

what is a water loop?

Water loops are recreational waterways on a lake, river, or ocean between specific locations, containing access points and day-use and/or camping sites for the boating public. Water loops emphasize low-impact use and promote stewardship of the resources, while providing healthy outdoor activity.

Lake County Water Loop maps can be found online at www.lakecounty.com or at Lake County Visitor Centers.



don't move a mussel!

Help protect Lake County's beautiful lakes and creeks by preventing the spread of harmful plants, animals, and other organisms, such as Quagga and Zebra mussels. These aquatic nuisance species can hitch a ride on boats, trailers, clothing, gear, etc., and then spread to other bodies of water. If conditions are right, these invasive species can severely impact the aquatic ecosystem. Each time you leave any water body, be sure to thoroughly clean, drain, and dry all items that come in contact with water.

boat inspections

To protect local water bodies from invasive species, the County of Lake requires that certain types of vessels be inspected prior to launching in Lake County waters. While kayaks and canoes currently are exempt, information about the inspection program is available through the Lake County Mussel Hotline: (707) 263-2556 or www.co.lake.ca.us/mussels

reporting water pollution

If you see anything suspected to be pollution or disturbance of the waterways, report it immediately by contacting the Lake County Sheriff's Department at (707) 263-2690.



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This is one in a series of Lake County Water Trails Brochures, published as a cooperative effort of the County of Lake, and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.

Photographs courtesy of Lyle Madeson, Redbud Audubon Society, Laura Lamar

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leave no trace

- Plan ahead and prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Respect wildlife—observe from a distance.
- Avoid disturbing wildlife especially during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young.
- Leave what you find. Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Respect the privacy of landowners.
- Always ask permission before entering private land; unless otherwise posted, assume it is private property.
- Don't litter.
- Remember sound carries across water more clearly than on land; avoid loud noises or boisterous behavior.



volcanics of Clear Lake



Geologists believe that Clear Lake may be the oldest lake in North America, its formation dating from 150,000 to one million years ago. Rising above the center of the lake to an elevation of 4,300 feet, Mount Konocti is a dormant volcano, the largest of the Clear Lake Volcanic Field and part of the Pacific Ocean's Ring of Fire.

Scientists believe Mount Konocti first erupted 350,000 years ago with its last eruption approximately 10,000 years ago. Perched several miles above an active magma chamber within the earth, Lake County is one of the world's most geothermally active areas, resulting in many hot springs. As water seeps down into the earth, it encounters the intense heat coming from the magma chamber and then makes its way back to the surface in the form of steam. Soda Bay's carbonation is caused by the release of volcanic gases, which bubble up from many fissures in the lake bed.

watch for these other species:



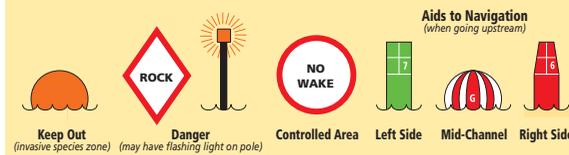
paddling safety

All canoes, kayaks, and inflatable rafts must carry a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (life jacket) for each person on board. Before setting out, boaters should become knowledgeable about local conditions such as currents, rapids, flow levels, weather, and hazards.

- Test new or unfamiliar equipment before use.
- Leave word with a responsible person concerning your destination and when you will return.
- Always make sure your craft is in good repair.
- Securely fasten all gear within the craft or in waterproof containers that will float high and be easily retrievable.
- Learn how to swim; learn first-aid techniques and CPR.
- Paddlers are harder to see from other vessels. Keep paddling groups together. Avoid long lines.
- Watch for and avoid hazards such as fallen trees, brush, fences, bridge abutments, or old pilings.
- Do not boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Additional recommended equipment: protective foot gear, extra paddle, anchoring device, bailing device/sponge, boating maps, flashlight, compass, first-aid kit, boat-repair materials, hat, sunglasses, whistle, sunscreen, waterproof storage bags, emergency light, water, GPS unit, cell phone, knife, and a 50- to 100-foot throw rope.

regulatory or advisory markers



cold water dangers

Capsizing or falling overboard into cold water can cause immediate health problems, ranging from disorientation and hyperventilation to heart attack. Cold water quickly numbs hands and feet and saps overall strength. To increase your chance of survival in cold water:

- Always wear a personal flotation device (life jacket).
- Get out of the water as fast as you can since you get colder faster in water than air.
- Dress properly.

in case of emergency, call 911

info and resources

Lake County Water Resources: (707) 263-2341
Lake County Parks & Recreation: (707) 262-1618
Clear Lake State Park: (707) 279-4293

