Scenic Vista Management

2012 Work Plan

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.

Scenic vista management is a program to document, protect, and reestablish Yosemite's important viewpoints and vistas, consistent with the natural processes and human influences that created them. This is a management program, rather than an individual project-based approach. Park staff have inventoried 181 scenic vistas in Yosemite and found that encroaching vegetation completely obscured about one-third of the vistas, and partially obscured over half the vistas. The *Finding of No Significant Impact* for the *Scenic Vista Management Plan* environmental assessment was completed and signed in July of 2011. Of the 181 sites inventoried, management of 10 will addressed as part of the *Tuolumne River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan*, and 83 will be addressed as part of the *Merced River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan*. Compliance for management actions on the remaining 88 vista sites has been completed. No more than 93 vista sites altogether will be initially managed, and an additional 21 sites only maintained, parkwide.

The following work plan for 2012 involves 10 sites for initial management.

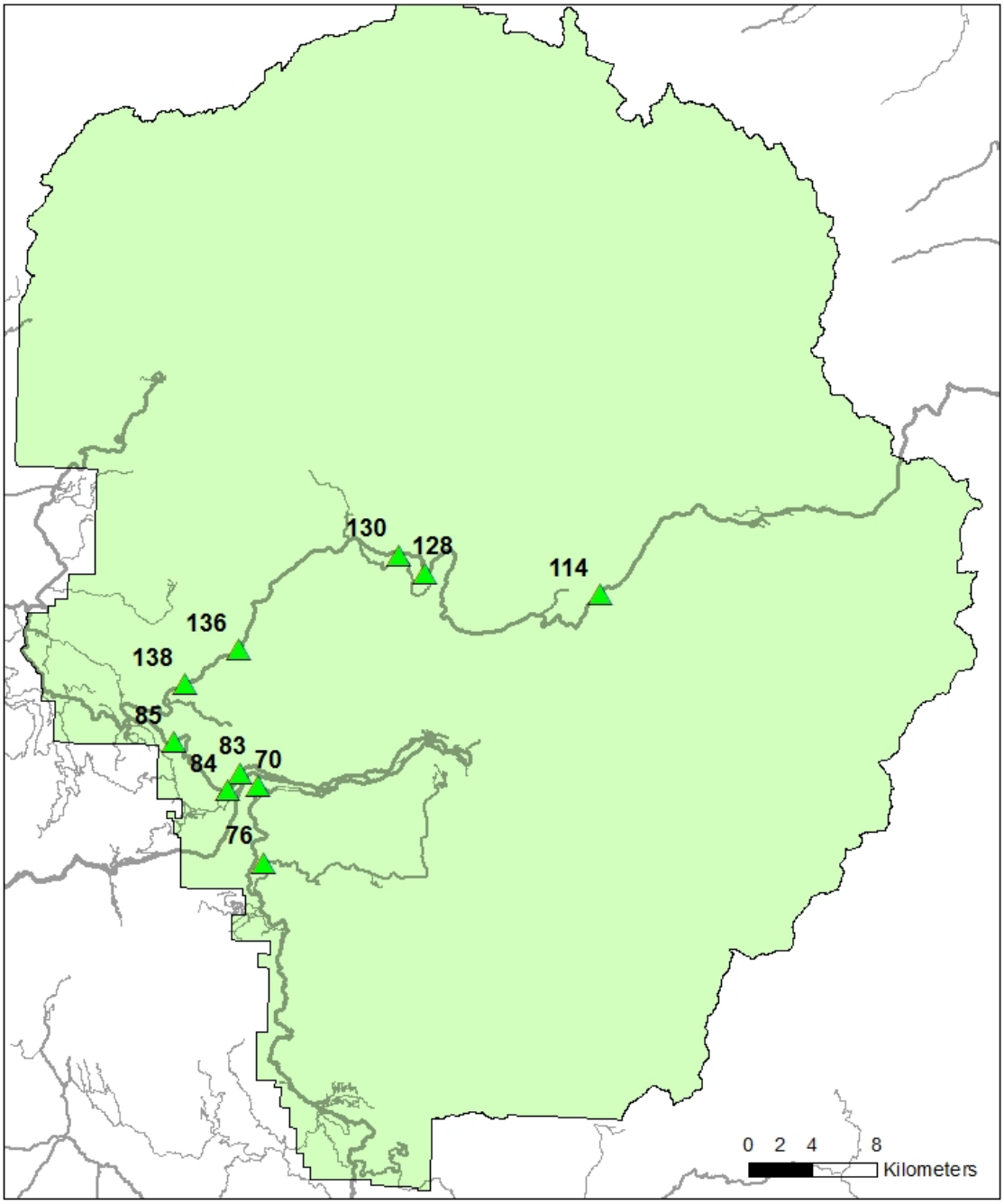
These work plans are provided to guide worker activities, to ensure the process is transparent, and the public is informed about all actions being taken in Yosemite National Park regarding scenic vista management. Comments about specific actions in the work plans are welcome. Park staff will review comments submitted to the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website and individual work plans can be adjusted, postponed, or canceled if pertinent information reveals any unforeseen adverse effects. Final work plans will be posted before any work begins. Work is estimated to begin in September, 2012.

