Choose Your Adventure
Contributed by Ranger Leah Duran

When winter arrives, Lassen is transformed into a world of white. Trails and roads are lost to a carpet of snow, and the park becomes a blank canvas to paint with skis and snowshoes. As defined boundaries disappear, visitors can design their own adventure, from a quiet walk in the red fir forest to a backcountry ski trip to the top of Lassen Peak.

Exploration allows us to step outside of our comfort zones, to try something new while exercising and experiencing a different side of Lassen. In this vast, tranquil landscape, winter activities abound for all ages and ability levels. Families can enjoy snow play by tossing snowballs, or heading to the hills for sledding and snowboarding. For those new to exploring the broad winter landscape, ranger-led programs offer an introduction to snowshoeing and winter ecology. Though the landscape may appear empty at first glance, the park is full of life. Wander through a glistening forest and look for the tiny footprints a pine marten paints on the smooth winter snow.

Adventure and challenge await visitors who delve deeper into the backcountry. More than 15 miles of cross-country ski trails begin at the Loomis Ranger Station. Backcountry skiers can test their skills on Lassen Peak, a three-day journey into the heart of a winter wonderland. Beneath a stunningly blue sky, volcanic peaks wear a calm winter coat that hides their fiery past and future potential.

Through our interactions with this ever-changing landscape, we are transformed as well. Take a step outside and discover the many ways to enjoy Lassen in winter.
**Road Closures**
The main park road usually closes by mid-November for the winter season due to snow. The Butte Lake, Warner Valley, and Juniper Lake roads close to vehicle traffic for the season due to snow by late October, and usually reopen in late June or early July. Plowing on the main park road usually begins in early April, and continues through late-June.

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

**Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center**
The Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center is open year-round. **Hours from October 10 to November 30 are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hours from December 1 to April 30 are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** The visitor center will be closed on November 24 and December 25. The gift shop and café are open weekends only. The visitor center may close at any time due to inclement weather. Please call (530) 595-4480 or visit http://go.nps.gov/lavo_current for closure information.

**Gasoline**
The nearest gas stations from the Manzanita Lake entrance are in Shingletown, 17 miles west on Highway 44, or in Old Station, 13 miles north on Highway 44/89. The nearest gas station from the Southwest entrance is in Chester, 30 miles east on Highway 36.

**Phones**
Cell phone coverage in the park is spotty. A pay phone is available in the Loomis Plaza at Manzanita Lake. An emergency phone is located in the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

**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 snow camping or camping in a vehicle is $10 per night. Please register at the entrance station. See page 9 for information on wilderness camping.
Pets in the Park
Activities with pets are limited at Lassen Volcanic. Pets must be restrained at all times and are not permitted in the park backcountry (including over snow), or inside visitor centers or other facilities. Vast public lands nearby offer outdoor opportunities with pets. Ask a ranger for information on nearby areas that allow pets.

Accessibility
Accessible facilities include the Loomis Ranger Station and the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center. Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are located at Loomis Plaza and the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

Firearms
All California firearm laws apply at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Firearms are not permitted within any federal building. Carrying or possessing a loaded firearm, including within a vehicle, without a valid concealed carry weapons permit from a recognized State of California agency, is prohibited. Openly carrying or possessing a loaded firearm on one’s person or in a vehicle is prohibited.

Weather
With elevations from 5,650 feet to 10,457 feet, a wide variety of weather conditions occur in Lassen Volcanic. Expect a 5° temperature decrease for every 1,000 foot increase in elevation. Prepare for your visit; bring layered clothing, snow boots, a hat and gloves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manzanita Lake Average High/Low Temperatures (5,850 feet)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>56/21°F</td>
<td>51/13°F</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>50/14°F</td>
<td>53/16°F</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>50/13°F</td>
<td>61/23°F</td>
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Snowmobiling
Snowmobiling is not permitted anywhere within the boundaries of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Please ask a ranger about groomed snowmobile trails outside the park.

Entrance Fees
Your park fees provide funding for park projects that improve and enhance the experience for park visitors.

1-7 Day Vehicle Fee - $10
Valid for six days from date of purchase.

