

YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY

AUTUMN.WINTER 2011 :: VOLUME 02 . ISSUE 02

Majestic Wonders Beyond the Valley

INSIDE

Campaign for Yosemite's Trails Update

Restoration Efforts at Tenaya Lake

Wawona Fountains Rehabilitated

Q&A With Ostrander Hut Keeper

GRIZZLY
GIANT

these shallow rooted trees
may shorten their lives



**YOSEMITE
CONSERVANCY**

Providing For Yosemite's Future

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PRESIDENT'S NOTE



Beyond the Valley

Winter is a welcome time of year in Yosemite. The visitors who have enjoyed the park in numbers all season long gradually subside with the cooling temperatures. Before the first snows, the forests radiate with fall foliage and begin to drop their leaves. It's a time to reflect on the summer season and give thanks for the supporters who made it all possible.

Throughout this issue, we go beyond the Valley and explore highlights from summer projects and programs and look toward winter activities, like those at Ostrander Ski Hut. Our Expert Insider, Gretchen Stromberg, describes the restoration efforts which began on Tenaya Lake's East Beach. Read about visitors who connected with the park through projects like Ask-A-Climber or gathered in rehabilitated campground amphitheaters. Others joined programs, like those at the Yosemite Art Center or Valley Theater, and left with special memories. Young people experienced wilderness for the first time by participating in one of the Youth in Yosemite programs.

There is much to discover in Yosemite by venturing beyond the Valley, whether it's snowshoeing in Mariposa Gove or hiking restored trails. We hope you are inspired by these special places as much as we are.

Thank you for your help making all of this possible with your generous support to Yosemite Conservancy.

See you in the park,

Mike

Mike Tollefson, President

In the spirit of conservation, we are now printing the magazine on paper stock that includes post-consumer recycled content, in addition to using Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper as we have in the past.



Join Yosemite Conservancy on **Facebook** and **Flicker**.





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TRAILS OF UNFORGETTA MEMORIES

CAMPAIGN-FUNDED RESTORATION OF MANY
POPULAR YOSEMITE TRAILS

“There are 800 miles of
trails to virtually every
corner of the park.”

IN 2006, the Campaign for Yosemite Trails was launched and successfully raised over \$13.5 million. The trails selected for work within this campaign represented the most critically compromised, heavily used and high profile trails in Yosemite.

ON SEPTEMBER 7, 2011, Yosemite Conservancy and the National Park Service celebrated the completion of trail upgrades to 75 miles of trails within the park. We're grateful to our many dedicated supporters who helped make this massive trail restoration project possible — **THANK YOU!**

BLE



Eagle Tower
7182

THE CAMPAIGN FOR YOSEMITE TRAILS

Brent Miller and his 11-year-old son Grady were hiking in Yosemite when they rounded a switchback and came face-to-face with a mammoth-sized effort to fix the trail.

“Here I am laboring with a backpack when we see that a crew has hauled 500 pounds of equipment up a mountain and is maneuvering a massive piece of granite with a pulley system attached to two trees to shore up the trail,” says Miller, a graphic artist from Napa, California. “Every step on a Yosemite trail seems to reveal a special memory I can share with my son — the light bouncing off of Half Dome, a black bear and even watching granite being split to make steps for a trail.”

In 2006, Yosemite Conservancy launched The Campaign for Yosemite Trails so trail crews like the one the Millers encountered could rehabilitate the park’s most critically compromised, heavily trafficked and high-profile trails. Since then, \$13.5 million has funded trail restoration, adjacent habitat protection, education opportunities and trail use promotion. Overall funding for the campaign was a collaboration of private donations and the National Park Service which contributed \$3 million to the total.

“Yosemite’s landscape harbors an unforgettable collection of peaks, domes, high waterfalls and alpine meadows. The best way to see these natural wonders is by trail,” says Royal Robbins, the legendary climber who helped to launch the campaign.

➤ *Continued on Page 21*

JOHN MUIR TRAIL
Hikers enjoy the John Muir
Trail near Nevada Falls and
Liberty Cap.

PHOTO: © KEITH WALKLET

WAWONA FOUNTAINS SPRING BACK TO LIFE

For much of the 20th century, travelers to Wawona were greeted by the sights and sounds of flowing waters. Whether arriving by stagecoach, Model T or modern day cars, the Wawona Hotel fountain and nearby Thomas Hill Studio fountain were welcome sights, letting visitors know they had finally arrived after a long journey.

This time-honored Wawona experience was lost to modern travelers as these historical features became dilapidated over time. Thanks to your support, they have both been painstakingly rehabilitated to restore each fountain's most recent appearance, and have been updated with contemporary water-saving features.

WAWONA FOUNTAIN : *After*

The rehabilitated Wawona Hotel fountain restores a significant character-defining element of the cultural landscape of the Wawona Hotel National Historic Landmark.





WAWONA FOUNTAIN : *Historic*

The Wawona Hotel fountain as it appeared in the 1920s. Clarence Washburn, son of one of the Wawona Hotel founders, sits at the reins.



WAWONA FOUNTAIN : *Before*

Prior to the start of the project, the main fountain had been covered by a tarp. The plumbing of the main fountain had stopped functioning and the exterior masonry had begun to crumble.



WAWONA FOUNTAIN : *During*

While work was happening on the exterior to restore the fountains to their original Victorian design, internally waterproofing and plumbing was being updated to 21st-century standards, including eco-friendly conservation features designed to reduce water consumption.



THOMAS HILL STUDIO FOUNTAIN : *After*

Today, the Wawona Visitor Center at the Thomas Hill Studio provides information, wilderness permits, books and opportunities to learn more about Hill's work.



THOMAS HILL STUDIO FOUNTAIN : *Historic*

The fountain at Thomas Hill Studio was originally installed in 1895. It has been through many transformations from a fountain, to at times a planter box and even a lily pond, as demonstrated in the image above.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NPS. (TOP RIGHT) © YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY.



