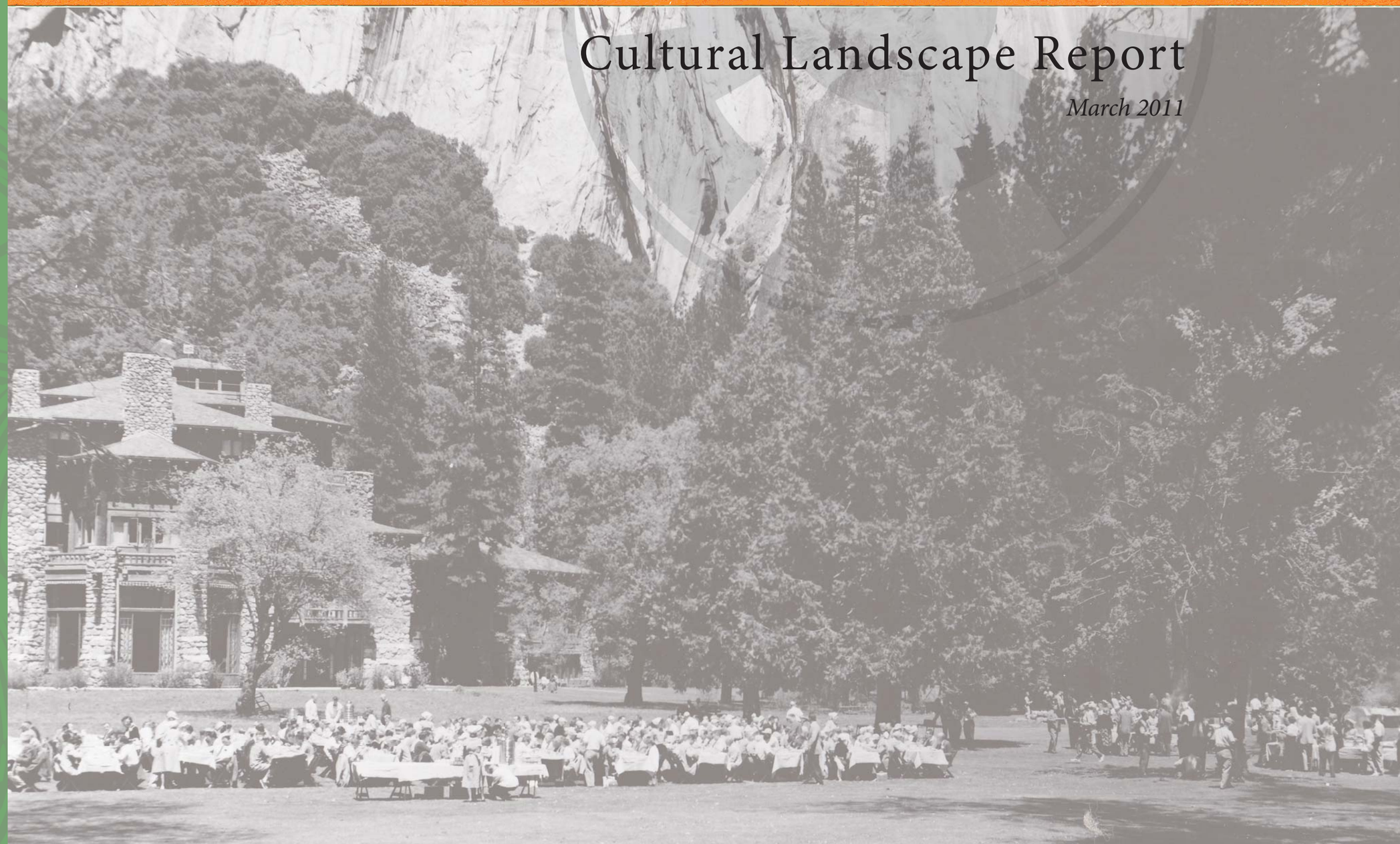
The Anwahnee

Cultural Landscape Report

March 2011



prepared for

National Park Service/
Yosemite National Park &
Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts
at Yosemite

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INTRODUCTION

Management Summary

AECOM has prepared the following Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) Part I and Part II to support rehabilitating the historic landscape of The Ahwahnee, currently managed by Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts at Yosemite (DNC) and the National Park Service (NPS). The CLR, along with the Historic Structures Report (HSR) prepared concurrently by Architectural Resources Group, Inc. (ARG), will inform the near-term Rehabilitation Plan for The Ahwahnee, as well as long-term management of the property's cultural resources. The Ahwahnee is a part of Yosemite National Park in the Central Sierra Nevada, California. Covering almost 1,200 square miles, Yosemite National Park has attracted visitors for more than 150 years for its spectacular scenery and history, and The Ahwahnee was developed to capitalize on the immense popularity of the park. The CLR documents the physical changes in the study area over time and its existing conditions in order to evaluate the significance of the site, to undertake analysis of its features and systems, to assess integrity of the site, and to establish the means and methods for preserving and rehabilitating the historic landscape.

Several goals have been identified for the CLR. Part I goals include proposing a period of significance and boundary for the study area. The current National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination (1977) and the National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination (1987) for The Ahwahnee classify the property as a "building" and do not include an evaluation of the hotel's historic landscape design except as the setting for the hotel building. The Yosemite Valley Historic District (YVHD) nomination (2006) addresses cultural landscape significance throughout the Valley, and provides additional information about the contributing landscape features within The Ahwahnee developed area. This CLR discusses the significance of the The Ahwahnee; proposes a new period of significance that is consistent with the information in the three nominations; and proposes a study area boundary that includes the full extent of the cultural landscape and encompasses all of the features identified as contributing features in the YVHD nomination (2006). The Ahwahnee study area described in the CLR includes approximately 35 acres.

Part II goals for treatment include protecting and preserving the natural and cultural resources within the historic landscape and ensuring the landscape at The Ahwahnee is safe, accessible, sustainable, and sensitive to the natural and cultural history of the site. The primary treatment is rehabilitation of the landscape to meet contemporary needs. This CLR addresses cultural resource protection by providing appropriate cultural resource treatment guidelines and recommendations for The Ahwahnee study area.

Historic Overview

The Ahwahnee landscape has provided a backdrop for centuries of human occupation. The isolation, incredible beauty, and richness of the animal and plant resources made the Yosemite Valley a good location for the permanent and seasonal communities of American Indians. Archeological evidence—supplemented by oral tradition—of this prehistoric occupation in Yosemite Valley is found in the Valley and within the study area, and supports the long story of human interaction with the landscape at Yosemite. Within historic times, a mixed tribe of Yosemite Indians occupied Yosemite Valley. They called the Valley Ahwahnee (Awani), meaning "deep, green valley" or "deep, grassy valley," and were known as the Ahwahneechee, meaning those who live at Ahwahnee.

The Indian village of Wis'-kah'lah was situated in the current location of The Ahwahnee. This village and others were destroyed in 1851 when the Mariposa Battalion raided the Valley in pursuit of the Yosemite Band with the intent of relocating the Indians to reservation lands.

By 1855, word had reached San Francisco of the majesty of the Yosemite Valley, and in the same year, the first tourist party was organized to visit it. Subsequently, tourism established rapidly in the Valley, and within a year the first hotels were constructed. In addition to tourists, settlers began to move there, bringing livestock, clearing trees, plowing the Valley floor for crops, planting pasture grasses, and manipulating the Merced River. Indians that remained in the Valley participated in this new European American economy, as their traditional resource base had been taken from them. In the 1850s and 1860s, many prominent Americans, including John Muir and Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., became deeply involved in the political movement to preserve Yosemite.

The late 19th century and early 20th century witnessed a sometimes sharp conflict between public, private and tribal interests in Yosemite Valley. State and federal governments, private landholders and leaseholders began a management campaign that favored the opening of the Valley for growing numbers of visitors and tourists. Yet the thread of concern for the protection of the Valley's natural characteristics—its views, water, cliffs, and woodlands—remained active throughout this period.

Through the 1860s, Yosemite Valley's reputation as a scenic wonder of the world continued to grow, but land preservation did not slow economic growth and development driven by the burgeoning tourism industry. In 1864, Abraham Lincoln signed the legislation establishing a grant of land, the Yosemite Grant, to the state of California for the preservation of over 36,000 acres. In 1890, Yosemite was designated a National Park. In 1905, after years of struggle to develop access to the land and to resolve land claims, California ceded the Yosemite Grant back to the federal government and it became a part of Yosemite National Park.

In 1925, the newly formed Yosemite Park and Curry Company (YP&C Co.), encouraged by the National Park Service, hired Gilbert Stanley Underwood and Co. to design and build a "first-class hotel" in Yosemite Valley. The design of the building and surrounding landscape emphasized the spectacular views of the cliffs and waterfalls, and took advantage of its location in a meadow at the eastern end of the Valley by using the enormous cliffs as a backdrop for the hotel. The president of the YP&C Co., Donald Tresidder, cited The Ahwahnee (opened in July, 1927) as a means to promote an elite vacation experience in Yosemite. Its landscape design was informed by the rustic style that was being established at this time

by Underwood and "landscape engineers" Charles Punchard, Daniel Hull, and Thomas Vint, and practiced by firms such as Olmsted Brothers and landscape gardener Carl Purdy. Despite the luxurious character of the hotel and landscape, visitation to the hotel slowed in the years leading up to World War II.

On June 25, 1943, The Ahwahnee was commissioned by the U.S. Navy as the U.S. Naval Convalescent Hospital, and by July of 1943 the hotel was sufficiently modified to accommodate its first patients. The Navy undertook substantial changes in the study area, which were quickly reversed when the Navy departed in 1945.

According to the NRHP nomination, NHL nomination, and the YVHD nomination, the property is significant primarily for its design and for its association with the development of the tourism and concessions industry in California.

The recommended period of significance for the study area is 1925-1942, which represents the time period when the major design and construction of the hotel and landscape was completed. Most of the landscape implementation was completed by 1932, and the rustic period in Yosemite Valley was largely concluded by 1942. Despite the fact that the Navy occupation of the hotel is outside the proposed period of significance, the history of the Navy's use of the study area represents an important and unusual period in The Ahwahnee's history.

Scope and Methodology

Scope of Work

The scope of work for the CLR calls for completion of Parts I and II as identified in the April 2009 scope of services requested by the National Park Service and DNC. The scope of work requests an updated description of the cultural landscape boundary using the previously defined developed area boundary as a starting point; and a well-defined period of significance, supported by the significance evaluation.

The preparation of the CLR for The Ahwahnee included the following tasks:

Landscape History

- Research primary and secondary source materials relating to the cultural landscape history of the project area.
- Prepare a narrative history that documents the cultural landscape's historic context and development.
- Prepare historical period plans.
- Compile a bibliography.

Existing Conditions Documentation

- Complete a field survey to inventory and document existing conditions in the project area.
- Update the existing survey to create an accurate planning-level base map.
- Complete site photography to support existing conditions documentation.
- Create a photographic station point map documenting the location and orientation of existing conditions photographs.
- Prepare a condition assessment for the existing landscape features and systems.

Analysis and Evaluation

- Determine the extent of the cultural landscape, henceforth referred to as the study area, and map the proposed boundary using park GIS standards.
- Describe current significance information for the cultural landscape, recommend a proposed period of significance.
- Create an inventory of existing cultural landscape features and systems with a description of their contributing value.
- Prepare a narrative comparative analysis of the cultural landscape's remnant historic features.
- Prepare a comparative analysis map that documents the location of contributing and non-contributing landscape resources.

Treatment

- Define the appropriate treatment approach for the project area.
- Develop treatment recommendations that address the management and maintenance of cultural landscape resources in the project area as well as the appropriate inclusion of new design interventions that provide for continued visitor use, accessibility, and interpretation of the significant cultural landscape.
- Prepare a treatment plan to illustrate the proposed recommendations.

Methodology

The standards used to create the CLR were the *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Technologies* (1998) and the *Director's Order 28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Chapter 7- Management of Cultural Landscapes* published by the NPS; these guides provide information on the appropriate content and format for the preparation of a CLR. Additional documents used to guide the CLR include:

- http://workflow.den.nps.gov/staging/5_ProjectPlanning/CLR_standards.htm
- *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996)
- National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*
- National Register Bulletin 18: *How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes*

Project Kick-off Meeting

On April 27, 2009, the project kick-off meeting convened and included personnel from DNC, NPS, ARG, and AECOM. The kick-off meeting agenda included information about project scope, objectives, coordination, schedule, communications, information gathering, and compliance process and procedures.

Background Research and Data Collection
AECOM shared research and data collection responsibilities with ARG to provide the necessary information to complete the CLR. Historical research in support of The Ahwahnee CLR built on previous documents including *The Ahwahnee HSR* (1997) the *Yosemite Valley CLR* (1994) and the YVHD nomination (2006). ARG undertook archival research at Yosemite National Park, University of California, Berkeley, and the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Pacific Region in San Bruno, CA to support the HSR and CLR; the information collected at the archive included historic maps, photographs, and planning documents, as well as other primary source data. AECOM also undertook archival research at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Department of the Navy, in Washington, DC. The planning documents included the *General Management Plan* (1980), the *Historic Resource Study* (1987), and *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan* (1996), among others. Books providing background information on the site were purchased at Yosemite National Park. AECOM used NPS internet sources for maps and other historical and planning information.

Field Investigation
From April 27 through April 29, 2009, AECOM personnel undertook field investigations at The Ahwahnee. The field investigation included photographing the existing conditions of the site and recording the location of the photographs on a station point map. Additional notes about conditions at the site were recorded on a base map. A brief interview with Ahwahnee staff member Diana Marquez was conducted on April 26, 2009. Site walk-overs were undertaken with the project architects of ARG and the project engineers of Provost & Pritchard to assess the condition of various landscape features. On August 28 through August 30, 2009, AECOM personnel undertook GPS mapping of the study area boundary.

Landscape History
Using primary and secondary source historical background information, including maps, photographs, and narratives, AECOM created a historic landscape narrative that documents the chronology of landscape change, the historic context of these changes, the design intent at the site, and the important individuals and events at the site. This narrative is accompanied by figures documenting historic photographs and historic maps. Historic period plans were created to support the narrative.

Existing Conditions Documentation
Landscape features and systems are documented in the CLR using the framework established in *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Content, Process, and Techniques*. The existing conditions discussion is organized by landscape characteristics. The documentation of the site was accomplished through existing conditions base mapping, field investigations, and photographic documentation of features. Photographs of representative landscape features are included with the narrative and referenced in the text.

Evaluation of Significance
The proposed significance information was based on previous significance evaluations as well as from research and analysis undertaken for this report. The NRHP nomination (1977), the NHL nomination (1987), and the YVHD nomination (2006) provided a baseline of information for the significance evaluation.

Comparative Analysis
The CLR includes a comparative analysis of the landscape that examines the relationship between the historic landscape during the period of significance and the landscape as it exists in 2009. The CLR focuses primarily on extant features and their dates of origin. The comparative analysis establishes which features survive from the period of significance; it establishes a basis for an integrity assessment; and it documents the similarities and differences between the historic and existing conditions in order to provide a foundation for treatment. Through the comparative analysis, the CLR documents whether the landscape features contribute to the significance of the landscape, do not contribute to the significance of the landscape (i.e. post-date the site's period of significance), are missing from the period of significance, or are undetermined. The YVHD nomination (2006) provided the baseline for the list of features that contribute to the significance of The Ahwahnee developed area.

Treatment
The CLR establishes the appropriate treatment approach for The Ahwahnee study area using the established criteria in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* and through discussion with the National Park Service and DNC. The treatment approach, guidelines, and recommendations are based on NPS treatment standards as well as described park management policies and goals.

Study Area Boundary

The Ahwahnee is located in the Yosemite Valley of Yosemite National Park, California, just east of Yosemite Village (Figure 1). The study area boundary includes land depicted in the NRHP nomination (1977), in the NHL nomination (1987), and in the YVHD nomination (2006) developed area. A new study area boundary was documented for this report that includes the entire cultural landscape and all of the features described in the YVHD nomination (2006).

The NRHP nomination (1977) described the property as a 35-acre site that included the hotel, dormitory, cottages, meadow, and associated parking areas. This boundary (Figure 2) stretched to the river and bicycle path on its southern border. However, the NHL nomination (1987) proposed a site of only 9.5 acres that excluded the cottages, the dormitory, and the majority of the meadow, and stated that it included the gate house, though the actual boundary as it was drawn does not accurately depict the gate house location (Figure 3). The YVHD nomination (2006)Ahwahnee developed area included the full length of Ahwahnee Road (Figure 4), as well as land east of the cottages that included the Navy-era concrete foundation.

The study area documented in the CLR includes The Ahwahnee, eight multi-unit cottages and a storage building, the dormitory, the stone entrance gate, the meadow, Royal Arch Creek, natural and constructed drainage channels, and other structures and landscape features (Figure 5).

The study area, as defined in this report, begins on its northwest corner at the stone gate house and proceeds east along the foot of the talus slope. At the eastern edge of the valet parking area, the boundary shifts southeast to follow the eastern edge of the unpaved parking and service road. The eastern edge of the site boundary is located at the large concrete pad that now serves as a storage area. The boundary curves around at the concrete pad to the south and west, and follows the service road to an unnamed intermittent drainageway. The boundary turns south at this drainageway until it reaches the Merced River where it follows the river's north bank until it reaches the Ahwahnee Bridge. At the bridge, the boundary turns west and follows the bicycle path. Just west of the tennis courts, the boundary turns north and follows a wooded edge until it passes the dormitory. The boundary turns west again and follows the southern side of the bicycle path parallel to Ahwahnee Road until it reaches the gate post at the northwest corner again.

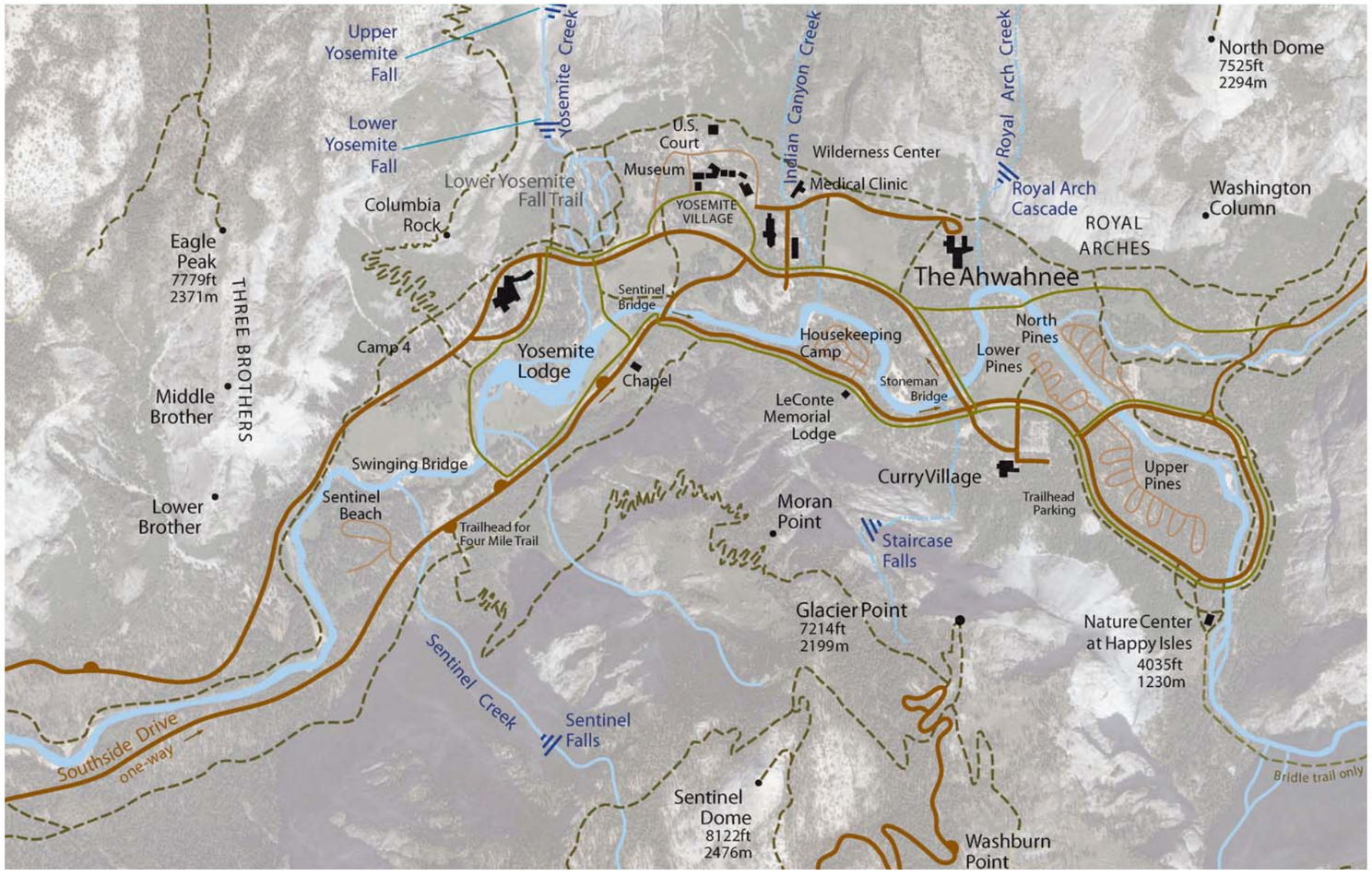


Figure 1. The Ahwahnee, located in Yosemite Valley. (Source: Adapted from "Yosemite National Park." Harpers Ferry Center, 2003.)

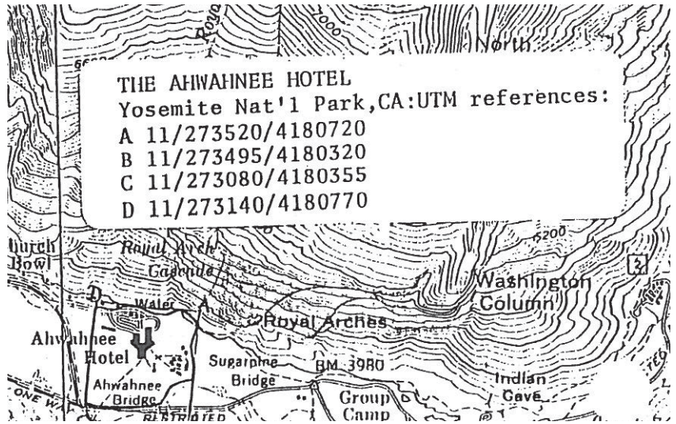


Figure 2. National Register nomination boundary (1977).

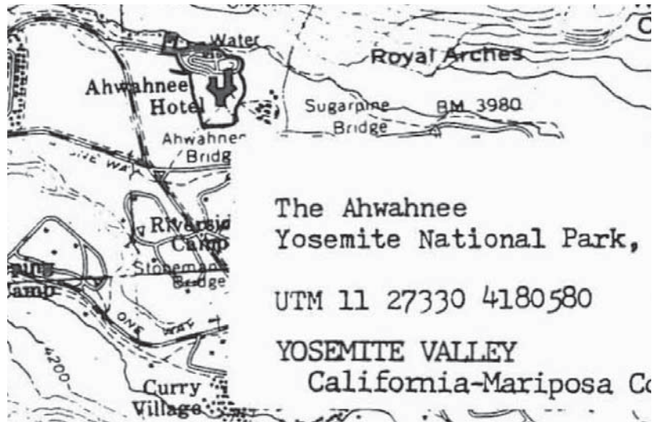
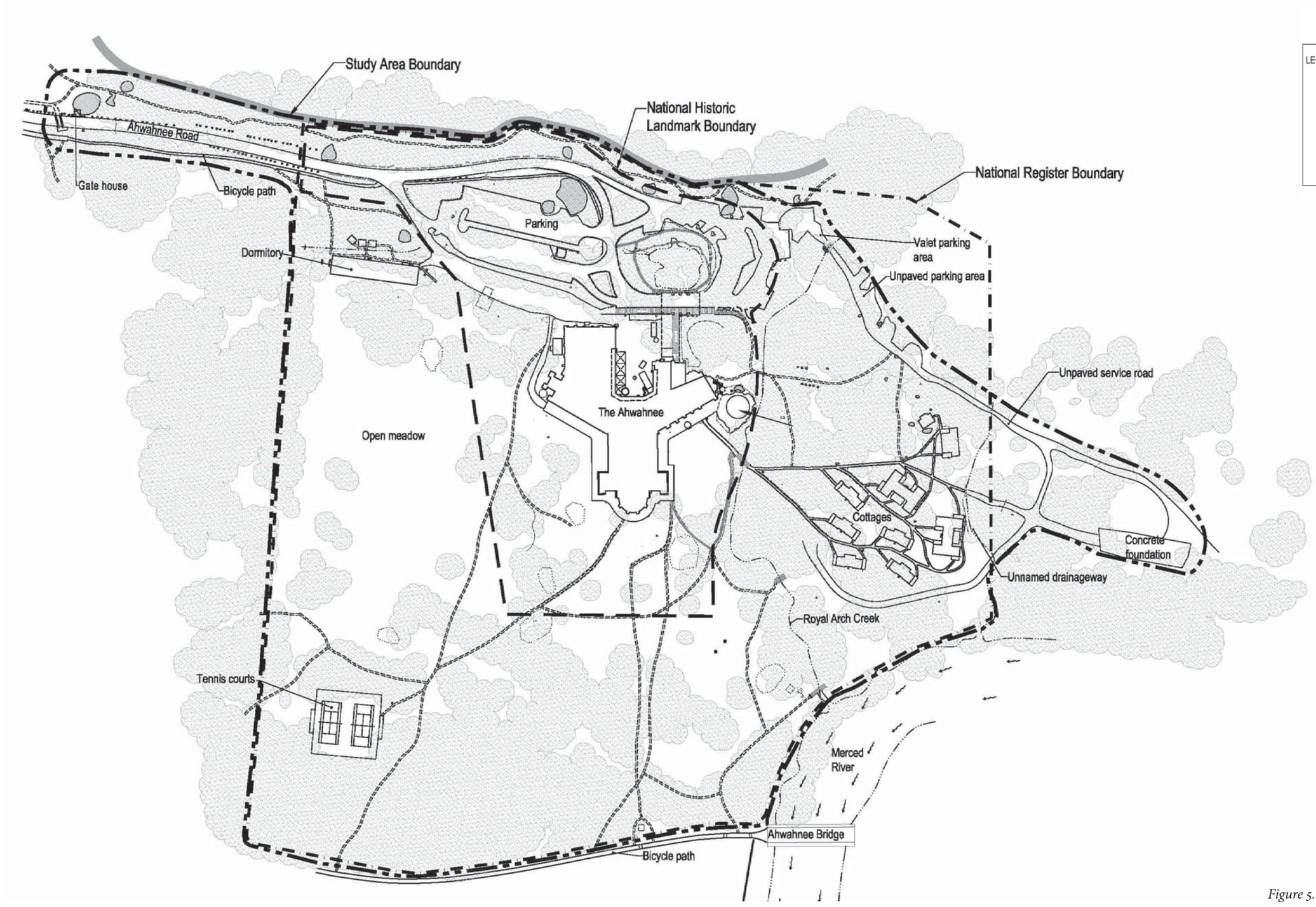


Figure 3. National Historic Landmark nomination boundary (1987).



Figure 4. The Ahwahnee developed area within the Yosemite Valley Historic District.



Note: This figure documents the NRHP (1977) and NHL (1987) boundaries as they were drawn in the nominations; however, these boundaries do not include landscape areas described in the narrative boundary descriptions. The narrative description of the boundaries includes the full length of Ahwahnee Road to the stone gate house.

The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Study Area Boundary
not to scale

N

Figure 5. The Ahwahnee study area boundary.

Summary of Findings

According to guidelines provided by the NRHP, discussed in greater detail in *Analysis and Evaluation* of the CLR, The Ahwahnee is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of national parks and the concessions industry, and under Criterion C for its embodiment of NPS rustic-style architecture and landscape architecture. Its significance under Criterion D is addressed in the Yosemite Valley Archeological District nomination; a Traditional Cultural Property nomination is planned for the Valley as well.

The Ahwahnee demonstrates integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association for its proposed period of significance (1925-1942). Changes to the landscape after the period of significance have somewhat diminished the integrity of the study area; however, no changes have resulted in a major loss of integrity and The Ahwahnee continues to convey the significance for which it was nominated.

The recommended treatment approach for the property is rehabilitation because The Ahwahnee retains integrity yet must undergo alterations, primarily due to the need for accessibility compliance and enhanced sustainability. Recommendations in the CLR provide guidelines for both ongoing and long-term sustainable management of the historic designed landscape at The Ahwahnee. Treatment goals for The Ahwahnee study area are to:

- Preserve resources that contribute to the significance of The Ahwahnee developed area as established in the YVHD nomination (2006) and that maintain the historic character of The Ahwahnee National Historic Landmark.
- Accommodate contemporary hotel operations and programmatic needs, including universal accessibility, within the framework of preservation and appropriate rehabilitation.
- Promote integrated resources stewardship through sustainable maintenance practices.

Although it was not included in the scope of work to provide information supporting an update to the NHL nomination, the CLR recommends that the NHL nomination be updated to include the evaluation of the cultural landscape, to update the list of contributing features, and to include the entire cultural landscape as part of a proposed district.

PART 1

PART I
SITE HISTORY

Introduction

This section focuses on the physical development and historic context of The Ahwahnee beginning with a summary overview of the prehistoric period and proceeding through the design and development of the hotel. The narrative divides the site's evolution into separate periods reflecting major trends and events that affected the physical appearance of the cultural landscape. The periods include:

- Prehistoric and Early Historic Overview (c. 7500 BCE- c. 1833 AD)
- Early Contact and Development in Yosemite Valley (c. 1833-1863)
- Development of Yosemite National Park and its Concessions (1864-1924)
- Design and Development of The Ahwahnee (1925-1942)
- Navy Occupation (1943-1945)
- Post World War II to Present (1946-2009)

The narrative is supported by historic maps, photographs, and period plans.

Prehistoric and Early Historic Overview (c. 7500 BCE - c. 1833 AD)

The Ahwahnee study area has provided a stunning backdrop for centuries of human occupation. The isolation, the incredible beauty, and the richness of its animal and plant resources made the Yosemite Valley a good location for permanent and seasonal communities of American Indians. Archeological evidence and oral traditions of this prehistoric occupation in Yosemite Valley are found throughout the Valley and within the study area, and support the long story of human interaction with the landscape at Yosemite.

Archeological data suggests that human occupation occurred in the Yosemite Valley by the pre-Archaic period (prior to 7500 BCE), but oral tradition maintains a much older occupation. Late pre-Archaic (c. 7500-6000 BCE) artifacts found in streamside archeological contexts include lithics (such as obsidian points) indicating a focus on hunting.[1] The paleoenvironmental conditions brought on by climate change resulted in habitat and species diversity that provided a broad range of resources for American Indians. By 5000-2000 BCE there was widespread though still sparse occupation of the Yosemite Valley, likely reflecting brief seasonal visits by various groups of hunter-gatherers. Evidence of human occupation during this period at The Ahwahnee site includes numerous lithics, possibly representing a seasonal camp.

The Late Archaic period (c. 1200 BCE – 650 AD) saw a change to intensive land use by large, dense populations in Yosemite Valley. The future site of The Ahwahnee was a locus of human occupation in the Yosemite Valley during this period, as evidenced by archeological sites found there.[2] Artifacts (many associated with the Crane Flat Complex) include an array of stone tools and weapons, bowls, and beads, some associated with burials that follow patterns similar to those found throughout Central California in this period. Distribution of artifacts indicates that this society was non-egalitarian. It is possible that some of the occupants of Yosemite during this time were Great Basin people moving in from the east, though cultural boundaries within the Valley have not yet been identified.[3]

From 650 AD to 1500 AD, the Tamarack Complex, typified by smaller, single-component sites, displaced the larger, sedentary Crane Flat type of settlement.[4] Fires appear to have been common during this period, leading to theories that many were anthropogenic. Both naturally occurring fires and those started by humans would have benefited people by expanding oak habitat and stabilizing meadow margins, resulting in a larger potential acorn harvest—a staple food in the area.[5] Ethnographic evidence for the use of anthropogenic fire as a land management strategy by American Indians suggests that vegetation conditions in Yosemite Valley were manipulated by humans over approximately the last 650 years.[6]

During late prehistoric and early historic times, inhabitants of the Yosemite National Park area included the Central and Southern Sierra Miwoks, along with Mono Paiute, and Yokuts.[7] Within historic times, a mixed band of Yosemite Indians occupied Yosemite Valley. They called the Valley Ahwahnee (Awani)—meaning "green valley" or "grassy valley"—and were known as the Ahwahneechee, "those who live at Ahwahnee."

The Yosemite area's isolation, beauty, and abundance of game, fish, edible plants, and water made it an ideal haven for early peoples. There the Yosemite Indians hunted grizzly and black bears, deer, elk, and smaller mammals such as rabbits and grey squirrels. They also caught several bird species and trout. The native population gathered greens and bulbs in the spring; seeds and fruits in the summer; acorns, nuts, and manzanita berries in the fall; and mushrooms in the late winter and early spring. Black oak acorns, the preferred starch of the California Indians' diet, occurred in the Yosemite region in abundance.[8]

A hunting-fishing-gathering economy was dominant in the late prehistoric period. People moved between large, dense, permanent settlements along rivers, and seasonal special-use camps scattered in upland areas. Permanent settlements were large and densely populated, comprised chiefly of cedar bark sided houses and semi-subterranean dwellings. Indians also used fire to manage the landscape along with other native landscape management practices which resulted in the black oak groves and open meadows. Horticultural practices enhanced the characteristics of culturally important plants, such as those used for basketmaking, to promote desired characteristics.

Yosemite's native peoples, by the beginning of the 19th century, were increasingly affected by the incursion of European and European American explorers and settlers into the region. While direct contact with the Yosemite Indians did not occur until the mid-1800s, the

1 National Park Service (NPS), *Historic Structure Report: The Ahwahnee* (*HSR*), prepared by Page and Turnbull (San Francisco, CA: U.S. Department of Interior, 1997), 116.
2 NPS, *HSR*, 116.
3 NPS, *HSR*, 117.
4 NPS, *HSR*, 118.
5 NPS, *HSR*, 118.
6 NPS, *HSR*, 118.
7 Linda Wedel Greene, *Historic Resource Study: Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources. A History of the Discovery, Management, and Physical Development of Yosemite National Park, California* (Yosemite, CA: Department of Interior, 1987), 2-6.
8 NPS, *HSR*, 116 and 118.

tribes were affected indirectly through the appearance of displaced groups of refugee Mission Indians and the possible introduction of smallpox, measles, and other European diseases that quickly decimated native populations throughout California.[9] According to accounts in 1800, such a disease afflicted the residents of Yosemite Valley. As a result, for a time the Yosemite abandoned their villages and went to live with neighboring tribes.[10] Several villages were destroyed in 1851 when the Mariposa Battalion militia raided the Valley in pursuit of the Yosemite Band with the intent of relocating the Indians to reservation lands. The Valley remained uninhabited for a few years until Tenaya, the son of a headman of the Yosemite who had grown up among the Monos along the eastern base of the Sierra, decided to return to the deep, grassy Valley that had been his family's home. Collecting the remnants of his father's people and some scattered members of other tribes, he reoccupied Yosemite Valley with this group in about 1821. Tenaya's band lived peacefully in Ahwahnee for several years.

In the mid-19th century, the village of Wis'-kah-lah stood in the vicinity of The Ahwahnee.[11] Occupied by the Yosemite Indians as late as 1898, it was described as "a large summer camp on a northward bend of the Merced River, a little west of Royal Arches."[12] The village was ideally situated to take advantage of resources, with easy access to the Merced River, to adjacent meadow and woodland, and to granite in the nearby cliffs of the northern Valley edge. At that time at least 36 Yosemite Indian villages existed throughout the Yosemite Valley, some of which were year-round and some seasonal (Figure 6).[13]

The Yosemite Indians built several kinds of structures in their settlements. They framed *umachas*, conical-shaped winter dwellings, with several long poles covered with slabs of incense cedar or pine bark. As late as the 1920s, a few of those structures could still be found in use in Yosemite. Impermanent conical brush shelters sufficed in summer. In association with the dwellings, villages contained large, semi-subterranean dance/assembly houses, 40 to 50 feet in diameter, dug to a depth of three or four feet. Sweathouses—circular, earth-covered, and between six and 15 feet in diameter—also commonly appeared in village areas. *Chukahs*, granaries for acorn storage, consisted of four tall incense cedar poles supporting elevated basket-like structures that held acorns. Remains of small, conical grinding houses made of bark slabs have also been found archeologically. Some of the village sites in Yosemite Valley stood closer to the north wall than to the river, enabling them to take full advantage of the winter sunshine; this situation indicates possible occupation during at least part of the winter months.[14]

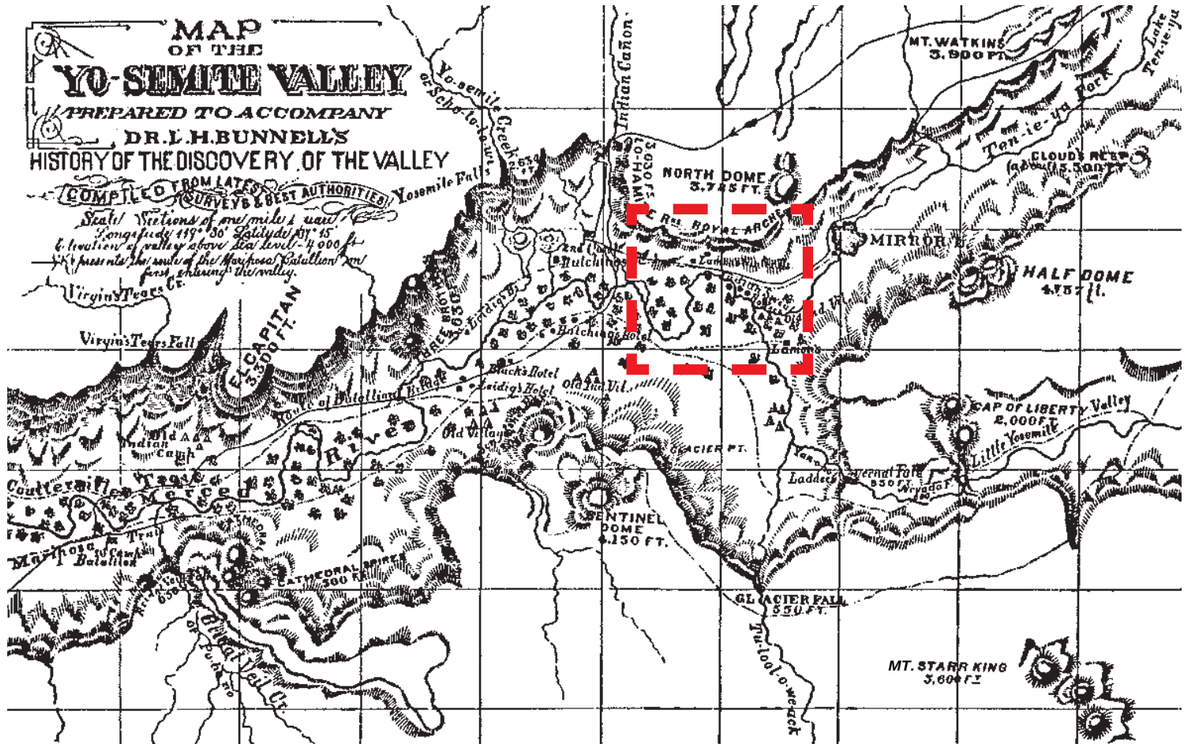


Figure 6. Indian villages in Yosemite Valley noted by Lafayette Houghton Bunnell in 1851. The general location of the future Ahwahnee is shown in the red outlined area. (Source: Bunnell, Discovery of the Yosemite, and the Indian War of 1851 which Led to that Event, 1892.)

9 NPS, *HSR*, 119; and Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 2.
10 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 2.
11 NPS, *HSR*, 3 and 16.
12 NPS, *HSR*, 119.
13 NPS, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report* (*CLR*), prepared by Land and Community Associates (Denver: NPS Denver Service Center, U.S. Department of Interior, 1994), 2-69.
14 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 9-10.

Early Contact and Development in Yosemite Valley (c. 1833-1863)

The Sierra Nevada range stood as a barrier to westward exploration, extending generally northwest-southeast along half of what is now the state of California's eastern boundary. European contact occurred later here than many other parts of North America due to the relative remoteness of the Yosemite Valley and its surrounding rough topography.

In 1833, Joseph Walker led a party up the Sierra Nevada's steep eastern escarpment and into the Yosemite region, between the Tuolumne and Merced Rivers; although not confirmed, his party were likely the first European Americans to view Yosemite Valley. In 1848-49, when gold was discovered in the foothills of the Sierra, settlers and miners streamed into central California from the coast. Their appetite for land and gold resulted in escalation of physical, often armed, violent conflicts between European Americans and the American Indian tribes of the Sierra Nevada.[15]

In 1851, U.S. Indian Commissioners began to meet with California tribes to seek agreements to establish designated reservations. While some cooperated, others, including the Ahwahneeche, refused to consider leaving their Yosemite Valley homeland and hoped to stave off the invaders. In response, the state legislature authorized the governor to proceed with local action.[16] During the conflict known as the Mariposa Indian War, the Mariposa Battalion militia of 200 men led by John Savage entered the Valley in pursuit of Yosemite Indians they believed had raided Savage's trading posts.[17] This 1851 event is generally considered the "discovery" of the Yosemite Valley by European Americans. Finding the Valley virtually abandoned, the battalion destroyed dwellings and acorn granaries.

Throughout the 19th century, American Indian settlements remained a part of Yosemite to some degree, including permanent year-round villages in Merced Canyon; summer villages, such as Wis'-kah-lah, which were occupied May-October; and small seasonal camps for hunting, fishing, and gathering.[18] However, the Yosemite Indians were marginalized, and most were forced out of the area and onto reservations as European-American settlement and control over the land increased and solidified. For more than a century, Yosemite Indian tribal descendants continued to live in the park area, gaining employment with park concessioners and the federal government. The last known Yosemite Indian settlement in the park was removed in 1969.[19]

By 1855, word had reached San Francisco of the majesty of the Yosemite Valley, and the first tourist party was organized to enter the Valley, led by James M. Hutchings, publisher of *California Magazine*.[20] These highly advertised trips created a new understanding of the geography of the mountainous areas near the Valley, and contributed to the public's understanding of its scenic qualities.[21] Indeed, published descriptions of scenic majesty piqued the interest of audiences in the East, seeding a national base of support for the preservation of Yosemite.[22] Landscape painters and those engaged in the fledgling field of photography also depicted Yosemite's wonders, capturing the imagination of Americans through images seen by countless viewers in exhibits throughout the U.S. In addition, these images were used to support the preservation effort when a case was made before the U.S. Congress to pass the Yosemite Act.[23]

Tourism established rapidly in the Valley after 1855. After California's Gold Rush, entrepreneurs capitalized on the wealth of those who profited from the rush by providing them goods and services. The first concessioners constructed hotels in and around Yosemite, offering basic services such as lodging, meals, and guided entry to the Valley. Even after the state and federal governments gained control of the land, the concessioners maintained their business with the visiting public.[24]

Within a year, hotels began to spring up within the Valley. The first was "a small and practical inn called the Lower Hotel (1856-1869)."[25] It was described as follows:

> "…looked like a barn, and its 'rooms' resembled stalls. Windows were glassless, floors of dirt or pine boughs, and beds springless. Mattresses were ticking stuffed with hay, bracken, or some other soft material, and sanitary facilities consisted of a wash pan and a path. Chickens and cows outnumbered wild animals, and meadows had been planted to hay and grain. Comforts were at a minimum, but surrounding beauty so great that few lodgers complained."[26]

The numerous early lodgings constructed in Yosemite Valley included the Upper Hotel (1857-1864), The Sentinel (1867-1938) (Figure 7), Leidig's (1869-1888), Stoneman Hotel (1886-1895), and Black's Hotel (1869-1888).[27] Each was built upstream from the previous, likely as a result of their wastewater being dumped into the Merced River.[28]

15 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 16.
16 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 18-19.
17 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 17-18.
18 NPS, *HSR*, 119.
19 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 27.
20 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xxxv.
21 Robert Charles Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape: A History of the Built Environment of Yosemite National Park, 1915-1940" (MA Thesis, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1986), 7.
22 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 35.
23 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 35.
24 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 8-9.
25 NPS, *HSR*, 6.
26 Sargent, quoted in Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 45.
27 NPS, *HSR*, 6.
28 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 46.



Figure 7. The Sentinel Hotel, late 1890s. (Source: Anonymous, Postcard, Flying Spur Press, Yosemite, CA.)

Other impacts of tourism included trail improvements on the routes of established indigenous footpaths, making them passable for horses. A few major regional trails existed at this time, such as the Mono Trail to Mono Lake, and other Indian routes that were used, blazed, and expanded by gold prospectors and miners.[29] In 1856, the Mann brothers constructed a toll trail into the Valley to facilitate tourist access. As Stockton served as the major point of departure for Yosemite tourists, routes entering the Valley from the north were developed most quickly.[30] By 1874, the first stage roads were established into the Valley.[31]

In addition to tourists, settlers had begun to move into the Valley during this early period, herding livestock, clearing trees, plowing the Valley floor for crops, planting pasture grasses, and manipulating the Merced River. James Lamon, born in Virginia in 1817, was one of these settlers. He had come to California in 1851 and worked in the sawmill and lumber industry in Mariposa County until 1858. After visiting Yosemite in 1857 and 1858, he bought the possessory rights of Charles Norris, Milton Mann, I.A. Epperson, and H.G. Coward, who had filed on 160 acres each. Lamon took possession of 219 acres in 1859 at the upper end of Yosemite Valley, east of the present Ahwahnee study area and north of Curry Village. Near the junction of Tenaya Creek and the Merced River, he built the first log house in Yosemite and established the Valley's first bonafide homestead through settlement (Figure 8). In 1861 Lamon filed claim to another 160-acre homestead. He established two orchards of about 500 fruit trees each, bearing apples, pears, peaches, plums, nectarines, and almonds; planted more than an acre of strawberry, blackberry, raspberry, gooseberry, and currant plants; cultivated several acres for a vegetable garden; sowed crops; and constructed irrigation ditches, cabins, and outbuildings. He also helped construct the Upper Hotel in 1859. At first Lamon lived in the Valley only during the spring and summer. He later became a year-round resident, selling the products of his orchards and garden to early hotelkeepers and visitors.[32]



Figure 8. Lamon's first cabin. (Source: Nilsson, Archeological Investigations of the Priority 3 Sites Yosemite National Park, California, 2009.)

29 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 37.
30 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 42-43.
31 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 44.
32 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 71.

Development of Yosemite National Park and its Concessions (1864-1924)

(See Figure 12, 1864-1924 period plan.)

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed a sometimes sharp conflict between public, private, and tribal interests in Yosemite Valley. State and federal governments, private landholders, and later, leaseholders, began a management campaign that favored the opening of the Valley for growing numbers of visitors and tourists. Yet the thread of concern for the protection of the Valley's natural characteristics—its views, water, cliffs, woodlands—remained active throughout this period.

In 1864, eminent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and his party camped opposite Yosemite Falls for three weeks, a visit which initiated an important relationship between Olmsted and Yosemite.[33] Olmsted was a key figure in the establishment of the Yosemite Grant, and his analysis of the park's scenery would be echoed years later by park managers.[34] In 1864, with Olmsted's urging, the Grant to California was signed by Abraham Lincoln. When the legislation establishing the Yosemite Grant passed through Congress, there was little reaction in the U.S., although it set an important precedent. The Grant was the first example of a federal government preserving land solely for the preservation of scenery and for public use and recreation."[35]

Olmsted's comprehension of the landscape unfolded slowly over the weeks as he visited Yosemite for the first time with his family. He later commented "it is in no scene or scenes that the charm consists, but in the miles of scenery where cliffs of awful heights and rocks of vast magnitude and of varied and exquisite coloring, and banked and fringed and draped and shadowed by the tender foliage of noble and lovely trees, reflected in the most placid pools and associated with the most tranquil meadows, the most playful streams, and every variety of soft and peaceful pastoral beauty."[36]

These observations led to his proposal for the management of this landscape: retaining the character of the vegetation and preservation of the scenery, and providing public access within the narrowest limits consistent with the necessary accommodation of visitors to the Grant. The Yosemite Grant established more than 36,000 acres for preservation. As one of eight commissioners appointed to manage the park, Olmsted prepared a detailed report in 1865 that proposed a new approach road from the nearby town of Mariposa that would create public access to scenic views while disturbing the landscape as little as possible. Olmsted's was the first plan for Yosemite Valley, although it was not widely accepted and few of its recommendations were realized.[37]

The Yosemite Grant was reported as composed chiefly of "worthless" lands, with some 97 percent of its area being too rough, steep, inaccessible, or wooded for practical use. The Valley floor included 745 acres of meadowlands, with the rest being "fern lands."[38] At the time, land was considered valuable for its potential to yield exploitable resources. The notion of value for public enjoyment of scenic beauty and natural curiosities was a new idea, and the concept of placing value on a landscape's natural ecology would not appear in the public consciousness until the next century. Characterizing the land as having no value was a precondition to Congress accepting its preservation for public use.[39]

Prior to the Grant, land in Yosemite Valley was in the public domain, open to preemption and settlement under existing U.S. homestead laws. The few landholdings that had been filed included one held by J.C. Lamon, who owned the land on which The Ahwahnee would later be built. In 1869, after his cabin flooded, Lamon built a two-story log house under the Royal Arches immediately east of the current Ahwahnee location. Along the southern property boundary, Lamon added a line fence.[40]

After terminating land claims, the state of California began issuing 10-year leases to individuals providing services such as hotels, roads, and trails, for which the lessees could charge a fee in order to recover their investments and realize a profit.[41] Because Lamon's holdings were inconspicuous, and in recognition of the useful work he had accomplished in the Valley, the commissioners offered Lamon the best deal they could under the circumstances—a 10-year lease at $1.00 per year.

Ultimately, the Yosemite Grant was used to resolve the terms of pre-existing private landholdings, but did not accommodate American Indian claims. Regardless, the Yosemite Indians continued to occupy villages in the Valley until 1969.[42]

Meanwhile, through the 1860s, Yosemite Valley's reputation as a scenic wonder of the world continued to grow. Land preservation did not slow economic growth and development driven by the burgeoning tourism industry in the Yosemite Valley. Settlers and Yosemite Indian residents alike found employment catering to visitors. But the long, tiring stage or horseback trip, the expense of hiring horses, guides, and packers, and the exorbitant charges demanded by hotel keepers limited the number of visitors.[43] By 1867, several bridges were built along the Merced River and Tenaya Creek for saddle horse and pedestrian access as part of a loop trail that encircled the Valley floor. However, floods swept away all the bridges the following year.[44]

In 1876, the year after Lamon's death, Aaron Harris leased his former homestead from the state. Harris grew fodder for visitors' livestock and sold provisions. By 1878, he had turned the area, formerly the 45-acre Royal Arch Farm, into the first public campground in

33 NPS, *HSR*, 16.
34 Charles E. Beveridge, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Concept for Yosemite," in *Yosemite Centennial Symposium Proceedings: Natural Areas and Yosemite: Prospects for the Future: A Global Issues Symposium Joining the 17th Annual Natural Areas Conference with the Yosemite Centennial Celebration October 13-20, 1990* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior, NPS, 1990).
35 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 59.
36 Beveridge, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Concept for Yosemite," 46.
37 NPS, *HSR*, 14.
38 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 53-54.
39 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 62.
40 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-71.
41 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 17.
42 NPS, *HSR*, 119.
43 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 66.
44 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 67.

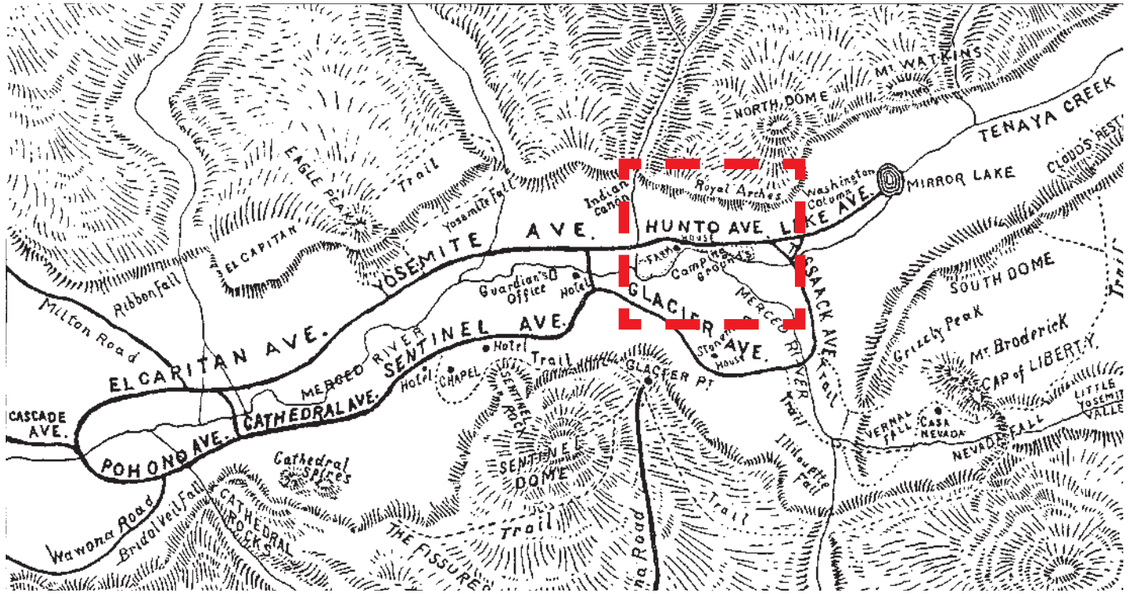


Figure 9. A map of the Yosemite Valley roads and structures, c. 1880s. Note the house and campground in the general vicinity of where the Ahwahnee would be built, indicated by the red outlined area. (Source: Greene, Historic Resource Study, 1987.)

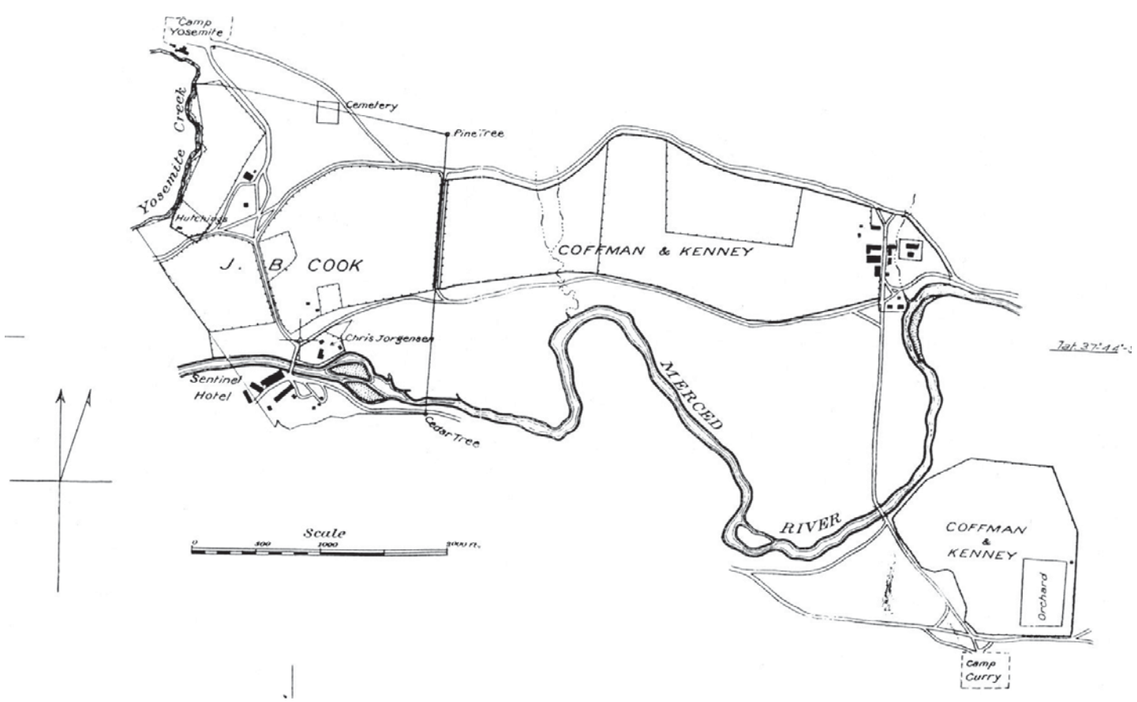


Figure 10. Plat of land leased to J. B. Cook, Chris Jorgensen, and Coffman and Kenney on the future location of The Ahwahnee, c. 1890-1920s. Note the location of Royal Arch Road north of Kenneyville Stables. (Source: Greene, Historic Resource Study, 1987.)

Yosemite Valley, "Camp 8" (Figure 9).[45] Harris fenced off the western part of his landholding to serve as a horse pasture for customers of the campground. This was likely on the east perimeter of the Ahwahnee meadow along the riverbank.[46] An office and stable manager's quarters were also constructed to support the campground operation.[47] In 1887, after his store burned, Harris left Yosemite and leased his land to William F. Coffman and George W. Kenney for their saddlehorse business. They had used stables near the foot of Four Mile Trail until 1886.[48] The new stable and the settlement that grew up around it came to be known as Kenneyville.[49] The Kenneys were living in the area by 1886, and George Kenney planted a sequoia (now east of the current hotel lawn) to commemorate the birth of his daughter.[50]

In 1889, the state of California constructed several buildings to support the operations at Kenneyville. This included a 52-by-100-foot barn, 16-by-60-foot carriage shed, 16-by-60-foot men's quarters and office, 24-by-60-foot residence with a veranda on its south and east sides, and a corral surrounded by a five-board fence. These were all on land leased by Coffman and Kenney near the former site of the Lamon house, east of the current site of The Ahwahnee. Most of the lumber was reclaimed from the razed Folsom Building.[51] All the buildings had wood frames and rock foundations with mud sills. Later construction added blacksmith, saddle, harness, and wagon shops; storerooms; sheds; a dormitory; and several residences, all facing Chapman Avenue, the main street in the center of Kenneyville.[52] By 1908, Coffman and Kenney's livery lease included "numerous" buildings on several acres of land (Figure 10).[53]

In the late 19th century, Frederick and Isabel Leidig owned a cabin on or near the future location of The Ahwahnee. The cabin was likely

45 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xxxviii.
46 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-71.
47 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-70.
48 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-70.
49 NPS, *HSR*, 119.
50 Elena Nilsson et al, *Archeological Investigation of the Priority 3 Sites, Yosemite National Park, California*; *Yosemite Research Center Publications in Anthropology* No. 33 (Yosemite, CA: NPS, U.S. Department of Interior, 2009), 128.
51 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-70.
52 Nilsson, *Archeological Investigation*, 129.
53 M. Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey, Yosemite National Park* (N.P, 1988), 10.

the second that Lamon had inhabited, and had a spring in the cellar.[54] They likely plowed the meadow during this time.[55]

During this time, park administration was handled by the U.S. Army, which deployed the Cavalry to oversee the park. The Army Cavalry were present seasonally, generally living in temporary tent encampments. During their tenure from 1891-1914, the Army's major imprint on the landscape of Yosemite was the creation and expansion of a system of backcountry trails.[56] While the War Department oversaw security and general operations in the park, it was left to private leaseholders to provide services to ever-increasing numbers of visitors.

A drastic boundary adjustment of Yosemite National Park in 1905 reduced its size by 430 square miles.[57] Yosemite Valley management was criticized by the likes of Robert Underwood Johnson and John Muir, who advocated that the federal government reclaim the Valley. However, the government relied on private developers to manage and develop the Valley. Therefore, many activities that affected the Valley's resources—grazing, cultivation, and developing poorly designed concessions—occurred during this time. Managing the grant on limited funds proved difficult for California as well. Eventually, the California Legislature re-ceded the grant to the Federal government on March 5, 1905[58] and the Yosemite Grant became a part of Yosemite National Park.[59]

A wagon road developed along an old horse trail used by travelers who journeyed from El Portal to the Valley by stages (and later, buses).[60] In 1907, the Yosemite Valley Railroad began operations from Merced to El Portal. The Superintendent's 1907 report praised the train and the "short stage ride of about fourteen miles," and noted that the "reduction in time and ease with which the Valley can now be reached has resulted in a large increase in the number of visitors."[61] The road, which had been described as "exceedingly beautiful," and the experience of the drive as "one of the main features of the park before the opening of this new road," was in 1910 noted as "rocky, narrow, and tortuous." As a result, the road was improved with a straighter alignment, a wider prism, and guard rails.[62]

In October 1912, a National Park Conference was held at Yosemite including among other topics a discussion about public access (what Colonel Forsyth, acting superintendent of Yosemite National Park, called the "automobile question").[63] After automobiles were allowed into the park on August 23, 1913, a total of 127 cars ventured into the Valley on its steep and narrow roads in the remainder of that year. The following year, 739 vehicles made the trek, and the trend was one of exponential increase despite the inadequacy of the road system, which was privately maintained except for the short segment from El Portal.[64] Road improvements to accommodate auto traffic began in 1913 with the widening of the main road from 10 to 25 feet on average, and the removal of some dangerous curves.[65] By 1915, Yosemite's horse-drawn stages began to be replaced by motor stages.[66] In the same year, travel to the park nearly doubled over the previous year as a result of the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, which also provided a catalyst for road improvements.[67]

The shortage of hotels was noted as early as 1912, when the Secretary of the Interior, Walter Fisher, declared at the National Park Conference:

> "the necessity of having much larger and much more modern accommodations than those that exist here is apparent to all of you. The present accommodations are very comfortable in many respects, but it is perfectly clear that they cannot take care of a very considerable traffic that would like better accommodations and that they cannot take care of the travel that ought to come, and, in my judgment will come to this park during the fair at San Francisco."[68]

Charles Fee of Southern Pacific Railroad in San Francisco noted at the 1912 Conference that

> "I have in my possession, to-day, letters received only very recently from people who have made this trip, during the present summer, in which they spoke of the beauties of Yosemite National Park, of the desirability of every one seeing it, but at the same time they said they would hesitate to recommend their friends to come in now, for the simple reason that the hotel accommodations were not such as were to be found in the Yellowstone or to be found abroad."[69]

The management of visitors—how they arrived at the parks, where they stayed— became crucial issues in the formative years of the National Park Service. Stephen T. Mather became Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane in 1915, and he and Horace Albright took charge of national parks and monuments.[70] In 1916, the National Park Service was formed, with Mather as its first Director. In the same year, the Desmond Park Service Company was founded to build and operate hotels and tourist camps in Yosemite National Park.[71] In 1917, they reorganized as the Yosemite National Park Company.[72] Mather's enthusiasm for the park demanded an equally capable and energetic person to manage it and to fulfill his expectations for remaking the park into an accessible and accommodating place for the public. Washington B. Lewis, an engineer with the United States Geological Survey, accepted the position in 1916, and guided Yosemite's transformation until 1928.[73]

Mather intended to bring tourists to the national parks, as part of the pragmatic conservationism popular at the time; the reasoning was that parkland could only be preserved if the American public

54 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 226.
55 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-70.
56 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 18-19.
57 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xl.
58 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape,"19-20.
59 NPS, *HSR*, 17.
60 Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey,* 15; and Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xl.
61 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 41.
62 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 42.
63 *Proceedings of the National Park Conference Held at the Yosemite National Park October 14, 15, and 16, 1912* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913).
64 *Proceedings of the National Park Conference 1912.*
65 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape,"42.
66 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xli.
67 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 43.
68 *Proceedings of the National Park Conference 1912.*
69 *Proceedings of the National Park Conference 1912.*
70 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xli.
71 NPS, *HSR*, 7.
72 NPS, *HSR*, 17; Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xlii. Sources disagree on name.
73 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 29.

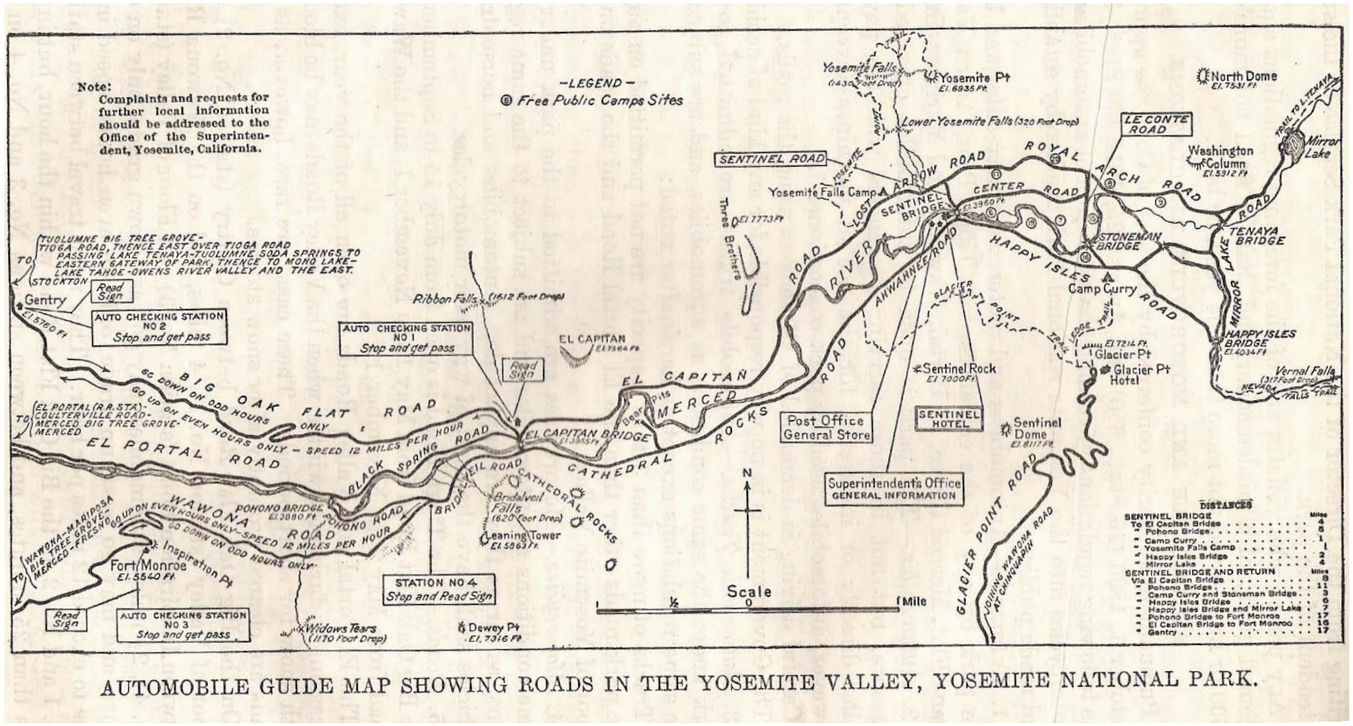


Figure 11. Road map showing Yosemite Valley roads, including Royal Arch Road and LeConte Road c. 1919. (Source: U.S. Department of Interior, General Information Regarding Yosemite National Park, 1919.)

could visit, enjoy, and become familiar with the wonders of nature firsthand. In the 1910s, it was clear already that the way this would be accomplished was via automobile.[74] This would require a careful balancing act as cars began to flood Yosemite in the years immediately after, creating challenges that continue to the present day. A major push for road construction and improvement in Yosemite Valley and adjacent areas occurred between 1918 and 1927 (Figure 11).

