

Yuba State Park

**Resource Management Plan
May 2009**



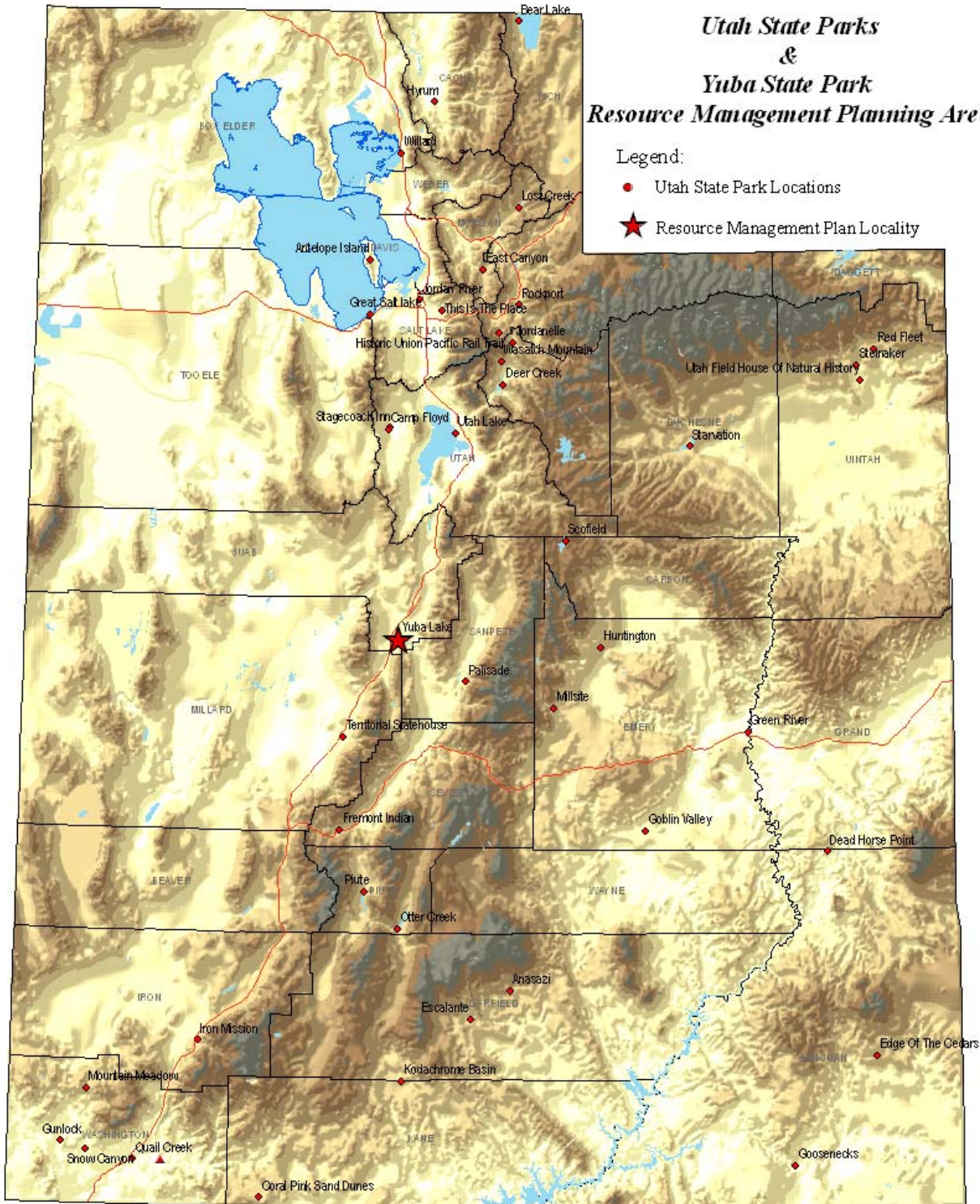
Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Planning Section
1594 West North Temple, Ste. 116
P.O. Box 146001
Salt Lake City, UT 84116-6001
(877) UT-PARKS
stateparks.utah.gov



*Utah State Parks
&
Yuba State Park
Resource Management Planning Area*

Legend:

- Utah State Park Locations
- ★ Resource Management Plan Locality



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Acknowledgements

Yuba State Park Resource Management Planning Team

Jay Christianson – NW Region Manager, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Neil Cook – Nephi, Utah
Chris Evans – Assistant Park Manager, Yuba State Park
Glenn Greenhalgh – Citizen Member, Board of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Micki Bailey – Assistant Field Manager, Fillmore Field Office, USDI Bureau of Land Management
Barry Monroe – Scipio, Utah
Doug Neilson – Fillmore, Utah
Jeff Rasmussen – Park Manager, Yuba State Park
Dale Roper – Delta, Utah
Jeff Sanders – Nephi, Utah
Ray Schelble – Holladay, Utah
Don Wiley – Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Other Participants

Pete Wilson – Construction Operations Specialist, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Dan Clark – Planning and Development Manager, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Deena Loyola – Public Affairs Coordinator, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Shannon Peterson – Planner, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Rock Smith – Research Consultant, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Edie Trimmer – Planner, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation

Administration

Mary Tullius – Director, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Bruce Hamilton – Deputy Director for Operations, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Mark Forbes – Deputy Director for Administration, Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation
Michael R. Styler – Executive Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources
Robyn Pearson – Deputy Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources
Darrin Bird – Deputy Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources

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Executive Summary

Yuba State Park is part of the Yuba Reservoir Recreation Area, a complex of recreation sites surrounding Yuba Reservoir. The recreation area includes the state park and the USDI Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Yuba Special Recreation Management Area. The Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation (Division) operates and manages the state-owned park and, through a cooperative agreement, the BLM sites within the recreation area.

In April 2007, staff from the Division met with community stakeholders from central Utah to initiate a resource planning process for state-owned Yuba State Park (Yuba). Stakeholders at this meeting nominated several community members to serve on the planning team for Yuba. From this list, the park manager and area manager chose nine people to serve on the Yuba Planning Team.

The Yuba Planning Team—a citizen-based team representing community leaders, interested users, local residents, neighbors and agency representatives—was at the core of the process. The planning process was based on public input and involvement. The recommendations contained in this document represent several months of work by the planning team.

Though this planning process was initiated to consider only issues and recommendations for Yuba State Park, the planning team recognized that the park is one management unit of a larger recreation area. The team felt that because the activities and impacts from the various parts of the recreation area

are interrelated and all activities have direct impacts on the state park and its staff, they should develop recommendations for the BLM lands within the recreation area for the BLM to consider in an area management plan that they will develop for the area. This area management plan would need to be consistent with the existing BLM Resource Management Plan for the West Desert District Office.

This plan provides recommendations based on nine primary vision elements that will guide future management of Yuba. These elements focus on the following:

- ▲ Developing, maintaining and enhancing facilities that offer safe and suitable water and land-based recreational opportunities for visitors year-round.
- ▲ Providing a stable, productive fishery that is an economic asset to the surrounding area.
- ▲ Providing seamless management of state and BLM lands that preserves traditional recreational experiences, while being open to appropriate new activities.
- ▲ Being a positive factor for local and state economic stability and tourism development.
- ▲ Addressing water and land resource conflicts in ways that benefit all stakeholders.
- ▲ Planning and cooperating with residents, civic groups, businesses and

governmental agencies to accomplish the park's mission.

- ▲ Protecting and preserving park resources and the surrounding environment by exercising good stewardship practices.
- ▲ Offering interpretive and educational programs that provide visitors the opportunity to develop a deeper appreciation of Yuba's ecological and cultural resources.
- ▲ Ensuring Yuba has adequate funding, staff, equipment and support.

These objectives are geared toward improving and expanding Yuba's recreational opportunities, protecting its resources and providing visitors with safe, enjoyable experiences. Achievement of these vision elements will require the continued support of users, legislative and community leaders, and the Division.



Camping on North Beach

The planning team developed a number of specific recommendations in support of the plan's vision elements. Six issue areas form the basis of the team's recommendations. Each issue area with a summary of recommendations is outlined

below. In addition to the recommendations developed by the planning team, the Utah Division of Homeland Security identified an issue area for natural hazards.

A more comprehensive discussion of each issue area and recommendations are found in the chapter titled **Issues and Recommendations** later in this document.

Management of Yuba Special Recreation Management Area

- Investigate a single managing agency for Yuba Special Recreation Management Area as one alternative to provide seamless management of state and BLM lands for the benefit of visitors.
- The West Desert District of the BLM should consider writing a cooperative Special Recreation Management Plan in cooperation with Utah State Parks for the Yuba recreation area. This plan would need to be consistent with the existing BLM Resource Management Plan for the West Desert District Office. The BLM is urged to adopt recommendations in this plan for facilities and recreational opportunities on BLM lands in that planning process.

Facilities and Development

- Replace and improve facilities at Oasis campground.
- Plan trailheads and motorized and non-motorized trails within Yuba Special Recreation Area.

- Improve facilities at North and West beaches.
- Expand and improve facilities at Painted Rocks.
- Expand and improve facilities at Eagle View.
- Offer access to anglers with basic facilities along stretches of beach formerly closed to use.
- Provide adequate staff housing.
- Provide new recreation activities, opportunities and facilities for visitors.

