

Lake Berryessa News - February 2, 2025

Rain is Back, But Is It Enough To Flow Over Glory Hole?

A special request from The Lake Berryessa News.

We are trying to increase the number of people on the mailing list for this regular newsletter. Please help us add new readers by forwarding the newsletter to friends and family and anyone else who has an interest in the news about Lake Berryessa. They can send their email address to: pkilkus@gmail.com. It will be kept confidential. I hope to increase the frequency of the newsletter to weekly, with special editions as needed.

Readers of this newsletter should also follow our website

(<https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/>)

and our Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064928340101>)

for the latest breaking news about Lake Berryessa.

Glory Hole Watch 2025 (2/2/25)

More than an inch of rain at Monticello Dam in the last day brought the total up to 13.69 inches. Lake level has risen about 3 inches to 437.4 feet, now only 2.6 feet below Glory Hole. It takes some time for the rain runoff to reach the lake.

It's certainly possible, even probable, that Glory Hole will overflow in February 2025. The latest light rains have saturated the soil enough so that the predicted rain this week will cause appreciable runoff to begin. At this lake level Lake Berryessa rises about 7 inches for every inch of rain - depending on the controlled output of the dam. Since the level is now officially at 437.4 feet, 2.6 feet below Glory Hole, about 5 inches of new rainfall should do the trick.

The Solano County Water Agency has been controlling the output at 100 cfs (cubic feet per second) or 198 A-F (acre feet per day) for two weeks. That means the inflow to the lake, even during this dry period, has been 100 cfs. The closer the lake gets to Glory Hole level (440 feet), the more they can control the level by changing the output - as they did last year.





Per the Solano County Water Agency "There is water being released from the dam year round to supply the cities and farmers of Solano County. Normally all the water is run through the power house and you would not see water being released from the jet valves. This time of year is when they are doing power house maintenance so the ordered flow is released through the jet valves while the power house is shut down."

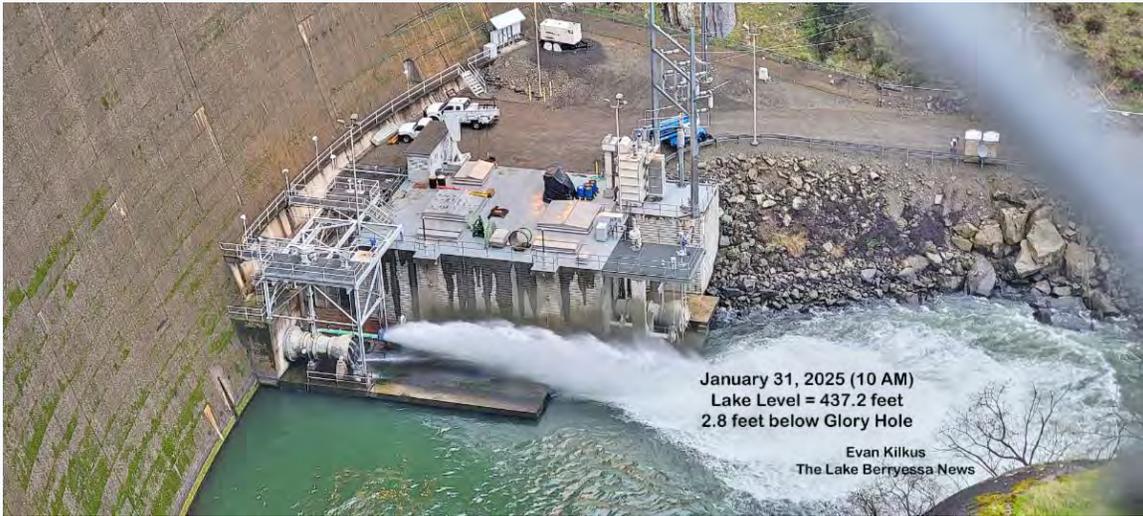
All the water released from the dam or through the powerhouse is being used for agriculture, water for domestic uses by 400,000 residents of Solano County, and maintaining minimum flows in Putah Creek. To ensure flow in the inter-dam reach, 45 cubic feet per second (CFS) is the minimum flow that always needs to be released from the dam. When the powerhouse is operating all the flow is diverted through the turbines and is output below the concrete pad which is below the water surface. There is no indication it is running unless you look very closely and notice the turbulence from under the pad.

The other valves that are occasionally used are for diverting flow around the powerhouse during maintenance. The photos below of the dam output on January 31, 2025 show water being released above the pad, which indicates that the system is undergoing internal maintenance.

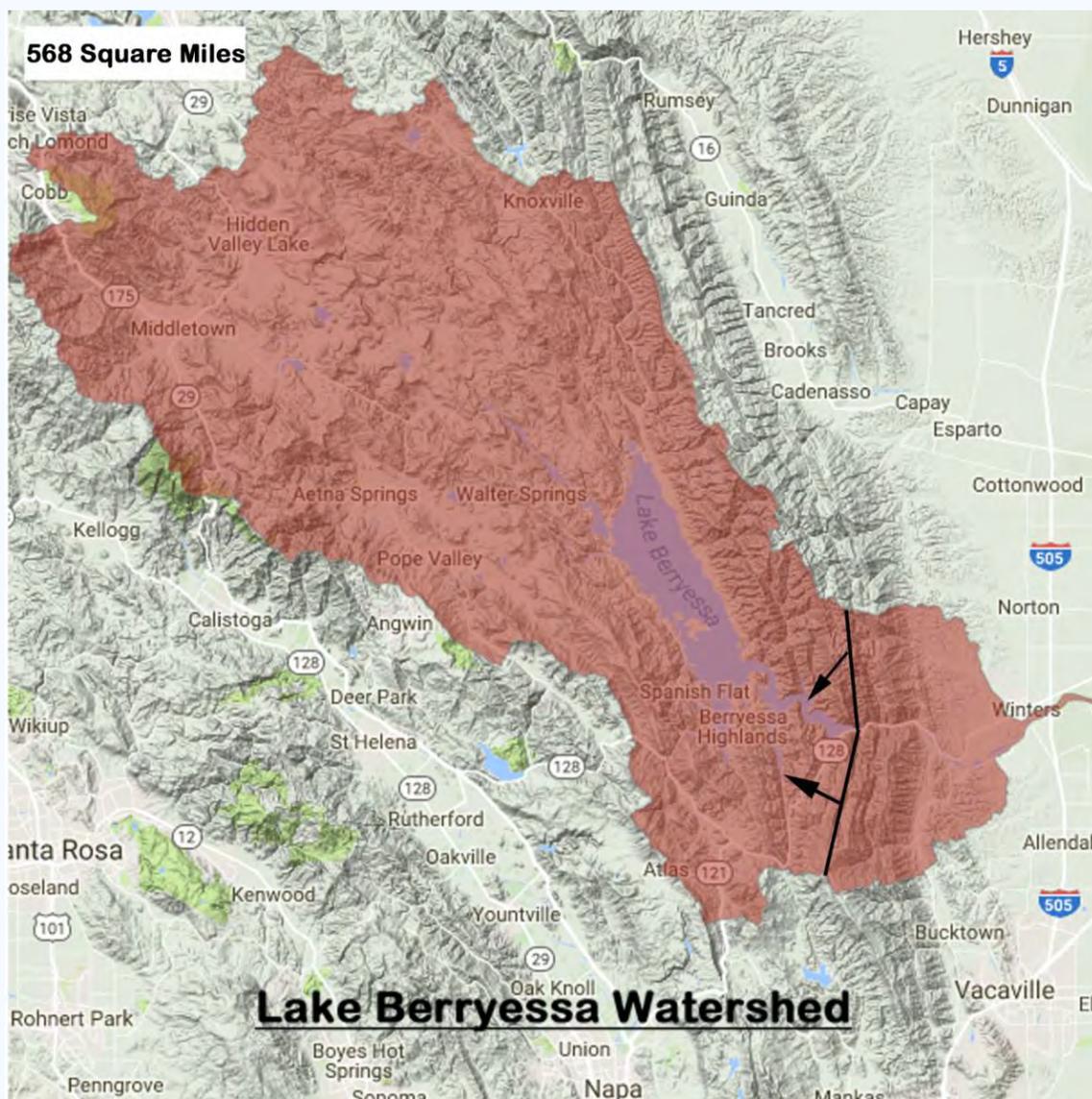
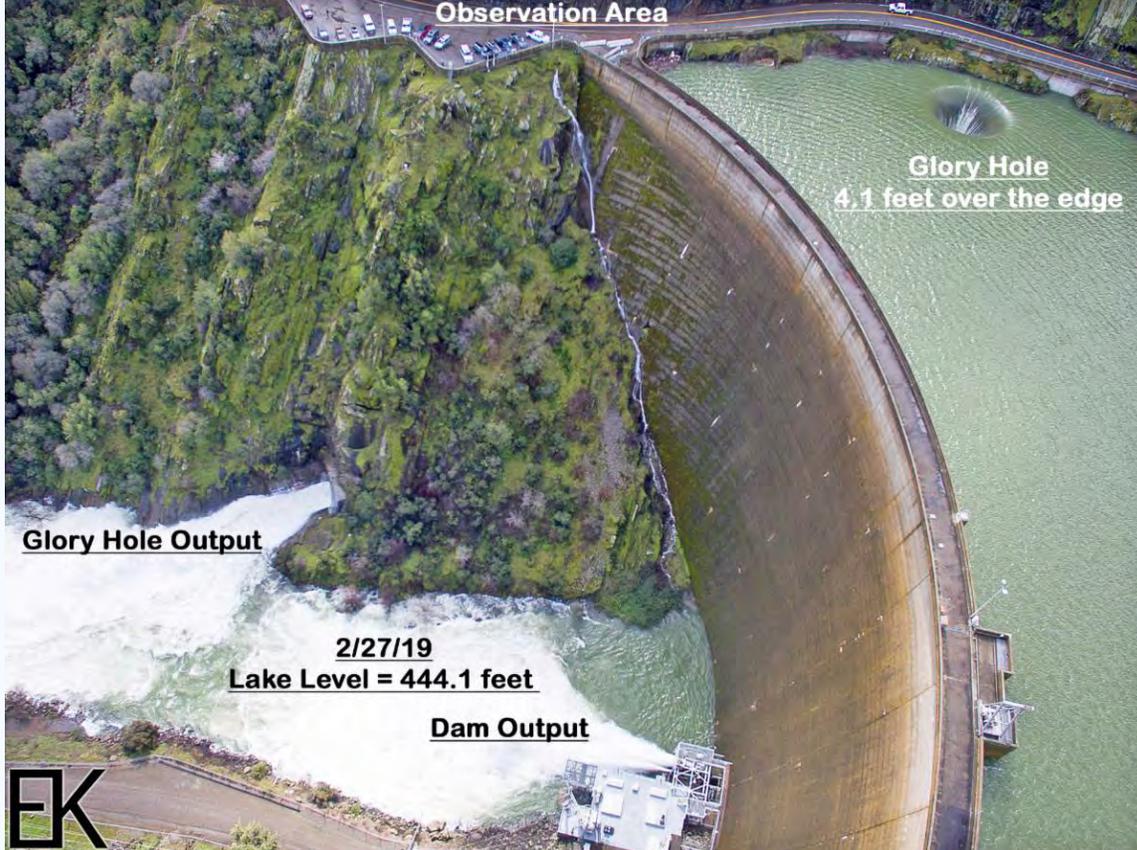
The powerhouse can operate at a maximum output of 700-750 CFS as long as this is never larger than the input to the lake. As inflow drops below this level, the powerhouse will also decrease the flow rate so that the lake either maintains its level or is slowly increasing.

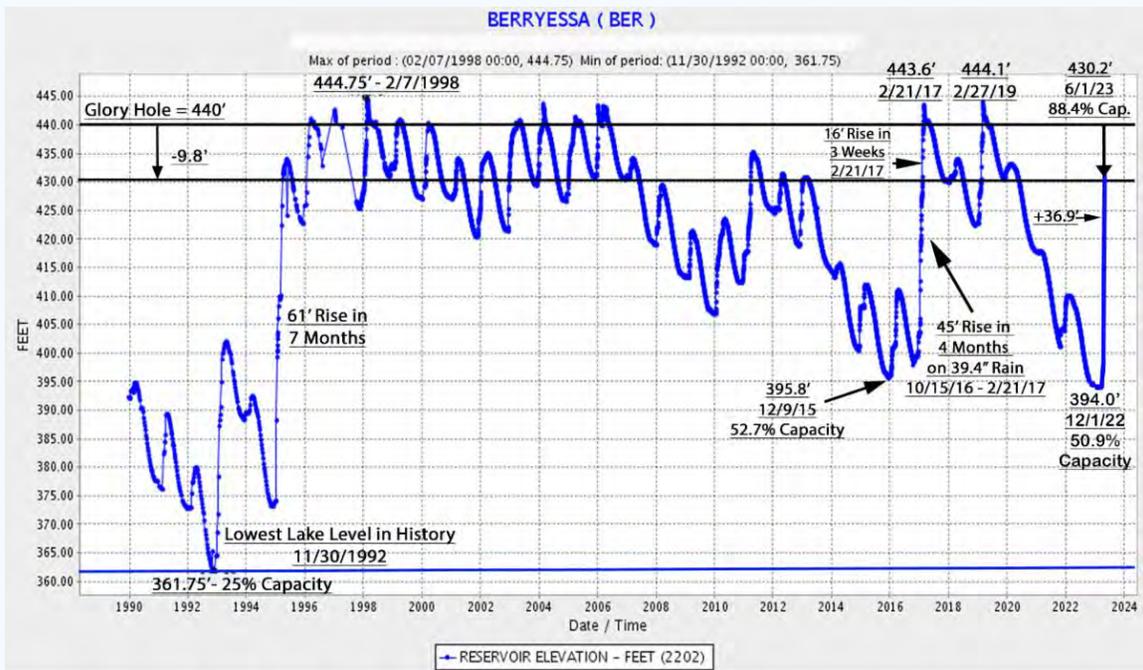
A full Lake Berryessa contains 1,551,292 AF (acre-feet) of water. At 50% capacity it contains about 750,000 AF. The relationship is not linear since the lake is essentially a V-shaped bowl. The difference is approximately 800,000 AF. So, at the present output rate of 198 AF/day output it would take about 4,040 days (11 years) to get down to 50% capacity. At the minimum required flow of 45 cfs (89 AF/day), it would take 8,989 days (25.2 years). At the highest summer maximum output of about 700 AF/day, it would take 1,143 days (3.1 years) to drop to half-full.

