Aesthetics Report

Appendix A: Key Observation Point (KOP) Descriptions and Conditions

DRAFT

Oroville Facilities P-2100 Relicensing

DRAFT for LUWG Review and Comment

prepared by

The HARZA EDAW Team

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KOP MR-1: Nelson Bar Car-top Boat Launch Ramp

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Nelson Bar Car-top Boat Launch Ramp is located at the north end of the west side of the West Branch at the end of Nelson Bar Road. This facility is the northern most recreation site in the Project boundary. The area near this KOP has a largely natural character with thickly forested hillsides and little evidence of manmade items other than the 60 by 60-yard parking area, the access road and launch ramp. The representative photograph for this KOP is taken from the edge of the parking area looking down at the access road and launch ramp. Views from this KOP are confined by the steep sides of the adjacent canyon and focus on the reservoir and nearby hillsides.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.695865, West 121.569318

This KOP is located at the southern edge of this facility's parking area and offers views to the southeast.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Nelson Bar Car-top Boat Launch is mainly used by those launching boats as well as bank fishermen. This location is at the northern end of the west branch of Lake Oroville and does not get a lot of use. People that view this location include those launching their boats, fishing from the shore, or passing by on a scenic drive. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include bank anglers, swimmers, and other day users of the shoreline.

Visible Project Features

There are no Project features related to power generation or transmission visible from this location.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir, the shoreline and the steep canyon walls (especially the unvegetated portion below the high reservoir elevation) are very visible in the foreground and are the dominant visual elements. At low reservoir elevations, the waters of the reservoir recede to the middleground and expose shoreline and the upper reaches of the canyon bottom. At these elevations the exposed shoreline/canyon bottom along with the walls of the canyon become the dominate visual element. During low reservoir elevations trees and other natural debris used for fish habitat are also noticeable from this KOP along the bottom of the canyon.

KOP MR-1: Nelson Bar Car-top Boat Launch Ramp: High Pool - June 13, 2002 (830 feet)

KOP MR-1: Nelson Bar Car-top Boat Launch Ramp: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP MR-2: Lime Saddle Boat Launch

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Lime Saddle area is located on the west side of the West Branch and is accessed from SR 70 and Pentz Road. The four-lane Lime Saddle Boat Launch is located east of the Lime Saddle Marina, which is the second largest marina at the Project and receives significant use. To the west of the boat launch (and behind the location where the photograph was taken) are two large developed parking areas (the main parking area has 43 single-vehicle parking spaces and 127 vehicle/trailer spaces while the overflow lot has room for approximately 100 vehicle/trailer spaces). The photograph for this KOP is at the top of the four-lane Lime Saddle Boat Launch. Views from this location are confined by nearby hillsides and focus on the reservoir and nearby hillsides. Nearby hillsides are steep and fairly thickly vegetated. Manmade features that are visible in the foreground of this KOP include the boat launch ramp, the marina, and moored boats.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.67582, West 121.55882

This KOP is located at the top of the boat launch ramp on the southwest side looking east down the ramp towards the marina facility.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The main viewers from this location are people launching boats on the ramp. Because of it's proximity to Chico, the facility receives heavy use.

Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP. The Project features that are visible from this KOP include the boat launch ramp, waters of the reservoir and components of the Lime Saddle marina complex, all of which are in the foreground.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations, the boat ramp, the marina complex (boats docks and covered moorage docks) and waters of the reservoir are very visible in the foreground from this KOP and are significant visual elements. The adjacent hillsides (both the vegetated portion above the high-water elevation and the unvegetated portion below it) are also quite visible in the middleground and are also significant visual elements. As the reservoir level decreases, more of the boat ramp and adjacent hillside-shoreline is exposed. Moored boats and docks are moved out further into the main channel of the reservoir as the reservoir is lowered. At low reservoir elevations, the blue/reflective water of reservoir and the marina are still visible, but are less significant visual elements. The unvegetated rocky brown and reddish hillsides-shoreline and the elongated dark paved boat launch ramp become more visually significant elements at low reservoir elevations.

KOP MR-2: Lime Saddle Boat Launch: High Pool - June 13, 2002 (830 feet)

KOP MR-2: Lime Saddle Boat Launch: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP MR-3: Lime Saddle Peninsula

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Lime Saddle Peninsula is located south of the Lime Saddle Marina. It is high above the access road to the marina and north of a section of the reservoir used for mooring boats. The peninsula area contains picnic tables and shelters, scattered benches and olive trees in planters. The peninsula area is largely unmaintained and does not have defined walkways. The covered picnic shelters and benches are in poor repair. The KOP is located at the east end of the peninsula. Views are fairly open (although defined by the adjacent steep hillsides) and include much of the West Branch to the east. The manmade character of the area near this KOP is heavily influenced by manmade elements such as the facilities on the peninsula, the presence of the marina and moored boats in the foreground, and the Highway 70 Bridge in the background.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.676, West 121.557

This KOP is located at the eastern end of the peninsula looking southeast along the West Branch.

Use of Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The peninsula offers excellent views of the reservoir and marina below and is used by facility users, sightseers and picnickers.

Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP. Boats moored at the marina and the marina itself are highly visible, as are the waters of the Project.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir, the sides of the adjacent canyon (both the vegetated portion above the high-water elevation and the unvegetated portion below it), and moored boats in the foreground are significant visual elements. At low reservoir elevations the blue/reflective waters of the reservoir recede and expose more of the light-sandy-brown unvegetated sides of the canyon. Moored boats are moved farther away and grouped closer together at low reservoir elevations but are still within the foreground. At low reservoir elevations, the exposed canyon walls-shoreline become the most significant visual elements, although the reservoir and moored boats are still highly visible.

KOP MR-3: Lime Saddle Peninsula: High Pool - June 13, 2002 (830 feet)

KOP MR-3: Lime Saddle Peninsula: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (710 feet)

KOP MR-4: Foreman Creek Car-top Boat Ramp

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Foreman Creek Car-top Boat Ramp is located along the northern portion of the main basin in Lake Oroville. The facility is used for hand launching boats. The KOP selected to represent this area is located on the road used to launch boats. The view from this KOP is oriented to the south and southwest and includes the reservoir side of Oroville Dam and the Bidwell facilities. Both are approximately 3 miles away in the background. This facility is located in a very open area and offers panoramic views of a large portion of the main basin of the reservoir. During high pool elevations, an island appears to the south of the launch which screens a portion of the view. During low pool elevations, the island becomes part of the extended shoreline. Although some manmade features such as the Oroville Dam, floating campsites and the Bidwell recreation complex can be seen from this KOP, the area near the KOP has a largely natural character.

Location of KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.58260, West 121.45183

This KOP is located on the west side of the boat launch road looking to the southwest. The location is marked with three red stripes on the dirt and a red painted rock on an outcrop indicate the specific location. As indicated in the photographs, this KOP is very near the edge of the reservoir at high pool elevations, and is approximately ¾ mile from the water at low pool elevations.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

This recreation area and car-top boat launch is very open and has no shade. The paved road that dead ends into the reservoir is used as the boat launch. This road is very long and provides boat launching access over a wide range of reservoir elevations. Only when the reservoir elevation is lowered to near 700 feet does the access road/launch become unusable. Based on recreation surveys, people who use this facility are swimmers, picnickers, bank anglers, pleasure boaters and boat anglers.

