

## Less Traffic, More Winter Fun in the Shasta Cascade

🕒 Friday, January 25th, 2013

Skiers, snowboarders and recreationists who get stuck in traffic driving to and from the Sierras, might want to consider heading to the Cascades for their next winter getaway.

Several recreational options are available in the Shasta Cascade, often reached without traffic delays or passes to cross. Mt Shasta Ski Park is so confident of its dependable access that it posts four CalTRANS webcams showing road conditions on nearby Interstate 5 and Hwy 89 ([www.skipark.com](http://www.skipark.com)).

Marketing Director Jim Mullins said, "We are what Tahoe used to be, but with Mt. Shasta vibe. The Ski Park has 32 runs, nearly 1,500 feet of vertical and no lift lines. From the Bay Area, it takes about the same driving time as to Tahoe, but without the traffic. On a holiday weekend or when it's snowing, getting here is much easier and takes less time. Plus, Mt. Shasta Ski Park is affordable. An all-day adult lift ticket is just \$44, \$29 midweek. Kids ski for \$25. Pups under 8 and seniors pay just \$9."

At nearby Ski Bowl Trailhead, Dog Sled Express provides an 8.4-mile tour by dog team. During hookup, the dogs bark and jump in excitement, but once on the trail, it's all business and quiet, as passengers get to experience the power and grace of a dog team hauling a sled, as its musher shouts commands. The one-hour ride is \$95/ adult and \$55/child ([www.dogsledexpress.com](http://www.dogsledexpress.com)).

The Shasta Cascade region has over 437 miles of trails at 12 major snowmobiling areas. Snowmobiles can be rented at Deer Mountain Snowmobile Park, 10 miles north of Weed, for from \$65 an hour to \$250 a day ([www.funfactoryrentals.com](http://www.funfactoryrentals.com)). From there, explore miles of trails that link with other area trails.

Lassen Volcanic National Park, northeast of Chico, offers free, ranger-guided, 2-hour snowshoe walks (\$1 Donation requested – 8 years and up) on weekend days starting at 1:30 p.m. For those with their own snowshoes, eight major snowshoe routes can be experienced within the national park and many more are found throughout the region. Several lead to fascinating geological sites, made all the more interesting in winter ([www.nps.gov/lavo](http://www.nps.gov/lavo)).

Excellent sledding hills are found near the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center inside Lassen Volcanic, within Shasta National Forest at Eskimo Hill on Hwy 44 near the park's north entrance, and at Snowman's Hill on Hwy 89, west of McCloud. Backcountry skiing, snowboarding and winter backpacking also occur at Lassen Volcanic and in surrounding national forests.

The Fly Shop in Redding reports great fly fishing all winter long, especially steelhead on the Trinity River and trophy rainbow trout on the Lower Sacramento River in Redding. Favorite winter trout hotspots include Baum Lake, Lewiston Lake, Iron Canyon Reservoir and Shasta Lake ([www.theflyshop.com](http://www.theflyshop.com)). All of these fisheries are open all winter.

Local anglers recommend Lake Davis and Frenchman's Lake for ice fishing, where worms and powerbait attract the trout. Ice skating has now moved to naturally frozen, snow-free ponds, as the scenic Siskiyou Ice Rink at Shastina Park in the town of Mt Shasta was open this year only through the first week of January.

Redding is a central and economical place from which base a winter getaway in the area. Numerous accommodations can also be found along Interstate 5, a major transportation corridor between California and the northwest. More travel planning information is found at [www.visitredding.com](http://www.visitredding.com) or at [www.shastacascade.org](http://www.shastacascade.org).