



A PDF text file of the project's approved environmental compliance package containing the letter of compliance completion, categorical exclusion form, environmental screening form, and any other associated environmental clearance forms, as applicable (e.g., Wilderness Minimum Requirement Analysis, Wild and Scenic River Section 7 Analysis). The signed originals of the package are on file in the Environmental Planning and Compliance Office at Yosemite National Park.

Letter of Compliance Completion

To: Garrett Dickman, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park

From: Cicely Muldoon, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park

Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2022-137 Biomass Removal and Thinning- Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Yosemite West (PEPC: 104171)

The Superintendent and park interdisciplinary team have reviewed the proposed project and completed an impact analysis and documentation, and have determined the following:

- The project has been assessed as “likely to adversely affect” the California red-legged frog and is being placed under the 2018 California Red Legged Frog Biological Opinion (BO) issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The effect determination means that while it is possible that the project may impact a few individuals, it will not result in a magnitude of impact that would jeopardize the species at the population or species level. All protection measures contained in the BO will be applied to minimize potential effects to the species. The project is not likely to adversely affect the Fisher. The project will have no effect on other threatened, endangered, or rare species and/or their critical habitat.
- There will be no adverse effect to historic properties.
- There will not be serious or long-term undesirable environmental or visual effects.

The subject proposed project, therefore, is 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.

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

Cultural Resources

- Integrate archeologist into project implementation and identify archeological site boundaries prior to implementation and identify priority sites for fuel reduction efforts. Archeologist will monitor work within sensitive archeological sites. Removal of fuels within site boundaries for resources that have the potential to be disturbed by these actions [REDACTED] will involve methods that minimize or do not include ground disturbance. Associated site protection actions include moving slash outside of site boundaries, identifying locations within site boundaries that do not contain cultural materials that can be treated with heavy equipment, chipping and hauling slash instead of piling, and removing fuels from on top of and adjacent to features and concentrations of artifacts. These methods are implemented on a site-by-site basis to ensure no adverse effect to archeological sites.

General

- Coordinate and consult with Park resources staff (wildlife, archeology, vegetation etc.), concessioners, facilities, hazard tree crews, and other affected stakeholders at least 1 week ahead of pile burning or thinning operations to identify sensitive areas, allow for operational planning, and ensure the implementation of applicable mitigation measures.
- Only work described in PEPC 104171 is approved for implementation. Any changes to the scope of work will require additional review by the Environmental Planning and Compliance Branch.

Vegetation

- Rehabilitation: If vehicle tracks or bare soils are created by tree removal activity, rehabilitate the site by raking soils to blend with surrounding area and covering with branch slash, native forest duff, or wood chips no more than 1 inch deep. Meadow margins may require additional native herbaceous plant seeding for some types of disturbance. Avoid vehicle travel through areas containing invasive plants- -consult with Invasive Plant Biologist in advance of project work.
- Survey for and control invasive non-native vegetation from two years prior to project activities through at least one year after project activities, or through duration of project funding.
- Consult with Forester or pathologist on best practice of treating cut fir stumps with Borax/Sporax within 24 hours to prevent Heterobasidion root disease.
- For project areas that have not been previously surveyed for special status or invasive plants, provide surveys at a time of year when plants are flowering. Consult with Plant Ecologist (Kimiora Ward (209) 379-3293) at least 2 weeks prior to project implementation to perform surveys. Flag special status and invasive plant populations for avoidance, or otherwise provide for avoidance.
- The project will adhere to the standard erosion control, prevention, and rehabilitation measures outlined in the Yosemite Fire Management Plan ROD.
- Measures shall be taken to prevent the introduction of exotic species in the project area and staging areas. All earth moving equipment must enter the Park free of dirt, dust, mud, seeds, or other potential contaminant. Examples of equipment that require inspection are excavators, skid steers, or boring equipment. Passenger vehicles do not need inspection but should be clean prior to entry in the park. Equipment exhibiting any dirt or other material attached to frame, tires, wheels, or other parts shall be thoroughly cleaned by the Contractor before entering the Park. Areas inspected shall include, but not be limited to, tracks, track guard/housings, belly pans/under covers, buckets, rippers, and other attachments. Equipment that does not pass inspection will be turned around to the nearest cleaning facility outside the park. The Contractor shall notify the Construction manager at least two work days (not including weekends) prior to bringing any equipment into the Park. Equipment found to have entered the Park with potential contaminants will be removed from the Park at the direction of the Contracting Officer at Contractor's sole expense. All staff working on site shall be informed of and follow best management practices for preventing the introduction and spread of non-native, invasive species as described in Division 1 Specifications, Section 1335.
- Avoid damage to black oak and sugar pine trees during project activities.
- Do not use wheeled or tracked equipment in soft meadow soils with abundant herbaceous vegetation. If meadows are the only access, use track mats to spread vehicle weight and prevent damage to meadow soils and vegetation.