In his 1918 "Statement of Policy," Mather stated,

> "In the construction of roads, trails, buildings, and other improvements, particular attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvements with the landscape. This is a most important item in our programs of development and requires the employment of trained engineers who either possess a knowledge of landscape architecture or have a proper appreciation of the esthetic value of park lands. All improvements will be carried out in accordance with a preconceived plan developed in special reference to the preservation of the landscape."[75]

In keeping with these attitudes and policies, the landscape (of what would become The Ahwahnee study area) was managed and manipulated to enhance its scenic qualities and to increase access. By 1915, circulation included a road to the Kenneyville complex and a trail on the talus slope north of the stables.[76] In 1919, 1920, and 1921, The Ahwahnee meadow—which had been plowed and planted with hay by government employees in 1910-1914— was intentionally burned to clear encroaching vegetation.[77]

Despite the incursion of the automobile, the Kenneyville stable thrived and grew as tourism continued to increase. In 1921, the saddlehouse was built, an office building was reconstructed, and an employee residence was remodeled, along with the stable manager's quarters and two barns. In 1922, a gas station was moved to the area from Camp Curry. In 1923, a storage shed was added to the wagon

74 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 530-537.
75 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 30.
76 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-71.
77 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-72.

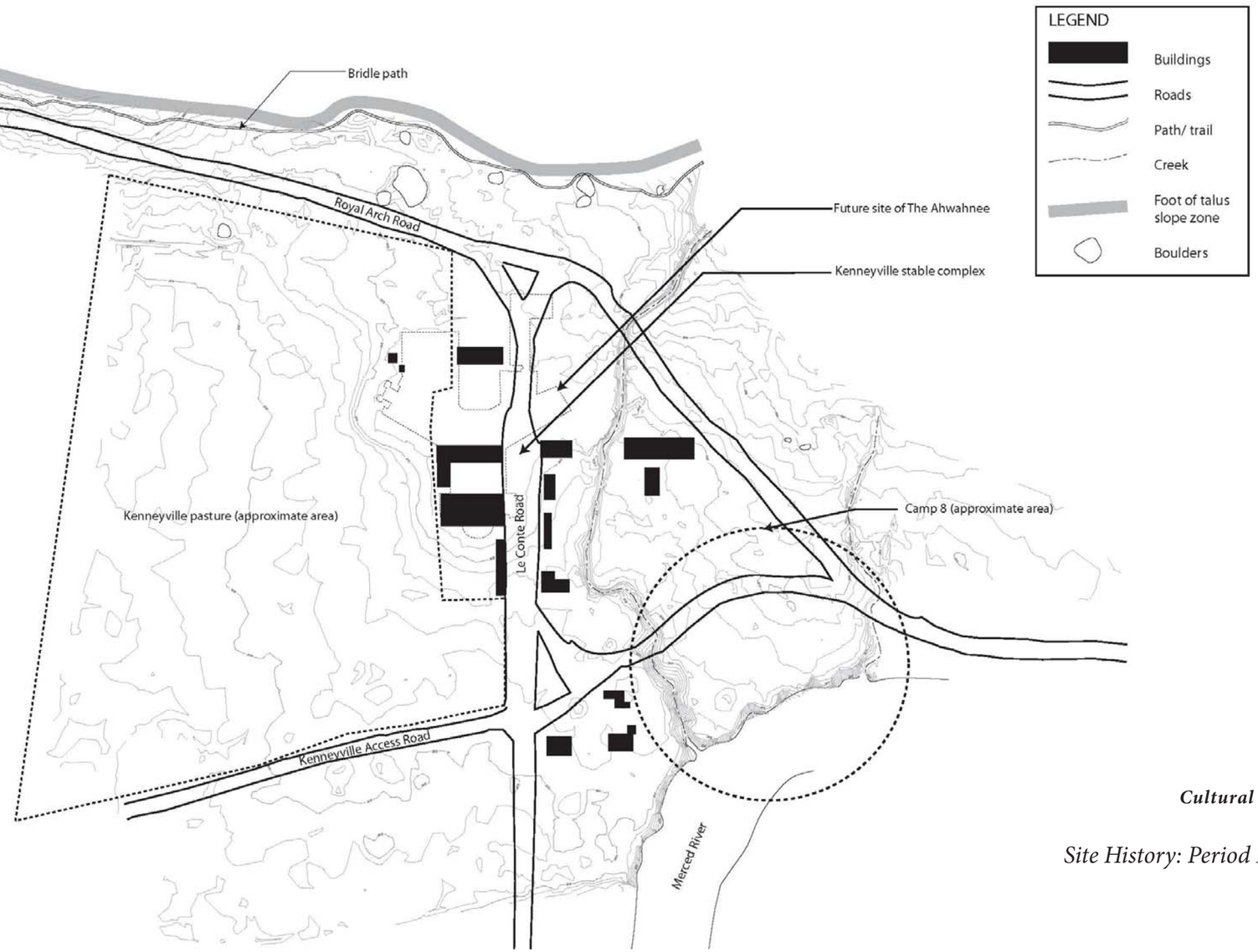
shed.[78] At its largest extent, Kenneyville comprised 17 buildings, including three stables, four sheds, an office, a blacksmith shop, a gas station, three outbuildings, and three employee houses.[79]

Once the National Park Service was formed as a single-purpose entity focused on the stewardship and management of the national parks, much-needed improvements to Yosemite—long neglected by the underfunded state government—were quickly undertaken. Unlike haphazard previous efforts, the National Park Service master-planned park developed areas, considering scale, siting, materials, and environmental and aesthetic impacts within the context of the surrounding wilderness and scenic areas. By 1921, the National Park Service had secured funding for park projects and there were opportunities to realize plans and designs. Daniel Hull, one of the first NPS chief landscape architects, focused on general plans for parks including Yosemite in the early 1920s, and set up offices in Los Angeles in the same space as his friend, architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood.[80] It was Hull who pioneered park service rustic design in the early 1920s at the Grand Canyon Village. This style would come to embody and define the national park experience for many Americans.[81] Design at Yosemite occurred in the context of the early years of what would come to be called rustic design.

One of the first development projects at the park was the planning and construction of a centralized administrative, housing, and utility complex known as Yosemite Village. It was sited on the north side of the Valley, away from the "old village" on the south, which was a run-down assemblage of structures considered to be seedy, poorly constructed, and poorly located.[82] The original architectural designs for the new village's post office and administration building were executed by Underwood. Mather decided that Underwood's designs for these buildings were too complex and ornamental. Mather secured the services of architect Myron Hunt to draw up new plans for the administration building, as well as a plan for the Village—designed in collaboration with Daniel Hull—which was completed in 1923.[83] The post office was constructed according to a simplified version of Underwood's original design. The new buildings were of unified appearance in the rustic style, using local materials, and the village was arranged and sited to take advantage of summer sun and fit into the landscape in a harmonious fashion. Through the 1920s, although federal funds were finally available for infrastructure in the parks and for administration and utility buildings, private companies were still responsible for funding the construction of lodgings and other tourist services, but with NPS review.[84]

In 1924, funding was appropriated for major road improvements within the park, including the paving of the Valley floor road system and El Portal road. This was to accommodate an expected increase in automobile traffic due to the impending construction of an "All-Year Highway" (today known as Route 140) through the Sierra Nevada, replacing serpentine mountain roads that were frequently closed in winter, and providing safe and easy access to the park for the first time. The new road would also eliminate the necessity for overnight stays in El Portal en route to the park.[85] The newly paved El Portal road was opened in July 1926, and the Valley floor road system, including seven new bridges, was improved in 1927.[86] Some of the bridges—designed with the assistance of landscape architect Thomas C. Vint, one of the founding figures of the rustic design movement—embody the values of design in harmony with natural surroundings.[87] During the construction of the bridges, problems arose with the contractors' methods including removal of trees and major excavation without permission. The National Park Service saw this as desecration of parkland; after exerting legal pressure on the contractors to repair their mistakes, the park administration came to realize that they needed to find contractors who shared the values of the National Park Service.[88]

78 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-74.
79 Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey,* 10.
80 Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebrasks Press, 1998), 112.
81 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 121.
82 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 37.
83 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 113; Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 38; Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xliii.
84 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 141.
85 Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey,*15.
86 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 45-46.
87 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 47.
88 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," 49.



Sources:
Pyle, Paul. 1997. Digital untitled survey of The Ahwahnee. AutoCAD format.

Greene, Linda Wedel. 1987. *Historic Resource Study. Yosemite: The Park and its Resources. A History of the Discovery, Management, and Physical Development of Yosemite National Park, California. Volume 1*. Yosemite National Park, CA. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

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Site History: Period Plan (1864-1924)

not to scale

N

Figure 12. 1864-1924 period plan.

Design and Development of The Ahwahnee (1925-1942)
(See Figure 32, 1925-1942 period plan.)
Several of the country's other national parks had their own grand hotels by this time: Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone, Many Glaciers Hotel at Glacier, and El Tovar at Grand Canyon. Yet Yosemite was still without accommodation for the wealthy visitors that continued to swarm to the park in the wake of the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition. Mather and the Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work, engineered a solution in 1924 that forced the 1925 merger of two competing concessioners. Donald Tresidder was installed as the president of this newly formed company: Yosemite Park and Curry Company (YP&C Co.). Encouraged by the National Park Service, YP&C Co. hired Gilbert Stanley Underwood and Co. to design and build a "first-class hotel" in Yosemite Valley.[89] Underwood, a close associate of Daniel Hull, NPS chief landscape architect, had designed a post office in Yosemite Village and so was familiar with the park. Underwood would later design the Grand Canyon Lodge, Zion and Bryce Lodges, Timberline Lodge, Sun Valley Lodge, and Williamsburg Lodge.

Mather, Horace Albright, Hubert Work, Donald Tresidder, and others on the YP&C Co. board selected the site for the hotel.[90] The site occupied by the Kenneyville stables was chosen for its spectacular views, including those of Yosemite Falls.[91] Its location, in a secluded meadow near the east end of Yosemite Valley, was at a distance from the other developed areas.[92] In 1925, in advance of the construction, sections of the roads leading to the Kenneyville stables were demolished to accommodate the new hotel, and a new road was built that crossed The Ahwahnee meadow. The stables themselves were moved and the other structures in the complex were demolished. In March 1926, Underwood's plans for the hotel were approved by the National Park Service and in April 1926, construction began.

The Ahwahnee was, and is, the primary building in the landscape. The seven-story structure with partial basement and elevator penthouse was completed in 1927. Underwood designed the exterior in what he called the "environmental" style. This style is now known as rustic, park rustic, or park service rustic. Because of the grand scale of The Ahwahnee, it is often described as "monumental rustic," meaning that it uses rustic elements on a massive scale. Rustic architecture incorporates local natural materials, most notably stone and wood, and attempts to create buildings that blend with their natural setting and environment. At The Ahwahnee, Underwood specified that the granite be placed with the weathered side on the exterior so that the walls would blend with the granite cliffs surrounding the building (Figure 13). Because of the history of hotels burning in Yosemite, Mather insisted that The Ahwahnee be fireproof, so the exterior walls, rafter ends, and posts—which look like wood—were actually formed of stained concrete. The dining room, porte cochère, and entrance walkway were the exception with their peeled log columns and trusses, a classic rustic design element.



Figure 13. View of The Ahwahnee from the southwest, with cliffs to the north. Photo c. 1927-1930. (Source: Yosemite Research Library, RL10046.)

89 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 142.
90 Keith Walklet, *The Ahwahnee: Yosemite's Grand Hotel* (Yosemite, CA: DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, Inc. and Yosemite Association, 2004), 15.
91 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-74.
92 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 142.

Underwood sited and oriented the building and the major rooms to take advantage of spectacular sights such as Yosemite Falls, Glacier Point, and Half Dome. The building is a "Y" shape in plan, with the lounge wing to the south, the registration wing to the northeast, and the dining wing to the northwest. The kitchen wing extends north from the dining wing, and the entry wing, consisting of the gift shop, porte cochère, and entrance walkway, extends north of the registration wing. The wings create a mountainous form which reflects the form of the surrounding cliffs. Balconies extend from each floor of the building to take advantage of the views. The central core of the building rises above the other wings and creates a tower of the fifth and sixth floors and the elevator penthouse. A large concrete terrace, stamped to resemble flagstone, surrounds the hotel wings on the east, south, and west.

Materials were used in a way that further merged the building with its landscape. Nearly 300 trees cut in the park were used in the hotel's construction, culled from overgrown wooded areas and from Hazel Green. The building was of materials both modern and local: reinforced concrete and granite. The Merced River granite was also used as aggregate in the concrete mix. The seven-story steel-frame building "was sheathed in textured concrete and stone veneer to simulate rough wood siding and massive stone piers. Luxurious, striking, and uniquely situated, The Ahwahnee culminated the tradition of massive, centralized national park lodges built by concessioners to cater to wealthy tourists."[93] The official opening of Highway 140 and the placing of the cornerstone for The Ahwahnee occurred in summer 1926, and July 14-16, 1927 marked the official opening of the hotel.

Just as the hotel opened, a landscape plan was developed and submitted by Olmsted Brothers for the preservation and enhancement of its existing vegetation and surroundings. Founded by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.'s son, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and his nephew, the landscape architecture firm followed in the ideological footsteps of Olmsted, Sr. The Olmsted Brothers firm was retained by the YP&C Co. in part as a political move. Previous plans for the hotel and grounds had been rejected by Mather and other NPS reviewers as inappropriate for the park, and Tresidder was convinced that the only way to get approval was to bring in a designer with an impeccable reputation and close relationship with NPS leadership.[94] The landscape plans were developed by a group headed by Olmsted Brothers but also including other lesser-known designers such as Carl Purdy, a California landscape architect and wildflower expert. It appears that very detailed drawings of the Olmsted Brothers plan have not survived from the initial design period. However, a "Plot Plan of Ahwahnee Hotel Grounds" exists from 1927, as drawn by Eldridge T. Spencer, Architect, with Olmsted Brothers, Consulting Landscape Architects. The plan shows many of the landscape features that exist today: the entrance road, woodlands, open meadow, trails, cottages, Royal Arch Creek, and parking areas (Figure 14).

At this time, the National Park Service had a growing influence on park development design, particularly with the increasingly important role of its Landscape Division which was expanded in 1927. Landscape preservation and harmonization with native landscape conditions became the driving goals for design within the national parks during this time. Linda Flint McClelland, in *Presenting Nature*, explains that "the overall intent of the [landscape design] program was to allow access while at the same time protecting surrounding vegetation and natural features and harmonizing the man made improvements with the natural setting. This program 'beautified' the grounds of administration buildings, entrance stations, park residences, museums, concession buildings, and other buildings in developed areas. It also created the illusion in the minds of visitors that the landscape had never been disturbed."[95]

93 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 142.

94 Donald Tresidder, letter to Carl Purdy (November 6, 1927).

95 Linda Flint McClelland, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916 to 1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior, NPS, National Register of Historic Places, 1993).



Figure 14. Plot Plan of the Ahwahnee Hotel Grounds, by Eldridge T. Spencer, Architect, Olmsted Brothers, Consulting Landscape Architects, 1927. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

Other drawings found in the Yosemite Archives, prepared by George B. Vaughan and Carl Purdy, illustrate planting plans for the landscape. One appears to depict numbered planting locations; however, the key that identifies the numbers' meaning was not found during research.[96] Other drawings show detailed planting designs (Figure 15). Planting locations surrounded the hotel to the east, south, west and north, and extended along Royal Arch Creek (Figure 16).

The initial landscape plan of 1927 advocated the preservation of much of the existing natural vegetation and the addition of generous quantities of wildflowers to create a native plant reserve at The Ahwahnee.[97] Olmsted Brothers promoted other design choices for the hotel as well, such as grading the south and west lawns around the building to give the appearance of the hotel being set on a knoll.[98]

96 George Vaughan and Carl Purdy, "Wildflower Planting: Ahwahnee Hotel" (Fall 1928).
97 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73. The native plant reserve was also called the "wildflower preserve," the "plant refuge," "wildflower reserve," and "wildflower garden."
98 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73.

In a lengthy 1927 memo to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Donald Tresidder, president of the YP&C Co., described the existing conditions at The Ahwahnee and outlined the challenges faced by the YP&C Co. as they attempted to fulfill the high expectations for the hotel and its landscape (the memo is reproduced in full in *Appendix C* at the end of this report). His memo provides an unusually detailed perspective on the development of the hotel in its early years. Tresidder cited The Ahwahnee as a means to promote an elite experience of Yosemite that countered the widespread belief that the park was too crowded. Tresidder noted of the site selection, "The Ahwahnee is located in such a way as to have superb views which embrace Glacier Point, Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, the Royal Arches. There are very few places in the Yosemite where such magnificent views could be obtained. It also offered a location ideally suited for Winter and Summer business because it afforded a maximum amount of available Winter sun and during the summer had sufficient forests surrounding it to relieve the extreme heat of the north wall of the Valley" (Figure 17).[99]

99 Donald Tresidder, memorandum to Frederick Law Olmsted (1927), II (see Appendix C).

Tresidder maintained in the 1927 memo, "The Superintendent's reports for Yosemite have urged the building of a concrete, fireproof hotel of the highest type of construction since 1890. Again and again the Superintendents have stressed the necessity for a hotel that would offer service comparable to the finest on the country, catering to the most sophisticated and discriminating tourists."[100] He also noted that re-routing the roads around the hotel site "gave an opportunity to isolate the grounds, particularly from the adjacent public camp areas, giving quiet and a feeling of spaciousness. The land was level and, with its combination of meadows, forests, river and peaks, it was an ideal location for a hotel cottage development such as we contemplated."[101]

Tresidder's memo continues, "It was desired from the beginning to make The Ahwahnee environmental in its architecture, rather than to follow any definite period….Many months were spent after the general plan was formed in orienting the building, in order to

100 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, I (see Appendix C).
101 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, II (see Appendix C).

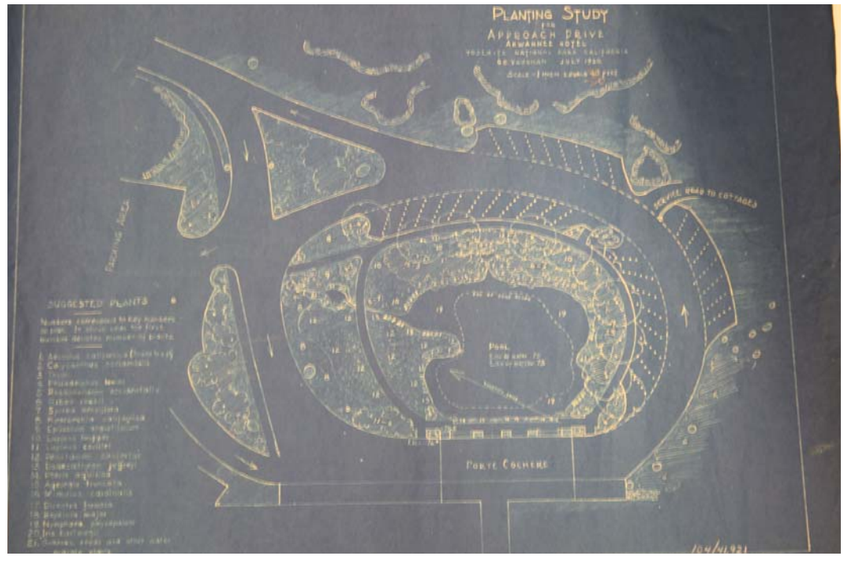


Figure 15. Planting Study for Approach Drive, Ahwahnee Hotel, 1930. Note plantings around the reflecting pond. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

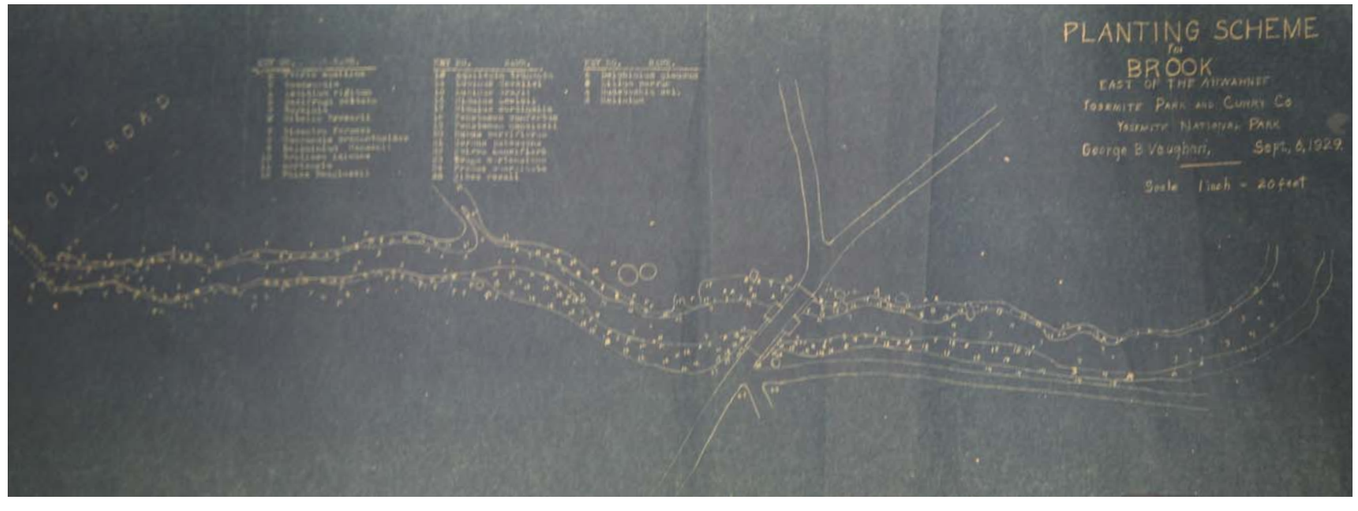


Figure 16. Planting Scheme for Brook, 1929. Note extent of plantings on either side of Royal Arch Creek. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

preserve the maximum number of trees…and, at the same time, provide views for all the…rooms. Because of the desire to create an atmosphere of quiet and restfulness, unusual efforts were made to keep automobiles as far removed from the hotel as possible, which accounts for the fact that there is no public front road and entrance to the building."[102]

Regarding landscape development, Tresidder wrote: "To our surprise, discriminating guests of The Ahwahnee invariably ask about our plans for landscaping the grounds, and seem to feel that the land development is as important to the character of the building as the very structure itself."[103] He noted the desire "to so develop our grounds so that the meadow and forest land would gradually merge into the refinement of the hotel itself in such a manner that one could hardly tell where the meadow left off and lawn began. The Ahwahnee fortunately also is ideally situated to restore the plant life of several life zones."[104] He identified the grounds as a good location for dry granite rock plants, wet meadow plants, and shade-loving forest plants. The goal, said Tresidder, was "to create a plant refuge at The Ahwahnee and restore the area to the condition it was in ten to fifteen years ago. It is well remembered that the meadows…were filled with Evening Primrose, Godetias, Mariposa Lilies and countless other wild flowers which have practically disappeared, owing to the grazing of the deer. We plan to restore this condition gradually, working from the hotel outward…" (Figure 18).[105]

Indeed, according to the landscape plan generated by Olmsted Brothers and Purdy, plantings on the hotel grounds were to include these varieties of flowers as well as numerous others, plus shrubs and trees. Purdy, identified by Tresidder in a 1928 letter as "perhaps the most noted and capable wild flower man in the West," was retained by the company to design and maintain the "flower refuge," as well as the layout of the water lines for irrigation of the grounds (Figure 19).[106]

102 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, I (see Appendix C).
103 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, VII (see Appendix C).
104 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, VII (see Appendix C).
105 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, VII (see Appendix C).
106 Donald Tresidder, letter to Ansel Hall (October 27, 1928).



Figure 17. View to Half Dome from the west, c. 1943. (Source: Yosemite Archives, Box 655-2.)



Figure 18. View northwest towards The Ahwahnee; note meadow grasses and wildflowers planted along Royal Arch Creek, c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Research Library, RL 4478.)

The 1928 season saw a major undertaking of wildflower plantings at The Ahwahnee, itemized in a cost report by Ansel F. Hall (see *Appendix B*). The soil was prepared with topsoil and fertilizer, and a sprinkler system involving more than five miles of piping was installed. The creek was rocked and planted. Seeds were wild-collected and more than 330,000 plants and bulbs assembled and planted. Transplanting, according to the report, was "surprisingly successful." In addition, the report states, "Over five hundred cedar, pine and fir trees have been transplanted successfully to The Ahwahnee grounds. Toyon berry, sequoia Gigantea [sic.], bay tree, azalea, dogwood, black oak, Manzanita are among the things which have already been planted." The cost report also lists fifty varieties of wildflowers including Camas lily, dogtooth violet, Mariposa lily, brodicea, lupine, allium, rudbeckia, aster, phlox, columbine, and others. Specimen plantings included varieties of the above, in addition to artemisia, wild buckwheat, viola, campion, monkey-flower, valerian, sedum, cinquefoil.

Although specific plant locations were not identified in the document, Hall noted that the gardens were to include, when completed, a dry rock plant section in granitic soil, stream plantings along Royal Arch Creek, bog plants in wet areas of the meadow, other wildflowers in the drier meadow areas, and shade plants.

A fall 1928 plant list has more of the same and additional wildflowers, including shooting stars, allium, fireweed, everlasting, tall mountain larkspur, Indian rhubarb, paintbrush, evening primrose, creeping phlox, fleabane, Yosemite and Anderson asters, penstemon, lady ferns, star tulips, a large number of Mariposa lilies and brodiceas of numerous varieties, godetia, lupine, and blue flax. In addition, more trees and shrubs were added including silver fir, yellow pine, azalea, dogwood, sequoia, live oaks, aspens, and others.

Unfortunately, this major effort was fleeting, as initial wildflower plantings were quickly destroyed by the abundant deer and other wildlife. Maintenance of The Ahwahnee grounds in the March 1928-May 1929 season included a vast amount of wildlife management, including trapping and shooting hundreds of gophers and



Figure 19. Wild Flower Planting: Ahwahnee Hotel by George Vaughan and Carl Purdy, Fall 1928. Also note the constructed drainage channel near the parking area on the upper right. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

squirrels, chasing deer and bears, and repairing bear damage to the fencing. Deer and elk devoured wildflowers, shrubs, and saplings. Tresidder recommended "the erection of fences, ditches, and wire entanglements"as a barrier against the animals.[107] Olmsted Brothers recommended a secondary planting of ferns, bay trees, azaleas, spruce, and pine (native plants which deer did not prefer) until a deer fence could be built.

According to 1927 letters, there was "most vigorous resistance" by the National Park Service to building a deer fence on the grounds. Among the objections was one from Captain Lewis, who felt that deer were of more interest to visitors than wildflowers were. In a 1927 letter, Purdy noted somewhat bitterly, "Without the desired permit [to build the fence], the most you can use is grass and possibly to use a few of the stronger ferns about the buildings. Flowers or shrubs could not stand a chance in that deer pasture. Yet they call it conservation." The fate of the plantings of 1928 was cited as further evidence of the intractable problem.[108] According to the correspondence, YP&C Co. determined that without approval of the deer fence, nothing but grass would be planted on The Ahwahnee grounds.[109]

The deer fence controversy was eventually resolved in favor of fencing The Ahwahnee, although the fence itself was apparently not completely effective. A 1928 drawing by Eldridge Spencer shows a plan for the "Hurdle Fence Around Ahwahnee." An eight-foot-high decorative split chestnut hurdle fence imported from France was installed in 1928 to protect the new plantings.[110] It appears that there may have been several varieties of fence types around the landscape as a whole.

Olmsted stated in a September 1929 letter to George Vaughan, the subconsultant designing the fencing plan, "I think it rather important that a stile for the admission of pedestrians with a suitable sign calling attention to the fact that is an entrance to the "Wild Flower Preserve" (or whatever it is finally called) should be provided for at a convenient point, or possibly at each of two convenient points, one near the Ahwahnee Bridge and one near the southwest corner of the fenced area."[111] However, in a 1930 memo, Superintendent Thompson indicated that the National Park Service would like the fence removed.[112] According to plant lists and correspondence, the wildflower plantings were reinstalled, including thousands of bulbs, in fall of 1929.

In an October 1929 letter to Vaughan, Olmsted noted the presence of a "ditch-and-wire barrier for deer between The Ahwahnee grounds and the road along the west side of them." He was interested in making the ditch wider (up to 30 feet wide) for purposes of excluding deer more effectively, but also so the ditch could double as a source of soil for the gardens, in lieu of digging borrow pits elsewhere.[113] A fence was still in place through the mid-1940s.

The Tresidder memo to Olmsted identified additional challenges to maintenance of the plantings: excessive traffic and crowding, resulting in errant campers trampling and driving over the plants and creating desire paths to access the hotel.

The envisioned tranquility of the hotel's environs was immediately besieged by the congestion that became the park's major ongoing issue. As early as 1927, only 14 years after the first automobiles were permitted to enter the park, Tresidder emphasized that "parking is one of the most urgent, menacing problems of the entire Yosemite Valley."[114] He bemoaned demands by visitors for a parking garage. The Ahwahnee, in an attempt to avoid such an intrusive addition to the hotel grounds, was using valet parking at a central garage in Yosemite Village, which turned out to be an unwieldy system. Tresidder proposed to build low-profile, covered parking on The Ahwahnee grounds (which never came to pass).

Another challenge was drainage and irrigation. "At present, each Spring finds our entrance area a small lake. Also, in the meadow itself, are several bogs which remain mosquito holes until as late as August….The only successful drainage would be a ditch carried parallel to the entrance road."[115] This constructed drainage channel appears to have been built as described (Figure 19). Interestingly, while Tresidder was identifying an abundance of water as a problem, in the same year, Purdy noted that the placement of the "sprinkler system" could not be determined until the general treatment of the grounds was decided. Purdy noted, "About the hotel and in the area where we considered the flower refuge the sprinklers would have to be placed in relation to the paths, beds and general layout of the grounds. This would be especially true in regard to such a space as directly back of the hotel where we were talking of a big massing of ferns with lily grounds throughout it. On the flower side the sprinklers would have to be placed so as to catch the spaces between the natural groups of trees and shrubs right but if there were no flower planting this would not be necessary." An irrigation system was added in the wildflower gardens in 1928 (Figure 20).[116]

In the original design for The Ahwahnee, problems arose from the service road and public entrance road being the same route, set along the cliff face in the rear of the hotel in order to preserve views to the

107 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, VII (see Appendix C).
108 September 30, 1929 correspondence from Olmsted to Vaughan.
109 November 67, 1927 correspondence from Tresidder to Carl Purdy.
110 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73.
111 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. letter to George Vaughan (September 30, 1929).
112 Eldridge Spencer, Memorandum (March 30, 1928).
113 Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. letter to George Vaughan (October 3, 1929).
114 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, IV (see Appendix C).
115 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, IX (see Appendix C).
116 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73.



Figure 20. Irrigation Modernization of Waterline System, 1942. Note the pumping station and pipe from the Merced River in the bottom right corner. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

east, west, and south. Tresidder identified in his memo to Olmsted a need for screening of service and parking areas with heavy planting, so they would not be seen from the entrance road, arrival circle, and porte cochère. He also called for a fence "to prevent the promiscuous passage of chauffeurs, etc. through our planting."[117] A revision of the Olmsted Brothers plan for the entrance drive was drawn up in 1930 by G.B. Vaughan. Begun in 1928, the hotel parking area and entrance road construction was completed in 1931 (Figure 21). A slate footpath was installed around the shallow pool near the newly redesigned porte cochère (Figure 22).[118] The area was planted in a design specified by Olmsted Brothers. Electric lights were installed in the parking lot west of the hotel.[119]

Other issues discussed in the Tresidder memo to Olmsted include the provision of employee housing on the hotel grounds, as "satisfactory service cannot be rendered unless the employees are in agreeable surroundings."[120] In fact, there were many problems associated with the conditions and location of employee housing, and the hotel was faced with a "complete walk-out" if the problems were not resolved. The site of the current employee dormitory was identified as one of the preferred locations for this development.

Perhaps most telling for the following decades of change at The Ahwahnee, Tresidder addressed in his memo to Olmsted the "problem of recreation." The initial concept for the hotel had maintained that active recreation was unnecessary, as it would disturb the peaceful atmosphere. However, before long, Tresidder began to promote active recreational facilities despite NPS resistance to this type of development. Olmsted, as the YP&C Co. consultant, backed these ideas. "If anyone can influence Mr. Mather to change his views, Mr. Olmsteads [sic] influence should," wrote Purdy to Tresidder in November 1927.

117 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, III-IV (see Appendix C).
118 This pool has been called the "reflecting pool," the "reflecting pond," and the "fish pond." This report will refer to it as the reflecting pond.
119 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73 and 2-74.
120 Tresidder memorandum to Olmsted, VII (see Appendix C).



Figure 21. View east along Ahwahnee Road towards the porte cochère, c. early 1930s. Note the granite block curbing. (Source: Yosemite Research Library, RL 8762.)

Figure 22. View towards porte cochère across reflecting pond construction, c. 1931. (Source: Yosemite Research Library, RL 6005.)



Tresidder had become convinced that guests expected entertainment and recreational facilities to be provided at the hotel, and that The Ahwahnee could never compete with other full-fledged resorts such as Lake Tahoe without facilities such as tennis courts, a swimming pool, an outdoor dance pavilion, croquet/lawn game areas, a "Kiddie Kamp," bridle paths, and footpaths (Figures 23 and 24).

Tennis courts were built in 1928 in the western corner of the grounds. These, however, were identified as problematic by Olmsted, as they were highly visible from the wildflower preserve. "When I last saw the place the back stops were very conspicuous from many points of view, that completely effective screening of these back-stops by foliage at a reasonably early date is an essential part of the plan" (Figure 25).[121] The tennis courts served a dual purpose as the site of outdoor summer dances.[122]

The 1927 Tresidder memo lays out a central conflict inherent in the directives for management of the national parks: the protection of resources for future generations versus accessibility and recreation for current visitors. In part due to their support and encouragement of concessioners' investment in tourist infrastructure in the parks, "the Park Service was at least partially committed to accommodating their need to expand, attract customers, and promote diverse recreational uses that would encourage longer hotel stays."[123]

In keeping with the concerns expressed in the Tresidder memo, but in direct contravention to the original Olmsted Brothers/ Purdy concept and installation of the wildflower preserve, the hotel proprietors added a small pitch-and-putt golf course in The Ahwahnee meadow in 1930. Despite initial rejection of the concept by NPS leadership, the plans for a "miniature golf course" were submitted to Park Superintendent Thompson in April 1930, with copies sent to Thomas Vint of the Landscape Division, who approved

121 Olmsted, Jr., letter to Vaughan (September 30, 1929).
122 Yosemite Park & Curry Company Hotel Division, memorandum to President's Office (April 29, 1940).
123 Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 221.



Figure 23. Guests playing croquet, c. 1930s. Note the clipped lawn in the foreground and taller meadow grasses in the middle ground, with views towards the cliffs in the background. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE #38516.)

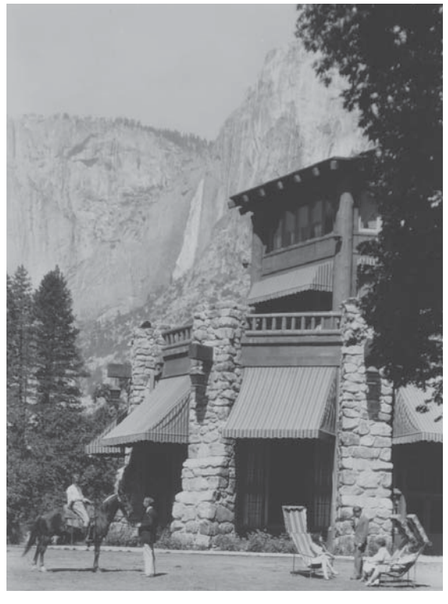


Figure 24. Guests horseback riding on meadow south of the hotel, c. 1930s. Note site furnishings and shrub and flower plantings along terraces, adjacent to hotel windows. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, #37681.)



Figure 25. The tennis courts, c. 1930s. Note the fence, screening trees, and view to Yosemite Falls in the background. (Source: Yosemite Research Library, RL 6782.)

the plan.[124] The course was of nine short holes (varying from 30 to 100 yards) with greens and small sand traps within about four acres "in an area roughly bounded by the tennis court and a line drawn practically north from the Kenneyville Bridge" (Figure 26). Although the golf course encroached upon the wildflower preserve, it appears from correspondence that Olmsted approved as well.[125] The rationale behind approval was that "its construction will not mar the landscape, and at any time its discontinuance became essential for any reason there would be nothing to efface, as in the case, for example, of the concrete tennis courts."[126] A footbridge was also constructed across the creek to allow golfers to cross, and a small tent-framed golf kiosk was added, built with a floor of flagstone and most likely used by the hotel golf pro.[127]

Additional recreational features continued to be planned for the landscape: proposed development at The Ahwahnee in the early 1930s comprised a garage, an addition to the studio wing, a casino, a swimming pool, a theater, a dining room, a playground, a dance pavilion, additional guestrooms, and an ice rink. Due to the onset of the Great Depression, none of these plans were realized.[128] However, by 1934, the site included an array of smaller recreational facilities such as courts for badminton and croquet, and an archery range (Figure 27).[129]

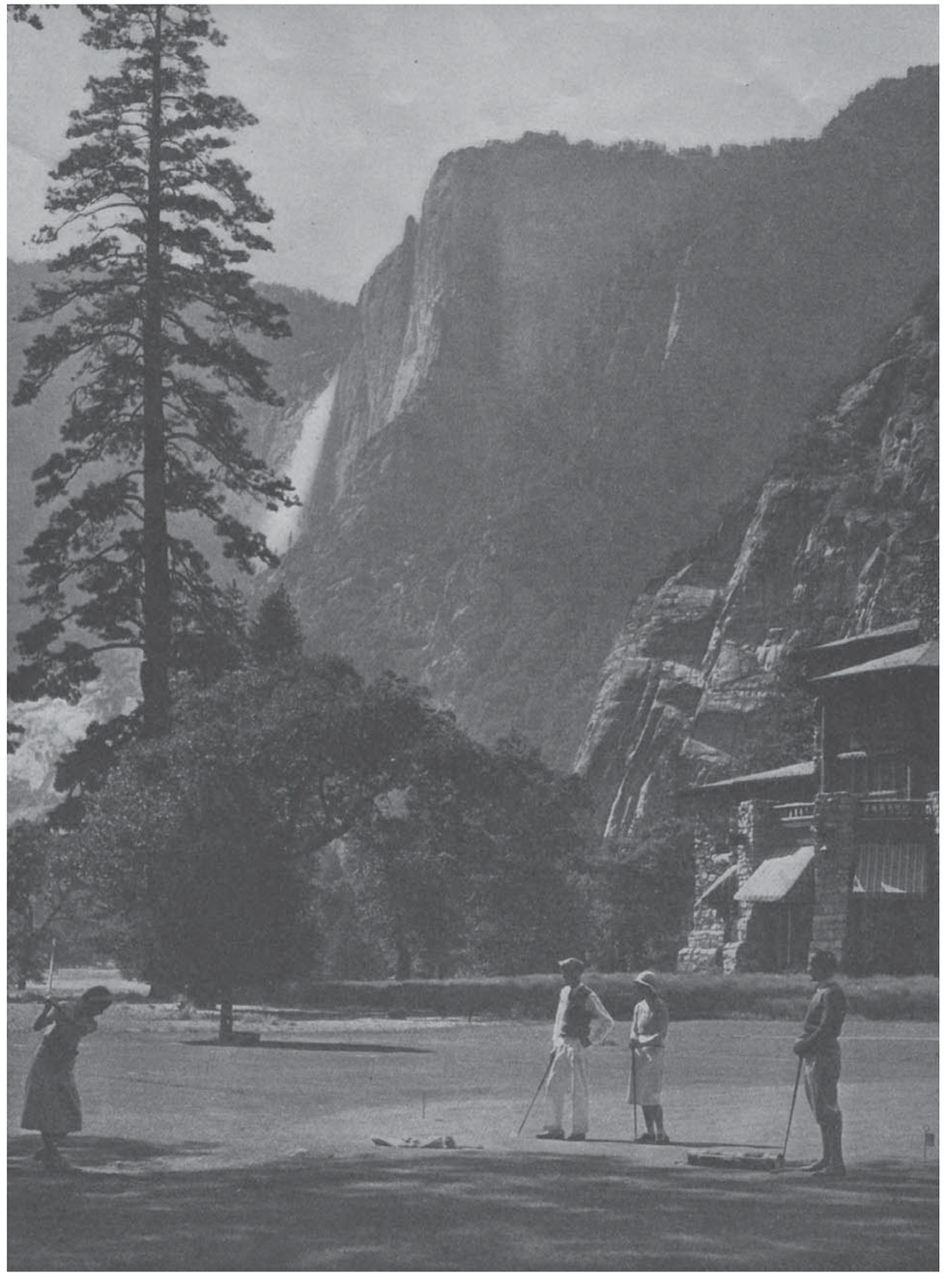


Figure 26. The golf course, c. 1934. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE 38050.)

124 NPS Superintendent's office, letter to Donald Tresidder (April 28, 1930).
125 NPS Superintendent's office, letter to Tresidder (April 28, 1930).
126 NPS Superintendent's office to NPS Director's office (April 17, 1930).
127 Perry Gage, memorandum to President's office (April 30, 1941); Yosemite Park & Curry Company Hotel Division, memorandum to President's office (March 27, 1941).
128 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-75.
129 "Ahwahnee Queen of Yosemite," in *Pacific Coast Record* (July 1934), 6.



Figure 27. Detail from a lighting plan of the hotel grounds, c. 1931. Note location of Kiddie Kamp, badminton court, putting green, and "pro golf house." (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

Between 1928 and 1930 more features were added to The Ahwahnee landscape. Eight new cottages designed by Eldridge T. Spencer were built east of Royal Arch Creek.[130] These cottages replaced the former Camp 8, which was demolished in advance of the cottages' construction. There were eight cottages and a storage building nested in the woods to the southeast of the main building (Figure 28). The original plans for the hotel included 100 guest rooms in cottages, but because of the Depression, World War II, and an associated decline in park visitors and hotel guests, the rest of the cottages were never built. There were three different cottage plans: five duplex cottages, one four-plex cottage, and two four-plex cottages with central living rooms. Each cottage was a single-story wood-framed building with wood siding and a wood shake roof.

130 These buildings were also sometimes referred to as "bungalows."



Figure 28. View through woods to cottages, c. 1930s. Note flagstone path and wooden bridge, with benches, crossing Royal Arch Creek. (Source: Yosemite Archives, MW6 15.)

The cottages are of a different style from the main hotel building. Although they incorporate a few rustic elements, such as the stone chimneys, they are not entirely rustic buildings, but rather a unique style that cannot be easily categorized. Although the plans and roof forms are simple, great care was taken in detailing the buildings (Figure 29). Key details are vertical and horizontal wood siding, projecting windows, wide stenciled door frames, refined exterior wood molded trim at projecting windows, decorative wood vents and wood signs at the gables, and notched rafter tails. The details of each cottage vary slightly from the others, such as the notching at the rafter tails, the stencils at the doors, and the signs at the gables.



Figure 29. A cottage with terrace c. 1930s. (Source: NPS, HSR.)



Figure 30. The Ahwahnee gate house sign, c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

A stone gate house and gate post were added along the entrance drive in 1930 (Figure 30).[131] Built into a granite boulder, the gate house is north of Ahwahnee Road, with its companion gate post on the opposite side. The gate house is of mortared rough granite stones, and was originally topped by a sign for the hotel. The sign, featuring a large metal eagle, was apparently designed by Eldridge Spencer.

In 1930, a pump was added to provide the irrigation system with water from the Merced River.[132] In the summer, water was also pumped into Royal Arch Creek to create an artificial flow through the channel. Abutments of the bridge housed the transformer and pump for a sprinkler system (used during low water).[133] In 1930, The Ahwahnee meadow was intentionally burned to clear encroaching brush (Figure 31).[134]

131 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-74.
132 Donald Tresidder, letter to Spencer (June 19, 1930).
133 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-72.
134 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-73.

In 1934, the *Pacific Coast Record* published an article describing the "Ahwahnee, Queen of Yosemite," and detailed the landscape improvements constructed since 1927. "The grounds have been magically transformed from barrenness to bloom. At the entrance… is a flower-bordered pool, which simulates in minutest detail a lovely alpine lake. Edged by blooming wildflowers, hemlocks, and aspens, the pool reflects the white beauty of Yosemite Falls in its clear surface." The article goes on to describe how "the multicolorful wildflower garden spreads out like a peacock's tail around the building. Beyond the garden is the cool green of the oak-shaded golf course. Across a stream that divides the grounds are the cottages in the shady seclusion of a pine grove of their own; each cottage has its own wildflower garden.…"[135]

135 "Ahwahnee, Queen of Yosemite," 6.



Figure 31. Meadow plantings west of the hotel, c. 1943. (Source: Yosmite Archives, Box 655-2.)

Despite the addition of recreational and other amenities at The Ahwahnee, visitation remained low. The Depression took its toll on the hotel—and Yosemite in general—until the late 1930s. However, the start of World War II and the accompanying rationing of fuel again affected the ability of even elite visitors to make the journey to the park. Wawona Hotel closed, and The Ahwahnee struggled to maintain its business. YP&C Co. may have been eager to resolve its financial difficulties by any means necessary. Help came in the form of the military. With war on the horizon, the Department of the Navy anticipated a demand for medical facilities to serve its sailors. As early as 1941, the Navy began a search to find buildings that would serve as candidates for transformation into new Navy hospitals. The Ahwahnee was identified as an appropriate possibility.

The National Park System and the YP&C Co. recognized the importance of making facilities available to the military under the difficult conditions of the times—both as a matter of financial responsibility and patriotic duty. NPS Director Newton Drury declared that

> "the stress of war has compelled the Service to take stock of its primary functions and responsibilities. As trustee for many great things in America—areas of outstanding natural beauty, scientific interest, and historical significance—the National Park Service has realized its obligation to harmonize its activities with those relating to war, aiding wherever possible, and striving to hold intact those things entrusted to it—the properties themselves, the basic organization trained to perform its tasks, and, most important of all, the uniquely American concept under which the national parks are preserved inviolate for the present and future benefit of all of our people."[136]

National Park Service lands supported numerous World War II efforts, such as lumber harvesting in Olympic National Park (especially its sitka spruce, which was valuable for aircraft construction); grazing livestock; and culling deer herds within parks such as Yellowstone to contribute to the national food supply.

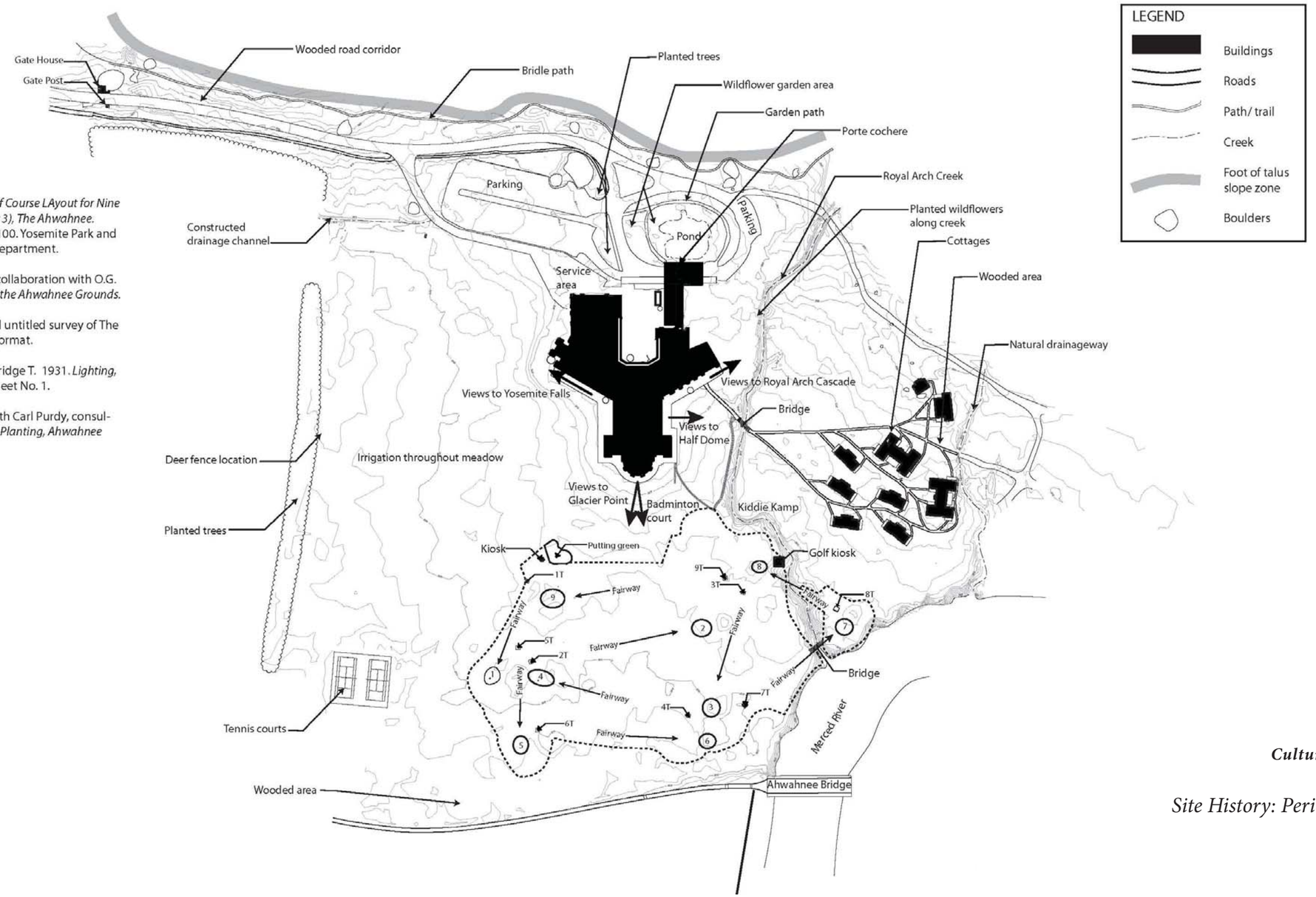
Director Drury established criteria for consideration of war-related use of national park facilities in a November 27, 1940 memorandum. These criteria included considerations such as: Is the request for use from a national defense agency? Will the agency cause irreparable damage to park lands? Will the agency protect park values? Will the agency restore the grounds damaged during use? Two years later a conference including the armed services, NPS leaders, and park concessioners stated that park and concession facilities would be made available to the military by mutual agreement.

Enabled by Congressional Law 528 in 1942, funds were appropriated for the "rehabilitation and recuperation of naval personnel returned from war service at sea or on shore."[137] Many NPS and concession facilities—among them The Ahwahnee—were thus made available to different branches of the armed services. This time marked an unusual development in naval hospitalization practices; hospitals were established that provided no special medical treatment facilities, but rather a holistic means for rehabilitating sailors who needed little more than a change in scenery, rest, proper diet, and therapy.[138]

136 U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *National Park Service War Work: December 7, 1941 - June 30, 1944* (1946), 1.

137 *National Park Service War Work,* 22.

138 Jennifer Mitchum, "BUMED's World War II 'Resorts,'" in *Navy Medicine* (Nov.-Dec. 1991), 22.



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The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Site History: Period Plan (1925-1942)

not to scale

N

Figure 32. 1925-1942 period plan.

Navy Occupation (1943-1945)

(See Figure 39, 1943-1945 period plan.)

In May 1943 the Navy arrived to begin renovating The Ahwahnee for its new use as a hospital. The renovation was not without its difficulties, as guests were still lodging at The Ahwahnee. Yet, by June 25, 1943, The Ahwahnee was commissioned by the U.S. Navy as the U.S. Naval Convalescent Hospital (Figure 33), and by July of 1943, the hotel was sufficiently modified to accommodate its first patients transferred from a hospital facility in Oakland.[139] The Ahwahnee was one of several hotels within the park service concession facilities leased by the armed services. Frijoles Canyon Lodge at Bandelier National Monument (used for the Manhattan Project scientists and military personnel), McKinley Hotel at Denali National Park, Paradise Inn and National Ski Lodge at Mount Ranier National Park, and Frozen Niagra Hotel at Mammoth Cave National Park, among others, were used as housing, recreation, and training sites for military personnel. The Ahwahnee was unusual among park facilities in that it was used as a convalescent hospital and was leased by the Navy, as most other concession facilities were leased by the Army.

Initially, the Navy leased The Ahwahnee for two years with the intent of using the hotel as a treatment facility for its psychiatric patients suffering from combat fatigue, now known as post-traumatic stress disorder. However, the environment at Yosemite—the intense isolation, the deep Valley with its dark, granite cliffs—aggravated rather than ameliorated the nervous conditions of the first convalescing patients. The proposed use of the hospital was thus modified in September 1943 to accommodate the rehabilitation of physically ill, exhausted, or injured sailors.[140]

The original commander was a medical officer named Captain Lloyd Edmiston who served from June through August, 1943. When he and his medical team arrived, they found themselves in control of a hospital area—referred to as a "reservation" by the Navy—that included approximately 37 acres surrounding the hotel. The hospital



Figure 33. The commissioning of the hospital, 1943. (Source: YP&C Co., History of the U.S. Navy Special Hospital, 1946.)

139 Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xlv.

140 U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, "Yosemite Naval Hospital during WWII," accessed online at http://www.nps.gov/yose/historyculture/navy-hospital.htm, 2009.

area included the designed landscape inherited from the previous tenants. There were tall pines and oaks along the Merced River. To the west of the hospital were meadows. North of the hospital was the reflecting pond, and towards the southeast were the eight cottages set amidst a grove of trees. The nine-hole 800-yard golf course, considered "sporty but hazardous," occupied the land to the south along with two concrete tennis courts. The "remainder of the reservation was chiefly meadow land covered with wildflowers" (Figure 34).[141]

Isolation and boredom plagued the sailors during their rehabilitation at the U.S. Navy Convalescent Hospital. Due to the extreme distances between Yosemite Valley and the region's cities—Merced was the closest city and San Francisco was over 200 miles away—the sailors lacked the amenities available at other hospitals. Recognizing the hardship that such isolation created, the new commander quickly authorized the expansion of the hotel's recreational facilities. Commander Reynolds Hayden, the hospital's new leader and "a competent, sensible, compassionate, and very resourceful" leader, had been the commanding officer at the Naval Hospital at Pearl Harbor during the December 7th, 1941 attack, and his experience leading military medical facilities proved invaluable in establishing the community at the U.S. Naval Convalescent Hospital at Yosemite.[142] On September 23, 1943, Commander Hayden promoted the addition of new amenities on site that eventually included the construction of eleven temporary buildings near the hotel. These included an auditorium, a pool hall, a brig, a washroom, a bowling alley, an enlisted men's club, therapy quarters, hobby and craft shops, and other features outside The Ahwahnee study area such as the Camp Curry toboggan run and additional transportation facilities to enable sailors to take leave outside the park.[143]

With the addition of specially planned facilities, the hospital was slowly transformed into a self-sustaining community—with organized social events, indoor and outdoor recreational activities, and vocational training. The emphasis on the creation of a



Figure 34. Aerial view of The Ahwahnee during the Navy occupation, c. 1943. Note the temporary building in the meadow to the southwest of the hotel. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE 53867.)

141 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital*, 7.
142 NPS, "Yosemite Naval Hospital during WWII."
143 NPS, "Yosemite Naval Hospital during WWII."

community at the hospital represented a new approach to patient rehabilitation that addressed all aspects of the sailors' needs: physical rehabilitation, as well as their social, spiritual, and intellectual renewal.[144]

The construction of new facilities and planning of social activities continued to ameliorate the deficiencies at the hospital (Figure 35). New additions associated with hospital development included a large building that housed a medical storeroom among other things, and which was constructed in the parking area. The Navy constructed a fence around the grounds—a second layer of fencing in addition to the existing deer fence—as well as a small guard house at the entrance to the hospital area. The Navy also enclosed the porte cochère. All of the work was done by the Younger Construction Company of San Francisco.[145] The construction of many of these new facilities decimated the designed wildflower gardens near the hotel.[146]

144 Yosemite Park & Curry Company (YP&C Co.), *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital, Yosemite National Park, California* (1946), 12.
145 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 7-8.
146 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan* (1996), 2.

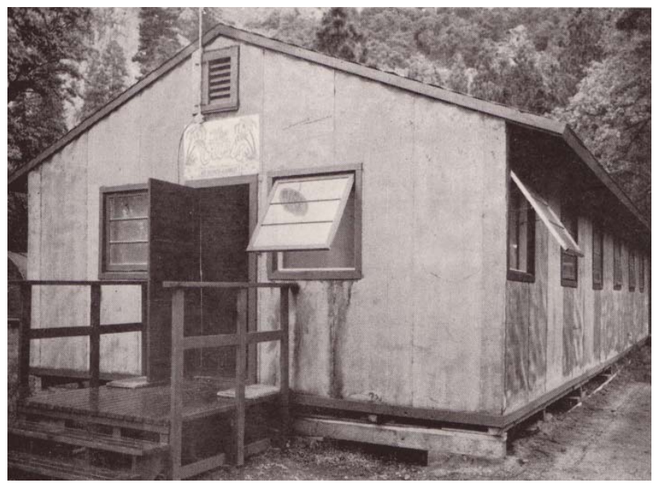


Figure 35. A typical Navy building, c. 1943-1944. (Source: YP&C CC, History of the U.S. Navy Special Hospital, 1946.)

The hospital was designed to house between 900 and 1,000 patients, although it rarely, if ever, reached capacity. Housing for staff, families, patients, and civilian employees was distributed according to a plan developed by the Superintendant of Yosemite and the general manager of the YP&C Co. Employees of the hospital were housed in dormitories of the YP&C Co., and other residences were used for their families. Rooms at Yosemite Lodge and tents in Camp Curry were rented from YP&C Co. for married enlisted men.[147] Plans to construct temporary quarters adjacent to the hospital were approved, but approval was rescinded when it was determined that the YP&C Co. had enough available space for housing.[148] Three of the existing cottages were used as hospital corps quarters and the remaining five were used as wards.

Despite the building campaign and attempts to improve the conditions at the hospital, low morale continued during 1943 and 1944. Sailors were discontented with their long rehabilitation periods, delays in receiving medical discharges, and the continued isolation. The introduction of a robust recreation program was intended to keep hospital patients happy, occupied, and on the road to regaining physical strength. At Christmas 1943, entertainment such as dances and parties were instituted in the hospital mess hall.[149] Bertha Sarver, who had arranged flowers for The Ahwahnee in its capacity as a hotel, also decorated the hospital with flowers for special holiday events and weekend parties.[150] After Christmas 1943, there was an orchestral event and dance with direction for the decorations and lighting provided by "Mr. Ansel Adams of Yosemite Valley."[151] Other recreation for the hospital patients included horseshoes, softball, golf, tennis, hiking, bicycle or horse rental, and skiing.[152] The Ahwahnee golf course was exceedingly popular, with as many as 200 patients using the course in a day (Figure 36).[153] The tennis court area, designated as Area I, included additional courts for volleyball, badminton, and shuffleboard.[154] Area II, a "surfaced area and surrounding grounds

147 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 22.
148 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 25.
149 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 31.
150 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 31-32.
151 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 32.
152 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 29.
153 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 49.
154 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 50.

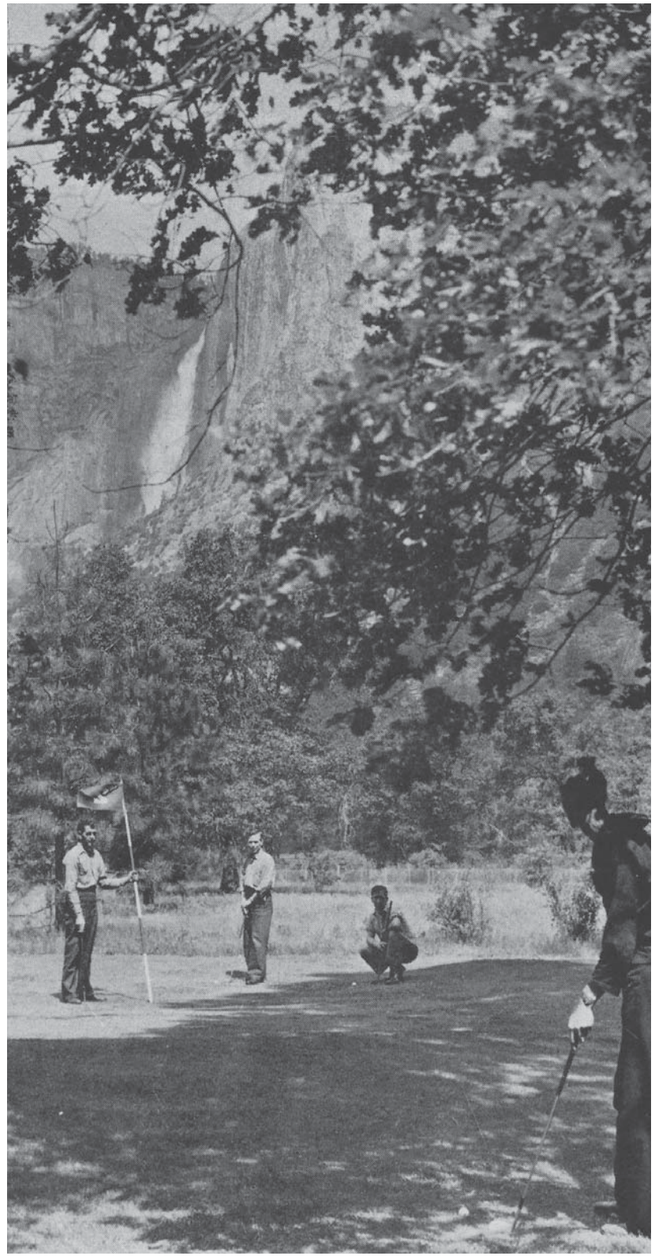


Figure 36. Sailors playing golf, c. 1943-1944. (Source: YP&C Co., History of the U.S. Navy Special Hospital, 1946.)

near the cabins," included the large tennis courts built by the Navy.[155] The handball courts, four basketball goals, volleyball courts, badminton courts, archery range, and shuffleboard courts were "in constant use" (Figure 37).[156] Supervised swimming took place in the Merced River near the hospital.

In 1944, Army temporary buildings were erected in the meadow west of the hospital for a rehabilitation and recreation center, with the understanding that these facilities would be removed after the decommissioning of the site (Figure 38).[157] The new recreation center was begun in summer 1944 and it officially opened in January 1945.[158]

By summer 1944, a summer softball league was formed, in addition to the continuation of other recreational activities such as golf, croquet, and tennis. A new bowling alley building was constructed. Other popular outdoor activities included fishing; fly tying was "practiced somewhat spasmodically" at a bench in the woodworking room.[159]

In the winter, the parking lot at Camp Curry was made into a skating rink that was usable until the middle of March.[160] A pool hall was constructed by joining two Army temporary buildings in January 1945.[161] Later, in March of that year, a small physical training building with gym equipment was added.[162] Best of all was the addition of a beer hall in April 1945. The only one of its kind at any Navy hospital, the beer hall was created in a temporary building at the "corner of the reservation near the entrance." Use of the beer hall was initiated "with appropriate ceremony."[163]

Problems including inadequate transportation and garage facilities continued to discomfit the sailors over the course of the Navy tenure. However, the problems were short-lived because the U.S. Naval Special Hospital (renamed in June 1945 to allow the facility to operate at full capacity) was officially decommissioned on December 15, 1945.[164] During the commission of the hospital almost 7,000 patients were treated there, and the hotel and landscape were dramatically altered.[165]

155 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 50.
156 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 51.
157 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 57.
158 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 32.
159 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 61-62.
160 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 32.
161 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 39.
162 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 49.
163 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 39.
164 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 7; Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, xlv.
165 YP&C Co., *History of the United States Naval Special Hospital,* 16.



Figure 37. Sailors playing volleyball, c. 1943-1944. (Source: YP&C Co., History of the U.S. Navy Special Hospital, 1946.)

