

Summit Lake Paiute Tribe

Natural Resources Department

Newsletter



April 2025



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Pictures taken by Tribal members at the 2024 Reservation Event



On March 13, 2025 the SnoTel weather station on Summit Lake Mountain recorded 37 inches of snow, and temperatures ranged from highs around 36 to lows around 19 degrees Fahrenheit. The SnoTel Station has recorded continuous presence of snow since November 2nd, with the deepest amount recorded as 42 inches on March 7th. Soldier Meadows road to the Reservation has snow, mud, and lingering puddles in places. Snow drifts a foot or two deep on the road near the western boundary make

passage difficult. Expect lots of mud and more difficult travel conditions in the upcoming weeks as more snow melts.

Travelers are advised to use caution. Bring a shovel in case of getting stuck, and extra food, water, and appropriate clothing in case you need to wait for or get help. Be sure to tell someone of your planned travel and when to expect to hear from you.



Natural Resources Staff

James Waddell-Fish & Wildlife Biologist



Hello, my name is James Waddell, and I am beginning my seventh year as a Fish and Wildlife Biologist with the Natural Resources Department. I have a master's degree in Natural Resource Management from Oregon State University, and I have decades of field experience working on several diverse projects ranging from bear and wolf research to private consultation with government agencies. I am captivated by natural resource management issues with particular concern regarding the conservation of threatened and endangered species. I am excited to continue projects investigating bat and bird species diversity on the Reservation this summer and I am proud to serve the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe in their efforts to conserve these species and the landscape upon which they rely.

Jason Piasecki-Fish & Wildlife Biologist

Hello, my name is Jason Piasecki and I am happy to continue to serve as one of your Fish and Wildlife Biologists. I have a BS



in Fisheries and Wildlife Science and an MS in Sustainable Forest Management from Oregon State University. Over the past seven years I have worked with numerous threatened and endangered species including Marbled Murrelets and Red Tree Voles. My passion is to explore and develop creative solutions to conserve and protect our most sensitive wildlife resources in the face of anthropogenic and climate driven challenges. My main focus on the Reservation will continue to be Greater sage-grouse but I am also looking forward to increasing our understanding of other ecologically important species and starting the Tribe's native seed program. I am excited and



honored to serve both the Tribe and your wildlife resources so please do not hesitate to reach out to me at jason.piasecki@slptnv.org with any questions about upland wildlife and habitats at Summit Lake.

Audrey Dufresne-Fish & Wildlife Biologist



Hello! My name is Audrey, and I am one of your Fish and Wildlife Biologists! I will be entering into my fourth field season with the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, and I'm excited to help continue to manage your Lahontan cutthroat trout. In 2021, I graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno with a degree in Environmental Science emphasizing in restoration and conservation and a minor in Spanish. Over the past three years working on various projects though the Natural Resources Department I have seen myself grow tremendously and am excited to continue to develop my skills this next field season. In my free time I enjoy playing rugby, exploring new places, painting, and spending time with family and friends.



Natural Resources Staff

Keane Flynn-Fish & Wildlife Biologist



Hello! My name is Keane Flynn and I am one of your Fish and Wildlife Biologists with the Natural Resources Department. While this is my first year as a staff biologist, this will be my fourth season working up on the Reservation. I recently finished my master's degree with the University of Nevada, Reno studying the stream-resident Lahontan Cutthroat trout population in Mahogany Creek after getting my bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley. This year I will be leading the implementation of the observational network at the Reservation which will help improve our efficiency as a Department to collect remote data and share it with you all! While most of my educational background is in fisheries work, much of my professional work involves implementing cutting-edge technological advancements for environmental monitoring. I am excited to apply my diverse skillset to whatever projects I am able to assist with to help conserve the landscape and improve our ability to share this conservation effort with you all!



Meghan Munn-Program Coordinator/Biologist

Hello! My name is Meghan Munn, and this will be my third year as the Natural Resources Program Coordinator/Biologist. I grew up in Auburn, California and received my Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Conservation Biology from UC Davis. Previously, I worked with the USGS in the California Central Valley on the monitoring project for the threatened giant garter snake, I have also worked at UC Davis in a teaching biology lab, and at UNR as a Laboratory Animal Technician. I am passionate about conservation, and look forward to continuing the reptile and amphibian inventory study this coming field season. Please feel free to email me at mghan.munn@slptnv.org if you have any questions or concerns.



Elizabeth Mast-Environmental Specialist



Hello! My name is Elizabeth Mast, and I am your Environmental Specialist. This is my first year working with the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe. I earned my master's degree in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology from the University of Nevada, Reno, in the fall of 2024. Before that, I grew up in Las Vegas and completed my bachelor's degree in Environmental and Resource Science. Throughout my academic journey, I gained hands-on experience working with various lake monitoring programs and local government environmental offices. I am passionate about conserving and protecting beautiful and wild places and sharing my love for the land with others. At Summit Lake, my work focuses on water quality sampling, nonpoint source pollution monitoring, vegetation management,

and community outreach. Outside of work, I am a landscape artist, angler, and avid hiker—I enjoy spending time outdoors in every way possible. I am grateful for this opportunity to work with you and can be reached at elizabeth.mast@slptnv.org.



Natural Resources Staff

Megan Yount-Fish & Wildlife Biologist



Hi, I'm Megan Yount, a Seasonal Fish and Wildlife Biologist with a deep passion for birds and wildlife conservation. Originally from Texas, I've spent my career working on wildlife research, habitat monitoring, and outdoor education across the western U.S. I love being out in the field, whether I'm conducting avian surveys, studying plant ecosystems, or capturing sage-grouse overnight. I've had the opportunity to conduct research for the Tribe before, so I'm thrilled to be spending another year here! When I'm not working, you'll find me making the most of life in Lake Tahoe. In the winter, I love snowboarding in the Sierras, and in the summer, I spend as much time as possible swimming and paddleboarding on the lake. Feel free to reach out to me at megan.yount@slptnv.org!



MaryAnne Hafen-Natural Resources Technician



Hello, I'm MaryAnne Hafen, and it is my first year as a Natural Resources Technician. I have experience working with native plants in identification, wildland seed collection, and propagation. I'm looking forward to expanding my knowledge working with sage grouse this season as well as helping to start the Tribe's native seed program. When I'm not outdoors I enjoy playing piano, painting, and writing.



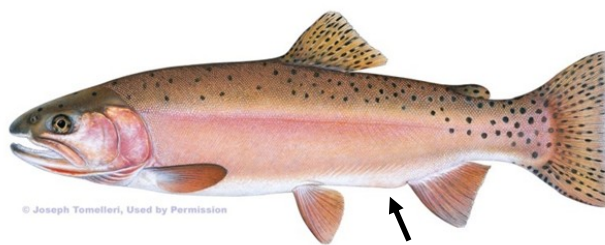
Fishing Regulations

Fishing limits for 2025 were established by the Tribal Council at the February 2025 meeting:

3 fish allowed per adult Tribal member and 1 fish allowed per minor Tribal member per year.

- ◆ Tribal members must be present on the Reservation to take their limit of fish.
- ◆ Except for spouses of Tribal members, fishing by non-Tribal members is prohibited.
- ◆ A non-Tribal member married to a Tribal member may assist their spouse in fishing or fish in place of their spouse, as long as the Tribal member is present on the Reservation. Their take in fish per year is limited to the number of fish to which the Tribal member is entitled.
- ◆ Mahogany Creek is closed to all fishing in and above the fish trap and 100 yards below the fish trap (marked by the fence crossing the stream) from March 1 to June 15.
- ◆ **All of Mahogany Creek is closed to fishing from September-December 2025.**
- ◆ Tribal members may use dip nets and fishing poles to catch fish. The use of live bait, chumming, gaff hooks, spears, traps, wire fences, or other implements to take fish is prohibited.