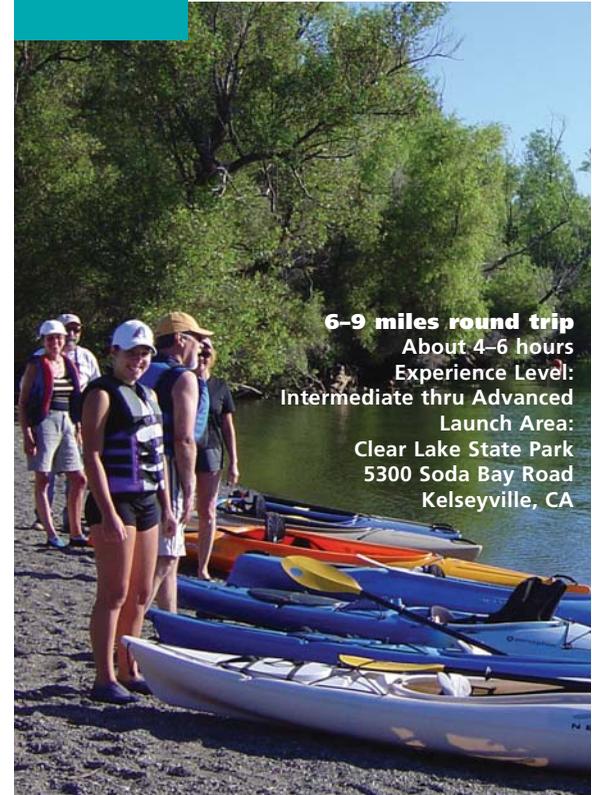
Note: There is a small day-use fee to access the park if you are not camping. Kayak and canoe rentals are available at the store during summer months.

www.lakecounty.com; www.konoctitrails.com;
<http://watershed.co.lake.ca.us/>

Clear Lake Water Loop 5

konocti
regional
trails

Soda Bay
volcanic vents



- Geothermal hot springs
- Wetlands, tule reeds
- Views of Mount Konocti
- Lakeshore paddling
- State park
- Grebe nesting areas
- Picnic spot

