



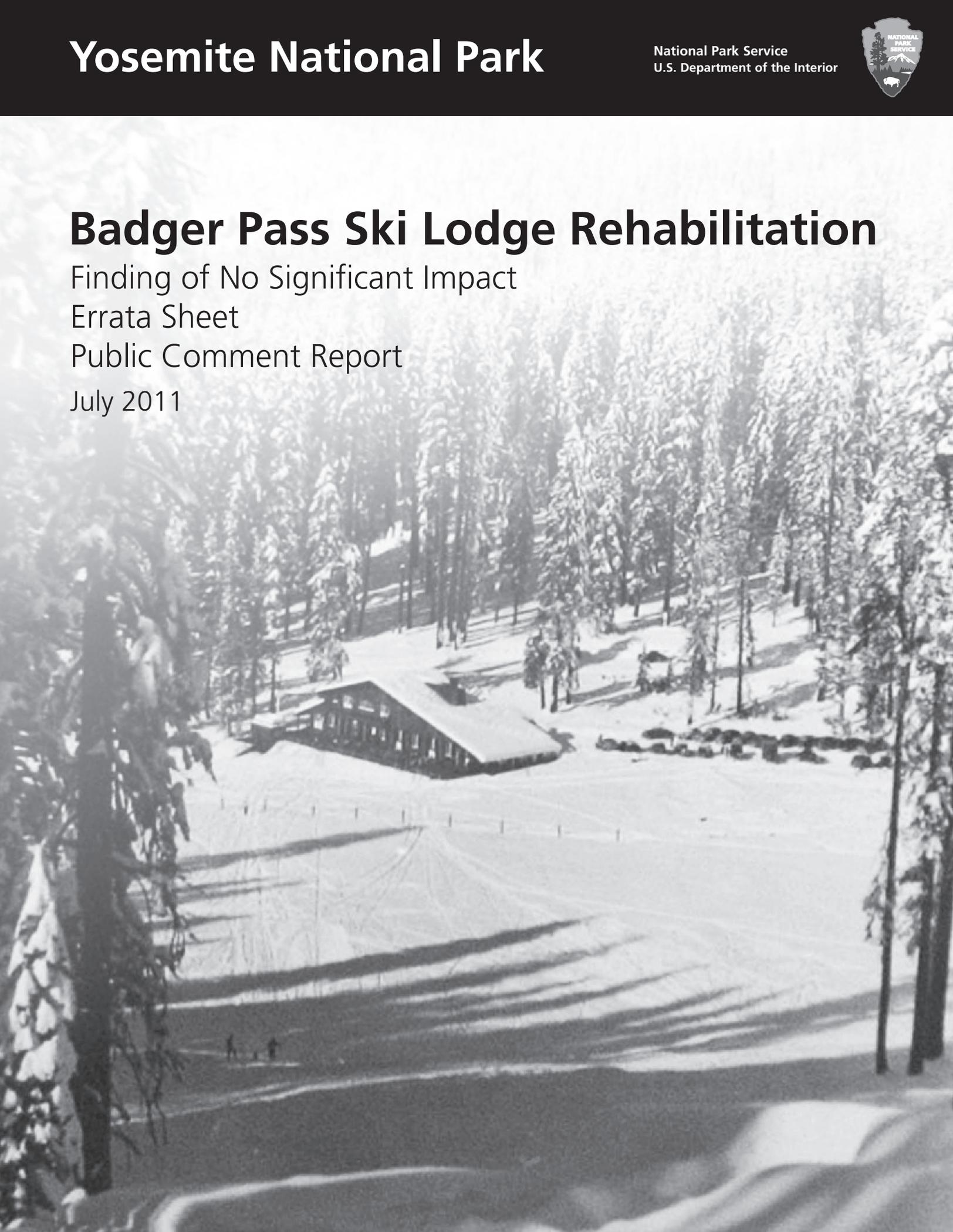
## Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation

Finding of No Significant Impact

Errata Sheet

Public Comment Report

July 2011





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# Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Finding of No Significant Impact

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## Yosemite National Park

Lead Agency: National Park Service

### Background

This Finding of No Significant Impact documents the decision of the National Park Service (NPS) to adopt a plan for the rehabilitation of Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the determination that no significant impacts on the human environment are associated with that decision.

The Badger Pass Ski Lodge is a National Park Service-owned facility that is operated by a park concessioner to provide commercial visitor services. Since its construction in 1935, Badger Pass Ski Lodge has supported winter recreation at the Badger Pass Ski Area in Yosemite National Park, a site that is historically significant as one of California's first developed downhill ski areas. Located at the base of Monroe Meadow, the original ski lodge building is characteristic of NPS Rustic architecture with Swiss chalet influences and is an important contributing feature to the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site within the Glacier Point Road historic district. The building continues to function as an active ski lodge and also serves as a summer base camp for the National Park Service-administered Youth Conservation Corps program. Over time, a combination of environmental stress, heavy use, and inadequate drainage have led to the deterioration of the building's structural integrity. The National Park Service plans to repair and stabilize deteriorated structural and exterior elements of Badger Pass Ski Lodge to prevent further damage and contribute to the rehabilitation of the ski lodge and associated support facilities.

### Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is: (1) to meet the goals stated in NPS management policies by correcting structural and design deficiencies that are contributing to the deterioration of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and/or are affecting visitor services, and (2) to support the park management goals for Badger Pass, as identified in the Yosemite *General Management Plan*, by maintaining opportunities for family-oriented downhill skiing and other forms of winter recreation at Badger Pass. Specifically, this project is needed to:

- Ensure visitor and employee safety
- Maintain and protect the integrity of Badger Pass Ski Lodge, a contributing element of the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site
- Maintain and protect natural resources
- Maintain ski lodge operations and service functions
- Protect the winter recreation visitor experience at Badger Pass Ski Area

The need for this project stems from the ongoing structural degradation occurring at the lodge, and the repairs needed to ensure that the facility can support winter recreation for generations to come. In addition, the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire/life safety systems need to be upgraded to meet current codes. Design deficiencies need to be corrected; in particular, the current layout of facilities contributes to circulation congestion, accessibility is difficult or impossible in portions of the ski lodge, and employee facilities are insufficient to support visitor services. Temporary structures housing visitor services are inadequate and detract from the character of the site. Lastly, some past additions to the ski lodge are incompatible with the historic character of the ski area.

## Range of Alternatives Considered

The *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* (EA) analyzed four alternatives, including Alternative 1-the No Action Alternative, and three action alternatives: Alternative 2-Essential Repairs and Upgrades, Alternative 3 (Preferred)-Rehabilitation and Improvements, and Alternative 4-Emphasize Historic Character. These alternatives represented a reasonable range of options to satisfy the purpose of and need for the project, while also meeting all relevant legal requirements. The National Park Service developed these alternatives based on the project purpose and need, issues raised during internal and public scoping, and project-specific research and design. The EA disclosed potential environmental consequences that may result from implementation of each alternative, and identified Alternative 3-Rehabilitation and Improvements, as the preferred alternative.

### **Selected Action- Alternative 3: Rehabilitation and Improvements**

The approved project is substantively the same as described for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3) in the EA with the exception of the addition and clarification of wildlife mitigations in response to comments received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service following review of the EA. Mitigation measures for special status wildlife were further clarified and are presented in Table 1 - Mitigation Measures of this FONSI.

The selected alternative addresses project requirements while protecting the historic character of the lodge, enhancing building performance, and improving facility operations and levels of visitor service. The existing building footprint will be maintained with some physical alteration. This alternative succeeds in protecting natural and cultural resources, enhancing the visitor experience, and complying with NPS management policies and the park's *General Management Plan*.

The Selected Actions will remove a portion of later additions that do not contribute to the historic character of the site and reorganize program uses to better accommodate functional needs. These include:

- **Historic Integrity:** Existing features that contribute to the historic character of the site will be maintained and strengthened. Later additions to the ski lodge that obscured the original west roof slope of the main lodge will be removed. The fireplace will be restored at the main lodge and circulation redirected to allow gathering and dining within the historic central lounge. Significant spatial relationships and site view corridors will be enhanced by removing building construction that obstructed views to and from the main lodge. As noted in the EA (actions common), the original 1935 ski lodge building will be retained. Actions taken will halt continued deterioration at the lodge, address structural strengthening, and establish basic protective measures where repair or upgrade work is conducted. Features that contribute to the historic character of the site and existing spatial relationships will be maintained and protected.

- **Accessibility:** Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-compliant slopes and ramps will be installed between the main lodge and adjacent buildings. As noted in the EA (actions common), accessibility will be improved by the addition of an elevator, ramps, floor leveling for improved path of travel, new stairs, new accessible restrooms on each floor of the lodge, and accessible curb cuts and steps at the ski lodge entrance.
- **Visitor Circulation:** Key improvements to visitor circulation include an entry plaza with prominent ticket/information windows and public restrooms, a new walkway leading from the lodge to the Nordic Center, new exterior passages to provide continuous slope-side linkage from the lodge to the south deck and the ski slopes, and new orientation and wayfinding mechanisms throughout the lodge.
- **Visitor Services and Operations:** The west building will be remodeled and reconfigured, and will house ticketing, retail, visitor programs, offices, prepackaged food service, an employee break area, and a bunk room for overnight employees. Improvements to food and beverage points of service, extended indoor dining, and new restrooms will be located on the first floor of the main lodge. The second floor dining will be open to overlook the lounge area on the first floor. As noted in the EA (actions common), all current program functions at the ski lodge will be maintained (e.g., ski school, food service, Youth Conservation Corps summer use), and NPS interpretive functions will be consolidated in the west building.

