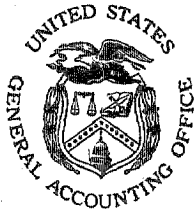


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B-174172

7-29-74



REPORT TO THE CONSERVATION AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RELEASED

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Managing Recreation Facilities At  
Bureau Of Reclamation Reservoirs

B-174172

Department of the Interior

BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES

~~906826~~

090262

JULY 29, 1974



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-174172

The Honorable Henry S. Reuss, Chairman  
Conservation and Natural Resources  
Subcommittee  
Committee on Government Operations  
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with your December 29, 1972, request and subsequent discussions with your office, we reviewed the management of recreation facilities at certain Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior, reservoirs.

We discussed our observations and conclusions with Bureau officials, but, as your office requested, we did not submit a copy of the report to that agency or to the Department of the Interior for review and comment.

We want to direct your attention to the fact that page 26 of this report contains recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior. As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions he has taken on our recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations not later than 60 days after the date of the report and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report. We understand that you will distribute copies of the report to the Secretary and the four committees for the purpose of setting in motion the requirements of section 236.

We do not plan to distribute this report further unless you agree or publicly announce its contents.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James B. Peck".

Comptroller General  
of the United States

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ABBREVIATIONS

GAO	General Accounting Office
NPS	National Park Service
NUID	North Unit Irrigation District

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S REPORT  
TO THE CONSERVATION AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MANAGING RECREATION  
FACILITIES AT BUREAU OF  
RECLAMATION RESERVOIRS  
Department of the Interior  
B-174172

D I G E S T

WHY THE REVIEW WAS MADE

At the request of the Subcommittee's Chairman, GAO reviewed the management of recreation facilities at certain Bureau of Reclamation reservoirs.

The Chairman was primarily interested in

- the Bureau's policy of assigning management of recreation areas at its reservoirs to non-Federal agencies and
- the Bureau's supervision of such management.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Because the Bureau lacks the authority and funds to provide recreational facilities at its reservoirs, it has for many years transferred the management of reservoir recreational areas to other agencies and organizations.

Management of reservoirs in or adjacent to national forests has been transferred to the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. Reservoirs in national recreation areas are managed by the Interior's National Park Service. For the remaining reservoirs, the Bureau encourages State and local agencies to assume management. (See p. 2.)

The Bureau's first general recreation authority is contained in the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965.

The act encourages non-Federal management of recreation areas and requires that the Federal Government and the non-Federal agency equally share some of the costs of the recreation function.

For reservoirs authorized before 1965, the Federal Government and the non-Federal agency each pay half the costs of developing recreation, with a \$100,000 ceiling on the Federal contribution. (See p. 2.)

The Bureau's instructions on land management state that minimum basic facilities can be provided at its reservoirs when such facilities are required to protect the health and safety of the visiting public or to protect Federal property. The definition of minimum facilities, as intended by the Congress in enacting the Federal Water Project Recreation Act, is more restrictive than that provided under the Bureau's instructions. (See p. 3.)

To help insure that non-Federal agencies adequately develop and properly manage recreation facilities, the Bureau enters into a recreation management agreement with an agency and requires it to prepare a recreation development plan. (See p. 4.)

The National Park Service, when requested by the Bureau, helps in preparing such plans and in developing and operating recreation facilities at the reservoirs. (See p. 3.)

GAO's review of 15 Bureau reservoirs in California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska, where non-Federal agencies manage recreation facilities, showed that recreation facilities were adequate for most of the reservoirs.

In all but a few cases, public access to such reservoirs had not been restricted by private development of cabins and/or mobile homes. In addition, the Bureau had periodically inspected recreational facilities at each of the reservoirs covered in GAO's review.

Several Bureau reservoirs, however, had problems.

- The Bureau did not adequately control development of public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa, California.

As a result, public access to the lake was severely restricted because concessionaires developed extensive mobile-home parks.

These were located along some of the most desirable shoreline areas. Nor were public recreational facilities provided in accordance with the prepared recreation development plan.

GAO reported on the conditions at this lake in 1972; this report points out that adverse conditions still exist. (See p. 6.)

- The Bureau has been unable to interest either Federal or non-Federal agencies in assuming responsibility for developing and operating recreation facilities at East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoirs in California. As a result, the Bureau has entered into temporary leases

with concessionaires, who have developed limited recreation facilities at these reservoirs.

A 1969 recreation development plan prepared by the National Park Service estimated that \$432,000 would be required for adequate recreation facilities at East Park; existing facilities were valued at \$4,985. A recreation development plan had not been prepared for Stony Gorge Reservoir. (See p. 13.)

- At Haystack Reservoir, Oregon, the North Unit Irrigation District had entered into a lease agreement with a private concessionaire to manage the recreational facilities, although the Bureau and the district had not entered into a recreation management agreement.

The National Park Service had prepared a recreation development plan in 1966. In May 1973 a Bureau inspection disclosed that the recreation development lacked adequate site planning and esthetic concerns.

The Forest Service has expressed an interest in administering recreation areas at the reservoir, if the Bureau ends concessionaire operations.

The Bureau should proceed to terminate concessionaire operations at Haystack and assign responsibility for recreation at the reservoir to the Forest Service. (See p. 14.)

- At Conconully Lake, Washington, the non-Federal Okanogan Irrigation District arranged for cabins and concessionaire operations at the reservoir, although the Bureau and the district had not entered into a recreation management agreement.

The National Park Service had prepared a recreation development plan in 1947. The Bureau should take the necessary steps to establish a management agreement for the recreation areas at this reservoir. (See p. 18.)

- Cabins and mobile homes are generally permitted on Bureau reservoir lands. Cabin development at Conconully Lake, Washington, restricted public access to the reservoir for recreation.

A similar situation involving mobile homes existed at Lake Berryessa. The Bureau should establish a policy to insure that development of mobile-home sites does not restrict public access to and use of the reservoirs. (See p. 20.)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS

The Secretary of the Interior should:

- Obtain the statutory authority to develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities at Bureau reservoirs when other Federal or non-Federal agencies are either unwilling or unable to assume such responsibility or when management by a non-Federal agency is unsatisfactory.
- Proceed to terminate concessionaire operations at Haystack Reservoir and assign such responsibilities to the Forest Service, which has expressed an interest in developing and operating recreational facilities at the reservoir.
- Require the Bureau to establish a management agreement for the recreation areas at Conconully Lake.
- Establish a policy on developing mobile-home parks at Bureau res-

ervoirs to insure that such development does not restrict public access to and use of the reservoirs.

- Insure adequate development of public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa, as provided for in the proposed revised public use plan.
- Require the Bureau to revise the definition of minimum basic facilities included in its instructions on land management to conform to the definition of minimum facilities intended under the Federal Water Project Recreation Act for developing water resources projects.

#### AGENCY ACTIONS AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

At the Subcommittee's request, GAO did not obtain written comments from the Bureau or the Interior Department on the contents of this report. GAO discussed the report with Bureau officials who generally agreed with the facts presented and agreed that improvements were needed in managing recreation facilities at some Bureau reservoirs.

After GAO completed its review, the Commissioner of Reclamation advised the Chairman, Board of Supervisors of Napa County, California, in a March 6, 1974, letter, that the Bureau had developed new policy guidelines for recreation at Lake Berryessa. (See p. 27.)

These guidelines provide for

- phasing out private use of the recreation area as present leases expire and
- seeking legislative authority to construct up to \$3 million worth of short-term facilities for general public use if Napa County agrees to certain conditions, including a new recreation management plan.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

As requested by the Chairman of the Conservation and Natural Resources Subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations (see app. I), and as modified by subsequent discussion with the Subcommittee, we reviewed the Bureau of Reclamation's administration of recreation facilities at certain Bureau reservoirs.

In its 1972 report "Water and Land Resources Accomplishments," the Bureau said that its 248 recreation areas had about 3.8 million acres of land, 1.7 million acres of water for recreation, and 11,700 miles of shoreline. Following are the agencies managing those recreation areas.

<u>Managing agency</u>	<u>Areas</u>	<u>Percent</u>
States	92	37
Forest Service, Department of Agriculture	46	19
Counties	40	16
Recreation and irrigation districts	23	9
Department of the Interior:		
Bureau of Reclamation	18	7
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife	15	6
National Park Service	13	5
Bureau of Land Management	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>248</u>	<u>100</u>

Information on visits to Bureau reservoir recreation areas for 1962 through 1972 follows.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Visitor-days (note a)</u> (millions)
1962	27.0
1963	34.7
1964	34.3
1965	36.6
1966	44.9
1967	47.9
1968	49.5
1969	54.5
1970	54.2
1971	55.7
1972	56.2

a/Visitor-day is defined by the Bureau as a large amount of time spent by one individual at a particular activity during a 24-hour period.



## CHAPTER 2

### BUREAU'S RECREATION POLICY

The Bureau has for many years transferred the management of recreation areas at its reservoirs to other agencies and organizations. Reservoirs in or adjacent to national forests have been transferred to the Forest Service, and those in national recreation areas are administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The Bureau encourages State and local agencies to assume management of the recreation areas at other reservoirs.

#### LEGISLATION

The Reclamation Act of 1902 (43 U.S.C. 391) established a water resource development program to supply irrigation to new settlers on public lands in the 17 Western States. This program was broadened under the Bureau and now includes such functions as hydroelectric power generation, municipal and industrial water supply, navigation and flood control, fish and wildlife enhancement, water quality control, environmental protection and preservation, and recreation.

The Congress recognized recreation as a separate function in a few specific project authorization acts before it enacted general legislative authority pertaining to recreation. For example, the Colorado River Storage Project Act (43 U.S.C. 620) and the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Act (43 U.S.C. 616) specifically authorized the Secretary of the Interior to plan, construct, operate, and maintain public recreational facilities at these projects.

The act authorizing the Trinity River Division of the Central Valley Project, California (69 Stat. 719, Aug. 12, 1955), provided only for minimum basic facilities to maintain public health and safety and protection of property. Later, the Congress enacted legislation to provide for the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area (16 U.S.C. 460q) because of its tremendous recreation potential.