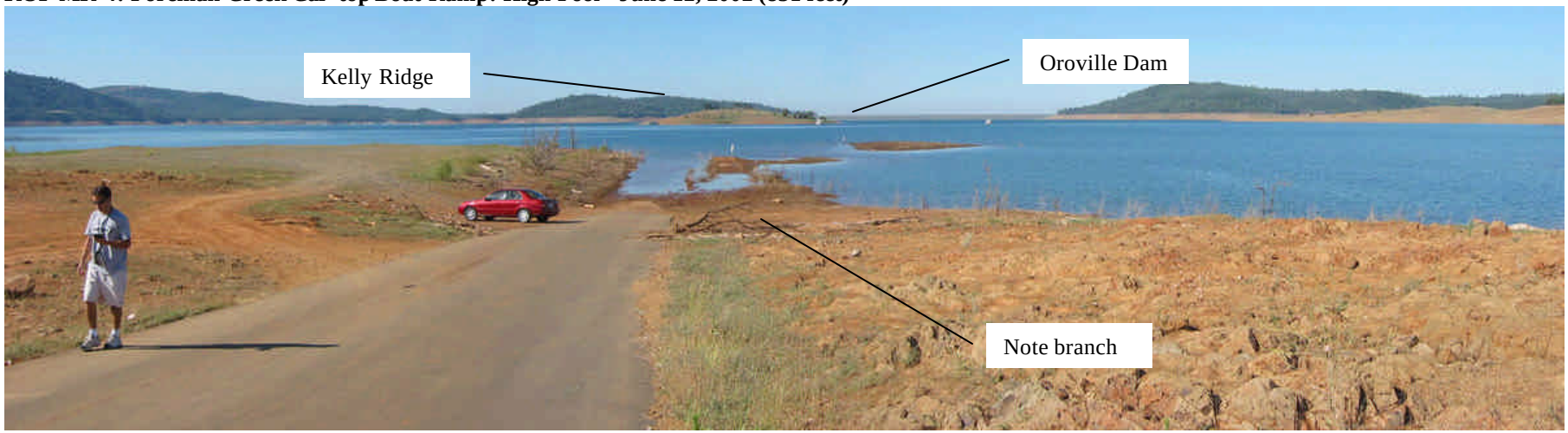
Visible Project Features

There are numerous Project features visible from this KOP. To the south is the Bidwell Canyon Marina and Boat Launch and to the southwest the Oroville Dam can be seen. During parts of the year several buoys and floating campsites are visible from this location.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir and the near shoreline are located in the foreground and along with the distant terrain and the sky, are the visually significant elements. At low pool elevations, the waters of the reservoir recede to a location approximately ½ mile from this KOP. The blue/reflective waters of the reservoir are replaced by the nearby rolling, rocky reddish-brown shoreline as the most significant visual element. The Project elements (the reservoir face of the dam and the Bidwell Canyon Marina complex) that are visible from this KOP in the background are noticeable at both elevations. The dam is more visible at low reservoir elevations than at high elevations because more of the face is exposed as a long horizontal element.

KOP MR-4: Foreman Creek Car-top Boat Ramp: High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)



KOP MR-4: Foreman Creek Car-top Boat Ramp: Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (710 feet)

KOP MR-5: Canyon Creek Bridge

Location and Aesthetic Environment

Canyon Creek Bridge is located where Highway 162 (the Oroville-Quincy Highway) crosses over Canyon Creek. The highway is located along the thickly vegetated sides of the Canyon Creek canyon and offers one of the few places at the Project where drivers have unobstructed views over the waters of the Project. The KOP selected for this location is at the west end of the bridge. Views from this area are enclosed by the adjacent steep hillsides and are focused towards the reservoir. The thickly forested hillsides and lack of manmade features (other than the bridge and highway) give the area near this KOP a largely natural character.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.586, West 121.433

This KOP is located on the southwestern corner of the Canyon Creek Bridge looking down the canyon to the southeast.

Use of Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The view from this KOP is seen by people driving east across the Canyon Creek Bridge and by people who park near the bridge to view Canyon Creek. There is an unpaved pull-off area for approximately 15 cars located on the northern side of Canyon Creek Road near this KOP. An informal, non-maintained trail is used to provide access to the shores of the reservoir.

Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations, the waters of the reservoir along with the forested and unvegetated sides of the canyon are significant visual elements and are located within the foreground of this KOP. The bridge itself is also a significant element (although it can not be seen in the accompanying photographs). At low reservoir elevations, the character of the view from this KOP changes. When the waters of the reservoir recede, expansive areas of the steep, grey-brown-reddish unvegetated canyon sides become the most significant visual element and all that is left of the waters of the reservoir is Canyon Creek flowing through deposited material at the bottom of the canyon.

KOP MR-5: Canyon Creek Bridge (west): High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)

KOP MR-5: Canyon Creek Bridge (west): Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (710 feet)

KOP MR-6: Bidwell Bar Bridge (Highway 162)

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Bidwell Bar Bridge is located where Highway 162 (the Oroville-Quincy Highway) crosses over the Middle Fork. This view is similar to that of people driving over the bridge. The KOP selected for this area is located at the turnout on the north side of the Bridge. This KOP is very open and provides panoramic views of the main body of the reservoir, the entrance to the Middle and South Fork arms of the reservoir and the Bridge itself. The Kelly Ridge area can be viewed off in the background to the southwest as can the Bidwell Canyon Marina and Boat Launch. Along with vegetated hillsides that appear natural, a number of significant man-made features such as Highway 162, the Bidwell Bar Bridge and the Bidwell Canyon Marina facilities can be seen from this KOP.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.553, West 121.430

This KOP is located on the north side of the Bidwell Bar Bridge at the pull-out area on the east side of Highway 162 looking to the south.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The view from this KOP is seen by those who stop at this turn out as well as those traveling south on Highway 162 across the Bidwell Bar Bridge. A narrow informal, non-maintained trail leads down to the water directly east of the turn out area.

Visible Project Features

Project facilities that are visible from this KOP include the Bidwell Canyon Marina, the Bidwell Boat Launch, and the Oroville Dam, all of which are in the background

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Compared to other KOPs, the aesthetic/visual character of this KOP is much less influenced by changes in reservoir elevations. Because the KOP is located near the main body of the reservoir, low reservoir elevations have much less of an influence on visual/aesthetic character at this KOP than at others located in the upper portions of the Project. At low reservoir elevations less of the waters of the reservoir are visible than at high elevations, but most of the main body of the reservoir is still visible. Project elements such as the Bidwell Canyon Marina and Boat Launch are visible in the background from this location and along with the bridge and Highway 162 (in the foreground) introduce a number of manmade elements into the areas visible from this KOP.

