

# Visual Assessment

The local governing body must prepare and submit a brief and concise visual assessment for the proposed State Scenic Highway segments. The visual assessment must identify scenic attributes and visual intrusions, as viewed from the highway, and describe how those characteristics contribute or detract from the overall quality of the corridor's visual environment.

An Extensively Illustrated Comprehensive Description of the Scenic Wonders, Flora, Fauna, Geological Formations, and History of California State Highway 180 from Trimmer Springs Road in Centerville to Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon National Park

Prepared by the Sierra Gateway Trust  
Sanger, California for Fresno County in 2008  
and Revised in December 2014

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### **VISUAL ASSESSMENT**

(revision #20, January 14, 2008)

**GENERAL COMMENTARY** - Scenic Highway 180 starts at the intersection of the highway with Trimmer Springs Road near the center of Centerville, about sixteen miles SE from downtown Fresno. Moving eastward from that Centerville intersection, the viewshed progresses from neatly tended orange groves, various other tree-fruit, table-grape and wine-grape vineyards, to hundreds of acres of mostly native grass pasture and then to progressively thicker (and largely pristine) foothill oak woodlands. As the Scenic Highway rises towards Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (its ultimate destination), the oak forest gives way to pines, firs, Incense Cedars and the various low growing native brush species typically found in such forests. Finally, as the road moves within Giant Sequoia National Monument (23.4 miles from the Trimmer Springs intersection), the forest adds another tree to its family - the famous and stately Giant Sequoia.

This is a highway of ever changing views - in terms of time of year, time of day, and the direction you are driving. In the springtime, the stretch of road from around Minkler to Cove Avenue (a little over seven miles) serves as part of Fresno County's tourist-attracting *Blossom Trail*. At the same time of year, the road beyond Cove Avenue becomes lined with California Poppies and the nearby hills spring forth with acres of pink, blue, yellow, lavender, and white wild flowers.

While the destination of this road is a place of transcendent grandeur, the road to that grand destination is, by itself - with its ever-changing viewshed of geologic formations, birds, wild flowers and incredible variety of trees and shrubs - a very special experience.

A brief listing of some of the birds seen along the *Sierra Gate* Scenic Highway might assist the reader to better appreciate the roadway's ornithological diversity:

- From the valley to about 3000' -- The rare remnant of native valley grassland found between these two *Gateway* mountains has Meadowlarks, with their bright yellow and black "V" shaped breasts; Western Kingbirds foraging for passing insects from a prominent open perch; circling Red-Tailed hawks and hovering White-tailed Kites hunt for prey; joined by the smallest American falcon, the Kestrel. The Western Bluebirds make an appearance in winter and spring. In the oak woodlands, Acorn Woodpeckers, California Quail, and Mourning Doves are often seen.
- From 3000' to around 6000'-- Birds commonly spotted in this "Mixed Conifer Forest" stretch of road include the Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vultures, Ravens and rarely a giant Golden Eagle riding the up-welling currents from the valley below. Some of the smaller birds seen in this elevation range include Robins, Fox Sparrows, Mt. Chickadees, and Red-breasted Nuthatches

- Upward from 6000' -- Here, the noisy crested Stellar Jay is an abundant resident and will be seen and heard frequently. The splendidly plumaged Western Tanager with its yellow, black and white body and wings, topped with a bright red hood is a summer visitor, as is the Black-headed Grosbeak. The little black hooded Junco, which winters at lower elevations and on the valley floor, is here for the spring and summer. A good place to see these and other birds is at the Millwood Road turn-off to Sequoia Lake with its ample parking area. The old road to Millwood is often good for birding - and a very lucky visitor to this stretch of road will see the Pileated Woodpecker, the largest North American woodpecker next to the Ivory Billed Woodpecker - although the latter's recent "rediscovery" is coming into more and more question.

Similarly, we can list a few of the many wildflowers, trees and shrubs in the roadway's viewshed:

- **WILDFLOWERS** - Fiddleneck, Popcorn Flower, Farewell to Spring, Live Forever, Common Madia, Common Monkeyflower, St. John's Wort, Leopard Lily, Blazing Star, Bush Senecio, Western Wall Flower, Bush poppy, Golden Brodiaea, California Poppy, Tarweed, California Goldenrod, Mountain Violet, Fiddleneck, Single Stemmed Butterweed, Bigelow's Sneezeweed, Meadow Lotus, Sierra Columbine, and many more.
- **TREES** - Giant Sequoia, California Bay, Ponderosa Pine, Jeffrey Pine, Sugar Pine, Incense Cedar, White Fir, California Buckeye, Mountain Dogwood, Blue Elderberry, Quaking Aspen, California White Oak, Valley Oak, Blue Oak, Interior Live Oak, California Nutmeg, four varieties of Willows (Valley, Red, Pacific and Arroyo), and many others. At the road's highest elevation, just after leaving the Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park while heading towards Cedar Grove, the vigilant observer will see Western White Pines and "straight as a telephone pole" Lodgepole Pines.
- **SHRUBS** - Western Azalea, Manzanita (several species), Redbud, Deerweed (aka California broom, *Lotus scoparius*), Bush Monkeyflower (aka sticky monkeyflower, *Mimulus aurantiacus*), Fremontia, Deer Brush, Snow Brush, Buck Brush, Yerba Santa, Bush Chinquapin, California Hazelnut, Western Clematis, Spice Bush, Mock orange, Gooseberry, Currant, Creambush, Thimbleberry, Calif. Blackberry, Calif. Wild Rose, Kit-kit-dizze, Mountain Mahogany, and many others.

We mention here with appreciation: The above three lists were reviewed, corrected, and expanded by Prof. Steve Stocking, retired instructor in biology-botany at San Joaquin Delta College and author of *The Giant Sequoias of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks*, *Wildflowers of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks* (with Jack A. Rockwell), and *Day Hikes of the Grant Grove Area*.

Not only is this a road of considerable diverse beauty, it is also a road with considerable history with its start in a now tiny village that was once the equal of Fresno, with its passage by the site of Scottsburg, one of Fresno County's earliest communities, with its passage by the "aging" but still operating Minkler Cash Store (and "Bobtown" site), and by its passage through almost the exact center of the magnificent *Sierra Gateway* with its twin ramparts of Jesse Morrow Mountain on the north and Campbell Mountain on the south and with the land of historic Dunagan's gap connecting them and serving as the base for the then ascending roadway.

Jesse Morrow and Campbell mountains are described as "western outposts of the Sierra Nevada" that "rise above the sediments that fill the valley floor. Their rocks are gabbro and variations on the theme of gabbro - dark rocks that consist mainly of pale plagioclase feldspar, black augite, and black hornblende. They crystallized during the early Cretaceous time, about 115 million years ago."<sup>1</sup>

As the road leaves the flat lands of the San Joaquin Valley, it passes through the lands owned in the 1880s and 90s by "The 76 Land and Water Company," the early developer of much of this area - including the construction of the still operating Alta Canal. As the road turns east just south of the 4-5 building "town" of Minkler, one can see in the southerly distance the tall storage tanks of the Wahtoke Winery - built in 1905 by the California Wine Association (the source of the name "CALWA" which is still associated with a small community on the southern outskirts of the city of Fresno). The Wahtoke Winery is now owned and operated by The Wine Group, a name rarely heard but a growing rival of E&J Gallo in size and industry respect.

The number "76" used as a portion of the corporate name of "The 76 Land and Water Company" was recorded as a cattle brand on August 4, 1857. For much of the second half of the 19th century, cattle wearing the brand "76" roamed far and wide over a vast territory, of which the Alta Irrigation District (which originally covered an area of roughly 130,000 acres) now occupies the main portion. Our proposed *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway passes directly through what many still call "76 Country."

As the road moves eastward, it passes through Native American lands with numerous sacred sites, petroglyphs, pictographs, and burial areas. Jesse Morrow Mountain, the northern rampart of the *Sierra Gateway*, is a focal-point of much local Native American history - particularly that of the Choinimni tribe of the Yokuts with their long-gone town of Tishechu on the south bank of the Kings River at the junction with Mill Creek.

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<sup>1</sup> Roadside Geology of Northern and Central California by David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, Mountain Press, 1999, page 89.

Many local landmarks (most of which are mentioned in our Visual Assessment) have still recognized Choinimni<sup>2</sup> Yokut names - with the following being a sample<sup>3</sup>:

- Bear Mountain . . . . . Wihshalu
- Campbell Mountain . . . . . Wahwahlut ("Crying Place")
- Dalton Mountain . . . . . Piakchin
- Dunagan's Gap . . . . . Wuhlahlyu
- Dunlap Valley . . . . . Tahlau ("Cane or Bamboo Place")
- Jesse Morrow Mountain . . . . . Wahhlish (and, sometimes, Choinimni)
- Mill Creek . . . . . Wokotro ("Water Running in Both Directions")
- Minkler/Bobtown . . . . . Poktown
- Ruth Hill . . . . . Gówpinau ("Gow" is a cow)
- Squaw Valley . . . . . Túcheu (also Mústinau, name of principal village)
- Tivy Mountain . . . . . Troiyuhyi pewish ("Where You Grind White Acorns")
- Trimmer Springs . . . . . Wahkahtru

One of the most common local landmark names, Wahtoke - as used in Wahtoke Colony, Wahtoke Creek, Wahtoke Home Acres, Wahtoke Lake, Wahtoke School District, Wahtoke Thermal Tract, Wahtoke Vineyard, Wahtoke Winery (and more) - commemorates the man who was the Chief of the Choinimni Yokuts at the coming of white settlers to the area in the 1850s.

The Chief's name was *Watoki* and his village, called *Kulushao*, was located on the east bank of Mill Creek about a miles upstream from where it flows into Kings River. Watoki was one of three Choinimni Chiefs who signed a treaty with the U.S. Government on April 29, 1851. However, it was never ratified by the US Senate and a little more than a year later a great tragedy occurred.

It was Chief Watoki's people who were ambushed and massacred by William Campbell (after whom Campbell Mountain is named), Walter Harvey (later elected a county judge) and about two dozen miners on July 8, 1852. In this unfortunate event, eleven Choinimni men, women, and children were killed at their village of *Tishechu* (either secondary to

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<sup>2</sup> The spelling "Choinimni" seems to be the most commonly used in recent relevant literature. However, Frank Latta (see full reference in next footnote) makes a good case for Choinumni (pronounced Choi-num-ni). We look forward to working with the still living members of this quite interesting Yokut tribe to learn the correct spelling and pronunciation.

<sup>3</sup> We have used two sources for these names (with both sources supporting each other):

\*\* Frank F. Latta "Handbook of Yokuts Indians", 2nd Edition, Bear State Books, 1977.

\*\* Helen McCarthy "Choinimni Ethnography and Ethnohistory" as found in "Test Excavations at CA-FRE-61, Fresno County, California", Occasional Papers in Anthropology No. 5, by California State University, Bakersfield, Museum of Anthropology, 1995.

*Kulushao* or a later relocation) on the south side of the Kings River, just a short distance east of the junction with Mill Creek.

Accounts vary about the location of this massacre. Some say "Choinimni Elders reported that [the location was an] encampment at Wahtoke Lake" - but the dam that formed today's Wahtoke Lake was not constructed until 1883, well after the massacre. Perhaps the Elders were referring to a site now covered by Wahtoke Lake, certainly a possibility. Whatever the case, others, with whom we agree, say the location was "the Choinimni village on the Kings River."

As the road ascends it passes on the left a once much-traveled gravel road to long-gone Millwood, the site of the lumber mill that converted to boards and shingles an entire Giant Sequoia forest, the once glorious Converse Basin Grove.

While one can not "see" history, history still surrounds this road ... the lands still called "76 Country," the hidden but still present Yokut petroglyphs and pictographs, the hundred year old Wahtoke Winery, the now dusty and deserted road to Millwood.

As a 501(c)3 educational organization, the Sierra Gateway Trust intends to offer educational programs about the rich history briefly outlined above. Additionally, we plan to assist local, county and state agencies in placing roadside "information stations" to mark points of botanical, geological, or historical interest.

- Set forth in the following pages is our Visual Assessment of both Segment #1 and Segment #2 of our proposed *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*.
- Appendix A sets forth a summary of the highway's visual intrusions - including our estimate of each intrusion's meaningful length.
- Appendix B names the various people who helped prepare this Visual Assessment and sets forth an annotated list of our written sources.
- Appendix C sets forth a brief history of Centerville, the starting point of our proposed *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*.

The total distance from the highway's starting point in Centerville until its end near Cedar Grove is 66.0 miles with 5.3 miles of that distance being within the Grant Grove Section of Kings Canyon National Park and thus not part of this request for Scenic Highway Designation. We are therefore requesting Scenic Highway designation for 60.7 miles of roadway - divided into two segments, Segment #1 having 35.0 miles, and Segment #2 having 25.7 miles.

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**SEGMENT #1 OF PROPOSED SIERRA GATEWAY SCENIC HIGHWAY**

(all mileages are from Trimmer Springs, all photos are by Henry J. Provost)

This segment contains 35.0 miles of Scenic Roadway, including 5.2 miles (14.9%) of minor intrusions, 1.75 miles (5.1%) of moderate intrusions, and 0.4 miles (1%) of major intrusions. These are "worst case" numbers since they reflect the visual duration of impact and not the physical duration which is generally much less.

Wherever there is a Caltrans roadway marker, we have included its number and descriptive name in square brackets.

**Miles  
from  
Trimmer  
Springs**

**Description**

[FRE-074.950, Trimmer Springs Road]

0.0

The start of our proposed Scenic Highway is at the intersection of Kings Canyon Highway (State Highway 180) and Trimmer Springs Road, in the historic community of Centerville in SE Fresno County.

