



For Immediate Release



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Stacie Dabbs
Deputy Executive Director
(209)723-3153 x 109
stacie.dabbs@mcagov.org

YARTS to offer free service to Yosemite on free National Park Service Gate Days

MERCED – Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) announced today that it will provide free transit service to Yosemite National Park on all free National Park Service (NPS) gate days for the next three years. YARTS will receive funding through the Federal Lands Access Program for a three-year demonstration project to operate free buses to Yosemite on all free NPS gate days. The grant will fund thirty free service days through September 2020.

YARTS staff expects the demonstration project to be highly successful. “We are excited to assist the park with the management of vehicle congestion by offering an alternative to driving and parking” said Cindy Kelly, YARTS Staff Analyst. “We want to give Californians and other visitors the opportunity to experience our nation’s jewel without adding to the congestion problem,” Kelly said.

The Highway 140 service through Merced and Mariposa Counties will be the first corridor to offer free service with this new program on November 11 and 12, 2017. Reservations will not be accepted on free service days which means the service will be based on a first-come, first-served policy. Seasonal free services from Mammoth Lakes, Fresno and Sonora are planned for summer of 2018.

Free service events will be posted on the YARTS Facebook page at www.facebook.com/rideyarts and website at www.yarts.com. Free gate days for 2018 have not yet been released.

YARTS is the only public transit to Yosemite National Park, with buses entering Yosemite Valley from Merced, Mammoth Lakes, Sonora and Fresno---as well as many different towns along the way. YARTS began service in May 2000, and now provides an alternative to driving to over 120,000 riders per year. More information can be found online at www.yarts.com

YARTS is a California Joint Powers Authority comprised of Merced, Mariposa and Mono Counties in partnership with Caltrans, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service and the United States Forest Service. MCAAG provides staff services and operational support for YARTS.

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