odors, dust, and flies. The riding stables should be closed, and the site naturalized. Commercial pack stock enterprises must be strictly limited to protect the Tuolumne River corridor and the experience of park visitors who are adversely affected by the many impacts of these operations.

While management of Hetch Hetchy and the O'Shaughnessey dam will, unfortunately, not be addressed in the Tuolumne River Plan, the *impact* of the dam on segments 5 and 6 need to be considered in the draft Plan. How does the dam impact these river segments?

It seems to me that concept 4 contains most of the important elements of the Tuolumne River Plan that should be included in the preferred alternative. However, this concept should be enhanced by limiting the impact of pack stock on the Tuolumne River watershed (see above for details). The footprint of stables at Tuolumne Meadows is huge and the subsequent impact of the stables is enormous. The stables should be removed. Stringent limits should also be placed on the use of pack and saddle stock near the Tuolumne River water shed, and in particular, no camping with pack stock should be allowed within ¼ mile of the river. These actions will significantly

improve the outstandingly remarkable values of the Tuolumne river. Likewise, the footprint of stables the Tuolumne Lodge is huge and the Lodge should be removed.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Need a vacation? Get great deals to amazing places on Yahoo! Travel.

L7 52 9/24

"I.Lindsey9/07"
[redacted]
09/09/2007 11:06 PM MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Workbook

- I am writing to comment on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook.
- I am a science teacher who often helps students and families on field trips to nature, including near Tuolumne Meadows in the Sierras. While teaching in the Sierras the students notice a lot and share their concern about the water pollution, resource impacts, and harm to recreation from commercial packstock and horseback riding in the Tuolumne Meadows, the river corridor, and surrounding areas. It has been particularly hard as the lead teacher to be unable to explain to the families why there is so much damage and abuse to nature from the use of stock animals The kids are visibly disheartened with their tree removal, tents at the edges of trails and lakes, and the trash from these profit seeking groups while we teach no impact techniques to them The fresh manure and urine stench on the trails and even the older manure all over campsites is not justified in their young innocent eyes. It is not possible to stay clean or keep minimal personal hygiene while staying on manure covered trails. How do you take boots off on a wilderness trip and then eat when you care so much about nature you don't bring soap? The people on the horses even bring shampoo and soaps and stand in the creeks and lakes while they use it!
-
- The Draft Management Prescriptions should end ALL commercial stock packing and horseback riding in and near the Tuolumne Meadows, Tuolumne River corridor, and surrounding areas. Commercial stock packing and horseback riding in these fragile, high-elevation areas serves only a very small minority of visitors while substantially harming water quality, park resources, and the experience of other visitors. It also sets a public example that the official policy of the park and its employees is simply and genuinely not respectful of nature.
-
- The plan for Tuolumne Meadows/River <u>must</u> consider an alternative that removes the "High Sierra Camps" at Glen Aulin, Tuolumne Meadows, and Vogelsang. These aged and ugly facilities are polluting the surrounding areas with sewage, "grey water" from showers, and grease and detergent from kitchens. The large numbers of stock animals needed to supply the camps with food, water, laundry, and other supplies are also further polluting alpine water, eroding already damaged trails, and adversely affecting the recreation experience of park visitors(i.e., dust, flies, manure). Most stock animal use in Yosemite NP is for the High Sierra Camps, so when they are eliminated, much of the damage ends. The NPS must address the harm caused by these facilities <u>now</u>, in this plan. Out of simple self respect the NPS must not put off evaluation and consideration of these impacts to some future process as NPS is proposing.
-
- Sincerely,
- for the kids
- I.Lindsey
- [redacted] Santa Cruz, CA 95065

LS 9/24
SW

"Loren Schilder" [redacted]

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc: [redacted]
Subject: Tuolumne River Plan

09/09/2007 04:59 PM
MST

Yosemite Planning,

I have visited Tuolumne Meadows for about 45 summers. I believe that the wilderness experience for most people evolves, beginning with automobile camping and progressing to backpacking and true wilderness experience. I also feel strongly that the NPS naturalist program is an important educational opportunity, especially for the children. I would like to think that those who trash our wilderness areas have not been exposed to the conservation ethic and have no understand of the fragile ecosystems.

In regards to the proposed concepts I submit the following:
Concept 1. Oppose the removal of campground loop "A", camp store, post office and what remains of the gas station.
Concept 2. For the average visitor, The Meadows offers the only opportunity to learn about this rare ecosystem. If anything, facilities to accommodate a greater number of visitors should be planned.
Concept 3. I generally favor this alternative, but nothing stays the same and I have witnessed a general deterioration in the facilities. The newest campground restrooms for example date from the 1960's. Many need to be replaced. Also dishwashing stations need to be added as many people cannot read the signs and make a mess for the rest of us.
Concept 4. This concept raises a red flag when the author says, "support some day and overnight opportunities …" I remember Carl Sharsmith taking a group of us out on the meadow in defiance of a naturalist order limiting the group size. He said, "that only by teaching people to appreciate this rare ecosystem could we have any hope to preserve it."

The most important elements should be to provide opportunities for visitors of varying ages and abilities. Tuolumne Meadows is too isolated to fit the day use model. Therefore campgrounds and other reasonably priced accommodations are needed to enhance the visitor experience.

