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Yosemite

A JOURNAL FOR MEMBERS OF THE
YOSEMITE ASSOCIATION

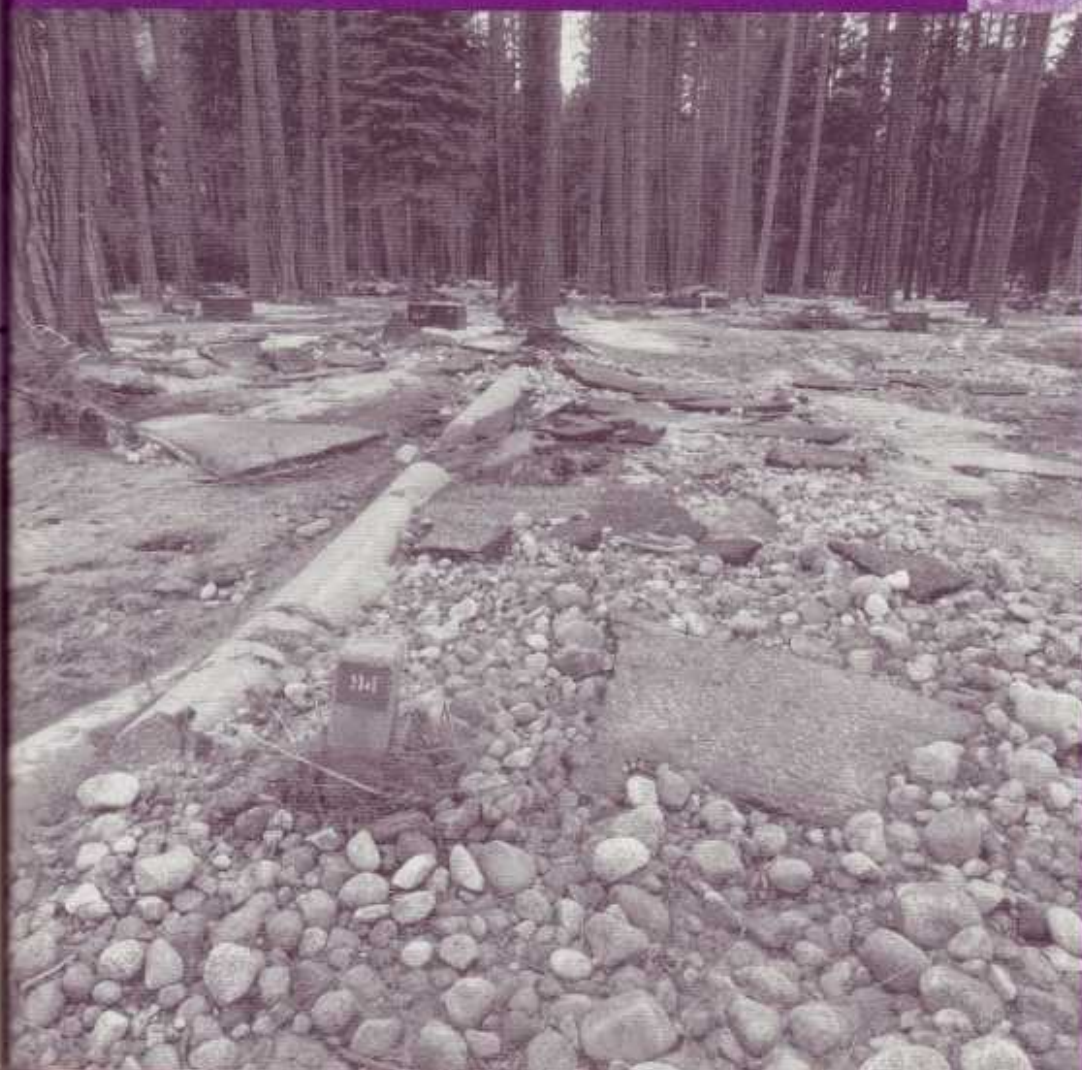
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The Flood of the Century



THE FLOOD OF THE CENTURY

KRISTINA RYLANDS



Cover Photo:
Lower Pines
Campground
(NPS photo)

Strange to say, the greatest floods occur in winter, when one would suppose all the wild waters would be muffled and chained in frost and snow...But at rare intervals, warm rains and warm winds invade the mountains and push back the snow line from 2,000 feet to 8,000, or even higher, and then come the big floods.

—John Muir, from his first book, *The Mountains of California* (1894)

Sierra winter storms are likely to be remembered more by the bridges and houses they carry away than by their beauty or the thousands of blessings they bring to the fields and gardens of Nature.

—John Muir, *The Mountains of California*

Heavy rain. High temperatures. A heavy snowpack. From January 1-3, 1997, these elements combined leading to the greatest flooding seen in Yosemite for over a century. But while January's flood brought record-setting water levels to the park, flooding in Yosemite Valley and along the Merced River Canyon is as old as the river itself. The tendency of the Merced River to flood was almost immediately recognized when James Lamon, the first non-Indian to live permanently in Yosemite Valley, was driven from his home in 1862 by the rising river. But while floods can wreak havoc with human structures, they are extremely beneficial from an ecological standpoint, serving as a sort of natural house-cleaning which scours and alters stream and river channels, redistributes rock, soil, silt, and sand, while enriching wildlife habitat.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Two and a half days of warm and heavy rain brought great change to Yosemite National Park during the first few days of 1997. In the early morning hours of New Year's Day, rain was falling at elevations as high as 9,500 feet. In the high country, rivulets in the snowpack indicate a snow line that eventually climbed to 12,000 feet. The deluge of this storm, along with a record-setting snowfall in December that was melted by this rain, created a high volume of water rarely seen in the rivers and waterfalls of Yosemite.

Valley residents saw Royal Arches Cascades—normally a relatively narrow stream of water—expanded to 350 feet across. Yosemite Falls was a raging gush, causing the meandering Yosemite Creek to flow over roadways and bridges. Yosemite Valley became a lake, inundating meadows, campgrounds, bridges, and roads. For video taken during the early hours of the flood, filming was only pos-

sible while positioned in the raised barrel of a front loader tractor.

Peaking in Yosemite Valley at about 11:00 p.m. on the night of January 2nd, the massive volume of water caused streams and rivers to overflow their banks and carve new channels. Initially, 900 visitors and 1,200 park employees were left stranded in Yosemite Valley when all three highways into the Valley closed. After the water subsided, downed trees were removed and initial repairs were made to Highway 41 sufficient to allow the evacuation of visitors and many employees from Yosemite Valley. But due to washed-out sewer and power lines, most utilities within the Valley were crippled for days, closing the park indefinitely.

EVIDENCE OF THE AFTERMATH

When the rain stopped and water levels receded, Yosemite and the surrounding areas that are so familiar to us were largely unrecognizable. Picnic tables hung in trees. Campsites vanished. Tent cabins, small structures, and even automobiles were left capsized. The Yosemite Chapel—built in 1879 with Sunday School donations—filled with water to the tops of pews.

A 7.5 mile stretch of road between El Portal and the Valley along "all-weather" Highway 140 sustained severe damage in 19 separate locations. In several places along this stretch, the road and underlying supporting ground layers were completely washed away; in other areas asphalt seemed to hang in mid-air as a result of severe undercutting by the river.

Nine road bridges in the Valley sustained damage and will need repairs. At least 33 trail bridges throughout the park were destroyed, and much of the park's 800 miles of trails suffered erosion. Due to extensive snow cover, tra-



Damage in the high country has been difficult to assess; however, it is known that some trails have been damaged and may be closed through summer.

At least 1.4 miles of riverbank and 550 acres of meadows (recently restored at a cost of \$1 million) were eroded by the flooding Merced River in the Valley. Losses in these areas also included 3.5 miles of resource protection fencing and 170 restoration signs that must be replaced.

Approximately half of the Valley's 900 campsites were flooded, washing hundreds of picnic tables, bear-proof storage lockers, waste cans, and fire grates down river. Reports of tent cabins found in El Portal were not uncommon, and a food storage locker was found as far down river as the Bagby Recreation Area at Lake McClure.) The Upper and Lower River Campgrounds were submerged under five feet of water and left with over a foot of silt and debris; both are closed indefinitely.

Nearly ten archeological sites sustained heavy damage, resulting in total removal of some cultural features and artifacts, erosion of surface deposits, and displacement of artifacts. Two sites with human burials were seriously

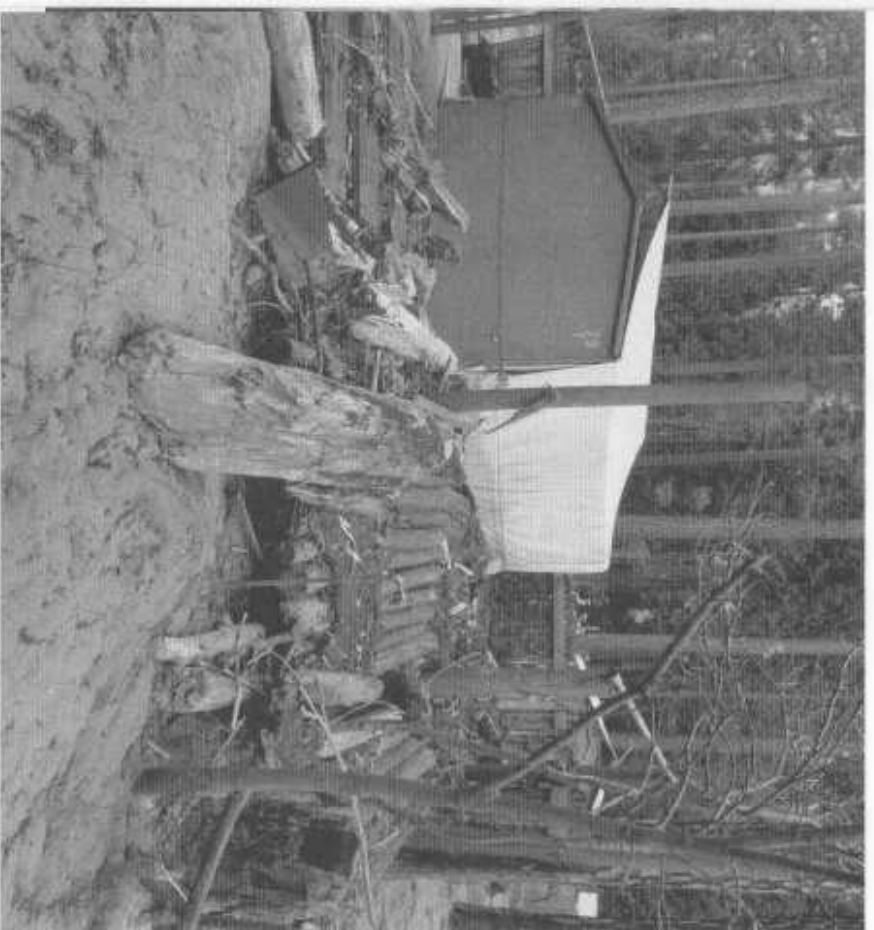
damaged by the river, requiring consultation with Native American groups before stabilization or excavation.

