

TRINITY UNIT

Whiskeytown • Shasta • Trinity
National Recreation Area

Shasta-Trinity National Forest
Weaverville Ranger Station



Fishermen on Lewiston Lake

America's Great Outdoors
California 2003

Forest  Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture



Boating Safety...

Please obey the following guidelines for your safety and that of others.

Do's...

- Obey posted speed limits.
- Use a spotter when skiing.
- Display a red flag when skiers are in the water.
- Have life preservers for everyone in the boat. Children and nonswimmers should wear them at all times.
- Always be on the lookout for other boaters and obstacles.
- Moor boats securely.

Don'ts...

- Ride on the bow of a boat.
- Move or destroy hazard buoys. They mark some submerged obstacles.
- Boat or waterski within 200 feet of swimmers.

Cautions...

Water level fluctuations: The water level of Trinity Lake can fluctuate as much as two or three feet per day during times of heavy rains.

Debris: Watch for unmarked hazards and floating debris following storms, the annual spring runoff, or during periods of low water.

Welcome to the Trinity Unit...

The Trinity Unit is one of three units that comprise the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area. It was established by Congress in 1965. These areas were recognized for their unique and varied recreation potential.

Trinity and Lewiston Lakes form the core of the Trinity Unit where water oriented sports such as fishing, water-skiing and houseboating dominate the recreation spotlight. For the adventurous, however, there are many other activities, such as; wildlife viewing, hiking, hunting, automobile touring, photography, and picnicking.

The Trinity and Shasta Units are administered by the USDA Forest Service. The Whiskeytown Unit is administered by the USDI National Park Service.

The construction of Trinity and Lewiston Dams...

The Trinity River Division of the Central Valley Project was designed to provide water, flood control and power to Central and Southern California but also for recreation and fish and wildlife conservation.

Water from the Trinity River Basin is stored, regulated and diverted through a system of reservoirs, dams, power plants, tunnels and conduits into water deficient areas of the Central Valley.

Trinity Dam and power plant are located on the Trinity River nine miles upstream from the town of Lewiston. It is one of the highest earth filled dams in the world, rising 465 feet above the river bed. It is 1/2 mile long across the top and 1/2 mile wide through the base. Construction began on the dam in 1957 and was completed in 1961.

Lewiston Dam was constructed at the same time as Trinity. It provides after-bay storage for releases from the Trinity power plant. It also serves to direct Trinity River water into the 11 mile long Clear Creek Tunnel for diversion to Whiskeytown Lake and power plant. It is also used to control water releases for downstream fisheries needs.

Trinity Lake was formed with the completion of Trinity Dam in 1961 and was filled completely by 1963. When full, it has a 145 mile shoreline and is 19 miles long.

The Stuart Fork Arm is the hub of most of the activity on the lake. It extends to the west and is fed by the Stuart Fork and the East Fork of the Stuart Fork of the Trinity River. Numerous campgrounds, picnic areas, beaches, boat ramps, resorts and marinas line its shores.

The Main Arm of the lake stretches from the dam north for about 19 miles. Here you can explore secluded, tree lined coves or spend a quiet night at a boat-in-campground. Lodging and other accommodations on the main arm range from marinas and boat ramps to Forest Service campgrounds.

The North Lake Area is quieter and more relaxed but provides a variety of services, supplies, facilities and recreation activities. It offers public campgrounds and a wide open expanse of water excellent for water-skiing. Also available are the commercial services of Trinity Center, including a campground, an airport and a marina with a public ramp and boat rentals.

Lewiston Lake is just downstream from Trinity Dam. It is 7 miles long with a rich and diverse 15 mile shoreline. Always kept at full capacity, the water here is much colder than in Trinity Lake. Because of the narrow width of the lake, the need for boater safety and to ensure a quality fishing experience, the speed limit for boating is 10 miles per hour. Marshy areas near the center of the lake provide for excellent wildlife and bird watching opportunities.

Attractions around the Trinity Unit...

Flanking the Trinity Unit on the west are snow covered mountains, emerald meadows, cascading alpine streams and lakes like jewels... all a part of the 517,000 acre **Trinity Alps Wilderness**. They form a breathtaking backdrop to Trinity Lake and provide the adventurous with a place of unusual solitude and beauty. Several trailheads adjacent to the Trinity Unit serve the backpacker, day hiker and horseback rider.

