



**Yosemite National Park**  
**[www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose)**

## **Stewardship**

*The following centennial proposal is certified as eligible for Centennial Challenge funding consideration in fiscal year 2008. Funding for the Centennial Challenge requires legislation.*

### **Restore Wawona Meadow Habitat and Historic Features**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$300,000  
Proposal # 49589

**Summary:** Wawona Meadow is the most intact mid- montane meadow system in the Sierra Nevada. However, the meadow itself, surrounding forest, and important elements of the historic landscape are in danger.

This project will restore ecological processes in Wawona Meadow, habitat for two threatened bird species (Great Gray Owl and Willow Flycatcher) and several sensitive plant species, while considering historic/prehistoric cultural resources. A management plan will be developed and implemented considering fire management, cultural landscape treatment, wildlife protection, hydrological improvements, and visitor education.

Volunteers will assist in the control of invasive plant species and asphalt removal. This project will create stewardship activities for visitors allowing them to experience Yosemite on a more meaningful level.

This is a three year project including initiation, planning, and implementation.

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### **Reconstruct Critical Gauging Station to Enhance Safety and Monitor Climate Change**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$157,000

Proposal # 94297

**Summary:** In recent years, minimum winter and summer temperatures and temperature of incoming November- March storms are increasing, resulting in more rain and less snow, which leads to increased frequencies of winter flooding.

A new stream flow gauge at a better location at Happy Isles is necessary to ensure that reliable data will be collected, accessible in real time via the internet, and available for analysis to an interdisciplinary/intergovernmental group of users. This data will benefit the scientific community that is studying climate change, park managers who need the information to make responsible decisions for the protection of employees, "downstream" water managers at the state and local levels, visitors and infrastructure, and park visitors who will be provided the opportunity to learn about the relationship between stream flow and climate events.

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### **Engage Visitors in Protecting Yosemite's Meadow Songbirds**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$100,000

Proposal # 96341

**Summary:** Songbirds of the Sierra Nevada represent perhaps the most sensitive indicators of ecosystem change through their diverse species and their array of adaptations to ecological niches. Over the past 12 years, Yosemite has operated five bird banding and research stations in meadow habitat; these stations have documented the disconcerting decline of numerous bird species. The proposed project will allow this critical data collection to continue and expand, allowing for the collection of more comprehensive data across the elevation gradient of the park. With such data, the park will be in the position to inform the public of human-caused changes in Yosemite's bird population and will enhance their understanding of the threats to the park and its species.

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### **Restore Ecological Integrity and Scenic Vistas through Invasive Plant Control**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$386,000  
Proposal # 109635

**Summary:** A national park like Yosemite provides amazing adventures to visitors from all across the globe; people come to enjoy the beautiful peaks, meadows, waterfalls, and wildlife. The ecological integrity and scenic vistas of Yosemite have become threatened by invasive species inadvertently introduced by the park's many admirers. Through invasive plant control and prevention, this project will undertake the restoration of this integrity and protect the beauty that draws its many visitors to Yosemite. Furthermore, this project will provide environmental outreach and stewardship opportunities for the park visitors to facilitate the healthy relationship between the people and the resources. The project will focus on four elements: early detection and prevention of new invasive plant populations; control of priority invasive plant populations; outreach and education, including stewardship by promoting volunteer opportunities; and finally tracking progress and trends through ecological monitoring.

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### **Preserve the Great Gray Owl in Yosemite**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$120,000

Proposal # 110386

**Summary:** The Great Gray Owl is a symbol of Yosemite's wilderness and an icon of the peaceful mountain meadows which it inhabits. This largest North American owl lures birdwatchers from around the world, and those who have glimpsed this magnificent animal remain captivated for a lifetime. Yosemite's meadows are home to over two-thirds of California's great gray owls.

