

Visitors at the sledding area behind the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center in the Southwest Area.

Winter/Spring 2020 - 2021

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.

Vehicle Access

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 or five miles north of SR-36 to the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center in the Southwest Area (see map on page 3).

The park highway is closed to through traffic due to snow approximately November through May. During heavy winters, the highway may close to through traffic as early as late-October and open as late as mid-July. Other park roads to Juniper Lake, Butte Lake, and Warner Valley Areas are also closed in winter.

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
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 visitor center here is an excellent first stop for new winter explorers. See page 3 for location.

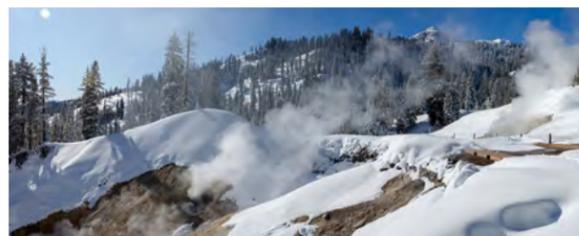
Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center

Access to exhibits and the park film may be limited due to COVID-19 response. The information desk and park store are available when the building is open. See hours on page 2. Light snacks and hot drinks are available on weekends only between 11 am and 2 pm.

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. 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 and routes on page 7.

Ranger-led Snowshoe Walks Postponed until 2022

Ranger-led snowshoe walks will not be offered this year due to COVID-19 response.

Manzanita Lake Area

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. See page 3 for location.

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.



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 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Presidents' Day	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 go.nps.gov/lavo/lodging	
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 for oversnow camping Camping in vehicles (not tents) permitted between islands in parking area	Not available
Backcountry Permits	Self-registration inside visitor center 24-hour vestibule	Self-registration outside Ranger Station

Southwest Area Facilities and Services

Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center

The visitor center may close at any time due to inclement weather. Please do not camp or cook inside the vestibule.

Winter Season November 1 through April 30

Open Wednesday through Sunday
9 am to 5 pm
January 18, 2021 (MLK Day)
February 15, 2021 (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.

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.

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.

