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My colleague and I were eating our lunch in our cafeteria when we overheard a blonde admin girl talking about the sunburn she got on her weekend drive to the beach. She drove down in an open-top convertible, but said she didn't think she'd get sunburned because the car was moving.

They Walk Among Us! And they vote!



The Lake Berryessa News

Your Information Gateway to Lake Berryessa and our Napa Back Roads!

March, 2016

**A Modest Proposal: Radical Restructuring
Ownership and Management of Lake Berryessa Should Be Transferred to Napa County**

By Peter Kilkus

**No Bids For Berryessa -
Why Did It Happen?**

Although lake water levels are low, outrage is high, and building, after the latest Bureau of Reclamation bid process fiasco. Reclamation announced that no successful bids were received in response to the latest Prospectus (the third failed bid process since 2006). Three California companies each bid on one area (Berryessa Point, Monticello Shores and Steele Canyon). All three bids were found to be "non-responsive."

According to Reclamation, if a bid was determined to be non-responsive to any one principal factor, it was determined to be non-responsive overall. The most important factor, and the one that probably led to a bid being declared non-responsive, was the financial issue.

Thousands of people who loved Lake Berryessa spent hundreds of thousands of dollars, donated thousands of hours of effort, sent thousands of letters to Reclamation, the Department of the Interior, and Congress. Some of us delivered more than 10,000 petition signatures to Washington supporting a common sense, fiscally responsible plan simply described as "Preserve the Best, Improve the Rest."

But no one in power listened, and we finally lost the "Battle for Berryessa" - resulting in the ghost lake we see now.

This major recreation destination, and its residential and business communities, have been severely damaged - resources important to the State of California and Napa County, both from a social and financial perspective.

If the government could pay millions to demolish the lake resorts why can't they pay millions to construct new basic infrastructure like launch ramps, power, water, sewer facilities?

Congressman Thompson's response to this crisis is printed on Page 2 of this

issue. His historical justification outlined in the first several paragraphs is contradicted by the facts, but follows the old saying, "History is always written by the winners."

See the Letter to the Editor by Bette Maron on Page 3 for a more accurate resident's view.

A Modest Proposal

The present situation at Lake Berryessa is reminiscent of the 1966 book title "Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up to Me". It's true of the lake levels that are so low that every foot of rise is welcomed with a cheer! It is true of the last ten years of federal government floundering where even a minor positive step seems like a beam of sunlight to the beleaguered residents of Eastern Napa County. But based on the latest results, there is little practical hope for progress.

Cong. Thompson's response is to propose a minor change - turn over management of the lake to the Bureau of Reclamation. But that is just trading one federal bureaucracy for another with no guarantee of any real progress.

Cong. Thompson could, instead, introduce legislation transferring Lake Berryessa from the federal government to the jurisdiction of Napa County. There is sufficient precedent for this action. Other Bureau of Reclamation sites have been transferred to local jurisdictions in the past.

It illustrative to see how the present situation evolved.

In 1958 Lake Berryessa was not officially open to the public, barbed wire was, in fact, strung to impede public access. Despite that, on August 31, 1958 there were 800 boats on the lake, with no launch ramps, sanitary or user facilities.

Reclamation, the State of California, the National Park Service, nor any other government agency had anticipated recreational use at Lake Berryessa, and neither were any of them interested in the recreation development, or

management, of the newly created lake.

During the first two years that the lake was forming, the water and land areas began to receive heavy public use, despite limited access from old existing roads, and despite the lack of sanitary facilities and garbage disposal facilities.

Since the United States had provided no funds for public use facilities at the lake, a plan was formulated for private concessioners to provide public use facilities with their own private funds at no cost to Napa County or to the US.

Napa County assumed management of the reservoir area on condition that County funds would not be spent for development, at least initially.

In 1958 Reclamation and Napa County entered into a Management Agreement whereby Napa County would administer and develop federally-owned lands at the lake.

All development at the lake was managed by Napa County from 1958 through 1974. Reclamation has managed in place of Napa County from 1975 to the present.

Because of the county's limited resources, and because a large majority of the public recreation use was by non-county residents, Napa County chose to rely on concessioners to provide most of the recreation services and facilities.

The concessioners entered into contracts in 1958 giving them the right to a reasonable profit and requiring concessioners to develop facilities to accommodate the recreational needs of the public. Development planning occurred from 1958-1962 with construction beginning after that. Revenue from these concessions was used by the County to fund the recreation management functions.

