



# 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: Jesse McGahey, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2010-058 Cathedral Peak Route Delineation (31175)

The 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.

\\ 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: 07/15/2010

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## Categorical Exclusion Form

**Project:** 2010-058 Cathedral Peak Route Delineation

**PEPC Project Number:** 31175

**Project Description:** Cathedral Peak has long been a popular destination for both climbers and adventure hikers. After decades of consistent use, severe erosion, extensive informal trail networks, gullies caused by "scree skiing", loose footing, and major vegetation loss characterize the final quarter-mile of the approach, as well as the descent back to the base. These impacts have only accelerated over the last few years as several new guidebooks promote the peak as a "classic", "easy" introduction to Sierra climbing.

This project proposes to delineate one path from the junction of the Budd Lake Fisherman's trail to the base of the south east face of Cathedral Peak, as well as a single descent path from the north ridge of the summit back to the base. By delineating one path and using extensive ecological restoration, the multiple social trails would be restored to natural conditions.

The following actions are:

- Establish "carabiner" signposts and to direct hikers and climbers to the preferred route. Their purpose is to reduce ecological impacts by clearly indicating preferred climber trails so restoration on other social trails will be more effective. The park interdisciplinary team believes that in this case the carabiner signs are necessary to keep climbers and hikers on one single approach and decent route. The team estimates that no more than five posts will be needed.
- A single path will be delineated from the junction of the Budd Lake Fisherman's trail to the base of the popular south east face of Cathedral Peak, as well as a single descent path from the ridge north of the summit back to the base. These routes would be connected to form one continuous path from the final quarter mile of the approach to the shoulder of Cathedral Peak. The route chosen for this delineation will be the most sustainable due to the abundance of stable rock, as well as natural features that border this social trail. This path will be the most effective at preventing foot traffic from entering the restoration areas.
- Proactive ecological restoration work includes: re-contouring, discouraging erosion, re-vegetating and seeding. It will help restore the wide swaths of paths and gullies (about five acres) to their natural conditions. To keep visitors out of the restoration area, "Restoration in Progress" signs may be needed where there are no clear natural barriers, and the delineated route is not obvious.

Wilderness Management will conduct outreach efforts before and during the project implementation to increase compliance and awareness of impacts. During the project, interpretive signs will go:

- Climbing information board in Tuolumne, Tuolumne Wilderness Center.
- Trailhead (John Muir Trail/Cathedral Lakes).
- First carabiner post on the approach as well as the first carabiner post on the descent.

**Project Location:**

Tuolumne County, CA

**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):

**C.11 Minor trail relocation, development of compatible trail networks on logging roads or other established routes, and trail maintenance and repair.**

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 or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.

**Park Superintendent** \\ Don L. Neubacher \\

**Date** 10/13/10

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## ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

### DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: 07/15/2010

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:** 2010-058 Cathedral Peak Route Delineation  
**PEPC Project Number:** 31175  
**Project Type:** Restoration and Route Delineation (OTHER)  
**Project Location:** County, State: Tuolumne, California District: Mather Other: Cathedral Peak Area  
**Project Leader:** Jesse McGahey

Preliminary drawings attached? Yes

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			Minimal disturbance; eroded areas will be filled and recontoured to restore natural conditions.
2. From geohazards	No				
3. Air quality	No				
4. Soundscapes		Negligible			Noises associated with trail work.
5. Water quality or quantity	No				
6. Streamflow characteristics	No				
7. Marine or estuarine resources	No				
8. Floodplains or wetlands	No				

<b>Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources</b>	<b>No Effect</b>	<b>Negligible Effects</b>	<b>Minor Effects</b>	<b>Exceeds Minor Effects</b>	<b>Data Needed to Determine/Notes</b>
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				
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	No				Delineation of the trail will enhance the visitor experience by minimizing impacts and protecting resources.
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 resources	No				

<b>Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources</b>	<b>No Effect</b>	<b>Negligible Effects</b>	<b>Minor Effects</b>	<b>Exceeds Minor Effects</b>	<b>Data Needed to Determine/Notes</b>
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				This project meets the park's goal of restoring natural areas and long-term management of resources.
30. Other important environment resources (e.g. geothermal, paleontological resources)?	No				

### **C. MANDATORY CRITERIA**

<b>Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Comment or Data Needed to Determine</b>
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		No		

<b>Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Comment or Data Needed to Determine</b>
effects?				
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 (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		

For the purpose of interpreting these procedures within the NPS, any action that has the potential to violate the NPS Organic Act by impairing park resources or values would constitute an action that triggers the DOI exception for actions that threaten to violate a federal law for protection of the environment.