KOP MR-6: Bidwell Bar Bridge (Highway 162): High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)

KOP MR-6: Bidwell Bar Bridge (Highway 162): Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (709.71 feet)

KOP MR-7: Stringtown Car-top Boat Ramp

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Stringtown Car-top Boat Ramp is located along the south bank of South Fork. Access to this location is rather difficult and requires traveling for quite some time on the narrow windy Stringtown Road. The KOP selected to represent this area is adjacent to the road that is used to launch boats. The area surrounding this location is heavily forested and appears undeveloped (although there are several residences in the general vicinity of the KOP).

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.53340, West 121.36784

This KOP is located just to the west of the access road used for launching boats where the road turns to the east and down the shoreline of the reservoir. The view from this KOP is to the northeast.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

This car-top boat launch is used by both boat launchers as well as unauthorized campers. The Stringtown area is open and exposed, especially during low pool elevations. During high pool elevations this area is used by house boaters who tie up to the shoreline. During low pool elevations this area may be used for unauthorized off road vehicle use, and visitors frequently drive directly to the shoreline. Based on recreation surveys, people who use this facility are bank anglers, swimmers, picnickers, and boat anglers.

Visible Project Features

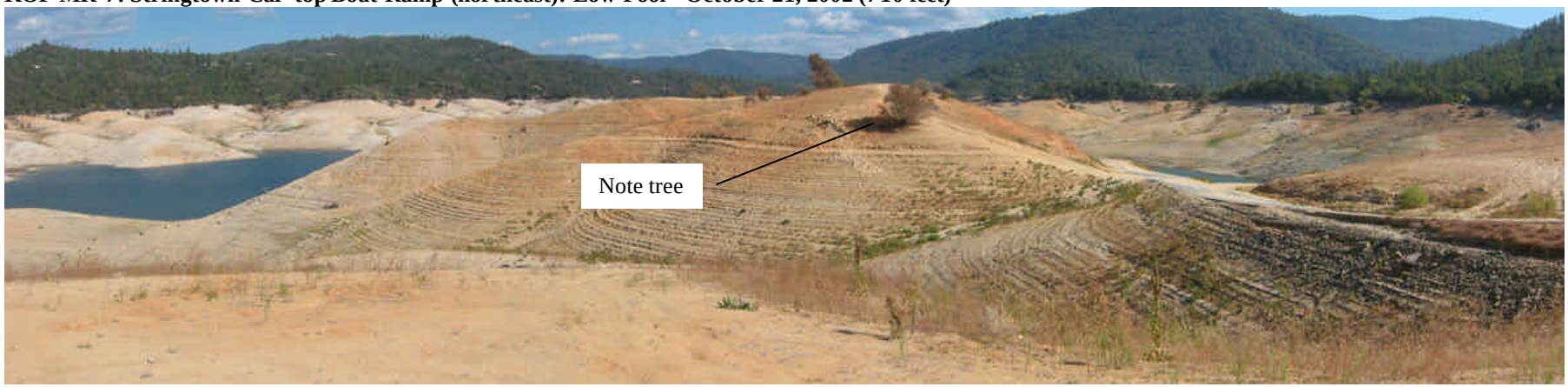
No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this location. During high pool elevations, houseboats frequently are visible and floating campsites may be as well.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir, the nearby hillsides, a nearby island and the sky are dominant visual elements. All are located within the foreground and middleground of this KOP. During low reservoir elevations the waters recede considerably and become a relatively minor visual element. The dominance of the water in the foreground is replaced by exposed shoreline which introduces a completely different appearance to the view from this KOP. The exposed shoreline near this KOP is more varied than shorelines at other parts of the Project and contains a greater variety of color (whites, reds, and browns) and shapes.

KOP MR-7: Stringtown Car-top Boat Ramp (northeast): High Pool - June 12, 2002 (835 feet)

KOP MR-7: Stringtown Car-top Boat Ramp (northeast): Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (710 feet)



KOP MR-8: Bidwell Canyon Boat Launch

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Bidwell Canyon Boat Launch is located just to the north of the Bidwell Marina on the eastern side of Kelly Ridge. The KOP selected to represent views from this area is located in the middle of the boat launch ramp. The view from this KOP is panoramic and encompasses a large area including the Bidwell Bar Bridge. The boat launch ramp can be accessed by car and there is a large parking lot that accommodates vehicles and trailers. A peninsula between the Marina and the Boat Launch Ramp effectively screens the two Project features from one another. The Bidwell launch is a large concrete structure that is visible throughout the Main Basin of the reservoir.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.53799, West 121.45747

This KOP is located at the top and center of the boat launch ramp and includes views to the north and northeast.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Bidwell Boat Launch is used primarily by people putting their boats into or out of Lake Oroville. The Bidwell Marina is located south of the boat launch and marina facilities such as the store are not visible from this KOP. During low pool elevations, the boats (mainly houseboats) stored at the marina are moved out into the main basin of the reservoir due to space constraints. Based on recreation surveys people who use this facility are pleasure boaters and boat anglers.

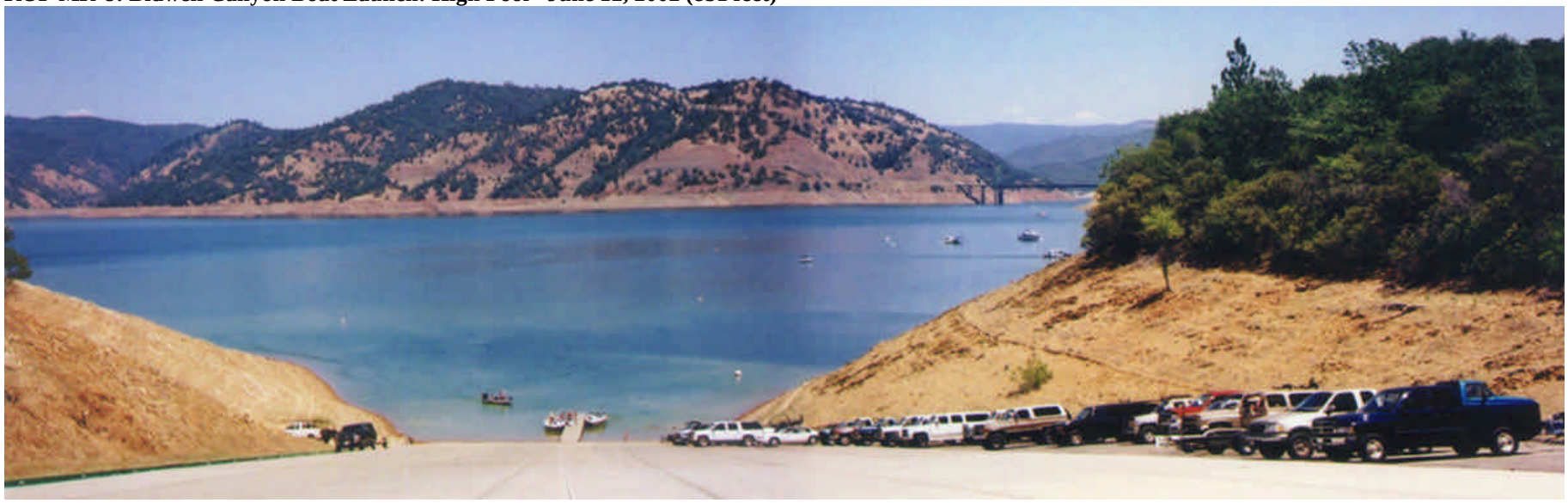
Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this location. During low pool elevations the boats moored at the Bidwell Marina have to be moved out into the Main Basin and are then visible from this location. The boat launch ramp is the most visible Project facility from this KOP.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the Boat Launch, the waters of the reservoir, and nearby slopes are dominant visual elements located in the foreground from this KOP. Hills on the other side of the reservoir and the sky are also dominant visual elements from this KOP. As the waters of the reservoir recede, shoreline in the foreground but beyond the end of the concrete launch ramp is exposed as is shoreline in the middleground on the opposite side of the reservoir. Although the water of the reservoir is still a dominant visual element at low reservoir elevations, the water is not as dominant as the exposed shoreline in the foreground and middle ground. In addition, boats that are moved from Bidwell Marina during low reservoir elevations become visible from this KOP.

