

WALKER LAKE HISTORY

Walker Lake is the remnant of ancient Lake Lahontan which covered much of central and northern Nevada during the last Ice Age. As the climate dried, Lake Lahontan receded and many closed valleys became isolated dry lake beds. The Walker River is one of three major rivers draining the east side of the Sierra Nevada, supporting riparian, wetland and desert lake ecosystems.

Native Americans inhabited the Walker Lake Basin dating back 11,000 years or more. A hunter-gatherer society, the native families traveled in small groups relying upon pine nuts, game and Walker Lake trout.

FISH & FOWL...and other WILD STORIES

"A rancher who arrived in town last night from Walker River country brought in a splendid lot of trout, caught in Walker Lake. The trout averaged about 12 pounds each and were fat as butter."

— Gold Hill News, April 1874

Because of upstream diversions, Walker Lake has dropped over 130 feet since 1880. Currently three native fish species live in the lake. Most numerous is the Tui Chub and most sought after is the Lahontan cutthroat trout. The cutthroat can grow three feet or more in length, are excellent sport fish and they taste good. A third native species, the Tahoe Sucker, is rare in Walker Lake because of the lack of spawning habitat. Walker Lake fish can feast on a wide variety of good food; algae, zooplankton, small crustaceans and insects.

"Walker Lake is critically important to loons and other migratory water birds... early reports suggest that Walker Lake may be a major staging ground for loons in the United States each spring and fall."

— Reno Gazette-Journal, April 1997

WALKER LAKE WORKING GROUP — OUR MISSION

In America's past, water seemed abundant and nature forgiving. But the dominant trend of single-interest water policies did not balance the diversity of human and natural needs in water. Intensive economic uses became the dominant forces in managing water. All too often other concerns — and ecosystems — were ignored.

Caught in this blueprint is Walker Lake. It has much in common with its fellow ancient Lahontan survivor, Pyramid Lake: the high evaporation rate, meager rainfall regime, the somewhat saline waters and water diversions from its river source.

The task of the Walker Lake Working Group is to change the blueprint — to build public support for developing a long-term solution to protect the lake without jeopardizing the upstream community. We need to build support for three things:

- The reestablishment of spawning runs of the Lahontan cutthroat trout.
- Sufficient water so that TDS (salt) levels are low enough to support the Walker Lake ecosystem.
- Acquiring and transferring water rights for environmental/recreational purposes.

To join us in this mission and become a member of the Walker Lake Working Group, please write to:

Walker Lake Working Group
P.O. Box 867
Hawthorne, NV 89415

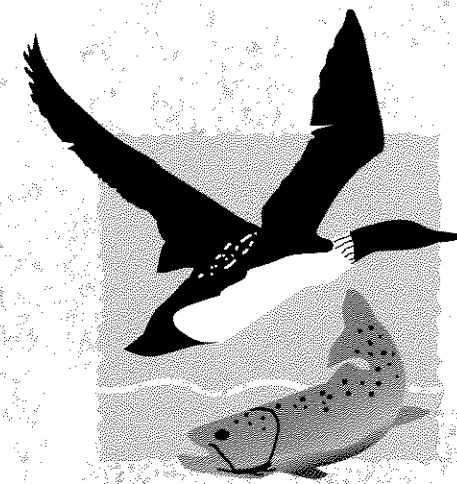
This brochure was brought to you by the Walker Lake Working Group and these other friends of Walker Lake.



Nevada Commission
On Tourism

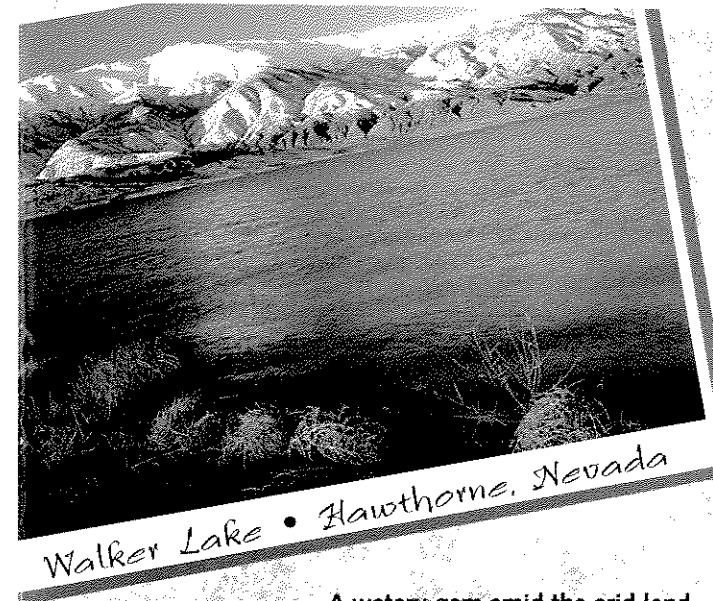
The William C. Kenney Watershed
Protection Foundation

For a listing of individual sponsors, see back side of insert.