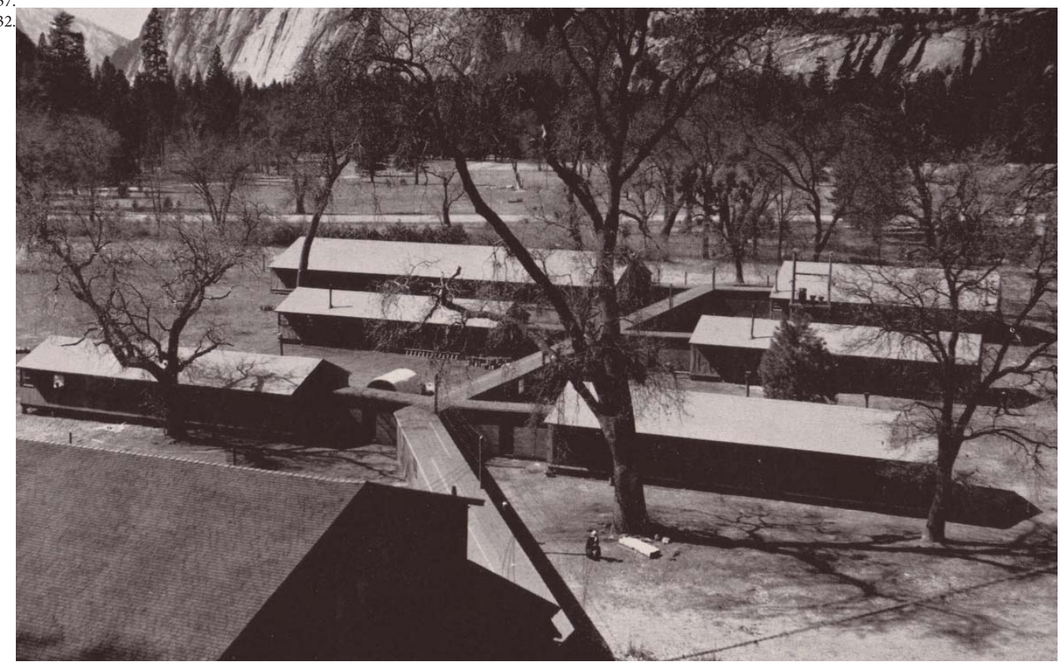
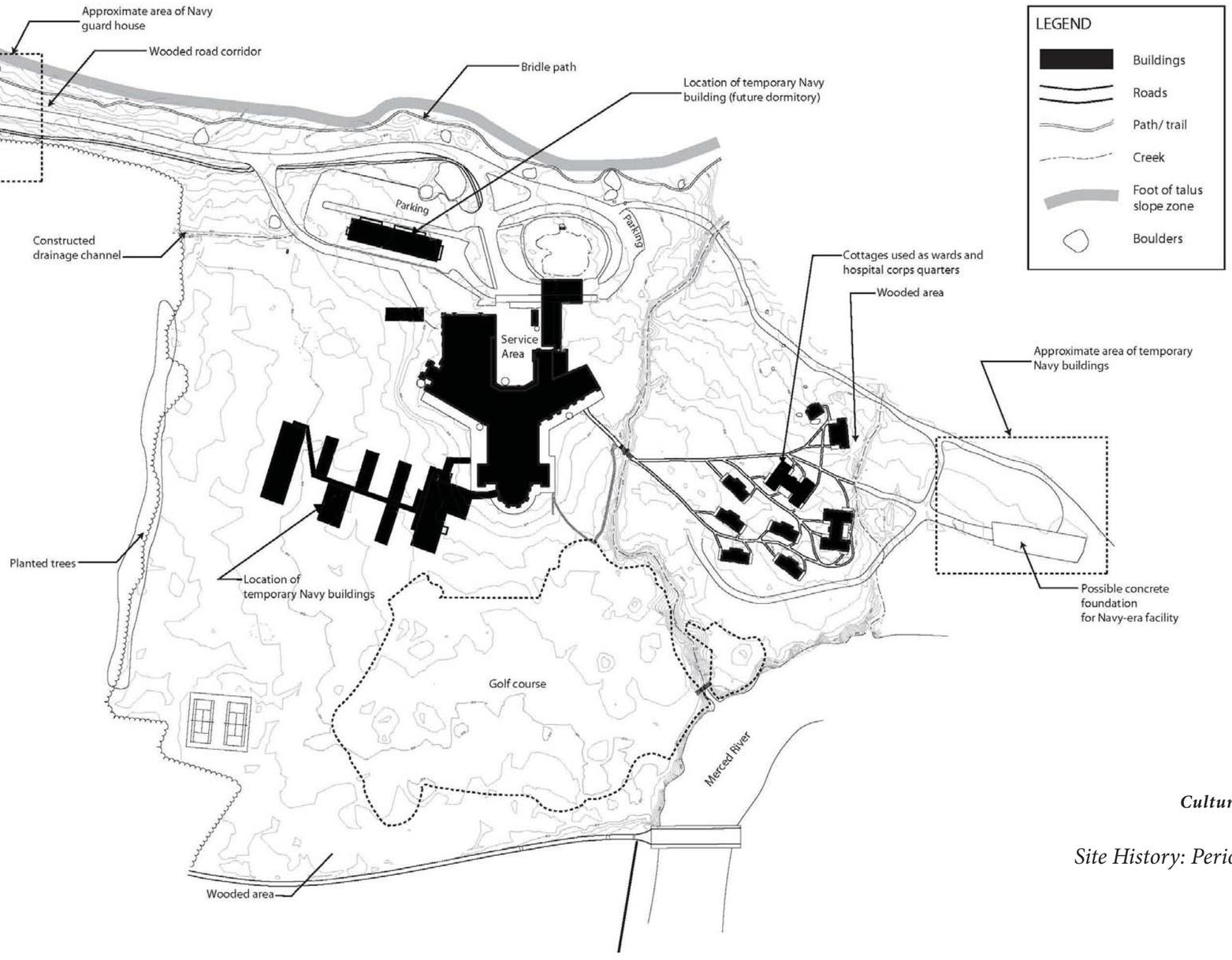


Figure 38. Navy buildings in the meadow west of the hospital, c. 1944. (Source: YP&C Co., History of the U.S. Navy Special Hospital, 1946.)



Sources:

Blanchard & Maher Architects. 1943. *U.S. Naval Convalescent Hospital (Ahwahnee Hotel) Yosemite National Park, California: Plot Plan.*

Conner, Wes. 1961. *Golf Course LAyout for Nine Hole Pitch and Putt (Par 3), The Ahwahnee.* Sheet 1, File No. L110-100. Yosemite Park and Curry Co. Landscape Department.

Creighton, Clifford, in collaboration with O.G. Taylor. 1929. *Survey of the Ahwahnee Grounds.*

Naval Operating Base, San Francisco, Cal. Twelfth Naval District. Undated. *U.S. Convalescent Hospital Ahwahnee Hotel Yosemite National Park, Calif. Occupational Therapy and Recreation Building Plot Plan.*

Pyle, Paul. 1997. Digital untitled survey of The Ahwahnee. AutoCAD format.

Spencer, Architect, Eldridge T. 1931. *Lighting, Ahwahnee Entrance.* Sheet No. 1.

Vaughan, George B. with Carl Purdy, consultant. 1928. *Wild Flower Planting, Ahwahnee Hotel.*

The Ahwahnee
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Site History: Period Plan (1943-1945)

not to scale

N

Figure 39. 1943-1945 period plan.

Post World War II to Present (1946-2009)

(See Figure 46, 1946-2009 period plan.)

In 1946, paying guests returned to The Ahwahnee. Extensive work was required to restore The Ahwahnee to its former condition as a hotel after the decommissioning of the U.S. Naval Special Hospital. Restoring sprinkler heads in the irrigation system, hauling dirt and sand, reconstructing portions of a fence, restoring the golf course, replacing decayed logs in the parking area, and replacing children's play equipment were all items listed under the restoration of the landscape at The Ahwahnee after the Navy's departure. The Navy structures—such as the garage, the pool hall and bowling alley, and the warehouse, designed to be temporary buildings—were removed to Crane Flat and used for heavy storage, though a concrete slab that may have provided the foundation for one of these buildings remained east of the cottages.[166] The Navy medical storeroom was moved from a section of the hotel parking lot and converted to the current employee dormitory west of the hotel.[167] Other changes to the landscape in the 1940s include the enclosure of the "old porte cochère."[168]

However, after the short-term restoration work required at the site after the Navy's departure, development and design at The Ahwahnee slowed during the post-war period. Maintenance, with an increasing emphasis on the ecological implications of landscape management, became a driving mandate.

The demands on the landscape—in the form of increasing visitation—escalated. "California also underwent dramatic changes in the size and makeup of its population as a result of the explosive growth of a military-based economy during the war. In order to accommodate greater numbers of park visitors a building program vastly different from and in many ways harmful to the natural features of the park was instituted."[169] The Mission 66 Prospectus for Yosemite National Park, published in July 1956, reiterated this evaluation. In its *Statement of Significance*, the prospectus states that "populations are increasing in the United States and in California in particular. Coupled with this is an expanding desire for relief, in the mountains, from the pressures of modern living. So well known and popular have Yosemite's multiplicity of attractions become that it is now necessary to meet the perplexing questions as to ways of accommodating all who seek entrance during the peak periods of travel. The impact of this mass use…constitutes problems in park management."[170] However, the goals for visitor experience remained much the same as they were nearly a century earlier when Olmsted first articulated his vision for the park: "inspiration, enjoyment of scenery…and a better appreciation and understanding of nature."[171]

Between the end of World War II and the mid-1950s, the average stay at Yosemite was less than four days, and a lack of accommodation still discouraged visitors. YP&C Co. was able to house approximately 4,500 people using all of its facilities. Camps were so crowded that barriers needed to be constructed along roadways to prevent visitors from having access to protected areas within the park.[172]

The health of the park's landscape was not only challenged by increasing visitation that reached over a million people in 1954, but also by other threats such as fire (natural and anthropogenic) and damage to the forests by pests and disease.[173] The lodgepole pine needle miner created an epidemic of forest devastation that covered nearly 50,000 acres in the upper elevations of the park. Control programs for the mountain pine beetle and the bark beetle were all maintained throughout this period. In 1952, pine trees were cleared around The Ahwahnee to open up views to Half Dome from the hotel, although the clearing may have helped control woodland diseases as well.[174] In 1964, damage to pines at The Ahwahnee due to beetle infestation was identified, mapped and treated.[175]

Other ecologically inspired vegetation management programs included "judicious" tree removal from meadow areas, erosion control along the Merced River, and control of invasive plants in the meadows to allow the native grasses and plants to thrive. The ecological health of the landscape and the maintenance of scenic views were interwoven: disturbed areas along roadsides became overgrown by vegetation that blocked the Valley's important vistas. At The Ahwahnee, these landscape management directives were embraced throughout the 1950s and 1960s, with permission given for the "usual burning" of the wildflowers in 1962 as evidence of a developing ecological perspective.[176]

Many Valley-wide development projects, in addition to the vegetation management work, were described as part of the Mission 66 Prospectus and several may have had an impact on The Ahwahnee. Trail improvements recommended included a 1.26 mile-long section of the bridle path behind Camp Curry, and a 2.3 mile-long section of the talus foot trail to Mirror Lake (Figure 40). Other recommended improvements included updates to utility systems, sewer systems, and rehabilitated NPS residences.

166 NPS, *HSR*, 20.
167 NPS, *HSR*, 20.
168 NPS, *HSR*, 20.
169 Pavlik, "In Harmony with the Landscape," vi.
170 U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *Yosemite National Park Final Prospectus: Mission 66* (1956), 1.
171 NPS, *Yosemite National Park Final Prospectus: Mission 66*, 2.
172 NPS, *Yosemite National Park Final Prospectus: Mission 66*, 8-9.
173 NPS, *Yosemite National Park Final Prospectus: Mission 66*, A-4.
174 NPS, *Yosemite Valley CLR*, 2-76.
175 Superintendent letter to YP&C Co. president, 1964.
176 YP&C Co., letter to Yosemite National Park Superintendent, 1962.

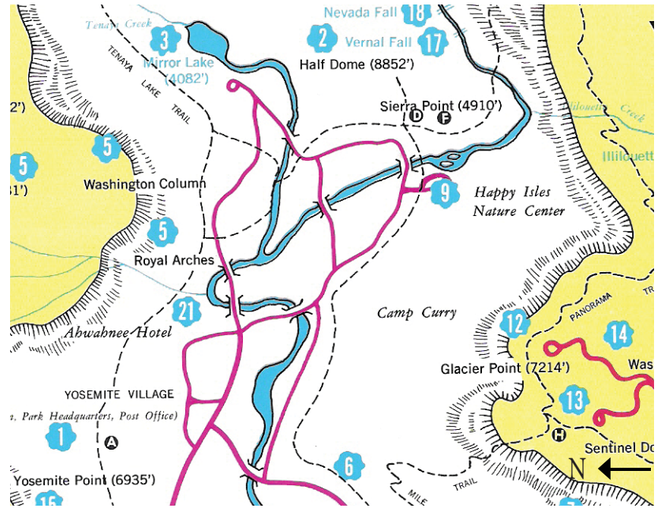


Figure 40. Yosemite Valley map showing trails and roads, c. 1964. (Source: Douglass Hubbard, This is Yosemite, 1964.)

Despite the comprehensive list of projects intended for implementation after the *Mission 66 Prospectus*, only a few major landscape changes were undertaken at The Ahwahnee. In 1964, the swimming pool and east stair were built; this alteration included associated mechanical and electrical updates. The pool's landscape was designed by Spencer and Lee, Architects of San Francisco, and it was sited adjacent to the hotel's terrace near the tip of its eastern wing. The pool deck was a faceted, irregular area of concrete paving, surrounded by planters, boulders, a rough stone wall, a diving rock, and plants (Figure 41). The east stair provided access to the upper level of the hotel, and was punctuated by landings. A fence around the pool was added in 1982.[177]

Other landscape changes included modifications to the landscape maintenance, safety procedures, and facilities. In 1965, additional parking bays were added to the parking area: to the southern section of the west lot, and to the east of the reflecting pond (Figure 42). In 1966, The Ahwahnee discontinued the use of pesticides in landscape projects.[178] In the early 1970s, three tent cabins were installed near the dormitory. In the late 1970s, a 10- to 12-foot-wide fire road was built around the hotel perimeter—perhaps in concert with the major renovation of the building. The road bed was covered with topsoil to camouflage its presence.[179] One section of the fire road's alignment was shown on the 1965 parking plan in the location of the current valet parking area entrance. Other fire prevention and control devices installed between 1985 and 1986 were three new underground water lines and nine fire hydrants near the hotel, with an additional fire road and hydrant loop around the cottages.[180] In 1983, turf grass sod was added to The Ahwahnee lawn, although by this time the golf course lawn to the south had largely reverted to meadow grasses.[181] Ten years later, possibly as a result of the flooding at the Merced River, many of the trees along its banks were beginning to fail. The park service instituted a tree replanting program to mitigate the tree failure.[182] However, west of the hotel, trees were cleared to restore the views of Yosemite Falls from the hotel dining room.[183]

Three years after The Ahwahnee was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (1977), a 1980 report on the hotel described in detail the landscape surrounding the hotel and the hotel's planned improvements:

> "Guests at The Ahwahnee Hotel may enjoy an outdoor treated swimming pool and two regulation-size tennis courts. The lawns invite one to stroll about…. Landscaped gardens enhance the natural beauty of the grounds surrounding the hotel. Originally planned and planted by Frederick Law Olmstead [sic] Jr., and Carl Purdy, the ten acres include numerous species of trees, shrubs, and flowering plants. Carl Stephens has been responsible for maintaining the grounds for the past 20 years. He is an expert gardener, specializing in native plants. The Ahwahnee gardens, with one of the most complete selections of native plants, provide the mountain botanist or casual observer with many interesting hours. Additionally, work has already begun on the Dana and Esther Morgenson Wildflower Trail, which will open in spring of 1981. Interpretive signs will increase guests' enjoyment of the natural beauty, allowing them to learn more about the magnificent wildflowers of Yosemite. The trail will be in two sections, one surrounding the reflection pond and the other paralleling Royal Arch Creek. The East Terrace of the hotel is edged by a smooth lawn, while the West Terrace adjoins a meadow. The bungalows are located across a small creek amongst a forest of Ponderosa pines, incense cedars, black oaks and dogwood. Spectacular views of Yosemite's cliffs are available from almost anywhere on the hotel grounds".[184]

Clearly, the design imperatives of the hotel's early years were still in place. The wildflower gardens, the exploitation of important views, the soothing qualities of the reflecting pond, the wooded

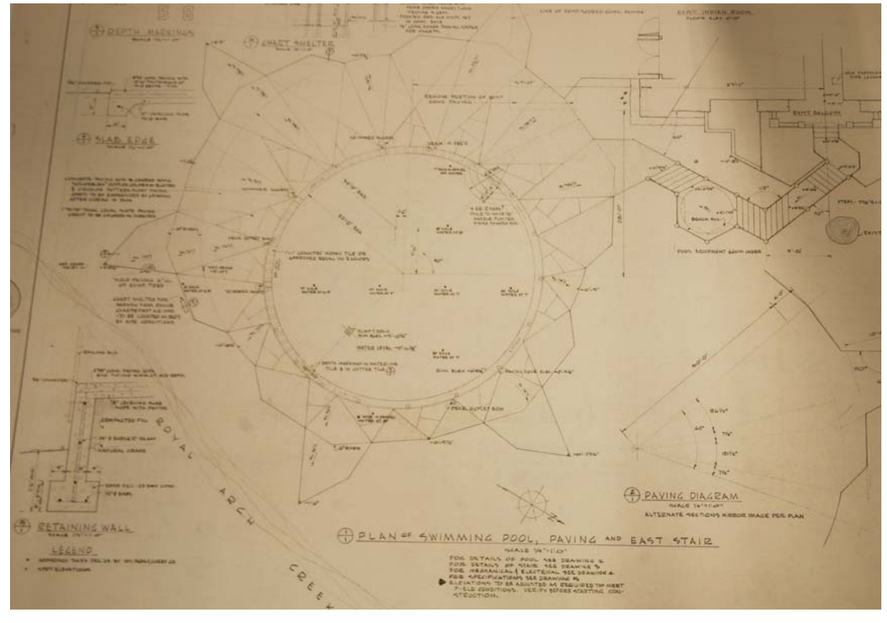


Figure 41. Plan of the swimming pool and east stair, 1964. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

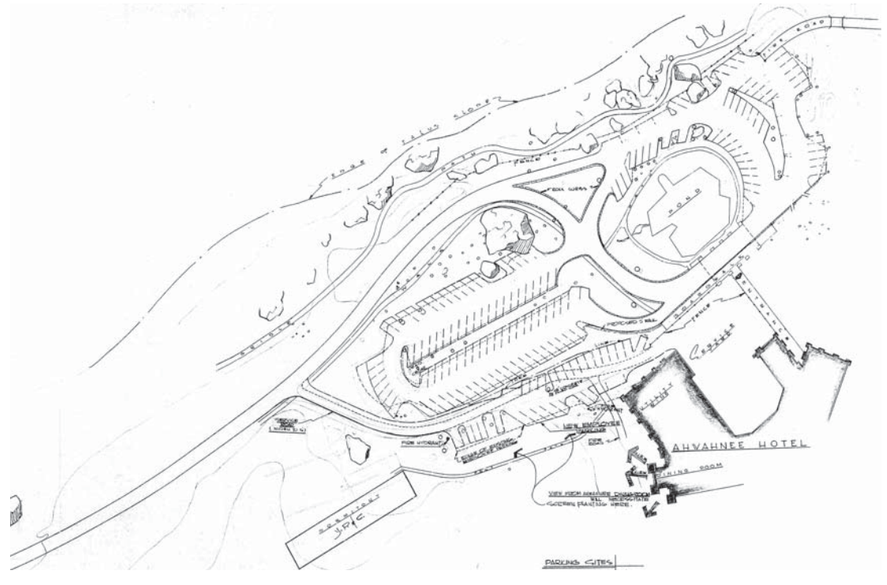


Figure 42. Plan of the proposed parking space additions, 1965. (Source: Knowles and Savage, "Parking Area, Ahwahnee Hotel," Drawing No. NP-YO, NPS Denver Service Center Archives.)

177 Letter from Edward Hardy to Jay Stein, 1982.
178 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 4.
179 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 2.
180 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 2; Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey,* 22-23.
181 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 2.
182 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 2.
183 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 2.
184 Yosemite Park & Curry Co., *The Ahwahnee Hotel*, c. 1980, 15-16

seclusion of the cottages (Figure 43), and the connection between the terrace and the meadow all remained to emphasize the connection between the natural world and the hotel's designed landscape. The built components of the design—hotel, cottages, entrance road, and parking—were all still in place (Figure 44).

In 1980 a *General Management Plan* was completed for the park. Its stated goals were to reclaim priceless natural beauty, markedly reduce traffic congestion, allow natural systems to prevail, reduce crowding, and promote visitor understanding and enjoyment. Its recommended goals for The Ahwahnee specified retaining the hotel's traditional character and level of service, but removing outdoor activities which were not directly related to the natural resource. To this end, specific recommendations included removing the tennis courts and the golf course, though as stated above, the golf course had likely disappeared—possibly through benign neglect—by 1980.

In 1989, a mechanical building was constructed west of the hotel's west wing. Throughout the 1990s, small alterations to the landscape—as well as management and maintenance—were the only documented changes. Several of the terraces for the cottages were replaced in 1990, and a new metal fence was added to the swimming pool in 1994 to replace the wooden fence. What was left of the golf course was fully dismantled, with the exception of the earthen mounds, which remain.

In 1996, a landscape maintenance plan was created to support management of the important qualities that had defined the landscape for so long. Three designated management zones were established for the site and continue to guide the maintenance of the landscape to the present (Figure 45).



Figure 43. View of a cottage with its terrace and plantings, c. 1948. (Source: U.S. Department of the Interior, "The Ahwahnee," 1948.)

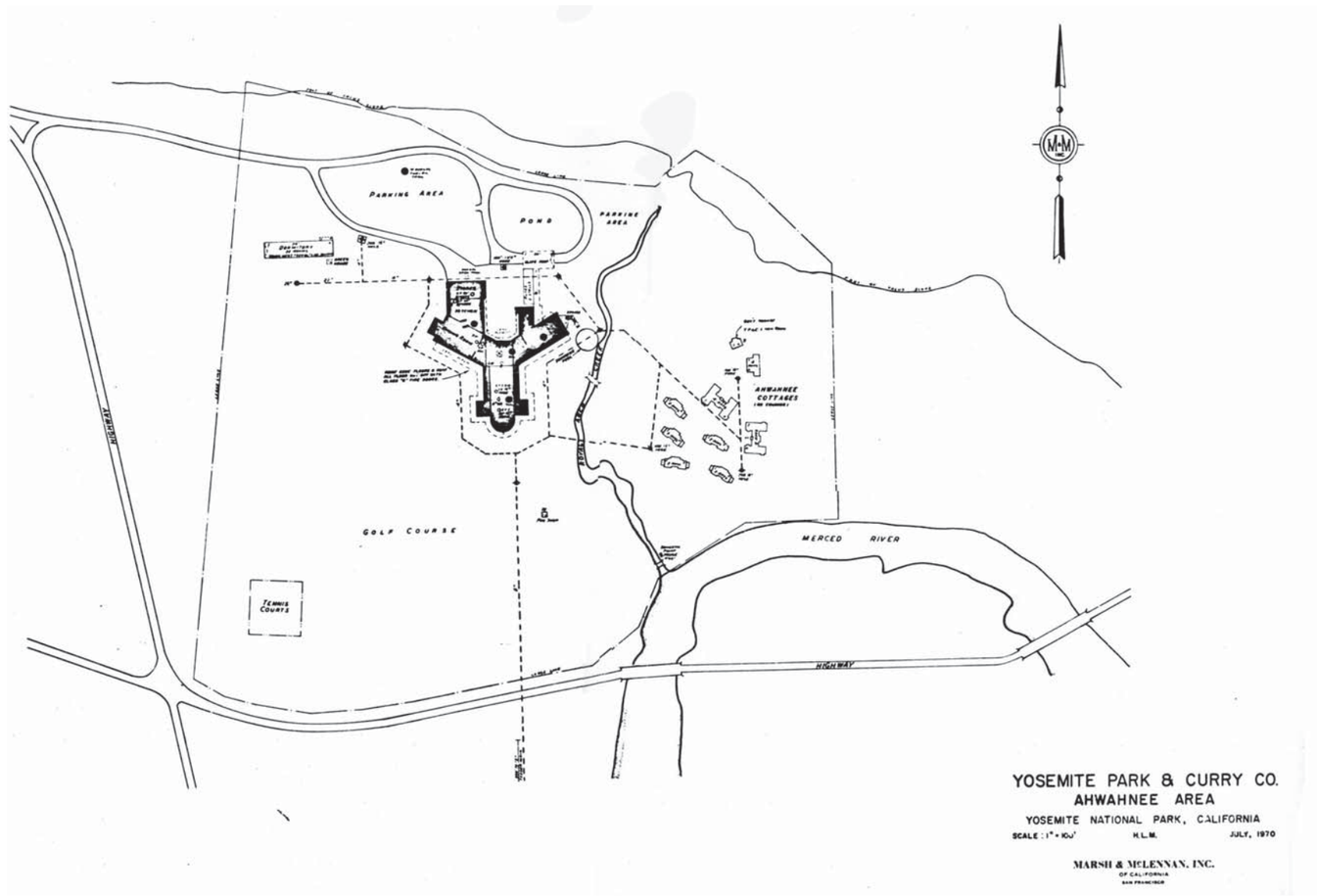


Figure 44. Plan of The Ahwahnee grounds, 1970. (Source: Denver Service Center files.)

These zones include:

- Landscaped Zone (encompassing the pond, the cottages area, the area surrounding Royal Arch Creek as it extends from the pool to the bridge, the wildflower meadow, and the dining room terrace). Maintenance included pruning, raking, weeding, path maintenance, fertilizing, removing debris, and seeding or transplanting native plants. This zone also includes "landscaping" with decorative logs, aged wood, post and cable fencing, and rocks and boulders.[185]

- Manicured Zone (The Ahwahnee lawn, the hotel entrance or flagpole lawn, and the "wedding" lawn). Maintenance includes seeding playground and turf, pruning, raking, weeding, transplanting/seeding native plants, removing debris, fertilizing, mowing, and aerating. This zone also includes "landscaping" with decorative logs, aged wood, and rocks and boulders.[186]

- Natural Zone (all areas not within landscape or manicured zones). Maintenance includes pruning, raking, removal of non-native invasive plants, path maintenance, litter removal, debris removal, correcting trip hazards, seeding or transplanting native plants, and watering seeds and transplants until establishment.[187]

Landscape maintenance has played a major role in protecting the site's native species and historic values in the years since The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan was implemented. Protection of drainage patterns and water quality has also been an ongoing goal. By 1996, The Ahwahnee was using two different types of irrigation: domestic water and Merced River water.[188] In December 1997, a large flood of the Merced River forced the closing of the hotel for several months. The most recent development at The Ahwahnee includes the addition of a bus stop with a shelter in the parking area in 2005. This stone and wood structure is located west of the reflecting pond between the north and central bays of the west parking area.

Beginning in the 1980s, many studies were undertaken that documented conditions at The Ahwahnee or prescribed future management of the landscape. These studies provide much of the information presented in this section, as well as in *Part 2* of this report, and serve as a basis for landscape treatment recommendations:

- Yosemite Valley General Management Plan (1980)
- Concession Services Plan EIS (1992)
- Yosemite Valley CLR (1994)
- The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan (1996)
- Fire Management Plan (2004).
- Invasive Plant Workplan (2009)
- Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park (2010)
- See http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/currentplans.htm for a complete list of current plans.
- Also see http://www.nps.gov/archive/yose/planning/documents/yosenepaall.htm for a complete list of other planning documents related to Yosemite National Park.

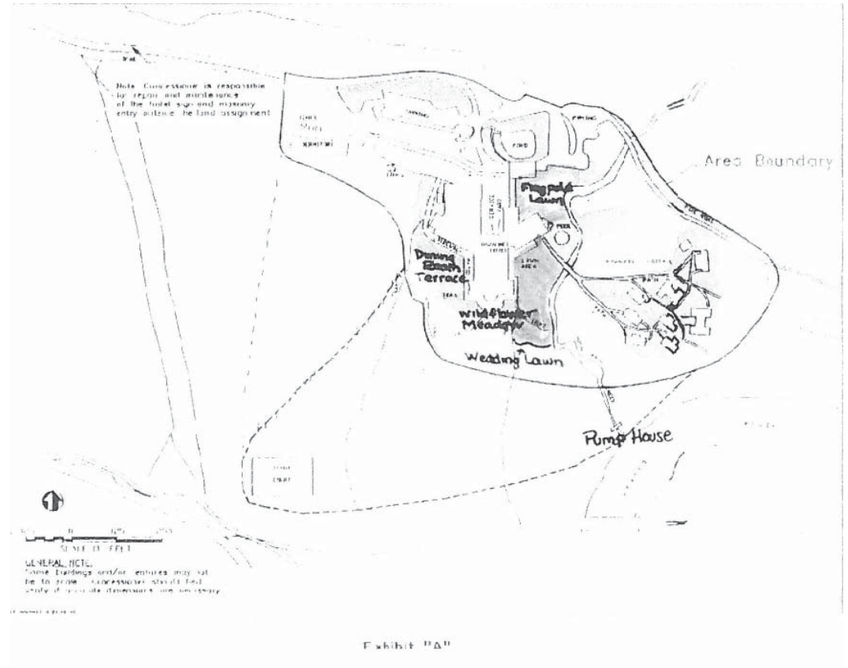
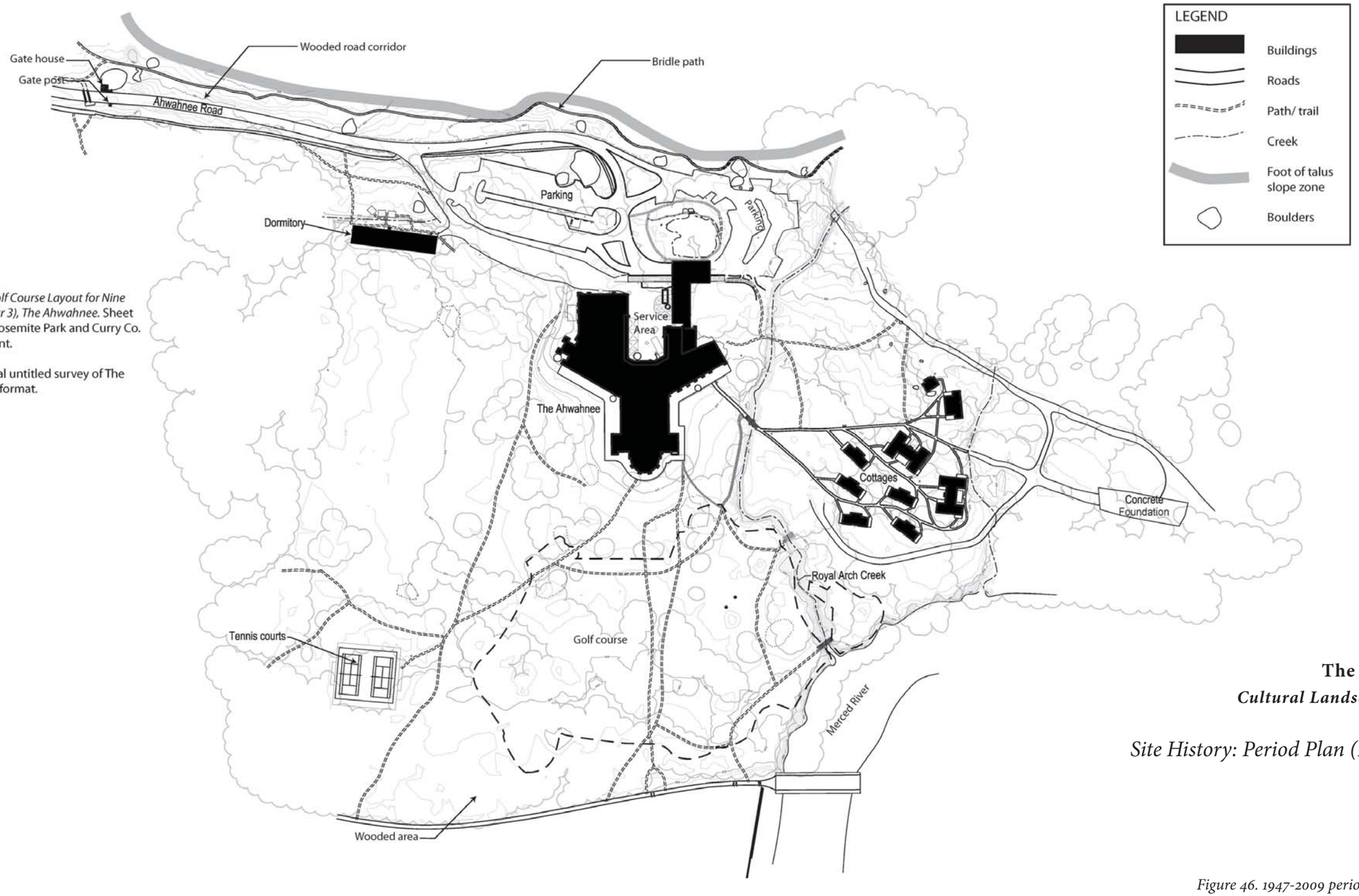


Figure 45. Landscape maintenance zones: "landscaped" (including reflecting pond, cottages and terraces), "manicured" (including the wedding lawn, hotel entrance, and flagpole area) and "natural" (wooded and meadow areas not included in landscaped or manicured zones). (Source: Yosemite Concession Services, The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan, 1996.)

185 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3.
186 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3.
187 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3.
188 Yosemite Concession Services, *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 4.



Sources:

Conner, Wes. 1961. *Golf Course Layout for Nine Hole Pitch and Putt (Par 3), The Ahwahnee.* Sheet 1, File No. L110-100. Yosemite Park and Curry Co. Landscape Department.

Pyle, Paul. 1997. Digital untitled survey of The Ahwahnee. AutoCAD format.

The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Site History: Period Plan (1947-2009)
not to scale

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Figure 46. 1947-2009 period plan, c. 1980.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Introduction

This section includes narrative, graphic, and photographic documentation of the 2009 existing conditions within The Ahwahnee Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) study area (Figure 47). This information is derived from an existing electronic base map provided by the National Park Service (NPS), available existing conditions documentation, and an April 2009 site visit to Yosemite National Park. This section also includes an overview of the Yosemite Valley which provides a context for The Ahwahnee study area. The description of the existing conditions within The Ahwahnee study area documents individual landscape systems and features.

The following landscape characteristics were used to organize existing conditions descriptions:

- Natural Systems and Features
- Spatial Organization
- Land Use
- Topography
- Vegetation
- Views and Vistas
- Buildings and Structures
- Circulation
- Small-scale Features
- Archeological Sites

All photographs used to illustrate written information are numbered and coordinated with a photographic station points map located at the beginning of this section (Figure 48). Photographs were taken by AECOM in April, 2009.

The section concludes with a condition assessment overview. The condition of each landscape feature—as well as a complete list of all landscape features—is included in a table in *Appendix A* of this report.

Overview of Yosemite Valley

Yosemite Valley, an internationally recognized natural resources area, is a U-shaped valley located in the granite walls of the Sierra Nevada of California. Its land area is approximately 9,000 acres.[1] The Valley is approximately 7 miles in length and one mile across at its widest point.[2] It is located centrally within the 12,000 square mile Yosemite National Park, and is the focal point for visitation to the park.

The dramatic, asymmetrical formations of the granite cliffs were created by periodic glaciations. Glacial ice scoured the landscape and meltwater moved rubble throughout the Valley. The height of the cliffs varies from 1,500 feet to 4,000 feet above its floor. The wonders created by this ecological process—both the awe-inspiring rock formations and the tremendous waterfalls—combine to create a unique landscape. Yosemite Falls, with a cascade of 2,425 feet, is the highest waterfall in North America.[3]

The Valley floor consists of surficial deposts of alluvium, talus and glacial till, from the multiple glaciations of the Holocene and Pleistocene Epochs.[4]

The granitic rocks which make up the Valley walls vary in age from 114 million years to 87 million years old. The oldest plutonic rock in the Yosemite Valley, found in the Merced Gorge and the west end of the Valley, include diorite, grandiorite and tonalite. Other varieties present throughout the Valley include El Capitan Granite (found on much of the western cliff face), Taft Granite, Bridalveil Grandiorite, Sentinel Grandiorite, Kuna Crest Diorite, and the geologically youngest Half Dome Grandiorite.[5] Major geologic features in the Valley include: El Capitan, Turtleback Dome, Three Brothers, Half Dome, Royal Arches, Cloud's Rest, Cathedral Rocks, North Dome, Glacial Point and Sentinel Rock.[6]

The prehistoric Lake Yosemite, created by glacial melt, was filled by stream deposits creating an essentially flat Valley floor underlain with 1,000-foot-deep sediments. It ranges in elevation from 3,800 feet to 4,200 feet above sea level. The Merced River, which begins in the high elevations of the Sierra Nevadas, flows along the Valley floor. The Merced River is a federally designated Wild and Scenic River.

The Valley contains many of Yosemite National Park's developed areas, the larger of which are Yosemite Lodge, Yosemite Village, The Ahwahnee, Curry Village, and the Nature Center at Happy Isle. There are also smaller developed areas within the Valley that include camp sites and picnic areas in addition to other visitor service and recreation facilities that accommodate hiking, horseback riding, and a medical clinic.

Vegetation communities in the Yosemite Valley fall within the lower montaine mixed conifer zone, which consists of four broad types of vegetation: meadow, riparian, upland, and California black oak. The National Park Service regards California black oak as a biological and cultural resource of great value; thus it is described as a community distinct from other upland vegetation. In general, the entire Valley vegetation system is influenced by thousands of years of anthropogenic burning and other American Indian methods of resource management. The following information about the Valley's vegetation communities is derived from previous studies:

- *Meadow Plant Communities*: the meadows in Yosemite Valley are transition zones from drier upland and black oak communities to wetter riparian communities. The meadows themselves vary from wet to dry seasonally and link the Merced River and tributaries to permanently dry land. Yosemite Valley meadows are classified into three general types: (1) wet meadow dominated by native hydrophilic vegetation, (2) grass meadow, dominated by non-native grasses, Himalayan blackberry and bull thistle (introduced in turn-of-the-century agriculture), and (3) native hydrophilic forbs.
- *Riparian Plant Communities*: riparian zones in Yosemite Valley are characterized by broadleaf deciduous trees such as white

1 Land and Community Associates, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report* (Denver: Denver Service Center, 1994), 2-3
2 Land and Community Associates, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report*, 3-5
3 Land and Community Associates, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report*, 3-4
4 N. King Huber, *The Geologic Story of Yosemite National Park* (Yosemite National Park, CA: Yosemite Association, 1989), plate 2
5 N. King Huber, *The Geologic Story of Yosemite National Park,* 18-19
6 Land and Community Associates, *Yosemite Valley Cultural Landscape Report*, 3-4

alder, black cottonwood, and willow species. Riparian areas within the Valley are rich in species diversity and structure.

- *Upland Plant Communities*: five forest types are found in Yosemite Valley. Mixed coniferous forest is found on the floor of the Valley. Canyon live oak forest, north-facing mixed conifer/canyon live oak talus forest, and south-facing mixed conifer/canyon live oak forest occur on the talus slopes along the sides of Yosemite Valley. The fifth type is the cliff community, characterized by steep granite cliffs and many discrete microhabitats.
- *California Black Oak Plant Communities*: California black oaks in Yosemite Valley form pure open stands of large, stately trees with an herbaceous understory. These pure stands are unique to the Valley due to thousands of years of anthropogenic activities, including annual burning and removal of young conifers, and are found at the change in slope between upland colluvial deposits and lower meadow, water-driven alluvial areas.

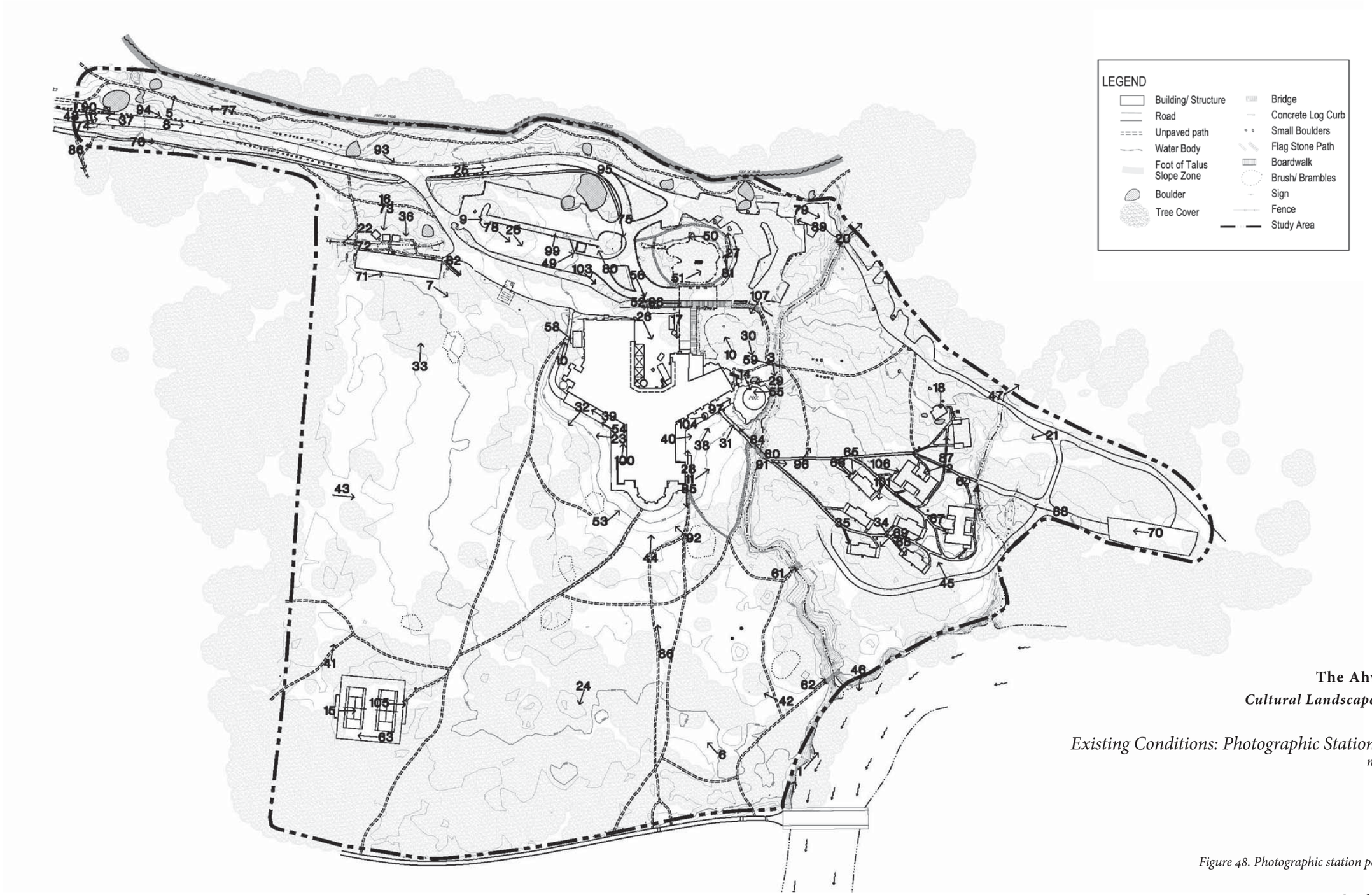


The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Study Area
not to scale

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Figure 47. The Ahwahnee study area, 2009.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Photographic Station Points
not to scale

Figure 48. Photographic station points map.

The Characteristics of The Ahwahnee Study Area

The extraordinary natural features in The Ahwahnee study area were key factors in the siting and orientation of the hotel. The backdrop of majestic granite cliffs dwarf all that surrounds them. The Ahwahnee contains a designed landscape that was inspired by the grandeur of its natural surroundings and seemingly captures every aspect of the Valley in microcosm: the cliffs, river, creeks, wildflower meadows, mature woodlands, pond, rustic buildings and structures.

Natural Systems and Features (see Figure 49)

The larger patterns of the Valley's natural systems are described in the *Overview of Yosemite Valley* in the first section of *Existing Conditions*, and several of these large natural features dominate the landscape at The Ahwahnee.

The Merced River, a federally designated Wild and Scenic River (Photo 1), runs along the southeastern boundary of the study area. Wide and fairly shallow at this location, the Merced River flows slowly east and south in a tight bend just south of the cottages. Its watershed contains the entire study area of The Ahwahnee. Steep wooded banks form the edge of the river (Photo 2). The Merced River is subject to periodic and seasonal localized flooding.

The Merced River in the eastern Valley is an alluvial river, and its channel has migrated over time as a result of flooding and other natural events. The Merced River's water quality is high in general, with some degradation due to visitor use. Surface water quality is important for the ongoing health of the Valley's land and water habitats.

Royal Arch Creek (Photo 3), a tributary of the Merced River, creates a physical separation between the hotel and the cottages. This creek flows during the spring when snow melt from the cliffs above feeds its channel; however, it stops flowing by the later summer. Lined with boulders, trees, and shrubs, the creek bed is quite deep and meanders south and southeast through a wooded corridor until it meets the Merced River.



Photo 1. Merced River.



Photo 2. Steep banks along the Merced River.



Photo 3. Royal Arch Creek.



Photo 4. Unnamed intermittent drainageway.



Photo 5. Talus slope.



Photo 6. Meadow.

There is a shallow intermittent unnamed drainageway (Photo 4) that flows in the spring along the eastern edge of the cottages area. This drainageway also runs dry in the summer, and its channel is composed mainly of stones and sandy soil.

A spring may still remain in the vicinity of the reflecting pond though its exact location is not known.

The enormous cliffs and active talus slope (Photo 5) form the northern boundary of the study area. In the summer of 2009, a minor rock slide occurred at the talus slope near the parking area, demonstrating the geologic change always affecting the study area. The rock fall resulted in the revision of the active talus zone boundary. Smaller-scale geological features include boulders—some the size of a car and others quite small—at the base of the talus slope.

The meadow (Photo 6) is a visual reminder of the other open grass areas that are spread across the Valley landscape, although it is separated from the meadow to its west by a thick band of trees. Because it is both drained and irrigated, the meadow's natural hydrology has been substantially altered. The lack of regular fire that previously controlled the spread of trees into meadows since the prehistoric period has allowed the current encroachment of volunteer trees into the meadow.

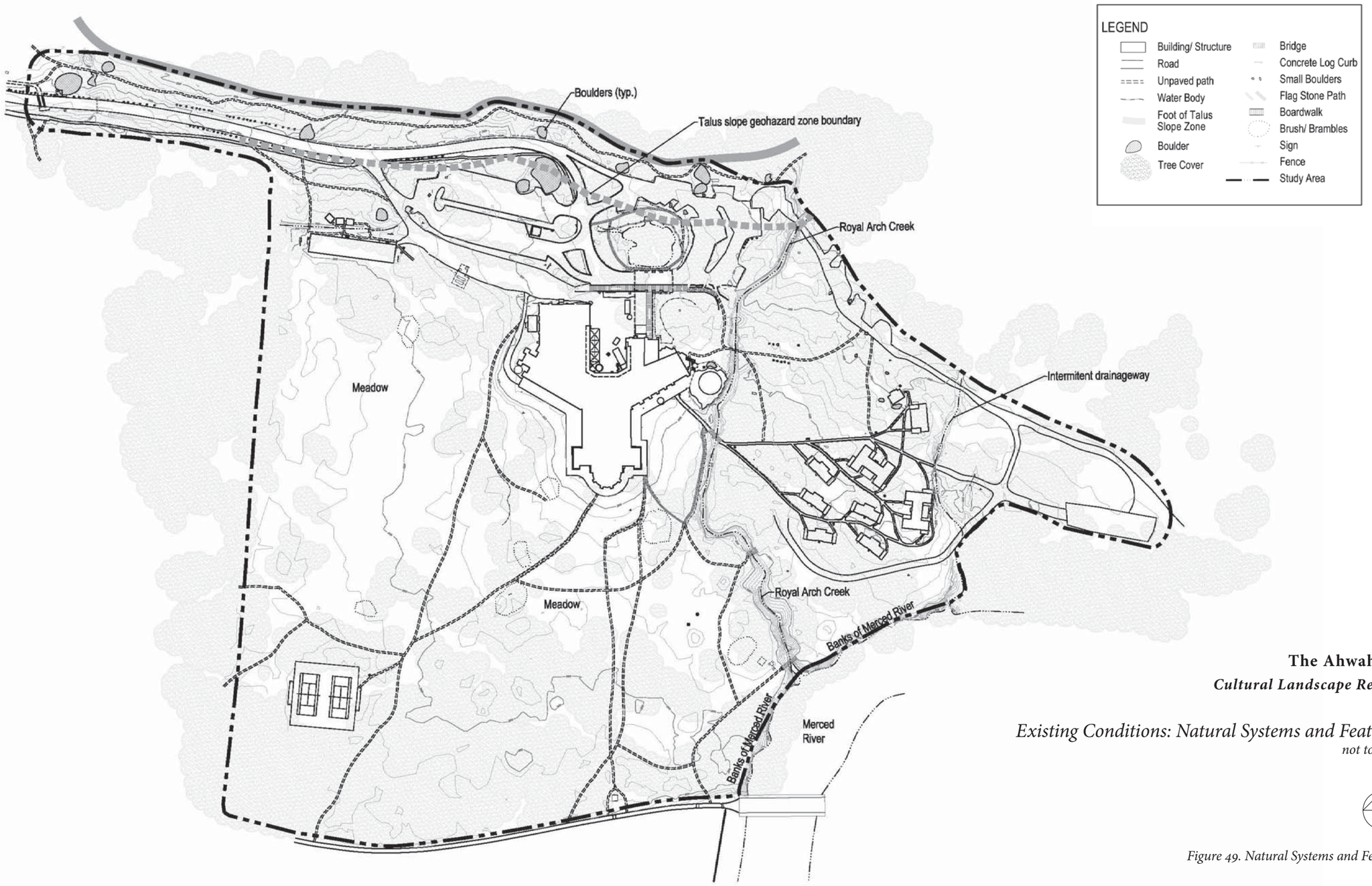
Yosemite Valley provides the habitat for over 80 species of mammals and over 100 species of birds. Mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) (Photo 7), California ground squirrels (*Citellus beecheyi*), chipmunks (*Eutamias quadrimaculatus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), and American black bear (*Ursus americanus*) are all common mammals in the Valley. The meadow at The Ahwahnee contains a multitude of ground squirrel burrows, and black bear are regular visitors. American robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and Steller's jays (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) are typical birds, although other birds include the great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), the acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), and the belted kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*).

The cool, moist winters and warm, dry summers create a Mediterranean climate in the Sierra Nevada. Precipitation and the growing season vary according to elevation.

Underlying bedrock provides the basis for soils, which share mineral and chemical characteristics of the parent material. Alluvial soils usually develop near streams through erosion; colluvial soils generally occur along cliff edges where land- and rock slides have occurred. Meadows and woodlands tend to have highly organic soils. Soil erosion may occur along stream banks due to heavy use or loss of vegetation.



Photo 7. Mule deer.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Natural Systems and Features
not to scale

Figure 49. Natural Systems and Features

Spatial Organization (see Figure 50)

The entire study area is enclosed by the cliffs to the north, the Merced river and thick band of woods to the south, and dense evergreen wooded areas to the east and west. However, this large study area is comprised of many smaller designed areas formed by buildings and structures, roads, vegetation, and other natural systems and features.

Ahwahnee Road (Photo 8) is long and linear, extending east to west, with linear bands of paths and trees flanking it on either side. The tall trees and cliffs enclose the space, and create a tunnel-like character that marks the entrance to The Ahwahnee.

The parking area (Photo 9) is surrounded by woods and boulders and bounded by the hotel to the south and the talus slope to the north. It is screened from the hotel with mature evergreen trees, including a row of giant sequoias.

The area immediately surrounding the hotel building contains designed planted spaces such as the flagpole garden (Photo 10), planted shrubs along the terrace edges, lawn areas, and the swimming pool (Photo 11). The "wedding lawn" is near the former golf course, south east of the hotel.

East of the hotel are the cottages in a more densely wooded area with an asymmetrical organization of trees, shrubs, and buildings (Photo 12). The cluster of cottages is nestled within the mature trees and shrubs in a way that creates a more closed, private landscape character than that near the larger hotel.

The meadow area is south of the hotel and has an open character with meadow grasses and scattered trees. This area is ringed by a thick planting of evergreen and deciduous trees such as pines and black oaks that provide a sense of enclosure (Photo 13).

Informal spatial zones include "private" spaces such as the enclosed service yard, the valet parking and storage area, and the wooded dormitory and tent cabin area; and "public" spaces designed for use by visitors and lodgers that includes meadow and woodlands.

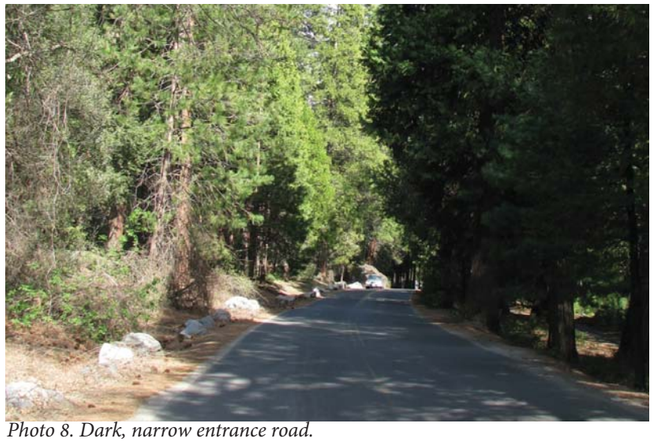


Photo 8. Dark, narrow entrance road.

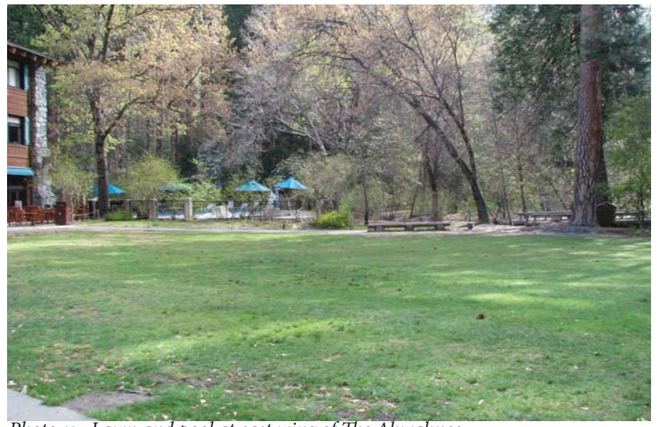


Photo 11. Lawn and pool at east wing of The Ahwahnee.



Photo 9. Screening trees in the parking area.



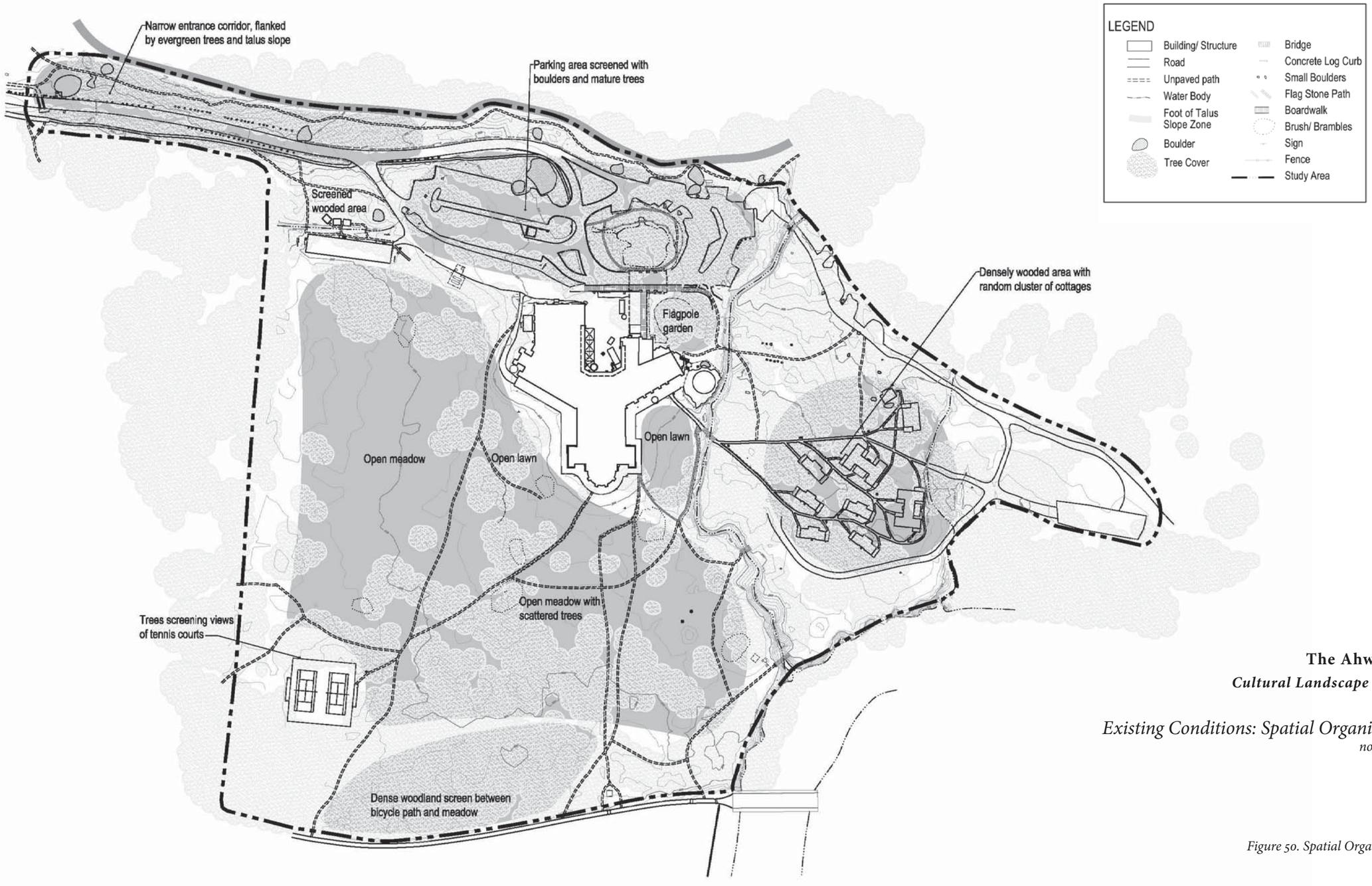
Photo 12. Enclosed wooded space at cottages.



Photo 10. Flagpole garden.



Photo 13. Open meadow surrounded by trees.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Spatial Organization
not to scale

Figure 50. Spatial Organization.

Land Use (see Figure 51)

The primary land use in the study area is lodging, and this use has provided the basis for the design of the hotel and the cluster of cottages. Commercial uses of the property include the sweet shop, bar, dining hall, and gift shop.

Other secondary land uses include recreation; landscape features such as the bicycle trails, the bridle path, the swimming pool (Photo 14), and the tennis courts (Photo 15) support this use. Events take place in the landscape, particularly in the area now referred to as the Wedding Lawn. The dormitory and tent cabins (Photo 16) support the residential use of the study area. Service and storage are supported in the service yard of the hotel (Photo 17), a storage building near the cottages (Photo 18), and the storage and service area east of the cottages (Photo 19).



Photo 14. Swimming pool.



Photo 15. Tennis courts.



Photo 16. Tent cabins.



Photo 17. Service yard.

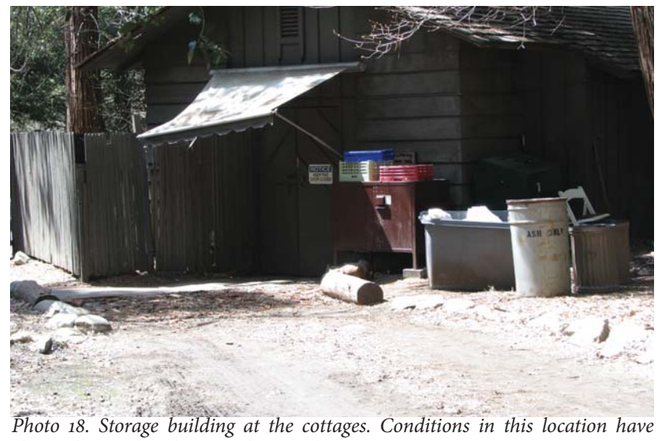


Photo 18. Storage building at the cottages. Conditions in this location have changed since this photograph was taken.



Photo 19. Storage east of the cottages. Conditions in this location have changed since this photograph was taken.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Land Use
not to scale

N

Figure 51. Land Use.

Topography (see Figure 52)

The topography of the entire Valley floor is relatively flat—underlain as it is by 1,000-foot-deep sediments—and surrounded by enormous cliffs. Exceptions to this condition in The Ahwahnee study area include the steep banks of the Merced River, the curvilinear channel of Royal Arch Creek which has been reinforced over time with stone (Photo 20), the shallow depression of the second natural drainageway east of the cottages (Photo 21), and the constructed drainage channel north of the dormitory (Photo 22). The constructed drainage channel is a fairly steep ditch with earthen slopes stabilized with vegetation.

The major topographic modifications at The Ahwahnee include the raised plinth on which the hotel was constructed (Photo 23)—evident on its western side—and low earthen berms associated with the former golf course in the meadow (Photo 24). The topography of the western "plinth" has been modified over time to support fire access, and is more gently sloped with grass cover.

Other minor topographic modifications include minor grading along the south side of Ahwahnee Road, including the slightly lowered bicycle path.

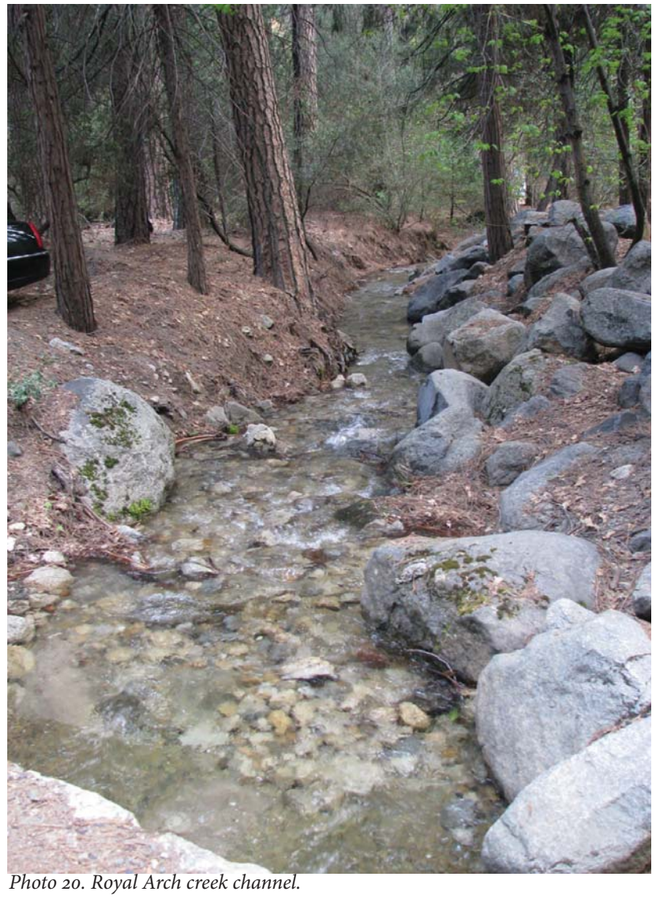


Photo 20. Royal Arch creek channel.



Photo 21. Small intermittent drainageway.



Photo 22. Constructed drainage channel.



Photo 23. Earthen plinth on western side of The Ahwanee.



Photo 24. Earthen berms in meadow.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Topography
not to scale

Figure 52. Topography.

Vegetation (see Figure 53)

The vegetation at The Ahwahnee evokes the hotel's natural surroundings. The mature evergreens, black oaks, and smaller understory shrubs and herbaceous plants define spaces within the grounds, screen views, and create garden spaces. The tall oaks, pines, firs, and sequoias dominate many sections of the landscape, and provide a thick ring of vegetation around the study area.

The entrance road is wooded primarily with tall evergreen trees and little understory (Photo 25), although there are some black oaks and shrubs intermingled with the pines and cedars. Mature pines and cedars grow throughout the talus slope north of Ahwahnee Road.

There are several distinctive plantings in the parking area. Flanking the parking bays are a row of giant sequoia trees in the southern median (Photo 26). There are lines of deciduous trees, such as black oak and dogwood, in the northern median. Around the reflecting pond are more deciduous trees such as aspen (Photo 27), willow, bigleaf maple, and black oak as well as shrubs, such as spicebush, planted in an asymmetrical arrangement. There are many herbaceous and wetland plants along the borders of the pond itself. The valet parking area contains mostly mature pines and cedars creating a dense woodland screen.

The vegetation immediately surrounding the hotel receives the most maintenance. There are planted shrubs such as spicebush (Photo 28) directly adjacent to the hotel in narrow planting areas between the terraces and the main hotel building. Garden areas such as the pool landscape (Photo 29) and the flag pole clearing garden (Photo 30) contain more delicate herbaceous plants such as trillium and ferns.



Photo 25. Pines and cedars along Ahwahnee Road.

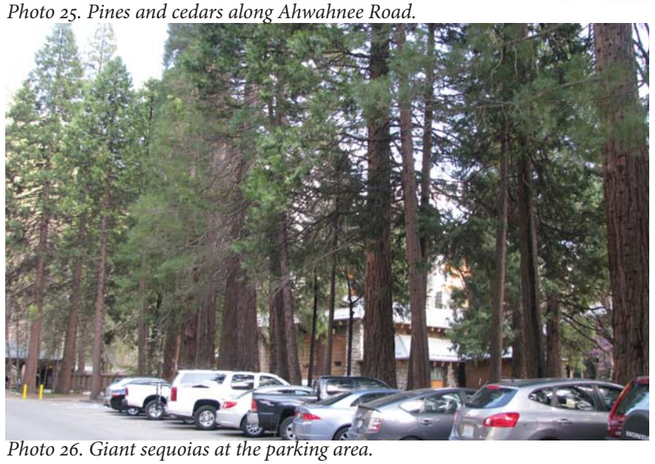


Photo 26. Giant sequoias at the parking area.



Photo 27. Aspens near the reflecting pond.



Photo 28. California allspice at the terrace.



Photo 29. Wildflowers and ferns at the pool.



Photo 30. Wildflower plantings at the flagpole clearing garden.

Immediately beyond the concrete terraces is a clipped lawn (Photo 31), and meadow grasses with small clumps of blackberry (Photo 32).

