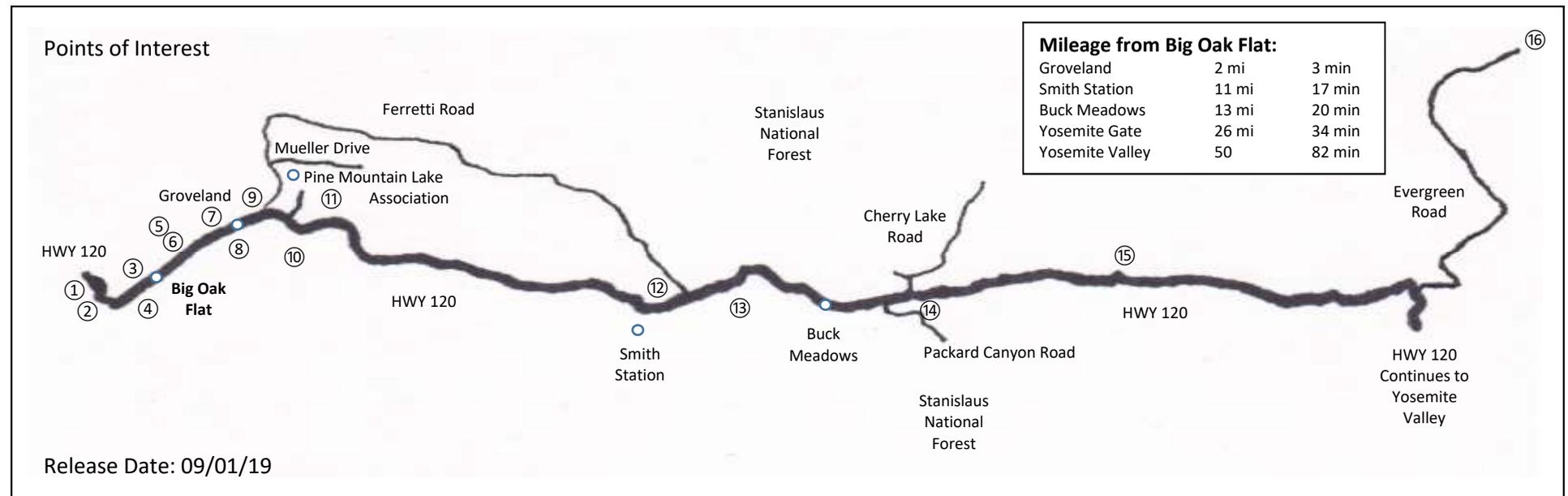


Points of Interest



Provided by:



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① Priest Grade

The old foot trail up Moccasin Hill came up the back of the hill and through a gap at the crest. There was no road in the earliest days. Equipment and supplies, iron doors and furniture, were hauled up the hill on mule back until 1859 when the road was completed and wagons and stage coaches could make the all-day trip up the steep grade that climbs over 1,200 feet in two miles.

② Priest Station

The Priest Station Café and cabins at the top of Priest Grade occupy the site of historic Priest Station, a well-known stage stop of the horse and buggy days.

Originating as tiny "Rattlesnake Store" in 1855, it grew into the noted hostelry that included the hotel and annex, a deluxe cottage across the highway, a rooming house for miners who were sent off to work each day carrying a lunch prepared by the hotel's Chinese cook, a carriage house, livery stable, barns and shed.

Teamsters and stage drivers changed horses here and meals were served to all comers.

Big Oak Flat

The founding of Big Oak Flat is credited to James Savage who established a trading post and panned for gold here in 1849, aided by a company of Indians. There were reportedly 3,000 miners on the flat at the height of the Gold Rush.

The town incorporated in 1860 and boasted hotels, restaurants, mercantile establishments, saloons, blacksmith shops, livery stables, an Odd Fellows Lodge and a Son of Temperance Chapter. It was the shopping and social center for its section of the country.

③ Odd Fellows Building

The I.O.O.F. Hall dates from the early 1850's and was originally two separate, one-story buildings; a close look will reveal where the two butt together. The east half of the lower story was built circa 1852 and housed Kent and Grant's Mercantile. The slightly smaller west half was built in 1854 for Michael Gilbert who operated a grocery store. Both buildings survived the fire of 1863 due in part to the iron doors, shipped around the Horn and freighted up the hill. Unfortunately, this was not the case for

the Odd Fellows original building and shortly after the fire they purchased Grant's store for a meeting hall. Gilbert's store was obtained sometime during the 1880's.

④ Historic Marker

The giant white oak for which the town was named succumbed to the ambitious efforts of miners who sought gold amongst its roots until undermined and sickened it fell. A token remnant is enshrined in this historical marker.

⑤ The Cobden House

The structure, aka Raggio House and /or The Yellow House was built in 1901 by Edward Cobden during the hard rock mining boom. The architecture is transitional Neo-Classical to Craftsman with Queen Anne details.

⑥ Gamble (aka Wells Fargo) Building

The site of the Gamble Building is believed to be the location of the original Savage Trading Post established in 1848. The Gamble Building, built in 1852, was constructed by Alexander Gamble principally from native slate and locally made bricks. The building has retained its integrity

of appearance over the past 150-plus years, hosting such businesses as a Wells Fargo Express office, U. S. Post Office, general store, cobbler, law offices, butcher shop, and justice court. On the west side of the building is a small jail with iron bars.

Groveland

Highway 120's most prosperous community between Oakdale and Yosemite, lived out its first quarter century under the dubious name Garrote. Swift justice at the end of a rope established the name of the camp inhabited by hundreds of Frenchman and Mexicans. The settlement grew up around Garrote Creek where Frenchmen Casimir Rebaul built a trading post in 1849.

