

From: Yosemite Gateway Partners info@yosemitegatewaypartners.org
Subject: NPS News Release: Yosemite National Park to Temporarily Close Day-Use Parking Area
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Yosemite National Park

Update

For Immediate Release

Yosemite National Park to Temporarily Close Day-Use Parking Area

Project will Improve Parking and Traffic Circulation for Visitors to Yosemite Valley

Yosemite National Park will close a day use parking area in Yosemite Valley on the evening of Monday September 5, 2016 to improve parking and traffic circulation. The parking area, also known as the Village Day-Use Parking Area (south) or Camp 6, will reopen this winter. Visitor parking will be available at the Yosemite Falls parking area west of Yosemite Valley Lodge and at Half Dome Village. All overnight parking at campgrounds and lodging will remain open. All visitor facilities, including campgrounds, hotels, restaurants and stores will remain open and operational during construction.

Road closures and detours in traffic flow throughout Yosemite Valley will change as the project progresses. For the duration of the project, please be aware of your surroundings, reduce vehicle speeds as posted, and follow directional signs posted throughout Yosemite Valley to your destination. Visitors to Yosemite National Park are encouraged to park at Yosemite Falls parking area or Half Dome Village, and ride the free park shuttle to destinations throughout Yosemite Valley.

Visitors are also highly encouraged to use the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) bus service to get into Yosemite Valley. www.yarts.com

Beginning on September 6, these temporary road closures will be in place throughout Yosemite Valley:

- Sentinel Drive will be closed at Sentinel Parking Area
- Northside Drive will become a two-way road at El Capitan Crossover
- Southside Drive will become a two-way road at El Capitan Crossover
- Tour Buses, RVs, and all oversized vehicles will be directed to park at the day use area west of Yosemite Lodge.

This project launches a multi-year effort in Yosemite Valley designed to improve vehicle circulation and reduce congestion, increase parking efficiency, create a sense of arrival to Yosemite Village, eliminate hazardous conditions for pedestrians, and reduce the footprint of the Yosemite Village parking area. The parking area will move farther from the Merced River, allowing restoration of 1.2 acres of wetland habitat.

During the temporary closure, the park will also realign a segment of Northside Drive south of the parking area and construct a roundabout to improve traffic circulation. New pedestrian pathways and a new shuttle bus stop and shelter will be constructed. Improvements to the Yosemite Falls parking area and the Camp 4 parking area will follow in Spring 2017.

This project, and subsequent projects to be implemented over the next several years, were approved in the 2014 Record of Decision for the Merced Wild and Scenic River Final Comprehensive Management Plan (Merced River Plan). The plan addresses management of the Merced River and facilities and visitor use within the river corridor.

Additional Merced River Plan projects have been initiated or completed since 2014. These include riverbank restoration at Lower Pines and North Pines Campgrounds, ecological restoration in Ahwahnee Meadow, construction of a parking area to the west of Yosemite Lodge, and relocating the Recreation Center facilities at Half Dome Village.

Yosemite National Park celebrated its 125th Anniversary last year and is currently celebrating the Centennial of the National Park Service. The park welcomes over four million visitors from around the world each year and serves as a strong economic engine for the region and local communities. Yosemite National Park generates \$535 million in economic benefit to the local region and directly supports 6,261 jobs. The park is home to Yosemite Falls, the tallest waterfall in North America, iconic rock formations such as Half Dome and El Capitan, approximately 90 different mammal species, and over 1,500 plant species.

-NPS-

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