



BLACK ROCK DESERT
HIGH ROCK CANYON
EMIGRANT TRAILS



NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

SOLDIER MEADOWS

Soldier Meadows: 10,000 Years of Camping

Prehistory-

- Between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago humans entered the Great Basin area
- It is believed that these people were large game hunters
- Numerous prehistoric archaeological sites have been identified in the area, including rock shelters, occupation sites, temporary camps, petroglyphs and pictographs.
- Around 11,000 to 8,000 years ago ancient Lake Lahontan began to recede, leaving grasslands and marshes in its wake
- Soldier Meadows was one of the first areas to be uncovered when the lake receded
- These grassy areas attracted large game such as mammoths and bison, which in turn attracted hunters
- It is believed that the hunters lived in this area since there was such an abundance of resources, including game, plant foods and stone for tools
- The Paiutes are also known to camp at Soldier Meadows during the winter months, due to the much milder climate.

History-

- The hot springs also drew the Paiutes to the area because of their belief that water is sacred and they were believed to have healing powers.
- Captain John C. Fremont and Kit Carson also stayed in Soldier Meadows during their 1843-1844 exploring expedition
- In the later 1800's the emigrants from the eastern states traveled through Soldier Meadows on the Applegate-Lassen trail.
- There are many accounts of emigrants stopping in the area to rest, since there was grass for their animals to eat and water from the hot and cold springs to drink.

Modern-

- In the past, people camped here out of necessity, now they camp for recreation. Unregulated use has degraded conditions at and around the springs, which has triggered the development of a recreational management plan for the area.
- Many of the existing campsites and access points have been closed and rehabbed to protect the sensitive hot springs resources.
- There are smaller individual campsites and group sites available, along with Soldier Meadows Ranch.



10,000 Years of Camping