



Following Up – The Cherry Solution

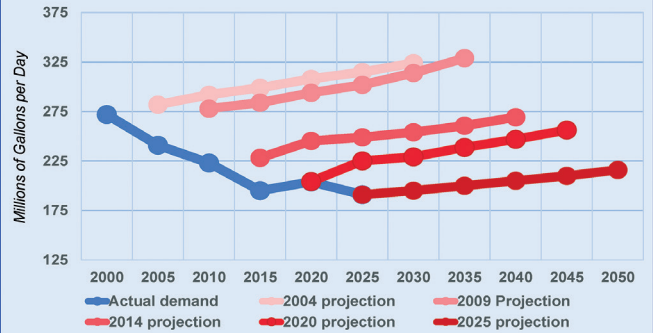
Our most recent publication, *Restoring Hetch Hetchy: The Cherry Solution*, released in January, includes two critical findings:

- ❖ The San Francisco Regional Water System would be able to meet all system demands. If the most severe 20th-century droughts recurred, the system would retain more than two years’ supply in reserve. Even without Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, the SFRWS would be very reliable.
- ❖ By diverting Tuolumne River supplies upstream, there would be no effect whatsoever on the Turlock and Modesto Irrigation Districts, with whom San Francisco shares the Tuolumne River.

So Restore Hetch Hetchy has made the case that no new supplies are needed to accommodate restoration —San Francisco simply needs to make improvements upstream to its conveyance facilities so Tuolumne River water supplies can be diverted to the Bay Area without storing them in Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

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The Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency
Actual Water Use Vs.
Urban Water Management Plan Projections



Urban water use throughout California continues to decrease, due to several factors, including the elimination of lawns and other thirsty landscaping. Water agencies, however, continue to predict increases in demand, driving up rates and causing undue environmental harm. San Francisco’s wholesale customers are no exception—compare their actual declining use (shown in blue above) with the continued projected increases (shown in red).

Image courtesy of The Sierra Club



It's no small irony that, before venturing out to Wapama Falls, many of our group convened on top of the O'Shaughnessy Dam, without question the most significant ecological and visual disruption within our national parks. Others ventured to the Poopenaut Valley trail and to the rim above Tueeulala and Wapama Falls.

Hetch Hetchy in May

Hetch Hetchy in mid spring is sublime. Flowers are blooming, the sun is warm, and swollen creeks are pouring over the canyon’s north rim onto the granite below.

Our gathering of board members and their families, along with new and old supporters, was inspirational. After a meet-and-greet atop the darn dam, many of us hiked the trail to Wapama Falls. The hike is a pilgrimage of sorts. After 2 and a half miles, you’ve warmed up and you are eager to be baptized by the ice-cold spray hitting the wooden bridges as you cross the falls (with apologies for the allusions to religion).

If the hike to Wapama was ever a secret, it’s out now. The trail was popular that day. The young and old as well as the fit and the no-so-fit, were all there, reflecting the diversity of California. Many lamented that they should’ve worn their hiking boots on the rocky trail.

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Following Up—The Cherry Solution *continued from page 1*

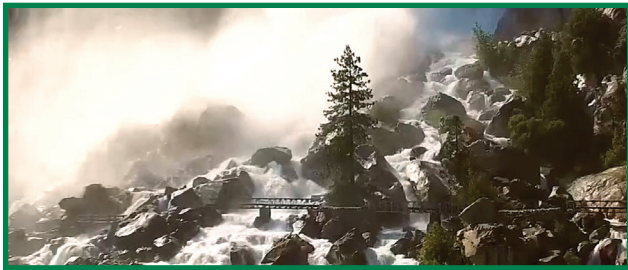
It's San Francisco's job, however, not ours, to determine how best to meet its customers' needs. Our job, as restoration advocates, is to convince the public and elected officials, especially those in San Francisco and in Congress, that water system improvements are not as challenging as some may think. They need to know that it's time to take action to restore Hetch Hetchy Valley—and to undo the greatest damage ever inflicted on America's national parks.

For decades, water agency officials have indicated privately that the water system improvements necessary for Hetch Hetchy's restoration are feasible and should be pursued. None have stepped forward to say that publicly, at least until retirement. Carl Boronkay and Tom Clark, respectively General Managers of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Kern County Water Agency, agencies many times the size of the San Francisco Regional Water System, are among those who strongly supported restoration.

Likewise, several members of Congress are familiar with the Hetch Hetchy opportunity and have indicated interest in restoration. These affirmations have always, however, been behind closed doors.

Hetch Hetchy Valley has been flooded by its namesake reservoir for far too long. The findings of the Cherry Solution warrant action now.

Hetch Hetchy in May *continued from page 1*



Crossing the five bridges at Wapama Falls during spring runoff is a wet experience. The westernmost bridge, finally rebuilt a year ago, ensures much safer passage.

Enjoying a hearty meal after a day at Hetch Hetchy.

"It's time for San Francisco to find a new water source."



Jessie Dickson, botanist, filmmaker and passionate advocate, was among those who joined us at Hetch Hetchy. Known online as Sacramento Food Forest, Jessie will be sharing our campaign for restoration on major social media platforms.