Wildlife

- Fisher- Timing
 - March 1 to May 31: Prohibit tree-cutting, thinning, or other vegetation management activities (including mastication) that produce noise above the ambient level within potential denning habitat. This time period may be waived if modeled potential den habitat is no longer considered den habitat due to on the ground information (e.g., habitat evaluation or current fisher locations) or more fine-tuned habitat models with approval with from the Service.

- March 1 to June 30: Prohibit tree cutting, thinning, or other vegetation management activities (including mastication and pile burning) within known den clusters. Prohibit herbicide application within known den clusters.
- March 15 to April 30: Avoid pile burning in potential or high-quality denning habitat, if possible. If burning must occur in these areas during this Limited Operating Period, personnel will make every effort to minimize smoke build up.
- Fisher- Habitat
 - Ensure that within a 60-acre cluster of potential denning habitat, at least an average of greater than one suitable den tree per acre and two suitable rest trees per acre will remain. Prioritize large trees with deformities, broken tops, large branches, and cavities for retention. A Park Wildlife Biologist will perform pre-work habitat surveys and mark high value habitat trees for retention.
 - While the project will remove trees and vegetation by design, large diameter trees (over 20-inch diameter at breast height) and California black oaks will be retained and protected.
 - The project manager will consult with Park wildlife staff during planning to avoid or enhance suitable habitat and corridors. A Park Wildlife Biologist will coordinate to ensure habitat elements are retained and ensure that corridors are avoided.
- Fisher- Protections During Work
 - Any temporary fencing will allow for the safe passage of fishers.
 - All food and garbage will be stored in wildlife-proof containers at all times.
 - Any pipes, water tanks, or trenches will be capped, screened, or fitted with escape ramps if they cannot be closed each night to avoid entrapment of wildlife.
 - Project staff will follow posted speed limits and reduce their speed by an additional five miles per hour during dusk and dawn.
 - The Park Wildlife Biologist will teach work crews how to identify the fisher, its den trees, and other important habitat components that should be retained.
 - If a fisher is observed at a work site, work that has the potential to result in take of the individual will cease, and the Park Wildlife Biologist will be contacted. The Park Wildlife Biologist will then contact the Service for further guidance.
 - Any future alterations to the project (i.e., additional thinning locations) will be reviewed by a Park Wildlife Biologist to determine if the changes are consistent with this consultation or if reinitiation of section 7 consultation with the Service is needed.
- The work will be placed under the California red-legged frog (CRLF) Biological Opinion and will have a Likely to Adversely Affect determination; all provisions of the BO must be followed. Specific actions from the BO that will protect CRLF are:
 - A biological monitor is required for pile burning. Coordinate with the park's Aquatic Wildlife Program early in the project planning phase so that on-site monitoring can be scheduled.
 - Pre-work educational talk by Aquatic Wildlife Biologist is required for tree felling, pile creation, and burning crews. Please schedule with the Aquatic Wildlife Program no later than 2 weeks before work start.
 - Pre-work CRLF surveys are required. The surveyor will flag habitat elements for retention and make recommendations for protection of CRLF. Biologists may want existing downed, cut trees to be retained as existing habitat at certain sites, such as Yellow Pine, or ask that tree fellers fell trees into certain areas to enhance the CRLF habitat.
 - Hauling and chipping or biogen is preferred to piling. Hand piling is preferred to using heavy machinery. Small piles are preferred to large piles.
 - No piles should be created or burned within 25 feet of aquatic habitats (ponds, rivers, drainages, wetlands).
 - Piles should be burned between April 15 and October 15 to avoid most impacts to CRLF. Burn piles will be burned preferably within 6 months of piling, but no greater than 1 year after piling. If piles sit for greater than 1 year, they will have to be deconstructed by hand with a biological monitor present and re-piled, before burning could commence.

