



2022

EASTERN SIERRA FISHING GUIDE

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

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“We don’t have just four or five lakes, creeks, or rivers to brag about; we have hundreds. Yes, you heard that right, hundreds.”

Angle for adventure in the Eastern Sierra

There are a lot of regions touting great fishing opportunities that would consider themselves well-blessed to have four or five high-quality streams, lakes or creeks to boast about.

And then, there is the Eastern Sierra.

We don’t have just four or five lakes, creeks, or rivers to brag about; we have hundreds. Yes, you heard that right, hundreds.

Now it’s true that some of them, such as our multitude of teal-blue high Sierra backcountry lakes, take a little bit of a walk – or a long bit of a walk – to get to, but that still leaves dozens and dozens of our best high-quality fishing lakes, streams and ponds, along with dozens of resorts, campgrounds and hotels and other amenities – right off the pavement.

So yes, we are pretty proud of our fishing here in the Eastern Sierra.

To show you how proud, we’d like to share some of it with you here in this 2022 Fishing Guide, starting from the very northernmost end of the Eastern Sierra at Topaz Lake, then heading down south to Lone Pine. Along the way, we’ll highlight success stories, like how one of the rarest trout in the world is making a comeback in a magical valley, and hand out fishing tips only the locals know. We’ll highlight places like the sparkling Twin Lakes out of Bridgeport, the stunning June Lakes loop area, the aspen-lined shores of turquoise Convict Lake, the bustling marina of Crowley Lake and so much more. We’ll then head south for a rousing adventure chasing a legendary fish that most people thought didn’t exist, before plunging south toward Bishop and the still waters of Pleasant Valley Reservoir and the Owens River, before heading up Bishop Creek for some of the most famous fishing in the region.

Along the way, we’ll show you the way to all of our campgrounds, resorts and much more.

So, we hope you’ll join us for a grand adventure fishing in the Eastern Sierra. You’ll be glad you did – and so will we!

2022 Eastern Sierra Fishing Guide

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ON THE COVER: A proud angler shows off his catch on Opening Day at Crowley Lake.

*Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi
Design by Julie Garrison*

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

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License fees in 2022

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

Fishing 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 \$54.00 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 2 and Saturday, Sept. 3, in 2022. The general Eastern Sierra trout season runs from the last Saturday in April through mid November. Southern Inyo waters – south of Independence and west of U.S. Highway 395 – open for fishing in March. 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

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Nonresident, Sport Fishing – \$145.80

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Reduced-Fee Sport Fishing License - Disabled/Recovering Veteran – \$8.24

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Reduced-Fee Sport Fishing License - Recovering Service Member – \$8.24*

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Reduced-Fee Sport Fishing License - Low-Income Senior – \$8.24*

Available for low-income California residents, 65 years of age and older, who meet the specified annual income requirements.

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

SHORT-TERM

One-day Sport Fishing License – \$17.54

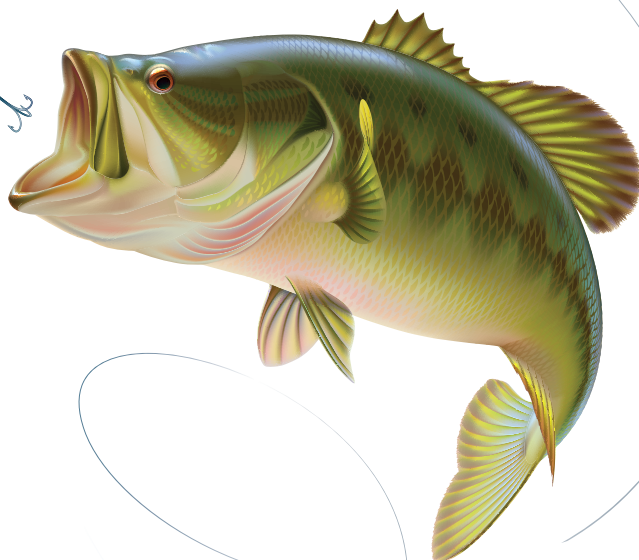
Allows a resident or nonresident to fish for one specified day. One-day sport fishing licenses are exempt from the Ocean Enhancement Validation requirement.

Two-day Sport Fishing License – \$27

Allows a resident or nonresident to fish for two consecutive days. Two-day sport fishing licenses are exempt from the Ocean Enhancement Validation requirement.

Ten-day Nonresident Sport Fishing License – \$54

Allows a nonresident to fish for ten consecutive days.



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Ages 10-39 – \$972.50

Ages 40-61 – \$876

Ages 62-plus – \$594.75

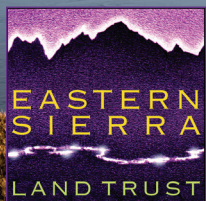
Available to residents of California. Lifetime fishing licensees receive an annual sport fishing license each year for life. Lifetime Fishing Packages must first be purchased from a CDFW License Sales Office. See Lifetime License Information for more details.

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Photos © Rick Kattelmann, ESLT Board of Directors

Topaz – A Mono County fishing gem

Drop a line in two different states By Register Staff

Heading up north, even as a traveler gets to the border of Mono County, there is one last watering hole to catch a lunker – Lake Topaz. Nestled at the northernmost edge of Mono County, Lake Topaz is both in Nevada and California, 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.

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 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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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 and more opportunity to catch wild trout and 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 of 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



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Winter fishing in the Eastern Sierra can make for a wild time with wild trout.

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 and 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 or on his webpage sierrabrightdot.com.)

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Walker River – keeper of trophy trout

Legendary trophy trout water runs wild By Register Staff

The sister forks of Walker River have proven time and time again that it is becoming a better fishery every year.

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

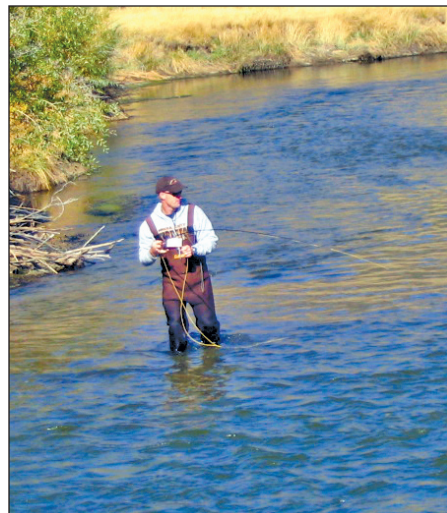
river was designated a year-round water in 2014. The new regulation allows for bait fishing from Opening Day to the Nov. 15 closing with no tackle restrictions, along with a five fish possession limit.

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

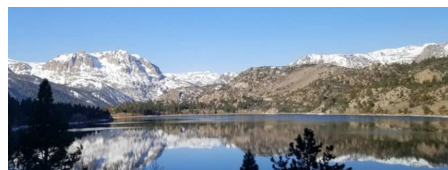
The river is on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Mono County trophy trout program during the regular season.

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. Email the Northern Mono Chamber of Commerce, info@northernmonochamber.com, for more information.



File photo
East Walker River anglers can find more than five miles of roads accessing waters holding a population of wild brown and rainbow trout.



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The legend that never dies

Bridgeport region home to record-sized trout By Register Staff

Bridgeport, the county seat of Mono County, continues to be a draw for a variety of summer-to-winter recreation, including hiking and – of course – fishing.

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

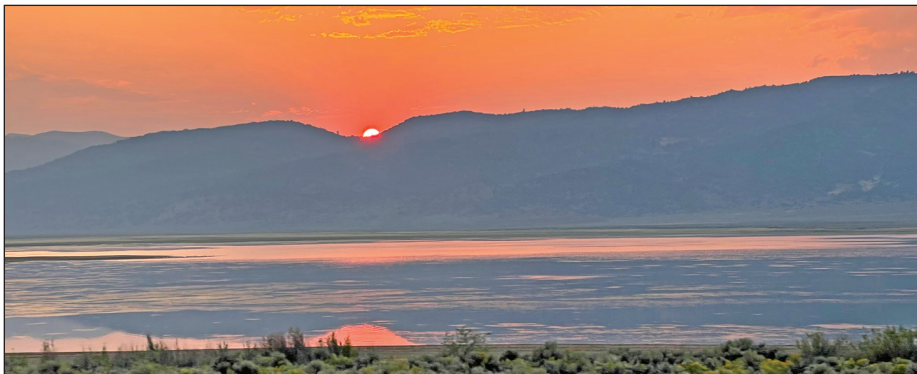


Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

A summer sunset sets Bridgeport Reservoir aflame.

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 Swauger 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

See BRIDGEPORT, pg. 15

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Photo by Don Chambers

Cutthroat faces baptism through fire

Slink Fire burned nearly half of rare Paiute cutthroat trout's habitat but the feisty fish survived By Wendilyn Grasseschi

The rare and wild Paiute cutthroat trout most likely first made national headlines in 2019 when the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other partners returned this California native fish to its home waters in Alpine County for the first time in more than 100 years. The Paiute cutthroat trout, reintroduced to Silver King Creek, which is about eight miles as the crow flies east of the small community of Walker in Mono County, was one of the first species in the nation listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

But two years later, a devastating fire called the Slink Fire looked like it might well wipe out all the hard work as it ripped through some of the key backcountry habitat supporting the rare fish.

So it was with trepidation that scientists entered the blackened and burned area, bracing for the worst, knowing the September 2020 26,759-acre fire had burned about half of the Corral Valley Creek watershed, potentially threatening the pure Paiute cutthroat trout population.

According to the U.S. Forest Service Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest's Public Information Officer Erica Hupp, once the area was deemed safe, Rachel Van Horne, Humboldt-



Photo by Rachel Van Horne

CDFW Fisheries Biologist John Hanson releases Paiute cutthroat trout into Silver King Creek.

Toiyabe National Forest fisheries biologist, who also was a member of the Slink Fire burned area emergency response team, went out to Corral Valley to see the effects of the fire. The team is made up of scientists and specialists with expertise in soils, hydrology, natural and cultural resources, engineering, and recreation. They conduct assessments of the burned area to determine treatments needed to minimize threats to human life and mitigate unacceptable degradation to natural and cultural resources in an area burned by a fire, Hupp said.

"I was nicely surprised with the mosaic burn, which includes patches of burned and

unburned areas, that occurred in the Corral Valley," said Van Horne. She explained that this type of burning is known to support biodiversity outcomes, but until the area recovers, the Corral Valley Creek will need to be continuously monitored to ensure the Paiute cutthroat trout habitat is not negatively affected by the fire.

"Since this portion of the fire was within wilderness and because of the overall positive effects of the fire to the landscape, there were no on-the-ground landscape treatments recommended for Corral Valley," she said.

According to Chad Mellison, Fish and Wildlife biologist and Slink Fire wildland fire resource advisor, the issue with wildfires is that their severity can influence fish populations and their habitat. As vegetation burns, increased sediment erodes into nearby bodies of water.

"This material fills in spaces where fish would lay eggs and can, in some cases, damage their gills," explained Mellison. "Migration routes can also be blocked or altered." As a resource advisor, Mellison provides guidance to agency administrators and incident management teams to help them develop suppression



Photo by Rachel Van Horne

The Slink Fire burned thousands of acres of the Paiute cutthroat habitat - but not all of it.



Photo by Rachel Van Horne

Newly released Paiute cutthroat trout swim in Silver King Creek, the trout's historic home.

strategies that best avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to critical natural resources.

Another significant issue is temperature change. Fish that have precise habitat requirements, like the Paiute cutthroat trout, are most at risk. When plants that shade cold-water streams are destroyed, the overall water temperature rises. Even just a few degrees change can have an impact on metabolic and reproductive rates of the fish living there.

"I would like to recognize the great job the three incident management teams, Sierra Front Team No. 3, Great Basin Team No. 6, and Nevada Team No. 3, did to protect the Paiute cutthroat trout habitat during the Slink Fire," said Bill Dunkelberger, Humboldt-Toiyabe National forest supervisor.

"Without everyone's hard work, the Paiute cutthroat trout population in Corral Valley Creek may have been decimated, and this would have been a huge loss for the recovery effort," added Dunkelberger.

Recovery efforts then continued in October 2020 when fisheries biologists relocated 44 Paiute cutthroat trout by pack animals from the nearby Corral Valley Creek into Silver King Creek, the fish's historic home. Both creeks are in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest.

It's been a long road to recovery for the rare trout – and it's not over yet.

"In 2019, the first translocation effort was completed when 30 Paiute cutthroat trout were moved from Coyote Valley Creek to Silver King

Creek," said Van Horne. "It was a momentous occasion, but the translocation efforts into the mainstem of Silver King Creek will need to continue yearly until a self-sustaining population has been established."

A genetically pure population of Paiute cutthroat trout was established in Corral Valley Creek and other suitable waters decades ago to ensure survival of the species while restoration work took place within Silver King Creek to remove introduced nonnative trout that displaced and hybridized with the native Paiute cutthroat trout.

To ensure that the population of Paiute cutthroat trout in Corral Valley is protected until recovery occurs, the Humboldt-Toiyabe

See PAIUTE, pg. 14



Photo provided by CDFW

All Paiute cutthroats were measured and weighed first.

