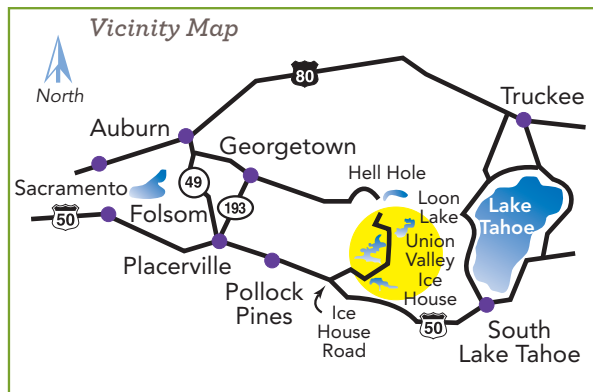




Crystal Basin Recreation Area

Powering forward. Together.



tread lightly!®
.org



During your visit to the Crystal Basin, please join SMUD and the Forest Service in their commitment to protect the environment - respect the natural inhabitants of the forest, the rights of those you meet along the way and those who follow you.



Forest Service - U.S. Department of Agriculture

©SMUD_0498-5/24 ©A trademark of Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off.

Welcome to the Crystal Basin Recreation Area of the Eldorado National Forest, spanning 85,000 acres of pine and fir forests along the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada. Capped by the majestic, granite peaks of the Crystal Range and traversed by lakes, reservoirs and streams, the Crystal Basin's four seasons and varied terrain offer a diverse range of rugged outdoor adventure.

History

The Crystal Basin was once the home of the Miwok, Washoe and Maidu people. In the 1800s, ranch settlers grazed dairy cattle on the high mountain meadows now covered by reservoirs. In the early 1900s, the USDA Forest Service opened the Crystal Basin to the public.

In 1957, Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) began construction of the Upper American River Project (UARP), a series of hydroelectric power plants in the Crystal Basin. Today, the UARP is capable of producing 1.8 billion kilowatt-hours of clean, affordable electricity — enough energy to power about 200,000 homes a year in Sacramento.

As part of the Upper American River Project, SMUD created a network of beautiful mountain reservoirs and built a variety of recreational facilities around the reservoirs. Working together, SMUD and the Forest Service continue to provide land and water-based recreation opportunities for all forest visitors to enjoy.

Camping

Over 700 developed campsites are available in the Crystal Basin. Most require fees and/or reservations and have a fire ring with grate, a table and parking spur. Campgrounds have bear proof storage and trash containers, toilets and many provide piped-in water. Most sites accommodate recreational vehicles (no hookups). The maximum stay is 14 days.

Camping in an undeveloped setting is allowed in most areas of the National Forest. When you pick your spot, make sure it is at least 100 feet away from streams and lakes, to protect streamside vegetation and prevent pollution.

Fishing

Anglers can cast for kokanee salmon, small mouth bass, mackinaw or rainbow trout at Union Valley Reservoir. Throughout the summer, Ice House, Union Valley, and Loon Lake Reservoir are stocked with rainbow trout by SMUD and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. For fishing enthusiasts eager to reel in a wild brown trout, try your luck at Gerle Creek.

Bicycling

The Crystal Basin has trails for both road cyclists and mountain bikers to enjoy. For families with children and cyclists who prefer a relaxed ride on pavement, Union Valley Reservoir has a paved 5.5 mile bike trail that winds along the edge of the lake. Mountain bikers can enjoy a 3.1 mile stretch of single track trail along the Ice House campgrounds.

Horseback Riding

Equestrian campgrounds are available at Loon Lake Reservoir, Wrights Lake and Tells Creek with access to scenic riding trails. The individual sites at Loon Lake Reservoir have hitching posts and pull-through parking to conveniently accommodate horse trailers.

Boating

Recreational boating is a favorite pastime on the clear mountain lakes of the Crystal Basin. Ice House, Union Valley and Loon Lake Reservoir have paved boat ramps and are large enough to accommodate motorboats and water sports.

Hiking

The Crystal Basin provides a gateway to Desolation Wilderness, offering access to 117 miles of hiking trails across the Sierra Nevada. Many of the trails located within the Crystal Basin offer easy to moderate day hikes. For an easy, informative hike, try the accessible Gerle Creek Summer Harvest Trail and learn how Native Americans utilized the resources available from the forest.

Accessible

Many of the developed areas throughout the Crystal Basin are accessible for people with disabilities. The Crystal Basin Information Station, fishing pier and trails at Gerle Creek, many of the campsites, parking areas and the paved boat ramps at the reservoirs accommodate wheelchairs.

Snow Skiing

Cross-country skiers can traverse miles of exquisite, pristine ski trails near Loon Lake Reservoir, the highest elevation reservoir in the Crystal Basin. The ungroomed trails are rated "Easiest" to "Most Difficult". Trail maps are available from the Forest Service. *Keep safety in mind, know your limitations and stay within your difficulty level.*

OHV

For those who prefer 4-wheels, the Crystal Basin is home to one of the most famous OHV trails, the Rubicon Jeep Trail. Another popular trail is Barrett Jeep Trail near Wrights Lake. Please check the latest Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) and only travel on designated roads and motorized trails.

