

Tuolumne to Mammoth

Distance: 29 miles point-to-point primarily on the John Muir & Pacific Crest Trails

Elevation: Gain: 3201' Loss: 3531

Time of Year: Mid-June to Mid-October depending on snowfall

Location: Tuolumne Meadows

DESCRIPTION:

This is one of the most "runnable" and accessible portions of the John Muir Trail. Aside from the climb up to Donahue, the trail is mostly flat. There are good water sources along the way; however, treating your water is a good idea because it is a high use area. The best time of year for this run is from mid-June until the time the snow sticks in the fall (late October). Be prepared to encounter many through-hikers, the majority of which who will size you up by asking you how many miles you are covering for the day. Better plan ahead and tell them you started in Yosemite Valley

Depending on who you ask, some people would say this run is preferable starting from Mammoth, however, we might suggest the opposite. It's nicer to start at the lower trailhead, so you can power-hike uphill, over spending miles on a knee-thrashing downhills. There is only a few hundred feet of net loss on this run when starting from Tuolumne, and no steep descents. One of the main perks of starting in Tuolumne is the development of scenery. You begin the day in quiet, flat meadows and slowly progress to higher, more mountainous and breathtaking terrain. The last couple miles of this run will make you gawk at the spectacular Ritter Range, and if done in the fall, you will be running through isles of golden cottonwoods. Wahoo! We're not haters to say that Tuolumne is boring or anything, it just doesn't compare to Agnew Meadows.

Be prepared and bring several layers (lightweight wind shell, beanie, and gloves are a must) on this outing. The Ritter Range can bring on some gusty winds, while the exposed miles of running in Tuolumne can be hot if it is sunny. If you are coming from a low elevation, like Bishop, then remember that Tuolumne is at 10,000 ft, and even if there is sun, it is likely to be a good 20 degrees cooler.

There is a toll booth when entering the Agnew Meadows area. When it opens at 7am you will be required to take a shuttle into the Angew / Reds Meadow area AND pay a fee to exit. If you access the area prior to 7am, you can drive through and exit with no fee (therefore if you start from Mammoth, better try to bribe your significant other/friend with breakfast confection to drop you off early). If ending in Tuolumne, consider hitching a ride to town to avoid the fee later in the day.

A parks pass or fee will be required when entering Tuolumne as well.