

# Photographing The Milky Way Galaxy

August 4 and 5, 2024

Welcome to the Invitation Instructional Field Trip for Photographing the Galaxy/Milky Way.

- **What:** Following our classroom educational session on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, along with you practice runs using cameras and smartphones join other club members at one of the most beautiful spots to shoot the night skies. We say this because you will not only get the skies but also two lakes and potential reflection shots.
- **Where:** We will be in the Hope Valley area, south of Lake Tahoe, specifically Caples Lake and Silver Lake. These are proven locations offering small light pollution.
- **When:** We have August 4 and 5. This is right at the new moon cycle offering the darkest sky to maximize visibility and beauty of the galaxies and Milky Way. Even if you don't take photos, you will remember this night.
- **Why:** Night photography is unique and will take more effort to prepare and understand the best approaches for capturing the sights of the night sky. Greg Ferguson who will be presenting "Introduction of Introduction to Landscape Astrophotography" on July 3<sup>rd</sup> at the SIG meeting provides all the basics on how to get started. The field trip allows you to take photos in the ideal situation and environment, again weather permitting.
- **Who:** Club members will be available to assist you in setting up and providing advice at our locations. <sup>h</sup>.
- **What to Bring:** This is the Sierra Nevada Mountains in August. Please review the attached "checklist." This is based on years of experience. It is meant to provide the best information for your photographing experience, safety, and well-being.
- **Carpooling:** We will provide a list of attendees once the sign-up is completed. For those wishing to carpool please reach out to other members and/or let us know you are interested in carpooling, and we will put the word out.

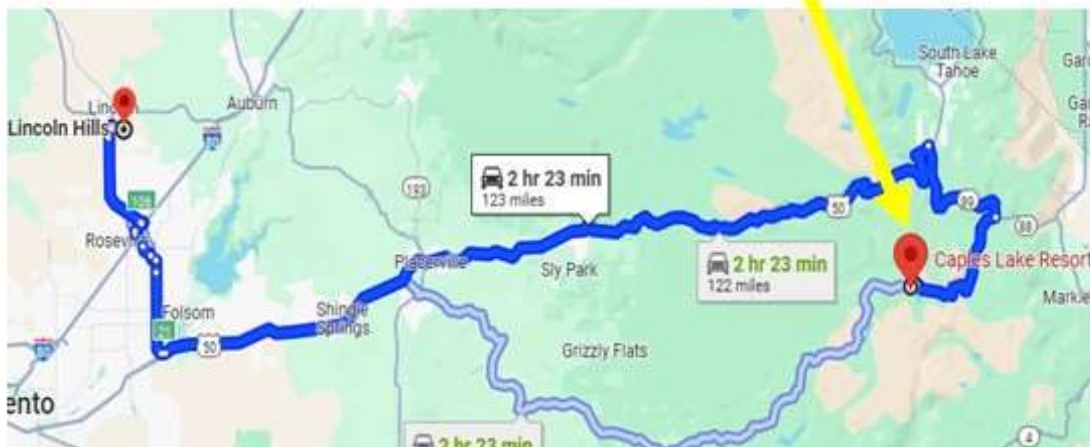
Please confirm if you plan to attend. Contact Jim, he will be keeping a list of attendees and provide updates and the final list to everyone. [jimsakaguchi57@gmail.com](mailto:jimsakaguchi57@gmail.com) 530-401-0949

## Location: Caples Lake, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:00pm

### Schedule:

- 5:00pm, gather at the “Meet Here” spot for a Q/A, Review places to set up, etc.
- 6:00pm, find your shooting location and set up equipment, software, etc.
- 6:30 - 8:30pm, start taking foreground shots.
- 8:30pm, start to see the stars.
- 10:00pm, Milky Way starts to become visible.

Directions to Caples Lake. Caples Lake is on Highway 88, east of Kirkwood Ski Resort. From Sun City take highway 50 to South Lake Tahoe (98 miles). When you get to Meyers, take Highway 89 south (11 miles). This will intersect with 88 (Carson Pass Highway), and make a right to go 13 miles. The meet-up is near Caples Lake Report, see below.