The proposals favor the backpack wilderness experience. Having been a backpacker, gone on to horses and now looking for less strenuous trails to hike, I see thing from a broader prospective. Every visitor should be encouraged to get out of his or her vehicle and see the beauty of nature, what ever their limitations. Along with this people need to learn back county etiquette. The reliance on increased levels of enforcement activities and posting signs, I believe is counter productive. I have met a number of people who were venturing out on their first backcountry trip without any previous camping experience and wonder if they will ever try a second one?

Loren Schilder

29 Sc
9/24

Ruth Fiala
<ronruthf84@earthlink.net>

09/06/2007 08:28 PM
MST

To: Yose_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

Comments by:
Ronald Fiala
2539 7th Street Apt. A
Santa Monica CA 90405

Introduction:

The Tuolumne Meadows area and contributing river systems are a very precious resource and protection and management of all natural ecosystem functions must be a high priority. I feel, however that careful management of the area must include the ability of the public to experience in great depth the beauty of this environment. Camping, hiking and climbing are activities that have allowed folks to experience Tuolumne in an intimate way for many generations now. My comments about each individual concept are informed by my explorations of the area over many years.

Concept One:

I have always liked the idea of taking some development out of the Tuolumne Meadows area and restoring those areas to their natural state. However, to truly experience and appreciate the area takes time. Maintaining (but not increasing) opportunities for people to stay in the area is an important element to any plan that is adopted. Moving the campground away from the river is a great idea but reducing the number of campsites or tent cabins is not a good idea in my opinion. Perhaps application of the latest in green and sustainable technologies could be applied to public facilities (including food service and store), amenities, camping and The Lodge to minimize the impact of those activities on the environment.
Tuolumne should not become another Yosemite Valley.

Concept Two:

It seems to me that adopting this concept could open the door to more development of the Tuolumne Meadows area than is necessary or desirable. Even additions of more signs, more interpretive displays, kiosks, hardened trails, bike paths or more picnic areas seems contrary to maintaining Tuolumne Meadows as an example of a unique, pristine natural environment.

Concept Three:

Maintaining Tuolumne Meadows the way it is now would be acceptable in my opinion as long as "development creep" (see concept two comment) is avoided through careful management over the long term. Respecting the history, natural character, and manmade character of Tuolumne is important. Parsons lodge, the visitor's center, A Loop restrooms and the Tioga entry station are important examples of manmade structures

that complement the natural beauty of the area. I feel that any new structures should follow those examples.

Concept Four:

The scientific research and ecological restoration component of concept four seems incredibly important and should perhaps be an overlay to any final concept but should not supplant in any significant way current public recreational use of the Tuolumne Meadows area. Also the intention to use the latest green technologies in any new or replacement development of facilities in the Tuolumne Meadows area should be a part of any plan implementation.

Conclusion:

In my opinion, key components of an overall plan for the Tuolumne area include a balanced application of maintenance and restoration of the natural environment with opportunities for day use folks to physically and intellectually engage Tuolumne, opportunities for folks to engage Tuolumne on a more intimate level through longer stays, opportunities for intensive scientific study and restoration of the unique natural environment and application of the latest in green and sustainable strategies and technologies to minimize the impact of humans on the environment.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on these issues.

L10 Sx 9/24

Ruth Fiala
<ronruthf84@earthlink.net>

09/09/2007 05:25 PM
MST

To: Yose_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

Concept 1: This concept allows for Tuolumne Meadows to retain the most wilderness character, and that is a very important concept to me. I have reservations about removing too much of the accommodations, because I think that it is important for people to be able to enjoy the area for more than just day use.

Concept 2: This concept allows too much development, such as hardened trails.

Concept 3: I think it is important to keep the character of Tuolumne Meadows by recognizing the importance of the historic buildings, and making any new architecture compatible with the old. However, I am opposed to more development, such as hardened trails.

Concept 4: Scientific research should be an important component of any national park and Tuolumne Meadows is no exception. I think it is very important to make the greatest possible use of green technologies in any new building.

I would like to see the area preserved as much as possible, while still allowing for people to enjoy the experience. There should still be opportunities for overnight stays. If the developed areas need to be changed to help protect the area (such as removing the A loop of the campground to preserve the river) the latest in green technology should be used, but also the character of the building should be maintained.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on the plan.

Ruth Fiala
2539 A 7th St.
Santa Monica, CA 90405

L11 9/24 Sc

dedlund@mninter.net
09/11/2007 05:23 PM EST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Comments on Tuolumne Planning Workbook

To: yose_planning@nps.gov

This e-mail contains comments on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook. Please modify the Draft Management Prescriptions to eliminate ALL commercial stock packing and horseback riding in the Tuolumne Meadows, Tuolumne River corridor, and surrounding areas. Commercial stock packing and horseback riding in these fragile, high-elevation areas serves only a small minority of visitors while causing significant reduction in water quality, causing harm to trails, and reducing the pleasant experience of other users including day hikers and backpackers.

