

Connect with Nature

Winter 2010

10 Siskiyou Things to Do!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's "Connecting People with Nature" program is among the agency's highest national priorities. Locally, the Service's Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office is offering a variety of programs and activities, as well as funding classroom projects, to help connect people with nature.



So beat the winter blues by experiencing the many winter activities Siskiyou County has to offer. The Yreka FWO is providing a list of 10 things that you can do to enjoy nature locally.

Individuals who participate in any one of the 10 activities can receive t-shirts, backpacks, and other prizes at the Yreka FWO. To receive prizes, participants must submit a brief write-up or photos describing their experiences. A selection of these photos and essays will be featured on the Yreka FWO website at www.fws.gov/yreka.

For more information contact Jennifer Jones, Yreka FWO Connecting People with Nature Coordinator, at (530) 841-3109.

1. Bald Eagles at Local Wildlife Refuges

From December through February, the Klamath Basin hosts the largest concentration of bald eagles in the contiguous United States. Some years more than 1,000 of these majestic birds are present, with most daytime use occurring at Lower Klamath and Tule Lake Refuges. During these months a large number and diversity of other raptors, including golden eagle, Northern harrier, and red-tailed and rough-legged hawks also can be found. Waterfowl numbers on the Refuges increase dramatically in February with the arrival of the first northbound migrants. For more information, contact the Refuge Visitor Center at (530) 667-2231.



Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS

2. Snowshoeing and Cross-Country Skiing

The Klamath National Forest offers outdoor winter adventures, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are great ways to explore the forest this time of year. There is an almost 12 mile Nordic ski trail near Juanita Lake. The trailhead is located at the junction of Meiss Lake Road and the north end of Juanita Lake Road. Some track set and grooming is provided. Snowmobiling is also permitted. For more information, contact the Klamath National Forest Gooseneck Ranger District at (530) 398-4391.



Photo: Devlin Madrone

3. Discover Wildlife Tracking

Kids love learning about wildlife. The next time it rains or snows, explore your backyard or take a hike in the woods and see how many different animal tracks you can find. If you are lucky you may come across the tracks of the seldom seen fisher (see photo). A good resource for identifying animal tracks is www.beartrackersden.com/track-guide2003/trackguide2003.pdf



Photo by J. Mark Higley, Hoopa Valley Tribal Forestry

4. Sledding on Mt. Shasta

A lot of kids go sledding, but few can boast sledding down the side of a volcano. According to the Mt. Shasta Chamber of Commerce, there are two locations on Mt. Shasta that provide good access for great sledding: Snowman's Hill at the summit of Hwy 89 between Mt. Shasta and McCloud, and Bunny Flat at the top of Everitt Memorial Hwy on Mt. Shasta. Make sure to stay on public land and supervise and instruct children to avoid collisions with people and trees. For more information contact the Shasta-Trinity National Forest at (530) 926-4511.

5. Winter Steelhead Fishing on the Klamath

From December through February, the Klamath River provides recreational fishing opportunities for steelhead (rainbow trout headed to the ocean) and salmon. There are plenty of spots along Hwy 96 west of Interstate 5 for bank fishing, or you can hire a drift-boat guide and cover a lot of prime water. Klamath steelhead are famous for being hard-fighting fish and typically range in the 3 to 5 pound class, though fish up to 10 pounds are landed every winter.



Photo: Brian Woodbridge

6. Explore Castle Lake During the winter months, Castle Lake freezes and provides locals with stunning scenery and great photo opportunities. Castle Lake is located 11 miles from Mt. Shasta along the eastern edge of the Klamath Mountains. Play it safe, and never assume that the ice is totally safe before walking, skiing, ice-fishing or skating on a frozen lake. For ice and road conditions, contact the Mt. Shasta Ranger Station's office at (530) 926-4511.

Tracks belonging to the fisher, a native and extremely rare mammal that roams the forests of Northern California. Fishers are cousins of wolverines, martens and mink. Learn more at: www.fws.gov/yreka/fisher.html

7. Winter Wings Festival This impressive conference is held annually in Klamath Falls and provides bird enthusiasts of all levels with many rewarding experiences, including presentations, guest lectures, photography tips and field trips. This year's festival will take place from Feb. 12-14. The local wildlife refuges are among the most important wildlife areas along the entire Pacific Flyway. Information about the festival can be found at www.winterwingsfest.org. The Klamath Falls Audubon Society chapter hosts this event.



Photo: Tupper Ansel Blake, USFWS

8. Ice Candles Making ice candles is a creative winter outdoor activity you can do with your kids and can be used to decorate a



Photo: Jennifer Jones

holiday or dinner party. First, make a mold by filling a bucket with cold water. Place a tin can in the center and fill it with enough small rocks to almost, but not quite, sink it. You can anchor the can with the knob from an inverted cookware lid. Place the bucket outside until the water is frozen solid. Remove the block of ice from bucket (if stuck, loosen ice by running warm water over the bucket's surface). Remove the can from the center of the mold. Place a small candle at the bottom of the well vacated by the can. Add food coloring for color!