Robbs Hut

Robbs Hut is a popular mountain bunkhouse located on a 6,700 foot peak overlooking the Crystal Basin. It is open year-round, and is equipped with a cook stove, outdoor barbeque and sleeping accommodations for six. Overnight reservations are required.

Loon Lake Chalet

Skiers, hikers, and mountain bikers can take refuge at the Loon Lake Chalet year-round. It offers a large warming room, a small kitchen and sleeping accommodations for up to 20 people. Overnight reservations are required. Reopening date to be determined.

Big Hill

For a panoramic view of the captivating scenery of the Crystal Basin, visit Big Hill Vista and Lookout. It offers views of the Crystal Range and west to Sacramento and Mount Diablo.

For more information, visit smud.org/CrystalBasin

RECREATION SITES	APPROXIMATE SEASON	FAMILY CAMPSITES	GROUP CAMPSITES	DAY-USE PICNIC SITES	FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
CLEVELAND CORRAL - 4000'	5/25 - 9/15		1		?	Information about Crystal Basin
Silver Creek Group Campground - 5200'	6/15 - 9/15		1		\$	No trailers/RVs Maximum of 50 people
BIG HILL VISTA POINT - 6100'	5/15 - 10/15		1			
ICE HOUSE RESERVOIR - 5400'						
Upper Silver Creek Day Use Area ²⁰¹⁹	5/15 - 10/15			5		No water
Ice House Campground ²⁰²²	5/15 - 10/15	68	12		\$	Accessible boarding ramp and dock
Peavine Point Day Use Area ²⁰²²	5/15 - 10/15			5		No water, boat-in only
Northwind Campground	5/15 - 10/1	9			\$	No water
Strawberry Point Campground	6/1 - 10/1	10			\$	No water
CRYSTAL BASIN INFORMATION STATION	5/25 - 10/1				?	Visitor Information
UNION VALLEY RESERVOIR - 4900'						
Azalea Cove Campground	5/25 - 10/1	10				Access by foot, boat or bicycle only No garbage
Big Silver Group Campground	5/25 - 10/1		1		\$	No water Group - Maximum of 50 people
Camino Cove Campground	5/25 - 10/15	32				No water
Fashoda Campground ²⁰²³	5/25 - 9/9	30	5		\$	Shower
Jones Fork Campground	5/25 - 10/1	10			\$	No water
Lone Rock Campground	5/25 - 10/1	5				Access by foot, boat or bicycle only No garbage
Sunset Campground ²⁰¹⁸	5/25 - 10/1	121	1		\$	Accessible boarding ramp and dock
Wench Creek Campground	5/25 - 9/15	100	2		\$	2 groups - Max. 50 people each
Westpoint Campground ²⁰²¹	5/25 - 10/15	23	1			Group - Maximum of 30 people
Wolf Creek Campground	5/25 - 9/15	42	3		\$	3 groups - Max. 25, 25, 50
Yellowjacket Campground ²⁰²¹	5/25 - 9/15	37			\$	
Van Vleck Bunkhouse - 6500'	Year Round				\$	Reservations required Maximum of 6 people
Robbs Hut - 6700'	Year Round		1		\$	Reservations required Maximum of 6 people
South Fork Group Campground - 5200'	5/25 - 10/1		1			Reservations required Maximum of 125 people
GERLE CREEK RESERVOIR - 5200'						
Angel Creek Picnic Area	6/15 - 10/1			4		No motorboats
Gerle Creek Campground ²⁰¹¹	6/15 - 10/1	50	4		\$	Interpretive hiking trail, Accessible No motorboats
Airport Flat Campground	5/25 - 10/15	16				No water Motorcycles & ATVs allowed
LOON LAKE RESERVOIR - 6400'						
Loon Lake Campground	6/15 - 10/1	53	2	5	\$	Group #1 - Maximum of 50 people Group #2 - Maximum of 35 people Livestock Required
Loon Lake Equestrian Campground	6/15 - 9/15	9	1		\$	No campfires, Accessible Boarding ramp and dock
Loon Lake Boat Ramp RV Campground ²⁰²⁰	6/15 - 10/1	12			\$	Reservations required Maximum of 20 people
Loon Lake Chalet - 6500'	Year Round				\$	
Northshore Campground ²⁰¹⁹	6/15 - 10/15	25			\$	Water now available at campground Access by foot, boat or bicycle only No water
Pleasant Campground	7/1 - 9/15	10				Maximum of 25 people, 6 cars Tents only
Red Fir Group Campground	7/1 - 9/15		1		\$	No trailers, rough road, No water
Wentworth Springs Campground	6/15 - 10/1	8				
WRIGHTS LAKE - 7000'						
Wright's Lake Equestrian Camp	6/25 - 10/1	15			\$	Livestock required
Wright's Lake Campground	6/25 - 10/1	68	10		\$	No motorboats

