



tikaboo

05/14/2007 10:32 AM  
MST

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: Merced River Plan

RECEIVED

MRP-SEIS-14  
MAY 14 2007

P. 1972  
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Marcus Taylor

Winthrop WA, 98862

May 14, 2007

Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
Attn: Merced River Plan  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

Dear Mr. Superintendent:

I am writing regarding the Merced River plan and specifically regulation of pack and saddle stock as they relate to water quality in the basin. I have been involved in commenting on plans for Yosemite since the mid-1970's when the General Plan of 1980. Sadly, I watched the entire plan pre-empted by the Superintendent at the time. I again contributed comments to the formulation of the General Plan for 2000, and am disturbed to find that once again it appears that the recommendations are being ignored. Specifically, the operation of the riding stables in Yosemite Valley have resulted in contaminated water and eroded trails that are polluted by offensive manure, urine, odors, dust, and flies. The riding stables should be closed, and the site rehabilitated to pre-project conditions, as called for in the Yosemite Valley Plan.

One of the most amazing part of water quality regulation is the lack of protection afforded rivers at their headwaters. In the case of Yosemite National Park this lack of protection is exemplified by the High Sierra Camps (HSCs) at Vogelsang, Merced Lake, Sunrise and May Lake are polluting the Merced River and adversely affecting the recreation experience of countless park visitors. All of the HSCs should be closed, and the sites rehabilitated as they lack any treatment for black and gray waters generated by their human and equine inhabitants.

But closing the Yosemite Riding Stables, as mandated in the Plan, and closing the HSCs will not be sufficient to protect the Merced. The Merced River Plan needs to address the currently excessive impacts due to pack and saddle stock uses throughout the Merced River watershed. Commercial packstock enterprises must be strictly limited to protect the Merced River corridor and the experience of park visitors who are adversely affected by the many impacts of these operations. The USFS needs to undertake a scientifically based program for assessing and redressing negative impacts to both ground and surface waters. The activities of pack and saddle animals need to follow strict Best Management Practices. Such BMPs are used in the Grand Canyon where each animal is required to be equipped with a manure bucket to preclude the deposition of feces from contaminating water resources or providing breeding grounds for flies.

Yosemite National Park is a nation jewel, and deserves to be protected against the negative impacts of pack and saddles animals . I appreciate

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MRP-SEIS-14  
p. 272

your time, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Marcus Taylor, P.E.



05/14/2007 04:29 PM EDT

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: Merced River Plan

RECEIVED

MRP-5213-15  
MAY 14 2007

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

TO: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Starting in 1948 I have made extended and regular trips into the High country of Yosemite Initially these were with mule pack train supported Sierra Club High Trips. Later, I was backpacking. More recently I have treasured the Vogelsang and other High Sierra Camps' supports for my aging and arthritic disabilities.

It is clear to me (with this history) that the Yosemite Backcountry needs Wilderness protections, which means protection from human overuse. This requires rationed use for backpackers.

The Merced River Plan for Yosemite N.P. needs to include the elimination of riding and pack stock in the back country, and needs to include the elimination of all of the High Sierra Camps including Tuolumne Meadows Lodge.

Sincerely yours, Alan F. Carpenter. [Redacted] Portola Valley, CA 94028

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Edward Naritomi  
[Redacted]  
05/14/2007 05:04 PM  
MST

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: Opposition to pack horses in Yosemite

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MRP-SEIS-16  
MAY 14 2007

*p. 1 of 1*

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Sir:

I have been hiking in the Sierras for a half century and have witnessed the damage that horses inflict on trails, especially when the trails are muddy in the spring and after rains.

The trails in Yosemite are the most heavily used in the Sierras. People also damage the trails but far less than 1,000 pound horses. To preserve Yosemite, the damage should be minimized and the best way is to ban horses within the park.

