

Media Advisory

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Region
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ADV-03-005
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* * * **REMINDER** * * *

MEDIA TOUR OF LAKE BERRYESSA

The media is invited to visit Lake Berryessa on **Wednesday, September 17, 2003**, to participate in either a morning tour from 10 a.m. to noon or an identical afternoon tour from 1 to 3 p.m.; each includes both a lake and a land tour.

The tours will provide a first-hand look at conditions in the lake's seven concession resorts as well as comprehensive background information. For 50 years, the resorts have managed privately owned vacation trailer villages under contracts with Reclamation. To prepare for the upcoming expiration of those contracts in 2008-2009, Reclamation is developing a Visitor Services Plan. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), scheduled to be released this fall, will contain alternatives for lake recreation. The media will see the conditions Reclamation will be addressing in the DEIS.

Participants will meet at the Lake Berryessa Visitor Center 30 minutes prior to the start of their tour. The Visitor Center is located next to the Lake Berryessa Field Office, 5520 Knoxville Road, Napa, CA 94558. If you would like to participate, **please RSVP by Monday, September 15, to Janet Sierzputowski at 916-978-5112 or e-mail jsierzputowski@mp.usbr.gov**.

FROM SACRAMENTO:

Take I-80 West towards Davis. Exit Highway 113 North to Woodland/Winters. Second exit, left on Covell Blvd. which turns into County Road E6 and then into Hwy 128. Stay on 128 until you see the turnoff for Lake Berryessa. Bear right at the Hwy 121/128 intersection ("the corners"), staying on 128. Turn right at the Turtle Rock sign onto Berryessa-Knoxville Road. Continue for about 6 miles to Reclamation's Visitor Center on your right.

FROM NAPA:

Take Hwy 121 North from Napa to the intersection of Hwy 128 at "the corners." Turn left on 128 and go approximately 5 miles. Turn right onto Berryessa-Knoxville Road at the Turtle Rock sign. Continue for about 6 miles to Reclamation's Visitor Center on your right.

More information on the situation at Lake Berryessa may be found on page 2.

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Background Information on Lake Berryessa

Since Summer 2000, Reclamation has been developing a long-term Visitor Services Plan (VSP) for Lake Berryessa. Since the late 1950s, the lake's recreation focus has been the private trailer villages managed by seven concession resorts under contracts with Reclamation. After nearly 50 years, these contracts will expire in 2008-2009, and there are no provisions in them for extension or renewal.

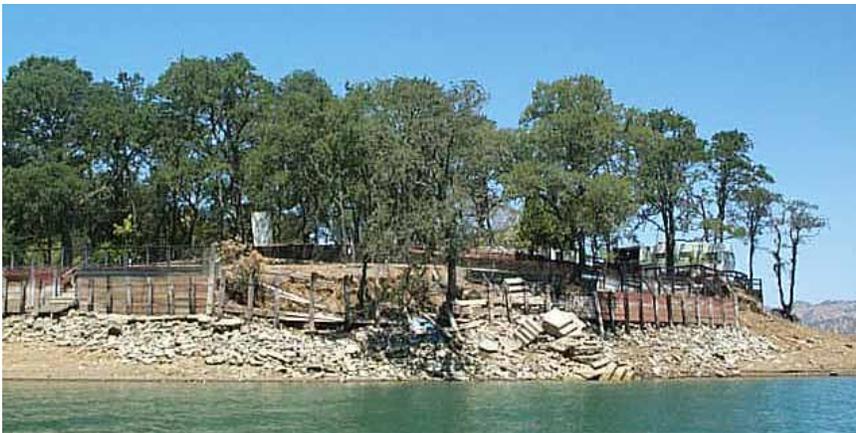
When the VSP process began in 2000, 1,500 privately owned vacation trailers were at the lake. In 2001, serious violations of State and County wastewater discharge laws were discovered at six of the seven resorts.

The subsequent cleanup resulted in the removal of about 200 "dry" trailer sites which had illegal systems draining gray (bath/dish wastewater) and black water (toilet sewage) into the ground and lake.

While much progress has been made in restoring parts of Lake Berryessa, much remains to be done. The VSP includes consultants' analyses of the resorts' infrastructure which report conditions such as failing sewage and water systems, dangerous electrical and fire hazards, and shoreline structures that are seriously degraded. The reports may be seen on the Lake Berryessa VSP Web site at www.usbr.gov/mp/berryessa.

Reclamation must also take into account the population growth and dramatic changes in recreation demand that have occurred in northern California in the last 50 years. Lake Berryessa is Federal property, but it has been viewed by many as a private lake, resulting in an inequality of access to the lake for the general public. With the expiration of the long-term contracts, it is time for Reclamation to correct this inequality.

In fall 2003, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be released to the public for a 90-day review and comment period. The DEIS will include a range of future alternatives for the lake which includes the possibility of removing all private trailers. We encourage the media to come to the lake and see firsthand the conditions that Reclamation is attempting to correct.



Before restoration

After restoration

