

# Tuolumne Area Day Hikes

Yosemite National Park  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



\* RT=roundtrip

## Easy (mostly flat)

### Tuolumne Meadows: Soda Springs/Parsons Memorial Lodge

1.5 miles (2.4 km) RT\*

1 hour

*Begin at Lembert Dome parking area (shuttle stop #4).* Walk along the gravel road and pass the locked gate (signed Glen Aulin and Soda Springs). Soda Springs—carbonated, cold water bubbling out of the ground—is protected within a log enclosure. Historic Parsons Memorial Lodge offers exhibits (limited hours—see *Yosemite Guide* for schedule). A path to the bridge below the lodge continues to the Tuolumne Visitor Center.

### Lyell Canyon via the John Muir Trail

8 miles (12.8 km)  
200-ft. elevation gain

Plan on ~2 miles/hour depending on how far you go.

*Begin across the road from Dog Lake parking area (shuttle stop #2).* This trail passes through Lyell Canyon, along the Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River. Early in the season, the trail can be muddy in places. There are several creek crossings, including Rafferty Creek (bridged) and Ireland Creek (unbridged). Spectacular Kuna Creek cascades down the side of the east canyon wall near the eight-mile mark.

For a shorter trip, walk 1/2 hour each way to the Lyell Fork and “Twin Bridges.”

## Moderately Strenuous (moderate elevation gain)

### Dog Lake or Lembert Dome

2.8 miles (4.5 km) RT\*

3 hours, 600-ft. elevation gain to Dog Lake or 850-ft. to Lembert Dome

*Begin at the Dog Lake parking area (shuttle stop #2, just west of Tuolumne Lodge).*

The trail rises steeply for 0.75 mile to a signed junction. Turn left to reach the top of Lembert Dome for a spectacular view of Tuolumne Meadows and surrounding peaks. To reach Dog Lake, continue straight at the junction. Allow four hours for a leisurely four mile (6.4 km) roundtrip visit to both Dog Lake and Lembert Dome.

Stay off domes during thunderstorms!

### Elizabeth Lake

4.8 miles (7.7 km) RT\*

4 - 5 hours  
1,000-ft. elevation gain

*Begin at Tuolumne Meadows Campground.*

The trail begins in the B loop of the campground and climbs steadily to a glacier-carved lake at the base of Unicorn Peak. The return hike follows the same route.

## Moderately Strenuous (moderate elevation gain)

### Cathedral Lakes

7 miles (11.3 km) RT\*

4 - 6 hours  
1,000-ft. elevation gain

*Begin along Tioga Road, shuttle stop #7 (0.5 mile west of the Tuolumne Visitor Center).*

The trail climbs steadily to Upper Cathedral Lake. Near the top of the climb, it passes a spur trail to Lower Cathedral Lake (0.5 mile to lake). The return hike follows the same route. This is one of the busiest trails in the Tuolumne Meadows area. Since parking at the trailhead is limited, consider taking the free shuttle bus.

### Glen Aulin

11 miles (17.7 km) RT\*

6 - 8 hours, 800-ft.  
elevation gain on return

*Begin at Soda Springs (see description above).*

Follow the Tuolumne River as it drops to Glen Aulin. Tuolumne Fall and White Cascade are four miles from the trailhead. Beyond Glen Aulin are California Fall (13 miles roundtrip), LeConte Fall (15 miles roundtrip), and Waterwheel Falls (18 miles roundtrip). The return hike follows the same route.

### Mono Pass

8 miles (12.9 km) RT\*

4 - 6 hours  
1,000-ft. elevation gain

*Begin at signed trailhead along Tioga Road (six miles east of Tuolumne Meadows) - shuttle service available from Tuolumne Lodge.*

This historic, trans-Sierra trail climbs gently at first from the Mono Pass parking area, through wet meadows and rushing creeks. At the Spillway Lake junction, the trail climbs steadily and more steeply to Mono Pass (elevation 10,600 feet). Don't miss the spectacular view of Mono Lake and Bloody Canyon: from the pass, hike a bit farther toward Upper Sardine Lake.