WHAT YOU CAN SEE TODAY

Despite the severity of this natural event, visitors to Yosemite may be surprised at how little of the flood's evidence remains. What you may see is that riverbanks look freshly scoured and widened, debris along high-water lines dangles in the trees and shrubs next to the river, and the shoulders of many park roads are eroded. Look for denuded tree limbs and other debris in Valley meadows. The National Park Service has installed red and white high-water signs throughout the Valley, their arrows marking the flood's peak water level. And you can walk along a Flood Trail that leads through Stoneman Meadow (across from Curry Village) to damaged campsites at the Lower Pines Campground.

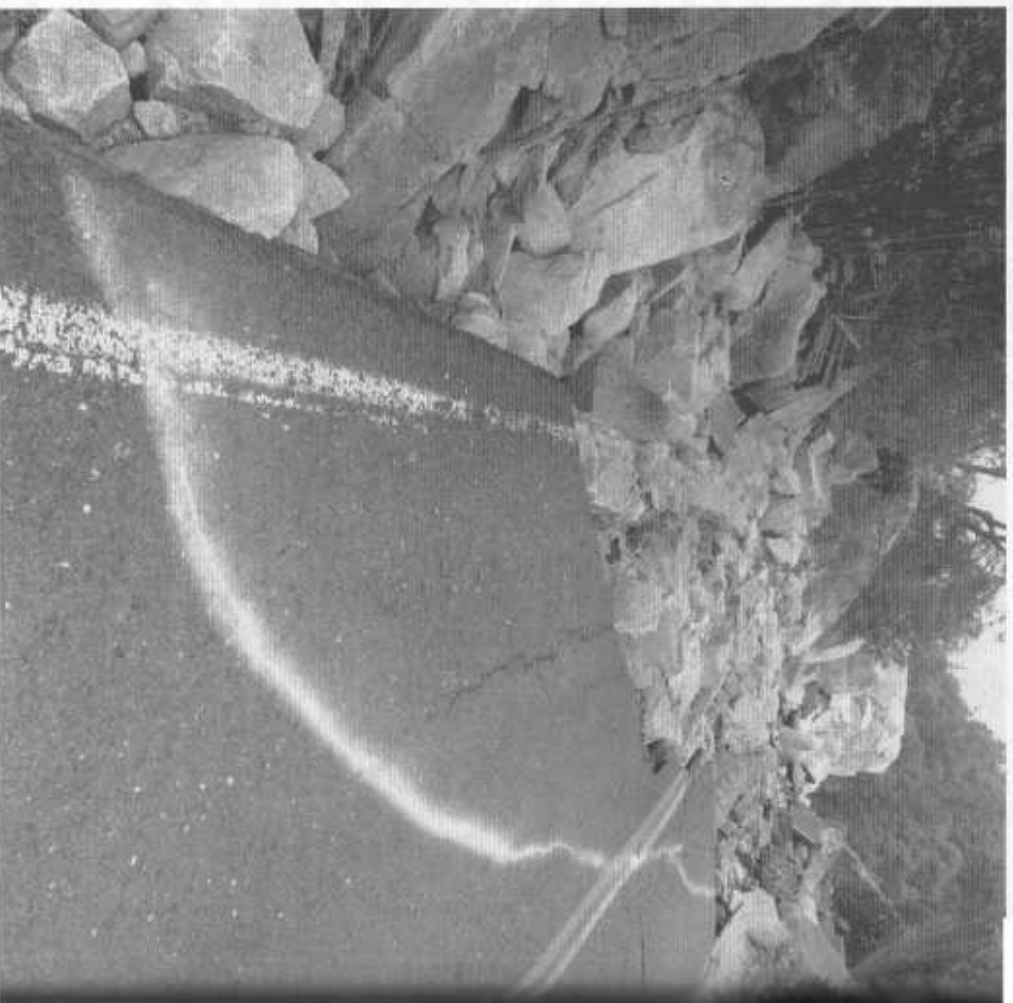
Walking around the Yosemite Lodge area, you will also see significant changes. While you might not immediately notice that 224 employee quarters were lost, the 246 damaged accommodations (189 cabins with and without bath

Flood waters at the gate of Lower River Campground, January 2, 1997 (NPS photo)



Left: Housekeeping Camp (NPS photo)

Below: Highway 140, "The Cookie Slide", looking south toward El Portal (NPS photo)



and guest rooms in Pine and Oak Cottage) will not re-open and are being removed from the floodplain area. Both campgrounds and lodgings lost approximately 40% of their available space for visitors.

What you won't see is the major "damage" experienced by the park's infrastructure. Many of the human-made systems required to support visitors sustained crippling blows. Electrical supply systems shut down. Water-soaked hillsides slid onto roads and power poles were toppled. Employee quarters, lodgings, and NPS administrative offices close to the river's edge filled beyond the windows, destroying furniture, computers, and tools along with personal property. Sewer lines broke, causing contamination of the water supply. In addition, the main sewage pumping station in the Valley was badly damaged, as silt and debris were forced into many parts of the system through bathrooms and man-hole covers.

Approximately half of the Valley's 900 campsites were flooded, washing hundreds of picnic tables, bear-proof storage lockers, waste cans, and fire grates down river.

WINTER VS. SPRING FLOODS

We tend to associate springtime with gushing waterfalls and torrents created by the melting snowpack. But major winter floods—although infrequent—occur in November, December, or January when several inches of warm rain falls at elevations up to 9,000 feet and quickly melts the snow in the high country. These floods are usually short-lived, lasting for only three to four days, but discharge often record-breaking amounts of water.

Conversely in spring, floods occur more gradually and have lower peak water levels. These spring floods result from normal seasonal melting of unusually deep snowpacks. This is the type of flood that occurred in May 1983—one of the greatest snowfall years on record—when most of the water in that winter's snowpack was discharged in just 45 days. The Valley made headlines in May 1996 when warm and heavy rains added to the already high snowmelt run-off, causing the Merced River to swell out of its banks, filling Valley meadows, covering roads, running through campgrounds, leaving the park closed for two days. However within days, the water subsided, leaving behind mineral-rich silt deposits along the riverbank which would benefit many of the park's plants and animals for months to come.

A HISTORY OF FLOODING

While precise quantitative descriptions of Yosemite floods do not appear until after the installation of special equipment in 1916 and 1917, there are at least two relatively detailed accounts of large winter floods prior to the 1997 event. The earliest significant account of a flood in Yosemite Valley appears in James Hutchings' *In The Heart Of The Sierra* (1886). Hutchings describes the conditions leading to the flood of December 23, 1867, "after a snow-



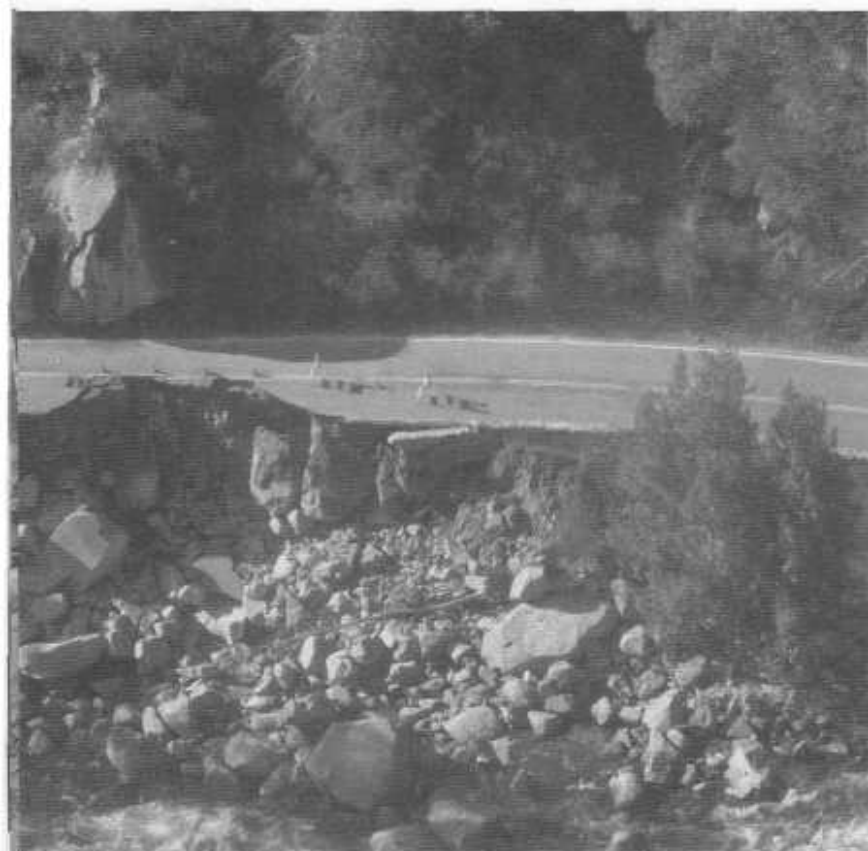
fall of about three feet, a heavy downpour of rain set in and incessantly continued for ten successive days...The whole meadow land of the Valley (Yosemite) was covered by a surging and impetuous flood to an average depth of nine feet."

