NRS NATURAL RESERVE SYSTEM

University of California

Eagle Lake Biological Field Station

Site Specs

Administering Campus
UC Davis

Established
1986 as an NRS reserve; field station originally established in 1968.

Location
Lassen County, one-hour drive north of Susanville, on eastern shore of Eagle Lake.

Size
25 ha (62 acres)

Elevation
1,554 to 2,438 m (5,100 to 8,000 ft)

Average Precipitation
31 to 36 cm (12 to 14 in) per year

Average Temperatures
Winter low: -15°C (5°F)
Summer high: 35°C (95°F)
Summer low: 10°C (50°F)

Facilities
Lab-dorm complex w/ running water, telephone, modest computer facilities, five-room lab, 24-bunk dorm, dining hall w/ kitchen, cluster of five cabins, building w/ small library/discussion area and compact dormitory space for 12; 25'X10' pontoon-style deck boat, 16' aluminum boat, 16' fiberglass boat; some scientific equipment available at reserve — more available at (and can be transported from) CA State University (CSU) Chico.

Databases
Geographic information system (GIS) being developed.

Personnel
Steward and cook on site; station director at CSU Chico Department of Biological Sciences; faculty reserve manager at UC Davis.

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NRS Website
<http://nrs.ucop.edu>

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Located in the remote northeastern corner of California at the juncture of the Sierra Nevada, Cascades, Great Basin, and volcanic Modoc Plateau, Eagle Lake Biological Field Station affords excellent opportunities to study California's fourth largest lake. A Pleistocene remnant of the Lake Lahonton system, Eagle Lake covers 12,146 hectares (30,000 acres) and stretches for nearly 23 kilometers (14 miles). This clear and cold high-altitude lake consists of three interconnected and limnologically distinct basins, which support only five fish species, all native and thriving: tui chub, Tahoe sucker, speckled dace, Lahontan redside, and rainbow trout. The landscape around Eagle Lake, also available for study, is primarily volcanic, with basaltic flows, lava caves, and a nearby caldera. Diverse habitats on lava flats accessible from the field station include fir and pine forests, mixed conifers, juniper and sagebrush scrub, and mountain mahogany. There are also more localized assemblages of manzanita and ceanothus brushfields, riparian woodlands with cottonwoods and willows, wet meadows, and freshwater marshes. These pristine habitats support more than 70 mammal species, 180 bird species, and one of the largest breeding populations of western grebes in North America. Dirt roads leading to the reserve are rough and rocky; four-wheel drive may be necessary during the winter and spring.

Selected Research

The effect of human disturbance on the nesting success of Aechmophorus grebes.

The ecology of over-water nesting ducks.

Mating system variation and genetic variation in the dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes*).

Special Programs

Field courses: High educational use of the site includes short and extended visits, lasting up to several weeks, by university courses in field biology, wildlife and fish biology, zooarchaeology and field ecology, archaeological site surveying, and others.

Reserve website: Further information on this field station, jointly administered by UC and CA State University (CSU), Chico, is available at: <http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/EagleLake/eaglelake.html>.