
State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Water Resources

RECREATION CARRYING CAPACITY

FINAL

R-8

**Oroville Facilities Relicensing
FERC Project No. 2100**



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Lake Oroville is the second largest reservoir in California, after Shasta Lake. Numerous existing facilities at Lake Oroville offer a variety of recreational opportunities, including boating, fishing, and camping. Opportunities to camp in the area range from fully developed campgrounds to primitive, less-developed sites. Boat-in and floating campsites also exist. There are two full-service marinas, six boat launches, eight car-top boat launches, ten floating campsites, seven floating toilets, and a visitor center located in the vicinity of Lake Oroville. At Lake Oroville itself, there are major developed recreation facilities at Loafer Creek, Bidwell Canyon, Spillway, and Lime Saddle. Other recreation opportunities include picnicking, swimming, horseback riding, hiking, off-road bicycle riding, personal watercraft (PWC) use, wildlife watching, and hunting. The area also offers visitor information sites with cultural and informational displays about Project facilities and the area's natural and cultural environment. Additional recreational and visitor facilities are located at Thermalito Diversion Pool, Thermalito Forebay, Thermalito Afterbay, and the Oroville Wildlife Area (OWA).

1.2 STUDY AREA

All public recreation sites included in the study area are depicted in Figure 1.2-1. The study area also includes all lands and waters within 0.25 mile of the Project boundary, which extends from south of the City of Oroville to reaches of the South Fork, Middle Fork, and North Fork of the Feather River (Figure 1.2-2). Encompassed within the study area are Lake Oroville, Thermalito Diversion Pool, Thermalito Forebay, Thermalito Afterbay, Lake Oroville Visitors Center, and the OWA. Lake Oroville, the Thermalito Diversion Pool, and the Thermalito Forebay are within the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (LOSRA), which is managed by California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Project facilities such as the Oroville Dam, Hyatt Powerplant, Thermalito Diversion Dam and Powerplant, Thermalito Power Canal, and the Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant are excluded from this analysis as the public is generally discouraged or prohibited from using these Project facilities for recreation purposes.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES

The Oroville Facilities were developed as part of the State Water Project (SWP) – a water storage and delivery system of reservoirs, aqueducts, power plants, and pumping plants. The main purpose of the SWP is to store and distribute water to supplement the needs of urban and agricultural water users in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, and Southern California. The Oroville Facilities are also operated for flood control power generation, to improve water quality in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, enhance fish and wildlife, and provide recreation.

FERC Project No. 2100 (Figure 1.2-2) encompasses 41,100 acres and includes Oroville Dam and Reservoir, three power plants (Hyatt Pumping-Generating Plant, Thermalito Diversion Dam Power Plant, and Thermalito Pumping-Generating Plant), Thermalito Diversion Dam, the Feather River Fish Hatchery and Fish Barrier Dam, Thermalito Power Canal, the OWA, Thermalito Forebay and Forebay Dam, Thermalito Afterbay