

A fisherman wearing a hat, sunglasses, and a fishing vest is standing in a river, casting a fishing rod. The background shows a river with rocky banks and mountains in the distance under a sunset sky.

# **2021** **EASTERN SIERRA** **FISHING GUIDE**

- **Hot Spots**
- **Full-Color Maps**
- **Campground Guide**
- **Tips and Tricks**
- **Events, Derby Listings**
- **Feature Stories**

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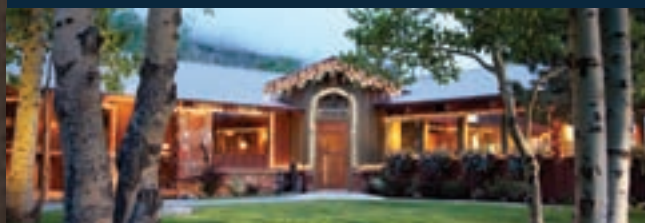
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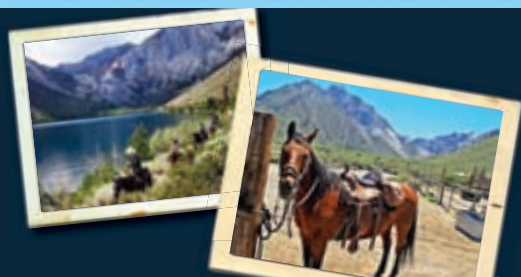
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## Get ready for a fishing adventure

Somewhere along the winding ribbon of U.S. Highway 395, the fishing adventure of a lifetime awaits. Whether it's an annual tradition or a once-in-a-lifetime trip to California's eastern edge, visiting the Eastern Sierra is the kind of experience that leaves its mark in hearts and trophy rooms alike.

Local anglers and longtime visitors agree that no matter how many times they visit a certain body of water, the experience is never the same. There are so many places to go fishing, an angler can spend a lifetime exploring each one and still not be able to fish them all. From the shores of the meandering Owens River to the rapids of Walker's western fork, the backcountry lakes as still as glass, to the social gathering of Fishmas on Crowley, the region has accessible fishing adventures for every angler, of every ability level. This guide contains a complete overview of fishing in the Eastern Sierra, beginning with Lake Diaz in Lone Pine north along U.S. Highway 395 to Lake Topaz at the Nevada border. Within these pages, there are inspiring stories and useful information such as our year-long local events calendar, campground guide and informational stories.

This guide also includes a complete overview of Eastern Sierra fishing, with spotlights that give a general description for each of the main fishing spots. There are tips from some of the area's most experienced fishing guides. With all the regulation changes this year, local experts offer suggestions and tips for fishing the expanded seasons.

When it comes to fishing, there is no better place than the Eastern Sierra, and even those who are new to the region will enjoy an amazing experience as well. This guide will help you get there.

**Kristina Blüm Justice, Project Manager**  
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**ON THE COVER:** Bob Ruscitto from Fountain Valley ends his day of learning Euro nymphing techniques from Sierra Bright Dot Fly Fishing Guide Service guide Fred Rowe on the wild trout section of the lower Owens River in March. The sunrises and sunsets in the Eastern Sierra can be almost magical, especially while enjoying casting a line into streams, rivers and lakes throughout the region.

Photo by Fred Rowe  
Design by Julie Garrison

Special thanks to the veteran anglers and sporting goods stores who once again offered their expertise and advice in the production of this guide.



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# License fees in 2021

Don't forget the most important thing in your tackle box By Register Staff

**F**ishing licenses aren't known for being inexpensive, and generally increase in price by about 50 cents each year. But, when viewed as an investment – in hours and days of invaluable recreation, in quality time with the family, in respite outdoors in the Eastern Sierra – they're actually one of the best values around.

Revenue from California fishing licenses also helps ensure there will be trout to catch in fisheries around the state. For every sport fishing license sold, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife is required to plant at least 2.75 pounds of fish.

And, should any of us be caught fishing without a license, it's a mini-

mum \$100 fine (\$25 if that person can provide proof of a license in court) – which makes that \$48.34 sound like a pretty good deal.

Licenses are required for all anglers age 16 or older except on California's two free fishing days: Saturday, July 3 and Saturday, Sept. 4, in 2021.

The general Eastern Sierra trout season runs from Saturday, April 24 through October. Southern Inyo waters – south of Independence and west of U.S. Highway 395 – open for fishing on Saturday, March 3. Various other fisheries in Inyo and Mono counties are open year-round, which is good because fishing licenses are valid from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

## ANNUAL

### Resident, Sport Fishing – \$52.66

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### Nonresident, Sport Fishing – \$142.05

Required for a nonresident 16 years of age or older to take fish, mollusks, crustaceans, invertebrates, amphibians or reptile in inland or ocean waters.

### Reduced-Fee Sport Fishing License - Disabled/Recovering Veteran – \$7.73

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### Free Sport Fishing License - Low-Income Native American – NONE\*

Available for any American Indian or lineal descendant whose household income does not exceed federal poverty guidelines.

### Free Sport Fishing License - Mobility Impaired, Blind or Developmentally Disabled – NONE\*

Available for a person who is blind, developmentally disabled, or mobility impaired. Your first Free Sport Fishing License must be obtained from the CDFW License and Revenue Branch. Subsequent licenses may be obtained from any license agent. See application for details.

\* Must be purchased at a CDFW office

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### Two-day Sport Fishing License – \$26.49

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### Ten-day Nonresident Sport Fishing License – \$52.66

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## LIFETIME

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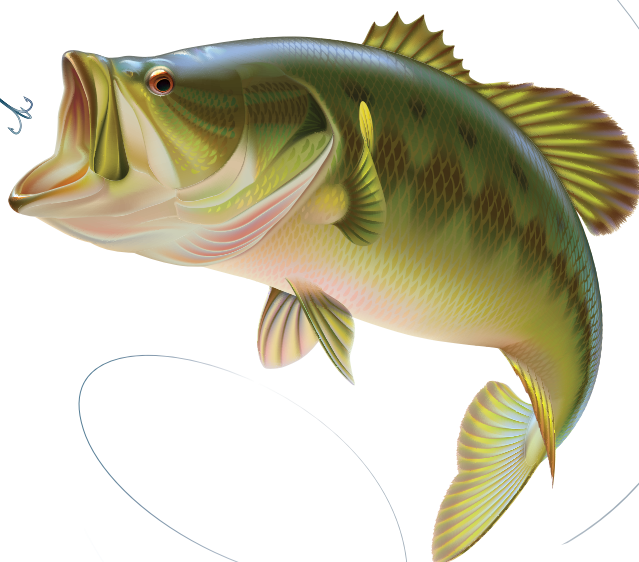
### Ages 40-61 – \$853

### Ages 62-plus – \$579.25

Available to residents of California. Lifetime fishing licensees receive an annual sport fishing license each year for life. Lifetime Fishing Packages must first be purchased from a CDFW License Sales Office. See Lifetime License Information for more details.

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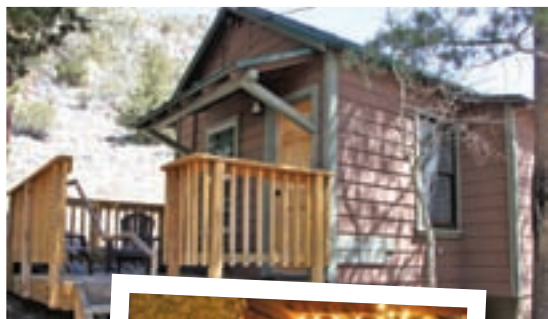
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# Fish in the shadow of Mt. Whitney

Lone Pine, full of fishing enthusiasm

By Register Staff

Mt. Whitney, the iconic jagged peak tucked in the Sierra Nevada mountains west of Lone Pine, is the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States. While the peak draws mountain climbers and adventurers from around the world each summer, the territory at the mountain's foot boasts incredible fishing with a delightful dusting of wild-west culture and Hollywood legend.

Lone Pine also is widely known for the spectacular Alabama Hills National Scenic Area, which has been the backdrop to some of Hollywood's most famous western films – and “Ironman.” But while the scenery might appear simply desert-like from the highway, Lone Pine also is home to some lesser known and remarkably beautiful fishing spots.

Diaz Lake was formed during a massive earthquake in 1872. This small lake is heavily stocked by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and by the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce.

Diaz is best fished by boat but shore fishing works well, too. There is a fishing platform, which is accessible for the disabled, that also is ideal for young children who are learning how to fish.

There is a marina for boat launches, however, boats cannot be left in the water overnight.

Local bait-fishing anglers swear by rainbow power bait for Diaz, but worms, jigs and the usual trout favorites work well, too.

All of the water west of U.S. Highway 395, south of Independence, is open for fishing on the first Saturday in March, giving anglers the opportunity to enjoy the water two whole months before general fishing season opens throughout



Photo by Jon Klusmire

The Wilson sisters show off their catches at the Diaz Lake early opener trout derby in March, 2020.

the rest of the state.

Whitney Portal Road ends at the base of Mt. Whitney. Here, the parking lot gradually loops

around a beautiful, easily accessed fishing pond, which is heavily planted throughout the summer months. This is another perfect option for chil-

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dren. The pond is perfect for young families looking for an alpine fishing experience without a backcountry hike. There is even a large waterfall just past the western end of the parking lot. The Whitney Portal store is famous for its pancakes but be sure to ask where Humphrey Bogart's famous death scene from "High Sierra" was filmed. Whitney Portal usually remains open into early November, weather permitting.

Another easily accessed fishing spot in the Lone Pine area is the "Sandtrap." The Sandtrap is located right above the spillway where Lone Pine Creek empties into the Los Angeles Aqueduct. All the fish from Lone Pine Creek end up pooling in the Sandtrap, making it an easy spot to catch a limit stringer.

Hogback Creek is accessed from Moffet Ranch Road from U.S. Highway 395. The road is a well-maintained dirt road north of Whitney Portal Road. There are areas along the creek that are nicely shaded by large cottonwood trees

Turtle Creek, south of Whitney Portal Road, is another popular fishing creek in the area, as well as the Lower Owens River.

If the fishing is slow, there are lots of unique opportunities in the Lone Pine area.

Start at the Museum of Western Film History, located on the south end of town. Here, you can learn about where film legends like John Wayne and Hopalong Cassidy made some of their movies. Scenes from movies like "The Lone Ranger," "Star Trek" and "Ironman" also were filmed in the area. Ask the museum staff how to find these filming locations.

From the museum, take Whitney Portal Road west to Movie Road and explore the Alabama Hills. The road is a well-maintained dirt road and there are several hikes, arches and rock formations to explore.

Fishing season in Lone Pine will again start with the Early Opener Trout Derby, hosted by the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce, the first Saturday in March. This derby kicks off the Eastern Sierra early fishing season and is very family friendly, being more about fishing than winning.

The derby places emphasis on children learning to enjoy the sport of



Photo by Jon Klusmire

From left, Wyatt and Max Castillo and Areyus Williams of Ridgecrest at the Lone Pine Early Opener Trout Derby at Diaz Lake in early March 2020. The annual derby attracted about 200 adult anglers, according to the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce, which sponsors the event. Another roughly 150 youngsters also enjoyed the fishing at Diaz Lake, Lone Pine Creek and Tuttle Creek. All youngsters who caught a fish got a prize.

fishing and each child participant receives prizes for every fish they catch, regardless of the weight or size of the fish.

The main derby is held at Diaz Lake but once participants have registered, they can fish anywhere from Lone Pine to Independence as long as they stay west of the U.S. Highway 395.

For more information about the Early Opener trout derby in Lone Pine, contact the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce at (760) 876-4444.

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# Changes are in store for the Alabama Hills

Camping in the area will be a little different in the future

By Jon Klusmire

The Alabama Hills got the nickname “Lone Pine’s Backyard” because it was a convenient and scenic place to go for a hike, take photos of Mt. Whitney through a rock arch, ride bikes or ATVs, rock climb, shoot a television commercial, watch the spectacular night sky full of shimmering stars, or have a community concert. Those traditional “day uses” will once again be available to locals and visitors to the hills.

The striking, unique rock formations framed by a stunning Sierra backdrop also made the hills a popular destination for campers, whether they are in vans, tents or recreational vehicles. But when a new management plan is implemented over the course of this year, the days of just rolling up to the Alabama Hills and setting up a campsite just about anywhere amongst the sage and distinctive rock formations will be coming to a

close.

Previously, dispersed camping throughout the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area was allowed with no fee and no permit or reservation needed. That resulted in dozens of locations scattered throughout the area where campers and RVs could set up camp among the rocks and sagebrush.

Under the new rules that will eventually be put in place based on the new Bureau of Land Management’s management plan for the Alabama Hills, the number and location of overnight camping sites will see some big changes. The BLM is still working on implementing the new rules and the camping situation will likely see slow and deliberate changes throughout 2021. Regardless of when the new camping rules go into effect, camping will still be free but at some point, a free camping permit will be required to secure a campsite. The new regulations will also eventually limit the number of days campers can call the hills home.

The BLM strongly suggests that anyone plan-

ning on camping in the Alabama Hills do a little pre-arrival research to stay up-to-date on which new rules will be in place when. The Bishop BLM office has built a webpage devoted to the Alabama Hills, [www.blm.gov/visit/alabama-hills](http://www.blm.gov/visit/alabama-hills), where information will be posted. The Bishop office also has a dedicated phone line for Alabama Hills information, at (760) 872-5000. Specific questions and other inquiries can also be sent to the BLM via email at [BLM\\_CA\\_Web\\_Bl@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CA_Web_Bl@blm.gov).

The Interagency Visitor Center south of Lone Pine will be open and have information on the changes in the hills.

The management plan will keep all of the camping in the Alabama Hills “semi-primitive,” with minimal amenities and improvements. That means that basic “leave no trace” camping and visiting is a must, so everyone is expected to pack out all trash, human waste and toilet paper.

To accommodate visitors, the nearby Tuttle Creek BLM Campground, with 83 sites, will see a number of improvements and if needed new



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Photo by Jesse Pluim

The Alabama Hills west of Lone Pine are a popular destination for many different forms of recreation.



campgrounds will be developed after a full environmental review. Visitors can also use the nearby campgrounds operated by the Inyo National Forest and Inyo County.

The new management plan will not dramatically change the full range of traditional and quite popular “day uses” in the Alabama Hills.

All of the existing day use recreational activities will be allowed without a permit. Those uses include: hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, sightseeing, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and motorized vehicle use.

The plan allows for Special Recreation Permits for community events, ranging from the Concert in the Rocks, the Wild Wild West Marathon, or tours of movie locations, with some limits on the number of participants. Movie and film shoots will also remain as permitted uses.

The plan does outline some guidelines for many of those day use/recreational activities.

Rock climbing in the hills occurs on 400 existing routes, with 300 bolted routes and 100 traditional climbs. The plan calls for implementing “best practices” on existing routes, and any new routes.

The Alabama Hills contain about 95 miles of roads and routes managed by the BLM, and 34 miles of roads managed by Inyo County. Again, visitors should observe common public land policies that limit all vehicles to designated roads and trails, while banning “user created” new routes or trails.

The Bishop BLM Office has been working to create the management plan since March of 2019 when the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act designated 18,745 acres of the Alabama Hills as a National Scenic Area. The Congressional designation came about after years of community activism and input to obtain a higher national designation

for the Alabama Hills that would retain the area’s many uses and provide additional resources to manage and maintain the hills for the long term.

Again, the BLM stresses visitors should check on the latest changes at the hills before arriving. For more information, contact the Bishop BLM office at (760) 872-5000, or check [www.blm.gov/visit/alabama-hills](http://www.blm.gov/visit/alabama-hills).



Hiking is one of many activities enjoyed in the Alabama Hills area west of Lone Pine.

File photo



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# Fishing history lovers need to explore Independence

Creek fishing around Inyo County seat is unbeatable By Register Staff

Independence, the earliest Anglo settlement in the Eastern Sierra, is one of the region's most peaceful destinations for early and late season stream fishing. With so much history oozing from the rocks and streams themselves, the community and its waterways are the perfect destination for those who enjoy a good campfire story. Opportunities for camping, hiking, fishing and hunting accompany spectacular stargazing and remarkable historic structures.

Extensive hiking and backpacking trails meander throughout the Sierra from trail heads at Onion Valley, including Shephard Pass, and Baxter Pass. There are several campgrounds in the vicinity of Independence and abundant trout fishing in the local creeks.

East of Independence the Owens River and off-channel lakes, ponds, and ditches offer warm water fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, bluegill, and catfish.

The Independence area is known for having some of the best creek fishing east of the Sierra. This area is not nearly as frequented as some of the more popular fishing spots in Bishop or Lone Pine. That means there are a lot of fish and not as many anglers, making Independence as quiet and peaceful as it is serene.

The Onion Valley area, which is west of Independence via Onion Valley Road, offers a campground and a pack station.

There also is a trailhead access to several alpine lakes, perfect for anglers who want to go fishing in the backcountry. This is one of the highest trailheads in the Sierra. Maps and detailed lake access information is available at any local visitor center.

Onion Valley Road is a windy, paved mountain road that offers spectacular views of the entire Owens Valley.

Independence Creek is perfect for stream fishing. This creek runs roughly parallel to Onion Valley Road, and is easily accessible and excellent for fly fishing.

Shepherd's Creek has its own unique fishing history. During World War II, when Japanese Americans were interred at the nearby Manzanar relocation camp, some of the internees would sneak out of the camp just to go fishing in Shepherd's Creek, as well as some of the other



The Independence Trout Derby is a local tradition.

Photo by Jon Klusmire

creeks near the camp.

Manzanar is now a national historic site, and the story of the Japanese American fishermen is featured in the film "The Manzanar Fishing Club," which can be found at the museum.

The film is a must-see for anyone who loves the fishing lifestyle, as the film celebrates the spirit of those courageous fishermen and human resilience in the face of unimaginable hardship.

Several of the streams in the Independence area are excellent for small-mouth bass fishing, as well as bullhead catfish and bluegill. There are several small ponds east of the town of Independence that are home to these species.

These ponds, along with the Owens River, can be accessed by Mazurka Canyon Road, then by various dirt roads. For detailed instructions, stop by one of the local visitor centers, or contact a local fishing guide service or sporting goods store.

There also are carp in the Independence area, which is the only type of fish in California that is legal to hunt with a bow and arrow.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reminds anglers that the arrow must be attached to the bow or a fishing reel.

The Independence area has a colorful history and a proud fishing tradition, but one of its most special locations is the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery. The Hatchery, now a museum, was instrumental in saving California's state fish, the golden trout. Although it is no longer used as a hatchery, the facility's grounds are a popular stop for photoengravers, and used as a venue for gatherings and weddings. This beautiful facility still stands as a monument to the history of fishing in the Eastern Sierra. The hatchery's front pond is a beautiful place to have a picnic after a morning of fishing. Children and children at heart alike will enjoy feeding the fish from food dispensers located around the pond.



