

KERN RIVER VALLEY

2024 Visitor's Guide

Gateway to The Trail of 100 Giants | Fishing | Events | Destinations and More!

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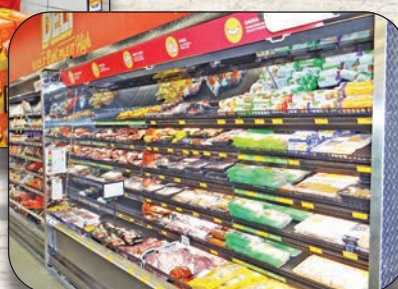
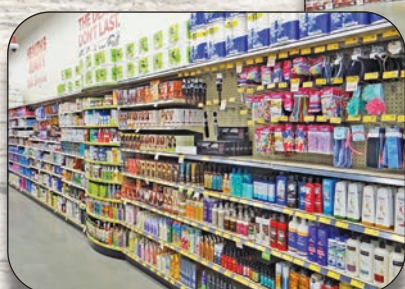
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The Kern River Valley Welcomes You

One of California's best kept secrets may no longer be a secret at all. The Kern River Valley is like another world, yet it is so very close. The valley is nestled among the majestic Southern Sierra Nevada mountains and offers some of the finest areas for recreation, relaxation and astonishing beauty. Just a few hours from busy city living, the Kern River Valley is waiting to share all it has to offer.

The South Fork of the Kern River weaves through ranch land and hosts one of the largest riparian areas in the state. The North Fork of the Kern River courses through one of the most breathtaking canyons in California and is surrounded by mountain peaks that soar to 10,000 feet and higher. Visit Isabella Lake for the best of the best in fishing and boating.

As you leave city life behind, a trip to the Kern River Valley will send you back in time with working cattle ranches, livestock grazing among endless vistas of farmland, and more stars than can be imagined hanging just above the grand mountain peaks in the night sky.

No matter what is on your agenda during your stay, the Kern River Valley has it covered. For land-based visitors, the surrounding area has numerous offerings, including hiking, hunting, sport shooting, horseback riding, birding,

mountain biking, gold panning, rock climbing, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, antiques, wildflower viewing and photographic possibilities. There is plenty to keep you busy. If you prefer spending time on the water, the Kern River and Isabella Lake are perfect choices. Offerings include fly fishing, whitewater rafting, kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, fishing, boating, windsurfing, kiteboarding, parasailing, sailing, waterskiing, tubing, and swimming.

Forget city life as you enter the Kern River Valley, where you can enjoy the clean, clear air and the majestic blue skies. Find all of these activities just 3 hours from Los Angeles and one hour from Bakersfield and Ridgecrest. The two primary ways to enter the valley are from the west, via Bakersfield on Highway 178, through the scenic Kern River Canyon, or from Highway 14 to Highway 178 and then over the historic Walker Pass from the east.

This guide is designed to be a user-friendly overview of the valley with three main sections – Activities, Destinations and Events. There is a detailed map in the center.

The Kern River Valley Visitor's Guide is produced by the area's weekly newspaper, the Kern Valley Sun. For more information, visit The Sun's website at www.KernValleySun.com.

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For current events, see KernValleySun.com or pick up the latest issue of the Kern Valley Sun

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CAMPING

Disbursed camping is free throughout most of the Sequoia National Forest. This is a service provided by the National Forest that offers areas with some amenities like “vault toilets” and all the way to extreme off-grid camping sites. Located all throughout the National Forest, this is one sure way to “get away from it all.” When people hear the words “free camping,” they immediately

want to know more about it, how it works, the locations, the times and the areas nearby. So a very good way to explain what disbursed camping is can be found at: www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/camping. It defines disbursed camping as: “Camping on public lands away from developed recreational facilities.” That covers a lot of area!

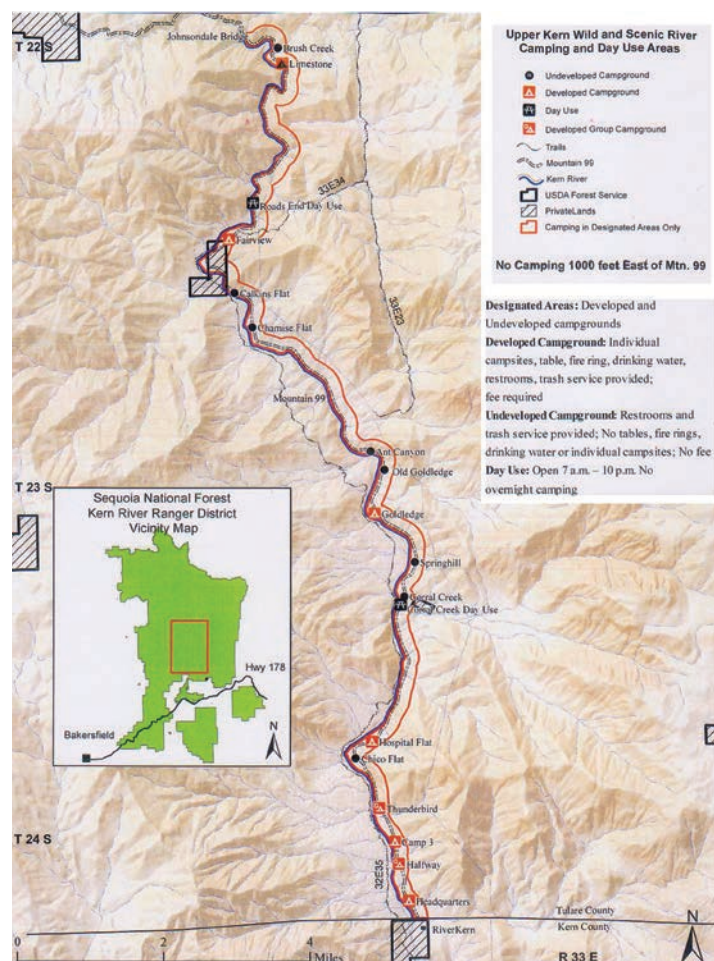
Here in the Kern River Valley, there are hundreds of disbursed camping sites with the most common being Keyesville Recreational Area near Lake Isabella. While camping on public land, you can stay in one spot for up to 14 days, then you must move on. So, there are a lot of people who take advantage of this little-known enforced law. They spend a week or more in one location enjoying what nature has provided. However, this area gets very busy during the summer and on holiday weekends.

“What can you do in these areas?” is a question asked a lot by campers. Most areas have “fire restrictions” in place and are patrolled by law enforcement. There is also a “no noise ban” in effect in most areas, so cranking up the stereo is not the best idea and glass of all kinds is banned. Drinking of alcohol is allowed just don’t drink and drive. Most areas have trash cans nearby so please use them and if you see others who don’t, kindly remind them to clean up after themselves.

Whatever your taste may be there is land to satisfy your needs. Be it desert, mountains or near lakes and streams, there is plenty of open land to enjoy in the Kern River Valley. One of the many benefits you have with disbursed camping is the ability to get away from it all in complete solitude. Off-road vehicles fully loaded spend days if not weeks on the open trails. Small off-road campers are also a big hit being able to go where their off-road vehicle takes them. This seems to add a bit of comfort along the trail.

There are some unspoken rules while enjoying these areas: No fires, no cutting of trees, no trash left behind, no harm to the environment, don’t feed the bears, watch out for wildlife, keep a sharp eye out for snakes but don’t hurt them – those are just a few.

These areas belong to us, they are managed by National Forest or BLM Personnel who service the vault toilets and remove the trash. These areas are not to be treated with disrespect the same as if someone disrespects your home, it won’t be tolerated. So, if you see something, say something and help all of us continue to enjoy the outdoors.



PACK IT IN PACK IT OUT
– Leave No Trace

IN THE KERN RIVER VALLEY

ACTIVITIES

This section showcases a variety of activities offered in the Kern River Valley, from the serene to the extreme. You will find something for everyone, of all ages, desires and abilities. Plan your visit today.



WATER ACTIVITIES

Tributaries from Mt. Whitney, the highest peak in the lower 48 states, feeds the Kern River as it makes its journey through the southern Sierra Nevadas into the Kern River Valley.

The North and South Forks of the Kern River have sections that are a part of the Wild and Scenic River network, affording them protection. Both rivers are outstanding scenic, recreational, and ecological values. The lower Kern, below Isabella Lake, remains unprotected, but is nationally known for its 21 miles of scenic whitewater adventures, fishing and camping.

The riverside vegetation, wildlife, abundance of dazzling sights and photo opportunities make the Kern River the jewel of the Sequoia National Forest.

In 1953, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed Isabella Dam. Its attributes draw thousands of visitors to its shores and the surrounding area, creating a year-round opportunity for adventure.

Isabella Lake is one of the largest and most widely enjoyed bodies of water in the state of California and is only a few hours away from city lights.

Water Safety Is Your Responsibility!

Water-related accidents are among the most common cause of death in some of our nation's most visited parks, forests and waterways. Many drowning victims were not trying to swim but were simply engaging in activities as innocent as wading, taking photos or playing along the stream bank. Those victims attempting to swim in swift waters overestimated their swimming ability and underestimated river currents. None of these drowning victims suspected that tragedy was about to overwhelm them.

Spring and summer activities often find visitors and their children near rivers and streams, enjoying nature's serene sounds or cooling sore feet from a long day's hike. It's important to understand water safety in and around these tempting waters. What can seem peaceful, warm and shallow can prove to be deceptively cold and easily overwhelm the strongest individuals. Each year, unexpected victims, whether purposefully in the water (boating, swimming, wading or crossing streams) or accidentally in the water (scrambling on rocks or even falling while hiking), find themselves in a water rescue situation. - National Park Service

Always use water safety, Wear PFD (Personal Flotation Device) when entering the river or the lake. Two local companies participate in free PFD rentals:

- Kern River Outfitters at 6602 Wofford Blvd, Wofford Heights.

You have to reserve ahead of time. For more details, call 760-376-3370.

- Whitewater Voyages at 11252 Kernville Road, Kernville, walk in or reserve PFD at 800-400-7238.

For more water safety info, you can also check out the Kern Conservancy website at KernRiverConservancy.org/river-safety.

Whitewater Rafting

The Kern River is a whitewater wonderland with some of the most challenging, aesthetic and varied whitewater rafting in the world.

The rafting season for the Kern River generally runs through the spring and summer. The North Fork features an expert wilderness run beginning at the Forks and miles of sections ranging from mild to wild roller coaster rides. The lower river has many class IV and V whitewater runs.

There are many areas on both the upper and lower river that may be enjoyed by amateurs. Because any river can be a dangerous place, the best way to stay safe is through a professional outfitter.

River Tubing

Tubing is a rising star on the Kern River. Several of the local outfitters rent tubes, life vests and even shuttles. Tubing the Kern River is similar to rafting, but riding down rapids completely immersed in the experience can be a lot more enjoyable, but also not as safe without a guide.

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WATER ACTIVITIES

Photo by Steven Fletcher

Kayaking

Hit the Kern River and a few of its tributaries for the adventure of a lifetime. The upper river offers runs with varying degrees of difficulty, with the Powerhouse and Limestone being the favorites. On the lower river, below the dam, try Slippery Rock and Miracle Hot Springs.

You can rent or buy kayaks locally if you do not have your own.

SUP - Standup Paddleboarding

Stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) is a relatively new form of surfing that has emerged as a way of having a totally different experience on the Kern River and Isabella Lake. This emerging sport has a Hawaiian heritage and is perfect for your next water adventure.

The mild, high desert climate gives great paddling opportunities 12 months a year. Isabella Lake has lovely little nooks and crannies to be explored on a SUP. Many people enjoy paddling all through the winter when it is quiet and peaceful. Local outfitters offer affordable, fun classes in the basics of lake paddling for everyone. These classes are easy and relaxing.

Fishing

The upper and lower Kern River as well as Isabella Lake afford some of the best fishing in the state of California and beyond. Largemouth bass, Rainbow trout, and native Golden and Brown trout are plentiful and found throughout the river. Fishing is allowed year-round with a fishing license.

Above the Johnsondale Bridge special fishing restrictions apply. Be sure to check local regulations from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW).

Talk to an expert to learn where some of the best fishing spots are and what the favorite bait might be.

Fly Fishing

For the avid fly fisher, the upper and lower Kern River and Isabella Lake have become 'must-see' places to fish. The 20 mile stretch of the upper Kern, from Kernville to the Johnsondale Bridge, has the required pocket water, short

runs and long riffles, along with large deep pools where those trophies hang out. Above the Johnsondale Bridge, the river becomes a special regulation area, and access is a bit more difficult. Fishing traffic is minimal along the 4-mile trail, making the upper waters a fly fisher's dream. The lower Kern, flowing below Isabella Dam, has been said to be a fishery unto its own.



