







Impressive vistas of mountain tops and river canyons, solitude, delicate wildflowers, unusual rock formations, challenging exercise—whatever trail experience you seek—you'll find these opportunities and more in the **Smith River National Recreation Area** (NRA). Whether you enjoy a leisurely stroll through the forest or a rigorous backpacking trek, the 70+ miles of Smith River NRA trails offer a multitude of recreational opportunities. Investigate the many possibilities within the Smith River "smorgasbord!"

Protect Yourself by bringing:

- ♦ Water . Water is Life! Bring at least 2 quarts per person per day, more in hot weather. Water from lakes and streams should be treated by bringing clear water to a rolling boil for five minutes.
- ♦ Compass and topographical maps. (Detailed Smith River NRA maps may be purchased at the NRA Visitor Center.)
- ♦ **Sturdy hiking boots** or shoes with good tread; several pairs of absorbent hiking socks.
- ♦ Sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, lip balm, and a first-aid kit.
- ♦ Layers of clothing, including a lightweight poncho or tarp that could double as a tent. Weather is very changeable and sudden storms are common, especially in the afternoon and evening. Summer temperatures may reach 100°.
- **♦** Nutritious, high-energy snacks.
- ♦ Waterproof matches, a flashlight. Be prepared to spend the night.

Plan ahead:

- ♦ Sign all trail registers. If there is no register, leave a note on the dashboard of your vehicle stating your destination and when you expect to return; also tell someone back home.
- ♦ Permits are required for campfires, camp stoves, lanterns, or barbecues used outside developed campgrounds. Obtain the free permit at any Forest Service office.
- ♦ Keep an eye on the weather. Contact the NRA Visitor Center for updates on weather and trail conditions.

♦ Be careful when walking near streams in winter and spring when water depth and swiftness can increase to dangerous levels. Rocks may be slippery at any time.

Protect Your Forest Environment:

Tread lightly on forest trails, leaving no permanent imprint of your visit.

- Stay on designated trails, which are designed to protect you and the land. This will also help hikers avoid poison oak.
- ♦ Where no toilets exist, select a spot at least 100 feet away from water, dig a 6-8" hole, and cover with soil and rocks.
- ♦ Pick up and pack out all trash, including gum, orange and banana peels, cans, bottles, and foil so others may enjoy a completely natural outdoor experience.
- ♦ Leave flowers, etc. for everyone to enjoy. Vegetation provides food and shelter for wildlife and should not be disturbed. Take photos, not samples.

Area, located within the Six Rivers National Forest in northwestern California. This 305,337 acre National Recreation Area (NRA) was designated by Congress in November 1990 to protect the area's special scenic value, natural diversity, cultural and historical attributes, wilderness, wildlife, fisheries, and the Smith River watershed's clean waters. The Forest Service has been designated as the steward of the NRA to provide recreational opportunities and to manage this diverse area for all of its valuable resources.

Takea SHORT HIKE ON a L O N G TRAIL!



Don't let a trail's length intimidate you! If you don't have the time — or the energy— to hike an entire trail, try a short jaunt to a scenic vista. All of these hikes are under four miles round trip, and many can be accomplished in an hour's time, plus driving time. (Driving time and directions to trailheads accompany individual trail descriptions below.)

- ♦ French Hill: From the upper trailhead hike down about .5 mile and see a lovely vista of the Smith River canyon. —OR— From the lower trailhead hike up about 1.25 miles to where a small stream crosses the fern-lined trail. Enjoy the restful sounds of the water and then hike up another .25 mile to the first view of the Smith River canyon. This hike is especially beautiful in May/June when the rhododendrons are blooming.
- ♦ Elk Camp: About 1 mile up from the lower trailhead you'll be rewarded with awesome views of the Siskiyous and then around the next bend you'll see the ocean and the beaches in Crescent City.
- ♦ **High Dome:** Under 1 mile from the upper trailhead two short side trips will take you to a former lookout site and the High Dome meadow (the trail's namesake). On a clear day you'll also see the ocean and awesome views of the Siskiyous.
- ♦ Craig's Creek: Hike in 1.75 miles and you'll be rewarded with a spectacular view of a bend in the South Fork plus numerous redwood trees along the way. Hike this in springtime for a wildflower treat.
- ♦ **South Kelsey:** From the parking area hike down about .4 mile and take the McClendon Ford Trail (1 mile). Have a picnic along the river. Enjoy the lush vegetation and huge cedars along the way. OR Hike the other direction on Kelsey as it climbs a rocky terrain and then drops down to the South Fork at the Buck Creek confluence (total one-way 1.6 miles to the bridge).
- ♦ Buck Lake: An easy hike into a lovely high mountain lake. You'll follow Doe Flat Trail 1.5 mile and then go .2 mile to Buck Lake. A great place for a picnic.
- ♦ Summit Valley: The picturesque meadow of Summit Valley and the remains of a shelter are about 2 miles from the upper trailhead. If you want to go a bit farther, continue up the trail another quarter mile or so and take a side trip to the former Summit Valley lookout. Awesome views in all directions!

