

**Aspen Outdoor Management Services ◊ California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
Echo Cooperative ◊ Evergreen Lodge, Rush Creek Lodge & Firefall Ranch
Fly Fisherman Magazine ◊ Friends of the River ◊ Merced Fly Fishers
Nesporado Fly Fishing ◊ Northern California Council, Fly Fishers International
Pasadena Casting Club ◊ Restore Hetch Hetchy ◊ Santa Barbara Fly Fishers
Santa Cruz Fly Fishing Club ◊ Sierra Nevada Alliance ◊ Sonora Fly Company
Stanislaus Fly Fishers ◊ Tight Line Therapy ◊ Trout Unlimited
Trout Unlimited Central Sierra Chapter ◊ Tuolumne River Trust
Yosemite Fly Fishing ◊ Yosemite Fly Fishing Guides ◊ Yosemite Adventure Guides
Yosemite Outfitters**

May 4, 2024

Superintendent Cicely Muldoon
Yosemite National Park

Re: Fishing in Hetch Hetchy Reservoir

Dear Superintendent Muldoon:

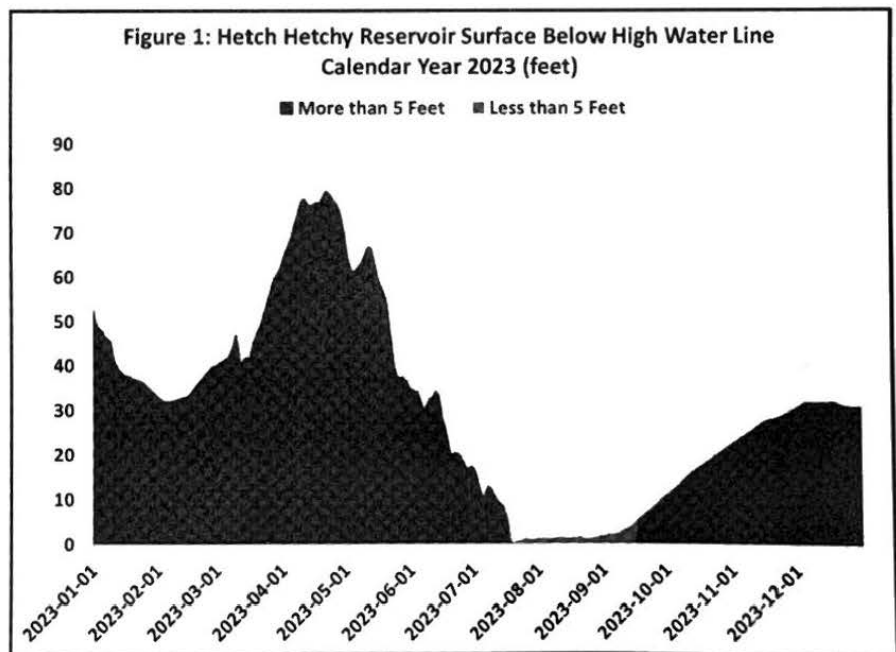
Our organizations support fishing in Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. We ask the National Park Service to modify its regulations prohibiting access below the high water mark of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir so fishing is possible.

A sign posted in the parking lot at Hetch Hetchy indicates that fishing is indeed allowed from the bank of the reservoir. The prohibition of access below the reservoir's high water mark, however, as included in the Superintendent's Compendium, in the National Park Service brochure distributed at the Hetch Hetchy entrance, and on the webpage for fishing in Yosemite National Park, effectively precludes fishing.

It's simply not possible to fish in the reservoir if you can't get near the water. Like all water supply reservoirs, the water level at Hetch Hetchy Reservoir fluctuates seasonally and is rarely close to its high water mark. For example, in calendar year 2023 the water level was within 5 feet of the high water mark for only 60 days in the summer (see Figure 1).

The brochure and Compendium state that prohibition's purpose is to maintain a clean source of drinking water. The Raker

Act, however, which authorized the construction of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, placed only specific limitations, i.e. no "human excrement, garbage, or other refuse" (shall be placed in the reservoir) and



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"No person shall bathe, wash clothes or cooking utensils, or water stock in, ruin any way pollute, the water". Further, the Raker Act expressly forbids the National Park Service from granting any additional rules or restrictions to protect water quality beyond those enumerated.

Further, Congress enacted the Raker Act with the full expectation that fishing would be not only permitted but encouraged. Congressmen, including Scott Ferris, Chairman of the Committee on Public Lands when the legislation was considered, enthusiastically embraced fishing in the reservoir.


It is not clear when this de facto ban on fishing was implemented. Until recent NPS website updates, it appeared that year-round access was given to fish all of Yosemite's lakes as well as Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

A storied written history exists of fishing Hetch Hetchy. Numerous visitors, NPS employees, and others have enjoyed the fishery. Hetch Hetchy Reservoir has some of Yosemite's largest trophy trout and provides outstanding value as a fishery. It is unreasonable to restrict recreation for responsible users who wish to respect the landscape and the National Park Service.

We ask the National Park Service to rescind the current prohibition on access below the high water mark of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir so park visitors can fish.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Elisabeth Barton, Aspen Outdoor Management Services
Chris Shutes, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
Bryant Burnette, Echo Cooperative
Lee Zimmerman, Evergreen Lodge, Rush Creek Lodge & Firefall Ranch
Ross Purnell, Fly Fisherman Magazine
Jann Dorman, Friends of the River
Derek Dale, Merced Fly Fishers
Greg Nespor, Nesporado Fly Fishing
Mark Rockwell, Northern CA Council, Fly Fishers International & Santa Barbara Fly Fishers
Sam Hagen, Pasadena Casting Club
Spreck Rosekrans, Restore Hetch Hetchy
Scott Kitayama, Santa Cruz Fly Fishing Club
Jenny Hatch, Sierra Nevada Alliance
Brian Fischer, Sonora Fly Co.
Paul Wallace, Stanislaus Fly Fishers
Lyle Burlingame, Tight Line Therapy
Jessica Strickland, Trout Unlimited
James Correa, Trout Unlimited, Central Sierra Chapter
Patrick Koepele, Tuolumne River Trust
Tim Hutchins, Yosemite Fly Fishing
David Furry, Yosemite Adventure Guides & Yosemite Fly Fishing Guides
David Gregory, Yosemite Outfitters