Winding through and adjacent to the Trinity Unit is the **Trinity Heritage National Scenic Byway**. It is a great introduction to the scenic beauty, rich history, diverse peoples and resource management activities of the area. A self guided tour brochure is available at the Weaverville Ranger Station.

Fishing opportunities are excellent throughout the area for smallmouth and largemouth bass, catfish, kokanee, rainbow and brown trout. Just below Lewiston Dam is the **Fly Stretch of the Trinity River**, a world class flyfishing area. The **Pine Cove Boat Ramp** provides quality wheelchair fishing access with decks built out over prime trout fishing water.

Just below Lewiston Dam is the **Trinity River Fish Hatchery**, built to help compensate for the loss of upstream spawning habitat when the dams were built. The California Department of Fish and Game operates the facility which has the capacity to spawn and incubate 35,000 salmon and steelhead eggs each season. Visitors are welcome to tour the hatchery.

Downstream from the hatchery is the **Sven-Olbertson Side Channel**, an area of extensive riparian and fisheries habitat rehabilitation. This is an interpretive site and offers excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

The town of **Lewiston** is situated within the Trinity Unit at its south end. "Lewis Town" got its start in 1840 when B.F. Lewis began a ferry operation and trading post on the Trinity River near the present site of the old one lane bridge. The town roared to life during the Gold Rush and again with the building of Trinity and Lewiston Dams in the late 1950s. The historic heart of Lewiston has been largely renovated and makes for a delightful stop.

Trinity Vista, on County Road 105 just north of Trinity Dam, is a great place to take a break, catch one of the area's most beautiful views and have a picnic. It is an interpretive stop on the Trinity Heritage National Scenic Byway.

Bowerman Barn is located just off Highway 3 on County Road 160 between Covington Mill and Bowerman Boat Ramp and is a stop along the Trinity Heritage National Scenic Byway. This restored barn provides a unique look into the history of Trinity County. Built in 1878 by Jacob Bowerman, it is an outstanding example of a late 19th century handcrafted structure.

Trinity Center is situated along Highway 3 near the north end of Trinity Lake. It offers a variety of services and an interesting look back into the area's rich Gold Rush history. Originally settled in 1851, it quickly became a hub for trade and travel in an area rich with gold and agriculture along the Portland-Sacramento Stage Route. During the Gold Rush 1200 people called "Trinity Centre" home. The town was moved from its original location some time in the late 1850s to accommodate local mining interests. It was once again moved in the late 1950s when construction began on Trinity Dam. Several of the old buildings were picked up and moved to their present locations and serve to maintain the town's link with its historic past. As a result, Trinity Center is probably the most widely travelled town in the United States!

While in Trinity Center stop at the **Scott Museum**, founded by E.W. Scott, a lifelong resident of the area. The museum is open during the summer months and houses an excellent collection of early Trinity area artifacts.

North Shore Vista, along Trinity Lake on Highway 3 just north of Trinity Center, is also an interpretive stop on the Byway. The interpretive sign there looks at the history of the massive gold dredges that once worked the gold bearing gravels along the Trinity River.

Coffee Creek is a small community located just outside the Trinity Unit's north boundary on Highway 3 and offers a variety of services including resorts, campgrounds, and a Forest Service Ranger Station. It is the last stop before you head over the Scott Mountain Divide into Scott Valley and the town of Callahan.

Weaverville, the historic seat of Trinity County, lies outside the Trinity Unit at the junction of Highways 3 and 299. It has a fascinating and colorful history dating back to 1850 when the first permanent building in the county was built there and the settlement was officially named. Over the years it has survived catastrophic fires, the boom and bust of the Gold Rush and the construction of Trinity and Lewiston Dams. The community is known for its beautifully preserved downtown area and unique spiral staircases along main street.

While in Weaverville visit the **Joss House**, the oldest continuously used Chinese Taoist Temple in California. The original structure, built by Chinese miners in the 1850s, burned to the ground in 1873 and was rebuilt in 1874. It is a unique and beautiful structure now administered by the State of California as an historical park.

