



The Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River

Recognizing the Tuolumne River's exceptional character and seeking to preserve its free-flowing nature, Congress included 83 miles of the river (54 miles in Yosemite National Park) in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1984. The Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River originates as the Dana and Lyell forks high on the crest of the Sierra Nevada. Flowing westward, the forks converge in Tuolumne Meadows. From there, the river meanders lazily westward before cascading through the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne and then entering the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir (which is not part of the national wild and scenic rivers system). Below O'Shaughnessy Dam, the river continues through Poopenaut Valley to the park boundary.

What Makes the Tuolumne River Special?

The Tuolumne is rich in what the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act calls *outstandingly remarkable values* (ORVs). These are the biological, geologic, cultural, scenic and recreational values that make the river worthy of inclusion as a wild and scenic river. The Tuolumne ORVs include:

- Extensive subalpine meadow and riparian communities in the Sierra Nevada with relatively high biological integrity;
- Low-elevation rare riparian and wetland habitat in Poopenaut Valley;
- Textbook examples of glacially carved stairstep river morphology;
- A rich archeological landscape reflecting thousands of years of travel, settlement, and trade;
- Parsons Memorial Lodge, a national historic landmark;
- Remarkable views in Dana and Tuolumne Meadows, Lyell Canyon, and the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne River;
- The Tioga Road, which provides rare and easy access to the sublime beauty and opportunities for reflection in Tuolumne Meadows;
- Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, self-reliance, and solitude in the wild segments of the Tuolumne River.

According to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Park Service must protect and enhance all of these values. The river's exceptional water quality and free-flowing condition must also be protected.



What Is the Tuolumne River Plan?

In keeping with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the NPS is preparing the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Tuolumne River Plan/DEIS) for the segments of the Tuolumne River corridor within Yosemite National Park. The plan will analyze a range of approaches for managing the river. When completed, the plan will guide future protection and enhancement of river values, management of existing facilities and construction of new facilities, and actions to improve the visitor experience.



To achieve this, the Tuolumne River Plan will:

- Describe existing resource conditions including outstandingly remarkable values, water quality, and free-flowing condition;
- Identify existing adverse impacts or degradation and describe goals, objectives, and actions for restoring river values;
- Present a monitoring plan to ensure ongoing protection of river values;
- Present a variety of alternatives for the current and future management and development of lands and facilities, including transportation, lodging, camping, parking, park facilities, employee housing, and concessions;
- Identify kinds and amounts of visitor uses that are appropriate and also protect river values;
- Address in-stream flow requirements; and
- Reflect a collaborative approach with all stakeholders.

Project Schedule

- Winter 2012-13:**
- Release of Tuolumne River Plan/DEIS for 60-day public review
 - NPS will conduct public meetings, webinars, and open houses to inform the public about the plan and offer opportunities for discussion and input
- 2013:**
- Release of Final Tuolumne River Plan/EIS

How Can I Be Involved?

The NPS will offer opportunities to learn about and provide input on the Tuolumne River Plan/DEIS, including monthly open houses, webinars, public meetings, and field visits. To learn about meeting times and locations, visit the Tuolumne River Plan website at:

<http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/trp.htm>.

You can also contact us by:

- Email: yose_planning@nps.gov;
- Phone: 209-379-1110; or
- U.S. mail: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, Attn: Tuolumne River Plan, P.O. Box 577, Yosemite, CA 95389.