



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
L7615 (YOSE-PM)

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yosemite National Park  
P. O. Box 577  
Yosemite, California 95389

## Memorandum

**To:** Victoria Hartman, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park  
**From:** Superintendent, Yosemite National Park  
**Subject:** NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2014 -013 Wilderness Restoration Programmatic (52187)

The Executive Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed project and completed its environmental assessment documentation, and we have determined the following:

- There will not be any effect on threatened, endangered, or rare species and/or their critical habitat.
- There will not be any effect on historical, cultural, or archeological resources.
- There will not be serious or long-term undesirable environmental or visual effects.

For the proposed project actions to be within compliance requirements during construction and/or project implementation, the following mitigations must be adhered to:

- Conduct archeological survey and site documentation; provide cultural resource education for restoration crews; and inform crews of locations requiring modified restoration methods, as necessary, to avoid or minimize effects to archeological sites. Prior to the 2015 field season, the project manager will review the archeological guidelines and implement any changes.

The NEPA and NHPA compliance requirements are complete for the proposed project as presented. Project plans and specifications are approved and construction and/or project implementation can commence.

For complete compliance information see PEPC Project 52187.

//Don Neubacher//  
Don L. Neubacher

Enclosure (with attachments)

cc: Statutory Compliance File

*The signed original of this document is on file at the  
Environmental Planning and Compliance Office in  
Yosemite National Park.*



## Categorical Exclusion Form

**Project:** 2014-013 Wilderness Restoration Programmatic

**PEPC Project Number:** 52187

**Project Description:**

This program will restore natural conditions to Yosemite Wilderness' montane, subalpine, and alpine ecosystems that are experiencing vegetation loss, soil erosion and compaction, habitat fragmentation and hydrological changes due to visitor and administrative use. This program will focus on ecologically restoring inappropriately located campsites; social, abandoned and parallel trails; and removing non-native invasive plants.

The following methods for removing invasive species, campsites, and trails have been determined (in consultation with cultural resource staff) to protect cultural resources.

**CAMPsites:** Inappropriate campsites are widespread throughout the wilderness, particularly in proximity to rivers, lakes and streams. Ecological restoration actions seek to rehabilitate damaged soils, thereby facilitating the return of native plant and animal communities. Work consists of 1) dispersing the fire rings and charcoal from inappropriately located sites in a way that protects the surroundings; 2) obstructing the site with logs and large rocks to camouflage the area as well as discourage camping; 3) decompacting the soil; and 4) naturalizing the site with locally gathered seeds and mulch to add organic matter to the site which helps prevent erosion and provides a seed bank. Materials will be gathered in a way that minimizes impacts on the local surroundings.

**PARALLEL TRAILS, ABANDONED TRAILS and SOCIAL TRAILS:** Throughout the wilderness, inappropriately located trails occur when users avoid wet, muddy areas in a trail; take (or make) short cuts; or create new trails to access water or another campsite. These trails cause habitat fragmentation, hydrological change and erosion. Ecological restoration of shallow trails can be as simple as placing an obstruction and decompacting the trail, preventing further damage. Deeper ruts require: 1) salvaging of existing plants from along the trail; 2) removing linear nature of trail edge; 3) decompacting and /or bringing rut up to grade; 4) discouraging use by placing obstructions and disguising old trail, a grip hoist may be used; 5) replanting salvaged plants; 6) scattering locally gathered seeds and duff; and 7) watering plants with a solar powered water pump thereby eliminating new social trail development. Work is done in small sections, to minimize the amount of time the salvaged plants are out of the ground. Materials will be gathered in a way that minimizes impacts on the local surroundings.

**INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS:** Invasive species enter the wilderness through seed dispersal from non-wilderness locations via stock, wind, hikers and human caused disturbance including fire fighting. Invasive plant removal methods vary depending on the species. Targeted plant removal methods are: hand pulled with minimal soil disturbance OR severing the stem at the base of the plants just beneath the soil surface, minimizing soil disturbance OR by digging up the plant.

These three actions are implemented by five person NPS Wilderness Restoration Crews who work from June-September, a five week eight person Student Conservation Association Crew, and various volunteer work weeks. The NPS and SCA crews are roving crews, backpacking from work area to work area. Stock support for the SCA

Categorical Exclusion Form - Wilderness Restoration Programmatic 2014 -2019 - PEPC ID: 52187

crew is two animals every five or six days. The NPS crew requires stock support only on trips exceeding eight days in length or if working in one area for an extended period time. Stock support will occur only on the first day and last of such projects. Volunteer work weeks receive stock support. The majority of the work is done with hand tools including shovels, rakes, buckets, large bags, webbing, crosscut saws, grass whips and sickles. A solar water pump for watering salvaged plants and grip hoists for moving large obstructions may also be used on meadow restoration projects in an effort to reduce impacts. \*\*\*Please see full project description in the PEQ\*\*\*

**Project Locations:**

Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Madera Counties, CA

**Mitigation:**

- Conduct archeological survey and site documentation; provide cultural resource education for restoration crews; and inform crews of locations requiring modified restoration methods, as necessary, to avoid or minimize effects to archeological sites. Prior to the 2015 field season, the project manager will review the archeological guidelines and implement any changes.

