

Wright's Lake Equestrian Camp

Eldorado National Forest, Pacific Ranger District

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July 1, 2018 (second edition with extra maps added)

Introduction:

During the hot summer months, many equestrians enjoy camping at higher altitude in the Sierras. The equestrian campground with **15 sites** at Wright's Lake has been a favorite of horsemen for many decades. There is trailhead access to the Desolation Wilderness Area via Rockbound Pass.

Location Map and Driving Directions:

From Highway 50, turn north at Riverton onto **Road #3**, and follow signs to Ice House Reservoir. Turn east onto paved U.S. Forest Service **Road #32**, and follow it to the junction with the Wright's Lake Road (**Road #4**). Proceed north to Wright's Lake. This longer route through Ice House Reservoir is relatively safer for heavily-loaded horse trailers, compared with the steep and narrow road that begins 4 miles west of Strawberry.

Road Map for Horse Trailer Access to Wright's Lake Equestrian Camp Eldorado National Forest

Follow road signs to Ice House Reservoir. Turn east onto paved USFS Road 32 to Wright's Lake.

Road 3

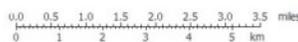
Paved Road 32

Horse Camp

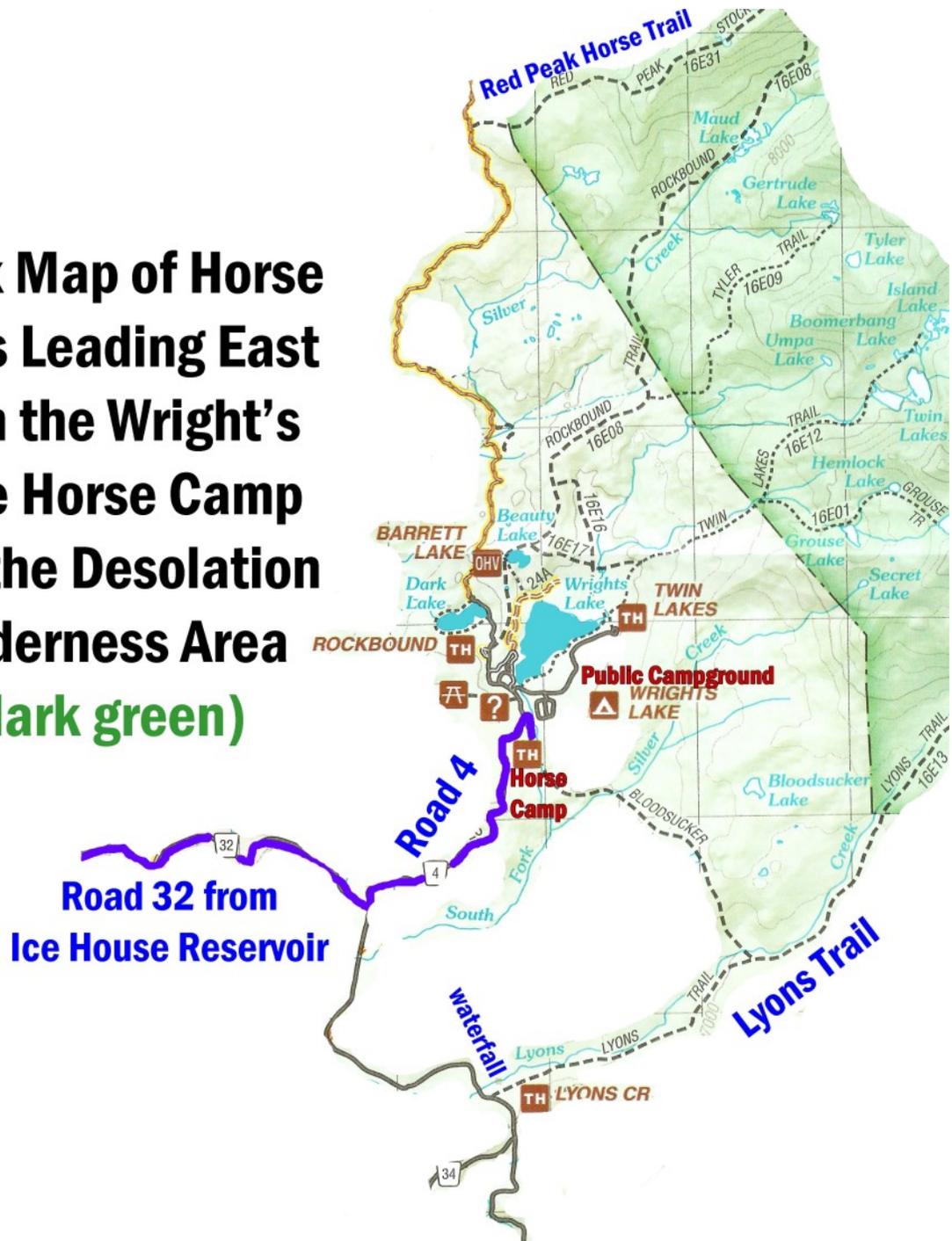
Strawberry

Highway 50 from Placerville. Turn north at Riverton.