KOP MR-8: Bidwell Canyon Boat Launch: High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)



KOP MR-8: Bidwell Canyon Boat Launch: Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (710 feet)

KOP MR-9: Bidwell Canyon Marina

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Bidwell Canyon Marina is located on the eastern side of Kelly Ridge and is the second [verify] most popular recreational facility at the Project. The marina is part of the larger Bidwell complex that includes the marina boat launch and a developed campground. The KOP selected to represent this area is located adjacent to the paved area that is used both as a parking lot and access road for vehicles and people. The marina office, store and restaurant are visible from this KOP as are uncovered and covered docks, moorage docks and boats moored to buoys. The area near the KOP has a developed character.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.53418, West 121.45551

This KOP is located next to an elevated concrete structure on the north side of the sloped marina parking area /access road. The view from this KOP is looking east.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Bidwell Canyon Marina is used by those who store their boats at one of the covered or uncovered marina docks, day use boaters and people renting houseboats.

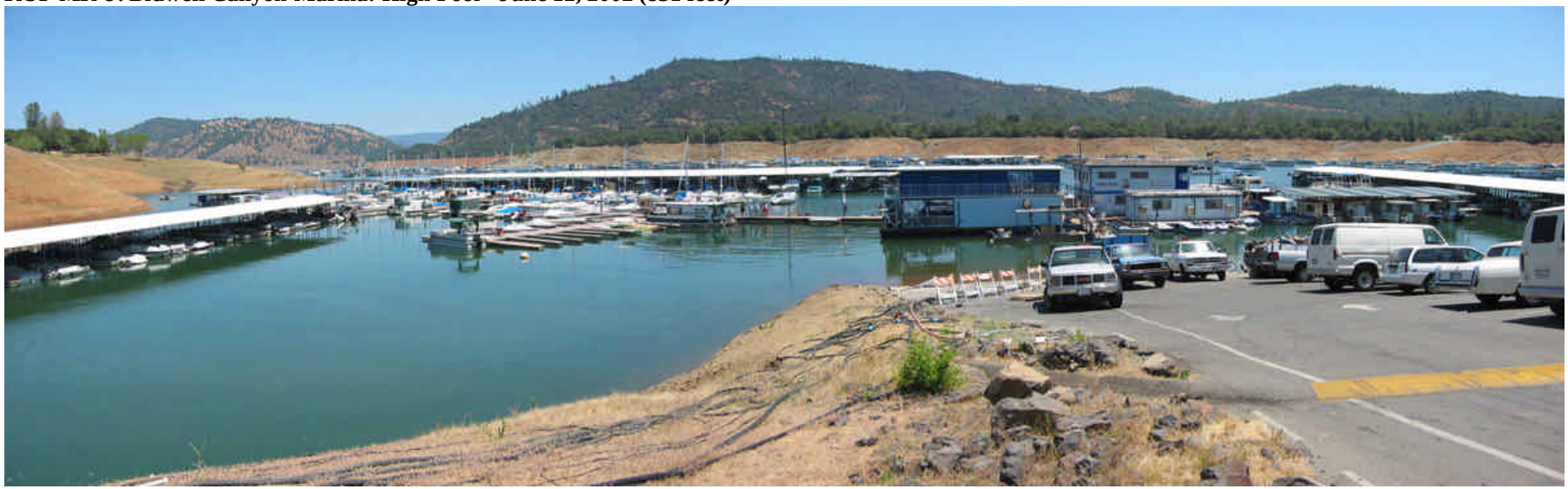
Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from the KOP. The main Project feature that is visible is the Bidwell Canyon Marina itself and the numerous boats tied to the marina's docks. In addition, boats (mostly houseboats) are anchored to mooring buoys in the reservoir.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the marina and its associated facilities, the surrounding hills and the waters of the reservoir are the dominant visual elements within the foreground of this KOP. At low reservoir elevations, the marina is much less visible and less visually dominant as are the waters of the reservoir. In their place, the exposed brown-reddish shorelines of the reservoir become the dominant visual element at low reservoir elevations.

KOP MR-9: Bidwell Canyon Marina: High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)



KOP MR-9: Bidwell Canyon Marina: Low Pool - October 21, 2002 (710 feet)

KOP MR-10: Bidwell Canyon Cove to South

Location and Aesthetic Environment
This KOP has a view of the cove to the south of the Bidwell Canyon Marina and Loafer Creek facilities. The cove is south of the Main Basin of the reservoir.

Location of the KOP
GPS coordinates = ____
The KOP selected to represent this KOP is located on a peninsula between the Loafer Creek Boat Launch and the cove. The main visual elements of this cove from this KOP are the boats at the Bidwell facility that are moored in this narrow waterway and the covered moorage facilities.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers
The cove to the south of the Bidwell Canyon Marina is where the houseboats are moored. The cove is surrounded by development. On the west side of the small branch of the reservoir is the Bidwell Canyon Marina facilities, and opposite of that, on the east side are the Loafer Creek facilities. Those that use this cove are mainly those that have boats stored in this area.

