

SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
FISCAL YEAR 1997

*Superintendent's Annual Report
Produced by the Public Information Office
Yosemite National Park*

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FOREWORD

The *Superintendent's Annual Report* is produced through submissions from each division of Yosemite National Park and includes summary information compiled during the federal fiscal year. The organization of each division is based on the nature of the work performed by that group, and each submission varies accordingly. Yosemite National Park is made up of the Superintendent's Office, six divisions and the temporary Division of Flood Recovery. They are represented here in no particular order.

Yosemite has an annual ONPS budget of approximately \$19 million. There are around 420 permanent employees and 300 seasonal employees. Yosemite's visitation is measured by calendar year. There were 3,801,397 visitors to the park in 1997 which is down 10% from 1996.

In FY97, Yosemite experienced *Highwater 97A*, the largest flood and closure event in its history. This event, which affected every aspect of the park from operations to visitation, began in January 1997 and ended in June--though complete recovery from the flood is expected to take several years. These effects, perhaps most visible in the creation of the Division of Flood Recovery, are reflected throughout this report.

FISCAL YEAR 1997 HIGHLIGHTS

-- 1996 --

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| October 15 | The cables on Half Dome taken down for the season. |
| October 21 | An environmental assessment for 5,500 foot bikeway between Stoneman Bridge and Sentinel Bridge released for thirty day public comment period. |
| October 21 | The Biological Resources Division of U.S.G.S. announced the beginning of a four-year mountain lion study in Yosemite. |
| October 21 | Forty-two year old Jeff Christman of Arizona died while BASE jumping off El Capitan. Six other BASE jumpers arrested. |
| November 5 | The Tioga Road and the Glacier Point Road closed for the season. |
| November 20 | A four-mile section of the El Portal Road from Parkline to Cascade Falls closed for two hours due to blasting to mitigate safety hazards concerning a boulder above the roadway. |
| November 21 | Heavy rains cause flash flooding which left debris, large boulders, and silt on a quarter mile stretch of the El Portal Road east of Parkline. The road was temporarily closed until 10:30 p.m. Friday, November 22. |
| December 24 | 21 year old Jacob and 20 year old Gregory Miller of Cupertino, California, were rescued after their climb of Washington Column in Yosemite Valley was halted due to severe winter weather. |

-- 1997 --

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| January 1 | Heavy rains cause flooding in Yosemite Valley. Campers were evacuated from Yosemite Valley campgrounds at noon. Visitors in park lodging were given the option to remain in the park or be evacuated. The Badger Pass Ski Area was closed at noon. The El Portal Road was closed at noon at the park boundary. The Wawona Road and the Big Oak Flat road closed at 3:00 p.m. |
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- January 3** Yosemite remained closed due to extensive flooding throughout the park. Park Superintendent B.J. Griffin ordered a mandatory evacuation of all visitors as soon as conditions allowed. Nine hundred visitors and 1200 park employees were isolated in Yosemite Valley.
- January 5** The Yosemite Valley sewage disposal system remained inoperable. Raw sewage releases into the flooded Merced River were considered a potential health risk. Those same flood waters caused water well pumps to fail, making it impossible to replenish the dwindling supply. The first of a potential two phase evacuation plan of Yosemite Valley was scheduled to take place January 6.
- January 6** The Wawona Road, Yosemite's only passable access road, was temporarily closed due to high winds and the resulting hazard of falling trees. As a result, the evacuation of 500 Yosemite Valley residents was postponed and rescheduled for January 7.
- January 7** The evacuation of concession employees and their families took place successfully. The first of about 500 people left Yosemite Valley in an auto and bus caravan about 11:15 a.m. over The Wawona Road to the park's South Entrance. The Red Cross set up a shelter for evacuees at the Mariposa County Fairgrounds. A second phase which would have called for the evacuation of all government employees and their families not directly involved in the recovery effort was planned but never implemented.
- January 13** The park announced reservations would be accepted beginning January 15 for all campsites in the Wawona and Hodgdon Meadow campgrounds. These were the only two park campgrounds which were expected to be open for the Memorial Day holiday weekend. This was the first time the Wawona campground had been placed on the reservation system.

- January 22** The Wawona area and portions of the park's wilderness reopened to limited visitation. The Mariposa Grove was accessible to hikers and cross-country skiers. The Mariposa Grove Road and the Chowchilla Mountain Road remained closed. Badger Pass Ski Area remained closed. Services in Wawona were limited to the Wawona Campground, Wawona Store, Chevron service station, Pine Tree Market, and the Wawona Post Office. The Wawona Hotel and Restaurant remained closed. Residents and guests of Wawona and Yosemite West continued to have access, conditions permitting. Entrance fees were temporarily reduced to \$5.00 per vehicle for a seven-day pass due to limited services. Wilderness area access was restricted to trails beginning in Wawona, the Mariposa Grove, and Tuolumne Meadows. Winter users were not permitted to begin or end trips in Yosemite Valley or the park's west side.
- January 23** A preliminary assessment of the damage and associated recovery costs was postponed as heavy winter snow hampered flood damage assessment efforts.
- January 31** Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt announced that flood damage to the park was so widespread and severe that the cost to fully repair and restore the park could run as high as \$178,053,000. Damage estimates were expected to climb once the snow melted and crews were able to get into areas inaccessible during the winter. Babbitt noted that the flood was an opportunity to rethink how the landscape is used to enhance the Yosemite experience for park visitors. Superintendent B.J. Griffin made copies of the Preliminary Damage Assessment Report available during a news briefing at the park. The news briefing was followed by a media tour of the damaged areas.
- February 1** The Badger Pass Ski Area opened to visitors for cross country skiing. It was announced the ski area would not reopen to downhill skiing for the remainder of the season because damage to park facilities prohibited full staffing.
- February 15** Emergency repairs on the Big Oak Flat road were completed. The park reopened to visitors through the Big Oak Flat Entrance to the Crane Flat area. There was no access into Yosemite Valley. The Visitor Center at the Big Oak Flat entrance opened weekends. A \$5 entrance fee was charged at the Big Oak Flat entrance station.

- February 17 The El Portal Road opened for restricted park employee travel. Emergency repairs were halted once each morning and evening to allow buses to carry park employees to and from their work sites. Employees had been temporarily housed in Yosemite Valley, Yosemite West, and Wawona while they were engaged in recovery efforts. The limited opening allowed workers to return home each evening.
- February 18 Yosemite Valley was projected to reopen to visitors on March 15.
- February 20 The public comment period for the Yosemite Valley Housing Plan - Draft Addendum / Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the General Management Plan was extended through March 31. The preferred alternative of the Draft Housing Plan proposed relocating housing for 345 employees, and moving National Park Service and Yosemite Concession Services administrative headquarters facilities from Yosemite Valley to El Portal.
- February 28 A new team was directed to create to direct flood recovery efforts. This included the construction and redesign of facilities, roads, utilities, and accommodations in compliance with the park's General Management Plan. The Flood Recovery Team was projected to remain in place for the duration of the recovery process.
- March 14 Yosemite Valley reopened to visitors at noon. They were welcomed back by Superintendent B. J. Griffin at ceremony held in front of the Valley Visitor Center. A limited number of buses were allowed to begin travel between El Portal and Yosemite Valley. These buses were required to accompany the morning and evening employee bus convoys. Bus entrance into Yosemite Valley from Mariposa and El Portal on Highway 140 was restricted to the morning employee convoy. Yosemite Valley had been closed to visitors for 82 days. This marked the longest closure in the park's 106 year history.
- March 14 Sunnyside Walk-in Campground and some sites in Lower Pines Campground in Yosemite Valley opened on a first-come, first-served basis.
- March 23 Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt visited the park. The Secretary joined volunteers from AmeriCorps, The Sierra Club, Chevron Corporation, and surrounding communities in removal of flood debris from Group Camp in Yosemite Valley.

- March 24** 21 year old Henry Tien, a student at Stanford University, was killed after suffering head injuries from a fall on the Upper Yosemite Falls Trail.
- March 27** Superintendent B.J. Griffin announced that an emergency vehicle reservation system proposed for Yosemite would not be implemented for summer 1997. It was determined it was not possible to develop and implement an emergency system which would meet park and visitor needs in the time available.
- March 28** The Mariposa Grove Road reopened for the season at 10:00 a.m. with a temporary gross weight restriction of 14,000 pounds.
- March 29** The El Portal Road reopened to limited visitor travel. Visitors were allowed to drive between Yosemite Valley and El Portal in ranger led convoys evenings and Saturdays.
- April 2** All roads leading in and out of the park were temporarily closed at 2:25 p.m. due to safety concerns related to high ridge top winds. High winds caused trees and tree limbs to fall throughout the park. Visitors were able to begin leaving the park in ranger led convoys over The El Portal Road at about 4:00 p.m. Normal convoy traffic resumed at 7:00 p.m. The Wawona Road reopened to visitor travel shortly after 5:00 p.m. The Big Oak Flat road reopened at 6:00 p.m. There were scattered reports of wind related damage in the park. Falling trees damaged a car in the Mariposa Grove area, crashed into a house in Wawona, and caused a house fire in Foresta. Power outages were reported in Wawona and El Portal. No one was hurt in any of these incidents.
- April 3** Emergency stabilization of the El Portal Road was completed. Emergency repairs to alleviate safety concerns on six portions of the road were scheduled to begin Monday, April 7. These repairs were expected to be completed in time to open the road to unrestricted visitor access by the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

- April 4** Acting Deputy Director Denis Galvin announced the reassignments of three of the bureau's most experienced senior executives. Superintendent Barbara (B.J.) Griffin was selected to become General Manager of the Presidio. Stanley Albright, who had been the Pacific West Regional Director since June 1987, was chosen to become Acting Superintendent of Yosemite. John Reynolds was selected to move from General Manager of the Presidio to the Directorship of the Pacific West Region, headquartered in San Francisco. These reassignments were expected to occur by early May.
- April 4** Upper Pines campground opened for the season.
- April 7** 74 year old Norman Hatch of Escondido, California died after an accident in Upper Pines campground. He had been working on a friend's motorhome when the jacks supporting the vehicle slipped, pinning him underneath.
- April 8** Climbing restrictions were put into place to protect peregrine falcon nesting sites.
- April 9** An environmental assessment for the Yosemite Lodge Design Concept Plan was released and made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. Originally part of the Valley Implementation Plan, the Yosemite Lodge Design Concept Plan was separated into an individual plan to expedite the recovery process. The plan called for Yosemite Lodge cabins and motel units and employee housing damaged by the flood to be moved out of the floodplain. A two hour project area walk was scheduled for each Wednesday for people interested in visiting the site and discussing details of the proposal.
- April 9** The Detailed Assessment Report of flood damages was completed. The final cost of damage repairs and reconstruction was estimated at \$176 million. The final report was created using more than 350 specific damage assessments completed by professional engineers, architects, and other experts. Damage to park infrastructure included impassable access roads, inoperable sewer system, water well systems destroyed, and the severe damage or destruction of hundreds of campsites, lodging units, and employee housing units. The cost estimates in the Detailed Damage Assessment Report were also based on making repairs in a manner consistent with the park's approved General Management Plan and not reconstructing facilities in known flood plains.

