

Restore Hetch Hetchy in Yosemite National Park

Fall 2014



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RESTORATION IN YOSEMITE *Mariposa Grove, Merced River, Tuolumne River* (in part)



Officials described the concrete in the Mariposa Grove an “embarrassment to Yosemite”, but ignored the concrete in Hetch Hetchy Valley.

Photo by Keith Walklet

On June 30, government officials and park lovers celebrated the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln signing the Yosemite Grant

by ceremonially removing the concrete roads and parking lots which threaten Giant Sequoias in the Mariposa Grove. The \$24 million renovation is funded in large part by the Yosemite Conservancy.

In other Yosemite news, the National Park Service plans to purchase 1,600 acres on the west side of the park are at a standstill. The new boundaries match those envisioned by John Muir for the park more than a century ago, but the acquisition has been stalled due to political opposition over the Merced River Plan.

And the Merced River Plan has indeed been controversial. Part of a process required by law to protect the health of the river and manage recreational access, the plan calls for restoration of almost 200 acres and increased reliance on shuttles rather than personal automobiles. Previous versions of the plan would have eliminated the ice rink as well as bike and boat rentals—those services will remain but be moved further from the river to lessen their environmental impact.

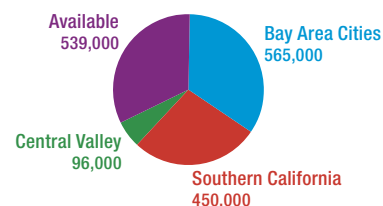
The park service has established a Wild and Scenic River plan for the Tuolumne River as well, but it does not include the Hetch Hetchy Valley portion of the river. Hetch Hetchy’s time is still to come.

California’s Drought: NEVER WASTE A GOOD CRISIS

California’s current drought is the fourth driest period of the last 100 years. We are all hoping that the rains come early and often in 2015.

But they say one should never waste a good crisis. In August, California finally enacted legislation that will require all the state’s groundwater to be used sustainably. While many parts of the state have been effectively managing groundwater for decades, in some areas there have been no limitations on what cities or farms can pump from underground. As a result, groundwater levels have plummeted in dry years and wells have gone dry. Of course, with no regulation there has been no incentive for anyone to recharge aquifers in wet years as there is no guarantee the water will be there later. The legislation will provide such incentives for recharge. Programs will be implemented at the local level, with minimal State oversight, as long as the region has a fair and sustainable plan in place. (cont.)

SEMITROPIC WATER BANK (acre–feet)



Semitropic in Kern County, where ground water rules are already in place, stores water for California’s largest cities. By contrast, Hetch Hetchy Reservoir holds 360,000 acre–feet.

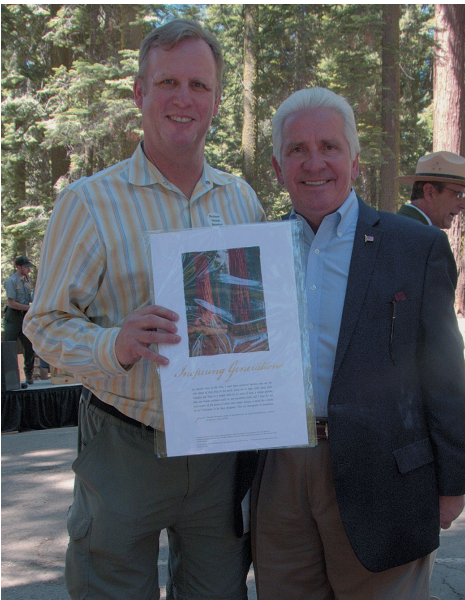
NEVER WASTE A GOOD CRISIS *(continued)*

The legislature has also approved a \$7,200,000,000 water bond for California voters to consider in November as Proposition 1. The bond is controversial in part because it includes \$2,500,000,000 in cost-sharing funds for new water storage projects. Some interest groups seek to use the funds to build Temperance Flat or Sites Reservoirs, or to expand Shasta Reservoir. Others, assuming that the bond passes, will argue that the funds would be more effectively spent on groundwater.

Other proposed water bond expenditures are less divisive and would fund water recycling, groundwater cleanup and environmental restoration—including dam removal on the Klamath River.



Passage of the water bond would help remove Iron Gate and other dams on the Klamath River. Hydropower replacement needs for Klamath restoration will be more than twice those for Hetch Hetchy's restoration. Photo Matt Stoecker



Congressman Jim Costa attended the Mariposa Grove ceremony along with Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom and Congressman Tom McClintock. In the 1980's, Costa supported a bill to consider restoration of Hetch Hetchy. Photo Doug Harnsberger



Patagonia's film, "Damnation", features Hetch Hetchy as it advocates removal of some of our most controversial dams. We love this picture. Photo: Matt Stoecker, enhanced by Davide Fellini

Restore Hetch Hetchy is grateful for contributions from the following:

- ★ Ron Rick Design
- ★ mWebb Communications
- ★ Hogan-Lovells
- ★ Daniel McKenzie (website design)
- ★ Pauline's Pizza & Calaveras Wines
- ★ Gibson & Company Inc. CPA
- ★ Clif Bar & Co.
- ★ LifeStyleRX
- ★ Patagonia

**Restore Hetch Hetchy
needs your help.**



Please contribute today!