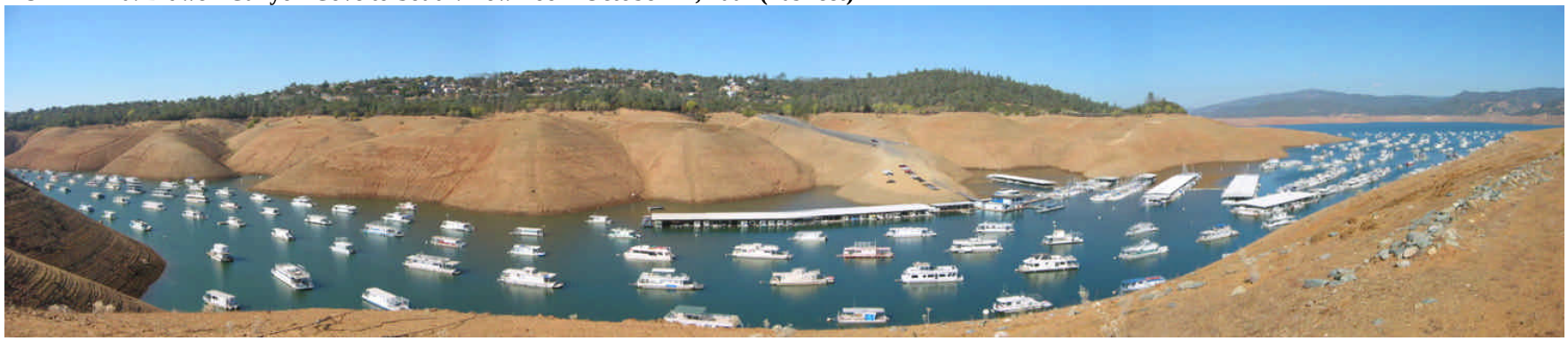
Visible Project Features
No Project facilities related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP. The main Project features that are visible from these locations are the Bidwell Canyon Marina facilities and the Loafer Creek facilities. The area surrounding the cove is highly developed, and therefore the boats moored in the cove do not represent a visual degradation.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions
At high reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir, the moored boats and the nearby hillsides are the dominant visual elements within the foreground of this KOP. At low reservoir elevations, the waters of the reservoir are less visually dominant and the exposed brown-reddish shorelines of the reservoir along with the moored boats become the dominant visual element.

KOP MR-10: Bidwell Canyon Cove to South: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

NEED HIGH POOL PHOTO

KOP MR-10: Bidwell Canyon Cove to South: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)



KOP MR-11: Loafer Creek Boat Launch

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Loafer Creek Boat Launch is located within the Loafer Creek Recreation Area which is located to the east. A large paved parking lot at the top of the seven-lane launch ramp can accommodate 178 vehicle/trailer combinations. The KOP selected to represent this area is located in the middle of the boat launch ramp. The Loafer Creek Boat Launch is located on the west side of an inlet located southeast and across from Bidwell Canyon Marina. The boat launch ramp can be assessed either by car or by trail. Boats moored at Bidwell Canyon Marina are highly visible from this KOP as are parts of the marina.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.52984, West 121.44954

This KOP is located at the top and center of the boat launch ramp looking north.

Use of Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Loafer Creek Boat Launch is mainly utilized by day use boaters. Due to its proximity to the Bidwell Canyon Marina, this area has the potential to be used by persons that would normally use the Bidwell Canyon Marina on crowded days. Loafer Creek has an extensive recreation area, with the largest equestrian facilities in the Project area. Based on recreation surveys, the people who use this facility are pleasure boaters and boating anglers, in particular those camping in the Loafer Creek area.

Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP. The main Project features that are visible are the concrete launching ramp and moored boats associated with Bidwell Canyon Marina.

Project Influence Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the boat launch ramp, the adjacent hillsides, the water of the reservoir, and nearby shorelines are dominant visual elements and are located in the foreground of this KOP. The hills across the reservoir are also significant visual elements. At low reservoir elevations the waters of the reservoir and moored boats associated with Bidwell Canyon Marina are much less visually dominant, although they are quite visible. Exposed shorelines and the boat launch ramp become much more visually dominant at low reservoir elevations.

KOP MR-11: Loafer Creek Boat Launch: High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)

KOP MR-11: Loafer Creek Boat Launch: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP MR-12: Kelly Ridge Visitor Center Tower

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Kelly Ridge Visitor Center is located directly east of the Oroville Dam on a large peninsula (Kelly Ridge) that extends into the main basin of the reservoir. The KOP that was selected for this area is the observation tower that is located near the center of the visitor center. Access to the Visitor Center is from Oroville Dam Road. The views from the Visitor Center Tower are expansive and offer visitors a 360° view of the Project area.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.53507, West 121.46682

This KOP is located at the top of the outlook tower at the Kelly Ridge Visitor Center and the view selected for this KOP is looking southwest at the Oroville Dam area.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The tower is used by visitors who want to get a view of the Oroville Reservoir and beyond.

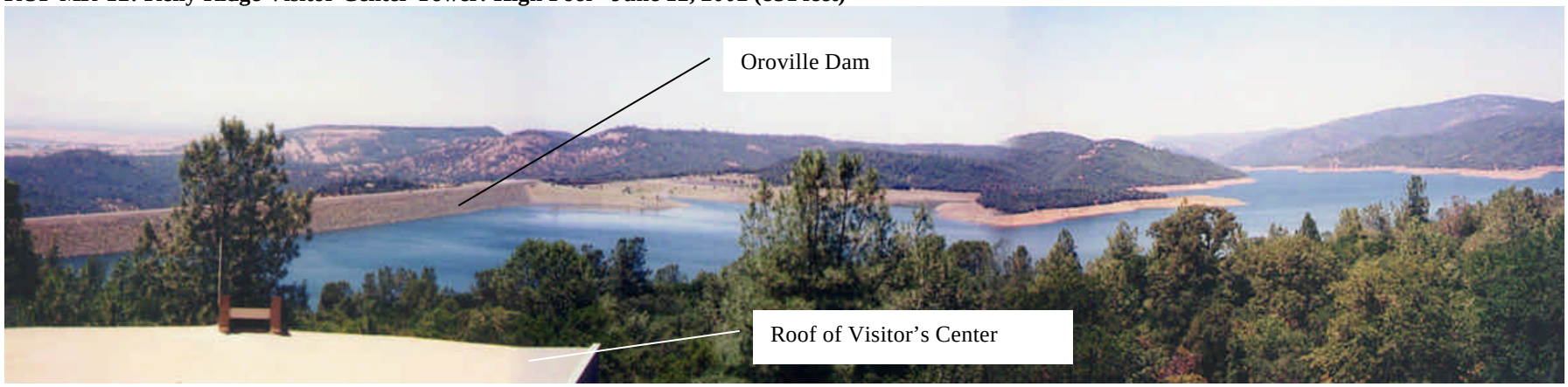
Visible Project Features

The main Project feature that is visible from this KOP is the Oroville Dam itself. Beyond the dam to the southwest is the Thermalito complex, where there are numerous Project features. The Project features beyond the Oroville Dam are in the background view from this location.

Project Influence Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

The reservoir and Oroville Dam are located in the middleground of this KOP. At high reservoir elevations the dam and reservoir are a major part of the view from this KOP. At low reservoir elevations, less of the blue reflective waters of the reservoir are visible and more of the exposed shoreline is revealed. Because of the distance of the reservoir and dam from the KOP and the presence of many visible elements, the difference between high and low reservoir elevations are not as noticeable from this KOPs as from other KOPs.

KOP MR-12: Kelly Ridge Visitor Center Tower: High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)



KOP MR-12: Kelly Ridge Visitor Center Tower: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP MR-13: Oroville Dam Visitors Area – East Side

Location and Aesthetic Environment
The Oroville Dam Visitors Area is located where Oroville Dam Road and the road that crosses the Oroville Dam intersect. The facility near this KOP contains picnic tables, benches, a permanent restroom, and a safety guardrail.