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PAIUTE, from pg. 13

National Forest worked with partners to come up with the best plan moving forward. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife decided to concentrate their relocation efforts from Corral Valley Creek to Silver King Creek in the event that post-fire sediment impacts occurred.

"Recovering this iconic trout has been a top priority for the department for many years," said department fisheries biologist Sarah Mussulman. "Continuing to move fish into their historic range is critical for long-term success of the project and for genetics management. I'm very pleased that despite many additional challenges due to COVID and wildfires, we were able to successfully move another 44 fish this year. This is worth celebrating!"

The translocation from Corral Valley Creek also served a dual purpose of continuing to build the population in the mainstem of Silver King Creek, while protecting the genetics of the fish in Corral Valley Creek should post-fire effects impact the population as the area moves into the winter.

Genetic samples were taken from all fish that were moved from Corral Valley Creek, so biologists will be able to track their reproductive success in the mainstem of Silver King Creek as a self-sustaining population is established.

"When we walked up to the Silver King Creek to release the fish from Corral Valley Creek, there was one of the fish we released last year swimming in the pool," Van Horne said. "Seeing that fish thriving in its historic range is what this project is all about!"

Each year that Paiute are moved into Silver King Creek is one step closer to a self-sustaining population," said Van Horne. "Hopefully next year when we walk to the stream's edge, we will see baby fish! Natural reproduction within the Silver King Creek would be momentous milestone for this recovery effort, so stay tuned."



Photo provided by CDFW.

CDFW biologists did population assessments of the trout the week before the fire ignited, gaining invaluable information.

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BRIDGEPORT, from pg. 11

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 damsel flies that allow the fish to gorge during the summer.

As far as 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



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

The view of the Sawtooth range from the Bridgeport Reservoir is almost as good as the fishing.

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.

For the latest updates on the local hot spots and recommendations on bait and techniques, check in with the folks at Ken's Sporting Goods in 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.

The 26-acre Big Virginia Lake is fed by underground streams and by Blue and Red lakes. The north shore cove is home to small browns and rainbows while the east shore is known for its brooks and rainbows. The bigger trout can generally be found on the south side of the lake. However, the east shore slopes to a big drop-off where brookies are known to feed.

The lowest of the chain of waters is the 10-acre Trumbull Lake. Little Virginia also is a small, 11-acre productive lake with a depth of about 20 feet at its deepest point.

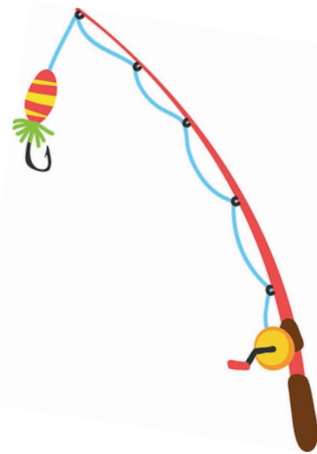


Remember to always think safety first!

The Mono County Sheriff's Office operates patrol boats across all major waterways throughout Mono County.

We are there to enforce all boating laws and ensure safety!

Enjoy yourself and good luck catching "The Big One!"



Gateway to Yosemite and fine fishing

Tioga Pass – fish, picnic and soak up the views By Kristina Blüm

Tioga Pass is California's highest mountain pass, boasting entry in Yosemite National Park but its also holds a couple of fishing hole gems that are part of the experience.

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



File photo

Tenaya Lake is located just passed the Tioga Pass entry to Yosemite National Park.

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.

Treasured moments in June

Bring rod, fishing tackle and your camera By Kristina Blüm Justice

Tucked away against the back side of Yosemite National Park and off U.S. Highway 395, the June Lake Loop is one of the Eastern Sierra's hidden gems. Sometimes lovingly called the Alps of the Sierra by the locals, the quiet backwaters of the lakes and streams is 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

See JUNE LAKE, pg. 18



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Silver Lake is one of the main lakes along the June Lake Loop.



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File photo

June Lake at sunrise is like walking into a postcard.

JUNE LAKE, from pg. 17

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 fishermen 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 fishermen 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 damselfly 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.

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 hikeable 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.



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Escaping to Convict Lake

Alpine angling on crystal clear water By Kristina Blüm Justice

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 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.

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 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



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Convict Lake has a marina where boats can be launched or rented.



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

A large grove of aspen trees on the back side of Convict Lake turns vibrant shades of orange, yellow and red in the fall.

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.

Crowley Lake – Legacy of an opening day tradition

The fishing is as great as the Crowley community

By Kristina Blüm Justice

For those familiar with Eastern Sierra fishing, Crowley ranks 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



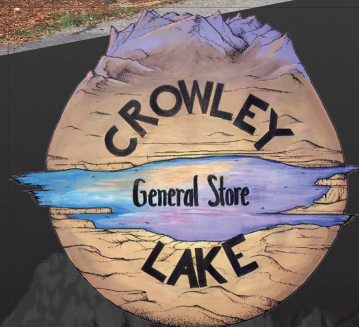
Photo courtesy of Lori Carnahan
Fish Story Lori holds her catch on Crowley Lake in May, 2019.

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 needle-fish, 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.



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A canyon that goes beyond beautiful

Rock Creek Canyon offers some spectacular scenery By Register Staff

Rock Creek is a beautiful Eastern Sierra backcountry canyon in the John Muir Wilderness, perfect for bicycling, hiking, fishing, camping, horseback riding, rock climbing, cross country skiing and snowshoeing – but the canyon also is home to beautiful as well as easily accessible fishing spots.

To reach Rock Creek Lake and Rock Creek, head west at the Tom's Place turn-off 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 night-crawler.

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

See ROCK CREEK, pg. 24



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi
Rock Creek Canyon has beautiful lake fishing and easily accessible backcountry lakes for those who enjoy a short hike.

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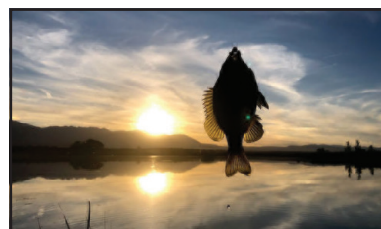
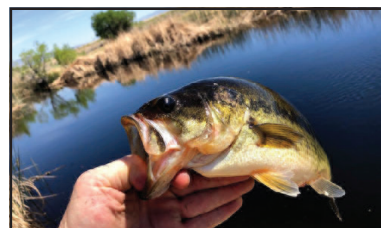
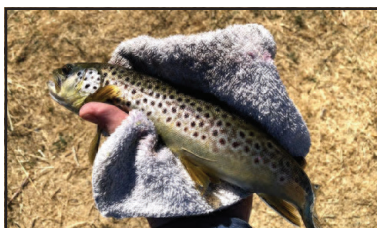


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ROCK CREEK, from pg. 22

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 ways down the road is historic Tom's Place. There you'll find good hamburgers and maybe a fishy tall-tale or two around the famous horseshoe bar.

Lower Rock Creek, south of Tom's Place, is an often overlooked stretch of the creek that produces a lot of trout. Watch for the turnoff to Lower Rock Creek Road, less than a mile south of Tom's Place, on the southbound side of the U.S. Highway 395.

Anglers may want to start with the traditional Powerbait and salmon eggs when fishing this portion of the creek.

If that doesn't produce easy results, switching to the mosquitoes and ants recommended for the upper stretch of the creek may be the ticket.

A popular hiking and mountain biking trail follows the course of the creek down the canyon.

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Hot Spots of Mono County

A quick guide to popular fisheries By Register Staff

Mono 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.

SADDLEBAG 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.

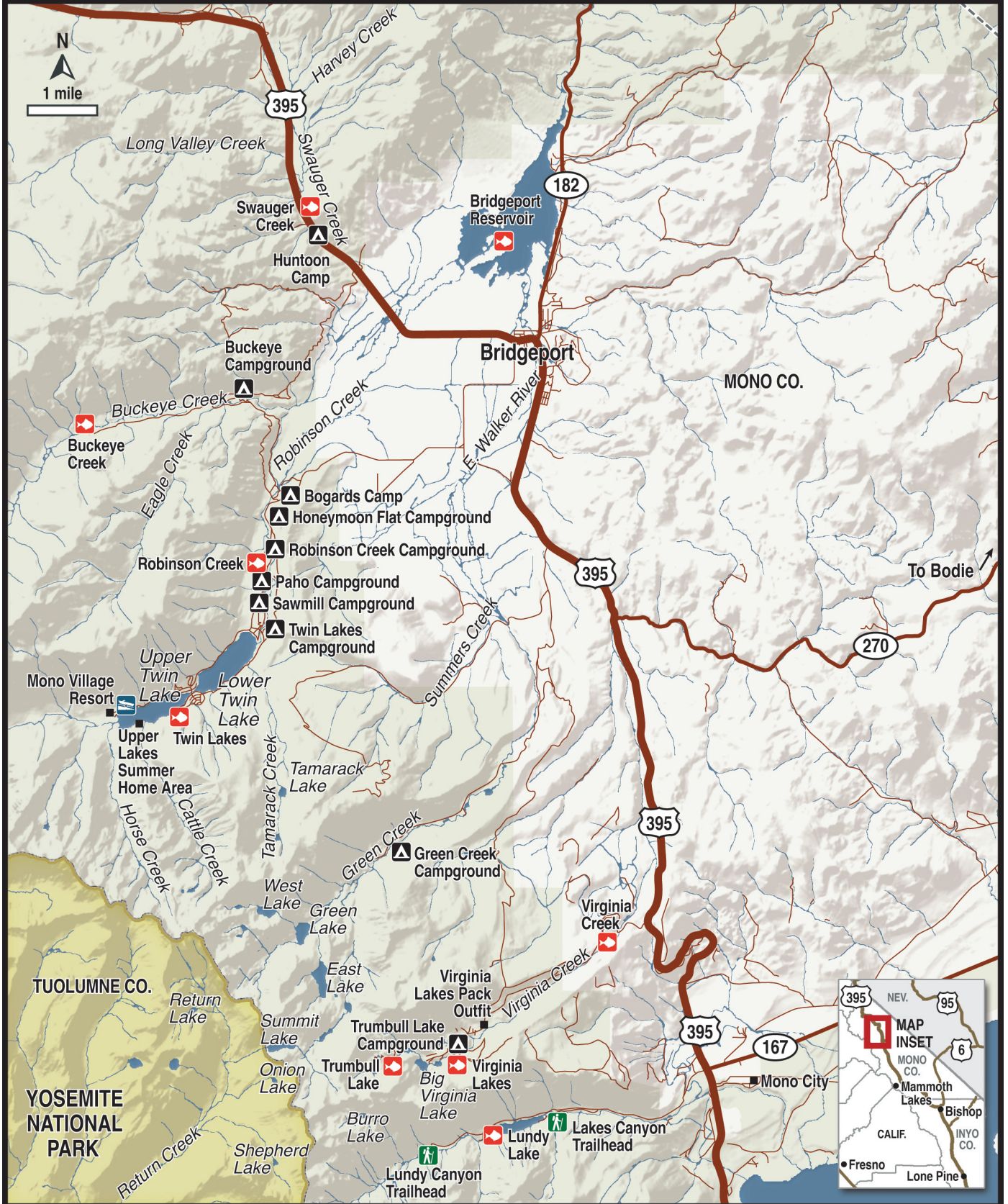
WEST WALKER RIVER

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.