Remember- the fish you catch could potentially have been tagged. Please have a Tribal employee scan your catch before cleaning it. PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) tags are small, bead-like capsules inserted just below the skin of a fish. Tribal members fishing this spring should bring their fish to the Tribal Compound to be scanned for the presence of a PIT tag so that it can be removed before eating.



Hunting Regulations

Hunting within the boundaries of the Reservation is permitted to Tribal members provided that hunting is conducted in a safe manner.

- ♦ A non-Tribal member married to a Tribal member may assist their spouse in hunting or hunt in place of their spouse, as long as the Tribal member is present on the Reservation.
- ♦ Firearms are not to be discharged within 300 feet of buildings, land assignments, or areas known to be occupied by Tribal members or employees. Firearms are not to be discharged from motorized vehicles, or at night.
- ♦ **When hunting or fishing on the Reservation, it is strongly recommended that you carry your state issued ID, SLPT member ID, Harvest tag, and any hunter safety documentation.**



Sage-grouse harvest limits for 2025 were established by the Tribal Council at the February 2025 meeting:

Sage-grouse hunting season at Summit Lake is **September 1, 2025 to September 30, 2025**

Harvest limit: 1 per adult member per year, no take for minors

- Except for spouses of Tribal members, hunting by non-Tribal members is prohibited.
- A non-Tribal member married to a Tribal member may assist their spouse in hunting or hunt in place of their spouse, as long as the Tribal member is present on the Reservation. Their harvest per year is limited to that which the Tribal member is entitled.
- Spotlighting sage-grouse while hunting is strictly prohibited
-

Please report any sage-grouse harvest to the Natural Resources Department using the provided harvest reporting tag

Harvest Reporting

The Council approved a harvest tagging and reporting process for fish and game taken on the Reservation. Currently, this process is completely optional, but the department strongly recommends that all members who harvest any fish and/or game on the Reservation properly fill out the harvest tag and return the reporting card. This process has three main benefits:

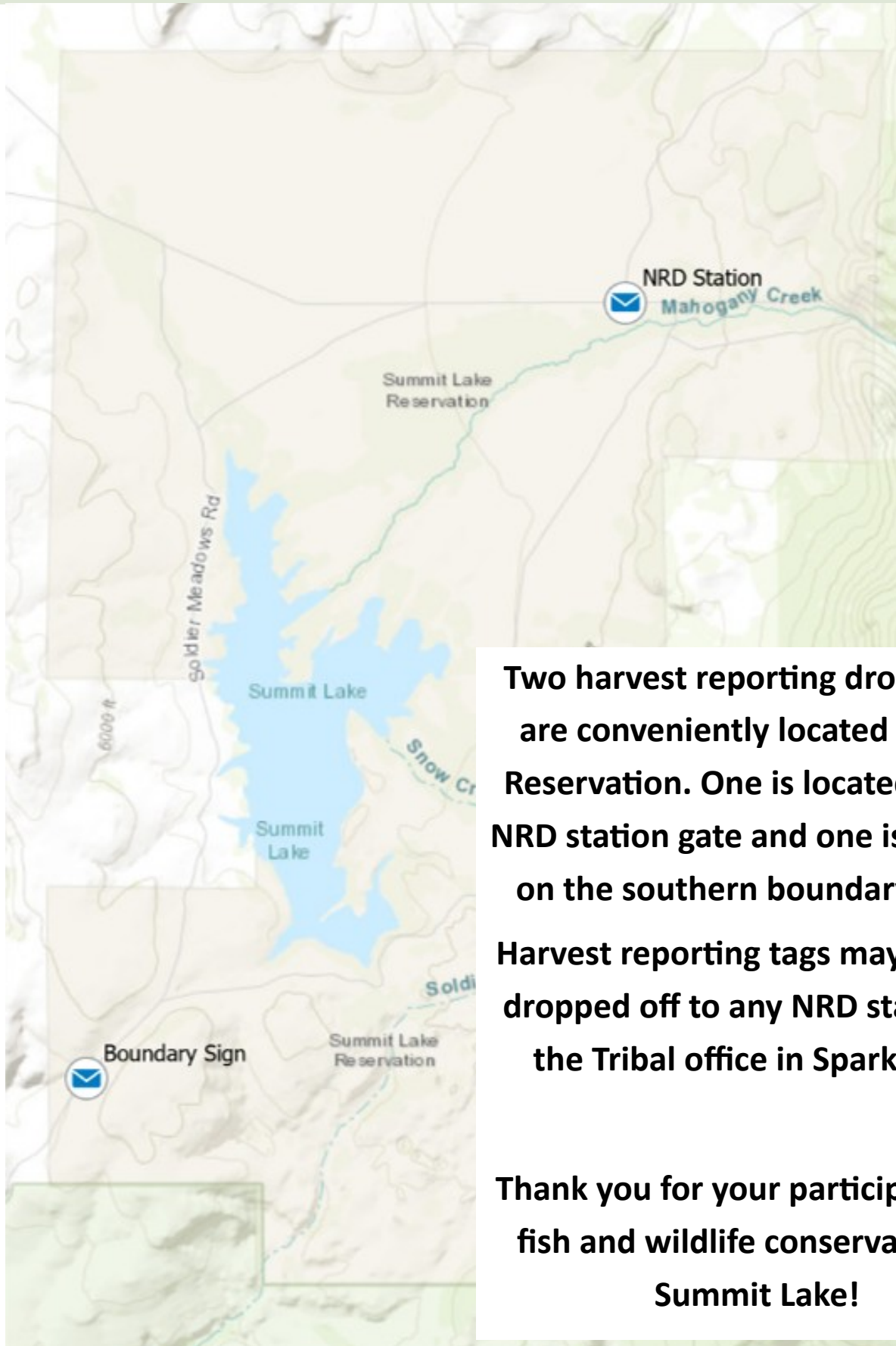
1. Proper tagging of harvest provides clarity to state game wardens in the event that any member is stopped outside the Reservation boundary with harvest taken on Summit Lake Tribal lands.
2. Harvest reporting provides valuable information to the NRD to more accurately monitor fish and wildlife populations at Summit Lake.
3. Annual harvest regulations (as approved by the Council) are detailed on the back of the harvest tag to provide a friendly reminder of any limits, restrictions, and/or seasons on fish and wildlife species within the Reservation boundary.

Additional harvest tags may be mailed on request or picked up at the Tribal office in Sparks, NV, and any questions about harvest tagging and reporting may be directed to the Natural Resources Department.

Harvest reporting cards are found on the bottom, tear-off portion of the harvest tag. These cards can be dropped in either of two harvest reporting drop boxes located at the Reservation (see map on next page), or dropped off at the Tribal office in Sparks, NV.



Harvest Reporting



Two harvest reporting drop boxes are conveniently located on the Reservation. One is located at the NRD station gate and one is located on the southern boundary sign . Harvest reporting tags may also be dropped off to any NRD staff or at the Tribal office in Sparks, NV.

Thank you for your participation in fish and wildlife conservation at Summit Lake!

Harvest Reporting

FRONT

Record location of harvest (latitude/longitude preferred)

Circle appropriate species/sex for upland game and/or number of fish for LCT


This portion will show the current annual harvest limits/seasons as approved by the Tribal Council

Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Harvest Tag

Tag #: _____ Tribal Enrollment #: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____
Location (Lat/Lon): _____
Species: Mule Deer Antelope Sage Grouse
Sex: Male Female
LCT #: _____

Harvest Year


24	25	26	27
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Harvest taken on Summit Lake Paiute Tribal lands per Tribal Ordinance V. Take limits on reverse side.
For questions or concerns, please contact:
 SLPT Natural Resources Director
2255 Green Vista Dr. Suite 402
Sparks, NV 89431

Tag #: _____ Tribal Enrollment #: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____
Location (Lat/Lon): _____
Species: Mule Deer Antelope Sage Grouse
Sex: Male Female
LCT #: _____
Please tear off and return to station, office, or dropbox

This information should match the top portion. Tear off bottom and return to NRD station, Tribal office or harvest tag drop box.