**CENTERVILLE** (elevation 393')- On the north side of Highway 180 and on the east side of the at-long-last being restored (much to the community's pleasure) old IOOF Hall, stands a well-proportioned granite monument with the following engraved thereon:

"KINGS RIVER - CENTERVILLE. Gabriel Moraga of the Spanish Army, on Jan. 6, 1806 camped near here on the banks of a river never before seen by white men. The day was Epiphany, commemorating the visit of the three kings of the East to the Christ child. This holy day suggested a name of the stream, "El Rio de los Santos Reyes," the River of the Holy Kings. In the 1850s the village of Scottsburg grew east of here but was repeatedly devastated by floods. It was relocated here in 1868 and named Centerville. It soon became a thriving trading and social center and was a candidate for county seat in 1874, but lost out to the new town of Fresno. The establishment of Sanger in 1887 began the decline of Centerville.

Dedicated this 21st day of October, 1979 by the Jim Savage Chapter 1852, E Clampus Vitus."

As the road moves beyond Centerville, the prominent mass of Jesse Morrow Mountain ("Wahallich" to the Choinimni tribe of Yokuts) appears in the

horizon. This is the northernmost of the two *Gates* of the *Sierra Gateway* through which the road will soon pass.



Photo #1: Shortly beyond junction with Trimmer Springs Road, Jesse Morrow Mountain (called Wahahlish by the Choinimni Yokuts) in the background (photo #6436, at about mile 0.7)

[FRE-075.940, Rio Vista Ave]

- 1.1 Rio Vista road enters on the left.

[FRE-076.319, Kings River], [FRE-076.380, End BR 42-70]

- 1.3 **KING'S RIVER** - For the casual birder, the most spectacular sighting along the river would be the Bald Eagle which winters in this area and can sometimes be seen hunting along the river. In the spring and summer Cliff Swallows nest under the Kings River Bridge and may be seen catching flying insects above the river or nearby canal and carrying mud to build their nests. The Cliff Swallows are joined by smaller numbers of Tree Swallows, which nest in cavities in trees. The large crested blue and white Kingfisher often sits on utility wires that cross the river on the north side of the bridge. For visitors with more time to explore, an undeveloped Fresno County park, China Creek Park, is just south of the highway on Smith Road. Smith Road



dead ends at the entrance to the park and provides good birding on mowed trails year round.



Photo #2: Kings River crossing near Pierce's Park (photo #6450, at about mile 1.3)

[FRE-076.690, Piedra Rd]

1.6 Crossing of Piedra Road.

[FRE-R076.807, Lone Oak Rd, RT]

1.8 Crossing of Lone Oak Road on the south.

1.9 Crossing of Elk Road.

2.1 Crossing of a minor branch of the Kings River.

[FRE-R076.990, Byrd Slough Br] [FRE-R077.020, EB 42-73]

2.2 Crossing of Byrd Slough - named for John Byrd, one of the first trustees of Clarks Valley School (mentioned later), organized on August 4, 1873.

[FRE-077.190, Kings R Oflw 42 74]



Photo #3: Byrd Slough crossing, named for John Byrd, one of the first trustees of the Clarks Valley School, the first school of what is now the Kings Canyon Unified School District (photo #6467, at about mile 2.2)

[FRE-077.305, Jct Unc Rte 65. Minkler]

2.2

**MINKLER** (elevation 395') - The small farming community of Minkler is situated on the eastern fringe of the Kings River flood plain. The store at Minkler dates back to the 1920's, but the settlement much earlier served the logging industry that flourished in the 1890s in the areas of Hume and Sequoia Lake. Starting in the 1850s/60s, it served as a stop on the "Eastern Detour" of the Stockton-Los Angeles Stage Road. Minkler's few (4-5) buildings do not detract from the visual unity of the corridor.

**SITE OF "BOBTOWN"** - Soon after the original Minkler Store (including a livery stable, a saloon, and hotel) was established in circa 1892, it was leased to Robert (Bob) Simpson who - with his wife "Ma" Simpson - also ran the Simpson Hotel in Reedley. A town soon grew just to the southeast of Minkler's Store (and saloon). It was a small ethnically mixed settlement where Choinimni and other Native Americans lived when they worked on the local farms. Because of its infamous saloon (and saloon keeper) the



community became known as "Bobtown" (*Poktown* in Choinimni) but the U.S. Post Office rejected that name and called the town "Minkler" instead.



Photo #4: The circa 1920 Minkler Cash Store (photo #6474, at about mile 2.2)

River-ground cobbles, pebbles, and sand mix with the rich "Hanford Sandy Loam" soil in this highly fertile farming area. Irrigation canals and ditches with highly valued water rights have enabled crops of tree fruit and vineyards to replace the earlier dry farming crops of hay and cotton. The latter, where found, are now irrigated as well. Almonds are also common.

Using a phrase from the University of California, this area is the beginning of the *Golden Triangle* of California agriculture.

In this mile and a half the land-use exemplifies what is typical for perhaps twenty miles to the west, north and south wherein groves of tree fruit - principally peaches, nectarines, plums, and pomegranates alternate with citrus groves, primarily oranges with some lemons in the hotter areas.

Wine grapes, table grapes and grapes grown for raisin production are also

characteristic of this area, with wine grape vineyards becoming increasingly common.



Photo #5: A nicely maintained, well fenced, irrigated cattle pasture just before entering Minkler (photo #6471, at about mile 2.2)

**The scenic beauty of this area has been showcased in the formation of the Fresno County Blossom Trail and the new (2004) Fresno County Fruit Trail.**

The seasonal changes in foliage of vineyards and orchards is spectacular in the progressive change from bare branches in January to budding, flowering fruit trees by late February. Vineyards begin leafing out in April. Summer finds beautiful, colorful fruit ripening on the vines and trees. By late summer the produce is filled with flavor and found in the numerous road-side fruit stands. Rivaling any other area of note, the fall colors again wash the valley in a sea of orange, red and yellow.

Natural vegetation includes the striking, deciduous, California Valley Oaks with enormous trunks and branches, sycamores at river's edge, willows, cattails, blackberries all follow the water channels. Deer and bobcats, though

now rarely seen, were plentiful just 30 years ago. Small red foxes are infrequently seen, with the more common raccoons, striped skunks, coyotes, and opossum. Many wild flowers can be found along the road-side including the California Poppy and various types of Lupine.

Outstanding examples of very resistant Jurassic period igneous and meta-igneous intrusive rock are seen in the two mountains that mark the beginning of rising elevation - Campbell Mountain and Jesse Morrow Mountain. The Jurassic period was characterized by the predominance of reptiles and evidence of the first birds.

This land and that which stretches northward to where Pine Flat Lake is today was the ancestral home to the Choinimni tribe. Both mountains are considered sacred to them.

**FROM MINKLER TO GRANT GROVE** - The corridor from Minkler to General Grant Grove provides a rare text book case of vertical zonation of vegetation, land-use, and climate within a relatively short distance, approximately 30 miles. The change in elevation is 6,191 ft. and shows distinct bands of vegetation change which can be easily identified with the coinciding elevation markers. If additional informational signs or plaques were posted, this would serve as a visual tool to educate the public, school children and tourists as to this changing landscape.

While three broad vegetation zones are given in Storer & Usinger's respected "Sierra Nevada Natural History" (Foothill Belt, Yellow Pine Belt, and Lodgepole Pine Belt), more distinctions can be applied in this particular transect - with Valley Grassland being an important element.

[FRE-077.490 Reed Ave at Kings Canyon]

2.3+ Shortly after leaving Minkler you turn east off of Reed Road and continue on State Highway 180. At the turn is the large, permanent Gerawan Fruit Stand. As you turn east, you begin the most scenic portion of this highway.

2.7 Crossing of old railroad bed (the "Wahtoke branch" of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe, rails removed 50+ years ago). The small pasture NE of this crossing was once the site of the headquarters of the old "76 Ranch" that played a prominent role in this area from 1857 until 1882. Until shortly after WW-II, this area between Reed and Frankwood Avenues was home to the Minkler Railroad depot, numerous packing sheds, and a rail switching yard - as a major shipping site for local crops. The Minkler depot remained until circa 1975 as a lone reminder of past glories.

[FRE-077.990, Frankwood Ave]





Photo #6: Fall color in a Persimmon grove on the Blossom Trail (photo #6476, at about mile 2.3)



Photo #7: Looking due east through Dunagan's Gap (Jesse Morrow Mountain to the left, Mt. Campbell to the right) with the Sierra Nevada dimly seen in the far horizon (photo #6477, at about mile 2.3)



Photo #8: Jesse Morrow Mountain, the north rampart of the *Sierra Gateway*. The recently cleared field in the foreground is the site of the long-gone BobTown with the field's eastern-most portion containing from 1857-1882 the numerous buildings of the headquarters of the old "76 Ranch" (photo #6478, at about mile 2.3)





Photo #9: Jesse Morrow Mountain, a closer view (photo #6542, at about mile 2.3)



Photo #10: Mount Campbell, the south rampart of the *Sierra Gateway* (photo #6479, at about mile 2.3)

- 3.0 **SOUTH FRANKWOOD AVENUE** - As you cross Frankwood Avenue, you see on your left Jesse Morrow Mountain and on the right Mount Campbell, the north and south ramparts of the *Sierra Gateway*. On the NE corner of the intersection is the locally popular Art Stand Gallery where many local painters, potters, sculptors, and other craft people display (and sell) their wares. On the SE corner is the historically significant brick-built Frankwood School (circa 1920). The school was decommissioned in 1958 and used since the late 1970s by a series of restaurants. It was occupied until early 2007 by the now closed Sherwood Inn.

Almost exactly as you cross S. Frankwood Ave., you leave the "Quaternary nonmarine terrace deposits" that comprise much of the San Joaquin Valley and move eastward onto the "Pleistocene nonmarine" sedimentary rocks that comprise much of the Sierra foothills.

As you drive forward you begin to see the Sierra Nevada mountains rising in your view in the distance and you climb a gentle rise marking the eastern edge of the flat lands of the San Joaquin Valley.





Photo #11: View NE, just before the crossing of the Alta Canal (built in 1883 by the 76 Land and Water Company). NE slope of Jesse Morrow Mountain seen on the left with an interesting exposure of "chalky" rock (diatomaceous earth from an ancient small lake bed) seen in the nearer foreground (photo #6482, at about mile 3.5)

[FRE-078.601, Alta Main Canal]

- 3.6 **ALTA CANAL** (elevation 417') - Here, as you cross the historic and still important Alta Canal, you leave the San Joaquin Valley and enter California's grass-covered rolling foothills. "The Alta" was first turned on Dec. 1, 1883 but a break here in Dunagan's Gap between the two *Sierra Gateway* mountains caused it to be closed for repairs until April 1, 1884.

The actual site of the 1883 break, a somewhat abrupt horseshoe bend in the old canal, is about 1/2 mile south of this point. The bend partially encircles a seasonal wetland with a dense thicket of Pacific Willows, a *Mecca* for local wildlife, providing ideal nesting sites for dozens of bird species as well as habitat for deer, mink, garter snakes, frogs, etc.

- 3.7 As you move beyond the Alta Canal, the full size of crescent shaped Jesse Morrow Mountain becomes more apparent. If you are driving WEST at this

point, you have an excellent view in the distance of the riparian forest lining the banks of the Kings River.

The roadcut here exposes "chalky" rock - diatomaceous earth from an ancient small lake bed.

- 4.2 Bear Mountain, a mix of ancient Pre-Cenozoic granitic and metamorphic rocks, begins to appear in the NE distance.

[FRE-079.299, Friant Kern Canal]

- 4.3 **FRIANT-KERN CANAL** - You next cross the much larger Friant-Kern Canal which parallels the highway on your right for about half-a-mile. Daniel C. Dunagan (1831-1890) owned this land and was an early Fresno County land owner, businessman and politician. As you drive east paralleling the Friant-Kern, the Sierras become more and more prominent in the distance with - in the Winter, Spring, and early Summer - their snow-covered summits being quite striking.

This is pristine native valley grassland with farm buildings few and sparsely spaced. Here, Great Blue Herons and American Egrets are frequently seen along the course of the Alta Canal and hunting in open grassy fields. Here too Meadowlarks with their bright yellow and black "V" shaped breasts often sit on fences bordering the grazing land. In the winter and spring Western Bluebirds and Western Kingbirds are common visitors. Red-Tailed Hawks circle the area searching for prey and White-tailed Kites hover and hunt the grassland for small rodents. The smallest American falcon, the Kestrel, uses the utility wires and poles as hunting perches.

- 4.8 **WINDMILL+CORRAL** - An antique windmill and cattle corral appears in the distance on your right. Close to the road on the left is a similarly old and somewhat picturesque cattle corral with a still useable wooden cattle chute.

- 5.3 On your right is a picturesque old olive grove. Here, the road resumes its easterly progress and your north and east-facing viewshed includes the native grass covered slopes of Jesse Morrow Mountain with the full east-west alignment of the mountain's massive structure becoming more readily apparent. The mountain is a Sacred Site to the Choinimni tribe of Yokut Indians.

**THE SOILS OF JESSE MORROW MOUNTAIN** - Jesse Morrow Mountain is an unusually complex geologic structure with a wide and interesting range of soils, including:

CIBO CLAY - comprises the South and Southwest facing upper slopes of Jesse Morrow Mountain; dark-grey or dark greyish-brown; well suited for and generally used as cattle range-land; fertilization is practical and the forage responds well to nitrogen applications. This soil has a high hazard of erosion from running water and a great hazard of slumping while saturated

MOUNT OLIVE CLAY - comprises the lower slopes of Jesse Morrow Mountain; a highly calcareous clay soil formed from the weathering of gabbro-diorite rocks; well suited for cattle range-land; easily tillable compared to other clay soils.

PORTERVILLE CLAY - comprises the foot slopes of Jesse Morrow Mountain and is often cobbly to very cobbly. In comparison to other clay soils, it is easier to obtain good tilth in this soil because of its strong tendency to granulate upon drying. Consequently, there is less tendency for a plowpan or traffic pan to form.

The above clay soils have high corrosivity. Thus, steel farm implements (plows, etc.) should have traces of these soils removed before storage.

TIVY LOAM - comprises the summit land of Jesse Morrow Mountain; a low corrosivity, loam soil formed from the weathering of gabbrodiorite rocks or metamorphic basic volcanic rocks. This soil has rapid to very rapid drainage runoff. Consequently, the hazard of erosion is high to very high.