Conclusion: Lake Berryessa is a VERY BIG LAKE!









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We've all seen the stories of elderly ladies being scammed out of thousands of dollars because they thought their grandson was in trouble. Or other women scammed because they thought the voice of Kevin Costner that called them to tell them he loved them was real. I'm sure many men have also been scammed. Seems stupid to most people, right? But what about product reviews on social media?

FAKE FEEDBACK

HALELUYA HADERO. Associated Press, Jan 11, 2025

The internet is rife with bogus product reviews. Will AI make this worse?

The emergence of generative artificial intelligence tools that allow people to efficiently produce novel and detailed online reviews with almost no work has put merchants, service providers and consumers in uncharted territory, watchdog groups and researchers say.

Phony reviews have long plagued many popular consumer websites, such as Amazon and Yelp. They are typically traded on private social media groups between fake review brokers and businesses willing to pay. Sometimes, such reviews are initiated by businesses that offer customers incentives such as gift cards for positive feedback. But AI-infused text generation tools, popularized by OpenAI's ChatGPT, enable fraudsters to produce reviews faster and in greater volume, according to tech industry experts. The deceptive practice is illegal in the U.S.

Where are AI-generated reviews showing up?

Fake reviews are found across a wide range of industries, from e-commerce, lodging and restaurants, to services such as home repairs, medical care and piano lessons. The Transparency Company, a tech company and watchdog group that uses software to detect fake reviews, said it started to see AI-generated reviews show up in large numbers in mid-2023, and they since multiplied.

For a report released in December, The Transparency Company analyzed 73 million reviews in three sectors: home, legal and medical services. Nearly 14% of the reviews were likely fake, and the company expressed a "high degree of confidence" that 2.3 million reviews were partly or entirely AI-generated. In September, the Federal Trade Commission sued the company behind an AI writing tool and content generator called Rytr, accusing it of offering a service that could pollute the marketplace with fraudulent reviews.

The FTC, which banned the sale or purchase of fake reviews, said some of Rytr's subscribers used the tool to produce hundreds — perhaps thousands — of reviews for garage door repair companies, sellers of "replica" designer handbags and other businesses.

It's likely on prominent online sites, too

Max Spero, CEO of AI detection company Pangram Labs, said the software his company uses detected with certainty that some AI-generated appraisals posted on Amazon bubbled up to the top of review search results. Pangram Labs conducted detection for some prominent online sites, which Spero declined to name due to nondisclosure agreements. He said he evaluated Amazon and Yelp independently.

Many of the AI-generated comments on Yelp appeared to be posted by individuals who were trying to publish enough reviews to earn an "Elite" badge, which is intended to let users know they should trust the content, Spero said.

To be sure, just because a review is AI-generated doesn't necessarily mean it's fake. Some consumers might experiment with AI tools to generate content that reflects their genuine sentiments. Some non-native English speakers say they turn to AI to make sure they use accurate language in the reviews they write. "It can help with reviews (and) make it more informative if it comes out of good intentions," said Michigan State University

marketing professor Sherry He, who has researched fake reviews. She says tech platforms should focus on the behavioral patterns of bad actors, which prominent platforms already do, instead of discouraging legitimate users from turning to AI tools.

What companies are doing

Prominent companies are developing policies for how AI-generated content fits into their systems for removing phony or abusive reviews. Some already employ algorithms and investigative teams to detect and take down fake reviews but are giving users some flexibility to use AI.

Spokespeople for Amazon and Trustpilot, for example, said they would allow customers to post AI-assisted reviews as long as they reflect their genuine experience. Yelp took a more cautious approach, saying its guidelines require reviewers to write their own copy.

The FTC's rule banning fake reviews, which took effect in October, allows the agency to fine businesses and individuals who engage in the practice. Tech companies hosting such reviews are shielded from the penalty because they are not legally liable under U.S. law for the content that outsiders post on their platforms. Tech companies, including Amazon, Yelp and Google, sued fake review brokers they accuse of peddling counterfeit reviews on their sites.

Spotting fake AI-generated reviews

Consumers can try to spot fake reviews by watching out for a few possible warning signs, according to researchers. Overly enthusiastic or negative reviews are red flags. Jargon that repeats a product's full name or model number is another potential giveaway. When it comes to AI, research conducted by Balázs Kovács, a Yale professor of organization behavior, revealed that people can't tell the difference between AI-generated and human-written reviews.

However, there are some "AI tells" that online shoppers and service seekers should keep in mind. Pangram Labs says reviews written with AI are typically longer, highly structured and include "empty descriptors," such as generic phrases and attributes. The writing also tends to include clichés like "the first thing that struck me" and "game-changer."

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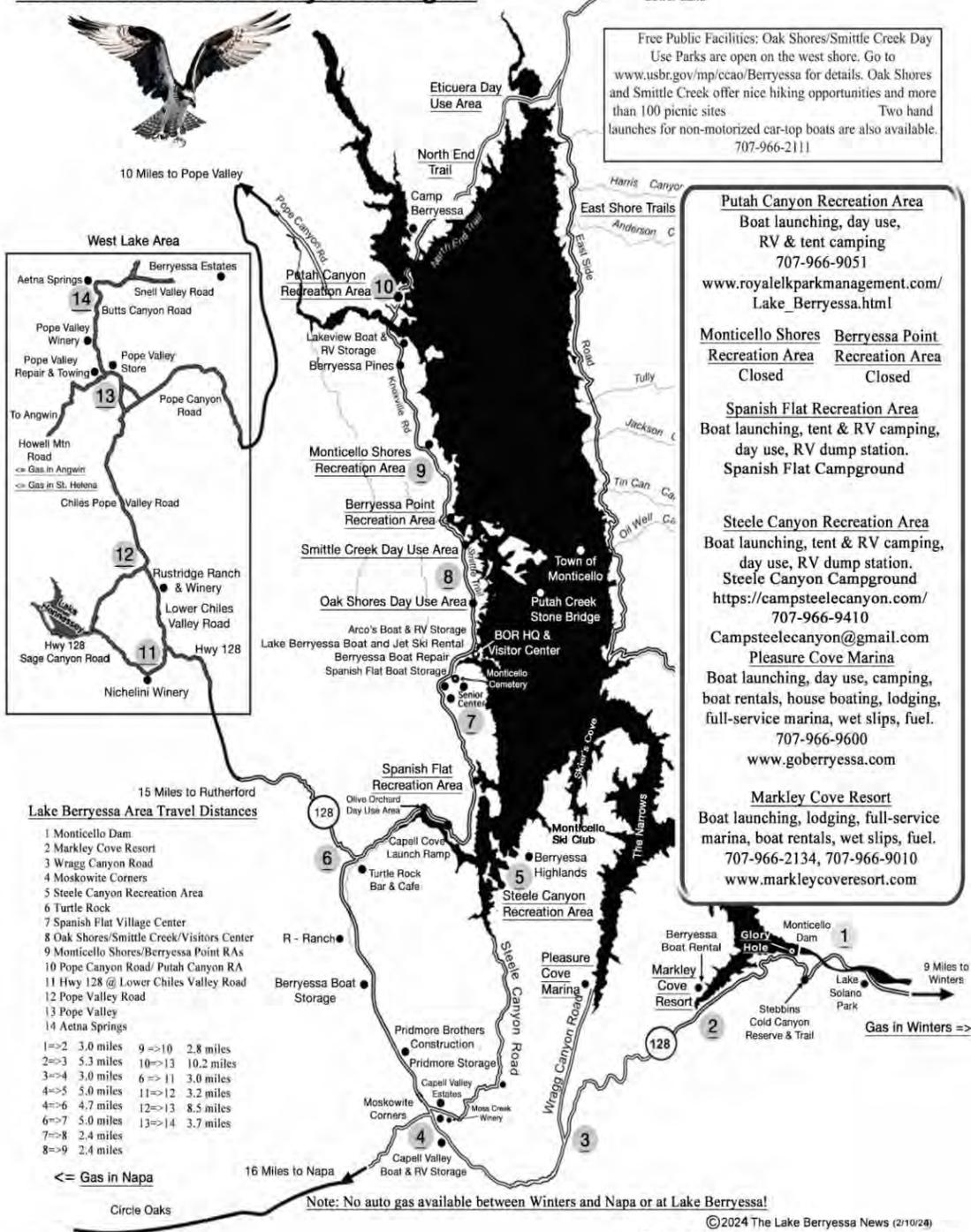
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The Greater Lake Berryessa Region

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Lake Berryessa News - February 5, 2025

Lake Berryessa Has Officially Spilled Over Glory Hole!

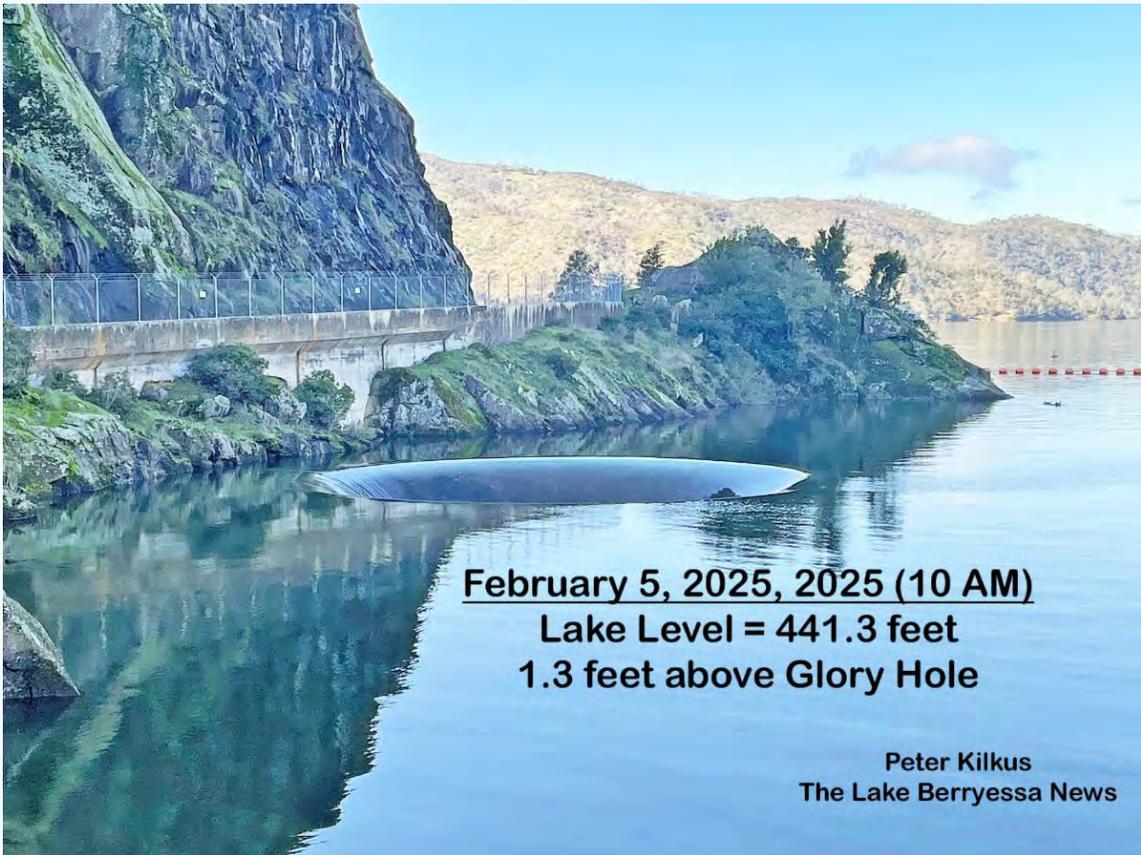
Solano County Water Agency

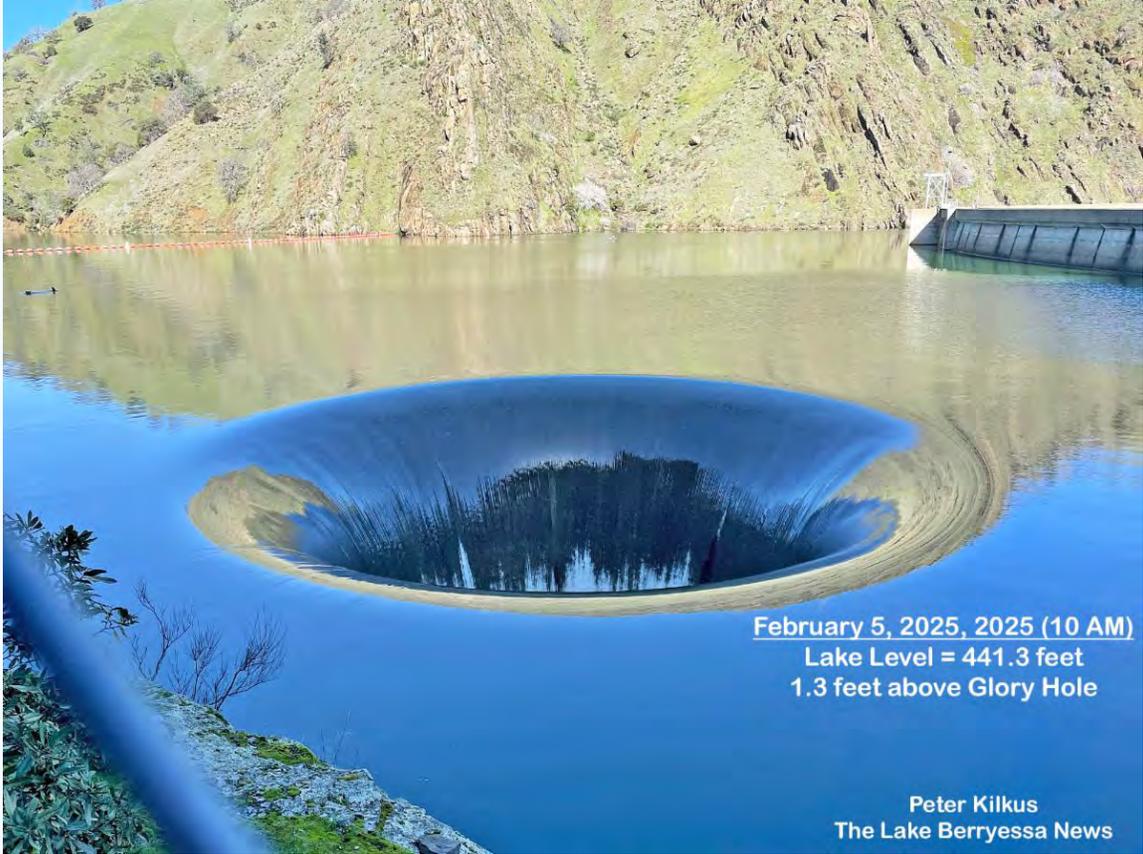
Glory Hole Spill Advisory

2/4/2025 6:15 PM - 440.05 feet

The Lake Berryessa Water Surface Elevation is now above 440 feet,
and the Glory Hole is spilling.

