

# Yosemite bike, rafting rental bans eliminated

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

In a major reversal, Yosemite National Park officials have dropped controversial plans to ban a wide variety of recreational activities in Yosemite Valley, including ending bike and raft rentals and tearing out swimming pools at the Yosemite Lodge and famed Ahwahnee Hotel.

The decision came after a yearlong battle in which more than 30,000 people commented on the park's plans to curtail recreation as part of a broader effort to restore natural conditions along the valley's Merced River. Many said the proposal went too far and penalized families who enjoy visiting the park – an opinion echoed by several members of Congress.

The saga – which featured 14 years of legal battles – highlighted the near-impossible mission of the National Park Service: providing public recreation while preserving spectacular landscapes.

**Read the whole story**