



# Old 40: Truckee to Cisco Grove

Rich in History, Rich in Scenery, Rich in Fun.

One section of the Yuba-Donner National Scenic Bypass is extraordinarily rich in history and scenery. Don't you dare take the freeway!

Old Highway 40 was the route over the Sierra before the Interstate. The section from Truckee to Cisco Grove on Donner Summit, only about 27 miles, is not to be missed.

In the old railway town of Truckee there are museums, shops, restaurants, and historic sites. Just outside of town is the Donner Memorial State Park where half of the Donner Party camped in 1846-47. There is a visitors' center, a monument dedicated to the "emigrants' suffering, determination, and heroism during their isolation at Donner Lake in the winter of 1846." The base of the monument, 22 feet high, shows how high the snow was that winter. Continue on Old 40 along the shore of Donner Lake to Donner Summit. At Donner Lake there is swimming, picnicking, hiking, and boating.

The route to Donner Summit is historic. Through here came Native Americans for thousands of years, the first transcontinental railroad, the first transcontinental highway, and the first transcontinental telephone line. Overhead was the first transcontinental air route.

Along the way you'll find magnificent views, Native American petroglyphs 4,000 years old, China Wall built without mortar by the Chinese workers in 1867-8, Sierra railroad tunnels blasted out of the Sierra granite by Chinese workers, the first bridge with a compound rising curve, historical ski areas and lodges, snowsheds that once extended for 40 miles protecting the railway route,

In Summit Valley at the top Native Americans camped in summers for thousands of years leaving behind dozens of mortars and metates.

There are lots of opportunities to walk, hike, photograph, bird watch, rock climb, and just enjoy.

20 Mile Museum interpretive signs are all along the route giving the history of the sites, good stories, and things to do.



Rust marks and grooves in the granite from emigrant wagon trains at Big Bend.



Sierra Junipers, thousands of years old, this one overlooking Donner Lake.



Catfish Pond, possibly stocked with catfish by Chinese RR workers.



Summit Valley, Jewel of the Sierra.

## Old Highway 40 Scenic Route

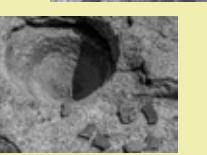
Cisco Grove  
exit 165

Big Bend

Rainbow  
exit 168

Highway 40  
Kingvale  
exit 171

Soda Springs  
exit 174



Native American mortars and metates in Summit Valley

Interstate 80

Boreal exit 176

Summit Valley

exit 174

Roller Pass  
between Mt.  
Judah and Lincoln - wagon  
trains went up the slope.

Donner Lake  
exit 180

Donner Lake

exit 184

Truckee

exit 184



Truckee  
Donner  
Historical  
Society mu-  
seum at the  
old jail.

20 Mile Museum sites •  
Donner Summit Historical Society •



Lincoln Highway  
marker at Big Bend.



Donner Summit Bridge, 1926

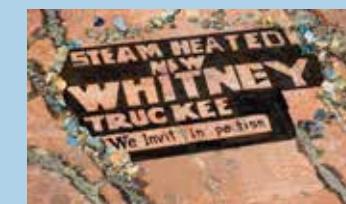
Original Emigrant Trail  
in the forest along the  
side of Summit Valley.



Snowsheds along the flank of Donner Pk.

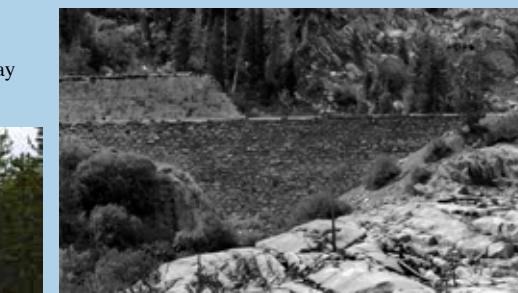


Tunnel 6, the longest of the Sierra  
tunnels, took 2 years to build from  
four different directions



Ads painted on rocks to direct early  
20th Century "automobilists."

Original Lincoln Highway  
along the Yuba River.



China Wall



20 Mile  
Museum  
interpretive  
signs all  
along Old 40  
and nearby  
- the map's  
red dots.

Each tells  
the history,

a good story

and things  
to do.

