



IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7615(YOSE-PM)

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yosemite National Park
P. O. Box 577
Yosemite, California 95389

Memorandum

To: Jim Roche, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2012-042 Tuolumne Meadows Permanent River Gage Installation (43661)

The Executive Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed project/action and completed its environmental assessment documentation, and we have determined that there:

- Will not be any effect on threatened, endangered, or rare species and/or their critical habitat.
- Will not be any effect on historical, cultural, or archeological resources.
- Will not be serious or long-term undesirable environmental or visual effects.

The subject proposed project, therefore, is now cleared for all NEPA and NHPA compliance requirements as presented above. Project plans and specifications are approved and construction and/or project implementation can commence.

For the proposed project actions to be within compliance requirements during construction and/or project implementation, the following mitigations must be adhered to:

- No mitigations identified.

For complete compliance information see PEPC Project 43661.

//Don L. Neubacher//
Don L. Neubacher

Enclosure (with attachments)

cc: Statutory Compliance File

*The signed original of this document is on file at the
Environmental Planning and Compliance Office in
Yosemite National Park.*



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 10/23/2012

Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: 2012-042 Tuolumne Meadows Permanent River Gage Installation

PEPC Project Number: 43661

Project Description:

The purpose of this project is to install a permanent low-profile recording and transmitting (real-time) river gage on the Tuolumne River at Tioga Road Bridge in Tuolumne Meadows. The gage would largely replace temporary research instrumentation in place for the past 12 years and allow remote access to river stage, flow, and temperature via the internet. The gage would consist of a 10-foot long (2-inch diameter) stainless steel pipe mounted to the rock abutment facing of the bridge. An instrument box (approximately 12 " by 18" by 12") mounted to the top of the abutment or under the bridge decking would contain a datalogger, battery, and radio transmitter. The instrumentation box would be connected to water depth and temperature sensors secured at the bottom of the steel pipe. A 12" long antenna mounted to the top of the gage pipe would transmit gage data to the nearby California Department of Water Resources Tuolumne Meadows Snow Pillow site. This data would be transmitted via existing satellite communications infrastructure. The existing staff plate would remain and become part of the permanent installation. A 15-watt solar panel (18" x 12") would power the unit and be mounted either where it is currently or on top of the instrumentation box. Installation would consist of drilling four to six 3/8 inch holes into the rock facing to secure pipe mounting brackets. An additional four 3/8 inch holes would be drilled into the top of the abutment to secure the instrumentation box. Total installation time would take 1-2 days.

Project Locations:

Tuolumne County, CA

Mitigations:

- No mitigations identified.

Describe the category used to exclude action from further NEPA analysis and indicate the number of the category (see Section 3-4 of DO-12):

E.5 Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.

On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances (e.g. all boxes in the ESF are marked "no") or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.

//Don L. Neubacher//
Don L. Neubacher

11/6/12
Date

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Yosemite National Park
Date: 10/23/2012

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: 10/23/2012

Updated May 2007 - per 2004 Departmental Manual revisions and proposed Director's Order 12 changes

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Park Name: Yosemite National Park
Project Title: 2012-042 Tuolumne Meadows Permanent River Gage Installation
PEPC Project Number: 43661
Project Type: Inventory and Monitoring (IM)
Project Location:
County, State: Tuolumne, California
Project Leader: Jim Roche

Is project a hot topic (controversial or sensitive issues that should be brought to attention of Regional Director)? No

B. RESOURCE EFFECTS TO CONSIDER:

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Geologic resources – soils, bedrock, streambeds, etc.	No				
2. From geohazards	No				
3. Air quality	No				
4. Soundscapes		Negligible			Installation includes temporary generator noise; this will last approximately two hours.
5. Water quality or quantity	No				

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
6. Streamflow characteristics	No				
7. Marine or estuarine resources	No				
8. Floodplains or wetlands	No				
9. Land use, including occupancy, income, values, ownership, type of use	No				
10. Rare or unusual vegetation – old growth timber, riparian, alpine	No				
11. Species of special concern (plant or animal; state or federal listed or proposed for listing) or their habitat	No				
12. Unique ecosystems, biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites	No				Yosemite National Park is a World Heritage Site.
13. Unique or important wildlife or wildlife habitat	No				
14. Unique or important fish or fish habitat	No				
15. Introduce or promote non-native species (plant or animal)	No				
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand,	No				

