



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: Annette Catamec, Yosemite National Park
From: Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Subject: NEPA and NHPA Clearance: 2010-044 Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Ecological
Restoration Project (30985)

The Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed project/action and completed its environmental assessment documentation, and we have determined that there:

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

The proposed project, therefore, is now cleared for all NEPA and NHPA compliance requirements as presented above. Project plans and specifications are approved and construction 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:

- Coordinate stock use with Facilities Management to mitigate additional impacts.
- Ensure consultation and arrangement for a site visit with the park Archeologist, Laura Kim, 379-1314, prior to beginning any work to ensure avoidance of archeological resources.

// Niki Nicholas //-(acting)
Don L. Neubacher

Enclosure (with attachments)

cc: Statutory Compliance File



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 04/13/2010

Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: 2010-044 Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Ecological Restoration Project

PEPC Project Number: 30985

Project Description: Ecological restoration work to be completed at the Vogelsang High Sierra Camp. The following actions will be implemented:

1. Restore the area and improve surface drainage using hand tools (shovels would be used to loosen about six inches of soil). Rocks gathered from the site would be used to delineate the trails. Locally-gathered duff would be spread onto the restored area. In addition, the corral area will be restored which would include loosening the soil and covering tree roots (where the soil has been eroded) with natural materials.
2. Cover a 20 foot section with soil and small rock.
3. Extend the hitching rail for 16 feet at the proposed location which is presently used for camp operations (e.g. trash storage and loading/unloading stock).

The materials (metal rail and concrete for footings) would be transported during the routine seasonal opening. Mechanical equipment will not be used to either transport materials or install the hitching rail. The concrete bases from the old hitching rail will be removed and hauled out using stock.

The National Park Service Trails Department will identify and apply erosion controls inside camp. A Wilderness Minimum Requirement Assessment is attached.

Project Location:

- Tuolumne County, California

Mitigation:

- Coordinate stock use with Facilities Management to mitigate additional impacts.

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 or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.

Park Superintendent // Niki Nicholas //-(acting)

Date 8-16-10



ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING FORM (ESF)

DO-12 APPENDIX 1

Date Form Initiated: **07/19/2010**

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: Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Ecological Restoration Project
PEPC Project Number: 30985
Project Type: landscape restoration (OTHER)
Project Location: County, State: Tuolumne, California Other: Vogelsang High Sierra Camp
Project Leader: Annette Catamec
Administrative Record Environmental Planning and Compliance Office
Location:
Administrative Record Contact: Renea Kennec
Notes:

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION

Preliminary drawings attached? **No**

Background information attached? **No**

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			Soil decompaction is six inches deep and hitching rail posts will be 24 inches deep and one foot in diameter.
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				
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 a 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				
16. Recreation resources, including supply, demand, visitation, activities, etc.	No				
17. Visitor experience, aesthetic resources	No				
18. Archeological resources		Negligible			Consultation with the park archeologist will occur prior to beginning any work.
19. Prehistoric/historic structure	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
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, sustainability	No				
28. Urban quality, gateway communities, etc.	No				
29. Long-term management of resources or land/resource productivity	No				
30. Other important environment	No				

D. 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?		N		
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		N		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?				
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?		N		
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		N		
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		N		
F. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		N		
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?		N		
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?		N		
I. Violate a federal law, or a state, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		N		
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		N		
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)?		N		
L. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or		N		

Mandatory Criteria: If implemented, would the proposal:	Yes	No	N/A	Comment or Data Needed to Determine
actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?				

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.

E. OTHER INFORMATION

Are personnel preparing this form familiar with the site? **Yes**

Did personnel conduct a site visit? **No**

Are there any interested or affected agencies or parties? **No**

Has consultation with all affected agencies or tribes been completed? **No**

Are there any connected, cumulative, or similar actions as part of the proposed action? **No**

G. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM SIGNATORIES

Field of Expertise

Project Leader -

Field of Expertise

Division IDT Liaison -

Historical Architect -

Chief of Project Management -

Fire Prevention Officer -

Deputy Chief Ranger, Operations -

Safety Officer -

Division IDT Liaison -

Historical Landscape Architect -

NEPA Specialist -

Archeologist -

Division IDT Liaison -

Division IDT Liaison -

Environmental Planning and Compliance Program Manager -

Chief of Interpretation -

Chief of Planning -

Interdisciplinary Team Leader Name

Annette Catamec:

Technical Specialists Names

Tony Brocchini

Sueann Brown

Mark Butler

Don Coffman

Charles Cuvelier

Roger Farmer

Randy Fong

David Humphrey

Renea Kennec

Laura Kirn

Mary Kline

Carol Knipper

-Elexis Mayer

Tom Medema

Kathleen Morse

Superintendent -
Chief of Resources Management & Science -
Chief of Business and Revenue Management -
NHPA Specialist -
Division IDT Liaison -
Chief of Administration Management -
Chief of Facilities Management -

Don Neubacher
Niki Nicholas
Marty Nielson
Jeannette Simons
Kim Tucker
Katariina Tuovinen
Ed Walls

H. 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.

F. SUPERVISORY SIGNATORY

Recommended:

Compliance Specialists	Date
<u>// Renea Kennec //</u> Compliance Specialist – Renea Kennec	<u>7/21/10</u>
<u>// Elexis Mayer //</u> Compliance Program Manager – Elexis Mayer	<u>8/4/10</u>
<u>// Randall J Fong //</u> Chief, Project Management – Mark Butler	<u>8/13/10</u>

Approved:

Superintendent	Date
<u>// Niki Nicholas //-(acting)</u> Don L. Neubacher	<u>8/16/10</u>



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 07/19/2010

PARK ESF ADDENDUM

Today's Date: July 19, 2010

PROJECT INFORMATION

Park Name: Yosemite National Park
Project Title: 2010-044 Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Ecological Restoration Project
PEPC Project Number: 30985
Project Type: landscape restoration (OTHER)
Project Location: County, State: Tuolumne, California
Project Leader: Annette Catamec

PARK ESF ADDENDUM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ESF Addendum Questions	Yes	No	N/A	Data Needed to Determine/Notes
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CHECKLIST				
1. Listed or proposed threatened or endangered species (Federal or State)?		No		
2. Species of special concern (Federal or State)?		No		
3. Park rare plants or vegetation?		No		
4. Potential habitat for any special-status species listed above?		No		
NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CHECKLIST				
5. Entail ground disturbance?	Yes			Soil decompaction is needed to improve percolation and decrease soil erosion.
6. Are any archeological or ethnographic sites located within the area of potential effect?		No		Arrange for site visit with park archeologist prior to beginning work, to ensure avoidance of archeological resources.
7. Entail alteration of a historic structure or cultural landscape?		No		

8. Has a National Register form been completed?			N/A	
9. Are there any structures on the park's List of Classified Structures in the area of potential effect?		No		
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CHECKLIST				
10. Fall within a wild and scenic river corridor?		No		
11. Fall within the bed and banks AND will affect the free-flow of the river?		No		
12. Have the possibility of affecting water quality of the area?		No		
13. Remain consistent with its river segment classification?			N/A	
14. Fall on a tributary of a Wild and Scenic River?	Yes			Fletcher Creek.
15. Will the project encroach or intrude upon the Wild and Scenic River corridor?		No		
16. Will the project unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, or fish and wildlife values?		No		
17. Consistent with the provisions in the Merced River Plan Settlement Agreement?	Yes			
WILDERNESS ACT CHECKLIST				
18. Within designated Wilderness?	Yes			Minimum Requirement Analysis is attached.
19. Within a Potential Wilderness Addition?	Yes			

