

# Visiting Lassen Volcanic in Winter

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Winter users on the snow-covered park highway in the Southwest Area. Peaks in the background from left to right: Mt. Diller, Lassen Peak, and Diamond Peak.

Winter 2019 - 2020

## Welcome!

Lassen Volcanic National Park receives as much as 30 feet of snow in its winter season. The resulting snowpack often lasts more than half of the year (approximately November to June). Despite the heavy snowfall, sunny skies are common between storms. These windows of "blue bird" days provide excellent opportunities to explore the park by snowshoe or ski or to simply enjoy the sights and sounds of winter from the year-round visitor center.

## Getting Around

The Manzanita Lake and Southwest Areas of the park are accessible throughout the winter season. Visitors can travel two miles from SR-44 to the Loomis Plaza in the Manzanita Lake Area and five miles north of SR-36 to the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center in the Southwest Area (see map on page 3).

The remainder of the 30-mile park highway and all other park roads are closed to vehicles due to snow from approximately November to May. During heavy winters, the highway may close to through traffic as early as late-October and open as late as mid-July.

Two routes around the park connect the Manzanita Lake and Southwest Areas. Travel time is approximately 90 minutes to 2 hours in normal winter driving conditions. Learn more on page 8.

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## Need More Help?

Visit [nps.gov/lavo](https://www.nps.gov/lavo)

Email [lavo\\_information@nps.gov](mailto:lavo_information@nps.gov)

Call (530) 595-4480

Write P.O. Box 100, Mineral, CA 96063

## Southwest Area

Steep slopes and sweeping vistas abound in the Southwest Area of the park. Beginning at 6,700 feet elevation, this area receives the most snow. The year-round visitor center here is an excellent first stop for new winter explorers.

### Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center

Watch the 20-minute park film, stroll the exhibit hall, or pick up supplies and gifts inside. Purchase light snacks and hot drinks on weekends between 11 am and 2 pm or bring your own meal to enjoy in the fireside dining area.

### Ranger-led Snowshoe Walks

Join a ranger-led snowshoe walk Saturday or Sunday, January through March. Participants will learn basic snowshoeing techniques and explore winter ecology in Lassen. Learn more on page 5.

### Sledding/Snow Play Area

Smaller, gentler slopes are located directly behind the visitor center. Steeper slopes are accessed via a short walk along the snow-covered park highway. Sled with caution; sledding is the number one cause of visitor injury in the winter season.

### Sulphur Works Hydrothermal Area

Experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the park's most accessible hydrothermal area. Snowshoe or ski one mile from the visitor center along the snow-covered park highway to reach this steamy spot that is visible year-round. Learn more on page 7.



Maintain a safe distance from hydrothermal features. Visitors have been severely burned by hot mud and water.

### Backcountry Skiing/Snowboarding

Experienced backcountry users will appreciate the spectacular terrain and uncommon solitude in the Southwest Area. Learn more about avalanche safety on page 7.

## Manzanita Lake Area

The Manzanita Lake Area (5,800 elevation) consists of gentle slopes and scenic lakes. It offers the easiest routes for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the park.

### Loomis Plaza

The plaza includes a heated restroom, pay phone, and informational signage. The far end of the plaza is one of multiple access points for the Manzanita Lake loop.

### Manzanita Lake Snowshoe Route



This 1.8-mile loop offers spectacular views of Lassen Peak and Chaos Crags. Pick up the trail anywhere between the entrance station and Loomis Plaza. This trail follows a narrow shoreline and is not recommended for skiing. More on page 6.

### Cross-Country Skiing

The snow-covered park highway is the most popular cross-country ski route in the park. The Manzanita Lake Area offers a gentler and more gradual climb than in the Southwest Area. There are no groomed trails in the park, however ski tracks often last between storms along this well-shaded corridor. Learn more on page 6.

### Sledding Areas

Small hills on the northern shore of Manzanita Lake and in the Chaos Jumbles Area can be fun with small children or those new to sledding. Steeper terrain can be found at the popular Eskimo Hill snow play area located 1.2 miles east of the park turnoff on SR-44/89 (map on page 3).

Sled with caution; sledding is the number one cause of visitor injury in the winter season.

Share Your Experience  
@LassenNPS #FindYourPark



This visitor guide is made possible through the support of the Lassen Association.

# Facilities and Services

## Availability of Facilities and Services

Services	Southwest Area	Manzanita Lake Area
Information	Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center open Wed-Sun, 9 am - 5 pm plus some holidays	Information kiosks in Loomis Plaza (unstaffed)
First Aid	In visitor center during regular hours Call 911 after hours - emergency phone in 24-hour vestibule	Call 911 - pay phone in Loomis Plaza
Fuel	No winter fuel services in the park; nearby gas stations shown on the regional map on page 8	
Restrooms	Inside the 24-hour vestibule at visitor center entrance	In Loomis Plaza
Supplies & Gifts	Gift Shop and Lassen Association Store inside (see hours below)	Not available
Lodging	No winter lodging in the park October through May View information about accommodations in the area at <a href="http://go.nps.gov/lavo/lodging">go.nps.gov/lavo/lodging</a>	
Dining	Light snacks and hot drinks weekends, 11 am - 2 pm Vending machine items available Wed-Sun, 9 am - 5 pm	Not available
Campground	Southwest Campground open year-round Camping in vehicles permitted between islands in parking area	Not available
Backcountry Permits	Front desk during visitor center hours; self-registration after hours	Self-registration outside Ranger Station

## Southwest Area Facilities and Services

### Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center

Make Lassen's year-round visitor center your winter visit basecamp. **The visitor center may close at any time due to inclement weather.**

**Winter Season** November 1 through April 30

**Open** Wednesday through Sunday  
9 am to 5 pm  
January 20, 2020 (MLK Day)  
February 17, 2020 (Presidents' Day)

**Closed** Mondays and Tuesdays  
Thanksgiving and Christmas

### Lassen Café & Gift

Browse the gift shop for souvenirs including art and crafts from local artists, or enjoy café offerings including self-serve frozen items, snacks, and hot and cold beverages during operating hours. You are also welcome to bring your own meal to enjoy in the dining area; a microwave is available.

**Hours** 11 am to 2 pm  
**Days** Weekends only\*

\*May also be open on selected holiday period weekdays. More at [go.nps.gov/lavo/hours](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/hours).