Passes
Annual passes can be obtained at park entrance stations, at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, by phone, or online. To purchase a Lassen Annual Pass visit www.pay.gov or call (530) 595-6120. To purchase an interagency pass, visit www.store.usgs.gov/pass or call 1-888-ASK-USGS, ext. 1.

Lassen Annual Pass - $25
Valid for one year from month of purchase. Also honored at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.

Interagency Annual Pass - $80
Covers all national park units and other federal recreation areas with entrance fees. Valid for one year from month of purchase.

Interagency Access Pass - Free
Free lifetime pass for U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are permanently disabled.

Interagency Senior Pass - $10
Lifetime pass for U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are 62 years or older.

Lassen Volcanic National Park
2012 Annual Pass

Thermal Area Danger
For your safety, do not travel near hydrothermal areas. The snow surrounding thermal areas can look solid but may actually be a weak snow layer hiding pools of acidic boiling water. Traveling too close to thermal areas has resulted in severe injuries for previous visitors.
Winter Activities

Winter at Lassen offers the opportunity to step outside of the boundaries by trying something new or exploring new terrain. Once the roads disappear and the trails are hidden under snow, the entire park is free to explore! Keep in mind that winter at Lassen poses many dangers. The best way to ensure your safety is to be prepared. Read more about winter safety on pages 8-9.

Fall Hiking
Spectacular fall colors often persist through November. Enjoy the autumn stillness in the park before the snow begins to fall. Call the visitor center for current trail information at (530) 595-4480 or check trail conditions at http://go.nps.gov/lavo/trails.

Snowshoeing
If you are new to snowshoeing, consider joining a ranger-led snowshoe walk. Snowshoes are available for participants with a suggested $1 donation. For those more familiar with walking on snow, opportunities abound at both the north and south entrances. Be sure to bring your own snowshoes if you’d like to explore on your own! Read about suggested ski and snowshoe routes on pages 6-7.

Sledding
The main park road is plowed to the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center. Excellent sledding hills can be found just outside the visitor center. See if you feel the bump as you slide over what was the park road just months earlier!

Nordic Skiing
Nordic skiers delight in the sweeping views from the gradual route along the main park road. Be sure to bring your own equipment. See pages 6-7 for suggested touring routes.

Wilderness Snow Camping
Experience the splendor of Lassen’s winter by snow camping. Enjoy unimpaired night sky watching, and a silence and peace only a snowy park can offer. Wilderness camping permits are required. See page 9 for more information.

Backcountry Skiing/Snowboarding
Backcountry skiers and snowboarders will agree that Lassen offers spectacular terrain with an uncommon solitude. Lassen’s backcountry is recommended only for experienced backcountry skiers. Read about suggested routes on pages 6-7.

Bring Your Own Equipment
If you plan on enjoying the snow at Lassen, don’t forget to bring your equipment with you. Equipment rentals are not available in the park. You may also rent or purchase equipment from local businesses in Mineral, Redding, Chester and Chico.
Join a park ranger for a one and one-half to two-hour adventure exploring winter ecology and Lassen’s geologic history in the Southwest area. Route and distance vary with the group and weather conditions. Participants must be at least eight years old and capable of moderate physical exercise. For safety reasons, infants and children in carriers are not allowed on the snowshoe walks. Wear boots, dress in warm layers, and bring a water bottle. The park provides snowshoes, with a suggested $1 donation to cover maintenance costs. Reservations are required for organized groups, but not for families or individuals. To schedule a group snowshoe walk, please call the park (530) 595-6132 or (530) 595-6133.

Ranger-led snowshoe walks are offered Saturday and Sunday at 1:30 p.m. December 17, 2011 through April 8, 2012. Meet outside of the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

For more information about snowshoe walks, please call the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center at (530) 595-4480.

