



Wawona Community News



PO Box 2008, Wawona, CA 95389

December 2022

WAWONA RANGER UPDATE

Chad Andrews ~ Wawona District Ranger

As we creep into winter, many of you have been, or are planning on cleaning up your yards and reducing fuels around your properties. This can include raking, brushing, and cutting limbs and trees. This is an opportune time to remind everyone what the ground rules are for conducting fuel reduction in Wawona on private and NPS lands. Just recently, the Park Superintendent signed a policy addressing this very issue. It will be available via the WAPPOA website. This policy does allow for the removal of vegetation from NPS land adjacent to private properties, *but under strict guidelines*. Most if not all of your questions around how you can remove vegetation from NPS land adjacent to your property are addressed in this policy. Please look it up and read it thoroughly.

Related to this subject is the issue of wood collection in the community. Primarily since the windstorm of 2021, we have seen an increase of downed wood being collected from NPS lands in and around Section 35. As we all were reeling from the storm, this was viewed by our office as a necessary allowance given the volume of debris and limited resources to handle it, combined with the ever present threat of wildfire. Things are looking much better today and, effective immediately, we will be reverting back to our stance on this practice for both private residents, contractors (on unrelated projects) and NPS employees alike. What this means is this: Anyone not specifically authorized to cut wood on NPS property may not do so. Anyone wishing to acquire wood to be used as firewood must purchase a wood cutting permit from the NPS, and may only cut wood in the designated wood yard (east of the fire station). Permit applications may be obtained at the Wawona Ranger Office.

As most of you are aware, the Biomass Fuel Reduction project, a combined Mariposa County and NPS project, is underway in Wawona. As of this date, they are working on Forest Drive. Once work is completed on the south side of the river, they will move to Chilnualna Road. Much of the wood that is being removed is earmarked for various projects, thus the need to no longer allow for wood cutting/gathering in Section 35. Some of the wood will be moved to the woodlot for firewood cutting availability.

In other news, you may have seen some new faces among the Protection ranks. In September we welcomed two new permanent rangers - Jamie Kitchen and Cody Zeisemer. Jamie, a Washington State native, has worked seasonally at Theodore Roosevelt National Park and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Cody comes to us from Ohio and has worked seasonally at Grand Tetons National Park as well as serving as an Ohio State Trooper. This month we also brought on a third permanent ranger, Byron Webb. Byron, also an Ohio native, has worked at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Acadia National Park, Grand Canyon National Park, Catocin Mountain Park, and Monocacy National Battlefield. We are excited to have them here and they are eager to get to know the community. Please join Heidi and I in welcoming them to the community.

As always, feel free to contact me or any of the Wawona Rangers with questions you may have by email: chad_andrews@nps.gov or by calling (209) 375-9520.

WAPPOA NEWS

Cheryl Kanaan ~ President

The WAPPOA General Meeting was held on October 8th, followed by the WAPPOA annual community picnic/BBQ. There were 58 attending and enjoying beautiful fall weather to enjoy time together to reconnect, catch up, and be thankful to be in Wawona.

WAPPOA is a 501 ©4 nonprofit organization which functions as advocates for the preservation and protection of Wawona as a private inholding, in working/dealing with the National Park Service, the State of California, Mariposa County and any other entity or individual that may affect private property rights.

WAPPOA Fall/Winter priorities and actions:

- **Long term solution to pine needle pickup** – Mariposa County solid waste and recycling rates will increase from \$96.50 quarterly to \$139.49 quarterly. They will, however, include funding for the pine needle pickup and large item pickup every year.
- **Achieve designation as Firewise Community** – WAPPOA Board members attended a Firewise meeting with Mariposa County to review steps and documentation to achieve Firewise community designation. It will take identifying some community members willing to lead efforts to work together as a community to educate, assist, and track goals to be met.
- **MOU with Mariposa County/NPS to provide potable water.** The wording in the 2016 MOU says that in the event of lack of potable water available in Wawona (due to severe draught) that the NPS would make potable water available to residents in Wawona, Section 35. They now want to change the wording to making water available only to homeowners on the NPS water system. There are 28 water systems in Wawona (including private wells). We are arguing to keep the original agreement.
- **Continuation of Barn Dances and Stagecoach rides.** The WAPPOA Board met with Ephraim Dickson, YNP Chief, Division of Interpretation and Education on November 14th to discuss solutions to continue Barn Dances in the Grey Barn. NPS has decided to store all the stagecoaches in the Grey Barn on a year-round basis. They used to be moved out to the “Pole Barn” structure near the Covered Bridge in the summer. They thought about enclosing the Pole Barn so the coaches could be kept there year –round, but an architectural historian deemed the pole barn a historic structure, so no changes can be made to it. The WAPPOA Board sent a letter to Superintendent Cicely Muldoon to intercede to delist the Pole Barn (as an historic building so it can be enclosed for year-round storage of the wagons and allow the Grey Barn to be open for Barn Dances and other experiential living history experiences that engage visitors directly. NPS also has decided that when our stagecoach driver, Burrell Maier, retires or when his horse team gets too old, that they will no longer have stagecoach rides. We argue that these are an important historical experience that many visitors love and return year after year to enjoy them. We can never replace Burrell, but we could try to offer stagecoach rides in the summer months. Burrell will celebrate his 50th year of doing these rides next June 24.
- **Golf Course Restoration-** The golf course was opened in June for a short time, but was “unplayable” and closed early. WAPPOA has sent letters to the Superintendent asking what the plans are to restore the course but have not received any replies. The course is maintained and operated by Aramark/Yosemite Hospitality while the Wawona Hotel is open in the summer. The NPS owns the land, so they must work together to solve this problem. We are tracking their progress, but it seems to be at a standstill. We will continue to advocate for a playable course.

“Friends of Wawona”. We are currently in the process of starting a group called Friends of Wawona. The purpose of this group will be to enlarge our support base. We will be working with the Redwoods and, hopefully, the Wawona Hotel. We will inform them about issues in Wawona. They will, in turn, send that to people who are repeat visitors who would be interested in what’s going on. These people would not be joining WAPPOA (that is an organization for homeowners) but would be part of a group that we ask for support on issues in Wawona. This support would be in the form of signing a petition or writing letters to NPS, County or State officials. Also, we may find people who have new ideas for solving these issues. If you are a homeowner in Wawona and do not belong to WAPPOA, you could also participate in this group. Please email WAPPOAT1@gmail for information.

WAPPOA 2023 General Meeting dates: April 15th, June 3rd, October 7th

Mariposa RCD Biomass Grant Project

Melinda Barrett ~ Executive Director Mariposa County RCD

We have been on hold waiting for archeological clearance on private and park lots. The good news is the new Park Archeologist starts on Monday and will be focusing on Wawona first. We plan to remove biomass as each lot gets clearance.

We have also picked up the few remaining pine needle piles we weren't aware of. If anyone else has a pile we overlooked, please let me know.

The work on Bill's Hill is almost complete with 100s of burn piles ready to go.

Mark
Your
Calendar



November 27: Wawona Hotel Closed

December 16: Wawona Hotel reopens for the holidays

December 16: Wawona Hotel Annual Tree Lighting Dinner 5 p.m.

January 1: Wawona Hotel Closes for the Winter after Breakfast

Date TBA: Hotel Reopens for the 2023 Season:

April 15 :WAPPOA Wawona Community Center 9 a.m.

June 3 : WAPPOA Wawona Community Center 9 a.m.

June : Date TBA : Pine Needle Pickup

August 31: Wawona Friends of the Library Book/Bake/Craft Sale

October 7: WAPPOA Wawona Community Center 9 a.m.

Important Web Site:

Check out local events and news on the Wawona website:

www.wawonanews.com

Many thanks to Fede Peinado for maintaining our www.wawonanews.com website!

WAWONA TOWN PLANNING

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There are several vacancies on this committee. Check the Mariposa County website or contact our District 5 Supervisor, Rosemarie Smallcombe, if you are interested in serving.