- Minimize use of heavy equipment in natural areas. Avoid turning in natural areas: Go in and back out if equipment must drive into areas for work
- Workers should follow all park speed limits and take extra care to drive slowly and alertly during warm wet conditions to avoid vehicle strikes to amphibians that may be on road ways.

- [REDACTED] No work should occur within 1 mile of identified Great Gray Owl nest trees during the nesting Limited Operating Period of March 15 - August 15 to avoid disturbing nesting owls. This LOP may be shortened depending on the actual timing of nesting. The project manager should work with the park biologist to identify avoidance areas and confirm the LOP prior to commencing work.

Cicely Muldoon

Date: April 29, 2022

Superintendent Signature: _____

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



Categorical Exclusion Documentation Form (CE Form)

Project: Biomass Removal and Thinning- Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Yosemite West

PEPC Project Number: 104171

Description of Action (Project Description):

This project reduces post-drought and post-fire fuels to protect Yosemite Valley, the communities of Yosemite West and Wawona, significant Pacific fisher and great grey owl [REDACTED] archeological sites, and improves safety for the public and first responders. Immediate actions are needed to protect these areas from high severity fire. The goals are reached by thinning conifers <20" diameter at breast height (dbh), standing dead trees, and removing dead and down trees that died after the 2012-2016 drought. Biomass are either removed and hauled offsite or piled and burned. This project occurs at three locations, Yosemite Valley, Yosemite West and 11-mile road, and Wawona. The community of Yosemite West is outside of the park's jurisdictional boundary and is not considered as part of this NEPA document, but is included as part of the larger project.

This project follows the 2004 Fire Management Plan EIS (FMP), Merced River Plan EIS (MRP), and Scenic Vista Management Plan, with several additions. Actions are described for those that adhere directly to these overarching documents and then those actions that expand and tier to them. Tiered actions are specifically called out with an explanation how they differ from the core document.

Description of actions

1. Remove hazard trees
2. Remove and haul dead and down biomass to co-gen facility or mill (16 U.S.C. 6). Removal will be performed by winching, skidding, or forwarding with rubber tired or tracked equipment.
3. Thin conifers up to 20 inches diameter and remove ladder fuels
4. Apply borax anti-fungal compound to stumps
5. Chip limbs, branches and small diameter material
6. Haul material to co-gen plant, or to portable biogen plant to be converted biochar (see PEPC 88127)
7. Pile and burn any material that cannot be hauled

Location of action and extent

For thinning along roads, the work extent is 200 feet from centerline on both sides of the road unless otherwise noted. No work will occur in Wilderness. Work may not occur in areas because the area is too steep, work area is unsafe, or there are sensitive species or cultural resource concerns. Work will only occur in sensitive sites with appropriate mitigations and/or monitoring from subject matter experts.

The actions and scope of work specific to each project area are:

Yosemite Valley

Yosemite Valley meadows have been reduced by 64% and 90% of black oak woodlands historically tended through indigenous practices and have been lost through conifer encroachment. To restore meadows, black oak woodlands, and to expediate the fire return interval by removing fuels unlikely to be removed during fire, small diameter conifers and dead and down material will be removed. This will facilitate regular prescribed fire, encourage black oak regeneration, expand water holding meadow lands, and ensure carbon is locked into the soil.

This project will:

- Remove dead and down, hazard trees, and thin/chip brush small conifers within Yosemite Valley (420 acres). These areas include areas identified for restoration in the MRP, inner and outer core Wildland Urban Interface identified in the FMP, and several areas in the West Valley not currently covered by either EIS.
- Thin conifers <20" dbh in meadows, black oak groves, road corridors, and prescribed burn units anticipated for future burning.
- Remove biomass and convert to biochar. Biochar will be used in soil remediation and local carbon sequestration projects.

Wawona

This project area focuses on the unincorporated community of Wawona. Wawona was identified as the community at highest risk of wildfire in the hazard assessment conducted for the 2021 Mariposa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The community is a mixture of State Responsibility Area (SRA) private lots and NPS lots with 370 residences. Dead and down material and heavy conifer regeneration cross all landowner boundaries. In January 2021, a mono wind event with gusts of 70 mph recorded caused \$7.5 million in damage and counting between crushed homes and downed powerlines. This community was already severely impacted by the 2012-2016 tree mortality event and the Ferguson Fire (2018). This wind event further exacerbates the problem by substantially increasing fuel on the ground and increases the difficulty of keeping fire out of the community.

