

How was the Hetch-Hetchy Valley flooded?

Abstract: Hetch-Hetchy Valley is now a reservoir situated next to the Yosemite Valley and Yosemite National Park. Prior to 1913, however the Hetch-Hetchy Valley was a natural place which, according to John Muir, rivaled the beauty of the Yosemite Valley. As San Francisco rapidly expanded after the turn of the century, its demands for water expanded with it. The great earthquake of 1906 caused an equally great fire and large parts of the city were destroyed. Some, who called for a new, reliable water source to quench the growing city's thirst, started to turn their gaze east, to the Tuolumne River and the Hetch-Hetchy Valley as a possible solution. The result was a social and political battle that lasted for many years. Students will study the events and people surrounding the decision to turn the valley into a reservoir and answer the question: How, after the huge successes of the conservation movement at the turn of the century, was the Hetch-Hetchy Valley flooded?

Ideal Audience: This lesson would be best suited for a 11th or 12th grade advanced placement or honors course in American History or civics. This inquiry requires students to place themselves in a different time and place and then asks them to critically evaluate several primary sources which relate to the controversy surrounding the Hetch-Hetchy Valley. Several of these data sets were produced for educated audiences including members of the United States Congress and even the President.

Objectives:

By engaging in this lesson, students will:

1. Identify key persons both for and against the construction of the O'Shaughnessy Dam.
2. Identify political movements which influenced both the construction of the O'Shaughnessy Dam and fought against it.
3. Evaluate primary sources by critically engaging in the arguments made by their authors.
4. Articulate possible motivations for each side of the issue which may not have been expressly written in the primary sources.
5. Use evidence to evaluate hypotheses and make judgments regarding the merits of various arguments associated with the O'Shaughnessy Dam.
6. Internalize a structured approach to decision-making, problem solving, and evaluating the decisions of others.
7. Empathize with both sides of the issue; and
8. Present an informed opinion about which side had a more sound case.

Primary Wisconsin Model Academic Standards Addressed:

B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches

B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion

B.12.4 Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events

C.12.5 Analyze different theories of how governmental powers might be used to help promote or

hinder liberty, equality, and justice, and develop a reasoned conclusion

C.12.10 Identify ways people may participate effectively in community affairs and the political process

A.12.9 Identify and analyze cultural factors, such as human needs, values, ideals, and public policies, that influence the design of places, such as an urban center, an industrial park, a public project, or a planned neighborhood

Secondary Wisconsin Model Academic Standards Addressed:

B.12.5 Gather various types of historical evidence, including visual and quantitative data, to analyze issues of freedom and equality, liberty and order, region and nation, individual and community, law and conscience, diversity and civic duty; form a reasoned conclusion in the light of other possible conclusions; and develop a coherent argument in the light of other possible arguments

B.12.9 Select significant changes caused by technology, industrialization, urbanization, and population growth, and analyze the effects of these changes in the United States and the world

C.12.11 Evaluate the ways in which public opinion can be used to influence and shape public policy

C.12.14 Explain and analyze how different political and social movements have sought to mobilize public opinion and obtain governmental support in order to achieve their goals

A.12.2 Analyze information generated from a computer about a place, including statistical sources, aerial and satellite images, and three-dimensional models

A.12.4 Analyze the short-term and long-term effects that major changes in population in various parts of the world have had or might have on the environment

A.12.5 Use a variety of geographic information and resources to analyze and illustrate the ways in which the unequal global distribution of natural resources influences trade and shapes economic patterns

E.12.6 Analyze the means by which and extent to which groups and institutions can influence people, events, and cultures in both historical and contemporary settings

E.12.9 Defend a point of view related to an ethical issue such as genetic engineering, declaring conscientious objector status, or restricting immigration

Time:

This inquiry lesson will take roughly 5, 50 minute class periods. This time frame relates to the number of data sets required to fully understand the issue and gives the teacher time to adequately address questions that may arise from the process of the inquiry.