- April 15** North Pines campground and Backpacker's Camp in Yosemite Valley opened for the season.
- April 15** Snow removal on the Tioga Pass Road began. Early indications suggested a possible mid-June opening of the road. However, heavy winter precipitation, unusually dry spring conditions, and at least six sites on the road known to have suffered damage in January's flood made predicting an opening date difficult.
- April 18** Tim Ludington, Backcountry Trails Supervisor, received the first Barry Hance Memorial Award, which was established in honor of the Yosemite National Park maintenance worker killed in an avalanche while plowing the Tioga Pass Road on June 13, 1995. The award was designed to celebrate Yosemite employees that demonstrate exceptional ethics, attitude, and concern for their fellow employees and the park.
- April 21** Temporary weight restrictions on the Mariposa Grove Road were lifted.
- April 27** 57 year old John Fazio of Fresno was killed when a vehicle cut in front of him on Chapel Straight on Southside Drive and he was ejected from his motorcycle. A 54 year old German national was taken into custody by rangers in Wawona on April 28 and charged with involuntary manslaughter.
- April 27** Steve Slovenkai of the San Francisco area fell to his death after completing a climb on the Arrowhead Arete in Yosemite Valley.
- May 6** Yosemite agreed to provide \$15,000 to Caltrans to allow the state agency to aid park crews in removing snow from The Tioga Road. Mono County crews begin plowing inside the park within the week.
- May 6** A draft Environmental Assessment for the Improvement of El Portal Road was made be available for public review through June 6. The proposed improvements called for retaining the road's historic, park-like character, and protecting the Wild and Scenic Merced River corridor, while making improvements essential for safe visitor access. Open houses for public questions and comments were scheduled for Yosemite Valley, Mariposa and San Francisco.

- May 8** The public review and comment period for the environmental assessment of the Yosemite Lodge Design Concept Plan was extended to May 16 to allow further input from interested parties.
- May 10** A sequence of thunder and lightning storms May 10, 11, and 12 started seven fires in Yosemite. These fires were burning in relatively remote sections of the park. Rainfall amounts had been scant following the substantial storms of late December 1996 and the floods of January. The combination of early rains and the early drying of the grasses, brush, and forest fuels created conditions for elevated fire danger. These conditions resulted in the start and spread of the wilderness fires southeast of Kibbie Lake, east of Lake Eleanor, and above the valley rim west of El Capitan. Smoke from these fires was visible from many park locations. These seven fires were designated Prescribed Natural Fires.
- May 19** Yosemite was the subject of NBC's The "Today" Show broadcast. Segments included feature stories on the park's Search and Rescue Operation, Yosemite's Wildlife, Rock Climbing in Yosemite Valley, Yosemite Through the Eyes of an Artist, Fly Fishing on the Merced River, and Historical Lodges in Yosemite National Park. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt was interviewed for the broadcast. He discussed flood recovery efforts, transportation issues in Yosemite and other National Parks, and the Prescribed Fire Management Program.
- May 22** The Glacier Point Road opened for the season at noon.
- May 23** The El Portal Road reopened to unrestricted travel following a short reopening ceremony. Deputy Superintendent Hal Grovert, Federal Highways Division Engineer Larry Smith, Mariposa County Supervisor Patti Reilly, and John McCammon, Chief of Staff for Congressman George Radanovich, spoke at the opening.
- May 27** Yosemite experienced a quiet Memorial Day holiday weekend. An estimated 37,200 people visited the park from Friday, May 24 through Monday, May 26. This was the lowest Memorial Day weekend visitation since 1993, and down sharply from the 56,089 people estimated to visit the park during the same period in 1996.
- May 28** The Half Dome Cables were installed for season.
- May 29** The public comment period on the Draft Environmental Assessment for El Portal Road Improvements was extended through June 16.

- June 11** Eighteen fourth, fifth, and six graders from Yosemite Elementary School received certificates marking their completion of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program. Guest speaker for the event was the Hon. Hollis G. Best, U.S. Magistrate to Yosemite. A special Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to the Yosemite Wellness Program, sponsored by Yosemite Concession Services.
- June 13** The Tioga Road opened to twenty four hour vehicle and bus travel at 11:52 a.m. The road opened as a transportation corridor only. No daytime or overnight vehicle parking was allowed along this 45 mile stretch of road. No services, facilities, camping, or overnight accommodations were available between Crane Flat and the Tioga Pass Entrance. No wilderness permits were being issued for trailheads along the Tioga Road.
- June 14** The Hetch Hetchy Road opened for the season at 8:00 a.m.
- June 20** The Merced River in Yosemite Valley opened to whitewater rafting from Stoneman Bridge to Sentinel Beach Picnic Area.
- June 24** 46 year old Richard Dean Eldredge of Merced was reportedly swimming in rough water approximately one mile above Yosemite's Arch Rock Entrance station when he was swept away by strong currents. An extensive search during the hours immediately following Eldredge's disappearance failed to turn up any sign of the missing man. On July 1, rangers discovered a what appeared to be a body submerged in the river near the site Eldredge disappeared. The body was positively identified on scene as that of Eldredge. Members of Yosemite's Search and Rescue team were brought in to July 2 to recover the body which was wedged among rocks in fast moving rapids.
- June 27** Most of the functions of the machine shop were moved out of Yosemite Valley to new facilities in El Portal. The move was part of the ongoing implementation of the park's General Management Plan of 1980. Space vacated in Yosemite Valley by the removal of the machine shop was to be used to house employees of the Roads and Trails department and the Forestry crew. This allowed both groups to consolidate their functions, and vacate temporary structures elsewhere in Yosemite Valley which were slated for future removal.

- June 27 The Tuolumne Meadows Lodge, Dining Room, Grill, Store, and Stables, the White Wolf Lodge and Dining Room, the Porcupine Flat campground and portions of the Tamarack Flat campground opened for the season.
- July 4 Park rangers conducted sobriety checkpoints over the Fourth of July holiday period. Rangers stopped vehicles and checked driver sobriety on a random basis.
- July 4 The White Wolf campground and portions of the Tuolumne Meadows campground opened for the season.
- July 5 35 year old Zhiming Li of Mountain View, California, was swept over Nevada Fall. Li was with a group of 11 people who had hiked to the top of Nevada Fall. Some members of the party, including Li, were swimming and wading in a pool in the Merced River above the falls. Witnesses said the man was wading about chest high in the river when he lost his footing. One person on the riverbank unsuccessfully tried to rescue Li as he was swept downstream. Other witnesses saw the man swept under the footbridge and then over the brink of the 594 foot waterfall. Li was presumed dead when high water prevented searchers from finding his body. Li's remains were discovered during a low-water search on October 12. Due to the length of time his body spent in the water, identification was only possible through the use of his dental records.
- July 7 The Wawona Service Station closed to upgrade the existing single wall fuel storage tank system to meet standards for fueling facilities established by the state of California.
- July 8 Yosemite experienced fewer visitors during the Fourth of July holiday weekend compared to previous July Fourth weekends. An estimated 57,530 people visited the park from Friday, July 4 through Sunday, July 6. This was the lowest Fourth of July weekend visitation since 1992, and was down sharply from the 80,056 people estimated to have visited the park during the same period in 1996. The park did not implement its delayed access plan over the weekend. Visitors had unrestricted entry into the park through all five park entrances.

- July 9 The body of 29 year old Joachim Tolksdorff of Germany was found by two foreign climbers near the base of the northwest face of Half Dome. His body was airlifted from the scene by Search and Rescue team members. Park investigators later concluded his death was a suicide.
- July 11 33 year old Hideki Inaba of Japan was solo climbing the difficult "Cosmos" route up the face of El Capitan when he reportedly fell about 6:30 a.m. Two other climbers found his blood stained helmet at the base of the mountain the next morning and reported it to rangers. The injured Japanese climber was flown off the summit of El Capitan July 13th after spending the night with rescue team members who hauled him up the side of the cliff to safety shortly before dark the previous evening.
- July 18 The Happy Isles area opened at noon after being closed for over a year due to damage from a fatal rockfall. Damage caused by the rockfall had been repaired.
- July 18 The Sunrise and Vogelsang High Sierra Camps opened for the season. The Glen Aulin, May Lake and Merced Lake High Sierra Camps had opened earlier in the summer.
- July 18 Yosemite Creek campground opened for the season.
- July 30 Acting Superintendent Stanley Albright announced a change in the entrance fee structure to begin Friday, August 1. The amended fee policy was a result of concerns voiced by Congressman John Doolittle (R-Rocklin) and the unusual circumstances created by the severe flooding in early January. The amended fee structure applied only to non-recreational trans-Sierra travel through Yosemite on the Tioga. This change in policy was intended to accommodate those local travelers who utilized the Tioga Road as a means of crossing the Sierra Nevada rather than as a recreational visit to the park. Vehicles were required to enter or exit the park through the Tioga Pass entrance on the Tioga Road. Upon entering the park, non-recreational users will paid a \$5.00 fee and be issued a time-imprinted receipt. If the vehicle remained in park beyond the allotted time, the remaining \$15.00 of the \$20.00 entrance fee was collected upon leaving the park.
- August 5 The park announced that construction on the El Portal Road would not begin any sooner than December 1, 1997. The construction period was originally anticipated to begin October 1, 1997.

- August 8** An environmental assessment for the Tuolumne Meadows Water and Wastewater System Improvements was released and made available for a thirty day public review and comment period. The preferred alternative called for converting the domestic water supply from surface water sources to ground water sources and for the prevention of any accidental release of untreated sewage into the Tuolumne River. Shoreline segments of the Dana Fork of the Tuolumne River were also to be restored under the preferred alternative.
- August 10** 67 year old Charles Richards of England was cross country hiking with his wife from the Saddlebag Lake area into Yosemite when he fell between 30 and 50 feet after getting tired and attempting to reach a lower elevation. The victim's wife spent the night in the backcountry and reported the accident after hiking out on August 11. Park rescuers reached the scene late that same day. The body was recovered August 12 by park search and rescue personnel.
- August 15** A group of over forty teens of the Youth Conservation Corps program (YCC) completed projects to help Yosemite recover from the effects of January's flood. The group worked on such projects as removal of exotic species, rock wall salvage, and constructing split-rail fences. The Yosemite YCC group was the only resident program remaining in the United States. YCC has been active in Yosemite for over 25 years. The young people worked eight weeks in the park, and made up to \$1000.
- August 25** Yosemite celebrated the 81st birthday of the National Park Service by offering Fee Free Day. Authorized by Congress in 1988, Yosemite took the opportunity to invite the public to visit the park at no charge.

August 27

The Yosemite Lodge Development Concept Plan (DCP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) was approved by Acting Superintendent Stanley Albright and Western Regional Director John Reynolds. The Finding of No Significant Impact cleared the way for reconstruction to begin in the Yosemite Lodge area which was heavily impacted by flooding in early January. The DCP/EA represented a final comprehensive site plan for the entire Lodge area. Actions in the plan included removal of flood damaged employee housing and lodging and construction of new lodging and housing units to replace those destroyed in the flood. New facilities were to be constructed out of the flood plain and primarily in previously developed areas. Construction was planned to reduce the Lodge facility foot print by replacing individual guest cabins with fourplex units and cottages, and by replacing employee housing units with three story dormitories. The plan also minimized impacts to Sunnyside Walk-in Campground, accommodated new circulation patterns, and called for the removal of the Valley Chevron Service Station. Under the plan, the size of the area developed at Yosemite Lodge was to be reduced by approximately three acres.

September 10

A celebration was held at Glacier Point to mark the completion of a \$3.2-million face lift that restored wilderness, created new amenities for stargazing and snacking and rid the popular site of major eyesores. The event marked the completion of the largest privately funded restoration project in the history of Yosemite. The project was the first to use money generated by a National Park Service concessions contract earmarked for major capital improvements which directly benefit visitors. The Glacier Point project was funded by approximately \$2.6 million from the capital improvement program in the Yosemite Concession Services contract and a \$600,000 contribution by The Yosemite Fund.

September 14

63 year old Robert Wise of Scottsdale, Arizona was hiking on the Upper Mist Trail with his wife and a friend when he was struck by a falling tree about 2:00 p.m. It was unclear whether the tree fall started a small rockslide, or whether the tree came down because of falling rock. The location of the rockslide was approximately two miles from the trailhead at Happy Isles. The Upper Mist Trail between the Iron Bridge and Nevada Fall was temporarily closed due to the rockslide. This was the first rockfall injury in the park since the fatal Happy Isles rockslide in July 1996.

September 15

The Crane Flat Chevron Station and General Store was temporarily closed to complete a station upgrade project.

