



# East Park Dam & Reservoir

## Overview

East Park Dam and Reservoir is located in Northern California's Colusa County, about 33 miles southwest of the town of Orland. Completed in 1910, the 139-foot-high dam and reservoir are part of the Orland Project, Reclamation's oldest and smallest water delivery project constructed in California. The Orland Project includes Reclamation's Stony Gorge Reservoir and approximately 125-mile canal system. East Park Dam is owned by Reclamation and has been operated and maintained by the Orland Unit Water Users Association since 1954. Colusa County manages the reservoir and 1,600 acres of adjacent parkland. Architects regard the workmanship and design of the spillways and dam tower as an elegant design.



*East Park Reservoir has 1,600 acres of adjacent parkland.*

## Water Supply

The reservoir receives and stores Orland Project water from runoff derived from Little Stony Creek, Squaw Creek, and Little Indian Creek in addition to water diverted from Big Stony Creek at Rainbow Diversion through the Feeder Canal. Stored water may be exchanged among East Park, Stony Gorge, and Black Butte reservoirs to maximize the conservation use.

The reservoir supplies water to approximately 20,000 acres of irrigable land in Colusa County. The reservoir has 10 miles of recreational shoreline and a surface acreage of around 1,820 acres, when at its full storage capacity of 52,000 acre-feet.



*The 2,000-foot-long East Park Dam Spillway features a set of curved labyrinth-spillway fins.*

## Fish and Wildlife

The reservoir contains approximately 200 acres of wetlands. Around 1,200 acres of wildlife habitat are within the adjacent uplands. Fish commonly found at East Park include channel catfish, largemouth, and smallmouth bass, bluegill, sunfish, threadfin shad, carp, and rainbow trout.

Wildlife observed in this area ranges from blacktail deer, tule elk, black-tailed jackrabbits, and various species of lizards. Bird watchers may see the following: bald eagles, egrets osprey, green and great blue herons, tri-colored blackbird, and a wide variety of waterfowl. Adobe and Colusa lilies bloom here in spring.

## Recreation

Recreational opportunities at East Park Reservoir include camping at approximately 200 established sites concentrated on the east side of the reservoir. Day uses include hiking; boating, including kayaking, canoeing, and jet-skiing; wading and swimming; fishing; bird watching; hang gliding near the landing zone established on the west side of the reservoir; and disc golf at an established course on the east side of the reservoir.

Third parties may host festivals on peninsulas along the east side of the reservoir, as well as other public events such as boat races, with the county's prior approval.



*East Park Reservoir has 10 miles of recreational shoreline that is managed by County of Colusa in agreement with Reclamation.*

## Issues

While the reservoir is used as a recreational resource and as an irrigation water source for Orland Unit Water Users' Association customers, it is not used as a drinking water source. The reservoir has a relatively high rate of sedimentation and turbidity from the tributaries that enter. Localized summer algae blooms can occur when the reservoir level is low and air temperatures are high.

Although repair needs on the dam infrastructure have been light over the greater than 100 years the East Park Dam has been operational, the regulating gate on the dam broke in 2020. The replacement of the gate and attendance to other maintenance needs were identified in past inspections.



*The control house on East Park Dam was built in the shape of a pagoda.*

East Park Reservoir was temporarily closed from August 2021 to April 2022 for dam inspection and maintenance activities, when the reservoir level was low due to drought conditions and the infrastructure was more accessible. The Orland Unit Water Users Association completed the installation of the gate and additional maintenance, and repairs were fully complete April 2022. Following completion of the repairs and maintenance, Reclamation and Colusa County joined efforts in restocking of fish in East Park Reservoir, with a focus on fish species that had known stable populations prior to 2021.



*Aerial photo showing both East Park Dam and Reservoir.*

## Additional Information

Contact Reclamation Public Affairs for more information at 916-978-5100 or visit <https://www.usbr.gov/mp/ncao/eastparkdam.html>.