

# A Quick Guide to Wickiup Reservoir Birding

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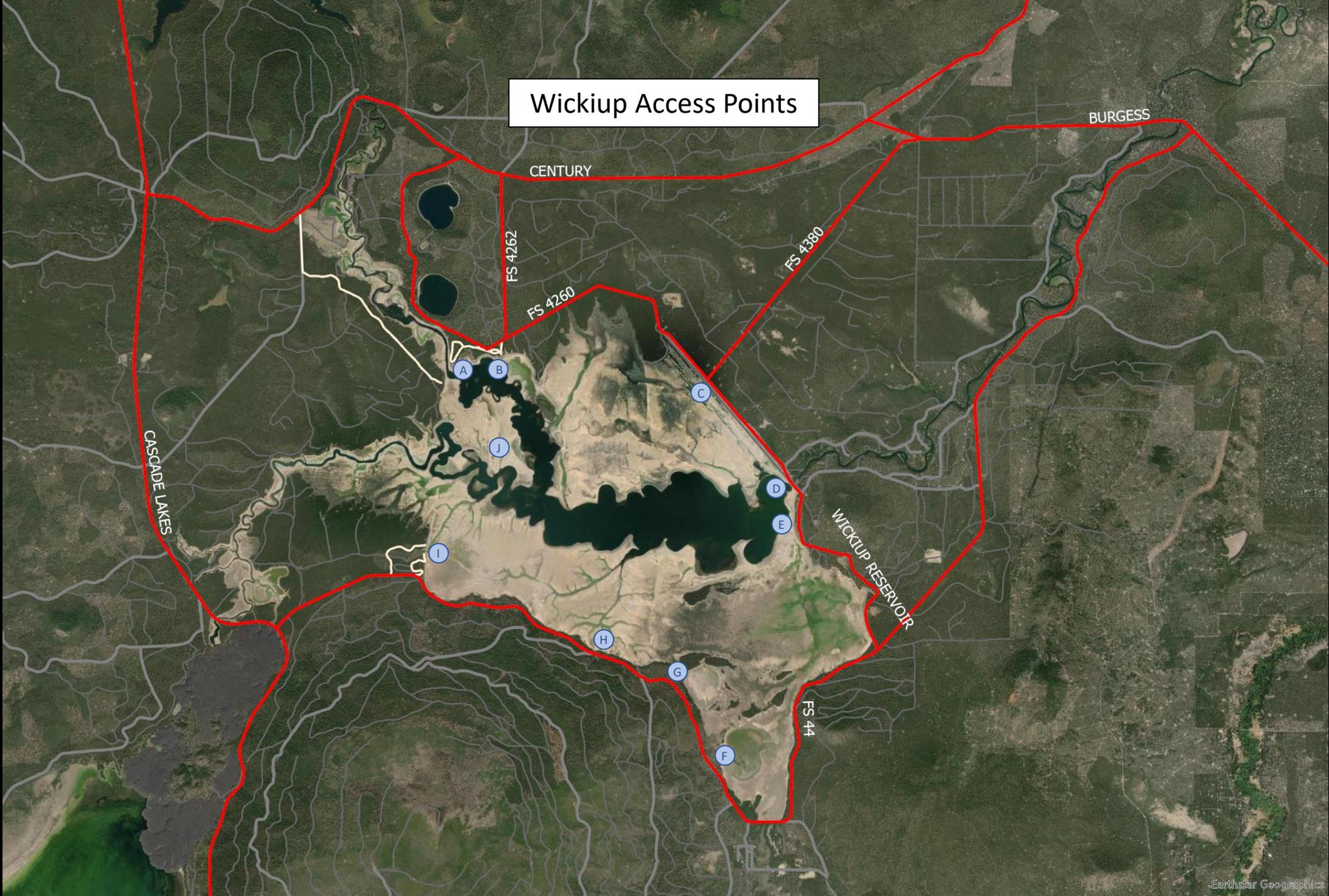
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# Wickiup Birding Areas



# Wickiup Access Points



## Wickiup Birding Area Descriptions 1 through 6

### 1. North Wickiup Boat Ramp ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access points A or B):

Paved access from Twin Lakes or good gravel access from Wickiup Dam. Forest Service parking lot, good car access out onto sand at low water. Good spot at all water levels. Extensive mudflats to east often hold shorebirds, bay to southwest and channel to southeast all good for diversity and rarities. Great winter waterfowl scoping spot. Gull Point Campground to west can hold passerines, views of the Deschutes River.

