



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Yosemite National Park  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, California 95389

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
L7617 (YOSE)

## Memorandum

To: Dave Van Meter  
From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park  
Subject: Categorical Exclusion for Project Number 2005-049  
El Portal Old Wastewater Treatment Facility Removal

Your proposed project is an action that has been determined to result in no measurable environmental effects. It is therefore Categorically Excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act analysis under the category: DO12 3.4.E.04, *Removal of non-historic materials and structures in order to restore natural conditions when the removal has no potential for environmental impacts, including impacts to cultural landscapes or archeological resources.*

Necessary compliance coordination has been completed with regards to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Endangered Species Act. This project clearance is valid under the condition that you adhere to the conditions stated in the attached environmental screening form and XXX (when attached) when implementing this project.

On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.

Michael J. Tollefson

4/28/05

Date

cc: Statutory compliance file  
Enclosure (2)

**Environmental Screening Form****I. Project Information****Project Title:** El Portal Old Wastewater Treatment Facility Removal**Project Manager:** Dave Van Meter**Division:** Facility Management**PMIS #:** 7242**Start Date:** 7/1/2005**Completion Date:** 11/30/2005**Location:** El Portal**Brief Project Description:**

The project entails the removal of all existing structures and rehabilitating the site to preconstruction conditions. However, rather than remove all the concrete footings, the excavation and demolition will concentrate on removing everything to below the finished grade and breaking up all remaining concrete to allow for surface water penetration. Native fill material will be added and used for site restoration.

The project will demolish and remove five concrete structures consisting of 169 tons of concrete, 345 tons of asphalt walks and roads, 550 feet of cyclone fencing, associated appurtenances.

Although archeological mitigation, monitoring, and exhumation of culturally sensitive human remains and artifacts occurred prior to construction in 1962, there will be archeological monitoring during all ground disturbing activities.

**Planning and Compliance Background (If box checked, then YES):**

- Has compliance already been completed?  
Provide name of compliance document, compliance tracking number, and date of signature:
  
  - Is this project explicitly called for in a completed (not draft) park planning document?  
Indicate which plan:  
Provide page number(s) from the plan which reference this project:  
Is this project still consistent with the approved plan? (If NO, prepare EA/EIS)
  
  - Does this project require consultation with any federal, state, local agency, or tribes?  
Provide name of agency and dates consulted:
  
  - Must a Wilderness Minimum Requirement Analysis be completed?  
Date received from PM by Planning and Compliance:
-

**Environmental Screening Form****II. National Environmental Policy Act Checklist**

Does the proposed project potentially (If box checked, then YES):

- Adversely impact public health and safety?  
Demolition and removal of materials could impact public health and safety; see conditions below.
- Adversely impact historic or cultural resources, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, ecologically critical areas, or Natural Landmarks?  
Structures to be demolished and removed sit on top of known archeological/burial site; see conditions below and in attached XXX.
- Have highly controversial environmental effects?
- Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown risks?
- Establish a precedent for future actions resulting in significant environmental effects?
- Relate directly to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?
- Involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources?
- Adversely affect properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?
- Adversely impact a species listed or proposed to be listed as Federally threatened, endangered or adversely impact designated critical habitat for these species?
- Violate any federal, state, local or tribal laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment, such as Executive Order 11098 (Floodplains Management) or Executive Order 11090 (Protection of Wetlands) or Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act or Wilderness Act?
- Have a disproportionate, significant adverse effect on low-income or minority populations?
- Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of non-native invasive species?  
Construction equipment and materials could harbor non-native invasive species; see conditions below.
- Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of federally listed noxious weeds?  
Construction equipment and materials could harbor non-native invasive species; see conditions below.
- Require a permit from a federal, state, or local agency to proceed, unless the agency from which the permit is required agrees that a CE is appropriate?
- Have the potential for significant impact as indicated by a federal, state, or local agency or Indian Tribe?
- Have the potential to be controversial because of disagreement over possible environmental effects?
- Have the potential to violate the NPS Organic Act by impairing park resources or values?
- Restrict access to, and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites?