BLASINGAME LOAM - comprises 10-15% of the northern slopes of Jesse Morrow Mountain; a well drained soil with medium runoff and a moderate to high hazard of erosion; well suited for cattle grazing; very good forage growth when seasonal rainfall is adequate. This soil is undulating to hilly with 2-25% surface rockiness that provides protection and nesting or den sites for small wildlife.

Source: *Soil Survey / Eastern Fresno Area / California*, issued October 1971 by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the University of California Agricultural Experiment Station and Fresno County.

- 5.9 **COBBLESTONE CHIMNEY** - The road twists slightly to your left and on your left is a picturesque broken cobblestone chimney and (when the native grass is low) the front steps of the long-gone farm home of the Ericson family, early settlers in this area.

This is farming country and, as you cross Alta Avenue, it transitions from native pasture to orange groves - but with many hundreds of acres remaining largely undisturbed by the presence of man. Here, the evidence of human



intrusion is often only the straight lines of century-old cattle fences.



Photo #12: View due east with the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada rising to a view of the eastern summits in the far distance (photo #6489, at about mile 5.8)

[FRE-081.070, Alta Avenue (South)]

- 6.1 **ALTA AVENUE** - Alta Avenue enters from the south; pleasing viewshed of large agricultural pasture on the right/south.

[FRE-081.900, Wahtoke]

- 7.0 **WAHTOKE CREEK** - Numerous indian petroglyphs have been discovered on Jesse Morrow Mountain's slopes, particularly in this area near Wahtoke Creek which drains the mountain's southeastern slopes.

This specific location is described in great detail in a May 1994 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 6 report entitled "Test Excavations at CA-FRE-61: Final Report." Quoting from this report:

"The archaeological investigation was designed to provide information necessary to evaluate the eligibility of CA-FRE-61 for inclusion in the

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) ...

**"CA-FRE-61 is eligible [for inclusion in] the NRHP under criteria C and D for Choinimni aesthetic values associated with the pictographs and cupules as well as its scientific importance."**

The site rests at the top of the TCR/ACRS archaeological site hierarchy specifically applicable to the southern Sierra/Foothill region and is defined as a "K-site" or major habitation area. Materials found at the site indicate habitation "for as long as six thousand years."

The site area is confined to the west side of Wahtoke Creek, extending approximately 300' north and 600' south of Route 180 (our proposed *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*). The test excavations at the CA-FRE-61 site "resulted in the identification of 58 bedrock surface features, including 77 mortars, 59 slicks, and six [exceedingly rare Choinimni-Yokut] pictograph panels." [NOTE - A slick is the flat equivalent of a mortar. "Slicks are the result of the rotary and/or back-and-forth action of an opposing handstone in seed milling."]

The CA-FRE-61 site is currently privately owned with the owner carefully limiting access to only appropriate, trustworthy individuals. The Sierra Gateway Trust strongly believes this site and others of a similar nature believed to exist on Jesse Morrow Mountain (called "Wahahlish" by the Choinimni Yokuts) deserve formal protection - at the very least that provided by the National Register of Historic Places.

[FRE-082.090, Crawford, Ave]

7.2

**CRAWFORD ROAD** (running south), **PORTER AVENUE** (running north) - Now, you are on an eastern portion of Fresno County's *Blossom Trail* and, on your left/north there are orchards of apricot trees stretching NE into Clark Valley and, on your right/south, extensive groves of navel oranges largely filling an area called Citrus Cove.

Porter Avenue winds north into Clark Valley and becomes a dirt road as it starts climbing the southern slopes of Tivy Mountain (called "Troiyuhyi pewish" by the Choinimni Yokuts). The road ends at Jug Rock, the site of the Choinimni village of *Aileeno*. Jug Rock has a number of pictographs and is considered an important place by the Choinimni and other local Indian People. It is the subject of the following myth summarized in the CA-FRE-61 report mentioned earlier.

### THE LEGEND OF JUG ROCK

Many years ago, in the Time When Animals Were People, before people as we know them were here, two boys were walking along in what is now Clark's Valley. The older one, *Limik* (falcon) was walking in front, while the younger one, *Fa uyun* (Crow) followed behind. *Fa uyun* shot a bird with his bow and arrow. It was a small bird that is often seen flying in and out among the rocks in the lower foothills. The boys left the bird where it fell.

After a while they became tired, so they lay down to rest under a live oak tree and soon fell asleep. When they awoke sometime later, they found themselves on top of an enormous rock, the one that is known now as Jug Rock or Balloon Rock. The rock had grown up while they were sleeping as punishment for having needlessly shot the little bird. The boys didn't know how they were to get down. After a while Crow came flying above and saw their predicament. Crow flew to the village, and told Eagle, the chief, about the boys' problem. Eagle called all the Bird and Animal People together to try to figure out a way to get the boys down from the top of the huge rock. They discussed the question for some time. Coyote, thinking he was clever, bragged about how he could climb the rock, so he was given the first chance. He tried and tried, clawing and scrambling at the rock, but each time he fell back and finally had to give up. Each one in succession tried climbing the rock, but each attempt failed.

Then *Hanook-hanook*, measuring worm, tried it. Slowly, he climbed and climbed, taking holds on the rough places on the rock and finally got to the top. Then he spun a web which he let down the side of the rock. Now one of the boys began sliding down the rope, but before he reached the ground *Hanook-hanook* broke the rope so that the boy fell to the ground with quite a jolt. This was to teach him a lesson. Then *Hanook-hanook* spun a rope for the other boy to descend. He broke this rope too as the boy neared the ground so that he also fell suddenly, teaching him a lesson too. [As told to Oscar Noren by Ben Hancock, a Choinimni man, in 1957.]

- 7.5      **ROCK FORMATION** - Here, your view to the NE is of a grass covered hillside rising to a low, rounded summit. The hill (some might call it a "mountain") is covered with visually interesting vertical granite formations, an example of the area's underlying mesozoic granitic rocks.
- 7.8      Here, the road veers south easterly to the right and you pass through an orange grove, after which you resume your almost directly easterly ascent to the Nation's Christmas Tree, the General Grant Grove of Giant Sequoias, and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, this being all of those entities' primary access road.



[FRE-R083.165, Wakefield Av L/Pvt Rd R]

- 8.4 **VIEW OF DUNAGAN'S GAP FROM THE EAST** - If you are driving westward towards Fresno, this spot in the proposed Scenic Highway presents an excellent view of Dunagan's Gap, the broad stretch of mostly natural pasture land between its adjoining mountains (Mt. Campbell to the south and Jesse Morrow Mt. to the north). This is a superb all-encompassing view of what some have called *The Sierra Gateway*.

**SIERRA GATEWAY WILD FLOWERS** - A variety of wild flowers are found on Mts. Campbell and Jesse Morrow including the California Poppy, fiddle neck, wild mustard, Owl's Clover, Blue Dick, popcorn flower, and lupine among others. In various years one or more of these may vibrantly color the face of these mountains.

**SIERRA GATEWAY BIRDS** - The rare remnant of native valley grassland found between these two Gateway mountains has Meadowlarks, with their bright yellow and black "V" shaped breasts; circling Red-Tailed hawks and hovering White-tailed Kites hunt for prey; joined by the smallest American falcon, the Kestrel. The Western Bluebirds and Western Kingbirds make an appearance in winter and spring.

**EASTWARD FROM THE SIERRA GATEWAY** - From these mountains into the foothills, vegetation changes abruptly to open oak woodland in which widely spaced oaks share ground with grasses providing excellent grazing for cattle. The prickly-leaved Live Oak is more commonly found as elevation increases. In this foothill belt and extending to about 4000 feet, many of the same birds are seen that are in the valley grasslands. Valley Quail, the state bird of California, is often seen in open grassy areas. In the winter the quail live in coveys of ten or more, but in spring and summer, they pair for nesting. A bird that is often heard as much as seen is the clown-faced Acorn Woodpecker, noted for its habit of storing acorns in holes that it drills in wooden fences, utility poles, and tree trunks. Much evidence of its efforts may be seen from our roadway.

[FRE-083.812, Cove Rd (South) Kaktus]

- 8.8 **COVE AVENUE** - At the crossing, you leave the rolling foothills and begin a notably steeper ascent. Here Kings Canyon Road (Highway 180) is cut into a south-facing slope and you quickly leave behind any signs of modern agricultural activities.



Photo #13: View due west while descending, at the Cove Avenue junction, the full expanse of the *Sierra Gateway* seen in the horizon, Mt. Campbell to the left, Dunagan's Gap in the center, and Jesse Morrow Mountain to the right (photo #6517, at about mile 8.8)

**KAKTUS KORNER** - In the now unused land to the SW of the Cove Avenue intersection, is a small rectangular cobblestone ruin, the only remaining sign of the once popular local *institution* (store, bar, billiard parlor, gas station, and - much earlier - a freight-wagon and stage stop) called Kaktus Korner<sup>4</sup>.

These are the *Golden Hills of California*, interspersed with various species of native California oak trees and a growing number of granite outcroppings - ever increasing evidence of the great mountain range you are now approaching. On your right/south, at the bottom of a steep descent, you can see a rustic but still in use old barn. Many of the barns in this area date from

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<sup>4</sup> This deserted site may have once been home to the first public school (the Clarks Valley School of 1873 mentioned earlier) in what is now the Kings Canyon Unified School District. Source: *The McCubbin Papers*, edited by Kenneth Zech, Reedley Historical Society, 1988, page 185.

the late 19th century, although most often re-sided and re-roofed many times.

- 8.9 **WESTWARD VIEW OF SIERRA GATEWAY** - When descending from Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, this spot on the proposed Scenic Highway presents the first view of *The Sierra Gateway* (as defined earlier).



Photo #14: View SW, some newly planted orange trees to the left, a mature orange grove in the center, and Mt. Campbell rising on the right (photo #6491, at about mile 9.0)





Photo #15: View SE, just as our *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway* starts its climb to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, a nice view of a mature grove of navel orange trees (photo #6493, at about mile 9.0)

- 9.2        **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road.
- 9.3        As the road climbs, there are rounded summits with native grass and an increasing number of oak trees on either side - possibly described as a "sparse" native oak forest. In this area the road has several turn-outs where drivers during hot summer days can pause and take in the beauty of the largely unblemished viewshed.
- THE VIEW SOUTH** - The view south is representative of California agriculture at its best, including a 200-300 acre well-tended orange grove.
- 9.5        **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.
- 10.0       **WESTWARD VIEW OF MT. CAMPBELL** - When descending from the National Parks, this spot presents the first full view of Mt. Campbell, the south rampart of *The Sierra Gateway*.

**TURN-OUT** - paved, long, south side of road with a beautiful view to the south of some of the area's *Golden Triangle* agricultural richness.



Photo #16: View east as our *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway* continues its climb through the *Golden Hills of California* to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks (photo #6494, at about mile 9.2)





Photo #17: View west from the same spot as photo #16 (photo #6495, at about mile 9.2)

10.3      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.

10.4      **1000 FT. ELEVATION MARKER** - The vegetation zone from here to about 3000 ft. is a transition from the oak woodland through the dense chaparral. This kind of dense growth at the upper elevations created an early barrier to settlement. In this vertical zone we find the dense growth of hardy shrubs including greenleaf manzanita, California red bud, buck brush, deer brush and more. The California buckeye stands out with its large, brown, pear-shaped seed pod contrasting with the white wood revealed as the leaves fall away. California lilac and laurel also inhabit the zone. Wild flowers include Mariposa lily, woolly mullein, sunflowers and others.

**VIEW TO RIGHT OF ROAD** - If you look down from the road at this point you can see remains of the old Highway 180 route (once used by freight-wagons and stagecoaches) that closely followed along a creek bed. Evidence of native occupation has been found in this area in the form of grinding holes and some petroglyphs.



Photo #18: View SW as seen when descending from Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, the prime *Golden Triangle* agricultural lands of the Central Valley just beginning to be seen in the distance (photo #6498, at about mile 10)

- 10.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, south side of road.
- 11.4      **TURN-OUTS (3)** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.
- 11.5      **WESTWARD VIEW** - This spot on the road presents an excellent, expansive view looking mostly south of Mt. Campbell and into the broad San Joaquin Valley beyond - all the way to the Coast Range in the far distance.
- 11.6      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, south side of road.
- 11.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.





Photo #19: View south of the sparse Valley Oak forest (photo #6499, at about mile 11)





Photo #20: View east over rolling native pasture with the snow covered summits of the Sierra Nevada mountains becoming more clearly seen in the distance (photo #6503, at about mile 11)

- 12.1 Bear Mountain (elev. 3,396' and comprised of Pre-Cenozoic granitic and metamorphic rock) appears directly in front of you - with many antennas on its summit. The summit is also home to a long-closed California Department of Forestry fire lookout, one of the few such lookouts still in existence.
- 12.3 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, on south side of road overlooking a largely pristine landscape of rolling grass pasture land, sparsely interspersed with oak trees.
- 12.5 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.

[FRE-087.706, JCT63, S. Hills Valley Rd]

- 12.6 **HIGHWAY 63 (aka Hills Valley Road)** - The road comfortably twists its way up the Sierra's western slope. As you cross State Highway 63 (the route to Visalia), our road's inclination grows and the oak woodland comes closer to the road on either side. This area is today home to many California Native Americans.

Dunlap Valley (*Tahlau* or "Cane or Bamboo Place" in Yokut), a few miles to the south, and particularly the area surrounding the town of Dunlap, was once home to the Éntimbits Yokuts. Their primary villages were *Kicheyu* on the banks of Mill Creek near today's Dunlap, and another site known at *Chitatichi* ("clover").

The *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway passes through the ancient tribal lands of the Yokut Nation - one of the only two or three of California's Native American nations to have formed distinct tribes with enduring names and semi-permanent territories (the Miwoks being the primary other California-based Indian Nation). The Yokut Nation has a rich history that deserves far more attention than it receives. With each passing year, more tribal elders pass on and their memories of their language, songs, ceremonies, and history becomes lost forever. Perhaps the formation of the *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway might in some way rekindle an interest in this swiftly vanishing treasure.