Resource Management

- Devise strategies for seasonal water fluctuations.
- Warm water fishing should continue as a vital element at Yuba.
- Resolve conflicts between recreation users and cattle at North and West beaches.
- Work with local and county officials to enhance and expand recreation opportunities at the recreation area.
- Protect known and unknown cultural resources within Yuba Special Recreation Area
- Maintain water quality and address erosion problems in cooperation with Sevier River Water Users Association.

Marketing

- Promote recreation activities and opportunities that would attract new visitors and entice return visits to the recreation area.
- Establish partnerships for marketing efforts and funding.

Conflicts

- Address current and potential conflicts through adequate facilities, education and enforcement.
- Provide practical and mutually beneficial solutions to resource

conflicts between park visitors and landowners.



Good Fishing at Yuba State Park

Funding and Budget

- Address issues of limited funding and staff.

Hazard Mitigation Recommendations from Utah Department of Public Safety, Utah Division of Homeland Security

- Minimize potential impacts from flooding due to severe storms and spring snowmelt runoff.
- Minimize impacts from earthquakes.
- Minimize potential impacts from wildfire.
- Minimize potential impacts from drought.
- Minimize impacts from West Nile virus by educating visitors on prevention.

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Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

Mission Statement

The mission of Yuba State Park is to protect and enhance the park's natural and cultural resources, provide a variety of safe and desirable water and land-based recreational and educational opportunities while having a positive impact on local and state economies.

Planning team members developed the mission statement recognizing that Yuba is an important provider of recreational opportunities in central Utah. Yuba will become increasingly popular because of the park's central location close to an interstate highway, the presence of unique beaches and landscapes, and population growth throughout the state. Yuba's facilities need to be improved and its many resources protected for present visitors as well as for the future.

Vision Statement

A vision statement is like a compass; it charts a destination, guides the Yuba Planning Team and Yuba State Park in the development of recommendations and sets the course of action to reach the shared vision. Using the principles developed in the mission statement, the planning team created a vision to guide the development of the plan's recommendations that balances recreational demands with preservation of Yuba's resources, offers new opportunities, and encourages community involvement.

Vision

Yuba State Park will accomplish its mission by:

- ▲ Developing, maintaining and enhancing facilities that offer safe and suitable water (including angling and boating) and land-based recreational (OHV, hiking, biking, etc.) opportunities for visitors year-round.
- ▲ Providing a stable, productive fishery that is an economic asset to the surrounding area.
- ▲ Providing seamless management in cooperation with state and federal agencies that preserves traditional recreational experiences, while being open to appropriate new activities.
- ▲ Being a positive factor for local and state economic stability and tourism development.
- ▲ Addressing water and land resource conflicts in a way that benefits all stakeholders.
- ▲ Planning and cooperating with residents, civic groups, businesses and governmental agencies to accomplish the park's mission.
- ▲ Protecting and preserving park resources and the surrounding environment by exercising good stewardship practices.
- ▲ Offering interpretive and educational programs that provide visitors the opportunity to develop a deeper appreciation of the Yuba's ecological and cultural resources.
- ▲ Ensuring that Yuba has adequate funding, staff, equipment and support.

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Resource Management Plan Purpose and Process

Purpose of the Plan

Yuba State Park is part of the Yuba Reservoir Recreation Area, a complex of recreation sites surrounding Yuba Reservoir. The recreation area includes the state park and the Bureau of Land Management's Yuba Special Recreation Management Area. The Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation operates and manages the state-owned park and, through a cooperative agreement, the BLM sites within the recreation area.

This Resource Management Plan (RMP) is intended to help guide the Division's stewardship obligations for Yuba State Park (Yuba). Planning for Yuba is essential, as the park will become increasingly important as a destination park for Utah's growing population. Yuba has many unique opportunities and resources that need to be managed and protected over the coming decade.

A number of issues ranging from management partnerships to budget and funding were developed from input provided by various groups, including planning team members and members of the general public. A Yuba park visitor survey was conducted prior to the beginning of the planning process. Planning team members aggregated the issues into six categories: management of the special recreation management area; facilities and development; resource management; marketing; conflicts; and funding and budgets. This plan and its recommendations address each of the issue areas. It provides flexible guidelines

for the management and development of Yuba for the next five to 10 years. More importantly, the plan is based on a foundation of public input and consensus of the key stakeholders rather than by unilateral direction by the Division.



Sailing at Yuba State Park

The Planning Process

Planning for a centrally located and diverse recreation resource like Yuba is required for the best use and development of the park within constraints of state and local budgets. The planning process is also necessary for the long-term protection of Yuba's natural and cultural resources. This RMP is required by the Utah State Legislature and the Board of Utah State Parks and Recreation to guide short and long-term management and capital development.

The Division's long-range strategic plan, Vision 2010, outlines required planning actions needed to effectively meet recreational and leisure needs into the

future. Vision 2010 identifies resource management planning as essential to the effective administration and operation of all parks in the agency's system. Under the guidance of Vision 2010, each RMP is developed around one core concept: meeting the needs and expectations of customers, visitors and the citizens of the state of Utah while protecting each park's unique resource base. In short, the process is customer-driven and resource-based.

The planning process recommends acceptable changes and a future vision for Yuba. Specifically, the process: (1) recognizes impacts will result from use and enjoyment of the park; (2) defines how much and what types of impacts may be accommodated while providing reasonable protection of the resources for future visitors; (3) incorporates values of resource sustainability, quality facilities, education and interpretation for visitors; and (4) seeks to determine the conditions under which this can be attained.

In April 2007, Division representatives met with community stakeholders to familiarize them with the planning process and the need for creating a RMP for Yuba. During this meeting, the Division solicited the names of community members and various users who have an interest in Yuba and the surrounding area. Planning team members were selected from the list generated by the stakeholders in accordance with park planning policies. BLM has a different approach to public involvement through a public review process and involving their Resource Advisory Council. For both agencies,

public involvement is important in the process.

All team members participated on a voluntary basis and expressed a willingness to give a significant portion of their time and expertise to the process. Eight individuals were selected to serve on the planning team along with the park manager and assistant manager and the northeast area manager. Three representatives from the Division served as staff to the team.

A public meeting was held at the Juab County Courthouse on June 5, 2007 to identify and prioritize issues relating to the recreation area.

Though this planning process was initiated to consider only issues and recommendations for Yuba State Park, the planning team recognized that the park is one unit of a larger recreation area. The team felt that because the activities and impacts from the various parts of the recreation area are interrelated and all activities have direct impacts on the state park and its staff, they should develop recommendations for the BLM lands within the recreation area. During the first team meeting, it was made clear to representatives from the BLM's Fillmore Field Office that any recommendations for BLM lands should be considered as suggestions for them to contemplate during their own planning efforts or when making management decisions for the recreation area.

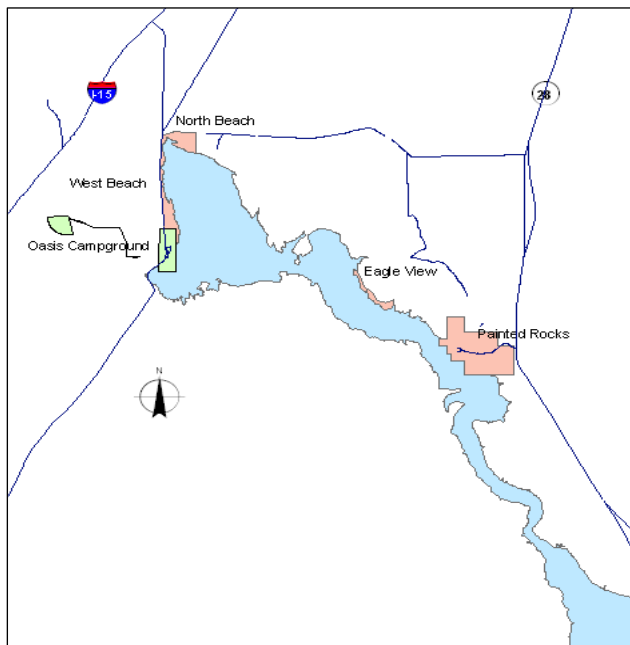
The planning team met five times between April and September 2007 to develop issues and recommendations for Yuba.

About Yuba State Park

Overview

Yuba is located in central Utah, south of Nephi. Other towns in the area are Gunnison, Scipio, Fayette and Levan. The campgrounds and beaches that are part of the Yuba Special Recreation Management Area are between Interstate 15 on the west and State Highway 28 on the east. The park is on state and BLM lands and managed by a cooperative management agreement between the two agencies.

Map 2. Yuba Recreation Area and Vicinity



Yuba State Park serves as the entryway for recreation along the 10,905-acre Sevier Bridge (Yuba) Reservoir. The park and reservoir are contained within the 15,940-acre Yuba Special Recreation Management Area and managed in cooperation with the BLM. State-owned land includes the state park and parcels owned by School and Institutional Trust

Lands Administration. These lands account for 990 acres, or six percent, of the recreation management area with the BLM owning 9,747 (61 percent) and the rest in private ownership.

This narrow reservoir, also known as Sevier Bridge Reservoir, stores water from the Sevier River and extends 22 miles to the southeast from Yuba Dam. The reservoir is within or close to four central Utah counties—Sanpete, Juab, Millard and Sevier.