BACK

 **Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Harvest Limits**

LCT (Per Adult Member):

No Take	1	2	3	4	5
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LCT (Per Minor Member, 17 & Under):

No Take	1	2	3	4	5
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Sage Grouse:

No Take	1	2	3	4	5
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Sage Grouse Season: _____
Mule Deer & Antelope: No limit; any sex and size
No harvest regulations on any other game animal
THESE REGULATIONS APPLY ONLY TO HARVEST TAKEN ON SLPT RESERVATION
Any fish or game harvested outside SLPT Reservation boundary requires appropriate state license(s) and is subject to Nevada state regulations. For additional information contact NDOW at (775) 688-1500.

NRD respects privacy of Tribal members and will never release personal information related to harvest without Council authorization

Preventing the Spread of Invasive Species & Disease

Preventing Invasive Species on the Reservation

Invasive species are non-native species whose introduction causes harm to the environment that they have been introduced to. Invasive species are often called “hitchhikers” because of the primary way they spread into new environments, which is by “hitching” a ride on clothing or equipment. ¹ A few simple practices can help stop the spread of invasive species on the Reservation:

Invasive Plant Species: Remove all seeds and stickers from hiking shoes and clothing before wearing them on the Reservation. Boot brushes can work well for this.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS): In order to prevent the spread of AISs on the Reservation, waders, shoes/boots, and nets should be disinfected before being placed in the water.

To disinfect waders and equipment, you will need ²:

- Bucket of soapy water
- Scrub brush
- 3% bleach solution in a spray bottle (1:32 dilution)
- A hose or gallon of fresh water

Steps to disinfect ²:

1. Remove all visible debris with hose and/or scrub brush
2. Wash with soapy water
3. Rinse with fresh water
4. Spray equipment thoroughly with diluted bleach solution, including bottoms of boots/waders
5. Wait 5 minutes
6. Rinse with fresh water

Preventing the Spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is a disease that occurs naturally in waterfowl and can infect other bird species and animals (including humans), but currently poses a low risk to the public according to the CDC ³. It is spread through infected birds’ saliva, nasal secretions, and feces ³. HPAI has been detected in birds on the Reservation. To prevent its spread, any shoes worn on the Reservation (especially near the lake where waterfowl feces is present) should be cleaned then disinfected (using a 3% bleach solution) as soon as possible after leaving the Reservation. HPAI is not transmissible through harvested birds as long as meat is properly cooked.



References

1. https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/invasives/Documents/Action/Training_AISDeconModule_NoQuiz_ADA.pdf?rev=3bf97924c633467f84cdf0a124fc45e
2. <https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/wildlife-wetland-sanitation.pdf>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-in-birds.htm>

Fisheries Management and Activities



The NRD fisheries program had a very successful season in 2024. Staff monitored the annual spring spawning run at the fish trap from April 15th-June 20th. This year, we had 340 spawning Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) pass through the trap on Mahogany Creek, an increase from 2023. The population of LCT in the watershed varies quite a bit depending on the time of year (pre-spawn versus post-spawn), and therefore enumerating the size of the spawning run and monitoring trends across time is a key factor in understanding the population dynamics of this species.

To better understand LCT spawning activity redd surveys were conducted throughout the lower Mahogany Creek watershed towards the end of May. These redd surveys consisted of staff walking along Mahogany Creek to map the distribution of redds encountered, and to record specific data associated with each redd such as average substrate size, redd dimensions, and water temperature. Data from

these surveys will inform future restoration efforts by identifying key characteristics and habitat type that are needed for LCT to spawn.

Staff also completed three surveys in Summit Lake itself to sample the lake population pre-spawn, post-spawn, and in the fall. These fish are measured, weighed, and checked for a PIT (passive integrated transponder) tag, and tagged if one was not already present. Tagging fish is an important tool that allows us to do capture-mark-recapture studies, which helps us estimate the size of the population at any given time based on the proportion of fish that are new captures versus fish that are recaptures during a particular sampling period.



Fisheries Management and Activities

PIT tags also allow us to track LCT movements throughout the watershed to better understand habitat usage and identify areas for targeting restoration efforts. To provide us with more information on fish movement, staff downloaded data periodically from four stationary PIT tag readers on Mahogany Creek. In 2025, staff aim to expand our network by adding new PIT tag readers in understudied areas of the watershed to better assess the population in the future.



NRD staff also completed another electrofishing survey of Mahogany Creek and Summer Camp Creek. Eighteen sections of creek were non-lethally surveyed across four days in late July. These surveys are our primary source of data on stream resident LCT and help us determine the density of LCT throughout the watershed.

In partnership with researchers at the University of Nevada Reno, a Summit Lake Population Viability Analysis (PVA) model is being created to assess the probability of LCT's long-term persistence. This model is complex and takes into account all the different life history stages of LCT to provide much more accurate information on the health and size of the population at every life stage. The PVA model will also be a valuable tool to inform future management and restoration efforts.

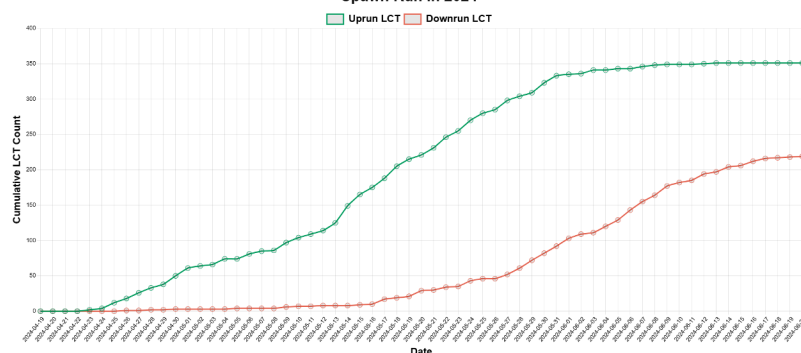


LCT Counter and Fish Trap Livestream

For the second year, Natural Resources Department will continue operation of a new section on our website that is focused on sharing information about the Lahontan Cutthroat trout population at the Reservation. Our first addition to this section will be a graph that will display the current cumulative count of Lahontan Cutthroat trout we have captured migrating upstream before spawning and back downstream after spawning through the trap in Mahogany Creek fish trap. With the addition of some new equipment we have installed on the Reservation, this daily count will be updated every few hours so you will know (in real time) exactly how many fish we have processed this year! This fish counter will be operational for the 2025 LCT spawn run in April 2025.

Additionally, this webpage will periodically live-stream a video of the Natural Resources Department catching and processing LCT in the fish trap! You will get to see us capture, measure, weight, tag, and release the LCT in real time. We plan to announce on our social media pages the specific dates and time when the livestream will be up and running on the website, but we currently plan to host this livestream once a week on our website during the peak of the spawn run (usually the month of May) to make sure you all get to see plenty of fish. Stay tuned for more information and updates about the cool projects we plan to share with you all!

Mahogany Creek Lahontan Cutthroat Trout
Spawn Run in 2024



Line graph showing current cumulative LCT count
for 2024



The LCT count and live-stream will be available at <https://www.summitlaketribe.org/lct.html>, or by scanning the QR code above.