Management Actions Common to all Work Plans

The following proposed 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 any adverse effects are minimized or eliminated.

- Park staff resource experts will review the annual work plan to ensure an absence of adverse effects on cultural and natural resources and apply appropriate mitigations.
- Work shall be scheduled to minimize potential adverse effects 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. No actions outside of these limits are proposed for 2012.
- Features with obvious high value to wildlife, such as snags (particularly those with evidence of wildlife use), very large diameter trees, California black oak trees, large diameter logs, and decaying wood would be preserved, where possible. If snags are proposed to be removed, it would be noted as a snag on the work plan.
- Key habitat features for Pacific fisher would be retained where possible. Work for 2012 is believed to be outside of fisher habitat at this time.
- Special-status plant species and wildlife habitat will be protected. No special status vegetation or wildlife species are believed to be effected at this time for the 2012 proposed work.
- Equipment would 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*) would not be removed unless critical to restoring a vista of high or medium value. No removal of species in the willow family (Salicaceae), including black cottonwood trees (*Populus balsamifera*) will occur. None of these species are proposed to be removed in 2012.
- Trees located immediately adjacent to the water's edge and hanging over the mean high water of streams or rivers will not be removed. Several vista sites in the 2012 Work Plan are near water bodies, but over hanging vegetation will not be removed. No removal of in-stream, downed large wood will occur.
- Old growth trees and trees older than the establishment date for the particular 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 or District Forestry Worker Supervisors qualified to safely direct tree felling, subject to strict supervisory control.
- Biomass may be utilized or disposed of in any way that would not require additional compliance. This could be cultural use, lop and scatter, onsite mulch, chip and haul, pile and burn, haul to woodlot, or contracted timber removal. Wood would be allowed to cure prior to being burned in order to reduce smoke generation if burned.
- All work that generates noise levels above 76 decibels near residential or visitor use areas would be performed between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- Work crews would avoid soil compaction when operating trucks or heavy equipment in wet or compactable soils by distributing machinery weight with the use of track mats.
- Operators would move tracked equipment straight in and out of work sites and avoid turning while off pavement. Disturbed soils would 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.
- No removals will take place in wilderness.
- Vehicles would contain equipment for the prevention and cleanup of spills. Temporary fuel storage and staging areas would be flagged, signed, and monitored. Work crews would use safe and environmentally friendly fuels, lubricants, hydraulic fluid, and other fluids.
- Stumps would 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. Conifer stumps with diameters greater than 8 inches in prone areas shall be treated with Sporax sporicide to avoid creating new annosus root disease centers.
- Temporary road closures would generally not exceed fifteen minutes. Road closures would be scheduled in periods of low visitation when possible and announced in the Daily Report. Appropriate traffic control signs will be placed for all work adjacent to roadways.



