Experience Your America Yosemite National Park

Yosemite Guide September 30, 2020 - December 1, 2020

Yosemite Valley Area in inset: Yosemite Valley Map

Celebrate, enjoy, and learn more about Yosemite’s undeveloped and natural wilderness areas on page 10. Photo by Ryan Alonzo

Winter Weather Driving and Chain Control Information:

Winter road conditions through Yosemite can vary widely and may require tire chains. **Chain requirements are strictly enforced.** For updated 24-hour road and weather conditions for Yosemite National Park, please call 209/372-0200. Signs will indicate when chains are required. Here is a summary of chain control signs on Yosemite roads:

**R1** - All vehicles without mud and snow tires are required to install chainstables. Vehicles with mud and snow tires do not need chains, but must still carry chains. See chain control regulations on www.nps.gov/yose for vehicles towing trailers.

**R2** - Chains/cables must be installed on ALL vehicles except 4-wheel/all-wheel drive vehicles with mud and snow tires. Four-wheel drive vehicles must have 4-wheel drive engaged.

**R3** - ALL vehicles are required to install chainstables/cables, regardless of having 4-wheel/all-wheel drive capability. NO EXCEPTIONS.

**"M+S"** will be on the side of your tires if they are mud and snow tires.

UPDATE

The Yosemite Valley Shuttle System will not be operating during the 2020 season.

Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, visitor services and access may be affected. Check local resources and area signage in light of changing public health requirements related to COVID-19. For details, visit www.nps.gov/yose.

We encourage you to follow CDC guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- Practice social distancing by maintaining 6 feet of distance between you and others.
- Wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Most importantly, stay home if you feel sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

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Park Updates

How Will COVID-19 Effect My Visit?
Following guidance from federal, state, and local public health authorities and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we are increasing access and services in a phased approach at Yosemite National Park. Visit the park website, www.nps.gov/yose, for updates on access and safety information.

Currently open and available
Visitor contact stations are located in Yosemite Valley, Mariposa Grove, Big Oak Flat, and Tuolumne Meadows.
Most roads and trails are open. Some trails may be closed or re-routed.
Select campgrounds and reservations are open. Campground fees are current.
Visitor Centers are closed until further notice.
Some campgrounds are currently closed.
Most programs are canceled until further notice.

Not open or available at this time
All shuttle and tours are canceled for the year.
Yosemite Theater and Yosemite Museum will be closed for the year.
Campground offices are closed. There is no walk-up service.
Tuolumne Meadows Lodge and services will be closed for the year.

Unavailable in 2020

What Does 6-ft Look Like?
The wing span of a bald eagle is roughly 6 feet long. While social distancing, imagine the length of a soaring eagle’s wing span between you and others.

Enterprising a National Park
Yosemite is a place where wilderness prevails. Prepare yourself for a wild experience. The National Park Service is bound by its mission to protect Yosemite’s natural and cultural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations. Please, be attentive to the regulations in place to protect park resources (page 9) and those designed for your safety (page 8).

Park App
Download the Yosemite app for an interactive map, hiking trails, and park updates. See page 11 for more information.

COVID-19 Coronavirus
SAFETY ALERT
For your safety and the safety of other visitors and employees, we encourage you to follow CDC guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Practice social distancing. Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet between you and others.
- Wash hands using soap and water or use hand sanitizer frequently.
- Wear a face-covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Additionally, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and most importantly, stay home if you feel sick.

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Access for People with Disabilities
For a complete list of accessible services, exhibits, and recreational opportunities, pick up a Yosemite Accessibility Guide at any park entrance station or visitor center, or view online at www.nps.gov/yose/accessibility.html, or call a park Accessibility Coordinator at (209) 379-1035.

Sign Language interpreting is available upon request. Contact Deaf Services at (209) 379-9250 (v/tex). Two weeks advance notice is requested.

Assistive Listening Devices available upon advance request at any visitor center.
Audio tours available at Yosemite Valley Visitor Center. Contact an Accessibility Coordinator for more information.

Accessible parking spaces available west of Yosemite Valley Visitor Center.

Upcoming Park Projects
Bridalveil Fall Rehabilitation Project
Why: To improve parking, roads, trails, and facilities situated near Bridalveil Fall.
When: Lasting through 2020 and 2021
Visitor Impact: Comfort station and parking lot may not be available due to construction.

Tien dta Road Rehabilitation Plan, Tenaya Lake Trail, and Tuolumne River Plan
Why: To make safety improvements and improve visitor experience, while preserving natural and cultural resources along the road.
When: Late 2020 through 2022 seasons
Visitor Impact: 30-minute traffic delays along Tioga Road due to construction.

Glacier Point Rehabilitation Plan
Why: To repair aging and deteriorated pavement, pullouts, and parking areas along Glacier Point Road.
When: Lasting through 2021 and 2022 seasons
Visitor Impact: Full road closure from spring through fall 2021, and 30-minute delays in 2022.

Enjoy American Indian Heritage Month
November is National American Indian Heritage Month and The National Park Service celebrates and pays tribute to the rich ancestry and traditions of Native Americans. America is a vast land of many cultures dating back thousands of years. Today, parks preserve and share the stories and heritage of indigenous peoples. Find your park and learn about the history, heritage, and traditions of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian peoples.

TIPS TO DO IN YOSEMITE VALLEY
Custom Yosemite Experiences
Join a Yosemite Conservancy naturalist guide for a Custom Adventure designed to fit your interests and schedule. Options include day hikes, birding walks, stargazing programs, backpacking trips, and more. For more information, contact adventures@yosemite.org or visit yosemite.org/custom-adventures.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
Photography Excursions
Sign up for 2-4 hour photography classes, private guided tours, or camera walks led by resident staff photographers. Call ahead for reservations 209/372-4413 or visit anseladams.com/photography-education.

