



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7615(YOSE-PM)

Memorandum

To: Mike Gauthier, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2014-016 Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition (51977)

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 be no adverse effect on historical, cultural, or archeological resources.
- There will not be serious or long-term undesirable environmental or visual effects.

The subject proposed project/action(s), therefore, is/are now cleared for all NEPA and NHPA compliance requirements as presented above. Project plans and specifications are approved and construction and/or project implementation can commence.

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

- No mitigations identified.

Recommendations for Conditions or Stipulations:

None

For complete compliance information see PEPC Project 51977.

// 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.*

Letter of Compliance Completion - Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition - PEPC ID: 51977



Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: 2014-016 Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition

PEPC Project Number: 51977

Project Description:

The park has the opportunity to perform a minor boundary adjustment for the 415 acre Ackerson Meadow property in order to acquire the property through a donation to the park. Ackerson Meadow is a private parcel (inholding) of land within the Stanislaus National Forest and adjacent to Yosemite National Park. The boundary adjustment will be accomplished through use of the minor boundary adjustment authority found at 16 USC 460l-9(c).

For several decades the conservation community has been interested in acquiring the privately held Ackerson Meadow parcel to better protect the extremely limited meadow habitat of the Great Gray Owl and Willow flycatcher, both state listed endangered species.

The NPS will notify the appropriate House and Senate committees of the NPS intent to acquire the parcel by way of donation and to make the minor boundary adjustment necessary to include the parcel within the boundary of the park.

The NPS will notify the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors of the NPS intent to accept the donation and will further notify them of the loss of state and county property taxes on the parcel due to federal acquisition and the inclusion of the parcel in the "Payment in Lieu of Taxes" program as found in 31 USC 69.

The NPS will publish a "Notice of Realty Action" in the Federal Register and in the local paper of record, the Union Democrat, and will take public comment on the proposed minor boundary adjustment for a period of 45 days.

Project Location:

Tuolumne County, CA

Mitigations:

- No mitigations identified.

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):

A.2 Minor boundary changes.

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:** 7/30/2015
Don L. Neubacher

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ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: 07/29/2015

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: 2014-016 Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition
PEPC Project Number: 51977
Project Type:
Land Acquisition or Exchange (LAND)
Project Location:

County, State:
Tuolumne, California

Project Leader:
Mike Gauthier

Is project a hot topic (controversial or sensitive issues that should be brought to attention of Regional Director)?

B. 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.	No				
2. From geohazards	No				
3. Air quality	No				
4. Soundscapes	No				
5. Water quality or quantity	No				
6. Streamflow characteristics	No				

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
7. Marine or estuarine resources	No				
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				<p>Potential rare park sensitive plants in vicinity</p> <p>Ackerson Meadow supports a wealth of species including the state listed Great Gray Owl and Willow Flycatcher.</p>
12. Unique ecosystems, biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites	No				
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				
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor	No				

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
experience, aesthetic resources					
18. Archeological resources	No				Surveys have not been conducted but the presence of archeological resources is known through site visits.
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		Negligible			negligible county tax implications, park could potentially add law enforcement patrol of area but impact would be negligible to park operations
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, sustainability	No				
28. Urban quality, gateway	No				

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
communities, etc.					
29. Long-term management of resources or land/resource productivity	No				
30. Other important environment resources (e.g. geothermal, paleontological resources)?	No				

C. MANDATORY CRITERIA

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
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 unique or unknown environmental risks?		No		
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		No		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
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		

For the purpose of interpreting these procedures within the NPS, any action that has the potential to violate the NPS Organic Act by impairing park resources or values would constitute an action that triggers the DOI exception for actions that threaten to violate a federal law for protection of the environment.

D. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Are personnel preparing this form familiar with the site? Yes
- 1.A. Did personnel conduct a site visit? Yes
05/13/2014 Location: Ackerson meadow
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

Environmental Screening Form (ESF) - Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition - PEPC ID: 51977

4. Has consultation with all affected agencies or tribes been completed? N/A
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
Kathleen Morse	Chief of Planning
Randy Fong	Chief of Project Management
Jeff Hilliard	Chief of Administration Management
Ron Borne	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
Chad Thomas	Project Leader
Madelyn Ruffner	Environmental Planning and Compliance Program Manager
Renea Kennec	NEPA Specialist

F. SUPERVISORY SIGNATORY

Based on the environmental impact information contained in the statutory compliance file and in this environmental screening form, environmental documentation for this stage of the subject project is complete.

Recommended:

Compliance Specialists	Date
<u>// Kyle Meakins //</u>	<u>7/30/2015</u>
Compliance Specialist – Kyle Meakins	
<u>// Madelyn Ruffner //</u>	<u>7/30/2015</u>
Compliance Program Manager – Madelyn Ruffner	
<u>// Randy Fong //</u>	<u>7/30/2015</u>
Chief, Project Management – Randy Fong	

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
<u>// Don Neubacher //</u>	<u>7/30/2015</u>
Don L. Neubacher	

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ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park

2. **Project Description:**

Project Name: 2014- 016 Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition

Prepared by: Madelyn Ruffner **Date Prepared:** 07/30/2015 **Telephone:** 209-379-1226

PEPC Project Number: 51977

Area of potential effects (as defined in 36 CFR 800.16[d])

Ackerson meadow

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

☒ No

☐ Yes

4. **Potentially Affected Resource(s):**

Archeological Resources Notes: Property previously in private ownership with farm and home. Surveys and evaluations for archeology and historic resources have not been conducted due to private land status.

Historical Structures/Resources Notes: Surveys and evaluations for archeology and historic resources have not been conducted due to private land status.

Ethnographic Resources Affected Notes: Information not obtained but administrative action will not affect any resources.

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

☐ No Destroy, remove, or alter features/elements from a historic structure

☐ No Replace historic features/elements in kind

☐ No Add non-historic features/elements to a historic structure

☐ No Alter or remove features/elements of a historic setting or environment (inc. terrain)

☐ No 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

☐ No Potentially affect presently unidentified cultural resources

☐ No 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:

[X] Anthropologist

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 07/29/2015

Comments: No historic properties or traditional values affected by administrative action.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance [X]

Assessment of Effect: X No Potential to Cause Effect ___ No Historic Properties Affected ___ No

Adverse Effect ___ Adverse Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

[X] Archeologist

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 07/29/2015

Comments: No historic properties or traditional values affected by administrative action.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: X No Potential to Cause Effect ___ No Historic Properties Affected ___ No

Adverse Effect ___ Adverse Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

[X] Historian

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 07/29/2015

Comments: No historic properties or traditional values affected by administrative action.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: X No Potential to Cause Effect ___ No Historic Properties Affected ___ No

Adverse Effect ___ Adverse Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

[X] Historical Architect

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 07/29/2015

Comments: No historic properties or traditional values affected by administrative action.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: X No Potential to Cause Effect ___ No Historic Properties Affected ___ No

Adverse Effect ___ Adverse Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

[X] Historical Landscape Architect

Name: Scott Carpenter

Date: 07/29/2015

Comments: No historic properties or traditional values affected by administrative action.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

Assessment of Effect: X No Potential to Cause Effect ___ No Historic Properties Affected ___ No

Adverse Effect ___ Adverse Effect ___ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Assessment of Effect Form - Ackerson Meadow Minor Boundary Adjustment and Acquisition - PEPC ID: 51977

No Reviews From: Curator, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

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

2. Additional Consulting Parties Information:

N/A

3. Stipulations and Conditions:

N/A

4. Mitigations/Treatment Measures:

Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:
(Remember that setting, location, and use may be relevant.)
No Assessment of Effect mitigations identified.

D. RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:

Historic Preservation Officer

Kimball Koch // Kimball Koch // **Date:** 7/30/2015

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:** 7/30/2015
Don L. Neubacher

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