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Kite Boarding

Isabella Lake offers great kiting with flat water or large chop depending on wind direction and reaches of up to a mile. The windiest times of the year are spring and fall. Winds most often pick up when the coast is overcast and the desert is clear, but can happen anytime. On most days, the winds will double in speed and are quite gusty. Bow kites have the range to handle this, but be careful not to rig too big. Kites range from 7 to 12 for most days. A popular spot is 'The Ghetto' near the boat ramp by the Auxiliary Dam. Isabella Lake is a reservoir, and there are submerged trees that can be just under the surface in some areas depending on the lake level. Be sure to ask a local where these hazards are located. Camping is free, but a lake permit is required for day use, and they are available at Golden State Surplus in Lake Isabella a few minutes from the beach.

Sailing

Sailing is a science that involves reading the wind, and Isabella Lake is one of the premier sailing lakes. The vast, wide-open surface area and the strong afternoon winds, attract an ever-increasing number of small boat sailors. Once you have tried water sailing, you will wonder why you waited so long. Sailors are passionate about their time on the water as the wind fills the sails, and their boat glides peacefully and swiftly through the water.

Water Skiing

The sport of water skiing has enjoyed a long, eventful history on Isabella Lake, and it continues to be one of the most popular water sports enjoyed by enthusiasts all over the country. Just put on a personal flotation device, grab a rope, and experience the sensation of water skiing, which compares to soaring through the air.



Photo by Sarah Roofener

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Kern River Valley Visitor's Guide



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OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

If you are in the Kern River Valley for a weekend or an extended vacation, you will find yourself surrounded by some of the most beautiful and adventure-filled settings in the state. Finding something to do will not be a problem. Whether the activity is full of excitement and challenge, or an opportunity to relax from the hustle and bustle of city life, you will find it here.

Camping

If you are coming to the Kern River Valley for a camping trip, you have come to the right place. You can set up a tent in the mountains, along the Kern River, on the shores of Isabella Lake, nestled on the banks of a babbling creek, in the Giant Sequoias or in the high desert. No matter what kind of camping you are interested in, you will find everything you need in the Kern River Valley and surrounding areas. Camping is one of the most widely enjoyed activities in the Kern River Valley because of the many choices offered.

Whatever your choice, before you begin your adventure, be sure to familiarize yourself and everyone in your party with the area, and wildlife.

Maps and information are available at Forest Service facilities in both Lake Isabella and in Kernville. Fire permits are required, and do remember to "pack it in, pack it out", and "leave no trace." There is a \$1,000 fine for littering.

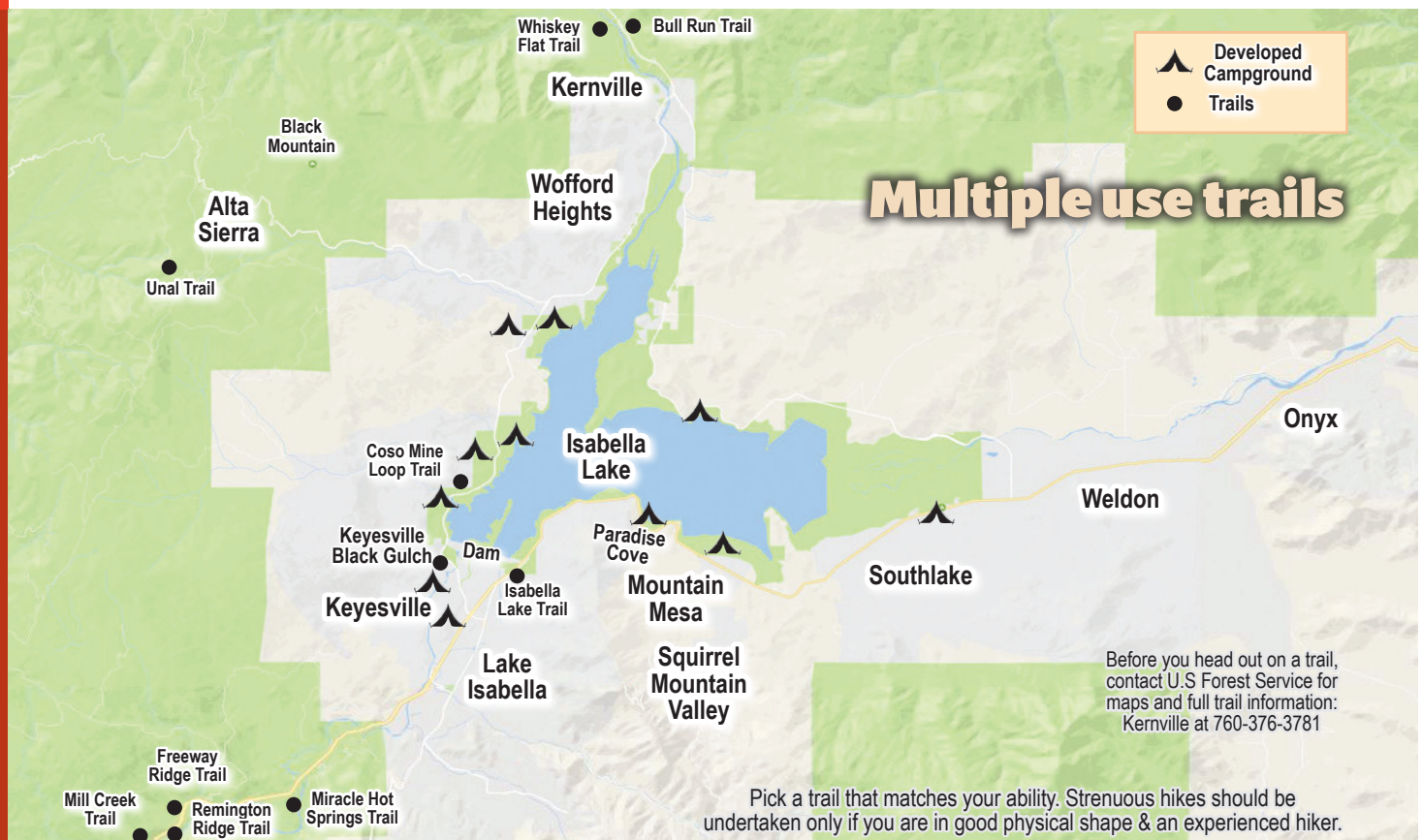
Horseback Riding

Travel back in time to when visitors and locals alike traveled on horseback. Saddle up and prepare for an amazing day of refreshing mountain air, breathtaking views of country vistas and mountain terrain that can only be seen from the back of a horse. Packing trips are available to tour the high country of the Kern River Valley as never seen before. For more information on trails, routes and packers, call the U.S. Forest Service 760-376-3781



File photo

Popular Trails & Campsites Map



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Activities

Hunting

The Kern River Valley and surrounding areas offer some of the best hunting in the state. From upland birds, to water fowl, to big game, hunters will not be disappointed. The valley has been popular with hunters for generations because of the variety of game that can be found. Make sure to check with local sporting goods retailers to find out where to get a license and where to hunt before you go out for the day.

Sport Shooting

The Kern River Valley shooting range is operated by the not-for-profit Kern River Valley Gun Association, operating on a non-discriminatory basis with a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service.

The shooting range provides a safe and environmentally friendly location for recreational target shooting for the entire family. There are archery targets, a regulation trap range and pistol targets distanced from 7 to 50 yards, as well as rifle targets at 50, 100, 200, 300, 400, and 500 yards.

The range is open to members from sun-up to sun-down every day, and, unless otherwise specified, it is open to the public for trap on Wednesday, and Sunday mornings, and for rifle and pistol Sunday mornings from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

A membership fee is \$45 per year, with applications available at the range or online at krvga.org



File photo

Rock Climbing/Bouldering

Rock climbing in the Kern River Valley greatly surpasses anything that has been written in any guide book. The exposed granite surrounding the area offers new and challenging rock faces that put skill and bravery to the test and is a paradise for extreme climbers. For inexperienced and new climbers, there are outfitters in the area to act as your climbing guide. A guide can provide the proper equipment and safety instruction.

Gold Panning

Gold panning in the Kern River Valley is a historical staple. Panning the lower river in Keyesville is probably the most popular location. There are old mines all over the entire valley. Most of them are gated but still offer a day's worth of fun hiking to explore the history. There is a local gold mining shop that will teach you all the techniques and even let you practice your skills right there at the shop.

Stargazing

If you are going to be in the Kern River Valley for an overnight stay, be sure to take a step outside in the dark of night. For an extra special experience, get in the car, head for the hills or lake shore and look up. The Kern River Valley has been rated one of the prime locations in the northern hemisphere for astronomers by the International Dark Sky Association. Due to its minimal light pollution, you will be able to see the night sky as never before. Be prepared for a truly magnificent sight. Crystal clear constellations fill the sky and the Milky Way bursts with light. If you are in the right place at the right time, a meteor shower might take your breath away. A satellite or space station may even appear right before your eyes. The Kern River Valley Astronomy Club holds star gazing parties on a regular basis along with special programs for the public. Settle in, look up and relax. The Kern River Valley night skies are yours for the taking. Call 760-376-6290 for more information.

Antiquing

For the perfect day strolling antique shops, looking for that "treasure find," an ideal place to start are the shops bordering Circle Park in Kernville, or try those on Lake Isabella Blvd. in Bodfish. Many of the antiques you will find are from right here in the Kern River Valley. Chat with the store proprietors to learn a bit of the local history and the history of the item you are admiring.

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The Kern River Valley is definitely not a boring place during winter. The surrounding mountains turn into a winter wonderland and snow play can be heard all around.

Snow Play


Head for the Greenhorn Mountains if a day of tubing, sledding, snowball fights and building snowmen is on your list. Shirley Meadows and Alta Sierra are fantastic places to take the family. You can also pull off on one of the highway safe spots to enjoy a day of fun in the snow. Be sure to bring chains and emergency supplies in case of the unexpected.

Snowmachining, Cross-Country Skiing, & Snowshoeing

The Greenhorn Mountains, Rancheria Road, Sherman Pass and above Johnsondale are the perfect spots for snow enthusiasts to find an abundance of developed snow, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trails. For those up to the challenge of experiencing winter in the Kern River Valley, these snow-covered forest roads provide the perfect terrain. Please remember, all snow machines are required to be registered with the state and have a valid "Green Sticker" affixed to the vehicle. Snowmachining is not allowed in wilderness areas or on trails designated for cross-country skiing. All snowmachine trails are open to skiers and snowshoers. Safety should be a top priority for all users on any trail. For information and maps, call the Kern River Ranger District at 760-376-3781.


Skiing, Snowboarding & Snow Tubing

For those wanting to experience the exhilaration and thrill of downhill skiing, snowboarding, or tire tubing, the Alta Sierra Ski Resort and Terrain Park in the Greenhorn Mountains offers the perfect opportunity to soak up the beauty of this area in winter. Only minutes from the valley floor, Hwy 155 from Wofford Heights takes you right to Greenhorn Summit. Hwy 155 is usually open in winter months. Always remember to check with the California Highway Patrol at 1-800-GAS-ROAD or the U.S. Forest Service at 760-376-3781 for the latest road conditions.



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Sequoia Lodge
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OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Activities

Trip Tips

Be Prepared! Bring proper clothing, as weather can change rapidly. Carry adequate water, a first-aid kit, map and food to meet your needs. Pick a trail that matches your ability. Strenuous hikes should be undertaken only if you are in good physical shape and an experienced hiker. Wear good hiking boots and break them in before a long hike.

Boil all water from rivers and streams for 5 minutes before drinking. Preserve water quality by avoiding pollution of surface waters. Set up camp 100 feet from any stream, rivers, or lakes. Bury all body wastes 6 inches deep and 100 feet away from water sources. Remember to pack out what you pack in!

Pets are permitted on trails but must be under control so as not to disturb wildlife or other hikers. A 6-foot leash is required.

During the spring and summer months, when hiking on trails from 3,000 to 6,000 feet in elevation, watch out for snakes.

Wildfire is always a danger in the mountains of Southern California. Campfire permits are required in trail camps. Permits may be obtained from the ranger stations.

Please don't smoke while hiking. Take the time to sit down and clear a fire safe area of all flammable material 3 feet in diameter before smoking!

Tread Lightly - Please stay on the trails and do not shortcut or create switchbacks. Lower elevations are usually snow free but may be too muddy for winter travel. Wet conditions may also leave trails subject to erosion. Motorized vehicles are prohibited on the Pacific Crest Trail and the Unal Trail. No trails listed are suitable for ATVs.

Mountain Biking

By Chris Horgan, Executive Director, Stewards of the Sequoia

The weather in the Kern River Valley is typically mild in the spring, fall and winter seasons, which allows for some incredible mountain biking nearly year-round. Local multiple use trails can challenge the most experienced riders, while other trails make newbies wonder why they've never tried this sport. There are three major biking areas in the Kern River Valley:

1. Alta Sierra: near the Greenhorn Summit, allowing you to choose the following trail ride options: Alta Sierra, Badger Gap, Forest 90, Greenhorn Summit Loop or Just Outstanding.