TIPS TO DO IN THE WAWONA AREA
Pioneer Yosemite History Center
Go back in time to horse-drawn wagons, a covered bridge, and log cabins. A visit to the Pioneer Yosemite History Center explores Yosemite’s history and interpretive signs explain how Yosemite was the inspiration for national parks in America and around the world.

Mariposa Grove
Located near Yosemite’s South Entrance, the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias is the park’s largest stand of giant sequoias, with about 500 trees in the grove. Shuttles will not operate during the 2020 season, expect a two-mile, one-way walk to reach the grove. Self-guiding tours are available in the grove.
Discover Yosemite
Let your curiosity guide you to new places

**Entrance Fees**

- **Non-commercial car, truck, RV, or van with 15 or fewer passenger seats (per-guest fee)**
  - Vehicle: Valid for 7 days
  - $35/vehicle
- **Motorcycle** Valid for 7 days
  - $30/motorcycle
- **Individual** Valid for 7 days
  - $20 (in a bus, on foot, bicycle, or horse)
- **Yosemite Pass $70**
  - Valid for one year in Yosemite.
- **Interagency Annual Pass $80**
  - Valid for one year at all federal recreation sites.
- **Interagency Senior Pass $80** (Lifetime)
  - For U.S. citizens or permanent residents 62 and over.
- **Interagency Annual Senior Pass $20**
  - For U.S. citizens or permanent residents 62 and over.
- **Interagency Access Pass (Free)** (Lifetime)
  - For permanently disabled U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- **Interagency Military Pass (Free)** (Annual)
  - For active duty U.S. military and dependents.
- **Interagency 4th Grade Pass (Free)** (Annual)
  - For fourth graders and their families. Must present paper voucher.

**Reservations**

- **Campground Reservations**
  - (877) 444-6777
  - www.recreation.gov
- **Lodging Reservations**
  - (888) 413-8869
  - www.travelyosemite.com
- **Group Sales Office**
  - (888) 339-3481

**Regional Info**

- **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)**
  - www.yarts.com
- **Highway 120 West**
  - Yosemite Chamber of Commerce
    - (800) 449-9120 or (209) 962-0429
- **Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau**
  - (800) 446-1333
  - www.tcvb.com
- **Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau**
  - (559) 683-4636
  - www.yosemitethisyear.com
- **Coulterville Visitor Center**
  - (209) 878-3329
- **California Welcome Center, Merced**
  - (800) 446-5353 or (209) 724-8104
  - www.yosemite-gateway.org
- **Mariposa County Visitor Center**
  - (866) 425-3366 or (209) 966-7081
- **Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau**
  - (209) 742-4567
  - www.yosemite.com
- **Highway 120 East**
  - Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce
    - (760) 647-6629, www.leevingin.com

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Walking Yosemite Valley

We strongly recommend moving around the east end of Yosemite Valley on foot or bike if possible. On the map below, the numbers in the white circles show the average walking time between each destination, represented by the red circles.

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Yosemite Valley Walking Map

- Average Walking Times
- Walking Routes
- Campground
- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Restroom
- Walk-In Campground

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The Tioga Road and Glacier Point Road close after the first significant snowfall. Overnight parking on these roads end October 15. For current road and weather information, please call (209) 372-0200.
Yosemite Valley

Yosemite Valley is world-famous for its impressive waterfalls, cliffs, and unusual rock formations. It is open year round and can be reached via Highway 41 from Fresno, Highway 140 from Merced, Highway 120 West from Manteca, and via the Tioga Road (Highway 120 East) from Lee Vining in summer. The Valley is known for massive cliff faces like El Capitan and Half Dome, its plunging waterfalls including the tallest in North America, and its attractive meadows. While Yosemite Falls will be dry until rain and snow recharge it, a moderate hike will take you to Vernal and Nevada Falls. Yosemite's meadows are great places to see wildlife and to photograph fall and winter scenery. Admire El Capitan, the massive granite monolith that stands 3,593 feet from base to summit. Whether you explore the Valley by foot or car, the scenery will leave you in awe and eager to see what’s around the next.

Glacier Point Road

Glacier Point, an overlook with a commanding view of Yosemite Valley, Half Dome, and Yosemite's high country, is located 30 miles (1 hour) from Yosemite Valley. The road stays open as weather permits, however, overnight parking along it ends October 15. Glacier Point Road closes beyond the Badger Pass Ski Area after the first significant snowfall. When the road is snow-covered and conditions permit, a system of cross-country ski tracks are maintained on it. From Yosemite Valley, take the Wawona Road (Highway 41), then turn left onto Glacier Point Road. At Glacier Point, a short, paved, and wheelchair-accessible trail leads you to a stunning view looking into Yosemite Valley.

Wawona and Mariposa Grove

The Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias is located 36 miles (1¼ hours) south of Yosemite Valley via the Wawona Road (Highway 41), two miles from the park's south entrance station. The Mariposa Grove Road will continue to be closed to vehicles, and have no shuttle service available, for the rest of 2020. The road usually remains closed for the winter until approximately mid-March, however, it is open to hikers, snowshoers, and skiers. All trails in the grove also remain open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The nearby Pioneer Yosemite History Center in Wawona is a collection of historic buildings associated with people and events that shaped the national park idea in Yosemite.

