

Lost Forest Research Natural Area

An unusual stand of ancient ponderosa pine forest growing out of the sand is the outstanding feature of the Lost Forest Research Natural Area, which is located in the northeast portion of the area. A remnant of a forest that existed in a cooler and wetter age, these pines survive on half the typical annual precipitation for this tree species due to unique soil and hydrologic properties of the area. The nearest forest is 40 miles to the northwest, yet the pines continue to reproduce and thrive in this environment. Old growth juniper groves also exist in the Lost Forest. Motorized vehicles are allowed in the Lost Forest on routes posted "open." No cross country use is allowed. Camping is permissible in designated sites only.

Sand Dunes Wilderness Study Area

The Sand Dunes Wilderness Study Area, located in the south and central part of the area, is the largest inland shifting sand dune system in the Pacific Northwest and a popular destination for off-highway vehicle enthusiasts. The dunes are composed largely of ash and pumice that blew into the area 7,000 years ago when Mt. Mazama erupted forming Crater Lake. Nearly 8,900 acres of dunes remain open to vehicle use. Please keep your vehicle on routes posted "open" until you reach the open bare dunes.

Fossil Lake Area of Critical Environmental Concern

The Fossil Lake Area is closed to off-highway vehicle use to protect the fragile fossils found here. These fossils range in age from about 10,000 years old, to as much as 400,000 years old. Paleontologists have worked in the Fossil Lake deposits for more than 100 years. Hundreds of species of reptiles, birds, fish, and mammals have been identified. Some are extinct, such as the mammoth, Dire wolf, giant beaver, and a large species of eagle. Others, such as the Tui chub, rabbit, ground squirrel, salmon, and prairie dog, exist here or in other parts of North America.

New species continue to be unearthed by research groups at Fossil Lake. Collecting fossils by the public is strictly prohibited. Access to this special area is limited to walk-in traffic only.

Know Before You Go

Camping and Services

- Camping areas are primitive. There are no facilities, water, or restrooms in the area. Please pack out toilet paper and bury human waste in a four-to six-inch-deep "cat-hole" at least 200 feet away from campsite.
- Camping is permitted in designated sites only.
- No firewood collecting or cutting is permitted anywhere in the area.
- The nearest services are located in Christmas Valley, Oregon, approximately 16 miles southwest.

Rules and Regulations for Off-highway Vehicle Use

- Off-highway vehicles are allowed only on designated routes or areas.
- The Bureau of Land Management follows Oregon State laws and regulations pertaining to off-highway vehicles. The term off-highway vehicle refers to all motorized vehicles.
- You must have a valid driver's license, state-issued all-terrain vehicle operator permit, or be accompanied by someone 18 or older with a valid driver's license or operator permit.
- Flags are required on all vehicles on the dunes (9 feet tall orange or red flag).
- A State of Oregon off-highway vehicle sticker is required to operate on all lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management in Oregon. Stickers may be purchased at All Terrain Vehicle dealerships or by calling 1 (800) 551-6949.
- Children between the ages of 7 and 12 must have both a state-issued all-terrain vehicle operator permit and be accompanied by someone 18 or older with a valid driver's license or state-issued all-terrain vehicle operator permit.
- Children under the age of 18 must wear a helmet on all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles.
- Use headlights and taillights between dusk and dawn.
- Mufflers must be maintained at 99 decibels.
- Out-of-state visitors are required to have their state off-highway vehicle sticker, or must purchase a State of Oregon sticker to ride here.
- Operate your off-highway vehicle sober, not under the influence of drugs or alcohol. No open liquor containers are allowed.
- Stay on designated travel routes between camping and day-use parking areas and the open dunes.
- Respect the rights of other visitors as you enjoy your visit.

Directions to the Site

From Christmas Valley, Oregon travel east on County Road 5-14 for 8 miles. Turn left (north) on County Road 5-14D and travel another 8 miles. Turn right (east) at the "T" and travel 3 miles on County Road 5-14E to the entrance of the Sand Dunes. Another 4 miles on Bureau of Land Management Road 6155 will bring you to the Lost Forest.

