

Olympics free up Tahoe area campsites

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

From the Sierra Crest on the edge of the Crystal Basin, you can scan down across miles of granite, forest and below to pristine Loon Lake and Pleasant Lake.

Below is a vast forestland and spectacular destinations with six lakes, three boat ramps, 20 campgrounds and many wilderness trailheads. The region is a testament to an upcoming phenomenon: The public loves its Olympics – but it loves its Saturday nights for camping even more.

The Olympics start Aug. 5, and the track-and-field events, Aug. 12. For the first time this summer, campsites will start becoming available at many of the marquee lakes across Northern California. That includes in the Crystal Basin in Eldorado National Forest, west of Tahoe and the Sierra Crest.

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