Vogelsang proposed restoration 2010

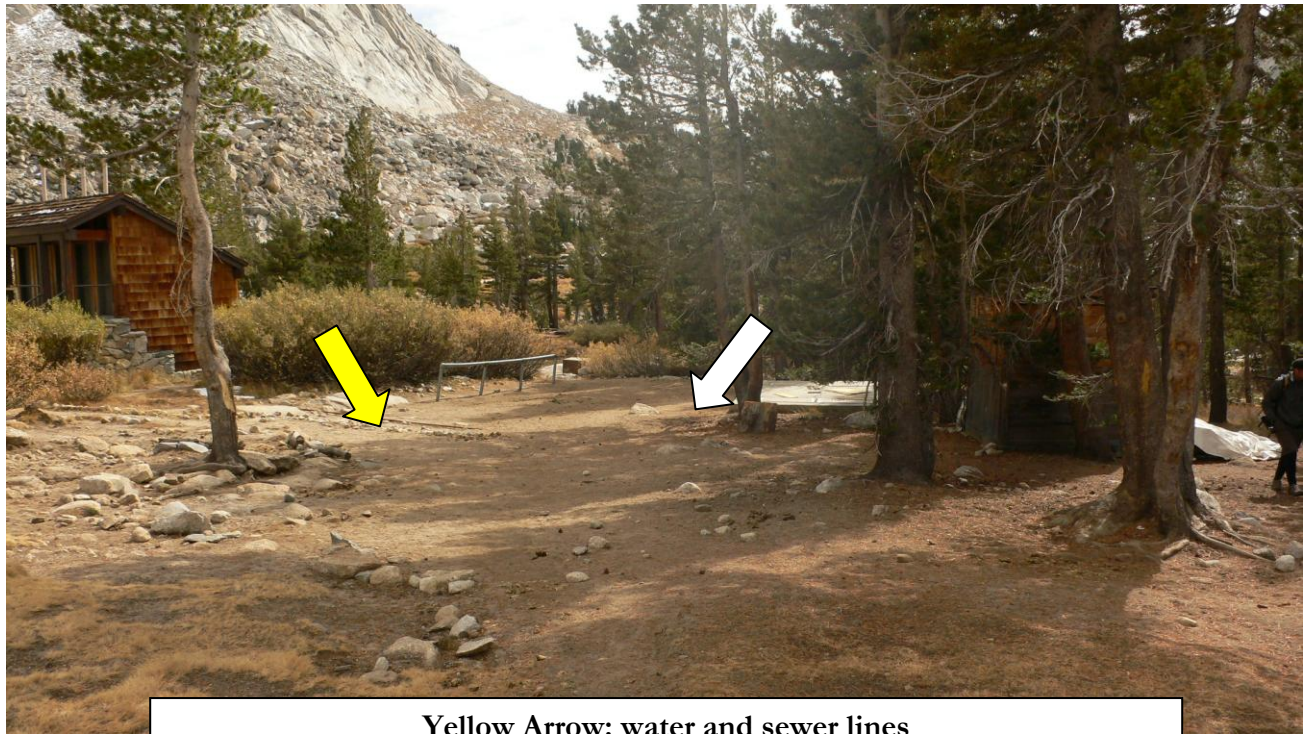


Paths inside camp

White arrow: to dinning tent

Yellow arrow: to linen shed

Red arrow: to guest tents



Yellow Arrow: water and sewer lines
White arrow: proposed location for a hitching rail



Old hitching rail removed during previous restoration effort in 2005



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Date: 07/19/2010

ASSESSMENT OF ACTIONS HAVING AN EFFECT ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. DESCRIPTION OF UNDERTAKING

1. **Park:** Yosemite National Park

2. Project Description:

a. **Project Name:** 2010-044 Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Ecological Restoration Project

b. **Date:** July 19, 2010

c. **PEPC project ID number:** 30985

3. Has the area of potential effects been surveyed to identify cultural resources?

☐ No

☐ Yes, Source or reference:

☐ Check here if no known cultural resources will be affected. (If this is because area has been disturbed, please explain or attach additional information to show the disturbance was so extensive as to preclude intact cultural deposits.)

4. Potentially Affected Resources:

Archeological resources affected?

Name and number(s): Vogelsang High Sierra Camp

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

☒ **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)

☐ Other (please specify)

6. Measures to prevent or minimize loss or impairment of historic/prehistoric properties:

- Ensure consultation and arrangement for a site visit with the park Archeologist, Laura Kirn, 379-1314, prior to beginning any work to ensure avoidance of archeological resources.

7. Supporting Study Data:

8. Attachments:

☐ Maps ☐ Archeological survey, if applicable ☐ Drawings ☐ Specifications ☐ Photographs
☐ Scope of Work ☐ Site plan ☐ List of Materials ☐ Samples ☐ Other:

Prepared by: Renea Kennec Date: July 19, 2010 Title: Telephone:

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: Laura Kirn

Date: 05/07/2010

Comments: Arrange for site visit with Archeologist prior to beginning work, to ensure avoidance of archeological resources.