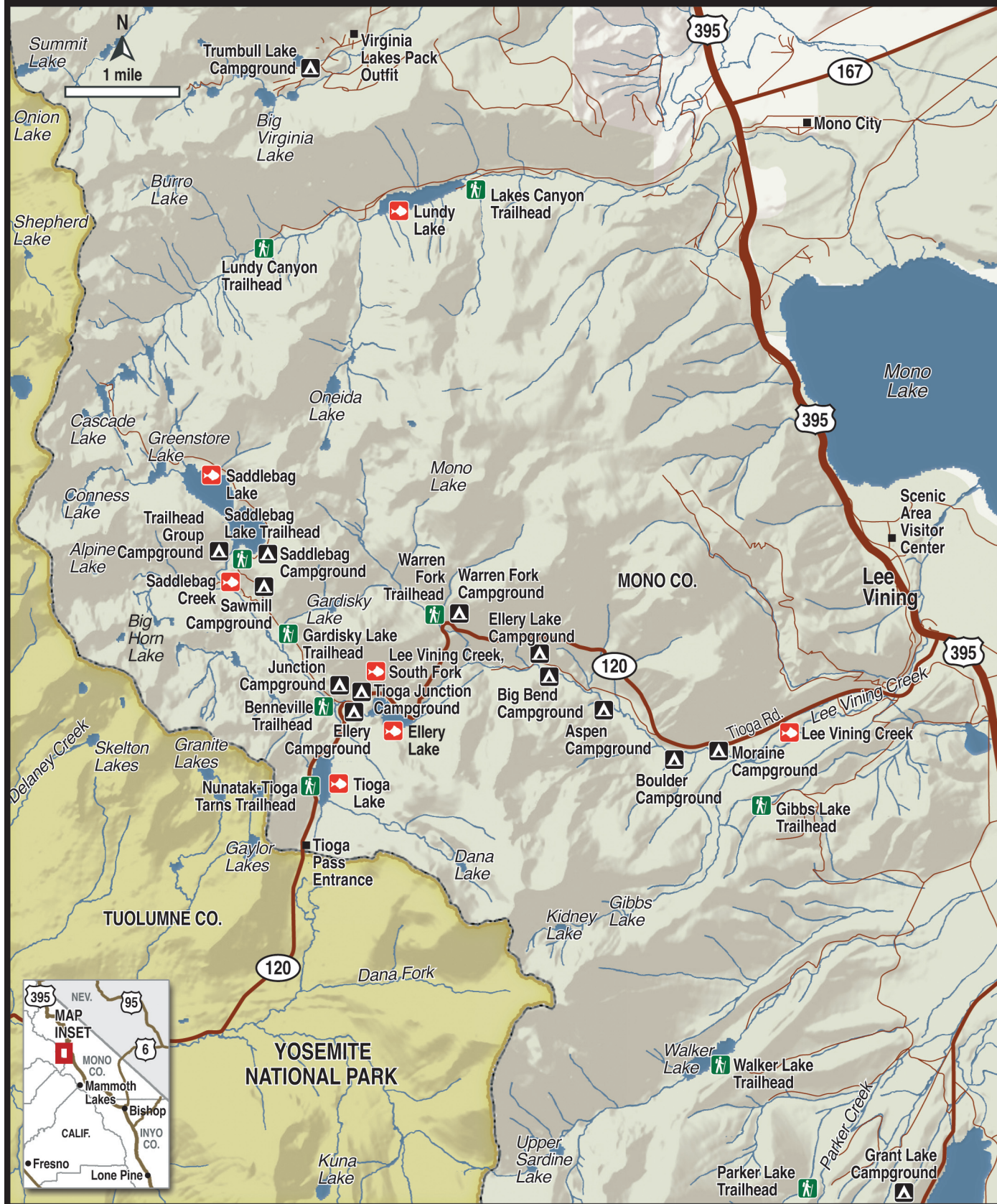
TOPAZ LAKE – WEST WALKER RIVER – SONORA PASS



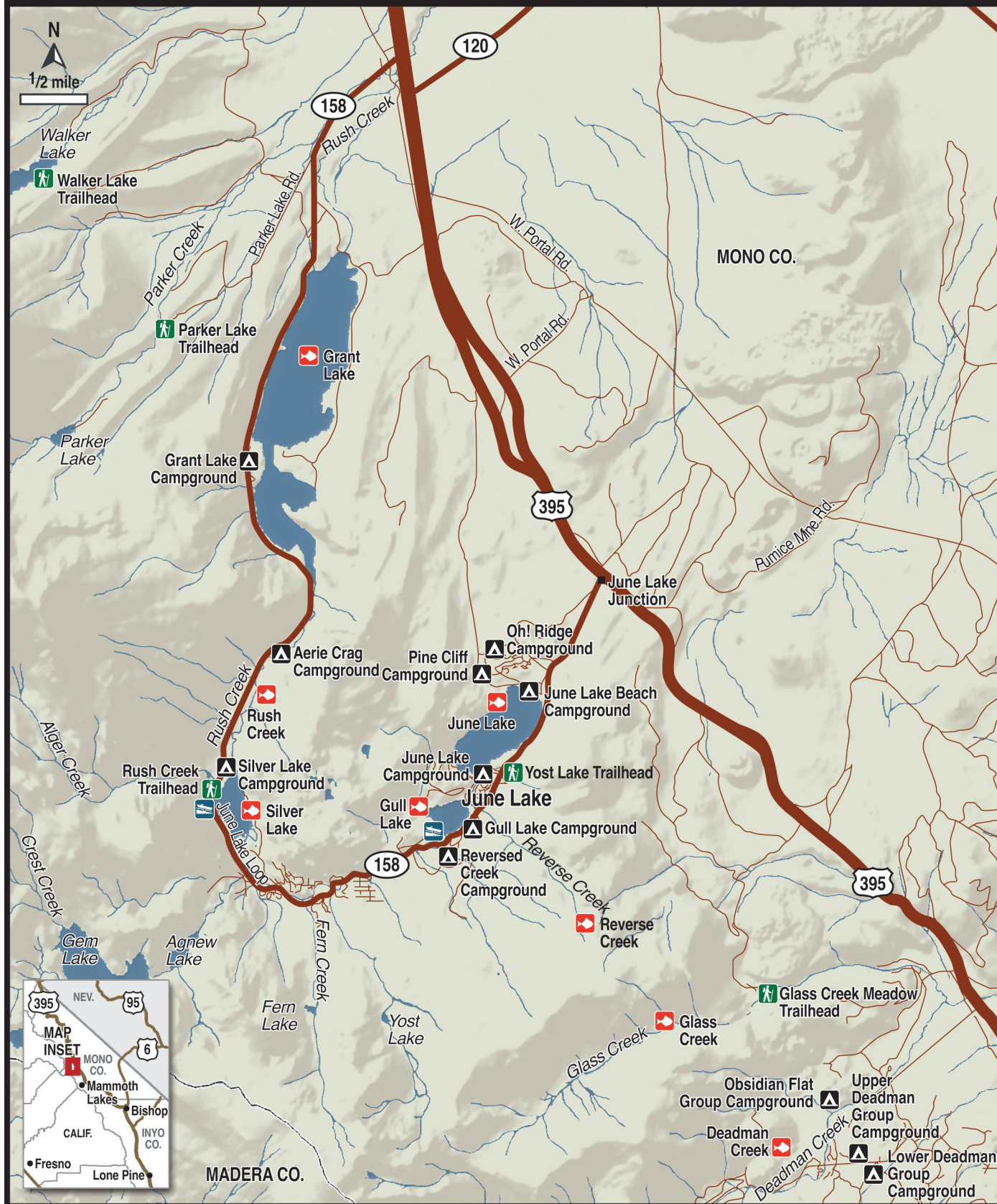
BRIDGEPORT – TWIN LAKES – VIRGINIA LAKES



TIOGA PASS



JUNE LAKE LOOP

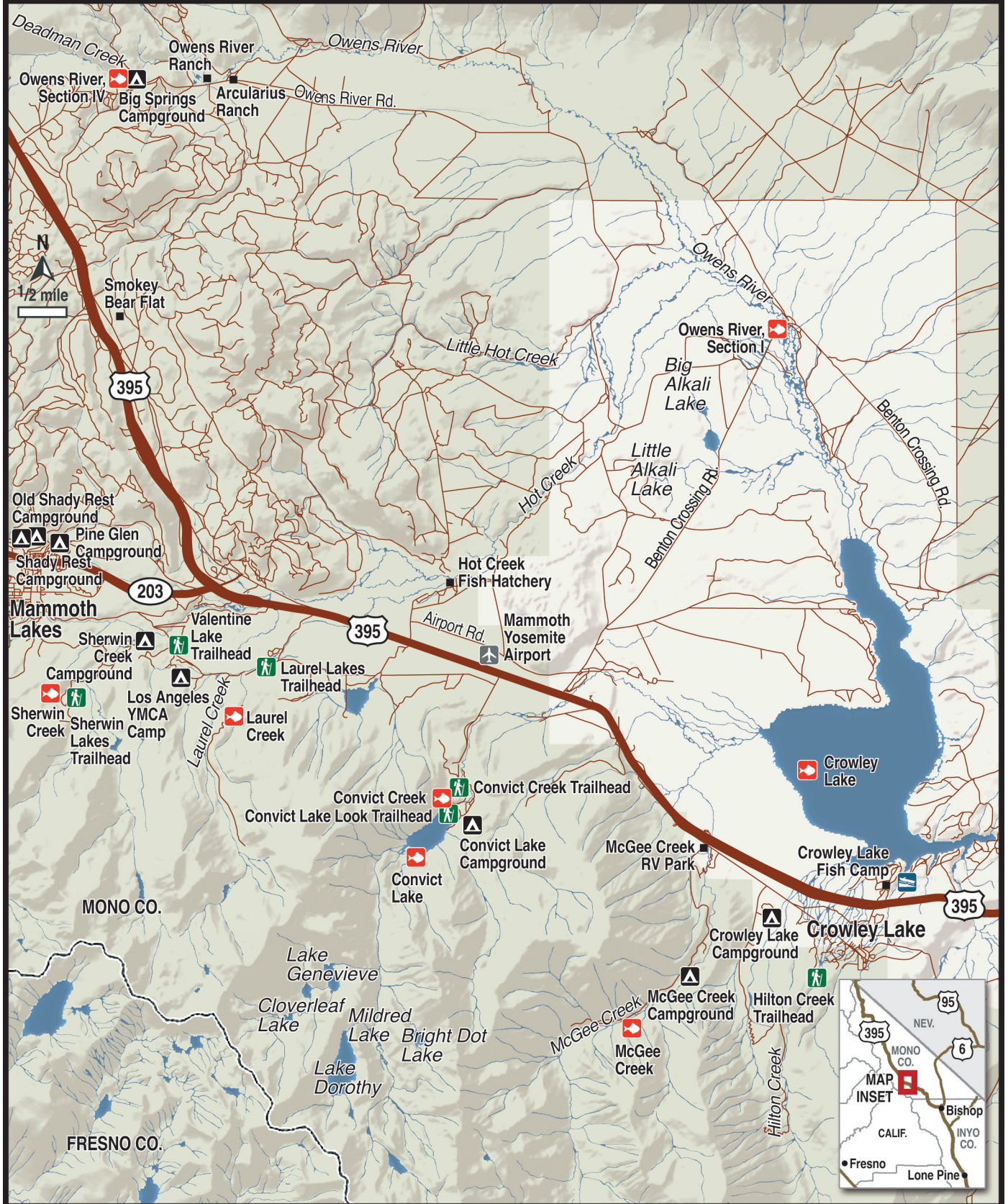


MAMMOTH LAKES AREA

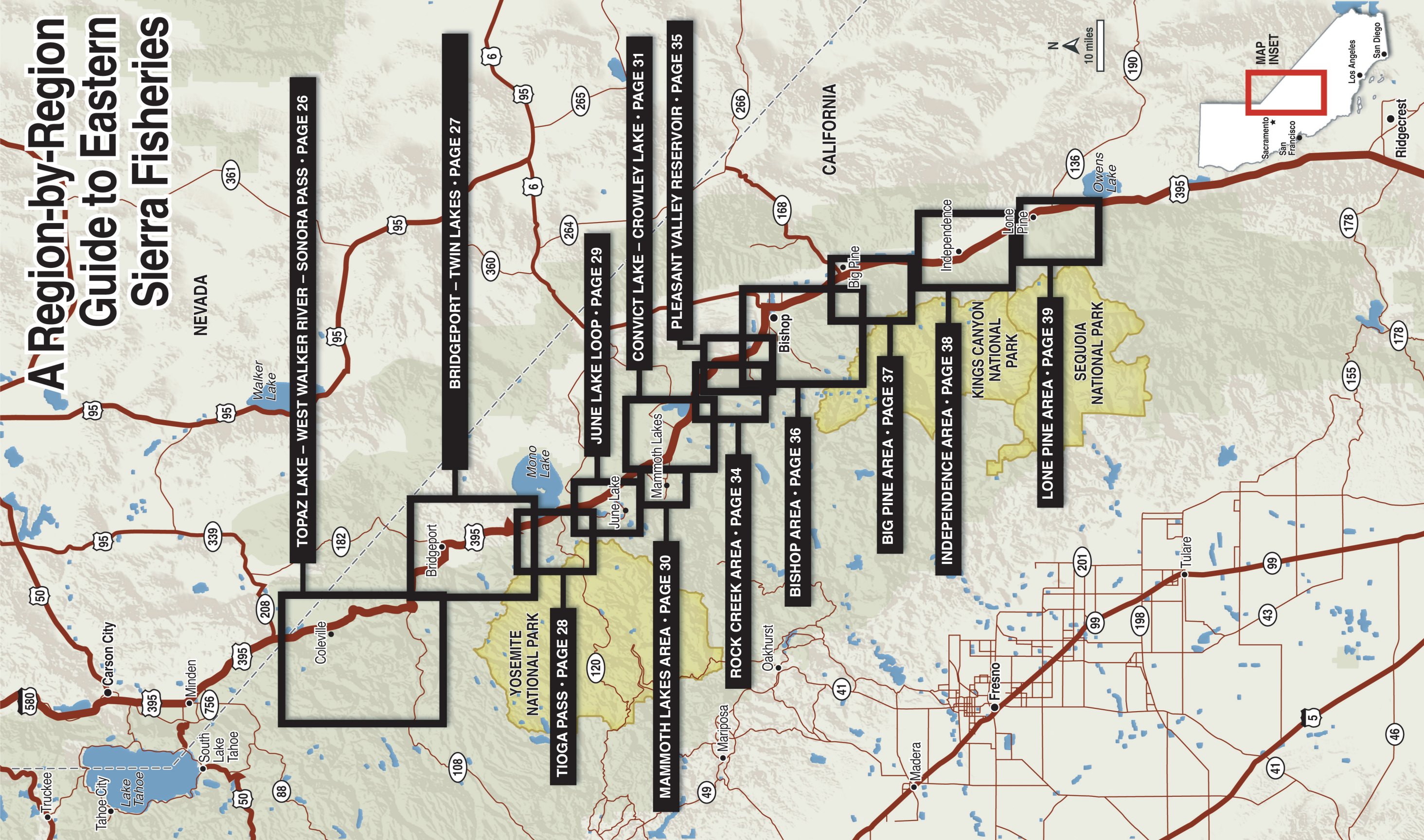
This map provides a detailed view of the Mammoth Lakes region, highlighting various recreational and geographical features. Key elements include:

- Geography:** The map shows the San Joaquin River to the west, Deadman Creek to the north, and Mammoth Creek to the east. The town of Mammoth Lakes is situated in the center, with the Mammoth Mountain Main Lodge and Mammoth Mountain nearby.
- Trails:** Numerous trails are marked with green hiker icons, including the High Trail, Inyo Craters, Minaret Lake, Sotcher Lake, Rainbow Falls, and Duck Pass trails.
- Campgrounds:** Several campgrounds are indicated with tent icons, such as Agnew Meadows, Soda Springs, Pumice Flat, Minaret Falls, Red's Meadow, Twin Lakes, and Lake Mary.
- Infrastructure:** Major roads like Highway 203 and Highway 395 are shown. The map also delineates the boundaries of Fresno County and Mono County.
- Landmarks:** Notable landmarks include the Devils Postpile National Monument and the Mammoth Mountain-Bottomless Pit Trailhead.
- Inset Map:** A small inset map in the bottom right corner shows the location of the Mammoth Lakes area within California, near the Nevada border, and identifies nearby towns like Fresno and Lone Pine.

