UCDAVIS TAHOE ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER

Activity Descriptions

(listed alphabetically, choose two per field trip)

Build Lake Tahoe: Students decide how they would develop their own piece of Tahoe lakefront property, then learn what impact this might have on the environment.

Drop in the Bucket: Students will estimate then calculate the percent of available fresh water on Earth in order to understand how limited a resource fresh water is.

Incredible Journey: Students roll dice that represent different stages of the water cycle, simulating the movement of water molecules from clouds to rivers to animals to plants, and so on.

Just Passing Through: In this whole-body activity, students recreate the movement of water over land surfaces with and without vegetation, thus learning about erosion and BMPs.

Macroinvertebrate Monitoring: Students will collect and observe samples of stream-dwelling macroinvertebrates such as aquatic worms, stoneflies, mayflies, etc., and learn what these species signify for water quality.

Quakes at the Lake: Students learn about the mechanics earthquakes by modeling the motion of P-waves and S-waves through both earth and water using slinkies.

Rock Around Tahoe: Students will roll dice at different stations representing various kinds of rocks and stages of the rock cycle, learning how things such as volcanic activity and sedimentation have shaped Tahoe.

Stream Monitoring: Students will learn how researchers monitor water quality by testing a stream for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH and conductivity.

Stream Table: Students learn about how water shapes the landscape by observing a mini river and identifying landforms.

Topography: This activity develops concepts of physical geography and mapping. Students make and use topographic maps that describe landforms.

Watershed model: Students get to place different kinds of pollutants onto a model landscape, then by using spray bottles to represent rain, they see how pollution drains into Lake Tahoe.