# For big fun, look no farther than Big Pine

Area offers easy access to streams, variety of fishing opportunities

By Register Staff

Big Pine offers an almost-endless variety of opportunities for stream fishing year-round, all within easy access that is perfect for families with children learning how to fish. As one of the lesser-crowded fishing destinations in the region, Big Pine is the perfect spot for anglers who are looking to find a new fishing destination without the crowds.

The small community of Big Pine is known as the portal to Palisade Glacier, the southernmost glacier in the northern hemisphere, and the ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, the oldest living trees in the world.

But the fishing is just as noteworthy.

Big Pine Creek, which flows down from the glaciers and the Sierra high country, offers excellent stream fishing without the crowds.

While Big Pine Canyon is one of the few canyons in the area that does not have a paved road leading to lakes, it does offer stream access near Glacier Lodge. There are several alpine lakes, accessible by a short hike or trail ride from

Glacier Pack Station.

The road to the Glacier Lodge crosses the creek at a point where the water flows rapidly, but there are many other places along the stream where the water slows.

There also are beautiful hikes along historic trails that lead to even more alpine fishing destinations along the streams and lakes of the Sierra backcountry. Big Pine Canyon is accessed by Crocker Street in downtown Big Pine. There is an excellent access point for Big Pine Creek just past the first big curve in the road, just before the road begins to gain altitude.

Baker Creek Campground, which is open year-round, is the perfect base camp for a fishing adventure, especially for families. Baker Creek pools in several places, including in and within walking distance of the campground, offering a peaceful fishing spot.

Some of the best fishing in Big Pine is along the Owens River, off U.S. Highway 168 East. The turnoff is just north of town, right next to the

Glacier View Campground. There is a large American flag and a solitary giant sequoia tree right next to the turnoff. U.S. Highway 168 crosses the Owens River, and continues up into the White Mountains towards the Bristlecone Pines. There is a well-maintained dirt road that follows the river, offering several different access points for anglers.

Tinnemaha Reservoir, located south of Big Pine, and east of U.S. Highway 395, is another great fishing spot. The reservoir can be challenging to reach, due to the brush and reeds that line the shores, but the fishing experience is worth the brush-wading. Several different species of fish inhabit the reservoir, including small-mouth bass – a fun change to the trout-fishing routine.

Little Fish Springs, which is located near Fish Springs Hatchery, is another excellent fishing option.

Goodale and Taboose campgrounds are located south of Fish Springs, and offer stream access for anglers.

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# Fishmas is on again this year – with some changes for Eastside anglers

Regulation changes affect fishing in the Sierra By Wendilyn Grasseschi

After a dismal 2020 without a formal Fishing Opener weekend due to COVID-19, many of the Eastern Sierra's lakes will once again be open to trout fishing on April 24 (the last Saturday in April) and run through Nov. 15 - just like they have for many years.

The parents will come, packing kids and hot dogs and hamburgers and sleeping bags, praying it won't be snowing and windy and 19 degrees on the morning of April 24, like it so often seems to be up here in the high Sierra.

The old men will come with their plastic buckets and their sons and their sons' sons and a few daughters and they will reminisce about how many decades they have been coming to exactly this spot, right here, using exactly this bait and they will let you know how much better the fishing was when they were boys – but still, they will come.

The couples will come and they will settle into their favorite rooms at their favorite resorts and eat at their favorite places, the same rooms and resorts and dining rooms they have been going too since they were married at that same resort and oh yes, maybe they will fish a bit too.

The groups of guys will come with their beer and their boats and really, it won't matter that much if they catch anything – it's more about being there, with these same group of guys they've been coming up here with for decades. And the beer.

The lakes will open at dawn on Saturday morning, rain or wind or sun or all three and the chairs will be popped open and settled and the trucks will be parked and Fishmas will commence.

So, yes, Fishmas is back.

But – and it is a big 'but' – there are also some big changes for anglers arriving in the Eastern Sierra this year due to a major overhaul of the state's fishing regulations in 2020.

The biggest change is a new rule which allows most of the rivers and creeks (and canals) and almost every lake not accessible by a road in the Eastern Sierra to be open to fishing year around for the first time.

The changes will not affect any of the several dozen lakes in the Eastern Sierra that have a road that leads to a resort or concessionaire establishment; think of the familiar, family fishing lakes like Silver and Convict and Crowley and the like. In fact, all of the Eastern Sierra lakes that can be driven to, sometimes called "frontcountry" lakes as compared to "backcountry lakes," will still only open for fishing on the last Saturday of April and still close on Nov. 15,

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Photo by Don Chambers



following months of pressure by local resort owners and politicians who petitioned the state to allow these lakes to be exempt from the year-around rule. There are many reasons for this petition; see further down in the article for more details.

The bottom line is there will be a lot more opportunities to pull out a fishing pole in the Eastern Sierra this year than there has ever been, for those who are willing to walk to high country lakes or those willing to fish in winter-like conditions.

That said, this year-around fishing opportunity does come with certain regulations in order to protect each distinct fishery. The main regulation (for many rivers, creeks, streams and canals) (there are some that have special regulations, and each waterway needs to be looked up in section 7.50 – Alphabetical listing of special regulations of the fishing regulations) is that anglers will only be able to catch and release with artificial lures with barbless hooks anytime before the last Saturday in April and after Nov. 15.

The exceptions and regulations for many rivers, creeks, streams and canals can be looked up in Section 7.50 of the CDFW regulations book (see how to access this information at the bottom of this article) as some that have special regulations, and, each waterway needs to be looked up before an angler starts fishing, according to Lt. Bill Dailey, with the Bishop-based CDFW office. “There you can find an alphabetical list-

ing of special regulations of the fishing regulations,” he said.

Once traditional fishing season hits – the last Saturday of April through Nov. 15 – those rivers, lakes and creeks will revert back to certain, established bag limits and possession limits, allowing anglers a chance to actually take fish home again.

So, this is the main change to fishing regulations for 2021; opening many of the Eastern Sierra’s rivers and creeks and any lake that is not accessible by a road to year around fishing (with certain regulations and exceptions as noted above).

The changes will be most pronounced in the high elevation fisheries that can remain snow-bound for the late fall and into spring. These fisheries are concentrated in Mono County, which is situated north of Inyo County along U.S. Highway 395. Mono County’s southern border starts about halfway up the Sherwin Grade and the northern boundary of the county is the Nevada state line north of Topaz. That is the reason Mono County Tourism worked with CDFW to create the graphics attached to this article.

“We were trying to simplify the regulations,” said Dailey, noting most of the waters in the rest of the state are already open to year around angling, with the Eastern Sierra the big exception.

However, when the state proposed opening

all of the Eastern Sierra’s waters year around, including the drive-to lakes like Crowley and Silver and Lundy, the push-back came fast.

Local resort owners rose up in frustration and even fear, telling the state en masse that most of the Eastern Sierra’s lakes were still iced over and/or snowbound on March 1 and as such dangerous; that roads to their resorts might not be able to be plowed that early; that would-be anglers might fall through the ice and drown; that they did not have a marketing plan or an amenities plan that could be implemented in early March.

Without a special day set aside for Fishmas, a date that is at this time suited to the economic and practical realities of operating a fishing-dominated resort facility located on the Eastern Sierra’s high-altitude lakes, they said, they would lose almost all of the huge, economic benefits of the Fishmas Trout Opening weekend, putting their ability to operate in peril.

It took time but eventually, the state agreed late last year to exclude all of the Eastern Sierra lakes that have a concessionaire associated with them from the year around regulation and allow them to operate during the traditional Fishmas season.

The 19 lakes that will only be open for fishing for the traditional season include: Bridgeport Reservoir and tributaries, Convict Lake, Crowley

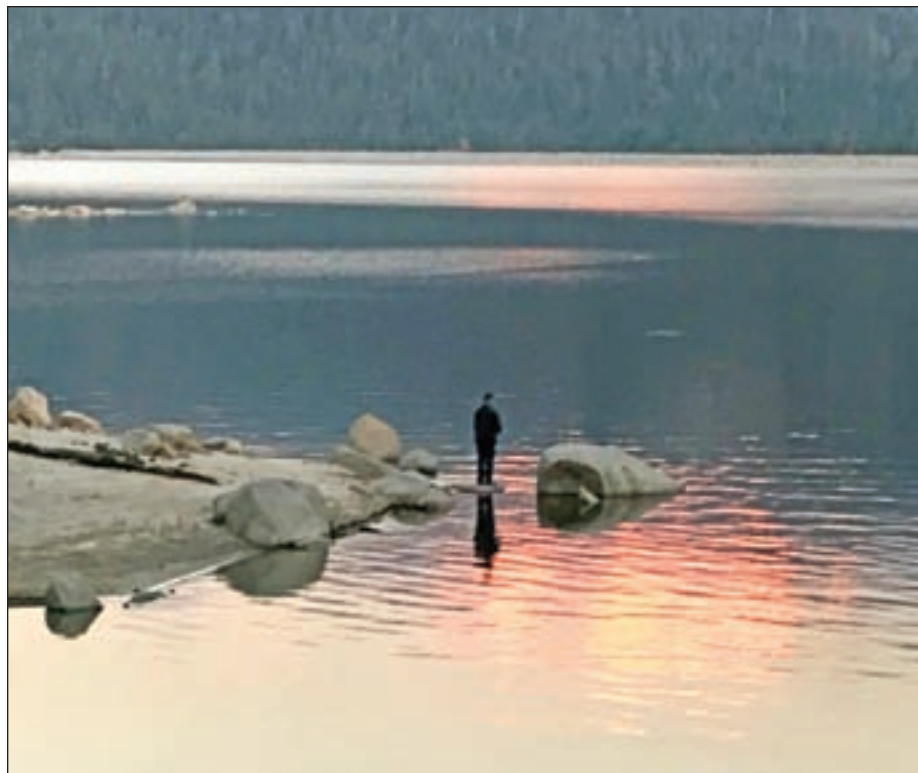


Photo By Wendilyn Grasseschi

While the new changes to regulations have changed some things about fishing in the Eastern Sierra, the important part – enjoying the great outdoors – remains just as beautiful as ever.



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## REGULATIONS, from pg. 15

Lake, George Lake, Grant Lake, Gull Lake, Horseshoe Lake, June Lake, Lundy Lake, Mamie Lake, Mary Lake, Rock Creek Lake, Sabrina Lake, Silver Lake, South Lake, Twin Lakes in Mammoth, Twin Lakes in Bridgeport and upper and lower Virginia Lake.

"Most of the remaining lakes will be open to year-round fishing with a daily bag limit of 5 trout and possession limit of 10 trout. Each waterway needs to be looked up in the alphabetical listing of Section 7.50 of the fishing regulations to ensure no special regulation exist for the particular waterway," Dailey said.

There are also other changes that will take some adjusting to, said Jim Erdman, a fish biologist with the Bishop field office of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"We tried to keep things simple, but we did need to create some special regulations for a few places that have unusual or rare fisheries," he said. For example, he said, places like Hot Creek are so unique, they require unique regulations – and as such, all of Hot Creek is catch and release only no matter what season.

Other places, such as parts of the East Fork of the Walker River, have other unique needs wherein a traditional bag limit and a year around season might easily de-populate the entire fishery.

Then there are places where the state has spent years, decades in fact, working to bring back native species of trout such as the Lahontan cutthroat trout and the Piute cutthroat trout. In waters that harbor newly restored populations of these rare, native trout,

special efforts have been made to protect the still-fragile recovery efforts and that means streams like Silver Creek have different regulations, he said.

These exceptions are where things do get complicated, Erdman acknowledged.

"We tried to keep it simple, but we did have to make exceptions for some unique waters," he said.

The best way to understand what those exceptions are is to take a look at the graph associated with this article (which can also be accessed by going online - see below) and to use some of the new tools the state has developed such as an application that anglers can download on their smartphones which shows anglers exactly where they are in real time and what the regulations are on that water.

"This new app is one of the best things out there," Erdman said. "You can use it even if you are out of range of cell service and it will tell you when you cross a boundary, say a state line or a border, and the regulations change. I think this is going to be a very effective tool."

- Get the app. Go to <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/sportfishingregs/>

- Go online to see a full list of changes at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife website here: [https://fgc.ca.gov/Regulations/2020-New-and-Proposed#3\\_00](https://fgc.ca.gov/Regulations/2020-New-and-Proposed#3_00)

- View the full press release from CDFW here: <https://cdfgnews.wordpress.com/2021/03/01/updated-freshwater-sportfishing-regulations/?fbclid=IwAR2SiWYJ3wIKKYS eRahRFR-hkZ4bgn90tMSPYIPrDWD3DfcB->



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Photo By Wendilyn Grosseschi

Fishmas, and its sometimes hard-core weather, will remain unchanged for many of the lakes in the region.



# Experimenting with Euro Nymphing

Local fishing expert shares thoughts on fly fishing technique By Fred Rowe

Euro nymphing is a method of fly fishing that comes from competition fly fishing. It uses heavily weighted flies, thin leaders and a sighter, a colored section of leader. This is a highly effective nymphing method that European anglers have perfected over years of competitive fishing.

Fly fishers can choose from one of four main methods: Polish, Czech, Spanish and French. There are slight differences in the leader setups and the way they are fished through the water column.

Ten- to 11-foot rods are used to fish the nymphs. These long rods have stiff butts and soft tips allowing the fly fisher to set the hook without breaking off the fish. The rods are stiff enough to land all but the largest of trout. A 10- to 11-foot three weight or four weight are standard Euro nymphing rods.

In most Euro nymphing, the fly line sits on the rod, and monofilament and fluorocarbon are used in the leader and tippet set up. Leader and tippet setups range from 15 to 25 feet. These leaders are designed to keep the slack out of the leader allow-

ing the fly fisher to feel the take of the fish.

Integral to the leader set-up is the sighter. This is a 12- to 48-inch piece of colored monofilament placed between the leader and the tippet. The sighter is used to control the amount of tension in the line. Too much slack and fly fishers will not be able to detect the take of the flies by the fish. Too much tension and the flies will drift through the water in an unnatural fashion. Running the sighter equal or slightly faster than the surface speed is optimum. The easiest way to perform this is to run the sighter just ahead of foam on the surface of the stream.

Heavily weighted thin bodied nymphs are used to penetrate the water's surface and allow the flies to quickly get to the substrate where the trout are looking for food. The flies are tied up to imitate the mayflies, caddis flies, stoneflies and midges that trout feed on. Some of the flies are tied using bright and shiny materials to be attractor patterns.

These flies are lobed not cast upstream and lead down-stream. The rod is kept high over the water, keeping the slack out of the leader. Strikes

are felt not seen in the sighter. Most strikes feel like tension in the line, not a hard hit like you would expect.

Tension in the leader and the right amount of weight from the flies is essential to the success of Euro nymphing. This method produces in a couple of hours the number of trout that normally is caught in an entire day.

Learning to Euro nymph takes a lot of on the water time. Hiring a guide is a great way to shorten the learning curve. A fly fishing guide well versed in Euro nymphing techniques is worth the price to get the fly fisher on the water catching trout with this very productive method of nymphing.

*(Fred Rowe owns Sierra Bright Dot Fly Fishing Guide Service. He teaches fly fishing and fly tying. He is one of the original fly fishing guides in the Eastern Sierra guiding from Bishop to Bridgeport. He is an avid hunter who loves to hunt birds, especially waterfowl. Fred can be reached at (760) 920-8325, roweboat5@verizon.net or on his webpage sierrabrightdot.com.)*



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# The Hopper Hatch

Hungry fish look for grasshoppers in mid summer By Fred Rowe

Every region has that one hatch season that fly fishers wait for all year. It's not the typical hatching mayflies, caddis or midges. It is an insect that offers enough calories to bring the largest trout of the stream to the surface. For the Eastern Sierra, it is the grasshopper hatch, which occurs in mid-summer.

Hoppers can be found throughout the Eastern Sierra. Grassy meadows split by a stream are a great spot to fish grasshoppers. From tiny creeks just a single step across to full on rivers they all offer good summer hopper fishing.

Sometime in late May or early June the hoppers hatch. At first, they are very small and just hop because they can't fly yet. This makes them vulnerable to jumping into the stream and becoming a meal for any trout feeding within a foot of the stream's bank. By July, the hoppers start flying and quite a few end up in the water as trout food. When hoppers are on the water, it does not take long for a trout to engulf them.

Once hoppers master their flying skills, they avoid the water. Afternoon winds are common in the Eastern Sierra, sometimes causing hoppers to crash land onto the water. Hopper fly fishing in the Eastern Sierra is best in the afternoon when the wind is blowing. Fly fishers want to cast their hopper patterns into the wind next to the bank the wind is blowing across and let it



Photo by Fred Rowe

Fishing the hopper hatch is a challenging, yet often rewarding way to explore fly fishing in the Eastern Sierra.

dead drift downstream.

Setting the hook when hopper fishing is tricky. A lot of small trout attempt to feed on the large hoppers and just can't swallow them.

Hopper fishing offers lots of action as every trout in the stream is looking up for a big meal. Trophy trout quite often do not engulf the hopper on the first or second attempt to eat them. They prefer their meal dead and use their snout to knock out or kill the hopper before eating it.

The summer of 2019 was the best hopper hatch I've seen in the Eastern Sierra. I had a trophy brown trout come up and smack my hopper pattern, sending it a couple of feet into the air and five feet downstream. I did not try to set the hook because I saw the big trout did not open its mouth on my hopper pattern. The fish moved downstream and again smacked my hopper pattern, but not trying to feed on it. My hopper pattern was now 10 feet downstream from where the initial hit took place. This huge mouth appeared on the surface from downstream of my hopper pattern and just engulfed my hopper fly sitting on the stream's surface. I set the hook and landed one of the biggest brown trout of my career on a dry fly.

Hopper fishing offers the best dry fly fishing opportunities of the summer on Eastern Sierra waters. Splating a hopper fly on the water and watching a trout come right to the surface and eat the fly is what every fly fisher is looking for during the hopper hatch.



Photo by Fred Rowe

An example of a young grasshopper compared to a grasshopper fly.



Photo by Fred Rowe

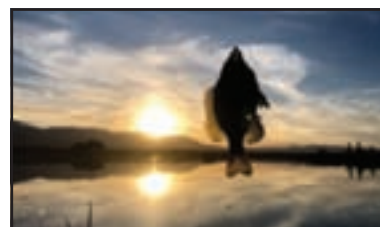
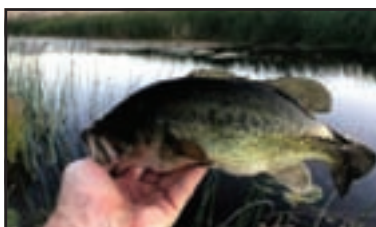
An Eastern Sierra grasshopper as compared to a fishing reel.