All approved project activities will be compliant with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the *Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park*. Historic materials will be retained or replaced in kind, but existing non-historic materials may be altered. The approved project also includes the following “common” elements:

- **Structural Integrity:** Major repairs and replacement of systems at the main lodge and west building will include exterior decking, roofing, steel framing, foundation work, and architectural window walls.
- **Fire /Life Safety, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems:** Fire/life safety, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems will be upgraded or replaced as necessary and made more energy efficient to meet code requirements and to support NPS sustainability goals by improving energy and water use efficiencies.
- **Site Drainage:** New drainage systems will be installed along the south edge and east edge of the lodge complex with new outfalls to Grouse Creek and Monroe Meadow. Minor regrading along the east, south, and west perimeter of the complex will direct surface run-off away from the buildings and toward Grouse Creek.
- **Temporary Buildings:** The temporary buildings housing Nordic and Alpine rental facilities will be removed and replaced with permanent structures of a similar size and location as the temporary buildings. The new permanent buildings will be compatible with the historic character of the site.

The approved project will be implemented as funding becomes available. First phases of work will consist of work to the main lodge, west building, exterior decks, and site work in the immediate building vicinity. Initial work will include required code upgrades for life-safety, fire protection, accessibility, and building infrastructure (civil, structural mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems). Later phases will include removal of the Winter Club room and breezeway connection, modifications and additions to the west building and main lodge, replacement of the temporary buildings, and engineering and related site improvements.

## Other Alternatives Considered or Analyzed

### Alternative 1: The No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, emergency repairs and routine maintenance would continue to take place as needed, but no comprehensive, long-term rehabilitation, restoration, or renovation would occur at the ski lodge. Specifically, no action would result in the following conditions:

- **Historic Integrity:** The character of the original ski lodge structure would continue to be masked by later additions. Underlying causes of structural damage to the ski lodge due to water intrusion, exposure to the elements, and aging infrastructure would not be addressed. Without stabilization measures, the structure would likely further lose historic integrity.
- **Structural Integrity:** The building's structural integrity would remain threatened by damaged roofing, poorly functioning interior and exterior drainage systems, and inadequate foundations and structural support. These conditions have caused and would continue to cause damage, an ongoing and repeated need for emergency repairs to protect life and safety, and long-term degradation of the building.
- **Accessibility:** Accessibility at the ski lodge would remain not fully compliant with current ADA codes.
- **Life Safety:** The ski lodge would not be fully compliant with current fire/life safety codes. In particular, emergency egress, separation, signage, and fire detection systems are insufficient, and the sprinkler system is in need of repair or replacement to adequately protect the facility.
- **Electrical Systems:** The existing power distribution and electrical equipment would remain, although most of the devices have reached or exceeded their life expectancy, and many do not meet current safety standards.
- **Mechanical and Plumbing Systems:** Aging steam generation and steam distribution systems would remain at the lodge, although they are due for replacement. Aging wastewater lines beneath the main building and west building would remain, although analysis has shown that groundwater may infiltrate the sewer lines during seasonal high groundwater levels. Ventilation systems at the dining area and locker room would remain inadequate.
- **Site Drainage:** An inadequate drainage system along the east and south sides of the ski lodge would continue to allow surface water to pond along the building foundations and to pond along the south side of the lodge. During periods of high groundwater levels, groundwater would continue to seep into the ground floor areas of the main building.
- **Temporary Buildings:** The Alpine (including downhill ski and snowboard) and Nordic (including cross-country ski, snowshoe, and inner tube) rental facilities would continue to be provided in temporary buildings detached from the main lodge. Both facilities lack restrooms and sufficient space for rental equipment, and the Nordic facility has no fire sprinkler system. As they were not constructed to be permanent, these temporary buildings would eventually require replacement.
- **Visitor Circulation:** Orientation and wayfinding between various visitor services would remain confusing and circulation would remain crowded and inconvenient at peak times.
- **Visitor Services:** Dining, seating, and restroom facilities would remain insufficient during peak times and at times of unfavorable weather. The bus drop-off area, the pedestrian entry, and the loading area for deliveries would all continue to be located in the same small area. Rental equipment would remain insufficient to meet demand on busy days due to a lack of storage space.

- Operations: Food, waste, and recycling storage facilities would remain insufficient and kitchen layout would remain inefficient. NPS interpretive functions would remain co-housed with NPS visitor protection in the nearby small A-frame building. Increased frequency of deliveries from Yosemite Valley may still be required due to a lack of cold storage. There would continue to be no employee breakroom.

## **Alternative 2: Essential Repairs and Upgrades**

Alternative 2 proposes a rehabilitation of the lodge within the current building envelope, involving minimal action to fulfill the basic project needs for repair and code upgrades. In addition to implementing the work described under Actions Common to All Action Alternatives above, Alternative 2 proposes the following engineering and related site improvements:

- An accessible ramp would be added to the breezeway.
- All exterior decks would be replaced in kind, and south deck stair and ramp connections would be replaced.

## **Alternative 4: Emphasize Historic Character**

Alternative 4 proposes to address project requirements while restoring the original 1935 ski lodge building to prominence and providing the optimal level of visitor service within the overall confines of the project site. The existing building footprint would be maintained with a small expansion of the footprint at the Alpine rental facility.

In addition to implementing the Actions Common to All Action Alternatives listed above, Alternative 4 would remove adjoining additions that do not contribute to the historic character of the site, reestablish the main lodge roof lines and restore façades, and relocate and reconfigure program uses to best accommodate visitor and functional needs. This includes:

- **Historic Integrity:** The main lodge would be freed from adjoining construction and all façades would be restored to close to their original appearance during the period of significance of the historic site. The fireplace and lounge character would be restored at the main lodge. Important spatial relationships and site view corridors would be enhanced by removing all building construction obstructing views to and from the main lodge. New construction would be designed in a compatible yet distinct architectural style that would be secondary to the main lodge.
- **Accessibility:** ADA-compliant slopes and ramps would be installed between the main lodge and adjacent buildings.
- **Visitor Circulation:** Visitor program areas would be grouped into zones that enable clear wayfinding through the site. Entrances and exits would define a controlled and logical circulation path. An entry plaza would provide entrances to the main lodge, ticket/information windows, and the main plaza, or to the Alpine rental building and Nordic Center. The main plaza would connect to other visitor services and south facing decks and serve to orient visitors and organize public circulation at the ski lodge. Orientation and wayfinding mechanisms would be incorporated into the final design solution.
- **Visitor Services and Operations:** Program areas would be reconfigured to provide the most efficient and effective arrangement for their specific role. A new west building would house administrative offices and visitor services, including interior dining, kitchen, retail, and access to restrooms and locker rooms. Rehabilitated and newly constructed areas would present a revitalized interior design appropriate to the historic setting.

## **Actions Considered but Dismissed**

The National Park Service considered a range of actions when developing possible alternatives for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation. The following actions were analyzed, considered and dismissed because they did not fully satisfy the objectives of this planning effort. These actions were dismissed for one of the following reasons:

- The action would not satisfy the project's purpose and need.
- Less environmentally damaging options were available.
- The action would cause unacceptable environmental, cultural, or social impacts.
- The action would present unacceptable engineering risks or constraints with an associated increase in costs.
- The action would conflict with the guidance and direction provided in the *General Management Plan*.

### **"Pedestrian Square" and "Town Square" Design**

This action included removing part of the parking loop at the north side of the lodge, using that space for new construction and creating an internal plaza area. This would make circulation flow more difficult and put more stress on other parking and circulation features in the area. An internal plaza surrounded by buildings would be problematic for several reasons. A reduction in parking spaces below 600 would not be compliant with the park's 1980 *General Management Plan*. Snow removal would be extremely difficult in this central area. Access to the original lodge building for fire suppression purposes would be compromised under this layout. This type of plaza would not be consistent with the historic character of Badger Pass, and would remove the sense of arrival by not having the lodge be the first view. It would also eliminate a contributing transportation feature of the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site within the Glacier Point Road Historic District.

### **Narrowing the road in front of the lodge to create a plaza area**

Making the road in front of the lodge so narrow that it would not accommodate two buses, car drop-off, and handicapped parking spaces, would not be acceptable. Fire access would be insufficient with bus drop-off ongoing, circulation would be worse, and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts would not be resolved.

### **Combining the ski rental functions**

This action would combine the ski rental shops into one rental building on the first floor of a west wing/structure. Nordic ski rental and downhill ski rental better serve the visitors in separate locations. The Nordic rental shop is better sited on the northeast part of the complex since this is the closest access to cross-country ski trails. Downhill ski rental, on the other hand, is better sited between the roadway and the downhill slopes, so there can be traffic flow in one door and out the other. Keeping them separate would also make the Nordic rental area quieter and reduce crowding in the Alpine rental area, providing better service to visitors in both cases.

### **Adding bunk rooms to the second floor of Nordic building**

Adding a second floor to the Nordic building to accommodate employee bunk rooms would enlarge the building footprint, altering the character of this portion of the project site. The resulting increase in the structure's vertical profile and massing would detract from the lodge-centered theme of the rehabilitation

plan. The second story would also push the building footprint to the south and/or to the east, which would alter the view of the ski lodge from the slopes and potentially encroach into an adjoining wetland.

## Environmentally Preferable Alternative

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NPS NEPA guidelines require that “the alternative or alternatives which were considered to be environmentally preferable” be identified (CEQ Regulations, Section 1505.2).

Environmentally preferable is defined as “the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in NEPA’s Section 101. Ordinarily, this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative that best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources” (CEQ 1981).

Section 101 of NEPA states that:

*It is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to . . . (1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations; (2) assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings; (3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences; (4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice; (5) achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities; and (6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.*

Alternative 3, the Selected Action, has the least amount of impacts to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources.

