



Replace the Big Oak Flat Welcome Center Complex Project and Environmental Assessment

Project Background

The National Park Service plans to improve visitor experience, address deferred maintenance, improve safety, and increase operational efficiency at the Big Oak Flat Welcome Center Complex. This park entrance welcomes about one million visitors annually from the park's western border. The complex (formerly called the Visitor Contact Station) provides a public restroom, information, campground reservations, wilderness permits, bear canister rentals, and retail sales. It also currently serves as the district law enforcement office. The project will improve visitor orientation and safety, reduce lines, and upgrade accessibility and utilities. The project's environmental assessment is available for public review until December 20, 2018.

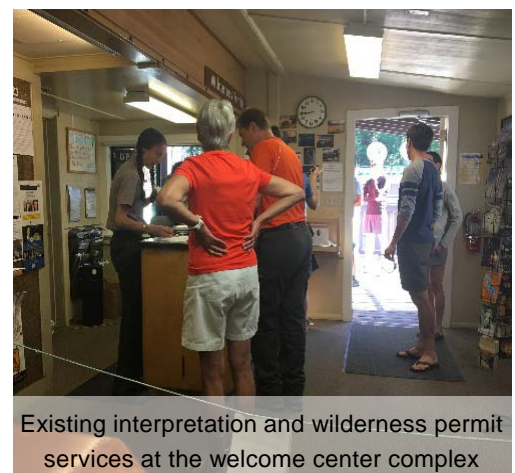
The park hosted a public meeting in May 2018 to present the project, answer questions, and solicit feedback from the community. The formal public scoping period closed in June 2018.

The park initially proposed constructing a separate facility in the Hodgdon Meadow area to house law enforcement/emergency services. This was ultimately not included in the preferred alternative due to the additional information needed to determine the preferred site and design approach for this facility. The park is now planning this facility as a separate future project.

Participation

Your ideas, concerns, and suggestions are important to us. Please share your written comments by **December 20, 2018**, via one of the following methods:

- Online through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website (preferred method) at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/BigOakFlatEntrance>
- Mail comments (postmarked by December 20, 2018) to:
Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Attn: Replace Big Oak Flat Welcome Center Complex
P.O. Box 577,
Yosemite, CA 95389



Existing interpretation and wilderness permit services at the welcome center complex

Project Actions

The environmental assessment presents a preferred alternative that proposes the following actions:

- Construct a new welcome center to unify visitor services and replace the modular building and trailer that currently house these functions
- Construct a new adequately sized comfort station to replace the aging, undersized one
- Construct a plaza to connect the new welcome center and comfort station buildings, and house informational and orientation panels
- Reconfigure the existing parking lot to decrease vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and reduce congestion
- Construct a small, unpaved staff parking area along Tuolumne Grove Road to reduce congestion
- Install a sewer to connect the welcome center complex to the Hodgdon community septic system and decommission the aging septic system currently serving the facilities
- Provide the option for the addition of a water tank and access road at a later date



Line of visitors waiting to use the comfort station

What are the Next Steps

The environmental assessment public comment period is open until **December 20, 2018**.

The park is hosting a public webinar December 12, 2018 from 12 to 1 pm (see PEPC website above for details).

At the webinar, the park will provide a presentation on the project and environmental assessment, answer questions, and provide information on how to comment.

Project Schedule (estimated):

- Public Review of Environmental Assessment: Ends December 20, 2018
- Webinar: December 12, 2018
- Decision Document: January 2019
- Project Construction Start: October 2019

Information on this project and other projects is available at:
<https://www.nps.gov/yose/getinvolved/planning.htm>



View of traffic congestion at the existing Big Oak Flat Welcome Center Complex.