



## Accessibility Guide

Welcome to Yosemite National Park! The park strives for full and equal participation of all visitors and continually upgrades facilities to make them more accessible. This guide outlines accessible park services, facilities, and activities. Within each area, it describes ways for people with sight, hearing, and mobility impairments to enjoy Yosemite. Symbols in the left margin mark accessibility features. (If you do not need this guide after your visit, please return it to any visitor center or entrance station.)

Guide information is current as of August 2008. For additional accessibility questions, call 209/379-1035 or e-mail [yose\\_accessibility@nps.gov](mailto:yose_accessibility@nps.gov). Discrimination on the basis of disability in federally conducted programs or activities of the Department of the Interior is prohibited.

For general descriptions of services, see the *Yosemite Guide* (available at entrance stations and visitor centers), or go to [www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose).

### Contents

<b>General Park Information</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<i>Entering the Park</i> .....	2
<i>Temporary Accessibility Placard</i> .....	2
<i>Parking</i> .....	3
<i>Service Animals</i> .....	3
<b>Services</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<i>Food</i> .....	3
<i>Gas</i> .....	3
<i>ATMs</i> .....	3
<i>Wheelchair Rental</i> .....	4
<i>Bicycle Rental</i> .....	4
<i>Telephone Services</i> .....	4
<i>Post Offices</i> .....	4
<b>Health Concerns</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<i>Weather</i> .....	5
<i>Elevation</i> .....	5
<i>Smoke and Fire</i> .....	5
<i>Medical Facilities</i> .....	6
<b>Staying in and near Yosemite</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Getting Around Yosemite</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Learning About Yosemite</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Yosemite by Region</b> .....	<b>11</b>

# General Park Information

Yosemite National Park, set aside in 1890, embraces spectacular mountain and valley scenery in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Park highlights include Yosemite Valley's high cliffs and waterfalls; Wawona's history center and historic hotel; the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias; Glacier Point's spectacular view of Yosemite Valley and the high country (summer through fall); Tuolumne Meadows, a large subalpine meadow surrounded by high mountain peaks (summer through fall); and Hetch Hetchy, a secluded valley with a reservoir formed by a dam on the Tuolumne River. Yosemite offers unparalleled natural views and soundscapes, and natural objects for tactile exploration. These opportunities are available in all areas of the park.

## Entering the Park

U.S. citizens or permanent residents who are blind or permanently disabled are eligible for the Access Pass. This free, lifetime admission pass is valid at National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Tennessee Valley Authority sites.

The Access Pass must be obtained in person and with proof of eligibility. The pass is nontransferable and does not cover or reduce special recreation permit fees or fees charged by concessionaires. In Yosemite, the pass is available at park entrance stations, information stations, and visitor centers; it admits the pass owner and accompanying passengers in a private vehicle. (At parks that charge individual fees, the pass admits the pass owner and other persons accompanying the owner, such as care assistants.)



The Access Pass also provides a 50 percent discount on federal use fees charged for facilities and services such as camping, swimming, parking, boat launching, and specialized interpretive services.

Visitors must supply the pass number when making a camping reservation. In some cases where use fees are charged, only the pass owner receives the 50 percent price reduction. For more information about fees in national parks, see [www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm).

## Temporary Accessibility Placard

For visitors who are temporarily disabled or who do not have their permanent accessibility placard with them, temporary placards are available at park entrance stations, campgrounds, and visitor centers. When displayed on a vehicle dashboard, the placards allow parking in designated accessible spaces and driving on some paved roads closed to other private-vehicle traffic, such as



the Happy Isles Loop Road and Mirror Lake Road. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and shuttle buses share these roads, so emergency flashers must be used, and the speed limit is 15 mph.

## **Parking**



Designated accessible spaces are marked with the international access symbol and are reserved for vehicles displaying an accessibility placard or license plate.

## **Service Animals**

In Yosemite, service animals are allowed in all facilities and on all trails, with the exceptions of stock trails and areas closed by the superintendent to protect park resources. Service animals must always be leashed. Service animals in training and pets are subject to other park regulations (see [www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/pets.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/pets.htm)). Traveling times in the park may be longer than anticipated. When traveling with an animal, carry water, and allow for stops. Dispose of pet feces in a trash bin.

## **Services**

### **Food**



Food-service facilities in Yosemite are wheelchair-accessible except:

- The Loft is located on the second floor of the Degnan's Complex in Yosemite Village. (The Loft is scheduled to have an elevator by 2009.)
- Tuolumne Meadows Lodge has two steps and no accessible restroom.
- The Wawona Hotel dining room has a steep ramp, a 2-inch threshold, and narrow doors at the back entrance; however, some visitors in wheelchairs can enter with assistance. No accessible restrooms are available.

### **Gas**

Gas stations are located in El Portal, Wawona, Crane Flat, and (in summer) Tuolumne Meadows. Pay-at-the-pump service is available with a debit or credit card 24 hours a day. Check *Yosemite Guide* for more details. Attendants can assist with fuel service during business hours.