Trail descriptions are arranged by distance and travel time from the Smith River NRA Visitor Center in Gasquet, CA, beginning with the trail nearest the Visitor Center. Trail length (**one way**), hiking difficulty, trail elevations, and directions to the trailhead are listed along with a short trail description.

French
Hill
Moderate/steep
Trail
Lower Trailhead elevation: 400'
Upper Trailhead elevation: 2,000'

Driving time: 0 minutes lower; 15 minutes upper #2E25 This former pack trail was built to transport supplies from the Gasquet Ranger Station to construct the Camp Six Lookout. Enjoy occasional vistas along a shaded walk in a garden-like setting.

Trailhead Access: Park at the NRA Visitor Center; trailhead is slightly east of the office, across Hwy 199. Shuttle: 2.2. miles west of Visitor Center take French Hill Road (milepost 12.23) for 4.48 miles. Trailhead is on the left.

Stony
Creek
Trail
Trail

Stony

Moderate
Trailhead elevation: 450'
Trail end elevation: 400'
Driving time: 5 minutes

#2E19 This shaded trail parallels the North Fork Smith River and ends at the Stony Creek confluence. Trail accesses excellent fishing holes and views of the river.

Trailhead Access: Travel .1 mile west on Hwy 199; turn right at Middle Fork Rd; continue right at intersection with Gasquet Flat Rd; cross bridge and stay left past Azalea Lane (North Fork Rd). Stay left at Gasquet Toll Rd intersection and continue .8 mile to Stony Creek Trail sign; turn right at sign. Trailhead is on the right .1 mile from corner. Two parking spaces located just before the trailhead. The trailhead is in a residential area. Please follow signs and respect private property.

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Darlingtonia Trail

0.3 mile loop Easy

Lowest elevation: 550' Highest elevation: 560'

Driving time: 5 minutes

#2E01 A short, universal access trail takes you to a thriving community of California Pitcher Plants (Darlingtonia californica) growing in their unique bog environment. These unusual plants are able to live in wet, serpentine soils devoid of nitrogen and phosphorous because they obtain these nutrients from an unexpected source: the insects and other small organisms that they trap within their cobra-like hoods. Two viewing platforms provide access to the bog area. Please remain on the trail at all times. Picking or collecting Darlingtonia is illegal. At the Smith River NRA Visitor Center you may obtain a copy of the Darlingtonia Trail interpretive brochure that has information on this interesting plant and the other plants that live along the trail.

Trailhead Access: Travel east 2.75 miles to milepost 17.9 on U.S. Highway 199; turn left into a parking lot. Trail begins at the left side of parking area.

Myrtle Creek Trail

1 mile Easy

Trailhead elevation: 200' Trail end elevation: 300'

Driving time: 15 minutes

#1E01 This interpretive trail follows an historic mining flume, and spotlights the mining, cultural, and geologic history of Myrtle Creek, where more than 100 years ago miner Jim Slinkard found a 47-ounce gold nugget the size and shape of an axe! Today's treasures include wildflowers and unusual plants such as Darlingtonia and many fern species. Interpretive information at 15 stops along the trail is available on signs at each stop and in a more detailed Myrtle Creek Trail brochure which may be obtained at the Smith River NRA Visitor Center.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.3 miles on Hwy 199. Turn onto the left pulloff just past the Myrtle Creek Bridge. Trailhead is on the opposite side of highway. Be careful when crossing Hwy 199!

