



# Reach the Peak 2010-2014



Lassen celebrates the rehabilitation and restoration of the 70-year-old Lassen Peak trail with the conclusion of the four year Reach the Peak project.

## The Project

2014 marked the final year for the *Reach the Peak* project to restore and rehabilitate the Lassen Peak trail. With the help of its partners, Lassen Volcanic National Park implemented improvements to accommodate the trail's increasing popularity while maintaining its historic character. Lassen is proud to celebrate the success of the *Reach the Peak Project* and its efforts to preserve this experience for the enjoyment of future generations.

## 2014 Accomplishments

The Lassen Volcanic National Park trail crew and a California Conservation Corps crew completed the Lassen Peak trail restoration project in the final 4 1/2 month summer season. Accomplishments for the 2014 season include:

Trail crews removed exposed roots and protruding rocks from a steep switchback section just above the parking area and constructed four retaining walls to frame the switchbacks within the lower half mile.

Crews constructed five large retaining walls and stairs on the middle ridge section. This is the most

challenging section for trail work due its steeply stacked switchbacks, which climb a narrow, loose scree ridge.

Trail crews battled biting winds to construct retaining walls and steps on switchbacks in the last mile using native stone.

Masons constructed eight new stone interpretive wayside monuments with new panels introducing topics ranging from climate change to rare alpine plants found on Lassen Peak.



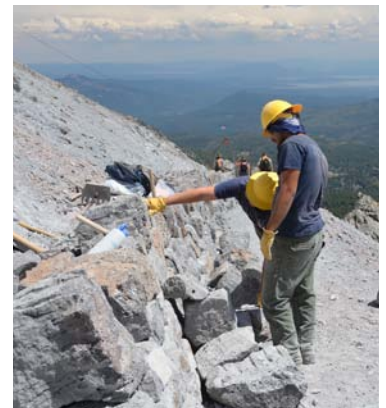
A new interpretive wayside highlights Lassen Peak's often unexpected butterfly population.



A retaining wall on the middle section of the trail reduces erosion and helps maintain trail width and prevent switchback cutting.



A member of the park trail crew prepares stone for placement in a retaining wall.



Trail crew members measure twice while setting each stone into a retaining wall.





## Project Summary

The four-year *Reach the Peak* project restored and rehabilitated the 70-year-old Lassen Peak trail. Improvements implemented by Lassen and California Conservation Corps trail crews will help preserve this trail and experience well into Lassen Volcanic National Park's second century.

The *Reach the Peak* project was successful in large part thanks to donations from the Lassen Park Foundation, the McConnell Foundation, the Ben B. Cheney Foundation, and the Federal Highway Administration Recreational Trails Program through the California Department of Transportation and Department of Parks and Recreation. Significant funding was also provided by visitors like you through the park fee program, which provides funding to projects that enhance the visitor experience.

This ambitious project began in 2010 with preparation work including quarrying, washing, and relocating 2.4 million pounds of stone to the Lassen Peak parking area. The largest helicopter flight operation in the park then placed the stone for use along the length of the trail.

An innovative cable and pulley highline system was used to transport the thousands of stone blocks deposited by helicopter. The system significantly reduced the use of motorized carts, thereby reducing impact on the trail and keeping the project's carbon footprint to a minimum.

With materials in place, crews began laboriously strengthening the backbone of the Lassen Peak trail. Overcoming hazardous work areas and exposure to severe weather, *Reach the Peak* trail crews cut and placed more than 10,000 linear feet

of stone into 100-plus retaining walls and landing sites, as well as dozens of rock steps. The labor-intensive retaining walls and steps reduce erosion, help maintain trail width, prevent switchback cutting, and provide a solid foundation for the higher, steeper sections of trail.

Additional work included removing exposed roots and protruding rocks, filling and supporting entrenched trail sections, and widening sections in the trail's first mile. Trail crews also expanded a number of landing and wayside sites, including the Grandview area, which provide excellent rest stops or lunch spots off to the side of the trail.

In the project's final years, trail crew masons constructed eight new stone interpretive wayside monuments. In conjunction with the existing geology waysides, these new exhibits introduce visitors to Lassen plants and animals, the peak's effect on them, and visitors' unique connection to these special resources.

The *Reach the Peak* restoration and rehabilitation project is complete, but the peak's loose volcanic slopes require never-ending maintenance. You can help keep the heavily-used trail safe and in good condition by staying on the trail.

The persevering hikers who complete the 2,000 foot climb will be rewarded with a one-of-kind view of the peak's colorful eruption crater. A monument to the 1915-1916 eruption series that brought national attention and paved the way for the establishment of Lassen Volcanic National Park, the crater reminds us of the fire both below ground and in our hearts that will continue to smolder well into Lassen's second century.