

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Yosemite National Park



Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan

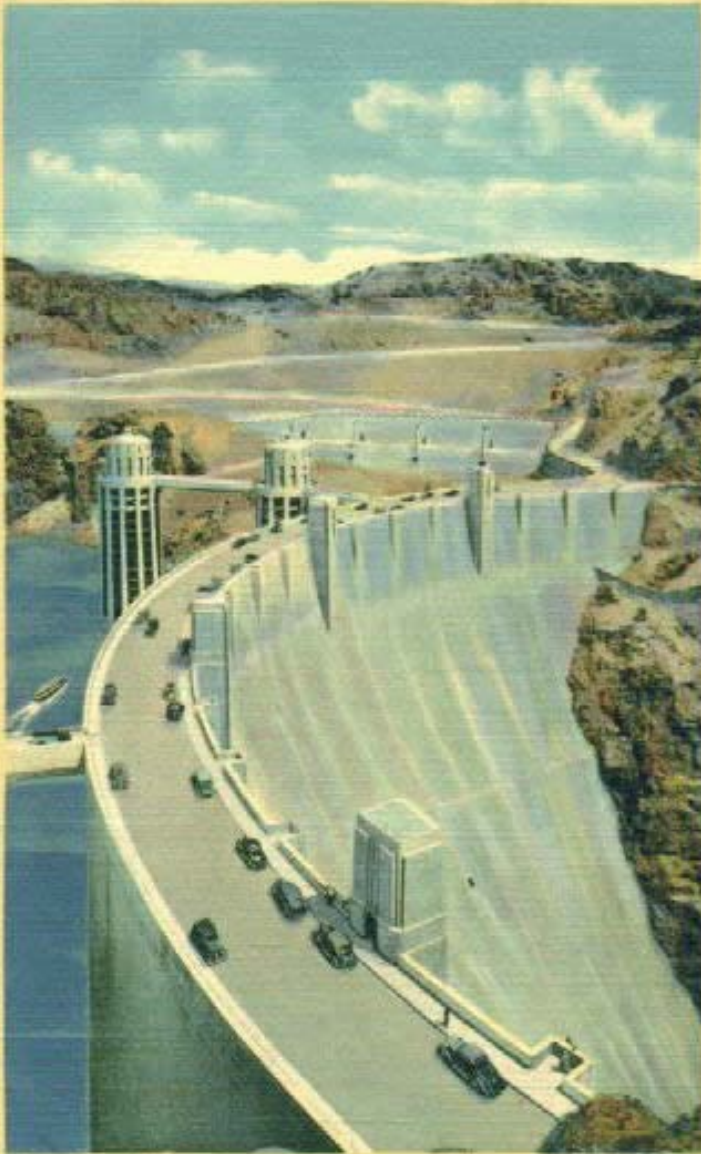


Planning
Overview and
Update

April, 2011

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

HIGHWAY ACROSS BOULDER DAM, CONNECTING NEVADA AND ARIZONA



"In a country where nature has been so lavish . . . to set aside a few rivers in their natural state should be considered an obligation."

Sen. Frank Church, 1968

". . . The time has also come to identify and preserve free-flowing stretches of our great rivers . . ."

Lyndon Johnson, 1965

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act 1968

- Protects free-flowing condition
- Protects water quality
- Protects and enhances the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values
- Ensures visitor access and enjoyment