In line with this policy, the County planned to retain concessioners to provide not only the required public services but practically all recreation facilities as well. But the financial realities finally led to allowing long-term mobile home sites to be leased to

private families. Without the year-around mobile home revenue, facilities for the general public would never have been developed.

Napa County may offer an effective management option. Lake Berryessa could become more significant in the Napa County tourist and recreation industry. Napa could have greater benefit directly from the concessions in funding the services that the County is required to provide.

The County could also conceivably sell some of the lakefront property for controlled sustainable development and benfit from the sales proceeds and additional property tax revenue.

There is also no reason that Napa County could not successfully manage "smart contracts" with major recreation companies to provide additional revenue. Lake Berryessa has missed this opportunity because of federal bureaucratic restrictions.

The County has the practical experience, the planning and environmental departments, and the law enforcement and safety services that clearly give Napa the advantage over the federal government in protecting the resources of this important part of the county.

As Save Lake Berryessa 2016 organizers have stated on their Facebook page, "California's third largest lake and the prime outdoor recreation destination in the Bay Area has been mostly shut down for eight years because the federal government can't figure out how to offer a realistic contract - A SMART CONTRACT! We Need To Tell Them To Do It Right. Invest In Infrastructure, Do It Fast, And Let Us Use Our Lake Again!"

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning." Albert Einstein

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Lake Berryessa Map - Page 5

Congressman Mike Thompson **Responds to Lake Berryessa** **Failed Bid Results**

6 Bug Out Bag Basics
Staying in Touch.
by Gary Howes
Guns and Gunsmiths Editor

Just about everyone has a cellphone these days, and the ability to stay in touch with friends and family wherever you are is usually taken for granted. There is no denying that they have also been responsible for saving many lives by allowing stranded or injured hikers, hunters and motorists to get in touch with someone when trouble arises and they need help.

However, despite claims to the contrary by the companies that provide mobile services, there are many large areas of the country where mobile phones don't receive a signal leaving you out of touch and having to fend for yourself.

If you like to go hunting or camping anywhere off the beaten path where phones don't work, or just want to be able to keep in touch in case your phone fails, has a flat battery, or if you travel overseas and don't want to pay those huge roaming charges, you need to have a device that doesn't depend on mobile phone technology.

That's where PLBs, or Personal Locator Beacons can come into play. These are derived from the EPIRBs (Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon) that are commonly found on most commercial and some private boats and have saved many at sea from disaster. Utilizing various satellite systems instead of cell towers, these can provide some form of communication just about anywhere on the planet as long as you have a clear view of the sky.

PLBs come in various flavors, and in the US usually fall into one of three types. The first is the pure emergency-location type such as ResQLink which serve one function only. In a crisis all it takes is a



push of a button to send an SOS to local Search and Rescue people with your position,utilizing the government-owned COSPAS/SARSAT system The main advantage is cost—once you purchase the device there is no service plan needed to use it.

The next two devices are technically not PLBs, but instead are called SEND or Satellite Emergency Notification Devices. Both use privately owned satellite systems and require a monthly subscription. One popular model is SPOT which utilizes the Globalstar satellite network. It is a low power transmitter and coverage is not complete across the planet, but it is fairly inexpensive to buy (look for them on sites like Amazon.com to do a little comparison shopping) and requires a monthly subscription fee. The second popular brand is the Delorme InReach (inreachdelorme.com). Although a little more expensive than the SPOT products, it has more features, uses the Iridium world-wide satellite system, and has the ability to both send and receive short text messages and track your path as well as the usual SOS function. This 2-way communication ability not only lets you have a back-and-forth “conversation”, but in the case of a real emergency, allows the GEOS operator to let you know your message was received and to get further info from you regarding your problem. With the ResQLink and SPOT systems, you press the SOS button and hope that it went through.

The model I bought is the inReach SE. It doesn't have onscreen routing and waypoints like the more expensive Explorer model, but I didn't consider that essential for what I wanted. After I received the unit, I had it set up in less than 15 minutes with a subscription plan that allows me to change plans up or down as needed with no fee, as well as suspend the plan for any months that I don't intend to use it. The basic service I chose is less than \$15 per month—not too bad given the safety and peace of mind it brings.

Messages can be sent to a smartphone or email address. When setting up the inReach, I

was able to write 3 preset messages that can be sent to pre-determined recipients with just a couple of keystrokes such as ” Arrived safely. All is well.” as well as any number of common messages that can be sent by SMS or email to anyone. This can save a lot of typing time, a good thing given the somewhat clunky onscreen keyboard interface.

