



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Yosemite National Park  
P. O. Box 577  
Yosemite, California 95389

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
L3415 (YOSE-PM)

CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

**JAN 31 2008**

Brian Ouzonian  
c/o Ouzonian Constructors, Inc.  
2821 Dumfries Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90064 - 4412

Dear Mr. Ouzonian,

On Saturday, October 6, 2007, Yosemite National Park planning staff received your letter and package of petitions supporting camping in Yosemite Valley. We would like to thank you for the time and energy you have invested to gather 500 hand signatures and 1,020 electronic signatures documenting the signatories' opposition to the removal of North Pines Campground, and supporting the repair and re-installation of all campgrounds and campsites damaged by the floods.

The National Park Service will continue to consider the petition in the new Merced River Planning process. Because it was submitted approximately three months after the conclusion of the official scoping period as published in the *Federal Register's* "Notice Of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Merced River Plan", we were unable to include these comments in the Public Scoping Report, which had already been published. However, we are firmly committed to considering the petition and supporting comments in the planning process and beyond.

For example, the Draft Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) Report for the new Merced River Plan to be released on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, (and posted on the park's web site at the following location: <http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/newmrp.htm>); clearly acknowledges that:

*"Camping and picnicking are two of many exemplary experiences along the river corridors that create personal memories, traditions, and multi-generational bonding among families and friends."*

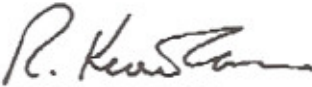
We look forward to your feedback on this report. Additionally, we encourage you to stay involved in the new Merced River Plan process. The next public planning workshop has been scheduled for Saturday, February 23, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center Auditorium. This workshop will be devoted to the ORVs and will begin the discussion on desired conditions. The range of visitor activities, such as camping, will be explored in these discussions. There will be multiple opportunities to engage with park staff in developing desired conditions and management zoning schemes for the new Merced River Plan. We anticipate release of preliminary concepts for management zoning in the summer of 2008.

As you know, we are currently awaiting a ruling that will determine whether or not we need to continue with the new Merced River Plan. Provided that we proceed, any decisions or changes related to camping in Yosemite Valley (such as closing campgrounds or creating new ones) need to flow from this process, which will culminate with a final plan and Environmental Impact Statement in September 2009. If the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals validates the previous plans, then the work done to date on this new effort – such as the February 2008, Draft ORV Report – will still be used to inform management decisions.

Our current management intentions at North Pines Campground are documented in the letter you received in September 2007 (enclosed). Absent a court ruling, this is still an accurate summary of our thinking today. We understand that this is an extremely important issue to you, your family, and those members of the public you have worked to engage. When a ruling becomes available and we have the opportunity to assess its significance to camping issues, we will work to keep you informed of any potential changes being considered.

Thank you for your continued efforts to keep Yosemite National Park informed about the importance of family camping in Yosemite Valley.

Sincerely,

*fn*   
Michael J. Tollefson  
Superintendent

Enclosure

cc: Elexis Mayer, Project Manager, Yosemite National Park  
Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Representative George Radanovich