Wright's Lake Road is steep and narrow, so ***not*** recommended for horse trailers.



Index Map of Horse Trails Leading East from the Wright's Lake Horse Camp into the Desolation Wilderness Area (dark green)



U.S. Forest Service Reservations

Wright's Lake Equestrian Campground costs \$20 per day. U.S. Forest Service reservations are made through the federal website: www.recreation.gov

There are 15 equestrian camping sites, numbered E-69 through E-83. The better campsites are on the east side, shaded by trees, and adjacent to the south fork of Silver Creek. Several of these are group-campsites, such as #E-80 and #E-81. Some of the west-side campsites with pull-through access are optimum for large 3-horse trailers. Each campsite has been photographed and posted onto Google Earth, so that equestrians can visualize the campsite *before* making a reservation.

Advance reservations are essential for popular weekends in the summertime, and highly advisable for week-days. *If* you show-up with no reservations, and *if* you are lucky, there might be vacancies. Then it is *possible* to register on-the-spot and



It is required to have a horse *with you* for horse camping; this avoids the problem of fake reservations and clever usurpers from the general public when the main campground is full (which is most of the summertime). There is a maximum of six people and two vehicles per campsite. Some horse campsites are more level than others; some are better for short trailers that can be backed-in; campsites on the east side have a forested canopy with shade. The 15 horse campsites are arranged in an oval driveway (about 200 yards long and roughly 150 yards wide).

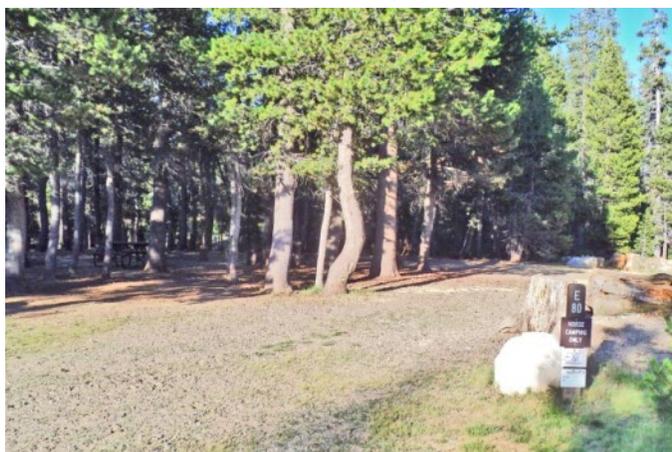
The central grassy meadow can be used for grazing, but only for horses that are accompanied by a rider with a lead-rope. Horses *cannot* be picketed in the central meadow for grazing all night long (*refer to signpost at right*).

Bring portable octagonal corrals or high-tie from the side of your horse trailer. Bring manure forks and buckets so that your campsite is left clean for the next equestrian camper.

There are two vault toilets, each with a dumpster and a water faucet. There are no showers, no bear-boxes, no electric hook-ups, no sewage disposal, no pipe-corrals, no hitching posts, no high-tie poles, and no cell-phone coverage.

Each site has a picnic table and a fire-ring. The water faucets have a smooth bib with no threads, so that a hose cannot be attached. You will have to carry horse water using small buckets. Bring your own firewood; no campfire permit is required within the campground. Sometimes there is large bulk firewood on the east side from fallen trees each winter. So bring an axe and a saw to reduce the bulky firewood into suitable smaller pieces. There are lots of mosquitoes and flies in the summertime, so bring mosquito repellent for your horses and yourself.

On the southeast side of the equestrian campground is the South Fork of Silver Creek, so Group Campsites #E-80 and #E-81 (*shown below*) have the pleasant sound of a running burbling stream with a large quiet pool below.

