

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

Susana Martinez
Governor

John H. Bemis
Cabinet Secretary

Brett F. Woods, Ph.D.
Deputy Cabinet Secretary

Tommy Mutz, Division Director
State Parks Division



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Contact: Jodi McGinnis Porter 505-476-3226; E-mail: Jodi.Porter@state.nm.us

Conchas Lake State Park Closes Boat Ramp *State Park Officials Stress Awareness Due to Low Lake Levels*

SANTA FE, NM – Conchas Lake State Park will close access to all boat ramps effective Friday, August 10th due to dropping water levels, resulting safety concerns, and to prevent property damage during launching and loading of boats. Low precipitation and high temperatures has resulted in extremely low water levels at several state park lakes causing boat access ramps to be closed. However, the boat ramps will be reopened when lake level conditions improve.

“Our hope is that we get some moisture to help restore lake levels,” stated Tommy Mutz State Parks Division Director. “We want boaters to enjoy their lakes and be safe while having fun.”

Unfortunately, changing lake levels bring the potential of new hazards that did not previously exist. Drought conditions throughout the state have brought submerged hazards close to or above the water's surface. At some lakes there are islands that were not there before and changing shorelines and minimized boat ramp conditions for launching and loading boats have made safe boating challenging. Consequently, the prudent boat operator must remain vigilant to all hazards and varying lake conditions. Currently, Conchas, Santa Rosa, Sumner, Brantley, El Vado, Elephant Butte and Caballo Lakes are experiencing low water levels. Clayton and Storrie Lakes have been closed for over a year to motorized boating due to very low water levels and public safety concerns.

As a result, state park officials are evaluating water levels daily, marking hazards, relocating courtesy docks and reminding boaters to boat safe, smart, and to be cautious and aware while out on the water. In addition, it's advisable for boaters to call or visit with park staff in advance to learn more about the lake conditions that may exist as they prepare to head out on the lake.

“Water levels are less than we hoped for this season, we want to make sure that we safeguard boaters from hazards,” said Paul Fishell Conchas Lake State Park Manager.

State parks are great places to find new interests, socialize, and create new memories. Always make safety your first priority, being prepared on the water could save your life and the lives of your loved ones. State law requires that you wear a lifejacket when on a canoe, kayak, or raft and that all children 12 years old and younger wear a lifejacket while on the deck of a moving vessel. The State Parks Division offers FREE boating safety classes around the state and on-line throughout the year.

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

1220 South St. Francis Drive • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
Phone (505) 476-3355 • Fax (505) 476-3361 • www.nmparks.com