The Bureau's first general recreation authority is contained in the Federal Water Project Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 4601-12). The act encourages non-Federal administration of recreation areas and requires that the Federal Government and the non-Federal agency each pay half the costs allocated to the recreation function. For existing reservoirs, the Federal Government and the non-Federal agency each pay half the costs of developing recreation, with a \$100,000 ceiling on the Federal contribution.

Since the enactment of the Federal Water Project Recreation Act in July 1965, 15 Bureau projects, with recreation as a stated function, have been authorized by the Congress at an estimated cost of \$2 billion. Of this amount, \$57 million has been allocated to recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement; of the \$57 million, \$7 million is to be reimbursed to the Government by the States and/or local agencies.

The authorizing legislation for each of these projects provides that fish and wildlife resources be developed and recreation opportunities be enhanced in accordance with the act.

As of January 1, 1974, construction had not begun on 9 of the 15 projects; the remaining 6 projects were in various stages of construction.

#### Minimum basic facilities

The Bureau's instructions on land management (215.1.6, dated June 4, 1958), state that minimum basic facilities be provided at its reservoirs when such facilities are required to protect the health and safety of the visiting public or to protect Federal property. The instructions specify that minimum basic facilities can include (1) access roads and parking lots, (2) sanitary facilities, (3) picnic, boating, and swimming facilities, (4) landscaping, and (5) fencing. The instructions state also that the need for these facilities will vary with the conditions at each reservoir.

We noted that the Federal Water Project Recreation Act refers to "minimum facilities" rather than minimum basic facilities. The definition of minimum facilities, as discussed in reports by both the Senate and House Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs (S. Rept. 89-149 and H. Rept. 89-254), is more restrictive than that provided for under the Bureau instructions which were issued prior to the act. Both reports specifically excluded such items as parking, picnicking, swimming, and camping areas and elaborate sanitary facilities. Hence, it appears to us that the Bureau's instructions on minimum basic facilities need to be revised to recognize the definition intended by the act.

#### RECREATION PLANNING

To implement congressional policy on including recreation as a function in planning for water resources projects, the Bureau relies on the Interior's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to help in recreation planning at the time of reconnaissance investigations. These investigations bring together all readily available information and basic facts on a particular area. Their chief purpose is to determine whether further detailed investigations involving engineering, economic, and financial feasibility are warranted. If such investigations are undertaken and require additional recreation planning assistance, the Bureau asks NPS to help. Similarly, following congressional authorization of proposed Bureau projects, NPS provides the following assistance to the Bureau, if requested.

- Negotiation of recreation administration agreements and concession contracts.

- Interim operation and management of recreation facilities.
- Preparation of recreation development plans for Bureau reservoirs.
- Supervision of construction of facilities.
- Inspection of recreation use, management, and operation of the facilities.

The recreation development plans prepared by NPS, hereinafter referred to as public use plans, contain information concerning (1) the physical and topographic characteristics of the recreation area, (2) current public use and expected future public use of the recreation area, (3) the recreation facilities required to meet the needs of the visiting public, and (4) drawings and maps of the locations of the existing and/or planned recreation facilities. In most cases, the plans also include estimates of the development, operation, and maintenance costs of the recommended facilities.

For recreation facilities needed at a particular area, NPS plans recommend items such as picnic tables, fireplaces, campsites, trailer sites, boat ramps and docks, roads, sanitation facilities, and parking spaces. NPS plans generally stipulate the number of recreation facilities to be developed to satisfy current and expected future needs.

To help insure that non-Federal agencies adequately develop and properly manage recreation facilities, the Bureau enters into a recreation management agreement with the non-Federal agency which sets forth certain operating conditions. Bureau officials advised us that they require a recreation development plan for each reservoir for which recreation management is being assigned to a non-Federal agency. They said these plans can be developed by the non-Federal agencies with Bureau approval or jointly by the non-Federal agency, the Bureau, and NPS.

Bureau officials said public use plans are intended to serve as flexible guidelines for non-Federal agencies to use in developing recreation areas. The officials said that non-Federal agencies are reluctant to make the public use plan a rigid requirement of the recreation management agreement because recreation activities are usually not profitable and the non-Federal agencies either are unwilling or do not have the funds to provide all the recreation facilities set forth in the plan.

### CHAPTER 3

#### OBSERVATIONS ON RECREATION FACILITIES

##### AT CERTAIN BUREAU RESERVOIRS

Our review of 15 Bureau reservoirs for which the management of recreation facilities had been assigned to non-Federal agencies showed that most of the reservoirs had adequate recreation facilities and that public access to and use of such reservoirs had not been restricted by private development of cabins and/or mobile homes. In addition, the Bureau had periodically inspected recreational facilities at each of the reservoirs covered in our review.

Several of the Bureau reservoirs, however, had problems.

--The Bureau had not adequately controlled the development of public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa, California. As a result public access to and use of the lake has been severely restricted because (1) concessionaires have developed extensive mobile-home parks along some of the most desirable shoreline areas and (2) public recreational facilities have not been provided in accordance with the public use plan. (See p. 6.)

--At East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoirs, in California, the Bureau has been unable to interest either Federal or non-Federal agencies in assuming the responsibility for developing and operating recreation facilities at the reservoirs. As a result, the Bureau has entered into temporary leases with concessionaires who have developed limited recreation facilities at these reservoirs. (See p. 13.)

A public use plan prepared by NPS in 1969 estimated that \$432,000 would be required for adequate recreation facilities at East Park, as compared to existing facilities valued at \$4,985. A public use plan had not been prepared for Stony Gorge Reservoir at the time of our review.

--At Haystack Reservoir, Oregon, the North Unit Irrigation District had entered into a lease agreement with a private concessionaire to manage the recreational facilities, although the Bureau and the district had not entered into a recreation management agreement. NPS had prepared a public use plan in 1966. A May 1973 Bureau inspection of recreation facilities at the reservoir disclosed inadequate site planning and lack of esthetic consideration. The Forest Service has expressed an interest in administering the recreation areas at the reservoir, if the Bureau terminates the concessionaire operations. (See p. 14.)

--At Conconully Lake, Washington, the Okanogan Irrigation District had entered into lease arrangements for cabins and concessionaire operations at the reservoir, although the Bureau and the district had

not entered into a recreation management agreement. NPS had prepared a public use plan in 1947. (See p. 18.)

--Cabins and mobile homes are generally permitted to be developed on Bureau reservoir lands. However, cabin development at Conconully Lake restricted public access to and use of the reservoir for recreation. A similar situation involving mobile homes existed at Lake Berryessa. We believe the Bureau should establish a policy to insure that development of mobile-home sites does not restrict public access to and use of the reservoirs. (See p. 20.)

These and other matters of interest specified in the Subcommittee's request are discussed in the following sections of this report.

### LAKE BERRYESSA

In our report entitled "Public Recreational Facilities Not Adequately Developed at Lake Berryessa, California--A Bureau of Reclamation Project" (B-174172, Feb. 22, 1972), we concluded that the Bureau's failure to adequately control the development of public recreational facilities had severely restricted public access to and use of the lake because (1) concessionaires developed extensive mobile-home parks along the shoreline, and (2) public recreational facilities were not provided in accordance with NPS's public use plan.

We recommended that (1) the Bureau of Reclamation be required to insure adequate development of public recreational facilities at the lake and (2) consideration be given to the feasibility of obtaining Federal authorization and funding for capital improvements at the lake to reduce reliance on others for development of public recreational facilities.

Because facilities were not available to accommodate the public and because the Bureau lacked both authorization and funds to develop and manage such facilities, the Bureau sought to have the State of California or local government agencies assume the responsibility of managing public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa. The State expressed no interest and, in November 1957, advised the Bureau that it had no funds available for such development.

In July 1958 the Bureau entered into a management agreement with Napa County for administering and developing recreation facilities at the lake. This agreement, as rewritten in 1962, provided that the county and all parties acting under the county's authority develop the area in accordance with a public use plan for Lake Berryessa. Under the terms of the agreement, either party could revise or modify the public use plan by mutual consent. NPS had prepared the plan for the Bureau in 1959. The plan stipulated the areas that should be developed and the number of boat-launching, picnicking, camping, and other recreational facilities that should be provided in each area.

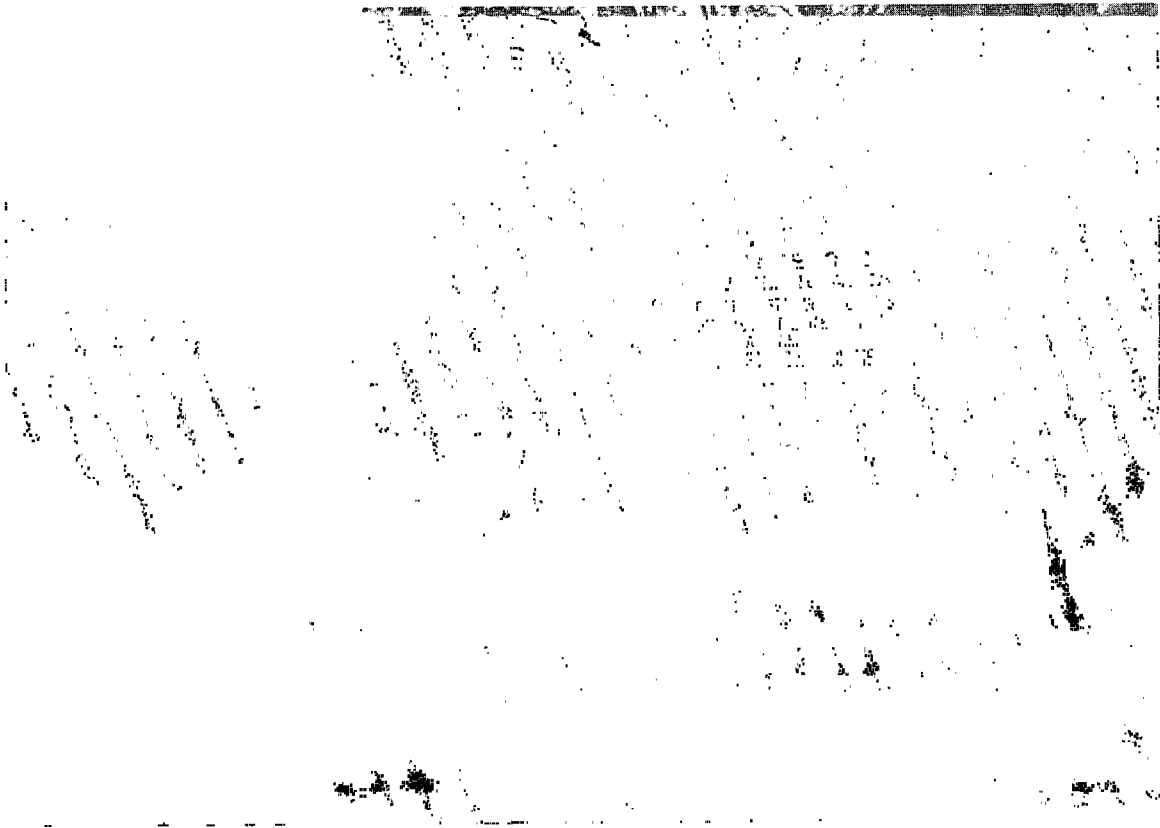
Napa County adopted the policy that the recreational facilities would be developed and managed by private concessionaires, at no cost to county taxpayers, because users of the lake included many nonresidents of the county. The county established the Lake Berryessa Park Commission to administer and manage the lands around the lake. The county loaned funds to the commission to construct a park headquarters but committed no funds for developing recreational facilities.