This project will:

- Remove dead and down biomass from within SRA and NPS lots within community (589 acres)

Yosemite West

This project area focuses on the SRA lands within the unincorporated community of Yosemite West corridor, and 11-mile road. This project provides direct benefits to the community by hardening roads and houses through biomass removal. It also helps facilitate the implementation of future prescribed fire. Some of the proposed fire roads were used during the 2018 Ferguson Fire, and remain critical for protecting the community from wildfire and implementing prescribed fire.

This project will:

- Remove dead and down, hazard trees, and thin/chip brush small conifers within community (241 acres)
- Remove biomass, thin <20" dbh conifers on 11 Mile road and spur roads (223 acres/ 7 miles). Work extent is 200' of centerline on both sides of the road.

Mitigation(s):

See Letter of Compliance Completion for Mitigations.

CE Citation: 3.3.B.1 Changes or amendments to an approved plan, when such changes would cause no or only minimal environmental impact.

CE Justification:

Actions are generally covered by the 2017 Fire Management Plan amendment (PEPC 41967), 2014 Record of Decision for the Merced River Plan/EIS (MRP, PEPC 18982), 2011 Scenic Vista Management Plan (PEPC

Extraordinary Circumstances:

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Explanation
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?	No	None
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	None
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?	No	None
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	No	None
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	No	None
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	None
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	This action has been appended to the Biological Opinions for the federally listed Fisher and CA Red-Legged Frog.
I. Violate a federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	No	None
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898)?	No	None
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)?	No	None
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	None



ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

Updated Sept 2015 per NPS NEPA Handbook

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Biomass Removal and Thinning- Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Yosemite West

PEPC Project Number: 104171

Project Type: Fire - Mechanical Fuel Reduction (MFR)

Project Location: County, State: Mariposa, California

Project Leader: Garrett Dickman

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

See Categorical Exclusion Form

C. RESOURCE IMPACTS TO CONSIDER:

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Air Air Quality	Potential	Issue: Pile burning is anticipated to generate smoke and localized air quality impacts. Impact: Air quality impacts are anticipated to be minor and highly localized. Project manager will refer to procedures noted in the 2004 Final Yosemite Fire Management Plan EIS for mitigation of potential air quality impacts.
Biological Nonnative or Exotic Species	Potential	Issue: Fire trucks, bulldozers, or other heavy equipment may act as vectors that could introduce or spread non-native plants. Impact: Follow resource protections outlined with regard to heavy equipment cleaning, inspection, and park expert consultation.
Biological Species of Special Concern or Their Habitat <i>Fisher, CA Red-Legged Frogs</i>	Potential	Issue: Special status species, including the Pacific Fisher and California Red-Legged Frogs, may be present in the project area. Impact: Follow resource protections with regard to special status species. Impacts from this action are expected to be minor and much smaller than those posed by catastrophic fire, which could result from not taking action.
Biological Vegetation	Potential	Issue: The forests and associated vegetation in the project locations are more dense than they were historically due to over a century of fire suppression. Impact: Impacts from this action are expected to be beneficial to forest health and intended to thwart the potential negative, extensive impacts from large, catastrophic fire, which could result from not taking action.

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Biological Wildlife and/or Wildlife Habitat including terrestrial and aquatic species	Potential	Issue: Thinning vegetation, pile burning, and associated noise and disturbance may have impacts to wildlife communities and habitat; wildlife behavior is impacted by human-caused food conditioning. Impact: Impacts from this action are expected to be beneficial to forest habitat health and intended to thwart the potential negative, extensive impacts from large, catastrophic fire, which could result from not taking action. Workers will follow resource protections with regard to food/trash storage outlined to prevent food conditioning in wildlife.
Cultural Archeological Resources <i>Yosemite Valley Archeological District</i>	Potential	Issue: There are many known archeological sites located in the vicinity of the proposed thinning and pile burning locations. See Assessment of Effect for details. Impact: Follow cultural resource protections outlined to avoid impacts to archeological resources. Archeologist will work closely with project managers to identify site boundaries and provide buffers for avoidance and site treatment measures to avoid adverse impacts.
Cultural Cultural Landscapes <i>Yosemite Valley Historic District, Yosemite Village Historic District, Yosemite Valley Archeological District, Wawona Hotel and Pavilion Historic District</i>	Potential	Issue: Several of the thinning locations overlap with historic districts and other cultural landscapes. See Assessment of Effect for details. Impact: This project is intended to return the forests in these areas to historic density conditions by removing encroaching small vegetation and trees.
Cultural Ethnographic Resources	Potential	Issue: Several ethnographic resources have been identified in proposed work areas. Impact: Follow cultural resource protections outlined to avoid impacts to cultural resources.
Cultural Museum Collections	None	None
Cultural Prehistoric/historic structures <i>Wawona Hotel, Ranger's Club, Ahwahnee Hotel</i>	Potential	Issue: Proposed thinning areas are adjacent to several historic buildings and structures, including several National Historic Landmarks. Impact: This project will protect the built environment from wildfire by removing ladder fuels and small trees around buildings and structures.
Geological Geologic Features	None	None

