



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lava Beds  
National Monument

PO Box 1240  
Tulelake, CA 96134

Mike Reynolds  
Superintendent  
530-667-8101  
mike\_reynolds@nps.gov

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# Lava Beds National Monument News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## A Chilly Way to Spend the Winter at Lava Beds

TULELAKE, California— Tired of all the ice and snow above ground this winter? Lava Beds National Monument is home to some special places that can allow you to see ice in a whole new way. Ice caves, like Crystal Ice cave, often collect and trap freezing cold air in low areas and are able to maintain year round ice, despite underground temperatures in other lava tube caves often being much above freezing. These beautiful ice features have served as a rare water source for wildlife and local peoples throughout history.

Over the past two decades researchers and park staff have monitored the loss of year-round ice within the lava tube caves at Lava Beds National Monument. This trend has been observed in Crystal Ice cave, and many of the ice caves found at Lava Beds. For this reason, limits have been placed on the size of groups and periods tours can be offered. The National Park Service strives to tell the story of America's special places, while preserving them for future generations. Crystal Ice cave is a remarkable way to experience volcanic geology within a very distinct cave environment. More so, the ice loss is an exceptional example of the effects a warming climate has on our national parks.

Superintendent Mike Reynolds announced today that Crystal Ice cave tours began on December the 5<sup>th</sup> and will run through the last Saturday in March. "The highly popular winter cave tour has been filling up rapidly," says Reynolds. Tours are provided every Saturday and have been booking up as soon as they become available; as they traditionally do each winter. Reservations for the Crystal Ice cave tour can be made up to three weeks in advance by calling the Lava Beds National Monument Visitor Center at (530)-667-8113. Reservations for the six tour slots are made on a first come first served basis and are free of charge. The tour is unique, but has a reasonably high degree of physical difficulty requiring strength and agility to access the ice caverns. "For those willing and able to take this tour, viewing these rare ice features could be a once in a life time experience," says Reynolds.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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Lava Beds National Monument, established in 1925, is a land of turmoil, both geologic and historic. Over the last half-million years, volcanic eruptions have created a rugged landscape dotted with diverse volcanic features. Lava tube caves, Native American sites, historic battlefields and a high desert wilderness experience await you!

For more information about visiting Lava Beds National Monument, call 530-667-8110, email [labe\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:labe_interpretation@nps.gov), or go to [www.nps.gov/labe](http://www.nps.gov/labe). Also, visit the park's Facebook page.

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