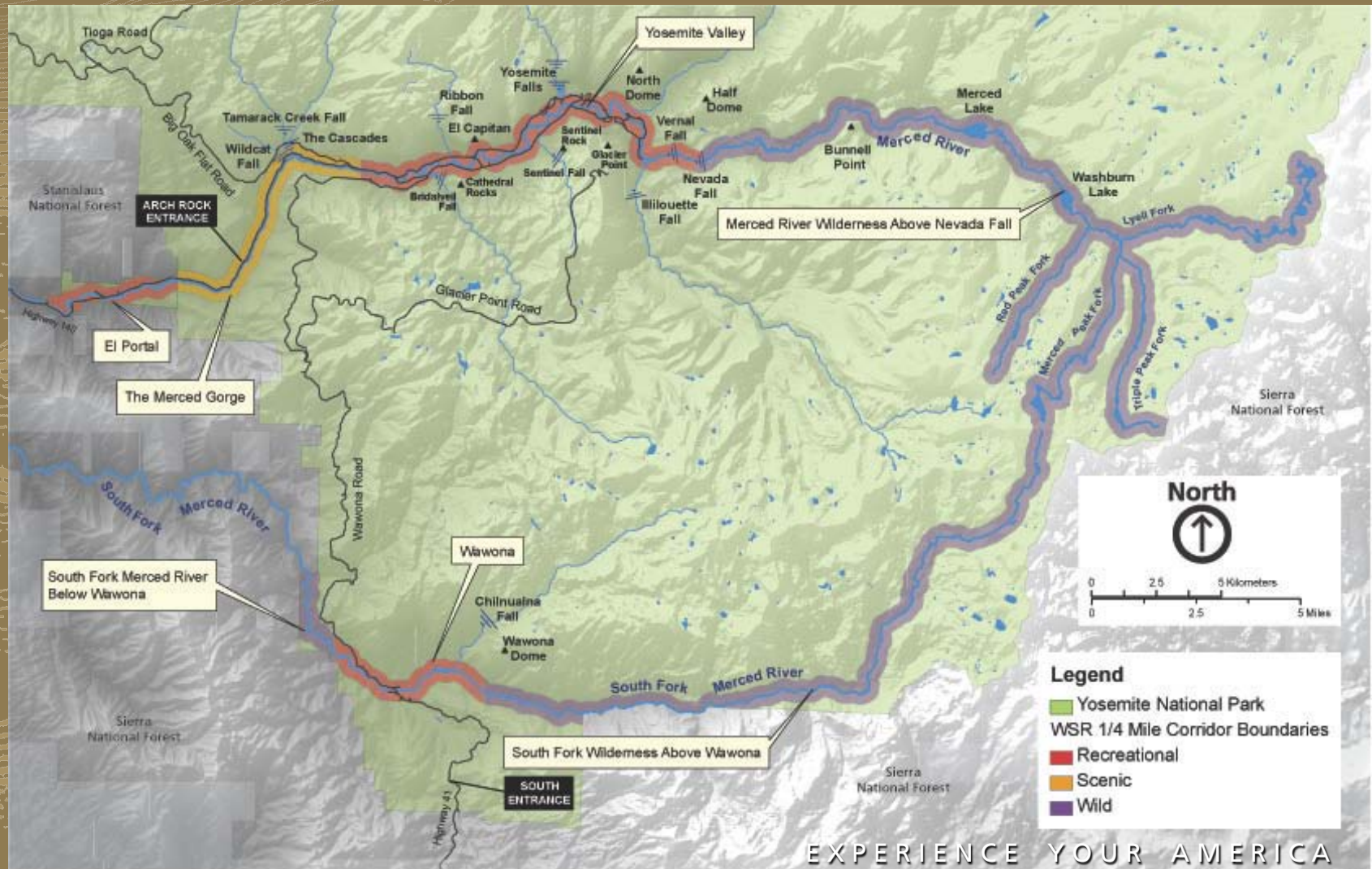


Merced Wild and Scenic River

- Congressionally designated in 1987
- Merced River from headwaters to El Portal
- South Fork Merced from Headwaters through Wawona
- Yosemite National Park: 81 miles