- September 17** The park announced it had scheduled several prescribed burns for fall and early winter 1997. The objectives of the planned burns were to reduce forest fuel loadings and wildfire hazards while maintaining optimal vegetative and wildlife conditions. The largest planned burns were the Kibbie prescribed burn, 3,000 wilderness acres on the northwest flank of the park done in coordination with the USDA Forest Service, and the Aspen Valley prescribed burn, 1,700 acres on the southeast flank of the 1996 Ackerson wildfire adjacent to Aspen Valley in-holdings. Several smaller controlled burn projects were planned for Yosemite Valley, Wawona, Hodgdon, and Foresta. Four small lightning caused fires were active in the Sunrise-Half Dome backcountry areas of Yosemite National Park. Smoke from these fires was visible from many vantage points.
- September 17** Yosemite hosted a record number of visitors during the month of August. An estimated 721,711 people visited the park during the month. August 1997 visitation was up 18,004 people or roughly 2% from August 1996, the park's previous record visitation month. However, the park experienced fewer visitors over the Labor Day holiday weekend compared to previous years. An estimated 51,959 people visited the park from Saturday, August 30 through Monday, September 1, 1997. In the previous nine years, the previous lowest Labor Day weekend visitation was 58,330 visitors in 1990.
- September 18** The Environmental Assessment for El Portal Road Improvements was approved by Acting Superintendent Stanley Albright and Western Regional Director John Reynolds. The Finding of No Significant Impact cleared the way for work to begin on the El Portal Road. Improvements included widening travel lanes from 9 1/2 to 11 feet to attain safety objectives, improving road stability, slightly adjusting road alignment, and increasing drainage capabilities. Construction was slated to begin in December 1997 and be completed by May 2000.
- September 27** Rangers from Yosemite National Park, Sequoia National Forest, and the Ridgecrest Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management teamed up with the South Sierra Council of the Boy Scouts of America to celebrate National Public Lands Day with a Leave No Trace training program session for youth group leaders. The program was held at the Jewett Boy Scout Camp near Lake Isabella in the Sequoia National Forest. Adult youth group leaders and counselors from all organizations were to attend this nationally recognized event. Workshop participants learned the principles of Leave No Trace (LNT), a widely acclaimed program teaching minimum impact camping and hiking skills.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MISSION

No report

BUDGET

no report

STAFF

Superintendent B.J. Griffin (exit duty 6/97)
Superintendent Stanley Albright (EOD 6/97)
Deputy Superintendent Hal Grovert
2 permanents

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

STAFF

Chief, Chip Jenkins
Public Affairs Specialist, Lisa Dapprich
2 permanents
1 Department of Transportation detailie
2 Interns

HIGHLIGHTS

- Facilitated completion of the \$4 million Glacier Point partnership project
- Managed \$2 million of private partnership monies for various partnership projects

OFFICE OF SAFETY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

STAFF

Chief, Oly Olson
2 permanents

HIGHLIGHTS

- Safety Officer for seven weeks during Highwater 97A. Of the 22,500+ work days of the incident from January 1 to February 15; there were 12 injuries with only 4 resulting in OWCP action; 11 illnesses that were the result of Colds or Flu; and 4 others, primarily Poison Oak exposure. A special Immunization program was also established for potential exposure risks to Hepatitis (18 employees) and 74 individuals were provided with Tetanus shots.
- Developed criteria for standardizing Accident Prevention Plans and inspection & oversight processes for Flood Recovery related construction projects.

- Represented the park during an unannounced OSHA inspection conducted March 11-14.
- Due to the almost doubling of the park's trail crew operation (110 employees), the Safety Office provided special emphasis on reducing the traditionally high accident rate. The total number of reportable accidents was below the FY96 levels.
- Conducted 192 public health inspections (regular, follow-up and investigative) of Concessionaire's facilities, YCC camps, and Trail Crew camps
- Over 14 foodborne illness investigations were conducted as a result of complaints generated from Concessionaire facilities. Cooperated with the Mariposa Co. Health Department in investigating a potentially major case of foodborne illness of 31 individuals resulting from a local fund raising event.
- Hazardous waste disposal costs for FY97 were reduced from the previous year as a result of a \$4,000 refund from recalculated CA State disposal fees.
- Facilitated the acquisition of 9 non-hazardous material Parts washers including acquisition of the large non-hazardous "Washing Machine" Parts washer for the Vehicle Maintenance shop in El Portal. This will eliminate employee exposure to toxic solvents and reduce disposal costs by nearly \$5,000 per year.

WAWONA – SECTION 35

- Coordinated the transfer of the Bass Lake School District's old school house to the NPS for use as a community center; and assisted in developing a SUP for the Wawona Community Association to use the structure for local area activities.
- Accepted the donation of the new \$150, 000 Wawona Library
- Accepted the donation of the new SDA sewer extension (\$85,000) to link Camp Wawona to the Govt. central sewer system.
- Developed draft CFR rulemaking for Section 35 Land Use Regulations and submitted them to WASO for inclusion in the Federal Register.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

No report.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION MANAGEMENT

MISSION

No report

BUDGET

Administration Office:

ONPS funds: \$2,045,500

Cost recovery funds taken in by the Office of Special Park Uses: \$256,488

Budget/Fiscal Office:

ONPS: Fund 01; Expenditures \$14,303,606; Balance \$4,575

Special Programs: Fund 01; Expenditures \$1,436,614; Balance \$24

Fee Collection Fund 20; Expenditures: \$915,500; Balance \$14,253

Fee Enhancement Fund 04; Expenditures: \$3,809,754; Balance \$80,242
Quarters Fund 34; Expenditures \$1,206,563; Balance \$100,068

53.66 total FTE for the division was as follows:

53 Permanent employees

1 Temporary employee

4 Seasonal employees

4 TERM employees

62 Total employees

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

STAFF

1 Administrative Officer, GS-14

1 Budget Assistant, GS-07

HIGHLIGHTS

No report

BUDGET/FISCAL OFFICE

STAFF

1 Supervisory Budget Analyst, GS-12

1 Supervisory Voucher Examiner, GS-06

2 Budget Analysts, GS-09

2 Voucher Examiners, GS-05

1 Transportation Assistant, GS-05

4 Fiscal Technicians, GS-05

1 Term - Fiscal Clerk, GS-04

HIGHLIGHTS

As a result of the Highwater 97A Incident, the Budget and Fiscal offices were relocated to Mariposa for three months in order to provide office space for park employees who were displaced. The relocation proved to be successful. Staff members were able to perform their duties with a minimum of disruption to the park.

The branch's workload increased due to flood recovery efforts. The branch processed 3,227 Third Party Drafts and issued 5,498 Bills of Collection.

Gerrit "Lou" Louwerens, Supervisory Voucher Examiner, transferred to Fish and Wildlife in early 1997. Gina Caruso, Voucher Examiner, was detailed as the acting Supervisory Voucher Examiner through the end of the fiscal year.

Tom Pimentel, Budget Analyst, was detailed to the Office of Special Park Uses (SPU) from April through September. Tom assisted SPU with film permits and land agreements.

In June, Ed Chamberlin, Admin Systems Technician, was reassigned from the Human Resources Office to the Fiscal Office as a Fiscal Technician. Ed, under the guidance of Mary Lou Cant, was trained in the issuance of Bills of Collection.

Karen Glenn, Budget Analyst, left the Budget Office in June in order assist the newly formed Recovery Division. Karen played a key role in establishing the Budget functions for the Recovery Division.

Connie Herrera, Budget Assistant-Administration, was detailed into the Budget Office as a Budget Analyst in order to backfill behind Karen Glenn and to assist with year-end closeout. Connie remained in this position through the end of the fiscal year.

Eula "Nell" Gann, Fiscal Technician, retired from government service in December. Nell worked for the park for over 20 years in various positions within the Administration Division. Mary Lou Cant, Fiscal Technician, took over the fee collection duties from Nell.

CONTRACTING/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT & GENERAL SERVICES

STAFF

- 1 Supervisory Contract Specialist, GS-13
- 1 Contract Specialist, GS-11
- 1 Supervisory Contract Specialist, GS-09
- 1 Purchasing Agent, GS-06
- 2 Procurement Technicians, GS-05
- 1 Supervisory General Supply Specialist, GS-11
- 1 Property Management Specialist, GS-09
- 2 Part-time Property Management Technicians, GS-07
- 1 Supply Clerk, GS-05
- 1 Property Management Clerk, GS-05
- 2 Materials Handlers, WG-05
- 1 Mail and File Clerk, GS-05
- 1 Mail and File Clerk, GS-04
- 1 Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-08
- 2 Seasonal - Material Handlers, WG-05

HIGHLIGHTS

The branch processed 105 contracts/modifications and agreements totaling \$33,796,933. Small purchases [included purchases orders, third party draft orders, and Procurement Office credit card purchases (IMPACT)] processed totaled \$3,865,316.

The dollar figures mentioned above do not reflect the procurement actions taken by Incident Command Team members who came to assist the park after the flood and its aftermath. The team works as an independent unit and their work was not captured on the park system. The branch

mentored a lower level Contracting Officer from Lassen Volcanic National Park. The Contract Specialist processed several significant contracts for Death Valley National Park.

In concert with GSA, the branch performed a GSA on-site auction that consisted of 488 items with a total revenue of \$229,385. A total of \$179,613 of this revenue was deposited in the Pacific Great Basin System Support Office Equipment Replacement Fund.

The branch provided in-park training on IMPACT purchase cards, small purchases. A new Board of Survey committee was selected. Twenty-nine Board of Survey reports were generated for 213 assorted structures and 105 personal property items. A record high of 647 new property items were received and distributed to accountable officers throughout the park.

The design of the new warehouse facility called for a "lock down" of the warehouse/commissary operation for security/loss potential. This was accomplished with minimum adverse impact on our in-park customers.

The commissary operations had an increased workload due to the flood recovery efforts. Over \$100,000 was spent on foodstuff orders. This process involves competing of orders, placing the orders, accurately documenting the receiving of the food stuff, assembling the orders, packing each order for proper weights and balancing on the mules for trips into the backcountry, and posting the orders for payment purposes and proper accounting procedures.

A portion of the Lost and Found operation was returned to the concessionaire, Yosemite Concessions Services. The transition was smooth and effective. The park now handles only 10% of the lost and found items. Due to this transition, the remaining duties of this position were combined with the Mail and File clerk duties.

David Sheehan, Materials Handler, resigned from the National Park Service.

Mark Holloway, Motor Vehicle Operator, transferred to Bureau of Reclamation.

Susan Clark, Property Management Technician, was promoted into the Park Ranger (Film Coordinator) position in the Office of Special Park Uses.

Sharon Keenan, Supervisory Contract Specialist, transferred to the Department of Defense.

Flood Highlights: The branch was heavily impacted by the flood. The Incident Command team located their members in our offices. IC team members slept on the floors and in the offices. Some areas were manned 24 hours a day by the teams. Equipment (copiers, phones, faxes, computers, vehicles, etc) was shared by our regular staff and IC team members.

A term employee, from the Maintenance division, was assigned to assist our branch with deliveries of supplies and materials throughout the park which were needed for recovery efforts. At the onset of the flood, a warehouse employee slept in the warehouse for two nights in order to assist the emergency efforts. Employees living in Mariposa were called in to assist with the organizing of food and water to be helicoptered into the park from the Mariposa Airport.

Branch employees assisted the Command Teams with purchasing and renting basic equipment and supplies in order to support the immediate recovery process. Resource information was provided the location of office space and rooms for displaced park employees and incident team members. Once the immediate recovery efforts were taken care of, branch employees tried to return to regular and normal duties.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT OFFICE

STAFF

1 Housing Officer, GS-09

2 Part-time Housing Management Assistants

HIGHLIGHTS

Karen Warren, Administrative Aide - SPU, was detailed into the Housing Manager position. Jean James, Admin Systems Technician, was reassigned from the Human Resources Office into the Housing Management Assistant position.

The branch assisted the Incident Command Team with tracking of 58 relocated occupants. The flood caused the loss of one permanent residence (Cascades) and seven seasonal beds at Arch Rock. Amenities were disrupted in all park housing areas due to the flood.