Lake County Visitor Information Center

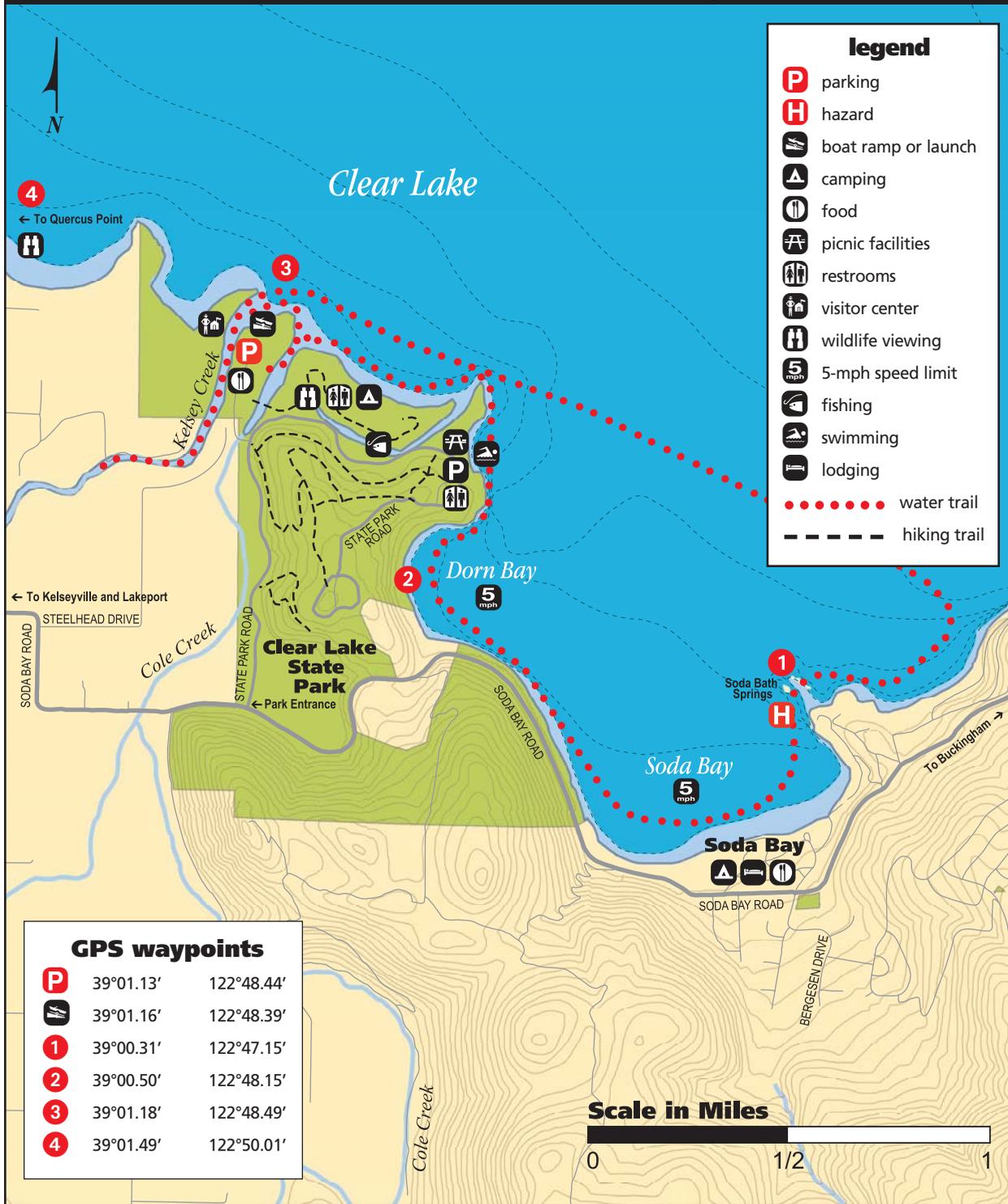
6110 East Highway 20, Lucerne, CA 95458

(707) 274-5652 | (800) 525-3743 | (800) LAKESIDE

www.lakecounty.com | info@lakecounty.com



Clear Lake Water Loop 5: Volcanic Vents of Soda Bay



trail description



A fascinating trip exploring the Clear Lake shoreline, around the infamous Soda Bay hot springs, looping back along Dorn Bay, and a calm paddle down Kelsey Creek. Beautiful views of Mount Konocti and the surrounding ridgelines. This route may be taken year-round. Note that in late summer and fall, intense sun, low water levels, and patches of algae and invasive weeds near the shoreline can impact paddling. A great trip for watching waterfowl and other wildlife, particularly in the winter and spring.

trail route

To access the trail, park **P** and launch from the boat ramp **🚤** located within Clear Lake State Park (nominal day-use fee required). Hugely popular, Clear Lake State Park was established in the 1940s with a gift of 300 acres from Fred and Nellie Dorn. Today, the park has grown to span 11,600 feet of shoreline.

From the ramp, head to the mouth of Cole Creek. Turn east and head toward Mount Konocti, a dormant multi-peaked volcano towering above Clear Lake. As you paddle, the water opens up; you are entering Soda Bay.

According to Pomo legend, a beautiful maiden living on Mount Konocti created Soda Bay with tears shed over the deaths of her feuding father and lover. Geologists believe Soda Bay was formed by violent volcanic events that created a circular crater—called a “maar”—when magma came in contact with lake water.

Today, Soda Bay still bubbles with volcanic gases of carbonated water that rise from the bottom of the lake, making the surface look as if it were boiling. The larger vent holes—some reportedly more than 100 feet deep—serve as nursery colonies for millions of juvenile catfish, attracted by plentiful food and protection inside the caves.

Head directly across the bay, and two small islands come into view—you are at the Soda Bath Springs **1**. Cement walls are all that is left of the Soda Bay resort once connected to the baths via a walkway; both were destroyed by fire in 1940. But during the early 1900s, health-seekers



were drawn to local hot springs resorts, which promised to cure anything from rheumatism to obesity.



Circle around the islands and you will see large bubbling carbon dioxide baths—warning signs herald the dangers of getting too close. In the past, asphyxiation deaths were caused when bathers built up the walls to increase the spa effect. This caused increased gas—and the shortage of oxygen. Today, the area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The walls have been removed, reducing the build-up of carbon dioxide near the water’s surface. Paddlers should respect the signs and keep a safe distance.

Turn south, heading past several small lakefront resorts and the Clearlake Queen, a large paddlewheel boat that once offered tours around the lake. Follow the shoreline back toward the park and you will pass through Dorn Bay **2** and the State Park swim beach



area. Many years ago, this area was inhabited by thousands of Native Americans living peacefully around the shore of the lake and streams. Numerous large boulders dot the shoreline—these are great spots to pull over to rest or have a picnic. Continue past Cole Creek along the tule reeds—be on the lookout for a pair of resident osprey that can be seen catching fish.

Turn in to Kelsey Creek **3**, one of the main tributaries of the Big Valley watershed. Kelsey Creek is also important as one of the few spawning runs for Lake County’s own indigenous fish species, the Clear Lake hitch. Once so abundant that millions would clog the lake’s feeder streams each spring, today the population has diminished and is now recognized as a “species of special concern.” March and April are the best months to view Clear Lake hitch as thousands splash their way upstream, attracting a wide array of hungry wildlife during their spring run.

During the winter and spring months of high water levels, it is possible to paddle up to the Kelsey bridge. During low-water months, the water becomes shallow and stagnant, and paddlers are forced to turn back.

For an additional 3-mile round-trip paddle, head west hugging the shoreline up to Quercus Point **4**. The marshy tule reeds provide nesting areas for Clark’s and Western Grebes, while treetops are great perches for numerous cormorants (pictured on cover).

Otherwise, paddle back to Cole Creek and the park boat ramp. Be sure to stop in to the Visitor’s Center and see the varied displays of birds, mammals, and Native American cultural exhibits.

Alternate launch point: This trail loop also may be accessed from the swim beach (pictured on cover) within Clear Lake State Park instead of the boat ramp.