IMPROVING WETLANDS & BEACH ACCESS

TENAYA LAKE EAST BEACH RESTORATION

“Tenaya Lake is a jewel of the park’s high country.”

— **MIKE TOLLEFSON** President, Yosemite Conservancy

“We’re focused on restoring and protecting it so that the visitor experience is as exceptional as its location.”

Picnickers, hikers and rock climbers are drawn to the lake’s picture-perfect beaches, deep blue water, surrounding granite domes, and lodge pole pine forests. Its eye-catching scenery is visible from Tioga Road, which provides easy access to the lake for park visitors of all ages and abilities. However, its popularity has resulted in challenges of crowded parking areas, unsafe traffic conditions, unintended harm to fragile ecosystems, shoreline erosion and unwanted runoff.

Yosemite Conservancy is providing funding for improvements at the lake’s East Beach area. Work began this summer on a new ecologically friendly trail

that will provide easy access for all from the parking lot to the shore and minimize future impacts to wetlands. The beach area will be enhanced for family use and picnicking with installation of new tables – including a common “long table” that will accommodate family gatherings. Wetlands and riparian areas are also being restored to natural conditions with the reestablishment of native willows.

“This initial phase restores and protects habitat and improves accessibility for all visitors to this magnificent location,” said Yosemite National Park Superintendent Don Neubacher. “Both the park and its visitors benefit from this Conservancy-funded project.” ■



TENAYA LAKE

Providing better access to Tenaya Lake's East Beach will help keep this pristine shore accessible to visitors while also maintaining the fragile ecosystem.

PHOTO: © MITHUN

TENAYA LAKE'S EAST BEACH

RESTORATION EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO PROTECT LAKE'S INTEGRITY AND BEAUTY

BY GRETCHEN STROMBERG, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

ABOVE The view from East Beach captivates park visitors. Phase 1 of this project will reroute trails away from sensitive wetland areas and restore shoreline vegetation.

Yosemite National Park visitors driving along Tioga Road are hard-pressed not to be struck by the sparkling waters of Tenaya Lake. At 8,150 feet in Yosemite's high country, Tenaya Lake is surrounded by granite domes and perhaps is more fittingly described by its American Indian name of Pie-we-ack, "lake of the shining rocks."

Long accessed by people traversing the Sierras, its present proximity to Tioga Road speaks of the lake's significance to American Indians as a resting point along their trade route across the Sierras, and later to dusty travelers along the Great Sierra Wagon Road. Admiration of Tenaya Lake is shared by many — from the families that have long visited the lake and continue to make an annual pilgrimage to dip in its waters, to new Yosemite visitors that discover its magic for the first time.

When visitors stop to marvel at the landscape and soak in the refreshing waters of Tenaya Lake, they admire the gleaming water, the grand views of granite domes, lodgepole pines and expansive blue sky. But, what they might not notice are

the areas of eroded lakeshore, loss of vegetation, and safety issues along the road. More obvious distractions from the experience at the lake are parking, lack of orientation and interpretive information, and a cohesive trail system that allows visitors to circumnavigate the lake.

The Tenaya Lake Restoration Plan has been developed over the past three years to address these issues and design ways in which the lake may be enjoyed with a lighter touch on the land. The National Park Service design team looked holistically at all the factors surrounding the entire lake basin, from water quality, to plant communities and wildlife corridors. Travel routes and patterns, by foot and vehicle, have been studied and sensitive wetlands, rare plants and archaeological sites identified that are in need of protection. Most importantly, throughout the process of developing the lake-wide plan, the design team has listened — listened to the stories of how Tenaya is loved by many, and how it should be restored and protected.

The goal of the planned restoration is to make necessary



PHOTOS: (ABOVE) © MITHUN. (TOP RIGHT) COURTESY OF NPS. (BOTTOM RIGHT) © MITHUN.



GRETCHEN STROMBERG is a landscape architect at Yosemite National Park. She first came to Yosemite in 1997 to work as an archaeologist, where she found deep inspiration studying humans' past relationship with the natural environment. Gretchen then altered her career path and obtained a master's degree in landscape architecture, to help influence our ongoing relationship with the natural environment. In 2003, Gretchen eagerly returned to the National Park Service, where she has worked on a variety of projects for the Pacific West Regional office and Yosemite National Park.



ARTIST RENDERING OF PROPOSED ACCESS AREA

YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY has provided a grant to Yosemite National Park to fund the first phase of restoration at Tenaya Lake's East Beach. Crews will create a new ecologically friendly and accessible path to the beach for visitors while protecting the surrounding wetlands. Beautiful native willows will be planted in these areas, restoring wetlands to the natural state. Yosemite is also benefitting from Federal Highway monies that are funding resurfacing and parking area improvements along Tioga Road.

changes to provide for visitor enjoyment in such a way that the lake ecosystem will be resilient and still thriving 100 years from now. Specific efforts include rerouting of trails that impact wetland areas, restoration of vegetation, concentration of parking at the lake's east and west ends to minimize inappropriate lakeside parking, and creation of wheelchair accessible walkways that provide for an experience of discovery and exploration. Over the next five years, as the plan is implemented, these improvements will encourage visitors new and veteran alike to pause, take a deep breath, and rediscover the breathtaking shores of Tenaya Lake. ■



Read more about the Tenaya Lake Restoration Plan on our website at yosemiteconservancy.org/magazine

TENAYA LAKE RESTORATION PLAN

The plan will address the many issues currently affecting Tenaya Lake's East Beach area.



RESTORING WETLANDS



LAKESHORE EROSION



REROUTING OF TRAILS



LAKESIDE PARKING

“It’s truly a unique experience to be in the real wilderness in a national park during winter.”

— FRITZ BAGGETT

Hut Keeper, Ostrander Ski Hut

Q&A

WITH A
YOSEMITE
INSIDER



ABOVE Fritz Baggett, soaks in the sights on a ridge overlooking Ostrander.