District Contact Information

Lakeview District

Lakeview Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
1301 South G Street
Lakeview, OR 97630

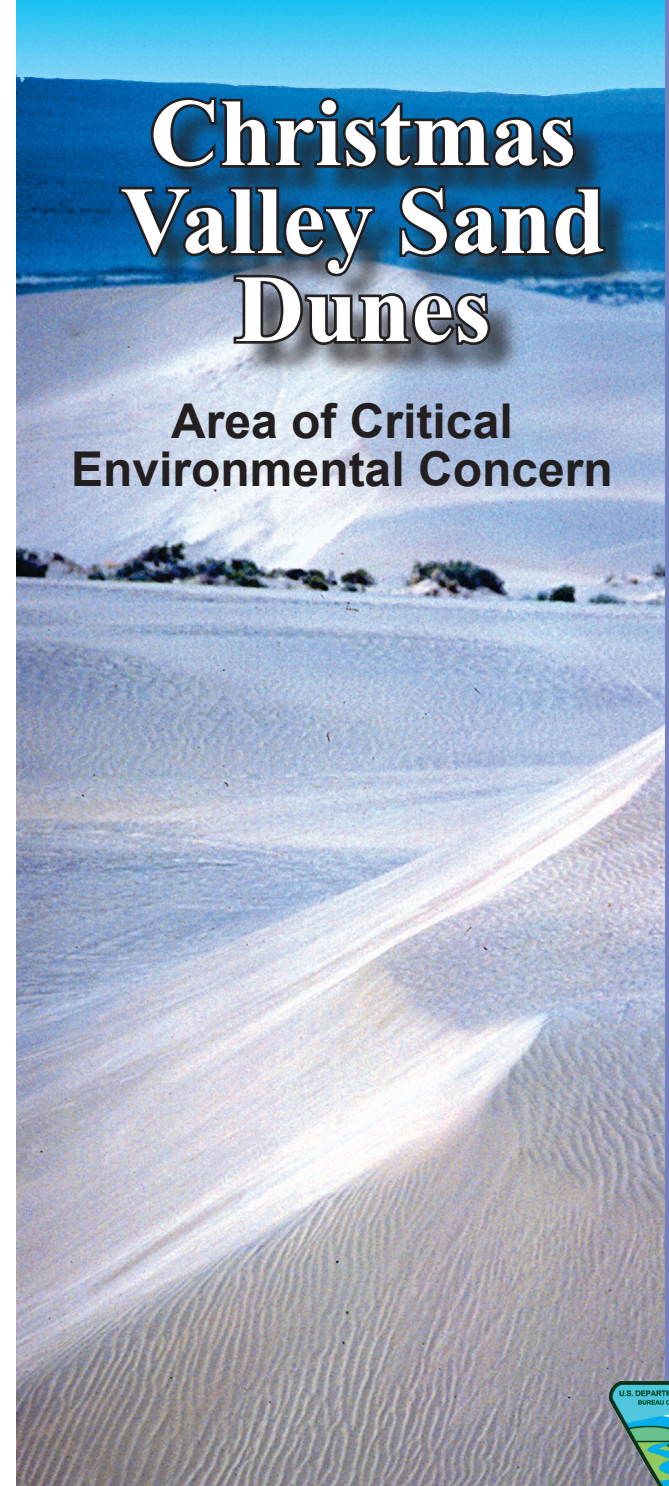
(541) 947-2177

www.or.blm.gov/lakeview

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Christmas Valley Sand Dunes

Area of Critical Environmental Concern



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Welcome to Christmas Valley Sand Dunes Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Welcome to the Lost Forest, Sand Dunes, and Fossil Lake Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. These areas also include a Research Natural Area and a Wilderness Study Area within their boundaries. The area offers a variety of recreational activities, including off-highway vehicle use, hiking, sightseeing, photography, and camping.

The main road to the Lost Forest and Sand Dunes is minimally maintained and drivers should use caution. The other roads in the area are not maintained and may be impassable at times. High clearance, four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended.

