

National Park Service
2011 Environmental Achievement Awards

Winner

Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts, Concessioner
Yosemite National Park
DNC Composting Initiative

Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts (DNC P&R) is a concessioner providing lodging, retail, food & beverage, commercial recreation, and transportation services to visitors at Yosemite National Park.

Although successful, DNC P&R's recycling program has presented limitations to increasing the overall diversion rate. Despite many recycling and diversion initiatives, the quantity of garbage sent to landfills in the period between 1999 and 2009 was still large, totaling 24,134 tons. Adding new materials to the recycling list was not enough to make a significant impact on the diversion rate.

In order to increase its diversion rate, DNC P&R added a whole category of waste to their recycling program: organic waste. In Yosemite, organic materials account for 60 percent of the waste stream. Of that 60 percent, half of the materials are comprised of food waste. In 2008, an industrial composting facility located nearby in Mariposa County became an option for diverting organic waste, and in 2009, DNC P&R began a process of having its organic waste sent to this facility.

Highlights of this composting initiative include:

- Between August 2009 and November 2010, DNC P&R has delivered 215.72 tons of clean organic waste to the county compost facility - 10.27% of the total amount of solid waste sent to the landfill in the same period. In terms of diversion, it is estimated that composting of organic waste increased DNC P&R's rate by 8.9%, from 38.7% in 2009 to 47.6% in 2010.
- The separation of organic waste from garbage throughout DNC P&R food and beverage outlets positively impacted the county compost facility operations, which currently counts on a substantial amount of clean organic waste from DNC P&R. DNC P&R's waste stream has helped the facility to produce a better product at the end of the composting process.
- DNC successfully negotiated a tipping fee of \$55/ton for clean organic waste and manure, which is another incentive for the County's other businesses to start composting.
- In October 2010, Yosemite National Park joined the composting initiative by placing a four yard dumpster in the Historic Housing Complex in Yosemite Valley which is serviced by DNC P&R and TWS services.

DNC P&R's efforts should serve as a model for other concessioners that have access to local large scale industrial composting facilities.