Pack Smart

- **Water**: Exercising in dry high-elevation air makes one particularly susceptible to dehydration
- **Waterproof Gear**: Always carry waterproof cold weather gear – even on sunny days
- **Layers**: Maintain an even temperature, as excessive perspiration can lead to hypothermia
- **Map and Compass**: Carry a topographic map and compass and know how to use them
- **Ski Equipment**: Pack an emergency ski tip, complete extra binding, and repair manuals

Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center

Enjoy the stunning 20-minute park film, take a relaxing tour through the exhibit hall, or purchase a cup of hot chocolate and watch the snowflakes fall as you enjoy the warmth of a stone fireplace. Make the visitor center the base for your next winter play day! Sled just outside the visitor center, and then enjoy a warm fireside lunch. As always, park rangers are always ready to help you make the most of your visit. Read more about the visitor center on page 2.
Ski and Snowshoe Routes

**BEGINNER TRAILS**

**Manzanita Lake Snowshoe Loop**
*This trail is not recommended for skiing*

**Distance:** 1.6 mile loop  
**Elevation:** 5800 feet to 5850 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 snow-covered Lassen Peak and Chaos Craggs. Please stay off lake ice. Lake ice is unstable, and shores may be difficult to recognize under snow.

**Nanny Creek via McGowan Ski Trail**
*Located in adjacent Lassen National Forest*

**Distance:** 5 miles to Nanny Creek one-way  
**Elevation:** 6080 feet to 5110 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 4 hours

The McGowan Ski Trail is located in Lassen National Forest, 3.5 miles south of the Southwest entrance. Marked with blue and white ski touring signs, the route travels across a flat and slightly descending landscape. Skiers will pass through largely forested areas with some meadow clearings, ending at Highway 36 at Nanny Creek. The trail does not go to McGowan Lake, which is on private property. This trail makes for a good one-way ski route if vehicles are available for shuttle.

**Main Park Road to Lake Helen**

**Distance:** 12.4 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6700 feet to 8200 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 6 hours  

From the Southwest parking area, follow the main park road. Hazardous, steep side hills with icy conditions may be encountered. The Diamond Peak area has a history of avalanches. This area should be avoided by using the marked “Ranger Cutoff” trail just north of Windy Point (see map on page 8). By mid-winter it is difficult to find any trace of the road between the head of Little Hot Springs Valley and Reading Peak. High winds and whiteout conditions are common in this same area during winter storms. The road crosses several avalanche paths. Good overnight snow camping areas can be found a short distance from the road north of Diamond Peak, and near Emerald Lake and Lake Helen.

**INTERMEDIATE ROUTES**

**Forest Lake**

**Distance:** 2 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 6700 feet to 7500 feet  
**Average Skiing Time:** 2 hours  
**Description:** This marked route through fir forest is popular with skiers and snowshoers alike. Look for a trail sign on the main park road across from the Southwest parking area. Follow the tree markers through several bowls to a short ridge. Continue along the ridge to the open bowl area beneath Brokeoff Mountain. Turn left (south) and follow the markers to Forest Lake.

**Manzanita Creek**

**Distance:** 7.5 miles round-trip  
**Elevation:** 5850 feet to 7400 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 of more than 1,000 feet. Suitable snow camping sites are found along the upper portion. Beware of avalanche chutes off of Loomis Peak that may reach the upper end of the trail.

**Main Park Road to Lake Helen**

**Distance:** 12.4 miles round-trip  
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From the Southwest parking area, follow the main park road. Hazardous, steep side hills with icy conditions may be encountered. The Diamond Peak area has a history of avalanches. This area should be avoided by using the marked “Ranger Cutoff” trail just north of Windy Point (see map on page 8). By mid-winter it is difficult to find any trace of the road between the head of Little Hot Springs Valley and Reading Peak. High winds and whiteout conditions are common in this same area during winter storms. The road crosses several avalanche paths. Good overnight snow camping areas can be found a short distance from the road north of Diamond Peak, and near Emerald Lake and Lake Helen.

Please be courteous by using separate ski and snowshoe tracks.
Ski and Snowshoe Routes

**ADVANCED ROUTES**

**Ridge Lakes**
- **Distance:** 2 miles round-trip
- **Elevation:** 7000 feet to 8000 feet
- **Skiing Time:** 2 hours

Follow the main park road from the Southwest parking area about ¾ mile, cross the bridge before Sulphur Works. Look for the trail sign to your left (north of the main park road). The trail 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.

**Brokeoff Mountain**
- **Distance:** 8 miles round-trip
- **Elevation:** 6650 feet to 9250 feet
- **Average Skiing Time:** 8 hours

Most skiers access the summit via the southwest ridge. Getting onto this ridge can be difficult as the various routes pass through hazardous canyons. Traditional routes use the Forest Lake trail 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 on Brokeoff Mountain until 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:** 20 miles round-trip
- **Elevation:** 6700 feet to 10,457 feet
- **Average Skiing Time:** 3 days

Most skiers and snowshoers allow three days to summit Lassen Peak in the winter. A possible itinerary includes Lake Helen, summit Lassen, return. 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 whiteout conditions and high winds.