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# Bishop Creek Canyon

The definition of a classic fishing destination By Register Staff

For many anglers, it's not just about catching fish. Some enjoy the thrill of the chase, and the burst of energy when there's a tug on their line.

For others, fishing offers a chance to spend time in nature, and Bishop Creek Canyon is arguably one of the best places to do so, while taking advantage of the wide variety of options available in the classic fishing destination.

The fishing opportunities in Bishop Creek Canyon abound, offering anglers both stream and lake options, all within a short driving distance from each other and the town of Bishop.

The canyon, which is shaped like a "Y," begins with W. Line Street, State Route 168 West, as it leaves downtown Bishop.

Shortly past the Big Trees Campground, South Lake Road branches off the main highway,

The road leading towards South Lake offers several different access points to fishing locations along the south fork of Bishop Creek. The deeper portions of the creek are heavily planted with trophy-sized rainbow trout. Some of these fish are planted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, but much of the planting is provided by the lodges located throughout the canyon and by the Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau.

South Lake marks the end of the south fork of Bishop Creek. Here, during good water years, there is excellent boat and shore fishing available.

South Lake also is a mecca for wildflower hunters in the late spring, and the canyon's many groves of aspen trees make Bishop Creek the perfect destination for late season fishing. The colors begin changing at the upper elevations first, usually in mid September, then gradually begin changing lower down in the canyon.

There are many trails that begin at South Lake and lead to alpine lakes where anglers can try their hand at catching the elusive California golden trout.

If hiking is not an option, all of the local pack outfitters can take anglers into the backcountry on horseback. This service makes backcountry water accessible to the elderly, the very young and



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Intake II, located a short distance up the S.R. Highway 168 from the South Lake turnoff, is popular for fisherfolk who like float tubing on a small lake.

The shore fishing at Intake II often is excellent as well. Trophy trout are frequently pulled from the Intake, which has its own campground a short distance from the shores.

Lake Sabrina is heralded among locals to be one of the most scenic lakes in the area. Surrounded by steep mountains, this natural and man-made lake is full of trophy trout, and the Sabrina Boat Landing offers boat rentals and some of the best pie this side of the Sierra.

Bald Eagles have been known to frequent the canyon, sometimes swooping down to the lake for a fresh trout lunch.

The loose granite rocks that line the shores of Lake Sabrina can be treacherous but fishing from the dam often is excellent.

There is a boat ramp for anglers who have their own boats. For those who do not own a boat, the Lake Sabrina Boat

Landing offers boat rentals, including non-motorized options.

North Lake is one of the highest lakes in the area that is accessible by car. When autumn begins in the Sierra, the aspens near North Lake are almost always the first to start changing color. North Lake is small in comparison to Sabrina or South Lake but the fish bite just the same.

North Lake is accessed by a well-maintained dirt road that ascends steeply up the side of the canyon wall. This road can be a bit dizzying for those afraid of heights but North Lake's beauty and hungry fish are well worth the adrenaline rush. There also are rustic campsites located right next to the lake.

Bishop Creek Canyon also has 13 different camping options to choose from, and three different lodges offering cabin rentals. Many of these options offer stream or lake access, making them ideal for a fishing trip in the Sierra. With all of the fish in the water, and the breathtaking scenery, Bishop Creek Canyon is a nature-loving angler's paradise.



Photo by Jon Klusmire

Parchers Resort in the south fork of Bishop Creek Canyon is one of the many beloved stops for anglers exploring Bishop Creek Canyon.

*2021 Eastern Sierra Fishing Guide (Maps on pages 26-39)*




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# Creating a virtual derby

Local anglers find alternative for COVID-safe fishing fun By Kristina Blüm Justice

When the COVID-19 pandemic wrapped the world in its grasp in March 2020, fishing derbies throughout the region were canceled to help slow the spread of the virus, but love for the sport of fishing remained. A group of local anglers began thinking outside the tackle box to come up with a creative alternative that would enable them to have some sort of derby while adhering to public health guidelines. Their solution made ripples in the fishing world locally and beyond.

This group of fishing friends held their own virtual fishing derby, utilizing technology to help them celebrate their sport and the beautiful Eastern Sierra outdoors together from a distance.

"We really weren't sure how it would go – and it went well," said Nick Lara, event organizer and owner of Eastern Sierra Outdoors.

The Eastern Sierra Bass Fishing Tournament took place in May last year. Anglers from throughout the region went to their favorite fishing spots scattered along the Owens Valley floor and compared their catches using an app on their phones. The winning catches were determined based on length rather than weight, and the event went so well, they decided to turn it into a circuit, with a few different



Photo courtesy Eastern Sierra Outdoors  
Nick Lara shows off the trophy that will be passed between tournament winners each year.

fishing days scheduled throughout the summer.

"We used an app, so people could take a picture of their fish on a measuring board and submit it," he said. "We're not keeping the fish; it's entirely catch and release, so it was environmentally friendly and easier for the anglers to keep fish alive. They'd catch the fish, measure and weigh it, take a pic-

ture and film it being released."

The first Owens Valley Bass Fishing Tournament, which lasted all day June 6, was done entirely without a gathering. The length of each angler's five longest fish were added together to determine the winners, with one angler's 91 inches of fish reeling in the win.

Lara said the tournament was mostly meant for local anglers who just wanted to get out and enjoy a day of fishing in the Eastern Sierra. There were 33 anglers who participated in the event, with 23 from Bishop, Big Pine and Lone Pine. A handful came from Ridgecrest, with one from Tahatchopi and one from Bakersfield. Each paid \$30 to participate in the tournament, with \$1,200 being awarded in prizes.

Lara moved to Bishop three years ago, when he visited specifically to go fishing and never left.

"A one-month fishing trip turned into three years later," he laughed.

He created a guide service and focused on building a social media following to help promote the Eastern Sierra Bass Tournament in the community. Lara created an LLC, "Eastern Sierra Outdoors," under which he continues to organize virtual tournaments, but it has grown into so much more than a fishing guide service.

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Photo courtesy Eastern Sierra Outdoors

Last year's virtual bass tournament was won by length of the fish rather than weight.

"I want to show people that the Owens Valley has so much more to offer," he said. "You don't just have to stop here for gas and bread. We've got a lot to offer for people who stop and hang out here."

While this year's tournament will remain an invitational event this year, it will con-

tinue to evolve. Lara said he hopes that as gatherings become safer, the end of the tournament can be celebrated with a community barbecue in November, and he looks forward to seeing where this new tournament and creative roots will go in the future.



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# Pleasant Valley offers fantastic fishing

The Owens River has plenty of secret hot spots By Jarett Coons

Over many eons, the Owens River has cut away at the volcanic tablelands, forming a gorge that stretches from Crowley Lake to Pleasant Valley Reservoir.

The Owens began its life from the melting snow and ran unchecked to Owens Lake being joined by many streams along the way. It must have been a sight to see it during a good runoff without any dams or reservoirs to impede its rage.

Today a steady flow of water is maintained through the canyon by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and anglers are left with a great trout fishery.

It can take a little rock climbing to get to the good places but it is worth the work. The steady flow makes fishing consistently good any given day.

The brown trout that live here average around 12 inches and will give fishing fans a good fight, often leaping like rainbows. They are opportunistic and can be drawn up by most dry flies. Some of my favorites are Royal Wulff's, Elk Hair Caddis and Stimulators. Hanging a nymph off that dry fly is a great idea here as these trout also take attractor nymphs like Copper Johns, Prince Nymphs and

Bead Head Pheasant Tails. The bottom of the Gorge is thick with tules, willows and nettles so be careful when trekking upstream and be careful on those big boulders because some of them are loose.

## Pleasant Valley Reservoir

At the lower end of the Gorge there is another dam sealing up the canyon and creating another fishery, Pleasant Valley Reservoir.

This place has very easy access you can park at the top or bottom of the reservoir and with a short walk down a paved road be fishing in minutes. The easy walk makes it a great place to pack in a float tube and fish more water.

This reservoir contains brown and rainbow trout as well as Sacramento perch and largemouth bass. Stripping streamers and Midgeing are two productive ways to fly fish PVR. If you are going after big trout, large streamers that resemble young trout, bass, perch and crawdads fished on a sink line is a good way to go. Hanging nymphs and baitfish patterns under an indicator is another productive method. It works well in a float tube as you can check your

depth and know your flies are on the bottom. At certain times of the year the perch move in near shore to spawn and several fish can be caught. I remember early summer afternoons when I was a kid, my dad would take us and we would catch more than 100 perch in an afternoon. It was a blast!

The Gorge has more than 10 miles of stream and a reservoir at the bottom end to fish. It has something for everyone no matter what your skill level or ability. It is a great place for kids to fish and if they get bored, it is always fun to climb around on the big rocks.

If you need more convincing it also is open to fishing all year long and the fishing in the fall and winter is the best if you ask me.

*Local fishing expert Jarett Coons was born in Bishop and spent the majority of his life fishing and hunting from Lone Pine to Bridgeport. When his father took him to Intake II, Coons got his first trout on a dry fly, and he, too, was hooked. In January 2010, he started Sierra Mountain Trout Guide Service with the goal of recreating that moment on Intake II for his clients all over the Eastern Sierra.)*



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# Hot Spots of Inyo County

A quick guide to popular fisheries By Register Staff

**F**rom Cottonwood Creek south of Lone Pine, to Rock Creek Lake north of Round Valley, Inyo County is home to dozens of

angling "hot spots." Here's a look at some of the most popular, and how to get there. California Department of Fish and Wildlife planting schedules, including exact locations, are subject to change.

## BAKER CREEK

Take U.S. 395 to the north end of Big Pine. Turn west on Baker Creek Road just north of the ballfield in Big Pine and travel one mile to the campgrounds. Fish are planted in the campground area.

## BIG PINE CREEK

Turn west off U.S. 395 on Crocker Street in Big Pine and continue to the top of the grade. The creek is planted from Sage Flat Campgrounds to Glacier Lodge.

## BISHOP CREEK, LOWER

Take U.S. 395 to the town of Bishop. Turn west on W. Line Street and continue to Elks (Bulpitt) and Isaak Walton parks. Plants are made upstream from Elks Park to the Powderline Road.

## BISHOP CREEK, UPPER

Turn west on W. Line Street in Bishop and continue 15 miles to Intake II. Trout are planted from Intake II to Cardinal Lodge and from Lake Sabrina downstream to the North Lake turnout.

## BISHOP CREEK, SOUTH FORK

From Bishop turn west on W. Line Street and continue to the South Lake turnout just below Intake II, and turn at the fork. The creek is planted at access points from Creekside RV to the U.S. Forest Service Campgrounds, and from Parcher's Resort to Weir Lake.

## COTTONWOOD CREEK

From U.S. 395 turn south at the Cottonwood Power House turnout located about eight miles south of Lone Pine. Keep to the left as you cross the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The creek is planted from the campgrounds at the power house intake to the end of the road.

## DIAZ LAKE

Located on the west side of U.S.

395, two miles south of Lone Pine.

## GEORGES CREEK

About seven miles south of Independence on U.S. 395 turn south on the small road located one-quarter mile northwest of the Los Angeles Aqueduct crossing. The fish are planted at the sand trap.

## GOODALE CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 14 miles north of Independence and turn west at the Goodale Creek campground sign, then go two miles to campground. The creek is stocked from the campground to Aberdeen.

## INDEPENDENCE CREEK

Turn west off U.S. 395 on Market Street next to the Post Office in Independence. Trout are planted from Independence Campground, located one-half mile west of Independence, to where the main road crosses the creek above Seven Pines Village, a distance of about seven miles.

## INTAKE II

Turn west at W. Line Street (S.R. 168) in Bishop, and go about 13 miles until you see signs for Intake II.

## LONE PINE CREEK, LOWER

From U.S. 395 turn west at the traffic signal located in the center of Lone Pine (Whitney Portal Road). The creek is planted at access points from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to Lone Pine Campgrounds.

## LONE PINE CREEK, UPPER

Travel U.S. 395 to Lone Pine. Turn west at the traffic signal located in the center of Lone Pine (Whitney Portal Road), and continue up the grade for 13 miles. Fish are planted at the campgrounds along the creek from this point to the pond at Whitney Portal store.

## NORTH LAKE

From U.S. 395 turn west on W. Line

Street in Bishop and continue up the grade for approximately 16 miles. Turn right at North Lake sign.

## OWENS RIVER, SECTION II

In the Bishop area, turn east from U.S. 395 on E. Line Street, U.S. 6, Warm Springs Road or Collins Road. Trout are planted from Laws Bridge on U.S. 6 to Collins Road. In the Big Pine area travel east from U.S. 395 on Westgard Pass Road (S.R. 168). The river is planted here.

## OWENS RIVER, SECTION III

Accessed via various dirt roads east of U.S. 395 from 10 miles south of Big Pine to just south of Boulder Creek RV Park. To get to "High Banks," turn east on Mazourka Canyon Road, south of Independence. Along the way as the road parallels the river; scout out your own personal spot for future reference. To get to the pools north of the pump-back station, drive to the south end of Lone Pine to Boulder Creek RV Park, then take a left on the long, straight dirt road leading east to the terminus of the river and the pumpback station. From there, another dirt road on the east side of the river leads north to the pools.

## PLEASANT VALLEY RESERVOIR

From Bishop, take U.S. 395 as it curves northwest toward Mammoth Lakes. About 10 miles later, a few miles past the Bishop city limits sign, there will be a turn-off on the right. Pass through the campground to the reservoir.

## PINE CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to approximately 10 miles north of Bishop. Turn off on Pine Creek Road and drive west to where the road crosses the creek.

## ROCK CREEK LAKE

From U.S. 395, turn west at Tom's Place located 23 miles north of Bishop (Rock Creek Road) and pro-

ceed west up the canyon for about 10 miles. Just beyond Rock Creek Lake Resort, a spur to the left leads to the lake; staying on Rock Creek Road bypasses the lake.

## LAKE SABRINA

Drive to Bishop on U.S. 395 and turn west on W. Line Street. Follow the signs to the lake which is located approximately 17 miles southwest of Bishop.

## SHEPHERD CREEK

Turn east at the road with a cattle guard located approximately five miles south of Independence on U.S. 395. Follow this road until it ends at the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Turn right and continue to the creek. Trout are planted at the sand trap where the road meets the creek.

## SOUTH LAKE

Travel to Bishop via U.S. 395 and turn west on W. Line Street (S.R. 168). Continue for approximately 13 miles to the South Lake Road turnout. Turn left and drive for another six miles to the lake.

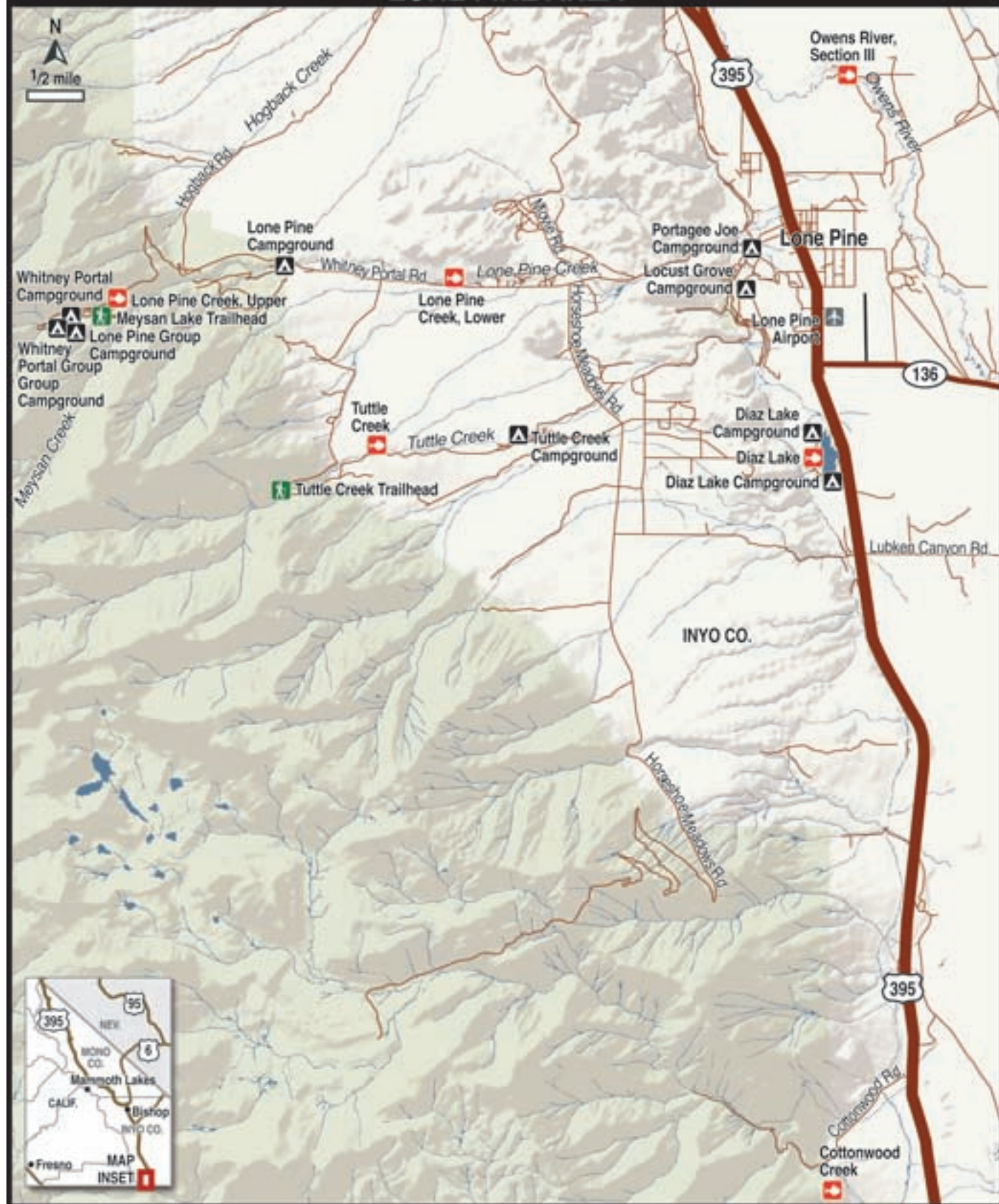
## TABOOSE CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to 14 miles north of Independence and turn west at the Taboose Creek Campgrounds sign. Turn left at the first road past Old U.S. 395 and continue to the stream. The creek is stocked in the campgrounds from Old U.S. 395 to one mile upstream.

