

TERC Field Trips

Thank you for your interest in a field trip with TERC! Field trips are offered in person in Incline Village, as live virtual sessions facilitated by TERC educators, or as pre-recorded videos and activity guides. **Be sure to note the format matches your preferences.** Please complete [this form](#) to schedule a live field trip or to gain access to the materials for a pre-recorded field trip. All in-person programs include a tour of the research vessel and laboratory exhibits in the Tahoe Science Center and a viewing of our “Lake Tahoe in Depth” 3-D film. Each of our field trips is adaptable to the grade levels listed and can be tailored to suit the needs of your class. As you plan your field trip, please refer to our detailed NGSS guide for more information.



Tahoe's Aquatic Food Web (Grades 3–5)

Students explore changes in our local Lake Tahoe aquatic food web. Students learn about a specific Tahoe organism and use that knowledge to construct a food web with their peers in person or using Google Jamboard. The food web model demonstrates the complexity and serves as a discussion for the many impacts from a single change.

Available in person, live virtual, or [pre-recorded](#)



Trees of Tahoe (Grades 3–5)

Students learn how to identify the common tree species found in Tahoe's forests. They get to practice and apply these skills by performing a forest survey to assess the local biodiversity. Students then use their survey to determine the health of Tahoe's forests. Trees of Tahoe can be adapted for older audiences to include forest health.

Available in person, live virtual, or [pre-recorded](#)



Water on Earth (Grades 3–5)

Students explore watersheds, the water cycle, water as a limited resource, and Lake Tahoe water quality. Hands-on activities may include Blue Planet, Drop in a Bucket, and The Incredible Journey or Incline Creek Stream Monitoring (weather dependent).

Available in person



Shaping Earth's Surface (Grades 3–6)

Students explore the forces behind the formation of landforms with an emphasis on erosion. Hands-on activities may include Topography, and Landforms.

Available in person



Earth System Science (Grades 3–12)

This program includes an engaging game show that helps students conceptualize the Earth science concepts of life webs, cycles of matter, and flows of energy. A 3-Part Play shows how energy continuously flows through Earth and all of its life forms. Other topics covered on this field trip include the carbon cycle, the carbon budget, and the greenhouse effect.

Available in person



UC DAVIS

Tahoe Environmental
Research Center

Support science education and further field trip development
by donating here: <https://give.ucdavis.edu/TERC/TENVGED>

TERC Field Trips



The Tahoe System (Grades 3–12)

This program provides an overview of the Tahoe Basin with a focus on systems thinking. Students explore some of the features of Lake Tahoe that make it so special and learn the threats to the lake. Hands-on activities may include Watershed Model and Build Lake Tahoe, Pollution Adds Up, Incline Creek Stream and Macroinvertebrate Monitoring.

Available in person



Formation of Lake Tahoe (Grades 4–6; three 1-hour sessions)

Students are taken on a broad journey of the geological processes that formed Lake Tahoe over millions of years. Through several hands-on demonstrations, students explore big-picture earth science topics such as density, plate tectonics, and earthquakes, and make the connection of how those actions over time led to the formation of Lake Tahoe.

Available live virtual or pre-recorded



Geology & Plate Tectonics (Grades 4–8)

Students will learn about the geological processes that formed Lake Tahoe and how tectonic activity is still at work in the Tahoe Basin and around the world. Activities may include, Quakes at the Lake, Rock Detective, and Rock Around Tahoe.

Available in person



Climate Change at Lake Tahoe (Grades 6–8; two 1-hour sessions)

Students start with an active and engaging lesson that discusses ways to combat climate change from a personal to global level. This is followed by an evidence-based exploration into how our changing climate affects Tahoe specifically. The field trip is designed to give students the information they need to understand the implications of this global crisis while empowering them to get involved!

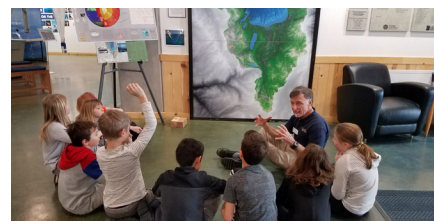
Available in person, live virtual, or pre-recorded



Environmental Detectives (Grades 6–8)

Students will investigate human impact on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems while assessing watershed health with the “Mystery of the Dying Fish” based on GEMS Environmental Detectives.

Available in person



Customized Tahoe Science Center Tour (Grades 9–12)

With a focus on in-depth discussion of more advanced concepts, any of the above thematic programs are appropriate for high school student groups, or other groups who request a more specialized trip. We also offer tours of our laboratories, a green building tour of the LEED Platinum Science Center, stream monitoring, the 3-D film, and a Sierra Nevada University campus tour.

Available in person or pre-recorded