Newsletter

Fall 2026

Change Begins in San Francisco or Washington D.C.

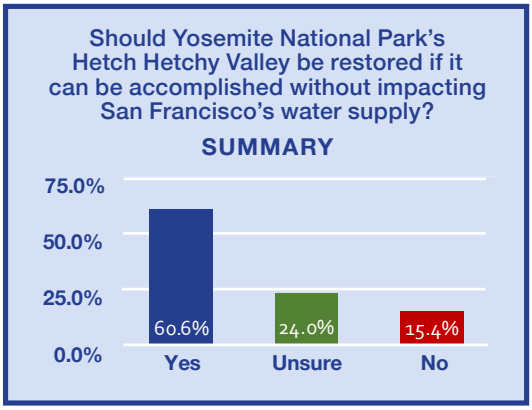
In January, Restore Hetch Hetchy published **Restoring Hetch Hetchy: The Cherry Solution,** showing that a sustained 19% decrease in water demand makes it far easier to meet customer needs without Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission simply needs to connect Cherry Reservoir to its water delivery system and slightly increase filtration capacity at its Sunol treatment plant.

Public support continues to grow. A recent statewide poll (see chart) by Probolsky Research found that Californians supporting restoration out-number those opposed by almost 4 to 1. Increasingly, environmental organizations are lending support to our plea for Congress and San Francisco to take action.

We have had numerous conversations with interested members of Congress and their staffs, albeit, unfortunately, no substantive discussions with San Francisco. We hope to find political support for our campaign after the midterm elections when the 120th Congress convenes in January.

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STATEWIDE POLL FAVORS RESTORATION BY 4 to 1!



Probolsky Research — May 2026

Restoration is supported by all demo-graphics—education, ethnicity, gender, age and political party.

ANNUAL DINNER Celebrating the Legacy Weavers of Yosemite

For at least 6,000 years prior to 1850, Hetch Hetchy was the homeland of Indigenous peoples, including Paiute and Sierra Miwok. They lived in the Valley both seasonally and year-round. They were stewards of the land—hunting, cultivating, pruning and, yes, making baskets from its grasses.

So Restore Hetch Hetchy was delighted to welcome Dr. Julia Parker and Lucy Parker, legacy weavers of Yosemite, as our keynote speakers. The exquisite examples of their grass weavings, along with stories of their families and craft, captivated dinner guests.

Grammy nominated musician Aaron White performed on his guitar and handcrafted flutes, and honored the Parkers with a drumming prayer. The presentation also included a welcome video by their cousin Greg Sarris, Tribal Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

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From left, Marilyn White, Aaron White, Dr. Julia Parker and Lucy Parker

Fresh Water Coming to Hetch Hetchy's Campground

Will it lead to other improvements for visitors?

It's about time. Our 2023 Petition to the Department of the Interior and National Park Service encouraged the agencies to compel San Francisco to comply with its century-old legal mandate to provide potable water to the campground at Hetch Hetchy. The work is scheduled for the summer of 2027.

Clearly Congress intended that park visitors would be able to stay overnight at Hetch Hetchy – either at a campground or a lodge. Presently, however, the only campers allowed are those leaving for or returning from a backpacking trip. And lodging is only available for certain privileged guests of San Francisco.

The fresh water coming to the campground provides an opportunity for change. At a minimum, all park visitors ought to be allowed to camp at Hetch Hetchy as they are in other areas of Yosemite. We have asked the Superintendent to change this policy.

Other ways the area around the O'Shaughnessy Dam could better serve park visitors include:

- Provide shade at the campground,
- Convert San Francisco's chalet overlooking the reservoir into an interpretive center for the National Park Service, and
- Make San Francisco's bunkhouse available to all park visitors. The City could still be allowed to use it on the few occasions when it is needed for pertinent business.

These improvements could `be made administratively by the National Park Service or the Department of the Interior, or they could be implemented by legislation. In either case, they would provide substantial visitor benefits in the near term as well as the longer term when the reservoir is relocated and the valley restored.



On September 16, Congresswoman Harriet Hageman chaired a meeting of the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries which included testimony on H.R. 177 (Rep. McClintock's bill to improve recreation at Hetch Hetchy). We are not holding our breath, but having held the hearing suggests they are considering moving the bill in the last few months of the 119th Congress – i.e. in 2026.

ANNUAL DINNER Celebrating the Legacy Weavers of Yosemite



Above: The elegant scene at the Lafayette Veterans Memorial Hall, Board Chair Roger Williams and Executive Director Spreck Rosekrans addressing the crowd, guests perusing the silent auction and Aaron White on guitar.

Restore Hetch Hetchy continues to support Tribal participation in all aspects of restoration, including the opportunity to co-manage the restored Hetch Hetchy Valley. We are committed to work with Tribes as partners to achieve this goal.