The meadow south and west of the hotel is primarily vegetated in meadow grasses, herbaceous plants, and both planted trees and volunteer trees (Photo 33). A ring of evergreen trees including ponderosa pine and cedars lines the meadow to the west and south. Dense copses of pine saplings dominate the southern extent of the meadow area, although black oaks also grow throughout. Several other tree species appear in the meadow including apple, white fir, white pine, and western dogwood.

The cottages area on the other side of Royal Arch Creek from the meadow is wooded (Photo 34) predominately with mature evergreen trees such as ponderosa pine; deciduous trees such as black oak, western dogwood, and bigleaf maple; and a thick understory of shrubs such as elderberry. Many of the larger trees appear to pre-date the cottages, and it is unclear how many of the understory trees and shrubs were planted deliberately. The vegetation in the vicinity of the cottages is quite thick and dense in some areas (Photo 35).

Other densely vegetated areas include the woods surrounding the dormitory and tent cabins which contain volunteer trees and shrubs (Photo 36), with small patches of meadow grass. The trees in this area are mostly cedars and pines, although a very large black oak towers over the dormitory on its southern side. The constructed drainage channel is heavily overgrown with vines.

Previous studies have documented the following vegetation within the study area:

Deciduous trees:

- Big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
- Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*)
- Pacific dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*)
- Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
- Black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*)
- California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*)
- Red willow (*Salix sp.*)
- Apple (*Malus sp.*)



Photo 31. Clipped lawn near the east terrace.



Photo 32. Taller grasses and blackberry.



Photo 33. Meadow ringed by pines and cedars.



Photo 34. Evergreen trees and understory shrubs at the cottages.

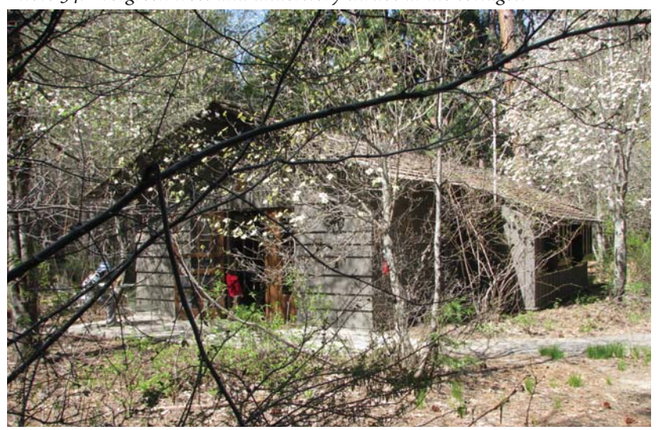


Photo 35. Thick understory plantings at the cottages.



Photo 36. Evergreen trees and volunteer understory vines and shrubs.

Evergreen Trees

- White fir (*Abies concolor*)
- Incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*)
- Knobcone pine (*Pinus attenuata*)
- Jeffery pine (*Pinus jefferyi*)
- Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)
- Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta ssp. murrayana*)
- Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
- Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)
- California laurel (bay) (*Umbellularia californica*)
- Canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*)

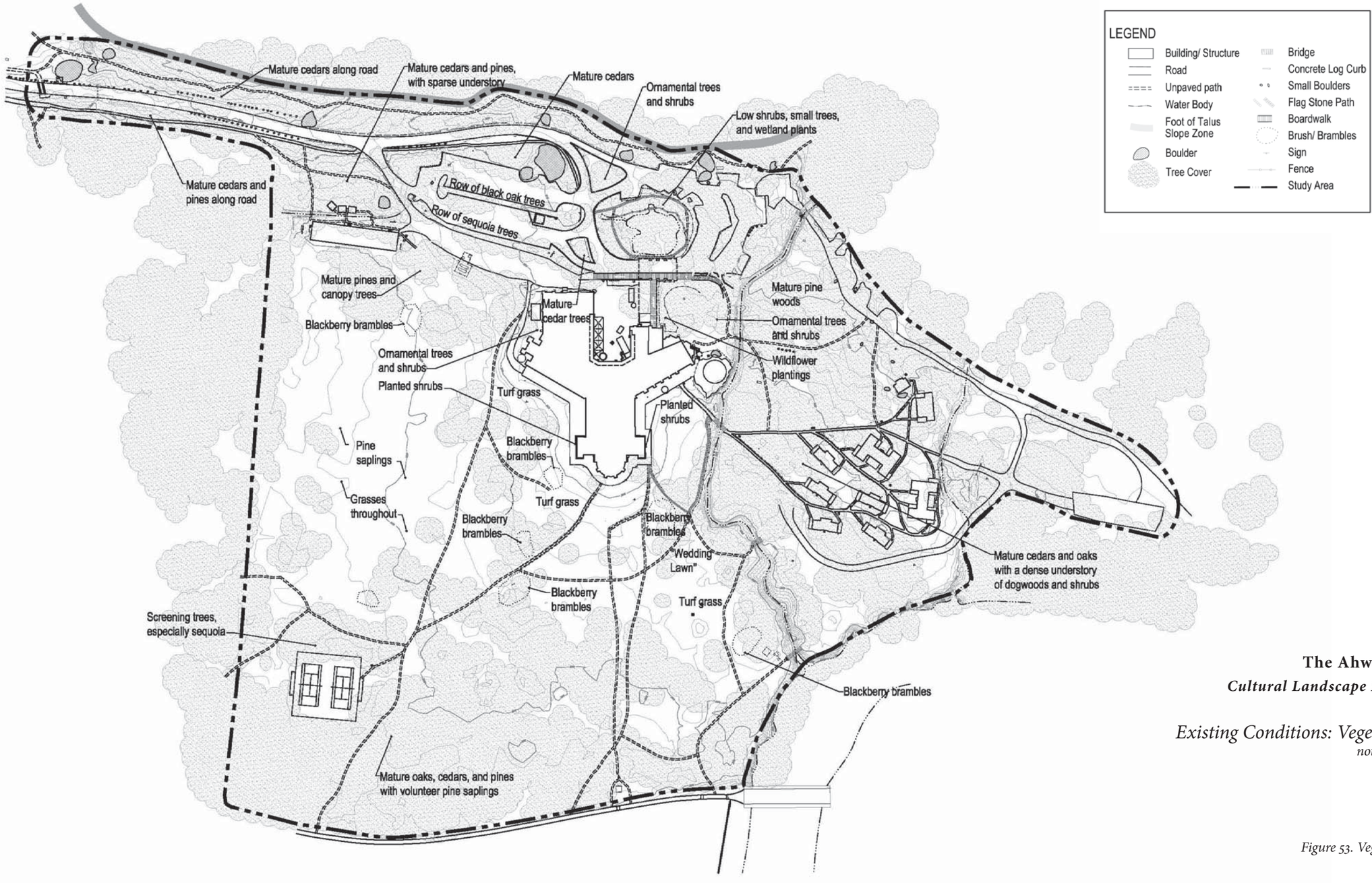
Shrubs

- White alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*)
- Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos sp.*)
- Spicebush (*Calycanthus occidentalis)*
- Elderberry (*Sambucus cerulea*)
- Juniper (*Juniperus spp.*)
- Western chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana var. demissa*)
- Sierra coffeeberry (*Rhamnus rubra*)
- Pacific rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*)
- Western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*)
- Sierra currant (*Ribes nevadense*)
- Western raspberry (*Rubus leucodermis*)

Herbaceous Plants

- Purple milkweed (*Asclepias cordifolia*)
- Scouringrush horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*)
- Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)
- Cinquefoil (*Potentilla sp.*)
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinium var. pubescens*)
- Northern goldenrod (*Solidago multiradiata*)
- Bleeding heart (*Dicentra sp.*)
- Trillium (*Trillium angustipetalum*)
- Western columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)
- *Large periwinkle (*Vinca major*)
- California wild grape (*Vitis californica*)
- *Perennial pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*)
- Meadow grasses and lawn grasses
- Ferns

*Noxious weeds with a high priority for removal



The Ahwahnee
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Existing Conditions: Vegetation
not to scale

Figure 53. Vegetation.

Views and Vistas (see Figure 54)

Scenic views and vistas of the incredible natural features that make up Yosemite Valley are available from many areas in The Ahwahnee study area. These views link the enormous and awesome natural geologic formations of the Valley landscape to the designed landscape of The Ahwahnee. The placement and design of the hotel building establishes many of the study area's important view points. Particularly notable are the views of Royal Arches, Yosemite Falls and Half Dome, and towards Royal Arch Cascade and Glacier Point (especially the historic Fire Fall location). From the meadow are views north to the hotel. Many of these designed views have been compromised by the growth of vegetation over the years, despite the extreme height and distance of the cliffs and waterfalls.

At the entrance to the hotel study area, views along Ahwahnee Road are mostly linear and narrow, restricted by the talus slope and tall evergreen trees. However, from the gate house are long views west to Yosemite Falls (Photo 37). There are also views down the entrance road towards the east of cliffs in the background.

Despite the tall evergreen screening trees in the parking area, there are several views above the canopies of the trees to the surrounding cliffs. The view to Royal Arch Cascade is notable from the pond and parking areas. Yosemite Falls are barely visible from the pond.

In general, the views from The Ahwahnee hotel building itself are the most remarkable and numerous of all. This is due to the more open nature of the immediate surroundings on the south, east and west of the building; strategic clearings in vegetation; and the siting of the building's windows, terraces, and sitting areas. There are (what are now partially obscured) views northeast to Royal Arch Cascade (Photo 38), west to the Yosemite Falls (Photo 39), to Glacier Point, to the surrounding cliffs, and up the Valley to the east (Photo 40) towards Half Dome. The immediate views south from the hotel are panoramas of the meadow and surrounding trees.

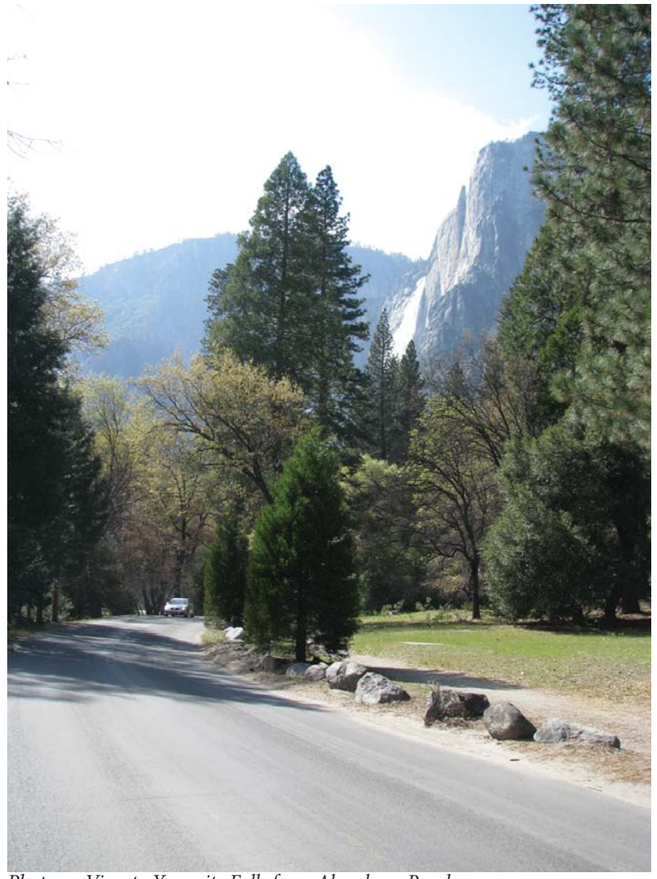


Photo 37. View to Yosemite Falls from Ahwahnee Road.

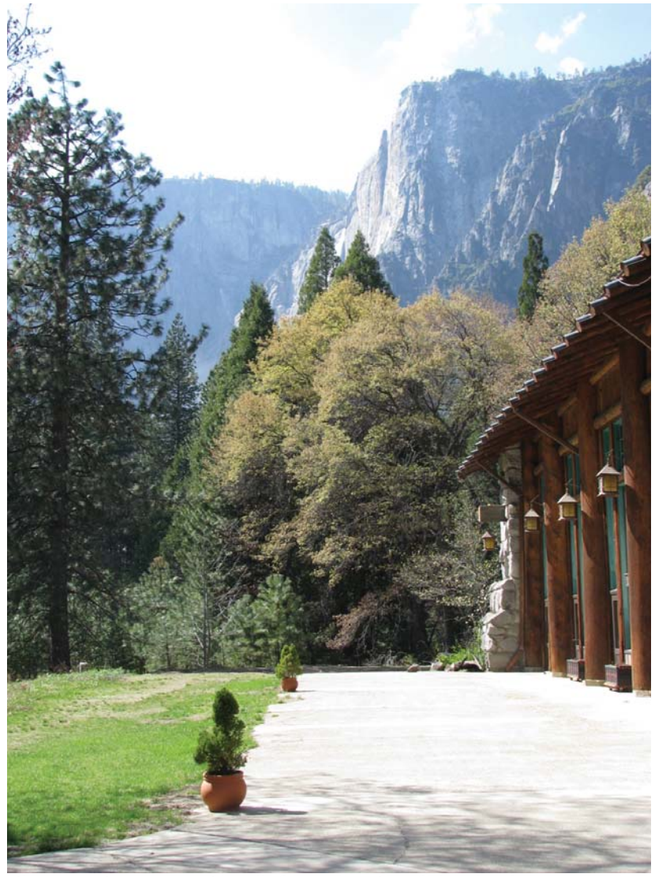


Photo 39. View to Yosemite Falls from west wing of The Ahwahnee.



Photo 38. View to Royal Arch Cascade.

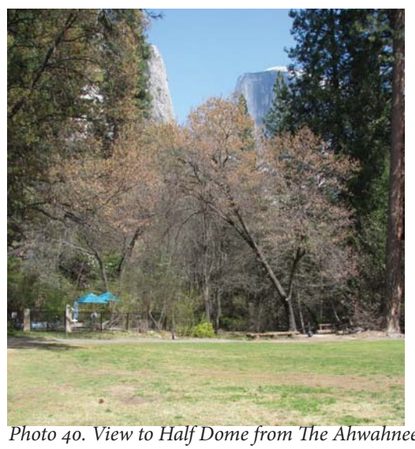


Photo 40. View to Half Dome from The Ahwahnee.

There are numerous views from the meadow to the hotel and Valley landscape, although the overgrowth of vegetation has partially obscured these views over time. Low, young pine trees and thick bands of mature evergreens effectively cut off many of the designed views from the study area. To the east are views through the woods to Ahwahnee Bridge, and from the southern portion of the meadow are long views to Royal Arches (Photo 41) and Yosemite Falls (Photo 42). There are views to the surrounding cliffs from several vantage points; the upper portion of Half Dome is visible in the east (Photo 43). Finally, the meadow affords the best views of The Ahwahnee (Photo 44) and its dramatic backdrop of granite cliffs and evergreens.

The views from the cottages are intermittent and season-dependent, due to the heavy vegetation. However, there are views to the Royal Arch Cascade (Photo 45), Ahwahnee Bridge (Photo 46), and the surrounding cliffs (Photo 47). From some places within the cottage area, there are views to Yosemite Falls as well.



Photo 41. View to Royal Arches from the meadow.

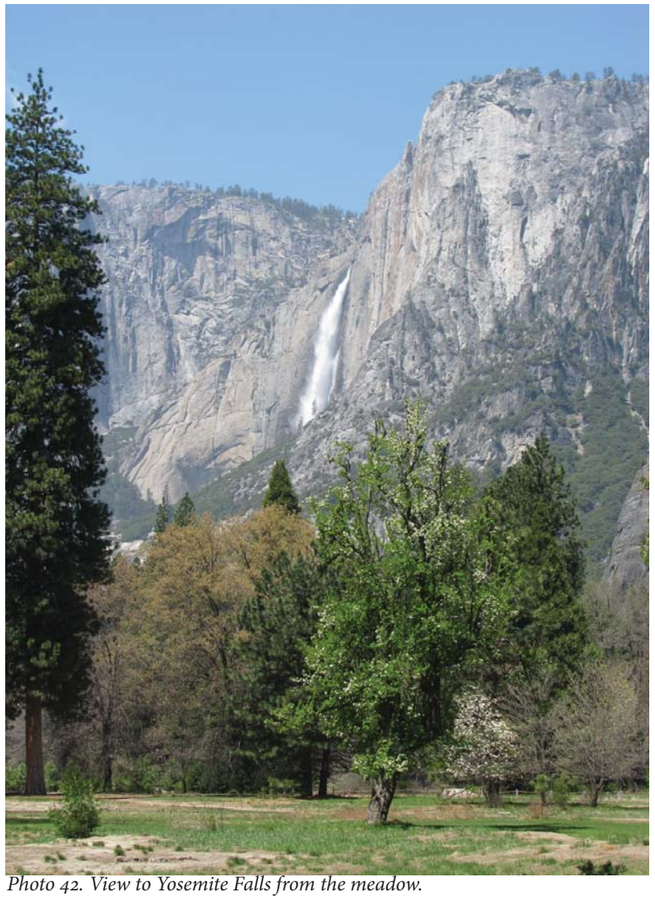


Photo 42. View to Yosemite Falls from the meadow.



Photo 43. View to Half Dome from the meadow.

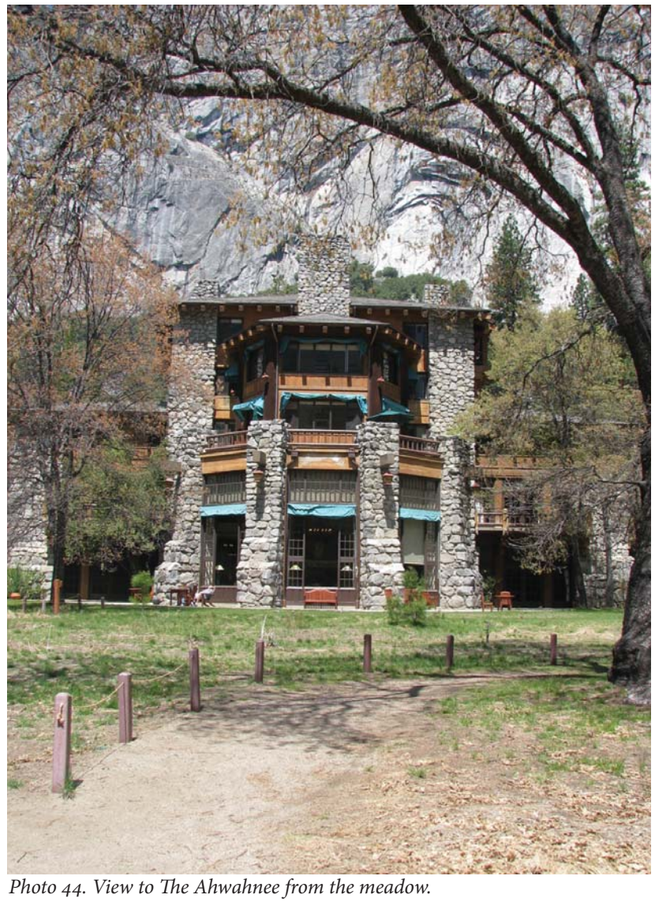


Photo 44. View to The Ahwahnee from the meadow.

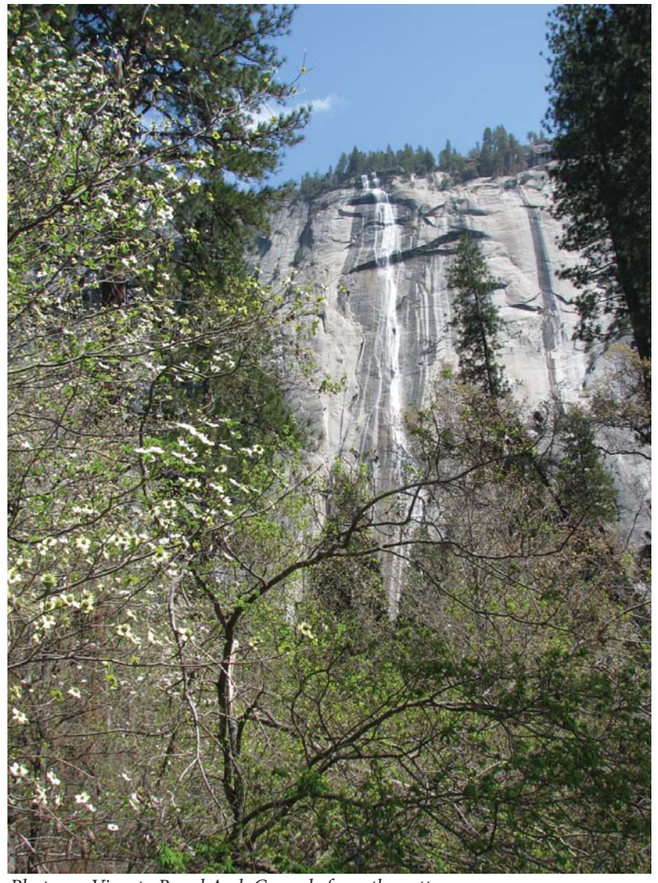


Photo 45. View to Royal Arch Cascade from the cottages.

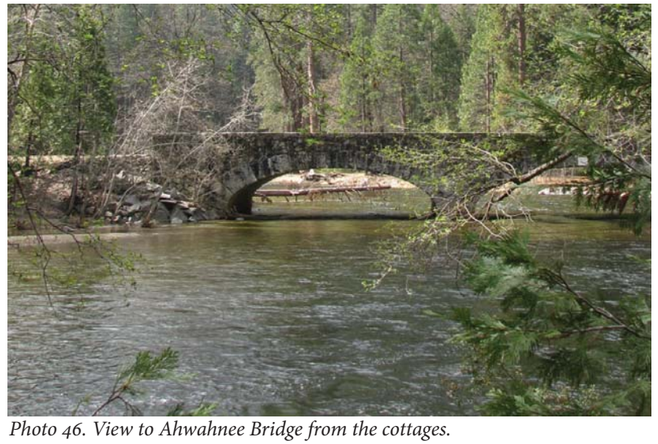


Photo 46. View to Ahwahnee Bridge from the cottages.

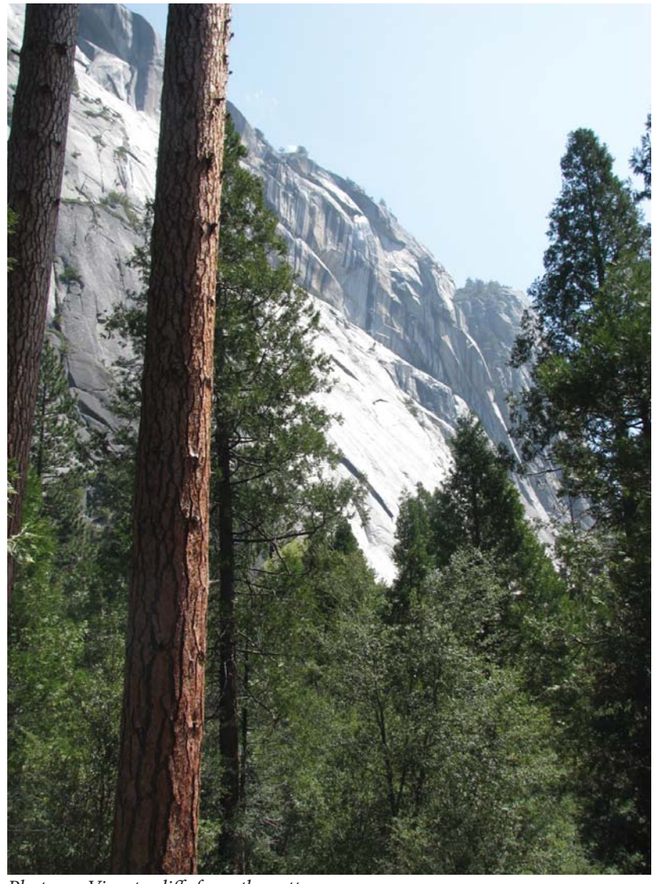


Photo 47. View to cliffs from the cottages.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Views and Vistas
not to scale

N

Figure 54. Views and Vistas.

Buildings and Structures (see Figure 55)

The central organizing element of the landscape is The Ahwahnee main hotel building, designed to recall the cliff face which is its backdrop. Other buildings within The Ahwahnee study area include the cottages and the dormitory, although these were sited to be obscured or unobtrusive from the main building. Additional structures within the study area include the gate house and gate post, stone culvert, bridges, the constructed water features, service buildings, and recreation facilities.

The western end of Ahwahnee Road is marked by the **gate house** (Photo 48) and **gate post**. Both of these structures are constructed from mortared rough cut stone and have traces of moss and lichen on them. Rustic in style and set against a large boulder, the gate house defines the entrance to The Ahwahnee study area. The gate post across the road matches the design of the gate house. The gate house is approximately 11-by-11 feet in size.

At the end of the entrance road, located in the parking area, is the **bus stop shelter** (Photo 49). The shelter—in a contemporary version of the rustic style— is constructed of wooden posts set in stone and concrete, with a peaked roof and wooden beam supports. Other structures in the parking area include a small **wooden bridge** adjacent to the reflecting pond (Bridge 5)(Photo 50). It is constructed of wood and does not have railings. The **reflecting pond** itself (Photo 51) is an irregularly-shaped constructed water feature. Almost 100 feet across and lined in concrete, the reflecting pond's water source is located near Bridge 5, with an outfall on its western edge near the path crossing. The pond is edged with stones. There is a substantial **stone culvert** over Royal Arch Creek at the valet parking area.

The dominant building in the study area is **The Ahwahnee**. The seven-story structure uses rustic elements on a massive scale. It incorporates both genuine natural building materials and materials that simulate natural materials such as concrete designed to resemble wood or stone. The porte cochère and entrance walkway incorporate peeled log columns and trusses which further define the building's design as rustic style (Photo 52).



Photo 48. Stone gate house.

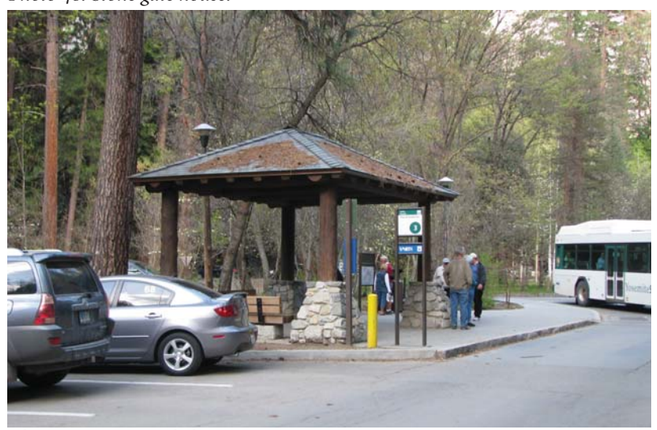


Photo 49. Bus stop shelter.



Photo 50. Wood bridge at reflecting pond.



Photo 51. Reflecting pond.



Photo 52. Porte cochere.

The hotel's overall Y-shape in plan includes the lounge wing to the south, the registration wing to the northeast, and dining wing to the northwest. The wings are several stories high and are set back at each level, creating a stacked, mountainous form that reflects the cliffs behind the hotel. Where the wings meet, the building is seven stories high. Balconies extend from each floor to provide views to the surrounding landscape.

The roofs are typically hipped, with a gable roof at the dining room. They are covered with slate and have copper flashing, gutters and downspouts that extend to the terrace at the ground level. Battered piers and pilasters along the exterior are granite masonry, and the dining room's exterior walls are formed of log columns with large wood-framed windows. Stained concrete mimicking wood siding is used on the exterior walls, although exterior doors are generally wood and glass and the building's large windows are framed in wood.

Loggias are located on either side of the Great Lounge, and are defined by large battered stone piers. The **concrete terrace** that surrounds the east, south, and west of the hotel is stamped in a flagstone pattern, with little of the original stain remaining. Many sections of the stamped concrete terraces have been replaced since the original installation, and there are several stripes of new plain (unstamped) concrete where new downspouts and pipes have been added.

The porte cochère on the north of the building has a hipped roof supported by log columns, with massive corner columns of granite. The entrance walkway that extends from the porte cochère also has wood and log construction.

The first view of the main building is of the rustic porte cochère . The wooden walkway at this covered structure leads visitors to the main entrance of the building. However, the massing and scale of the building are difficult to perceive from the northern entrance, and its grandeur is best observed from the south (Photo 53). The hotel's site was selected for the dramatic backdrop of the granite cliffs and the adjacent meadow near the Merced River. The large windows on



Photo 53. The Ahwahnee.

the first floor provide views to the walls of the Valley. The concrete terraces surrounding the hotel's east, south, and west sides are used as large, open sitting areas (Photo 54). These terraces vary in width from 10 feet at the narrowest to over 30 feet wide on the western side of the hotel. Attached to the terrace on the east side of the hotel is an irregularly-shaped concrete pool deck (Photo 55) with a faceted scored pattern. The circular **pool**, approximately 42 feet in diameter, is located adjacent to the east wing of the hotel.

The few support buildings and structures in this area were located deliberately to be unobtrusive, either by siting or through screening with vegetation or a large fence (Photo 56). These facilities include an **employee break shelter** set in the hotel service yard (Photo 57), and a wood-sided **mechanical building,** approximately 17-by-30 feet in size (Photo 58) on the western side of the hotel building.

The hotel's service yard is located in the center of the hotel building and contains a concrete loading dock with a roof, large wood platforms with trash containers, and concrete paving. The service yard is separated from the hotel entrance by a large **wood fence** of log posts supported by concrete footings and horizontal wood boards painted tan. It stretches over 130 feet from the hotel entrance to the west.

Located to the south of the hotel are several bridges crossing Royal Arch Creek. These include **Bridge 1**, north of the pool, made of unpainted wood with log railings (Photo 59); **Bridge 2** south of the



Photo 54. Concrete terrace.



Photo 57. Service yard.

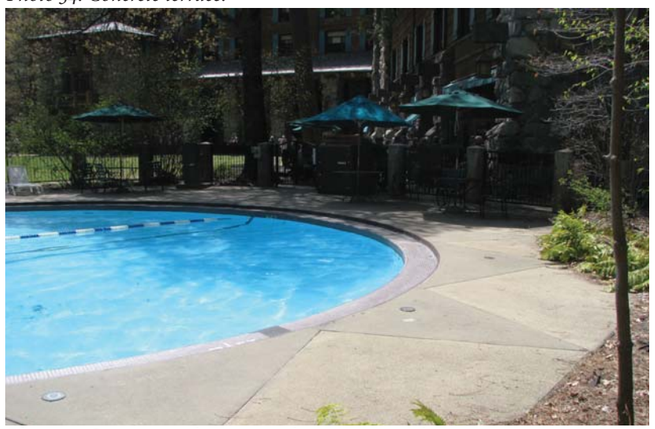


Photo 55. Concrete pool terrace and swimming pool.

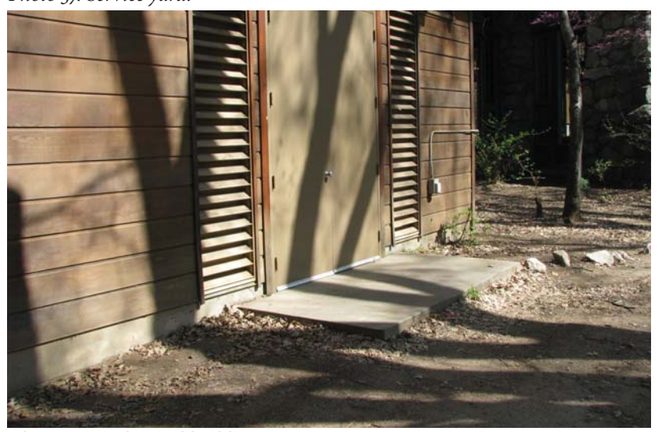


Photo 58. Mechanical building.



Photo 56. Wood fence at service yard.



Photo 59. Bridge 1.

pool and leading to the cottages (Photo 60) with log railings painted a greyish-brown and two integrated wood benches; **Bridge 3** south east of the cottages, with a wood deck and low wood curb (Photo 61); and **Bridge 4** near the creek's confluence with the Merced River with unpainted log railings buttressed with wood supports (Photo 62). These bridges are constructed with abutments of stone or concrete. The design of the bridges, with their log construction, echoes the rustic style of the hotel, though no one bridge is exactly like another.

The wooded area and meadow south of the hotel includes several structures such as a small concrete pad, water pump and associated structures, and the **tennis courts** (Photo 63). The tennis courts, set within a grove of trees, are the most prominent constructed feature in the meadow area. Approximately 120-by-120 feet, the two doubles courts have a green finish course. Flagstone terraces abut the tennis courts on the east and west. Metal link fencing—with metal posts and finials—includes a pitched awning support over the stone terraces.

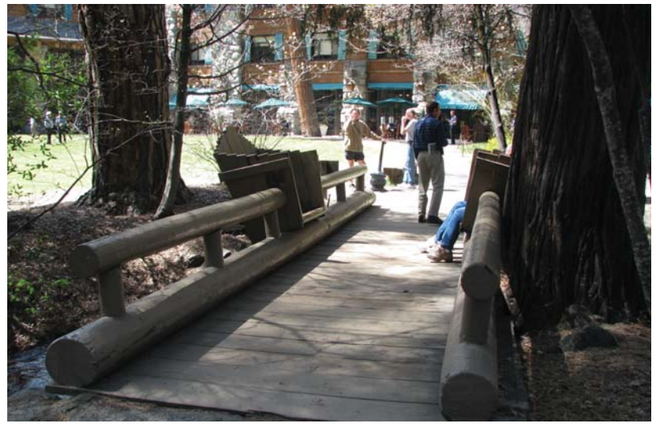


Photo 60. Bridge 2.



Photo 61. Bridge 3.



Photo 62. Bridge 4.



Photo 63. Tennis courts.

Across Royal Arch Creek from the hotel are eight single-story **cottage buildings** and one **storage building**. The cottages are sited east of the hotel sheltered in a wooded enclave. The apparently haphazard arrangement of the cottages may be a result of an attempt to maintain the privacy for each, as well as to situate the cottages within the existing grove of trees.

The cottage buildings are divided into 24 units, numbered 700-723. Each cottage is a single-story wood framed structure on a concrete foundation. They are all clad with wood board, and have gabled roofs with cedar shakes. The peak of each gable has a decorative wood grille. Units 700-707 are split into duplexes that are accessed by the southern path. These four cottages are rectangular in shape with a small projection on the northern side; the entrances to the cottages are located on the short end of the rectangle. They are approximately 17-by-48 feet in size. Units 708 and 709 are also part of a duplex located on the northern side of the loop. The duplex is similar in both size and shape the other duplexes. Units 710-714 are in one building, accessed from the northern path and the central path. Units 715-719 are in the second five-unit building, located on the east of the complex and accessed by all three paths. The five-unit cottages are H-shaped in plan, and have one large terrace within one of the central open areas, and smaller terraces on the other sides of the cottages. They are approximately 50-by-70 feet in size. Units 720-723 are housed in a cottage to the north of the other seven cottages, adjacent to the storage building. This cottage is rectangular in shape with small notches on the northwest and southwest corners. It is approximately 50-by-70 feet in size. The cottages vary in design (Photos 64 and 65), some with horizontal wood siding, others with vertical wood siding. Architectural details include projecting windows with molded trim below and rustic stone chimneys. Each cottage includes a small **terrace** at its door. There are four different surfacing materials used for the terraces; mortared flagstone (Photo 66), poured aggregate-embedded concrete (Photo 67), dry-laid concrete pavers (Photo 68), and poured accessible broom-finished concrete flush with the pathway (Photo 69).



Photo 64. Cottage.



Photo 65. Cottage.



Photo 66. Flagstone cottage terrace.



Photo 67. Aggregate-embedded concrete cottage terrace.



Photo 68. Concrete paver cottage terrace.



Photo 69. Accessible broom-finished concrete cottage terrace.

Just east of the cottages, on the other side of an intermittent drainageway, is a large, fragmented **concrete foundation** (Photo 70), approximately 165-by-45 feet, used for equipment storage.

Secluded within a wooded area on the opposite side of the study area is the wood-frame **dormitory**, a 160-by-35 foot, painted grey, rectangular shaped building constructed on a concrete block foundation with a peaked roof and a row of windows along each side (Photo 71). The dormitory has a narrow porch made of concrete with wood posts supporting a shed roof cover. Ramps with rails lead to the raised threshold at the door. A second covered wooden porch is located on the northwest of the building, and is accessed by a short flight of steps. The dormitory is sited parallel to the entry road, but is separated from it by a **constructed drainage channel** (Photo 72) clogged with vines.

North of the dormitory are three temporary **tent cabins** (Photo 73) made of white canvas, set on wood and concrete risers, and sited within a grove of tall evergreens. A wooden boardwalk and deck provide access to the tent cabins.

This cluster of dormitory and tents is largely hidden from the rest of the hotel study area. Three **footbridges** cross the constructed drainage channel that runs parallel to the long side of the dormitory, connecting to both the parking area and pedestrian pathways. The footbridges are wood with low log curbs.



Photo 70. Concrete pad at service/storage area.



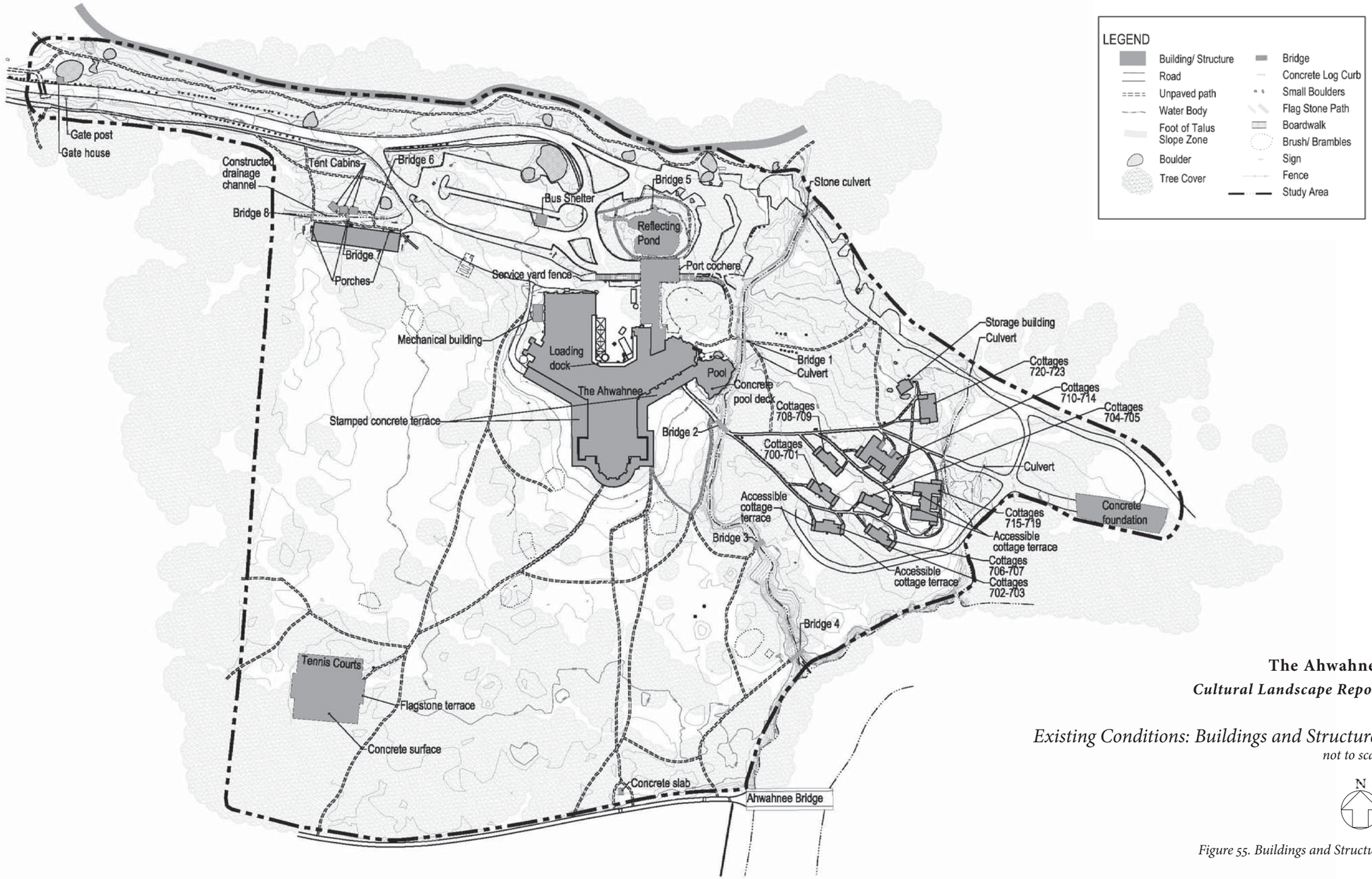
Photo 71. Dormitory.



Photo 72. Constructed drainage channel.



Photo 73. Tent cabins.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Buildings and Structures
not to scale

Figure 55. Buildings and Structures.

Circulation (see Figure 56)

The quarter-mile **Ahwahnee Road** (Photo 74) forms the entrance to The Ahwahnee study area. As visitors approach the hotel, they pass the open meadow on the south, and immediately enter the shady and narrow space of the entrance road corridor. Marked by the gate house and post, Ahwahnee Road is enclosed by tall mature evergreens on both sides and the talus slope on its north side. Ahwahnee Road is a two-lane paved road, striped along the center, flat and relatively straight, leading from the gate house to the parking areas. The road is uncurbed along most of its length, with plants and small boulders lining its edge. The entrance road first passes a parking area—largely obscured by trees—and proceeds to an arrival circle (Photo 75). The road divides just north of the hotel, and traffic turns right (counterclockwise) to enter the arrival circle—formed by the reflecting pond and garden area—and the hotel's porte cochère. The road is curbed with granite at this point. Vehicles exit the porte cochère and may park or exit the parking area by the lane on the north of the traffic circle to rejoin the entrance road and leave the hotel study area.

The road is flanked by a **bicycle path** to the south (Photo 76) and a **bridle path** (a segment of the Valley Loop Trail) to the north (Photo 77). The approximately 5-feet-wide asphalt-paved bicycle path parallels the entrance road for just over 1000 feet, and connects Yosemite Village to the hotel. The bridle path, nearly 1500 feet long in the study area, is unpaved and meanders between trees and boulders at the base of the talus slope.

The **parking** for the hotel includes public parking areas (Photo 78), and one valet parking area (Photo 79). The larger parking area near the hotel has three bays of parking, which are screened by evergreen trees. These bays are referred to in this report as the north, central, and south parking areas, and they are paved with asphalt and have painted stripes to delineate spaces. Additional parking spaces curve around the reflecting pond and are nestled between trees and boulders. Another lot extends east of the reflecting pond. The parking area contains approximately 130 spaces. The valet parking is accessible through a gate; this area is unpaved, with roughly defined parking


Photo 74. Ahwanhee Road entrance.


Photo 75. Arrival circle.


Photo 76. Bicycle path.


Photo 77. Bridle path.


Photo 78. Central parking area.


Photo 79. Valet parking area.

spaces carved out amidst the trees in the woodland surrounding it. The valet parking road curves south and east on the perimeter of the study area boundary to join with the service and storage area east of the cottages. As a result of a 2009 rock slide, 43 parking spaces—29 of which are paved—were closed. These spaces are located along the talus slope in the northern section of the parking area.

Sidewalks (Photo 80) as well as paths and crosswalks traverse the parking area. The sidewalks are primarily concrete. The sidewalks are made accessible from the parking pavement by ramps. A **wooden walkway** stretches approximately 180 feet across the southern edge of the arrival circle and provides a connection between the parking area and the hotel entrance. The wooden walkway has areas flush with the asphalt paving surface along its otherwise low metal-edged curb.

Paths of varying materials circle the reflecting pond. A mortared **stone path,** nearly 450 feet long and approximately 3 feet wide, encircles the pond on the outer edge of the surrounding garden (Photo 81) (although it is missing a section of paving). An **inner loop path** of concrete pavers connects with this flagstone path to provide two rings of pedestrian circulation.

There is an **asphalt sidewalk** (Photo 82) extending west of the parking area to the dormitory building, and an unpaved path that adjoins the dormitory on its north side. Other **unpaved paths** connect the tent cabins and bicycle trail to the parking area, and extend from the westernmost bridge north of the dormitory to the bicycle path to the north.

The circulation systems directly around The Ahwahnee are primarily pedestrian, with the exception of an **unpaved road** (Photo 83) on the west side of the building that provides access to the meadow area, and vehicular connection to the service yard in the center of the hotel.

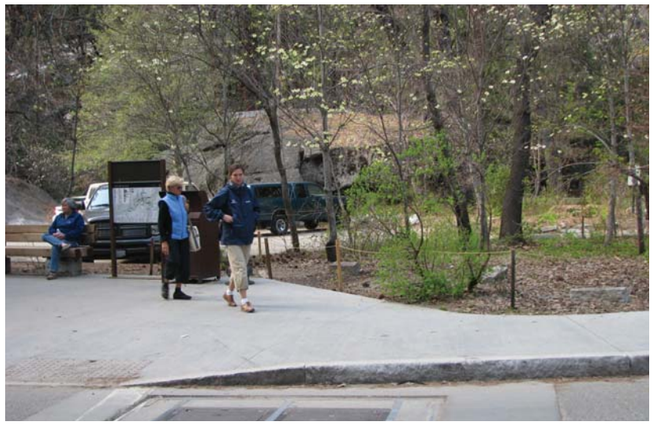


Photo 80. Concrete sidewalk near bus shelter.



Photo 81. Paving at reflecting pond.



Photo 82. Asphalt path to dormitory.



Photo 83. Unpaved fire road.

The primary pedestrian circulation features near the hotel are the wide, stamped concrete terraces that wrap around the west, south, and east side of the building. These terraces are documented as part of the *Buildings and Structures* section earlier in this report.

Other circulation features include sidewalks, flagstone paths, and unpaved paths. One path leaves the terraces from the eastern corner near the pool; this **path** is approximately 6 feet wide and paved with asphalt (Photo 84), and connects the hotel terrace to Bridge 2 and the cottages beyond. A **flagstone path** almost 120 feet long and 3 feet wide, set in earth, connects the terrace south of the hotel to the meadow (Photo 85). A smaller **flagstone path**, approximately 180 feet long and 4 feet wide, connects these two along the west bank of Royal Arch Creek. An unpaved path departs the terrace immediately south of the Solarium and leads to the tennis courts in the southwest of the meadow.

The meadow is crossed by pedestrian paths and a vehicle route used primarily for maintenance and emergency purposes. The pedestrian circulation features include **unpaved paths** (Photo 86), and flagstone paving at the tennis courts. The paths traverse the meadow in a meandering and poorly-defined way, and were likely created by guests and visitors entering or exiting the site from the bicycle path to the south of the study area.

The cottages are accessible by means of pedestrian pathways, and vehicle traffic (only for service and fire access). The types of pedestrian paths in this area include **asphalt paths** approximately 4 feet in width (Photo 87) and **unpaved paths**. The paths provide a connection between the hotel and the cottages at the two bridges crossing Royal Arch Creek (Bridge 1 and Bridge 2). The path from Bridge 1 is unpaved, and meanders through the woods towards the service road north of the cottages, and also south to link with the asphalt path from Bridge 2. The main asphalt path provides access to the cottages; there are two main path branches that link to the individual cottages by means of smaller asphalt paths.



Photo 84. Asphalt path leading to cottages from hotel.



Photo 85. Flagstone path to meadow.



Photo 86. Unpaved paths in meadow.



Photo 87. Asphalt paths at cottages.

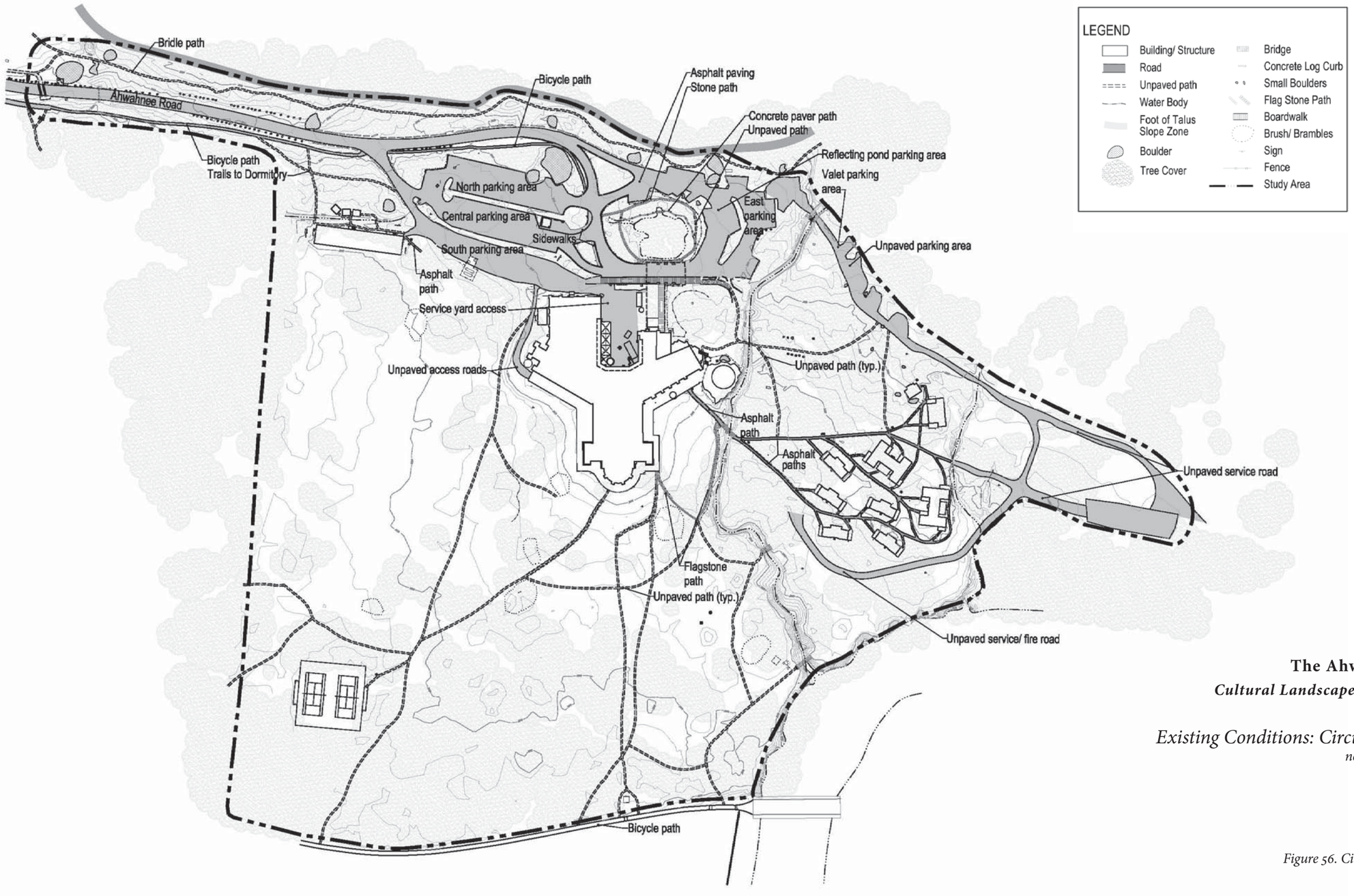
The larger asphalt path continues east from Bridge 2 and leads towards the service and storage area east of the cottages. As this path crosses a small culvert, its asphalt paving disappears and it is unpaved for the rest of its length. This unpaved path connects to the unpaved access roads (Photo 88) which circle the cottages to the south, and become the valet parking area (Photo 89) to the north and west. A concrete foundation has been incorporated into this circulation system at the far east of the study area.



Photo 88. Unpaved service road.



Photo 89. Unpaved valet parking area.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Circulation
not to scale

N

Figure 56. Circulation.

Small-scale Features (see Figure 57)

Small-scale features in The Ahwahnee study area include hundreds of features such as signs, curbs, fences, trash receptacles, lights, irrigation, storm water drains and drainage pipes. The majority of these are contemporary features made of metal, although some exhibit the rustic design style of the hotel.

The most prominent sign is the main hotel sign which is mounted to the roof of the gate house (Photo 90). The sign is painted metal with the distinctive arts and crafts lettering of the hotel's name. Other signs include a large number of traffic signs, NPS standard painted brown wooden or metal warning and wayfinding signs (Photo 91), a tennis court sign, and a bus service sign. A metal wayside exhibit is located in the meadow (Photo 92).

Curbing and road markers include concrete half log curbs (Photo 93), small boulders (Photo 94), concrete curbs, painted concrete curbs to designate accessible parking spaces, and granite curbs (Photo 95). These are located along Ahwahnee Road and throughout the parking area.



Photo 90. Gate house sign.



Photo 91. Signs, trash receptacle, post and rope fence, and bollard light.



Photo 92. Wayside exhibit.



Photo 93. Concrete half log curbs.



Photo 94. Small boulders.



Photo 95. Granite curbs.

Fences include a post-and-rope fence style, made mainly of composite wood or wood (Photo 96) and used throughout the study area; a chain link fence at the tennis courts; and wood fence at the storage area near the cottages. There is a metal gate to control access to the valet parking area, and a metal fence with concrete posts surrounding the pool area. Metal bollards are used in the parking area to designate pedestrian traffic areas.

Irrigation- and drainage-related small-scale features include culverts, sprinkler heads, couplers, and elements associated with the pump used to divert water from the Merced River. Utilities such as fire hydrants, storm water inlets, and manholes covers are also visible in the landscape.

Site furnishings include wood benches, tables, umbrellas, and chairs at the hotel terrace (Photo 97); pool-side furnishings; wood planters at the porte cochère (Photo 98) and the terraces; metal tables and chairs at the cottages; a painted wood bench at the tennis courts; and log benches. Trash receptacles such as bear-proof trash and storage bins and cigarette receptacles are found throughout the study area.

Lighting includes tree-mounted lights, and wood light posts (Photo 99) in the parking area, building mounted light fixtures along the hotel terraces (Photo 100) and wood fence at the service yard, and bollard lights (Photo 101) in the cottages and meadow areas.



Photo 96. Post-and-rope fencing.



Photo 99. Light post at parking.



Photo 97. Wood site furnishings.



Photo 100. Building mounted lights.



Photo 98. Planter box.



Photo 101. Bollard light.

Dumpsters (Photo 102) are located near the hotel, and metal bicycle racks (Photo 103) are used throughout the grounds.

There are tree planters near the hotel building, such as a wooden tree grate (Photo 104) and circular concrete planters near the dining room wing and in the service yard.

There are many other individual small-scale features throughout the study area. At the tennis courts are nets on metal poles, a non-functioning water fountain (Photo 105), and a practice wall. There are upright log posts (Photo 106) and rain chains at the cottages; picnic tables, and vending machines around the dormitory and tent cabins; and the flagpole (Photo 107) near the porte cochère.



Photo 102. Dumpster.



Photo 103. Bicycle racks.



Photo 104. Wood tree grate.



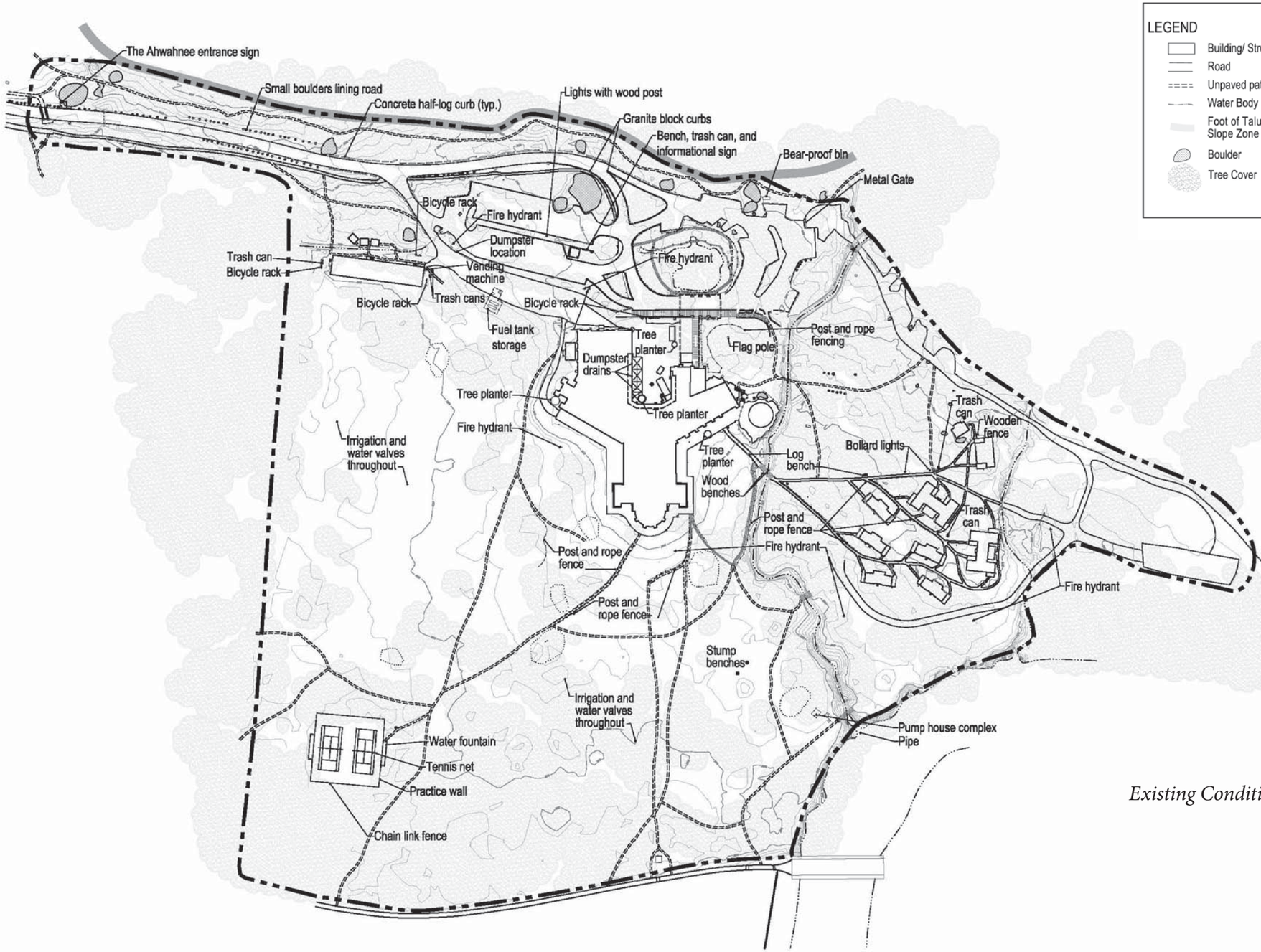
Photo 105. Water fountain at tennis courts.



Photo 106. Upright log posts.



Photo 107. Flagpole.



The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Existing Conditions: Small-scale Features
not to scale

Figure 57. Small-scale Features.

Archeological Sites

The Ahwahnee study area lies within the Yosemite Valley Archeological District, added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, which comprises 8,100 acres of Valley floor and numerous sites. Archeological investigations undertaken since then have revealed more than 100 additional archeological sites. Archeological remains in Yosemite Valley consist of habitation sites, bedrock mortars primarily for pounding acorn, and also vegetal material and small mammals; midden deposits, containing artifacts and food byproducts; rock shelters; lithic scatters; building foundations; and pictographs. Some isolated burials have also been found.[7]

Archeological investigations at The Ahwahnee reveal that the site has been occupied almost continuously for over 8,000 years.[8] The resources associated with the prehistoric occupation of the site include features such as a midden deposit and several bedrock milling stations. This site was the location of Wis'-kah-la, the village or summer camp used by Yosemite Indians. The historic occupation of the site—from the earliest European American settlement of the Valley through the end of World War II—includes the Lamon homestead, Royal Arch Farm and Harris Campground, Kenneyville, The Ahwahnee, and the U.S. Naval hospital use of the hotel buildings and study area. Archeological evidence of this continuous occupation reveals information important to history and prehistory.

Archeological investigations have included the following projects.

- A survey by Napton, Albee, and Greathouse (1975) initially inventoried sites on The Ahwahnee grounds as part of a wider inventory of the Valley.

- A major 1985-86 survey project, detailed by Baldrica in a 1988 report, consisted of monitoring ground-disturbing activities related to the installation of new underground water and electric lines in the Valley. The monitoring mitigated impacts of these infrastructure projects. Archeological monitoring at The Ahwahnee included trenching for three new underground water lines and nine fire hydrants around the hotel, and a hydrant loop around The Ahwahnee cottages.[9] Prehistoric artifacts were identified and recovered dating from earlier than A.D. 600 to as late as the 1800s, and historic artifacts from the 1800s and early 1900s.

- Hull, Bevill and Kelly's "Report of Selected Subsurface Archeological Investigations in Yosemite Valley, 1986-1991," (1995) along with an additional study by Hull and Kelly in the same year, reaffirmed and in some cases expanded, the boundaries of sites initially identified the 1978 survey. Electronic site forms were completed by this project team to integrate Yosemite's listed archeological sites into a statewide database.

- Nilsson, Bevill, and Button's report "Archeological Investigation of the Priority 3 Sites, Yosemite National Park, California" (2009) evaluated 12 sites in Yosemite Valley to evaluate their data potential and to identify strategies for their management. The sites within The Ahwahnee study area previously determined to contribute to the Yosemite Valley Archeological District were confirmed as contributing after the investigations associated with this study were completed.

Information about identified archeological sites at The Ahwahnee is consolidated from these studies.[10]

Isolated archeological features have been identified in The Ahwahnee study area. An isolated feature is a scatter, deposit, or non-portable feature (such as a pipeline) that does not contain a sufficient amount of material to be called a site, and represents a restricted time span or single event.[11] Isolates have been found while trenching for utilities south of the hotel.

A 16,956 square meter site complex, is located entirely around and under hotel building. Prior to the hotel construction, the complex of Kenneyville (1870s-1926) was constructed here, overlapping the prehistoric habitation site. These sites appear to have been heavily impacted by the construction of the hotel and subsequent ground disturbing activities, and have diminished integrity in some places. However, rockshelters and pounding rocks are present in this area. A large boulder on the northern edge of the north parking area is a prominent bedrock mortar.

Prehistoric sites, representing a portion of the Indian village of Wis'-kah-lah, consist of a group of boulder milling features north of the parking area and several granite overhang rockshelters. There were also subsurface artifact deposits discovered while trenching for utility lines in 1985-1986. Prehistoric material and midden were observed, including lithics dated to before A.D. 600, and A.D. 1600 to 1850. A portable milling slab and handstones, steatite beads, fragments of burned bone, and other artifacts were also recovered.

Historic materials were found scattered around the south, west, and north sides of the hotel building. Sections of three concrete foundations were found southwest of the hotel buried by six inches of soil. Other historic artifacts, likely associated with the Kenneyville stable operation, included ceramic and glass fragments, nails, and horseshoes.[12] Remnant foundations from Kenneyville structures have been located within the study area as well.[13]

A site representing a portion of the village of Wis'-kah-lah is located on an open flat east of Royal Arch Creek in the vicinity of the cottages. It was identified in 1975 and monitored during utility line trenching in 1985-1986, with most artifacts removed for curation.

A large site consisting of granite boulders with mortar cups, and obsidian and other lithic materials and some groundstone along with historic period bottle glass and ceramic fragments was also found.

7 Linda Wedel Greene, *Historic Resource Study. Yosemite: The Park and its Resources* (Yosemite National Park, CA: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1987), 29-30.
8 Elena Nilsson, et al. *Archeological Investigations of the Priority 3 Sites, Yosemite National Park, California* (Yosemite Research Center, 2009), iv.
9 M. Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey* (Yosemite National Park: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1988), 22-23.
10 Also see M. Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey (1988)*, 64-105 for detailed list of artifacts found on The Ahwahnee grounds.
11 M. Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey* (1988), 57
12 M. Baldrica, *Draft Archeological Survey* (1988), 37-38
13 Elena Nilsson, et al. *Archeological Investigations of the Priority 3 Sites, Yosemite National Park, California* (2009), 146-150

Condition Assessment of Landscape Features

This section includes a description of the physical condition of the existing landscape features and systems within the study area using established NPS standards in *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*. There are four standards defining the conditions of cultural landscape features and systems:

- Good: indicates the cultural landscape shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural landscape's historical and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.
- Fair: indicates the cultural landscape shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within three to five years to prevent further harm to its historical and/or natural values. The cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the significant characteristics and features of the cultural landscape, if left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, will cause the landscape to degrade to a poor condition.
- Poor: indicates the cultural landscape shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural areas.
- Unknown: indicates that not enough information is available to make an evaluation.

The existing landscape features and systems have been assessed and assigned a rating according to these standards. A rationale has been given for each rating. Features that are assessed as being in good condition are not described in detail. A complete listing of inventoried features and their condition is located in *Appendix A* of this report.

Representative landscape features in good condition

(Figure 58)

Buildings and Structures

The Ahwahnee
Cottages
Tent cabins
Culvert over Royal Arch Creek at valet parking entrance
Bridge 5 at reflecting pond
Bridge 1
New concrete and concrete paver terraces at the cottages
Gate house and gate post
Mechanical building
Swimming pool
Bus stop shelter

Small-scale Features

Trash receptacles
Site furnishings



Tent cabins



Bridge 5 at reflecting pond



Bus stop shelter



Culvert over Royal Arch Creek



Accessible concrete terrace



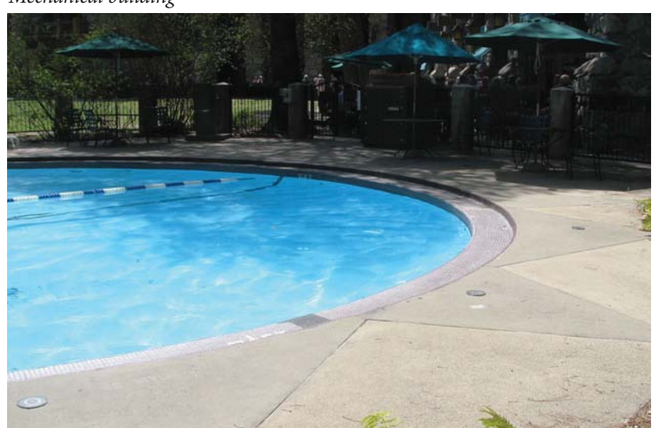
Mechanical building



Bridge 1



Gate house and gate post



Swimming pool

Figure 58. Representative landscape features in good condition

Representative landscape features in fair condition
(Figure 59)
Circulation
Bicycle path: cracked and heaving from tree roots, edges deteriorating.
Stamped concrete terraces: some areas spalling.
Sidewalks: cracked and eroding edges.
Service access roads: washout and ponding.