**Describe the category used to exclude action from further NEPA analysis and indicate the number of the category (see Section 3-4 of DO-12):**

E.4 Removal of non-historic materials and structures in order to restore natural conditions.

**On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances (e.g. all boxes in the ESF are marked "no") or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.**

**Superintendent:**  //Don Neubacher//  **Date:**  7/7/14

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# ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

## DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: 06/26/2014

Updated May 2007 - per 2004 Departmental Manual revisions and proposed Director's Order 12 changes

### A. PROJECT INFORMATION

**Park Name:** Yosemite National Park  
**Project Title:** 2014-013 Wilderness Restoration Programmatic 2014 -2019  
**PEPC Project Number:** 52187  
**Project Type:** Resource Protection (PROT)  
**Project Location:**  
**County, State:** Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Madera Counties, California  
**Project Leader:** Victoria Hartman

**B. Is project a hot topic (controversial or sensitive issues that should be brought to attention of Regional Director)?** No

### C. RESOURCE EFFECTS TO CONSIDER:

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
1. Geologic resources – soils, bedrock, streambeds, etc.		Negligible			Soils will be disrupted: campsites – no deeper than 10 inches; trails – up to 3 feet on either side of the trail corridor; and invasive plants – up to 10 inches.
2. From geohazards	No				
3. Air quality	No				
4. Soundscapes	No				
5. Water quality or quantity	No				
6. Streamflow characteristics	No				
7. Marine or estuarine resources	No				

<b>Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources</b>	<b>No Effect</b>	<b>Negligible Effects</b>	<b>Minor Effects</b>	<b>Exceeds Minor Effects</b>	<b>Data Needed to Determine/Notes</b>
8. Floodplains or wetlands	No				
9. Land use, including occupancy, income, values, ownership, type of use	No				
10. Rare or unusual vegetation – old growth timber, riparian, alpine	No				
11. Species of special concern (plant or animal; state or federal listed or proposed for listing) or their habitat	No				
12. Unique ecosystems, biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites	No				Yosemite National Park is World Heritage Site.
13. Unique or important wildlife or wildlife habitat	No				
14. Unique or important fish or fish habitat	No				
15. Introduce or promote non-native species (plant or animal)	No				This programmatic project intends to reduce the non-native species in the wilderness.
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources		Negligible			Overall, wilderness visitor experience will be enhanced as wilderness qualities such as natural

Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources	No Effect	Negligible Effects	Minor Effects	Exceeds Minor Effects	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
					processes, pristineness, and opportunities for solitude will be protected. This project reduces human impacts.
18. Archeological resources		Negligible			This project intends to meet the current guidelines for archeological survey and site documentation.
19. Prehistoric/historic structure	No				
20. Cultural landscapes	No				
21. Ethnographic resources	No				
22. Museum collections (objects, specimens, and archival and manuscript collections)	No				
23. Socioeconomics, including employment, occupation, income changes, tax base, infrastructure	No				
24. Minority and low income populations, ethnography, size, migration patterns, etc.	No				
25. Energy resources	No				
26. Other agency or tribal land use plans or policies	No				
27. Resource, including energy, conservation potential,	No				

<b>Identify potential effects to the following physical, natural, or cultural resources</b>	<b>No Effect</b>	<b>Negligible Effects</b>	<b>Minor Effects</b>	<b>Exceeds Minor Effects</b>	<b>Data Needed to Determine/Notes</b>
sustainability					
28. Urban quality, gateway communities, etc.	No				
29. Long-term management of resources or land/resource productivity	No				This project focuses on restoring inappropriately located campsites; social, abandoned, and parallel trails; and removing non-native invasive plants to meet the parks long-term resource management goals.
30. Other important environment resources (e.g. geothermal, paleontological resources)?	No				

**D. MANDATORY CRITERIA**

<b>Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Comment or Data Needed to Determine</b>
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?		No		
B. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		No		
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?		No		
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve		No		

<b>Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Comment or Data Needed to Determine</b>
unique or unknown environmental risks?				
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		No		
F. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		No		
G. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by either the bureau or office?		No		
H. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		No		
I. Violate a federal law, or a state, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		No		
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		No		
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		No		
L. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		No		