Please consider an alternative plan for Tuolumne Meadows/River to remove the "High Sierra Camps" at Glen Aulin, Tuolumne Meadows, and Vogelsang. These old and ugly facilities are polluting the surrounding areas with raw sewage, grey water from showers, and grease and detergent wastes from kitchens. The large numbers of stock animals needed to supply the camps with food, water, laundry, and other supplies are also polluting water, eroding trails, and having an adverse affect on the recreation experience of park visitors due to dust, flies and powdered manure. Most of the stock animal use in Yosemite NP is used to service the High Sierra Camps. If the High Sierra Camps are eliminated, most of the damage caused by stock would end. The NPS must address the harm caused by these facilities now, in this plan. The NPS cannot properly put off evaluation and consideration of these impacts to some future wilderness planning process. The NPS proposal is off base if these concerns are not addressed in this plan.

I am very concerned about the water pollution, resource impacts, and harm to recreation that is caused by commercial packstock and horseback riding in the Tuolumne Meadows, the river corridor, and surrounding areas. My recreation experience while backpacking in these ares was severely impacted in a negative way by the forced breathing of old horse manure dust on the dry trails, the many flies attracted to the fresh horse manure and the trail erosion caused by the heavy horse traffic.

David M. Edlund
1922 Tioga Blvd
New Brighton MN 55112
Phone: 651-636-3503
dedlund@mninter.net

This message was sent using IMP, the Internet Messaging Program.

L12 52 9-24

Oneromin@aol.com
09/10/2007 08:14 PM EDT

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: (no subject)

Yosemite Planning,

I have been a visitor to the Meadows for at least40 summers and am quite concerned about the planning decisions that will be made. In a time of declining park usage it seems absurd to seriously consider measures that will discourage the public from exploring and learning to love and protect this priceless wonder.

Throughout most of my life I have seen subtle declines in services and in the quality of patrons at the campgrounds. Admittedly, this area is not the classic"recreation" area. It has always appealed to the true nature lover who is willing to endure cold nights and minimal comforts and limited commercial services Large RVs have encouraged another type of user to enter the area and they also have a right to enjoy it as long as they do not degrade the experience for other campers. Limiting them and isolating them is not a bad idea. However, classic car camping is a wonderful introduction to the wilderness. It is suitable for beginning campers, young families and older campers who might find backpacking too difficult. Good clean and quiet campgrounds combined with a strong naturalist program should be a basic focus of any planning.

In regards to the proposed concepts have the following comments:

Concept 1. I oppose the removal of campground loop "A", camp store, post office and what remains of the gas station. The campgrounds need to be kept open and well maintained and if necessary monitored more routinely. Removal of the store and gasoline will merely mean more traveling by car to get necessities.

Concept 2. For the average visitor, The Meadows offers the only opportunity to learn about this rare ecosystem. If anything, facilities to accommodate a greater number of visitors should be planned

Concept 3. I generally favor this alternative, but nothing stays the same and I have witnessed a general deterioration in the facilities. Many restrooms need to be replaced or at least carefully maintained Also dishwashing stations need to be added as many people cannot read or disregard the signs Some campers do not have adequate personal cleaning facilities and they will use the restrooms instead Some better cleaning facilities might even result in cleaner campsites. Better monitoring is probably necessary with today's careless people. How else are they to learn what a sound curfew means?

Concept 4. This sounds like a open season on campgrounds.

The most important elements should aimed at providing opportunities for visitors of varying ages and abilities. Tuolumne Meadows is too isolated to fit the day use model Why encourage more auto traffic than we already have with the Trans-Sierra highway? Therefore, campgrounds and other reasonably priced accommodations are needed to enhance the visitor experience. Not all visitors want to drive by and admire. Not all visitors want to stay in the tent cabins where they cannot cook Not all visitors want to backpack. Many visitors are not capable of backpacking although they can day hike and enjoy the programs and scenery.

Carol Rominger

See what's new at AOL.com and Make AOL Your Homepage.

L13 SC 9/24

"Rick Sanger"
<Rick@MountainPathPr
ess.com>

09/10/2007 09:39 PM
CST
Please respond to Rick

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Workbook

To Whom it may concern:
I wish to comment on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook. It has been brought to my attention that the Draft Management Prescriptions would allow commercial stock packing and horseback riding in **ALL** areas of Tuolumne Meadows and the Tuolumne River corridor. I have long been under the impression that studies have shown stock create a greatly unbalanced amount of water pollution and environmental degradation for the number of park visitors they serve My own hiking experience certainly supports these studies. I have spent the past 11 summers in the high sierra backcountry and have not only seen the degradation of fragile, alpine meadows but also their slow(and never completely reversible) regeneration from eliminating stock use.

It is very clear to me that any responsible plan should limit or eliminate stock use in fragile, alpine meadows. The mandate of the park service is to protect these areas for the enjoyment of future generations. While stock makes these areas accessible to some visitors, it is only a small number who benefit and it is not worth the damage these critters cause While there are lower elevation, more durable areas which better support stock travel, it does not make sense to sacrifice these delicate ecosystems to everyone's detriment.

I also believe alternatives to reduce or eliminate stock used to support the high sierra camps should be considered. Stock used to support these developments creates the vast majority of the damage caused by stock use in the park. This may mean curtailing or eliminating these camps. Of course, eliminating these camps also reduces the amount of chemical impact park concessions have in Yosemite.