2. Cannell Trail: if the road is clear of snow and your riding abilities are honed, choose to ride from the top of Sherman Peak, or the very exhilarating and challenging 32 mile "Cannell Plunge" with a 9,000 foot descent and 2,300 feet of climbing.

3. Whiskey Flat: A great, advanced ride during cooler seasons, this 14.5 mile trail is anything but flat, offering quite a few exposed downhill sections with incredible views, as well as a number of hike-and-bike sections.

Don't hit the trail until you are prepared!

Practice Safety: Hike only trails that fit your experience level. Bring plenty of food and water. Also remember that most trails are multi-use trails. Before you head out on a trail, contact U.S Forest Service for maps and full trail information: Kernville at 760-376-3781.



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MULTIPLE USE TRAILS

Riding Trails

By Chris Horgan, Executive Director, Stewards of the Sequoia

The Kern River Valley has been a mecca for motorcyclists for decades. For road riders, there are several loops to choose from. The Lion's Trail is one of the most notable routes in the area, even garnering honorable mention in the American Motorcycle Association Magazine as one of the greatest motorcycle roads in America. For a taste of paved mountain riding, try taking Mt. 99 north out of Kernville toward the Trail of 100 Giants, and be sure to stop and enjoy the views along the way. Going this direction gives you the option of heading east over Sherman Pass and coming out on Hwy 14 at Pearsonville, or taking the Western Divide Hwy past the Ponderosa Lodge and down to Springville, on the western slope of the Sierras.

Dual sport motorcyclists have the best of both worlds, being able to travel all over the mountains on paved and dirt surfaces. Some of the spectacular dual sport routes include Breckenridge Road, in the area south of the Kern Canyon, and Rancheria Road, which runs from Johnsondale through Alta Sierra and ends at the Rio Bravo Ranch outside of Bakersfield. In addition to these maintained dirt roads, this area hosts one of the most extensive single track networks in California. These single tracks vary in difficulty from double black diamonds to easy trail riding. Please stop by one of the U.S. Forest Service offices and get the current trail map and some suggested riding areas. Many of these trails remain open, in large part, due to the efforts of Stewards of the Sequoia motorized volunteers. They perform maintenance on 200 miles of trails each year. Check them out at StewardsOfTheSequoia.org and learn more about their Trail Appreciation volunteer days.

These are just a few of the beautiful rides in this epic country, so please stay, explore, and enjoy the ride!

Hiking

By Chris Horgan, Executive Director, Stewards of the Sequoia

Hiking is an activity many visitors find great joy in doing in the Kern River Valley, with its abundant and easily accessible multiple use trails, agreeable climate, and beautiful vistas. Hiking became so popular in the valley that a hiking club was formed by local and out-of-town hikers to document hiking trails and provide information for new hikers and visitors interested in hiking in the valley. If you are planning on doing any serious hiking in or around the Kern River Valley, in either the Sierra Nevada or Piute Mountain ranges, then contacting the Kern River Valley Hiking Club is a worthwhile first step to your adventure. Call the KRVHC at 661-778-3453 for more information.

Seventeen shared use nature trails around the valley have been listed by the Forest Service, and excellent guides to the trails can be obtained from the Cannell Meadow Ranger Station in Kernville. They include: Cannell Trail, Whiskey Flat Trail, Rincon Trail, Flynn And Tobias Trails, Packsaddle Cave Trail, River Trail, Bull Run Trail, Bright Star Trail, Clear Creek Trail, Dry Meadow Trail, Kern River, Mill Creek Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, Remington Ridge Trail, Sunday Peak Trail and Badger Gap Trail.

Walking, Horse, Mountain Bike and Dirt Bike Trails

Greenhorn and Breckenridge Mountains

Badger Gap Trail Begins one mile north of Oak Flat Lookout Road on Rancheria Road and provides some fine views of the Lower Kern Canyon. Intermediate riders. Number 31E76, 10.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,200; highest elevation: 4,300.

Dry Meadow Trail starts at the end of the Steve Spring Road (28S27B) in the Piute Mountains. Difficult motorcycle trail. Expert

Keyesville Multiple Use Trails

(Both locations are free to the public and managed by the US Forest Service)

To Old Keyesville

Keyesville Rd.

Staging Area

Lower Kern River

Enter Here

To Hwy 155

large elevation gain. No water. Goes through recently burned area. Shared Use. Number 34E31, 5.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,000; highest elevation: 7,400.

Kern Canyon Trail begins at the Badger Gap Trail (31E76). There are gradual elevation changes as the trail parallels the river through open hillsides of grass and oak. Excellent intermediate sidehill trail. Shared Use. Number 31E75, 8.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,200; highest elevation: 2,400.

Hobo Fishing Trail begins at Hobo Campground and follows the Kern River to Sandy Flat Campground. Gentle slopes and good fishing are accessible along the trail. Number 31E74, 0.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,280; highest elevation: 2,400.

Kern River Trail begins at the Badger Gap trail (31E76). There are gradual elevation changes as the trail parallels the river through open hillsides of grass and oak. Expert mountain bike or dirt bike. Moderate for hiking. Large dropoffs with exposure above Kern River. Nice spot for flowers in early spring. Shared Use. Number 32E49, 5.3 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,000; highest elevation: 2,200.

Mill Creek Trail starts 1.5 miles east of Hwy. 178 on Old Kern Canyon Road. The trail ends at a small spur road just north of Squirrel Meadow on Breckenridge Mountain. Intermediate level section to creek, then steep sidehill trail. Nice spot for flowers in early spring. Shared Use. Number 31E78, 6.6 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,400; highest elevation: 6,700.

Pacific Crest Trail crosses Piute Mountain Road 1.5 miles east of Landers Meadow. Hiking Only. Number 2000, 10.4 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,200; highest elevation: 6,800.

Patch Corner Trail starts 0.4 miles east of Democrat Station on Highway 178 and parallels the Kern River, coming in at China Gardens. Number 31E82, 2.0 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,200; highest elevation: 2,271.

Portuguese Trail begins on Forest Hwy. 90 just south of the Girl Scout Camp. Intermediate sidehill trail. Shared Use. Number 31E59, 2.1 miles. lowest elevation: 6,800; highest elevation: 7,300.

Remington Ridge Trail starts 1.75 miles west of Hobo Campground on Old Kern Canyon Road. Intermediate steep sidehill trail. Shared Use. Number 31E51, 7.4 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,500; highest elevation: 6,400.

Sunday Peak Trail begins at the Girl Scout Camp parking area on Forest Hwy. 90. This trail is a good day hike for families, with a nice lunch spot at the summit. Hiking only. Number 31E66, 1.7 miles. Lowest elevation: 7,200; highest elevation: 8,300.

Unal Trail loops along Greenhorn Summit beginning at the Summit Station. Moderate climbing and good views. Number 31E58, 3.0 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,350; highest elevation: 7,050.

Horse, Mountain Bike and Dirt Bike Trails Upper Kern Canyon

Many trails are available to explore on the Kern River Ranger District of the Sequoia National Forest.

Cannell Trail begins at the horse corrals 2 miles north of Kernville on Mtn. 99. At Pine Flat, the trail parallels the south side of Forest Road #245 12 and crosses Cannell Creek two different times before reaching the Cannell Cabin, built between 1904 and 1909. The trail is considered strenuous in difficulty. Large elevation gain and loss through nicely forested area at top and open rocky areas at bottom. Be prepared. This is a long trail with no easy exits. Shared Use. Number 33E32, 12 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,800; highest elevation: 7,520.

Rincon Trail starts approximately 10 miles north of Kernville on Mtn. 99 across from Ant Canyon and proceeds north following the Rincon fault to the Forks of the Kern River. Salmon, Brush and Durrwood Creeks are crossed offering good fishing and some nice undeveloped camping spots. Expert mountain bike or dirt bike. Moderate for hiking. Sidehill with limited water during summer. Shared Use. Number 33E23, 19.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 3,680; highest elevation: 4,640.

Tobias Trail starts 0.5 mile up the same trailhead as Flynn Trail. Expert mountain bike or dirt bike. Moderate for hiking. Steep trail in forested and meadow areas up top, then exposed brushy slopes at bottom. Top section is Shared Use. Bottom is non-motorized. Bottom of trail is at McNally's restaurant by the river. Number 32E34, 4.6 miles. Lowest elevation: 3,600; highest elevation: 6,400.

Walking, Hiking Trails Upper Kern Canyon

Whiskey Flat Trail starts at the north end of Burlando Road in Kernville, paralleling the Kern River, and ending at the Fairview footbridge. Please respect private property. Intermediate that is anything but flat. Lots of undulating elevation gains and losses. Large exposure in some places, non-motorized. Number 32E35, 14.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 2,800; highest elevation: 3,600.

Packsaddle Cave Trail begins 16 miles north of Kernville on Mtn. 99. The trail is a moderate, occasionally steep incline to a cave that has long since been robbed. Bring a flashlight to explore the cave. Number 33E34, 2.3 miles. Lowest elevation: 3,600; highest elevation: 4,500.

Flynn Trail begins at the Fairview footbridge, 16 miles north of Kernville on Mtn. 99. Watch for poison oak! Number 32E33, 3.9 miles. Lowest elevation: 3,600; highest elevation: 6,000.

River Trail begins 19 miles north of Kernville on the east side of the Johnsondale Bridge off Mtn. 99. Good access for fishing on the North Fork of the Kern River. Trail suitable for day hikes or overnight backpack trips and is considered easy to moderate in difficulty. Number 33E30, 5.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 3,700; highest elevation: 4,000.



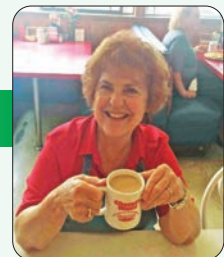
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MULTIPLE USE TRAILS

Photo by Grace Harrison

Hiking Trails Sequoia National Forest Giant Sequoia National Monument

Long Meadow leaves from Shake Camp in Mtn. Home State Forest Trail, travels northeasterly starting at 6,800', and enters Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks at approximately 9,000'. Approximate hiking time to Summit Lake is 6-8 hours. Fishing is available along the trail. Number 31E15, 7.6 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,800; highest elevation: 9,000. Moderate/Strenuous.

Summit Trail (Wilderness Portion) trailhead is approximately 10 miles north of Quaking Aspen on road 21S50. Approximate hiking time to the lakes is 5-6 hours. Fishing is available in Maggie and Twin Lakes. Golden Trout Wilderness (GTW). This is an entrance to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Number 31E14, 11.3 miles. Lowest elevation: 8,400; highest elevation: 9,920. Moderate.

Summit South (Non-Wilderness Portion) travels from the GTW boundary south to Freezeout Meadow on the Hot Springs District. Number 31E14, 25 miles. Lowest elevation: 7,000; highest elevation: 9,000. Moderate. Bike allowed.

Clicks Creek leaves from trail head on road 21S50, approximately 7 miles from Quaking Aspen. Parts of this trail are steep. Fishing is available in the Little Kern River. Number 32E11, 8.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,200; highest elevation: 7,800. Moderate/Strenuous.

Lewis Camp trail head is 8 miles north of Quaking Aspen. Fishing is available in the Little and Big Kern River and the Little Kern Lake. Number 33E01, 18.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 5,800; highest elevation: 7,600. Moderate.

Jerkey Meadow starts at Pyles Boys Camp, then leaves from Lloyd Meadow near the end of road 22S82 at the Jerkey Meadow Trail head. Trail is 5 miles to Grey Meadow. Fishing and water are scarce on this trail. Number 32E12, 9.8 miles. Lowest elevation: 6,000; highest elevation: 6,800. Easy/Moderate.

Forks Of The Kern trail head is on road 20S67 off the Lloyd Meadow road 22S82. There is NO BRIDGE crossing the Little Kern, and extreme caution should be used. Crossing should not be attempted during spring snow runoff. Campsites and fishing are available from the Little Kern Crossing to the Big Kern Bridge. Number 33E20, 11.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 4,600; highest elevation: 5,700. Moderate.

Lloyd Meadow Trail connects with Lloyd Meadow road 22S82 at the Jerkey Meadow. Trailhead and a large turnout

near the base of The Needles, 5.1 miles south. Fishing and water are scarce during summer months. Number 32E12, 5.1 miles. Lowest elevation: 5,600; highest elevation: 6,000. Easy. Bikes allowed.



Nelson Trail travels from Quaking Aspen to Camp Nelson. Fishing is available along most of the trail, except for the upper portion. Number 31E30, 3.7 miles. Lowest elevation: 5,300; highest elevation: 6,800. Easy/Moderate. Bikes allowed.

Bear Creek trail head is on the Coy Flat Road 0.25 miles past the last cabin and 0.5 miles shy of the Coy Flat Campground. At about 3.5 miles, you reach the top of the grove. At about 8 miles, you reach the junction with the Summit Trail. Number 31E31, 8 miles. Lowest elevation: 5,000; highest elevation: 9,000. Moderate/Strenuous. Bikes allowed.