This project will investigate the status of Yosemite's great gray owls to promote the conservation of this rare species, and better assist land managers both inside and outside the park in protecting this magnificent animal for the benefit of owl and visitors alike. Project objectives include measuring the habitat relations, survival, occupancy, reproduction, and movement patterns of the owl in the greater Yosemite area.

Concurrent with this research, an interpretive program will be developed and presented to the public.

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## **Stewardship**

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### **Restore Critical Riparian Habitat and Braided River Corridor at the Greenemeyer Sand Pit**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$340,000  
Proposal # 110390

**Summary:** The heart of the Greenemeyer Sand Pit project is a two- acre barren mound filled with compacted layers of unnatural spoil material rising 10 feet above the natural grade of the Merced River floodplain.

Yosemite National Park is a regional leader in riparian restoration, with 14 successful riparian restoration projects completed since 1991. Now, Yosemite proposes to restore eight acres of highly- degraded floodplain habitat on the Merced Wild and Scenic River. The project will: 1) repair severe NPS- caused damage to floodplain and riparian habitat, 2) restore scenic beauty and natural processes to the degraded site, 3) interpret the unique ecological value of low- elevation riparian habitat in the Sierra Nevada to park visitors, and 4) provide hands- on stewardship opportunities for volunteers.

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**Recreation**

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**Reconstruct Trailhead Parking Areas on Tioga Road**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$1,000,000  
Proposal # 117474

**Summary:** Among the many alluring features in Yosemite National Park, the breathtaking, challenging, and rejuvenating hiking trails entice hundreds of thousands of adventure-seekers to visit each year. An easily overlooked, yet important element of their hiking experience is the condition of the trailhead, which, if inaccessible, confusing, or counterintuitive, can kick off and/or end their hikes with undue stress and anxiety. This project would improve circulation, accessibility, parking, viewing, food storage, wayfinding, and interpretive opportunities along the Tioga Road corridor, which encompasses many popular hiking trails.

This project will include assembling existing information, creating topographic maps, preparing site analysis and assessing existing conditions, determining how visitors currently use the different sites, conducting workshops to establish goals, objectives, program, and design parameters. The present proposal includes the following trailheads: Mono Pass, Gaylor Lakes, Murphy Creek, Sunrise, Snow Creek, May Lake, Porcupine, Yosemite Creek/Ten Lakes, Lukens Lake/Yosemite Creek, and Tamarack/South Fork Tuolumne River.

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## **Stewardship**

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### **Time Travelers: Establish Volunteer-based Archaeological Site Stewardship**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$150,000  
Proposal # 129962

**Summary:** Public participation in archeological programs is a proven and successful method of achieving public education, while fostering stewardship of our non-renewable resources. This project will put volunteers to work side-by-side with professional archeologists, performing tasks such as archeological inventory, site documentation and condition assessment. This will be a pilot project with potential to become a national-level initiative.

A traditional perspective will be provided by American Indian tribal representatives, who will play a key role in broadening the public experience of understanding the traditional uses and values of archeological resources. The park's hundreds of archeological sites are at risk from camping impacts, illegal collection, and inadvertent damage. An informed and participatory public will be able to reverse these harmful effects and will become actively involved in the protection of Yosemite and other great National Parks throughout the country.

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## **Education**

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### **Establish a Junior Ranger Program at Happy Isles**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$396,126

Proposal # 137605

**Summary:** In keeping with the Centennial Challenge's national Junior Ranger initiative, the Happy Isles Nature Center will become the Happy Isles Junior Ranger Center. This project will upgrade exhibits, provide expanded the curriculum of Junior Ranger programs, and recruit a new cadre of volunteers. Staffing by park rangers and Yosemite Association volunteers will keep the center open 9 months/year, 7 days/week, and during holidays in 2008 and 2009.

The center will also capitalize on Yosemite's partnership with the UC Merced and the National Science Foundation by installing an exhibit tied directly (in real time) to a global climate change study being conducted on the South Fork of the Merced River.