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance ☐

Assessment of Effect: ☒ No Historic Properties Affected ☐ No Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

☒ Historical Architect

Name: Sueann Brown

Date: 05/26/2010

Comments:

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance ☐

Assessment of Effect: ☐ No Historic Properties Affected ☒ No Adverse Effect ☐ Adverse Effect ☐ Streamlined Review

Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: Park Specific Programmatic Agreement

[X] Historical Landscape Architect
Name: David Humphrey
Date: 05/13/2010
Comments:

Check if project does not involve ground disturbance []
Assessment of Effect: X No Historic Properties Affected ___ No Adverse Effect ___ Adverse
Effect ___ Streamlined Review
Recommendations for conditions or stipulations:

Doc Method: No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

No Reviews From: Curator, Historian, 106 Advisor, Other Advisor, Anthropologist

C. PARK SECTION 106 COORDINATOR'S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Assessment of Effect:

_____ No Historic Properties Affected X No Adverse Effect _____ Adverse Effect

2. Compliance requirements:

[] 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: _____

[X] 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.
Specify: 1999 Programmatic Agreement

☐ E. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED BY USE OF NEPA

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

☐ F. No Potential to Cause Effects [800.3(a)(1)]

☐ G. STIPULATIONS/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.

Recommended by Park Section 106 coordinator:

Signature of Historic Preservation Officer \\ Jeanette Simmons \\

Date: 8-11-10

D. 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.

Signature of Superintendent // Niki Nicholas //-(acting)

Date: 8-16-10

Yosemite National Park
Minimum Requirement Decision Process
For
Vogelsang High Sierra Camp Hitch Rail Installation

The current conditions are that the other hitching rail, which was located in the grassy area just north of the existing hitching rail, was unusable and missing the rail section and was removed in 2005 in a previous restoration effort. The existing hitching rail is about 16 feet and can occupy 8 head of stock at one time. We need to occupy up to 8 additional stock for a total of 16. The proposed location of the new hitching rail is immediately adjacent to the existing rail, in the loading and unloading area, about 10 feet to the south.

Step 1

Determine whether the proposed action takes place in designated Wilderness or in a Potential Wilderness Addition.

The proposed project will take place at Vogelsang High Sierra Camp which is a DNC land assignment within a potential wilderness addition.

Step 2a (For actions in Potential Wilderness Additions only)

Determine whether the proposed action is required for the continuation of the existing nonconforming use.

Stock use is required to sustain the High Sierra Camps' current use in order to supply the camps with needed supplies and equipment.

Step 3

Determine if the objectives of the proposed action can be met with actions outside of wilderness or potential wilderness.

No.

Step 4

Develop a list of alternatives to meet the objective of the proposed action. Include ways to reduce or mitigate the impacts of each alternative.

Ecological Restoration: This is an action that will occur in summer 2010, as expected by NPS, and as part of cyclic volunteer restoration projects performed at the High Camps. Ecological restoration is common to all alternatives and will help mitigate the impacts associated with stock use at Vogelsang High Sierra Camp.

Hitching Rail Alternatives:

***No action:** The existing impact consists of about 6 affected trees along with tree roots and vegetation which will continue if the hitching rail is not extended. The existing hitching rail has not been adequate to serve the 16 mules at camp at one time using only the existing hitching rail. The rail that was removed in 2005 was originally ill-placed far away from the camp in a grassy area and was very deteriorated. It was rarely used and thus removed in a previous restoration effort at Vogelsang. Extended hitching rail is needed for stock use. Signs will not mitigate this issue.*

***Extend Existing Hitching Rail 16 feet (preferred):** Extending the hitching rail at the proposed location will localize stock impacts to one area, close to the camp structures, and that is presently used for camp operations (i.e. trash storage, loading/unloading stock, etc.). Stock related impacts are minimized if consolidated into one place that is currently heavily used, instead of dispersing stock and rotating them in and out of the loading area. By providing enough infrastructure to tie stock to in the loading area, impact is consolidated and minimized at Vogelsang. Stock will be used to transporting the equipment (four 4' pieces of 3" diameter galvanized pipe for the rail & post and limited concrete for footings, which will be from 2 feet to 3 feet deep). We will be incorporated into routine seasonal opening of the Camp when additional stock is required to stock the camp for seasonal opening. The project will be conducted using hand-tools only. There will be no mechanical equipment used in either the transport of the materials or the installation.*

