

## **American Indian Traditional Cultural Resources**

American Indian traditional cultural resources within the Merced Wild and Scenic River corridor include ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, sites of spiritual significance, archeological sites, and areas with other important qualities or uses for traditionally associated American Indians. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP, or National Register) includes a process for formalizing and recording traditional cultural resources as Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs). To date, within the MRP area no TCPs have been nominated to or listed in the National Register. Traditional resources have value beyond those defined within the National Register.

Resources that do not meet the National Register criteria may qualify as significant ethnographic resources under NEPA and the NPS 2006 Management Policies. As examples, traditional use plant population areas, geographic features important in stories and songs, archeological sites valued for reasons other than data potential, or other locations of sacred or cultural importance often do not fit typical definitions of National Register status. For this reason, analysis below focuses on NEPA compliance methodology. The park works with culturally associated American Indian tribes and groups to identify such resources and protect those characteristics that convey their cultural significance, regardless of National Register status.

Three areas in particular stand out for their association with traditional cultural resources: Yosemite Valley National Register District, Wawona Archeological District, and the El Portal Archeological District. In discussion of its significance, the 1976 National Register nomination of the Yosemite Valley National Register District noted “The remains of past Indian occupation have significance for archeological and environmental research, evidence of a unique tie and a native ethnic population, and value for interpretation in the Park” (emphasis added). While this “unique tie” has not been formalized, the intent of recognition of values beyond data potential is apparent. Similarly, the 1978 National Register nominations of the Wawona Archeological District and El Portal Archeological District note that the areas are known and recognized based on archeological and ethnographic research and resources.

The park has ongoing consultations with American Indian tribes and groups – including the Bishop Paiute Tribe, Mono Lake Kudzadika, American Indian Council of Mariposa County (AICMC), Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk, Bridgeport Indian Colony, and North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians – to identify such resources and protect those characteristics that convey their cultural significance. Throughout this document, consultation is recommended to solicit American Indians’ input on specific plan designs, as well as development of interpretive, education, and outreach material. In many instances, monitoring by American Indian representatives of proposed actions would likely be required. Text below identifies general areas that may be impacted by MRP actions. Appendix J provides more specific detail, as much of the information about traditional cultural resources is considered to be confidential.

## *Affected Environment*

Numerous federal laws, statutes, and regulations have been enacted to protect the country's cultural heritage. The most applicable regulations to the proposed undertaking are summarized below. In addition, NPS has several internal policies, also listed here.

### **Regulations and Policies**

*Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act 1966 (as amended).* Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) (16 USC 470) directs federal agencies to take into account the effects of any undertaking on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) has developed implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), which allow agencies to develop agreements for consideration of these historic properties.

Prior to implementing an "undertaking" (i.e., "a project, activity, or program funded in whole or in part under the direct or indirect jurisdiction of a Federal agency, including those carried out by or on behalf of a Federal agency; those carried out with Federal financial assistance; and those requiring a Federal permit, license or approval"), Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of the undertaking on historic properties and to afford the ACHP and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) a reasonable opportunity to comment on any undertaking that would potentially affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register. Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the act requires the agency official to consult with any Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization that attaches religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by an undertaking. The lead federal agency is responsible for project compliance with sections 101 and 106 of the NHPA.

*Cultural Resources Management Plan (1973).* The Cultural Resources Management Plan completed for the Yosemite General Management Plan was designed to protect the significant cultural resources of the park through compliance with all cultural resource legislative, executive, and regulatory requirements. The Cultural Resources Management Plan provides specific policies to guide cultural resources management at Yosemite, including consultation, survey and evaluation, preservation/restoration/reuse, and documentation.

*Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990, 5 USC 3001 et seq.).* This act provides for the protection and repatriation of Native American human remains and cultural items, and requires notification of the relevant Native American tribes and groups upon the intentional excavation or inadvertent discovery of human remains and other cultural items.

*American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1979 (42 USC 1996).* This act preserves for American Indians and other indigenous groups the right to express traditional religious practices, including access to sites under federal jurisdiction. Yosemite National Park complies with this act by consulting with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups, working with them to support traditional religious events and practices to the maximum extent possible, and accommodating access to and ceremonial use of sites, within the constraints of law and policy.

*Executive Order 13007: Indian Sacred Sites (1996).* Executive Order 13007 directs federal agencies with statutory or administrative responsibility for the management of federal lands, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by American Indian religious practitioners and to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

*1999 Programmatic Agreement.* Yosemite National Park, in consultation with the ACHP, the California SHPO, American Indian tribes, and the public, has developed a programmatic agreement for planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities. This programmatic agreement provides a process for compliance with NHPA and includes stipulations for identification, evaluation, treatment, and mitigation of adverse effects for actions affecting historic properties, including potentially eligible historic properties. Under the 1999 PA, the park is obligated to “make every reasonable effort to avoid adverse effects to Historic Properties . . . through project design, facilities’ location, or other means. Avoidance alternatives will be documented during the NEPA process.” The park will follow stipulations of this programmatic agreement for all future planning and design projects. This programmatic agreement expires in 2014, and if a new programmatic agreement is not completed, the 2008 nationwide programmatic agreement in conjunction with standard compliance under 36 CFR 800 will provide guidance for park activities.

*2008 Programmatic Agreement.* This programmatic agreement provides nationwide coordination between the NPS, the ACHP, and the National Conference of SHPOs for the section 106 compliance process. The NHPA, 36 CFR 800, and the programmatic agreement provide the NPS with a roadmap to plan for and carry out undertakings to minimize harm to cultural resources.

*Proposed Merced River Plan Programmatic Agreement.* As a part of the current Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan, the Park is proposing, via consultation with the ACHP, OHP, and traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups, the development of a programmatic agreement regarding treatment of historic resources under the proposed management plan (Merced River PA). This document, while not yet finalized, will provide guidance for the identification, evaluation, treatment, and mitigation of adverse effects for actions affecting historic properties impacted by all future planning and design projects of the Merced River Plan. One of the primary alterations in approaches as a result of this new programmatic agreement is that data recovery of archaeological sites is acknowledged as a way of minimizing adverse effects, but also requires that tribal consultation be incorporated into the process. This recognizes that traditionally associated tribes have values assigned to archaeological sites beyond their potential for data and information.

*Director’s Order 28 Cultural Resources Management Guideline (1998).* Director’s Order 28 guides the NPS to protect and manage cultural resources in its custody through effective research, planning, and stewardship and in accordance with the policies and principles contained in the *NPS Management Policies*. It also ensures that the NPS comply with the substantive and procedural requirements described in the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. Additionally, the NPS will comply with the 2008 programmatic agreement with the ACHP and the National Conference of SHPOs. The NPS published the *2006 Management Policies* relating to the systemwide treatment of various types of resources on NPS lands. The following are some specific policies related to resources of the types discussed in the Director’s Order; other sections within the *Management Policies* describe the processes for consultation with traditionally associated peoples:

**5.3.5 Treatment of Cultural Resources.** The NPS will provide for the long-term preservation of, public access to, and appreciation of the features, materials, and qualities contributing to the significance of cultural resources. With some differences by type, cultural resources are subject to several basic treatments, including (1) preservation in their existing states; (2) rehabilitation to serve contemporary uses consistent with their integrity and character; and (3) restoration to earlier appearances by the removal of later additions and replacement of missing elements.

**5.3.5.1 Archeological Resources.** Archeological resources will be managed in situ, unless the removal of artifacts or physical disturbance is justified by research, consultation, preservation, protection, or interpretive requirements. Preservation treatments will include proactive measures that protect resources from vandalism and looting, and will maintain or improve their condition by limiting damage due to natural and human agents

**5.3.5.2 Cultural Landscapes.** Treatment decisions will be based on a cultural landscape's historical significance over time, existing conditions, and use. Treatment decisions will consider both the natural and built characteristics and features of a landscape, the dynamics inherent in natural processes and continued use, and the concerns of traditionally associated peoples. The treatment implemented will be based on sound preservation practices to enable long-term preservation of a resource's historic features, qualities, and materials. There are three types of treatment for extant cultural landscapes: preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration.

**5.3.5.3 Ethnographic Resources.** Park ethnographic resources are the cultural and natural features of a park that are of traditional significance to traditionally associated peoples. These peoples are the contemporary park neighbors and ethnic or occupational communities that have been associated with a park for two or more generations (40 years), and whose interests in the park's resources began before the park's establishment. Living peoples of many cultural backgrounds—American Indians, Inuit (Eskimos), Native Hawaiians, African Americans, Hispanics, Chinese Americans, Euro- Americans, and farmers, ranchers, and fishermen—may have a traditional association with a particular park.

*Executive Order 11593: Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment.* Executive Order 11593 instructs all federal agencies to support the preservation of cultural properties. It directs them to identify and nominate cultural properties in Yosemite to the NRHP and to “exercise caution. . . to assure that any federally owned property that might qualify for nomination is not inadvertently transferred, sold, demolished, or substantially altered” (NPS 1971).

## Scope of the Analysis

This section addresses American Indian traditional cultural resources and places for traditional practices and provides some background on ethnographic considerations. Traditional cultural resources are those that are part of the collective use or knowledge of a place. Resources can include those used either by a community or by an individual for traditional activities, including traditional plant use, ceremony, and teaching; these may or may not have been used ancestrally. Some of the places considered are archeological sites and ethnographic villages, while others are places in stories and discussed in oral histories, and still others are places where material items were/are acquired, or where ceremonies are conducted. One defining aspect of ethnographic resources is that they possess both historical and contemporary significance to the culture with which they are associated and are vitally important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity and traditions of the group (Parker and King 1998). This

section considers assessments of the existing condition and potential impacts on American Indian resources under NEPA. As an example, in his ethnographic evaluation of Yosemite Valley Brian Bibby (1994a:15) described plant uses and plant use areas that continue to be of special significance to traditionally associated American Indians. Bibby (1994a) especially highlighted the use of black acorn and mushrooms as food, wormwood for ceremonial use, and braken fern, sedge roots, and deer grass for basketry. The Park also maintains a database with archeological sites and ethnographic resources identified as important to traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups, found in various segments of the Merced River corridor (YNP 2010).

### *All River Segments – Importance as American Indian Traditional Cultural Resources*

Ethnographic resources in the Merced Wild and Scenic River corridor represent an interconnected web of locations and resources, with the river as the central thread. Some of the important associations include the water and springs that feed the river, ethnobotanically important plants, unique geological features that figure in traditional songs and stories, areas of solitude for conducting ceremonies, and vistas that are unchanged from long ago. American Indian groups assign strong spiritual value to the Merced River and Yosemite Valley, and attach names and stories to geologic and other features in the river corridor. Archeological sites related to American Indian occupation of the Merced River corridor are also culturally significant. While impacts on National Register defined “scientific values” of archeological resources are addressed in a separate section, impacts on the American Indian association and values of these same sites are discussed here.

Important ongoing cultural practices include the traditional use of important natural resources found within the river corridor, including plants and fungi for food, medicine, textiles, basketry, dyes and pigments, and ceremonial uses. These resources remain of special significance to traditionally associated American Indians, who have continued to use plants and other resources into the present (Anderson 2005). These plants have specific ethnobotanical uses and are in many cases found exclusively or primarily in the river-dependent meadows and marshes of Yosemite Valley (Heady and Zinke 1978).

Several locations within the Yosemite Valley and El Portal areas contain prehistoric sites that continued to be occupied into the 20th century. All but one ancient village site recorded by C. Hart Merriam in Yosemite Valley is also associated with archeological remains. Many locations of old villages are still known by name. Traditionally associated American Indians continue to live in and around the park, and many are employed by the NPS, the concessioner, or other local businesses. At least seven American Indian tribes and groups claim traditional associations with Yosemite. Individuals from these tribes and groups continue to maintain cultural associations with lands and resources in the park through cultural and religious practices.

### *Environmental Consequences Methodology*

Formerly, methodology for assessing impacts to cultural resources identified by traditionally associated American Indians was based on stipulations of the 1999 PA. This included identifying areas and resources that could be impacted, identifying the extent and type of impacts (beneficial or adverse), and considering ways to avoid, reduce, or mitigate adverse impacts. NPS is currently developing a plan-specific programmatic agreement that more specifically addresses how tribal

consultation will be incorporated into the overall process. For the MRP, the Park has not yet conducted project-specific consultation for each of the proposed actions. As a result, assessment of impacts to traditional cultural resources in this document is preliminary, and subject to change.