The Junior Ranger Center and its programs have the great potential to help establish a future cadre of park stewards.

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## **Professionalism**

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### **Foster a Diverse Workforce through Innovative University Internships**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): University of California, Merced; Yosemite Association; Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$426,000

Proposal # 137609

**Summary:** This project will allow 20 interns to work for twelve weeks in 2008 and 2009 in the park on various projects. These interns will provide visitor services such as information and interpretation, and they will also participate in resource monitoring, data collection, search and rescue, wildlife management, stewardship projects, among several other projects. This project has successfully created partnerships among the National Park Service, Yosemite Association, and the University of California, Merced. By bringing UCM students into Yosemite as interns, the project will enhance visitor experience, strengthen diverse staff recruiting, and maintain a critical link between the scientific communities of the park and university.

This program will familiarize the UCM diverse student body with career opportunities in the National Park Service while building skills that will make them highly competitive for NPS jobs.

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### **Establish Multi-Cultural Field Seminars - Yosemite's Untold Stories**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Association

Total Cost: \$20,000

Proposal # 137608

**Summary:** This program seeks to move beyond the classic Euro- American historical perspective and explore the diverse angles of Yosemite's history as seen through the eyes of American Indians, African- Americans, Chinese Americans, as well as the Latino perspective of the 18th and 19th centuries. By conducting a series of one- day field seminar courses, interpreters of varying ethnicities will address their own unique contributions to the park, including the Miwok heritage, the Chinese immigrants' work on road- building, the African- American Buffalo Soldiers on patrol, and a Latino perspective exploring the centuries when California first became Spanish and Mexican territory

Project funding will support three Field Seminars each in 2008 and 2009. Seminars will leverage Yosemite Association funds to reach out to underrepresented groups in the Central Valley of California and connect these groups with Yosemite's diverse cultural history.

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### **Replace Entrance Signs and Parking at Big Oak Flat and South Entrances**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$700,000  
Proposal # 137698

**Summary:** This Centennial Challenge project responds to the goals of Recreational Experience and Stewardship by improving the first experience of the visitors as they enter the park. By providing new park entrance signs and improved entry parking areas at the Big Oak Flat and South Entrances, it will create a more welcoming entry area to greet visitors as they view the sign and enter Yosemite National Park. Parking will be better delineated and space provided for visitors with disabilities. New wayside exhibits will provide general orientation to visitors as they enter the park and before they drive to the entrance stations. The quality and character of the design will be compatible with the existing landscape, and reflect park service rustic architecture.

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### **Rehabilitate and Enhance Half Dome Overlook on Big Oak Flat Road**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$950,000

Proposal # 137703

**Summary:** Half Dome Overlook offers the first and a dramatic view of Yosemite Valley for eastbound visitors on the Big Oak Flat road. Visitors are awed by an iconic view of Half Dome bracketed by El Capitan to the left and the Glacier Point cliff with Sentinel Rock and Sentinel Dome on the right. This project will rehabilitate and improve the current parking and viewing areas to provide a better experience for the visitor and protect the resources of the natural setting. Clearer site boundaries with walkways and granite curbing and seat walls will be provided. Design will provide accessibility to viewing area for visitors with disabilities. Wayside exhibits will be upgraded to include additional orientation and interpretation, which offer a means of further connecting the visitor to the park.

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**Education**

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**Produce Multilingual "Yosemite Owners Manuals" for Junior Rangers**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$340,000  
Proposal # 137607

**Summary:** Many children of various ages come to Yosemite with little or no knowledge of the park's resources. The books proposed in this project would provide that knowledge as well as the awareness of the fact that the resources in Yosemite are theirs to care for, theirs to preserve. In several of the counties surrounding the park, Spanish is the predominant language. Large Hispanic families visit the park and are underserved with current programming. US Census projections indicate that Hispanic children (aged 0- 19) in California are projected to go from 50% of the children's population in 2010 to 65% of the children's population by 2050. This project will provide six different Junior Ranger "Yosemite Owners Manuals" in English and Spanish for different locations in the park. Translation sheets in French, German, Mandarin and Japanese will also be made available.