Buildings and Structures
Pool paving: paving is cracked.
Reflecting pond: concrete lining is leaking, stones missing from edging.
Bridge 2: paint is peeling.
Bridge 2 bench: paint is peeling.
Stone paving at tennis courts: edge is chipping, mortar crumbling.
Storage building: siding not intact, awning out of alignment.
(This condition was corrected after the condition assessment was undertaken for the CLR).
Bridge 3: boards split, warped, loose.

Views and Vistas
View to Ahwahnee from meadow: obscured by vegetation.
Views to Yosemite Falls from the reflecting pond: obscured by encroaching vegetation, primarily tree growth.
View to Yosemite Falls from meadow; obscured by encroaching vegetation, primarily tree growth.
View to Ahwahnee Bridge from cottages; obscured by encroaching vegetation, primarily tree growth.

Vegetation
Meadow lawn/grasses: sections overgrown with blackberry.
Lawn: bare spots, overgrown with blackberry.

Small-scale Features
Granite block curbs: some eroded, or chipped, buried or out of alignment.
Concrete half-log curbs: some shifted, out of alignment, partially covered with asphalt.
Post-and-rope fence: posts are heaving out of alignment.
Metal bollards: paint is chipping, bollards are out of alignment.
Sign post: wood is split and stained.
Upright log bench/post: logs split, cracked.



Ponding at valet parking area



Loose wood siding and awning at storage building (corrected)



Blackberry in meadow



Missing stones at reflecting pond



Peeling paint at Bridge 2



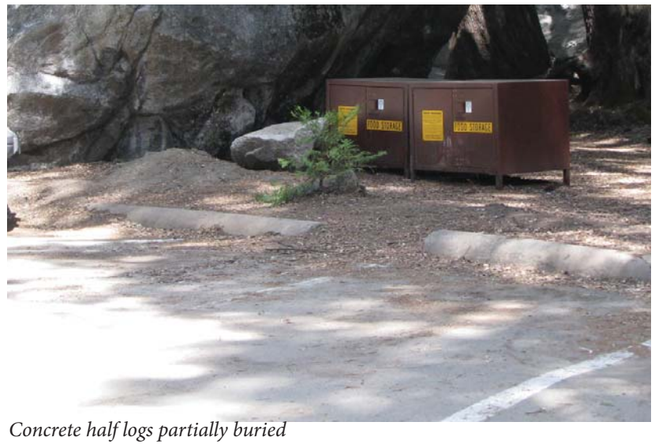
Granite curbing heaved out of alignment



Cracked mortar at tennis court paving



Eroding concrete at stamped concrete terraces



Concrete half logs partially buried

Figure 59. Representative landscape features in fair condition

Representative landscape features in poor condition
(Figure 60)
Buildings and Structures
Bridge 4: railings are unstable, boards split, stone buttress is deteriorating.
Tennis courts: surface is chipped, spalling, fence overgrown with vines, fence bent.
Concrete pad at service/storage area: cracked, partially buried in soil.
Constructed drainage channel: eroding, filled with debris.
Wood fence at service yard: wood posts cracked, concrete base cracked.

Circulation
Central parking area: pavement is cracked and split.
East parking area: pavement is cracking, heaving from tree roots.
South parking area: pavement is cracked and gouged.
Stone path at reflecting pond: stones are heaving, mortar deteriorated, stones are missing.
Stamped concrete terrace: sections replaced with no stamped pattern, crumbling edges, worn down stamped pattern.
Stone path south of concrete terraces: stones are missing and/or partially buried.
Asphalt path: edges cracked and heaving from tree roots.

Vegetation
Lawn: dying, worn away.
Meadow: volunteer pine saplings overgrowing open areas.

Small-scale Features
Concrete half-log curbs: broken, spalling, misplaced, buried.
Poured concrete curb: chipped, broken, heaved from freeze/thaw and tree roots, out of alignment.
Wooden bench at tennis courts: paint peeling, boards warped.
Wooden fence at service yard: boards are broken, cracked, need repainting.



Bridge 4 railings loose



Cracked concrete and log posts at service yard fence



Missing grass cover



Tennis courts fencing overgrown with vines



Asphalt paving gouged from snow plows



Missing flagstones at reflecting pond path



Constructed drainage channel overgrown with vegetation



Cracked concrete at stamped concrete terraces



Meadow overgrown with pine saplings

Figure 60. Representative landscape features in poor condition

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The Ahwahnee is a designed historic landscape that represents the work of the NPS, park concessioners, and consulting designers between 1925 and 1942. The design and development of The Ahwahnee study area was influenced by historical trends in 20th century conservation, landscape architecture, architecture, and tourism. The landscape also retains evidence of earlier use and modification by American Indians; early settlement and farming activities; and later use of the site by the U.S. Navy during World War II. The natural features of Yosemite Valley—the dramatic cliffs, meadows, forests, rivers, and waterfalls for which it is known—provide the environmental setting for the study area.

Documentation of Historical Significance

Resources within The Ahwahnee study area are described and documented in four nominations, including a National Register (NRHP) nomination (1977) and a National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination (1987). Both of these nominations focus on the architectural significance of the Ahwahnee hotel with only marginal discussions of the designed historic landscape. Archeological resources in the study area are described in the Yosemite Valley Archeological District nomination (1978). The most recent effort to document resources at The Ahwahnee is the Yosemite Valley Historic District (YVHD) nomination (2006), which incorporates information from previous nominations and expands the documentation to include the significance of the historic designed landscape within The Ahwahnee developed area. Because this CLR and the analysis and evaluation of The Ahwahnee study area build on information presented in these nominations, each is summarized below.

The NRHP nomination (1977) for The Ahwahnee describes a national level of significance for the hotel based on architectural significance. The nomination describes the style of architecture as rustic or "environmental," and establishes the historic context as national park development in the western United States and Canada. The statement of significance in the nomination states, "the significance of the hotel lies in the preservation of the exterior of the building and its setting… The hotel is the primary resource on the site; the ancillary buildings and structures are not significant individually, but contribute to the site as a whole."[1] The period of significance in the nomination is 1925-1927.

The NHL nomination (1987) for The Ahwahnee broadens the areas of significance for the property. While the "principal significance of The Ahwahnee lies in its monumental rustic architecture," the NHL nomination also defines significance associated with famous visitors and patrons, including artists, actors, and dignitaries.[2] Important individuals mentioned in the nomination include Stephen Mather and Horace Albright of the National Park Service; Donald Tresidder of Yosemite Park & Curry Company (YP&C Co.); and Gilbert Stanley Underwood, the Los Angeles architect who designed The Ahwahnee. Dr. Phyllis Ackerman and Arthur Upham Pope, and artists Jeanette Dyer Spencer and Robert Boardman Howard are identified in the nomination for their contributions to the design of the hotel's interior. Finally, the NHL nomination adds the role of the hotel and its "place in California history and the development of the concessions industry at Yosemite National Park" as the basis for its regional significance.[3] The period of significance in the NHL nomination is 1925-present. Features that convey the significance of the design include the main hotel building, meadow, stone gate house, parking lots, pond, and walkways at the hotel's entrance.

1 U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Nomination for The Ahwahnee Hotel* (1977).
2 U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Nomination for The Ahwahnee Hotel* (1987).

According to *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1995), to be eligible for the NRHP, a historic property must meet one or more of the following criteria:

A. Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

B. Be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The YVHD nomination (2006) documents The Ahwahnee as one of three developed areas within Yosemite Valley.[4] Building on the previous nominations and new research, this nomination places the significance of the hotel and the development of the grounds in a larger historical context. While the hotel remains the primary resource associated with The Ahwahnee developed area, the nomination also includes other documentation of the designed landscape constituting the grounds and developments around the hotel.[5] Cultural landscape characteristics such as spatial organization, circulation, vegetation, land use patterns and activities, and natural systems and features related to the design are described. In addition to these cultural landscape characteristics, the design intent for much of the articulated landscape is analyzed to understand how the grounds functioned both as an elegant setting for the hotel and as a place designed for visitor enjoyment and inspiration within the natural grandeur of Yosemite Valley.

The YVHD nomination establishes The Ahwahnee's significance for its role in the development of tourism, national parks, and the concessions industry. The Ahwahnee is historically significant as a representation of the resorts developed in the early 20th century that attracted wealthy visitors in the country's new national park system. Greater visitation to Yosemite Valley in the early 20th century reflected the overall mobility of a public with increasing access to automobiles and an expanded railroad and road system in Mariposa County. Park concessioners capitalized on these trends with the construction of luxury hotels catering to elite visitors at the country's

3 U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Nomination for The Ahwahnee Hotel* (1987).
4 The other developed areas include Camp Curry and Yosemite Village.
5 The use of the term "developed area" in the YVHD nomination was required by the National Register because the entire Valley was designated a "district" and the Register does not allow a district within a district for the purposes of the nomination.

most scenic parks. The nascent National Park Service's influence over these changes—evident in Mather's enthusiasm to create the YP&C Co.—helped create a dynamic process that generated new development responsive to the demands of the American public, yet sympathetic to the spectacular natural resources in the nation's park system.

The YVHD nomination also establishes the high level of significance of The Ahwahnee as a work of rustic style architecture. Using indigenous materials such as local Sierra logs and rough-cut granite, the building was constructed on a monumental scale. Its craftsmanship, detailing, and innovative use of materials, such as poured concrete designed to simulate wood, enhance the building's rustic but luxurious character. The hotel is significant as the work of a master, Gilbert Stanley Underwood, whose commissions at multiple national parks—including Bryce, Zion, Grand Canyon, and Yellowstone—cemented his status as a practitioner of the emerging rustic style. The architectural design of the cottages is also important. Designed by Eldridge T. Spencer, the cottages do not exhibit the same rustic style, but have a simpler quality that distinguishes them from the larger and grander hotel. Single-story buildings, framed and clad in wood with simple plans, massing, and roof forms, the cottages display small variations in design with careful attention to detail. The cottages' setting, separated from the hotel in a more secluded wooded area, is a distinctive part of the overall grounds.

In addition, this nomination provides the documentation to expand the area of significance to include The Ahwahnee as a significant cultural landscape. The design of the landscape was informed by the rustic style that was being established at the time by landscape engineers Charles Punchard, Daniel Hull, and Thomas Vint. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., a prominent landscape architect whose firm, Olmsted Brothers, influenced the design of The Ahwahnee study area, contributed to the expression of early 20th century NPS design methods, materials, and styles at The Ahwahnee. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. served on Yosemite's advisory committee from the 1920s into the 1950s, and aided the NPS Landscape Division in resolving design problems throughout the park. His 1927 plan for The Ahwahnee landscape and his 1931 plan for the hotel's reflecting pond were important elements in the study area's evolution. The Olmsted Brothers landscape plan showcasing park vegetation through the planting of wildflowers and shrubs native to the Sierra Nevada resulted in a wildflower preserve at The Ahwahnee, the first in the National Park system. As a "splendid example of a naturalistic landscape in the wilderness," the preserve influenced other NPS landscape designers and encouraged other concessioners to adopt a similar approach to planting design.[6] The historic designed landscape exemplifies the principles and practices of rustic design in a way that complements the hotel building, uniting the two in a holistic design.

Important archeological features and sites within the study area, which are documented as part of the Yosemite Valley Archeological District, are not directly addressed in this report unless information is publicly available or critical to preservation or management of the historic designed landscape. The entire Yosemite Valley also is considered an American Indian Traditional Cultural Property, based on ethnogeographic information, and a formal National Register nomination is planned to document these values.

Other Potential Areas of Significance

The Ahwahnee also may be significant as the location of a naval hospital during World War II, although the full context for this significance has not been established. Commissioned as a hospital between 1943 and 1945, The Ahwahnee study area was substantially transformed to accommodate the unusual demands placed on the facility due to its remote location. The use of The Ahwahnee as a Special Hospital by the Navy during World War II was a unique event in Yosemite National Park's history and may have been part of a groundbreaking experiment in the evolution of military medical treatment and facilities. The use of The Ahwahnee by the Navy during World War II also fits within the context of military history, and the U.S. Armed Services' use of NPS resources during wartime. However, with few exceptions, the landscape does not retain features related to the World War II period, and Navy use of the site is therefore excluded from the analysis in this report. Treatment of structures that do remain from the Navy era—the employee dormitory and the concrete foundation east of the cottages—are discussed in *Part II, Treatment*.

Proposed Period of Significance

The cultural landscape study area boundary adopted for this CLR varies from the boundaries for The Ahwahnee in the National Register (1977), the NHL (1987), and the YVHD (2006) nominations, as indicated on Figures 2 through 5 in the *Introduction* to this report. Therefore, the period of significance and the study area described and evaluated in this CLR are qualified as "proposed," until such time as the existing nominations are revised to update the nomination boundaries and formalize the period of significance. Based on previous documentation and research undertaken for the CLR, the proposed period of significance for The Ahwahnee study area is 1925 to 1942. The start date for this period reflects the inception of the YP&C Co., as well as the beginning of design for the hotel; the end date represents the end of the rustic design period in Yosemite Valley.

The proposed period of significance for the cultural landscape study area used in this report fits within the periods established in previous nominations as defined below:

- 1977 NRHP nomination period of significance: 1925-1927
- 1987 NHL nomination period of significance: 1925-present
- 2006 YVHD nomination period of significance: 1855-1942 (for the whole Yosemite Valley).

6 Linda McClelland, *Building the National Parks* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998), 270

Comparative Analysis of Historic and Existing Conditions

The comparative analysis for The Ahwahnee study area documents the relationship between the conditions of the landscape in 2009 (described in *Existing Conditions*) and the landscape conditions that existed during the proposed period of significance (described in *Site History*). The analysis focuses on existing landscape features, although some non-extant historic features are also identified. The goals of the analysis are to:

- Document landscape resources that contribute to the historic significance and character of The Ahwahnee study area (the YVHD nomination (2006) provides a basis for identification of contributing features in the study area)
- Assess the integrity of remaining landscape resources
- Provide a foundation for treatment recommendations assuring long-term preservation of significant resources.

Landscape features that remain from the proposed period of significance and retain integrity are either considered contributing resources or landscape characteristics that contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Landscape features that post-date the proposed period of significance, or that date from the proposed period of significance but lack integrity, are considered non-contributing. Landscape features that are non-contributing but that do not detract from the historic character of the landscape may be considered compatible features but are not eligible for the National Register. Many of the landscape resources, patterns, and features discussed in this section are documented and evaluated using comparative photographs to illustrate the type and degree of landscape change, and support the assessments provided in this report.

The comparative analysis is organized into sections, based on the landscape characteristics described in *Existing Conditions*. These characteristics include natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, topography, vegetation, views and vistas, buildings and structures, circulation, and small-scale features. A complete list of evaluated resources is provided in *Appendix A*. (See Figure 69 at the end of this section for the locations of these resources.)

Natural systems and features

The natural systems and features within and near the study area inform most aspects of its design. The important organizing natural systems and features of the landscape—the level terrain, the towering cliffs, and the Merced River—remain from the proposed period of significance. However, like many natural systems and features, these features change over time: the Merced River floods and overruns its steep banks, and the cliffs experience rock falls that alter the talus slope.

Historically, the ecology of the landscape was altered by people who used fire and other methods to clear trees and control the landscape in order to promote the growth of certain valuable plants such as black oaks. The meadow has perhaps undergone the most dramatic ecological shift, as it was both drained and irrigated during the proposed period of significance; these manipulations affected both its hydrology and natural vegetation.

The historic geological instability of the Valley is evident along the talus slope north of Ahwahnee Road. The base of the talus slope and the imposing cliff to the north are the dominant natural features near the road and have remained fairly consistent since the proposed period of significance, with the exception of occasional rock slides that alter the configuration of the boulders at the bottom of the cliff. Boulders that have fallen from the cliffs above are present along the northern side of Ahwahnee Road, and remain from the proposed period of significance. Some large boulders within the parking area apparently were used to organize the design of the road and parking.

Royal Arch Creek and another unnamed intermittent drainageway flowed through the area during the proposed period of significance. These drainageways bisect the study area. A tributary of the Merced River, Royal Arch Creek likely shifted in alignment from time to time as a result of flooding. This creek was manipulated during the proposed period of significance with piping, as water was pumped to its northern end during dry summer months in order to provide water flow south towards the river. Its banks have been reinforced with stone since the proposed period of significance. The YVHD nomination identified Royal Arch Creek and the other drainageway as contributing structures (S9 Ahwahnee Hotel Drainageways).

Wildlife has been a constant presence in the study area since the proposed period of significance. Deer and bear that foraged in the hotel area in the early days of the hotel still visit the landscape looking for food—whether planted wildflowers or trash.

Natural systems and features that contribute to the historic character of the landscape

- Merced River
- Talus slope
- Royal Arch Creek
- Intermittent drainageway

Spatial organization

The primary landscape spaces within the study area are the narrow entrance road corridor, the enclosed parking area and entry area north of the hotel, the more highly maintained garden and landscape spaces around the hotel, the open meadow area, and the enclosed, wooded semi-private cottage cluster.

The primary spatial organization of Ahwahnee Road is defined by the quarter-mile-long gently curvilinear roadway, which creates a shady corridor through the wooded areas and past the talus slope and imposing cliffs to the north. This corridor historically defined the entrance into the hotel study area and today establishes the important threshold into the proposed district. A wooded entrance corridor was depicted on an early landscape plan by Olmsted Brothers.[7]

7 Eldridge T. Spencer, Architect and Olmsted Brothers, Consulting Landscape Architect, *Plot Plan of Ahwahnee Hotel Grounds.* 1927.

The parking area is a level area with edges defined by the talus slope, tall pines and other evergreen trees (which serve as screens), and the hotel building. The entry into the hotel across the wooden walkway and through the porte cochère is the spatial sequence that has defined the entrance into the precinct of The Ahwahnee since the proposed period of significance.

Other designed spaces near the hotel are defined by the wings of the building and plantings that form garden rooms, such as the flagpole clearing, wildflower garden, and open lawn south of the east wing and pool. These spaces have remained fairly consistent since the proposed period of significance, and are defined in part by open spaces around the concrete terraces and by the existing trees that were saved during the construction of the hotel.

The hotel's existing service area in a yard at the center of the hotel building maintains the historic public/private separation between hotel staff and lodgers. However, the thin separation between the two spaces (a wood fence) and the shared entrance area to the hotel and service yard have historically proved problematic for hotel managers, as the front door and back-of-house functions share the same area.

Historic photographs reveal that the spatial organization of the meadow was more expansive during the proposed period of significance, with views to the surrounding natural features maintained through the control of vegetation. In the proposed period of significance, a golf course occupied the southern part of the meadow; its clipped lawn defined the ground plane in contrast to the taller meadow grasses surrounding it. The golf course is no longer extant, save for some earthen berms. The golf course may have slowly deteriorated through neglect, as it appears to have converted to meadow grass in the late 1970s, and was no longer noted as a landscape feature in a 1980 description of the study area. The open grassy landscape that remains is a non-contributing compatible feature, as it does not detract from the character of the meadow. The existing spatial organization of the meadow is defined by copses and linear bands of trees, with densely wooded areas along its eastern, southern and western boundaries. The meadow's western boundary was historically not as thick with trees as it is now; a small single row of trees during the proposed period of significance has developed into a thick band of evergreens. The spatial organization of the meadow now differs somewhat from its condition during the proposed period of significance, as additional vegetation—whether volunteer or planted—has created greater enclosure and screening. However, its overall open condition contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

The spatial organization of the cottages cluster is defined by a wooded area with small clearings containing clustered cottages. The vegetation—particularly the shrubs and other understory plants—has grown considerably since the proposed period of significance and has somewhat altered the spatial character of the area. However, the essential character remains to create a sense of distance and separation from the hotel and meadow and contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

Spatial organization that contributes to the historic character of the landscape

- Narrow entrance road corridor, enclosed parking area, and entry sequence into the hotel
- Maintained garden and landscape spaces around the hotel
- Open meadow (somewhat compromised)
- Wooded cottages cluster

Land use

The land use at The Ahwahnee is consistent with its historic use. Lodging and recreation have been the key land uses since the inception of The Ahwahnee. Commercial uses at the sweet shop and other venues are also historic. Service and storage have been secondary land uses in the landscape. Non-historic land uses include the residential use of the dormitory and tent cabins.

Land uses that contribute to the historic character of the landscape

- Lodging
- Recreation
- Commercial

Missing land use

- Golf course

Topography

The terrain of the entire Valley floor is relatively level, as is the topography of The Ahwahnee grounds. The dramatically vertical talus slope provides a sharp contrast to this overall flat topographic condition.

The designed topographic modifications in the landscape include the remaining earthen berms associated with the former golf course, minor grading at Ahwahnee Road, the earthen plinth on which the hotel is constructed and that is expressed on the western side of the hotel terraces, the constructed reflecting pond, and the constructed drainage channel near the dormitory.[8] The earthen plinth and topography associated with the pond and drainage channel remain from the proposed period of significance and contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The earthen berms associated with the former golf course are non-contributing.

Topography that contributes to the historic character of the landscape

- Overall level terrain
- Earthen plinth on the western side of the hotel
- Topographic modifications associated with the reflecting pond and constructed drainage channel

8 The plinth flattens on the eastern side of the hotel.

Vegetation

The vegetation at The Ahwahnee has filled in substantially since the proposed period of significance, and in some cases is overgrown. Nevertheless, mature woodland areas of pines, cedars, and black oak trees remain from the proposed period of significance. Wildflower plantings that were a key aspect of the landscape design in the proposed period of significance are now largely missing, and the character of the open meadow and lawn areas is somewhat diminished. The wildflower planting designs and other planting concepts were the result of the work of Olmsted Brothers, George Vaughan, and Carl Purdy, who collected many of the plants from elsewhere within the park for transplanting at The Ahwahnee.

The tall, imposing evergreen trees that edge Ahwahnee Road west of the gate house remain from the proposed period of significance. The Eldridge Spencer and Olmsted Brothers plan indicates a massing of shrubs and trees at the roadway edges along the approach to the hotel.[9] A dense grove of trees occupied the entrance road margins by the end of the proposed period of significance, seen in the 1943 aerial photograph of the landscape (Figure 34). The wooded condition controlled direct views to the hotel along the approach road. The thickly tree-lined entrance contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

The parking area contains rows of evergreen trees and native plants occupying the medians throughout the parking area. Historically, trees appear to have been used to determine the location for parking spaces, especially around the reflecting pond. The rows of trees were designed to enclose the parking area and to screen views of the parking from the hotel. These trees remain from the proposed period of significance, and contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

The wildflower plant area around the reflecting pond that was designed during the proposed period of significance remains. The plants historically were primarily native medium- and low-growing wildflowers with trees planted in a curve along the eastern rim of the reflecting pond area. The wildflowers in the western section of the garden were intended to remain low to allow views from the pond towards Yosemite Falls. New wildflower plantings have been reestablished in this area and enhance the intended character of the reflecting pond vegetation.

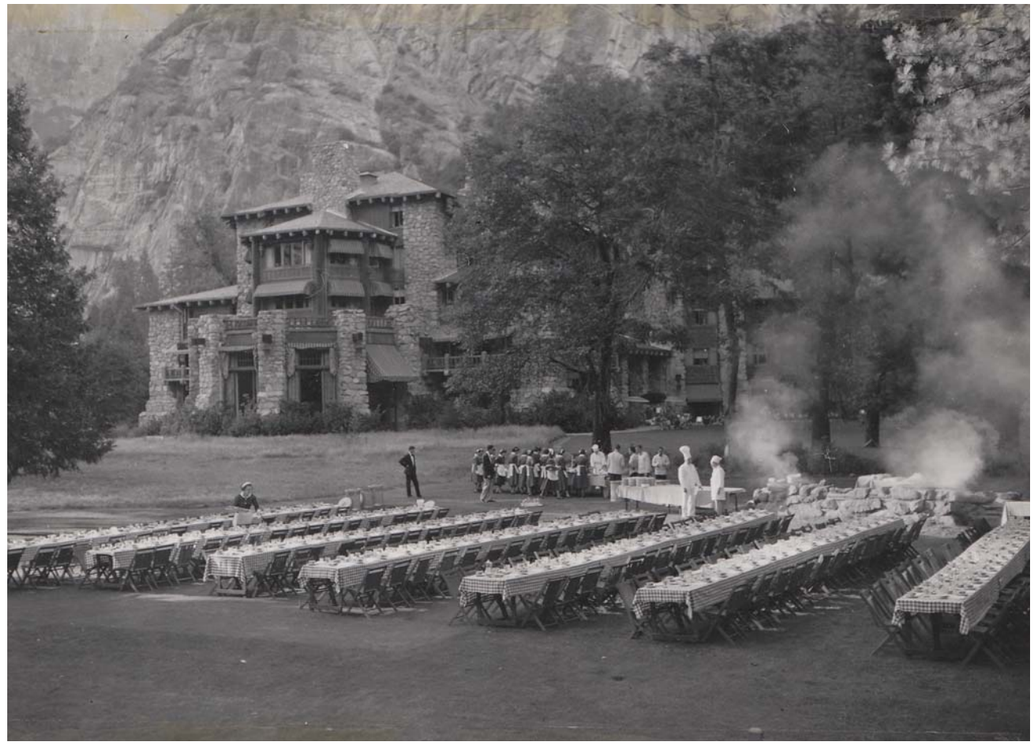


Figure 61. Shrubs planted at terraces, c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

Other wildflower planting areas along Royal Arch Creek and scattered throughout the meadow are now missing. These plantings were designed to reflect the different microclimates in the Valley, such as wetland areas and drier upland areas. Deer decimated the plantings in 1928, requiring a complete replanting in 1929. Historic photographs and planting plans suggest that the Royal Arch Creek corridor was planted in a swath of wildflowers that hugged the edge of the creek bed on both sides. There is less specific evidence for the historic character of the meadow plantings. Many planting plans from the proposed period of significance contained plant identification keys that are now missing, and historic photographs convey the overall tall grass cover condition without depicting the detailed quality of the wildflower plants. The condition of the vegetation in these areas today is sparser, without the lush, thick growth of flowers and grasses.

Shrubs and other plants were installed in thin linear planting beds between the concrete terraces and hotel building on the west, south, and east sides (Figure 61). Although the exact plants used are unknown, historic photographs suggest that there was a variety of plants used over time, including ferns, broad-leafed herbaceous or woody plants, and small- to medium-sized shrubs. These planting

9 Spencer, *Plot Plan of Ahwahnee Hotel Grounds.*

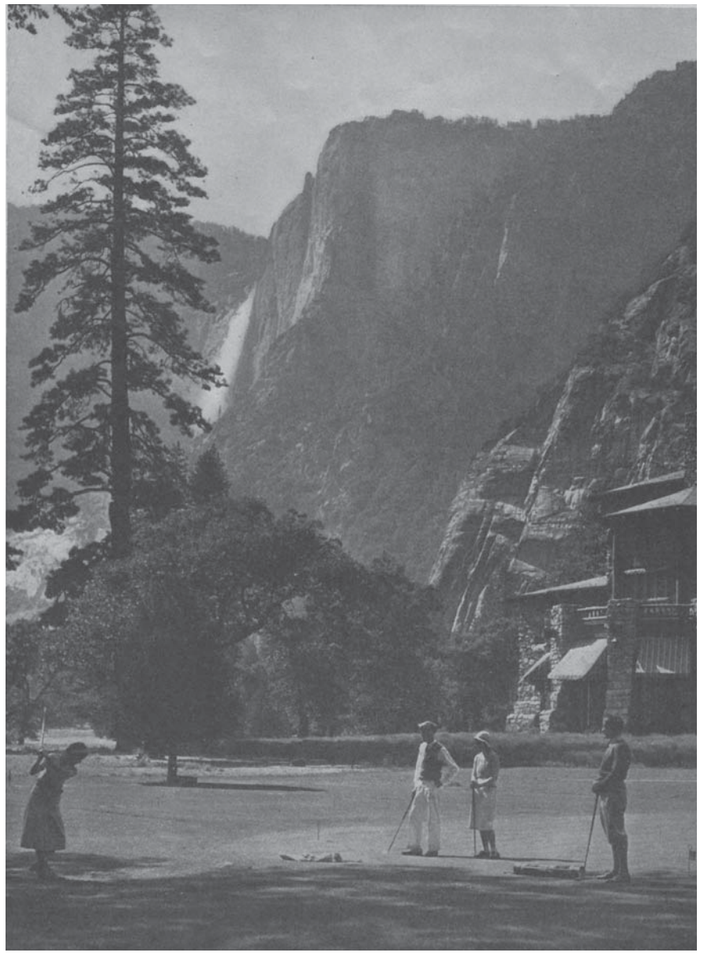


Figure 62. Golf course with short grasses in foreground, tall meadow grasses visible in the middle ground and the view to Yosemite Falls in the background of this photograph, c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE 38050.)

areas remain, and the existing shrubs are compatible with the historic character.

It is unknown whether wildflowers were planted at the flagpole garden historically. However, the current plants—native wildflowers and shrubs—are compatible with the historic plants used throughout the hotel area.

The open grassy meadow predates the hotel. The grass in the meadow was both clipped as lawn and taller-growing during the proposed period of significance (Figure 62). Designers and gardeners during the proposed period of significance created the "wildflower preserve": an open area scattered with evergreen and deciduous trees and planted with native wildflowers. The area immediately south of the hotel appeared to be more open, with fewer trees; this open character enabled views of the hotel from the meadow. Later, when the golf course was created, the mown grass area included the entire golf course and the lawn area stretching southeast from the hotel, although ornamental trees such as apples were added to the golf course after the proposed period of significance. The distinction between the historic mown lawn area and taller meadow grasses has become blurred over the years. In addition, volunteer trees, particularly pines, have encroached on the meadow and the scattering of black oaks and firs that have been there since the proposed period of significance. The meadow was burned several times in its history to control this growth. The volunteer trees are non-contributing, although the remaining open grass areas and many of the other scattered deciduous and evergreen trees contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

A thicker band of trees such as sequoias and black oaks edged Royal Arch Creek historically, and continues to delineate the creek. Pines and oaks lined the southern edge of the meadow in a thick band, and black oaks and sequoias screened the tennis courts from the hotel and meadow. (See Figure 19.) Black oaks appeared to dominate the western side of the hotel during the proposed period of significance. Many of these trees remain, and have been supplemented by additional tree growth over the years. The trees near the tennis courts, especially the black oaks and sequoias, were planted during the proposed period of significance and contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The mature evergreen trees along the western boundary of the study area remain from earlier plantings established during the proposed period of significance. Historic photographs and plans reveal a thin, single line of trees planted along this edge; however, the trees have grown substantially since that time and now create a dense, tall screen. These trees along the west side of the meadow were young during the proposed period of significance, and did not block views between The Ahwahnee meadow and the meadow to the west. However, as they enclose the meadow and continue to create a sense of the private precinct at the hotel, they contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

The dense evergreen woodland with understory plants surrounding the cottages remains from the proposed period of significance. This wooded area provided a secluded environment for the cottages, and the location of existing trees may have determined the locations for the individual cottages at the time of their construction. This wooded area with an understory of native flowering shrubs and smaller flowering trees such as dogwoods contributes to the historic character.

Vegetation that contributes to the historic character of the landscape

- Wooded evergreen entrance road corridor
- Scattered trees in meadow, especially black oaks
- Screening trees at parking area
- Grasses and other herbaceous plants in the meadow
- Wooded area with understory at cottages
- Screening trees at tennis courts
- Wooded area along southern edge of study area
- Lawn area east and south of hotel
- Shrub plantings at terraces
- Wildflower planting area at the reflecting pond
- Dense evergreen tree screening along the western edge of study area

Non-contributing compatible vegetation features
- Wildflower planting area at the flagpole clearing

Non-contributing incompatible vegetation features
- Volunteer trees and invasive plants in the meadow

Missing vegetation features
- Wildflower plantings along Royal Arch Creek
- Clipped lawn areas in the meadow

Views and vistas

Views and vistas were a major organizing element of The Ahwahnee design. Historically, designed vistas to Glacier Point, Royal Arches, Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, and Royal Arch Cascade were available not only from the large public indoor and outdoor spaces in the hotel, but from some bedrooms as well. The hotel wings were aligned to provide views of the distinctive cliff formations. Views from Ahwahnee Road and from the meadow were also important orienting elements. The design and framing of scenic views was a key practice of rustic design, especially in a landscape such as the Valley with its tall cliffs and waterfalls visible from long distances. Not all of the currently available views were necessarily designed, however; some views of the surrounding landscape from The Ahwahnee may be incidental.

From Ahwahnee Road to the west is a direct view towards Yosemite Falls; a similar view is available from the parking area, particularly from the reflecting pond. These are designed views and contribute to the historic character of the landscape, although they are partially obscured today by overgrown vegetation (Figure 63).

From the hotel, there are views to the meadow, to Royal Arch Cascade, to Yosemite Falls, to Half Dome, and to Glacier Point and the surrounding cliffs. These designed views contribute to the historic character of the landscape. These views have been maintained somewhat successfully over time: in 1952, for example, pine trees were cleared to reveal views to Half Dome from the hotel; in 1996, trees were cleared west of the hotel to restore the views of Yosemite Falls from the hotel dining room.

Historically, views and vistas from the meadow area south of the hotel included views to the hotel (Figure 64) and views towards Yosemite Falls (Figure 65), Royal Arches, and Half Dome (Figure 66).

Views from the cottages include a view towards Ahwahnee Bridge.

Views that contribute to the historic character of the landscape
- Views to the hotel from the meadow
- Views to Glacier Point from the hotel
- Views to Royal Arches and Royal Arch Cascade from meadow, hotel, and parking area
- Views to Half Dome from the meadow and hotel
- Views to Yosemite Falls from hotel, reflecting pond, and entrance road
- Views to Ahwahnee Bridge from the cottages
- Views to the meadow from the hotel

Buildings and structures

The Ahwahnee (LCS ID 55943) was constructed in 1926-1927, and is the major contributing resource of the National Historic Landmark, as its rustic style design and position in the landscape influences the majority of the study area. The building's scale, detail, and use of materials make it an extraordinary example of rustic design. Its stone materials, mountainous form, log columns, and siting to take advantage of majestic views enhanced its monumental rustic design. The building was modified during the Navy period with the enclosure of the original porte cochère and other changes, but was largely rehabilitated directly after World War II. A stair tower was added to the east wing in 1964-1965, and other interior remodeling took place in the intervening years, but no substantial changes affected the



Figure 63. View towards Yosemite Falls from the reflecting pond c. 1940s and in 2009. (Historic photograph source: "Ahwahnee, Yosemite National Park," YP&C Co.)

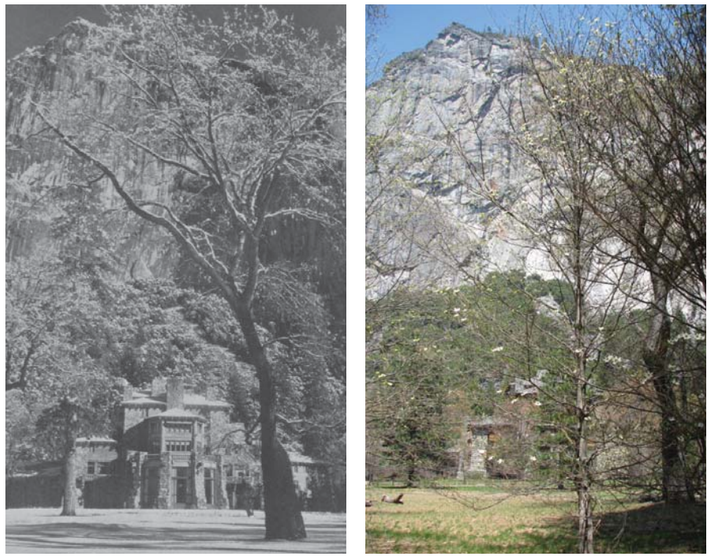


Figure 64. View towards the hotel from the meadow, 1942 and 2009. Note the enchroaching vegetation that impedes this view. (Historic photograph source: "Ahwahnee, Yosemite National Park" YP&C Co.)

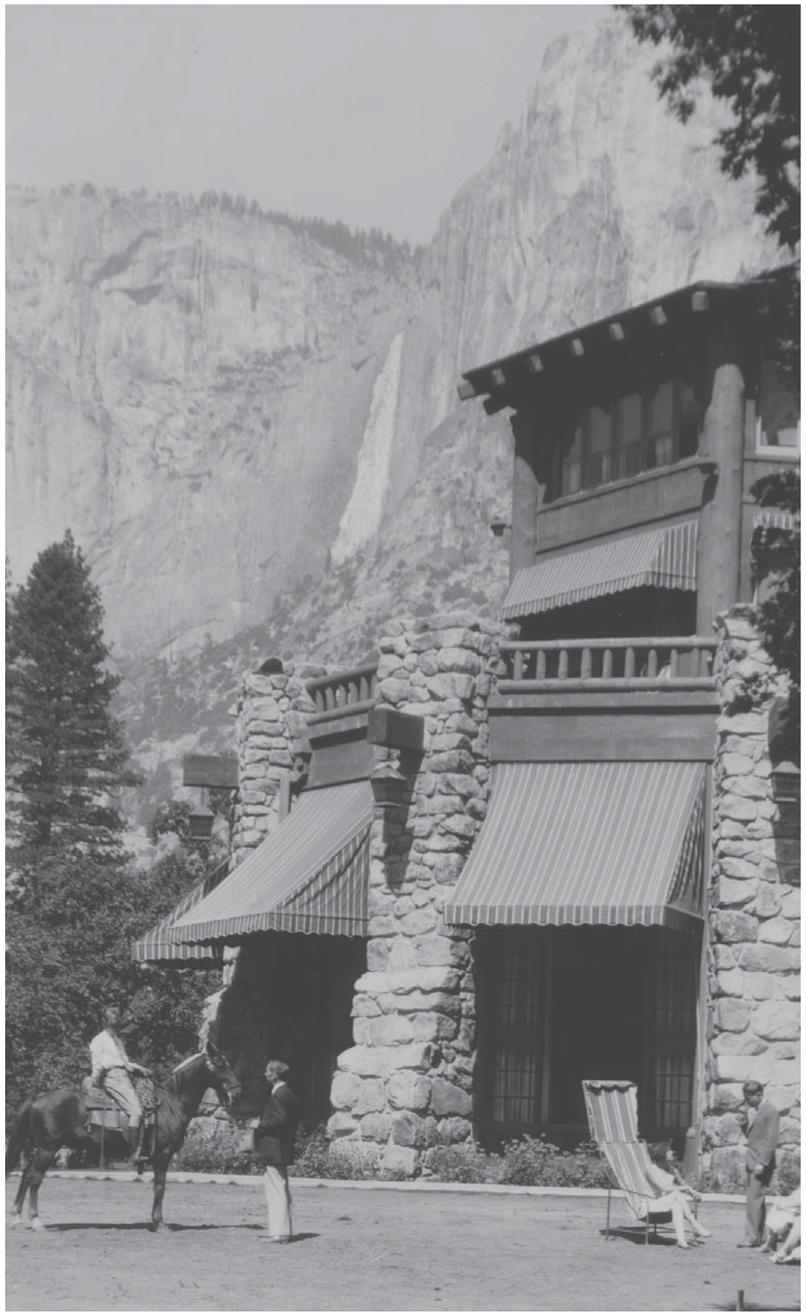


Figure 65. Historic view towards Yosemite Falls, c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE 37681.)



Figure 66. Historic view towards Half Dome, c. early 1940s. (Source: Yosemite Archive, Box 655-2.)

exterior of the building. This building was documented in the YVHD nomination as a contributing resource (B1 Ahwahnee Hotel).

A large **log and wood fence** (LCS ID 55527) that separates the hotel parking from the service yard has historically maintained the separation between guest and employee activities. Its design and construction of vertical log posts with wood boards painted brown complements the hotel's rustic design. Historic drawings suggest the original wood fence was replaced in-kind in the mid-1950s with a new fence by Eldridge Spencer. The fence contributes to the historic landscape.

The **concrete terrace** (LCS ID 55487) surrounding the hotel on its west, south, and east sides (Figure 67) integrated the building with its surrounding landscape. The concrete is stamped to resemble flagstone; this mimicry of natural materials evokes a similar use of concrete in the hotel building that is intended to resemble wood. The stamped concrete terrace contributes to the historic landscape, although sections of the concrete have been replaced or repaired over the decades—not always successfully—and its integrity of materials is somewhat diminished as a result. The terrace was documented as a contributing resource in the YVHD nomination (S11 Ahwahnee Hotel Terrace). The pool terrace was added in 1964 and is a non-contributing feature.

Both the **gate house and gate post** (LCS ID 55460), constructed at the west end of Ahwahnee Road in 1930, remain as they were designed. Their rough stone materials and relationship to the surrounding granite boulders foreshadow in miniature the presence of the enormous stone hotel ahead. The gate house and gate post contribute to the historic landscape and were documented as contributing resources in the YVHD nomination (S2 Ahwahnee Hotel Gate Lodge and Post).

The eight **cottages** (LCS ID 55540, 55559, 55577, 59857, 59750, 59751, 59752, 59753), divided into a total of twenty-four units, and one **storage building** (LCS ID 55629) were constructed in 1928 according to a design by Eldridge T. Spencer. They are secluded in the woods, set apart from the main hotel building. Their design and scale differ substantially from the hotel's and their arrangement was intentionally clustered in the woods apart from the main hotel area. The buildings' wood cladding, simple forms, stone chimneys, and relationship to each other reinforce the rustic character of this cluster. These buildings remain from the proposed period of significance and contribute to the historic landscape. They were documented in the YVHD nomination as contributing resources (B2-B10, 8 Ahwahnee Hotel Guest Cottages and Guest Cottage Linen Building).

There are several types of **terraces** adjacent to the cottages: current materials consist of poured concrete with a raised edge, poured concrete with a ramp edge, dry-laid concrete pavers, and mortared flagstone. The forms of the terraces for the cottages remain from the proposed period of significance—as does the mortared flagstone—and these contribute to the historic character of the landscape. However, the original materials were stone and not concrete or concrete pavers, and this change results in a minor loss of integrity of materials for some of the terraces.

The **dormitory** and **tent cabins** are located west of the hotel; the dormitory was constructed c. 1943-44 and moved to its current location from the parking area c. 1945 after the Navy vacated the hotel. Tent cabins have been in this location since c. 1970, although the current tent cabins were constructed in 2009 due to a need for temporary housing after the 2008 rock fall at Curry Village. These buildings post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing, but the dormitory conveys the history of the Navy period.

The parking area contains a **bus stop shelter** constructed in 2005, which is a non-contributing structure. Other structures near the parking area include a **stone culvert** at the valet parking area entrance. The YVHD nomination included the bridle trail ford (in the location of the stone culvert) as a contributing resource (S8 Ahwahnee Hotel Bridle Trail Ford), although the stone culvert appears to have been rebuilt since 2006 when the nomination was written.



Figure 67. Stamped concrete terrace during the proposed period of significance and in 2009. Note the original section of paving and the new paving in the lower photograph. (Historic photograph source: Yosemite Museum Collection, YOSE, 37678.)

In 1964, the **swimming pool** and **east stair** were constructed adjacent to the east wing of the building; this alteration included associated mechanical and electrical updates. The swimming pool and associated deck are non-contributing features. Other non-contributing features near the hotel include an **employee break shelter** in the service yard and a small **mechanical building,** constructed in 1989 west of the hotel.

A small wooden **footbridge** at the northern end of the reflecting pond was constructed as part of the designed wildflower walk c. 1981, and is a non-contributing feature. Several other footbridges cross Royal Arch Creek: **Bridge 1**, north of the pool, **Bridge 2** (LCS ID 55482), south of the pool, **Bridge 3**, southeast of the cottages, and **Bridge 4** (LCS ID 55346), at the confluence of Royal Arch Creek and the Merced River. Of these, Bridge 2 and Bridge 4 remain from the proposed period of significance. Bridge 2, with its log construction and incorporated wooden benches reflecting the rustic style, contributes to the historic landscape. Bridge 4, also of log construction with large stone abutments, contributes to the historic landscape. Bridge 2 and Bridge 4 were documented in the YVHD nomination as contributing resources (S6 and S7, Ahwahnee Hotel Footbridge to Guest Cottages and Ahwahnee Hotel Footbridge near Merced River). Bridge 1 and Bridge 3 post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing, but because of their wood construction, they are compatible with the rustic character of the landscape. Other small footbridges, including those crossing the constructed drainage channel near the dormitory and at the reflecting pond, are non-contributing.

In 1931 the **reflecting pond** (LCS ID 55494) was constructed in the parking area's arrival circle. A "spring" is noted on a historic drawing at the north edge of the pond near the location of the existing footbridge. However, the construction drawing for the reflecting pond appear to show an intake pipe for the pond connecting to the hotel's cistern and an overflow pipe into a culvert (Figure 68), suggesting the spring was not the source for the pond's water. The reflecting pond was designed to reflect views of Yosemite Falls, and its woodland character of trees and wildflowers set the stage for the hotel's rustic design character. The reflecting pond contributes to the historic landscape and is documented in the YVHD nomination as a contributing resource (S4 Ahwahnee Hotel Fish Pond). The other constructed water feature is the drainage channel north of the dormitory. This **constructed drainage channel** was referenced in the 1927 Tresidder memo, as he bemoaned the boggy conditions of the meadow and suggested the construction of a drainage channel to alleviate the water surplus. Maintaining the scenic quality of the landscape as well as eliminating the problem of mosquitoes for the comfort of the hotel guests were key elements in the decision to create the drainage channel. It remains from the proposed period of significance and contributes to the historic landscape. The YVHD nomination also documented **drainageways** (S9 Ahwahnee Hotel Drainageways, LCS ID 59756) as contributing structures. These are described in more detail under *Natural Systems and Features*.

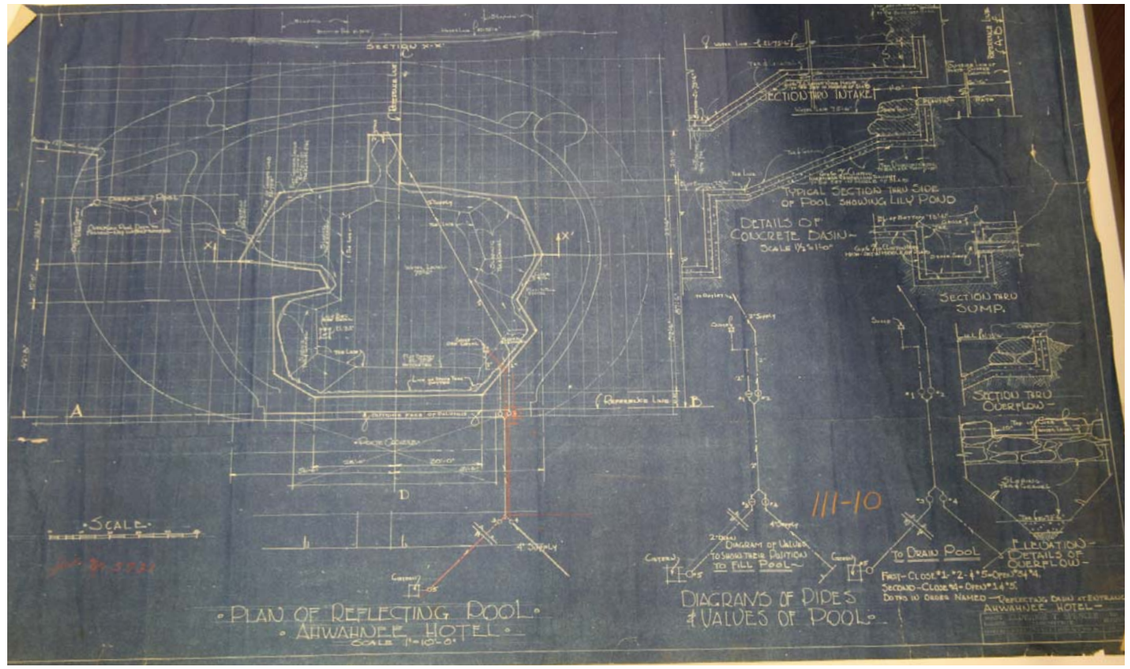


Figure 68. Plan of Reflecting Pool at Ahwahnee Hotel by Eldridge Spencer, 1930. Note the location of the intake pipe marked in orange. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

In 1928, in order to expand recreation opportunities at The Ahwahnee, two **tennis courts** (LCS ID 55481) were constructed in the southwestern portion of the hotel grounds. The tennis courts represented the expansion of active recreation to satisfy the demands of the elite clientele at the hotel, and they are contributing features which remain in the meadow. The tennis courts were documented as part of the YVHD nomination as contributing resources (S10 Ahwahnee Hotel Tennis Courts).

In keeping with the desire for added recreational uses, in 1930 a nine-hole "pitch and putt" golf course was constructed, along with a footbridge accessing the course. The golf course is no longer extant, nor is the associated kiosk built during the proposed period of significance. The kiosk is considered a missing structure.

A small stage, badminton court, and outdoor stone fire pit or cooking area also appear to have been located at the eastern side of the

meadow by 1931. These features are missing. Other missing features include the original deer fence (built in 1929), the Kenneyville stable complex, a small greenhouse in the southern section of the meadow near the tennis courts, and Kiddie Kamp, the children's play area for hotel guests.

There are currently no buildings east of the cottages though there is a roughly 165-by-45-foot **concrete foundation** that may have once been the location of a building. Though rumored to be a remnant of the Navy bowling alley built between 1943 and 1945, this is unconfirmed. The size of the foundation is similar in proportion and size to the other Navy temporary buildings (for example, the dormitory measures approximately 160 by 35 feet). The concrete foundation is non-contributing, but continues to convey the history of the Navy period.

Contributing buildings and structures
- The Ahwahnee
- Gate house
- Gate post
- Stamped concrete terraces
- Cottage terraces
- Cottages and storage building
- Bridge 2
- Bridge 4
- Reflecting pond
- Constructed drainage channel
- Tennis courts
- Wood fence at service yard
- Crossing over Royal Arch Creek at valet parking area
- Service yard

Non-contributing compatible buildings and structures
- Bridge 1
- Bridge 3

Non-contributing buildings and structures
- Dormitory
- Tent cabins
- Bridge at reflecting pond (Bridge 5)
- Bridges over drainage channel near dormitory
- Mechanical building
- Concrete foundation east of cottages
- Bus stop shelter
- Swimming pool
- Pool terrace
- Employee break shelter

Missing buildings and structures
- Golf course kiosk
- Badminton court
- Kiddie Kamp
- Stone fire/cooking structure in meadow
- Kenneyville stable complex
- Deer fence
- Green house

Circulation

Throughout the proposed period of significance, the main vehicular circulation feature in the landscape was **Ahwahnee Road** (LCS ID 55675), although Royal Arch Road and Le Conte Road ran through this area until c. 1925 when the roads leading to the Kenneyville stables were largely dismantled and reconfigured in preparation for the construction of The Ahwahnee. These earlier roads provided access to the landscape for the growing number of tourists visiting the Valley. When The Ahwahnee was designed, the original intent had been to keep automobiles away from the hotel; however, this goal rapidly became impractical. The entrance road, Ahwahnee Road, was realigned according to the Olmsted Brothers design, and constructed between 1928 to 1931. The final alignment of Ahwahnee Road is along the approximate alignment of the western segment of the earlier Royal Arch Road (see Figure 12, 1864-1924 period plan), although its eastern section was redesigned in a curving form to access the parking area and hotel. Ahwahnee Road remains as it was designed during the proposed period of significance, and is a listed contributing resource in the YVHD nomination (S1 Ahwahnee Hotel Entry Road from gateway to parking lot). The road, which hugs the talus slope and is surrounded by woods, contributes to the landscape (Figure 69).

The **parking area** (LCS ID 59754) was originally designed as a solution for the troublesome valet parking system adopted by the hotel in its first year. Tresidder's desire to have a screened parking area near the hotel resulted in the new design by Olmsted Brothers in 1930. The parking area was designed as two bays to the northwest of the hotel, with a small area near the hotel reserved for service. The reflecting pond was the centerpiece of the new design for the arrival circle and entry at the hotel, and its location was noted on the Olmsted Brothers plan. The parking was modified in 1965 to add the south and east parking areas. As a result of this reconfiguration, there are now three parking bays to the west of the reflecting pond: north, central, and south. Parking also surrounds the reflecting pond. An additional parking area is located on the eastern side of the reflecting pond, and a valet parking area follows the alignment of the unpaved road leading southeast along the eastern boundary of the study area. The north and central parking areas and the parking area surrounding the reflecting pond appear to survive from the proposed period of significance; these vehicular circulation features contribute to the landscape. The historic parking area contained trees, boulders, and other native plants to harmonize it with the surrounding wooded area and talus slope. The trees also screened the parking from the hotel. The northwest parking area is documented in the YVHD nomination as a contributing resource (S3 Ahwahnee Hotel Parking Area (West)). However, the south parking area and valet parking area, as well as the parking area east of the reflecting pond, post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing. In 2009, a rock fall resulted in the closure of many parking spaces, including spaces associated with the original historic designed parking area near the reflecting pond.

In the 1980s, a 10- to 12-foot-wide **fire road** was built around the hotel perimeter as part of fire safety upgrades. The road bed was covered with topsoil to camouflage its presence. The fire road post-dates the proposed period of significance and does not contribute to the

historic landscape. Other circulation features near the hotel building include a **flagstone path** at the north end of the flagpole clearing, which post-dates the proposed period of significance but which is compatible with the historic character of the landscape.

The North Talus Slope Trail was present c. 1906-1915, and was later reconfigured to create the existing **bridle path** (LCS ID 59755). The Olmsted Brothers revised 1930 plan suggested the realignment of the bridle path along the segment which is directly north of the porte cochère. The bridle path historically linked the hotel to the Valley-wide trails and to Yosemite Village, and was likely an unpaved path. In addition to the bridle path, a paved **bicycle path** is located along the southern side of Ahwahnee Road. Historic drawings reveal that the alignment of this trail remains from the proposed period of significance, although it is unclear when it was paved. The bicycle path also provided an important link to Yosemite Village, connecting The Ahwahnee to other developed areas within the Valley. These paths wind through trees and between boulders along either side of Ahwahnee Road. The bridle path and bicycle path contribute to the landscape.





Figure 69. The entrance road during construction and in 2009. Note the granite block curbing and the now obscured view of the porte cochere. (Historic photograph source: Yosemite Research Library, RL 8762.)

In 1931 a **stone footpath** was installed around the reflecting pond as part of a designed wildflower garden walk. In c. 1981, an additional path was installed closer to the pond—paved with flagstones and sand-set aggregate pavers—as part of a new wildflower interpretive walk. The outer flagstone-paved path appears to remain from the proposed period of significance, although it is missing some sections of stone. The **inner path** post-dates the proposed period of significance and is incompatible. The 1931 flagstone path, with its natural stone materials and curving alignment providing access to a native wildflower garden, contributes to the historic landscape.

Circulation around the hotel perimeter is primarily pedestrian, and includes sidewalks, stamped concrete terraces flanking the south, east and west faces of the hotel (discussed under *Buildings and Structures*), as well as a **wooden walkway** (LCS ID 55527) at the hotel entrance. Other circulation features are **flagstone paths** and **unpaved paths** leading to the meadow. The wooden walkway survives from the proposed period of significance and was an important part of the historic hotel entry sequence; it contributes to the historic landscape.

The **flagstone path** (LCS ID 55632) leading from the terrace towards the meadow appears to remain from the proposed period of significance. The **path leading from the terrace to Bridge 2** (LCS ID 55916) also remains from the proposed period of significance. This path appears to have been originally paved with flagstone, although the stone may have been replaced with concrete by the early 1940s and it has now been paved with asphalt, resulting in a loss of integrity of materials. These paths connected the terrace to the surrounding landscape and to the cottages, and they contribute to the historic landscape.

Existing circulation through the meadow is entirely pedestrian, with the exception of a vehicle fire road. Circulation features include **unpaved social paths**, likely created by hotel guests and other visitors meandering through the meadow. Historic photographs suggest that the majority of the unpaved paths currently traversing the meadow were not present during the proposed period of significance, although it is likely that a path connected the hotel to the tennis courts, which were constructed in 1928.

Circulation features near the cottages are primarily pedestrian, with the exception of a **service road** and the unpaved fire road that was constructed in 1985-1986. The fire road is non-contributing but compatible. It appears that the service road now used for valet parking may survive from the proposed period of significance. It also appears that the **unpaved paths** that traverse the wooded area north of the cottages post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing, but are compatible because their unpaved condition does not detract from the historic character of the rustic wooded landscape. Paved paths to the cottages branch off from a central path connecting them to the hotel. Some of these paths appear to have been reconfigured slightly since the proposed period of significance, in particular those leading to the northern cottages. The main paths appears to have been paved during the proposed period of significance; it is not known when the spur paths leading to the front doors of the cottages were paved. These narrow paths accentuate the semi-private character of the cottages by creating an individual route to each front door. Despite a possible change in materials, these paths contribute to the historic landscape. They were documented in the YVHD nomination as contributing resources (S5 Ahwahnee Hotel Paths Leading to Guest Cottages).

Circulation features in the service and storage area east of the cottages include the service road, an **unpaved parking area** for service and utility vehicles, and **unpaved paths**. It is unclear how many of these roads or paths existed during the proposed period of significance, although some historic maps indicate a circulation feature east of the cottages that may have been the precursor to the existing service road. The contributing status of these roads is undetermined.

All of the circulation features around the dormitory and tent cabins are pedestrian-oriented, and consist of **sidewalks**, **unpaved paths** and **wooden walkways** leading to the tent cabins. These features post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing.

Contributing circulation features
- Ahwahnee Road
- North and central parking areas
- Parking around reflecting pond
- Bicycle path
- Bridle path
- Flagstone path around reflecting pond (though minor loss of integrity due to missing sections of the path)
- Asphalt path to cottages from terrace (though minor loss of integrity due to likely change in materials)
- Flagstone path to meadow
- Wooden walkway near porte cochère

Non-contributing compatible circulation features
- Unpaved paths north of the cottages
- Fire road

Undetermined circulation features
- Unpaved path to the tennis courts from the hotel terrace
- Service road

Non-contributing circulation features
- South parking area
- Valet parking area
- East parking area
- Concrete paver path around reflecting pond
- Unpaved paths in the meadow
- Unpaved paths in the parking area

Missing circulation features
- Le Conte Road
- Royal Arch Road

Small-scale features
Numerous small-scale features are located throughout the study area, and the majority of them post-date the proposed period of significance. However, several important historic small-scale features remain.

The Ahwahnee sign, designed by Eldridge Spencer and located at the gate house, appears to remain from the proposed period of significance, although it is missing the metal eagle that historically was mounted to it. The sign exhibits some of the design motifs of the hotel interior and contributes to the historic character of the landscape (Figure 70). Ahwahnee Road also includes historic small-scale features such as the granite edging along the roadway where it bifurcates at the arrival circle (see Figure 69). Small boulders line the road edge, although it is unknown if boulders were used historically. Their use is compatible with the historic character of the landscape. Formed concrete half-log curbs edge much of the northern side of the entrance road, as well as along the southern side where the road connects to the central parking area. Concrete curbs are also used in sections of the parking area. These curbs post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing.

Numerous small-scale features in the parking area mostly consist of directional and informational signs and curbing. In 1931, electric lights were installed in the parking area west of the hotel, and some of these lights remain. Lights were constructed of upright wood posts with a simple fixture and they contribute to the historic character of the landscape (Figure 71), although other tree-mounted lights do not.

Post-and-rope fencing made of artificial materials and metal bollards direct foot and vehicle traffic. A metal valet parking gate controls vehicular traffic and a metal bicycle rack serves parking needs. Other small-scale features include bear-proof trash cans and storage bins, dumpsters, fuel tank storage and fence, cigarette receptacles and a fire hydrant. A wood and concrete bench is located within the bus shelter. Water management and irrigation-related features include culvert pipes, couplers and sprinkler heads. These features post-date the proposed period of significance and are not compatible with the rustic character of the historic landscape. None of these features contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

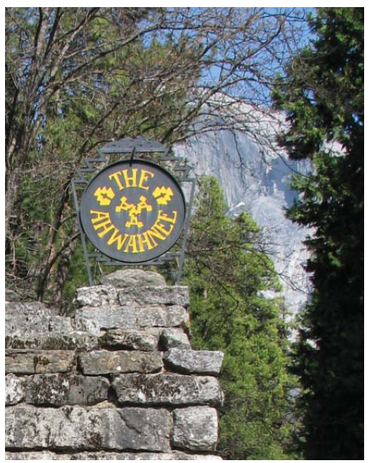
Near the dormitory and tent cabins are additional non-contributing small-scale features that include furnishings such as a picnic table, vending machines, and upright logs.

The immediate environs of the hotel includes many small-scale features. These include building-mounted lights, benches, tables, chairs, a flagpole, a concrete tree planter, a wooden tree grate, and a fire hydrant. Other small-scale features include a wayside exhibit, planter boxes, and small boulders. Historic photographs from c. 1943 suggest that the flagpole may remain from the proposed period of significance. Many of the building-mounted lights are historic and contribute to the character of the landscape. Two circular concrete tree planters—one located west of the dining room and one in the service yard—appear to remain from the proposed period of significance. One planter was largely demolished in the interim and has been rebuilt. These planters may have been intended to protect existing trees at the time of the hotel construction, although this is unconfirmed. The planters contribute to the historic character of the landscape. The site furnishings post-date the proposed period of significance.

The cottage area includes metal and wood site furnishings, rain chains, and upright log posts. These features post-date the proposed period of significance and are non-contributing. A wood slat fence at the storage building near the cottages appears to remain from the proposed period of significance and contributes to the historic character of the landscape.

The meadow contains irrigation features installed in 1928. It also contains benches such as wood stump benches; these features do not remain from the proposed period of significance and are non-





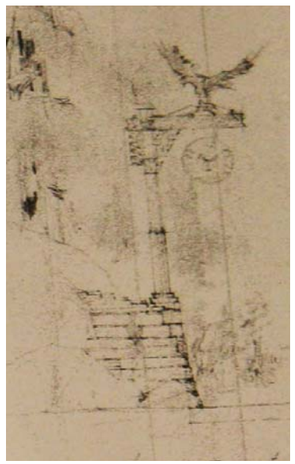
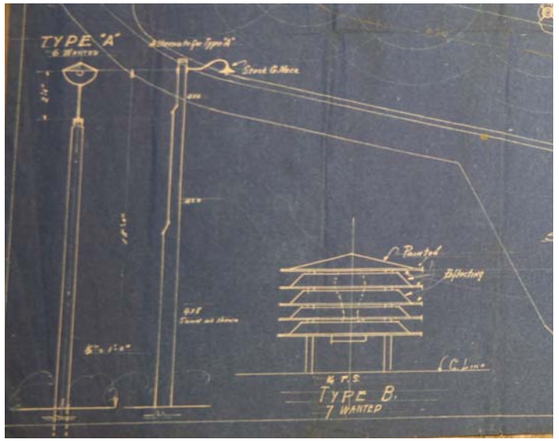


Figure 70. The Ahwahnee entrance sign at the gate house, c. 1930s and 2009, and the original design sketch by Eldridge Spencer in 1928. (Historic photograph and drawing source: Yosemite Archives.)



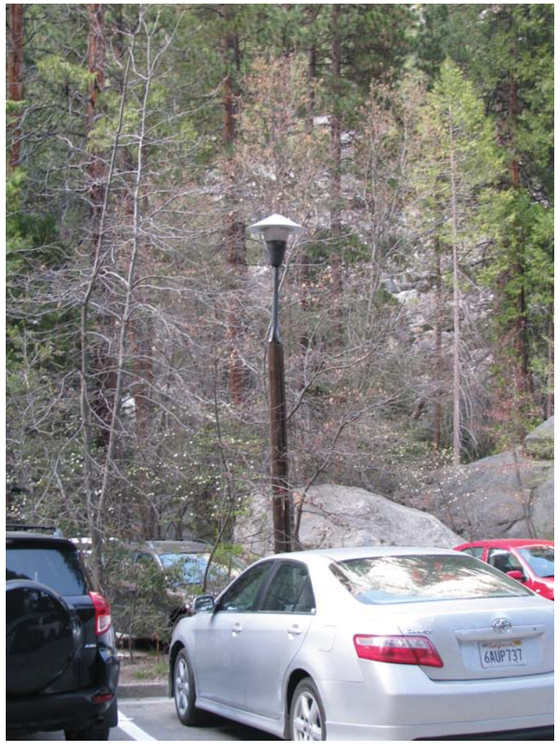


Figure 71. Parking lot lights shown in 1931 drawing "Lighting Ahwahnee Entrance" by Eldgridge Spencer, and historic light of same design shown in 2009 photograph. (Historic drawing source: Yosemite Archives.)

contributing, although the benches are compatible. The small-scale features associated with the tennis courts are the tennis nets, practice wall, water fountain, fences, awning supports, and bench. These were installed with the tennis courts as part of the 1928 campaign to add recreational facilities at the hotel, and contribute to the historic character of the landscape.

Small-scale features that contribute to the historic character of the landscape

- The Ahwahnee gate house sign
- Historic building-mounted light fixtures
- Granite curbing
- Concrete tree planters in service yard and near dining room
- Pump
- Tennis court features such as the nets, water fountain, fence, awning supports, and bench
- Wood fence at storage building near cottages
- Wood post light fixtures in parking area

Compatible small-scale features

- Small boulders lining road and parking areas
- Log benches

Undetermined small-scale features

- Flagpole

Non-contributing small-scale features

- Concrete curbing
- Concrete half-logs
- Signs—informational and directional
- Valet parking gate
- Trash receptacles
- Cigarette receptacles
- Bus stop bench
- Storage bins
- Site furnishings at terraces, cottages, and swimming pool
- Fuel storage tank and fence
- Post-and-rope fencing made with artificial materials

- Bollards—metal or lighted
- Bicycle racks
- Wayside exhibit
- Fire hydrants
- Pool fence
- Picnic tables
- Dumpster
- Vending machines
- Small concrete pads
- Tree-mounted lights at parking area

Missing small-scale features

- Golf course features
- Metal eagle on the gate house sign

Integrity Assessment

An integrity assessment evaluates the existence and condition of landscape features from the proposed period of significance, using individual qualities of integrity as part of the overall assessment. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* states that

> "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance… Historic properties either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognize seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant."[10]

The seven aspects of integrity included in the National Register criteria are:

- Location—the place where the cultural landscape was constructed or the landscape where the historic event occurred.