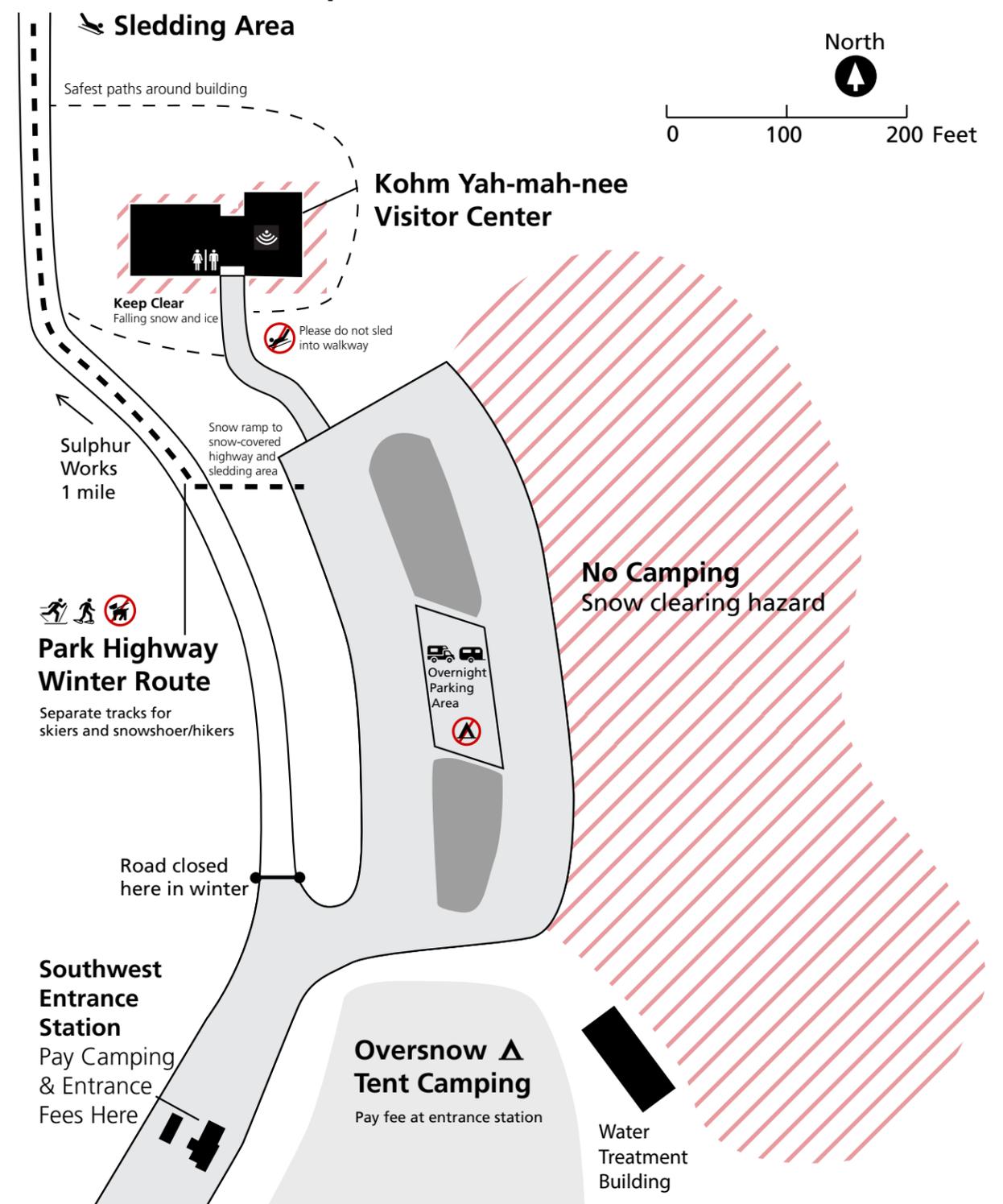
Lost & Found

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

Wi-Fi

Free Wi-Fi is available at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center. You must open a browser and agree to terms of use to connect to *NPS Visitor Wi-Fi*. Please note that bandwidth is very limited and service may be slow or unavailable during busy times.