I recently tested the inReach during a trip away to Nevada to go shoot some auto machine guns and submachine guns with some friends, and was able to send a message to my better half telling her I was OK, and got a reply back from her within minutes. Of course the tracking info included with my message also let her know I was actually at the gun range and not losing my money at a casino, so use at your own risk!

The inReach also has an app for iPhones, iPads, and Android devices that can link the inReach to your phone or tablet via Bluetooth and turn it into a large screen mapping and messaging adjunct. Very nice!

Another good feature is the inclusion of a link to a map showing my location as a part of any message I send. You can also have the unit send regular tracking info that someone else can follow on their computer. It even can post your location to your favorite social media site, such as Facebook or Twitter.

I now know that I can head off into the woods and be assured that I can let my wife know I am OK (she thinks I'm getting old and feeble) or if anything bad did happen, help would soon be on the way. That sort of peace of mind is worth the money it costs and could potentially save my life one day.

Why California Reservoirs Dump Water in a Drought.

There's a rule in California that may seem bizarre in a drought-stricken state: in the winter, reservoirs aren't allowed to fill up completely. Even now, a handful of reservoirs are releasing water to maintain empty space.

The practice is due to a decades-old rule designed to protect public safety. If a major winter storm comes in, reservoirs need space to catch the runoff and prevent floods. But with advances in weather forecasting, some say this preemptive strategy is outdated. A new, “smart” flood control system could save water in years when Californians need it most.

At one of the state's major reservoirs

— Folsom Lake, east of Sacramento — the volume of water spilling from the dam has swollen eight-fold in the past few weeks, sending billions of gallons downstream, much of it into San Francisco Bay.

Early in February the reservoir reached a key threshold: 60 percent full, which is the highest water level allowed during the winter months, according to rules from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. Last year, most of the reservoir was a dry, dusty lakebed. What reservoir was left was confined to the old river channels.

Just an average-size winter storm can send huge volumes of water down the American River into Folsom Reservoir, boosting the lake by 10 percent or more. A major storm can produce much more.

Sitting 40 percent empty allows the reservoir to act as a buffer against floods, gulping the runoff without overflowing. In years where the upstream reservoirs are fuller, Folsom Reservoir is required to remain 60 percent empty.

The rules that govern water in the West were created in the 19th century. An alternative 21st century approach would allow water managers to use cutting-edge weather forecasts to gauge how much flood space they need. Instead of emptying out a reservoir preemptively, managers would allow the reservoir to stay fuller, keeping an eye on the forecast.

If a big storm appears, they'd have three, four, five days lead time, enough to release that extra water and get it out of the way safely. If storms don't appear, the water would be saved for later in the year.

The question is whether weather forecasts are precise enough - not just as to when a storm is coming, but how big it is. The Corps plans to decide whether to manage Folsom Reservoir using weather forecasts next year.

Changing current flood rules for how much the reservoir can hold in the winter would require an act of Congress. But if it works at Folsom it would be a model for reservoirs across the Western U.S.

One day I was walking down the beach with some friends when someone shouted, "Look at that dead bird!" A guy looked up at the sky and said..."Where?"

They walk among us! And they vote!

Letters to the Editor

The Lake Berryessa News welcomes your letters concerning Lake Berryesssa issues. Please keep your letters to 500 words or less.

To the Editor,

I, for one, believe in a strong federal government. Except it is now evident when decisions are made a continent away in Washington, DC by bureaucrats with no realistic conception of local needs and conditions, time and money is wasted to no avail.


The Bureau of Reclamations plans for Lake Berryessa had beautiful expectations of creating newly built, well managed facilities to entice more people to enjoy what Lake Berryessa offered when the resort concession contracts would expire and new bids would be sought. They held meetings for those of us who lived in the area to offer our ideas. They assured us the transition would be easy and smooth.

That was 10 years ago. Here is what the Steele Park Resort offered when I moved to the Berryessa Highlands. The marina near the boat launch ramps had a café for quick orders along with an adjacent grocery. Down by the docks there was a bait shop. When fishermen got back with their catch they had a place with running water to clean their fish. In fact, the camp sites had easy access to water; moreover, the campers had real rest rooms with included showers.

There were covered docks which could be rented so that boats could be kept in the water for the season, besides garages where other boats could be stored. Boats could also be rented for the day. And there even was a ski school.

A restaurant and bar overlooked the main body of the lake. People who lived in the park as well as those in the nearby neighborhood would frequent both eateries. The atmosphere at the main

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restaurant would remind one of what they saw in that old sitcom “Cheers.”

Among other amenities a popular ice cream parlor opened in the summers. This was a place both campers and those who lived in the neighborhood enjoyed.