Location of the KOP
GPS coordinates = North 39.53234, West 121.47754
This KOP is located at the southeast end of the Oroville Dam near the intersection of the road across the dam and Oroville Dam Road. The view from this KOP is looking to the northwest.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers
The Oroville Dam Visitors Area on the east side of the dam is mainly utilized by recreationalists who want a close up view of the dam and by people walking on the sidewalk next to the 6,920-foot long roadway located on the crest of the dam. Across the dam to the west is the Spillway and related recreation facilities. Parking occurs along Oroville Dam Road and along the dam (although it has not been allowed on the dam since heightened security measures were implemented in September 2001). This recreation area adjacent to this KOP is small yet is frequented by a large number of visitors due to its proximity to Oroville Dam Road and the Oroville Dam. Based on recreation surveys, the people who use this facility are sightseers, picnickers, and local people who walk and roller blade along the top of the dam for exercise.

Visible Project Features
The main Project features that are visible from this location is the Oroville Dam itself, as well as the Spillway and associated recreation areas to the west.

Project Influence Aesthetic/Visual Conditions
At high reservoir elevations the dominant visual elements within the foreground are the sides of the dam and the waters of the reservoir. At low reservoir elevations the reservoir is less dominant, but is still a major element, as are the increased amount of exposed shoreline.

KOP MR-13: Oroville Dam Visitors Area (view looking west): High Pool - June 12, 2002 (831 feet)

KOP MR-13: Oroville Dam Visitors Area (view looking west): Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP MR-14 Spillway Boat Launch

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Spillway Boat Launch is located on the northwest side of the Oroville Dam and requires crossing the dam to access it. At low reservoir elevations a paved parking lot and second boat launching ramp below the end of the upper ramp are usable (they are submerged at high pool elevations). The KOP selected to represent this area is next to the upper boat launch ramp/parking area. Views from this location are framed by nearby low and heavily vegetated hillsides and are focused on the area below the launch ramp/parking area. Features in the foreground such as the upper and lower boat launch ramp/parking areas give this area a manmade character.

Location of KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.54750, West 121.49214

This KOP is located on the east side of the top of the upper boat launch ramp/parking area looking to the northwest.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Spillway Boat Launch is used primarily by people launching boats. The area includes a large paved parking lot, a small recreation area with picnic tables, shade structures, and permanent restrooms, the upper paved boat launch ramp/parking area, and a lower paved boat launch ramp/ parking area. The lower boat launch ramp/parking area is still usable at low pool elevations when others are unusable. Based on recreation surveys, the people who use this facility include pleasure boaters and boat anglers. The area also receives some use by sightseers, bank anglers, and picnickers.

Visible Project Features

There are numerous Project features visible from this KOP. These features include the upper boat launch ramp/parking area and the lower boat launch ramp/parking area (at low reservoir elevations) in the foreground and the dam to the southeast in the middleground.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

At high reservoir elevations the most significant visual elements seen from this KOP are in the foreground and include the paved upper ramp/parking lot, the waters of the reservoir and the adjacent hillsides (both the vegetated portion above the high-water elevation and the unvegetated portion below it). At low pool elevations the waters of the reservoir recede beyond view and are replaced by the exposed lower boat launch ramp and parking area. At these low elevations, exposed shoreline (paved areas and unvegetated ground) becomes even more visually significant at this KOP that at high reservoir elevations. The blue/reflective qualities of the reservoir are replaced by additional dark paved areas and moderately steep, reddish-brown shoreline.

KOP MR-14: Spillway Boat Launch: High Pool - June 11, 2002 (832 feet)

KOP MR-14: Spillway Boat Launch: Low Pool - October 22, 2002 (709 feet)

KOP TD-1: Oroville Dam Road

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Oroville Dam Road pull-out area is located directly to the south of the Oroville Dam spillway. The KOP selected to represent this area is located on the shoulder of the pull-out area. This undeveloped, informal, unpaved pull-out has room for several vehicles. Next to the pull-out is a trailhead to the Dan Beebe Trail and the trail which provides access from pullout area to the Feather River below. When looking to the north or northeast manmade features dominate the landscape.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.534, West 121.503

This KOP is located at a turn off and viewing spot on the north side of Oroville Dam Road looking to the north.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The area is used by those who want to get a view of the Oroville Dam spillway or by those using a nearby trail head for the multi-use Dan Beebe Trail. Based on recreation surveys, the main users of this facility are hikers, off-road bikers, and equestrian trail riders.

Visible Project Features

The main Project feature that is visible from this KOP is the spillway itself. The multi-use trail that heads down the north side of the hillside is also visible from this location. High releases of water through the spillway attract sightseers.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

The dominant visual element seen from this KOP is the spillway and the southern portion of the dam. The spillway is located within the foreground of the KOP as is the vegetated southern face of the dam.

KOP TD-1: Oroville Dam Road - June 11, 2002

KOP TD-2: Diversion Pool Day Use Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Diversion Pool is located between the area below the dam and diversion dam. The KOP selected to represent views from this portion of the Diversion Pool that is the Day Use Area. It is located alongside the north-south portion of the road that is adjacent to the Diversion Pool and is approximately 1 mile north of the Diversion Dam. The water in the Diversion Pool is generally calm. The area across the Diversion Pool from the KOP has a natural appearance except for where the railroad bridge passes over the pool.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.541, West 121.546

This KOP is located on the unpaved access road that parallels the Diversion Pool near where the restrooms are located. The view is to the south.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The main use of this area is for recreation. Activities include canoeing (and other non-motorized boating), wind surfing, bicycle riding, fishing and walking along the road. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include bank anglers, hikers, off-road bikers and equestrian trail users.

Visible Project Features

No Project features related to power generation or transmission are visible from this KOP. The Diversion Dam to the south of this KOP is visible and is located within the foreground of this KOP. Red buoys upstream from the dam are also visible.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Diversion Pool fluctuations of up to approximately 3.5 feet can expose shoreline at low pool elevations.

KOP TD-2: Diversion Pool Day Use Area - June 11, 2002 (___ feet)

KOP TD-3: North Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The North Forebay Thermalito Recreation Area is located directly west of Highway 70 and is accessed via the Garden Drive exit of Highway 70. The KOP selected to represent this area is located next to the beach shower on the northern side of the swim area at the Recreation Area. This area is used for swimming and has an extensive sand beach. A row of trees along the perimeter of the beach provides shade to an extensive irrigated lawn area that contains numerous concrete picnic tables and barbeques. The recreation area also contains two 2-lane boat launch ramps, parking for 59 single-vehicles (and unpaved overflow parking area), and restroom facilities.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.535243, West 121.587157

This KOP is located on the south side of the recreation area next to an outside beach shower looking to the south and southwest.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The recreation area is heavily used for swimming, sunbathing, picnicking, and other types of water-based, non-motorized recreation activities. Most viewers are recreationists. Drivers heading south on Highway 70 people accessing Highway 90 via Garden Pass also have a view of this facility. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include walkers, picnickers, swimmers, and bank anglers.

Visible Project Features

No Project features other than the waters of the Thermalito Forebay are visible from this location.

Project Influence Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Fluctuations in the Forebay of up to 3.5 feet can expose shoreline at low elevations. These areas are especially apparent in the shallow area used for the beach at the recreation area.