**D. OTHER INFORMATION**

1. Are personnel preparing this form familiar with the site? Yes
- 1.A. Did personnel conduct a site visit? No
2. Is the project in an approved plan such as a General Management Plan or an Implementation Plan with an accompanying NEPA document? No



3. Are there any interested or affected agencies or parties? No
4. Has consultation with all affected agencies or tribes been completed? Yes
5. Are there any connected, cumulative, or similar actions as part of the proposed action? (e.g., other development projects in area or identified in GMP, adequate/available utilities to accomplish project) No

**E. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM SIGNATORIES**

<u>Interdisciplinary Team</u>	<u>Field of Expertise</u>
Don L. Neubacher	Superintendent
Michael Gauthier	Chief of Staff
Kathleen Morse	Chief of Planning
Randy Fong	Chief of Project Management
Zach Allely	Acting Chief of Administration Management
Paul Laymon	Acting Chief of Facilities Management
Linda C. Mazzu	Chief of Resources Management & Science
Kris Kirby	Chief of Business and Revenue Management
Tom Medema	Chief of Interpretation and Education
Kevin Killian	Chief of Visitor and Resource Protection
Vickie Hartman	Project Leader
Lisa Acree	Acting Environmental Planning and Compliance Program Manager
Renea Kennec	NEPA Specialist

**F. SUPERVISORY SIGNATORY**

**Recommended:**

Compliance Specialists	Date
<u>//Renea Kennec//</u> Compliance Specialist – Renea Kennec	<u>6/27/14</u>
<u>//Lisa Acree//</u> Acting Compliance Program Manager – Lisa Acree	<u>7/2/14</u>
<u>//Randy Fong//</u> Chief, Project Management – Randy Fong	<u>7/2/14</u>

**Approved:**

Superintendent	Date
<u>//Don Neubacher//</u> Don L. Neubacher	<u>7/7/14</u>

*The signed original of this document is on file at the Environmental Planning and Compliance Office in Yosemite National Park.*



## PARK ESF ADDENDUM

### PROJECT INFORMATION

**Park Name:** Yosemite National Park  
**Project Title:** 2014-013 Wilderness Restoration Programmatic  
**PEPC Project Number:** 52187  
**Project Type:** Resource Protection (PROT)  
**Project Location:**  
     **County, State:** Mariposa, California  
     **County, State:** Tuolumne, California  
     **County, State:** Madera, California  
**Project Leader:** Victoria Hartman

### PARK ESF ADDENDUM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
<b>SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CHECKLIST</b>				
Listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (Federal or State)?		No		
Species of special concern (Federal or State)?		No		
Park rare plants or vegetation?		No		
Potential habitat for any special-status species listed above?		No		
<b>NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CHECKLIST</b>				
Entail ground disturbance?	Yes			
Are any archeological or ethnographic sites located within the area of potential effect?	Yes			Following current guidelines: conduct archeological survey and site documentation; provide education for restoration crews; and inform crews of locations requiring modified restoration methods, as necessary, to avoid or minimize effects to archeological sites. In 2015, review the archeological guidelines and implement any changes.

<b>ESF Addendum Questions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Data Needed to Determine/Notes</b>
Entail alteration of a historic structure or cultural landscape?		No		
Has a National Register form been completed?		No		
Are there any structures on the park's List of Classified Structures in the area of potential effect?		No		
<b>WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CHECKLIST</b>				
Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor?	Yes			Merced and Tuolumne Rivers
Fall within the bed and banks AND will affect the free-flow of the river?	Yes			Restoration efforts might be conducted within the bed and bank of rivers and creeks.
Have the possibility of affecting water quality of the area?		No		
Remain consistent with its river segment classification?		No		
Fall on a tributary of a Wild and Scenic River?	Yes			Parkwide
Will the project encroach or intrude upon the Wild and Scenic River corridor?		No		
Will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?		No		
<b>WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST</b>				
Within designated Wilderness?	Yes			Minimum Requirement Analysis attached.
Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?		No		



**ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES**  
**A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING**

**1. Park:** Yosemite National Park

**2. Project Description:**

**Project Name:** 2014-013 Wilderness Restoration Programmatic  
**Prepared by:** Renea Kennec  
**Date Prepared:** 06/26/2014  
**Telephone:** 209-379-1038  
**PEPC Project Number:** 52187

**Area of potential effects (as defined in 36 CFR 800.16[d])**  
Parkwide area of potential effect.

**3. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify historic properties?**

No  
 Yes

Source or reference:

**4. Potentially Affected Resources:**

**Archeological resources affected:**

**Name and number:** Parkwide permit; presence/absence of resources determined on a site by site basis.

**Cultural Landscapes Affected:**

**Name and number:** Parkwide permit; presence/absence of resources determined on a site by site basis.

**Ethnographic Resources Affected:**

**Name and number:** Parkwide permit; presence/absence of resources determined on a site by site basis.

**5. The proposed action will: (check as many as apply)**

- Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure
- Replace historic features/elements in kind
- Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure
- Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (inc. terrain)
- Add non-historic features/elements (inc. visual, audible, or atmospheric) to a historic setting

- or cultural landscape
- No Disturb, destroy, or make archeological resources inaccessible
- No Disturb, destroy, or make ethnographic resources inaccessible
- Yes Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources
- Begin or contribute to deterioration of historic features, terrain, setting, landscape elements, or archeological or ethnographic resources
- No Involve a real property transaction (exchange, sale, or lease of land or structures)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Supporting Study Data:**

**(Attach if feasible; if action is in a plan, EA or EIS, give name and project or page number.)**

**B. REVIEWS BY CULTURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS**

**The park 106 coordinator requested review by the park's cultural resource specialist/advisors as indicated by check-off boxes or as follows:**

Archeologist  
 Name: Sonny Montague  
 Date: 04/29/2014

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance*

Assessment of Effect:  No Potential to Cause Effect  No Historic Properties  
 Affected  No Adverse Effect  Adverse Effect  Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Following current guidelines: conduct archeological survey and site documentation; provide education for restoration crews; and inform crews of locations requiring modified restoration methods, as necessary, to avoid or minimize effects to archeological sites. In 2015, review the archeological guidelines and implement any changes.

Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement

Historical Landscape Architect  
 Name: Kevin McCardle  
 Date: 06/03/2014

*Check if project does not involve ground disturbance*

Assessment of Effect:  No Potential to Cause Effect  No Historic Properties  
 Affected  No Adverse Effect  Adverse Effect  Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement

**No Reviews From:** Curator, Historical Architect, Historian, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor, Anthropologist

**C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Assessment of Effect Form - Wilderness Restoration Programmatic 2014 -2019 - PEPC ID: 52187

**1. Assessment of Effect:**

- No Potential to Cause Effects
- No Historic Properties Affected
- No Adverse Effect
- Adverse Effect

**2. Documentation Method:**

A. STANDARD 36 CFR PART 800 CONSULTATION  
Further consultation under 36 CFR Part 800 is needed.

B. STREAMLINED REVIEW UNDER THE 2008 SERVICEWIDE PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT (PA)

The above action meets all conditions for a streamlined review under section III of the 2008 Servicewide PA for Section 106 compliance.

APPLICABLE STREAMLINED REVIEW Criteria  
(Specify 1-16 of the list of streamlined review criteria.)

C. PLAN-RELATED UNDERTAKING

Consultation and review of the proposed undertaking were completed in the context of a plan review process, in accordance with the 2008 Servicewide PA and 36 CFR Part 800.  
Specify plan/EA/EIS:

D. UNDERTAKING RELATED TO ANOTHER AGREEMENT

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under another document such as a statewide agreement established in accord with 36 CFR 800.7 or counterpart regulations.

Explanation: None

1999 Programmatic Agreement

E. COMBINED NEPA/NHPA Document

Documentation is required for the preparation of an EA/FONSI or an EIS/ROD has been developed and used so as also to meet the requirements of 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6

G. Memo to SHPO/THPO

H. Memo to ACHP

**3. Additional Consulting Parties Information:**

Additional Consulting Parties: No

**4. Stipulations and Conditions:**

Following are listed any stipulations or conditions necessary to ensure that the assessment of effect above is consistent with 36 CFR Part 800 criteria of effect or to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects.

#### **5. Mitigations/Treatment Measures:**

Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:  
(Remember that setting, location, and use may be relevant.)

- Assessment of Effect - Archeological recommendations include: following current guidelines: conduct archeological survey and site documentation; provide education for restoration crews; and inform crews of locations requiring modified restoration methods, as necessary, to avoid or minimize effects to archeological sites. Prior to the 2015 field season, the project manager should review the archeological guidelines and implement any changes.

#### **D. RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:**

##### **Historic Preservation Officer:**

Kimball Koch     *//Kimball Koch//*

**Date:** June 27, 2014

#### **E. SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL**

**The proposed work conforms to the NPS *Management Policies* and *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, and I have reviewed and approve the recommendations, stipulations, or conditions noted in Section C of this form.**

**Superintendent:** *//Don Neubacher//*

**Date:** 7/7/14

Don L. Neubacher

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Yosemite National Park.*