Patrick Creek Trail

Easy Trailhead elevation: 834' Driving time: 15 minutes

.25 mile

A short universal access paved interpretive trail from Patrick Creek Lodge to Patrick Creek Campground via an

under-the-bridge route. Choose from 3 different interpretive themes: Stories of the Land, The River or Its People. Pick up brochures at the lodge or campground. A side spur leads to a universal access fishing platform at the Patrick Creek–Middle Fork confluence.

Trailhead Access: Travel east 7.5 miles to Milepost 22.0 Hwy 199; park in Patrick Creek Picnic Area.

Craig's Creek Trail

3.7 miles Moderate

Trailhead elevation: 200' Trail end elevation: 200'

Driving time: 15 minutes

#1E02 Miners and pack animals followed this trail in the late 1800s. As you climb to vista points high above the South Fork of the Smith

River, notice the dramatic changes in vegetation. The trail ends at the confluence of Craig's Creek and South Fork Smith River.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.2 miles on Hwy 199 to junction with South Fork Rd. Turn left onto South Fork Rd and follow the sign to river access. Park in the river access area. Walk back and across South Fork Rd. Trailhead is on north side of Tryon (2nd) Bridge. Cross road carefully!

Elk Camp Ridge Trail

Moderate to Steep (2500' climb) Lower Trailhead elevation: 2100'

8.2 miles

Upper Trailhead elevation: 3400'

Driving time: 20 minutes lower; 45 minutes upper #2E04 Originally a pack train trail between Crescent City and gold mines in the Illinois Valley in Oregon, this scenic trail presents panoramic views of high mountain peaks, the ocean, and the North and Middle Forks of Smith River. Vegetation is stunted because of the high mineral content of the underlying serpentine rocks. The first half mile from the lower trailhead was burned over in the Panther Fire of 1996.

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Trailhead Access: Travel .1 mile west on Hwy 199; turn right at Middle Fork Rd and right at Gasquet Flat Road. Cross Horace Gasquet Bridge; stay left past Azalea Lane. At the top of the hill turn right at the Gasquet Toll Rd intersection. Follow the Gasquet Toll Rd for 2.4 miles to FS 18N10. Turn left on 18N10 and travel 1.4 miles to the trailhead. **Shuttle:** go east on Hwy 199 7.7 miles to Patrick Creek Rd; turn left and go on Patrick Creek 3.1 miles to signed junction, following sign to Gasquet Toll Rd. Travel 0.5 miles across a bridge, turning right onto road #315 (Holiday Rd) and continuing 4.25 miles on Holiday Rd. Trailhead is on left.

High **Dome** Trail

4 miles Moderate/steep Upper Trailhead: 3500' Lower Trailhead: 1300' Highest elevation 3821'

Driving time: 25 minutes lower; 55 minutes upper #3E02 This trail climbs to a scenic overlook atop High Dome Mountain, elevation 3821', and a natural grass meadow (the dome) with views of surrounding peaks and the ocean. Ruins of a former fire lookout platform remain. Trail descends to the west fork of Patrick Creek where the lower trailhead is located. Primitive camping is available at the Three Ponds site on Gasquet Toll Road.

Trailhead Access: Travel east 7.7 miles on Hwy 199 to Patrick Creek Rd (first road to the left after Patrick Creek Lodge). Turn left on Patrick Creek Rd and continue 3.1 miles to a signed junction. Stay left following the sign to the Gasquet Toll Rd. Travel 0.5 miles and cross a bridge, immediately turning right onto Holiday Road (#315). Trailhead is on the right, parking on left. Shuttle: Continue up #315 another 5.8 miles to the upper trailhead, on the right. High-clearance vehicle and/or four-wheel drive recommended on #315.

Little **Bald Hills** Trail

5.1 miles + 4.5 milesModerate: climb to 2000' Rock Creek trailhead: 560' State Park trailhead: 100'

Driving time: 30 minutes

#1E03 This trail is an old road, the north half (4.5 mi.) of which is in Jedediah Smith State Park and south half (5.1 mi.) in Smith River NRA. The open prairies ("bald" hills), fringed by pines and fir trees, provide an excellent spot for seeing birds of prey in action. South trailhead begins at Rock Creek. Seasonal trail closure because of Port-Orford-cedar root disease. Check status at Visitor Center.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.2 miles on Hwy 199 to junction with South Fork Rd. Turn left on South Fork Rd; continue on South Fork Rd another 7.9 miles to the Rock Creek Bridge. Turn right onto Forest Road 16N23; continue 0.9 miles (very rough road). Road loops; trail begins at creek. Shuttle: Follow instructions to South Fork Road; after crossing second bridge turn right on Howland Hill Road. Travel another 2 miles to parking area. (Jedediah Smith Trailhead)

Paradise Trail

1.1 miles Moderate Lowest elevation: 450'

Highest elevation: 950' Driving time: 30 minutes

#2E02 Does this trail lead to paradise? Actually, it ascends from Paradise Flat (also called Seven Cabins Flat), the area across the road and adjacent to the South Fork Smith. That spot was once the location of a lodging facility and rest stop along a pack route to Haines Flat, Paradise Trail connects to Little Bald Hills Trail at mile 1.2 and hikers will enjoy beautiful views of the river and Siskiyou Mountains to the east. Seasonal trail closure because of Port-Orfordcedar root disease. Check status at Visitor Center.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.2 miles on Highway 199 to junction with South Fork Road. Turn left of South Fork Road; continue 7.3 miles; trail is on the right (west) side of the road.

South **Kelsey** Trail

17 miles in NRA + 12 miles in Klamath Moderate/difficult

Trailhead elevation: 1280' Lowest elevation: 1040' at Buck Creek

Highest elevation: 5775'

Driving time: 1 hour

#4E06 From 1855–1880 the historic Kelsey Trail was the major transportation link between Crescent City and mines in the Klamath River region and Yreka. The people of Yreka raised money to build the trail from Yreka across the Marble Mountains to the Klamath and the people of

Crescent City paid for their section from Crescent City to the Klamath. The trail was named for Ben Kelsey, hired to construct the section of the trail from Big Flat over the Siskiyou Mountains to the Klamath River. The Kelsey Trail cut down travelling distance between Crescent City and Yreka from 175 miles to 100 miles. Mule trains carried supplies inland and, presumably, gold and other minerals back to Crescent City and eventually San Francisco.

The present South Kelsey Trail begins between Horse and Buck Creeks and follows the South Fork for seven miles, affording numerous river accesses for trout fishing. A fire in the summer of 1998 burned many acres between Yellowjacket and Buck Creeks. Look for signs of new growth as you hike. Miles 7-13 ascend to Baldy Peak, reaching 5,775 ft. The *experienced* hikers who reach this former lookout site will be rewarded with awesome views of the Pacific Ocean, the rugged Siskiyou and Marble Mountains, and Mt. Shasta. Trail continues another 3.1 miles to Harrington Lake and then enters Klamath National Forest (where it goes on another 12 miles).

Camping opportunities: Buck Creek, Elk Horn Bar, and Eightmile Creek. *Note: Trailhead is occasionally inaccessible due to ice and snow in winter/spring; beyond Eightmile Creek, trail is usually inaccessible in winter/spring.*

Sidetrips: Bear Wallow Trail (#4E20) offers a short .3 mile side trip ending at the remains of Bear Wallow Shelter. This trail forks from the Kelsey .8 mile east of Baldy Peak. **Boundary Trail** (4E50) leaves the Kelsey near Harrington Lake on the Smith River/Orleans boundary. This section of trail has not been maintained and may be overgrown. About 5 miles of the trail are in the NRA, but it continues another 3 miles in the Orleans Ranger District.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.2 miles on Hwy 199 to junction with South Fork Rd. Turn left on South Fork Rd and travel 13.7 miles to a paved road going to the right one mile past Steven Bridge. This is the G-O Road, Forest Service Route 15. Continue south 3.51 miles and turn left on (gravel) FS15N39. Travel another 2 miles to the trailhead where there are picnic tables, vault toilet, and parking for 10 vehicles. Shuttle: Follow instructions to Gunbarrel Trailhead.

McClendon Ford Trail 1 mile plus .5 on S. Kelsey Moderate

Trailhead elevation: 1050' Trail end elevation: 700'

Driving time: 1 hour

A side trip from South Kelsey Trail, this is a picturesque hike through old growth fir and cedar, to a bouldered beach and beautiful pool of the South Fork Smith River. From South Kelsey Trailhead, hike downhill .5 mile to junction overlooking the South Fork; turn left and follow trail downstream. Trail crosses Horse Creek and ends at McClendon Ford on the Smith River.

