

TEN-S-10

RECEIVED

SEP 29 2008



09/28/2008 08:00 PM

To <yose\_planning@nps.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Tenaya Lake project

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Yosemite Park Planners:

I read an article today in the Contra Costa Times, entitled, Restoration plans begin for Tenaya Lake in Yosemite. Here are my views of that article which was centered around comments made by Linda Dahl, and the Yosemite Park Planners, interested in accommodating all who want to come to Tenaya Lake, and area that shouldn't need to accommodate as many people who are daily converging on that area now

It's clear to me from the article that the park service already know what they are going to do, from what Ms. Dahl said in this article, but seems that you plan to go through the exercise of seeking public opinion to make it look right in these media blurbs you put out.

The concept of spending as much money for this project as you claim, when it's clear that nothing is broken there at Tenaya Lake, worries me. It is obvious that you plan on expanding the park incrementally, with one project after another like this one, the Lower Falls project, the Tunnel View project, the Fern Springs project, etc., just so that this park can better handle crowding. More and more visitors come as time goes on, but you show now concept of how to deal with it in any terms but accommodating all of them, with no foresight of the future.

Just how many people can go to Tenaya Lake area before things start breaking down? That is entirely relative to how many accommodations you make for what will be a never ending surge of people over the years to come. You want to build parking areas and more trails, just so the area can accommodate people, simply because they are crowded. You are making Yosemite's high country areas that are accessible by car and/or tour bus, more like Yosemite Valley's so called "front country", simply because more and more people are coming with a tour bus every three minutes in the summer? The tour bus drops them off on the east end, drives up the road a quarter mile, and picks them up again. This occurs every fifteen minutes, at least in late September, all day long. When will you say enough is enough? Commercial impacts on Yosemite are over burdening these non-front country areas now. Don't encourage it.

Now that I joined your planning department a week ago when you offered a walking tour focused on this scoping study, it became clear to me that there is nothing you can do to gain parking without claiming virgin natural areas at Tenaya Lake. The idea that parking areas are not well defined, or lack signage is questionable. The parking along the road is narrow, but what are you going to do, widen the road? You will not always be able to accommodate everyone who wants to come there, which is why the court ordered you to do a User Carrying Capacity study for the Merced River.

I	1	2	2	C	10			
RT	#S	LT	DT	UT	IA	IR	OR	TS

There is nothing in the article that I read today that indicates that the park service has any concern that one day there will be several times the amounts of visitors you are seeing there now.

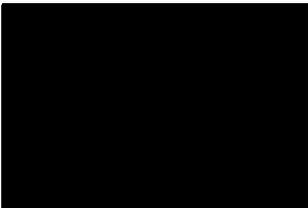
I've said it before, but again, visitation has historically doubled every twenty years since 1954, when the first time in history Yosemite accommodated its first million visitors per year. Since then the park has reached four million in the mid 1990s. One day the gates will need to shut when so many people arrive that every "front country" trail is overused. I guess you see it coming, which is why you want to pave and widen the trails, build larger parking areas, build gigantic restroom facilities for sixty people flowing out of a tour bus all at once, simply because commercial tour buses converge on the place in record numbers these days. How about saying "no" to the Yosemite Fund's money for a change, and think about what to do to preserve Yosemite's pristine places, the few that are left that are accessible by car, before the Yosemite Fund makes Yosemite National Park into another New York Central Park?

This whole thing worries me greatly. But, I do look forward to hearing your discussions about what kind of camping could be discussed for Tenaya Lake. That old campground was always a favorite for those who wanted something other than the congestion available in the Valley campgrounds.

Are you dangling the campground potential at Tenaya Lake out there so that those of us who are still incensed by your lack of interest in a better Yosemite camping experience might not speak too disparagingly about their Tenaya Lake plans. I'm sorry. If that's all it is, as much as it hurts to say this, forget the campground, and preserve Tenaya Lake first. Don't expand it simply because too many people want to go there these days. What's it going to be like in ten years if you build more parking lots now? You'll just want larger parking lots every twenty or thirty years, on into infinity. That is, until someone puts their foot down.



Truckee, CA 96161



TEN-S-10

Page  
3063

P.S: Please extend my regards to the nice people who performed the Tenaya Lake Scoping Study walking tour a week ago. These were some of the nicest, and well informed park service people I've dealt with thus far. Gretchen Stromberg, Sue Beatty, and Clarence (forgot last name) have my most sincere respect. There's no way these people would be in favor of some of the things alluded to in this Contra Costa Times Article I read today.