



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yosemite National Park
P. O. Box 577
Yosemite, California 95389

June 4, 2020

Dear Glacier Point Astronomy Volunteer Groups,

We want to acknowledge the invaluable service you provide for Yosemite National Park and our visitors. The Glacier Point star parties have been offered for almost 40 years, and many of those years were only possible with the help of volunteer groups like yourselves.

With that being said, we are sorry to say we are cancelling your scheduled volunteer projects in Yosemite this summer.

Yosemite National Park is working closely with federal, state, and local public health authorities, as well as the four surrounding counties, to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and develop a phased approach to increase recreational access and services. Our operational approach continues to be centered on examining each facility function and service provided to ensure those operations comply with current public health guidance. Some facilities and services that we've been accustomed to offering in the past will not be possible this year due to the pandemic.

The changes to the volunteer program are significant. Many of the normally used campsites will not be available, and we are down about half of the staff who would usually lead volunteer groups in the field, because of housing and funding restrictions.

Our ability to provide safe accommodation and competent leadership for groups are paramount in offering positive experiences for volunteers. We want you to know we value your health as well as your contributions to Yosemite.

Due to the Glacier Point Road Rehabilitation Project, we are also unable to host you next summer. Glacier Point Road will be closed to all traffic in 2021 to rehabilitate and improve the road. The only access to Glacier Point will be via the Four Mile, Panorma, and Pohono Trails, all of which are strenuous hikes.

We appreciate your understanding during these uncertain times. We know that for many of you this is a tradition you look forward to every summer, just as we do, and will be missed until you return. A sincere thank you for the everything you have done and continue to do for Yosemite.

Sincerely,

Bob Loudon
Branch Chief of Field Operations
Division of Interpretation & Education
Yosemite National Park