

LASSEN NEWS

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KOHM YAH-MAH-NEE VISITOR CENTER ON SCHEDULE



This summer when you are in the park you'll see the beautiful new Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center near the Southwest Entrance to the park. As the project has stayed right on schedule, the construction will be completed by the end of July. Exhibits will be installed later in August and final work done in September. The public grand opening is planned for Saturday, October 4th, with a special Lassen Park Foundation donor preview on Saturday, September 20th.

Kohm Yah-mah-nee is the Mountain Maidu Indian name for Snow Mountain (Lassen Peak). The new center is the fulfillment of a long-awaited dream of visitors, and especially of the Lassen Park Foundation, which was established with the goal to create a much-needed visitor center for this national park. Although Lassen Volcanic National Park was the nation's 13th national park, founded in 1916, it has never had a formal visitor center.

The building has been designed and constructed with the goal to achieve the platinum level of "green building" certification, and is the first *LEED-certified national park building that is to be open year-round. LEED certification means that the building meets national standards for environmentally smart construction and operation, such as energy use, source of timber/building materials, and operation. There is no conventional air conditioning equipment. Instead, interior air temperature will be regulated similar to a heat pump through pipes buried deep in the ground and cooled by the surrounding earth. High, vaulted ceilings will pull warm air higher. With its large windows, the building will take advantage of ambient light through a software-guided lighting system that measures and responds to room brightness. It will also adjust to a darkened or totally dark room that is not in use and won't heat it as much.

Winters at Lassen Volcanic National Park will never be the same however, with a year-round visitor center to accommodate visitors, with a warm interpretive center to visit, a book and gift store, restrooms, and food service.



One of the Lassen Park Foundation's major contributions is a 21-minute interpretive film about the park, which will orient visitors and encourage them to make the most of their visit. With the establishment of a true visitor center, visitation to the park is expected to increase. Certainly, those who love "Lassen" are more than ready to see Kohm Yah-mah-nee open its doors—it's time!

The Lassen Park Foundation is grateful to all who gave so generously for this project. We hope that many of our donors will join us for the donor preview and enjoy the acknowledgement of creating such a wonderful asset for northern California.

* The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating system.



RECONSTRUCTION OF THE DEVASTATED AREA INTERPRETIVE TRAIL A PRIORITY

Lassen Volcanic National Park has requested help from the Lassen Park Foundation to raise funds for the reconstruction of the Devastated Area Interpretive/ Accessible Trail on the northern side of Lassen Volcanic National Park. This trail is specifically designed to include park visitors with disabilities so that they may have the experience of viewing a key geological exhibit that is off the main road. As national parks belong to all Americans, it is important to be inclusive to all of our potential visitors. The trail was constructed twenty years ago and is now in a serious state of disrepair.

The Devastated Area Interpretive Accessible trail is on the verge of being inaccessible to wheelchair use. There are multiple frost heaves and deteriorated sections of asphalt. The trail no longer meets the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibilities Guidelines in regard to trail width, pullout size, cross and vertical slope, signage and audio interpretation.

The Devastated Area of Lassen Volcanic National Park shows the combined mud flow and gas blast destruction typical of many steam eruptions in the Cascades. After the May 1915 eruption, this side of Lassen Peak took the brunt of the lava and mud flow. There is a "hot rock" nearby that retained the heat of the volcanic eruption for many years. The viewshed most visibly illustrates the slow but steady return of Earth's green mantle of plants and trees to what was not many years ago a barren landscape. The area is approximately eight miles from the north entrance to the park from Highway 44/89 and readily accessible to the public.





SNOWSHOEING IN THE PARK!

The Lassen Park Foundation again contributed to the Winter Education program at Lassen Volcanic National Park. The funding allowed intern, Sean Foley, who is a Chico State University student, to oversee the outreach to schools and community events. Each weekend four guided snowshoe walks were held at Manzanita Lake. The program continues to be very popular with families and schools, and includes valuable education about visiting Lassen during the winter.

RECORD YEAR FUNDING FOR YOUTH PROJECTS

This year the Lassen Park Foundation's youth camping grant program received a record number of applications. At the recent Board of Directors meeting, approval was granted to seventeen groups requesting funding in order to facilitate their camping trips. The groups that benefit serve young people who would not ordinarily have a chance to experience a camping trip. Schools suffering from lack of funding, group homes, foster care agencies, mentoring groups and urban youth are the applicants for grants from the Lassen Park Foundation. Chairman John Koeberer said that the Foundation is committed to sharing the benefits of a national park experience with young people. "Most of the Directors have a strong connection to this park and enjoyed it when they were young too—we think that providing funding for this initiative is one of the most important things we can do for the next generation." The groups which were selected this year are: Cottonwood School, Youth for Change from Paradise, Remi Vista group home from Redding, Lassen County Friday Night Live, Sierra Club Sacramento Inner City Kids, two classes from Paradise School, a Boy Scout troop from Corning, YMCA PlusOne Mentors from Redding, Lassen Alliance Mentorship Project from Susanville, Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center from Quincy, Flournoy Elementary School, Sierra Club San Jose Inner City Kids, Plumas Charter School, Today's Youth Matter from Sacramento, Acorn Teen Group from Montgomery Creek, and Families First group home from Davis. Thank you to everyone who made a contribution to this program. Your financial assistance allows equality of experience for all our youth. As National Park Service Director Mary Bonar said, "These magnificent places pay homage to our ancestors and inspire our children to become stewards of the parks of tomorrow. National parks have the power to stir our souls, reinvigorate our spirit and renew our commitment. They provide incredible opportunities to experience the marvelous natural and cultural heritage of our country."



FOUNDATION COMMITS TO SUPPORT LASSEN PEAK TRAIL ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

At a recent meeting, the Board of Directors voted to support a major project for restoration of the Lassen Peak Trail that will take place over five years, beginning in 2009. This vital project has been selected as Lassen Volcanic National Park's Centennial Challenge project. President Bush initiated the Centennial Challenge to invigorate national parks and celebrate 100 years of the National Park Service. It is also Lassen's 100th birthday! The campaign is designed to engage all Americans in preserving our heritage, history and natural resources—and reconnect people with their parks. The Lassen Peak Trail project will be submitted for approval to National Park Service officials, although the extent of federal contribution is not known. The project will restore the centerpiece of Lassen Volcanic National Park. The current trail is inadequate for the numbers of people who use it yearly and is unsafe in places. During the next year the Lassen Park Foundation will work with Lassen Volcanic National Park to design a campaign to support this project.

The national park idea has been nurtured by each succeeding generation of Americans. Today, across our land, the National Park System represents America at its best. Each park contributes to a deeper understanding of the history of the United States and our way of life; of the natural processes which have given form to our land, and to the enrichment of the environment in which we live." George B. Hartzog, Jr. – NPS Director, 1964-1972