Subsequently, Napa County entered into contracts with seven concessionaires to develop and operate recreational facilities at various locations at the lake in accordance with the 1959 plan. Each concessionaire contract provided for scheduled completion dates for public recreational development and provided that all facilities be completed by the end of 1966. These development costs were to be recovered by charging the general public admission fees. In addition, the contracts with the seven concessionaires provided that the county receive 3 percent of the concessionaires' gross proceeds as a franchise fee. The county was to use these funds to finance the Lake Berryessa Park Commission. Any excess funds were to be used for public use development at the lake.

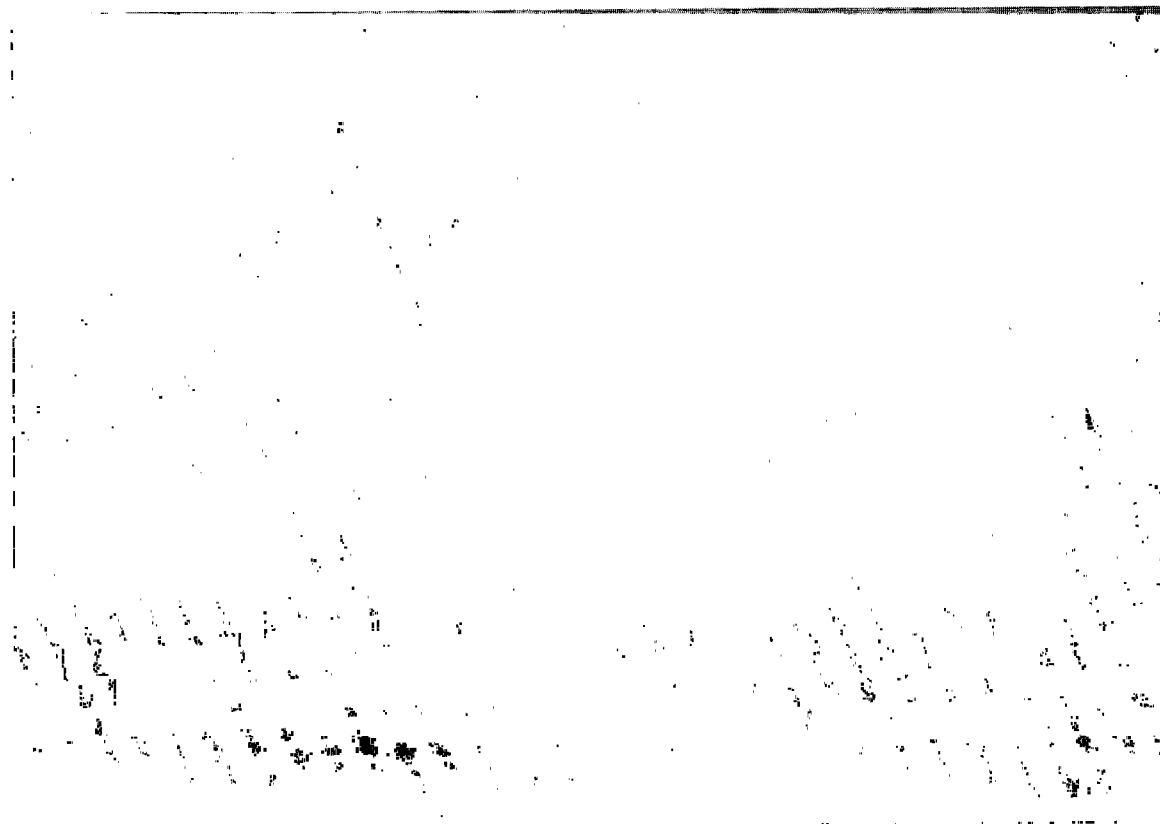
Our report compared the facilities developed by the seven concessionaires with those to be developed in accordance with the public use plan. Generally, the number of facilities in operation were less than those outlined in the public use plan.

Our report on Lake Berryessa discussed the following findings.

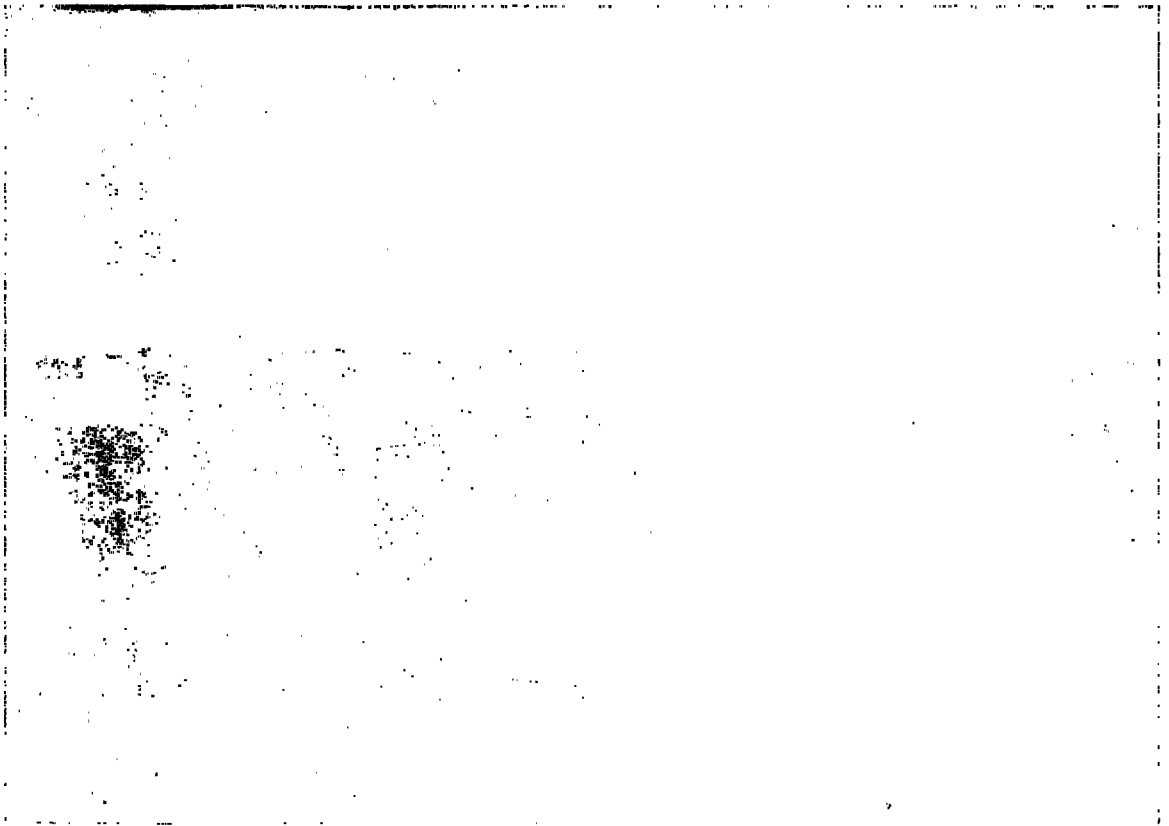
1. The public use plan provided for Napa County to develop one of the areas at the lake into a major public use area. It was to contain up to 50 boat-launching ramps, 4,000 picnic sites, 600 camping sites, and swimming areas. During a visit to this area, commonly known as Bums' Beach, we noted that there were no boat-launching ramps, no developed picnic sites, and no camping sites. The only improvements in the area were trash cans and temporary chemical toilets. The area was posted as a hazardous swimming area and had no improved swimming beaches. (See p. 8.) Visitors were required to vacate the area 1 hour after sundown. Bums' Beach was the only area at the lake available to the general public on a no-charge basis and was Napa County's contribution toward public recreational facilities.
2. The major development at all seven concessionaire areas had been the construction of mobile-home parks. About 1,700 private mobile homes are located in mobile-home parks on concessionaire-operated, Government-owned lands around Lake Berryessa. These parks occupy some of the most desirable areas along the lake shoreline. The mobile homes range in size from small travel trailers to 24- by 60-foot mobile homes having elaborate redwood decking, aluminum awnings, and private boat docks. (See p. 9.)