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Geological Geologic Processes	None	None
Lightscares	None	None
Other Human Health and Safety	Potential	<p>Issue: Fire operations and heavy equipment operations pose inherent risks to human health and safety. Large, catastrophic fires (which could result from not taking action) also pose risks to human health and safety.</p> <p>Impact: Follow NPS and Park protocols to safely carry out pile burning and thinning activities and have contingency plans in place. Overall impacts to human health and safety are improved by decreasing the risk of large, catastrophic fire that could result from not taking action.</p>
Other Operational	Potential	<p>Issue: Some NPS operations, particularly along road corridors associated with proposed thinning and pile burning locations, may be impacted by this project.</p> <p>Impact: Communicate and coordinate project actions well ahead of projected implementation, refer to the 2004 Final Yosemite Fire Management Plan EIS for mitigations and procedures regarding communication and coordination.</p>
Other	None	None
Socioeconomic Land Use <i>Yosemite West</i>	Potential	<p>Issue: This project will target the gateway community of Yosemite West for fuels reduction work.</p> <p>Impact: The community of Yosemite West will be better protected from the effects of wildfires as a result of this work.</p>
Socioeconomic Minority and low-income populations, size, migration patterns, etc.	None	None
Socioeconomic	None	None
Soundscapes <i>Tools and Equipment</i>	Potential	<p>Issue: Heavy equipment, chainsaws, and other tools used in thinning operations produce noise.</p> <p>Impact: Noise from hand tools and other equipment may disturb wildlife, but is expected to be highly localized and temporary in duration.</p>
Viewsheds <i>Forest Structure, Smoke</i>	Potential	<p>Issue: The project will clear excessive growth and vegetation from the project area. Burn piles will produce smoke when ignited.</p> <p>Impact: Smoke impacts from burn piles is expected to be localized and temporary in duration. In the long term, the project is expected to positively impact the forest views in these locations by creating a more open, park-like forest structure.</p>

Resource	Potential for Impact	Potential Issues & Impacts
Visitor Use and Experience Recreation Resources <i>Roads, High-Use Areas</i>	Potential	Issue: Areas in and adjacent to planned thinning and pile burning activities, including recreational resources in Yosemite Valley, may be temporarily closed to visitation to protect visitor safety or may experience smoke impacts. Delays or reduced traffic speeds are possible along roads adjacent to the project area. Impact: Minor, temporary negative impact to recreational resources. Pile burning and thinning will likely take place in the low-visitation season. Refer to mitigations in the 2004 Final Yosemite Fire Management Plan EIS to reduce potential visitor impacts.
Visitor Use and Experience Visitor Use and Experience	None	None
Water Floodplains	Potential	Issue: Some work areas may overlap with designated floodplains. Impact: The proposed project is expected to diminish flooding hazards by removing potentially damaging vegetative debris from the floodplain.
Water Marine or Estuarine Resources	None	None
Water Water Quality or Quantity	None	None
Water Wetlands	Potential	Issue: Some work areas may overlap with meadows and wetlands. Impact: Project personnel will follow mitigation measures to avoid or minimize heavy equipment use in wetlands.
Water Wild and Scenic River <i>Merced Wild and Scenic River</i>	Potential	Issue: Proposed work areas overlap with several segments of the Merced Wild and Scenic River. Impact: This project aligns with the goals of the Merced River Plan EIS by restoring forest structure throughout the river corridor.
Wilderness	None	None



ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON HISTORIC PROPERTIES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park

2. **Project Description:**

Project Name: Biomass Removal and Thinning- Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Yosemite West

Prepared by: Daniel Sharon **Date Prepared:** 10/07/2021 **Telephone:** (209) 379-1038

PEPC Project Number: 104171

Locations:

County, State: Mariposa, CA

Describe project:

See Categorical Exclusion Form.