### **ATMs**



See *Yosemite Guide* for locations. The Bank of America Versateller (at the Yosemite Art and Education Center in Yosemite Village) has Braille functions and a plug for a headset.

## **Wheelchair Rental**



Manual wheelchairs and electric scooters can be rented seasonally at the bicycle-rental stand at Yosemite Lodge and Curry Village; reservations suggested, call 209/372-8319. Check *Yosemite Guide* for hours of operation.

## **Bicycle Rental**



Bicycles can be rented seasonally at Yosemite Lodge and Curry Village rental stands. A tandem bicycle (for visitors with sight and other impairments) and a hand-cranked bicycle are available. Reservations suggested; call 209/372-8319. Check *Yosemite Guide* for hours of operation.

## **Telephone Services**

Cell-phone signal strength is marginal in most of Yosemite.



There are pay phones throughout the park; most have volume control.



TTY pay phones are available in several locations: at the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center, in the lobby of Yosemite Lodge, and in the mezzanine of The Ahwahnee. Free TTY phone kits are also available for guests to take to their rooms at Yosemite Lodge and at The Ahwahnee. The Wawona Hotel has TTY phone kits to use in conjunction with the phone in the manager's office. Curry Village has kits, too, which include smoke alarm, light flasher doorbell and shake-awake, but have no phones in the room in which to use a TTY device.

- TTY general park information
  - 209/372-4726
- TTY Yosemite lodging reservations
  - 559/252-2846
- TTY Yosemite campground reservations
  - 877/833-6777

Using a TTY, deaf callers can also dial 711 for free relay service, which provides an operator to assist people who are deaf in making calls to voice-only numbers.

## **Post Offices**



See *Yosemite Guide* for post office locations in the park. The main post office (located in Yosemite Village) has accessible parking and a letter-drop box behind the building. Enter from the service road just north of the Degnan's Deli off Village Drive.

# Health Concerns

## ***Weather***

Temperatures in Yosemite vary widely depending on season, elevation, and time of day; they can change rapidly and unexpectedly. Summer daytime temperatures usually range from the 90s in Yosemite Valley and Wawona to the 70s in Tuolumne Meadows; nighttime lows usually range from the 50s in Yosemite Valley and Wawona to the 30s in Tuolumne Meadows. Snowy, rainy, or even sunny days are possible in winter, with daytime highs in Wawona and the Valley ranging from the 30s to 50s and lows, in the upper 20s.

Pay attention to the weather, and be aware of extreme temperatures. Dress appropriately for the season (in layers, if possible); bring rain gear. Carry and drink plenty of water, and take rest breaks during physical activity.

## ***Elevation***

Yosemite Valley is 4,000 feet above sea level. Outside the Valley, elevations range from 2,000 feet to nearly 10,000 feet above sea level. In southern Yosemite, Glacier Point is at 7,214 feet; Wawona is at 4,000 feet; and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias ranges from 5,600 feet in the Lower Grove to 6,600 feet in the Upper Grove.

Maximum elevation on roads entering Yosemite Valley:

Approach	Road	Highest Road Elevation
From South	Wawona Road via Hwy 41 N	6,039 ft at Chinquapin
From West	Big Oak Flat Road via Hwy 120 E	6,192 ft at Crane Flat
From West	El Portal Road via Hwy 140 E	4,000 ft at Yosemite Valley
From East (June to Nov)	Tioga Road via Hwy 120 W	9,945 ft at Tioga Pass

## ***Smoke and Fire***

In Yosemite, fire is natural and important for maintaining healthy forests, and smoky skies are possible in spring, summer, and fall. Wildland fires—often ignited by lightning—generally are allowed to burn. Trained fire crews use prescribed burns to clear unnatural build-up of plant material in developed areas.

Campgrounds also can be very smoky. To improve air quality in Yosemite Valley during crowded months, campfires are limited to the hours between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., May 1 through October 1. There are no time restrictions during the rest of the year (however, campfires must always be attended).

Visitors with respiratory conditions should call 209/372-0200 (press 3, then 5 to speak with a ranger during business hours on weekdays), or visit the park's web site ([www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm)) for a fire update.

## **Medical Facilities**

### **In Yosemite**



The Yosemite Medical Clinic is in Yosemite Village. Services include a limited pharmacy, a laboratory, X-ray services, and physical therapy. Hours of operation vary seasonally, but emergency and paramedic/ambulance services are available 24 hours a day. The rear emergency entrance is accessible to wheelchairs. See *Yosemite Guide* or call 209/372-4637.