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Wishon Trail travels between Camp Wishon and Mtn. Home State Forest. Fishing in the Tule River and its tributaries is available along most of the trail. Number 30E14, 6 miles. Lowest elevation: 4,000; highest elevation: 5,600. Easy/Moderate. Bikes allowed.

The Needles trail head is 2.5 miles from Western Divide Hwy at the end of Needles Road (21S05). The trail follows the northern slope of Needles Ridge and offers spectacular views stretching all the way to Mt. Whitney. There is no water on this trail or at the lookout. The lookout tower was destroyed by fire July 28, 2011, when a wayward ember from the wood stove's chimney caught the roof on fire. Number 32E22, 2.5 miles. Lowest elevation: 7,800; highest elevation: 8,200. Moderate. Bikes allowed.

Freeman Creek connects Quaking Aspen with Lloyd Meadow and drops 1,500 feet in elevation between the two locations. Fishing in Freeman Creek at Lloyd Meadow is normally good. Number 32E20, 4.3 miles. Lowest elevation: 5,600; highest elevation: 7,100. Moderate. Bikes allowed.

Jordan Peak trail is short but steep and ends at the Jordan Peak Lookout.* The trail head is at the end of road 20S71, which leaves from the North Road 21S50 about halfway between the Clicks Creek and Summit Trail heads. Number 31E35, 1.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 8,600; highest elevation: 9,115. Easy/Moderate. Bikes allowed.

Mule Peak is short but steep and ends at the Mule Peak Fire Lookout Tower.* The trail head is off of road 22S03, which leaves from the Western Divide Highway just north of the Trail of 100 Giants. Number 31E43, 1.2 miles. Lowest elevation: 7,600; highest elevation: 8,200. Easy/Moderate. Bikes allowed.

**The fire lookout may be able to visit with you during summer months, dependent upon current fire activity.*

Pavement Meets Dirt

Off-Roading - Jeep

By Bakersfield Trail Blazers

The Kern River Valley has many diverse off-road trails that offer outstanding views and scenery as well as access to many outstanding remote camping areas.

Keyesville area has many miles of easy 4x4 trails and roads that can be accessed off of Hwy 155 near Hwy 178. The area is great for exploring and you will often encounter historic mining structures and forts and access to many dispersed campgrounds. A great drive to have lunch and relax and camp near the Kern River.

Freeway Ridge 4x4 and Black Gulch trails off of Hwy 178 offers some steep climbs and rocky terrain where a high clearance 4x4 vehicle is strongly recommended. This is one of the most popular trails in the area. You will often encounter loose rocks and dirt and the trail has some drop-offs as you traverse the route that is not for the faint of heart. These trails can give you access to Evans Flat campground and makes a great place to have lunch.

Sherman Jeep trail is a moderate trail you can access off of Sherman pass Rd. It is a seasonal trail that typically opens in June and closes at the first winter storm. The trail is nearly 7 miles long and reaches Sherman Peak at 9,900 ft that offers one of the best views of the area. The route has some tight areas through brush and trees that could leave you with some "pinstriping" on your vehicles paint.

With all of these trails have a map handy and always have a buddy with you. These are in remote areas and a breakdown on one of these trails can leave you stranded well off the beaten path. Always stay on the trail, pack it in, pack it out, and tread lightly. Recreate responsibly and enjoy your public lands.

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DRIVING/RIDING TOURS

Photo by Steven Fletcher

The Kern River Valley has been a destination for off-roaders for decades, whether they are two-wheel or four-wheel enthusiasts. OHV enthusiasts can explore the Sequoia National Forest on a number of designated OHV riding trails, from Walker Basin to Keyesville and the Greenhorns, up to the high country above Kernville. A close and convenient location for some 'wheeling' fun is at the Cyrus Canyon OHV Park off Sierra Highway, just south of Kernville. The area is a mecca for off-roaders and offers a great variety of terrain regardless of the type of vehicle you bring with you to the Kern River Valley.

State law requires registration of all motor vehicles before being operated on public lands and must have green stickers or street-legal plates, quiet mufflers and approved spark arrestors to operate on public lands.

There are more than 12 trails available for a challenging day of off-roading on your next visit to the Kern River Valley. It is highly recommended to ride in small groups, wear the proper safety equipment, carry plenty of water, and keep a first aid kit with you. Proper clothing is also advisable, as the weather can change in an instant, and you won't want to get caught short. Play, stay, and, better than anything, enjoy the ride! For more maps and information, call the U.S. Forest Service at 760-376-3781.

Adventure Bike

The Lake Isabella Area offers incredible opportunities for Adventure riding. This new sport embodies a mixture of road and off-road with varying degrees of ability in each situation. The Lake Isabella area offers everything from serene to extreme. The essence of adventure riding is that you can tour to interesting places on the road less traveled. After enjoying a day adventure riding on local forest roads there are plenty of options for food and lodging in Lake Isabella and surrounding areas. More adventurous types may set up camp in the back country due to the large luggage capacity of their adventure bike, enjoying a well deserved dinner by a camp fire under the stars. Adventure Rallies such as WARPED are held here every year. Numerous loop rides are possible starting from Lake Isabella. Riders often use apps like CaliMoto to easily layout routes, calimoto.com/en.

OHV Riding & Four-Wheeling

By Chris Horgan, Executive Director, Stewards of the Sequoia

For decades, off-roaders have been making the pilgrimage to the valley to ride their OHVs. The U.S. Forest Service has worked to provide responsible motorized recreational experiences in national forests and grasslands with the goal of not damaging the environment. The Bureau of Land Management controls much of the public acreage in the valley not overseen by the U.S. Forest Service. Off-roaders are responsible for checking where off-road riding is allowed and staying on designated trails.

For more information call the U.S. Forest Service in Kernville at 760-376-3781.

Here are some great places to ride:

1. A motorcycle track located in Cyrus Canyon near Kernville.

2. The Kern Plateau offers more than a hundred miles of trails nestled amongst the pines. Among them are:

- Rattlesnake Trail, Rincon Trail, Schaeffer Trail, North Meadow Pass Trail, Trout Creek Trail, Cannel Meadow Trail, Sherman Pass, Beach Trail, Little Horse Trail, Fish and Troy Connector, Rattlesnake Creek Trail, Sherman Pass Trail, Boone Meadow Trail, Mahogany Creek Trail, Blackrock Mountain Trail, Beach Ridge Trail, Monache 4-Wheel Drive Road, Granite/Broder Trail, Granite Cut-Off Trail, Jackass Peak Trail, Albanita Trail, Jackass Creek Trail, and Blackrock Station Trail.

3. There is a network of motorized trails in Keyesville, on BLM land near the Main Dam. For more information, call 661-391-6000.



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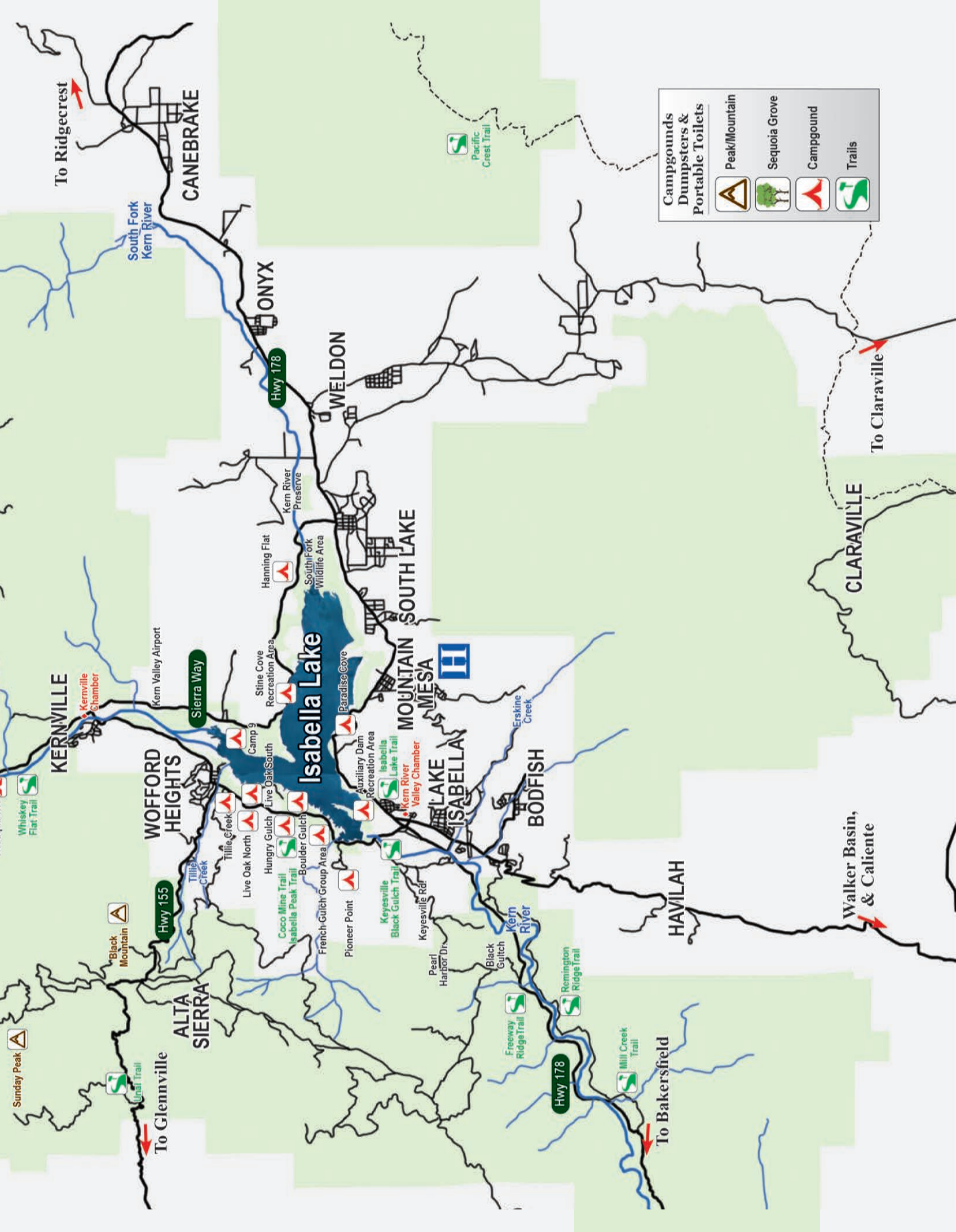
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Stine Cove
Recreation Area

Camp 9

Live Oak South

Hungry Gulch

Live Oak North

Tillie Creek

Wofford Heights

Kern Valley Airport

Sierra Way

Whiskey Flat Trail

Kernville Chamber

Black Mountain

Hwy 155

To Glennville

Unal Trail

Keyesville Black Gulch Trail

Isabella Lake Trail

Kern River Valley Chamber

French Gulch Group Area

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Freeway Ridge Trail

Remington Ridge Trail

Mill Creek Trail

Hwy 178

To Bakersfield

HAVILAH

Walker Basin, & Caliente

To Claraville

CLARAVILLE

South Lake

MOUNTAIN MESA

LAKE ISABELLA

BODFISH

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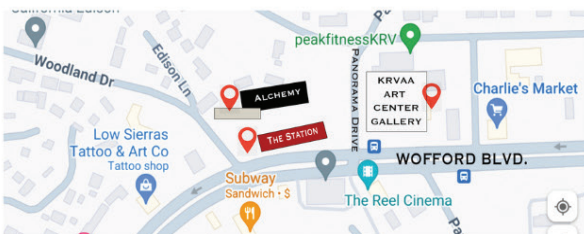
Kern River Valley Art Association

CONTACT US

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OUR PLATFORM

THE VISION IS TO CREATE AN ART CENTER/COMMUNITY THAT WILL BE RENOWNED LOCALLY, NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY FOR OFFERING ANYONE, YOUNG AND OLD, THE ABILITY TO LEARN MOST FORMS OF INNOVATIVE, TRADITIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL ARTS. OUR COMMUNITY WILL BECOME KNOWN FOR THESE THINGS AND PROSPER. OUR WONDERFUL COMMUNITY WILL BENEFIT NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF RAFTING AND THE OUTDOORS BUT ALSO FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE. IT WILL GIVE THE YOUTH OF OUR COMMUNITY A POSITIVE OUTLET AND OPTION FOR BENEFICIAL GROWTH.



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OUR STORY

.... IS THE SLOGAN FOR OUR ASSOCIATION WHOSE CHARTER IS TO BROADEN THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL HORIZONS OF THE KERN RIVER VALLEY RESIDENTS. WE HAVE FOUR PROGRAMS EMPHASIZING ARTS THIS SLOGAN:

ARTS AND EDUCATION CENTER
THE EMPHASIS OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO TEACH ART THROUGH HANDS-ON-ARTS SUCH AS PAINTING, SCULPTING, VARIOUS CRAFTS, PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMMAKING AND PERFORMANCE ART, THROUGH OUR THREE DEDICATED BUILDINGS IN WOFFORD HEIGHTS.