The present analysis is intended to fulfill the largely parallel goals of the regulatory programs and plan specific programmatic agreement through the execution of five basic analytic phases:

1. The initial phase is the determination of the appropriate geographic extent or Area of Potential Effects (APE) of the analysis for the plan and for each alternative action under consideration.
2. The second phase is to produce (when possible) an inventory of traditional cultural resources in each such geographic area.
3. The third phase is to determine whether particular cultural resources in an inventory are significant, unless resources can be avoided by construction.
4. The fourth phase is to assess the character and the severity of the impacts of the plan and alternatives on the significant cultural resources that cannot be avoided in each respective inventory.
5. The final phase is to propose mitigation measures that would reduce or resolve significant impacts.

Through the study of geographic locales of potential areas of traditional cultural resources, researchers assess potential physical changes resulting from proposed plan actions. In instances of geographic overlap, both short-term and long-term impacts are estimated based on: the degree of physical change that would result from the action (e.g., minor disturbance from vegetation thinning, vs. moderate/major disturbance from building removal and grading or other earthwork); and the nature of the resource (i.e., traditional plant use area, ethnographic village site with archeological remains, spiritually significant locale, or other resource type).

In several instances, restoration or facilities-related actions would potentially restrict access to areas with traditional cultural resources during their construction or implementation phase, resulting in a short-term adverse impact, although the ultimate result of the action may be an improved condition for the resource (i.e., long-term beneficial impact).

For actions that would not result in physical changes to the resources, such as actions relating to visitor and facilities use management, the primary consideration with regard to impacts on traditional cultural resources is continued accessibility. Again, assessment of these impacts in this document is preliminary and subject to change as a result of the Park's extensive and plan-specific consultation that will be conducted with traditionally associated tribes and groups. In a few instances, actions proposed as part of the MRP are similar to those proposed previously as individual Park undertakings, and the Park has already consulted with traditionally associated American Indians regarding these actions. Although the Park will conduct additional consultation for these actions as part of the plan-specific programmatic agreement, results of preliminary consultation have been taken into account for the impact assessments in this section.

## **NEPA Compliance Methodology**

Some actions, such as meadow restoration, may have a beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources (in this example, by increasing the health and number of traditionally use plant areas). Adverse impacts on American Indian traditional cultural resources include damage, alteration, destruction, isolation, neglect, deterioration, limited accessibility, and other factors that may diminish the characteristics that make the place significant to the traditionally associated community. American Indian traditional cultural resources may also be impacted if the community's ability to access or use culturally significant resources or locations affects the way in which the community connects to the valued property. As an example, an increase in annual visitors to the park could increase visitor use and crowding at specific locations. This may result in impacts on the setting and feeling of culturally significant resources. This can include visual and aural intrusions as well as physical alterations. Analyses of impacts on American Indian traditional cultural resources for NEPA purposes are based on: context, intensity, duration, and type of impact.

**Context.** The context of the impact considers whether the impact would be local, segmentwide, parkwide, or regional. For this analysis, local impacts would be those that occur in a specific area within a segment of the Merced River. This analysis further identifies whether there would be local impacts in multiple segments. Segmentwide impacts would consist of a number of local impacts within a single segment or larger-scale impacts that would affect the segment as a whole. Parkwide impacts would extend beyond the river corridor and the study area within Yosemite. Regional impacts would be those that extend to the Yosemite gateway region.

**Intensity.** The intensity of impact depends on the nature, location, and design of the proposed project. Intensity of impacts are described as:

- **Negligible.** Impact is barely perceptible and not measurable; confined to small areas of a particular site or ethnographic district.
- **Minor.** Impact is perceptible and measureable; remains localized and confined to a single area of a particular site or ethnographic district.
- **Moderate.** Impact is sufficient to cause a change in a character-defining feature; generally involves a single site or small group of sites within an ethnographic district.
- **Major.** Impact results in a substantial and highly noticeable change in character-defining features; involves a large area of one site, or larger areas with high to exceptional ethnographic value.

**Duration.** Impacts to traditional cultural resources are described as short-term or long-term duration.

**Type of Impact.** Impacts can be considered either be adverse or beneficial, direct or indirect. Impacts are considered adverse when they have the potential to diminish significant characteristics of a resource. Specific actions, such as demolition, result in direct impacts. Indirect impacts generally occur after project completion, and result from changes in land use or pedestrian traffic patterns.

The assessment of impacts on traditional cultural resources requires knowledge of the specific qualities of the resource that are considered culturally valuable. For example, if a particular meadow is

valued for the species of medicinal plants that grow there, an increase or change in the amount of use of the meadow may not be an adverse impact as long as the plants are protected. If the same meadow is considered culturally significant, changes allowing increased visitor access/visitation or incompatible recreation activities would likely be considered adverse. Consequently, analysis of impacts on traditional cultural resources requires consultation with tribal governments, traditional cultural practitioners, and other traditionally associated American Indians.

Under NEPA, cumulative impacts are defined as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR § 1508.7). For traditional cultural resources, cumulative impacts are generally those that take place within a specified geographic area that contains similar or related resources. NEPA also requires a discussion of mitigation, and the appropriateness and effectiveness of mitigation. To best meet these requirements, ongoing tribal consultation over the life of the project will be critical, as well as adherence to the plan-specific programmatic agreement that is currently being developed.

American Indian traditional cultural resources in the Merced River corridor are qualitatively analyzed based on existing knowledge, and assessing what potential modifications could alter character-defining features. Actions specific to individual alternatives that would affect these historic properties are described under each alternative.

Appendix C contains mitigation measures that may reduce the potential for impacts, and contain provisions and requirements for consultation with traditionally associated cultural groups. Mitigation measure MM-AR-1 notes that National Register eligibility determinations, and potential impacts on prehistoric and ethnographic sites are determined in consultation with traditionally associated groups. This measure also contains provisions for appropriate protocols in the event that Native American remains are encountered. Mitigation Measure MM-AR-3 notes that the presence of Native American monitors may be appropriate during some ground disturbing activities, and consultation would occur prior to some ground-penetrating work such as excavation, trenching, drilling, or stump and root removal in culturally sensitive areas. This mitigation measure also notes appropriate protocol in the event that human remains are discovered.

### *Environmental Consequences of Alternative 1 (No Action)*

In this and following sections, impacts are summarized for different types of proposed management actions (including No Action) that would occur in each Wild and Scenic River segment. Many actions have been determined to have no impact on traditional cultural resources, typically because there is no geographic correlation between the action and any known ethnographic resources. In order to protect confidential resource data, ethnographic sites are not individually named nor are their exact locations relative to the management actions revealed.

The following discussion provides an overview of the types of impacts that could occur with regards to American Indian traditional cultural resources within the Merced River corridor from application of Alternative 1 (No Action). NPS recognizes that there may be National Register-eligible (but as yet not defined) TCPs within the study area, in all segments of the river corridor. Scientific data related to



archeological sites is addressed in “Archeological Resources” section earlier in this chapter. Archeological sites (currently listed, potentially eligible, and not-listed) may also have value for traditionally associated American Indians that have not yet been formalized; as such, these traditional values are not discussed with regard to NHPA. Resources that may qualify as significant resources under NEPA and NPS *2006 Management Policies* are primarily found in Yosemite Valley (Segment 2) and El Portal (Segment 4) (YNP 2010), and are discussed here.

## **Segment 2: Yosemite Valley**

### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Traditionally associated American Indian communities continue to practice their spiritual ceremonies and conduct other traditional cultural practices in Yosemite as they have for thousands of years. The Valley is a traditional location for many seasonal ceremonies and events. Areas within Segment 2 are used for seasonal religious ceremonies and cultural gatherings, as well as life-cycle occasions such as weddings and funerals. Many of these events are held during the park’s peak visitation season, and require the use of the Yellow Pines group campground. Other important ongoing cultural practices include the traditional use of native plant species found within the meadows, riparian habitat, and black oak groves of the Valley.

Under Alternative 1 (No Action), management of ethnobotanical resources, access to traditional use plant populations and sacred sites, and culturally important views would remain unchanged from current conditions. No habitat restoration activities would be conducted in riparian or meadow areas, and no campsites or abandoned infrastructure and other facilities would be removed from known village sites and other archeological resources. No informal trails would be removed and restored in ethnographic sites, meaning that all park visitors could continue to access, and potentially damage, these resources through inappropriate use, trampling of ethnobotanically important plants, or artifact collection and vandalism. While many of the proposed restoration actions would have long-term, beneficial impacts on ethnographic resources that would not occur under Alternative 1, neither would there be a potential for adverse impacts associated with physical disturbance of resources and decreased access to important sites and traditional use plant population areas during restoration activities, which would also be possible under Alternatives 2–6.

### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Issues associated with Alternative 1 (No Action) are ongoing concerns by traditionally associated American Indians regarding maintenance of the populations of important native plant species, the decline in black oak seedling and sapling survival rates, unimpeded access to sacred sites or ceremonial locations (especially during peak visitor seasons), and protection of ethnohistoric village locations and archeological sites from visitor use impacts. Alternative 1 would provide no opportunities to improve populations of ethnobotanically important plants through removal of facilities or reductions in user capacity, nor would access to sacred sites and traditional use plant population areas be changed from the current, sometimes crowded, conditions.

## **Segment 4: El Portal**

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Segment 4 contains several locations along the Merced River that are known as traditional use areas for plants, notably those used in basketry. Traditionally associated American Indians and the NPS manage stands of redbud, willow, sourberry, and other materials for their use in woven baskets. Under Alternative 1 (No Action), no opportunities for increasing the populations and health of these species would occur.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Disruption of the habitat necessary to support ethnobotanical species, as well as limited access to the area could continue under Alternative 1 (No Action). These impacts are primarily a result of park administrative operations and existing habitat disruption in the form of heavily traveled roads and other developed areas. While no additional adverse impacts would occur under Alternative 1, there would also be no opportunity for improved access to or protection of ethnographic resources resulting from facilities removal or reduction in user capacity.

## **Segment 7: Wawona Campground and Store**

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Segment 7 contains a large archeological site, especially in the area of the northernmost campground “loop.” Similarly, there is a known archeological site in the area of the Wawona Store. Under Alternative 1 (No Action), no opportunities for limiting access to these areas would occur.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Issues associated with Alternative 1 (No Action) are ongoing concerns by traditionally associated American Indians regarding maintenance protection of archeological sites from visitor use impacts. Alternative 1 would provide no opportunities to alter these impacts that result from current, sometimes crowded, conditions.

## **Summary of Alternative 1 (No Action) Impacts**

Under Alternative 1 (No Action), impacts on traditional cultural resources would be negligible under NEPA criteria. There would be no planned changes in the treatment of traditional cultural resources in the Merced River corridor. Impacts on these resources would occur as a result of ongoing park operations and programs, such as facilities maintenance and repair, as well as visitor use. The projected 3% increase in annual visitation under Alternative 1 would potentially affect access to ceremonial locations by traditionally associated American Indians, especially during the peak season when many important traditional practices take place. Impacts on traditional cultural resources would occur throughout Segments 2 and 4 and be long term, minor to major, and adverse.

**Table 9-252** summarizes the kinds of traditional cultural resources that may be found within the Park, and NEPA-level analysis of the overall impact of no action. It highlights the context of proposed Alternative 1 (no-action), duration and type of impacts, and overall impact on resources. Ongoing consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would continue under Alternative 1 (No Action) to identify and understand potential adverse impacts and determine appropriate mitigation measures. As an example, monitoring by American Indian representatives of potential ground disturbing activities for ongoing park operations would likely be appropriate. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is also required under section 106 of NHPA.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 1 (No Action)**

Cumulative impacts on traditional cultural resources are based on analysis of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the Yosemite region in combination with potential impacts of Alternative 1 (No Action). The projects identified below include only those projects that could affect traditional cultural resources within the Merced River corridor.

#### ***Past Actions***

Past development, visitor use, natural events, and widespread disruption of cultural traditions has damaged ethnographic resources and their traditional cultural associations throughout the Yosemite area. Development of facilities within the Merced River corridor has disturbed or destroyed numerous ethnographic resources and compromised the integrity of habitat for traditionally important plant species. Appendix C contains the list of past actions that have resulted in cumulative impacts on environmental resources. With regard to traditional cultural resources such as areas of traditional plant use, actions at Cook's Meadow, Fern Springs, Merced River at Eagle Creek, and other restoration activities, as well as the *2004 Fire Management Plan* may improve conditions for native species. Those that include habitat restoration were developed and implemented in consultation with representatives of traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups. Habitat restoration projects generally provide a beneficial impact for traditional use plant population areas. NPS continues to monitor the impacts of these actions.