As of 10 AM on Wednesday, February 5, 2025 The lake level has reached 441.3 feet.
The question is no longer when it will spill, but how high will the lake get.





February 5, 2025, 2025 (10 AM)
Lake Level = 441.3 feet
1.3 feet above Glory Hole

Peter Kilkus
The Lake Berryessa News



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Lake Level = 441.3 feet
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Steele Canyon Campground Launch Ramp
February 5, 2025, 2025 (10 AM)
Lake Level = 441.3 feet
1.3 feet above Glory Hole

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Steele Canyon Campground View
February 5, 2025, 2025 (10 AM)
Lake Level = 441.3 feet
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Steele Canyon Campground View
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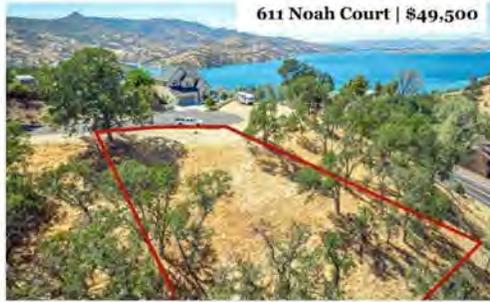
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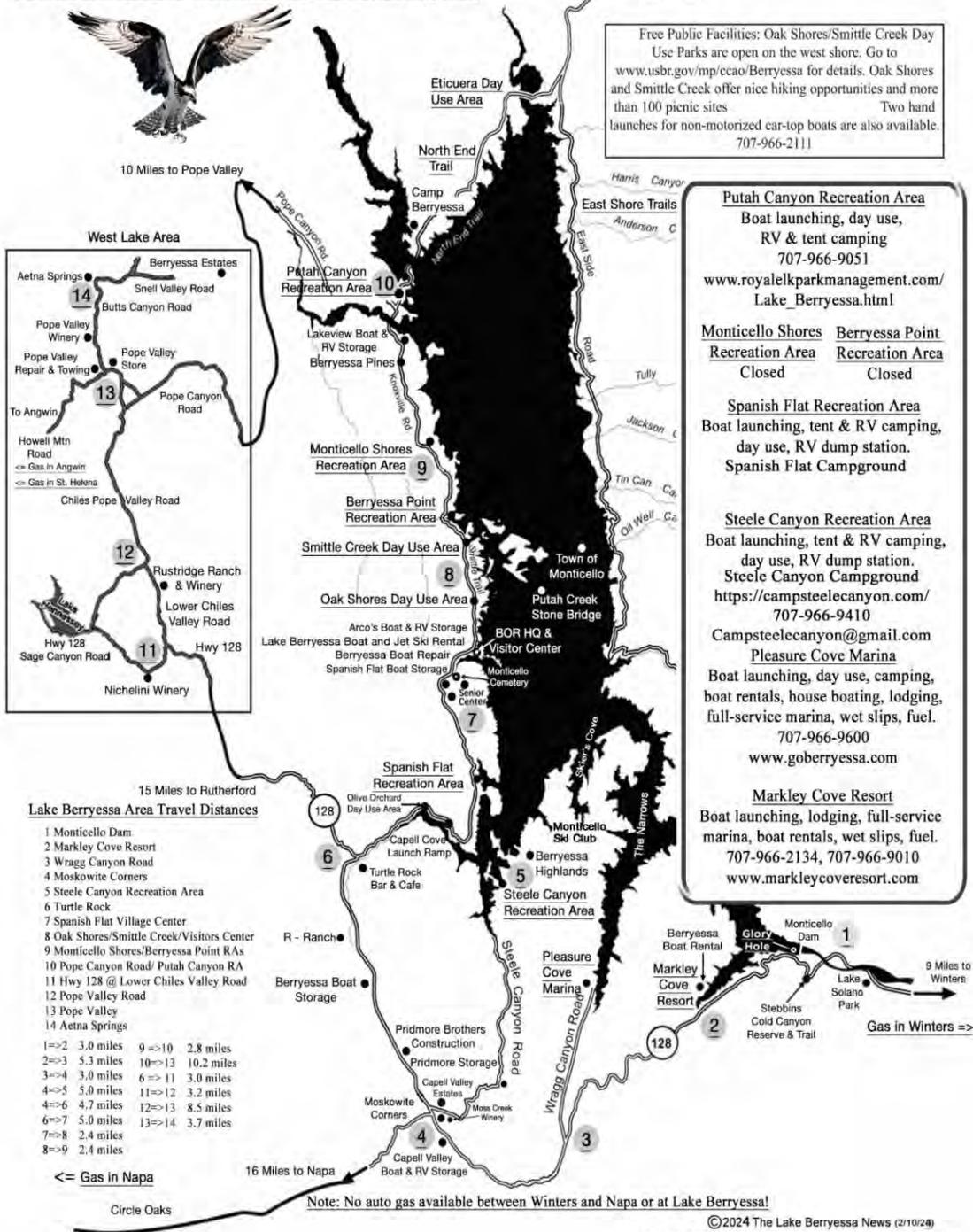
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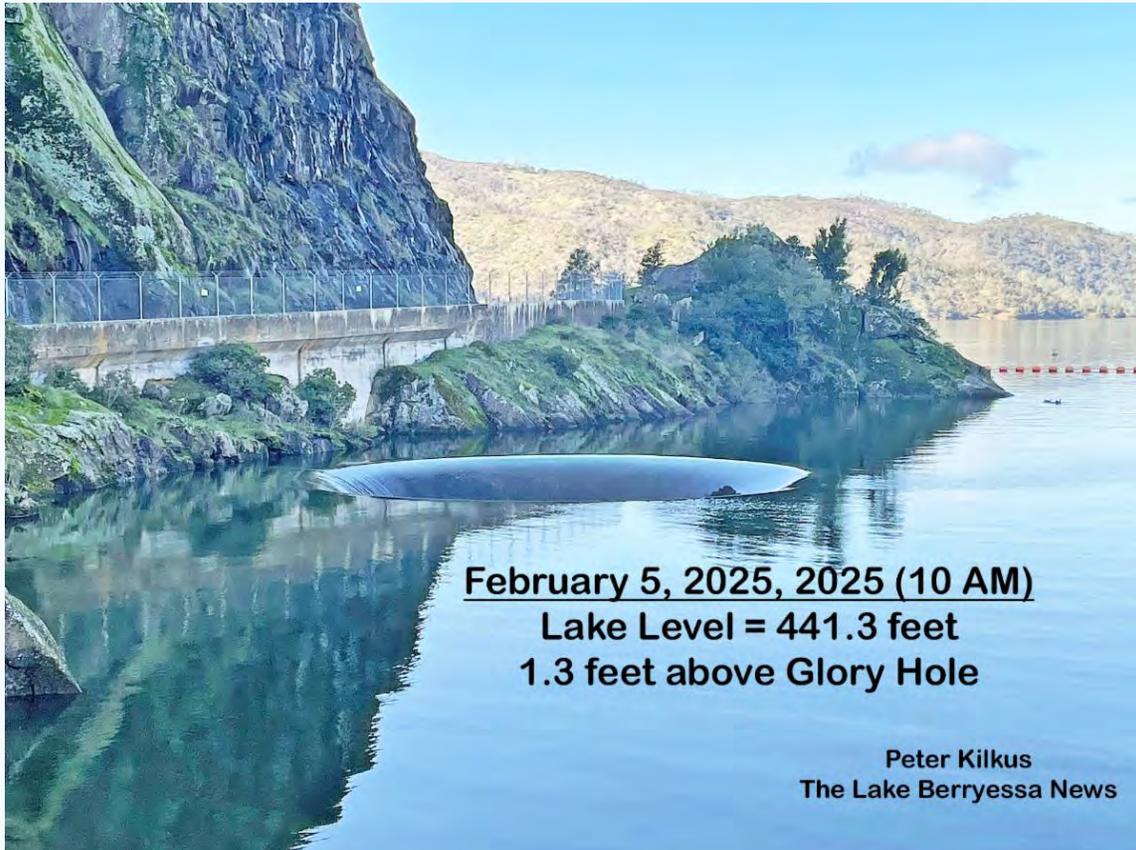


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Lake Berryessa News - February 9, 2025

Glory Hole Watch 2025 (2/9/25)

The Lake Berryessa water level has started to stabilize at 442.5 feet, 2.5 feet above Glory Hole. Glory Hole is flowing at an estimate 3,068 cfs and the output from the dam is very high at 1,310 cfs. Without significant new rainfall, the lake level will begin to fall - depending on how closely the dam engineers control the outputs. The latest report from the Solano Irrigation District began to include the spill through Glory Hole described below. They have also increased the release of water from the dam through all of the normal outlets.





Do Other Glory Holes Exist?

There are many morning glory spillways around the world. The closest to Lake Berryessa is the one at Whiskeytown Lake near Redding. The photo below shows Whiskeytown Lake's Glory Hole overflowing last year. The latest Bureau of Reclamation press release reports that it has already spilled this year.



Whiskeytown Lake
February 27, 2024

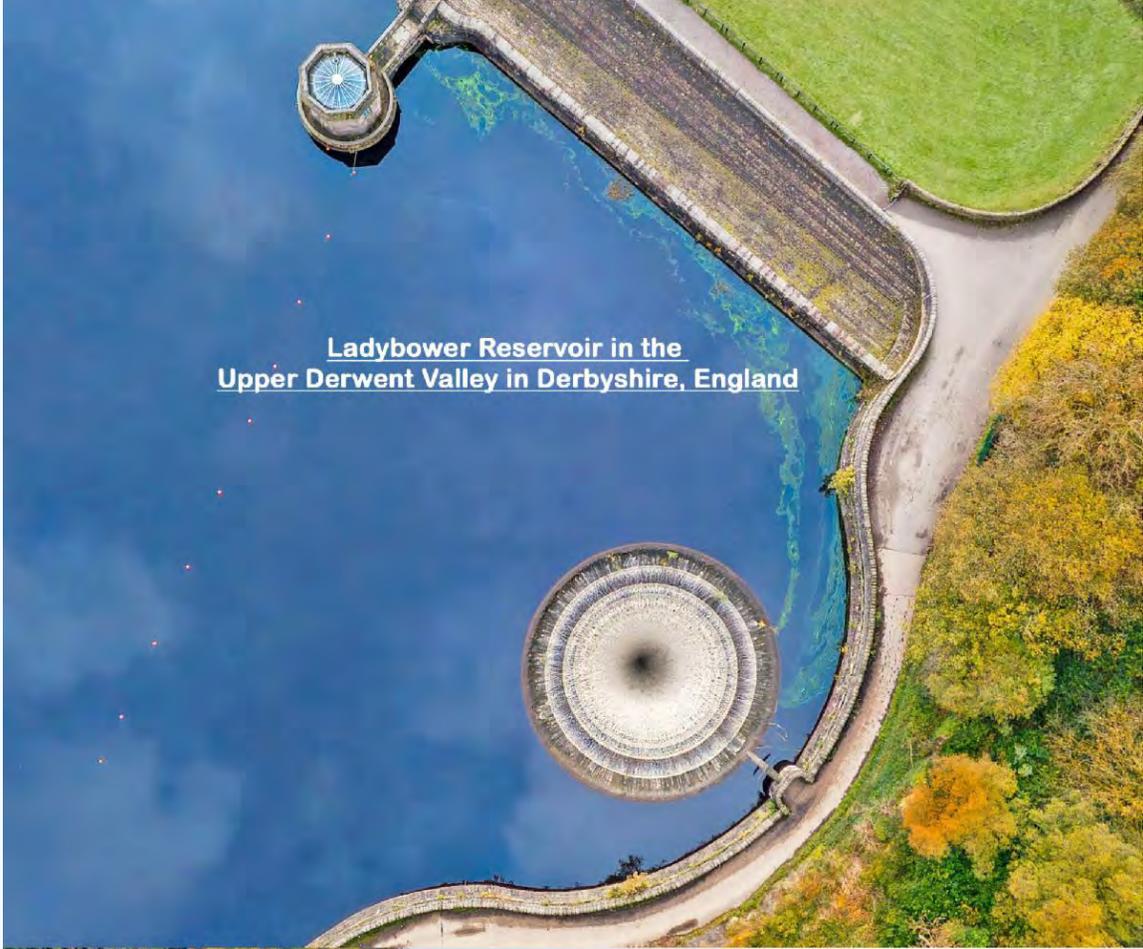
Below are photos of several other Glory hole-type spillways in other countries, including an odd, star-shaped version.



