



Glacier Point Road Rehabilitation

Where is the project located?

The project area begins along Wawona Road, near Chinquapin Intersection, midway between Wawona and Yosemite Valley in Yosemite National Park. The project area includes 5.1 miles of the historic Glacier Point Road from Chinquapin intersection to and including the Badger Pass Ski Area parking lot. The existing roadway was completed in 1936, replacing a wagon road constructed in 1882.

Why undertake this project?

This area attracts high volumes of traffic year-round, providing access to Glacier Point, Badger Pass Ski Area, Bridalveil Campground, and trailheads to Nevada Falls and Taft Point. Rehabilitation of this historic road is necessary to maintain access to these popular sites and to make safety improvements, while preserving natural and cultural resources along the road. The road has not been fully repaved in over 40 years and has significantly deteriorated due to poor drainage and subsurface erosion. Visitor safety would be improved by resurfacing, replacing failing culverts, making minor grade adjustments to steep intersection approaches, and cleaning and restoring shoulders to their original width. Additionally, the Badger Pass Ski Area parking lot has extensive cracking and groundwater regularly seeps up through the asphalt.

What does this project propose?

The alternatives address issues identified in internal and public scoping, with input and review by subject matter experts such as the Federal Highways Administration engineering and safety experts, and park staff. These alternatives are described in detail in the *Glacier Point Road Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment (EA)*, released June 27, 2007. Listed below are highlights of the proposed actions.

- ❖ **Proposed roadway improvements** include restoring the roadbed, repaving, restoring ditches and shoulders, and replacing undersized or failing culverts to facilitate drainage. Historic stone culvert headwalls would be maintained or carefully removed and reconstructed to accommodate culvert replacement. In addition to culverts, drainage ditches along this segment are in need of reconstruction to help facilitate proper drainage of the roadway. At Chinquapin and Badger Pass intersections, slight grade adjustments would be made to their steep approaches to reduce vehicle accidents in winter conditions. Selective thinning of small diameter roadside trees would reduce ice build-up on the road, and reduce snow plow damage and interference.
- ❖ **Proposed improvements to the Chinquapin intersection** include minor modifications to address safety concerns and improve navigation of the intersection. Regulatory and informational signs would be added or upgraded to alert drivers of the approaching intersection and restroom entrances. Visibility would be improved by removing small diameter pine trees blocking the view of the comfort station parking entrance. Low retaining walls would be added to the outer curve of Wawona Road to support the roadbed and allow for placement of designated turning lanes onto Glacier Point Road from Wawona Road. Chain-up areas would be modified or added. In addition to this, an accessible path to the restroom will be added.

What does this project propose? continued...

- ❖ **Proposed improvements to the Badger Pass Ski Area parking lot include** replacement of drains and culverts to reduce puddling and ice build-up, and installation of filters to protect nearby wetlands from parking lot runoff.

What alternatives have been developed?

Public scoping for this project occurred in fall 2005. Issues and concerns identified in scoping were applied to the development of two reasonable and feasible action alternatives analyzed in detail in the *Glacier Point Road Rehabilitation EA*. Actions common to the two action alternatives include slight adjustment of steep grades (super-elevation), culvert replacement, roadside drainage repairs, and visitor use area improvements at El Portal Overlook and Chinquapin Intersection. Some of the differences in the alternatives include the placement of designated snow chaining areas, treatment of various turnouts, and the designs for turning lanes at Chinquapin. As a rehabilitation project (rather than reconstruction), the road footprint remains similar to its original design (10 ft lanes with 1 ft shoulders) in each of the alternatives. Action alternative 2 has also been identified as the “environmentally preferred” alternative, because it would best preserve the resources and contributing historic features of Glacier Point Road.

What is the schedule for this project?

The public comment and review period for the Environmental Assessment is open from June 27, 2007 until July 29, 2007. Comments will be used to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), if appropriate. If approved, the rehabilitation of the road would likely begin in May 2008.

Public Participation

Public participation is essential for the success of this and all other park improvement projects. Here are some ways to stay involved in this project and its planning process:

- **Attend a National Park Service public open house** to talk with project specialists and obtain more information on the project. Visit the park’s planning website (listed below) for upcoming dates.
- **Add your name to the park’s planning list** and receive the *Planning Update* newsletter as well as other planning-related notices. You can also submit your email address to receive the park’s periodic electronic newsletter.
- **To request a copy of the Environmental Assessment** (hard copy or CD), write, email or fax your request to the address listed below. *All comments must be postmarked by July 29, 2007.* You can submit comments on the Environmental Assessment by any of the following means:

Mail: Superintendent

Attn: *Glacier Point Road Rehabilitation*
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Phone: 209/379-1365; **Fax:** 209/379-1294

E-mail: Yose_Planning@nps.gov

- **Visit online:** www.nps.gov/yose/planning
- **Web:** A new way to submit comments is available online. It’s called PEPC (Planning, Environment, and Public Comment). Access the site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yose>