## Location – Silver Lake August 5<sup>th</sup>

Meet at Ferguson Point, see below for parking.

### Schedule:

- 5:00pm, gather at the “Meet Here” spot for a Q/A, Review places to set up, etc.
- 6:00pm, find your shooting location and set up equipment, software, etc.
- 6:30 - 8:30pm, start taking foreground shots.
- 8:30pm, start to see the stars.
- 10:00pm, Milky Way starts to become visible.



## **Checklist: Photography**

### **Mirrorless/DLSR Camera**

- Primary camera.
- Back-up camera if you have one.
- Tripod and extra attachment clips (if applicable).
- Remote shutter release.
- Gaffer's tape or painter's tape to lock down your pinpoint focus setting.
- Lens: optimal would be 16mm/24mm wide with 1.4 to 2.4 f-stop.
- Memory cards, ensure they are formatted correctly.
- Make sure batteries are fully charged.
- Batteries, min of one, more is better. Prolonged exposure can consume a lot of battery power.
- Lens hoods may be helpful to shield against unexpected light (cars, flashlights, etc.).
- Carry bag/camera backpack to keep your gear together. It is dark.
- Camera manual to solve problems. Load onto phone or have paper. Cell reception is nil or poor.
- Red light flashlight. Headlamp and/or handheld.
- Lens cleaning kit (cloth, brush, air bulbs).
- Paper and pen if you wish to document things.

### **Smartphone**

- Smartphone battery pack to recharge. There are many types to choose. Here are some examples, cord plug-in, magnetic, cards, etc. I do NOT recommend type 4. The phone power slot does not hold it.



- Tripod, if you are planning to do both your smartphone and primary camera suggest having on separate tripods.
- Remote shutter release. Some smartphones have voice command.
- Lens cleaner kit.

## Checklist: Personal Care

### Personal items

- Have paper maps and/or load maps loaded in your smartphone. Cell reception can be weak or none. Thus, GPS reliability and use can be non-existent.
- Validate your car's GPS working in the area. Should have a satellite connection but line of sight might be required. Test it during the day hours.
- **Portable/lightweight folding camp chair – it is a long night.**
- White light flashlight, use when walking back to car, etc. Please be aware of others taking pictures, do not shine the light around. Please stay focused on your walking path.
- Mosquito repellent and sunblock.
- Clothing. It will be cool. Dress in layers. Thermal underwear, neck gaiters, jacket, warm hat (Bennie), gloves.
- Footwear. Wear boots, hiking footwear or good traction shoes. Depending on where you decided to take photos some area's terrain can be rocky. If we have dampness, things could get slippery.
- Food – may want to have something you can throw in your backpack/bag. Snacks, sandwiches, bottled water, or a thermos with something hot to drink.
- Lightweight/portable raingear, we are in the Nevada Sierra with late summer storms possible. Consider bringing raingear.

### Safety

- Driving at night can be challenging. Remember, this will be one of the darkest nights (no moon). Be cautious when driving. **Always be aware of deer and other wildlife which are frequently on or near the roads at night. Go slow.**
- If possible, drive the areas in the day to become familiar with landmarks, turns, etc.
- Lighting/thunderstorm, hoping we do not see any (if we do forget the stars). These types of storm fronts are dangerous. Take cover immediately in your vehicle. "If you can hear it, fear it." Remember metal attracts lighting. Might be nice to take pictures but unless you're experienced in this type of photography we recommend not. Head for shelter/vehicle.
- This is a high-altitude area (7,000+ feet). If you start to experience headache, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, malaise, trouble sleeping, dizziness, and vision changes these are signs of high-altitude sickness. The following link provides more information. [Altitude Sickness: What It Is, Symptoms, Treatment & Prevention \(clevelandclinic.org\)](https://www.clevelandclinic.org/health/condition/altitude-sickness)

## Accommodations

Hotels and motels are limited in the area. The following are what we have found.

