

Clear Lake State Park



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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CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Clear Lake State Park

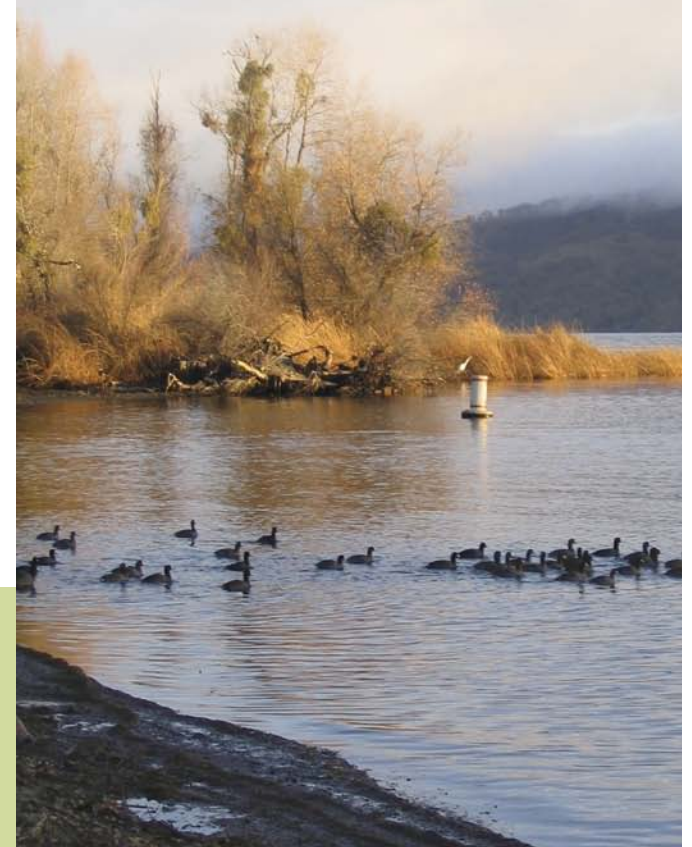
5300 Soda Bay Road

Kelseyville, CA 95451

(707) 279-4293

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*California's largest
natural lake dates back
to the early Pleistocene
era, more than
1.5 million years ago.*



Clear Lake State

Park is located on the southwestern shore of California's largest natural lake. More than 120,000 visitors each year come to swim, fish, boat, waterski, picnic and camp. The park sits on the edge of Soda Bay, named for a spring of



View of Mt. Konocti from the swim area

carbonated water that rises from the bottom of the lake and bubbles at the surface.

Summer temperatures often reach over 100 degrees, but most nights cool off comfortably. In winter it may snow in the park. Between October and March, temperatures can dip to 20 degrees, and rain is fairly common.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

The predominant culture surrounding the lake was Pomo. The west side of what is now Kelsey Creek was inhabited by the Xabenapo Pomo, now known as the Big Valley Pomo. Surrounded by Pomo neighbors, the Lile'ek Wappo were allowed the use of land east of Kelsey Creek in today's park. The Southeastern Pomo lived east of the Lile'ek people.

The Pomo were hunters and gatherers. They built tule boats to fish and used obsidian (cooled volcanic lava) from Mt. Konocti for tool-making and barter. Complex Pomo baskets, made from plant material and often adorned with feathers, were and still are among the finest baskets made.

Pioneers arrived in 1826 and began to settle in territory inhabited by the native people, which often resulted in violence. Tribal leaders eventually signed an 1851 treaty with the U.S. government that

gave the natives 72 miles of lakefront land and a promise of peace. However, this and many subsequent government agreements for the Pomo to regain their land were canceled or dishonored. In 1983, 17 California tribes sued for and gained permanent federal recognition. The Big Valley Pomo began buying back their former tribal lands. Today the Big Valley Pomo enjoy a thriving government and are working toward self-sufficiency.

The Land Becomes a State Park

After the Pomo land was confiscated by the government, it was granted to Salvador Vallejo, who grazed his livestock in the area. For the next 90 years, successive owners used the land for grazing, dairy farming, hunting and fishing.

In 1947, then-owners Fred and Nellie Dorn sent a letter to Lake County officials "granting the County of Lake 330

acres bordering the shores of Clear Lake and which in turn is to be transferred to the State of California for use as a public park." The county deeded the land to the State in 1948, preserving the property for future generations.

NATURAL HISTORY

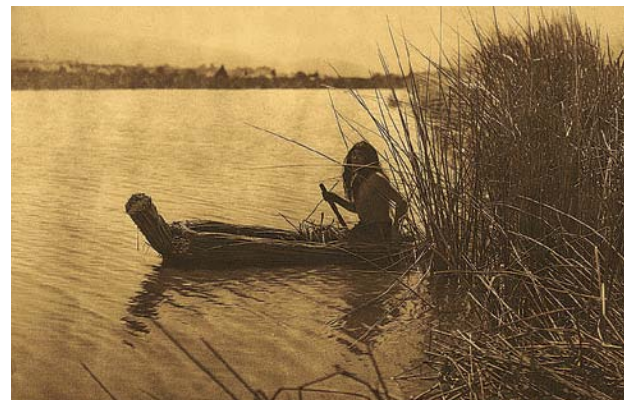
The most prominent of the region's many volcanic cones is 4,200-foot Mount Konocti, just southwest of the park. Konocti is classified as an active volcano, although it has been dormant for thousands of years.