### Lassen Association Store

Open during visitor center hours

Browse books, maps, trail guides, and videos about the park's natural and cultural history at the Lassen Association store. Choose from a wide selection of educational gift merchandise to enhance your park experience and take home as memories. All profits go directly to the park.

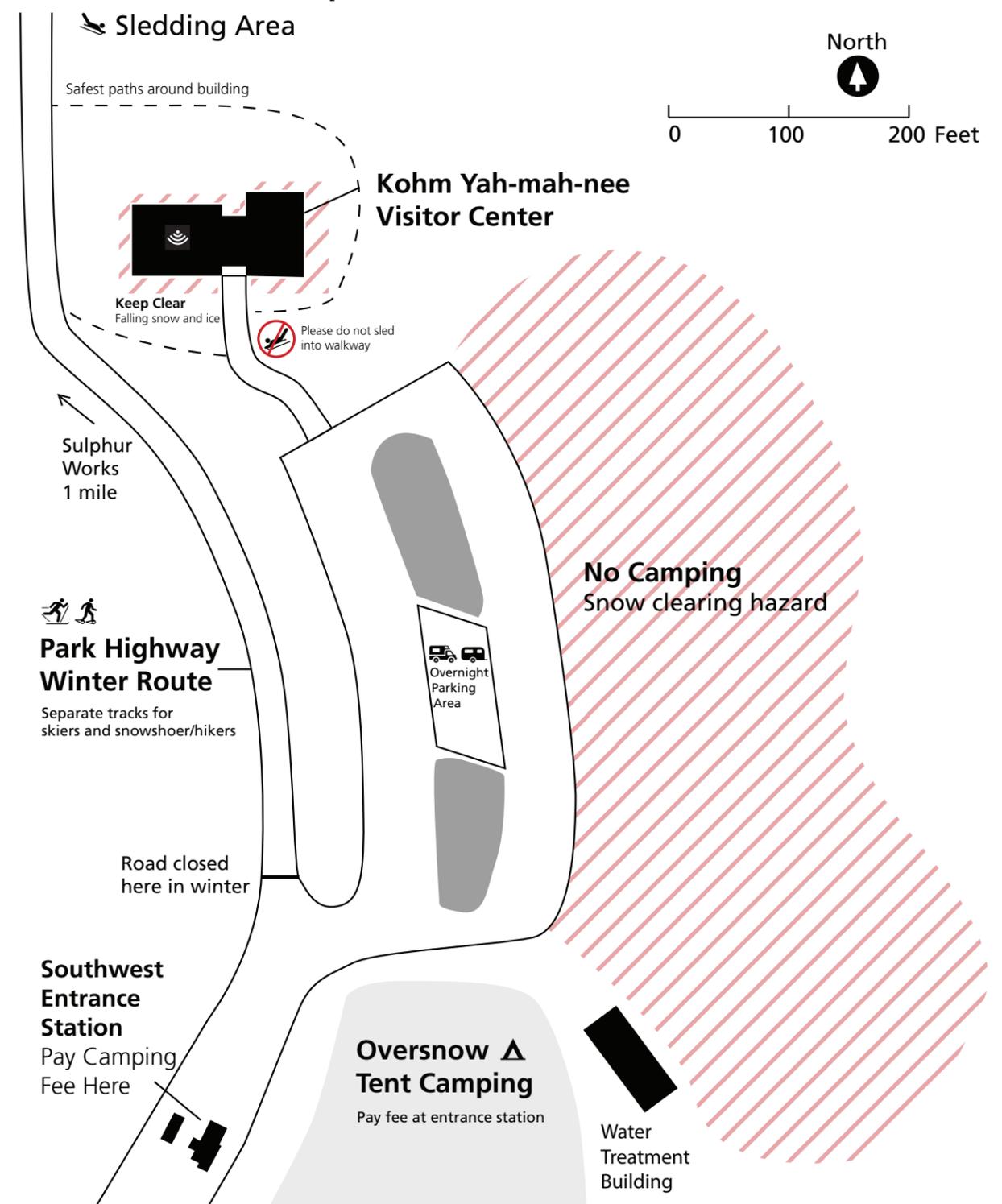
### Lost & Found

Retrieve lost items or drop off found items inside the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

### Wi-Fi

Free Wi-Fi is available inside the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