Crane Flat and Tuolumne Grove

Crane Flat is located 16 miles from Yosemite Valley at the junction of the Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads. A number of hikes through pleasant meadows are available— when snow covers the ground these turn into delightful ski and snowshoe tracks. To see giant sequoias, park at the Tuolumne Grove parking area located on the Tioga Road, and walk one steep mile down to the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias. Or, park at Merced Grove trailhead and walk two steep miles down to this small grove. These groves north of Yosemite Valley are smaller than the more-famous Mariposa Grove, but are quieter and off limits to vehicles. Remember that the walk down is easier than the walk back up.

Tuolumne Meadows and Tioga Road

The Tioga Road offers a 39-mile scenic drive past forests, meadows, lakes, and granite domes. The road closes after the first big snowfall, and overnight parking ends on October 15. The road's elevation ranges from 6,200 feet to just under 10,000 feet. Tuolumne Meadows embodies the high-country of the Sierra Nevada. The Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River winds through broad sub-alpine meadows surrounded by granite domes and peaks. It is the jumping off place for countless hikes, whether you venture out for a day or a week. In winter, Tuolumne Meadows is often reached by skiers via the Snow Creek Trail from the Mirror Lake trailhead, a short distance east of Yosemite Valley.

Hetch Hetchy

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, a source of drinking water and hydroelectric power for the City of San Francisco, is home to spectacular scenery and the starting point for many wilderness trails. The area’s low elevation makes it a good place to hike in autumn and winter. The Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is located 40 miles (1¼ hour) from Yosemite Valley via the Big Oak Flat Road (Highway 120W) and the Evergreen Road. The Hetch Hetchy Road is open from 8am to 5pm. Vehicles and/or trailers over 25 feet long, and RV’s and other vehicles over 8 feet wide are not permitted on the narrow, winding Hetch Hetchy Road.
Experience Your America
Yosemite National Park

Yosemite Valley and Beyond

Information, Exhibits, and Programs

Yosemite Valley Visitor Center and Bookstore
A visitor contact station will be available outside the visitor center for information and updates. The Yosemite Conservancy Bookstore will be operating as an outdoor “to-go” store from 9am to 5pm. Located in Yosemite Village.

Yosemite Museum
Closed during the 2020 season.

INDIAN CULTURAL VILLAGE
Walk through the reconstructed Indian Village of Ahwahnee and learn about the structures the Ahwahneechee lived in and the plants they used for survival. Check out the interactive displays and see the ceremonial roundhouse, bark houses, and sweathouse members of the local tribes still actively use for ceremonies and special gatherings. Located behind the Yosemite Museum in Yosemite Village.

Yosemite Museum Store
Closed during the 2020 season.

Yosemite Renaissance - A Call for Artists
The call to artists for Yosemite Renaissance 36 has begun. The competition is open to artists worldwide, and offers $4000 in cash awards. The show opens at the Yosemite Museum Gallery in February 2021, then travels to other art centers across California. Submission deadline is November 29, 2020. The exhibit focuses on artwork inspired by Yosemite and the California Sierra Nevada region. Artists interested in applying can view the prospectus at www.yosemiterenaissance.org and can apply at www.smartrentery.com. For more information, call (559) 683-5551 or email info@yosemiterenaissance.org.

CONCLUDING EXHIBIT
August 23, 2020 - October 10, 2020 Yosemite and The West: Photographs by Bob Kolbrener
While places like Yosemite and The West have found their way into our collective consciousness, stirring us through art, politics or social media, their metaphors of perseverance, strength and receptiveness carry a new weight.

Bob Kolbrener has photographed Yosemite and The West for over 50 years. It is easy to see in his images a benevolence and power in grand landscapes, of the earth calling to us.

NEW EXHIBIT
October 11, 2020 - November 21, 2020 Glacial Conclusions - New Paintings by Penny Otwell
Now is the time to seek out old friends — and in Penny Orwell’s case, the oldest of friends. Literally. Throughout her decades spent wandering and painting Yosemite National Park, Ms. Orwell has come to include the eternal rocks, trees and waterfalls as among her dearest companions, and those she knows and understands intimately. They in return, have given her a lifetime of inspiration and influence, which now more than ever, we look to embrace without debate or critique. A result of that grounded relationship in these times of consolation is Glacial Conclusions - New Paintings by Penny Orwell, which will open at The Ansel Adams Gallery on October 11 and run through November 21, 2020. We hope you can come to the gallery to view a culmination in a lifetime of friendship and art in Yosemite.

A Call to Artists
- Yosemite Renaissance
- Yosemite Museum
- Yosemite Museum Store
- Yosemite Renaissance - A Call for Artists
- Yosemite Museum

Thematic Programs

Social distancing measures will be in place at all park programs for the safety of participants and employees. Programs marked with a ∆ indicates that facilities are accessible to visitors in wheelchairs. Short, steep inclines may be encountered. Check local listings for additional programs.

PHOTOGRAPHY CLASSES ∆
The Ansel Adams Gallery offers photography classes most days of the week. Sign up in advance at The Ansel Adams Gallery, located in Yosemite Valley or visit their website for a complete schedule at anseladams.com/photography-education. Excursions have been modified to limit group size and accommodate social distancing for guest safety.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
Open 10am to 3pm daily. The gallery offers works by Ansel Adams as well as contemporary photographers, painters, and printers. Call (209) 372-4413 or visit www.anseladams.com for more information. The Ansel Adams Gallery is located in Yosemite Village.

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Yosemite Conservancy (YC)

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES AND MORE
Join Yosemite Conservancy for naturalist-led outdoor adventures.

