

what is a water loop?

Water loops are recreational waterways on a lake, river, or ocean between specific locations, containing access points and day-use and/or camping sites for the boating public. Water loops emphasize low-impact use and promote stewardship of the resources, while providing healthy outdoor activity.

Lake County Water Loop maps can be found online at www.lakecounty.com or at Lake County Visitor Centers.



don't move a mussel!

Help protect Lake County's beautiful lakes and creeks by preventing the spread of harmful plants, animals, and other organisms, such as Quagga and Zebra mussels. These aquatic nuisance species can hitch a ride on boats, trailers, clothing, gear, etc., and then spread to other bodies of water. If conditions are right, these invasive species can severely impact the aquatic ecosystem. Each time you leave any water body, be sure to thoroughly clean, drain, and dry all items that come in contact with water.

boat inspections

To protect local water bodies from invasive species, the County of Lake requires that certain types of vessels be inspected prior to launching in Lake County waters. While kayaks and canoes currently are exempt, information about the inspection program is available through the Lake County Mussel Hotline: (707) 263-2556 or www.co.lake.ca.us/mussels



Wildflowers dot grassy shores in springtime

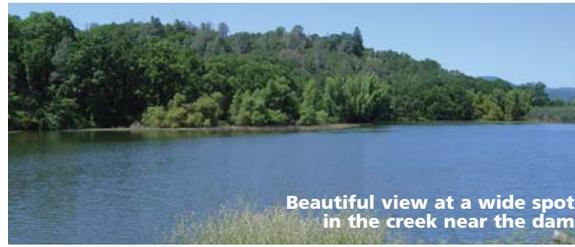
reporting water pollution

If you see anything suspected to be pollution or disturbance of the waterways, report it immediately by contacting the Lake County Sheriff's Department at (707) 263-2690.

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This is one in a series of Lake County Water Trails Brochures, published as a cooperative effort of the County of Lake and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.

Photographs courtesy of Lyle Madeson, Redbud Audubon Society, Dwain Goforth, Laura Lamar 4/10



Beautiful view at a wide spot in the creek near the dam

leave no trace

- Plan ahead and prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Respect wildlife—observe from a distance.
- Avoid disturbing wildlife especially during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young.
- Leave what you find. Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Respect the privacy of landowners.
- Always ask permission before entering private land; unless otherwise posted, assume it is private property.
- Don't litter.
- Remember sound carries across water more clearly than on land; avoid loud noises or boisterous behavior.

what is the Rumsey Scale?

In 1872, a pioneer named Captain Rumsey established the low point of the Grigsby Riffle sill, a rock ledge located at the confluence of Cache and Siegler creeks in Lower Lake, as "Zero Rumsey." All subsequent measurements of Clear Lake's level are based on this elevation. Zero Rumsey is equivalent to 1,318.256 feet elevation above sea level.

Clear Lake is considered full at 7.56 Rumsey. Flood levels vary, but warnings are issued at 9 Rumsey. The highest recorded lake level was 13.66 Rumsey in 1890 while the lowest was -3.5 Rumsey in 1920. Typically, the lake level varies from an average 1.6 Rumsey to 6.75 Rumsey each year.

When Clear Lake is full, it has a surface area of 43,790 acres and contains 1,155,000 acre-feet of water. At Zero Rumsey, the surface area is 39,170 acres with a capacity of 842,000 acre-feet.

watch for these other species:



paddling safety

All canoes, kayaks, and inflatable rafts must carry a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (life jacket) for each person on board. Before setting out, boaters should become knowledgeable about local conditions such as currents, rapids, flow levels, weather, and hazards.

- Test new or unfamiliar equipment before use.
- Leave word with a responsible person concerning your destination and when you will return.
- Always make sure your craft is in good repair.
- Securely fasten all gear within the craft or in waterproof containers that will float high and be easily retrievable.
- Learn how to swim; learn first-aid techniques and CPR.
- Paddlers are harder to see from other vessels. Keep paddling groups together. Avoid long lines.
- Watch for and avoid hazards such as fallen trees, brush, fences, bridge abutments, or old pilings.
- Do not boat under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Additional recommended equipment: protective foot gear, extra paddle, anchoring device, bailing device/sponge, boating maps, flashlight, compass, first-aid kit, boat-repair materials, hat, sunglasses, whistle, sunscreen, waterproof storage bags, emergency light, water, GPS unit, cell phone, knife, and a 50- to 100-foot throw rope.

regulatory or advisory markers



cold water dangers

Capsizing or falling overboard into cold water can cause immediate health problems, ranging from disorientation and hyperventilation to heart attack. Cold water quickly numbs hands and feet and saps overall strength. To increase your chance of survival in cold water:

- Always wear a personal flotation device (life jacket).
- Get out of the water as fast as you can since you get colder faster in water than air.
- Dress properly.

