

LOVE THREE HOT SPRINGS OUT OF THE THOUSANDS - HOT CREEK, FIELDS AND ASH -

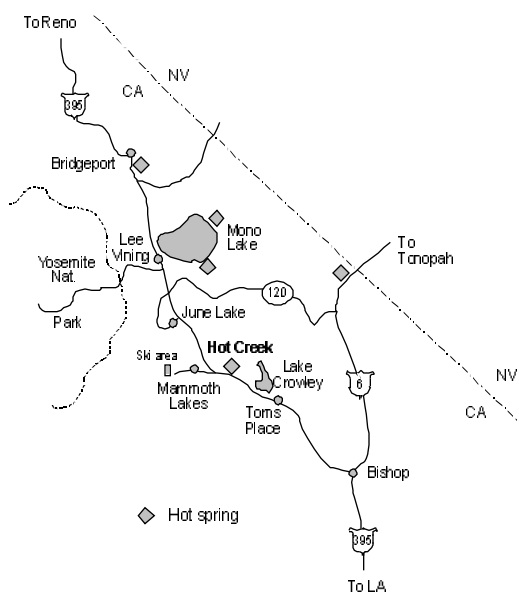
Bill Kaysing
King City, CA

HOT CREEK

This has to be a divine design. An icy stream descending from the High Sierras meets a stream-bed steam vent only a short distance from Highway US 395 above Bishop, California.

What this produces is a delightful and varied hot springs bath. You have your choice of toasting your toes by probing the stones of the creek bottom or having the feeling of being in an ice-cube-filled cocktail shaker. And you can enjoy every temperature in between! There's a thrill in knowing that you are cavorting in a "crack in the cosmic egg," dancing in a geothermal miracle.

I should mention that I have not been there in years and things could have changed; but, I hope not. This is one of our Great Spirit's finest aquatic playgrounds.



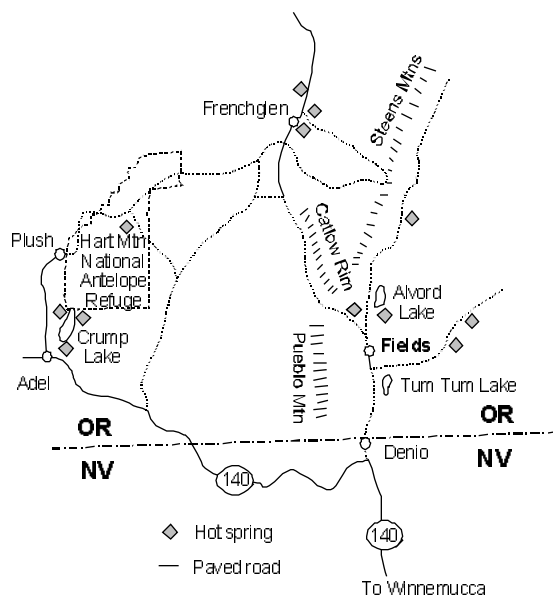
Hot Creek Springs

FIELDS

I call it this because it is close to a tiny village with that name. To find it, just take the dirt road north from Fields in far eastern Oregon and watch for a small lake to your right. On cold days, the vapors rising from the surface will tag it. Just imagine a lake of about an acre in size full of water around 100°F. No one in sight. The mysterious Steen's mountains to the west and not a sound. This has to be either an energy vortex or a metaphysical feng shui or simply a super wonderful geothermal spring.

I recall swimming to the center of the lake and remembering that someone in Fields said it was 7,000 feet deep. What a mystical and magical concept... to be suspended by warm water over a deep chasm in Mother Earth. My beloved and

recently departed soul mate and fellow hot springs lover, Ruth, loved it. And I will always remember how she was sunbathing on the crusty beach when a small snake slithered under her neck. I was shaken by the thought it could be venomous; but, Ruth was in a state of hot springs euphoria along with her usual courage and elan, and she never even quivered.

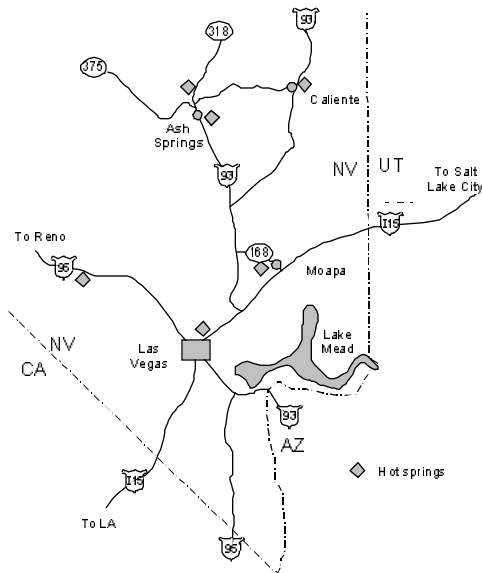


Fields Springs

ASH

If you drive northeast from Vegas on I15, you will intersect the Pan-American Highway US 93. Turn north and drive between the towering Sheep Range and the charming Meadow Valley Wash for about 80 miles. You'll know you're at Ash Springs when you see a totally gigantic cottonwood on your left along with a small store. Turn right into a dirt road for less than a block and you should see a small concrete-lined pool. Toss your clothes off if no one is there and leap in. No shock, just bliss as the water is just about body temperature. It pours out of a sub-surface pipe, keeps the pool sparkling clean and then flows down to a warm water lake of about two acres. The pool is on BLM land and open to the public all year. The lake is privately owned and you should make inquiry before using it.

I once spent an entire week at Ash, bathing in that luxurious, velvet-textured water amidst a forest of willows and cottonwoods, roaming through the nearby desert hills and enjoying campfire meals in the evening. Experiences like that convinced me that being a hot springs gypsy was quite possibly the highest and best use of my life or anyone's life for that matter.



Ash Springs



EPILOG

Hot springs, how I love them and how fortunate to have visited so many in the last four decades. If readers have questions, I'll be happy to try to answer them. Bill Kaysing, PO 1095, King City, CA 93930 [only 20 miles from Paraiso (Paradise Hot Springs)].

Editor's Note: Bill Kaysing - author, inventor, sailor and vagabond - has written a classic book on "Great Hot Springs of the West" covering 1,700 known hot springs that flow in the 11 western states.

We have since learned from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that there is a species of fish in Ash Springs (*Crenicthys baileyi baileyi*), that is listed federally by the Endangered Species Act.