Materials:

The materials necessary to complete this inquiry lesson include:

- Copies of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* for each student.
- Digital copies of the *Hook*: before and after pictures of Hetch-Hetchy Valley to be displayed on the Smart Board.
- Internet Sites:
 - <http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/watch-video/#645>
 - <http://www.zimbio.com/Hetch+Hetchy+Native+American+Indian+history/articles/7/Hetch+Hetchy+Native+Indigenous+history+lacking>

- http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.landscapeonline.com/research/lor/2004/11/img/hetch-hetchy-02.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.landscapeonline.com/research/article/4696&usq=625v9DcyOiBGIBDizX6HUIdUb6A=&h=213&w=325&sz=12&hl=en&start=16&zoom=1&tbnid=ODw0ThMSzRbTdM:&tbnh=134&tbnw=204&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dhetch%2Bhetchy%2Bvalley%26hl%3Den%26biw%3D1280%26bih%3D619%26gbv%3D2%26tbs%3Disch:10%2C544&itbs=1&iact=rc&dur=404&ei=9gzHTO6AAoWTnOfwsISqAO&oei=lgzHTP_UO4mhnAexxqUw&esq=3&page=2&ndsp=17&ved=1t:429,r:14,s:16&tx=66&ty=73&biw=1280&bih=619

- Copies of the data set packet for each student.
- A computer with internet access.
- Smart Board.
- Overhead Projector with transparent sheets or film roll.

Inquiry Lesson Procedure:

I. Engagement in the Inquiry

Use the Smart Board to show students a roughly 6 minute video clip streamed from the web-address: <http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/watch-video/#645>. This video will introduce students to the idea of the formation of the National Parks and is based on two of the most important figures they will encounter in the inquiry: Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir. The video focuses on the development of the parks and particularly will familiarize the students with Yosemite Valley, which is situated due south of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley.

After showing the video clip place the two images of Hetch-Hetchy Valley on the Smart Board and ask students to: first describe the obvious difference; and second to begin hypothesizing how the valley got flooded. Read the following description of Robert Righter's recent work: The Battle of Hetch-Hetchy:

In the wake of the devastating 1906 earthquake and fire, the city of San Francisco desperately needed reliable supplies of water and electricity. Its mayor, James Phelan, pressed for the damming of the Tuolumne River in the newly created Yosemite National Park, setting off a firestorm of protest. For the first time in American history, a significant national opposition arose to defend and preserve nature, led by John Muir and the Sierra Club, who sought to protect what they believed was the right of all Americans to experience natural beauty, particularly the magnificent mountains of the Yosemite region. Yet the defenders of the valley, while opposing the creation of a dam and reservoir, did not intend for it to be maintained as wilderness. Instead they advocated a different kind of development--the building of roads, hotels, and an infrastructure to support recreational tourism. Using articles, pamphlets, and broadsides, they successfully whipped up public opinion against the dam. Letters from individuals began to pour into Congress by the thousands, and major newspapers published editorials condemning the dam. The fight went to the floor of Congress, where politicians debated the value of scenery and the costs of western development.

II. Elicit Hypotheses

After watching the video clip, presenting the before and after pictures of Hetch-Hetchy, and reading a description of the broader history of the event, write the following question on the Smart Board: "How was the Hetch-Hetchy Valley flooded?" Distribute the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* to each student. Instruct students to posit several hypotheses that may answer the inquiry question. Once students have completed a list of their own hypotheses, break them into groups of 4 to 5 students. After they have been arranged into groups, have them share their hypotheses with each other and generate new hypotheses based on their collective hypotheses. Ask each group to share one possible hypothesis with the class and have a student volunteer record each hypothesis on the class copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* found on the overhead projector. Direct students to also record the class hypotheses on their own tracking sheets. Repeat this until all hypotheses have been exhausted. After all the "logical" hypotheses have been presented have students create on "crazy" hypothesis. Record these new hypotheses on the class copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* and have the students continue to record all of the hypotheses.

III. Gathering Data and Revising Hypotheses

Distribute the data sets and have one student read a data set to the class. This can also be done individually or as a group depending on the nature of the data set. After the student has finished reading the data set give each group time to discuss amongst themselves and determine: whether or not the previous hypotheses were supported or undermined by the new evidence (if supported place a [+] in the "Evidence" column, if undermined place a [-] in that column on student's copy), and discuss if the information created any new hypotheses. Again, go group by group and have them describe if the evidence supported or undermined each of the various hypotheses. When that process is complete ask the students for new hypotheses. After exhausting all of the data sets, students should have a large list of hypotheses with evidence in both support and undermining several of the assertions.

IV. Conclusion

Ask the students to choose the hypothesis that they find the most convincing based on their personal evaluation of the evidence. Next, direct the students to write a short essay in class using evidence from the provided data sets which argues either in favor or against the original building of dam at Hetch-Hetchy Valley. After the students have completed their final essay, distribute the final data set, which includes a description of San Francisco's current water use and a story about Hetch-Hetchy's current use and recreational opportunities. These are important to demonstrate to students that this issue continues to be controversial to this day. They help students understand that there are benefits and costs to public decisions and often the results do not settle the issue.