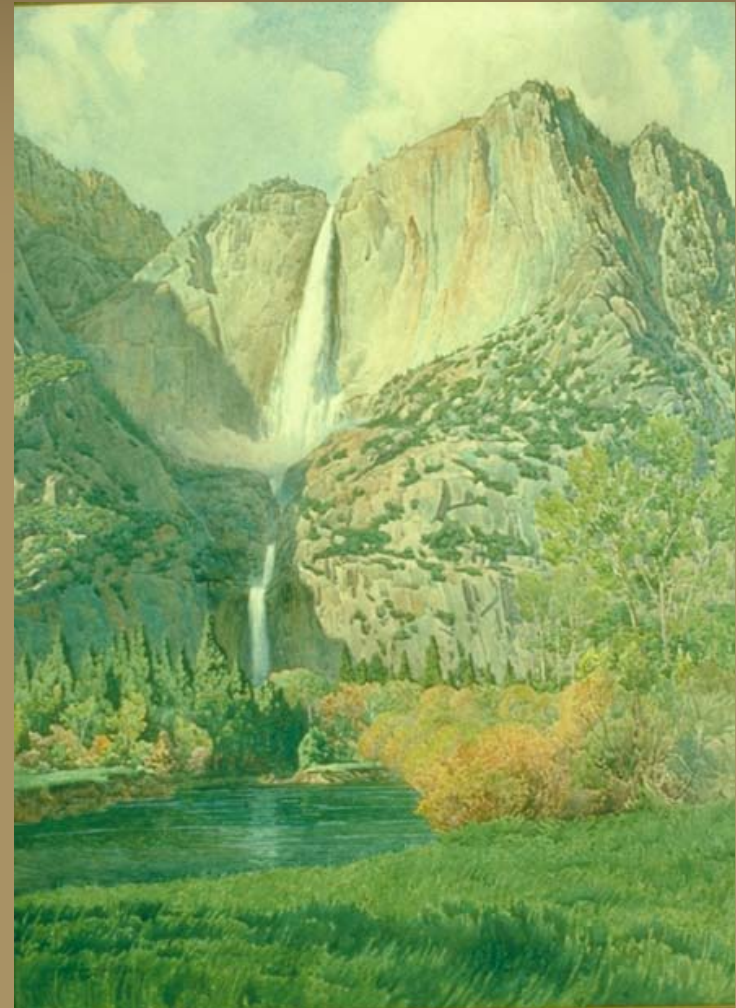


Merced Wild and Scenic River



Purposes of the River Plan

- Protect and enhance the river's **Outstandingly Remarkable Values**, water quality, and free-flowing condition
- Address:
 - User Capacities*
 - Development of lands and facilities*
 - Other management practices necessary to achieve the purposes of the Act*



Outstandingly Remarkable Values

- **Outstandingly Remarkable Values** (ORVs) are the qualities that make the river worthy of special protection
- Merced River: 24 ORVs
scenic, recreational,
geological, hydrological,
biological, cultural



