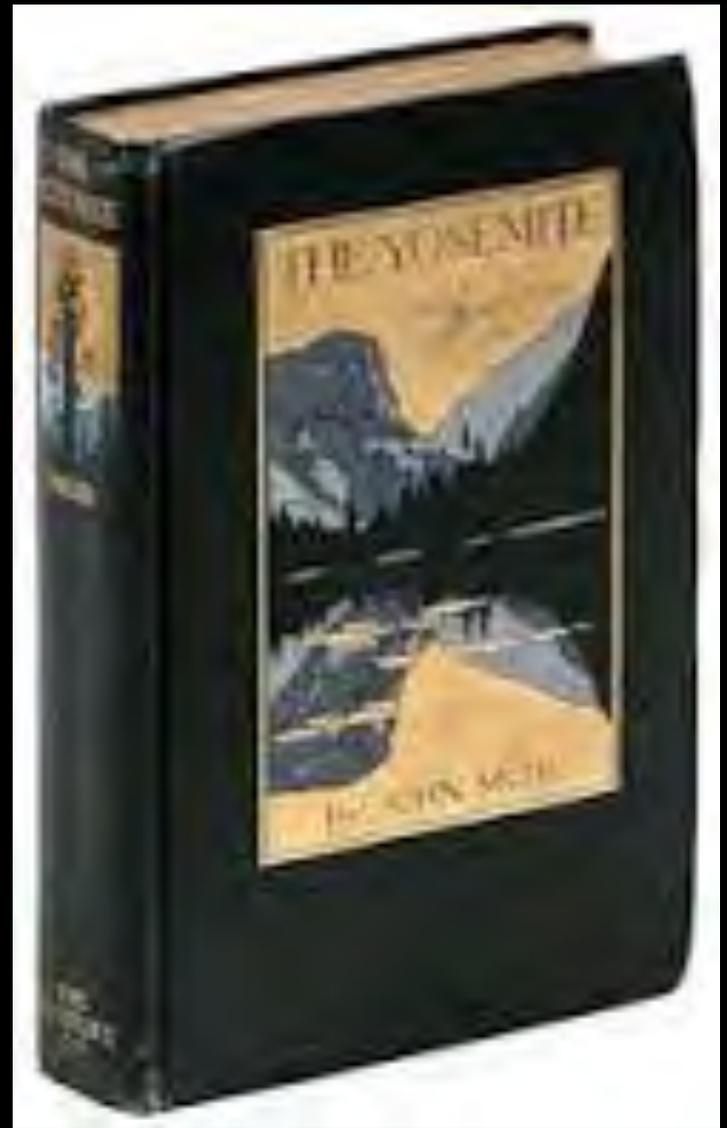
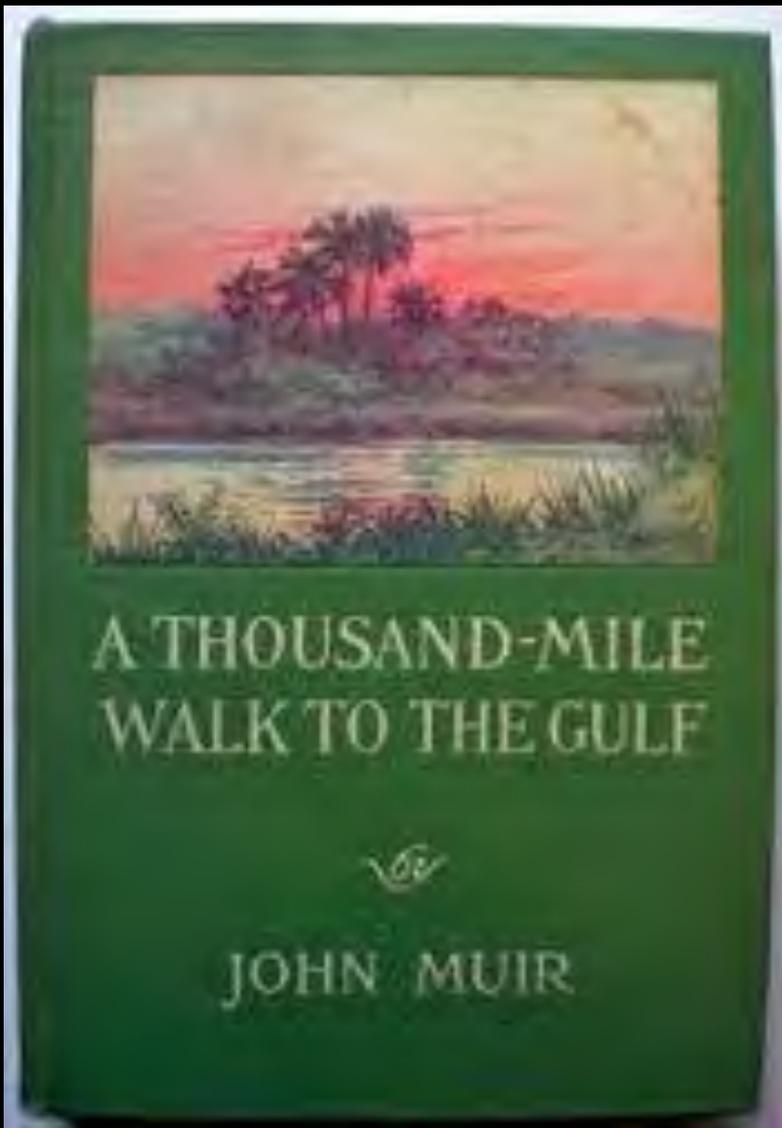


# The Muir Ramble Route: Urban Backpacking





Reading Muir's writing to find what he said about his trip.

“I followed the Diablo foothills along the San José Valley to Gilroy, thence over the Diablo Mountains to the valley of San Joaquin by the Pacheco Pass, thence down the valley until about opposite the mouth of the Merced River, thence across the San Joaquin, and up into the Sierra Nevada, to the mammoth trees of Mariposa and the glorious Yo Semite valley.”