### Southwest Area Map

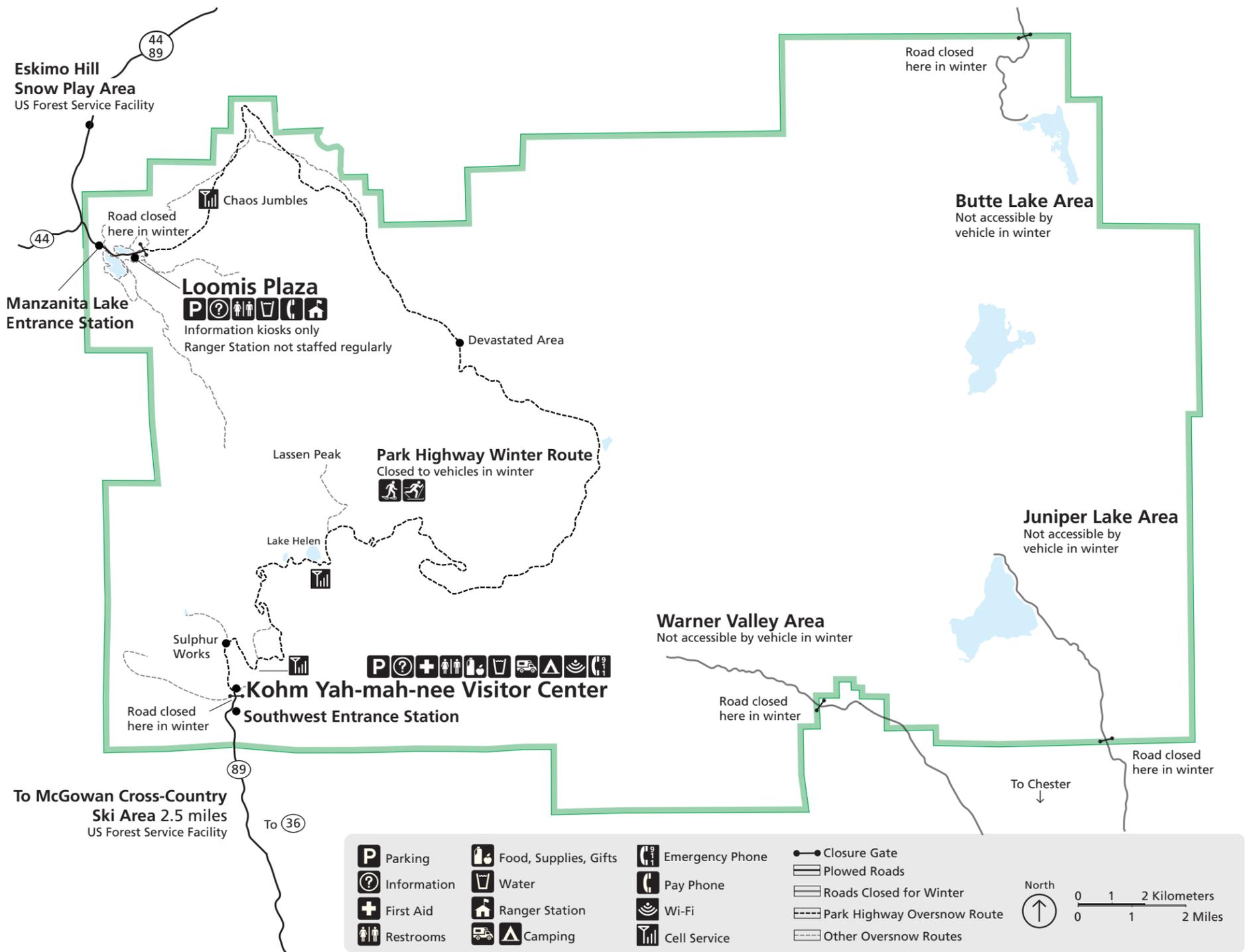


### Winter Camping

The Southwest Campground is open year-round. Fires and fire pans are not permitted in the winter, however self-contained barbecues are allowed in the paved parking area. The fee for tent or vehicle camping is \$10 per night.

The winter tent camping area is located at the southern end of the parking area. Overnight vehicles must park between islands to allow for snow plowing operations. Please self-register at the entrance station.

# Winter Roads and Services Map



## Winter Preparedness and Safety

### Dress for Success

Even in Lassen's winter conditions, you can be comfortable and safe if you dress properly to prevent chilling and overheating.

Wear clothes in several adjustable layers including waterproof outdoor, warm underlayers, a hat, and gloves.

Avoid cotton clothes of any kind, including jeans, sweatshirts, underwear, or socks. They retain moisture and put you at risk for hypothermia.

Wear polyester or wool whenever possible, these fabrics wick moisture from your skin and help keep you dry.

### Know the Risks

Enjoying winter at Lassen involves risk. Be aware of winter conditions and associated risks:

- Deep snow/heavy snowfall
- Sudden changes in weather
- Cold temperatures
- Sun exposure
- Avalanche terrain
- Sport-related injuries (sledding is the number one cause of injury)
- High elevation/altitude effects

### Are You Prepared?

You are responsible for your safety.

A few suggestions to help you stay safe:

- Wear waterproof and insulated footwear
- Bring water and extra food
- Carry extra layers for warmth
- Take breaks often
- Carry sunscreen
- Bring a flashlight or headlamp
- Finish your outing before dark
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return
- Check the weather forecast at the visitor center or online at [go.nps.gov/lavo/current](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/current)



### Weather

With elevations from 5,650 feet to 10,457 feet, a wide variety of weather conditions occur in the park. Expect a 5° temperature decrease for every 1,000 foot increase in elevation.

Month	Average High/Low	Date	Sunrise	Sunset
November	56/21 °F	11/15	6:55 am	4:51 pm
December	50/14 °F	12/15	7:25 am	4:43 pm
January	50/13 °F	1/15	7:31 am	5:06 pm
February	51/13 °F	2/15	7:03 am	5:44 pm
March	53/16 °F	3/15*	7:20 am	7:17 pm
April	61/23 °F	4/15	6:30 am	7:49 pm
		5/15	5:52 am	8:20 pm

Data for Manzanita Lake Area (5,850 ft elevation) Daylight savings time begins 3/8/20



### Effects of High Elevation

Hiking at high elevation can aggravate pre-existing medical conditions. Carry plenty of water, take breaks often, and do not exceed your abilities.

If you start to experience any symptoms of altitude sickness (headache, dizziness, shortness of breath, confusion, pain behind the eyes, nausea), descend immediately. Seek medical attention from a ranger or doctor.

# General Information

## Spring Snow Clearing



Spring road clearing near the Southwest Entrance and Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

Snow removal from the park highway usually begins in April and continues for about two months before the highway opens to through traffic. Visit [go.nps.gov/lavo/snowclearing](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/snowclearing) for spring road information.

The high-elevation park highway encompasses 30 miles of stunning views with hairpin turns, steep grades, and avalanche-prone slopes with up to 2,000 foot drops. The steep terrain combined with heavy snowfall can result in snowdrifts up to 40 feet deep.

Predicting when the highway will open is not possible, even in late spring, because weather in April and May can affect plowing progress significantly. See the chart below for opening and closing dates for the last ten years.

Year	Date plowing began	Date road opened	Date road closed
2009	April 13	June 4	November 18
2010	April 19	July 8	October 23
2011	April 19	July 16	November 22
2012	April 21	June 1	November 19
2013	March 21	May 24	December 18
2014	April 2	May 19	December 1
2015	March 30	May 3	November 8
2016	April 18	June 12	October 30
2017	April 4	July 26	November 10
2018	March 30	May 27	November 20
2019	April 22	June 22	

## Spring Hiking and Biking

Hike and Bike the Highway (HBH) is an opportunity for visitors to enjoy cleared sections of the highway before they open to vehicles. When conditions and timing allow, the Saturday before the highway opens to through traffic is promoted as the final opportunity for HBH.

The park highway usually opens in segments as snow clearing operations progress. The usual order of opening is:

- Loomis Museum to Devastated Area - 10 mi
- Southwest Entrance to Sulphur Works - 1 mi
- Sulphur Works to
  - Bumpass Hell parking - 7 mi
  - Lassen Peak parking area - 8 mi
- Open to through traffic - 30 mi

You can view which segments of the highway will be open during your visit on the spring road opening map at [go.nps.gov/lavo/snowclearing](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/snowclearing).

Generally, the timing of openings is largely dependent on snow depth, snow clearing operations, and conditions at the time of anticipated opening. Learn more about HBH at [go.nps.gov/hbh](http://go.nps.gov/hbh).