**Caples Lake Resort.** 1111 C.A. 88 Kirkwood, CA 95646 209-258-8888 Cabins range from \$210-\$350 a night plus taxes and other fees. Limited supply. [reservations@capleslakeresort.com](mailto:reservations@capleslakeresort.com)

**Kirkwood Mountain Resort** (844) 471-3753 Prices for condo/rooms range from \$129-\$359 a night plus taxes and other fees. Locations vary in the resort. If you book here, you will need to get the address.

[Kirkwood Hotels, Condos & Vacation Rentals | Kirkwood Ski Resort](#)

**Desolation Hotel** at 14255 CA-88, Hope Valley, CA 96120. +15306942203. These are mostly 2 to 4 person cabins. They range in price from \$400/\$575 a night. [Desolation Hotel Hope Valley](#)

**Kit Carson Lodge** 32161 Kit Carson Rd, Kit Carson, CA Prices starts at \$369/night for a 2-person cabin. Limited supply. [Kit Carson Lodge - Rustic Silver Lake Cabins & Restaurant](#)

**Recommend you read on-line reviews by customers to see if any of these locations will fit your needs and expectations.**

**Outdoor Camping is an option.** There are several tent camping locations in the area. The following is a list. **These sites do NOT take reservations, first come, first serve.** You will need to bring your own camping equipment (tent, lights, stove, sleeping bag, mat, cot, cooler, etc.).

Name	Phone	Website	Reserveration	Daily Fees	Water	Restroom	Bath
Caples Lake Campground	15306225061	<a href="#">Eldorado - Caples Lake Campground (usda.gov)</a>	No	\$28 to \$56 (Double)	Yes	Yes	No
Woods Lake Campground	12092954251	<a href="#">Eldorado - Woods Lake Campground (usda.gov)</a>	No	\$28 to \$56 (Double)	Yes	Yes	No
Silver Lake West Campground	15302956810	<a href="#">Silver Lake West Campground   El Dorado Irrigation District (eid.org)</a>	?	See Website	Yes	Yes	No
Silver Lake East- Eldorado	12092954251	<a href="#">Silver Lake East- Eldorado, Eldorado National Forest - Recreation.gov</a>	Yes	See Website	Yes	Yes	No
Silver Fork Campground	15306442324	<a href="#">Eldorado - Silver Fork Campground (usda.gov)</a>	No	\$28 to \$56 (Double)	Yes	Yes	No
Kirkwood Campground	15306225061	<a href="#">Eldorado - Kirkwood Campground (usda.gov)</a>	No	\$28 to \$56 (Double)	Yes	Yes	No

## Restaurants / Food

**Food outlets and restaurants are limited.**

**We recommend bringing a cooler and your own food and beverage supplies.** The two gathering at the lakes we suggest you bring sandwiches and your favorite snacks. We will be going into the late hours. Can be cool, a hot beverage in a thermos will be helpful.

The following are the main restaurants.

### **Desolation Hotel Hope Valley**

Mon-Sun 12:00-8:00pm,

14255 CA-88 Wylder Hotel, Markleeville, CA 96120

(530) 694-2203

Pricing: \$\$ Stars - 4

**The Restaurant at Caples Lake Resort**

Wed/Thur/Fri/Sat/Sun only 5:30-9:30am, 3:00-9:30pm.

1111 CA-88, Kirkwood, CA 95646

(209) 258-8888

Pricing: \$\$\$ Star – 4.5

**Kirkwood Inn and Saloon**

Fri/Sat/Sun only 12:00-6:00pm,

CA-88, Kirkwood, CA 95646.

(209) 258-7304

Pricing: \$\$ Stars - 4

**Silver Fork Restaurant**

Mon/Wed/Thur/Fri/Sat/Sun 12:00-3:00pm and 5:00-9:00pm.