The branch arranged for temporary housing for Yosemite NP high school students who were unable to get to school because of road damage. The housing was coordinated with the US Forest Service.

Annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) affecting government housing rental rates were effective May 11, 1997, rather than in March due to the flood. The new rates affected approximately 400 occupants. The CPI increased the government rental rates by 3.6 percent across the board.

The Housing Management Plan was updated.

Laundry equipment owned by contractor Mel Brooks was removed from all park facilities. The equipment was replaced by coin-operated, park owned washers and dryers.

A Letter of Agreement with the US Forest Service-Groveland was initiated to establish the use of an excess house for rental by NPS seasonal fee collectors working at Big Oak Flat Entrance Station.

A new housing assignment policy for TERM employees was initiated. TERM employees are now considered for permanent housing rather than seasonal housing.

In order to meet a Congressional inquiry, a contractor - Seamon and Associates, was assigned to gather housing information based on communities surrounding Yosemite National Park. The Housing staff assisted the contractor by providing on-site inspections of park housing and information on communities. Housing, occupant, cost reports, and personal data was provided to the contractor.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BRANCH

STAFF

2 Computer Specialists, GS-12
1 Computer Specialist, GS-11
1 TERM Computer Specialist, GS-09
1 Temporary Computer Specialist, GS-09
1 Volunteer, Computer Specialist

HIGHLIGHTS

- The IM staff provided extensive emergency support to the Incident Command teams as well as park staff during the Highwater 97A Incident.
- Returned park networks and information management systems to normal state following the flood.
- Provided 3 months of priority support to the newly formed recovery division.
- Installed new RAS server and procured 4 new LAN servers.
- Installed 175 new computers throughout the park.
- Increased work station standardization to 75% of goal.
- Completed more than 1500 service requests.
- Installed 2 peer-to-peer networks.
- Cabled the Office of Special Park Uses building in El Portal.
- Provided technical oversight for fiber optic LAN construction in the El Portal warehouse.
- Rebuilt and installed server to upgrade EP-ADMIN LAN.
- Added 200 additional Internet Protocol addresses to allow park users to access the Internet.
- Requested and received new high-speed servers for the Yosemite and EP-warehouse LANs.
- Ordered and received upgrade network software to Novell 4.11. Began upgrade installation planning.
- Increased and reorganized IM staff to meet increased resource demand.
- Planned upgrades to EP-warehouse LANs to allow an additional 100-130 users.
- Began migration from obsolete DOS based workstations to WINDOWS 95 via RAS servers.
- Completed installation and connection of Human Resources building to EP-ADMIN LAN via fiber optic cable. Connected Human Resources workstations to Denver personnel mainframe via Internet.
- Upgraded Travel Manager software to Travel Manager for WINDOWS.
- Upgraded cc:MAIL router equipment.
- Redesignated and converted the Wilderness Permit System from Microsoft Access 7.0 to Microsoft SQL Server 6.5.
- Redesignated and converted Utility Billing System from Borland dBASE IV to Microsoft Access 7.0.
- Redesignated and converted Trailhead Quota model from FORTRAN to Microsoft Access 7.0.
- Installed, configured and provided outgoing administration of Microsoft Windows NT servers on the Research and Yosemite Valley subnets, and at the Wilderness Center.
- Installed and configured Windows NT server for remote-node network access (3 servers).
- Redesign and upgrade of LEO server.

HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH

STAFF

1 Personnel Officer, GS-13
1 Position Classification Specialist, GS-12
1 Personnel Staffing Specialist, GS-11
1 Personnel Staffing Specialist, GS-09
1 Supervisory Personnel Assistant, GS-08
1 Personnel Assistant, GS-07
1 Workman's Compensation Program Manager, GS-09
2 Personnel Assistants, GS-06
2 Personnel Assistant, GS-05
1 Workforce Support Clerk, GS-04
1 Employee Relations Specialist, GS-11
1 Temporary - Position Classification Specialist, GS-11
1 TERM - Human Resources Specialist, GS-09

HIGHLIGHTS

Billie Hair, Personnel Officer, retired from government service in January 1997. Michael Clayton was selected to fill the Personnel Officer position.

Gayle Hovey Polovina was hired from the US Forest Service as a TERM employee to assist with flood recovery efforts. Gayle concentrated on the classification of Recovery division position descriptions. Gayle left before the end of the fiscal year to relocate to Sonora when her husband Mike Polovina, FMO Dispatch, transferred to the US Forest Service.

The Processing staff processing in excess of 9500 personnel actions. Some of these actions were in preparing for a full OPM audit. The staff also processed personnel actions for Sequoia National Park for four payperiods and provided technical support to Point Reyes NS, Channel Islands NP, Redwoods NP, and PGSO.

The Personnel Officer was called on share his personnel expertise with the state of New Mexico and NPS-Alaska Region. He also assisted the Incident Command teams during the flood recovery efforts.

Full orientation was provided to over 50 permanent and TERM employees. Over 50 background investigations were processed. We processed 11 retirements (8 voluntary, 1 mandatory, 1 discontinued, and 1 disability). 50 counseling sessions and retirement computations were provided. Ten military redeposits and 5 temporary redeposits were processed. During the open seasons, over 50 TSP enrollments/changes and 70 health benefits changes were processed. In excess of 70 drug tests were ordered relating to employment. We also provided assistance to other parks in these areas

We classified 107 positions. An additional 15 positions were classified for the Pacific Island Group. Sixty IA positions were established. The reorganization of the Interpretation Division was accomplished. This included 12 new positions, and review of 50 positions.

The staffing section issued 128 vacancy announcements. This is more than double the previous year. Seventy-nine of these announcements were for permanent positions, 30 were for TERM positions, and 19 for seasonal positions. Please note that 2 of these announcements covered 74 different kind of positions. We received 1820 seasonal applications. This is an increase of 500 over 1996. The OPM clerical exam was given to over 100 candidates. Recruitment fairs were conducted at Merced Junior College and at the CCC graduation at Camp Mather. Recruitment mailings were expanded to reach all EDD offices, and many colleges and universities, including historically Black and Hispanic colleges, throughout the US.

The staffing section processed 161 permanent actions, 22 TERM actions, and over 353 temporary actions.

Training classes for park employees included POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment), Labor Relations, and Safety. Four supervisory training courses were conducted in conjunction with the Safety Office. This training greatly reduced work related injuries to park trail crews.

The initiation of representational activities by a labor union caused an even greater workload for the staff. Two suspension letters, one decision letter, numerous letters of reprimands, and EO complaints were handled.

We processed 248 CA-1s and CA-2s. Eight surgical procedures were paid. Six schedule awards (for loss of use or ability) were paid. We secured 3 permanent placements of injured employees into positions they could perform successfully in. The park has 45 pending claims on hearing loss. Alternate work assignment positions were established for future placements. We initiated a visit with the Department of Labor. Cooperation and coordination with this office resulted in the removal of 2 park workers from workers' compensation roles and clearly up old cases. Some workers' compensation cases were 10 years old. Case review by this office and DOL will continue.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted an audit. The review was extensive and detailed. No improper or illegal actions were identified. There were several areas which needed improvement (primarily in use of seasonals and in our crediting plans). These areas are being addressed. Overall, the review was quite positive and reflected well on the HR staff.

OFFICE OF SPECIAL PARK USES

STAFF

- 1 Supervisory Park Ranger, GS-13
- 1 Supervisory Park Ranger, GS-11
- 1 Park Ranger, GS-09 (LE)
- 1 Park Ranger, GS-09
- 1 Office Automation Clerk, GS-04
- 1 Volunteer-In-Park Program Manager, GS-09

HIGHLIGHTS

- The first ever DRAFT El Portal Administrative Site Lease Guidelines was released for comment.
- Assisted with the Fischer Land Exchange issue at Parkline.
- Approximately 800 permits are now managed by the branch.
- The first private cabin permits were issued.
- The first Cross Country Ski permit was issued.
- Approximately 274 (from 350 applications) permits were issued to commercial bus companies. Us Magistrate ordered an unprecedented fine of \$12,500 (PUC and CHP) violations to one company made by possible by the Incidental Business Permits process.
- 197 wedding permits were issued. This is an increase over 1996 even with the Highwater 97A Incident.
- The Yosemite - IMAX film permit is continuing. 30 other film company projects were approved.
- Volunteer-In-Park hours almost doubled over the previous year totaling 143,872 hours. The Highwater 97A Incident added to the interest in volunteer efforts from the private sector.
- Susan Clark was promoted into the Park Ranger (Film Coordinator) position.
- Phil Dendel, Supervisory Park Ranger, transferred to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.
- Leslie Price transferred from Point Reyes National Seashore into the Office Automation Clerk position.
- Karen Warren, Administrative Aide, was detailed into the Housing Officer position.
- Kenneth Stowell was promoted into the TERM Maintenance Worker Leader position to assist with the volunteer efforts. Ken is from the Maintenance division.

DIVISION OF FLOOD RECOVERY

MISSION

The mission of the flood recovery office is responsible management of the repair and rehabilitation of Yosemite's flood-damaged facilities. Objectives include:

- Assessing flood damage.
- Restoring visitor access and services through both temporary and long-term measures.
- Estimating the cost to repair facilities so that they will not be damaged in a future flood of similar magnitude.
- Requesting and obtaining funding from Congress, and providing regular status reports.
- Phasing over \$176 million in facility development projects based on compliance issues, size and complexity of projects, location, type of work, and amount of design needed to implement the repair.
- Accomplishing projects in an orderly sequence that coincides with the facility development process used for the National Park Service's line-item construction program.
- Enhancing accountability through project managers who are responsible for projects from beginning to end.

- Ensuring that park staff is adequately involved with the facility development process.

BUDGET

- Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Public Law 105-18)Emergency: \$176,000,000
Non-emergency transportation: \$10,000,000
Future NPS/Federal Lands Highways Program funding commitment: \$11,000,000
Total Flood Recovery Budget (no-year funds available until expended): \$197,000,000

STAFF

1 Flood Recovery Manager: Kevin Cann
1 Deputy Flood Recovery Manager: Bill Delaney
5 Project Managers
1 Compliance Coordinator with staff of 5 and 3 seasonals
1 Budget Analyst
1 Secretary
1 Management Assistant

11 (est) Total number of FTE. The flood recovery office was established as a term (approximately four-year) organization during the 1997 flood emergency. Positions were filled primarily through term detail assignments from other divisions within the park.

0 FTE of lapsed positions

1 new hire

0 transfers

1 retirements (employee detailed to the Flood Recovery Office from the Maintenance Division, retired in 1997)

Entire staff is detailed employees (The entire staff, except for one term appointment, consisted of employees on term details from other park positions.)

All staff is term employees.

3 seasonals

0 interns

80,591 volunteer hours (includes two special work groups convened in response to the flood: Motherlode and CVOC).

HIGHLIGHTS

- Re-opened Highways 120 and 41 on March 14.
- Re-opened Highway 140 on May 23.
- Opened Tioga Road June 12.
- Completed 12 road projects.
- Completed Environmental Assessments for El Portal Road and Yosemite Lodge.
- Collected 350 pounds of seed for roadside rehabilitation.
- Reconstructed 3.5 miles of resource protection fencing and 170 restoration signs.
- Cleared tons of garbage from the river corridor.
- Removed hazardous trees from developed areas.
- Fully reconstructed 10 hiking bridges and repaired six others.