Research at the Bancroft  
Library, UC Berkeley



Finding the route  
near Santa Nella

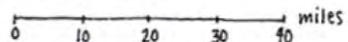


California Academy of Science:  
an 1868 plant press replica

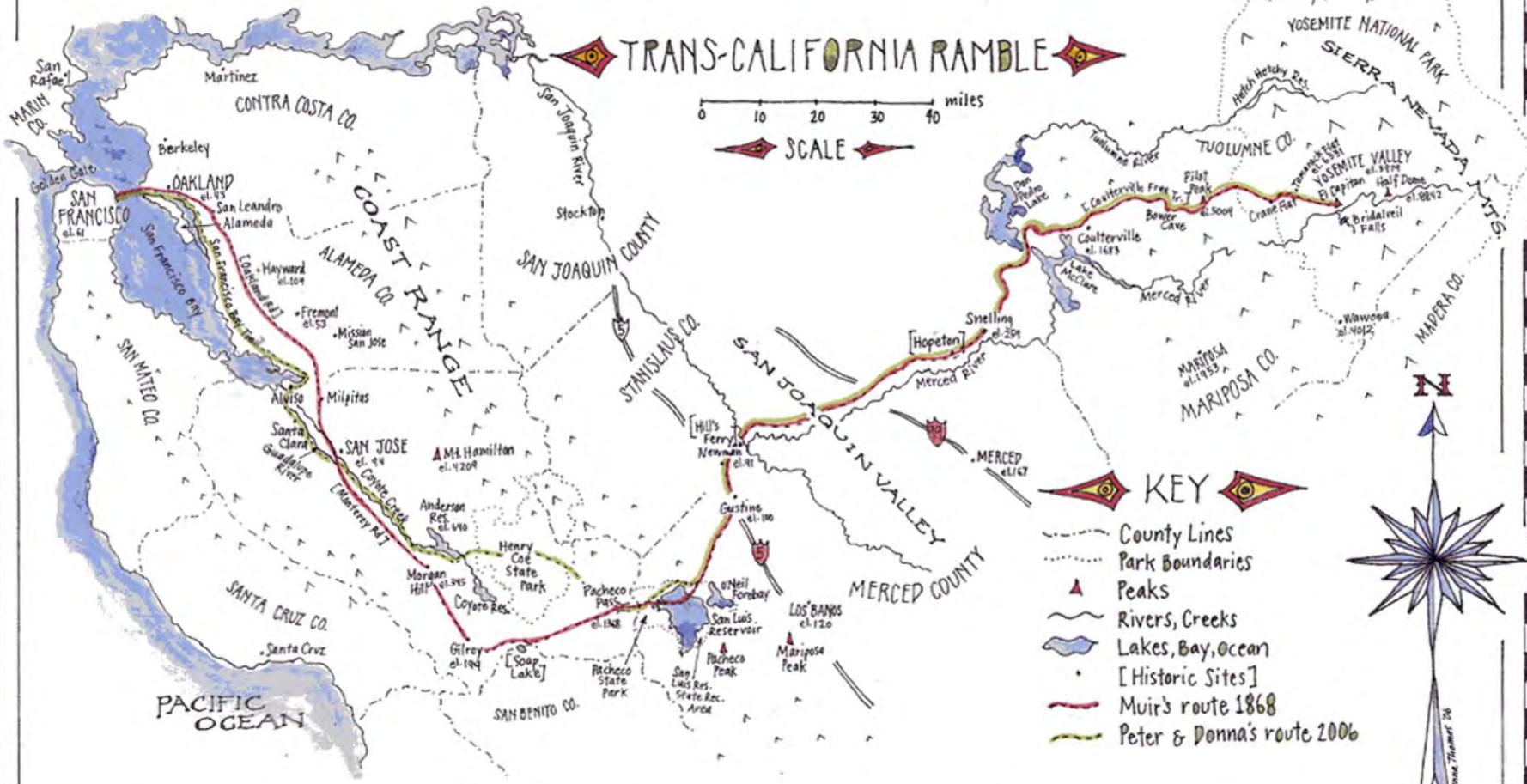


Map from the Merced County  
Courthouse Museum

# TRANS-CALIFORNIA RAMBLE

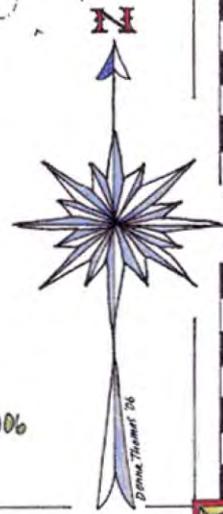


SCALE



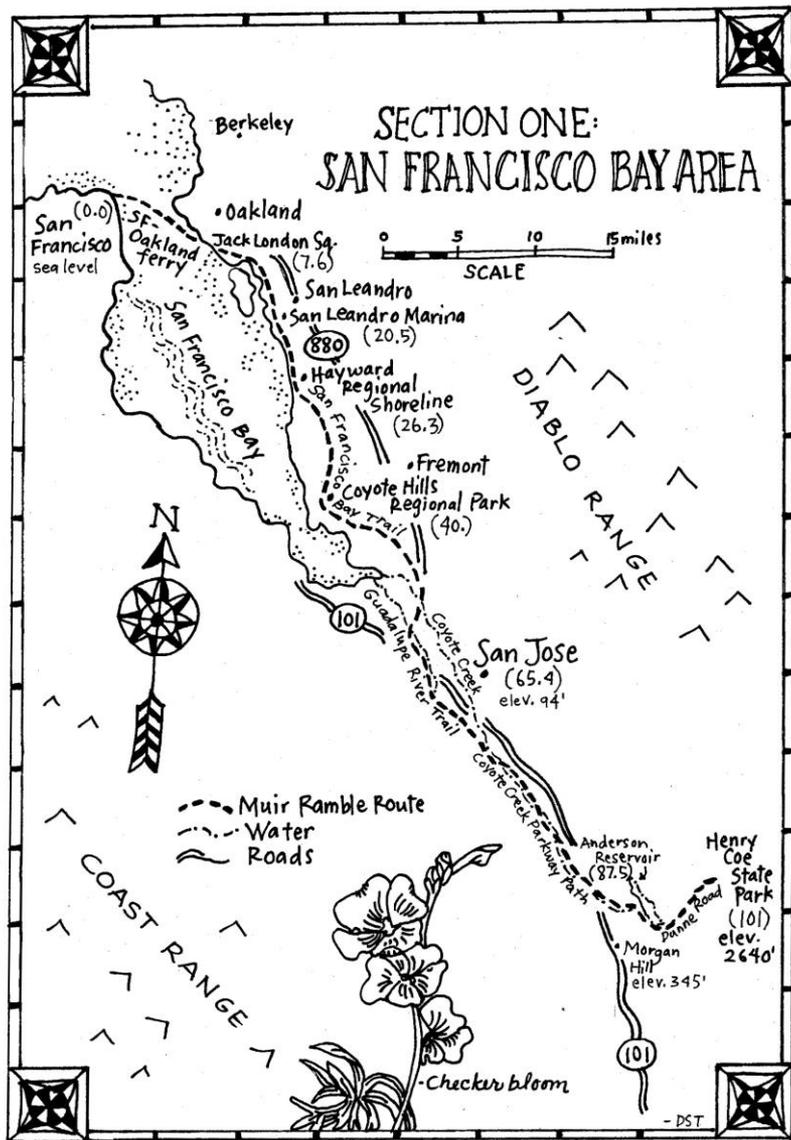
## KEY

- County Lines
- Park Boundaries
- Peaks
- Rivers, Creeks
- Lakes, Bay, Ocean
- [Historic Sites]
- Muir's route 1868
- Peter & Donna's route 2006