Oct 3-4 Birthplace of Modern Climbing: Yosemite Valley
Oct 6-9 Drawing & Watercolor Journaling with Janet Takahashi
Oct 31 Dine and Discover: Halloween Fall Moon Hike to Tiptop Point

Contact us to plan a custom adventure or custom art class. Visit us online to learn more.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES:
yosemite.org/experience/outdoor-adventures

Custom Adventures:
yosemite.org/experience/custom-adventures

Custom Art Classes (through Oct 17):
yosemite.org/experience/custom-art-classes

FUTURE EXHIBIT
November 22, 2020 - January 2, 2021 40 Years in Yosemite: A Retrospective of Charles Cramer

Charles Cramer has enjoyed photographing and exhibiting in Yosemite National Park — beginning with his first show at the Valley Visitor Center in 1979. This winter, we celebrate his life chasing the light in the Sierra.

THINGS TO DO IN CRANE FLAT
Tuolumne Grove
The trailhead for this grove of approximately 25 mature sequoias is near the Big Oak Flat and Tuoga road intersection at Crane Flat. The moderately strenuous trail drops 508 feet (150 meters) in one mile. Within the Tuolumne Grove there is an easy, half-mile, self-guided nature trail. Bring drinking water.

Merced Grove
The Merced Grove, a group of about 20 mature trees, is a three-mile, round-trip hike. The trail drops 1.5 miles, making this a moderately-strenuous hike. Bring drinking water. The grove is located 3½ miles north of Crane Flat along the Big Oak Flat Road (Highway 120 West). The trail is marked by a roadside sign.

THINGS TO DO IN TUOLUMNE MEADOWS
Scenic Drive / Hikes
Tuolumne Meadows provides a glimpse of the High Sierra. The Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River winds through broad sub-alpine meadows surrounded by high granite domes and peaks. It is the jumping off place for countless hikes. Stop at the Tuolumne Meadows information center for details. Open 9-5 daily.

Parsons Memorial Lodge, McCauley Cabin, and Soda Springs
Two trails, both flat and 3/4-mile long, lead to this historic area. Soda Springs are small, naturally-carbonated springs that attract birds and deer, especially at sunrise and sunset. Thank you for staying on the trail.

The Merced River, with its naturally-carbonated springs that attract birds, flows through the Tuolumne Meadows. Throughout the park, visitors can find a wide variety of programs and activities, including nature walks, stargazing, and music concerts. To learn more about the latest updates, visit the park’s website or call (209) 372-4413.

Yosemite Valley Visitor Center
Information, Exhibits, and Programs

Programs

Collection of images and articles related to Yosemite National Park, including information on the park’s natural and cultural history. Yosemite Valley Visitor Center provides information on all park programs, events, and activities. Visit the center to learn about the park’s many hiking trails, scenic drives, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
Located in the Yosemite Village area of the park, the gallery offers an extensive collection of photography, with works by Ansel Adams and other contemporary photographers. The gallery also includes a gift shop featuring books, prints, and other items related to Yosemite.

Yosemite Museum
Located in the Yosemite Village area of the park, the museum features exhibits on the park’s history, culture, and natural features. Visitors can learn about the Ahwahneechee people who lived in the park before European settlement, as well as the park’s wildlife and plant life.

Yosemite Museum Store
The museum store offers a variety of items related to Yosemite, including books, shirts, hats, and other souvenirs. The store is located in the Yosemite Village area of the park.

Yosemite Renaissance - A Call for Artists
Yosemite Renaissance is an annual call to artists that invites submissions of artwork inspired by Yosemite and the California Sierra Nevada region. The exhibition is open to artists worldwide, and offers $4000 in cash awards. The show opens at the Yosemite Museum Gallery in February 2021, then travels to other art centers across California.

CONCLUDING EXHIBIT
August 23, 2020 - October 10, 2020 Yosemite and The West: Photographs by Bob Kolbrener
The exhibit features photographs by Bob Kolbrener, a renowned photographer who has captured the beauty of Yosemite and The West for over 50 years. His images highlight the region’s natural beauty and the unique relationship between humans and nature.

NEW EXHIBIT
October 11, 2020 - November 21, 2020 Glacial Conclusions - New Paintings by Penny Otwell
This exhibit features new paintings by Penny Otwell, a long-time artist who has given her a lifetime of inspiration and influence. Her works reflect her deep understanding of the landscape and her connection to the natural world.

The Merced Grove is a group of about 20 mature sequoias located in Tuolumne Meadows. It is a three-mile, round-trip hike that drops 1.5 miles. Bring drinking water.

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All available operations and hours of operations are subject to change. Check local resources and area signage in light of changing public health requirements related to COVID-19.
Choose your adventure

What better way to enjoy the beauty of Yosemite than on foot. Ask a ranger at any visitor contact station for updated trail conditions and one of several free day-hike handouts.

### Popular Yosemite Day Hikes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail / Description</th>
<th>Starting Point</th>
<th>Distance / Time</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>NPS Images of Trails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridalveil Fall</td>
<td>Yosemite Valley - Bridalveil Fall Parking Area</td>
<td>0.5 mile round-trip, 20 minutes</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Yosemite Fall</td>
<td>Yosemite Valley - Yosemite Valley Lodge Parking Lot</td>
<td>1 mile round-trip, 20 minutes</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror Lake</td>
<td>Yosemite Valley - Curry Village Parking Area</td>
<td>3+ miles round-trip, 2-3 hours</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook's Meadow Loop</td>
<td>Yosemite Valley - Yosemite Village Parking Area</td>
<td>1 mile loop, 2 hours</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa Grove: Big Trees Loop</td>
<td>Mariposa Grove Welcome Center Parking Lot</td>
<td>4.3 miles round-trip, 3 to 4 hours</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lowerr Mist Trail Closure

- Closed from the lower Mist Trail-JMT junction to the top of Vernal Fall
- Closed Monday through Friday, 7am to 4pm, through November 21, 2020, due to trail reconstruction.
- Trail open on weekends
- Trail may be open overnight; if not, gates will remain closed and signs posted about the overnight closure.
- Hikers are encouraged to hike the Mist Trail as a loop up to Clark Point and down the JMT at all times.
- Warning: there is a $280 fine for entering a construction zone.
- Visit a visitor contact station for more information.