**Lassen Backcountry Ski Patrol**

The Lassen Volcanic Backcountry Ski Patrol is on patrol! Volunteer patrol members bear the universal first aid symbol and name tags. They can provide information about routes, weather conditions, and the park in general. You can often meet ski patrollers snow camping at the Southwest or Devastated Areas. Look for the Backcountry Ski Patrol sign on their vehicles.
Travel Safely

Winter travel at Lassen Volcanic involves risk. Your best chance of survival is to use your own resources; be prepared and stay alert. We encourage travelers to sign in on the rosters at Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center and the Loomis Ranger Station.

Group Travel. Always travel with a partner or group. Select a familiar route equal to your group’s experience and ability.

Storm Preparedness. Be prepared for winter weather extremes including gale winds, subzero temperatures, blowing snow and whiteout conditions. Postpone or terminate your trip if a storm is forecasted or appears to be building.

Avoid Hydrothermal Areas. Snow surrounding thermal areas may be a weak layer hiding pools of acidic boiling water. Visitors have been injured by traveling too close to these areas.

Avalanche Awareness

Snow travel at Lassen Volcanic National Park involves entering avalanche terrain. 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 winter wilderness, ensure that you have a solid understanding of avalanche awareness and carry avalanche gear including a shovel, probe, and transceiver (beacon).

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

For more information about traveling in avalanche terrain, and to view a park avalanche terrain map, visit the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center or Loomis Ranger Station.
Manzanita Lake Area Winter Route Map

Wilderness Camping

Permits Required
A free wilderness permit is required for overnight camping in Lassen’s backcountry wilderness. Permits are available in-person during operating hours at the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center (KYVC). Self-registration is available after hours at the Loomis Ranger Station and inside the KYVC vestibule. Permits are also available in advance through our website or by phone at (530) 595-4480.

Water
Purify park surface water and melted snow before drinking by filtering or boiling for five minutes to avoid giardia. Potable water is available at the KYVC and near the Loomis Ranger Station.

Campfires
Campfires are not allowed anywhere in the backcountry. Please use camp stoves only.

Parking
Please park in designated overnight parking areas only; vehicles can be damaged by snow removal equipment if parked in other areas.

Food Storage
To protect wildlife, food and other scented items must be hung out of reach of animals, or stored in an animal-proof container.

Waste
Dig latrines and bury human waste at least one foot deep in snow away from trails and drainages. Carry out all waste paper.
Earn Your Turns

Composed of 24 dedicated volunteers, Lassen Ski Patrol has been actively assisting park visitors for decades. Beginning with a single volunteer, the group has developed into a tightly knit team committed to ensuring the enjoyment and safety of all winter visitors.

Susanville resident Phil Finkel began skiing in the park in 1990, and shortly after joined Lassen Ski Patrol. As a teacher and outdoor enthusiast, Phil enjoys sharing his knowledge of Lassen’s backcountry with visitors. He explains that his duty as a ski patroller involves four primary activities: providing information, responding to injuries, assisting with search and rescue, and effecting avalanche rescue. With this year’s lingering snows, Phil was still carving turns in August, and he was able to assist with two summer visitor injuries. Although he was skiing on a different mountain, being in the backcountry allowed him to respond quickly. Ski Patrol is often described as the “eyes and ears” for park rangers in the winter.

Winter at Lassen offers a silent beauty, and a tempting challenge that lures outdoor enthusiasts to its snowy playground. Many visitors return winter after winter to enjoy being outdoors, and to overcome the challenge of activity at high elevation in the purity of nature. Phil explains the beauty he finds in making his own tracks at Lassen: “Snow is like a balm, a healing salve that covers everything. You can discover whole new tracks, and see a side of nature many people don’t get to see - all while earning your turns.”

Superintendent Darlene Koontz awards ski patroller Phil Finkel with a 1,000-hour service award at the 2011 Lassen Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue.

