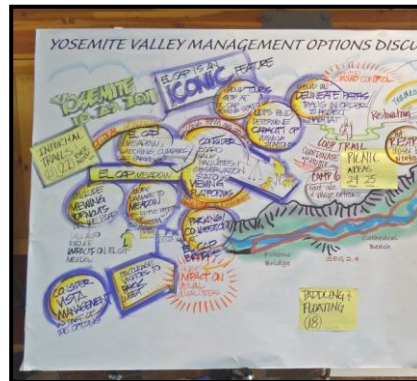




# Meeting Summary Merced Wild and Scenic River Plan Yosemite Valley Community Workshop #1

October 29, 2011





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The Merced River Plan will provide overarching guidance for river protection and public use within the Merced Wild and Scenic River corridor inside Yosemite National Park. The overall goal of the plan is to “protect and enhance the values for which the river was designated wild and scenic leaving the river unimpaired for future generations.” The Yosemite Valley Community Workshop is one of six meetings held in October and November 2011 to gather community input on preliminary management considerations and options. This feedback will be used in the next phase of the project - development of alternatives. Draft alternatives will be available for public review in the Spring of 2012 and will be analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement to be released in Summer 2012. Community input received during scoping in 2007, and between 2009 and 2011; and during the community workshops in Spring 2011 will also be considered in developing alternatives. The alternatives will also reflect data from the numerous scientific and socio-cultural studies that have occurred over the past year. Ultimately, each alternative must reflect the goals of the Merced River Plan and protect and enhance the river’s outstandingly remarkable biological, geologic/hydrologic, cultural, scenic, and recreational values, as well as water quality and the river’s free flowing condition.

### Merced River Plan: Yosemite Valley Workshop #1

The first of two Yosemite Valley Community Workshops for the Merced River Plan was held on October 29, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This was the third of five community workshops (there were also web meetings) held in October and November 2011 to address the Merced River Plan. Approximately 12 participants attended the workshop, most of whom had attended the Spring 2011 workshops.

TIMES	ACTIVITIES
10 <sup>00</sup>	● WELCOME & ORIENTATION
10 <sup>15</sup>	
10 <sup>40</sup>	● OPEN HOUSE <i>Dots &amp; comments on boards.</i>
11 <sup>30</sup>	● DISCUSSION ROUND 1
12 <sup>30</sup>	L - U - N - C - H
1 <sup>00</sup>	● DISCUSSION Round 2 <i>Camping, Resources...</i>
2 <sup>00</sup>	B - R - E - A - K
2 <sup>15</sup>	● DISCUSSION Round 2 <i>Transportation, User Capacity</i>
3 <sup>15</sup>	● NEXT STEPS & Closing Comments
3 <sup>30</sup>	A - D - J - O - U - R - N



The October 29, 2011 Yosemite Valley workshop had four parts:

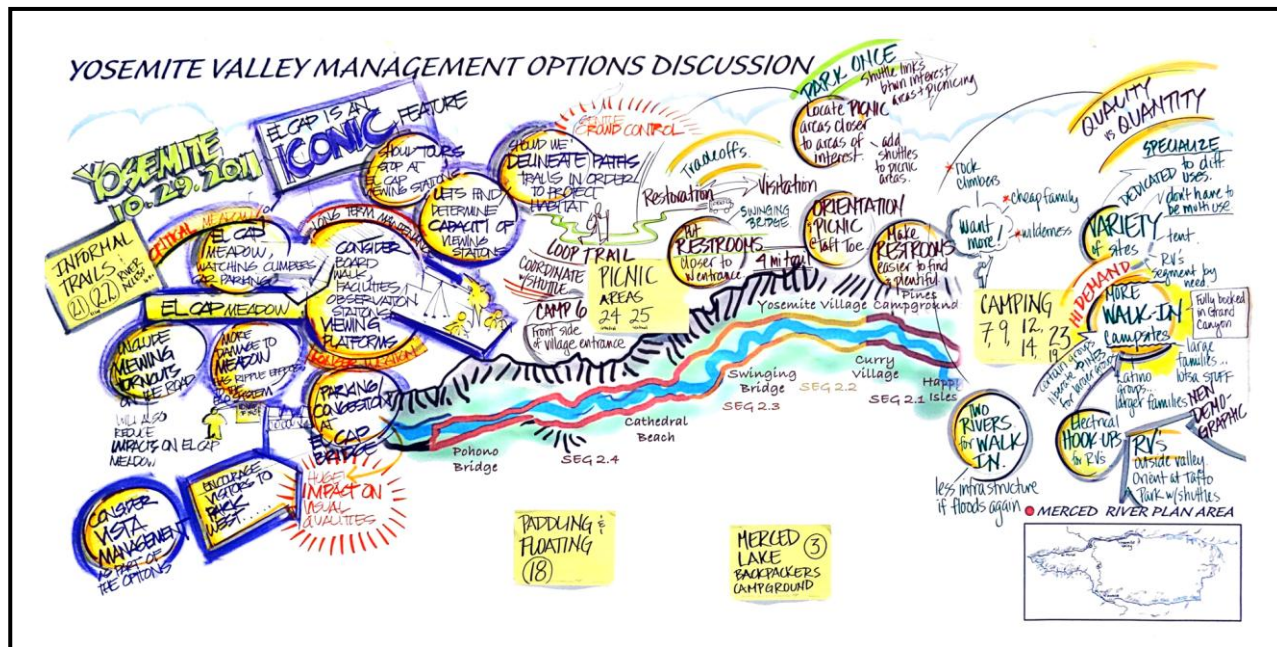
- Part 1: Welcome and Orientation (detailed description is included in Appendix 1: Meeting Notes on page A1-1) – This part of the workshop included an overview of the agenda; a description of the planning workbook including the planning process, Merced River Plan goals, and outstandingly remarkable values; and an explanation of the display board exercise.
- Part 2: Open House – Participants reviewed the display boards and the Merced Wild and Scenic River Planning Workbook and commented on the Merced River management options. Participants also used colored dots to identify which options they wanted to discuss in the group discussions. Comments received on the various management options are included in Appendix 2: Display Board Comments beginning on page A2-1.
- Part 3: Small Group Discussion – Participants gathered in small groups to discuss the management options of greatest interest to them based upon the placement of their colored dots. The topics that emerged as most important to this group are listed below. The small group comments are incorporated into this Executive Summary and are included in their entirety in Appendix 1: Meeting Notes, page A1-3.
  - Camping (Management Considerations 7, 9, 12, 14, 19 and 23)
  - Paddling and Floating (Management Consideration 18)
  - Informal Trails and River Access (Management Considerations 21 and 22)
  - Picnic Areas (Management Considerations 24 and 25)
  - Merced Lake Backpackers Campground (Management Consideration 3)





- Part 4: Large Group Discussion – The final part of the meeting was a group discussion about the management issues and opportunities of concern to the participants. The large group comments are incorporated into this Executive Summary and are included in their entirety in Appendix 1: Meeting Notes, page A1-3.

