

Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area



Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



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Discover the many states of California.™

Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area

14651 Cedar Circle

Hesperia, CA 92345

(760) 389-2281

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*Rain and snowmelt
from the Feather River
Basin collects in Lake
Oroville, then traverses
the Sacramento-San
Joaquin Delta, joins
the 444-mile State
Water Project, and
ends in the snow-
capped reflections of
Silverwood Lake.*



High in the heart of the San Bernardino National Forest, Silverwood Lake

State Recreation Area captures the eye and the imagination with vistas of snow-capped mountain peaks reflected on the lake.

The lake was formed by the 249-foot Cedar Springs Dam, which holds back the waters of the west fork of the Mojave River as it passes through the San Bernardino Mountains.

Warm, dry breezes prevail during summer—with high temperatures averaging between 90 and 100 degrees from June to September. From December through March, rainy winter temperatures vary from the low 30s to the low 60s.

NATIVE PEOPLE

For more than 2,500 years, the Serrano (Spanish for “mountain people”) Indians occupied *Yahaviat* (pine place) on the northern and southern faces of the San Bernardino Mountains, as far north as the flat desert bounded by the Tehachapi Mountains.

Alongside rivers and streams, the Serrano lived in settlements of 10 to 20 dwellings. Their circular-shaped homes were usually made of willow frames covered in brush or tule reeds and tied with various fibers or rawhide. Several Serrano settlements, including Yucaipa and Cucamonga, have modern towns that bear their names.

The Serrano used ritual, including songs and storytelling, to pass along knowledge necessary to maintain the Earth’s natural order. Skilled artisans, the Serrano were known for their delicate, ornate pottery and woven baskets.

The Serrano traded with the Mojave to the east and the Gabrielino to the west for goods they could not produce themselves.

The stable lives and traditions of the Serrano changed drastically around 1790, when they were drawn into the San Gabriel Mission. Hard labor and European diseases took their toll. By the early 20th century, a group of approximately 1,500 Serrano people had dwindled to 119. Today some Serrano descendants live on or near the San Manuel and Morongo Reservations.

THE STATE WATER PROJECT

Silverwood Lake was named for W. E. “Ted” Silverwood, a Riverside County resident. Silverwood’s support for the State Water Project—and his unceasing work for water and soil conservation—helped to bring water to southern California.

Supplying water and power for California’s agriculture, cities and industry, the Water Project also provides flood control, recreation, and protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife. The lake waters begin in California’s upper Feather River Basin as rain or snowmelt. From the

water storage facility at Lake Oroville, the water is released in regulated amounts, flowing down the Feather and Sacramento Rivers to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and into the 444-mile California Aqueduct.

The water moves south to the foot of the Tehachapi Mountains. It enters Southern California on the south side of the Tehachapis, then splits into the west branch serving the Los Angeles Basin and Ventura County’s coastal areas, and the east branch, which serves the Antelope Valley and San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange and San Diego counties. In the Antelope Valley, the water level is pumped to a height of 3,480 feet above sea level, then downhill, under the Mojave River and Highway 173, and finally, it reaches Silverwood Lake.

From the intake towers at the south end of Silverwood Lake, the water continues south, where it plunges 1,600 feet to spin the turbines that generate electricity. Some of the water goes to contracting agencies, while the rest flows on to Lake Perris, the southern terminus of the aqueduct.



View of Silverwood Lake

WILDLIFE AND HABITATS

California mule deer are often seen in early morning and sometimes in the evenings. Night predators such as gray foxes, coyotes and (rarely) mountain lions use the darkness to hunt cottontail and brush rabbits, jackrabbits, western gray and ground squirrels, ringtails, chipmunks and wood rats.

Black bears, bobcats and golden beavers may be seen along the Mojave River. In winter bald eagles glide silently above the lake, fishing for their next meal. Water-oriented birds—great blue herons, snowy egrets, avocets, western grebes, loons, Canada geese, mergansers and several varieties of ducks—are plentiful. Around Sawpit Canyon, birds of prey include red-tailed hawks, Cooper's hawks, ospreys and roadrunners. This area is also home to Clark's nutcrackers, Steller's and scrub jays, rock wrens and mountain bluebirds.

Silverwood Lake habitats include ponderosa pine, incense cedar, white fir and black oak. Along the shore, chamise, live oak, manzanita, ceanothus and mountain mahogany grow. Alders, willows and sycamores are found along streams.

In October of 2003, wildfires claimed about 1,000 acres of Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area.

After the fires, winter rains brought flooding; some parts of the park may still be recovering.