In *The Yosemite* (1912), John Muir writes of a flood that he witnessed in December, 1871. He places the peak of the flooding on December 19 and describes this as "the most sublime waterfall flood I ever saw...During the night of the 18th, heavy rain fell on the snow (and then) about midnight the temperature rose to 42 degrees, carrying the snow line far beyond the Valley walls, and next morning Yosemite was rejoicing in a glorious flood."

The details offered in both of these accounts hint at a pattern which today is recognized to be associated with the largest floods on record in Yosemite Valley. In both cases a heavy, early snowfall was followed by an unseasonably warm storm with rain reported at least as high as 10,000 feet. The five largest floods this century all follow this pattern.

Some of the most severe flooding of this century occurred in 1937, 1950, and 1955. As with January's

Bridge over Tenaya Creek on Mirror Lake Loop trail (NPS photo)



Highway 140, Windy Point near Arch Rock, January 1997 (NPS photo)

Broken sewer pipe, Highway 140. "The Cookie Slide" (NPS photo)

flood, bridges, roads, and even buildings were washed away or completely destroyed in 1937, while the 1955 floodwater reached a record depth and covered almost the entire Valley floor, submerging roads on both sides of the river under five feet of water. In fact, photographs detailing the damage from these previous events closely resemble those taken this past January.

THE FLOOD'S ECOLOGICAL ROLE

The Flood of '97 reflects the Merced River's dominant role in forming the character and ecology of Yosemite Valley. Although seemingly destructive, the changes brought about by the flood are part of the natural cycle of events that created and continue to shape areas within Yosemite.

Consequently, accurate surveys and documentation of this event are underway. Aerial photographs, hydrological assessments, and flood plain data are being collected. This information will aid park managers in their understanding of the dynamics of flooding, the beneficial role floods play in the ecosystem, and the effects of human intervention on the channeling of the Merced River in the Valley.



THE WORK CONTINUES

Much of the park was closed to the public in January and February as a result of the flood's damage. The NPS is working with the assistance of many other federal, state, and local agencies to assess damages to park roads, trails, buildings, grounds, and park utility systems. Emergency repairs, salvage operations and long-term planning for park restoration are currently underway (on the Internet, check the NPS Home Page for park planning and recovery information: <http://www.nps.gov/yose/>). Park managers hope that this represents the beginning of a recovery effort that will leave Yosemite better than before—better for park resources and better for visitors.

Kristina Rylands originally compiled this article for the Spring Special Edition of the Yosemite Guide, where she serves as editor. She also works in the park as a freelance writer, a naturalist, and YA Field Seminar leader.

DIRECT FROM NATURE: THE OIL SKETCHES OF THOMAS HILL

Editor's note: *The following is an excerpt from the Yosemite Association's newest publication, Direct from Nature: The Oil Sketches of Thomas Hill, the first book to draw attention to the remarkable small paintings by the famed landscape artist. Thomas Hill is generally remembered for his monumental canvases of Yosemite and other grand American landscapes. However, author Janice T. Driesbach, curator of art at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, contends in this book that his remarkable oil sketches, painted in the field directly from nature, not only comprise a significant portion of his work but also helped to define an aesthetic for depicting California and broader American landscapes. The following section describes the artist's time in Wawona. Information on ordering Direct from Nature can be found on page 18. The Direct from Nature show will next be an exhibition from June 19 – August 16 at the California Historical Society, Yerba Buena Center, 678 Mission Street in San Francisco.*

AT HOME IN WAWONA

Hill attended the wedding of his daughter Estella and John Washburn, a proprietor of Yosemite's Wawona Hotel, on April 28, 1885. The ceremony, at the "handsome" home in Oakland, was attended by a large number of people, most of whom were family members. One social column concluded with the report that: "At 3 o'clock, the newly wedded pair, accompanied by Mr. Thomas Hill, Mrs. Edward Hill and other members of the family started for Monterey, where they will remain for a few days and then to Yosemite."

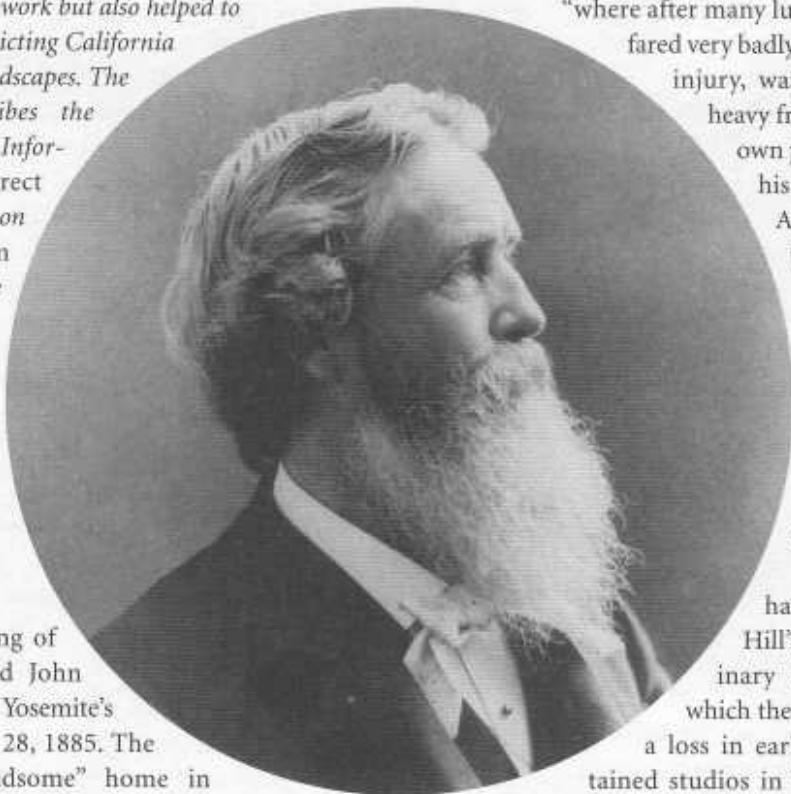
From this time on, Hill found a haven at Wawona, where the Washburns provided him rooms and constructed a studio for him nearby (in 1886). In this environment, Hill worked and sold his paintings to Yosemite

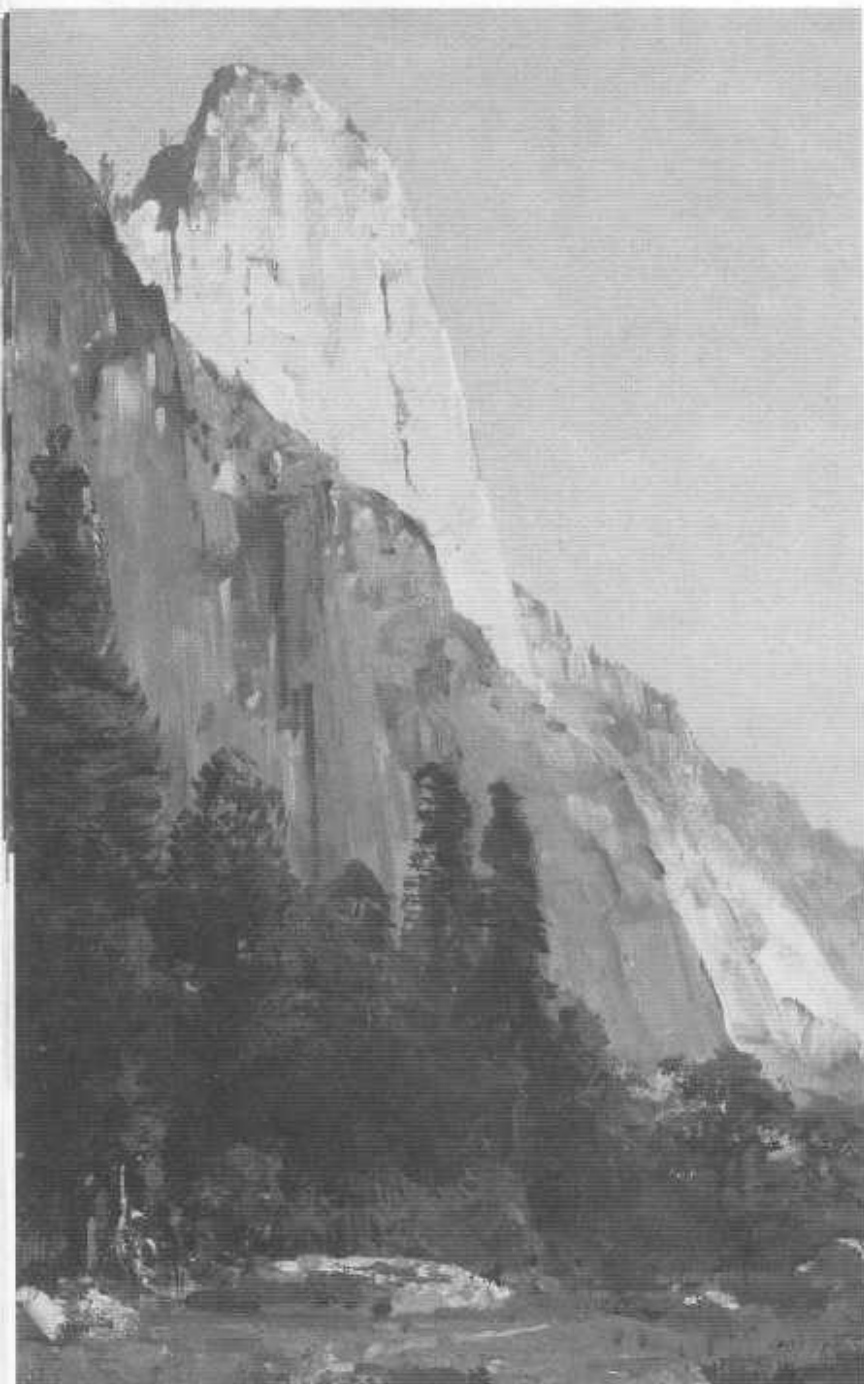
visitors. He was tended to by his daughter as well as by Willetta Hill. A gifted artist in her own right, Willetta was married to Hill's eldest son, Edward. She remained at Wawona after her divorce and became Hill's traveling companion in the latter years of his life. This relationship may have contributed to the disruption of Hill's own marriage and been a cause for him to disengage from activities in San Francisco.