ART GALLERY
THE EMPHASIS OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO PRODUCE REGULAR THEMED AND JURIED ART SHOWS, DISPLAYING THE WORK OF A VARIETY OF ARTISTS IN THE KERN RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITIES.

PUBLIC ART "MURALS OF THE VALLEY" AND MAKERS PROGRAMS
THE EMPHASIS OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO PRODUCE AND DISPLAY MURALS ON BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT THE KERN RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITIES, SUCH AS HOSPITALS, BUSINESSES AND OTHER PUBLIC SETTINGS. THE MAKERS PROGRAM IS INTENDED TO DISTRIBUTE ART ACROSS THE VALLEY FOR ANYONE TO FIND AND ENJOY.

ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL
THE EMPHASIS OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO PRODUCE AT REGULAR INTERVALS, FESTIVALS WHICH GIVE LOCAL AND VISITING ARTISTS AND CRAFTERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISPLAY AND SELL THEIR WORK TO A WIDE AUDIENCE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND VISITORS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES.



OUR VISION

A MISSION TO CREATE AN INDUSTRIAL ARTS SPACE IN THE KERN RIVER VALLEY THAT CAN HOUSE INDUSTRIAL CLASSES SUCH AS BLACKSMITHING, WELDING, GLASS WORK, LEATHER CRAFTS, OIL PAINTING, MURAL PAINTING, BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO DEVELOPING, WOOD WORKING, PAPER MAKING, CNC ROUTING, POTTERY, AND SO FORTH.



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FACES OF THE VALLEY LOCAL WILDLIFE

Red-tailed Hawk
Photo by Steven Fletcher

Wildlife that calls the Kern River Valley Home

The Kern River Valley is a very special place for birds. Beautiful and even colorful birds migrate through the area twice a year.

Pictured are only a few of the more common birds that call the Kern River Valley home, even if only for a season.

The highest density of exotic birds can be seen at the Kern River Preserve.

Local winter birds, according to the Kern River Preserve:

Mallard, wild turkey, California quail, American white pelican, great blue heron, osprey, northern harrier, cooper's hawk, red-shouldered hawk, red-tailed hawk, ferruginous hawk, golden eagle, American kestrel, prairie falcon, American coot, killdeer, wilson's snipe, ring-billed gull, California gull, eurasian collared dove, mourning dove, greater roadrunner, barn owl, great horned owl, white-throated swift, anna's hummingbird, red-breasted sapsucker, nuttall's woodpecker, downy woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, northern flicker, black phoebe, say's phoebe, loggerhead shrike, western scrub-jay, common raven, oak titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, rock wren, bewick's wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, western bluebird, mountain bluebird, American robin, northern mockingbird, European starling, audubon's warbler, spotted towhee, lark sparrow, savannah sparrow, song sparrow, lincoln's sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, dark-eyed junco, red-winged blackbird, tricolored blackbird, western meadowlark, brewer's blackbird, house finch, pine siskin, lesser goldfinch, american goldfinch, and house sparrow.

Birding

Bird watching (or birding) can be one of the most relaxing and interesting activities you can participate in. The Kern River Valley offers impressive birds. Many migrating and breeding species call the surrounding habitat home, including a large number of threatened and endangered species. Over 200 species frequent the corridor of the South Fork of the Kern River that is the Kern River Preserve located on Hwy. 178 in Weldon. The preserve is a globally important bird habitat. A large variety of birds can be observed anywhere in the valley. For the best viewing, South Fork has the largest expanse of riparian forest in the Western United States. Raptors, or birds of prey, are some of the valley's most exciting birds to watch for: bald eagles, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, red-tailed hawks, and turkey vultures are all varieties of raptors or birds of prey. The staff at the preserve are well informed, enthusiastic, and eager to provide all the information you need about valley birds and other wildlife. Tours of the preserve are available, and monthly events are offered free of charge. For more information, call 760-378-2029.

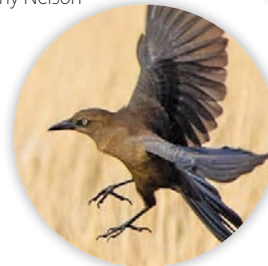
Other place to Bird include Scodie Park in Onyx, Tillie Creek Campground in Wofford Heights, Main Dam Campground below Isabella Reservoir, all around Isabella Reservoir and its other campgrounds, the Greenhorn Mountains via State Highway 155, and Canebrake Ecological Reserve. Allow for a very full day.



Western Bluebird
Photo by Amy Nelson



Bald Eagle
Photo by Amy Nelson



Great Tailed Grackle
Photo by Elizabeth Skill



Great Blue Heron
Photo by Elizabeth Skill



Purple Finches
(male and female)
Photo by Amy Nelson



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Coyote

Photo by Michele Lynn



Bear Cub

Photo by Sarah Roofener



Bobcat

Photo by Amy Nelson



Mule Deer

Photo by Amy Nelson



Canine Tracks

Canine prints are distinctive -- the overall shape is oval with four toes. The front toes often lining up side-by-side. There usually are claws visible in the track.



Feline Tracks

Feline prints have four toes and a heel pad with three lobes at the bottom edges that are shaped like a bubble letter "M".

Amphibians, reptiles, bugs, insects and more!

The Kern River Valley has more life than can be covered in such few pages. Shown below are a few of the more common residence in the "creepy crawlly" devision. Beautiful as they may be, many people steer clear of them.

The amphibian life in the Kern River Valley is surprising in its diversity. Many salamander species are found all throughout the region.

Arthropods - spiders, and insects evoke a sense of fear and fascination. Tarantulas can most often be seen in the fall throughout the area.

Reptiles are tetrapod animals in the class Reptilia - turtles, snakes, and lizards - which are found when you look carefully, especially in shady places in the summer.



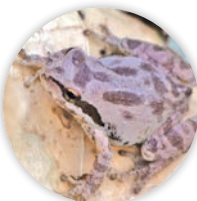
**Black Tailed
Brush Lizard**



Tarantula



Praying Mantis



Pacific Chorus Frog



Alligator Lizard



King Snake

Wildlife that calls the Kern River Valley Home

Pictured are just a few of the many types of wildlife that can be seen around the valley.

Some of the most common wildlife you will come across are rabbits, deer, and squirrels.

Virginia opossum, Ornate Shrew, gray fox, coyote, black bear, raccoon, long-tailed weasel, badger, western spotted skunk, striped skunk, bobcat, mountain lion, mule deer, merriam's chipmunk, white-tailed antelope squirrel, California ground squirrel, beaver, brush rabbit, desert cottontail, black-tailed jackrabbit.

There are more mammals that live in this region than any other place in North America north of Mexico. This amazing diversity is because of our geographical and climate variation.

Know the Difference

Do you know how to tell the difference between the local rattlesnake and the gopher snake?



There are quite a few differences, but we are just going to cover the most basic visual. Remember if you do not know the difference, do not handle either. Both snakes are vital to the environment, leave them be. If you can't see the rattles, what kind of snake is it?

- **Head Shape** - Rattlesnake heads are much wider at the neck. You could describe it as an upside down heart. Non-venomous snakes heads seamlessly meet the body.

- **Skin** - Rattlesnake skin looks rough and scaly while gopher snake skin is much more smooth.

- **Eyes** - Rattlesnakes have a prominent pointy scale above the eyes.

- **A few other visual differences:** eye shape, under belly scales, pattern, and nostrils, but you will not want to handle or get close enough to inspect these more subtle or hidden differences.

Keep your pets safe and be vigilant while walking, or hiking.



Desert Cottontail
Photo by Sarah Roofener



Grey Squirrel
Photo by Mark Schmitt

Our Wildflowers

Nothing heralds the arrival of spring like a green mountainside covered with a blanket of vibrantly colored wildflowers. The Kern River Valley offers an unrivaled and spectacular show of Mother Nature's springtime gems. Don't forget to bring your camera! These springtime beauties don't linger long. Wildflower viewing is at its best for a few short weeks, from late February to early April.

There are a couple of flowers that are prickly that you will want to stay away from like fiddleneck and ragweed. There are a couple others that are beautiful, but can cause quite a rash and/or blisters like poodledog bush, poison oak, and stinging nettle.



Poodledog Bush

Touching this pretty purple flowered plant, can cause a significant allergic reaction. It grows in post burn areas for a few years following the fire. It is a very tall bush.



Poison Oak

Touching this beautiful vibrant green and often red plant, can cause a significant allergic reaction. It grows in wet areas along rivers, creeks, and gullies.



Stinging Nettle

Touching this green leafy plant, can cause a stinging sensation where the little hairs are implanted. It grows near water sources similar to poison oak, but nettle needs even more water, so it will be very close to the creeks, and streams.



Liberty Ambulance, EMS provider for Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, is proud to serve the residents of the High Desert and Kern River Valley with outstanding patient care, when they need it most.

- ★ Providing service throughout Ridgecrest, Inyokern, Trona and Kern River Valley
- ★ 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- ★ Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) and Critical Care Transport (CCT) Ambulance
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- ★ Highly skilled Paramedics, EMTs and Nurses

For all emergencies, call 911
Non-emergencies dial - (760) 375-6565



LOCAL FISH



Sacramento Pike Minnow (Squawfish)

They are native to the area and common.

Description: 16-47", thick elongated body, olive brown color.

Rainbow Trout

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 23-47", silvery to yellowish above with a red band on the side.



Pumpkinseed

They were introduced and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 12-16", greenish-gray or brownish-green, orange, yellow, blue, and green spots.

Largemouth Bass

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 16-38", Green to olive on back, white to yellow on belly.



Hitch

They are native to the area and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 14", elongated, yet laterally compressed body.

Hardhead

They are native and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 13"-23.5", thick elongated body.



Golden Shiner

They were introduced and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 4-10", golden and silvery.

Channel Catfish

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 22-52", cylindrical and thick body, barbels around mouth.



Black Crappie

They were introduced and they are common to the area.

Description: 8-12", oblong body, whitish-silvery side, dark back, white belly.

Brown Bullhead

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 12-21", cylindrical and thick body, barbels around mouth.



Black Bullhead

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 10.5-26", cylindrical and thick body, barbels around mouth.



White Crappie

They were introduced and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 8-21", silver stiff ellipse body with vertical bands.

Western Mosquitofish

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 1.6-2.8", light tan color with iridescent blue, green to purple scales.



Sacramento Sucker

They are native to the area and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 14-20", thick elongated body, green to brown back with a yellow-gold white underside.

Threadfin Shad

They were introduced and are uncommon in the area.

Description: 2"-8", usually silver with blue or black coloring at the rear, and the more notable long ray at the end of the dorsal fin.



Green Sunfish

They were introduced and they are common to the area.

Description: 8-12", olive green on back fading on the sides, orange-yellow breast and belly.

Common Carp

They were introduced and are common to the area.

Description: 12-20", horizontal jaw with two pairs of barbels on the upper lip.



Bluegill

They were introduced and they are uncommon to the area.

Description: 7.5-16", blue or purplish iridescence, faint vertical bars, breeding males brighter blue and orange.

Chinook Salmon

Description: blue-green, red, or purple on the back and top of the head, with silvery sides.



Kokanee Salmon

Description: 10-18", olive colored sides, and turn more red during the breeding season.

Brown Trout

Description: 16-31", brassy brown cast fading to creamy white on the fish's belly, with medium-sized spots surrounded by lighter halos



Photos by Alison Sheehy, Duane Raver USFWS, and Rene Reyes USDOIBR
Resources used: kern.audubon.org/SKRV_fish.htm



Fishing the Kern River Valley

By Noble Smith

The Kern River Valley is one of the most diversified fisheries in the state. In one day an angler can fish for native trout in high country creeks, fish for stocked rainbow trout on the main Kern River, and finish up at Lake Isabella for some great lake fishing. The lake offers great catfishing, bass fishing, crappie and rainbow trout fishing.

There are many creeks just a short drive from the Kern River Valley full of mature trout. Bull Run, Salmon, Brush, Bone, Nobel Young, Peppermint, Freeman, and South creeks to name a few. All are a day trip from the Valley. The season for these tributary creeks starts on the last Saturday in April thru mid-November.

There are many methods for taking these native fish. For bait fisherman it is crickets, worms, and salmon eggs as the top three baits. The trick is presentation. These creeks are narrow and overgrown with brush. A short ultralight rod is a necessity. Light gear is important, a lot of time an angler will be making underhand casts.

Artificial lures and flies are also an effective way to catch these fish. Small spinners in the 1/32 oz. size are the way to go. Fly fishing these creeks is tough due to the limited access. A lot of anglers will use a clear bobber above their favorite fly on light spinning tackle.

Fishing the main Kern River is a different ballgame. The main Kern is open and stocked year-round. From Johnsondale bridge down to Bakersfield is accessible by car. During the runoff from April to June (depending on the snowpack) the river can be very rough. Whitewater rafting and kayaking are in full swing this time of year. Fishermen need to concentrate on shore structure and slack water behind rocks this time of year.