Just because something has existed for the past 50 or 100 years, doesn't mean it is a good thing, or that it serves the public interest. The elimination of the giant forest village in Sequoia National Park was a long, difficult road but has created a pristine area for visitor enjoyment of a precious national resource, and serves to better protect this resource. In the same way, it is your obligation to consider alternatives that best protect the resource.

-Rick Sanger

L14

FAX COVER

September 14, 2007

To: Yosemite Planning

Fax: 209-379-1294

From: JoAnne Clarke (Armstrong)

Phone: 209-726-0636
E-Mail: sierrafer@peoplepc.com

In Re: Tuolumne River Planning Comments

Pages: 4, including cover

LH 1/24 SC

JoAnne Clarke (Armstrong)
2823 Oleander Ave.
Merced, CA 95340
sierrafcr@peoplepc.com

September 13, 2007

Yosemite Planning
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax: 209/379-1294
E-Mail: yose_planning@nps.gov

To Whom It May Concern:
Re: Tuolumne River Planning

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer my comments regarding the Tuolumne River Planning process. First I would like to address the draft management prescriptions that have been provided in the planning workbook. This workbook has made a difficult process a little easier to understand and by providing the planning prescriptions you have given me a better idea of the options available.

The Remote Wilderness
This is the very best prescription for this fragile environment. User capacity should be addressed and a reservation system may be necessary to prevent degradation of the area from overuse. The operation of the High Sierra Camps, including the use of pack stock, serves to further impact this area. I support the "grandfathering in of existing camps but encourage restriction of any further developments of this nature. Backpacking and the use of primitive camps, providing that "leave no trace" is mandated, should be emphasized. Sanitation is an issue that can be addressed by providing "pack out" toilet accessories, similar to what is used on Mt. Whitney. This prescription provides for the ultimate "Muir High Country Experience", which is what makes this place so special.

Day-Use Wilderness
I also approve of this prescription. Small parking lots inconspicuously placed can relieve the congestion of road-side parking. I adamantly oppose the use of any type of asphalt/petroleum based surface for parking or trails. As the asphalt breaks down the surface becomes dangerously uneven and the pollutants from these materials invade the environment and flow into the soils and waterways. There are many aggregate surfaces available for this type of use that do not breakdown the way asphalt does. A short hike on the "Muir Trail" where asphalt has been used in the past will convince you of my concerns. The Tuolumne River Plan can be a "new innovator" by installing these types of surfaces where necessary. A small composting toilet and several bear boxes should be

L 14 Sc 9/24

included in these small parking areas to provide necessary services for the day-use visitor.

High Country Experience
This prescription is acceptable, providing the level of development is limited to rustic campgrounds and campfire interpretive programs given by naturalists, rangers or local Native Americans. Leave the cultural demonstrations in Yosemite Valley. Signage should be limited to trail identification and not interpretive. I don't think the "John Muir Experience" included guided, interpretive walks. These should be left in the Valley as well. Rustic campgrounds should be served with composting toilets, bear boxes and little more.

High Country Base Camp
This prescription should be applied only to those areas where development already exists and any additional development of this type should be discouraged or prohibited. Motor and bicycle touring should be limited to paved areas that already exist. A bicycle lane on the shoulder of Tioga Road would be encouraged while roadside parking is eliminated and replaced by small inconspicuous lots located near trail heads for backpacking and day hike use. We must retain the natural character of this area and in no way do I envision a "Yosemite Valley Experience" here. Large group parties can have a devastating impact on this fragile place. The quiet and serenity should not be sacrificed for motor touring. Stock packing has a severe impact on high country trails and should be limited by a reservation system if necessary.

Historic Tuolumne
This prescription really scares me. It is vague in its intention. I envision "Old Town Tuolumne" with all of the shopping and amenities that that would entail. Perhaps a re-creation of these historic aspects in Lee Vining or El Portal would be more appropriate. Please eliminate this prescription from the Tuolumne River Plan.

Next I will comment on the four Preliminary Alternative Concepts you have provided:

Concept One
This concept is probably the most acceptable to me. The area indicated "High Country Base Camp" covers the area that is already developed here. Existing structures should be retained but any additional structures should be temporary in nature. The store and gas station are necessary to service those traveling over the Pass and should be retained as a seasonal service when the Pass is open. It would be my preference to have this area designated "High Country Experience". Small areas within this section could be designated "Base Camp" such as the existing visitor center, wilderness center and the Tuolumne Meadows Campground while limiting any further development in the Soda Springs and Parsons Lodge area. I appreciate the goals of this concept to remove utilities and roads accessing these structures. If removing the Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp would insure wilderness designation for this area, then I encourage its removal. This concept provides for the least development and impact to the area, which I support.

Concept Two

I think the area indicated "High Country Experience" should be replaced with "Day Use Wilderness. This concept allows for excessive development that is vaguely identified. I think use of the High Sierra Camps should be limited not expanded. These camps cater to a more elite visitor which creates social equity issues. They impact water quality and contribute to the cost of trail maintenance from stock use. If their existence threatens the potential for wilderness designation, then they should be removed. The suggestion of hardened trails again brings visions of asphalt pavement, alternatives to asphalt must be considered. I think wheel chair and bicycle trails are better left in the Valley. Campgrounds and picnic areas should be primitive. Ultra camping and lodging is provided in Yosemite Valley and the wilderness aspect of this area should be retained. Interpretive and cultural programs should be provided in existing facilities or, better yet, in a campfire setting.