in case of emergency, call 911

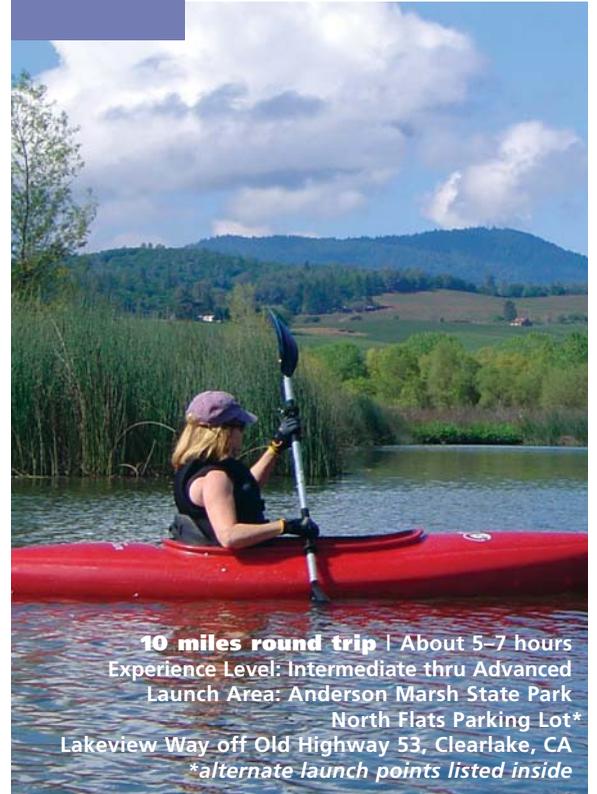
info & resources

Lake County Water Resources: (707) 263-2341
 Lake County Parks & Recreation: (707) 262-1618
 City of Clearlake: (707) 994-8201
www.lakecounty.com; www.konoctitrails.com;
<http://watershed.co.lake.ca.us/>

Clear Lake Water Loop 3

konocti
regional
trails

Cache
Creek
rock riffle & dam



10 miles round trip | About 5-7 hours
 Experience Level: Intermediate thru Advanced
 Launch Area: Anderson Marsh State Park
 North Flats Parking Lot*
 Lakeview Way off Old Highway 53, Clearlake, CA
 *alternate launch points listed inside



- Rich wildlife viewing
- Riffle and dam
- Beautiful back country
- Oxbows and canals
- Waterfront neighborhoods
- State park
- Blue heron rookeries

Lake County Visitor Information Center

6110 East Highway 20, Lucerne, CA 95458
 (707) 274-5652 | (800) 525-3743 | (800) LAKESIDE
www.lakecounty.com | info@lakecounty.com



Clear Lake Water Loop 3: Cache Creek



trail description



A serene paddling experience down Cache Creek to the dam and back, past the Anderson Flats tule reeds, a few older waterfront neighborhoods, and then through the beautiful oak-studded back hills. This loop is best taken during summer and fall, when water levels are lower and Cache Creek Dam is not releasing huge amounts of water. During winter and spring, if the current is too strong, turn around and take a few side loop trips. In the summer, mornings are best as the midday sun can be intense.

trail route

From the North Flats parking lot **P** at the northern portion of Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, carry your boat 500 feet to the soft launch at the end of the creek. Head south (to the left), and after 1/4 mile, you will reach a confluence **1**. Take a left (east), turning onto the main Cache Creek waterway, which ultimately will lead you to the dam.

Clear Lake's current form was created thousands of years ago by a series of earthquakes that elevated the northwestern lake basin, cutting off drainage into the Russian River. The water rose until it found a new outlet—Cache Creek—which drains eastward into the Sacramento River. The name Cache Creek comes from Hudson's Bay Company trappers who cached their furs along the Sacramento River and smaller tributaries.



Paddling along, you will pass by Slater Island, among tule reeds and wooded areas. Spring is a great time to watch for Great Blue Heron rookeries, though you will see all types of waterfowl year-round. This also is a favored fishing spot.

About one mile into your trip, you will begin to see a series of "oxbows" **2**, small side canals that are remnants of old channels where Cache Creek used to flow (pictured, cover). The first oxbow comes to a dead end, but the next four actually loop around when the water level is high. Egrets, cormorants (rookery pictured, cover), herons, mallards, and an occasional osprey may be spotted. At this point, you begin passing through Highlands Harbor, a small residential waterfront community.

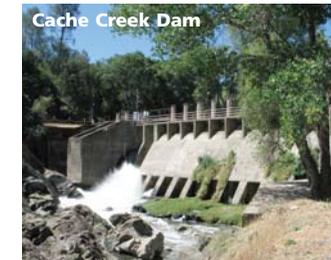
Riffle is a natural rock formation that limits the amount of water flowing past and thus controls outflow from Clear Lake. Prior to construction of the dam, the Riffle was the sole means of maintaining lake levels.



At two miles, you will cross under Lake Street bridge and begin to enter Redbank Gorge **4**, which winds through a few more older waterfront neighborhoods. At about three miles, you start to leave the houses behind and enter the back hill country where you may see deer, wild turkeys, jumping fish, otters, and a myriad of waterfowl.

After five miles, you will approach the dam **5**, which is currently owned and operated by Yolo County. Heed the danger signs that warn boaters to stay back. This is the site of the 1868 Cache Creek Dam Incident when locals tore down the original dam after waters backed up and flooded most of Lower Lake. The dam was rebuilt in 1914 and remains controversial today.

Due to its size, Clear Lake rises to flood stage only after prolonged, high-intensity storms. When this happens,



Clear Lake's natural outlet, Cache Creek, is too small to allow flood-water to leave the lake as fast as it enters. Since the late 19th century, water rights and flooding protection have been in dispute between Yolo and Lake counties. An ongoing series of court decrees attempts to balance the needs of both counties by regulating water level and release.

At this point, you can turn around and head back the same route. Should you opt for some additional paddling, some of the side canals through the tule reeds along Anderson Marsh State Historic Park can be nice spots for bird watching, particularly when the water level is higher during winter, spring, and early summer.

Access note and alternate launch: Due to State budget issues, the gate to the North Flats parking lot is open sporadically. This loop also may be accessed from the Redbud Park boat ramp, located at 14655 Lakeshore Drive in Clearlake. After launching, head south along the shoreline then left at the opening to Cache Creek, past North Flats (red P). Kayaks also may launch for a nominal fee from Shaw's Shady Acres, located at 7805 Cache Creek Way off Old Highway 53 (if no one is there, place the money under the front door of the residence).