The following sections summarize the key topics of discussion and include comments received on each topic via the display boards, and the small and large group discussions.



## El Cap Meadow

The group discussed the use of El Cap Meadow in depth. Many were concerned with the effects of human use on the ecosystem. Others felt that the meadow was a significant place for visitors and climbers. Visitors use the meadow to picnic, lie in the grass and watch the climbers on El Cap. For climbers, El Cap Meadow is a ritual gathering place before and after climbing. Boardwalks are needed to protect the meadow but there also need to be viewing areas where people could spend more time. Several people suggested that if trees were removed from the edge of the meadow casual observers would not have to walk into the meadow to view El Cap and the climbers. Parking around El Cap Meadow is also an issue. Suggested solutions included a shuttle stop at El Cap Meadow.

**“How can we design picnic areas and campgrounds to accommodate the changing demographics of visitation.”**



## Camping

Most participants felt that more camping is needed, especially more walk-in camping, and that there should be less multi-purpose camping (i.e. RVs, car camping and tent camping should be separated). New walk-in campgrounds could be located near the river since they don't need as much infrastructure, therefore in a future flood, there would not be a significant loss of infrastructure. Providing more walk-in camping would get these people out of the other campgrounds and free up spaces for car camping. Suggestions relating to RV use included providing electrical hookups to avoid generator use and encouraging RV camping outside of the valley due to the space RVs occupy. Several people mentioned California's changing demographics and the need for campsites to accommodate more people. Several people felt that camping numbers should be maintained at 1980 GMP levels.



## Picnicking

Participants mentioned that making picnic areas work requires a three part approach - picnic areas need to be located at destination sites, served by frequent shuttles and located such that people can walk to them. As with camping, picnic areas need to address changing demographics and the need for larger groups.

## Taft Toe

Several people felt that Taft Toe would be an appropriate location for an orientation and tour/shuttle staging area. This would keep people from going farther into the Valley by car and reduce congestion. Development of Taft Toe raised concerns about the visibility of more manmade features and development from Tunnel View and other places above the Valley. Several participants were concerned that the west Valley does not become developed like the east Valley.

***“Provide an incentive for people not to drive – a reason to ride transportation rather than being penalized for it.”***



## Transportation

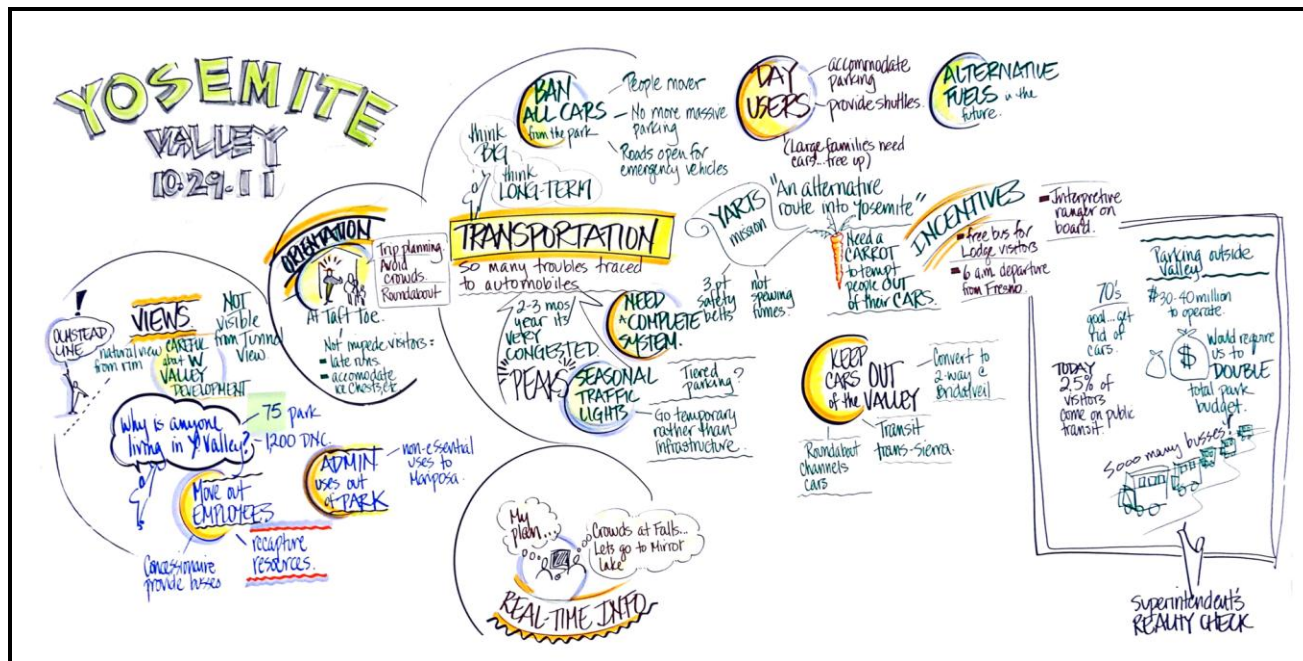
Transportation was a key topic of conversation, especially the interconnectedness of private vehicles, public transit into the park from afar, and a convenient, frequent in-park shuttle. Without the latter, people will use private vehicles to get to destinations. Several people suggested that day users park outside the valley.

## Peak Days

Several participants mentioned that crowding and congestion is an issue only during peak season. The cost of crowd control needs to be balanced with the number of days it is needed. Reservations on peak days and other non-structural controls are more financially feasible than building parking garages. Other suggestions for controlling congestion include limiting visitors in private vehicles based upon the number of available parking spaces; providing staging areas outside the park; and providing incentives for day users to park outside the park and take public transportation. The latter would also allow campers to drive in and park. Providing real time information would also help people decide whether or not to drive into the Valley or how to tailor their trip to avoid congestion.

## Paddling and Floating

Participants had varying opinions about paddling and floating. Some felt all paddling and floating should be prohibited and natural processes should prevail stating that the removal of woody debris was not ecologically appropriate. Others felt the



**“So many of the problems are related to the private vehicle.”**



numbers should be controlled; that there needs to be options for those that do not have their own raft; that there should be permits; and that private boating is preferable to commercial boating operations.

