

Yosemite National Park Mariposa Grove Restoration

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

A photograph of a dense forest of tall, thick redwood trees with reddish-brown bark and green foliage. The trees are the central focus of the image.

Public Scoping Mariposa Grove Restoration EIS

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Protection of the Mariposa Grove

***“An Act Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the “Yo-Semite Valley,” and of the Land embracing the “Mariposa Big Tree Grove”
--- signed by President Lincoln, June 30, 1864.***

The first legislation passed by Congress to specifically set aside public lands for their scenic values and *“be held for public uses, resort and recreation.”*

Wawona Tunnel Tree ca.1928



US Army soldiers in the Mariposa Grove, 1899



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Project Need

Today, the Mariposa Grove is a popular all-season destination for visitors to Yosemite. Existing visitor use and site infrastructure severely impact the health of the ancient trees as well as the quality of the visitor experience.



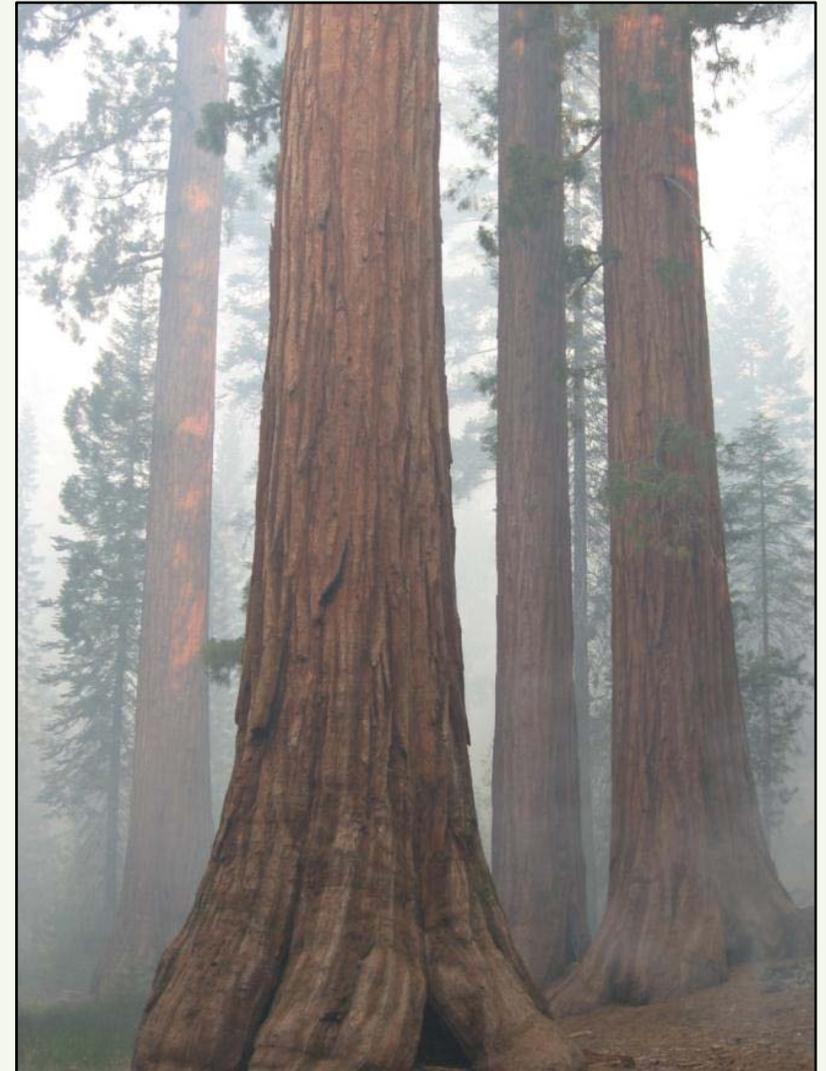
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Project Purpose

- Restore Degraded Grove Habitat
- Enhance the Visitor Experience
- Sustain Long-Term Health of the Giant Sequoias



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General Management Plan Goals (NPS, 1980)