2012 MRP Vista Points
Site Inventory Number
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

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number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
1	**Bridalveil Fall View**	**83**	**High**	**13.5**
	Big Oak Flat Road, Turnout east of the large tunnel with views of Bridalveil Falls, the Cathedrals, the Leaning Tower, and Merced River.			X: 260398 Y: 4178627

Local Ecology

Lower montane, Ponderosa Pine-Incense-cedar-(California Black Oak-Canyon Live Oak) association with rock barrens.

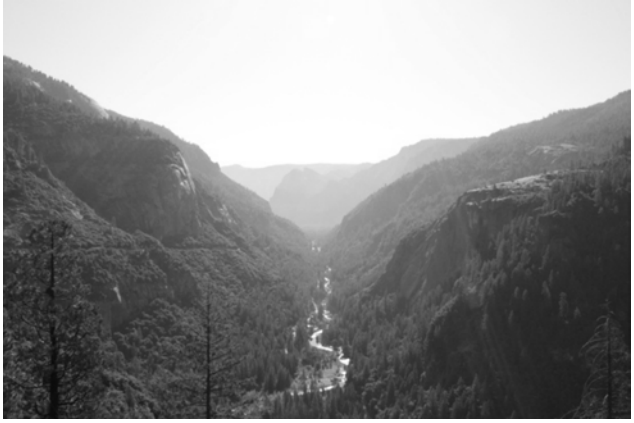

Figure 1. Bridalveil View. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 20”” DBH	Total
Cedar	1	1
White Fir	1	1

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Salvage plants that will be impacted by the use of logging equipment when it has been determined that targeted cut trees will be removed from the site.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Replant salvaged plants and seed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.
- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas annually.
- Maintenance may include revegetating eroded slopes or other denuded areas.

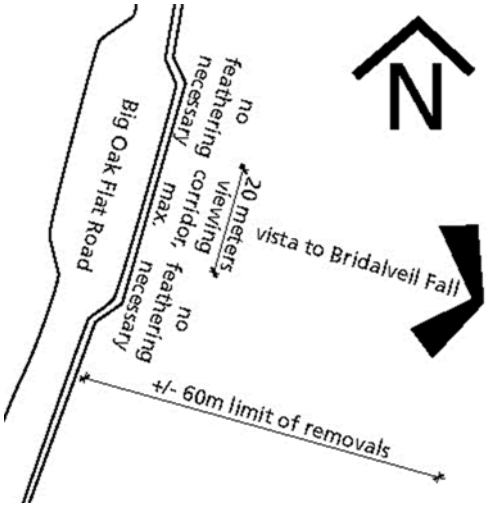

Figure 2. Bridalveil site diagram. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
2	**Half Dome View**	**84**	**high**	**11**
	Big Oak Flat Road, Half Dome View is just west of the big tunnel at a large turnout.			X: 259597 Y: 4177537

Local Ecology

Lower montane, Ponderosa Pine-Incense-cedar-(California Black Oak-Canyon Live Oak) association.

Figure 3. Half Dome View.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 20”” DBH	Total
Cedar	2	2

- 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.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Salvage plants that will be impacted by the use of logging equipment when it has been determined that targeted cut trees will be removed from the site.
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- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas annually.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH, revegetating eroded slopes or other denuded areas.