### 2. Kiosk Ponds ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point C):

Good gravel access from Wickiup Dam, North Wickiup Boat Ramp, or FS-4380. Gravel parking lot near kiosk next to dam with social trail onto dam. Extensive area of willows, ponds, and channels (underwater at high water) especially to northwest and to a lesser extent southeast. Excellent passerine spot, and often good shorebirds. Best in late summer and autumn though can hold winter rarities. Lots of nooks to explore with slow, careful birding.

### 3. Wickiup Dam ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point D):

Good gravel access from FS-4260 from North Wickiup Boat Ramp or FS-4380. Parking along top of dam in wide pullouts (don't block traffic). Extensive views of eastern reservoir, even in low water. Can hike out to sand peninsulas in low water. Excellent scoping spot especially for waterfowl, gulls, and open water rarities. Great spot to start out and get a sense of the reservoir, weather conditions and water levels. Can be extremely windy.

### 4. Wikiup Broads North Shore (No Hotspot, though some use Kiosk Ponds, Access points C or D):

Hike out from Kiosk Ponds or the dam at low water to view the main broad channels of the reservoir, even in winter. Can be over a mile at lowest water, though worth bringing a scope because the views are vast. Many coves and sand points hide shorebirds, excellent way to find rarities hiding in the broad channels that are too distant to see other spots and catch birds heading up or down reservoir. Open country birds sometimes found on the sand flats.

### 5. Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point E):

Bumpy dirt road access from Wickiup Dam (3<sup>rd</sup> side road after dam, look at Google Maps). Parking area at boat ramp. Boat ramp itself in terrible condition but can be driven down to sand in low water. Sand beyond the boat ramp can be loose. Willows around boat ramp can be good for passerines even in winter, but main attraction is walking down to reservoir and out to Area #9. Can be great for shorebirds and scoping birds at closer range than the dam.

### 6. Wickiup Broads South Shore (No Hotspot, though some use Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp, Access points usually E, sometimes H):

Hike out to the coves, mudflats, and sandy points of the south shore of the main broad channels, usually from the Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp but depending on water level can be good from the southside channels. Can drive but loose sand and mud are hazards. Particularly good when water levels create large mudflats. Excellent to find shorebirds, gulls, open water birds, and especially rarities hiding out in the hard-to-reach parts of the reservoir.

## Wickiup Birding Area Descriptions 7 through 12

### 7. Southeast Flats (No Hotspot, though some use Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp, Access point E or from various pullouts):

Ringed by FS-4260/-44 (Wickiup Rd.) which is bumpy dirt to the east, good gravel to the south, and can be confusing to follow especially the mile south of Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp. Large wet meadow area with willows and sand flats, underwater at high water. Not the most interesting spot but often hosts cranes and other meadow nesting birds and be good for passerines in the willows. Probably an under-birded spot.

### 8. Southeast Wickiup Pond ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point F or from various pullouts):

Ringed by FS-44 (Wickiup Rd.) that is good gravel with several pullouts and camping sites that can provide access. This site is the large pond at the very southern end of the reservoir, underwater at high water but otherwise a stand-alone wetland. Surrounding forest is mix of age and burn class which can be good for passerines, wetland can be good for waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders. Cranes often use the area.

### 9. Round Swamp ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point G):

A confusing one, and I may be wrong in my naming. I refer to Round Swamp as the second semipermanent wetland in the southeast corner but northeast of #7 and more round in shape. But the eBird Hotspot is at the camping site that is access point F and sometimes called the Round Swamp Campground. This pond isn't visible from the road and requires going down a rocky spur to access point G. This is a large pond good for wetland species and waders.

### 10. Southside Channels ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point H):

Good gravel access from FS-44 (Wickiup Rd.). Intricate set of channels best at moderate water levels, go completely dry at lower water levels. Also potential for hiking out to main broad channels though can be a long walk at low water levels. Can be productive especially for shorebirds, terns, and gulls. Easy to spook birds back to the reservoir if you're not careful. Confusing water and mud can make navigating tricky.

### 11. Wickiup Reservoir Campground ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point I):

Good gravel access from FS-44 (Wickiup Rd.) to dirt campground road. Possible to drive out on sand but loose sand is a hazard. Dynamic site depending on water level with ever changing shoreline and channels, especially at the north end. Excellent for shorebird numbers and diversity and passerine flocks in forest edge and willows; waterfowl brood diversity is good here too. Gulls, terns, and waders can be productive especially in late summer and early fall.

