



Campgrounds & Trails

Fact Sheet—King Range National Conservation Area, California

CAMPGROUNDS

King Range National Conservation Area (NCA) campgrounds are open all year and no reservations required. Facilities are kept to a minimum in order to preserve the area's rustic and semi-primitive qualities.

Mattole Campground

Location: North end of King Range NCA at the beach. U.S. Highway 101 at Garberville, South Fork/Honeydew, or Ferndale exits. Follow signs toward Petrolia, turn on Lighthouse Road toward ocean. Facilities: 14 tent/trailer campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets, no hookups. Northern Lost Coast Trailhead and parking area. Wheelchair accessible. No OHV access. No Water. Camping Use Fee: \$8.00

Horse Mountain Campground (No Facilities)

Location: U.S. Highway 101 to Redway, west 22 miles on Briceland/Shelter Cove Road, then 6.5 miles north on King Peak Road. No toilets, fire rings, water, and hookups. No Water. No Camping Use Fee.

Tolkan Campground

Location: U.S. Highway 101 to Redway, west 22 miles on Briceland/Shelter Cove Road, then 3.5 miles north on King Peak Road. Facilities: 5 trailer/4 tent campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets. No water. No hookups. Wheelchair accessible. This campground provides easy access to the Paradise Royale Mountain Bike Trail System and Tolkan Terrain Park. Camping Use Fee: \$8.00

Nadelos Campground

Location: U.S. Highway 101 to Redway, west 22 miles on Briceland/Shelter Cove Road, south 1.5 miles on Chemise Mountain Road. Facilities: 8 tent campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets. Water is available from nearby creek; treat water before drinking. No hookups. Wheelchair accessible. Chemise Mountain Trailhead. Camping Use Fee: \$8.00

Entire campground may be reserved for overnight group use for \$85 per night. Minimum number of people in group is 20, and maximum group number is 60. All applications and fees must be received 30 days prior to the first use day. To request a permit application please call the BLM King Range Project Office at 707-986-5400. No group reservations are available Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July weekend or Labor Day weekend.

Wailaki Campground

Location: U.S. Highway 101 to Redway, west 22 miles on Briceland/Shelter Cove Road, south 2 miles on Chemise Mountain Road. Facilities: 13 tent/trailer campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets. Water is available from nearby creek; treat water before drinking. No hookups. Wheelchair accessible. Chemise Mountain Trailhead. Camping Use Fee: \$8.00

DAY USE ONLY—NO CAMPING:

Mal Coombs Park

Location: U.S. Highway 101 to Redway, west about 25 miles on Briceland/Shelter Cove Road to Shelter Cove. Facilities: group and family picnic tables, flush toilets, potable water, wheelchair accessible, RV parking, boat launching ramp nearby (privately operated). Day Use Fee: None

Large Group Site may be reserved for single-day events for \$50. Maximum number of people is 150, if event will exceed this then a Special Recreation Permit will be required. To request a permit application or reserve the site, please call the BLM King Range Project Office at 707-986-5400. All applications and fees must be received 30 days prior to first day of use.

Honeydew Creek Day Use Area

Location: U.S. Highway 101 at South/Fork Honeydew exit. Follow signs to Honeydew, turn south onto Wilder Ridge Road toward Ettersburg for 1 mile.

TRAILS

All trail distances/elevation changes listed below are for one-way travel between the points listed.

Lost Coast Trail North (Mattole to Black Sands Beach)

24.6 miles, mostly level

The Lost Coast Trail offers one of the few coastal wilderness hiking experiences in the United States. Hikers can view sea lions, tidepools and spectacular spring wildflowers. Solitude can be difficult to find on holiday weekends, so try to plan your hike during weekdays, or the less crowded spring/fall months. Allow at least three days for the entire hike.

Much of the trail is beach hiking with several stretches of 1-2 ft. rounded boulders. Wear sturdy hiking boots. Water sources are plentiful along the beach.

Stream crossings may be impassable during/after heavy winter rains (no bridges). The area near Punta Gorda; from Sea Lion Gulch to Randall Creek; and from Miller Flat to Gitchell Creek may be impassable during high tide. Carry a tide table, and when in doubt, hike these stretches during an outgoing tide to avoid being trapped.

Always be aware of the ocean. Large sets of waves can occur at any time, sweeping unsuspecting hikers into the ocean. Large waves and/or high winds will amplify the effects of tides, causing areas normally passable at a particular tide to become impassable.

Several privately owned cabins exist along the Lost Coast and are not for public use; BLM does not maintain any facilities along this trail - please respect private property rights.

Lost Coast Trail South (Hidden Valley to Needle Rock in Sinkyone Wilderness State Park)

9 miles, 875 ft. climb 2,600 ft. descent

Mountain meadows, old-growth forests and ridgetop vistas through coastal chaparral offer hikers an interesting contrast to the northern portion of the Lost Coast Trail. Hikers can also continue for 19 more miles through redwood groves and fern clad glens of Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. NOTE: The State Park has different regulations regarding trail use and camping (e.g. no pets or mountain bikes; camping is only allowed in designated areas).

Chemise Mountain Trail (Wailaki or Nadelos Campground to Chemise Mountain)

1.5 miles, 800 ft. climb

One of the easier hikes in the King Range NCA rewards hikers with vistas of the coastline and inland mountain ranges from the 2,598 ft. summit of Chemise Mountain.