### **Outside Yosemite**

The hospitals nearest to Yosemite are located in:

- Mariposa (west of the park, off Highway 140)
- Oakhurst (south of the park, off Highway 41) Urgent Care facility ONLY.
- Mammoth Lakes (southeast of the park off Highway 395; not accessible from Yosemite in winter)

Hospitals outside Yosemite with a range of services include:

Northern Inyo Hospital 150 Pioneer Lane Bishop, CA 93514 760/873-5811	Oakhurst Community Medical Center (Urgent Care only) 48677 Victoria Lane Oakhurst, CA 93644 559/683-2992
Mammoth Hospital 185 Sierra Park Road Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 760/934-3311	John C. Fremont Hospital 5189 Hospital Road Mariposa, CA 95338 209/966-3631
Mercy Medical Merced Community Campus 301 East 13 <sup>th</sup> Street Merced, CA 95340 209/385-7000	Tuolumne General Hospital 101 Hospital Road Sonora, CA 95370 209/533-7100
Valley Children's Hospital 9300 Valley Children's Place Madera, CA 93638 559/353-5150	Sonora Regional Medical Center 1000 Greenley Rd. Sonora, CA 95370 209/536-5000
Madera Community Hospital 1250 Almond Avenue Madera, CA 93637 559/673-5101	Doctors Medical Center 1441 Florida Avenue Modesto, CA 95352 209/578-1211

# Staying in and near Yosemite

**When reserving campsites or lodging, describe specific needs and ask for full descriptions of facilities and services.**

## ***Camping***

### **Reservations**

Seven of Yosemite's 13 campgrounds are on a reservation system. Campsites may be reserved through the National Recreation Reservation Service by phoning 877/444-6777 in the United States and Canada or 518/885-3639 from outside the United States and Canada. TTY users may dial 877/833-6777. To reserve a campsite online, visit <http://www.recreation.gov>. Phone and online reservations may be made using Visa, Mastercard, American Express, or Discover cards. For more information on camping, see [www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/camping.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/camping.htm). The Valley Campground Reservation Office is in the Curry Village parking area and is wheelchair-accessible. Visitors with Access Passes receive a 50 percent discount on camping in Yosemite. (Pass holders must give their number when making a reservation and present the card upon check-in.)

### **Camping in Yosemite Valley**



Three campgrounds in the Valley offer accessible campsites, suitable for wheelchairs. Lower Pines includes sites #7, 13 (with a raised tent pad), 14, 18, and 20. Upper Pines includes sites #21 (with a raised tent pad), 27, and 42. North Pines includes sites #111, 113, and 119 (with a raised tent pad). All sites mentioned have accessible fire rings and picnic tables with extended tops. Electric power to charge a wheelchair can be found at Lower Pines accessible site #14.

Camp 4 walk-in campground (first-come, first-served) has a dirt access route leading to many level sites; however, none is designated accessible and there are no designated accessible parking spaces. The restroom is accessible.

### **Camping Elsewhere in Yosemite National Park**



Plans are underway to make sites at campgrounds outside Yosemite Valley accessible. Crane Flat and Wawona campgrounds should have accessible sites available in the spring of 2009.

### **Camping Outside Yosemite National Park**



Campgrounds, some of which might be accessible, are available in areas outside Yosemite; see [www.yosemite.com/tripplan/camping.html](http://www.yosemite.com/tripplan/camping.html). For more information, call the National Recreation Reservation Service (877/444-6777); or visit online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

## ***Lodging***

Guest lodging in Yosemite is provided by DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, Inc. Reservations are recommended (call 801/559-5000 or TTY 559/252-2846; or visit online at [www.YosemitePark.com](http://www.YosemitePark.com)). See *Yosemite Guide* for hours of operation. Describe specific accessibility needs, so that an appropriate room may be offered. Some Valley lodging facilities have a kit for deaf visitors with a TTY, light flasher smoke alarm, light flasher doorbell, and shake-awake.

### **Lodging in Yosemite Valley**



***The Ahwahnee*** has four fully accessible hotel rooms, four partially accessible hotel rooms and two fully accessible cottages. The ground floor of the hotel has an accessible passenger-loading zone, dining room, bar, gift shop, patio, telephone, and drinking fountain. An accessible unisex restroom on the mezzanine is identified by a sign and can be reached by elevator. Walkway surfaces are paved; the covered approach to the front door is wood planking. Valet parking and designated parking spaces are available.



***Yosemite Lodge*** has five accessible hotel rooms with accessible bathrooms and showers. The front lobby and tour desk are accessible by ramp (at the west end of the front complex) leading to the covered walkway into the lobby, and from a ramp at the east end of the registration building. Accessible restrooms, restaurants, and gift shops are available. An outdoor, accessible amphitheater offers evening programs spring through fall. Most walkways are paved. Designated parking spaces are available near the registration building.



***Curry Village*** has two accessible cabins with bathrooms, one accessible hotel-standard room, six accessible cabins without bathrooms and 12 accessible canvas tent cabins (four with heat). Accessible shower and restroom facilities are nearby for accommodations that do not have private bathrooms. Walkway surfaces are asphalt and connect to all major services. The dining pavilion, grocery/gift shop, pizza patio and bar, and mountaineering shop are accessible. An accessible outdoor amphitheater offers evening programs spring through fall. Designated parking spaces are available.

