The Washoe likely originated among the coastal tribes of California and either migrated or were forced to move east to areas surrounding Lake Tahoe on the Nevada-California border. Today the Washoe of California and Nevada occupy a series of small “colonies” in Nevada and reside off these reservations in both states. A single Tribal Council based in Gardnersville, Nevada, governs the colonies under a single flag.

The flag is dark blue with the seal of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California in gold and blue in the center (seal provided by the Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California). The seal depicts the geography, flora, and fauna of the lands of the Washoe. With a backdrop of mountains, the foreground is filled with three main sources of sustenance for the ancient Washoe—the piñón pine or dagum, the trout or atabei, and the deer or mumdaywe. Around the upper rim of the seal is “SEAL OF THE WASHOE TRIBE OF NEVADA AND CALIFORNIA”. At the lower rim are two crossed eagle feathers for the two states the Washoe nation today call home. An inner ring is filled with a geometric pattern of triangles and diamonds.