Change Begins *continued*

In every conversation, we make clear that any restoration plan must ensure San Francisco can continue to fully meet the water needs of its customers, replace lost electric power production, and honor its obligations to the Turlock and Modesto Irrigation Districts, which hold senior water rights on the Tuolumne River.

We are grateful that numerous environmental groups (partial list shown at right) are publicly supporting our campaign:

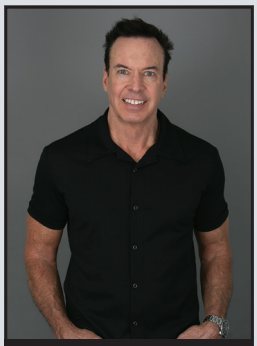
- To ask that Congress and San Francisco work collaboratively to plan and guide the restoration process, and
- To help establish a funding mechanism through which public and private contributions can be coordinated to assist with costs.

We'll keep you posted.

Environmental Organizations

supporting the opportunity to restore Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to its natural splendor:

Friends of the Eel River ✦ Friends of the River ✦ Mono Lake Committee ✦ Natural Heritage Institute ✦ Public Interest Coalition ✦ Resource Renewal Institute ✦ Restore Hetch Hetchy ✦ Save Auburn Ravine Salmon and Steelhead ✦ Sierra Nevada Alliance ✦ South Yuba River Citizens League ✦ The Environmental Justice Program of Catholic Charities of Stockton ✦ Unite For Parks ✦ Yosemite Outfitters Yosemite Rivers Conservancy



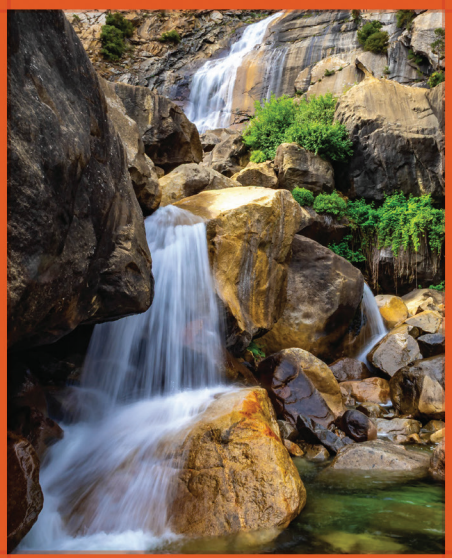
Greg Sarris

After the Fall is a thought-provoking short story that blends the legacy of Indigenous people at Hetch Hetchy with John Muir's leadership in preservation, culminating in a young man telling his grandfather about the restored valley:

"I sit below Wapama Falls; perhaps I'm on the same boulder you sat on when you first visited. Same company too: a squawking jay; a scraggly pine, stoic observer on the cliff above. But what I see you only imagined. Dwellings of willow and cottonwood and alder overlook the gold-lit Tuolumne and its bogs and marshes. Purples and yellows so intense in this light you'd think the flowers—irises, lupines, goldenrods and sunflowers—had swallowed a share of the sun. Bighorn sheep travel east below Kolana, blending with the landscape but for their white rears. Below me, a deer exits her cover of manzanita; two fawns with faded white spots follow."

After the Fall is posted (free) on the Los Angeles Times website. Search for: "Greg Sarris Hetchy".

In addition to being Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Greg Sarris is an author and recent chair of the Board of Trustees of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.



Restore Hetch Hetchy



LET'S MATCH THE MATCH!

$35,000 Giving Tuesday Challenge

The Challenge starts NOW and runs through Tuesday, December 1. Celebrate our progress. Double your impact. Advance the vision of a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley. Every gift is matched 1:1.

Support the Match today!

GIVING TUESDAY

hetchhetchy.org

Restore Hetch Hetchy
3286 Adeline Street, Suite 8
Berkeley, CA 94703





"A Portrait of a Landscape, Hetch Hetchy Valley Before the Dam" (2023), by Salvador López. Used with permission. Salvadore's painting presents a serene midmorning scene, the valley unfolding in a lush tapestry of vibrant greens and golden grasses, kissed by the gentle morning light.

For a full-size print or to see Sal's other work, visit **salvadorlopezfineart.com**

Restoring Hetch Hetchy provides an opportunity to recover a spectacular landscape, to undo the worst damage ever inflicted on America's national parks and to inspire a new generation. It also provides an opportunity for Indigenous communities to regain an important piece of their own natural and cultural heritage.

Inspiration comes easily—from our Annual Dinner with its enthusiastic crowd and the legacy weavers of Yosemite, Greg Sarris's story, and Sal Lopez's art to the overwhelming support from the Probolsky poll. We are pleased that so many friends in the environmental community have joined our request that Congress engage San Francisco to collaboratively develop a restoration plan.

We continue to share our story and the passion behind it with elected officials. It's time, past time actually, to be serious about a plan that works, not just for park visitors but for San Francisco as well.



Spreck Rosekrans
Executive Director