

Public Scoping Meeting Comments
11/3/2009
4-8 p.m.
REI, Fresno, CA

Comments/Questions

- Plan needs to have the flexibility to adjust to future technologies, etc. for the benefit of future generations

What do you Love about the Merced River in Yosemite? (Yose Valley, Wawona, El Portal, high country)

- I love everything about Yosemite that is natural
- Packing it in and packing it out
- People picking up garbage – good feeling
- In 5 minutes you can find a spot of your own
- Beautiful, quick hikes
- Peace and quiet driving a winter storm
- Restore and bring back the meadows that were historically in Yose Valley, but don't cut any trees not necessary for that task. Meadows provide flood control. Yosemite can set precedent for wetland restoration
- Valley – in the early 60s: quiet, clean air (now smoky) little traffic except during firefall; meadows respected, people stayed on trails
- Watching sunrise over Glacier Pt while camped at Lower Pines with fellow volunteers. Starts your day really good
- The way Wawona has been maintained as historic village
- the way the river has been cleaned up in the last 10 yrs or so
- Publish Happy Isles Nature Center more for kids – great place for kids
- Yosemite! period!
- Existing bike trails; so pleasurable to go through trees – only way to see the Valley
- Going up to Glacier Pt to see the sunset
- Coming across a bear and bear runs away from me. I love the bears
- Ranger talks: impressed they are so diverse in knowledge of subjects. Don't want to see become endangered species. Very important to the park

What should stay the same?

- Restore pre-1997 flood campsites that have been removed – the fact that they were momentarily flooded doesn't mean that they cannot be restored
- Mist Trail
- Riverside parking lot at Arch Rock
- Gateway communities – publicize warnings not to feed wildlife; start infio campaign before people get into the park

- Post bear warnings/food in cars warnings at each entrance
- Outreach should be kept general for the general public, not “targeted” or discriminatory
- National Pass fee is too high; reduce to allow access at lower fee
- Yosemite Fund – Jr Ranger and materials need not cater to Hispanic-only audience with programs or outreach materials
- No “free” admission based on ethnic groups
- Historic archives, access to research library should be publicized
- Yosemite West is a fire hazard
- Increase fines for DNC when they habituate wildlife (mtn lions, raccoons, etc) (food storage is the problem)
- Fix or cover potholes in Yosemite Lodge parking lot
- improper or insufficient snow removal; clear walkways
- Plain wooden surfaces on bridges, esp at Yosemite Falls
- no asphalt on pedestrian bridges
- Don’t use bear skins in Ranger talks: desecrates the animal; use fake fur instead
- Adopt zero tolerance for putting bears down, forcing you to put policies into effect that will meet the objectives
- Eco-engineering: don’t use too much asphalt
- Keep/expand meadow restoration and invasive plant eradication
- Private boating allowed on river

What needs to be fixed?

- People parking in meadows
- Raise the fine for littering
- Entrance stations – people with passes should have a wave-thru line
- Dissemination of info so that people understand which roads are open. Inform people ahead of time, en route to park
- Perhaps build an elevated viewing stand to protect El Capitan Meadow
- Like the shuttle bus system
- Air quality! It’s (smoke) killing the trees and making me sick
- Communications with Indian people. Proper consultation a must. The so-called “Tribes” not inclusive – include lineal descendants
- No buildings or campgrounds should be done on the river
- Do away with mountain climbers
- Taft Toe parking was a great idea
- Kempner-Tregoe decision-making model, to weigh issues and get all ideas out in the open
- Would like to see a bike path through the western end of Yosemite Valley (10 ft wide) to get bikes off the main road. Right now there is no road shoulder (from trail system in East Valley [Yose Lodge] to Pohono Bridge and back)
- Consider bike trails in Wawona; around the community from the hotel, etc

- Consider bike path around Tenaya Lake
- Bike parking in the Valley is needed. Racks are deplorable! APBP.org [Assn of pedestrian and bicycle professionals ~ 850 members] Report contains good examples of some of the nation's best bike parking design
- Need good racks at Happy Isles. Often overcrowded, over capacity for available racks
- Get more people to bike, leave cars behind
- Are there bike racks on the Valley shuttle busses?
- With bikes you can get around easily to access great views and places to take photos
- Need more paved turnouts, esp along Tioga Rd. (particularly from Crane Flat to White Wolf) There is very little space for slower drivers to pull over, improve safety. Place turnouts every ¼ mile
- Protect the lichen from people who deface rocks. Perhaps add this in the Jr Ranger guides. Teach kids about the fragility of lichen
- Air quality! Consider prohibiting campfires, or at least have some smoke-free campgrounds. I get sick every time I stay overnight in the Valley. I can't be the only one!
- Restore Wawona golf course to natural state
- Replant trees cut across Yosemite Lodge (e. of lodge)
- Install warning lights for motorists when bicyclists are in tunnel (lights are activated by the cyclists)
- Would like bike lanes or separated paths for them in west end of Valley and down to El Portal

What do you want to see protected?

- Everything in the park
- Joe Public camping in Valley, high country. High Sierra Camps. Bears!
- Would like limits on tour buses (#per day)
- Would like to see commercial vehicle inspections to continue and be increased
- Protect the ability of the average person to visit the park. No limit to # of people, but vehicle limits would be OK
- Would like strict penalties for those who feed wildlife (esp bears) and better enforcement
- Would like to see less asphalt on trails. It's hard on knees and because it's not natural ground for park animals. Asphalt also increases runoff and water pollution
- Increase Ranger numbers in summer; Enforce ban on feeding wildlife
- Would like to see # of cars in Yose Valley reduced- develop a parking facility at Taft Toe
- Increase day-use parking in the Valley
- Would like to see private vehicles banned from Valley

- If cars are banned from Valley and public busses are developed as an alternate form of transport, they need to run frequently and have room for suitcases and camping gear
- Protect cultural properties, esp American Indian sites
- Consider banning rock climbing – at least ban any permanent bolts, defacements, etc on cliff faces
- Prohibit boating on Merced River. Prohibit swimming in Merced River
- Protect the wonderful swimming holes on the S Fork Merced in the Wawona area – allow people to keep swimming in them
- Preserve opportunities for rock climbing. Visitors should be able to enjoy the park in their own way so long as it does not interfere with other visitors or damage the resources
- Abolish High Sierra Camps
- Protect Wilderness values by prohibiting electronic communications – a form of mechanical transportation – within the Wilderness. Emergency use falls within the administrative provisions of the Wilderness Act
- Preserve Indian sites in El Portal
- Preserve interaction of visitor with nature. Avoid creating barriers, either literal or figurative (e.g. Glacier Pt rock walls replacing iron railings). People are disconnected from cliff experience; it's no different than being on the top of a building
- Create a plan that has a firm focus on the ORVs. What are the data gaps? Will the public get to know this? [yes]
- Will the public have an opportunity to review the science/data that describes the natural/cultural ORVs before making comments on the draft plan? [yes]
- Work on relationship with Tribes in order to help inform traditional cultural practices and what to protect
- What will this plan say (NPS) about the terminal moraine that was blasted by Galen Clark?