Southwest Area Map

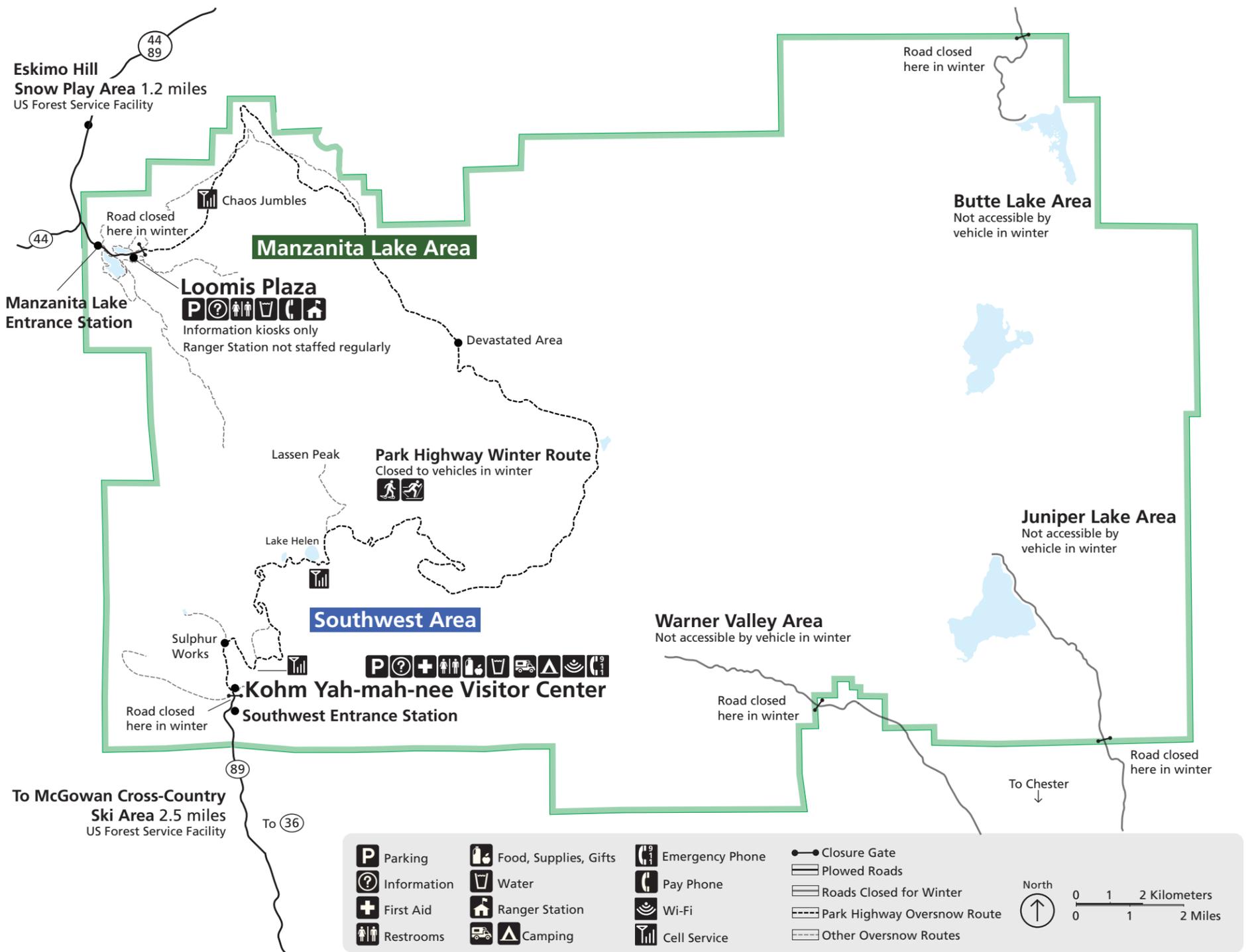


Winter Camping

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

Tents are permitted only in the oversnow tent camping area, not in 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 winter conditions, you can improve your comfort and safety by dressing properly.

Wear clothes in several layers including waterproof outerwear, 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.

Wear sunglasses to protect from light reflected by snow; polarized lenses are best.

Know the Risks

Enjoying winter at Lassen involves risk. Be aware of and prepared for winter conditions and their 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 improve your safety:

- Wear waterproof and insulated footwear
- Bring water and extra food
- Carry extra layers for warmth
- Take breaks often
- Carry sunscreen and sunglasses
- 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



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 3/14/21



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 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
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	November 29
2020	March 19	May 29	

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.

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.

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.



Accessibility

Facilities in the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and Loomis Plaza are accessible. An Accessibility Guide to Lassen Volcanic is available at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and online at 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

All visitors must pay an entrance fee. Display your fee receipt, Lassen Annual Pass, or Interagency Pass on your vehicle's dashboard. Entrance fee payment is usually self-serve and cannot be paid at the visitor center. Bring a check or exact change or purchase an annual pass online prior to your visit.

1-7 Day Vehicle Fee

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

Annual Passes

Lassen Annual Pass - \$55

Also valid at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. Visit 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 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 everykidoutdoors.gov

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, videos, and educational gifts in park stores or online at lassenassociation.org.



Lassen Association
(530) 348-2670
lassenassociation@yahoo.com
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.

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.

Emergencies

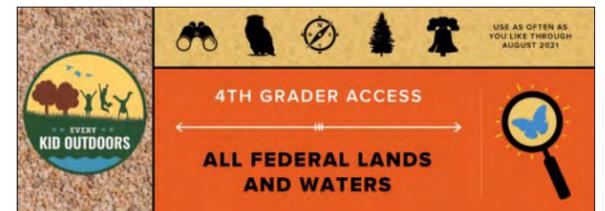
If you have an emergency call 911. If phone service is not available, contact a park employee, go to the Loomis Ranger Station, or use the emergency phone in the 24-hour vestibule of the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

Equipment Rental

Equipment rental is not available in the park. 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 or email 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 philanthropic support to Lassen Volcanic National Park and invites all, especially youth, to experience and preserve the natural and cultural resources of this special place.

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) 768-1110
info@lassenparkfoundation.org
www.lassenparkfoundation.org

Protect Yourself—Protect the Park

Recreate Responsibly

The National Park Service encourages all visitors to make responsible decisions and follow Center for Disease Control guidance to help reduce the spread of COVID-19:



Practice social distancing. Maintain at least 6 feet (1.8 meters) of distance between you and others.



Wear a face covering when social distancing cannot be maintained.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze (not with your hands).



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Most importantly, please return home and stay at home if you feel sick.

Access to and availability of park services and facilities may be impacted by COVID-19 response. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we adapt for the safety of both staff and visitors. View current modifications at [go.nps.gov/lavo/current](https://www.nps.gov/lavo/current).