#### ***Present and Future Actions***

Projects have the potential to result in adverse impacts, including damage to traditional use plant population areas and historic village or restricted access to traditional use places. Projects that could result in either beneficial or adverse impacts through management of ethnographic resources include the *Scenic Vista Management Plan*, *Vegetation Management Plan* and the upcoming *Yosemite Wilderness Stewardship Plan/EIS*. General restoration projects also provide the potential for restoration of native plant habitat, including plants used traditionally by American Indians. Beneficial impacts would result from the development of the Wahhoga Indian Cultural Center by providing a location for traditional cultural activities and ceremonies, managed by culturally associated tribes and groups. The intensity of impacts from future operational actions depends on the nature, location, and design of the undertaking, as well as the quantity and nature of ethnographic resource(s) affected. Every effort would be made during the design phase to avoid adverse impacts. Where such avoidance is not feasible

**TABLE 9-252: EXAMPLES OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL RESOURCES AND OVERALL IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)**

Type of Resource	Context	Intensity	Duration of Impact	Type of Impact	Overall Impact
<b>Merced River</b>	Regional	Minor to major	Short to long-term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potential adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs
<b>Yosemite Valley</b>	Regional	Minor to major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Ethnohistoric village areas</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Traditional use plant population areas</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Sites of spiritual significance</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to Major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Archeological sites valued as traditional cultural resources</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to Major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Ceremonial or traditional use sites</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to Major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Places important to traditional history</b>	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to Major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Unchanged from current conditions. Potentially adverse impacts due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs.
<b>Sites with other important qualities</b>	Parkwide	Negligible	Long-term	No impact	Unchanged from current conditions
	Parkwide to segmentwide	Minor to Major	Short- to long- term	Indirect and direct adverse impacts	Potentially adverse due to heavier visitor use and ongoing park operations and programs

or prudent, the park, in consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups, would mitigate the impacts to the greatest extent possible, potentially reducing the intensity of the impacts.

### *Overall Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 1 (No Action)*

Alternative 1 (No Action) in consideration with past, present, and future actions would result in no change in the treatment and management of traditional cultural resources. Any site-specific planning and compliance actions would be accomplished in accordance with stipulations in the servicewide 2008 programmatic agreement. Cumulative impacts of Alternative 1 on traditional cultural resources would be negligible under the NEPA significance criteria.

### *Environmental Consequences of Actions Common to Alternatives 2–6*

Many of the actions under Alternatives 2–6 to protect and enhance river values in Segment 2 would result in long-term, beneficial impacts on populations of ethnobotanically important plants, ecological stability of traditionally important locales, reduction or elimination of ongoing visitor use impacts on archeological sites and other traditional cultural resources, and improved clarity and understanding of traditionally important views. Table 9-253 groups and summarizes actions with similar impacts, although some individual actions are addressed in a more specific manner. Table 9-253 considers actions to protect and enhance river values, as well as those intended to manage visitor use and facilities.

Adverse impacts are possible during any action involving ground disturbance to a traditional cultural resource, or resulting from restricting access for traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to important areas.

Considering the actions common to Alternatives 2–6, impacts on these resources may be negligible under NEPA criteria, although this conclusion is dependent upon information learned during consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups. As discussed in the “Archeological Resources” section analysis of actions common to Alternatives 2–6, there would be minor to major adverse impacts on known and unknown archeological resources under NEPA criteria, and an adverse effect under NHPA. While recognizing that archeological resources have the potential to be traditional cultural resources, discussions of archeological sites for their scientific value is addressed elsewhere. For this section, it is important to recognize that consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is also a NHPA requirement.

The proposed removal and reduction of various unused, outdated, inappropriate, or inadequate recreational, retail, employee housing, operational, and other facilities would remove visual clutter and non-traditional activities from the river corridor, thereby restoring some of the river’s traditional setting, a beneficial impact. As with all ground-disturbing activities, consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended to ensure the no physical damage occurs to archeological or other ethnographic resources during demolition and restoration activities. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians may be required during these activities. Considering the actions common to Alternatives 2–6, assuming traditional cultural resources could be avoided, adverse impacts on these

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: removal of informal trails that encroach onto sites designated as American Indian traditional cultural resources would result in a reduction of ongoing, minor to moderate impacts from trespassing, including erosion and destruction of natural vegetation in sites significant for traditional plant use areas, spiritual uses, ethnographic villages, and other sites.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.  Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impact.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2-6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
All segments	Parkwide: decompacting soils and planting native vegetation on denuded areas could be a beneficial impact in those areas recorded as traditional use plant population areas, and proposed fencing and signage would direct visitor use to appropriate areas.	As above	As above
All segments	Parkwide: restoration of hydrologic processes and renewed use of low-intensity fire to restore meadows and black oak communities.	As above	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impact.  Overall could result in beneficial impacts on traditional ethnobotanical resources, unimpeded views of culturally important geologic features, and restoration of meadow-based sacred sites.  Use of fire, in particular, would help restore the conditions of the meadows to that maintained for centuries by the area's traditionally associated American Indians and would provide public recognition of the efficacy of traditional land management skills. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2–6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Hydrological Resource Actions</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: removal of riprap, use of bioengineering stabilization techniques, and subsequent revegetation of the riverbanks with riparian species could potentially result in a beneficial impact for traditional cultural resources associated with traditional plant use along the riverbanks, as well as restoring the river itself to a more natural condition consistent with traditional cultural resources. Incorporation of large woody debris and constructed logjams would also improve the natural condition of the river.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, hydrological resource actions should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.  Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impact.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2–6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during hydrological resource actions. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
All segments	Parkwide: directed visitor access, revegetation, protection, and stabilization of eroded riverbanks would potentially benefit American Indian traditional cultural resources directly associated with the river.	As above	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impact.  Protecting the riparian zone from new development, and removing or relocating campsites at least 100 feet away from the ordinary high-water mark could potentially result in a beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources associated with traditional plant use areas.  Use of fire, in particular, would help restore the conditions of the meadows to that maintained for centuries by the area's traditionally associated American Indians and would provide public recognition of the efficacy of traditional land management skills. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: rerouting of trails out of sensitive habitats, construction of fencing and/or boardwalks to elevate trails over wetlands, and removal of informal trails in meadow habitats.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, biological resource actions should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts, and to avoid archeological resources.  Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities may be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impact.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2-6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during biological resource actions. Removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on traditional plant use areas. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: improvements to meadow hydrology and habitat through filling ditches and reinstating a low-intensity fire regime.	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.  Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2-6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during biological resource actions. Actions may have long-term, beneficial impacts on meadows. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.



**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2–6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: removal of abandoned underground infrastructure and related facilities (parking and other ground disturbances) from various locations.	Representatives of traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups should be consulted regarding any specific project methods and locations that could result in additional impacts on ethnographic resources. These actions are likely to be highly controversial for traditionally associated American Indians, and many may feel that the adverse impacts would outweigh any beneficial impacts of this action.  Representatives would likely want to monitor the removal activities and/or perform traditional ceremonies to restore ethnographic and/or spiritual integrity.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Ultimately, by removing the infrastructure and revegetating the area with native plants, minor to moderate beneficial impacts could result.  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance of removal activities is not feasible, adverse impacts would be moderate to major.  Although areas of underground utilities were previously disturbed during original construction of the infrastructure, removal could result in adverse impacts on highly sensitive ethnographic/archeological resources.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: construction of elevated bicycle paths and boardwalks.	If ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the boardwalks could affect traditional plant use, spiritual, village, or other sites, then representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be consulted and invited to collaborate on solutions.  Monitoring by American Indian representatives of ground disturbing activities may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Bicycle and pedestrian paths across meadows under Alternatives 2–6 might encroach on American Indian ethnographic sites (as well as archeological sites, as discussed elsewhere). Avoidance would be given preferential consideration, and result in a minor to moderate beneficial impact.  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Construction could result in short-term and long-term impacts from disruptions to the setting of these sites both during construction activities and with use of such paths by park visitors.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: removal of infrastructure in Royal Arches meadow – a known important traditional use plant population area	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.  Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Ultimately, by removing the infrastructure and revegetating the area with native plants, minor to moderate beneficial impacts could result.

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)			<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance of removal activities is not feasible, adverse impacts would be moderate to major.</p> <p>Although areas of underground utilities were previously disturbed during original construction of the infrastructure, removal could result in adverse impacts on highly sensitive ethnographic/archeological resources.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Segmentwide: restoration of floodplain areas that were formal campgrounds prior to the 1997 flood -- in the immediate vicinity of known traditional use plant population.</p>	<p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Restoration activities (decompaction of soils, removal of fill material, and removal of invasive species) could lead to enhancement of the habitat and, ultimately, a beneficial impact on ethnobotanically important species.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2 - Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: unimproved parking area at Camp 6 has no mitigations for water quality and flood control. This action will move the unimproved parking area north closer to the Village Center and reroute Northside Drive to just above the 10-year floodplain. Meadow and floodplain ecosystems will be restored.</p>	<p>As this is in an area of known archeological resources, Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>Restoration of meadow may result in new areas for traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses. Consultation may promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p>

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2–6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Hydrologic Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: redirecting visitors away from sensitive riverbanks and overused areas near Valley bridges, beaches, and picnic areas, including revegetating and fencing eroded areas, removing riprap, and rebuilding the riverbank -- potentially occurring within traditional use plant population areas.	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Redirecting visitor use to resilient sandbars may potentially allow for a long-term beneficial restoration of native plant habitat, providing that access to these areas is maintained for traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: redirection in portions of the East Valley campgrounds -- intent to redirect campground visitors away from unstable slopes and toward resilient sandy beaches.	As above	As above
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: delineate and connect segments of the Valley Loop Trail. This will move the Valley Loop Trail out of the Wahhoga Designated Use Area.	<p>Actions should take into account the locations of ethnographic resources, and ensure that trail reconstruction would not affect archeological sites or other traditionally important areas.</p> <p>Monitoring of such actions by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>If portions of trail are rerouted away from resources, as determined appropriate by the park's American Indian consulting partners, this would result in a long-term beneficial impact. Should avoidance of resources not be practical, Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Hydrologic Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: restoration of riparian habitat at the site of the former Yosemite Lodge cabins and wellness center -- within the immediate vicinity of a known ethnographic site.	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of known ethnographic resources.  Monitoring of such actions by American Indian representatives would likely be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.  Overall impacts on traditional cultural resources would be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on ethnographic and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: removal of several buildings and facilities, construction of new facilities and parking areas  Specific areas: expansion of Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground) and Backpackers – would potentially encroach on nearby ethnographic resources  Improvements to visitor facilities at Bridalveil Fall  Construction of new parking lots and expansion of existing lots  Removal of Valley Garage Service and relocation to Government Utility Building  Expansion of Camp 6 parking into previous footprint of Valley Garage area	Yosemite Valley is an area known to have archeological sites and ethnographic uses such as village sites.  Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.  Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.  Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2-6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.  Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.  Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2–6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)	<p>Construction of two-bay roads and trails maintenance building in proximity to the Government Utility Building</p> <p>Retain existing facilities and services of Ahwahnee Hotel, but remove pool and tennis courts associated with Hotel</p> <p>Remove old and temporary housing at Highland Court and the Thousand Cabins in the Yosemite Lodge area and replace with new housing</p> <p>Retain Yosemite Lodge maintenance and housekeeping</p> <p>Remove NPS Volunteer Office (former Wellness Center), post office, swimming pool, and snack stand in Yosemite Lodge area</p> <p>Remove Concessioner General Office in Yosemite Village (use infilled into other existing buildings)</p>	<p>For those uses that would be relocated, the new locations of these facilities would need to be assessed for potential sites as the destination of each facility is being planned, to avoid inadvertent impact to traditional cultural resources in other areas. As above, consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p>	
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Scenic Resource Actions</b>			
3: Merced River Gorge	Segmentwide: removal of encroaching conifers	<p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, any removal activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity of land management efforts.</p> <p>Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> may have a minor, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources in Segment 3 through preservation and propagation of other important ethnobotanical resource.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance of known traditional cultural resources is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal	Segmentwide: removing informal trails, nonessential roads, surface paving, and imported rock	<p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p> <p>Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians may be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impacts.</p> <p>If portions of trails are rerouted away from resources, as determined appropriate by the park's American Indian consulting partners, this would result in a long-term beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance of resources is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
4: El Portal	Segmentwide: removal of abandoned infrastructure (includes area of abandoned El Portal Wastewater Treatment Plant). Restoration actions in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area	<p>As above</p> <p>This area is in known proximity of archeological and ethnographic resources</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2-6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.</p> <p>Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, as well as archeological sites, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2–6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	Segmentwide: infill of employee housing units	As above, with regard to planning of housing units	As above
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Cultural Resource Actions</b>			
5: South Fork Merced River	Segmentwide: remove informal trails and charcoal rings from sensitive archeological resources	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid impacts to traditional cultural resources, and to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during and after these activities  Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> redirection of visitors away from sensitive archeological resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2–6 is beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological resources is avoided during planned actions.
7: South Fork Merced River	Localized: some Wawona Campground sites removed that are either within the 100 foot floodplain, within 100-150 feet of the river or in culturally sensitive areas.	The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area.  To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.  Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term  <i>Type of impact:</i> Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	Segmentwide: new formal river access and visitor amenities, such as restrooms and waste disposal, near the Wawona Swinging Bridge	As above, with regard to new construction	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term  <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternatives 2–6 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.