Fritz Baggett has cheerfully worked as one of the hut keepers at Ostrander Ski Hut for over five years. Hut keepers at Ostrander share a passion for the outdoors, winter sports and of course this charming historic structure. Only a select handful of others, including his wife Lindsey Elts, and Ostrander legend, Howard Weamer, have also been hut keepers. While many have had the opportunity to visit the remote hut, few have experienced Ostrander like the hut keepers.

Q :: What first brought you to Yosemite and Ostrander Ski Hut? What draws you back each year?

A :: I grew up in El Portal, just outside of Yosemite, and my parents brought me as soon as they could. I wasn’t even yet a teenager. The snow and terrain at Ostrander is some of the best mid-winter skiing anywhere in the world. I live near Yosemite now and I’ve come to the conclusion that I don’t need to stray far from home to be where I want to be most – being at Ostrander is really satisfying.

Q :: Please share with Conservancy supporters some of the history of Ostrander Ski Hut.

A :: The creation of the hut, completed in 1941, can be attributed to the Curry family who ran concessions in the

park, and Mary Curry Tresidder who was an avid backcountry skier. A true steward of hut history from the early 70s to the present is fellow hut keeper, Howard Weamer, who has been at the hut during the winter for nearly 40 years. Hut-goers may even meet him in person as he is still skiing as much as ever, and we split shifts in the wintertime at the hut.

Q :: What are some of your favorite memories of Ostrander?

A :: Large groups of happy skiers. Cold days skiing powder in a blizzard. And of course T-shirt days on the tops of ridges are also really memorable.

Q :: Maintaining a rustic hut in the backcountry seems like very solitary work. How do you spend your time when visitors are not enjoying the hut?

A :: There is always some sort of maintenance to be done on the hut or snow to be shoveled. My wife, Lindsey, is also there as a hut keeper, and we’re able to spend quality time together reading, cooking, and long days skiing while looking for our favorite trees.

Q :: What do you enjoy most about the area surrounding Ostrander?

A :: The whole unique forest environment – it’s really an untouched area with many different species of old growth trees. Animals seem to thrive here; from the bugs to pine martens

and bears. There is not a paved road crossing the sierra much farther than you can see north or south. There's a large expanse of wilderness; open granite bowls stretching from the ponds and lakes to the peaks and steep ridges – it's very special.

Q :: Yosemite Conservancy has managed and maintained the hut since 1974. Why is it important to preserve the hut, and the experience it provides to visitors?

A :: It's truly a unique experience to be in the real wilderness in a national park during winter. The hut provides basic shelter so that visitors can experience longer stays, and travel ten miles into the backcountry. There are no vehicles and hardly any signs of other people. It also provides an opportunity for a diverse group of people to get out into the winter wilderness. We regularly have kids who are not yet teenagers and 70–80 year olds visiting the hut; sometimes sharing the hut at the same time!

Q :: What advice would you give to someone interested in visiting Ostrander Ski Hut for the first time?



ABOVE Backcountry skiers enjoy a sunny winter day at Ostrander Ski Hut.

A :: Get an early start! Take time for breaks and lunch, and have a more relaxing day. Bring lightweight slippers for a comfortable evening around the fire. Most importantly, don't forget to stop and look around on your ski out to the hut. ■



Learn more about the Ostrander experience, reserve the hut and check out a gear list on our website, yosemiteconservancy.org/ostrander



Long-time hut keeper Howard Weamer has published a book, *The Perfect Art*, about Ostrander Hut and skiing in the area. Purchase it online or in a Conservancy bookstore in the park.

Give Gifts Inspired by Yosemite.

Give gifts that will inspire the kids on your list to get outdoors. Explore our selection of young reader nature guides, Junior Ranger gear and more!

Purchases made at the Yosemite Conservancy store support our work in the park and help ensure its preservation for generations to come.

Receive 15% discount with code **HOLIDAY2011**

Shop now at
yosemiteconservancy.org

Code valid through January 31, 2012,
online purchases only.



New Projects for 2011*

CULTURAL & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic Lake Vernon Snow Survey	
Cabin Restoration	\$37,890
Museum Stereograph Images Preserved	\$24,438

HABITAT RESTORATION

Mariposa Grove Restoration	\$467,395
Tenaya Lake Restoration: East Beach	\$842,755
Wilderness Restoration in Meadows and Valleys	\$199,775

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Research Dates Yosemite's Rockfalls	\$19,570
Understanding the Cause of Yosemite's Rockfalls	\$99,570

TRAIL REPAIR & ACCESS

Legendary Valley Trails Restoration	\$390,450
Tuolumne Backcountry Trails	
Restoration by CCC Crews	\$355,700
Yosemite Trails Campaign (5 trails)	\$2,363,184
Youth Crews Restore Campgrounds, Trails and Habitat	\$320,000

VISITOR SERVICES & EDUCATION

Adventure to Leadership: Youth Development Program with ARC	\$93,515
Archives Digitized through SCA Internships	\$43,350
Ask A Climber	\$29,890
Bilingual Journal to Engage Diverse Communities	\$26,100
Campground Amphitheaters Renovated	\$87,420
Campus Wilderness Center Connects Students to Yosemite	\$109,128
Horses and Mules in Yosemite: Renewing Traditions	\$50,000
Junior Range Program	\$90,000
Sustainable Campsites in Yosemite Creek Campground	\$100,142
Teens Connect to Yosemite Wilderness through WildLink	\$9,000
Tuolumne Grove Giant Sequoias Educational Signs	\$127,800
UC Merced Intern Yosemite Leadership Program	\$59,848
Views and Visitors Exhibit II: Yosemite Experience in the 20th Century	\$61,795
Yosemite Nature Notes: A Yosemite Web Video Series	\$60,000
Yosemite Youth Art and Poetry Contest	\$20,700
Yosemite's 150 Year Celebration	\$35,180
WildLink Alumni Explore Careers in Yosemite	\$11,500