Sincerely,

Edward Naritomi  
[Redacted]

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"Budd Van Winkle"

05/14/2007 07:50 PM  
MST

To: <yose\_planning@nps.gov>

cc:

Subject: Merced River Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan

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MKP-5815-17  
MAY 14 2007

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Superintendent,

I have several concerns that I believe need to be considered in the Merced River Plan

1. Strict limits must be applied to commercial pack trains in Yosemite, especially the Merced River drainage. Research shows that these operations result in contaminated water, eroded trails and badly damaged meadows. Based on my experiences backpacking in Yosemite on the John Muir Trail, I have experienced the aforementioned situations
2. The riding stables in Yosemite Valley should be removed. The results of their impact include: trails that are polluted by offensive manure, urine, odors, flies and dust. The Yosemite Valley Plan call for their closure. These conditions detract from the wilderness experience of most visitors who are not on horseback.
3. The High Sierra Camps are polluting the Merced River. The results of high numbers of humans occupying these camps are sewage, grey water and grease and detergent from the kitchens. With no wastewater or sewage treatment plants these pollutants go right into the Merced River drainage. Having backpacked past Sunrise High Sierra Camp, I have seen the impact of large numbers of humans on the area. These camps should be closed to eliminate these sources of pollution. The Park Service has been derelict in its duties as outlined in the California Wilderness Act of 1984. It has never conducted the requested monitoring or prepared any of the "annual assessments requested by Congress.
4. Yosemite National Park is one of America's treasures. We need to save it for future generations to enjoy in its pristine state.

Sincerely,

William B. Van Winkle

Novato, CA 94947

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Mary Bjorkholm

[Redacted]

05/14/2007 07:56 PM  
MST

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: Horses in Yosemite area

RECEIVED

18  
MRP-5815-1871

MAY 14 2007

P. 1071  
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

I am concerned about the trail damage and the pollution of streams caused by the continued use of horses in the Yosemite area.

As a hiker, I practice "leave no trace" wherever I go and whenever I go on any trail. This is certainly not the case with horses or their owners/wranglers. Restricting or eliminating the use of horses in our natural areas would be a wonderful idea. The horses pollute the trails with poop and their hooves damage the trails far more than hikers. The parks are already short of money to repair the trails so restricting damage would be a good idea. It is very easy to see the damage caused by the pack animals and horses. There is no reason that this problem needs to worsen by increasing the of usage by horses and pack animals. I would like to see the elimination of these animals in our parks with the exception of emergency/special circumstances.

Thank you for allowing me to express my thoughts.

Mary Bjorkholm, member of YA, Sierra Club, Yosemite Fund  
[Redacted]  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

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"Linda W. Ghysels"



05/14/2007 08:29 PM  
MST

Please respond to  
"Linda W. Ghysels"

To: <yose\_planning@nps.gov>

cc:

Subject: Merced River Plan

**RECEIVED**

*MRP-SEIS-19*

**MAY 14 2007**

*p. 103-1*

**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**

Yosemite National Park Superintendent,

I would like to comment against the continued overuse of horses and pack animals in Yosemite National Park. Besides eroding trails and contaminating water, the waste and smell they leave create a much diminished Yosemite experience. As an avid hiker and backpacker, it puzzles me that there would be so many pack animals allowed in this, my favorite National Park

Linda Ghysels



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Laurie Polster  
 [Redacted] ne  
 05/14/2007 08:46 PM  
 MST

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
 cc:  
 Subject: re: Desperate need to limit pack animals in the backcountry

RECEIVED  
 MRP-5818-20  
 MAY 14 2007  
 P-1071  
 YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

To whom it may concern:

I've backpacked and day-hiked in Yosemite for years, averaging two trips per season - and I LOVE this incredible park! Over the past several years though, the impact from horses has gotten worse, and each year I ask myself, do I want to hike on trails that allow horses?

We've hit an intolerable condition with respect to pollution from pack animals and riding stables which directly impacts the Merced River, Yosemite Valley and the entire backcountry of this exquisite national park. The riding stables should be closed, as stipulated in the Yosemite Valley Plan, and the area allowed to return to it's natural status. The excessive amount of urine, manure, dust, flies and obnoxious odor on the trails makes for very unpleasant hiking - not to mention the potential for disease. The backcountry is getting polluted from pack animals going to the HSCs, and commercial packstock enterprises must be restricted to protect the river and surrounding areas.

Please STOP or severely curtail the use of horses in the park. It's crucial that we do whatever we can to reduce pollution and save this park for generations to come.

Thank you,

Laurie Polster  
 [Redacted]  
 Oakland, CA 94609

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"matt eremko"



05/14/2007 10:22 PM

MST

Please respond to "matt eremko"

To: <yose\_planning@nps.gov>

cc:

Subject: Pack animals and low impact

RECEIVED

MRP-5415-21

MAY 14 2007

P. 1861  
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Superintendent,

As a back packer and former Boy Scout, I have always adhered to the philosophy of low impact in the wild. The issue of reducing pack and saddle stock use throughout the Merced River watershed is long overdue. Phrases like *The John Manure Trail* should be a thing of the past. The idea that when backpacking, people should be acutely aware of their disposal of waste is in sharp contrast to the operations of the High Sierra Camps at Vogelsang, Merced Lake, Sunrise and May Lake. Human waste from the camps combined with the waste and trail destruction of commercial packstock enterprises directly pollutes the Merced River watershed. Trampled meadows and dodging road apples is not part of my definition of a *low impact* experience. The time has come to close the camps, restore the area and severely reduce or eliminate the packstock business. The argument that "We've been here for so long" or "We've always done it this way" no longer is acceptable.

