

Getting to Florence Lake/Muir Trail Ranch from various places in California

From San Francisco, Sacramento: Take SR* 99 south to Madera's Cleveland Ave exit, turn left on Cleveland and get in the right-hand lane so you can turn right on Gateway. Go south to Yosemite Ave, SR 145. Turn left (east) on SR 145 about 15 miles, cross SR 41 at signal. You're now on Road 145; continue 3 miles to Road 206. Turn right and continue to Friant. At stop sign, turn left, go about 4 miles to stop sign at Auberry Rd. Turn left to town of Prather. At stop sign, turn left onto SR 168. Follow signs to Huntington Lake.

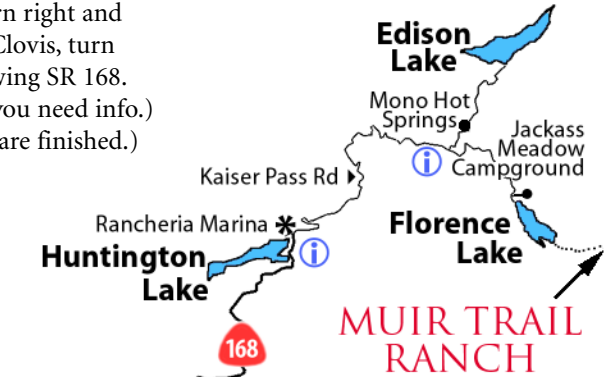
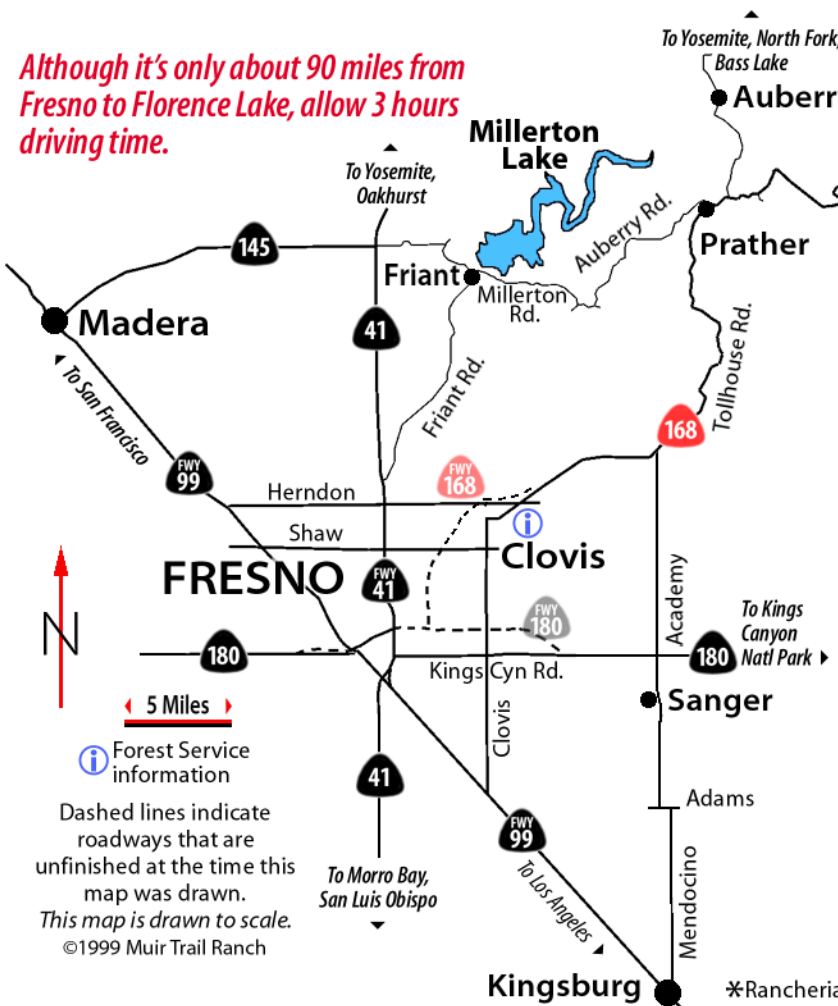
From Los Angeles: Go north on SR 99 to Kingsburg/Sanger exit and go north on 18th Ave (it becomes Mendocino Ave). At Adams Ave, turn left, go half mile, turn right on Academy. Go north, turn right on Tollhouse Rd. Follow signs to Huntington Lake.

From Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo: Take SR 41 to Fresno. Exit at Shaw Ave, turn right and head east to Clovis Ave. Turn left on Clovis Ave and travel north to 3rd St in Clovis, turn right on 3rd. Go across Sunnyside Ave at traffic light, and veer leftward, following SR 168. (At 1600 Tollhouse Rd is the Sierra National Forest Headquarters building if you need info.) Follow SR 168 to Huntington Lake. (This will change when the new freeways are finished.)

From Yosemite National Park: Take SR 41 south. Between Fish Camp and Oakhurst, turn left on Road 222 to Bass Lake and North Fork. Right turn at stop/yield sign, cross the creek, go left through North Fork till you see the left turn sign for Road 222 to Auberry. You'll cross the San Joaquin River. Go through Auberry to stop sign at SR 168, follow signs to Huntington Lake.

*SR=State Route

Although it's only about 90 miles from Fresno to Florence Lake, allow 3 hours driving time.



Once you've arrived at Huntington Lake, the real adventure begins! First, check to see that you have plenty of fuel for your car, because Rancharia Marina is the last place to get it (a pump takes dollar bills day or night). If you need fuel, stay on SR 168, going a quarter mile past the Florence and Edison Lakes turnoff. Say hi to the nice folks at Rancharia, fill 'er up, then go back to the turnoff, turn left, and head up the hill on Forest Service Road 80, the Kaiser Pass Road. At the junction of SR 168 and the Kaiser Pass Road is the Eastwood Ranger Station if you need info.

Drive up the nice two-lane road for about 5 miles, and you'll come to the one-lane portion. Relax, it's only another 17 miles to Florence Lake on some really interesting road!

On the way, you'll pass the last Ranger outpost, the High Sierra station. A mile past that is the turnoff to Mono Hot Springs and Edison Lake. Just breeze on past and head straight (figuratively speaking, of course) the remaining 7 miles to Florence Lake.

Check in at the Florence Lake Store. Offload your stuff where they tell you to, and park your car in the lovely paved Trailhead Parking lot.

*Rancharia Marina at Huntington Lake is your last chance for gasoline.

Getting to the Ranch by other means: If a three-hour drive from Fresno isn't your cuppa, you can fly into the ranch by helicopter, which takes about 25 minutes from Fresno/Clovis. But you'll miss the really neat ferryboat ride, and the hike or horseback ride. Since the ranch is private land, there is no need to get permission from other agencies to land there. You do have to get *our* permission, however.

Another fine way to arrive at Muir Trail Ranch is to hike in from Bishop over Piute Pass. Or up from Mt. Whitney on the PCT. Yosemite is a popular starting point for a hike, too, via the Muir Trail. In fact, you can get to the ranch from almost anywhere in the world. (Exceptions include: Federal prison, the grave, and the belly of a lion.) Once you get here, though—you'll know you've arrived at a truly remarkable place. Leave your troubles behind, but don't forget to bring your manners.