KOP TD-3: North Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area - June 11, 2002 (832 feet)

KOP TD-4: South Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The South Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area is located at the south part of the Thermalito Forebay and is accessed via an unimproved access road from Grand Avenue. The KOP is located on the northern side of the recreation area at the base of a peninsula that extends over 100 feet east into the Forebay. The area contains a 2-lane boat launch ramp, small beach, picnic facilities, and 60 by 60-yard unpaved parking area. There are several large trees at this site that are used to shade picnic tables and barbecue pits. There is no formally configured parking lot, so vehicles are parked throughout the recreation area, usually near the picnic tables and shade trees. Although the Campbell Hills are located to the northwest of this area, the in other directions is flat and gives the recreation area an open character.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.534, West 121.622

This KOP is located at the western end of the peninsula on the northern portion of the recreation area approximately 10 feet west of the picnic tables. The view from this KOP is looking southeast.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The recreation area site is used by boaters, day use campers, picnickers, and anglers. The majority of users at this location use it for day use activities and launching boats. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include picnickers, bank anglers, pleasure boaters and boat anglers.

Visible Project Features

The main Project features that are visible from this KOP in the foreground are the forebay, the forebay dam, the North Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area, an equipment lift located at the dam and the concrete boat launch. The Oroville Dam is visible in the background to the east.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Changes in forebay water elevation of up to 3.5-feet influence the size of the beach at the recreation area. Low elevations expose more shoreline as well as increasing the severity of the drop off from the peninsula to the water surface.

KOP TD-4: South Thermalito Forebay Recreation Area - June 11, 2002 (832 feet)

KOP TA-1: Larkin Road Day Use Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Larkin Road facility is located west of Larkin Road along the east side of the Thermalito Afterbay. The KOP selected to represent this area is located on the southern end of the paved parking and boat launching area. This recreation area consists of a small paved area used to launch boats and a restroom facility located on the northern end of the paved lot. The area has a very open and exposed.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.468, West 121.633

This KOP is located on the south side of the gravel car-top boat launch ramp in line with the southern most pole that has an informational sign on it. The view from this KOP is looking to the west.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

This recreation area is primarily used for launching boats into the Thermalito Afterbay. Water based recreation activities, such as jet skiing, boating, or swimming are common at this location. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include pleasure boaters and jet ski users in particular.

Visible Project Features

The most visible Project feature that can be seen from this KOP is the Thermalito Afterbay. The portion of the afterbay dam along Larkin Road near the afterbay spillway can also be seen in the middlegound as can the levee along the western border of the afterbay.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

The water level in the Thermalito Afterbay changes as much as 9-feet during normal operational fluctuations. At low elevations, more of the shoreline in this shallow area is exposed as is much of the island directly west of the boat launch ramp.

KOP TA-1: Larkin Road Day Use Area - June 11, 2002

KOP TA-2: Monument Hill Day Use Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Monument Hill Day Use Area is located south of Highway 162 at the north end of the Thermalito Afterbay. The KOP is located next to the beach area. The Monument Hill facility contains a significant amount of paved and gravel parking, restrooms, a beach, picnic tables, barbeque pits, and a boat launch ramp.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.492, West 121.669

This KOP is located on the sidewalk south of the lower parking area just north of the chain link fence above the beach area. The view of the KOP is to the west.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Monument Hill facility is used for day use activities. The two-lane boat launch ramp, 39 vehicle/trailer and 10 single vehicle parking spaces (and additional gravel overflow parking), beach and picnic facilities make this a popular recreation area. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include swimmers, picnickers, pleasure boaters, and waterfowl hunters.

Visible Project Features

Project features that can be seen from this KOP include the levee along Highway 99 in the background, the recreation facilities in the foreground, and the waters of the Thermalito Afterbay.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

The water level in the Thermalito Afterbay changes as much as 9-feet during normal operational fluctuations. At low elevations, less of the inlet is covered by water and more of the shoreline and beach in this shallow area is exposed. More of the island directly west of the boat launch ramp is also exposed a lower elevations.

KOP TD-2: Monument Hill Day Use Area - June 11, 2002

KOP BR-1: Feather River Nature Center

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Feather River Nature Center is located along the low flow section of the Feather River in the City of Oroville below the Fish Barrier Dam and the Diversion Dam. The Center is accessed from Table Mountain Boulevard and is several hundred feet upstream from the Table Mountain Boulevard. That crosses the river. The KOP selected to represent this area is located on the side of the unpaved access road. The access road provides access to parking and viewing areas.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.518, West 121.548
This KOP is located along the center's access road and the view is looking north.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Center is used for picnicking, walking, and environmental education. During the Fall spawning season, the center attracts visitors who can view spawning fish on their way to the Feather River Fish Hatchery.

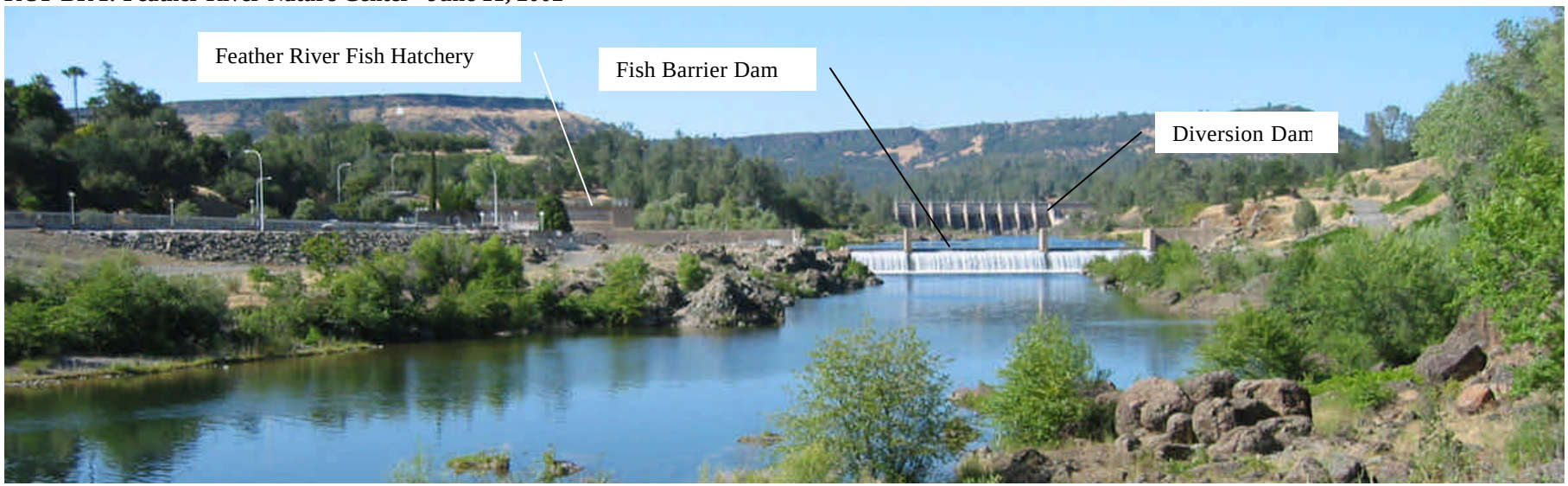
Visible Project Features

A number of Project features are visible from this KOP. They include the Diversion Dam, the Fish Barrier Dam, the Feather River Fish Hatchery and the low flow section of the Feather River.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Water releases over the Fish Barrier Dam influence the amount of water in the low flow section of the river and the amount of water flowing over the dam.