- Repaired popular hiking trails, including: the 11-mile trail from the top of Vernal Falls to Merced Lake; the steep trail from the Silver Apron to Nevada Falls, and the "golden stairs" of Jack Main Trail.
- Restored electricity, water and sewer utilities throughout the park.
- Cleaned flood debris out of 187 underground electric transformers and vault switches.
- Replaced temporary sewer and water lines in Abbieville Trailer Court with buried pipe.
- Restored nine flooded comfort stations.
- Repaired 100 of the flooded units at Yosemite Lodge.
- Completed planning and comprehensive design for replacement units at Yosemite Lodge.
- Completed repairs to the historic Yosemite Chapel.
- Conducted archeological surveys and damage assessments in much of the backcountry.
- Stabilized three archeological sites.
- Installed 10 interpretive signs about the flood in Yosemite Valley.
- Developed a 318-page Detailed Assessment Report describing flood damage, proposed solutions, and cost estimates.
- Requested and obtained nearly \$200 million in Congressional funding for flood recovery.
- Developed a Report to Congress-Yosemite Flood Recovery Action Plan outlining a spending plan, the sequence of planned construction and rehabilitation projects, and work performed and obligations incurred to date. (Suggestion: add a note here that "a copy is attached" and include the Action Plan in the file. Copies are available in PIO).
- Began quarterly reporting to update expenditures and accomplishments.

DIVISION OF CONCESSIONS MANAGEMENT

MISSION

The GPRA mission for the Division of Concessions Management will be to provide for the public enjoyment and visitor experience of the park. The goal is for visitors to safely and satisfactorily enjoy the available, accessible, diverse and quality park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities in the park.

BUDGET

The FY97 budget for the Division of Concessions Management was \$416,400.

STAFF

1 Division Chief: Martin L. Nielson
 1 Construction Analyst: William Rust
 1 Financial Analyst: Marvin Mann
 3 Concession Specialists: Annette Catamec, Bill Fay and Kim Tucker
 1 Construction Representative: Mary Hazell (detailed to Flood Recovery)
 1 Civil Engineer: Michael Wichmann (detailed to Flood Recovery)

8.69 Total FTE for the Division this year

The Secretary position was lapsed (0.35 FTE) during the year.

Two employees (Hazell and Wichmann) were detailed to Flood Recovery from January 1 through year's end. Marlene Igo from Glen Canyon NRA assisted the Division during a 120-day detail which started the first pay period in August.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Merced River flood caused evacuation and closure of visitor and employee access to Yosemite Valley through March 15. Some concession facilities were flooded, including the apartments under the Nurses Dorm at the Clinic, Housekeeping Camp, Camp Six, the Village Garage, and Yosemite Lodge cabins, motels, and employee housing areas located south of the loop access road.

Due to the flood, most Division personnel were not able to access the office in Yosemite Valley from January 1 until February 14, 1998. Approximately half of the Division staff worked at least for a short period in the flood recovery effort. The remaining staff maintained some semblance of "normal" operations in El Portal.

Division staff, both within and outside of the Flood Recovery organization, worked with YCS and DSC staff to develop plans for new visitor lodging and employee housing at Yosemite Lodge.

CONCESSIONER OPERATIONS

YOSEMITE CONCESSION SERVICES CORPORATION

Overall YCS performed in a satisfactory manner during the year. As a result of the flood, major changes took place within the company as it down-sized to match a reduced revenue flow. The trauma of this necessary reaction resulted in much community and corporate disruption and visitor services which suffered toward the end of the season.

EMPLOYEES AND HOUSING

When the flood hit, the entire housing complex at Yosemite Lodge was inundated (Camp Clark known as the Ozone, the Annex dormitories and Annex cabins) as was Camp 6 in Yosemite Village. On January 7th, due to damage to the sewer line, over 500 concession employees and their dependents that permanently reside in Yosemite Valley were evacuated. One hundred essential concessioner employees and 48 dependents were allowed to stay in the Valley to support park recovery operations.

Once the park reopened, YCS experienced an unprecedented shortage of employee accommodations. "Highland Court," a complex of four large trailers, was purchased by YCS and placed at the Yosemite Lodge Cafeteria parking lot. While unsightly, this complex was renovated by YCS and provided some relief for year-round housing in Yosemite Valley.

Staffing was depressed from normal levels throughout the season. As an indication, park-wide YCS employed only 1,541 on July 8, 1997 as compared to 1,915 on the same date a year earlier.

LODGING

All cabins with and without bath and Pine and Oak Cottages were unavailable for guest accommodations at Yosemite Lodge this year due to the flood in January 1997. The remaining rooms (245 of the 495) were fully operational.

The refurbishment project of guest accommodations and public areas at The Ahwahnee, an historic landmark, was completed prior to reopening in March 1997.

VISITOR SERVICES AND REVENUES

Reductions in the numbers of both campsites and YCS overnight accommodations available and initial light visitation resulted in impacts on YCS revenues from all venues. Retail and food and beverage operations were especially hard hit and scaled back.

YCS projected gross revenues for CY 1997 to be \$20 million below the \$94 million gross posted for CY 1996. Requests for financial relief were made by YCS and DNC was actively interfacing within the Office of the Secretary.

CIF/GIA PROGRAM

Pursuant to a July 23, 1997, letter from DOI, monthly deposits to the CIF were temporarily suspended. As a result, deposits to the CIF, for FY97, totaled \$1,674,679. Monthly deposits to the GIA were not made late, but are due in the amount stipulated in the contract.

A total of \$9,013,360 was expended on approximately 45 CIF/GIA projects active during FY97. As the year progressed, the potential of reduced funding along with staff shortages slowed starts and resulted in putting lower priority projects on hold. Ten projects were completed and closed out during the year. At year's end, approximately 26 active projects remained, half of which were approaching close-out.

COMPLETION OF THE REMODEL YOSEMITE LODGE FOOD, BEVERAGE, & RETAIL BUILDING, PHASE I
The project was a major rehabilitation of the Mountain Broiler Room (now Mt. Room) and kitchen, Four Seasons (now Garden Terrace), and Indian Gift Shop (now Nature Shop). Once construction was started it became evident that much of the existing structure was not built to code or industry standard, even for its time. All that remained of the original was the shell.

COMPLETION OF THE GLACIER POINT FOOD AND RETAIL BUILDING

A new facility was constructed at Glacier Point. The structure is intended to last for the long term. New rest rooms and complete sewer system were constructed as part of this project. Adjacent site work (amphitheater, viewing area, revegetation) was accomplished under the same contract but funded through a cooperative venture with the Yosemite Fund.

HIGH SIERRA CAMPS

The Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp sewer system which posed sanitation and environmental concerns in 1996 were addressed and corrected prior to reopening for the season in Summer 1997.

The new composting toilet and shower house structure at Sunrise High Sierra Camp was open for public for the first time in 1997. Some operational problems occurred, but should be resolved prior opening for the Summer 1998 season.

National Park Service employees provided guided 4- and 7-day guided hikes to the High Sierra Camps for the second season in cooperation with YCS. Participant reaction has been favorable.

BADGER PASS SKI AREA

Ski operations closed January 2, 1997, due to the Merced River Flood. While the downhill ski operation remained closed for the rest of the season, nordic operations reopened February 1, closing on March 30.

SERVICE STATIONS

Park management determined that the Lodge service station would need to be eliminated early in 1998 in order to successfully complete the Lodge reconstruction project.

A project was initiated to convert the fueling facility by the warehouse into a YCS operated facility that would provide fuel to NPS, YCS, the park community, and park employees.

The Wawona and Crane Flat Service Stations were equipped with "Pay Point" gas pumps as a part of the removal of the underground fuel storage tanks at these facilities. The Tuolumne Service Station remained closed during the entire 1997 operating season due to a mandatory underground fuel tank project.

THE ANSEL ADAMS GALLERY

The concessioner requested, but was denied, a waiver or elimination of franchise fee payment due to interruption in visitor services caused by the flood. Once the park reopened, all services were available.

The Ansel Adams Gallery operated in a fully satisfactory manner throughout the operating period. Some renovations and repairs, including a new deck and a partial roof on employee housing units, were accomplished with GIA funds.

YOSEMITE MEDICAL CLINIC

Doctors Medical Center (DMC) received an "unsatisfactory" Annual Overall Rating for the 1996 operating period. DMC initiated a secondary agreement with American Medical Response, a nationwide ambulance service, to provide all services at the Clinic. First Medical, a physician staffing organization affiliated with AMR, provided physician services beginning in May 1997 through the remainder of the operating year. Although the Service noted an improvement in the delivery of medical services, concerns remained with regard to patient billing, fee structure and Contract compliance. DMC was found to be "unsatisfactory" for a second successive year for the 1997 operating period.

EL PORTAL CHEVRON

The concessionaire's business was severely impacted by the Merced River Flood and subsequent park closure. The park forwarded a final draft of a prospectus for Gas Station Service in El Portal

to the regional office. The concessionaire received a satisfactory score on their overall annual rating.

EL PORTAL MARKET

The concessionaire continued to operate in a successful manner although their business was impacted due to the Merced River Flood. In accordance with their contract they were notified by the Service that the "amount and character" of their franchise fees may be reconsidered.

DIVISION OF INTERPRETATION

MISSION

Interpretation will assist people in understanding, enjoying, and contributing to the protection of the park's natural, cultural, and scenic resources and dynamic processes.

BUDGET

\$422,400 ONPS designated, \$8,506 turned back
\$1,128,300 Enhanced Fee, \$82,932 turned back

BRANCH OF INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Jim Corless
3 permanents, subject to furlough (one loaned to Highwater 97A then Recovery Division after January); not reported, Bob Roney, Laurie Lee Jenkins
2 term, subject to furlough (one project funded); Mary Beth Shenton; Kristin Ramsey
1 long-term volunteer; Jack Finney

HIGHLIGHTS

- Produced two Highwater 97A video programs
- Produced one Valley Implementation Plan (VIP) video program
- Participated in planning for VIP public meeting trips
- Established program with Yosemite Transportation Service to improve commercial interpretation
- Created and installed 10 Highwater 97A wayside interpretive exhibits
- Created and installed interpretive wayside exhibits for new Glacier Point Amphitheater
- Facilitated the reopening of the Happy Isles Nature Center

BRANCH OF CURATORIAL SERVICES

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Dave Forgang
6 permanents
1 permanent, subject to furlough

1 permanent detailed out to Branch of Interpretive Services beginning March, 1997
Several staff members were detailed to Highwater 97A event

HIGHLIGHTS

- The major project for this year involved the completion of a permanent, environmentally controlled storage facility in El Portal and the subsequent transfer of collections materials from storage in Yosemite Valley to the new facility. The entire archive collection was moved and some portions of other collections were also moved.
- The Research Library processed 1474 books through the check out procedure
- 121 new books were accessioned into the Research Library; 102 books were catalogued; 40 books were purchased; 33 rolls of Mariposa Gazette microfilm purchased; and 63 periodical subscriptions maintained
- Loaned 663 photographic resources
- 270 researchers and visitors (25% NPS and 75% other) utilized the Collections Room
- Responded to 224 formal information requests
- Averaged 90-100 library users per week (34% NPS and 66% other)
- 52 items were accessioned into the Museum collection
- Archie Leonard Jr. and Tom Leonard visited the park and donated artifacts which had belonged to Archie Leonard, one of the first civilian rangers in Yosemite
- Participated through loans in exhibits at the Gene Autry Museum; the National Building Museum; the Crocker Art Museum (two separate exhibits); the Indiana University's Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Anthropology; and the Oakland Museum
- 697 catalog records were added to the Automated National Catalog System bringing the total database to 4,249 accession records, 41,377 cultural catalog records (representing over 400,000 items), and 10,348 natural history catalog records
- Assisted SEKI with preparation of a written Collection Storage Plan
- Logged and filed over 200 Highwater 97A rolls of film
- Assisted on development of Highwater 97A wayside exhibits

BRANCH OF INFORMATION SERVICES

STAFF

Branch Chief: Scott Gediman

Supervisory Park Ranger, Visitor Center Operations: Vallerie Pillsbury

Supervisory Park Ranger, Public Information Office (PIO): Kendell Thompson

2 permanent, one month subject to furlough GS-303 (PIO); EOD: 12/6/96 and EOD: 1/13/97; Al Nash, Christine Cowles

1 permanent, GS-303 clerk; Raye Santos

2 terms (6 months subject to furlough), Visitor Center Operations; Julie Ahern, Laura Avadesian

