



## Yosemite National Park

User Capacity Symposium, February 6-8, 2008

Cliff Room, Yosemite Lodge

### **Round 4: (Same Question as Round 3) Regardless of the approach chosen, how can land management agencies better implement and institutionalize user capacity systems, given issues such as money, time, political will, complexity, hard decisions, litigation, and other concerns?**

- Funding for monitoring should be prioritized and formalized.
- How to institutionalize the commitments when staff changes (training, information transfer, etc.)
- Empowering staff to train managers.
- Choice of indicators is critical, meaningful inexpensive and effective.
- Legislation ineffective without monitoring (sustainable program)
- Feedback about monitoring effectiveness.
- Make monitoring effective and meaningful.
- Make monitoring fit with existing duties, efficient and simple.
- Integrate and communication about monitoring activities to better utilizes resources.
- How can participants implement 'political will' about protecting resources?
- How far do we go to give everyone all the access they want?
- Studies should be followed by actions.
- Build trusting relationships (help minimize the need for litigation/ try mediation first.)
- Use advisory committee to help implement plan / management decisions.
- Continue to make good use of the internet as an information / engagement tool.
- Don't design for failure; make it easy for people to comply with the preferred actions.
- Consistency of methods i.e. front country / backcountry for a reservation system.
- Make sure you have right skill set -> be creative.
- Educate public on changes in a positive light.
- The message should be 'why this will be better' ...
- People value choice (transportation) keep things on the table for conversation.
- It has to be achievable!!!
- Introducing potential choices gradually – educating along the way to ensure support – understanding (trade-offs).
  
- Be creative – look @ how to manage use at one time versus overall use.
  - Offer transparent choices.
  - Examine role of gateway communities in helping the process to find win – win approaches.
- Put responsibilities onto visitors where there is buy in, willingness and feasibility:
- Allow them to practice stewardship by educating them, create some sense of empowerment.
- Don't just 'prohibit' -> positive reinforcement.
- Avoid techno-speak, build common language use laymen's terms.

- Communicate better about where numerical capacity limits are appropriate and where other approaches are better.
  - Engage visitors on issues as part on interp involve before public comment period.
  - How can the process be simplified?
  - Communication often throughout the process.
  - Express transportation 'FDC' as part of the GMP process.
  - Use a case study approach so can learn from others, i.e. how it worked, what didn't work and why.
  - Barriers – inadequate political will, inadequate resources.
  - Be consistent among problem types – decision making.
  - Steps NPS can take to avoid litigation. Transition of NPS from 'good guys' to 'bad guys' trust!!!
  - Adequate public involvement in environmental comprehensive process.
  - Process successfully used in other land management agencies.
  - Avoidance of litigation is unrealistic.
  - Use existing data to determine a number and stick with it.
  - Study, study, study = inaction.
  - Establish criteria when use capacity approach is appropriate.
  - Public buys into need and process – level support.
  - Desired conditions are agreed upon by stakeholders.
  - NPS should come up with desired conditions with public input, but not to the point of causing inaction.
  - Institutionalize resource protection into training among disciplines and a part of performance plans.
  - Question is unanswerable - too many variables: money, political will etc. – we don't however have the time.
  - Education of appropriate visitor behavior as a way of raising visitor numbers – Yosemite is a cathedral.
  - Outreach – requires public support – how to get next generation to buy in.
  - Interact with co-op government and others -> implement.
  - It's a regional situation.
  - If management actions (like transit system) are used, make sure it does the job.
  - Need buy-in from stakeholders and public.
  - Manage for diversity of experience or it won't get support.
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- Create trust and partnerships – Yosemite gateway partnership – mariposa forum.
  - Constant exchange of information. Creates political will to support management.
  - Need to 'draw a line in the sand' specific head count.
  - Create a fluid approach that allows for testing and dialogue on what works.