The same issue of pack animals applies to the riding stables in Yosemite Valley. Here again, the polar opposite of low impact is the reality. These horses cause water contamination by their manure and urine and erode trails. As I understand it the Yosemite Valley Plan called for these riding stables to be closed and the area restored. What happened? *Business as usual* in the Valley and in the High Sierra is no longer acceptable.

Sincerely,

Matt Eremko

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Pete and Judy Sager



05/14/2007 10:39 PM  
MST

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: yosemite planning

RECEIVED  
MRP-5815-22  
MAY 14 2007  
p. 1081  
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
Attn: Merced River Plan  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

The Merced River Plan needs to address the currently excessive impacts due to pack and saddle stock uses throughout the Merced River watershed.

The riding stables in Yosemite Valley are resulting in contaminated water and eroded trails that are polluted by offensive manure, urine, odors, dust, and flies. The riding stables should be closed, and the site naturalized, as called for in the Yosemite Valley Plan.

The High Sierra Camps (HSCs) at Vogelsang, Merced Lake, Sunrise and May Lake are polluting the Merced River and adversely affecting the recreation experience of countless park visitors. All of the HSCs should be closed, and the sites restored.

Commercial packstock enterprises must be strictly limited to protect the Merced River corridor and the experience of park visitors who are adversely affected by the many impacts of these operations.

Judy Sager



San Rafael Ca 94903

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HECTOR rendon

05/15/2007 07:58 AM  
GMT

To: <yose\_planning@nps.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: SAVING OUR NATURAL TRESURES

RECEIVED

MRP-5815-23  
MAY 14 2007

P. 1031  
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN :

FOR THE LAST 22 YEARS I'VE BACKPACKED IN ALL THE HIGH SIERRA'S NAT'L PARKS AND MOST OF IT'S DESIGNATED WILDERNESS AREAS. I'VE ALSO HIKEED AND BACKPACKED MANY, MANY COASTAL TRAILS OF OUR STATE PARKS , WILDERNESS AREAS AND NATIONAL MONUMENTS, NOT TO MENTION LOCATIONS IN BETWEEN. I BELIEVE THAT I DO KNOW OUR NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS QUITE INTIMATELY. I'D LIKE TO SHARE A COUPLE OF MY MANY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES THAT PERTAIN TO THIS SUBJECT AT HAND. A FEW YEARS BACK WHILE BACKPACKING THE RAE LAKES LOOP TRAIL FOR THE SECOND TIME. I WAS HIKING UP BUBBS CREEK CANYON AND STOPPED TO FILTER SOME WATER AT CHARLOTTE CREEK WHEN I HAD TO YIELD WAY FOR A PACK TRAIN THAT WAS ALSO GOING UP TRAIL. I WITNESSED FIRST HAND (2) HORSES FROM THIS PACK TRAIN, DEFECATE MID-STREAM WHILE CONTINUING UP TRAIL. ONE CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT ADVERSE EFFECTS THIS TYPE OF RECREATIONAL USAGE CAN HAVE ON OUR SO CALLED PROTECTED NATURAL RESOURCES. WHAT TYPE OF NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES THIS ALLOWED PRACTICE CAN HAVE ON OUR LIMITED REMAINING WATERSHEDS ?

I'VE BEEN ON AND SEEN MANY, MANY TRAILS THAT CONTINUE TO BE RUINED BY THE EFFECTS OF EQUESTRIAN TRAIL RIDING. THEY TURN THE SOIL ON THE TRAILS INTO POWDER, LOOSEN AND TEAR AWAY THE ROCK , THAT LITERALLY DESTROY THE INTEGRITY OF THESE OTHERWISE WONDERFUL TRAILS.

