



January 13, 2017

To: Woody Smeck, Acting Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
woody_smeck@nps.gov

Re: Proposed Wilderness & Climbing Interpretive Center at Yosemite National Park

Dear Superintendent Smeck:

The Mountaineers writes to express our support of the Proposed Wilderness & Climbing Interpretive Center at Yosemite National Park. The mission of this Center is to preserve the wilderness and climbing heritage of Yosemite, educate and inspire stewardship in all visitors, and promote safe Park use with minimum impact. These tenants are all core beliefs for our organization, and Yosemite is a destination that is important to our membership.

The Mountaineers, based in Seattle, Washington and founded in 1906, is a nonprofit outdoor education, conservation, and recreation organization whose mission is “to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.” The Mountaineers Books publishing division expands the mission internationally through award-winning publications including instructional guides, adventure narratives, and conservation photography. 1,800 skilled volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education courses and activities annually for 15,500 members and guests. Our youth programs provide over 6,000 opportunities each year for children to get outside. We are a passionate, engaged, and knowledgeable community that cares about the outdoors, protecting the outdoor experience for current and future generations.

As an organization steeped in climbing history, Yosemite is an important destination for our members, with both personal and organizational trips to the Park. Yosemite has also been the focus of many publications of our publishing division, including *CAMP 4 Recollections of a Yosemite Rockclimber*; *100 hikes in Yosemite* and two field guides on Yosemite’s flora and fauna. Last spring, Helen Cherullo, our Head of Publishing, joined others at Yosemite for a Centennial Business Retreat focusing on initiatives to make our National Parks sustainable in the face of climate change, and public-private partnerships that encourage visitation, stewardship, and advocacy of our national parks, especially to Americans of all races and backgrounds.

We appreciate the public/private partnership efforts coming together to create and manage this facility. We work closely with land managers here in the Pacific Northwest and with agencies nationally, and believe that this type of endeavor is important in supporting our public lands.



Thank you for considering The Mountaineers endorsement of efforts to create a Valley-based Wilderness and Climbing Center in Yosemite National Park.

Sincerely,

Katherine Hollis
Conservation and Advocacy Director,
The Mountaineers

cc:

Frank Dean	fdean@yosemiteconservancy.org
Ken Yager	yagerca@gmail.com
Phil Powers	powers@americanalpineclub.org
Jerry Gallwas	gegallwas@msn.com