### COVID-19 Coronavirus

- Please practice social distancing while walking on trails.
- Expect trail closures.
- Some trails may be re-routed to accommodate social distancing protocol. Please comply with all posted signs.

### PARK UPDATE

- Please practice social distancing while walking on trails.
- Expect trail closures.
- Some trails may be re-routed to accommodate social distancing protocol. Please comply with all posted signs.

### Know Before You Go:

- Swimming is not permitted in the Hetch Hetchy reservoir or in Emerald Pool above Vernal Fall.
- Stay away from swift-moving water. Choose swimming areas carefully. Always supervise children closely.
- Never swim upstream from a waterfall, even if the water appears shallow/calm.
 Permit Information

Camping, Hiking, and Wilderness Use

Wilderness Permits

Wilderness permits are required for all overnight trips into the Yosemite Wilderness. Following adaptive management guidelines and the need to protect the health and safety of our visitors and employees, there will be no first come first serve (FCFS) permits issued in the park for 2020. The remaining 40 percent of trailhead quotas will be available through a two week out lottery using the advanced reservation system. Beginning October 15, 100 percent of trailhead quotas will be available through this same lottery system. Once the Day Use Reservation System ends, wilderness permits will be available by self-registration from the station closest to your trailhead. Reservations can be made online at www.yosemite.org/experience/wilderness-permits. A processing fee of $5 per permit plus $5 per person is charged to each confirmed reservation. Please visit www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/wildcond.htm for the most up to date information about wilderness permits and conditions. For even more information, visit www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm and the Leave No Trace website at www.lnt.org.

YOSEMITE VALLEY Wilderness Centers

Open daily from 9am to 1pm for bear canister rentals only. The Valley Wilderness Center is located in Yosemite Village, between the post office and The Ansel Adams Gallery. Closes for the season October 18, bear canisters will then be available to rent or buy at the Yosemite Valley Bookstore.

TUOLUMNE MEADOWS

Open daily from 9am to 1pm for bear canister rentals only. The Tuolumne Meadows Wilderness Center is located just south of Tioga Road, along the road to Tuolumne Meadows Lodge. Closes for the season October 15.

Half Dome Permit Information

Permits to hike to the top of Half Dome are required seven days a week when the cables are up for 2020, through October 13, conditions permitting. A daily total of 225 preseason lottery permits have already been issued for 2020. Some additional permits will be released by daily lottery throughout the season based on estimated under-use and cancellation rates. Applications for daily lottery permits will be accepted 2 days prior to the desired hiking date between midnight and 1pm. To apply, visit Recreation.gov or call 877/444-6777. A non-refundable application fee applies to all submissions and a use fee applies to winning applicants. Finally, a daily quota of 75 Half Dome permits will be available to overnight users with an appropriate wilderness permit (use fee applies). For the 2020 season, Half Dome permits attached to a wilderness permit will only be available through the current online wilderness reservation system. Rock climbers who reach the top of Half Dome without entering the subdome area may descend on the Half Dome Trail without a permit. More information is available at: http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/hdpermits.htm. For backpackers more information is available at: http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/hdwildpermits.htm.

Camping

Upper Pines is open year-round during the 2020 season. For more information on campground opening dates, visit our website at go.nps.gov/campground. Sleeping in vehicles and frontcountry camping are only permitted in designated campgrounds.

CAMPING RESERVATIONS

In Yosemite Valley’s car campgrounds, reservations are recommended December through February, and required March through November. Outside the valley, reservations are required summer through fall for Hodgdon Meadow, Crane Flat, Wawona, and half of Tuolumne Meadows.

Other campgrounds (except group and stock campgrounds) are first-come, first-served. Campground reservations are available up to five months in advance, on the 15th of each month at 7 am Pacific time. Log onto the website or call as soon as possible as some campgrounds fill within a few minutes of the opening period.

For campground reservations, visit www.recreation.gov (recommended) or call (877) 444-6777 or TDD (877) 833-6777 or (518) 885-3639 from outside the US and Canada.

COVID-19 Coronavirus

PARK UPDATE

• Camping during the 2020 season is by reservation only.
• There is no walk-up service, campground offices are closed. Same-day availability may be accessed via recreation.gov.
• Some campgrounds will be closed.

General Camping Information

Services
• All sites include picnic tables, firepits with grills, and a food locker (33” x 45” x 18”). See page 9 for food storage regulations.
• Shower and laundry facilities are not available during the 2020 season.
• There are no hookups in Yosemite campgrounds, but there are sanitary dump stations in Yosemite Valley (all year), and summer only in Wawona and Tuolumne Meadows.

Regulations
• Proper food storage is required 24 hours a day.
• A maximum of six people (including children) and two vehicles are allowed per campsite.
• Quiet hours are from 10pm to 6am.
• Where permitted, pets must be on a leash and may not be left unattended.

Campfires
• In Yosemite Valley between May 1 and September 30, campfires are permitted between 5pm and 10pm.
• Firewood collection is permitted within the boundaries of campgrounds in Yosemite Valley, and can otherwise be gathered anywhere in the park that is outside Yosemite Valley, below 9,600 feet, and not in a sequoia grove.

