

Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert Recreation Information Update December 13 - 19, 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 US Hwy 395. SR 120 (Tioga Pass) is closed on the eastside for the winter. On the west, SR 120 is closed due to snow at Crane Flat. SR 4 (Ebbets Pass) is closed due to snow. The roads may open if weather conditions allow. SR 108 (Sonora Pass) is closed for the winter. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) is currently closed due to snow. 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 snow tires. For California highway conditions, call 1-800-427-ROAD (1-800-427-7623), or visit the web at www.dot.ca.gov. For Nevada roads, call 1-877-NVROADS or visit the website at www.nevadadot.com/traveler/roads.

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK road (SR270) is closed due to snow. South SR 158 is open to June Lake Village. The June Lake Loop is closed due to snow. The Lake Mary road is open to Tamarack parking area. Rock Creek road is closed at the East Fork parking area. 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 closed. Big Pine Canyon is open to the trailhead.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. Hwy 267 is closed east of Scotty's Castle to the junction of US Highway 95. Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course and the West Side dirt roads are open. The Charcoal Kilns road is open. The South Pass and North Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County due to washouts. The Big Pine Road is open from the west to Eureka Valley road and, closed to the east at Ubehebe Crater Road. 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 descriptions of backcountry roads, check the web at www.nps.gov/deva ("Plan Your Visit/Things to Do/Outdoor Activities") and the Morning Report for current information.

WEATHER: Wet weather is in the outlook for the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave regions as a series of storms is forecast to move over the area through the middle of next week. A storm over the region on Thursday is expected to produce mountain snow and valley rain, then shift east on Friday. Another storm will result in unsettled weather through the weekend, with clearing skies on Monday. This will be followed by a third system on Tuesday and Wednesday. Temperatures are expected to be below normal through the week. Highs have been in the teens in the mountains, mid 40s in the Owens Valley and near 60 in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from single digits in the mountains, to the lower 30s in Death Valley.

CAMPGROUNDS: **INYO COUNTY** sites are open. Privately operated campgrounds and RV facilities are open throughout the region. **BISHOP BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT** campgrounds at Tuttle Creek (fee/no water) and the Pleasant Valley Pit (fee/no water) are open.

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 (water/no fee). Reservations for Furnace Creek campsites are available six months in advance for the period of 10/15 to 4/15, or for group sites, 12 months in advance online through www.recreation.gov or call 1-877-444-6777 (and visit www.nps.gov/deva). RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort.

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 **LAKE DIAZ** are open to year-round fishing. Copies of the California fishing regulations are 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 more 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 HWY 395) close on 12/16.

WINTER SPORTS: MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN is open with a 5 to 7 foot base of packed powder and machine groomed snow. Please be aware some obstacles do exist. Ski and ride with care. For daily lift operation and snow conditions, visit the web site at www.mammothmountain.com, or call 1-888-766-9778.

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 11 miles of set track; call 1-760-934-5293 for more information.

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.

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. Many 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: Join in the 113th **Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count**, the oldest and largest citizen science event in the world; beginning 12/14/12 through 1/5/13. For over a hundred years, people have gathered during the winter holiday season to count birds. All skill levels are encouraged to participate. Contact the following individuals for counts in the region:

Ash Meadow National Wildlife Refuge - Friday, 12/14 - contact Sam Skalak at sskalak@gmail.com

Bishop - Saturday, 12/15 - contact Chris Howard at chris93514@gmail.com

Butterbret Spring/Jawbone ACEC (off SR 14/NW of BLM Jawbone Station) - Saturday, 12/15 - contact Charles Bragg at braggjr67@verizon.net Note: Roads can be rough, high clearance recommended.

Lancaster - Saturday, 12/15 - contact Nick & Mary Freeman at mnfreeman@earthlink.net

Sequoia National Park - Saturday, 12/15 - contact Savannah Boiano at sfi@sequoiahistory.org

Woodfords/Alpine County - Saturday, 12/15 - contact Andrea Salmi at andisalmi@yahoo.com

Ridgecrest/China Lake - Sunday, 12/16 - contact Pete Woodman at kivabio@aol.com

Death Valley National Park - Sunday, 12/16 - contact Linda Manning at linda_manning@nps.gov

Yosemite National Park - Sunday, 12/16 - contact Sarah Stock at sarah_stock@nps.gov

Mono Basin - Tuesday, 12/18 - contact Kristie Nelson at storm_petrel@hotmail.com

Tehachapi - Wednesday, 12/19 - contact Larry Parmeter at lanparmeter3@hotmail.com

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).

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. For more information, check at the Interpretive Center or the web at www.nps.gov/manz.

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.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER 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.

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

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