



PADDLING AT LAKE BERRYESSA

Paddle sports such as kayaking, canoeing, and paddle boarding are becoming increasingly popular on Lake Berryessa. Quiet coves, beautiful views, and pleasant weather all draw paddlers to the lake. You can hand launch anywhere you can legally access the water. The following map shows some common put-in spots.



1) **East Side Road – E14**

This foot entrance to the shoreline is found at the south end of the gravel East Side Road. The boat must be lifted over the gate and then rolled or carried down to the shore. This is a long trail to the water. It is not recommended for the paddler wanting quick access, but it offers easy access to the remote southeastern shoreline of Berryessa. Please respect local residents; drive slowly down this road to minimize the amount of dust your vehicle kicks up.

2) **East Side Road – E1**

This foot entrance is found at the north end of East Side Road. A .1 mile long path follows an old road bed to a small cove to launch in. Paddling along the eastern shoreline offers excellent birding opportunities.

3) **Eticuera Day Use Area and Old Eticuera Turnout**

Eticuera Day Use Area offers ample parking, a pit toilet, and a gravel hand launch ramp. Beautiful views of the lake and great fishing are the draws of this area. The Old Eticuera Turnout is just west of the Day Use Area; this spot offers access to the north side of Berryessa-Knoxville Road. While the path to the shoreline is steep here, it allows you to launch into a large willow-filled “lagoon” area on Eticuera Creek.

4) **Schoolhouse Cove**

There is a short hike down to the water through a pedestrian gate at this roadside turnout. Here you’ll find easy access to start exploring the northwestern shore of the lake.

5) **Putah Creek Bridge**

On the north side of Putah Creek Bridge, you’ll find a dirt pullout and several steep paths down to the water. While access here can be difficult, it offers a chance to paddle the Putah Creek arm of the lake. Based on the lake surface elevation, this creek is navigable several miles.

6) **Pope Creek Bridge**

This access point offers a large parking lot and a pit toilet. The path to the water is steep, but allows paddlers to explore the Pope Creek arm of the lake.

7) **Smittle Creek Day Use Area**

An easy walk through the picnic area offers access to the shoreline. This allows quick access to the northern end of a non-motorized boating zone between the lake shoreline and Big and Small Islands.

8) **Oak Shores Day Use Area – Coyote Knolls**

Oak Shores is a free day use area with ample parking and toilet facilities. Boats can be carried to the water anywhere. Coyote Knolls has long a concrete hand launch ramp that allows easy access to the Non-Motorized Boating Zone and the Big and Small Islands. Trailers are not allowed in Oak Shores.

9) **Oak Shores Day Use Area – Foxtail Flat**

Foxtail Flat has a short concrete hand launch ramp. This area is within a 5 mph boating zone, making it ideal for beginning paddlers to explore without having to deal with boat wakes. It also offers easy access for more experienced paddlers to explore Goat Island and Big Island.

10) **Capell Cove**

Capell Cove is a free public boat launch ramp, offering easy access to Capell Creek and the southwestern coves of the lake. The ramp or the beach can be used to launch paddle boats. Toilet facilities and parking are available; vehicles without trailers are not authorized to park in designated trailer parking stalls.

11) **Steele Canyon**

There is a public foot entrance off of Steele Canyon Road just before Steel Canyon Recreation Area. This cove offers excellent birding and fishing opportunities.

12) **Dam Turnouts**

There are several dirt turnouts located between Markley Cove Marina and Monticello Dam on the southern end of the lake. Each offers a path down to the shoreline; some are more suitable than others for hauling a boat down to the water. These turnouts allow paddlers to explore The Narrows and view Monticello Dam. Be aware however that a buoy line restricts all watercraft from the dam.





Paddling and the Concession Areas

Putah Canyon Recreation Area, Steele Canyon Recreation Area, Markley Cove Marina, and Pleasure Cove Resort all offer boat ramps to launch from. Spanish Flat Recreation Area offers access to the shoreline to launch. There are [fees](#) for access to each of these areas. Pleasure Cove Resort and Markley Cove Marina offer paddling boat rentals. [Contact](#) the concession areas directly for more information.

Park Ranger-Led Paddling Tours

The Bureau of Reclamation Park Rangers lead free, guided paddling tours during the spring, summer and fall. Each tour offers a different experience as participants launch from various areas around the lake. Events occur rain or shine, but high winds may cause an event to be cancelled. Paddling outings are open to experienced swimmers with a kayak, canoe or other non-motorized boat. Coast Guard-approved life jackets will be provided on request, but boats are not available for rent. Participants should bring their boat, life jacket, paddle, sunscreen, hat, water, clothing layers depending on the weather, and a lunch or snack. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Contact 707-966-2111 x 113 for information on upcoming paddling tours.



Invasive Species

Quagga and zebra mussels, New Zealand mud snails, and invasive plants are all a concern at Lake Berryessa. These invasive species have not been found here, and it is the responsibility of all lake users to help ensure that they are never found here. Educational campaigns such as “Don’t Move a Mussel!” tend to be targeted at motorized boats, but anything that has entered a waterway with invasive species has the potential to spread them. This includes kayaks, canoes, paddles, wet suits, and even wading boots and bait buckets. It is good practice, when leaving any water body, to completely CLEAN, DRAIN, and DRY all of your paddling equipment before launching somewhere else.



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