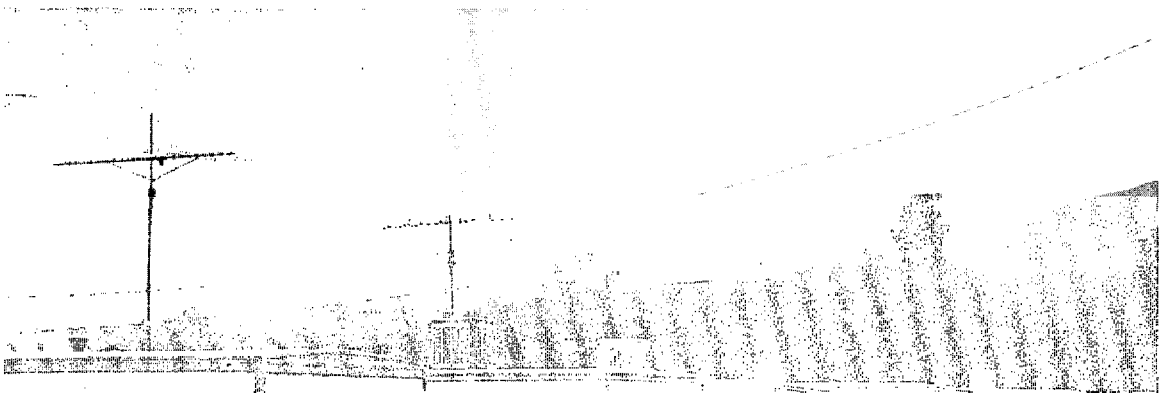
Sign at free public use area at Lake Berryessa warning of swimming hazard



Minimum public use facilities at free public use area at Lake Berryessa



Mobile-home development along shoreline of Lake Berryessa



Mobile-home park on Federal land at Lake Berryessa



In one area the homes are on concrete pier foundations and have the appearance of permanent lakeside cabins.

3. The concessionaires at Lake Berryessa rented most of the mobile-home spaces by the month or year and provided only a limited number of spaces for short-term users. In addition, although there were no signs restricting the public from using the beaches where the mobile-home parks were located, the proximity of the mobile homes to the water and the presence of private docks deterred public use of the area. Furthermore, although limited public day-use and camping facilities had been provided, these improvements did not satisfy the requirements of the earlier or the proposed revised public use plan.

Our followup review at Lake Berryessa, ending in October 1973, showed that conditions had not changed.

--Public use facilities were inadequate.

--Mobile homes had not been moved away from the shoreline.

--Federal funding had not been provided to construct needed public use facilities.

As part of our followup, we asked Bureau officials what had been done to correct the conditions discussed in our prior report on Lake Berryessa. They provided us with the following information.

In August 1972, NPS, at the Bureau's request, updated its 1959 public use plan for recreational development at Lake Berryessa. This plan provided for phasing out the mobile homes at Lake Berryessa to allow public access to the areas they dominated. It also noted that, instead of continuing the existing management agreement with Napa County, Lake Berryessa should be managed by NPS as a national recreation area or be managed by California. According to Bureau officials, NPS submitted its updated plan to the Bureau's Commissioner in September 1972. As of February 4, 1974, the plan was still being reviewed at the Bureau's central office in Washington, D.C.

Bureau officials advised us that they began working with Napa County in July 1972 on preparing standards for developing and managing recreation at the lake. They advised us that initially these standards were intended for all new construction and that, ultimately, existing facilities would be upgraded to meet these standards.

Bureau officials also advised us that considerable progress had been made in developing the new standards. They said that Napa County had adopted planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance standards for developing mobile-home parks, public boat docks, campgrounds, picnic areas, swimming beaches, and short-term dry boat storage. Moreover, they advised us that these

standards essentially agreed with the standards jointly developed by the Bureau and Napa County and reviewed by NPS.

Bureau officials further advised us that they were attempting to negotiate with Napa County to amend the existing agreement on an interim basis whereby the concessionaires would continue to operate the seven areas but all new construction would be governed by the new standards developed by the Bureau and Napa County. They said that under this proposed agreement the concessionaires would have to develop more day-use facilities within the concession areas before any more mobile-home space could be established.

We noted that the Bureau assigned a full-time recreation manager who is stationed at the lake. Bureau officials advised us that the manager would more effectively supervise the development and management of recreation activities at the lake.

- - - -

At the Subcommittee's request, we inquired into whether water quality was a problem at Lake Berryessa.

Officials of the Bureau's Mid-Pacific regional office advised us that they had been collecting water samples from three locations at Lake Berryessa on a monthly basis since 1968. The officials advised us that water quality was tested using drinking-water standards established in 1962 by the U.S. Public Health Service.

Information on the Bureau's monthly water quality tests at Lake Berryessa are routinely sent to the Environmental Protection Agency, Bethesda, Maryland. The Bureau officials advised us that the water quality tests have continued to show that the water is safe for drinking.

We also contacted the Chief, Water Quality Division, Central District, California Department of Water Resources, and the Senior Staff Chemist, Water Quality Surveillance and Analysis Division, Environmental Protection Agency, San Francisco, to inquire whether they were aware of any water quality problems at Lake Berryessa. Both officials advised us that they were not aware of any water quality problems at the lake.

We inquired at the Department of Water Science and Engineering, University of California at Davis, California, to determine whether the department had conducted water quality tests at Lake Berryessa and, if so, whether it had evidence of water quality problems at the lake. A professor in the Department of Water Science and Engineering said he was not aware of a water quality problem at Lake Berryessa.

#### Task force study of Lake Berryessa

In June 1973, Congressman Don H. Clausen of California proposed to Bureau and Napa County officials that a task force be established

to study the problems at Lake Berryessa. Shortly thereafter, the Lake Berryessa Recreation Management Task Force was established with representatives from the Bureau of Reclamation, Napa County, Lake Berryessa concessionaires, and Lake Berryessa Tenants Council.

In September 1973, the task force submitted "A Report on Recreation Management for Lake Berryessa, Napa County, California" to Interior. The task force recommended that (1) Interior immediately establish a definite policy concerning long-term-use facilities, such as mobile homes, and, on the basis of this policy, develop and implement a public use plan and management system for Lake Berryessa, and (2) until this recommendation was implemented, the task force continue to help resolve impasses encountered in administering the existing recreation management agreement and to provide further recommendations to the Bureau and Napa County.

#### Proposed legislation

During the 93d Congress, 1st session, S. 1740 was introduced to establish the Lake Berryessa National Recreational Area in California. According to the sponsors of this bill, the Federal Government would assume responsibility for the entire area and buy all existing utilities, roads, launching ramps, and structures from the concessionaires. Also, the Federal Government would assume responsibility for developing, operating, and maintaining adequate day-use facilities at the lake.

In addition, H. R. 11758, introduced in the 93d Congress, 1st session, would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide and maintain necessary day-use recreation facilities and to administer the Federal land and water areas at Lake Berryessa. Under this bill the day-use facilities would be developed, operated, and maintained by the Bureau of Reclamation. Neither of these bills was acted on during the 1st session of the 93d Congress.

## LIMITED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AT RESERVOIRS NOT UNDER MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

The Bureau has been unable to interest either Federal or non-Federal agencies in assuming responsibility for managing recreation areas at East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoirs in California. The limited recreation facilities at these reservoirs are being provided by private concessionaires, operating under temporary permits issued by the Bureau. The Bureau attempted to transfer the management of recreation areas at these reservoirs to non-Federal agencies; however, the agencies lack funds and cannot assume such responsibility. The reservoirs also are not located near or in Federal areas, so Federal agencies cannot assume responsibility for the reservoir recreation areas.

East Park Reservoir is in Colusa County and was completed in 1910. The project diverts and stores water from Stony Creek, Little Stony Creek, Squaw Creek, and Little Indian Creek to irrigate agricultural lands in the Orland Water District. Stony Gorge Reservoir, in Glenn County, was completed in 1928. The reservoir stores water diverted from Stony Creek to irrigate agricultural lands in the Orland Water District.

East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoirs had the following recreation facilities: a few picnic tables and trash cans, several toilets, two drinking-water outlets; and unpaved visitor parking areas and access and circulatory roads. There was a small boat-launching ramp at Stony Gorge but none at East Park. Camping was permitted at various locations on the Federal land surrounding both reservoirs, although there were no designated campsites.

To provide insight into the different types of recreational facilities, we compared the facilities developed by the private concessionaires at East Park and Stony Gorge Reservoirs with the recreation facilities developed by California at Folsom Lake, California, under its recreation management agreement with the Bureau. Folsom Lake had the following recreation facilities: flush toilet restrooms, showers, many picnic tables, trash cans, several drinking-water outlets, boat ramps, and paved visitor parking areas and access and circulatory roads. Photographs showing the contrasts are on pages 15 to 17.)

According to a 1969 public use plan prepared by NPS for East Park, the area could expect annual visitor-days to increase to 166,000 in 1974, as compared to 41,639 visitor-days reported in 1972. The NPS plan also estimated that \$432,000 would be required for adequate recreation facilities at East Park, as compared to existing facilities valued at \$4,985. Officials of the Bureau's Mid-Pacific regional office told us that a public use plan had not been prepared for Stony Gorge Reservoir.

The Bureau attempted to budget recreation development funds for East Park Reservoir. The Bureau's proposed budgets for fiscal

years 1973 and 1974 included \$65,000 for East Park recreation development. Bureau officials told us that the Office of Management and Budget disapproved the budget requests in both cases because it felt that specific legislation would be needed to spend funds on recreation facilities at East Park Reservoir. The Bureau did not request recreation funds for East Park Reservoir in its fiscal year 1975 budget.

At East Park and Stony Gorge, where the Bureau is unable to interest either Federal or non-Federal agencies in assuming responsibility for the recreation areas, the Bureau lacks the necessary authority to develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities.

#### BUREAU RESERVOIRS NOT UNDER RECREATION MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

##### Haystack Reservoir

Haystack Reservoir was completed in 1957 as an offstream addition to the Deschutes project in central Oregon and NPS prepared a public use plan in 1966. The North Unit Irrigation District (NUID) operates Haystack Reservoir for irrigation. However, a recreation management agreement assigning responsibility for the reservoir recreation areas to NUID has not been entered into.