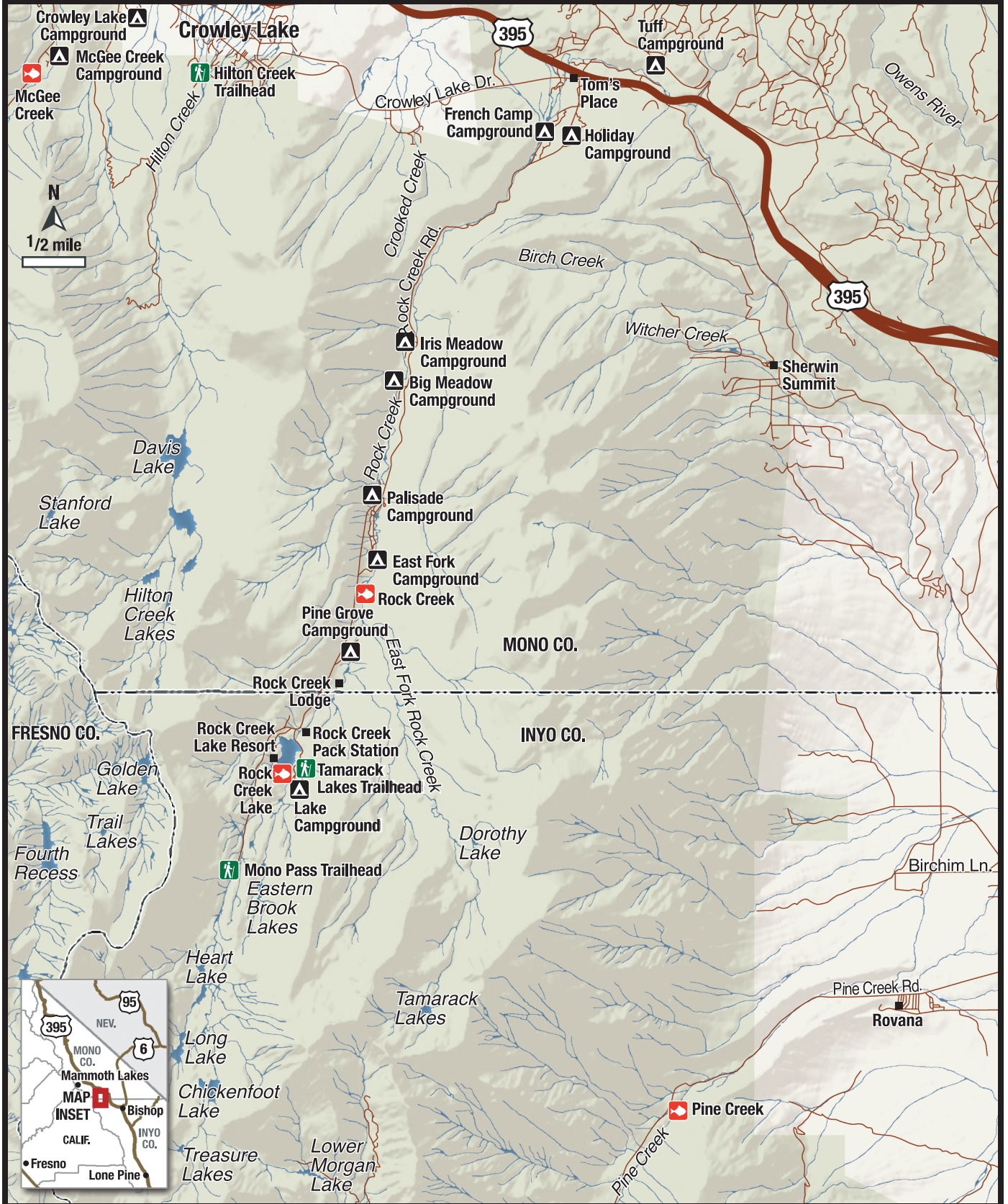
CONVICT LAKE – CROWLEY LAKE



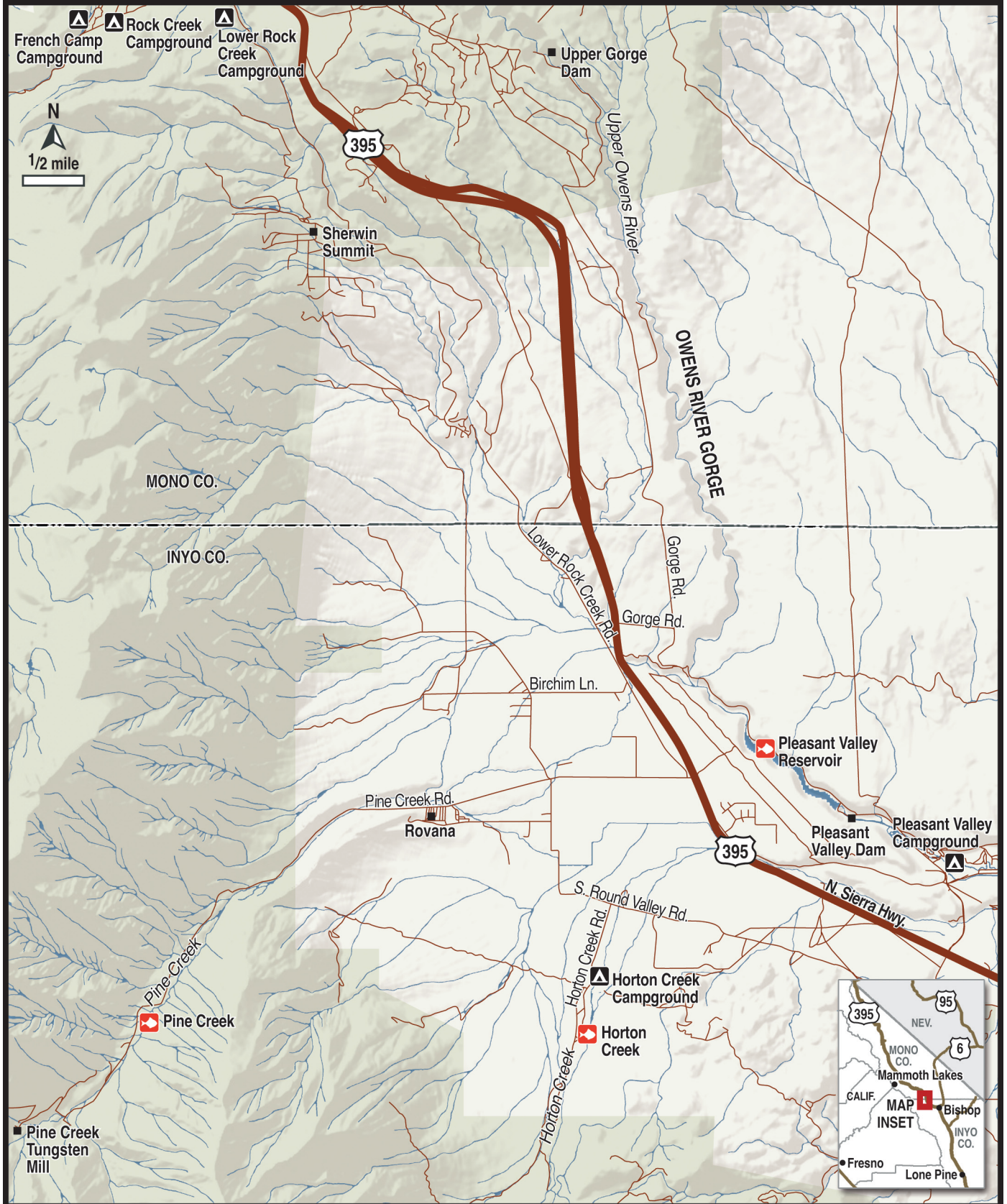
A Region-by-Region Guide to Eastern Sierra Fisheries