As late as August 1885, Hill was still contending with difficulties associated with the New Orleans Exposition, "where after many luxuriant promises he fared very badly, and, to add insult to injury, was compelled to pay heavy freight charges out his own pocket in order to get his pictures back at all." Additionally, it was noted that "Hill is a good business man and an artist with a national reputation. Affairs must have been very badly managed when he has such a complaint to make."

This setback may have led to the sale of Hill's commodious Seminary Avenue home, on which there was a large lien, at a loss in early 1886. Hill maintained studios in both San Francisco and Wawona, most of his children were maturing, and the large residence may have been a burden to his wife, who subsequently acquired a "homestead residence" in Oakland. Hill continued to lease his studio in Yosemite Valley in the late 1880s.

According to records, Yosemite visitors were directed by the Washburns to the artist's nearby studio at Wawona, which was adorned from floor to ceiling with animal skins, Indian baskets, and Hill's paintings. Hill received and fulfilled a large number of orders from his quarters, as documented in an account book he





*Sentinel Rock,
Yosemite, about
1880*

*Thomas Hill's
studio in Wawona*

maintained there between 1884 and 1887.

The 163 sales noted during this four-year period indicate that Hill was producing large numbers of Yosemite scenes in standard sizes upon request, probably ordered from oil sketches and other paintings at the studio. The request of William J. Parks of Hartford, Connecticut, for an *Early Morning*, "with more midday effect, more detail on El Capitan," offers insights to Hill's transactions.

His subjects ranged as far afield as Mount Rainier and Mount Shasta, but *Early Morning*, *General View*, *Bridal Veil Meadow*, and *Bridal Veil*, Nevada, Vernal, and



Yosemite Falls were the most popular views. The preferred formats were sixteen by twenty-four inches, twenty-six by thirty-five inches, thirty by forty-five inches, thirty-six by sixty inches, and thirty-six by fifty-four inches. Prices ranged from \$50 (for what appear to be sketches) to \$500 (for larger canvases) and Hill forwarded paintings to the homes of purchasers when they were completed.

Although Hill had several commissions from notable Northern California (among them Governor George Stoneman and John Muir), clients living nearby accounted for only 5% of the sales in his account book. His primary buyers were tourists from the East and the Midwest, many from New York State and Massachusetts, as well as visitors from the British Empire, including residents of New Zealand, Australia, Bombay, and London.

Sales from his Yosemite studio alone (including sketches) earned Hill in excess of \$8,500 annually in the years covered. His sales at Wawona were critical to his livelihood, and motivated Hill to rapidly produce a number of Yosemite views that are uninspired and unrepresentative of his true talent. Though they helped provide financial stability in his life, these routine canvases did little to impress critics in San Francisco and other art centers, from which he was already distanced.

While Hill was still painting other subjects for public exhibition, including views of Oregon, the Headwaters of the Madison River, and Yellowstone Lake he showed to the Art Association, he was "fast becoming a painter of Yosemite." His growing association with Yosemite was acknowledged by one reviewer, who commented that "his faithfulness to his subject he has almost made it his own, and no artist has yet been able to contend with him."

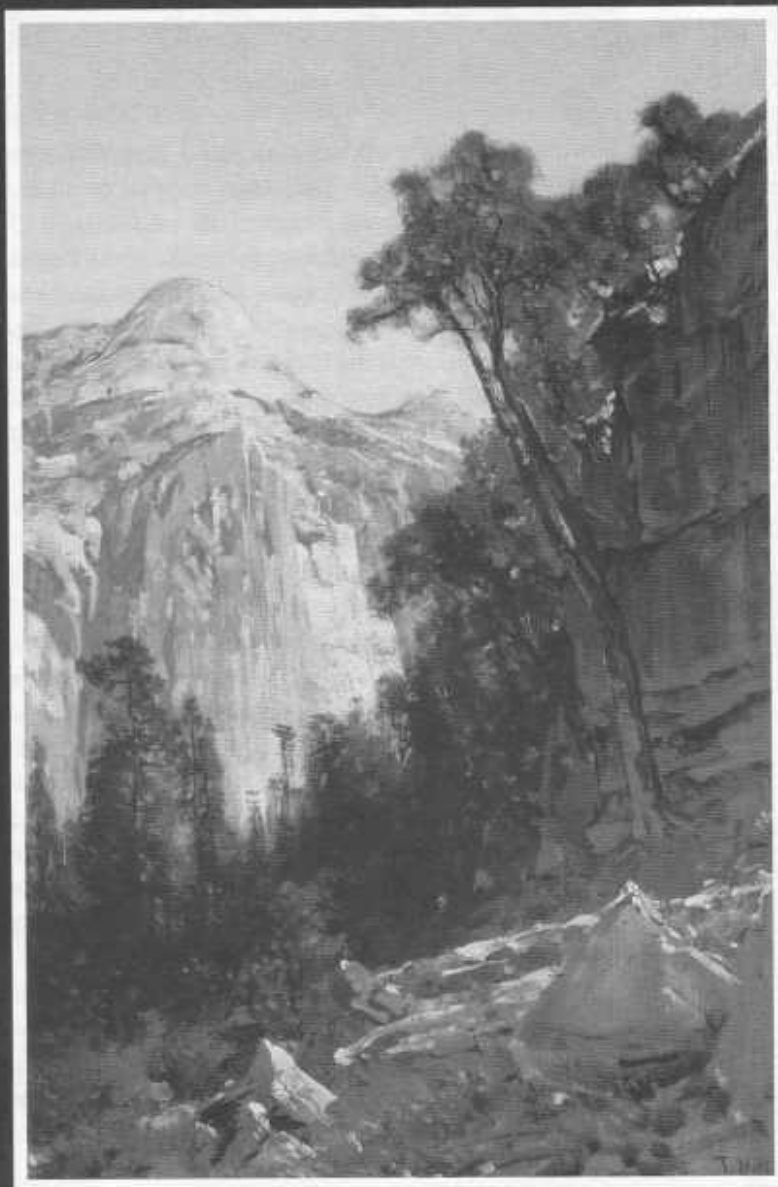
Note: Other Thomas Hill paintings from Direct From Nature illustrate Y.A.'s 1996 Annual Report on the pages that follow.

For the Yosemite Association, 1996 was characterized by the continued success of our traditional activities, and the addition of two new programs to our operation. At the request of the National Park Service, we instituted a 900-number phone information service for Yosemite. Callers are able to talk to a live operator, who will answer any Yosemite-related questions for \$1.95 for the first minute and \$.95 for each additional minute. While a bit slow in its infancy, the service should prove to be an important supplement to park information resources.

A second new enterprise initiated in 1996 is Y.A.'s Internet web page (<http://yosemite.org>), which averaged about 750 visits per day over the course of the year. It includes a seminar listing, a listing of books for sale, member information, news, and even a live camera pointed at Glacier Point. Y.A. hopes that a sponsor can be located for the site so that it can be improved and updated on a more regular basis.

The year also was notable for the recognition our publications and programs received. In the 1996 N.P.S. Cooperating Association Interpretive Excellence Competition, Y.A. was honored with awards in nine different categories, including the highest prize, The Director's Award (for *Yosemite—The Promise of Wilderness*). It was the third straight competition that our association received the top award. Y.A.-published materials also received two prizes in the Museum Publications Design Competition sponsored by the American Association of Museums.

Our success was fueled by a strong board, an excellent staff, and a remarkable cast of volunteers and members. With the terrific support of the Yosemite Association's wide constituency, we were able more than ever before to satisfy our mission of promoting park stewardship and enriching the visitor experience. We extend thanks and gratitude to everyone who contributed to our efforts.



South Dome, Yosemite Valley, about 1870



Yosemite Valley,
1867

BOARD AND STAFF

The Yosemite Association lost a dear friend and devoted supporter of Yosemite National Park this year. Board member Jeffery Lapham died unexpectedly in July. Enthusiasm and caring distinguished his efforts for YA's mission in the park, and he is greatly missed. New additions to the Board of Trustees this year are Thomas Bowman of Piedmont, California, and Martha Brown from nearby Mariposa, California, who serve on the board as Yosemite Fund representatives.

Several changes occurred at the office in El Portal. Claire Haley departed after many years of hard work as office manager and bookkeeper; Margaret Bailey has assumed the bookkeeping duties. Nancy Novo Lusignan joined the staff for several months and launched the 900 information line, and Mary Kay Kirn has replaced Wendy Vittands as warehouse manager.

SALES & PUBLICATIONS

Y.A.'s publication and sales program managed a relatively strong year despite the disruptions caused by such circumstances as the federal budget shutdown, the rockslides in Yosemite Valley, and a weak economy. While visitation was higher, visitors were not as inclined as in previous years to purchase educational materials at Y.A. bookstores. Our in-park sales were virtually even with last year's level, but our overall sales performance dropped just less than 2% due to a somewhat sluggish wholesale market. Key factors were a drop in overall orders from the Yosemite Concessions Services Co. and our failure to issue our usual number of new publications.

