



## Replacement of the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station and Emergency Services Facilities

**Project Background** Yosemite National Park is pleased to announce the initiation of the Replacement of the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station and Emergency Services Facilities Project. This entrance gate welcomes about one million visitors to the park annually from the park's western border. The Visitor Contact Station provides information, campground reservations, wilderness permit services, bear canister rentals, a small retail space, and limited staff operational space. It also serves as the Mather District Law Enforcement Office and has a public restroom. The National Park Service is in the early planning stages to replace these facilities. Visitors encounter long lines to access services and restrooms, as well as confusion as to the proper places to seek information. The purpose of the project is to improve visitor experience and wayfinding, reduce congestion, improve visitor safety, meet accessibility standards, and correct long-standing maintenance issues.

### Need

Park staff at the Big Oak Flat Visitor Contact Station struggle to provide quality public service due to the facilities not being adequately sized or effectively organized to accommodate the volume of visitors arriving through this entrance. The wayfinding signage in the area are unclear, leading to confusion and congestion in the parking area and unsafe conditions. Furthermore, visitors often must wait in long lines to access interpretive, wilderness, and campground services, as well as restroom facilities. Space restrictions strain the delivery of emergency, informational, and interpretive services to the public, and aging utility systems require a high level of maintenance.



## Proposed Action

The project will:

- Unify visitor services with improved wayfinding and orientation
- Provide an appropriately sized comfort station
- Address visitor safety issues related to parking, lighting, and fire protection
- Provide an emergency services facility with unobscured parking for ambulances and ranger vehicles
- Reduce parking lot congestion and vehicular-pedestrian conflict
- Upgrade outdated utility systems
- Address accessibility deficiencies



## What are the Next Steps?

The park is preparing an environmental assessment per the National Environmental Policy Act and is coordinating compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. The park is soliciting public scoping comments through June 4, 2018. The park anticipates releasing the environmental assessment for public comment in late 2018 and will conduct a public meeting in during this period. The final decision document is expected in early 2019.



## Participation

Your ideas, concerns, issues, suggestions, and potential topics for consideration are important to us as we develop the environmental assessment. Please share your comments by June 4, 2018 via one of the following methods:

- o Online through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (preferred) at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/BigOakFlatEntrance>
- o Mail comments postmarked by June 4, 2018, to:

*Superintendent  
Yosemite National Park  
Attn: Big Oak Flat Entrance EA  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389*

### Project Schedule (estimate):

- Public Scoping Period – Closes June 4, 2018
- Public Scoping Meeting – May 18, 2018 (details online)
- Environmental Assessment Public Review  
– Winter 2018
- Decision Document – Early 2019
- Project Construction Start – Summer 2019



Information on this project and other park projects is available at:

<https://www.nps.gov/yose/getinvolved/planning.htm>