History of the Park

Yuba State Park was created on February 15, 1964, when five local irrigation companies deeded 40 acres of land to the Division. The deed for this tract of lands restricted use for public recreation. Five years later, in 1969, the Division purchased 80 acres from the State Land Board for \$20 an acre. These lands became the Oasis area of Yuba State Park.

In 1983, the BLM leased 445 acres to the Division for a period of 17 years on the southeast shore of the lake under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act. This site, cooperatively managed with the BLM, is known as Painted Rocks. The site has recently-renovated campgrounds, boat ramps and restrooms. Drinking water is available at the site from a well drilled jointly by the BLM and the Division.

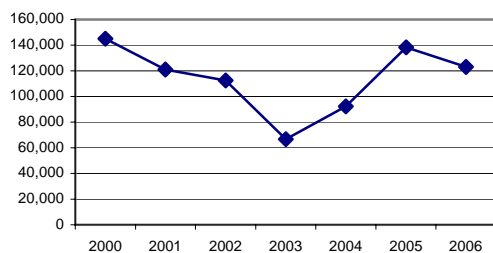
Yuba Special Recreation Management Area is currently managed under a Cooperative Management Agreement between the Division, Juab County and the BLM. This agreement was signed in 1997 and is supplemented by an annual

operating plan negotiated between the BLM and the Division.

Recreation Area Visitation

Surface acreage of Yuba Reservoir is two to three times the surface acres of Jordanelle Reservoir, but visitation to Yuba State Park ranges between 100,000 to 140,000 visitors per year as compared to almost 300,000 at Jordanelle. Most visitation occurs between the months of May and September (See Figures 1 and 2). Visitation peaks in June and July with monthly visitation over 20,000. During the years of reconstruction work on Yuba Dam in 2003 and 2004, visitation dropped to between 60,000 and 80,000. More than 85 percent of visitors come from Utah and from within 150 miles travel distance, according to a recent Yuba State Park visitor survey.

Figure 1: Annual Visitation to Yuba Recreation Area 2000 to 2006



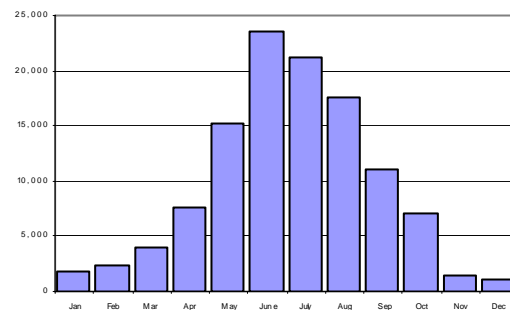
Yuba State Park is popular for boating, water skiing, fishing, sunbathing, camping and riding personal watercraft. The park also offers opportunities for hiking, biking and bird watching. The Oasis campground is close to the Paiute OHV Trail, a trail of over 900 miles, located in south-central Utah. Major dam reconstruction was completed on Yuba Dam in 2003. During that period, habitat improvements to the

reservoir were also completed for yellow perch. Over time, as perch populations increase, walleye populations, which in the past were a popular sport fish at Yuba, should return as well.

The recreation area has five campgrounds—Oasis, Painted Rocks, Eagle View and primitive camping on North and West beaches. Oasis is on state-owned land while the remaining sites are on BLM land. Oasis, located on the north end of the reservoir, is the most developed, with 28 sites for tent and recreational vehicle camping, showers and restrooms, boat launching facilities and a sewage disposal station.

In cooperation with the BLM, a 41-unit campground was completed at Painted Rocks on the reservoir’s eastern shore in 2006. This site offers camping for both tents and RVs with culinary water, sewage disposal station, camp host site and security lighting system. Painted Rocks is named for the petroglyphs and pictographs close by. The Eagle View camping area is accessible only by boat. It offers boat docks, a group picnic area and 20 camping units.

Figure 2: Average Monthly Visitation at Yuba Recreation Area





Sand Sea Monster on North Beach

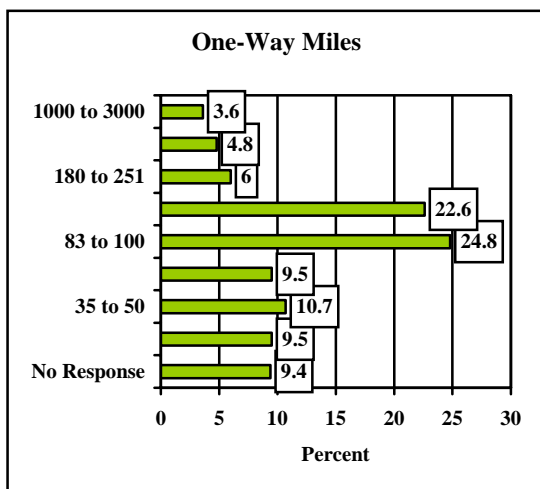
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Visitor Survey

Summary of Results

The Division administered a visitor survey for Yuba through the summer of 2006. The survey was conducted to achieve a better understanding of Yuba visitors, their satisfaction with existing facilities and services, and their opinions about recreation opportunities at the park. Survey results were incorporated into the planning process in the development of recommendations.

Figure 3: Distance Traveled to Recreation Area



77.1 percent of respondents traveled between 15 and 150 miles to visit Yuba with an average distance traveled of 185 miles.

The response rate for the survey was low, at 21 percent. Consequently, a non-response bias may exist. One must be careful in using the results to draw generalized conclusions about the population of users who visited Yuba during the study period, although the summer months are the season of heaviest use. With these limitations in mind, respondents noted several items of interest that are summarized below.

Yuba is a Destination Park Serving Visitors Living Within 150 Miles

Yuba is a destination park serving Utah residents who live within a two to three hours drive. Most visitors know about Yuba through word of mouth (67 percent), or by local knowledge of the area. Another 14 percent found Yuba through the Division’s website. A much smaller number found the park through signs, road atlases or park field guides.

Yuba Attracts Groups of Family and Friends who Spend Substantial Time at the Park

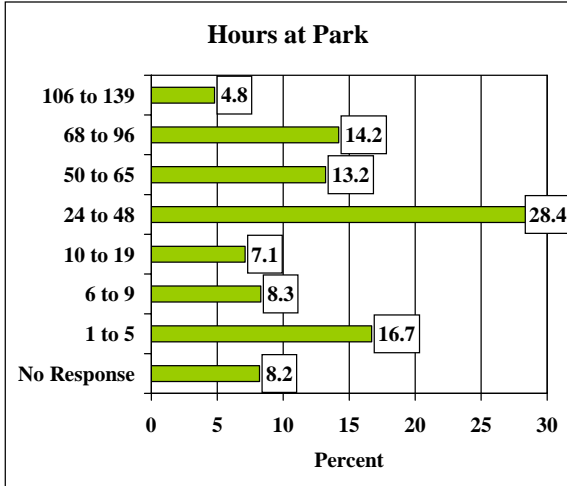
Yuba is popular with groups of family and friends who spend an average of two full days at the park. In contrast to the length of stay for many other state parks, only 25 percent of visitors use the park for day use only. Just as the length of stay is unusually long, the average group size is very large, with the average number of adults per group at seven with five children per group. There is, however, a wide range in group size, with the number of adults ranging from one adult to over 17 adults in one group. The range for number of children was even greater, from no children to groups of more than 20.

Eighty percent of Yuba Visitors Spend Money in Local Communities During Their Stay

Yuba visitors spend money in local communities close to the reservoir, primarily on fuel, vehicle expenses and supplies. The average amount spent per

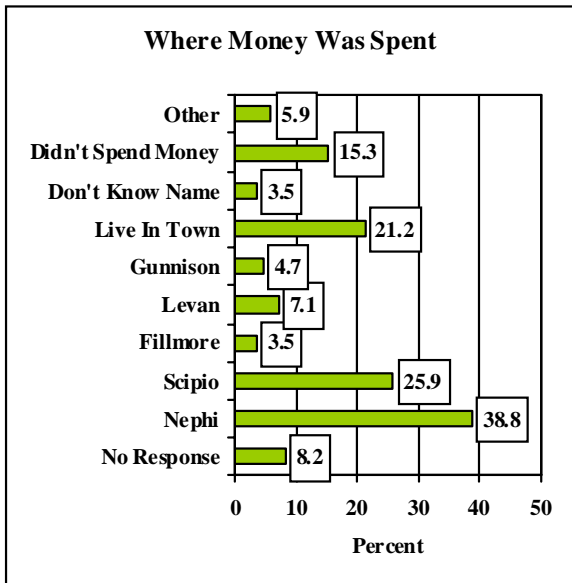
group per visit is \$218 as reported by respondents to the visitor survey.

Figure 4: Length of Stay in Recreation Area



Almost 30 percent (28.4 percent) reported staying between 24 and 48 hours at Yuba. 16.7 percent reported staying between one and five hours. The average length of stay was 41 hours.