KOP BR-1: Feather River Nature Center - June 11, 2002



KOP BR-2: Thermalito Afterbay Outlet

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The area where the Thermalito Afterbay spills into the Feather River is located within the Oroville Wildlife Area. The KOP selected to represent this area is located at the top of the unpaved road that leads to the Thermalito Afterbay release concrete spillway structure. The afterbay release recreation area provides excellent views of the Feather River and is used by anglers and campers. The quality of fishing near the afterbay release attracts boaters as well as shore anglers. At this KOP, the main visual features are the road down to the afterbay release, the spillway structure itself, the anglers (both boat and shoreline), and the Feather River itself (both east and southwest).

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = North 39.456, West 121.635

This KOP is located near the top of the gravel ramp that heads down to the Thermalito Afterbay release into the Feather River. There is a small recreation area located to the east of the spillway, and the photo is taken on the western most edge of the recreation area.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

This recreation area is used by anglers, campers, as well as other day users. Numerous anglers utilize this stretch of the Feather River. Primary viewers include people camping at the recreation area along with boaters and shore anglers. Based on recreation surveys, people who mainly use this facility include people wading, bank, and boat anglers.

Visible Project Features

The main Project feature that can be seen from this KOP is the Thermalito Afterbay spillway

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Releases from the Diversion Dam as well as the Thermalito Afterbay Outlet determine the amount of water in the low flow channel and river. At low releases, more of the river shoreline is exposed, while at high releases, water elevations can increase dramatically.

KOP BR-2: Thermalito Afterbay Outlet - June 11, 2002

KOP BR-3: Riverbend Park

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The Riverbend Park is located to the west of Highway 70 and is west of the main part of the City of Oroville. The Park is outside of the Project boundary. The park contains a variety of vegetation, from forested areas to open grasslands. Scattered throughout the park are remnants of gravel piles from mining operations

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = _____

This KOP is located near the main park entrance parking area. The panoramic photo was taken just west of the paved bike trail, to the west of the parking area.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Riverbend Park is used by a large number of people. There is an established paved bike trail (the Brad Freeman Trail) that goes through the park. This bike trail is also used by runners and walkers and there are workout stations located frequently along the trail. The park is also used by disc (Frisbee) golfers and contains a disc golf course. There are picnic tables and areas for day use recreation activities throughout the park. Based on recreation surveys, the breakdown of people who use this facility are primarily walkers, disc golfers, bike riders, and bank anglers.

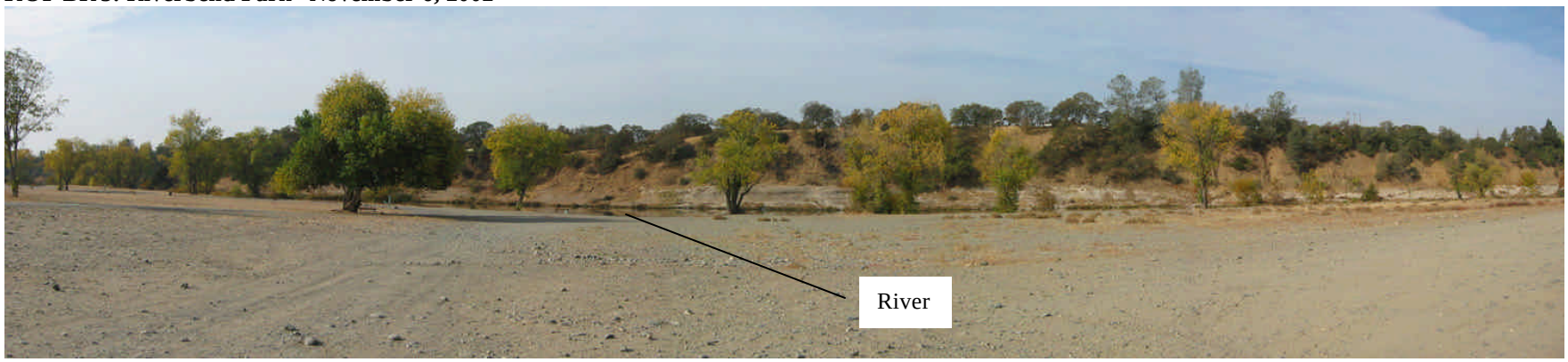
Visible Project Features

There are no Project features visible from this location. This KOP is located outside of the Project boundary as is this section of the low flow segment of the river.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

Releases from the Diversion Dam determine the amount of water in the low flow channel. At low releases, more of the river shoreline is exposed, while at high releases, water elevations can increase dramatically.

KOP BR-3: Riverbend Park - November 6, 2002



KOP OWA-1: One – Mile Campground

Location and Aesthetic Environment
The One-Mile Campground is located directly to the north of the "One-Mile Lake". The campground consists of a small gravel area that is used for camping. Both overnight as well as day use camping occurs at this location. Access to this location is via a dirt and gravel road that has access controlled by the DFG.

Location of the KOP
GPS coordinates = ____
This KOP is located to the just north of One-Mile Lake west of the Feather River in the OWA. This photo is taken at the campground area and provides a panorama towards the south.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers
The One-Mile Campground is used mainly for day use and camping. This area is rather difficult to access by vehicle and is therefore not heavily used. Based on recreation surveys, the breakdown of people who use this facility are river boaters, bank anglers and hunters.

Visible Project Features
There are no Project features related to power generation or transmission visible from this location. The campground has some permanent features such as trash cans and restrooms.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions
Releases from the Diversion Dam as well as the Thermalito Afterbay Outlet determine influence the amount of water in One-Mile Lake (as a result of water seepage from the river to the lake).

KOP OWA-1: One–Mile Campground - November 7, 2002

KOP OWA-2: OWA Bird Viewing Area

Location and Aesthetic Environment

The OWA Bird Viewing Area is located approximately 0.75 mile to the east of the Thermalito Afterbay release into the Feather River. The photo was taken from an elevated access roadway that provides panoramic views to the south. There are numerous places to view a natural setting from this elevated roadway.

Location of the KOP

GPS coordinates = _____

This KOP is located on the south side of the access road paralleling the Feather River to the east of the Thermalito Afterbay release into the Feather River. The photo direction is towards the south.

Use of the Area Near the KOP and Viewers

The Bird Viewing Area in the OWA is small and contains limited parking. During certain times of the year the area is popular for viewing birds. This area and the rest of the OWA is also used by hunters during hunting season.

Visible Project Features

There are no Project features visible from this location.

Project Influence on Aesthetic/Visual Conditions

No body of water is visible from this location. Therefore Project operations do not affect aesthetic quality at this KOP.

KOP OWA-2: OWA Bird Viewing Area - November 7, 2002