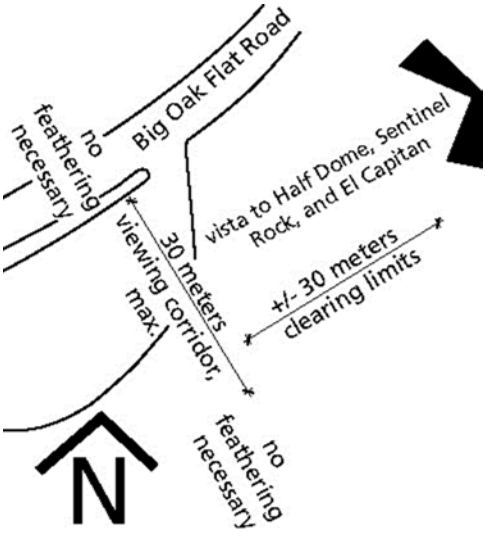

Figure 4. Half Dome Overlook site diagram. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
3	**Big Meadow Overlook**	**85**	**medium**	**9.25**
	Big Oak Flat Road, Big Meadow Overlook is at a large turnout looking out to Foresta and Big Meadow.			X: 256202 Y: 4180532

Local Ecology

Lower montane, Ponderosa Pine-Incense-cedar-(California Black Oak-Canyon Live Oak) association.

Figure 5. Big Meadow Overlook. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal			
Tree Species	< 20" DBH	<12" DBH	Total
Ponderosa Pine	2		2
Cedar	1		1
Interior Live Oak		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.

Restoration Actions

- Install erosion controls on the slope by constructing soil check dams using woody materials accumulated from the targeted tree removal. This material placement, along with slope contouring will be accomplished with the use of heavy equipment and manual labor.
- Install natural barriers from woody debris to reduce trampling to the vegetated and seeded slope.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifying compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Salvage plants that will be impacted by the use of logging equipment when it has been determined that targeted cut trees will be removed from the site.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Replant salvaged plants and seed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.

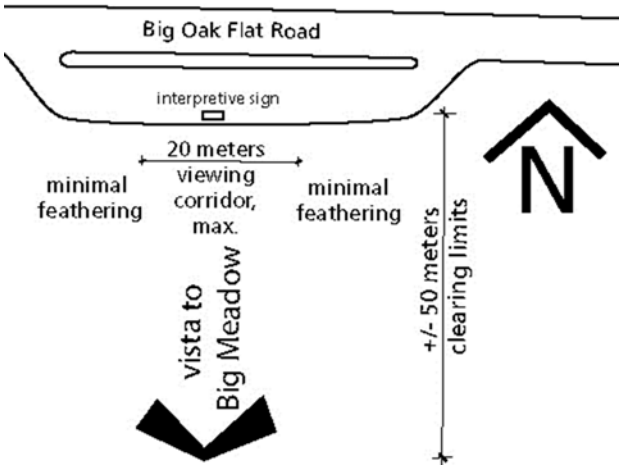

Figure 6. Big Meadow Overlook site diagram. Not to Scale.

- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every three years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetating eroded slopes and denuded areas.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
4	**Big Turnout South of Wawona Tunnel**	**70**	**high**	**11.0**
	Wawona Road, one mile west of the Wawona Tunnel.			**X**: 261503 **Y**: 4177813

Vegetation Ecology

Upper montane, Jeffrey Pine-Canyon Live Oak/Whiteleaf Manzanita Woodland Association.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 20” DBH	Total
Jeffery Pine	3	3
Interior Live Oak	3	3

Figure 7. Big turnout south of Wawona Tunnel. NPS 2009.

- 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.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
- Install erosion controls on the slope by constructing soil check dams using woody materials accumulated from the targeted tree removal. This material placement, along with slope contouring will be accomplished with manual labor.

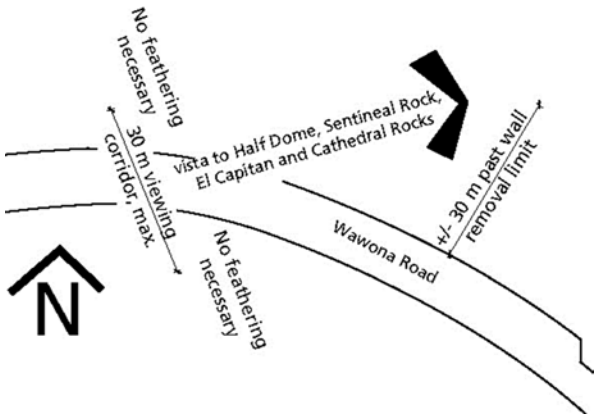

Figure 8. Big turnout South of Wawona tunnel site diagram. Not to Scale.

