

Yosemite West Community Emergency Preparedness Plan

Mariposa County / Yosemite National Park



June 2012



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Preparedness Plan for the Yosemite West Area has been developed in the event that an emergency incident in the area necessitates an evacuation of the Yosemite West community. This Plan is divided in three basic steps: **PREPARATION, NOTIFICATION, AND THE EVACUATION PROCESS**. All actions, locations and routes in this plan are suggested. Environmental conditions and other factors may necessitate changes to this plan. This evacuation plan may be used in the event of a Wildland fire, act of terrorism, hazardous material release, flood, earthquake, or other natural disaster.

The purpose of this plan is to maximize visitor and residence safety and the protection of resources and property. Notification to evacuate occur in the middle of the night or with a few days warning. It requires careful coordination with numerous agencies, including communication to residents and visitors. Pre-planning by residents and visitors' can alleviate much of the stress associated with those orders to evacuate.

Personnel involved in the development and review of this plan include:

Chad Andrews – Wawona Supervisor Park Ranger;
Gary Wuchner – Fire Education and Information Manager;
Kevin Killian – Yosemite Deputy Chief Ranger;
Doug Binnewies – Mariposa County Sheriff;
Joe Reyes – Sierra National Forrest
Jim Wilson – Mariposa County Fire Chief;
Don Florence – Mariposa County OES;
Kelly Martin – Yosemite Chief of Fire and Aviation Management.

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Jim Wilson – Mariposa County Fire Chief

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Kelly Martin – Yosemite Chief of Fire and Aviation Management, YNP

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Kevin Killian – Interim Chief Ranger, YNP

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Doug Binnewies – Mariposa County Sheriff

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Yosemite West Evacuation Plan

PREPARATION

The best time to prepare yourself and your family in case of an emergency is before are called to act. These instructions are intended to help you prepare in case you need to evacuate your home due to an emergency incident. The more prepared you are, the more effectively emergency responders can protect you and your home. For more information about making your home and family safe from disasters please see the following websites:

www.firewise.org Firewise website

www.firesafecouncil.org Fire Safe Council website

www.oes.ca.gov California Emergency Management Agency

www.ready.gov Department of Homeland Security

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/focus/> US Fire Administration – Planning for Wildfires

Before a wildfire or other disaster threatens:

- Plan more than one escape route from your home and community by car and by foot.
- Arrangements should be made for the shelter of pets and/or livestock prior to an emergency.
- Have fire extinguisher on hand and train your family how to use them
- Ensure that your family knows where your gas, electric, and water main shut-off controls are and how to use them.
- Maintain a list of emergency contact numbers posted near your phone and in your emergency supply kit.
- Appoint an out-of-area friend or relative as a point of contact so you can communicate with family members who have relocated.
- Keep an extra emergency supply kit in your car in case you can't get to your home.

Prepare a family evacuation kit that includes:

- Three changes of clothing and a change of footwear per person and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A three-day supply of food and water.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.

- Emergency tools including a battery-powered AM/FM radio, flashlight, & batteries.
- Extra car keys and a credit card, cash, or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of eyeglasses/sunglasses.
- Important family documents.
- Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks, bonds.
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records.
- Bank account numbers.
- Credit card account numbers and companies.
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important phone numbers.
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates).

Pick two meeting places for your family:

- A place a safe distance outside your home.
- A place outside of Yosemite West Area in case you cannot return to the area of your home.

If an Evacuation Alert is in effect:

- Back your car into the garage or park in an open space facing the direction of escape. Shut doors and roll up windows. Leave a second set of keys in the vehicle ignition. Place your valuables in the car ahead of time.
- Confine pets to one room so they will be readily available when the time comes to evacuate. Make plans ahead of time to care for your pets in case you must evacuate. Contact the local kennels, animal shelters, friends, etc.
- Arrange temporary housing at a friend or relative's home outside the threatened area in case the evacuation is longer than expected.

If you're sure you have time, take these steps to protect your home:

INSIDE YOUR HOUSE

- Close windows, vents, Venetian blinds or non-combustible window coverings and heavy drapes. Be sure to remove any combustible materials from near the windows to prevent radiant heat from igniting them.
- Close all interior doors to confine drafts and prevent a fire from moving inside the structure.
- Shut off gas or propane. Turn off pilot lights.
- Move flammable furniture into center of the home away from windows and sliding-glass doors.
- Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke. Be sure to turn on the outside porch light as well. This will help emergency responders to find your house in low visibility conditions.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE:

- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Remove gas grills from decks and patios, place propane tanks in garage.
- Place combustible patio furniture inside.
- Connect garden hoses to outside taps, leave in obvious location for firefighters.
- Place a non-combustible ladder on house for access to roof for firefighters.
- Remove firewood or any other stored combustibles near your home.
- Remove all shrubs within 30 feet of your home.

When an Evacuation Order is in effect and you are advised to evacuate, do so immediately and safely.

- Wear protective clothing-sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, long sleeved shirt, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.