## Facilities

Participants generally agreed that more restrooms were needed, especially in the west Valley before Swinging Bridge, and that if offices and concessioner housing were moved outside the valley, land and facilities would become available that could be used for other purposes.





## APPENDIX 1: MEETING NOTES

### Part 1: Welcome and Orientation

The meeting began with an opportunity for participants to review the Merced River Plan Workbook and the display boards that reflected the workbook content. Following this, Laurie Durnell of The Grove Consultants International welcomed the group. She stated the meeting purpose - to gather feedback from meeting participants on some of the management options that have been created by staff for the Merced River. This information will be used in the development of alternatives – a set of actions to enhance overall quality of Merced River.

Laurie provided an overview of the agenda and an orientation to the Merced River Plan Workbook. She reminded the group that the boards in the room are a summary of the workbook. She reviewed the goals of the Merced River Plan and mentioned how challenging it is to address the tradeoffs involved in managing all four goals. She noted that the color coding of the goals is carried throughout the workbook and the boards.

Laurie reviewed the planning process including the public scoping sessions held in early 2011 and identification of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values - the values to be protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act – completed in mid-2011. She mentioned the Spring 2011 workshops and the scientific and socio-cultural studies that have occurred since then. The management options presented at these Fall 2011 workshops are a snapshot in time but options continue to be developed. The management options are different ways to address the management challenges. She encouraged the group to fill out the last three pages of the workbook and turn them in either in person or by mail by November 30, 2011. Finally she pointed out the site planning sketches which are ideas for ways to handle management challenges in different areas of the park.







Jim Oswald, also of The Grove described the interactive exercise. He directed participants to place a green dot on management options they supported and a red dot on those options they did not support. In both cases, placement of a dot indicated a desire to discuss the management option with the group. The options with the greatest concentration of dots would be those discussed in the small group exercises. He asked the group to write the reasons why they placed the green or red dot on green or red sticky notes. Finally, he reiterated that all comments will be used to inform the development of alternatives.

## Part 2: Open House

Participants spent approximately an hour placing dots and comments on the interactive boards. Each board addressed management considerations for one of the river segments and included an area to comment on the potential management considerations and options for that segment. Not all management options received comments. For those management options where comments were received, comments are included in Appendix 2. Comments and dots were also placed on the preliminary site plans for Yosemite Valley, Abbeville Trailer Court and Old El Portal. These are also included in Appendix 2.



## Part 3 and 4: Small and Large Group Discussion

Laurie Durnell of The Grove identified the management opportunities that were of greatest interest to the group. These were:

- Camping (Management Considerations 7, 9, 12, 14, 19 and 23)
- Paddling and Floating (Management Consideration 18)
- Informal Trails and River Access (Management Considerations 21 and 22)
- Picnic Areas (Management Considerations 24 and 25)



- Merced Lake Backpackers Campground (Management Consideration 3)

Small table groups discussed each topic and included notes on tabletop templates. These small group templates are included in Appendix 1. Due to the size of the group, most of the discussion at this meeting occurred within the large group.

## Informal Trails

- *“El Cap Meadow issues – random cars stopping to look at climbers; people in meadow looking at people. Provide facilities such as a boardwalk. Maintain the boardwalk. Hodgepodge. Every year it starts over – new plants and then new social trails.”*
- *“Concern about boardwalks and long term maintenance. Financial commitment the park has to make but benefits meadow ecosystem.”*
- *“Need space in meadow for observation stations. Different than other boardwalks in meadows. Add viewing platforms. Can’t just have a boardwalk. People want to stand and look. Anticipate and accommodate. Creates safety issues the way it is now.”*
- *“Valley floor tours stop at El Cap Meadow. This encourages people to come later. What is capacity of viewing stations? This may result in a management change and not pointing out El Cap Meadow in tours.”*
- *“When people walk through the meadows, the first thing they do is look for a trail and then they walk there. Periodically go in and delineate the trails. Easier to walk on an identifiable, established trail. Crowd control. Tell them where you want them to go.”*
- *“Parking is covered on south side of North Side Drive but parking by El Cap Bridge is a mess. No delineated parking. Parking on meadow in pull out. Congestion around the bridge and on both sides.”*
- *“Parking at El Cap crossover at North Side Drive has an impact on visual quality. Have an option that says limit parking in that area to official use and let people park farther down.”*
- *“El Cap Meadow recovers annually. Is El Cap Meadow degraded over time or can it sustain the use it has because it is drier?”*

**NPS Staff Response** – There has been a baseline conditions report. The research completed last summer will allow us to track some trends over time. There are more invasive plants in El Cap Meadow and it is drier than other meadows.



- *“Don’t have views of El Cap that you used to have. Remove some conifers and you will expand the views and opportunities to view from road.”*

**CNPS Representative Response** – In a general sense, the more human access to Sierra Nevada meadows the more degradation over time – including soil compaction, introduction of invasive exotics, removal of native species, and changed hydrology over time. The more invasive plants you have the drier it becomes as invasives use more water.

- *“Concern that the park has no ongoing studies of El Cap Meadow. Things that can be done to enhance viewing experience and still have people in meadow area.”*
- *“Is there a plan for visual enhancement of the pull outs?”*

**Park Response** – FONSI is done for Scenic Vista Management Plan. Implementation hasn’t started. The Park is coming up with annual work plans. This plan does not deal with areas in corridor – decisions on these areas have been deferred to the MRP (e.g. improving vistas, cutting down trees within corridor).

- *“Add vista management as a management option.”*

## Camping

- *“Camping is hard to characterize. People want more camping. Rock climbers, low cost housing for families or for wilderness experience. Some people don’t want to camp here because it’s crowded. More walk-in campsites.”*
- *“Need a lot of carrying capacity because a lot of stuff comes in with campers.”*
- *“If you want to attract emerging populations – Latinos – need larger campsites – 9 to 15 people. Difficult for a walk in campsite.”*
- *“Encourage RVs to camp outside of Valley and come in for the day. RVs take up 2 to 3 spaces in Camp 6. Day use RVs at Taft Toe – have an orientation area.”*
- *“Various types of camping – keep them separate – walk-in, drive-in and RVs. Improves flexibility.”*
- *“Preference for RV electrical hookups to avoid generator.”*