Trailhead Access: Follow instructions to South Kelsey Trailhead access above.

Doe Flat Trail 4.25 miles Easy/moderate Trailhead elevation: 4100' Train end elevation: 3200' Driving time: 1.2 hours

The first section of the trail follows an old mining road along Doe Creek to an old chrome mine; the trail continues to Devil's Punchbowl Trail and Trout Camp near the intersection with Clear Creek Trail. Buck Lake Trail branches off 1.5 mile from trailhead; wilderness hunting and fishing areas may also be accessed from this trail. Parking, 3 campsites and a vault toilet are at the trailhead.

Trailhead Access: Travel east on Hwy 199 for about 10 miles (mile post 24.85). Turn right at Little Jones Creek Rd (a.k.a. FS 16, and FS17N05) and stay on the paved road for about 10 miles to intersection of FS16N02. Turn left on 16N02 and drive about 3.5 miles; road ends at the trailhead.

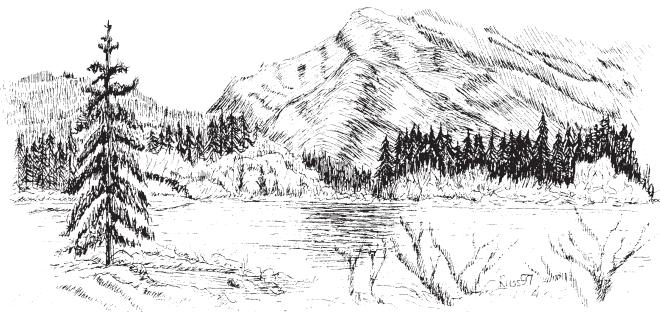
Buck Lake Trail .2 mile + 1.5 mile on Doe Flat Easy

Trailhead elevation: 3900' Buck Lake elevation: 4300'

Driving time: 1.2 hour to Doe Flat Trail

Follow Doe Flat Trail for about 1.5 miles and take the Buck Lake Trail to a high elevation lake. Enjoy excellent fishing in the quiet solitude of the Siskiyou Wilderness.

Trailhead Access: Follow route to Doe Flat Trailhead.



Devil's Punchbowl Trail

2.5 miles + 3.8 on Doe Flat Difficult; very steep Trailhead elevation: 3300' Trail end elevation: 4840'

Driving time: 1.2 hours to Doe Flat

The Devil's Punchbowl Trail is steep with many switchbacks; however, it can be enjoyed by the average hiker at a slow, steady pace. Two picturesque lakes and spectacular views of surrounding mountain peaks and valleys make this hike popular among more experienced hikers. No camping is possible at trail end; camp at Trout Camp at the Doe Flat/Clear Creek junction.

Trailhead Access: Follow driving instructions to Doe Flat Trailhead. Hike the Doe Flat Trail for 3.8 miles to reach trailhead.

Island Lake Trail

6.47 miles
Difficult
Trailhead elevation: 4300'

Trail end elevation: 5000' Driving time: 1.2 hours

Follow an old road down to the headwaters of South Fork Smith River and a small waterfall. After crossing the river, the steep trail travels through old-growth fir trees, climbing about 2000' in the next four miles. Water is scarce from the time you leave the river until you reach the lake. Picturesque Island Lake rewards the experienced hiker a lovely spot for a wilderness camping experience—and there really is an island!

Trailhead Access: Travel east on Hwy 199 about 10 miles (milepost 24.85), turning right on Little Jones Creek Road (a.k.a. FS 16 & 17N05). Drive 10 miles to 16N02; turn left on 16N02 for about 2.5 miles and then right on 16N10. Continue to gate and parking area.

Summit Valley Trail

8.1 miles Moderate/difficult Upper Trailhead elevation: 4600'

Lower Trailhead elevation: 1160'
Driving time: 1.5 hour

Hikers will follow an old jeep road for the first mile, then the trail travels through mountain meadows filled with wildflowers in the late spring. Summit Valley is 3 acres; the site of the old Summit Valley Lookout can be reached by taking a 1/4 mile side trip to the right after you climb out of the valley. The Lookout site offers views of the Pacific Ocean, Siskiyou Mountains, and Mount Shasta. The remainder of the trail descends to and ends at the South Kelsey Trail near Elk Horn Bar.