## TUTTLE CREEK

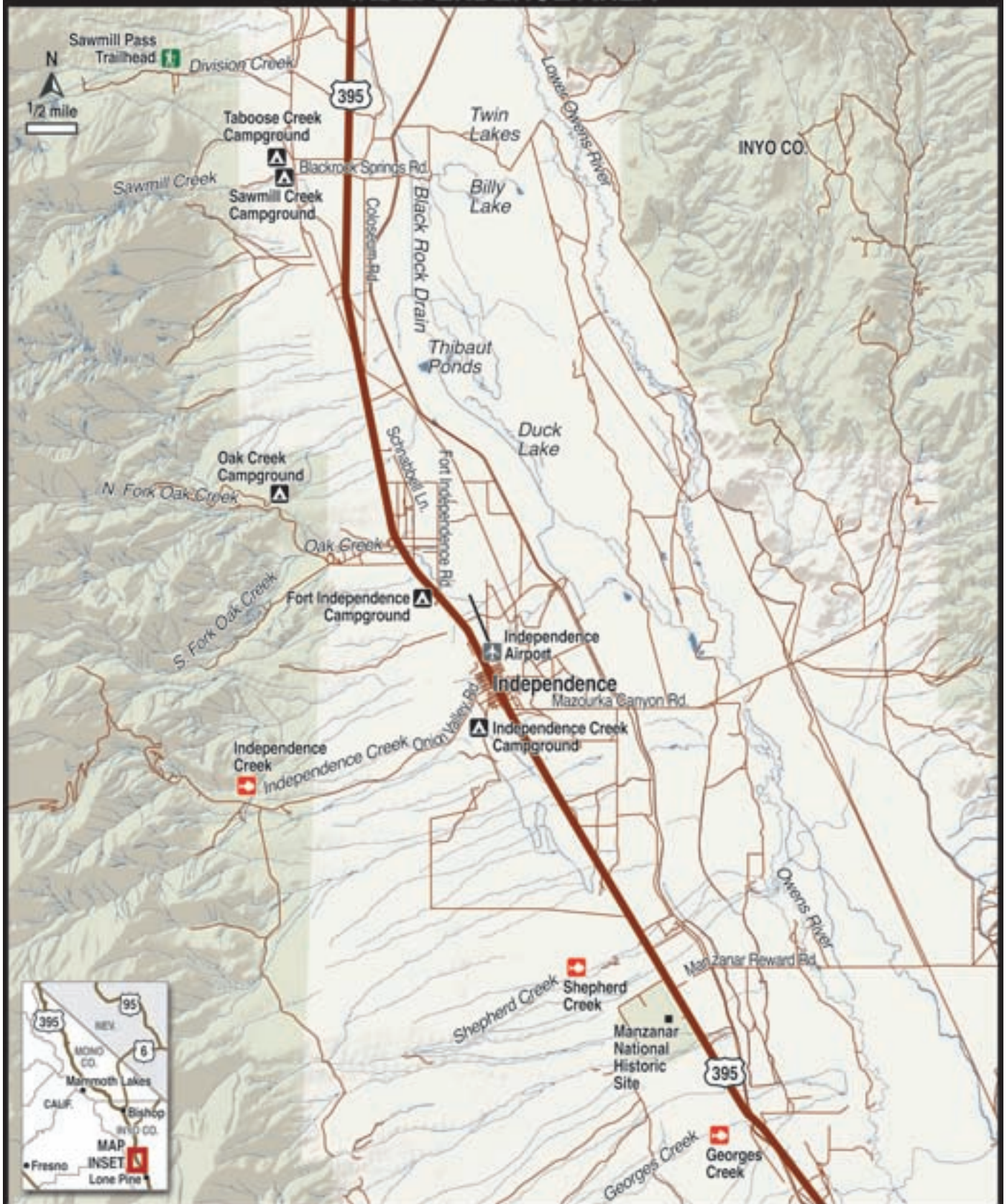
Travel U.S. 395 to Lone Pine and turn west at the traffic signal in the center of town. Continue up the road (Whitney Portal Road) for three miles to Horseshoe Meadow Road and turn left. Drive for about two miles to the Tuttle Creek Campgrounds. The creek is planted at access points in the campgrounds.

