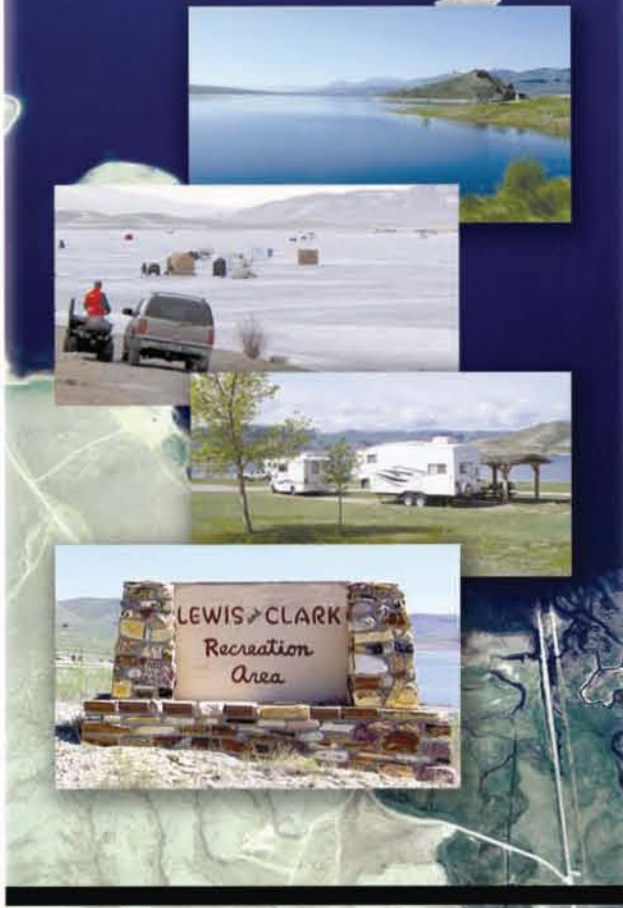


# Clark Canyon Reservoir Recreation Area



## Clark Canyon Dam

Clark Canyon Reservoir is located 20 miles south of Dillon Montana and is the head waters of the Beaverhead River. Construction of the reservoir started in 1961 and completed in 1964, stores water from the Red Rock River to the south and the Horse Prairie Creek to the west.

The Dam is an earth filled structure with a height of 147.5 feet, a crest length of 2950 feet and a width of 36 feet with a volume of 1,970,000 cubic yards of material. Built for irrigation and flood control the reservoir provides water to nearly 50,000 acres of agricultural lands. The reservoir has a water surface area of 4935 acres with an additional 4388 acres of land and 17 miles of shore line.



## Recreation, Fish and Wildlife

Many recreation opportunities are available around the reservoir including boating, camping, fishing, picnicking, waterskiing, hunting, photography and wildlife viewing. Seven campgrounds offer individuals the option to stay on all sides of the reservoir as well as one RV Park with full hook ups for those who want more than the basic primitive amenities.

White tail and mule deer as well as antelope are often seen roaming the lands surrounding the reservoir. Moose can be seen in some of the thicker willowed areas. Several species of waterfowl as well as song birds, birds of prey and shore birds make their homes in and around the water.



## Campgrounds and Day Use Areas

**BEAVERHEAD RIVER ACCESS** — Beaverhead River access is a frequently used site situated immediately below Clark Canyon Dam. Compared to most other areas around the reservoir, this area is lush with vegetation and is used by anglers, campers, bird watchers, and other wildlife observers. The area is also a popular launch site for anglers floating the Beaverhead River. Access to the site is from a steep, winding gravel road that begins near the top of Clark Canyon Dam. Picnic tables, camping slabs, and a vault toilet are available.

**BUFFALO BRIDGE RIVER ACCESS** — The Buffalo Bridge River access is heavily used during the fishing season. The site is not signed, but is well known and accessed from the east side of Interstate 15. During the fishing season, the area is often congested, especially when anglers are trying to launch their boats. A vault toilet is available.

**LEWIS & CLARK CAMPGROUND** — The Lewis and Clark Campground / Marina Area offers full service hook-ups for recreational vehicles by the day, week, or month with a self pay fee station. A boat ramp and courtesy dock are available at no charge to the public.