#### **D. OTHER INFORMATION**

Are personnel preparing this form familiar with the site? Yes

Did personnel conduct a site visit? No

Is the project in an approved plan such as a General Management Plan or an Implementation Plan with an accompanying NEPA document? No

Are there any interested or affected agencies or parties? No

Has consultation with all affected agencies or tribes been completed? No

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
Kathleen Morse	Chief of Planning
Mark Butler	Chief of Project Management
Katariina Tuovinen	Chief of Administration Management
Ed Walls	Chief of Facilities Management
Niki Nicholas	Chief of Resources Management & Science
Marty Nielson	Chief of Business and Revenue Management
Tom Medema	Chief of Interpretation and Education
Charles Cuvelier	Chief of Visitor and Resource Protection
Jesse McGahey	Project Leader
Elexis Mayer	Environmental Planning and Compliance Program Manager
Jeannette Simons	NHPA Specialist
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>10-5-10</u>
 <u>// Elexis Mayer //</u> Compliance Program Manager – Elexis Mayer	 <u>10-5-10</u>
 <u>// Randy Fong // - Acting</u> Chief, Project Management – Mark Butler	 <u>10-6-10</u>

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
 <u>//Don L. Neubacher //</u> Don L. Neubacher	 <u>10-13-10</u>

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Yosemite National Park  
Date: 07/15/2010

## PARK ESF ADDENDUM

Today's Date: **July 15, 2010**

### PROJECT INFORMATION

**Park Name:** Yosemite National Park  
**Project Title:** 2010-058 Cathedral Peak Route Delineation  
**PEPC Project Number:** 31175  
**Project Type:** Restoration and Route Delineation (OTHER)  
**Project Location:** County, State: Tuolumne, California District: Mather  
**Project Leader:** Jesse McGahey

