

Review all safety advice on page 10. Carry a map and warm clothes. Orient yourself before heading out and tell someone where you are going. You are on your own in the winter woods.

## The Foothills

The lower elevations offer wonderful winter visits—green and usually snowless! The foothills house more biological diversity (different kinds of plants and animals) than the conifer forests and High Sierra combined.

### Foothills Visitor Center

Exhibits on the diverse foothills. 8am-4:30pm.

### Hospital Rock Picnic Area

Exhibits about the Western Mono people who once lived here. A short trail built by the Civilian Conservation Corps leads to a cascade. Careful; drownings often occur here! Always store food to keep it away from bears.

### Marble Falls Trail

climbs 3.7 miles (6 km) through chaparral to a waterfall. Park across the highway from Potwisha (no non-camper parking in campground). Near site #14, follow the dirt road across the concrete ditch; the trail starts along the steep bank to the right.

### Paradise Creek

At Buckeye Flat Campground, take the path across from site #28 across the footbridge over the Middle Fork. Follow Paradise Creek (not the Middle Fork) for 1½ miles (1.6 km) until the trail grows faint.

## Mineral King

Open late May through October (weather permitting). The winding, steep road to this valley ends at 7800', the park's highest road. Trails there lead to the High Sierra and snowy conditions. Weather can be severe on the passes; ask for a weather report. No gasoline or electricity in the area. Until spring, the road is gated at the park boundary (about 9 miles from Hwy 198); for a pass through this first gate, ask at the Foothills Visitor Center.



Castle Peaks



Winter forest near Lodgepole

## Giant Forest & Lodgepole

Winter parking is at Big Trees Trail/Round Meadow. Once snow accumulates, rent snowshoes and cross-country skis downstairs at Wuksachi Lodge, and purchase a ski-trail map. Talk to a ranger, then carefully follow the yellow triangular markers above eye level on trees (not on sequoias). Guided snowshoe walks may be offered on weekends.

### Lodgepole Visitor Center

Friday-Monday 9am-4:30pm (daily 12/23-1/2 & starting in April). Film and exhibits; details page 2.

### Giant Forest Museum

Closed for winter.

### Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road

This 3-mile (5 km), dead-end road closes in winter to become a ski and snowshoe trail. It begins at the Giant Forest Museum on the Generals Highway, crosses the southwest portions of the sequoia grove, and ends at Crescent Meadow. Walkers and snowshoers: Please don't walk in ski tracks. High-lights include:

- Moro Rock: A granite dome with a steep 1/4-mile (.4 km) staircase to the summit (300 foot /91 m elevation gain). Don't climb if there is any ice or snow on the stairs; it is very dangerous. A spectacular view of the Great Western Divide and the western half of the park. 2 miles (3.2 km) from the Generals Highway.
- Tunnel Log: A fallen sequoia that was tunneled through. The only tree you can ski through in these parks. 2 miles (3.2 km) from the Generals Highway.
- Crescent Meadow: Several walking and ski trails connect here. It is 1 mile (1.6 km) from here to Tharp's Log, the hollow fallen sequoia lived in by Giant Forest's first settler. The summer High Sierra Trail runs 71 miles (114 km) to Mt. Whitney (highest peak in the lower 48 states at 14,494 feet / 4417 m).

### General Sherman Tree

If conditions permit, the upper trail and parking stay open at the start of winter (take the Wolverton Road between the Sherman Tree and Lodgepole and follow signs). From there you walk down to the tree. Once much snow flies, access to the world's largest tree is only from the parking area along the Generals Highway. The trail from there may not be plowed, but snow is usually packed down enough to walk on it.

If the upper trail is too steep, you can walk down and have someone pick you up at the lower parking area on the Generals Highway.

### Big Trees Trail

Walk or ski this 2/3-mile (1 km) trail (no yellow markers) that circles Round Meadow. Colorful trailside panels describe sequoia ecology.



## Snowplay Areas

### Wolverton

Sledding hill at the end of Wolverton Road, two miles (3.2 km) north of the Sherman Tree (see page 8). After storms, plows may need several hours to open the road. Pay telephone is located outside the building next to the restrooms. Snowplay is prohibited in the Sherman Tree Trail area.

### Grant Grove

Use Big Stump & Columbine picnic areas (see page 9). Snowplay is prohibited in the Grant Tree Trail area. Azalea Campground is for campers only, not people who are just snowplaying. Pay telephones are located at visitor center, market, & gift shop.