

State of New Mexico
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News Release

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Salmon Snagging Closure Areas at Navajo Lake State Park

Navajo Dam, NM – Low water levels at Navajo Lake have caused the New Mexico State Parks Division to close the Pine and Sims Mesa Boat Ramp Areas, including the adjacent “No Wake” zones, to fishing and salmon snagging, State Parks Division officials announced today. Salmon snagging season opens at Navajo Lake October 1. The closure remains in effect through December 31. **The rest of Navajo Lake remains open to snagging from boats, and the shore, including the face of the dam from the spillway to the far corner of the dam.**

Salmon snagging is done with large, weighted treble hooks, and authorities said the low lake level combined with the casting of the heavy hooks presents potential hazards to visitors, boats, and the marinas.

“The safety of our visitors is our top priority,” said Park Superintendent James Valenzuela. “Currently there are too many potential hazards around the Pine and Sims Mesa Boat Ramp Areas.” Those hazards include a varying cliff face, gas lines, electric lines, boats and cables.

A similar closure was implemented last year at the Pine Boat Ramp Area only. Due to low lake levels, the closure is expanded this year to include the Sims Mesa Boat Ramp Area and the No Wake zones at Pine and Sims. “Wake” means white water created from wave action breaking off the vessel’s bow or sides. No Wake zones are implemented for safety and resource protection, often occur near boat ramps and marinas, and are designated by buoys and signs.

Kokanee salmon snagging season is Oct. 1 through Dec. 31 at Navajo Lake, the Pine River, El Vado Lake, Abiquiu Lake, Eagle Nest Lake and the Chama River from El Vado Lake to the west boundary of the Rio Chama Wildlife and Fishing Area. The season is Nov. 15 through Dec. 31 at Heron Lake and Willow Creek. The bag limit is 12 kokanee per day and 24 in possession. For more information about New Mexico’s kokanee salmon seasons, please consult the “[New Mexico Fishing Rules and Information](#)” booklet, available at license vendors and on the Department of Game and Fish website, www.wildlife.state.nm.us.

Navajo Lake is New Mexico's second largest lake, is typically more than 15,000 surface acres and offers the full range of water activities and services. The San Juan River below the dam is world renowned for excellent trout fishing. For more information, call Navajo Lake State Park at 505-632-2278, or visit www.nmparks.com.

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