Concept Three

I strongly oppose this concept because the "Historic Tuolumne" prescription covers the entire non-wilderness area. It vaguely suggests extensive development of campgrounds, lodging and food service and threatens the natural, wilderness character of this place. The history of Tuolumne Meadows can be re-created outside of this area of limited space.

Concept Four

I agree that concept four provides for less impact than concepts two and three and appreciate the fact that fewer opportunities for universal access exist. This is a special place and part of the attraction is the difficulty of access. It appeals to the wild spirit within us and challenges our abilities. It is the effort that provides the value and appreciation. The absence of hardened trails, picnic areas and interpretive facilities is a good thing. John Muir didn't have picnic tables or cultural demonstrations during his travels through the Sierras. Please make every effort to retain the natural, wilderness character that has made this place so special. Limit user capacity to insure its survival. The harder something is to attain, the more value we place on it. Establish a reservation system if necessary. Limit access to foot travel but provide for bicycles along the Tioga Road. Utilize satellite parking outside of the park and encourage trans-Sierra hikes by providing a shuttle service. Protect the meadows and scenic vistas by eliminating the volunteer saplings that encroach on the perimeter of the meadows.

Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of the long-term planning for this precious place.

Sincerely,
JoAnne Clarke (Armstrong)

L15 9/24

"Stephen E. Rock"
<ser@slac.stanford.edu
>

09/14/2007 12:06 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Workbook

Dear Folks,
Here are my comments about the Tuolumne Planning Workbook.

I go to the Tuolumne area often. Most recently this summer to Waterwheel falls and from Dana Meadows over Parker Pass.

First, thank you for taking care of our wilderness. My grandchildren are 7 and 10 years old are being taken to the wilderness by their parents and I hope that it is still there for generatins to come.

The most important negative thing for me is the problem of horses trashing the trails and polluting the water. The number of horses in the area should be drastically reduced.

My observation is that this could be easily accomplished by eliminating 'LUXURY' trips. Most encounters I have with stock and horses involve very few 'guests' accompanied by many servents and horses carying tables, chairs, beds, ice chests with steaks etc. (I met a guide a few weeks ago who described his very heavy and volumonous 'bedroll'. There was no problem since the horses could carry it.) This puts a great strain on the wilderness so that a very few rich individuals can experience the wilderness as if they were in their mansions back home.
If people would like to ride, let them take minimal equipment like a backpacker does.

The same goes for the High Sierra Camps. From what I have been told, they have fancy food, showers and maids to make the beds. Bring them down to the basics and then there
will be less need for staff and fewer horse trips to bring in supplies. The wilderness is for wilderness experience and should not be damaged so some people can be supplied with luxurious living.

The Vogelsang HS camp looks like a slum situated in a very beautiful area and should be cleaned up or eliminated.

Stephen Rock
3872 Nathan Way
Palo Alto, CA
94303

SER84@columbia.edu

L16 SC 9/24

Jeffrey Kane
<ladakhjeff@yahoo.com
>

09/13/2007 11:08 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Comments on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to submit the following comments on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook. I am an avid backpacker and mountaineer, and have spent several weeks each of the past several summers in the backcountry throughout the Sierra Nevada. I have also worked as a stream ecologist performing water quality evaluations throughout the Sierra Nevada for the past six years.

I am glad that the NPS is finally developing a management plan for the Tuolumne River. The planning area is truly one of the mountain wilderness gems of our nation, and as such is in danger of being loved to death if the NPS does not proactively restrict activities in the basin. Of fundamental concern to me is the role of ***commercial enterprises*** in National Parks and designated wilderness areas. Such for-profit operations that necessarily rely on economic growth for their well-being are inherently antithetical to preserving and conserving our finite parks and wildernesses. As such, I believe it is NPS' duty to limit such operations only to the extent truly necessary, and that a good first step would be to allocate use to those types that minimize resource impacts so that these areas may be enjoyed by the maximum amount of people without compromising their integrity.

With this in mind, I was appalled to read two references to the High Sierra Camps as "Outstanding Remarkable Values":

> "Historic landscape features and structures associated with the High Sierra Camp Loop represent the development of a nationally distinctive kind of high-country touring." (page 3)
>
> "The rustic high-country lodging available along the Dana Fork, in Tuolumne Meadows, and above the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne offers a distinctive type of recreation that is unique in the national park system." (page 5)

This is an outrage. In fact, nothing about these "camps" has any place in a wild and scenic river basin. My first encounter with one of these camps (at Vogelsang) came as I backpacked from Reds Meadow to Tuolumne. After five day of blissful solitude, I was unexpectedly shocked back to the trappings of humans in an area of otherwise unique solitude. Before I even saw these "historic [] structures" I was greeted by the smell of festering sewage, manure, and garbage. I do not understand how the NPS can continue to rationalize such operations in a wilderness setting. The park already offers many outstanding recreation opportunities, and should not feel obliged to pander to visitors that wish for luxury and convenience - this can be had anywhere outside the park. Nowhere in the draft planning documents does the NPS adequately disclose the resource and social impacts from these commercial operations, nor justify their continued existence and operation. The final EIS must do so, and consider management alternatives that include their

L16 9/24
SC

removal.