Prohibited Activities

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

Bringing pets on trails or 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.**

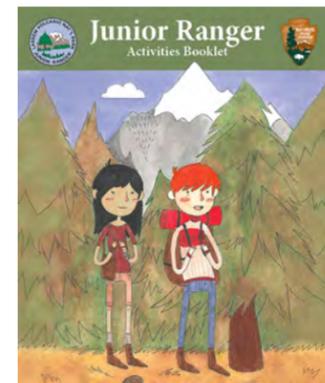
This is only a partial list of regulations. For more information, consult 36 Code of Federal Regulations and the Superintendent's Compendium available at [go.nps.gov/lavo/regs](https://www.nps.gov/lavo/regs).

Become a Junior Ranger

Kids age five and older are invited to participate in our Junior Ranger program. Choose from a variety of activities to earn an official Junior Ranger badge.

Our younger explorers are welcome to participate in the 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](https://www.nps.gov/lavo/jr).



Winter Wildlife

Can you spot these winter residents or signs of their presence such as tracks or scat? 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 (*Vulpes vulpes necator*) captured on a motion-sensor camera in Lassen Volcanic.

Lassen Volcanic National Park is one of two known habitats for 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, SNRFs generally weigh 4.5 to 9 pounds, have a narrow pointed muzzle, large pointy ears, and a slender body and legs.

SNRFs 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 or signs of its presence 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](https://www.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 can become dependent on people for food. Animals that cannot find food on their own may starve.

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.

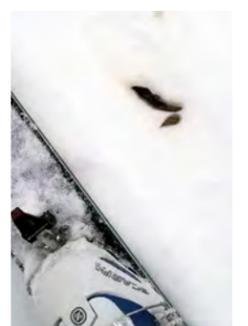
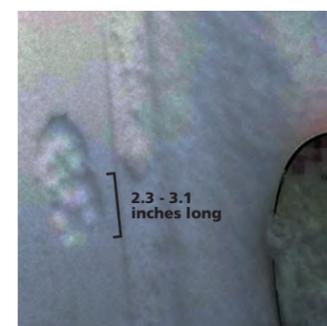
Bad for you:

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 SNRFs 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 route 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 route 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: 5,900 to 6,187 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 Route

This route is not recommended for skiing

Distance: 4 miles round-trip
Elevation: 5,900 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 route climbs steeply up to a ridge. If you decide to descend to Crags Lake, beware of potential rockfall and high winds.

Nobles Emigrant Route

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

Pick up the route 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 7,100 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 route.

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: 5,995 feet
Estimated Time: 2 hours