One of the finest collections of items and photographs portraying the historic development of Trinity County is housed in the **Jake Jackson Museum** in downtown

Weaverville. Funded and built by local residents, it displays a community pride uncommon in other towns its size. If looking into the colorful past of the Trinity area is attractive to you this is your place. The museum is open from May through November and during Easter vacation. It is operated by the Trinity County Historical Society which built a working "stamp mill" next to the museum. The mill demonstrates how gold ore was crushed during the separation and recovery process.

Speaking of gold... Gold was discovered by Major Pierson B. Reading in 1848 at Reading's Bar on the Trinity River. The site of his discovery is near the present Douglas City Bridge on Highway 299. The rush that followed helped shape the modern history of this area. It is indelibly stamped into the landscape. Efforts at gold mining went the course from picks and pans to the use of hydraulic monitors and bucket line dredges. Entire mountains were washed away, tunnels dug and river valleys turned upside down in the search for gold. The lone prospector and his mule who first entered the mountains quickly became part of the early history of this area as the easy to reach surface deposits were depleted. A new generation of miners and mining engineers, backed by big eastern money, began to devise new and better methods for recovering the yellow stuff. A lot of the money made in Northern California gold mines went to finance Union efforts during the Civil War.

Organized efforts to recover gold from the area in and around the current sites of Trinity and Lewiston Lakes continued well in the 1940s but came to a halt with the shutting down of the last of the big bucket line dredges in 1947. Carrville Pond was home to this final testament to the search for gold and, for years afterward, the Carrville Dredge sat floating idly in its still waters.

The Trinity Valley...

Prior to the construction of Trinity and Lewiston Dams and the subsequent filling of the lakes, the Trinity valley between Lewiston in the south and Trinity Center in the north was a relatively isolated and beautiful area...home to several impressive farms and ranches that were surrounded by lush forests of fir, pine and cedar. During the Gold Rush, a few enterprising men and women realized good money while raising beef and dairy cows and other agricultural products needed to fuel the search for gold.

There was the Scott Ranch near Trinity Center, the Trinity Ranch and Cattle Company on the East Fork of the Trinity River, the Linton Ranch, the Bragdon Ranch, the Freethy and Feeney Ranches. There was Cedar Stock Farm and the Van Matre Ranch, Papoose Ranch and Eastman Farm. These are all names familiar to vacationers on these lakes because they are now the names of arms or ridges or other features that define the waters of these lakes.

Before the first explorations by early fur traders and prospectors the Trinity Valley was home to the Native American tribe known as the Wintu. Their existence here, while not easy, was rich. They hunted the hills and river banks for a variety of game animals and fished the rivers and streams for salmon and steelhead. They gathered the acorns of the blue and black oaks. They traded a variety of goods, such as obsidian, across a broad area with neighbors in the Scott Valley to the north, the Central Valley to the southeast, along the lower Trinity River, and with the tribes around Mt. Shasta and the Modoc Plateau.

Some things to know...

Campfires... Please use grills, stoves, or fire rings that are provided at campgrounds and picnic areas. Campfire permits are not required at developed sites; however, they are required elsewhere.

Campsite occupancy... Campsites must be occupied the first night and cannot be unoccupied for more than 24 hours. "Saving" campsites is not permitted.

Firearms... Firearms may not be discharged within 150 yards of residences, buildings, developed recreation sites, across roads or bodies of water.

Firewood... The gathering of down wood for campfires is allowed. No permit is necessary. However, if you intend to take wood home with you, a personal use firewood permit is required. Contact the nearest Ranger Station for details.

Fireworks... Fireworks are prohibited!

Garbage... Receptacles are located at most campgrounds, picnic areas, and boat ramps. Where garbage is not collected, please pack it out to the nearest container. Do not bury it or dispose of it in the restrooms.

Law enforcement... The Trinity County Sheriff's Department works closely with the Forest Service in enforcing local laws and the California Boating Law. If you need assistance, contact the Sheriff's Patrol or any Forest Service employee. Uniformed Forest Service personnel are Federal

Officers authorized to enforce Forest Service regulations. **Length of stay...** The limit of stay all campgrounds is 14 consecutive days.