- *“Demand for walk-in campgrounds. There isn’t one suitable for a family. Only one walk-in and it’s occupied. Popular with one segment of the population. If you have more walk-in camping you can get them out of the other campgrounds and can provide more of the other types of campsites.”*
- *“North Rim of Grand Canyon – walk in campground is booked all the time. People like it. Easy to get a spot in drive-in campground.”*
- *“Put new campgrounds where there traditionally haven’t been ones – look at two River Campgrounds and consider for walk-in camping. Don’t need a lot of infrastructure. Parking bathrooms and picnic tables. In another flood, infrastructure won’t be wiped out.”*
- *“Why do all campsites need to be multi-purpose – have walk-in, multi-family, RV – specialize a bit and could accommodate more people and eliminate congestion.”*
- *“Quantity versus quality. May have to be tradeoffs to get better quality.”*

## River Picnic Areas

- *“Swinging Bridge – tradeoffs between riparian restoration and visitation. Swinging Bridge is first restroom in valley. Add restrooms before Swinging Bridge to take pressure off.”*
- *“Best photo spot for photographing Yosemite Falls.”*
- *“How to restore picnic areas.”*
- *“Orientation and parking for cars and RV at Taft Toe”*
- *“Picnic areas are outside the area where people tend to be looking at falls. Locate picnic areas closer to destinations.”*
- *“Connect picnic areas with existing shuttle system. Have shuttle run throughout the Valley to avoid people jumping in their car to drive around and find picnic area.”*
- *“Improve Valley loop trail so people can move between picnic areas on foot. Coordinate this with shuttle system so you could get back to your car.”*
- *“Hidden bathroom across the road at valley view. Bathroom sites could be first view of El Capitan, four mile trail.”*



## Camp 6 Parking Lot

- *“This is the armpit of the Valley. Backside of Yosemite Village. Entrance and egress to Camp Six parking area is separate than where people go. Make a promenade.”*

## Facilities

- *“Why have anyone living in Yosemite Valley? Only about 75 NPS people live in the Valley but there are 1200 concessionaire employees. As you remove people and resources from Valley, there is an opportunity to use those resources for other purposes. Opportunity to restructure economic benefits from having the park in the area. Need to provide transit for those people. Have concessionaire provide buses. No cars.”*
- *“Can also move offices to Mariposa. Not everyone has to be in the park all the time.”*

## Transportation

- *“The ideas seem like they are thinking small. Need to think big, not short term incremental improvements. Need to be realistic about funding. What happens if you ban all private transportation in the park? You eliminate a host of problems and long term costs. Have a world class transportation system. 1M per day if needed. Wouldn't need so much parking or road structure. So many of the problems are related to the private vehicle.”*
- *“Park and orientation at Taft Toe would cost money but be a solution – help alleviate all people forced into Camp 6 and East Valley. Could park and ride a shuttle. Tours could be run from here. Quick orientation.”*
- *“Keeping cars out of Yosemite – local transportation system had to make no cars attractive is to add to Mission Statement that this is an alternative way to go into Yosemite. Make choosing public transit more palatable. Encourages making system attractive. Rather than taking people who really love their cars out, make the alternative attractive.”*
- *“Conflicts between expanding campsites for large families and no cars in Valley.”*
- *“July and August – people come for the day. Encourage day users to leave their cars and take a shuttle. Do what they need to do. Reduce traffic but still give opportunity for campers to drive in. What is the percent of day users?”*
- *“Taft Toe – construction shouldn't be visible from Tunnel View.”*



- *“Park and ride shouldn’t impede people coming in. Frequency, how to deal with people with stuff – strollers, ice chests, etc.”*
- *“Provide an incentive for people not to drive. Put an interpreter on bus. Add value to the trip. Add these from areas farther away like Tracy and Fresno. Give people a reason to ride transportation rather than being penalized for it.”*
- *“From vista points you see a natural valley, not all the manmade things. Parking lots in west valley will start problems that we already have in east valley. Olmsted no development west of the Olmstead line.”*
- *“Need both transportation into and around valley.”*

## Information

- *“Making real time information available would eliminate some crowding. Find out where people are – might make you change your itinerary. ‘There’s an app for that.’”*
- *“Taft Toe – catch people before they go in and help them plan their trip better. Taft Toe is hidden so doesn’t impede view. Now West valley is a roundabout – Taft Toe would allow people to come in and continue to east valley or go over El Cap Bridge and out.”*
- *“New technology – we may not be on petroleum based fuel.”*
- *“What about if you leave your car you get a free bike to ride around the valley (TS)”*
- *“Is there someone who remembers era of when cars were eliminated – what were issues around that?”*

**Staff Response** – GMP planning process 1970s had a long-term goal to get rid of cars. Total operating budget is \$29M from Congress. Cost of building parking garages steep. \$4.6M is cost of the shuttle system. It carries 4M people and is the fourth largest transportation system in the country. Financially this could expand. Currently only 2.5% of visitors come by public transit. You could put parking outside the park but if you put lots of buses on the road you need to rebuild the roads. Congestion occurs in July and August – some of the solutions are expensive for two months per year. We need to look at how to deal with seasonal peaks (e.g. a seasonal stoplight) rather than developing more hardscape to maintain..”

- *“Yosemite is southernmost point on Trans Sierra Highway. Need to accommodate people who want to pass through park.”*
- *“Use parking structure or stacked parking.”*



- *“Trans Sierra – for people coming from Fresno, Merced, Wawona and want to go to the east side, Taft Toe serves as a good round about. Three miles of valley driving could be eliminated if the one way road became two way again and people could get out.”*

Laurie Durnell closed the meeting and reminded participants of the upcoming meetings and webinars. She also reminded people of the schedule. The next steps will be to develop alternatives which will be analyzed in the Draft EIS due out in 2012.

## Tabletop Worksheets

Each table group was provided with a worksheet divided into sections for each river segment (Segment 1, Segment 2, Segment 4 and Segment 5 through 8). During the small group exercises participants were asked to add comments to the worksheet as they saw fit. The following are the comments sorted by topic as written by meeting participants.