The Clear Lake region is geologically active—as seen by the many hot springs in the area. At the turn of the 20th century, hundreds of health-seekers traveled by rail and stage to the local mineral springs resorts, which promised to cure everything from rheumatism to obesity.

Clear Lake State Park is a refuge and nesting place for many varieties of waterfowl. Wood ducks nest in the trees; mallards find homes in the grass and tules. Other birds include herons, egrets, white pelicans, great horned owls, bushtits, northern flickers, red-shouldered hawks and osprey.

Trail users may spot wildlife such as Beechey ground squirrels, minks, muskrats, western pond turtles and, rarely, a bobcat or mountain lion.

In March, the bright magenta flowers of western redbud stand out in the landscape. California buckeyes leaf out and prepare to bloom. Manzanita,



Edward Curtis's "The Hunter on Lake Pomo" Photographed at Clear Lake, 1931

mountain mahogany and basket bush shrubs are common. The toyon, with its red winter berries, flourishes. Foothill pines, blue oaks and California bay laurel are prominent in woodlands; black cottonwood, California black walnut and willow trees are found near streams.



RECREATION

Visitor Center—Located west of the boat launch parking lot, the visitor center's interpretive displays focus on the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the lake. The center has a large aquarium displaying some of the lake's fish species. Park staff offer educational and interpretive programs at the nearby Education Pavilion.

Activities—Morning nature walks, evening campfire programs and Junior Ranger programs are scheduled throughout the summer. An interpretive Wildflower Brunch takes place each spring. For details, visit www.clearlakesatepark.org.

Special programs are available for groups. Call to make arrangements at least two weeks before your visit.

Camping—The park has four developed campgrounds with a total of 147 sites, plus two hike/bike sites. Each group camp accommodates 40 people. All campgrounds except Lower Bayview have restrooms with hot showers. An RV sanitation station is near the boat launch area,

but no campsites have RV hookups.

Cabins—Eight lakeside cabins without electricity or running water may be rented. For cabin and campsite details and site-specific reservations, call (800) 444-7275 or visit www.parks.ca.gov.

Fishing and Picnicking—You can fish for crappie, catfish or largemouth bass while enjoying your picnic lunch under the oaks and cottonwoods. Picnic sites have tables, barbecues and water faucets. Restrooms and parking areas with room for buses are nearby.

Boat Launch—The boat launch and marina are located on the west bank of Cole Creek. The launch ramp is paved, lighted and usable year-round. Boat mooring slips are available first-come, first-served. Launch fees apply. Paved parking adjoins the marina, which has a shower and restroom.



The park provides mooring and launching space.

Swimming—Clear Lake State Park has a swimming beach just north of the Lower Bayview Campground. Use caution; no lifeguards are on duty.

Hiking—Many miles of hiking trails and fire roads wind through the park. Most of the terrain is hilly, with elevations of 1,320 to 1,600 feet. Carry drinking water and sunscreen and wear a hat.

Dorn Nature Trail winds through oak woodland and chaparral. The vegetation includes oaks, manzanita and many native wildflowers. You can start the trail at several points (see map). The two-mile trail is moderately strenuous.

Indian Nature Trail is a self-guided trail that shows how local Pomo used native plants and other resources. The trail is a moderate half-mile walk.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- All natural and cultural features are protected by state law and may not be disturbed or removed.
- Fires are permitted only in the stoves or fireplaces provided. Ground fires are not allowed. Bring your own fuel or buy it at the entrance station.
- Loaded firearms and fireworks are not allowed in the park.
- Mosquito repellent is advised.
- Do not feed skunks or other wildlife.
- Diving is not permitted in the park.
- Poison oak is found throughout the park. Stay on trails and designated areas.



ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Several campsites, restrooms, cabins, showers and the swim beach are accessible, as are the Kelsey Creek Trail and portions of the Dorn Nature Trail.

Access is continually improving. For updates, see <http://access.parks.ca.gov> or call (916) 445-8949.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Anderson Marsh State Historic Park
Anderson Ranch Parkway off Highway 53
Lower Lake 95457 (707) 279-2267
- Robert Louis Stevenson State Park
Hwy. 29, eight miles south of
Middletown 95461 (707) 942-4575

This park receives support in part from a nonprofit organization. For more information, contact:
Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Assn.
5300 Soda Bay Road, Kelseyville, CA 95451
www.clearlakestatepark.org