### 12. FS-4280 Peninsula ([eBird Hotspot](#), Access point J):

Tricky access requires bumpy dirt road travel down FS-4280 which is a bit of a maze, followed by good sand travel. This site takes some exploring and time to get to know but can be the best shorebirding at Wickiup. Southeastern tip constantly changing with water levels, with dynamic shoreline and coves holding lots of sandpipers, pelicans, and gulls. Excellent evening birding with sun to your back, terrific for nighthawk flights.

## Wickiup Birding Access Site Descriptions A through F

### A. Gull Point Campground ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Forest Service campground with paved access from the west on Twin Lakes Road off South Century Drive, or via gravel shortcut NF-4262 from the east. Gated in off season but walkable year-round. Boat ramp can be busy when water level is appropriate, typically early summer. Parking pass posted site.

### B. North Wickiup Boat Ramp ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Forest Service boat ramp with paved access from the west on Twin Lakes Road off South Century Drive, or via gravel shortcut NF-4262 from the east. Open year-round. Boat ramp can be busy when water level is appropriate, typically early summer. Parking pass posted site. Possible to drive down boat ramp and out onto sand when water levels are low, loose sand and mud are minimal hazards if you stick to the obvious route.

### C. Kiosk Ponds Parking Site ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Small gravel designated parking site next to kiosk off NF-4260 at intersection with FS-4380. Good gravel access from all directions on those roads. Social path through rocks over dam to access Kiosk Ponds.

### D. Wickiup Dam ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Two wide gravel pullout areas on the top of the dam west of the main structure. Good gravel access from the west on FS-4360, though ramp up dam is often very washboarded. Be sure to not block traffic by pulling over well to the side on the pullouts. Beyond scoping the reservoir, can walk the top of the dam or pick your way down the rocks to access the north shore.

### E. Wickiup Butte Boat Ramp ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Gravel designated parking site next to boat ramp, a short bumpy dirt road drive south from the dam. The actual boat ramp turnoff is the 3<sup>rd</sup> turn south from the dam, easily seen on Google Maps but can be tricky in person. Also note the “Wickiup Butte Boating Site” label on Google Maps is a quarter-mile south of the actual boat ramp. You can drive down the boat ramp at low water, but it’s in very bad condition. Use caution on the sand and mud beyond.

### F. Southeast Wickiup Campsite ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Undeveloped but well-established campsite on the west side of the wetlands, with good gravel access from the west on FS-44, or bumpy dirt road access around from the east on the same road. Allows for walks out to the wetlands.

## Wickiup Birding Access Site Descriptions G through J

### G. Round Swamp Campsite ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Undeveloped but well-established campsite down an easily missed bumpy dirt spur off NF-44, which leads to the edge of the pond. Hard to tell if someone is already camped there from the road and tight turnaround spot, so proceed cautiously. Otherwise easy parking and direct access to site.

### H. Southside Channel Campsite ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Undeveloped but well-established campsite on NF-44 which is a good gravel road on the south side of Wickiup, though closed in winter and spring with snow. Campsite is a convenient and shady place to pull off and park, with easy access to hike out to the north and explore channels.

### I. Reservoir Campground ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

Developed Forest Service campground with dirt access road off NF-44 which is a good gravel road on the south side of Wickiup, though closed in winter and spring with snow. There are two openings to the reservoir flats, at the north and south ends of the campground, both with space for parking and dirt ramps you can drive down onto the sand flats. A hikable or walkable sand road goes north to the channel which is usually good driving for some extent, but loose sand and mud become greater hazards the closer to the channel you get, which varies in extent greatly depending on water levels. A second, narrow, and bumpy dirt road NF-970/-960 goes beyond the campground from NF-44 just west of the campground entrance to some dispersed campsites.

### J. FS-4280 Peninsula ([Google Map Coordinates](#)):

The trickiest access of all, getting out to the FS-4280 peninsula requires driving about three miles down narrow and bumpy dirty roads off S. Century Drive to reach the open peninsula, and then sand road driving to get out to the water. The Google Map point here is where you leave the Forest Service road and the forest and drive out onto the peninsula. The peninsula is underwater at high water, and the margins change dynamically with water level.

The first turn onto NF-4280 goes 0.7 miles down a decent straight gravel road, then you turn onto the NF-100 branch which is narrow and bumpy. You follow the main road, which nominally becomes the NF-120 branch for 2 miles out to the open peninsula. The main sand road heads southeast to the tip of the peninsula where the best channels start, [about here](#) among groves of willows where you can pull off the path to park. Beyond that point loose sand and mud are prominent hazards, you'll want to hike out further from here.