Motor vehicles... Motorized vehicles must stay on established roads. Off-road travel is prohibited.

Pets... Household pets must be on a leash or under restraint in campgrounds, picnic areas, and at boat ramps. Horses are allowed at designated horse campgrounds.

Permits... Any boat designed or converted for overnight occupancy requires a houseboat permit from the Forest Service. Temporary permits are good for 30 days per year.

Some helpful hints... To better assure the camping public the type of recreation experience National Forest campgrounds are intended to provide, these common sense regulations and a few others have been established. A complete listing is posted on campground bulletin boards.

Bear precautions... Black bears are common around Trinity Lake campgrounds, and they have been known to walk into campsites, climb into moored boats, and raid ice chests or food left lying around. The potential for bear encounters can be reduced if visitors follow some common sense do's and don'ts:

1. Use bear proof garbage receptacles and bins. Do not leave garbage unattended in campsite, or boat.
2. Store food, pet food, etc. in bear proof food lockers if available. Otherwise, store food in air tight containers, disguised with a tarp or blanket, in your car, or in your trailer if feasible. You can also hang all food/ice chests in trees at least 10 feet above the ground and 5 feet away from the trunk.
3. DO NOT take food, drinks, or cosmetics into your sleeping area.
4. Respect the rights of bears. DO NOT FEED OR PET BEARS. (California Code of Regulations 251.3 "prohibits feeding of big game mammals," punishable by a \$1,000 fine and/or 6 months in jail or both.)
5. Report any bear problems to the camp host or Forest Service Ranger Station at (530)-623-2121.

Campground and Camping Information

Campground hosts... Several of the larger Forest Service campgrounds within the Trinity Unit have resident campground hosts. These people are volunteers who spend all or part of the summer helping take care of their campground and assisting campers.

Dispersed area camping... Camping outside of a developed campground is permitted on Trinity Lake. Since there are a few areas along Trinity Lake that are closed to lakeshore camping, please check first with Forest Service personnel. Dispersed camping is not permitted on Lewiston Lake.

Fees... Most Forest Service campgrounds and all commercial campgrounds charge a fee. There are no fees for boat access campgrounds. These fees are used to help pay the cost of cleaning and maintaining the campgrounds. Golden Eagle Passports are NOT valid for overnight camping, use of developed boat launches or concessionaire services, and consequently, do not apply to fee sites on the Trinity Unit of the National Recreation Area.

Season... Most Forest Service campgrounds are open from Memorial Day through Labor Day. A few remain open all year. During the winter months, most water systems are shut down; however, restroom facilities are available. The operating season for commercial campgrounds vary.

Water warning... Most campgrounds have developed water systems. Since surface waters can easily be contaminated when camping at a site without a developed system, treatment of water, such as boiling for five minutes or using a water purification filter, is advised.

Maps, brochures, fire permits and other information may be obtained from the following locations:

- Supervisor's Office, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, 2400 Washington Avenue, Redding, CA 96001 (530) 244-2978
- Weaverville Ranger District, 210 West Main Street P.O. Box 1190, Weaverville, California, CA 96093 (530) 623-2121
- Forest Service Website: www.fs.fed.us/r5/shastatrinity
- Coffee Creek Ranger Station, Coffee Creek, CA 96091. (530) 266-3211. **Open summer only.**
- Mule Creek Guard Station. **Open summer only.** Wilderness and campfire permits and information.
- Osprey Information Center (self service), west shore of Trinity Lake near the Stuart Fork Boat Ramp. **No maps or campfire permits.**
- Lewiston Vista (self service) near Mary Smith Campground on Lewiston Lake. **No maps or campfire permits.**
- Rush Creek Entrance (self service), junction of Rush Creek Road and Highway 3. **No maps or campfire permits.**
- Trinity Vista Interpretive exhibits on County road 105 northwest of Trinity Dam.
- North Shore Vista Interpretive exhibit on Highway 3 north of Trinity Center.

Additional information about the area... its sights, attractions, events and services may be obtained from:

- The Trinity County Chamber of Commerce on Highway 3 in Downtown Weaverville. (800) 487-4648

