

## **United States Department of the Interior**

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

#### Memorandum

To: Kevin M. Keheley, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2014-024 Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic

Area Accessibility Improvements and Rehabilitation (53021)

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

- There will not be any effect on threatened, endangered, or rare species and/or their critical habitat.
- There will not be any effect on historical, cultural, or archeological resources.
- There 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:

- Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Based on tribal comments submitted and park subject matter expert project review, tribal monitoring of project work is recommended.
- The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within
  the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried
  archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is
  recommended.
- Consider an additional group site to accommodate larger picnicking parties.
- Ensure any food storage and bear safety messages are bilingual. Consider installing bear lockers.

Letter of Compliance Completion - Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

- Ensure parking is not blocked with staging during the peak visitor season.
- Ensure the Design Guidelines for Yosemite Valley are incorporated into the design. Specifically, match the rustic style and durability of other picnic tables in the Valley with thicker wood slats.

## **Recommendations for Conditions or Stipulations:**

Based on potential for buried archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.

For complete compliance information see PEPC Project 53021.

<u>//Don Neubacher//</u>\_\_\_\_\_

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.



## **Categorical Exclusion Form**

Project: 2014-024 Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and

Yosemite National Park

Date: 08/26/2014

Rehabilitation

**PEPC Project Number:** 53021

**Project Description:** 

The scope of this project addresses site delineation, accessible trail construction and picnic site amenities installation. This project will retain the existing trail that leads to the swinging bridge crossing and an additional 470 feet of hardened surface trail will be constructed for the 14 accessible picnic sites. The existing path to the present accessible picnic sites will be removed. The picnic sites will be constructed in the upper portion of the existing picnic area. The path surface will be non-asphaltic and porous type material. The picnic pads will be of the same material as the path and they will meet the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility guidelines (ABA) for outdoor developed areas (36 CFR Part 1191). The walking surfaces that are a part of an accessible route shall comply with Chapter 4 (accessible routes) section 403.3 Slopes: The running slope of walking surfaces shall not be steeper than 1:20. The cross slope of walking surfaces shall not be steeper than 1:48.

Each of the 14 picnic tables and grills will be oriented to allow for ease of access for someone in a wheelchair. The tables will be anchored down with rebar casted in concrete so tables will not move, this will allow for sustainable accessibility clearance around table and grills. The path and picnic pads will be flush with ground surface to minimize any changing slopes or elevations and to minimize any ponding. The path will be constructed so a person that is mobility impaired will be able to circulate around the path to all picnic sites without barriers. The ground disturbance will be 6 inches deep to allow for 4 inches of base rock and 2 inches of non-asphaltic and porous type material (Sta-lok material). Hardened surface area for the pathway is approximately 470 feet long by 6 feet wide which equals 2820 square feet. The hardened surface for the picnic pads will be approximately 18 feet long by 15 feet wide which equals 270 square feet per site, for a total of 3780 square feet for the 14 sites.

Placing the picnic pads in the upper location of the picnic area will allow the removal of 6 tables, 3 grills and relocation of one "No Ground Fires" sign out of flood plain. The total number of existing picnic sites including the accessible sites is 12 total. The removal of 3 picnic sites in the flood plain will leave 3 accessible sites and 6 non-compliant sites for picnic use. This project will increase the sites to 14 accessible compliant sites and 6 non-compliant sites for a total of 20 picnic sites with a net increase of 8 sites.

## **Project Locations:**

Mariposa County, CA

#### **Mitigations:**

Categorical Exclusion Form - Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

- Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Based on tribal comments submitted and park subject matter expert project review, tribal monitoring of project work is recommended.
- The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.
- Consider an additional group site to accommodate larger picnicking parties.
- Ensure any food storage and bear safety messages are bilingual. Consider installing bear lockers.
- Ensure parking is not blocked with staging during the peak visitor season.
- Ensure the Design Guidelines for Yosemite Valley are incorporated into the design. Specifically, match the rustic style and durability of other picnic tables in the Valley with thicker wood slats.

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):

C.18 Construction of minor structures, including small improved parking lots, in previously disturbed or developed areas.

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.

Superintendent:	//Don Neubacher//	<b>Date:</b> 9/4/14	
	Don L. Neubacher		

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

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF) DO-12 APPENDIX 1

**Date Form Initiated:** 08/21/2014

 $Updated\ May\ 2007\ \hbox{- per 2004 Departmental Manual revisions and proposed\ Director's\ Order\ 12}$ 

Yosemite National Park

Date: 08/26/2014

changes

## A. PROJECT INFORMATION

**Park Name:** Yosemite National Park

**Project Title:** 2014-024 Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility

Improvements and Rehabilitation

PEPC Project

53021

**Number:** 

**Project Type:** Repair/Rehabilitation (REHAB)

**Project Location:** 

County, State: Mariposa, California

**Project Leader:** Kevin Keheley

Administrative Environmental Planning and Compliance Office

Record

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.		Negligible			The pathway and picnic site area is approximately 6,600 square feet. The entire area will be disrupted down to 6 inches.
2. From geohazards	No				
3. Air quality		Negligible			There will be some temporary dust and air emissions during the site construction.
4. Soundscapes		Negligible			Typical construction noises during the

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
					picnic area rehabilitation.
5. Water quality or quantity	No				
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 Historic 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	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
animal)					
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	No				Visitor experience will be enhanced with an accessible picnic site.
18. Archeological resources		Negligible			Yosemite Valley Archeological District The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village.
19. Prehistoric/historic structure	No				
20. Cultural landscapes		Negligible			Yosemite Valley Historic District
21. Ethnographic resources		Negligible			Submitted for tribal review in June 2014. Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Tribal comments and park subject matter experts recommend tribal monitoring of project work. Based on tribal comments submitted and park subject matter experts project review, tribal monitoring of project work is recommended.
22. Museum collections (objects, specimens, and archival and manuscript collections)	No				
23. Socioeconomics, including employment, occupation, income	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
changes, tax base, infrastructure					
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				
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 Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?	No	
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	No	

