



Purpose and Need for the Plan and Environmental Assessment

The purpose of the visitor access management plan is to reduce overcrowding and traffic congestion, expand tools to better pace vehicle volume into the park, and provide equitable visitor access to inspirational experiences while ensuring operational sustainability and protection of Yosemite National Park's exemplary natural and cultural resources.

The plan is needed to address a wide range of issues associated with persistently high visitation, including the following:

- crowding and congestion that detracts from equitable access and meaningful, enjoyable visitor experiences at parking lots, park entrances, and key destinations
- heavy strain on the park's services and facilities and staff's ability to access facilities and perform daily operations
- impacts of visitor use on natural and cultural resources
- visitor and staff safety concerns along roadways due to traffic congestion and heavy use of roadways by pedestrians

The plan and environmental assessment analyzes three action alternatives that would proactively manage visitor access to help meet long-term management goals. The analysis describes the current and expected future condition of affected resources and experiences. See chapter 3 for more details.

We Want to Hear from You!

We've received thousands of letters from people all over the world who deeply care about Yosemite and are invested in this process. Working toward a long-term solution is a park priority, and your ideas helped shape the range of alternatives in the draft Visitor Access Management Plan / Environmental Assessment that is now available for public review.

Every idea and comment we receive in this review of the plan and environmental assessment will be read and considered. To be most helpful, your comments should address at least one of the following:

1. the purpose and need for action;
2. the environmental issues/impact topics analyzed;
3. your opinions on the alternatives, including mitigation measures that could reduce potentially harmful effects; and
4. the information used to describe the affected environment and environmental consequences.

From August 16 to September 30, 2024, you are invited to participate in the third and final comment period of this planning process. Please provide comments on the draft plan at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/yosemitevisitoraccess>, or scan the QR code with a smartphone.



Yosemite National Park Needs YOUR Input!

The National Park Service (NPS) has developed a draft visitor access management plan and environmental assessment. This plan strives to provide equitable visitor access to inspirational experiences, ensure operational sustainability, and protect Yosemite National Park's exemplary natural and cultural resources. We value your perspective on how we can ensure quality visitor experiences in a way that preserves the natural, cultural, wilderness, and recreational resources of the park long term.



Summary of Alternatives Included in the Draft Plan / Environmental Assessment

ALTERNATIVE A: No Action, Continue Current Management

Visitors would access the park on a first-come, first-served basis 24 hours per day, primarily using private vehicles. The National Park Service would close areas of the park when visitor demand for parking lots exceeds supply and use traffic diversions or “shunting” as needed, a reactive practice of redirecting traffic from an area of the park when it is filled beyond capacity. Visitors would likely still experience long delays at entrance stations and heavy congestion in the park. This alternative does not meet the purpose and need for this plan nor does it meet the mission of Yosemite National Park.

ALTERNATIVE B PARKWIDE RESERVATIONS: Peak Hours, Daily NPS Preferred Alternative

- Updated zoning and desired conditions
- Indicators, thresholds, and visitor capacity
- Responsive management based on seasonality, time of day, inventory, and distribution
- Visitor exemptions, bicycle use, and non-vehicular access
- Clear visitor communications and technology improvements
- Entrance station improvements at Arch Rock, Hetch Hetchy, and Big Oak Flat

ALTERNATIVE C PARKWIDE RESERVATIONS: Timed Entry

Common to All Action Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE D YOSEMITE VALLEY ACCESS RESERVATIONS: Timed Entry

Visitors would need one parkwide reservation to enter all areas of Yosemite National Park during peak hours (between 5:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.). This reservation would be valid for a three-day period. This alternative would allow for holistic access to the park, granting visitors flexibility to come and go at any time within the three-day window and to move freely in the park to enjoy spontaneous exploration of Yosemite National Park’s resources and recreational opportunities.

Visitors would need one parkwide timed-entry reservation to enter all areas of Yosemite National Park during peak hours (between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.). Timed-entry reservations would be valid for one day, with visitors required to arrive at Yosemite National Park during their designated window of time. This alternative would allow for holistic access to all of Yosemite National Park’s resources and recreational opportunities during the day of the reservation.

Visitors would need one timed-entry reservation to enter Yosemite Valley during peak hours (between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.). Timed-entry reservations would be valid for one day. Those with a reservation would be able to access all areas of the park, including Yosemite Valley. Those without a reservation would be able to access all areas of the park outside of Yosemite Valley and would not have access to Yosemite Valley services. Roadway changes would be required, and three reservation checkpoint booths would be installed to support this alternative. This alternative would offer a way for some visitors to enjoy Yosemite Valley with reduced congestion, resource impacts, and crowding.