***Install Highline:** Installing a highline between trees is another alternative to secure stock. In order for this to happen each wrangler would have to secure the highline and take it down after each use. Leaving the highline up for the season would not be a preferred alternative.*

Step 5

**Determine the effects of each alternative on wilderness health and character.
Include cumulative effects.**

No action:

1. Biophysical effects –

- Describe any effects this action will have on the ecological health of the area, including air and water quality, wildlife, introduction of exotic species, erosion, siltation, wetlands, and rare, threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Include both biological and physical effects. Consult subject matter experts as needed.

The damage to trees and ground disturbance will continue, because the stock needs a hitching rail to be tie to.

- In potential wilderness additions, describe whether this action will make restoration to a wilderness condition more difficult when the area is designated as wilderness.

Restoration efforts may be more complex in some areas if the existing conditions continue. Restoration would also be required more often.

2. Experiential effects

- Describe any effects this action will have on the experience of wilderness visitors. Consider the effects on the opportunity for solitude, natural quiet, self-reliance, surprise, and discovery.

The present condition will continue to deteriorate as the impacts continue altering the natural appearance that the guests may seek.

- Describe any effect this action will have on the natural appearance of the area.
The present condition will continue to deteriorate as the impacts continue altering the natural appearance that the guests may seek.

3. Effects on wilderness character

- Describe any interference with natural processes, constraints on the freedom of wildlife or visitors, increase of management presence, or other reduction of wildness that this action may cause

Same as what presently exists.

Extend Existing Hitching Rail 16 feet

1. Biophysical effects –

- Describe any effects this action will have on the ecological health of the area, including air and water quality, wildlife, introduction of exotic species, erosion, siltation, wetlands, and rare, threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Include both biological and physical effects. Consult subject matter experts as needed.

This action will improve the ecological health of the area, by supplying a hitching rail to accommodate the existing number of stock to the camp. Extending the existing railing will contain stock related impacts to one area (unloading area) that is presently impacted, rather than allowing stock impacts to perpetuate throughout the camp.

- In potential wilderness additions, describe whether this action will make restoration to a wilderness condition more difficult when the area is designated as wilderness.

If Vogelsang High Sierra Camp is removed and the area is restored to Wilderness, the removal of the extended hitching rail will be a negligible amount of effort in relation to the removal of all the infrastructure at the Camp. The loading and unloading area where the extended rail is proposed for installation will likely require significant restoration efforts; however, those efforts will be consolidated to a localized area, rather than expanded restoration efforts throughout the potential wilderness addition. The hitching rail can be removed with the same amount of moderate effort used to install it.

2. Experiential effects

- Describe any effects this action will have on the experience of wilderness visitors. Consider the effects on the opportunity for solitude, natural quiet, self-reliance, surprise, and discovery.

The hitching rail should not affect the visitor's wilderness experience as it is proposed to be installed in an area where camp operations take place currently. Extending a hitching rail 16 feet will not introduce more man-made influence of a degraded environment, but it will minimally increase the amount of development that currently exists. The fact that the proposed action would help consolidate the operations at camp to one area may enhance some visitors' Wilderness experience. Likewise, the ecological restoration work throughout the disturbed areas in camp could enhance visitors' wilderness experience. Using normally scheduled stock use to the camps will not increase the strings of animals using the trails, therefore reducing possible experience impacts for visitors along the trail.

- Describe any effect this action will have on the natural appearance of the area.

Providing a rail for the stock to be tied to will improve the general appearance of the area as a whole, the stock impacts will be consolidated to the operational area of the camp.

3. Effects on wilderness character

- Describe any interference with natural processes, constraints on the freedom of wildlife or visitors, increase of management presence, or other reduction of wilderness that this action may cause

None. We will use normally scheduled stock trips to the camps to haul the materials for this project.

Install a Highline:

1. Biophysical effects –

- Describe any effects this action will have on the ecological health of the area, including air and water quality, wildlife, introduction of exotic species, erosion, siltation, wetlands, and rare, threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Include both biological and physical effects. Consult subject matter experts as needed.

A hitching rail is a necessary piece of equipment to tie stock to, especially at the high camps, as it will help consolidated the areas where stock accumulated, resulting in minimized.