The new products that were completed included *The Miwok in Yosemite*, a new guide to the Yosemite Indian Village, a paper edition of *Yosemite—The Promise of Wilderness*, and two posters, Albert Bierstadt's *Night at Valley View*, and the Jo Mora *Cartoon Map of Yosemite*

Valley. Each of these items enjoyed strong sales both inside and outside the park. A number of reprints were completed, including *The Tree of Time*, *Railroads of Yosemite Valley*, both very recent releases, and *The Yosemite Fun Book*, *Discovering Sierra Reptiles*, *The Pictorial Guide to Yosemite* (in English and Japanese), the video *Yosemite: the Fate of Heaven*, and the *Map and Guide to Yosemite Valley*.

Review of our sales for the year showed that our strongest selling publications are *The Wild Muir*, *The Happy Camper Handbook*, *The Yosemite Fun Book*, *The Complete Guidebook to Yosemite National Park*, the *Pictorial Guide to Yosemite National Park*, and *The Yosemite Road Guide*. Our co-publication with Rufus Graphics, *The Map and Guide to Yosemite Valley*, sold over 25,000 copies.

Yosemite Association remodeled two of its retail outlets in conjunction with National Park Service renovation of its interpretive facilities. In the newly rehabilitated Wilderness Center, our sales increased 36%; because of the rockslides at Happy Isles, our new sales facility there was closed within a month of its completion. We hope that it will prove equally successful when the nature center is re-opened.

Other sales outlets proved lucrative during 1996. Receipts at the Mariposa Grove Museum grew 110%, thanks in part to an improved display of the items for sale there. The Yosemite Museum Shop increased its revenue yet another year, with a boost from the store's developing relationship with the Native American craftspeople and artists who supply it. Other locations with sales increase included Tuolumne Meadows, up by 33%, and the Yosemite Theater, up 39%. Disappointingly, Valley Visitor Center sales were off by 5%, the Big Oak Flat Visitor Center was off by 14%, the Pioneer History Center store slumped by 13%, and the Wawona Information Center experienced a decrease of 30%. Gross revenue from park sales totaled \$1,186,264, with out-of-park sales totaling \$371,100.

The Association provided valuable assistance to the National Park Service through its sales/information clerks, who supplement interpretive and information service in the park's visitor centers. The sales department also managed the Wilderness Reservation System at the Wilderness Center, which offered a range of support services for backpackers, and generated revenue to further develop the reservation software and hardware.

Members of the sales staff attended a number of trade events including the Museum Stores Association Members Market in Phoenix, the Northern California Booksellers Trade Show in Oakland, and the San Francisco Book Festival.

MEMBERSHIP

The YA membership program experienced a successful 1996 highlighted by a variety of member events and volunteer activities.

With well over 600 people in attendance, the 1996 Spring Forum proved to be the most popular YA member event ever. Prominent among the program were speakers as diverse as mountain lion expert Kevin Hansen, archaeologist Sonny Montague, wildlife educator Diane Ganner, artist Stephen Lyman, historic architect Sylvia Augustus, wildlife biologist Maureen Loughlin, and Deputy Superintendent Hal Grovert. The ever-popular walks led by naturalists, photographers, historians, resource protection experts, archaeologists, and rock climbers rounded out a full and informative day for members.

At the Twenty-first Annual Meeting held in September in Wawona, members were treated to two entertaining talks by our guest speakers. First, we learned about the enactment of the Yosemite Grant from noted Yosemite historian Hank Johnston. Then University of Colorado law professor Charles Wilkinson moved us with his personal account of "Druid Arch: A National Park Journey." In addition, members had the opportunity to tour the Pioneer Yosemite History Center complete with demonstrations by the volunteers who bring Yosemite's past to life, take a variety of ranger-led walks in the Wawona area, and attend the traditional evening barn dance.

Five member worktrips were conducted during the 1996 season, two in Yosemite Valley, two in Tuolumne Meadows, and a backpacking trip to the Sunrise Lakes area. Cooperatively sponsored by the NPS which establishes and supervises the projects, the Yosemite Institute which provides the meals and leadership, Yosemite Concession Services which contributes the program's funding, and YA which provides the enthusiastic labor, these trips have become a yearly tradition for a number of our dedicated members. The work is hard, but the camaraderie with fellow YAers and the knowledge that they are truly making a difference are worth the effort.

Another ardent group of volunteers spent a month or more in Yosemite Valley or Tuolumne Meadows staffing the Museum Gallery, operating the orientation slide show, welcoming seminar participants, giving out park information at Parson's Lodge and the membership booths, and encouraging membership in the Association. Through their efforts nearly 47,000 people were able to view the Museum Gallery exhibit, over 33,600 visitors experienced the orientation slide show, and YA gained over 400 new members. Both the NPS and YA rely heavily on our volunteers to carry out these responsibilities, and we are indebted to them for the many services they provide.



OSTRANDER LAKE SKI HUT

Operated at the request of the National Park Service, the Ostrander Lake Ski Hut was open again this year. Ten miles into the backcountry, the hut provides a favorite destination and rustic lodging for nordic skiers in a season that lasts from mid-December to early April. YA pays for hutkeepers, firewood, and other necessities, and handles the lottery and reservation system through the Wilderness Center.

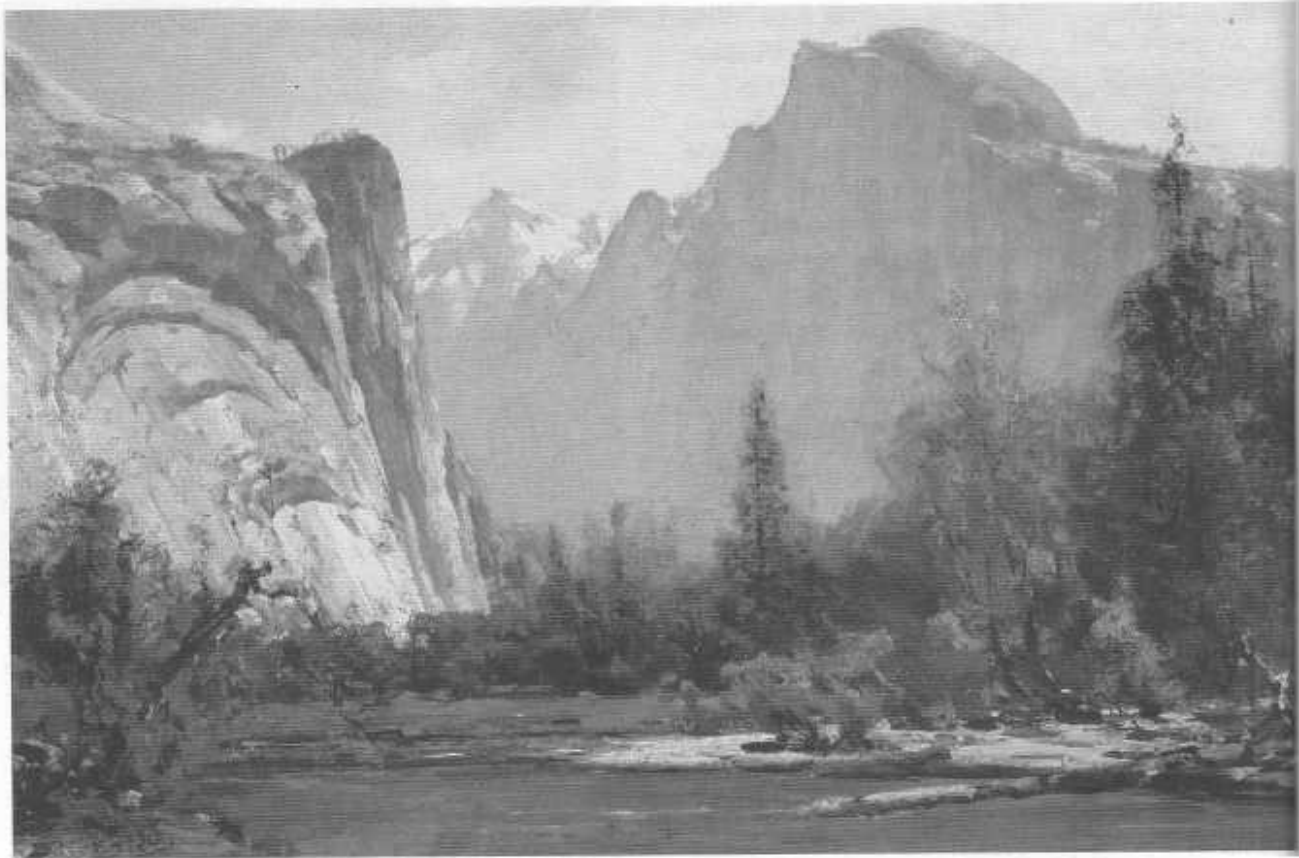
SEMINARS

Yosemite Field Seminars experienced a healthy and rewarding year in 1996. 875 people total had attended the seventy classes by the year's end. The breakdown on enrollments was as follows: 33% attended classes in natural history, 18% backpacking trips, 15% photography classes, 11% drawing and painting classes, 8% day hikes, 5% family trips, 4% birding classes, and 3% each for Native American and history seminars.

One of the new classes for 1996 was Sarah Rabkin's "Portable Magic: Keeping an Illustrated Journal in Yosemite" which took place in late July. This three-day program held in Tuolumne Meadows appealed to writers, artists, and those who merely wanted to record what they saw on their trips to Yosemite.

Each day's hike provided inspiration to students as they explored new writing and drawing skills. The goal was to keep a journal that became a personal record of

*Indian Camp,
Yo-Semite, about
1873*



*Royal Arches
and Half Dome,
Yosemite, n.d.*

experience and observation. Capturing spontaneity and having fun was included as part of that process. Sarah brought her sensitive teaching style to this seminar, along with creative writing exercises. Her many years of hiking Yosemite's trails and her commitment to developing her own illustrated nature journals made a very successful seminar. Sarah will return to teach this class again in the summer of 1997.