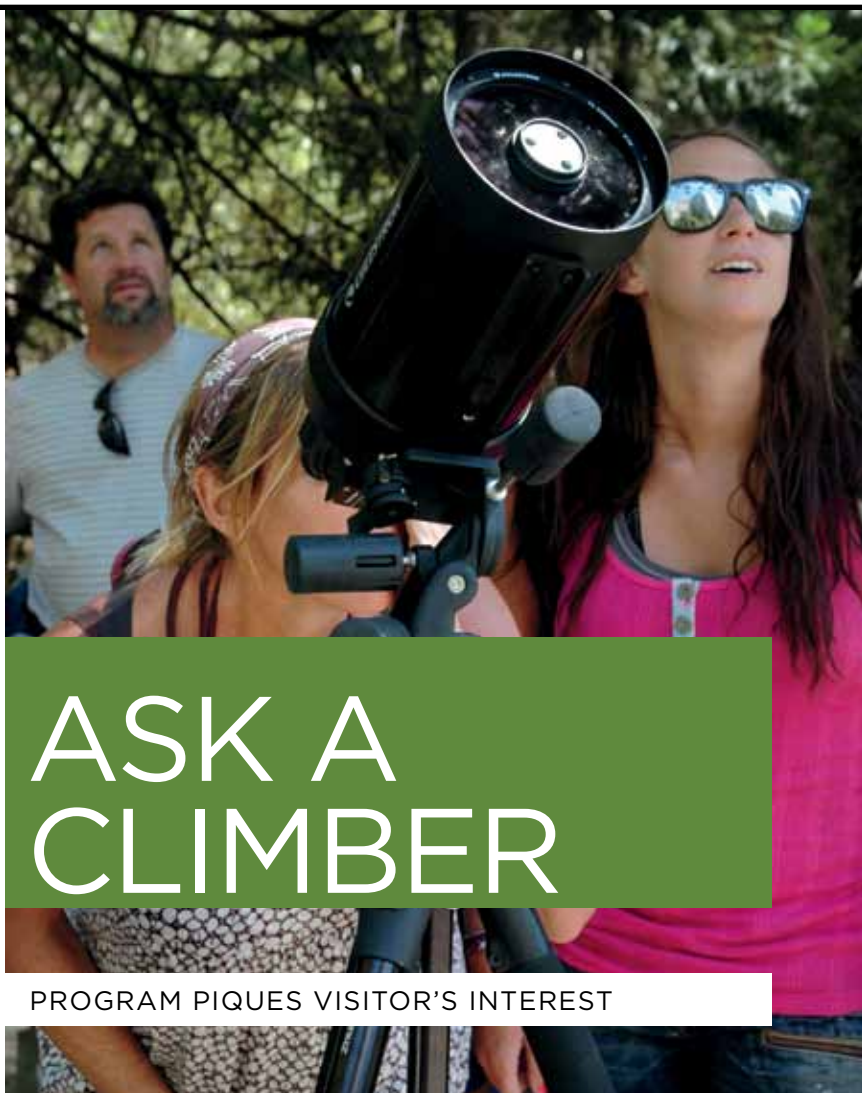
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Bear Boxes in Yellow Pine Volunteer Area	\$18,900
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TOTAL **\$6,154,995**

*Total project funding is included for multi-year projects.

Color Represents 2011 Youth in Yosemite Programs



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NPS.

ASK A CLIMBER

PROGRAM PIQUES VISITOR'S INTEREST

ABOVE This project introduces visitors to seasoned climbers, and allows them to observe El Capitan through a telescope.

El Capitan is the world's largest monolith of granite, rising more than 3,000 feet from Yosemite Valley. With climbing routes up its face called The Nose, Lost in America and Lurking Fear, visitors are fascinated by El Capitan's daunting beauty and with the Olympic-caliber athletes ascending it walls.

The Ask a Climber program, with funding by Yosemite Conservancy, gives summer park visitors the opportunity to talk with local climbing experts about topics from routes and climbing techniques to equipment and the granite walls themselves. Two telescopes allow visitors to get a close-up look at climbers scaling El Capitan.

"Providing accurate information and perspective from actual climbers is a unique opportunity," says Ken Yager of the Yosemite Climbing Association, which heads the program. "It has been very popular, with about 200 visitors daily. Many tourists have said that tracking climbers up El Cap has been the best part of their visit." ■

PHOTOS (TOP) © YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY (BOTTOM) © DON BRIDCOTT

CAMPGROUND AMPHITHEATERS

CAMPFIRES AND RANGER TALKS CREATE MEMORIES



ABOVE Fire rings, like this one at Crane Flat, will be upgraded for improved visitor safety.

LEFT Sustainable materials were incorporated in the restoration process of dilapidated amphitheaters.

“Campfires are open invitations for storytelling, song and camaraderie.”

— **TOM DARCY**
Yosemite National Park

Campfires are a timeless way to bring people together. With support from Yosemite Conservancy, fire rings and amphitheaters at Bridalveil Creek, Wawona and Crane Flat campgrounds are being upgraded this year.

“Campfires are open invitations for storytelling, song and camaraderie,” says Tom Darcy, who manages the projects for the National Park Service in Yosemite. “This work allows people of all ages to focus on what is important — creating lasting memories about and connections to the park.”

New wooden benches made of recycled material are being installed at the Wawona and Bridalveil campgrounds to replace unsafe and uncomfortable seating. Fire rings with presentation areas at all three locations will be reconditioned or replaced before year’s end. Degraded walking surfaces also are being repaired.

This work improves the setting for programs like the Campfire Talk With a Ranger. During summer evenings visitors might hear a ranger talk about black bears, pioneer history, waterfalls, or learn songs of Yosemite. ■

YOUTH IN YOSEMITE

EXPERIENCING NATURE'S CLASSROOM

Youth of all ages and backgrounds participated in 11 Youth in Yosemite programs on education, mentoring, and wilderness exploration and restoration supported this year with more than \$1.3 million in funding from Yosemite Conservancy.

