



Lake Oroville Community Update

September 27, 2024

Oroville Salmon Festival

Join the Department of Water Resources (DWR) at the Oroville Salmon Festival on Saturday, Sept. 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for a celebration of the migration of native Chinook salmon in the Feather River. Visit DWR's booth at the Feather River Fish Hatchery, where we will have educational materials on water safety, salmon coloring activities for kids, and a salmon head photo opportunity. DWR Guides will also be giving free tours of the Hatchery, where DWR and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) raise Chinook salmon and steelhead to improve fish populations throughout the state.



Other Salmon Festival activities include the Friday night salmon dinner, Motor Mania, Avie's Place 3K color run, a food and beer garden, Kid's Zone, and numerous shopping opportunities and vendor booths in downtown Oroville. DWR has also partnered with the Oroville State Theater to showcase videos about efforts to support vital salmon habitat restoration, fish health, and population growth.

View the full Salmon Festival schedule at [Visit Oroville](#).



DWR Helps Local Communities Prepare for Flood Emergencies

DWR is awarding \$1.4 million in funding for nine emergency response agencies across the state to increase their ability to respond to flood events. This funding will help put resources in the hands of local first responders tasked with protecting our communities. Locally, the Butte County Office of Emergency Services was awarded \$110,250 to support flood emergency preparedness.

California continues to adapt to an increase in extreme weather, with swings from dry conditions to dangerous flooding. The previous two winters have demonstrated the importance of planning for flood emergencies, especially at the local level. These latest grant awards will provide funding to emergency response agencies to replenish and

bolster local stockpiles of flood fight materials, such as sandbags and levee-reinforcing muscle-wall, and fund flood planning activities and training exercises.

See the full list of 2024 Emergency Response Grant awardees in [DWR's press release](#).

Routine Spillway Cleaning and Inspections Underway

Following another wet winter requiring flood control releases from Oroville Dam's main spillway, DWR has begun cleaning activities and routine annual inspections of the concrete spillway chute. Members of the public should expect to see crews using pressure washers, brooms, and small cleaning equipment, followed by engineers traversing the spillway on foot conducting the inspections through Oct. 4.



Annual inspections of the main spillway are conducted by DWR engineers. During the inspections, engineers assess the condition of the spillway's concrete slabs, walls, joint sealant, and dentates (energy dissipators at the base of the spillway structure). Routine maintenance activities are expected this fall based on inspection results and reservoir levels.

The main spillway continues to perform well and operate as designed. The spillway was rebuilt to the highest engineering and safety standards with oversight and guidance by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD), and an independent board of consultants. DWR performed a significant amount of inspection and testing throughout construction to verify compliance with project specifications. DWR also provides regular updates to the [Oroville Dam Citizens Advisory Commission](#), a public forum for discussing operations, maintenance, and public safety activities at Oroville Dam and its facilities.



Lakeside Access Road Now Open

Lake Oroville's water elevation has dropped sufficiently low to allow DWR to reopen the Lakeside Access Road, providing around-the-clock access to the Spillway Boat Ramp and Day Use Area. Construction of Lakeside Access Road was completed in 2022 and provides a direct route to the Spillway Day Use Area from Oroville Dam Crest Road without requiring visitors to pass through the California Highway Patrol (CHP) inspection kiosk. The CHP kiosk will now be closed with Lakeside Access Road's reopening.

Geotechnical Investigation

DWR has begun drilling associated with a geotechnical investigation of Parish Camp Saddle Dam located near the Lime Saddle Marina. The investigation will provide below-surface data needed to analyze and study the dam's foundation. The geotechnical investigation is a recommendation by Independent Consultants as part of routine facility performance and safety reviews (Part 12D) that are reported to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). DWR's drilling plan was reviewed and approved by FERC and the California Division of Safety of Dams. In addition to the sampling of soil and rock materials, DWR plans to conduct optical and geophysical surveys within select drill holes to further DWR's understanding of the subsurface geology, rock quality, and foundation properties. DWR anticipates Parish Camp Saddle Dam field work to conclude by early November.



Oroville Recreation



DWR, State Parks, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) maintain over 92 miles of trails in the Oroville area. An interactive map of recreation facilities, including open trails and their permitted uses (hike, bike, horse, multi), is available on DWR's [Lake Oroville Recreation webpage](#). A paper trail map is available at various locations, including most entrance kiosks and the Lake Oroville Visitor Center.

Staffed by knowledgeable guides, the Lake Oroville Visitor Center features interpretive displays on Oroville Dam, area geology, wildlife and habitat, hydroelectric power, and cultural and historical artifacts. View videos in the theater about the construction of Oroville Dam, walk or hike along nearby trails, and visit the 47-foot-tall observation tower that provides unsurpassed panoramic views of surrounding areas. Free guided tours for school and community groups are available by reservation. Parking and admission to the Visitor Center are free.

Lake Oroville is one of the State Water Project's premier recreational destinations and one of California's best fishing spots. The lake provides both warm-water and cold-water fisheries. Below the Oroville Dam, the Thermalito Forebay, Thermalito Afterbay and the Feather River offer additional excellent fishing opportunities for Chinook salmon and steelhead. The marinas at Bidwell Canyon and Lime Saddle are open daily and provide a variety of services including a convenience store, gas, boat rentals, and more.

Upstream migrating fish totals through the Feather River Fish Monitoring Station between Jan. 1 and Sept. 17 are:

- Spring-run Chinook salmon (March 1 through June 30): 7,142
- Fall-run Chinook salmon (July 1 through present): 12,004
- Steelhead: 1,074

Current Lake Operations

Lake Oroville is at 785 feet elevation and storage is approximately 1.94 million acre-feet (MAF), which is 57 percent of its total capacity and 101 percent of the historical average.

Feather River flows are at 800 cubic feet per second (cfs) through the City of Oroville with 8,200 cfs being released from the Thermalito Afterbay River Outlet (Outlet) for a total Feather River release of 9,000 cfs downstream. DWR continues to assess Feather River releases daily.

The public can track precipitation, snow, reservoir levels and more at the [California Data Exchange Center](#). The Lake Oroville gage station is identified as “ORO.”

All data as of midnight 9/26/2024.

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