- Salvage plants that will be impacted by the use of logging equipment when it has been determined that targeted cut trees will be removed from the site.

- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Replant salvaged plants and seed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.
- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas annually.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH, revegetating eroded slopes or other denuded areas.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
5	**El Portal View**	**76**	**Medium**	8.75
	Glacier Point Road, 3.5 miles east of Wawona Road. Vista looks to El Portal, and Merced Canyon, and, on clear days, the Coast Range and San Joaquin Valley.			**X**: 261836 **Y**: 4172810

Vegetation Ecology

Between upper montane White Fir-Sugar Pine-(Incense-cedar-Jeffrey Pine) Forest and lower montane Deerbrush-Whiteleaf Manzanita Shrubland Association.

Figure 9. El Portal View. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 20” DBH	Total
Ponderosa Pine	7	7
Tree Pruning		
3- 12” DBH Black Oak		

- 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.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
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- Replant salvaged plants and seed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.
- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every 3 years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetating eroded slopes or denuded areas.

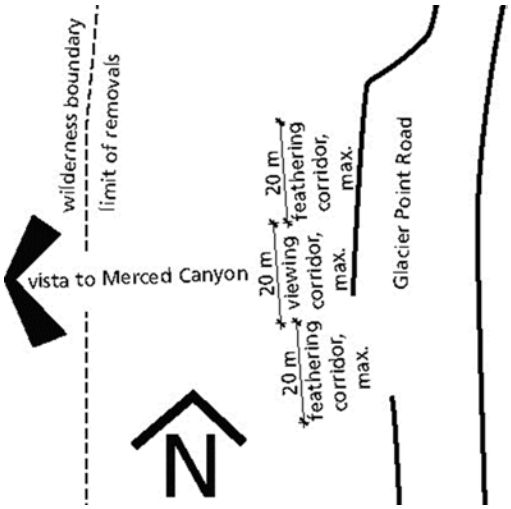

Figure 10. El Portal View site diagram. Not to scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
6	**Walker Party Turnout (T4)**	**138**	**medium**	7.75
	Tioga Road, 6.5 miles east of Crane Flat. Erroneously referred to as Gin Flat, previously.			**X**: 256934 **Y:** 4184176

Vegetation Ecology

Upper montane California Red Fir/ White Fir Forest Alliance.

Figure 11. Walker Party. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 20” DBH	Total
Red Fir	10	10
White Fir	5	5

- 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.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
- Salvage plants that will be impacted by the use of logging equipment when it has been determined that targeted cut trees will be removed from the site.
- Collect native grass and forb seed in late summer and early fall, as appropriate by species.
- Replant salvaged plants and seed any impacted areas upon completion of all forestry management actions.
- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

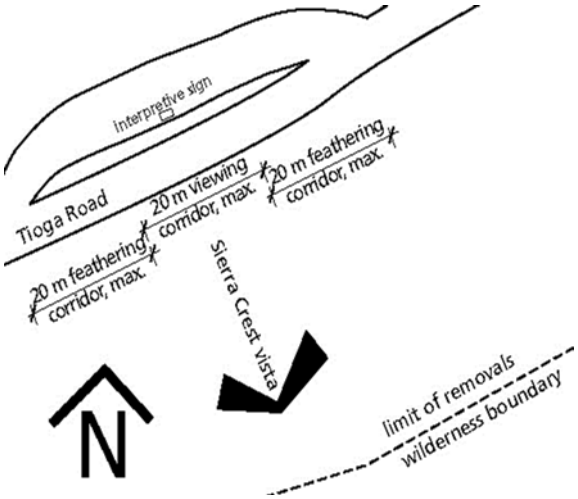

Figure 22. Walker Party Turnout site diagram. Not to scale.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every 3 years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetating eroded slopes and denuded areas.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
7	**South Fork of the Tuolumne Bridge (T5)**	**136**	**medium**	**8.75**
	Tioga Road on the South Fork of the Tuolumne River bridge, west of White Wolf.			**X:** 260256 **Y:** 4186260

Vegetation Ecology

Upper montane Jeffrey Pine/Huckleberry Oak Woodland Association.