V. Assessment

Use formal and informal assessments to ensure that students have met the objectives of this

lesson. Evaluate their understanding of the topic and of the evidence based on their ability to verbally explain and make arguments about the data sets and the hypotheses. Listen to group discussion and gauge how well students are incorporating new information into their thoughts about the topic. Use the written assignment as a gauge to evaluate how well the information was understood. Use the following rubric to evaluate the written assignment. Based on the quality of work in the written assignment it may be helpful to again go over the major implications of the inquiry in a following day's lesson.

Name: _____ Hour: _____

Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet

Hypotheses

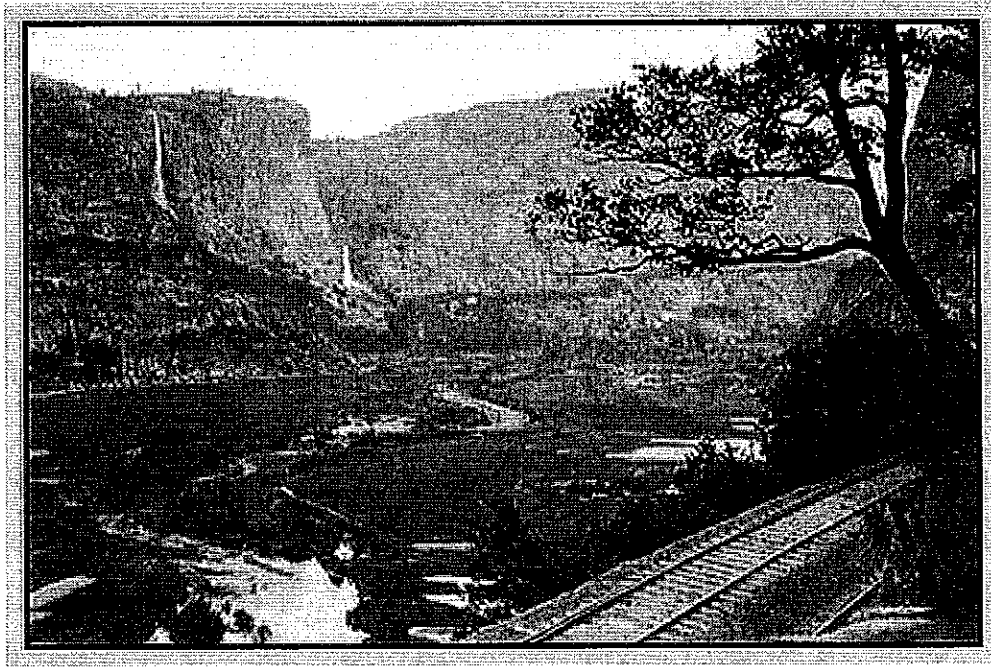
Evidence (Supporting [+] Undermining [-])