That was 10 years ago, before everything was razed to the ground.

The BOR could've chosen to keep what was good and improve what needed improvement. However, the BOR didn't see the whole picture. Although extensive camping and day use access was already available, mobile home sites immediately adjacent to the lake could've been eliminated. There was plenty of remaining area a bit farther inland.

It was these mobile home owners who did odd jobs around the resort, helping to keep it clean and free of rubbish left by campers. More significantly, it was the rent they paid for the land they occupied that made the whole enterprise viable. They still brought money into the park when campers didn't show during the winter off season. They also spent their money in the park.

Ten years on from the plan published by the BOR here is what we now have:

Plenty of camp sites, but with no electrical hookups anywhere, and no convenient access to water. Instead of nice restrooms, they have portable outhouses. There isn't even any water to service the out of service fire hydrants, even though each camp site does have a fire pit. There are no amenities other than that fire pit and a picnic table by each site. There is a pre-existing launch ramp that had not been demolished as the BOR had done at the other resorts.

We have recently been informed that only three of the five resorts needing new concessionaires received bids, but none of the bids met BOR demands. We have no idea if those lacks were critical or just cosmetic. Apparently, they aren't allowed to make that public.

A neighbor asked me what I thought the BOR should try to include in any new contracts. Well... campers could use decent restrooms and convenient access to potable water. A snack bar would be nice, and

an ice cream parlor wonderful. Perhaps they could allow boat docks to be installed for those who'd like to keep their boats ready to use conveniently.

It would be a start that could be built upon. It would allow more possible concessionaires to be in a position to be able to bid for the BOR contracts. The potential bidders could suggest their own ideas for improvements which the BOR could take in consideration when awarding the final contract.

The dream that the BOR originally had never was realistic. Ten years on from that "seamless transition" they promised, nothing has been achieved except the ruining of the lake economy , the loss of local businesses and jobs for local residents, and even the well-being of any potential business a little down the road, because no one comes to support them when nothing is being offered in the resort parks.

Urge whoever might have the power to make the decisions that affect the future of Lake Berryessa not to give credence to those that insist the federal government is incapable of credible action. You might even consider investing BOR funds to rebuild some of the infrastructure you insisted be demolished and which led to 10 years of economic collapse around the lake.

Bette Maron, Lake Berryessa

Make The Old Capell Valley School Property A Community Park

Dear RPOSD Board members,

As president of the Lake Berryessa Chamber of Commerce, I urge the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District to make the old Capell Valley School property a regional community park. The property served as a local school for many years, but also as a

community playground, garden, and site for community sports teams and events. Hundreds of Napa County residents live within easy reach of the site. The property has excellent infrastructure to continue to serve the community as a regional park - infrastructure that would have little value for use as a private residential development. Although we wish that the RPOSD would manage the facility, a non-profit support group already exists which could assist.

As part of unincorporated Napa County, this site falls within your jurisdiction and objectives. This project would show local residents that they have some representation and support at the County level.

Let me point out that the RPOSD has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on other properties that have much less access for average Napa County residents, such as Moore Creek Park and the land-locked Berryessa Vista “park” accessible only by boat or kayak. Although Berryessa Vista is only a few miles from the Capell Valley School site, it remains essentially unused many years after its purchase.

The Capell Valley Community Park would be a real park for real people.

Respectfully, Peter Kilkus

Headlines from the Onion

GOP Maintains Solid Hold On Youth That Already Look Like Old Men

Report: Average Male 4,000% Less Effective In Fights Than They Imagine

Report: Many Companies Now Offering Women Permanent, Unpaid Maternity Leave

New Wearable Feedbags Let Americans Eat More, Move Less

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San Francisco, CA 94133
rwa@robwolfassoc.com

Susan Sedillo
707-287-2663
106 Clearwater Ct.
ssedillo@gmail.com

The Community Church
of Lake Berryessa
Pastor Bob Lee
707-252-4488 Cell
6008 Steele Canyon Rd.
terribob@lakeberryessa .net

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707-966-2246
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Lake Level Status as of 3/15/16

The lake level rose .68 feet (8.2 inches) yesterday to 408.95 feet - 31.05 feet below Glory Hole - about 3.1 feet to go to get to last year's "high" point of 412.07 feet. Rainfall was 0 inches yesterday keeping the total season's rainfall to 22.07 inches.

The lake’s capacity is now at 1,012,996 acre feet or 63.3% of total.

Lake level has increased 7.48 feet since 3/4/16 and rainfall has been 7.69 inches since 3/4/16.