The rest of the year the Kern is very fishable. Early morning and late evening are the best times to fish. During low light conditions the insects will become active on the water's surface. The trout will become active feeding on insects.

The traditional salmon egg split shot set-up has been an effective way to take trout on the Kern River for years. A split-shot 18 inches above a #10 or #12 hook. Cast out and let the salmon egg flow with the current. Adjust the size of the weight of the split-shot to the strength of the river's current.

Some of the same spinners that work well on the creeks will also

work on the main Kern. Panther Martins, Mepps, Vilmax and Rooster Tails in the 1/8 oz. size are deadly on the Kern River rainbow trout. Other lures that are effective are spoons and small Rapala-type minnow lures. As far as fly fishing goes it's all about matching what insects are landing on the river's surface.

Lake Isabella is one of the best crappie fishing lakes in the state. Lake Isabella also hosts professional bass tournaments and is home to one of the largest trout derby's in the nation. Not to mention catfish in the 40 to 50 pound class hauled out of Lake Isabella.

Around March on Lake Isabella, when water temperatures warm to around 60 degrees, the crappie move into the shallows to spawn. Twenty-five-fish-limits are common this time of year. Shore fishermen as well as boat fishermen are successful.

All-time best bait is live minnow. Meal worms also work well. A cigar bobber above a #6 or #8 hook allowing the minnow to swim freely is deadly on crappie. Crappie jigs are also a very effective way to fish. A 1/32 oz. jig with crappie nibble on the hook is the way to go. Red and white, yellow and white, and plain white are popular color jigs to use.

Bass fishing is legendary on Lake Isabella. Three of the largest bass ever to be caught in the country have been caught in Lake Isabella. Bass in the 8-to-10 pound range are common in Lake Isabella. Bass love to gorge on the healthy threadfin shad and crawdad population in the lake. Crank baits in a shad pattern and soft plastics in a crawdad pattern are very effective for catching big mouths.

Catfish up to 50 pounds have been caught out of Lake Isabella. There are plenty of trophy cats in the lake. Catfish are a hardy fish and take advantage of the large food source the lake has to offer. Many baits are effective for cats. Clams, crawlers, shad and mackerel are a few favorites.

The main event on Isabella Lake is held every year a week before Easter - The Isabella Lake Fishing Derby. Trophy and catchable trout are tagged and stocked for cash and prizes for anglers. A great family event, anybody can sign up and fish.

When planning a fishing trip to the Kern River Valley remember to bring a lot of gear. The choices are plentiful, a fisherman's dream.

See you on the River!



Kern River Rainbow

They are native to the area and common.
Description: 18" long, thick elongated body, bright colors, orange tints on the belly, white tips on dorsal, pelvic and anal fins.

Golden Trout

They are native and are common in the area.

Description: 6-12" long, very bright colors, the belly, opercula, lower jaws, and lateral line are a vivid red to red-orange.



Little Kern Golden Trout

They are native and are common in the area.

Description: 10", sporadic spots along body, bright red stripe and dark purple parr marks along lateral line, yellow fins with white tips.

Fish that call Kern River Valley Home

Some of the fish now here were not always here. Some were intentionally introduced and some were by mistake.

There are many native fish in the Kern River Valley that have been affected by the introduction of sport fish. The most abundant fish though is the carp closely followed by the green sunfish. Here are 18 species (4 native - some trout may also be native) that have been found within the Kern River Valley. For more information, about licenses and limits, visit the California Department of Fish and Wildlife website at: wildlife.ca.gov

DESTINATIONS

As it turns out, everywhere in the Kern River Valley is a “must see” place. This section highlights many places in and around the valley that offer wonderful experiences and will have you returning to the valley again and again.

Many magnificent wonders of the valley are waiting to be discovered. Whether it's by car, bicycle, horseback or simply on foot, get out there and start discovering.

Some of the secret places loved by the locals are listed in this section, and we highly suggest you scope out these little treasures for yourself. Location descriptions are provided, along with somewhat vague directions. Check out the map in the center for a few of the landmarks to aid in your discovery process. Have fun exploring this beautiful place!



WORTHWHILE STOPS

Silver City Ghost Town

If you are looking for a fun, hands-on history lesson, Silver City Ghost Town in Bodfish is a definite stop during any trip to the Kern River Valley. Much of the valley's history is preserved there in the thousands of artifacts on display throughout the grounds.

Buildings from the past have been attentively preserved in a state of "arrested decay." This extremely interesting tour is of a realistic town site containing buildings from the Keyesville, Isabella, Claraville, Hot Springs, South Fork, Burlando Ranch, and Miracle mining camps. Furnished with items from the early Kern River Valley, more than 20 historic buildings are open for you to explore.

Adorned with period artifacts, historic saloons, shops, miner's cabins and the Old Isabella jail are available to enjoy. This site is a great representation of gold outposts and miner dwellings abandoned long ago. Silver City is listed in the National Directory of Haunted Places, and there are those who believe it is haunted by spirits from the past. Pay a visit to one of the bi-weekly "Lantern Light Tours & Ghost Hunts" held every April through October to decide for yourself.

Pearl Harbor Memorial

Who would guess that the Kern River Valley would be host to a memorial for Pearl Harbor and the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial? But it is, and it is a treasure to behold. The memorial is located at Tank Park, between Lake Isabella and Bodfish. It has precious artifacts and information about the event that changed the course of history during WWII. Lake Isabella's Tank Park is named for the actual military tank and amphibious landing vehicle parked in front. In 2004, a monument was dedicated to housing remnants of the U.S.S. Arizona, sunk at Pearl Harbor, in honor of the event that became known as "the day that will live in infamy." After viewing the memorial, a picnic may be in order, as Tank Park offers very nice accommodations for the entire family with restrooms, playground, and a great space to play.

Kern Valley Museum

Gripped by Gold Fever in the early 1850s, the entire Kern River area was a destination for many of the gold seekers migrating west in search of great fortune. Once the gold died out, a number of those treasure seekers stayed in the valley and became ranchers, farmers and merchants. A trip to the Kern Valley Museum is a must to learn the complete history. The museum is filled to the brim with historical treasures. Inside, discover exhibits on everything from prehistoric times to present day. There is a large fossil exhibit and geological section along with mining, ranching, Native American presence, movie making history, an interactive history of the Edison hydroelectric plants that line the Kern River, and so much more. The museum is open Thursday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Kern River Valley Historical Society and its many docents are always ready and willing to give you a guided tour or answer any questions that may arise as you escape into the past. Admission is always free; however, donations are gladly accepted. For more information, call the museum at 760-376-6683.

Keyesville

Today, the historic Keyesville town site is not much more than a ghost town, but a few generations ago, it played an important role in the settlement and early mining of the Kern River Valley.

In 1851, gold was discovered on Greenhorn Creek near the Kern River just a few miles northwest of the community of Lake Isabella. The first gold rush on the Kern River happened in 1852 when Richard Keyes discovered lode gold. Keyesville is a California historical landmark. Even though the actual site is on private land, there are many historic resources in the surrounding area that can be enjoyed, including Native American mortar rocks, placer and hardrock gold mines, the Walker cabin, Keyesville village, the old Keyesville Fort, and the cemetery. The Keyesville Classic Mountain Bike Stage Race is also a world-class event that is held each year in Keyesville. The event carries the status of "Classic" by the National Off-Road Bicycle Association.

Nuui Cunni Native American Cultural Center

The cultural center is located right on the shores of Isabella Lake, just off Hwy 155 at the French Gulch Recreation area. The Nuui Cunni Native American Cultural Center provides a beautiful and tranquil experience into the ancient history of the Kern River Valley. It provides a rich cultural background, in a natural setting, of what life would have been like thousands of years ago when the native community flourished.

Nuui Cunni, which means "Our House," represents over 3,000 years of history by the Paiute-Shoshone, Tubatulabal, Kawaiisu and others travelling through the valley in their search of food.

Inside the building that is designed as a hogan, you will find authentic Native American artifacts from not only the local peoples, but from tribes far and wide. The center includes a breathtaking view of Isabella Lake. It also has a native plant garden filled with traditional herbs and plants ancestors used as food and medicine. There is gift shop offering many Native American arts and crafts. Education is central to the mission of the center, and there is always someone on hand to guide you through the museum or escort you outside for a tour of the gardens. Call 760-549-0800 for information regarding cultural programs available.



KERN VALLEY MUSEUM

Discover The Local Kern Valley History Museum and Grounds

Explore Over 12,000 Square Feet of Indoor and Outdoor Exhibits and Displays

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Open Thursday thru Sunday 10am to 4pm

www.kernvalleymuseum.org
49 Big Blue Rd. Kernville CA
760-376-6683

Wagon & Stage Displays

Pioneer Cabin Exhibit

WORTHWHILE STOPS

GATEWAY TO THE SEQUOIAS

The Kern River Valley is the Gateway to the Giant Sequoia National Monument, and these awe inspiring works of nature are located within an hour's travel. The "large trees" grow only on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California. These giants are closely related to the coastal redwoods; however, they are more massive and considered to be the largest trees in the world in terms of volume. This national monument gives the public an extraordinary view of the breathtaking giant sequoia trees and other natural resources with every turn in the trail.

Trail of 100 Giants

The Trail of a 100 Giants is a self-guided interpretive trail through the Long Meadow Grove of Giant Sequoias. It has long been a popular tourist attraction to get up close and personal with some of the largest living beings on the planet. The paved trail is 1.3 miles with a paved parking area, restrooms, a picnic area, and a nearby campground. The largest tree in the grove has a diameter of 20 feet and is 220 feet in height. Some of the largest trees in this grove are estimated to be up to 1,500 years old. There are about 125 trees in this grove that are larger than 10 feet in diameter. There are more than 700 trees that are less than 10 feet in diameter.

Another very impressive sight along the trail is where two trees fell on Friday, September 30, 2011. They had grown together at the base. They remain on the ground today, lying in silence with a tremendous root over 17 feet across exposed, and impact fractures which allow the public to view the inside of this giant.

Enthusiasts of all kinds will be delighted by what they encounter along the trail. Visitors are welcome to climb in and on the giants to really get a feel for their magnificent lives.

The summer months or early fall are the best times to plan your visit by car. In the winter, there are snowmobile trails that lead to the grove. You will want to allow plenty of time to marvel over these amazing trees, as each one has unique characteristics.

President Bill Clinton Tree

On April 15, 2000, President Bill Clinton proclaimed the establishment of the Giant Sequoia National Monument and made his announcement beneath one of the giant trees at the Trail of 100 Giants. That tree carries his name to this day.

Freeman Grove

At 4,192 acres, the Freeman Grove is one of the largest groves with 800 sequoias that are 10 foot in diameter or more. There is a quarter-mile developed wheelchair accessible loop trail that meanders its way through the giants. There is a trail that splits off along the way. It

crosses a slow moving creek atop a sturdy bridge. The trail continues up into a quieter, much less used area along a creek. This trail is about 4 miles one way. One thing that makes this grove special is that most of the trees here are very young. There are only a couple of trees with a 20 foot or larger diameter. Within the grove, there are plenty of pines, fir and oaks to create a romantic wooded hike.

President George H.W. Bush Tree

In 1992, President George Bush delivered his presidential proclamation about protecting and preserving land while standing aside this tree. It was later named in his honor. The Bush Tree is the largest tree in the Freeman Grove.

Alder Creek Grove

The Alder Grove is nothing like the Trail of 100 Giants or the Freeman Grove. There is no paved trail and few cars in the parking area. It is quiet and secluded, and it is one of the most beautiful groves in the area. The grove is over 700 acres and has giants dispersed in the entire grove, which is also thick with pines.

Stagg Tree

The Stagg Tree is the fifth largest tree in the world, standing at 243 feet tall. The tree is on private property on the border of the wilderness boundary. The property owners allow visitors to hike through their property to the Stagg Tree. After the trail passes the old logging cabins, it enters a denser forest of pines, sequoias, and deciduous trees. Autumn is the most beautiful time to visit. The trail winds its way through a tunnel of very colorful deciduous trees.

Dome Rock

Driving up the Western Divide Highway, you can see Dome Rock is visible between breaks in the tall trees. The trail is only about 1.5 miles out and back. It is an easy, but steep trail that children and dogs can enjoy. When you get to the top of the trail, you are on top of Dome Rock which offers some of the most spectacular views of the forest, valley, and mountains. The rock slopes down deceptively steep till it drops off. Before the top of the rock, there is a trail to the left that leads to some popular rock climbing destinations. The trail leads to the top of Dome Rock, and to the left, there is a huge rock formation collectively called The Needles, a longer hike with more incredible views and more climbing opportunities. The Western Divide Highway above Johnsondale is closed in the winter.