The Ahwahnee landscape retains integrity of location because it remains in the same location in which it was first designed and constructed. The built elements of the landscape—the entrance road, parking, hotel building, cottages—were intentionally located in relationship to the natural surroundings of cliffs, streams, rivers, and meadow, and these spatial relationships remain today.

- Design—the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a cultural landscape

The Ahwahnee landscape retains integrity of design based on the continued display of the characteristics that defined its rustic or "environmental" design. The continuing use of rustic-style log bridges of stone and wood; the designed views (though moderately obscured by vegetation); the rustic buildings and structures of stone and wood; meandering circulation systems; native vegetation; and the building and designed landscape integrated with the natural systems in the Valley all contribute to the design integrity of the landscape. The designed precincts within the landscape—the entrance road, the meadow, the hotel and terrace, the wooded cottage area, and the parking area—all retain the essential character they were designed to have. The remarkable building design by Gilbert Stanley Underwood has maintained the essential monumental rustic character for which it is famous. The landscape design efforts of Olmsted Brothers, Carl Purdy, and George Vaughan in the hotel, entrance road and parking areas (especially the reflecting pond garden) and the wildflower meadow have been retained over time. Eldridge Spencer's design for the cottages, with their semi-private wooded setting apart from the hotel main building, also remains. Aspects of the historic planting design have been compromised, however, by encroaching volunteer vegetation, missing wildflower plantings, changing values of park management and deferred maintenance. This aspect of integrity is one of the most important at The Ahwahnee.

- Setting—the physical environment of the cultural landscape

The Ahwahnee retains integrity of setting. The general setting for the hotel near the top of the Valley between the cliffs, and along the edge of The Ahwahnee meadow among native woodlands, remains intact. Little encroachment from other development in the Valley has disturbed this setting, except for the development associated with the World War II Navy temporary use of the hotel and study area landscape.

- Materials—the physical elements that were combined or deposited during the particular period(s) of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the cultural landscape

The Ahwahnee landscape retains integrity of materials, although this is the most compromised of the aspects of integrity. The use of native stone boulders, flagstone paving, native plants, and log structures are all consistent with the original materials used in the landscape. The Ahwahnee hotel building and cottages also retain integrity of materials. However, many of the historic circulation features such as pathways have been resurfaced in contemporary materials such as asphalt, and other small-scale features such as signs, trash receptacles, and post-and-rope barriers are new in design and materials, using metal and composite wood. Although features such as metal gates, dumpsters, metal signs, and trash receptacles may be necessary for the contemporary use of the landscape, they detract somewhat from its historic character. Many of the original native wildflower plantings are now missing, although their survival was challenged even during the proposed period of significance. Other features, such as the stamped concrete terraces and cottage terraces, have been altered through materials replacement and degradation of materials.

10 U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 44

- Workmanship—the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory

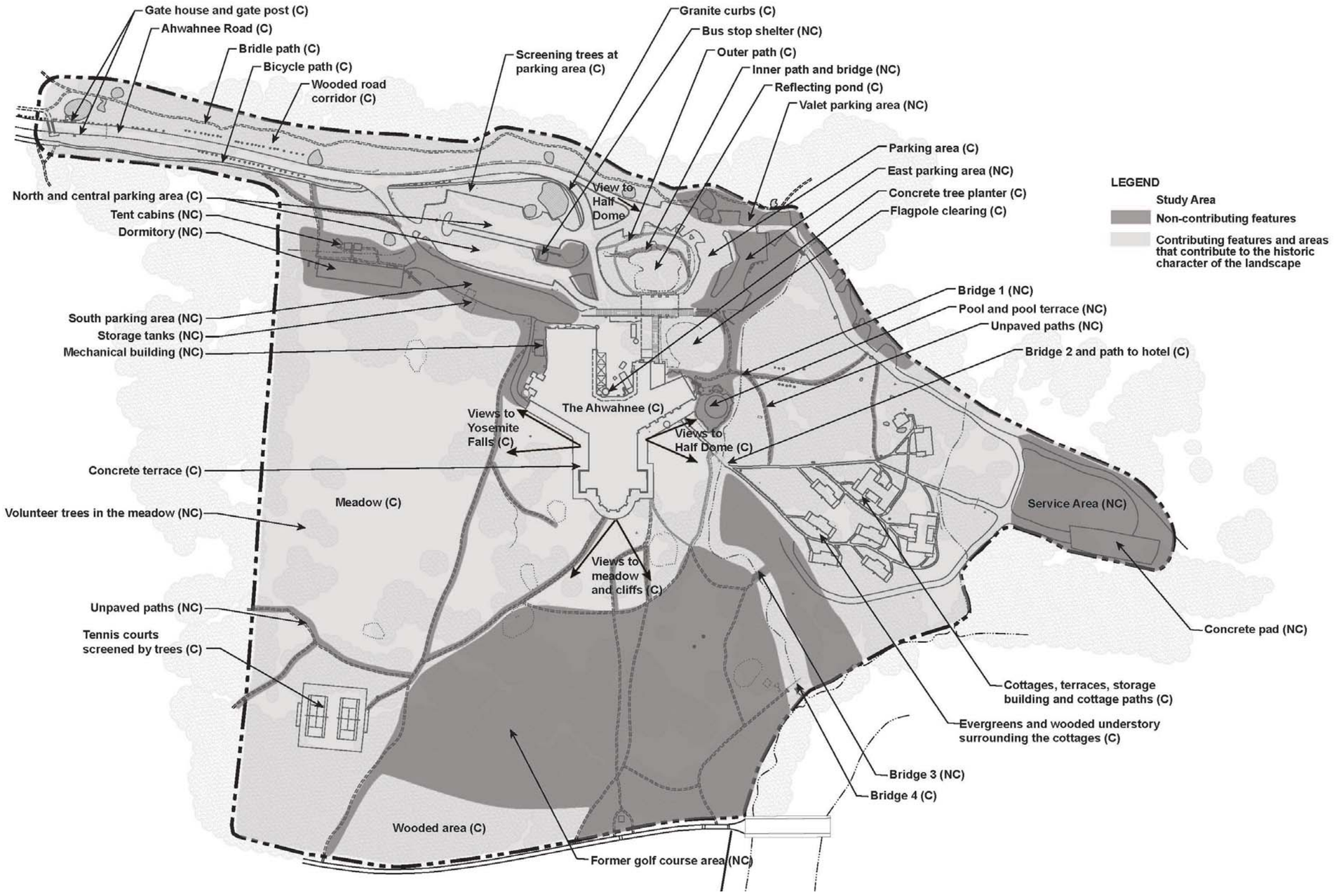
The Ahwahnee retains integrity of workmanship primarily for the buildings and structures in the landscape. The stamped concrete terraces have been maintained, although they show evidence of poor repair. The log bridges, although in some cases in poor condition, retain the rustic style detailing from the proposed period of significance.

- Feeling—a cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time

The Ahwahnee retains integrity of feeling. However, this aspect of integrity is also strongly compromised by deferred maintenance in the landscape. The Ahwahnee represented the epitome of monumental luxury set within the bustling activity of Yosemite Valley. Although The Ahwahnee continues to convey the feeling of luxury and an elite experience at the park, decades of use without the necessary level of maintenance have resulted in the poor condition of many landscape features. Cracked paving, thinning grass, and depleted ornamental plantings diminish the feeling The Ahwahnee once conveyed during the proposed period of significance of being a special designed precinct within the rustic Valley landscape.

- Association—the direct link between the important historic event or person and a cultural landscape

The Ahwahnee retains integrity of association. The Ahwahnee is inseparable from Yosemite Valley and from Yosemite National Park, which historically provided the basis for its creation. Evidence of the designers and managers who planned and developed the site is still present in the design of the landscape today.



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Comparative Analysis
not to scale

N

Figure 72. Comparative analysis.

PART 2

PART II TREATMENT

Introduction

Recommendations for treatment of the historic designed landscape of The Ahwahnee are based on resource issues and management objectives identified in—or affected by—several park planning documents. Some of these plans and reports include the *General Management Plan* for Yosemite National Park (1980), the *Concession Services Plan Environmental Impact Statement* (1992), the *Invasive Plant Management Plan* (2009), the *Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park Environmental Assessment* (2010), the *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan* (1996), the *Yosemite Fire Management Plan* (2004), the *Draft Yosemite Lighting Guidelines* (2009), and *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite Valley* (2004).

Recommendations in this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) provide guidelines for both ongoing and long-term sustainable management of the historic designed landscape at The Ahwahnee. Treatment goals for The Ahwahnee study area are to:

- Preserve resources that contribute to the significance of The Ahwahnee Developed Area as established in the Yosemite Valley Historic District (YVHD) nomination (2006) and that maintain the historic character of The Ahwahnee National Historic Landmark.
- Accommodate contemporary hotel operations and programmatic needs, including universal accessibility, within the framework of preservation and appropriate rehabilitation.
- Promote integrated resources stewardship through sustainable maintenance practices.

The CLR addresses these goals by providing a flexible approach to the protection, preservation, and maintenance of historic resources at The Ahwahnee. Treatment is based on information developed in *Part 1* of the CLR, including historic documentation, existing conditions documentation, and the analysis and evaluation of significant resources. Treatment includes guidelines, which provide general direction for preservation planning, and recommendations, which provide more detail for the treatment of specific landscape resources. Site plans illustrating treatment recommendations are included to consolidate specific actions for integrated management planning, compliance, and future implementation. Treatment is also intended to comply with sustainable practices to the degree possible.

All treatment guidelines and recommendations were developed in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996), and NPS *Director's Order-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1998).

Preservation Philosophy and Treatment Approach

The broad philosophy guiding overall treatment of the historic designed landscape of The Ahwahnee is preservation of contributing resources within the study area. General guidelines for preservation address historic buildings and structures, spatial relationships, circulation systems including the arrival sequence, articulated planting beds, constructed water features, and natural systems, including the meadows and forest edges within which the designed landscape developed.

The specific treatment approach for the historic designed landscape of The Ahwahnee is rehabilitation. Defined as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values," this treatment strategy allows for contemporary use associated with hotel operations, visitor services, universal accessibility, and compliance with health and safety codes.[1] Rehabilitation also is used as a treatment approach for a number of resources and features throughout the study area that are in poor condition and require repair Many of these features are documented in *Part 1, Existing Conditions* and in *Appendix A*. While individually the condition of these features does not affect integrity, collectively, the poor condition of so many features erodes the significant historic character of the

1 U.S. Department of the Interior, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, by Charles Birnbaum with Christine Capella Peters (1996), 48.

Treatment alternatives defined by *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the NPS *Director's Order-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline*:

- *Preservation* maintains the existing integrity and character of a cultural landscape by arresting or retarding deterioration caused by natural forces and normal use. It includes both maintenance and stabilization. Maintenance is a systematic activity mitigating wear and deterioration of a cultural landscape by protecting its conditions. In light of the dynamic qualities of a landscape, maintenance is essential for the long-term preservation of individual features and integrity of the entire landscape. Stabilization involves re-establishing the stability of an unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated cultural landscape while maintaining its existing character.
- *Rehabilitation* improves the utility or function of a cultural landscape, through repair or alteration, to make possible an efficient compatible use while preserving those portions or features that are important in defining its significance.
- *Restoration* accurately depicts the form, features, and character of a cultural landscape as it appeared at a specific period or as intended by its original constructed design. It may involve the reconstruction of missing historic features, and selective removal of later features, some having cultural value in themselves.
- *Reconstruction* entails depicting the form, features, and details of a non-surviving cultural landscape, or any part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period or as intended by its original constructed design. Reconstruction of an entire landscape is always a last-resort measure for addressing a management objective and will be undertaken only after consultation.

entire study area. The Ahwahnee was designed to be the epitome of luxury in a dramatic natural setting, and deteriorating landscape features and systems erode this character. In addition, over the years many non-contributing features have been added to the property. The accretion of these small-scale elements also detracts from the historic integrity of the study area, and recommendations for removal or mitigation of the impacts from these features are also provided.

Treatment recommendations identify detailed actions that can be undertaken to preserve contributing resources. The basic process for treatment includes the following possible actions:

- Identify, retain, and preserve: these basic actions involve identifying, retaining, and preserving the features in a historic landscape that contribute to its significance and to the character of the historic landscape. The contributing features of The Ahwahnee landscape are described in detail in *Part I, Analysis and Evaluation*.
- Protect and maintain: these actions describe the measures that should be undertaken to protect and maintain the identified contributing features.
- Repair: when the contributing features are in poor condition, repair is recommended.
- Replace: if a feature's condition is too poor to repair, then replacement, usually in-kind, is recommended.
- Compatible alterations and additions: alterations and additions may be required for a feature to ensure its continued use.

The treatment recommendations in this report primarily focus on actions to retain, preserve, maintain, and repair contributing landscape features.

Treatment Guidelines

Treatment guidelines provide an overall framework for rehabilitation of the historic designed landscape, and apply to the entire study area. The guidelines ensure preservation of significant resources and historic character while allowing compatible changes for adaptive use, compliance with health and safety codes, and sustainable practices. The assets and features associated with the historic designed landscape should be incorporated into the "Maintained Landscape" component of FMSS.

Treatment guidelines for the study area address:

- Land use
- Historic structures
- Temporary barriers and screening options
- Vegetation management
- Historic viewsheds
- Visitor access and accessibility
- New design and sustainability
- Structures

Land Use

- Preserve historic land use patterns and activities throughout the study area. These patterns reflect a strong hierarchy and gradation from the entry and arrival spaces on the north side of the hotel; to semi-private spaces associated with the hotel entrance, lobby areas, terraces, and cottages; to the more public areas in the meadow and woodlands.
- Ensure all land use activities within the study area are compatible with the historic character of the historic designed landscape as defined in this report.

Vegetation Management

- Remove vegetation to restore character-defining historic views as needed and to meet safety requirements.
- Undertake vegetation removal or thinning intended to maintain or restore historic views and vistas in accordance with the recommendations in the *Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park*.
- Ensure that vegetation management within the study area is based on sustainable principles and NPS vegetation management objectives for The Ahwahnee within the larger environmental context of the historic designed landscape and Yosemite Valley.
- Utilize native plants selected in consultation with park botanist and historical landscape architect for new plantings.
- Incorporate, as appropriate and possible, the use of plants

The following standards for rehabilitation based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* apply:

- A property will be used as it was historically or is given a new or adaptive use that maximizes the retention of historic materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement or removal of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- Each property is recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features, will be not undertaken.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historical significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- Historic materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or replacement of a historic feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Repair or replacement of missing features will be substantiated by archeological, documentary, or physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archeological resources are protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

documented as having value to groups with Yosemite Valley traditional cultural affiliations. Examples of these plants include black oak (*Quercus kellogii*), tree mushrooms (*Trametes hispida*), wormwood (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), and deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*).

- Remove invasive species in accordance with the park's Invasive Plant Management Plan and in consultation with park natural and cultural resources staff.
- Remove invasive species in proximity to historic and archeological resources in a way that minimizes ground disturbance.
- Use low-impact planting techniques for rehabilitation of vegetation in areas of known or potential archeological resources. Recommended techniques include:
  - Install small-sized plants for rehabilitation wherever possible.
  - Install plants manually and limit the use of heavy machinery.
  - Protect existing plants during rehabilitation activities.
- Ensure all planting plans for rehabilitation at The Ahwahnee are reviewed and approved by appropriate park natural and cultural resources staff.
- Undertake all vegetation management activities for natural systems—such as the meadow and woodland areas that define the extent of the designed landscape—in consultation with natural and cultural resources staff.

Historic Viewsheds

- Retain historic views and vistas as documented in this report, including but not limited to:
  - Views from the study area to surrounding cliffs and features.
  - Views within the study area that allow visual connections between developed visitor areas and designed and natural open spaces and surrounding forests.
- Undertake rehabilitation of historic views in consultation with park cultural and natural resources staffs.
  - Selectively thin vegetation where encroachment or natural growth has obscured or blocked historically open views.
  - Use historic documentation, including photographs, to determine the extent of potential vegetative thinning required to re-establish the historic views. In some cases, rehabilitation of historic views may be limited or phased to preserve unique or seasonal habitat.
  - Ensure all vegetation thinning and removal is undertaken in accordance with the *Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park*.

According to *Director's Order-28 (Chapter 7 Section D)*, the following standards apply to all treatments:

- Land use activities, whether historic or introduced, do not impair archeological resources.
- Uses addressing programmatic needs or park facilities within a cultural landscape, such as visitor centers, parking, interpretive structures, housing, administrative facilities, maintenance yards, and storage areas, are carefully considered in the context of the significance of the landscape.
- Use is monitored and regulated to minimize both immediate and long-term damage.
- Contemporary facilities do not adversely impact the landscape's physical and visual character.
- New facilities are compatible with the historic character and material of the landscape.
- Contemporary structures to facilitate access, such as ramps, railings, signs, and curb cuts, are designed and located to minimize adverse impacts on the character and features of a cultural landscape.
- Access to a cultural landscape that is vulnerable to damage from human use is limited, monitored, or controlled.
- All treatment and use decisions reflect consideration of effects on both the natural and built features of a cultural landscape and the dynamics inherent in natural processes and continued use.
- Use of destructive techniques, such as archeological excavation, is limited to providing sufficient information for research, interpretation, and management needs.
- All work that may affect cultural landscapes is evaluated by a historical landscape architect and other professionals, as appropriate.
- All modification, repair, or replacement of materials and features is preceded by sufficient study and recording to protect research and interpretive values.
- New work, materials, and replacement features are identified, documented, or permanently marked in an unobtrusive manner to distinguish them from original work, materials, and features. The manner and location of identification is recorded using the NPS Inventory and Condition Assessment Program (ICAP).
- A proposed treatment project is initiated by the appropriate programming document, including a scope of work and cost estimate from a CLR or ICAP. Such projects include preservation maintenance as well as major treatment. No treatment is undertaken without an approved CLR or work procedure specifying the work, and Section 106 compliance.
- A treatment project is directed by a historical landscape architect and performed by qualified technicians.
- Representative features salvaged from a cultural landscape are accessioned and cataloged, provided that they fall within the park's scope of collection statement.
- All changes made during treatment are graphically documented with drawings and photographs. Records of treatment are managed as archival materials by a curator or archivist within the park's museum collection.
- Work on historic structures, including modifications to improve drainage and access, does not harm the character-defining features of a cultural landscape.

Visitor Access and Accessibility

- Assess the condition and degree to which current visitor access throughout the historic designed landscape is compliant with federal law and NPS policies.
  - Undertake rehabilitation of existing and historic walkways to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) requirements in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.
- Ensure that future design and rehabilitation work associated with the historic landscape provides universal accessibility whenever possible and as needed.
- Enhance visitor experience and safety by providing clear delineation between areas of unrestricted public access and

areas of limited public access, such as service and utility areas, and sensitive resource areas within the study area.

New Design and Sustainability

- Undertake all landscape rehabilitation projects within the study area in a holistic manner that supports ecologically based management of natural systems, and that incorporates an integrated resources management approach to the treatment of the historic designed landscape.
- Ensure that new design and rehabilitation of the landscape incorporate sustainable practices for long-term maintenance.
  - Work with park resource and concessioner maintenance staff to ensure that specifications for implementation comply with appropriate Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards.
- Encourage sustainable design through best practices conservation, in collaboration with maintenance and natural resources staff, for the rehabilitation of planting beds and the selection of plants.
- Work to meet LEED certification standards for all new irrigation systems.
  - Consider incorporating new technologies for irrigation as a means of enhancing water conservation.
  - Minimize ground disturbance when removing or replacing existing irrigation components to protect archeological resources.
  - Reuse existing irrigation line trenches during irrigation system replacement to the degree practicable.
  - Establish a cyclic maintenance program for the replacement of valves, irrigation heads, water lines, and automation clocks to maintain optimal effectiveness and system efficiency.
- Use locally sourced materials for construction of new small-scale features whenever possible.
- Undertake all rehabilitation projects in consultation with appropriate NPS technical experts, including historical landscape architects, historical architects, archeologists, botanists, ecologists, and qualified preservation crews and craftspersons.

Historic Structures

- Preserve and maintain historic structures that contribute to the significance of The Ahwahnee developed area as established in the YVHD nomination (2006).
- Preserve the spatial relationships among the hotel and adjacent contributing structures in the study area. The addition of new structures within the study area is strongly discouraged. If new structures are required for operations or infrastructure, locate them outside the study area whenever possible.
- Undertake all preservation maintenance work on historic structures in collaboration with a park historical architect or appropriate preservation specialist to ensure compliance with preservation standards and guidelines.
- Ensure that all rehabilitation or reuse of historic structures is considered in the context of the historic designed landscape and the degree to which the reuse is compatible with the historic character of the landscape.
- Incorporate the use of sustainable materials for selected components and small-scale structural features as appropriate:
  - Consider the use of sustainable materials for historic features only when replacement yields a compatible and significant long-term benefit for reducing park maintenance.
  - Undertake substitutions or replacement of historic building components only in consultation with and guidance from an NPS historical architect. (See *New Design and Sustainability Guidelines.*)
- Maintain historic structures as part of a preservation maintenance program through the Facility Maintenance Software System (FMSS).
  - Work with park historical landscape architects and botanists to identify cyclic preservation maintenance for the structural and water-barrier integrity of planting beds around the foundation of the hotel and cottages.

Director's Order-28 (Chapter 6, Section D) maintains the following guidelines for the treatment of archeological resources:

- All resources will be protected against natural and human agents of destruction and deterioration whenever practicable.
- Preservation will maintain the existing form, integrity, and materials of the resource.
- Preservation will include techniques of arresting or retarding deterioration through a program of ongoing maintenance. Deteriorated areas (e.g., depressions created through erosion, slumping, subsidence, and other natural causes) will be backfilled or otherwise stabilized.
- Excavation and other destructive techniques will be employed only when necessary to provide sufficient information for research, interpretation, and management needs. Excavated areas (including potholes excavated by looters) will be backfilled or otherwise stabilized.
- Stabilization of a resource to arrest and inhibit deterioration will be done in such a way as to detract as little as possible from its appearance and significance and not adversely affect its research potential unless adequate data recovery has occurred. Stabilization by vegetation, installation of riprap or landscape netting, burial, or other alteration will be undertaken only after sufficient research or experimentation to determine the probable efficacy of the action and only after existing conditions are fully documented. A complete record of stabilization work will be kept.
- Data recovery will precede and be completed before physical intervention into any archeological resource, including sites associated with historic structures.
- Archeological sites and structures will not be rehabilitated, restored, or reconstructed.
- Archeological resources will be protected from vandalism and looting. Patrols, fencing, warning signs, and remote-sensing alarms will be used as appropriate. Stewardship programs wherein concerned local people are enlisted to monitor conditions of archeological resources are encouraged.
- Interpretive and public educational programs to promote site protection are encouraged. The public should be made aware of the value of archeological resources and the penalties for destroying them through posters, films, and other media. Park staff should be made aware of protection concerns and methods through training sessions.

Temporary Barriers and Screening Structures

- Incorporate the use of temporary barriers for short-term protection of new plantings and other areas from trampling. Some styles recommended for use at The Ahwahnee include a small, flat-topped boulder, cedar post and rope, or pierced-post fence. Other appropriate temporary barriers may include a natural log. All barriers should be removed when no longer needed. Additional design guidance for temporary barriers is outlined in *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park*.
- Construct compatible fencing for long-term screening of non-compatible and visually intrusive features from public view.
  - Construct new fences of wood, and include wood post and either vertical pickets or horizontal wood planks to match existing styles. (See Photo 56 of wood fence near hotel entrance.)
  - Leave new fences untreated to weather, or painted brown to match other wood fences within the study area.

Treatment Recommendations

Treatment recommendations for The Ahwahnee study area are based on an understanding of the historic designed landscape and management objectives for compatible rehabilitation and long-term stewardship of the developed area surrounding the National Historic Landmark hotel. Recommendations are organized into five cultural landscape management zones based on significance and integrity, historic character, and contemporary maintenance or operational issues (Figure 73). For each zone, specific recommendations address the treatment of vegetation, views and vistas, buildings and structures, circulation, and small-scale features.

All treatment recommendations provided in this CLR for The Ahwahnee study area comply with current park planning and management objectives and NPS policies and standards, including *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.* Before implementation, additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) Section 106 compliance and/or consultation with park natural and cultural resources technical staff may be required.

Management Zones

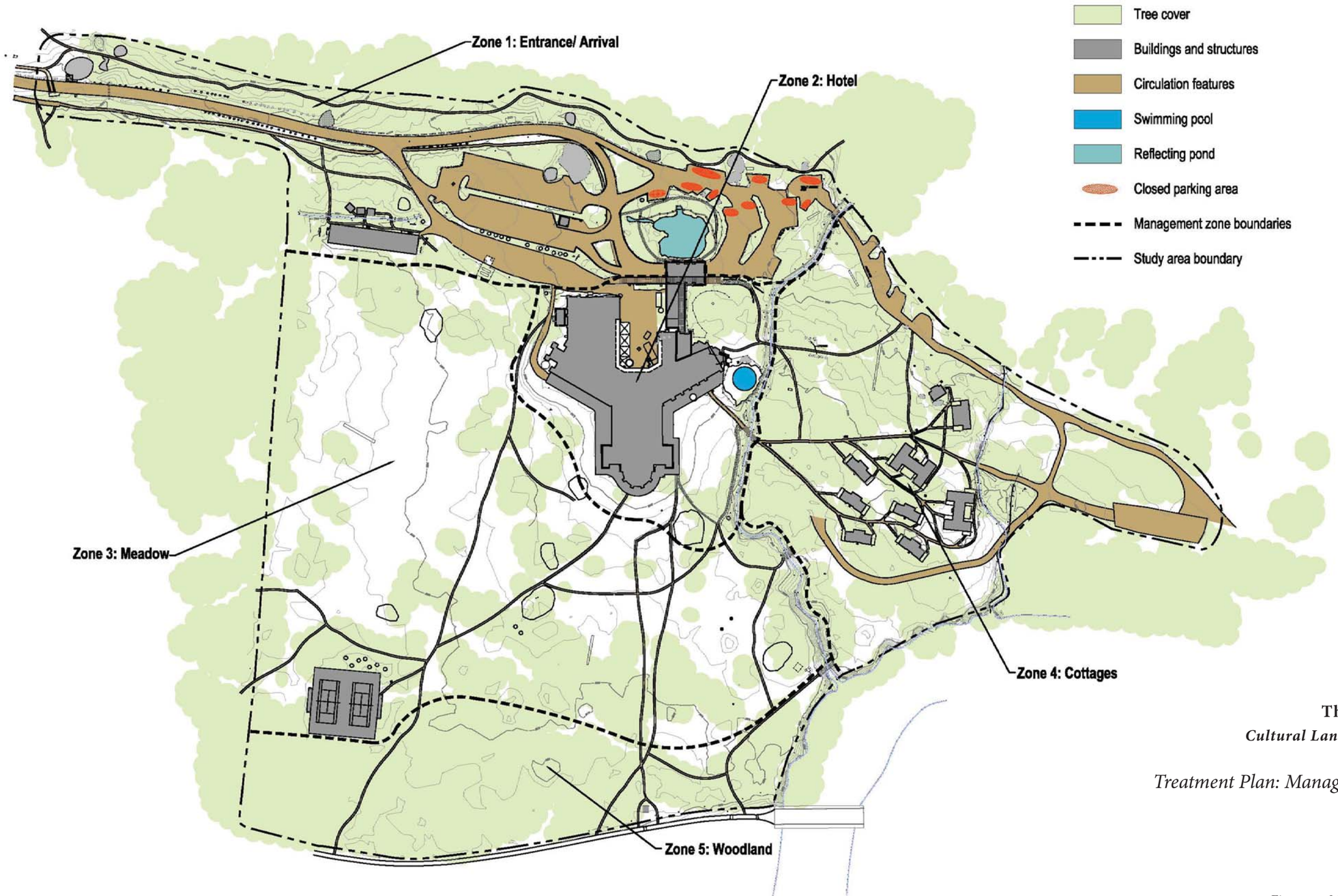
Zone 1: Entrance/Arrival—This zone includes the stone gate posts and gate house; the entrance road, bicycle path, and bridle path along the base of the cliffs; the parking area; and the reflecting pond north of the porte cochère, which collectively defined the historic entry sequence into the hotel. Today this zone remains the primary entrance for hotel guests and visitors, and accommodates visitor parking, a shuttle bus stop, and paths for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists.

Zone 2: Hotel—This zone contains The Ahwahnee hotel, associated service areas, outdoor terraces, the swimming pool, and articulated landscaped areas immediately adjacent to the hotel, including lawns and planting beds around the hotel and the flagpole clearing. This management zone is the most highly articulated area of the study area and exemplifies the rustic style design for which The Ahwahnee is famous.

Zone 3: Meadow—This zone includes the open meadow south of the hotel, remnant tennis courts and associated water fountain and plantings, and open spaces formerly part of the golf course. The natural meadow was historically augmented with wildflowers to create a "preserve," which included lush tall grasses, wildflowers, and scattered trees—especially oaks and pines. The meadow was historically enclosed and defined by trees on the east, south, and west sides. The hotel formed the northern boundary of the meadow. The meadow is watered with an irrigation system and retains the remnants of an underground drainage tile system.

Zone 4: Cottages—This zone includes the cluster of eight guest cottages, a storage building, footpaths and service roads, the surrounding woodlands, and understory plantings located on the east side of Royal Arch Creek. The woodlands provide a canopy and screening for the cottages, creating a sense of privacy and seclusion. The eastern part of the cottages zone also includes a concrete service and storage area, where U.S. Navy temporary buildings were located during World War II.

Zone 5: Woodlands—This zone forms the southern edge of the meadow and historically defined the extent of the developed landscape associated with the historic design of The Ahwahnee.



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Treatment Plan: Management Zones
not to scale

Figure 73. Management zones.

Recommendations

Zone 1: Entrance/Arrival

This management zone encompasses the public entrance to the hotel grounds, including the stone entry gate features, Ahwahnee Road, parking areas, the reflecting pond, a shuttle bus stop, and paths for pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists. This zone is defined by the physical and experiential arrival sequence to the hotel and staging access for hotel visitors and guests. The porte cochère and reflecting pond are the primary arrival point for all hotel guests. A constructed drainage channel, employee dormitory, and temporary employee tent cabins also are within this management zone (the dormitory and tent cabins post-date the proposed period of significance). Historic design principles expressed in this zone include the use of native and Sierra Nevada vegetation and local stone in the built features and the incorporation of scenic views as organizing elements in the design, connecting arrival to The Ahwahnee with the larger Yosemite Valley landscape.

Treatment recommendations for this zone focus on preserving the arrival sequence; maintaining visual screening between the hotel, service areas, and parking areas; rehabilitating the reflecting pond and associated planting design; restoring scenic views and vistas; enhancing accessibility within the parking areas; and preserving native plants. (See Figure 82 at the end of this section).

Vegetation

Woodland in Entrance Corridor

The entry along the Ahwahnee Road historically provided a sequence of spatial experiences, beginning with open views south into the meadow and transitioning into stands of trees of varying density and species. The trees lining both sides of the road created a corridor into the hotel and screened service areas from the arriving guests. This historic character should be maintained.

- Work with the park forester and botanist to maintain this spatial sequence in good condition to include the existing mixture of oak, pine, cedar, and other native plant species including native meadow plants.
  - Selectively manage sapling trees to maintain historic character. Management may involve removing some saplings to keep views open, while leaving others to maintain some understory along the Ahwahnee Road.
  - Trim or remove hazard trees along the road and pathways in consultation with the park forester.
- Consider planting new evergreen vegetation to screen the view of the non-contributing dormitory from the Ahwahnee Road, the hotel, and parking areas.

Reflecting Pond Wildflower Garden

The garden around the pond historically contained a variety of flowers, trees, and shrubs designed to showcase native plants and to frame views to Yosemite Falls. Today the garden is a mix of trees such as aspen, and other herbaceous plants such as trillium and ferns. The goal of treatment is to rehabilitate the landscape and plantings around the pond to better reflect historic character.[2]

- Rehabilitate the wildflower garden around the pond to reflect the historic character of the original design. Choose appropriate plants native to the Valley in consultation with park resources staff.

Parking Area Plantings

During construction of The Ahwahnee, much of the woodland around the site was retained as a naturalistic setting for the new hotel. Today, the extent and character of the woodland surrounding the parking area and entrance remains from the proposed period of significance. and continues to create a rustic context and setting for the parking areas and guest arrival to the hotel. During the proposed period of significance, a row of giant sequoia trees was planted to screen the parking area from the hotel. These trees have matured and no longer serve as a visual screen. Recommendations for treatment address preservation of the historic character of the parking area and provide options for rehabilitation of this screen planting.

- Retain the existing mature wooded vegetation in unpaved areas.
- Preserve and maintain native trees and shrubs in the parking area around the hotel, especially in the parking medians where vegetation functions to create a visual screen between guest areas and vehicle parking.
- Consider the use of supplemental plantings in the parking medians to fill voids and enhance the vegetative screening for parking areas from visitor use areas.
- Retain the row of giant sequoia trees in the median between the south and central parking bays. These trees were planted during the proposed period of significance and are identified as contributing resources in the Yosemite Valley Historic District (YVHD) nomination (2006); however, they have matured and no longer function to screen the parking from the hotel.
  - Consider replacing the sequoia trees with alternative plantings to reestablish the historic screening function in this area.
  - Monitor for impacts of the sequoia trees on adjacent structures. If there is evidence of structural damage from roots, consider replacing the trees with vegetation that is historically appropriate in terms of scale and function.
  - Document the removal of the sequoia trees, if required, and undertake removal in consultation with natural and cultural resources staff.
- Work with the park forester to identify and assess hazard trees in the parking area.
- Remove, trim, or stabilize hazardous trees in the parking area in consultation with the park forester and natural and cultural resources staff.
- Monitor ground disturbance near mature trees in consultation with the park archeologist.
- Replace hazardous or dead trees in kind; for example, replace a deciduous tree with an appropriate native deciduous tree similar in size, scale, and habit.
- Work with natural and cultural resources staff to develop vegetation management strategies to stabilize drainages and bank slopes.

2 Refer to Figure 15. *Planting Study for Approach Drive*, *Ahwahnee Hotel,* 1930, for more information about its historic condition.

Views and Vistas

Encroaching vegetation has obscured historically open views throughout this management zone. Treatment recommendations target rehabilitation of these views through selected vegetation management in accordance with the *Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park* and in consultation with natural resources staff.

- Manage the historic view to Yosemite Falls from the Ahwahnee Road through selective tree trimming or, if required, removal (Figure 74). This may require work outside the study area.
- Manage views to Royal Arches from the parking area through selective tree trimming or, if required, removal.
- Manage historic views from the reflecting pond toward Yosemite Falls through selective tree trimming or, if required, removal (Figure 75).

Buildings and Structures

There are four historic structures, three non-contributing temporary structures, and two non-contributing buildings in this management zone. Specific treatments for The Ahwahnee hotel are addressed in the *The Ahwahnee Historic Structures Report* (2010). Recommendations for structures in the study area are addressed in the CLR to the degree the overall exterior appearance of the structure is maintained.

Gate House and Gate Post

The gate house and gate post are identified as contributing structures in the YVHD nomination (2006). These stone structures mark the entrance to The Ahwahnee and define the physical western boundary for the study area.

- Preserve the gate house and gate post structures and maintain them in good condition.
- Monitor both structures as part of a cyclic maintenance program through FMSS, and effect repairs as required and in consultation with a historical architect.

Reflecting Pond

The reflecting pond is a designed water feature that is identified as contributing to The Ahwahnee developed area in the YVHD nomination (2006). The structure includes the base and liner system, supply and discharge plumbing, paved paths, and ornamental plantings. Designed by Olmsted Brothers during initial site planning for The Ahwahnee, the pond was both ornamental and representative of native vegetation in Yosemite.[3] Over time, the condition of the structure has deteriorated as a result of leaking through the liner, poor water quality, invasive vegetation, and stagnation, which in turn has fostered habitat for mosquitoes and bullfrogs. Recommended treatment of the reflecting pond focuses on rehabilitating the structure and upgrading the mechanical components to improve water quality; eliminating the seasonal use of the Merced River as a water source; and reducing water use.

- Preserve the historic design and character of the reflecting pond.
  - Retain the irregular, curving outline of the reflecting pool.
  - Maintain the location of the historic intake on the north side of the pond.
  - Maintain the historic location for outfall on the west side of the pond.
  - Use appropriate materials to repair structural damage to the pond as needed to prevent leaking.
  - Replace missing sections of the pond's stone edging; match new stone to the existing.
- Consider installing new systems, such as a pump and piping, to re-circulate water in the pond. Ensure the new water circulation system is installed in a way that does not alter the character of the pond, including its smooth, reflective surface. Install the new pump in an unobtrusive location.

3 Refer to Figure 15. *Planting Study for Approach Drive, Ahwahnee Hotel,* 1930, for more information about its historic condition.

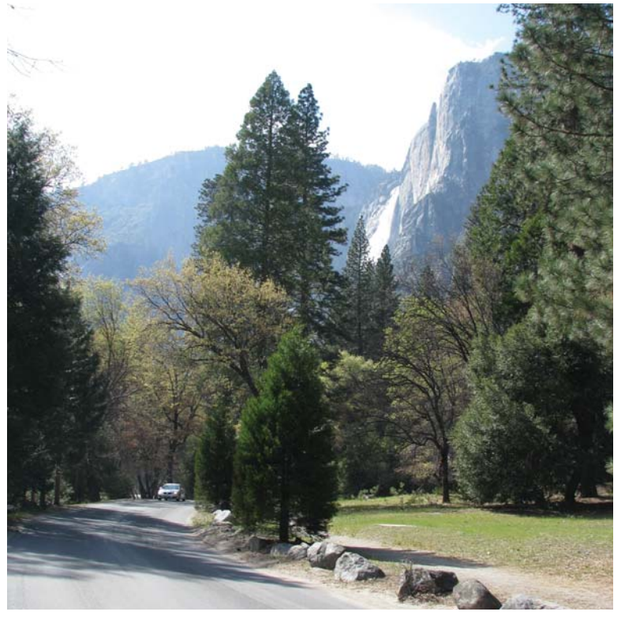


Figure 74. View towards Yosemite Falls, 2009.

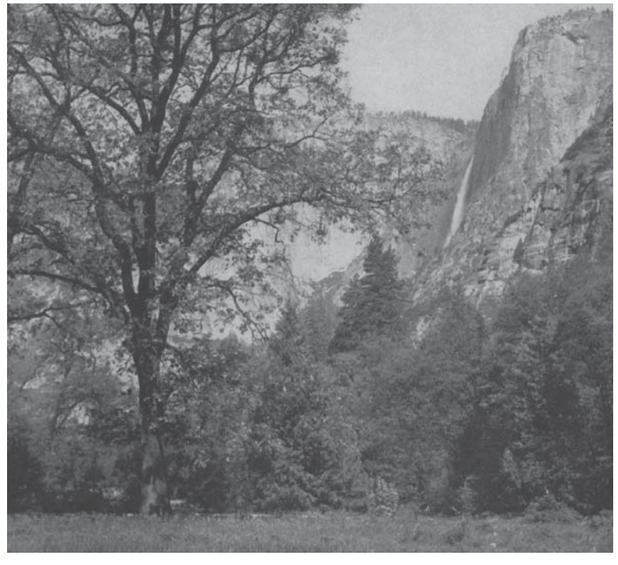


Figure 75. Historic view to Yosemite Falls from reflecting pond, 1942. (Source: YP&C Co. "Ahwahnee, Yosemite National Park," San Francisco, CA: Johnck & Seeger, 1942.)

Bus Shelter

The bus shelter, located at the eastern edge of the main parking area, is a non-contributing structure. It also encompasses the associated passenger loading area and bus parking. The bus shelter, while convenient for guests and visitors, has undesirable views of the hotel service area.

- Consider working with Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System and the park transportation coordinator to relocate the bus shelter to the west side of the parking area, or another location that does not adversely affect the visitor experience and arrival at the hotel entrance.

Constructed Drainage Channel

The drainage channel on the eastern side of this management zone was constructed during the proposed period of significance to convey runoff away from the site, and to drain surface and ground water from the meadow. Today, it is unknown if the channel continues to receive meadow groundwater via a subsurface drainage tile system. The interior cut slopes of the channel are eroded, with vegetation and debris collecting on the banks.

- Stabilize the drainage channel by removing debris and overgrown or invasive vegetation in a manner that does not adversely affect its integrity.
- Restore functionality of the drainage channel adjacent to the dormitory.

Dormitory and Tent Cabins

The dormitory is a non-contributing building that post-dates the proposed period of significance for The Ahwahnee study area. This building is related to the U.S. Navy's use of the study area during World War II. The temporary tent cabins and associated decking also post-date the proposed period of significance (installed in 2009), and are visually intrusive in the historic designed landscape.

- Minimize the visibility of the dormitory from Ahwahnee Road and from the hotel by maintaining its dark paint color and by screening it with additional vegetation.
- Future planning efforts should consider moving the dormitory to a location more remote from the hotel. The area east of the cottages may be an appropriate location for the dormitory as this was the site of other Navy buildings during World War II.
- Remove the temporary tent cabins and associated wood decking.

Circulation

Historically, vehicular access, parking, and pedestrian circulation systems were more articulated immediately around the hotel and more informal in the meadow, cottage area, and larger trail system in Yosemite Valley. Parking for hotel guests was restricted to the western portion of the management zone. Today, visitors continue to use the historic entry road; pedestrian, bicycle, and bridle paths; and parking areas. Treatment addresses preservation of significant features and rehabilitation of components to meet safety and accessibility objectives.

Ahwahnee Road

Ahwahnee Road is the main entrance route to the hotel and a contributing structure to The Ahwahnee developed area, and is listed in the YVHD nomination (2006). The alignment of the road along the base of the cliffs, the gently sloping grades, and relatively narrow two-lane width through mature forest historically created a narrow, contained approach to the hotel (Figure 76). This historic character remains today. The asphalt surface of the road (near the porte cochère) has been repaved multiple times, resulting in a higher road grade that prevents tall vehicles from entering the porte cochère.

- Preserve the historic alignment, grade, and width of Ahwahnee Road as the historic entry to the hotel.
- Retain the alignment of the entrance road as it divides at the parking area and creates a loop at the porte cochère, circling the reflecting pond before returning to the hotel.
- Retain the historic counterclockwise traffic flow from Ahwahnee Road past the parking area to the porte cochère.
- Inspect and assess the condition of asphalt paving as part of a cyclic preservation maintenance program through FMSS. Spot repairs should match existing material. Appropriate repairs may include:
  - Improvement of the sub-grade.
  - Minimal re-grading to address drainage problems.
  - When repairs begin to adversely affect the structural integrity or overall character of the paving, removal and replacement of paving is recommended.
- Repave the road at the porte cochère to reestablish lower grades and maintain positive drainage.

Bicycle Path

The bicycle path is part of the historic entrance to The Ahwahnee, and connects the hotel to Yosemite Village and other areas of the park. It is a historic route that skirts the southern edge of Ahwahnee Road along the woodland. Today it is a narrow, asphalt path. The historic paving material is unknown.

- Retain the alignment of the bicycle path.
- Repair asphalt paving in fair or poor condition to reduce cracking and heaving.
- Consider rehabilitating the bicycle path to comply with ADAAG, including width and slope guidelines, to maintain accessibility between Yosemite Village and The Ahwahnee.
- Maintain the width of the path and do not widen to encroach on the prism of Ahwahnee Road.

Bridle Path

The bridle path north of Ahwahnee Road remains from the proposed period of significance and should be managed as a contributing



Figure 76. Ahwahnee Road, 2009.

structure of the historic designed landscape in accordance with the YVHD nomination (2006). The path surface is compacted dirt, and it winds between the evergreens and large boulders that line the Ahwahnee Road, within and adjacent to the active talus slope.

- Retain the unpaved surface, alignment, grade, and width of the path between the gate house and the parking/August 2009 rock slide area to the east.

Parking Areas

Portions of the parking lot at The Ahwahnee hotel—the north and central parking bays of the western parking lot, and parking located around the reflecting pond—were designed during the proposed period of significance by Olmsted Brothers. Many of the 29 parking spaces that were closed as a result of the 2009 rock fall were part of the historic parking area. Plantings were used originally to visually screen parking from the hotel and, in the case of the reflecting pond, to create an enhanced rustic setting and elegant sense of arrival to the hotel. Some of this vegetation remains, but much of it has matured and no longer screens vehicles from view. Recommendations address preservation of existing parking spaces and rehabilitation of plantings to enhance screening of views to vehicles from the hotel.

- Preserve the configuration, extent, and function of the historic parking area and associated plantings as much as possible.
- Ensure visitor safety by placing a temporary barrier (such as a large log) to restrict access to the parking area closed in response to the August 2009 rock falls.
- Consider reuse of the rockfall parking area if these spaces are permanently closed.
  - Consider revegetation as an appropriate reuse of the area.
  - Remove asphalt paving, and restore native vegetation in the former parking area.
  - Select appropriate plants in consultation with park staff.
- Mitigate the impacts of social paths that damage vegetation and compact soil in the parking medians.
  - Designate pedestrian paths across parking medians to concentrate circulation and reduce damage to vegetation. Use hard edging material set flush with grade. Appropriate edging materials include smooth finish concrete block, flagstone, or granite stones.
- Improve safety and clarify vehicular and pedestrian routes by re-striping traffic lanes and parking spaces.
- Regrade the parking lot to improve drainage and remove excess layers of asphalt.
- Minimize damage to asphalt paving by improving standard operating procedures for snow removal.
- Redevelop existing sidewalks and curb-cut ramps as necessary to comply with current ADAAG requirements addressing required width, slope, and flare. Maintain a flush threshold between path paving surfaces.
- Redesign accessible parking stalls in the west parking area to comply with current ADAAG requirements, including required width and slope.
- Consider relocating bicycle parking farther away from the main hotel entrance to the south parking area.
  - Paint bicycle racks a dark color such as black or brown to minimize their visual impact on the historic landscape.

Reflecting Pond Path

The stone path encircling the reflecting pond is a historic pedestrian route through the garden. However, the inner path is surfaced with concrete pavers that, along with the wood bridge, post-date the proposed period of significance and are not visually compatible.

- Maintain the alignment of the historic path around the reflecting pond.
  - Reset the stone pavers to repair effects of heaving and cracked mortar.
  - Install a sub-base of stone and sand to mitigate future heaving or cracking.
  - Where it is necessary to replace or add new stone, match the existing stone and mortar color used in the historic path (Figure 77).
- Remove the concrete paver path and wood bridge.
- Establish new plantings where concrete has been removed.
- Discourage new social trails around the reflecting pool by incorporating temporary barriers as needed (see *A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite National Park).*

Small-scale Features

Hotel Entry Sign

During the proposed period of significance, a metal cutout depicting

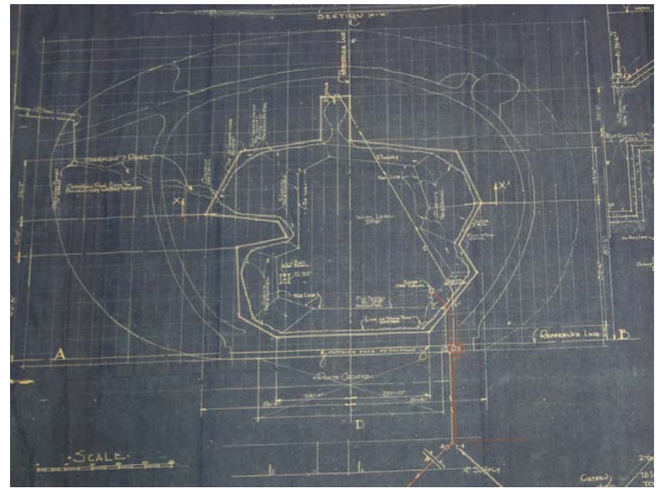




Figure 77. Reflecting pond drawing and paths today. Note the historic mortared stone path and the non-contributing concrete paver path. (Historic drawing source: Eldridge Spencer, "Plan of Reflecting Pool, Ahwahnee Hotel," 1930. Yosemite Archives.)

an eagle was attached to the top of the gate house sign at the entrance to The Ahwahnee (Figure 78).

- Restore the metal eagle cutout on the gate house sign.
  - Replicate the design of the metal eagle based on the historic drawings and photographs of the sign. Stamp the new sign to mark it as a reproduction.

Curbing and Edging

Small-scale features along Ahwahnee Road include curbs, culverts, and other features. The historic curbs in the parking area were granite block. Much of this curbing remains today and contributes to the rustic character of this zone. Other features, such as the concrete half-logs, are not historic and detract from the historic character of the landscape (Figure 79).

- Remove the concrete half-logs from Ahwahnee Road and replace with small boulders to discourage off-road parking and driving.
- Replace continuous concrete curbing throughout the parking area with granite blocks or concrete blocks. Concrete, if used, should be similar to granite in color and texture. Repair or reset broken or missing granite curb stones. Match existing granite for all new stone curbs.
- Maintain historic culverts and include annual inspection and cleaning as part of a preservation maintenance program through FMSS.

Lighting

Some historic lighting features remain from the proposed period of significance. These lights are mounted on log poles in the parking area and add to the historic character of the landscape.

- Preserve and maintain historic lighting fixtures between the north and central parking areas.
  - If new lighting is required, install fixtures that are compatible with the style, size, and illumination of the historic fixtures (Figure 80).
  - Comply with the guidance provided in the *Yosemite Lighting Guidelines* for illumination.



Figure 78. Stencil of metal eagle that was historically part of the entrance sign. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)



Figure 79. Concrete half-log along Ahwahnee Road, 2009.

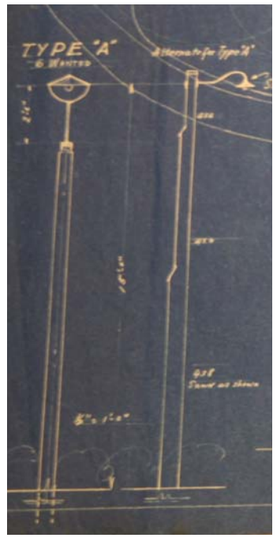


Figure 80. Drawing for historic lights in the parking area (above) and photograph of light (below). (Source: Eldridge Spencer, "Lighting Ahwahnee Entrance," 1931. Yosemite Archives.)



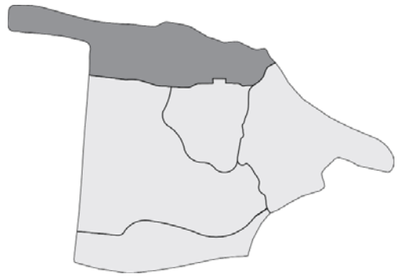
Contemporary Small-scale Features

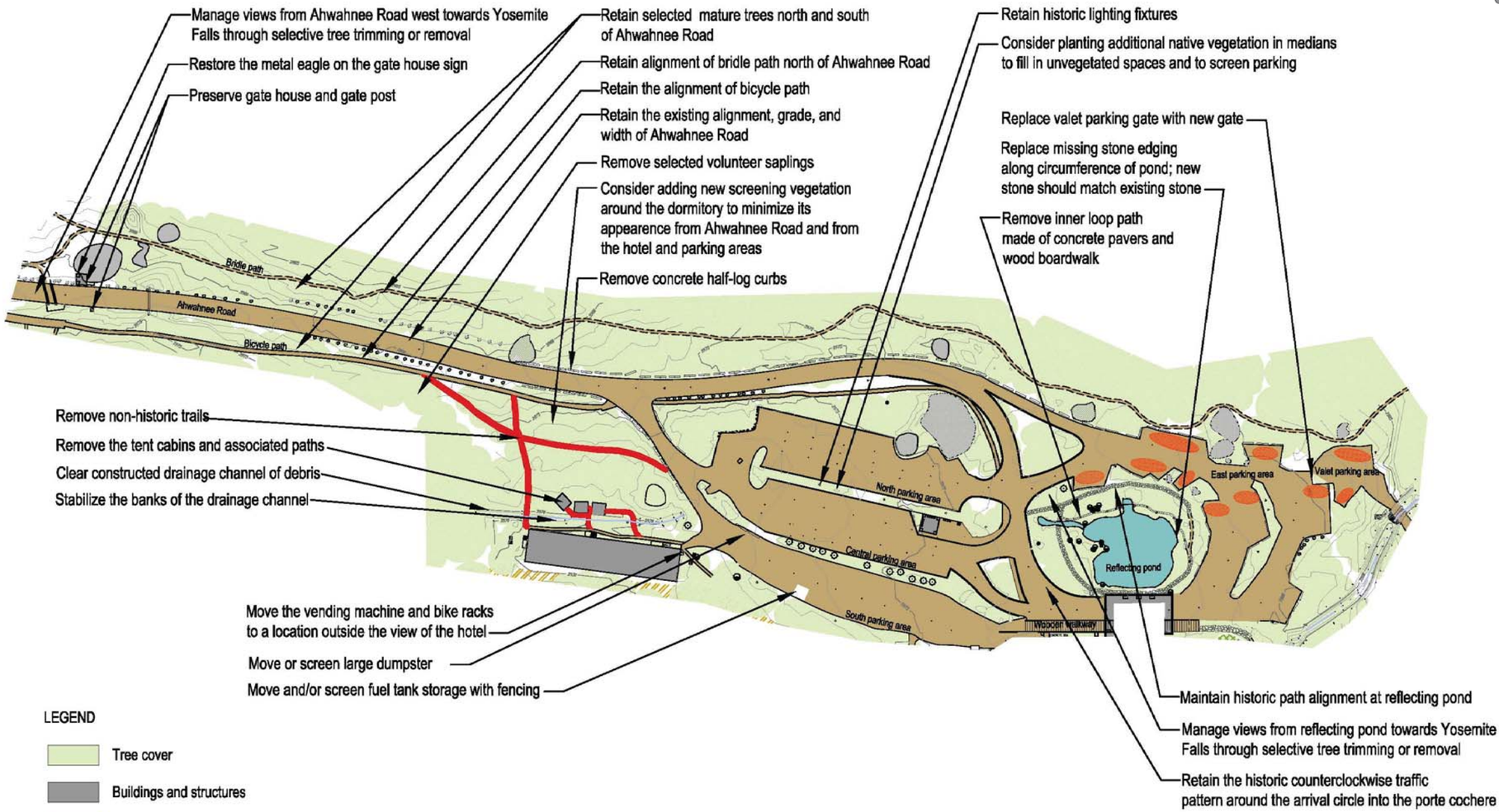
Many small-scale landscape features are required for safety and code compliance, but are incompatible with the historic character of the landscape. Treatment focuses on screening these features or mitigating impacts through relocation or design.

- Replace metal bollards with more compatible barriers, such as wooden posts or small boulders, to control vehicle traffic where allowed by code.
- Relocate the dumpster (Figure 81) to an area that can be screened from public view, such as the service yard or wooded area near the dormitory.
  - Screen the dumpster with appropriate vegetation or fencing. See *Treatment Guidelines, Temporary Barrier and Screening Structures*, for appropriate fence design for screening.
- Relocate the fuel tank storage area (Figure 81) to a less visually obtrusive location, if possible.
  - Appropriate locations may be the service yard, south of the mechanical building, or the concrete pads east of the cottages.
  - If the fuel tanks cannot be relocated, consider screening with a more compatible fence. See *Treatment Guidelines, Temporary Barrier and Screening Structures*.
- Replace the metal gate at the valet parking area with a new metal gate in a more compatible rustic style; or with a wood gate left unpainted or painted brown. Minimize the number of metal signs on the gate or replace them with painted wood signs.
- Use a rustic-style sign post for traffic signs, such as a peeled log or painted wood post.
- Maintain a clean and orderly appearance around the dormitory by removing or relocating non-compatible site furniture such as picnic tables and other small-scale features.



Figure 81. Non-contributing features: dumpster (left), fuel tank storage (right).





The Ahwahnee
Cultural Landscape Report

Treatment Plan: Zone 1
not to scale

N

Figure 82. Zone 1: Entrance/Arrival treatment plan.

Zone 2: Hotel Zone

This management zone contains The Ahwahnee hotel and the maintained designed landscape, including terrace areas, planting beds, garden spaces, swimming pool, paths, and extended areas of lawn and meadow. Historically the hotel and maintained landscape were designed in relationship to each other and within the context of the surrounding cliffs and natural meadow. In this way, the landscape was designed to provide scenic views to and from the hotel; these views remain an important organizing element in the landscape. Planted areas, such as the garden beds located between the terraces and the hotel building, incorporated native plants from the surrounding natural landscape into the designed landscape as maintained garden elements. The earthen plinth and flat lawn on the west and east sides of the hotel were part of the historic design of the landscape and are evident in historic photographs from the proposed period of significance. The flat, level lawn near the eastern terrace allowed visitors easy access to the grounds, while the sloping grades on the south and west created a small separation between the terrace and the meadow. Treatment supports the restoration of historic views, and the attributes of the maintained landscape that define the historic design of The Ahwahnee (Figure 87).

Vegetation

Based on historic photographs of The Ahwahnee during the proposed period of significance, ornamental vegetation near the hotel appeared informal in character. During construction of the hotel, many large trees were retained, adding a sense of scale and dimension to the setting. Shrubs and herbaceous plants were arranged in beds between the terraces and the hotel, and for the most part appear to have been maintained in their natural habit. Several planting plans exist from the proposed period of significance, but not all are complete and several lack a key; as a result, the identification of specific plants and their location during the proposed period of significance is undetermined. Recommendations for plants are based on the character of vegetation depicted in historic photographs—meaning plants that reflect the size, shape, texture, and form of the plants depicted in historic photographs regardless of species or variety. Whenever possible, selection of plants for The Ahwahnee should meet management and concessioner operational objectives, including visitor safety, views and vistas, maintenance, and sustainability.

Ornamental Plantings

Narrow planting beds between the hotel terraces and the west, south, and east sides of the hotel building were designed and used as shrub and perennial planting areas. These areas provided an important connection between the hotel and the larger landscape. Although the species of plants are unknown, historic photographs suggest that over the years, a variety were installed in the beds. The character of these plants indicate small to medium-sized shrubs (approximately 3 to 4 feet tall) with ascending branches; large ferns; and medium-sized, large-leafed woody or herbaceous plants. Historically, these were likely native plants, in keeping with the overall planting approach at The Ahwahnee that favored the use of locally-sourced, ornamental shrubs and wildflowers in the garden setting of the hotel. Although the current shrub planting does not appear to date from the proposed period of significance, it is compatible with the historic character.

- Retain the historic planting areas between the hotel building and terraces.
- Retain the native shrubs between the stamped concrete terrace and the hotel building. If it is necessary to replace them in the future, consider using other native shrubs that match the historic character.

Lawns

The lawns were used historically by hotel guests as an extension of the terraces for passive recreation such as croquet, and for strolling, bird watching, or relaxing.

- Restore the lawn as needed to maintain grass cover and minimize worn or bare areas (Figures 83 and 84).
  - Re-seed, over-seed, or re-sod lawn areas as necessary to maintain turf.
  - Work with park and concessioner staff to reduce water requirements of the lawn by using a drought-tolerant species in consultation with park natural and cultural resources staff.
- Remove blackberry and other invasive plants and limit mowing



Figure 83. Area of bare lawn that requires re-seeding or re-sodding.





Figure 84. Historic photograph showing areas of trimmed and tall grasses near the hotel, and existing conditions photograph, 2009, showing lawn condition with bare spots and no differentiation between tall and short grass cover. Meadow area vegetation should be rehabilitated to resemble the historic meadow condition, with clipped grass limited to the Lawn area. (Historic photograph source: Doris Schmiedell, "Ahwahnee, Queen of Yosemite," Pacific Coast Record, 1934.)

to the area southwest of the hotel.

- Create pine-needle mulched areas to the drip lines of trees in the southwest lawn area to reduce water demand and protect shallow tree roots.
- Retain the event ("Wedding") lawn in its current location. Plant with meadow grasses as part of the overall meadow rehabilitation (see *Zone 3: Meadow*) and mow as necessary. Do not irrigate this area.

Meadow

The meadow adjacent to the south and west sides of the terraces was historically designed to create a connection between the hotel and meadow to the south.

- Plant appropriate meadow vegetation in accordance with a meadow rehabilitation plan based on park ecologist design. See recommendations in *Zone 3: Meadow* for more information.
- Remove small volunteer and encroaching trees in meadow areas adjacent to the hotel to enhance historic views from the meadow to the hotel.

Flagpole Garden

Little is known about the historic design or character of the flagpole garden. The open lawn in this garden appears in photographs from the Navy era. The lawn and wildflower plantings are compatible with the historic rustic character of the overall landscape.

- Retain the mature trees surrounding the clearing.
- Retain the lawn.
- Retain the wildflower plantings.

Royal Arch Creek Plantings

Historically, native herbaceous plants and wildflowers (approximately 2 to 3 feet in height) were planted in a curving swath along the banks of Royal Arch Creek from the hotel area to the south. These wildflowers included phlox, delphinium, lilies, and others.[4] These plantings created a vegetated boundary between the lawn and creek that may have minimized soil erosion and the need for fencing.

4 Refer to Figure 16, *Planting Scheme for Brook East of the Ahwahnee*, 1929, by George B. Vaughan for more information about the historic planting scheme for this area.

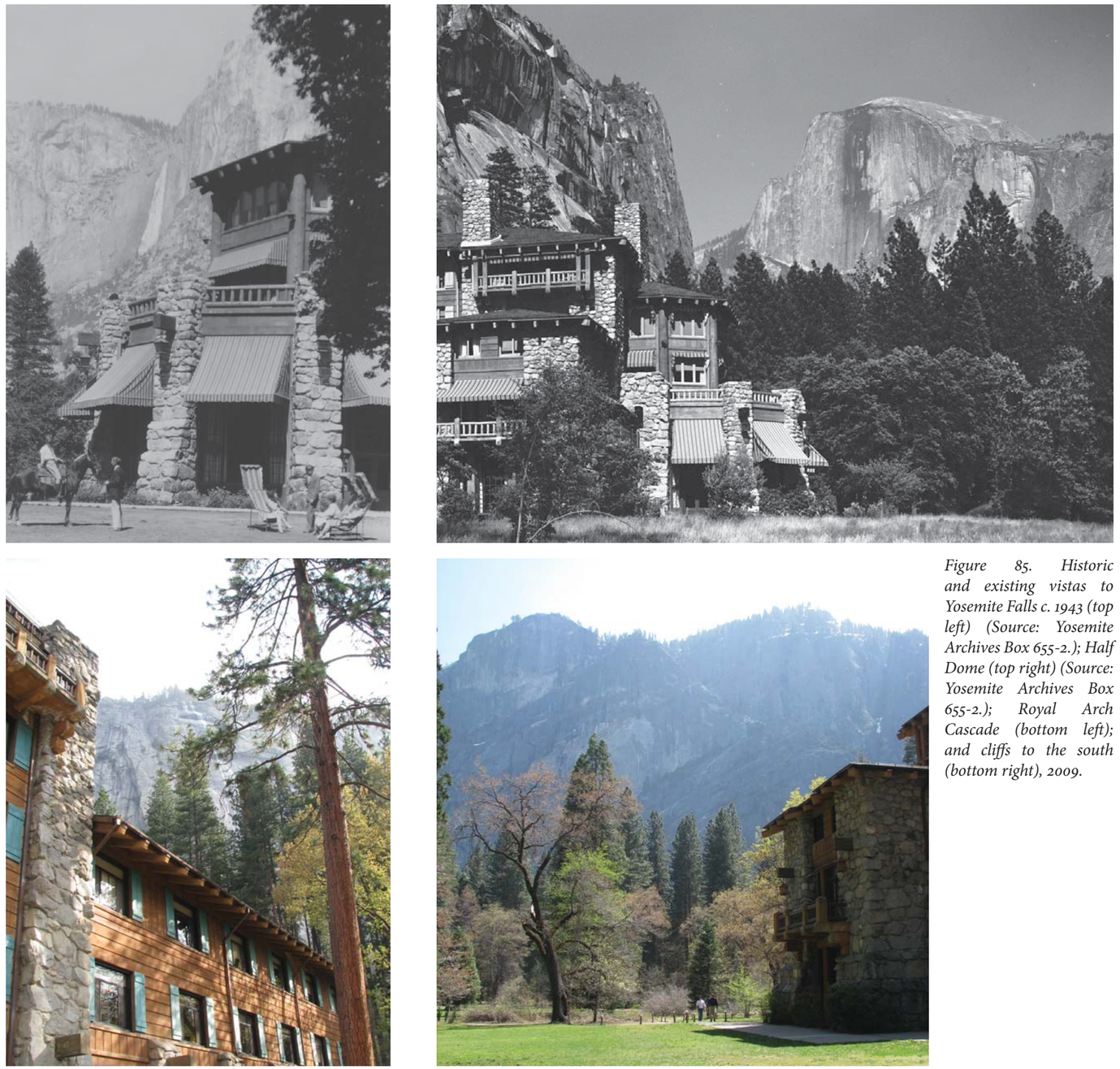


Figure 85. Historic and existing vistas to Yosemite Falls c. 1943 (top left) (Source: Yosemite Archives Box 655-2.); Half Dome (top right) (Source: Yosemite Archives Box 655-2.); Royal Arch Cascade (bottom left); and cliffs to the south (bottom right), 2009.

- Work with park staff to develop a list of plants consistent with the historic character to augment plantings along the banks of the creek.

Trees

Several large trees near the hotel appear to remain from the proposed period of significance, including a large pine at the eastern terrace, trees in circular concrete planters, and other mature trees preserved during construction of the hotel. These mature trees enhance the hotel's setting by providing a sense of scale and physical link between the manicured grounds around the hotel, and the surrounding natural landscape of the forest and meadow.

- Retain the tree within the circular planter in the service yard of the hotel.
- Retain the circular tree planter on the western end of the hotel.
- Retain the mature pine outside the bar on the eastern side of the terrace.
- Retain other mature trees in the wooded areas around the east and west sides of the hotel (especially black oaks.)
- Replace mature trees if necessary with trees of the same species after consultation with park staff.