## Accessibility

Facilities in the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and Loomis Plaza are accessible. Audio description and assisted listening devices are available for exhibits and the park film. An Accessibility Guide to Lassen Volcanic is available at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and online at [go.nps.gov/lavo/access](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/access).

Service animals are allowed in all facilities and on all trails unless an area has been closed by the superintendent to protect park resources. Service animals must always be leashed or harnessed, under control, and attended at all times.

## Backcountry Permits

Backcountry camping permits are required for overnight use outside of the Southwest Campground. Self-registration is available outside the Loomis Ranger Station and in the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center 24-hour vestibule.

## Cell Service

Cell service (AT&T and Verizon) is very limited in the park and surrounding areas. View spots with limited coverage on the map on page 3.

## Entrance Fees

Entrance fees are required year-round. Display your fee receipt, Lassen Annual Pass, or Interagency Pass on your vehicle's dashboard.

### 1-7 Day Vehicle Fee

December 1 to April 15 - \$10  
April 16 to November 30 - \$30

### Annual Passes

**Lassen Annual Pass - \$55**

Visit [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov) or call (530) 595-6120.

### Interagency Passes

The passes listed below cover all national park units and other federal recreation areas with entrance fees. Visit [store.usgs.gov/pass](http://store.usgs.gov/pass) or call 888-ASK-USGS ext1.

Pass	Price
Annual	\$80
Senior	\$20 Annual / \$80 Lifetime
Access	Free with documentation of permanent disability
Military	Free with identification CAC Card/DD Form 1173
4th Grade	Free at <a href="http://everykidoutdoors.gov">everykidoutdoors.gov</a>

## Park Partners

**Lassen Association** is a non-profit partner that promotes the discovery of Lassen Volcanic, enriches the experience of visitors, and supports the preservation and protection of the park for future generations.

### Shop the Store, Support Your Park

Profits from Lassen Association stores directly support park research, conservation, and education programs. Browse a wide selection of books, maps, trail guides, and videos about the natural and cultural history of the park as well as educational gift merchandise to enhance your park experience and take home as memories.



Lassen Association  
(530) 348-2670  
[lassenassociation@yahoo.com](mailto:lassenassociation@yahoo.com)  
[www.lassenassociation.org](http://www.lassenassociation.org)

## Dogs in the Park

Dogs and other pets are welcome in parking areas and in the Loomis Plaza. Pets must be leashed at all times and are not permitted on trails/routes (including over the snow) or inside visitor centers or other facilities.

### Why Are Dogs Limited to Paved Areas?

All dogs leave behind a territorial scent that disrupts the behavior of native animals like the Sierra Nevada red fox.

Dogs are predators that could chase, scare, kill, and transmit diseases to wild animals. Alternatively, wild animals can transmit diseases including bubonic plague to pets (and then to humans).

Pets are permitted in most areas of the surrounding Lassen National Forest. Learn more about the McGowan Ski Area near the Southwest Entrance on page 7 or other nearby areas to take your pet at [go.nps.gov/lavo/pets](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/pets).

## Emergencies

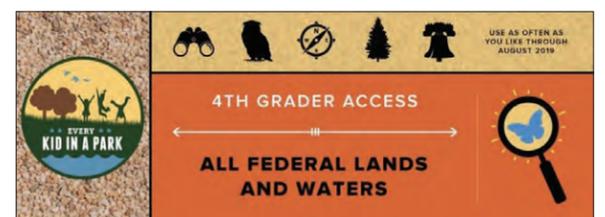
If you have an emergency call 911. If phone service is not available, contact a park employee, go to the Loomis Ranger Station, or use the emergency phone in the 24-hour vestibule of the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

## Equipment Rental

Equipment rental is not available in the park. Snowshoes are provided for ranger-led snowshoe tours only. Equipment rental is available in Mineral, Childs Meadow, Chester, Redding, and Chico.

## Firearms

Visitors are responsible for understanding and complying with all applicable State of California, local, and federal firearms laws. Federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in this park identified by posted signs at public entrances. For more information visit [oag.ca.gov/firearms](http://oag.ca.gov/firearms) or email [lavo\\_information@nps.gov](mailto:lavo_information@nps.gov).



Fourth graders and their families can get free access to hundreds of parks, lands, and waters for an entire year.

**Lassen Park Foundation** provides support to preserve and interpret the special natural and cultural resources of Lassen Volcanic National Park and its environs for future generations.

With the generosity and dedication of our supporters, the non-profit Park Foundation has provided funding for projects including the winter snowshoe education program, Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, and Volcano Adventure Camp (youth camping facility).

Please become a Friend of Lassen by contributing to the Lassen Park Foundation! Your donation is tax-deductible.



Lassen Park Foundation  
(530) 378-2600  
[info@lassenparkfoundation.org](mailto:info@lassenparkfoundation.org)  
[www.lassenparkfoundation.org](http://www.lassenparkfoundation.org)

# More Winter Activities



## Ranger-led Snowshoe Walks

### Dates

Saturdays and Sundays  
January 4 through March 29, 2020

### Time/Location

1:30 pm - 3:30 pm  
Meet outside the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center. Space is limited; obtain a free ticket at the front desk the day of the program.

### Cost

Suggested \$1 donation for snowshoe maintenance.

### Ages

8 years and older. Infants and children in carriers are not allowed for safety reasons.

### What to Bring

Boots, warm layers, water, lunch/snacks.

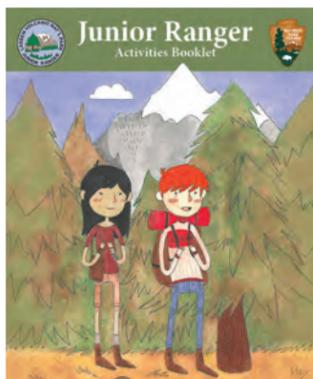
Ranger-led snowshoe walks are an excellent way to learn or practice snowshoeing techniques and explore winter at Lassen. As participant experience and fitness levels may vary, so too does route and distance. A ranger will demonstrate how to put on snowshoes and how to move around at the beginning of the walk.

## Become a Junior Ranger

Kids between the ages of 7 and 12 are invited to participate in our Junior Ranger program. Choose from a variety of activities in the park and activity booklet to earn an official Junior Ranger badge.