***Housekeeping Camp*** offers 3-sided canvas structures with beds, a place to prepare meals, and a concrete patio with a picnic table; linens are not provided but can be rented, and laundry facilities are available. Walkway surfaces include asphalt and sand. An accessible restroom and shower are located in Section H.

### **Lodging Elsewhere in Yosemite National Park**

Currently, no accessible lodgings are available at Tuolumne Meadows, White Wolf, or Wawona. For updates, call DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite at 801/559-5000 or TTY 559/252-2846, or visit online at [www.YosemitePark.com](http://www.YosemitePark.com).

# Getting Around Yosemite

## ***Shuttle Buses***

Free accessible shuttle buses operate in several areas of the park (for more information, see *Yosemite Guide*, or call 209/372-1240). The buses have wheelchair lifts and tie-downs. Bus drivers can help passengers on and off buses or notify them of stops. Ask for assistance.



- Yosemite Valley: throughout the Yosemite Village area (year-round) and to El Capitan Bridge and Tuolumne Meadows (summer only).
- Wawona: from the Wawona Store & Pioneer Gift Shop to the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias (summer only)
- Tuolumne Meadows: from Olmsted Point to Tioga Pass (summer only)

Note: Shuttle service is not available from the Valley to southern Yosemite, including Wawona.

## ***Sightseeing by Car***

Many of Yosemite's fine views and points of interest can be seen from park roads. Sightseeing guidebooks and other information are available at park visitor centers and retail outlets and can be purchased online from the nonprofit Yosemite Association at [www.yosemitestore.com](http://www.yosemitestore.com).

## ***Tours***



Fee-based, open-air Valley Floor trams run within the Valley. Fee-based enclosed motor coaches make trips from Yosemite Valley to Tuolumne Meadows, Glacier Point, and Grand Tour (includes the Valley, Glacier Point and the Mariposa Grove). Accessible tour vehicle for the above trips can be made available by prior arrangement. Contact DNC Parks & Resorts at the Yosemite Lodge tour desk, at Curry Village tour desk or at Yosemite Village tour desk (summer only). Call 209/372-4386 for schedule and fare information. Tours depart from Yosemite Lodge. Call 24 hours in advance to reserve a space.

## ***Trail Rides (seasonal)***

Stables in Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and Tuolumne Meadows offer trail rides. They can tailor rides to specific needs; call at least 24 hours in advance: Yosemite Valley, 209/372-8348; Tuolumne Meadows (summer only) 209/372-8427; or Wawona (summer only) 209/375-6502.

The Wawona Stable has an accessible portable toilet, but restrooms at the Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows Stables are not accessible.

# Learning About Yosemite

## ***Visitor Centers and Museums***

Rangers in the park's visitor centers, wilderness centers, and museums are knowledgeable about Yosemite and are there to assist visitors. They can provide personalized services, information, and interpretation about the park.

## ***Ranger Interpretive Programs***

See *Yosemite Guide* for a complete list of ranger activities, which range from campfire programs and all-day hikes to talks about Yosemite topics. Ask at any visitor center for details, or visit online at [www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose).

## **Sign Language Interpretation**



In summer and during limited off-season hours, a National Park Service ranger may be available to provide American Sign Language interpretation for ranger programs. Please make individual or group reservations at least two weeks in advance. All requests are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Inquire at visitor centers, or phone 209/372-4726 (TTY). For ASL interpretation on paid tours, call the Yosemite Lodge tour desk at 209/372-1240.

## **Assisted-Listening Devices**



Ask at the Yosemite Valley Visitor Center about assisted-listening devices for ranger-led programs and tours in Yosemite Valley, Wawona, Glacier Point and Tuolumne Meadows. Lodging facilities at Curry Village, Yosemite Lodge and The Ahwahnee have assisted listening devices that are available for interpretive programs. Guests should contact the DNC Parks & Resorts tour desk at 209/372-1240 in advance to request the device at a program.

## ***Park Publications***

Many park publications—including books, maps, and other media—are available at visitor centers and retail outlets throughout the park, or online at [www.yosemitestore.com](http://www.yosemitestore.com).

A version of this accessibility guide is produced in Braille and is available at the Visitor Center. Park information can be downloaded from Yosemite's web site ([www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose)), and the font size increased to improve readability for those needing large-print materials.

## ***Environmental Education***

The National Park Service and two nonprofit park partners offer a variety of environmental education programs for children and adults.

**National Park Service:** Most educational programs in Yosemite are accessible to students with disabilities. Yosemite staff members work with teachers and

school districts to ensure that every student can be included in field trips, camping trips, and other educational park activities. The Environmental Living Program at the Pioneer Yosemite History Center (in Wawona) and the Parks As Classrooms programs serve students with a wide range of specific needs. For further information, contact the park's Education Branch at 209/375-9505.