Fall Wildlife Reminders - Pet Leashes and Bird Feeders

(Wildlife Management)

Fall is a sensitive time for many wildlife species in Yosemite National Park. As black bears are putting on weight preparing to den for the winter, coyotes are becoming more day active, and mule deer are entering a period of stress due to less food being available. There have been several reports of native wildlife being harassed by off-leash pets. Visitors of Yosemite, residents, and the guests of residents are reminded that pets are required to be on leash at all times if they are outside of a fenced yard. Bird feeders and other forms of feeding wildlife are also prohibited in Yosemite National Park. Residents specifically have a greater impact on wildlife and the park as long-term inhabitants and stewards. Please do your part and protect our native wildlife.

Yosemite Fire News

Nancy Phillipe ~ Fire Communication and Education Specialist

Yosemite National Park experienced widespread precipitation and snow accumulation recently. The closure of the fire season occurs when there is a season ending precipitation event totaling two inches or more. Helicopter 551, Yosemite's helicopter that was contracted for the fire season, has now left the park. Seasonal fire personnel are completing their assignments and will soon be leaving the park as well.

Consistent lower fire danger along with the recent precipitation has made residential pile burning permissible. Residential pile burning is important for reducing fire hazards and can only be conducted on permissible burn days. Property owners and residents must follow all burning guidelines.

See www.wawonanews.com for Residential Burn Pile Regulations.

UC Merced Yosemite Field Station News

Dr. Breezy Jackson ~ Yosemite and Sequoia Field Stations Director

We've had a busy summer and fall at Yosemite Field Station supporting research, higher education, and public service that enhances our understanding and wise stewardship of the Earth. Colorado State University researchers and the Ancient Forest Society continue their work describing effects of beetles, drought, and fire on giant sequoias in the Mariposa and Merced Groves. Tulane University researchers also continued their work describing the adaptability of several species of monkeyflower to changing conditions due to climate change. This fall, we hosted a Geology course from UC Santa Barbara and a California Ecosystems course from University of San Francisco. In addition to coursework, students from UC Merced honed their leadership and field work skills during Yosemite Leadership Program retreats and our new program called ¿Field Curious?. ¿Field Curious? is aimed at increasing sense of belonging in field research for UC Merced Undergraduates. During our first weekend retreat, 19 students learned about field-based inquiry, hypothesis generation, field notebook techniques, grassland ecology, and giant sequoia life history starting at the Merced Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve and finishing at Yosemite Field Station. We also welcomed our first student assistant this fall semester. Citlali Perez is a first-generation college student in her final year at UC Merced studying Cell and Molecular Biology. Citlali has been an immense help to our operations, assisting with reservation correspondence, social media and website editing, and playing a huge role as the program coordinator for ¿field curious?. Welcome Citlali! For more news about the field station, follow us on Facebook and Instagram. You can always support Yosemite Field Station by going to <https://engage.ucmerced.edu/nrs-yosemite-field->

WAWONA TOWN PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WTPAC)

Gene Splinder ~ Chairman

NPS Threatens to Withhold Water Access

On October 7, 2022 The Wawona Town Planning Advisory Committee, (WTPAC) met, among other things, to discuss the status of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Mariposa County and the National Park Service (NPS). WTPAC is a committee of individuals appointed by the Mariposa County Supervisor either living or owning property in Wawona. Roles and responsibilities relating to providing government services in Wawona are spelled out in an MOU which must be renewed every 5 years. That MOU expired in 2021 and discussions had been moving slowly between the County and the NPS. During the meeting the Committee was made aware of changes to the MOU being presented by the NPS.

The item of greatest consequence presented by the NPS changes relates to the NPS requirement to provide potable water to Wawona. Ever since the establishment of concurrent jurisdiction between Mariposa County and the NPS on privately owned lands the MOU has required that the NPS provide potable water to all properties in Wawona, including privately owned property. Changes to the MOU being advanced by the NPS would accomplish the following:

§ Limit access to the NPS water system to existing previously connected Yosemite National Park water service accounts.

§ Require NPS water service applicants to first attempt to drill their own well or seek to connect to another well system,

§ Having failed to find another source of water, the property owner may apply to the NPS. In such case each application would be considered on a case by case basis with no assurance of acceptance.

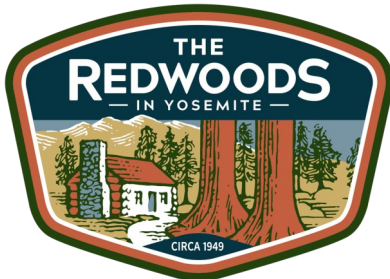
The Committee rejected the changes put forward by the NPS and expressed a strong sentiment that the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors also reject the NPS proposal.

