



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7615(YOSE-PM)

Memorandum

To: Michael Pieper, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park
From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: Big Oak Flat Road Emergency Repairs (70983)

The Executive Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed project/action 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 be no adverse 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:

- Any imported rock should be inspected for weeds prior to park entry.
- See environmental screening form for additional mitigations.

For complete compliance information see PEPC Project 70983.

//Lisa A. Mendelson-Ielmini// acting
Woody Smeck (Acting Superintendent)

Enclosure (with attachments)

cc: Statutory Compliance File

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Environmental Planning and Compliance Office in
Yosemite National Park.*



Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: 2017-05 Big Oak Flat Road Emergency Repairs

PEPC Project Number: 70983

Description of Action (Project Description):

On February 14, 2017, longitudinal cracking was discovered on the Big Oak Flat Road approximately 6 miles north of the El Portal Road intersection. Due to safety concerns, the road was closed on the evening of February 21, 2017, because the crack width had widened to just over three inches and one lane of road had sunk 4-6 inches in five days. The existing fill slope supporting the Big Oak Flat Road is approximately 50 feet high. On February 28, the crack had widened to two feet and had sunk two additional feet.

Repair actions will include the following:

- 1.) An 8" diameter underdrain pipe will be installed along the uphill shoulder (cutbank side) of the road. This will require a trench (two feet wide by four to eight feet deep) along the cutbank shoulder. This trench will be lined with a permeable geotextile fabric. The pipe will be surrounded by eight inches of drain rock (3/4"-1" fractured rock) This underdrain will flow to a 24-inch diameter culvert pipe that will replace the existing 18 inch culvert at the low end of the failure area. Note: This trench will be installed within the new stabilization area.
- 2.) The existing paved road surface and the base/subgrade material supporting the road will be removed to the depth of the failure area (approximately 3,000 cubic yards of material along the uphill lane and another 8,000 cubic yards along the downhill lane).
- 3.) The historic stone headwall will be salvaged and repaired in-kind. Photo documentation will occur prior to work (and will include documentation of the stone retaining wall although no work is planned for the wall).
- 4.) After all the failed material is removed, a fabric and/or pipe drain system will be installed to allow the slope to drain by multiple ways if water were to enter the slope in the future. This will include sheet drains as well as multiple perforated pipe drains flowing out to the edge of the failure area. This series of drainage systems would be placed in combination with the new backfill material and the geogrid material noted below.
- 5.) Weather permitting, the intent is to salvage as much existing material as possible and blend it with good subgrade/base material to create an acceptable backfill material. The backfill would then be placed and compacted in 2 to 4 foot lifts until the new fill material is level with the existing road grade.

At the beginning of each lift of fill material a uniaxial/biaxial/triaxial geogrid material would be placed as a tie-back to help support the road and prevent this failure from happening in the future.

- 6.) As part of the backfill operation, the outside/exterior fill slope will be armored with large rocks (2 to 6 foot in diameter) to support the exterior of the new fill slope. The lower 2/3 of the fill slope is armored with existing large rock and the intent would be to salvage as much of this rock as possible, but more rock will need to be added because the existing rock was not adequate, more support is needed to prevent future failure.
- 7.) The road will then be repaved with 4 inches of new asphalt pavement to match the existing width, along with a replacement curb and pavement markings.

- 8.) Approximately 50 trees, mostly fir (24 inches diameter or smaller), will need to be removed to provide for repair access to the embankment.
- 9.) Staging will occur on the road itself and on road turnouts/parking areas.
- 10.) A temporary access haul road will need to be provided to allow for safe access for equipment south of the existing slide area. Impacts will be minimized by avoiding large trees and other vegetation.

Project Locations:

Mariposa County, CA

Mitigation(s):

- Any imported rock should be inspected for weeds prior to park entry.

CE Citation: C.9 Repair, resurfacing, striping, installation of traffic control devices, repair/replacement of guardrails, etc., on existing roads.

Decision: I find that the action fits within the categorical exclusion above. Therefore, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No extraordinary circumstances apply.

Superintendent: //Lisa A Mendelson-Ielmini// acting **Date:** 3/3/17
Woody Smeck (Acting Superintendent)

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Extraordinary Circumstances:

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Notes
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 Critical Habitat for these species?	No	
I. Violate a federal, 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 (EO 12898)?	No	
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 130007)?	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	



ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

Updated Sept 2015 per NPS NEPA Handbook

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: 2017-005 Big Oak Flat Road Emergency Repairs
PEPC Project Number: 70983
Project Type: Repair/Rehabilitation (REHAB)
Project Location:
County, State: Mariposa, California
Project Leader: Michael Pieper

B. RESOURCE IMPACTS TO CONSIDER:

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Air Air Quality	None	
Biological Nonnative or Exotic Species	Potential	Imported rock will be inspected prior to entry. The Foresta woodlot and the Foresta Road will not be used for staging due to invasive weed concerns.
Biological Species of Special Concern or Their Habitat	None	
Biological Vegetation	Potential	As work progresses, revegetation and follow-up invasive plant survey and control will be discussed. Approximately 50 small diameter trees (mostly fir) will be removed. Removal of trees will be minimized to the extent possible. Although not anticipated, any excess clean fill will be salvaged (at a location to be determined by NPS staff) for future restoration.
Biological Wildlife and/or Wildlife Habitat including terrestrial and aquatic species	None	
Cultural Archeological Resources	None	
Cultural Cultural Landscapes	Potential	Big Oak Flat road is a historic property. Historic headwall will be photo documented prior to work and work will be in-kind. Existing stone retaining wall will remain (no work involved).
Cultural Ethnographic Resources	None	Tribes will be notified of the scope and emergency nature of the work.
Cultural Museum Collections	None	
Cultural Prehistoric/historic	None	