East from the Dunlap area is the ancestral homeland of the Wobonuch Indians, a tribe of a Shoshonean division called the Monache (or Monachi) by the Yokuts and now often referred to as the Mono Indians.

12.7      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, on south side of road, immediately beyond the Highway 63 intersection. In the visit looking SW, you get an excellent view of Smith Mountain and the Reedley/Dinuba area. Bear Mountain rises to the road's north.

13.1      **WESTWARD VIEW** - When descending, this spot on the road gives an early and quite broad view of the Coast Range in the distance. The summit of Jesse Morrow Mountain is visible to the right.

[FRE-088.480, Ruth Hill Rd (South)]

13.4      **RUTH HILL ROAD** - You next pass the junction with Ruth Hill Road and shortly thereafter pass through the small (about 0.3 miles long) but growing community of Squaw Valley with numerous commercial establishments sparsely lining the road on both sides. Both before and after Squaw Valley, the land to the left and right is close-to-pristine grazing land with sparse oak forest.

This area was at one time home to the Chukaimina Yokuts and their two long-vanished towns of Dochiu and Mashtinau. The Yokut name for Ruth Hill is Gówpinau ("Gow" is a cow).

At the SE corner of the junction there is a small, picturesque group of old

farm buildings.

13.6 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, south side of road.

[FRE-089.370, George E Smith Rd (So)]

14.2 **BEAR MOUNTAIN ROAD (north) & GEORGE SMITH ROAD (south)** - a picturesque intersection with two country roads. With the exception of a few farm homes and farm buildings, this area - just before entering the small community of Squaw Valley - is mostly pristine pasture land with a few oaks with these somewhat larger than those encountered earlier.

14.5 **TURN-OUT**

15.1 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.

[FRE-090.700, Wonder Valley Rd (Left)]

15.6 **ELWOOD ROAD** - This leads north to Wonder Valley and, beyond, to Pine Flat dam. Pyramid shaped Bald Mountain (elev. 3,605') and its northern extension, Dalton Mountain, can be seen on the left, in 1891 the site of a hide-out of Grat Dalton of the famous Dalton Gang<sup>5</sup>. These mountains are of Pre-Cretaceous metavolcanic rocks and thus possibly older than nearby Bear Mountain (Pre-Cenozoic granitic and metamorphic rocks).

[FRE-090.787, Indian Guide Rd-Lt]

15.7 **INDIAN GUIDE ROAD** - This leads south into Dunlap Valley.

As our proposed *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway* continues east, the road briefly descends and a rocky grass-covered hill rises in front of you. The road twists and continues its descent, crossing Silver Lane on your left and, on your right, a road that is the entrance to an old ranch.

16.4 **FIRE STATION** - On the south side of the road is a newly rebuilt (2006) Calif.

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<sup>5</sup> On September 3, 1891, a train was stopped at Ceres but the robbers were beaten off - the three Dalton brothers, Bill, Bob, and Grat, being the chief suspects. A short time later Grat (Grattan) Dalton, Arvil Beck and W.B. Smith escaped from the Tulare County Jail at Visalia. While Tulare County Sheriff Eugene "Gene" Kay quickly recovered Beck and Smith, Grat Dalton proved elusive. On December 23, 1891, two posses met at the old hotel in Centerville and proceeded to the Elwood Ranch about three or so miles up Mill Creek from its junction with the Kings River. Grat Dalton and Riley Dean had camped on a mountain just to the east (now called Dalton Mountain). On the morning of December 24, 1891, the combined posses surrounded the campsite. Riley Dean was captured but Grat Dalton managed to escape - only to be killed (along with his brother Bill) less than a year later, on October 5, 1892, during a bank robbery in Coffeyville, Kansas.



Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) fire station with four unobtrusive, well maintained, quietly landscaped one story buildings (2 residences, 1 fire-apparatus building, 1 equipment storage building). There is an entrance to a ranch on the road's north side.

16.7        **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of the road.

[FRE-091.879, Squaw Cr]

[FRE-92.181, Mill Cr]

17.1        **MILL CREEK** - As you cross this creek, the native vegetation begins to take on more interest with more frequent appearances of California Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), one of our states most beautiful native trees - with its striking clusters of white flowers enlivening the viewshed in the late Spring and early Summer. The largest, most obvious trees here are the California Sycamore with white trunks and large leaves. In the Springtime, this area is lush with poppies, lupine, farewell-to-spring, Indian Paintbrush, and many other California wild flowers.

#### GEOLOGIC NOTE

At this creek crossing, Bald Mtn., comprised of Pre-Cretaceous metavolcanics (the southern part of the Kings River ophiolite), rises directly to the north while the road itself passes through a stretch of Pre-Cenozoic granitic and metamorphic rocks. This stretch of highway also offers a few exposures of dark pillow basalt - all you are likely to see without a hike. Other components of the oceanic crust - serpentinite, layered gabbro, and basalt dikes - are exposed north of the roadway. This slab of oceanic crust dates from Jurassic time, sometime around 200 million years ago.

17.1        **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, on east side of Mill Creek and north side of road.

17.3        **WESTWARD VIEW** - When descending, the view here is one of native grass covered hillsides with a growing number of still sparsely scattered well-built modern residences.

17.5        **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.

17.6        **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.

17.9        **RANCH GATE** - On north side of the road is a well-maintained ranch gate.

18.2        **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, south side of road.

- 18.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, south side of road.
- 18.6      **PRISTINE AREA** - Here the road levels in an area of native grasses and low oaks. This is a particularly scenic portion of the road, almost totally lacking in an evidence of development or human intrusion of any kind - truly pristine.
- Next, the road resumes its ascent, clinging to the south-facing slopes of the mountain structure that forms the north side of Dunlap Valley. Although this is still mostly grazing land, the oak trees steadily increase in number, taking on the appearance of a fairly dense oak forest.
- 19.2      **TURN-OUT** - signed, partially-paved, large, south side of road, with a structure containing a dozen or so locked mailboxes and a sign indicating a school bus stop.
- 19.3      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, north side of road.
- 19.4      **WESTWARD VIEW** - As you descend, there is an excellent head-on view of a picturesque mountain on the left. Later, as the road twists downward, the same mountain appears again on the right.

[FRE-094.780, Dunlap Rd, Hapewe 11 Rd]

- 19.6-20.1      **CLINGAN'S JUNCTION** -At the SW corner of the junction with Hopewell Road is a highly regarded restaurant called the Hummingbird, the most recent occupant of a cobblestone & mortar building that has served the area for perhaps 100+ years as a freight-wagon & stagecoach stop, then as a gas station, and now as a restaurant. Hopewell Road leads south to the small communities of Dunlap and Miramonte.

Clingan's Junction approximately marks a geologic transition from Pre-Cenozoic granitic and metamorphic rocks (to the west) to younger Mesozoic granitic rocks (to the east).

[FRE-095.043, Sie. Vill/Hume Ranger Di]

- 20.0      **HUME LAKE U.S. FOREST SERVICE DISTRICT OFFICE** - Located in front is a historic "Donkey Engine" from the 1890s logging era (possibly worth a stop to examine).
- 20.1      **DUNLAP ROAD** - This leads south to sparsely populated Dunlap Valley and its several small communities.
- 20.3      **TURN-OUT**

- 20.5      **2000' ELEVATION MARKER & TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large turn-out on south side of road containing a classic old concrete and cobblestone fountain for filling car radiators. The oak forest and its native grasses are, once again, on either side of the road and the view becomes more and more mountainous as you continue the climb to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.
- 20.9      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road with a driveway into a unseen home.
- 21.3      **OLD HOUSE & TURN-OUT** - unsigned, partially-paved, small, south side of road.
- 21.8      In this area the variety of vegetation changes with Elderberry, Fremontia, and Buckeye (already seen) becoming more frequent. If you look westward, you see a complex structure of rounded, low hills (some might call them mountains) covered with oak and native grasses, and a few houses infrequently appearing in the mostly pristine landscape. If you look southward, you can look across the wide expanse of Dunlap Valley in which many members of the Éntimbits tribe of Yokut<sup>6</sup> indians continue to have their homes, in an area where their tribe lived long before the coming of the Spanish explorers and the American settlers.
- 22.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, wide, south side of road. This area has several driveways leading in to small farms and/or homes, the structures of which are generally not visible from the highway.
- 22.3      **CAT HAVEN** - This is a privately funded sanctuary where endangered wild cats can be observed nicely caged in large hillside enclosures.
- [FRE-097.957, Beg FH-50]
- 23.1      **PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - At this point in the road's ascent, you begin to get a magnificent, expansive view to the south and to the east of the sparsely populated Dunlap Valley with its many massive oak trees - an enduring remnant of the area's pre-Spanish conquest oak forest. The road here is cut through massive outcroppings of Sierran granite.

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<sup>6</sup> Both A.L. Kroeber and F.F. Latta identify the Éntimbits as Yokuts. However, others say they are Shoshonean. Whatever may be the case, there is clearly no exact boundary between the Wobonuch (Shoshonean) to the east, and the Éntimbits (Yokut) here.



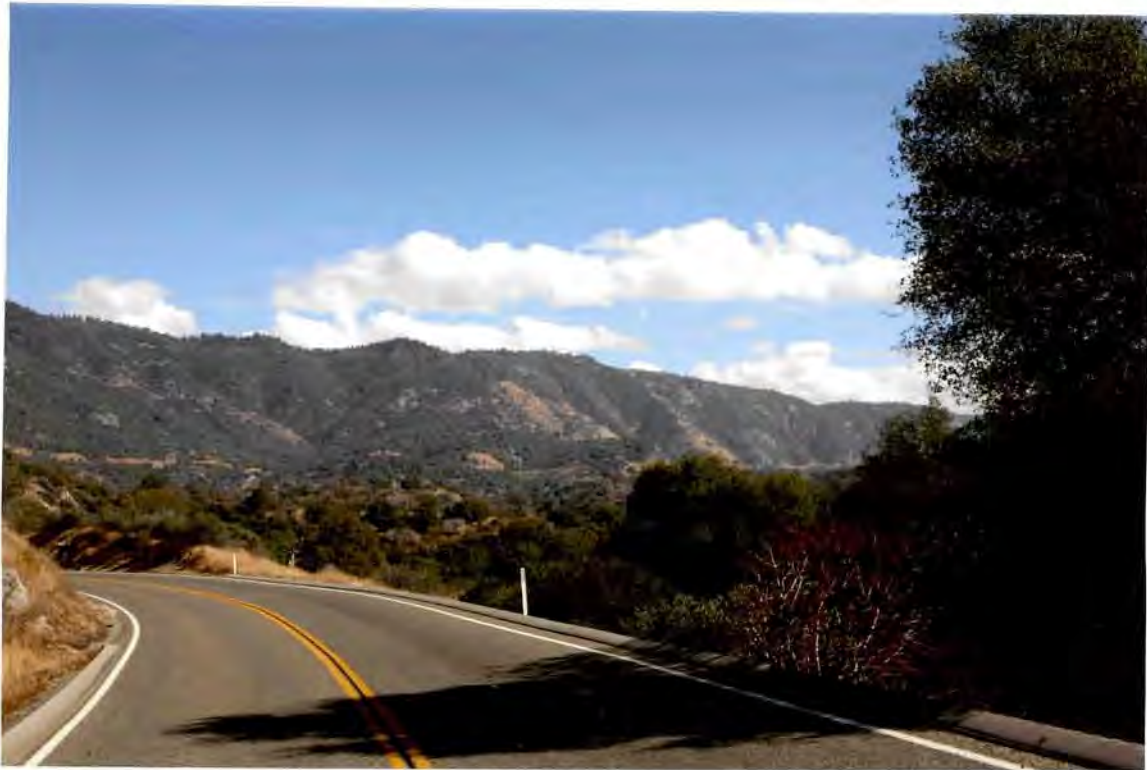


Photo #21: Ascending view, looking eastward (photo #6306, at about mile 22)

- 23.6      **TURN-OUT & SECONDARY ROAD** - Near a secondary road leading south, there is a large, paved turn-out on the south side of the road with a driveway leading to a not visible home in the distance. From a sharp drop-off, there is a continuing view of the wide, flat plain of Dunlap Valley with sparsely spaced homes.

As the road ascends, the vegetation contains increasing numbers of Incense Cedars, manzanita bushes, an occasional California Bay (more correctly, California Laurel, *Umbellularia California*), and Yerba Santa.

- 23.7      **GIANT SEQUOIA NATIONAL MONUMENT** - At a large turn-out there is a prominent sign announcing that you are entering Giant Sequoia National Monument, created in the year 2000, late in the administration of President Clinton.



Photo #22: View east just after entering the Giant Sequoia National Monument. This portion of the road until its entrance to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks is a federally designated Scenic Byway (photo #6508, at about mile 23.7)

- 23.9      **3000' ELEVATION MARKER** - This closely follows the National Monument entrance sign. The continuation of this road from this point until its entrance to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks is a federally designated as a Scenic Byway.

On the right you continue to look across the wide expanse of flat-bottomed Dunlap Valley, the floor of which is an ever increasing number of hundred feet below our ascending roadway. The valley floor is visually largely unspoiled, with the land covered with oaks, buckeyes, ceanothus, and other native plants. The ascent steepens and you pass multiple turn-outs where the interested driver can pause and look over the pleasant native California landscape of Dunlap Valley and its surrounding hills and smaller valleys - with many of these hills and valleys appearing to be pristine in nature.

**FOREST & BIRDS** - From approximately here to around 6000 ft. elevation is found the Mixed Conifer Forest. Birds commonly spotted in this stretch of



road include the red-tailed hawk, Turkey vultures, ravens and rarely a giant golden eagle riding the up-welling currents from the valley below.

24.5      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of road.



Photo #23: Ascending view, looking eastward (photo #6307, at about mile 24.5)

24.6      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of road (larger and in better condition). From this point eastward for about two miles, the road passes through a narrow N-S band of Pre-Cretaceous metasedimentary rock.