Due to saturation and rapid runoff, the average rise in lake level for this 11 day period of storms has been 11.7 inches level rise per inch of rain.

Lake Berryessa Information Resources

Bureau of Reclamation Information Page:
www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/index.html



BOR Lake Berryessa Visitor Information:
www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/visitor-info.html



BOR Lake Berryessa Recreation Opportunities:
www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa/rec-opp.html



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www.markleycoveresort.com



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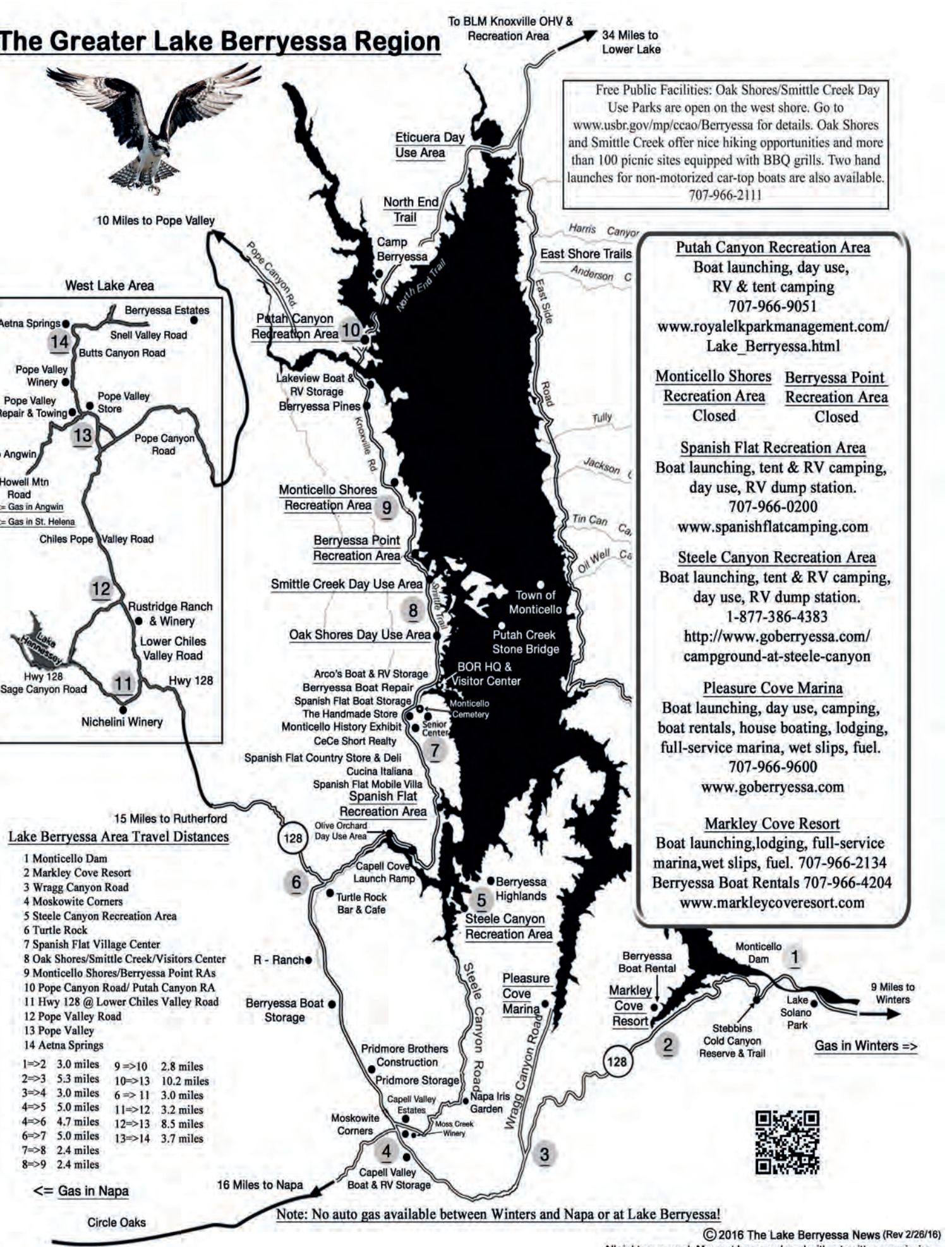
Spanish Flat Recreation Area:
www.spanishflatcamping.com



Steele Canyon Recreation Area:
www.goberryessa.com/campground-at-steele-canyon



Putah Canyon Recreation Area
www.royalelcparkmanagement.com/
Lake_Berryessa.html



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