

Summary of Lake Berryessa Community Forum Meeting

Date: March 18, 2015

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Capell Valley Fire Station

Introduction of new coordinating team members: Stu Williams, Peter Kilkus, Amy Gunn-Edwards, and Battalion Chief Geoff Belyea.

Coordinating Team Members Present: Stu Williams, George Gamble, Peter Kilkus, Carol Kunze, Lonny Lopez, Chris Lee, Susan Sedillo

Status of Recreation Services

All Reclamation managed day use areas are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Dufer Point Visitor Center is open from noon to 3:00 p.m. on weekends. Markley Cove and Pleasure Cove are fully open and operating with a variety of marina services, retail, day use, boat launch and lodging, with camping also available at Pleasure Cove. Steele Canyon is open for camping, day use, and boat launching. Spanish Flat is currently closed. Putah Canyon is open for camping, day use, and boat launching.

The Steele Canyon dump station has been installed except for the water line and water tank. This work will be completed once the environmental evaluation is approved, which is expected in April 2015. Work on the Putah Canyon potable water well began in January. A drill bit broke off in hole #1 and hole #2 collapsed. Reclamation experienced many difficulties in getting the contractor to provide required submittals, including safety plans, engineering plans, and work schedules. Because of the contractor's inability to meet the contract specifications, Reclamation chose not to continue with this contract. Reclamation is currently working to add the well drilling and development to the contract with GD Nielson, who will be building **the water distribution system**.

Jeff Laird announced that Spanish Flat Recreation Area will remain closed this summer. Declining visitation and revenue due to the drought are unable to offset the costs of operating the site by Pleasure Cove, LLC. Projected revenues are too low to pay for the operating costs, which include, but are not limited to, garbage, porta potties, maintenance, utilities, and staffing. Reclamation does not have excess funds or resources that can be allocated to manage the site at this time. Reclamation has been searching for someone to operate the site, but at this time there are no prospects. If someone knows of any business or entity that could potentially be interested in operating Spanish Flat, please let Jeff Laird know as soon as possible.

Royal Elk Park Management, who operates Putah Canyon Recreation Area is also experiencing difficulty in generating enough revenue to pay for operating costs. Reclamation is working with Royal Elk to try and identify ways to make the operational feasible to operate. If Royal Elk cannot identify ways to increase revenues or reduce operating costs, they may need to reduce services at Putah Canyon Recreation Area.

The water level at Lake Berryessa is currently just under 412' mean sea level (msl). Lake Berryessa began the 2014 recreation season at 415' msl. If the lake level does not rise this spring, and if the water drops at the same rate as in 2014, Capell Cove Boat Launch could be closed sometime in July. In addition, all other boat ramps (except Markley Cove) could become unusable prior to Labor Day.

Chris Lee, Solano County Water Agency, stated that they have received a grant which will allow them to hire 10 interns to help with mussel education and inspections this summer.

Napa County Parks and Open Space District is planning to break ground at Camp Berryessa (old Boy Scout Camp) to build a new environmental education facility in April, 2015. Stu Williams stated that Napa County had awarded a contract of \$1.1 million for phase one of the Camp Berryessa project.

North End Trail – Carol Kunze stated that Tuleyome has received a grant to build 7 miles of multi-use trail. Carol is currently working to finalize the permits needed to build the trail. She stated that Tuleyome will hire a contractor to build the trail, but will also use volunteers to help with the construction. The target date for construction to begin is fall of 2015.

Jeff Laird stated that Reclamation has a list of approximately 20 possible vendors who might be interested in reviewing the prospectus and potentially submitting a proposal. The five site prospectus is scheduled to be released in spring of 2015 and will be open for 75 days.

Preparation for Summer Operations: Reclamation staff will be coordinating a meeting between the concession contractors, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and ambulance services to ensure that every concession contractor is aware of the roles of different agencies in case of emergencies.

Law Enforcement and Fire Management Activities: The Berryessa Highlands Fire Safe Council is working with CalFire and Reclamation to perform maintenance on the Berryessa Highlands fuel break. In addition, Reclamation is coordinating with CalFire to perform maintenance on the fuel break below Berryessa Pines. Reclamation is also planning a controlled burn of approximately 100 acres in paddock 2 of the Lake Berryessa Wildlife Area (LBWA) for late spring or early summer.

