

Lower Lehman Creek Campground Expansion Great Basin National Park Public Scoping Letter

November 2, 2021

Great Basin National Park is requesting public input for the development of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a project to rehabilitate and expand Lower Lehman Creek Campground.



Background

Lower Lehman Creek Campground was constructed in the 1950s and one of six campgrounds in Great Basin National Park. The campground is located at 7,338 feet in elevation along the Lehman Creek corridor and is the first campground visitors come to on their way up the historic Wheeler Park Scenic Drive. Lower Lehman Creek Campground is sought out for its recreational vehicle (RV) access with six pull-through sites. It is the only campground in the park that remains open year-round.

In the years since its construction, the campground and its features have deteriorated and its amenities are outdated. Too few restrooms are in place, and they need to be replaced with larger, more modern infrastructure. The roadway asphalt has cracked and crumbled needing to be repaved. Fire rings, grills, and picnic tables need replacement. Accessibility improvements and multilingual signing are needed to better serve a changing park visitor demographic.

Within the last 10 years, five of the six campgrounds in the park have undergone rehabilitation, modernizing the amenities and access. Lower Lehman Campground will be the last to undergo a

modernization improvement. This project will ensure that the Lower Lehman Creek Campground will continue to provide outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities.

Key Issues

An “issue” describes the relationship between actions and environmental (natural, cultural, and socioeconomic) resources. Issues are usually problems that either the current situation has caused, or that any of the proposed options might cause, but they may be questions, concerns, problems, or other relationships, including beneficial ones. With respect to rehabilitating and expanding the Lower Lehman Creek Campground, the NPS has identified issues related to the following resources:

- Visitor use and experience
- Cultural resources
- Vegetation and wetlands

Preliminary Alternatives

The NPS has developed two preliminary alternatives for rehabilitation and expansion of the Lower Lehman Creek Campground.

The proposed action includes:

- The total number of campsites would increase from 11 to 20, including the host site and two accessible campsites.
- Nine existing campsites would be retained.
- Campsite #7 would be removed and restored to wetland.
- One additional back-in campsite would be added onto the existing road, on the east side near the exit.
- Ten new campsites would be located east of the existing campground loop.
- Site furnishings would include a fire ring, picnic table and campsite marker at each campsite.
- The existing water distribution system would be abandoned, and a new waterline installed.
- The fee station/trailhead would be improved to match Upper Lehman Campground including asphalt pull-off.
- Minor improvements would be made to concrete at the existing vault toilets.
- One additional proposed vault toilet would be constructed.
- NPS is also considering potentially realigning or reconfiguring the existing campground entrance from Wheeler Peak Road, to allow better access for recreational vehicles or vehicles pulling trailers.

The NPS is also considering a No Action Alternative, in which no improvements would be made to the campground.

How to Comment

The public can review and comment on this proposal at the National Park Service Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/LowerLehmanCreekCG>

Comments can also be mailed to:

Superintendent
100 Great Basin National Park
Attn: Lower Lehman Campground Project
Baker, NV 89311

Comments will be accepted until midnight, December 1, 2021. The NPS will analyze and consider all feedback and prepare an environmental assessment (EA), in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), to develop and evaluate alternatives. Once complete, there will be a second opportunity for public comment on the EA later next year.