Donna Thamer '06

# SECTION ONE: SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA





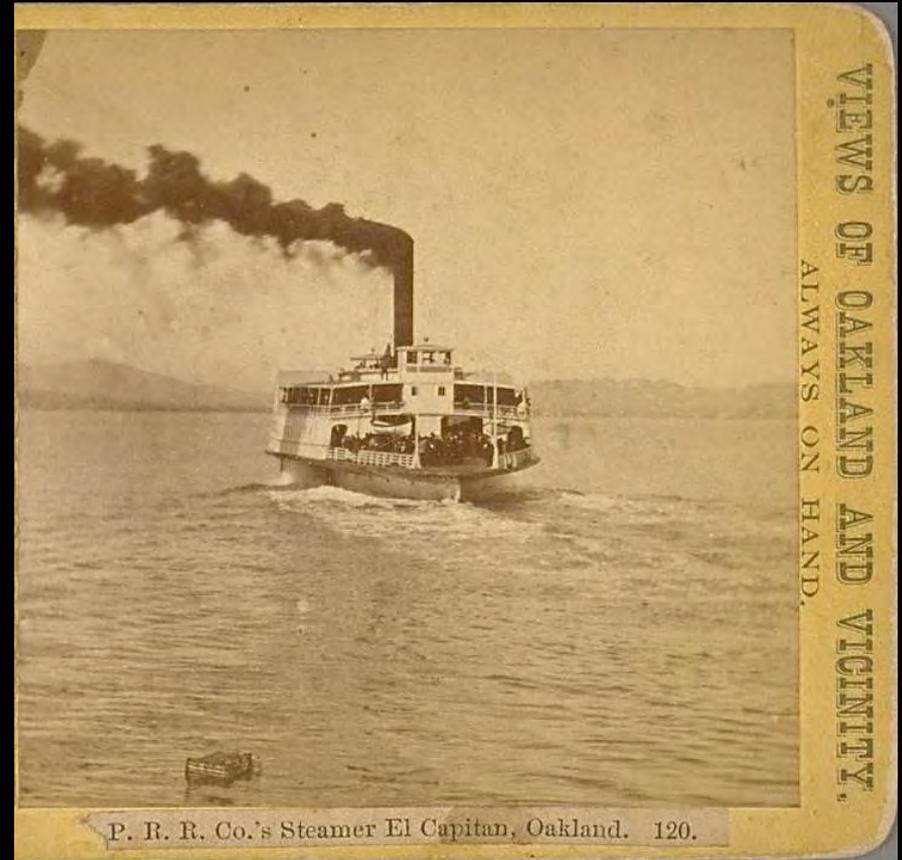
Send off party



The huge map



Just as Muir did, we take the  
ferry from SF to Oakland



1860's ferry

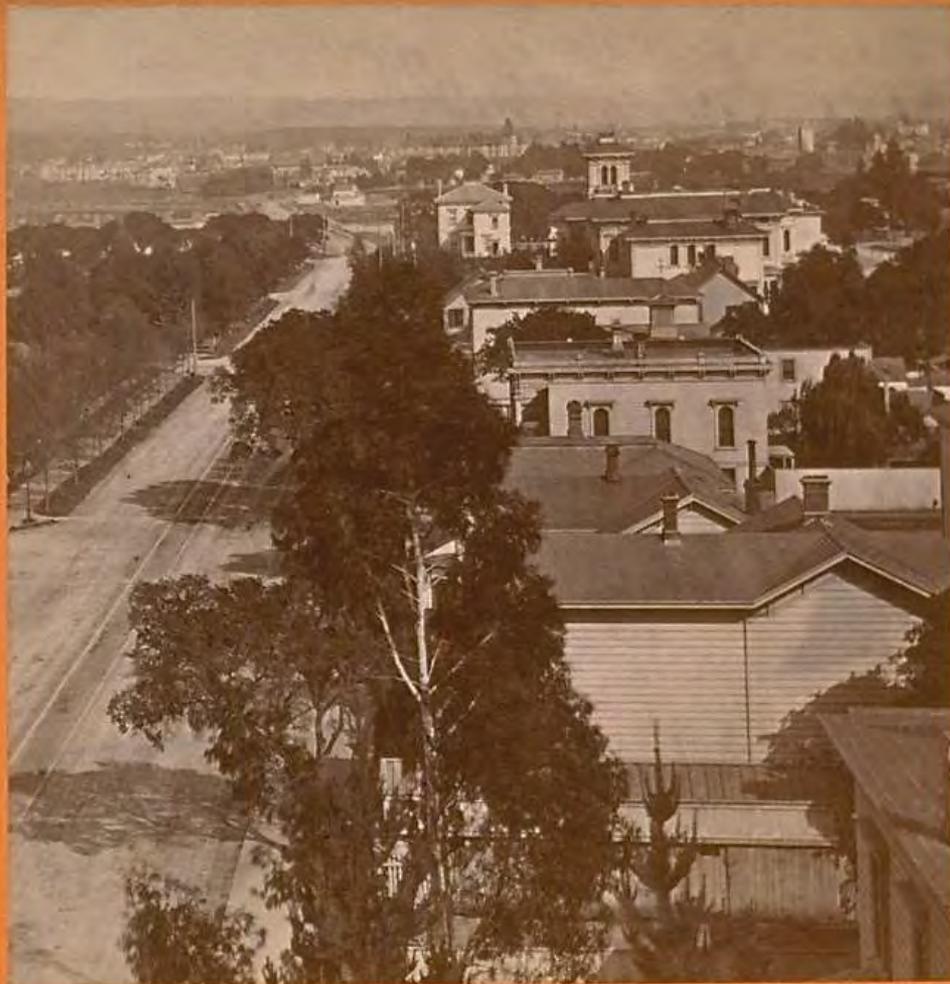
“But we had plenty of time, and proposed drifting leisurely mountainward, by any road that we chanced to find; enjoying the flowers and light, "camping out" in our blankets wherever overtaken by night, and paying very little compliance to roads or times.”



We were met at the Oakland landing by Bay Trail users to show us the way

WATKINS' NEW SERIES

Of Pacific Coast Views, 427 Montgomery Street, S. F.



Oakland at 14<sup>th</sup> st in the 1860s





Not always easy to find the trail,  
and not always filled with natural beauty!



Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline



Hayward Regional Shore



East Oakland 1868



Crossing over Hwy 92 on the Bay Trail



Coyote Hills Regional Park



Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Area



Fremont



A long stretch of bay trail beside a busy road in Fremont

Urban backpackers often find nature on a more intimate scale, like a patch of oak hillside, a short stretch of shoreline, or a section of a river corridor.



Guadalupe River 1868



Guadalupe River 2006



Downtown San Jose 1868 and 2006



Coyote Valley: 1868



2006



Coyote Creek bike path



A rain storm  
forced us to detour



Morgan Hill 1868



2006



Anderson Dam



Waiting for a ride when  
the day's hike ended



Creative camping: Parkway Lakes

The wilderness backpacker follows routes through remote places of natural beauty.

Urban backpacking routes weave through cities and rural areas to find accessible natural spots: parks, empty land, river corridors, rural roads, bike trails and other havens for nature.





Backpacking through Henry Coe State Park





The Narrows



...a million flowers with every step...





