THE STATE WATER PROJECT

Planned, designed, constructed, and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the State Water Project (SWP) is the largest state-built, multi-purpose, user-financed water project in the United States.

The SWP, spanning more than 600 miles from Northern California to Southern California, includes 34 storage facilities, 20 pumping plants, four pumping-generating plants, five hydroelectric powerplants, and approximately 700 miles of canals, tunnels, and pipelines.

The SWP's main purpose is to provide a water supply – that is, to divert and store water during wet periods and distribute it to areas of need during dry periods in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, and Southern California. Other project purposes include flood control, power generation, recreation, fish and wildlife enhancement, and water quality improvements to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The $1.75 billion bond approved in 1960 provided initial funding for the SWP, and payments received from 29 urban and agricultural water agencies are paying off the bonds. Approximately 70 percent of SWP water goes to urban users and 30 percent to agricultural users. These SWP contracting agencies are repaying the cost, including interest, of financing, building, operating, and maintaining the SWP water storage and delivery system.

UPPER FEATHER RIVER LAKES

The three Upper Feather River Lakes – Antelope, Frenchman, and Davis – mark the start of the State Water Project. The lakes, located northeast of Oroville, are situated within the Plumas National Forest. Recreation is one of the primary purposes of these lakes. Water releases from these lakes also enhance fish and wildlife in the area and supplement water supplies to the Sierra Valley, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and the City of Portola.

STATISTICS

Antelope Lake and Dam

Lake	Dam
Capacity 22,570 acre-feet	Height 120 feet
Surface 930 acres	Crest Elevation 5,025 feet
Shoreline 15 miles	Crest Length 1,320 feet
Maximum depth 80 feet	Volume 380,000 cubic yards

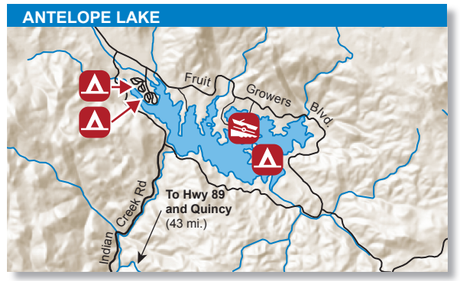
Lake Davis and Grizzly Valley Dam

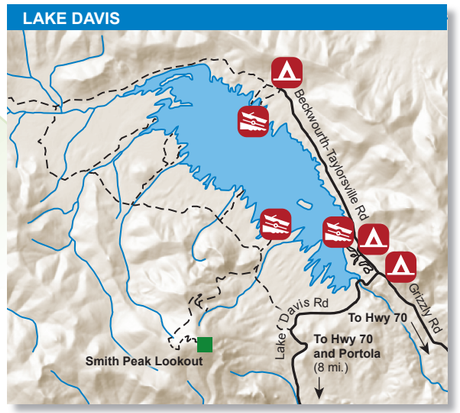
Lake	Dam
Capacity 84,370 acre-feet	Height 132 feet
Surface 4,030 acres	Crest Elevation 5,785 feet
Shoreline 32 miles	Crest Length 800 feet
Maximum depth 108 feet	Volume 253,000 cubic yards

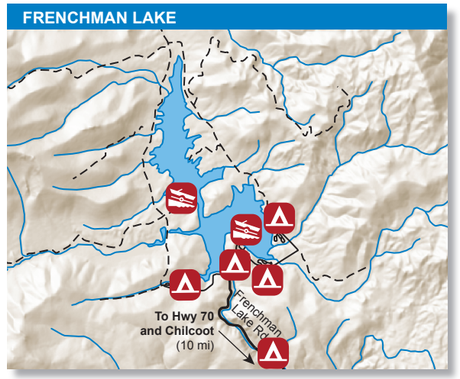
Frenchman Lake and Dam

Lake	Dam
Capacity 55,480 acre-feet	Height 139 feet
Surface 1,580 acres	Crest Elevation 5,607 feet
Shoreline 21 miles	Crest Length 720 feet
Maximum depth 101 feet	Volume 537,000 cubic yards

Upper Feather River Lakes







California Department of Water Resources' Mission...

To manage the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the State's people, and to protect, restore and enhance the natural and human environments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit DWR'S Website at
http://www.water.ca.gov
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CALIFORNIA'S STATE WATER PROJECT

Upper Feather River Lakes

Lake Davis

Antelope Lake

Frenchman Lake

ANTELOPE LAKE AND DAM

Antelope Lake, which is the smallest of the three Upper Feather River lakes, is located on Indian Creek, a tributary of the North Fork Feather River. Of the three Upper Feather River dams, Antelope Dam has the longest crest (top of structure).

History

Completed in December 1963, the dam began storing water the following month to meet the increasing demand for water-oriented recreation and to improve fishing in Indian Creek by assuring a persistent, year-round flow of water below the dam.

