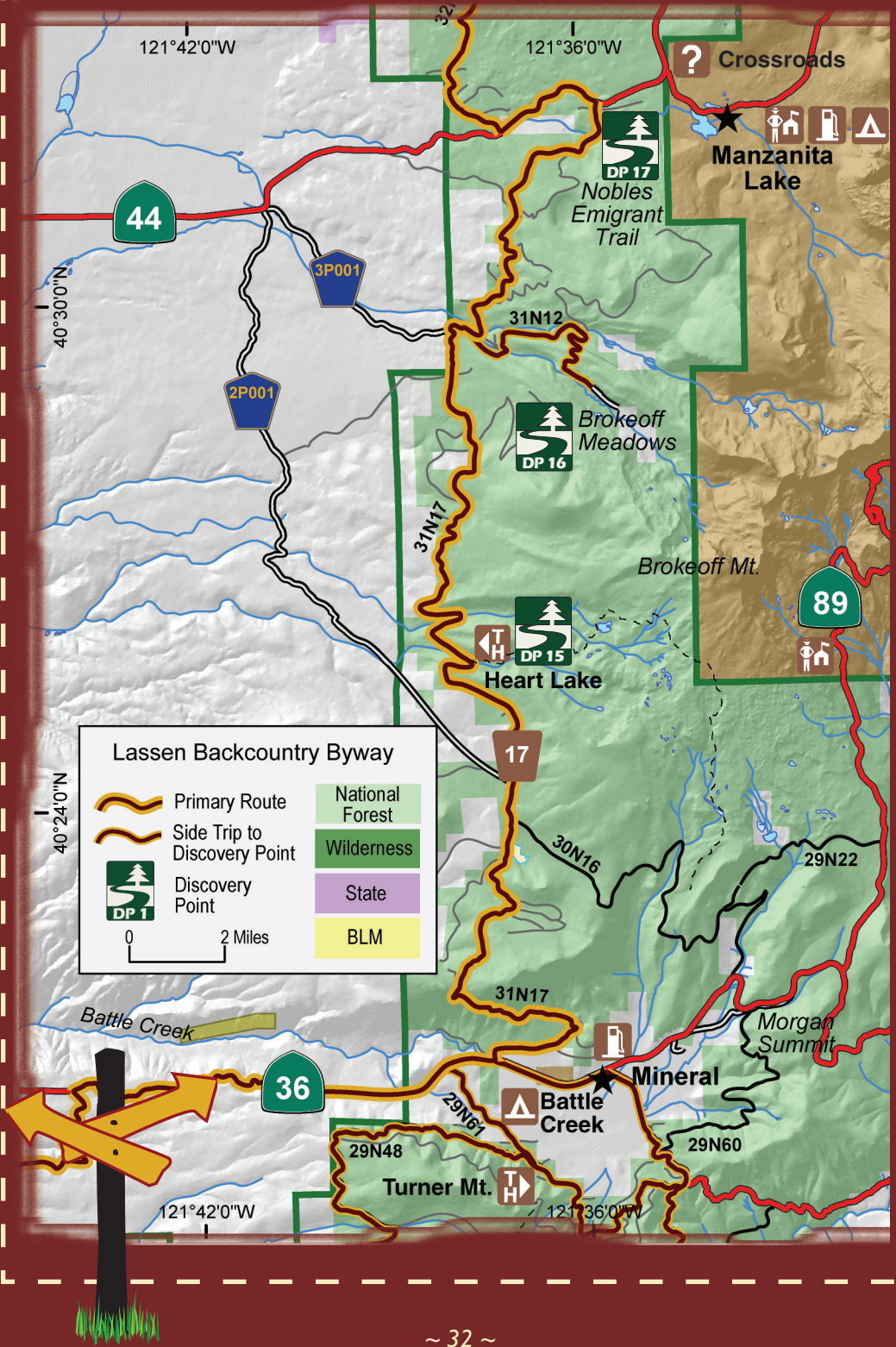


The Crossroads



An Evolving Landscape



The Crossroads

An Evolving Landscape



Section 3

Discovery Points 15 ~ 17

Distance ~ 21.9 miles

Here, the granitic Sierra Nevada Mountains join the volcanic Cascade Range. Here, emigrants to the Sacramento Valley crossed each others' paths on their way to the same destination. Here, cattle and sheep trekked through a chute of manzanita on their way to greener pastures. Here, you are at The Crossroads.