Campsite in Henry Coe

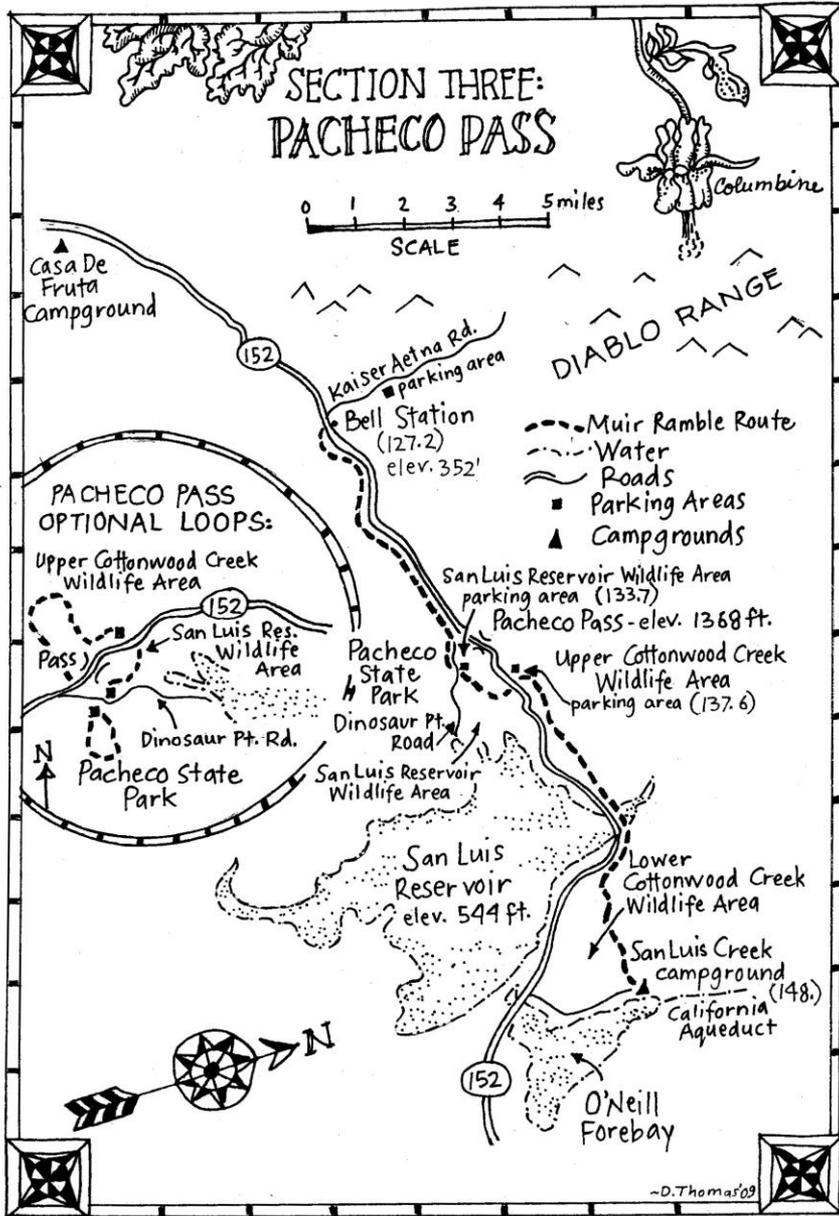


Kaiser Aetna Road out of Henry Coe towards Pacheco Pass

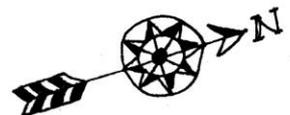
# SECTION THREE: PACHECO PASS

0 1 2 3 4 5 miles

SCALE



- - - Muir Ramble Route
- - - Water
- Roads
- Parking Areas
- ▲ Campgrounds



“The mighty Sierra, miles in height, and so gloriously colored and so radiant, seemed not clothed with light, but wholly composed of it... Then it seemed to me that the Sierra should be called, not the Nevada or Snowy Range, but the Range of Light.”



A peak near Pacheco Pass with views of the “Range of Light”



Pacheco State Park







Fall view of San Luis Reservoir State Rec. Area: tule elk



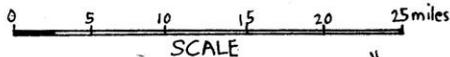
Hiking down to the O'Neil  
Forebay



Campsite at Forebay

Urban backpackers don't need to carry all the gear required in the wilderness; stores, restaurants and lodging are usually close at hand, and there is always the option to call a taxi or take a bus.

# SECTION FOUR SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY



- - - Muir Ramble Route
- Water
- == Roads
- Parking Area
- ▲ Campgrounds

MERCED RIVER DISTANCES:  