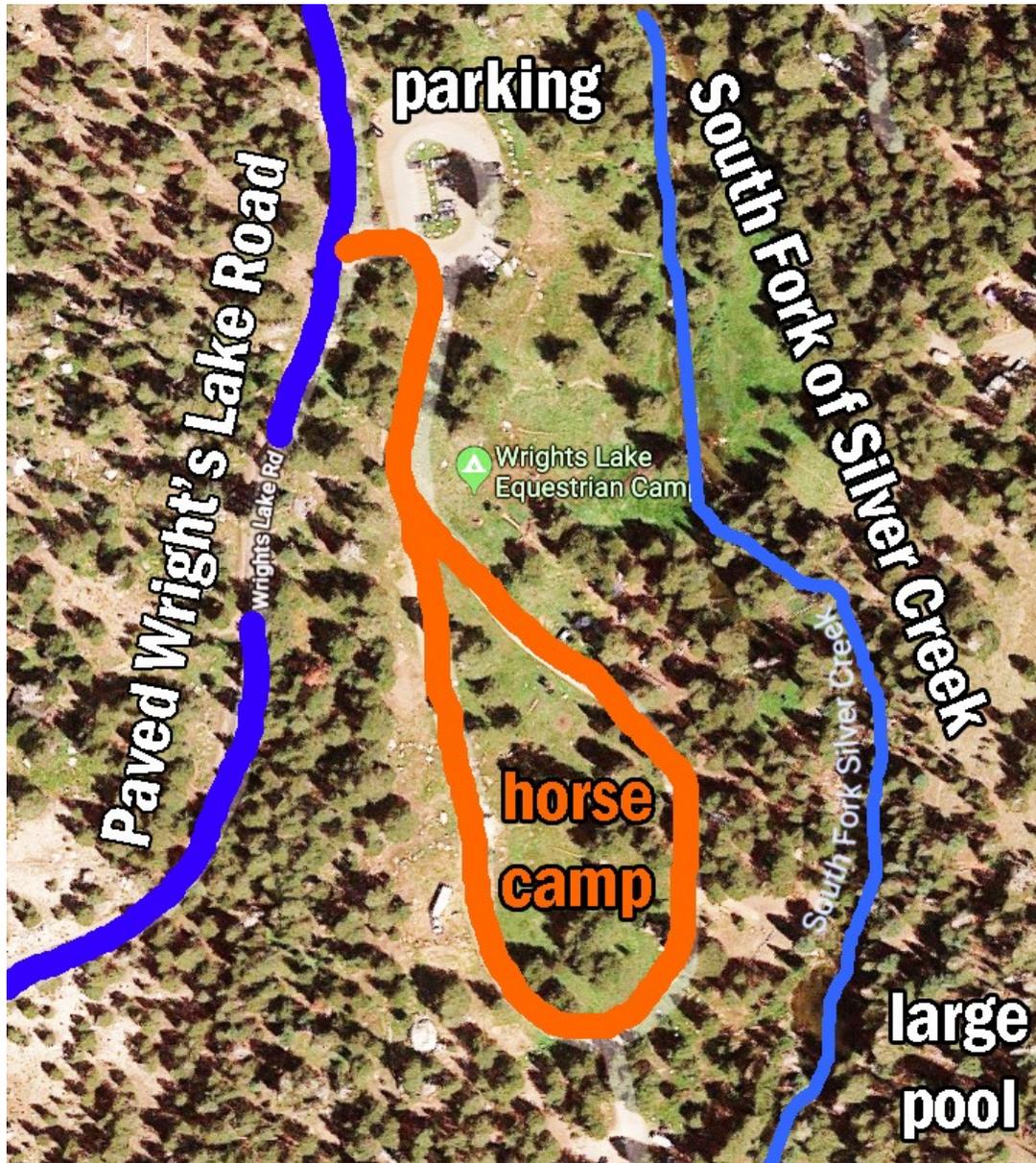


The elevation of the equestrian campground is **6,960 feet**, with high diurnal fluctuation in summer temperatures (cold nights and hot days), so bring **horse blankets**. The coordinates of the equestrian campground are 38.833°North and 120.233°West. Wright's Lake Equestrian Campground is set about a half-mile away from the USFS family campground at Wright's Lake. This separation avoids safety problems with small children and disruptions to horses from a noisy public campground.

The information bulletin board shows the trail system that leads in several directions from Wright's Lake. Trail maps may be purchased from **Eldorado National Forest Interpretative Association**, < <http://enfia.info> >

There are no trail maps dispensed at the trailhead bulletin boards. Cleverly photograph trail-maps with your iPhone. Several trail maps are included in this report; print them out at home and bring the maps with you. As explained at the bulletin board, all of the foot trails near the public campground and around the shoreline of Wright's Lake are restricted for horses.