# LONE PINE AREA





# INDEPENDENCE AREA





# BIG PINE AREA

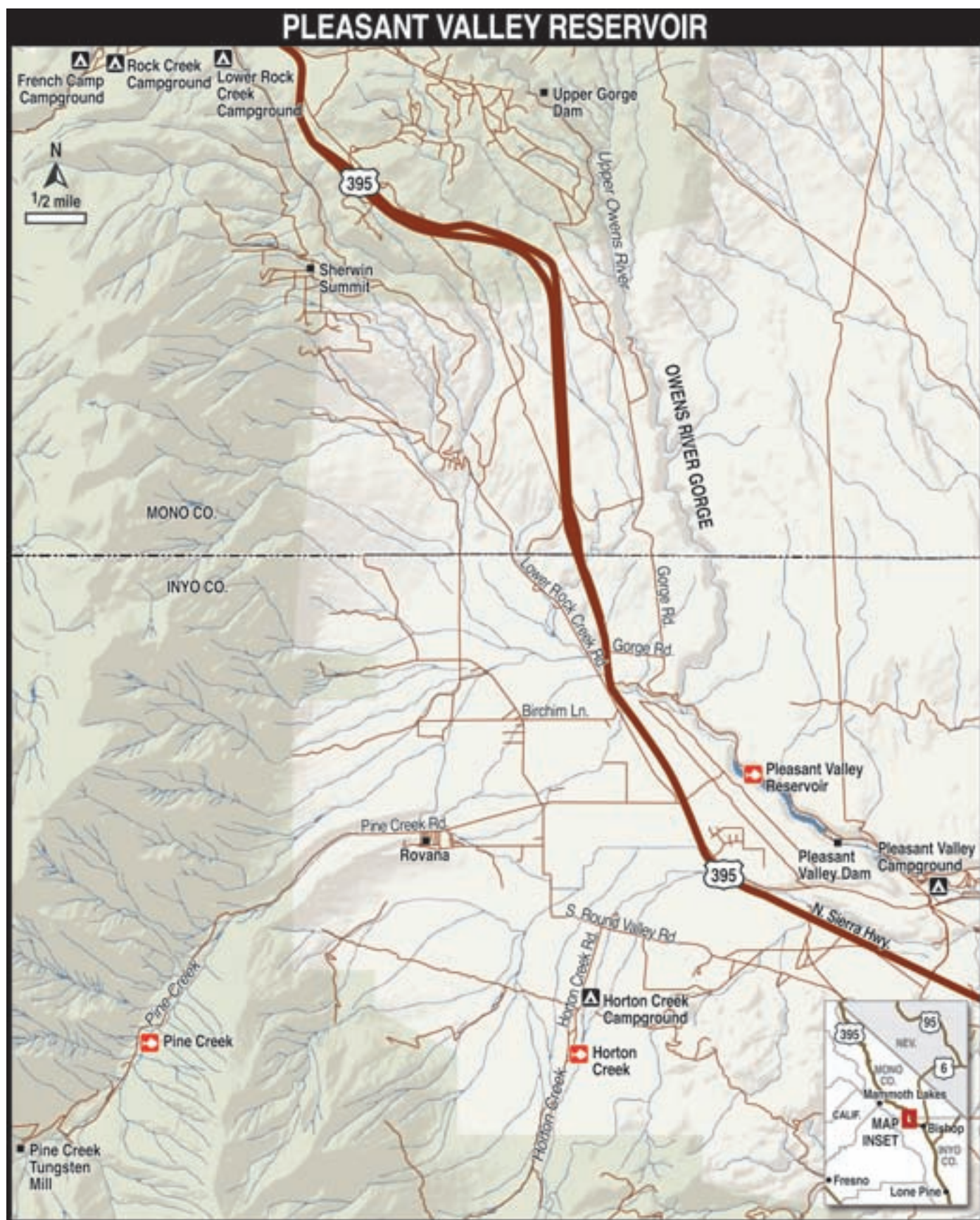




# BISHOP AREA

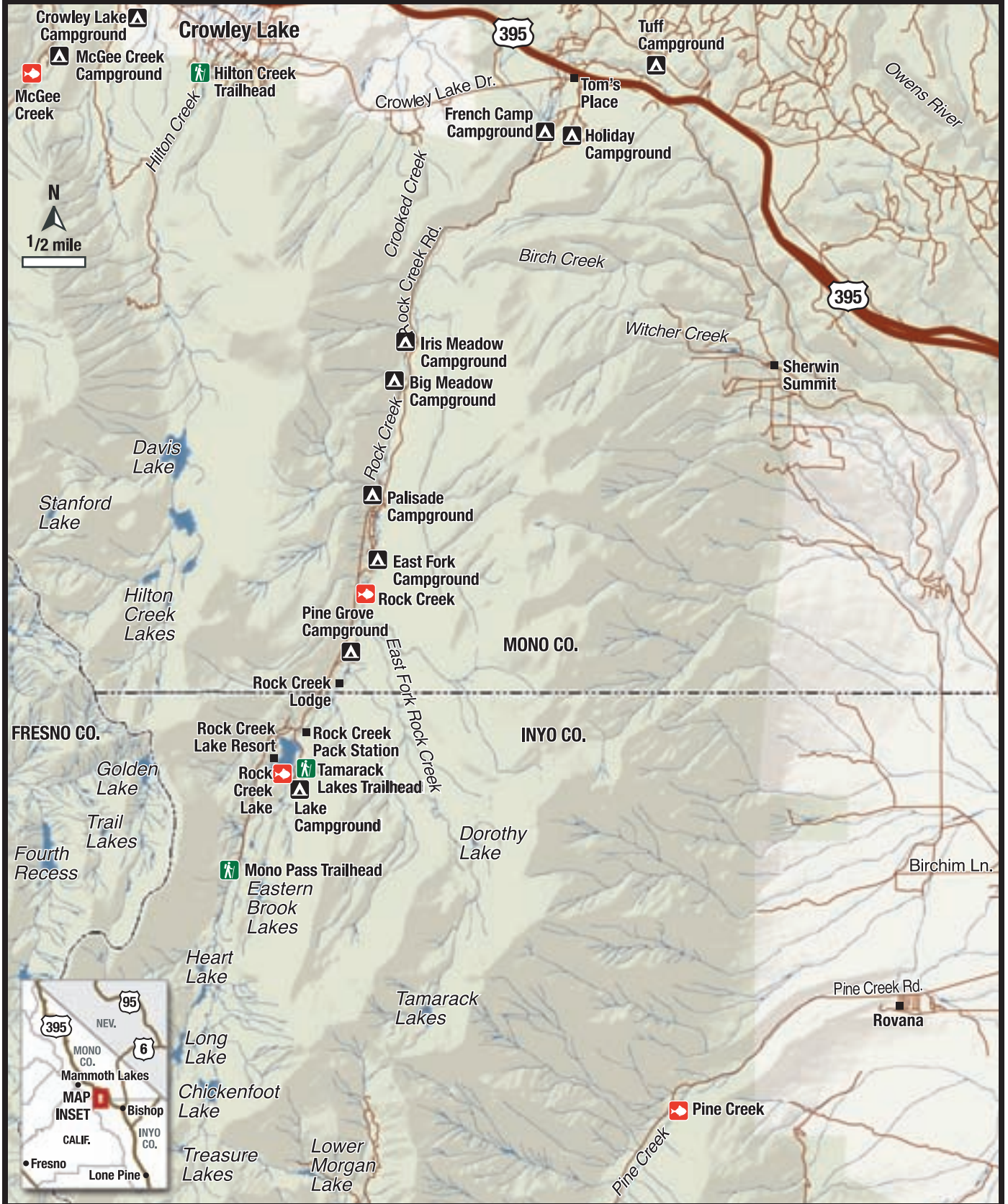






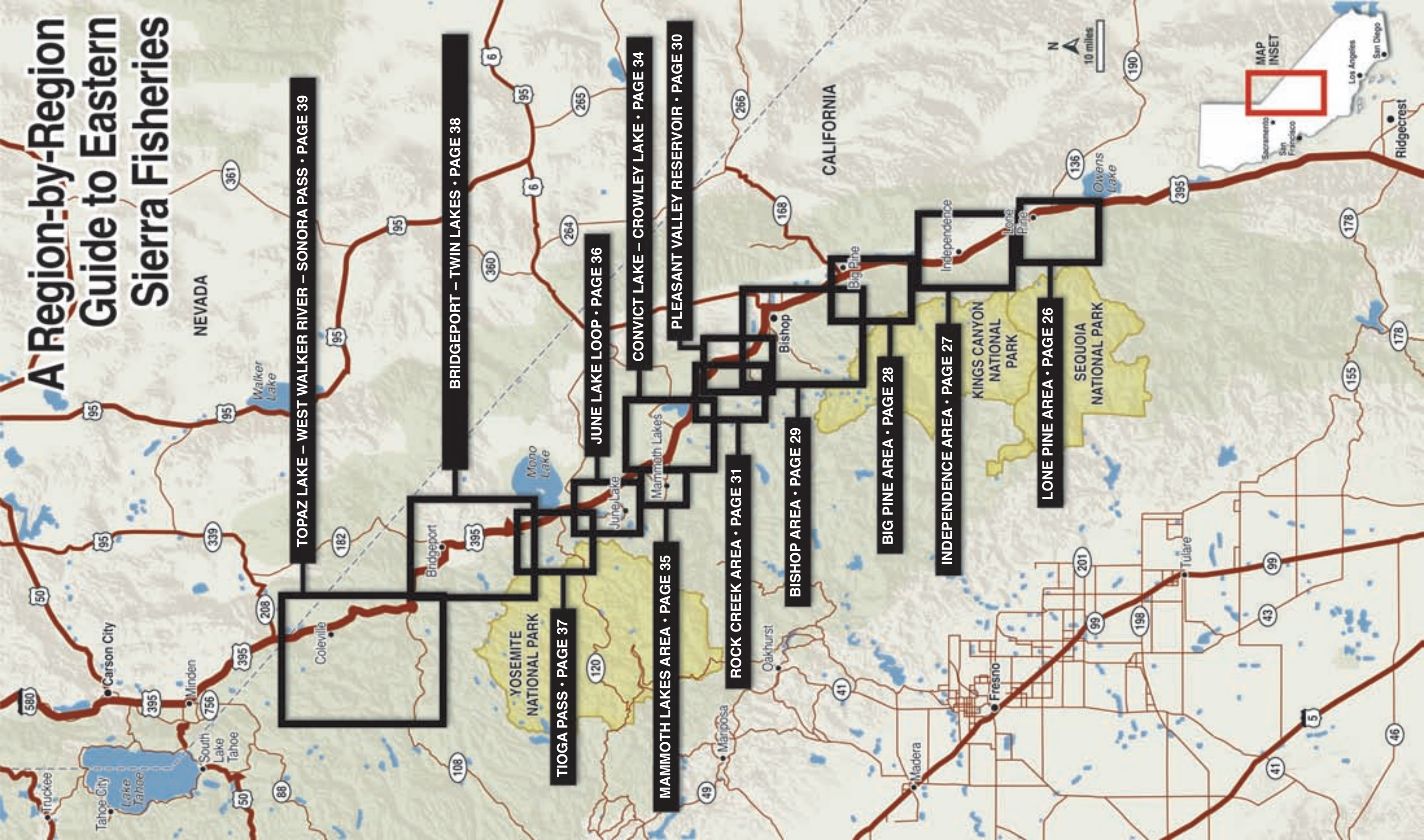


# ROCK CREEK AREA





# A Region-by-Region Guide to Eastern Sierra Fisheries



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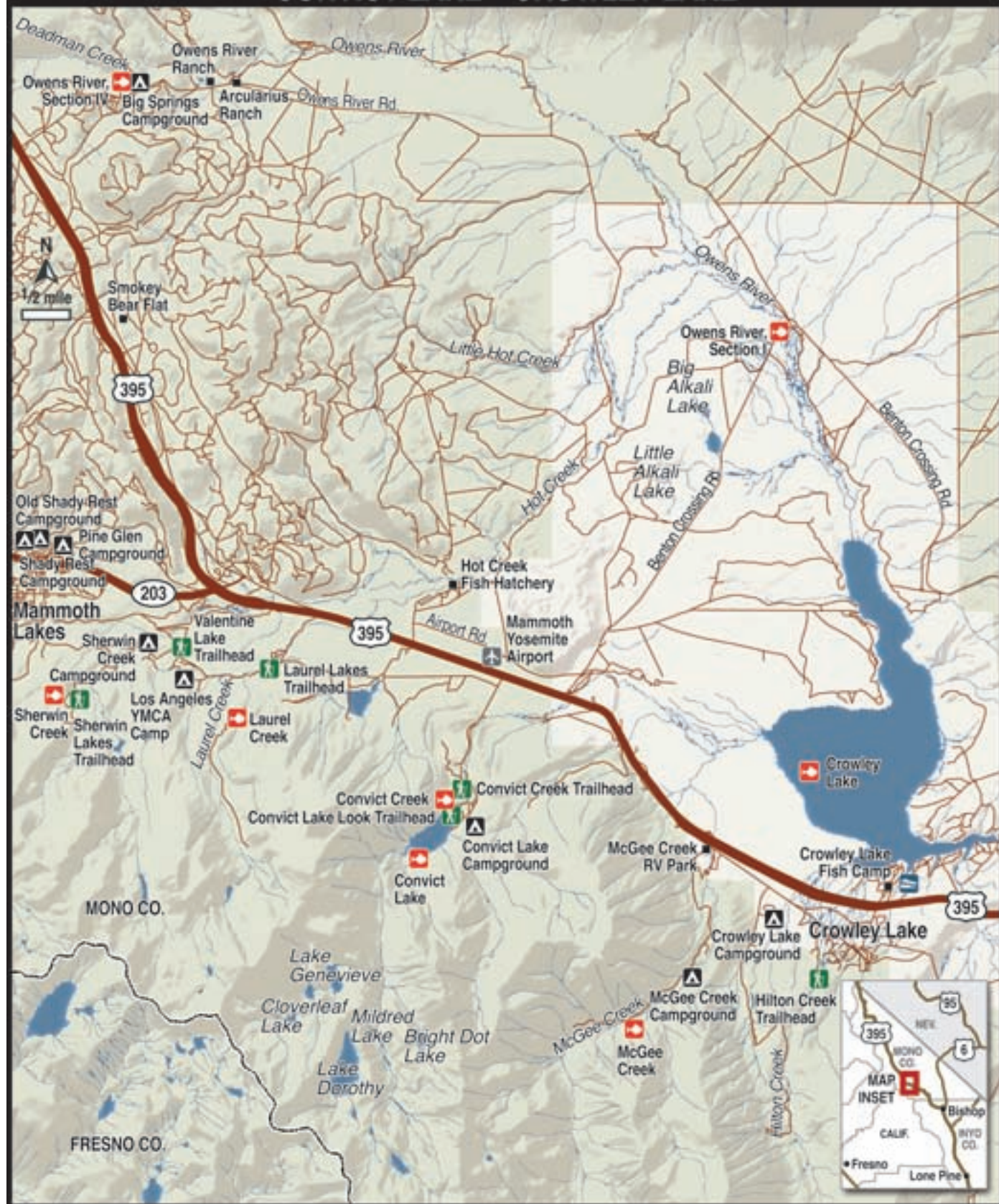
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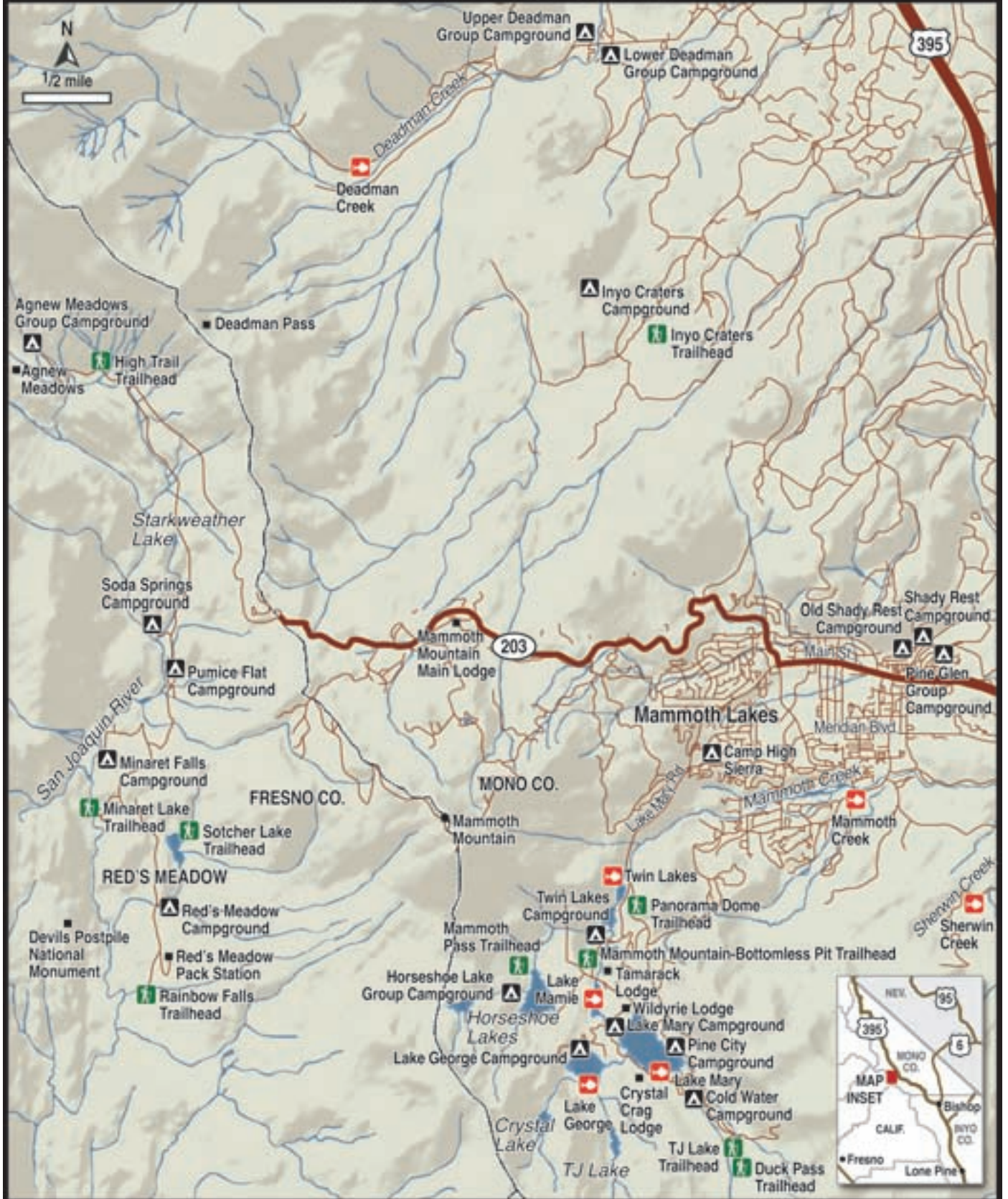


# CONVICT LAKE – CROWLEY LAKE





# MAMMOTH LAKES AREA



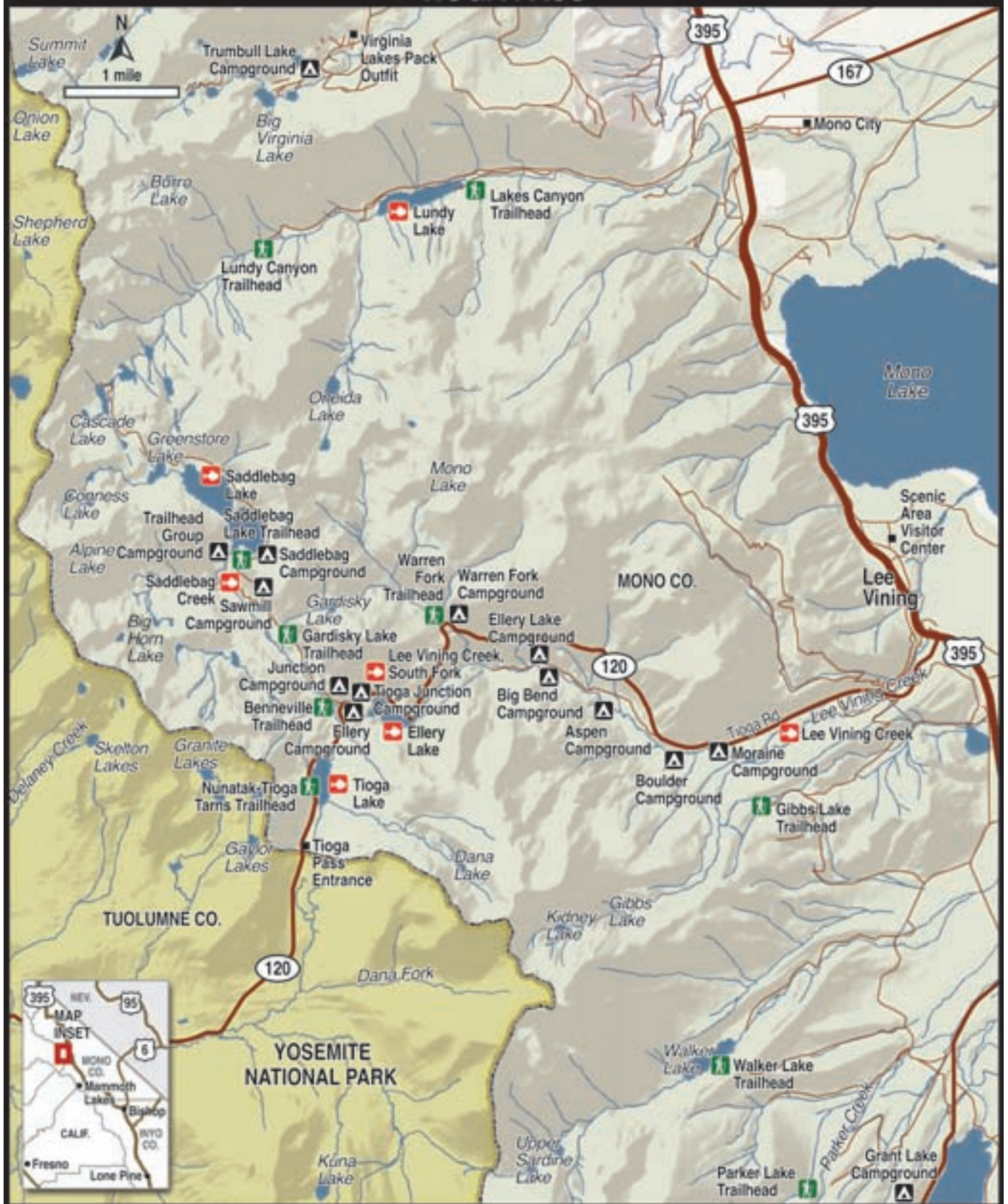


# JUNE LAKE LOOP





# TIOGA PASS





# BRIDGEPORT – TWIN LAKES – VIRGINIA LAKES





# TOPAZ LAKE – WEST WALKER RIVER – SONORA PASS





# Hot Spots of Mono County

A quick guide to popular fisheries By Register Staff

**M**ono County has no shortage of fishing “hot spots,” whether anglers are looking for calm fly fishing streams, rugged backcountry

lakes teeming with feisty fish or sprawling waters perfect for trolling. California Department of Fish and Wildlife planting schedules, including exact locations, are subject to change.

## BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR

Turn north off U.S. 395 at S.R. 182 at the south city limits of Bridgeport and continue for approximately three miles to the lake.

## BUCKEYE CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to the west end of Bridgeport and turn south at Twin Lakes Road. Continue for about eight miles and turn right on Buckeye Creek Road located at Doc and Al's Resort. Proceed for another four miles to where the road crosses the creek. Trout are planted from this location upstream.

## CONVICT LAKE AND CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to 10 miles south of Mammoth Lakes and turn west on Convict Lake Road. Continue approximately two miles to the lake.

## CROWLEY LAKE

The most popular Eastern Sierra fishing lake, Crowley is located 25 miles north of Bishop just off U.S. 395. Turn east at the Crowley Lake sign to enter at the south end of the lake. Drive farther north on U.S. 395 to Benton Crossing Road. Turn east and follow road to the north lake entrance.

## DEADMAN CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to nine miles north of Mammoth Lakes junction. Turn west on White Wing Camp Road and drive six miles to Deadman Campground. The creek is planted in the campground area.

## ELLERY LAKE

Drive U.S. 395 to one-half mile south of the town of Lee Vining and turn west on S.R. 120, Tioga Pass Road. The lake is located about 12 miles away on the south side of the road.

## GLASS CREEK

Drive 10 miles north of Mammoth Lakes on U.S. 395 and turn west on the road located across from Crestview Maintenance Station. Continue for one-half mile to the creek crossing.

## GRANT LAKE

Turn west off U.S. 395 onto the June Lake Loop Road, north. Continue to the lake.

## GULL LAKE

Turn west off U.S. 395 onto the June Lake Loop Road, south. Continue through June Lake Village to Gull Lake.

## JUNE LAKE

Turn west off U.S. 395 onto June Lake Loop Road, south. June Lake is approximately one mile from the turnoff.

## KIRMAN LAKE

From Bridgeport, head north on U.S. 395 for

about 17 miles. Turn left on S.R. 108 heading west toward Sonora Pass for about 2 miles. Off of the south shoulder and before the Sonora Bridge Campground will be a parking area leading to the Kirman Lake trailhead.

## LAKE GEORGE

Drive on U.S. 395 to the Mammoth Lakes turnoff and continue on Main Street (Lake Mary Road) and continue past Twin Lakes and bear right at the fork in the road to Lake Mary and follow the Forest Service signs to Lake George.

## LAKE MAMIE

Drive on U.S. 395 to the Mammoth Lakes turnoff and continue on Main Street (Lake Mary Road) past Twin Lakes, turning right where Lake Mary Road splits. Go straight.

## LAKE MARY

Drive on U.S. 395 to the Mammoth Lakes turnoff and continue on Main Street (Lake Mary Road) past Twin Lakes and bear left at the fork in the road to Lake Mary.

## LAUREL CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to four miles south of the Mammoth Lakes turnoff. Turn west on Sherwin Creek Road and continue a short distance to the first stream crossing.

## LEE VINING CREEK

Drive one-half mile south of the town of Lee Vining on U.S. 395 and turn west on S.R. 120. Access to the creek is available via campgrounds on the south side of the road and via Poole Power Plant Road.

## LEE VINING CREEK, SOUTH FORK

Travel one-quarter mile south of Lee Vining on U.S. 395 and turn west on S.R. 120. Continue on S.R. 120 for 15 miles to just past Ellery Lake. The creek is planted from the west end of Ellery Lake to Tioga Lake.

## LUNDY LAKE

Turn west off U.S. 395 at Lundy Lake Road, located seven miles north of the town of Lee Vining. Continue west on Lundy Lake Road to the lake.

## MAMMOTH CREEK

Drive on U.S. 395 to S.R. 203 (the road to the town of Mammoth Lakes), and turn west. Drive to Mammoth Lakes and turn left on Old Mammoth Road. Continue to Mammoth Creek Road just before the bridge and turn left. The creek is planted at access points from the bridge downstream to Old U.S. 395.

## MCGEE CREEK

Drive 28 miles north of Bishop on U.S.

395 and turn west on McGee Creek Road. Continue one-quarter mile south on Old U.S. 395 to McGee Pack Station Road. The creek is planted off access roads from Old U.S. 395 to Upper Campground.

## OWENS RIVER, SECTION I

Drive 35 miles north of Bishop on U.S. 395 and turn east on Benton Crossing Road. Continue on Benton Crossing Road to the bridge.

## OWENS RIVER SECTION IV

Drive U.S. 395 to approximately eight miles north of the Mammoth Lakes turnoff and turn east on Big Springs Road. Continue for five miles and then turn north at the Big Springs Campgrounds turnoff.

## REVERSE CREEK

Take U.S. 395 to the June Lake Loop Road, south, and turn west. Continue past June and Gull lakes to the point where the road crosses the creek.

## ROBINSON CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to Twin Lakes Road at the north end of Bridgeport and turn south. The creek is planted at access points all along Twin Lakes Road to Lower Twin Lakes.

## ROCK CREEK

From U.S. 395, turn west at Tom's Place located 23 miles north of Bishop (Rock Creek Road). The creek parallels the road – first on the south, then the north and then south again – all the way to the outlet at Rock Creek Lake, and is planted at various points along the route.

## ROOSEVELT LAKE

From Bridgeport, head north on U.S. 395 for about 17 miles. Turn left on S.R. 108 heading west. Just across from the Marine Corps Training Center is the trailhead through Leavitt Meadow to both Lane and Roosevelt lakes after 3.2 miles. Check special regulations.

## RUSH CREEK

Drive on U.S. 395 to the June Lake Loop Road, south and turn west. Continue to Silver Lake. The creek is planted at access points from the Southern California Edison power plant bridge, north to the lake, and in Silver Lake Campground located north of the lake, and for approximately one-quarter mile north of the campgrounds.

## SADDELBAG LAKE AND CREEK

Drive U.S. 395 to one-half mile south of the town of Lee Vining and turn west on S.R. 120. Continue for approximately 16 miles to the Saddlebag Lake turnoff and drive to the lake at the end of the dirt road.

## SHERWIN CREEK

Drive on U.S. 395 to S.R. 203 (the road to the town of Mammoth Lakes), and turn west. Drive to Mammoth Lakes and turn left on Old Mammoth Road. After the bridge, take a left on Sherwin Creek Road and drive three miles to Sherwin Creek Campground. The creek is planted from access roads on both sides of Sherwin Creek Road at Sherwin Creek Campground.

## SILVER LAKE

Turn west off U.S. 395 at the South June Lake Loop Road and continue past June Lake and June Lake Village to Silver Lake.

## SWAUGER CREEK

Drive to the dirt road located nine miles north of Bridgeport and turn east. The creek parallels U.S. 395.

## TIOGA LAKE

Travel U.S. 395 to one-half mile south of the town of Lee Vining to S.R. 120, the Tioga Pass Road. Turn west and continue for 18 miles to the lake, located just outside the entrance to Yosemite National Park.

## TOPAZ LAKE

The lake is located in northern Mono County on the California-Nevada border just off U.S. 395.

## TRUMBULL LAKE

Drive U.S. 395 to the top of Conway Summit, 17 miles north of the town of Lee Vining, and turn west on Virginia Lakes Road. The lake is on the right side of the road near Virginia Lakes Resort area.

## TWIN LAKES BRIDGEPORT

Turn south off U.S. 395 onto Twin Lakes Road located at the north end of Bridgeport and continue to the lakes.

## TWIN LAKES MAMMOTH

Drive U.S. 395 to Mammoth Lakes Road (S.R. 203), 12 miles north of Crowley Lake, and turn west. Twin Lakes are about seven miles up the road.

## VIRGINIA LAKES AND CREEK

Travel U.S. 395 to the top of Conway Summit, 17 miles north of the town of Lee Vining, and turn west on Virginia Lakes Road. The lakes are at the end of the road; the creek follows the road.

## WEST WALKER RIVER

Begin at Leavitt Meadow and on S.R. 108 and continue north along U.S. 395 through the canyon. Access the river from the bridges at “The Lanes”: Eastside Lane, Larson Lane, Cunningham Lane and Topaz Lane all located off U.S. 395. Please respect the ranchers and stay below the high water line along the river.

# Explore an alpine angling paradise

Rock Creek Canyon offers easy hiking and great fishing spots **By Register Staff**

Rock Creek Canyon, with its spectacular scenery and world-class fishing, is as easily accessible as it is beautiful. Like a good friend, the canyon itself seems to welcome visitors with open arms, inviting young and old alike to explore the John Muir Wilderness through hiking, horse-back riding, biking, rock climbing, and of course fishing.

To reach Rock Creek Lake and Rock Creek, head west at the Tom's Place turnoff on U.S. Highway 395 (at the top of Sherwin Grade). From there, the road winds to a myriad of backcountry angling opportunities.

Rock Creek Lake is one of the smaller lakes that are easily accessible in the Eastern Sierra. Due to its high elevation, if the conditions are right, Rock Creek Lake is a great place to go ice fishing early in the season. Conditions for ice fishing depend on the previous winter.

However, the benefits of the lake's elevation affords the angler more than a chance for ice fishing. Temperatures on the Owens Valley floor will almost always hit triple digits in the summer. When that happens, Rock Creek Lake and Rock Creek can be a much-needed sanctuary from the 100-plus degree heat. The odds of nabbing brooks and 'bows is said to be best during these times.

Veteran anglers swear by the fly bubble combo when it comes to fly fishing Rock Creek Lake. As for bait, many anglers swear by the traditional nightcrawler.

Rock Creek area lakes are stocked with trout annually.

Fishing season for the Rock Creek area opens the last Saturday in April and closes November 15. Be sure to check with the White Mountain Ranger Station in Bishop to make sure the road to Rock Creek Lake and the canyon beyond is open early in the season. Due to its altitude, if the winter was especially heavy, the road won't be open as early as some of the other roads in the area.

Rock Creek Pack Station is only a short distance from the lake. Their specialty is backcountry excursions, which will expose anglers to many lakes teeming with wild brook, rainbow and golden trout. Half, full and multiple day adventures can be arranged through the pack station.