 McConnell to Merced River Park: 2.5 mi.  
 Merced River Park to Hagaman: 6.5 mi.  
 Hagaman to Hatfield: 9 mi.  
 McConnell to Hatfield: 18 mi.



California Aqueduct Bike Trail



San Joaquin Valley:  
Irrigation canals provide off-street walking



Hill's Ferry, where Muir crossed the Merced and San Joaquin Rivers



Hill's Ferry in the 1860s

“When I walked, more than a hundred flowers touched my feet, at every step closing above them, as if wading in water. Go where I would, east or west, north or south, I still plashed and rippled in flower-gems; and at night I lay between two skies of silver and gold, spanned by a milkyway of vegetable suns.”



Beside the almond orchards near Delhi



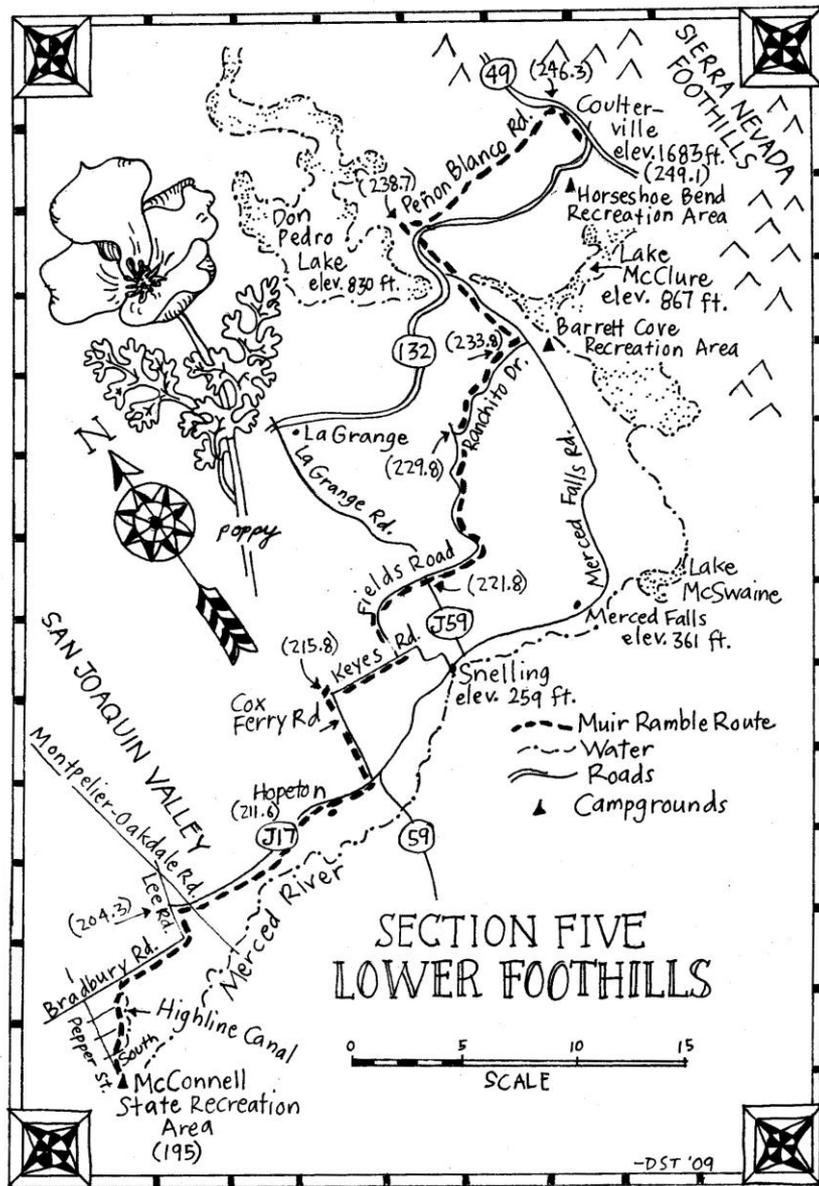


Merced River RV  
Campground



Merced River at dawn

Urban backpacking is a great group activity. One person walking through a city with a backpack may be perceived as someone to avoid or fear. When a group of people with backpacks walks through a city, it becomes a kind of movement, and people become curious, which leads to questions and the chance for education or interaction, and even the possibility of friendship or a request to join in.



