

PARADISE MEADOW AND LILY LAKE, LASSEN NATIONAL PARK

Photo of the Chaos Crags on our way to the trailhead for Paradise Meadow:



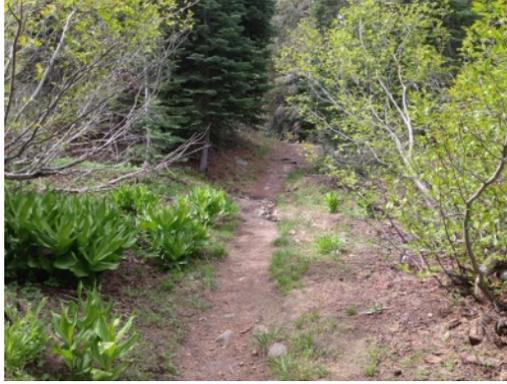
A view of Mount Lassen from the trailhead for Paradise Meadow:



As shown on this map located at the trailhead, the trail to Paradise Meadow is only 1.4 miles. It follows the creek for most of the way, staying relatively level at first then beginning to climb more steeply as it approaches the destination:



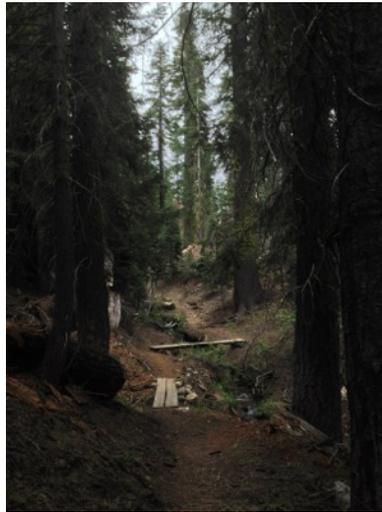
The trail is very well defined throughout the hike:



Notice how much moss is on the trees in this photo:



The trail crosses some small tributaries of the main creek:



About midway through the hike, the trail begins to climb more steeply, and we are now looking down on the nearby creek:



We soon passed this nice waterfall, which would make a nice picnic spot on a warmer day (it was cold on this day and we actually were snowed on during our hike back):



Another view through the trees of the creek as the trail follows it along:



There are many nice, small waterfalls that can be seen from the trail through here:



Here, Mt. Lassen can just barely be seen through the trees:



Up ahead is where the trail forks; the main trail continues across the grassy slope seen in this photo, while the trail to Paradise Meadow will go to the left:



This very nice waterfall can be spotted just before reaching the trail junction; we checked it out on our way back:



The main trail crosses the creek on this bridge:



The Paradise Meadow trail continues for 0.1 mile, following the stream:



This meadow would probably be covered with spectacular wildflowers at another time of year; however, the snow had just cleared when we visited:



Looking down-stream and getting a glimpse of the nearby mountains:



These were the only (small) wildflowers that we saw on this hike:



On our hike back, we took the side-trail to this very nice waterfall that we had seen on our hike up to the meadows:



Another photo of this waterfall from further back along the side-trail:



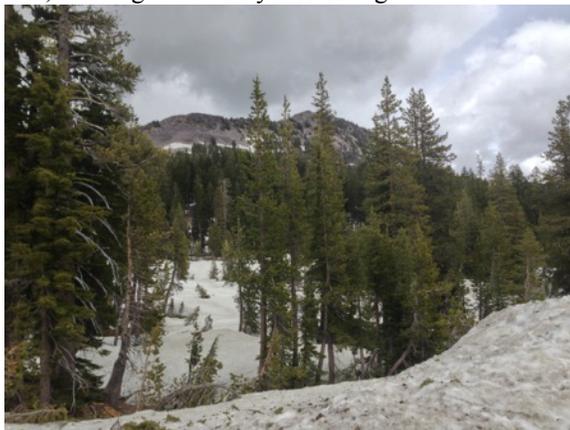
This large boulder is located near the beginning of the Paradise Meadow trail; I wonder how it got to be here:



After returning to the parking area, we continued up the main road, and encountered increasingly large amounts of snow. This is Upper Meadow:



This photo is looking towards Reading Peak; this might be a very interesting hike when there is less snow:



Since most of the hikes we had been planning on doing in this area were either too wet or too snowy, we parked at the entrance to the side-road which leads to the Kings Creek Picnic Area and the Cold Boiling Lake trailhead and hiked down this road to see if we could get a view. This "snow-bridge" across a small creek is a good reminder why one should be careful when walking across snowy areas (especially to those who aren't used to snow, like myself):



This is the trailhead to Cold Boiling Lake; as can be seen in this photo, the snow is almost above the top of the trail sign (left of center). The snowbank here was about 8 feet tall:



From here, we headed back down the main road (we had planned on driving the rest of the way through the park on the next day, but unfortunately the road was closed due to the snow we had overnight—so I still haven't seen the part of this road between Kings Creek Picnic Area and the Lassen Peak Trailhead). This photo is of the view looking towards Horseshoe Lake:



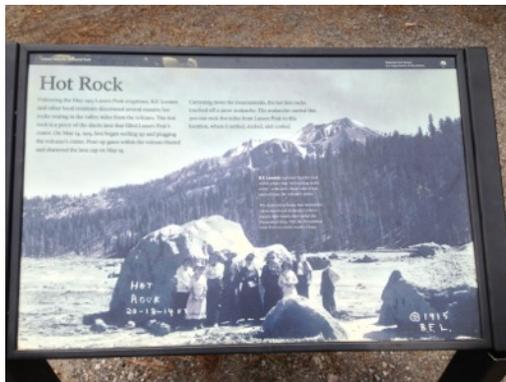
Continuing down the main park road as snow begins to fall; notice some of the very nice peaks seen in the background of this photo. I'm not sure how many of these peaks are accessible to hikers, but it certainly would be interesting to hike closer to these peaks:



The snow lessened as we got further down the road, so we stopped at the "Hot Rock" turnout:



This 300 ton lava rock was carried 5 miles from the crater by a snow avalanche; it was reported to be "still sizzling in the water" 40 hours after the eruption:



We also stopped at the Chaos Crags viewpoint on our drive back (compare this photo with the photo taken the next morning, on the last page of this report):



As it was getting to be very cold, even though the snow had stopped, we decided to just do the short Lily Lake Trail. This is Reflection Lake, located near the Loomis Museum:



Another view of Reflection Lake, which wasn't reflecting the nearby scenery today particularly well, likely because of the cloudy weather:



This is one of the marshy areas we walked by on this nature trail; I would think there would probably be some nice flowers here in warmer months:



We had seen many of these flowers along the side of the road on our drive up the main park road, but I hadn't yet had a chance to get a close-up photo of one:



These are pacific willow trees; I had seen them before, and their characteristic cotton-like "willow down" (which wasn't present this time of year), but I had previously not known what they are called:



Panorama of aptly-named Lily Lake:



Another panorama of Lily Lake, from the other end of the lake:



As on the Paradise Meadow trail, there was quite a bit of lichen/moss on the trees through here:



This is another small pond we passed by on this trail (the bend in the log is from iPhone panorama distortion):



As we were returning to the parking area, the clouds began to get darker, so we decided not to do another short hike in this area in case of a big rainstorm:



Looking over at the clouds now surrounding the Chaos Crags:



There were a few of these nice flowers at the end of the Lily Lake trail:



The next day, we had planned to drive through the park and see more of the other side of the park road (which we hadn't been to since 2008), but unfortunately the road was closed at the Devastated Area. We first stopped at the Chaos Crags turnout to take photos of all the snow:



Notice that not only are the Chaos Crags covered in snow, there is also a substantial amount of snow on the ground, near the road, where there had been none the night before:



The trees were also coated in snow, and we saw large chunks of snow fall from the trees onto the road as we drove through here:



Lassen Peak, surrounded by clouds, as seen from the Devastated Area parking lot:

