



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Modoc Line
Rail Trail**
California



Modoc Line Rail Trail

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The Modoc Line Rail Trail follows a portion the historic Modoc Line, which ran through remote ranch land and deserts in northeastern California. Originally constructed as the narrow-gauge Nevada-California-Oregon (N-C-O), Southern Pacific converted the line to standard gauge in the 1920s when they acquired it and operated it as the Modoc Line until the 1990s. An abandoned portion of the line was railbanked, and in 2008, an 85-mile section of the former rail corridor was purchased by the Lassen Land and Trails Trust, who now manage the rail-trail.

The N-C-O was also referred to as the "narrow, crooked, and ornery." And thus, modern-day users take note: the trail is rough in some places (ballast and gravel surface), and the weather in this remote country can change in minutes, so dress appropriately and take precautions. The

Modoc Line is still being developed in some places, so travel is at your own risk.

There are currently three disconnected sections of the Modoc Line Rail Trail. From north to south, they are as follows:

Sagehen Segment (19.9 miles)

This section runs between Dons Road in Likely and where Lassen Street becomes Clarks Valley Road in Madeline.

One of the most scenic sections, the trail travels up Tule Mountain via switchbacks. At the highest point, there are stunning views of the Warner Mountains and the Modoc Plateau.

Snowstorm Canyon Segment (13 miles)

This section runs between Horse Lake Road in Crest to Karlo Rd in Lassen County).

From Crest, the trail meanders down into Snowstorm Creek canyon and climbs onto volcanic tablelands. Columnar basalt cliffs tower above the path and the remnants of a train wreck can be seen lying below the trail.

Continuing south along the trail, the Snowstorm Mountain is to the east and two creeks are west of the trail. Running parallel within yards of one another, the Snowstorm Creek and Pete's Creek are only separated by a narrow volcanic wedge.

The Bureau of Land Management's Biscar Reservoir can be seen from the trail. To access the reservoir, take Karlo Road to the Biscar entrance, where there are portable toilets and opportunities to launch kayaks, canoes, or rowboats.

Viewland Segment (6.9 miles)



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States: California

Counties: Lassen, Modoc

Length: 39.8 miles

Trail end points: Dons Rd (Likely in Modoc County) to Lassen St & Clarks Valley Rd (Madeline) to Horse Lake Rd (Crest) to Karlo Rd (Lassen County); Wendel Rd (Wendel in eastern Lassen County)

Trail surfaces: Ballast, Cinder, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: ATV, Horseback

Parking & Trail Access

The Modoc Line is under development, so there are no facilities or formal trailheads. Travel at your own risk.

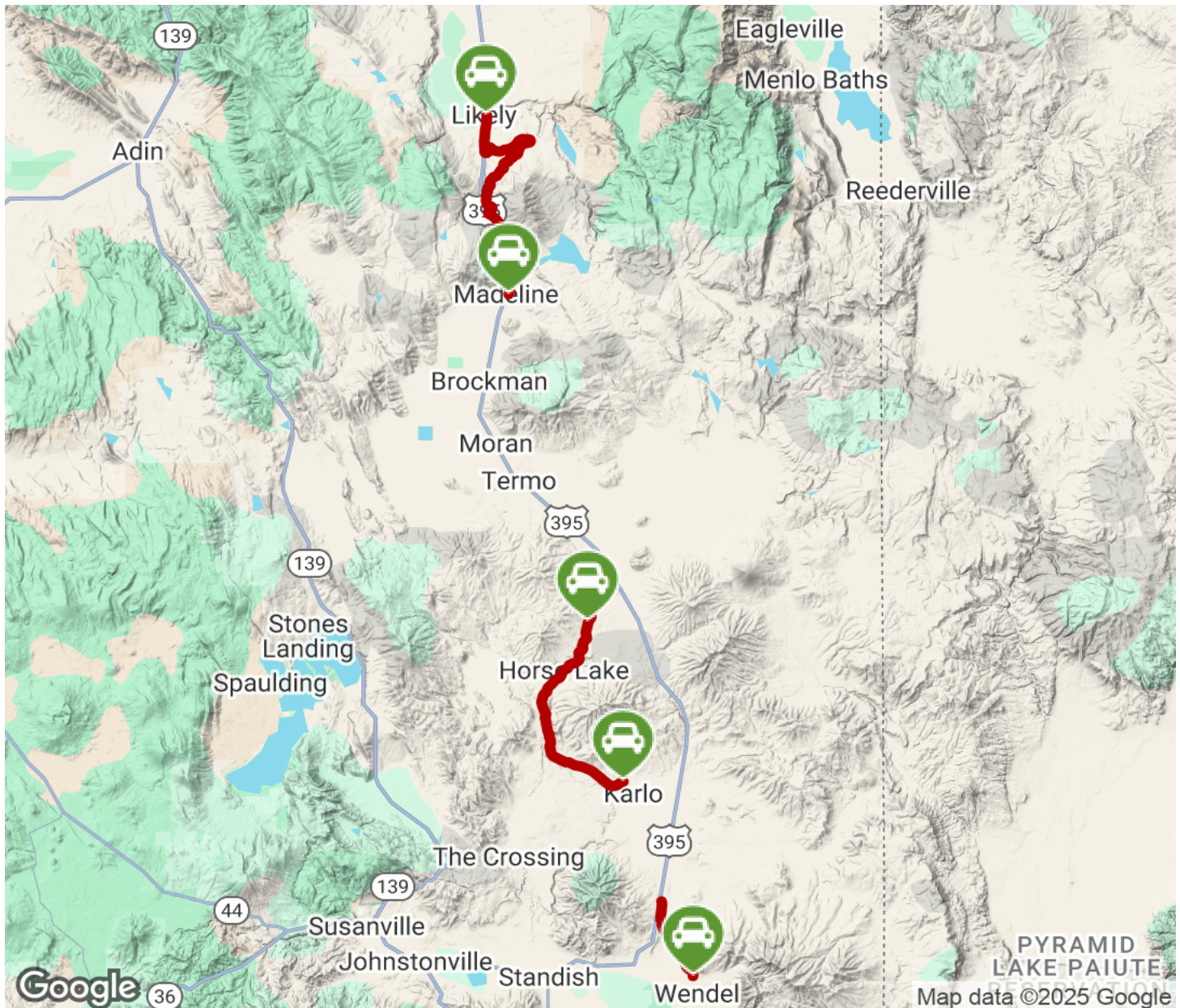
To reach the southern trailhead in Wendel from Susanville, take US 395 east then turn on Wendel Road (follow the signs to Honey Lake) and continue until you cross the old railroad berm. You can also go into Wendel and park near the intersection of Amedee and Antola roads.

To access the trail in McArthur Siding from Alturas, take US 395 south to Lyneta Rd./CR 187A and turn west (right). Turn left at Beet Camp Road. The trail is on the east side of Eastside Canal.



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-  Trailhead
-  Restroom
-  Parking
-  Water Fountain
-  Tunnel