



Restore Hetch Hetchy

IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Vol 3, No. 1

Spring 2004

New Documentary Film is Well Received!

In early March, Restore Hetch Hetchy paid tribute to the wonderful people in the San Francisco Bay Area who produced and edited our new documentary film, “Hetch Hetchy: Yosemite’s Lost Valley.” Of course, our special THANKS go to the film’s talented and dedicated producer, Deborah Landowne, and the many professionals at LUX Edit and other firms who have worked on the film for the past three years.

After showing the film at the evening tribute, representatives of Restore Hetch Hetchy presented Deborah with a beautifully framed photograph by James McGrew titled: “Hetch Hetchy Flowers and Waterfalls, May 1998.” The inscription on the photo praised Deborah’s “outstanding effort” for producing the film. Please see accompanying photographs.

Our new film is also making the rounds on the film festival circuit! In early January, the film was



Restore Hetch Hetchy Board members present photograph to Deborah Landowne to thank her for producing the film:

Left to Right: Spreck Rosekrans, Vice-Chair; Marsh Pitman; Deborah Landowne; Mark Palley, Treasurer.

The photograph is by James McGrew, titled: Hetch Hetchy Flowers and Waterfalls, May 1998.

shown on opening night of the Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival in Nevada City to an appreciative audience of approximately 150 people. The film festival was sponsored by SYRCL, the South Yuba River Citizens League.

To introduce the film, Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser played his beautifully moving tune, “Lament for Hetch Hetchy,” which is heard during the film and while the

credits are rolling. After the film was shown the film’s producer, Deborah Landowne, and RHH Executive Director, Ron Good, were invited on stage to receive the well-wishes of the audience, to address questions about the film’s production, and to encourage people to participate in our effort to restore Hetch Hetchy Valley. A few days after the festival, we learned that our film had received the Best of Entries award! Please see a close-up photograph of this award on page 2.

In February, our film was also shown at the Siskiyou Environmental Film Festival in Ashland, Oregon, and at the Tangle River Film Festival at the beautiful Crest Theater in downtown Sacramento.

The 19-minute documentary film, which describes our “win-win” approach to restoring Hetch Hetchy and addressing the water & power concerns of the San Fran-

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Restore Hetch Hetchy is:

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Jerry Meral, RHH Executive Committee Member


Jerry Meral is a founding director of Restore Hetch Hetchy, and one of the people who attended our first RHH meeting in June 1999. In fact, Jerry made the motion at that meeting to create Restore Hetch Hetchy!

Jerry has a long history with the Tuolumne River, being the first person to canoe from Lumsden Campground to Jacksonville (a town on the Tuolumne that was later inundated by enlarged Don Pedro Reservoir), and the first person (along with Dick Sunderland) to boat the Cherry Creek Run from Holm Powerhouse to Lumsden Falls.

In a later misadventure, he washed out of his boat near Lumsden Campground, and was punished by having "Meral's Pool" named after

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Restore Hetch Hetchy's new documentary film, "Hetch Hetchy: Yosemite's Lost Valley" received the Best of Entries award at the Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival, sponsored by the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) on January 9, 2004. **To order a DVD or VHS copy of the film, please see page 7.** 

Proposed “Rent” Increase for San Francisco’s Use of Hetch Hetchy Valley

In 1913, after a decade of opposition by John Muir, Congress passed the Raker Act allowing San Francisco to build a dam and reservoir in Yosemite National Park’s Hetch Hetchy Valley. Congress set San Francisco’s annual “rental” fee at \$15,000 for the use of Hetch Hetchy Valley. The rental payments were to begin in 1918. In 1928, the annual fee went to \$20,000; and, in 1938, the annual fee was set at \$30,000. There have been no rent increases since then. This amounts to a grand total of about \$2.3 million mandated by Congress for San Francisco’s use of nearly two thousand acres of “prime real estate” in Yosemite National Park.

In early February, the President’s budget proposed to increase San Francisco’s annual rental of Hetch Hetchy Valley from \$30,000 to \$8 million, and to ear-mark the money for Yosemite. Each year, San Francisco receives approximately \$30 to \$40 million from the sale of hydro-power from three powerhouses (Kirkwood, Moccasin, and Holm) located outside the Park that are tied to the Hetch Hetchy power grid. It’s

amounted to over \$670 million for the benefit of San Francisco since 1979, according to a report by the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

In a nine-page letter to Yosemite Superintendent Michael Tollefson,



Looking up Hetch Hetchy Valley from Surprise Point, 1908.



