



**Client:**  
Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FYI)

**Industry:**  
Airport (Airport Terminal Improvement)

**NatureMaker® Solution:**  
Giant column clad sequoia integrated into High Sierra naturoscapes create a unique “sense of place”

Client Profile

*“NatureMaker’s Steel Art Trees are the key component in helping us rebrand the airport’s image. There are few airports in the world where you can land and know exactly where you are. Now when passengers arrive at or exit the terminal, through NatureMaker’s “sequoia-scape,” they will remember Fresno Yosemite International Airport.”*

**Russ Widmar**  
Director of Aviation, Fresno Yosemite International Airport

### CLIENT PROFILE

Fresno Yosemite International, formerly known as Hammer Airfield, was used by the US Army Air Force during World War II. In a decision to rebrand and celebrate its enviable location as the airport closest to three national parks, Sequoia, Kings Canyon, and Yosemite, the name was changed in 1995 from Fresno Air Terminal (FAT) to Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FYI).

Today FYI provides safe, convenient non-stop air service as far east as Dallas/Fort Worth and internationally to Guadalajara, Mexico. FYI is the largest self-supporting airport serving California’s Central San Joaquin Valley -- a six county region with a population base of nearly 1 million. The Greater Fresno / Clovis Metropolitan Area is the major urban and principal business center in the region.

### CLIENT CHALLENGE

As Fresno’s population base continues to grow, so has the need for more comprehensive air service. FYI was therefore tasked to improve its terminal facility to serve the projected needs of its domestic and international travelers for the next twenty years. Rather than settling for a conventional Terminal remodel and expansion, the Airport sought to integrate the nearby, world-renowned natural attractions into its design. In presenting itself as “The Gateway City to Three National Parks”, both Fresno and its Airport would attain national and international stature. “The Sense of Place” project, as envisioned by FYI, was intended to create a memorable experience for its passengers that would attract more airlines, increase the number of daily flights, boost regional tourism, and improve the city’s image.

### NATUREMAKER SOLUTION

NatureMaker teamed with the architectural firm, CSHQA, Fresno Yosemite International Airport and the National Park Service to create a uniquely immersive, naturalistic environment for FYI’s passengers and visitors. The outcome of three years of planning and design is the commissioned public art project, funded entirely by Airport revenues, that is the central feature of the terminal lobby.





The first design and architectural consideration was how best to integrate six existing structural columns into the nature-oriented theme. The solution: A series of 25' tall sequoia trees, growing from floor to skylight, that not only wrap the columns, but also create the most immediate visual impact. A brilliantly detailed (both inside and out) walk-through sequoia, cladding two of the columns, is evocative of the famous Wawona Tree in Yosemite's Mariposa Grove. The adjacent smaller sequoia, pine, and fir trees, coupled with fallen logs, tree stumps, charred trunks, and ground forms, fully capture the essential tranquility and persistence of life in the High Sierra.

Over the course of eighteen months, NatureMaker designed, engineered, handcrafted, and installed the "sequoia-scape" that highlights the Airport's geographic proximity to the National Parks. The project works to provide visitors with a first and last impression of the grandeur, beauty, and connectivity to the wilderness experience.

## THE RESULT

The recently completed Airport rebranding and Terminal remodel /improvements have already accentuated an uptick in passenger traffic and increased regional tourism. FYI's enhanced travel experience will continue to generate its own word-of-mouth: no other major airport in the world can boast of a similar integration of nature, art, imagination, and civic-mindedness to create a singular identity. As passengers and visitors stroll through the Airport's sequoia forest, they are delighted and fascinated by the giant specimens that seem to be supporting and growing through the roof of the Terminal. In its attention to details large and small -- sapling and snag trees, authentic cedar split rail fencing, native granite curbing, natural groundcover material, and carpet patterns that closely resemble the local agricultural landscape as seen from the sky -- Fresno Yosemite International Airport has successfully realized its intended "sense of place".