-DST '09



Accessing the Merced Irrigation District canals to stay off the roads



Hopeton, 1868



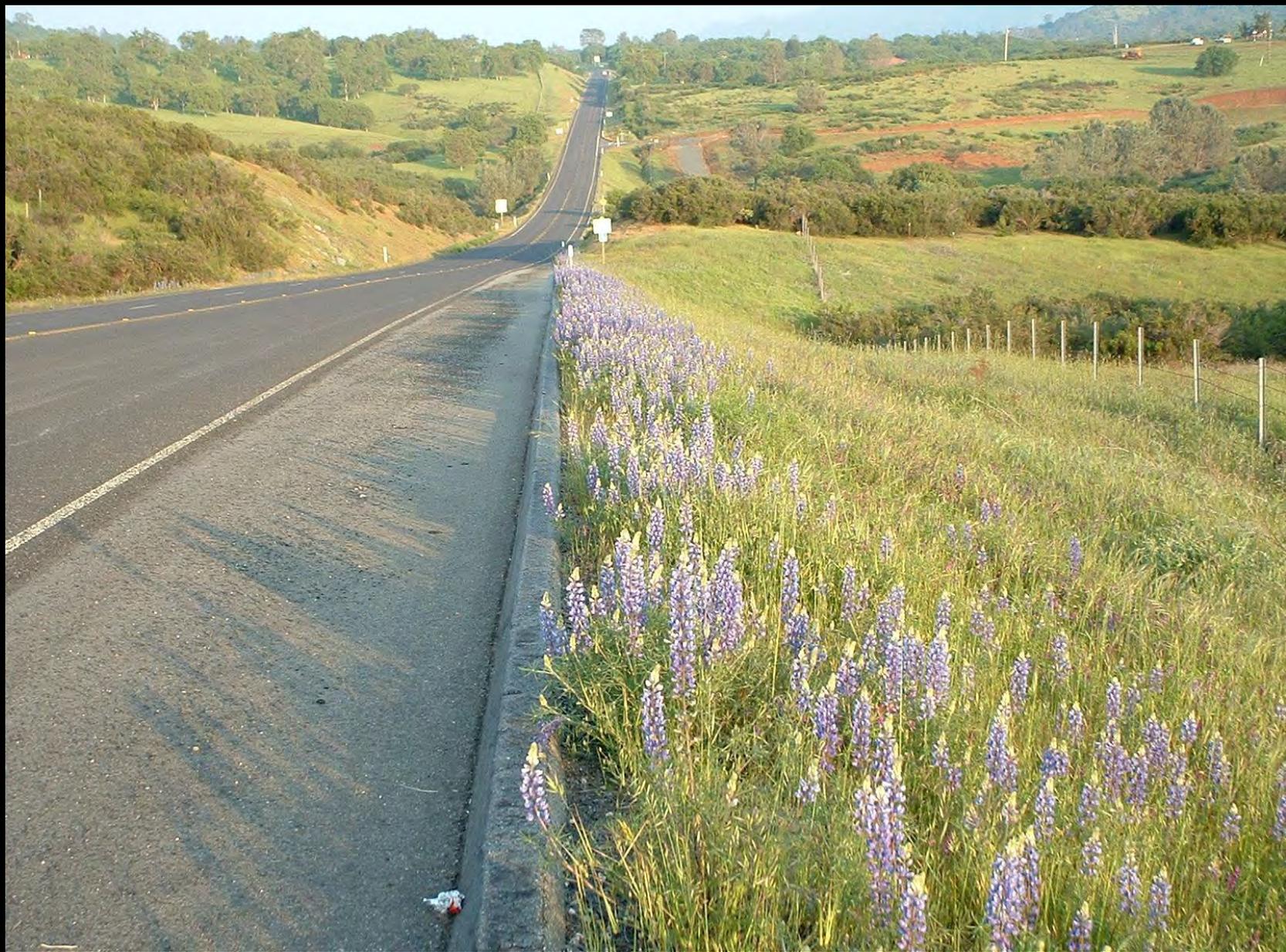
Fields Road, near Snelling CA



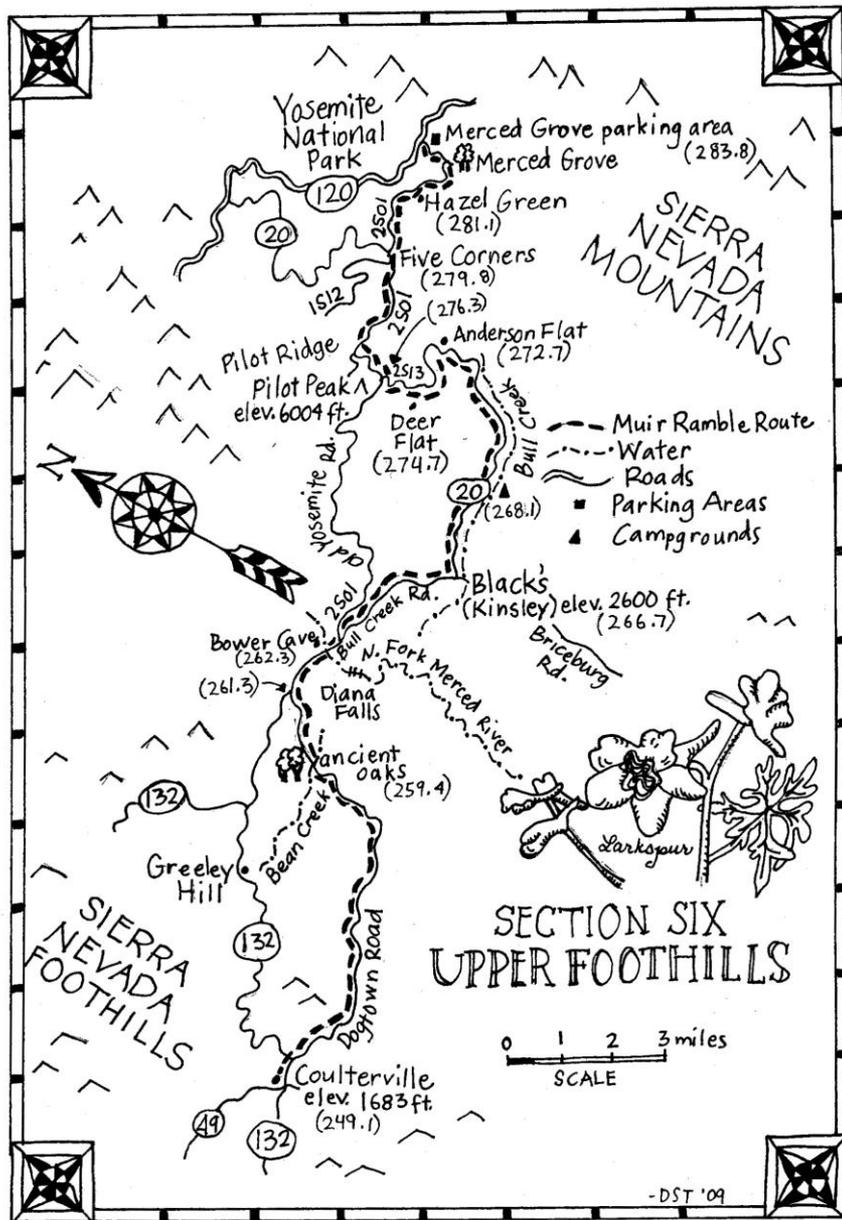
“Keep out. Thank you.” Looking towards Muir’s 20 Hill Hollow



Narrow shoulders on Hwy 132 near Don Pedro Reservoir



Walking late in the day to avoid the heat





Don Pedro to Coulterville



Coulterville



Coulterville



Red Cloud Mine Road, Greeley Hill



Heritage black oaks, Greeley Hill



Black's Stage Stop



Near Anderson Flat



Pilot Peak fire lookout



Hazel Green



Entrance to Yosemite N.P.

