Geological Timeline

Event	Years Before Present
Beginning of the Earth	4.5 billion years before present
Unicellular life	3.4 billion years before present
Multicellular life	700 million years before present
Animals with backbones first appear	500 million years before present
Oldest rocks in Yosemite	500 million years before present
Fish are major life form	400 million years before present
Age of Dinosaurs begins	245 million years before present
Breakup of Pangaea, continents begin to move	200 million years before present
Subduction begins off coast of what is now California. Ancient Sierra Nevada range starts to form.	200 million years before present
Formation of the granite rock mass (batholith) begins. The Batholith would eventually become the Sierra Nevada range	195 million years before present
First Birds appear on Earth	175 million years before present
Flowering Plants first appear	150 million years before present
Age of Mammals begins/Dinosaurs die out (become extinct)	65 million years before present
Ancient volcanic Sierra Nevada range is eroded down to rolling hills in Yosemite, exposing the granite batholith	65 million years before present
Movement at the plate boundaries off California changes from subduction to a strike-slip movement	60 million years before present
Uplift and tilting of the Sierra Nevada range begins	25 million years before present
Horses, apes, dogs, and cats appear	10 million years before present
Hominids (human ancestors)	3.5 million years before present
Significant uplift of Sierra Nevada. Rivers begin to cut a V-shaped Canyon in Yosemite	5 million years before present
Cooling throughout the Northern Hemisphere resulting in the great ice age	2.5 million years before present
V-shaped canyon widened to a U-shaped Yosemite valley by glaciers	1.2 million years before present
Humans appear on earth	100,000 years before present
End of most recent ice age; Last glaciers retreat from Yosemite leaving behind Lake Yosemite	10,000 years before present
Eastern side of the Sierra Nevada continues to uplift causing occasional earthquakes	Present