



What is Designated Wilderness?

National Wilderness Preservation System

“A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.” - *Wilderness Act of 1964*

With the Wilderness Act of 1964, Congress acted to preserve wild areas across our nation to “secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness.” This landmark legislation, the first of its kind anywhere in the world, established the National Wilderness Preservation System. Federal lands included in this system are designated by Congress and must, by law, be managed to preserve their wilderness character.

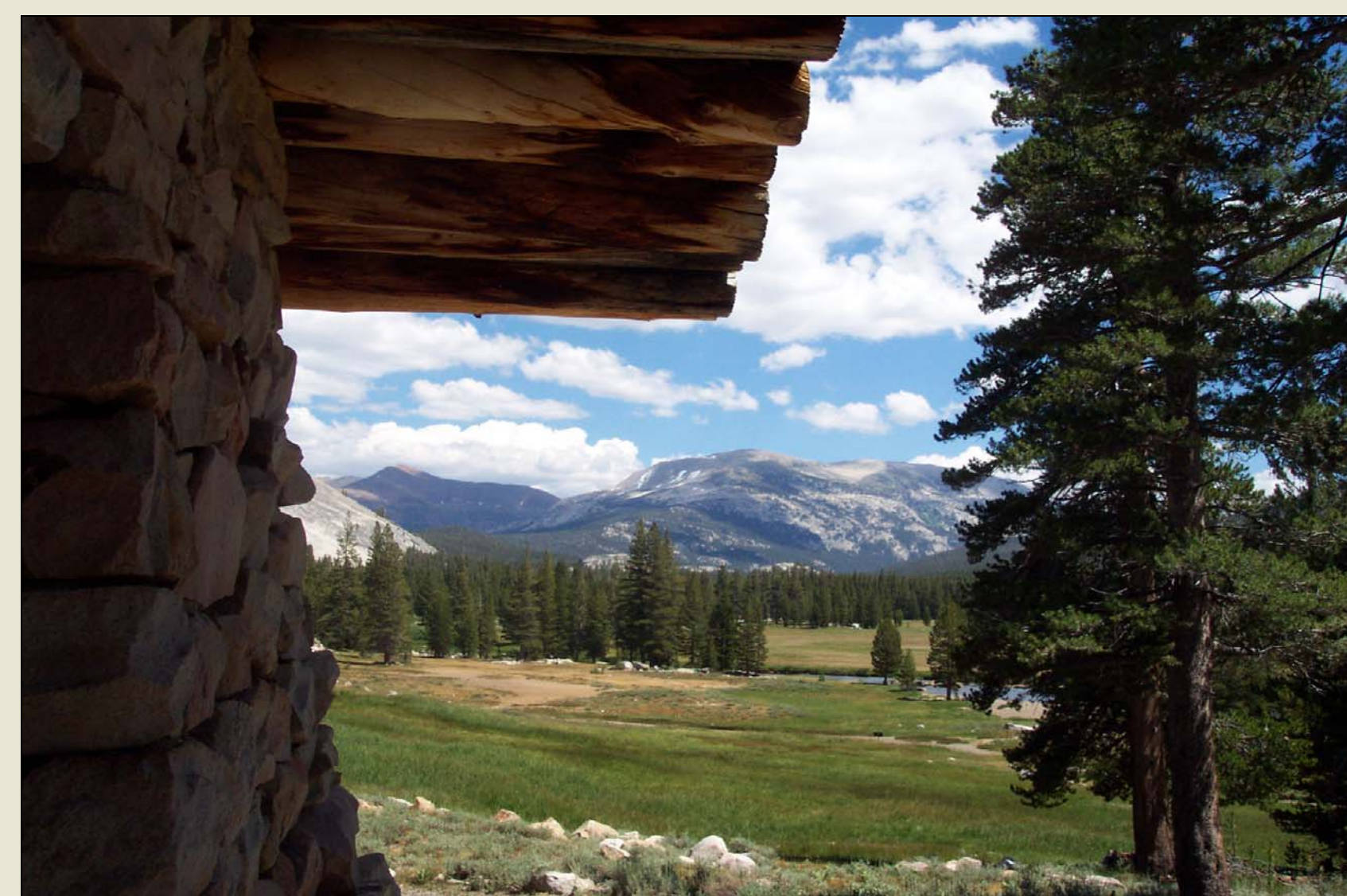


Photo courtesy of Angela Sevin

“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity...” John Muir, 1898

Wilderness in Yosemite National Park

Congress designated the Yosemite Wilderness in 1984, placing over 93% of Yosemite National Park (about 705,000 acres) in designated Wilderness. Yosemite’s Wilderness is managed through the park’s Wilderness Management Program, which is a successful model for wilderness management throughout the nation. The goals of the program are to provide for maximum visitor freedom while protecting wilderness values and park resources. Key components of this program include use limits, monitoring, and Leave No Trace education.



Tuolumne Meadows from Parsons Lodge

Photo Courtesy of Kristina Rylands

Tuolumne Meadows is a rustic outpost in the vast expanse of Yosemite’s Wilderness. Due to its high elevation, proximity to wilderness, and relatively low amount of development, Tuolumne Meadows is, for many, a jumping-off point for backcountry excursions as well as a destination for visitors seeking solitude and an accessible wilderness experience.

Designated Wilderness and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

Approximately 78% of the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River corridor is located in Congressionally designated Wilderness and is part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act specifies that in case of conflicts between the mandates of the National Wild and Scenic River and National Wilderness Systems, the more restrictive provisions apply.