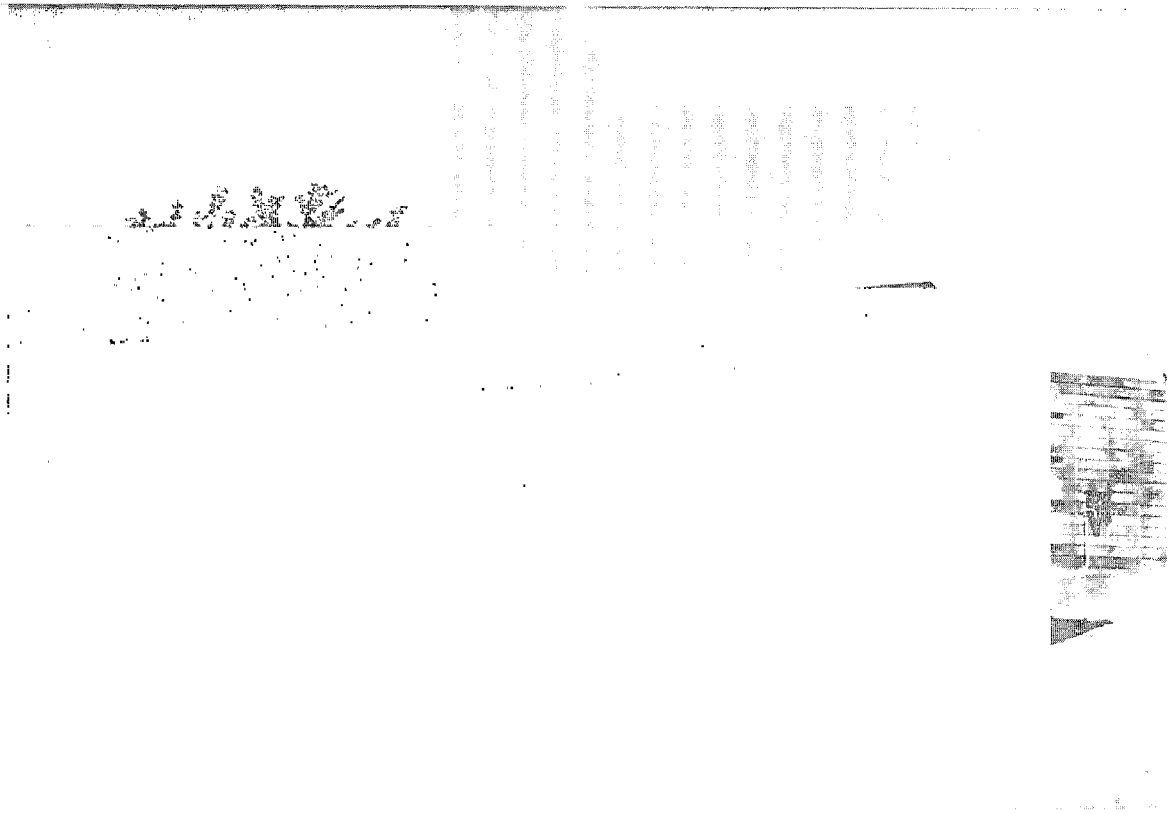
Records showed that the Bureau attempted during May 1961 and November, 1963 to establish a recreation management agreement with NUID.

The manager of NUID informed us that Haystack Reservoir had been used for recreation since 1957. He said that NUID entered into a lease agreement with a concessionaire in 1959 to relieve itself of the burden of managing reservoir recreational facilities. He also said that (1) the lease was entered into without the Bureau's approval and (2) members of the board of directors of NUID were aware that the Bureau had not authorized the lease and that, as such, it was not a legal document.

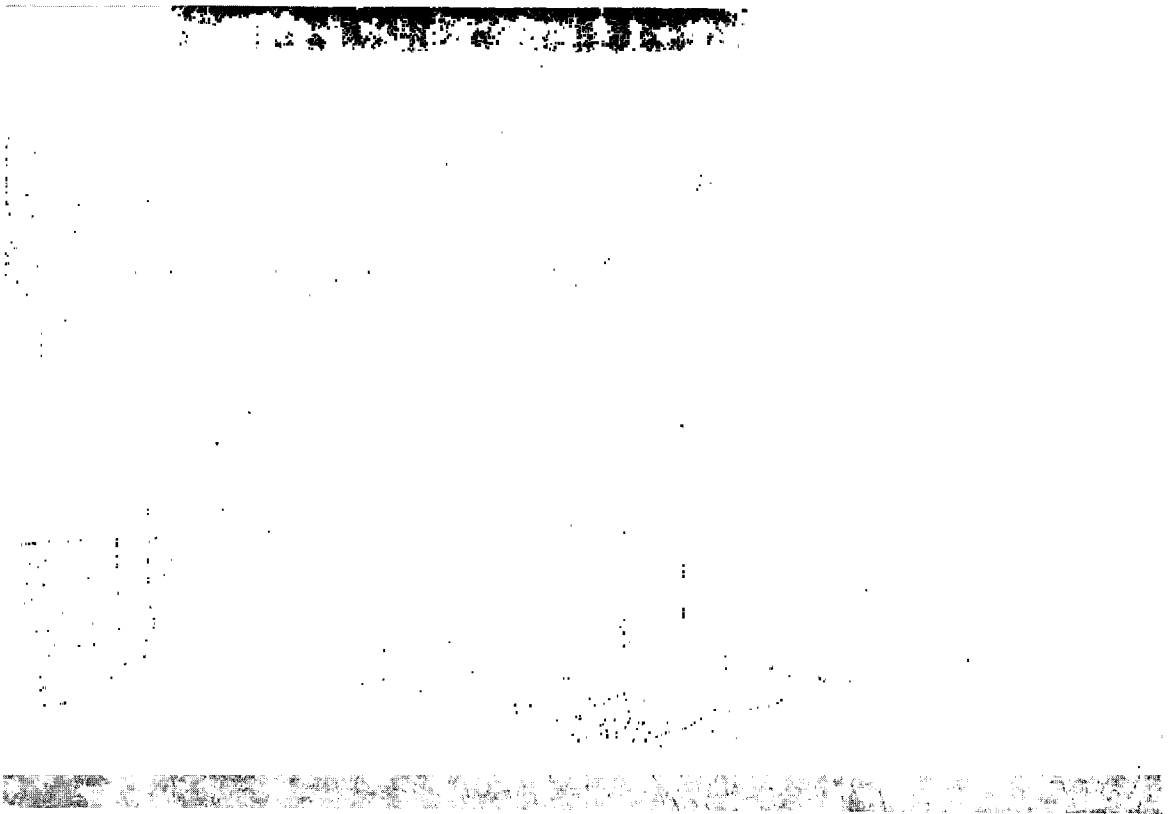
In a letter dated December 6, 1963, to the Regional Supervisor of Irrigation for the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region, the attorney for NUID informed the region that he was authorized by NUID to advise the region that the board of directors of NUID would rather not enter into an agreement for administering the land and recreation facilities at the reservoir. He stated also that:

"\* \* \* we understand that the present lease [concessionaire] is probably voidable and under the Oregon law it appears that the board of directors may not have authority to enter into such an agreement as now proposed."

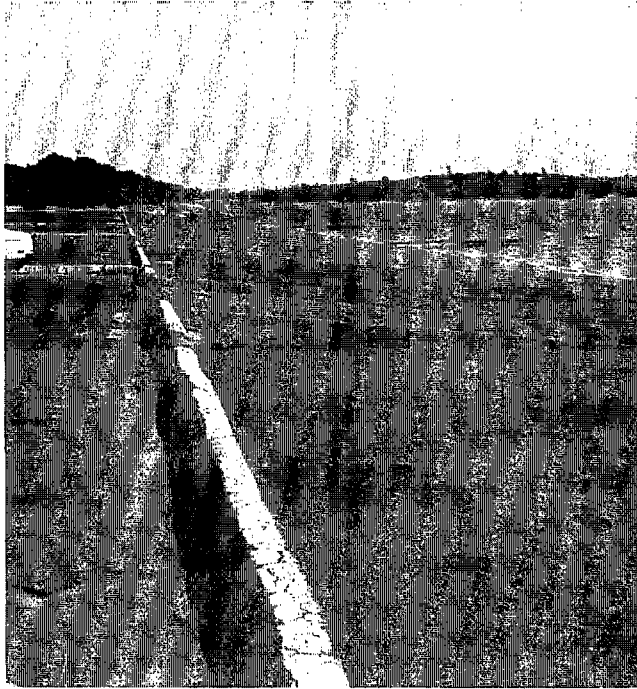
Subsequently, in a letter to the secretary-manager, NUID, dated May 7, 1964, the Assistant Regional Director of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region said NUID had entered into the concessionaire lease without the region's knowledge or approval.



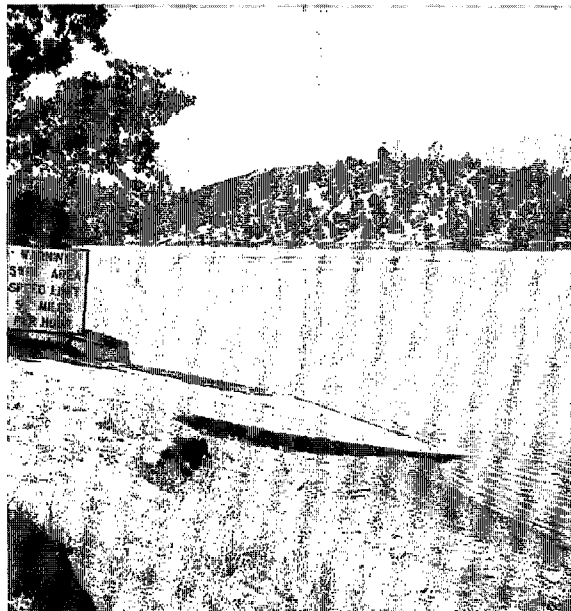
Public use facilities at Folsom Lake—flush toilet restrooms, showers, and change room facility



Public use facilities at East Park Reservoir—toilet



Public use facilities at Folsom Lake -- boat-launching area, docks, and paved parking area



Public use facilities at Stony Gorge Reservoir -- boat-launching area; parking area is unpaved

The Bureau and the district have not entered into a formal recreation management agreement. In a July 14, 1969, memorandum to the Regional Director of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region, the Chief, Lands Branch, Pacific Northwest region, stated that recreation management of Conconully Lake was not covered by an agreement with the Bureau. An official of the Okanogan Irrigation District informed us that, in his opinion, the irrigation repayment contract between the Bureau and the district provided the district with the authority to manage recreation facilities at both Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir.