Landscapes and other features of the 13-mile shoreline have changed dramatically, and some once-familiar features may never return. Although nature has begun repairs, visit www.parks.ca.gov/silverwoodlake to check on current conditions and fire regulations.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

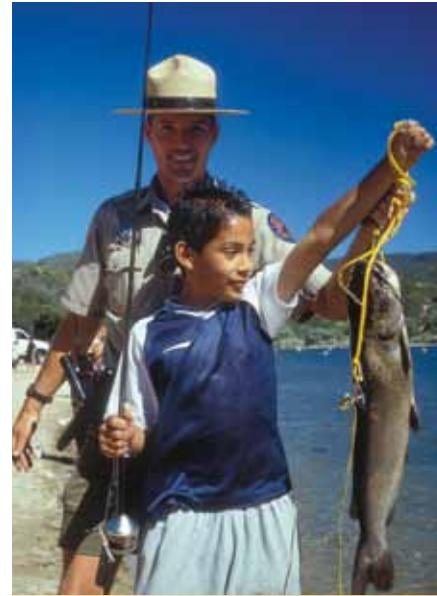
Camping—The Mesa Campground has 136 family sites, each with a table, barbecue grill and fire ring. Restrooms and showers are nearby. Seven walk-in sites are used by bicyclists and hikers. Group sites have barbecues, tables and restrooms with showers. Each group site will accommodate 120 persons and 30 cars.

Although some campsites were scorched in the 2003 fire, most are now available for use. For updates on camping at Silverwood Lake and to make reservations, call (800) 444-7275 or visit www.parks.ca.gov/silverwoodlake.

Hiking/Bicycling—The park has 13 miles of paved hiking and bicycling trails. Bicyclists under 18 years of age must wear safety helmets. Watch for debris on the trail, slow down around blind curves, and carry plenty of water.

Boating—The northern part of the lake has a waterski area; a marina and launch ramps are at the south end.

Waterskiing—Only commercially designed water floats, aquaplanes, wakeboards or waterskis are permitted. Tow lines must



Silverwood Lake offers 976 acres of water recreation.

not exceed 90 feet. Do not tow non-commercial inflatable equipment such as rubber rafts and inner tubes.

Swimming—Two swim beaches are located at the southern end of the lake. Lifeguards are on duty daily from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

Fishing—The best

fishing conditions are in spring and fall, when lake and boating activity are minimal. From February through early June, trout fishing is good; the lake also has largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, catfish and striped bass. In spring, boat and shore fishing are available. All anglers 16 years of age or older must carry a valid California fishing license.

Bald Eagle Barge Tours—From January through March, barge tours to view the bald eagles are available. Saturday or Sunday tours are popular attractions. Reservations are recommended; call (760) 389-2303.

The Pacific Crest Trail—Part of the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail—which originates in Mexico, traverses three western states and terminates in Canada—passes through the park. This jewel in the crown of America's scenic trails crests along the San Bernardino Mountains.



ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Camping—Five accessible campsites have nearby restrooms with showers that may be usable with some assistance.

Trails—The Cleghorn Hike and Bike Trail, with vistas of the foothills, is accessible for 0.75 mile. Trailhead, parking and usable restrooms are available.

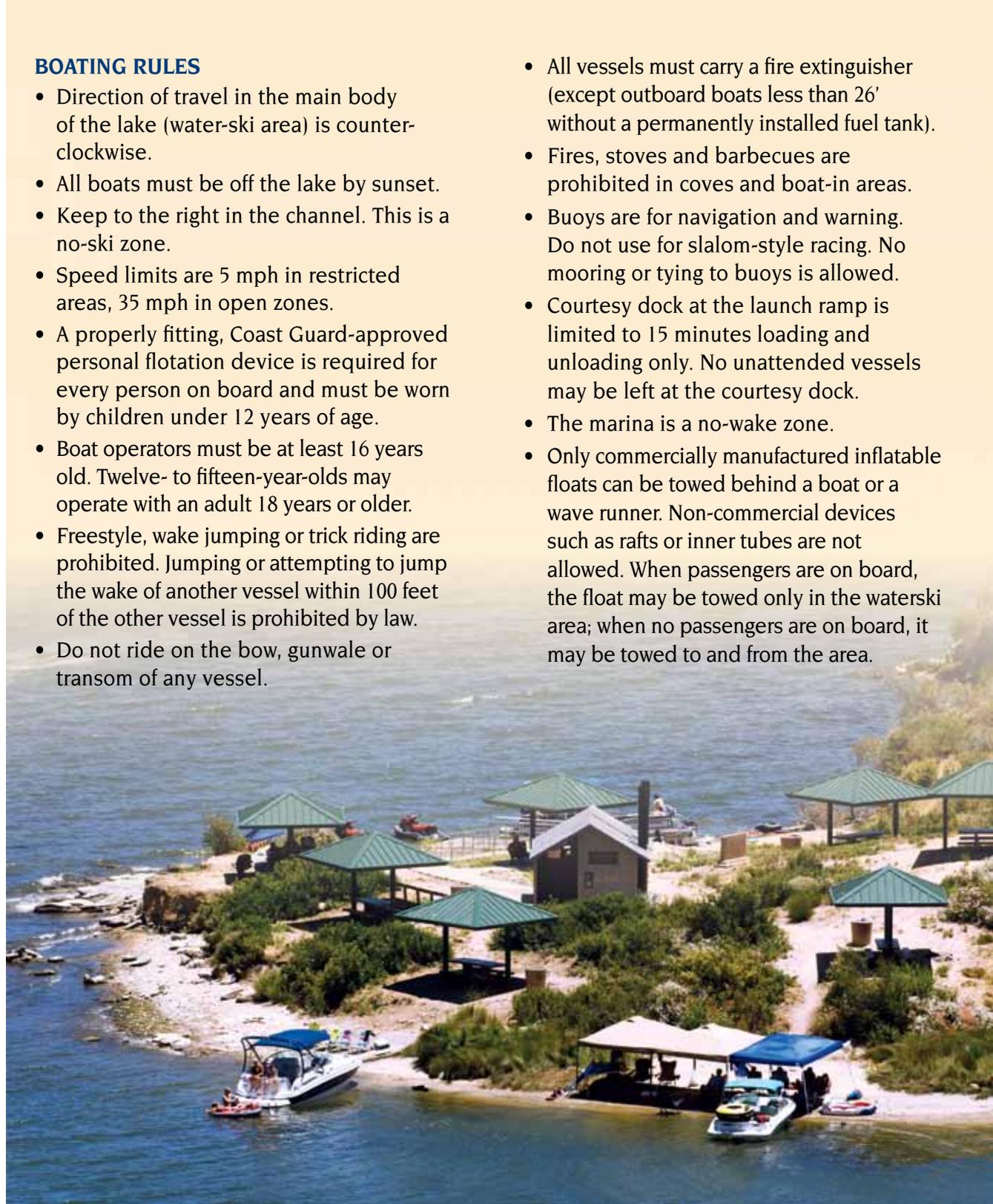
Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Lake Perris State Recreation Area
17801 Lake Perris Drive
Perris 92571 (951) 940-5600
- Saddleback Butte State Park
43220 172nd Street
East Lancaster 93534 (661) 727-9899
- Antelope Valley Indian Museum
State Historic Park
43779 15th Street West
Lancaster 93534 (661) 946-3055