“These programs cultivate new life interests in a setting that was previously unfamiliar to many,” said Shauna Potocky of the National Park Service. “Participants become deeply connected to the park and have transformational experiences that give rise to a passion for things like geology, wildlife protection, and sharing in the legacy of preserving Yosemite.”

For children ages 7-13, that experience may involve participating in Junior Ranger programs that teach thousands about nature during park visits. Through the Yosemite Leadership Program, University of California, Merced students work with park professionals to hone stewardship and leadership skills on projects such as meadow restoration, visitor education programs and park sustainability initiatives. Other programs involve museum archiving, trail repair, habitat restoration and first-time opportunities to spend time in Yosemite's wilderness.

Tabitha Brogden volunteered with Adventure Risk Challenge (ARC), a 40-day immersion program that uses the Yosemite wilderness experience to improve academic skills among high school students. “By summer's end, the student's were the ones inspiring me with their dedication, hopes and dreams,” says Brogden, a sophomore at the University of California, Merced. “I didn't expect that to happen.”

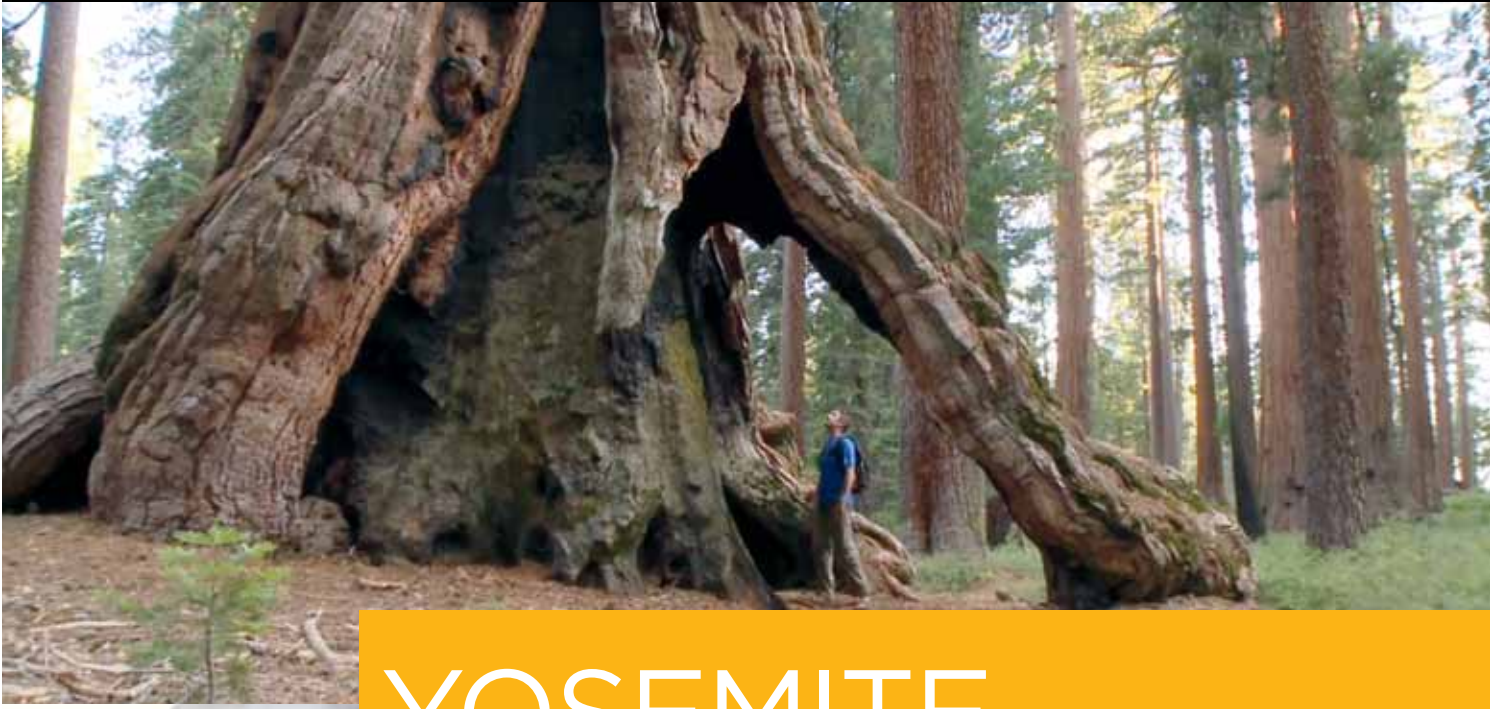
Nature's classroom is full of wonder. ■

ABOVE Bee Xiong, a Yosemite Leadership Program participant, experiencing Yosemite's backcountry.

RIGHT Students learn about meadow restoration firsthand in Yosemite.



PHOTOS: (TOP) © JESSE CHAKRIN. (BOTTOM) COURTESY OF NPS.



YOSEMITE NATURE NOTES



VIDEOS CAPTURE PARK'S MAGIC



TOP Episode 11 entitled "Big Trees" provides a stunning glimpse at the majesty of this ancient species.

MIDDLE Creator Steve Bumgardner shares the making of Yosemite Nature Notes videos in his Behind the Scenes series. **BOTTOM** Specialized equipment, like this crane, are sometimes used in the making of the films.

Have you ever seen a lunar rainbow on Yosemite Falls? Do you know what it's like to climb Half Dome? Are you interested in learning about the world's biggest trees? Yosemite Nature Notes brings the park's magic to life in a stunning high-definition web video series.

"These short documentaries capture the beauty, wonder and history of Yosemite to inspire, educate and share with friends and family," says producer Steven M. Bumgardner.

In 2011, Yosemite Conservancy supported production of six new episodes. One captures the brilliance of lunar rainbows, called moonbows, which only appear during the full moon of the spring and early summer on Yosemite's waterfalls. Fifteen episodes, each 5–9 minutes, have been produced so far on topics like the Big Trees of Mariposa Grove, Frazil Ice, Rockfall, and Glaciers.

