

Westside Rails: Tuolumne to North Fork/Tuolumne River

At the turn of the century, the growing timber industry was an economic boon to Tuolumne County. The Westside Flume and Lumber Co. came to Carters (now the town of Tuolumne) to build its impressive sawmill. To bring the timber to its mill, Westside Lumber built its own narrow gauge railroad: the Hetch Hetchy and Yosemite Valley Railway.

About the site

The initial stretch of the mainline grade between Carters and the North Fork Tuolumne River was blasted into the steep and rocky canyon. Chinese workers began its construction in 1901, with local Native Americans finishing the job. Without bulldozers or loaders, these crews carved the railway out of a canyon wall, winding in and out of the turns and drainages, eventually crossing the North Fork, allowing the Westside Lumber to log its timber to the west.



Rails to trails

Today, 5.5 miles of this trail to the North Fork of the Tuolumne River have been converted to combination hiking / biking / equestrian trails. You will see rails, ties and other construction features such as stacked rock retaining walls. The trail affords spectacular views and a stunning display of wildflowers in spring.

There is little or no shade on this wide, level trail—take plenty of water, wear a hat and take an energy snack just in case you need the extra calories on the trail. Except for extreme weather conditions, this trail is open during the winter months.

Getting there

From the Forest Supervisor’s Office, turn left on Mono Way to Tuolumne Road. Turn right on Tuolumne Road to Carter Street in Tuolumne. Turn left on Carter Street to Buchanan Road. Turn right. Travel 0.2 mile on Buchanan Road. The trailhead and parking area are on the left, at Buchanan and Mira Monte roads.

Please feel free to call, write or visit any of these locations for more information on camping or other recreation activities offered in the Stanislaus National Forest:

**Stanislaus National Forest
Supervisor’s Office**
19777 Greenley Road
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 532-3671

Calaveras Ranger District
5519 Hwy 4
PO Box 500
Hathaway Pines, CA 95323
(209) 795-1381

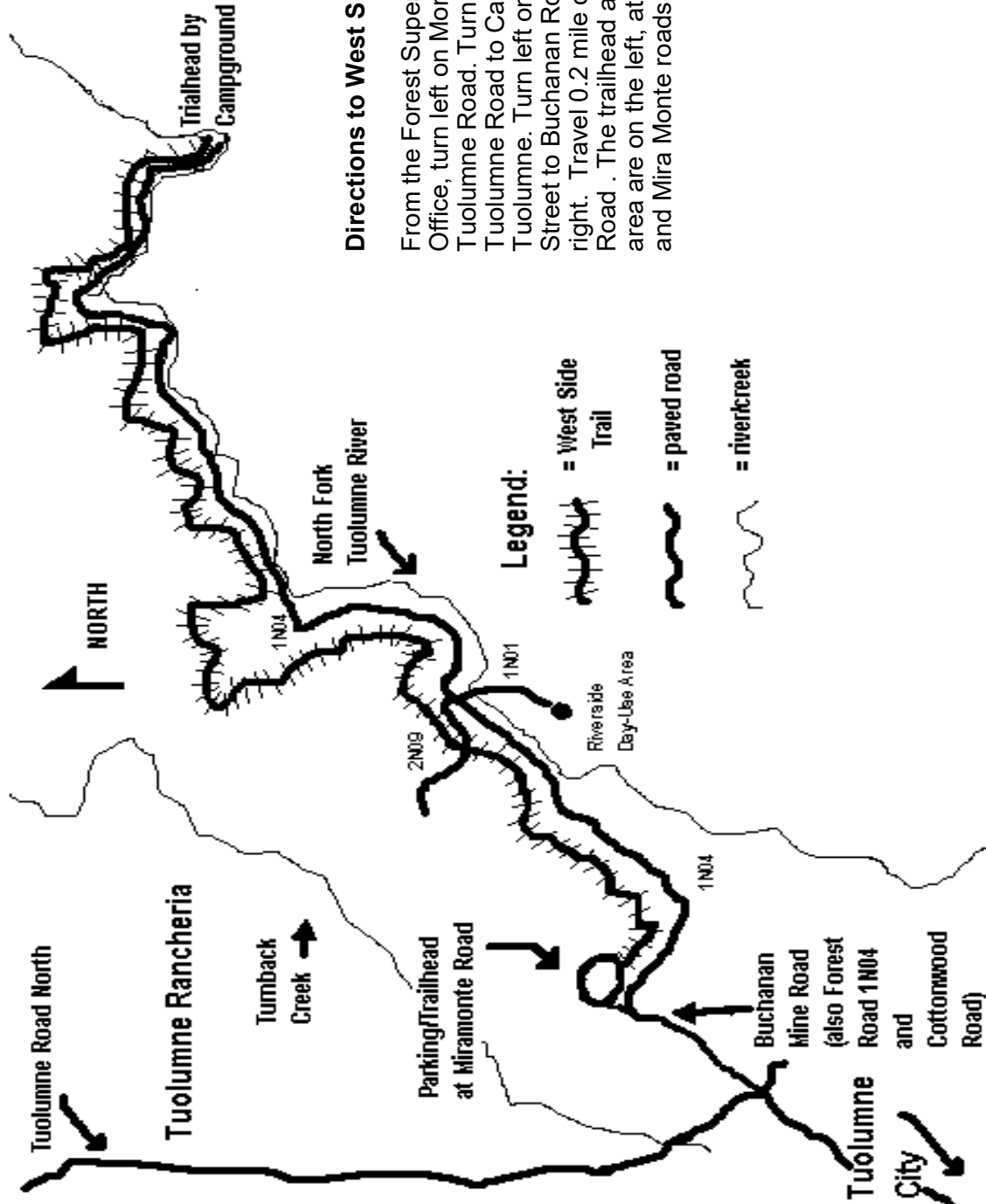
Summit Ranger District
#1 Pinecrest Lake Road
Pinecrest, CA 95364
(209) 965-3434

Groveland Ranger District
24545 Hwy 120
Groveland, CA 95321
(209) 962-7825



West Side Rails: (Page 2)

ROG 16-51-03; 2/2020



Directions to West Side Rails:

From the Forest Supervisor's Office, turn left on Mono Way to Tuolumne Road. Turn right on Tuolumne Road to Carter Street in Tuolumne. Turn left on Carter Street to Buchanan Road. Turn right. Travel 0.2 mile on Buchanan Road. The trailhead and parking area are on the left, at Buchanan and Mira Monte roads.