**NEPA Comments/Conditions:**

1. If mercury is found to be present, include provisions in project specifications that stipulate appropriate handling procedures. (Safety Office)
2. Establish work-group with Archeology & Vegetation team from RMS to integrate archeological resource protection into the scope of work and project implementation, including both demolition and restoration phases. (Resources Management & Science)
3. Develop NAGPRA action plan, including involvement of AICMC in planning for Native American Monitoring during all phases of project implementation.

## Environmental Screening Form

4. Contractors shall be informed of, and NPS staff shall follow, best management practices for preventing the spread of non-native, invasive plant species as described in Division 1 specifications, Section 1355.

*If any of the above exceptions apply and cannot be avoided or mitigated, the project cannot be Categorical Excluded and an EA or an EIS is required.*

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**Environmental Screening Form****III. YNP Checklist**

Does the project contribute to measurable impacts on (If box checked, then YES):

- Geologic resources (i.e. Soils, Bedrock, Streambeds, etc.)?
- Air quality?
- Soundscape (i.e. Increase Noise, Affect Natural Sounds)?
- Water quality/quantity or streamflow characteristics?
- Types and levels of land use, including occupancy, income, values, and/or ownership?
- Unique ecosystems?
- Unique, important fish/wildlife or their habitats?
- Visitor experience or aesthetic resources (i.e. Supply, Demand, Visitation Activities, etc.)?
- Socioeconomics, including employment, occupation, income changes, tax base and/or infrastructure?
- Energy resources?
- Gateway communities?
- Long term management of resources or land resources productivity?
- Pollution Prevention (greening of the parks)?
- Other important environmental resources (e.g., geothermal, paleontological, or night skies)?

**YNP Comments/Conditions:**

*If any of the above exceptions apply, the project cannot be Categorically Excluded and an EA or an EIS is required.*

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**IV. Special Status Species Checklist**

Within the area of potential impact, are there any (If box checked, then YES):

- Species of special concern? (Federal or State)
- Proposed or listed threatened or endangered species? (Federal or State)
- Park rare plants or vegetation?
- Potential habitats for the special-status species listed above?

**Special Status Species Comments/Conditions:**

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**Environmental Screening Form****V. National Historic Preservation Act Checklist**

Does the proposed project (If box checked, then YES):

- Entail ground disturbance?\*
- Demolition and removal of structure will cause ground disturbance; see conditions below and on attached XXX.
- Have any archeological or ethnographic sites within the area of potential effect?\*
- Structure to be demolished and removed sits on a known archeological/burial site; see attached XXX.
- Entail alteration of a historic structure or a cultural landscape?\*
- Has a National Register form been completed?\*
- Are there any structures on the List of Classified Structures in the area of potential effect?\*

\*If yes, then a XXX must be completed

**NHPA Comments/Conditions:**

1. Establish work-group with Archeology & Vegetation team from RMS to integrate archeological resource protection into the scope of work and project implementation, including both demolition and restoration phases. (Resources Management & Science)
2. Develop NAGPRA action plan, including involvement of AICMC in planning for Native American Monitoring during all phases of project implementation.

**VI. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act Checklist**

Does the proposed project (If box checked, then YES):

- Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor? Merced River
  - Fall within the bed and banks AND will it effect the free-flow of the river?
- If Yes, WSRA Section 7 determination required**
- Have the possibility of affecting water quality of the area?
  - Remain consistent with its river segment classification (Wild, Scenic, or Recreational - MRP p. 39)?  
Removal of these structures is consistent with this river segment's classification as "Recreational"; see comments below.
  - Protect and enhance ORVs (Scientific, Scenic, Geologic Processes/Conditions, Recreational, Biological, Cultural, Hydrologic Processes [i.e. Water Quality, Unique Wetlands]) on a segment-wide basis (refer to Fig. 2 in the MRP - p. 43)?  
Removal of these structures will protect and enhance this segments ORVs; see comments below.
  - Fall within the River Protection Overlay (MRP p. 99-101)?
  - Remain consistent with conditions of the River Protection Overlay (MRP p. 53)?
  - Remain consistent with Management Zoning (MRP p. 99-101)?  
Removal of these structures is consistent with all proposed management of this area; see comments below.
  - Fall on a tributary to a Wild and Scenic River?
    - Will the project invade (encroach or intrude upon) a Wild and Scenic River corridor?
    - Will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?