### PARK ESF ADDENDUM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

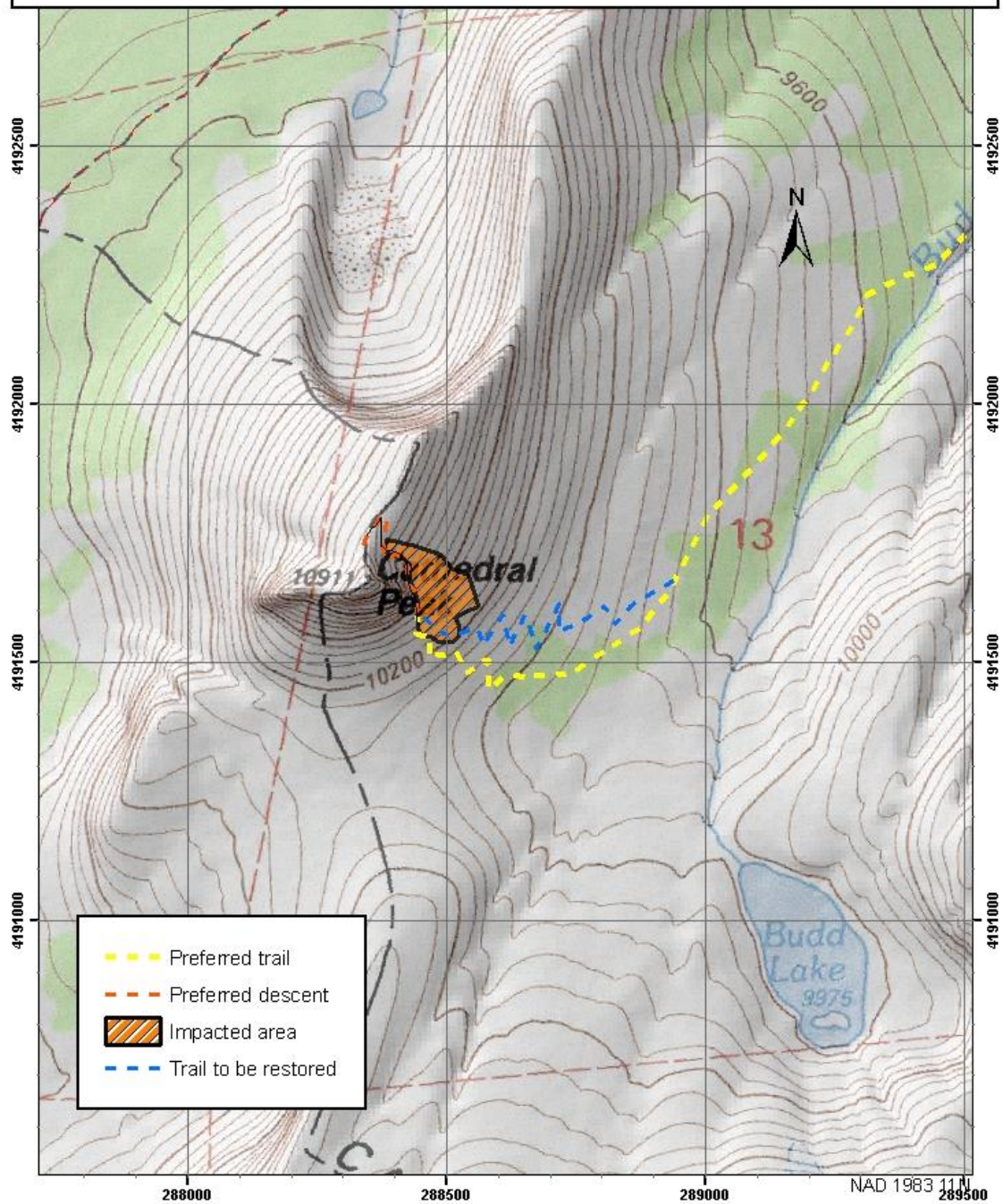
ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CHECKLIST				
1. Listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (Federal or State)?		No		
2. Species of special concern (Federal or State)?		No		
3. Park rare plants or vegetation?		No		
4. Potential habitat for any special-status species listed above?		No		
NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CHECKLIST				
5. Entail ground disturbance?	Yes			Minimal disturbance will occur while social trails are being eliminated.
6. Are any archeological or ethnographic sites located within the area of potential effect?		No		
7. Entail alteration of a historic structure or cultural landscape?		No		
8. Has a National Register form been completed?		No		
9. 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				
10. Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor?		No		
11. Fall within the bed and banks AND will affect the free-flow of the river?		No		
12. Have the possibility of affecting water quality of the area?		No		
13. Remain consistent with its river segment classification?			N/A	
14. Fall on a tributary of a Wild and Scenic River?		No		
15. Will the project encroach or intrude upon the Wild and Scenic River corridor?		No		
16. Will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?		No		
17. Consistent with the provisions in the Merced River Plan Settlement Agreement?			N/A	
WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST				
18. Within designated Wilderness?	Yes			Minimum Requirement Analysis is attached.
19. Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?		No		

# Cathedral MRA Map 1 Quad



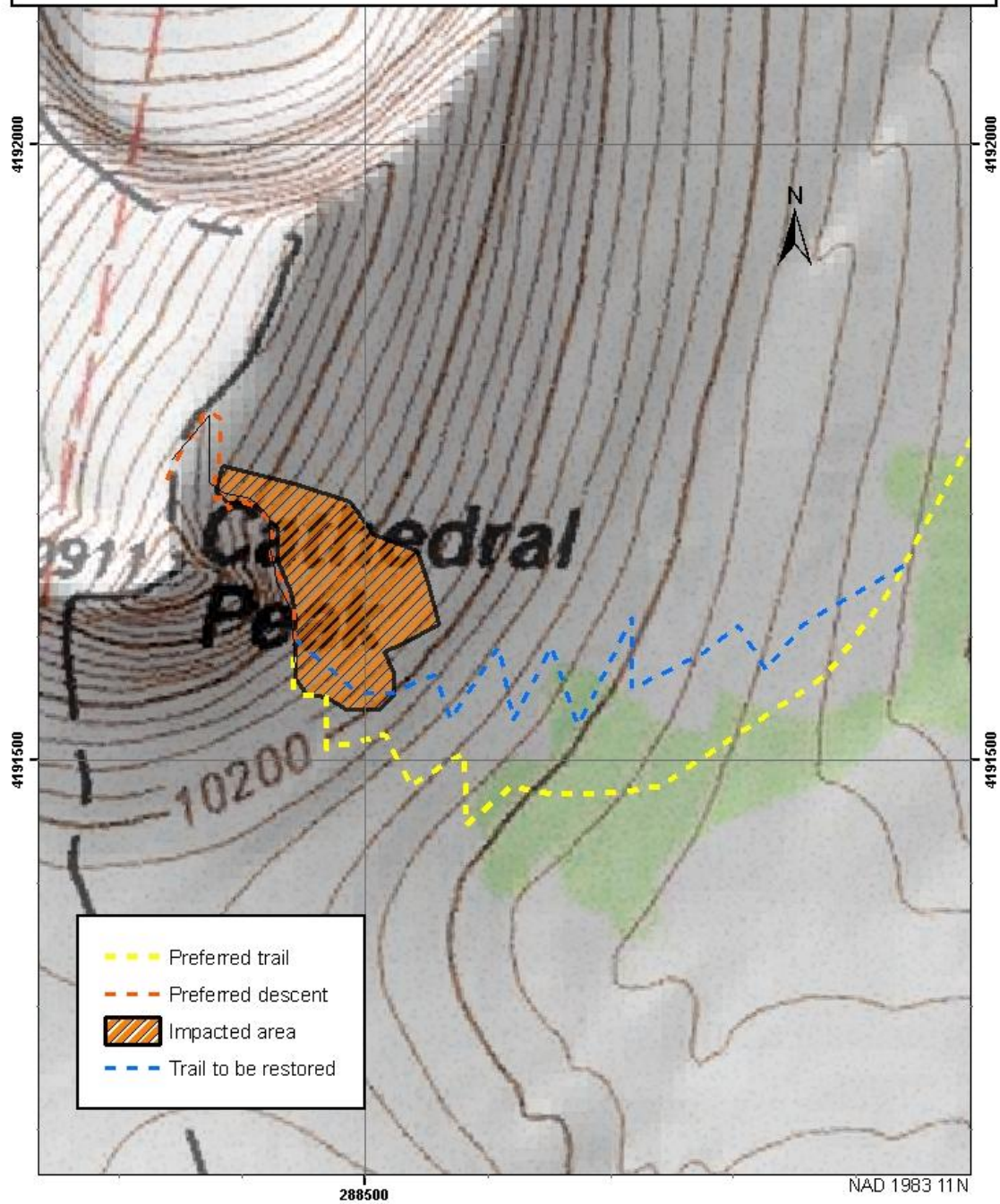
J. McGahey Oct. 2008 1:10,000



# Cathedral MRA Map 2 Quad



J. McGahey Oct. 2008 1:4,200





Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

# Cathedral Peak Restoration Project



**Problem:** After decades of consistent use, the final quarter-mile of the approach as well as the descent back to the base of Cathedral Peak has been severely eroded, creating extensive trail networks and gullies. This results in loose footing and major vegetation loss.