Rubric:**Persuasive Essay : Why was Hetch-Hetchy Valley Flooded?**

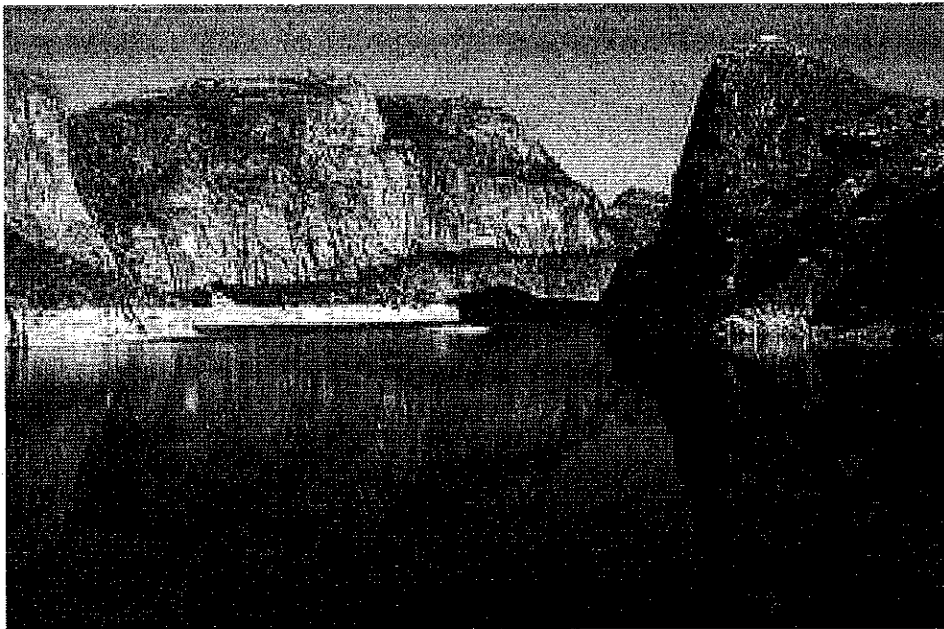
Teacher Name: _____

Student Name: _____

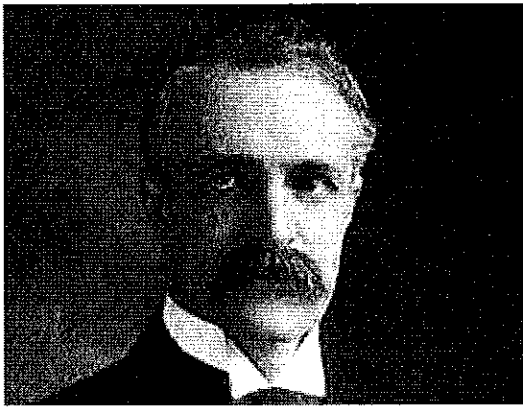
CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards	Score
Focus or Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.	
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).	
Sequencing	Arguments and support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy and interesting to follow the author's train of thought.	Arguments and support are provided in a fairly logical order that makes it reasonably easy to follow the author's train of thought.	A few of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem a little confusing.	Many of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem very confusing.	
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.	



Hetch-Hetchy Valley before building of the O'Shaughnessy Dam.



Hetch-Hetchy Reservoir after building of the O'Shaughnessy Dam.



Gifford Pinchot, circa 1905

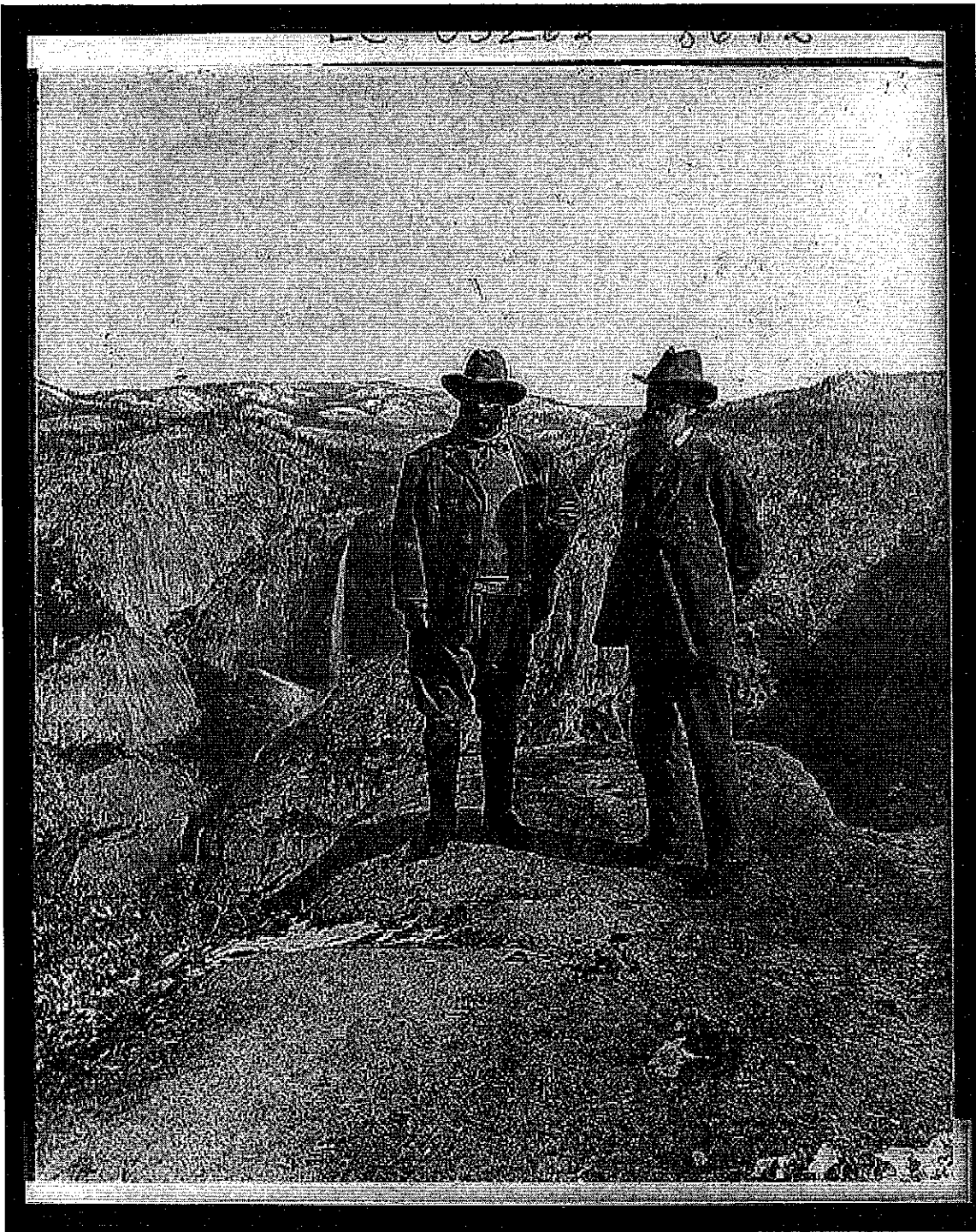
Gifford Pinchot (1865–1946)