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
visitation, activities, etc.					
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	No				
18. Archeological resources	No				
19. Prehistoric/historic structure	No				
20. Cultural landscapes		Negligible			Tuolumne Meadows Historic District; this project adds a visual element to the Tuolumne River Bridge.
21. Ethnographic resources	No				
22. Museum collections (objects, specimens, and archival and manuscript collections)	No				
23. Socioeconomics, including employment, occupation, income changes, tax base, infrastructure	No				
24. Minority and low income populations, ethnography, size, migration patterns, etc.	No				
25. Energy resources	No				
26. Other agency or tribal land use plans or policies	No				

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
27. Resource, including energy, conservation potential, sustainability	No				
28. Urban quality, gateway communities, etc.	No				
29. Long-term management of resources or land/resource productivity		Negligible			Installing the river gage will provide real-time flow information for the Tuolumne river. The information will inform decisions regarding road opening dates, meadow and trail opening dates and reservoir operations for Hetch Hetchy.
30. Other important environment resources (e.g. geothermal, paleontological resources)?	No				

C. MANDATORY CRITERIA

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?		No		
B. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		No		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?		No		
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		No		
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		No		
F. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		No		
G. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by either the bureau or office?		No		
H. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		No		
I. Violate a federal law, or a state, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		No		
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		No		
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly		No		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?				
L. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		No		

D. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Are personnel preparing this form familiar with the site? Yes
- 1.A. Did personnel conduct a site visit? No
2. Is the project in an approved plan such as a General Management Plan or an Implementation Plan with an accompanying NEPA document? No
3. Are there any interested or affected agencies or parties? No
4. Has consultation with all affected agencies or tribes been completed? No
5. Are there any connected, cumulative, or similar actions as part of the proposed action? (*e.g., other development projects in area or identified in GMP, adequate/available utilities to accomplish project*) No

E. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM SIGNATORIES

<u>Interdisciplinary Team</u>	<u>Field of Expertise</u>
Don L. Neubacher	Superintendent
Woody Smeck	Deputy Superintendent
Michael Gauthier	Chief of Staff
Kathleen Morse	Chief of Planning
Randy Fong	Chief of Project Management
Teri Austin	Chief of Administration Management
Ed Walls	Chief of Facilities Management
Linda C. Mazzu	Chief of Resources Management & Science
Shari Ogden	Acting Chief of Business and Revenue Management
Tom Medema	Chief of Interpretation and Education
Charles Cuvelier	Chief of Visitor and Resource Protection
Jim Roche	Project Leader
Madelyn Ruffner	Acting Environmental Planning and Compliance Program Manager
Renea Kennec	NEPA Specialist

F. SUPERVISORY SIGNATORY

Based on the environmental impact information contained in the statutory compliance file and in this environmental screening form, environmental documentation for this stage of the subject project is complete.

Recommended:

Compliance Specialists	Date
<u>//Renea Kennec//</u> Compliance Specialist – Renea Kennec	<u>10/25/12</u>
<u>Madelyn Ruffner//</u> Acting Compliance Program Manager – Madelyn Ruffner	<u>10/31/12</u>
<u>//Randy Fong//</u> Chief, Project Management – Randy Fong	<u>11/1/12</u>

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
<u>//Don L. Neubacher//</u> Don L. Neubacher	<u>11/6/12</u>

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Yosemite National Park
Date: 10/23/2012