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**Recreation**

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**Rehabilitate Premiere Visitor Use Trails**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Fund  
Total Cost: \$4,000,000  
Proposal # 137690

**Summary:** The project will rehabilitate the Valley Floor Trail, providing visitors with improved access to west Yosemite Valley destinations while protecting the adjacent natural landscape. The John Muir Trail is one of the best known and loved trails in the United States; approximately thirty- three miles of the trail are in Yosemite. This project will restore the condition of the trail corridor to a level commensurate with its stature as a premier American trail. The Red Peak Pass Trail is the only trail to provide a route over the Clark Range within the entire park. This great trail resource requires substantial reconstruction to restore it to a safe and sustainable condition. Finally, upgrading and enhancing the approximately seven and a half mile Mariposa Grove Trail System associated with the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias will mitigate impacts associated with the trails on the giant sequoias and other sensitive resources.

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## **Environment**

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### **Create a Signature Yosemite Institute Environmental Education Campus**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite Institute  
Total Cost: \$3,100,000  
Proposal # 76026

**Summary:** Since 1972, Yosemite Institute (YI) has partnered with the National Park Service (NPS) to fulfill a shared mission of providing environmental educational opportunities in Yosemite to youth from diverse backgrounds. This project will create a new environmental education campus with improved educational opportunities to enhance the students' overall park experience. This would include spaces designed for learning such as classrooms, laboratories and outdoor teaching areas.

YI has based its immersive experiential education programs at Yosemite National Park facilities in Crane Flat for the past 30 years. The Crane Flat campus has been pieced together over time, and is comprised of older buildings in need of extensive repair, and not intentionally designed for educational purposes. Through greater efficiencies provided by new facilities and programs, YI will be better equipped to serve a broader range of communities and schools, and provide additional scholarships to disadvantaged students.

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### **Rehabilitate Yosemite's Iconic Tunnel View Overlook**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA

Partner(s): Yosemite Fund

Total Cost: \$4,500,000

Proposal # 136555

**Summary:** The Wawona Tunnel View scenic overlook is one of the most popular scenic overlooks in Yosemite National Park. This project will address two objectives. Firstly, it will work to improve the visitor experience, accessibility, and safety by remedying long-standing vehicle and pedestrian safety issues.

Secondly, this project will work to preserve and enhance the naturalistic, rustic character and integrity of this historic site through thoughtful site design and construction. This iconic overlook affords expansive views of Yosemite Valley, El Capitan, Bridalveil Fall, and Half Dome that have captured the awe of visitors for nearly 75 years. Wawona Tunnel and Tunnel View were determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 because of their exemplary park service rustic design. This project seeks to maintain or, where possible, surpass these standards for the preservation of the historical features boasted by Tunnel View.

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### **Connect Underserved Youth to Parks and Evaluate Success (Multi-Park Proposal)**

Location: Yosemite National Park, CA  
Partner(s): Yosemite National Institutes  
Total Cost: \$3,000,000  
Proposal # 137687

**Summary:** National parks must address changing demographics both locally and across the country. Youth must interact with the natural environment in order to connect with nature and become future Earth stewards. This project will provide diversity scholarships to underserved youth, and it will also provide an evaluation of the project's success for three parks: Yosemite National Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Olympic National Park. This educational program will build on a strong private partnership with Yosemite National Institute's campus affiliates, Yosemite Institute, Headlands Institute, and Olympic Park Institute. Yosemite National Institutes (the parent organization of the three affiliates) is already committing to \$200,000 per year, per park for scholarships in 2008 and 2009, and \$50,000 per year, per park for evaluation for a total of \$1.5 million over 2 years.

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