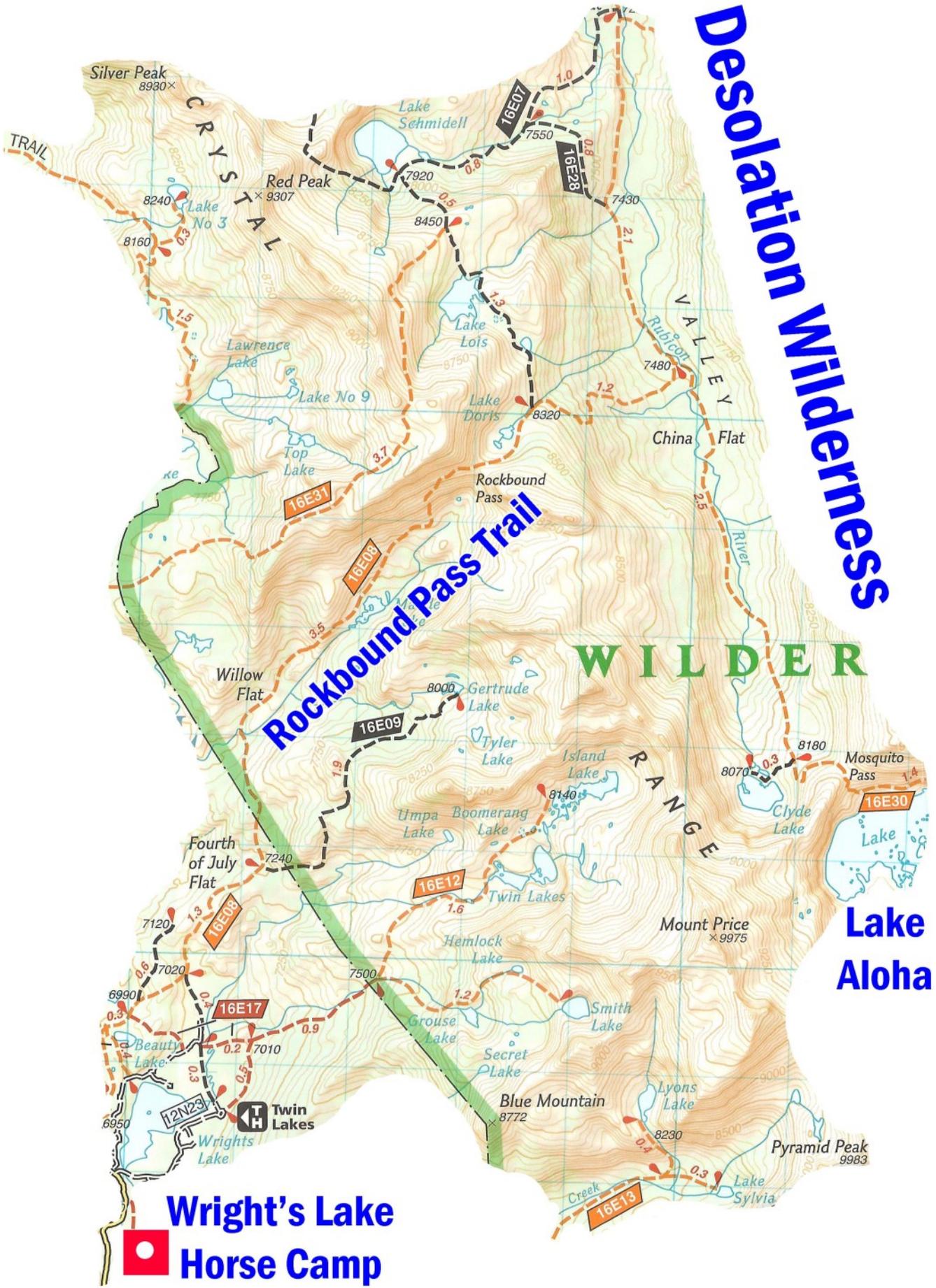
For general questions about Wright's Lake Recreation Area, telephone the U.S. Forest Service at (530) 644-6048. There is a visitor's center that is seasonally open during the summer months at Wright's Lake (near the Ranger Station), and trail information and horse-camping rules can be obtained there.



Views of the trailhead into Rockbound Pass and the Desolation Wilderness. Day-Use and Overnight camping **permits are required** for the Desolation Wilderness Area to balance the volume of traffic on the trails during the summer months.