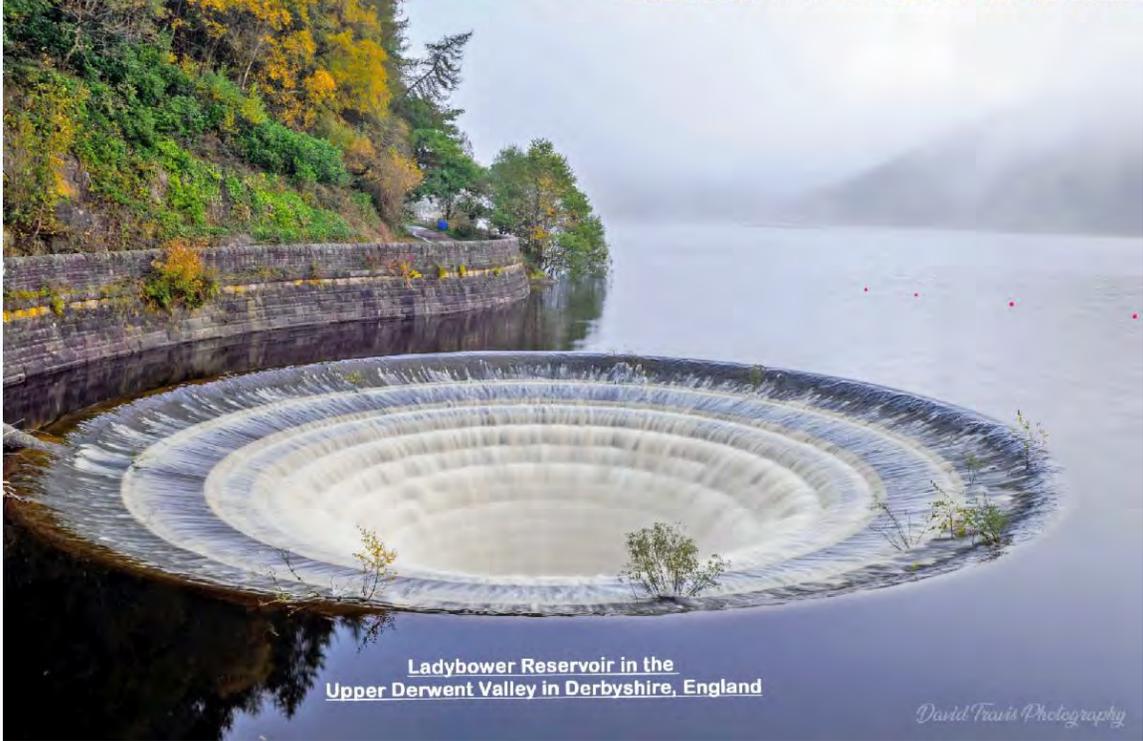
Pontsticill Reservoir
South Wales, United Kingdom



Aerial View of Jatiluhur,
the Largest Dam in Indonesia.

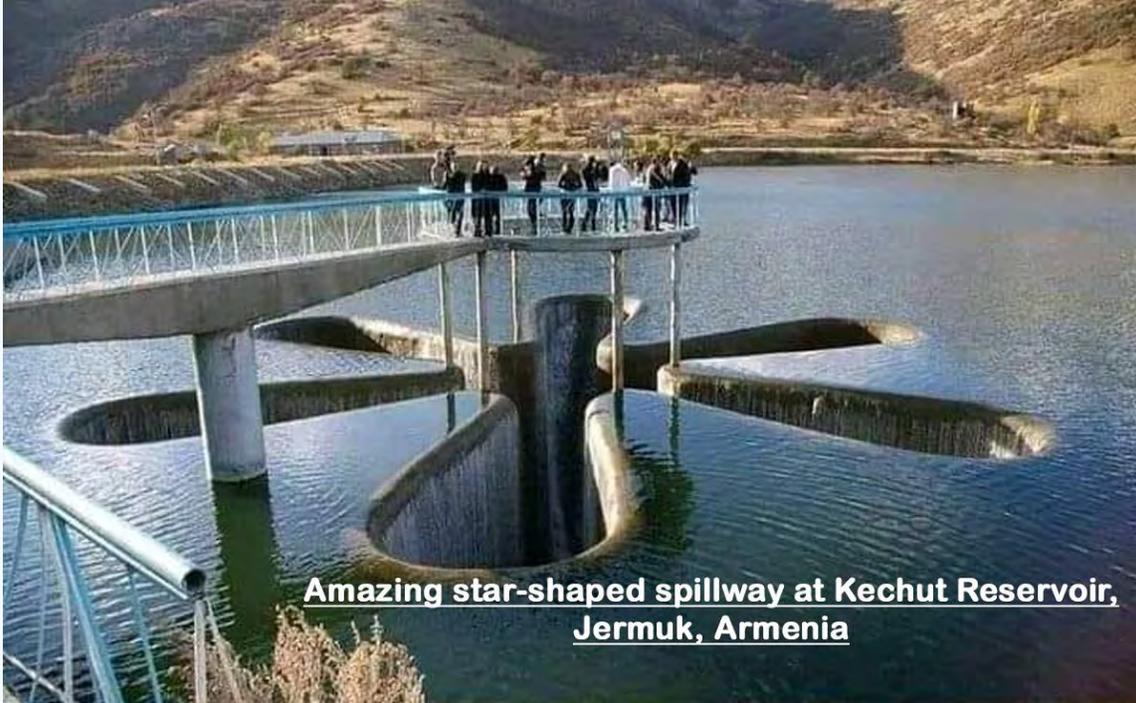


Ladybower Reservoir in the
Upper Derwent Valley in Derbyshire, England



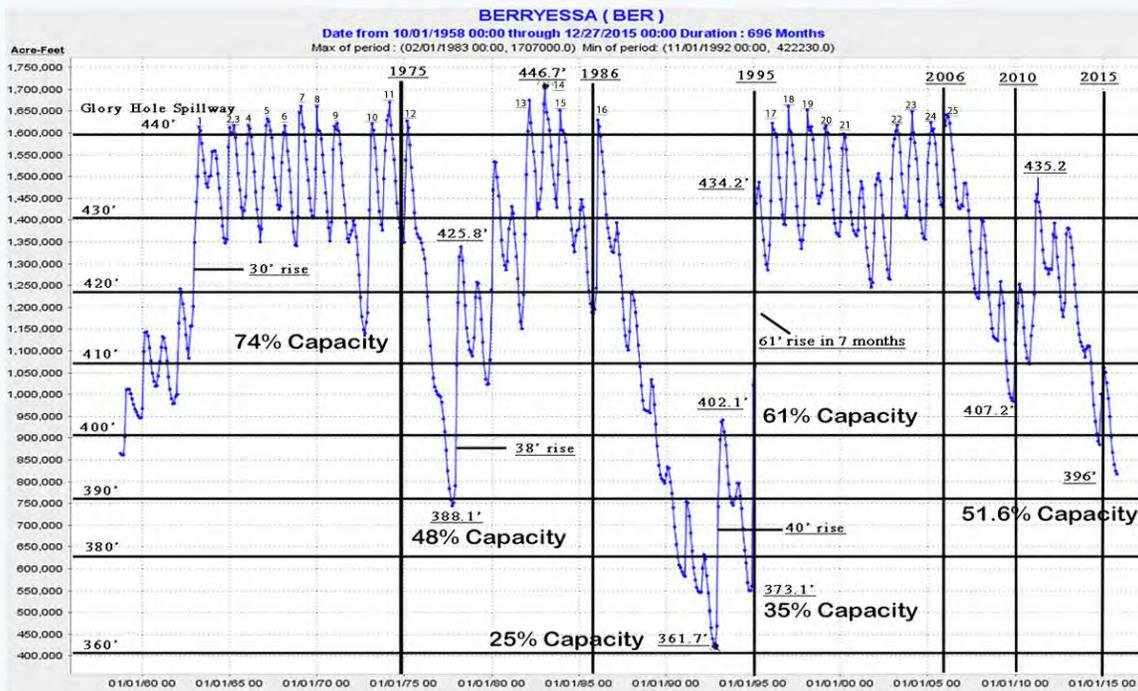
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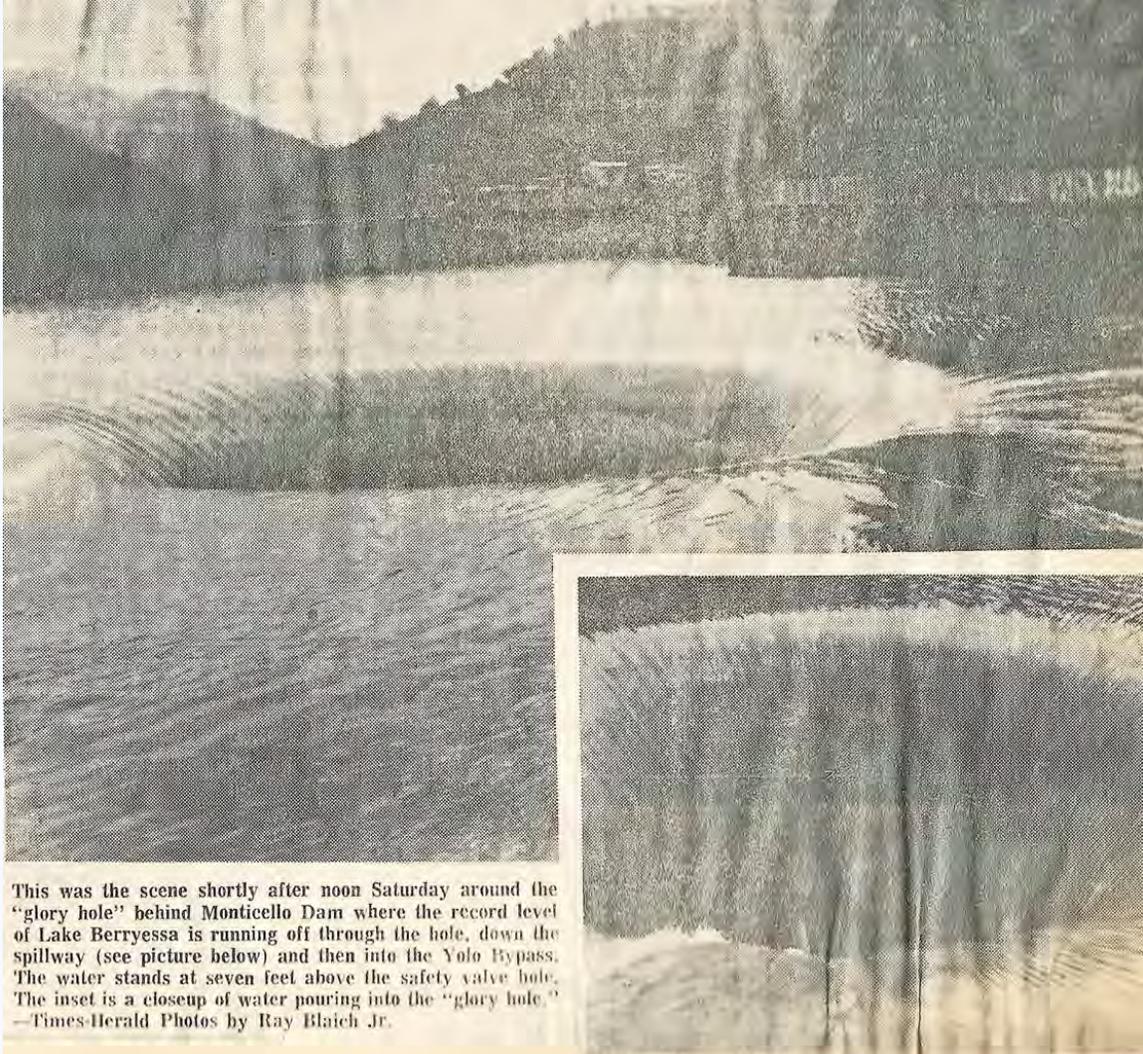
David Travis Photography



Amazing star-shaped spillway at Kechut Reservoir, Jermuk, Armenia

Since Monticello Dam was completed in 1958 Lake Berryessa has only spilled over the lip of Glory Hole 28 times. Count them yourself in the charts below. The first was in 1963. 2006 was the 25th, 2017 was the 26th, and 2019 was the 27th. This year is the 28th spill.





This was the scene shortly after noon Saturday around the "glory hole" behind Monticello Dam where the record level of Lake Berryessa is running off through the hole, down the spillway (see picture below) and then into the Yolo Bypass. The water stands at seven feet above the safety valve hole. The inset is a closeup of water pouring into the "glory hole."
—Times-Herald Photos by Ray Blaich Jr.

Our Glory Hole had a moment of notoriety in 1997 when a woman committed suicide by jumping into it. The water was only inches above the lip. Although some news stories attempted to sensationalize the tragedy by claiming she was "sucked into" the spillway, she actually had to climb over the lip and jump in.

When I was interviewed by a New York Times reporter last week she asked when I had first seen Glory Hole. I actually could not remember. My first experience with lake levels was a flood in 1998 when the lake rose many feet very quickly below my house, 5 feet in 4 days. As a newcomer to Lake Berryessa, I was quite surprised. You can see my experience with my first flood at the end of my short video, Steele Park Resort Tour 1998, at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkPV8dZS6pM>.



2/3/1998 440.36' msl
Glory Hole spills



Steele Park Mobile Home
2/7/1998 444.75' msl
4.75' over Glory Hole

2/9/98

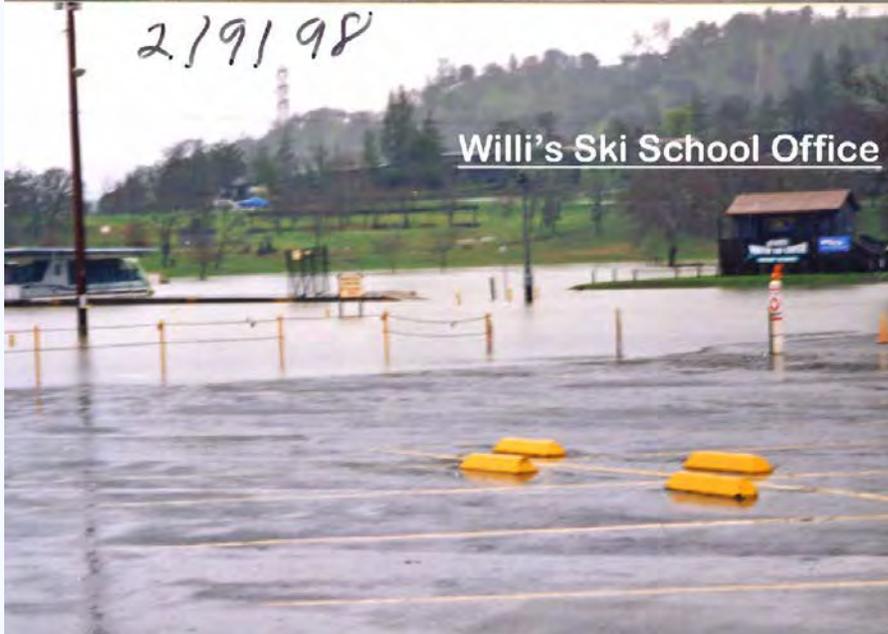
2/9/98: Lake level is 444.75' msl
or 4.75' above Glory Hole



Steele Park Launch Ramp

2/9/98

Willi's Ski School Office



All that historical disinterest in Glory Hole changed dramatically into international fame in 2017.