Our younger explorers are welcome to participate in the Lassen Volcanic National Park Chipmunk Club. Kids can learn more about wildlife in the park and earn a Chipmunk Club sticker.

Pick up your Chipmunk Club card or Junior Ranger booklet at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center or print one online at [go.nps.gov/lavo/jr](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/jr).



## Prohibited Activities

These activities are dangerous or destructive and carry legal penalties, including fines:

Bringing pets on trails/routes; including over the snow or in a carrier.

Camping outside of designated campsites or overnight parking areas.

Feeding wildlife (includes littering).

Launching, landing, or operating unmanned aircraft (drones) on park lands and waters.

Snowmobiling within park boundaries.

Carrying a firearm into park buildings.

Traveling or camping too close to hydrothermal areas. **Visitors have been severely injured by walking too close to hydrothermal features.**

This is only a partial list of regulations. For more information, consult 36 Code of Federal Regulations and the Superintendent's Compendium available at [go.nps.gov/lavo/regs](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/regs).

# Winter Wildlife

Can you spot tracks, scat, or these winter residents themselves? These animals have adaptations to survive Lassen's harsh winters, such as storing food and developing thicker coats.



### Steller's Jay

*Cyanocitta stelleri*

This large, dark jay swoops on its broad, rounded wings. Keep an eye on your winter picnic as they are quick to spot unattended food. Steller's and Blue jays are the only northern American jays with crests.



### Mountain Chickadee

*Poecile gambeli*

Sparrow-sized, small-billed bird often sighted in trees throughout the winter months. Makes two distinctive calls, "chicka-dee-dee-de" and another that sounds strikingly like "cheeseburger!"



### Clark's Nutcracker

*Nucifraga columbiana*

This member of the crow family caches thousands of seeds each year. Easy to spot throughout the park as they swoop between trees. Listen for their frequent long, grating calls.



### Snowshoe Hare

*Lepus americanus*

Slightly larger than rabbits, with taller hind legs and longer ears. Their large, furry feet help them move atop snow and a snow-white winter coat turns brown when the snow melts each spring.



### American "Pine" Marten

*Martes americana*

Cat-sized weasel with a long, slender body, short legs, rounded ears, and a bushy tail. The marten may be active as little as 15% of the day in the winter. Spotted occasionally in the Southwest Area.

## Lassen's Own Sierra Nevada Red Fox



A Sierra Nevada red fox captured on a motion-sensor camera in Lassen Volcanic.

Lassen Volcanic National Park is one of two known locations of Sierra Nevada red fox (SNRF). Although once found throughout the Sierra Nevada and Southern Cascade mountain ranges, the species is now one of the rarest mammals in California.

Researchers estimate the Lassen area population consists of only about 20 individuals, based on survey findings from 2009 to 2011. An ongoing survey effort in and around Lassen Volcanic may provide our best opportunity for understanding and fostering Lassen's native red fox.

Smaller in size than low-elevation red foxes, SNRF generally weigh 4.5 to 9 pounds, have a narrow pointed muzzle, large pointy ears, and a slender body and legs.

SNRF are typically yellowish to reddish brown, but, despite their name, can also be black or silver. Handsome dark-brown markings adorn the top of their ears and shins, and white covers their chest and stomach. Their bushy fox tail always has a white tip, is long and flowing and carried close to the ground where it adds an additional dimension to their length.



### Report a Red Fox Sighting

If you observe a red fox in the Sierra Nevada, Southern Cascade, or Klamath mountain ranges above 2,500 feet elevation, please report your observation by providing: date and time observed, location, terrain (e.g. rocky slope/forest/meadow), photos, and GPS location.

Learn more or report a sighting at [go.nps.gov/lavo/SNRF](http://go.nps.gov/lavo/SNRF).

## Help Keep Wild Animals Wild

Enjoy your food, but please do not share with park animals. Winter residents each have their own special adaptations that help them survive the long winter season.



### Bad for wildlife:

Wildlife will become dependent on people (they're wild animals!) and they will forget how to forage for food on their own.

Wild animals can become unhealthy or die from eating human food instead of their natural food.

Fed animals hang around parking lots and roads and could be hit and killed by cars.

Animals that are fed can become nuisances and may have to be destroyed.

### Bad for you:

Small rodents and birds can and will bite the hand that feeds them, transmitting a variety of diseases.

Animals may carry rabies and you will have to get shots if bitten.

Fed animals lose their wariness of people and become aggressive. Larger animals, such as deer, have been known to buck or kick suddenly and cause serious injuries.

Wildlife may carry diseases that your pets are not protected from.



These fox prints and scat seen on the snow-covered Lassen Park Highway last winter suggest SNRF use ski and snowshoe tracks to facilitate winter travel and may be sighted in the vicinity.

# Manzanita Lake Area Winter Routes

## Beginner Routes

### Manzanita Lake Snowshoe Loop

This trail is not recommended for skiing

**Distance:** 1.8 mile loop  
**Elevation:** 5,800 to 5,850 feet  
**Average Time:** 1.5 hours

Begin near the Loomis Ranger Station and circle the lake in either direction. This route provides excellent views of Lassen Peak and Chaos Crags. Please stay off lake ice, it is unstable and shores may be difficult to recognize under snow.

### Reflection Lake Snowshoe Loop

This trail is not recommended for skiing

**Distance:** 0.5 mile loop  
**Elevation:** 5,800 feet  
**Average Time:** 30 minutes

Begin at the shore across the highway from the Loomis Museum and circle the lake in either direction. It may be necessary to follow the park highway for a short section of the lake edge closest to the road. Please stay off lake ice, it may be unstable and shores can be difficult to recognize under snow.

### Manzanita Campground Loop

**Distance:** 1.5 mile loop  
**Elevation:** 5,800 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 1.5 hours

Cross the footbridge by the Loomis Ranger Station, turn right and follow the road to the campground for approximately a quarter mile to where it turns to the right through a set of large rocks. The route covers a half-mile loop through several sections of the campground.

## Intermediate Routes

### Chaos Jumbles Area

**Distance:** 1.2+ miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 5,290 to 5,300 feet  
**Average Time:** 1+ hour

Head up the park highway for 0.6 mile to an open area of stunted trees. Veer to the right up toward Chaos Crags. Here, the undulating topography slopes up into the bowl of the Crags. The terrain is easy to moderately difficult with excellent views at the higher elevations.