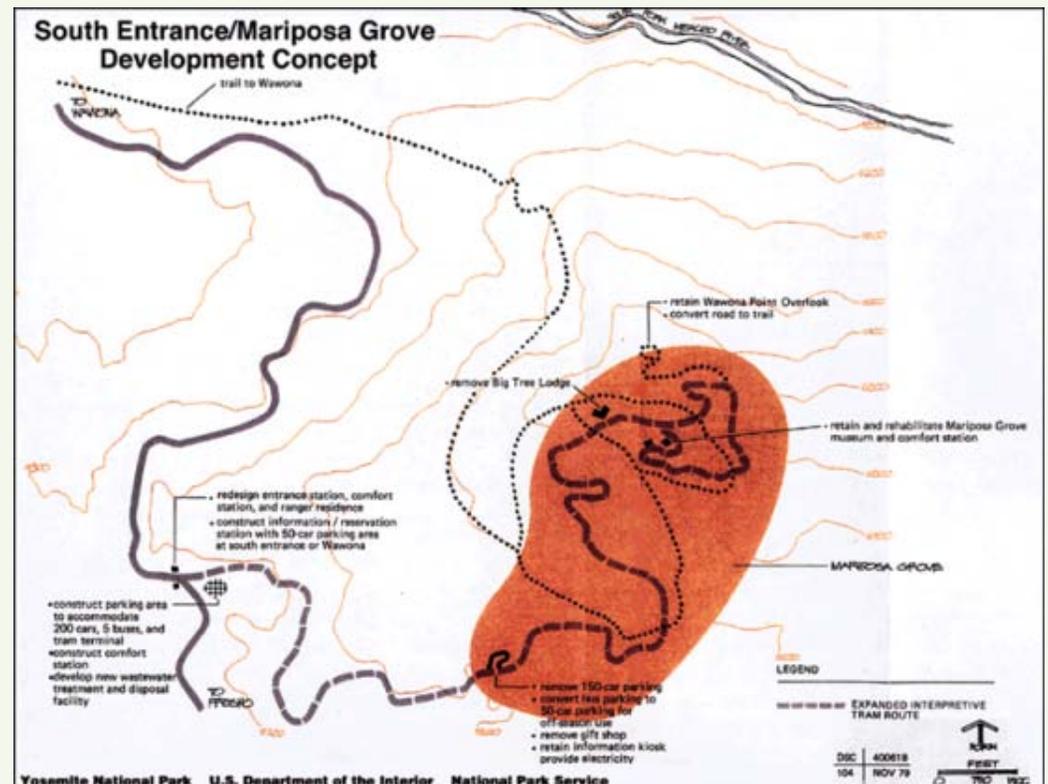
Mariposa Grove

- Remove parking from the lower grove
- Provide off-season parking at the Grove
- Provide only visitor facilities consistent with preservation of the unique ecosystem

South Entrance Station

- Provide park orientation/information
- Provide staging facilities for the Mariposa Grove
- Redesign the South Entrance Station
- Provide adequate road to the Grove for bus access

GMP Concept Map



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Issues:

Natural Resources

Giant sequoias have shallow surface roots. Healthy root structure is essential to ensure the longevity of these ancient giant trees.

High visitation affects the health of the giant sequoias:

- Pedestrians and vehicles compact the soil
- Erosion exposes the shallow roots of the sequoias to potential damage

Past development has greatly impacted hydrological flows within the Grove.



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Issues:

Sense of Arrival

The arrival experience can be confusing:

- Better trailhead and directional signs are needed on-site to improve visitor orientation
- Information is lacking about the variety of options for getting to and enjoying the Grove
- Mixed messages about where and how the visitors should park at satellite parking areas
- The shuttle bus unloads visitors where there are no signs directing visitors to the trailhead



