

## Summary of Lake Berryessa Community Forum Meeting

**Date:** March 2, 2016

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Berryessa Senior Center

### Welcoming Remarks

Mid-Pacific Deputy Regional Director Pablo Arroyave welcomed the members of the Coordinating Team and the public and introduced the Reclamation staff in attendance. Facilitator Louis Moore presented the Agenda.

### Membership on the Coordinating Team

Central California Area Office (CCAO) Area Manager Drew Lessard thanked several outgoing coordinating team members for their service, including George Gamble (not present), Lonny Lopez, Carol Kunze, Wendy Wallin, and John Donlevy. Drew urged the members of the coordinating team and the public to nominate qualified candidates to replace these members representing constituencies including Local Ranchers, Water-based Recreation, Land-based Recreation, Conservation Groups, and Gateway Communities. Nominees should be able to serve a two-year term, fairly represent an interest group, and be results oriented, collaborative and courteous. There is no compensation for serving on the Forum. Nominations are requested by Friday, March 25, via letter or email. They should include the interest and background of the nominee and be no more than one page. Please send nominations to Park Manager Margaret Bailey, 5520 Knoxville Road, Napa, CA 94558 or [m Bailey@usbr.gov](mailto:m Bailey@usbr.gov).

### Review of and Results of Recent Prospectus

Drew Lessard reviewed the development of the recent prospectus. In order to improve the business opportunity for bidders, Reclamation took input from multiple Forum meetings and a scoping meeting. This input informed the work of contractors who developed a Market Analysis, Financial Feasibility Evaluation, conceptual site plans, and 60 percent infrastructure plans. The goal was to develop reasonable business opportunities at all five sites under consideration. The result was a request for proposals was very prescriptive and specific about the Required Services at three sites (Putah Canyon, Spanish Flat, and Steele Canyon), and very open-ended about the proposed development at two other areas (Monticello Shores and Berryessa Point). The business opportunities were for new concession operations to develop and operate concessions for up to a 30-year term that focused on traditional short-term recreational facilities.

The prospectus was posted July 2, 2015, and the bid window closed September 15. At that point, Reclamation had received three bids, a single bid each for Steele Canyon, Berryessa Point, and Monticello Shores, and the bids were evaluated. A panel of Reclamation and non-Reclamation staff with experience in land management, resources management, project management, hospitality, intergovernmental relations, and finances was convened to evaluate the bids. This panel would evaluate bids on five principal factors: environmental management, providing quality visitor services, past business experience, understanding of the financial requirements, and benefit to the government. If it were determined that a bidder was non-responsive in any one principal factor, then the whole package was determined to be non-responsive. Reclamation is unable to go into details regarding the

specific bidders and the specific factors of each bid determined non-responsive; however, all three bidders were eager to participate and were professional in their interaction with Reclamation, but in each bid there was at least one principal factor that Reclamation determined to be non-responsive. Going forward, Reclamation will meet with all three bidders in the near future to discuss the bids and to identify the areas where the bids failed to meet the responsiveness standard. Reclamation realizes that it is a difficult time in the recreation industry since in 2015. Reclamation received no bids for a similar business opportunity at New Melones Lake, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation received no bids for the Browns Ravine Marina at Folsom Lake.

Drew continued that Reclamation's goal for Lake Berryessa has not changed. The plan is still to develop viable business opportunities at Lake Berryessa and get contractors who can develop the areas and operate them to provide the recreational facilities and services that the public has expressed a need for. Going forward, Reclamation wished to engage with stakeholders, including the Forum, Napa County, and others in order to identify the options that will lead to the best possible business opportunities at Lake Berryessa. Reclamation has developed a series of options to explore with stakeholders to identify the advantages and disadvantages in order to make a well-informed decision on the next steps forward on concessions management at Lake Berryessa. Reclamation has made no decision as to which option to exercise and is open to input about which path(s) have the best advantages or if there are other paths that Reclamation has not considered.

Drew reviewed the options Reclamation has identified including releasing the prospectus again with a new open period for bids; focusing on a few sites that are most attractive to bidders and re-releasing the prospectus only for those sites; re-scoping the prospectus to identify different levels of Required and Authorized Services that may be more attractive to bidders; identifying shorter-term contracts of about 10 years to operate areas with limited facilities such as those now under interim contracts; and exploring direct government operation of one or more sites. Reclamation must make a determination and act as three of the areas under consideration in the prospectus (Steele Canyon, Spanish Flat, and Putah Canyon) are currently operating under interim contracts that expire by the end of the year.