In 1875, the Gold Rush over and lode mining established, the town had a population of about 100 persons, and with Big Oak Flat, was the hub of activity for the mines and ranches at Moccasin Creek, Deer Flat, Spring Gulch, Big Creek, and Second Garrote.

It was during the Hetch Hetchy days of 1913 to 1927 that Groveland had her heyday. Headquarters for the railroad operation during the building of O'Shaughnessy Dam and the mountain tunnels was in Groveland. This precipitated a sudden influx of a great number of men, some with their families.

With the development of Pine Mountain Lake subdivision in 1969 the town again experienced a spurt of growth.

⑦ Groveland Jail

Built approximately 1895 as a holding cell for the unruly. There is evidence in one cell, on the left, that a breakout was attempted by setting fire to the cell.

⑧ Iron Door Saloon

The oldest continuously operating saloon in California. The name "Iron Door" comes from the saloon's front doors, which are made of iron. The interior has the typical decor of an old saloon, with the original bar intact. The roof is adorned with with dollar bills and other historical artifacts. Live music is played on the weekends.

⑨ Groveland Museum and Library

The museum offers historical displays depicting local history, many focusing on the Gold Rush era. Its History Resource Center collects and maintains historical records of the area and aids with genealogy research. A small theater in the museum features a collection of DVD's on Yosemite, Hetch Hetchy, and the Gold Rush. The museum store offers many books on Tuolumne County and the State of California.

Pine Mountain Lake

A 3,300 acre subdivision the rings a 210 acre lake with 6 miles of shoreline used for boating and fishing. Facilities open to the public include the country club, its dining room and cocktail bar, a 18 hole golf course and pro-shop, equestrian center campground and airport.

Association members retain exclusive privilege to the lake, marina, Lake Lodge, fishermen's cove, swimming pool and tennis courts.

⑩ Second Garrote

Sometimes called Hangman's Tree by the old timers, lies east of Groveland in a bend in the winding road that leads to Yosemite. Following the exuberant days of gold mining, the settlement was home for a small community of settlers. There was a flour mill, sawmill, butcher shop, general store, gardens and orchard.

The Bret Harte cabin, home of James A. Chaffee and Jason P. Chamberlain, whose lifelong loyalty to one another was said to have inspired Bret Harte's "Tennessee's Partner", was a tourist attraction until fire destroyed it several years ago.

⑪ Sugar Pine Ranch

The ranch was the headquarters for the Yosemite Power Company early in the century. Its power house, situated at the bend in the Tuolumne River, supplied power for mining machinery and the illumination of Groveland. The first settler built a cabin on the site of today's ranch house in the 1860's. It was the Peri Ranch at the close of the century.

Smith Station

A huge barn marks the site of old Smith Station, Smith Station road turns south from HWY 120 heading toward Wagner Valley and connecting with other roads going to Greeley Hill, Coulterville and Bower's Cave.

John B. Smith came to California from Maine in 1854 and homesteaded the meadow first known as Sprague's Ranch. Smith provided lodging for stage passengers and hostlers and served meals which include venison or mountain trout or beef which he butchered himself. Vegetables came from the garden planted beside the two story house. Meals cost 25c and a bed could be had for 75c.

⑫ La Casa Loma

Within sight of the old stage stop is La Casa Loma, the house on the hill. The store and cabins have stood by the edge of the highway near the junction of Ferretti Road since the 1950's. A portion of the old road touched its doorstep.

Buck Meadows

Buck Meadows was originally Hamilton's Station, another stage coach stop on the road to Yosemite in freighting days. Cattlemen herding cattle up country to summer pasture stopped here for the night. Alva and Johanna Hamilton farmed the land in the 18870's, raising beef and pork. They planted apples, peaches and Bartlett pears.

⑬ Groveland Ranger Station

Whether you are looking for camping, fishing, hunting, backpacking, hiking, rafting, the exciting wild and scenic Tuolumne, seeking pristine solitude, or any other outdoor recreational activity the choice is yours in our National Forest. Stop by the ranger station if you want information about fire restrictions and permits, use permits, firearms use, maps and brochures of the area.

⑭ Rainbow Pool

Rainbow Pools are natural swimming holes along the south fork of the Tuolumne River, where one can dip their feet, take a plunge or just watch courageous kids jump the rock lined ledges into the largest of the inviting pools. Originally a Toll Stop on the Big Oak Flat Road to Yosemite, and later a resort development, the area is now a popular picnic, swimming, hiking and fishing spot.

⑮ Rim of the World

You get a panoramic view of Jawbone Ridge and the Tuolumne River Canyon from here. Any time of year, this vista is a great treat. In the winter, the snow covers the trees and sparkles throughout the valley and mountains. In the summer, the green valley, flora and fauna, are all buzzing with excitement. It is always peaceful and sunsets are NOT to be missed.

⑯ Hetch Hetchy Reservoir

The glacial Hetch Hetchy Valley lies in the northwestern part of Yosemite National Park and is drained by the Tuolumne River. For thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans in the 1850s, the valley was inhabited by Native Americans who practiced subsistence hunting-gathering. Its natural beauty is often compared to that of Yosemite Valley.

In 1923, the O'Shaughnessy Dam was completed on the Tuolumne River, flooding the entire valley under the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. The dam and reservoir are the centerpiece of the Hetch Hetchy Project, which in 1934 began to deliver water 167 miles (269 km) west to San Francisco and its client municipalities in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

Yosemite National Park

Yosemite covers an area of nearly 1,200 square miles and spans the eastern portions of Tuolumne and Madera counties.

Yosemite is known for its granite cliffs, waterfalls, clear streams and giant sequoia groves. Hotels, camping, an art gallery and food are available. There is ice skating and skiing in the winter.