1 term (6 months subject to furlough), Deaf Services; Sarina Lambert

4 seasonals, Visitor Center Operations, two Division of Recovery funded for Community Information Centers

1 seasonal, PIO, Division of Recovery funded

HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

The PIO saw a 30% increase in media contacts and a 43% rise in visitor telephone contacts over FY96. This rise is due almost entirely to an increased worldwide interest in the park and visitor uncertainties following the Highwater 97A flood. PIO handled:

- 25,642 visitor information telephone phone calls
- 2,928 media telephone contacts from 275 media organizations
- 11,882 pieces of mail sent
- Best of the Web award was given to the park based largely on the news section of the park's website which is managed by the PIO.
- High demand required the dissemination of all news releases, updates, and Daily Reports to be converted from a stand-alone fax machine to a computer-based system with a much higher capability. The recipient lists grew approximately 100 to 500%.
- Internet e-mail was used for the first time for routine dissemination of news releases, updates and Daily Reports.
- 54,000 *known* destinations were reached through e-mail and facsimile delivery of news releases, updates and *Daily Reports*

VISITOR CENTER

- 4 additional Community Information areas were staffed during Highwater 97A (Oakhurst, Mariposa, Groveland, El Portal)
- The Mariposa community information post was established for long-term staffing on a part-time basis
- Deaf services, no report

BRANCH OF EDUCATION

STAFF

- 1 Branch Chief, Lynda Doucette
- 1 Permanent, Nancy Hadlock
- 1 Permanent, subject to furlough, Sue Branch
- 2 Terms, subject to furlough, Noreen McClintock and Dave Dahler
- 1 Student Intern (summer only)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Partnered with USFS and Yosemite Institute during week-long teacher's workshop
- Completed 10 traveling trunks for use by off-site teachers
- Facilitated 600 students through the two-day, Environmental Living Program
- Led 1200 students through two-hour, on-site Parks as Classroom environmental education programs
- Guided 400 visitor children through the Junior Ranger Program

BRANCH OF FIELD OPERATIONS

STAFF

1 Branch Chief: Mary Kline
10 Field Staff Permanent
25 Summer Seasonals
15 Interns
6 Volunteers

HIGHLIGHTS

- 235,782 visitors were contacted by Field Staff during programs or roving and over 3,406 programs were offered.
- Field staff attended training in storytelling (Margaret and Ginger), traditional skills (Julia, Kimberly and Bob) and several in house training including, Akerson Fire training, Compelling Stories Workshops, and advanced Sequoia Ecology training in the Nelder Grove.
- Represented the NPS at the California Indian Basketweavers conference where they initiated a process to bring that group here in two years.
- Represented the NPS as a professional facilitator at Leadership Seminars in GA, HI and CA during this year and completed Advanced Mediation Training for the benefit of the service. I also taught two EO classes this year along with auditing several POSH classes and continuing to run the parks EO Counselor Program here and at SEKI.

DIVISION OF MAINTENANCE

MISSION

No report

BUDGET

ONPS: 6,185,200
Fee Enhancement: \$1,712,500
Fee Demo: \$3,333,000
Cultural Cyclic Maintenance: \$59,000
Regular Cyclic Maintenance: \$450,000
Repair/Rehab: \$275,759
Equipment Replacement: \$285,744
Construction: \$81,213
Housing Initiative: \$6,851
YCS-Trails: \$150,000
Hetch Hetchy: \$666,133
Utility Income: \$3,351,141
Donation - Yosemite Fund: \$171,343
Quarters: \$1,109,111
Hazardous Waste: \$31,916
Storm Damage (May Flood): \$117,275

ERFO (FY95 Damage): \$79,822

Fire Rehab: \$178,799

1 Division Chief: Kevin Cann (10/96 - 2/97)/Edward Walls (Acting)(3/97 - 9/97)

244.55 FTE for the Maintenance Division

6 FTE of lapsed positions

22 New Hires

? Transfers

9 Retirements

5 Detailed employees

8 Term employees

132 Seasonal employees

2 Interns

1,386 Volunteer hours (Not including YA or SCA)

ROADS & TRAILS BRANCH

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Roads and Trails: Steve Kelly (10/96 - 2/97)/E. Dean Glenn (Acting)(3/97 - 9/97)

14 Branch of Roads and Trails Supervisors

78 Branch of Roads and Trails Staff

HIGHLIGHTS

VALLEY ROADS

- All ditches were pulled
- All shoulders were graded
- All potholes were patched
- Stabilized slopes on Hwy 41
- Reopened four mile road
- Repairs to Eagle Creek
- Emergency repairs at Bridalveil
- Emergency repairs at Sentinel Creek
- Replaced shoulder that was washed out during the flood at Ribbon Creek
- Replace shoulder at Black Spring that was washed out during the Flood
- All culverts were cleaned out
- El Capitan Bridge was cleared of logs and sediment and broken railing was replaced

MATHER ROADS

- Work completed at Mather Tuolumne, Hetch Hetchy, Aspen Valley consisted of; Cleaned and pulled ditches, graded al dirt roads, cleaned and flushed culverts.
- On Hwy 120, Tioga Road, Hetchy Road, and Foresta Road patched potholes, crack sealed, pulled ditches, installed snow poles, light brushing

- Getting equipment ready for summer and winter use, mounting, removing sanders, plow blades rotary loader mount
- Plow snow on Hetchy Road, Hwy 120, Foresta Road, spring opening of Tioga Pass Road, charcoaled Olmsted Avalanche area, worked with avalanche consultant on a day to day bases
- Completed flood repair on Tuolumne Grove Road
- Mather crew attended avalanche training refresher before starting Tioga Road opening

WAWONA ROADS

- On Chowchilla Mt. Road and 4-Mile Road, cleaned debris, graded and reshaped, build headwalls on all culverts
- Installed culvert and headwalls on Livingston Meadows Road
- Graded and reshaped for fire the Henness Road 2 miles of fire road
- Graded and reshaped fire escape road at Mariposa Grove Road
- Crack sealed and patched shoulders on Hwy 41 from Bishop Creek to tunnel
- Repaired base and skin patched Badger Pass and Glacier Point Roads

EL PORTAL ROADS/SOLID WASTE

- Repaired Coulterville Road damaged in Highwater 97A
- Graded all roads to housing and applied 100 ton of material for sub base
- Assisted with Highwater 97A flood as representative for El Portal Roads & Trails
- Graded and applied base material to all access roads in El Portal including Middle Road
- Graded and applied base material to El Portal Firehouse
- Installed 2 culverts for main drainage out of old El Portal and Motor Inn Cabins
- Improved drainage at El Portal Trailer Court at dike
- Assisted Federal Hwy with repairs in El Portal
- Relocated Solid Waste/Roads operation out of building for remodel into temporary trailer
- Completed most of the ERFO repairs that we were responsible for
- Removed all solid waste from Yosemite National Park during peak season visitation
- Was able to hold the Solid Waste/Roads Operation together as a team during these many changes
- Re-sign all wayside signs on Tioga Road
- Re-do all the regulatory signs on Tioga Rd
- New sign system for Happy Isles
- Re-stripe all roads in Yosemite - COR contract
- Paint speed bumps throughout park
- Emergency signing Highwater 97A
- Repairs to all signs damaged by Highwater 97A

MACHINE SHOP

- Shop relocated to El Portal on our own and kept one or both shops open continuously
- Rehabed equipment from Residence 1 that was flooded
- Worked with trails to repair Wawona Swinging Bridge
- Assisted Forestry in the removal of hazard trees
- Rehabed flood damaged generators at Yosemite lift station

- Repaired and replaced Nevada Falls hand rail
- Raised sewer line for trailer court with wrecker during flood
- Welded 8" water main for Hodgdon
- Moved floor of storage area for Trails
- Worked on wrecker towards completion
- Processed 2,327 work requests

Raleigh Patterson retired

CORRALS OPERATION

- Rebuilt south side of alley way and training corral by 2 feet to make it safer for packers, students and young horses
- Purchased 5 powder river feeders to feed 5 head of stock and not have to feed on the ground
- Built 50' alley way to make it safer to do worming and doctoring of stock
- Packers helped sewer log the 800 miles of trails
- Packed large amounts of dirt of Vogelsang trail and Nevada Falls horse trail
- Packed large amounts of bridge decking and rails to bridges damaged in Highwater 97A
- Packed and supplied all bridge crews with mortar and cement for bridge approaches
- Packed materials to the Wilma Ranger cabin and rehabed the roof.
- Packed wood and supplies to Ostrander lake cabin
- Helped BCU pack out human waste from LYV and Merced Lake
- Packers broke many young mules for dirt packing in, total of 5 strings
- In 1996 we packed an average of 275,200 lbs, in 1997 we packed 381,300 lbs of gear and supplies

TRAILS

- Completed reconstruction of bridge abutments and installation of 8 new bridge spans
- Completed substantial repairs to 9 bridges
- Completed construction of new abutment for 6 bridges ready for new spans in 1998
- Milled 26 bridge beams from hazard trees
- Reconstructed trail from Silver Apron to Top of Nevada Falls
- Reconstructed trail from Happy Isles to Clarks Bridge
- Completed major repairs to Nevada Falls Horse trail
- Reconstructed trail through Mirror Lake rock slide
- Reconstructed Buena Vista trail
- Began reconstruction of Chilnualna Lakes trail
- Reconstructed Paradise Meadow to Tildeu Canyon trail
- Repaired flood damage up Merced Canyon to Merced Lake
- Completed trail repair and meadow restoration from Vogelsang to Evelyn Lake
- Cleared 90% of Park trails of logs
- Accomplished comprehensive trail maintenance on approximately 200 miles of trails

BUILDING & GROUNDS BRANCH

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Buildings and Grounds: Glen Rothell
7 Branch of Buildings and Grounds Supervisors
74 Branch of Buildings and Grounds Staff

HIGHLIGHTS

- Construct/Repair/Rehab 17 Toilet Facilities Parkwide
- Rehab/Repair 21 Housing projects to single dwelling, apts, and Motor Inn Cabins
- Converted 3 dorm type structures to Administrative Building Use
- Paint/Repaint 9 structure projects both buildings and housing
- Installed 8 fire suppression systems 6=housing 2=buildings
- Replaced 16 8=washers 8=dryers at 3 parkwide sites
- Restored/constructed 11 landscape sites
- Provided personnel, equipment and materials for Highwater 97A Incident
- Provided 7 F.T.E. at various times for CORT trade related contracts
- Provided approximately 280 hours of trades related training for mechanics in 4 districts
- Removed asbestos from 9 houses and 4 buildings
- Completed Lead Testing Program of 123 combined structures

UTILITIES BRANCH

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Utilities: Edward Walls (10/96 - 2/97)/John Clark (Acting) (3/97 - 9/97)
5 Branch of Utilities Supervisors
62 Branch of Utilities Staff

HIGHLIGHTS

- Leach field rehab at Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp
- Lost the Backcountry Utilities office/shop in the Highwater 97A Incident
- Sewerline rehab at Tuolumne Meadows
- Rebuild water/wastewater utilities in three Districts after the Highwater 97A Incident
- Rebuilt primary electrical distribution system in Yosemite Valley
- Repaired flood damaged golf course at Wawona
- Rebuilt flood damaged bridges at Wawona Golf Course

DESIGN AND ENGINEERING BRANCH

STAFF

1 Branch Chief, Design and Engineering: William Delaney (10/96 - 2/97)/Chris English (Acting) (3/97 - 9/97)

0 Branch of Design and Engineering Supervisors
4 Branch of Design and Engineering Staff

HIGHLIGHTS

No report

DIVISION OF VISITOR PROTECTION

MISSION

No report

BUDGET

Fire Budget: ONPS funded: \$524,900/Firepro funded: \$865,914

Wilderness Budget: ONPS: (Fee Enhancement): \$135,355/City of San Francisco: \$209,932

Fee Collection Budget & Revenue:

Budget for both campground and entrance station operations: \$915,000 (This was all fee collection funding; no ONPS)

San Francisco funding for Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station: \$88,332

Entrance Station revenue, including passes and commercial tour fees: \$10,485,071

Campground revenue: \$1,723,955. (A possibly significant, but unknown amount of campground revenue was lost when Destinet went bankrupt. They owed the NPS approx. \$600,000 and a large portion of that was probably owed to Yosemite.)