Trailhead Access: Travel west 7.2 miles on Hwy 199 to the junction with South Fork Rd. Turn left onto South Fork Rd (County Road 427) and travel approximately 13.7 miles to a paved road going to the right, which is FS15, the G-O Road. Continue south about 15 miles; trailhead is on the left.

Shuttle: Leave second vehicle at South Kelsey Trailhead (directions above). Hikers will hike an additional 3 miles on South Kelsey.

Young's Valley Trail

2.5 miles Moderate

Trailhead elevation: 5,400' Trail end elevation: 4,500' Driving time: 2 hours

This trail was formerly a forest road that is now closed to vehicles. Camp in the meadow at the end of this trail and hike into the Siskiyou Wilderness on the Clear Creek Trail, Raspberry Lake Trail, El Capitan Lake Trail, or the Twin Valley Trail for spectacular mountain top views.

Trailhead Access: Travel east on Hwy 199 approximately 16 miles to Knopki Creek Rd (18N07), turn right and drive about 6 miles to a "Y" in road. Stay right, remaining on 18N07 and continue another 8 miles to the junction of Sanger Lake and Youngs Valley. Turn right and continue another 1 mile (road ends). This portion of the road is fairly rough and high clearance vehicles are recommended. Trail begins on the left (heading east).

Gunbarrel Trail

Difficult Trailhead elevation: 2500' Trail end elevation: 1400' Driving time: 2 hours

1.3 miles

#3E01 The trail starts on a ridge and travels downslope to the South Fork of the Smith River where it meets the South Kelsey Trail. The Gunbarrel Trail is part of the historic Kelsey Trail.

Trailhead Access: Travel east on Hwy 199 about 10 miles (mile post 24.85) and turn right on Little Jones Creek (a.k.a. Jawbone Rd, FS17N05, and FS 16). Stay on FS16 for about 15 miles to FS16N18. Turn on FS16N18 and continue about 5.7 miles, taking a left on FS15N34. Travel about 2 miles on FS15N34; trailhead is on the left, before the end of the road. Very limited parking. **Shuttle: follow instructions to South Kelsey Trailhead.**

Trail Name	Length one way (in miles)	Accessed via Hwy 199 and:	Diffic- ulty	Summer only	Driving time from Visitor Center	Permitted Use
Buck Lake Trail	.2 (+1.5)	FS 16/16N02/ Doe FlatTrail	9	yes	1.2 hr.	(k)
Craig's Creek Trail	3.7	South Fork Road Milepost .5	\		15 min.	A FIN
Darlingtonia	.3 loop	Hwy 199 Milepost 17.9	F		10 min.	(
Devil's Punchbowl	2.5 (+3.8)	FS16/16N02/Doe Flat Trail		yes	1.2 hr.	K
Doe Flat Trail	4.25	FS 16/16N02		yes	1.2 hr.	/ mr
Elk Camp Ridge	8.2	Gasquet Toll Rd/18N10	~		20 min.	* M &
French Hill Trail	2.8	across from Visitor Center	\		0	1 m 40
Gunbarrel Trail	1.3	FS 16/16N18/15N34	₩	yes	2 hrs.	K M
High Dome Trail	4	Patrick Cr. Rd./Gasquet Toll/315	\sim		25 min.	* M &
Island Lake Trail	6.47	FS 16/16N02/16N10	₩	yes	1.2 hr.	*
Little Bald Hills	5.1 (+4.5)	South Fork Rd/FS16N23	√	yes	30 min.	1 m 40
McClendon Ford	1(+.5)	S. Fork/FS15/15N39/S.Kelsey	~		1 hr.	(*) (**)
Myrtle Creek Trail	1	Hwy 199 Milepost 7	9		15 min.	
Paradise Trail	1.1	South Fork Road	√	yes	30 min	* * * *
Patrick Creek Trail	.25	Hwy 199 Milepost 22	E		15 min.	
South Kelsey Trail	17 (+12)	S.Fork Rd/FS15/15N39	√	portions	1 hr.	*
Stony Creek Trail	.5	Mid. Fork Rd/Gasquet Fl/N.Fork	\sim		10 min.	k
Summit Valley Trail	8.1	S.Fork/FS15 (GO)	 ♦	yes	1.5 hr.	*
Young's Valley Trail	2.5	FS18N07 (Knopki Crk.Rd.)	\(yes	2 hrs.	*