Desolation Wilderness



Rockbound Pass Trail

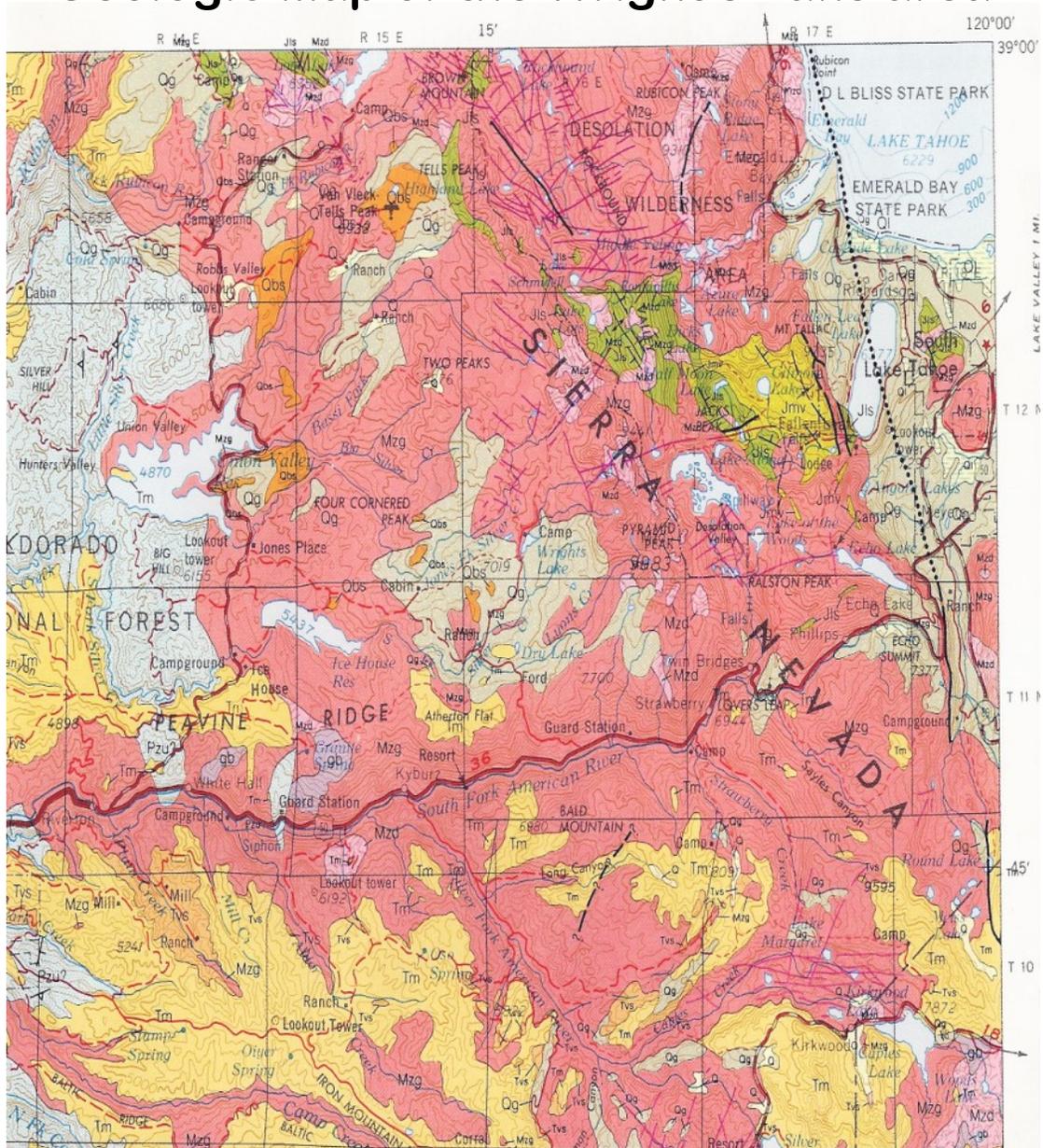
WILDER

RANGE

Lake Aloha

Wright's Lake Horse Camp

Geologic Map of the Wright's Lake area



extract from the

Geologic Map of the Sacramento Quadrangle

1:250,000-scale

1981

compiled by D.L. Wagner, C.W. Jennings, T.L. Bedrossian, and E.J. Bortugno

This regional geologic map is available for purchase from the

California Geological Survey

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/Pages/Index.aspx>

801 K Street, MS 14-33, Sacramento, CA 95814-3531

916-445-5716

Geologic Symbols:

Qg = Quaternary **glacial deposits**. In the area of Wright's Lake, these Pleistocene glacial deposits are rounded boulders of quartz diorite that were transported by glaciers, then dumped as the glaciers retreated about 11,000 years ago. (light gray-brown color)

Qbs = Quaternary **basalt** (orange color)

Tm = **Mehrtens Formation**, andesitic conglomerate, sandstone, and breccia. (yellow-orange color)

Mzg = Mesozoic granitic rocks that compose the Sierra Nevada batholith. These plutonic rocks are mostly composed of **quartz diorite** of the Cretaceous Period, with late-stage quartz dikes. (pink color)