Mosquito Flats is located just up the road from Rock Creek Lake. Despite its name, Mosquito Flats is a wonderful place to start a backcountry fishing excursion; Little Lakes Valley is among the most beloved and popular hiking trails in the region because of its spectacular scenery and gentle slope. The trail head lies at the far end of the Mosquito Flat parking lot.

The trail is surrounded by wildflowers in the springtime. The trail forks into the Morgan Pass and Mono Pass trails not far from the trail head. To reach the Little Lakes Valley, take the Morgan Pass trail to the left.

The Mono Pass trail ascends steeply up the western side of the canyon while the Morgan Pass trail meanders through the lush meadows of Little Lakes Valley for three

miles of gentle ascent before ascending to Morgan Pass.

In Little Lakes Valley, there is a series of small lakes and streams, including Serene, East Brook, Mack, Heart, Hidden and Gem lakes. Mostly brook trout are found here, with an occasional heavyweight brown making an appearance.

When fishing Rock Creek, black ants or green body mosquitoes are recommended, as both are natural fare for the creek's trout. Stream anglers will find the water stocked with CDFW rainbows. Look for the rainbows in the open, easy-to-reach locations, especially adjacent to campgrounds. For the sneaky fisherman, wild brown trout are there for the taking in the brush-lined, hard to reach spots.

Forest Service campgrounds are located along Rock Creek and on the lakeshore.

For those looking for more refined accommodations, modern cabin rentals are available at Rock Creek Lake Resort. About a mile downstream more options are available at Rock Creek Lodge.

Rock Creek Lake Resort features a well-stocked general store, home-cookin' with a nightly dinner special as well as rental boats. Rock Creek Lake Resort also serves up smoked barbecue as well as cobbles.

Just a short drive down the road is historic Tom's Place. There, hungry fishermen can find good hamburgers

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# Crowley Lake carries fishing tradition forward

The fishing is as great as the Crowley community

By Register Staff

For those familiar with Eastern Sierra fishing, Crowley ranks up right there up at the top, especially when it comes to opening day in April. It's massive and so are the fish that live there. The community around the lake also is renowned for its hospitality.

The massive lake, located just north of U.S. Highway 395 north of Tom's Place, is one of the region's most popular early-season destinations. It is a great place to spend Opening Day, especially for anglers who enjoy socializing with other fish enthusiasts.

Crowley features a variety of bays and inlets as well as its outlet to the Owens River on the south side. At 12 miles long and five miles across at its widest point, there's plenty of elbowroom on Crowley, and even more opportunities for a trophy-sized catch.

With so much room for the fish to swim, Crowley has a reputation as home to some truly massive fish, with the largest on record weighing in at a whopping 26 pounds.

Experts explain that Crowley's catches grow so large thanks to a midge-fly-based food chain that provides summertime feasts for the fish. The fish also gorge themselves on Sacramento perch fry.

The lake features a boat launch and rentals, available at the Crowley Lake Store, along with information on what's biting and where anglers are having the best luck.

Access to Green Banks near the old North Landing can be reached off Benton Crossing Road (north of the Crowley Lake turnoff and identifiable by the historic Green Church at the turn-off from U.S. Highway 395). The key at Green Banks is trolling over the deeper water of the Owens River Channel where some of the lake's bigger browns will wade deep, waiting for food to flow out of the Owens and into the lake.

Those who continue past Green Banks on Benton Crossing Road will cross the Owens River and find the eastern shores of the lake's inlet, which features popular fishing holes like Layton Springs and Alligator Point. No, there are no actual alligators at Alligator point, but the fish may be just as hungry as a 'gator. Both Layton Springs and Alligator Point have a reputation for delving early-season limits with plenty of action

all summer long. They also are accessible by boat.

For those trolling the waters of Crowley, minnow imitators, Cultiva's Rip'n Minnow and Mira Shad, Rapals and Yo Zurls are a safe bet.

Local sportsmen also recommend needlefish, Lucky Craft Pointers and other options.

Don't be afraid to ask around to find out what's working best and the folks over at the Crowley Lake Fish Camp are always ready to help.

Crowley also is a popular destination for fly fishing, with many hitting the lake in float tubes, or plying the shores. As always, fishing with flies can be a tricky business and the proper fly will change with the season, temperatures and other conditions. Anglers say midge and caddis imitators and streamers resembling perch fry are a good bet if all else fails.

Crowley Lake is named after Father John J. Crowley, who was a Catholic priest and served the Eastern California area in the 1920s and '30s. Crowley founded and served the congregation of Santa Rosa Catholic Church in Lone Pine, which celebrated 100 years in 2019.

Father Crowley was indefatigable in his efforts to attract tourists to the Owens Valley. Each year on Opening Day of trout season – which he managed to have declared a county holiday – he blessed fishing equipment.

In another publicity effort, on Sept. 14, 1934, he climbed Mt. Whitney and became the first priest to celebrate Mass on the summit. Pictures of the Mass appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

The priest's flair for publicity paid off. Tourists began to flock to the valley, and the once-hostile residents began to welcome them. Using constant media pressure, Father Crowley finally secured a hearing with commissioners of Los Angeles regarding the plight of the Owens Valley. At one point, Father Crowley actually locked Chief Water Engineer H.C. Van Norman in a meeting room until the exasperated engineer conceded to requests to build a new dam that would restore water to the impoverished desert.

While returning from a publicity trip to San Francisco in September 1940, Father Crowley struck a steer that had wandered onto the highway. His car was forced into the path of an

oncoming truck and he was killed instantly.

When the new Long Valley Dam was completed, the reservoir it created was named Crowley Lake in honor of the desert priest. It remains a popular fishing spot today, attracting thousands of people each year for trout season.

It is interesting to note that 78 years after his tragic accident, Father Crowley remains a legendary figure, recognized as the visionary leader who saw the potential for the region, and as a man of faith who dedicated his life to helping its inhabitants.



Fish Story Lori holds her catch on Crowley Lake in May 2019.

Photo courtesy of Lori Conahan

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# Escape to Convict Lake

Alpine angling on crystal clear water By Register Staff

The history of Convict Lake is almost as deep as the lake itself. The sheer cliffs that surround the lake are known to be home to bald eagles, and the deep water is home to trophy trout.

Tucked just off U.S. Highway 395 south of the turn-off to Mammoth, Convict Lake is considered by the locals to be one of the most beautiful destinations in the beauty-filled Eastern Sierra, and the paved road goes right to the shoreline. For anglers, the lake offers more than just spectacular scenery.

Convict Lake features a loop trail that provides almost 360 degrees of shore access and the Convict Lake Resort, founded in 1929, offers virtually every kind of amenity, from boat rentals to lodging to tackle and supplies and horseback rides.

Convict Lake Resort also promotes a number of fishing derbies throughout the year, offering anglers ample opportunities to win prizes like tackle and gear.

Though the angling is good across the lake, experts say the best option is to hit the water on a boat. From shore or from a boat, some of the best angling action can be found at the inlet, located on the west side of the lake. Garlic-flavored PowerBait of any color is one of the recommended tools, but worms and crickets also are a favorite.

As the weather warms up in the summer, trollers tend to work well on the lake, beating out shore anglers for some of the larger catches.

Be sure to watch out for the bald eagles that call the lake home. They've been known to do fishing of their own, swooping down to the lake's surface and snatching trophy trout of their own.

Seasoned anglers say the trick to netting the trophy-sized trout is to get the bait at a depth of 30-40 feet, where the trout linger to avoid the heat of the day.

As with most Eastern Sierra waters, the best bet is to hit the waters early in the day or late in the afternoon.

Stream fishermen and women also have the option of heading down to Convict Creek, located on the east side of the lake. The lower creek runs past a number of Forest Service campgrounds, giving those who



Photo by Bob Wigand

The fishing – and just about any other form of recreation – is downright idyllic at Convict Lake in the fall. Season long, the fishing is consistently great.

have acclimated to the altitude an opportunity to walk from water to water.

For more secluded angling opportunities, hit the trail to the upper creek. The trail begins at 7,580 feet and provides access to a number of great fishing holes.

The truly hardy can keep going, hitting Mildred Lake at about 9,760 feet.

To reach Convict Lake, take the Convict turnoff from U.S. Highway 395 near the Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

For information about Convict Lake, call the resort at (800) 992-2260 or (760) 934-3800 or visit [www.convictlake.com](http://www.convictlake.com).

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# Winter time fishing opens new possibilities

Regulation changes mean a change in technique for early season fishing

By Fred Rowe

As of March 1, 2021 Eastern Sierra river, streams and canals opened up to year-round fishing if they are not listed in section 7.50 of the California fishing regulations, waters with special regulations. The regulations are on line at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations>. These new regulations allow anglers to fish with barbless lures from November 16, to the Friday preceding the last Saturday in April.

Wintertime fishing in the Sierra is totally different than summertime fishing. There will be less opportunity for catching stocked trout. More opportunity to catch wild trout. Winter times cooler temperatures will affect the angler and the trout.

A trout's metabolism is about a quarter of what it is during the summer months. Trout just do not eat much in the winter time. Trout will not move very far from their lair to ingest food. Your fly, spinner or tube jig needs to float right in front of the trout. Successful anglers will cover a lot more water with their lure than in the summer time. I make two to three times more cast in the winter time to properly cover the water.

These waters are self-regulating depending on the

snow pack. In heavy snow years angles will be limited to the amount water that they can access. In mild winters there will be more waters accessible. A lot of mountain roads that are open in summer are closed in the winter time.

Winter time anglers need to be prepared for winter conditions. Using layers is the best method for staying warm in the winter. I carry a small duffle bag with shorts, thermals, insulated coveralls, fleece and a down jacket. Having the right clothes is a guarantee of a good day in the outdoors.

Eastern Sierra moving waters will be at their lowest levels and gin clear. Anglers need to approach these waters with stealth. I'm not into crawling up to a creek, but winter time creeks require this kind of stealth.

Trout will be concentrated in the deep holes and slots of the streams. Approaching from down stream will keep the angler out of the trout's vision. Lighter tippets and lines will allow the angler to fish these clear waters without spooking the trout. Four pound test and two pound tippets are what is required to be successful.

Winter time conditions require perfect presentations

from the angler. Anglers fishing upstream and carefully casting their lures into the stream way above the holding trout will have success. With the gin clear water of wintertime anglers can see the fish and the fish can see the angler. Successful anglers will cover lots of the stream looking for those perfect spots that allow the angler to fish while not spooking the trout.

For anglers willing to brave winter time conditions there are lots of sierra streams that will offer trout fishing opportunities. Anglers need to be prepared for the harshest of winter time conditions. The lures you offer to the trout need to be presented slowly and directly to the trout. Anglers that are prepared, fish with stealth, will be rewarded with wintertime trout fishing success.

*(Fred Rowe owns Sierra Bright Dot Fly Fishing Guide Service. He teaches fly fishing and fly tying. He is one of the original fly fishing guides in the Eastern Sierra guiding from Bishop to Bridgeport. He is an avid hunter who loves to hunt birds, especially waterfowl. Fred can be reached at (760) 920-8325, [roweboat5@verizon.net](mailto:roweboat5@verizon.net) or on his webpage [sierrabrightdot.com](http://sierrabrightdot.com).)*



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# They call it 'fishing' instead of 'catching' for a reason

2020 saw yet another blow to outdoor recreation By Jon Klusmire

When crusty old anglers come home with less than a stringer full of trout and get asked why they didn't get their legal daily limit, the classic response is a bit of a stink eye is followed by the comment, "they call it fishing instead of catching for a reason."

Besides, anglers of all ages will remind the curious and questioning that they like going fishing even if they don't catch many fish, or even any fish at all. They will extoll the joy of just making the trek to a favorite Eastern Sierra fishing hole where they can get into the outdoors and take a spot streamside or lakeside. Once on the water, it's time to unplug from an increasing busy workday life, go off-line and escape digital distractions and simply enjoy the cool air, the striking landscape, and some much-needed peace and quiet. Catching a trout is just a bonus, an add-on to the overall fishing experience.

This year will likely test the "fishing versus catching" truism and noble pronouncements about the love of the outdoors and benefits of wild places as opposed to reeling in a stringer full of big, fat trout.

A deadly virus decimated three California Department of Fish and Wildlife trout hatcheries in the summer of 2020 (which just added another traumatic scene to the outdoor disaster movie that was the pandemic year). To defeat the virus, the fish in all three hatcheries, about 3 million trout, were killed and disposed of. Then the hatcheries, Warm Springs and Blackrock in Inyo County, and the Mojave Hatchery, underwent a massive disinfectant cleaning process before starting to get back in the business of growing and stocking trout in Eastern Sierra waters.

With reduced trout stocking in area creeks and lakes still likely in 2021, more people than usual will probably be catching more scenery than trout, and working a bit harder than in the past to land those trout.

But keep in mind, these waters have hosted trout for decades, and it's hard to catch everything in a lake or stream, even if some anglers brag about doing just that. There are still trout out there for the catching.

There will also still be plenty of trout stocking in the region. The DFW Hot Creek Hatchery in Mono County was not struck by the virus and continued to its regular stocking schedule in Inyo and Mono counties throughout 2020 and into 2021. In addition, the DFW has been working to try and bring trout from other state hatcheries to some easily accessible, heavily visited Eastern Sierra waters.

Helping supplement the DFW trout plants are a number of businesses and organizations. For example, the businesses in the Bishop Creek Canyon and South Lake all pitched in last year and brought some true trophy trout to the area. The Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce, and the Independence Fishing Derby organization all buy and stock trout for various events and to augment the DFW



Photo by Jon Klusmire

If the fish aren't biting, well, at least the views in the Eastern Sierra are nice.

stocking operation. In Mono County, the Bridgeport community and local businesses pitch in for loads of trout, as do various Mammoth Lakes and Mono County business and marketing groups.

Anglers can also decide to go about this season a bit differently.

Instead of relying on the old standards, when the fish aren't biting it could be time to change things up. Reach into the bag of trout tricks and go with different baits, or change lures and flies. How about trying a little catch-and-release, or make this the year to try out fly fishing. On the other hand, why not climb into a boat and navigating some of the area's bigger lakes for a change? Float tubing? Why not?

This could also be the season to try some new locations. Maybe go a bit farther down or up the Owens River and seek out some areas that a sort of tough to get to on foot, meaning there are probably fewer anglers competing for that trout. Or go south and hook into some bass – yes there are bass in the Owens River.

High country lakes also are calling. It might take a bit of a hike, but there's nothing like "earning your trout" in the heart of the Sierra.

The destruction of more than 3 million trout was a tough call, but a necessary one. "Euthanizing our hatchery stocks was not a decision we came to lightly, but it had to be done," said Jay Rowan environmental program manager for CDFW hatcheries this summer. "This bacterium is resistant to all the treatment options we have available for fish. The best option we have available that will get us back to planting fish from these hatcheries in the shortest timeline is to clear the raceways, thoroughly disinfect the facilities, and start over."

The outbreak of *Lactococcus garvieae*, which is similar to streptococcus, has been reported in cattle and poultry farms as well as



Photo by Jon Klusmire

They call it "fishing," not "catching" for a reason, as this angler discovered.

fresh and salt water fish and shellfish hatcheries around the world, but had never before been detected in fish in California.

It typically takes between 10 months and two years to grow "catchable" trout of about a half pound in a hatchery. Trout eggs typically start arriving at the hatcheries in December. Catchable fish from Mojave could be ready by the end of 2021. At Black Rock and Fish Springs, DFW estimated catchable trout will not ready for stocking until the spring of 2022.

Until then, try and remember they call it fishing and not catching for a reason, and enjoy the fishing.



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Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

The early dawn hour is the best time of day to hunt for the illusive, yet beautiful golden trout, California's official state fish.

## The golden hour

On the trail of the rare and beautiful golden trout

By Wendilyn Grasseschi

It is an hour before dawn and the lake outside the tent is perfectly still.

The lake's surface reflects and mirrors the spires and turrets of the high Sierra peaks encircling the deep blue lake; silver serrated peaks, indigo sky, white snow.

It is quiet. Even the robins, those ubiquitous alpine dawn-singers, are not up yet.

I slip the nylon sleeping bag off my shoulders and carefully, quietly, grab shirt and coat and hat and gloves, layering up, then unzip the tent and step out.

It is cold, bone-chillingly cold. There is

ice on the socks I put over the log near the tent to dry last night, freezing them into a U-shaped woolen mass. There is ice on the tent and it sparkles in the clear sunless morning light. There is ice on the moss-covered banks of the tiny creek mumbling its way past the tent and down to the lake.

I grab the lightweight fishing pole and reel and the bag of flies and lures and pliers and other paraphernalia from their spot against a gnarled lodgepole and ease my feet into my old Chaco sandals, wincing as bare toes meet the icy, wet alpine sedge lawn sur-

rounding the tent.

The lake is only a few minutes away and as I walk, I dodge pine branches laden with icicles, trying to keep as dry as possible.

At the lake, I can see the spot where the sun will eventually come up in the east; a brightening spot above one of the serrated knife ridges above the lake. It will be another hour before the light – or the warmth – of the sun touches this cold alpine basin.

I slip a fly onto the leader and unclip the bail, then send the line flinging into the cold morning air. The fly lands noiselessly and



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

The golden trout, characterized by its golden scales and eyes, can be found in alpine backcountry lakes throughout the Sierra.

the air-filled bubble shifts and settles, pointing the way.

I settle in, slowly, slowly reeling the pine back, watching the line, watching the serrated peaks catch the first light, watching the clear water shimmer and ripple where the bubble rests on the water.

We came to this high-country Sierra basin, a two-day hike from the nearest road, on our way to another basin after a hiker at the top of the pass a few days ago noticed the fishing pole lashed to my pack.

"Where are you headed," he asked and when we told him, he leaned in close and said, "I have a better idea" and then he told us about this place and so we took a left instead of a right at the bottom of the pass and he was right, it was a better idea.

The air smells of pine and granite and

water. It's still cold and I walk out into the soft sandy bottom of lake a few feet, finding the water warmer than the icy grass, then start to reel the line in slowly, slowly.

Nothing.

I repeat the process, sending the line out again, over and over. The lake is still calm, but there are small ruffles beginning to spread across the middle of the lake; a sure sign the calm morning hour is about to end.

Above me to the east, the sky brightens and shimmers as the unseen sun inches closer to the ridgeline. The sky is now a pale turquoise instead of a deep blue.

I am running out of time.

I send the silver line singing out again and this time when it settles, I feel a tug running like an electric spark up the line

and down the pole.

I flip the pole up with a sharp, short jerk, hoping to hook the fish then slowly reel it back to shore.

The sun eases over the ridge, flooding the 11,000-foot elevation basin with sudden light.

I bring the fish in closer and through the clear teal water, I see it flash under the water; purest gold and vermillion and copper.

