



FRIENDS
OF
THE INYO SINCE 1986

June 30, 2021

Devils Postpile National Monument
P.O. Box 3999
Mammoth Lakes CA 95346

Electronically Submitted via:
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/commentForm.cfm?documentID=112868>

Re: PEPC Project Number 94932, Devils Postpile National Monument Wastewater Treatment System Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear National Parks Service:

Please accept these comments on behalf of Friends of the Inyo and our 1,000+ members. Friends of the Inyo (FOI) is a grassroots non-profit based in Bishop California whose mission is to protect and care for the public lands of the Eastern Sierra. Over our 34-year history, FOI has become an active partner with federal land management agencies including the NPS. The plan for a wastewater treatment system in Devils Postpile National Monument represents proactive efforts of the National Parks Service (NPS) and Forest Service (USFS) to address the current failing wastewater system. This project as currently described will protect public lands and reduce the maintenance burden on management agencies. Specifically the proposed septic system will protect waterways from contamination by eliminating the need for aging mechanical force mains and lift stations. Removing the aging mechanical infrastructure will reduce danger of failure and accidental discharge, reduce the agency's energy costs, and reduce maintenance needs.

Friends of the Inyo supports the agency's move towards employing vault toilets over traditional flush toilets to reduce the quantity of wastewater produced. The study of soils for properly engineered leach fields should aim to preserve the quality of surface waters and groundwater at Devils Postpile NM and the surrounding areas as described in the plan. It should also be noted that planning for increased visitation into the future should be incorporated into the implementation and maintenance plans of any developed recreational facilities, including the proposed wastewater treatment plan and future vault toilets.



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We appreciate the agency's efforts soliciting environmental review on this project, and emphasize that any earth moving operation includes risks of damaging resources. Friends of the Inyo reserves the option to raise objections if cultural or environmental resource impacts are discovered in the testing or survey process. We would like to be included on any further correspondence related to this project and receive updates on project approval and development. I can be reached at wendy@friendsoftheinyo.org. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,

Wendy Schneider
Executive Director