### Chaos Crags Trail

This trail is not recommended for skiing

**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 5,290 to 6,650 feet  
**Average Time:** 3-4 hours

Cross the footbridge by the Loomis Ranger Station, turn left and follow the road to the Chaos Crags Trailhead sign. Follow yellow tree markers as the trail climbs steeply up to a ridge. If you decide to descend to Crags Lake, beware of potential rockfall and high winds.

### Nobles Emigrant Trail

**Distance:** 5.2 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 5,875 to 6,275 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 3-4 hours

Pick up the trail north of Reflection Lake or at the trailhead off a service road west of Reflection Lake. Follow the orange tree markers along the base of Table Mountain. The trail climbs over a flank of Table Mountain into fir forest and rejoins the park highway at Sunflower Flat. Return the way you came or via the park highway to make a loop.

### Manzanita Creek

**Distance:** 7.5 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 5,850 to 7,400 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 6 hours

From the Loomis Ranger Station, cross a footbridge, then turn right onto the Manzanita Lake Campground road. Travel through the campground to the Manzanita Creek trailhead sign. The route is mostly a gradual climb. Beware of avalanche chutes off of Loomis Peak that may reach the upper end of the trail.

### Park Highway Destinations

The park highway route begins at the road closure gate just beyond the Loomis Plaza parking area. Destinations beyond Lost Creek Campground area are recommended for overnight trips only.

### Sunflower Flat

**Distance:** 2.5 miles one-way  
**Elevation Gain:** 400 feet  
**Estimated Time:** 2 hours

### Lost Creek Campground

**Distance:** 4 miles one-way  
**Elevation Gain:** 200 feet  
**Estimated Time:** 3-4 hours

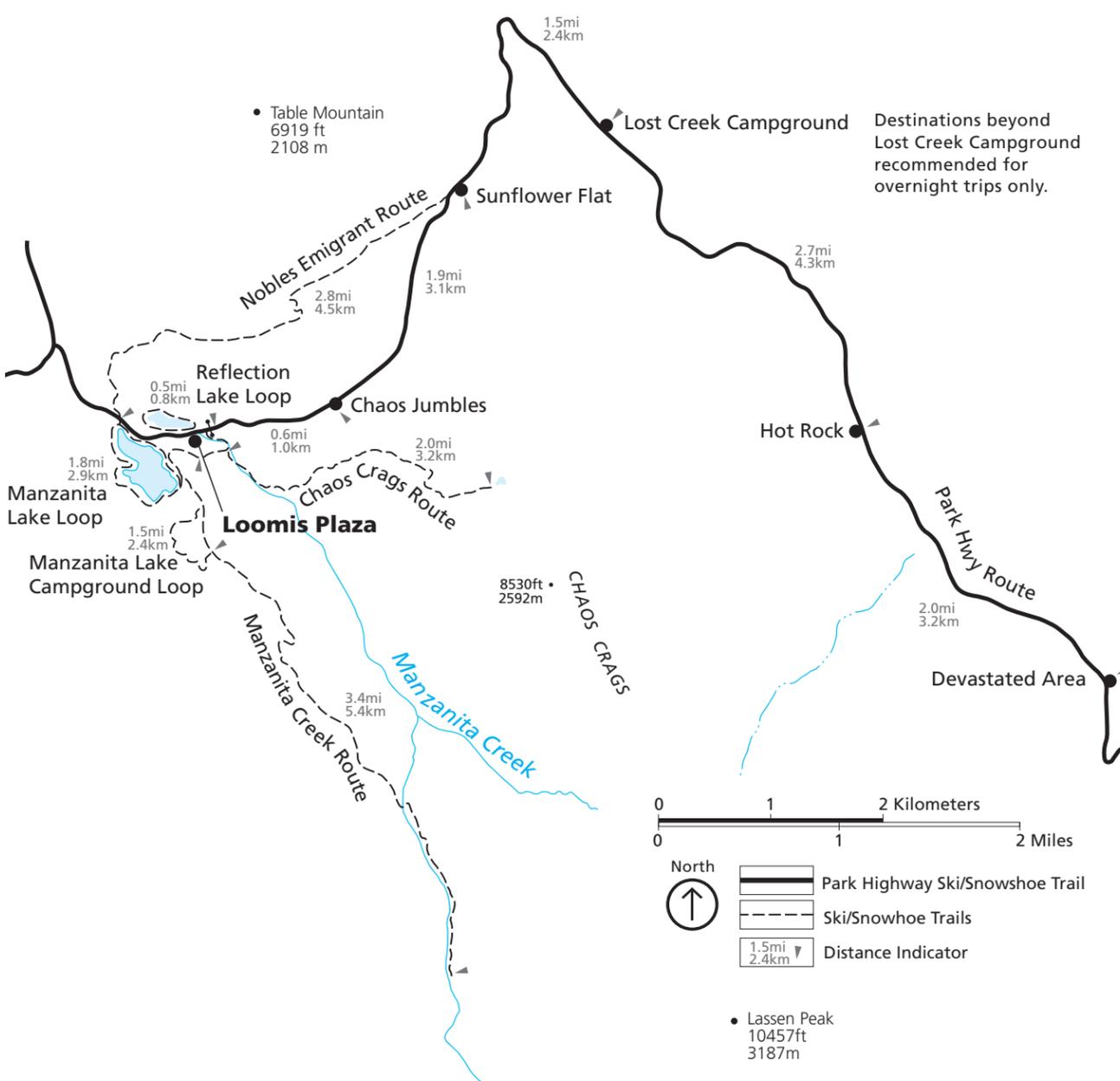
### Hot Rock

**Distance:** 6.7 miles one-way  
**Elevation Gain:** 400 feet  
**Estimated Time:** Overnight

### Devastated Area

**Distance:** 8.7 miles one-way  
**Elevation Gain:** 580 feet  
**Estimated Time:** Overnight

## Manzanita Lake Area Winter Routes Map



## Winter Etiquette



### Do not walk on ski tracks

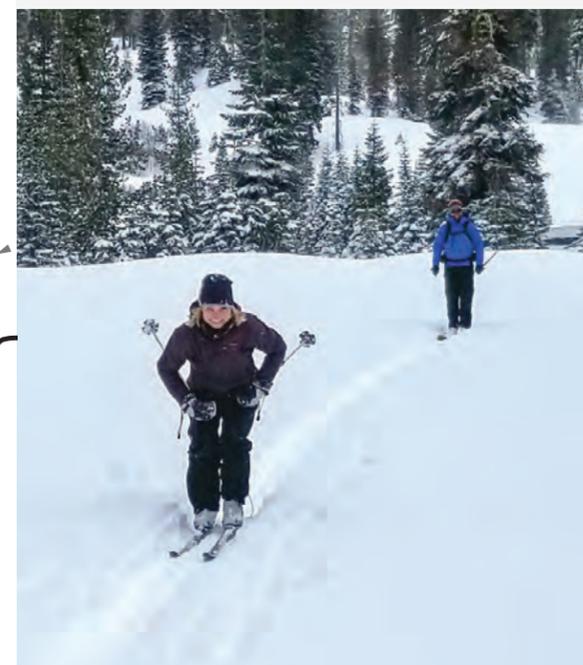
Footprints and snowshoe tracks create hazards that make skiing more difficult.

