

Modoc Back Country Discovery Trail

Modoc National Forest



The Modoc National Forest segment of the Back Country Discovery Trails is about 200 miles long with another 42 miles of Alternate (more challenging) Trails. Most of the Modoc Back Country Discovery Trails system is single lane and unpaved. Ultimately, this statewide system will provide a network of interconnected off-highway vehicle roads from Mexico to Oregon.

Trip Particulars: Starts on FS Rd 48N21 at the California/Oregon border southeast of Lakeview, OR, and terminates at the junction of FS Rd 43N48 and FS Rd 15 located at the Klamath/Shasta-Trinity NF boundary.

Length of Drive: 200 miles

Minimum Driving Time: 15-20 hours. Plan on at least a couple days and camp out along the way--it will be much more enjoyable

Best time of Year: June 1 through October 15--not plowed during winter months.

Elevation of Drive: Approximately 4300' to 7600'.

Road closure Information: The roads are usually closed by snow from November through May.

Discovery Points: Twenty-two (22) **Discovery Points** will be designated along the route. When completed each will have an interpretative sign and other information to assist the traveler in enjoying the California Back Country.

Route Description: The trail passes through three of the four Ranger Districts on the Forest and can be roughly divided into three separate portions.

The eastern portion of the Trail passes through higher elevations (up to 7600') which encompass mixed conifers, lodgepole pine, numerous meadow systems, and many lakes and creeks. It passes through the community of Davis Creek. Points of interest are: Cave and Lily Lakes, Mt. Vida Vista Point, Fort Bidwell, the Highgrade National Recreation Trail, the Rainbow Obsidian Mines, Sugar Hill Lookout, and Lake City. Three campgrounds are on or near the primary trail.

The central portion of the trail lies primarily on the Devil's Garden Plateau and is fairly flat at 4300' to 5400'. This is predominantly an eastside setting with ponderosa pine stands, sagebrush, juniper, rock- flat grasslands, and meadows. There are numerous reservoirs, lakes, and wetlands. The points of interest are: Goose Lake, Jane's Reservoir, Blue Mountain Lookout, Reservoir C, Big Sage Reservoir, and Fairchild Swamp. Four campground is near the trail.

The western portion passes through the Doublehead Ranger District in the higher elevation's (up to 7000ft) lodgepole pine/red fir forests. The points of interest are: Timber Mountain Lookout, the Lava Beds National

Monument, Medicine Lake Glass Flow, Medicine Lake, Arnica Sink, Glass Mountain Geologic Area, Little Mt. Hoffman Lookout, and Little Glass Mountain. Four campgrounds are on or near the trail.

Nearest Consumer Information Center: Modoc National Forest, Doublehead Ranger District, Tulelake, CA; Warner Mtn. Ranger District, Cedarville, CA; Modoc National Forest Headquarters, Alturas, CA.

Traveler Services: Available in Davis Creek and Tionesta--lodging and services before or after your trip in Lakeview, OR, McCloud, Alturas and Cedarville, CA.

About the Back Country Trails

Legal: If your vehicle is street-legal and carries a license, you have access to all open highways, roadways, and OHV routes within the National Forests unless they are posted "closed". If you have a vehicle which only carries an off-highway registration, commonly referred to in California as a "greensticker", you are restricted to Forest Service gravel and dirt roads on the Modoc National Forest. The Discovery Trail passes through both public and private lands. Please respect the rights of private landowners and other posted lands.

Modoc BCDT Discovery Points

Our points of interest (Discovery Points) on the map (web map under construction) are designated with DP and assigned a number (DP 1) to assist in locating them. This sheet provides a short descriptions of each of the Discovery Points. If you see something that catches your eye and would like more information, please contact any Modoc National Forest office for more information. Mile posts were measured from the eastern end of the route.