Why Is Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole So Famous?

The Glory Hole spill in 2006 kicked off an eleven year drought, and it did so in style. Besides the flooding and typical wind damage, it also caused a major landslide on Monticello Road just past the Wooden Valley Road turnoff. The road to Napa was closed for about two weeks. I had just bought my place above the Berryessa Highlands, and it was an unwelcome introduction to country living. At least I did not have to commute daily to Napa as so many of my neighbors did.

It was also the time that I and some friends resurrected the Lake Berryessa Chamber of Commerce. I had also joined Shirl Katleba in writing and publishing The Lake Berryessa News. It was also the most active period in our battle with the Bureau of Reclamation to stop their destructive Visitor Services Plan which ultimately destroyed the Lake Berryessa recreational community, leaving it the shadow you see now.

The Lake Berryessa community coalesced around the idea of promoting the amazing

recreational resource of Lake Berryessa to the world. Our first big hurdle was to get Napa County to realize that Lake Berryessa even existed. That took a couple of years. The second roadblock was to get Napa County and the "Napa Valley Only" folks to admit the Lake Berryessa even mattered. That took another few years. Some of you may remember our "Allie, the Lake Berryessa Alligator" campaign, our own Loch Ness monster to entice folks to come to the lake.



The Lake Berryessa Chamber of Commerce became very active, and The Lake Berryessa News regularly provided the only news and information you could find about Lake Berryessa, including daily monitoring of lake levels and Monticello Dam statistics focusing on lake levels relative to Glory Hole.

Meanwhile digital photography and video production advanced rapidly culminating in the introduction of the first of the modern drones. The Lake Berryessa News was lucky to have the first of the drone video pioneers as our Associate Editor, Evan Kilkus. You probably saw some of his great videos documenting the 2014 Napa earthquake and

supporting the community's recovery efforts. Evan soon started making amazing drone videos of Lake Berryessa, Monticello Dam, and Glory Hole. And then, in 2017, came an unanticipated big bang of a heavy rainfall year, and Evan was there to document the rapid rise of the lake to overflow Glory Hole for the first time in 11 years.

You can watch the series of videos that made Glory hole internationally famous (they never get old) at:

<https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/styled-4/>.

Some of those videos were seen by more than a million people around the world with highest viewing audience at 62 million for "Lake Berryessa is 3.5' OVER the Glory Hole Spillway" at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iHAjOrrU4k>

The Lake Berryessa News Facebook page grew to more than 30,000 followers in only a few weeks (now at 38,511). The Lake Berryessa News website received more than 3,000 hits per day.

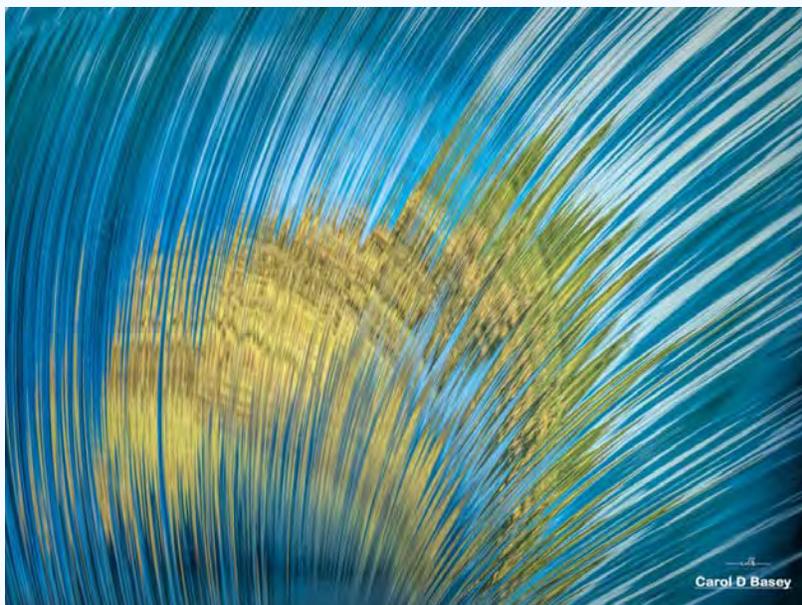
But I must admit that I still don't remember the first time I saw Glory Hole from the road.

What Do People See When They Gaze Into Glory Hole?

As a physicist I see the beauty of science in action. The smooth elegance of moving water expressing the basic equations of laminar fluid flow.



Love of science and the emotional effect of art are compatible human emotions. Carol D Basey gave us some beautiful work this week.

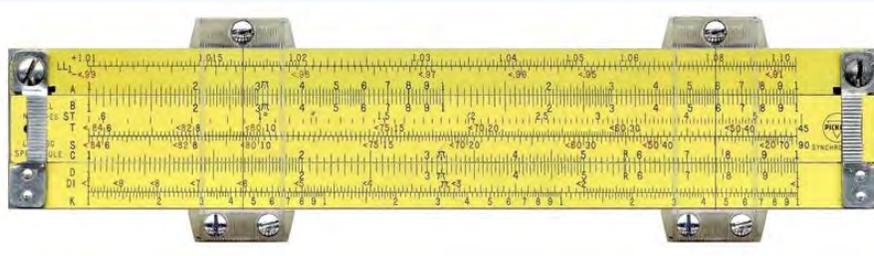


Some people express fear or unease. They look into Glory Hole and see their soul.



How Much Water Escapes Through Glory Hole?

Most people are used to hearing that the lake spills at 440 feet, but it actually starts to spill 1 cubic foot per second (CFS) at a level of 439.95 feet; 2 CFS at a level of 439.96 feet; and 10 CFS at a level of 440 feet. There are no direct measuring devices inside Glory Hole. These values are listed in a Spillway Discharge Table for Monticello Dam computed in 1963 before the introduction of digital computers and electronic calculators. Below is a photo of the desk top personal computer I used in college.



Engineers needed to solve simple equations like this one to calculate the Spillway Discharge Table. The water flow over a spillway when neglecting viscosity is given by the equation:

$$Q = \frac{2}{3} w \sqrt{2gy^3}$$

where w is the width of the spillway, g is the acceleration due to gravity, and y is the height of the water above the spillway. This is derived by using Bernoulli's equation and Torricelli's equation, and taking into account the flow over an area rather than just a point. Glory Hole is actually a circular waterfall.

Below is the Glory Hole spill volume for the last few days which shows the increase in flow over the top.

Date	Water Level (Feet)	Storage (AF)	Glory Hole Spill (CFS)	Dam Release (CFS)
02/01/25	437.35	1,501,609	0	90
02/02/25	437.87	1,511,303	0	90
02/03/25	438.39	1,521,024	0	50
02/04/25	440.83	1,566,993	251	45
02/05/25	441.50	1,579,714	1118	935
02/06/25	442.09	1,590,952	1598	1120
02/07/25	442.57	1,600,118	3011	1220

Here is a scan of the first page of the Spillway Discharge Table still in use. It calculates the flow through Glory Hole in cubic feet per second at every hundredth of foot lake level after the lake level reaches 439.95 feet.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
REGION 2
CENTRAL VALLEY OPERATIONS OFFICE
SPILLWAY DISCHARGE TABLE
MONTICELLO DAM**

ELEV	.00	.01	.02	.03	.04	.05	.06	.07	.08	.09
439.90					0	1	2	3	5	7
440.00	10	12	15	18	21	24	27	31	34	38
440.10	42	46	50	55	59	64	68	73	78	83
440.20	88	93	98	104	109	115	120	126	132	138
440.30	144	150	156	162	169	175	182	188	195	202
440.40	209	215	223	230	237	244	251	259	266	274
440.50	281	289	297	305	313	321	329	337	345	353
440.60	362	370	379	387	396	405	413	422	431	440
440.70	449	458	467	477	486	495	505	514	524	534
440.80	543	553	563	573	583	593	603	613	623	633
440.90	644	654	665	675	686	696	707	718	728	739
441.00	750	761	772	783	795	806	817	828	840	851
441.10	863	874	886	898	910	921	933	945	957	969
441.20	981	993	1006	1018	1030	1043	1055	1068	1080	1093
441.30	1105	1118	1131	1144	1157	1170	1183	1196	1209	1222
441.40	1235	1248	1262	1275	1289	1302	1316	1329	1343	1357
441.50	1370	1384	1398	1412	1426	1440	1454	1468	1483	1497
441.60	1511	1525	1540	1554	1569	1583	1598	1613	1627	1642
441.70	1657	1672	1687	1702	1717	1732	1747	1762	1778	1793
441.80	1808	1824	1839	1855	1870	1886	1902	1917	1933	1949
441.90	1965	1981	1997	2013	2029	2045	2061	2077	2094	2110
442-00	2127									

SOURCE DATA IS LETTER DATED AUGUST 6, 1963 TO ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR AND CHIEF OF OPERATIONS FROM CHIEF, IRRIGATION DAM BRANCH OF IRRIGATION DIVISION. TABLE COMPUTED AUGUST 1963.
Source data is letter dated August 6, 1963 to Assistant Regional Director and Chief of Operations from Chief, Irrigation Dam Branch of Irrigation Division. Table computed August 1963.

And that's the end of your Science Sunday Edition of The Lake Berryessa News. Remember to always check my website (<https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/>) and

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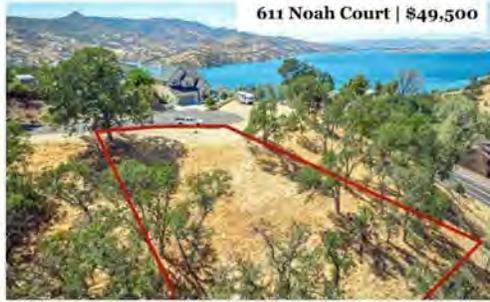
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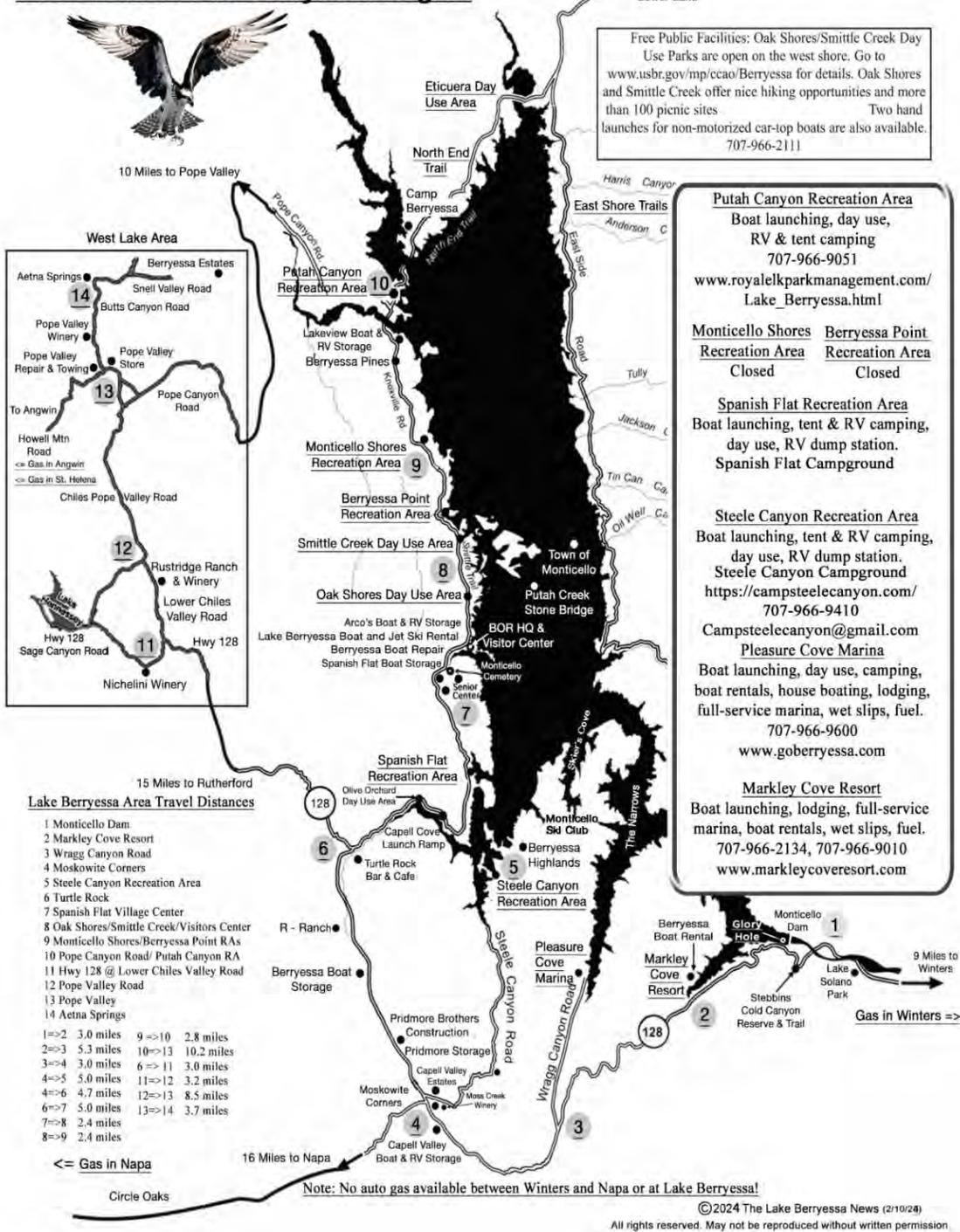
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Updated Lake Berryessa Map (1/28/24)

The Greater Lake Berryessa Region

To BLM Knoxville OHV & Recreation Area
34 Miles to Lower Lake



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Lake Berryessa News - February 16, 2025

Glory Hole Watch 2025 (2/16/25)

The Lake Berryessa water level had risen to a high of 442.97 feet, 2.97 feet above Glory Hole on Valentine's Day. But it has started dropping again. Rainfall has reached 20.14 inches (about average) at Monticello Dam. No rainfall is predicted for a week. Future rainfall predictions are not very high. Creeks have slowed their flow. Lake capacity is at 103.3%. Statistically, the lake may be at its high point for this season.