O’Shaughnessy Dam and Reservoir.

Restore Hetch Hetchy Executive Director, Ron Good, suggested possible uses for new revenues:

Visitors Center at Hetch Hetchy: Currently, there is no Visitors Center at Hetch Hetchy Valley that could serve as an educational center for Park visitors

to learn about the natural history (Tuolumne River, the glacial periods, the uplift of the land, geology, and plants and wildlife), cultural history (presence of Native Americans in Hetch Hetchy Valley

for thousands of years prior to contact with European Americans), and Hetch Hetchy’s proper role in the Park (the great debate among John Muir, Gifford Pinchot, and Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson regarding San Francisco’s proposal to build a dam and reservoir in Hetch Hetchy). Visitors Centers are located throughout Yosemite - in Yosemite Valley, and in the summer at Glacier Point, Wawona, Giant Sequoias, and Tuolumne Meadows. Nanci Sikes, Executive Director of the Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau ap-

plauded the idea of a Hetch Hetchy Visitors Center as a way to boost travel and tourism; and,

Interpretive/Educational Park Rangers at Hetch Hetchy: Currently, there are NO Interpretive/Educational Park Rangers assigned

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Photo by Faber, 1908

Photo by Ron Good, 2003

Jerry Meral, Executive Committee Member

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him. It is now the put-in for private and commercial trips on the lower Tuolumne.

Jerry organized the meeting which founded the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust in 1980, to successfully fight the proposal to build hydroelectric dams that would have destroyed the Tuolumne River above Don Pedro. He also wrote Proposition 17 in 1974, which would have preserved the Stanislaus River from the Corps of Engineers New Melones Dam. He organized Friends of the River for that campaign, which has gone on to preserve many other rivers. He suggested forming a national river conservation organization in an article in American Whitewater in 1973, and attended the national meeting where American Rivers was organized.

In 1984 Meral was awarded the Perception River Conservationist of the Year award for his many river conservation efforts.

While Deputy Director of the California Department of Water Resources from 1978-1983, he helped convince Governor Brown to submit California's wild and scenic rivers to the federal government for inclusion in the National System, and then directed the environmental studies that allowed Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus to include those rivers in the National System on the last day of the Carter Administration. During his tenure, DWR was known to

water developers as the "Department of Wild Rivers."

Meral was Executive Director of the Planning and Conservation League for 20 years, until early 2003. He now consults, and serves on 9 conservation advisory boards and committees. He is preparing a major report for RHH on strategies

for the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley. He lives in Inverness, California, with his wife Barbara, and his home is surrounded by federally and state protected parklands that he fought to preserve over the last 35 years.




Lawsuit Settlement

Last July, we filed a lawsuit against San Francisco and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SF PUC) over their proposal to modify the O'Shaughnessy Dam. We felt that important environmental concerns were not being addressed in their proposal to put a new pipe on the face of the dam to deal with a supposed soil & debris problems in the water supply. In addition, the City and the SF PUC had been blocking our repeated requests to cooperate with an independent study of alternative water storage and electrical power options for the San Francisco Bay Area. We believe it is important to have such a study completed by a professional consultant who is independent of Restore Hetch Hetchy, the City of San Francisco, SF PUC, the State of California, or the federal government.

Although our lawsuit did not halt the modification to the dam as we had hoped, we have been able to

negotiate a settlement with the City and the SF PUC that is favorable to our interests. The settlement agreement states that, for three years, the City Supervisors and Mayor and the SF PUC must remain "neutral" in our effort to secure federal, state, and private foundation funding for an independent study of alternatives for water supply and power options. Their neutrality will allow us to approach Congress, the state legislature, and private foundations for funding for an independent study without fear that they will be lobbying against the proposal.

We wish to THANK our wonderful team of attorneys: Bill Yeates, lead counsel; and Mary Akens and Keith Wagner. Their expert legal advice and good humor kept the negotiations on track for several months. And, we wish to THANK all of you who made special contributions for this lawsuit. 