**TABLE 9-253: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES 2-6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River (cont.)			<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance of traditional cultural resources is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>



resources would be negligible under NEPA criteria. This conclusion is dependent upon information learned during consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups. If avoidance of traditional cultural resources is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major, depending on the resource. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians during and after the planning stages of proposed actions may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

### **Cultural Resource Actions**

All proposed actions to protect archeological sites from ongoing impacts of inappropriate uses (stock trails, informal trails, parking, climbing, unauthorized camping, and graffiti) would ultimately result in minor to moderate beneficial impacts to sites valued as traditional cultural resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians would be vital to ensure continuous access to these sites for cultural uses. Consultation is also recommended to solicit American Indians' input on designs of the specific plans for site restoration, as well as development of interpretive, educational, and outreach materials. In most instances, monitoring by American Indian representatives of restoration activities would likely be appropriate.

### **Biological Resource Actions**

Specific projects to protect and enhance the river's biological values that would occur across all segments under Alternatives 2-6 include management of invasive plant species and other actions to stabilize and enhance populations of traditionally used native plants could have a beneficial long-term impact on ethnobotanical resources. Specific management methods, techniques, and timing should be discussed with the park's American Indian consulting partners to prevent unintended consequences to ecosystems, or inadvertently restricting access to ethnographic resources.

Under Alternatives 2–6, various actions would occur in each river segment to restore the Merced River and its interrelated habitats to more natural conditions. Abandoned underground infrastructure, such as sewer and water pipes and wastewater treatment facilities, would be removed from all river segments. Because abandoned underground infrastructure removal projects would be subject to review under NEPA and section 106 of the NHPA on an individual basis, impacts on traditional cultural resources would be assessed and mitigated as necessary when project-level plans are complete. Avoidance of ethnographic resources would first be attempted. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups will be an integral part of the planning process. No additional impacts on these resources would result from the programmatic management actions.

### **Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions**

The proposed measures under Alternatives 2–6 to improve the free-flowing condition of the Merced River in various locations by use of brush layering, large woody debris, and constructed logjams to lessen the scouring effects of bridges and encourage channel complexity would not occur within or adjacent to any known ethnographic sites. Similarly, removal of old bridge footings and gaging station equipment would not directly affect known locations of ethnobotanical or other traditional uses. As consultation has confirmed, the river itself is a traditional cultural resource, and restoration to a more

natural condition would enhance its association as a traditional cultural resource in Segment 2. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of specific actions may be appropriate.

### Scenic Resource Actions

Scenic restoration management actions, and proposed removal of facilities and infrastructure (housing, tennis courts, irrigation lines, and ditches) from Yosemite Valley meadows under Alternatives 2–6 would allow for the enhancement of ethnobotanical resources in these areas. Because of the ethnographic sensitivity of the meadows, consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to determine the best way to maximize benefits to these Segment 2 sites.

### Summary of Impacts Common to Alternatives 2–6

Some of the management actions proposed for Alternatives 2–6 would have the potential to result in minor to moderate adverse impacts on known traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the resource, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to find design solutions for specific actions that would avoid or minimize short- and long-term impacts on traditional use plant population areas, archeological sites, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, and other significant sites. In some cases, monitoring by American Indian representatives of actions may be appropriate. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

Many of the restoration actions associated with Alternatives 2–6 would result in minor to moderate long-term, beneficial impacts on known traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage or influence the setting of traditional sites, or restoration of traditional use plant population areas.

## *Environmental Consequences of Alternative 2: Self-Reliant Visitor Experiences and Extensive Floodplain Restoration*

### All River Segments

To avoid or reduce adverse impacts, restoration, visitor management, and construction activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access, and avoid areas of known traditional cultural resources. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would result. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts. Text below describes actions specific to Alternative 2, and assumes that consultation and avoidance of impacts to traditional cultural resources would occur whenever possible. **Table 9-254** provides NEPA analysis of potential impacts to traditional cultural resources and recommendations for consultation.

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: management of swimming and boating access in all river segments under Alternative 2 would influence the traditional cultural resources related to the Merced River's setting and condition	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restriction of boating activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> management of access results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources.
All segments	Parkwide: implementation of a day use reservation system would influence one of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association: access to park lands and resources	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, implementation of a day use reservation system should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> implementation of day use program could result in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational users must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. If both of these criteria are met, then it could reasonably be stated that the day use reservation system proposed under Alternative 2 would not negatively affect American Indian traditional cultural properties. Otherwise, implementation of a day use reservation system has the potential to adversely impact traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities.

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall (cont.)		Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows	<p>These actions have the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of housing and other development from between the Village Store and Ahwahnee Meadow would provide benefits to the ecology of the meadow	Proximity of an ethnohistoric village site suggests that adverse impacts could occur. Consultation is recommended to determine the best way to achieve the restoration goals without inflicting damage on the site during earthmoving activities. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	As above Construction may result in short-term disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact. Restoration of meadow areas may have a long-term beneficial impact on the same plant use area.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of 420 parking spaces Curry Orchard parking lot	This is in the vicinity of a known ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas would affect access to native flora	This is in the vicinity of known archeological sites. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing traditional plan use areas. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized : removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking in Housekeeping Camp	A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	As above Removal and restoration efforts potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities may adversely impact known resources.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain for restoration	As above	As above While removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting, the proposed actions (specifically, recontouring the ground surface) has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of the site. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of Sugar Pine and Ahwahnee Bridges, and rerouting multiuse trail between them, including restoration of native vegetation.	There are known archeological and ethnographic resources in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Bridge removal would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an ethnohistoric village site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: reduced numbers of day use and overnight visitors proposed under Alternative 2 in Segment 2 would potentially have a beneficial impact on some types of traditional cultural resources.  Implementation of restricted access has the potential for adversely impacting access to traditional cultural resources.	Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely impact access to traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites at the Yellow Pine administrative group campsites	These actions would potentially impact a traditional use plant population area. Loss of the Yellow Pine campground as designated as tribal priority camping during annually scheduled traditional cultural events would also impact access to traditional cultural resources.  Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Camp 6</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: Move Camp 6 parking northward outside 10-year floodplain  Reroute Northside Drive south of the parking area  Formalize Camp 6/Village Center Parking Area with 550 parking places	Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites.  The proposed relocation of a parking area and rerouting of a portion of Northside Drive would be designed and planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.	As above

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Curry Village Area</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of the Curry Village stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, may affect native flora.	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> The Curry Village stables are located in the vicinity of several traditional use plant population areas. Restoration following removal of the stables and associated lodging, would likely increase opportunities for native habitat to flourish, resulting in a minor to moderate beneficial effect.
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain	There is a known ethnohistoric village site in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would likely be warranted	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Removal of buildings would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of the ethnographic site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground)	There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource. Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.



**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking in Housekeeping Camp	A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site.  Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.  Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	As above
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas	There are known traditional plan use and archeological resources in this vicinity.  Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.  Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	As above  Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora.
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: restriction of parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove.

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	<p>Localized: construction of replacement employee housing and administrative group camping in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area</p>	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological and ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbeville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p> <p>Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians may be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternative 2 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.</p> <p>Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	<p>Localized: decommission and restore the Wawona Golf Course</p>	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological resources.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid impacts to traditional cultural resources.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>The golf course was constructed over an archeological site, and recontouring the ground surface to remove the artificial topography of the golf course would potentially disturb buried portions of the site.</p> <p>The meadow adjacent to the golf course is an American Indian traditional use area. Restoration of the golf course could have a beneficial impact.</p>

**TABLE 9-254: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 2 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
7: South Fork Merced River	Segmentwide: removal and relocation of two stock campsites from Wawona Stock Camp to the Wawona Stables area would affect traditional cultural resources.	The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians. Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	Duration of Impact: long-term Type of impact: Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.
7: South Fork Merced River	Localized: redesign bus stop at Wawona Store to accommodate visitor use.	This is in the general area of known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, designing of the bus stop should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians. Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	Duration of Impact: short- to long-term Intensity and type of impact: avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Intensity and type of impact: Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 2, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in all river segments beyond than those common to Alternatives 2–6.

***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

The management of swimming and boating access in all river segments under Alternative 2 would influence the traditional cultural resources related to the Merced River’s setting and condition. Fewer boaters, in particular, would provide more opportunities for other visitors to experience the river in a more traditional state. Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources, providing that traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups do not have restricted access to important resources. Under Alternative 2, the park would implement a day use reservation system. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. If both of these criteria are met, then it could reasonably be stated that the day use reservation system proposed under Alternative 2 would not adversely impact American Indian traditional cultural resources. Otherwise, implementation of a day use reservation system has the potential to be an adverse impact, and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

**Segment 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall**

***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 2, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 1 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

**Biological Resource Actions.** Specific projects to protect and enhance the river’s biological values that would occur across all segments under Alternative 2 include proposed changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp that would have the potential to both beneficially and adversely impact known archeological sites in the vicinity of these areas.

**Segment 2: Yosemite Valley**

***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Actions in the Segment 2, Yosemite Valley, have the potential to adversely impact ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. These actions would be

designed and planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid or minimize impacts. Consultation may result in mitigation that reduces adverse impacts, and may result in beneficial impacts by directing activity away from known sites, and/or improving native vegetation.

**Biological Resource Actions.** Specific projects to protect and enhance the river’s biological values that would occur in Segment 2 under Alternative 2 include rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows, which has the potential to adversely impact traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources in Segment 2, as noted in **table 9-254**. Traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups should be consulted to plan appropriate areas for reroutes and nondamaging methods for removing abandoned segments of trails.

The Curry Orchard parking lot and a portion of Stoneman Meadow are within the immediate vicinity of an ethnohistoric village site. The proposed partial restoration of the Curry Orchard parking lot under Alternative 2 could have a minor to moderate beneficial impact on this resource by restoring some of the setting integrity.

The proposed removal of housing and other development from between the Village Store and Ahwahnee Meadow would provide minor to moderate beneficial impacts to the ecology of the meadow, although the proximity of an ethnohistoric village site suggests that adverse impacts could occur. Consultation is recommended to determine the best way to achieve the restoration goals without inflicting damage on the site during earthmoving activities. A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2. The proposed removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking under Alternative 2 would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site’s integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently affect the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

The proposed removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain has the potential to adversely impact a large ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2. While removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting, the proposed actions (specifically, recontouring the ground surface) has the potential to adversely impact both the physical integrity of the site, if archeological remains are present, and the ethnographic value of the resource.

The floodplains of the East Valley campgrounds contain traditional use plant population areas. The proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora. Access to traditional use plant population areas should be kept open during restoration activities through consultation with traditionally associated American Indians, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Impacts on the ethnographic values of nearby archeological sites valued as traditional cultural resources would also be discussed during consultation. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be required.

**Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions.** The multiuse trail between Sugar Pine Bridge and the Ahwahnee Bridge crosses a traditional use plant population area. Removal of these bridges under Alternative 2 would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species. Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on known traditional cultural resources, including an archeological site and ethnohistoric village site. Consideration of this site is recommended when planning the rerouted trail location, and traditionally associated American Indian representatives may wish to monitor trail construction in this area.

*Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

The Yellow Pine administrative group campsites are within a traditional use plant population area. Removal of the campsites and restoration of the area to a natural condition would result in beneficial impacts on ethnobotanical resources by enhancing native habitat and reducing visitor use impacts. This action could also have adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources because Yellow Pine campground is designated as tribal priority camping during annually scheduled traditional cultural events. Under Alternative 2, administrative group camping would be moved to the Abbieville/Trailer Village area of El Portal, an area with ethnographically sensitive sites that is also proposed for development of employee housing, causing an adverse impact. Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources. Impacts to specific geographic areas are discussed below.

**Curry Village.** The Curry Village stables are located in the vicinity of several traditional use plant population areas. Under Alternative 2, removal of the stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, would likely increase opportunities for native habitat to flourish.

**Camp 6.** Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. The proposed relocation of a parking area and rerouting of a portion of Northside Drive would be designed and planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

**Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4.** The proposed construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 would have the potential to adversely impact a number of nearby archeological and other ethnographic resources. The reduced numbers of day use and overnight visitors proposed under Alternative 2 in Segment 2 would potentially have a beneficial impact on some types of traditional cultural resources. Intensive visitor use affects the setting and feeling of traditional or spiritual sites and can impede access to these locations by cultural practitioners. Although visitor use can and does affect plant use areas, impacts are much more dependent on localized use specific to areas that contain these resources. A reduction in the overall visitor numbers would not necessarily reduce impacts on traditional use plant population areas.