Enjoying such pristine beauty does come with risks. To ensure their safety, ski patrollers carry backcountry gear including a beacon, shovel, and probe. Phil recommends that visitors be prepared for sudden changes in weather, and strong winds at high elevation. Despite his extensive knowledge of the area, even he has gotten caught in heavy fog, and had to rely on his compass to help him find a return route. He reminds winter visitors of the importance of knowing where you are going, being prepared with gear, food and water, and signing in on the winter traveler roster. Your artfully carved tracks might be a masterpiece on winter’s snowy canvas, but they might not be enough for ski patrol to locate you in an emergency.
Support Your Park

The Lassen Association is a non-profit partner that supports and assists Lassen Volcanic National Park in research, interpretation, and conservation programs. Lassen Association promotes the discovery of Lassen Volcanic National Park, enriches the experience of visitors, and supports the preservation and protection of the park for future generations.

During the winter season, the Lassen Association bookstore, located within the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, offers books, maps, trail guides and videos about the natural and cultural history of Lassen. The bookstore also offers a large selection of educational gift merchandise to enhance your park experience and take home as memories. All profits go directly to the park.

For information on how to join our association, visit us online www.lassenassociation.org, or contact us at (530)529-3450, or by e-mail at lassenassociation@yahoo.com.

The 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 generous contributions from park visitors, the Lassen Park Foundation has helped to support projects including the restoration of the Lassen Peak Trail, the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center, and the winter snowshoe education program.

Please become a Friend of Lassen by contributing to the Lassen Park Foundation! Your donation is tax-deductible. To learn more visit www.lassenparkfoundation.org, call (530) 898-9309, or email info@lassenparkfoundation.org.

A young visitor brings a Great Horned Owl puppet to life

Students explore winter at Lassen in the park’s snowshoe education program
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North of Park, Highway 44: Shingletown, Old Station and Hat Creek

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Winter Travel

Sudden changes in weather and freezing temperatures create hazardous driving conditions. Please drive with caution.

High-elevation roads are often icy or snow-covered during the fall and winter seasons and can be very hazardous, especially when temperatures drop during the evening and early morning hours.

The main park road between Highway 44/89 and Highway 36 is closed throughout most of the winter. The road is plowed to the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center from the Southwest entrance and to the Loomis Ranger Station from the Manzanita Lake Entrance Station. Visit the website for road status at: http://go.nps.gov/lavo_current for up-to-date information. The A-17 Road (31N17 from Mineral to Viola), other U.S. Forest Service, and some county roads close for the winter.

**Carry tire chains in your vehicle from October through May.** Chain requirements can be instituted at any time; even four-wheel drive vehicles with snow tires can be required to chain up. Watch for highway advisories posted in Red Bluff and Redding. Caltrans will post chain requirements on Highways 36 and 44.

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 go to the Caltrans website at http://www.dot.ca.gov/cgi-bin/roads.cgi. Caltrans also offers important tips for winter driving in snow country at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/roadinfo/wntrdriv.htm.

Obtain park road information by calling the visitor center at (530) 595-4480 or view current conditions on-line at http://go.nps.gov/lavo_current
Directions Around the Park

The main road through the park is closed to vehicles in the winter. Follow the directions below for travel between the Southwest and Manzanita Lake Entrances. RVs and trailers are advised to use I-5 via Highways CA-44 and CA-36, or travel around the east side of the park. 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 windy road is not recommended 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 / CA-89 for 4 miles.
2. Turn right (west) on CA-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, make a slight left onto Wilson Hill Road. Continue for 4.5 miles.
6. Turn left to stay on Wilson Hill Road. Continue for 3 miles.
7. Turn right (east) onto CA-89. Continue for 27 miles.
8. Turn right (south) onto Lassen National Park Highway. Continue 1 mile to the Manzanita Lake Entrance.

Travel Around the East Side of the Park
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 / CA-89 for 4 miles.
2. Turn left (east) on CA-36. Continue 38 miles to Co Rd A21 / Mooney Road. Co Rd A21 is located in the town of Westwood. Continue for 18 miles.
3. Turn left (west) onto CA-44. Continue for 28 miles.
4. Turn left (west) onto CA-44 / CA-89. Continue for 13.5 miles.
5. Turn left (south) on Lassen National Park Highway. Continue 1 mile to the Manzanita Lake Entrance.