



**For Immediate Release**

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**YARTS Celebrates 10 Years  
of Service to Yosemite Region**

**MERCED, Calif., August 24, 2009** – Over 40 people who made bus service to Yosemite National Park a reality despite numerous hurdles gathered in the park on Friday, Aug. 21 to celebrate 10 years of Yosemite Regional Transportation System (YARTS).

Mentioning the efforts to get funding, teamwork to get approvals, and scramble to find solutions to the rock slide that closed down Highway 140 for a while, YARTS Chair Vicki Bauer compared the project to steering a Viking ship. “All hands must be on the oars and pulling together,” she said. She praised the work of Congressmen George Radanovich, Dennis Cardoza, and Buck McKeon for their past and continuing work in support of YARTS.

The concept for YARTS began in 1992 when Mariposa Supervisor Art Baggett, Gwen Foster, Mariposa County Public Works, and others brought forward the idea of a regional transit system for the Yosemite region. The first bus hit the highway in May 2000, capping an 8-year process.

Both visitors and employees ride YARTS to reduce congestion in the park, not to mention that riding makes it easier to see the dramatic scenery. The service is available from Mariposa, Merced, and Mono counties. YARTS is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year of service and has carried over 550,000 passengers.

Other speakers included Dave Uberuaga, Interim Superintendent of Yosemite Park. The National Park Service supports YARTS in many ways, including through a program that subsidizes employee commute costs. About 35 percent of YARTS riders are commuters.

Mariposa County Supervisor Brad Aborn expressed the county’s appreciation for YARTS, stating, “Mariposa economy is strongly based on tourism. YARTS encourages tourism by providing transportation options for travelers who come to the Yosemite region.”

YARTS contracts for management, planning and administrative services with Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG). MCAG Executive Director, Jesse Brown, also functions as the Executive Director of YARTS. MCAG’s Dick Whittington is the YARTS Transit Manager.

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