Figure 13. South Fork Tuolumne River bridge. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal	
Species	Stems < 3” dia.
Mountain Alder (shrub)	+/- 30

- Cut alder to ground in at southwest corner of pullout to allow viewing of waterfall from pullout edge.
- Flush cut stumps with hand tools to minimize impact to surrounding vegetation.
- Scatter all woody debris left on site from the newly cut trees to reduce visual impacts.

Restoration Actions

- No revegetation actions will be necessary

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate maintain site vistas every 3 years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetation of eroded slopes and denuded areas.

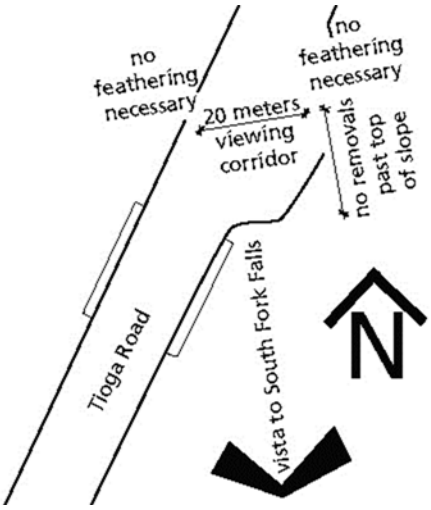

Figure 14. South Fork of the Tuolumne River bridge site diagram. Not to Scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
8	**Clark Range View (T11)**	**130**	**high**	**12.5**
	Tioga Road, 0.27 miles east of the Lukens Lake trailhead. There is a base of an old interpretive sign that once identified the peaks in the range			**X**: 270268 **Y**: 4192219

Vegetation Ecology

Upper montane California Red Fir-(Sierra Lodgepole Pine) Forest Superassociation and Jeffrey Pine/Huckleberry Oak Woodland Association.

Figure 15. Clark Range View and old interpretive sign base. NPS 2009.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal				
Tree Species	<6”DBH	<20”DBH	20”-30” DBH	TOTAL
Red Fir	5	10	2	17
Tree Pruning				
Trim - 40” Jeffery Pine (remove lower limbs that obstruct view of Clark Range)				

- 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.
- Salvage non-target plants that could be impacted by machinery before work begins, where practical, and replant afterward.

Restoration Actions

- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
- Install erosion controls on the slope by constructing soil check dams using woody materials accumulated from the targeted tree removal. This material placement, along with slope contouring will be accomplished with manual labor.
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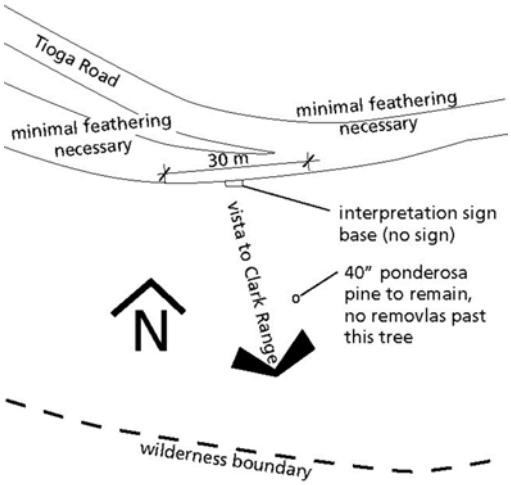

Figure 16. Clark Range View Turnout site diagram. Not to scale.