WILDERNESS RESERVATION SYSTEM

During 1996 the Yosemite Association continued to operate the Wilderness Reservation System at the request of the National Park Service. For a fee of \$3 per person per permit, backpackers could reserve wilderness permits up to 24 weeks in advance of their planned trips. The YA staff who operated the system answered many questions about backpacking in Yosemite. In addition, the Wilderness Center itself was renovated to include new exhibits on backcountry travel and how to plan a backpacking trip, and a special three-dimensional physical map of the park.

YOSEMITE THEATER

Recognized by the National Park Service as the best interpretive program of its type in the National Park System, the Yosemite Theater continued to offer visitors a wide variety of quality evening programs. From Lee Stetson's vibrant portrayal of John Muir to the lively music of Gail Lynne Dreifus and the Recycled String Band to Connie Stetson's dramatic performance as a strong pioneer woman, the Yosemite Theater has entertained park visitors for thirteen years. In addition to this impressive list of performers, 1996 featured two new programs. Renowned climber Mark Wellman introduced "No Barriers," a film he co-produced on extreme disabled sports. Van Gordon's "Friendly Fire" depicted a 49er's life with the Yosemite Indians.

ART ACTIVITY CENTER

The Art Activity Center enjoyed its sixteenth successful year of operation and reached 2917 students. Thirteen new artists were introduced to the program teaching classes in watercolor, acrylic on paper, Chinese painting on silk, pen and ink, and journaling. The no fee classes were held seven days a week from April to October, plus Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday weeks.

Highlights of 1996

JANUARY

On January 6, Yosemite National Park reopened to the public after having been closed on December 20 due to the lack of an approved federal budget.

Campground reservation procedures changed on January 15. Destinet (formerly Mistix) began accepting reservations up to four months in advance beginning on the 15th of each month.

APRIL

The Yosemite Association began operating a new 900 (900/454-YOSE) telephone information service to supplement the National Park Service phone system.

On April 20, the body of noted Yosemite artist Stephen Lyman was found in the Cathedral Rocks area. Lyman had been missing for two days and appeared to have died from injuries sustained in a fall.

MAY

On May 16, heavy rains caused the closure of all highways into Yosemite Valley. The Merced River rose to flood level, and Valley campgrounds were evacuated. The park reopened two days later.

The Half Dome cables went up on May 20.

On May 24, the Glacier Point Road opened for the season. The Tioga Road opened on May 31.

JUNE

The Hetch Hetchy Road closed in early June to all visitor use weekdays, with limited foot and bicycle use possible on weekends.

JULY

On July 10, a massive rockfall occurred at 7 p.m. between Washburn Point and Glacier Point. An air blast resulting from the fall caused several hundred trees to blow over in the Happy Isles area. One person was killed and numerous people sustained serious injuries. The snack stand and the Happy Isles Nature Center were damaged. That area, along with the Vernal and Nevada Falls, Trails, was closed to the public.

The Hetch Hetchy Road reopened on July 19, and the Vernal - Nevada Falls Trail reopened on July 20. Happy Isles remained closed.

AUGUST

August 10 - 12, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt vacationed with his family in the park.

Two Boy Scout leaders contacted NPS Rangers on August 12 to report that they had killed a bear by throwing rocks at it in an attempt to frighten it away from their campsite. The incident sparked media attention and controversy.

On August 15, NPS and US Forest Service made the decision to jointly manage 13 separate wildfires burning in Yosemite and in Stanislaus National Forest. The fire, known as the Ackerson Complex, burned for more than a month and eventually covered over 59,000 acres.

SEPTEMBER

A small rockslide occurred on the Upper Yosemite Falls Trail. There were no injuries, but the area was closed for repairs until early October.

On September 30, the NPS announced that because of inconclusive evidence they would not prosecute the two Boy Scout leaders in the death of the bear cub.

OCTOBER

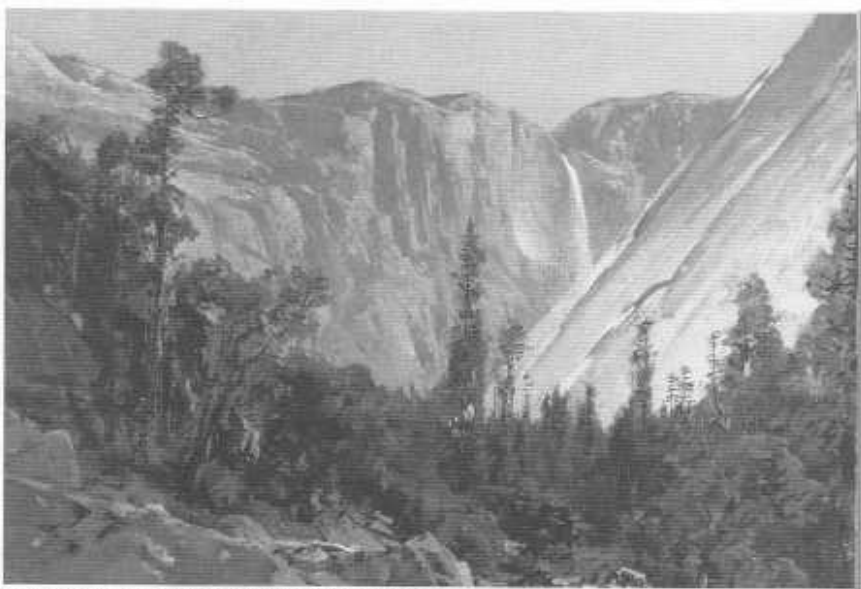
The Half Dome Cables were taken down on October 15.

It was announced that a Mountain Lion Study will be undertaken in Yosemite beginning in October of 1996 and continuing through December of 2000.

NOVEMBER

On November 5, The Tioga Road and the Glacier Point Road closed for the season.

Highway 140 closed on November 22 due to a rockslide. It reopened the following day.



Artist's Point and Yosemite Falls, about 1873

Statement of Financial Position

FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1995

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$227,735
Investments	26,938
Accounts receivable	42,952
Deposits	17,500
Prepaid expenses	18,235
Inventory	638,380
Property and equipment	36,072

TOTAL ASSETS \$1,007,812

LIABILITIES

Trade accounts payable	\$3,974
Accrued Payroll Taxes	1,214
Royalties payable	16,670
Sales tax payable	3,995
Vacation payable	16,305

TOTAL LIABILITIES 42,158

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted:	
Designated for programs	37,459
Undesignated	804,061
Temporarily restricted	124,134

TOTAL NET ASSETS 965,654

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS \$1,007,812

Statement of Activities, 1995

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

REVENUE

Publication sales	\$1,557,373
Seminars	129,349
Memberships	255,562
Investment income	9,668
Theater	56,400
Wilderness Center	56,485
900 information services	3,216
Auxiliary activities	113,953
Designated programs	12,198

2,194,204

Net assets released from restrictions 70,258

2,264,262

EXPENSES

Cost of sales:

Publication costs 1,190,226

Auxiliary activities:

Seminars	150,353
Theater	50,580
Wilderness Center	45,433
900 information services	24,874
Other activities	35,833

Supporting services:

Management and general	213,183
Membership	165,943

1,876,422

Aid to National Park Service 434,908

2,311,330

DECREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS (46,868)

TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED ASSETS

Contributions	9,511
Auxiliary activities	56,911

Net assets released from restrictions:
(by payment) (70,258)

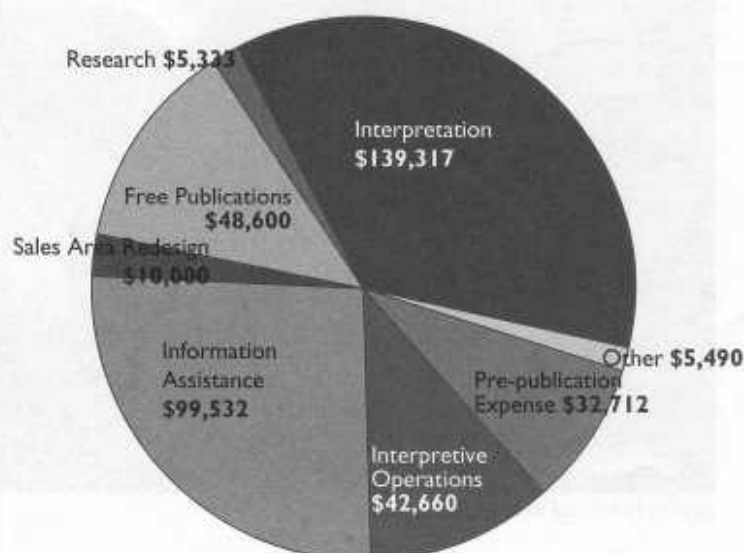
DECREASE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS (3,826)

DECREASE IN NET ASSETS (50,694)

NET ASSETS, AT BEGINNING OF YEAR 1,016,350

NET ASSETS, AT END OF YEAR \$965,656

1996 Aid-to-NPS



Hike With An Expert This Summer

Both the Yosemite highwater flood and the major mailing of the 1997 seminar brochure occurred on January 2. Widespread publicity about park closures and damage to roads and structures has resulted in fewer enrollments for the Yosemite Field Seminar program. People call and ask, "Are you doing your pro-

gram?" The answer is a resounding YES!!!

Here is a list of some of the courses with openings, but there are many more. We are happily anticipating the opening of Tuolumne Meadows by late June. Some classes are old favorites, others are new (indicated by **) All include free campground space - just bring your tent

and camping gear; some offer rooms, at an additional cost. The teaching staff is made up of experts in their fields with their knowledge and experience of Yosemite. There are hikes and backpacks for all levels of expertise. And best of all, the high country should be spectacular this year!

