Policy

Reclamation Policy LND P02, dated March 2002, sets the policy for planning, development, management, and operation of concessions at Reclamation projects.

Authority: Reclamation Act of 1902, as amended and supplemented; the Reclamation Project Act of 1939; and the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965, as amended.

Concessions Principles.

A. Concessions will provide quality recreation facilities and services accessible to persons with disabilities, and appropriate visitor goods and services at reasonable rates.

B. Concession operations will provide for the protection, conservation, and preservation of natural, historical, and cultural resources.

C. Commercial facilities and services will be planned and developed through a commercial services planning and public involvement process.

D. Concessionaires will be provided with opportunities for a reasonable profit and may be compensated for Reclamation-approved improvements that will remain the property of the United States.

E. Reclamation will ensure fair competition in the awarding of concessions contracts and will not allow preferential rights of renewal.

F. Exclusive use will not be allowed and existing exclusive use will be removed as soon as possible.

G. Concessions will comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

VSP Key Messages

1. Private use of public lands and lakeshore should not continue into the future. The VSP will address this problem.
2. Facilities at Lake Berryessa such as sewage systems, roads, and campgrounds are outdated and in poor condition. These types of facilities will be greatly improved when the VSP is implemented.
3. The resorts are dominated by private long-term use trailers. The VSP will open up new short-term recreation opportunities for the public.
4. The local economy receives little benefit from the current long-term private uses (observe the lack of restaurants, stores, and service stations under current conditions). Short-term uses under the VSP should enhance local business opportunities.
5. The expiration of the long-term contracts is the logical time to change the resorts and their private recreation use emphasis. Public recreation needs have changed dramatically since the late 1950s when the resorts were developed. The VSP will meet these changing needs.
6. Reclamation's goal is a smooth transition to new concession operations, with minimal disruption to the public.

VSP Contacts

VSP Team Leader, Steve Rodgers
srodgers@mp.usbr.gov
707-966-2111 x106, FAX 707-966-0409

Concessions Manager, Cleve Dufer
cdufer@mp.usbr.gov
707-966-2111 x141, FAX 707-966-0409

Concessions Policy, Mike Petrinovich
mpetrinovich@mp.usbr.gov
916-989-7276, FAX 916-989-7208

VSP Mailing List, Janet Sierzputowski
jsierzputowski@mp.usbr.gov
916-978-5112, FAX 916-978-5114

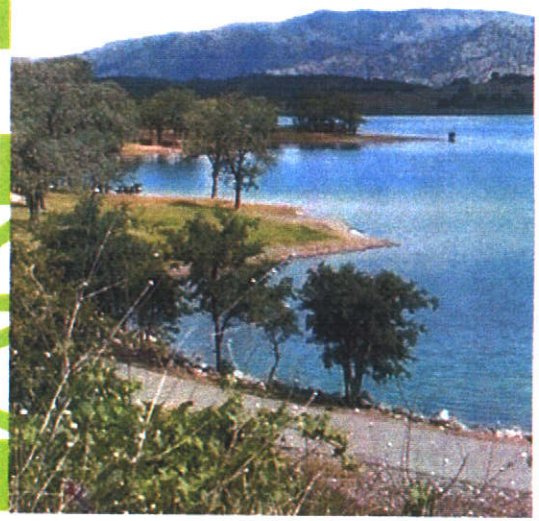
Alternative format available upon request.
Call 707-966-2111, TDD 707-966-0205.

www.usbr.gov/mp/berryessa

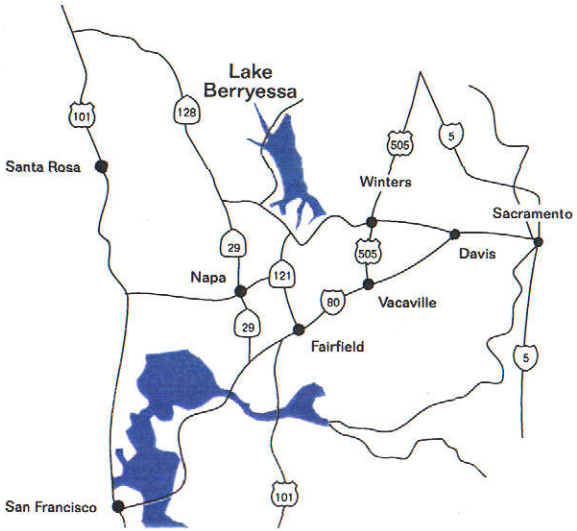
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region

LAKE BERRYESSA

VISITOR SERVICES PLANNING EFFORT



LAKE BERRYESSA



Past

Lake Berryessa was created as part of the Solano Project with the completion of Monticello Dam in 1957. In 1958, Reclamation contracted with Napa County to manage the lake's recreation activities. A Public Use Plan (PUP) was developed by the National Park Service in 1959 to guide the creation of the lake's facilities and programs. The PUP focused on lake access and short-term recreation programs to be implemented by seven commercial concessions. Long-term contracts were issued to the concessionaires who then strayed from the PUP, developing exclusive-use trailer villages which exist today much as they did in the 1960s.

In 1975, a General Accounting Office Audit reported the failure to follow the PUP in providing recreational opportunities to the general public. Napa County returned management of the lake to Reclamation. By then, the situation was beyond a simple fix as 1,500+ private trailers were already in place.

Present

From 1975 to today, Reclamation has managed recreation at the lake, developing day use facilities outside of the concession areas to improve short-term recreation opportunities. The concession areas are much the same today as they were in the early 1960s, but some concessionaires attempted to add short-term recreation facilities by making campgrounds out of parking lots and near sewage ponds.

The trailers at the lake are vacation homes, not primary residences. Many are 40+ years old and occupy prime lakeshore sites, making those areas unavailable to the general public. Additionally, there are many violations of health, safety, and environmental regulations at the resorts. Since 2000, nearly 200 of the worst trailers have been cited for violations and removed. As of summer 2003, about 1,300 trailers remain.

Future

Future alternatives for the lake range from no change from the current situation, to increased shoreline access and short-term recreation with some private trailers in certain locations, to increased shoreline access and short-term recreation with no private trailers. The level of commercial development also varies by alternative, from levels similar to the current condition to reduced commercial development and expanded government operations.

Any future concessions will remain within the existing concession area footprint. New development could include trails, marinas, campgrounds, boat-in campsites, houseboat rentals, a water skiing center, RV parks, restaurants, lodging, and stores. Lake zoning could include new 5 mile-per-hour and non-motorized areas.

Visitor Services Plan (VSP)

In June 2000, Reclamation began developing the VSP to determine the type of commercial facilities and services needed at the lake after the concession contracts expire in 2008 and 2009.

The VSP is being developed with public input. A website was developed and bulletins and update letters have been sent to keep the public informed on the VSP's progress. Additional public input will be requested when the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released.

Reclamation believes that Lake Berryessa can become an outstanding center for traditional outdoor recreation. Reclamation also believes the lake can provide a great opportunity for businesses that offer facilities and programs to the widest spectrum of the public in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Past

Present

Possible Future