### Meadows and Informal Trails

- *“Boardwalks in meadows enhance plant diversity. El Cap will be challenging as far as getting people to use them.”*
- *“Concern re: maintaining boardwalks for the long-term use.”*

### Camping/Lodging

- *“Balance to find. . . Relationship that people find with place. E.g. people come back year after year. Maybe remove some sites but not whole thing. . . but housekeeping impacts river. Need to balance impact.”*
- *“Use GMP numbers set for camping. Went through a lot of scrutiny at that time.”*
- *“Consider where to relocate sites, new sites.”*
- *“If removing sites next to river, people will still go directly to river so would this be helpful.”*
- *“Would be easier to deal with resource concerns in potential campgrounds if they were outside the Valley.”*
- *“Replace lost lodging with camping which is of greater interest.”*
- *“Separate tent and RV camping.”*



- *“Needs to be a cap on size of vehicle (RV) to fit at sites or in valley.”*
- *“Don’t like camping at Taft Toe – to maximize parking.”*
- *“Like to see more RV camping outside of Valley. Walk in next to river.”*
- *“Need to understand the mix of camping experiences desired and how to best address group, walk-in, drive-in and RV.”*
- *“Old Rivers Campgrounds as walk-in.”*
- *“More walk-in campgrounds.”*
- *“RVs outside of the valley would face opposition.”*
- *“Don’t do away with low cost recreation options.”*
- *“Different fee levels.”*
- *“Maybe a portion available as first come first served.”*
- *“Hook ups would be preferable to generators but need to be mindful of disturbance to place electricity in place.”*

## Picnic Areas

- *“Increase/improve the interpretive and picnic areas at Swinging Bridge.”*

## Camp 6 Parking Lot

- *“Like the Camp 6 with visitor access (15C) to make Visitor Center more accessible. Moving ingress/egress to south side of Camp 6.”*

## Facilities

- *“Increase the number of bathrooms. Look at Bridal Veil Fall, 1<sup>st</sup> stop in the Valley”*
- *“More bathrooms away from river and expand restroom facilities.”*





- *“Get rid of concessioner housing and you don’t need to service those staff and house them.”*
- *“Moving concessioner housing could benefit the Gateway Communities.”*
- *“Moving concessioner housing would relieve the areas where housing occurs for repurposing.”*

## Transportation and Congestion

- *“Many linkages. . .if removing bridges, must consider type of path to reconstruct/relocate.”*
- *“Need to know if bike trail around whole Valley or not.”*
- *“Need to know if shuttle service for whole Valley.”*
- *“Road from Pohono Bridge to BridalVeil should be restored to two way. Would enable through traffic to avoid going up to El Cap Bridge.”*
- *“Put parking lots where they will not have an unacceptable impact to resources/environment. This can be the limit for capacity.”*
- *“Staging areas – reduce traffic with day users parking at other areas – Forest, Chinquapin, Henness Ridge.”*
- *“Staging/satellite parking requires an extensive system to accommodate visitors using it.”*
- *“To reduce the number of parking sites needed, make a “cruising zone” – if you stop you get a ticket.”*
- *“Can use day use reservations on peak days.”*
- *“Like to consider removing the bridges. Transportation system would knowingly have to change.”*
- *“Delineate Valley loop trail at key points like El Cap Bridge and other places.”*
- *“Parking at Swinging Bridge is a problem. There is not enough parking in the summer.”*
- *“Provide separate parking area for RVs in order to free-up space for other vehicles.”*
- *“Suggest banning RVs because of the parking problem they present.”*



- *“Like Taft Toe because it isn’t visible from Tunnel View. Parking, interpretation, picnic area.”*
- *“Picnicking and parking are related. Need to develop parking if have more picnicking or run shuttle to picnic areas.”*

## **Paddling and Floating**

- *“Private boating preferable to commercial.”*
- *“Need to make river safe it allowing any rafting. Therefore, rafting should not be allowed because cannot let natural process prevail.”*
- *“In favor of leaving large woody debris for public enjoyment as with 6B.”*
- *“Like to see Wild and Scenic River enhanced throughout its length. Minimize impacts by developing river access. Recognize where/why visitors are using the access and develop appropriately.”*
- *“Inspection of private floating vessels.”*
- *“Permit with instruction for floating/kayaking. Other organizations like American Whitewater.”*
- *“Kayaking in lower Merced.”*

## **Merced Lake High Sierra Camp**

- *“Concentrate use in wilderness.”*

## **User Capacity**

- *“How to determine overnight numbers in Valley? First need to know capacity of Valley.”*
- *“Capacity needs to be determined by infrastructure.”*



## Meeting Times

- *“I want to encourage you to have these planning activities during days/hours that working people can participate in. I shouldn’t have to take vacation time.”*

## Activities

- *“Like to enhance photographing ability on the east side of river left of Swinging Bridge.”*



## APPENDIX 2: DISPLAY BOARD COMMENTS

### SEGMENT 1: Merced River Above Nevada Fall

No comments were made on the Segment 1 display boards.

### SEGMENT 2-1: East Yosemite Valley

#### Ecological and Natural Resource Values

##### Management Consideration 6: Clarks Bridge to El Cap Bridge: Large Woody Debris Management

Management Option 6A: Stop removing large woody debris. Allow boating seasonally. Educate visitors about risks of river use and allow for seasonal closures to protect visitor safety.

- *“Explain Options 6A and B.”*

#### Visitor Use Management Program

##### Management Consideration 9: Valley: Camping Demand

###### General Comments:

- *“New campsite, walk in only.”*
- *“Consider some campsites in west or mid valley. Also outside of valley.”*
- *“Happy Isles to JMT Bridge back in (at gauge station). Pedestrian traffic is messed up without it.”*

### SEGMENT 2-2: Yosemite Village Area

###### General Comments:

- *“Like the idea of removing concessioner office and turning it into parking.”*



## Ecological and Natural Resource Values

### Management Consideration 12: Upper and Lower Rivers Campground Areas

#### General Comments

- *“Walk-in campgrounds only”*
- *“If you add picnic areas – how can we design them to accommodate changing demographics of visitation? If large family groups are coming should we have more group picnic areas?”*
- *“How do any of these options affect current infrastructure such as the LR Amphitheatre which was just redone?”*

## Visitor Use Management Program

### Management Consideration 14: Valley: Camping Demand

#### General Comment:

- *“Walk in only”*

## SEGMENT 2-3: Yosemite Lodge Area

## Ecological and Natural Resource Values

### Management Consideration 16: Leidig Meadow: Meadow Impacts by Informal Trails

#### General Comment:

- *“Remove boardwalks”*



## Visitor Use Management Program

### Management Consideration 18: Yosemite Valley: Paddling and Floating

#### General Comments:

- *“Control numbers of usage. Consider fishing, photography.”*
- *“Has to be a compromise for those who do not have their own raft. How would safety issues (life jackets, glass, etc.) be monitored or enforced? Is it all permit only?”*

### Management Consideration 19: Valley Camping Demand

#### General Comments:

- *“Camping sites should be maintained at General Management Plan 1980 numbers.”*

## Land Uses and Associated Development

### Management Consideration 20: Yosemite Lodge: Intersection Congestion

Management Option 20A: Relocate lodge entrance and replace with pedestrian promenade and underpass for pedestrian access to Lower Yosemite Falls (see DSC drawing).