Figure 5: Towns in Which Respondents Spent Money

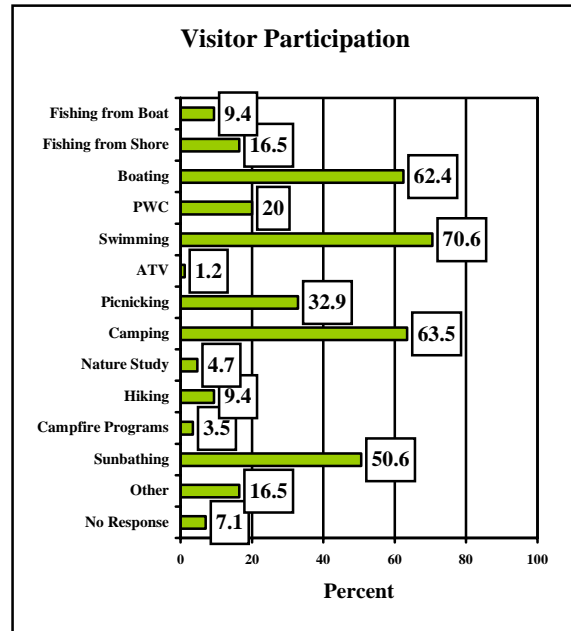


38.8 percent of respondents reported spending money in Nephi. 25.9 percent of respondents reported spending money in Scipio.

Yuba Visitors Enjoy a Wide Range of Activities During Their Stay

Visitors list boating and camping as their primary reason for visiting the park, but they also take part in a wide array of activities from sunbathing and swimming to use of personal watercraft (PWC), fishing, picnicking and hiking. In open-ended comments, visitors noted biking, walking, canoeing, reading and enjoying scenery as activities they participated in at the park. One interesting response to the survey was that the respondents were almost evenly split on the need for concessions at the park, with the number opposing concessions just slightly higher than those who favored concessions.

Figure 6: Recreational Activities at Yuba Special Recreation Area



Respondents chose swimming (70.6 percent), camping (63.5 percent) and boating (62.4 percent) as the top three recreational activities they participated in at Yuba State Park.

Note: The category of "other" includes biking, canoes, facilities, family gathering/reunion, let kids play in water, rafting, reading, enjoying beautiful scenery and walking.

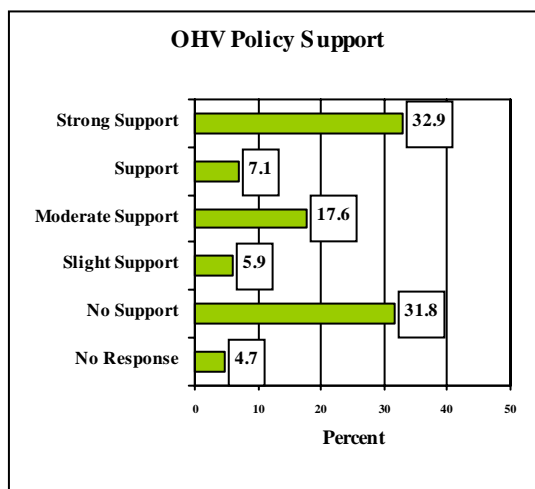
Multiple responses may total over 100 percent.

A Majority of Yuba Visitors Support OHV Use

Presently, Yuba is closed to OHV use. This has been an item of discussion by park staff, county officials and park visitors. The BLM will re-open routes in 2009 and have provided cultural resource clearances.

In response to a survey question about the use of OHVs from campsites to designated OHV areas, 57.6 percent of respondents moderately or strongly supported the idea, with 37.5 percent expressing slight or no support. However, a significant percent of visitors, 31.8 percent, expressed no support for a revised policy that allows OHV travel from campsites to designated OHV areas outside the park. The concerns of these visitors will need to be addressed in any new policy.

Figure 7: Level of Support for Policy Allowing OHV Travel from Campsites to Designated OHV Areas



Approximately one-third (32.9 percent) of respondents were in strong support of the proposed policy to allow OHV travel from campsites to designated OHV areas outside the park. Conversely, 31.8 percent stated that they did not support the proposed policy. Overall, 57.6 percent of respondents listed moderate to strong support.

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About Yuba State Park's Surrounding Area

Demographic and Socioeconomic Information

According to an updated report from the Utah State Data Center, the combined population of the four counties around Yuba (Millard, Juab, Sanpete and Sevier) was 69,974 in July 2007. This represents 2.6 percent of the state's population. The four counties cover a very large area, but most of the population is concentrated along the eastern edges of Millard and Juab counties or in Sanpete and Sevier counties. Sanpete and Sevier counties account for two-thirds of the total population for the four counties. Average annual rates of change for population growth over the seven-year period from 2000 to 2006 ranged from 1.1 percent in Sevier County to 2.2 percent in Juab County. This compares with an average annual 2.7 percent growth rate over the same seven-year period for the entire state.

Approximately 30 percent of the entire population of the area is under age 18, a statistic that is comparable to the statewide average. Approximately 12 percent of the population is more than 65 years old as compared to the statewide average of 8.7 percent. Over 97 percent is white while 2.3 percent in Juab County to 11 percent in Millard County are Latino. People of American Indian heritage accounted for just over one percent while all other ethnic groups were less than one percent.

The median household income in 2004 was \$35,232 for Sanpete, \$39,160 for Sevier, \$40,468 for Millard, and \$41,862 for Juab,

as compared to \$47,224 for the state as a whole.

Employment in local, state and federal government accounts for the greatest share of jobs in the four counties with retail trade and farm employment also important contributors. An interesting statistic for Millard and Juab counties is the high percent of female-owned businesses, approximately 40 percent, as compared to a statewide average of 25 percent.

Agriculture continues to be an important source of income and jobs. However, farm employment has remained at the same levels since 1997, while employment in other economic sectors has grown modestly. Agricultural employment accounts for 11 percent of jobs in the four counties. In 2004, Millard and Sanpete counties ranked fifth and sixth respectively among all Utah counties for cash receipts from farming.

According to the Utah Division of Travel Development, tourism was responsible for over 2,900 jobs in all four counties in 2003. In Juab County, 500 tourism jobs accounted for 20 percent of non-farm employment; in Sevier County 1,237 tourism jobs accounted for 17 percent of non-farm employment; and in Millard County, 643 tourism jobs accounted for 15 percent of non-farm employment. In the somewhat larger economy of Sanpete County, 520 tourism jobs accounted for seven percent of non-farm employment.

Economic Impacts of Yuba Special Recreation Area

The economic impacts of annual visitation to Yuba are estimated using IMPLAN Professional Version 2.01.1025 software. IMPLAN is software used to assist in estimating economic impacts of land and resource management planning.

The study area covers four counties—Juab, Millard, Sanpete and Sevier counties, which include the communities of Nephi, Delta, Gunnison, Richfield Fillmore and other towns. Input data for economic impacts include (1) visitor spending on supplies, vehicle expenses and restaurants; (2) yearly expenditures by Yuba State Park; and (3) estimates for two staff positions and support expenditures for BLM staff attributable to Yuba State Park.

The results of the IMPLAN model are that Yuba Special Recreation Area, with estimated visitation of a low of 100,000 and a high of 150,000 provides for between 25 and 42 jobs in the four-county study area. Direct impacts of the recreation area range from between \$1.1 million and \$2.4 million per year. Indirect impacts (the results of purchases by businesses and institutions patronized by park visitors) and induced impacts (the results of household purchases by employees and proprietors of those businesses and institutions) ranged from \$330,000 to \$620,000. Total impacts are therefore \$1.4 million to \$3 million.

The estimated economic and employment impacts are modest for a recreation area with the number of visitors Yuba has.

There are some possible explanations for these modest numbers.

1. Visitor survey results with respect to group size and length of stay may be unreliable because of sample size. Group size and length of stay are two of the least reliable input measures for the impact analyses done for Yuba. Large group size reduces direct economic impacts because expenditures per visitor go down significantly. Average group size, based on survey data, was between seven and 14 people. On the other hand, survey results, limited as they are, may accurately represent groups of family and friends who routinely visit Yuba.
2. Visitor survey results with respect to the proportion of groups in each category (local day user, local overnight user, non-local day user, and non-local overnight user) may be unreliable because of the low number of surveys. To assure the reasonableness of survey data, estimates were compared to USDA Forest Service expenditure data for similar recreational users. Many groups visiting Yuba may come in self-sufficient groups, having purchased many supplies and items at their town of residence.
3. There may be few convenient places to purchase supplies, food and vehicle related items near Yuba and few opportunities for activity-related expenditures.

Human History around Yuba Special Recreation Area

American Indian presence near Yuba Reservoir is evident in pictographs and petroglyphs at Painted Rocks and in the

archeological evidence in the Nephi Mounds. In addition, the names of local towns or landmarks have their origins in American Indian languages. For example, Juab is from a Ute word meaning “flat or level plain”; Sanpete derives its name from the San Pitch band of Utes; Pahvant means “close to water.”

Excavations at the Nephi Mounds north of Nephi reveal an important agricultural site for Fremont-Sevier cultures, with stone- and mud-walled structures as well as pottery, stone points, and metates. These people disappeared around A.D. 1300.



Pictographs at Yuba Special Recreation Management Area

The Ute Indians lived in the area by the time of first contacts with European explorers. The Utes traveled in small family groups or bands, with each band traveling for seasonal hunting and gathering activities over a defined territory. Bands were named for the area they occupied. The San Pitch band lived in the Sanpete Valley. Other bands in the area were the Pahvant in the Sevier Lake area and the Moanumts in the Upper Sevier Valley. At times, these bands would gather for various social and trading activities.

The earliest contact with the Ute bands in this area may have been with the Dominguez-Escalante expedition near the city of Nephi in 1776. This initial contact was followed by a period of prosperity for the Utes, who benefited from both raids on and trade with fur trappers and Spanish settlements in California.