Lost Creek Campground

Distance: 4 miles one-way
Elevation: 5,628 feet
Estimated Time: 3-4 hours

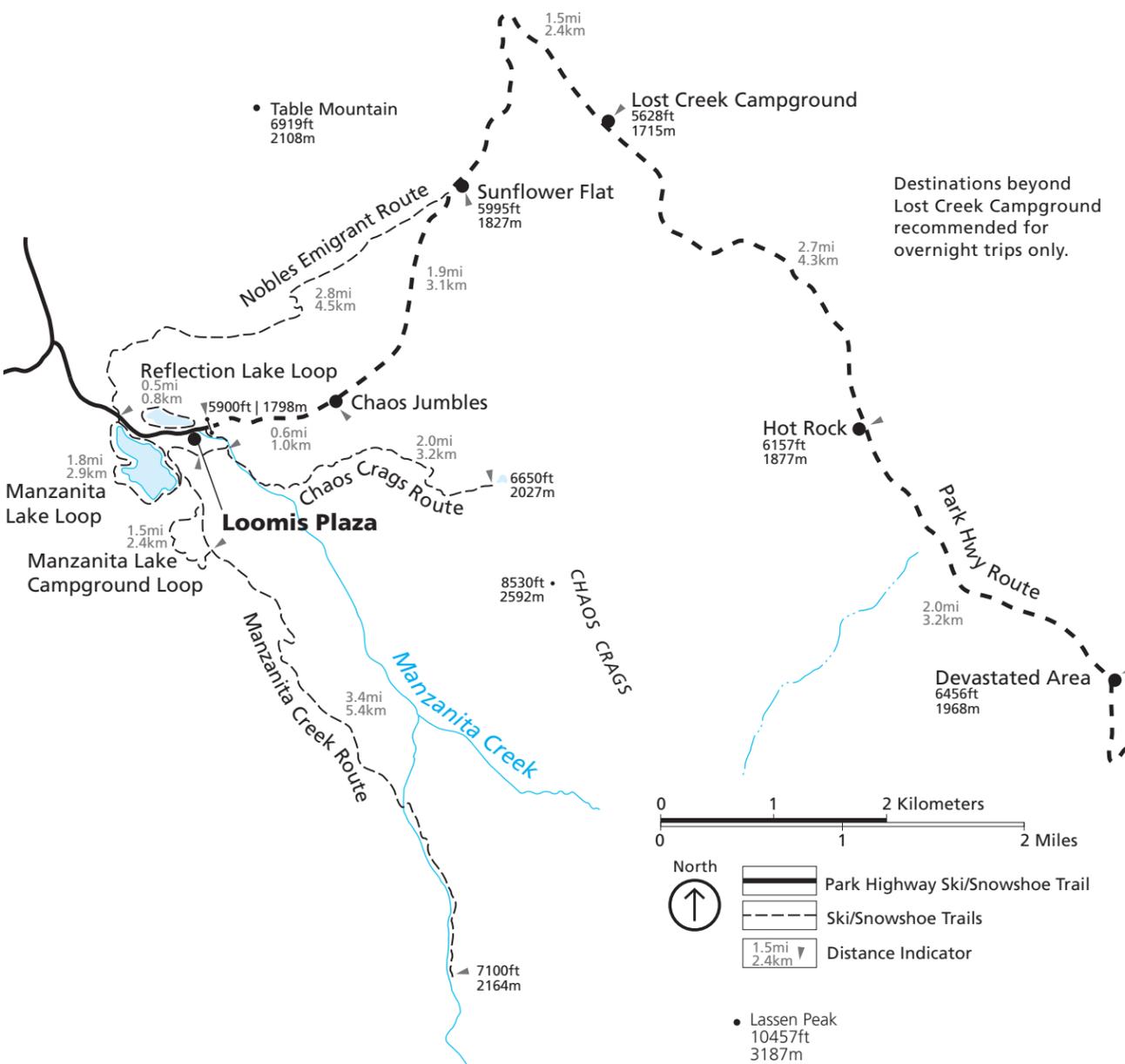
Hot Rock

Distance: 6.7 miles one-way
Elevation: 6,157 feet
Estimated Time: Overnight

Devastated Area

Distance: 8.7 miles one-way
Elevation: 6,456 feet
Estimated Time: Overnight

Manzanita Lake Area Winter Routes Map



Winter Etiquette



Do not walk on ski tracks

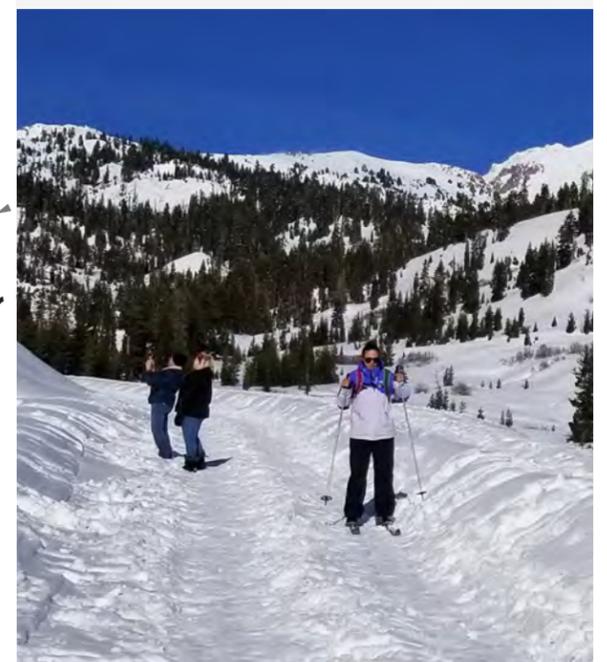
Footprints and snowshoe tracks create hazards that make skiing more difficult.

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

Marvel at boiling mudpots and steam vents at Sulphur Works hydrothermal area. 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, not shown on map below

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 go.nps.gov/lavo/skiing.