PARK ESF ADDENDUM

Today's Date: October 23, 2012

PROJECT INFORMATION

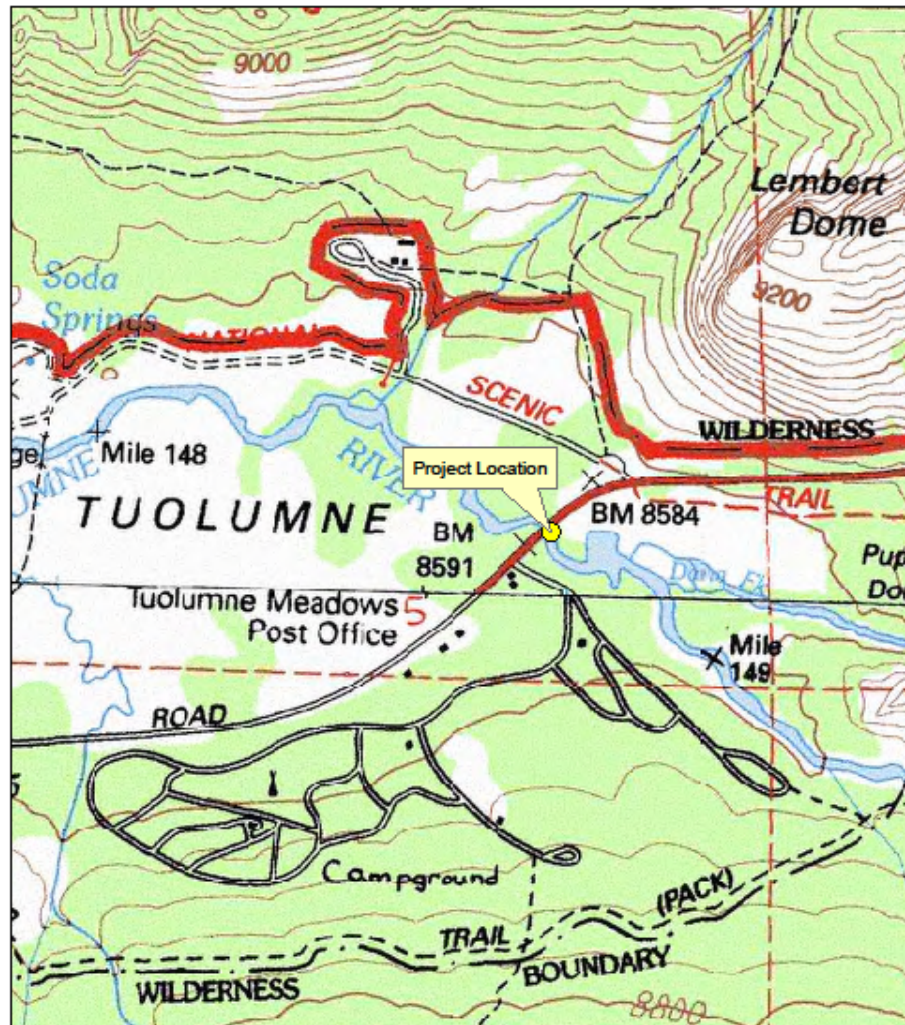
Park Name: Yosemite National Park
Project Title: 2012-042 Tuolumne Meadows Permanent River Gage Installation
PEPC Project Number: 43661
Project Type: Inventory and Monitoring (IM)
Project Location:
County, State: Tuolumne, California
Project Leader: Jim Roche

PARK ESF ADDENDUM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

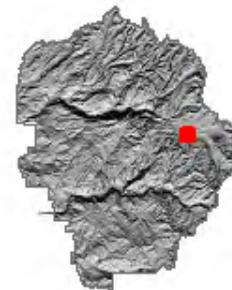
ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CHECKLIST				
Listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (Federal or State)?		No		
Species of special concern (Federal or State)?		No		
Park rare plants or vegetation?		No		
Potential habitat for any special-status species listed above?		No		
NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CHECKLIST				
Entail ground disturbance?		No		
Are any archeological or ethnographic sites located within the area of potential effect?		No		
Entail alteration of a historic structure or cultural landscape?	Yes			The river gage will be seen from the downstream side of the bridge.
Has a National Register form been completed?	Yes			Tuolumne Meadows Historic District.
Are there any structures on the park's List of Classified Structures in the area of potential effect?		No		

ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CHECKLIST				
Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor?	Yes			Tuolumne River.
Fall within the bed and banks AND will affect the free-flow of the river?		No		
Have the possibility of affecting water quality of the area?		No		
Remain consistent with its river segment classification?	Yes			
Fall on a tributary of a Wild and Scenic River?		No		
Will the project encroach or intrude upon the Wild and Scenic River corridor?		No		
Will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?		No		
Consistent with the provisions in the Merced River Plan Settlement Agreement?	Yes			
WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST				
Within designated Wilderness?		No		
Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?		No		