Under Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, critical code upgrades and repairs for life-safety, fire protection, accessibility and building infrastructure (including civil, structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems) would be completed. Temporary structures would be replaced with permanent buildings with an architectural character that is compatible with the historic site. Alternative 1 (No Action) would not provide for these critical project requirements, nor would it protect or enhance the character of the historic site, improve operations, or improve visitor experience. Implementation of Alternative 2 would include all critical repairs and upgrades, but offers the least amount of protection of historic character and improvements for universal design, the flow and functionality of interior spaces, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, and concessioner and NPS operations.

Alternatives 3 and 4 would both include substantial improvements for all key elements listed above. However, while Alternative 4 would restore many features of the main lodge that contribute to the historic character of the site, it is focused on optimizing visitor experience and slightly enlarges the facility footprint, potentially affecting cultural and natural resources. Alternative 3 addresses all of the critical code and structural upgrades, protects the historic character of the site, and provides many improvements to visitor experience and operations while remaining within the existing footprint. Therefore, Alternative 3 best balances the protection of environmental resources with essential project requirements.

## Why the Selected Action Will Not Have a Significant Effect on the Human Environment

The National Park Service has analyzed the significance criteria provided in CEQ regulations (Section 1508.27) to determine if the Selected Action would have a previously undisclosed significant adverse effect on the human environment. The National Park Service has determined that none of the significance criteria are triggered under the Selected Action. Specifically, no highly uncertain or controversial impacts, unique or unknown risks, elements of precedence, or cumulatively significant effects have been identified; implementation of the Selected Action will not result in the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources; and, implementation of the Selected Action will not violate any federal, state, or local laws.

The Selected Action results in the repair, stabilization, and strengthening of structural and exterior elements to halt ongoing degradation of the building's structural integrity while contributing to the full rehabilitation of the ski lodge and its associated support facilities. In addition, the Selected Action addresses deficiencies in fire/life safety, seismic, health, accessibility, and building codes and makes several key improvements to visitor experience, operations, and energy efficiency. Lastly, the Selected Action protects the historic character of the ski area with the restoration and repair of ski lodge elements, such as the historic central lounge, as well as replacement of non-historic temporary structures with permanent buildings that are compatible with the historic character of the ski area.

The specific impacts of the Selected Action on natural, cultural, and socio-cultural resources are identified below.

### **Soils**

Construction activities will disturb approximately 0.6 acres of surface and near-surface soils, resulting in localized short-term, minor, adverse impacts on soils over four summers, as subsequent phases of construction are implemented.

In conjunction with construction activities, soil contamination from localized, low-mobility diesel-range petroleum hydrocarbons found in soils near the site of a former fuel storage tank may be remediated. All remediation activities occurring in conjunction with this rehabilitation will be undertaken with oversight from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. This will result in a long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impact on soil resources.

Structural upgrades will include measures to mitigate the presence of soils subject to liquefaction found under the lodge complex. These structural treatments will have a long-term, minor, adverse impact on soils. No additional long-term impacts on soils are anticipated once construction and subsequent restoration activities have been completed.

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

The ski lodge will continue to adversely impact local hydrology through the diversion of Grouse Creek, potential deflection of the water table, and some restriction of surface flow. However, proposed site drainage improvements will have a localized, minor to moderate, beneficial effect on local hydrology by redirecting surface flow away from structures and toward adjacent wetlands and Grouse Creek. Final

design of site drainage improvements will be conducted in coordination with the park's Resources Management and Science Division.

Replacement of the existing well pump timer will ensure that overtopping on the existing storage tank is eliminated or reduced from current levels, resulting in a long-term, negligible to minor, beneficial impact on local groundwater resources.

During construction activities, mitigation measures (see Mitigation, below) will be implemented to ensure that dewatering activities do not increase sediment loading in Grouse Creek, or otherwise adversely impact adjacent meadow wetlands. With mitigation, construction-related impacts will be localized, short-term, adverse, and negligible to minor on local hydrology and water quality.

## **Wetlands**

Construction activities will have the potential to affect approximately 0.38 acres of palustrine emergent wetlands to the east, south, and west of the ski lodge and approximately 0.07 acres of palustrine scrub shrub wetland to the east of the ski lodge. Construction activities at the Nordic Center will also have the potential to affect a small palustrine emergent wetland on the vegetation island north of the lodge. Adherence to mitigation measures (see Mitigation, below) and avoidance of wetlands where possible will reduce construction related effects of the Selected Action on wetlands to localized, short-term, minor, adverse impacts.

Implementation of the Selected Action will not further disrupt the long-term continuity or integrity of native plant communities. Under all action alternatives, proposed site drainage improvements will have the long-term, minor, beneficial effect of redirecting water away from buildings and toward wetland areas and Grouse Creek.

## **Wetland Statement of Findings**

National Park Service *Director's Order 12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making* (DO-12) directs parks to include a wetland or floodplain statement of findings with the public review copy of an environmental assessment if the preferred alternative would be located in or adversely affect a floodplain or wetland. DO-12 further directs that a wetland or floodplain statement of findings would accompany a Finding of No Significant Impact if the Selected Action would result in an adverse impact to wetlands or floodplains.

Because the ski lodge is located in a known wetland area, the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* included a Wetland Statement of Findings as Appendix C. In July 2010, the NPS Water Resources Division Wetlands Program reviewed the draft Wetland Statement of Findings included with the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* and concluded that a final Wetland Statement of Findings was not necessary for the proposed action. This determination was in view of the fact that the selected action would only affect wetland areas immediately adjacent to the structure. This area had been disturbed previously during construction of the facility prior to 1980 and therefore is an exempted action. Thus, the Draft Statement of Findings for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation is rescinded.

## **Vegetation**

Impacts to wetland vegetation are addressed under the Wetlands section above. Adherence to mitigation measures (see Mitigation, below) and avoidance of vegetation where possible will reduce potential construction-related impacts on upland vegetation to localized, short-term, negligible to minor, adverse impacts. In the long-term, with adherence to mitigation measures, implementation of the Selected Action will not further disrupt the continuity or integrity of native plant communities.

## **Wildlife**

Construction activities will have the potential to disrupt seasonal wildlife use of the area. However, with the implementation of mitigation measures (see Mitigation Measures, below), especially during breeding seasons, any noise and visual disturbance to wildlife will be minimized or avoided. This will result in localized, short-term, negligible to minor, adverse impacts on wildlife.

## **Special Status Species**

Construction will occur in suitable habitat for a number of special status species, but implementation of mitigation measures (see Mitigation Measures, below) with a focus upon avoidance, limiting construction activities during breeding seasons, and limiting areas of impacts will reduce potential adverse effects. Overall, the Selected Action will result in localized, short-term, negligible to minor, adverse impacts on special status species. Therefore, the Selected Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect special status species.

## **Air Quality**

Construction activities will result in a short-term, negligible, adverse impact on local air quality during four summer seasons due to construction-related dust and equipment and vehicle emissions. In the long-term, diesel-fired boilers and an emergency generator will be replaced with more efficient models, mechanical ventilation will be provided throughout the complex, and low-emission finish materials will be used where possible. A wood-burning or propane fireplace will be added in the ski lodge; emissions would be dependent upon the type of fuel used, the size of the hearth, weather, and operational policy. Overall, these actions will result in a long-term, negligible to minor, beneficial impact on indoor, local and regional air quality.

## **Soundscapes**

Construction activities will result in elevated levels of noise in the vicinity of Badger Pass Ski Area during four summer seasons. This will potentially affect wildlife, onsite staff, and nearby recreational users, although the number of recreational users is generally lower in the summer season than in winter. Overall, this will result in a local, short-term, minor, adverse impact on soundscapes. No long-term impacts on soundscapes are expected.

## **Visitor Experience and Recreation**

Use of the facility by ski area visitors would be uninterrupted by construction activities, as construction would occur during the summer season. Upon implementation, there will be improved accessibility and visitor safety at the ski lodge, substantial improvements to circulation, a reduction in crowding at key locations, restoration of the historic lounge character, more efficient rental facilities, and improvements to

food and dining services. Overall, this will result in a local, long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impact on the visitor experience at Badger Pass Ski Area.

## **Visitor Services**

In addition to essential repairs and code upgrades, there will be key improvements to the location and efficiency of visitor services at the ski lodge, improved storage space areas, new employee break areas and expanded facilities for overnight grooming staff, and upgrades to kitchen work areas and related facilities. Elements to improve overall visitor safety will also be implemented. Overall, this will result in a local, long-term, minor, beneficial impact on visitor services.

## **Facility Operations and Infrastructure**

There will be long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts on concessioner operations due to a substantial reduction in annual maintenance requirements. Modifications to the facility to enhance functionality of visitor services and administrative areas will result in a long-term, moderate, beneficial impact on concessioner operations. There will be a long-term, minor, beneficial impact on NPS operations from the proposed relocation of interpretive functions to the west building; however, there would also be short-term and long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts on NPS operations due to increased cost associated with construction oversight and maintenance of new utility and site drainage infrastructure.

## **Transportation**

There will be local, short-term, minor, adverse impacts on transportation, due to construction-related traffic congestion and use of parking lots as staging areas during four summer seasons. However, once construction is complete, traffic flow in front of the ski lodge, pedestrian safety and ADA-compliant parking will be improved, resulting in local, long-term, minor, beneficial impacts on transportation.

## **Energy Consumption and Global Climate Change**

There will be a short-term increase in gasoline and diesel fuel consumption during four seasons of construction, however, upgrades to mechanical and ventilation systems and installation of a new boiler system would increase energy efficiency and reduce long-term diesel requirements. There will be a small, long-term increase in power demand due to the installation of a hydronic snow melt system. The installation of a fireplace is also expected to increase propane or wood energy use. However, compared with existing energy requirements at the lodge, the Selected Action will reduce energy consumption, help the National Park Service reach its overall energy conservation objectives, and reduce overall contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. This will result in a local, long-term, negligible, beneficial impact on energy consumption.

