

Recreation abounds at several regional lakes

By Vickie Rogers
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With summer approaching, it's a great time to start thinking about taking the family or friends out to go camping, boating and fishing, or even a picnic just for the day out at the lake.

And with the variety of lakes with recreational areas in the vicinity, there's plenty to choose from, such as Lake Don Pedro, Lake Yosemite and Lake McClure. For more information, just log on to the Internet to check out Don Pedro Reservoir and Lake McClure.

Located just 25 miles northeast out of Merced, Lake McClure and Lake McSwain provide plenty of space for recreation. Although there are two lakes, Lake McSwain is the lower lake which is only used for fishing. Mike Bermingham, the parks manager for Merced Irrigation District, said that because it's a narrow lake, only fishing boats are allowed on the water with a speed limit of 10 mph.

Although the lake is stocked every week with Rainbow Trout and Brook Trout, and the marina provides fishing licenses and fishing boat rentals.

However, Lake McClure is 26 miles long and is used for fast recreational use, such as water skiing and jet skiing, he said. As for day use and overnight facilities, there are over 600 camp sites around the 7,500 acres. There are electrical hookups on more than half the sites, he said.

Bermingham said there is one recreational area at Lake McSwain and four at Lake McClure. Rentals are available at the concessionaire, which includes jet skis, houseboats, ski boats and

fishing boats. The Barrett Cove Cafe is also on site at the marina.

While pets are allowed, there is a \$2 fee. Access fees into the park is \$5.50 a day for vehicles and \$10.50 with a boat. For more information,

call 378-2521 or visit the web site at www.lakemcclure.com.

Another recreational facility that offers plenty of room for water fun and

Continued next page

Recreation

From page 2

overnight camping is Lake Don Pedro, which offers three sites with showers, restrooms and electrical hook ups to accommodate both day use and over night camping. Between Blue Oaks, Moccasin Point and Fleming Meadow, there's a total of 550 camping sites. However, no pets are allowed at the sites.

Herb Hahn, recreation director for the reservoir, said there is year round fishing, as the lake is stocked with large mouth bass, trout, salmon, crappie and cat fish.

For those looking for the perfect swimming hole, Hahn said there is a developed swimming lagoon with a sandy bottom at Fleming Meadows.

For boating and jet ski rentals, there are two marinas located on the premises, at Fleming Meadows and Moccasin, which rent out houseboats, fishing craft, jet skis

and ski boats.

Lake shore camping is also available for campers with boats, however, Hahn said there are no restrooms available in those areas.

Fourth of July on the water is an annual event at the reservoir which takes place on July 3, Hahn said spectators can come up for the evening and sit on the shore line just to watch the show. The events include a houseboat parade and fireworks

Although the reservoir is fully reserved for Memorial Day weekend, Hahn said there are 90 sites remaining for the Fourth of July weekend.

To call for reservations for any weekend, call 852-2396. For more information, log on to www.donpedrolake.com. The site gives information about the reservoir, including colored maps and directions.

For those who don't want to drive very far to get away for the day, Lake Yosemite fits that bill, as the recreational park is

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