No donation is too small or too large.

Use attached envelope, or www.hetchhetchy.org

Soccer at SAN FRANCISCO CITY CALL

In July we placed second in Street Soccer USA's National Cup. Street Soccer USA is a great cause—it runs soccer programs across the country that help homeless people re-integrate into society. And we could not resist the opportunity to play right in front of San Francisco's City Hall.

Restore Hetch Hetchy beat a number of company teams and prevailed in a tough match against a strong contingent from the San Francisco Police Department. Our only loss came in the tournament finale, where we succumbed to Google in a penalty shootout.



After the spectacular descent into the Hetch Hetchy canyon, some of the cyclists pose with the bust of Michael O'Shaughnessy.

On September 25, a group of hardy bicyclists pedaled off in the early morning rain on a four-day ride from the Bay Area to Hetch Hetchy. The ride follows much of the “ramble route” that John Muir took when he walked to Yosemite in 1868.

Muir's ride is a challenge. It covers 100 miles the first day. Successive days are shorter but include some tough uphill climbs. We braved the same ghosts at Coulterville's Jeffery Hotel that Pres. Theodore Roosevelt faced more than a century ago. Prospective cyclists should know that Muir's ride is professionally supported by the Cycling Camp of San Diego.

Profile: Lance Olson RESTORE HETCH HETCHY BOARD



Lance Olson is an attorney who specializes in election and political law in Sacramento.

In 1968, when he was an 18 year old college freshman, Lance heard Hetch Hetchy's tragic story at a Sierra Club meeting. He went to visit the dam and valley that year. Nearly forty years later Lance joined the Restore Hetch Hetchy board. He is determined to make restoration a reality.

As a board member, Lance has provided legal services through his firm, solicited support from individuals and businesses alike, and recruited other board members. Over the last four years, Lance has served on Restore Hetch Hetchy's executive committee. He is keenly focused on exactly those activities that will lead to Hetch Hetchy's restoration and its return to Yosemite National Park and to the American people.

Lance points proudly to Restore Hetch Hetchy's involvement in bringing Proposition F before the voters in San Francisco in 2012. Even though we lost badly, it was the first time since John Muir died that anyone had tried to do something substantively to begin restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley.

Having worked closely with Restore Hetch Hetchy's outside counsel and other legal advisers, Lance believes our current litigation strategy lays the groundwork for success. He looks forward to its implementation.

Lance grew up in Sacramento, and first visited Yosemite with his parents when he was 12 years old. He has been an avid backpacker for more than 40 years and hiked more than 150 miles in the Sierra in 2014.

Lance and his wife Suzette Olson are proud parents of 3 adult children. They love the Sierra Nevada and especially Yosemite.

Restore Hetch Hetchy

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The mission of Restore Hetch Hetchy is to return the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to its natural splendor while continuing to meet the water and power needs of all communities that depend on the Tuolumne River.

Legal Activities

There are plenty of legal challenges to San Francisco's operation of Hetch Hetchy and other reservoirs in the Tuolumne River watershed, although none yet have taken on the ongoing damage that the reservoir does to Yosemite National Park. We plan to change that soon.

Restore Hetch Hetchy has intervened in the relicensing of Don Pedro Reservoir, downstream on Tuolumne River. San Francisco' paid one half the cost of Don Pedro's construction and its water bank in the reservoir can hold twice the volume of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. San Francisco has protested loudly that proposed potential requirements to release additional water into the lower Tuolumne River would impose economic hardships in the Bay Area, but has provided no indication of how it would in fact respond if Tuolumne River supplies were to become less available. In our view, San Francisco must consider the costs and feasibility of a range of water supply alternatives—projects and programs no different from those that other California water agencies have recently implemented. San Francisco will need to consider similar modest system improvements when Hetch Hetchy Valley is restored. Restore Hetch Hetchy has told San Francisco that it will formally oppose inclusion of San Francisco's analysis in its current form.

A group called CESAR (Center for Environmental Science Accountability and Research) has filed suit against the National Park Service for its failure to consider the impacts of San Francisco's water system operations on endangered species, principally salmon and Delta smelt, downstream in the Bay Delta. CESAR's view is that the application of Endangered Species Act protections has disproportionately impacted certain agricultural water interests, while imposing no burden on others who have adversely affected fisheries.

Meanwhile, Restore Hetch Hetchy is hard at work preparing our own legal challenge to the damage that Hetch Hetchy Reservoir does to Yosemite National Park every day. We look forward to our day in court where we will show that there are feasible alternatives available for diverting the Tuolumne River and storing supplies outside Yosemite, and that the ongoing operation of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is a violation of state and federal law.



Executive Director
Spreck Rosekrans



"Help us return this national treasure to the American people." - Harrison Ford