"The videos are easy to share via social media and encourage a new generation of viewers to connect with Yosemite," adds Bumgardner. "If we can inspire more people to care about the park, we improve our chances of protecting it." ■



Be Inspired. To view the latest Yosemite Nature Notes video, visit yosemiteconservancy.org/yosemite-conservancy-videos



PHOTOS: (TOP LEFT) © BERNARD CHEN, (BOTTOM LEFT) © NANCY ROBBINS,

PHOTOS: © STEPHEN SHANKLAND

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

DISCOVER YOSEMITE WITH OUTDOOR ADVENTURES



TOP A moment of quiet solitude in Mariposa Grove. **BOTTOM** Snowshoeing offers a unique opportunity for visitors of all experience levels to explore Yosemite in winter.

UPCOMING 2012 OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

JANUARY 7

Mariposa Grove Moonlight Snowshoe

JANUARY 19-22

Winter Landscape Photography

FEBRUARY 17-18

Photographing the "Firefall"

MARCH 30

Spring Canyon Flowers

Yosemite Conservancy is devoted to sharing all there is to know and love about Yosemite, any time of the year. One way we connect visitors is through our Outdoor Adventures program. During these adventures, Yosemite Conservancy naturalist guides share their passion and insider knowledge with participants, treating them to a unique experience — whether it's just an afternoon, two days in the wilderness or a custom-planned trip.

"We looked for pine marten and chickaree tracks in the fresh snow on the long trek to Ostrander" wrote one custom adventure participant, "Our guide identified trees and animals, as well as shared the areas' history. We made fun discoveries and great memories."

Recently, Outdoor Adventures naturalist Virgia Bryan spoke on the wonders of the landscape, "It's totally exhilarating to snowshoe in the Mariposa Grove on a full moon night among ancient giants who have endured millennia of moonlit nights, and will endure millennia more. I love sharing that experience."

Yosemite Conservancy invites you to explore the park with our naturalists and artists. They will share with you the wonder of Yosemite's winter world. See our winter schedule on our website or plan your own adventure by reserving a naturalist for the day for your group or family. ■



Sign up today for your adventure at yosemiteconservancy.org/outdoor-adventures

WILDERNESS UPDATE

DISCOVER WINTER SOLITUDE AT OSTRANDER SKI HUT

Yosemite's winter trekking destinations hold great rewards for those who venture into the wilderness during the snowier months. Ostrander Ski Hut is one of these winter gems. Situated near the shore of beautiful Ostrander Lake, this rustic hut echoes Yosemite's charisma with its' thick granite walls and lodgepole pine beams all sourced from the local Yosemite area.

Completed in 1941, this hut was the passion of Dr. Donald Tresidder, President of the Curry Company and founder of the Yosemite Winter Club, and his wife, Mary Curry Tresidder. The Tresidder's dreamed that Yosemite would become the "Switzerland of the West" and advocated for the expansion of winter sports facilities in Yosemite. Ultimately, Ostrander was the only ski hut built and today is a warm and friendly place to rest, eat and share the night with fellow backcountry winter sports enthusiasts.

Yosemite Conservancy took over management of Ostrander Ski Hut in 1974, and since that time has employed knowledgeable hut keepers who carry on the traditions started by the Tresidder's. With its rich history and stunning location, Ostrander Ski Hut offers a special experience for any skier fit enough to make the ten-mile trek. ■

ABOVE Ostrander Ski Hut was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and is an example of "rustic architecture" popularized in the national parks through the 1920s and 1930s.

LEFT Ostrander visitors are experienced skiers who brave the ten-mile trek to the rustic winter hut.



Find details about the hut's facilities and reservation information at yosemiteconservancy.org/ostrander



“Everyone can create art.”

— DAVID DEYELL
Resident Artist

ART IN YOSEMITE

EXPLORING YOSEMITE WITH ALL FIVE SENSES



PHOTOS © YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY

TOP RIGHT Yosemite Art Center participants practice plein air painting techniques. **MIDDLE** An original watercolor by David Deyell. **BOTTOM** David Deyell instructs groups of all ages in the art of exploring Yosemite through watercolor.

Artists were among the early explorers to Yosemite National Park, and their paintings and sketches helped inspire its protection for all time. Today, artists continue to be drawn to the park for its awe-inspiring scenery and magnificently shifting light as a backdrop to their work.

The Yosemite Art Center has provided park visitors with summertime art workshops for almost 30 years, with Yosemite Conservancy managing the program for the past six. Visiting artists donate their time in exchange for lodging and providing one week of instruction to beginners and veterans alike in daily workshops. In 2011, over 30 artists provided training in a range of mediums, from watercolor to silk painting and even sumi-e ink techniques. Whether the style is abstract, impressionism, or realism, there are many ways to interpret familiar Yosemite icons.

One of the artists who volunteers his time was David Deyell, a professional watercolorist who has been leading Yosemite art workshops for 12 years. He describes his work as bright and colorful. David inspires all visitors, regardless of previous experience or skill level, to connect with the park through all five senses. He says, “I want participants in my course to hear, feel, touch, smell, and see Yosemite. Everyone can create art.” ■



Connect with Yosemite. Learn more about Yosemite Conservancy art programs on our website yosemiteconservancy.org/arts



LEFT A jubilant hiker celebrates atop Mount Hoffmann. **MIDDLE** Completion of the campaign was celebrated with a ribbon cutting in Yosemite Valley. **RIGHT** The Red Peak Pass trail crew prepares to lift a boulder while repairing the trail.

► Trails of Unforgettable Memories *continued from page 5*

Within the 1,200 square miles of Yosemite National Park, there are 800 miles of trails to virtually every corner of the park. The campaign involved areas from the Yosemite Valley to the rugged peaks of the High Sierra.

Repairs were made to the east and west ends of the Yosemite Valley Loop Trail, and to the John Muir Trailhead. Improvements to paths in parts of the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias now protect the root systems of these trees, the oldest living things on Earth.