**Yosemite Institute:** Residential field-science programs for groups of children and adults through the Yosemite Institute can be tailored to accommodate specific needs. For more information, contact Yosemite Institute at 209/379-9511, or visit online at [www.yni.org/yi](http://www.yni.org/yi).

**Yosemite Association:** With advance notice, the Yosemite Association will work to develop custom Outdoor Adventures for visitors with disabilities. For more information, call 209/379-2646 or visit online at [www.yosemite.org](http://www.yosemite.org).

## Yosemite by Region

### Yosemite Valley

Elevation: 4,000 feet

Known as the "Incomparable Valley," Yosemite Valley is seven miles long and one mile across at its widest point. Formed by glacial erosion over millions of years, Yosemite Valley is famous for its waterfalls and rock formations (including Half Dome and El Capitan). The Valley is the most-visited place in Yosemite, and it offers a variety of educational and recreational opportunities.

### Yosemite Valley Visitor Center

(Shuttle Stops #5 and #9)

The Valley Visitor Center has an information desk, exhibits about the park, and a bookstore. An auditorium and a theater behind the visitor center offer presentations, including an award-winning orientation film, *Spirit of Yosemite*. This 23-minute film is shown free throughout the day in the theater.



The *Spirit of Yosemite* movie is closed-captioned, as are video displays in the visitor center. In addition, the film has audio description for visitors who are blind and translations for foreign speakers. Ask the visitor desk for listening devices.



The main exhibit hall is fully accessible with tactile exhibits, including the geologic story of Yosemite Valley. A tactile relief map is also available. An audio tour of the exhibits should be available in 2009.

The visitor center has accessible power-assisted doors at front and rear entrances. Access to the theater and auditorium is through the front doors: Proceed through the exhibit area and out the rear doors to the ramp (on the left). Accessible restrooms are located behind the visitor center.

To reach the theater when the visitor center is closed, use the sidewalk to the left of the visitor center's front entrance, pass the restrooms, and go up the concrete path past the visitor center's rear doors. This path has slopes ranging up to 16%.

A few accessible parking spaces are available just west of the visitor center. To reach these parking spaces, enter the Valley on Southside Drive, and go west (left) on Sentinel Drive. Turn left on Northside Drive, and follow the blue-and-white accessibility signs. Turn right on Village Drive. Stay on Village Drive until reaching the "Do Not Enter" sign marking the shuttle-bus route, and then turn left. Accessible parking spaces are on the right side of the road.

Visitors can also park at the day-visitor parking area and take the free shuttle bus, which has wheelchair lifts and tie-downs, to the visitor center (summer only).

### **Yosemite Museum**

*(Shuttle stops #5 and #9, just west of Valley Visitor Center)*

The Yosemite Museum has an art gallery and the Indian Cultural Exhibit. The exhibit offers displays and demonstrations relating to the culture and lives of the Ahwahneechee people who inhabited Yosemite Valley.



In front of the Museum is a cross-section of a giant sequoia tree that visitors can touch. Inside the museum, the Indian Cultural Exhibit also has tactile displays. An interpretive ranger is available to give personal assistance.

### **Indian Village of Ahwahnee**

*(Shuttle stops #5 and #9, behind Valley Visitor Center)*

Behind the museum and the visitor center is the reconstructed Indian Village of Ahwahnee, which offers outdoor displays about the culture and lives of the Ahwahneechee inhabitants of Yosemite Valley.



A short, partially paved loop trail winding through the village has displays that incorporate audio buttons. The village's central area is level but unpaved.

### **The Ansel Adams Gallery**

*(Shuttle stops #5 and #9, just east of Valley Visitor Center)*

Showcasing the work of Ansel Adams, contemporary photographers, and other fine artists, the gallery is open daily. For more information, contact the gallery at 209/372-4413, or visit online at [www.anseladams.com](http://www.anseladams.com).



The gallery's main floor is accessible by ramp at the front. Its upper level is accessible by an outside path (with a short slope of 8 percent) or by steps inside.

### **Yosemite Art Center**

*(Shuttle stop #2)*

Located near the Yosemite Village Store, the Yosemite Art and Education Center offers art classes during the summer and fall. For information and a schedule of

classes, call 209/372-1442 or 209/379-2646 or see *Yosemite Guide*. Many art classes are offered in accessible areas.

## **Lower Yosemite Fall**

(Shuttle stop #6)

**Ride the free, lift-equipped shuttle buses to the Lower Fall area (stop #6).**

From the shuttle stop, visitors can see the world's fifth tallest waterfall (the tallest in North America), one of the most sought-after views in the park. Yosemite Falls, 2,425 feet high, consists of three segments: Upper Yosemite Fall, the Middle Cascade, and Lower Yosemite Fall. No parking is available for any vehicles.