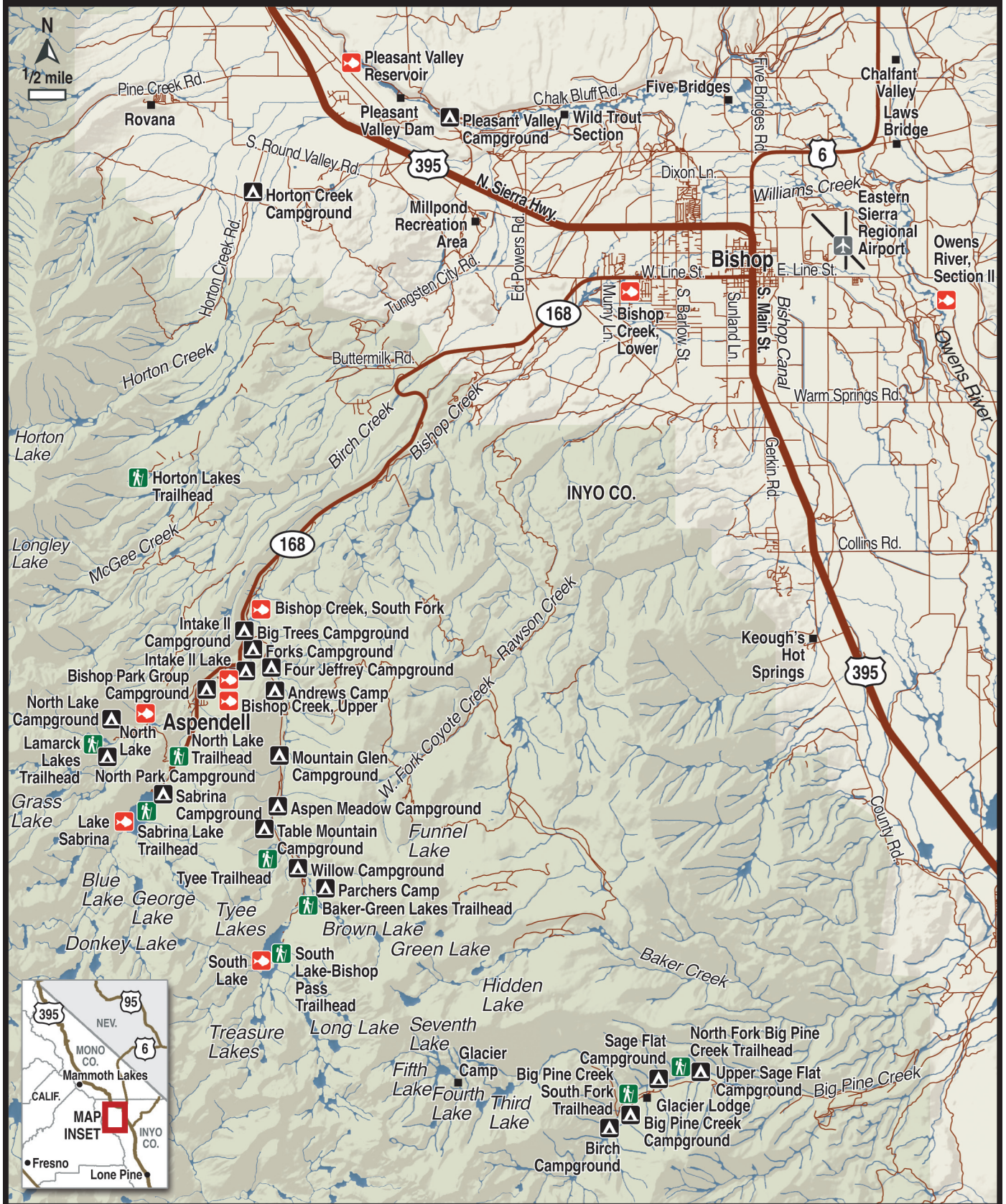
ROCK CREEK AREA



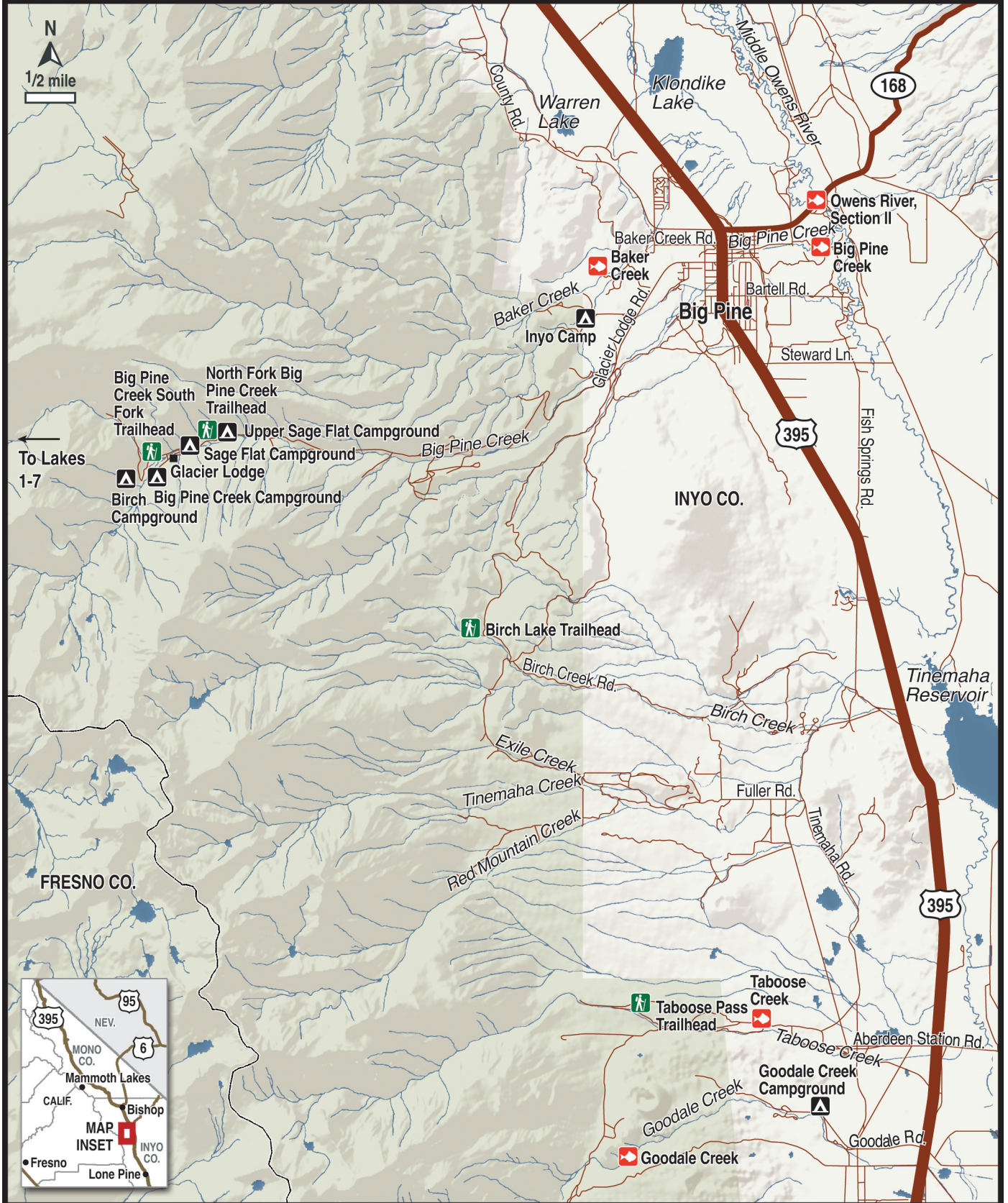
PLEASANT VALLEY RESERVOIR



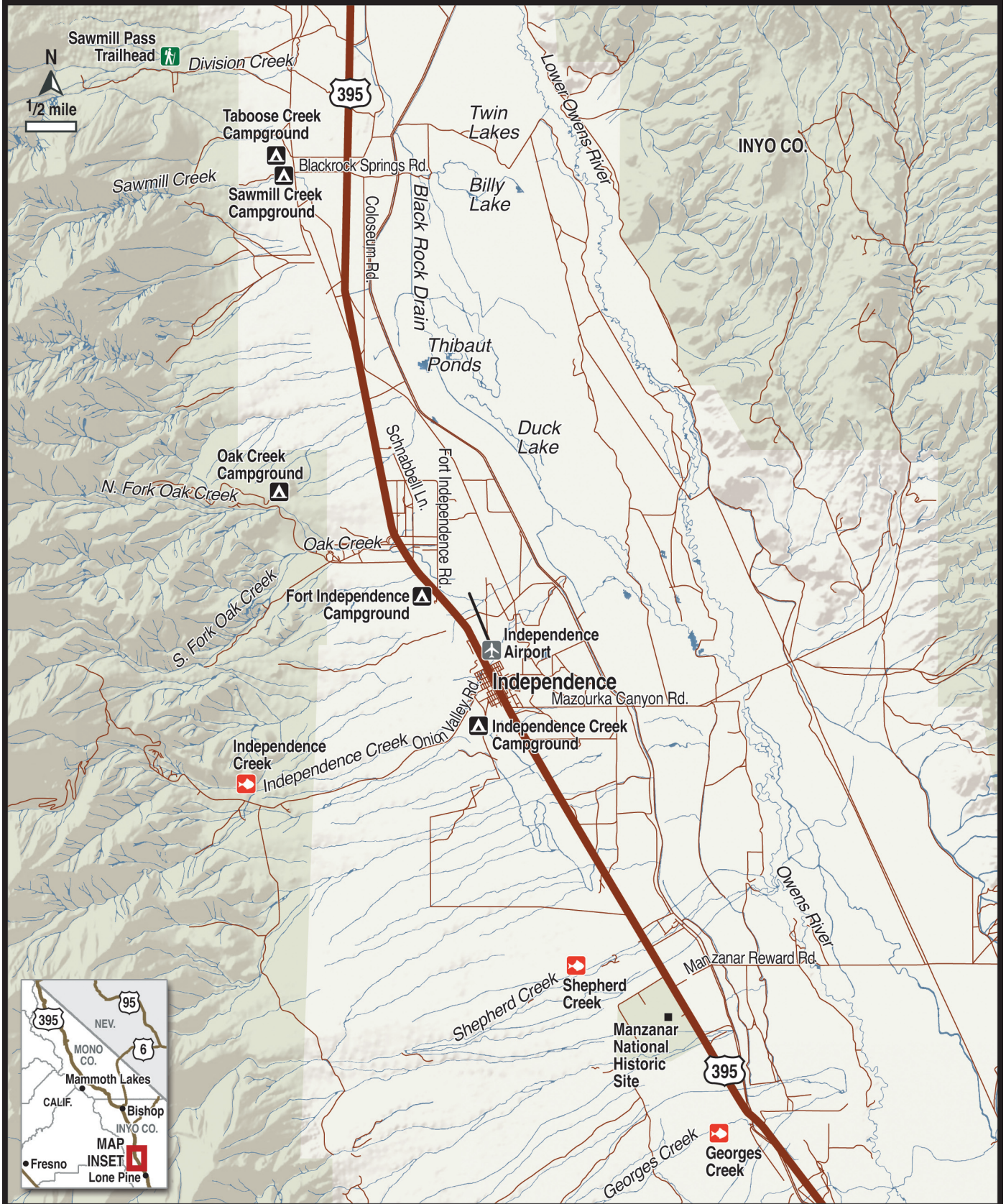
BISHOP AREA



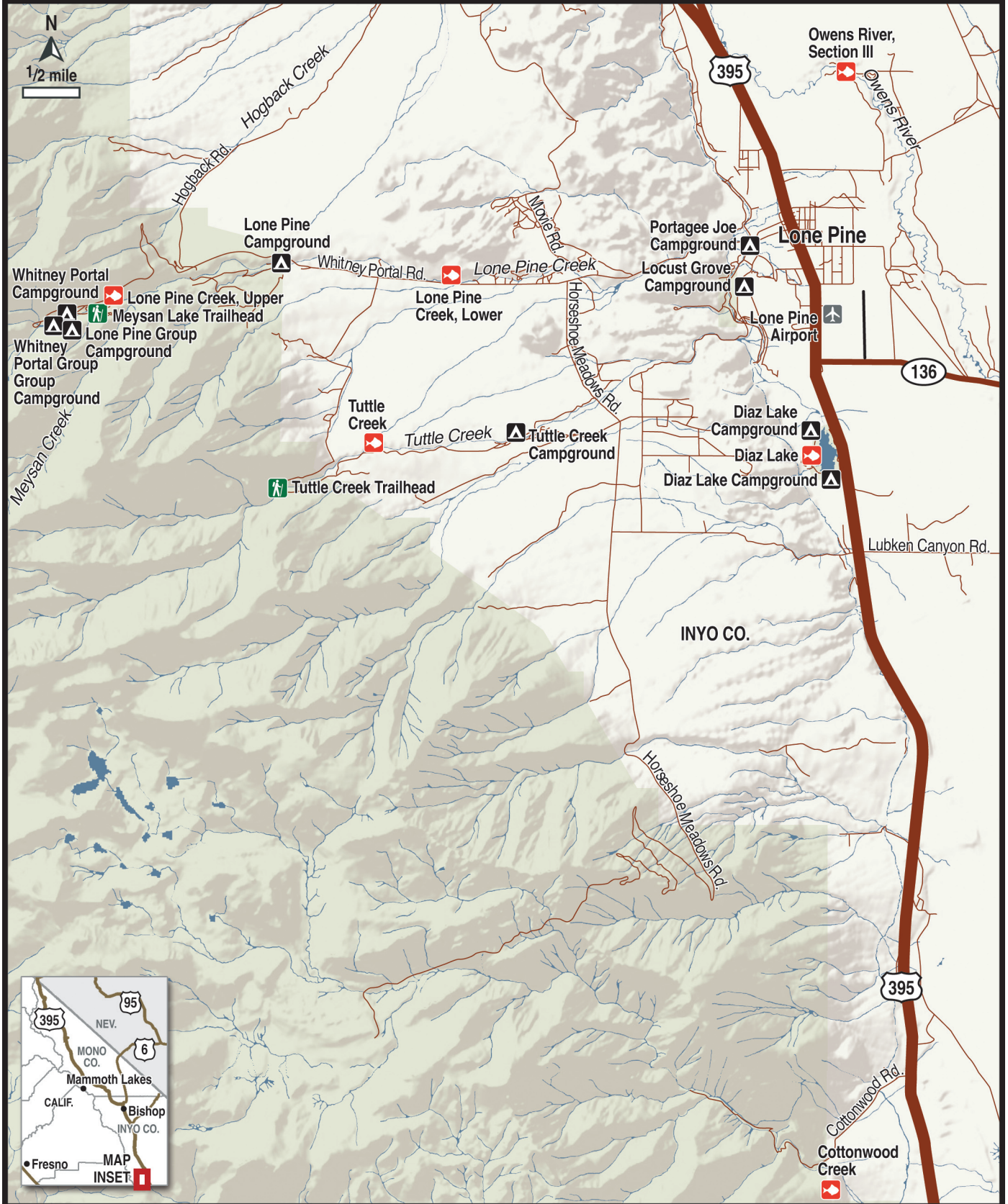
BIG PINE AREA



INDEPENDENCE AREA



LONE PINE AREA



Hot Spots of Inyo County

A quick guide to popular fisheries By Register Staff

From 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.