Yale-educated, Pinchot studied forestry in Europe and was the first American to declare himself a professional forester. At first a friend and ally of John Muir's in his opposition to the wasteful destruction of American forests, Pinchot eventually became an adversary of Muir's within the growing conservation movement. Pinchot's favorite saying, "the greatest good for the greatest number," attested to his view of conservation-through-use that would come to be known as "utilitarian." Muir, on the other hand, was what came to be called a "preservationist." To him, the great value of forests and wilderness was more spiritual than practical.

With the creation of the National Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture, and with Pinchot as its first director, his view prevailed in Washington: forests would be treated like a crop, not a temple. Pinchot prevailed again when he persuaded President Theodore Roosevelt to allow the construction of the Hetch Hetchy dam in Yosemite, despite Muir's vociferous objections.

After Muir's death, supporters of the creation of a National Park Service believed that Pinchot – and his Forest Service – tried their best to prevent a separate parks agency from being established and then to keep the number of new parks at a minimum. To a certain degree, the rivalry exists to this day. Pinchot remained a powerful political force and leader in conservation; he went on to become governor of Pennsylvania from 1923 to 1927, and 1931 to 1935.

(<http://www.pbs.org/nationalparks/people/historical/2/#pinchot>)



President Theodore Roosevelt and Naturalist and Environmental advocate John Muir (Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, 1906).

**LET EVERYONE HELP TO SAVE THE FAMOUS HETCH-
HETCHY VALLEY
AND
STOP THE COMMERCIAL DESTRUCTION WHICH
THREATENS OUR NATIONAL PARKS**

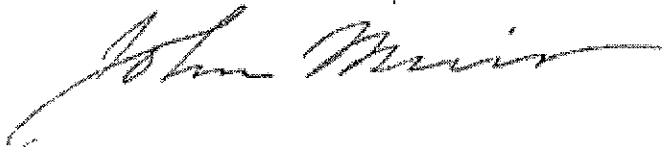
To the American Public:

The famous Hetch-Hetchy Valley, next to Yosemite the most wonderful and important feature of our Yosemite National Park, is again in danger of being destroyed. Year after year attacks have been made on this Park under the guise of development of natural resources. At the last regular session of Congress the most determined attack of all was made by the City of San Francisco to get possession of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley as a reservoir site, thus defrauding ninety millions of people for the sake of saving San Francisco dollars.

As soon as this scheme became manifest, public-spirited citizens all over the country poured a storm of protest on Congress. Before the session was over, the Park invaders saw that they were defeated and permitted the bill to die without bringing it to a vote, so as to be able to try again.

The bill has been re-introduced and will be urged at the coming session of Congress, which convenes in December. Let all those who believe that our great national wonderlands should be preserved unmarred as places of rest and recreation for the use of all the people, now enter their protests. Ask Congress to reject this destructive bill, and also urge that the present Park laws be so amended as to put an end to all such assaults on our system of National Parks.

Faithfully yours,



November, 1909.

