

Washoe Lake State Park

High Water MARKER



On Monday, May 30, 1983, a barrage of water, mud, and boulders came barreling down from Slide Mountain, crashing into Washoe Valley. Seemingly out of nowhere on a sunny and warm Memorial Day, a massive section of Slide Mountain broke free, slamming into Upper and Lower Price Lakes at the mountain's base. Water from the lakes was displaced, causing both lakes to essentially disappear. The displaced water then carried the slide material down the creek bed of Ophir Creek, tearing up the landscape and adding even more debris to the slide.

The 1983 slide was caused by an exceptionally dense snowpack, resulting from the previous winter being far colder and wetter than average. With temperatures consistently in the 80s and 90s over the second half of May, the snowpack began rapidly melting. This culminated in the water-saturated soil on the mountain giving way, initiating the slide that would travel more than three miles before dumping into the northwest end of Washoe Lake. This devastating event killed one person, injured six, destroyed four homes, and caused a total of 1.2 million damage (equivalent to about 3.6 million today).



To learn more about flooding in Nevada and to see other high water marks throughout the state, scan this QR code.