## **American Indian Traditional Cultural Practices**

Ground disturbance and limited access associated with construction activities may impact some traditional cultural resources over a period of four summers. This would result in a short-term, local, minor, adverse impact on traditional cultural practices.

## **Historic Sites, Buildings, and Cultural Landscapes**

The Selected Action allows for rehabilitation that is compliant with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (U.S. Department of the Interior 1995) and the protection of contributing features within the historic site. Beyond the proposed abatement of structural, weather envelope, life-safety, and mechanical systems issues, as well as improved ADA accessibility, the Selected Action further considers the need to distinguish the ski lodge as a significant and primary contributing feature of the historic site. The proposed activities will not alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of the historic site that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Therefore, the Selected Action will have no adverse effect.

## **Cumulative Impacts**

CEQ regulations (Section 1508.7) describe a cumulative impact as follows:

*...a "Cumulative impact" is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.*

The analysis of cumulative impacts in the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* did not identify any significant cumulative impacts. Past actions, including the construction of and subsequent modifications to the original ski lodge and associated facilities, have had long-term adverse impacts on natural resources in the area. Recently completed, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions may reverse adverse impacts on these resources to some degree, but in most cases a cumulative adverse impact remains. For instance, recently completed drainage improvements in the Badger Pass Ski Area parking lot have successfully redirected surface water away from the lodge and toward natural drainages, but the ski lodge and its associated infrastructure still adversely impact the local hydrologic regime.

Therefore, the impacts of the Selected Action, when considered in conjunction with past, present, and foreseeable future actions, would ultimately result in a negligible to minor adverse cumulative impact for the natural resources analyzed in the environmental assessment. In the case of special status species, if the Selected Action is implemented at the same time as other proposed projects in the area, there is the potential for short-term and long-term, minor to moderate, adverse impacts on special status wildlife. Most socio-cultural resources, such as visitor experience and recreation, would see a cumulative beneficial effect due to the proposed improvements related to public safety, energy efficiency, operations, and visitor services. There would be no adverse effect on historic properties under the Selected Action.

## Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures presented in Table 1 have been incorporated into the Selected Action to avoid or reduce adverse impacts to park resources.

| <b>Table 1. Mitigation Measures</b>  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Mitigation Measure</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>                               | <b>Critical Milestones</b>                      |
| <b>CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION MEASURES</b>  |   |   |
| Prior to entry into the park, steam-clean heavy equipment to prevent importation of non-native plant species, tighten hydraulic fittings, ensure hydraulic hoses are in good condition and replace if damaged, and repair all petroleum leaks.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Inspect the project to ensure that impacts stay within the parameters of the project area and do not escalate beyond the scope of the environmental assessment, as well as to ensure that the project conforms with all applicable permits or project conditions. Store all construction equipment within the delineated work limits. Confine work areas within creek channels to the smallest area necessary. | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Implement compliance monitoring to ensure that the project remains within the parameters of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) compliance documents.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Provide a project orientation for all construction workers to increase their understanding and sensitivity to the challenges of the special environment in which they will be working.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| If deemed necessary, demolition/construction work on weekends or federal government holidays may be authorized, with prior written approval of the Superintendent.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Remove all tools, equipment, barricades, signs, surplus materials, and rubbish from the project work limits upon project completion. Repair any asphalt surfaces that are damaged due to work on the project to original condition. Remove all debris from the project site, including all visible concrete, timber, and metal pieces.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Upon completion of project activities           |
| The Construction Contractor shall prepare a Health and Safety Plan to address all aspects of Contractor health and safety issues compliant with OSHA standards and other relevant regulations. The Plan shall be submitted for park review and approval prior to construction.   | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall be prepared by the Construction Contractor and implemented for construction activities to control surface run-off, reduce erosion, and prevent sedimentation from entering water bodies during construction. The SWPPP shall be submitted for park review and approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board prior to construction.                | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| A construction work schedule shall be prepared by the Construction Contractor for the project that minimizes effects on wildlife in adjacent habitats and peaks in visitation. The work schedule shall be submitted for park review and approval prior to construction.  | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Supervisory construction personnel shall attend an Environmental Protection briefing provided by the park prior to working on site. This briefing is designed to familiarize workers with statutory and contractual environmental requirements and the recognition of and protection measures for archeological sites, sensitive habitats, water resources, and wildlife habitats.                             | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| The park shall develop a Communications Strategy Plan to alert necessary park and Concessioner employees, residents and visitors to pertinent elements of the construction work schedule.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Provide proper and timely maintenance for vehicles and equipment used during construction to reduce the potential for mechanical breakdowns.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| <b>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>   |   |   |
| Where working areas are adjacent to or encroach on live streams, barriers shall be constructed that are adequate to prevent the discharge of turbid water in excess of specified limits.   | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |

| <b>Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)</b>  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Mitigation Measure</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>                               | <b>Critical Milestones</b>                                 |
| <b>HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY (CONTINUED)</b>   |   |  |
| All disturbed soil and fill slopes shall be stabilized in an appropriate manner.   | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Store equipment and materials away from all waterways.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Construction limits in the vicinity of wetlands should be clearly delineated with construction fencing   | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with construction activities       |
| Wastewater contaminated with silt, grout, or other by-products from construction activities shall be contained in a holding or settling tank to prevent contaminated material from entering watercourses or wetlands.  | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Waters shall be free of changes in turbidity that cause a nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses. Increases in turbidity attributable to controllable water quality factors shall not exceed the following limits, as described in <i>The Water Quality Control Plan</i> for the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB 1998). In determining compliance with the limits below, appropriate averaging periods may be applied, provided that beneficial uses will be fully protected<br><br>Where natural turbidity is between 0 and 5 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTUs), increases shall not exceed 1 NTU.<br><br>Where natural turbidity is between 5 and 50 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 20%.<br><br>Where natural turbidity is between 50 and 100 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 10 NTUs.<br><br>Where natural turbidity is greater than 100 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 10%. | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Remove hazardous waste materials generated during implementation of the project from the project site immediately.   | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Dispose of volatile wastes and oils in approved containers for removal from the project site to avoid contamination of soils, drainages, and watercourses. Keep absorbent pads, booms, and other materials onsite during projects that use heavy equipment to contain oil, hydraulic fluid, solvents, and hazardous materials spills.  | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Incorporate trench plugs into new and abandoned utility corridors through wetland areas where required to prevent formation or continuation of groundwater conduits.   | Yosemite National Park; Project Manager; Contractor | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Surface drainage facilities shall be designed to transport runoff in a non-erosive manner.   | Yosemite National Park; Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Use silt fencing at drainages to prevent construction materials from escaping work areas.  | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| Material from construction work will be collected by the contractor and covered and shall not be deposited where it could be eroded and carried to the stream by surface runoff or high stream flows.  | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |
| <b>VEGETATION (INCLUDING SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS)</b>  |   |  |
| Contractor will develop a Revegetation Plan in conjunction with the park's Resources Management and Science Division, to be approved prior to construction activities.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to project activities                                |
| Ensure that all earth moving equipment and hand tools enter the park free of mud or seed-bearing material to prevent the introduction of non-native plants. The NPS will inspect all equipment prior to use on the project.<br><br>Map and treat noxious weeds prior to construction. Certify all seeds and straw material as weed-free. Ensure that imported top-soil is weed-free. The NPS will approve sources of imported fill material that will be used within the top 12 inches of the finished grade. Monitor and treat invasive plants for three years post-construction.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to, concurrent with and following project activities |

**Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)**

| Mitigation Measure  | Responsibility   | Critical Milestones                              |
|---|--|--|
| <b>VEGETATION (INCLUDING SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS)(CONTINUED)</b>  |  |  |
| Install temporary fencing (black silt fencing or orange construction fencing) around the entire project area to protect natural surroundings (including sensitive plants, trees, and root zones) from damage. Avoid fastening ropes, cables, or fences to trees.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |
| Use native seed mix or seed-free mulch to minimize surface erosion and the introduction of noxious weeds.   | Contractor   | Concurrent with project activities               |
| A Park Botanist will oversee placement of construction fencing to avoid impacts to sensitive plants and wetlands. Adverse impacts to the Yosemite bog orchid, a special status plant species, are not acceptable. If additional special-status plant species are identified within the construction disturbance zone, the project manager will work with the Park Botanist to avoid impacts.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |
| Demarcate wetlands and apply protection measures during construction. Wetlands have been delineated and will be clearly marked prior to work. Perform activities in a cautious manner to prevent damage caused by equipment, erosion, siltation, etc.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |
| <b>WILDLIFE (INCLUDING SPECIAL STATUS WILDLIFE)</b>   |  |  |
| <p>General: Provide information to the contractor regarding protection of special status species wildlife at the project briefings and provide contractor specifications and Best Management Practices to avoid activities that are destructive to wildlife and habitats.</p> <p>Project Manager will consult with the park biologist to schedule construction activities with seasonal consideration of wildlife lifecycles to minimize impacts during sensitive periods.</p> <p>Construction personnel will adhere to park regulations concerning food storage and refuse management. All food will be properly stored during the work day and will be removed from the site at the end of each work day.</p>   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor                              | Concurrent with and following project activities |
| <p>For owls, pacific fisher:</p> <p>Limit the effects of light and noise on adjacent habitat. No outdoor construction activities are to occur between dusk and dawn, to eliminate the need for outdoor construction lighting, and to avoid disruption of mating, nesting, or foraging owls.</p>   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |
| <p>For birds:</p> <p>Beginning in early spring, a wildlife biologist will conduct bird surveys and review current owl reports to determine whether special status species are present and may be mating, nesting, or foraging in the project vicinity.</p> <p>If trees, including willows, are to be trimmed or removed, the biologist will first survey (within 4 days prior to any such work) to determine whether there are any nests present, and advise as to whether the activity must be delayed to ensure that sensitive species such as nesting migratory birds are protected and not disrupted.</p> <p>If nesting birds are observed (during bird surveys, or discovered by workers) that are not special-status species, the project manager will notify the park wildlife biologist who will recommend steps to avoid undesirable impacts to the nest or young.</p> | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager working with the park wildlife biologist | Prior to construction                            |
| <p>For bats:</p> <p>A park biologist will conduct bat surveys in the vicinity of the Lodge in early summer (May-July for maternity colonies) and in fall (August - November) to locate potentially roosting/hibernating bats), and will provide specific directions for avoiding their disturbance if they are found. If bats are detected, the specific area will be protected and work on that particular area will be delayed until the bats vacate or can be excluded from the area in a manner that does not adversely affect their survival or that of their young.</p> <p>If surveys conducted immediately prior to construction do not reveal any bat species present within the project area, then the action will begin within three days to prevent the destruction of any bats that could move into the area after the survey.</p>                                  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager, Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |

**Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)**

| Mitigation Measure   | Responsibility                                      | Critical Milestones  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>WILDLIFE (INCLUDING SPECIAL STATUS WILDLIFE)(CONTINUED)</b>   |   |  |
| <p>For mountain beaver, Yosemite toads, and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs:<br/>The contractor will adhere to 401/404 permits to prevent increased turbidity in the creek from occurring during construction activities.<br/>Water output design will dissipate water slowly, and avoid concentrated outflows to the meadow or Grouse Creek.<br/>Continuous water flows and water quality will be maintained for Grouse Creek. Only minimal and temporary holding or diversion of water for immediate and specific construction work will be allowed. If water is retained during construction, the containment will include wildlife escape ramps and the containment will be inspected in the morning before beginning work and at the end of the day to ensure that no animals have become trapped.<br/>Suitable habitat for Yosemite toads and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs exists in the meadow and stream surrounding the lodge. A biologist will survey for these species in spring (May-June), around the lodge and below the lodge in Grouse Creek, prior to construction. If adults, tadpoles, or eggs are discovered, the biologist will inform the Project Manager how best to avoid harm during construction activities, and may recommend delaying/rescheduling work in that particular section or minimizing the diversion of water from the creek.</p> | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| <b>FEDERAL AND STATE PERMIT REQUIREMENTS</b>   |   |  |
| The NPS will apply for and comply with all federal and state permits required for construction-related activities.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to project activities                                |
| <b>HISTORIC PROPERTIES</b>   |   |  |
| The Park will adhere to the <i>Park Programmatic Agreement Among the National Park Service at Yosemite, the California State Historical Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Planning, Design, Construction, Operations, and Maintenance, Yosemite National Park, California</i> (1999 PA) to mitigate adverse effects.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Mitigation measures include avoiding impacts and designing new development to be compatible with surrounding historic resources. Standard mitigation measures, as defined in the 1999 PA, include photo documentation, salvage, and reevaluation of National Register status (updating National Register Nomination form).   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Culturally associated tribes will be given notice prior to ground disturbing activities at the project site and may be present at the project site to monitor ground disturbance during construction.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager, Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities            |
| Continue to consult with the NPS American Indian Liaison for consultation with culturally associated American Indian tribes throughout the project to avoid or mitigate damage to American Indian traditional resources.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to, concurrent with and following project activities |
| Design all new construction within historic districts and landscapes or adjacent to historic sites to be compatible in terms of architectural elements, scale, massing, materials, and orientation.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to project activities                                |
| Undertake all treatments within historic landscapes in keeping with the Secretary of The Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Prior to project activities                                |
| <b>DUST ABATEMENT MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Cover and/or seal truck beds and stockpiles to minimize blowing dust or loss of debris.  | Contractor  | Concurrent to project activities                           |
| Limit truck and related construction equipment speeds in active construction areas to a maximum of 15 miles per hour and strictly adhering to park regulations and posted speed limits in other areas while inside park boundaries.  | Contractor  | Concurrent to project activities                           |
| Maintain adequate dust suppression equipment and using clean water to control excess airborne particulates at staging areas, active construction zones, and unpaved roads leading to/from active construction areas.   | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities                         |

| <b>Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)</b>   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Mitigation Measure</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b>                   | <b>Critical Milestones</b>                      |
| <b>EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION MEASURES</b>  |   |   |
| Develop an emergency notification plan that complies with park, federal, and state requirements and allows contractors to properly notify park, federal, and/or state personnel in the event of an emergency during construction activities. This plan will address notification requirements related to fire, personnel, and/or visitor injury, releases of spilled material, evacuation processes, etc. The emergency notification plan will be submitted to the park for review/approval prior to commencement of construction activities. | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager | Prior to project activities                     |
| Notify utilities prior to construction activities. Identify locations of existing utilities prior to removal activity to prevent damage to utilities. The Underground Services Alert and NPS maintenance staff will be informed 72 hours prior to any ground disturbance. Construction-related activities will not proceed until the process of locating existing utilities is completed (water, wastewater, electric, communications, and telephone lines). An emergency response plan will be required of the contractor.                   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| <b>EROSION CONTROL MEASURES</b>   |   |   |
| Use approved siltation and sediment control devices in construction areas to reduce erosion and surface scouring.   | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Use approved siltation and sediment control devices appropriate to the situation in grading areas to capture eroding soil before discharge to riparian channels.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Conserve and salvage topsoil for reuse. Materials will be reused to the maximum extent possible.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| <b>HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MEASURES</b>   |   |   |
| An Oil and Hazardous Materials Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan shall be prepared by the Construction Contractor for the project to address hazardous materials storage, spill prevention and response. The Plan shall be submitted for park review and approval prior to construction.   | Contractor                              | Prior to and concurrent with project activities |
| Store and use all hazardous materials in compliance with federal regulations. All applicable Materials Safety Data Sheets will be kept on site for inspection.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Hazardous or flammable chemicals shall be prohibited from storage in the staging area, except for those substances identified in the Oil and Hazardous Materials Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan. Hazardous waste materials shall be immediately removed from project site in approved containers.   | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Comply with all applicable regulations and policies during the removal and remediation of asbestos, lead paint, and polychlorinated biphenyls.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| <b>SOUNDSCAPES</b>  |   |   |
| Ensure that all construction equipment has functional exhaust/muffler systems.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Submit a construction work plan/schedule that minimizes construction-related noise in noise-sensitive areas to the park for review/approval prior to commencement of construction activities.   | Contractor                              | Prior to project activities                     |
| Use hydraulically or electrically powered construction equipment, when feasible.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Locate stationary noise sources as far from sensitive receptors as possible.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Limit the idling of motors except as necessary (e.g., concrete mixing trucks).  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| To the extent possible, perform all on-site noisy work above 76 A-weighted decibels (dBA) (such as the operation of heavy equipment) between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to minimize disruption to nearby park users.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| <b>SCENIC RESOURCES PROTECTION MEASURES</b>   |   |   |
| Fence construction staging areas and construction activity areas to visually screen construction activity and materials.  | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |
| Consolidate construction equipment and materials to the staging areas at the end of each work day to limit the visual intrusion of construction equipment during nonwork hours.   | Contractor                              | Concurrent with project activities              |

| <b>Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)</b>  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Mitigation Measure</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>                               | <b>Critical Milestones</b>                       |
| <b>SPILL PREVENTION/ RESPONSE MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Develop and implement a comprehensive spill prevention/response plan that complies with federal and state regulations and addresses all aspects of spill prevention, notification, emergency spill response strategies for spills occurring on land and water, reporting requirements, monitoring requirements, personnel responsibilities, response equipment type and location, and drills and training requirements. The spill prevention/response plan will be submitted to the park for review/approval prior to commencement of construction activities.   | Contractor  | Prior to project activities                      |
| <b>SPILL PREVENTION/ RESPONSE MEASURES (CONTINUED)</b>   |   |  |
| To minimize the possibility of hazardous materials seeping into soil or water, check equipment frequently to identify and repair any leaks. Standard measures include hazardous materials storage and handling procedures; spill containment, cleanup, and reporting procedures; and limitation of refueling and other hazardous activities to upland/nonsensitive sites. Provide an adequate hydrocarbon spill containment system (e.g., absorption materials, etc.) on site, in case of unexpected spills in the project area. Ensure equipment is equipped with a hazardous spill containment kit at all times. Ensure that personnel trained in the use of hazardous spill containment kits.   | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities               |
| <b>STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION MEASURES</b>  |   |  |
| Develop and implement a comprehensive stormwater pollution prevention plan for construction activities that complies with federal and state regulations and addresses all aspects of stormwater pollution prevention. The plan will be submitted to the park for approval prior to construction activities. The plan will include measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take measures to control erosion, sedimentation, and compaction, and thereby reduce water pollution and adverse water quality effects. Use silt fences, sedimentation basins, etc. in construction areas to reduce erosion, surface scouring, and discharge to water bodies.</li> <li>▪ To the extent possible, schedule the use of mechanical equipment during periods of low precipitation to reduce risk of accidental hydrocarbon leaks or spills. When mechanical equipment is necessary outside of low precipitation periods, use NPS– approved methods to protect soil and water from contaminants</li> <li>▪ Dispose of volatile wastes and oils in approved containers for removal from construction sites to avoid contamination of soils, and drainages. Inspect equipment for hydraulic and oil leaks prior to use on construction sites, and implement inspection schedules to prevent contamination of soil and water. Keep absorbent pads, booms, and other materials on site during projects that use heavy equipment to contain oil, hydraulic fluid, solvents, and hazardous material spills</li> </ul> | Contractor  | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |
| <b>TRAFFIC CONTROL AND VISITOR PROTECTION MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Provide protective fencing enclosures around construction areas, including utility trenches, to protect public health and safety.  | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities               |
| <b>TRANSPORTATION MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Install appropriate traffic signs.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Concurrent with and following project activities |
| <b>UTILITY MEASURES</b>  |   |  |
| Verify utility locations by contacting the Underground Services Alert prior to the start of construction.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to project activities                      |
| Promptly reconnect utility services that are interrupted because of construction activities and provide advance notification if utility service will be disrupted.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Concurrent with and following project activities |
| <b>VISITOR EXPERIENCE MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Limit construction activities to the off-season to allow for continued visitor access to the ski area during the winter.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Prior to and concurrent with project activities  |

