



A Community Newsletter from the Contra Costa Water District | Volume 15, Number 3, Fall 2001

Los Vaqueros Reservoir Now Open for Fishing

Fishing at the Los Vaqueros Reservoir is receiving an enthusiastic response from Bay Area anglers, many of whom are finding it to be a fishing paradise.

Since the reservoir opened to fishing in September, more than 1,000 anglers have visited each week, with many catching their limit in fish. Fishing is allowed from the western shore, four fishing piers and a fleet of electric-powered rental boats.

As of early October, the largest fish caught at the reservoir was a 7.5-pound catfish. Rainbow trout up to 4 pounds and black bass up to 6 pounds are also commonly caught at the reservoir.



Electric fishing boats are available at the Los Vaqueros Marina.

By opening day, the reservoir had been fully stocked with more than 200,000 pounds of game fish, including rainbow trout, Kokanee salmon, channel catfish, largemouth black bass and varieties of sunfish. Restocking of the reservoir has

already started through an on-going stocking program that is funded by \$3 Daily Fishing Access Pass fees.

The new marina is located on the south shore of the 100,000-acre-foot drinking water reservoir in eastern Contra Costa County. The Los Vaqueros Marina entrance is accessible from Vasco Road at the Alameda-Contra Costa County line.

There are 26 16-foot rental boats available at the marina, along with a single 20-foot pontoon boat. All of these boats perform very well in high winds and waves. The Los Vaqueros reservoir was built to improve the quality of drinking water for the District's 450,000 customers and provide an emergency supply. To protect water quality, privately-owned boats are not allowed. Only the electric-powered rental boats offered at the Marina are allowed on the lake. The boats are available on a first-come, first-served basis daily.

Due to environmental protection requirements, there are some live bait restrictions. The only bait allowed in the reservoir are salmon eggs, power bait, worms, nightcrawlers, crickets, grasshoppers, grubs, liver and artificial lures. Live or dead fish, crayfish, clams, frogs and snakes are strictly forbidden as bait, to protect endangered species and the ecosystem.



Rainbow trout are plentiful at Los Vaqueros.

A California State Fishing License and a CCWD Daily Fishing Access Pass are required for fishing. The parking fee is \$4 for District residents and \$6 for non-residents.

From November through March, operating hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week, including holidays. Operating hours are extended in the spring and summer.

For more information on fishing at Los Vaqueros, call the marina at (925) 371-2628. Or check the CCWD website at www.ccwater.com

Fishing Limits:

Catfish: 10

Black Bass: 12 (min. length 12 inches)

Striped Bass: 2 (min. length 18 inches)

Trout: 5

Kokanee Salmon: 5

Crappie: 25



CCWD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Pretti
President

Noble O. Elcenko, D.C.
Vice President

Elizabeth R. Anello

Bette Boatmun

Joseph L. Campbell

Writer/Editor

Gina Oltman

goltman@ccwater.com

General Manager
Walter J. Bishop



CONTRA COSTA
WATER DISTRICT

1331 Concord Ave.
P.O. Box H2O
Concord, CA 94524
(925) 688-8000
<http://www.ccwater.com>

The Contra Costa Water District provides water to 430,000 Contra Costa County residents. Approximately 220,000 residents in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Martinez, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill, Port Costa, and Walnut Creek receive water that has been treated by a District water treatment plant.

The other 210,000 are served by local water agencies that receive raw water from CCWD, then treat, distribute and bill for it themselves. These agencies are City of Antioch, City of Martinez, City of Pittsburg and the California Cities Water Company (Bay Point). Oakley residents are served by a jointly owned CCWD/Diablo Water District treatment plant.

Los Vaqueros Levels Dropping Faster Than Normal This Fall

It's normal for much of your tap water to come from the Los Vaqueros Reservoir during the fall months because the Water District's Delta sources usually become too salty for quality drinking water. Maintaining low salt levels in your drinking water is the primary purpose of the Los Vaqueros Project, which was completed in 1997.