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

The APE is limited to the area within 200 feet of the centerline of the road segments in Wawona and Yosemite West as described (approximately 812 acres total) and approximately 420 acres across Yosemite Valley burn units. Conifers will be flush cut. Ground disturbance may be caused by impact from falling trees, equipment working in and removing timber from project areas, and burning slash piles affecting surface and near-surface soils.

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

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

Archeological Resources Present: Yes

Property Name: Wawona Archeological District **LCS:**

Property Name: Yosemite Valley Archeological District **LCS:**

Archeological Resources Notes: Multiple archeological sites are in proposed work areas [REDACTED]

Historical Structures/Resources Present: Yes

Property Name: Wawona Hotel National Historic Landmark **LCS:**

Property Name: Ranger Club NHL **LCS:**

Location: Yosemite

Historical Structures/Resources Notes: Various historic structures and resources are present within the project area, including the Wawona Hotel NHL and Rangers' Club NHL.

Cultural Landscapes Present: Yes

Property Name: Yosemite Valley Historic District **LCS:**

Property Name: Yosemite Village Historic District **LCS:**

Property Name: Wawona Hotel and Pavilion Historic District **LCS:**

Ethnographic Resources Present: Yes

Ethnographic Resources Notes: Black Oak woodlands in Yosemite Valley were historically tended through indigenous practices. This project will remove encroaching conifers to restore better growing conditions for oaks. Project details were included in the October 2021 Tribal Spreadsheet. No comments were received.

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

Yes/No	The proposed action will...
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
Yes	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)
No	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:

106 Advisor

Name: Hope Schear

Date: 12/03/2021

Comments: Compliance complete. YOSE PA streamlined review category 6.

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 or Other Programmatic Agreement

[X] Anthropologist

Name: Liz Williams

Date: 11/30/2021

Comments: Tribes were invited to consult through the TSS on 10/28/2021.

The park did not receive a response to our consultation request within 30-days.

No comments, concerns, or objections have been received by the park within 30-days.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []

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

Adverse Effect ___Adverse Effect ___Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: Park Specific or Other Programmatic Agreement

[X] Archeologist

Name: Erin Davenport

Date: 10/07/2021

Comments: Various archeological survey projects have occurred in these proposed work areas. Multiple archeological sites are in proposed work areas [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As with this project and others related to fuel management, such as hazard tree removal and prescribed burns, the Branch of Anthropology coordinates with project managers to identify site boundaries and provide buffers for avoidance. Site locations are conveyed through face-to-face interaction, monthly meetings, and shared spatial data on secured mobile devices. In other instances, archeologists have teamed with crews to identify locations within site boundaries that would benefit from fuel reduction actions, particularly removing fallen trees on the site surface. These fuels, when burned, increase the intensity and duration of fire on the site surface, which increases potential damage to cultural materials. To reduce this risk, archeologists identify treatment areas and specify methods for reducing ground disturbance.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance [X]

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

Adverse Effect ___Adverse Effect ___Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations: Integrate archeologist into project implementation and identify archeological site boundaries prior to implementation and identify priority sites for fuel reduction efforts. Archeologist will monitor work within sensitive archeological sites. Removal of fuels within site boundaries for resources that have the potential to be disturbed by these actions [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] will involve methods that minimize or do not include ground disturbance. Associated site protection actions include moving slash outside of site boundaries, identifying locations within site boundaries that do not contain cultural materials that can be treated with heavy equipment, chipping and hauling slash instead of piling, and removing fuels from on top of and adjacent to features and concentrations of artifacts. These methods are implemented on a site by site basis to ensure no adverse effect to archeological sites.

Doc Method: Park Specific or Other Programmatic Agreement

[X] Historian

Name: Erin Davenport

Date: 01/05/2022

Comments: Impacts to built-environment buildings and structures is negligible in the short term, and beneficial in the long term. Historic views and vistas will be restored in many cases due to this work. Defensible space provides further protection for historic buildings and structures.

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 or Other Programmatic Agreement

[X] **Historical Landscape Architect**

Name: Vida Germano

Date: 11/01/2021

Comments: This project will have no adverse on cultural landscapes within the APE. Hazard tree removal and fuel reduction following approved plans is necessary to minimize hazards within the cultural landscape and is part of routine maintenance of the cultural landscapes. This work will improve the condition of several key cultural landscapes within the park.