25.1      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, paved, south side of road; provides a magnificent view of the Dunlap Valley and the mountains to the south.



Photo #24: Looking southward across the Dunlap Valley (photo #6312, at about mile 25.1)

- 25.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, small, gravel, south side of road.
- 25.8      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of road.
- 26.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, south side of road.
- 26.6      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of road.
- 26.6      **SEASONAL WATERFALL** - To the north of the road is a steeply ascending gully filled with massive granite slabs that in Spring and early Summer contains a small but nicely picturesque waterfall. The surrounding slopes are now mostly covered by scrub oaks, native grasses and other low vegetation. The north side of the road looks upward over steep granite slopes while the south side continues to offer views of Dunlap Valley.

The vegetation here is transitioning with numerous low "scrub oaks" and California Buckeye interspersed with native grasses and increasing linear expanses of Manzanita paralleling the roadside.





Photo #25: Sparse oak forest above a road-cut through granite (photo #6314, at about mile 26.3)

The oak forest diminishes as the ascent continues with the oaks transitioning to manzanita, ceanothus (more specifically, deer brush) and other native plants common to what is called the "Yellow Pine Belt" transition zone. A mixed conifer forest begins to emerge, mainly ponderosa pines, white firs, and a few incense cedars - with some of this growing from the ashes of the 17,500 acre McGee/Cherry Gap fire of 1955.

- 27.0      **WESTWARD VIEW** - The descending driver sees at this point Bear Mountain and the twin summits of the *Sierra Gateway*, Mt. Campbell and Jesse Morrow Mt.
- 27.7      **4000' ELEVATION MARKER** - This marks the approximate lower extremity of the annual snow line. To your left is an unpaved turn-out and a dirt road to a small long-abandoned quarry (not visible from the road).
- THE TREE TRANSITION** - The forest here is definitely in transition with the lower elevation oaks now being replaced by incense cedars, sugar and ponderosa pines, and some white fir - interspersed with manzanita and other brush in the thinning soils and outcrops of granite. Incense cedar is known to all for supplying wood for pencils. The Sugar pine is a major lumber species. The Ponderosa pine (aka the western yellow pine) favors the arid west slopes. The Jeffrey pine, looking similar to the Ponderosa, is found at higher elevations, generally above 6000 feet. White Fir (found from 3500' to 7500') and Red Fir (found from 6500' to 9000') are favored as Christmas trees.
- 28.2      **SNOWLINE LODGE** - A low berm separates our road from this rustic 1930s structure. On the berm are several interesting antique farm implements. We understand that some of these implements played an important role in local history. Perhaps a roadside marker here could document this history and make it easily available.
- 28.9      **WESTWARD VIEW** - At this point there is a superb view to the South and West with much foothill vegetation (oaks, etc.) visible in the distance. In view of its numerous visually interesting large Black Oaks, the area immediately to the south of the road is designated "Black Oak Flat" on the Miramonte 7.5 minute series USGS topographic map.
- [FRE-104.070, Millwood Rd, McKenzie]
- 29.0      **MILLWOOD TURN-OFF** - Here, you pass on the right the Millwood Road and on the left a gravel road (McKenzie Road) to numerous private camps (including the Armenian Church Camp and what once was called the Bob Mathias Camp for Boys), the McKenzie Heliport, a U.S Forest Service fire lookout, and eventually the Kings River.
- 29.6      **GEOLOGIC POINT OF INTEREST** - Just 1.4 miles east of Snowline Lodge, the roadway is cut through a patch of the Kings Terrane southern Sierra roof pendant. While later the same terrane is encountered at Boyden Cave where it is comprised of marble, here it is comprised of quartzite surrounded by a red soil that is also deserving of interest.





Photo #26: Circa 1930s Snowline Lodge (photo #6315, at about mile 28.2)



Photo #27: Just beyond Snowline Lodge with a vegetation transition seen in the distance (photo #6318, at about mile 29.5)

- 29.8      **TURN-OUT** - signed, partially-paved, large, on south side of road and separated from the road by a low berm of soil. By this point, the oak-to-pine forest transition has largely been completed. Elderberry are beginning to appear.

This is an interesting stretch of road for the geologically inclined. For the next mile (driving east), one sees on both sides of the road basalt (a Tertiary period volcanic) and then, for about 0.2 miles, the road passes through a narrow band of Pre-Cretaceous metasedimentary rocks, the southerly extension of the rock core of McKenzie Ridge.

- 30.1      **NICE VIEW** - There is a nice southerly view here but no turn-out. There are numerous Manzanita bushes and Incense Cedars in this area.
- 30.5      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, north side of road.
- 30.6      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, paved, south side of road; offers a nice view opportunity to the south where you can see the wide



expanse of Dunlap Valley which becomes progressively more pristine in its easterly extension.

31.2      **MAGNIFICENT VIEW** - same as at 30.6m and 31.4m but with no turn-out.

31.4-31.5      **TURN-OUTS (3) & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - three unsigned, paved, small, on south side of road; a nice photo opportunity looking into the easterly extension of Dunlap Valley. The road cuts on your left are now more and more clearly cut through granodiorite.



Photo #28: About three miles beyond Snowline Lodge, the vegetation transitions to one where pines and cedars are dominant (photo #6317, at about mile 31.5)

31.7      **WESTWARD VIEW** - The descending driver here receives (on a clear day) an excellent, expansive view of the Coast Range.

31.7      **5000' ELEVATION MARKER** - Here you can look due-south across Dunlap Valley, most of which appears to be untouched with only a few small settlements visible in the distance.

**VEGETATION** - By this point, pines and cedar are the dominant vegetation.

With their tall growth, the forest floor is sparsely covered with the wide areas between the trees only partially filled in with shorter shrubs.

**WESTWARD VIEW** - Descending drivers here receive their first (and quite magnificent) view of the San Joaquin Valley.

- 32.2 **TURN-OUT & MAJOR PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, large, definitely a vista turn-out on south side of road. Here, you can look over the fir and pine forest descending from the road towards the floor of still visible Dunlap Valley.

**WESTWARD VIEW** - Descending drivers at this point receive early but somewhat restricted views of the San Joaquin Valley and, in the far distance, the Coast Range.

- 32.4 **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, large, south side of road. Here, you start looking towards Redwood Mountain on the western edge of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

- 32.7 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, small, south side of road.

[FRE-108.128, Jct St 245 S]

- 33.1 **HIGHWAY 245 TURNOFF** - This is the junction with the road to Pinehurst and beyond to Porterville. You can see to the SE a pine covered ridge that is the edge of the Redwood Mountain Grove of Giant Sequoias.

**WESTWARD VIEW** - Descending drivers here get their first views (mostly to the SW) of the grass and oak covered foothills and - in the further distance - the broad expanse of the San Joaquin Valley.

- 33.6 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, south side of road.

[FRE-108.840, Happy Gap Rd (Left)]

- 33.7 **HAPPY GAP & SEQUOIA LAKE TURNOFF** - This spot is called "Happy Gap" on the local USGS topo map, the name coming from the fact that the teamsters for the 1890s logging companies were happy at this point to be at the end of the "long pull" up from the San Joaquin Valley, the road from this point to Millwood being largely level. On the north side of our road at this point, there are three items of interest:

[1] - a dirt road (once the old highway to Grant Grove) leading NE to the shores of Sequoia Lake,



[2] - a dirt road leading NW to the now returned-to-nature site of Millwood, and

[3] - standing beneath a tall Sugar Pine a few yards west of the turnoff, a brass plaque firmly attached to a massive granite stand with these words engraved on it:

"MILLWOOD. Two miles northeast of here astride Mill Flat Creek is the site of old Millwood, a sawmill town established in 1891. Railroads brought logs here for milling and later timber from nearby mills including that which cut the privately owned redwoods of Converse Basin. The lumber was dried and placed in the fifty-four mile wooded flume terminating in Sanger. Sequoia Lake was formed to provide flume water. The operation continued until 1910 when it was moved to Hume. Millwood once had a seasonal population of more than one thousand, a thirty room hotel and all facilities for a complete town. Today nothing remains. Jim Savage Chapter 1852, E Clampus Vitus, Nov. 14 1965."

**VEGETATION** - The vegetation here consists of Yellow, and Sugar Pines, Incense Cedars, some higher elevation oaks, and manzanita. As you drive onward, a true, original, untouched mountain landscape begins to emerge with ferns and various low-growing plants now covering the soil between the closely growing trees.

[FRE-109.528, Fre/Tul Co Line]

34.4 **TULARE COUNTY** - For the next 6/10<sup>ths</sup> of a mile our proposed *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway resides within Tulare County. This short stretch of road passes through Pre-Cretaceous metamorphic rocks before returning to the far more dominant granitic rocks at the park boundary.

34.5 **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, south side of road.

34.5 **SIGN** - "Park Entrance, 2 miles"

34.8 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.



Photo #29: Road-cut through granite with the vegetation transition not quite completed (photo #6324, at about mile 33)



Photo #30: Descending view, looking southwestward across the eastern end of the Dunlap Valley (photo #6326, at about mile 33+)





Photo #31: Descending view, looking due west with a geologically interesting road-cut on the right (photo #6334, at about mile 33+)





Photo #32: Looking due south across the east end of the Dunlap Valley (photo #6337, at about mile 33+)

35.0      **6000' ELEVATION MARKER & PARK BOUNDARY** - A small sign indicates you are leaving Sequoia National Forest. Here, too, you also leave Giant Sequoia National Monument and enter Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. At this point, Segment #1 of our proposed *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway ends. Segment #2 of our proposed *Sierra Gateway* Scenic Highway resumes 5.3 miles later when the highway leaves Kings Canyon National Park just north of Grant Grove.

**TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, east side of road; in your directly forward view, your first relatively "close up" view of a massive, ancient Giant Sequoia rising well above the lower growing pines, firs, and cedars; a careful look into the forest here reveals several younger and smaller Sequoias.

**VEGETATION AT THIS ELEVATION** - Pines and cedars, firs and sierra redwoods including some of the largest examples of Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) are well documented in the Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks. These are the world's largest trees. The average

diameter of 10' to 15' is well surpassed by the biggest giants of 30' diameters. Diameters of up to 17' are found as high on these trees as 120' in some of the tallest trees that top out at 250'. Meadows offer deep grasses and wild flowers while in canyons one finds "micro" areas of the beautiful blooms of the Pacific Dogwood and Western Azalea.

**BIRDS AT THIS ELEVATION** - At this elevation the noisy crested Stellar Jay is an abundant resident and will be seen and heard frequently. The splendidly plumaged Western Tanager with its yellow, black and white body and wings, topped with a bright red hood is a summer visitor, as is the Black-headed Grosbeak. The little black hooded Junco, which winters at lower elevations and on the valley floor, is here for the spring and summer. A good place to see these and other birds is at the Millwood Road turn-off to Sequoia Lake with its ample parking area. The old road to Millwood is often good for birding, as well as to allow for stretching of car-weary muscles. A very lucky visitor to this stretch of road will see the Pileated Woodpecker, according to many - the largest North American woodpecker. From within the park, the Big Stump Trail is also excellent for birding.

[TUL-110.829, W Bndry Gen Grant Grove]

### Within Grant Grove Section of Kings Canyon National Park

The following are a few of the things seen within the Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park on this short stretch of road.

- 35.3            **GIANT SEQUOIA** - first close to the road view of one of these superb trees.
- 38.4            **ROAD TO WILSONIA** - This small, well-hidden, summer-home community was founded in circa 1920 by families from the Fresno-to-Visalia portion of the San Joaquin Valley. On March 15, 1996 the entire community was granted National Register of Historic Places status because of its vibrant, multi-generational culture.
- 38.6            **GRANT GROVE VISITORS' CENTER** - This is the central complex of visitor services within Kings Canyon National Park.
- 39.2            **ROAD TO GRANT GROVE** - At this point, a well marked, paved road on the west leads in 1/2 mile to the General Grant Grove of "Big Trees".

#### GENERAL GRANT GROVE

The *General Grant Grove* of Big Trees is perhaps the most famous such grove in the world. It contains over fifty "named" trees including:

- the Abraham Lincoln Tree, the Robert E. Lee Tree, the William Jennings Bryan Tree, and the General Lawton Tree,
- the Columbia Tree, the Happy Family (a group of six trees), the Twin Sisters, the Lightning Tree, the Martyr Tree, the Fallen Monarch, and Centennial Stump
- the "State" trees for Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana\*, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts [fell, 1931], Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana\*, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York\*, North Dakota\*, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina\*, South Dakota\*, Tennessee, Vermont [fell, 1985], Virginia, West Virginia\*, Wisconsin\*, and Wyoming. \* = trees in North Grove
- and perhaps the most famous single tree in the entire world, **THE GENERAL GRANT TREE** - our nation's *Christmas Tree*, one of the world's largest living things, and - since 1956 - a Presidentially designated shrine to our Nation's war dead.

The General Grant Grove of Giant Sequoias was discovered in 1862 by Joseph Thomas Hardin and became a National Park in 1890. After large additions, it was renamed Kings Canyon Nat'l Park in 1940.

"Man has invested the giant sequoia with a significance that probably has no counterpart among other trees. Many biologically and ecologically interesting qualities of this tree insure man's high regard for it. It carries a remnant gene pool which bridges the eons back to the Cretaceous, some 125 million years in the past. Here, in this wonderful tree, is a world of scientific interest perhaps never to be fully explained." [The Giant Sequoia of the Sierra Nevada, Hartesveldt et al, 1975]

- 40.3            **PARK BOUNDARY** - A small sign indicates you are entering Sequoia National Forest.

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**SEGMENT #2 OF PROPOSED SIERRA GATEWAY SCENIC HIGHWAY**

(all mileages are from Trimmer Springs)

This segment contains 25.7 miles of Scenic Roadway, including 0.25 miles (1%) of minor intrusions, 0.5 miles (1.9%) of moderate intrusions, and no major intrusions. These are "worst case" numbers since they reflect the visual duration of impact and not the physical duration which is generally much less.