32161 Kit Carson Rd, Kit Carson, CA 95644.

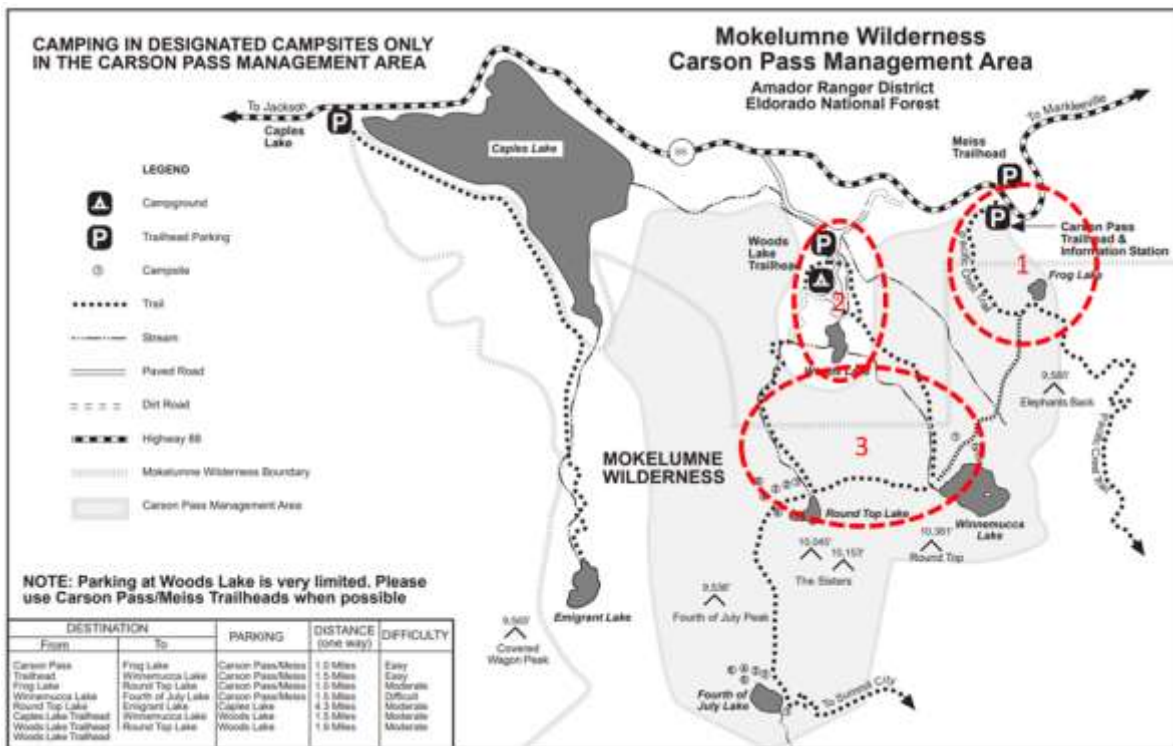
(209) 258-8500

Pricing \$\$ Stars – 4

**Day Time Activities/Sights to Photography**

There will No formal activities scheduled. The following are suggestions only of places or areas you may want to check-out.

Some members have hiked in the area and recommend the following three areas in Carson Pass Management Area. 1 and 2 are short hikes. Number 3 requires doing either 1 or 2 first. Recommend 2 and 3 together.