Our chief concerns are as follows:

§ The NPS will not automatically provide “will serve” letters to property owners wishing to build on their Property which would dramatically reduce the value of their property.

§ In the event a private well runs dry there is no assurance that the NPS will allow the property owner to then hook into their system.

We will continue to track this development and keep you informed.



The Redwoods In Yosemite

Peggy Hutchinson ~ Senior Accountant

The Redwoods would like to wish the entire community a Happy Holiday Season. As we enter the season we wish for great weather which includes much needed snow. Not only does this make Wawona a winter wonderland,

it will help with our much needed water. The Redwoods will again host International Students from Malaysia and Peru and we hope they will enjoy this lovely community. What a wonderful place to be visiting in the winter. If you see them walking along the road, please say hi.



Why Are
Friends of the Library Membership Dues and Donations Important?

All dues and donations provide the extras for our Wawona Bassett Memorial Library! New circulation materials including books, magazines, DVD's, titles on CD's are purchased and, as a service to the community, the Wawona Community News is mailed four times annually. The Wawona Community News keeps Wawona residents and property owners informed of the latest community and Yosemite news.

Wawona Friends of the Library Art News

Many posters created by our good friend and former neighbor, Larry Duke, are framed and displayed in the Wawona Bassett Memorial Library. Watch for the Saturday date for our "Art in the Library" event.

We think we have a supplier for our Larry Duke illustrated Library Book Bags and if all goes according to plan, they will be available before Christmas.



Tom Bopp's December Schedule:

December 16 through December 31.

December 16: Tree Lighting Ceremony ~ 5 p.m.

5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday

Friends of the Bassett Memorial Library in Wawona

NEWSLETTER

PO Box 2008, Wawona, CA 95389

December 2022

Community Appreciation

The annual Book/Bake/Craft Sale was a huge success this year! After all the late sales were paid for, we made \$2,592.00! Credit goes to our amazing volunteers who sorted books, worked the sale, did set-up and take-down, and baked all the great baked items. Once again, our community supported the sale as the best customers!

Extra Summer Hours Challenge

THANK YOU, SARA!!!

Thanks to everyone who made donations towards the Extra Summer Hours Challenge. Sara Miller McCune matched the dollars donated and we were able to keep the library open 6 days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day prior to summer 2022 adding 3 days to the County funded 3 days a week. During summer 2022, staffing was not available for the extra 3 days. We've been funded for the Extra Summer Hours every summer since the library opened in 1997 by the generous donations from the community and Sara Miller McCune. If staffing is available for summer 2023, we will be open 6 days weekly after Memorial Day 2023.

August ~ November Memorial Donation



*Russ & Teresa Bassett
Dr. Lawrence E. Gershon
Milt & Ruth Irvine
Elizabeth C. Majewski
Mindy Rauch*

Wawona Bassett Memorial Library

Hours

December 1 through Memorial Day 2023
209-375-6510

Free Internet & Wi-Fi Available
(Password required for Wi-Fi)

Monday: Noon – 5 PM
Wednesday: Noon – 5 PM
Saturday: 10 AM – 3 PM

Closed Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday,
Friday & Holidays

Wawona Community Newsletter
P.O. Box 2008
Wawona, CA 95389

2022 MEMBERSHIP WAWONA FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Please print information for mailing list: April 1 ~ March 31

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Membership Categories:		Email Address	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Friend	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$ 10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Panner	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$ 50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Miner	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$ 100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Strike	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Golden Patron	\$ 500.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Wawona Fund Booster Unlimited	

Additional Contributions: (Include address for acknowledgement)

\$ _____ Memorial for (Name) _____

\$ _____ Gift in honor of (Name) _____

\$ _____ Extra Hours Donation _____

I am interested in assisting with the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering in library
<input type="checkbox"/> Serving on the Board of Directors	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Sale
<input type="checkbox"/> Help at Special Events	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Make checks payable to:

WAWONA FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

P.O. Box 2008
WAWONA, CA 95389

ALL DUES AND DONATIONS ARE

TAX DEDUCTIBLE.