Other sand roads on the peninsula lead to additional viewpoints across from the North Wickiup Boat Ramp and the Reservoir Campground birding areas.

**Other Birding Sites Near Wickiup**

Cultus Lake Campground

Little Cultus Lake  
Campground

Rock Creek Campground

Crane Prairie Dame

Browns Mountain

East Davis Lake  
Campground  
(Klamath County)

Cow Meadow Campground

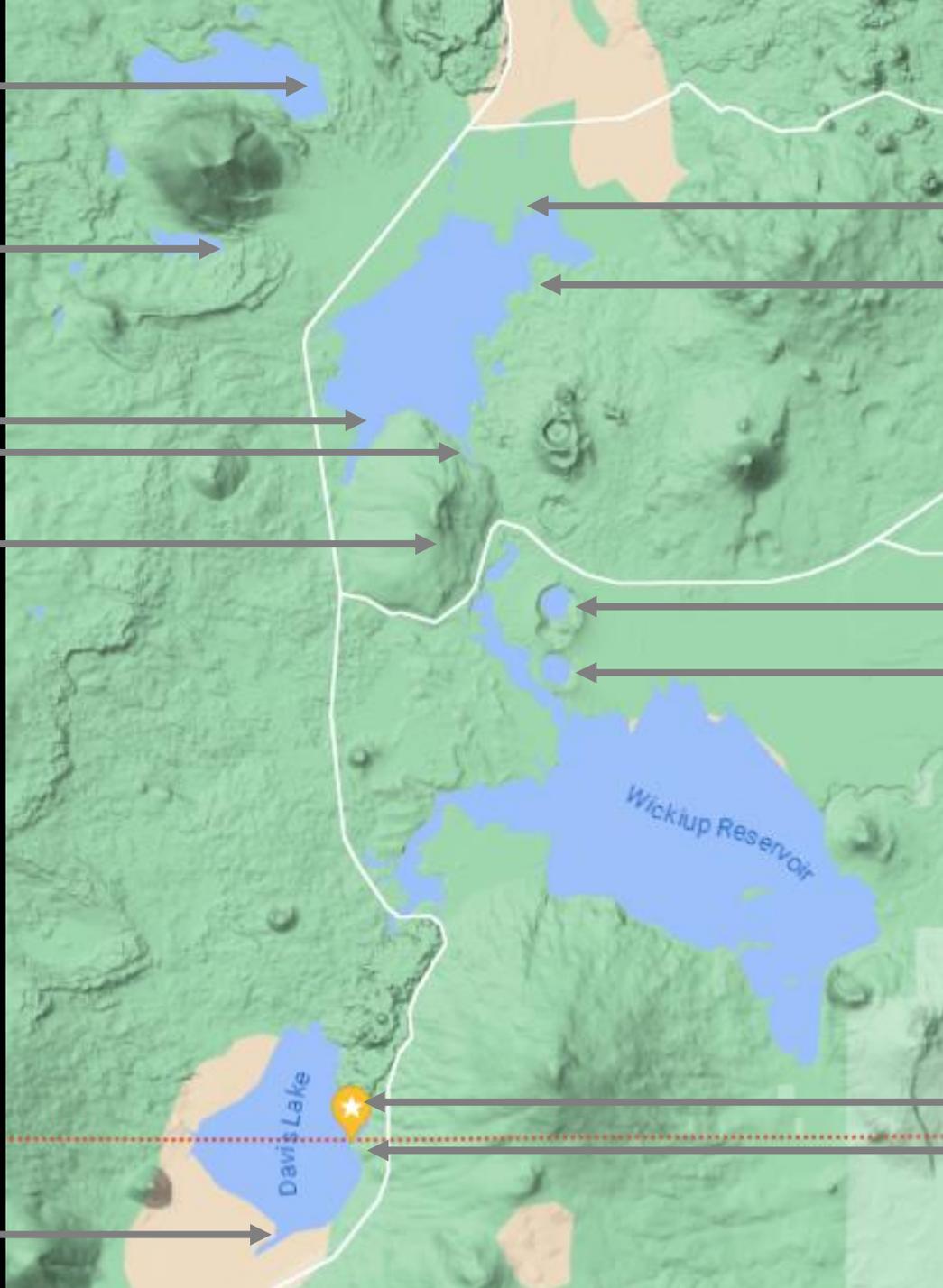
Crane Prairie Campground

North Twin Lake

South Twin Lake

Lava Flow Campground

Davis Lake Boat Ramp  
(Klamath County)



Wickiup Reservoir

Davis Lake