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 or Other Programmatic Agreement

No Reviews From: Curator, Historical Architect, Other Advisor

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

Select with X	Assessment of Effect
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Potential to Cause Effects
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Historic Properties Affected
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Adverse Effect
<input type="checkbox"/>	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.)

[X] **C. Undertaking Related to Park Specific or Another Agreement**

The proposed undertaking is covered for Section 106 purposes under another document such as a park, region or statewide agreement established in accord with 36 CFR 800.7 or 36 CFR 800.14.

[] **D. Combined NEPA/NHPA Process**

Process and documentation required for the preparation of an EA/FONSI or an EIS/ROD to comply with Section 106 is in accord with 36 CFR 800.8.c.

3. Consultation Information

SHPO Required: No

SHPO Sent:

SHPO Received:

THPO Required: Yes

THPO Sent: 10/28/2021

THPO Received: No comments received after 30 days

SHPO/THPO Notes:

Advisory Council Participating: No

Advisory Council Notes:

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.)

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

- Only work described in PEPC 104171 is approved for implementation. Any changes to the scope of work will require additional review by the Environmental Planning and Compliance Branch.
- Integrate archeologist into project implementation and identify archeological site boundaries prior to implementation and identify priority sites for fuel reduction efforts. Archeologist will monitor work within sensitive archeological sites. Removal of fuels within site boundaries for resources that have the potential to be disturbed by these actions [REDACTED] will involve methods that minimize or do not include ground disturbance. Associated site protection actions include moving slash outside of site boundaries, identifying locations within site boundaries that do not contain cultural materials that can be treated with heavy equipment, chipping and hauling slash instead of piling, and removing fuels from on top of and adjacent to features and concentrations of artifacts. These methods are implemented on a site-by-site basis to ensure no adverse effect to archeological sites.
- Coordinate and consult with Park resources staff (wildlife, archeology, vegetation etc.), concessioners, facilities, hazard tree crews, and other affected stakeholders at least 1 week ahead of pile burning or thinning operations to identify sensitive areas, allow for operational planning, and ensure the implementation of applicable mitigation measures.

6. Assessment of Effect Notes:

This work falls within the scope of the 2020 Yosemite Programmatic Agreement, category 6 Hazard Fuel and Fire Management.

D.RECOMMENDED BY PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR:

Section 106 Coordinator Hope Schear **Date:** April 27, 2022
Signature: _____

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 Signature: Cicely Muldoon **Date:** April 29, 2022



Other Compliance/Consultations Form

Park Name: Yosemite National Park

PEPC Project Number: 104171

Project Title: Biomass Removal and Thinning- Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Yosemite West

Project Type: Fire - Mechanical Fuel Reduction

Project Location:

County, State: Mariposa, CA

Project Leader: Garrett Dickman

ESA

Any Federal Species in the project Area? Yes

If species in area: Likely to Adversely Affect

Was Biological Assessment prepared? Yes

Sent to FWS: Aug 13, 2018

FWS Response: Dec 12, 2018

Sent to NMFS:

NMFS Response:

If Biological Assessment prepared, concurred? Yes

Formal Consultation required? Yes

Formal Consultation Notes:

This project "may effect, but is not likely to adversely affect" the Pacific Fisher. The project has been appended to the park's 6/12/2020 Programmatic Biological Opinion for the Fisher with USFWS concurrence on 4/1/2022. MA-NLAA determination is contingent on the implementation and adherence to the conservation measures outlined in the Mitigations section.

This project is being placed under the park's programmatic biological opinion for the California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*; CRLF), "Reinitiation of Formal Consultation on the California Red-legged Frog, Reintroduction Project in Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park" dated 12/12/2018 (attached). The park has determined that the project "may affect, and is likely to adversely affect" the California red-legged frog due to the proximity of the project area to areas that are known to be occupied by the frog and the project actions involving pile burning and heavy equipment use.

The following protections apply for CRLF:

A biological monitor is required for pile burning. Coordinate with the Aquatic Wildlife Program ASAP so that we can help with this and get it on our tentative schedule.

Educational talk by Aquatic Wildlife Biologist is required- please schedule no later than 2 weeks before work start, this would need to happen for both tree felling/piling crews, as well as burning crews.

Pre-work CRLF surveys are required. The surveyor will flag habitat elements for retention and make recommendations for protection of CRLF. Biologists may want existing downed, cut trees to be retained as existing habitat at certain sites, such as Yellow Pine, or ask that tree fellers fell trees into certain areas to enhance the CRLF habitat.