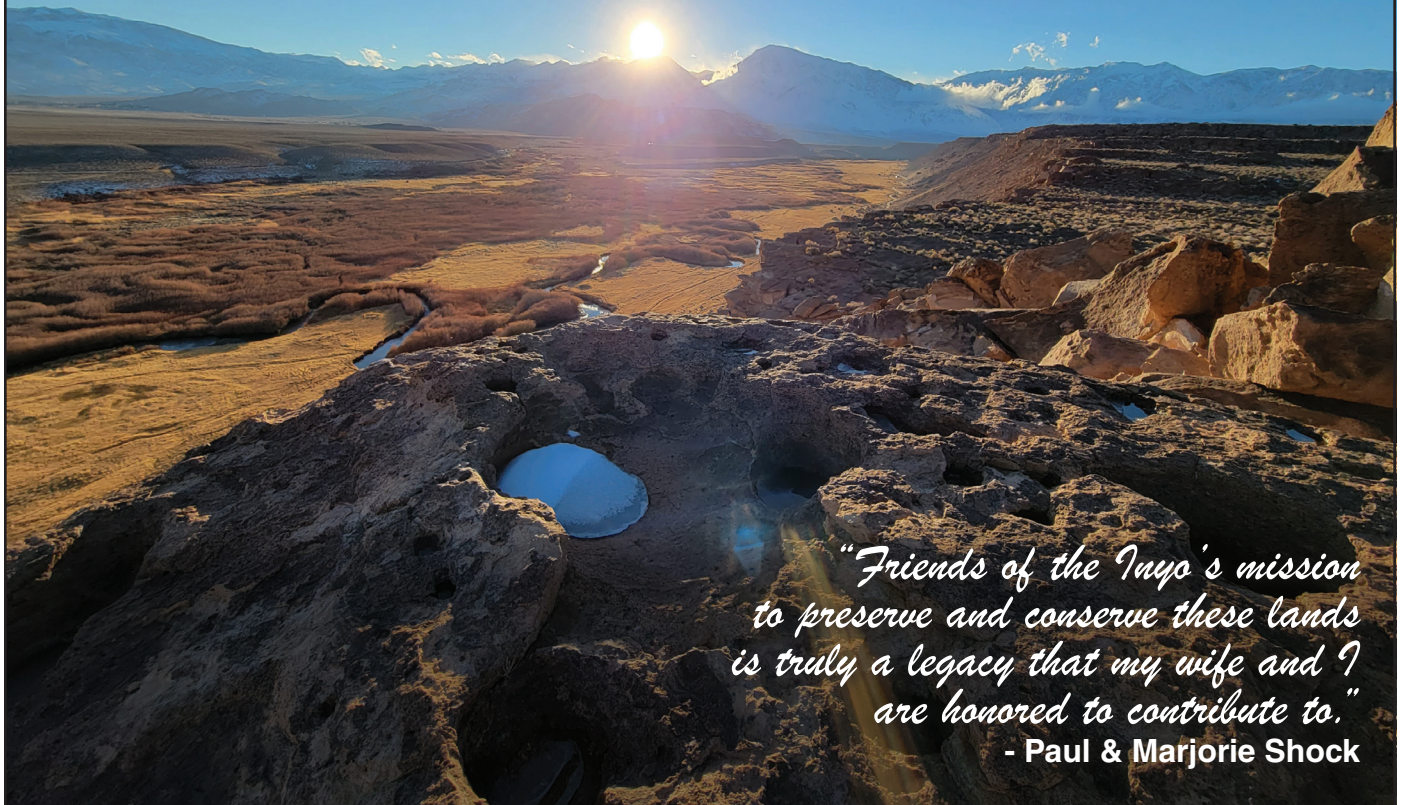
TABOOSE CREEK

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.

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- Paul & Marjorie Shock

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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 Midging 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 needed 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.)



The view from Pleasant Valley is as good as the fishing.

Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

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

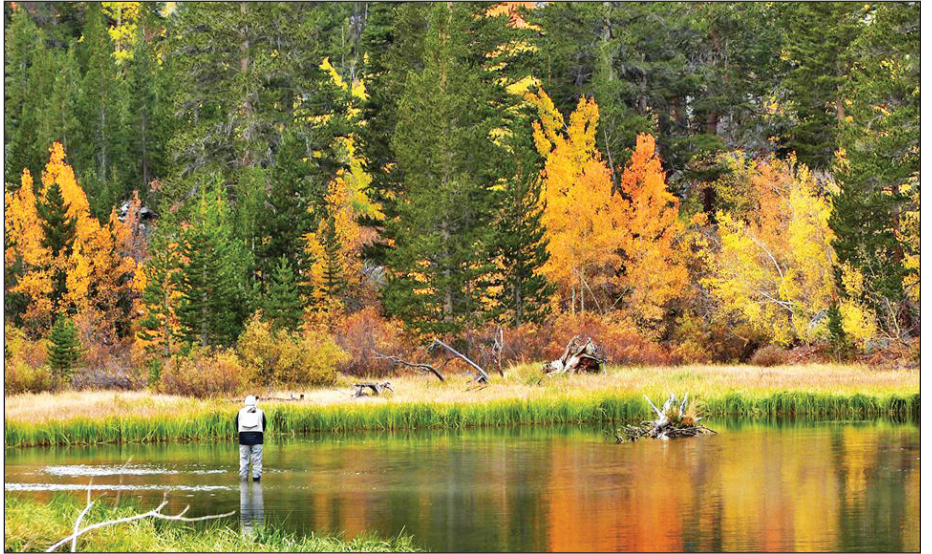


Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

See **BISHOP CREEK**, pg. 47

Bishop Creek fall fishing.



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Chasing the big one

Who hikes two days through desert, landslides and an epic storm to look for a legendary trout that might not exist? By Wendilyn Grasseschi

The insanity of hiking for two days through the simmering heat and dust straight up a 4,000-foot, treeless, desert mountain in search of a fish – even a legendary trout reputed to be lurking like the Loch Ness monster in the bottom of a secret, high Sierra lake the color, it has been said, of a sapphire – wasn't lost on me but by the time we got to the top of 11,140-foot high Pine Creek Pass, I was too tired to care.

The trail from the Pine Creek Pack Station just southwest of Bishop to the top of the pass has a reputation for being one of the hardest trails in the Sierra and for good reason; it climbs like a gunshot from the valley floor up an old mining road that knows nothing about polite trail behavior, lurching and lunging like a drunken sailor trying to get home up one of the biggest mountains in the Eastern Sierra, 13,658-foot Mt. Tom. Frequently washed out by massive landslides (yes, this time too), cursed by being located on a south-facing aspect, which means it takes up the hot desert sun like a basking lizard from daybreak to sunset, the trail is one of those that most people only take when the quota for other nearby, popular, lake-drenched and snow-washed trails like Rock Creek or Bishop Creek are full.

But I am not most people and I don't like the far-past-full parking lots and masses of freshly showered-this-morning crowds on popular trails and so, between the lure of the Loch Ness trout



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Backcountry fishing in the Eastern is always an adventure.

and the solitude, the Pine Creek trail it was – just like it has been many other times in my three decades in these mountains.

And so it also was that at 5 p.m. on the second day of the hike, I finally found myself climbing that last 100 feet to the top of the pass, counting the steps one by one just to forget how stupid backpacking can be at times like this – an exercise in tedium and fatigue and outright discomfort that had me yearning for the anti-grav boots my four

younger brothers and sister used to dream of on equally long, hot climbs with our parents back in the Grand Teton climbs of my youth.

"One-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three," I muttered under my breath, the heavy pack glued to my back. "One thousand-four, one-thousand..." and then I was at the top, my pack of colliers surging ahead, racing for the clear blue tarn that makes its eternal home at the very top of the pass.

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Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Getting to some of the more remote lakes in the area is half the adventure.

I stumbled after them, taking the familiar side trail down to the familiar beach surrounded by the familiar, emerald-green alpine lawn that graces every high county tarn and lake up here. I dropped my pack and clothes and followed the dogs and Chris into the clear water, diving under and coming up newborn and just like that, the day started anew and the climb and the dust and the fatigue were forgotten.

Splashing, laughing, chilled to the bone, we hauled up on the beach and dug into the foodbag for a few handfuls of chocolate before swinging the packs back on and heading down, blessedly DOWN for the first time in two days, the trail chasing that Loch Ness monster.

The trail gentled and rambled and rolled, passing stream and flower and waterfall and rock and snow; the gorgeous mosaic of green and blue and silver that make up the alpine tundra up here at this elevation. The summer sun was still high in the sky because it was mid-summer and it would not get dark until 9 p.m. and we still had miles to go and so on we went.

We had heard about this fabled trout, this large, monster trout lurking in a high, secret, off-trail huge lake somewhere up in this high, huge mostly trailless basin above Pine Creek from an old fisherman in Bishop who had been fishing these lakes since before I was born and if that was the excuse we needed to do the two-day climb from Hell, it was as good as any.

Map in hand, we left the main trail that was headed down to Lake Edison eventually and

instead took off cross country for a basin high up on the eastern wall of the rock-rimmed escarpment, where the map showed a small notch in the wall should hold the fabled, secret, huge lake. The notch in the wall and the granite cliffs on each side of it didn't look big enough to hold back a lake big enough to hold a monster trout but after climbing in these mountains for 30 years, I had learned the hard way how easily and quickly accessible the places I wanted to go seemed from a few miles away and how much farther away they always, always were than they seemed.

We were in no hurry and mosquitoes were getting bad and so it was that a few miles short of our Loch Ness, we stopped for the night, tumbling into a hastily erected tent to wait out the evening surge of the whining bugs before it got too cold for them and they retreated to wherever it is mosquitoes go at night, allowing us time for dinner and a few, fruitless casts on an unnamed shimmering silver lake in the setting sun.

The next morning, we packed up fast and early, aiming straight up the falling creek, climbing over ridge and vale, bypassing hundreds of stunning waterfalls and flowery meadows and perfect campsites, driven by one thing: to find and catch that damn trout.

Up we went, collies forging ahead, their colorful panniers flashing in the morning sun. A few hours later, we slipped up the final granite staircase ridge and there it was – one of the most stunning lakes I have ever seen, almost perfectly

See CHASING, pg. 46

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CHASING, from pg. 45

circular, huge, still as a mirror, turquoise and teal shimmering under a perfectly blue sky.

I dropped my pack and headed to the lake, tying the dogs up to a whitebark pine because remote, rarely-traveled, alpine stealth fishing and a bunch of hyped-up collies just ... doesn't work.

I walked down to the outlet of the big lake, not really expecting to see anything except the little, eight-to-12-inch Golden's so common to the high-country golden lakes, because really, who expects to actually FIND a legend?

I got close to the outlet and sure enough, I saw dozens of the familiar Golden's flashing in the sun, pale as their namesake and just as beautiful. I watched for a moment, then started to head back to the packs to get the fishing gear and as I turned to leave, there, in the pale aquamarine water, I saw it.

Big, black, twice the size of the Golden's, a fish swam through the Golden's, parting them like Moses at the Red Sea. It was so big, it cast a shadow on the ground. I've been fishing these high-country lakes for many years now and have never seen any fish that big up above 11,000 feet, which we were. And what the heck was wrong with the color? It was much darker than the Golden's and then I saw another one, same size, same color, following its friend. I yelled for Chris, "Bring the pole, bring the pole, hurry, hurry!"

For anyone who fishes the high country, the five-fish-for-dinner thing is pretty common; they just don't get that big. This one ... could feed us both. "Hurry, hurry," I yelled.

He came crashing down to the lake trailing gear and a pole that was still not set up and we set up the pole fast, throwing one of Ron from Mac's Sports in Bishop homemade-just-for-us flies on the line, then cast it into the clear water. No luck. Tried again, no luck. Again, no luck.



Even the most eager of anglers can't help but stop and take in the view.

Then, I got a strike, and it sure as heck wasn't one of the little Golden's. I started to reel it in, trying to figure out why I wasn't gaining on it and then I realized the tension was set for a sub-one-pound fish. "Tighten it, tighten it," Chris said, and I did and it worked and I started to reel the huge trout in and then just two feet from shore ... it slipped away. Off it went into the deep blue.

I spent the next hour trying to recreate the glory with no luck. I handed the pole to Chris and headed back to the camp because part of me just didn't want to end the life of something that big. It had earned its size though some very hard work.

Hours passed and still, down by the lake, cast after cast, hour after hour, the big trout eluded him. But I know Chris and I know that once he saw that thing slip away from us, there was no way he was going to give up without a fight.

At dusk, I heard him yell, "Got it," and I ran down to the lake where, sure enough, he had landed one of the biggest fish we had seen.

It was huge for the backcountry; at least two pounds, maybe 24 inches long and it was also very odd; it looked nothing like the resident Golden's that were supposed to be the only fish in this lake but then, we thought maybe we just didn't know what a two-foot Golden looked like because we had never seen one. We took it home and had to cut it in half to fit in our little back-



Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

Maybe not the Loch Ness Monster but mythical none the less.

country frying pan and then, stars reeling above and the pines sighing, we slept.

We crashed out of the lake the next morning, chased by a massive thunderstorm, bound for Bishop and a date with work the next morning and the torrents came down and the creeks flooded and it sleeted and snowed and after nine miserable, wet miles down the wild and rocky Pine Creek trail in the pouring rain, just as we were crossing the big rockslide area of the trail halfway down, we heard it; an immense roaring sound like thunder and cannons going off all at once. We watched the section of the trail we had just left disappear under a massive wall of rock and mud. There was no time to even take in how close we had come to death and we shot down the trail looking for someplace safer to wait out the flashing storm, dodging house-sized boulders and crossing more slides and I have never, ever been so scared in my life in the backcountry. The problem was, there was no safe place on this entire mountainside, not up, not down. We were stuck on the one section of the trail where there was no way off the mountain and all we could do was dodge the falling rocks and scramble over the gouged-out trail on thin lines of loose boulders, hauling dogs and packs over the new abysses carved below us.

And then, finally, it was over and we came to a halt in the shelter of the only trees on the trail down by the pack station and all I could think was, "Damn, that was one fine trout."

(Note from the author: After arriving safely in Bishop we sent photos of the big trout to Fish and Wildlife biologist Jim Erdman and sure enough, it wasn't a Golden at all, it was a Cutthroat, which should not be in the lake at all and could spawn hybrids, which is the opposite of why the lake was set aside for Golden's only. So we will be back this year to catch and eat the other one because, after all, it's just a nice thing to do.)