**LEWIS & CLARK DAY USE AREA** provides good access to the reservoir and has shelters, tables, and water available.

**BEAVERHEAD CAMPGROUND** is the most popular and conveniently accessible camping site at the reservoir. It has shelters, toilets, fire rings, and hand pumps. A courtesy dock and two boat ramps are available. The reservoir's only low water boat ramp is located at this site.

**CAMP FORTUNATE INTERPRETIVE SITE** — The Camp Fortunate Overlook is a day use area that has information about the Lewis and Clark journey through the area. A vault toilet and picnic tables are available for public use. The area provides excellent views of the reservoir and surrounding countryside.

Fishing is a year round activity for many with chances to catch large rainbow and brown trout as well as burbot which is a native fish of Montana and found in very few locations. The Cattail Nature Trail, located along the Beaverhead River directly below the reservoir, provides opportunities for photography of watchable wildlife as well as many diverse plant species.

## History

The area around Clark Canyon Reservoir has a rich and interesting past. Dillon banker William "Happy" Hawkins was instrumental in the efforts to build Clark Canyon Dam. Hawkins died before the project was completed. In recognition of his efforts, the reservoir behind the Dam was named Hap Hawkins Reservoir. Today the reservoir is more commonly known by the same name as the Dam — Clark Canyon.

Beneath the waters of Clark Canyon is the site of the historic town of Armstead. A railroad town, which was named after miner Harry Armstead, was still a viable community when the decision to build the dam was made. When water levels get low parts of the old highway, railroad, and even building foundations are still visible. Armstead was a station stop for the Oregon Short Line railroad and also served as the eastern terminus and headquarters of the Gilmore and Pittsburgh Railroad which operated a line from there to Salmon, Idaho between 1910 and 1939.



## Campgrounds and Day Use Areas

**HORSE PRAIRIE CAMPGROUND** is used for camping and fishing access on the west side of the reservoir. Shelters, hand pumps, fire pits, and two vault toilets are available. A boat ramp is available during higher water periods.

**CAMEAHWAIT CAMPGROUND**— Located along the west shore of the reservoir, this is a popular campground with covered shelters, vault toilet, fire pits, and a hand pump.

**WEST CAMEAHWAIT CAMPGROUND** is the last campground before leaving the reservoir along the west shore. There is one large covered shelter, vault toilets, fire pits, and one hand pump. The shelter can be reserved for groups by calling the Dillon Field Office

**HAP HAWKINS CAMPGROUND** is located on the southwest end of the reservoir and offers secluded views of the surrounding area. A popular group use and general camping area. One large covered shelter with a fire place, vault toilets, fire pits and a hand pump. The shelter can be reserved by calling the Dillon Field Office. Access is by an improved gravel road.

**LONE TREE CAMPGROUND** is located on the south end of Clark Canyon and is a popular area for group camping. Access is by a gravel county road off of I-15 or State Highway 324. Shelters, picnic tables, vault toilets, a hand pump, and fire rings are available.

**SOUTH SHORE ACCESS** has no development and no facilities. Gravel road access only.

**RED ROCK ACCESS** is heavily used during peak fishing periods. Limited parking. Vault toilet is available.

Clark Canyon Reservoir is the site of Camp Fortunate, one of the more significant spots along the Lewis and Clark Trail. It was at Camp Fortunate that the Lewis and Clark expedition met the Lemhi Shoshoni Tribe and where Sacagawea was reunited with her people. Members of the expedition cached their canoes and a stash of supplies at this location for their return trip. The Camp Fortunate Interpretive site presents information about the Lewis and Clark campsite and about their journey.

Several historic and pre-historic sites have been documented around the reservoir as well. Camp sites as well as drawings have been found around the area.

## Barretts Diversion Dam

Located 11 miles north of Clark Canyon Dam and 8 miles from the city of Dillon, Barretts Diversion diverts water from the Beaverhead River through nearly 44 miles of canals. This location has had historic significance since Lewis and Clark traveled through the area and wrote about the "Rattlesnake Cliffs" in their journals. Also known as the gateway of the Beaverhead this spot was once the location of a toll road, post office and store between 1866 and 1880. Even today many people stop and use the facilities offered free to the public. Day use as well as limited overnight camping is available. A large group use shelter on the south side of the river is a popular place for weddings, family reunions and other large gatherings. The shelter may be reserved by contacting the Dillon Field Office:



1200 Hwy. 41  
Dillon, MT 59725  
Phone: (406) 683-6472