

Lee Vining Hydroelectric Project

FERC No. 1388

Welcome!

Recreation and Land Use Technical
Working Group Meeting

March 1, 2023

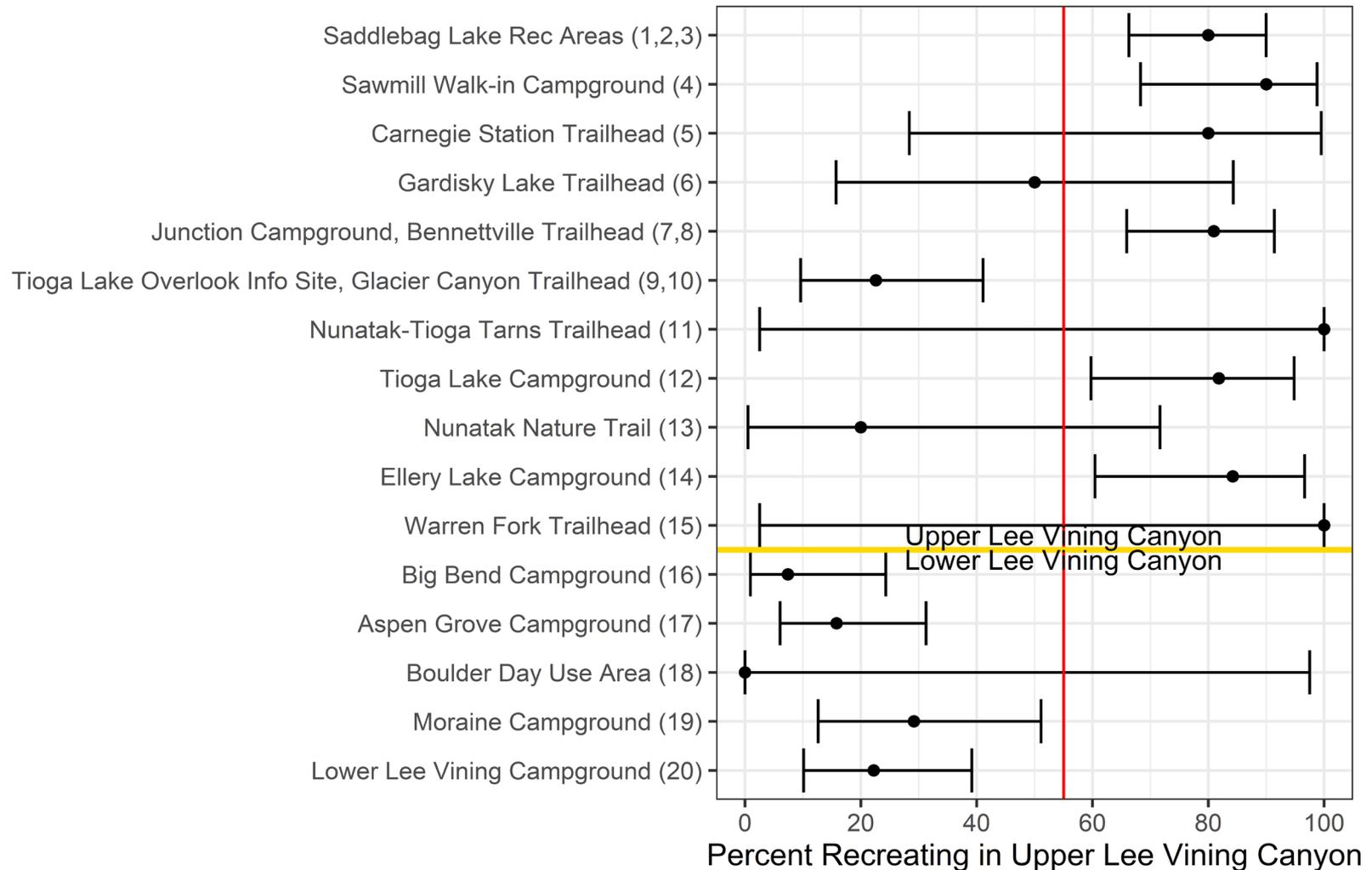
Project Baseline

- No recreation facilities located within the FERC Project boundary, based on FERC's EA (1992) that acknowledged significant National Park and scenic factors for recreation use in Project Vicinity

Recreation Use and Needs Study

- Goal REC-1 Study Plan (2022)
 - Determine which recreation facilities or activities have a potential connection to the Project and thus would warrant inclusion in the broader studies proposed in the second study season (future use and needs).
- Phase 1 (2022 Surveys)
 - Eliminate areas clearly not associated with the Project Facilities or Operation
- Phase 2 (2023 Surveys)
 - Deeper dive into remaining campgrounds and trails
 - This will lead to future conversation around nexus and any future recreation needs in the Project Area.

Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1) 2022 Data Summary



Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1) Comments and Response

INF requests that Lower Lee Vining Campground and Moraine Campground be included in the 2023 continuation of REC-1 to capture potential use displaced by the lack of available campsites in the upper canyon.