[FRE-112.090E]

40.3      **PARK BOUNDARY** - Here the roadway leaves the protection of Kings Canyon National Park and enters a historic omission, an area considered for over a hundred years to be virtually the equal in scenic grandeur to that of the National Park to its south and east.

40.4      **TURN-OUT** - small, paved, east side of road. A road sign at this point lists Hume Lake - 8m, Boyden Cave - 18m, Cedar Grove - 28m.

40.5      **TURN-OUT** - small, unpaved, east side of road.

40.5+      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, east side of road.

The road here is going through a forest of Incense Cedars, Sugar and Ponderosa Pines, and White Firs with its numerous shady areas covered with ferns - indistinguishable from the National Park it has just exited.

40.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, west side of the road with a dirt fire road leading downward and westward.

40.9      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, paved, on both sides of the road with a dirt fire road on the east side.

41.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, east side of road.

41.3      **PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - Here one enjoys a magnificent view to the west of the Sierra foothills and, in the distance, the broad expanse of the San Joaquin Valley.

41.6      **TURN-OUT (McGee Vista Point)** - signed, paved, large, west side of road. A sturdy metal plaque tells the story of the 17,500 acre McGee (aka Cherry Gap) Fire of the fall of 1955 - a fire that was visible from Dunagan's Gap at the *Sierra Gateway*, near the start of our Scenic Highway. The fire scar has largely healed with a new forest of pines, firs, and green undergrowth. The replanting of the pines was paid for by several area Garden Clubs.

[FRE-113.879, Cherry Gap EL-6897]

- 42.0      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - signed, paved, on both sides of road. The western turn-out has a sign indicating a dirt road to the Converse Basin Grove and the Boole Tree. In the turn-out's northwest corner is a large, nicely engraved black granite plaque erected here on October 3, 1977 by Jim Savage Chapter of E Clampus Vitus. The plaque states:

"CONVERSE BASIN GROVE - One of the largest stands of Giant Sequoias, it contained some of the finest Big Trees. The grove was logged as private land between 1897 and 1907, first by the Sanger Lumber Company and later by Hume-Bennett Lumber Company, which in 1909 developed Hume Lake for a mill.

Converse Basin, two miles northeast of this monument, had its own mill and narrow gage rail connection to the logging town of Millwood, from which lumber was sent to Sanger in the valley by flume. Although they never realized any profit, the companies cut several thousand Big Trees and left only the largest, the Boole Tree, unfelled.

The area today is part of Sequoia National Forest which regulates all uses, including logging, but none of the ancient Giant Sequoias will ever be commercially cut again.

Jim Savage Chapter, E Clampus Vitus, October 23, 1977."

NOTE - Contrary to what the plaque states, a few other ancient trees were left standing. Also, the dirt road really goes to "The Chicago Stump" and not to the Boole Tree which is located on the northern slopes of Converse Mountain.

The eastern turn-out at this point gives entry to a well-used dirt road. There is a small sign on a wooden post stating "Cherry Gap Nordic Ski Trail Loop"

At this junction, our Scenic Highway begins its descent to the meadows and forests of the floor of Kings Canyon. Here we gain our first views of the Sierra Nevada to the northeast through the road corridor. The forest here is thick with pines, firs, cedars, and a few higher elevation oaks.

- 42.3      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, paved, east side of road; somewhat tree-obscured views of High Sierra summits in the eastern horizon.

- 42.6 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, east side of road - with fewer trees obscuring the view, thus perhaps a better "Photo Op" than the turn-out at 42.3. The knowledgeable viewer will recognize The Palisades of the Sierra Crest (14,242' North Palisade, 14,040' Middle Palisade, and 14,058' Split Mountain [an easy climb for those interested in "peak-bagging" a fourteen thousand foot mountain]).
- 42.9 **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, east side of road.
- 43.1 **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, large, paved, east side of road with a much smaller unpaved one of the west side of the road.
- 43.2 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, small, paved, east side of road.
- 43.3 **TURN-OUT & DIRT ROAD** - unsigned, unpaved, small, east side of road; on the west side of the road there is a dirt road and a sign indicating it leads to Converse Basin, Stump Meadow, and Boole Tree. The "challenging" dirt road ends a mile or so short of the Boole Tree. From that point on there is a typical forest trail to the tree.
- 43.5 **TURN-OUT** - signed, large, paved, east side of road.
- 43.7 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, small, paved, east side of road.
- As your descent continues, more broad-leaved trees are seen. While oaks and manzanita are becoming more common, this remains a dense forest with still frequent stands of pine, fir, and cedar.
- 44.1 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, east side of road.
- 44.2 **TURN-OUTS (2)** - signed, paved, large, on both sides of the road. Here the road is passing through a dense forest of pines, cedars, firs, and oaks. Quite a nice view.
- 44.4 **DIRT ROAD** - a closed dirt road exits to the west.
- 44.6 **6000' ELEVATION MARKER** - 2<sup>nd</sup> growth Sequoias on both sides of the road and huge Sequoia stumps.
- 44.8 **CAMPGROUND** - Here, a sign announces the "Princess Campground" and a dirt road exits north into the campground with a magnificent view of the large Indian Basin meadow seen through the screen of tall firs and pines.





Photo #33: Looking across Indian Basin meadow (photo #6340, at about mile 44.8)

44.8+ **PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - As the road passes the entrance to the Princess Campground, an un-obscured view of the large, grass-filled, Indian Basin meadow presents itself; well worth a pause if for no other reason to enjoy its unblemished beauty. In early summer, wild iris are abundant.

With the exception of a few barely visible foundation post remnants, the once massive sawmill at the bottom of the meadow is now totally gone. All of the 1<sup>st</sup> growth Sequoias were logged from this Indian Basin Grove in the early 1900s.

[FRE-116.850, Hume Lake Rd]

45.0 **ROAD JUNCTION** - Here a paved road to Hume Lake exits to the east while the road we are on continues forward to Cedar Grove. For much of Spring and Summer (well into August), our road in this area is bordered on both sides by abundant displays of colorful wild flowers.

For about one mile west to two miles east of this junction, the north side of

the road is cut into an interesting localized outcropping of basalt (a Tertiary volcanic), similar to that seen, in Segment #1, near the McKenzie Road junction.



Photo #34: Road junction, left to Cedar Grove and Kings Canyon, right to Hume Lake, an area often with an abundant display of colorful wildflowers (photo #6341, at about mile 45.0)



- 45.3      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, small, on east side of road; the rate of descent seems to increase here with magnificent views during the descent of the High Sierra summits.
- 45.7      **TURN-OUT** - signed, paved, west of the road.
- 45.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, east of the road with a dirt road exiting to the left.
- 46.0      **TURN-OUT** - signed, unpaved, east of the road.



Photo #35: View eastward through pines and yucca with the High Sierra summits (of The Minarets?) now clearly seen in the eastern horizon (photo #6347, at about mile 46+)

- 46.2      **MAGNIFICENT VIEW** - As you descend, you get a magnificent view to the northeast of the High Sierra peaks as they emerge directly in front of your car. The entire panorama begins to appear for the first time.
- 46.3      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, paved, east side of road;



a superb place to pause to take a photo of an expansive view of the High Sierra - the Canyon of the Middle Fork of the Kings River, the Monarch divide, and the Canyon of the South Fork of the Kings River (aka Kings canyon). Here the road turns and descends.



Photo #36: Descending to Cedar Grove, a view northward into the Canyon of the Middle Fork of the Kings River (photo #6349, at about mile 46.3)

- 46.9      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road.
- 47.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road; beginning to leave the forest at this point; steeper descent; Yucca plants and large manzanita bushes becoming more common.
- 47.1      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road; magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra - including 10,051' Spanish Mountain, 9,700' Obelisk, and (continuing to your right in the viewshed) Tombstone Ridge, which serves as the boundary between where the viewer is within Sequoia National Forest and Kings Canyon National Park.



Photo #37: Continuing descent, a view eastward into the Canyon of the South Fork of the Kings River (more commonly called Kings Canyon) (photo #6360, at about mile 47.5)

- 47.2 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road; similarly magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra.
- 47.2 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, partially paved, east side of road; yet another offering magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra. At this point the highest peaks of the



Sierra Nevada are strikingly seen in the eastern horizon.

- 47.4 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, paved, east side of road; yet another offering magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra. The obvious "big face" is 10,051' Spanish Mountain.



Photo #38: View northward, Spanish Mountain and the Monarch Divide (photo #6362, at about mile 47.5)

- 47.5 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, east side of road; yet another offering magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra.

**RUST COLORED ROCKS** - The steeply rising granitic walls of the canyon are here interestingly colored with a wide variety of rusty hues - likely caused by dissolved iron salts in the ground water.

- 47.5+ **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, partially paved, east side of road; yet another offering magnificent views to the northeast and directly east of the summits of the High Sierra.



- 47.8      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, east of road; an open, expansive view of the Sierras.
- 47.9      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, partially-paved, east side of road; yet another beautiful view of the Sierras.
- 48.0      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, partially-paved, east side of road; here is an expansive view to the south including in the distant horizon the granite dome on which sits the still-manned (now by a volunteer organization) Buck Rock fire lookout, one of the few such lookouts still in use.
- 48.1      **TURN-OUTS (2) & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, paved, on both sides of the road; offering the first expansive western view with the northern view here being of the massive granite face of Spanish Mountain on the north side of the Kings River. At this point, the drop from the summit of 10,051' Spanish Mountain to the floor of Kings Canyon (elev. 2,040') is 8,011' making Kings Canyon the deepest canyon in North America.
- 48.2      **5000' ELEVATION MARKER** - Here you begin to look down into the Kings River Canyon.
- 48.3      **VIEW** - As the road turns here and starts a more directly easterly movement towards Cedar Grove, you get a direct view to the east of the High Sierra summits.
- 48.5      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 48.7      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road; here the road is cut through massive granitic walls with a steep drop-off on the north side into the Kings River Canyon.
- 49.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 49.1      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road; with continuing magnificent views of the High Sierra and the Middle Fork of the Kings River coming in at this point; steep granite walls on the road's right.
- 49.5      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 49.5+      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY ("Junction View Vista Point")** - signed, large, partially-paved, north side of the road. Only a metal support

frame remains for a long-gone informational map explaining the view & naming the northern horizon's summits. To the northeast you see a magnificent panoramic view of the High Sierra ("The Obelisk" and Tombstone Ridge) while to the south you see the canyon of Ten Mile Creek descending from Hume Lake and to the east you the summits of the Sierra Nevada mountains - a true "Photo Op" in every sense of word.

The road continues to descend to the Kings River through an area of broad-leaved trees, large Manzanita bushes, Yucca plants, mountain chaparral and widely-spaced pines.

- 49.9      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.
- 50.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; Yucca plants becoming more numerous on either side of the road.
- 50.3      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, partially-paved, north side of road, one immediately following the other; California Buckeye and other low-growing native plants becoming more numerous. The road here twists and briefly heads north.
- 50.3+      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - signed, unpaved, east side of road; absolutely magnificent view looking up the Middle Fork of the Kings River; large Manzanita bushes on both sides of the road.
- 50.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, east side of road as you descend heading north.
- 50.9      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, east side of road. Here, the road in a series of "S" curves, snakes its way down into Kings Canyon.
- 51.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, east side of road. In this stretch of road, the road is heading South as it descends.
- 51.3      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road.
- 51.4      **4000' ELEVATION MARKER**
- 51.5      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road; magnificent view to the north of several gorgeous granite spires and ridges.



Photo #39: Continuing descent, view southeastward (photo #6369, at about mile 50)





Photo #40: Continuing descent, view NE from a paved turn-out (photo #6371, at about mile 50)

51.6      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - signed, unpaved, both sides of road.

[FRE-123.559, Ten Mile Creek]

51.7      **CROSSING OF TEN MILE CREEK** - which descends here from Hume Lake which was created in 1908 by the construction of the Hume Lake Dam (the world's first reinforced concrete multiple arch dam) for storing water for fluming and for a logging pond for the Hume-Bennett Lumber Company. The

reservoir (now used exclusively for recreational purposes) has a water surface of 87 acres and stores about 460,000,000 gallons. The dam was designed by John S. Eastwood who had a long and distinguished career as a consulting engineer.



Photo #41: Vegetation near Ten Mile Creek crossing (photo #6376, at about mile 51.7)

[FRE-123.660, Robinsons]

- 51.8      **KINGS CANYON LODGE** - a modest-sized, well maintained, rustic, visitor accommodation consisting of six or so compact cabins well hidden in the local forest and one central lodge.
  
- 52.3      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, west side of road (with the road descending northerly at this point).
  
- 52.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, moderately large, west side of road.
  
- 52.5      **ROAD CLOSURE GATES** - Here one sees the steel gates that are used to close the road in the winter.



- 52.6 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road. Here one sees a deep drop into Ten Mile Canyon.
- 52.7 **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of the road, one immediately following the other.
- 52.8 **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of the road, one immediately following the other.
- 52.9 **TURN-OUT & YUCCA POINT TRAILHEAD** - unsigned, unpaved, west side of road. A trail descends from this point to the Kings River for fishing.

**BOYDEN CAVE ROOF PENDANT**

From Yucca Point to two miles east of Boyden Cavern, the South Fork of the Kings River cuts through the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant, one of the large roof pendants of the Kings Terrane. The roof pendant consists of slate, quartzite, marble and schist. Sparse fossils, mainly crinoids and ammonites of Jurassic age, have been found in some of these rocks. Excellent exposures of the roof pendant can be seen along the river, in the roadcuts along the highway, and in the slopes above the river. One of the best places to see these rocks is at Horseshoe Bend.

- 53.1 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, north side of road with the road now heading predominantly east into Kings Canyon.
- 53.2 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 53.3 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.
- 53.4 **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 53.6 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, but long turn-out at this point on north side of road; magnificent view down into the Kings River Canyon and the Kings River.
- 53.7 **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road; magnificent view down into the Kings River Canyon and the Kings River.
- 53.8 **INTERESTING ROCKS** - Here one sees some particularly interesting massive metamorphic blocks to the right of the road, along with Yucca plants, Red Buds, and other interesting plant life.