We asked officials of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region what they planned to do regarding the lack of a formal recreation management agreement at Conconully Lake. The Assistant to the Regional Director, Pacific Northwest region, advised us in February 1974 that the region was aware of the situation at Conconully Lake and that it had the matter under consideration.



## DEVELOPMENT OF MOBILE HOMES AND CABINS AT BUREAU RESERVOIRS

Cabins and mobile homes are generally permitted to be developed on Bureau reservoir lands. We found two cases in which the development of cabins and/or mobile homes restricted public access to or public use of Bureau reservoirs.

Bureau officials in Washington, D.C., advised us that the Bureau's authority to allow cabins at its reservoirs is provided under 43 CFR 21 which states, in part, that:

"(d) 'Cabin site' means any area within a public recreation or conservation area whose occupancy and use is granted to an individual or group for a period of time by permit.

(e) 'Substantial improvement' means any building, structure, or other relatively permanent facility or improvement affixed to a cabin site, utilized for human occupancy or related purposes, and costing or worth \$1,000 or more. It does not include trailers or similar removable facilities."

Bureau officials advised us in March 1974 that 43 CFR 21 did not apply to mobile homes and that Interior did not have a formal policy on mobile homes at Bureau reservoirs. Interior's practice, however, was to permit the development of mobile homes at the reservoirs.

We noted several instances when NPS's public use plans provided for the development of mobile homes and/or cabins at Bureau reservoirs. An NPS official in Washington, D.C., advised us that NPS had generally allowed the development of mobile homes and cabins in preparing public use plans for Bureau reservoirs.

Public access to the reservoir at Conconully Lake was restricted because of cabin development. Such development appears to discourage full public use of the area; as discussed on page 6, similar conditions involving mobile homes existed at Lake Berryessa. At five other reservoirs covered by our review, we noted private cabin and/or mobile-home development; however, such development had not restricted public use of or access to the reservoirs. These matters are discussed below.

### Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir

Conconully Lake has approximately 1 mile of shoreline usable for recreation development. About 90 percent of this area was occupied by private cabins and a small concession operation. The remaining 10 percent consisted of a public boat-launching ramp and parking area provided by the Washington State Department of Game.

Most of the cabins were located near the shoreline. (See p. 21.) Small boat docks had been constructed at many of the cabin sites. It



Public use facilities at Folsom Lake -- picnic tables, trash cans, and fireplaces



Public use facilities at East Park Reservoir -- picnic tables, trash cans, and unpaved road

From time to time, the Forest Service has expressed an interest in administering the reservoir recreation areas. By letter dated May 29, 1969, signed jointly by the U.S. Regional Forester and the Bureau's Regional Director, Pacific Northwest region, NUID was informed that, before the Forest Service would assume management of recreation at the reservoir, it would be necessary to terminate the concessionaire operations at the reservoir. The Federal officials posed several alternatives for terminating the concessionaire operations.

1. Give the concessionaire a reasonable period to remove the improvements without compensation.
2. Offer the concessionaire compensation for his improvements when NUID is financially able to do so.
3. Terminate his contract if intolerable violations are experienced.
4. Do not renew his contract on the expiration date of October 1, 1979.

NUID responded in a letter dated February 4, 1970, to the Regional Director, Pacific Northwest region, that NUID's board of directors felt that it would prefer to let the agreement run until its expiration date of October 1979.

After inspecting the recreation facilities at Haystack Reservoir, an official of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region stated in a report dated May 2, 1973, that it was questionable whether the resort would meet minimum county and State sanitation codes and that the development showed a lack of adequate site planning and consideration of esthetic concerns.

We asked officials of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region what they planned to do regarding the unauthorized concessionaire lease at Haystack Reservoir. The Assistant to the Regional Director advised us in February 1974 that the region was aware of the problems at Haystack Reservoir and that it had the matter under consideration. Forest Service officials advised us in March 1974 that they were still interested in managing the recreation areas at Haystack Reservoir, provided the concessionaire operations were terminated.

It appears that the Bureau should proceed to terminate the concessionaire operations at the reservoir and have the Forest Service assume the responsibility for providing reservoir recreation facilities.

### Conconully Lake

Conconully Lake is in north-central Washington, and the reservoir was completed in 1921. The lake provides irrigation to agricultural lands in the Okanogan Irrigation District. NPS prepared a public use plan in 1947.

The Bureau and the district have not entered into a formal recreation management agreement. In a July 14, 1969, memorandum to the Regional Director of the Bureau's Pacific Northwest region, the Chief, Lands Branch, Pacific Northwest region, stated that recreation management of Conconully Lake was not covered by an agreement with the Bureau. An official of the Okanogan Irrigation District informed us that, in his opinion, the irrigation repayment contract between the Bureau and the district provided the district with the authority to manage recreation facilities at both Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir.

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### Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir

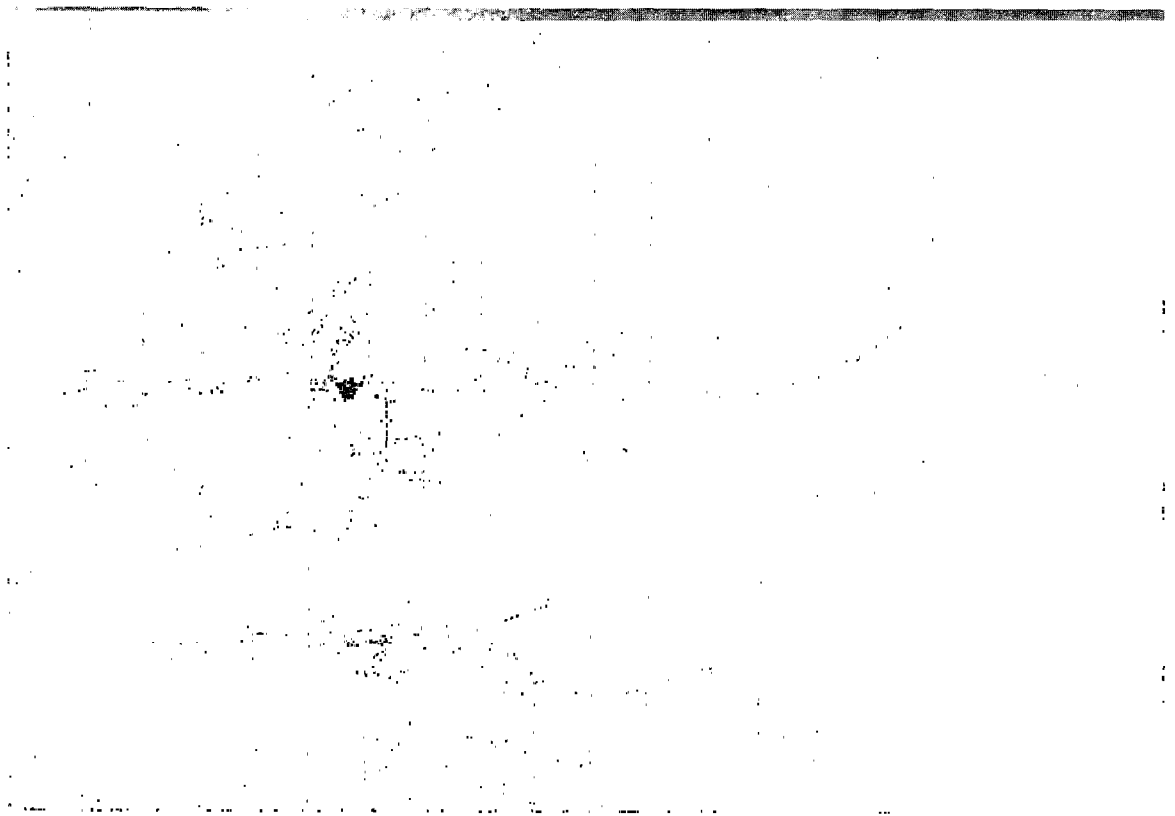
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Most of the cabins were located near the shoreline. (See p. 21.) Small boat docks had been constructed at many of the cabin sites. It

appeared to us that the existence of the cabins and boat docks tended to discourage the public from fully using such areas.

Conconully Reservoir is in north-central Washington and was completed in 1910. The reservoir provides irrigation to agricultural lands in the Okanogan Irrigation District.

The Washington State Park and Recreation Commission and the Okanogan Irrigation District manage recreation at Conconully Reservoir. A 1954 amendment to the 1952 management agreement between the Washington State Park and Recreation Commission and the Bureau authorized the district to lease cabin sites at the reservoir.



Private cabin development along shoreline of Conconully Lake

The cabins at Conconully Reservoir did not restrict public access to or use of the reservoir and adequate open space for public use was available at the reservoir.

Bureau files showed that in 1969 Bureau officials inspected the recreation development at both Conconully Lake and Conconully Reservoir and did not identify any significant problems regarding the recreation facilities at Conconully Reservoir. The officials did note, however, that the land area at Conconully Lake which was suitable for public use development was occupied by cabins.

## Owyhee Reservoir

The Owyhee Reservoir, on the border between southeast Oregon and southwest Idaho and completed in 1932, provides irrigation and flood control for the surrounding area. NPS prepared a public use plan in 1953.

Interior's Bureau of Land Management, the Oregon Highway Commission, and a private concessionaire all manage recreation facilities at Owyhee Reservoir. The reservoir's large land and water area and the difficult accessibility to many parts of the reservoir, according to Bureau officials, make it difficult for them to obtain a single managing agency willing to develop and administer all reservoir recreation facilities.

Cabin site leases at the reservoir were administered by the Bureau. Cabins were on land suitable for public use; however, they did not restrict public use of the reservoir land because they occupied relatively small parts of remote land at the reservoir.

In May 1973, Federal, State, and irrigation district officials inspected the recreation facilities at Owyhee Reservoir. They did not cite any major problems concerning reservoir recreation facilities.