- *“Yes this is great. B and C – no.”*

#### General Comments:

- *“Reduced carrying capacity in the Valley would alleviate this problem.”*
- *“Create parking outside of Yosemite Valley.”*



## SEGMENT 2-4: West Yosemite Valley

### Ecological and Natural Resource Values

#### Management Consideration 21: El Cap Meadow: Informal Social Trails

##### General Comments:

- *“Retain access to meadow for photographers.”*
- *“Visual cues to indicate paths would divert most people.”*
- *“Create parking with shuttle service to outside of Yosemite Valley.”*
- *“Option E: Shuttle bus stop at El Cap Meadow to reduce numbers of vehicles parking along the meadow. Designate the stop at appropriate location.”*

### Visitor Use Management Program

#### Management Consideration 22: West of Pohono Bridge: River Access

##### General Comments:

- *“BridalVeil Falls viewing area on Southside Drive. Rest facilities.”*

#### Management Consideration 23: Valley: Camping Demand

##### General Comments

- *“Visitor orientation and parking at Taft Toe.”*
- *“Maintain campsite numbers at 1980 master plan levels.”*
- *“Run free bus throughout valley.”*
- *“There are few opportunities for large parking lots. More sites are available for small lots.”*



## Land Uses and Associated Development

### Management Consideration 24: Cathedral Beach Picnic Area

#### General Comments

- *“Create parking outside Yosemite Valley for day users.”*
- *“Put parking closer to the road and walk into picnic area.”*
- *“Paved turnouts for parking along valley roads.”*

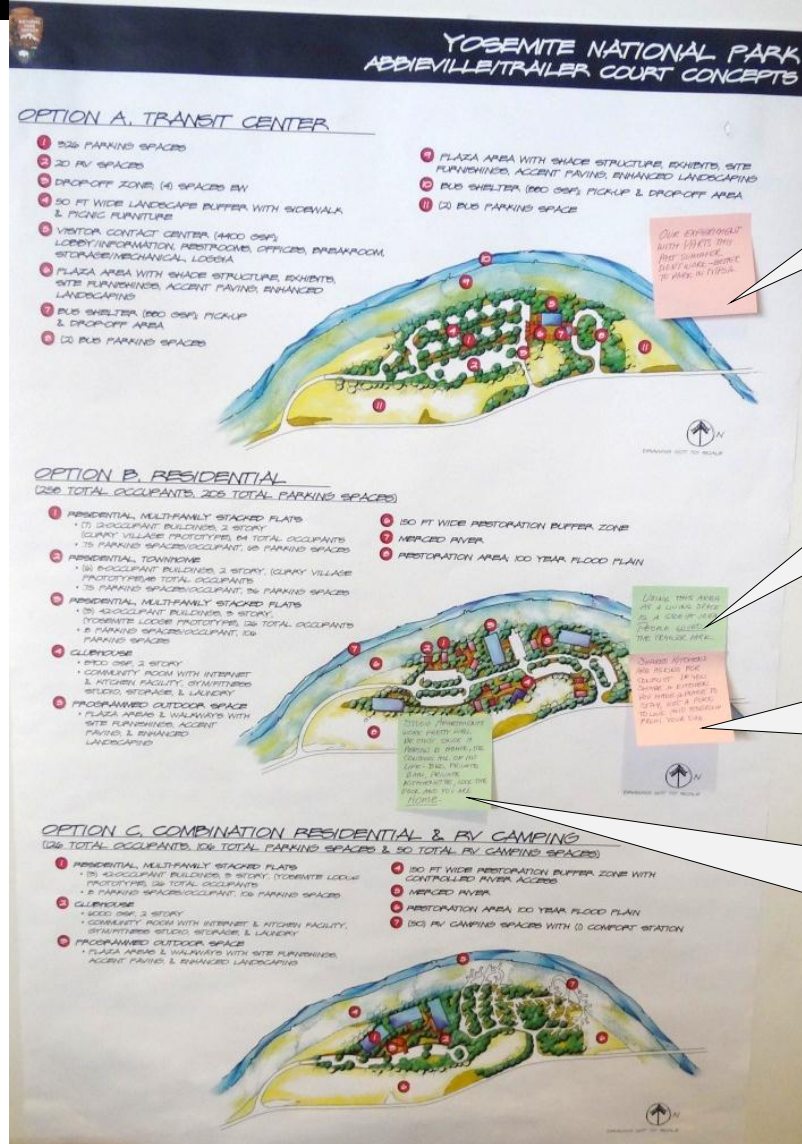
### **SEGMENT 4: El Portal**

No comments were made on the Segment 4 display boards.

### **SEGMENTS 5, 6, 7 and 8: South Fork Merced River Wawona**

No comments were made on the Segment 5 – 8 display boards.





*Our experiment with YARTS this past summer didn't work - better to park in Mariposa.*

*Using this area as a living space is a great idea. People loved the trailer park.*

*Shared kitchens are asking for conflict. If you share a kitchen, you have a place to stay, not a place to live and regroup from your day.*

*Studio apartments work pretty well because once a person is home, he controls all of his life - bed, private bath, private kitchenette, lock the door and you are home.*



MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS					
Segment 1: Merced River Above					
<b>Management Consideration 1</b> Merced River Above Backpackers Goal: Visitor Use Management Program	<b>Option A</b> Prohibit wilderness permits to allow use on this trail.	<b>Option B</b> Prohibit High Sierra Camp use on this trail.	<b>Option C</b> Prohibit High Sierra Camp use on this trail.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 2</b> Merced River Above Recreational User Conflicts Goal: Visitor Use Management Program	<b>Option A</b> Close or reduce Merced Lake High Sierra Camp capacity to 42 beds to reduce or avoid to limit wilderness stock use.	<b>Option B</b> Use helicopters instead of stock to reduce user conflicts.	<b>Option C</b> Reduce the extent of trails maintained for stock in this area, which would in turn reduce the number of trails needed to maintain them.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 3</b> Merced Lake Backpackers Campground Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	<b>Option A</b> Reduce use by burning quotas for trails that lead to the Merced Lake area.	<b>Option B</b> Allow only limited dispersed camping at Merced Lake.	<b>Option C</b> Retain backpacker camps to that visitor use is concentrated. This strategy tends to protect resources and address human waste concerns.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 4</b> Merced Lake High Sierra Camp Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	<b>Option A</b> Close Merced Lake High Sierra Camp and restore to natural conditions.	<b>Option B</b> Reduce capacity from 60 beds to 42 beds (equal to that of the next largest camp (Opportunity)).	<b>Option C</b> Reduce amenities such as shower facilities to accommodate only staff members, eliminate food service for tent sites, convert food service to cold meals only.	<b>Option D</b> Convert MULEC to staff's quarters, in which all structures are temporary & removed in fall.	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Management Consideration 5</b> Little Yosemite Valley Backpackers Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	<b>Option A</b> Reduce backpacker camps to that visitor use is concentrated. This strategy tends to protect resources and address human waste concerns.	<b>Option B</b> Retain backpacker camps to that visitor use is concentrated. This strategy tends to protect resources and address human waste concerns.	<b>Option C</b> Convert backpacker camps to that visitor use is concentrated. This strategy tends to protect resources and address human waste concerns.	<b>Option D</b> Retain camps to that visitor use is concentrated. This strategy tends to protect resources and address human waste concerns.	<b>Comments</b>

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS					
Segment 2.1: East Yosemite Valley					
<b>Management Consideration 6</b> Cultural OUV Visitor Use and Infrastructure Goal: Opportunity for Direct Connection to River Values	<b>Option A</b> Retain visitor use areas where appropriate to maintain cultural resources and structures for additional cultural practices and values.	<b>Option B</b> Partner with traditional practitioners to restore areas important for traditional and spiritual use.	<b>Option C</b> Conduct on-going consultation and data collection to ensure the protection of ethnographic resources. Partner with traditional practitioners to conduct regular condition assessment monitoring.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 7</b> Riparian Zone Campsites Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	<b>Option A</b> Retain or remove campsites that are within the ordinary high water mark and the riparian zone. Design new campsites in riparian locations and restore riparian area to natural conditions.	<b>Option B</b> Relocate or remove campsites that are within the ordinary high water mark and the riparian zone. Design new campsites in riparian locations and restore riparian area to natural conditions.	<b>Option C</b> Relocate or remove campsites that are within the ordinary high water mark and the riparian zone. Design new campsites in riparian locations and restore riparian area to natural conditions.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 8</b> Sugar Pine Bridgehead Bern: Free Flowing Condition Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	<b>Option A</b> Remove Sugar Pine Bridge and road bridge, but leave Abbot's Bridge and re-route traffic to the north bank of the river.	<b>Option B</b> Remove Sugar Pine Bridge and road bridge, but leave Abbot's Bridge. The Abbot's Bridge would provide access to lower and upper Pine Campgrounds.	<b>Option C</b> Restore both existing bridges with two bridges, including the project and enhance the free-flowing condition of the river.	<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Management Consideration 9</b> Valley Camping Demand Goal: Visitor Use Management	<b>Option A</b> Identify new campgrounds in riparian locations and restore riparian areas to natural conditions.	<b>Option B</b> Identify new campgrounds in riparian locations and restore riparian areas to natural conditions.	<b>Option C</b> Identify new campgrounds in riparian locations and restore riparian areas to natural conditions.	<b>Comments</b>	



## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS Segment 2.2: Yosemite Village Area

Management Consideration	Option A	Option B	Option C	Comments	Management Consideration	Option A	Option B	Option C	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 11</b> Housekeeping Camp, Riparian and Flood Plain Impacts  Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Integrate riparian up to 51 foot riparian zone and associated wetlands into the riparian area. Where possible, relocate the riparian zone to an adjacent more resilient location within Yosemite Valley.	Remove all existing units and restore to the 1960 General Management Plan.	Remove all existing units, infrastructure and restore the riparian zone to natural conditions.		<b>Management Consideration 12</b> Upper and Lower Rivers Campground Area  Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Provide visitor use opportunities and access to the riparian zone. Park facilities and parking areas to be located in the riparian zone.	Remove visitor use opportunities and access to the riparian zone. Park facilities and parking areas to be located in the riparian zone.	Remove visitor use opportunities and access to the riparian zone. Park facilities and parking areas to be located in the riparian zone.	
<b>Management Consideration 13</b> Cultural Only: Visitor Use Impacts  Goal: Opportunities for Direct Connection to River Values	Restore visitor use area where appropriate to allow on-going events and activities. Conduct regular condition assessment monitoring.	Stabilize archeological sites where appropriate to prevent additional damage. Conduct regular monitoring.	Conduct data recovery as a mitigation measure for potential threats and disturbances. Develop site-specific treatments to minimize ongoing and prevent future degradation. Conduct regular monitoring.		<b>Management Consideration 14</b> Valley Campground Demand  Goal: Visitor Use Management	Establish camping at the former River Campground.	In addition to Option 1, identify other campground locations within the park but outside of Yosemite Valley.	Do not add more camping to Yosemite Valley.	
<b>Management Consideration 15</b> Camp & Intersection  Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	Design a roundabout and all other infrastructure to improve intersection performance. Due to space considerations, this would likely require the relocation of Headquarters building.	Redesign parking area to improve operational efficiency.	Restore pedestrian crossing to northeast corner of parking area to avoid intersection issues. Restore information kiosk within the lot. Utilize electronic and pedestrian and vehicle crossing signals.	Install temporary, seasonal electronic pedestrian crossing signals.	<b>Option E</b> Redesign intersection to be a four-way stop. Install access to parking area along with center from Sentinel Drive. Include pedestrian under-crossing and relocate other pedestrian crossing.	Comments			

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS Segment 2.3: Yosemite Lodge Area

Management Consideration	Option A	Option B	Option C	Comments	Management Consideration	Option A	Option B	Option C	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 16</b> Lodging Meadows: Natural Impacts by Informal Trails  Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Remove low-lying vegetation and install boardwalks to prevent future impacts. Remove low-lying vegetation and install boardwalks to prevent future impacts.	Remove low-lying vegetation and install boardwalks to prevent future impacts. Remove low-lying vegetation and install boardwalks to prevent future impacts.			<b>Management Consideration 17</b> Swinging Bridge: Riparian Impacts  Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Redesign parking area to its current location. Identify additional parking on the south side of South Side Drive. Designate the area as a formal river access point.	Retain existing river area. Designate the area as a formal river access point. Remove existing parking area and parking lot. Relocate bathrooms to Sentinel area, adjacent to Sentinel and Calaveras Meadows. Designate area as lot and foot path.		
<b>Management Consideration 18</b> Yosemite Valley: Roadway and Flooding  Goal: Visitor Use Management	Prohibit parking and floating in a limited section of the river. Remove permits for all parking and floating. Designate out-of-lake-out points and floating points along the wall.	Continue parking and floating in a limited section of the river. Remove permits for all parking and floating. Designate out-of-lake-out points and floating points along the wall.	Same as Option B, but would allow parking and floating on a longer stretch of river to El Cap Overlook.	Private floating is permitted from Clark's bridge to Pohorens bridge. Allow use throughout the year as long as water conditions are suitable. No commercial floating would be allowed. Designate out-of-lake-out locations.	<b>Option E</b> Similar to Option B, but with limited commercial floating opportunities with designated parking and take-outs. Private floating of rafts would be allowed. Designate out-of-lake-out and take-out locations.	Comments			
<b>Management Consideration 19</b> Valley Campground Demand  Goal: Visitor Use Management	Do not add more camping to Yosemite Valley.	In addition to Option 1, identify new campground locations or expand existing campgrounds inside the park but outside of Yosemite Valley.	Do not add more camping to Yosemite Valley.		<b>Management Consideration 20</b> Yosemite Lodge: Intersection Congestion  Goal: Land Use and Associated Development	Relocate lodge entrance and replace with pedestrian promenade and underpass for pedestrian access to Lower Yosemite Falls area (see DDC drawing).	Implement an environmentally sensitive intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians.	Construct a pedestrian overpass for accessibility requirements by maintaining a second crossing at current level.	



## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS Segment 2.4: West Yosemite Valley

<b>Management Consideration 21</b> El Cap Meadow Informal Social Trails  Goal Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Informal trail and pedestrian network in the El Cap Meadow. Multiple meadows, roads, and trails. Some trails are open to the general public.	<b>Option A</b> Use restoration fencing to limit foot traffic into the meadow and designate appropriate access routes using boardwalks and viewing platforms.	<b>Option B</b> Use restoration fencing to limit foot traffic into the meadow and designate appropriate meadow access points in more resilient locations.	<b>Option C</b> Selectively remove vegetation that is blocking roadside views of El Capitan.	<b>Option D</b> Limit most roadside parking to search and rescue and other emergency use. Consolidate all the roadside parking along the west end of the meadow, keep parking open for fall and other admin traffic.	Comments				
<b>Management Consideration 22</b> West of El Cap Access  Goal Visitor Use Management	There are no existing trails in this area.	<b>Option A</b> Final design for trail design. Use existing trails and boardwalks.	<b>Option C</b> Designate trail access and use boundaries to limit parking in un-paved parking areas.	Comments	<b>Management Consideration 23</b> Valley Camping Demand  Goal Visitor Use Management	Public comment received at above to have more camping opportunities in Yosemite Valley.	<b>Option A</b> Potential areas for campground development: Salt Lake, east of El Capitan Picnic Area, west of El Capitan Meadow, Tellow Pines.	<b>Option B</b> In addition to Option C, identify new campground locations or expand existing campgrounds inside the park but outside of Yosemite Valley.	<b>Option C</b> Do not add more camping to Yosemite Valley.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 24</b> Cathedral Beach Picnic Area  Goal Land Uses and Development	Cathedral Beach Picnic Area is a popular area for high use. The area is currently managed as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area.	<b>Option A</b> Re-design picnic area to better manage the level of use and designate the area as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area.	<b>Management Consideration 25</b> Sentry Beach Picnic Area  Goal Land Uses and Development	The Sentry Beach picnic area is not well defined. The area is currently managed as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area.	<b>Option A</b> Re-design picnic area in its current location to accommodate parking and seating. Designate river access.	<b>Option B</b> Remove left take-out access to accommodate expansion of parking, formalize vehicle access and parking, designate river access.	<b>Option C</b> Relocate picnic use sites to accommodate left take out and seating. Formalize vehicle access and parking, designate river access.	<b>Option D</b> Re-design picnic area to expand parking and seating. Formalize vehicle access and parking, designate river access.	Comments	

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS Segment 4: El Portal

<b>Management Consideration 26</b> Greenmeadow Sandbars Flood and Riparian Plant Impacts from Fill Material  Goal Ecological and Natural Resources Values	Greenmeadow sandbars contain fill material. The area is currently managed as a riparian area. The area is currently managed as a riparian area.	<b>Option A</b> Restore to natural conditions, remove fill material and reclaim flow.	<b>Option B</b> Cultivate fill material to allow flooding cycles and other natural processes to flush the site gradually and reclaim the flood plain.	<b>Option C</b> Using best management practices, continue administrative functions including staging and biomass management.	Comments	<b>Management Consideration 27</b> Infrastructure: Valley Oaks Impacts  Goal Ecological and Natural Resources Values	Infrastructure has been built at the site and care will be taken to ensure the site is managed in a way that is consistent with the site's natural resources.	<b>Option A</b> Remove all facilities and restore the understorey.	<b>Option B</b> Repurpose sites as needed. Restore area where infrastructure is removed to natural conditions.	<b>Option C</b> Retain facilities but create an other viewing/interpretation area in a different location.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 28</b> Maintenance Administrative Complex Roadside Parking  Goal Land Use and Associated Development	The site is currently managed as a picnic area. The area is currently managed as a picnic area.	<b>Option A</b> Construct interpretive features (Best Management Practices) and formalize existing parking area to maximize visitor and employee parking within the existing footprint.	<b>Option B</b> Relocate parking from the river's edge. Build new parking east of Foresta Road at the Administrative Facility. Restore sites between Foresta Road and the river.	Comments							



## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### Segment 5-8: South Fork Merced River

<b>Management Consideration 29</b> Wawona Campground: campground activity near river  Goal: Ecological and Natural Resource Values	Relocate or close camp sites that are too close to the river.	Designate access points to the river to reduce resource impacts.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 30</b> Camp A.E. Wood  Goal: Opportunities for Direct Connection to River Values	Relocate or close camp sites that are too close to the river.	Designate access points to the river to reduce resource impacts.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 31</b> South Fork paddling and floating  Goal: Visitor Use Management Program	Continue to allow paddling and floating in this segment without any management or large vehicle debris. No limits on the number of floaters or boats would be in place. No design put in or take-out.	Continue to allow paddling and floating in this segment with designated put-in and take-out for boating in the section through Wawona gorge and limits on the number of boats per year. No limits on recreational floating and related water play.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 32</b> Picnic area near Wawona Store  Goal: Land Uses and Associated Development	Redesign picnic area in its current location, designate river access areas.	Relocate picnicking to a different location, designate river access in this area.	Comments
<b>Management Consideration 33</b> Impoundment Effects on Free-Floating Condition  Goal: Land Uses and Associated Development	Investigate reservoir options, such as water system development from Bileto Spring or Big Creek. Retain the impoundment until other options are developed.	Comments	Comments