The town of Gunnison was settled in 1859 at the confluence of the Sevier and San Pitch rivers. Water diversions from the Sevier River began immediately, first at the town of Deseret near Delta. As more settlers moved in, all water resources along the Sevier River were completely diverted. Conflicts developed as water users in the upper basins of the Sevier River diverted water as long as it was available. In periods of drought, as occurred in the late 1890s, users in the lower basins suffered from lack of water during the hot summers.

These disputes led to a number of decrees governing the ownership and use of water and also the construction of several dams for water storage along the whole Sevier River drainage. The first dams were constructed in 1860 and 1872 in the upper drainages of the Sevier. Many more dams and extensive canals were built between 1890 and 1915. Two canals, the Sevier Valley-Piute Canal and the Central Utah Canal, were 65 miles and 52 miles long, respectively.

John Wesley Powell described the Sevier River drainage basin and its importance to agriculture in his *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region*, published in 1878.

This district embraces all the country drained by the waters which flow into the Sevier Lake,

and the areas drained by many small streams which are quickly lost in the desert. The greater part of the irrigable land lies in the long, narrow valleys walled by the plateaus, especially along the Sevier, Otter Creek, and the San Pete. The arable lands greatly exceed the irrigable, and good selections may be made. Most of the irrigable lands are already occupied by farmers, and the waters are used in their service. In the valleys among the high plateaus, and along their western border, the grasses are good, and many pasturage farms may be selected, and the springs and little streams that come from the plateau cliffs will afford an abundant supply of water. The summits of the plateaus will afford an abundant summer pasturage.

Westward among the Basin Ranges feeble and infrequent springs are found; there is little timber of value, but the lower mountains and foot hills have cedars and piñon pines that would be valuable for fuel if nearer to habitations. The cedar and piñon hills bear scant grasses. The valleys are sometimes covered with sage, sometimes with grease wood, sometimes quite naked.



John Wesley Powell, circa 1891 (Grand Canyon NP collection)

Construction on the Sevier Bridge (Yuba) Reservoir was begun in 1902 and completed in 1907 through the efforts of every able-bodied man and boy in the area. The dam was raised in 1913 to store approximately 236,000 acre-feet of water. This is nearly half of the storage capacity of the entire Sevier River drainage basin. The other two major reservoirs, Otter Creek and Piute, also serve as state parks.



Sevier Bridge Reservoir, circa 1920 (Sevier River Water Users' Association).

The Sevier River and the Sevier Bridge Reservoir have undergone several name changes by the various European explorers and settlers. The cartographer with the Dominguez-Escalante expedition, Don Bernado de Miera, named the river Rio Buenaventura. In 1813, traders Moricio Arce and Lagos Garcia re-named it Rio Sebero. This Spanish name is likely

the source of the name “Sevier.” The reservoir was named for the dam built above a bridge crossing the Sevier River but the local ranchers and farmers who built the dam nicknamed it U.B. Dam for “you be damned if you did and damned if you didn’t” for the hard work they invested. Locally, the reservoir became Yuba Reservoir, memorialized in a song written by John Henry Western of Deseret, Utah called “U.B. Dam.” Yuba State Park takes its name from the local name for Sevier Bridge Reservoir.

Geography and Geology

The Sevier River basin is a terminal basin that covers 10,575 square miles, all within the state of Utah. It extends north as an inverted “J” through south-central Utah from the Paunsaugunt Plateau in Kane County, through narrow valleys in Sevier and Piute counties to emerge on the eastern edge of the Great Basin and end at Sevier Lake. This lake is a dry playa, with water only in years of high precipitation.

The area has been covered several times by seas and once by a freshwater lake. Important geological features of this basin are the Markagunt, Paunsaugunt and Wasatch plateaus, the Tushar Mountains and the Sevier Desert. The basin varies in elevation from 4,518 feet at Sevier Lake to 12,173 feet at Delano Peak in the Tushar Mountains. Most surface geologic layers are of recent geologic origin such as Tertiary volcanic or sediments from Jurassic through Quaternary periods. There are two major faults running northeast. The Paunsaugunt fault runs from northern Arizona past Bryce Canyon. The Sevier fault runs from northern Arizona along the eastern side of Sevier

Valley and into Sanpete Valley. Displacement along these faults is 2,000 feet. A smaller fault line, the Elsinore fault, is one of the most active in Utah.

Yuba Reservoir lies a few miles southeast of where the Sevier River changes course and flows to the southwest. The dam is built where the river emerges from the valley created by the Valley Mountains to the south and the San Pitch Mountains to the north. Lake elevation is at 4,978 feet and it drains a watershed area of 1,260,000 acres. The average depth of the reservoir is 21 feet, but 80 feet is its maximum depth. The reservoir is 22 miles long and three miles across at its widest point. The reservoir’s water quality is fairly good despite the fact that salinity of the Sevier River increases as it reaches the lower areas of the basin. Salinity measurements below the confluence of the Sevier and San Pitch Rivers measured 1,103 mg/L compared with less than 300 mg/L above Sigurd, as reported by the Division of Water Resources in 1997. The reservoir is high in calcium carbonates, making the water hard. Water quality of the reservoir exceeds state standards for phosphorous and dissolved oxygen.



Sevier Bridge Reservoir during 1983 Flooding, photo by Tom Friedman (Sevier River Water Users' Association).

Climate

Yuba Reservoir is at the eastern edge of the Sevier Desert and has the semi-arid climate of southwestern deserts. Precipitation in the Sevier River Basin is influenced by two storm patterns, one as a frontal system from the Pacific Northwest during the winter and spring, the second as later summer and early fall thunderstorms from the south and southwest. Annual precipitation at Gunnison averages nine inches a year, with most of that as snowfall in the winter months. Scipio, just a few miles away on the west side of the Valley Mountains, gets 14 inches a year. Both communities have short growing seasons with just over 100 frost-free days. Average maximum temperature in January is 38 degrees Fahrenheit, and average maximum temperature in July is 91 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperature extremes range from a recorded low of -40 degrees to a high of 106 degrees Fahrenheit. The Utah Division of Water Resources found wet and dry cycles occurring every 10 to 15 years.

Ecosystem

Vegetation types in the elevations of 4,500 to 5,000 feet are comprised of grasses and northern desert shrub. Important vegetation in addition to sagebrush includes Indian rice grass, needle and thread grass, winterfat, black greasewood and shad scale. Salts affect the soils in the bottomlands. These areas provide winter range for livestock and wildlife. There are several grazing allotments managed by the BLM within the Yuba Reservoir Special Recreation Management Area.

The foothills east of Highway 28 are considered critical winter habitat for mule deer. Private lands also provide important winter habitat. The Valley Hills to the southeast of Yuba Reservoir provide summer habitat.

The Utah Natural Heritage Program, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) reports “recent records of occurrence for bald eagle within a one-half mile radius of the project area noted above. In addition, in the vicinity there are recent records of occurrence for leatherside chub and long-billed curlew. All of the aforementioned species are included on the *Utah Sensitive Species List*.”



Long-billed curlew (drawing by Chris Goldade, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, USGS)

The Intermountain West Joint Venture in its 2005 *Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation in Utah* designated Yuba Reservoir and nearby Chicken Creek Reservoir as Bird Habitat Conservation Area 30 for the southern region of the state. The plan cites these criteria for designation as a habitat conservation area: open water with large marsh areas around the perimeter; waterfowl and shorebird nesting habitat; long-billed curlew nesting in adjacent fields; and peregrine falcon foraging during migration.

The plan cites the following additional species as priority birds for this area: cinnamon teal, gadwall, northern pintail, northern shoveler, Canada goose, American avocet and black-necked stilt.

Natural Hazards Analysis

The Utah Division of Homeland Security conducted a natural hazards analysis for Yuba State Park and the surrounding area in 2007. This study identified risks from seasonal or flash floods, severe weather events, earthquakes and wildfires.

Severe weather events, such as floods and summer thunderstorms, with lightning or hail, pose a significant threat to park visitors. This is a particular hazard to those boating or fishing by boat at Yuba State Park.

The Sevier River Bridge Dam has been identified as a “high hazard” dam, defined in Utah Code as, those dams which, if they fail, have a high probability of causing loss of human life or extensive economic loss, including damage to critical public utilities. The risk of failure of this dam comes from flood events or earthquakes.

The Utah Division of Homeland Security reports as follows on earthquake hazards: “The Six County region’s earthquake threat from the Intermountain Seismic Belt and other crustal rock strain release areas is high...During historic times the largest recorded earthquake in Juab County has not reached above 5.7 on the Richter magnitude scale, yet geologic

investigation has determined much larger events have happened in the recent geologic past and could happen in the future.”



In August 1994, a controlled burning of vegetation on the southeast shore of Yuba Lake produced a towering firewhirl. (Photo by Jim Hanks.)

The area around Yuba State Park is at moderate risk for wildfire, with some areas of high risk near the park. The presence of campgrounds and campfires increase the potential of fire in the area. Fires can affect park attendance and air quality.

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Issues and Recommendations

The planning team, park staff and public participants identified a number of issues and corresponding recommendations for Yuba during the Resource Management Planning process. Issues discussed related to facilities development, creation of new recreational opportunities, resolving water and land resource conflicts, and promoting joint management between state parks and the BLM. These issues were identified by various means, including input from planning team members, the public-at-large and through a visitor survey. Planning team members and the public identified six issue areas that are addressed in this plan. In addition to the recommendations developed by the planning team, the Utah Division of Homeland Security identified an issue area for natural hazards.

