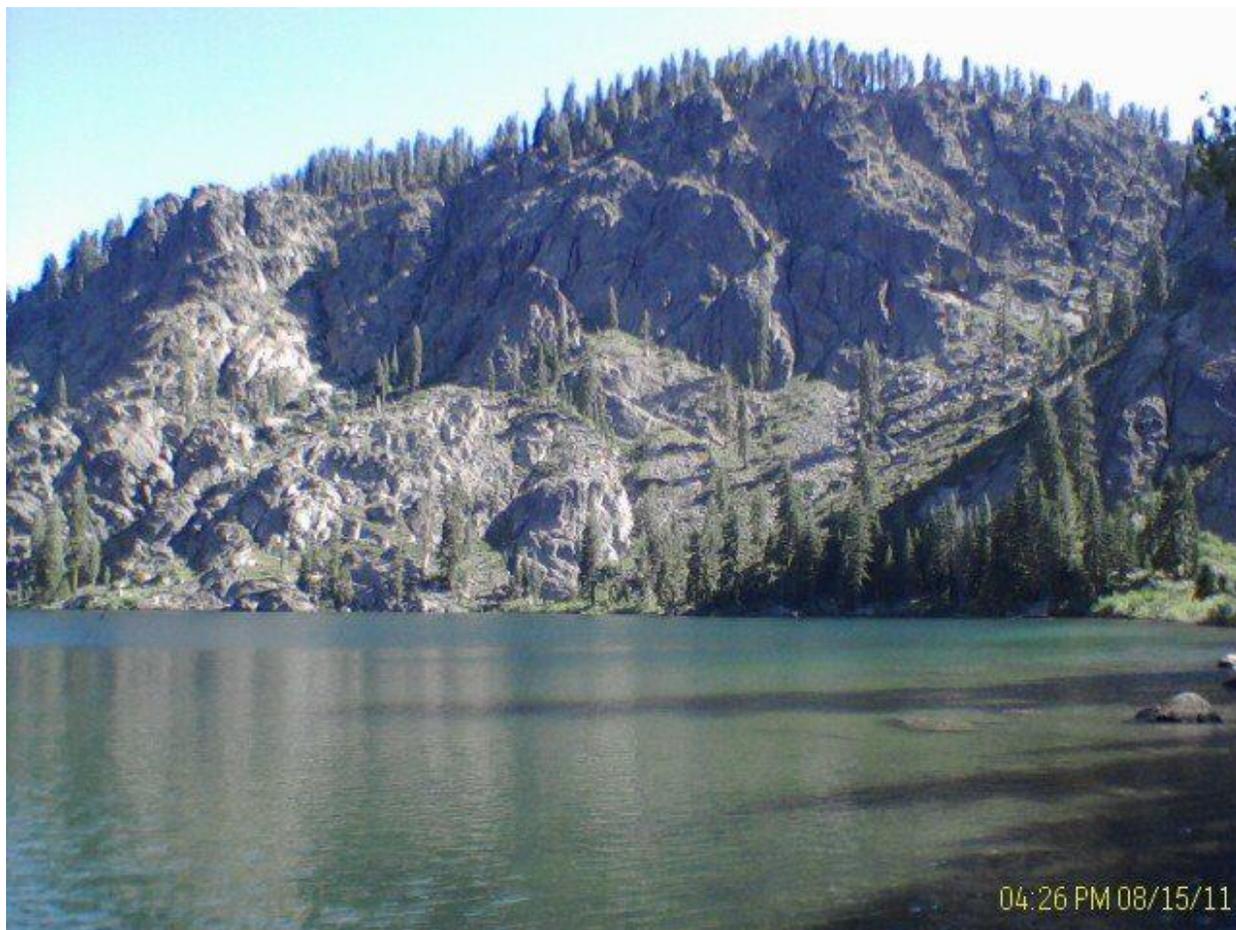


# Homer/Dearheart Lake Trail

By Owen Donnell



**Rock Face at Homer:** A little bit of the scenery around Homer Lake in Lassen County.  
Photo by Martin Donnell

This trail offers brilliant scenery and access to three natural, glacier-fed alpine lakes up on Keddie Ridge just within the border of Lassen County. The closest town is Greenville in the Indian Valley and is a well-known local summer destination for hiking, swimming, camping, and fishing. It is located on Keddie Ridge in the secluded area known as Mountain Meadows just north of Greenville and south of Westwood. This area is sacred to the Mountain Maidu people who are native to this region. Mountain Meadows is the location of the birth of the Mountain Maidu people in their creation stories. The area is also important to the Mountain Maidu people for collection of important medicinal plants and spiritual guidance. Mountain Maidu people have claimed seeing visions and communicating with spirits upon diving in Homer Lake and the whole area has traditionally been regarded as highly spiritual and powerful.

