



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific
Northwest
Region



Clear Lake

Naches Ranger District

Clear Lake is a popular recreation area located about one mile west of Rimrock Lake off U.S. Highway 12 about 40 miles from Yakima. Clear Creek Dam was originally constructed in 1914 to a height of 62 feet as part of the Yakima Irrigation Project and raised an additional 21 feet in 1918. By 1925 the Tieton Dam had been completed creating Rimrock Lake. Clear Lake was no longer the dominant irrigation source, but quickly became a favorite place to camp and a major fisheries resource.

By 1990, Clear Creek Dam began to deteriorate to the point of becoming dangerous. The decision was made to breach the dam and make repairs, which meant drawing Clear Lake down to a meandering creek. Through the collective efforts of private and governmental groups, \$5 million for the reconstruction of Clear Creek Dam was secured through a challenge grant from the U.S. Forest Service, along with matching money from the State of Washington, Yakima Basin Irrigation Districts, and the Clear Lake Task Force (a private citizen's group). By 1993, repairs were completed and once again Clear Lake began to fill. Rehabilitation work was accomplished by a cooperative effort between the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Forest Service.

Four large group camps are located near Clear Lake. YMCA's Camp Dudley, LDS's Church Camp Zarahemla, Northwest Brethren Camp Assn. (Grace Brethren) and Camp Prime Time which caters to disabled and terminally ill children and is supported exclusively by private and corporate donations.

Two popular Forest Service campgrounds (Clear Lake and Indian Creek) occupy the area immediately downstream from the dam.

The river below the dam is the primary spawning grounds for kokanee salmon in Rimrock Lake and uses water released in early fall to ensure adequate flow for spawning activity.

A boat ramp constructed on the south shore of Clear Lake southwest of the dam offers all barrier free facilities.

In 1994 Clear Lake Day Use site was ready for public use. The entire Clear Lake Day Use area was constructed by the U.S. Forest Service with everyone in mind--the physically challenged, senior citizens, children of all ages, and of course you and me. This special site was created in several different steps. The area was distraught with diseased trees suffering from laminated root rot, dwarf mistletoe and pine beetles. With this in mind, foresters selectively logged the area, harvesting dead and diseased trees and replacing them with Douglas fir, lodgepole and ponderosa pine, Engelmann spruce and western larch (tamarack).

Picnic sites were created to accommodate visitors in wheelchairs and connecting trails allow access to numerous wildlife viewing stations along the lake. As you walk along the trails you can see young seedlings as well as large, mature trees. Among these stands you'll find wildflowers such as Calypso orchid, trillium, Indian paintbrush, bluebells, and native shrubs such as kinnickinick, huckleberry, snowberry, and service berry. A variety of fungi, mosses, and lichens are plentiful, challenging those interested to identify them. Millipedes, spiders and insects abound; while snakes, elk, and deer quietly search the forest for food.

There's so much to see and do at Clear Lake! The nature trail travels through riparian areas, rich with aquatic and terrestrial life. Riparian habitats are "home" to rainbow and brook trout, bull trout and cutthroat. Migratory waterfowl use these quality wetlands to sustain healthy populations and even songbirds and buzzing insects are part of this complex ecosystem. Nests, burrows, feathers, paw prints and animal droppings are everywhere, just waiting to be "discovered".

Primary facilities at Clear Lake Day Use site include parking, picnicking, fishing (including a barrier free fishing dock), access to the lake for swimming and a short nature trail. The area is currently being operated by the Naches Ranger District and the fee is \$5.00 per vehicle per day which includes buses. The Northwest Forest Pass, Golden Age/Access and Interagency Senior/Access passes can be used in lieu of the \$5 fee, if they are displayed properly and the card holder has identification. For more information, call or write to: Naches Ranger Station, 10237 U.S. Highway 12, Naches, WA 98937, (509) 653-1400

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**Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests
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