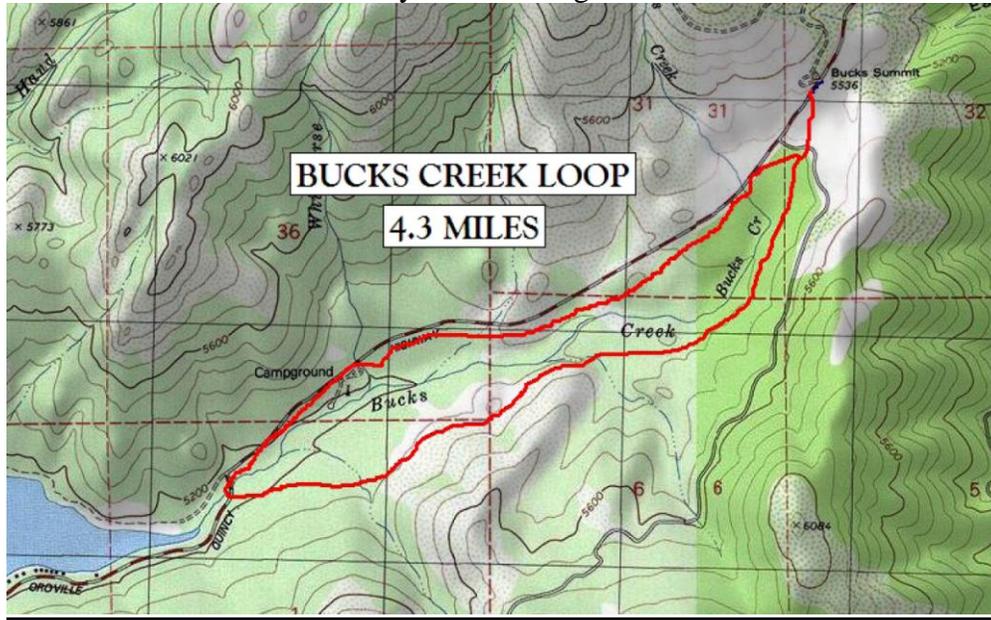


Buck's Creek Loop

By Dana Ludington



Buck's Lake Area

History: The area, which is now Buck's Lake, was first claimed by Horace Bucklin and Francis Walker in 1850. They named the valley Buck's Ranch. The ranch, composed of 1,200 acres, went through several owners, becoming more and more developed with farm buildings, barns, a post office, a store, and a hotel. The Beckworth Trail, which ran from the Sacramento Valley to the mines in Quincy, passed through Buck's Ranch. The ranch became an important supply point for the mines.

In the mid 1920's the valley was purchased by Feather River Power Company who planned to establish a hydroelectric reservoir. During the construction of the dam, the ownership was bought by the Great Western Power Company and then in the 1930's was bought by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company who still own the land and reservoir today. The power plant began operating in March of 1928.

PG&E leased much of the land surrounding the reservoir for private use. The rest of the land surrounding PG&E's holdings was public land and managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Some of the public land was also leased to private parties and some of the public land has been designated the Buck's Lake Wilderness.

Description: The area surrounding Buck's Lake is land primarily owned by the National Forest Service with a number of private land holdings. The forests are dominantly evergreen forests of White Fir, Red Fir, Douglas-Fir, Lodgepole Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Jeffrey Pine, and Incense-Cedar. There is also a population of deciduous trees, including Dogwood, Aspen, and Alder which provide incredible colors in forests in Autumn. This area is also home to a very diverse population of wildlife, such as deer, black bear, coyote, Mackinaw, German Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, Kokanee Salmon, and a variety of birds.

This area provides an array of recreational activities, including fishing, hunting (during hunting season), lake kayaking or canoeing, hiking, mountain and road biking, swimming, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, road skiing, and backcountry skiing.

The Buck's Lake area also provides easy access to the Buck's Lake Wilderness.

Directions: From Quincy, CA take Buck's Lake Road (Quincy/Oroville Highway) West for approximately 14 miles to Buck's Summit.

Buck's Creek Loop 4.3 Miles****

Time Needed: 2 Hours on foot, 1 Hour on a bike

Sun Exposure: The entire trail is fairly shaded. Certain sections receive more sun than others. In general, the South side of the loop trail receives slightly more sun exposure than the North side of the loop.

Elevation: 5,280ft.-5,536ft.

Rating: Easy/Beginner

Gear Needed: Hiking shoes or mountain bike, water, and food.

Directions: The Buck's Creek Loop Trail starts from the Southwest end of the Buck's Summit parking lot adjacent to the Pacific Crest Trail. From Buck's Summit, the trail parallels the left side of Buck's Lake Road for about 3 hundred feet. The trail then begins to drop downhill. After about a ½ mile the trail will cross a dirt road (Forest Service Road 24N29Y) and then split into the loop. The loop trail can be traveled either direction.

Description: The Buck's Creek Loop Trail descends approximately 300ft in elevation and ascends the same. It was reconstructed in the fall of 2010. It has now become a very smooth and easy-to-follow trail that provides easy travel for hikers and mountain bikers. There are two creek crossings and a number of elevated turnpikes through marshy areas. The trail parallels the Buck's Lake Road closely in two areas.

The trail passes through a number of beautiful riparian zones as well as dry, exposed meadows, and large fir, Lodgepole, and ponderosa pine forests. This trail also provides opportunities for wildlife sightings as it travels adjacent to deer, bear, coyote, bird, fish and many other animal habitats. During the fall, from this trail, you can see the beautiful Kokanee Salmon spawning in Buck's Creek.

Since this area is not located within the boundaries of the Buck's Lake Wilderness, the trail provides opportunities for bicycle and horse travel.