



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: Ruth Middlecamp, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2012-034 Programmatic Special Use Permit-Guided Hiking & Backpacking (43181)

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 43181.

//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: 08/28/2012

Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: 2011-034 Programmatic Special Use Permit-Guided Hiking & Backpacking

PEPC Project Number: 43181

Project Description:

This is a request for a 5 year programmatic Categorical Exclusion to issue Special Use Permits (SUP) for nonprofit guided hiking and backpacking services in Yosemite National Park. This programmatic CE will cover SUPs issued beginning on January 1, 2013.

This SUP is issued to companies, organization or individuals conducting non-profit guided day hiking and overnight backpacking trips in Yosemite National Park. The permit holder (permittee) must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the SUP which is administered and managed by Yosemite National Park, Office of Special Park Uses in conjunction with the Yosemite Wilderness Office.

The hiking/backpacking SUP is used as the core permit to which additional activities, authorized through the compliance process, are attached if requested. When multiple activity permits are requested the additional conditions are attached to the hiking/backpacking permit rather than issuing each permit separately. The permitted activities are to be conducted only in those areas of Yosemite National Park open to the public and authorized by the SUP. The permittee is required to obtain any additional permits or license required by law. The SUP will only be issued for a period of one year at a time. Companies must apply for a new SUP each year that they plan to offer guided trips in Yosemite National Park. The permittee is required to conduct all business (advertisements and bookings and financial transaction) outside of the park.

The permittee must obtain a wilderness permit separately and in addition to the SUP when conducting overnight stays in the wilderness. Permits to hike up Half Dome must be obtained separately through the authorized permitting system. The permittee is required to provide their proposed trip itinerary to the Yosemite Wilderness Office prior to their trip(s) beginning in the park. The itinerary information is used by the Wilderness Office to schedule patrols in areas to attempt to make contact with groups in the field and provide written reports on the findings of their contacts. Each permittee is required to submit monthly use reports listing the actual trailheads and campsites used, along with the number of days/night spent in the park, and the number of clients guided.

Project Locations:

Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Madera Counties

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):

A.6 Commercial use licenses involving no construction.

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

9/27/12
Date

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 08/28/2012

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: 08/28/2012

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: 2012-034 Programmatic Special Use Permit-Guided Hiking & Backpacking
PEPC Project Number: 43181
Project Type: Permit - Special Use (SUP)
Project Location:
County, State: Mariposa, Tuolumne & Madera Counties, California
Project Leader: Ruth Middlecamp

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	No				
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				

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
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	No				
18. Archeological resources	No				
19. Prehistoric/historic structure	No				
20. Cultural landscapes	No				
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	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
resources					
26. Other agency or tribal land use plans or policies	No				
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	No				
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		No		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?				
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		No		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
(Executive Order 12898)?				
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		No		
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? No
- 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
Tara Riggs	Acting Chief of Business and Revenue Management
Tom Medema	Chief of Interpretation and Education
Charles Cuvelier	Chief of Visitor and Resource Protection
Ruth Middlecamp	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>8/28/12</u>
<u>//Madelyn Ruffner//</u> Acting Compliance Program Manager – Madelyn Ruffner	<u>9/21/12</u>
<u>//Randy Fong//</u> Chief, Project Management – Randy Fong	<u>9/24/12</u>

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
<u>//Don L. Neubacher//</u> Don L. Neubacher	<u>9/27/12</u>

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 08/28/2012

PARK ESF ADDENDUM

Today's Date: August 28, 2012

PROJECT INFORMATION

Park Name: Yosemite National Park
Project Title: 2012-034 Programmatic Special Use Permit-Guided Hiking & Backpacking
PEPC Project Number: 43181
Project Type: Permit - Special Use (SUP)
Project Location:
County, State: Mariposa, Tuolumne & Madera Counties, California
Project Leader: Ruth Middlecamp

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?		No		
Has a National Register form been completed?		No		
Are there any structures on the park's List of Classified Structures in the area of potential effect?		No		
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CHECKLIST				
Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor?	Yes			This permit is parkwide and includes areas

ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
				around the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers.
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?	Yes			Parkwide
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?	Yes			The Holder of the permit is required to obtain a wilderness permit prior to wilderness travel; no Minimum Requirement Analysis is necessary for this type of permit.
Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?		No		