



The Daily News
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Lassen Gateway Coalition Spring Conference

The Lassen Gateway Coalition held its spring conference on May 10 in Chester.

This second semi-annual event brought together 42 attendees from Butte, Lassen, Plumas, Shasta, and Tehama counties.

Participants represented local business and Chambers of Commerce, conservation organizations, local governments, federal and state agencies, and other organizations from the neighboring communities of Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lassen National Forest.

In September 2010, Lassen Volcanic National Park hosted a meeting, Making Connections with Lassen Volcanic National Park and its Gateway Communities, which invited participants to consider how they and the park might be better neighbors.

Discussion focused on developing new approaches to topics including regional collaboration, employment opportunities, and quality of life in gateway communities.

As a result, the Lassen Gateway Coalition (LGC) was formed to improve information sharing and communication, and further develop partnerships within the gateway communities.

The LGC spring conference kicked-off with updates from Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lassen National Forest. Karen Haner, Chief of Interpretation at Lassen Volcanic National Park, and Jerry Bird, Forest Supervisor for Lassen National Forest, provided information on projects and upcoming events, and briefly discussed issues currently affecting the two agencies. Both agencies fielded questions from coalition members, providing an opportunity for a valuable two-way conversation.

The conference focused on addressing three key goals: developing an effective communication system, defining the objectives and mission of the LGC, and creating itineraries for travel through the gateway communities surrounding Lassen Volcanic National Park and Lassen National Forest.

Initial discussions were productive and set stepping stones for the coalition.

Bob Kingman from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, closed the conference with a presentation on the Sierra Nevada GeoTourism project. A partnership between the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Sierra Business Council, and National Geographic, the project provides visitors an opportunity to plan an authentic, enriching travel experience using its web-based MapGuide.

Coalition members were invited to nominate special places and events that sustain or enhance the geographical character of the Sierra Nevada region.

Lassen Volcanic National Park plans to submit nominations for the park as well as specific locations within the park with special significance such as Drakesbad Guest Ranch.

Conference host, Susan Bryner of the Chester-Lake Almanor Chamber of Conference, expressed appreciation to the event's generous donors including Best Western Rose Quartz Inn and Red Onion Grill of Chester, Carol's Café and Deli of Pratville, CA, Indian Peak Vineyards and Mt. Tehama Winery of Manton, Lucero Olive Oil of Corning, Trader Joe's in Redding, Frank and Jean Galusha and Vera DeWitt of Shingletown.

For more information about the Lassen Gateway Coalition, please contact the park at 595-6102 or for general park information call 595-4480.

You can also visit the park website at www.nps.gov/lavo.