A Volcano

Became a Forest

Lassen Peak makes a stunning appearance in this section of the Lassen Backcountry Byway. But, it wasn't always the spectacle that it

is today. Lassen Peak was not part of this landscape 400,000 - 600,000 years ago when a larger volcano known as Mt. Tehama (Brokeoff Volcano) dominated the area at 11,500 feet high. A mere 27,000 years ago, Lassen Peak formed at the base of ancient Mt. Tehama through a series of eruptions of thick pasty lava called dacite. Eventually the thick lava cooled and plugged its dome when it had grown to over 10,400 feet - possibly the largest dome volcano in the world.

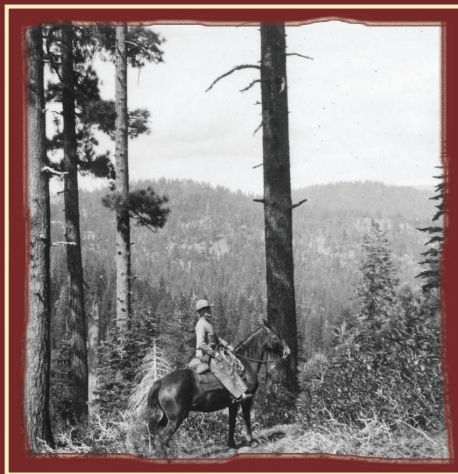
Volcanic rock produces acidic soils, favorable for pine and fir trees. Toward the end of the 19th century, Congress began to understand the importance of



these and other timber resources to the health and welfare of the nation – we were at a crossroads of conservation. Over 200 western land conservation bills were debated between 1871 and 1897! In 1908, the Lassen Peak Forest Reserve and parts of the Diamond



◆ **Side Trip - Hiking**
Mile 9.6
Lat/Long 40° 25' 44"N,
121° 37' 47"W

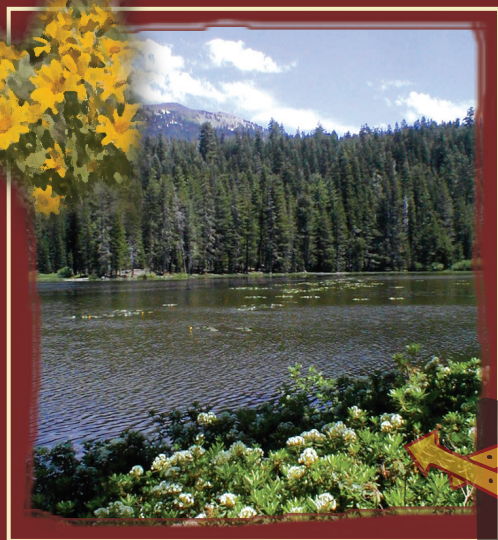


From the trailhead, hike 1.8 miles (and up 1,000 feet) to reach Heart Lake, elevation 6,584 feet. For the first .25 mile, you'll follow the rambling sound of South Fork Digger Creek, shaded by giant sugar pine and cedar trees. Near the top the trail opens into a flower-studded meadow. At the heart-shaped lake, you'll be rewarded with stunning views of Lassen Peak reflecting off the water.

Mountain Forest Reserve were combined to create the Lassen National Forest.

Here, the Lassen Backcountry Byway crosses through forests of beauty, awe, and inspiration.

◆ **Mile 0.0**
Lat/Long 40° 21' 00"N,
121° 37' 32"W
Begin this section at the intersection of SR 36 and PFR 17. Turn north onto the gravel road.



Heart Lake

As you continue your journey north on the primary route, you will see not only Mt. Shasta, but also the Sacramento Valley and the Trinity Alps. You can enjoy these tremendous views for the next several miles.



**↖ Side Trip - Driving
Mile 16.9
Lat/Long 40° 28' 54"N, 121°
35' 49"W
Brokeoff Meadows Access
Turn right on 31N12 and
travel four miles to scenic
Brokeoff Meadows.**

Volcanoes have been active in this region for over 3 million years. Brokeoff Mountain (behind you) is the jagged remnant of Mt. Tehama after glaciers, hydrothermal activity and erosion carved away much of



Brokeoff Meadows and Mountain

A Volcano Erupts!

The most recent eruption of Lassen Peak was on May 22, 1915, when the force of the explosion blew volcanic ash 200 miles to the east. It was the last large Cascade Range explosive volcanic event until the Mount St. Helens eruption in 1980.

*Photo by R.E. Stinson,
courtesy of the National Park Service*



the volcano, leaving only remnants of its base.

Enjoy a leisurely picnic with Brokeoff Mountain as your backdrop. For an extended stay, there is an unimproved campsite adjacent to Brokeoff Meadow on the east side.

*Off Road, Cross
Country travel is
prohibited.*



**Nobles
Emigrant
Trail**



Mile 21.7

**Lat/Long 40° 32' 18"N,
121° 35' 45"W**



In 1851, William H. Nobles set out with a prospecting party to explore a northern route that would bring emigrants from points east into Shasta City. His party included Peter Lassen who had already pioneered a southern route around Lassen Peak into this valley.

Wagon trains on these two trails would pass each other where the trails converged, just east of Manzanita Creek. Those going

south on Lassen's route would drop into the valley to the southwest of Lassen Peak. Those going north on Nobles Trail would arrive to the northwest of Lassen Peak. All were headed for California, but going in opposite directions! However, the Lassen route was soon abandoned and the Nobles Trail became an important thoroughfare to the northern mountains.

Look for the historic emigrant trail and marker on the right just beyond Manzanita Creek and as you near SR 44.

You are also in the area of the "Manzanita Chute," one of the only stock driveways during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Forest Service Ranger Robert Abbey described it in 1908:

"Some of the bands of cattle I missed counting at Deer Flat I would count at Manzanita Chute. This chute was the main travel road and stock driveway, approximately 100 feet, more or less, wide and 2 1/2 or 3 miles long with dense manzanita 5 or 6 feet high on both sides. The sheep were driven in bands of 1800, 2000 or 2500."
(Early Day Experiences in the U.S. Forest Service, Robert Harvey Abbey, 1932)





Before the road existed, sheep battled thick manzanita and negotiated treacherous rocks through the “Chute”



Mile 21.9

**Lat/Long 40° 32' 18”N,
121° 35' 44”W**

This is the intersection of SR 44 and PFR 17. To continue on the primary route, turn left on SR 44 for 1.6 miles, then turn right on 32N17 going north. This is the beginning of Section 4: “Thousand Lakes – The Wild Woods.”



To visit Lassen Volcanic National Park, turn right on SR 44 and go 1.0 mile. The Lassen Crossroads Information Station near the Park entrance can help with additional trip planning. Manzanita Lake area has gas,

groceries, and a 179-unit campground, open seasonally.



Continue north on SR 44/89 for 13.0 miles to Old Station and gateway to the Hat Creek Recreation Area. Gas, food, and lodging are also available here.

The Hat Creek Recreation Area has several developed campgrounds, scenic vistas, picnic areas, Subway Cave, and Hat Creek, an unusual spring fed trout fishery.

Winter time offers the Eskimo Hill snow play area and Ashpan snowmobile staging area and warming hut along SR 44. For more information, stop by the Old Station Visitor Center, open late spring to late fall.

Color and Critters
along the
Lassen Backcountry
Byway



Yellow mariposa lily
(*Calochortus superbus*)



Sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*)



Mountain lion (*Felis concolor*)



Gopher snake
(*Pituophis melanoleucus*)