**A paved loop trail**, just over a mile in length, extends east and west from shuttle stop #6 to the Lower Fall, which plummets 320 feet to the rocks below. In spring, spray reaches out to the viewing area and beyond. Watch your step: the walkway and bridge may be wet.



Along the loop trail are seating areas, orientation maps, and educational exhibits. The exhibits have tactile features. A bronze relief map near the base of the western trail depicts the watershed that drains into Yosemite Falls. Huge granite boulders—some as big as a house—can be seen and touched just steps away from the paved trail leading to the base of Lower Yosemite Fall.



**The eastern part of the loop** (0.6 mile) is accessible to wheelchairs and crosses several braided streams before reaching the Lower Fall viewing area, which has transferable seating to granite boulders at wheelchair height. An accessible restroom is located at the trailhead near the shuttle stop.

**The western trail** (0.5 mile) is wide enough for several people and is mostly accessible; however, a short, steep grade near the viewing area (the last 180 feet include a slope of 13.8%) may make assistance necessary for some visitors.

## **Multi-Use Paved Trails**

More than 12 miles of paved, two-lane trails for bicyclists and pedestrians wind through forests and along the Merced River in Yosemite Valley. Bicycle-rental stands at Curry Village and Yosemite Lodge have bicycle trail maps; to reserve a bicycle, call 209/372-8319; additional trail maps are available at the Valley Visitor Center.



Most of these trails are accessible; however, the Superintendent's Bridge (opposite the historic Yosemite Chapel) has steps, and a section near Housekeeping Camp is steep.

## **Happy Isles**

*(Shuttle stop #16)*

Happy Isles offers an accessible nature center (summer only) and a nature trail, access to the Merced River, a snack stand (summer only), and the trailhead for the Vernal and Nevada Falls, Half Dome, and John Muir trails.



**By private vehicle:** Happy Isles Loop Road, at the east end of Yosemite Valley, is closed to private-vehicle traffic, but vehicles with accessibility placards may enter. (If eligible, obtain a temporary placard at any visitor center or entrance station, and display it on the vehicle dashboard.) To enter the loop, follow signs to the campgrounds and trailhead parking, then drive east beyond the “Authorized Vehicles Only” sign.

At shuttle stop #16, turn right on the paved road. Two designated parking spaces are located behind the accessible restroom, and two more are at the Nature Center at Happy Isles.

**On Happy Isles Road, display access placard, and drive with emergency flashers on. Speed limit is 15 mph.**

## **The Nature Center at Happy Isles (summer only)**

*(Shuttle stop #16)*

The Nature Center at Happy Isles, about 100 yards from the shuttle stop, is geared to children and their families and is open daily in summer. The center offers nature exhibits and interactive, tactile displays on Yosemite’s natural history.



Visitors can take a short walk out to the Happy Isles in the Merced River, listening for the roar of the river over huge boulders.



Nearby is an accessible nature trail, with outdoor panels detailing Happy Isles’ distinct environments: forest, river, and fen. Outdoor exhibits also tell the geologic story of rockfall in Yosemite.

During the summer, a volunteer at the nature center is available to assist with narrating the outdoor exhibits. Benches are available along the trail.

## **Mirror Lake (a seasonal lake)**

*(Shuttle stop # 17)*

Mirror Lake is a seasonal lake on Tenaya Creek, in the shadow of Half Dome. Wayside exhibits explain the natural and cultural features of the area. A one-mile trail, found at the drop-off location for shuttle stop #17, leads to the lake but is

difficult to walk due to its compacted gravel surface that may be slippery. Also, the last 1,000 feet up to the lake are on a slope from 6.6 percent to 10.6 percent.



**Go by vehicle:** The road to Mirror Lake, at the east end of Yosemite Valley, is closed to private-vehicle traffic, but vehicles with accessibility placards may enter with parking available. (If eligible, obtain a temporary placard at any entrance station or visitor center, and display it on the vehicle dashboard.) Follow the signs to the campgrounds. At North Pines Campground, proceed past the “No Entry” sign, and follow the signs to Mirror Lake. Or, from Happy Isles, turn right onto the Happy Isles Loop Road and drive one mile. Turn right at the Mirror Lake shuttle stop (#17).

**On Mirror Lake Road, display access placard, and drive with emergency flashers on. Speed limit is 15 mph.**

### **Bridalveil Fall**

*(No shuttle service)*

This spectacular, year-round waterfall (albeit a trickle in autumn) can be seen from a parking lot located where Wawona Road enters Yosemite Valley. Rainbows are common in afternoon as is the wind that causes the fall to spray up. Many visitors stop here on their way into Yosemite Valley.

The parking lot has designated parking spaces and accessible vault toilets. A short paved trail leads to the base of the fall, but it is steep in places (14% to 24% slope) and not advisable for people using wheelchairs or walking aids.