### Gaylor Lakes

2 miles (3.2 km) RT\*

2 hours  
500-ft. elevation gain

*Begin at Tioga Pass Entrance Station - shuttle service available from Tuolumne Lodge.*

This hike offers some of the most spectacular high-country views off of Tioga Road. From the trailhead, climb steadily to a ridge with views of the high Sierra including Mt. Dana and Dana Meadows with its scattered ponds. At the ridge crest, the trail drops 200 feet to Middle Gaylor Lake. Return via the same route.

## Strenuous (long with elevation gain)

### Vogelsang Area

13.8 miles (22.2 km) RT\*

6 - 8 hours  
1,360-ft. elevation gain

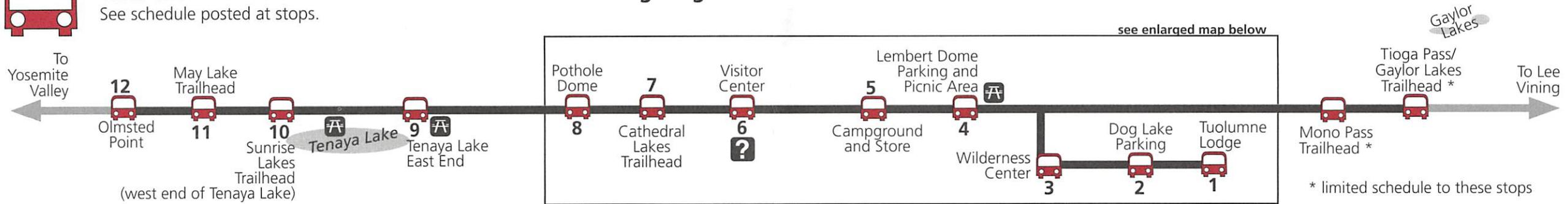
*Begin at John Muir Trailhead, across from Dog Lake parking area (shuttle stop #2).*

The first two miles of the John Muir Trail are relatively level as they follow the Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River. At the Rafferty Creek junction, the trail begins its 1,200 foot ascent to Tuolumne Pass. Follow the signs to Vogelsang High Sierra Camp, another 160 feet higher in elevation. Hike beyond the camp to Vogelsang Lake (0.5 mile, 280-ft. elevation gain) or to Vogelsang Pass (1.5 mile, 600-ft. elevation gain).

