



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Yosemite National Park
Media Relations Office

P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
www.nps.gov/yose/news
209 372-0248 phone



THE YOSEMITE FUND®
Providing for Yosemite's Future

Yosemite News Release
September 29, 2009

Contacts: Scott Gediman, Media and External Relations, Yosemite National Park, 209-372-0248
Peter Bartelme, Media Relations, The Yosemite Fund, 415-664-1503

Half Dome Overlook Makeover Completed in Yosemite National Park

“First Impressions” of Yosemite Valley Improved by \$800,000 Rehabilitation by Yosemite Fund Donors

Yosemite, CA – For many visitors to Yosemite National Park, Half Dome Overlook is their first chance to stop and see the Valley’s iconic features: Half Dome framed perfectly between the granite walls of El Capitan and the cliffs of Glacier Point.

Thanks to donors of the nonprofit Yosemite Fund, the overlook has been redesigned and rehabilitated as part of an \$800,000 overhaul and recently reopened to the public.

“We now have a place that actually improves upon people’s first impressions of Yosemite Valley,” said Mike Tollefson, president of the Fund.

Before the overlook’s makeover it was easy to miss and did not provide for visitors’ needs. Located on Big Oak Flat Road and a short drive from Yosemite Valley, those who did stop sometimes stood in the parking area to take in the views and snap photos. It wasn’t the best way to see the grandeur below and beyond.

“These improvements enhance the visitor experience,” said Acting Park Superintendent Dave Uberuaga. “Now people can enjoy the view and its exhibits in a safe and accessible manner as part of a redesign that also protects the natural environment. All of that makes a great view even better.”

Today, travelers enter a well-organized parking area and follow new pedestrian walkways to the overlook. Paths now meet accessibility standards and new exhibits help educate visitors about the inspiring place they see. Habitat is protected. The project also included the rehabilitation of paths that eroded from overuse and the construction of natural barriers to prevent additional trails from being created. A striking bronze relief model allows visitors to see details of Half Dome.

The project was completed in mid-September and is part of the Fund’s ongoing 15-year effort to improve the park’s marquee viewpoints. Donors have supported projects to rehabilitate overlooks at Tunnel View, Olmsted Point, Glacier Point and the approach to Yosemite Falls.

Generous contributions to Half Dome Overlook were made by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Dave and Dana Dornsife, and Allen and Marilyn Puckett.

The Yosemite Fund is a nonprofit organization that provides broad-based private funding and resources for projects that preserve, protect or enhance Yosemite National Park. Since 1988, more than 100,000 individual, corporate and foundation donors have enabled the Fund to grant over \$50 million to complete over 200 projects in Yosemite. Contributors provide a margin of excellence in Yosemite, extending a long-standing tradition of private philanthropy in National Parks. Results of the Fund’s work on major projects can be seen most notably at the approach to lower Yosemite Falls (\$13.5 million), Glacier Point (\$4 million), Happy Isles (\$2 million) and Olmsted Point (\$1.2 million). Learn more at www.yosemitefund.org 1-800-4-MY-PARK.

Editors Note: Please call for photographs of the completed overlook.

-NPS-THE YOSEMITE FUND

HALF DOME OVERLOOK REHABILITATION PHOTOGRAPHS



- Ken and Aiwen Nakamoto of Sunnyvale, CA, take a perfect picture at the redesigned Half Dome Overlook, an \$800,000 project made possible by Yosemite Fund donors.



- Lori Harper, Matt Shaffer and Cory Carpenter of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, admire a new bronze relief model at Half Dome Overlook, part of an \$800,000 makeover to the site by The Yosemite Fund.



- Park Ranger Kari Cobb discusses improvements to Half Dome Overlook with visitors that are part of an \$800,000 makeover by the nonprofit Yosemite Fund.