Update on Eastside Management Planning: Reclamation has sent the draft Managing Partner Agreement for LBWA to the Blue Ridge Berryessa Partnership for their signatures.

One member of the public asked if grazing would be allowed in the LBWA under this new Managing Partner Agreement. Jeff Laird stated that grazing would be allowed (in concept), but that he did not know if the Blue Ridge Berryessa Partnership would include grazing in their management plan or not.

Update on Long-Term Concession Area Development

Drew Lessard provided a status update on prospectus planning. The five site prospectus is currently being reviewed by Reclamation's Office of Policy and Administration and DOI Solicitors. Reclamation has a weeklong meeting scheduled for the week of March 30 to get representatives from all reviewing departments together to talk through and answer questions that reviewers may have. The prospectus is scheduled to be released in spring of 2015. Drew also discussed the process used to evaluate the proposals and stated that the evaluation of financial aspects of the proposal and each company will be an important component of the process.

Future Meetings/Potential Topics: Jeff Laird stated that future meetings would continue to provide updates on the prospectus process and status, updates on east side management issues, and recreation updates. Suggestions or recommendations for topics for future forum meetings should be provided to Park Manager Jeff Laird.

Public/Staff Comments

The public asked if concessionaires could utilize sub-contractors to provide certain amenities such as fuel sales or food trucks. Reclamation staff let the public know that Reclamation's Directives and Standards prohibit sub-contractors from providing services or facilities in concession managed areas. Contractors and sub-contractors can create a joint venture and submit a prospectus proposal as one entity. Reclamation staff also asked the public to consider providing some of these desired services and facilities on private lands near the concession areas.

The public asked whether Reclamation received any proposals for the New Melones prospectus. Peggi Brooks informed those present that no proposals were received for the New Melones prospectus.

The public asked whether long-term concession contracts could be awarded for more than 30 years. Reclamation staff explained that Reclamation's Directives and Standards require contracts to be issued for the shortest term that makes the contract financially feasible. At the end of a 30 year contract, concession operators can bid on the same area during that prospectus process.

Reclamation discussed that at the end of the long-term contracts, infrastructure within the concession areas will be owned by Reclamation. Infrastructure includes roads, water and wastewater facilities, electric facilities, and boat ramps.

Peter Kilkus asked whether Reclamation would consider changing the non-motorized zone around the Big Island back to a motorized zone and why the Ski School Cove has not been buoyed off yet as non-motorized. He stated that the Big Island zone is rarely used. Drew Lessard said the non-motorized zone is the result of a multi-year planning effort that resulted in the Visitor Services Plan Record of Decision (VSP ROD). Drew also stated that Reclamation is not considering re-opening the VSP ROD at this time.

The public and Reclamation discussed when and how the Capell Cove Boat Launch might be closed this summer due to dropping water levels. The public asked Reclamation to consider just closing the ramp and keeping the parking area open. The group also discussed that the topography in Capell Cove would make it very difficult and costly to extend the boat ramp to a lower level.

The group held a general discussion to discuss ways to provide the public with positive information about Lake Berryessa and that the lake has plenty of water for recreation this summer. Jeff Laird reported that Reclamation's Public Affairs Office is investigating scheduling editorial boards with local newspapers and writing positive press releases regarding the lake and available recreation services. Jeff Laird asked if there was any interest in creating a sub-committee from the Coordinating Team or other members of the local public to plan and carry out a positive press campaign. Only one person volunteered to be a part of this type of sub-committee.

The date, time and location for the next Forum meeting will be announced in the future.

For questions or comments regarding Lake Berryessa, contact Park Manager Jeff Laird, either by e-mail (JLaird@usbr.gov), mail (Lake Berryessa Office, Park Manager, 5520 Knoxville RD., Napa CA 94558) or by phone (707-966-2111, ext 0).

For additional information, please visit the Lake Berryessa website at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/berryessa> and click on "Recreation Updates" in the light-blue navigation column on the left.