Ferguson Slide Restoration Project

Merced River's Wild and Scenic River Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Site CA-MRP-001566 - a prehistoric bedrock mortar site would be protected during construction by designation as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing would be installed during construction and monitored by professionally qualified staff.

Geology – The project area is in a steep inner gorge consisting of very old and highly fractured rocks. The formation of the Merced Canyon is a result of tectonic uplift and cutting by the Merced River. Exposure of the rocks within the canyon has provided an opportunity for understanding the geologic history of the area. The Ferguson rockslide is a natural feature approximately thousands of years old. Its recent activity was due to precipitation over a two-year period.

Vegetation – In the project area, the Merced River Canyon harbors several species of plants, such as Tompkin's sedge *(Carex tompkinsii)*, smallflower mokeyflower *(Mimulus inconspicuous)*, Mariposa clarkia *(Clarkia biloba* ssp. *australis)*, Merced clarkia *(Clarkia lingulata)*, and elongate copper moss *(Mielichoferia elongata)*. These plants represent an extraordinary diversity of native and rare plants that draw recreationists from around the world during the spring.

Cultural (Pre-History, Traditional) – Valuable archeological features identified within the project area include a bedrock mortar site and concrete piers and debris. Architectural resources include the Yosemite Mountain Railroad Grade, Jenkins Hill Trail, and State Route 140. Caltrans is continuing to coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service and the American Indian Council of Mariposa in developing methods to preserve the pre-historic, historic, and possible ongoing traditional uses in the area of the proposed project.