**Public Comment:** (*Q: indicates a question or comment, A indicates a Reclamation answer or response. Similar questions or comments have been combined.*)

A statement from Supervisors Dillon and Pedroza of Napa County was read as was a statement from Assemblyman Bill Dodd. Winters Mayor Cecelia Aguiar-Curry also provided a statement.

Q: Has Reclamation explored transferring Lake Berryessa to another agency for direct management, as has been done at many Reclamation projects?

A: Discussions like that are already occurring.

Q: Winters is impacted by Markley Cove and Pleasure Cove and needs those areas to remain open.

A: Markley Cove was not included in the recent prospectus, and Reclamation is finishing up the appraisal of current improvements in order to solicit bids for a long-term concession contract at Markley Cove.

Q: Reclamation spent a lot of time/money to develop a financial feasibility study for the prospectus. What about the bids or the feasibility analysis was wrong that resulted in no responsive bids?

A: Reclamation hired a consultant to develop the feasibility analysis and held workshops to try to find the optimal business opportunities. The determination of non-responsiveness was because the bids failed to provide key information that Reclamation needed in order to evaluate. Reclamation will conduct meetings with bidders to understand why the bids were non-responsive.

Q: Why not turn management of the lake over to Napa County?

A: Reclamation has met with Napa County regarding the recent bid and is committed to engaging the county in the decision to determine the future course of development at Lake Berryessa.

Q: Ten-year contracts are not a good solution because there is not enough time to get investment in improvements back.

A: Reclamation recognizes that there may not be a one-size-fits-all solution for all five areas and wishes to explore all options.

Q: Reclamation needs to get \$50 million to fund infrastructure so that future bidders will only be bidding on the amenities and public facilities that make money. People need to lobby their elected officials to support infrastructure development. There is a Facebook group "Save Lake Berryessa" advocating this position.

Q: No more vault toilets.

Q: A major problem facing any future contractor is that a lot of the old infrastructure is broken and remains in place; Reclamation did a clean-up, but it was not finished.

Q: Contractors need enough time to get value from any improvements they put it, and if they want to pursue grants there is a 20-year requirement. With the water levels low is the perfect time to put in improvements.

Q: Financials provided as part of the prospectus were not good, especially the requirement that contractors invest in infrastructure and then hand it over to the government.

Q: Reclamation has made decisions and taken actions that have had the effect of damaging the businesses and communities at Lake Berryessa.

Q: Why not negotiate with bidders since there was only one bidder for each area that got a bid?

A: Since the bid were determined to be non-responsive, Reclamation could not proceed to negotiations.

Q: The public made comments that they have the right and reason to be angry and upset and were also upset that elected officials chose not to attend in person.

Q: Why not immediately re-release the existing prospectus rather than wait six months?

A: Reclamation made an obligation to sit down with each of the bidders in order to review their bids. That, plus feedback from the Forum, Napa County, and other stakeholders will give Reclamation a sense of lessons learned in order to quickly make a decision on the next steps and implement them based on the options that are explored. Reclamation recognizes that this is not a successful outcome and is committed to making every attempt to arrive at a successful outcome. Reclamation cannot simply go back to the bidders under the recent prospectus and initiate negotiations if they are determined to be non-responsive. Reclamation will be required to release a new prospectus with a new open bidding period.

Q: Will facilities be open this summer?

A: Yes, Pleasure Cove is under a long-term contract; Markley Cove, Steele Canyon, Spanish Flat, and Putah Canyon are all operating under interim contracts for the upcoming summer.

Q: Reclamation staff should come camp and boat at Lake Berryessa under the current conditions.

Q: Reclamation should configure contracts so that if operators regularly make improvements then their term can be extended so that there is an incentive to improve facilities and infrastructure.

Q: Reclamation should explore public/private partnerships to develop facilities.

Q: Is the environmental document for the infrastructure complete?

A: It is in progress, with a contractor on board; however, Reclamation is not yet ready to sign off on the Finding of No Significant Impact.

Q: Reclamation needs to take action to prevent fires, including allowing people to graze cattle.

Q: Some contractors do not want the government's money for infrastructure; rather, they want a contract that gives them a reasonable term and opportunity to make a profit off of their investments in infrastructure and improvements. Although 30 years seems long, it may not be enough.

A: Reclamation appreciates all of the comments. Based on these comments and other feedback, Reclamation will make a decision on the next step and implement it in order to do the best thing for the lake as a whole.

For questions or comments regarding Lake Berryessa, contact Park Manager Margaret Bailey, by email ([mbailey@usbr.gov](mailto:mbailey@usbr.gov)), mail (Lake Berryessa Office, Park Manager, 5520 Knoxville RD., Napa CA 94558) or 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.