

# Chapter 4: Consultation and Coordination

This chapter presents a review of all consultation and coordination efforts undertaken for The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment.

## Project Scoping History

A 45-day public scoping period for The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment was initiated on August 13, 2009 and was subsequently extended through September 30, 2009. Two public meetings with a focus on this planning effort were held during the public scoping period: a Park Public Open House at the East Auditorium in Yosemite Valley on August 26, 2009, and a public scoping meeting at The Ahwahnee on September 22, 2009. The purpose of these meetings was to inform interested parties about the proposed project and solicit comments from members of the public in order to understand the spectrum of concerns, interests, and issues that should be considered in the planning process. In addition, information about the project was also displayed and public comments were accepted at an informal public meeting at The Ahwahnee on September 8, 2009 and at the Park Public Open House on September 30, 2009 at the East Auditorium in Yosemite Valley.

Comments were invited for submission by mail, fax, email, through the web-based Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) system, and on comment forms that were made available during public scoping meetings. During the scoping period, the National Park Service received eight letters from seven individuals and one organization. An analysis of these letters identified 21 discrete comments, from which 18 general concern statements were generated.

Based on internal and public scoping comments and applicable federal law, regulations, and executive orders, the National Park Service determined that an environmental assessment would be the appropriate level of compliance for The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan. Public scoping comments and issues raised by National Park Service staff were used in the alternatives development process and the analysis presented in this environmental assessment.

In addition, the National Park Service conducted targeted scoping for this planning effort in January 2010 to California museums, historical societies, and preservation groups, soliciting their input on the comprehensive planning process. No comments were received.

## Agency Consultation

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.) requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat. The National Park Service obtained a list of federally listed endangered and threatened species that may be present in The Ahwahnee area in November 2009 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This list was used as the basis for the special status species analysis in this environmental assessment. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will receive a copy of this environmental assessment and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue, as defined by section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as environmental compliance for The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan is finalized.

## **Historic Preservation Agencies**

During the initial phases of project planning in 2009, the National Park Service determined that the proposed rehabilitation project would have the potential to affect The Ahwahnee National Historic Landmark and the Yosemite Valley Historic District, as defined in 36 CFR part 800.16(i). Accordingly, the park initiated consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) in September 2009.

During the development of the comprehensive rehabilitation plan, the National Park Service consulted with the SHPO and the ACHP pursuant to the *1999 Programmatic Agreement Among the National Park Service at Yosemite, The California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Planning, Design, Construction, Operations, and Maintenance, Yosemite National Park, California* (1999 Programmatic Agreement) and regulations at 36 CFR 800 for implementing section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 USC 470f).

### **California State Historic Preservation Officer**

The National Park Service initiated consultation with the SHPO in September 2009. In August 2010, the National Park Service submitted 100% conceptual drawings and 50% schematic drawings of the comprehensive rehabilitation plan alternatives for SHPO consideration and review. Following this submittal, the SHPO conducted a site visit to review project alternatives and consult with the National Park Service regarding the identification of the preferred alternative in October 2010. In December 2010, the SHPO submitted a letter outlining concerns with specific items included in the preferred alternative of the comprehensive rehabilitation program. These concerns were resolved by the National Park Service and SHPO verbally, by phone, on December 29, 2010, and were further documented in a written response from the National Park Service to the SHPO in January 12, 2011.

Because the comprehensive rehabilitation program will have an adverse effect on The Ahwahnee National Historic Landmark and has the potential to affect archeological sites that contribute to the Yosemite Valley Archeological District, the National Park Service and the SHPO have entered into a programmatic agreement, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.14(b) (see Appendix A). The programmatic agreement was released for public review on January 4, 2011 and a targeted letter was sent to California museums, historical societies, and preservation groups providing notification of the development of the agreement and requesting comment. No comments were received. The programmatic agreement was signed by the National Park Service and SHPO on January 24, 2011. The National Park Service will continue to consult with SHPO per the 2011 programmatic agreement.