## Cachuma Lake

Cachuma Lake Reservoir, located in Santa Barbara County, California, was completed in 1953. NPS had prepared a public use plan in 1947. The reservoir controls and impounds floodwaters of the Santa Ynez River and stores water for distribution to the Santa Barbara County Water Agency. In January 1953, the Bureau and the Park Department, Santa Barbara County, entered into a recreation management agreement.

Public use areas were available at the reservoir and a mobile-home park, located away from the shoreline, did not restrict public use or access to the reservoir. The Bureau approved initial development of this mobile-home park as a desired facility. The trailer spaces were occupied on a long-term basis, however, and only a few spaces were available to short-term users. An official of the managing agency advised us that the agency was aware of this situation and that the county had budgeted \$300,000 in revenue-sharing funds in its 1973-74 special revenue fund budget to acquire the concessionaire's investment in the mobile-home park. If funds are made available to purchase the park, the county plans to convert the park for use on a short-term basis-- 14 days or less.

The files showed that the Bureau had inspected the recreation facilities at Cachuma Lake Reservoir during June 1971. The files indicated no major problems with reservoir recreation facilities.

## Alcova Reservoir

Alcova Reservoir, on the North Platte River in Wyoming, was completed in 1938, and a powerplant was added by 1954. The reservoir produces electrical power and regulates the flow of the river for all downstream uses. With the exception of certain islands, administered by the Wyoming State Game and Fish Commission, the reservoir land and water areas have been administered by the Natrona County Parks Board, Wyoming, since 1957. Until July 1958, this was by verbal agreement between the Wyoming State Parks Commission and the board; from July 1958 through May 1966, by lease from the Wyoming State Parks Commission; and since May 1966, by a Memorandum of Understanding between the board and the Bureau.

According to the 1968 NPS public use plan for the reservoir, the quality of recreation was being lowered because of crowding and lack of facilities. The plan specified needed development of reservoir recreation facilities estimated to cost about \$1 million. Because of the large investment of funds required for the needed improvements, the public use plan was to serve as a guide for the orderly development of reservoir recreation facilities rather than as a rigid requirement.

Natrona County has made some of the recreational developments specified in the 1968 NPS public use plan. The Manager, Natrona County Parks Board, advised us that it would be impractical for the county to finance the plan in a short period. He said the plan was a long-range goal of the county.

A mobile-home park at Alcova Reservoir is located away from the shoreline and does not restrict public use of or access to the reservoir. Also, a cabin site subdivision, private boat club, and private ski club facilities are located in shoreline areas. Public use areas are available at the reservoir.

An official of the Bureau's Lower Missouri region told us that the region had advised the board that no further development of cabin sites would be approved.

The files showed that the Bureau had inspected the reservoir recreation facilities during August 1971. The files indicated no major problems with the facilities.

## Hugh Butler Lake

Hugh Butler Lake Reservoir is located on Red Willow Creek, in Frontier County, Nebraska, and was completed in 1962. The reservoir is designed to control flooding and to furnish a regulated water supply for irrigation purposes. Management of the fish and wildlife and recreation functions at the reservoir was transferred to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission in April 1964.



Approximately 140 acres had been set aside for private cabin sites. This represented about 3 percent of the total acreage around the reservoir. The NPS plan provided for 77 cabin sites; however, only 8 had been built at the time of our visit. Even though these lands were for private use, the public had complete use of the shoreline. Roads skirting the cabin sites allowed public access to the lake, and public use areas were available at the reservoir.

Bureau files showed that the reservoir recreation facilities had been inspected by officials from the Bureau and Nebraska during July 1972. The files indicated no major problems with the facilities.

#### OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE

Other items specified in the Subcommittee's request concerned vandalism, overcrowding, and concessionaire records.

##### Vandalism

Our examination of the Bureau's records and discussions with Bureau, State, and local officials did not indicate that vandalism was a major problem at the reservoirs included in our review.

##### Overcrowding

Our discussions with Bureau, State, and county officials did not disclose evidence that overcrowding was a significant problem at the reservoirs included in our review. Bureau and county officials indicated that four of the reservoirs experienced occasional overcrowding during peak use days, such as the Fourth of July and Labor Day. They said, however, that such overcrowding had not posed serious problems.

##### Concessionaire records

The Bureau generally does not review concessionaires' accounting records. Interior's Office of Survey and Review, Audit Operations, did, however, review the financial operations of the seven concessionaires operating the recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa in June 1971 at the request of the Commissioner of Reclamation. The audit reports noted that, on the basis of the concessionaires' accounting records, Bureau auditors could not express an opinion on the financial records or on the overall results of the concessionaires' operations at the lake.

The concessionaires' records are mainly the concern of the non-Federal agencies because, under the terms of the recreation management agreements, the non-Federal agencies assume full responsibility for developing, operating, and maintaining recreation facilities at Bureau reservoirs. Under these arrangements, the non-Federal agencies are permitted to enter into leases with concessionaires who develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities. Several of the concessionaire

leases we examined contained a provision requiring the concessionaire to keep accurate records so that the non-Federal agency or other authorized representatives could verify receipts and expenditures.

Because Federal agencies generally are not a party to the arrangements between the concessionaires and the non-Federal agencies and Federal funds are not involved, we did not attempt to determine the adequacy of the concessionaires' accounting records.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### CONCLUSIONS

For most of the reservoirs we reviewed, recreation facilities were adequate and public access to and use of the reservoirs had not been restricted by private development of cabins and/or mobile homes.

The Bureau, however, has not adequately controlled the development of public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa. As a result, public use of the lake has been restricted because concessionaires have developed extensive mobile-home parks along the shoreline, and public recreation facilities have not been provided in accordance with NPS's public use plan.

The Bureau should proceed to terminate the concessionaire operations at Haystack Reservoir and assign responsibility for reservoir recreation areas to the Forest Service, which has expressed an interest in providing adequate recreation facilities there. Further, the Bureau should take the necessary steps to establish a management agreement for the recreation areas at Conconully Lake and should establish a policy to insure that development of mobile-home sites does not restrict public access to and use of Bureau reservoirs.

When Federal or non-Federal agencies are either unwilling or unable to assume responsibility for recreation areas, the Bureau should have the authority to develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities.

Further, we believe that the Bureau should revise the definition of minimum basic facilities included in its instructions on land management to conform to the definition of minimum facilities as intended by the Federal Water Project Recreation Act for developing water resources projects.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

We recommend that the Secretary of the Interior:

- Obtain the statutory authority to develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities at Bureau reservoirs when other Federal or non-Federal agencies are either unwilling or unable to assume such responsibility or when management by a non-Federal agency is unsatisfactory.
- Proceed to terminate the concessionaire operations at Haystack Reservoir and assign such responsibilities to the Forest Service, which has expressed an interest in developing and operating recreation facilities at the reservoir.

- Require the Bureau to establish a management agreement for the recreation areas at Conconully Lake.
- Establish a policy on developing mobile-home parks at Bureau reservoirs to insure that such development does not restrict public access to and use of the reservoirs.
- Insure adequate development of public recreation facilities at Lake Berryessa, as provided for in the proposed revised public use plan.
- Require the Bureau to revise the definition of minimum basic facilities included in its instructions on land management to conform to the definition of minimum facilities intended under the Federal Water Project Recreation Act for developing water resources projects.

### AGENCY COMMENTS

We discussed this report with Bureau officials, who generally agreed with the facts presented and agreed that improvements were needed in administering the recreation facilities at some Bureau reservoirs.

After we finished our review, the Bureau provided us with a copy of a letter dated March 6, 1974, in which Interior's Commissioner of Reclamation advised the Chairman, Board of Supervisors of Napa County, that Interior had developed new policy guidelines for recreation at Lake Berryessa, California. The new policy guidelines state that:

"1. The policy on long-term use facilities at Lake Berryessa will be based upon the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43, Subtitle A, Part 21, (CFR 43, Part 21). Those regulations apply to cabin-site leases but will be revised to cover mobile homes. The basic policy, as expressed in the regulations, is that when the need to use a conservation and recreation area for general public recreation materializes, private uses such as cabin sites, etc., will be phased out.

"2. The Department of the Interior will seek legislative authority to construct up to \$3 million of short-term facilities at Lake Berryessa for general public use, provided that Napa County will agree to an amendment to its contract with the United States which would provide that:

"(a) Napa County will continue as the operation manager of recreation on Federal lands at Lake Berryessa.

"(b) Napa County will prepare, within 6 months, a new recreation management plan to be concurred in by the Department

of the Interior with the advice of the State of California. The plan will establish appropriate standards for existing mobile homesites and will provide that certain mobile homesites will be phased out as present leases expire or are modified, as necessary, to conform to the policies cited in the revised CFR 43, Part 21. New mobile homesites will be permitted only if consistent with the public-use policies cited in CFR 43, Part 21.

"(c) Napa County will administer the approved management plan with advice from the Department of the Interior.

"(d) Napa County will establish a system of user charges or fees (similar to those charged by the State of California for like facilities and/or services) which should be sufficient to cover operation and maintenance costs of the day-use facilities.

"There are many details that must be worked out through the combined efforts of the county and the Bureau of Reclamation to effectively implement the departmental policy. We are anxious to move ahead promptly on this matter so that the benefits of the policy guidelines can be realized at the earliest possible time."

## CHAPTER 5

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

We reviewed 15 Bureau reservoirs in California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska for which the Bureau had assigned the management of recreation facilities to non-Federal agencies, such as counties, States, and recreation and/or irrigation districts--organizations created under State law that were authorized to contract with the Bureau. We did not review the recreational areas which the Bureau had assigned to other Federal agencies. Appendix II lists the 15 reservoirs and managing agencies.

We did our work at the 15 reservoirs; at the Bureau's regional offices in Boise, Idaho; Denver, Colorado; and Sacramento, California; at the Bureau of Reclamation in Washington, D. C. ; and at non-Federal managing agencies--irrigation water districts and State and local governments. We examined pertinent legislation and Bureau policies, procedures, and practices for administering the recreation facilities. The physical characteristics of the recreation facilities at the 15 Bureau reservoirs are given in appendix III.