In my travels throughout the Sierra backcountry, I have observed that the most substantial impacts to water quality, campsites, and soil are due to packstock use. I have also read recent scientific literature showing that packstock manure has polluted several streams and lakes in the Sierra (Derlet, R. W., and J.R. Carlson. 2006. "Coliform Bacteria in Sierra Nevada Wilderness Lakes and Streams: What Is the Impact of Backpackers, Pack Animals, and Cattle?" Wilderness and Environmental Medicine 17: 15-20). As such, and given the extreme demands for use of the Tuolumne River area (speaking to the need for NPS to ration use as efficiently as possible), the NSP should consider alternatives that strictly limit or eliminate all stock use in the Tuolumne River basin, especially commercial stock use.

Above all, in this planning process the NPS should prioritize opportunities for solitude and the preservation of all of the Tuolumne River basin's unique natural features and resource for future generations.

Thank you in advance for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Kane
38A W 30th Ave
Eugene, OR 97405
ladakhjeff@yahoo.com
760-709-1098

L/7 SC
9/24

"Kurt Steinbacher"
<kurtsteinbacher@earthlink.net>
09/13/2007 05:46 PM
EST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Public Comments, Tuolumne Planning Workbook

Hello,

I am commenting on the Tuolumne Planning Workbook.

I would object to the Outstandingly Remarkable Values "***Historic landscape features and structures associated with the High Sierra Camp Loop represent the development of a nationally distinctive kind of high-country touring***" and ***"The rustic high-country lodging available along the Dana Fork, in Tuolumne Meadows, and above the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne offers a distinctive type of recreation that is unique in the national park system "*** being included in the workbook.

Both statements are inaccurate descriptions of structures and activities that are inconsistent with and inappropriate in, Wilderness. The fact that you have allowed these activities and structures to exist in what otherwise would be pristine backcountry in no way justifies their becoming part of the workbook, or any resulting management plan. I'd prefer that you just admit that you have been boneheads about this, and that you promise to be better stewards of the backcountry from now on.

Thank you,

Kurt Steinbacher
420 S.E. 1st St.
Evansville, IN

L18 se 9/24

"Robert Wood"
<woodys@robertwoodbooks.com>
09/13/2007 02:50 PM MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc: <ravenamstutz@gmail.com>
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows planning testimony

To Yosemite NPS: These are submitted Comments on the TUOLUMNE PLANNING WORKBOOK from Robert S & Deanne R. Wood, sent by e-mail on 9/13/07. Please make them part of the official record.

The Planning Workbook is vague, repetitive, boring and poorly written in impenetrable governmentese, a waste of taxpayer money. After reading it we have no idea what's being considered. It's almost impossible to distinguish between the four plans

In summary: WE URGE MINIMAL DEVELOPMENT OF TUOLUMNE, SO I GUESS WE FAVOR CONCEPT ONE

We will gladly sacrifice comfort for a more natural, wilder-looking environment. Let's not repeat the deplorable over-development of Yosemite Valley.

We want No hotels or tourist housing of any kind beyond that already provided by Yosemite Lodge and the campground, with no additional paving.

We want NO more visitor facilities, like musems, information centers, stock trails, trail signs, pre-digested "interpretive" signs, parking lots, fast food sellers or restuarants.

We have been using the backcountry camps for 50 years, and we urge the NPS to keep them intact. Why aren't they specifically considered in the workbook?

We were at Vogelsang during the July '07 search for the old lady, and the camp was badly abused by the arrogant Search & Rsecue horde, headed by an officious, armed fool from the Rockies who didn't know the area he was supposed to search!

Submitted by Robert S. Wood and Deanne R. Wood

Robert S. Wood
785 Lee Mountain Road
Sedona, AZ 86351

L19 SC 9/24

Jay McKnight
<jaymck@flash.net>
09/12/2007 11:22 PM MST
Please respond to Jay McKnight

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Comments on "Tuolumne Planning Workbook"

Hello yose_planning,

Goodness, what a lot of bureaucratic talk in the "Tuolumne Planning Workbook" -- "how can we please all of those people who have opposing goals". So here are my comments, and how you could please me.

I have hiked, backpacked, and driven a car in Yosemite, Kings Canyon, Sequoia, and the San Joaquin drainage between since 1940. I have backpacked the Tuolumne Canyon, and to all of the High Sierra Camps, tho I've never stayed at one. I still hike and drive.

What activities are unique to the High Sierra? Enjoying the beauty of the mountains, rocks, trees, and rivers. How is that best done? Hiking, backpacking, camping, and even driving a car!

What is the cause of the harm to the Sierra? TOO MANY VISITORS. Why too many visitors? Partly, at least, too many facilities to attract more visitors. Why too many facilities? Because they make money for the provider. But are they good for the natural beauty of the Sierra? NO!

Which facilities should be removed? The ones that cause the most destruction and pollution of the Sierra. As a hiker, I find that horses and mules on the trails destroy the trails -- they pound them to sand, which increases erosion and makes walking difficult. They destroy the meadows. They defecate and urinate on the trails, making a big stink, attracting flies, polluting the streams, and making walking unpleasant.