Photo #42: As the road enters eastward into Kings Canyon (photo #6377, at about mile 53+)



Photo #43: The view westward (photo #6379, at about mile 53+)





Photo #44: Magnificent rock face to north of roadway (photo #6380, at about mile 53+)

- 54.1      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 54.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road. Here the road is getting closer and closer to a massive granite face.

[FRE-126.143, Sidehill Viaduct 42138]  
[FRE-126.188, Sidehill Viaduct 42139]





Photo #45: Looking skyward as we move into Kings Canyon (photo #6384, at about mile 54+)

- 54.3      **MAN-MADE ROCK WALLS** - In this stretch of road, most likely because of the steep drop to the Kings River, there is a series of nicely constructed and visually appealing low rock barriers on the road's north side. The views here are becoming progressively more magnificent as the road moves onward down into Kings Canyon.

At approximately this point, the road (while driving eastward) leaves a predominantly granitic area and enters an area of Pre-Cretaceous metasedimentary rocks.

- 54.5      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road with the road continuing to twist and turn will still heading predominantly east as it descends into Kings Canyon.
- 54.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.
- 55.1      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.

- 55.2      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; two quite impressive dark spires (metamorphic?) in the near eastern view; excellent opportunity here to closely observe the rock structure of the canyon on the right (south) side of the road.
- 55.5      **STUNNING VIEW** - a magnificent view to the north of a stunning, shear, massive, metamorphic structure.
- 55.6      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; here you can get a glimpse of the road continuing well below you as it winds its way into Kings Canyon.
- 55.8      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north of road; excellent photo-op.
- 55.9      **TURN OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; excellent photo-op of a grey marble "dike".
- 56.0      **TURN OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; excellent photo-op with a steep creek bed coming down into your view-shed.
- 56.2      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, large, north side of road.
- 56.3      **TURN-OUT & ROAD CROSSES SMALL UN-NAMED CREEK** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road with a rock structure offering water "for car radiators only". USGS map identifies creek as Redwood Creek.
- 56.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, north side of road.
- 56.5      **HILLSIDE PLANTS** - a visually appealing steep hillside of California Buckeye and other interesting low-growing plants.
- 56.7      **TURN-OUT, CAMPGROUND ENTRANCE, & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - unsigned, unpaved, east side of road with the road here descending northerly; signed entrance on west of road to "Convict Flat<sup>7</sup> Campground & Picnic Area" with the campground itself only partially visible from the roadway; photo-op here looking directly ahead of a massive, shear, granite structure colored with various quite striking hues of yellow and chartreuse (caused mostly by lichens).

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<sup>7</sup> Convict labor was used in the building of the road into Kings Canyon. During that construction, a prison camp was located here.

- 57.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north (river) side of road
- 57.0+      **TURN-OUT & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY ("Horseshoe Bend")** - unsigned, partially paved, larger, north (river) side of road; road here cuts through massive blocks that partially overhang the roadway.

**POINT OF GEOLOGIC INTEREST**

At Horseshoe Bend, the South Fork of the Kings River makes a horseshoe-shaped detour as it cuts across a thick bed of very hard quartzite in the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant. The quartzite bed is about 3,600 feet thick, is layered, and the layers are near-vertical. The quartzite was formed by metamorphism of a thick bed of quartz sandstone. Faint cross bedding and graded bedding can be seen in some of the sandstone beds. The sandstone is thought to have been formed in a shallow water tidal environment or perhaps as a channel in a deeper water fan system. Age dating from zircons in the sandstone indicates that the sandstone was sourced from a pre-Cambrian continental mass.

Looking westward from the turn-out, the rocks of the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant are exposed in several steep ridges on the southern slope of Monarch Divide. The ridges of quartzite appear as dark reddish-brown cliffs. The gray cliffs and spires are formed from beds of marble, and the brown areas of subdued relief are schist.

- 57.3      **CANYON NARROWS** - At this point, the other side of the canyon has become really quite close. In contrast to the flat-bottomed "U" profile of glacier-cut canyons, this portion of Kings Canyon is river cut and thus has a "V" profile. The glaciers did not advance this far down the canyon.
- 57.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.
- 57.5      **TURN-OUTS (2) & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY** - two unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road - right next to each other; the view to the east is beautifully framed between two tall, shear, massive marble spires of the Boyden Cave roof pendant, and the road here descends more precipitously.
- 57.9      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, larger, north side of road; the road here drops closer to the Kings River.
- 58.0      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, small, one right after the other.
- 58.2      **TURN-OUT & BOYDEN CAVE COMPLEX** - unsigned, paved, large, north side of road (provides overflow parking for Boyden Cave visitors). Our road here crosses the Kings River to its north side.



Prior to the river crossing, the road passes through a narrow (<1.0 mile wide) N-S trending band of limestone that extends about 2.0 miles north of the road and 2.5 miles south of the road, a fertile geologic structure for the development of an underground limestone cavern.

Just before the river crossing, you can enter the Boyden Cave site with its paved parking area and two small Visitors' Center and Restroom buildings. The site is well maintained and its two buildings are both unobtrusive.

#### **POINT OF GEOLOGIC INTEREST**

Boyden Cavern is in a thick layer of marble that lies within the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant. This blue-gray marble is exposed in the parking area and in the channel of the river in the vicinity of the bridge. The marble is a massive, vertically-layered unit about 2,000 feet thick. The entrance to Boyden Cavern is in a cliff in the lower part of the river canyon on the south side of the river. The cave has many decorations normally associated with limestone caves, including draperies, stalactites, and stalagmites. Boyden Cavern is one of many small-to-moderate-sized caves that occur with the limestone and marble of the Kings Terrane.

#### **POINT OF BOTANICAL INTEREST**

There are large California Nutmeg (*Torreya californica*) trees overlooking the parking lot. They are conifers with sharp needles and nutmeg-like "cones" and are not common in this vegetation zone.

[FRE-130.127, S Fk Kings R]

58.3

**VIEW OF BOYDEN CAVE TRAIL** - Here one can see on the slope on the other side of the river the short trail that ascends from the Boyden Cave Visitors' Center to the cave entrance.

**TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road (now on the side away from the river).

The road closely follows the course of the Kings River and is constructed immediately next to the river, just 12' or so above the water with shear cliffs (still of the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant) on either side of the canyon.

The foliage here is transitioning from the mountain chaparral of a few miles to the west to a forest of cedars, pines, and higher elevation oaks.



Photo #46: Looking westward with the Kings River in the foreground (photo #6386, at about mile 58.3)

- 58.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, wide, on south (river side) of road.
- 59.4      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of the road, one immediately following the other.

**GEOLOGIC NOTE** - At about this point, the road moves beyond the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant and enters a granite area. These are all fairly pale and contain generous amounts of quartz and pink orthoclase feldspar, but they



are not all the same. Geologists have found that they belong to several masses of granite, each intruded at a different time, each distinctive enough to recognize and plot on a map.



Photo #47: Rockwall above Kings River (photo #6390, at about mile 59+)





Photo #48: Roadside foliage with Kings River seen beyond (photo #6397, at about mile 59+)

- 59.5      **CROSSING A SMALL CREEK**
- 59.9      **ROAD RISES** - The road begins to climb a bit above the river at this point, perhaps to about 20' above the riverbed.
- 60.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.
- 60.1      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road.
- 60.3      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, north side of road; at this point the road has come closer to the river and is once again only about 12' or so above the riverbed.
- 60.5      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, both sides of the road. The forest here is becoming more dense and the road is again ascending higher above the river. The river here is flowing and tumbling through numerous large boulders, much adding to its scenic beauty.

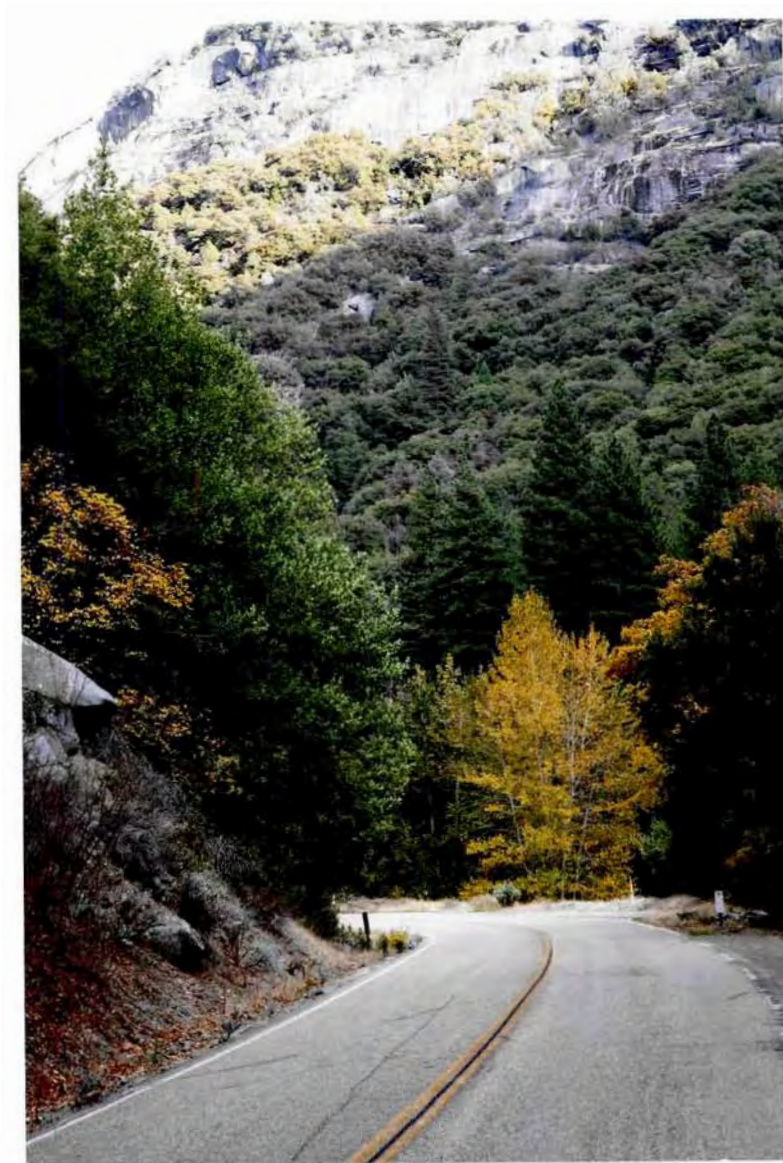


Photo #49: In Kings Canyon, moving eastward towards Cedar Grove and the entrance to Kings Canyon National Park (photo #6398, at about mile 59+)

- 61.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, south side of road.
- 61.2      **RIVER VIEW** - The river here is descending through some particularly spectacular boulders, well worth a photo but of something the beauty of which is difficult to capture on film.





Photo #50: View NE while descending into Kings Canyon (photo #6400)

- 61.4      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.
- 61.7      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, south side of road.
- 61.8      **4000' ELEVATION MARKER**
- 62.1      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road. The road here remains quite close to the Kings River.
- 62.3      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, both sides of the road. Foliage here consists largely of pines, Cottonwoods, some oaks, steam-side willows, etc. - a really beautiful section of roadway.
- 62.6      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, long, south side of road.
- 62.7      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road. More and more pines and cedars ...



- 63.1      **TURN-OUTS (2)** - unsigned, unpaved, small, one on each side of the road.
- 63.3      **GRIZZLY FALLS & PICNIC AREA** - paved parking area, nice picnic area and a short trail to the falls. The Kings River at this point is descending slowly and there are several large and visually appealing pools of water.
- 64.5      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, large, south side of road.
- 64.9      **TURN-OUT & DEER COVE TRAILHEAD (entrance to Monarch Wilderness)** - signed, paved, on north side of road.
- 65.0      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, paved, south side of road. Here, again, the road is quite close to the Kings River and only a few feet above it.
- 65.3      **TURN-OUT** - signed, large, paved, north side of road.
- 65.6      **TURN-OUT** - signed, small, paved, south side of road.
- 65.8      **TURN-OUT** - unsigned, unpaved, small, south side of road.

[FRE-137.940, End Rte@Kings Cyn N P]

- 66.0      **PARK BOUNDARY** - sign indicating leaving Sequoia National Forest & re-entering Kings Canyon National Park. At this point, Segment #2 of our proposed *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway* ends. The actual sign announcing Kings Canyon National Park is 1/10th of mile further east.



Photo #51: A sunset view westward from the *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway* just west of the Grant Grove entrance to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks (photo #6402)

## Total Visual Intrusions

**A Summary of Visual Intrusions along the Route of Highway 180 proposed for State Scenic Highway Status is provided in Appendix A, p. 97 of the Visual Assessment. Not more than one-quarter of the proposed scenic highway should be impacted by visual intrusions.**

<u>Description</u>	<u>Miles of Minor Intrusions</u>	<u>Miles of Moderate Intrusions</u>	<u>Miles of Major Intrusions</u>
Segment 1	5.20	1.80	0.40
Segment 2	<u>0.25</u>	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total by Type	5.45	2.30	0.40

Total Miles of Minor, Moderate and Major Intrusions: 8.15

1.05 miles of lesser duplicate intrusions were deleted from the total above as per Caltrans instructions. Staff calculated 7.10\* miles of net intrusions of the 60.7 miles of the proposed State scenic highway route or 11.7 percent of the total route.

\*NOTE: Caltrans Section III, Step 3D of the State Scenic Highway Guidelines Nomination Process states that the net intrusion calculation does not include lesser intrusions where there is a greater intrusion at the same location on the other side of the roadway.



