



Tioga Trailheads Project

What is the Tioga Trailheads Project?

The Tioga Road is an historic travel route stretching 46 miles through the high country of Yosemite National Park. This trans-Sierra road began as a Native American footpath for trade and travel. It later became the great Sierra Wagon road and then a mining road. When the road first opened to regular park visitors in 1915 it was travelled by only 190 cars.

Today Tioga Road is a seasonal highway used by over 500,000 travelers each year. The road is typically open from May to November, depending on weather conditions, and is closed each winter. The road is the highest trans-sierra route in California crossing Tioga Pass at 9,945 ft.

The Tioga Trailheads Project will establish corridor-wide trailhead design guidelines; it will identify actions needed to protect sensitive natural and cultural resources; and will identify areas where visitor safety, access, and enjoyment may be improved. The project will also consider alternative means to improve traffic and pedestrian travel patterns, wayfinding, accessibility, picnicking facilities, food storage, waste management and the location of interpretive materials at select trailheads along the Tioga Road.

This project will address eight of the twelve designated trailheads along the Tioga Road, including (from east to west): Gaylor Lakes at Tioga Pass, Mono Pass, Snow Creek, May Lake, Porcupine, Yosemite Creek/Ten Lakes, Lukens Lake, and Tamarack Flat/Aspen Valley.

What are the goals of this Project?

PROVIDE OVERALL TRAILHEAD DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Establish Tioga Road trailhead design guidelines consistent with historic and contemporary values

PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Focus use and improve site delineation to minimize trampling and erosion
- Restore impacted areas
- Ensure proper stormwater run-off to minimize erosion and mitigate impacts to surface water flow patterns
- Provide food storage where needed to ensure wildlife do not have access to human food
- Provide for continued American Indian traditional and cultural practices

IMPROVE VISITOR SAFETY, ACCESS, AND ENJOYMENT

- Ensure safe ingress and egress from trailhead parking areas
- Improve way-finding and signs
- Provide appropriate parking capacity
- Determine appropriate locations for visitor information, education and interpretation opportunities at trailheads
- Provide needed improvements for visitor accessibility
- Ensure proper trash and waste management



Why is the project needed at this time?

Several trailheads along the Tioga Road corridor are experiencing problems related to aging facilities, insufficient parking, confusing trailhead signs, and sites that were not designed to accommodate current use levels. Some trailheads are experiencing problems related to erosion, loss of vegetation, and improper waste disposal that is having a negative effect on the surrounding landscape.

The Gaylor Lakes and Cathedral Lakes trailheads are being addressed in the Tuolumne River Plan (TRP) and the Sunrise and Murphy Creek trailheads will be addressed in the Tenaya Lake Area Concept Plan. The remaining eight trailheads will be addressed through the Tioga Trailheads Project

How can I contribute to the plan?

An environmental assessment is currently underway. Public scoping is open from November 6 through December 12, 2008. Comments with issues, ideas, and suggestions for the Tioga Trailheads Project may be submitted during this period. The public will have a second formal comment period when the environmental assessment is ready for review (anticipated in winter 2009/2010). Although there will be two formal opportunities to comment on this plan, it is important to remember that comments are welcome at any time during the planning process.

Public Participation

Public participation is essential for the success of this and all other park projects. Here are some ways to stay involved in the park:

- Visit www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/ttp.htm to find the most up to date information about the Tioga Trailheads Project.
- Attend a National Park Service public open house on October 29 or December 3, 2008 at the Yosemite Valley East Auditorium from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. to talk with park staff and obtain more information about the Tioga Trailheads Project.
- Attend a site visit to select trailheads along the Tioga Road in Spring 2009. Check the project website for time and location after the Tioga Road opens for the season in 2009.
- Add your name to the park's planning mailing list and receive the Planning Update newsletter as well as other planning-related notices. You can also submit your email address to receive the park's periodic electronic newsletter.
- Additionally, you can submit comments with your thoughts about this topic or any other project in the park by any of the following means:

Mail: Superintendent
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Phone: 209/379-1365
Fax: 209/379-1294
E-mail: Yose_Planning@nps.gov



THE YOSEMITE FUND[®]
Providing for Yosemite's Future

The Yosemite Fund is the primary nonprofit fundraising organization for Yosemite. Since 1988, The Yosemite Fund has supported projects that include trail rehabilitation and repair, habitat restoration, visitor services and education, cultural and historic preservation, scientific research, and wildlife management. The Tioga Trailheads Project is one of several projects currently being funded by the Yosemite Fund as part of the Trail Campaign.