

Directions to Lake San Antonio

by Jim Bartolini

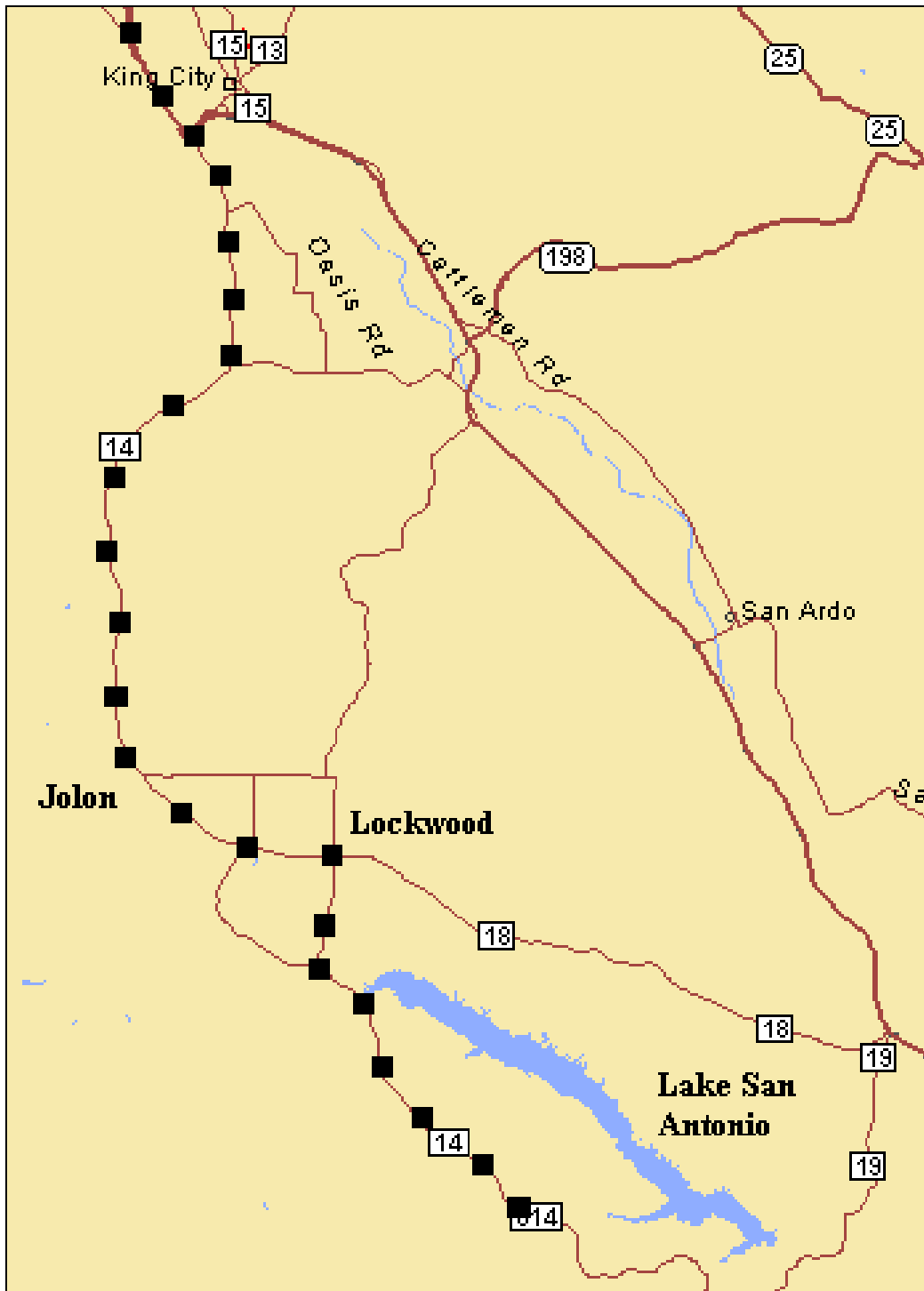
(NOTE: maps are not to scale)

From the San Jose area, proceed south on US101 for about 100 miles (as measured from the 101/280/680 interchange) until you approach King City. Just as the highway begins to curve to the left to cross the river, take the Jolon Road exit ramp (County Road J14) and proceed south.