An analytical technique used to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and future threats (known as “SWOT” analysis) for Yuba helped in the development of these issues. A specific description or statement summarizing each issue was constructed to clearly identify and articulate each problem or challenge.

A number of constraints (i.e., available funding, adequate staff, rights of water users, federal policies and management agreements, etc.) will need to be addressed prior to issue resolution. Planning team members, planning staff and Division experts identified some of the limiting factors that may hinder implementation of a specific team recommendation.

The planning team developed specific recommendations for the identified issues. The planning team’s recommendations were arrived at by consensus of opinion among those who attended team meetings.

Management of Yuba Special Recreation Management Area

Yuba is currently co-managed by the BLM and the Division. Both agencies have benefited from this partnership through shared resources and management expertise. This cooperative management has allowed Yuba to extend beyond lands owned by the Division to use substantial acreage managed by the BLM and to create new facilities for visitors.

The area has a reputation as a ‘rowdy/party’ location. With the joint management of the area, the area is now used by groups of families and friends coming for a wide variety of activities within the Special Recreation Management Area.

Under current operating agreements, Yuba State Park staff manages developed recreation sites on both state- and BLM-owned lands. The park retains revenues collected in fees after payment to the BLM of three percent of fees collected on facilities on BLM lands.

With past management problems resolved, the planning team recommends investigating a single managing agency for the Yuba Special Recreation Management Area.

Management Goal #1 – Move toward a Single Managing Agency for Yuba Recreation Area

The mission of the Division is to “enhance the quality of life by preserving and providing natural, cultural and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.”

The management responsibilities of the BLM are broader. The agency manages multiple resources and uses, including energy and minerals, timber, forage, recreation, wild horse and burro herds, fish and wildlife habitat, wilderness areas, and archaeological, paleontological and historical sites. These are on federally owned lands, mostly in western states.

The mission set by the planning team for Yuba is as follows: to protect and enhance the park’s natural and cultural resources, provide a variety of safe and desirable water and land based recreational and educational opportunities while having a positive impact on local and state economies.

The planning team considered how the Division and the BLM might co-manage the park/recreation area while still meeting their respective goals and objectives. The BLM office in Fillmore has limited staff for recreation management although the agency is able to hire seasonal staff to assist in recreation management. With this staff, the BLM manages the two Special Recreation Management Areas and dispersed recreation on 4.7 million acres within Juab and Millard counties. Yuba State Park staff manages developed recreation sites on both state and BLM

lands. For these reasons, the planning team favors a single managing agency for the Yuba Special Recreation Management Area. In the interim, the team recommends that the West Desert District of the BLM incorporate the facility improvements and expanded recreation opportunities in this plan in their next planning cycle for the Yuba Special Recreation Management Area.

Recommendations:

1. The Division should investigate a single managing agency for Yuba Special Recreation Management Area as one alternative to provide seamless management of state and BLM lands for the benefit of visitors.
2. The West Desert District of the BLM should consider writing a cooperative Special Recreation Management Plan with Utah State Parks for the Yuba recreation area. This plan would need to be consistent with the existing BLM Resource Management Plan for the West Desert District Office. The BLM is urged to adopt recommendations in this plan for facilities and recreational opportunities on BLM lands in that planning process.

Facilities and Development

Yuba is a destination park visited by large groups of family and friends who often stay for two or more days. Visitors to the park enjoy a wide range of activities, even though facilities at the park are modest and, at Oasis, aging.

The planning team believes that upgrading and expanding facilities will offer increased opportunities for an even greater range of

activities at Yuba. Improved facilities could attract new visitors to the park as well.



Tent Camping at Oasis Campground

Facilities Goal #1 – Improve Existing Facilities

The facilities at the original campground at Oasis on Yuba's west shores were built in the 1970s. This site has long been popular, but facilities are aging, with sites that are small and with limited hook-ups for recreational vehicles.

Improvements are needed for these existing facilities. For example, the aging restrooms need to be replaced and the water system replaced or repaired. The team indicated that there should be more recreational opportunities and facilities for visitors.

Recommendations

1. Replace and improve facilities at Oasis.
 - A. Replace and/or expand the Oasis area to the north and west on land owned by the Division.
 - B. Prepare a site plan for future uses and expansion, such as parking to serve OHV users as well as boaters and other day-use visitors for all

park areas. This includes improvements to existing facilities. Campsites should have hook-ups and additional restrooms.

- C. Oasis needs more and larger group sites and camping sites that can accommodate larger RVs.
 - D. Investigate acquiring adjacent land from School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration for expansion.
 - E. If a new campground is developed at a different location, convert the current Oasis campground into a day-use area.
 - F. Renovate restrooms and septic system at Oasis campground.
 - G. Replace water line serving Oasis campground and upgrade other water system components. The current storage capacity of 32,000 gallons is not adequate even for present needs. Future development at Oasis will put even more demands on this limited water storage capacity.
 - H. Investigate water quantity and water rights at Blue Springs and determine if this is enough to cover needs at Oasis in the future.
 - I. Construct overflow parking lot for day-use boat trailers. Plan to meet future needs for parking.
 - J. Replace fish-cleaning station at Oasis with one suitable for warm water fishery.
 - K. Build cabins or yurts (with A/C) that will serve users riding on the Arapene and Piute Trail systems.
 - L. Remodeled and new facilities should be built to ADA standards.
2. Plan trailheads and motorized and non-motorized trails to more fully utilize

BLM lands near the Yuba Special Recreation Area.

- A. Install trailheads at Oasis to access trails on BLM land to the north and south of the park.
 - B. Design hiking trails from Oasis to adjoining BLM lands.
 - C. Develop marked trail systems on BLM lands.
3. Improve facilities at North and West beaches.
- A. Install a dump station at North Beach. This is dependent on developing a water supply for the area. There is the potential for joint water development between private landowners and the Division for North and West beach areas, with BLM approval.
 - B. Develop showers to take the pressure off Oasis campground facilities.
 - C. Remodeled and new facilities should be built to ADA standards.
4. Expand and improve facilities at Painted Rocks.
- A. Pave gravel road from highway to Painted Rocks. Determine if this is on UDOT project list or if there are other road funds, possibly with county help.
 - B. Improve Temple Road for all-weather travel.
 - C. Explore bridging the reservoir at the Narrows near Painted Rocks to allow access to OHV trails on the south side of the reservoir. This can be an alternative recreation use for this area, especially when water levels are too low to allow access to water by boats.

- D. Build cabins or yurts (with A/C) that will serve users riding on the Arapene and Piute Trail systems.
- E. Explore wind generation as a source of electricity.
- F. Remodeled and new facilities should be built to ADA standards.

5. Offer access to anglers along stretches of beach formerly closed to use.
- A. Open the shoreline outside of existing developed recreation sites for angler access.
 - B. Provide basic facilities such as trash containers and vault toilets at sites visited by anglers.
6. Provide adequate staff housing.
- A. Provide adequate housing for full-time staff and for seasonal employees. Full-time employees need a larger residence to assure on-site presence at the park. One possibility to explore is to use the existing house for seasonal employees and build a larger house for full-time staff.
 - B. Provide housing for seasonal employees at Painted Rocks.
 - C. Remodeled and new facilities should be built to ADA standards.



Triathlon Event

Facilities Goal #2 – Provide New Recreation Activities, Opportunities, and Facilities for Visitors

The reservoir is the focus of recreational opportunities and activities at the park. Yuba is known primarily as a boating and fishing recreation area. The location of Yuba in central Utah, close to I-15, makes it an attractive site to develop new recreational opportunities, activities and facilities. The planning team recommends recreational opportunities that could be added to the recreation area.

Recommendations

1. Diversify recreation opportunities, such as hiking, biking and OHV trails.
 - A. Construct appropriate OHV trails to the west and south of Oasis. Print OHV maps to keep riders on developed trails.
 - B. Allow OHV access to and from campsites, especially at Painted Rocks.
 - C. Design and construct connections between Yuba's campgrounds and the Arapene and Piute Trail systems.
 - D. Work with partners at the federal, state, county and local levels to investigate and develop OHV riding opportunities in the area.
 - E. Work with the community and county government to plan more special events—volleyball, wakeboard, fishing tournaments, bird watching, school groups and kite flying events.
 - F. Investigate potential sites for equestrian trails.
 - G. Integrate increased marketing and recreational opportunities with a business plan.

- H. Protect cultural resources and develop interpretive opportunities.
- I. Promote wind-based recreation opportunities.



Finish line at Yuba Rock and Road Triathlon

Resource Management

The planning team identified several issues related to resource management. Among these are dealing with lake fluctuations, promoting a healthy warm water fishery, protecting and interpreting archeological resources, and managing cattle grazing in the park.

Resource Goal #1 – Water Fluctuations

Management of water levels of Yuba Reservoir is outside of the park's control. The planning team considered recommendations to mitigate the effects of such fluctuations on park resources and visitor experience.

Recommendations

1. Expand activities to attract visitors during low water times and shoulder seasons.
2. Monitor recreation activities around Yuba reservoir to reduce risk of soil erosion and adverse impacts to water quality.