Mile Post	Discovery Point	Narrative Description
0.0	1	California/Oregon border is 2.9 miles off Modoc Forest Rd (FS Rd) #2 on 48N21 and the start of the Modoc segment of the CBDT. This location is snowed in from November to late June most years.
2.9	2	Cave and Lily Lakes at 6,800ft offer a variety of high elevation water-based recreational activities as well as camping and picnicking. Take FS Rd 2 west for 3 miles from CBDT.
5.9	3	Mt. Vida Vista where you can see California and Nevada come together and the large Alkali Lakes in Surprise Valley in between. Overlook is just off FS RD 2 at 6,560ft.
11.9	4	Ft. Bidwell is just a mile south of the Trail down County Rd (CO Rd) #2. This historic town dates back to 1866 and the general store there has a museum of local memorabilia.
23.5	5	Highgrade National Recreation Trail is 5.5 miles long. Elevations range from 7,100 to 7,800ft in this high elevation forest setting.
34.7	6	Rainbow Obsidian Mines are a place where rock hounds can search for the beautiful varieties of obsidian found there. The mines are just 1/4 mile east of the Trail here.
40.1	7	Sugar Hill Lookout sits at 7,267ft and offers a spectacular vista of Goose Lake and the Warner Mountains. Take the cutoff from here (FS Rd 45N08) for about 6 miles.
51.2	8	Lake City cutoff (CO Rd 11). Go east down Lake City Canyon about 5 miles. This is

Mile Post	Discovery Point	Narrative Description
		also a very old town. Visit the historic old flour mill.
58.6	9	Goose Lake runs right next to the Trail. This area is full of watchable wildlife, from waterfowl to antelope, deer, hawks, eagles, elk and an occasional badger or coyote.
83.3	10	Janes Reservoir offers a variety of water-based recreational activities, camping, hunting, and is a good recreational fishery for rainbow and brown trout at 5,138ft.
91.5	11	Blue Mountain Lookout at 5,740ft is the place to view all of the Devil's Garden Plateau, east to Goose Lake, and west to Clear Lake. Take FS Rd 136 for about 8 miles.
114.2	12	Reservoir C is another area that offers a variety of water-based recreational activities as well as camping, hiking, and hunting. Seasonally, one can watch the osprey hunt for fish.
125.3	13	Fairchild Swamp has abundant watchable wildlife in the form of waterfowl, and on some of the neighboring cliffs, you can view the prehistoric Native American petroglyphs.
162.7	14	Timber Mountain Lookout at the top is 5,086ft. As you drive by, you can see the visible scars from the "Timber Fire" of 1992. The fire ultimately burned 1,385 acres.
185.0	15	Doorknob Snowmobile Park offers winter recreation on groomed trails for snowmobiles and cross country skiing. The Park has plenty of parking, rest rooms and warming shelter.
188.4	16	Lava Beds National Monument is 2 miles north of the CBDT on FS Rd 49. Covering over 46,000 acres, this area contains over 380 lava tubes, numerous petroglyphs, an interpretive center, and two campgrounds and picnic areas.
192.8	17	Medicine Lake Glass Flow is a mile from the Trail right off FS Rd 49. This area covers 570 acres with stony gray dacite obsidian 5,150ft deep. It is estimated to be 1,000 years old.
192.8	18	Medicine Lake , 2 miles from the Glass Flow still on the 49 Rd, was once the center of a volcano and is over 150ft deep. This lake at 6,700ft offers boating, fishing, hiking, swimming and camping. (Note: unlicensed vehicles are not permitted in the developed sites at Medicine Lake)
192.8	19	Arnica Sink is 1 mile down FS Rd 43N99. Once connected with Medicine Lake, it is now a dry basin in which water worn cobbles and pebbles are mixed with sub-angular boulders covered by a washed mantle of pumice.
192.8	20	Glass Mountain Geological Area , 3miles past Arnica Sink still on 43N99, is a 4,210acre lava flow of glassy black obsidian boulders ending suddenly into a white pumice soil.
196.7	21	Little Mt. Hoffman Lookout is 7,309ft and only 1/4 mile off the Trail. From here you can see Mt. Shasta, Mt. Lassen, and Mt. McLaughlin. The Lookout is available for rent year round by contacting the Shasta-Trinity National Forests.
198.1	22	Little Glass Mountain is another huge lava flow of black obsidian boulders.

We hope you enjoyed the Modoc segment of the Back Country Discovery Trail. If you have suggestions that would help us make your experience better please let us know. We would appreciate your comments!!

For More Information: Visit our Web Site at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/modoc/>

or call, visit or write:

Supervisor's Office
Devil's Garden Ranger District
225 W. 8th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
(530) 233-5811

Big Valley Ranger District
P.O. Box 159
Adin, CA 96006
(530) 299-3215

Doublehead Ranger District
49870 Ste. Hwy 139
Tulelake, CA 96134
(530) 667-2246

Warner Mountain Ranger District
385 Wallace St.
Cedarville, CA 96104
(530) 279-6116

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