Here's just a few of the classes that still have openings:

- Birds of Tuolumne Meadows*, (Mike Ross) July 5-6
- Mammals of the High Sierra*, (John Harris) July 7-11
Tuolumne Meadows **
- Photographing Yosemite's Sleepy Hollow, Wawona*,
(Howard Weamer) July 11-13
- Where Glaciers Roamed - Geology of the Yosemite Sierra*,
(Doris Sloan) July 14-18 Tuolumne Meadows
- In The Heart of Nature* (Photography), (Robert Frutos)
July 17-20 Tuolumne Meadows **
- Yosemite Weather: Past, Present and Future*, (Ron Smith)
July 21-25 stay at Bridalveil Creek Campground **
- Photographing High Country Wildflowers*, (Brenda Tharp)
July 25-27 Tuolumne Meadows **
- Photographing High Country Habitats*, (Howard Weamer)
July 25-27 Tuolumne Meadows
- Tuolumne Meadows: Flowers, Rocks, and Birds*,
(Michael Ross) August 20-24 **
- Tuolumne Saunters* (Easy Hikes), (Joe and Lynn Medeiros)
August 15-17 Tuolumne Meadows
- California Indian Material Culture for Elementary School
Teachers*, (Bob Fry) October 4-5 Yosemite Valley **

Beginner Backpacks:

- Lyle Canyon*, (Kristina Rylands) July 24-27 **
- May Lake*, (Kristina Rylands) August 7-10
- Young Lakes*, (For women)
(Suzanne Swedo) August 14-17 &
(Katie Colbert & Linda Yemoto) August 21-24 **

** Indicates new seminar for 1997

Intermediate Backpacks:

- From Tuolumne Meadows to Yosemite Valley, A Women's
Intermediate Backpack*, (Lisa Strong & Annette Bottaro
Walklet) ** August 14-18
- Alpine Ecology*, (Michael Ross) September 5-8 Tuolumne
Meadows **

Advanced Backpacks:

- Into The North Park*, (Dick Ewart) August 10-17 **
- Sierra Crest Peaks & Passes*, (Jim Nett) August 13-19

Call Penny or Lou at 209/379-2321. They are happy to help you determine which seminar you'll really enjoy. FAX any requests to 209/379-2486 or E-mail: YOSE_Yosemite_Association@nps.gov



John King

Summer Work Trips Planned

Dates have been set for the summer YA member Work Trips. The projects to be undertaken are planned and directed by the National Park Service's Division of Resources Management. Typically the work involves restoring damaged trails, and campsites, and returning impacted areas to a more natural condition. The tasks can vary tremendously, but in previous years, people have spent time digging and moving soil, salvaging and replanting sod, decompacting soil, mulching collecting plant material, planting transplants, hydrodrilling willow cuttings into riverbanks, and carrying water by hand.

For this coming summer, there are four trips planned.



Edith Simonson

July 27–August 2: Work trip at Tuolumne Meadows. The group will camp at the Tuolumne Meadows Campground group area and do restoration work at the former Tenaya Lake Campground (now closed) and other sites in the Tuolumne area.

August 3–9: Work trip in the Glacier Point Road area. The group will camp at Bridalveil Campground and work on restoration projects along the Glacier Point Road corridor (Washburn Point and other places).



Edith Simonson

August 17–23: Same work and arrangements as August 3.

October 5–11: Work Trip in Yosemite Valley. The group will camp at Yellow Pines Campground in the Valley (a special campground for volunteer groups) and work on projects in the Valley which may or may not be flood-related.

As before, these trips are a cooperative venture of the National Park Service

(overseeing the restoration and revegetation projects), Yosemite Concessions Services Company (contributing necessary funding), the Yosemite Institute (providing staff and culinary services) and the Yosemite Association (supplying work crews of YA members). The four frontcountry trips (Tuolumne Meadows, Glacier Point Road, and Valley) will follow a similar pattern even though the location varies. People will arrive at the assigned campground (shared campsites) Sunday afternoon and work with the project leaders Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesday will be a day off and frequently people combine for a group hike somewhere in the park. Meals are supplied, but volunteers provide their own camping equipment.

Though there are many people wishing to help in repairing flood damage in the Valley, it appears that contracted crews will be tackling that work (most of which is beyond the scope of volunteer labor). However, there is still much work to be done, and the NPS Resources Division looks forward to making good progress this summer on a number of other valuable restoration projects.

For an application and/or more information, please call Holly or Connie at (209) 372-2317.



Russ Morimoto

Superintendent Changes at Yosemite

B. J. Griffin, who has served as Yosemite's superintendent since 1995, has been reassigned to the Presidio in San Francisco as its General Manager. The National Park Service (NPS) announced that Griffin had been offered the Presidio post after demonstrating exceptional leadership skills in bringing Yosemite through one of the worst disasters in the park's history.

B.J., as she is known to most park employees and many YA members, has been a very popular and successful superintendent. While generally recognized for

her keen management insights and her ability to negotiate and compromise with a variety of interests, many longtime park supporters also applauded her congeniality and her forthrightness. YA wishes B. J. well in her new post.

Stanley Albright, who has been the Pacific West Regional Director since June 1987, will become Acting Superintendent of Yosemite. Albright, the nephew of the late Horace T. Albright (co-founder of the NPS and its second Director), brings more than 40 years of park operations management experience to the job. He

has been intimately involved in Yosemite issues and challenges both as the regional director and as someone who was raised in the area and has close ties throughout the Sierra. He served as Superintendent of Sequoia Kings Canyon National Parks and Bandelier National Monument. His strong background in park operations and resource management made him a logical choice to manage Yosemite through the flood recovery and the implementation of the General Management Plan.

Recent Donations

John & Susan Brennan, Lowell Daun, Sam & Nancy Hopkins, Orange Tree Productions, Real Music, James & Elizabeth Scherfee, Marie A. Smith, Ira Siegel, Georgia Stigall, Twin Rocks Trading Post, Woodland Press, Yosemite Hang Gliding Association, Inc.

In memory of Ross Blue: Mr. & Mrs. H. D. Humway

In memory of Frederick L. Clogston: Jack & Marjorie Fry

In memory of Rod Collier: Mary L. Collier

In memory of Joe Forshee: Gary Bassett, Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Bassett, California Business Interiors, Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Clifford, Rose Marie Lodolini & Family, John & Linda Mitchell

In memory of Jerry Garcia: David A. Blackwood

In memory of Kelly Gleason: Kris Knight

In memory of Michael Grazda: Michael Ross

In memory of Della Taylor Hoss: Virginia Adams; John Argue; Carol Dawn Berry; Barbara J. Blevens; Mrs. John R. Broughton; Joellen W. Bruce; Cliff & Jo Cracknell; Charles & Alice Eckart; Robert Eckart; Myron E. Etienne, Jr.; Mr. & Mrs. John Falkenberg; Cliff & Mary Lou Gardner; E. Joe Hancock, D.D.S.; Allan & Carol Hayes; Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Helms; Walter Isle; Estelle Loeffler; Rodney A. Loeffler; Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd W. Lowrey; Mr. & Mrs. Martin May; Basil & Eve Mills; Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss; Nan Orchefsky; Don & Kay Pitts; Charles & Mary Proctor; Barbara Schwefel; William & Holly Shepard; Mr. & Mrs. Franklin Snow; Joseph & Barbara Solomon; Dan & Penny Sturm; Pat Taylor; Margaret Timberlake; Elwynne Trepel; Pam Walker

In memory of John Robert Kilman: Arline Fleischer

In memory of Loretta Lauria: Teresa Pawletko

In memory of Helen Lipson: Sharon Jacobson

In memory of Alan Pence: E. Taylor Threlkeld

In memory of Stephen Ross: Shane Ohline

In memory of Anthony Tartaglia: Mr. & Mrs. Charles Crim, Mr. & Mrs. Albert Manasero

Special thanks to Ken Renshaw for his extraordinary "car salesman" skills.

Correction

The quote attributed to Jules Eichorn and that appeared in the introduction to "The Mountains of the Yosemite Region" in the Winter, 1997 issue of *Yosemite* originally appeared in the volume, *Norman Clyde of the Sierra Nevada: Rambles Through the Range of Light* (San Francisco: Scrimshaw Press, 1971).

Association Dates

July 13 - 19, 1997:
Backcountry Work Trip at Kibbe Lake*.

July 27 - August 2, 1997:
Work Trip at Tuolumne Meadows*.

August 3 - August 9, 1997:
Work Trip at Glacier Point*.

August 17 - August 23, 1997:
Work Trip at Glacier Point.

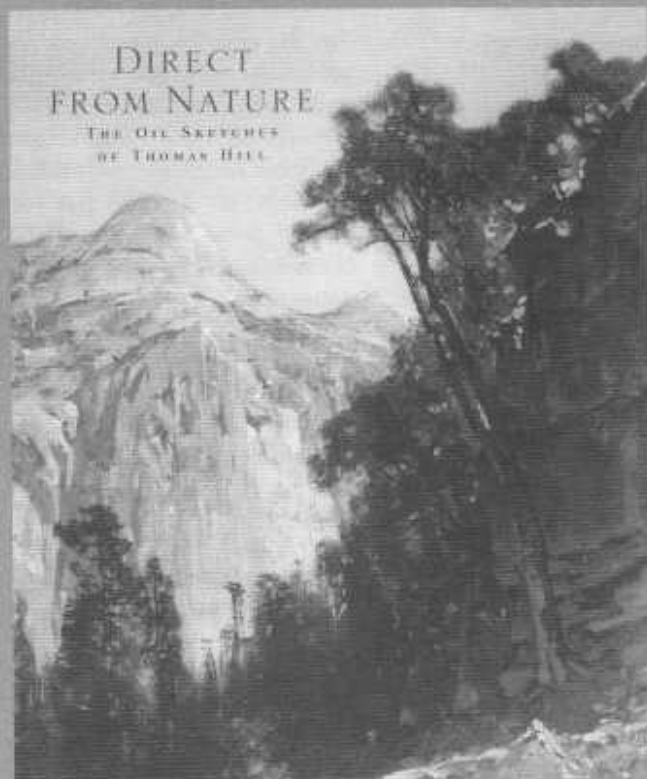
September 13, 1997:
22nd Annual Meeting, Tuolumne Meadows.