Resource Goal #2 – Protect and Manage Resources within the Recreation Area

A. Besides the recreational resources that attract visitors to Yuba, there are other resources that should receive protection (aesthetic, natural, cultural, visual, wildlife habitat). The planning team made recommendations on how the park could enhance appreciation for those resources while also providing for their protection.

Recommendations

1. A vital warm water fishery should be fostered at Yuba Reservoir

- A. Work with partners such as UDWR, Consolidated Sevier Bridge Reservoir Company, and others to purchase easement and/or water rights for conservation pool at Yuba.
 - B. Work with the UDWR and others to build habitat structures, especially for habitat at low water levels and to enhance opportunities for fishing from shore.
3. Resolve conflicts between recreation users and cattle use of North and West beaches.
 - A. With the BLM and ranchers, investigate ways to keep cows from beach areas. Cows are there for access to water and some feed.
 - B. Develop a team of stakeholders to solve problems in a way that benefits all parties.
 3. Work with local and county officials to enhance and expand recreation opportunities at the park.
 - A. Monitor and participate in local land-use planning for activities that may impact Yuba.
 - B. Investigate the possibility of purchasing private lands for inclusion in the Yuba Special Recreation Area.
 4. Work with BLM and UDWR to maintain or improve wildlife habitat within the Special Recreation Management Area to include upland, shoreline and flat water habitats.

Marketing

Yuba's proximity to the Wasatch Front and overall location afford it the possibility of becoming a year-round destination. There are potential partnering opportunities for marketing and advertising Yuba and other area or regional attractions.

Marketing Goal #1 – In Partnership with Others, Market the Park and Surrounding Area

Yuba State Park's heaviest visitation occurs from May through August. However, there are fishing, camping, hiking and other recreational opportunities that would be suitable for year-round visits.

These opportunities and activities and their respective seasons and time periods should be marketed, partnering with the BLM, local communities and the state. Sources of funding and expertise for marketing should also be identified.



Wakeboard Competition

Recommendations:

1. Promote recreation activities and opportunities that would attract new visitors and entice return visits to the park.
 - A. Sponsor OHV events once access issues within Yuba are addressed.
 - B. Contact local school districts to invite them to use Yuba as an

outdoor classroom for curricula dealing with cultural resources, fisheries and career fairs featuring professional opportunities in the field of natural resources.

- C. Explore Yuba's potential to host local community activities and celebrations. Promote Yuba as a good site for church events, scouting, team sports and other community groups. Local businesses, for example, could sponsor pizza parties or ice cream socials.
- D. Promote fisheries and the restoration of fisheries at Yuba. Provide flyers to sporting goods stores along the Wasatch Front with pictures of big fish caught at Yuba.
- E. Develop and update Division and UDWR websites devoted to fishing conditions. These and other sites need more immediate information about good fishing conditions at Yuba.
- F. Expand the visitation base by bringing people to Yuba who would not normally visit, such as volleyball participants, triathlon competitors, wakeboarders, kite enthusiasts, bird watchers and others.
- G. Send information to school sports programs announcing special competitions or events to attract their participation.
- H. Explore opportunities for concessions at Yuba.
- I. Increase advertising along the Wasatch Front, such as billboard advertising along interstate highways.
- J. Market areas and times of use that are not fully utilized, such as Eagle View and Painted Rocks or weekdays and shoulder seasons.

- K. Market Eagle View campground to increase use or allow vehicle access if increased marketing doesn't work.
 - L. Develop school group activities and opportunities for scouts, possibly at Eagle View.
 - M. Explore the potential of Eagle View campground for equestrian camping.
2. Establish partnerships for marketing efforts and funding
- A. Approach local and state representatives about changing the name of Sevier Bridge Reservoir on maps and documents so that there is consistency between the reservoir name and Yuba State Park.
 - B. Work with the Utah Department of Transportation to install highway signs for Yuba State Park consistent with current Division standards for signs.
 - C. Integrate increased marketing and recreational opportunities with a business plan.
 - D. Continue and expand partnerships between Juab, Millard, Sanpete and Sevier counties and Yuba for promotion of the park and the surrounding area.
 - E. Assign park staff to work on marketing efforts.
 - F. Acquire marketing funds from the Division.
 - G. Develop partnership opportunities for marketing with schools, the BLM, UDWR and other agencies.
 - H. Work with producers of outdoor-oriented television shows and other marketing agencies to feature events and attractions at Yuba Special Recreation Management Area.
 - I. Create kiosks with local businesses to provide advertising and

information about community resources.

- J. Work with dealerships across the state to hold OHV events once access issues are addressed.
- K. Market existing opportunities with the State Travel and Tourism offices and other partners.

Conflicts

The planning team noted several conflicts that exist or may surface at Yuba, especially as the park provides increased recreational opportunities to visitors. A number of public comments have asked for some segregation of use, either through timing or zoning areas for specific activities.

Other conflicts that must be addressed are the use of beaches by both visitors and by grazing permittees to allow access to water for their stock. Also, visitors sometimes trespass on private property.

Conflicts Goal #1 – Identify Conflicts and Determine Solutions

The planning team considered what conflicts currently exist at the park and how these conflicts might best be solved. They also considered what possible conflicts could arise and how to prevent them.

Recommendations:

- 1. Address current and potential conflicts through adequate facilities, education and enforcement.
 - A. Design and implement programs to educate different users to accommodate competing uses. These competing uses include day-use

versus overnight use of North and West beaches or boat fishing versus water sports like water skiing, wakeboarding or PWC use.

- B. Enforce existing restrictions such as wakeless areas of the reservoir, the number of camper vehicles allowed on beach areas and quiet hours in camping areas.
- C. Add staff dedicated to enforcement of rules to avoid the severe user conflicts that occurred in the past.
- D. Provide adequate facilities close to beaches (day-use areas, group sites, hook-ups, dump stations, trash collection and restrooms).
- E. Respect the capacity of each area as measured by vehicles; enforce limits on vehicle numbers, especially on beach areas to allow adequate room for day use.
- F. Partner with Juab County and Sanpete law enforcement agencies or Search and Rescue volunteers on busy weekends.

Conflicts Goal #2 –Resolve Conflicts with Private Landowners

Private landowners have grazing permits or own land close to some of the popular beaches at Yuba. These landowners need access to the reservoir for watering stock. In addition, there are incidents of trespassing by park visitors on private property.

Recommendations:

- 1. Provide practical and mutually beneficial solutions to resource conflicts between park visitors and landowners.
 - A. Work with private landowners, grazing permittees and the BLM to provide other access to water to keep

cows away from developed recreation sites and beaches.

- B. Investigate alternative sources of water for stock such as shares of water from reservoir or joint well development.
- C. Partner with irrigation companies to determine if water from the reservoir can be diverted for cows.
- D. Install fencing to minimize trespassing by park visitors on private lands.

Funding and Budget

Yuba's plan to increase recreational opportunities will mean an increase in the workload for the staff. The park's limited funding will need to be increased to properly staff and operate the park. This will include any site development or workload increases recommended in the RMP. In addition, there is no dedicated or guaranteed funding source for development.

Funding & Budget Goal #1 – Increase Funding and Staff

To achieve the goals of the RMP, Yuba must be assured of adequate funding and staffing levels. The planning team made recommendations regarding park funding and how park staff might achieve the recommendations listed in the RMP.

Recommendations:

- 1. Provide adequate funding and staff to accomplish RMP recommendations for Yuba
 - A. Operational funds must come with any new development.

- B. Dedicate increased funds for marketing to attract new visitors to Yuba.
- C. Add maintenance staff to allow rangers more time for interaction with park visitors for assistance, enforcement and patrol.
- D. Complete a business plan with marketing staffing analysis.
- E. Hire lead seasonal employees to help direct other seasonal employees.
- F. Yuba's development budget should anticipate growth in visitation as the Wasatch Front population expands into counties south of Utah County.

Resource Hazard Mitigation

In addition to the recommendations developed by the planning team, the Utah Division of Homeland Security performed a natural hazard review and made recommendations for mitigating identified hazards. These recommendations are included here.

Recommendations:

- 1. Minimize potential impacts from flooding due to severe storms and spring snowmelt runoff.
 - A. Monitor weather through NOAA or the National Weather Service, especially during summer thunderstorm season.
 - B. Evaluate and identify areas on the benches where spring snowmelt and rain on snowmelt may be a concern.