“The great sugar pines waved their long arms solemnly, to the cold, loud, winds among rushing, changing, stormclouds.... Snow began to fall thick and blinding, and soon my horse was deep in snow. Thus, in less than a week from the hot autumn of the San Joaquin, we were struggling in a bewildering storm of mountain winter.”





Passing near the Merced  
Grove



Crane Flat Campground



Rockefeller Grove



Crane Flat Ranger Station



Walking from Gin Flat Road to Tamarack Flat Campground.



Tamarack Creek



Fireplace Creek



Tamarack Flat to Gentry's



Fine stone masonry on the  
Old Big Oak Flat Road

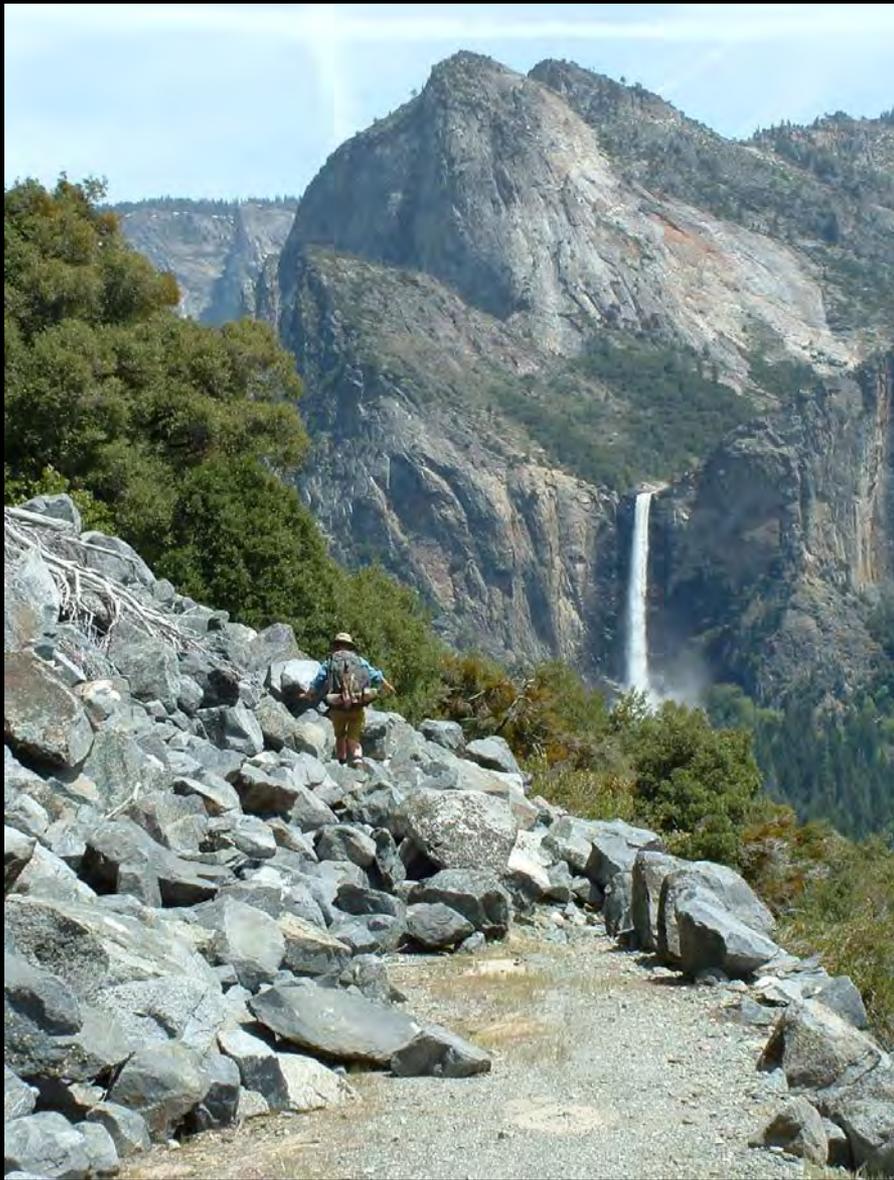




Rainbow View



Rockslide on the  
Old Big Oak Flat Rd.