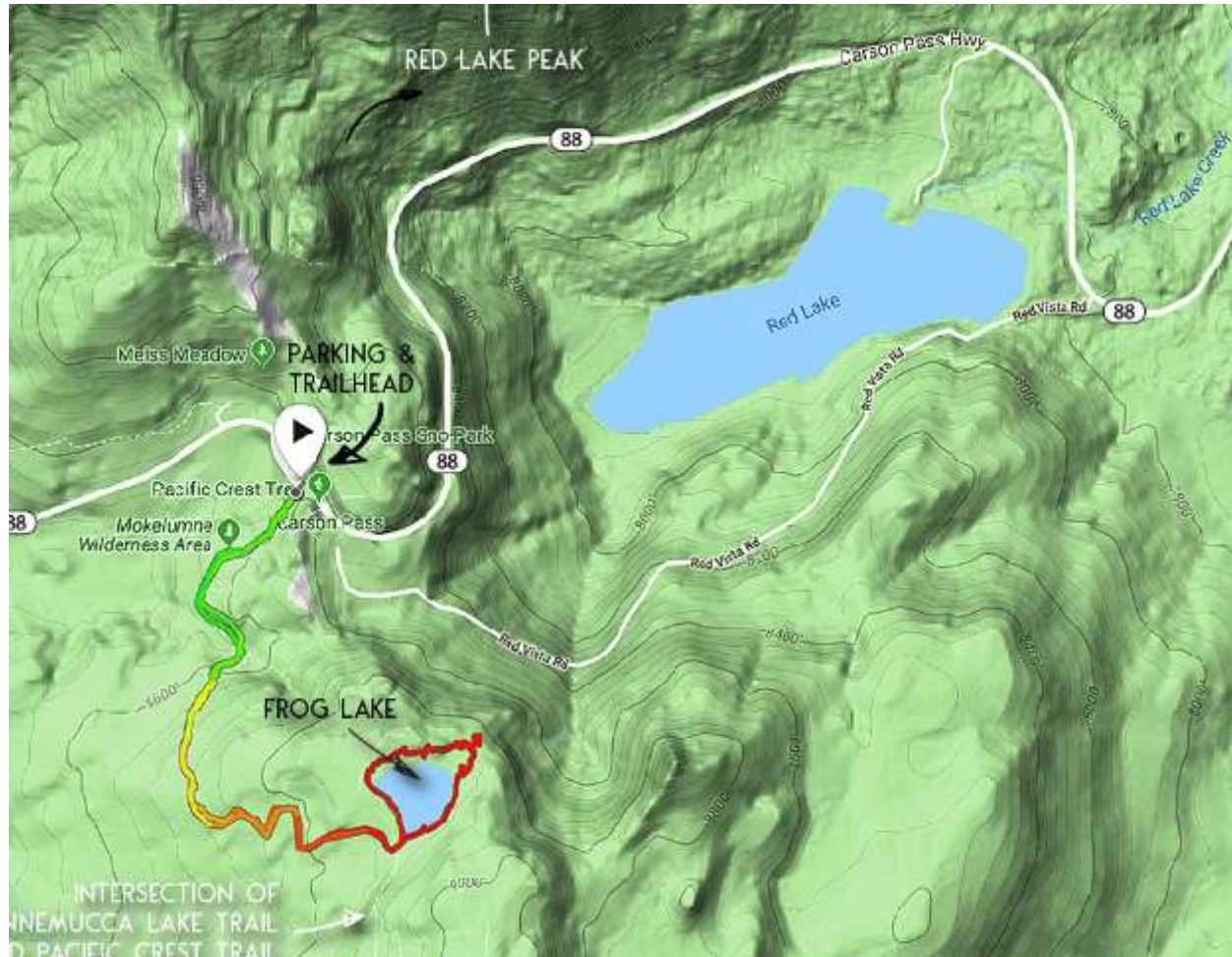


## 1. Carson Pass Information Center to Frog Lake

Hiking to Frog Lake is an ideal adventure for all ages/fitness levels because the trail to Frog Lake short and easy. Should have wildflowers. Reaching Frog Lake, you will have views of the Carson Pass area to see Freel Peak, Hope Valley, Markleeville Peak, Elephant's Back, Round Top, The Sister, Caples Lake, and Little Round Top.

Hike Difficulty: moderate, hard-packed sand/rocky terrain. Total miles: 3 (out and back). Trailhead elevation: 8,570, highest point 8,870. Elevation gain: 350 feet.