It is one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen. I bring it in gently, then just as gently, unhook the barbless hook.

The morning sunlight catches the pure golden scales and the pure golden eye and the pure golden fins. The trout flashes in my hand for just a moment and then it is gone and I head back to the tent.

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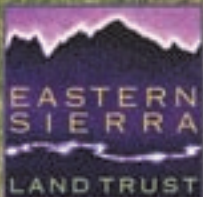
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# Making memories in Mammoth

Lakes Basin offers plenty of options

By Register Staff

The Mammoth area was given its name during the California gold rush, as mine owners attempted to tempt investors with the possibility of a “mammoth” gold strike. Although the mining operation was short lived, the region’s fish certainly live up to the “mammoth” name.

During the winter, the community of Mammoth is known for its world-renowned skiing, but during the summer, it is the perfect place to take an easy vacation with fishing nearby. With its series of seven lakes just outside of town, the Mammoth Lakes Basin area is a playground for those who love fishing. The main lakes, which are accessible by paved roads, are home to rainbows, brooks and browns, but the easily hikable trails in the area lead to backcountry lakes that are fishable as well.

One of the most popular is Lake George, the third largest of the basin’s great lakes, which is 38 acres in size. Local experts say that fishing the backside of the lake, where the water is deepest, is generally the best spot.

The largest of Mammoth’s lakes, Lake Mary, is 140 acres, providing plenty of room for boats and shore fishing. Mary also boasts campgrounds and other facilities. The locals say the hot spots are near the outlet at the northern end of the lake, and the inlet on the western side.

Next up is Twin Lakes, which is actually a set of three waters connected by Mammoth Creek. The lakes, along with the waterfall that feeds them are the first lakes that are visible from Lake Mary Road, located just across the street from the Tamarack Lodge. Locals say the hot spot is at the inlet of Upper Twin, the northern-most lake. The Twin Lakes are generally accessible on the Opening Day of the fishing season, depending on how much snow Mother Nature dumps on the region.

Lake Mamie is located just south of Twin Lakes. This water has been proven to deliver for eager anglers looking to land that trophy-sized trout. A good place to start is in the deeper waters on an early morning.

Horseshoe Lake, a 53-acre lake at the end of the paved road, contains no fish. While Horseshoe isn’t a fishing hole, it is a popular swimming hole for anglers taking a break from a day of fishing.

All the lakes, except Horseshoe, are stocked by the California



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Fishing the alpine lakes around Mammoth can yield trophy trout and treasured memories.

Department of Fish and Wildlife and receives healthy summer plants from private hatcheries.

Anglers looking to stretch their legs and take in some of Mammoth’s famous mountain air and breathtaking Sierra vistas can lace up their boots and head for McLeod and Crystal lakes, located just a short hike away from the paved roads. And for the more adventurous angler, there are plenty of opportunities farther into the backcountry.

Access to all Mammoth Basin waters is available through the town of Mammoth Lakes, located just a short drive west on State Route 203 from U.S. Highway 395.

## Remember to always think safety first!



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Enjoy yourself and good luck catching “The Big One!”





# Take another look at the loop

Bring rod, fishing tackle and your camera to June Lake region

By Register Staff

Tucked away against the back side of Yosemite National Park, just a little way off U.S. Highway 395, the June Lake Loop is one of the Eastern Sierra's most beloved hidden gems. Sometimes called the Alps of the Sierra by the locals, the quiet backwaters of the lakes and streams are the perfect spot for fishing while surrounded by natural beauty.

The 22-mile loop begins and ends on U.S. Highway 395. The loop is home to Grant, Silver, Gull and June lakes, as well as a number of streams and tributaries that offer their own unique angling opportunities.

Grant and Silver lakes are known for legendary catches for brown trout. Fishing for these trophy browns is best in the fall, towards the end of fishing season.

The habits of the various fish found along the Loop can vary depending on the season, temperature and body of water they are swimming in; it's always a good idea to check in at a local tackle shop to see what's biting and where. For a more localized perspective, check in with fellow anglers before hitting the water.

In general, Sierra Slammers, Berkley trout worms and Panther Martins are popular on Gull Lake, and at Silver the regulars tend to go with a bubble and flies or Woolly Buggers, trout traps, Panther Martins and Rooster Tails.

Another popular bait for big brown hunters are Tasmanian Devils. Anglers report that Rapalas, Lucky Craft Pointers and Kastmasters are smart options.

The June Lake Loop begins at the junction of U.S. Highway 395 and State Route 158, heads west to June Lake, a 160-acre spring-fed lake preferred by trollers and bait fisherman due to its deep waters. Float tubing gets good results along the western edge and northern shoreline, where anglers will find tule beds and a shelf that drops into the depths. Fish tend to circumnavigate the lake along this shelf, making it an ideal location to drop some bait.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife stocks June, and supplemental trout are provided through a private trout farmer and rainbows reared at the marina.

Just beyond June Lake, anglers will reach Gull Lake, set among a pine forest and a serene setting. Gull is popular among fly fisherman and bait fishers alike. At 64 acres, Gull is the smallest of the June Lake Loop waters but that doesn't stop the angling action. Like June, Gull's tule

beds along the northern shoreline draws float tubers who say damsel nymphs and calibaetis nymphs bring results. Others recommend tugging streamers between the big rocks and aspens along the western shoreline. Gull is generally known as a haven for rainbows in the 10- to 14-inch range, with a few odd trophy-sized Alpers trout to be found.

Farther west along the loop, anglers will find June's fly fishing haven – the 80-acre Silver Lake. Boat traffic on Silver is limited to 10 mph, which makes for an awesome opportunity for kayaks and float tubes.

Silver Lake is linked to Gull by Reverse Creek and to Grant by Rush Creek. A popular spot for anglers is at the Rush Creek outlet. This area really takes off as larger rainbows begin spawning.

Another hot spot is the drop-off along the southern shoreline, which is another productive fishing hole in the early summer months.

For those of the fly fishing persuasion, note that Silver Lake often experiences chironomid hatches throughout the season, which can make for great opportunities.

The largest of the Loop's lakes is Grant Lake, reached just before the Loop reconnects with U.S. Highway 395. Grant Lake is a massive 1,100-acre body of water popular with trollers who report great action in the early mornings and late afternoons.



Experts say late fall is best for float tubing, as the big browns are coming up from the depths to feed along the shoreline before the winter freeze. During late spring spawning, those big browns can be found at the Rush Creek inlet.

In addition to its drive-to lakes, the Loop serves as a launching point for more secluded high-elevation lakes. A gravel road about a mile north of Grand Lakes leads to a trailhead to Parker and Little Walker lakes. Parker is known for its population of wild browns in the 5-pound range.


Another trailhead located near Silver Lake leads to Agnew and Gem lakes and a plethora of wild brooks and rainbows.

For a prolonged trip, the nearby Frontier Pack station provides trips to more distant backcountry destinations like Alpers and its golden trout.

Each lake in the Loop boasts its own Forest Service campground and there are plenty of other accommodations to be had in the area.

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## Yosemite's best kept secret

Tioga Pass – fish, picnic and soak up the views

By Register Staff

Adventure seekers and nature lovers alike journey from around the world to experience Yosemite National Park, with its sky-piercing spires and serene pine forests, but anglers know that Yosemite's best kept secret is its spectacular back door, Tioga Pass. The eastern boarder of the park, and the Lee Vining area of Mono County, is home to some spectacular fishing spots.

Ellery and Tioga lakes hold a lot of put-and-take Department of Fish and Wildlife rainbows and a healthy supply of browns, many of which have been growing, just waiting for the skilled angler.

The locals claim that a fly-and-bubble combo is a good choice. But when the bugs start buzzing and the mosquitoes come out, traditional favorites like Powerbait and worms also provide promise.

For wild browns, anglers should head on to Saddlebag Lake. At about 340 acres, this high-elevation water is generally open by Memorial Day. The lake also offers a marina with boat rentals and a store with supplies and advice.

Saddlebag also is a launching point for the 20 Lakes Basin, a grouping of high country waters brimming with brookies and even the elusive golden trout, California's state fish.

However, 20 Lakes Basin does not include road access, so a short hike will be in order.

The creek flowing from Saddlebag Lake is a popular fly fishing destination, with 8- to 12-inch browns caught regularly.

Lee Vining Creek also flows out of Ellery Lake and offers more great fly opportunities in the warm summer months. A section of the creek

is catch and release, and is heavily stocked with rainbows. Locals say the open meadows in Lee Vining Canyon are a great place to find 12- to 15-inch lunkers.

Below the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power intake at Mono Lake, wild browns are available. However, there is a two-fish limit and no stocking.

Ellery, Tioga and Saddlebag lakes each have campgrounds and creek-side camping is available in Lee Vining Canyon, accessible just before the ascent to Tioga Pass, near the Forest Service Ranger Station.

A short, though strenuous, one-mile hike to the Gaylor Lake Basin offers outstanding fishing for wild brook trout. The four small lakes in the basin are within Yosemite National Park, with the trail located near the entrance station.

These waters are governed by California Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations and there are no special park rules.

When it comes to the high-elevation lakes in the Tioga Pass area, weather plays a huge part in the fishing action. In heavy snow years, Tioga Pass, which is State Route 120, may not open until May.

The highway links the east and west sides of the Sierra and provides access to Yosemite. But for fishermen, the opening of the highway is the opening of Ellery and Tioga lakes, the high-country lakes with scenery that rivals the catching.

When accessing Tioga from U.S. Highway 395, be sure to stop in the community of Lee Vining to stock up on supplies.



Tioga Lake offers a slice of anglers' paradise right on the doorstep of Yosemite.

File photo

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# Bridgeport continues record-breaking traditions

Monster trout and mountain culture make this region  
a must for every fishing enthusiast By Register Staff

Those who are lucky enough to travel through the quiet community of Bridgeport will find a quaint little town nestled in a beautiful alpine valley in Mono County. Its historic white courthouse and welcoming downtown are often decorated with red, white and blue as the town sports its potassium and small-town America pride.

But for those who are luckier still, and are able to spend some time exploring everything Bridgeport has to offer, the fishing is fantastic.

Twin Lakes, which is not far from the mountain community of Bridgeport, has produced a record-shattering 26-pound, 8-ounce brown trout – and there are plenty more record-setters in these northern Mono County waters.

Twin Lakes is only one of the many fishing options. The Bridgeport area is home to the spacious Bridgeport reservoir, Virginia Lakes, Big Virginia Lake, Red Lake, Trumbull Lake and many more. Each has proven to be a productive body of water for lunkers.

Bridgeport Reservoir is a 2,913-acre lake that is filled with about 40,000 acre-feet of crisp alpine water. While there is ample room for anglers to fish from shore, many recommend boat fishing on the lake as the best way to catch a lunker.

For those who prefer to cast from solid ground, the reservoir has 13 miles of fishable shoreline with popular spots like Rainbow Point and the Swaiger and Buckley creek outlets

located on the south side of the lake.

Just below the dam, anglers will find a spot the locals refer to as the “Miracle Mile,” the first stretch of the Walker River, which produces great stringers year-round.

Bridgeport Reservoir is sometimes compared to Crowley Lake, because of its size and reputation as home of massive trout. However, there is at least one notable difference; Bridgeport Reservoir is not prone to the big crowds that are common on Crowley. At 5,600 feet, Bridgeport Reservoir is at a lower-altitude than Crowley and has shallower waters. One reason the trout grow so big in Bridgeport is because there is a healthy population of callibaetis, hironomid and damselflies that allow the fish to gorge during the summer. As for technique, still-water nymphing is a safe bet during the spring, when the trout are migrating to the cooler waters flowing out of the creeks.

During the fall, streamer fishing from float tubes has been known to bring in 10-pounders for those angling for browns or rainbows.

The reservoir’s marina and boat launch are located off State Route 108, just past the Bridgeport airstrip. There are RV parks along the shoreline as well as public launch ramps. State Route 108 exits U.S. Highway 395 south of Bridgeport, heading towards Yerington, Nevada.

In addition to the popular reservoir, the Bridgeport area’s other premier fishing holes

include Twin Lakes (though, it’s a different set of Twins than can be found in the Mammoth area). The Twins can be found southwest of Bridgeport by taking State Route 182 West. The shoreline is rocky and steep, but the water is deep and turns out some monster brown trout each year.

Robinson Creek flows through the Upper and Lower Twin lakes, then heads east to Bridgeport Reservoir. Below Lower Twin Lake, there are several creekside campsites that make for convenient angling opportunities.

The action doesn’t stop there. The mountains that rise from the valley are a tangle of streams and creeks ripe for the plucking. North of Robinson Creek, anglers will find Buckeye Creek and its two tributaries. To the south (and across State Route 182) are Green and Virginia creeks, with access located roughly five miles south of Bridgeport.

The Bridgeport Valley also is home to the Virginia Lakes, a chain of 10 lakes located between 9,500 and 10,200 feet in elevation, accessed just six miles east of U.S. Highway 395. All 10 lakes lie within a mile and a half of the Virginia Lakes Resort. This chain of lakes was first stocked in the 1800s, and continue to be stocked with rainbows. Three of the 10 are accessible by car and most are home to native brooks and browns that are ready to feast on natural baits like Nightcrawlers and crickets.

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# Step into another world along Walker River

Legendary trophy trout water runs wild

By Register Staff

The sister forks of Walker River may flow through some of the most beautiful portions of the Eastern Sierra, but the rivers also are home to year-round fishing that is sure to keep anglers coming back time and time again. Designated as a trophy trout water in 2007, the East Walker River, flowing east from Bridgeport Reservoir, has the reputation as being a premier fly fishing stream.

Catches of trophy class brown trout, judged by pounds not inches, make a season long showing. Anglers will find more than five miles of easy-to-access roadside waters.

A favored location for consistently producing heavyweights is the "miracle mile" section of water directly downstream from the dam.

The river is governed by special regulation. Angling is restricted to barbless hook lure or fly – no bait. From Opening Day to the final day of the season possession limit is one fish, minimum size 18-inches. From the close of the general season (Nov. 15) to the next season Opening Day, possession is zero.

Fifteen miles north of Bridgeport, U.S. Highway 395 crosses the West Walker River. The river was designated a year-round water in 2014. The new regulation allows for bait fishing from Opening Day to the Nov. 15 closing with no tackle restrictions along with a five fish possession limit.

From Nov. 16 to the next season opening day angling is restricted to barbless hook or fly with zero possession.

The river is on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Mono County trophy trout program during the regular season.

Historically productive locations have been a short distance up and downstream from the U.S. Highway 395 bridge crossing and the slower waters near the downstream town of Walker.

Highlighting the summer season, is the "How Big is Big" derby. Sponsored by the communities of Walker, Coleville and Topaz, and the Northern Mono Chamber of Commerce, the How Big is Big Fishing Derby runs for the entire month of July. No entry fee – just bring your fish in to the Walker General Store, and your catch will be weighed and recorded. There will be lots of prizes. Email the Northern Mono Chamber of Commerce, [info@northernmonochamber.com](mailto:info@northernmonochamber.com), for more information.



File photo

Walker River is a designated trophy trout fishery.

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## Have an old-school good time at Topaz

Drop a line in two different states By Register Staff

Heading north along U.S. Highway 395, as a traveler gets to the border of Mono County and the Nevada state line, there is one last watering hole to catch a lunker – Lake Topaz. Nestled at the northernmost edge of Mono County, Lake Topaz is located in both Nevada and California, and it is legal to fish Topaz with a license from either state. This warm-water fishery is home to monstrous rainbow and brown trout, as well as smallmouth bass.

Because the lake crosses a state line, it has slightly different regulations. Topaz has an unusually long fishing season, making it a perfect destination for early season fishing. Opening day for the lake is the first day of January and the fishing season ends on Sept. 30. Legal fishing times for Topaz are from one hour before dawn to two hours after dusk.

The lake is heavily stocked with trophy trout. The Nevada Department of Wildlife alone plants 40,000 rainbow trout and an additional 2,000 tagged trophy trout when the season ends in October.

Anglers who catch a tagged trout may call the Nevada Department of Wildlife phone number, which will be on the tag.

Daily and possession limits are five trout, 10 mountain whitefish, and 15 warm-water game fish, of which no more than five may be black bass.

The lake remains busy until closing in late September, but becomes especially busy during summer holiday weekends like Independence Day. Topaz also is a popular destination for jet skiers and recreational boaters.

While Topaz is heavily stocked in October, the fish always are hungry when the season opens Jan. 1, but the weather can be bitter cold. It's not an uncommon sight for anglers to cast their line, put their fishing pole in a holder, then sit in their cars with the heater running full blast.

The lake is home to a large minnow population, which means streamers and Panther Martins are good for trolling.

In the warm summer months, the trout are likely to head for deeper, cooler waters. Anglers should sink their bait to a depth of about 34 feet to find the fish. At its deepest point, Topaz reaches a depth of 92 feet.

One of the popular trout holes on Topaz is on the north-east corner of the reservoir. It's a good place to float to with purple or black woolly buggers or prince nymphs with an intermediate sink line.



Lake photo courtesy Topaz RV Park Lake Cam/angler photo courtesy Topaz Lodge

Topaz RV Park's live "Lake Cam" shows Topaz in all its glory in mid-January, while Shawn Lenz of Auburn shows off the 3.9-lb., 21.25-inch trout he pulled from the lake for a first-place prize during Week 4 of Topaz Lake Lodge and Casino's annual fishing derby, which began Jan. 1.

Trout fishing remains strong throughout the year, but Topaz offers a couple options for anglers. Bass fishing takes off as the weather begins to warm up. The record smallmouth bass for the lake is in the six-plus-pound range.

Anglers who are looking to hook a bass should try a crawdad pattern from shore.

Another emerging trend on Topaz is carp fishing.

Because carp spawn twice a year, laying thousands of eggs, they are abundant in Topaz. They're also big and strong and will put up a fight. Carp also pose a new challenge for seasoned anglers, because they're reclusive, skittish fish. But on the up side anyone, whether fishing with a fly or bait, from the shore or the bank, can try their hand at catching a nice sized carp.

With the surge in interest in carp fishing, the lake has seen an increase in bow fishing, with clubs making special trips to the lake during spawning season to hunt carp.

Access to Topaz Lake is excellent for all types of vehicles. From Carson City, travel south on U.S. Highway 395 for approximately 40 miles. Turn east on Topaz Lake Park Road to reach the Douglas County Park at the far east end of the reservoir or turn east on Mark Twain Avenue (just past Topaz Lodge and Casino) and follow the road to Topaz Marina.

Shore access is available along Topaz Lake Park Road, within Douglas County Park, and farther south on U.S. Highway 395 in California.

