

## **Plumas-Eureka State Park to close for hazardous waste cleanup**

**Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee, 1-27-11**

Portions of Plumas-Eureka State Park, near the town of Graeagle in the Sierra Nevada, will close this year for work to clean up hazardous waste from the park's historic mining days.

Nearly all of the park's physical amenities – including the campground, visitors center, museum and picnic areas – will be closed for several months starting this spring.

Matt Green, State Parks acting district superintendent, said park managers hope to preserve access to hiking trails in the Plumas County park during the cleanup work, but a plan for that has not yet been developed.

About 100 reservations had already been made in the campground, which usually sells out for the entire summer. Those people will be contacted to receive refunds or to reserve a site elsewhere, Green said.

"We wanted to get the word out as soon as possible so people could make those summer plans," he said.

State Parks acquired the 4,000- acre Plumas-Eureka property in 1959, along with its legacy of historic hard-rock gold mining.

The cleanup includes removing soil contaminated by arsenic, lead and mercury at levels that exceed federal safety standards. About 15 sites in the park will be cleaned up, said Brett Moxley, federal on-scene coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"It was not contamination that was brought in," Moxley said. "It was really naturally occurring in material that was liberated from the ore, or made more available by the actual mining activity."

The exact start of the cleanup depends on when snow melts in the park, but the work could last into fall. Work will begin first in the campground, Moxley said, which should be ready to reopen sometime this summer.

The EPA is funding and overseeing the cleanup through its Superfund hazardous waste program. Total cost is estimated at \$1.4 million.