

Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert Recreation Information Update February 1 - 7, 2012

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 HWY 395. Trans Sierra roads - SR 120 (Tioga Pass), SR 108 (Sonora Pass) and SR 4 (Ebbets Pass) are closed for the winter. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) is closed for the winter. South SR 158 is open to June Lake Village. Mono Mills road (SR 120) is closed due to snow. Weather and road conditions can change rapidly this time of year; mountain passes 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.

SR 270, the **BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK** road is closed for the winter. The Lake Mary road is open to Tamarack Ski Center parking area. The Rock Creek road is open to the SnoPark at East Fork. In Bishop Creek, SR 168 is open to Aspendell and the South Lake road is open to Bishop Creek Lodge.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. The Big Pine, Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course and West Side dirt roads are open. The Upper Wildrose road is open to the Charcoal Kilns, continuing to Mahogany Flat; 4x4 high clearance required as there is snow. The North Saline Valley road is open; 4x4 high clearance recommended (carry chains). The South Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County (4x4 high clearance vehicles required). Rangers ask visitors traveling to remote locations 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/Outdoor Activities) and the Morning Report for current conditions.

WEATHER: Gusty winds will diminish starting Thursday, as high pressure builds over California through the weekend. Sunny days with clear skies are expected to persist through early next week in the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave regions. Temperatures are expected to warm to near normal by Saturday, then slowly drop each day through Tuesday. Highs have been in the 20s in the mountains, mid 50s in the Owens Valley and mid 60s in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from teens in the mountains, to the upper 30s 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). Some Forest Service campsites are reservable, call 1-877-444-6777 or check the web at www.recreation.gov; family sites can be reserved 240 days in advance and group sites 360 days in advance.

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: Sunset, Texas Spring, Stovepipe Wells, Mesquite Springs, Emigrant (tent only/no fee) and Wildrose (no fee). Furnace Creek campground will close 2/1/12 for sewer and water line replacement, estimated closure 2 - 3 months; other campgrounds are available in the area. RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/deva.

Campgrounds are open in the **SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST** on the Kern River and at Lake Isabella on a reservation, or a first-come/first-served basis. For more information call 1-760-376-3781, or visit the web at www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia.

Cooperating Agencies of the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Inyo County

California - Department of Transportation

Bureau of Land Management

California - Department of Fish & Game

National Park Service

Mono County

City of Los Angeles - Department of Water & Power

USDA - Forest Service

FISHING: The **OWENS RIVER** south of Crowley Lake (including Pleasant Valley Reservoir and Tinnemaha Reservoir) and **DIAZ LAKE** are open to year-round fishing. Copies of California fishing regulations are available on the web at www.dfg.ca.gov.

WINTER SPORTS: **MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN** is open with a 3.5 to 5 foot base. For daily lift operation and snow conditions visit the web site at www.mammothmountain.com, or call 1-888-766-9778. **JUNE MOUNTAIN** is open with a 2 to 3 foot base, check the web at www.junemountain.com, or call 1-760-934-2224 for more information.

Many snow-covered roads in Mono County offer a variety of scenery and terrain for X-COUNTRY SKIING, SNOWSHOEING and SNOWMOBILING. **TAMARACK CROSS COUNTRY SKI CENTER** in the Mammoth Lakes Basin is open with 19 miles of set track; call 1-760-934-2442 for more information. The **SNOPARK IN ROCK CREEK** at East Fork is open for the winter. Self-issue parking permits are available on site, or can be purchased (for the day or season) in advance at many locations. SnoPark permits may also be purchased online at www.ohv.parks.ca.gov.

The outdoor **MAMMOTH LAKES ICE RINK** is open daily and offers public skating sessions, hockey clinics, pick-up hockey and special events. Skate rentals and snack services are available. The rink is located on Meridian Blvd., next to the Mammoth Lakes Library. For more information, call 760-934-2505 or visit the web site at www.mammothicerink.com.

Visit the **MAMMOTH LAKES WELCOME CENTER** for current snow conditions, trail maps and avalanche risk; open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm, or call 1-760-924-5500. The **EASTERN SIERRA AVALANCHE CENTER (ESAC)** offers avalanche advisories and an on-line discussion center for the region. For information, check the web site at www.esavalanche.org.

BACKCOUNTRY: Backpackers should be prepared with winter gear for snowy/icy terrain, freezing temperatures and sudden weather changes. 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, including the new reservation system, please visit the web at www.fs.usda.gov/inyo.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK is open daily 9:00am to 3:00pm. Visitors must use over-snow transportation to access the park. Bring drinking water, food and plenty of warm clothes for a winter visit to Bodie (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**.

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.

Visit the **KERN VALLEY MUSEUM** to explore the fascinating history of the Old West through artifacts and memorabilia that make history come alive, in Kernville; open 10:00am to 4:00pm Thursday through Sunday.

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. Reservations for Scotty's Castle tours are available on the web at recreation.gov, or call 1-877-444-6777.

Lower Vine Ranch was Scotty's real home in Death Valley. Several tours are scheduled each week. Tours last approximately 2.5 hours and involve a 2 mile roundtrip walk over a graded dirt road. These tours are not handicap accessible and not recommended for those who have difficulty walking. Call 1-760-786-2392 for current tour schedule. Advance reservations through recreation.gov are strongly recommended as space is limited. The fee is \$20 per person.

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. 2/1/12kcw