**Directions from Quincy:** Take CA-70 W CA-89 North from town past Keddie, Butterfly Valley Road, and along Spanish Creek. After 10.1 miles, take a right at the “Y” where CA-89 splits off from CA-70. Continue North on CA-89, along Indian Creek and up into the Indian Valley and through Crescent Mills. Eleven miles past the “Y” of CA-70 and CA-89 you will roll through Greenville. A notable fact is that immediately north of Greenville you will be driving on the world’s longest continuous turn in a road. Wow. The turn off the HI way is Old Haun Road, 2.6 miles north of Greenville on CA-89. It is a dirt road, and unmarked, so it can be difficult to detect, but it is the only road north of Greenville that crosses the HI way (If drive underneath a concrete railroad bridge, then you are on your way to Canyon Dam and you’ve gone too far). You take a right up Old Haun Road. This is where it gets a little bumpy because the road is fairly rough. You take this road high up onto the Greenville Saddle, which offers some glorious views of the Indian Valley. You will drive 1.9 miles, where you will come to an intersection and make a right. Then take a left after 5.1 miles, and then another left turn 3.1 miles after that. Another 2.1 miles and you arrive at the trailhead!

### **Homer/Dearheart Lake Trail:**

Quality Rating: 3

Time needed: 3-4 hours

Elevation: Trailhead-6,700 Homer Lake- 6,500 Dearheart Lake- 6,300

Trail type: out and back

Trail length: 5.2 miles (to Dearheart and back)

Rating: A good workout, but not especially difficult. Your Grandma could do it!

Gear Needed: Good boots/shoes, visor/brim hat or sunscreen, USGS 7 ½ minute map of the Greenville Quadrangle and compass, couple liters of water.

Directions: When you arrive at the trailhead there are actually two trails you can take to Homer Lake. As you pull up to the parking area at the trailhead, the trail you will see on the left goes up and over a hill and drops back down to the lake. It is a pretty long uphill stretch, and a steep drop back down. This trail can be fun, but I usually rather prefer the trail on the right, which will be right ahead of you as you pull into the parking area. This trail is a steady traverse and slight downhill for most of the way, but then a fairly steep climb right before the lake (definitely less strenuous than the trail to the left).

Homer is a very scenic spot, and enough of a destination in its own right, with stunning rock formations and colorful displays of wildflowers in the summer. The lake has been seeded

with fish (trout) that can be caught as well. The trail continues to Dearheart Lake from the very northern tip of Homer, where a creek flows from the lake. The trail ascends and descends through the forest a little ways before breaking out into a stretch of exposed rocky terrain where the trail crosses over a small cascading creek.

Shortly after the creek you may notice a trail to the left going up a steep hill. This is the trail to Hidden Lake. The trail to Hidden Lake is pretty hard work, but I think it's worth the effort. It's a lot like Homer, but smaller. The surrounding rock formations offer some excellent expansive views of Mountain Meadows Reservoir, Westwood, Mt. Lassen, and other surrounding mountains. I've heard people say there's no fish in this lake, but I swear I've seen some.



**Hidden Lake-** photo by T.J Smith

Continuing on the trail to Dearheart Lake, after you pass the trail that goes up to Hidden Lake you follow the trail through some high brush until you come back into the forest. This is where it is a good idea to have a topographic map and compass, because the trail is not particularly well distinguished and can be easy to lose, but it basically just continues northeast

climbing slightly and steadily until it drops down into Dearheart Lake. Dearheart Lake is smaller than Homer, but very nice, very scenic and good for fishing as well.



**Dearheart Lake-** photo by T.J. Smith

Risks: the Keddie Ridge area is known to have a sizeable bear population. Take bear precautions, if camping. Be aware of rattlesnakes, especially in rocky areas. Make sure to pack plenty of water on a hot day to avoid dehydration. Make sure to take that topographic map and compass!

Please help to keep this special area clean and beautiful!

Local contact for information:

Lassen National Forest Chester-Almanor Ranger Station – (530)258-2141