- Take your evacuation kit.
- Tie a white towel, sheet or ribbon on your front door; this advises emergency responders that your home has been evacuated.
- Tell family or a close friend when you left and where you are going.
- Check in at the pre-designated Traffic Control Point: **Heness Ridge** or **Wawona Road (Highway 41)**. Wawona Golf Course, or El Captain Meadow, Yosemite Valley. Follow the pre-designated Evacuation Route out of the area (See attached Yosemite West Area Evacuation Map).

IF YOU ARE TRAPPED: SURVIVAL TIPS

- Shelter away from outside walls.
- Bring garden hoses inside house so embers don't destroy them
- Patrol inside your home for spot fires and extinguish them
- Stay Hydrated
- Ensure you can exit the home if it catches fire (remember if its hot inside the house, it is much hotter outside).
- Fill sinks and tubs for an emergency water supply
- Place wet towels under doors to keep smoke and embers out.
- After the fire has passed, check your roof and extinguish any small fires, sparks or embers.
- Check inside your attic for hidden embers
- Patrol you property and extinguish small fires

If there are fires that you cannot extinguish with a small amount of water or in a short period of time, call 9-1-1.

NOTIFICATION

The decision to implement an Evacuation Alert is made by the Incident Commander and Law Enforcement authorities. An Evacuation Alert is a notification of danger; Alerts are issued to advise the population at risk of the potential for loss of life from an emergency incident and recommends that the population involved be prepared to evacuate based on an expected time frame.

Types and Terminology of Alerts:

Evacuation Advisory: Issued alert of event to affected communities and potential of pending evacuation orders.

Evacuation Warning: Issued alert to prepare, when an evacuation order is eminent.

Evacuation Order: Issued when there is a recognized immediate threat to life.

Alert methods can consist of the following practices:

Code-Red emergency notification system (Reverse 911)

Face to Face notification

Public Address System

Mariposa County Emergency Information Line

Local Radio and Media, including digital media

Roadway Advisory Signage

Evacuation Order. Instructions are given to the population at risk in the affected area. Residents will be advised to leave the area immediately via the designated traffic control points for Yosemite West. Traffic Control Points are as follows:

- ✓ **Heness Ridge Traffic Control Point** – Community Mailboxes
- ✓ **Wawona Road (Hwy 41) Traffic Control Point** – Intersection decision

Law Enforcement and/or incident personnel will attempt to staff each Traffic Control Point to contact exiting persons. Further directions concerning the evacuation process and safe evacuation routes will be provided at this time.

The Mariposa County Sheriff will conduct the evacuation process using utilizing Alert methods and resources available to the incident. Good practices identify layering Alert methods. As available, or in the event an immediate evacuation is necessary, law enforcement officers will attempt to conduct a door-to-door notification of all area residents.

EVACUATION PROCESS

Traffic control points will be established to organize and control the evacuation process by denying entry of unauthorized persons, directing evacuees to an established evacuation route, and by recording all outgoing evacuees, if time allows. Collected information may be used by incident personnel as a communication conduit to assist the operation including the Red Cross with public searching for family members. These control points will also coordinate incoming emergency response vehicles and outgoing evacuees to prevent traffic congestion problems.

The Mariposa County Human Services Director or his/her designee will assist with establishing refugee or evacuation shelters (Red Cross) based upon the need and type of incident.

Traffic Control and Security:

The Mariposa County Sheriff is responsible for traffic control & security during an evacuation and will coordinate the traffic control plan during the evacuation. Other law enforcement partners such as the National Park Service and the California Highway Patrol could be visibly assisting in this capacity.

The departure routes should be used according to the pre-designated evacuation route on the Yosemite West Evacuation Map.

During a wildfire, law enforcement officials may ask you to evacuate with little warning. Take precautions now to prepare for that possibility.

A community “**Safety Zone**” has been designated at the Wawona Golf Course. In the event that Wawona Road (Highway 41) is cut-off in both directions the public may be directed to a large open area until the evacuation route is re-opened.

Yosemite West Emergency Evacuation Plan Tips:

- ✓ Listen to media reports for updated information.
- ✓ Prepare important documents ahead of time.
- ✓ Take a disaster supply kit.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing during the evacuation.
- ✓ Follow the routes outlined in this plan.
- ✓ Check-in with a traffic control point coordinator
- ✓ Prepare yourself, if needed, to shelter in place

RETURN / RE-ENTRY

After the risk of potential for loss of life and property from unstable incident conditions has subsided and the Incident Commander deems it safe to do so, the Declaration of a Re-Entry shall be broadcast. Priority for re-entry and the re-entry process will be at the discretion of the Incident Commander and the Sheriff with priority given to the overall safety of incident

personnel, property owners and the general public.

For Event updates including possible Re-Entry information Yosemite West residents and the general public may call the Mariposa County Emergency Information telephone number at 209-966-1133 or 1-888-966-1133 to obtain updated recorded information. In addition this information will be shared with YNP and DNC authorities for proper dissemination.

The Mariposa County Event Information Line 209- 966-1133 and 1-888-966-1133 is designated to provide information to the public during emergencies and disasters. Intervals between these events are used to share information, in particular, safety and education related items, with the community. These messages are created and provided by the Mariposa County Health Department, Mariposa County Sheriff's Office, and the Mariposa County Fire Department. The number can still be called during power outages-but-you must own and have ready, a corded phone that plugs directly into a wall.

Evacuation Map