Volunteers Needed for Free Speech Tables in Yosemite

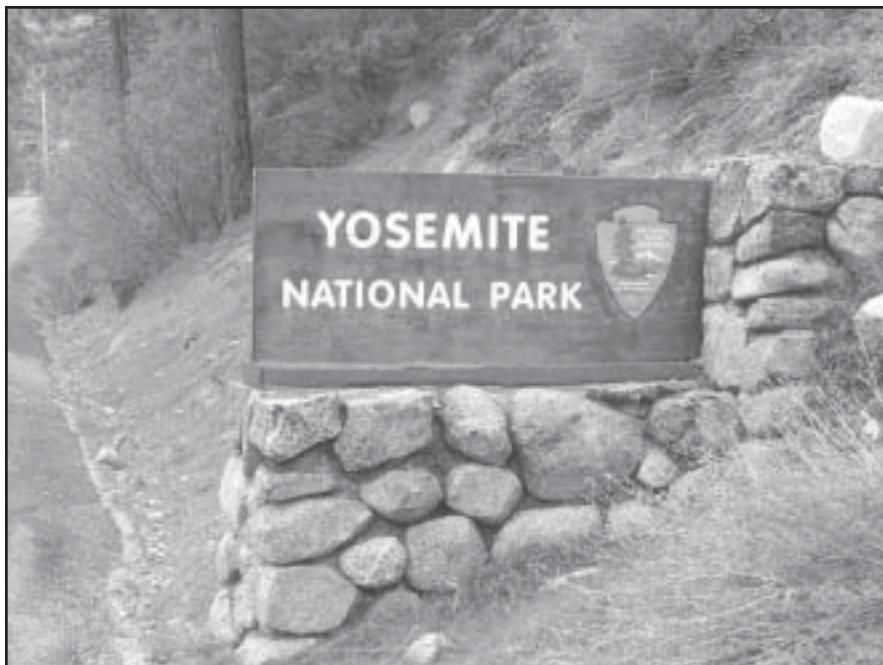
In an effort to reach out to Yosemite National Park visitors, Restore Hetch Hetchy is planning to have Free Speech tables in Yosemite Valley and at Hetch Hetchy Valley.

For the past two years, RHH has had a Free Speech table at Hetch Hetchy during the Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. This corresponds with the wonderful Strawberry Music Festival held at nearby Camp Mather. We're planning to continue that tradition during this year's Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends (Fridays through Sundays). We pass out our literature, newspaper articles and editorials, and bumper stickers, and

ask people to sign our petition to encourage Hetch Hetchy's restoration.

We would also like to have a Free Speech table near the Visitors Center in Yosemite Valley between May and October.

Please let us know if you would be available to help volunteer at our Free Speech tables in either Yosemite Valley or Hetch Hetchy Valley. Send an e-mail to: info@hetchhetchy.org, call (925) 933-4489, or write to P.O. Box 3591, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. THANKS for helping us educate people about Hetch Hetchy Valley. 



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YOUR
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TO
RESTORE
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HETCHY!**

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Proposed Rent Increase for Use of Hetch Hetchy Valley

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to Hetch Hetchy. Interpretation activities have become an integral part of the Park experience for our national park visitors. Whether it's a Ranger-led program about the wildflowers in the meadows, star gazing from Glacier Point, pioneer history at Wawona, geology, wildlife, Buffalo Soldiers, or Native Americans, the visitor experience is greatly enhanced by these kinds of educational activities.

While interpretive programs occur throughout other places in Yosemite (Yosemite Valley, Glacier Point, Tuolumne Meadows, White Wolf, Giant Sequoias), NONE are scheduled at Hetch Hetchy.

Congressman George Radanovich who is Chair of the National Parks Subcommittee in the U.S. House of Representatives and whose district includes Yosemite National Park and Tuolumne and Mariposa counties, reacted favorably to the proposal: "The nice thing about this proposal is that the \$8 million could be used in Yosemite. We're always looking for ways to improve the park and pay for those improvements."

A spokesperson for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, however, defended the current rental fee, and

objected to any increase.

Sonora Union Democrat reporter Genevieve Bookwalter stated:

"Until now, the city has enjoyed bargain-basement rates: Its federal rent now breaks down to \$2,500 per month, or \$82.19 per day. A summer room at The Ahwahnee,

Yosemite Valley's posh hotel, costs more than four times as much per night."

