



El Portal Road Reconstruction- Public Site Visit Orientation Sheet

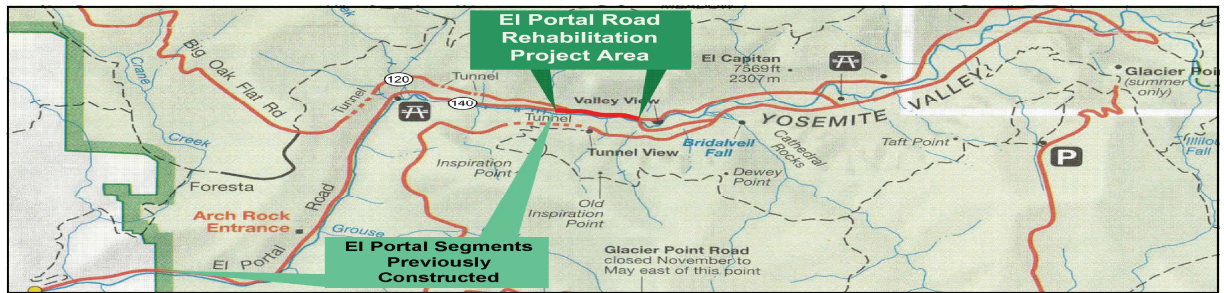
What is the purpose of the site visit?

The purpose of the site visit is to allow interested persons to tour the proposed project area and observe firsthand the damage that would be addressed by the El Portal Road Reconstruction. Park staff will be present to answer questions about the proposed work and to record the comments and ideas that are generated during the site visit.

Where and when will the site visit take place?

The site visit is scheduled for 10:00 am on Wednesday, November 29, 2006. This site visit will be conducted “rain-or-shine” unless inclement weather poses an unacceptable safety hazard. Participants should meet approximately 3.5 miles east of the Arch Rock Entrance Station, at a parking area located just east of the Big Oak Flat Road intersection, on the north side of the El Portal Road. Another small parking area is located west of the Big Oak Flat Road intersection on the south side of the road. If parking here and crossing the road to the meeting place, **please exercise extreme caution when crossing El Portal Road.**

The Big Oak Flat Road intersection is located at the west end of the project area highlighted in the map below.



What are the conditions at the project site, and what should I bring?

Please consider the following when choosing to participate in the site visit:

Traffic: The El Portal Road is narrow and the traffic speed limit is 35 mph. In order to observe the failing portion of the road, participants will need to walk several hundred feet along a narrow road shoulder. Park staff will provide safety vests and will slow traffic with traffic signs, but participants will need to exercise caution at all times during the site visit. Some participants may not feel comfortable approaching the failing area.

Viewing the retaining wall: The primary concern of this project is a steep rock retaining wall that rises above the Merced River. In order to observe this road feature, participants must scramble down a steep boulder-strewn slope, perhaps 25 feet high. The rocks can be polished and slippery, particularly after rain. Some participants may not be comfortable with this exposure. Once at the base of the wall, participants will need to cross more large, slick boulders to observe the wall close up.

Weather: November can be a cold and rainy month in Yosemite National Park. Raingear, warm clothes, and sturdy, weatherproof footwear are recommended for the site visit. Because of the traffic on El Portal Road, brightly colored clothing is appropriate. Wet conditions can also compound traffic hazards and contribute to slips and falls.

Other: Food and water are not available at the project site, so participants should bring these if desired. Participants should bring their own cameras and note-taking materials if desired.

How can I sign-up for this site visit?

Because of the special conditions of this site visit, including the hazards associated with traffic and environmental conditions at this project site, we ask that participants RSVP before arriving at the project site.

If you have not done so already, please RSVP by calling the Yosemite planning information line at 209/379-1365, or by emailing us at: yose_planning@nps.gov. Please provide your name and a contact phone number or email so that we can notify you of any scheduling changes.

What are the next steps and how can I get involved?

Yosemite National Park is seeking your ideas about how best to address road deficiencies while protecting the resources of the Merced River canyon and maintaining the historic character of the area. This section of road is heavily traveled, is becoming increasingly degraded, and needs immediate attention.

The public scoping comment period is from November 14, 2006 and lasts 45 days through December 29, 2006. Public scoping and associated monthly open houses serve as an opportunity early in the planning process for the public, organizations, and other agencies to suggest issues to be considered by the National Park Service in preparing the environmental assessment.

Planning Timeline:

Ongoing:

November 14-December 29, 2006:

Spring-Summer 2007:

Internal Agency Scoping

Formal Public Scoping

Public Review of Environmental Assessment (EA)

How can I stay involved in other planning efforts?

Public participation is essential for the success of this and all other park improvement projects. Here are some ways to stay involved in this project and its planning process:

- Attend a National Park Service public open house to talk with project specialists and obtain more information on the project. Visit the park's planning website (listed below) for upcoming dates.
- Add your name to the park's planning list and receive the *Planning Update* newsletter as well as other planning-related notices. You can also submit your email address to receive the park's periodic electronic newsletter.

Mail:

Superintendent

Attn: *El Portal Road Reconstruction—Pohono Bridge to Big Oak Flat Road Intersection*

P.O. Box 577

Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax:

209/379-1294

E-mail:

Yose_Planning@nps.gov

PEPC:

Comments can be submitted through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) commenting system at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>

Visit online:

www.nps.gov/yose/planning