Image from the livestream camera installed in the fish trap looking into Mahogany Creek



In the Fall of 2024, the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, along with our partners at the University of Nevada, Reno, installed a network tower on the mountain-top overlooking Summit Lake. This tower is connected to an expansive point-to-point network throughout the state of Nevada used to monitor for wildfires in real time. As the Reservation has not experienced any substantial wildfires in roughly two decades, the risk of wildfire on the Reservation is of great concern to the well-being of the natural resources at the Reservation. Leveraging this camera and advanced real time analytical methods from our colleagues at UNR, we will be ready for potential wildfires and be able to respond as quickly as possible, even when no staff are present.



The QR code above will direct you to the Summit Lake Alert Wildfire camera.

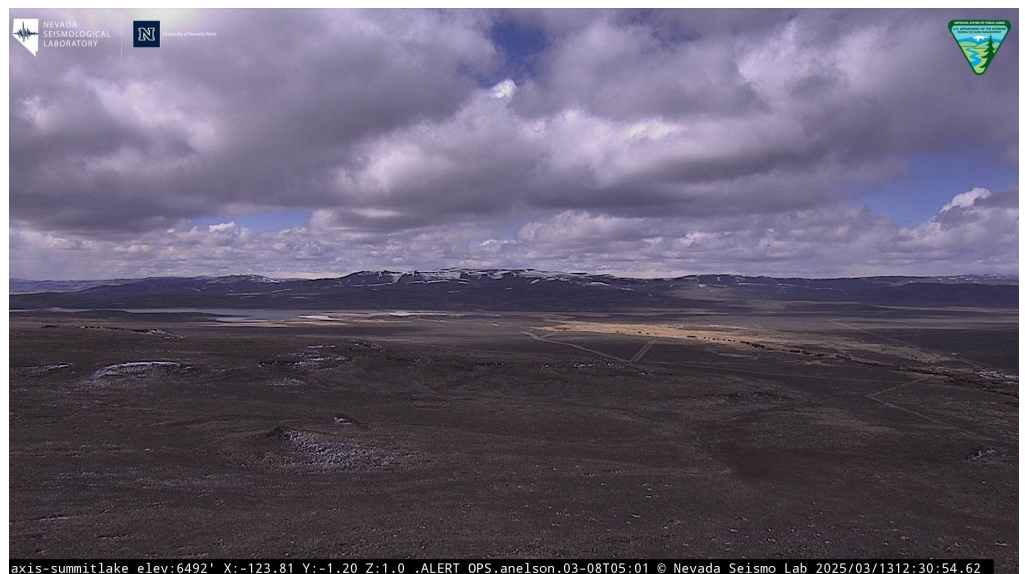


Image from the Summit Lake wildfire camera

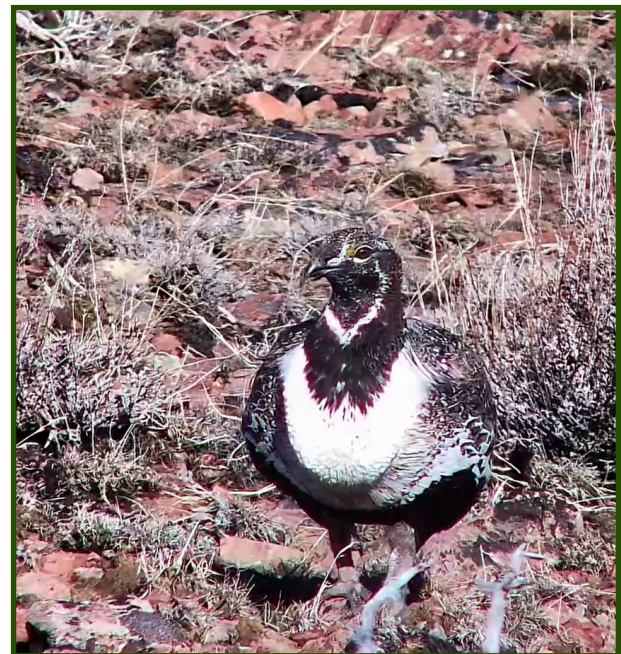
Sage-Grouse Study



Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) are the largest of seven grouse species in North America and occupy sagebrush-steppe ecosystems, which dominate the western portion of the continent. Sage-grouse were historically found throughout sagebrush communities in 15 states and along the southern border of two western Canadian provinces. The remaining core sage-grouse populations are located in areas of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Wyoming, with remnant populations in other states. Over the last 30 years, sage-grouse populations have declined dramatically and currently occupy less than 50% of their historic range. Habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation have reduced the quantity and quality of sagebrush-steppe habitat leading to widespread population declines. Wildfire, invasion of nonnative flora and fauna, grazing pressures, energy development and mining, agriculture and rural/ suburban development, disease, and climate change are all factors impacting sagebrush-steppe habitats. Because of these sources of habitat degradation

and their contribution to sage-grouse population declines, sage-grouse have been petitioned multiple times for listing under the Endangered Species Act. To date, they have yet to be listed, largely in part due to state and federally enacted conservation efforts and monitoring programs throughout the West.

Tribal members have observed a sharp decline in sage-grouse populations on the Reservation over the past few decades similar to documented state- and range-wide trends. In response, the Summit Lake Paiute Tribe Natural Resources Department (NRD) began a sage-grouse study in 2014 to assess population trends over time and determine factors impacting the local sage-grouse population. This study focuses on collecting a wide range of sage-grouse population demographics such as lek attendance, adult and juvenile survival, nest and brood success and seasonal habitat utilization and movements. These data will help the Tribe monitor short and long term changes both in sage-grouse population and habitat condition and prioritize and implement habitat restoration and conservation for sage-grouse at Summit Lake.



Sage-Grouse Study

Lek Counts

Department staff conducted 52 lek counts in 2024 which is the most counts conducted per season since the Tribe began monitoring sage-grouse in 2014. This was a great accomplishment in population monitoring for sage-grouse at Summit Lake and the department anticipates meeting or exceeding that effort in the 2025 field season. Additionally, in 2024, department staff discovered a new lek located on the Reservation. This lek had consistently high attendance in 2024 which was very encouraging. In 2024 the department installed a camera system to monitor this lek remotely and record additional information about sage-grouse lek attendance. The department is again well staffed going into the 2025 field season and will continue to prioritize lek counts around Summit Lake and collaborate with NDOW and Sheldon biologists to accurately and efficiently monitor the sage-grouse population at Summit Lake.



Capture Effort

Department staff successfully captured and collared 39 hens in 2024. These hens were fitted with GPS collars which provide more accurate and frequent location information compared to VHF collars. Location information helps determine seasonal sage-grouse habitat use to inform sage-grouse-conscious management decisions and reduce potential disturbance to sage-grouse across the Reservation.

Nest/Brood Monitoring

Staff monitored 12 sage-grouse nests in 2024. Staff were able to improve nest monitoring efforts with the use of nest camera systems. Nest success was above 50% and hatch rate was approximately 82.5% meaning sage-grouse at Summit Lake had a relatively good reproductive season in 2024.

Habitat Surveys

Department staff conducted 51 habitat surveys at sage-grouse locations throughout 2024. These surveys provide valuable information on the fine-scale habitat characteristics and improve decision-making processes for sage-brush habitat restoration and management around Summit Lake.



2024 was a successful year for noxious weed control on the Summit Lake Paiute Reservation! Invasive species pose a significant threat due to their ability to outcompete native plants. With few natural competitors or predators, these species quickly dominate, depleting key resources and reducing native plant populations. To address this issue, we partnered with Progressive Pest Management to conduct two treatments—one in the spring and one in the fall. This year, we targeted perennial pepperweed, hoary cress, Canada thistle, bull thistle, tamarisk, Scotch thistle, and cheatgrass. Treatments covered 451.42 acres, including Mahogany Creek, Summit Lake, the field station, roads, springs, and the landing runway. Noxious weed control efforts will continue in the upcoming field season.