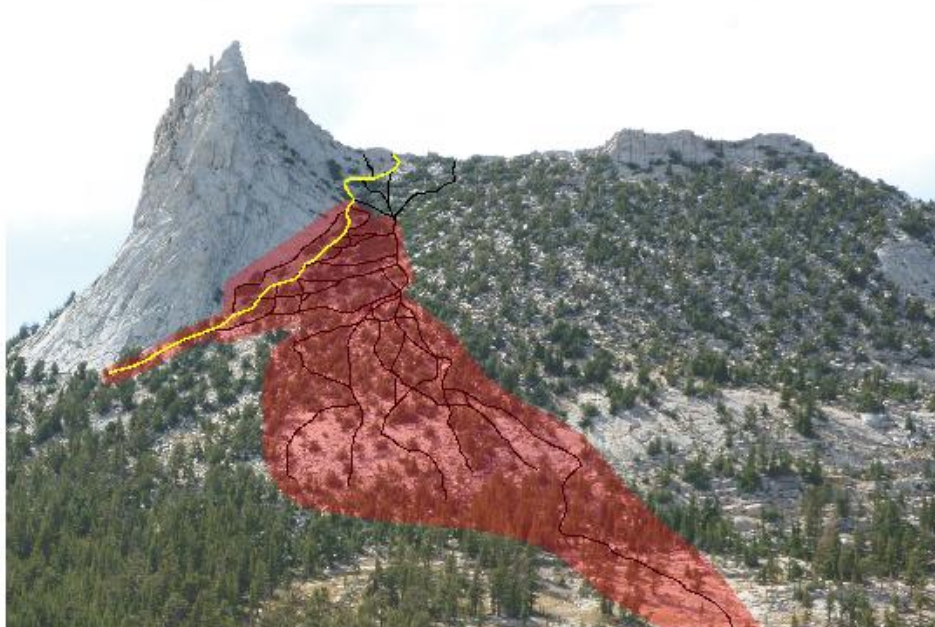


## NPS Restoration Actions:

- Identify and establish a durable, direct approach and descent.
- Remove the old network of paths and block the area.
- Re-contour and re-vegetate the area of erosion and vegetation loss.

## What you can do...

Staying on the delineated trail by following the carabiner signs will help the NPS as they work to stabilize the trail and restore the impacted area.



THE YOSEMITE FUND®  
*Preserving for Yosemite's Future*

This project was made possible by a grant from the Yosemite Fund



Proposed Carbiner Sign



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Yosemite National Park  
Date: 07/15/2010

## ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

### A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park    **Park District:** Mather

2. **Project Description:**

a. **Project Name:** 2010-058 Cathedral Peak Route Delineation

b. **Date:** July 15, 2010

c. **PEPC Project ID Number:** 31175

3. **Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify cultural resources?**

☒ No  
☐ Yes, Source or reference:

☒ Check here if no known cultural resources will be affected. (If this is because area has been disturbed, please explain or attach additional information to show the disturbance was so extensive as to preclude intact cultural deposits.)

4. **Potentially Affected Resources:**

None

5. **The proposed action will:**

☐ Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure  
☐ 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 (inc. terrain)  
☐ Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting or cultural landscape  
☐ Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible  
☐ Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible  
☒ Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources  
☐ Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources  
☐ Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or structures)  
☐ Other (please specify)

6. **Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:**

No Assessment of Effect mitigations identified.

**7. Supporting Study Data:**

**8. Attachments:**

☐ Maps ☐ Archeological survey, if applicable ☐ Drawings ☐ Specifications ☐ Photographs  
☐ Scope of Work ☐ Site plan ☐ List of Materials ☐ Samples ☐ Other:

**Prepared by:** Erin Davenport    **Date:** July 15, 2010    **Title:** Compliance Specialist    **Telephone:** 209-379-1067

**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:

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☒ Archeologist  
Name: Laura Kirn  
Date: 07/14/2010  
Comments:

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance* ☐  
Assessment of Effect: ☒ No Historic Properties Affected    ☐ No Adverse Effect    ☐ Adverse Effect  
☐ Streamlined Review  
Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

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☒ Historical Architect  
Name: Sueann Brown  
Date: 06/23/2010  
Comments:

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance* ☐  
Assessment of Effect: ☒ No Historic Properties Affected    ☐ No Adverse Effect    ☐ Adverse Effect  
☐ Streamlined Review  
Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

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☒ 106 Advisor  
Name: Jeannette Simons  
Date: 09/08/2010  
Comments: American Indian consultation occurred on September 7, 2010.

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance* ☐  
Assessment of Effect: ☒ No Historic Properties Affected    ☐ No Adverse Effect    ☐ Adverse

Effect ☐ Streamlined Review  
Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

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☒ Anthropologist

Name: Jeannette Simons

Date: 09/08/2010

Comments: American Indian Liaison. Consultation on September 7, 2010 site visit indicated no American Indian resources of concern in the project area.

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance* ☐

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

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

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☒ Historical Landscape Architect

Name: David Humphrey

Date: 06/23/2010

Comments: None.

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance* ☐

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

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: None.

Doc Method: No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

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No Reviews From: Curator, Historian, Other Advisor

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## **C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Assessment of Effect:

☒ No Historic Properties Affected ☐ No Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect

2. Compliance requirements:

☐ 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.

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ E. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED BY USE OF NEPA

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

☒ F. No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

☐ G. STIPULATIONS/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.

Recommended by Park Section 106 coordinator:

Signature of Historic Preservation Officer \_\_\_\_\_ \\ Jeanette Simmons \\

Date: 9-8-10

**D. 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.

Signature of Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_ \\ Don L. Neubacher \\

Date: 10-13-10

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