

California Department of Water Resources NEWS

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Lake Oroville Provides Fishing And Boating As Well As Flood Protection

OROVILLE---Lake Oroville provides enjoyable fishing and boating opportunities as well as significant water storage and flood protection.

Fishing during the winter features angling for chinook salmon, German brown trout, rainbow trout, bass, catfish, bluegill and crappie.

"Anglers are welcome at Lake Oroville, the second largest reservoir in California," said John Ford, Oroville Dam tour guide for the Department of Water Resources. DWR operates the dam.

Lake Oroville is part of the multipurpose State Water Project that provides water conservation, power generation, flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife enhancement.

The Lake is the reservoir created by Oroville Dam, key facility in the State Water Project. Completed in 1967 and rising to 770 feet at its crest, Oroville Dam is the tallest dam in the United States.

The Lake has a gross storage capacity in excess of 3.5 million acre-feet, 167 miles of shoreline, and a surface area greater than 15,800 acres.

"At this time of year, many Californians think of Lake Oroville in terms of the flood protection it provides to downstream communities along the Feather and Sacramento rivers," said Rolland Williams, Chief of DWR's Oroville Field Division.

"But the Lake also provides excellent recreational opportunities for boaters and anglers," noted Williams.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has planted more than 1 million fish in Lake Oroville in recent years. DWR has worked cooperatively with local volunteers and other government agencies to improve the Lake habitat, especially for black bass.

Located five miles east of the City of Oroville, Lake Oroville lies about 75 miles north of Sacramento, and is easily reached via State Highway 70.

Visitors Center

DWR and the State Department of Parks and Recreation jointly operate the Lake Oroville Visitors Center at 917 Kelly Ridge Road, overlooking the Lake. The Visitors Center offers exhibits about the dam's construction and the Indian legacy of the Oroville area, a choice of more than 20 films to watch free of charge, nature trails, and a sweeping view of the Lake from atop a 46-foot-tall viewing tower.

The Visitors Center is open from 9 am to 5 pm daily. For information on the Visitors Center, or to arrange tours of Oroville Dam, call John Ford at (916) 534-2306.

Recreation Opportunities

The State Department of Parks and Recreation operates the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area, which offers campsites and boat ramp facilities.

At Loafer Creek, there is a seven-lane boat launch ramp and a boarding dock. At the north end of the dam is the Spillway Launch Ramp, which features a 13-lane launch ramp. Bidwell Canyon Launching Ramp has seven lanes. At Lime Saddle, the recreation area has a five-lane boat ramp.

For information on visiting the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area, call (916) 538-2200.

Boating and angling are also available below the Lake at North and South Thermalito Forebays, as well as at Thermalito Afterbay. North Thermalito Forebay is reserved for sailboats, canoes, and other non-motorized boats. A two-lane boat launching ramp is available. South Thermalito Forebay has a four-lane launching ramp and is open to power boating.

Sport fishing is available at the nearby Oroville Wildlife Area, operated by the DFG. Anglers can fish the wildlife area waters for steelhead trout, channel catfish and striped bass. For information on visiting the Oroville Wildlife Area, call (916) 538-2236.

A popular visitor attraction at Oroville is the Feather River Fish Hatchery, built by DWR and operated by DFG. The Hatchery opened in 1967, to replace natural spawning areas lost to the dam. The Hatchery

annually accommodates up to 12,000 salmon and steelhead returning up the Feather River to spawn. The Hatchery is located at 5 Table Mountain Boulevard. Information on Hatchery visits can be obtained by calling John Ford at (916) 534-2306.

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