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

Intermediate Routes

Ridge Lakes

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 ¼ 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 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.

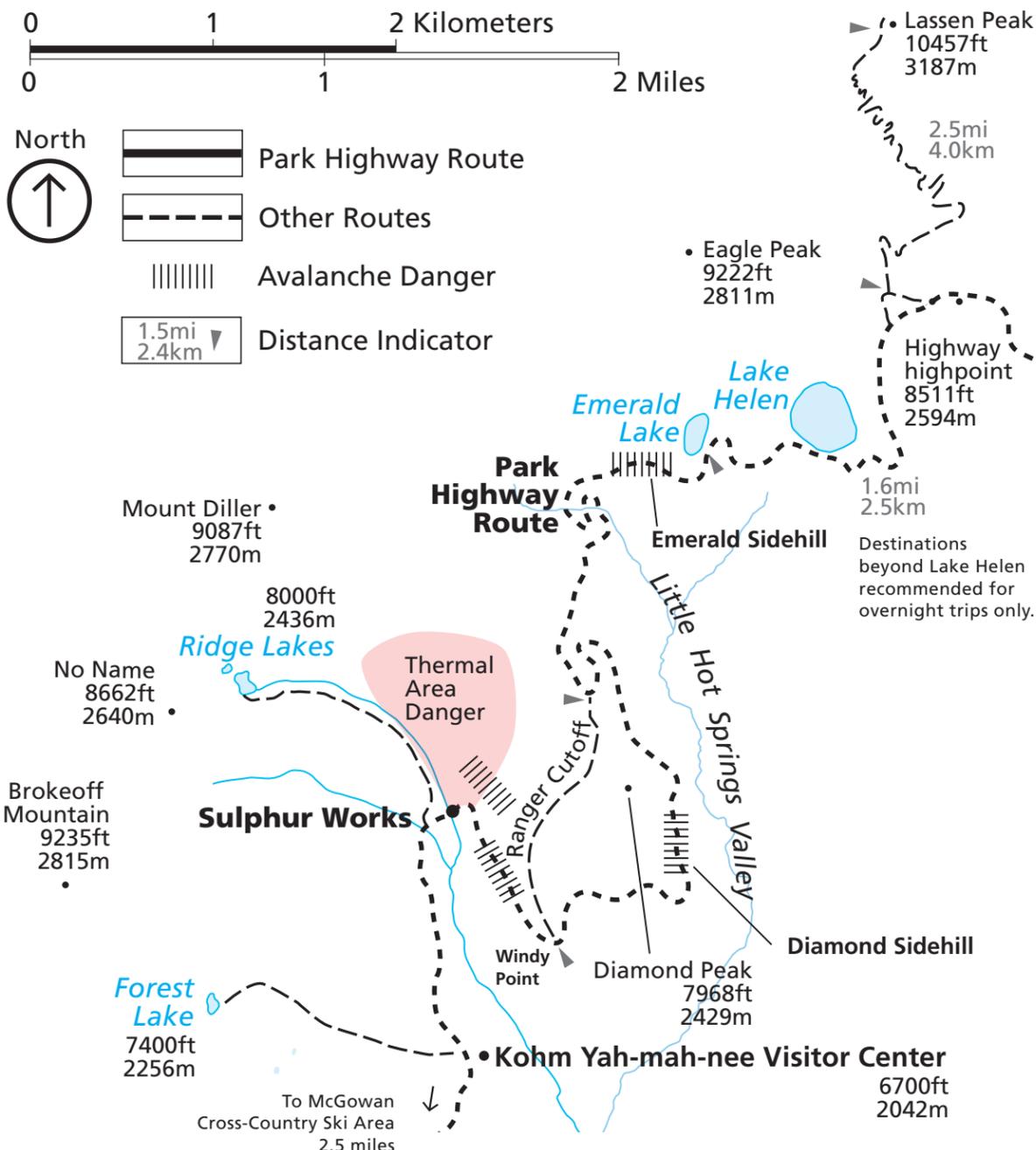
Lassen Peak

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

There is no avalanche forecast for the park



View the park Avalanche Awareness Guide with an avalanche terrain map and links to avalanche forecasts for the nearby Shasta and Tahoe areas at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center or go.nps.gov/winter_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.



Backcountry users should carry avalanche gear and know how to use it. Learn more at go.nps.gov/winter_safety.