Proposed Tioga Road Bridge Gage Project Location,
Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park



400 200 0 400 Meters



Existing Staff Plate and Research Gage



Proposed Gage Installation Mockup (staff plate and solar panel would remain; the battery box could be mounted under the bridge)





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U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 10/23/2012

ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park

2. **Project Description:**

Project Name: 2012-042 Tuolumne Meadows Permanent River Gage Installation

Prepared by: Renea Kennec

Date Prepared: 10/23/2012

Telephone: 209-379-1038

PEPC Project Number: 43661

Area of potential effects (as defined in 36 CFR 800.16[d])

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

☐ No

☒ Yes

Source or reference: **Tuolumne Meadows Historic District**

Check here if no known cultural resources will be affected. (If this is because area has been disturbed, please explain or attach additional information to show the disturbance was so extensive as to preclude intact

☒ cultural deposits.)

4. **Potentially Affected Resources:**

Cultural Landscapes Affected:

Name and numbers: Tuolumne Meadows Historic District

Location: Tuolumne Meadows

5. **The proposed action will: (check as many as apply)**

☐ No Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure

☐ No Replace historic features/elements in kind

☐ No Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure

☐ No Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment

☐ No (inc. terrain)

Yes Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric)
to a historic setting or cultural landscape
No Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible
No Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible
Yes Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources
No Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting,
landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources
No Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or
structures)
Other (please
specify): _____

6. Supporting Study Data:

(Attach if feasible; if action is in a plan, EA or EIS, give name and project or page number.)

B. REVIEWS BY CULTURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS

The park 106 coordinator requested review by the park's cultural resource specialist/advisors as indicated by check-off boxes or as follows:

[X] Archeologist

Name: Laura Kirn

Date: 10/21/2012

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: X No Historic Properties Affected ___ No Adverse Effect ___ Adverse
Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

[X] Historical Landscape Architect

Name: Kevin McCardle

Date: 10/24/2012

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ___ No Historic Properties Affected X No Adverse Effect ___ Adverse
Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement

No Reviews From: Curator, Historical Architect, Historian, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor, Anthropologist

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

No Historic Properties Affected _____	No Adverse X Effect _____	Adverse Effect _____
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2. Documentation Method:

☐ A. STANDARD 36 CFR PART 800 CONSULTATION

Further consultation under 36 CFR Part 800 is needed.

☐ B. STREAMLINED REVIEW UNDER THE 2008 SERVICEWIDE PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT (PA)

The above action meets all conditions for a streamlined review under section III of the 2008 Servicewide PA for Section 106 compliance.

APPLICABLE STREAMLINED REVIEW Criteria
(Specify 1-16 of the list of streamlined review criteria.)

☐ C. PLAN-RELATED UNDERTAKING

Consultation and review of the proposed undertaking were completed in the context of a plan review process, in accordance with the 2008 Servicewide PA and 36 CFR Part 800.
Specify plan/EA/EIS:

☒ D. UNDERTAKING RELATED TO ANOTHER AGREEMENT

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under another document such as a statewide agreement established in accord with 36 CFR 800.7 or counterpart regulations.
Specify: 1999 Programmatic Agreement

☐ E. COMBINED NEPA/NHPA Document

Documentation is required for the preparation of an EA/FONSI or an EIS/ROD has been developed and used so as also to meet the requirements of 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6

☐ F. No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

☐ G. Memo to SHPO/THPO

☐ H. Memo to ACHP

3. Additional Consulting Parties Information:

Additional Consulting Parties: No

4. Stipulations and Conditions:

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

5. Mitigations/Treatment Measures:

**Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:
(Remember that setting, location, and use may be relevant.)**

No Assessment of Effect mitigations identified.

D. RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:

Acting Historic Preservation Officer

//Kimball Koch// Date: 11/1/12
Kimball Koch

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL

The proposed work conforms to the NPS *Management Policies* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, and I have reviewed and approve the recommendations, stipulations, or conditions noted in Section C of this form.

Superintendent: //Don L. Neubacher// Date: 11/6/12
Don L. Neubacher

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