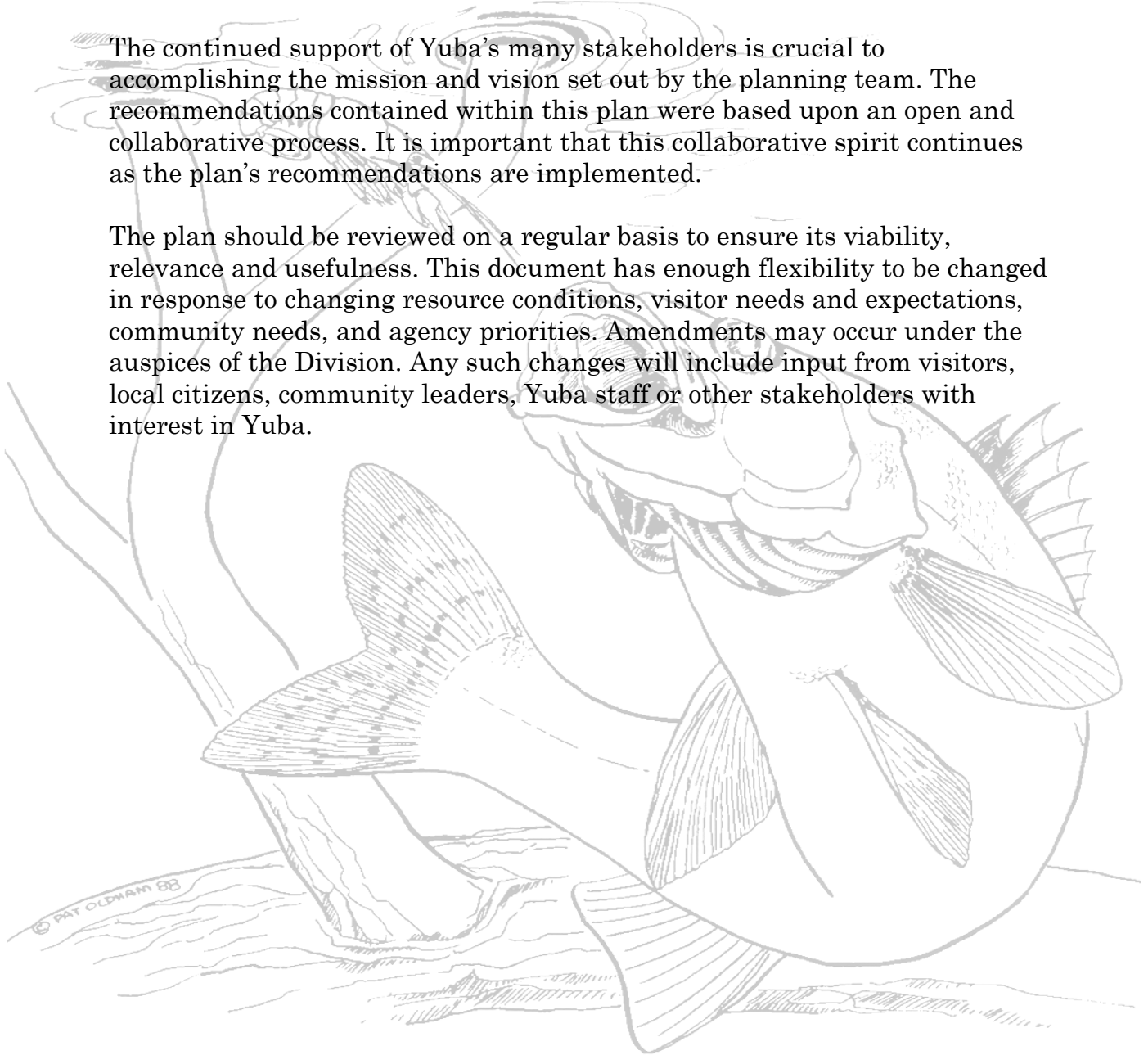
- C. Monitor Sevier Bridge Dam. Staff should be aware of the dam's emergency action plan.
 - D. Advise and update the public about weather-related hazards.
- 2. Minimize impacts from earthquakes.
 - A. Monitor earthquake activity in the area and be ready to address damage to facilities and transportation access to the area.
 - B. Following an earthquake, contact the State Dam Safety Office to ascertain impacts to Sevier Bridge Dam. Become familiar with the emergency action plan for the dam.
 - 3. Minimize potential impacts from wildfire.
 - A. Monitor state and federal wildfire mitigation or response activities in the area, to include post burn debris flows.
 - B. Post and enforce burn restrictions. Distribute wildfire awareness materials to park visitors.
 - 4. Minimize potential impacts from drought.
 - A. Monitor fish habitat and water quality.
 - 5. Minimize impacts from West Nile virus by educating visitors on prevention.

Conclusion

This plan is a blueprint to help implement the planning team's recommendations. The plan outlines the initial steps to be taken in cooperation with Yuba visitors, local communities, and other interested users to: determine the best management strategies for state park resources; develop and improve facilities to serve visitor needs now and into the future; ensure adequate staff and funding; protect the natural and cultural resources at Yuba; provide a stable, productive fishery; enhance the impact of Yuba on local communities and on local and state economies; and expand the recreational opportunities that Yuba offers.

The continued support of Yuba's many stakeholders is crucial to accomplishing the mission and vision set out by the planning team. The recommendations contained within this plan were based upon an open and collaborative process. It is important that this collaborative spirit continues as the plan's recommendations are implemented.

The plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its viability, relevance and usefulness. This document has enough flexibility to be changed in response to changing resource conditions, visitor needs and expectations, community needs, and agency priorities. Amendments may occur under the auspices of the Division. Any such changes will include input from visitors, local citizens, community leaders, Yuba staff or other stakeholders with interest in Yuba.



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Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of Public Comments and Responses

In May 2009, this plan was released to the public for review and comment. During May and June 2009, the plan was made available to the general public by placing an electronic version on the Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation website. Hardcopies were made available to the public at Yuba State Park, the Department of Natural Resources building in Salt Lake City, Juab County offices, and Sanpete Office of Economic Development and Travel. Comments were accepted by e-mail or in writing to the Division's planning section. Four comments were received: a letter from Juab County Commissioners, e-mails from two groups of landowners adjacent to Yuba Reservoir and an e-mail from the Secretary for the Consolidated Sevier Bridge Reservoir Company. The following is a summary of comments received regarding the draft RMP. Each comment is summarized below and is followed by the Division's corresponding response.

Comment: Sole purpose of Yuba Reservoir is for water storage and distribution, managed by the Consolidated Sevier Bridge Reservoir Company (CSBR): (one comment)

Response:

The Division and this RMP recognizes that the primary purpose of Yuba Reservoir is for water storage for irrigation and other water users. The plan makes recommendations for fishery habitat and recreational use to accommodate seasonal fluctuations as the reservoir is drawn down by water users during the summer. The plan suggests investigating the purchase of water shares from willing buyers and with the approval and support of CSBR to establish a conservation pool at Yuba, and to divert water to a remote livestock watering station to meet the needs of BLM grazing permittees and to remove the need for cows to access water on the recreation beaches.

Comment: Expanded OHV use should be encouraged at Yuba Reservoir (one comment)

Juab County Commissioners are in agreement with the decision to open up areas for OHV use within Yuba State Park. The commissioners believe that all citizens have a right to operate OHVs for recreational purposes in a legal, safe and responsible manner as long as private property rights are respected.

Response:

The RMP does make recommendations for OHV use within Yuba Special Recreation Management Area and on surrounding public lands. Utah State

Parks only has ownership responsibilities for a small part of the special recreation management area (Oasis). The remaining lands within the recreation area, as well as the surrounding public lands are administered by the BLM. From Oasis, OHV riders can access county roads designated as open to OHV use by Juab County Ordinance 9-07-2004-A. This ordinance designates certain county-maintained roads as open for public travel for OHVs. These roads are shown on the Juab County ATV Road Map.

The planning team suggested expanding the recreation opportunities throughout the entire recreation management area and recommended that BLM in its future planning efforts for the area consider OHV use and development of support facilities on BLM lands to allow access to county roads or BLM trails open to OHVs. BLM recently lifted a closure on OHV use on BLM trails in the vicinity of Yuba Special Recreation Management Area put in place by BLM's 1994 Yuba Reservoir Recreation Management Plan and by notice in the Federal Register, Vol. 60, No. 51, March 16, 1995.

The planning team and the Yuba State Park staff agree with the Juab County Commissioners in wanting OHV riders to observe laws and private property rights in the operation of their vehicles. The BLM lands surrounding Yuba are open to OHV use currently, and it is hoped that by adding designated routes, signage and staging areas, along with law enforcement by state park and other agency officers, responsible OHV use would result and impacts to the environment, livestock and private property would be mitigated.

Comment: Expanded OHV use should not be encouraged at Yuba Reservoir (two comments)

Comments from two groups of adjacent landowners/grazing permittees oppose encouraging increased OHV use in the area, including the construction of an OHV trailhead within Yuba Special Recreation Management area. Concerns included a return of reckless and negligent operation of OHVs on public and private lands, erosion on BLM lands, disruption to cattle, crowding from Wasatch Front visitors, expansion of facilities at expense of private property, and increased need for law enforcement by the county, state parks and BLM. One group also felt they were not represented or allowed to participate in the planning process and that the needs of cattle operations were not taken into account by the planning team.

Response:

As noted in the response to the previous comment to encourage OHV use, the public lands surrounding the recreation area are currently open to OHV use, as are county roads. It is hoped that by developing trailhead staging areas

and designating trails or travel routes, impacts of OHV use will be controlled and responsible use promoted. The impacts from this use will need to be monitored by managing agencies, and impacts mitigated with the cooperation of all stakeholders.

With regard to representation of all interests on the planning effort for Yuba State Park, the planning process attempts to involve all stakeholders from the beginning of planning efforts. Utah State Park staff first met with invited stakeholders from central Utah in April 2007. This group nominated a number of community members to serve on the planning team. From this list, nine people were chosen to serve on the Yuba RMP planning team. These members represented several business and property interests in the area, including cattle operations. Another opportunity for public involvement was a meeting held at the Juab County Courthouse on June 5, 2007 to identify and prioritize issues received from the general public relating to the state park and recreation area.

The plan also makes recommendations to resolve conflicts about trespass and cows in recreation areas to mutual benefit of all involved parties.

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