This past year, our partners at the University of Nevada-Reno, along with other academic institutions, have analyzed sediment cores collected from the deepest part of Summit Lake to better understand the geologic and climatic history of the Summit Lake watershed. After collecting two overlapped 11-meter-long sediment cores (one of which ended up drilling into an ancient tree!) and radiocarbon dating the extracted sediment, they were able to reconstruct some of the major geologic and climatic events in the watershed's history. Approximately 12,000 years ago Summit Lake was created by a landslide from Summit Lake Mountain. The deep-water lake conditions of the next 4,000 years helped to solidify the formation of the lake, but the period from approximately 8,000 to only 600 years ago shows that there were prolonged drought events with large fluctuations in lake level. In addition to these exciting results and insights into the lake's history the researchers plan to extract DNA remnants from the cores and examine tree rings from the surrounding region to better understand how changes in climate may have impacted the ecology and species composition of the watershed. We look forward to sharing more results from this study with you all as our partners at the University continue their research!



Reptile and Amphibian Inventory Project



This past field season NRD staff began a “herp”, or reptile and amphibian, inventory study on the Reservation. The goal of the study is to gain a better understanding of the species composition on the Reservation as well as allow the NRD department to get a baseline dataset of herpetofauna species to facilitate future monitoring of their populations. Both reptiles and amphibians face a variety of threats today, so monitoring their populations is important for both the conservation of herp species and as an indication of the ecosystem’s health as a whole.

NRD staff completed 80 reptile and amphibian surveys this past season, including surveys around the springs, lake, and creeks for amphibians, and in a variety of habitats around the Reservation for reptiles, and surveys will continue this coming field season. 13 different amphibian and reptile species were found this year on the Reservation during surveys, and more species are predicted to be present. Below is a table of the species found this past field season.



Juvenile western yellow-bellied racer



Great Basin collared lizard



Western terrestrial gartersnake

Common Name	Scientific Name
Amphibian Species	
Sierran treefrog	<i>Pseudacris sierra</i>
Reptile Species	
Western skink	<i>Plestiodon skiltonianus</i>
Pygmy short-horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma douglasii</i>
Sagebrush lizard	<i>Sceloporus graciosus</i>
Desert horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma platyrhinos</i>
Western whiptail	<i>Aspidoscelis tigris</i>
Great Basin collared lizard	<i>Crotaphytus bicinctores</i>
Western fence lizard	<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>
Western terrestrial gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis elegans</i>
Western yellow-bellied racer	<i>Coluber constrictor mormon</i>
Great Basin rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus lutosus</i>
Great Basin gophersnake	<i>Pituophis catenifer deserticola</i>
Northern rubber boa	<i>Charina bottae</i>



Sierran treefrog



Pygmy short-horned lizard



Northern rubber boa

Raptor Migration in Northern Nevada: A Fall Spectacle

Each fall, raptors—hawks, eagles, falcons, and other birds of prey—journey south through the rugged basins and mountain ridges of northern Nevada. These birds rely on thermals and updrafts along ridgelines to conserve energy while traveling to their wintering grounds. Hawk watchers often head to high vantage points this time of year, keeping careful tally of species and numbers. By gathering consistent observations over time, scientists and volunteers can track population trends and better understand how changes in land use or weather may affect these powerful aerial predators.

During a hawk watch, skilled observers position themselves at strategic vantage points—often ridgelines or prominent summits—and systematically count every migrating raptor that passes overhead. By using standardized methods (consistent observation times, detailed species identification, and careful data recording), they gather reliable insights into migration volume, timing, and species composition. In September of 2021 and 2024, NRD staff conducted short hawk watches on top of Summit Lake Mountain and discovered a significant migration corridor:

Species	9.21.21 Count 1.5 Observation Hours	9.27.21 Count 1 Observation Hours	9.28.21 Count 1.5 Observation Hours	9.29.21 Count 2 Observation Hours	9.25.24 Count 2.5 Observation Hours	9.26.24 Count 2.75 Observation Hours	Species Total
American Kestrel	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
Cooper's Hawk	3	-	-	1	-	2	6
Golden Eagle	3	1	2	15	3	13	37
Northern Goshawk	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Northern Harrier	2	1	-	1	1	1	6
Prairie Falcon	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Red-tailed Hawk	2	-	2	-	2	11	17
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Unidentified Accipiter	1	-	-	-	1	3	5
Unidentified Buteo	4	1	2	4	2	6	19
Unidentified Raptor	-	-	2	2	-	2	6
Daily Total	15	4	9	26	10	40	-

104 raptors observed in 11 hours!

Local Counts: Golden Eagle Dominance

These fall migration counts reinforce northern Nevada's importance as a migration corridor, particularly for Golden Eagles. Across six observation periods, NRD staff recorded:

- **37 Golden Eagles**, the most observed species in the dataset
- **17 Red-tailed Hawks**, the second-most common identified species
- A scattering of other raptors, including American Kestrels, Northern Harriers, Prairie Falcons, and several accipiters (Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, and Northern Goshawk)
- Daily tallies ranging from 4 to 40 total raptors, reflecting how weather and wind patterns can create large day-to-day swings in migration activity

Raptor Migration in Northern Nevada: A Fall Spectacle

On high-traffic days, watchers saw well over 10 raptors per hour, underscoring how quickly “migration pulses” can appear in optimal conditions. Although shorter observation windows can’t capture every bird on the move, these snapshots highlight a robust fall passage for eagles and a healthy diversity of other hawks, falcons, and harriers.

Comparing to HawkCount.org Data

Each fall, the Goshute Mountains in eastern Nevada draw approximately 12,000 to 25,000 migrating raptors, covering up to 18 species! This impressive flight places the Goshutes among the largest known raptor migration hotspots in the western United States. If you explore HawkCount.org—which includes data from major western hawk watch sites like the Goshute Mountains, Nevada—you’ll notice a similar local pattern:

- **Golden Eagles** often rank among the top migrants, with the Goshutes site logging hundreds or even thousands annually, depending on the season. While our local counts are smaller in scale, they mirror that trend of Golden Eagles being a keystone migrant in Nevada.
- **Red-tailed Hawks** and **Accipiters** also consistently appear in moderate numbers at most western watches during late September, aligning with the snapshot we see here.

Daily variability is a recurring theme: Just like our data, the Goshute Mountains site often records substantial fluctuations from day to day—e.g., one big “push” followed by slower traffic the next, depending on weather fronts and wind direction.

In short, our local results dovetail with broader patterns reported on HawkCount.org, reaffirming northern Nevada’s significance as a raptor flyway.

Why It Matters

Data from hawk watches help scientists track raptor population health, migration timing, and route shifts that may be influenced by climate change or landscape alterations (such as renewable energy developments). Even short sampling periods, like those in our local data set, feed into the bigger picture provided by long-running counts at well-established sites. Together, these data streams guide conservation and management efforts across raptors’ wide-ranging habitats.

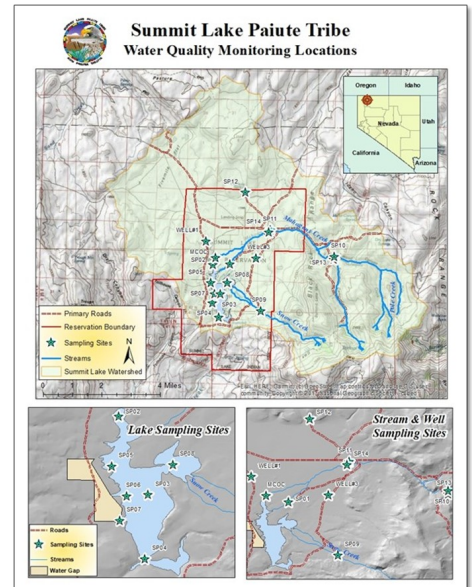
If you’d like to learn more about raptor migration, volunteer for a hawk watch, or get involved in citizen-science monitoring, keep an eye out for local birding group announcements. Every set of eyes on the sky contributes to ensuring these magnificent birds keep soaring through Nevada’s open spaces for generations to come.