Fire Restrictions Are in Effect for the Entire Park

• Wood and charcoal fires (including twig stoves) are only permitted in open developed campgrounds, open picnic areas with park-installed grills, and residential areas.
• Only portable stoves that use pressurized gas, liquid fuel, propane, or alcohol (including tabletop stoves), not wood, are allowed.
• Smoking is prohibited except within an enclosed vehicle, a building in which smoking is allowed, designated campgrounds, designated picnic areas, paved developed areas, and designated smoking areas.
• Smoke is inevitable throughout the year in different parts of the park, whether from campfires, natural wildfire in the backcountry, or prescribed fire. The park may also experience smoke impacts from other areas throughout the region. To help plan your trip look up the air quality page on the park’s website.

Yosemite Guide   September 30, 2020 - December 1, 2020
Keep yourself safe while exploring your park.

There are many ways to experience the wilderness of Yosemite. While the forces of nature can create unexpected hazardous conditions, with a little common sense and some pre-planning, you can minimize the risks associated with many activities.

Autumn Changes in Yosemite

As the heat and excitement of the summer come to a close, changing seasons in Yosemite welcome new possibilities for adventure and enjoyment. Shorter days and cooler temperatures provide a glimpse of the coming winter. With these changes, it is important to know your limits and to be prepared with the essentials when enjoying the myriad of outdoor recreation opportunities in Yosemite.

Weather

Dehydration and exhaustion can occur during any season. You are particularly vulnerable during the lingering summer heat in lower elevation areas of the park. Always carry more water than you need and make sure your hike or outdoor activity is half over before your water is half gone. Prevent dehydration by sipping lots of water throughout the day and frequently eating salty, easy-to-digest snacks. During this season the high country may see its first storms, making it important to monitor weather forecasts while planning trips and making sure to be prepared with extra warm clothes in the event of cooler temperatures.

Altitude

The elevation of Yosemite Valley is around 4,000 feet, and Tuolumne Meadows hovers around 9,000 feet, which may leave you experiencing signs of altitude illness. The effects of altitude can lead to problems with judgment and physical performance and may even become life-threatening. Altitude illness affects us equally, regardless of age, physical condition, and gender. The only cure for altitude illness is to lose elevation.

Rivers and Stream

Yosemite's streams are a huge temptation. Do not be fooled! Yosemite's water is deceptively wanting to cool tired feet. Do not be the overheated and weary hiker simply completely off the road into designated pull-outs. Buckle up! Park rangers enforce California's Motor Vehicle Code on park roads.

For All Seasons

• Stay on established trails – do not take shortcuts, ignore fences, or approach water. Almost all of Yosemite's non-traffic related injuries occur off trail.
• Rock scrambling - leave this to the critters.
• Water and food – Carry more water than you need; stay hydrated and snack frequently. If you are sweating, replace lost salts with salty, easy-to-digest snacks.
• "10 hiking essentials" – including a flashlight or headlamp, sunglasses, sunscreen, navigation, and a signaling method (mirror and whistle).

Let someone know – leave your hiking plan, including intended route, destination, and estimated time of return, with a trusted person. If no one knows you are missing, no one is going to look for you. To return, with a trusted person. If no one knows you are missing, no one is going to look for you.

Hantavirus Information

Mice are an important part of the ecosystem, but can carry diseases harmful to humans. Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) is a rare but serious disease spread to humans via the droppings, urine, or saliva of infected rodents. Not all rodents are infected with hantavirus, but infected rodents have been found throughout the US. You may come into close proximity to rodents during your visit, so take steps to protect yourself from HPS. HPS risk is greater inside enclosures where deer mice are present. If staying in guest lodging, tell housekeeping staff if you see evidence of mice in your room. Do not clean the area yourself. Keep doors to guest lodging shut and keep food in sealed containers. If you are camping and backpacking, do not pitch tents near rodent burrows or droppings.

Hantavirus Information

For more information on hantavirus visit: www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/oursafety.htm.

Plague

Plague is an infectious bacterial disease that is carried by squirrels, chipmunks and other wild rodents. When an infected rodent dies, its fleas can carry the infection to other animals, including humans. Never feed wildlife, avoid dropping food when eating outside, and pitching a tent near rodent burrows. Wear insect repellent with DEET, and tell a park ranger if you see a dead animal. Early symptoms of plague may include high fever, chills, nausea, weakness, and painful swelling at the site of an insect bite. If you develop these symptoms within 6 days of visiting an area at risk for plague in the park, see your doctor and inform them you may have been exposed.

Avoid Contact with Wildlife

Wild animals in Yosemite can transmit diseases, including plague, rabies, and hantavirus. Keeping your distance and your food from wildlife not only protects the animals, but can carry diseases harmful to humans.

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Wildness Etiquette: How to Poop in the Woods

• When nature calls, make sure you are at least 200 feet away from any water source.
• Carry a trowel so you can dig a hole in the dirt that is at least 6 inches deep so you’re able to bury your waste.
• Pack out toilet paper, don’t bury it or try to burn it! If you are in snow and can’t dig a hole into soil you are expected to pack out your waste as well.

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Keep Bears Wild

With warmer spring weather, bears emerge hungry from hibernation. Please, keep Yosemite’s black bears wild and alive, while protecting yourself and your property.

STORE YOUR FOOD PROPERLY

The typical daily diet of most bears may consist of 4,000 to 20,000 calories worth of grasses, acorns, and grubs. It’s easier for a bear to eat the thousands of calories of food in an ice chest than it is to spend all day nibbling on grasses. Their incredible sense of smell allows them to detect things we can’t, which helps them find food—a black bear can smell a dead deer three miles away.