BRANCH OF OPERATIONS

STAFF

Don Coelho (acting 1/97 - 11/97)

Hunter Sharp(11/97 - present)

Dave Lattimore Mather District Ranger Staff 7 perm 4 seas

John Roth Tuolumne District Ranger Staff 1 perm 1 term 10 seas.

Harry Steed El Portal District Ranger Staff 3 perm

Todd Brindle Wawona District Ranger Staff 5 perm

Jim Tucker Valley District Ranger (acting) 12 perm

42 Total FTE

9 FTE Lapsed in patrol positions

2 FTE lapsed in clerical

4 Permanent new hires, GS-9 park rangers

3 Transfers (Jan Cauthorn Page, Dave Page transferred out, John Stobinsky in)

1 Retirement

0 Detailed out of park/2 detailed in Valley District (Tucker and Grady Bryant)

1 Term employee (Dave Page)

22 Seasonals
5 Interns
3,450+ Volunteer hours (desk officer program)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Worked under new organization while seeking to complete reorganization
- Managed initial response to January Flood, organized ICS for parkwide response
- Returned to normal operations with reopening of park in March.
- Opened Tuolumne Road as a trial through park road in early summer
- Hired 4 park rangers EOD late summer early fall
- Hosted new park service director at Glacier Point opening
- Initiated Traffic control with control aids at Yosemite falls junction
- 333 arrests for 1997

BRANCH OF FEE COLLECTION

STAFF

1 Acting Branch Chief: Mike Osborne
4 PFT fee collection supervisors
2 PLFT fee collection supervisors
2 PFT non-supervisory employees
7 PLFT fee collection employees
38 Term and Seasonal employees

28.59 Total FTE

Total lapsed positions: Estimate 5 to 10 FTE worth of lapsed positions for 1997. Because the unified fee collection program is still new and the org chart is still in flux, this is impossible to answer accurately. It was difficult hiring enough seasonals in a timely fashion so many positions remained vacant for much of the season. A lack of housing at the beginning of the season also contributed to several positions either not getting filled or filled late in the season.

20 New hires (approx)
1 Permanent employee transferred
0 Retirements
2 Employees had 3 temporary details (only one of the details was a temporary promotion)
5 Term employees (2 in campgrounds/3 in entrance stations/5 vacant Term positions)
33 Seasonal employees
0 Interns
9,375 Volunteer hours (approx 18 - 20 campground hosts)

HIGHLIGHTS

At the time of the Jan. flood, Valley campground reservations had been made through May 21st. Many of these reservations were for campsites that no longer existed. Many thousands of these campers had to be reassigned into existing campsites which would accommodate their party, their

length of stay, and the size of their vehicles. Accomplished with a minimum of inconvenience to the public but required a heroic response by staff.

Also in response to the loss of campsites in the Valley, Wawona Campground was placed on the reservation system with very little lead time. Same day sale of vacant campsites was difficult because there was no computer (no electricity) and no Destinet staff at Wawona. Some public dismay that the campground was no longer first-come, first-served but more people seemed glad that reservations were now possible.

Three permanent fee collection personnel were reassigned to the flood effort through March.

Closure of Hwy. 140 (and Arch Rock) until May 25 caused significant lost revenue. Lack of seasonal housing led to understaffed fee operations for much or all of the 1997 season. Housing at Arch Rock was unusable for the entire year. South Entrance housing remained unusable as well. Arch Rock entrance station was not staffed for two days a week in June and July because we had no place to house seasonals. Most other entrance and campground operations were staffed at the bare minimum level.

Late arrival of seasonal certs and long lead times to get people on board also caused understaffing and reduced collections at entrance stations, especially May-July.

Beginning August 1, at the insistence of Congressman Doolittle, we instituted a program of permitting trans-Sierra travel for the reduced entrance fee of \$5. Time limits of 2 hours between Big Oak Flat or Arch Rock and Tioga, and 3 hours between South Entrance and Tioga, were allowed. The park lost approximately \$500,000 in revenue Aug. thru Oct. The program was also susceptible to fraud. Approx. 10% of the people requesting the pass through remained in the park until the entrance stations were closed. The program was very popular with the people who were actually driving through. Unfortunately, many people just wanted to drive through but also wanted to eat, stop at turnouts, take pictures and otherwise enjoy the park on their drive and could not do so in the time allotted. These people were very angry with us whether they just drove through or whether they missed the time limit and were asked to pay the remainder of the full entrance fee (many refused). Entrance station employees received much verbal abuse from the public over this program.

FIRE MANAGEMENT OFFICE

STAFF

1 Fire Management Officer: Ed Duncan
1 staff

1 Prescribed Fire Manager: L. Dean Clark
1 supervisor
12 staff

1 North District Fire Management Officer: Robert Reece
2 supervisors

13 staff

1 South District FMO: Deron Mills (EOD 04/97)

2 supervisors

8 staff

1 ECC Manager: Mike Polovina (Transferred 10/97)

2 staff

1 Telecom. Specialist: Dexter Dearth

2 staff

FTE: 19.4 Firepro.....9.4 ONPS

0.5 Firepro.....0.4 ONPS

0 new hires.....3 positions re-hired

2 transfers

1 retirement

1 detailed employee

4 Term employees

30 seasonal employees

0 interns

0 volunteer hours.....6720 hours by CVOC program

HIGHLIGHTS

The Yosemite Branch of Fire and Aviation had a slow Wildland Fire season. While the park was in a partial open mode due to the flood event of last January, and weather was mild the Branch took advantage of the situation to get quite a bit of fuel management work done starting as early as March with sizable burns. Special funding made available through the counties allowed use of the CVOC program to bring on and retain a small 5-8 person size module to help clean up. This program lasted until the end of 1997 and resulted in a lot of piling which in turn was burned in late fall. It also promulgated the idea that a crew of individuals (on a commuting basis) would be of great benefit in the future, and would represent the entry level firefighter position but for the first year would be used as a fuel crew to increase the work done on the ground.

Additionally in FY-97 the Branch was able to accomplish more management ignited prescribed burning than ever done in history of the program. While Natural Wildland Fires were not numerous at all this year much more emphasis was placed on preparing for fall burning season which paid off. Also a sizable re-ignition of a natural wildland fire (Kibbie) was undertaken and completed which was a prototypic event for the park and proved that the use of natural selection for targeting burns was a viable method of determining where to work. This project in combination with other burns allowed the program to finish the year with just over 5000 acres.

New activity in the Air Quality arena due to the new policy and increased activity by other agencies has elevated the topic once again to the forefront. It can be expected that as agencies increase their burning even more time will be needed to be spent coordinating this issue.

The Crane Flat Air Operations facility was in place by April and used this summer. A new well was drilled and at 620' water was located. Estimated production from the well is 60 GPM. This facility has always had water hauled to it since its construction in 1923.

Interagency inspections were requested and completed this season on the four Yosemite fire stations and their wildland crews which yielded extremely usable information. This winter the station captains have tasks of rectifying all identified deficiencies to standardize the stations with regard to scheduling, tracking training, physical fitness, inventory and reporting. An Interagency team of aviation managers also visited the new Air Operations facility in the fall and performed a separate base inspection which also yielded excellent information to improve that operation for next year as well.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS OFFICE

STAFF

No report

HIGHLIGHTS

Total people booked last year in the Jail was 333. This figure was down from 457 or 27% from the previous year. This was likely due to the drastic change in visitation due to the flood incident. Of the prisoners, 300 were arrested on specific charges stemming from activities in the park. 11 were arrested on federal warrants and 22 were arrested on state warrants. The end of year prisoner days, were 743 days, that figure is down from 997 the previous year.

Scott represented the park on 342 cases filed in court. This included 52 class a misdemeanors and about 15 felony incidents. The figures do not include CVB citations. The LEO has not tracked cases and information related to those cases prosecuted in our local court. This will change. We have Beth coming up with an Access program to track pertinent info.

The CIU had the following:

Criminal Cases assigned: 84

Criminal Cases closed: 66

Criminal cases suspended 8

Criminal cases open as of 12/31/97: 10

Closure rate was 78.5% (Suspended cases are ones that are not solved, and leads have run out.)

Civil cases assigned: 6

Civil cases closed: 6

Internal investigations assigned 15

Internal Investigations closed 10

Internal Investigations Open/Suspended 5

Total TDY for the CIU in 1997 is approximate 9.5 months. TDY was all in support of cluster parks CHIS, PINN, SEKI,

This year case totals were down, due to the unusual visitation due to the flood. TDY was up due to the case at CHIS.

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT OFFICE

STAFF

1 Wilderness Manager--Ron Mackie (retired 1/28/97)/Acting Wilderness Manager--Laurel Boyers (1/29/97-present)

3 Supervisors

1 Interagency Education Specialist

18 Staff

7 FTE's

1 lapsed FTE

2 new hires

No transfers

1 retirement

No details

No term

6 seasonals

9 interns

3 volunteers

HIGHLIGHTS

- Maintained wilderness quality by issuing over 17,000 wilderness permits with over 5,000 reservations and patrolled over 5000 miles of trail, contacting over 14,500 visitors in the field.
- An estimated 110,000 people visited the Wilderness Center.
- Third year of interagency Wilderness Education Program, focusing on Wilderness Curriculum, Wilderness Rider, and Scouting Ahead programs. Two Leave No Trace Masters were certified on staff.
- Completed the 1990's Wilderness Impacts Survey, surveying the final 8 sites of 30 in this 3 decade study.
- Initiated and developed trailhead signing prototypes and plans for new Tuolumne Wilderness Center with City of San Francisco funding. Both products will be completed in 1998.
- Received notification of being selected as winner of the 1995 National Wilderness Leadership Award in Education for Wilderness Center and Wilderness Education Project.
- Worked with neighboring USFS areas to transfer administration of three trailheads located on our common boundary to the Sierra and Stanislaus Forests.
- Produced educational materials and signs for big wall climbs in Yosemite Valley
- Worked with maintenance to repair damaged roof and door at Wilma Lake cabin.
- Conducted snow surveys despite bizarre sampling due to flood event. Completed flood damage assessment, posted all trailheads, and increased public information efforts due to flood issues.

DIVISION OF RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

MISSION

No report

BUDGET

No report

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT & ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

STAFF

No report

HIGHLIGHTS

OAK WOODLAND MONITORING (YOSEMITE FUND)

The California black oak woodland project continued this year with the 9th year of seedling monitoring, site maintenance, and evaluation. Over 30% of the planted oak seedlings are still alive, and oak seedlings continue to become established on their own in many of the protected and treated areas throughout Yosemite Valley. Eighteen planted seedlings are now over two meters tall, and an additional thirty-plus were over 1-meter tall in June 1997. All protective fencing, tree shelters, and signs were maintained this year, and protected sites were weeded of exotic species. A paper presented at the California Oak Symposium in San Luis Obispo, CA in March 1996 is being published through the U.S.D.A, Forest Service.

MEADOW MANAGEMENT (YOSEMITE FUND AND MAVERICK MOVIE)

The 1996 draft Yosemite Valley meadow management plan continues to be revised with additional sections addressing exotic species and fire management in the meadows.

EXOTIC PLANT MANAGEMENT (MOSTLY UNFUNDED)

Although this program continues to be unfunded, it continues to receive significant emphasis due to the potential and actual threats of exotic species establishment in many sections of the park. There are at least 150 exotic species growing within Yosemite National Park to date (which is over 1/10th of the park's flora), and new species are being introduced each year, with accompanying threats to the native ecosystem. Due to lack of funds, most eradication work has been done by volunteers under the direction of park staff. Georgia Stigall coordinated numerous volunteer groups, and received Yosemite's Volunteer-of-the-Year award for her diligence and dedication to protecting the park's native flora.