Here's a short video from yesterday. Perspective - it doesn't look like 3 feet over.

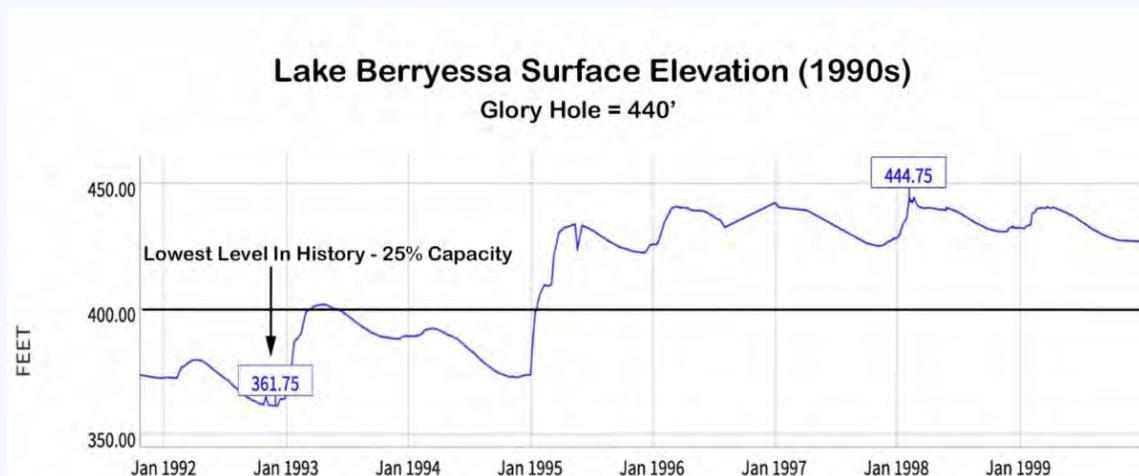
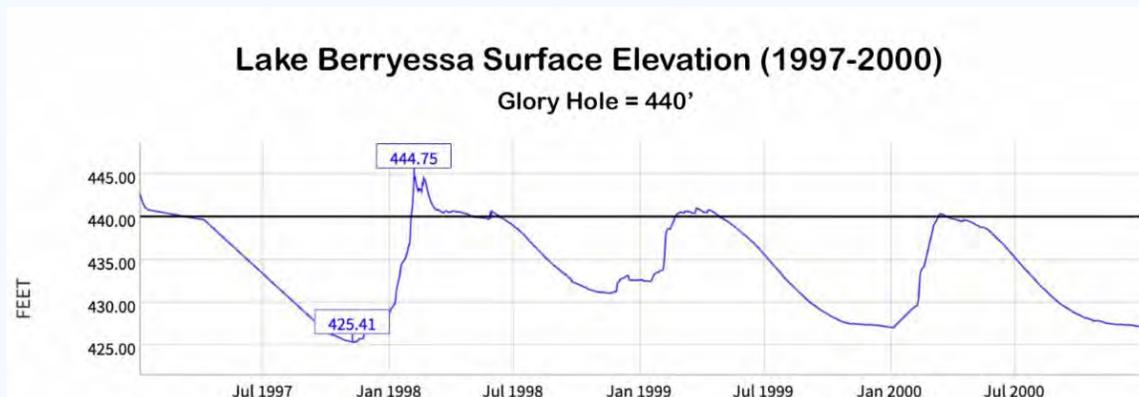
[Glory Hole Video \(2/15/25\)](#)

Thanks to Tim Carl of Napa Valley Features for printing my article:

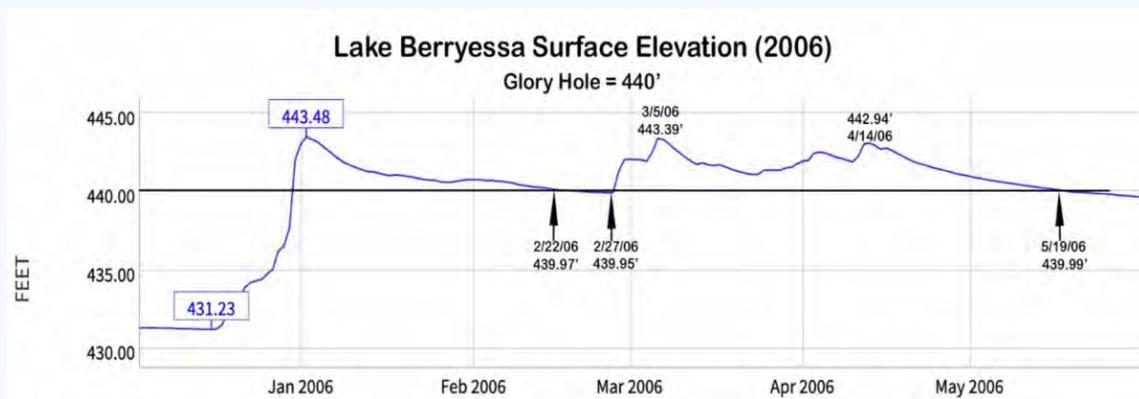
[Sunday E-dition: Lake Berryessa — Glory Hole Watch 2025](#)

The Glory Hole Watch Series (1990 - 2025)

Glory Hole Watch 1900 - 2000



Glory Hole Watch 2006



Glory Hole Goes Over! On Sat. Dec. 31, 2005, at 8am. It went back below Glory Hole on 5/22/06. Rainfall had already hit 35 inches. The lake stayed above Glory Hole for almost 6 months with an additional 25 inches of rain during the same period,

1/6/2006: The elevation of the spillway (Glory Hole) at Monticello Dam is 440 feet. The water is now at 440.29 feet, .29 feet below the top of the spillway. Lake Berryessa has had 33.94 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 2005. As reported by Carlos Jeffreys of The Corners.

Glory Hole Goes Over for a 2nd time in one season on 2-27-06, 1.28 over the spillway

4/2/06: The water is now 440.99 feet, .01 feet above the top of the spillway. Lake Berryessa has had 52.26 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 05

4/16/06: The water is now 442.77 feet, 2.77 feet above the top of the spillway. Lake Berryessa has had 58.16 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 2004. April 4th thru April 16th had a total of 4 inches rain!!

4/30/06: The water is now at 441.04 feet, 1.04 feet above the top of the spillway. Lake Berryessa has had 58.51 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 2005

5/14/06: The water is now 440.23, .23 feet above the top of the spillway. Lake Berryessa has had 58.51 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 2005.

5/22/06: The water is now at 439.93 feet, .07 feet below Glory Hole. Lake Berryessa has had 58.51 inches of rainfall since July 1st, 2005

Glory Hole Watch 2017

Lake Berryessa Surface Elevation (2017)

Glory Hole = 440'



February, 2017: Lake Berryessa Takes A Full Breath of Fresh Water and Glory Hole Goes Viral!

Lake Berryessa is almost a living creature. It breathes in and out, grows and shrinks. But it breathes water not air and breathes in during the winter and out during the summer. Actually, it is always breathing out a bit through Monticello Dam all year long. The last time the lake took a full

breath was January, 2006 when the level reached 443.5 feet above mean sea level (msl). For the last ten years the lake has breathed out more than in, it's shallowest breath occurring in October 2016 when the lake level dropped to 398.6 feet. On February 21, 2017 Lake Berryessa finally took another big deep breath and reached its second highest lake level in history - 443.6 feet msl - a 45 foot rise - the second fastest rise in its 58 year history.

Watch Evan Kilkus' Lake Berryessa News drone videos of the dramatic rise of Lake Berryessa as it finally spilled over Glory Hole on 2/16/17 after an 11-year drought at:

<https://youtu.be/bGJvoflyTwQ>

1/11/17: 10"+ of Rain Takes Its Toll, But Lake Berryessa is Rising

<https://youtu.be/PRWAFvW9DBU>

2/10/17: Lake Berryessa Is Almost Full

<https://youtu.be/8pIPsgLFggk>

2/12/17: Lake Berryessa Splashes Over Glory Hole -With a Little Help

<https://youtu.be/EH0LQW7iduY>

2/12/17: Breathtakingly Beautiful Drone Tour of Lake Berryessa

<https://youtu.be/cB0BKIm1EzM>

2/16/17: Lake Berryessa Is Full & Splashing Over the Spillway

<https://youtu.be/uQp0QConILY>

2/18/17: Lake Berryessa Is Spilling 1 Foot Over Glory Hole

[Original ACDC version of:](#)

[2/18/17: Lake Berryessa Is Spilling 1 Foot Over Glory Hole](#)

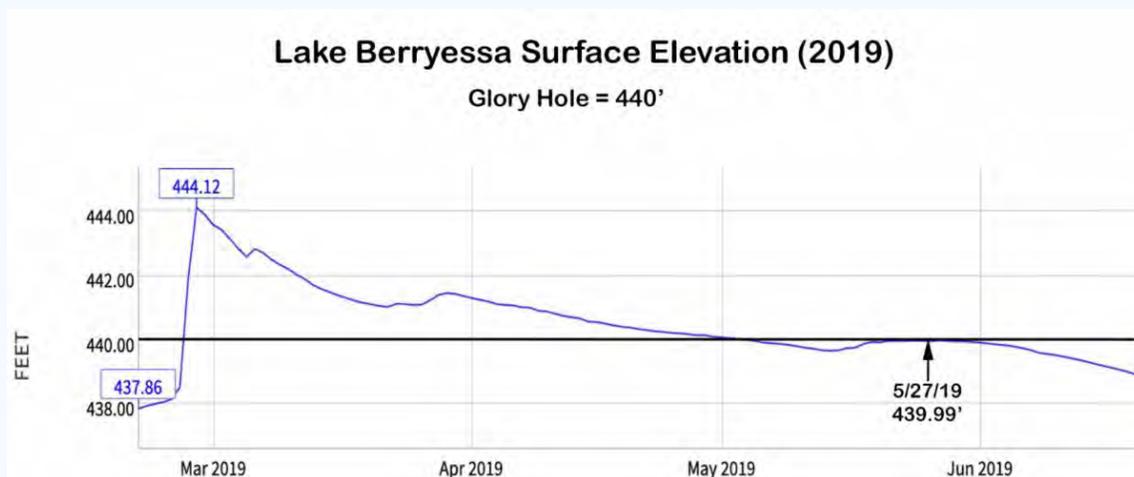
<https://youtu.be/-iHAjOrrU4k>

2/21/17: Lake Berryessa is 3.5' OVER the Glory Hole Spillway

<https://youtu.be/qhPzR2Gqzs0>

2/24/17: Another Breathtaking Drone Tour of a Full Lake Berryessa

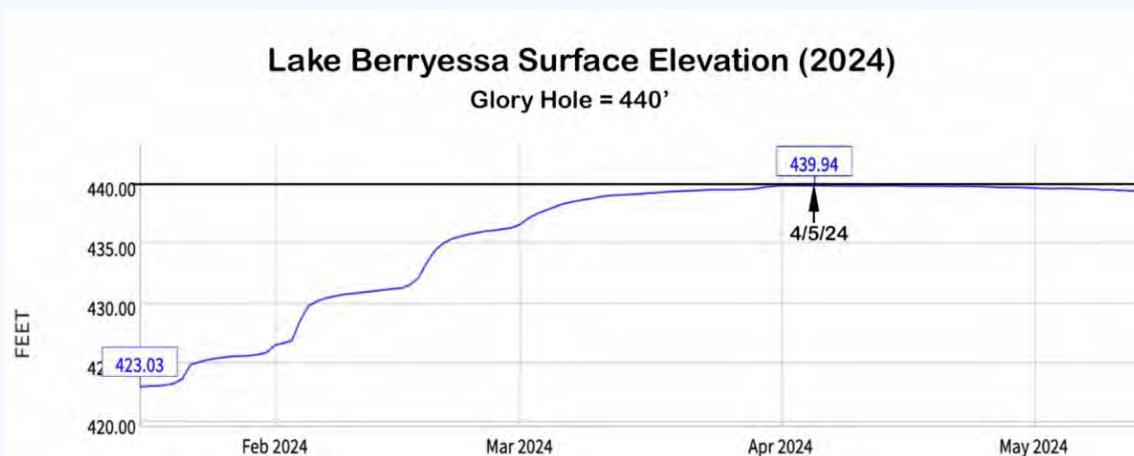
Glory Hole Watch 2019



**March 2019: Glory Hole Overflows (2/26/19): Lake Berryessa is Full Again
And 4' Above The Spillway!**

Glory Hole Spill Watch is Over. The “How High Will It Go” Watch Is On! Lake Berryessa overflowed Glory Hole at 10:30AM on Tuesday, February 26, 2019. The lake level hit 444.1' - 4.1' above Glory Hole at 8 AM, 2/28/19. That’s an increase of more than 5' in 24 hours! In 2017 the highest point was 443.6'. Before that it was 443.5' in 2006. Highest lake level was 446.7' in 1983.

Glory Hole Watch 2024



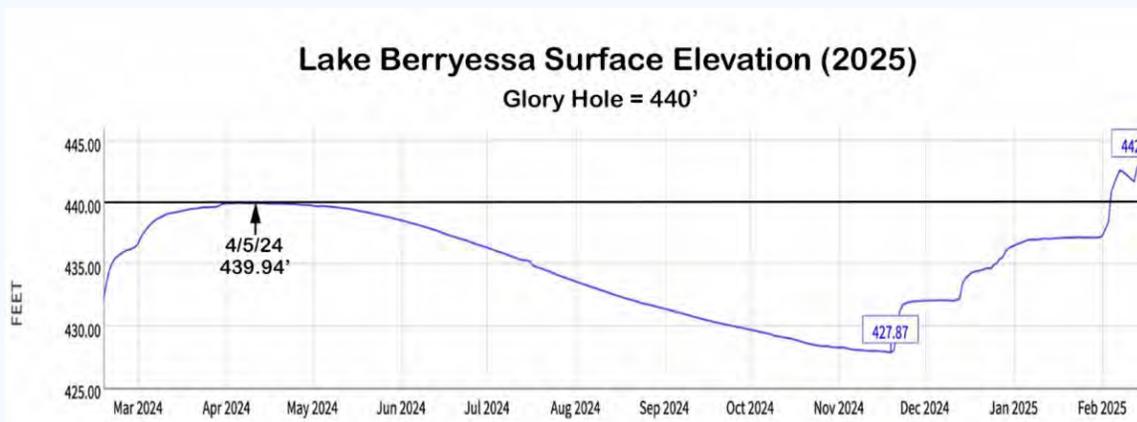
Glory Hole Watch 2024: No Spill, No Flow, But A New Record

2024 was the highest the lake level has ever reached without officially going over the Glory Hole spillway! The lake level has started to go down. Lake Berryessa's Morning Glory Spillway, famously known as the Glory Hole, has been on the brink of spilling for more than two weeks, hanging a few inches away from a full spill for what's been the longest time on record.