October 5 - 11, 1997:
Work Trip in Yosemite Valley*.

*These work trips still have room. For more information, please call Holly or Connie (209) 379-2317.

209/379-2317

If you're planning a trip to Yosemite and have questions, give our phone line a call between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We don't make reservations, but we can give appropriate phone numbers and usually lots of helpful advice.



00425 Direct from Nature: The Oil Sketches of Thomas Hill

by Janice T. Driesbach with an essay by William H. Gerdt.
The newest publication of the Yosemite Association, this is the first book to draw attention to the remarkable oil sketches of famed landscape artist Thomas Hill. These smaller pieces, painted in the field directly from nature, represent some of Hill's finest work and include subjects as diverse as Yosemite, the White Mountains, and Alaska.

An essay by Janice T. Driesbach, curator of art at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, details Hill's production of the oil sketches while providing much new valuable information about his life. Driesbach contends that Hill, through his small works, helped define an aesthetic for depicting California and broader American landscapes. There is considerable treatment of Hill's work in Yosemite, including his time in Wawona and Yosemite Valley.

The essays are illustrated with over 90 reproductions (most in full color) of paintings by Thomas Hill and other landscape artists. A chronology of the artist's life and an index have also been added. With its thorough coverage of the subject and key new biographical information about Thomas Hill, *Direct from Nature*

is a landmark work. It is sure to appeal to a wide audience including art historians, students of California history, and lovers of Western landscape art. 128 pages, copiously illustrated, primarily in color. Published in association with the Crocker Art Museum. Paper, \$19.95.

Hard Cover Edition: A limited number of case bound copies of *Direct from Nature* were produced, and fewer than fifty are left. The volume is covered in rust colored cloth with gold stamping, and there is no dust jacket. 00426, cloth, \$50.00.

31435 A Sierra Nevada Flora - Fourth Edition

by Norman E. Weeden, with new drawings by Amy David.

Originally published in 1975, this is an updated version of the popular key that has been used by thousands of enthusiastic Sierran botanists. With it, you should be able to identify most of the plants of the Sierra Nevada without the use of a hand lens or the need to dissect flower or fruit. Plant characteristics easily observed make up the keys, and the use of specialized scientific terminology has been minimized.

For the fourth edition, Weeden has made taxonomic revisions based on the new *Jepson Manual*, closely following its nomenclature for scientific names. He also arranged for approximately one hundred new illustrations to be added. The line drawings were executed by Amy David, and can be identified by her initials.

A Sierra Nevada Flora is no longer the pocket-sized field guide it once was (it's now 5½ x 8½ inches), but it's the only plant identification book you'll need when you head into the Sierra. 259 pages, black and white line drawings. Wilderness Press, 1996. Paper, \$15.95.

A SIERRA NEVADA FLORA



Norman E. Weeden, Ph.D.
Professor of Plant Genetics, Cornell University

KASHAYA POMO PLANTS



09305 Kashaya Pomo Plants

by Jennie Goodrich, Claudia Lawson, and Vana Parrish Lawson.

This fascinating book describes 150 common plants of coastal California (many of which occur throughout the state) that have long been an important part of Pomo life. In addition to a scientifically accurate description, each plant entry provides information on how the plant has been used for food, tea, medicine, fiber, basketry material, and other purposes.

Based on the teachings of renowned Kashaya Pomo spiritual leader Essie Parrish, her husband Sidney Parrish, and elder Susie Gomes, as well as on research into the anthropological and linguistic records, this is a reprint of the work that was originally published in 1980 by the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA.

This is a valuable reference for anyone interested in native plants, providing an introduction to the deep botanical knowledge of a people who have lived on intimate terms with these plants for thousands of years. 171 pages, black and white illustrations, Heyday Books. Paper, \$12.95.

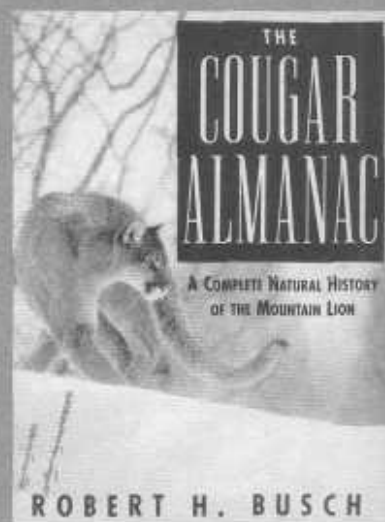
15582 The Cougar Almanac -

A Complete Natural History of the Mountain Lion

by Robert H. Busch.

A comprehensive natural history of the cougar, this volume explores distribution, behavior, biology, habitat, and conservation (with case studies of the Florida panther and the Eastern cougar). Because the mountain lion is controversial, elusive, and shrouded in myth, books like this, offering factual information based on scientific study, are important to a better public understanding of this big cat whose existence is increasingly threatened.

The work is well-illustrated with an impressive array of black and white photos, and also includes a section of full-color images illuminating cougar appearance and behavior. 144 pages, Lyons and Burford, 1996. Hardcover, \$25.00.



BEFORE THE WILDERNESS

Environmental Management
by
Native Californians

15582 Before the Wilderness - Environmental Management by Native Americans

compiled and edited by Thomas C.
Blackburn and Kat Anderson.

Through this collection of essays about the manipulation of the natural world by Native Americans, the editors make their case that the "wilderness" encountered by explorers and settlers was, in fact, a landscape carefully managed by knowledgeable people to provide them with food, clothing, shelter, fuel, and

tools. They show that native peoples practiced controlled burning techniques, preserved wet meadows as water supplies, and pruned various plants to provide basket-making and other materials.

Before the Wilderness is about the beginnings of agriculture, for by the eighteenth century in California, Indians had taken many of the steps that make up the technology of agriculture. The book is also valuable for what it has to say about better ways to manage our environment now. 476 pages, Ballena Press, 1993. Paper, \$31.50.

MADE for EACH OTHER



81950 Made for Each Other - A Symbiosis of Birds and Pines

by Ronald M. Lanner.

Here the author details the relationship between wingless-seeded pine trees (like the whitebark) and seed-dispersing nutcrackers and jays, showing how mutualism drives each others' evolution and affects the ecology of many other members of the surrounding ecosystem as well.

Focusing on the Rocky Mountains and the American Southwest,

and ranging as far afield as the Alps, Finland, Siberia, and China, this nicely illustrated and well-written work elucidates the phenomenon of co-evolution. 160 pages, illustrated. Oxford University Press, 1996. Paper, \$15.95.

**07516 Yosemite Association Patch**

Our Association logo is embroidered on colorful, sturdy fabric for placement on daypacks, shirts, blue jeans, jackets, or wherever!

The newly-designed patch

is available in three attractive colors: dark blue, forest green, and maroon. \$3.00 (please specify color)

**07800 Yosemite Wilderness Pin**

Here's a beautiful enamel pin commemorating Yosemite's unparalleled wilderness. It's circular in shape with a high country scene rendered in blues, grays, and greens. A real treasure for collectors. Approximately 1 inch in diameter. \$4.00

07510 Yosemite Association Mug

This distinctive and functional heavy ceramic mug feels good with your hand wrapped around it. Available in two colors (green and maroon), it's imprinted with our logo and name in black and white. Holds 12 ounces of your favorite beverage. \$6.50 (please specify color)

**400 Sierra Nevada Field Card Set**

Illustrated by Elizabeth Morales

These handy field identification cards depict the most commonly seen birds, mammals, trees, and wildflowers from the Sierra Nevada region. Illustrated with color drawings and including information about the size, habitat, and other field marks of each, the cards are unbreakable, waterproof vinyl plastic and fit conveniently in one's daypack or glove compartment. Particularly helpful for newcomers to the Sierra as regularly observed flora and fauna can be quickly identified. Four plastic cards printed on both sides, Yosemite Association, 1991 and 1995. \$11.00

**07720 Yosemite Bookstore Book Bag**

Conserve resources with YA's handy book bag made from durable 100% cotton fabric with a sturdy web handle. Cream-colored, it's imprinted in blue with the Yosemite Bookstore logo. Fine craftsmanship and generous oversized design make this a bag you'll want to take everywhere. Approximately 17 x 16 inches. \$8.95

**07505 Yosemite Association Baseball-Style Cap**

Our YA caps are made of corduroy with an adjustable strap at the back so that one size fits all. The cap is adorned with a YA logo patch, and comes in dark blue, forest green and maroon colors.

The cap is stylish and comfortable, and wearing it is a good way to demonstrate your support for Yosemite.

\$9.95 (please specify color)

**Order Form**

Credit card orders call: (209) 379-2648 Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm

Item#	Qty.	Color	Description	Price Each	Total
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Credit Card No: _____ Expires: _____

Signature: _____

Subtotal:

Less 15% Member's Discount:

SUBTOTAL A:

7.25% Sales Tax (CA customers only):

Shipping Charges: \$3.95

TOTAL ENCLOSED:

Yosemite Association, P.O. Box 230, El Portal, CA 95318

FLOOD DONATIONS

The Yosemite Association's appeal for help during the difficult economic times occasioned by park flooding, resulted in a remarkable response from our members and friends. The widespread support for Y.A. is indicated by the impressively long list of donors that follows. We apologize for any inadvertent omissions and send thanks and appreciation to each and every one of you for your generosity.

Up to \$50

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