***In Memoriam
Marsh Pitman
1927-2026***



In 1999, Restore Hetch Hetchy was launched in Marsh's living room in Merced, California. Founder Ron Good had convened a group of passionate advocates, some recommended by David Brower. Following inspirational morning conversations and a lunch of sandwiches in Marsh's kitchen, the group committed to incorporate as Restore Hetch Hetchy.

Please support
Restore Hetch Hetchy

Help us create a new kind of national park.

Use the attached envelope or contribute online.

Ways to give include contributing appreciated stock and including Restore Hetch Hetchy in your estate planning—see **hetchhetchy.org**

The vision of Restore Hetch Hetchy is to return to the people Yosemite Valley's lost twin, Hetch Hetchy—a majestic glacier-carved valley with towering cliffs and waterfalls, an untamed place where river and wildlife run free, a new kind of national park.

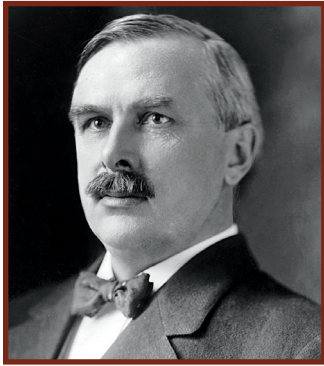


Keeping Promises Update:

After a delay caused by the change of leadership in Yosemite National Park and last fall's government shutdown, Restore Hetch Hetchy has renewed its efforts to improve the Hetch Hetchy area even before the reservoir is emptied.

There has been some improvement—visiting hours have been extended, a safer bridge at Wapama Falls has been installed and potable water should be available at the campground by next year.

But more opportunities are sorely needed. Camping, boating and fishing should be allowed. Trails should be improved. Park visitors should be truly welcome at Hetch Hetchy as they are in the rest of Yosemite National Park.



Congressman John Raker (at a 1913 Congressional hearing): *“the park shall be used as it is used now, with roads and trails provided and also boating on the reservoir...”*



The Department of the Interior should reassess whether San Francisco's occupation of limited real estate at Hetch Hetchy is warranted under the Raker Act. Might these and other cabins be repurposed for the benefit of park visitors?

Those pesky Superintendent's Compendia

The Superintendent's Compendium outlines regulations for Yosemite National Park, including prohibitions on boating on Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and any access below the reservoir's high-water line—effectively prohibiting fishing as well.

The National Park Service has changed the Compendium twice in response to our legal analysis and advocacy. The Compendium first cited San Francisco's *Filtration Avoidance Regulation* as a legal rationale, then cited the *NPS Organic and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Acts* in its place. The most recent version removes any legal reference, simply asserting the need for *“a clean municipal drinking water source free from microbial pathogens and other contaminants”*.

No other municipal agency asks for this level of protection. As we have stated many times—there are 38 large (over 200,000 acre-feet capacity) reservoirs in California—almost all provide municipal drinking water. 37 allow boating and fishing—**only Hetch Hetchy does not!** Water quality concern is not a defensible rationale.

The actual reasons for these prohibitions are (1) boating and fishing would place an additional burden on park management and (2) San Francisco opposes improved recreation. We have offered to work with the National Park Service to address the management challenge. San Francisco's opposition, on the other hand, violates the spirit if not the letter of the Raker Act and should be disregarded.

Please join us for our

Restore Hetch Hetchy

ANNUAL DINNER

Celebrating the Legacy Weavers of Yosemite

Image: Matt Ashby Wolfskill, Library of Congress.

Saturday, October 17, 2026

6 p.m. at Lafayette Veterans
Memorial Center

Learn more and reserve your seat
at hetchhetchy.org.

Restore Hetch Hetchy

3286 Adeline Street, Suite 8
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The route to Wapama Falls is one of Yosemite's great hikes. It's best in spring when the falls are gushing and stunning in the autumn as well. The trail is less popular in summer due to lack of shade. When the valley is restored, future visitors will be able to stroll across an arboreal meadow year-round.

Photo:
Roger Williams

The trail past Tueeulala Falls and on to Wapama Falls was magnificent. What's better than exploring Hetch Hetchy on a balmy spring day? Doing it with friends of course! It was a refreshing and invigorating trip.

But that dam is still there! And San Francisco's many cabins at the reservoir as well as the City's Camp Mather adjacent to the park entrance are stark reminders that the City regards Hetch Hetchy as its own. We don't begrudge any community a reliable water supply, but every single other municipal water agency in the United States has been able to serve their customers without building a dam in a national park—and Yosemite is not just any national park.

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir has denied park visitors access to the valley for more than 100 years. It is not necessary for water supply. Destructive dams around the country have been coming down.

When Hetch Hetchy is restored, the Tuolumne River will once again flow its natural course through the valley. In a few short years, grasses, sedges and wildlife will return. Park visitors will marvel as the valley comes to life; families will return again and again to see seedlings grow into their majestic heights.

Please sign our petition at <https://hetchhetchy.org/petition>.



Spreck Rosekrans
Executive Director