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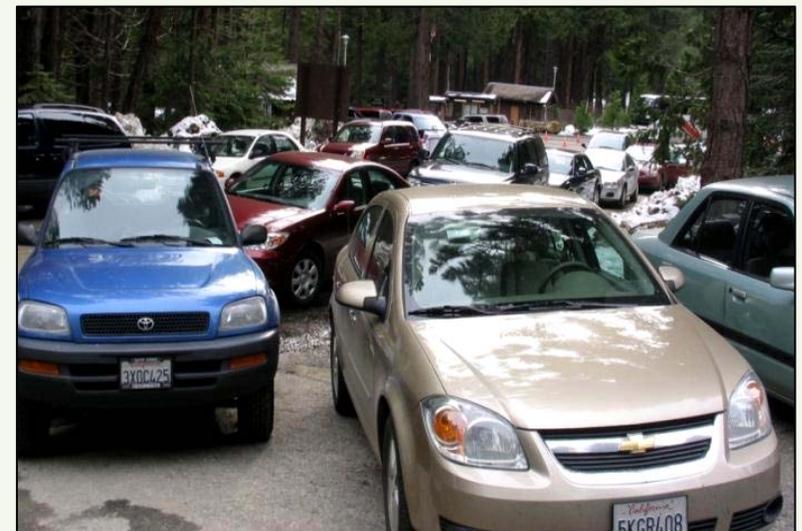


Issues:

Congestion

The site has outgrown its ability to address current visitation needs:

- Existing parking areas do not meet need or demand
- Parking lots fill to capacity by 10:00 a.m. on a typical summer day
- Coordination of parking for the Grove at remote locations like the South Entrance and at Wawona is problematic
- Shuttles arrive at South Entrance already filled to capacity



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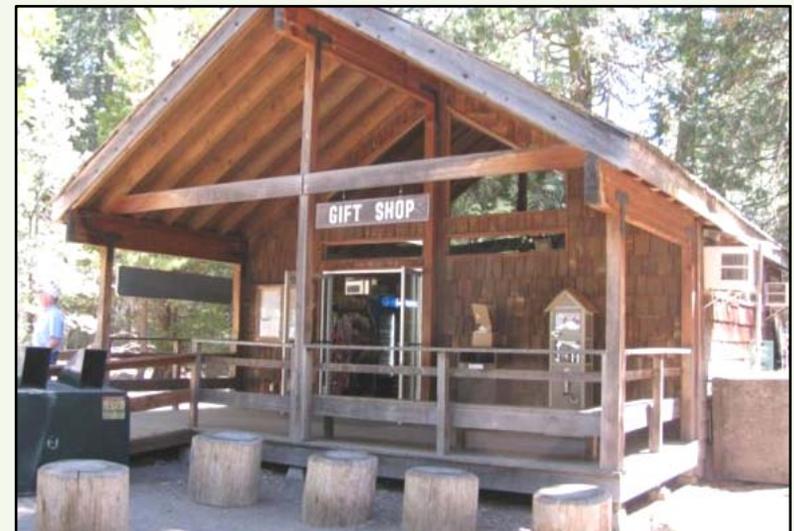


Issues:

Infrastructure

Existing infrastructure affects both the health and visitor appreciation of the Grove:

- The main asphalt parking lot is sited directly within the lower grove of giant sequoias
- Facilities need to be better integrated with the site
- The tram fueling station is on-site, within the Grove
- Utilities are outdated or lacking and need improvement



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External Site Issues

- Traffic congestion
- Parking
- Shuttle stops
- Visitor Safety
- Protection of cultural/historic resources



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Resource Data Collection (2010-2011)

Photo Documentation	Completed
GIS Data, Maps & Site Analysis	Ongoing
Rare Plant Survey	June 2011
Historical Site Survey	August 2011
Resource Condition Assessment	Fall 2011
Wildlife Survey	Fall 2011
Wetland Delineation	Fall 2011
Hydrological Assessment	Fall 2011
Archaeological Site Analysis & Surveys	Winter 2011
Research and Consultation about American Indian Connections with the Grove	Fall 2011-2012
Transportation & Pedestrian Surveys	Winter 2011

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Project Milestones

Project Timeline



Restoration Timeline



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Public Scoping is going on now: Get Involved!

What should the Grove look like in 150 years?



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Questions and Comments