This action should not effect water quality, wildlife, exotic species, but could open other areas to impact that have not been impacted in the past and could negatively impact the trees that the highline is attached to.

- In potential wilderness additions, describe whether this action will make restoration to a wilderness condition more difficult when the area is designated as wilderness.

Same as what presently exists.

2. Experiential effects

- Describe any effects this action will have on the experience of wilderness visitors. Consider the effects on the opportunity for solitude, natural quiet, self-reliance, surprise, and discovery.

A highline may appear to be out of place for the casual wilderness hiker, but affects on the visitors' Wilderness experience are difficult to assess.

- Describe any effect this action will have on the natural appearance of the area.

While the natural appearance of the area could be the same for each alternative, it may be the best alternative to consolidate stock to one area that is previously impacted and very close to the camp. Highlines strung through trees, further away from the loading area may seem out of place and could impact the appearance of the overall camp area.

3. Effects on wilderness character

- Describe any interference with natural processes, constraints on the freedom of wildlife or visitors, increase of management presence, or other reduction of wildness that this action may cause

Negligible localized manipulation from restoration in currently disturbed areas.

Step 6

Determine the management concerns of each alternative.

No action:

1. Health and safety concerns

- Describe any health and safety concerns associated with this action. Include health and safety considerations of both employees and the public.

A shortage of hitching space for the stock will increase the safety concerns for the cowboys and possibly the guests. Stock management can be dangerous and adequate infrastructure to properly secure stock will improve the safety concerns related to stock use. Under the no action alternative, limited safety concerns could continue.

2. Societal/political/economic effects

- Describe any political considerations such as MOUs, agency agreements, etc. that may be affected by this action.

None

- Estimate the economic costs of this action.

None

Extend Existing Hitching Rail:

1. Health and safety concerns

- Describe any health and safety concerns associated with this action. Include health and safety considerations of both employees and the public.

Extending the hitching rail would be a safer alternative. It is stronger and will hold up better than a highline. Using normal stock runs to the camp will not increase concerns for hikers' safety. Extending the hitching rail will give the cowboys a safer place to tie the stock to and an adequate facility. The consolidation of stock to one manageable area will improve visitor safety surrounding stock.

2. Societal/political/economic effects

- Describe any political considerations such as MOUs, agency agreements, etc. that may be affected by this action.

None

- Estimate the economic costs of this action.

This option will cost the concessionaire approximately \$500 to procure and install and minimal annual maintenance will be required. This option will have negligible impact on the socioeconomic environment.

Install a Highline:

1. Health and safety concerns

- Describe any health and safety concerns associated with this action. Include health and safety considerations of both employees and the public.

A highline is not as stable as a hitching rail and relies on cowboy skill to properly secure. A highline will not consolidate stock to one area and may be harder to manage than a permanent, consolidated fixture.

2. Societal/political/economic effects

- Describe any political considerations such as MOUs, agency agreements, etc. that may be affected by this action.

None

- Estimate the economic costs of this action.

Minimal costs to install or transport

Step 7

Choose an alternative

Extending the hitching rail would be a safer alternative and will hold up better than a highline. The hitching rail will contain the stock impact to an area that is already impacted compared to installing and removing the highline after each use.

No action or keeping the existing condition will only continue to deteriorate the resources in the immediate area. Preventing further resource damage by the installation of another 16 feet of hitching rail outweighs the argument of no action.

Our preferred alternative is installing an additional 16 feet of hitching rail in the camps unloading area. Since the operation of the camp requires the camp to be supplied by stock providing the stock adequate facilities should exist. Extending the existing hitching rail 16 feet is a minimum requirement for providing the facilities needed to prevent further resource damage by stock in camp.

Vogelsang HSC Hitch Rail Installation

Check one:

- ☒ The proposed action is a temporary, one time activity.
- ☐ The proposed action will be an on-going, long term activity.

Submitted By:

M. Gallagher 3/28/10
Date

Reviewed By:

Mr C. Miller 6/7/10
Wilderness Manager Date
(Attach any comments and conditions)

Approved By:

Charles Croft 6/11/10
Chief Ranger Date
(Attach any comments and conditions)

D. K. Kuehn 6/11/10
Superintendent Date
(Attach any comments and conditions)