**WSRA Comments/Conditions:**

The site from which the structures are proposed to be removed are not within the river corridor as it is defined in the current Merced WSR CMP; however, it is within the proposed corridor for all action alternatives in the Revised Merced WSR Plan/DEIS, where the area is zoned either 2B, Discovery, or 2C-Day Use.

**Environmental Screening Form**

**VII. NEPA Analysis And Approval Conditions**

The project meets the terms and conditions of a categorical exclusion to NEPA.

**Applicable Categorical Exclusion:**

DO12 3.4.E.04 Removal of non-historic materials and structures in order to restore natural conditions when the removal has no potential for environmental impacts, including impacts to cultural landscapes or archeological resources.

**Conditions:**

- 1. If mercury is found to be present, include provisions in project specifications that stipulate appropriate handling procedures. (Safety Office)
- 2. Establish work-group with Archeology & Vegetation team from RMS to integrate archeological resource protection into the scope of work and project implementation, including both demolition and restoration phases. (Resources Management & Science)
- 3. Develop NAGPRA action plan, including involvement of AICMC in planning for Native American Monitoring during all phases of project implementation. (Resources Management & Science)
- 4. Contractors shall be informed of, and NPS staff shall follow, best management practices for preventing the spread of non-native, invasive plant species as described in Division 1 specifications, Section 1355. (Planning & Compliance Office)

*This project has been reviewed in accordance with the above criteria and it has been determined that the project will result in no or minimal environmental effects. Therefore, it is Categorically Excluded from further environmental review required under the National Environmental Policy Act. Additionally, the necessary compliance coordination has been completed with regards to the National Historic Preservation Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Endangered Species Act.*

**Prepared by:**

Gary Colliver

**With information from:**

Dave Van Meter

*Colliver* 4/20/05  
 Compliance Specialist Date

*Mann A Bure* 4/20/05  
 Compliance Program Manager Date

*Bill Delaney* 4/26/05  
 Chief, Project Management Date

**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)****A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING**

**Project Title:** El Portal Old Wastewater Treatment Facility Removal

**Project Manager:** Dave Van Meter

**Start Date:** 7/1/2005

**Completion Date:** 11/30/2005

**Location:** El Portal

**Description:**

The project entails the removal of all existing structures and rehabilitating the site to preconstruction conditions. However, rather than remove all the concrete footings, the excavation and demolition will concentrate on removing everything to below the finished grade and breaking up all remaining concrete to allow for surface water penetration. Native fill material will be added and used for site restoration.

The project will demolish and remove five concrete structures consisting of 169 tons of concrete, 345 tons of asphalt walks and roads, 550 feet of cyclone fencing, associated appurtenances.

Although archeological mitigation, monitoring, and exhumation of culturally sensitive human remains and artifacts occurred prior to construction in 1962, there will be archeological monitoring during all ground disturbing activities.

**Attachments:**

Drawings     Maps     Specifications     Photographs     Site Plan

Other:

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**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)**

**B. DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS**

**1. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify cultural resources?**

Yes     No

**Reference:** YOSE 1975AC  
El Portal Archeological District Nomination Form

**Check here if known cultural resources will be affected**

If the area has been disturbed in the past, please attach additional sheets to describe the nature, extent, and intensity of disturbance

**2. Affected Resource(s):**

CA-MRP-0181

**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)****3. The proposed action will (check as many as apply):**

- Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure
- Replace historic features/elements in kind
- Add nonhistoric features/elements to a historic structure
- Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (including terrain)
- Add nonhistoric features/elements (including visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting or cultural landscape
- Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible, or alter terrain
- Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible, or alter terrain
- Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resource
- Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic fabric, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources
- Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or structures)
- Other: NAGPRA Plan of Action; consultation, participation by AICMC.

**4. Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric fabric, setting, integrity or data:****5. Supporting Study Data (attach if feasible; if action is in a plan, give name and project or page number):****6. Additional Attachments (if needed):**

- Drawings  Maps  Photographs  Site Plan  Sample  List of Materials
- Other:

**Checklist Preparer****Date**

**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)**

**C. SPECIALIST SECTION**

SPECIALISTS: Your comments here (or attached) show that you have reviewed this proposal for conformity with requirements of Section 106, with the 1995 Servicewide PA (if applicable), and applicable parts of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation, the NPS Management Policies, and the NPS Cultural Resource Management Guideline, and have given your best professional advice about this project and the issues relevant to the Section 106 process, including identification and evaluation of historic properties and further consultation needs.