Practically, Lake Berryessa is considered "full" when the level hits 440' MSL (Above Mean Sea Level). That is the level of the top of the lip of the Glory Hole spillway. Before 2017 Glory Hole had overflowed only 25 times in the 59 years since the dam was finished in 1958. By 2024 Glory Hole has overflowed only 27 times in the 67 years since the dam was finished in 1958.

This year marks the longest period of time the lake has ever been so close to the edge without officially spilling. Some of the other years that had low level spills was 2000 with a spill level of 440.33 ft, 1966 with a spill level of 440.47, and 1963 with a spill level of 440.57 ft. This appears to be a once-in-a-lifetime year.

Glory Hole Watch 2025



The official announcement came in the middle of the day on Tuesday, Feb. 4, after heavy rainfall: "Solano County Water Agency Glory Hole Spill Advisory, 2/4/2025, 6:15 PM. The Lake Berryessa Water Surface Elevation is now above 440 feet, and the Glory Hole is spilling." Lake level rose quickly to 441.3 feet, 1.3 feet above Glory Hole by 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 5.

The Lake Berryessa water level continued to rise rapidly on 3.97 inches of rain at Monticello Dam and reached 442.6 feet, 2.6 feet above Glory Hole, on Friday, Feb. 7. The question now seemed to be how high the lake would get. And then the rain stopped. Then it started again and by 2/15/25 the lake had risen to 443 feet. Will this be the high level for 2025?



2025: A Year of Anniversaries

The Lake Berryessa News has been around in one form or another since the 1970's.
Check out the full history of downloadable, searchable PDF files at:

[Lake Berryessa News Past Issues 2005-2025:https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/styled-2/](https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/styled-2/2025:https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/styled-2/)

The Lake Berryessa News 20th Anniversary (2005) **My First Editorial**

20 years seems like almost yesterday. Rereading my first editorial shows that some things have not changed much - except that the Lake Berryessa recreational and residential communities have been destroyed despite all attempts at positive improvement. Unfortunately, I could write much the same editorial today! But our old slogan still rings true: "Preserve the Best, Improve the Rest".

From the Editor: General Plans, People, and Earth Day (April 21, 2005)

April 22 is Earth Day, in case you forgot. The first Earth Day was on April 22, 1970 and

we've learned a lot since then. But the County General Plan meeting at the Berryessa Senior Center on April 6 was much more than it seemed on the surface and made me wonder how much some people actually have learned. *There were clear distinctions between what those who live here want and what those who don't live here think we should want.*

Consider County attitude – it seems to be paternalistic and negative towards our community. County officials have publicly stated that Lake Berryessa is a “black hole” expense and that Napa County citizens don't use the lake. An unnamed Planning Department person worried that the meeting would be full of people from *the “six packs and gun racks”* crowd. Those of us who were there know this wasn't the case. But I've sometimes made a point about how much something costs by translating the dollar figure into the number of six-packs you could buy with the money. That pile of sixpacks is quite an exciting visual when you think about a multi-million dollar government waste of money like the plan the Bureau of Reclamation is proposing for Lake Berryessa.

But the six-pack comment also indicates a fundamental lack of understanding of what it is like to be part of a concerned and educated rural America in the 21st century. There are too many people who have not gotten beyond their 1970's Easy Rider stereotypes. Some, like the local Sierra Club, are so far behind the times they must be able to see wagon trains catching up to them in their rearview mirrors!

Many of us at Lake Berryessa now were part of the efforts that resulted in unprecedented environmental and social progress during the last 35 years since the first Earth Day. But some don't want to let go of the thrill of the battles, with the rush that comes from knowing you (the good guys) are right, and they (the bad guys) are wrong. You can see it now in some of the rhetoric from local exclusionist groups who seem to want to fight bigger and bigger battles over smaller and smaller things.

Consider the local folks' attitude – most seem to want to combine the positive values of the Lake Berryessa community with a desire for a modest increase in the number of homes and businesses – more lodging outside the resorts for visitors, for example. Sure would be nice to be able to have a self-supporting gas station out here! Maybe even a change to the highly-restrictive 160 acre agricultural zoning. Even Marin County - no slouch when it comes to protection - has only 60 acre ag zoning. Local people, especially those who have lived out here their whole lives, know the value of what they've got, but they also want to share it, expand it, benefit reasonably from it.

So how about some philosophy in the mix. General planning principles point out that to have a sustainable community you need at least 1,000 homes - to support a school, local businesses, local services. In other words, you have to have a critical mass of social and economic activity to create a sustainable community. Lake Berryessa has not gotten there yet and based on how it's being treated by the County it may never be allowed to. When people who control your destiny (the rest of Napa County) don't even know much about you (remember the County says Napa County residents, i.e., voters, don't even use the lake) you are at a disadvantage.

Philosophically, we've learned a lot in the 35 years since that first Earth Day. We've learned that most of us Americans consider ourselves environmentalists. We've learned

how to turn the tide on environmental destruction and have done so in remarkable ways. We've learned that using sustainability as a guiding principle gives the best result for the environment, the economy, and social equity. And I know we've learned how to make Lake Berryessa a vibrant community while preserving the values that make this community unique.

[Celebrating Napa County's 175th Anniversary](#)

This year marks the 175th anniversary of Napa County. Life back in 1850 was very different - the population then estimated at just over 1,000 people according to the 1852 California Census, agriculture was primarily and livestock, and milk was only 10 cents a quart.

[Through the Vine Ep. 7 - 175th Anniversary Special Edition Video](#)

In this special 175th anniversary special edition of Through the Vine, we take a look back at the county's early roots and how we're continuing to make history today.

https://youtu.be/EH_mebXf4QU?si=rpl1jL0g0_uQsOuN

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This app let's you see into your mailbox before you go to get your mail.

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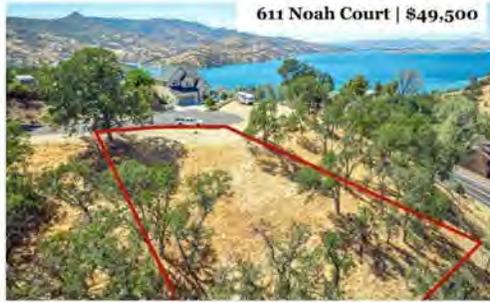
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Offered at \$75,600
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Flat Space with a hill at the back of the lot

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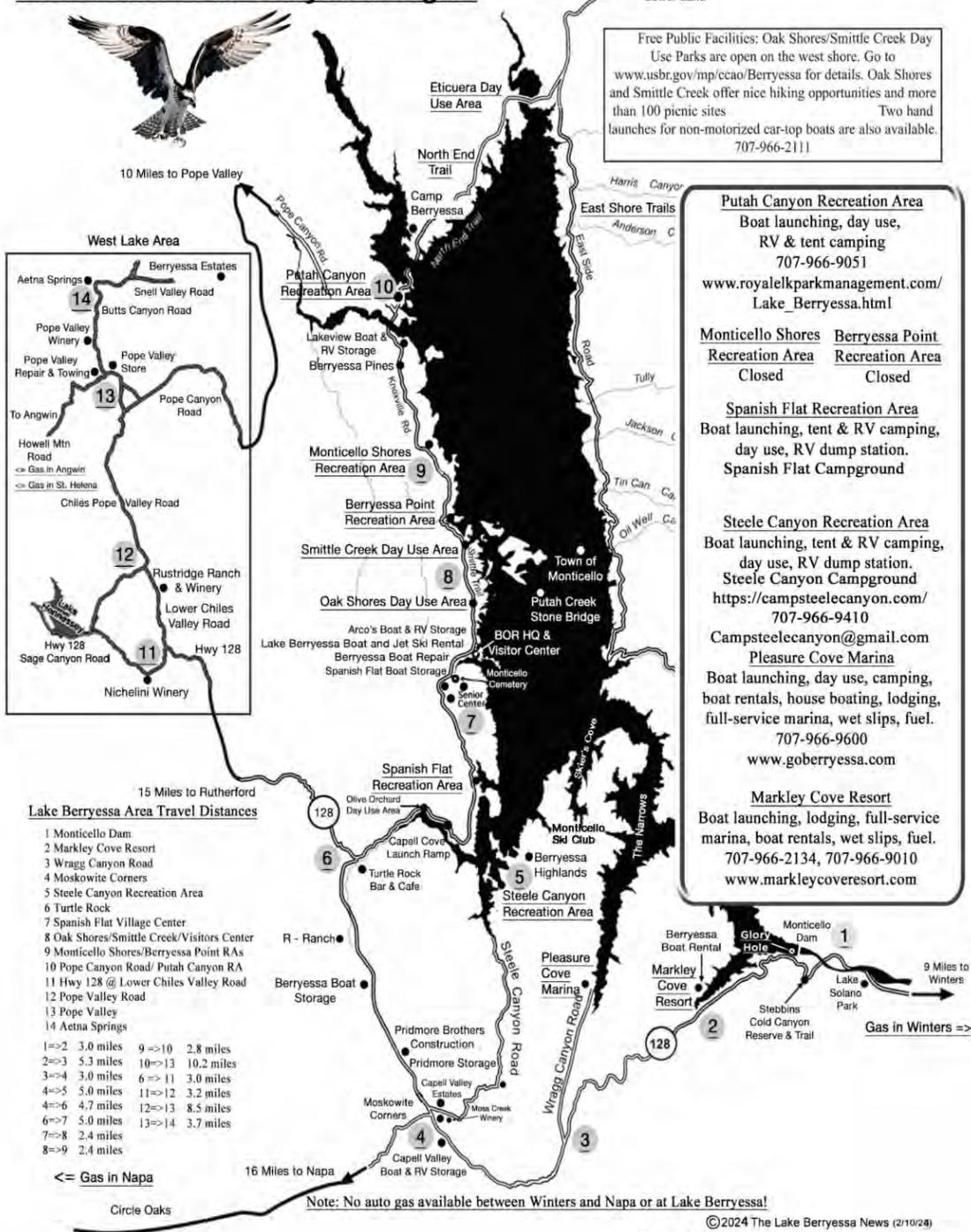
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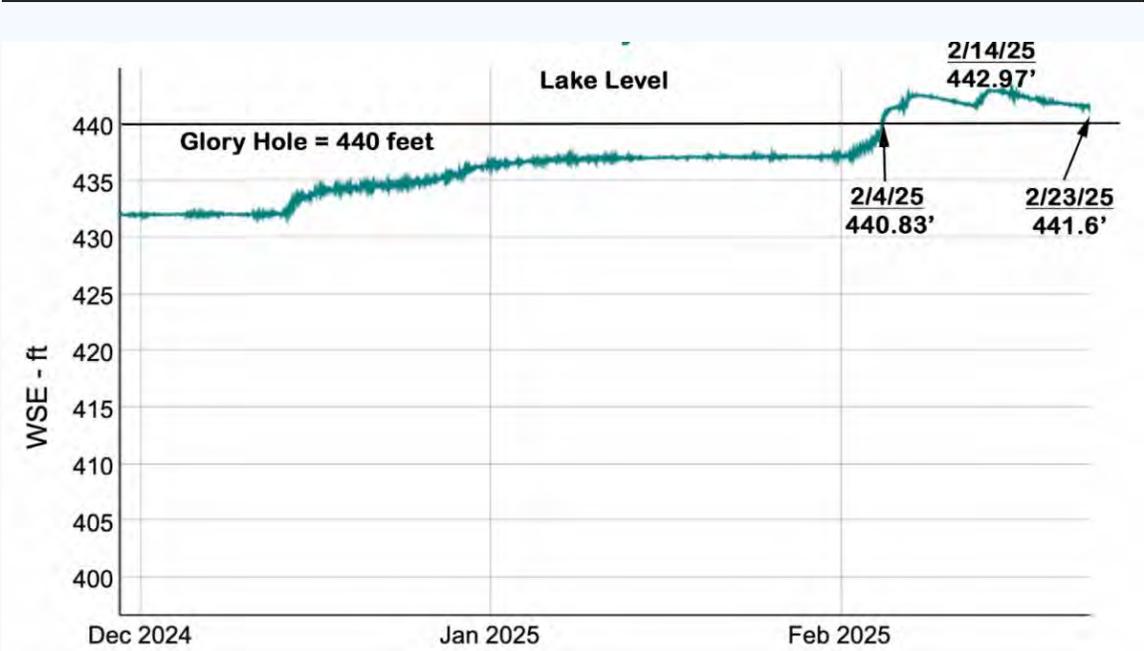