In Yosemite's backcountry, hikers will enjoy a well-defined route to the summit of Mount Hoffmann, the geographic center of Yosemite. On 33 miles of the world-renowned John Muir Trail there are new stone walls, rock staircases, and drainage structures, plus habitat restoration that will improve safety and protect areas bordering the trail. This work addressed parts of the John Muir Trail from Tuolumne Meadows through Little Yosemite Valley to Yosemite Valley.

Yosemite Conservancy Council Members Dave and Dana Dornsife believe trails are the best part of the park, especially the John Muir Trail.

"It embodies all of the magic of the park — mountain streams, high meadows and clear lakes flanked by granite walls," says Dana. "Of course, those memories wouldn't be complete without a few bear encounters to spice up the

backcountry experience."

Along Tioga Road, improvements were made to trailheads at Tamarack Flat, May Lake, Yosemite Creek/Ten Lakes, Snow Creek, and at Gaylor Lakes, such as new habitat-friendly and safer parking and access, food storage lockers, and wilderness education exhibits.

Major portions of the spectacular 12-mile Red Peak Pass Trail, in southeastern Yosemite, were repaired and rebuilt.

Campaign supporter Jon Lovelace jumped at the opportunity to help restore the Red Peak Pass trail. "It was my very first hike in Yosemite, and right after I graduated from college," says Lovelace. "The drama on the trail increases with every step, revealing alpine meadows, deep blue lakes and views of the Clark Range. It's one of the most memorable and inspirational trails in the park."

The Campaign included lead gifts from the Dornsife's, Jon and Lillian Lovelace, John and Leslie Dorman, Bill and Cynthia Floyd, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, and Jim and Anahita Lovelace. In the last 15 years alone, Yosemite Conservancy supporters have provided more than \$35 million to help the National Park Service restore trails throughout the park.

And, create special memories that a father can share with his son. ■



THANK YOU

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We gratefully acknowledge the John Muir Heritage Society and Joseph Le Conte Legacy Society donors, foundations, businesses and volunteers that supported our work from January 1, 2010 to August 4, 2011. Without these generous donors we would not be able to fulfill our mission to preserve and protect Yosemite National Park and enrich the visitor experience — today and for future generations. We thank you!

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For more information, contact Darlene Bellucci:
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Tales From Our Mailbox

In your words, special memories from Yosemite that create lifelong connections with the park.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOYCE DONALDSON MASON.

LEFT 1962, the Donaldson's first trip to Yosemite. (left to right) Melanie, John, Jim, Maggie, Joyce. **RIGHT** 2010, the extended Donaldson family answering the call put forth by John Muir, "The Mountains are calling and I must go." (left to right): Maggie in dark blue shirt, Joyce kneeling with white shirt, Jim kneeling with dark blue jacket, Mom in center with bright blue vest, Melanie in front with green shirt and John standing with plaid shirt.

Earlier this year we received a note from a long-time supporter with a heartwarming story of family vacations in Yosemite. This summer, the Donaldson family celebrated their 50th consecutive year of vacationing in Tuolumne Meadows. It all started in 1962, with mom and dad bringing their five children and a borrowed tent from Southern California to Yosemite's high country for a break from the city. They were hooked from that first visit and returned year after year to camp in Tuolumne.

The Donaldson's summer memories of hiking the meadows and mountains, fishing for trout, and singing around the campfire have now expanded to include four generations soaking up Yosemite's magic days of summer. Joyce Donaldson Mason reveals some of her families' favorite pastimes in Tuolumne.

CHILDHOOD MEMORY OF VISITING YOSEMITE

In those early years, the Tuolumne campground was rarely full. The usual time for us to visit was late August to celebrate Dad's birthday. One year in the early '60s it snowed on his birthday, which for Southern California kids was magical.

RECENT MEMORY OF VISITING YOSEMITE

We have moved our base lodging to the tent cabins in Tuolumne Meadows. Each day we gather for happy hour and share with

each other the details of our day, what we encountered on our hikes and our favorite activities. We even have a little friendly competition with the chairs we each bring.

FAVORITE HIKE

It's always the one I'm on. It's the journey more than the destination that I love. Believe it or not, we're still finding new hikes that we haven't tried.

ON FAMILY TIME IN TUOLUMNE

Tuolumne holds many precious memories for me and my family. If you were to talk with any of us you would find many different stories. Although it was my father who found this place and brought us here, I have always admired my mother who had to plan meals for seven and cook over a camp stove and still hiked with us all. She shared our joys of accomplishment as we tried new and more difficult hikes.

WHY I SUPPORT YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY

When you find the place that you love, and you want it to last forever and for others to have the same experiences, it's easy to contribute.

We are so grateful for their support of Yosemite Conservancy and we wish the Donaldson family many more years of magic summer memories.

Volunteers Pitch in on “Fee Free Days”

In 2011, the National Park Service waived park entrance fees for 17 days for Yosemite National Park. On many of these days, the Conservancy has collected donations at park entrances, and then used these funds to help preserve and protect Yosemite. With help from corporate partners, Wells Fargo and REI, and our long-term volunteers Yosemite Conservancy has collected over \$85,000 in donations at park gates this year.

While this magazine is at press, there are four more “Fee Free” days in 2011. Volunteers from Wells Fargo and REI will again be helping at Yosemite’s gates collecting donations. We’re grateful to them and all our volunteers who are willing to spend their free time in Yosemite.

Thank you!



ABOVE Volunteers collect donations at the Arch Rock entrance station.



ABOVE Robert Bragg and Paula McNerney return each summer to volunteer with the Conservancy in Yosemite.

Sharing a Lifelong Love of Yosemite

Paula McNerney and Robert Bragg of Granite Cañon, Wyo., have volunteered with Yosemite Conservancy for six years. Each year, the couple volunteers for a month at visitor information kiosks located throughout the park. For them, volunteering is a way to share their knowledge and love of Yosemite National Park with first-time visitors.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME CONSERVANCY VOLUNTEERS?

