



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lava Beds National  
Monument

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## Lava Beds National Monument News Release

For Immediate Release

May 19, 2008, Contact: Kale Bowling, 530-667-8112

### Lava Beds Staff Prepare for an Activity-Filled Summer

As the Memorial Day weekend approaches, Superintendent Dave Kruse is pleased to announce the return of summer interpretive programming at Lava Beds. Weekend programs will be offered over the Memorial Day weekend as well as the following weekend; with seven day a week programs beginning on June 6<sup>th</sup>. The Monument's Visitor Center will also be open extended hours from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM beginning May 23<sup>rd</sup> to better serve the needs of visitors.

In preparation for the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016, Lava Beds and other National Park sites have received additional funding for summer staff in 2008. Visitors to the Monument will enjoy daily programs one week earlier than in the past few years, and will notice more uniformed interpretive and maintenance staff in place of some student interns.

Lava Beds offers a wide variety of activities for all ages and abilities. For those interested in camping, Lava Beds' 43 individual campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and typically fill only on holiday weekends. If you are planning a visit over the busy Memorial Day weekend, a Friday arrival affords a better chance of securing a campsite. Other camping options are also available in the area; check with a ranger.

Ranger guided cave tours leave the Visitor Center at 3:00 PM, and range in difficulty from an easy walk through Sentinel or Valentine Cave to challenging excursions into Juniper or Catacombs Caves. No matter what the weather is outside, visitors should come prepared to "Cave Safely, Cave Softly" with long pants, long-sleeved shirts, closed-toed shoes, head protection, and a flashlight for each person. Flashlights may be borrowed from the Visitor Center during open hours, and a selection of hardhats, kneepads, gloves, and cave maps are available for sale.

Evening slide shows are also fun for the entire family. They are presented in the Indian Wells Campground amphitheater, and begin at 9:00 PM. Evening programs will be offered on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights of Memorial Day weekend, Friday and Saturday nights of the following weekend and every night starting June 6<sup>th</sup>. In-depth discussions of the Lava Beds backcountry, Modoc cultural history, and climate change in national parks as well as viewing the night sky through a telescope will be among the programs offered.

Special Junior Firefighter programs are conducted at the Visitor Center several times during the summer season, including Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:00 AM, giving kids the chance to explore Lava Beds' fire engines and other firefighting gear up close and personal. Lava Beds is also pleased to offer a Junior Ranger badge to children ages five through thirteen who complete a workbook available at the Visitor Center. Young people can also earn a Junior Firefighter award by hiking to the Schonchin Butte Fire Lookout and completing activities with the lookout ranger.

Additionally, short interpretive talks or ranger-guided walks will be offered many summer mornings at 11:00 AM. Join a ranger to learn about bats or meet a living history character from Lava Beds' past near the Visitor Center, view a geology slide show in Mushpot Cave, or enjoy a talk at Petroglyph Point, Merrill Ice Cave, or a Modoc War site.

A weekly schedule of interpretive program topics and locations is available at the Lava Beds Visitor Center, the park website ([www.nps.gov/labe](http://www.nps.gov/labe)), or by calling 530-667-8113. Daily ranger guided programs will be offered through Labor Day, and occasionally on weekends in the fall.

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