Old Big Oak Flat Road



Bridalveil Fall



1868 photo of Bridalveil Fall by Carlton Watkins



Almost there!

“We emerged from this ether baptism new creatures, born again; and truly not until this time were we fairly conscious that we were born at all. Never more, I thought, as we strode forward at faster speed, never more shall I sentimentalize about getting out of the mortal coil: this flesh is not a coil, its a sponge steeped in immortality.”



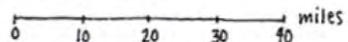
Ribbon Creek



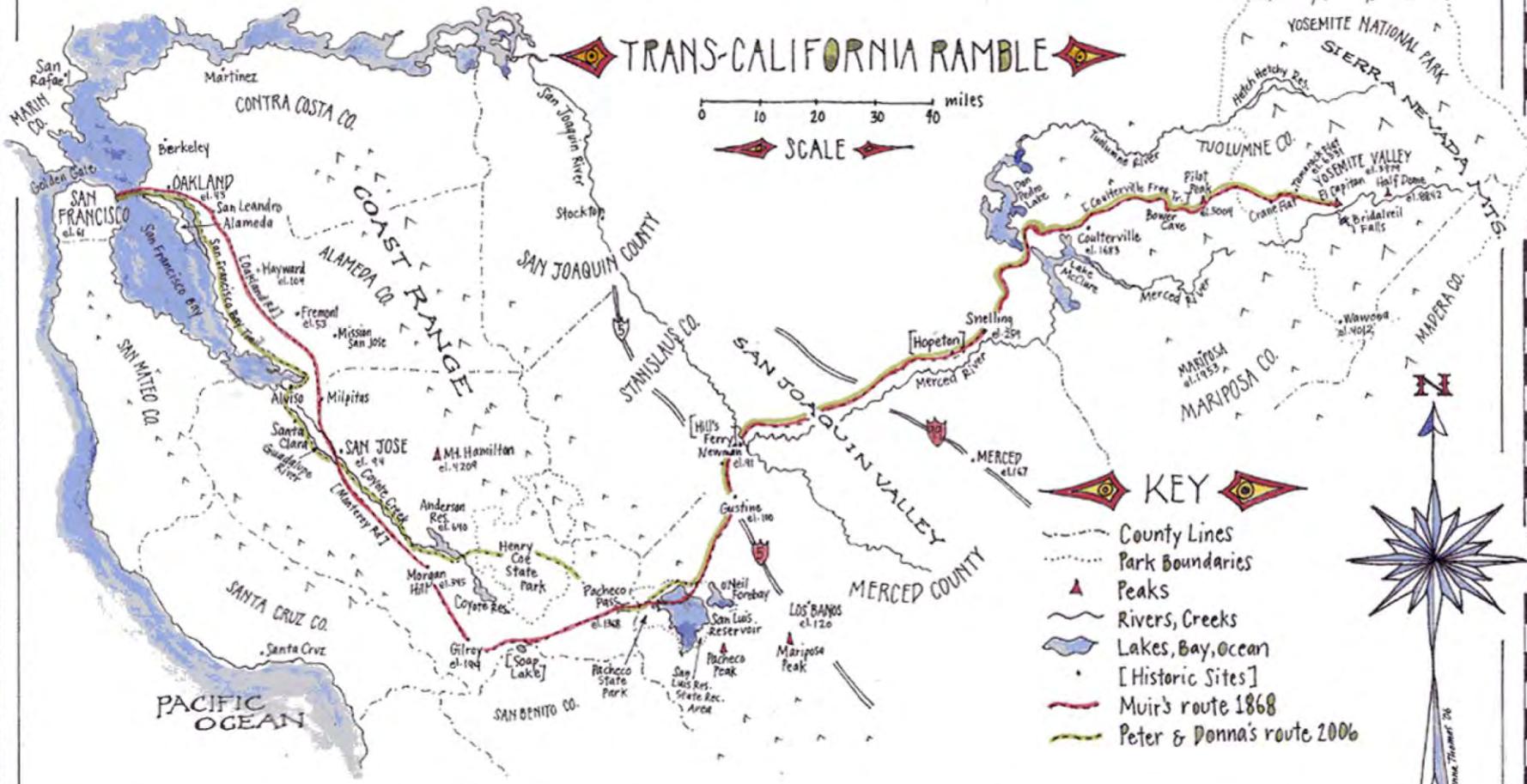
We end our trip at the LeConte Memorial Lodge.  
The Sierra Club's home in Yosemite Valley.

Urban backpacking has its own pleasures: it provides an opportunity to discover and experience the wilderness in your own backyard. Even in the city the beauty of nature is inspiring. A determined blade of grass pushing up through the sidewalk, gardens and landscape plantings, the swirling, billowing clouds and soaring birds in the sky, can leave you as refreshed and inspired as Muir was by his beloved Yosemite.

# TRANS-CALIFORNIA RAMBLE

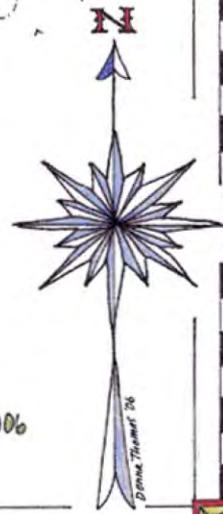


SCALE



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Donna Thamer '06