And why so many horses? Because they are a life style for the packers, and they make money for the pack station owners. Should the park service care about the packers? I guess so, but they attract more visitors with the horses & mules, and this is undesirable. Furthermore, the destruction of the trails should be your first consideration -- the welfare of the packers is not (or should not) be one of your primary considerations.

Who uses the packers? A good deal of the usage is for the High Sierra Camps -- another attraction to visitors that also pollutes the mountains and streams, makes money for their operators, and should be removed.

By the way, it is ironic that the other managers of Sierra lands, the Forest Service and the BLM, are pushing hard to close 4WD roads on their lands, and cars do not even inherently pollute the roads and streams!

--
Best regards,
Jay McKnight

Cupertino, CA US
mailto:jaymck@flash.net
Tel: +1 408 252 7396

L 20

Se 9/24

rm46@humboldt.edu
09/13/2007 01:40 PM MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Workbook

I'm unclear about what exactly the 4 concepts are to comment on. The workbook seemed to have a lot of useless information and did not get to the point.

In general, I think preserving the natural environment should be the number one priority. Then we should think about how humans can enjoy it in the most ecologically sensitive way. Instead of building new outhouses, how about composting toilets? Instead of more parking, how about more bike paths and bike locking places at every parking lot? Instead of building more structures, how about tearing down the ones that are obsolete or not necessary? Let's make Yosemite a model of how environmental a national park can be! We could model it off of Denali National Park, where wildlife and natural environment come first, humans come second. We are the visitors and we need to give it the respect it deserves.

-R. Martin

L21

SC
9/24

greg@safeclimbing.org
09/12/2007 02:04 PM
AST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne River Plan comments

Thanks for asking for comments on the proposed Tuolumne River Plan!

All four proposed options seem to do a good job of protecting Tuolumne from the over-development that characterizes Yosemite Valley. Congratulations to the planning team for producing well-thought-out options.

However, one single change that is not proposed in any of the options would do more for protecting the river than any other change:

I would like to strongly advocate for the closure of the High Sierra Camp at Glen Aulin, and all the other camps as well. The pack trains servicing these camps must be the largest single source of pollution along the river, at least away from the actual road/campground/store area (perhaps runoff from these areas exceeds the horse/mule impact). The pack trains pollute with horse dung, pulverize the trail surfaces, create new "lanes" of trails across meadows, destroy carefully constructed rock work along trails, and make the trails dusty and stinky (not to mention attracting flies!). The trail surface damage must surely produce substantial silt, dirt, and dung runoff into the river during thunderstorms or rainy periods. And while impacts from the camps themselves are contained in small areas, impact from trail surface damage is spread throughout the area, including long stretches along the river.

While I realize that the High Sierra Camps are historically significant, I think that the time has come to change them from full-service camps into historical displays and non-serviced picnic (and perhaps group camping) areas.

Thanks for requesting input, and I hope you will consider the possibility of closing the High Sierra Camps.

Greg Barnes
PO Box 1814
Bishop, CA 93515

2 22 9/24 SC

Your Comments Are Important!

Pages 28-35 of this workbook provide descriptions of the preliminary alternative concepts that are being considered for the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan. Please provide feedback on the concepts by carefully separating this form from the workbook and writing your comments on it. After completing your comments, fold the form where indicated, tape shut the top and sides, add postage (thank you!) and place it in the mail. You can also submit comments by email by answering the questions below and sending them to yose_planning@nps.gov, or faxing your responses to 209/379-1294. To be considered in the alternatives development process, comments should be received no later than September 15.

1. Have we presented a full range of preliminary concepts from which to build alternatives in the Draft Tuolumne River Plan? Is there another concept that we have not considered? If so, please describe and/or color the zoning scheme onto the map provided on the other side of this form.

2. What do you like or dislike about each concept? How could these concepts be improved?

Concept 1
Don't turn Tuolumne Meadows into a wilderness. There are already vast areas of wilderness in the Park. This concept leaves out most people including ourselves.

Concept 2
This is the preferred concept. The Park is for people to enjoy while protecting the beauty and ecology of the area. Tuolumne Meadows is a centralized area to accommodate the visitors. The High Sierra Camps, including Glen Aulin, are a part of the Yosemite experience and should be maintained.

Concept 3
History can be preserved under Concept 2. We have strong traditional ties to Yosemite and Tuolumne Meadows but don't see a conflict between that and accommodating people.

Concept 4
There are vast areas available in the Park for research. There is no need to tie up Tuolumne Meadows for this purpose. We suggest developing some botanical study areas that all can utilize and enjoy.

3. What are the most important elements that you think should be part of a preferred alternative? Why?
Unfortunately, an increasing population will put more pressure on Yosemite, including Tuolumne Meadows. By concentrating accommodations and services in the immediate Tuolumne Meadows area and allowing them to improve, the pressure can be managed and the outlying areas can be protected.

4. Do you have any comments on the management prescriptions/zones?
Use the Concept 2 zones. Consider extending the Base Camp designation on the north side to the Wild and Scenic River Boundary. There seems no reason for the complex boundaries shown and would seem hard to manage.