WHILE BACKPACKING UP TO VOGELSANG LAKE LAST SUMMER, I CAN'T HELP BUT TO REMEMBER NEGATIVE MEMORIES OF THE TRAIL CONDITIONS CAUSED BY EQUESTRIAN USAGE. THEN TO ENCOUNTER CABINS AND NUMEROUS PEOPLE AS I PASSED THROUGH THE HSC. THESE TWO UNPLEASANT MEMORIES COMPROMISED MY PERSONAL WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE. I'M SAD TO SAY THAT I DON'T THINK I'LL BE VISITING THIS PART OF YOSEMITE NAT'L PARK AGAIN AND THATS A SHAME BECAUSE VOGELSANG LAKE AND IT'S ENVIRONS ARE TRULY ONE OF THE MAGNIFICENT ACCESSIBLE AREAS OF YOSEMITE'S HIGH COUNTRY !

PLEASE BE PRUDENT AND USE SOUND, WELL INFORMED JUDGMENT ( FORESIGHT) WHEN CARING AND GUARDING FOR OUR LAST REMAINING FINITE NATURAL RECREATIONAL RESOURCES. IF NOT FOR US , THEN FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

THANK

YOU, SINCERELY, HECTOR G. RENDON SR.

HECTOR G. RENDON SR.

FRESNO CA. 93722

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05/15/2007 01:49 PM  
EDT

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc:  
Subject: National Park Service

**RECEIVED**  
*MRP-S&S-24*  
**MAY 15 2007**  
*P. J. [Signature]*  
**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**

To Whom it may concern:

I am writing because of information I have learned regarding horse use of trails and other matters

The Yosemite area and backcountry are pristine, fragile environments that we need to manage extremely well.

I oppose the excessive use of pack and saddle stock animals throughout this area. I have learned that the use of the animals are causing erosion, polluting the trails and streams and in general are degrading the enjoyment of the nature experience for others

The Park Service needs to implement the Valley plans to remove the riding stables from Yosemite Valley.

I oppose the High Sierra Camps at Vogelsang, Merced Lake, Sunrise and May Lake. I believe these should be closed. There is no tolerance for all of the human waste to enter this pristine and valuable area.

The Secretary of the Interior should know about all of this and hopefully the use of nature in this way to be cut back and neutralized.

Thanks,

Lauren

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MPA-SEIS-24  
P. 282

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[Redacted]  
05/15/2007 02:41 PM  
EDT

To: yose\_planning@nps.gov  
cc: HSHAhike@aol.com  
Subject: Merced River Plan

[Redacted]  
Newark, DE 19711  
May 15, 2007

**RECEIVED**  
*MRP-SEIS-25*  
**MAY 15 2007**  
*P. C. [Signature]*  
**YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**

Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
Attn: Merced River Plan  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

Dear sir or madam:

Please accept these comments on the Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan.

I am concerned with excessive commercial activities throughout this area, resulting in trampled meadows, contaminated water, and eroded trails that are polluted by manure, urine, dust, and flies. Too much of the Merced River watershed has become so degraded that visitors are forced to endure a "barnyard" experience rather than enjoying their national park.

There are three types of commercial activities in this area that need to be addressed:

I. The first is the riding stables in Yosemite Valley. The existing Yosemite Valley Plan, adopted in 2000, called for the removal of the riding stables from Yosemite Valley. This has not been done, and the result is contaminated water and eroded trails that are polluted by offensive manure, urine, odors, dust, and flies.. The Merced River Plan needs to specify that the stables in Yosemite Valley will be closed at once and the site restored.

II. Second, commercial packstock enterprises must not be allowed to operate freely, with few limits, in the Yosemite backcountry. These commercial packstock operations are resulting in eroded trails, trampled meadows, and contaminated water. The Merced River Plan needs to place stringent limits on these commercial enterprises to protect the River and surrounding meadows and wetland areas.

III. Third, the High Sierra Camps (HSCs) at Vogelsang, Merced Lake, Sunrise and May Lake are polluting the Merced River and should be closed. All the by-products of human occupancy are produced at the HSCs: sewage (human body wastes), "gray water" from showers, grease and detergent from kitchens. But there are no wastewater or sewage treatment plants. Wastewater and sewage from these facilities directly pollutes the meadows, soils, and waters of the Merced River watershed. Also, in order to service the

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MRRP-SBS-25  
edge

camps, vast numbers of stock animals travel back-and-forth to haul the needed supplies. The result is badly eroded trails that are covered in stock manure, urine, flies and dust.

The Merced River Plan needs to address the currently excessive impacts due these commercial activities throughout the watershed.

Sincerely,

Andrew W. Urquhart



Newark, DE, 19711

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