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
structures		
Geological Geologic Features	Potential	Trenching on the uphill shoulder of the road, the length of the failure (about 250 linear feet): 2 ft. wide by 4-8 ft. deep. Trenching will occur within the newly disturbed stabilization area. Removal of up to 11,000 cubic yards of road base material, digging to the depth of the failure in the roadbed.
Geological Geologic Processes	None	
Lightscares Lightscares	Potential	Night work will be included. Likely not too visible from Foresta community.
Other Human Health and Safety	Potential	The construction will improve and repair hazardous road damage and will re-open a main access road to Yosemite Valley. To minimize impacts to park employees, employee vehicles can be parked a minimum of 200 feet from the work limits on a straight segment of road with clear site distance. Pedestrian traffic must stay 100 feet above the existing road. No pedestrian access will be allowed below the road.
Other Operational	Potential	Re-opening the Big Oak Flat road and repairing unsafe road conditions will improve operational mobility for NPS employees and park partners.
Socioeconomic Land Use	None	
Socioeconomic Minority and low-income populations, size, migration patterns, etc.	None	
Soundscapes Soundscapes	Potential	Heavy equipment will be used during hours of construction.
Viewsheds Viewsheds	None	
Visitor Use and Experience Recreation Resources	Potential	Repairs will allow access to Yosemite Valley, as well as re-establish access to trails and recreational opportunities accessed by this road.
Visitor Use and Experience Visitor Use and Experience	Potential	Information and outreach to the public will be provided as well as to community residents such as Foresta through various media including social media, press releases, and flyers.
Water Floodplains	None	
Water Marine or Estuarine Resources	None	
Water Water Quality or Quantity	None	
Water Wetlands	None	
Water	None	

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Wild and Scenic River		
Wilderness Wilderness	None	

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
<u>//Lisa A. Mendelson-Ielmini// acting</u> Woody Smeck (Acting Superintendent)	<u>3/3/17</u>

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ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park

2. **Project Description:**

Project Name: 2017-005 Big Oak Flat Road Emergency Repairs

Prepared by: Madelyn Ruffner **Date Prepared:** 03/02/2017 **Telephone:** 209-379-1226

PEPC Project Number: 70983

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

Big Oak Flat Road

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

 No

 X Yes

Source or reference:

4. **Potentially Affected Resource(s):**

Archeological Resources Notes: Road corridor has been surveyed associated with previous fire survey in 1990s.

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

 Yes Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure

 Yes Replace historic features/elements in kind

 Yes Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure

 Yes Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (inc. terrain)

 Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting or cultural landscape

 No

 No Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible

 No Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible

 Yes Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources

 Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources

 No

 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.)

N: Road repair will alter fill support for road. Minor modifications to the road associated with repair of the damaged section. No character-defining stone guard wall is affected by the project O: One roadside stone headwall for a drop-inlet will repaired/relocated with in-kind materials to address hydrological issues affecting the road/road fill. P: Addition of drainage pipe/rock-fill features will facilitate dewatering of the road fill (not visible). Q: Trees to be removed are part of the natural setting but will regenerate following repair. No trees predating the construction of the road will be affected.

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] Anthropologist

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 03/06/2017

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Potential to Cause Effect ☒ No Historic Properties Affected ☐ No

Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Emergency project. No known properties of traditional significance. Tribes to be notified of project via FYI on Tribal Spreadsheet

[X] Archeologist

Name: Sara Dolan

Date: 03/06/2017

Comments: There are no archeological concerns.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Potential to Cause Effect ☒ No Historic Properties Affected ☐ No

Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

[X] Historian

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 03/06/2017

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Potential to Cause Effect ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No

Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Headwall to be photographed before repair to aid in in-kind reconstruction.

[X] Historical Architect
Name: Scott Carpenter
Date: 03/06/2017

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Potential to Cause Effect ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No
Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Headwall to be photographed before repair to aid in in-kind reconstruction.

[X] Historical Landscape Architect
Name: Kimball Koch
Date: 03/06/2017

Comments: The Project Manager has been working closely with FHWA to ensure that there are no adverse effects associated with the project. One stone headwall will be replaced in-kind to facilitate better drainage. Road alignment remains the same. No historic guard walls will be affected. Minimal effects to natural setting which should revegetate following completion of repair work to damaged fill slope. The work does not affect the Old Oak Flat Road historic district.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Potential to Cause Effect ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No
Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Project manager to continue briefing Cultural Resources Program Manager and Section 106 Coordinator to ensure that proposed repair work is reviewed by the CRM Team and that there are no adverse effects to either the New or Old Oak Road historic properties. Haul road to be restored at end of repair work in consultation with park's vegetation branch.

Doc Method: Park Specific or Other Programmatic Agreement

No Reviews From: Curator, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

☐ No Potential to Cause Effects
☐ No Historic Properties Affected
☒ 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

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.

1999 Programmatic Agreement as amended in 2014

☐ 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

SHPO/THPO Notes: Tribal notification due to emergency nature of work.

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:

Historic Preservation Officer:

Kimball Koch //Kimball Koch// **Date:** 3/7/17

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.

Acting

Superintendent: //Lisa A. Mendelson-Ielmini// acting **Date:** 3/7/17
Woody Smeck

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