



Park Seeks Public Input on Rehabilitation of the Black Rock Campground for Erosion and Drainage Control

Public input is being sought regarding the National Park Service's (NPS) proposed plan to conduct drainage and erosion control improvements, along with redesign of the road and campground layout at the Black Rock Campground. Joshua Tree National Park will be hosting a public meeting on June 28, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. at the Black Rock Campground Visitor Center Auditorium to inform the public about proposed improvements to the campground. This will also be a time for the public to share their ideas and recommendations. Black Rock Campground is located at 9800 Black Rock Canyon, Yucca Valley California 92284, five miles south of Highway 62 in Yucca Valley via Joshua Lane.

The campground is sited on 80 acres in the northwest corner of Joshua Tree National Park about 1 mile south of the town of Yucca Valley. The existing campground facilities include a visitor center, comfort stations, gravel and asphalt roads, and car and recreational vehicle (RV) campsites. The large Black Rock Canyon watershed outside of the boundaries of the campground currently conveys storm runoff through portions of the campground in an unpredictable manner, resulting in localized erosion and flooding. The campground, acquired by the Park Service in 1976 from a commercial operator, was not designed to adequately convey drainage away from campground facilities. Campground roads are currently aligned so that storm water runs directly down the roads with the potential for damaging campground facilities, natural resources, and adjacent landowner property. Degraded roads and camping areas also have contributed to increased storm runoff, erosion, and sedimentation.

To address these issues, the park is proposing several changes to the campground including drainage improvements to divert storm water runoff away from campground roads and nearby residential properties into appropriate natural drainage channels. Campground roads would be realigned across the topographic contour to prevent conveyance of storm water runoff and reduce the potential for erosion. The proposed realignment of the campground road network would improve accessibility for vehicles, pedestrians, and horse riders, and it would enhance overall circulation. Improvement of campsite layout with better privacy would also be a component of the proposed rehabilitation work. The proposed project does not include improvements to the campground entrance road. This will be addressed in a future project.

An Environmental Assessment will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that: 1) analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives to meet project objectives, 2) evaluates issues and impacts to park resources and values, and 3) identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts.

The park encourages public participation throughout the planning process. There will be two opportunities to comment formally on the project—once during initial project scoping and again following release of the Environmental Assessment.

How to Comment on Plans for Black Rock Campground Rehabilitation

The public is invited to provide input on the proposal to rehabilitate Black Rock Campground. Comments received during this scoping period will be used to help define the issues and concerns to be addressed in this environmental assessment.

Comments will be accepted until July 28, 2011. Comments can be submitted at the public open house described above or online by visiting <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, the website for the National Park Service's Planning Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) system.

Comments also may be sent to the address below:

Superintendent
Joshua Tree National Park
74485 National Park Drive
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277-3597

Commentors should be aware that their entire comments— including personal identifying information— may be made publicly available at any time. While commentors can ask that their personal identifying information be withheld from public review, the NPS cannot this guarantee this will be possible.

If you have questions about the project or would like more information please contact Kirk Diamond at 760-367-5683, or by email at kirk_diamond@nps.gov. If you have questions about the Environmental Assessment or would like additional information, please contact Andrea Compton, Chief of Resources, at 760-367-5560 or by e-mail at andrea_compton@nps.gov.

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