Critical Habitat for these species?		
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 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? 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? Yes
- 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

Interdisciplinary Team_	Field of Expertise
Don L. Neubacher	Superintendent
Michael Gauthier	Chief of Staff
Kathleen Morse	Chief of Planning

Randy Fong	Chief of Project Management
Dayna Jackson	Acting Chief of Administration Management
Ron Borne	Chief of Facilities Management
Linda C. Mazzu	Chief of Resources Management & Science
Kris Kirby	Chief of Business and Revenue Management
Tom Medema	Chief of Interpretation and Education
Kevin Killian	Chief of Visitor and Resource Protection
Kevin Keheley	Project Leader
Lisa Acree	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
//Renea Kennec// Compliance Specialist – Renea Kennec	9/2/14
//Lisa Acree// Acting Compliance Program Manager – Lisa Acree	9/2/14
	9/2/14

## **Approved:**

Superintendent	Date
//Don Neubacher//	_9/4/14
Don L. Neubacher	

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

Yosemite National Park Date: 08/26/2014

## PARK ESF ADDENDUM

Today's Date: August 26, 2014

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**Park Name:** Yosemite National Park

**Project Title:** Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements

and Rehabilitation

PEPC Project Number: 53021

**Project Type:** Repair/Rehabilitation (REHAB)

**Project Location:** 

County, State: Mariposa, California Project Leader: Kevin Keheley

## 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?	Yes			
Are any archeological or ethnographic sites located within the area of potential effect?	Yes			The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.
Entail alteration of a historic structure or cultural landscape?		No		This project will not change the use of the picnic area but will formalize

ESf Addendum - Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

			the area with a new pathway and more accessible picnic tables.
Has a National Register form been completed?	Yes		Yosemite Valley Archeological District and Yosemite Valley Historic District
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		Merced 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	
WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST			
Within designated Wilderness?		No	
Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?		No	



## National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park Date: 08/26/2014

## ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. Park: Yosemite National Park

## 2. Project Description:

Project Name: 2014-024 Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility

Improvements and Rehabilitation **Prepared by:** Renea Kennec **Date Prepared:** 08/25/2014 **Telephone:** 209-379-1038 **PEPC Project Number:** 53021

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

Yosemite Valley Historic District; Yosemite Valley Archeological District

3. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify historic properties?

	No
X	Yes
	Source or reference:

## 4. Potentially Affected Resources:

### **Archeological resources affected:**

Name and numbers: Yosemite Valley Archeological District

NR status: 1 - Listed in Register and documented

**Archeological Resources Notes:** The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.

## **Cultural Landscapes Affected:**

Name and numbers: Yosemite Valley Historic District NR status: 1 - Listed in Register and documented

Assessment of Effect Form - Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and

Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

**Ethnographic Resources Affected Notes:** Submitted for tribal review, June 2014. Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Tribal comments and NPS SME recommend tribal monitoring of project work. Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Based on tribal comments submitted and NPS SME project review, tribal monitoring of project work is recommended.

	nany as apply)	as many	check a	will:	action	proposed	. The	5.
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	No	Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure							
No Replace historic features/elements in kind									
Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure									
Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment Yes (inc. terrain)									
Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric)  Yes to a historic setting or cultural landscape									
No Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible									
	No	Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible							
	No	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):								
B. R	EVIE'	WS BY CULTURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS							
	_								
	cated I	06 coordinator requested review by the park's cultural resource specialist/advisors as by check-off boxes or as follows:							
Nam Date Com	Anthrie: Jeni: 08/25	op check-off boxes or as follows:  opologist nifer Hardin							
Name Date Come ethnormal Check Asset Affe Records work	Anthrie: Jeni: 08/25 ments: ograph ck if pr essmen cted ommen urces. la	opologist nifer Hardin 5/2014 Submitted for tribal review, June 2014. Project will occur in area with documented							

Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement
[ X ] Archeologist Name: Sonny Montague Date: 08/18/2014
Check if project does not involve ground disturbance [ ] Assessment of Effect: No Potential to Cause Effect No Historic Properties Affected _X No Adverse Effect Adverse Effect Streamlined Review Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried archeological resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.
Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement
No Reviews From: Curator, Historical Architect, Historian, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor, Historical Landscape Architect
C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS  1. Assessment of Effect:
No Potential to Cause Effects
No Historic Properties Affected
X No Adverse Effect
Adverse Effect
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

Assessment of Effect Form - Yosemite Valley Swinging Bridge Picnic Area Accessibility Improvements and Rehabilitation - PEPC ID: 53021

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:

## [X] 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.

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

[ ] 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.

- Project will occur in area with documented ethnographic resources. Based on tribal comments submitted and park subject matter expert project review, tribal monitoring of project work is recommended.
- The project area is in close proximity to several documented archeological sites, and is within the
  area of the non-extant Lower Yosemite Village. Based on the potential for buried archeological
  resources related to the Lower Village, archeological monitoring is recommended.

## 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.

Historic Prese	ervation Officer:		
Kimball			
Koch	//Kimball Koch//	<b>Date:</b> 9/2/2014	
E. SUPERIN	TENDENT'S APPROVAL		
	l I have reviewed and appr	Management Policies and Cultural Resource ove the recommendations, stipulations, or o	•
Superintende	nt: //Don Neubacher//	<b>Date:</b> 9/4/14	
	Don L. Neubacher		

D. RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:

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