

LAKE BERRYESSA

VISITOR SERVICES PLAN (VSP)

Since the late 1950's, Reclamation has had contracts with seven private concessionaires to manage recreation programs and facilities at Lake Berryessa. The contracts expire in 2008 and 2009. As specified by Public Law 96-375 and Reclamation policy, the current concessionaires have no right of renewal. In June 2000, Reclamation began a plan for the types of facilities and services needed at this Federal property after the concession contracts expire. This plan, the VSP, is being developed with public input. A website was created and update letters have been sent to keep the public informed on the VSP.

Lake Berryessa can become an outstanding center for outdoor recreation and can provide a great opportunity for businesses that offer environmentally sensitive facilities and programs to a wide spectrum of the public. Based on decisions resulting from the VSP, Reclamation will develop new concession contracts to provide commercial visitor services supporting diverse recreational opportunities. As part of the VSP, a detailed environmental study was performed, and four Alternatives have been developed. The Alternatives feature a range of possible new facilities and programs to include lodging, restaurants, campgrounds, boat-in campsites, upgraded marinas, houseboat rentals, RV parks, trails, stores, etc. Future concessions will remain within the existing concession area 'footprint.' A brief summary of the four Alternatives follows:

ALTERNATIVE A

Alternative A outlines what the situation would be at the lake if no action is taken to address expiring concession contracts or other Reclamation programs within the coverage of the 1992 Lake Berryessa Area Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A 'No Action Alternative' is a requirement in an EIS as a benchmark for the action alternatives, which would introduce some level of change. If chosen, Alternative A would be implemented when the contracts expire or prior to expiration if a concessionaire were to discontinue current operations.

Selection of this alternative would require Reclamation to plan for the closure of the existing resort facilities at contract expiration. Reclamation would then provide access and support by issuing new competitive concession contracts not directly tied to the VSP. The new contracts would use the existing contracts as a guideline. Alternative A does not meet many applicable codes, regulations, standards, and policies.

ALTERNATIVE B

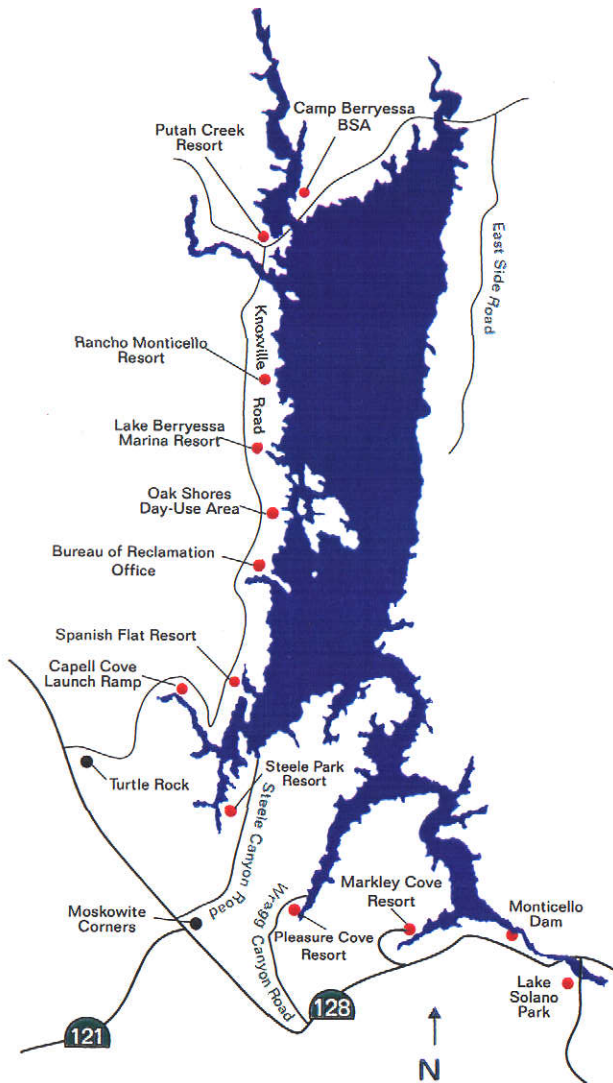
In Alternative B, the focus at the lake would be the development of new facilities and programs to better serve the short-term visitor. This alternative would permanently remove all private exclusive-use trailer sites and provide increased and improved short-term use opportunities. Camping, RV sites, cabins, and other overnight accommodations, food and beverage outlets, retail sales (groceries, camping, boating, hiking supplies), houseboating, marinas, picnicking, etc. would be increased and improved. Another major area of attention would be the improvement of lakeshore access in and around the resorts for day use activities, some of which would be free. Under Alternative B, Reclamation would have an expanded involvement in providing visitor facilities including a focus on the development of a major trail system around the lake. Water surface zoning would be implemented, including additional 5 mph areas and adding/expanding facilities and areas for non-motorized watercraft.