Views and Vistas

The siting and orientation for The Ahwahnee hotel were designed to capture views of the awesome cliffs and waterfalls surrounding Yosemite Valley (Figure 85). Managing these views is a critical aspect of the historic design and design intent for guest experience. All actions involving management of these important views should be undertaken in compliance with the *Scenic Vista Management Plan for Yosemite National Park* and in consultation with park resources staff.

- Manage the view to Half Dome from the hotel through selective tree trimming and removal.
- Manage the view to Royal Arch Cascade from the lawn through selective tree trimming or removal.
- Restore the view to Yosemite Falls from the west side of the hotel and from the dining room through selective tree trimming or removal.
- Manage the views to surrounding cliffs, particularly the historic Fire Fall location at Glacier Point, through selective tree trimming and removal.
- Minimize views to the non-contributing mechanical building by adding screening vegetation.

Buildings and Structures

Hotel

- Undertake treatment of the hotel building according to recommendations and guidelines in *The Ahwahnee Historic Structures Report* (2010).

Stamped Concrete Terrace

The stamped concrete terrace is a contributing feature within The Ahwahnee developed area in the YVHD. The terrace wraps around the east, west and south sides of the building. The terrace has a variable width and is constructed of concrete stamped and stained to resemble flagstone. The "stone" color is a light green concrete stain; the "mortar" color is a light reddish-brown stain. Areas of the terraces that are in sheltered locations are in the best condition (for example, under the west loggia.) The terraces have substantial condition problems, such as cracking, as a result of weathering and vehicles driving on the paving. Some sections of the concrete terrace were improperly replaced or patched in the past.

- Retain and maintain the stamped concrete terraces in good condition.
- Repair or replace concrete terraces in fair or poor condition.
  - Match the historic concrete stain color and stamp pattern when replacing concrete. Use a wood board matching the length and width of the original stamp to recreate the historic pattern, or use a stamp molded from a section of the original paving. Cut concrete along joint lines in the concrete pattern when removing sections of the existing terrace to be replaced (Figure 86).
- Retain the earthen plinth at the west side terrace.
- Retain the flat expanse of lawn at the east side terrace.
- Survey the terrace to establish which original areas must be repaired or replaced. Repairs and replacements should match the original as closely as possible in color, texture and form and stamp pattern.
- Add a concrete stain to match the historic color described above when repairing stamped concrete that retains the correct stamp pattern (and is not cracked or spalling).



Figure 86. Stamped concrete paving at terrace: terrace with replaced and degraded materials (left) and terrace showing historic materials, with proper color and stamp pattern, and improperly replaced concrete adjacent to it (right).

- Date-stamp any new concrete material at the terraces in an unobtrusive location so that new work can be distinguished from the historic.
- Prevent vehicles from driving on concrete terraces in order to avoid cracking the paving. Replace metal bollards with more compatible materials, such as small boulders or wooden posts, along the terrace edge at the northwest corner in order to control vehicle access unobtrusively.
- Minimize water spray on concrete terraces by adjusting irrigation fixtures.
- Repair stone or soil surfaces adjacent to the concrete terraces; add mulch, soil or grass to minimize change in grade between concrete and unpaved areas. This minor adjustment to grading would improve accessibility in the landscape without being visually intrusive.

Swimming Pool

The location of the swimming pool was formerly a wildflower planting area during the proposed period of significance. The swimming pool is a non-contributing structure built in 1964.[5] Treatment addresses removal of this non-contributing structure, but also allows for the possible retention and refurbishment of the pool.

- Consider removing the swimming pool, pool terracing, and fencing. Replant pool area with appropriate native wildflowers in consultation with park staff if the swimming pool is removed.
- If retaining the pool, consider replacing the metal fencing with a code-compliant rustic-style fence composed of log posts and wood pickets or boards, and augmenting the existing plantings with appropriate native plants chosen in consultation with park staff to minimize views into the pool area. Paint the pool interior surface to better blend with the hotel's surroundings. Maintain screening plantings at pool and stair structure.
- If retaining the pool, consider constructing a ramp or improving the lift to provide better accessibility. Redesign the gate to provide a minimum clear opening per current ADAAG standards. Provide easily manipulable gate hardware that does not require grasping, pinching, or twisting to operate, such as a lever.

Bridges

Bridge 1 post-dates the proposed period of significance and is a non-contributing structure. Bridge 2, a log bridge with benches, is identified as a contributing feature for The Ahwahnee developed area in the YVHD nomination (2006). The material and distinctive design make it an excellent example of a rustic style footbridge.

- Retain Bridge 1, and undertake the necessary modifications to maintain its compatibility and to ensure the bridge complies with current ADAAG standards and code requirements.• Retain Bridge 2 and its historic benches.
- Paint Bridge 2 as necessary, matching the existing light-brown paint color.
- Replace deteriorated wood with new wood that matches the existing in size and diameter, wood grain, form, shape, and finish.
- Ensure that the joint between the paths leading to the bridges and bridge deck does not exceed the maximum difference in height allowed by current ADAAG standards for thresholds.
- Undertake repairs to the historic log bridge in consultation with NPS historical architects or experienced craftspersons and in compliance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.*
- Monitor bridge foundations for loose or missing stones and displacement from freeze/thaw heaving or erosion.

Wood Fence

The original wood fence between the hotel service yard and arrival area likely was replaced in the mid-1950s with a fence based on a drawing by Eldridge Spencer. This in-kind fence replacement remains today, and is a contributing structure, although it is in poor condition.

- Repair cracked concrete supports for the log posts.
- Replace individual wood posts and boards as necessary. Resurface and reuse selected boards if possible. Match new wood posts and boards to existing wood.
- Repaint fence a light-brown color to match the existing paint.
- Replace the fence in-kind if necessary.
- Retain the fence-mounted lights which are compatible with the historic character of the landscape.
- Remount these lights on the fence if it is replaced.

Circulation

The historic designed arrival sequence at the hotel is through the porte cochère, along the covered wooden walk and into the lobby of The Ahwahnee hotel.

- Maintain the historic arrival sequence into the hotel.

Wood Walkway

The east/west wood walkway north of the service yard near the hotel entrance provides a safe route for guests and hotel visitors to reach the entrance, and should be retained.

- Repair the wood walkway to minimize gaps between boards in accordance with current ADAAG standards.
- Repair the pavement in the wood walkway area, and re-grade as necessary to promote positive drainage.

Path to Cottages

The alignment of the path connecting the east terrace to the cottages is historic. Originally surfaced in stone, it is currently paved in asphalt.

5 Refer to Figure 16, *Planting Scheme for Brook East of the Ahwahnee*, 1929, by George B. Vaughan for more information about the historic planting scheme for this area.

- Maintain the existing historic alignment and width of the pedestrian path from the hotel terrace to Bridge 2 and the cottages.
- Rehabilitate the path to meet current ADAAG standards.
- Consider rehabilitating the asphalt path to better reflect the historic character by replacing existing asphalt paving.
  - Use flagstone for the path surface.
  - Maintain accessibility standards by placing stone with a smooth surface.
  - Install 6 to 8 inches of aggregate subgrade base and a 2- to 3-inch-deep layer of compacted sand to support accessibility.
  - Regrade the path with a gentle cross slope or crown.
  - Match the nearby stone path paving material if possible, using a random pattern of stone shapes, joinery, color, and size.

Flagstone Paths

Flagstone paths south of the terraces contribute to the historic character of the landscape but do not meet accessibility standards. Treatment targets rehabilitation to preserve the flagstone paving while reducing trip hazards and improving drainage.

- Regrade the existing flagstone paths as necessary to achieve a smooth surface and positive drainage.
  - Add porous material (sand) as needed to level individual stones.
  - Inspect stones as part of cyclic maintenance to maintain a level walking surface.
  - Document location of 24" oak tree stump and grind to ground level.

Paths Between South Terrace and Meadow

Informal pedestrian paths between the hotel and the meadow are used by guests to connect with other pathways and routes through Yosemite Valley. Some of these paths through the meadow are considered undesirable social paths, and adversely affect the fragile meadow vegetation. A few routes—such as the path to the remnant tennis court—may remain from the proposed period of significance, but do not function as originally intended. Treatment focuses on reducing the number of social trails through the meadow to reduce impacts to vegetation while providing accessible routes for visitors and hotel guests.

- Retain the paths leading to the tennis courts and south to the bicycle path and the primary route through the meadow.
- Consider adding a new resin surface on the social path south of the solarium to create an accessible connection to the Wedding Lawn.
- Remove other unpaved pedestrian pathways between the south terrace and the meadow.
  - Work with natural resources staff to develop appropriate strategies for revegetation of impacted areas (see *Zone 3: Meadow* treatment recommendations for more information).
  - Remove post and rope fencing lining these paths.
- Establish temporary barriers to discourage new social paths.
- Enhance accessibility on existing paths by minimizing the vertical change at the joint between materials.
- Re-grade paths to ensure positive drainage; crown paths or create cross slopes.

Small-scale Features

Lighting

Historical documentation indicates that lights near the hotel were used to illuminate pathways and highlight trees. Historically, the lights south of the hotel appear to have been low pathway luminaires with metal covers. These were low-wattage and were set approximately every 50 feet along the flagstone paths south of the eastern wing of the hotel and along the path to the cottages.[6]

- Remove the tall bollards with light fixtures along the historic flagstone path south of the terrace. If this path is deemed a high or medium activity area, consider using the minimum illumination criteria and bollard design described in the Yosemite National Park lighting guidelines.
- Work with a historical architect to assess the efficacy of the exterior historic light fixtures mounted on the hotel building. Conserve and repair functional historic mounted light fixtures at the hotel according to recommendations in *The Ahwahnee Historic Structures Report* (2010). Non-historic exterior lights may be removed to enhance the historic exterior appearance of the hotel and to reduce light pollution.

Contemporary Features

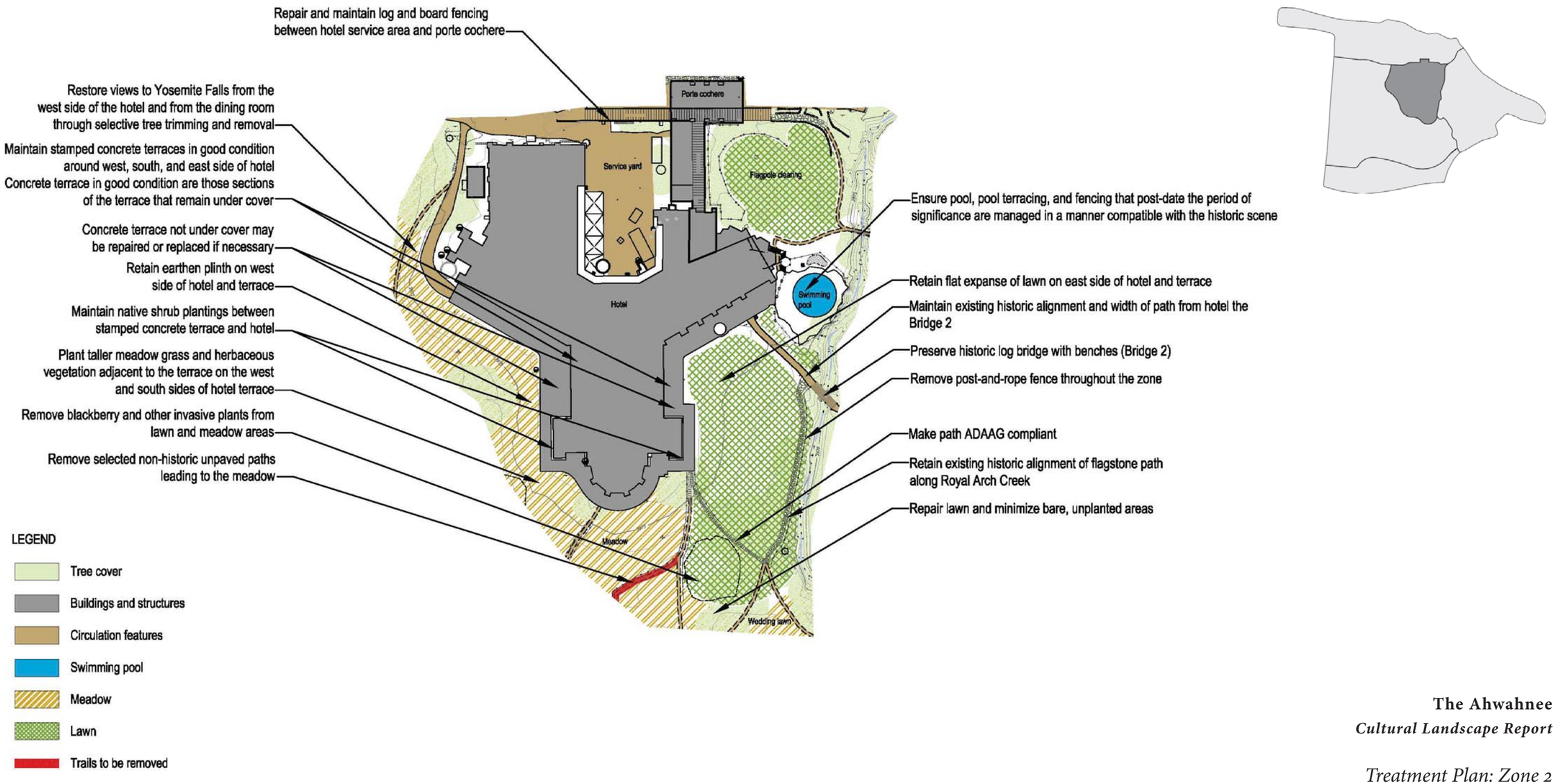
A number of contemporary small-scale features are located throughout the study area, including temporary barriers and interpretive signs. Some of these are visually compatible with the historic landscape but many are not. When viewed individually, these small-scale features do not affect the character of the larger historic landscape. However, when aggregated, the overall effect of so many disparate features is incompatible with the historic character of the landscape. Treatment focuses on reducing the number of these features to minimize impacts, and instead, encouraging the use of natural materials and design that is visually compatible with the historic character of The Ahwahnee.

- Remove the post and rope fencing made of composite wood material and plastic rope. If temporary barriers are needed in the hotel area, use cedar post and rope barriers.
- Replace incompatible metal sign posts with rustic-style posts, such as a peeled log or painted wood post.
- Remove the deteriorating wood sign frame near the swimming pool area.
- Maintain the existing, compatible wayside exhibit south of the hotel.
  - Work with park interpretive staff to ensure any new interpretive structures are compatible with the historic scene.
- Consider replacing upright irrigation fixtures with flush fixtures to minimize their appearance in the landscape.
- Consider removing bicycle racks from the hotel zone to a new dedicated bicycle parking area with fixed racks in the entry/arrival zone.

Zone 3: Meadow

Originally part of a large meadow that spanned nearly the entire length of Yosemite Valley, the meadow at The Ahwahnee was retained in the original design as an open area defined on the east by Royal

6 See *Lighting, Ahwahnee Grounds* and *Lighting, Ahwahnee Entrance*, 1931, by Eldridge Spencer for more information about historic lights near the hotel.



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Treatment Plan: Zone 2
not to scale

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Figure 87. Zone 2: Hotel treatment plan

Arch Creek, with views to The Ahwahnee, Yosemite Falls, Half Dome, and Royal Arches. Soon after the hotel was constructed, a golf course was added in the meadow. The golf course was later abandoned, but the level expanse of open grasses and herbaceous plants that remains is compatible with the historic character of the original meadow. The former putting green is now the location of the Wedding Lawn, used for special events.

The ecological integrity of the meadow, however, is degraded. Volunteer trees are encroaching, and most native plants have disappeared. High water tables that originally sustained meadow vegetation may be compromised. The meadow contains remnants of the subsurface tile drains that discharged to the constructed drainage channel. Exploration has located the tiles that drained the meadow, although the system no longer appears to function. Sections of the historic irrigation system are also still intact and in use in the lawn and around the hotel.

Treatment is focused on enhancing the open spatial quality and views that contribute to the historic character of the meadow landscape, as well as ecological restoration of the meadow with native meadow vegetation (see Figure 92 at the end of this section). Ecological rehabilitation of the meadow should be accomplished by, or in consultation with, NPS staff.

Vegetation

Meadow

The open grassy meadow in this zone pre-dates the hotel. Designers during the proposed period of significance capitalized on its open condition by creating the wildflower preserve, dotted with mature evergreen and deciduous trees and planted with a scattering of native wildflowers (Figure 88). The area immediately south of the hotel appeared to have been open, with few trees. This condition allowed for views of the hotel from the meadow. Thicker bands of trees, including oaks, edged Royal Arch Creek; pines lined the southern edge of the meadow; and oaks and sequoias were planted to screen the tennis courts. Black oaks appeared to occupy the meadow on the western side of the hotel. Wildflowers were planted in small single-species groupings throughout the meadow area amidst the lush, tall grasses. The tall grasses contrasted with the clipped lawn near the hotel, in an area that stretched from the hotel terrace to what is now the Wedding Lawn (the former golf course putting green). The goal of treatment for vegetation is to rehabilitate most of the meadow to its natural condition. The turf grass areas immediately adjacent to the hotel east terrace would remain as lawn and irrigated as needed; the Wedding Lawn would create a transitional zone with clipped meadow grasses. The restored meadow would evoke the original open appearance for the area as envisioned by Olmsted Brothers, and also support sustainability by using native plants that require no mowing or irrigation.

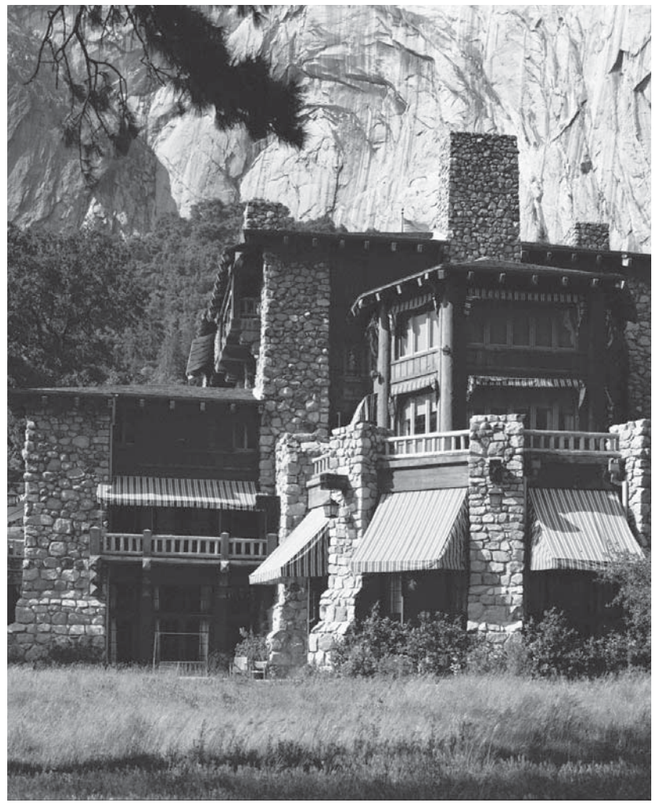


Figure 88. Historic meadow condition, c. 1940s. (Source: Yosemite Museum)

- Retain the historic open quality of the meadow.
- Develop a meadow restoration plan in conjunction with park restoration biologists.
  - Remove invasive plants (Figure 89).
  - Consider using wildflowers described in historic meadow planting plans as inspiration for a new planting plan. Plant wildflowers in single-species drifts as introduced in the historic meadow planting plan. Ensure these are appropriate native plants that meet current park approval.
  - Re-establish the historic areas of taller, unmown native plants throughout the majority of the meadow zone (see Figure 88).
  - Re-establish native plants (grasses) in the Wedding Lawn area, but mow as necessary. Do not irrigate this area.
  - Replant areas of dying plants and grasses to achieve consistent vegetation cover.
- Maintain mown turf grass in the lawn area adjacent to the east terrace, and irrigate as necessary. Use drought-tolerant species in consultation with park natural and cultural resources staff.
- Retain trees in the meadow that can be dated to the proposed period of significance, particularly black oaks.
- Remove trees that have been established in the meadow since the proposed period of significance, with the exception of habitat species identified in consultation with park natural resources staff.
  - Remove non-historic trees throughout the meadow zone that



Figure 89. Area of invasive blackberry.

block views to and from the hotel, and that encroach on the open character of the meadow.
- Prune historic and replacement trees to sustain historic views to and from the hotel.
- Monitor sensitive resource areas with the assistance of park archeologists when removing trees in the meadow.

Vegetation near Tennis Courts

The trees at the tennis courts, especially the sequoias, were planted during the proposed period of significance and contribute to the character of the landscape. Black oaks occupied the tennis courts area before the installation of the courts, and some of these trees may remain today. The trees in this location screen the courts from the hotel and from the meadow.

- If the tennis courts are retained, undertake minimal vegetation removal to improve visitor safety and to stabilize the tennis courts and associated features.
  - Retain the screening trees.
  - Remove vines from the fence (Figure 90) to stabilize this structure.
  - Remove hazard trees from the area surrounding the tennis court and consider replacing them with black oaks or other appropriate native evergreen trees.
  - Trim tree limbs overhanging the tennis court.
  - Remove non-native sequoias planted during the historic period.
- If the tennis courts are removed, rehabilitate meadow vegetation in the area in consultation with park natural resources staff.
  - Monitor sensitive resource areas with the assistance of park archeologists if undertaking tennis court removal.

Views and Vistas

The historically open meadow provided important views of the surrounding landscape. These views are currently compromised by overgrown vegetation.

- Manage views to Half Dome from the meadow through selective tree trimming or removal.
- Manage views to Yosemite Falls through selective tree trimming or removal.
- Manage views to The Ahwahnee from the meadow through selective tree trimming or removal. Base the removal of trees and shrubs on historic photographs of this zone (Figure 91).

Buildings and Structures

Bridges

Bridge 3 is a non-contributing, compatible structure.

- Repair the bridge deck to comply with current ADAAG requirements, including reducing the gaps between wood decking.
- Add railings that are complementary in design to the railings of other historic bridges, such as Bridge 2 or 4.
- Monitor bridge foundations for loose or missing stones and displacement from freeze/thaw heaving or erosion.

Tennis Courts

The *GMP* (1980) and the *Concession Services Plan* (1992) include a recommendation to remove the tennis courts. However, the courts were determined to be a contributing structure after these decision documents were completed.

- If the tennis courts are removed:
  - Document the resources to HABS/HALS/HAER standards before removal.
  - Undertake ecological restoration with guidance from park natural resource staff in the area currently occupied by tennis courts.
- If the tennis courts are restored:
  - Repair concrete paving with a weather-resistant surface.
  - Replace concrete trim at the stone paving.
  - Repair flagstone paving and mortar at terraces.
  - Paint new court lines as necessary.
  - Restore awnings at the sitting areas.
  - Maintain nets.
  - Repair wood benches as necessary.
  - Retain alignment and design of fencing.
  - Make the courts and associated features accessible per



Figure 90. Vines and tree branches at tennis court fence.



Figure 91. Historic view towards hotel from meadow. c. 1930s. (Source: Yosemite Archives.)

ADAAG standards.
- Replace the drinking fountain with an accessible one that meets current ADAAG standards, and restore water supply.
- Modify gate hardware with a design that does not require grasping, pinching or twisting to operate, per the current ADAAG standards.

Earthen Berms

The earthen berms remain from the former golf course and currently impede the flow of surface water across the meadow.

- In conjunction with meadow restoration, regrade the earthen berms to restore hydrology in consultation with natural resources and archeology park staff.

Circulation

Paths

Paths through the meadow should be minimized to protect sensitive vegetation. This plan recommends retaining three main paths to facilitate some circulation across the meadow; providing a new, dedicated ADAAG compliant path to the wedding lawn; and removing the remaining social paths. The paths to remain may survive from the proposed period of significance, and they provide a connection from the hotel building to the bicycle path south of the study area.

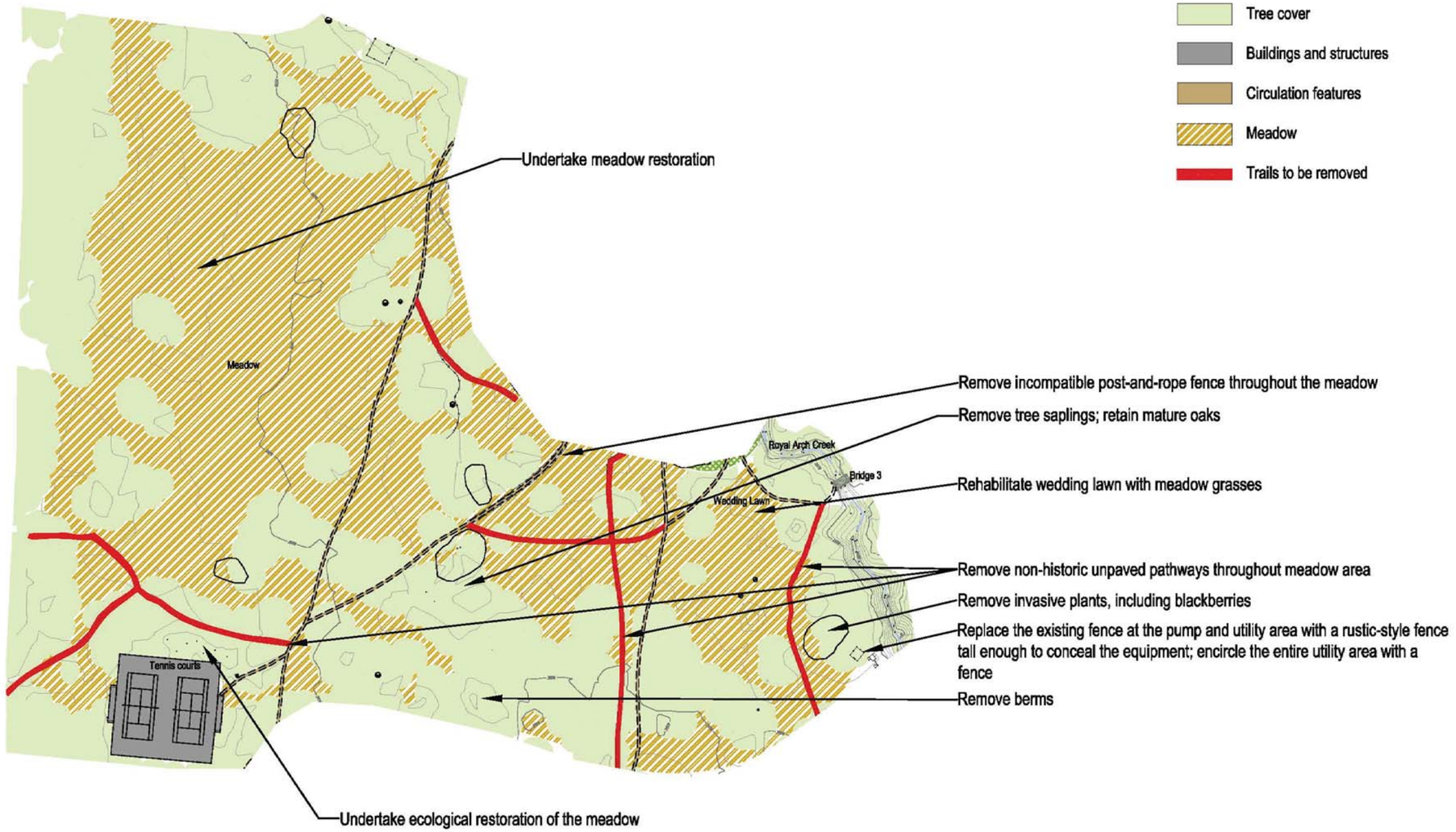
- Consider retaining the path leading to the tennis courts and southern bicycle path.
  - Do not pave this path; maintain the hard-packed earth or add a mulched surface material to be compatible with the character of the surrounding meadow.
- Retain the path alignment from the southeast corner of the hotel terrace south to the bicycle path to provide an accessible connection to the Wedding Lawn and across the meadow.
  - Rehabilitate this path to ADAAG standards between the terrace and Wedding Lawn.
  - See recommendations for this path in *Zone 2: Hotel* section above.
- Remove all other unpaved pedestrian pathways in the meadow.
  - Reseed or replant the path areas with approved meadow grass and herbaceous plantings as part of the meadow restoration plan.
  - Remove incompatible post and rope fencing lining these paths.
  - Temporarily block off any new social paths as they occur, using a natural log laid across the path or a cedar post and rope barrier.

Small-scale Features

Irrigation and Other Small-scale Features

The irrigation system is a remnant of the historic design; however, other small-scale features of man-made materials such as metal, composite wood, or plastic-wrapped rope detract from the historic character of the study area. The goal of treatment for these features is to minimize their appearance in the landscape or to replace them with compatible features of natural materials and/or with a hand-hewn character in keeping with the rustic style.

- Replace upright irrigation fixtures with flush fixtures to minimize their appearance in the landscape in locations where irrigation is to remain.
- Remove or disconnect the irrigation system in the meadow.
  - Monitor sensitive resource areas with the assistance of park archeologists if undertaking irrigation removal, addition, or adjustment.
- Remove subsurface drainage tiles and/or subsurface irrigation pipes from the meadow in consultation with park archeologists.
- Remove incompatible post and rope fencing.
- Replace the existing fence at the pump and utility area with a rustic-style fence tall enough to conceal the equipment; encircle the entire utility area with a fence.
  - The fence may be made of wood posts with wood pickets or panels, painted brown or left unpainted.
  - Consider screening the pump with additional native vegetation.



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Treatment Plan: Zone 3
not to scale

N

Figure 92. Zone 3: Meadow treatment plan.

Zone 4: Cottages

The cottages zone is defined by the cluster of eight cottages and one storage building, and the surrounding dense woods and understory plantings. Separated from the hotel and meadow by Royal Arch Creek, the wooded condition of this zone provides the cottages with a semi-private character. Treatment goals for this zone include preserving the distinctive design of the cottages and the woodland character of the vegetation (see Figure 95 at the end of this section).

This zone is also used for valet parking and storage of heavy equipment. This zone was the location for Navy-related facilities during World War II, and the concrete foundation in this area—now used for heavy storage—is the likely remnant of these facilities. The storage and service area's proximity to the cottages and parking makes it probable that hotel guests enter the area from time to time. Treatment goals focus on minimizing the visual impact of the stored equipment and improving the condition of the service road and valet parking areas.

Vegetation

The wooded character of the area historically provided a sense of privacy and separation from the hotel and meadow area. The condition appeared to include mature trees and lower understory shrubs and small trees.

- Retain mature trees, small flowering trees, and understory shrubs (Figure 93).
- Replant bare areas in the beds near the cottages with native vegetation compatible with the existing plants.
  - Consider the mature size and massing of new shrubs and trees to ensure they do not encroach into pathways.
- Protect the intermittent drainageway from erosion.
  - Consider planting appropriate native vegetation along the drainageway to stabilize the slopes.
  - Undertake a stream planting restoration plan in consultation with park staff.
- Screen the fire road from the cottages area with appropriate native vegetation.
- Screen stored material at the storage building with additional appropriate native vegetation.
- Choose plants in consultation with park natural resources specialists.

Views and Vistas

Views from the cottages zone are defined by openings in the vegetation that provide clear lines of sight to natural or historic features.

- Manage existing views to Royal Arch Cascade from the cottages.
- Manage existing views to Ahwahnee Bridge from the cottages.

Buildings and Structures

Cottages and Storage Building

The cottages and linen storage building are contributing buildings to The Ahwahnee developed area, and treatment is focused on retaining their historic character, massing, and details.

- Retain and maintain all eight historic cottages and the linen storage building.
- Avoid altering the exterior appearance of the buildings.
  - Maintain the current dark color paint on cottage exterior walls and doors.
  - Maintain the variations in architectural details such as the individual cladding designs, overall fenestration, roof alignment and designs, stone chimneys, and historic building-mounted features.
  - Avoid the introduction of replacement windows, new non-wood siding, or asphalt shingle roofing.
  - See the *The Ahwahnee Historic Structures Report* (2010) for more information about the treatment of the buildings in this zone.
- Remove the incompatible temporary air conditioning units outside the cottages.

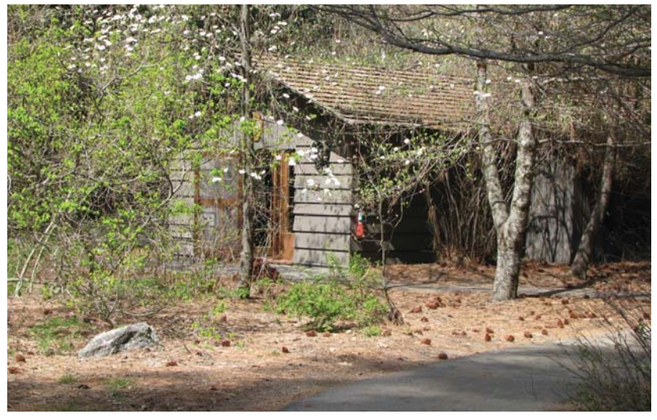


Figure 93. Character of the vegetation at the cottages (2009).

Cottage Terraces

The terraces at the entrance to each cottage are historic, though in many cases the finish materials have been altered.

- Retain the historic flagstone terraces, and repair mortar and flagstone paving as necessary.
- When it is necessary to replace the flagstones or mortar, match the existing materials.
- Replace all non-historic/non-accessible terraces that are built of concrete or concrete pavers with mortared flagstone to match the historic flagstone terrace paving.

Navy-era Concrete Foundation

The Navy-era concrete foundation post-dates the proposed period of significance and is a non-contributing feature. Although the foundation is considered non-contributing, the Navy period is an important part of The Ahwahnee's history and its significance may be interpreted through the features that remain from this period. It is used for equipment storage, materials staging, and employee parking.

- Consider retaining the foundation.
- Screen from view the stored materials on the foundation.
  - Use shrubs and low evergreen trees in consultation with park natural resources staff or a fence made with wood posts and wood pickets or panels painted brown or left unpainted.

Circulation

Paths

The main path from the hotel to the cottages across Bridge 2 was built during the proposed period of significance and is a contributing feature. Although the western section of the path near the hotel was originally paved in stone, the historic paving material east of Royal Arch Creek is unknown. Other short paths leading to the cottages were built during the proposed period of significance. Unpaved paths north of the cottages in the wooded area are non-contributing but compatible with the historic character of the study area.

- Repair or replace the asphalt paving that is in fair or poor condition.
- Retain the alignment and width of existing paths if possible while meeting the current ADAAG standards.
  - Widen paths only to the degree necessary to meet accessibility requirements.
- Create a crown or cross-slope on paths to achieve positive drainage.
- Ensure the paths remain flush with accessible terraces at the cottages (702-703, 715, 717) to meet current ADAAG standards.
- Retain unpaved paths from Bridge 1 to the cottages area and to the valet parking area.
  - Maintain compatible rustic path surfaces through the woodland, including hard-packed earth, mulch, or resin coating.
- Discourage the formation of social paths by temporarily blocking new paths as they arise with a natural log or cedar post and rope barrier.

Roads

The service and fire access road now used for valet parking appears to remain from the proposed period of significance, although it is unknown if its historic uses included parking.

- Maintain the unpaved vehicle and fire access road.
  - Regrade the road and parking spaces as necessary with a cross-slope or crown to minimize ponding from storm water or snow melt runoff.
  - Upgrade the road as necessary to meet fire access codes.
- Consider adding additional parking spaces along this road to compensate for the 43 spaces lost to the talus slope geohazard zone created as a result of the 2009 rock fall.

Small-scale Features

Storage Building Features

The exact character of the fence and awning at the storage building is unknown, although the storage building is a contributing feature to the YVHD.

- Repair the fence at the storage building; match the paint color to that on the buildings, and replace wood pickets in-kind as necessary.
- Repair the awning over the storage building door.



Figure 94. Peeled log sign post.

Lighting

It appears that low metal lights with a reflecting cover were used historically to illuminate pathways near the cottages.[7]

- Remove the incompatible lighted bollards along the paths.
- Use one style of path lighting throughout the cottages area.
  - Consider using a new low rustic-style bollard light with a design that meets the current illumination criteria for the park.

Contemporary Features

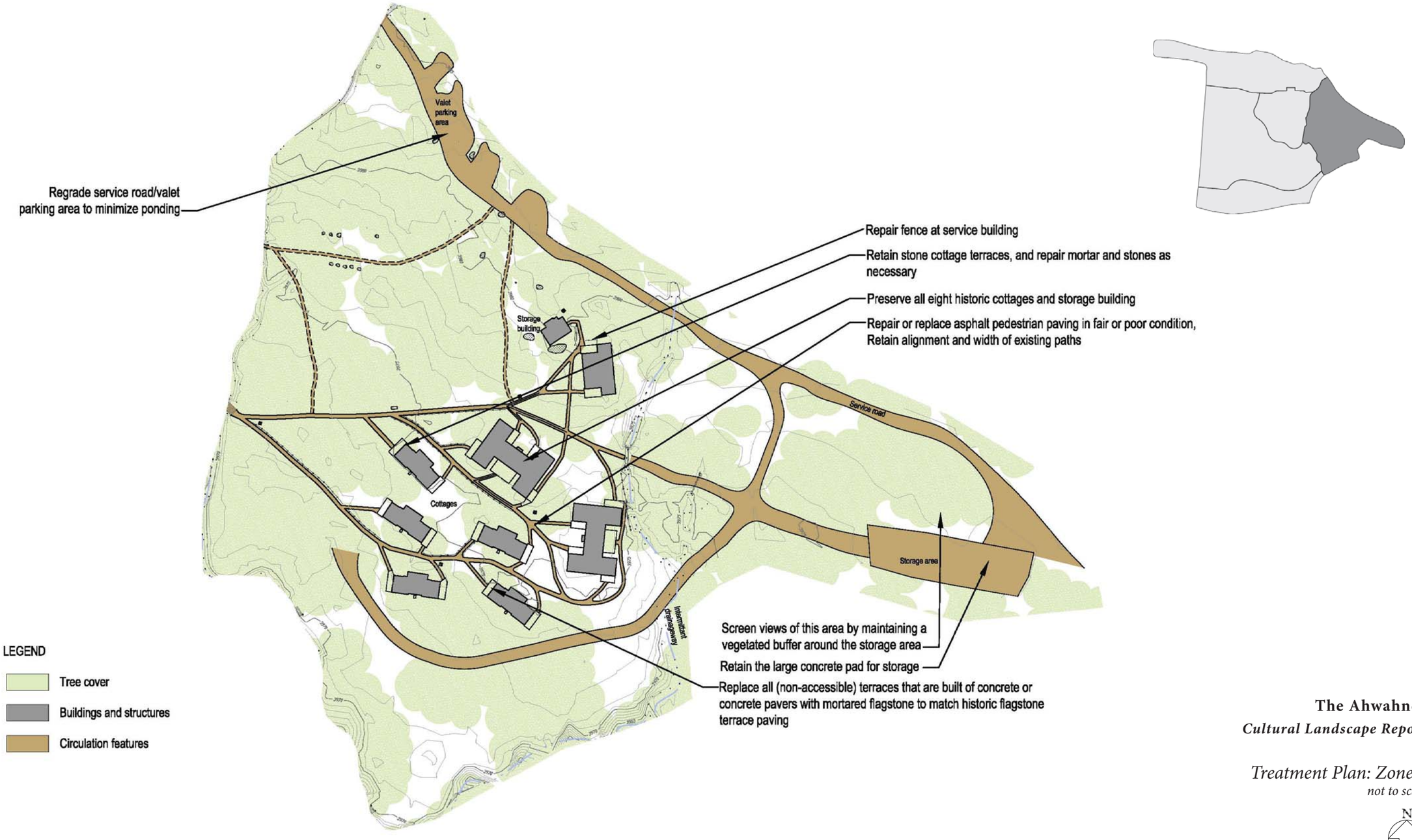
Contemporary small-scale features of man made materials such as metal, composite wood, or plastic-wrapped rope detract from the historic character of the landscape. The goal of treatment is to minimize their appearance in the landscape or to replace them with compatible features made of natural materials and with a hand-hewn character in keeping with the rustic style.

- Remove composite wood post and rope fencing.
  - If it is necessary to install a temporary barrier, use a natural log or cedar post and rope.
- Consider using a rustic style sign post for signs, such as a peeled log or wooden post (Figure 94).
- Remove metal site furnishings.
  - Consider using furnishings that match the hotel zone site furnishings.
- Maintain a dark paint color (such as brown) on all small-scale features such as trash receptacles, signs, and fences to minimize their appearance in the woodland landscape.

Utilities

- If new equipment—such as heating, venting, or air conditioning equipment—is required at the cottages in the future, locate it away from paths, cottage terraces and front doors in order to minimize visual intrusions in the historic landscape.
  - Screen equipment areas with native evergreen vegetation of an appropriate height.

7 See *Lighting, Ahwahnee Grounds* and *Lighting, Ahwahnee Entrance*, 1931, by Eldridge Spencer for more information about historic lights near the cottages.



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Treatment Plan: Zone 4
not to scale

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Figure 95. Zone 4: Cottages treatment plan.

Zone 5: Woodland

This zone adjacent to the meadow forms a visual screen between the hotel area and the bicycle path to the south. The wooded area historically was dominated by pines and oaks. It is now becoming overgrown by pine saplings that create a denser woodland character than what was there historically. Treatment goals for this zone include restoring the historic character of the woodland, and controlling access from the bicycle path. (See Figure 97 at the end of this section).

Vegetation

Woodland

The woodland along the southern boundary of the study area historically contained pines and black oaks.

- Remove tree saplings from this zone to preserve the historic character of mature woodlands with an open understory (Figure 96).
  - Consider using techniques such as fire management, mechanical or manual tree removal that are consistent with park woodland management policies and that encourage black oak growth.

Buildings and Structures

Bridge

Bridge 4 remains from the proposed period of significance and is a contributing feature to The Ahwahnee Developed Area within the YVHD.

- Work with park preservation crews, and others as appropriate, to assess/evaluate the structural integrity and condition of Bridge 4, including the abutments, decking, railing and all other structural components.
- Repair and rehabilitate the bridge as needed to ensure structural stability and compliance with ADAAG requirements.
  - If new stone is required to replace damaged historic stone in the abutments, match it to the historic in size, color, and type.
- Monitor bridge foundations for loose or missing stones and displacement from freeze/thaw heaving or erosion.



Figure 96. Saplings in the wooded area at the southern edge of meadow compromise the historic character of the woodland and encroach on the adjacent meadow.

Circulation

Paths

It is unknown if paths historically traversed the woodland zone. The current number of paths allow excessive foot and bicycle traffic through the woodland and meadow.

- Retain designated paths from Bridge 4, the tennis courts, and the Wedding Lawn to provide limited access through this area.
  - Maintain compatible rustic path surfaces through the woodland including hard-packed earth, mulch, or resin coating.
- Document existing paths and discourage the establishment of new paths by temporarily blocking new paths with logs.

Small-scale Features

Fence

- Consider installing a low rustic-style fence along north side of bicycle path (at the southern edge of this zone) to deter bicyclists from entering the woodland and meadow zones.
  - Use a park standard pierced post fence with openings at designated intervals to allow people to pass through.
  - Design the fence openings to be universally accessible.



Figure 97. Zone 5: Woodland treatment plan.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- Undertake archival research at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site to determine if additional information is available regarding Olmsted Brothers work at The Ahwahnee.
- Complete a context study for the World War II military use of National Park Service resources to provide a better understanding of the significance of changes made by the Navy to The Ahwahnee during World War II.
- Update *The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan* (1996) to include new guidelines for the maintenance of the hotel grounds based on current park planning and maintenance standards.
- Update the National Historic Landmark nomination (1987) and the YVHD nomination (2006) to update the landmark and developed area boundaries, reassess significance under all four NRHP criteria, and update the list of contributing landscape features.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE RESOURCES WITH CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The following table catalogs the landscape resources in The Ahwahnee study area. The table includes the name of the resource, its associated landscape characteristic (building/structure, circulation, etc.), its management zone location, its date of origin, its condition, notes about its condition, and its assessment. The assessment is marked "*contributing*" if the resource is a contributing resource as defined by the YVHD nomination (2006); "*historic*" if it contributes to the historic character of the landscape; "*non-contributing*" if it post-dates the proposed period of significance; "*missing*" if it was located in the study area during the proposed period of significance and is no longer extant; and "*undetermined*" if its date of origin is unknown. In the case of features that are clearly contemporary but do not have a known installation date (such as bear-proof trash receptacles or bicycle racks, for example) the date of origin will be marked "*contemporary.*" Natural resources with no date of origin will have the origin information left blank. Non-contributing resources will be noted as either "*compatible*" or "*incompatible*" with the historic character of the study area. Some resources, or types of resources, are referenced multiple times because they exist in multiple zones within the study area. The location of the features cataloged in this table is identified in the plan figures in *Part 1, Existing Conditions* of this report. An asterisk (*) denotes that the resource is located in more than one zone.

The standards defining the condition of cultural landscape features are taken from *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports,* and described in detail in *Part 1, Existing Conditions.* These include Good, Fair, Poor, or Unknown.

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Talus slope	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival			Active	Historic
Boulders	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Good	Active change of boulders at talus base	Historic
Royal Arch Creek	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival*		Good	Reinforced with stone, contains piping	Historic
Narrow road corridor	Spatial Organization	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1928	Good		Historic
Reflecting pond garden	Spatial Organization	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Fair		Historic
Wooded area	Spatial Organization	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1920s	Fair	Some volunteer trees and shrubs	Historic
Level, except for reflecting pond and Royal Arch Creek	Topography	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Good		Historic
Level, with depressed bicycle path	Topography	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1928	Fair	Some erosion south of road	Historic
Planted shrubs	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1931	Good		Historic
Row of deciduous trees	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1931/Contemporary	Good		Historic
Row of giant sequoia trees	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1931	Good		Historic
Wildflower plantings at reflecting pond	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Originally C. 1931; New Plantings, Unknown	Good/Fair	Plantings thin, includes grass and other volunteer vegetation	Historic
Pines, cedars, black oak woods	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Some volunteer trees and shrubs	Historic
Meadow grasses	Vegetation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Some volunteer trees and shrubs	Historic
View to Yosemite Falls from Gate House	Views	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
View to Yosemite Falls from Reflecting Pond	Views	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Royal Arch Cascade	Views	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to The Ahwahnee	Views	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Good		Historic

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Gate house , LCS 55460	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1930	Good	Some signs of efflorescence and moss inside	Contributing
Gate post, LCS 55460	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1930	Good		Contributing
Constructed drainage channel	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1928	Poor	Overgrown with vegetation, filled with debris, eroded bank	Historic
Dormitory	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Moved C. 1945	Poor	Compatible; simple wood structure with dark color paint relatively unobtrusive in landscape	Non-contributing
Tent cabins and wood decking	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Current: 2009, Previous: C. 1970s	Good	Incompatible; light color canvas is obtrusive	Non-contributing
Wooden bridges (at constructed drainage channel)	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1970s	Poor	Incompatible; some boards split, warped, loose	Non-contributing
Bridge 5 (at reflecting pond)	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1981	Good	Incompatible; covers pond intake area	Non-contributing
Bus stop shelter	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	2005	Good	Incompatible; not ideal location	Non-contributing
Reflecting pond, LCS 55494	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Poor	Leaking water; missing stones from edge	Contributing
Royal Arch Creek, LCS 59765	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival			Reinforced with stone	Contributing
Stone culvert	Buildings and Structures	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 2007 (?)	Good	Location of historic bridle trail ford	Contributing (?)
Ahwahnee Road, LCS 55675	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1931	Good	Needs to be re-striped	Historic
Bicycle path	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1928	Fair	Heaving from nearby tree roots; edges deteriorating in places	Historic
Bridle path, LCS 59755	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1928	Good		Historic
Central parking area, LCS 59754	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Poor	Some pavement cracking and splitting, curbs broken	Historic
Concrete paver path at reflecting pond	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1981	Fair	Incompatible; pavers heaving, inappropriate material/design	Non-contributing
Concrete sidewalks	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1965?	Good	Incompatible; pavers heaving, inappropriate material/design	Non-contributing
Concrete terrace at dormitory	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1945	Good	Incompatible; pavers heaving, inappropriate material/design	Non-contributing
Crosswalks	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Incompatible; bright paint striping worn away	Non-contributing
East parking area	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1965	Fair	Compatible; designed in wooded area	Non-contributing
Le Conte Road	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1880s			Missing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Parking area around reflecting pond	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Poor	Some pavement edges are cracking and damaged by tree roots; curbs broken; some spaces closed due to a 2009 rock slide	Historic
North parking area, LCS 59754	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Fair	Some pavement edges are cracking	Historic
Royal Arch Road	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	C. 1880s			Missing
Service access roads/valet parking	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Poor	Compatible; some erosion and ponding, woodland setting not inappropriate for study area	Undetermined
Sidewalks	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Incompatible; cracking and eroded edges, little historic basis for plain concrete sidewalks	Non-contributing
South parking area	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1965	Fair	Compatible; pavement cracked and gouged	Non-contributing
Stone path at reflecting pond	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1930	Poor	Mortar chipped and missing, flagstone heaving, path section missing	Historic
Unpaved paths	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Good	Compatible; unpaved character not inappropriate for study area	Non-contributing
Wooden walkway at porte cochere, LCS 55527	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Poor	Areas near the western transition from the paved parking and the wood walkway at the porte cochere flood during rain or snow melt conditions. Pavement is potholed and cracked liked due to poor drainage.	Historic
Wooden decking near dormitory and tent cabins	Circulation	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Good	Incompatible; contemporary	Non-contributing
Ahwahnee gate house sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1930	Good	Missing the metal eagle	Historic
Accessible-parking sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Bear-proof storage bins	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Bear-proof trash cans	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Bicycle racks	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Cigarette receptacle/ash urn	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Concrete curb	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1965?	Poor	Incompatible; chipped, broken, heaved by freeze-thaw and tree roots, out of alignment	Non-contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Concrete half-log curbs	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Unknown	Poor	Incompatible; some are broken, spalling, misplaced, and/or buried	Non-contributing
Culvert pipe	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Unknown	Fair	Incompatible; necessary for site storm water management	Non-contributing
Do-not-enter sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Do-not-feed-the-animals sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Dumpster	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; necessary for site security and safety, exposed to public, in parking area	Non-contributing
Fire hydrant	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1985-86	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Fuel tank storage	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival		Fair	Incompatible; necessary for hotel needs, exposed to public, in parking area, sections of fence bent	Non-contributing
Granite curbs	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931 and Contemporary	Fair/Poor	Some are shifted of broken, partially covered with asphalt, out of alignment; some new in good condition	Historic
Informational sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Irrigation system	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival*	C. 1928	Fair	Functional but old	Historic
Metal bollards	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; paint chipped, some leaning	Non-contributing
No-parking signs	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
NPS signs	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
One-way signs	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Picnic table	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; does not complement the rustic design style	Non-contributing
Post-and-rope fence	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; some posts are leaning out of alignment, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Small boulders edging road	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Unknown	Good		Historic
Speed-limit sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Tree-mounted light	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1965?	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Upright log bench/ post	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Compatible	Non-contributing
Valet parking gate	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; paint peeling, signs bent	Non-contributing
Wood and concrete bench at bus shelter	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	2005	Good	Incompatible; contemporary	Non-contributing
Wood post light fixtures	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	1931	Fair		Historic
Vending machines	Small-scale Features	Zone 1: Entrance/ Arrival	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Royal Arch Creek	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 2: Hotel*		Good	Reinforced with stone, contains piping	Contributing
Flag pole clearing/garden	Spatial Organization	Zone 2: Hotel	By 1943	Good		Historic
Kenneyville stable complex	Spatial Organization	Zone 2: Hotel	1889			Missing
Lawn and meadow south of building	Spatial Organization	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1928	Fair		Historic
Flat lawn	Topography	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Good	Some exposed soil	Historic
Raised plinth on southwest side of hotel building	Topography	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Good	Minor regrading for fire road construction	Historic
Garden area at flagpole clearing	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927	Fair	Some unplanted, bare areas	Historic
Lawn or "Wedding Lawn"	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel*	C. 1927	Poor	Bare soil areas	Historic
Meadow grasses	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel*	C. 1927	Fair	Invasive plants; grass in poor shape; bare soil areas	Historic
Planted shrubs at hotel terrace	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927/Contemporary	Fair	Missing shrubs in areas	Historic
Planted trees near hotel terrace	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927	Fair		Historic
Volunteer trees and shrubs	Vegetation	Zone 2: Hotel*		Poor	Incompatible; invasive; overtaking open character	Non-contributing
Views to Half Dome	Views	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to meadow	Views	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Royal Arch Cascade	Views	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Fire Fall/Glacier Point	Views	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Yosemite Falls	Views	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
The Ahwahnee, LCS 55943	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Good		Contributing
Bridge 1	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1990s	Good	Compatible	Non-contributing
Bridge 2, LCS 55482	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1928	Fair	Peeling paint	Contributing
Employee break shelter	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel		Fair	Incompatible; not rustic style	Non-contributing
Kenneyville stable complex	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1870			Missing
Mechanical Building	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1989	Good	Incompatible; not rustic style, inappropriate location	Non-contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Pool terrace	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1964	Fair	Incompatible; cracked paving, not rustic style	Non-contributing
Swimming pool	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1964	Good	Incompatible; not rustic style, bright color	Non-contributing
Service yard	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair		Historic
Stamped concrete terrace, LCS 55487	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	1927	Fair/Poor	Some areas have been replaced; in other areas, stamped design is wearing thin. Concrete is cracked or broken at edges due to historic use as a driving path for maintenance or other vehicles, sections cut for drainage system upgrades were replaced with concrete of different character as a short term repair. These repairs are neither stamped nor stained.	Contributing
Wooden fence at service yard	Buildings and Structures	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927	Fair/Poor	Paint is peeling, wood chipping. Many of the wood posts are rotted and cracked at the base and concrete bases (foundations) are cracked allowing moisture in and increasing the rate of decay. Many of the support timbers have deteriorated and temporary repairs have been made.	Historic
Le Conte Road	Circulation	Zone 2: Hotel	1870?			Missing
Fire road	Circulation	Zone 2: Hotel*	1985-86	Fair	Incompatible; ponding in some locations, grading for road apparent	Non-contributing
Flagstone path (south of terrace), LCS 55632	Circulation	Zone 2: Hotel*	C. 1927	Poor	Stone paths are uneven, missing stone surfaces, and contain roots above grade in several locations; heaving presents tripping hazards.	Historic
Path to Bridge 2 and cottages, LCS 55916	Circulation	Zone 2: Hotel*	C. 1927	Fair	Heaving paving	Historic
Unpaved paths	Circulation	Zone 2: Hotel*	Unknown	Poor	Incompatible; not designed	Non-contributing
Building-mounted lights	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927	Good		Historic
Bicycle rack	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Boulders edging path	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Unknown	Good		Historic
Cigarette receptacle	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Concrete tree planters	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1928	Fair/Poor	One has been rebuilt (2009), one is chipped and cracked	Historic

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Deliveries-only sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Do-not-enter sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Dumpster	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Fire hydrant	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	1985-86	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Flag pole	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	By 1943	Good		Undetermined
Granite curbs	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	1931	Fair/Poor	Some are misplaced, eroded, chipped	Historic
Informational sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Irrigation system	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel*	1928	Fair/Poor	Functional but old, likely leaking	Historic
Manhole cover	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Metal bollards	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; paint chipping, some are leaning	Non-contributing
NPS signs	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
NPS signs	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Planter boxes	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Unknown	Good		Undetermined
Pool fence	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	1994	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Post-and-rope fence	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Post-and-rope fence with lights	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Sign post	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Trash receptacle	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Wooden benches	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; not rustic style	Non-contributing
Wooden table and chairs	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; not rustic style	Non-contributing
Wooden tree grate	Small-scale Features	Zone 2: Hotel	C. 1927, likely rebuilt	Good	May have been rebuilt	Historic (?)
Royal Arch Creek	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 3: Meadow*		Good	Reinforced with stone	Historic
Badminton Court	Spatial Organization	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1930			Missing
Golf course	Spatial Organization	Zone 3: Meadow	1930			Missing
Meadow	Spatial Organization	Zone 3: Meadow		Poor	Overgrown with volunteer trees	Historic
Berms associated with golf course	Topography	Zone 3: Meadow	1930	Fair		Historic
Lawn	Vegetation	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1927	Fair	Some bare spots in lawn areas	Historic
Meadow grasses	Vegetation	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1927	Fair	Thin, some bare spots	Historic

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Screening trees at tennis courts	Vegetation	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1928	Fair	Trees overgrown, and limbs overhanging courts	Historic
Volunteer trees	Vegetation	Zone 3: Meadow		Poor	Incompatible; overwhelming meadow	Non-contributing
View to Half Dome	Views	Zone 3: Meadow		Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Ahwahnee Bridge	Views	Zone 3: Meadow		Good		Historic
Views to hotel from meadow	Views	Zone 3: Meadow	1927	Fair	Obscured by vegetation	Historic
Views to Royal Arch Cascade	Views	Zone 3: Meadow		Good		Historic
Views to surrounding cliffs	Views	Zone 3: Meadow		Good		Historic
Views to Yosemite Falls	Views	Zone 3: Meadow		Good		Historic
Bridge 3	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow		Fair	Compatible	Non-contributing
Deer fence	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	1928			Missing
Fence	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	1906		Pasture fence assoc. w/ Kenneyville	Missing
Golf course kiosk	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1931			Missing
Stone fire/cooking structure	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1931			Missing
Temporary buildings (11)	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1944			Missing
Tennis courts, LCS 55481	Buildings and Structures	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Poor	Surface is chipped, spalling	Contributing
Kenneyville stable access road	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1905			Missing
Fire road (unpaved)	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow*	1985-86	Fair	Incompatible; grading evident	Non-contributing
Flagstone path near stamped concrete terraces	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1928	Fair/Poor	Some stones are partially buried, misplaced, or missing	Historic
Le Conte Road	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow				Missing
Stone terraces (tennis court)	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Fair/Poor	Edge is deteriorating, mortar breaking down.	Contributing
Unpaved paths	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow		Poor	Incompatible; undesigned, meandering, eroded	Non-contributing
Unpaved path to tennis courts	Circulation	Zone 3: Meadow		Poor	Incompatible; undesigned	Non-contributing
Awning support (tennis court)	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Poor	Missing awning, paint peeling	Historic
Badminton court	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1931			Missing
Chain link fence (tennis court)	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Poor	Bent in some places, overgrown with vines	Historic
Fire hydrant	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1985-86		Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Informational sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Irrigation system	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow*	1928	Fair/Poor	Functional but very old, leaking water	Historic
Manhole	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary		Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Metal bollards	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; paint chipping	Non-contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Post-and-rope fence	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Post-and-rope fence with lights	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Practice wall at tennis courts	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow		Poor	Loose, covered with graffiti	Undetermined
Pump and associated equipment	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	C. 1930	Poor	Equipment is exposed	Historic
Rules-of-the-courts sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow		Fair		Undetermined
Trail sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Tree stump bench	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	Contemporary	Fair	Compatible; rustic style	Non-contributing
Valve control wheel	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow		Unknown		Undetermined
Valve cover	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow		Unknown		Undetermined
Water fountain at tennis courts	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Poor	Not functioning	Historic
Wooden bench at tennis court	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1928	Poor	Paint peeling, boards warped,	Historic
Wooden slat fence at pump house	Small-scale Features	Zone 3: Meadow	1928?	Poor	Fence pickets loose	Undetermined
Drainageway	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Erosion and washouts	Historic
Intermittent drainageway	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Some erosion	Historic
Royal Arch Creek	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 4: Cottages*				Historic
Merced River	Natural Systems and Features	Zone 4: Cottages*				Historic
Camp 8	Spatial Organization	Zone 4: Cottages	1878			Missing
Clustered buildings and paths	Spatial Organization	Zone 4: Cottages	1928			Historic
Kiddie Kamp	Spatial Organization	Zone 4: Cottages	By 1931			Missing
Wooded area	Spatial Organization	Zone 4: Cottages		Good		Historic
Level with natural drainageways	Topography	Zone 4: Cottages				Historic
Sloped riverbank at Merced River	Topography	Zone 4: Cottages				Historic
Meadow grasses	Vegetation	Zone 4: Cottages		Good		Historic
Volunteer trees	Vegetation	Zone 4: Cottages		Good	Incompatible; overwhelming wooded area	Non-contributing
Understory shrubs	Vegetation	Zone 4: Cottages	1925	Good	In some places overgrown	Historic
Evergreen and deciduous trees	Vegetation	Zone 4: Cottages	1925	Good		Historic
Views to Ahwahnee Bridge	Views	Zone 4: Cottages		Good		Historic
Views to Royal Arch Cascade	Views	Zone 4: Cottages		Good		Historic
Concrete pad	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	C. 1944	Poor	Incompatible; some cracks, partially buried	Non-contributing
Cottages 700-701, LCS 55540	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 702-703, LCS 59857	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 704-705, LCS 59750	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 706-707, LCS 59751	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Cottages 708-709, LCS 59752	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 710-714, LCS 55559	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 715-719, LCS 59753	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottages 720-723, LCS 55577	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottage terraces -accessible poured concrete	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1990	Good	Terrace structure is contributing, new materials represent some loss of integrity; reversible.	Contributing
Cottage terraces-dry-laid concrete pavers	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1990	Good		Contributing
Cottage terraces-mortared flagstones	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Good		Contributing
Cottage terraces-poured concrete terraces	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1990	Fair	Some spalling and cracking	Contributing
Intermittent drainageway, LCS 59757	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Some erosion	Contributing
Storage building, LCS 55629	Buildings and Structures	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Fair	Awning crooked, siding not completely intact	Contributing
Asphalt paths	Circulation	Zone 4: Cottages	1928	Fair	Some cracks and tree root damage	Historic
Service road	Circulation	Zone 4: Cottages*	1985-86	Fair	Some ponding	Undetermined
Unpaved paths	Circulation	Zone 4: Cottages	Unknown	Good		Undetermined
Unpaved roads	Circulation	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Erosion and washout	Unknown
Valet parking area	Circulation	Zone 4: Cottages	1965?	Poor	Water, ponding on road, poor grading	Non-contributing
Bear-proof storage bins	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Bear-proof trash can	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Black lamp on black post	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Cottage directional sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Culvert	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Do-not-feed sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Equipment at storage building	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Poor	Incompatible; unused, exposed	Non-contributing
Fire hydrant	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	1985-86	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Green lamp on metal post	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Informational sign	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing

RESOURCE	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	MANAGEMENT ZONE	DATE OF ORIGIN	CONDITION	NOTES	ASSESSMENT
Manhole	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Post-and-rope fence	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Rain chain	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Metal table and chairs	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Small boulders	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Good	Compatible	Non-contributing
Stone curb	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Some stones misplaced, buried	Undetermined
Tall wooden fence at storage building	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	C. 1928 (?)	Fair	Some boards are broken, cracked, need repainting	Historic
Upright log bench/ post	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages		Fair	Some logs split, cracked	Undetermined
Wooden table and chairs	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Good	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Truck trailer	Small-scale Features	Zone 4: Cottages	Contemporary	Unknown	Incompatible; contemporary design, non-natural materials	Non-contributing
Wooded area along bicycle path	Spatial Organization	Zone 5: Woodland	1925	Fair	Volunteer trees overgrowing area	Historic
Evergreen and deciduous trees	Vegetation	Zone 5: Woodland	C. 1927	Fair	Overwhelmed by pine saplings	Historic
Bridge 4, LCS 55346	Buildings and Structures	Zone 5: Woodland	C. 1930	Poor	Railings are loose, boards are split, stone supports are deteriorating. The abutments of Bridge 4 were apparently undermined during the 1997 flood. Rather then repairing the abutments, the walking surface was modified to allow access.	Contributing
Trails	Circulation	Zone 5: Woodland	Contemporary	Fair	Incompatible; undesigned unpaved social paths	Non-contributing

APPENDIX B- HISTORIC PLANT LISTS

A-4.1

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
File # 4-4

COSTS OF AHWAHNEE WILD FLOWER PLANTING

March 20, 1928 to May 1, 1929

Preparing ground Hauling dirt and fertilizer, ploughing and leveling	3,318.40
Installing Sprinkler system (over 5 miles of piping)	11,768.71
Collecting seed and over 330,000 plants and bulbs	3,206.88
Planting same	1,068.43
Planting and rocking creek	216.42
Maintenance work Watering and weeding Trapping 300 gophers shooting 250 squirrels Chasing deer and bear Repairing fence after bear	1,468.58
TOTAL	$21,047.42

WILD FLOWERS PLANTED AT THE AHWAHNEE

Fall of 1928

50,000	Shooting stars	(Dodecatheon redolens)
500	Marsh Marigold	(Caltha biflora)
1,000	Lupine	(Lupinus longipes)
10,000	Shooting stars	(Dodecatheon Jeffreyii)
500	Columbine	(Aquilegia truncata)
1,500	Pink Mimulus	(Mimulus lewisii)
500	Wild Onion	(Allium validum)
10,000	Anderson Aster	(Aster Andersonii)
500	Fireweed	(Epilobium angustifolium)
2,000	Black-eyed Susans	(Rudebeckia californica)
5,000	Penstemon	(Penstemon confertus)
25	Tall Mountain Larkspur	(Delphinium glaucum)
3,000	Brown-eyed Susans	(Helenium Hoopesii)
400	Everlasting	(Anaphilis margaritacea)
1,000	Lappula	(Lappula
1,000	Mertensia	(Mertensia sibirica)
1,000	Mitrewort	(Mitella Brewerii)
700	Boykinia	(Boykinia major)
250	Indian Rhubarb	(Saxifiaga peltata)
30,000	Yosemite Aster	(Aster Yosemitensis)
1,000	Purple Aster	(Aster Fremontii)
100	Paint Brush	(Castilleia miniata)
150		(Carum Douglassii)
300	Evening Primrose	(Oenothera hookeri)

2.