| <b>Table 1. Mitigation Measures (Continued)</b>  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Mitigation Measure</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b>                               | <b>Critical Milestones</b>                       |
| <b>NIGHT SKY MEASURES</b>  |   |  |
| Direct and shield night lighting associated with construction equipment to minimize light scatter effects.   | Contractor  | Concurrent with project activities               |
| All new exterior lighting installed as part of this rehabilitation project will conform to the Yosemite National Park Outdoor Lighting Guidelines.   | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Concurrent with and following project activities |
| <b>WASTE MANAGEMENT MEASURES</b>   |   |  |
| Require construction personnel to adhere to park regulations concerning food storage and refuse management.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager; Contractor | Concurrent with project activities               |
| Properly secure trash during the workday and remove all trash from site at the end of each workday.  | Yosemite National Park, Project Manager             | Concurrent with and following project activities |
| Develop and implement a comprehensive waste management plan that complies with federal and state regulations and addresses all aspects related to the transportation, storage, and handling of construction-related hazardous and nonhazardous liquid and solid wastes and submit the plan to the park for review/approval prior to the commencement of construction activities. | Contractor  | Prior to project activities                      |

## Public Involvement and Coordination

### Public Scoping

Public scoping was initiated for the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* on January 14, 2009, and the National Park Service accepted scoping comments through February 13, 2009. Two public scoping meetings were held during the public scoping period, one each in Yosemite Valley and at Badger Pass. Written public scoping comments were received at public scoping meetings, by fax, email, U.S. mail, and online through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website. Comment boxes were also placed at the central area of the main ski lodge and at the tour activity desk of Yosemite Lodge.

The National Park Service received 44 individual letters from 40 individuals and 4 organizations during the public scoping period. The analysis of these letters identified almost 200 discrete comments, from which 78 general concern statements were generated. The following overarching issues were identified for consideration during the public scoping process and through input received from National Park Service staff and Yosemite National Park concessioner Delaware North Companies, Inc. staff:

- Maintain the rustic character of the ski lodge and features of the lodge that contribute to the significance of the historic site
- Improve the ski lodge to accommodate visitor use
- Protect natural and cultural resources

The public outreach called for in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was integrated with the NEPA scoping process described above, in accordance with the *1999 Programmatic Agreement Among the National Park Service at Yosemite, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Planning, Design, Construction, Operations, and Maintenance, Yosemite National Park, California*.

Internal scoping and consultation with other government agencies and American Indian tribes and groups informed the planning process. See ‘Consultation’, below, for more information.

## **Public Review and Comment Period**

The *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* was released for a 50-day public review period beginning May 19, 2010, and closing July 7, 2010. The document was available via the Internet for review and hardcopies were available as requested. Approximately 20 hardcopies were distributed. Hardcopies were available for public review at the Bassett Memorial library in Wawona, Mariposa County Public Library, El Portal Public Library, and Oakhurst Public Library in California, as well as at the Yosemite Archives and Research Library. The public review period was announced in a press release, a Yosemite electronic news release, the Yosemite National Park Daily Report, the Mariposa Gazette, and on the Yosemite National Park website. During the review period, the National Park Service held open houses on May 26, 2010 and June 30, 2010 to disseminate information and collect written comments on the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation and other projects. Comments could be submitted online through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website and by U.S. mail and fax.

The National Park Service received three letters from two individuals and one organization during the public review period. An analysis of these letters identified seven discrete comments, from which four general concern statements were generated. This report can be reviewed online at the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website, <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/BadgerPass>.

The following overarching issues were identified for consideration during the public review process:

- Preservation of the historic quality of the lodge, while improving visitor services meets the purpose and need of the project
- Expansion of services or capacity should not be considered
- Removal of the lodge should be considered

Comments received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service resulted in the addition and clarification of wildlife mitigations. Changes are reflected in Table 1-1 Mitigation Measures of this FONSI.

## **Coordination**

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

The National Park Service has initiated consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding jurisdictional waters and wetlands of the United States within the project area that the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation has the potential to impact. Required permits will be obtained prior to construction. Any new stipulations are incorporated by reference as conditions of this decision.

### **Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board**

The National Park Service will continue coordination with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to obtain a water quality certification for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation prior to construction. Any new stipulations are incorporated by reference as conditions of this decision.

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.) requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat. The National Park Service obtained a list of federally listed, proposed, and candidate species that may be present in the Badger Pass area in August 2008 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and an updated list was obtained in August 2009 and in January 2011. These lists were used as the basis for the special status species analysis in the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment*. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received a copy of the environmental assessment during the public review period. On August 16, 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service responded with comments regarding clarification of documentation of the presence of and mitigations for the Yosemite toad and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. Clarifications have been addressed through changes noted in the errata sheets. Specifically, clarifications were made to the Special Status Species affected environment to reflect updates to special status species listings and current knowledge of species occurrence, particularly that the California spotted owl has been confirmed in the project area and has nested nearby, the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog has been observed within the ski area boundary and in a meadow outside the boundary, and the Yosemite toad has been observed in meadows within dispersal distance but there are no records of occurrence within the ski area boundary. In addition, mitigations were further clarified for bats and birds to specify that surveys will be conducted to determine whether special status species are present prior to construction activities. Specific mitigations were added for the Yosemite toad, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and mountain beaver regarding surveying prior to construction and diversion and containment of water during construction, as detailed in Table 1-1 – Mitigation Measures of this FONSI.

Based on this revised analysis and with more detailed mitigations, the NPS concludes that the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect federally listed, threatened, or candidate species, or critical habitat. On February 14, 2011, the NPS transmitted a copy of the draft changes to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with request for concurrence. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service responded that the clarifications and changes adequately addressed their concerns. If, as the project progresses, new information reveals effects of the proposed action that could affect listed, proposed, or candidate species in a manner that causes an effect that was not previously considered; or a new species or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the proposed action; or if changes in status occur (e.g., Sierra Nevada Mountain yellow-legged frog receiving a listing of threatened or endangered); consultation will be re-initiated (50 CFR 402.14).

## California State Historic Preservation Officer/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

A historic structure report and a cultural landscape report for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and Badger Pass Ski Area were prepared in early 2009. Subsequently, a determination of eligibility was prepared for the Badger Pass Ski Area Historic Site in August 2009. A letter dated October 13, 2009, requesting comment and concurrence for the determination of eligibility was provided to the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The National Park Service received a letter of concurrence from SHPO dated December 29, 2009, with the determination of eligibility for the Badger Pass Ski Area Historic Site.

The National Park Service has determined that the Selected Action will have no adverse effect on the Badger Pass Ski Area Historic Site. Design and construction would be conducted in a manner that would avoid adverse effects to the historic site. The proposed activities would not alter, directly or indirectly, any

of the characteristics of the historic site that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association.

A Programmatic Agreement among the National Park Service at Yosemite, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding Planning, Design, Construction, Operations and Maintenance was developed in consultation with Native American tribes and groups having cultural association with Yosemite National Park and was executed in October 1999 governing parkwide projects. The Yosemite National Park National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Compliance Coordinator has reviewed the project per the 1999 programmatic agreement, and the National Park Service ensures that decisions regarding this undertaking have been made and will be carried out in conformance with the 1999 programmatic agreement stipulations. The proposed action does not meet the required consultation stipulation VIII(B) in the 1999 programmatic agreement, thus further consultation with SHPO is not required.

### **American Indian Consultation**

Yosemite National Park is consulting with American Indian tribes and groups having cultural association with the Badger Pass area, including the North Fork Mono Rancheria, the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Yokuts), and the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. (Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation), on proposed actions under the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation.

Consultation with the North Fork Mono Rancheria included meetings held on May 19, 2009 and January 6, 2010. Consultation with the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians (Yokuts) included a meeting held on September 28, 2009. Consultation with the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. (Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation) included meetings held on August 11, 2009 and November 3, 2009. A 95% draft of an ethnographic report developed for this rehabilitation was provided to tribes and groups for review and comment on November 13, 2009. Comments received from the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians by letter dated March 23, 2010, and from the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians through electronic communication with the park's Historic Preservation Officer were considered and incorporated into the final ethnographic report as appropriate. Comments did not result in changes to the environmental assessment. In addition, a copy of the administrative review draft of the environmental assessment was provided to the American Indian tribes and groups on November 19, 2009 for review and comment. No comments were received.

The American Indian tribes and groups received copies of the public review *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* for review and comment in May 2010. No comments were received. Consultation and partnering will continue with the American Indian tribes and groups throughout the planning and implementation phases of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation.

## **Non-Impairment of Park Resources**

Pursuant to the 1916 Organic Act, the National Park Service has a management responsibility "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and provide for the enjoyment of future generations." Therefore, the National Park Service cannot take an action that will "impair" park resources or values.

Based on the analysis provided in the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment*, the magnitude of adverse impacts and/or adverse effects is not sufficient to impair a resource or a value whose conservation is:

- Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of Yosemite National Park
- Key to the natural or cultural integrity of Yosemite National Park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park
- Identified as a goal in the park's *General Management Plan* or other relevant National Park Service planning documents

Consequently, the National Park Service concludes that implementation of the Selected Action will not violate the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916.