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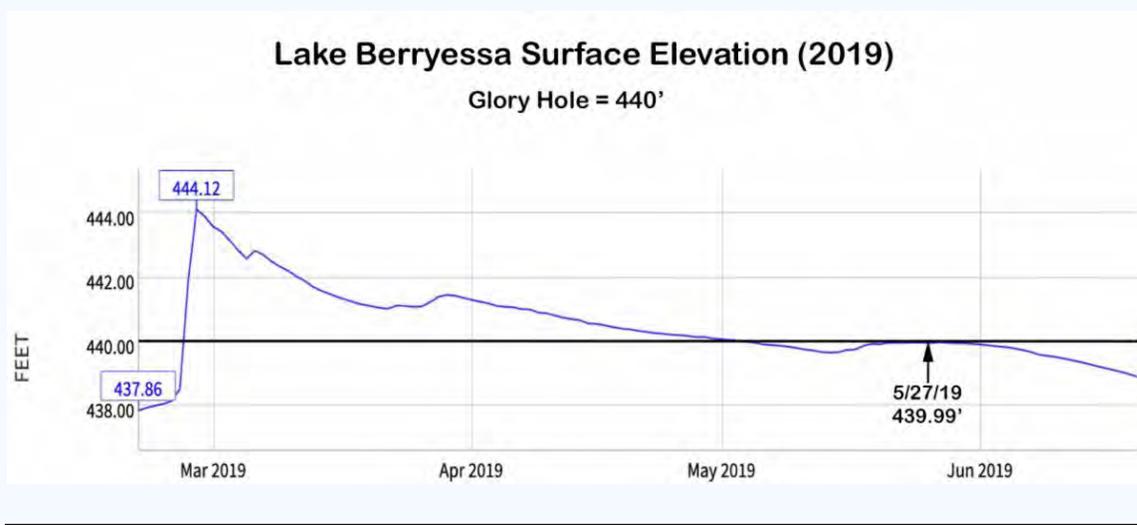
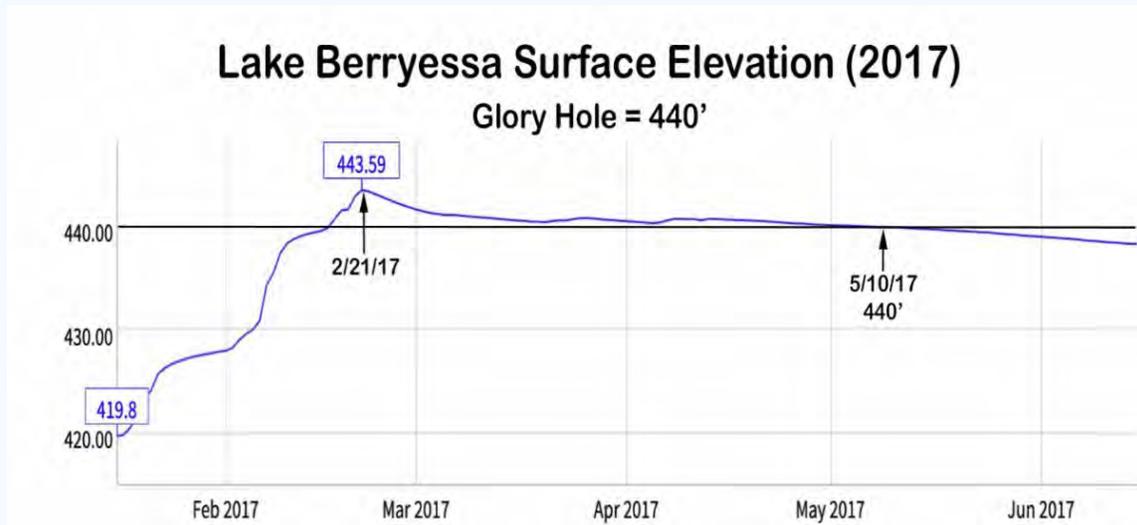
Lake Berryessa News - February 23, 2025

Glory Hole Watch 2025 (2/23/25)

The Lake Berryessa water level is continuing to drop slowly. It is now at 441.6 feet, 1.6 feet above Glory Hole with no substantial rain in sight. Its high point was 442.97 feet on Valentine's Day. Rainfall remains at 20.14 inches (about average) at Monticello Dam. Capacity is 101.9%.



Glory Hole 2025 watchers are now wondering how long the lake will stay above Glory Hole. Below are two of the longest periods.



OPEN HOUSE

Join Bureau of Reclamation employees and partners at an open house to learn about Lake Berryessa's invasive Mussel Prevention Program



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The Paper Passport Is Dying

Smartphones and face recognition are being combined to create new digital travel documents. The paper passport's days are numbered—despite new privacy risks. In a matter of years, no matter where you live or travel, your face will likely be your new passport.

For centuries, people have used some form of passport while moving from place to place. But the widespread standardization of passports as we know them today didn't really begin until after World War 1, when passports were commonly used as a security measure and to deter spies entering a country. Even then, some considered passports to be an "anachronism in the modern world."

But the use of paper passports—which were first digitized as "e-Passports" with NFC chips in 2006—is slowly undergoing one of its biggest transformations to date. The travel industry, airports, and governments are working to remove the need to show your passport while flying internationally. Eventually, you may not need to carry your passport at all.

Instead, face recognition technology and smartphones are increasingly being used to check and confirm your identity against travel details before you can fly. These systems, advocates claim, can reduce the amount of waiting time and "friction" you experience at airports. But privacy experts caution that there is little transparency about the technologies being deployed, and their proliferation could lead to data breaches and greater levels of

surveillance.

The push to remove paper passports is happening worldwide. So far, airports in Finland, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United States, India, and elsewhere have been trialing various levels of passport-free travel or the technology needed to make it happen. In October, officials in Singapore announced that its residents can fly to and from the country without using their documentation, and foreign visitors can “enjoy the convenience of passport-less clearance when they depart Singapore.” More than 1.5 million people have used the systems, officials claim.

Sunday Funnies: Really Bad Similes Written by High School Students

Every year, English teachers from across the country can submit their collections of actual analogies and metaphors found in high school essays for the amusement of teachers across the country. Here are some winners:

- Her face was a perfect oval, like a circle that had its two sides gently compressed by a Thigh Master.
- His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling-Free.
- He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it.
- She grew on him like she was a colony of E. Coli, and he was room-temperature Canadian beef.
- She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.
- Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
- McBride fell 12 stories, hitting the pavement like a Hefty bag filled with vegetable soup.
- From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and Jeopardy comes on at 7:00 p.m. instead of 7:30.
- Her hair glistened in the rain like a nose hair after a sneeze.
- The hailstones leaped from the pavement, just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.

- He fell for her like his heart was a mob informant, and she was the East River.
- Even in his last years, Granddad had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long, it had rusted shut.
- The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.

He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck, either, but a real duck that was actually lame, maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.

- It was an American tradition, like fathers chasing kids around with power tools.
- He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a garbage truck backing up.
- Her eyes were like two brown circles with big black dots in the center.
- He was as tall as a 6'3" tree.
- John and Mary never met. They were like two hummingbirds that had also never met.
- She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh like that sound a dog makes before it throws up.
- The ballerina rose gracefully en pointe and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant.
- Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintegrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free ATM.
- The lamp just sat there, like an inanimate object.

Fake Feedback

The internet is rife with bogus product reviews. Will AI make this worse?

The emergence of generative artificial intelligence tools that allow people to efficiently produce novel and detailed online reviews with almost no work has put merchants, service providers and consumers in uncharted territory, watchdog groups and researchers say. Phony reviews have long plagued many popular consumer websites, such as Amazon and Yelp. They are typically traded on private social media groups between fake review brokers and businesses willing to pay. Sometimes, such reviews are initiated by businesses that offer customers incentives such as gift cards for positive feedback. But AI-infused text generation tools, popularized by OpenAI's ChatGPT, enable fraudsters

to produce reviews faster and in greater volume, according to tech industry experts. The deceptive practice is illegal in the U.S.

Where are AI-generated reviews showing up?

Fake reviews are found across a wide range of industries, from e-commerce, lodging and restaurants, to services such as home repairs, medical care and piano lessons. The Transparency Company, a tech company and watchdog group that uses software to detect fake reviews, said it started to see AI-generated reviews show up in large numbers in mid-2023, and they since multiplied.

For a report released in December, The Transparency Company analyzed 73 million reviews in three sectors: home, legal and medical services. Nearly 14% of the reviews were likely fake, and the company expressed a "high degree of confidence" that 2.3 million reviews were partly or entirely AI-generated.

In September, the Federal Trade Commission sued the company behind an AI writing tool and content generator called Rytr, accusing it of offering a service that could pollute the marketplace with fraudulent reviews. The FTC, which banned the sale or purchase of fake reviews, said some of Rytr's subscribers used the tool to produce hundreds — perhaps thousands — of reviews for garage door repair companies, sellers of "replica" designer handbags and other businesses.

Max Spero, CEO of AI detection company Pangram Labs, said the software his company uses detected with certainty that some AI-generated appraisals posted on Amazon bubbled up to the top of review search results. Many of the AI-generated comments on Yelp appeared to be posted by individuals who were trying to publish enough reviews to earn an "Elite" badge, which is intended to let users know they should trust the content. To be sure, just because a review is AI-generated doesn't necessarily mean it's fake. Some consumers might experiment with AI tools to generate content that reflects their genuine sentiments. Some non-native English speakers say they turn to AI to make sure they use accurate language in the reviews they write.

What companies are doing

Prominent companies are developing policies for how AI-generated content fits into their systems for removing phony or abusive reviews. Some already employ algorithms and investigative teams to detect and take down fake reviews but are giving users some flexibility to use AI. Spokespeople for Amazon and Trustpilot, for example, said they would allow customers to post AI-assisted reviews as long as they reflect their genuine experience. Yelp took a more cautious approach, saying its guidelines require reviewers to write their own copy.

The FTC's rule banning fake reviews, which took effect in October, allows the agency to fine businesses and individuals who engage in the practice. Tech companies hosting such reviews are shielded from the penalty because they are not legally liable under U.S. law for the content that outsiders post on their platforms. Tech companies, including Amazon, Yelp and Google, sued fake review brokers they accuse of peddling counterfeit reviews on their sites.

Spotting fake AI-generated reviews

Consumers can try to spot fake reviews by watching out for a few possible warning signs.

Overly enthusiastic or negative reviews are red flags. Jargon that repeats a product's full name or model number is another potential giveaway. When it comes to AI, research revealed that people can't tell the difference between AI-generated and human-written reviews. However, there are some "AI tells" that online shoppers and service seekers should keep in mind. Reviews written with AI are typically longer, highly structured and include "empty descriptors," such as generic phrases and attributes. The writing also tends to include cliches like "the first thing that struck me" and "game-changer."

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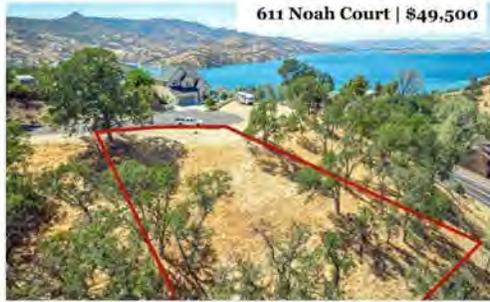
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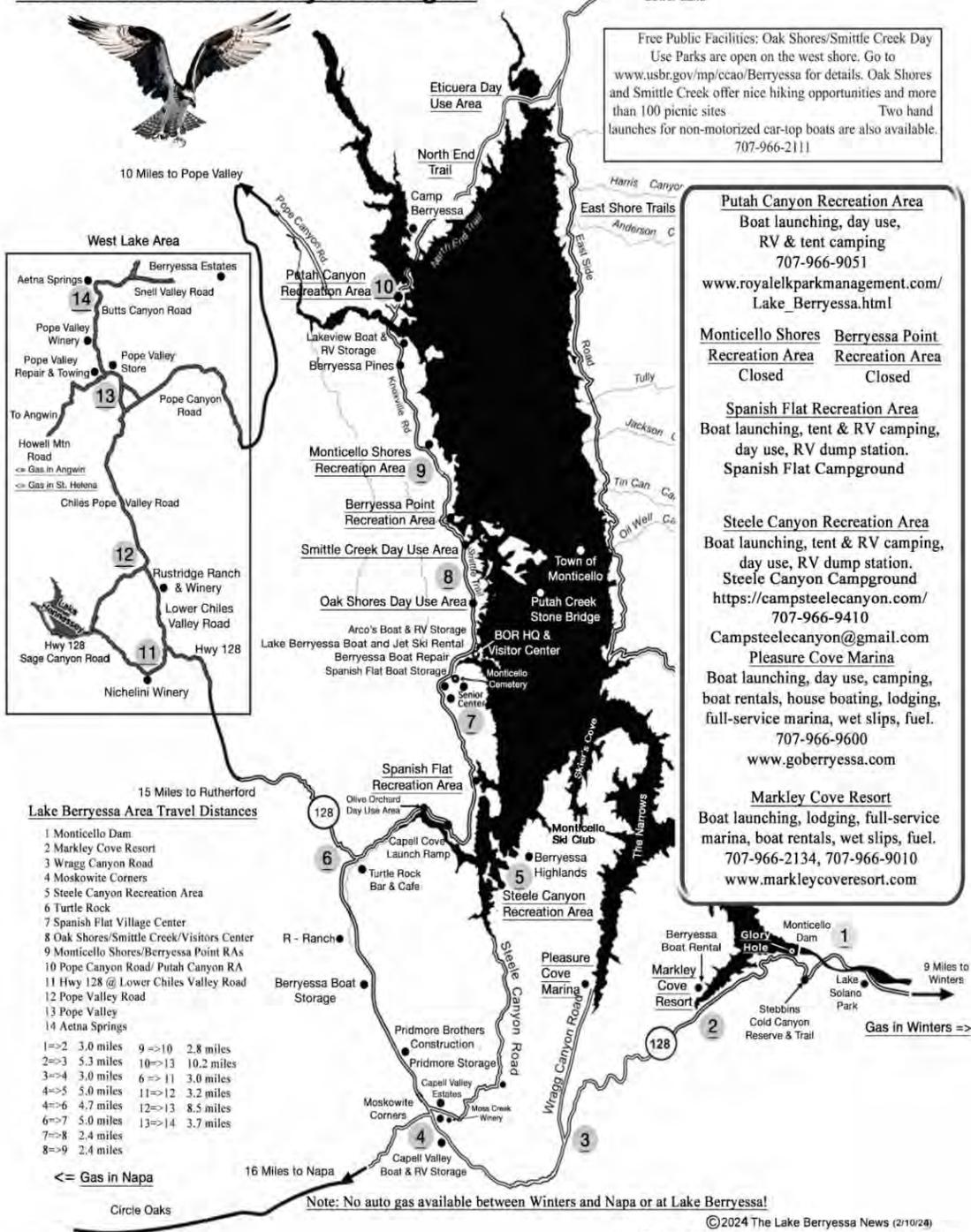
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