### **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

The National Park Service initiated consultation with the ACHP in September 2009. The ACHP subsequently acknowledged receipt of NPS communication and requested that the National Park Service notify the ACHP of a determination of adverse effect and provide adequate documentation for review. Accordingly, the National Park Service provided notification and supporting documentation regarding the development of a programmatic agreement for this planning effort pursuant to 36 CFR 800.14(b) on November 23, 2010. Based upon the information provided, the ACHP concluded that Appendix A, Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases, of ACHP regulations, “Protection of Historic Properties” (36 CFR

Part 800), does not apply to this planning effort and the ACHP therefore declined to participate in the development of the programmatic agreement on December 15, 2010.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b)(1)(iv), the National Park Service has filed the final programmatic agreement and related documentation with the ACHP.

## **National Trust for Historic Preservation**

The National Park Service initiated consultation with the NTHP in September 2009. In addition, the National Park Service provided notification and supporting documentation regarding the development of a programmatic agreement for this planning effort pursuant to 36 CFR 800.14(b), on November 23, 2010. The NTHP verbally acknowledged the NPS communication and declined to participate in the development of a programmatic agreement on December 6, 2010.

## **American Indian Tribes and Groups**

Yosemite National Park is consulting with American Indian tribes and groups having cultural association with The Ahwahnee area, including the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe, the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, the Bridgeport Paiute Indian Colony, the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians, the Bishop Paiute Tribe, and the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. (Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation), on proposed actions under The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan.

Consultation with these tribes and groups regarding this planning effort was initiated in September 2009 through written correspondence. The National Park Service discussed The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan during government-to-government consultations with the tribes and groups at yearly, quarterly, and monthly tribal meetings in late 2009 and early 2010. Consultation continues during the planning process as described below.

Each of the tribes and groups above were provided with a letter dated January 5, 2011 inviting their participation as a concurring party to the programmatic agreement for this project, with an attached copy of the draft programmatic agreement for their consideration. On February 23, 2011, a consultation meeting was held as requested with the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians to discuss the programmatic agreement. On February 24, 2011, the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians signed the programmatic agreement as a concurring party.

In addition, a copy of the administrative review draft of this environmental assessment was provided to the American Indian tribes and groups for review and comment in February 2011. Comments were received from The Bishop Paiute Tribe and the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California and were considered during the preparation of this assessment for public review.

The American Indian tribes and groups will also receive copies of this environmental assessment for review and comment. Consultation and partnering will continue with the American Indian tribes and groups throughout the planning and implementation of The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan.

## Future Information

Updated information about various aspects of The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan will be periodically distributed via electronic newsletters, mailings, the project website ([http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/ahwahnee\\_rehab.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/ahwahnee_rehab.htm)), and regional and local news media.

There will be a 30-day public comment period on this environmental assessment. Please refer to the project web page for the exact comment review close and end dates.

Readers are encouraged to submit comments electronically through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) system. A link to PEPC can be found on the project website, above, or directly at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/AhwahneeRehab>.

Written comments regarding this document should be postmarked by the end of the review period and directed to:

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park  
ATTN: The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, California 95389  
Fax: 209-379-1294

To request a printed copy or CD of this environmental assessment (available in limited quantity), please email: [Yose\\_Planning@nps.gov](mailto:Yose_Planning@nps.gov).

## List of Agencies, Organizations, and Businesses that Received The Ahwahnee Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Merced County Historical Society
American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. (Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation)	Meux Home Museum
Atwater Historical Society	Milliken Museum
Bassett Memorial Library	Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Tribe
Bishop Paiute Tribe	National Park Service, Pacific West Region
Bodie State Historical Park	National Park Service, Yosemite National Park Archives
Bridgeport Paiute Indian Colony	National Park Service, Yosemite National Park Research Library
California Preservation Foundation	National Trust for Historic Preservation
Castle Air Museum	North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California
Central Sierra Historical Society	Northern Mariposa County History
Clovis-Big Dry Creek Historical Society	Oakhurst Public Library
Coarsegold Historical Society	Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians
Columbia State Historic Park	Railtown 1897 State Historic Park
Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts at Yosemite	Reedley Historical Society/Museum
El Portal Public Library	Sierra Mono Museum
Forestiere Underground Gardens	Society for California Archaeology
Fresno Art Museum	Society of Architectural Historians
Fresno City & County Historical Society	The California Historical Society
Gustine Museum	The Discovery Center
Madera County Historical Society	Tuolumne County Historical Society
Mariposa County Public Library	Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
Mariposa County Visitors Bureau/Board of Supervisors	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mariposa Museum and History Center	Yosemite Committee Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club

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