

Spectacular views spill forth after easy climb



Views of Rubicon Point and Mount Tallac from Eagle Rock.
Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

TAHOE CITY – Eagle Rock has to be the easiest hike in Lake Tahoe to get some of the most stunning views. It's like having an eagle's-eye view of the basin.

Eagle Rock has always been popular among those who knew about it. But now it is getting even more attention because a designated trail was created. It used to require scrambling up the rocky backside to get to the top.

When we scampered up there two weeks ago the dirt trail was narrow, with a gradual climb. It's only 1,800-feet long.



Blackwood Creek flows into Lake Tahoe.

Signs at the trailhead said it's a moderate hike. I would say for those who are used to hiking in Tahoe it's an easy hike. The only "difficult" part is a bit of rock scrambling at the top. This might be where poles would come in handy for anyone with balance or knee issues.

It's 250-feet of volcanic rock at the top. This in itself makes it such a change from the usual granite that dominates the basin.

Like so many places in the basin, this used to be a special spot for Native Americans. However, white people knew about Eagle Rock in the 1880s. At one time there was a gazebo at the top. With how exposed the area is, it's easy to see how it could be a hot vista in the summer.

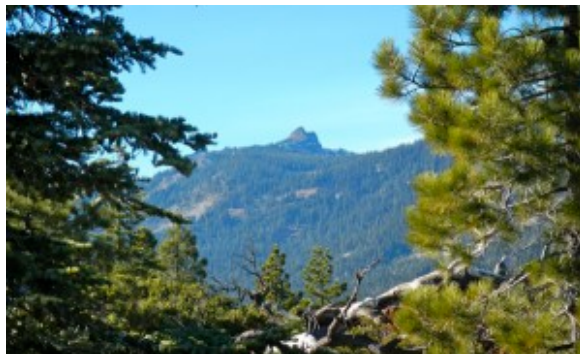
There is a California State Lands Commission marker at the top that is dated 1979.

The California Tahoe Conservancy in 1987 acquired the 54.5-acre property that includes Eagle Rock for \$450,000.

The Conservancy in 2012 completed a more than \$4 million restoration project in the Blackwood Creek Watershed. This area contributed more sediment to Lake Tahoe than any other watershed in the basin – more than 1,900 tons a year.

The Eagle Rock trail is in the watershed. Part of it was built in 2011, with the second and final phase finished this year.

It's easy to see where Blackwood Creek spills into Lake Tahoe.



Rubicon Peak

The sweeping views make it a must-do hike. It takes about 15 minutes to get to the top. Rubicon Point and Mount Tallac dominate the southern view. Immediately to the south are Homewood's ski runs. Heavenly's upper trails are distinctly outlined in white. To the rear is Rubicon Peak. Private piers dot the landscape to the north.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 north. The trail is between Chamber's Landing and Sunnyside, on the left. There is parking on the left side, but there is no visible trailhead sign that can be seen while driving. There is a large "Lower Blackwood Creek Restoration Project" sign. The trailhead sign is to the right of that.