The Needles

The lookout tower at the top of The Needles burned down in July 2011, but the hike still offers incredible sights. It also offers great climbing opportunities. The Needles have some of the best climbing in the state for both experts and moderate climbers. The towering granite peaks are visible from Forest Rte 22S82 heading towards the Freeman Grove. Visitors can hike or mountain bike the 3 mile dirt road (Forest Rte 21S05). If climbing is not for you, the 5-mile round-trip trail weaves in and out of pines. There are benches to take a rest and enjoy the views the first mile of the trail. These views are nothing compared to the expansive panoramic views from the top of the rock that the lookout formerly sat on. Since the fire, the stairs to the lookout are closed.

Quaking Aspen

After passing the Ponderosa Lodge, where visitors can stop for meals, amenities and/or lodging, the road is lined with aspen trees. In the fall, this is an incredible, colorful sight! There are many hiking trails through meadows, along creeks, and through the forest. There are also campgrounds nearby that are near creeks.

Sentinel Peak

Sentinel Peak is one of the more impressive large granite peaks. It is an incredible climbing destination, but also offers a great hike and beautiful views. It offers 5.9 to 5.11 climbs, top bolted, and has single and multi-pitch climbs. The trail to get to the peak is a 2.6-mile round trip. Sentinel Peak is typically explored by those seeking to get off the beaten path. The trail is not marked and lightly used. Keep an eye out for cairns (stacked rocks) to direct the trail.

Jordan Hot Springs

Now within the Golden Trout Wilderness boundary, the hike to the hot springs is an 11 mile round trip trek. There are historic cabins from a resort started in the 1900s. The trail travels down a drainage through the McNally Fire burn area. Near the hot springs is a meadow that offers great overnight camping. There are streams to enjoy fishing and views of Manzanita Knob.

Seven Teacups

Dry Meadow Creek rushes and falls through the pothole gorge known as the Seven Teacups. This creek has sculpted the granite for ages, dropping nearly 300 feet in two-tenths of a mile before it reaches the North Fork of the Kern River. The Seven Teacups are a local treasure on Dry Meadow Creek just before it joins into the Kern River. The River Trail meanders along the river. At the creek, it gets a lot steeper. In high water years, and in cooler weather, it is hard to wade across the Kern River. The best times to visit the Teacups are the summer and fall.

Natural Water Slide

There are a few places to explore that have natural water slides. Where there is steep terrain, granite slabs and creeks, there will be natural water slides. There are a few popular places to go to enjoy the slides. Peppermint Slides are among the favorites. When it is warmer, it is a very busy destination.

Peppermint Creek Falls

A definite must see during your visit to the Kern River Valley is Peppermint Creek, a tributary to the North Fork of the Kern River. The trail snakes through a meadow next to Peppermint Creek, then through a forest of shady Jeffrey Pines. The trees open up and provide a view of a 150-foot waterfall below with a huge granite dome above. Although the journey to the top of the falls is fairly easy, prepare for a steeper descent to the bottom of the falls. To get to Peppermint Falls, it is a 1.6 mile hike on a heavily trafficked trail. As the creek tumbles over the rounded granite landscape, the sound and the mist it creates are magnificent and well worth the trip down. You can hike to the bottom of the falls for a better view of one of the most memorable and beautiful waterfalls in the region. Private property is located nearby.

South Creek Falls

One of the most attractive roadside waterfalls above Kernville on Hwy Mt 99 is South Creek Falls. It is said to be 120 feet tall and has a spectacular split drop. When the runoff starts, its waters often shoot straight off the ledge, roaring to the bottom. It meets the North Fork of the Kern River at the Johnsondale Bridge and becomes part of one of the most breathtaking rivers in California. It is located just 15 miles above Kernville. Like most snow melt-fed waterfalls, the falls is at its wildest in late spring, especially when the runoff starts.

Nobe Young Falls

These falls are a hidden treasure that most people drive right by, never knowing it is right behind a few trees. To get to the falls, it is a 1 mile round trip. There is no official trail to get to the falls, but you can follow an old logging road to a lightly used trail. The falls are about an 80 foot drop. In the fall, there are raspberries and elderberries along the trail.

Brush Creek

Brush Creek offers easy access to exciting rapids, super fun slides and beautiful waterfalls, plus excellent fishing where it cascades into the North Fork of the Kern River. Depending on the time of year, the creek even offers swimming, sun bathing, camping, hiking and kayaking. For many years, there has been a Brush Creek Down River Race during the Kern River Festival. Brush Creek should be at the top of the list when visiting the valley.

Upper Salmon Creek

Upper Salmon Creek Falls boasts the title of the highest waterfall in the Southern Sierras. At the top of the falls, there is an enormous, solid granite wall. This is another area that offers not only spectacular views, but also great hiking and rock climbing. From the upper trail, you can see the Salmon Creek Teacups.

Lower Salmon Creek

The trail starts at the Kern River and follows the creek until it gets to a narrow canyon, where there is a face-like boulder at the top of the falls with a pool at the bottom. You can continue on the trail to the Upper falls, but the trail become extremely strenuous after the lower falls.

Forks of the Kern

The trail to the Forks of the Kern offers plenty of vista points. The trail zigzags down a forested hillside. The first few miles are steep. To get to the Forks, it is a 2.3 mile round trip hike, with a 5,800 foot elevation change. There are many longer overnight trails that branch off once at the forks. This part of the river offers spectacular fly fishing. The elevation gain helps this jewel remain remote and quiet. It is a great place to hike to find peaceful solitude. Find a nice shoreline to crack open a book, fish or relax with only the sound of the river and birds in the trees.

WORTHWHILE STOPS

Weldon, Onyx, and the surrounding areas along the South Fork of the Kern River boast a rich ranching and cowboy history that still lives in its pastoral settings. After possibly thousands of years of being the winter home of the Tubatulabal Native American tribe, cattle ranchers began raising their stock in the South Fork Valley in the 1860s. This area is home to Audubon California's Kern River Preserve. The South Fork area contains many small hamlets, such as Bella Vista, Fay Canyon, Kelso Valley, Hillview Acres, and Lakeview Ranchos, as well as the towns of Onyx and Weldon. Most of the property is zoned for large animals, making it ideal for farms, horse ranches, and working cattle ranches. The definition of country living is found here: plenty of open spaces and beautiful scenery.

Scenic Sierra Way

In the Kern River Valley, there is a stretch of road that is unlike most others in California or anywhere else. The road is the stretch of Sierra Way between Kernville and Weldon, also known as "the back side of the lake" or "the Kernville cutoff." In the space of only about 15 miles, you'll see amazing vistas and an incredible transformation of terrain.

Enter Sierra Way, driving south, and the landscape changes quickly to pastoral grassland with private estates and horse ranches. The Kern Valley Airport soon swings into view; a rural airport catering to small recreational aircraft. There are a few campsites available right at the airport.

As you climb the grassy hills to the south, suddenly, there is the amazing vista of Isabella Lake as seen from several hundred feet above lake level, the only place on the lake shore where this is possible. Across the lake, the Piute Mountains form the backdrop, the peaks of which are covered with snow in winter.

Continue along to the Stine Cove area past Robinson Cove, a residential area, and then to Hanning Flat, a wide-open area that was once home to a bootlegger's still in the Prohibition era. It is now used for hunting and model airplane flying.

On the lake side of the road, there is a rocky outcropping known as Rabbit Island. It is a smaller version of Morro Rock in Morro Bay.

Climb another set of hills, and you are driving alongside the Kern River Preserve, a stretch of undisturbed willow forest that is a sanctuary for birds. In the fall, thousands of turkey vultures spiral lazily in the sky above. Bird enthusiasts come from everywhere year-round to enjoy the preserve.

As Sierra Way turns due south to join Highway 178, there is a bridge over the South Fork of the Kern River, and then you are in the cattle country of Weldon. Weldon is the home of several large active cattle ranches.

The A. Brown Mill

In the 1880s, Andy Brown, a pioneer businessman in the Kern River Valley, owned stores in Old Kernville, Havilah, and Weldon. His store was the center of the community, and his South Fork ranch encompassed about 14,000 acres. The A. Brown Store in Weldon contained a boarding house, a post office, and a bank. In a field near the store was a mill for grinding flour. The old mill is still there and is one of the most photographed rustic buildings in the Kern River Valley area. The A. Brown Mill was built in 1878. It was first powered by a water wheel and later by steam power. Cottonwoods from the river bottom were cut to feed the steam engine. The flour that was made in the mill was sold locally and out of the valley.

South Fork Ranches

Active cattle ranches like the Hafenfeld Ranch and Onyx Ranch are found throughout the South Fork Valley. The stunning granite mountains of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range back cattle grazing in picturesque fields. If your visit is during the right time of year, you

might get to see a real cattle drive in action. The South Fork area is open cattle range, so drive carefully. Bring your camera; you'll want to stop often and photograph the incredible scenery. Be sure to head over to South Fork between the months of March and May to see beautiful wildflowers on the mountainsides.

Kern River Preserve

Exploring the great outdoors is a wonderful way to spend time in the Kern River Valley. A great family destination is the Kern River Preserve in Weldon. The area is home to the highest altitude and largest contiguous Great Valley cottonwood and willow forest in the state of California. The preserve is a sanctuary for many species of birds, as well as birds that use the South Fork Valley as a stopping point on their migratory travels. This treasure of environmental delights is managed by Audubon California for the preservation of one of California's finest remaining riparian forests and the wildlife it supports. There are numerous nature trails to wander along as nature bursts forth around every bend. There is no collecting, fishing, or hunting on the preserve. If you see any animal or plant on the preserve, please take only pictures and memories. Do not disturb nesting birds and stay on the designated trails. Private tours can be arranged. 760-378-2531.

Cottage Grove Cemetery

Along Hwy. 178, just east of Onyx, you will find the Cottage Grove Cemetery tucked into a shady curve just off the road. This tiny cemetery is packed with history dating back to the 1860s. Many of the headstones date back to life in the Kern River Valley more than a century ago. The Cottage Grove Cemetery is just one of the many fascinating glimpses of history in the South Fork Valley.



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HIGH COUNTRY

From Mt. Whitney southward, the Sierra Nevada slopes away to the south gradually, exchanging alpine peaks for the less lofty ridges of the Kern Plateau and forming the northern border of the Kern River Valley. But make no mistake, the Kern Plateau is still very much the high country, with many areas between 8,000 and 10,000 feet above sea level. The weather can change swiftly at such altitudes, so travelers are warned to bring plenty of warm clothes and have food and water in their vehicles.

Blackrock Ranger Station

This high country ranger station is on Sherman Pass Road, about halfway between Kernville and Highway 395. Information about most high country adventures is available at the Blackrock Ranger Station. Due to its elevation, the ranger station is not accessible during the winter months. For additional information, contact the U.S. Forest Service office in Kernville at 760-376-3781.

Kennedy Meadows

Kennedy Meadows, located at 5,800 feet, is a small community of cabins and homes in the beautiful pine woodlands and meadows on the Kern Plateau. The campground has 39 spots with a motorhome limit of 30 feet. The back roads provide privacy and seclusion. Kennedy Meadows is accessible via paved roads from either Kernville or Highway 395. Winter conditions force closure of the roads, so call ahead to the U.S. Forest Service office in Kernville at 760-376-3781.