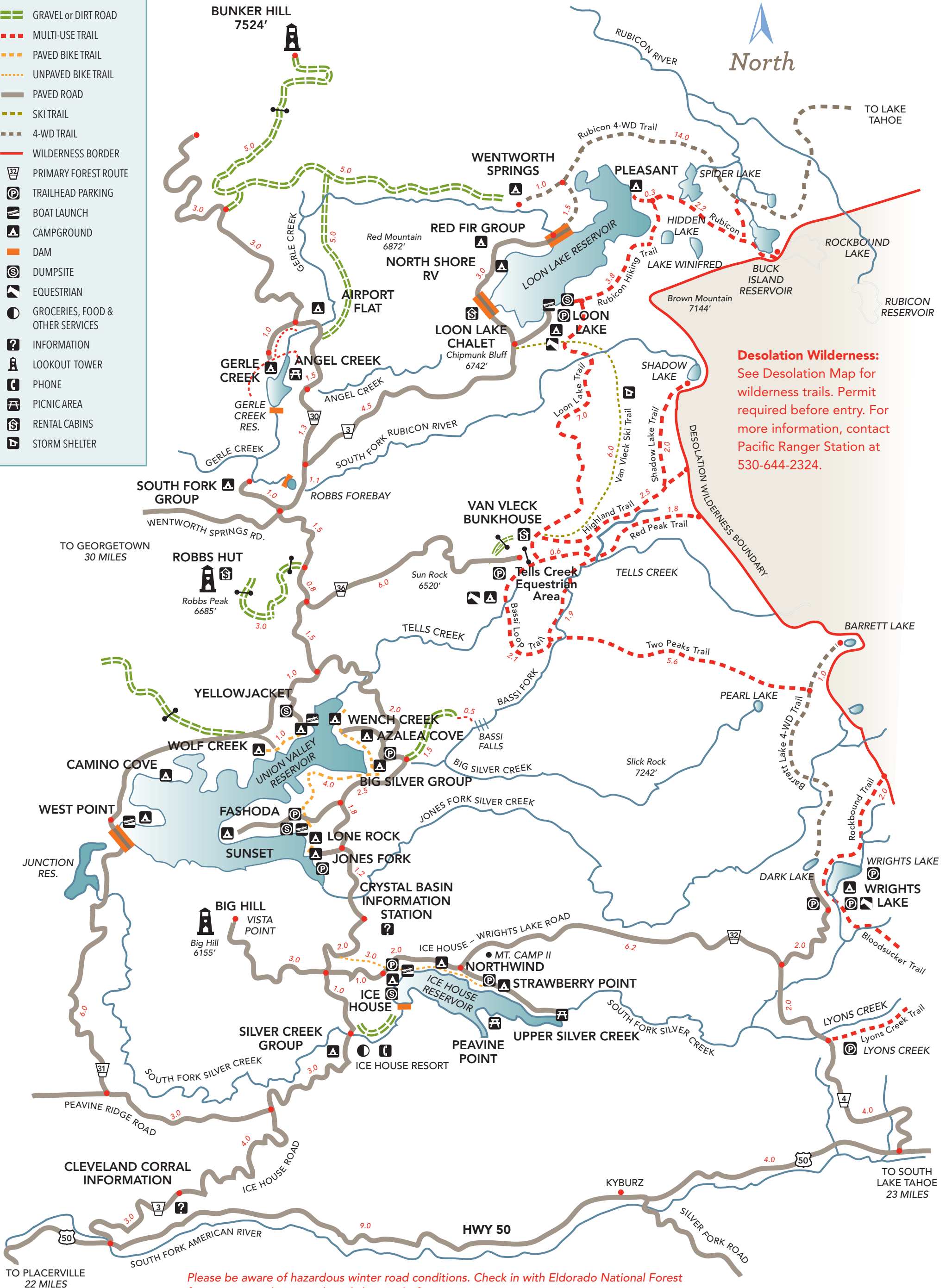
LEGEND For more information, call Pacific Ranger Station / Crystal Basin Recreation information at 530-644-2324.

R Reservations 1-877-444-6777 www.reconstruction.gov	Boating	Equestrian	Hiking	Mountain Biking	Restroom	Skiing	Wheel Chair Accessible
	Boat Ramp	Fee	Information	Picnic Area	RV	Swimming	Shower
	Drinking Water	Fishing	Lookout	RV Dump Site	View Point		Reconstruction Year



LEGEND

- GATE
- GRAVEL or DIRT ROAD
- MULTI-USE TRAIL
- PAVED BIKE TRAIL
- UNPAVED BIKE TRAIL
- PAVED ROAD
- SKI TRAIL
- 4-WD TRAIL
- WILDERNESS BORDER
- PRIMARY FOREST ROUTE
- TRAILHEAD PARKING
- BOAT LAUNCH
- CAMPGROUND
- DAM
- DUMPSITE
- EQUESTRIAN
- GROCERIES, FOOD & OTHER SERVICES
- INFORMATION
- LOOKOUT TOWER
- PHONE
- PICNIC AREA
- RENTAL CABINS
- STORM SHELTER



Desolation Wilderness:
See Desolation Map for wilderness trails. Permit required before entry. For more information, contact Pacific Ranger Station at 530-644-2324.

Please be aware of hazardous winter road conditions. Check in with Eldorado National Forest for current conditions and road closures before setting out on your trip.