Implementation of restricted access also has the potential for adversely impacting access to traditional cultural resources. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must

be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely affecting traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

The proposed conversion of the Yosemite Lodge and surrounding area to day use, camping, and parking, and associated removal and repurposing of various facilities under Alternative 2 would potentially affect the ethnographic values of a large village site (with some related archeological remains).

**Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp.** Under Alternative 2, a large number of campsites would be removed from the floodplain at all the East Valley campgrounds and habitat restoration would be conducted to revegetate and stabilize these areas of Segment 2. Several traditional use plant population areas are located in and around the current campgrounds, and these areas would potentially be affected by the proposed actions. Overall, the proposed actions would likely lead to long-term improvements in the health of native plant populations and, therefore, a beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources. To avoid adverse impacts during restoration activities, unrestricted access to these areas should be maintained for traditionally associated American Indians, as well as consultation on traditional land management strategies.

A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2. The proposed removal of all lodging facilities and most amenities and infrastructure (with the exception of one restroom for day users) would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently adversely impact the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

### **Segments 3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 2, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 3 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

**Biological Resource Actions.** The proposed actions under Alternative 2 to restrict parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks in Segment 4 would result in a beneficial impact for these trees. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove and allow it to grow and flourish.

#### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Under Alternative 2, there would be no actions to manage visitor use and facilities in Segment 3 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

Under Alternative 2, the Abbieville/Trailer Village area would be used for replacement employee housing (405 beds) and administrative group camping, both of which would be relocated to El Portal,

from Yosemite Valley. This area has archeological and other traditional cultural resources present, and new construction could result in adverse impacts on these resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbieville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites. Regarding the archeological and other traditional cultural resources present, consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

### **Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8: South Fork Merced River**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 2, the Wawona Golf Course would be decommissioned and restored to a natural condition. The golf course was constructed over an archeological site, which may retain sensitive cultural materials and traditional cultural resources. Recontouring the ground surface to remove the artificial topography of the golf course would potentially disturb buried portions of the site, as described in the “Archeological Resources” section earlier in this chapter. The meadow adjacent to the golf course is an American Indian traditional use area. Restoration of the golf course could have a beneficial impact.

Two stock campsites are proposed for removal from their current location in the Wawona stock camp and would be relocated to an area near the Wawona stables. Because the campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area, the removal of the campsites would provide a benefit to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling, and restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting, providing a beneficial impact.

#### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Removal of campsites from the Wawona Campground would reduce ongoing impacts on prehistoric and historic archeological site components. Although this action is primarily intended to be of benefit to the historic remains of U.S. Army Camp A.E. Wood, reduction in the intensity of camping would also have beneficial impacts for the physical integrity and ethnographic values of American Indian archeological remains.

### **Summary of Impacts from Alternative 2: Self-Reliant Visitor Experiences and Extensive Floodplain Restoration**

A portion of the management actions proposed under Alternative 2 would have the potential to result in adverse impacts, on known American Indian traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the site, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to find design solutions for specific actions, and would potentially avoid short- and long-term impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, and other significant resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is required under NEPA and NHPA.



Many of the management actions associated with Alternative 2 would result in long-term, beneficial impacts on known traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage, influencing the setting of traditional sites, or restoration of traditional use plant population areas.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 2: Self-Reliant Visitor Experiences and Extensive Floodplain Restoration**

#### ***Past Actions***

While none of the past actions listed in Appendix C specifically address traditional cultural resources, those that include habitat restoration were developed and implemented in consultation with representatives of traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups. Habitat restoration projects generally provide a beneficial impact for traditional use plant population areas.

#### ***Present Actions***

The Yosemite *General Management Plan* contains provisions regarding proper management of traditional cultural resources and the circumstances under which consultation with traditionally associated groups is recommended. To date, none of the present cumulative scenario projects have resulted in measurable impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual, village, or other sites.

#### ***Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions***

There are no reasonably foreseeable future actions that have the potential to measurably affect traditional cultural resources.

### ***Overall Cumulative Impact from Alternative 2: Self-Reliant Visitor Experiences and Extensive Floodplain Restoration***

The combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions of the cumulative scenario would have a negligible or beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources after implementation of all associated mitigation and consultation, providing that impacts to traditional cultural resources are avoided. The proposed management actions associated with Alternatives 2, including actions common to Alternatives 2-6, may have reduced or negligible impacts following consultation, or beneficial impacts resulting from enhanced communities of traditionally used plants, restrictions on some kinds and amounts of visitor use, or protection or enhancement of site settings. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes or groups could result in mitigations that reduce cumulative impacts that may occur.

### ***Environmental Consequences of Alternative 3: Dispersed Visitor Experiences and Extensive Riverbank Restoration***

#### **All River Segments**

To avoid adverse impacts, restoration, visitor management, and construction activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access, and avoid areas of known traditional cultural resources. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would result. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Text below describes actions specific to Alternative 3, and assumes that consultation and avoidance of impacts to traditional cultural resources would occur whenever possible. **Table 9-255** provides NEPA analysis of potential impacts to traditional cultural resources and recommendations for consultation.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 3, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in all river segments beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

The restrictions on boating in various sections of the Merced River would be in place. Commercial boating would be prohibited, but increased numbers of private boats would be allowed in Segment 2. Fewer boaters, in particular, would provide more opportunities for other visitors to experience the river in a more traditional state. Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources, providing that traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups do not have restricted access to important resources.

#### **Segment 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 3, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 1 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

**Biological Resource Actions.** Actions under Alternative 3 that would reduce or redesignate facilities and uses associated with Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp would have the potential to both beneficially and adversely impact known archeological sites in the vicinity of these areas.

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: management of swimming and boating access in all river segments would influence the traditional cultural resources related to the Merced River's setting and condition	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restriction of boating activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: management of access results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts.</i> <i>Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources.</i>
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall Camp	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites.  To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities.  Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</i>  Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities.  <i>Intensity and type of impact: If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</i>  As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows	These actions have the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</i>

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)		<p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: partial restoration of the Curry Orchard Day Use Parking Area to facilitate Stoneman Meadow restoration; removes 50 spaces for re-alignment to allow for a total of 300 parking spaces.</p>	<p>This is in the vicinity of a known ethnohistoric village site.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>May provide a beneficial impact on traditional use plant population areas in these Segment 2 meadows. Nearby ethnographic village and/or archeological sites would be protected from adverse impacts during ground-disturbing restoration activities</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas would affect access to native flora</p>	<p>This is in the vicinity of known archeological sites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing traditional plan use areas.</p>

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)			<i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat in Housekeeping Camp	A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	As above Removal and restoration efforts potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities may adversely impact known resources.
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain	As above Proximity of an ethnohistoric village site suggests that adverse impacts could occur. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> proposed actions (specifically, recontouring the ground surface) has the potential to affect both the physical integrity of the site. If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of Sugar Pine and Ahwahnee Bridges, and rerouting multiuse trail between them, including restoration of native vegetation.	There are known archeological and ethnographic resources in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Bridge removal would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an ethnohistoric village site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: reduced numbers of day use and overnight visitors proposed under Alternative 3 in Segment 2 would potentially have a beneficial impact on some types of traditional cultural resources Implementation of restricted access has the potential for adversely impacting access to traditional cultural resources.	Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely impact access to traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Camp 6</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: Move Camp 6 parking northward outside 10-year floodplain Reroute Northside Drive south of the parking area Formalize Camp 6/Village Center Parking Area with 550 parking places	Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. The proposed relocation of a parking area and rerouting of a portion of Northside Drive would be designed and planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</i> <i>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</i>
<b>Curry Village Area</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: removal of the Curry Village stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, may affect native flora.	Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: The Curry Village stables are located in the vicinity of several traditional use plant population areas. Restoration following removal of the stables and associated lodging, would likely increase opportunities for native habitat to flourish, resulting in a minor to moderate beneficial effect.</i>
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: extension of Upper Pines Campground would be constructed with new spaces for 36 recreational vehicles (RVs)	This is an area near a known ethnographic village site. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource. Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact: Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</i> <i>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</i>

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain</p>	<p>There is a known ethnohistoric village site in this vicinity.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would likely be warranted</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i></p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Removal of buildings would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of the ethnographic site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground)</p>	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i></p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
<b>Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat in Housekeeping Camp</p>	<p>A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive</p>	<p>As above</p>



**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)		<p>areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas</p>	<p>There are known traditional plan use and archeological resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora.</p>
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
4: El Portal	<p>Localized: restriction of parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks.</p>	<p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove.</p>
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	<p>Localized: restoration of riparian areas in Abbeville</p>	<p>There are traditional cultural resources in the vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts.</p> <p>New traditional use plant areas may result.</p>

**TABLE 9-255: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE 3 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	<p>Localized: decommission and restore the Wawona Golf Course</p>	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological resources.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid impacts to traditional cultural resources.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>The meadow adjacent to the golf course is an American Indian traditional use area. Restoration of the golf course could have a beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>The golf course was constructed over an archeological site, and recontouring the ground surface to remove the artificial topography of the golf course would potentially disturb buried portions of the site.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	<p>Localized: removal and relocation of two stock campsites from Wawona Stock Camp to the Wawona Stables area would affect traditional cultural resources.</p>	<p>The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.</p>

## **Segment 2: Yosemite Valley**

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows has the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources in Segment 2. The Curry Orchard parking lot and a portion of Stoneman Meadow are within the immediate vicinity of an ethnohistoric village site. The proposed partial restoration of the Curry Orchard parking lot and Stoneman Meadow could have a minor beneficial impact on this resource by restoring some of the integrity of setting. Similarly, the proposed removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking at Housekeeping Camp would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the ethnohistoric village site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently adversely impact the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

The floodplains of the East Valley campgrounds contain traditional use plant population areas. The proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora. Access to traditional use plant population areas should be kept open during restoration activities through consultation with traditionally associated American Indians, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Impacts on the ethnographic values of nearby archeological sites valued as traditional cultural resources would also be discussed during consultation. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be required.

The proposed removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain has the potential to affect a large ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2. While removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term beneficial impact for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting, the proposed actions (specifically, recontouring the ground surface) have the potential to adversely impact both the physical integrity of the site, if archeological remains are present, and the ethnographic value of the resource.

**Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions.** The multiuse trail between Sugar Pine Bridge and the Ahwahnee Bridge crosses a traditional use plant population area. Removal of these bridges would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species. Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an archeological site and ethnohistoric village site. Consideration of this site is recommended when planning the rerouted trail location, and traditionally associated American Indian representatives may wish to monitor trail construction in this area.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

**Curry Village.** The Curry Village stables are located in the vicinity of several traditional use plant population areas. Under Alternative 2, removal of the stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, would likely increase opportunities for native habitat to flourish.

Proposed extension of Upper Pines Campground with new spaces for 36 recreational vehicles (RVs) in an area with known traditional cultural resources may result in adverse impacts. Consultation may result in mitigation that would reduce those adverse impacts.

**Camp 6.** Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. The proposed relocation of a parking area and rerouting of a portion of Northside Drive would be designed and planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

**Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4.** The proposed construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 would have the potential to adversely affect a number of nearby archeological and other ethnographic resources.

Although Yosemite Lodge would not be converted to day use under Alternative 3, many of the facilities and infrastructure would be removed. Two new concessioner housing areas and employee parking spaces would be constructed in the Yosemite Lodge area under Alternative 3; this could introduce the potential for new adverse impacts from construction in a Segment 2 area known to contain archeological and other ethnographically sensitive resources.

**Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp.** A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2. The proposed removal of all lodging facilities and most amenities and infrastructure (with the exception of one restroom for day users) would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently affect the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

Under Alternative 3, a number of campsites would be removed from the East Valley campgrounds than under. Additionally, an extension of Upper Pines Campground would be constructed with new spaces for 36 recreational vehicles (RVs). Overall, the proposed actions would likely lead to long-term improvements in the health of native plant populations and, therefore, a beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources. However, some adverse affects are anticipated because the proposed new campground loop would be constructed near a known ethnographic village site.

### **Segments 3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 3, the valley oak protection zone proposed would include an area on the east side of El Portal Road. The larger oak protection zone under Alternative 3

has the potential for minor to moderate beneficial impacts on the valley oaks. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and restore traditional cultural continuity of land management efforts.

***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Under Alternative 3, 35 existing housing units would remain at the Abbeville/Trailer Village area in Segment 4; additional employee housing and administrative group camping would not be relocated here from the Valley, new parking would not be constructed, and riparian areas next to the river would be restored. Riparian restoration would have a potential beneficial impact for nearby traditional cultural resources, when accomplished in consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups.

**Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8: South Fork Merced River**

***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 3, the Wawona Golf Course would be decommissioned and restored, and two stock campsites would be moved from the Wawona stock camp to the Wawona stables. The golf course was constructed over an archeological site, which may retain sensitive cultural materials and traditional cultural resources. Recontouring the ground surface to remove the artificial topography of the golf course would potentially disturb buried portions of the site, as described in the “Archeological Resources” section earlier in this chapter. The meadow adjacent to the golf course is an American Indian traditional use area. Restoration of the gold course could have a beneficial impact.

Two stock campsites are proposed for removal from their current location in the Wawona stock camp and would be relocated to an area near the Wawona stables. Because the campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area, the removal of the campsites would provide a benefit to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling, and restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.

***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Campsites would be removed from the Wawona Campground under Alternative 3; this would have beneficial impacts for the physical integrity and ethnographic values of American Indian archeological remains.

**Summary of Impacts from Alternative 3: Dispersed Visitor Experiences and Extensive Riverbank Restoration**

Some of the management actions proposed under Alternative 3 would have the potential to result in minor to moderate impacts to known traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the site, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or

disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated groups to find design solutions for specific actions would avoid or minimize short-term and long-term adverse impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, archeological sites, and other significant sites.

Many of the management actions associated with Alternative 3 would result in long-term, beneficial impacts on known traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage, restrict access, or influence the setting of traditional sites, or restoration of traditional use plant population areas. There would be slightly less habitat restoration, but also slightly less ground disturbance as a result of demolition, construction, and restoration activities.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 3: Dispersed Visitor Experiences and Extensive Riverbank Restoration**

Cumulatively considerable projects that could affect American Indian traditional cultural resources are the same as those identified for Alternative 2, and include past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the study area.

#### ***Overall Cumulative Impact from Alternative 3: Dispersed Visitor Experiences and Extensive Riverbank Restoration***

The combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions of the cumulative scenario would have a negligible or beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources after implementation of all associated mitigation and consultation, providing that impacts to traditional cultural resources are avoided. The proposed management actions associated with Alternatives 3, including actions common to Alternatives 2-6, may have reduced or negligible impacts following consultation, or beneficial impacts resulting from enhanced communities of traditionally used plants, restrictions on some kinds and amounts of visitor use, or protection or enhancement of site settings. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes or groups could result in mitigations that reduce cumulative impacts that may occur.

#### ***Environmental Consequences of Alternative 4: Resource-Based Visitor Experiences and Targeted Riverbank Restoration***

To avoid or reduce adverse impacts, restoration, visitor management, and construction activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access, and avoid areas of known traditional cultural resources. Monitoring of ground disturbance by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would result. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Text below describes actions specific to Alternative 4, and assumes that consultation and avoidance of impacts to traditional cultural resources would occur whenever possible. Table 9-256 provides NEPA analysis of potential impacts to traditional cultural resources and recommendations for consultation.

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: management of swimming and boating access in all river segments under Alternative 2 would influence the traditional cultural resources related to the Merced River's setting and condition	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restriction of boating activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> management of access results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources.
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows	These actions have the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)		<p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: partial restoration of the Curry Orchard Day Use Parking Area to facilitate Stoneman Meadow restoration</p>	<p>This is in the vicinity of a known ethnohistoric village site.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>May provide a beneficial impact on traditional use plant population areas in these Segment 2 meadows. Nearby ethnographic village and/or archeological sites would be protected from adverse impacts during ground-disturbing restoration activities</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas would affect access to native flora</p>	<p>This is in the vicinity of known archeological sites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing traditional plan use areas.</p>



**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)			<i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized : removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking in Housekeeping Camp	A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	As above Removal and restoration efforts potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities may adversely impact known resources.
<b>Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of Sugar Pine and Ahwahnee Bridges, and rerouting multiuse trail between them, including restoration of native vegetation.	There are known archeological and ethnographic resources in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Bridge removal would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an ethnohistoric village site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: reduced numbers of day use and overnight visitors proposed under Alternative 2 in Segment 2 would potentially have a beneficial impact on some types of traditional cultural resources.  Implementation of restricted access has the potential for adversely impacting access to traditional cultural resources.	Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely impact access to traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Camp 6</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: Move Camp 6 north from the river to facilitate riparian restoration goals  Formalize Camp 6/Village Center Parking Area with 750 parking places  Construct a pedestrian underpass and roundabout at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersection to address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.	Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites.  Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible impact <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major  The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of resources in the area.  Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Curry Village</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of the Curry Village stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, may affect native flora.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Type of impact:</i> beneficial  The Curry Village stables are located in the vicinity of several traditional use plant population areas. Restoration following removal of the stables and associated lodging, would likely increase opportunities for native habitat to flourish.

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground)	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i></p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of new employee housing at Yosemite Lodge	<p>There is a known ethnohistoric village site in this vicinity.</p> <p>This action would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbing activities would likely be required.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible impact</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</p> <p>The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of the site.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of facilities and infrastructure, restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat, and conversion of the area into day use river access and picnicking in Housekeeping Camp	A large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	As above
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas	There are known traditional plan use and archeological resources in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	As above Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora.
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: restriction of parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove.

**TABLE 9-256: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 4 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: construction of replacement employee housing in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area.	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological and ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbeville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p> <p>Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians may be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternative 2 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.</p> <p>Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	Segmentwide: removal and relocation of two stock campsites from Wawona Stock Camp to the Wawona Stables area would affect traditional cultural resources.	<p>The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.</p>

## All River Segments

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 4, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in all river segments beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Under Alternative 4, more private boaters would be allowed in Segment 2 of the Merced River, although a permit would be required. Commercial boats would be allowed with a commercial use authorization. These actions would result in a minor beneficial impact over current conditions.

Proposed changes in parking, traffic management, and public transportation under Alternative 4 would have no impact on traditional cultural resources provided that traditionally associated American Indians are guaranteed access to the park for traditional cultural events. Parking and/or public transportation fee waivers for nonrecreational use could also be required to maintain appropriate access to the park, as required under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

## Segment 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 4, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 1 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

#### **Biological Resource Actions**

Actions under Alternative 4 would reduce use at Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp. The overall impacts of the proposed actions would have the potential to both beneficially (by avoiding sites) and adversely impact known archeological sites in the vicinity of these areas.

## Segment 2: Yosemite Valley

### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 4, actions propose restoration of Stoneman Meadow and portions of the Curry Orchard parking lot. The proposed partial restoration of the Curry Orchard parking lot could have a minor beneficial impact on this resource by restoring some of the setting integrity.

Alternative 4 actions for the Yosemite Lodge area would not include removal of any buildings from the floodplain except for those included in the actions common to Alternatives 2–6. Rerouting of some trails, roads, and bicycle paths would occur, and some trail would be elevated onto boardwalks. No roads or bicycle paths would be rerouted out of meadows. These actions have the potential to impact traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources in Segment 2. Traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups should be consulted to plan appropriate areas for reroutes and nondamaging methods for removing abandoned segments of trails.

The park would remove campsites from the East Valley campgrounds and somewhat restore the floodplain area. The proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora. Access to traditional use plant population areas should be kept open during restoration activities through consultation with traditionally associated American Indians, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Impacts on the ethnographic values of nearby archeological sites valued as traditional cultural resources would also be discussed during consultation.

Actions to remove facilities from Housekeeping Camp, restore habitat, and provide formal river access would be less under Alternative 4 than under Alternative 3, with some lodging units remaining and less riparian ecosystem being restored. As a large portion of Housekeeping Camp is located within an ethnohistoric village site in Segment 2, the proposed actions would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently adversely impact the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

**Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions.** Removal of the Ahwahnee and Sugar Pine bridges and rerouting of the trail between these bridges would occur. Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an archeological site and an ethnohistoric village site. Consideration of this site is recommended when planning the rerouted trail location, and traditionally associated American Indian representatives may wish to monitor trail construction in this area.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

**Curry Village.** Removal of the Curry Village stables and associated lodging, followed by ecological restoration of the stables area, may affect native flora. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.

**Camp 6.** Moving Camp 6 parking north from the river will facilitate riparian restoration goals. This action has a potentially beneficial impact. The Camp 6/Village Parking Area will be formalized with 750 parking places. To address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, a pedestrian underpass and roundabout will be constructed at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersections. The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the

physical integrity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4.** A Camp 4 shuttle stop would be constructed under Alternative 4, and would have the potential to adversely impact a number of nearby archeological and other ethnographic resources.

Under Alternative 4, predicted numbers of day and overnight visitors would be reduced compared to current peak day visitors. Intensive visitor use impacts the setting and feeling of traditional or spiritual sites and can impede access to these locations by cultural practitioners. Although visitor use can and does affect traditional use plant population areas, impacts are much more dependent on localized use specific to areas that contain these resources. A reduction in the overall visitor numbers would not necessarily reduce impacts on plant use sites. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. Under Alternative 4, American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any visitor limits. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely impacting traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

Actions at Yosemite Lodge include construction of two new concessioner housing areas and employee parking spaces. Associated removal and repurposing of various facilities would potentially adversely impact the ethnographic values of a large village site (with some related archeological remains).

**Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp.** Under Alternative 4, some lodging units and other facilities would remain at Housekeeping Camp. The proposed removal of facilities, amenities and infrastructure would potentially have a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the ethnohistoric village site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently adversely impact the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

Under Alternative 4, a number of campsites would be removed from the East Valley campgrounds, but several areas would be proposed for construction of new campgrounds. Additional walk-in, drive-in, and RV spaces would be created in areas adjacent to existing campgrounds, in areas of former campgrounds, or next to other existing facilities such as the Curry Village stables and Yosemite Lodge. These actions would result in some beneficial impacts, but also have the potential for adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources, as several of the proposed new campground areas would be constructed near known traditional use plant population areas and/or ethnographic village sites.

### **Segments 3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** The valley oak protection zone proposed under Alternative 4 would remove current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove and allow it to grow and flourish.



### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Under Alternative 4, the Abbieville/Trailer Village area in Segment 4 would be used for high-density replacement employee housing (258 beds) relocated from the Valley to El Portal. This area has archeological and other ethnographic resources present, and new construction would result in adverse impacts on these resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to determine the best uses for the Abbieville/Trailer Village area.

### **Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8: South Fork Merced River**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 4, the Wawona Golf Course would remain operational and open for use; no impacts on traditional cultural resources would occur from this use. Two stock campsites would be removed; because the campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area, the removal of the campsites would provide a benefit to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling, and restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Campsites would be removed from the Wawona Campground under Alternative 4. Impacts on ethnographically important resources would be the same as described above.

### **Summary of Impacts from Alternative 4: Resource-based Visitor Experiences and Targeted Riverbank Restoration**

Some of the management actions proposed under Alternative 4 would have the potential to result in minor to moderate adverse impacts on known traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the site, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to find design solutions for specific actions that would avoid or minimize short- and long-term impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, and other significant sites.

Some of the management actions associated with Alternative 4 would result in long-term, beneficial impacts on known traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage, restrict access, or influence the setting of traditional sites, or restoration of traditional use plant population areas. Fewer existing facilities would be removed under Alternative 4, and a greater amount of new construction of campsites, parking lots, and other facilities would occur.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 4: Resource-based Visitor Experiences and Targeted Riverbank Restoration**

Cumulatively considerable projects that could affect American Indian traditional cultural resources are the same as those identified for Alternative 2, and include past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the study area.

#### ***Overall Cumulative Impact from Alternative 4: Resource-based Visitor Experiences and Targeted Riverbank Restoration***

The combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions of the cumulative scenario would have a negligible or beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources after implementation of all associated mitigation and consultation, providing that impacts to traditional cultural resources are avoided. The proposed management actions associated with Alternatives 4, including actions common to Alternatives 2-6, may have reduced or negligible adverse impacts following consultation, or beneficial impacts resulting from enhanced communities of traditionally used plants, restrictions on some kinds and amounts of visitor use, or protection or enhancement of site settings. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes or groups could result in mitigations that reduce cumulative impacts that may occur.

#### ***Environmental Consequences of Alternative 5: Enhanced Visitor Experiences and Essential Riverbank Restoration***

To avoid or reduce adverse impacts, restoration, visitor management, and construction activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access, and avoid areas of known traditional cultural resources. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would result. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Text below describes actions specific to Alternative 5, and assumes that consultation and avoidance of impacts to traditional cultural resources would occur whenever possible. **Table 9-257** provides NEPA analysis of potential impacts to traditional cultural resources and recommendations for consultation.

### **All River Segments**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 5, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in all segments beyond those common to Alternatives 2-6.

TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
All segments	Parkwide: management of swimming and boating access in all river segments under Alternative 2 would influence the traditional cultural resources related to the Merced River's setting and condition	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restriction of boating activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and to restore traditional cultural continuity to meadow management efforts.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> management of access results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Eliminating commercial boating and implementing strict number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in the greatest beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources.
All segments	Segmentwide: a progressive day use reservation system would potentially have a beneficial impact on some types of traditional cultural resources	Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> management of access results in minor to moderate beneficial impacts. In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely affecting traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Type of impact:</i> No ecosystem restoration would occur, and impacts on traditional cultural resources would likely be a minor beneficial impact. <i>Type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be negligible to minor. As no ecosystem restoration would occur, and impacts on traditional cultural resources would likely be a minor adverse impact. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows	<p>These actions have the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: partial restoration of the Curry Orchard Day Use Parking Area to allow for a total of 400 parking spaces.	<p>This is in the vicinity of a known ethnohistoric village site.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>May provide a beneficial impact on traditional use plant population areas in these Segment 2 meadows. Nearby ethnographic village and/or archeological sites would be protected from adverse impacts during ground-disturbing restoration activities</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas would affect access to native flora	This is in the vicinity of known archeological sites. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing traditional plan use areas.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
<b>Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of Sugar Pine Bridge and the rerouting of the multiuse trail have the potential to affect an ethnohistoric site while restoring native vegetation.	There is a known archeological site and ethnographic village site in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Bridge removal would have a beneficial impact on this resource by enhancing native vegetation species</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on an ethnohistoric village site. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: Visitor use is limited through parking management. As parking reaches full capacity in the Valley, cars would be redirected to West Valley overflow parking, and then to overflow parking in El Portal and Gateway communities.	Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> In order for the establishment of a day use reservation system not to have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, (1) American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and (2) tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely impact access to traditional cultural resources and could possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
<b>Camp 6</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: Move Camp 6 north from the river to facilitate riparian restoration goals</p> <p>Formalize Camp 6/Village Center Parking Area with 850 parking places</p> <p>Construct a pedestrian underpass and roundabout at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersection to address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.</p>	<p>Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible impact</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</p> <p>The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of the site.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of new employee housing at Yosemite Lodge	<p>There is a known ethnohistoric village site in this vicinity.</p> <p>This action would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible impact</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</p> <p>The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of the site.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4 (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)		<p>ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbing activities would likely be required.</p>	
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: creation of additional walk-in, drive-in, and RV spaces in areas adjacent to existing campgrounds and in areas of former campgrounds</p>	<p>There are known traditional cultural resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources would result in minor beneficial effect</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	<p>Localized: construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground)</p>	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>

**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas	There are known traditional plan use and archeological resources in this vicinity. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	As above Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of a roundabout to address traffic conflicts at the bank three-way intersection with Northside Drive	There are known traditional cultural resources in this vicinity. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource. Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.	<i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i> <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: restriction of parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove.



**TABLE 9-257: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 5 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Analysis under NEPA
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: construction of replacement employee housing in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area.	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological and ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbeville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p> <p>Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians may be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternative 2 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions.</p> <p>Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	Segmentwide: removal and relocation of two stock campsites from Wawona Stock Camp to the Wawona Stables area would affect traditional cultural resources.	<p>The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.</p>

*Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

Under Alternative 5, a number of private boaters would be allowed in Segment 2 of the Merced River, but a permit would be required. Commercial boats would not be allowed under Alternative 5. Fewer boaters, in particular, would provide more opportunities for other visitors to experience the river in a more traditional state. Implementing number restrictions on private boats within some river segments would result in a beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources, providing that traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups do not have restricted access to important resources.

Under Alternative 5, a progressive day use reservation system would be implemented by the park, along with other phased traffic and parking management systems that would be activated when demand exceeds a certain level. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. To ensure that the establishment of a day use reservation system would not have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. If both of these criteria are met, then it could reasonably be stated that the progressive day use reservation system proposed under Alternative 5 would not adversely affect American Indian traditional cultural resources. Otherwise, implementation of a day use reservation system has the potential to adversely affect traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

**Segment 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall**

*Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 5, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 1 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

*Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

**Biological Resource Actions**

Under Alternative 5, there would be no reduction in use at Little Yosemite Valley Campground, although bear boxes would be removed. Bear boxes and flush toilets would also be removed from Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and the Merced Lake High Sierra Camp would be reduced to 42 beds. No ecosystem restoration would occur, and impacts on traditional cultural resources (both beneficial and adverse) would be minor.

**Segment 2: Yosemite Valley**

*Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 5, the actions proposed to reroute trails, roads, and bicycle paths. Some trail would be rerouted, and some trail would be elevated onto boardwalks. No roads or bicycle paths would be rerouted out of meadows. Traditionally associated American Indian

tribes and groups should be consulted to plan appropriate areas for reroutes and nondamaging methods for removing abandoned segments of trails.

There would be no restoration of Stoneman Meadow under Alternative 5; instead, the Curry Orchard parking lot would be redesigned to improve drainage and hydrologic connectivity in Stoneman Meadow. The proposed partial restoration of the Curry Orchard parking lot could have a slight beneficial impact on this resource by restoring some of the setting integrity.

Under Alternative 5, the park would remove some campsites from the East Valley campgrounds and restore less floodplain area. The floodplains of the East Valley campgrounds contain traditional use plant population areas. The removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a local, long-term, minor beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be required.

Actions to remove facilities from Housekeeping Camp, restore habitat, and provide formal river access would leave most lodging units and only 1 acre of riparian ecosystem would be restored. The removal of facilities and infrastructure and restoration of floodplain and riparian habitat would potentially have a local, long-term, minor beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by reducing the intensity of use and thereby improving the site's integrity of setting. Ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition and removal of facilities could inadvertently adversely impact the values of the site. Active restoration may also restrict access to the site.

Under Alternative 5, actions in the Yosemite Lodge area would not include removal of any buildings from the floodplain except for those included in the actions common to Alternatives 2–6.

**Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 5, only the Sugar Pine Bridge would be removed and the adjacent multiple use trail would be rerouted to the north. The Ahwahnee Bridge would remain. Rerouting the trail to the north of the river may result in the trail encroaching on traditional cultural resources. Consideration of this site is recommended when planning the rerouted trail location, and traditionally associated American Indian representatives may wish to monitor trail construction in this area.

### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

**Camp 6.** Moving Camp 6 parking north from the river will facilitate riparian restoration goals. This action has a potentially beneficial impact. The Camp 6/Village Parking Area will be formalized with 750 parking places. To address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, a pedestrian underpass and roundabout will be constructed at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersections. The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Actions (and impacts) at Yosemite Lodge would be the same under Alternative 5 as under Alternative 4, including the construction of two new concessioner housing areas and employee parking spaces. Associated removal and repurposing of various facilities would potentially affect the ethnographic values of a large village site (with some related archeological remains).

**Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4.** The proposed construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 would have the potential to adversely affect a number of nearby archeological and other ethnographic resources.

Construction of new employee housing at Yosemite Lodge would potentially adversely impact a known ethnohistoric village site in this vicinity. This action would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of traditional cultural resources.

Under Alternative 5, predicted numbers of day and overnight visitors would be approximately the same as current peak day demand. Intensive visitor use affects the setting and feeling of traditional or spiritual sites and can impede access to these locations by cultural practitioners. Although visitor use can and does affect plant traditional use plant population areas, impacts are much more dependent on localized use specific to areas that contain these resources. A change in the overall visitor numbers would not necessarily alter impacts on traditional use plant population areas. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. Under Alternative 5, American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any progressive day use reservation system or visitor limits. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential for adversely affecting traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

**Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp.** Under Alternative 5, most lodging units and other facilities would remain at Housekeeping Camp. There would be no measurable beneficial impacts over present conditions, but adverse impacts related to continued high-intensity visitor use of the area would still occur, as described for Alternative 1.

Under Alternative 5, some campsites would be removed from the East Valley campgrounds. Several areas would be proposed for the construction of new campgrounds. Additional walk-in, drive-in, and RV spaces would be created in areas adjacent to existing campgrounds and in areas of former campgrounds, but not next to other existing facilities. Several traditional use plant population areas are located in and around the current campgrounds, and these areas would potentially be affected by the proposed actions. To avoid adverse impacts during restoration activities, unrestricted access to these areas should be maintained for traditionally associated American Indians, as well as consultation on traditional land management strategies.

### **Segments 3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

**Biological Resource Actions.** The proposed actions to restrict parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks in Segment 4 would result in a beneficial impact for these trees. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating

with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove and allow it to grow and flourish.

### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Any construction of replacement employee housing would adversely affect archeological and other traditional cultural resources in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area. This area has archeological and other traditional cultural resources present, and new construction would likely result in local, long-term adverse impacts on these resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbeville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

### **Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8: South Fork Merced River**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 5, the Wawona Golf Course would remain open. Two stock campsites would be removed from the Wawona stock camp, but under Alternative 5 these campsites would be relocated to the Wawona Maintenance area. Because the campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area, the removal of the campsites would provide a benefit to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling, and restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.

### **Summary of Impacts from Alternative 5: Enhanced Visitor Experiences and Essential Riverbank Restoration**

Some of the management actions proposed under Alternative 5 would have the potential to result in minor to moderate adverse impacts on known American Indian traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the site, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended to find design solutions for specific actions in order to minimize short-term impacts and avoid long-term impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, and other significant sites.

Some of the Alternative 5 management actions would result in long-term, beneficial impacts on known American Indian traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage, restrict access, or influence the setting of traditional sites, or restoration of traditional use plant population areas.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 5: Enhanced Visitor Experiences and Essential Riverbank Restoration**

Cumulatively considerable projects that could affect American Indian traditional cultural resources are the same as those identified for Alternative 2, and include past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the study area.

#### ***Overall Cumulative Impact from Alternative 5: Enhanced Visitor Experiences and Essential Riverbank Restoration***

The combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions of the cumulative scenario would have a negligible or beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources after implementation of all associated mitigation and consultation, providing that impacts to traditional cultural resources are avoided. The proposed management actions associated with Alternatives 5, including actions common to Alternatives 2-6, may have reduced or negligible impacts following consultation, or beneficial impacts resulting from enhanced communities of traditionally used plants, restrictions on some kinds and amounts of visitor use, or protection or enhancement of site settings. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes or groups could result in mitigations that reduce cumulative impacts that may occur.

#### ***Environmental Consequences of Alternative 6: Diversified Visitor Experiences and Selective Riverbank Restoration***

To avoid or reduce adverse impacts, restoration, visitor management, and construction activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access, and avoid areas of known traditional cultural resources. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would result. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Text below describes actions specific to Alternative 6, and assumes that consultation and avoidance of impacts to traditional cultural resources would occur whenever possible. Table 9-258 provides NEPA analysis of potential impacts to traditional cultural resources and recommendations for consultation.

### **All River Segments**

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values***

Under Alternative 6, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in all river segments beyond those common to Alternatives 2-6.

#### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

Under Alternative 6, the largest number of boats would be allowed on the Wild and Scenic River area of the Merced River out of Alternatives 2-6. Permits would be required for private boats, and commercial boats would be allowed by concessioners.