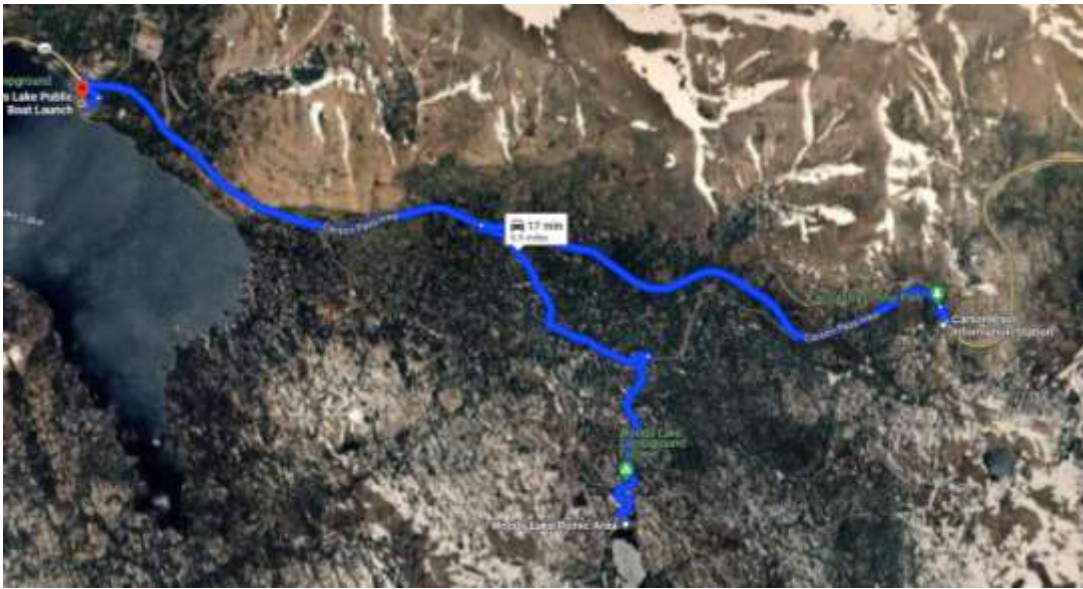
<https://tahoetrailguide.com/hiking-frog-lake/>





## 2. Woods Lake

Another trail you can hike to see lakes, streams and wildflowers is the Woods Lake. You can drive to Woods Lake and head towards the picnic area at the end of Woods Lake Road. You can get onto Woods Lake Road off Route 88. It is between Caples Lake (3 miles from the lake to road entry) and 1.6 miles from the Carson Pass Information. Woods Lake Road is a gravel road.



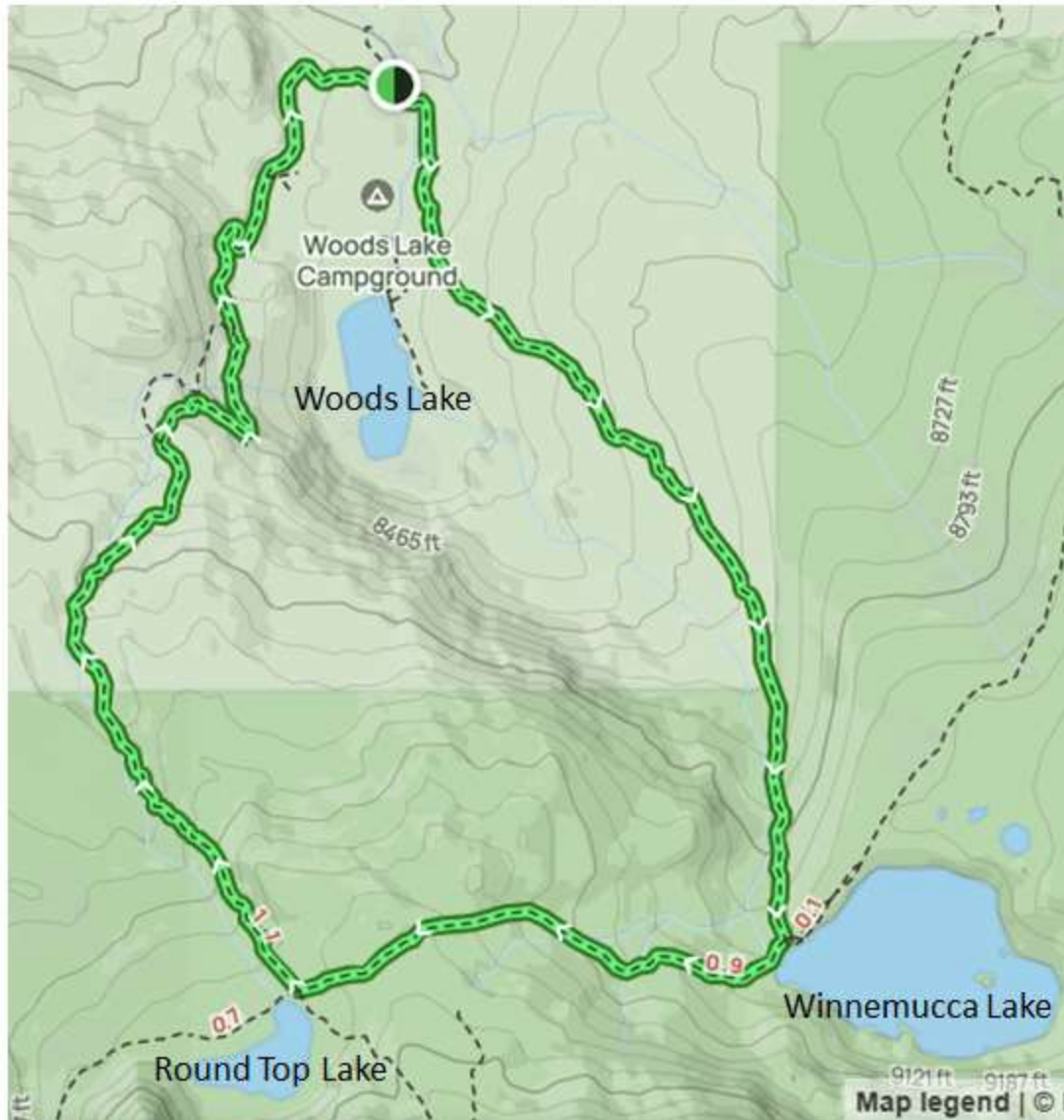
Once on Woods Lake Road heading to the picnic area you will see trailhead access to Round Top Lake Trail and the Winnemucca Lake Trail. In the picnic area parking is limited to 15-20 spaces. If you cannot park go back towards 88, there is another parking area. There is a restroom and tables available at the picnic area. To walk around the Woods Lake, see below. The official trail only extends part of way (see below).



Doing the full loop of 2 and 3 will take you to Winnemucca and Round Top Loop

Rating: Moderate Total Loop: 4.7 miles Elevation Gain: 1,217 ft Time: 3 – 4 hours.

## Woods Lake, Winnemucca and Round Top Lakes Loop



### Some articles about the area.

[Woods Lake Wildflower Loop at Carson Pass - Charlie Russell Nature Photography \(ibrakeforwildflowers.com\)](https://www.ibrakeforwildflowers.com/)

[Round Top, Carson Pass CA \(trailspotting.com\)](https://www.trailspotting.com/)

[Sierra Hikes - Woods Lake Loop - STEVE JACKOWSKI](#)

**The Interpretive Hikes at Carson Pass Station for the summer 2024 season have begun.**

[CPIS Interpretive hikes 2024.docx \(wildapricot.com\)](#)

[Carson Pass - ENFIA](#)

## **Other sites a little further away:**

### South Lake Tahoe

- Emerald Bay State Park
- Eagle Falls
- Desolation Wilderness
- Vikingsholm (old mansion)
- Cascade Falls
- Tallac Historic Site

### East Shore/North Lake Tahoe

- Sand Harbor Beach
- Bonsai Rock
- Chimney Beach
- Zephyr Cove

### Genoa, Nevada

- Mormon Station State Historic Park
- Genoa Courthouse Museum
- Genoa Bar (oldest bar in NV)
- North River Fork Ranch Trailhead