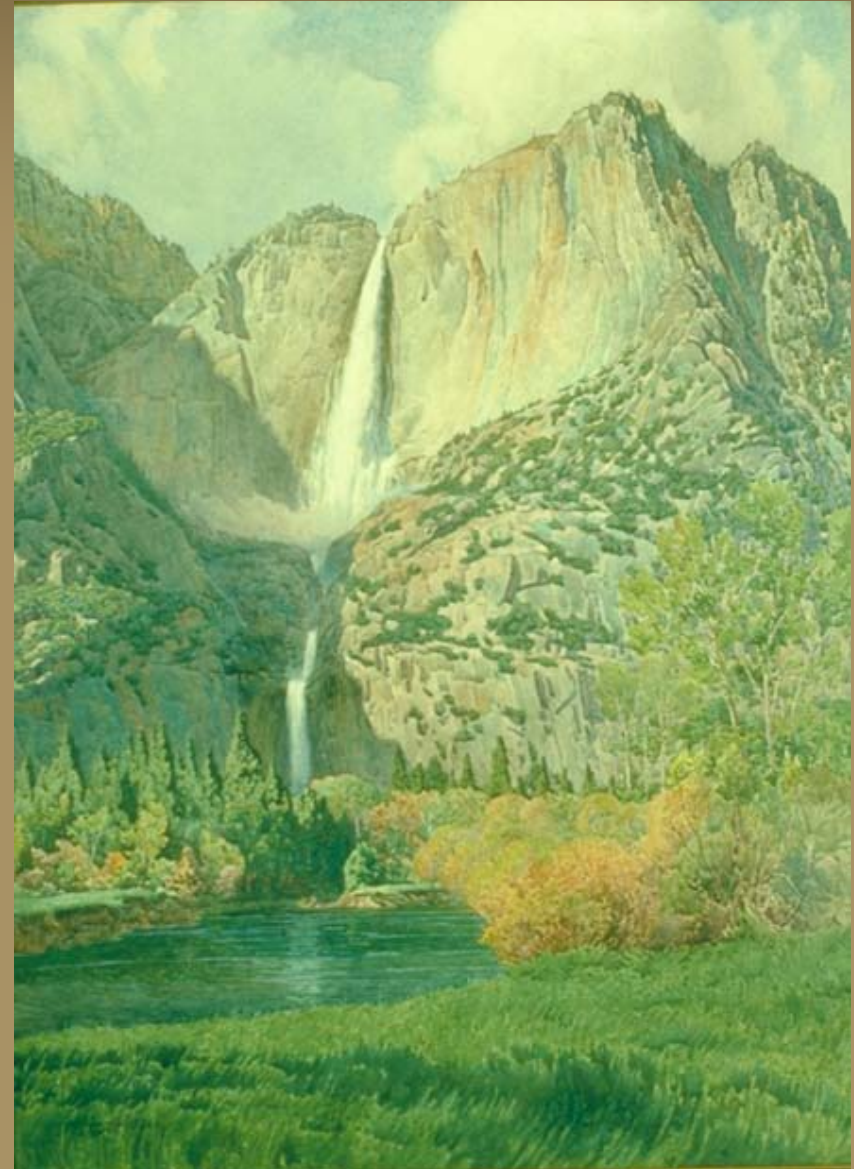
Interagency WSR Council Criteria

The value **must be river related or river dependent:**

Located in the river or on its immediate shorelands (within a quarter-mile on either side of the river) **and**

Contribute substantially to the functioning of the river ecosystem **or**

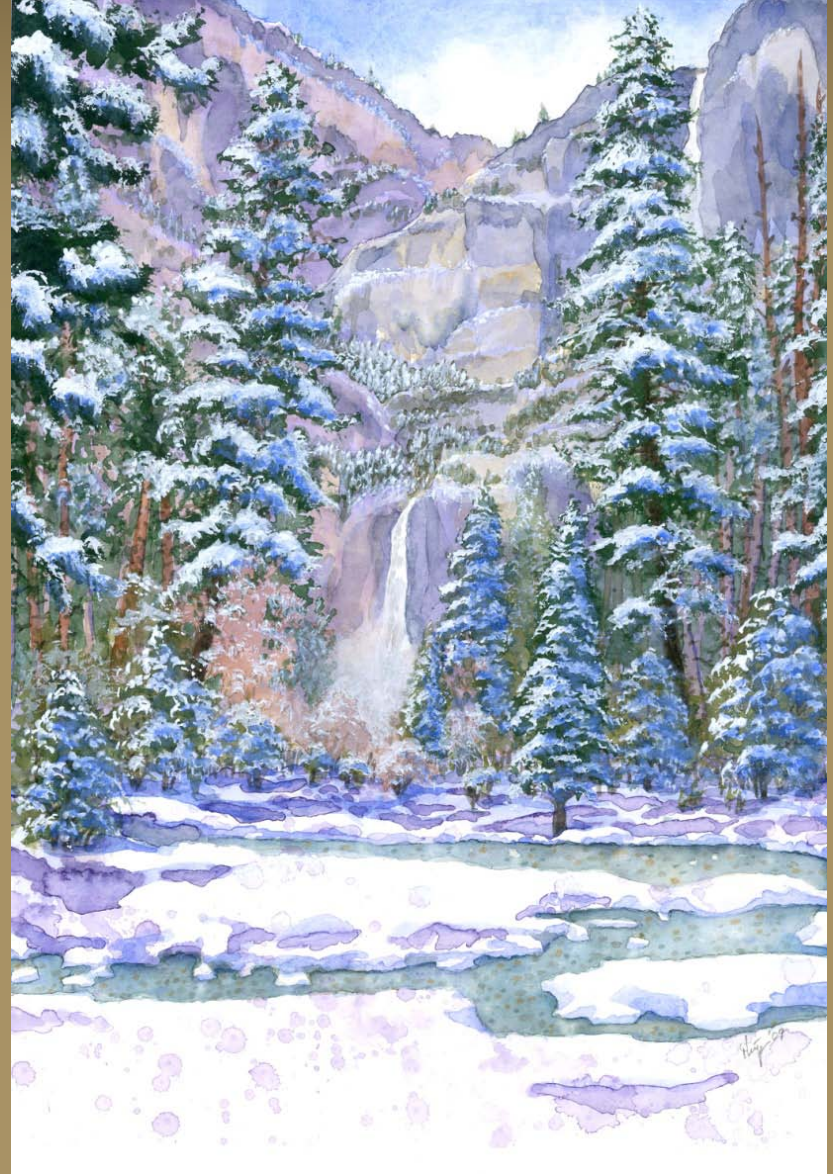
Owe its location or existence to the presence of the river



Interagency WSR Council Criteria

The value **must be rare, unique, or exemplary in a regional or national context:**

A conspicuous example from among a number of similar values that are themselves uncommon or extraordinary.



