

Mountain biking is a favorite pursuit for many visitors to Plumas County. The surrounding forest land provides miles and miles of biking opportunities, including abandoned logging roads, offering a good cross-section of terrain and topography.

The national forest routes and others listed here are a sampling of some of the area's best. Remember, when mountain biking, to respect other trail users by slowing before approaching hikers or horses, and staying on the trail as much as possible.

Mountain bikers should also be aware that biking is not allowed in the Bucks Lake Wilderness and Caribou Wilderness areas, nor on the Pacific Crest Trail. For maps and more details on the trails listed, contact the Plumas National Forest (530) 283-2050. For the trails listed in the Almanor area, contact Bodfish Bicycles in Chester (530) 258-2338.

Eastern Plumas

Mills Peak Lookout

Distance: 6 miles (one-way)

Effort: Moderate

Average Ride Time: 1.5 hours

This trail along dirt roads in the Lakes Basin Recreation Area climbs from 6,500 to 7,340 feet to a lookout that offers vistas of Eastern Plumas County. From Highway 89 south of Graeagle, take the Gold Lake Highway to the junction of Mills Peak Road (County Roads 721/822). Park across from this intersection at the turnout. Bike 1.5 miles on County Road 721, then turn north on County Road 822 for 4.5 miles to the lookout.

Lake Davis Loop

Distance: 18 miles

Effort: Easy

Average Ride Time: 2 hours

This is a flat, easy loop around Lake Davis. Elevation is 5,800 feet, and the route includes six paved miles and 12 miles of gravel. Points of interest include picnic areas, lakeview vistas, bird and wildlife viewing and Jenkins Sheep Camp. Vehicle traffic may be heavy on weekends. From Highway 70 in Portola take West Street

approximately seven miles to the Lake Davis Dam and park at the information kiosk. Bike 1.7 miles west to Forest Service Road 24N10, travel on that for 8.1 miles until you reach the junction with County Road 112. Then turn east and continue around the lake. Past the Grizzly Campground a half mile, turn south on County Road 126 and continue back to the dam.

Dixie Mountain

Distance: 15.6 miles

Effort: Difficult

Average Ride Time: 2 hours

This is a loop ride to a Frenchman Lake lookout. Elevation range is 5,630 to 7,840 feet. The route includes gravel and dirt roads and about a mile of single track. From Highway 70 at Chilcoot, go north on Highway 284 for eight miles to Frenchman Dam. Proceed straight on 25N11 for six miles to the junction with 24N02Y. Signs say Dixie Mountain Lookout. Bike west from that junction to mile post 6.4 at Dixie Trail, then northeast on 25N03 to 25N11. Take 25N11 two miles back to starting point. A side trip to the end of 24N02Y (.3 miles) provides a spectacular view from Dixie Mountain Lookout.

Crystal Peak

Distance: 10.5 (one-way)

Effort: Moderate

Average Ride Time: 2 hours

Crystal Peak near Frenchman Lake affords excellent views and passes through an area with old mine workings and abandoned cabins. The dirt road route climbs from 5,075 to 7,780 feet. From Highway 70 at Chilcoot, go north on Highway 284 approximately five miles. Beyond Chilcoot Campground is a one-lane bridge. Parking is available at the Choke Cherry Day Use Area on the right. Begin the ride at the 24N44 junction with Highway 284, proceed northeast on 24N44 to 24N12X, then north on 24N12X to Crystal Peak. For an alternative return route, take 24N02 off 24N12X at mile post 9.8 and go seven miles to Frenchman Reservoir.

Central Plumas

Summit-Bucks Creek Loop

Distance: 3.8 miles

Effort: Easy

Average Ride Time: 1 hour

This is a trail with views of the beautiful Bucks Lake Wilderness. The

elevation ranges from 5,200 to 5,520 feet. Take Bucks Lake Road 14 miles west of Quincy and park at either the Bucks Summit parking area or Bucks Creek trailhead. The summit trailhead starts at Bucks Summit and continues two miles through meadows and forest. When the trail reaches the pavement (Bucks Lake Road), turn right and take the Bucks Creek trail 1.8 miles. The trail parallels and eventually returns to Bucks Lake Road. Follow the road a quarter mile back to Bucks Summit. The trail goes through White Horse Campground.

Howland Flat Loop

Distance: 19 miles

Effort: Difficult

Average Ride Time: 5 hours

This ride begins at the snowmobile staging area located just outside the town of La Porte. A map is essential. Historic mining areas and some interesting cemeteries are featured on this ride over mostly gravel road, ranging from 5,000 to 5,980 feet. From the staging area, take County Road 511 toward Quincy five miles. Turn right towards Baptist Camp on County Road 900, go two miles, past Lake Delahunty. Turn right on County

Road 800, go three miles crossing Slate Creek and Sawmill Ridge. At Potosi Creek, turn right, go a half mile, and turn left onto 21N08 for 4.5 miles. Turn right onto 21N12 for three-quarters mile, and then right on 21N08/County Road 791. At stop sign, turn right, go through town, and return to the staging area.

Round Valley Lake Loop

Distance: 12 miles

Effort: Moderate

Average Ride Time: 2 hours

This route on paved and dirt roads climbs from Greenville at 3,600 feet and circles Round Valley Lake. From Hwy. 89 south of Greenville, take Greenville-Round Valley Road and continue southwest three miles to the Round Valley Dam, at 4,550 feet. From the parking lot, take the lake road going either direction, through tall trees, crossing small stream beds. The area is home to eagles, osprey, wood ducks, mallards and Canada geese. The trail intersects other side trips; more information is available at the campground store located at the lake.

Antelope Lake Loop

Distance: 11 miles

Effort: Easy

Average Ride Time: 1.5 hours

This is an easy loop around Antelope Lake. Points of interest include the Pioneer Cabin and Grave, picnic areas, lakeview vistas, bird and wildlife viewing. Vehicle traffic may be heavy on holiday weekends. Take 89 north from Quincy (or south from Greenville) and go east on Arlington Road five miles to Taylorsville. From there, take the Genesee Antelope Lake Road east for 24 miles to reach the lake.

Parking is available at numerous pullouts along the route. The lake has three campgrounds.

Almanor Basin

Last Chance Loop

Distance: 12 to 14 miles

Effort: Easy

Average Ride Time: 1.5 hours

This is a mostly flat loop around the upper reaches of Lake Almanor and Lower Last Chance Creek. It includes three miles of pavement and 9 to 12 miles of gravel road. From Chester, bike east on Highway 36 across the

causeway, and make a left at PG&E's Last Chance Creek Campground Road. After the campground, continue west to Walker Road, cross Benner Creek, and continue to Juniper Lake Road. Continue on the gravel road to Warner Valley Road. A left onto the pavement returns you to Chester.

Lake Almanor Recreation Trail

Distance: 14 miles

Effort: Easy

Average Ride Time: 1.5 hours (one-way)

This route combines a four-mile stretch of old Highway 89 with the new U.S. Forest Service trail along the west shore of Lake Almanor. Begin the ride at the Cedar Chalet Bakery, two miles west of Chester on Highway 36, and head south on old Highway 89, which parallels present Highway 89. Make a left at the intersection with Humboldt/Humbug Road (County Road 309), crossing over new Highway 89. This road intersects with the forest service trail, which ends near the Lake Almanor PG&E Campground.