*[This space intentionally left blank]*

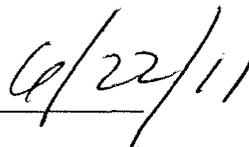
## Conclusion

Based on the information contained in the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* as summarized above; the minimal nature of comments received from affected agencies and the public; and the incorporation of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts; it is the determination of the National Park Service that the Selected Action is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. There will be no unacceptable impacts or impairment of park resources and values as a result of the Selected Action.

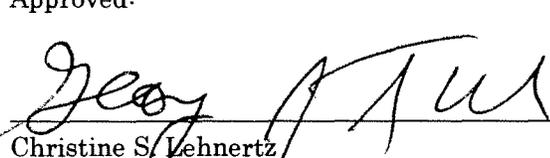
In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9), an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. The Selected Action as detailed in the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* may be implemented as soon as practicable.

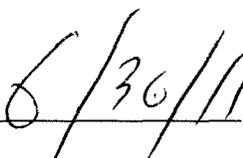
Recommended:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Don L. Neubacher  
Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

  
Date

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Christine S. Lehnertz  
Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service

  
Date

# Errata Sheet for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project Environmental Assessment

The following list includes clarifications or corrections to the environmental assessment (EA). None of the corrections listed below substantially affect the analyses or conclusions of the effect of the EA.

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Page 3-38, second paragraph: The word “plant” is to be inserted so that the sentence now reads, “In addition, Yosemite National Park recognizes state and local rare and sensitive species, and maintains its own list of “park sensitive plant species.”

Page 3-38, last paragraph has been clarified to state: “For the purpose of this EA, “special status species” are defined as those that are listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as endangered, threatened, proposed, or candidate, or by the State of California as endangered, threatened, candidate, species of special concern, fully protected, or California Bird Species of Special Concern. Species lists were obtained by park staff from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game’s California Natural Diversity Database in August 2008, August 2009, and January 2011. Based on this information, reported observations, scientific research, and professional judgment on the part of Yosemite’s staff, a list of those special status wildlife species that could occur within the boundaries of the park was prepared. This list was further refined to include 24 special status species that currently or historically occurred within the Badger Pass project area (Table 3-1).”

Page 3-39, Table 3-1, Special Status Animal Species with Potential to Occur in the Vicinity of Badger Pass Ski Area, has been updated per current species listings and park professional judgment:

*[This space intentionally left blank]*

| Species  | Federal   | State    |
|--|---|----------|
| <b>AMPHIBIANS</b>  |   |          |
| Yosemite toad ( <i>Anaxyrus canorus</i> )  | FC  | CSC      |
| Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog ( <i>Rana sierrae</i> )   | FC  | CCE      |
| <b>BIRDS</b>   |   |          |
| Northern goshawk ( <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> )   |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Golden eagle ( <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> )  |   | CFP      |
| Long-eared owl ( <i>Asio otus</i> )  |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Great gray owl ( <i>Strix nebulosa</i> )   |   | CE       |
| California spotted owl ( <i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i> )  |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Vaux's swift ( <i>Chaetura vauxi</i> )   |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Black swift ( <i>Cyseloides niger</i> )  |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Olive-sided flycatcher ( <i>Contopus cooperi</i> )   |   | CSC,BSSC |
| Yellow warbler ( <i>Dendroica petechia</i> )   |   | CSC,BSSC |
| <b>MAMMALS</b>   |   |          |
| Mount Lyell shrew ( <i>Sorex lyelli</i> )  |   | CSC      |
| Pallid bat ( <i>Antrozous pallidus</i> )   |   | CSC      |
| Townsend's big-eared bat ( <i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> )  |   | CSC      |
| Spotted bat ( <i>Euderma maculatum</i> )   |   | CSC      |
| Western red bat ( <i>Lasiurus blossevilli</i> )  |   | CSC      |
| Western mastiff bat ( <i>Eumops perotis</i> )  |   | CSC      |
| Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare ( <i>Lepus americanus tahoensis</i> )  |   | CSC      |
| Western white-tailed jackrabbit ( <i>Lepus townsendii townsendii</i> )   |   | CSC      |
| Sierra Nevada mountain beaver ( <i>Aplodontia rufa californica</i> )   |   | CSC      |
| Sierra Nevada red fox ( <i>Vulpes vulpes necator</i> )   |   | CT       |
| California wolverine ( <i>Gulo gulo</i> )*   |   | CT       |
| Pacific fisher ( <i>Martes pennanti</i> )  | FC  | CSC      |
| American badger ( <i>Taxidea taxus</i> )   |   | CSC      |
| <b>FC</b> –Federal Candidate   | <b>CFP</b> –California Fully Protected                  |          |
| <b>CE</b> –California Endangered   | <b>CSC</b> –California Species of Concern               |          |
| <b>CT</b> –California Threatened   | <b>BSSC</b> –California Bird Species of Special Concern |          |
| <b>CCE</b> –California Candidate Endangered  |   |          |
| *–May be extirpated from Yosemite National Park  |   |          |
| Source: Yosemite Special Status Animal Species list, Wildlife Management Branch, Resources Management & Science, Yosemite National Park, January 2009, updated April 2011. |   |          |

Page 3-40, first paragraph: “The Yosemite toad (*Anaxyrus canorus*), Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierra*) and Pacific fisher (*Martes pennanti*) are candidate species that have may occur within the Badger Pass Ski Lodge project vicinity” has been clarified to state: “The following three candidate species have potential to occur in the project vicinity: the Yosemite toad (*Anaxyrus canorus*), Sierra Nevada

yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*), and Pacific fisher (*Martes pennanti*). These species are discussed in further detail below.”

Page 3-41, first full paragraph, Yosemite bog-orchid: “Impacts on this plant should be avoided. Potential impacts that should be avoided include direct physical destruction of the plant and its immediate surroundings or changes in the natural processes that sustain the orchid, such as surface water and groundwater flows” has been deleted. “Preconstruction surveys should be made in other potential habitat in the appropriate season for detection. Survey protocols should follow the Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed and Candidate Plants (USFWS 1998). If the plant is found, the plant should either be avoided or consultation should be initiated with the National Park Service to determine if there are other mitigation alternatives” has been amended to state: “Preconstruction surveys of other potential habitat in the appropriate season for detection will follow the Guidelines for Conducting and Reporting Botanical Inventories for Federally Listed, Proposed and Candidate Plants (USFWS 1998). Specific mitigations to protect this and other wetland plants are provided in the Mitigations table in Appendix B. If new orchid plants are discovered near the work site, the area will be flagged off, and the Park Botanist will be notified immediately, to determine how best to protect the plants.”

Page 3-41, second full paragraph: “According to the park’s website” has been deleted. “A scoping process with the National Park Service has identified” has been amended to “The National Park Service has identified”. The phrase as having the highest potential of” has been amended to “as having potential for”.

Page 3-41, Bat Species: This paragraph is replaced with the following text to better detail current knowledge of bat occurrence: “Surveys conducted in 2010 at nearby Hennes Ridge found high species diversity with detections of 14 species of bats, including four of Yosemite’s five special status bat species (pallid bat, Townsend’s big-eared bat, spotted bat, and western mastiff bat) (Stock and Cline 2010). The majority of these bat species are somewhat specialized in their habitat requirements, preferring large trees, hollow trees, dense foliage, or snags for roosting or foraging habitat. No evidence exists of a substantial bat colony using the ski lodge or other adjacent structures. The ski lodge, with its open beam design, probably does not provide suitable roosting habitat for colonies (NPS 2009b). Mitigations to survey for bats prior to tree removal are provided in the Mitigations table in Appendix B.

Page 3-41, Great gray owl: This paragraph is clarified with the following text to better detail current knowledge of Great gray owl occurrence: “This species has been documented nesting in a nearby meadow just outside the project area in 1984 and in 2007 (Winter 1984, Keane et al. 2011) and probably forages in the meadow adjacent to the lodge (Winter 1984). A pair of Great gray owls were documented during 2008 surveys in another nearby meadow in the Grouse Creek area, also just outside the project area (Keane et al. 2011). Great gray owl individuals, pairs, and nests have been documented at several locations adjacent to the Glacier Point Road but no nest sites have been observed within the project area (Keane et al. 2011, Yosemite Wildlife Observation Database 2011). Light and noise from construction activities can interfere with nesting and foraging. Mitigations to avoid construction disturbances are provided in the Mitigations table in Appendix B.”

Page 3-41, California spotted owl: This paragraph is clarified with the following text to better detail current knowledge of California spotted owl occurrence: “California spotted owls have been confirmed in the project area and have nested nearby (Roberts 2008). Mitigations to avoid disturbance of nesting and foraging owls are included in the Mitigations table in Appendix B.”

Page 3-41, Sierra Nevada mountain beaver: The word “rodent” has been changed to “mammal.” The following text has been added after the first sentence: “During 1988-1989 surveys, Todd (1990) detected presence of mountain beavers at 18 sites within about 3 kilometers of the project area; the closest site being about 500 meters from the lodge.” The last sentence of the paragraph is replaced with: “Mitigations measures for protecting water quality and wetland and riparian soils from contamination and compaction are provided in the Mitigations table in Appendix B.”

Page 3-42, Pacific fisher: This paragraph is clarified with the following text to better detail current knowledge on the occurrence of the Pacific fisher: “Recent fisher surveys (2009-2011) have resulted in fisher detections within about 4 miles of the project area (NPS unpublished data, 2009-2011). No impacts to this Candidate species are anticipated from the project, however, as their nesting and foraging habitat lies in the densely wooded forest, beyond the meadow. No large diameter snags or logs are scheduled to be removed for this project. Mitigations to avoid sound and light disturbance for owls as listed in the Mitigations table in Appendix B will also serve to avoid disturbing any possible nighttime fisher activity in the surrounding forest.”

Page 3-42, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad: “Although documentation of the presence of these species is lacking, the wet meadow and elevation of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge matches the habitat requirements for these Federal Candidate Species” has been replaced with the following two paragraphs:

“**Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog** (*Rana sierrae*): This species is a Candidate species for listing under the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts. There have been two observations of adult frogs within the Badger Pass Ski Area boundary (Fellers, unpublished data, 2005-2007) and multiple observations of adults and tadpoles in a meadow just outside the ski area boundary. Mitigations to avoid adverse effects are provided in the Mitigations table in Appendix B.

**Yosemite toad** (*Anaxyrus canorus*): This species is a Candidate species for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act and a California Species of Special Concern. Although there is suitable wet meadow habitat within and adjacent to Badger Pass, there are no records of occurrences within the ski area boundary from annual surveys of USGS monitoring sites. Yosemite Toads have been observed in meadows within dispersal distance (1 mile) of the Badger Pass Ski Area boundary (Fellers, unpublished data, 1993-2006). Mitigations to protect the wet meadow will aid in avoiding any incidental disturbance to this species and are included in Appendix B.”

Page 3-43, last paragraph: “The Yosemite Bog Orchid has been observed within Monroe Meadow and would be adversely affected in the construction zone if it is present there. The Yosemite bog-orchid is extremely rare; avoidance is assumed for this project. With implementation of mitigation measures (see Appendix B) that include presence/absence surveys prior to each construction season and a focus on avoidance, potential impacts on this species would be avoided” has been amended to state: “The Yosemite bog-orchid has been observed within Monroe Meadow near the construction site. The Yosemite bog-orchid is extremely rare. With implementation of mitigation measures (see Appendix B) that include presence/absence surveys prior to each construction season and a focus on protecting the surrounding meadow, potential impacts to this species would be avoided.”

Page 3-44, first paragraph: “Dewatering activities and water runoff from impermeable surfaces could potentially cause sediment-laden and/or contaminated water to enter Grouse Creek during construction and resulting in an adverse impact on the Sierra Nevada Mountain Beaver, which is known to inhabit

portions of Monroe Meadow and portions of Grouse Creek, and the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and the Yosemite toad, which have the potential to reside within the Badger Pass Ski Area. The potential impacts of dewatering are discussed in detail in the Hydrology section of this chapter. Implementation of standard mitigation measures and those recommended in the Hydrology section of this chapter, as well as following avoidance procedures would reduce impacts on this species localized, short-term, negligible to minor, and adverse” has been amended to state: “Without proper mitigations, dewatering activities and water runoff from impermeable surfaces could potentially cause sediment-laden and/or contaminated water to enter Grouse Creek during construction. The Sierra Nevada Mountain Beaver is known to inhabit portions of Monroe Meadow and portions of Grouse Creek. The Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog has been observed within the Badger Pass Ski Area boundary and the Yosemite toad has the potential to reside within the Badger Pass Ski Area. Mitigations to protect water quality, wet soils, and retain flows in Grouse Creek, as well as implementation of standard mitigation measures as listed in Appendix B and those recommended in the Hydrology section of this chapter, will minimize these impacts. As well, construction activities will be timed to avoid disturbing breeding or nesting species, as noted in the Mitigations table. Impacts on these species would thus be localized, short-term, negligible to minor, and adverse.”

Page 3-44, Conclusion: “Under all action alternatives, project construction would occur in suitable habitat for a number of special status species, but implementation of mitigation measures with a focus upon avoidance, limiting construction activities during breeding seasons, and limiting areas of impacts would reduce potential adverse effects” has been amended to “The lodge is situated in suitable (wet meadow) habitat for a number of special status species, however, implementation of mitigation measures to protect wetlands, soils, and water quality, and to avoid disruption of these species (including preconstruction surveys and limiting construction activities during critical breeding and nesting times) would reduce potential adverse effects under the action alternatives.” The word “slightly” is added before “greater degree than under Alternative 2” and in the second to last sentence “impacts on special status species” is changed to “impacts on individuals of special status species.”

Page 3-44, fourth paragraph: “If construction activities on the campus coincided with ski lodge rehabilitation construction, there would be a potential for adverse effects on these species in the region” has been amended to state “If construction activities on the campus coincided with ski lodge rehabilitation, there would be a potential for adverse effects on these species in the vicinity, such as disturbance.” The following text has been added: “However, this rehabilitation project does not entail clearing and removing habitat for new construction, but rather repair and construction of replacement buildings within the existing developed footprint. Surveys prior to and during construction will provide updated information to identify any species of concern that may be present or active in the area, and impacts will be avoided through the mitigations specified for both projects.”

Appendix B, Mitigation Measures Common to All Actions Alternatives – Mitigation measures for wildlife and special status species were further detailed in response to comments from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and are incorporated into Table 1-1, Mitigation Measures [see the Wildlife (Including Special Status Wildlife) heading] of the Finding of No Significant Impact.

Appendix C - The Draft Statement of Findings for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project is rescinded. Since the selected action will only affect wetland areas immediately adjacent to the structure and the area had been disturbed previously during construction of the facility prior to 1980, it is an exempted action and a final Wetland Statement of Findings is not necessary for the proposed action.

# Appendix A

## Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment



### Public Comment Report



**National Park Service  
Yosemite National Park  
November 2010**

## **Introduction**

This report summarizes public comments submitted on the *Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment* (EA). The Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation EA was released for public review on May 19, 2010, and the National Park Service accepted comments through July 7, 2010. All written public comments on the proposed project were received online through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. This report provides a summary of public concerns expressed in those comment letters.

## **Public Comment Analysis Methodology**

Public comment letters received during the comment period are reviewed and analyzed in a series of stages which require review and assessment by staff. For example, each letter is read to determine discrete points expressed by the author, each of which is considered to be a “comment.” Each discrete comment is then “coded” in order to associate that comment with a particular resource topic or element of the plan (such as Purpose and Need or Visitor Services).

Once all letters have been coded for individual comments, similar comments are grouped together and a “concern statement” is generated, which is intended to capture the main points or common themes expressed by the group of similar comments. The planning team then screens each concern statement to determine whether or not further clarification is needed, or whether modification of the proposed action is necessary. In the latter case, concerns would be brought to park management for further deliberation.

Lastly, the planning team prepares responses to comments that are considered ‘substantive’. Substantive comments are those that

- Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the EA
- Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of environmental analysis
- Develop and evaluate reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the EA
- Cause changes to the proposal or alternatives
- Make factual corrections

All comments received during the public comment period have been duly considered and are now part of the administrative record for this project.

## **Results of Public Comment Analysis**

During the 50-day public comment period, the park received three public comment letters from two individuals and one organization. The analysis of these letters identified seven discrete comments, from which four general concern statements were generated. None of the concerns were identified as considered substantive.

Concern statements are presented below and are organized by topic and include “supporting quotes,” which are verbatim excerpts from individual public comment letters. These supporting quotes are followed by comment author attributes, such as whether the comment author was an individual or an organization (if an organization – a general description of the organization type), the city and state of residence of the comment author, and the assigned letter and comment number. For example, “(Conservation organization, CA - #2-1)” is a letter from an organization in California – which was the second letter received, and the first coded comment from that specific letter. For this project, public concern did not result in any changes to the alternatives in the EA or the proposed action.

## **Public Concerns**

### **Purpose and Need for Action**

#### **Concern 1: The National Park Service has correctly identified the Purpose and Need for the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project.**

*“The NPS proposal to rehabilitate the deteriorated Badger Pass ski lodge to its historic architectural design and function is an action the Committee encourages and supports. The original ski lodge, constructed in 1935, has been impacted by decades of heavy snowfall and weather extremes and has become an unacceptable eyesore and public safety problem.”*

(Conservation organization, CA, #2-1)

*“Preserving the historic quality of the Badger Pass ski area, improving the quality of existing visitor services, addressing critical code and structural upgrade requirements, reducing impacts to nearby sensitive wetland resources while remaining within the existing Badger Pass lodge and associated buildings footprint is an action the Yosemite committee can support.”*

(Conservation organization, CA, #2-2)

### **Alternatives**

#### **Concern 2: The National Park Service should consider an alternative that removes Badger Pass Ski Lodge.**

*“I was the Wawona district ranger in the early 70's and if there was ever a downhill ski area that did not deserve to exist it is Badger Pass. It is small, and lacked sufficient parking then. It could make a nice facility for cross country skiing, but the lodge should be obliterated and a new facility for cross country skiing developed. The lifts should also be removed.*

*I am disapointed that one of the alternatives is not removing it.”*

(Individual, #1-1)

#### **Concern 3: The National Park Service has correctly identified Alternative 3 as the environmentally preferred alternative.**

*“We support maintaining the historic architectural design of the original lodge structure in this rehabilitation effort and concur that the modifications and improvements proposed in preferred alternative three in your recently released May 2010 EA best meets those needs.”*

(Conservation organization, CA, #2-3)

*“Based on this premise, either Alternative 1 or 4 would be the WORST possible choice. Alternative 3, the Preferred alternative, is the most compatible with the objectives/needed work.”*  
(Individual, #3-2)

## **Visitor Services**

### **Concern 4: The National Park Service should not expand visitor services as part of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge Rehabilitation Project.**

*“Any expansion of existing visitor services resulting from this rehabilitation effort would be strongly opposed by our committee.”*  
(Conservation organization, CA, #2-3)

*“While we realize and agree that the old historic buildings and structure must be refurbished for preservation and safety, it is not acceptable to substantially change or enlarge them. Perhaps this would make it more 'comphy' for more visitors, however that's not the point. The point is wilderness and history.”*  
(Individual, CA, #3-1)

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**Yosemite National Park**  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

[www.nps.gov/yose/](http://www.nps.gov/yose/)

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public land and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is on the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.