Work this year again focused on species that have been of concern for quite a while - bull thistle, common mullein, yellow and white sweet-clover, Himalayan blackberry, ox-eye daisy, and Jerusalem-oak. In addition, yellow star-thistle reared its ugly head in El Portal this year, as well as spotted knapweed in Foresta. These species have begun to move rapidly away from road corridors

and construction areas onto undisturbed slopes away from residential areas and into rare plant habitats. Contacts have been made with agency counterparts on adjacent lands to address exotic species management on an ecosystem rather than jurisdictional level.

A minor amount of funding through DSC enabled the program to purchase new equipment that will be used in future exotics eradication efforts. Ackerson fire rehabilitation funding enabled staff to begin assessing the new and ongoing exotic problem in the Hetch Hetchy area of the park. Threatened, Endangered, & Sensitive Species Monitoring (Ackerson Fire Rehabilitation) Funding through the Ackerson fire enabled staff to monitor some of the TES affected by the 1996 fire. These species and populations had not been monitored since 1988 due to lack of funding. Significant increases in the Hetch Hetchy monkey flower (Federal species of concern) numbers and populations were discovered. New populations of Tompkin's Sedge (State Rare) were also discovered within the burned area.

WASHBURN POINT (YOSEMITE FUND)

The Washburn Point revegetation project began in 1994 and was completed in fall of 1997. The maintenance division had a matching project at Washburn which included the construction of the stone walls. The plantings at Washburn included over 700 plants of native species propagated from plant material collected in previous years at the project site. Soils were decompacted and the area was mulched with locally gathered forest duff.

TUOLUMNE SEWER LINE REVEGETATION (CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO)

No report

SOUTH FORK BRIDGE (FEDERAL HIGHWAYS)

Bridge construction was delayed until FY'98. Additional seed was collected within the proposed construction area, and is being stored until it is needed. Long-term photo monitoring points were installed to document the pre-existing vegetation, construction progress, and post-construction revegetation effectiveness. Planning and monitoring were completed in anticipation of construction of a temporary bridge.

CHILNUALNA BRIDGE (FEDERAL HIGHWAYS)

Completed final revegetation and monitoring of the new bridge in the fall of 1996.

GLACIER POINT CIR PROJECT (UNFUNDED)

Technical advice and volunteer supervision were provided to facilitate completion of the revegetation components of the Glacier Point CIF project.

GLACIER POINT SEWER LINE (YOSEMITE FUND)

Restoration staff served as the project manager for the removal and restoration of the Glacier Point sewer line following the installation of the new facility. This project involved obtaining a contract for removal and disposal of hazardous materials. The 300 linear feet of abandoned asbestos-concrete pipe were removed during the latter part of July. Staff coordinated with the NPS concession representative to schedule the removal of the existing sewer line in conjunction with construction of the Glacier Point building and new utilities. Restoration staff and YCC crews spent

approximately 4 weeks regrading eroding soils, opening trenches and removing pipe and restoring soil conditions over the 1,200 feet of steep slope.

GLACIER POINT PARKING LOT (FEDERAL HIGHWAYS)

Funding was made available to do some follow-up revegetation (200+ plants), fencing (400+ feet), social trail obliteration, and removal of old erosion control netting around the parking lot.

MIRROR LAKE PROJECT (YOSEMITE FUND)

- The restoration and design work at Mirror Lake concluded the majority of project implementation at Mirror Lake. A 25-foot pedestrian bridge is scheduled for construction in the fall of 1998. Work completed to date includes:
 - An EA was prepared and a FONSI was issued in compliance with NEPA requirements. The Cultural Landscape Report was completed, XXX prepared and SHPO approval of the proposed action obtained in compliance with section 106, NHPA.
 - Restoration of over 43,700 square feet of impacted land.
 - Construction of approximately 1,100 linear feet of split rail fence. Fencing serves to reduce trampling of vegetation and delineate restoration areas.
 - Planting native vegetation that was propagated from site-specific plant materials.
 - Removing a road and parking lot that was left obsolete by the development of a public transit system in Yosemite Valley in the 1970's. Park staff and volunteers removed over 450 feet of road, a 110 X 150 ft. parking area, 800 tons of asphalt and road base material.
 - Developed and installed a "universally" accessible interpretive trail that highlights significant features in the Mirror Lake landscape. The trail is approximately 600 feet in length, incorporates over 100 feet of 1860's carriage road within the modern transportation corridor and developed interpretive themes for 7 display panels.
 - Constructed parking sites at the lower pool for handicap placarded vehicles. Developed two sets of handicap accessible vault toilets. Restrooms replaced chemical toilets that were difficult to locate and inaccessible to handicap visitors.
 - A cultural landscape report was prepared as part of the project research and significant features were identified and included in the interpretation of the site.
 - Happy Isles Rockfall Restoration (Emergency Funding)
 - Repairs to the fencing and revegetation sites were completed in the summer of 1997.
- Assistance provided to management to finalize new locations for the bus stop and snack stand.

ACKERSON FIRE REHABILITATION (BAER)

Completed total rehabilitation of 35 miles of handline (see attached report). Installed 5 fire effects monitoring plots to evaluate vegetation recovery in the high intensity burn areas in Ponderosa Pine, White Fir, and Red Fir forest types. Completed rehabilitation of fire-related damage to the Great Sierra Wagon Road from Aspen Valley to White Wolf (8 miles), and assisted cultural resources management with development of a flood damage assessment for this wilderness road corridor.

JANUARY 1997 FLOOD

The restoration and vegetation management staff served as the Incident Resource Advisor and field staff through the entire incident. Work included development of damage assessment reports,

survey and replacement of damaged property equipment, and development of recommendations for natural resource protection during repairs to sewer, water, and other utility lines throughout the park.

Following the incident and approved funding for Flood Recovery, the staff worked on twelve flood recovery projects through the 1997 season, ranging from re-monitoring 27 pre-existing river cross-sections through Yosemite Valley, making repairs on damaged fencing, signs, and structures at all restoration sites, weeding exotics at ERFO sites on all park road corridors, and providing input to compliance documents and planning for future Flood Recovery projects.

BRANCH OF ARCHEOLOGY

STAFF

No report

HIGHLIGHTS

ACKERSON POST-FIRE ASSESSMENTS & REHABILITATION

- Cultural resource sites were visited (35 new finds) and post-fire documentation and condition assessment conducted.
- Scope of work for data recovery work at Aspen Valley completed; to be implemented in FY98.
- Cultural resources review and documentation of post-fire rehabilitation actions such as handline removal, hazard tree removal, dozer line rehabilitation.
- Paper presented at Society for California Archeology - Northern California Data Sharing. Meeting on post-fire cultural resources activities.

HIGHWATER 1997 EMERGENCY & RECOVERY

- Resources visited and post-flood documentation and condition assessment conducted.
- Negotiations w/SHPO, ACHP, Indian groups for compliance.
- One major resource stabilization project undertaken (CA-MRP-181).
- Three discoveries of human remains, emergency consultation and treatment under NAGPRA (two reburials accomplished; remains of third individual have been systematically excavated and temporarily stored pending NAGPRA notification and repatriation).
- In-house completion of El Portal road documentation; archeological monitoring of extensive soil testing at Yosemite Lodge; data recovery excavations at CA-MRP-183 and test excavations at CA-MRP-350 in El Portal; site reconnaissance and condition assessments completed for 85 cultural resource sites in wilderness areas.

TUOLUMNE SEWERLINE REPLACEMENT

- Archeological monitoring of utility trenching at Lembert Dome completed.
- Special analyses conducted of possible prehistoric fire-hearth charcoal at Lembert Dome.
- Draft technical report of findings prepared, peer-review in progress.

LOWER YOSEMITE FALL REHABILITATION

- Staff participation in design workshops.
- Preliminary cultural resource information assembled.
- Recommendations forwarded for additional work; staff consultation with YF contractor to discuss scope of necessary cultural resources planning/compliance.

VALLEY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Prepared final draft of cultural resources elements of EIS.
- Staff participation in public involvement process; representation on Public Involvement team.
- Drafted programmatic agreement and assisted with preparation of matrix of GMP actions & list of completed compliance actions.

FIRE PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Conducted cultural resource inventory of high-sensitivity portions of Kibbie Fire.
- Provided cultural resources technical expertise during both Kibbie fire episodes for line location, cultural resources protection.
- Provided cultural resources protection information for Ribbon Fire plan.
- Provided intensive support for pilot fuels reduction demonstration project (preparation of project proposal, scoping of environmental assessment).
- Provided resource protection support for Foresta hazard fuels reduction project.
- Documented post-fire condition of sites burned in the Soupbowl Wawona Meadow burn.
- Provided extensive cultural resources inventory, resource protection, and compliance for Aspen Valley burn.

REVEGETATION PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Provided intensive resource documentation and rehabilitation support after unanticipated "restoration" damage to Great Sierra Wagon road.
- Provided cultural resources monitoring during asphalt removal near Ahwahnee Meadow.
- Prepared draft cultural resources inventory and preliminary evaluation report in support of Merced Grove Road Removal project.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Monitored underground fuel storage tank removal at Tuolumne Meadows visitor center.

NATIVE AMERICAN RELATIONSHIPS

- Prepared final draft of park's traditional use agreement.
- Established initial formal contact with Northfork Mono rancheria, escorted group of elders for a tour of Yosemite Valley and the Yosemite museum collections.
- Conducted initial consultation meetings for park programmatic agreement, VIP and Housing Plan.
- Began preparation of NAGPRA inadvertent discovery plan.

GENERAL SECTION 106 COMPLIANCE

- Provided cultural resources review of all park project proposals.

- Prepared three XXX documents for SHPO consultation.
- Parkwide Soils Survey Support
- Established protocol for frontcountry soils survey work.
- Provided specific archeological clearance for Merced Grove, Tuolumne Grove, Tuolumne Meadows, Wawona Road, Tioga Road soil pits.

PARKWIDE ARCHEOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS & RESEARCH DESIGN

- Disseminated draft product to peer review group.
- Prepared park final comments on draft product.
- Negotiated complete resubmittal of historical archeology chapter.

OTHER CONTRACT WORK

- Managed contract for archeological/ethnographic research at Johnny Wilson's place, south side of Merced River in El Portal in support of the Yosemite Valley Housing Plan.
- Managed contract addendum for Wawona Meadow Historic Resource documentation.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS/STAFF TRAINING

- Assisted with seasonal interpreters' training.
- Assisted with seasonal law enforcement refresher (specific to ARPA).
- Presented interpretive talk as part of the Parsons Lodge program.
- Participated in the Yosemite Association spring forum.
- Presented one informal paper and provided two archeology "walks" at Society for California Archeology Northern California data sharing meeting.
- Gave informal presentation to CCC crew at Aspen Valley.
- Provided technical support for Yosemite Institute's educational programs.

GRANT PROPOSALS PREPARED

- Wawona Meadow cultural landscape and restoration project.
- Post-flood front country archeological inventory project.
- High elevation backcountry archeological survey (SAIP) proposal.

REPORTS PREPARED (DRAFTS OR FINAL PUBLICATIONS)

- Test Excavation at CA-TUO-120, Yosemite National Park, Tuolumne County, California, by Suzanna T. Montague (final publication).
- Report of Test Excavations and Monitoring at CA-MRP-56 and -301, Yosemite Valley, Mariposa County, California, by Suzanna T. Montague (final publication).
- The Dana Meadows Archeological Testing Project, Yosemite National Park, Tuolumne County, California, by Suzanna T. Montague (final publication).
- The Role of Cultural Resources Management in the 1997 Yosemite Flood: The First 30 Days (Highwater 97A), by Suzanna T. Montague (final publication).
- Test Excavations at Tuolumne Meadows and White Wolf, by John Vittands (draft report)