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>All Segments - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites. To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities. Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 1 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
1: Merced River above Nevada Fall	Segmentwide: changes to the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and Merced Lake High Sierra Camp	<p>Some actions are proposed in areas with known archeological sites.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities.</p> <p>Monitoring by traditionally associated American Indians of activities would likely be warranted in some areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during restoration activities.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>As an example, construction may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact, while removal of informal trails may have a beneficial impact on the same plant use area.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: rerouting trails, bicycle paths, and roads in all Yosemite Valley meadows	<p>These actions have the potential to affect traditional cultural resources, including archeological sites, traditional use plant population areas, or other American Indian traditional cultural resources</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of archeological and ethnographic resources, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such ground disturbance would be appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>



**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: partial restoration of the Curry Orchard Day Use Parking Area to allow for a total of 400 parking spaces.	This is in the vicinity of a known ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to physical disturbance of ethnographic resources. Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by American Indian representatives may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in negligible to moderate beneficial impact. May provide a beneficial impact on traditional use plant population areas in these Segment 2 meadows. Nearby ethnographic village and/or archeological sites would be protected from adverse impacts during ground-disturbing restoration activities <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the East Valley campground areas would affect access to native flora	This is in the vicinity of known archeological sites. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing traditional plan use areas. <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: removal of buildings in the Yosemite Lodge floodplain	This has the potential to affect a large ethnohistoric village site. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work. Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact. Removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting,

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values (cont.)</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley (cont.)			<i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> proposed actions (specifically, recontouring the ground surface) has the potential to affect both the physical integrity of the site. If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: removal of facilities in Housekeeping Camp	As above	As above
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Segmentwide: no reduction of the numbers of day use and overnight visitors is proposed under Alternative 6 in Segment 2.	Intensive visitor use impacts the setting and feeling of traditional or spiritual sites, and can impede access to these locations by cultural practitioners.  Project planners would consult with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to determine the course of action that would result in the least adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources would result in negligible impact and beneficial impact <i>Type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.
<b>Camp 6</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: Move Camp 6 north from the river to facilitate riparian restoration goals  Formalize Camp 6/Village Center Parking Area with 850 parking places  Construct a pedestrian underpass and roundabout at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersection to address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.	Camp 6 is in the vicinity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites.  Consultation with traditionally associated American Indians is recommended for any actions that would involve use of heavy machinery or temporary restrictions on access to ethnographically sensitive areas. This would help to avoid any adverse impacts related to continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies.	<i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible impact <i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, impacts would be minor, moderate, to major The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of the site. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of new employee housing and lodge redesign at Yosemite Lodge	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact: short- to long-term</i></p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources and rerouting away from traditional cultural resources results in minor to moderate beneficial impact.</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> Demolition and ground disturbing activities has the potential to adversely impact the physical integrity of known sites. If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts.</p>
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: construction of new walk-in, drive-in, and RV spaces adjacent to existing campgrounds and in areas of former campgrounds within the East Valley	<p>There are known traditional use plant areas and archeological sites in the vicinity.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would be conducted prior to the commencement of this type of work.</p> <p>Monitoring by American Indian representatives of such actions may be appropriate.</p>	As above
2: Yosemite Valley	Localized: construction of a shuttle stop at Camp 4 (Sunnyside Campground)	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	As above

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segment 2 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
<b>Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4 (cont.)</b>			
2: Yosemite Valley	Local: Construction of Bank three-way intersection and a roundabout at the intersection with Northside Drive	<p>There are known ethnographic resources in this vicinity</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, construction activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of ground disturbing activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	As above
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Protect and Enhance River Values</b>			
<b>Biological Resource Actions</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: restriction of parking and new building construction within a protection zone around a stand of valley oaks.	To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, restoration activities should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> minor to moderate beneficial impacts. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decomposing soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove.</p>
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
4: El Portal	Localized: construction of replacement employee housing in the Abbeville/Trailer Village area.	<p>This area is in known proximity of archeological and ethnographic resources.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbeville/Trailer Village area, especially in recognition that associated American Indians have a priority agreement for the administrative group campsites.</p> <p>Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups is recommended during the planning stages.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> short- to long-term</p> <p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> avoidance of resources results in negligible to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall impact on traditional cultural resources under Alternative 2 could be beneficial, provided that physical impacts on archeological, ethnographic, and other sites valued as traditional cultural resources could be avoided during planned actions. Removal of some buildings may also redirect visitor activity away from known sites, or provide new opportunities for traditional plant use areas.</p>

**TABLE 9-258: PROPOSED ACTIONS AND IMPACTS UNDER ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVE 6 (CONTINUED)**

River Segment	Context of Proposed Actions and Impacts to Resources	Consultation with Traditionally Associated American Indian Tribes or Groups	Duration, Intensity, and Type of Impact
<b>Segments 3 and 4 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities (cont.)</b>			
4: El Portal (cont.)		<p>Construction or removal activities would be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians to ensure uninterrupted access to ethnographic resources during these activities, and avoid known traditional cultural resource.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians may be warranted in some areas, especially in areas of ground disturbing activities.</p>	<p><i>Intensity and type of impact:</i> If avoidance is not feasible, adverse impacts would be minor, moderate, to major.</p> <p>Construction and removal may result in disruption of ethnobotanical species' habitats, and may be an adverse impact.</p> <p>Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce adverse impacts.</p>
<b>Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8 - Actions: Manage Visitor Use and Facilities</b>			
7: South Fork Merced River	<p>Segmentwide: removal and relocation of two stock campsites from Wawona Stock Camp to the Wawona Stables area would affect traditional cultural resources.</p>	<p>The campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area.</p> <p>To avoid adverse impacts, or reduce impacts, removal of the campsites should be planned in consultation with traditionally associated American Indians.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities by traditionally associated American Indians would likely be warranted in some areas.</p>	<p><i>Duration of Impact:</i> long-term</p> <p><i>Type of impact:</i> Removal of the campsites would provide a minor to moderate benefit impact to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling. Restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.</p>

Under Alternative 6, a progressive day use reservation system would be implemented by the park, along with other phased traffic and parking management systems that would be activated when demand exceeds a certain level. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. To ensure that the establishment of a day use reservation system would not have an adverse impact on traditional cultural resources, American Indian access for traditional cultural events must be guaranteed, and tribal fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any day use reservation system in place. If both of these criteria are met, then it could reasonably be stated that the progressive day use reservation system proposed under Alternative 6 would not adversely impact American Indian traditional cultural resources. Otherwise, implementation of a day use reservation system has the potential to adversely affect traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

### **Segment 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 6, there would be no actions to protect and enhance river values in Segment 1 beyond those common to Alternatives 2–6.

#### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 6, there would be no reduction in use at Little Yosemite Valley Campground, although bear boxes would be removed. Bear boxes and flush toilets would also be removed from Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and the Merced Lake High Sierra Camp would be reduced to 60 beds. No ecosystem restoration would occur, and impacts on traditional cultural resources (both beneficial and adverse) would likely be minimal.

### **Segment 2: Yosemite Valley**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Proposed actions under Alternative 6 include: rerouting of trails, roads, and bicycle paths in Segment 2; redesign of Curry Orchard parking lot; restoration and campsite removal actions at East Valley campgrounds; actions to remove facilities from Housekeeping Camp. For these actions, impacts could occur on ethnographic resources, both beneficial and adverse. The proposed partial redesign of the Curry Orchard parking lot could have a slight beneficial impact on this resource by restoring some of the setting integrity. Traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups should be consulted to plan appropriate areas for reroutes and nondamaging methods for removing abandoned segments of trails and campsites.

Under Alternative 6, actions for the Yosemite Lodge area include removal of buildings in the floodplain and recontouring/restoration, and a new parking lot would be added for lodging units. While removal of unused facilities and restoration of vegetation would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for the site by restoring some of its traditional setting, the proposed actions (specifically,

recontouring the ground surface) has the potential to affect both the physical integrity of the site, if archeological remains are present, and the ethnographic value of the resource.

**Hydrologic/Geologic Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 6, both the Sugar Pine and Ahwahnee bridges would remain and the multiuse trail between these bridges would also stay in its current alignment.

### ***Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities***

**Camp 6.** Moving Camp 6 parking north from the river will facilitate riparian restoration goals. This action has a potentially beneficial impact. The Camp 6/Village Parking Area will be formalized with 850 parking places. To address traffic congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, a pedestrian underpass and two roundabout will be constructed at the Village Drive/Northside Drive intersections. The proposed actions (specifically, ground disturbance and recontouring) have the potential to affect the physical integrity of known ethnohistoric village sites, traditional use plant population areas, and/or archeological sites. Consultation may result in mitigations that reduce impacts. Associated removal and repurposing of various facilities would potentially impact the ethnographic values of a large village site (with some related archeological remains).

**Yosemite Lodge and Camp 4.** Actions at Yosemite Lodge include construction of two new concessioner housing areas and employee parking spaces. In addition, the lodge would be redesigned out of the floodplain, and a new three-story building would be constructed with 44 lodging units. This construction would have the potential to adversely impact known traditional cultural resources in the immediate vicinity of Yosemite Lodge.

A Camp 4 shuttle stop and Bank three-way intersection roundabout would be constructed under Alternative 6, and a roundabout would be constructed at the three-way intersection with Northside Drive. Because this roundabout would also be located in a sensitive ethnographic area, potential adverse impacts would be possible. Consultation would be recommended.

Under Alternative 6, available parking and lodging for day use and overnight visitors would meet the current peak day demand and the projected demand for the next five years, allowing for 3% annual growth. Intensive visitor use affects the setting and feeling of traditional or spiritual sites, and can impede access to these locations by cultural practitioners. Although visitor use can and does affect traditional use plant population areas, impacts are much more dependent on localized use specific to areas that contain these resources. A change in the overall visitor numbers would not necessarily alter impacts on plant use sites. One of the most important aspects of traditional cultural association is access to park lands and resources. Under Alternative 6, American Indian access for traditional cultural events in Segment 2 must be guaranteed, and fee waiver passes for nonrecreational uses must be honored regardless of any progressive day use reservation system or visitor limits. Otherwise, implementation of these actions has the potential to adversely affect traditional cultural resources and would possibly be in conflict with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

**Yosemite Village and Housekeeping Camp.** Under Alternative 6, most lodging units and all other facilities would remain at Housekeeping Camp. There would be negligible beneficial impacts over existing conditions, but minor, adverse impacts on traditional cultural resources related to continued

high-intensity visitor use of the area would still occur. Under Alternative 6, some campsites would be removed from the East Valley campgrounds. Several areas would be proposed for the construction of new campgrounds. New walk-in, drive-in, and RV spaces would be added in areas adjacent to existing campgrounds and in areas of former campgrounds, as well as near Yosemite Lodge, but no campsites would be constructed at the Curry Village stables. The proposed removal of campsites and asphalt and restoration of native vegetation within the campground areas would ultimately provide a long-term, minor beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources by increasing and enhancing the native flora. Access to traditional use plant population areas should be kept open during restoration activities through consultation with traditionally associated American Indians, allow for continuous access to traditional use plant population areas for seasonal uses, and promote cultural continuity of land management strategies. Impacts on the ethnographic values of nearby archeological sites valued as traditional cultural resources would also be discussed during consultation. Traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups should be consulted to plan appropriate areas for new construction.

### **Segments 3 and 4: Merced River Gorge and El Portal**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

**Biological Resource Actions.** Under Alternative 6, there would also be a proposed valley oak protection zone. Removing current facilities and imported fill, then decompacting soils and revegetating with native oak-compatible understory species would improve the health of this grove and allow it to grow and flourish.

#### *Impacts of Actions to Manage User Capacities, Land Use, and Facilities*

The proposed housing at the Abbieville/Trailer Village area in Segment 4 under Alternative 6 would include high-density units for 258 employees and remote parking for 200 vehicles. This area has archeological and other traditional cultural resources present, and new construction would likely result in adverse impacts on these resources. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups would determine the best uses for the Abbieville/Trailer Village area.

### **Segments 5, 6, 7, and 8: South Fork Merced River**

#### *Impacts of Actions to Protect and Enhance River Values*

Under Alternative 6, the Wawona Golf Course would remain open, and two stock campsites would be relocated from the Wawona stock camp to the Wawona stables. Because the campsites are currently located within a sensitive cultural area, the removal of the campsites would provide a benefit to this resource by eliminating a source of erosion and trampling, and restoration of the area would improve the integrity of the site setting.



### **Summary of Impacts from Alternative 6: Diversified Visitor Experiences and Selective Riverbank Restoration**

Some of the management actions proposed under Alternative 6 would have the potential to result in minor to moderate adverse impacts on known American Indian traditional cultural resources through actions related to restoration, construction, and facilities removal. These could result in short-term or long-term changes in the setting of the site, destruction of native vegetation, changes in important views, or disruption through visitor use or lack of access. Consultation with representatives from traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups to find design solutions for specific actions would avoid or reduce short-term and long-term impacts on traditional use plant population areas, spiritual sites, ethnographic village locations, and other significant sites.

Some of the management actions associated with Alternative 6 would result in long-term beneficial impacts to known American Indian traditional cultural resources, either through restrictions on types or amounts of visitor use that can cause damage, restrict access, or influence the setting of traditional sites, or traditional use plant population areas.

### **Cumulative Impacts of Alternative 6: Diversified Visitor Experiences and Selective Riverbank Restoration**

Cumulatively considerable projects that could affect American Indian traditional cultural resources are the same as those identified for Alternative 2, and include past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions in the study area.

### ***Overall Cumulative Impact from Alternative 6: Diversified Visitor Experiences and Selective Riverbank Restoration***

The combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions of the cumulative scenario would have a negligible or beneficial impact on traditional cultural resources after implementation of all associated mitigation and consultation, providing that impacts to traditional cultural resources are avoided. The proposed management actions associated with Alternatives 6, including actions common to Alternatives 2-6, may have reduced or negligible adverse impacts following consultation, or beneficial impacts resulting from enhanced communities of traditionally used plants, restrictions on some kinds and amounts of visitor use, or protection or enhancement of site settings. Consultation with traditionally associated American Indian tribes or groups could result in mitigations that reduce cumulative impacts that may occur.

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