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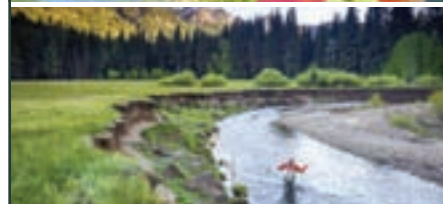
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# Guide to Eastern Sierra Campgrounds

The Campground Guide is intended to provide vacationers to the Eastern Sierra with a general overview of the campgrounds available in Inyo and Mono counties. **Fees and other applicable information are always subject to change.** The fee and other information included here was the most current data available when the Fishing Guide went to press.

As a general rule, most campgrounds open with

the spring thaw and close before the first winter storm in the fall. Some of the campgrounds located at lower elevations and those privately or county-owned are open year round. Tuttle Creek Campground, managed by the BLM, is open year-round.

It is always recommended that visitors contact the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center at (760) 924-5500, or the BLM at (760) 872-5008, for the most up-to-date information as the summer camp-

ing season draws near.

Visitors may also call the ranger districts at the phone numbers provided below, or visit the following websites, for up-to-date information:

www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo/recreation/campgrounds.  
shtml  
www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bishop/camping/index.  
html  
www.inyocountycamping.com

## Key:

**C** – Concession; **R** – Reservations; **DS** – Dump Station (\$6 donation); **A** – Handicapped Accessible; **B** – Bear Boxes Available; **S** – Sewer; **E** – Electricity; **V** – Vault Toilets; **F** – Flush

Campground & Information Number	Sites	Details	Elevation	Water	Fee	Max. stay
<b>LONE PINE AREA – (760) 876-6200</b>						
<u>Horseshoe Meadow</u>						
Cottonwood Pass Backpacker (walk-in)	18	B/V	10,000	pipd	\$6	1
Cottonwood Lakes Backpacker (walk-in)	13	B/V	10,000	pipd	\$6	1
Horseshoe Meadows (equestrian)	10	B/V	10,000	pipd	\$12	1
<u>Lone Pine Creek</u>						
Lone Pine	43	B/R/V	6,000	pipd	\$26	14
Lone Pine (group)	1	B/R/V	6,000	pipd	\$70	14
Whitney Portal	43	B/R/V	8,000	pipd	\$28	7
Whitney Portal (group)	3	B/R/V	8,100	pipd	\$70	7
Whitney Trailhead (walk-in)	25	B/V	8,300	pipd	\$18	1
<u>Independence Creek</u>						
Lower Grays Meadow	52	B/R/V	6,000	pipd	\$25	14
Upper Grays Meadow	35	B/R/V	6,200	pipd	\$25	14
Onion Valley	29	B/R/V	9,200	pipd	\$25	14
<u>Other Campgrounds</u>						
Diaz Lake (Inyo County)	200	C/R	3,700	pipd	\$14	15
Independence Creek (Inyo County)	25		3,900	pipd	\$14	15
Tuttle Creek (BLM 760-872-5008)	83	DS/A	5,120	none in winter	\$5 per night/\$5 for 14 dump station/horse corrals	14
Goodale Creek (BLM)	43		4,000	none	\$5	14
Portagee Joe (Inyo County)	15		3,800	well	\$14	14
<b>BISHOP AREA – (760) 873-2500</b>						
<u>Big Pine Creek</u>						
Big Pine Creek	30	B/R/V	7,700	pipd	\$21	14
Sage Flat	28	B/V	7,400	pipd	\$25	14
Upper Sage Flat	21	B/R/V	7,600	pipd	\$25	14
Palisade Glacier (group no. 518)	1	B/R/V	7,600	pipd	\$70	14
Clyde Glacier (group no. 518)	1	B/R/V	7,600	pipd	\$70	14
<u>White Mountains</u>						
Grandview	23	V	8,560	none	donation	14
Ferguson (group)	3	V	7,200	none	\$35	14
<u>Bishop Creek</u>						
Big Trees	16	B/F	7,500	pipd	\$30	7
Bishop Park (group)	1	B/R/V	8,200	none	varies	14
Bitterbrush	35	B/V	7,350	pipd	\$27	14
Forks	21	B/F	7,800	pipd	\$30	7
Four Jeffrey	104	R/DS/F	8,100	pipd	\$28	14
Intake II	13	B/F	8,200	pipd	\$30	7
Mountain Glen	5	B/V	8,200	none	\$25	7

North Lake (no trailers/RVs)	11	B/V	9,500	pipd	\$27	7
Sabrina	19	B/V	9,000	pipd	\$30	7
Willow	8	B/V	9,000	none	\$25	7
Table Mountain (group)	1	B/R/V	8,500	pipd	\$70	
<u>Rock Creek</u>						
Big Meadow	11	B/F	8,600	pipd	\$29	7
East Fork	133	B/R/F	9,000	pipd	\$29	14
French Camp	86	B/R/DS/F	7,500	pipd	\$29	21
Iris Meadow	14	B/F	8,300	pipd	\$29	7
Palisade (Group)	5	B/V	8,600	yes	\$70	7
Pine Grove	11	B/V	9,300	yes	\$22	7
Rock Creek Lake	28	B/F	9,600	yes	\$29	7
Tuff	34	B/R/V	7,000	yes	\$27	21
Upper Pine Grove	8	B/V	9,400	yes	\$29	7
Holiday	35	V	7,500	pipd	\$29	14
Aspen (group)	1	B/R	8,100	yes	\$70	14
Mosquito Flat Trailhead (walk-in)	10	B	10,100	none	none	1
Rock Creek Lake (group)	1	B/R	9,700	yes	\$70	14
<u>McGee Creek</u>						
McGee Creek	28	B/R	7,600	pipd	\$27	14
<u>Other Campgrounds</u>						
Tri-County Fairgrounds (State of Calif.)	42	R/S/E	4, 140	yes	\$25	30
Millpond Recreation Area (private)	60	C/E	4,444	pipd	\$20-25	14
Brown's Town Campground (private)	100	C/E	4,147	pipd	\$20-27	14
Glacier View Campground (private)	40	C/E	3,985	well	\$12-17	15
Pleasant Valley (Inyo County)	200		4,300	yes	\$14	14
Pleasant Valley Pit – Winter (BLM)	75		4,300	none	\$5	60
Baker Creek (Inyo County)	70		4,159	none	\$14	15
Tinnemaha Creek (Inyo County)	55			well	\$14	15
Taboose Creek (Inyo County)	50		3,897	none	\$14	15
Horton Creek (BLM)	49	DS/A	4,975	yes	\$5 per night/ \$5 for dump station	14
<b>MAMMOTH LAKES AREA – (760) 924-5500</b>						
<u>Convict Lake</u>						
Convict Lake	85	B/R/F/DS	7,600	pipd	\$29	7
<u>Mammoth Village Area</u>						
New Shady Rest	92	B/R/DS	7,800	pipd	\$23	14
Old Shady Rest	47	R	7,800	pipd	\$23	14
Sherwin Creek	85	B/R	7,600	pipd	\$23	21
Pine Glen (overflow)	10		7,800	pipd	\$22	14
Pine Glen (group)	7	B/R	7,800	pipd	varies by size	14
<u>Mammoth Lakes Basin</u>						
Coldwater	77	B/R	8,900	pipd	\$24	14
Twin Lakes	92	B/R	8,600	pipd	\$24	7
Lake George	16	B	9,000	pipd	\$24	7
Lake Mary	46	B	8,900	pipd	\$24	14
Pine City	10	B	8,900	pipd	\$24	14
<u>Reds Meadow Area</u>						
Agnew Meadows	Under	B	8,400	pipd	\$23	14
(Equestrian and group sites)	Construction				\$24	
Minaret Falls	24	B	7,600	pipd	\$23	14
Red's Meadow	56	B	7,600	pipd	\$23	14
Pumice Flat	17	C	7,700	pipd	\$23	14
Upper Soda Springs	29	C/A	7,700	pipd	\$23	14
Pumice Flat (group)	4	B/R	7,700	pipd	varies by size	14
<u>Other Campgrounds</u>						
Crowley Lake (BLM)	48	DS/A	9,200	yes	\$5	14
Devil's Postpile (Nat'l. Park Service)	21		7,679	pipd	\$16	14
Mammoth Mountain RV Park	179	C/DS/S/E/R	7,800	yes	\$27-\$50	n/a



## LEE VINING/JUNE LAKE AREA – (760) 647-3044

### Crestview Area

Big Springs	26		7,300	none	none	14
Deadman, Lower	15		7,800	none	none	14
Upper Deadman	15		7,780	none	none	14
Glass Creek	50		7,600	none	none	14
Hartley Springs	20		8,400	none	none	14
Obsidian Flat (group)	1	B/R/V	7,800	none	varies	14

### June Lake Loop

Aerie Crag (RVs only/overflow)	10	V	7,200	none	\$14	3
Gull Lake	11	B/F	7,600	pipd	\$23	14
June Lake	28	B/R/F	7,600	pipd	\$23	14
Oh! Ridge	144	B/R/F	7,600	pipd	\$27.50	14
Reversed Creek	17	B/F	7,600	pipd	\$23	14
Silver Lake	63	B/R/F	7,200	pipd	\$23	14

### Lee Vining Area

Lower Lee Vining	53	B/V	7,300	none	\$14	14
Moraine	20	V	7,350	none	\$14	14
Aspen Grove	56	B/V	7,490	pipd	\$14	14
Big Bend	17	B/V	7,800	pipd	\$22	14
Ellery Lake	21	B/V	9,500	pipd	\$22	14
Junction	13	B/V	9,600	none	\$17	14
Sawmill (walk-in)	12	B/V	9,800	none	\$17	14
Tioga Lake (small trailers/RVs)	13	B/V	9,700	pipd	\$22	14
Saddlebag Lake (small trailers/RVs)	19	B/V	10,000	pipd	\$22	14
Trailhead Group (@ Saddlebag Lake)	1	B/R/V	10,000	pipd	varies	14

### Other Campgrounds

Lee Vining Canyon (Mono County)	182		6,800	none	\$7	none
Lundy Canyon (Mono County)	54		7,800	none	\$7	none

## BRIDGEPORT RANGER DISTRICT – (760) 932-7070

### Bridgeport Campgrounds

Honeymoon Flat	47		7,000	yes	\$17	
N. Robinson Creek	54		7,000	yes	\$20	
Paha	22		7,000	yes	\$20	
Crags	27		7,100	yes	\$20	
Lower Twin	15		7,000	yes	\$20	
Buckeye	65		7,000	yes	\$17	
Green Creek	11		7,500	yes	\$17	
Trumbull Lake	45		9,500	yes	varies by size	
Obsidian	14		7,800	no	\$12	
Sonora Bridge	23		6,800	yes	\$17	
Leavitt Meadows	16		7,000	yes	\$17	
Chris Flat	15		6,600	yes	\$15	
Bootleg	63		6,600	yes	\$20	
Desert Creek	13		6,300	no	none	
Green Creek (group site 1)	25		7,500	yes	\$52	
Green Creek (group site 2)	30		7,500	yes	\$65	
Crags (Group)	45		7,100	yes	varies by size	

## CARSON RANGER DISTRICT – (775) 882-2766

### Carson Campgrounds

Lookout	22		6,700	no	\$6	
Mt. Rose	24		8,900	yes	\$15	
Crystal Springs	22		6,600	yes	\$14	
Markleeville	10		5,500	yes	\$14	
Kit Carson	12		6,900	yes	\$14	
Hope Valley	20		7,300	yes	\$14	
Silver Creek	22		6,800	yes	\$15	
Hope Valley (Group)	3-16 PAOT			yes	\$25	
Lookout (Group)	1-30 PAOT			no	\$25	

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Thank you to all of our  
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To become a part of the 69th  
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Guide in 2022, contact Sandra at  
*The Inyo Register*  
advertising department at  
(760) 873-3535, or via email:  
advertising@inyoregister.com.



# In-the-field guidance

Fishing guides and pack stations here to enhance your experience

Not everyone is lucky enough to live in the Eastern Sierra full-time, and for these people, it's important they make the absolute most of their time here in Inyo and Mono counties.

There are also longtime locals wanting to approach one of their favorite pastimes from a fresh perspective, or learn new and better techniques,

or explore areas of their big backyard they've only seen in photographs.

For all of these folks, the services offered by local fishing guides and pack stations are invaluable. And luckily, the Eastern Sierra is flush with both – willing, ready and eager to educate, broaden horizons and add an element of adventure to angling excursions.

Following are some of the guides and stations here to help ...

## FISHING GUIDES

The Angler's Edge  
1506 Hwy. 395,  
Gardnerville, Nev.  
[www.theanglersedge.com](http://www.theanglersedge.com)

CPR (Catch Photograph  
Release) Guide Service  
(760) 784-1524

Dan's Guide Service  
(661) 478-0036  
[facebook.com/dansguideservice](http://facebook.com/dansguideservice)

Eastern Sierra Guide Service  
(760) 872-7770  
[www.jaeger-flyfishing.com](http://www.jaeger-flyfishing.com)

**High Sierra Outfitters**  
**130 S. Main St., Lone Pine**  
**(760) 876-9994**  
**(See ad on pg. 79)**

Hot Creek Fly Fishing Ranch  
Mammoth Lakes  
(760) 924-5637  
<http://hstrial-hotcreekranch.homestead.com>

**Ken's Sporting Goods**  
**258 Main St., Bridgeport**  
**(760) 932-7707**  
**[www.kenssport.com](http://www.kenssport.com)**  
**(See ad on pg. 13)**

Kevin Peterson's Fly Fishing  
Adventures  
85 Hot Creek Hatchery  
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Mammoth Lakes  
(760) 937-0519  
[www.kevinpetersonflyfishing.com](http://www.kevinpetersonflyfishing.com)

Kittredge Sports  
Mammoth Lakes  
(760) 934-7566  
[www.kittredgesports.com](http://www.kittredgesports.com)

Mammoth Flyfishing  
Adventures  
(760) 937-5680  
[www.mammothflyfishingadventures.com](http://www.mammothflyfishingadventures.com)

Oasis Fly Fishing  
P.O. Box 7765,  
Alhambra, CA 91802  
(626) 219-2999  
[www.oasisflyshop.com](http://www.oasisflyshop.com)

Performance Anglers Guide  
Service and Outfitters  
P.O. Box 1688, Mammoth  
Lakes  
(818) 288-0584  
[www.performanceanglers.com](http://www.performanceanglers.com)

Performance Guide Service/  
Rick's Sports Center  
3241 Main St., Mammoth  
(760) 914-0730  
[www.performanceguideservice.com](http://www.performanceguideservice.com)

Sierra Bright Dot Guide  
Service  
Fly Fishing Specialist  
1509 Lazy A Dr., Bishop  
(760) 873-3948

Sierra Drifters Guide Service  
Mammoth Lakes  
(760) 935-4250  
[www.sierradrifters.com](http://www.sierradrifters.com)

Sierra Fly Fisher Tours  
P.O. Box 631, Bass Lake, Calif.  
(559) 683-7664  
[www.sierraflyfisher.com](http://www.sierraflyfisher.com)  
Sierra Fly Guide  
2806 Boulder Dr., June Lake  
(760) 209-3260

Sierra Guide Group  
P.O. Box 451, Bishop  
(760) 872-9836  
[www.sierraguidegroup.com](http://www.sierraguidegroup.com)

**Sierra Mountain Trout  
Guide Service**  
**(760) 263-5013**  
**[www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Mountain-Trout-Guide-Service/106914379349120](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Mountain-Trout-Guide-Service/106914379349120)**  
**(see ad on pg. 27)**

Sierra Trout Magnet Fly Shop  
2272 N. Sierra Hwy., Bishop  
(760) 873-0010  
[www.sierratroutmagnet.com](http://www.sierratroutmagnet.com)

**The Troutfitter/The Trout  
Fly**  
**2987 Main St.,  
Mammoth Lakes**  
**(760) 924-3676**  
**[www.thetroutfly.com](http://www.thetroutfly.com)**  
**(See ad on pg. 2)**

The Trout Scout  
(760) 872-9836  
[troutscout@verizon.net](mailto:troutscout@verizon.net)

Daniel Merrero  
from Glendora  
shows off this  
20-plus-inch brown  
trout caught with  
the help of Dan's  
Guide Service

Dan's Guide Service



## PACK STATIONS

Agnew Meadows Pack  
Station  
P.O. Box 395, Mammoth  
Lakes  
(760) 934-2345  
[www.redsmeadow.com](http://www.redsmeadow.com)

Bishop Pack Outfitters  
Bishop  
(760) 873-4785

Cottonwood Pack Station  
Lone Pine  
(760) 878-2015

Frontier Pack Station  
Winter: 1012 E. Line St.,  
Bishop  
Summer: P.O. Box 656,  
June Lake  
(888) 437-MULE (toll-free)  
<https://sites.google.com/site/fron-tierpacktraindot.com/home/about-us>

Glacier Pack Train  
Big Pine  
(760) 938-2538

Kennedy Meadows Pack  
Station  
Sonora Pass  
Summer: (209) 965-3911,  
(209) 965-3900  
Winter: (209) 965-3900,  
(209) 928-1239  
[www.kennedymeadows.com](http://www.kennedymeadows.com)

Leavitt Meadows Pack  
Station  
7386 S.R. Hwy. 108,  
Bridgeport  
(530) 495-2196  
[www.leavittmeadows.com](http://www.leavittmeadows.com)

Mammoth Lakes Pack  
Outfit  
Lake Mary Road, Mammoth  
(888) 475-8747  
[www.mammothpack.com](http://www.mammothpack.com)

McGee Creek Pack Station  
2990 McGee Creek Rd.,  
Crowley Lake  
(800) 854-7407  
[www.mcgeecreekpackstation.com](http://www.mcgeecreekpackstation.com)

Mt. Whitney Pack Trains  
Mt. Whitney  
(760) 872-8331  
[www.rockcreekpackstation.com/goldentroutinfotop.shtml](http://www.rockcreekpackstation.com/goldentroutinfotop.shtml)

Pine Creek Pack Station  
Bishop  
(800) 962-0775

Rainbow Pack Station  
Bishop  
(760) 873-8877  
<http://rainbow.zb-net.com/>

Red's Meadow Pack Outfit  
P.O. Box 395,  
Mammoth Lakes  
(760) 934-2345  
[www.redsmeadow.com](http://www.redsmeadow.com)

Rock Creek Pack Station  
Bishop  
(760) 872-8331  
[www.rockcreekpackstation.com](http://www.rockcreekpackstation.com)

Sequoia Kings Pack Trips  
Independence  
(800) 962-0775

Virginia Lakes Pack Outfit  
Bridgeport  
Summer: (760) 937-0326  
Winter: (925) 349-5074  
[www.virginalakes.com](http://www.virginalakes.com)  
(See ad on pg. 11)



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the environment, wildlife  
and natural resources of the  
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