

Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert Recreation Information Update December 7 - 13, 2011

Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Junction of US HWY 395 & SR 136
Lone Pine, California 93545

(760) 876-6222
TDD 876-6228

Open Daily: 8:00am to 5:00pm

ROADS: Major Eastern Sierra roads are open, including US 395. SR 120 (Tioga Pass) is open; no overnight parking. SR 108 (Sonora Pass) and SR 4 (Ebbets Pass) are currently closed due to snow. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) is open. Weather and road conditions can change rapidly this time of year; mountain passes and roads are subject to immediate controls and/or closures. Drivers headed to the mountains need to be sure their vehicles are equipped with chains, including those with snowtires. Call 1-800-427-ROAD (1-800-427-7623) or visit the website at www.dot.ca.gov, for California highway conditions and construction schedules. For Nevada roads, call 1-877-NVROADS (1-877-687-6237) or visit the web at www.nevadadot.com.

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK road (SR270) is open. Mono Mills road (SR 120) and June Lake Loop (SR 158) are open. Rock Creek is open to the pack station. In Bishop Creek, SR 168 is open to Aspendell and the South Lake road is open to Bishop Creek Lodge. In the White Mountains, the paved road to the **ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST AND SCHULMAN GROVE** is open; the White Mountain dirt road is open with snow, 4x4 required. Big Pine Canyon is open to the trailhead.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. The Big Pine, Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course, West Side, Charcoal Kilns and Mahogany Flat dirt roads are open. The North Saline Valley road is open; 4x4 high clearance vehicles recommended. The South Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County (4x4 high clearance vehicles required). Rangers ask visitors traveling to remote desert valleys to leave a complete itinerary at home, obtain a good backcountry road map and be prepared for the unexpected. Drivers need to be sure their vehicle is in good condition and to carry an additional spare tire, extra gas, food and water. For backcountry roads information, check the website at www.nps.gov/deva ("Plan Your Visit & Things To Do" section) and the Morning Report for current information.

WEATHER: High pressure over the California coast will produce sunny days with below normal temperatures in the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave regions through Thursday. High pressure will strengthen over Southern California on Friday, warming temperatures to near normal this weekend. A Pacific storm system is expected to move over Northern California Sunday, continuing southward on Monday, resulting in cooler temperatures, gusty winds with chance of snow showers over the mountains through early next week. Highs have been in the 20s in the mountains, mid 50s in the Owens Valley and mid 60's in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from low teens in the mountains, to the low 40s in Death Valley.

CAMPGROUNDS: **INYO COUNTY** campgrounds are open. The **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT** campgrounds at Tuttle Creek (fee/no water) and the Pleasant Valley Pit (fee/no water) are open. Additional privately operated campgrounds & RV facilities are open throughout the area.

INYO NATIONAL FOREST, Lone Pine to Lee Vining - the following campgrounds are open: Lone Pine (no water/no fee), Bitterbrush (no water/no fee) and Holiday in Rock Creek (no water/no fee).

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK - Yosemite Valley campgrounds have sites open and reservable. Reservations are accepted five months in advance on the 15th of each month, for a one-month block through www.recreation.gov; or call 1-877-444-6777. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis at Wawona (SR 41 south of Yosemite Valley), Hodgdon Meadows (SR 120, near Big Oak Flat) and Camp Four walk-in campground in Yosemite Valley. For information, visit the web site at www.nps.gov/yose.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, open sites include: Furnace Creek, Sunset, Texas Spring, Stovepipe Wells, Mesquite Springs, Emigrant (tent only/ no fee) and Wildrose (no fee). Reservations for Furnace Creek are available six months in advance for the period of 10/15 to 4/15, or for group sites 12 months in advance through www.recreation.gov. RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort. For information, visit www.nps.gov/deva.

Camping sites are available year round in the **MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE** at Hole-In-The-Wall and Mid Hills on a first-come/first-served basis. For more information, call 1-760-252-6108, or visit the web at www.nps.gov/moja. Black Canyon Equestrian & Group Campground (across from Hole-In-The-Wall) is open with reservations required, call 1-760-928-2572.

Cooperating Agencies of the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Inyo County

California - Department of Fish & Game

City of Los Angeles - Department of Water & Power

California - Department of Transportation

National Park Service

Bureau of Land Management

Mono County

USDA - Forest Service

FISHING: General trout season is closed in the Eastern Sierra. However, the **OWENS RIVER** south of Crowley Lake (including Pleasant Valley Reservoir and Tinnemaha Reservoir) and **DIAZ LAKE** are open to year-round fishing. California fishing regulations are available at sporting good stores selling fishing licenses, or on the web at www.dfg.ca.gov.