9. Siskiyou County Sportsman Expo The 5th annual Siskiyou Sportsmen's Expo will be held on Saturday, March 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Siskiyou Golden County Fairgrounds and features vendors, contests, exhibits, and more. For more information, contact the Siskiyou Golden County Fairgrounds office at (530) 842-2767, or visit: www.sisqfair.com.

10. Mt. Shasta Nordic Center Another destination for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing is the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center. There are more than 12 miles of groomed trails that offer a variety of terrain for skiers of all ages. The community trails are open to all, though a donation is greatly appreciated. The Center is open daily from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. There are ski clinics and other events and programs planned throughout the winter. Equipment may also be rented. For more information, please visit: www.mtshastanordic.org.

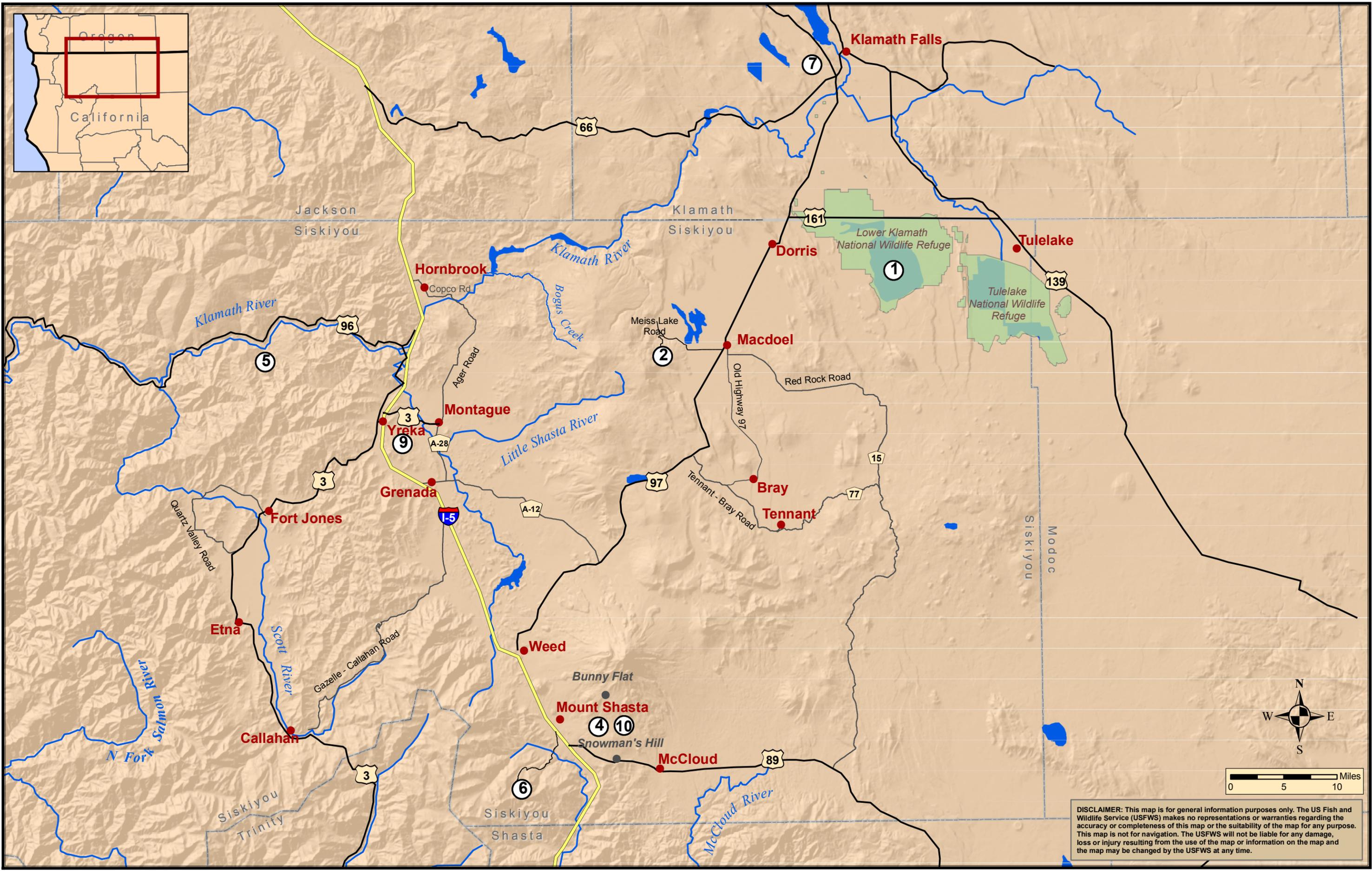


Photo: Jennifer Jones

Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office
1829 South Oregon Street
Yreka, CA 96097

(530) 842-5763
www.fws.gov/yreka





DISCLAIMER: This map is for general information purposes only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of this map or the suitability of the map for any purpose. This map is not for navigation. The USFWS will not be liable for any damage, loss or injury resulting from the use of the map or information on the map and the map may be changed by the USFWS at any time.