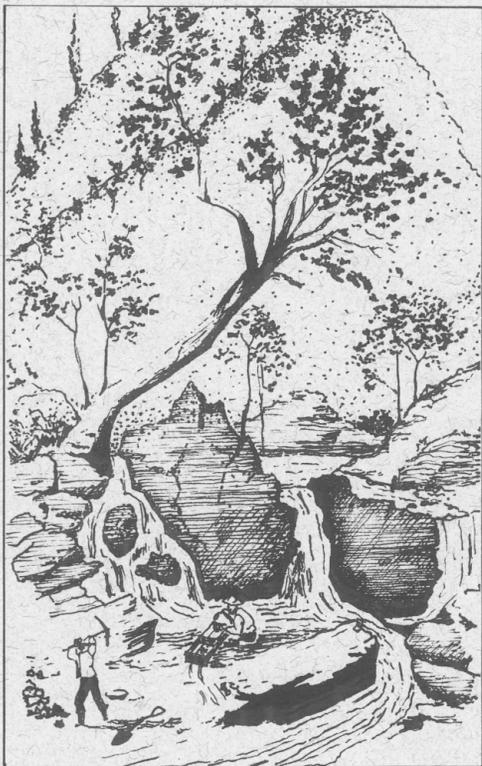


49 Miles Along Highway 49

Tahoe National Forest



America's Great Outdoors

Forest  Service

United States Department of Agriculture

A historic driving tour

Welcome to the Downieville Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest. The following brochure will guide you along one of the most scenic and historically rich sections of this beautiful highway, through quaint, small towns, historic mining areas, along one of the truly beautiful rivers of Northern California, and show you some of the rich history contained within the hills and mountains of rural California.

Starting from either end, visit the historic stops along the highway. Learn about the miners and ranchers of the area, what they did and how they did it. Learn about the Indians who lived here prior to the influx of miners in 1849.

Each stop can be visited independently, letting you take as long as you want at each one, so that you won't feel the pressure to complete the tour at one time.

Many of these "stops" are located at or near archaeological sites within the National Forest, and are protected by the **Archaeological Resources Protection Act** and other federal laws. Removal of artifacts or damaging, defacing, or destroying any parts of these sites and their features is a felony.

Please help us preserve our heritage.

If you should discover any historical or archaeological sites or artifacts, please leave them alone, and report your find to the nearest Ranger Station or to the Forest Archaeologist, Tahoe National Forest, P.O. Box 6003, Nevada City, CA 95959-6003.

This sign identifies "stops":



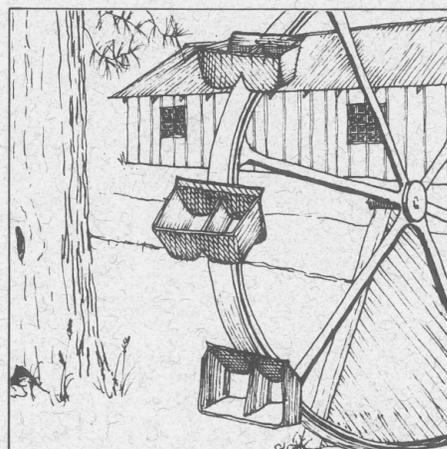
Travel Tips

Please be sure to plan your trip before embarking. Take your time, visit all or just part of the "stops". You may want to make overnight accommodations. Food and lodging is available in Downieville and Sierra City, or you may want to stay in one of the many campgrounds found on or nearby the route. Another choice is to drive the tour all in one day, going to or coming from other nearby recreation areas.

Tour Stops

The twelve "stops" along this "49 mile trail of history", starting from the southern end, are as follows:

Oregon Creek Day Use Area: The confluence of the Middle Yuba River and Oregon Creek has been the site of varied and continuous use. It was first used by the Maidu Indians hundreds of years ago, probably for a seasonal campsite, and, in the 1860's, the south branch of the Henness Pass Road was constructed to pass this way. Part of this wagon road system was the Oregon Creek covered bridge, which is still in use today.



Camptonville: Camptonville was originally a stop on the road to Downieville. In 1852 a gold strike was made here, and by 1857 large scale gravel mining was going on.

In 1879, Lester Pelton, a carpenter and Camptonville resident, invented a split bucket water wheel to power a sewing machine. This simple device proved to have over twice the efficiency of a flat paddle water wheel, and over 20 % greater efficiency than a single bucket wheel. The 'Pelton Wheel' was patented in 1880 and was an instant success. It powered stamp mills, pumps, printing presses, fans, sugar mills and many other machines all over the world. Along with reservoirs and ditches, it was a major component in the development of hydroelectricity. The Pelton wheel is still in use today and provides power at many locations including nearby Bullards Bar Dam.

Jouberts Diggings: Portions of ancient river systems containing large but dispersed amounts of gold are now located on ridge tops and were mined by the hydraulic method. It was a way to efficiently mine low yield gravels. The drawback was the releasing of "slickens", or sluice tailings, into the river and ultimately into the Sacramento Valley. Farmers objected and took it to court. The Sawyer Decision of 1884 effectively ended the large hydraulic operations in California.

Under certain conditions hydraulic mining was allowed. The Jouberts, by using debris dams, continued hydraulicking until 1941.

Indian Valley: Post 1849 Indian Valley was an isolated community of miners, loggers, ranchers and small shop owners. Access was by a steep and rough wagon road from Indian Hill. In 1921 the California Bureau of Public Roads completed the current highway.

This road opened the area to recreation use and provided a more direct route to towns along the North Yuba.



Indian Rock Picnic Area: Native people have used this area for at least 4,000 years. For the past 1,500 years, acorns have been an important food source. They were ground into a flour in mortar holes with a stone pestle. The flour was then leached to remove tannic acid and cooked in a water tight basket with hot rocks.

The Nisenan, who were the most recent native people to use this area, were attuned to animal behavior, as well as the ripening of various vegetable resources located at varying elevations. They moved with the seasons to gather these resources.

Goodyears Bar: Goodyears Bar was one of the earliest mining camps along the North Yuba River. It was established in 1849, and at one time had a Chinese population of over 400 people. Few historic buildings remain in this once busy mining town.



Highway 49 was extended to Goodyears Bar in 1921. Before that time the stage descended 2,000 feet from the ridge visible on the south side of the canyon. In 1858, the Sierra Turnpike Company met in Goodyears Bar to plan the construction of this road. The road connected Camptonville and Downieville by way of Goodyears Bar, with connecting roads to Forest City and the

Henness Pass Road. The road was completed in 1859. The first stage into Downieville was accompanied by forty men on mules, and a great ball was held that evening to celebrate the completion of the road.

Downieville: In 1850, 5,000 men wintered in Downieville. In the following spring, that population scattered into the surrounding hills and canyons in search of gold. Nevertheless, the miners remained dependent on Downieville for provisions and mail. Coming to town also offered a social dimension to the endless work in the mines. The town offered restaurants, soft beds, gambling, culture and companionship. Perhaps the most important aspect of a town visit was the chance to share ideas and techniques about mining.

Today, Downieville retains much of its former character and many of its traditional functions.

Loganville: Loganville campground is situated east of the former town of Loganville. In 1889, Luigi Lagomarsino put in an orchard, a clover field and a garden. This is an example of a typical homestead of that time. Many of the original miners in the Loganville/Sierra City area were immigrants from Italy, France and the British Isles.