Image of NRD’s hawk watch site on Summit Lake Mountain at the headwater of Mahogany Creek.

Water Quality Monitoring

The Summit Lake watershed requires the protection of water quality to guard human and environmental health. NRD staff were able to successfully complete water quality testing three separate times, stream flow measurements, BMI testing, spring monitoring, and began imported all water quality data into the EPA water quality exchange. Each spring, summer, and fall NRD staff collect water samples from Summit Lake, Mahogany Creek, Snow Creek, water wells, and natural springs. The samples are analyzed in a laboratory for several different water quality parameters such as inorganic nutrient levels (i.e., magnesium, fluoride, iron, etc.), organic nutrient levels (i.e., ammonia, nitrogen, phosphorus, etc.), and bacteria presence. Field measurements which include pH, temperature, specific conductivity, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen are taken on site when the samples are collected. The water quality parameter's results are compared with past results to track changes over the years. To further enhance water quality management, staff worked on a draft of Summit Lake's Water Quality Standards. These standards will guide monitoring efforts and help assess whether water bodies meet the necessary conditions for protecting fish, wildlife, and other uses. Creek flow measurements were taken every month from April through September, allowing staff and members to understand how water quantity is changing throughout the year and between years. The Summit Lake Paiute Tribe added their water quality results to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality exchange. This data is not available to the general public but will increase the ability for staff to track water quality on the Reservation. Staff recommend only drinking from our approved drinking water well at the Reservation and remember to always filter or boil other stream/springs water before drinking!



Benthic macroinvertebrates (BMI) are small critters- such as snails, leeches, mussels, fly larva, and many more- that live on the bottom of the lake, creeks, and springs. These invertebrates help NRD staff understand the health and diversity of these ecosystems. Samples were sent in for ID testing and when the results are finalized, staff will know the different species of BMI within the watershed along with a rough estimate of the density of each species. Staff worked on creating monitoring protocols for better understanding of mussel and snail populations in the creeks and springs.

Nonpoint Source Pollution and Game Cameras

Nonpoint source pollution refers to contamination that cannot be traced to a single source, with common examples including agriculture, drainage runoff, animal waste, and human-related pollutants like oil or fertilizer. This past summer, our staff conducted vegetation surveys, water quality sampling, and invertebrate sampling at



Lakeview, Tollhouse, Tule, Slide, and One Mile Springs. Slide and Tule are located in the southern part of the Reservation, One Mile Spring is in the north, and Tollhouse and Lakeview are west of Summit Lake. Water quality samples were analyzed for bacteria, metals, and inorganic materials to assess contamination levels, while vegetation surveys documented plant species around the springs to provide valuable data for future restoration projects aimed at preventing nonpoint source pollution. In spring 2024, additional wildlife friendly fencing was installed around Springs to prevent livestock from contributing to water contamination. These fences are specifically designed to allow native wildlife, such as deer, pronghorn, and coyotes, to pass through while keeping out cattle and horses. As of 2024, staff monitor 18 wildlife cameras around water bodies, and footage has confirmed that cattle and horse interactions at the springs have ceased while native wildlife continues to access these critical water sources. Looking ahead to 2025, we will expand our nonpoint pollution monitoring efforts to include additional metals monitoring.



Native Plant/Seed Program

The Natural Resources Department is excited to begin work on a native plant and seed program for the Tribe this year.

Goals:

1. Improve effectiveness of the Tribe's restoration efforts by increasing capacity to use desirable, locally adapted native plant species.
2. Strengthen the Tribe's connection to the sagebrush community at Summit Lake by promoting the resilience and long-term health of culturally significant plant populations through seed collection and propagation.

This year's work will involve collecting information on plants occurring on the Reservation and surrounding lands including information on culturally important plant species, scouting plant populations for seed collection, and collecting, cleaning and storing seed for future restoration.





We enjoyed seeing new and returning faces last year for the 2024 Reservation Event! Unlike the 2023 Outreach Event, this event was three days so we were able to provide more activities for the friends and families that attended. This event was created for our Tribal Members to allow you to visit your Reservation while showing Members what our Department has been working on. Activities for the 2024 event included boat rides, scavenger hunt, sage grouse collar hunt, Paiute bingo, BMI demonstrations, plus reptile/amphibian show and tell. A special thanks to Food Evolution catering team, the EPA, the Tribal Members, and the Council for helping make last years event possible!



2025 Reservation Event

June 6-8 we are planning another Reservation event! Like last year, Tribal members will be able to see and participate in some of the projects going on at the reservation including Sage Grouse, LCT, boat rides, herps, and more! Please RSVP by April 18th.





Chronic Wasting Disease Information

What is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a highly contagious neurological disease like Mad Cow Disease (BSE) but instead affects deer, elk, reindeer, and moose. To date, there have been no reported cases of CWD infection in people. However, CWD has been found to pose a risk to non-human primates like monkeys, which raises concerns that there may also be a risk to people.¹

CWD and BSE are prion diseases that cause abnormal folding of prion proteins that lead to brain damage. Prion diseases are also known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) and are a family of rare progressive disorders that affect both humans and animals. TSEs typically progress rapidly and are always fatal.¹ CWD is transmitted directly through animal-to-animal contact, and indirectly through contact with objects or environment contaminated with saliva, urine, feces, or carcasses of CWD-infected animals. There are no treatments or vaccines currently available.¹



Why are you being told about CWD?

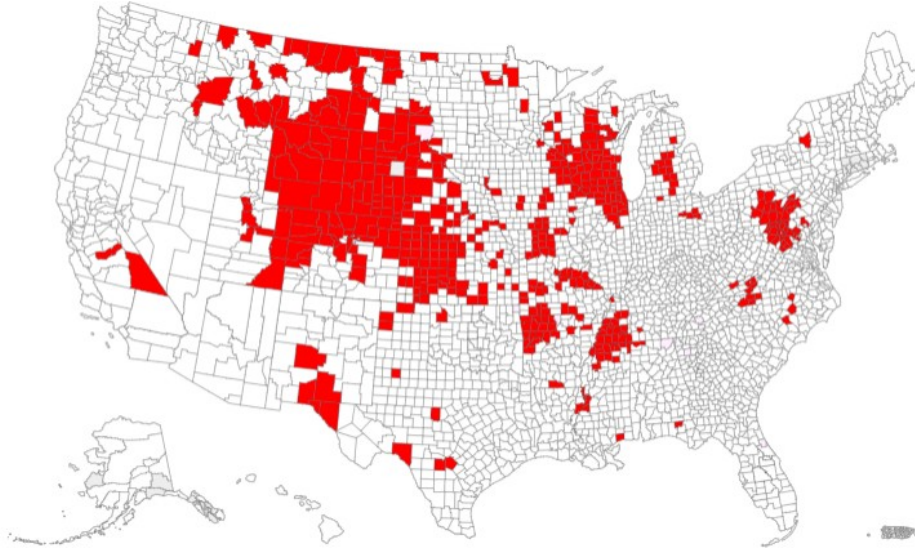
Because of CWD's long incubation period, infected mule deer may be difficult to detect from appearance or behavior alone. So, by distributing information about CWD, Tribal members can make informed decisions about harvesting or consuming mule deer from the Reservation. Additionally, by providing information and gathering samples for CWD testing, Tribal members can assist with statewide monitoring and early detection efforts.