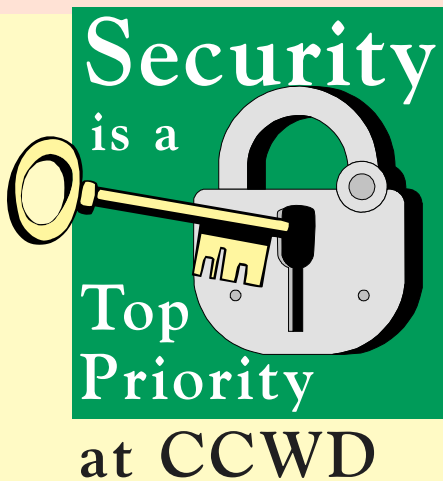
This fall, however, salt levels in the Delta starting rising sharply in mid-summer, much earlier than usual. This is because last winter's Sierra snowpack was well below normal. As the snowpack melted, less fresh water

flowed into the Delta, and this allowed more salt water to move in from the San Francisco Bay. As a result, salt levels at the Water District's Rock Slough intake have been hovering around 220 milligrams per liter (mg/L), about twice the amount it takes for the water to start tasting salty.

If you visit Los Vaqueros this fall, you may notice that the reservoir is lower than you might have seen in the past. (You can get an idea of reservoir level fluctuations by looking at the amount of shoreline exposed as the water recedes.) This is because the Water District has been drawing a portion of its daily supply from Los Vaqueros since late July, and is now relying on the reservoir for most of its daily water supply in order to avoid delivering salty Delta water to customers.

While Los Vaqueros makes it possible for CCWD customers to continue receiving good quality drinking water, water levels in the reservoir are dropping far below levels of previous years. Water levels are expected to continue dropping until January, when Delta water quality normally improves enough to begin refilling it. By then the water level in the reservoir could be as low as 54,000 acre feet, about half the capacity of the 100,00 acre foot reservoir.

You can help by conserving water in your home and yard. Now is an especially good time to adjust automatic sprinkler timers to prevent overwatering. For more water conservation ideas, check out our website at www.ccwater.com.



Security has always been a priority for the Contra Costa Water District, but with the recent terrorist attacks, it has become even more critical to our daily operations.

Although the District has not received any direct threats, it is operating on heightened alert as a general precaution. Surveillance of all facilities has been increased and security, in general, has been strengthened. The District constantly monitors its water and operations and continues to make adjustments to security procedures as needed.

Like most major utilities across the nation, the District has emergency preparedness and response plans in place and regularly conducts drills to test these plans.

On a national level, the District has joined water utilities across the country to protect the nation's water supplies, increase awareness about security issues, and obtain government funding for additional security measures.

District customers can be assured that their water supply is carefully monitored and remains safe.

Suspicious activity near water facilities can be reported by calling (925)688-8374, or 9-1-1.



Lagoon Construction Begins at Contra Loma

Construction is progressing on a treated-water swimming lagoon that will keep drinking water from coming into contact with swimmers at Contra Loma Reservoir in Antioch.

Where a string of floating buoys have defined the reservoir's swimming area for many years, a low wall has been built to keep the swimming water in a lagoon, where it will be filtered, treated and recirculated, much like the water in a swimming pool.

This project will result in safer drinking water for the Water District's 450,000 customers and cleaner, healthier, swimming water for Contra Loma visitors.

The lagoon is a win-win solution. It allows the Water District to protect the public's drinking water without sacrificing recreational swimming opportunities.

The new swimming lagoon is expected to be completed by Summer 2002.

CCWD Recognized for Excellence in Water Treatment

The Contra Costa Water District's Ralph D. Bollman Water Treatment Plant has received an honor bestowed upon less than one percent of the nearly 20,000 water treatment plants in the United States.

The Directors' Award of Recognition has been awarded to the Bollman plant by the Partnership for Safe Water, a program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and five national water industry associations.

This award puts the Bollman plant, located in Concord, in an elite circle.



Only 148 water treatment plants nationwide have received this award, which is presented to plants that successfully meet extensive criteria and pass a rigorous self-assessment and peer review.

"This award demonstrates that the Contra Costa Water District provides an outstanding product to its customers from the Bollman Water Treatment Plant," said District President James Pretti. "It also recognizes the significant investment the District has made in upgrading the Bollman plant over the years."

Water treated at the Bollman plant is distributed to 230,000 CCWD customers in Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Port Costa and parts of Pleasant Hill, Martinez and Walnut Creek.