

# Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails Visitor Information

## Plan your Visit

There are few visitor facilities inside the NCA and no potable water, so you should plan your visit carefully. At two of the portals to the NCA, the small towns of Gerlach and Cedarville contain gas stations, restaurants, and motels. Cedarville and the small town of Empire contain small grocery stores, but few camping supplies or other amenities are available. There is a small hospital in Cedarville and a sheriff's sub-station in Gerlach. The area is remote, so you should make sure you have plenty of water, warm clothes in cool weather, good tires and at least one spare, and food supplies when you start your trip. Notify friends or family where you are going, when you plan to return, and check in with them when you return. Except for the playa, driving is restricted to existing roads and no wheeled vehicles or machines are allowed in any of the ten wilderness areas associated with the NCA.

## What Can I Do?

- Camping
- Hiking
- Hunting
- Sightseeing
- Rock Hounding
- Off-Highway Vehicle Use

## What Can I See?

### Black Rock Station

Black Rock Station is a visitor contact station and administrative center manned from mid-May to the end of September. The station contains interpretive signs explaining the features of the NCA and has interpretive brochures for the public.

### Black Rock Playa

The Playa, being one of the largest almost completely flat locations on earth, is the bottom of a large Pleistocene era lakebed. It is a popular recreation site and houses Burning Man, attracting over 60,000 people for an art and lifestyle festival.

### High Rock Canyon

High Rock Canyon is one of the most dramatic landscapes in the NCA, a steep-sided canyon first visited by Europeans in 1842, when the explorer John C. Fremont entered the Great Basin while searching for a river to the Pacific Ocean.

### Emigrant Trails

The Applegate and Nobles Trails cross the NCA. The NCA was mainly established to protect the settings of the historic trails. Visitors can experience the same landscape that wagon trains crossed in the 19th century.

### Black Rock Point and Hot Springs

This was landmark and stopping point along the Applegate Trail. Today, visitors camp here and enjoy the hot springs in a dramatic desert environment at the edge of the Black Rock desert.

### Double Hot Springs

At 180 degrees, the deep pools here are too hot to touch. Aside from the warning signs and protective fence, the bubbling pool appears much as it did to the emigrants who camped here on their way to Oregon and California.

**Soldier Meadows**

This area of hot and cold springs was designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern in order to protect several threatened species, including the desert dace, a minnow-like fish as well as abundant cultural resources. Check camping restrictions.

**Stevens Camp**

This spot along the Applegate Trail contains a small cabin in an open meadow that used to serve as a linecamp, now popular with hunters and campers. A beautiful stream passes through the camp with a corral for horseback riders.

**Massacre Ranch**

This spot along the Applegate Trail contains a small cabin with a corral and opens into a beautiful meadow that is filled with wildflowers in the spring and early summer. It is popular with hunters and campers, especially in bad weather.