HUNTING: General hunting season for quail, chukar, pheasant and doves is open. Waterfowl season for ducks (including Mergansers), common Moorhen, American Coot and geese is open. For information, check the web at www.dfg.ca.gov. For deer hunting, the Goodale Buck Hunt (Inyo County/Sierra Escarpment) and the Round Valley Apprentice Buck Hunt (Mono-Inyo County, west of HWY 395) are open. The Kern River Buck Hunt (on the Sequoia National Forest, north of Kernville) is open through 12/11.

WINTER SPORTS: MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN is open with an 18" - 24" base of machine groomed snow. Please be aware, early season obstacles do exist, the available terrain and number of lifts is limited. Ski and ride with care. For daily lift operations and snow conditions, visit the web site at www.mammothmountain.com or call 1-888-766-9778.

Visit the **MAMMOTH LAKES WELCOME CENTER** (on SR 203) for more information on roads, fees/passes, permits, current recreation updates, current snow conditions, trail maps and visitor guides; open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm.

BACKCOUNTRY: Backpackers should be prepared with winter gear for snowy/icy terrain, freezing temperatures and sudden weather changes. Recent snow makes trails difficult to locate and passes very slick. Most roads to trailheads are closed for the winter. **WILDERNESS PERMITS** are required for overnight travel all year long. Trailhead quotas, which daily limit the number of hikers on trails, are no longer in effect for Eastern Sierra wilderness areas. Self-issue permits can be obtained in the night boxes at the following locations: InterAgency Visitor Center (Lone Pine), Bishop Ranger Station, Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center (Lee Vining) and Bridgeport Ranger Station after office hours. For information on Inyo National Forest wilderness permits, please visit the web at www.fs.usda.gov/inyo.

FOR THE HOLIDAYS: Christmas trees may be cut on locations of the Bridgeport Ranger District of the HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST, or on BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT lands near Benton and the Lida Summit area in Esmeralda County, Nevada - after obtaining a permit, tag and map. A permit may be purchased at the Bridgeport Ranger Station, or the Inyo National Forest offices in Bishop and Mammoth Lakes. Call the following Forest Service offices for more information, 1-760-932-7070 (Bridgeport), 1-760-924-5500 (Mammoth Lakes) or 1-760-873-2500 (Bishop).

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK is open daily 9:00am to 3:00pm. Visitors should bring drinking water, food and warm clothes for a visit to Bodie and dogs must be on a six foot leash (recreation fee area).

Visit the Mono Lake Committee & Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce Information Center, located in the center of town, open daily 9:00am to 5:00pm, for lots of information on the **MONO BASIN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC AREA/MONO LAKE TUFAS STATE RESERVE**. Photographers and geology enthusiasts alike will find the beauty of this million-year old lake a fascinating destination with its captivating vistas, dramatic snow-covered peaks and intriguing volcanic formations.

EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM in Independence is open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily, with exhibits on Inyo County, including a significant collection of Native American baskets and artifacts from Manzanar NHS.

The Interpretive Center at **MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**, located 5 miles south of Independence, is open daily from 9:00am to 4:30pm. Self-guided walking and auto tours make it easy to explore the park. Check at the Interpretive Center, or the web at www.nps.gov/manz, for more information.

Visit the Beverly & Jim Rogers **MUSEUM OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY**, with exhibits celebrating the heroes, the films and the locations of the many movies shot in the area. The museum opens daily at 10:00am; closing at 6:00pm Monday through Wednesday, at 7:00pm Thursday through Saturday and at 4:00pm on Sunday.

BLM JAWBONE STATION REGIONAL OHV FACILITY is open 9:00am to 5:00pm daily for trip assistance. The station is located 25 miles north of Mojave on SR 14 for pre-trip information; call 1-760-373-1146.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER (temporary) at the Furnace Creek Ranch is open daily from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Ranger talks and other interpretive programs are presented daily. An evening program is presented at 7:00pm in a variety of locations. Check at the Visitor Center, or www.nps.gov/deva for information. **SCOTTY'S CASTLE** has "Living History" tours from 9:00am to 5:00pm, and "Underground Mystery Tours" daily.

Information on the **MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE** can be obtained daily from 9:00am to 5:00pm at the **Kelso Depot Visitor Center** (off I 15 at Baker or off I 40 on Kelbaker Road). The Visitor Center features exhibits, an orientation film, an art gallery and bookstore. The historic lunch counter known as "The Beanery" is open daily. Kelso Depot ranger talks are offered daily at 11:00am and 2:00pm. The Kelso Dunes interpretive walk is offered on Saturdays at 11am. The **Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center** is open Wednesday through Sunday, from 9:00am to 4:00pm, with interpretive activities on the weekends.

Reports on current recreation conditions, schedules of planned events and detailed information on visitor destinations throughout the Eastern Sierra Nevada and Northern Mojave Desert are available daily at the Visitor Center. 12/7/11kcw