- Response: While SCE agrees the 50% confidence interval threshold is met by both the Lee Vining Campground and Moraine Campground neither of the sites meet the 55% threshold for recreationists recreating in Upper Lee Vining Canyon which was also utilized. Additionally, surveyors did ask recreationists if the campground they were staying at was indeed their preferred location.
- Of the twenty-four (24) recreationists surveyed at the Moraine Campground, none of them indicated they preferred to stay somewhere else. Of the thirty-six (36) recreationists surveyed at the Lower Lee Vining Campground three (3) indicated they would have preferred to stay somewhere other than the sites listed in the survey, one (1) indicated they preferred to stay at Moraine Campground, one (1) indicated they preferred to stay at Tioga Lake Campground however no sites were available. **For these reasons, SCE does not intend to include these two sites in the REC-1 2023 surveys.**

Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1) Comments and Response

Because winter 2022/2023 may be a near-record snow year, springtime could present an opportunity to measure substantial over-snow recreation in the project area including snowmobiling and skiing. The INF requests that the 2023 survey be designed to capture over-snow use in addition to summer recreation uses by surveying in April and May.

- Response: Snowmobiling and skiing were not previously identified as recreation opportunities, and SCE does not see any connection to the Project area or operations for these activities. However, SCE will include them as activity options in the 2023 survey.

Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1)

- RUNS proposed locations
 - Intercept surveys
 - Spot counts
 - Traffic/trail counters and calibrations
 - Winter survey locations

Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1)

– User Survey Methods

- Schedule, timing
- Survey instrument
- One visitor survey circuit includes conducting visitor surveys at each of the sites identified in Table 3-1. There will be three 4-hour shifts: Shift 1 (7 a.m. to 11 a.m.), Shift 2 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.), and Shift 3 (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.). On each of the 13 days, two visitor survey circuits will be completed within a 4-hour shift. SCE anticipates each circuit will take approximately 2 hours. Within each shift, once the first circuit is completed, the second circuit will commence. The visitor surveys will be conducted following a bus route method (e.g., Pollack et al., 1994); the shift, the starting recreation site for each circuit, and the direction of travel (i.e., clockwise or counterclockwise) will be selected randomly on the days the surveys are conducted.

Recreation Use and Needs Assessment (REC-1)

– Creel Survey Methods

- Creel surveys will be conducted during peak fishing season (between Fishmas and Labor Day 2023), 128 days.
- Conduct creel surveys for approximately 30 % of the creel survey period, including Fishmas, one representative day from each of the four major holiday weekends (Memorial Day, National Independence Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day weekends) and the remainder of survey days split between weekdays and non-peak weekend days.
- One creel survey circuit will be completed each sampling day at each site identified in the Study Plan.
- There will be two 4-hour blocks (morning and afternoon/evening) on each sampling day.
- The creel surveys will be conducted following a bus route method (e.g., Pollack et al., 1994); the shift, the starting recreation site for each circuit, and the direction of travel (i.e., clockwise or counterclockwise) will be selected randomly on the days the surveys are conducted.

Questions?



Recreation Facilities Condition Assessment (REC-2)

– USFS Comments received on Tech Memo

- Based on the findings from REC-1 in 2022, recreation in the upper canyon was the primary activity for users of Sawmill Walk-in Campground and Junction Campground (Figure 4-1). Include these campgrounds in the recreation facilities condition survey in 2023. Survey responses at both campgrounds are well within the 50% confidence interval threshold set by SCE in REC-1.
 - Response: These campgrounds have been added to the 2023 REC-2 Recreation Facilities Condition Assessment.
- REC-1 results indicate that a substantial portion of visitors staying at Lower Lee Vining Campground (22%) and Moraine Campground (29%) recreate in the upper canyon as their primary activity. These two lower canyon campgrounds should be included in the REC-2 recreation facilities condition assessment in 2023 because of their potential nexus with the project and the possibility that improving these campgrounds may be an option if improvements at upper canyon campgrounds are prevented by physical or biological constraints.
 - Response: SCE does not intend to include these sites in the REC-2 study for reasons previously discussed in the response to REC-1 comments.

Recreation Facilities Condition Assessment (REC-2)

Methods

- Proposed locations
- Schedule, timing
- Datasheet

Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2)

- Proposed KOPs
- Methods (*next slide*)
 - Schedule, timing
 - Datasheet
 - Report / deliverables

Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2)

Field Survey Methods

- Identify key observation points (KOPs) and inventory them in the field. KOPs selected because of their use by the public (e.g., REC-1 study sites) and potential views of Project infrastructure.
- Take photographs at each KOP using a high-quality digital camera and tripod. Photos would include a minimum of three sweeping panoramas.
- Use printed copies of the Aesthetic Inventory Form datasheets to record information at each KOP
- Record the point coordinate locations of each photo with a GPS and hand draw each location on field maps.
- Proposed field week is June 19-23, 2023.

Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP - Saddlebag



Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Ellery Lake Campground



Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Tioga Campground



Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Tioga Overlook



Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Hwy 20



(Zoomed in to center of left image)

Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Junction Campground / Bennettville Trailhead



Aesthetic Resources Survey (LAND-2) Proposed KOP – Poole Powerhouse



Questions?



Schedule and Next Steps

Recreation Action Items from 2/1 Progress Report Meeting

- CDFW's Alyssa Marquez needs info/will follow up on Tech Memos and request the ArcGIS information

Relicensing Process Schedule

Date	Activity
February 1, 2023	2022 Progress Report meeting
March 1, 2023	Recreation and Land Use TWG
March 14/15, 2023	Additional Recreation and Land Use TWG, if needed
Spring – Fall 2023	2023 field studies
Spring 2024	Technical Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreation Use Assessment (REC-1)• Facilities Condition Assessment (REC-2)• Aesthetic Resource Assessment (LAND-2)
September 2024	SCE Files Draft License Application
January 2025	SCE Files Final License Application

Final Questions?



Thank you!