### Snowshoe parallel to the ski track

Using a separate track ensures snowshoers remain clear of downhill skiers.

### Yield to faster skiers or downhill traffic

Step to the side to allow skiers traveling downhill to safely pass. In all other cases, yield to those traveling uphill, as they are working harder and have the right of way.



Please be courteous and do not walk in ski tracks.

# Southwest Area Winter Routes

## Beginner Routes

### Sulphur Works

**Distance:** 2 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6,700 to 7,000 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 1 hour

The boiling mudpots and steam vents at Sulphur Works are active year-round. Follow the park highway route from the southwest parking area. The left side of the route is bordered by steep side hills, be aware of avalanche danger. For your safety, do not travel or camp in or near hydrothermal areas. The snow surrounding these areas may look solid, but may actually be a weak snow layer hiding pools of acidic boiling water. **Maintain a safe distance from hydrothermal features. Visitors have been severely burned by hot mud and water.**

### McGowan Cross-Country Ski Area

Located in adjacent Lassen National Forest

**Distance:** 5 miles to Nanny Creek one-way  
**Elevation:** 6,080 to 5,110 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 4 hours

The McGowan Cross-Country Ski Area is located in Lassen National Forest, 2.5 miles south of the Southwest Entrance. Marked routes travel across a flat and slightly descending landscape. Ask a ranger for a map of the ski area or visit [nps.gov/lavo/skiing](http://nps.gov/lavo/skiing).

 Pets are welcome in this Lassen National Forest area south of the park.

## Intermediate Routes

### Ridge Lake

**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 7,000 to 8,000 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 4 hours

Follow the park highway route from the southwest parking area about ¾ mile and cross the bridge before Sulphur Works. The route begins at the north end of the flat area to the left. The route climbs rapidly along the east side of West Sulphur Creek to the Ridge Lakes basin. Several good camping spots can be found on the north shore of Ridge Lakes. If weather is severe, more protected camping can be found about ¼ mile below Ridge Lakes along its outlet creek. Avoid the area south of Ridge Lakes during periods of avalanche danger.

### Diamond Peak

**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6,700 to 8,000 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 4 hours

Follow the park highway route from the southwest parking area 1.5 miles to Windy Point. Veer left off at the sign for Ranger Cutoff, just beyond the point. The route climbs a gentle slope to a ridge with excellent views of Brokeoff Mountain and Sulphur Works. Stop here or continue along the ridge as it gradually narrows, providing views of Lassen Peak and eventually opening onto a steep slope at the western foot of Diamond Peak. Return using the same route; avoid descending the avalanche-prone slopes above the Sulphur Works area.

## Advanced Routes

### Brokeoff Mountain

**Distance:** 7 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6,650 to 9,250 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 8 hours

Traditional routes use the Forest Lake route or the summer trail that begins near the park entrance. Numerous avalanche paths exist on all aspects of the mountain. Travelers should use extreme caution. Many skiers reserve travel to the summit for spring when snow conditions traditionally stabilize. Summit conditions during inclement weather often include high winds with little or no visibility. Be cautious of overhanging cornices at the summit.