Horse Mountain Creek Trail (Horse Mountain Creek Trailhead to Beach)

4.2 miles, 300 ft. climb, 1,700 ft. descent

This is the most gradual trail connecting the ridge to the beach. It also has several water sources. The trail climbs about 300 feet and drops 1,700 feet between the Horse Mountain Creek Trailhead and the beach. Passing through the forest with a few grassy openings, the trail joins the beach about 0.2 miles north of Horse Mountain Creek.

Lightning Trail (Lightning Trailhead to King Peak)

3 miles, 1900 ft. climb

This shortest trail to King Peak is a steady, but gradual climb through old-growth forests of the Honeydew Creek basin. The view from the top is incredible, with the Pacific Ocean almost a stones throw to the west and endless rows of forested mountains stretching to the east. Maple Camp has year-round water.

Buck Creek Trail (Saddle Mountain Trailhead to Beach)

4.5 miles, 400 ft. climb 3,300 ft. descent

Infamous as having one of the steepest grades of any northern California trail, Buck Creek follows an old logging road through forests to the coast. Where Buck Creek Trail intersects with the beach is 5.2 miles back to Shelter Cove. Water is available only at the mouth of Buck Creek.

King Crest Trail South (Saddle Mountain Trailhead to King Peak)

5.6 miles, 1,200 ft. climb

A gradual climb through a mixture of chaparral and forest, topping off with the spectacular King Peak vista.

King Crest Trail North (North Slide Peak Trailhead to King Peak)

5.8 miles, 800 ft. climb

Much of the trail corridor burned in 2003. This has added endless vistas of the Lost Coast, Mattole Valley and inland mountain ranges. As a trade-off, fallen snags may slow your pace. A 3.1-mile loop to Miller Camp involves an 800 ft. descent/climb as well as a refreshing spring. This spring may be dry during summer months.

Rattlesnake Ridge Trail (King Crest Trail to Beach)

5.7 miles, 3600 ft. descent

Most of this trail burned in 2003. Vegetation on this ridge regrows rapidly so hikers may have to bushwhack. This trail heads off of the King Crest Trail 2.8 miles south of the North Slide Peak Trailhead. It is recommended only for adventurous backpackers who don't mind some bushwhacking and stream crossings. Follows brushy Rattlesnake Ridge before descending through old-growth forest to Big Flat Creek. Ferns and mosses line the boulder choked channel of Big Flat Creek, which you must cross twice on the way to the coast. You will find a year-round spring at Bear Hollow Camp after leaving King Crest Trail.

Kinsey Ridge Trail (Kinsey Ridge Trailhead to Beach)

4 miles, 2300 ft. descent

Follows a dirt road to the heart of the Lost Coast shoreline, offering glimpses of the coastline and Big Flat as it descends through breaks in the forest. No water.

Spanish Ridge Trail (Spanish Ridge Trailhead to Beach)

4.7 miles, 300 ft. climb, 2400 ft. descent

Steep descent to the beach along a grassy ridgeline. Excellent views, especially to the south. No water.

Cooskie Creek Trail (Punta Gorda to Spanish Ridge Trailhead)

12.8 miles, 2400 ft. climb, 2300 ft. descent, 2300 ft. climb

This trail currently has a break where it crosses private property about 1-mile north of the Spanish Ridge Trailhead. The 11 miles south of the private land climbs up and down grassy ridges with clumps of windblown Douglas-fir, offering great views of the coast.

Hiking Loops

Saddle Mountain, Rattlesnake Ridge, Buck Creek Loop (Saddle Mountain Trailhead)

20.9 miles, 1200 ft. climb, 4,000 ft. descent, 3,300 ft. climb

This 2-3 day moderate to difficult hiking loop is a great alternative to the popular Lost Coast Trail, as it climbs to King Peak (4,088 ft.) and descends to the beach. Park at the Saddle Mountain Trailhead and a gradual climb through a mixture of chaparral and forest, topping off with the spectacular King Peak vista. Then follow the King Crest Trail to Rattlesnake Ridge Trail. It is recommended only for adventurous backpackers who don't mind some bushwhacking and stream crossings. Follows brushy Rattlesnake Ridge before descending through old-growth forest to Big Flat Creek. Ferns and mosses line the boulder choked channel of Big Flat Creek, which you must cross multiple times on the way to the coast. You will find a year-round spring at Bear Hollow Camp after leaving King Crest Trail. The stretch of the Lost Coast Trail between Big Flat and Buck Creek may be impassable during high tide; take a tide chart with you. Fill up water again at Buck Creek before heading up the Buck Creek Trail to the Saddle Mountain Trailhead.

Hidden Valley-Chinquapin-Lost Coast Trail Loop (Hidden Valley Trailhead)

8.3 miles, 900 ft. climb, 600 ft. descent

From the Hidden Valley Trailhead, the route (Lost Coast Trail-South) crosses grassy open meadows before climbing through a Douglas-fir forest to the top of Chemise Mountain (2,598 ft.). The Chinquapin Loop Trail drops off the west side of Chemise Mountain before rejoining the Lost Coast Trail. It provides beautiful ocean vistas while also accessing Nick's Camp, a backcountry campsite with year-round water nearby.

Hidden Valley Interpretive Trail (Hidden Valley Trailhead)

2 miles, 240 ft. climb

This stacked loop offers visitors an easy to moderate hike with a variety of views from mountain valley prairies, Pacific Ocean, to a historic apple orchard. This trail is great for the entire family to enjoy as it hosts an education [quest](#) for children with the reward of a patch.