Photo by Wendilyn Grasseschi

BISHOP CREEK, from pg. 43

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

See BISHOP CREEK, pg. 57

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Friends of the Inyo

Protecting and Caring for 'The Land of Flowing Water'

By Louis Medina

Because Friends of the Inyo's mission is to protect and care for the public lands of the Eastern Sierra, we are fortunate to often find ourselves in the company of other groups and individuals devoted to conservation, including those working to protect rivers, streams, fish and other wildlife in our region.

Anglers who travel here to enjoy a most contemplative fishing experience amid the breathtaking beauty of Payahuunadü – “the land of flowing water,” as the original Paiute inhabitants called the Owens Valley – can feel hopeful about Friends of the Inyo and our partners' efforts to safeguard Inyo and Mono County waters.

Following are some examples of how creek and fish protection is helping to improve the health of our entire region – and beyond.

Protecting Rough Creek helps ensure the future of the Bodie Hills

As a leading member of the Bodie Hills Conservation Partnership (BHCP), Friends of the Inyo (FOI) is always looking for opportunities to ensure the sustainable future of this special place that holds exceptional scenic, historic, and recreational values.

With the encouragement of FOI's Policy Director, Jora Fogg, who is also the current BHCP Campaign Coordinator, Coalition partners Walker Basin Conservancy and Trout Unlimited applied for grant funding to gather and analyze data and convene stakeholders to develop goals for the future management and restoration of the Rough Creek Watershed, which covers roughly 205 square miles within and beyond the Bodie Hills.

The waters of Rough Creek support meadows, streams and wildlife that includes

the bi-state sage grouse, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, and migratory waterfowl. Historically, these waters have also been an important habitat for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT), but these fish have been absent from the watershed for decades due to habitat degradation.

Thanks to the grant funding these partners received in 2021, the Coalition will have a better understanding of the conditions of Rough Creek, which should help in potential future LCT reintroduction efforts and the protection of other species the creek supports.

The heated fight over Hot Creek

In the fall of 2021, FOI and partners sued the U.S. Forest Service to stop exploratory drilling in Long Valley by KORE Mining, Ltd., whose activities would threaten the health of Hot Creek..

Fishing Live Bait Ammo



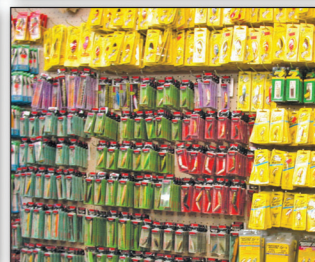
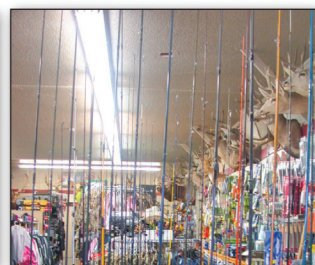
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“This is a bad project for the community of Mammoth Lakes, Southern Mono County, and negatively impacts wildlife ...and our recreational tourism economy,” FOI Executive Director Wendy Schneider said. “It provides no benefit to the people of Mono County.”

Hot Creek is a popular fishing spot for local anglers and fishing guides, and is especially loved by trout fishermen, Schneider highlighted, adding that the noise, dust and light pollution, waste, and traffic generated by KORE Mining’s activities would change the idyllic nature of that area of Long Valley.

Fortunately, she said, the fishing community has come out strongly against KORE Mining, and the lawsuit has, if nothing else, bought some time in the fight for Long Valley and Hot Creek’s protection.

But the saga continues. For updates, visit friendsoftheinyo.org/long-valley-mining.

Cottonwood Creek Paiute Cutthroat Trout: A Story of “Naturalization” and Reverse Transplantation

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), way back in 1946, several hundred Paiute Cutthroat Trout (PCT) were transplanted from their

native Silver King Creek in Alpine County, to the North Fork of Cottonwood Creek in the White Mountains, some 18 miles north of Bishop. The reason was to protect the declining native PCT population from poaching in the Upper Fish Valley of Silver King Creek.

At an altitude of close to 10,000 feet, the North Fork of Cottonwood Creek met all the conditions for the transplanted PCT to thrive, according to fsw.gov: cold, well-oxygenated water and shade from overhanging vegetation. This ideal habitat was permanently protected in 2009 under the Omnibus Public Land Management Act and designated as a Wild & Scenic River.

Over the decades, the Cottonwood Creek PCT became “naturalized” here, according to FOI Trail Ambassador Lindsay Butcher, who has spent significant time in that area of the White Mountains. “(They) are today one of the most genetically pure populations due to a lack of hybridization,” she wrote in an article published in the Spring 2021 issue of FOI’s biannual magazine, the Jeffrey Pine Journal.

According to the CDWF website, wildlife.ca.gov, “There are only five self-sustaining populations of Paiute Cutthroat Trout in

existence (including the North Fork of Cottonwood Creek), and the species is listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act due to their inability to tolerate competition from other nonnative trout species, their small population size, and their limited range.”

In a happy tale of reverse transplantation, in 2017, a whopping 71 years after being brought here, the Cottonwood Creek PCT population was used by FSW biologists, in conjunction with members of the U.S. Forest Service and CDFW, to repopulate Silver King Creek as part of a recovery project following the ravages of drought, then flooding, that had devastated Silver King Creek PCT.

The meek Cottonwood Creek PCT probably don’t see themselves as heroes, but they certainly returned to save the day in their original homeland – or, shall we say, “home waters”?

Louis (Lou) Medina serves as the director of Communications and Philanthropy for Friends of the Inyo. You can write to him at Louis@friendsoftheinyo.org. To learn more about FOI’s work, visit friendsoftheinyo.org. To access FOI’s online archive of past issues of the Jeffrey Pine Journal magazine, visit friendsoftheinyo.org/publications.



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

Changes from 2021 still in place; what you need to know By Wendilyn Grasseschi

“Fishmas” will be open to trout fishing on April 30 (the last Saturday in April) and run through Nov. 15, just like it has for decades.

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 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; those changes will remain in place for 2022.

The biggest change then – and now – was 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



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 easy as ever.

‘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, 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 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 listing 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 (see attached chart), allowing anglers a chance to actually take fish home again.

So, this is the main change to fishing regulations for 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. 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 a graphic (see online).

"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 pushback 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 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 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 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 Paiute 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 which can be accessed by going online 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."

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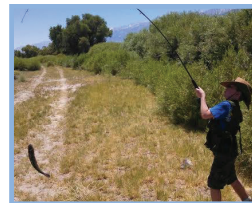
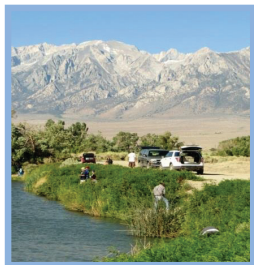
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When fishing meant freedom

World War II internees able to reclaim a piece of normalcy

By Charles James

(Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the 2014 Fishing Guide. It is reprinted to mark the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Manzanar War Relocation Center in March 1942.)

Janis Joplin topped the U.S. singles chart in 1971 with the song “Me and Bobby McGee.” An enduring lyric, “Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose,” resonated with many listeners. At an earlier time in our country’s history, the 10,000 Japanese Americans sent to the Manzanar Relocation Center during World War II must have felt the same, having lost their freedom, homes, jobs, businesses and belongings.

The meaning of loss in the lyric refers to having gained freedom only to have it take a destructive turn. Two-thirds of the internees at Manzanar were U.S. citizens and loyal Americans. There was little evidence that those who were not U.S. citizens were disloyal. One day they were all free with the rights and privileges of life and liberty in the United States and then, despite the U.S. Constitution’s guarantees, they were viewed as potential threats to the government and placed in a camp behind barbed wire and armed guards.

In March 2012, Cory Shiozaki released a feature-length documentary titled, “The Manzanar Fishing Club.” It chronicles the internment of Japanese Americans through the eyes of those for whom fishing was an expression of defiance. It speaks eloquently to the strength of character and the values held by the internees even when in confinement.

What fishing meant to those anglers behind Manzanar’s barbed wire fences varied, and often depended on their age.

Mos Okui was a young boy at the time. “I was just a kid so anything to do was great!” He and his 11- and 12-year-old friends would often play in the southwest corner of the camp in Bairs Creek. But while there were always plenty of worms to go fishing, they had no fishing tackle, so their first attempts at fishing involved string and safety pins – which did not work. One day a guard

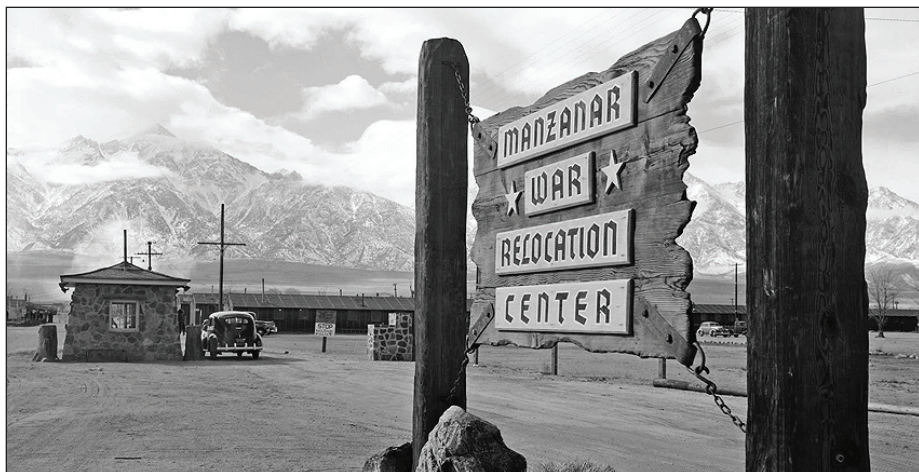


Photo by Ansel Adams/courtesy Library of Congress

The entrance to Manzanar War Relocation Camp in 1943, home to as many as 10,000 Japanese Americans pulled from their homes and forced to live, work and attend school behind barbed wire at the foot of the Eastern Sierra.

patrolling the fence asked them what they were doing. They told him. A couple of weeks later he came back to them with a paper bag and inside were little square droplines with hooks that he handed out to the boys. Okui admits that he wasn’t a very good fisherman then and he was not among those that would sneak out of camp to fish. He did, however, become an avid fly fisherman as an adult and has spent 60 years visiting the Eastern Sierra to fish.

Some older internees sent to the camp came from fishing backgrounds and naturally wanted to take advantage of the fishing opportunities for which the Eastern Sierra was famous. Optimistically, a few internees brought fishing line and hooks with them to Manzanar with the thought they would be going fishing. On arrival they would find that the circumstances would be challenging and even dangerous. All of the fishing streams were outside the camp. It was forbidden to leave and there was a real risk of being shot by a guard.

One of the young men from the documentary on the Manzanar Fishing Club, Jack Semura, talked about the time he almost got shot by a guard. Not that it stopped him; he just waited a few days before attempting it again – and was

much more careful. Such was his love of fishing – and the need to escape into its world if only for a few hours.

Another young man, Archie Miyatake, the son of the famous photographer Toyo Miyatake who documented life at the camp, spoke about seeing the barbed wire and how it “made you mad – you wanted out!” He remembers his first illicit fishing outing “outside the fence.” Later he spoke of his excitement at catching his first trout. Fishing, he says, gave him “that feeling of freedom. It was a satisfying feeling that made you feel like you put one over (on) the government.” It is a sentiment shared even today among many Americans.

Making their own fishing equipment, from bamboo poles and willow branches to experimenting with rice as bait, gave the internees a sense of purpose. The feeling of being outside that barbed wire fence – just doing what ordinary Americans have done for generations – simply fishing – that was “freedom.”

Manzanar Relocation Camp opened in March of 1942, and was closed on Nov. 21, 1945. It is a reminder that no one should ever take their freedom for granted – even the simple pleasure of fishing.

Big Pine offers it all

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.

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.

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 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 are also 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.

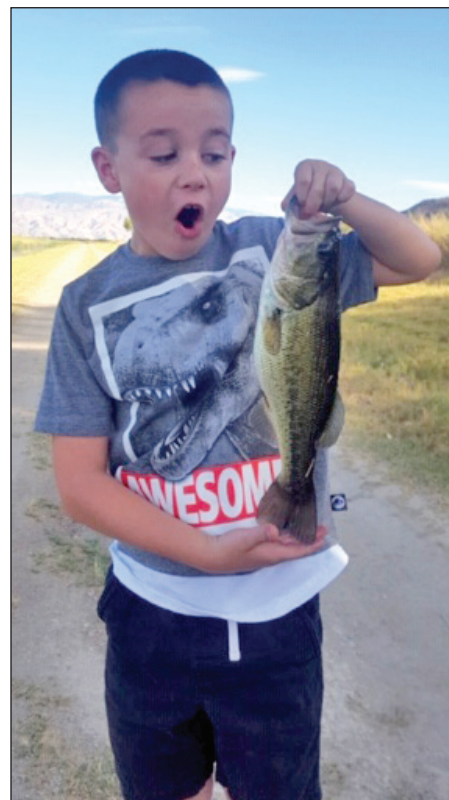
Baker Creek Campground, which is open year-round, is the perfect base camp for a fishing adventure, especially for families. Baker Creek pools in several places, including in and within walking distance of the campground, offering a peaceful fishing spot.