Hauling and chipping or biogen is preferred to piling. Hand piling is preferred to using heavy machinery. Small piles are preferred to large piles.

No piles or burning within 25 feet of aquatic habitats (ponds, rivers, drainages, wetlands). Piles need to be burned between April 15 and October 15 to best avoid impacts to CRLF.

Burn piles will be burned preferably within 6 months of piling, but no greater than 1 year after piling. If piles sit for greater than 1 year, they will have to be deconstructed by hand with a biological monitor present and re-piled, before burning could commence.

Minimize use of heavy equipment in natural areas; go in and out if they must drive into areas for work. Avoid turning in natural areas.

Formal Consultation Concluded: Apr 1, 2022

Any State listed Species in the Project Area? Yes

Consultation Information: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] No work should occur within 1 mile of identified Great Gray Owl nest trees during the nesting Limited Operating Period of March 15 - August 15 to avoid disturbing nesting owls. This LOP may be shortened depending on the actual timing of nesting. The project manager should work with the park biologist to identify avoidance areas and confirm the LOP prior to commencing work.

General Notes:

Data Entered By: Ninette Daniele **Date:** Nov 24, 2021

ESA Mitigations

See Letter of Compliance Completion

Floodplains/Wetlands/§404 Permits

Question	Yes/No	Details
A.1. Is project in 100- or 500-year floodplain or flash flood hazard area?	Yes	Determined to be exempt from compliance with Director's Order #77-2 and no Floodplain Statement of Findings required.
A.2. Is Project in wetlands as defined by NPS/DOI?	Yes	Determined to be exempt from compliance with Director's Order #77-1 and no Wetland Statement of Findings required.
B. COE Section 404 permit needed?	No	No placement of fill in waters of the United States.
C. State 401 certification?	No	None
D. State Section 401 Permit?	No	Issue Date: Expiration Date:
E. Tribal Water Quality Permit?	No	None
F. CZM Consistency determination needed?	N/A	N/A
G. Erosion & Sediment Control Plan Required?	No	None
H. Any other permits required?	No	Permit Information:
Other Information:	Yes	Some thinning areas are located within the 1% chance of annual flooding zone, however no construction within or modification of the floodplain is proposed. Impacts to meadows or wetlands will be minimized by avoiding wheeled or tracked equipment within these areas.

Data Entered By: Daniel Sharon

Date: Nov 1, 2021

Floodplains & Wetlands Mitigations

See Letter of Compliance Completion

Wilderness

Question	Yes/No	Notes
A. Does this project occur in or adjacent to Designated, Recommended, Proposed, Study, Eligible, or Potential Wilderness?	No	None
B. Is the only place to conduct this project in wilderness?	No	None
C. Is the project necessary for the administration of the area as wilderness?	No	None
D. Would the project or any of its alternatives adversely affect (directly or indirectly) Designated, Recommended, Proposed, Study, Eligible, or Potential Wilderness? (If Yes, Minimum Requirements Analysis required)	No	None
E. Does the project or any of its alternatives involve the use of any of the Wilderness Act Section 4(c) prohibited uses: commercial enterprise, permanent road, temporary road, motor vehicles, motorized equipment, motorboats, landing of aircraft, mechanical transport, structure, or installation? (If Yes, Minimum Requirements Analysis required)	No	None
If the answer to D or E above is "Yes" then a Minimum Requirements Analysis is required. Describe the status of this analysis in the column to the right.	N/A	Initiation Date: Completed Date: Approved Date:
Other Information:	No	None

Data Entered By: Daniel Sharon **Date:** Nov 1, 2021

Other Permits/Laws *Questions A & B are no longer used.*

Question	Yes/No
C. Wild and scenic river concerns exist?	No
D. National Trails concerns exist?	No
E. Air Quality consult with State needed?	Yes
F. Consistent with Architectural Barriers, Rehabilitation, and Americans with Disabilities Acts or not Applicable? (If N/A check Yes)	Yes
G. Other:	No

Other Information:

Pile Burning may require a smoke management plan approved by the state. Proposed work areas overlap with several segments of the Merced Wild and Scenic River. This project aligns with the goals of the Merced River Plan EIS by restoring forest structure throughout the river corridor.

Data Entered By: Daniel Sharon **Date:** Nov 1, 2021