Recreation

Antelope Lake Recreation Area, operated by private concession and administered by Plumas National Forest-Mount Hough Ranger District, provides fishing, camping, picnicking, water-skiing, swimming, boating, hiking, and winter sports, such as snowmobiling.

The lake, which is stocked with rainbow trout, also supports brook trout, crappie, channel catfish, and smallmouth and largemouth bass. Fishing is often good in Indian Creek below the spillway at Antelope Dam. Hunting for mule deer is available in the fall, before they migrate to lower elevations for winter. The smaller black-tailed deer and occasionally black bear can also be found here.

Antelope Lake's three campgrounds are Boulder Creek, Lone Rock, and Long Point. Camping is not permitted outside these campgrounds within the designated boundaries of the Antelope Recreation Area.

All campgrounds have tables, stoves, water, and toilets. Trailers up to 30 feet can be accommodated in some units. No hookups for water or waste disposal are provided. With a maximum stay of 14 days, the 194 camping sites are usually open May through October. Recreation facilities also include a boat launching ramp, three day use fishing access sites, and a day use picnic area.

FRENCHMAN LAKE AND DAM

Frenchman Lake and Dam are located on Little Last Chance Creek, a tributary of the Middle Fork Feather River. Frenchman Dam is the tallest of the three Upper Feather River dams.

History

Frenchman Dam was completed in 1961. The lake provides water releases to irrigate farmland in the Sierra Valley and to improve fish habitat in Little Last Chance Creek.

Recreation

Frenchman Recreation Area is operated by a private concessionaire and administered by Plumas National Forest-Beckwourth Ranger District. The area offers camping, fishing, picnicking, water-skiing, swimming, boating, hunting, hiking, and winter sports, such as cross-country skiing, ice fishing and snowmobiling. Rainbow trout, including Eagle Lake strain, are stocked in Frenchman Lake.

Camping is permitted at Chilcoot, Cottonwood Springs, Frenchman, Spring Creek, and Big Cove Campgrounds totaling 199 campsites with five walk-ins. All campgrounds have tables, stoves, water, and toilets. Some units can accommodate trailers up to 22 feet. Usually open from May through October, recreation facilities include two group campsites, a trailer dump station, drinking water, sanitary facilities, and two concrete boat ramp launching sites.

LAKE DAVIS AND GRIZZLY DAM

Lake Davis and Grizzly Valley Dam are located on Big Grizzly Creek, a tributary of the Middle Fork Feather River. The lake is the largest of three Upper Feather River lakes. Grizzly Valley Dam is an earth and rockfill dam.

History

Completed in 1966, Lake Davis not only provides recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement, but also supplies water to the City of Portola through the six-mile Grizzly Valley Pipeline built by DWR.

Recreation

Lake Davis Recreation Area is operated by a private concessionaire and administered by Plumas National Forest-Beckwourth Ranger District. It offers camping, fishing, picnicking, boating, hunting, hiking, and winter sports, such as cross-country skiing and snowmobiling.

The lake opened to fishing in 1968. Mule deer and black-tailed deer can be hunted in the Lake Davis area, but check regulations carefully to be aware of the nearby Dixie Mountain and Smith Peak State Game Refuges (no hunting or firearms allowed). The three campgrounds with a total of 180 campsite units are Grizzly, Grasshopper, and Lightning Tree. Camping, which is open from May to October, is permitted only in the campgrounds. All campgrounds have tables, grills, fire rings and water. Grizzly and Grasshopper have flush toilets while Lightning Tree has vault toilets. Some campsites can accommodate trailers up to 32 feet. The maximum stay at these campgrounds is 14 days.

The area also provides a sanitary dump station. Lightning and Honker Cove boat ramps have paved launching ramps, boarding docks, toilets, and drinking water. Mallard car-top boat launching facility has a paved unloading and loading area for boats. Water-skiing is not allowed at Lake Davis.

Directions

Antelope Lake and Dam, located 43 miles from Quincy, is reached by taking Arlington Road off Highway 89 (near Crescent Mills) to Taylorsville Road, continuing on Genesee Road and Indian Creek Road to the lake.

Frenchman Lake and Dam, located about 37 miles northwest of Reno, Nevada and 26 miles northeast of Portola, is reached by taking Highway 284 north for 8.3 miles from Highway 70 at Chilcoot.

Lake Davis and Grizzly Valley Dam, located eight miles north of Portola, are reached by taking West Street north from Portola on Highway 70 (West Street becomes Lake Davis Road); or by taking Grizzly Road, which is three miles east of Portola. Grizzly Road connects with Lake Davis Road at Lake Davis.

Information

The U.S. Forest Service manages all recreational facilities, typically by concessionaires, at the three lakes. Some campsites at all three locations may be reserved by contacting www.recreation.gov or 1-877-444-6777. Campsites are closed during the winter. To learn if the area is open, you can visit www.fs.usda.gov/plumas or call the Forest Service at (530) 283-2050. Fishing and hunting information is available at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's website at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/.