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 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 south, 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 great fishing option.

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



File photo
Ryder is in awe of the bass that he caught while fishing a canal in the Big Pine area during 2018.

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The basics

Try a beginner's intro to fly fishing By Jarett Coons

The fly-fishing industry is rapidly evolving and every day more and more people join this wonderful sport. Because many of these people are intelligent thinkers, they are always exploring the next frontier and tinkering with their fishing. The internet has allowed us to access any information we want, and we get to see what anglers around the world are doing. Techniques are being borrowed, altered and combined with others to find that perfect presentation.

I think therefore many people are intimidated by fly fishing, they think it is too difficult for them. When you look at it overall yes, it seems intimidating, all those flies, all those tools. But once you give it a try and understand the fundamentals, you'll see we are just slinging bugs to hungry trout.

Start with a great guide

I highly recommend going with a guide your first time out, they will strive to answer all your questions and make sure you learn as much as possible. Not just any guide, but a great guide. When you call to book your trip ask as many questions as you can and make sure to tell your guide your experience level, if they don't ask. A good guide will do the same, they will get to know you and your abilities in order to provide you with the best day possible. They will be enthused to take you out and will make the day all about you. Good guides have endless patience and will never become frustrated with you no matter how long it takes. Their job is to keep you enthused, motivated and above all else make sure you are HAVING FUN! This goes beyond fishing, I often recommend food, lodging or anything else my clients are looking for! If you get the impression that your guide doesn't want to answer questions or acts like a prima donna, hang up and call someone else, after all, you are paying to have fun and learn, not to follow around a rock star.

As you are new to fly fishing your guide will most likely suggest a beginners or intro course to teach you the fundamentals and get you ready to leave the nest. This class usually starts out at a park or casting pond where we will cover the basic terms and skill sets that will get you out fishing on your own.

Rods/casting

After we break the ice, I will begin to talk about flyrods. The sizes, lengths, actions and where and why we use them. Then I'll do the same with reels and lines. I want you to understand how we balance a fly rod set up and the differences between the techniques used. Because I could spend weeks covering the many techniques we use, I have already hand selected what I will teach my client based on their needs and what they want to get out of the day.

Next, we cast! You are given a rod while your guide walks you through the mechanics of the basic fly cast. This is a great way to learn to cast as your guide will be able to instantly explain and correct any issues you might be having. I love when I get someone who says, "It seems much too difficult, I can't do it." Then five minutes later they are making beautiful casts with a huge smile on their face!

Then I will finish up by running them through a fish fighting drill



Photo by Jarett Coons

Learning the basics of fly fishing can help one land the lunkers.

showing them how to properly fight, land and safely release fish.

Knots/leaders

Probably just before we cast, we will talk about tippet, leaders and how we attach them. I'll explain the difference between all the materials we use and why. I'll explain the purpose and physics of leader construction from building your own, to pre-made tapered leaders.

Then I break out nylon rope and we practice tying our fundamental knots. Typically, the improved clinch, nail and blood knots, or any other knot we have confidence in. Using the rope to practice really helps you not only tie the knot but understand how it should look when properly seated. When finished with this part of the class you should have everything you need to make your major connections.

Entomology/fly selection

In order to catch trout, we must know what they eat and no they don't eat mice tails or powered bait, they eat insects! Aquatic and terrestrial insects make up a huge portion of a trout's diet and the more we know about these insects the more fish we will catch. We will leave the pond and head out to the stream we are going to fish



Photo by Jarett Coons

Casting practice can take place at lots of different locations and will lead to a better fishing experience.

where you learn to take a stream sample to see what kind of insects, or trout foods are available. We take the insects to the truck and along with the help of our hatch guides we identify them. Then I explain their life cycles; of how and when these insects are available to trout. We open our fly box and select a fly that is the same size, shape and color, we also want our fly to mimic the action of the naturals and look "alive." The more of these categories we can match, the better chances we have of fooling trout.

Putting it all together

Like any class there is always a test. From here you rig up and select flies (Don't worry, your guide will be there to keep you from getting into trouble.) Then, we fish! We will talk about presentation as you fish so you will see firsthand how to make a good drift and again, your guide will be there to help you make any corrections. As soon as we start making good drifts the fish will come, then you will get to see if you remember your fish fighting drill. Once the fish is in the net your guide will show you how to safely handle a trout and get a great

picture of you with your catch before releasing it. The day usually concludes here, and we head back to the truck with our heads held high. Before I head out, I will answer any final questions and point you towards anything you may need for future fishing.

Fly fishing is like playing an instrument; you wouldn't just pick up a guitar and crank out a blistering solo that makes your ear drums bleed. It would take time and dedication, the more you practice the better you become. Every fish is a milestone as you progress and learn to become a better angler, and this is what fly fishing is about. The end result is fish, but the satisfaction comes from the journey.

(Jarett Coons was born in Bishop, Ca. and has spent the majority of his life fishing and hunting from Lone Pine to Bridgeport. Owner of Sierra Mountain Trout Guide Service he now spends his time guiding for Trout, Bass and Carp on his home waters in the Eastern Sierra. When not on the river he can be found hiking and camping with his wife and son or donating his time to kids fishing events.)

2022 Eastern Sierra Fishing Guide (Maps on pages 26-39)



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A paradise for creek fishing

Independence is the spot for warm, cold water angling 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. Opportunities for camping, hiking, fishing and hunting accompany spectacular stargazing and remarkable historic structures.

Extensive hiking and backpacking trails go throughout the Sierra from trail heads at Onion Valley, 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 creeks near the internment 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.

Several of the streams in the Independence area are excellent for smallmouth 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.

Independence also has a fishing derby each year, on the Saturday before Father's Day in June. This year, the derby will be held on June 20.

The Independence area has a long history and a proud fishing tradition. The Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, now a museum, was instrumental in saving California's state fish, the golden trout. This beautiful facility still stands as a monument to the history of fishing in the area. The hatchery's front pond is a beautiful place to have a picnic after a morning of fishing.

Fishing Etiquette

Unwritten laws of life you won't find in the regulations By Jarett Coons

For a society to function it must have rules, these laws are chiseled in stone and enforced by might. But what is fascinating is we also have rules that are not written and yet enforced not by anyone in a uniform, but by the people. These laws exist in every aspect of life, right is right, and unless you are overtaken by greed, impatience, or insecure narcissistic arrogance, things run smoothly. The same goes with fishing. As a guide I spend a ton of time on the water every year and get to witness all kinds of chaotic behavior; don't be one of these people.

Give people space

This should go without saying but it is mind boggling how many people will just walk up and start fishing right next to you, even when there is plenty of empty places to fish. Don't do this! People come to the Sierra to experience the solitude and beauty of the outdoors, not to have you stand on their rod while they try and fish. If on the river, give them a couple bends, go around the corner out of sight. It is often I plan on fishing a certain hole only to find someone there when I arrive, oh well, that's fishing, and you will have to adapt. Who knows? You may find an even better spot than you intended, it has happened to me. I know it is not always easy and on a crowded day you might have to combat fish next to someone but always give everyone as much space as you can.

Don't block the boat ramp

Ahh, the boat ramp. If you want to see something hilarious just hang around a marina or boat launch and you are almost guaranteed to see something go down, especially if there is a jet ski there! Whether at the marina, or a put-in/take-out on the river your only concern should be quickly backing your trailer to the water, launching your boat and getting out of the way so the next guy can do it, that's it! Have everything ready BEFORE you get to the ramp! Don't start loading the boat while your trailer is in the water or walk away and go use the restroom, other people are waiting on you to launch their boats.

If you are on the Lower Owens consider any road that gets near the bank of the river a boat ramp. Driftboats and duckboats run the river and use these places to launch, even if the boat must be pushed a little way. Usually, we try and keep our trailers out of the way where we plan to take out so if you see a vehicle with a boat trailer parked at a spot, they are likely planning on taking out there at the end of their drift. Sometimes trips can run short due to unseen circumstances, or god forbid an emergency forces you to take out anywhere you can. Most of these places have plenty of room for you to park close to the river and still leave room for a trailer to get to the water. It's just common courtesy and can save precious seconds in an emergency.

You are a guest here, act like it

I guess you could say I saved the best for last and this one goes for on and off the water, especially off the water. I was born here in Bishop and am of Paiute descent, so I am very protective of my home. I was taught that when you go to another town or place you are a guest in someone else's home, and you need to respect it as such. It sometimes seems along the lines this ideology was lost and even reversed with some people. Littering is an actual law and I can't believe I even have to say it but please don't throw your trash or dump your ashtray out on the ground. You wouldn't do that in your own home, or, maybe you would. Either way don't do it here.

The world doesn't revolve around you. We are all SUPER impressed you are from Southern California, drive an Escalade, and have a YELP account but it doesn't give you a free ticket to give the waitress a bad review because she wouldn't book your hotel room for you. Our local merchants and service people are very friendly, patient and love to go the extra mile for you. But don't be disappointed when the local bookstore owner won't go outside and check your oil.

It seems that unwritten laws could be chalked up to common courtesy and common sense. These are just a couple of the biggest offences I see on a regular basis. Most people abide by this and understand the concept but sadly the percentage of those who don't is growing.

LADWP boosts economy by promoting healthy fisheries

Utility leases land for hatcheries By Register Staff

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power owns approximately 315,000 acres in Inyo and Mono counties, and keeps nearly 75 percent of that private land open for public recreational uses.

This open space not only benefits the community by contributing to the beauty of the environment, but it also bolsters the local economy. Fishing, for example, is one of the Owens Valley's greatest tourist attractions and LADWP plays a vital role in ensuring fishing activity remains a healthy component of the local economy. In partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife LADWP works to enhance the local economy by promoting healthy fisheries within the waterways of Inyo and Mono counties. Fish and Wildlife is in charge of stocking the fish, while LADWP maintains the stream flows when water is available to keep the fish in good condition in all streams on LADWP property.

Because of LADWP's extensive landownership and ownership of water rights, the department's ongoing operations activities in area waterways ensure that local fish habitat is in good condition. LADWP promotes the health and vitality of Owens Valley waterways through conducting flow management and land management practices. These efforts include controlling livestock grazing patterns and timing water diversions and flows according to fish lifecycles, where possible.

In addition to watershed protection efforts, LADWP has restored approximately 10 streams to healthy fisheries in Inyo and Mono counties. The department also leases land to Fish and Wildlife for three local hatcheries – Hot Creek, Black Rock and Fish Springs hatcheries – and supports hatchery operations by providing water to the facilities.

LADWP spends millions of dollars each year to ensure the protection of the local watershed, which in turn keeps the local fishing economy afloat. While maintaining local fishing is not LADWP's primary driver, it is a good side effect of promoting healthy watershed and one the department takes seriously.



File photo

A day of catch-and-release fishing at the Fish Springs Ditch is likely to land the angler everything from a beautiful, wild brown trout to a rainbow that's escaped the hatchery. LADWP leases land to the DFW for three local hatcheries, including Fish Springs Hatchery.

BISHOP CREEK, from pg. 47

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 the disabled.

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.

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
LONE PINE AREA – (760) 876-6200						
<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
BISHOP AREA – (760) 873-2500						
<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
MAMMOTH LAKES AREA – (760) 924-5500						
<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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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

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

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

Eastern Sierra Guide Service
(760) 872-7770
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
(See ad on pg. 13)

Kevin Peterson's Fly Fishing
Adventures
85 Hot Creek Hatchery
Rd.,
Mammoth Lakes
(760) 937-0519
www.kevinpetersonflyfishing.com

Kittredge Sports
Mammoth Lakes
(760) 934-7566
www.kittredgesports.com

Mammoth Flyfishing
Adventures
(760) 937-5680
www.mammothflyfishingadventures.com

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

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

Performance Guide Service/
Rick's Sports Center
3241 Main St., Mammoth
Lakes
(760) 914-0730
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

Sierra Fly Fisher Tours
P.O. Box 631, Bass Lake, Calif.
(559) 683-7664
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

**Sierra Mountain Trout
Guide Service**
(760) 263-5013
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

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

The Trout Scout
(760) 872-9836
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

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-tierpacktraindotcom/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

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

Mammoth Lakes Pack
Outfit
Lake Mary Road, Mammoth
(888) 475-8747
www.mammothpack.com

McGee Creek Pack Station
2990 McGee Creek Rd.,
Crowley Lake
(800) 854-7407
www.mcgeecreekpackstation.com

Mt. Whitney Pack Trains
Mt. Whitney
(760) 872-8331
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

Rock Creek Pack Station
Bishop
(760) 872-8331
www.rockcreekpackstation.com

Sequoia Kings Pack Trips
Independence
(800) 962-0775

Virginia Lakes Pack Outfit
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Winter: (925) 349-5074
www.virginalakes.com
(See ad on pg. 11)



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