Pacific Crest Trail

The Pacific Crest Trail spans 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada and is considered the crown jewel of America's scenic trails. Year after year, thousands of equestrians and hikers enjoy this beautiful national treasure. Pacific Crest Trail passes through Walker Pass (elevation 5,246 ft.), the eastern gateway to the Kern River Valley. North bound travelers will find the trail becomes a natural, wildly scenic realm with no roads. The trail hugs the crest through the Chimney Peak Wilderness before crossing the South Fork of the Kern River near Kennedy Meadows. Largely through the efforts of hikers and

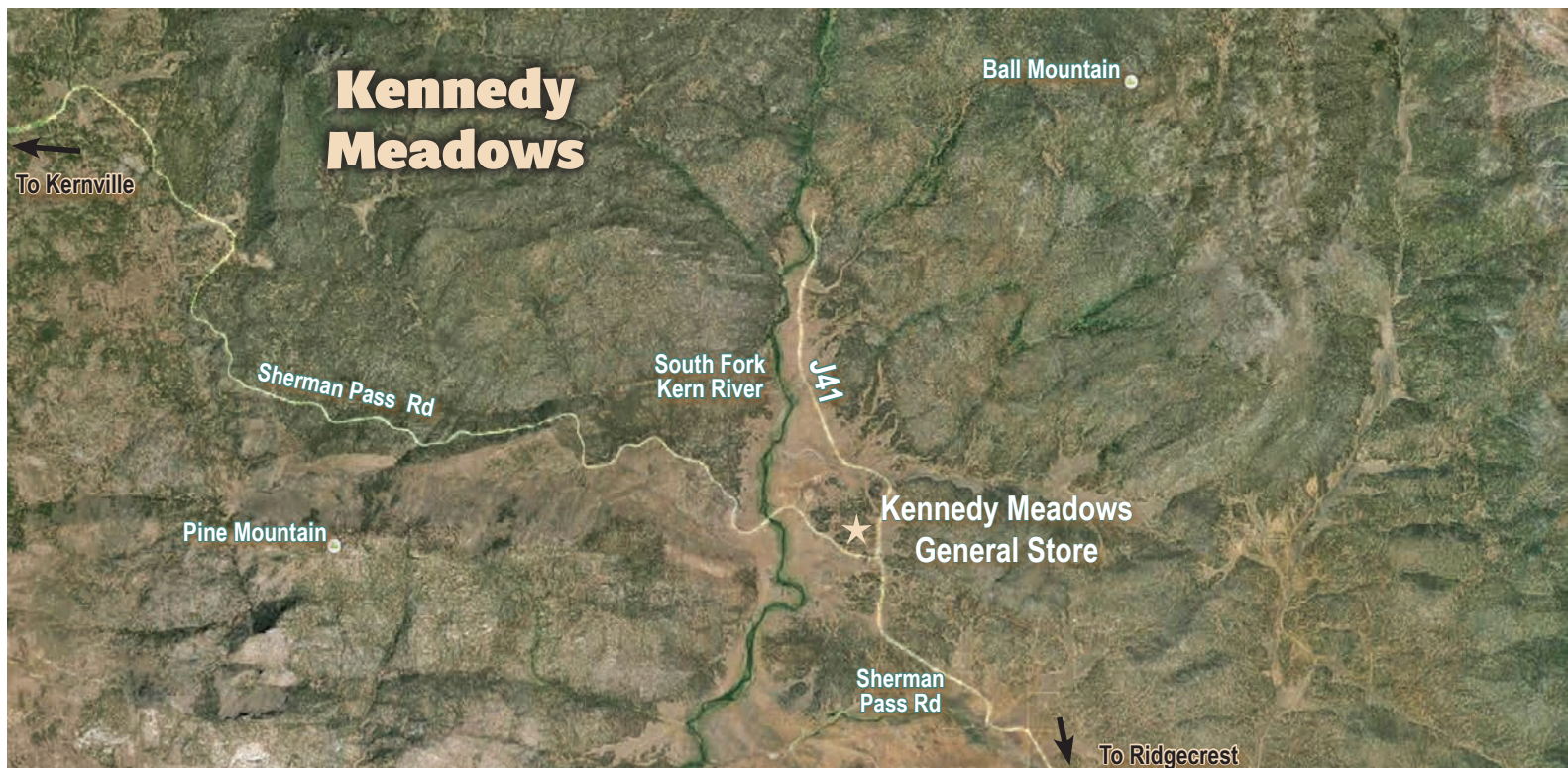
equestrians, the Pacific Crest Trail was one of the first scenic trails in the National Trails System authorized by Congress in 1968 and was dedicated in 1993. Some people hike the trail in sections, while others choose to hike every mile in a single trip. Do plenty of research before hitting the trail for a trip. A book about the PCT is highly recommended. Internet researching can help, but the books are based on years of information and research specifically to help hikers find a personalized trip. There are even loop trails that use the PCT and then move to other trails in the area for a nice day hike back to your starting location. Parts of the trail can be covered with snow much of the year, while other areas do not have natural water sources. For current weather and trail conditions, contact the U.S. Forest Service office in Kernville at 760-376-3781.

Sherman Pass

Sherman Pass Road runs between Hwy 395 and the Kern River, north of Kernville. This paved road crosses the South Fork of the Kern River, traveling through breathtaking mountain meadows and beautiful forest glades at more than 10,000 ft. elevation. The pass is closed during winter. For current road conditions, call the U.S. Forest Service office in Kernville at 760-376-3781.

Domeland Wilderness

Known for its many granite domes and unique geological formations, the original Domeland Wilderness was given some additions in 1984. One of these additions was a large basin surrounded by rock formations. Then, in 1994, approximately 36,300 acres on the east side were added. The Wild & Scenic South Fork of the Kern River, one of America's wildest waterways, crosses the Wilderness through deep gorges with bold rock outcroppings and domes interspersed with meadows. The Pacific Crest Trail crosses the area north-south and follows the river for about 9 miles. Other trails, suitable for foot and horse, give access mostly to the northern section, leaving the south and east seldom explored because of the difficulty of travel. There are about 45 total trail miles.





February

Whiskey Flat Days

One of the biggest events in the Kern River Valley is Whiskey Flat Days, and it stampedes into Kernville on President's Day weekend. Whiskey Flat Days began in the late 1950s in order to increase tourism during the winter season, and ever since, folks have been flooding the valley to kick up their heels and relive a little of the Old West. The festival is crowned by the election of Mayor of Whiskey Flat. With something for everyone, Whiskey Flat Days offers children and adults a parade and rodeo, as well as a carnival, music, arts and crafts show, dancing and much more during the long President's Day weekend. Mark your calendar and join us for a weekend of relaxation and festivities that celebrate the valley's rich heritage. For more information, visit gotokernville.com or call the Kernville Chamber of Commerce at 760-376-2629.

March

Keyesville Classic

For over 30 years, the Keyesville Classic has drawn casual riders, pro mountain bike racers and their friends and families to participate in a fun-filled weekend of bike-related events and activities in March. From the entertaining Vintage Class and trial events to the highly challenging All-Mountain Stage Race where riders tackle the Cross-Country, Short Track and Super D courses all on the same bike, the Keyesville Classic has something for everyone, riders and spectators alike.

Created by the founding members of the Southern Sierra Fat Tire Association, The Keyesville Classic is one of the longest running and best mountain bike races in the nation. Official race info and updates can be found at www.keyesville-classicmtb.com and on their Facebook Page: Keyesville Classic.

Isabella Lake Fishing Derby

March 23rd, 24th, and 25th, 2024 - Come out to the annual Isabella Lake Fishing Derby for one of the largest and beloved trout derbies in all of California. Over \$76,000 dollars in possible prize winnings will be up for grabs including 500 tagged trout that include two \$10,000 dollar and two \$5,000 dollar tagged fish, longest fish categories, a blind bogey drawing, and more. Go to Kernrivervalley.com/isabellalakefishingderby to purchase your tickets and learn more about the derby, and head over to the derby's social media page at facebook.com/lakeisabellafishingderby/ for the up-to-the-minute information and photos

May

Sirretta Street Sale

On the first Saturday in May, the Annual Sirretta Street Swap Meet and Yard Sale takes place! This is most likely the biggest yard, patio, garage, carport and street sale you have ever been to! The sale runs the entire length of Sirretta Street in Kernville! For more information, call the Kernville Chamber of Commerce at 760-376-2629.

Rotary Classic Car Show

Visit the Classic Car Show in May, vintage autos and trucks, made before 1976, line Riverside Park in Kernville for the Kern River Valley Rotary Club's annual Classic Car Show, where spectators are dazzled by awesome paint jobs, custom interiors, and creative motor work. Craft vendors line Circle Park and Riverside Park along with a dog show and other activities take place throughout the day, including several drawings and live music. For more information, call 760-417-1008.

KRVAA Kernville Art Festival

Sponsored by the Kern River Valley Art Association, the show features art and crafts from many talented artisans. On Memorial Day weekend every year, Circle Park is filled with photos, paintings, jewelry, candles, flowers, and much more for browsers and buyers alike. For more information, call 760-478-0077.

Outlaw West "Country Music Tailgate Party"

Wish the Tailgatin wouldn't end? Bring your own Grub n Chug and hear the music from your own party spot! Outlaw West is gonna bring some of the best Renegade Country Music on the West coast to beautiful Kernville, CA on May 11, 2024. This ain't no yuppie country music tailgate festival, straight up old school Outlaw country the way it was meant to be! For more information and tickets visit: outlawwestkernville.com

June

Yesterfest

A Classic Rock Festival paying tribute to Rock n Roll music from the past! YesterFest is a music experience on June 15, 2024 in Kernville, CA that brings some of the best classic rock tribute bands on the west coast. The scenic Central California Mountains is the perfect outdoor setting with 5 bands. Tailgating is the plan with your own BBQ and drinks. Bring the kids, cornhole and games for a great day remembering the good ol' rock n roll bands of Yesterday! For more information and tickets visit: notoriousent.net/yesterfest

July

Independance Day Fireworks Extravaganza

The shores of Lake Isabella are filled each year by families gathered to celebrate our nation's founding. Events on the Saturday closest to the holiday are capped off with a spectacular fireworks show over the lake. The 2024 show will take place on Saturday, July 6th, shortly after dark. The fireworks will be launched from Engineer's Point.

The show is sponsored by local merchants, community groups, and individuals. Both the Kern River Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Kernville Chamber of Commerce urge everyone's support of the show. Please contact either chamber for additional information.

Wine & Dessert Walk

Notorious Entertainment will be hosting Kernville's first Wine & Dessert Walk as part of their Sizzling Summer Concert Series. Celebrate July with an evening in downtown Kernville wine and dessert tasting with music in Circle Park. Tickets will be available at the participating locations and also at notoriousent.net/winewalk

August

Rubber Ducky Races

On the last Saturday of August, the Kern Valley Exchange Club is sponsoring their annual Rubber Ducky Races. The event will be held on a beautiful day full of fun in Riverside Park in Kernville. Rubber ducks are marked and dropped into the Kern River at the starting point (the bridge at the north end of Riverside Park) and race to the finish line just before the river turns south at the end of the park. A deep pit barbecue lunch is served alongside other fun activities. There will be kids games, concessions, music, drawings, and more. Ducks are usually sold out prior to race day, but reservations are available. Calling ahead of time will ensure that participants aren't caught quack-less. There are also specialty races sold on race day. For more information contact Kern Valley Exchange Club on Facebook.

September

KRVAA Kernville Art Festival

Sponsored by the Kern River Valley Art Association, the show features art and crafts from many talented artisans. On Labor Day weekend every year, Circle Park is filled with photos, paintings, jewelry, candles, flowers, and much more for browsers and buyers alike. For more information, call 760-478-0077.

Kern River Rock N Blues Fest

This event will take place on September 26-29, 2024. From the Thursday Kick-Off to the Saturday night parties, each and everyone who attends enjoys Kern County's Best Rock n Blues Party in beautiful Kernville. Each year, the festival is a great show with more production and the best Classic Rock 'n' Blues on the West Coast from world class musicians. The Rock N Blues Fest is a proud supporter of Sarge's Wreaths for Vets, which places Christmas wreaths on Veteran headstones at the Kern River Valley Cemetery. Visit www.kernriverrocknblues.com for more information.

October

"Kick Back in Kernville" Car Show

"Kick Back in Kernville" began over 31 years ago as an opportunity for car enthusiasts to show off their beautifully restored cars in October during Columbus Day weekend. The car show has grown in popularity and is one of the biggest events of the year in the Kern River Valley. The love of classic cars is the common denominator, attracting more than 350 exhibitors last year alone. Every year, the cars are

flashier and more impressive, but one thing never changes: the friendliness of the exhibitors who generously display the beautiful interiors, big engines, and candy paint jobs to the public. For more information, call 909-754-5270.

Kern River Beer & Music Festival

The 7th Annual Rockin' River Beer & Music Festival will be October. Come sample over 25 independent breweries! All of the net proceeds go to the Kern Valley Search and Rescue. Visit www.kernvillebeerfest.com for all the details.

Rivernook Beer & Music Festival

The best breweries, best location, best food, best bands, and your best friends. Enjoy a weekend of camping on the Kern River, sipping beer while mingling with the brewers who craft your favorite beverages, all while listening to incredible music with old and new friends. Featuring Kern River Brewing Company & Friends in October. For more information contact Rivernook Campground on Facebook.

Kernville Fall Festival

During the last weekend of October, Kernville presents the Kernville Fall Festival! The festival features live music, small dog races, pumpkin pie eating contest, costume contest, pet costume contest, pumpkin patch, farmer's market, free petting farm, rodeo, food/shopping vendors and much more! For more information, visit www.gotokernville.com or call the Kernville Chamber of Commerce at 760-376-2629.

November

Lake Isabella Christmas Parade

The Saturday following Thanksgiving is always set aside for the annual Christmas parade, sponsored by the Kern River Valley Chamber of Commerce. The time is set, so folks visiting for the holiday can enjoy the parade as well. The parade starts at 5:00 p.m. at the post office on Lake Isabella Blvd. and winds up at the intersection of Crestview Ave. and Lake Isabella Blvd. Santa Claus always makes an appearance. For more information, call the Kern River Valley Chamber of Commerce at 760-379-5236.

December

Christmas in Kernville & Classic Car Parade

The Kern River Valley annual Christmas is a 48-year tradition that is held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving along Lake Isabella's main thoroughfare. There is no charge to observe the parade and spectators line the streets of Lake Isabella Blvd from Kernville road where the parade starts, to Crestview where it ends - but stake your best viewing location early as hundreds of families come out to enjoy the spectacle come rain, snow, or shine. Happening Saturday, November 30th, exact time to be determined.



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