WALKER LAKE
WORTH VISITING...WORTH SAVING

EXHIBIT Q - LANDS
Document consists of 2 pages.
Entire Exhibit Provided
Meeting Date: 03-24-06



**A watery gem amid the arid land,
Walker Lake is a treasure worth discovering.
One of North America's great desert lakes, it is
home to Lahontan cutthroat trout, migrating loons
and the solitude of Nevada's Great Basin.**

WATER & LIFE

Nearly the last of its kind, the first stop for a great adventure.

Born in the Sierra Nevada, Walker Lake is the terminus of the Walker River watershed. It supports threatened fish and hundreds of thousands of breeding and migrating water birds, including spring and fall visits from 1,400 common loons – the largest known inland congregation west of the Mississippi. Other visiting fowl include the western grebe, eared grebe, redheads, ruddy duck and American white pelican.

It is also a gathering place for the weary traveler, the ardent angler, and the family on a great adventure. The lake is just 5 miles north of Hawthorne, Nevada which features a full complement of amenities and services including resort casinos, shopping, eclectic dining, golf and tennis. Walker Lake is a rare and endangered kind of lake; only a handful exist in the world. It is subject to the complex water issues of the West as well as the breathtaking and relentless environment of the Great Basin Desert.

NATURE'S FOUR STAR RESORT

Walker Lake is a haven for boating, fishing, camping, hiking and birdwatching. Winter fishing for Lahontan cutthroat trout can be enjoyed in solitude or experienced with the camaraderie of fishing derbies scheduled throughout the winter and spring. Water skiing and personal watercraft are welcome as well as quiet vessels such as canoes and kayaks — perfect for exploring the Walker River delta or observing loons, grebes, and other waterbirds. Major beaches and campgrounds include Sportsman's Beach, Twenty Mile Beach, Tamarack and Walker Lake State Park. A public boat ramp is located at Sportsman's Beach.

Hikers can explore the lake shore or venture into the surrounding basin and range. Mt. Grant is the highest point of land, crowning the Wassuk Range at 11,245 feet above sea level.

THE NOT SO COMMON LOONS

No one knows where they come from or precisely when. But each spring and fall they gorge on fish from Walker Lake to sustain them on uncharted migratory journeys. Sleek and graceful on the water, common loons have always been seen at Walker Lake, but several years ago biologists realized that the desert lake may be a crucial resting and re-fueling stop for these birds. Walker Lake and Hawthorne celebrate the return of the loons each spring in the Annual Loon Festival which features guided boat tours and educational seminars.

GREAT SERPENT SEEN IN WALKER LAKE

"Goldfield, Nevada... a man named Peters is said to have discovered the serpent some time ago in shallow water near the shore, and on being aroused it disappeared in deep water. There is also said to be legend among the Paiute Indians near Shurz concerning the existence of a great serpent in Walker Lake."

—The San Francisco Cable, July 1907

Only the loons and the trout know if the serpent stories are true!

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

- February
Presidents' Weekend
Fishing Derby
Walker Lake, Nevada

April
Loon Festival
Walker Lake, Nevada

May
Armed Forces Day
Hawthorne, Nevada
- September
Pine Nut Festival
Shurz, Nevada

October-April
El Capitan Fishing Derby
Walker Lake, Nevada

November
Thanksgiving Fishing Derby
Walker Lake, Nevada

Photo Credits
Cover photo by Scott Smith
Inside spread photos by
Bob Goodman, Desert Images
Mike Sevon, Nevada Division of Wildlife
Scott Smith



WALKER LAKE... WORTH VISITING

No matter which direction you come from, the drive is one of beauty through the desert. From Reno, take Interstate 80 east to Fernley where Hwy. 95 meets the junction of Alt. 95 (to Yerington) and Alt. 50 (to Fallon). From Fallon, take Hwy. 95 South to Shurz. From Yerington, go east on Alt. 95 to Shurz. A short drive from Shurz brings you to Walker Lake. If coming from Las Vegas, head north on Hwy. 95 through Hawthorne until you reach the lake.