What are the signs of CWD?

The most obvious sign of CWD is progressive weight loss. Other signs include loss of fear of humans, excessive salivation, decreased social interaction, and loss of awareness.³ CWD has a long incubation period, averaging 18 – 24 months between infection and the onset of noticeable signs. During the incubation period, animals look and act normally.³

Chronic Wasting Disease Information

Where is CWD Found?



*Occurrence of CWD based on best-available information (www.cdc.gov).

As of August 2024, 35 states have reported CWD in free ranging cervids such as mule deer and elk.¹ Although CWD has not been detected in Nevada yet, it is likely to arrive in the future based on its continued spread across the United States and presence in neighboring states.

How can a Tribal member get a harvested deer tested?

Hunter participation is voluntary but critical in CWD testing at Summit Lake.

General Field Dressing Safety Precautions: It is recommended to not use household knives or other kitchen utensils, wear protective gloves, minimize handling brain and spinal tissues, and wash your hands and instruments thoroughly when field dressing is completed.

*If you wish to shoulder-mount your deer, cape and remove antlers first.

Tribal members have the following 2 options for submitting lymph nodes for testing. All testing will be performed by NDOW.

1. Tribal member collection then submission to NRD or NDOW.

- a. Tribal member follows the following video or written instructions to collect the lymph nodes.
- b. Tribal member drops off the lymph nodes at one of the following locations:

- i. NRD station at the Reservation

1. Staff are likely present at the station or on the Reservation Monday–Thursday during the field season (approximately April to mid-November).

2. NRD will submit the lymph nodes to NDOW.

Chronic Wasting Disease Information

ii. NRD department at the Tribal office

1. Please notify the NRD department in advance that the lymph nodes will be dropped off. Please call the main office number at 775-827-9670, Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm
2. Location: 2255 Green Vista Dr. #402, Sparks, NV 89431
3. NRD will submit the lymph nodes to NDOW.

iii. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)

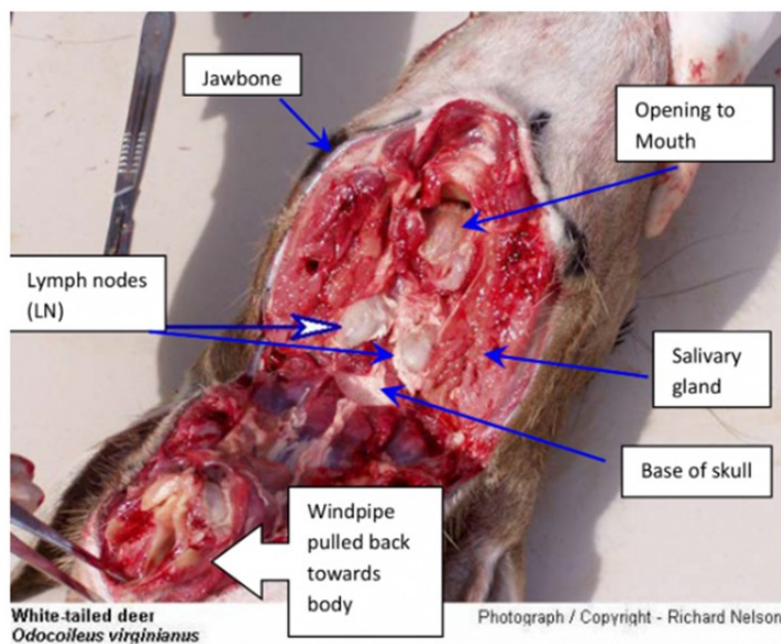
1. Please notify NDOW in advance that the lymph nodes will be dropped off. Please call 775-688-1506, Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm.
2. Location: 1100 Valley Rd., Reno NV 89512.
3. IMPORTANT: You must present your SLPT harvest tag so that NDOW is aware that the harvest was valid on the Reservation.

2. NDOW Collection

- a. Please notify NDOW in advance that the harvest will be presented for lymph node removal. Please call 775-688-1506, Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm.
- b. Location: 1100 Valley Rd., Reno NV 89512.
- c. IMPORTANT: You must present your SLPT harvest tag so that NDOW is aware that the harvest was valid on the Reservation.

NOTE: Please leave your name and phone number or email with SLPT or NDOW so that you can be notified of the results.

Locate Lymph Nodes



Chronic Wasting Disease Information

Video instructions to remove the lymph nodes:



<https://youtu.be/xsLhOqNiTWA>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUls5iVO1J4>

Written instructions to remove lymph nodes (*Source: Idaho Fish and Game):

1. Cut across the neck and under the jawbone. Cut towards the ears, through the windpipe until you hit bone.²
2. Pull back the windpipe and cut the muscles towards the base of the skull. Locate the left and right lymph nodes, half-way between each angle of the jawbone and the base of the skull and beneath the opening to the mouth. Lymph node consistency is much firmer and rounder than the surrounding tissue.²
3. Avoid the salivary glands, which are found next to the lymph nodes and are more segmented. Salivary glands are not a CWD testable sample tissue.²
4. Remove the left and right lymph nodes. Remove excess fat and connective tissue from the lymph nodes.²
5. NRD will have sample bags (located in a mailbox near the front gate of the field station) available at the Reservation. Write the sex of the harvest and your name, phone number, or email with ballpoint pen (provided in mailbox) to prevent smearing.²
6. Keep the samples frozen until you can drop them off at the NRD station at the Reservation, the Tribal office in Sparks, or the NDOW office in Reno.

View Lymph Nodes



- Lymph nodes are normally light pink or bluish color. They could be red if the animal is head shot.
- Rounded, kidney shaped and roughly the size of the tip of a finger.
- If you cut them in half, you will see marbled coloring.

The Natural Resources Department wishes you safe and successful hunting and thanks you for your participation!

References and Additional Information

<https://www.cdc.gov/prions/cwd/index.html> ¹

<https://idfg.idaho.gov/cwd/sampling/how-to> ²

<https://www.usgs.gov/diseases-of-terrestrial-wildlife/chronic-wasting-disease> ³

A Note from the Director

Members and Council, thank you for the honor of serving as your Natural Resources Department Director, and your support is critical to the department's success. Additionally, our achievements are produced by our skilled, hardworking, and committed team and our partnerships with federal and state agencies, the University of Nevada Reno and other universities, consultants, and other organizations.

Last year was extremely productive, and these projects are highlighted because they were unique or happened for the first time:

- Department completed all the major projects planned for the year
- Full year of data collection on the sage grouse lifecycle
- Reed canary grass management plan and treatments in lower Mahogany Creek
- Installation began for the watershed observation network
- Commencement of the reptile and amphibian inventory project
- New fences around Tollhouse, Slide and upper Tule springs
- Completion of the LCT population viability analysis (PVA) base model



We are excited about the upcoming year's full slate of projects to fulfill the Tribe's mission!

I wish you and your families the best for the upcoming year and hope to see you at the Reservation event on June 6 - 8 – we are looking forward to it!



The NRD is exploring options to make hunter safety education more accessible both financially and logistically for Tribal members. Existing resources for completing hunter safety education can be found at <https://www.hunter-ed.com/> or <https://www.huntercourse.com/>. Taking a hunter safety course is not required to hunt on the Reservation but is encouraged. Both courses are recognized by Nevada Department of Wildlife.



