

The Great American Outdoors Act is providing crucial funding – up to \$6.65 billion over five years – to fix our national parks’ crumbling roads, decaying buildings, outdated water systems and many more repair needs. This bill, along with other funding sources, is ensuring our parks can continue to welcome millions of visitors each year and protect the natural and cultural resources that tell our nation’s history.

Yosemite NATIONAL PARK



Bordered by the spectacular Sierra and Stanislaus national forests of central California, Yosemite National Park is one of the nation’s most popular destinations. Known worldwide for its breathtaking granite cliffs, waterfalls, glaciers, and giant sequoia groves (the largest of which is home to 500 trees), Yosemite covers nearly 1,200 square miles.

The park’s natural beauty is rivaled only by the land’s notable and impressive history: President Abraham Lincoln set aside the site in 1864, which helped pave the way for the National Park system. Yosemite, a World Heritage Site, now attracts about four million visitors a year, three-quarters of whom visit between May and October. Among the most visited spots is Yosemite Valley.

About 90 minutes from Yosemite Valley is Tuolumne Meadows Campground, Yosemite’s largest camping area. Surrounded by majestic peaks and granite domes, it provides direct access to the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River, the John Muir Trail, and Tioga Road, which offers a 47-mile scenic drive through forests and past meadows

and lakes. At 8,600 feet, the campground views are dazzling, so it’s no surprise that this affordable overnight option—which is open seasonally—is typically at capacity, hosting more than 150,000 campers annually. Also no surprise: A campground built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and expanded to 140 acres in the 1960s now faces long-standing maintenance needs.

THE CHALLENGE: Deterioration of facilities and water/sewer systems at Yosemite’s biggest campground

Tuolumne Meadows Campground has 304 drive-in campsites, seven group sites, four horse sites, a group camp, and 21 backpacker sites. The sites are dated and

BY THE NUMBERS:



\$21.5 million

investment from the GAOA to repair projects



4 million

annual visitors



150,000

annual campers



47 mile

scenic drive

PHOTOS: Cover: ©Lorcel/Shutterstock
Back: ©gg5795e/Shutterstock



deteriorating. Roads are potholed, restrooms are overcrowded, 17 campsites are located along the river within the floodplain, aging structures have been damaged from heavy snowfall, and the site isn't fully accessible to visitors with disabilities. The inefficient water and sewer systems are degrading, and if the condition worsens, the park could face a public health risk and may need to shut down the campground or prevent it from supplying potable water. All of these issues will contribute to negatively impacting the visitor experience at one of the country's most beloved parks.

THE PROJECT

Through an investment that is approximately \$21.5 million, the Great American Outdoors Act will fund a major overhaul and modernization of the Tuolumne Meadows Campground. The project will rehabilitate campground roads, make accessibility improvements for campsites, and enhance the amenities at each campsite—including a hardened parking pad, new picnic tables, fire rings, and food storage containers for bear protection. They will also be redesigned with revegetation and improved drainage. The campsites and access roads will be moved away from riverbanks to a new loop road. The eight restrooms—which serve approximately 1,200

The park's natural beauty is rivaled only by the land's notable and impressive history: President Abraham Lincoln set aside the site in 1864, which helped pave the way for the National Park system.

visitors per day during periods of full occupancy—will be upgraded with new fixtures and floor plans and will be refurbished to meet Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS). Two restrooms will be added. The entire water system in the campground will be replaced, including new water service to the existing and new restrooms. The portions of the sanitary sewer system that were not replaced as part of the 1995 sewer improvement project will be replaced in this project. Work begins this summer and the campground will be closed until work is complete in 2024 or 2025.

THE IMPACT

At a time when Americans are looking for a place to escape from technology and enjoy nature, campgrounds are just as relevant today as they were to early 20th century campers. This investment will improve accessibility, expand recreation opportunities and public access, and reduce or

eliminate deferred maintenance. When the project is complete, the volume of costly unplanned or emergency work on the aging systems and infrastructure will



decrease significantly. Drainage and alignment improvements will protect current investments from damage and reduce corrective maintenance costs in the campground by reducing rutting, scouring, and erosion. Finally, the improvements will limit the park's vulnerability to legal action as a result of non-compliance with area planning documents, accessibility requirements, and public health standards. The work will improve the camping experience for more than 150,000 people annually by upgrading amenities and addressing long-standing maintenance needs at the park's largest campground.

The Great American Outdoors Act is successfully repairing infrastructure at hundreds of parks across the country. However, with a nearly \$22 billion backlog, much more is needed. We urge Congress to extend the Legacy Restoration Fund for an additional five years.

Preserving Our Past.



Protecting Our Future.