Another viewing area is located on Southside Drive, in a sizable turnout just east of where Wawona Road merges with Southside Drive.

### **Picnic Areas**

Yosemite Valley has several picnic areas in which to enjoy an afternoon in the park.



**In the Valley:** Lower Yosemite Fall has an accessible picnic area and restrooms. Because no parking is available, use accessible shuttle bus. The El Capitan Picnic Area has a designated parking space with immediate paved access to a level, paved site with a picnic table with an extended tabletop, and an accessible vault toilet. Swinging Bridge has accessible picnic areas, restrooms and parking. Sentinel Beach has accessible picnic areas, parking and restrooms.

**At Wawona:** Soldier Flat, north of Wawona and south of the Wawona Campground, has picnic tables, grills and toilets that are accessible.

Plans exist to make picnic areas at Arch Rock and Cascades accessible as of fall 2008.

## ***Northern Yosemite***

### **Big Oak Flat**

Elevation: 4,872 feet



The Big Oak Flat Information Station is open in summer. Check *Yosemite Guide* for hours of operation. The station has an accessible information desk, campground reservation desk, wilderness center, and restrooms.

### **Hetch Hetchy**

Elevation: 3,813 feet

O'Shaughnessy Dam, built between 1919 and 1923, impounds the Tuolumne River, forming Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. In summer, the area can be extremely hot, and it lacks shade. The road to Hetch Hetchy has a 25-foot restriction on vehicle length and is closed at night to all vehicles. Because of the excessive cross-slope of the main parking area, no designated accessible parking spaces are available.

Find an accessible restroom, with designated accessible parking, at the backpackers parking lot.

### **Tioga Road (generally open to vehicles June through October)**

Elevation range: 6,192 - 9,945 feet

This spectacular National Scenic Byway crosses Yosemite and the Sierra Nevada, offering several roadside exhibits at vista points. Tioga Road is closed in winter, typically from November through May or June; no access is available to Highway 395 when the Tioga Road is closed.

Accessible vault toilets are located (from west to east) at the Tuolumne Grove parking lot, Sunrise Lakes Trailhead, Murphy Creek Picnic Area at Tenaya Lake, Tenaya Lake (east end), and Lembert Dome Picnic Area. Accessible restroom facilities are available at the Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center.

### **Tuolumne Grove**

Elevation: 5,727 feet

The Tuolumne Grove is a cluster of about 25 giant sequoias that can be reached from a parking area at Crane Flat, between the gas station and the Yosemite Institute campus. The paved path into the grove is open year-round but not plowed in winter. This path is the former route of the Big Oak Flat Road, now closed to vehicles; it has a 7.5% grade for about a mile, where the first sequoias are visible.

**The uphill return from Tuolumne Grove is steep and at moderately high elevation, so it is strenuous for most visitors.**



A short distance from the parking lot is an accessible restroom. Just beyond it is a cross-section of a giant sequoia tree, which has transferable seating at wheelchair height and tactile features.

### **White Wolf (summer only)**

Elevation: 7,758 feet

This area has lush meadows dotted with wildflowers in summer. No wheelchair-accessible facilities are available.

### **Olmsted Point (summer through fall)**

Elevation: 8,400 feet

This stunning spot overlooks Half Dome, Clouds Rest, Tenaya Lake, and the Sierra Crest. Exhibits are fully accessible.

### **Tenaya Lake (summer through fall)**

Elevation: 8,150 feet

This large, glacier-carved lake along Tioga Road nestles among granite domes and peaks, just west of Tuolumne Meadows.

Some portions of the viewing area along the northern side of Tenaya Lake have a paved sidewalk. The access route to the Tenaya Lake Picnic Area and beach is not accessible to wheelchairs because it is along a soil trail.

### **Tuolumne Meadows (open June through October)**

Elevation: 8,600 feet

Subalpine meadows, the Tuolumne River, and spectacular domes and peaks dominate the landscape in this gateway to the Sierra high country. See *Yosemite Guide* for facilities and interpretive programs.

### **Tuolumne Meadows Visitor Center (June through September)**



The visitor center has an information desk, a bookstore, and exhibits about the Tuolumne Meadows area. A designated accessible parking space and entrance are available. From the main parking lot, drive up the service road to the right of the visitor center. Park in the designated space, and follow the paved path in front of the visitor center to the rear entrance. Accessible restrooms are adjacent to the main parking lot.

## ***Southern Yosemite – Glacier Point Area***

### **Glacier Point Road (closed beyond Badger Pass in winter)**

Elevation range: 6,040 feet to 7,888 feet

Glacier Point Road offers easy access to some of the Sierra Nevada's most striking high-country views. Wildflowers abound in July. The road crosses Bridalveil Creek, the origin of Yosemite's Valley's Bridalveil Fall.