An editorial in


the *Sacramento Bee* calculated San Francisco's annual fee at 7 cents per acre for use of the entire Tuolumne River watershed in Yosemite National Park, and commented:

"Here's hoping San Francisco keeps up the Hetch Hetchy kvetching. A full-blown tempest would serve to resurface some much larger issues about Yosemite, Hetch Hetchy and San Francisco's troubling reluctance to follow the lead of Southern California and diversify its water supply. Hetch Hetchy keeps Yosemite's second-largest valley submerged. This national treasure surely deserves more than 7 cents an acre for that." 



New Documentary Film is Well Received

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cisco Bay Area, is narrated by Shari Belafonte. It contains beautiful footage of the Tuolumne River by Emmy-Award winner Sterling Johnson from Mariposa as well as photographs by the late Galen Rowell. Several members of the RHH Board of Directors and Advisory Committee are interviewed including Dr. Roderick Nash, emeritus Professor of History at UC Santa Barbara and author of *Wilderness and the American Mind*. We are also pleased that former Interior Secretary Don Hodel is interviewed in the film. Please see the Winter 2003 newsletter for more details. 



San Francisco Bay Area film professionals who worked on our film:

Front row, left to right: Deborah Landowne, film's producer; Jennifer Bugnatto, Producer, Jump Ship Studios; Lisa Falvo, Executive Producer, LUX Edit; Mark Riehl, 3D Animator/ Graphics, LUX Edit.

Back row, left to right: Kate Rooks, Production Assistant, Oakland Audio Visual Services; Matt Lavine, Director of Photography, Bugi'd Productions; Ben Somkin, Assistant Editor, LUX Edit; Kristin Nielsen, Producer, Radium; David Burghardt, Senior Editor, LUX Edit; Meg Lopez-Cepero, Reception, LUX Edit.

Not pictured: Rowena Cape, Producer, LUX Edit; Patrick Fitzgerald & Mary Ellen Perry, Engineers and Carrie Baker, Operations, Polarity Post; Blake Padilla, Producer & Bob Campbell, Colorist, Varitel; Jim Barton, Director & Liz Garman, Producer, Project Film & TV; Casey Benjamin, Graphics/IT, LUX Edit; Scott Williams, Owner, LUX Edit; Susan Conklin, Executive Producer, Jump Ship Studios; Lil Ysa-Al, Reception, LUX Edit.

**Please Use Our Website Catalog To View the
Items Described Below at www.hetchhetchy.org.**

- Please send ____ copies of Restore Hetch Hetchy's new 20-minute documentary video in ____VHS format or ____DVD format. I am enclosing \$16 for each video (price includes postage), or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ____ copies of landscape artist Albert Bierstadt's poster/painting of Hetch Hetchy Valley. I am enclosing \$20 for each poster (postage included), or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ____ Restore Hetch Hetchy t-shirt(s). Size ____M ____L ____X-L
I am enclosing a check for \$20 (plus \$3.50 for priority mail postage) for each shirt, or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ____ Restore Hetch Hetchy bumper stickers. I am enclosing \$1 for each bumper sticker (postage included), or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ____ Restore Hetch Hetchy license plate holders. I am enclosing \$10 for each license plate holder (plus \$2 postage for each license plate holder), or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ____ greeting cards at \$2 each or ____ sets of 6 for \$10 (price includes postage). I have included a check or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send _____ copies of David Brower's 1955 video, Two Yosemite's. I am enclosing \$10 (price includes postage), or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please enroll me as a new member or renew my Restore Hetch Hetchy membership.**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ FAX (____) _____ E-mail _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible **Restore Hetch Hetchy membership donation** of:

\$25 ____ \$50 ____ \$100 ____ \$500 ____ \$1,000 ____ \$ ____ other

\$ _____ per month (minimum \$5 per month) beginning immediately for Restore Hetch Hetchy.

Please make check payable to **RESTORE HETCH HETCHY**
or include credit card information and insert in an envelope and mail to:

Restore Hetch Hetchy, Membership Office, 926 J Street, Suite 612, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Please charge my credit card: ____ Master Card ____ VISA

Signature _____


Card # _____ Expires _____

Albert Bierstadt Poster of Hetch Hetchy Valley Available



This beautiful, color poster of Albert Bierstadt's painting of Hetch Hetchy is available on our catalog. Please see page 7 to order. Visit our website catalog, www.hetchhetchy.org to see the image in color. Courtesy of Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut.

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