**Archeologist** Name: Laura Kirn

Date: 4/13/05

Comments:

Ground Disturbance Not Involved?

Assessment of Effect: NO adverse effect

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Integrate protection of archeological resources into specific plan of action (Project Mgmt + Scope of work).

Signature of Archeologist: Laura Kirn

**Cultural Anthropologist** Name: JENNIFER WETTESIMONS

Date: 4/13/05

Comments:

Assessment of Effect: No adverse effect

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Develop NABRS plan of action, involve AICMC in planning; monitor during removal.

Signature of Cultural Anthropologist: Jennifer Wettesimons

**Curator** Name:

Date:

Comments:

Assessment of Effect:

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Signature of Curator: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)**

**Historian**

Name:

Date:

Comments:

Assessment of Effect:

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Signature of Historian: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historical Architect**

Name:

Date:

Comments:

Assessment of Effect:

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Signature of Historical Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historical Landscape Architect** Name:

Date:

Comments:

Assessment of Effect:

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Signature of Historical Landscape Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preservation Specialist** Name:

*MARY VITTORE*

Date: *4/13/05*

Comments:

Assessment of Effect:

*NO EFFECT*

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Signature of Preservation Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

*Ernest M. Valle*

**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)****D. PARK 106 COORDINATOR REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. Review by specialists:** The appropriate subject-matter experts for reviewing the project are indicated in check-off boxes in the Specialist Section.

- The foregoing assessment is adequate: proposed action is consistent with all applicable NPS Management Policies, standards, guidelines, or USDI Standards/Guidelines, Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings or others and incorporates measures to avoid Adverse Effects.*

**Reviewed and Accepted By:**

Name: *Vicki Stephanie Gabel* Date: *4/13/05*

Title: Chief of Resources Division

**2. Assessment of Effect:** *No adverse effect*

**3. Compliance Requirements** The following is the park's assessment of Section 106 process needs and requirements for this undertaking

**A. Standard 36 CFR Part 800 Consultation**

Consultation under 36 CFR is needed subsequent to preparation and review by appropriate cultural resource management advisors of this form.

**B. Undertaking related to 1995 NPS Programmatic Agreement**

The above action meets all conditions for a programmatic exclusion under Stipulation IV of the 1995 NPS programmatic agreement.

**Exclusion Number: 4**

**C. Plan-Related Undertaking**

Consultation and review of the proposed undertaking were completed in the context of a plan review process, in accordance with the 1995 NPS programmatic agreement and 36 CFR Part 800.

**D. Undertaking Related to Another Agreement**

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under a document such as a statewide agreement written in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.7 or counterpart regulations.

**Agreement:**

**E. Flood-Recovery Related Undertaking**

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under the letter-based agreement between the NPS, the State Historic Preservation Office and the Council for Historic Preservation for Highwater 97 flood repair and recovery.

**F. Undertaking Related to 1999 Yosemite Programmatic Agreement**

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under the park's 1999 programmatic agreement for planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance; the undertaking meets the stipulations identified in Article VII.C.2.

**Agreement:**

**4. Stipulations/Conditions**

- Following are listed any stipulations or conditions necessary to ensure that the assessment of effect above is consistent with 36 CFR Part 800 criteria of effect or to mitigate potential adverse effects.

1. *Integrate protection of archeological resources into a plan-of-action (scope of work & project management)*
2. *Develop WAGRA plan of action: involve AICMC in planning. Action items involving being plant removal.*

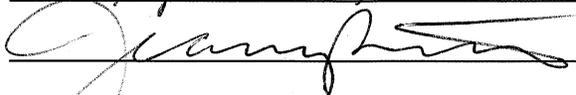
**PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM (YOSE-XXX)**

**Recommended by Park Section 106 coordinator**

Name: **Jeannette Simons**

Title: **Historic Preservation Officer**

Date: April 13, 2005

Signature: 

**E. SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL**

The proposed work conforms to NPS Management Policies and NPS-28 and I approve the recommendations, stipulations, or conditions noted in Section B of this form.

Signature of Superintendent: 

Date: 4/28/05