



Santa Maria Joint Union
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEWS * NEWS * NEWS
PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday,
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2023

The Santa Maria High School Alpine Club took their annual trip to Yosemite National Park last weekend.

Fifteen students camped in Wawona Campground for three nights, explored the Yosemite History Center and Pioneer Museum, and challenged themselves with rigorous hikes each day in the Yosemite Valley. They were able to learn about the geology and history of the park, the importance of preservation and conservation, teamwork, camping and trail etiquette, and make new friendships.

The students hiked between 7 and 10 miles each day, one of which was the hike to Nevada Falls, which took them up the popular Mist Trail - alongside Vernal Falls, and down the famous Muir Trail. They also walked up the mist of the waterfall and then endured walking through a pouring waterfall on the Muir Trail after descending from the top of Nevada Falls. The snowpack totals for Yosemite were at nearly 300% this year, and the waterfalls and rivers were raging.

"Many of our students have never been to a National Park, and some have never even left Santa Maria, so this was an eye-opening experience for our club members. They were able to see star-filled skies at night, beautiful giant trees, snow, and of course- gorgeous waterfalls. There was still a lot of snow, and we had to cross several snowbanks while we were hiking, which made it quite an adventure. The students were in awe of the tremendous amount of water and the numerous waterfalls. The water is beautiful, but treacherous, so we had to be sure and provide several safety lessons to our group." – Amy Hennings, club advisor and teacher.

"You can try to imagine what Yosemite is like but once you get there it will be nothing like you imagined because of how spectacular it is" - Angelica Hilario, 11th grade.

"This trip with the Alpine Club to Yosemite will be one I won't forget. I walked through a waterfall, had a snowball fight, saw a full rainbow, hiked 7 miles or more, and met some pretty cool people. I will definitely see you again sometime, Yosemite." - Elizabeth Sanchez, 12th grade.

"The trip to Yosemite was quite a memorable experience, one which will never be forgotten. I did not know what to expect, but due to the preparedness of chaperones and advisor, Mrs. Hennings, I've grown a closer connection to the club and fellow peers. Although some hikes were a bit strenuous, they were safely conducted. Coming out of Yosemite, I cannot wait to embark on a newfound hiking hobby throughout my soon to come, college journey." - Suleima Martinez Espinoza, 12th grade.

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