During one of our first visits we spoke with a Conservancy volunteer at Parsons Lodge. She helped us learn more about Yosemite. We wanted to be able to do the same thing, and share our love of the park with others.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT BEING A CONSERVANCY VOLUNTEER?

We enjoy having the opportunity to guide a first-time visitor in experiencing Yosemite, so that they, too, may develop a lifelong love of the park.

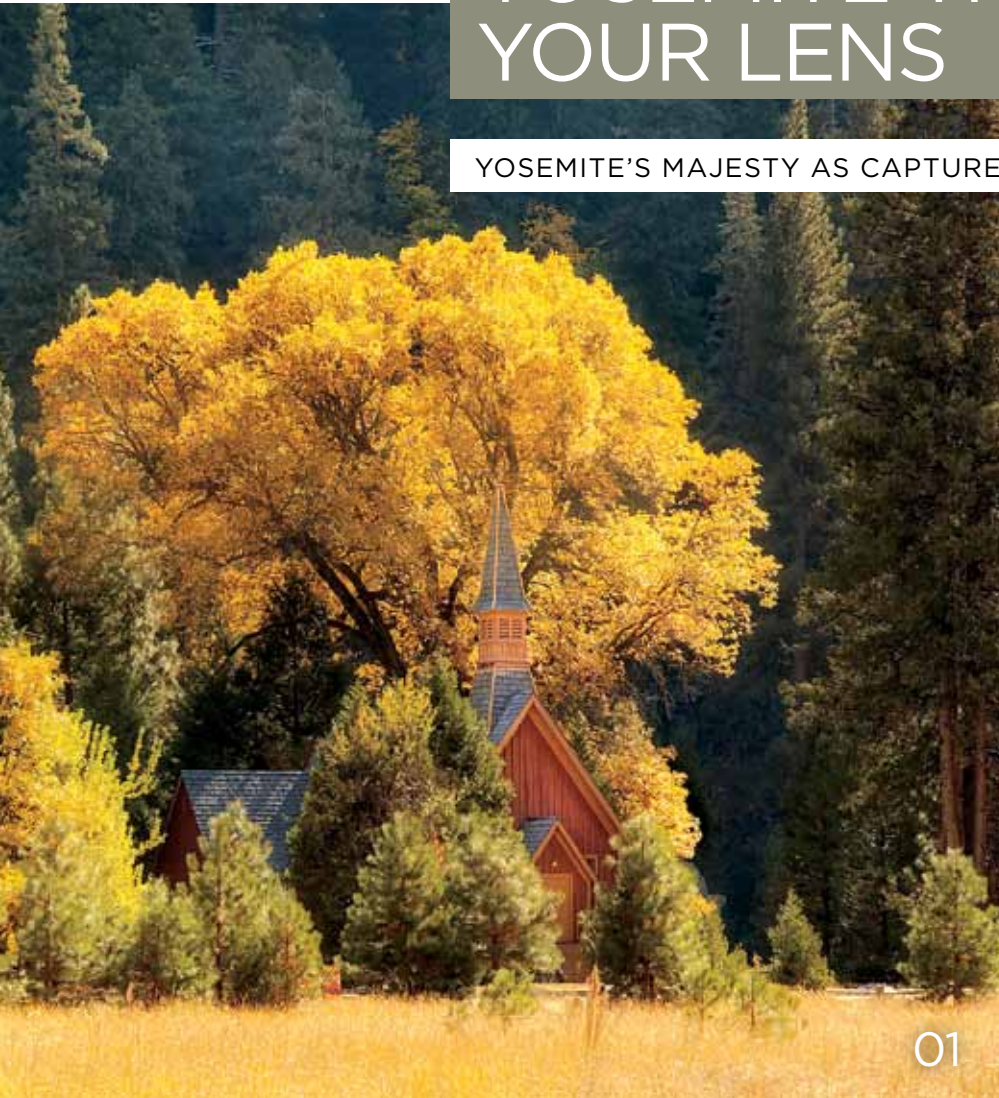
WHAT DO YOU BOTH ENJOY ABOUT RETURNING EACH SUMMER TO VOLUNTEER?

The park and the people are one of a kind. Each year we find new areas to explore and new people to meet. We can't think of a better way to spend a summer.

Thank you Paula and Robert, for your commitment to volunteering and sharing your love of Yosemite with park visitors!

YOSEMITE THROUGH YOUR LENS

YOSEMITE'S MAJESTY AS CAPTURED BY OUR SUPPORTERS.



01



02



03



04

01 Yosemite Chapel in Autumn Splendor

PHOTO BY © ROB BOHNING

02 A Winter Resident Sends Seasons Greetings from Yosemite

PHOTO BY © MARK TEUFEL

03 Frost on Yosemite Falls

PHOTO BY © ANDREW KEE

04 Stealing Kisses on Glacier Point

PHOTO BY © MIKE REEVES

Do you have a special memory you would like to share?

We love to see photos from your first or 100th visit to Yosemite. Our staff will select a few for printing in each issue of *Yosemite Conservancy*.



Visit the Yosemite Conservancy on **Facebook** or **Flickr** and share any photos of a special place you like in Yosemite.

YOSEMITE CONSERVANCY

Magazine of Yosemite Conservancy,
published twice a year

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Autumn . Winter 2011 :: Volume 02 . Issue 02
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Federal Tax Identification #94-3058041



YOSEMITE
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VOLUNTEER
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Greet park visitors, restore meadows
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Yosemite. No Place Is More Deserving Of Your Support.

Your generosity supports projects that preserve and protect Yosemite's beautiful landscapes...improves trails and facilities...and creates opportunities for people of all ages to experience the park in all its glory.

We hope that your commitment to the special place that is Yosemite will move you to help us meet our commitment to the park, and you will be including Yosemite Conservancy in your year-end giving.

Donate online now or mail your support with the enclosed envelope.
yosemiteconservancy.org