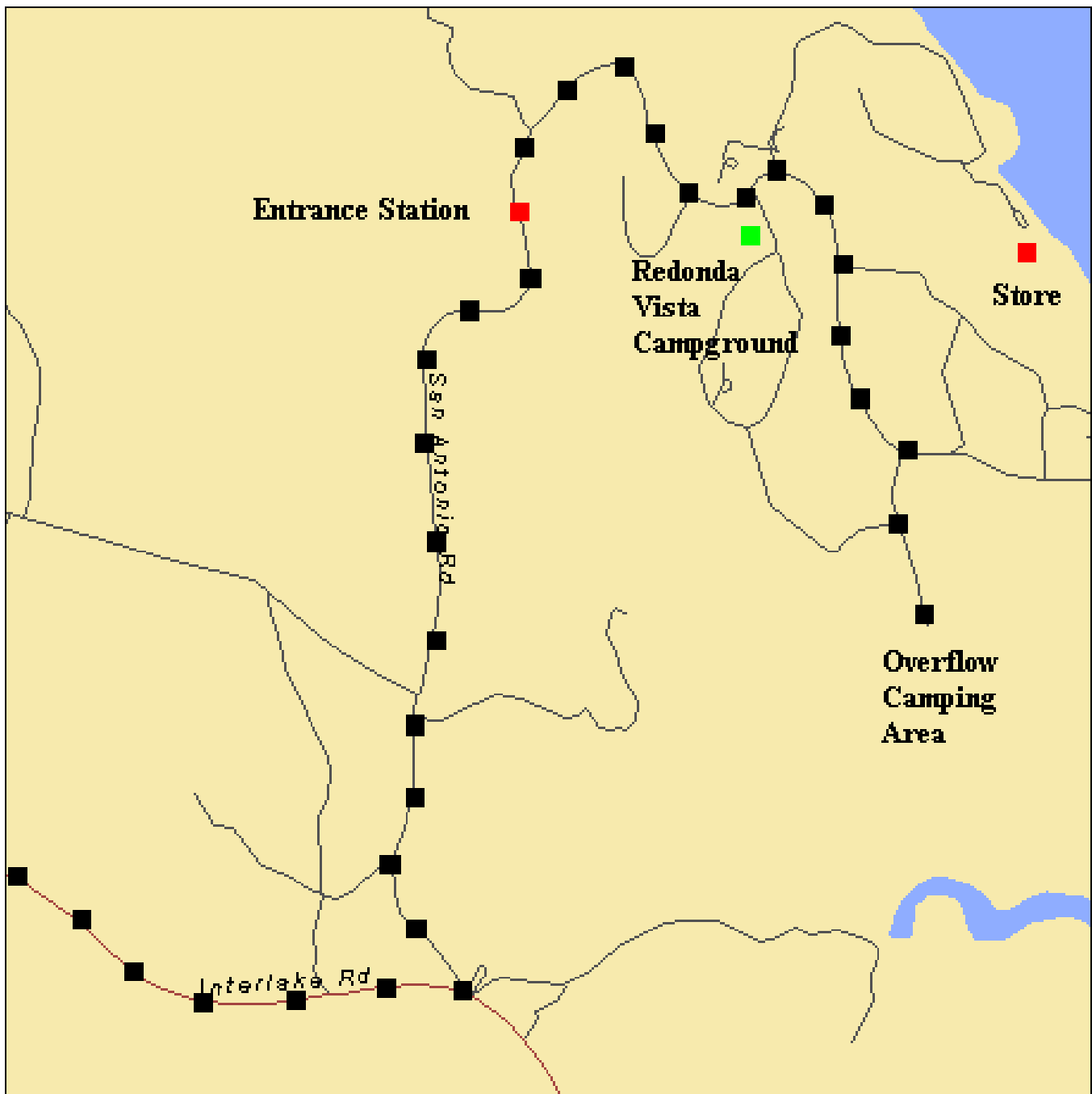


Follow this fast and easy road for approximately 23 miles until you reach the tiny hamlet of Lockwood, where you will make a right turn (it's still J14, but now you're on Interlake Road). Continue for another 12 miles or so (more fast and easy driving) until you reach the Lake San Antonio turnoff on your left.

WARNING: do not proceed straight at Lockwood, otherwise you will find yourself on County Road J18 which will put you on the wrong side of the lake. You want the South Shore side, **not** the North Shore side.



Turn left onto San Antonio Road and proceed for about 2 miles to the Entrance Station. Pay your fees, get a map, etc. (it might be a good idea to let the gate attendant know that you are with the TAC Astronomy Group), then proceed for about 1 mile (passing the Redonda Vista campground entrance on the right), then turn right at the junction and continue for about 0.75 miles to the Overflow Camping Area (look for a small “Overflow” sign on the right-hand side). Turn right onto the dirt road and continue for about 100-200 yards, then take the road to the left where the larger and more desirable campsites are located (or else just look for some familiar faces and/or vehicles).



The OCA is a relatively large, flat, roomy space, situated in a shallow depression at approximately 1,000' elevation, surrounded by low hills and dotted with stately oaks, yet still provides very good panoramas from a number of nice group-sized campsites as well as from the baseball field (which doesn't appear to have been used for quite some time). Horizons to the south are in the 5-20 degree range, other horizons are in the 10-20 degree range. Except for a couple of the smaller, less desirable sites close to the entrance, the entire area is shielded from direct road traffic lights, and I detected no noticeable light domes emanating from either King City to the north or Paso Robles to the southeast.

One of the biggest advantages of this location is the fact that you can leave your equipment set up during the day, whether it's in the camping area or on the baseball field. And, since there's little chance that anyone else will be using the OCA, we will very likely have the entire area to ourselves, affording us more than enough room for even a Lassen-sized group!!!

For a more detailed treatise on Lake San Antonio, I suggest that you check out Doug Hudgins' website at <http://web99.arc.nasa.gov/~astrochm/dougbio.html>, then scroll down to find "**Extracurriculars...**".

And remember: despite the warm-to-extremely-hot temperatures that can often occur in this region during the daylight hours, it can become quite chilly at night; so be sure to bring at least twice as much clothing as you **think** you'll need.

NOTE: provisions at the lake store are limited, to say the least, although they do have an adequate cafeteria / snack bar. Make sure that you bring all the necessary equipment and supplies with you -- the nearest "decent" shopping area is back in King City.