<https://www.hunter-ed.com/>



<https://www.huntercourse.com/>

Upcoming Activities

2025 Primary Reservation Projects (approximate timelines)

Year Round (or every season)

- Sage Grouse: tracking collared birds.
- Reptiles/amphibians/migratory birds/bats: surveys and monitoring to identify species and their habitats.
- Streamflow, water quality, lake level and springs: streamflow measurements in Mahogany and Snow Creeks, water quality sampling in the lake, streams, springs, and wells, and surveys of the conditions and wildlife at the main springs. In addition, maintenance of the weather station, bubbler, and stream gage network at the lake and Mahogany and Snow Creeks.
- Range management: Reservation surveys and then collaboration with ranchers and BLM for timely removal of trespass cattle/feral horses. Native plant seed collection.
- Roads: maintenance of the Reservation roads.
- Field station: maintenance of the buildings, equipment, and grounds.

Spring

- LCT (April): mark-recapture sampling in the lake.
- LCT (May): Continued reed canary grass treatment on lower Mahogany Creek with native plant plantings.
- LCT (April – May): monitoring the spawning run at the Fish Trap and redd surveys in mainstem Mahogany, the north channel, and Snow Creek.
- Sage-grouse (March – May): capturing/collaring birds, nest monitoring, and habitat and raven surveys.
- Range management (April or May): Removal of old unnecessary fencing to reduce wildlife injury/mortality and improve wildlife movement within the Reservation.
- Observation Network (April – May): installation and testing of the remaining components of the new observation network.
- Creeks restoration (TBD): field surveys for future restoration activities on lower Mahogany Creek, and a field survey for a restoration assessment of Snow Creek.
- Helipad (TBD): installation of a helicopter pad for emergencies and other activities.
- Wildfire management (April or May): maintaining road firebreaks.

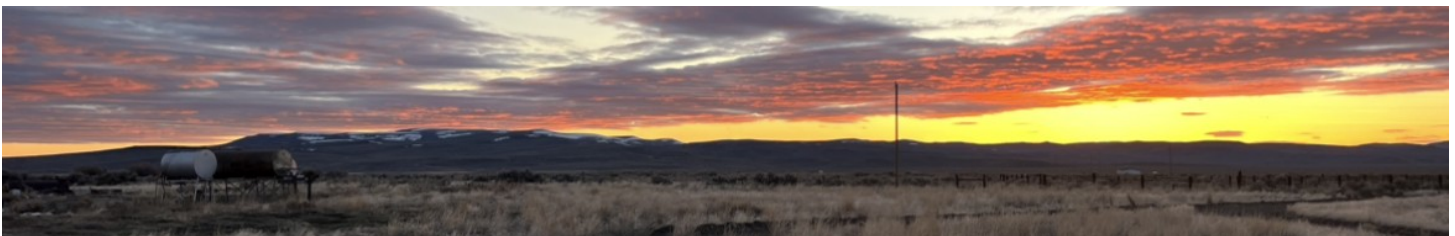
Summer

- LCT (June, August): finish up monitoring the spawning run at the Fish Trap and redd surveys in mainstem Mahogany, the north channel, and Snow Creek, electrofishing surveys in Mahogany and Snow Creeks, and continued native plant revegetation on lower Mahogany Creek. Fish trap upgrades.
- Creeks restoration (TBD): field surveys for future restoration activities on lower Mahogany Creek, and a field survey for a restoration assessment of Snow Creek.
- Sage-grouse (June – August): brood checks, chick diet sampling, habitat and raven surveys, and capturing/collaring birds.
- Outreach/education (June): 2025 Reservation event for Members, June 6-8.
- Invasive plants (June or July): herbicide treatment of invasive plants at multiple locations within the Reservation.
- Water quality (TBD): benthic macroinvertebrate sampling in Mahogany Creek and the lake.

Fall

- LCT: removal of old concrete irrigation structure on lower Mahogany Creek and restoration with native vegetation and improved spawning habitat.
- Sage-grouse (September - November): habitat surveys.
- Range management (September or October): Aerial application of native plant seed on the southern end of the Reservation. Aerial application of herbicide on a northern section of the Reservation. And herbicide treatment of invasive plants/noxious weeds in various locations of the Reservation.

Field station (Nov): closed for winter.



2025 Reservation Event

June 6-8 we are planning another Reservation event! Like last year, Tribal members will be able to see and participate in some of the projects going on at the reservation including Sage Grouse, LCT, boat rides, herps, and more! Please RSVP by April 18th.

Connect with us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on current activities and events.





SUMMIT LAKE PAIUTE TRIBE

Primary Administrative Office

2255 Green Vista Dr. Ste 402 Sparks, NV 89431

Phone (775) 827-9670 • Fax (775) 827-9678

SUMMIT LAKE PAIUTE COUNCIL

Chairwoman: Randi Lone Eagle • Vice-Chairperson: Nedra Crane

Secretary/Treasurer: Philip Frank • Council Member: Cherice Trejo • Council Member: Scott 'Cory' Burdette

February 18, 2025

Attention Summit Lake Paiute Tribal Members,

We encourage all tribal members to keep your contact information updated with our office. To do so we ask that you inform the Tribe and/or the Enrollment Coordinator of any changes such as your name, address, phone number, email address, etc.

If you would like a new tribal enrollment card or are in need of a (CIB) Certificate of Indian Blood, or a (CTE) Certificate of Tribal Enrollment, email your request to the Enrollment Coordinator at enrollment@summitlaketribe.org

You must include the following:

- Request for ID Card or documents
- Full name
- Enrollment number
- Date of Birth
- Current contact information: address, phone number/s, email, etc.
- Hair and Eye color
- Height
- A Passport style photo (head and shoulders)
- Your Signature written in black marker on a blank printer size white sheet of paper

All the above is required to create your Tribal ID card.

There is a form on the tribal website summitlaketribe.org under the Enrollment Tab, that can be used as well.

*** To ensure your enrollment record is complete and your total tribal blood degree/s are correct, please mail or email a colored copy of your certified Birth Certificate, SS card, proof of all name changes with marriage certificate, divorce decree, court orders, proof of other tribal affiliations: tribal enrollment records, CIB's, affidavits, etc. These documents will be scanned into the electronic record system and placed in your paper chart.

Sincerely,
/s/

Delgadina Gonzalez
Enrollment Coordinator

Summit Lake Housing Department

Programs

Down Payment/Closing Cost Assistance:

Eligible in Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona and Idaho. This assistance will provide a tribal member with up to \$25,000.00 to assist with the down payment and closing cost of a home. Tribal Member must secure a home loan. This assistance can be paired with a 184 Loan.



Security Deposit and First Month's Rental Assistance:

Eligible in all US States. Assistance will provide up to \$2,000.00 for Security Deposit and up to \$2,000.00 for First Month's Rent. This program can be paired with TBRA.

Job Training: Eligible in all US States. Assistance is for eligible tribal members who need employment certifications and are unable to assume the cost. SLPT Administration Office has computers that can be utilized by the tribal members at any time for personal use or training.



Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA):

Eligible in Nevada only. Assistance is up to \$500.00 per month for one (1) calendar year. Applicants may reapply after the initial calendar year, all applications will be treated case by case.

Sports Registration and Equipment: Eligible in all US States. Assistance will provide up to \$500.00 per tribal member minor between the ages of 4-17. Assistance can be used on the registration fee and needed sporting equipment. This assistance can be used twice



per tribal member minor within one (1) calendar year.

Rehabilitation Assistance: This assistance is for the Homeowners in Nevada who are in need of rehabilitation on their home. This assistance can cover converting a home to be ADA complaint, assist with remediation due to water damage, roof repair, and other home needs. Assistance will be provided for up to \$15,000.00.

Did you know? Summit Lake Housing has two computers available for all tribal members to utilize for printing and internet access needs. These can be used anytime between 8-5 M-F.

All of the above programs are HUD funded and regulated. In order to be eligible for these programs, you must meet the income criteria, background requirements, provide required documents, and the head of household must be a SLPT Tribal Member.