**APPENDIX A: Summary of Intrusions**

<b><u>Intrusion Number &amp; Description</u></b>	<b><u>Length of Minor</u></b>	<b><u>Length of Moderate</u></b>	<b><u>Length of Major</u></b>
<b>SEGMENT #1</b>			
1 - Overhead utility lines	3.5m		
2 - Vulcan Materials sign		0.05m	
3 - Pierces' Park			0.3m
4 - Mobile Hm Pk & Pay/Fish			0.1m
5 - Homes	0.1m		
6 - Home & derelict cars		0.05m	
7 - Sherwood Inn	0.1m		
8 - Homes	0.1m		
9 - Homes	0.1m		
10 - Friant-Kern Canal	0.3m		
11 - Dis-used olive grove	0.1m		
12 - Signal tower lights	0.1m		
13 - Caltrans changeable sign	0.1m		
14 - HV power lines		0.2m	
15 - Ag reservoir & poultry fm	0.1m		
16 - Old farm buildings	0.1m		
17 - Squaw Valley		0.7m	
18 - Herb Garden	0.1m		
19 - Unused commercial site		0.1m	
20 - Clingan's Junction		0.3m	
21 - Hume Lake Ranger Office	0.1m		
22 - Brick Church	0.1m		
23 - Driveway to old house	0.1m		
24 - Sequoia Inn		0.1m	
25 - Poorly maintained homes		0.2m	
26 - Snowline Lodge		0.1m	
27 - Telephone poles in horizon	<u>0.1m</u> 5.2m	<u>1.8m</u>	<u>0.4m</u>
<b>SEGMENT #2</b>			
28 - Road signs	0.05m		
29 - Kings Canyon Lodge		0.2m	
30 - Derelict buildings	0.05m		
31 - Road signs	0.05m		
32 - Boyden Cave		0.3m	
33 - Boyden Cave trail	<u>0.1m</u> 0.25m	<u>0.5m</u>	<u>0.0m</u>

**Location & Description of Segment #1 Intrusions**

- [1] from 0.0 miles to about 3.5 miles, a Minor Intrusion caused by overhead utility lines within view from the corridor.
- [2] at 0.7 miles: Moderate Intrusion [0.05 miles], the Vulcan Materials Company onsite advertising sign.
- [3] at 1.2 miles: Pierce's Park, a Major Intrusion [0.3 miles], bar and ramshackle buildings, ill-kept campground on the banks of the Kings River.
- [4] at 1.4 miles: Major Intrusion [0.1 miles], a cramped, old fashioned mobile home park on the left and a well maintained "pay per fish" pair of small stocked fishing lakes (about 1/2 acre each) on the right.
- [5] at 1.8 miles: Crossing of Lone Oak Road on the south - Minor Intrusions of widely-spaced, modest, generally well maintained local homes [total = 0.1 miles].
- [6] at 2.3 miles: Moderate Intrusion [0.05 miles], a poorly maintained home surrounded by a dozen or so derelict cars; likely temporary as community activists are working to get this cleaned up.
- [7] at 2.3+ miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], north of road, two widely-spaced, well maintained, modest, local farm homes.
- [8] at 3.0 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], historic circa 1920 Frankwood School, recently used as the Sherwood Inn restaurant.
- [9] at 3.2 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], north of road, two widely-spaced, well maintained, modest, local farm homes.
- [10] at 4.3 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.3 miles], the Friant-Kern Canal
- [11] at 5.3 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], on your right a dis-used old olive grove.
- [12] at 6.1 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], at night only, in the SE distance, lights on 3 signal towers.
- [13] at 8.7 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles], a Caltrans changeable message sign.
- [14] at 8.8 miles: Moderate Intrusion: HV power lines [0.2 miles].

- [15] at 9.3 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]: in the southerly distance, surrounded by a 200-300 acre well-tended orange grove: (a) an agricultural reservoir, (b) a poultry ranch.
- [16] at 13.4 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]: SE corner of the junction, a small group of old farm buildings and a "needing repair" long, narrow barn once used for raising turkeys or chickens.
- [17] at 14.5-15.2: Squaw Valley, a Moderate Intrusion [0.7 miles] with all new buildings in this largely "linear" community set back 200' from the road in keeping with Fresno County's designation of this road as a Scenic Highway in its Long Range Plan [check this terminology]. These new buildings are all one story in height and well maintained, including a Sheriff's Substation, a Fresno County Library, a Community Church, and two or three other commercial establishments. In the center of town is an old sawmill/lumber yard, now serving the area as the local hardware store.
- [18] at 15.9 miles: Herb Garden, a Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]; a wholesale/retail nursery specializing in herbs. Here, the intrusions largely end. As you continue east, the road briefly descends and a rocky grass-covered hill rises in front of you. The road twists and continues its descent, crossing Silver Lane on your left and, on your right, a road that appears to be the entrance to an old farm.
- [19] at 17.0 miles: Unused Commercial Structure, a Moderate Intrusion [0.1 miles], a long unused commercial site north side of the road, including a derelict building and four piles of what appear to be "recovered" building materials.
- [20] at 19.6-20.1 miles: Clingan's Junction, a Major Intrusion [0.3 miles]; includes several sparsely located commercial establishments including the Kings Canyon Mobile Home Park at 19.8.
- [21] at 20.0 miles: Hume Lake Ranger District Office - Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]; located at the east end of Clingan's Junction on the north side of the road; well landscaped parking area includes a historic "Donkey Engine" from the 1890s logging era (possibly worth a stop to examine).
- [22] at 20.1 miles: Brick Church - Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]; set back from the road by a well landscaped parking area; a recently built, well maintained "traditional" brick "Mormon" church of modest size.
- [23] at 21.3 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles] at eastern end of turn-out, a driveway into a well set back old house.



- [24] at 21.8 miles: Moderate Intrusion [0.1 miles] on north side of road, a recently restored, nine room old style motor inn (apparently quite busy).
- [25] at 23.6 miles: Moderate Intrusion [0.2 miles]: 4-5 widely separated homes, some poorly maintained, mostly well set back, minor impact individually but moderate impact "in sum"; one might wish for a program to reduce the adverse visual impact, perhaps County-funded "screens" using native trees.
- [26] at 28.2 miles: Snowline Lodge - Moderate Intrusion [ 0.1 miles]; a rustic, 1930s style highway lodge with a small parking area separated from the road by a berm on which have been placed some interesting (but somewhat derelict) antique farm implements.
- [27] at 28.9 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles] - telephone poles on the horizon.

#### **Location & Description of Segment #2 Intrusions**

- [28] at 51.6 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.05 miles], two small road signs announcing Kings Canyon Lodge in 1/4 mile; seen only when driving into the canyon.
- [29] at 51.8 miles: Kings Canyon Lodge, a Moderate Intrusion [0.2 miles]: a modest-sized, well maintained, rustic, visitor accommodation consisting of six or so smallish cabins and one central lodge.
- [30] at 51.8+ miles: Minor Intrusion [0.05 miles]: 2-3 small derelict buildings can be seen a fair distance from the road, largely hidden by local trees and shrubs.
- [31] at 52.0 miles: Minor Intrusion [0.05 miles]: two small road signs announcing Kings Canyon Lodge in 1/4 mile; seen only when leaving the canyon.
- [32] at 58.2 miles: Boyden Cave, Moderate Intrusion [0.3 miles]: Just before the river crossing, you can enter the Boyden Cave site with its paved parking area and two small Visitors' Center and Restroom buildings. The site is well maintained and its two buildings are both unobtrusive. The primary visual intrusion is the paved parking area which covers approximately one acre.
- [33] at 58.3 miles: View of Boyden Cave Trail, a Minor Intrusion [0.1 miles]: From the roadway on the north side of the river, one can see on the slope on the other side of the river the guardrail and asphalt pavement of the short trail that ascends from the Boyden Cave Visitors' Center to the cave's entrance.

## **APPENDIX B: Acknowledgements & Sources**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The primary author of this Visual Assessment was James M. Spitze. He was ably assisted by his wife, Betty Jean Spitze, who either drove the family car or took notes during several trips made on the roadway in mid 2007. Mr. Spitze accepts all blame for any errors found in the document and deeply appreciates all of the excellent help he received from the many people who contributed to this effort.

Retired Professor of Botany, Steve Stocking of San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California, meticulously reviewed and corrected drafts #9 and #14 plus provided much incremental geologic data. He is widely respected as an expert regarding the birds and wild flowers of the road's vicinity and his comments regarding these two subjects added greatly to the accuracy and completeness of the text.

The material on the birds of the *Sierra Gateway* viewshed came from several sources: Prof. Stocking, Sally Delap-John (a long-time local resident and respected watercolor artist), and Kay Barnes (another long-time local resident).

All of the photographs were taken by Henry J. Provost, a long-time Sanger resident with a deep interest (and much skill) in outdoor photography.

We must also express our appreciation to Caltrans Landscape Architect Michael Mills for his constructive advice regarding the visual intrusions and evaluations of them.

### **WRITTEN SOURCES**

Regarding the Native Americans:

- [1] Kroeber, A.L., *Handbook of the Indians of California*, Dover Publications, Inc., 1976 [an unabridged republication of the work originally published in 1925 as Bulletin 78 of the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution]. This remains an important text on this topic and provided particularly helpful material regarding the dividing line between the Mono and Yokut territories.
- [2] Latta, F.F., *Handbook of Yokuts Indians, Second Edition*, Bear State Books, 1977. The second edition is almost a tripling in size from the first edition and sets forth Latta's Yokut material in a much better organized manner.
- [3] McCarthy, Helen, *Choinimni Ethnography and Ethnohistory*, included as Part I (pages 5-22) within *Test Excavations at CA-FRE-61, Fresno County, California*, by Kelly R. McGuire, published as Occasional Papers in Anthropology No. 5, by the

California State University, Bakersfield, Museum of Anthropology, 1995. This is an excellent paper that summarizes and organizes much of the material in the Latta and Kroeber handbooks while also adding additional information from several more recent sources.

Regarding other local history:

- [4] Latta, F. F., *Dalton Gang Days*, Bear State Books, 1976. Much misinformation exists regarding "The Dalton Gang" in California. Latta's book, based on never-before-performed interviews with credible participants, corrects the story and presents the truth in a balanced, well organized manner.
- [5] McCubbin, John C. (edited by Kenneth Zech), *The McCubbin Papers: an early history of Reedley and the "76 Country"*, Reedley Historical Society, 1988. This is by far the best, most comprehensive, most accurate, and - certainly - the most entertaining book on the Reedley & Sanger area for almost the entire hundred year period, 1850-1950.

Regarding geologic data:

- [6] Alt, David & Hyndman, Donald W., *Roadside Geology of Northern and Central California*, Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2000. This is the source for the material regarding the road's interesting rock formations near Bald Mountain (the southern extension of Dalton Mountain). Also, this book provided supplemental information regarding the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant.
- [7] Feray, Dan E. (and others), *Geological Highway Map of the Pacific Southwest Region: California [and] Nevada*, The American Association of Petroleum Geologists with the cooperation of the United States Geological Survey, 1968. This map provided supplemental information to the Matthews map (see source 9).
- [8] Konigsmark, Ted, *Geologic Trips: Sierra Nevada*, Bored Feet Publications, 2003. This is the primary source for the material regarding the Kings Terrane and its subset, the Boyden Cave Roof Pendant.
- [9] Matthews, Robert A., Burnett, John L., *Geologic Map of California: Fresno Sheet*, State of California Division of Mines and Geology, 1966 (4th printing, 1991). This is a remarkably detailed map with a wealth of interesting and quite specific information about the content of the geologic formations encountered by our *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*.
- [10] twenty or so USGS maps covering the full viewshed of the *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*.



### APPENDIX C: A Short History of Centerville

In the early 1850s, the old Stockton-Los Angeles Stage Road meandered northward from west of Exeter to east of Farmersville, thence between the villages of Yetten (to the west) and Seville (to the east). Continuing NW, it passed east of Cutler and entered Fresno County just east of Smith Mountain. From behind Smith Mountain, the old road moved NW for several miles and then turned due North to cross the Kings River via a ferry operated by William J. Campbell and his brother Edward. By 1854, a small town (named Scottsburg in honor of its colorful saloon keeper, William Y. "Monte" Scott) was growing at the ferry crossing - with Scott's saloon, Widow Flanagan's Falcon Hotel, and various other businesses. However, the great Kings River flood of the winter of 1861-62 completely destroyed the town, leaving not a trace of what some say was "the first settlement in Fresno County".

The citizens decided to rebuild a half mile NW, on higher ground, away from the river, near Collins Creek. On Christmas Eve, December 24, 1867, another flood threatened the town and the citizens decided to move again - another half mile NW - out of the rich "bottom" land to land above the bluff overlooking the Kings River. At its new site, the residents renamed their town "Centerville" which it retains today.

There is no sign today of the Scottsburg of 1854. Its location - due east of the Vulcan gravel pits - will soon be obliterated for all time as those pits expand eastward as currently planned.

The "new" town of Centerville grew quickly. Jesse Morrow (after whom Jesse Morrow Mountain is named) built a three-story flour mill and ran a four-horse stage line between the town and Fresno, its then smaller neighbor. Later, he became owner of the Henry/Morrow House, Fresno's first high-quality hotel.

In 1888, the Southern Pacific Railroad elected to build its rail line through the far smaller neighboring town of Sanger. The effect of the boom in Sanger was to depopulate Centerville. Then, in 1889, the Kings River Lumber Company elected to build its huge mill in Sanger - further hastening Centerville's decline.

However, the surrounding farming economy was strong and Centerville slowly recovered. In the mid 1890s Oliver's saloon opened as did the Quong Fat Merchandise Store. In 1898, the Independent Order of Odd Fellow's erected a meeting hall, and re-erected it in 1916 after a disastrous fire. In the 1920s Centerville had a resurgence with several new residences (still extant) being built. The Great Depression brought a long period of quiet to the community, a quiet that only recently has it begun to awaken from.

We can hope that William Caldwell's early 1870s brick residence - still standing today just NW of the intersection of North Oliver and Highway 180 - soon receives the recognition it deserves as one of the area's oldest structures. We hope too for a similar recognition for Orie O. Oliver's circa 1897 residence which is also still standing - at 16287 Highway 180, almost at the exact starting point of the *Sierra Gateway Scenic Highway*.