To top it off, bears have excellent vision and see in color, so they recognize ice chests, grocery bags, and other food containers as potential food sources.

DRIVE THE SPEED LIMIT

The most common human-related cause of death for a black bear in Yosemite is being hit by a car. Slow down! Driving too fast is almost always the cause of these accidental deaths. Please report bear sightings by calling (209) 372-0322.

IF YOU SEE A BEAR...

...scare it away or keep your distance. You may not see a bear during your visit because they naturally avoid people. However, if you see one in a developed area (like a campground or parking lot), act immediately to scare it away. Make noise and yell as loud as possible. If there are more than one person, stand together to present a more intimidating figure, but do not surround the bear. If you see a bear anywhere else, consider yourself lucky—keep your distance (at least 50 yards, or about the distance made by four shuttle buses parked end to end). If you get too close, you will be helping the bear become used to being around people. Bears that become comfortable around humans lose their natural fear of us and may become too aggressive. When that happens, they sometimes have to be killed. Report bear sightings and incidents to the Save-A-Bear hotline (209) 372-0322 or by emailing yose_bear_mgmt@nps.gov. For more information about bears in Yosemite please visit www.keepbearswild.org.

How to Store Food

"Food" includes any item with a scent, regardless of packaging. This includes items you may not consider food, such as canned goods, bottles, drinks, soap, cosmetics, toiletries, trash, ice chests (even when empty), and unwashed dishes.

LOCATION FOOD STORAGE WHY?
Your Vehicle You may store food in your car (with windows closed) only during daylight hours. Do not store food in your car after dark: see a food locker. Remember to clear your car of food wrappers, baby wipes, and crumbs in baby seats.
Your Campsite or Tent Cabin You must store all your food in food lockers—not in your tent or tent cabin. A food locker is available at each campsite and tent cabin. Food may be stored out of sight in hard-sided bins with windows closed.
Picnic Areas & on the Trails Do not leave food unattended. Always keep food within arm’s reach. Don’t lock your car to your food.
Backpacking in the Wilderness Bear resistant food containers are required throughout the Yosemite Wilderness. Hanging food is prohibited in Yosemite.

Clean water is a precious resource for all living beings.

- Protect fragile plants and soils: Trampling vegetation and compacting soils affects the movement and cleanliness of water.
- Walk and camp on durable surfaces: Use established trails, campsites, rock, and gravel to minimize your impact. Walk single file and keep groups small.
- Pack it in, pack it out: Pack out toilet paper, hygiene products, leftover food, trash, and litter from campsites, rest areas, and trails. Leave no trace!
- Wash yourself or dishes 200 feet away from water sources.
- Use restroom facilities or bury human waste: Bury human waste in a hole at least 6 inches (15 centimeters) deep and at least 200 feet (60 meters) from streams and lakes.

Yosemite Guardians

Visitors to Yosemite National Park are the park’s most important guardians. With nearly 4 million people watching over its special plants, animals, historic, and archeological sites, imagine how well-protected these park resources could be!

During your visit, be aware that there are people who either unknowingly or intentionally harm park resources. Please contact a park official if you see any of the following illegal acts:

- Feeding or approaching wildlife
- Collecting plants
- Hunting animals
- Collecting reptiles and butterflies
- Picking up archeological items, such as arrowheads
- Using metal detectors
- Driving vehicles into meadows
- Biking off of paved roads
- Camping outside of designated campgrounds
- Possession of weapons inside federal facilities
- Possessing or using marijuana, including medical marijuana
- Operating an unmanned aircraft system ("drone")

If you see activities that could harm people or park resources, jot down any descriptions or a vehicle license plate number and call (209) 379-1992.

E-BIKES

E-bikes with two or three wheels, fully operable pedals, and electric motors less than 750 watts (1 horsepower) are allowed on roads open to cars, as well as on Happy Isles Road and Mirror Lake Road. They are not allowed on bike paths or trails.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about Yosemite National Park regulations visit www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/yoursafety.htm.

Hitch Hikeby - Image by NPS
When you hear the word wilderness
what do you feel?

We’ll even give you space to write it down.

You're right! Yosemite, as a national park, helps to elicit many feelings of wilderness—particularly in the parts of the park that are federally designated as such. In 1964, Congress passed the Wilderness Act, designating land to be specifically managed with restraint. The goal was to let natural forces have free play in these landscapes. All those feelings—independence, freedom, fear, fun, humility, solitude, connection, and comfort can be evoked when we visit the wilderness here in Yosemite. With 94 percent of the 759,620 acres contained within our border designated as wilderness, it’s unlikely you’ll ever run out of new places to explore or feel!

What about the wilderness evokes these feelings?

The Wilderness Act established the National Wilderness Preservation System, as a public response to our increasingly crowded, developed and mechanized world. The public and their representatives sought a way to leave some land undeveloped and natural. It was meant to be different, even from the rest of national park land. The lack of development in these areas allows us freedom to wander and experience an unmanipulated world where natural processes are left to evolve without human management. It provides for feeling small under big night skies, awe in watching animals roam in their habitats, healing space and solitude, and seeing cultural resources that tell the human story of this place. The wilderness is one of the few places you can travel for days without ever seeing a road, a building, or any sign of modern human influence. It also allows for the opportunity to challenge ourselves physically and mentally in an unaltered and untamed environment. Here, we can test our limits and discover self-reliance in a wide variety of ways from hiking, backpacking, climbing, or trail riding, to skiing and snowshoeing.

For some, the test of limits is not needed. The pure knowledge that wilderness exists evokes these feelings. Author Wallace Stegner wrote in his ‘Defense of Wilderness’ “...We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope.”

What can you do to help preserve this experience for yourself and others?

