

Webber Lake Campground Opens Pristine Wilderness, History to Public

By **Truckee Donner Land Trust** - April 4, 2018, 09:57:09 AM

SIERRA COUNTY, Calif. April 4, 2018 – Less than an hour north of the hustle and bustle of Lake Tahoe, the serene Webber Lake Campground is open to the public for the first time in many years.

Quietly sitting unnoticed for a century, spectacular forests, meadows and wildlife thrive, and surrounding peaks and ridges give the small lake a secluded feel. The 45-site campground, now owned and operated by the Truckee Donner Land Trust, offers access to hiking, fishing, paddling and cycling to those looking for a unique escape.



Dawn at Webber Lake. Photo by John Peltier

“Webber Lake is a really special place, and once you’ve spent a couple nights there, you’ll understand why,” said Perry Norris, executive director of the Truckee Donner Land Trust. “We’ve been eying this property for 20 years – we’d heard stories about it, but it was more on our fantasy wish list than a realistic acquisition.”

Home to threatened and endangered species, bird migration corridors and a lake stocked with fish, the 3,000-acre property has only been visited by a select few as a private campground for generations.

Calls from sandhill crane, coyote and other animals echo over the lake at dusk as sunset paints the surrounding peaks orange and purple, and at dawn as mist rises from the lake’s crystal-clear water.

It’s the perfect base camp to explore nearby Perazzo Meadows, Mt. Lola, Independence Lake, The Pacific Crest Trail, Webber Falls and Sierra Valley to the north.

And while few today are familiar with the campground, lake and adjoining Lacey Meadow, it was once a mainstay on the overland route to California during the Gold Rush. The last hotel along the historic Henness Pass wagon train route still stands on the property, one of the oldest standing buildings in Northern California dating back to 1860.

In 2012 The Truckee Donner Land Trust and its partner, The Trust for Public Land, with support from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, California Natural Resources Agency, and the Northern Sierra Partnership purchased the property for \$8 million from the Johnson family, who has owned the property since 1870.

“It was mostly done over their kitchen table – Perry would bring them soup,” said John Svahn, stewardship director for the Land Trust. “Mr. and Mrs. Johnson wanted the property preserved and kept like it is, so in the end they turned down more lucrative offers and even made a donation to the land trust.”

2018 will be the first full camping season open to the public, and reservations are recommended. Go to tdlandtrust.org/webber-lakelacey-meadows to make reservations or to learn more.

About the Truckee Donner Land Trust

The Truckee Donner Land Trust preserves and protects scenic, historic and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the Truckee Donner region.

The Land Trust works with landowners, federal, state and local governments, and the public-at-large, to create win-win situations for private and public interests. Learn more at tdlandtrust.org.