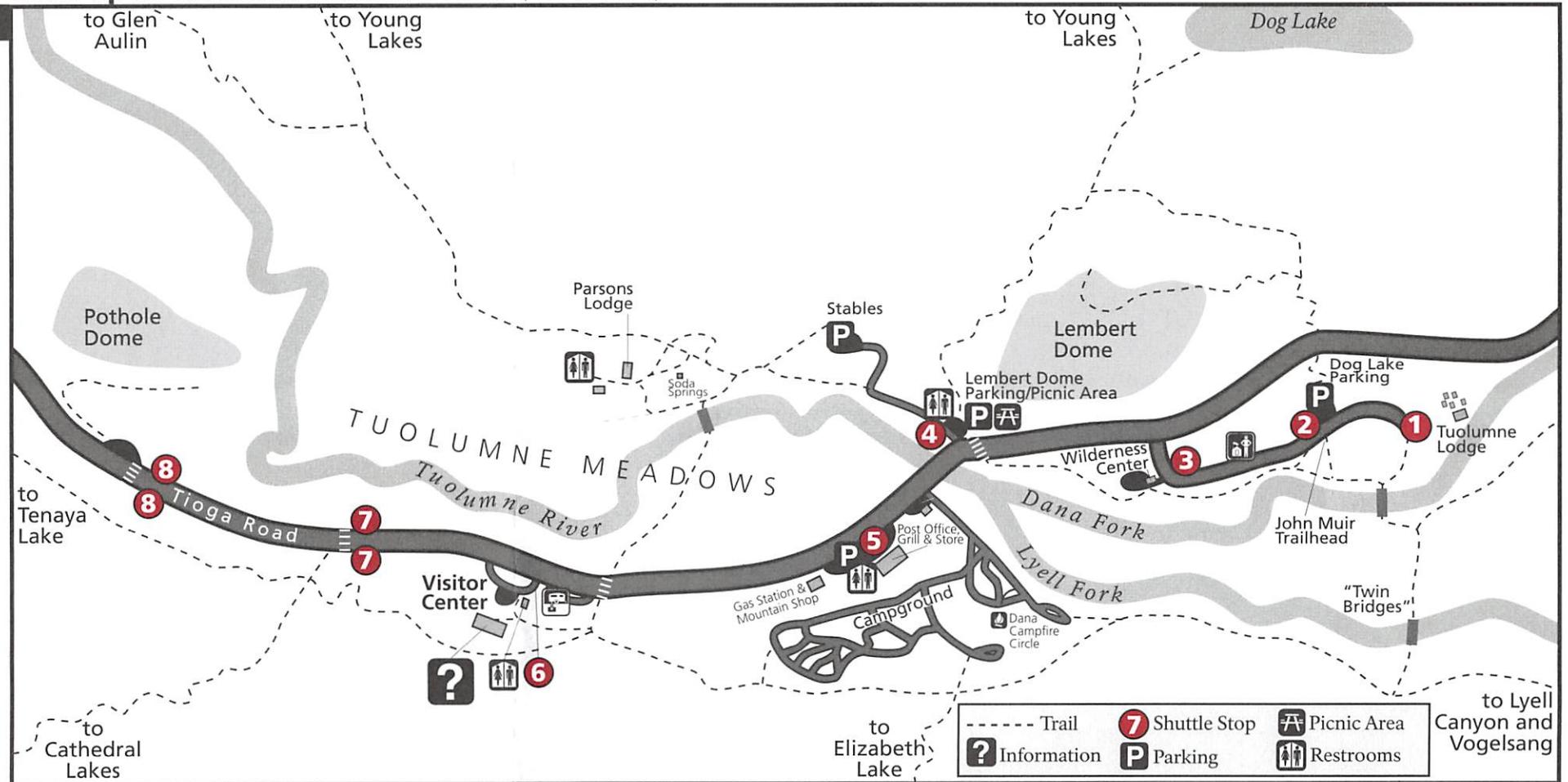
# Tuolumne Meadows Map and Area Information



**Take the FREE Tuolumne Meadows shuttle bus along Tioga Road!**  
See schedule posted at stops.



## Close-up of Tuolumne Meadows Area (not to scale)



## Area Information

**For safety while hiking**, carry water and be prepared for sudden weather changes.

**Protect fragile meadow ecosystems** by staying on official trails.

**Dogs, bicycles, and strollers** are only allowed on roads open to vehicles.

**Day-hikers and backpackers** must go to the bathroom at least 100 feet away from water, trail, and camp areas; bury human waste six inches deep; pack out toilet paper and all other trash.

**Parking:** Park only in designated areas. Drive only on established roadways. Parking is very limited. Please walk or take the free shuttle bus whenever possible.

**Bear lockers** are located at most parking areas. All food, trash and scented items should be removed from vehicles and placed in food-storage lockers (this is required by law at night). Keep empty coolers out of sight.

**Ranger programs** include nightly campfires and daily walks; see *Yosemite Guide* or postings for times and locations.

**Parsons Memorial Lodge:** Exhibits and Summer Series programs are free and open to the public. See *Yosemite Guide* or postings for schedule.

**Food service** is available at the Grill and Lodge. Groceries can be purchased at the store.