

# LAHONTAN State Recreation Area

16799 Lahontan Dam Road, Fallon, Nevada 89406

LahontanSRA@gmail.com

(775) 867-3500 • Churchill Ranger Station

(775) 577-2226 • Silver Springs Fee Booth

(775) 577-2226 • Silver Springs Ranger Station

Lahontan is located on the Carson River, 18 miles west of Fallon and 45 miles northeast of Nevada's Capital, Carson City, via U.S. Highway 50. Visitors may access the park from two entrances: U.S. highway 50 east of Silver Springs and U.S. highway 95A south of Silver Springs.



## DIVISION OF STATE PARKS

901 S. Stewart St., Suite 5005

Carson City, Nevada 89701-5248

www.parks.nv.gov • (775) 684-2770



The Division of State Parks prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or sexual orientation. July 2013.

# LAHONTAN State Recreation Area



Photo: Sarah Park, www.sarah-park.com



(775) 577-2226  
www.parks.nv.gov

## PARK HISTORY

Lahontan Dam and reservoir are part of the Newlands Project, one of the first irrigation projects selected for construction following passage of the 1902 Reclamation Act. In 1905 it became the first to deliver water from works constructed by the U.S. Government. The project diverts and stores water from the Truckee and Carson River Basins to irrigate lands near Fallon and to produce hydroelectric power. Drainage water from irrigated lands flows into the Stillwater Wildlife Management Area—one of the finest waterfowl areas in Nevada. The dam, completed in 1915, is 162-foot high, 1,700-feet long at the top and contains 733 cubic yards of earth fill. The reservoir has a storage capacity of 312,000 acre-feet when full. The reservoir was named after the ancient Lake Lahontan, which covered more than 8,500 square miles of the western Great Basin during the last Ice Age. Its ancient shore terraces may be seen high on the mountainsides of the surrounding region. Lahontan became a Nevada State Recreation Area in 1971. It was previously operated by Churchill and Lyon Counties.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The park's vegetation is dominated by high desert sagebrush communities. Wooded areas of native cottonwoods and willows are scattered along the lake shore. Riparian zones are found up and downstream of the lake along the Carson River. The majority of the park is below 4,000 feet in elevation. Rock from ancient volcanic flows is common in the mountains around the lake. Wild horses, bobcat, coyote, fox and deer share the park with a variety of birds. Migratory waterfowl, pelicans, herons, egrets and hawks are frequently seen. Lahontan is one of the few nesting sites for bald eagles.

## LOCATION AND CLIMATE

Lahontan is located on the Carson River, 18 miles west of Fallon and 45 miles northeast of Nevada's Capital, Carson City, via U.S. Highway 50. The Reno-Sparks metropolitan area is slightly over one hour away by auto. Visitors may access the park from two entrances: U.S. highway 50 east of Silver Springs and U.S. highway 95A south of Silver Springs.

The reservoir is almost 17 miles long with 69 miles of shoreline. When full, it contains 10,000 surface acres of water. This recreation area is open all year with maximum use during the late spring through summer. Primary activities are boating, water skiing, fishing and camping. The climate is typical of the northern Nevada desert region. Rainfall is slight, averaging less than six inches annually. Sunny skies are the norm, with summer daytime temperatures near 90 degrees. Nights may drop below 50 degrees.

## FACILITIES & FEATURES

**PICNICKING AND CAMPING:** There are two developed, day-use picnicking areas at Lahontan: One is located directly across Lahontan Dam and one is on Silver Springs Beach.

Facilities include modern restrooms, showers, tables and grills. All new facilities are accessible to the disabled. Silver Springs Beach #7 offers developed campground facilities with modern restrooms, tables and grills. Primitive on-the-beach camping is permitted in all areas except for day-use and boat-ramp areas.

**SANITARY TRAILER DUMP STATIONS:** Sanitary dump station facilities are available near both entrances to the park.

**BOAT LAUNCH AREAS:** Boaters with four-wheel drive vehicles may launch off of beaches open to camping. Both sides of the park also provide paved boat launching and parking facilities. The Silver Springs boat launch is located near the day-use area. The Churchill Beach boat launch, at the North Shore Marina, is located along U.S. Highway 50, one mile west of Lahontan Dam. All boat launching is done at the risk of the user.

**FISHING:** Bank and boat fishing techniques are used to catch walleye, white bass, the hybrid wiper, catfish, trout and other game fish. The Nevada Department of Wildlife maintains fishing regulations.

**FIREARMS:** Firearms are permitted inside the park by those who may legally possess them. Target shooting is not allowed in any area of the park. Hunting is only allowed in designated areas. Nevada Department of Wildlife regulations and licenses apply within the park.

## REMINDERS

**The desert is extremely fragile.** Proof of this can be seen in the scars left by thoughtless motorists and others who have abused the area in the past. Studies by ecologists indicate that it takes centuries for nature to restore a desert area to its original condition once the soil and vegetation have been disturbed. For this reason, for your enjoyment and for the comfort and safety of others, we urge you observe the following rules and regulations:

- Drive only on approved routes of travel. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on trails in the park.
- Only licensed vehicles and operators may drive in the park. No ALL TERRAIN VEHICLES (ATV) or other unlicensed vehicles are allowed. Motorcyclists must wear helmets.
- The maximum speed limit of motorized vehicles is 25 mph within the recreation area and 15 mph within the beach and congested areas in the park.
- All plants, animals, artifacts, rocks and minerals are protected by state law. Please do not remove or disturb them.
- Pets are welcome, but must be kept on a leash of not more than six feet in length.
- Boats may not exceed 5 mph with 100 feet of swimmers or within any buoyed flat-wake zone along beaches.
- Please deposit all trash in the centrally located dumpsters or trash cans in the park.
- Discharge of any fireworks inside the park is forbidden.