Read carefully pp. 20-21 and help to save the Park.

HETCH HETCHY GRANT TO SAN FRANCISCO.

SEPTEMBER 25, 1913.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. MYERS, from the Committee on Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 7207.]

The Committee on Public Lands, to which was referred H. R. 7207, a bill granting to the city and county of San Francisco certain rights of way in, over, and through certain public lands in the Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest, and certain lands in the Yosemite National Park, the Stanislaus National Forest, and the public lands in the State of California, and for other purposes, having had the same under consideration, begs leave to report it back to the Senate with the recommendation that it do pass.

The bill upon its receipt by the committee was referred to the Department of the Interior, and the following is the report received thereon:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., September 10, 1913.

Hon. HENRY L. MYERS,
Chairman Committee on Public Lands,
United States Senate.

My DEAR SENATOR: Your letter of September 5, 1913, has been received inclosing, with request for report thereon, H. R. 7207 (63d Cong., 1st sess.), entitled "An act granting to the city and county of San Francisco certain rights of way in, over, and through certain public lands, the Yosemite National Park, and Stanislaus National Forest, and certain lands in the Yosemite National Park, the Stanislaus National Forest, and the public lands in the State of California, and for other purposes," which passed the House of Representatives September 3, 1913.

In response thereto I have to state that upon examination of the bill I have no objections to suggest thereto and heartily recommend that it be enacted into law.

Cordially, yours,

A. A. JONES, Acting Secretary.

Reference is hereby made to House report 41, first session Sixty-third Congress, which is a very full and complete statement with reference to the purpose and intention of this bill.

Timeline:

1908

The Governors' Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources, organized by Gifford Pinchot and his associate "W.J." (as he preferred to style himself) McGee, whom Pinchot called "the scientific brains of the new [conservation] movement," and largely financed by Pinchot himself, is held May 13-15 at the White House, propelling conservation issues into the forefront of public consciousness and stimulating a large number of private and state-level conservation initiatives. The Conference's *Proceedings* are published in 1909. A second such Conference is held at the end of the year to receive the recommendations of the National Conservation Commission.

An article by Robert Underwood Johnson in *Century* magazine, "A High Price to Pay for Water," helps bring the Hetch Hetchy controversy to national attention.

Congress begins several years of hearings and debate on the Hetch Hetchy question; the transcript of a *Hearing held before the Committee on the Public Lands of the House of Representatives, December 16, 1908* suggests the scope of public concerns.

1909

Outlook magazine becomes a chief organ in the national campaign to save Hetch Hetchy, publishing two editorials on the subject by its editor, Lyman Abbott.

For the next several years, conservationists appointed by Roosevelt turn to the general public for support of their policies in the face of conflict with Congress and appointees of President Taft; as a result, conservation gains greater national attention, even as policy debates also increasingly involve those more anxious to preserve natural resources for aesthetic/spiritual reasons than to put them to practical use.

1910

In the legislation known as the Withdrawal Act, Congress authorizes the President to withdraw public lands from entry and reserve them for "water-power sites, irrigation, classification of lands, or other public purposes," but reaffirms its ban on the creation or enlargement of national forests in six Western states.

1912

John Muir publishes *The Yosemite*, an eloquent and loving portrait which concludes with an impassioned plea for the preservation of Hetch Hetchy.

1913

Debate over the fate of Hetch Hetchy continues in the national press throughout the year, along with intensive campaigning to save Hetch Hetchy on the part of conservation and nature-related organizations (such as the Sierra Club and the Appalachian Mountain

Club) and concerned individuals throughout the country; the arguments made by the opposing sides in the campaign are exemplified by such works as John Muir's pamphlet "Let Everyone Help to Save the Famous Hetch Hetchy Valley and Stop the Commercial Destruction Which Threatens Our National Parks" (1911), Isaac Branson's pamphlet "Yosemite Against Corporation Greed; Shall Half of Yosemite National Park Be Destroyed by San Francisco?" (1909), and Martin Vilas's pamphlet "Water and Power for San Francisco from Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park" (1915). On September 3 and December 6, the House and Senate, respectively, pass the Baker Act, granting San Francisco permission to dam Hetch Hetchy, and President Woodrow Wilson signs the bill into law on December 19; though a defeat for preservation-minded conservationists, the controversy has brought the preservationist movement to a new level of maturity, and the conservation movement as a whole to a new level of importance and awareness in national life; the loss of Hetch Hetchy now galvanizes the campaign to create an independent Federal bureau to protect and care for the national parks.

-All information from timeline found at: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amrvhtml/cnchron6.html>

The River

The Tuolumne River, which drains a 1,960 square-mile watershed on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada range, is the largest of three major tributaries to the San Joaquin River. The Tuolumne originates in Yosemite National Park and flows southwest through Yosemite, Stanislaus National Forest, and private lands to its confluence with the San Joaquin River, approximately 10 miles west of Modesto.

At higher elevations, the watershed is composed primarily of granitic bedrock that was scoured by glaciers during glacial periods down to the O'Shaughnessy Dam location, resulting in mountainous terrain, patchy forests, and a variety of steep canyons and mountain meadows. The middle portion of the watershed from New Don Pedro Reservoir to above Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is characterized by deep canyons and forested terrain. Near the town of La Grange, the river exits the Sierra Nevada foothills and flows through a gently sloping alluvial valley that is incised into Pleistocene alluvial fans.

-Current description of the river from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.



**New scientific discovery
fuels muscle building**



**Shocking
discovery for joint
relief**



**The trick to
sleeping like a
baby again**

Los Angeles Times

<http://travel.latimes.com/articles/la-tr-hetchhetchy30-2009aug30>
From the Los Angeles Times

OUTDOORS & ADVENTURE

Hetch Hetchy Valley's hush

A Yosemite-adjacent parkland of abundant beauty is a little-known find for hikers and campers. The serenity nevertheless permits a wet and wild white-water experience.

By Dan Blackburn
Reporting from Hetch Hetchy, Calif.
August 28, 2009

You might say it was a family challenge. My daughter Courtney was graduating from high school, so I asked what she wanted to do to celebrate. She replied, "Go camping somewhere we never have been that is less than a day's drive from Los Angeles."

Not a simple request. We've done a lot of California camping. Out came the road map, familiar Yosemite in the middle. But what was that spot northwest of the park? Two words. Hetch Hetchy. Challenge met.

If Southern Californians know anything about Hetch Hetchy, it's probably that the reservoir there provides drinking water to San Francisco and that the damming of the Tuolumne River stirred controversy that continues to this day. The O'Shaughnessy Dam took 20 years to build and was completed in 1934, creating a lake eight miles long and more than 300 feet deep. The dam and reservoir sit just inside the Yosemite National Park boundary. The rest of the Hetch Hetchy area is contained within the Stanislaus National Forest.

For would-be visitors, however, the most impressive statistic is the comparison between the number of people who visit Yosemite Valley and those who visit Hetch Hetchy. Yosemite: 3 million a year, most in the summer. Hetch Hetchy: 50,600 a year. Most come from the Bay Area. In fact, Hetch Hetchy may be San Francisco's best-kept secret.

After some research, we piled into our car and headed off for the six-hour drive to the Dimond O Campground, where we would spend the week. Joining us was my daughter's good friend Celine, who had signed on for her first real camping trip. She could not have asked for a better location. Stately sequoias towered above our campsite while whispered sounds of the Tuolumne River, just a few yards away, lulled us to sleep at night. There was even a natural swimming hole by the riverbank.

The campground was well maintained, with plenty of room between campsites, and, as the girls quickly noted, restrooms were nearby.

We promptly popped up our tents -- one for the girls and one for me. Next came a couple of camp chairs and storing food and other cooking items in the metal bear box at the campsite. (Since campgrounds in national forests and parks started installing the bear-proof boxes, potentially dangerous encounters between hungry black bears and campers have dropped to near zero.)

Once we had settled in, we took time to explore the immediate area and then started making our plans for the rest of our stay.

First up was the almost mandatory visit to the controversial reservoir. That meant stopping at the National Park Service ranger station, where we chatted with Clarisa Flores, a 12-year veteran of Hetch Hetchy and our candidate for helpful and informative park service ranger of the year.

I asked what it was about Hetch Hetchy that appealed so strongly to her. "The quiet," she said. "When people come out here, it actually feels like a national park should. You can hear the birds sing. You have to get out of your car and walk and explore it. It's for people who are looking for something different. It is a place to hike and backpack. We actually get more backpackers than we do cars. And people always seem to want to tell us what a nice time they had."

In 1870, John Muir said the Hetch Hetchy Valley was "a wonderfully exact counterpart of the great Yosemite." As I stood on O'Shaughnessy Dam, I could see what Muir was talking about. As I gazed along the reservoir, a granite cliff that strongly resembled the upper half of Yosemite's famed El Capitan rose to my left. Next to it tumbled Wapama Falls, and across the way sat a familiar-looking granite dome.