The National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for the stewardship of 44 million acres of designated Wilderness, which makes up over 80 percent of all NPS lands. Whether you drive to the edge and look in, or spend a lifetime of immersion in Wilderness—your role is important. Imagine walking through a massive museum of priceless artifacts with no velvet ropes, no guards, no one to protect the exhibits. We are seeking partners to assist us in ensuring the preservation of these wild places in their natural states.

- Learn more about wilderness! Check out www.wilderness.net to learn more about where it is, and what makes each wilderness unit unique
- Please familiarize yourself with Leave No Trace ethics.
- Consider every action you make and its effect on the place you are in as well the plants and animals that live there. Remember that no matter how small your lone action might seem there are 4 million Yosemite visitors each year that could amplify your impact and alter this place for ever. Where are you stepping? Are you damaging plants? How does feeding a chipmunk forever alter that otherwise wild animal’s behavior? What effect does your bug spray or sunscreen have on the river or the lake when you jump in? When you leave, how can you ensure others will not know you were here?

Where does the wilderness end?

Perhaps one feeling of Wilderness is connection, a personal connection to place—and a connection to Wilderness when back home. How do your actions outside of the park’s borders alter this protected place? Yosemite and the wilderness at large does not exist in a bubble. The choices we make everyday, regardless of where we live around the globe, make an impact. Can you practice Leave No Trace in places where it is not required? Can we be better caretakers of this planet as a whole? How do we foster the same love, appreciation, and care for other living things no matter where they call home? Your visit to wilderness, your knowledge of this unique landscape may help stir the feelings to be better defenders of wilderness. As Edward Abbey wrote, “The idea of wilderness needs no defense—it only needs more defenders.” Enjoy, experience, share—and defend!
Supporting Your Park
Providing for Yosemite’s Future

Enhance the Visitor Experience
It takes a legion of people working together to protect this special park for you and future generations of visitors. You too can extend your connection to Yosemite well after you return home by getting involved with the organizations that partner to preserve Yosemite.

This publication was made possible by the Yosemite Park Partners listed on this page. Read more below or visit www.yosemitepartners.org to learn more about helping these organizations provide for the future of Yosemite National Park.

The Ansel Adams Gallery

The Ansel Adams Gallery, owned by the family of photographer Ansel Adams since 1962, is a center that celebrates the arts and the natural grandeur of our environment. It cultivates an aesthetic appreciation and concern for our world by offering visitors a unique variety of literature and art, as well as programs that inspire creativity. Visit online at: www.anseladams.com.

Yosemite Hospitality LLC

Yosemite Hospitality, a subsidiary of Aramark, operates lodging, food and beverage, retail, recreational activities, tours, interpretive programs, transportation, and service stations under contract with the U.S. Department of Interior with a focus on delivering authentic and memorable guest experiences. Yosemite Hospitality is committed to providing park stewardship in collaboration with the National Park Service in effort to protect and preserve the park for millions of park visitors to enjoy. Visit www.TravelYosemite.com for more information.

NatureBridge

NatureBridge provides residential field science programs for youth in the world’s most spectacular classroom—Yosemite National Park. Through active student engagement, our faculty teaches science, history, and the arts and gives these subjects context through personal experience. A NatureBridge learning adventure strives to foster a lifelong connection to the natural world and responsible actions to sustain it. Find out more about our year-round programs for schools and summer programs for individual teens at www.naturebridge.org/yosemite.

Yosemite Conservancy

Yosemite Conservancy inspires people to support projects and programs that preserve Yosemite National Park and enrich the visitor experience. Thanks to generous donors, the Conservancy has provided over $130 million in grants to the park to restore trails and habitat, protect wildlife, provide educational programs, and more. The Conservancy’s guided adventures, volunteer opportunities, wilderness services and bookstores help visitors of all ages connect with Yosemite. Learn more: yosemite.org or (415) 434-1782.

Yosemite Volunteers: Serving Yosemite

Over 10,374 volunteers donated more than 139,500 hours of service to Yosemite last year, restoring native habitat, working in visitor centers, serving as camp hosts, studying wildlife, cleaning up litter and more. Would you like to serve? We have group and individual volunteer opportunities, both short term and long term. Learn more at: www.nps.gov/yose/getinvolved/volunteer.htm or call the volunteer office at (209) 379-1850.

Yosemite National Park App

Want the Guide on your Apple or Android device? Get the App! Search NPS-Yosemite in app stores or at nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit to download the official park app to support projects and programs that preserve Yosemite National Park and enrich the visitor experience. Thanks to generous donors, the Conservancy has provided over $130 million in grants to the park to restore trails and habitat, protect wildlife, provide educational programs, and more. The Conservancy’s guided adventures, volunteer opportunities, wilderness services and bookstores help visitors of all ages connect with Yosemite. Learn more: yosemite.org or (415) 434-1782.

NatureBridge

NatureBridge provides residential field science programs for youth in the world’s most spectacular classroom—Yosemite National Park. Through active student engagement, our faculty teaches science, history, and the arts and gives these subjects context through personal experience. A NatureBridge learning adventure strives to foster a lifelong connection to the natural world and responsible actions to sustain it. Find out more about our year-round programs for schools and summer programs for individual teens at www.naturebridge.org/yosemite.

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Lose Something in Yosemite?

To inquire about items lost or found at one of Yosemite’s restaurants, hotels, lounges, shuttle buses or tour services, call (209) 372-4357. For items lost or found in other areas of the park, call (209) 379-1001 or email yose_lostandfound@nps.gov

Looking for a Hiking Trail?

Check out the TRAILHEADS tab, located within the SERVICES tab.