600	Creeping phlox	(Phlox Douglassii)
50,000	Fleabane	(Erigeron salsuginosus)

FERNS

100	Brake Fern	(Pterisaquilina)
5	Great Chain fern	(Woodwardia radicans)
200	Lady Fern	(Asplenium felix-femina)

BULBS

10,000	Dog tooth Violets	(Erythronium Hartioegii)
12,000	Fairy Lanterns	(Calochortus albus)
3,000	Star Tulip	(Calochortus nudus)
8,000	Camass	(Camassia quamash)
	Mariposa Lilies	(Calachortus venustus)
15,000	White to lavender-gold blotch	(var) eldorado
20,000	Yellow	(") citrinus
15,000	Big white to lavender and pinks	(") "Shirlock"
5,000	Harvest Brodiaea	(Brodiaea grandiflora)
8,000	Twining Brodiaea	(Brodiaea volubilis)
6,000	Golden Brodiaea	(Brodiaea ixiodes)
10,000	Bridges' Brodiaea	(Brodiaea Bridgesii)
5,000	White Brodiaea	(Hyacinthinia (var) lactea)

3.

SEED

Godetia	(three varieties)
Larkspur	(Delphinuim Hansonii)
Tall Mountain Larkspur	(Delphinuim glaucum)
Lupines	(several varieties)
Baby Blue Eyes	(nemophylla)
Blue Flax	(linum lewisii)
Cillia	(Cillia achilliaefolia)

TREES AND SHRUBS

50	Silver Fir	(Abies concolar)
10	Yellow pine	(Pinus ponderosa)
150	Azalea	(Rhodedendron occidentalis)
18	Sequoia	(Sequoia gigantea)
150	Honysuckle vine	(Lonicera interrupta)
30	Wild Gooseberry	(Ribes roesli)
25	Christmas berry	(Toyon)
25	California Laural	(Umbellularia)
12	Live Oaks	(Quercus chrosolepis)
10	Aspens	(Populus tremuloides)
15	Thimble Berry	(Rubus parviflorus)
400	Tree Dogwood	(Cornus parviflorus)
6	Syringa	(Philadelphus Lewisii, var Californicus)

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
File # H

October 27, 1928

Mr. Ansel F. Hall, Chief Naturalist
National Park Service,
213 Hilgard Hall,
University of California

Dear Ansel:

Answering your letter of October 24th:

The area we are now developing for wild flower gardens is approximately twelve acres.

It is difficult to estimate the complete cost. An idea of the size of the undertaking, however, can be obtained from the following:

1 -	Installation of complete sprinkler system	$12,000.00
2 -	English Hurdle Fence to keep out the deer	4,528.02
3 -	Grading, filling, etc.	3,588.41
4 -	Cost of collecting specimens for the first year's planting	4,249.77
5 -	Cost of landscape planting to date - approx.	2,000.00
6 -	Cost of the direct supervision of the collecting and planting for the first year	1,500.00
	Total -	$ 27,866.20

The original landscape lay out showing where different types of plants and shrubs should go was made by Olmstead Bros. of Palos Verdes, California, under the direct supervision of Frederick Law Olmstead. The actual work of selecting shrubs and plants to fit Mr. Olmstead's landscape scheme is being done by Mr. Carl Purdy of Ukiah. Mr. Purdy is perhaps the most noted and capable wild flower man in the West.

Mr. Ansel F. Hall -- 2 October 27th, 1928.

You may get some idea of the progress to date when I tell you that over five hundred cedar, pine and fir trees have been transplanted successfully to the Ahwahnee grounds. Toyon berry, sequoia Gigantea, bay tree, azalea, dogwood, black oak, manzanita are among the things which have already been planted. In addition we have planted:-

15,000	Calochortus venustus - var. Eldorado
15,000	" " " Shilock
20,000	" " " Citrimus
12,000	" albus
3,000	" nudus
5,000	Brodicea grandiflora
8,000	" volubiles
6,000	" ixiodies
10,000	" Bridgessii
5,000	" Lactia
20,000	Erythroneum Hartwegii
8,000	Camassia
seed	Godetia - 3 varieties
1,500	Delphinium Hansonii
1,500	"
300	Silene Californica
50,000	Dodecatheon redolens
1,000	Lupinus Longipes
10,000	Dodecatheon Jeffreyii
1,000	Aster Andersonii
1,500	Minulus Lewisii
300	Allium Validum
500	Epilobium (the fireweed)
2,000	Rudebecka Californica
5,000	Penstemon confictus
3,000	Helenium Hoopesii
1,000	Lappelas
1,000	Meitensias
1,000	Mitella Brewerii
700	Boykinias
250	Saxifraga Peltata
400	Anaphilis
30,000	Aster Yosemitensis
1,000	Aster Foomontii
100	Castilleia miniata (the painted brush)
150	Carum Douglasii
1,500	Aquilegia truncata
600	Phlix Douglassii
900	Lupinus ? (from Aspen Valley)
50,000	Erigeran Salsuginasus
seeds	of Lupinus longipes
"	" Nemophylla
"	" Linum Lewisii
"	" Gilia Achelliaefolia
200	Cerreanothus integerimus
50	Libocedrus decureus
50	Abies concolar
10	Pinus ponderosa
150	Rhodedendron occidentale
18	Sequioa gigantea

Mr. Ansel F. Hall —3 October 27th, 1928.

150 Lonicera interrupta
30 Ribes oroesti
25 Toyon berry
25 Unbellulovia Californica
12 Quercus Chrysolepis
10 Populus tremuloides
15 Rubus parviflowis

Also small lots of the following for specimen planting.

Allium Validum
Anaphyllis margaritacea
Aster Entegrifolius
Aster Andersonii
Aster Occidebtaolis
Areanraia capillaris
" compacta
" nuttallii
Arnicacordifolius
Arabis Platysperma
Antennaria Media
Aquilegia pubescens
Artemisia Norvegica
" tridentata
Carum Douglassii
Castilleia Cuthertsonii
Cnicus acualescens
Coptis biflora
Scopulorum
Dodecatheon Alpinum
" Jeffreyii redolens in pits
" " in pits
Eriophyllum
Eriogonum incanum
" ovalifolium
" wrightii
Erigeron Coulterii
" compactum
Gentiana Newberyii to Tresidders
Gilia aggfregata
Viola purpurea
" Glabella
" Porcupine Flat
Silene Lemmonii
" Bridgesii
Habenaria unalaschenskis
Hieracium horridum
Horkelia Fusca
" Gordonii
Frasera speciosa
Lappula nervosa
L Velutina
Lewisia Pygmaea
" Nevadensis
Linum Lewisii
Lupinus Grayii
" Longipes Dana var.
" Danaea
Mitella Brewerii
Mimulus Lewisii
Penstemon Davidsonii
" Confertus
Pedicularis semibarbatus
Phacelia Mabelianics ?
Potentilla flabelliformis
" Gracilis
" Grayii
Polemonium pulcherrimum
" Eximium
Pyrola secunda
Selinum capitellatum
Senecio aureus
" Schorzonella
" Triangularis
" Lugens
Troximon
Valeriana sylvatica
Vaccinium
Sedum obtusatum
Salix arctica var petrae

When completed the gardens will include a section of dry rock plants growing in granitic soil, a section of stream plants following Royal Arch Creek, a section of boggy meadow plants, another section for plants which grow in drier, grassy meadows, as well as a section for shade-loving plants.

We have been surprisingly successful to date in our transplantations. In passing, you will be pleased to know we have even transplanted polemonium from near the summit of Mt. Conness. Our chief difficulty to date, with the exception of inroads of deer, has been with ground squirrels and gophers. Over five hundred of these animals have been killed in the last two months in the grounds immediately

Mr. Ansel F. Hall — 4 October 27th, 1928.

adjoining the hotel. They have resulted in the loss of several thousand bulbs and plants in spite of our best efforts.

Very truly yours,

_____
President.
YOSEMITE PARK AND CURRY CO.

DBT:B

WILD FLOWER PLANTING

AHWAHNEE HOTEL

Yosemite National Park

for

Yosemite Park and Curry Company

By George B. Vaughan
Carl Purdy, Consultant

FALL-1928

Key No.	Perennials No. of Plants	Name
1	50,000	Dodecatheon redolens
2	500	Caltha biflora
3	1,000	Lupinus longipes
4	10,000	Dodecatheon Jeffreyii
5	500	Aquilegia truncata
6	1,500	Mimulus Lewisii
7	500	Allium validum
8	10,000	Aster Andersonii
9	500	Epilobium angustifolium
10	2,000	Rudebeckia californica
11	5,000	Penstamon confertus
12	3,000	Helenium Hoopesii
18	400	Anaphilis margaritacea
19	30,000	Aster yosemitensis
20	1,000	Aster Fremontii
21	500	Castillea miniata
22	150	Carum Douglassii
23	300	Oenethera hookeri
24	600	Phlox Douglassii
25	50,000	Erigeron salsuginosus
26	150	Aspen Valley Lupine
62	100	Pteris aquilina
63	5	Woodwardia
64	200	Aspidium rigidum
	Bulbs	
27	10,000	Erythronium Hartwegii
28	12,000	Calochortus albus
29	3,000	" nudus
30	8,000	Camassia quamash
32	15,000	Calochortus venustus (var)eldorado
33	20,000	" " " citrinus
34	15,000	" " " Shirlock
35	5,000	Brodiaea grandiflora
36	8,000	" californica
37	6,000	" ixiodes
38	10,000	" Bridgesii
39	5,000	" hyacinthina (var) lactea

WILD FLOWER PLANTING

AHWAHNEE HOTEL

Key No.	No. of Plants	Name
40	Seed	Godetia (three varieties)
44		Lupinus (Aspen Valley)
45		Nemophylla
46		Linum Lewisii
47		Gillia achilliaefolia
	Trees and Shrubs	
49	50	Abies concolar
51	10	Pinus ponderosa
52	150	Rhodendron occidentalis
53	18	Sequoia gigantea
54	150	Lonicera interrupta
55	30	Ribes roesli
56	25	Toyon
57	25	Umbellularia
58	12	Quercus chrysolepis
59	10	Populus tremuloides
60	15	Rubus parviflorus
61	25	Cornus parviflorus
62	100	Ceanothus intergerimus
63	10	Calycanthus
64	25	Cercis occidentalis
65	5	Philadelphus

WILD FLOWER PLANTING

AHWAHNEE HOTEL

FALL--1929

Key No.	Perennials No. of Plants	Name
25	40,000	Erigeron salsuginosus
20		Aster Fremontii
19	10,000	Aster yosemitensis
1	15,000	Dodecatheon jeffrii
24	1,000	Phlox Douglassii
72	100	Lupinus Covellii
80	200	Penstamon menziesii
5	500	Aquilegia truncata
73	100	Dicentra formosa
75	100	Rosa californica
76	150	Salanum xanti
77	200	(Bush Penstamon)?
78	500	(Yellow daisy-like--silver leaves)
79	100	Mimulus Cardinalis
23	300	Oenothera hookeri (and seed)
	Shrubs	
74	200	Spirea densiflora
55	130	Ribes roesli
67	200	Ceanothus integerrimus
66	27	Prunus emarginata
61	25	Cornus parviflorus
70	20	Cornus pubescens
68	52	Calycanthus
65	86	Philadelphus lewisii
52	40	Rhodendron occ.
71	115	Populus tremuloides

LIST OF PLANTS IN NURSERY AT AHWAHNEE - SEPT. 23rd - By Carl Purdy

Small lots of the following for specimen planting:

Allinum Validum
Anaphllis margaritacea
Aster Yosemitensis
Aster Fremontii
Aster Integrifolius
Aster Andersonii
Aster Occidebtaolis
Arcanraia capillaris
" compacta
" Nuttallii
Arnica cordifolius
Arabis Platysperma
Antennaria Media
" ?
Aquilegia pubescens
Artemisia Norvegica
" tridentata
Carum Douglassii
Castilleia Cuthbertsonii
Cnicus acualescens
Caltha biflora
Delphinium Andersonii
" Scopulorum
Dodecatheon Alpinum
" Jeffreyii redolens
in pits
" " in pits
Eriophyllum ?
Eriogonum incanum
" Ovalifolium
" Wrightii
Erigeron Coulterii
" Compactum
" ?
Gentiana Newberryii to Tresidders
Gilia aggfregata
Habenaria unalaschenskis
Hieracium horridum
Horkelia Fusca
" Gordonii
Freasera speciosa
Lappula nervosa
" Velutina
Lewisia Pygmaea
" Nevadensis
Linum Lewisii
Lupinus Grayii
" Longipes Dana var.
" Danaea
Mitella Brewerii
Mimulus Lewisii
" mall to Tresidders
Parnassia Californica Tresidders
Pentstemon Davidsonii
" Confertus
Pedicularis semibarbatus
Phacelia Mabeklanics ?
Potentilla flabelliformis
" Gracilis
" Grayii
Polemonium pulcherrimum
" Eximium
Pyrola secunda
Selinum capitellatum
Senecio aureus
" Schorzonella
" Triangularis
" Lugens
Troximon
Valeriana sylvatica
Vaccinium
Viola purpurea
" Glabella
" Porcupine Flat
Silene Lemmonii
" Bridgesii
Sedum obtusatum
Salix arctica var Petrae
Kalmia polifolia Tresidders
Some numbered ones and others

330,245 plants
11,500 plants in nursery
341,745

78
61
139 varieties

ROCK GARDEN PLANTS

C	Woodwardia	Sept-Oct	Coulterville Road between Big Meadow and Little Crane Creek
V	Pteris aquilina	Sept-May	Happy Isles, way back in swamp
V	Aspidium rigidum	Sept-May	Talus, south slope Valley
D	Mitella breweii	Sept-June	Davis Grade
T	Mertensia	Sept-June	West fork Snow Creek above road
	Rubus parviflours	Sept-May	
T	Spirea densiflora	Sept-May	Canyons above Snow Creek meadow
T	Phlox Douglassi	Sept-May	S.E.slope of Hoffman
T	Castilleja miniata	Sept-May	Aspen Valley, scattered
T	Aquilegia truncata	Sept-May	
T	Lupinus danaus	Sept,early July	Timberline, Mt. Dana
T	Lupinus covellei	Oct.and June	S.E.side of Hoffman
T	Lupinus grayi	Oct.and June	Aspen Valley, above Lodge
T	Mimulus Lewisii	Sept-June,Oct.	Aspen Valley
G	Delphinium Hansonii	Aug.to Oct	Pohono Meadows Hill N. of Mariposa on Shirlock Mining Country loop road. Dig and store dry like bulbs, plant in spring.
T	Brodiaea ixiodus	Aug.to snow	S.E.side Mt.Hoffman Fall Plant
C	Dicentia formoso	Sept.to May	Coulterville Road, first bridge above Little Crane Creek
C	Campanula prenanthoides	Aug.and Sept	Canyon beyond second bridge above Little Crane Creek
T	Penstamon confertus	Aug.and Sept	Upper end of first meadow above Aspen Valley Checking Station
T	Penstamon menziesii	Aug.and Sept	Left of road, grade on middle fork of the Tuolumne.

WILD FLOWER PLANTING

AHWAHNEE HOTEL

Yosemite National Park
for
The Yosemite Park and Curry Company

by George B. Vaughan
Carl Purdy, consultant
Fall-1928

U. S. DIST. CT. N D CAL.
No. 23275-L
Dft EX. P
FILED DEC 5 1947
C. W. CALBREATH, Clerk
BY L. R. Elkington DEPUTY CLERK

Key no.	No. of plants	Name
		Perennials
1	50,000	Dodecatheon redolens – Shooting - Star
2	500	Caltha biflora – Marsh Marigold - yellow
3	1,000	Lupinus longipes - LUPINE - 2 - 6 ft. blue - wet places
4	10,000	Dodecatheon Jeffreyii - red -
5	500	Aquilegia truncata COLUMBINE
6	1,500	Mimulus Lewisii - PINK MONKEY FLOWER -
7	500	Allium validum - SWAMP - ONION.
8	10,000	Aster Andersonii fine ANDERSON - ASTER - purple -
9	5000	Epilobium angustifolium - FIRE - WEED -
10	2,000	Rudebeckia californica - California CONEFLOWER 2-4ft.
11	5,000	Penstamon confertus - blue -
12	3,000	Helenium Hoopesii - SNEEZEWEED – yellow - per.
18	4000	Anaphilis margaritacea - EVERLASTING - White -
19	30,000	Aster yosemitensis - 1-4 feet - Aster -
20	1,000	Aster Fremontii - 12 inches - Aster -
21	5000	Castilleja miniata per. PAINTED CUP - 1-4 feet - red -
22	150	Carum Douglassii - Caraway - 2 feet - white -
23	300	Oenothera hookeri - EVENING - PRIMROSE - biennial - yellow
24	600	Phlox Douglassii - PER.
25 26	50,000 150	Erigeron salsuginosus Aspen Valley Lupine
62	100	Pteris aquilina - Common Brake - Fern -
63	5	Woodwardia - Fern -
64	200	Aspidium rigidum - Wood Fern - Shield - Fern
		Bulbs
27	10,000	Erythronium Hartwegii - Dog - Tooth - Violet -
28	12,000	Calochortus albus - Mariposa Lily - white Globe Tulip -
29	3,000	" nudus - " Star Tulip - June -
30	8,000	Camassia quamash - CAMAS. 1 - 2½ feet - blue -
32	15,000	Calochortus venustus (var) eldorado
33	20,000	" " " citrinus
34	15,000	" " " Shirlock
35	5,000	Brodiaea grandiflora - HARVEST - BRODEA - blue -
36	8,000	" californica TWINING - BRODEA - Pink -
37	6,000	" ixiodes - Golden Brodea - yellow -
38	10,000	" Bridgesii - FIRE - CRACKER - plant -
39	5,000	" hyacinthina (var) lactea white -
		Seed
40		Godetia (three varieties) annual - lav, purple - crimson -
44		Lupinus (Aspen Valley)
45		Nemophylla - BABY - BLUE - EYES -
46		Linum Lewisii BLUE - FLAX - per.
47		Gilia achilliaefolia - PINK - Gilia - annual -
		Trees and Shrubs
49	50	concolar

WILD FLOWER PLANTING
Ahwahnee Hotel

Key no.	No. of plants	Name
51	10	Pinus ponderosa
52	150	Rhodedendron occidentalis - AZELEA - June-July -
53	18	Sequoia @igantea
54	150	Lonicera interrupta - Chaparal - honeysuckle -
55	30	Ribes roesli - Wild Gooseberry -
56	25	Toyon Red berry -
57	25	Umbellularia California Laurel -
58	12	quercus Chrysolepis Maul Oak -
59	10	Populus tremuloides - Quaking - Aspen -
60	15	Rubus parviflorus Thimble - Berry -
61	25	Cornus parviflorus Dog-Wood -

WILD FLOWER PLANTING

AHWAHNEE HOTEL

Yosemite National Park
for
The Yosemite Park and Curry Company

By George E. Vaughan
Carl Purdy, consultant
Fall-1929.

Key no.	No. of plants	Name of plants
	Perennials	
25	40,000	Erigeron salsuginosus ASTER -
20		Aster Fremontii Regelii
19	10,000	Aster yosemitensis
1	15,000	Dodecatheon jeffrii Shooting Star -
24	1,000	Phlox Douglassii
72	100	Lupinus Covellii
80	200	Penstamon menziesii
5	500	Aquilegia truncata Columbine red -
73	100	Dicentra formosa Bleeding heart -
75	100	Rosa californica California wild Rose -
76	150	Salanum xanti Violet Nightshade - pur -
77	200	(Bush Penstamon)?
78	500	(Yellow daisy-like—silver leaves)
79	100	Mimulus [illegible]dinalis - Scarlet Monkey-flower -
23	300	Oenothera hookeri (and seed) Ev. PRIMROSE
	Shrubs	
74	200	Spirea densiflora
55	130	Ribes roesli Wild Gooseberry -
67	200	Ceanothus integerrimus Deer brush -
66	27	Prunus emarginata Bitter Cherry -
61	25	Cornus parviflorus
70	20	Cornus pubescens
68	52	Calycanthus Sweet shrub - Thurs Red
65	86	Philadelphus lewisii Syringa
52	40	Rhodendron Occ.
71	115	Populus tremuloides

APPENDIX C- MEMORANDUM OF THE AHWAHNEE DEVELOPMENT TO FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED, JR., 1927

A-4

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

File # [illegible]

November 12, 1927.

Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted,
Cosmos Club,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Olmsted:

I am attaching a memorandum of The Ahwahnee project as it appears to us, in order that the general scheme may be clearly before you when you discuss it with Mr. Mather. I am also attaching a copy of a letter from Superintendent Leavitt, which shows Mr. Mather's present attitude on certain phases of The Ahwahnee development. I feel a full discussion of The Ahwahnee with him and the Landscape Division will lead to a satisfactory solution.

In spite of the fact that he is not at present willing to authorize tennis courts or similar recreational units in The Ahwahnee area, we believe it advisable to make a plan for this development. Thus, it is the first time in the history of the Company in Yosemite that we have had an opportunity to plan a fixed unit, with due consideration to the future demands. It seems to us a mistake at this time to proceed with bungalows or any other part of the building without having the fullest possible development of The Ahwahnee site in mind.

Sincerely yours,

President,
YOSEMITE PARK AND CURRY CO.

DT'K
Enclosures

INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to consider The Ahwahnee general plan without also considering the present and future development of the entire valley. It is the first unit which the company has built where there was an opportunity to plan the entire layout under ideal conditions. In planning the other units of the valley we are continually compromising because of the existence of present roads, buildings or other factors.

I. REASONS FOR BUILDING THE AHWAHNEE

It is clearly evident that The Ahwahnee will never be a substantial earning unit for the company. The directors at the time of its building, recognized that a similar sum of money invested in camps or, any other tourist facilities, would return many times the profit. Nevertheless, the work was undertaken as a part of the obligation that the company assumed at the time of its consolidation three years ago. The Superintendent's reports for Yosemite have urged the building of a concrete, fireproof hotel of the highest type of construction since 1890. Again and again the Superintendents have stressed the necessity for a hotel that would offer service comparable to the finest in the country, catering to the most sophisticated and discriminating tourists.

In view of this situation, the company developed its policy of future building activities with The Ahwahnee as the corner-stone around which all its other enterprises would center. This program offered a service for every tourist with prices for every purse, as follows —

1. The Ahwahnee, rates $10.00 and up, giving the highest class of American plan service.

2. The rebuilding of Camp Curry, rates $4.00 American plan to $6.50 American plan, family style, service intended for a large popular camp.

3. The rebuilding of Yosemite Lodge, rates $1.50 and up for European plan service, with a large cafeteria, service eventually planned to operate the year around.

4. New permanent Housekeeping Camp (site yet to be determined), offering fully furnished cabins for housekeeping at low weekly and monthly rates.

Another fact which influenced the building of The Ahwahnee was our belief that it would at least partly counteract the propaganda to the effect that the Yosemite was overwhelmed with people. We felt by offering a quiet, restful, spacious hotel that many of the well-to-do, influential people who had ceased coming to the Yosemite, owing to the crowds, could be led to return to us again and that, furthermore, The Ahwahnee would give us a suitable unit in which we could actively promote all-year business, offering the most luxurious comfort at all seasons of the year.

II. REASONS FOR SELECTING PRESENT SITE

Page II

The Ahwahnee is located in such a way as to have superb views which embrace Glacier Point, Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, the Royal Arches. There are very few places in the Yosemite where such magnificient view could be obtained. It also offered a location ideally situated for Winter and Summer business because it afforded a maximum amount of available Winter sun and during the Summer had sufficient forests surrounding it to relieve the extreme heat of the north wall of the valley.

By re-routing the roads around the site, it gave an opportunity to isolate the grounds, particularly from the adjacent public camp areas, giving quiet and a feeling of spaciousness. The land was level and, with its combination of meadows, forests, river and peaks, it was an ideal location for a hotel cottage development such as we contemplated.

III. TYPE OF BUILDING

It was desired from the beginning to make The Ahwahnee environmental in its architecture, rather than to follow any definite period. It was therefore constructed of concrete and native stone. Many months were spent after the general plan was formed in orienting the building, in order to preserve the maximum number of trees to screen the building as much as possible and, at the same time, provide views for all the bedrooms, as well as public rooms. It was planned with a small number of bedrooms in the hotel (100), but with exceptionally large public space to accommodate the cottages which were expected to be built adjoining the hotel. Because of the desire to create an atmosphere of quiet and restfulness, unusual efforts were made to keep automobiles as far removed from the hotel as possible, which accounts for the fact that there is no public front road and entrance to the building.

In a further effort to maintain this atmosphere, the building was planned in such a way that all office activities, such as registration, telephone booths, cashiering, etc., would be located in an Administration Wing widely separated from the Lounge and hotel proper. It is a common practice in hotel buildings, to put shops, office activities and other commercial life as convenient and near to the guests as possible, but in the case of The Ahwahnee, the opposite was done, not only with the front office activities, but also with our Studio, Sweet Shop, etc. on the theory that people desiring such services, need only be aware of the existence of these units when they had business to transact and on the theory that once our guest had passed the Business Wing, the atmosphere of the Lounge and other public rooms would be that of a quiet, luxurious country home.

To add to this feeling, non-professionals were selected to furnish and decorate The Ahwahnee. Practically all of the furniture was custom built, the rarest antique rugs were selected and many thousands of dollars were spent in an effort to create an atmosphere of richness, sophistication and good taste.

IV. CLIENTELE TO WHICH THE AHWAHNEE CATERS

In order properly to understand the plans for the development of The Ahwahnee, it is necessary to analyze the business it receives, which is divided into two large groups:

1. The tourist business, composed of sightseeing travelers. This

Page III

business is seasonal, except for a small sprinkling of world tourists who include Yosemite as a side trip before they sail from San Francisco or Los Angele

The Ahwahnee tourist travel is heaviest from June to September and is practically negligible from September until January, is small in volume from January to March and is negligible again until the start of Summer travel. It constitutes about 25% of our business. It is thoroughly inadequate to maintain at a profit even a unit as small as the Sentinel Hotel and, if the company were forced to rely on this source of business entirely, it could not operate on a year around basis. Tourist business is also short termed, the average length of stay being less than three days and many thousands stay but a single day. It is composed of people who practically never take the trails; the usual cour is for the tourist to take the motor ride around the floor of the valley, the trip to the Big Trees and Glacier Point and in special cases a horseback trip. these people the Firefall and the Evening Trip to See the Bears is as important a part of their trip to Yosemite as the trip to Glacier Point.

2. The second group of our clientele might be termed the California resort business which constitutes 75% of our total travel. Prior to the building of th all-year highway, this business was restricted largely to the Summer months in w people could enter the valley in private cars. Since the building of the all-ye highway, the private car travel has come steadily during the Fall and Winter months and has brought us also a second problem of first magnitude. It is in this class of travel that The Ahwahnee, as well as all the other units of the company must rely in order to support an operation that caters to tourist travel as well. Resort business is made up of people many of whom come to the Yosemite every year and remain from a week to two and even three months. Many of the people have taken all the trails and come to Yosemite as a place to relax and enjoy a recreational vacation. The influence of these two groups will be shown in connection with our recreation problem.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF ROADS AROUND THE AHWAHNEE

(We have forwarded under separate cover a map showing the entrance road and service road, as planned with you on the ground). This does not represent an ideal situation because the service road and the public road are one and the same until the service road divides to enter the back yard of the hotel. This was made necessary because of the fact that with major views on the East, West and South ends of the hotel, the logical place for both the service and public road was next to the cliff where it would not in any way interfere with the development of the views and grounds. The development of a service road leading off from the public road necessitates heavy screening with shrubs and planting, both from the public road and from the hotel grounds. This screening should be undertaken immediately because, under the present circumstances, one of the few criticisms of The Ahwahnee from our guests is the fact that the service road and entrance road are not clearly defined and that the first glimpse the guest has of The Ahwahnee is the sight of the entrance to the back yard.

It is felt desirable to keep parked cars out of the area adjoining the porte cochere. It is planned, therefore, to screen the road along the "turn around". The screening of this road, as well as the service road, creates an area which ca be used for parking where the cars will be near the entrance and, at the same tim remain unseen.

To prevent the promiscuous passage of chauffeurs, etc., through our planting

Page IV

it will be necessary to run a fence so that there will be but a single entrance to the parking area and this fence should be built soon.

VI. PARKING

Even when The Ahwahnee was started in 1926, the parking problem in Yosemite was not fully appreciated, owing to the fact that the all-year highway had not yet opened. The Summer of 1927 has clearly demonstrated that parking is one of the most urgent, menacing problems of the entire Yosemite valley. This is illustrated at Camp Curry where, by actual count, this past Summer as many as 1,200 machines were parked in front of the camp at a single time. It was planned from the beginning of The Ahwahnee that no parking would be permitted in the cottage area or in the turn-around and, while the possibility of building a garage on the grounds was always in our minds, it was considered undesirable from many standpoints.

Assuming the eventual capacity of The Ahwahnee to be about 500 guests, it is believed that the maximum parking requirements of guests' cars, on the basis of present statistics, to be 150 machines. It is hoped to compress this number in a single area which will be so screened as to be practically unobserved. Cars in excess of this number, coming on holidays or representing the machines of people not our guests, will have to be parked much farther away from the hotel in an area which would serve as an overflow.

Our experience with parking to date is as follows —

Upon opening the hotel, the doorman instructed each person arriving that cars could be parked in the Main Garage, one-half mile distant, and the guest was told that bellboys would drive the cars to the garage and call for them. This met with universal objection and complaint from the car owner. Many of them stated they would not think of turning over a $5,000.00 machine to a bellboy and complained vigorously because of the lack of a garage on the grounds. The garage question at the present time is one of our most urgent, vexing problems and perhaps brings us more complaints than any other single issue.

Before definitely deciding to build a garage on the hotel grounds, we have in the past month offered a different service. The doorman possesses claim checks for automobiles. When a guest arrives, he offers to give the owner a claim check just as if the car already were in the garage. We then have a uniformed Yosemite Transportation System driver on hand who takes the car to the garage and delivers it at the owner's will. Under this arrangement also the owner can have his car serviced with gas, oil, air, etc. While this is an improvement on the former situation, it is doubtful whether in the long run it will be satisfactory; one of the principal reasons being that when a guest arrives, tired and hungry and worn, he checks his car, thinking he will have no further use for it, but may call for it two or three times that day or evening, which makes it an expensive and unsatisfactory operation. In the event of the failure of our present plan of operation, we have two courses —

1. To build a single low-roofed sturcture, covering our entire parking area, so screening it as to be practically hidden from the guests and operating this garage only as a storage garage.

2. To roof, on a flat cantilever principle, the lines of parked cars, giving individual stalls. (This plan will be shown on the map of the parking area which we are forwarding to you). This arrangement, with the most concentrated development,

Page V

will hold approximately 130 cars. It is the feeling that all overflow parking w go in the area along the South of the entrance road, beyond the point where our present service road takes off. It is hoped to relieve the situation also by pla our so-called "de luxe" or family cottages in an area that will permit ingress a egress from a main road, thus giving these families who stay many weeks with us opportunity to have their cars near their cottages without disturbing our genera plan or parking development or without disturbing other guests in the garage are

VII. THE PROBLEM OF COTTAGES

So-called bungalow hotels have become increasingly popular both in Californi and Florida, until it has reached the point where many wealthy travelers will not remain for long in a place unless they can be in cottages. While the company ha offered bungalows at Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge in the past, nothing approachi the present contemplated cottage development has been available. Just as The Ahwahnee itself is one of the distinctive resort hotels of the country in point o service and equipment, so also the cottages will have to offer the same high-cla facilities that are found in similar hotels elsewhere in California; for example the Del Monte Hotel, El Mirasol, Huntington Hotel and others.

We expect to provide such features as sitting rooms with fireplaces, telepho service pantries, permanent heating facilities, etc. Some members of the Park Service have already commented unfavorably on our plan for sitting rooms and serv pantries. This is probably because such service is new to the National Parks, in fact it was new in the Yosemite until the building of The Ahwahnee. Even now a considerable number of our guests take many of their meals in their rooms and we have had several guests who did not appear in our Main Dining Room for a single meal. This is particularly true of European travelers. In order to give high-cl meal service in cottages, it will be necessary to have service pantries with plug for percolators, dish warmers and other accessories.

The actual location of the cottages will be made with respect to both Winter and Summer conditions, with respect to the views, existing trees, topography of t land and the distance from the hotel. We have just completed a two-weeks trip in California, visiting the hotels that have outstanding bungalow developments, and find that the unanimous opinion of hotel managers is that privacy is the prime consideration affecting the desirability of cottages. This privacy is obtained i concentrated cottage development not only by the distance between cottages but mo especially by skillfully placed planting of shrubs and trees which act both as a screen and a sound silencer.

The cottages particularly appeal to our resort group. There has been consid talk of Yosemite becoming so crowded by people who stay long periods of time that may be necessary to limit, during the crowded seasons of the year, the length of time which any one guest can remain. The time is not far off when this will probe be necessary in the public camp grounds and it may even come at Yosemite Lodge and Camp Curry. In a unit such as The Ahwahnee, however, with a rate and service whic caters to a very small number of people, it is almost a certainty that the time wi never come when the stay of a guest will have to be arbitrarily limited. In fact, the problem at The Ahwahnee will always be that of keeping a sufficient number of permanent guests to assure a fixed income. It is for this reason that the company plans to cater to the family type of business which comes and makes a stay of many weeks with an entire family. (A map is attached showing the first group of cottag

which it is hoped to build as soon as the disappearance of snow will permit in the Spring. Altho the area seems extensive, when one actually attempts to place 200 rooms in it, it is extremely difficult. We are already seriously questioning whether The Ahwahnee can be brought to its desired capacity unless we place our cottages more closely together than we had planned or unless we take an additional area around the hotel for this development.

VIII. THE PROBLEM OF EMPLOYES

At first glance it would seem easy to keep employes in Yosemite, but, when one considers the lack of amusement for this type of person and further considers that we are in competition with such resorts as Del Monte and the Pasadena hotels for the best cooks, waitresses, bellboys, etc., that can be obtained, the importance of this problem can be realized. We have always recognized the possibility that we might be forced to house the employes on The Ahwahnee area itself. This was considered so undesirable that originally we attempted to plan for our employes in comfortable cottages at Yosemite Lodge, over one mile distant, hauling them to The Ahwahnee in buses. This service was given a thorough trial and was an utter failure. The various shifts for employes were so widely different in point of time that a 14 passenger bus was kept going from five o'clock in the morning until midnight and even then could not give enough prompt service back and forth to meet the demands of the employes. Another difficulty was that many employes would have from fifteen minutes to an hour free time between duties which, had their quarters been near at hand, could have been used for the washing of clothes, resting, etc. but, with their quarters over a mile away it was not worth the trip and such free time as they had around the hotel was lost to them. After losing several of our valuable employes, the attempt was abandoned.

A second plan was to house the employes in Camp 17 in dormitories. This is .6 of a mile from The Ahwahnee and from a ten to a fifteen minute walk. There is a possibility that this scheme could be used, at least for the men, altho there is the difficulty of Winter weather. If Camp 17 cannot successfully be used, it is then necessary to find a location on The Ahwahnee grounds themselves. Three areas are under consideration —

1. Area adjoining the cottage development along Royal Arch Creek. This is subject to many disadvantages which have already been experienced, because of the fact that in the Summer months the employes lived in tents in this area. We found it necessary to maintain a strict control over their activities at night, such as the use of radios, talking machines, etc. because of the disturbance to guests. Many of the employes complained that under such strict regulation they had no pleasures at all. A further embarrassment was the fact that we could not control the entrance of the employes into the hotel. Invariably, they took the shortest route, which led directly through the porte cochere and guest area. In spite of our efforts, some employes were always walking past the guests in their overalls or with their shirts open at the neck and in such a dishevelled condition as to arouse comment. It seems this area should be used for employes only as a last resort.

2. Adjoining the area we have set aside for the parking of cars on the West. This is open to the objection of being so close to the hotel that the activities of the employes would have to be strictly controlled.

3. Area to the North of our main entrance road near the gateway. This is the area we favor to date. It has been suggested as a gate lodge although Mr. Spencer

states if this site were chosen he would plan the buildings to be as inobstructi as possible, with no attempt to create the feeling of a medieval gate lodge. Th advantages of this site are that the building would be sufficiently removed from the hotel area as to give the employes greater freedom. It is in the right direction also for a direct entrance of the employes to the service road. It is near enough to the hotel so that the employes could run back and forth at will. The disadvantages are that it invades a fine scenic area along the talus slopes. In fact, we are embarrassed with so many fine scenic features that it seems objectionable to put a building anywhere on the grounds. The development would be close to the entrance road which would necessitate very thorough screening. The third disadvantage is the small amount of available space. At present, the employes are being handled in temporary dormitories located in our garage area. It is absolutely imperative that the problem of housing our employes be solved before next Summer because work cannot be undertaken on guest cottages until the employes are removed from that area. Satisfactory service cannot be rendered unless the employes are in agreeable surroundings. Already the situation is so acute that we have been faced with almost a complete walk-out of employes. The importance of this cannot be overstated.

IX. LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

To our surprise, discriminating guests of The Ahwahnee invariably ask about our plans for landscaping the grounds, and seem to feel that the land development is as important to the character of the building as the very structure itself. The general thought in our minds in this relation was to so develop our grounds so that the meadow and forest land would gradually merge into the refinement of the hotel itself in such a manner that one could hardly tell where meadow left off and lawn began. The Ahwahnee fortunately also is ideally situated to restor the plant life of several life zones. Perhaps nowhere else in the valley could the combination of dry granitic rock plants (usually found in altitudes from 500 to 2,000 ft.) wet meadow plants (commonly found in altitudes from 4,000 to 6,000 ft.) and shade-loving plants of the woods be grown with such a degree of success in such close proximity to each other.

In the Parks great stress has been laid on the urgent need of establishing animal refuges for the preservation of wild life. The result of this policy ha been that Nature's balance has been completely upset. Deer, bear and other gam have increased at the rate of 100% a year, with the result that plant life has suffered in direct proportion. It was our general thought, therefore, to creat a plant refuge at The Ahwahnee and restore the area to the condition it was in ten and fifteen years ago. It is well remembered that the meadows many years ago were filled with Evening Primroses, Godetias, Mariposa Lilies and countless other wild flowers which have practically disappeared, owing to the grazing of the deer. We plan to restore this condition gradually, working from the hotel outward and attempting no more in a year than we could handle. It was also planned to give the Nature Guide Service free access to the area, in order that the nature classes could study many of the wild flowers that have practically disappeared from the floor of the Yosemite. Any landscaping around The Ahwahnee is impossible unless we are protected against two things:

First, this past season, owing to the tremendous increase of traffic in the Yosemite and the fact that the ranger service of the Park was badly undermanned, public campers and hikers got entirely out of hand. The restrictions of former years, such as no camping within forty feet of the banks of the river, no camping in meadows or other areas that lack proper sanitary facilities, etc., were abandc

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because of the lack of sufficient policing force. The Ahwahnee suffered particularly under these conditions, because immediately across the road which bounds The Ahwahnee on the South, is perhaps the highest concentration of public camping in the valley. Campers, in spite of all signs and warnings, drove in to the wooded areas to the South of The Ahwahnee and established camps, which broke the shrubs, and made roads across our meadows, until finally the Superintendent permitted us to erect a temporary fence. The actions of the campers were not wilful but were due principally to the fact that public camp grounds were taxed beyond their capacity and campers were forced to go where they could. It is only by the opening up of many more camp grounds that this condition can be avoided in the upper Yosemite valley. Even after a temporary fence was erected, sections of it were torn down daily and more people continued to enter our ground until the Superintendent granted us permission to maintain a watchman along this stretch of road who had authority to turn back all campers. The seriousness of this can be recognized, when I recall to you the dozen little roads which I pointed out to you in this area which led through the shrubs and trees to the South of The Ahwahnee. You will remember these roads had just been ploughed up by us with a view to returning them to grass.

Second, an even greater disturbance than the injury to our landscape was the continual procession of campers from the public camp grounds across these roads to the hotel. Director Mather himself saw this condition and at one period a ranger was stationed at the hotel to help us control the traffic. Many of our guests said they felt like museum exhibits to have a steady stream of people passing through the hotel.

In addition to the above, the greatest menace to our landscape plans are the deer and elk. It has been estimated by many authorities that the deer are increasing at the rate of 100% a year. As a result of their grazing, many shrubs are failing to reproduce themselves and all the shrub growth of Yosemite valley is grazed as high as a deer can reach. (I am attaching some pictures to show this illustration). When the elk were released from captivity this Summer, even tho they were only a handful, the destruction they wrought around the Ahwahnee in a single night was greater than any destruction the deer would cause in a month. The elk not only grazed the Manzanita, Cascara, Wild Rose, etc. but would rear on their hind legs and pull great branches to the ground until, as a result of a few nights grazing, some of the Manzanita was almost entirely destroyed.

The impossibility of accomplishing anything under these conditions has already been demonstrated to us at Camp Curry. Several years ago one of the foremost wild flower experts of the country, Mr. Carl Purdy, was employed by us to establish wild flower meadows around Camp Curry. At that time Mr. Purdy recognized the menace of the deer and to a large extent advised the planting of things which, in his experience farther north in California, the deer would not eat. The first season over $2,00.00 was invested in plants, shrubs and bulbs and a complete sprinkling system was installed at a cost of several hundred dollars. The entire area, covering about three acres, was covered with top soil. The following year we got a liberal return for our efforts but before the project was more than started, the deer began making inroads on our plants. In desperation, we sprayed these areas with a machine, using first nicotine and later blood meal, both of which were supposed to be a specific check against deer invasion. Neither of these methods was successful and after about three years of effort, we finally gave up the project entirely.

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It is my belief that the only sure protection for our land is the erection of fences, ditches and wire entanglements which will be an absolute barrier against deer and elk.

The final question in the successful landscaping of The Ahwahnee area is a matter of drainage. At present, each Spring finds our entrance area a small lake. Also, in the meadow itself, are several bogs which remain mosquito holes until as late as August. We have just about reached the conclusion that the only successful drainage would be a ditch carried parallel to the entrance road of The Ahwahnee and later carried parallel to the road which crosses the road toward Camp Curry. (This ditch is shown on the map which we are forwarding).

X. PROBLEM OF RECREATION

It was my personal conception in the beginning of The Ahwahnee plans that it would not be necessary to offer recreation or entertainment of any type there. My belief was based on the theory that guests seeking amusement, such as dancing, swimming or evening music could go to Camp Curry or Yosemite Lodge and in this way not disturb the atmosphere we are attempting to create at the hotel. From the start, practically all the directors of the company disagreed with me in this question and were firm in the belief that recreation would be absolutely essential at The Ahwahnee and that our guests could not be persuaded to travel to other units to obtain the same. Since there were two totally different conceptions of what the guests would prefer, it was agreed that we would start on my theory but so plan the hotel that we could right-about-face in case we were proven to be mistaken.

For instance, the Lounge floor was laid and planned in such a way that large dances could be given in it if found necessary. The 6th floor or roof garden was planned for smaller dancing parties. From the minute The Ahwahnee was opened, it was apparent to everyone that the plan of taking guests to other units for their amusement was wholly unfeasible. Both classes of our business - the distinct tourist type and our resort or vacation type - seemed to feel that when they became our guests at The Ahwahnee we were responsible not only for the supplying of board and room but for their entertainment and amusement and insisted that if they had to go to Yosemite Lodge or Camp Curry to dance we should take them there on buses, free of charge.

In order to meet the situation temporarily, a great deal of free transportation service was offered, but it was unsatisfactory. First, many of our guests, particularly tourists, wanted but two or three dances and were ready to come home before the rest of the bus load had gotten well started. Many Mothers insisted on accompanying their children, then one or two members of the family would be ready to come home before the others and we found it simply impossible to offer transportation service, either free of charge or at a reasonable return which would adequately meet this situation. Next, both Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge were so overcrowded with their own guests that the bringing of hotel guests to these units only added to the congestion. From the experience of the past Summer, we are now firmly convinced that our entire policy of entertainment and recreation should be changed at all of our units. We now feel that because of the increase in traffic congestion, difficulty of parking and the overwhelming crowds of people that flood us in the Summertime, that each unit should be self-sustaining as to recreation and entertainment, even to the supplying of entertainment in the housekeeping camps in order to prevent the flooding of any given unit by outside business at night to the disadvantage of its guests.

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For example, the evening entertainment facilities at Camp Curry are entirely inadequate, even though we have some 1,200 chairs, and the dance floor is overcrowded, although we have built it to hold 500 couples. This overcrowding is due, not to our guests, but to the thousands of people, campers, etc., who turn to Camp Curry each night.

Another reason for the failure of the plan to let hotel guests seek their amusement at other units is the fact that both at Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge one finds a different class of people than is found at The Ahwahnee. It is not meant that the Camp Curry or Yosemite Lodge guests are not equally desirable, but nevertheless they are distinctly different and hotel guests whom we take to these units regularly made the most severe criticisms of us on this score.

After a few months trial, there is not a member of the organization who is not thoroughly convinced that The Ahwahnee will have to supply recreation for its guests on The Ahwahnee property itself. Mr. Esther contends that there is no necessity for tennis courts, swimming pool, dance pavilion or other recreations. There is not a day in the week that a party of guests at the hotel does not remark about the absence of these various features. Guests arrive at The Ahwahnee with the intention of staying several days or a week. After they have taken a trip or two, they begin to ask what more can be done and complain of the lack of facilities for recreation and many guests who plan to stay two weeks leave us after three or four days and go to Del Monte or other resorts.

Many guests interested in the success of our venture have sought me out personally to state they felt we would have to offer some amusement facilities in order to make a success. As stated in the beginning, our resort business, which is the bread and butter business of the hotel and without which we could not hope to operate is composed principally of families with children. If the children cannot get amusement and entertainment, they become dissatisfied and persuade their parents to go elsewhere.

For example, when The Ahwahnee opened last July, a family, including four girls, stayed at The Ahwahnee a few days and then moved to the cottages at Yosemite Lodge and endured the disadvantage of cafeteria service in order to have their children near the swimming pool, tennis court and outdoor dance pavilion. Another large family, whose revenue to us over a period of six or eight weeks amounts to $1,500.00 to $2,000.00 a week, has informed us that unless we have cottages and amusement facilities next Summer, they are not coming to Yosemite but will go to Tahoe instead.

It must be recognized by the National Park Service, as well as ourselves, that The Ahwahnee is in the severest kind of competition for resort business. It competes with Del Monte, Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara and Lake Tahoe particularly. With $1,250,000.00 in The Ahwahnee, the company cannot calmly sit back and inform its guests that they are supposed to be nature lovers who should take hikes and enjoy the scenery. Such a policy will eventually result in the failure of the hotel. However desirable it may have been in the beginning to maintain the Yosemite valley unimpaired in all its scenic features for the benefit of present and future generations, many, many years ago the Government committed itself to a policy of making the valley more and more accessible and the all-year highway was the final step in this project. There has been brought to us all the elements of a city — the sophisticated tourist, the resort seeker, the shop girl, the auto camper, etc. It is too late now to talk of the good old days in Yosemite, the most that can be hoped for is to work out a plan which will do as little harm to the landscape and atmosphere of the valley as is possible, no small task with 27,000

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people in this small area in a single day. Our conception of the recreational features at The Ahwahnee is as follows —

Just as the automobile was considered a necessary evil in connection with the hotel operation and, therefore, was kept as far away from the hotel as possible and well hidden, so also do we believe the recreation of The Ahwahnee to be a necessity and it should be so developed as to endanger in no way the integrity of the hotel's atmosphere. We favor a study of the ground, with a view to obtaining an area near enough to the hotel building to be easily accessible and far enough away that hotel guests will not be disturbed and let those seeking recreation get it and those who desire to bask in the quiet dignity of the Lounge enjoy it without the disturbance of hilarious youngsters. The recreational units, for which we know there is a demand and which we know will eventually have to be met are —

1. Outdoor dance pavilion

2. Swimming pool

3. Tennis courts

4. Croquet and other lawn games such as bowling

5. Kiddie Kamp (This has become one of our largest activities, both at Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge and involves not only playground apparatus, but a small building with toilets and little diet kitchens where trained attendants take children of all ages, give them meals, naps and in every way care for them while the parents take trips). It has proven one of our biggest and most appreciated services

6. The building of bridle paths and foot paths.

APPENDIX D- PARK PLANNING DOCUMENTS

1980 General Management Plan (GMP)

The GMP stated the following goals and actions that affect The Ahwahnee study area. The actions have been completed with the exception of the removal of the tennis courts.

Visitor Use Goals

- Retain the traditional Ahwahnee character and level of service, but remove outdoor activities which are not directly related to the park's natural resources

Visitor Use Actions

- Retain the 99 Ahwahnee hotel rooms and 22 cabin rooms
- Retain the dining room, gift shop, bar, and other services
- Retain the 132-car parking area
- Remove the tennis courts
- Remove the golf course

The GMP has been amended by the Concession Services Plan EIS (1992).

Fire Management Plan

The Fire Management Plan (2004) provides treatment recommendations for the use of fire in clearing vegetation; this plan may be used in conjunction with the scenic vista management plan in order to establish methods for the restoration of historic views at The Ahwahnee. The fire management units are described below.

The Yosemite Valley WUI (Wildland/Urban interface) unit is located in Yosemite Valley and includes the entire community. The vegetation types are mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, meadow, scrub oak and black oak. Much of The Ahwahnee study area falls into the fire suppression unit. Treatment methods for the Wildland/Urban interface are given below:

- In areas near development in the six WUI communities, small trees are removed by mechanical methods to reduce tree density. In some areas, shrubs and ladder fuels are removed to improve the defensibility of the communities. Other methods are used to thin vegetation to reduce hazardous fuels.
- Areas previously thinned by mechanical means are broadcast burned although fire may be prescribed as the initial treatment. Wood material gathered during mechanical removal is used in the park to the fullest extent possible. Sensitive sites such as cultural resource sites or wildlife habitat sites are identified before vegetation removal, and these areas are reviewed by park specialists before action is undertaken.

One exception to these treatment measures applies to The Ahwahnee meadow, which has prescribed burns. This area is designated as YV 22 of the Yosemite Valley Prescribed Burn Units.

Scenic Vista Management Plan Environmental Assessment, 2010

The National Park Service has developed a Scenic Vista Management Plan (SVMP) for the Yosemite Valley. One goal of The Ahwahnee CLR analysis and treatment has been to identify historic views both within the study area and from the study area to the surrounding landscape, and to restore these significant views.

The purpose of the SVMP is to develop a systematic program to document, protect, and reestablish Yosemite's important viewpoints and vistas, consistent with the natural processes and human influences that created them. The SVMP considers which vistas the park would treat, how the park would prioritize treatments, and the extent and intensity of treatments.

The following actions would guide the management of scenic vistas:

- All clearing actions would adhere to the target conditions specified in the Yosemite Fire Management Plan for target densities, gap distribution, and other vegetation attributes as maximum limits for clearing.
- Employee and visitor safety would be the highest priority during vista clearing operations. Tree felling operations would occur under the direction of the park forester, subject to strict supervisory control.
- Maximum sizes for the viewing area and feathering (a technique to manage the visual transition from cleared areas to the surrounding natural vegetation) would apply.
- Old growth trees and trees older than the establishment date for the vista would not be removed.
- Mechanical equipment would be chosen to minimize impacts based on the conditions at a site.
- Specific restrictions on the disposal of biomass would apply.
- Specific restrictions on noise levels near residential or visitor use areas would apply.
- Temporary road closures would generally not exceed one-half hour. Road closures would be scheduled in periods of low visitation when possible.
- Vista sites would be revegetated if necessary after clearing, by seeding or planting local native plants that would not obscure vistas.
- Each site would be evaluated as to whether it requires initial clearing or maintenance. Maintenance activities would be restricted to removal of trees smaller than 6 inches diameter breast height. Cleared sites would be maintained on a cycle of one to five years, depending on the assessed scenic value of the site.
- A National Park Service team would develop and review annual work plans for vista clearing treatments. Consultation would take place with Native American tribes and groups associated with the park. Work plans would be posted on the Yosemite National Park web site and in the Yosemite National Park Electronic Newsletter. The final annual work plan would be released to the public before work commences.

Draft Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, 2009

The National Park Service has developed a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for Yosemite National Park. According to the National Park Service, the mission of interpretation is to provide enhanced opportunities for park audiences to explore their own intellectual and emotional connections to the natural and cultural resources that comprise shared heritage. This mission may influence an interpretive program at The Ahwahnee. Primary interpretive goals for the park are:

- To determine the overarching stories that organize the park's largest-scale ideas and meanings
- To provide opportunities for people to explore and relate to all park significance statements

The NPS interpretive program for Yosemite National Park includes:

- Orientation
- Personal Services (people to people)
- Interpretive Media (exhibits, films, websites)
- Curriculum-based Education Programs (Programs for Schools/ Educators)
- Community Engagement
- Service through Volunteering
- Museum Services
- Public Involvement and Outreach
- Public Affairs
- International Relations

NPS goals for the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan include the identification and description of the foundations of the park's interpretive program. These are:

- Park Purpose
- Park Significance
- Interpretive Themes
- Management Objectives
- Audiences
- Visitor Experience Goals
- Recommends Specific Programs and Media

The methods use to achieve these goals may include:

- Engage People to Make Enduring Connections to America's Special Places
- Use Current Technologies
- Embrace Interpretation and Education Partners
- Develop and Implement Professional Standards
- Create a Culture of Evaluation

The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan (1996)

The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan (LMP), produced by Yosemite Concession Services (YCS) in 1996, is intended to provide direction for landscape maintenance procedures at The Ahwahnee. The CLR treatment recommendations for the vegetation at The Ahwahnee are intended to enhance these maintenance regimes. This CLR recommends that The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan by revised and approved by NPS staff in order to include updated information on planting and transplanting guidelines.

The LMP divided The Ahwahnee grounds into three zones: natural, landscaped, and manicured (Figure 73). Of these, irrigation occurs in the landscaped and manicured zones. The irrigation system uses a seasonal combination of river and domestic water. The river water is used from March through October, when approximately 25,000,000 gallons are drawn from the river. Watering occurs between two and three times per week, dependent upon season, drought, river levels, special events, and management directions.[1]

The LMP's natural zone encompasses the area of The Ahwahnee grounds extending beyond radius from the hotel, to the west and south of the hotel. No irrigation occurs in the natural zone, other than watering needed to establish seeds and transplants.[2]

The LMP's landscaped zone consists of the reflecting pond, the cottages area, the area surrounding the creek as it extends from the pool to the vehicle bridge, the wildflower meadow and the dining room terrace. These areas are irrigated semi-weekly or as-needed. The water source for the pond is 60% river from March through October, and 100% domestic from November through February.[3]

The LMP's manicured zone falls closest to the hotel, and includes The Ahwahnee lawn, the hotel entrance or flagpole lawn, and the "wedding" lawn, which sits south of the hotel, adjacent to the wildflower meadow. These areas are irrigated three times a week or as needed.[4]

Other activities identified in the LMP are associated with landscape maintenance and include: debris removal, exterior lighting, hazard tree removal and pruning, scenic resources management and site restoration.

Debris disposal is implemented to eliminate fire hazards and earth-to-wood contact around building foundations. Nearly half of all the landscape debris collected on The Ahwahnee grounds is recycled into mulch, to be used on established pathways and gardens.[5]
Hazard tree removal is undertaken for safety, viewshed management, and for historic landscape restoration. The park forester approves and tags hazard trees for removal.[6]

Selective trimming and cutting is employed to establish and maintain vistas: "Some vegetation cover will be left on the ground when opening a viewing area through standing trees. We will develop the appearance of a natural setting by leaving trees of different size classes. We will trim standing trees so that low limbs do not block scenic vistas and in a way that no cutting pattern is evident. Wherever possible, revegetation efforts in natural zones will use seeds, cuttings, or transplants representing species and gene pools native to the ecological area of The Ahwahnee. If we remove facilities or plan construction activities that will adversely impact existing exterior conditions at The Ahwahnee site restoration plans will be developed with NPS staff as necessary."[7]

Strategies to implement the landscape maintenance objectives are defined in the LMP:

- Necessary pruning will complement the natural growth of the vegetation.
- Disinfect tools used for pruning of trees known to be diseased

1 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*. Yosemite National Park (1996), 4
2 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3
3 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3
4 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 3
5 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 5
6 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 5
7 Yosemite Concession Services, *Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan*, 5

after each cut and before cutting another tree.

- Use local native species in all transplants, new landscaping and other revegetation efforts. Deciduous trees, rather than conifers, will be planted.
- Remove all non-native plants that can be extirpated without adverse effects to native species.
- Revegetate disturbed sites through the preparation of soils, restriction of access, and use of locally-collected seeds.
- Prevent the introduction of non-native species on all revegetation projects.
- Assure that plant communities reflect the character-defining features of the landscape. Eliminate invasive species and replace with non-invasive species that represent the design intent.
- Contact Park Archeologist and Historic Architect when trees in a historic district are being considered for manipulation. Advance discussion with these specialists is required to decide the status, location, vulnerability and significance of cultural resources.
- Maintain lawn areas in a green lush state. Aerate the lawn soil to prevent compaction of soil, roots, and sodded turf. To lessen the acid content of the soil, apply lime. Use organic matter to recondition the soil to allow air and water to penetrate. At times total rehabilitation may be necessary to remove dead grass, thatch and roots. Plant sod or seed.
- Undertake creek rehabilitation as needed. (Any action within the beds and banks of the creek are subject to review and approval by NPS staff).
- Contact Park Archeologist when digging holes deeper than one foot in depth.
- Identify areas where resource damage can be prevented through appropriate design changes such as routing visitors to established paths by blocking access with fallen logs, boulders, restoration signs, and shallow planted posts fitted with rope or cable.
- Develop planting list from local/adjacent sites that are within the natural community range of distribution. Propagate, divide, or transplant plants from material within the land assignment. If additional plants are required, obtain a collecting permit from the Division of Resources Management and Science to collect seed, propagules, or cuttings. (This strategy reflects an update to the approach described in the LMP).

Plant species recommended in the LMP (1996) for planting and transplanting include the following:

Deciduous trees

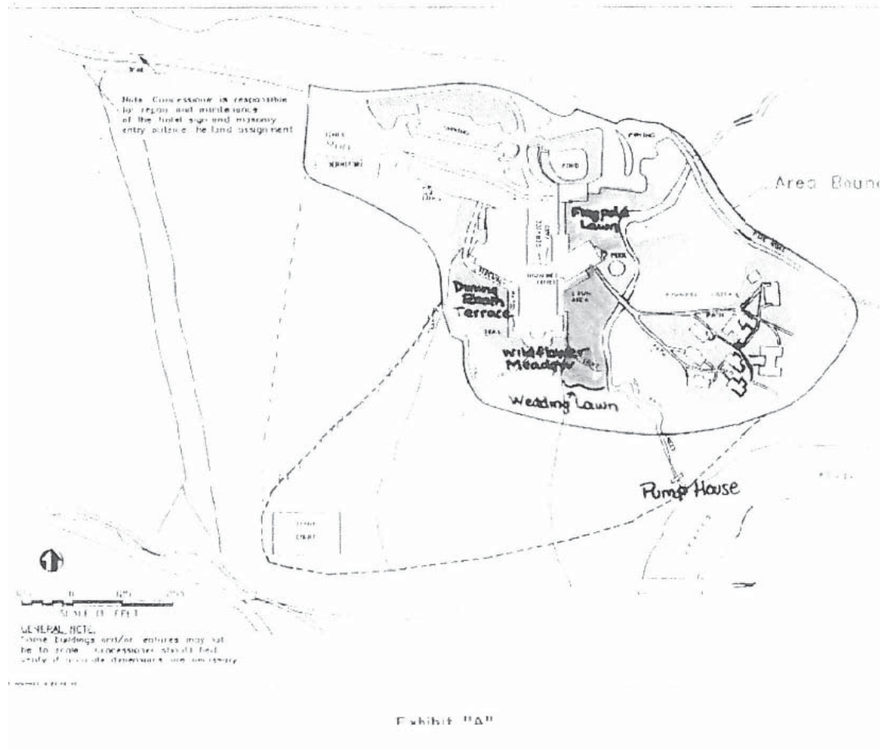
- Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*)- not native, no longer recommended
- Big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
- Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*)- not found at this elevation, no longer recommended
- Pacific dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*)
- Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
- Black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*)
- California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*)
- White alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*)

Evergreen trees

- White fir (*Abies concolor*)
- Incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*)
- Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)
- Jeffery pine (*Pinus jefferyi*)- not found at this elevation, no longer recommended
- Canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*)
- California bay (*Umbellularia califomica*)
- Live oak (*Quercus wislizenli*)

Deciduous shrubs

- Willow (*Salix sp.*)
- Spicebush (*Calycanthus occidentalis*)
- Western chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
- Sierra coffeeberry (*Rhamnus rubra*)
- Western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*)
- Sierra currant (*Ribes nevadense*)
- Western raspberry (*Rubus leucodermis*)
- Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*)- very rare, no longer recommended
- Gooseberry (*Ribes sp.*)
- Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*)



The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan zones, 1996. Source: The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan.

Evergreen shrubs
- Manzanita sp. (*Manzanita*)
- English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)- not native, no longer recommended
- Juniper (*Juniperus spp.*)- typically not found in Ahwahnee habitat, no longer recommended

Herbaceous plants, ferns, ground covers
- Milkweed (*Asclepias sp.*)
- Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)
- Cinquefoil (*Potentilla sp.*)
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum var. pubescens*)
- Goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*)
- Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)- invasive plant, no longer recommended
- California wild grape (*Vitis californica*)
- Ferns (*Woodwardia fimbriata*)
- Bracken ferns (*Pteridium aquilinum var. pubescens*)
- Lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*)
- Perennial pea- invasive plant, no longer recommended
- Meadow grasses, lawn grasses
- Lupine
- Columbine (*Aquilegia sp.*)
- Cattail (*Typha sp.*)
- Water plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*)
- Pondweed (*Potamogeton sp.*)
- Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
- Sedges (*Carex sp.)*
- Rushes (*Juncus sp.)*
- Mint, sage- no longer recommended
- Trillium- not appropriate for planting or transplanting, no longer recommended
- Indian hemp (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*)
- Soap root (*Cholorogalum pomeridianum var. pomeridianum*)- recommended to be grown from seed only
- Aster
- Cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*)
- Fox glove (*Digitailis sp.*)- invasive plant, no longer recommended
- Coneflowers (*Rudbeckia sp.*)- no longer recommended
- Yarrow (*Achellea millifolium*)
- Rosa, mimulus, penstemon, gilias
- Indian pinks (*Silene california*)
- Alpine lily (*Lilium parvum*)- propagate from seed only
- Rein orchis (*Piperia sp.*)- propagate from seed only
- Wild ginger (*Asarum hartweggi*)
- Indian pond lilly (*Nuphar lutea ssp. polysepala*)- propagate from seed only
- Brodiaeas (Dichlostema capitatum ssp. capitatum
- Snow plants (*Sarcodes sanguinea*)- no longer recommended

Invasive Plant Work Plan, 2009

The 2009 Invasive Plant Work Plan, developed from the priorities established by the 2008 Yosemite National Park Invasive Plant Management Plan (IPMP), outlines treatment measures for the most serious, known invasive plants within the park relative to site-specific conditions. Conditions applicable to The Ahwahnee include those related to terrestrial ecosystems and archeological sites.

Location	**Treatment**
Terrestrial ecosystems	Herbicide for Himalayan blackberry, other species herbicide if population size exceeds threshold in IPMP
Archeological sites	In consultation with Branch of Anthropology and Archeology

Within the Yosemite Valley, the *Invasive Plant Work Plan* has treatment measures specified for multiple species:

Species	**Timing**	**Treatment**
Himalayan blackberry	June-July August-October	Pilot herbicide study (glyphosate, aminopyralid)
Velvet grass	May-July	Spray (glyphosate)
Bull-thistle	May-August	Pilot herbicide study (glyphosate)
White clover	April-June	Hand-pull
Black locust	August-October	Herbicide (glyphosate)
Klamath weed	July-August	Hand-pull
Virginia creeper	July-September	Hand-pull
Hops	April-October	Hand-pull (volunteers)

Invasive Plant Management Program 2009 season goals for the Yosemite Valley work zone:
- Himalayan blackberry has been the most heavily treated species in Yosemite in past decades. The majority of the blackberry-infested areas are treated with herbicide. Although most spraying takes place in the fall, some pilot studies may occur during the summer.
- Repeated manual control of velvet grass in Yosemite has not been particularly effective. A pilot spray study is planned for Yosemite Valley.
- The current extent of Himalayan blackberry and velvet grass will be mapped.
- National Park Service crews and volunteer groups will hand-pull and shovel-shear bull-thistle as in previous seasons, but the IPMP plan permits spraying of dense patches if found.
- Black locust populations will be mapped and treated with a cut-stump approach.
- Volunteer groups that have traditionally helped pull Himalayan blackberry will now be able to focus attention on areas in which herbicide use is not permitted and on other invasive plant species such as hops, common mullein and bull-thistle.
- Experienced botanists will conduct plant surveys to detect any new non-native species entering the park.

A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Yosemite Valley, 2004

The guidelines in this document address design issues throughout the Valley, but call out The Ahwahnee as a developed area with its own unique design issues. Specific guidelines were developed to manage changes in the landscape at The Ahwahnee:
- Base any removal or replacement of vegetation on a thorough

inventory of existing conditions, including the problem of pines, cedars, and sequoias crowding out dogwoods and oaks, encroaching into the meadow, and blocking historic views from the hotel. Removal and replacement of vegetation must not compromise the area's sense of relative isolation.

- The Ahwahnee Landscape Maintenance Plan (NPS 1996a) indicates how best to manage the dense forested bungalow area while addressing fire hazard, removal of dying and hazardous trees, and maintenance of an unevenly aged plant community.
- Pathways should continue to be paved with random angular slate which matches the existing paths.

Yosemite National Park Draft Lighting Guidelines

The main goal stated in the draft lighting guidelines for the park is that "all exterior lighting in the Park shall be designed to mitigate light pollution and to preserve the natural darkness as much as possible."[8] The draft guidelines provide recommendations based on lighting situation type (such as roads posted 25 miles per hour or less) that are incorporated into the recommendations in this CLR treatment plan.

Settlement Agreement, 2009

In addition, a Settlement Agreement (September 2009) regarding the Merced River Comprehensive Plan was issued which effects treatment of the landscape near the Merced River. The Settlement Agreement upholds the Merced River Corridor, defined as one quarter mile from the Ordinary High Water Mark on either side of the river.

8 U.S. Department of the Interior, *Draft Yosemite Lighting Guidelines* (2009) 1