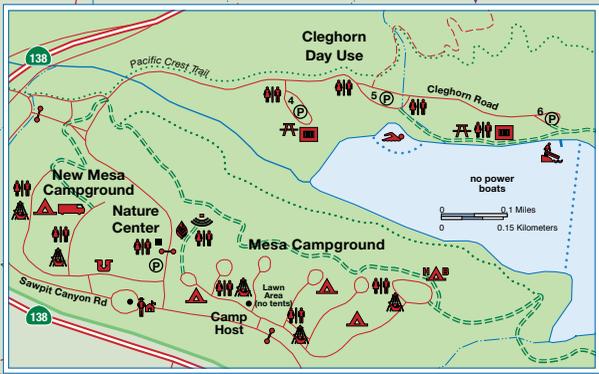
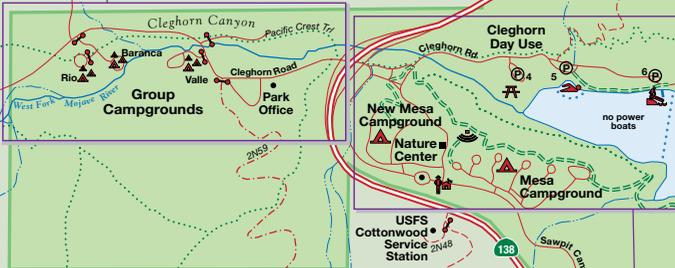
BOATING RULES

- Direction of travel in the main body of the lake (water-ski area) is counter-clockwise.
- All boats must be off the lake by sunset.
- Keep to the right in the channel. This is a no-ski zone.
- Speed limits are 5 mph in restricted areas, 35 mph in open zones.
- A properly fitting, Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device is required for every person on board and must be worn by children under 12 years of age.
- Boat operators must be at least 16 years old. Twelve- to fifteen-year-olds may operate with an adult 18 years or older.
- Freestyle, wake jumping or trick riding are prohibited. Jumping or attempting to jump the wake of another vessel within 100 feet of the other vessel is prohibited by law.
- Do not ride on the bow, gunwale or transom of any vessel.
- All vessels must carry a fire extinguisher (except outboard boats less than 26' without a permanently installed fuel tank).
- Fires, stoves and barbecues are prohibited in coves and boat-in areas.
- Buoys are for navigation and warning. Do not use for slalom-style racing. No mooring or tying to buoys is allowed.
- Courtesy dock at the launch ramp is limited to 15 minutes loading and unloading only. No unattended vessels may be left at the courtesy dock.
- The marina is a no-wake zone.
- Only commercially manufactured inflatable floats can be towed behind a boat or a wave runner. Non-commercial devices such as rafts or inner tubes are not allowed. When passengers are on board, the float may be towed only in the waterski area; when no passengers are on board, it may be towed to and from the area.



Legend

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NOTE: Forest roads (unpaved, red-dashed roads) are difficult to bike. Please ride with caution.

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles
0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Kilometers

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Map by Europa Cartography, Berkeley, CA

Silverwood Lake
State Recreation Area

SILVERWOOD LAKE
STATE
RECREATION
AREA

This park receives support in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information, contact:
Mojave River Natural History Association (MRNHA)
Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area • (760) 389-2303
<http://www.mrnha.shorturl.com>



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