



March 2019

PUBLIC SCOPING for a proposal to Replace the Failing Septic System for the Drakesbad Guest Ranch Environmental Assessment

Background— The Drakesbad Guest Ranch is located at the end of the Warner Valley Road in the Warner Valley, about 45 miles outside of Chester, CA, in the south east portion of the park. The Drakesbad Guest Ranch is part of the Drakesbad Guest Ranch Historic District, and the facilities include a lodge, dining hall, cabins, duplex units, bath house for the thermal pool, employee housing, laundry facilities, and public restrooms. They are operated by a concession on a seasonal basis, closing for the winter. Other facilities in the area are part of the Warner Valley Developed Area Historic District, which includes the Warner Valley Road and the Warner Valley Ranger Station.

At Drakesbad, the wastewater system consists of a gravity sewer collection to a septic tank and effluent pump station that delivers wastewater up to a disposal field. The current septic system leach field was replaced in 2009 and the pump distribution system was replaced in 2004. However, during the summer of 2017, wastewater was seen surfacing on the ground, indicating a failure of the leach field.

Without a functioning wastewater system, the area would be unsuitable for visitor use and the existing facilities would need to be closed.

The park is committed to preserving facilities that are part of the Drakesbad Guest Ranch Historic District and the Warner Valley Developed Area Historic District, as it has stated in the Warner Valley Comprehensive Site Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement. This preservation and the continuation of a unique park experience necessitates replacing the existing wastewater system.

To address these and other issues, the park intends to analyze two alternatives in an environmental assessment. A no-action alternative would continue existing management of the Drakesbad wastewater system. The action alternative proposes to construct a new wastewater disposal field at Drakesbad. Public comments received during the public scoping period will help the park identify issues, concerns, and other potential alternatives for the project.



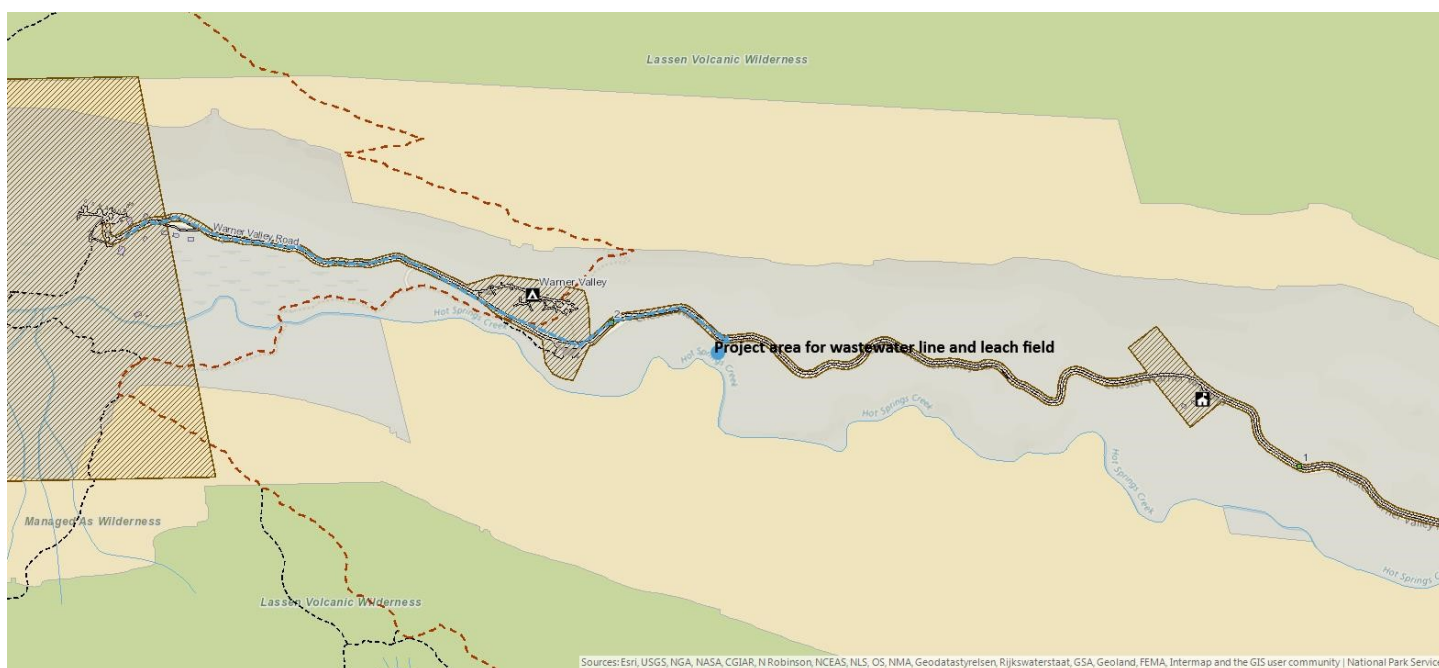
View of Drakesbad Guest Ranch from meadow (NPS Photo)

Objectives

- Replace failing wastewater system
- Protect water resources and vegetation from pollutants
- Maintain the unique visitor experience at the Drakesbad Guest Ranch
- Avoid impacts to sensitive cultural and natural resources from constructing a new septic system

Concerns and Issues

- Public safety and health
- Water resources (hydrology, wetlands, and water quality)
- Historic road, historic district, and cultural resources
- Visitor Experience
- Natural resources (vegetation, wildlife, and fish)



Project area is an approximately 4200 foot waste water line and 8000 foot disposal area along the road corridor leading to a new leach field location (blue line and dot in vicinity map).

Environmental Assessment Process

- Public Scoping
- Preparation of Plan/ Environmental Assessment
- Public Review of Plan/EA
- Analysis of Public Comments
- Decision Document

Public Comments During Scoping

Your comments will help identify issues, concerns, and other alternatives to evaluate in the EA. There will be another opportunity for you to comment when the plan/EA is completed.

Please post your scoping comments online at:

www.parkplanning.nps.gov/DrakesbadSepticSystem

Or send comments to:

Superintendent, Lassen Volcanic National Park

Attn: Replace Failing Septic System for the Drakesbad Guest Ranch

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Please provide comments by:

April 10, 2019