- Maintain planted vegetation with regular watering until seasonal rainfall begins in the fall.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas every three years.
- Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetating eroded slopes and denuded areas.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
9	**West of Lukens Lake (T13)**	**128**	**medium**	**8.25**
	Tioga Road. Large turnout approximately 3 miles east of White Wolf intersection.		**X:** 271852 **Y:** 4191083	

Vegetation Ecology

Upper montane Sierra Juniper/(Oceanspray) Woodland Superassociation

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

- No trees need to be removed.

Restoration Actions

- Install erosion controls on the slope by constructing soil check dams using woody materials accumulated from the targeted tree removal. This material placement, along with slope contouring will be accomplished with the use of heavy equipment and manual labor.

Figure 17. Turnout West of Lukens Lake. NPS 2009.

- Install natural barriers from woody debris to reduce trampling to the vegetated and seeded slope.
- Transplant seedling herbaceous and woody shrubs from the surrounding area on the impacted slope.
- Mitigate all impacts associated with the cutting and removal of targeted trees by scarifing compacted soils and mulching disturbed areas with native forest litter.
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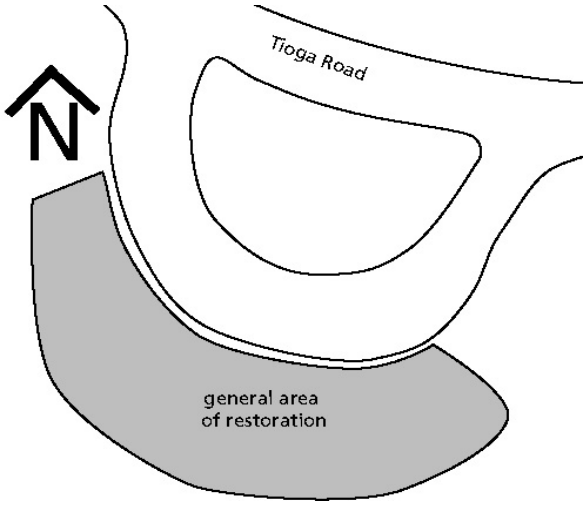

Figure 18. Turnout West of Lukens Lake site diagram. Not to scale.

number	name	Inventory number	priority	VRA score
10	**West End of Tenaya Lake**	**114**	**high**	11.5
	Tioga Road, at picnic area ½ mile west of Murphy Creek adjacent to Tenaya Lake.			**X**: 282842 **Y**: 4189749

Vegetation Ecology

Subalpine, Sierra Lodgepole Pine Woodlands Superassociation.

Vista Management Actions

Forestry Management

Tree Removal		
Tree Species	< 12” DBH	Total
Lodgepole Pine	16	16
Tree Pruning		
Trim 15 Lodgepole Pine		

Figure 19. Tenaya Lake view. NPS 2009.

- 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.

Restoration Actions

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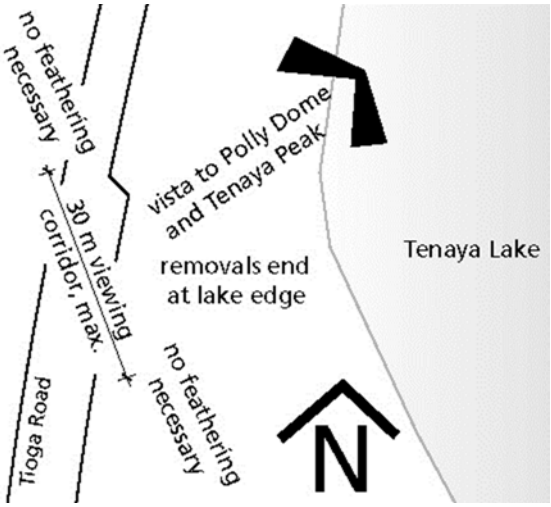

Figure 20. Tenaya Lake View site diagram. Not to scale.

Continued Maintenance

- Evaluate and maintain site vistas annually.

Maintenance may include felling trees < 6” DBH and revegetating eroded slopes and denuded areas.