ALTERNATIVE C

Alternative C would reintroduce a minimal number of long-term, exclusive use sites. Under Alternative C, life, health, and safety standards and environmental compliance regulations would be strictly enforced. All existing trailers and infrastructure would be removed and required improvements would be made, with a limited number of trailers reintroduced in a more appropriate configuration. Trailers would not be permitted within 100 linear feet uphill of elevation 455 feet above mean sea level, resulting in the availability of all shoreline areas for use by the general public. New facilities for short-term visitors would be created and access to the lake for the general public would be improved. Alternative C retains some exclusive use but reduces the footprint of this use while increasing emphasis on short-term recreation. Exclusive use, even on a limited level, is counter to Reclamation's National concession policy.

ALTERNATIVE D

Reclamation would manage more of the services for the public, and the locations where traditional commercial services exist would be reduced. Water surface zoning would be implemented including additional 5 mph areas and expanded facilities/areas for non-motorized watercraft.



POLICY

Reclamation Policy LND P02, dated March 2002, sets the policy for planning, development, management, and operation of concessions at Reclamation projects.

Authority: Reclamation Act of 1902, as amended and supplemented; the Reclamation Project Act of 1939; and the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965, as amended.

Concessions Principles.

- A. Concessions will provide quality recreation facilities and services accessible to persons with disabilities, and appropriate visitor goods and services at reasonable rates.
- B. Concession operations will provide for the protection, conservation, and preservation of natural, historical, and cultural resources.
- C. Commercial facilities and services will be planned and developed through a commercial services planning and public involvement process.
- D. Concessionaires will be provided with opportunities for a reasonable profit and may be compensated for Reclamation-approved improvements that will remain the property of the United States.
- E. Reclamation will ensure fair competition in the awarding of concessions contracts and will not allow preferential rights of renewal.
- F. Exclusive use will not be allowed and existing exclusive use will be removed as soon as possible.
- G. Concessions will comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

Alternative format available upon request.
Call 707-966-2111, TDD 707-966-0205.



PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The DEIS is available for a 90-day public review and comment period and may be viewed on Reclamation's website at www.usbr.gov/mp/berryessa. For a hard copy or CD, please contact Janet Sierzputowski at 916-978-5112 or jsierzputowski@mp.usbr.gov. Written comments must be sent by Wednesday, February 4, 2004, to: Bureau of Reclamation, Attention: MP-140 (Janet Sierzputowski), 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825. Comments may also be faxed to 916-978-5114 or e-mailed to jsierzputowski@mp.usbr.gov.

"OPEN HOUSE"

On Saturday, November 22, 2003, Reclamation will hold an Open House from 1-4 p.m. at the Exposition Hall, Solano County Fairgrounds, Vallejo, California. The Open House will consist of informational displays staffed by VSP team members. The purpose of the open house is to discuss the contents of the DEIS.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

On Wednesday, January 21, 2004, Reclamation will hold two public hearings to receive oral comments on the DEIS. The hearings will be held at the Exposition Hall, Solano County Fairgrounds, Vallejo, from 1-4 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. The hearings will allow the public an opportunity to provide oral comments on the DEIS. Individuals wishing to make comments must register in advance at the Exposition Hall; it is suggested they arrive ½ hour early (by 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. respectively). The order in which individuals register will determine the order in which they will speak. Every effort will be made to allow everyone to speak; however, if there is insufficient time, written comments will be accepted. Reclamation will respond to both written and oral comments.

VSP CONTACTS

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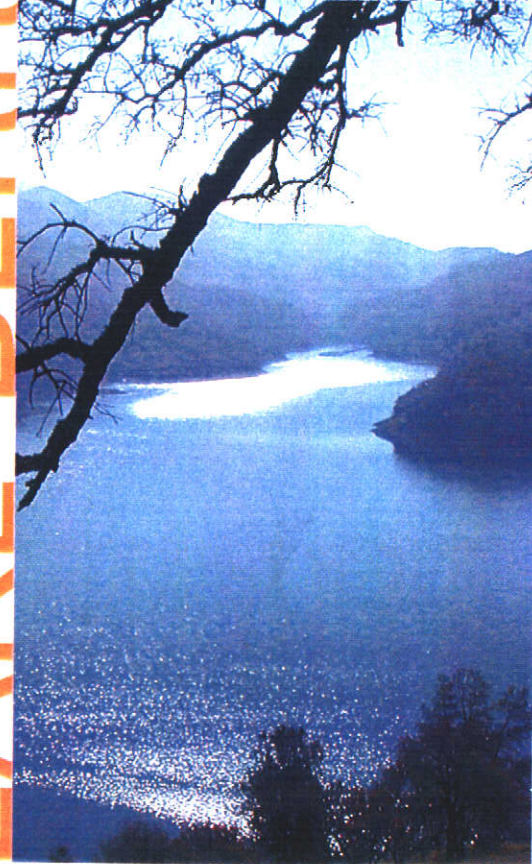
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region



DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS)

Open House and
Public Hearings Scheduled

VISITOR SERVICES PLANNING EFFORT



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www.usbr.gov/mp/berryessa