HENRY S. REUSS, WIS., CHAIRMAN  
 JOHN E. MOSS, CALIF.  
 DANTE B. FASCELL, FLA.  
 FLOYD V. HICKS, WASH.  
 JOHN CONYERS, JR., MICH.  
 BELLA S. ABZUG, N.Y.

GUY VANDER JAGT, MICH.  
 GILBERT GUDE, MD.  
 PAUL N. MCCLOSKEY, JR., CALIF.  
 SAM STEIGER, ARIZ.

NINETY-SECOND CONGRESS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
 OF THE  
 COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM B349-B  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

225-6427

December 29, 1972

Mr. Elmer B. Staats  
 Comptroller General of the United States  
 441 G Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Staats:

For many years, the Bureau of Reclamation has followed a policy of transferring the administration of recreation at reclamation projects to other Federal agencies, and to State and local governmental and non-governmental bodies. The Bureau, in an August 4, 1972, letter to us, commented on this policy as follows:

"It will be noted that recreation management at most areas has been transferred to other Federal and non-Federal agencies. The transfer of management responsibility has been accomplished through a formal management agreement for each area.

# # # #

"Reservoirs situated in national forests customarily have been transferred to the Forest Service for recreation management. Those of national significance such as Lake Mead have been transferred to the National Park Service. Those areas having substantial significance for migratory waterfowl management purposes have been transferred to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Others, constituting the bulk of recreation areas on Reclamation projects, have been transferred to non-Federal entities such as State park departments, State fish and game commissions, counties, water user organizations, and recreation districts.

"The policy of transferring recreation management responsibility to other agencies initially evolved out of necessity because of the absence of authority for the Bureau of Reclamation to undertake such responsibilities. The Congress has indicated that this was an acceptable policy, through approval of project plans in which such transfers were contemplated.

"The Congress did not embrace this as a general policy until enactment of the Federal Water Project Recreation Act on July 9, 1965. However, this policy is clearly stated in Section 1 of that act which in Part (c) provides that 'Project construction agencies shall encourage non-Federal public bodies to administer project land and water areas for recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement purposes and operate, maintain, and replace facilities provided for those purposes unless such areas or facilities are included or proposed for inclusion within a national recreation area, or are appropriate for administration by a Federal agency as a part of the national forest system, as a part of the public lands classified for retention for Federal ownership, or in connection with an authorized Federal program for the conservation and development of fish and wildlife'."

Enclosed for your information are tables identifying the Bureau's recreation areas, the administering agency, and the utilization of these areas, as of 1971.

The tables list some 243 separate recreation areas, with approximately 3,746,895 acres of land and 1,630,998 acres of water available for recreation and over 11,000 miles of shoreline. They are administered by the following principal types of managing agencies:

	<u>Number of areas</u>
State agencies .....	99
Local governmental agencies including counties, irrigation districts and water user agencies .....	52
Forest Service .....	44
Bureau of Reclamation .....	21
Bureau of Sport Fisheries & Wildlife .....	13
National Park Service .....	13

We are concerned about the adequacy of both the recreation management of these areas, and the Bureau's supervision or review of such management. We would, therefore, appreciate your agency thoroughly investigating the recreational management at these areas, including:

1. The adequacy of the agreements between the Bureau and the managing agency and the capability of the managing agency to manage the area;
2. The extent to which these agreements are periodically reviewed by the Bureau and, when appropriate, revised;



3. The adequacy of administration of these agreements by the Bureau, including the extent and adequacy of inspections of the recreation areas and associated facilities (if they are made) and whether adequate funds and personnel are available to the Bureau to administer the agreements effectively;

4. Whether the Bureau has required adequate planning at the recreational area to prevent overcrowding -- both from the standpoint of people and structural congestion -- and to prevent pollution and other environmental problems;

5. Whether concessionaires operating facilities at these areas maintain suitable accounting records, and whether the Bureau periodically views those records;

6. Whether applicable Federal laws and regulations are being complied with in the management of these areas;

7. Whether the land and water areas are adequately policed to prevent vandalism and accidents;

8. The adequacy of actions taken by the Bureau and those managing these areas to protect and preserve natural features and wildlife and other environmental values;

9. Whether public use of these Federal land and water areas is restricted (a) through shoreline development of cabins, mobile homes, and other facilities that are leased or transferred to private persons for long terms, or (b) through the failure of the Bureau or the managing agency to provide adequate access and other facilities to permit public use, or (c) through the charging of excessive fees, or (d) because of other reasons;

10. Whether sufficient seasonal-type, day use facilities for the general public are available; and

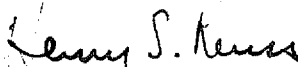
11. Whether present Federal laws provide the Bureau with sufficient flexibility in the choice of a managing agency and concessionaires for each area and in negotiating or renegotiating effective agreements.

If it may not be feasible to conduct this investigation in equal depth with respect to all of the Bureau's projects, we would hope that you would at least do so at several Bureau projects in several states, with particular emphasis on those managed by local governmental agencies or by water user or irrigation organizations. We would appreciate your findings and also your recommendations, if any, as to what improvements are needed in the agreements or in applicable Federal laws and regulations to protect the Federal interest and provide adequate recreational facilities for the public and protect environmental and natural values.

The GAO conducted an investigation of one of the Bureau's projects and, on February 22, 1972, issued a report (B-174172) entitled "Public Recreational Facilities Not Adequately Developed At Lake Beryessa, California -- A Bureau of Reclamation Project." The report made several recommendations and stated that the "GAO plans to review the actions taken or planned for the development of public recreational facilities" at Lake Beryessa. We would appreciate your conducting that "review" in connection with this investigation, and providing us your findings. We are particularly interested in learning what, if any, "corrective actions" the Bureau has taken or plans at the area, particularly since the Bureau, we understand, began some negotiations with the managing agency in September 1972.

Before finalizing your report, which we hope will be completed in the first session of the 93rd Congress, we would appreciate your staff discussing your proposed findings with our subcommittee. As has been our practice in requesting other GAO investigations, we also request that you discuss with the Bureau and other appropriate officials the contents of the report to insure adequacy of data, etc., but that you do not obtain written comments. This will be done by our subcommittee.

Sincerely,



HENRY S. REUSS  
Chairman  
Conservation and Natural Resources  
Subcommittee

Encls

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION RESERVOIRS

<u>Reservoir</u>	<u>Recreation managing agency</u>	<u>Date of management agreement</u>	<u>Term of agreement (years)</u>
Alcova, Wyo.	Natrona County Parks Board	May 19, 1966	25
Cachuma Lake, Calif.	Park Department, Santa Barbara County	Jan. 12, 1953	50
Conconully Lake, Wash.	Okanogan Irrigation District	(a)	
Conconully Reservoir, Wash.	Washington State Park and Recreation Commission and the Okanogan Irrigation District	Feb. 29, 1952	50
East Park, Calif.	Private concessionaire	(b)	1
Folsom Lake, Calif.	California Department of Parks and Recreation	Apr. 17, 1956	50
Haystack, Oreg.	North Unit Irrigation District	(a)	
Howard Prairie, Oreg.	Jackson County	Dec. 3, 1968	50
Hugh Butler Lake, Nebr.	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	Apr. 20, 1964	25
Lake Berryessa, Calif.	Napa County	Jan. 17, 1962	50
Lake Casitas, Calif.	Casitas Municipal Water District	Mar. 7, 1956	40
Lake Estes, Colo.	Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Recrea- tion District	Mar. 30, 1954	25
Owyhee, Oreg. (note c)	Private concessionaire	Feb. 11, 1954	50
	Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior	Oct. 20, 1971	(d)
	Oregon Highway Commission	Apr. 28, 1958	50
Potholes, Wash.	Washington State Game Department	July 10, 1952	50
Stony Gorge, Calif.	Private concessionaire	(b)	1

<sup>a</sup> Recreation facilities being managed by private concessionaire, although there is no management agreement between the Bureau and the district.

<sup>b</sup> Bureau issues 1-year renewable recreation management permits to private concessionaires for developing and managing recreation facilities.

<sup>c</sup> Recreation areas at Owyhee Reservoir are managed by three separate agencies.

<sup>d</sup> Management agreement provides that the management agreement may be amended, supplemented, or superseded upon mutual consent.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RECREATION FACILITIES

AT BUREAU OF RECLAMATION RESERVOIRS

<u>Reservoir</u>	<u>Land and Water data</u>					<u>Recreation facilities</u>	
	<u>Total acres</u>		<u>Acres available for recreation</u>		<u>Shoreline miles</u>	<u>Boat-launching ramps</u>	<u>Boat docks</u>
	<u>Land</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Land</u>	<u>Water</u>			
Alcova, Wyo.	3,372	2,500	3,237	2,500	15	X	X
Cachuma Lake, Calif.	6,448	3,250	300	3,250	42	X	X
Conconully Lake, Wash.	768	313	768	313	8	X	X
Conconully Reservoir, Wash.	200	450	200	450	5		
East Park, Calif.	1,630	1,820	600	1,820	25		X
Folsom Lake, Calif.	4,875	11,850	4,875	11,850	75	X	X
Haystack, Oreg.	271	215	271	215	5	X	X
Howard Prairie, Oreg.	1,946	1,960	1,946	1,960	14	X	X
Hugh Butler Lake, Nebr.	4,461	1,629	4,319	1,629	35	X	X
Lake Berryessa, Calif.	9,588	19,328	6,088	19,328	165	X	X
Lake Casitas, Calif.	4,097	2,710	1,800	2,710	31	X	X
Lake Estes, Colo.	123	185	118	185	4	X	X
Owyhee, Oreg.	20,851	13,083	20,851	13,083	150	X	X
Potholes, Wash.	14,500	23,000	14,500	23,000	35	X	X
Stony Gorge, Calif.	1,161	1,275	45	1,275	18	X	X

<u>Recreation facilities</u>								
<u>Cabins and/or mobile homes</u>	<u>Camp grounds</u>	<u>Parking</u>	<u>Picnic areas</u>	<u>Picnic tables</u>	<u>Drinking water</u>	<u>Toilets</u>	<u>Trailer spaces</u>	<u>Swimming beaches</u>
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			X	X	X	X		
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X		X	X	X	X	X		X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
		X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
			X	X	X	X	X	X