

For Immediate Release
Contact

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Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks to Begin Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park will be preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a plan to restore high elevation aquatic ecosystems and mountain yellow-legged frogs within their historic range in the parks. A notice of intent to prepare an EIS was published today in the Federal Register provides more information on the proposal.

There are approximately 560 lakes and ponds within the parks that contain introduced trout, and removal of these non-native species from up to 15% of these sites will be considered. This project is needed to preserve and restore aquatic ecosystems and populations of native species, including mountain yellow-legged frogs in high elevation lakes and streams, creating new opportunities for visitors to experience native wildlife yet also maintaining recreational fishing opportunities.

Initially public scoping was conducted in early 2007, and it was anticipated an environmental assessment (EA) would be prepared to analyze the project. During that time, the parks received comments from over 30 different sources. As staff began the environmental analysis and re-examined information provided by the public, it became clear that the project had the potential for significant impacts on the human environment. There was a level of controversy associated with the proposal, potential for uncertainty and both adverse and beneficial consequences, and unique and unforeseeable environmental impacts. For these reasons, in early 2009 the Superintendent determined that an EIS would be prepared. An EIS is a more comprehensive document that is prepared when a federal action may result in a significant impact on the human environment.

All scoping comments received to date are included in the official administrative record; the Scoping Summary Report includes all comments and information obtained to date and is available on-line at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>. It is not necessary for previous letters to be resubmitted; however if prior respondents have new issues or information they wish to bring forward then new letters should be submitted. The public can submit comments on the project until November 21, 2009, online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/seki>, by email at SEKI_Planning@nps.gov, or by writing:

Superintendent
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks
47050 Generals Highway
Three Rivers, CA 93271

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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