5. All Tuolumne Meadows Plan scoping comments received during summer 2006 are still being considered. If the information in this workbook has prompted new thoughts about how to plan for Tuolumne Meadows, please provide them here.
More off road, secluded parking; improve campground; limit number of meadow trails and harden; keep and encourage use of bus service; keep and improve current services including H.S. camps; develop botanical study area(s) for enjoyment of all; allow river access.

Bill and Joan Arsenault
PO Box 550
Elkton, OR 97436
pcranch@cascadeaccess.com

L23 9/24
SC

Yosemite Planning
National Park Service
PO Box 577
Yosemite, Ca 95389-9905

9/5/07

Dear Sirs,

I received the Tuolumne Planning Workbook and would like to offer the following comments for your consideration.

In general I strongly urge adoption of policies that implement the highest level of wilderness protection and limitation of development in the Tuolumne River and Meadows Plans.

Of the four alternatives presented, concept one comes closest to accomplishing my desired goal of reducing human generated impacts. There is one major exception.

In all four concepts the Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp is allowed to continue current operations. I disagree with this. No where in any of the documents that I have read is there mention of the industrial scale operation that now exists in Tuolumne Meadows to support not only Glen Aulin, but the Sunrise and Vogelsang High Sierra Camps as well. From what I have observed, these commercial operations involve trucking in supplies and materials to the pack stations located in Tuolumne Meadows which are then transported to the Camps via hundreds or thousands of pack trains. These operations generate significant environmental impacts including air pollution, water pollution and siltation of tributary streams and the river from the excavated soils churned up by thousands of stock on the access trails to name a few. The visitor experience is greatly diminished by having to walk through clouds of dust and swatting away flies attracted to the stock droppings on the trails. I assume the difficulty and cost of maintaining the trails that access these camps is dramatically increased by the intense stock traffic. Of course this maintenance is paid for by the Park Service, subsidizing a private commercial operation that benefits a relatively few Park visitors.

I find this scale of commercial use at Tuolumne seriously jeopardizes the extraordinary values of the Tuolumne area that are enumerated in the workbook. Other options need to be developed that include reducing the level of use at the High Sierra Camps, developing different ways of using the facilities ie: client carries in his own supplies and moving the stables out of the Park.

The future EIS needs to fully analyze all impacts associated with the High Sierra Camps, commercial pack stock operations and other commercial uses at Tuolumne Meadows.

Thank you for the opportunity to make these comments and I look forward to participating in the future.

Jonathan Braun

Jonathan Braun
PO Box 627
San Anselmo, CA
94979

29 Sc
9/24

Ruth Fiala
[redacted]
09/06/2007 08:28 PM
MST

To: Yose_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

Comments by:
Ronald Fiala
[redacted]
Santa Monica CA 90405

Introduction:

The Tuolumne Meadows area and contributing river systems are a very precious resource and protection and management of all natural ecosystem functions must be a high priority. I feel, however that careful management of the area must include the ability of the public to experience in great depth the beauty of this environment. Camping, hiking and climbing are activities that have allowed folks to experience Tuolumne in an intimate way for many generations now. My comments about each individual concept are informed by my explorations of the area over many years.

Concept One:

I have always liked the idea of taking some development out of the Tuolumne Meadows area and restoring those areas to their natural state. However, to truly experience and appreciate the area takes time. Maintaining (but not increasing) opportunities for people to stay in the area is an important element to any plan that is adopted. Moving the campground away from the river is a great idea but reducing the number of campsites or tent cabins is not a good idea in my opinion. Perhaps application of the latest in green and sustainable technologies could be applied to public facilities (including food service and store), amenities, camping and The Lodge to minimize the impact of those activities on the environment.
Tuolumne should not become another Yosemite Valley.

Concept Two:

It seems to me that adopting this concept could open the door to more development of the Tuolumne Meadows area than is necessary or desirable. Even additions of more signs, more interpretive displays, kiosks, hardened trails, bike paths or more picnic areas seems contrary to maintaining Tuolumne Meadows as an example of a unique, pristine natural environment.

Concept Three:

Maintaining Tuolumne Meadows the way it is now would be acceptable in my opinion as long as "development creep" (see concept two comment) is avoided through careful management over the long term. Respecting the history, natural character, and manmade character of Tuolumne is important. Parsons lodge, the visitor's center, A Loop restrooms and the Tioga entry station are important examples of manmade structures

that complement the natural beauty of the area. I feel that any new structures should follow those examples.

Concept Four:

The scientific research and ecological restoration component of concept four seems incredibly important and should perhaps be an overlay to any final concept but should not supplant in any significant way current public recreational use of the Tuolumne Meadows area. Also the intention to use the latest green technologies in any new or replacement development of facilities in the Tuolumne Meadows area should be a part of any plan implementation.

Conclusion:

In my opinion, key components of an overall plan for the Tuolumne area include a balanced application of maintenance and restoration of the natural environment with opportunities for day use folks to physically and intellectually engage Tuolumne, opportunities for folks to engage Tuolumne on a more intimate level through longer stays, opportunities for intensive scientific study and restoration of the unique natural environment and application of the latest in green and sustainable strategies and technologies to minimize the impact of humans on the environment.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on these issues.