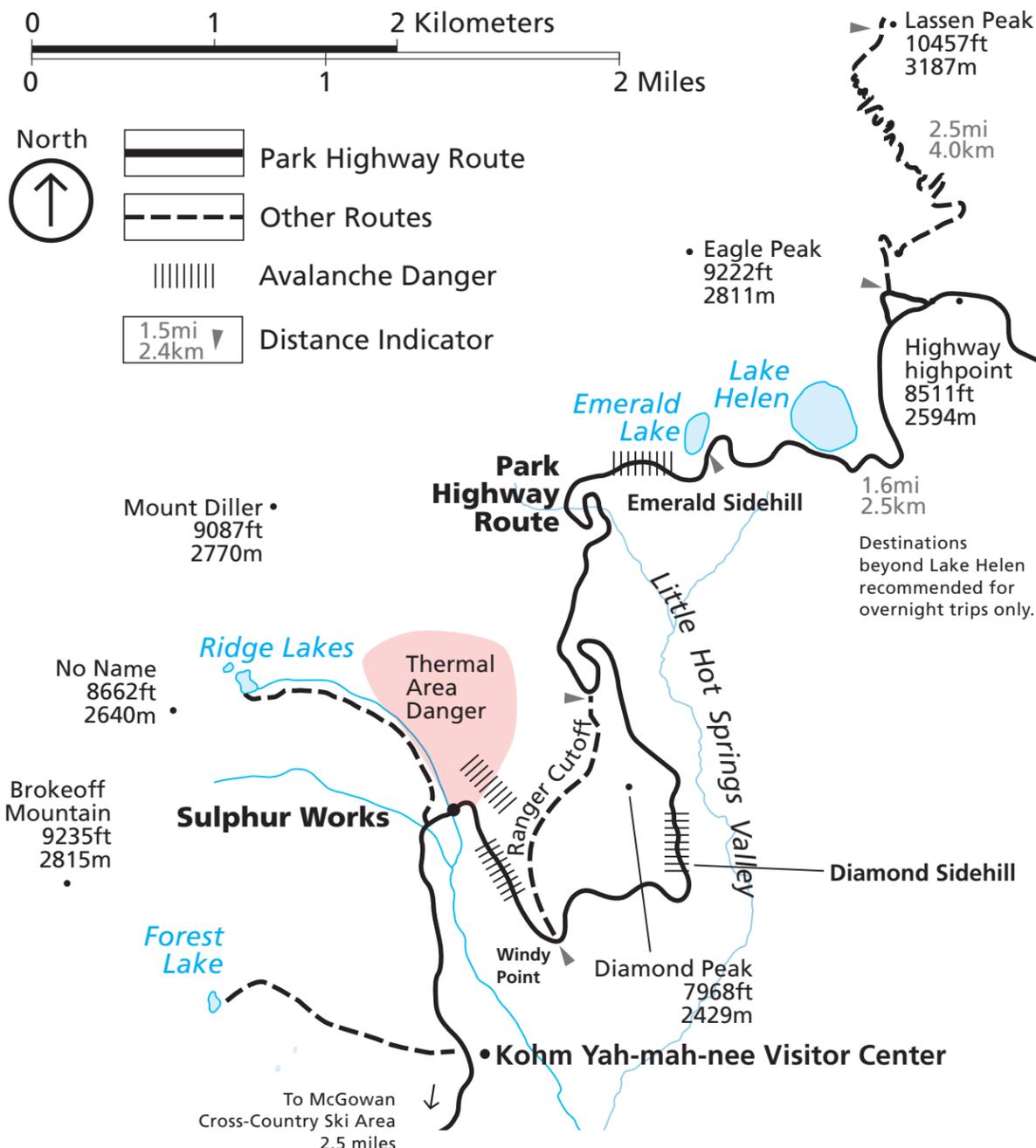
### Lassen Peak

**Distance:** 17 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6,700 to 10,457 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 3 days

Most travelers allow three days to summit Lassen Peak in the winter. Be prepared for high winds in the Lassen Peak and Lake Helen areas. Conditions on the mountain are most stable in early morning hours; afternoon travel is not recommended. The safest route up the mountain follows the summer trail through the forested section and continues on the southeast ridge to the summit. Weather conditions on Lassen Peak can deteriorate rapidly, creating white out conditions and high winds.

Travel outside of the highway corridor is recommended only for experienced winter travelers.

## Southwest Area Winter Routes Map



## Avalanche Safety



Lassen is avalanche country. Each year avalanches claim more than 150 lives worldwide. Knowledge, information, and equipment are key to preventing and surviving avalanche accidents.

Before you enter the backcountry, ensure that you have a solid understanding of avalanche awareness. Carry avalanche gear including a shovel, probe, and transceiver/beacon and know how to use them.

Be especially cautious during and after a snow storm. Spring road opening also warrants extra caution, as avalanches and rockslides can occur on plowed sections of the highway at any time.

A Lassen Avalanche Awareness Guide with an avalanche terrain map is available at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and online at [go.nps.gov/winter\\_safety](http://go.nps.gov/winter_safety).



Backcountry users should carry avalanche gear and know how to use it. Learn more at [go.nps.gov/winter\\_safety](http://go.nps.gov/winter_safety).

# Winter Travel



## Directions Around the Park

Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway is closed to vehicles in the winter and early spring. Follow the directions below for travel between the Southwest and Manzanita Lake Entrances. **The route around the west side of the park is not recommended for RVs or trailers.** For directions from Manzanita Lake to the Southwest Entrance, follow the directions above in reverse—be sure to reverse left and right turns.

### Travel Around the West Side of the Park

This route is the shortest route around the park. **This windy road is not recommended for RVs and trailers. Average travel time is one hour and 45 minutes.**

1. From the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, head south on Lassen National Park Highway/SR-89 for 5 miles.
2. Turn right (west) on SR-36. Continue for 23 miles.
3. Turn right (north) onto Lanes Valley Road. A large road sign on the north side of the highway marks the turnoff approximately one mile before the town of Paynes Creek. Continue for 7 miles.
4. Turn right onto Manton Road/Co Rd A6. Continue for 7 miles.
5. In Manton, turn left onto Wilson Hill Road. Continue for 1.5 miles.
6. Turn left to stay on Wilson Hill Road. Continue for 6 miles.
7. Turn right (east) onto SR-44. Continue for 17 miles.
8. Turn right (south) into the park. Continue 1 mile to the Manzanita Lake entrance.

### Travel Around the East Side of the Park

**Best route for RVs and Trailers**  
This route is slightly longer than the west route, however it has fewer curves and is appropriate for RVs and trailers. **Average travel time is two hours.**

1. From the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, head south on Lassen National Park Highway/SR-89 for 5 miles.
2. Turn left (east) on SR-36. Continue 38 miles to CR A21/Mooney Road located in the town of Westwood. Continue for 18 miles. Please note that CR A21 may close during heavy snowfall. In the case of closure, follow SR-36 an additional 17 miles to the SR-44 junction just west of Susanville.
3. Turn left (west) onto SR-44. Continue for 28 miles.
4. Turn left (west) onto SR-44/89. Continue for 13.5 miles.
5. Turn left (south) into the park. Continue 1 mile to the Manzanita Lake Entrance.

## Winter Driving

**Be prepared for icy or snowy conditions at high elevations during the fall and winter seasons.** Conditions can be very hazardous, especially when temperatures drop during the evening and early morning hours.

During periods of heavy snowfall, Southwest Area plowing operations typically end at 1:30 pm.

Visitors are strongly encouraged to exit the park behind the snowplow to avoid traveling through deep snowpack.

### Protect Yourself

Carry tire chains in your vehicle from October through May and know how to use them. Chain requirements can be instituted at any time; even four-wheel drive vehicles with snow tires can be required to chain up.

If you get stuck, stay in your vehicle and call for or flag down help. Clear your exhaust pipe to prevent carbon monoxide build-up.

Keep a full gas tank whenever possible.

### Prevent Crashes

Drive for the conditions

Slower speeds, slower acceleration

Leave room for longer stopping distances

Use small, slow motions

Ease on the breaks

Steer into the skid

Stomp, stay, steer with anti-lock brakes (ABS)

### No Fuel in the Park

There are no winter fuel services in the park. View nearby gas stations on the map above.

### Cell Service Limited

Cell service (AT&T and Verizon) is very limited in the park and surrounding areas. View spots with limited coverage on the map on page 3.

### Emergencies

If you have an emergency call 911. If phone service is not available, contact a park employee, go to the Loomis Ranger Station, or use the emergency phone in the 24-hour vestibule of the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

### California Highway Information

To check for chain requirements, road closures, or other highway advisories before your trip, call the CalTrans Highway Information Network at 1-800-427-7623 or visit [roads.dot.ca.gov](http://roads.dot.ca.gov).



Southwest Entrance Station and Diamond Peak near the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.