### **Glacier Point Vista (open June through October)**

Elevation 7,214 feet

This world-renowned overlook gives visitors a grand view of Yosemite Valley from above and a captivating vista of the park's southeastern high peaks. The overlook is accessible via a 300-yard paved, switchback trail from the main parking lot. Restrooms, snack bar, and a gift shop are accessible.



A bronze, three-dimensional model (on the terrace below the gift shop) identifies geologic features.



### **Badger Pass Ski Area (open late December through March)**

Elevation: 7,245 feet

California's oldest operating ski area, Badger Pass offers downhill and cross-country skiing, snow tubing, and snowshoeing. The ski area is approximately 45 minutes from Yosemite Valley.

Sit-ski lessons are offered by advance reservation. Call 209/372-8430. On the first floor of the Badger Pass Lodge, the food-service area, deck, and restrooms are accessible. There are three designated parking spaces.



### **Washburn Point (open June through October)**

Elevation: 7,591 feet

This overlook, just west of Glacier Point, provides beautiful views of Half Dome and the eastern crest of the Sierra Nevada. From this vantage point, visitors can take in the "giant staircase" waterfalls—Nevada and Vernal—and also Illilouette Fall. The point is named for the Washburn brothers, who built the first road from Wawona to Yosemite Valley. Washburn Point lacks designated parking spaces and curb cuts for wheelchair access.

## ***Southern Yosemite – Wawona Area***

### **Wawona**

Elevation: 4,012 feet

Facilities in Wawona include a year-round gas station (attendant available during business hours) and a grocery/gift shop. A golf course, golf shop, stage rides, and stable are available seasonally.

## **Wawona Hotel**

This beautiful complex of buildings, with a backdrop of stately trees, dates back to 1879.

Designated parking spaces are located on the north side (rear) of Hill's Studio (pink structure). While the hotel dining room is accessible, the approach is not: the ramp is steep; there is a two-inch threshold at the lobby, and the doors are narrow. However, visitors in wheelchairs may be able to enter with assistance. Follow the signs to the ramp at the rear of the hotel. No accessible restrooms or lodging are available.

## **Wawona Information Station at Hill's Studio (May into October)**

Located on the grounds of the Wawona Hotel, Hill's Studio was the gallery and art studio of famous 19<sup>th</sup>-Century landscape painter Thomas Hill. Today it serves as an information station.



Two accessible parking spaces and a mechanical lift are available at the rear of the studio. Ask staff for help using the lift.

## **Pioneer Yosemite History Center**

The history center allows visitors to explore Yosemite's 19<sup>th</sup>-century past, offering glimpses into cabins and a stable, and a chance to cross a covered bridge. Written displays about the buildings are available year-round. Stage rides and blacksmith demonstrations are offered in July and August.

Paths within the complex have a dirt surface. An accessible restroom is located near the parking lot. There is no designated parking. Parking near the Wawona Store & Pioneer Gift Shop provides the best access; the paved route includes a portion with an 8.1% slope.

## **Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias**

Elevation range: 5,606 – 6,461 feet

Yosemite's largest stand of giant sequoias, the Mariposa Grove also has the park's largest and most impressive individual trees. Some giant sequoias are visible in the grove parking lot. The Mariposa Grove Road is open approximately from mid-April through November, conditions permitting. When the two-mile road is closed to cars, visitors may walk up the road (snow and/or ice may be present).

An open-air tram tour of the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoias, with pre-recorded tour narration, is available May through September for a fee. Purchase tickets at the grove's tram-departure kiosk. Trams are not equipped with lifts, but visitors with mobility impairments may drive in their own vehicles behind the tram for free or pay for the tour to receive a headset if prior arrangements have been made.



Contact DNC Parks & Resorts at 209/375-1621 or the Wawona ranger station at 209/975-9520.



Note: An audio-described version of the tour also is available for visitors who are blind as are audio versions with foreign-language translations.



There are two designated parking spaces in the Mariposa Grove parking lot near the restrooms, each with a slope and cross-slope of 5.4%. The parking-area restrooms on the north side of the building are accessible to wheelchairs.

### **Mariposa Grove Museum (open June through late September)**

Elevation: 6,440 feet

Modeled after a cabin where Yosemite's first guardian—Galen Clark—lived, the museum has exhibits explaining the natural history of giant sequoias and the human history of the area.



Visitors with an accessibility placard may follow a tram to the museum, which has an access path; however, the path is steep in places. No accessible restrooms are available.

## ***Questions or Suggestions?***

To ask questions or make suggestions about accessibility in Yosemite, contact the accessibility coordinator by phone at 209/379-1035, by e-mail to [yose\\_accessibility@nps.gov](mailto:yose_accessibility@nps.gov), or by mail c/o the National Park Service, P.O. Box 700-W, El Portal, CA 95318.

For more information regarding accessibility and the National Park Service, check online at [www.nps.gov/access/](http://www.nps.gov/access/). For concerns or complaints regarding accessibility, write to: EEO Program Manager, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, org code 0008, Washington, DC 20240.