Merced ORV Development to Date

Date	Participants
January 2010	Merced River Plan steering team and USFS Wild and Scenic Rivers Act expert
February 2010	Yosemite natural and cultural resource experts (about 30)
February 2010	Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council and two Yosemite employees
February 2010	Merced River Plan core team, environmental compliance contractors, and user capacity experts (about 40 Yosemite employees and colleagues)
March 2010	Yosemite <i>National</i> Park natural and cultural resource experts (about 30, in subject area teams)
April 2010	Yosemite Management Team review (about 10 persons)
Fall 2010	Public, academic, and professional organization review, and local, state, and federal agency review.
<i>Spring 2011</i>	<i>Condition Assessment and Workshops</i>



MERCED RIVER PLAN ROADMAP — Draft 2.0, Feb 2011 (Will be updated)

1. Scoping II. Identify Foundation Elements

III. Develop Alternatives



ON-LINE NEWSLETTER — OPEN CONVERSATIONS — WEB INFORMATION — WEBINARS & VIDEO CLIPS



ON-LINE NEWSLETTER — OPEN CONVERSATIONS

10/14
GATEWAY
PARTNERS
Meeting

7/14
GATEWAY
PARTNERS
Meeting

June
Collaborative
ALTERNATIVE
CONCEPTS
Workshops

Workshop
Workshop
Workshop

OUTPUTS

ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOPS

5/13
SCIENCE
FORUM
Time & agenda
TBD

4/29
User
Capacity
Workshop
Time & agenda
TBD

4/26
Transportation
Workshop
Update & Discussion
(Part of
Park-wide
Transp. plan)

4/22
Hydrology
Biology
Geology
Workshop

4/14
GATEWAY
PARTNERS
Meeting

BASELINE CONDITIONS WORKSHOPS

3/25
Recreation
ORV
Workshop
at
YNP Open House
3/25
1-4:00pm

4/27
Cultural
Resources
ORV Workshop
at
YNP Open House

SCIENTIFIC
DATA
RMS
Final
Report

April
SCIENTIFIC
DATA
RMS
Draft
Report

Draft
RIVER
VALUES
BASELINE
CONDITIONS
Report

ORV
Report

GOALS
&
OBJECTIVES
Report

SCOPING
LETTERS
&
Report

BI-WEEKLY PLAN TEAM MEETINGS

YNP
Open
House

YNP
Open
House

YNP
Open
House

YNP
Open
House

Internal
Workshops

ALTERNATIVE
CONCEPTS
Workbook

Final
RIVER
VALUES
BASELINE
CONDITIONS
Report

Halfdome EA

Rockfall EA

Tioga EA

TRP
REVIEW

TRP
RELEASE

TRP
PUBLIC MEETINGS

Ahwahnee EA

JAN

FEB

MAR

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

SUMMER

FALL

● PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT Workshops & Communication Meetings

All Yellow Circles = Open Public Meetings

● DELIVERABLES

White = drafts
Blue = final reports

Other projects with implications for MRP

Overall Schedule

- Spring 2011
Spring Workshops on Baseline Conditions and Management Concerns
- Summer 2011
Collaborative Development of Alternatives Concepts Workbook
- Fall 2011
Continued work with public on Alternatives Development
- Early 2012
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Summer/Fall 2012
Public Comment and DEIS Workshops

Keep up to date!

MRP NPS website:

<http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/mrp.htm>

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NEW documents posted!



In 1987 the U.S. Congress designated the Merced a Wild and Scenic River to preserve its free-flowing condition and to protect and enhance the unique values that made it worthy of special protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Both the Merced River above, through, and below Yosemite Valley, and the South Fork of the Merced above, through, and below Wawona have this special status.

In accordance with the law, the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing the Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (**Merced River Plan/EIS**) for the 81 miles of the river within Yosemite National Park. When completed, the plan will guide future management of activities in the river corridor, including site-specific actions needed to protect the river in Yosemite Valley, El Portal, and Wawona.

Yosemite National Park has put together a dynamic **team** of professionals to develop this plan. The team brings an enthusiasm and commitment to developing a Merced River Plan that protects the river's values for present and future generations. Assisting the team is a large group of subject matter experts on the Yosemite Staff; park managers will be utilizing the skills of other experts as well. All of us look forward to working with you in this exciting process.