Miles of scenic trails

Flores was right: This is a place for people who like to hike. From the dam to the base of Wapama Falls is an easy five-mile round trip. The trail meanders through some shady areas and over sunbaked rock and was lined with wildflowers in shades of white, purple, lavender and pink. A fine mist spread over the trail at the base of Wapama Falls, providing a refreshing spray.

Four miles farther on, backpackers and hearty hikers can stop at Rancheria Falls and, from there, trek into the wilderness of the Yosemite high country. We, however, had other stops on our agenda.

As we headed from the reservoir, we passed through Camp Mather -- a summer camp owned and operated by the city of San Francisco for use by its residents. The camp may be best known for its Strawberry Music Festivals featuring bluegrass music on Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. The camp has several cabins, a small lake for swimming, a general store and a stable that offers horseback rides.

One of our friends who had recently visited Hetch Hetchy -- mountaineering guide Doug Robinson -- had insisted that we check out Evergreen Lodge. Doug's advice usually is worth following, and this was no exception.

Evergreen Lodge was built in 1921 for men working on O'Shaughnessy Dam. Legend has it that moonshine was distilled in the

lodge basement and that a couple of the cabins were operated as a brothel. By the '50s and '60s, however, it had become a mainstream tourist spot with outdoor dining and dancing and a live orchestra.

More recently, it has undergone major renovations, including the addition of 75 well-equipped cabins and other modern buildings wrapped in forest-flavored wooden exteriors. The dining-room menu includes venison, fresh trout and wild boar.

Because there is no cellphone access in the area, the lodge has regular telephone lines available to guests as well as Internet service. Both Courtney and Celine seized the opportunity to check their accumulated e-mails. A range of activities also is available for both kids and adults.

Recreation manager Lesli Brown, who recently hiked the entire Pacific Crest Trail with her husband, showed me the lodge's latest addition -- camping. Away from the main lodge, 15 tents of varying sizes have been set up. It's called Custom Camping.

Each tent includes foam mattresses, sleeping bags, towels and lanterns. There is a communal bathhouse nearby.

"It's a way to immerse people into the woods and provide a different feel from staying in a lodge room," Brown said. "Some people really love to camp but can't always bring their gear, especially if they are coming from abroad. So this works for them, and it's cheaper too." If we had known about this sooner. . . . But no, we really liked our campsite.

The river wild

Day 3 was about to become the highlight of the trip for the girls. We had signed up for a day of white-water rafting on the Tuolumne River, one of the best rafting rivers in North America. Few roads offer river access to the river, so rafting is a true wilderness experience.

The river's rapids range up to Class 5, which can be daunting. It also would be just the thing to take Celine's mind off of the 27 bug bites she had accumulated despite significant application of insect repellent.

Of course, everyone needed a little reassurance. Nick Nyquist of Zephyr Whitewater Expeditions gathered the participants and addressed the safety issues, spelling out the rules and rehearsing what to do if the raft decides to dump you in the water.

"White-water rafting is not as dangerous as you might think," he said. "The technology has advanced with both the boats and the life jackets, and everyone wears helmets too. Lots of bright clothing. So much has been done to make it safer than in the past. In addition, all of the guides are white-water safety certified." They also were young and very fit.

Once people were in the river, the goal was to maintain some control over the headlong rush of the raft downstream. Forget about staying dry. Wet was the normal condition of the trip. At the end of the day, Courtney summed up the girls' reaction with one enthusiastic word: awesome.

Flores' words about the need to get out and walk in Hetch Hetchy stayed with us all week. We took a three-mile round-trip hike to beautiful Carlton Falls. The trail wound through sun-filtered forest that made us feel as though we were the only souls there. And, indeed, when we arrived at the falls, we were. The only voices were those of birds, muffled somewhat by the sound of falling water.

We also trudged up dirt roads that rambled beside and sometimes through flower-covered meadows. Gorgeous fields of purple lupine appeared almost everywhere, often accompanied by the brilliant yellow of Common Madia, a type of small sunflower. Here and there, old wooden barns spoke to the ranching and mining history of the region.

Funny, we thought, at the end of our trip. We came here because we had never been here, lured by the thought of something different and new. It is no longer new, but it was so different that, I'm sure, we'll be back again.

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