

Lake Mead

NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
ARIZONA • NEVADA

Vast expanses of clear water, stark and colorful desert landscapes, clean air, and ideal climate make this national recreation area a welcome spot in our polluted, crowded, jet-age world.

THE LAKE MEAD COUNTRY

Lake Mead stretches 170 kilometers (105 miles) up the old course of the Colorado River from Hoover Dam to Separation Canyon. Its 890-kilometer (550-mile) shoreline, consisting of wide gravel beaches, shadowed coves, and steep canyon walls, provides endless opportunities for swimming, scuba diving, fishing, boating, water skiing, and beach camping.

Lake Mohave, a narrow reservoir created by Davis Dam, reaches northward 108 kilometers (67 miles) to the base of Hoover Dam. Besides the various water sports, visitors also observe and photograph interesting geological formations, ancient Indian petroglyphs, and desert bighorn along its shores.

The surrounding desert ranges in elevation from 158 meters (517 feet) above sea level below Davis Dam to 2,130 meters (6,990 feet) on the Shivwits Plateau. Here you can enjoy hiking, climbing, rock-hounding, hunting, and photography.

This expansive country offers much more than just physical recreation. Perhaps even more sig-

nificant are its lessons about the formation of the earth's surface, the natural laws that govern biological communities, the influence of man on this environment, and in turn its influence on man.

GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The recreation area lies astride the Grand Wash Cliffs, which form the abrupt and spectacular transition between two major geographical provinces of North America. To the east, the Colorado River has carved a series of canyons through the high province known as the Colorado Plateau. The grandest of these is the Grand Canyon, where erosion has exposed a spectacular cross section of nearly horizontal layers of limestones, shales, and sandstones.

Soon after emerging from the western portal of the Grand Canyon, at the Grand Wash Cliffs, the north-south trending mountains of the Basin and Range Province divert the Colorado River southward toward the Gulf of California. Broad enclosed valleys, without external drainage, separate the many mountain ranges of this vast province.

But in the Lake Mead sections, the erosive power of the Colorado River has breached the mountain barriers, thus providing the local basins with drainage to the south. These broad basins and sheer connecting canyons are ideally suited for the collection of water behind Hoover and Davis Dams.

The exposed rock formations in the Lake Mead country span nearly the full range of geologic history and are related to those exposed in Zion, Grand Canyon, and Petrified Forest National Parks. Marine and freshwater sediments as well as volcanic rocks are well represented. Faulting, folding, and erosion are beautifully displayed.

PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITIES

Four major communities of plants and animals occupy the recreation area, which lies within the northwest corner of the Mohave Desert.



The kit fox makes its home on the desert where it preys upon rodents.

This etching of three bighorn was done long ago, probably by chipping the rock's weathered surface with a stone. In some places in the recreation area, the Indian petroglyphs show a variety of shapes. Whether they were done for pure artistic pleasure or with a message in mind is not known.

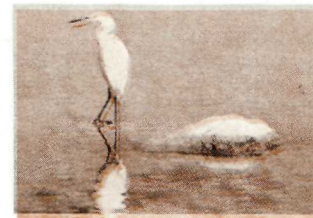


The Desert Shrub Community is the most widespread of these four living communities. It covers all valley floors and gravel slopes up to about 1,830 meters (6,000 feet) above sea level. Common plants include creosotebush, Mohave yucca, Joshua-tree, and a variety of cactuses. Animals of this arid community include kit fox, kangaroo rats, desert bighorn, and a variety of reptiles and birds.

The Woodland Community lies generally above the 1,830-meter level and is limited in the recreation area to the Shivwits Plateau and the Newberry Mountains around Christmas Tree Pass. Utah juniper, Colorado pinyon pine, Gambel oak, and sagebrush characterize this community. Common animals include Utah rock squirrel, cliff chipmunk, and a variety of reptiles and birds. Mule deer are common on the Shivwits Plateau.



Two of the plants of the Desert Shrub Community are the Joshua-tree (left) and the desert primrose.



The egret feeds on small fish and frogs in the shallow waters at the lake edge.

Dissecting the terrain at all elevations are the drainages and canyons of the *Transzonal Community*, where a mosaic of species reside within and between the other communities. Honey mesquite, salt-bush, and desertwillow thrive on moisture beneath gravelly wash bottoms. Animals of this community also belong to the surrounding communities.

The Shoreline and Aquatic Community is made up of plants and animals living in, or associated with, permanent springs, streams, and the lakes. Fremont poplar, willow, tamarisk (saltcedar), and cattail thrive along these waters. Lake Mead and Lake Mohave, both manmade, support most of this community which is populated with species

exotic to the desert. Ducks, gulls, and grebes feed on the surface, while largemouth black bass, rainbow trout, and black crappie cruise along the submerged cliffs searching for aquatic insects.

MAN IN THE LAKE MEAD COUNTRY

Human history here extends back more than 10,000 years to man's arrival in the Southwest. The people of the archaic desert culture were highly successful at adapting to one of the most rigorous climates in America. This culture has endured into historic times here through the Paiute Indians. Trading and agricultural societies evolved along the stream courses of the region. This area became the western frontier of the great Pueblo Culture until about 1150. Most significant archeological sites, including the Lost City Pueblo and the Virgin River Salt Quarries, were inundated by the reservoirs.

The recorded history of the area began in 1826, when Jedediah Smith passed through on his first Southwest Expedition in search of beaver. The long list of early explorers here includes John C. Fremont, Lt. Edward Beale, Lt. Joseph C. Ives, and Maj. John Wesley Powell.

The period of exploration was followed by colonization and exploitation. Mormon farm settlements and roaring mining camps sprang up along the rivers and in the mountains, and a riverboat transportation system soon developed on the Colorado River. Stern-wheeled steamboats up to 53 meters (175 feet) in length and with gross tonnages in excess of 180 metric tons (200 tons) negotiated the sand bars and the rapids of the mighty Colorado up to the Mormon river port of Callville and even up to Rioville at the mouth of the Virgin River.

The history of man in the region reached a dramatic point in 1935 when Hoover Dam was completed and Lake Mead was formed, covering such historic sites as Callville, Rioville, and St. Thomas.

The filling of Lakes Mead and Mohave drastically altered the natural desert environment and at the same time created an outstanding water recreational resource. Where our pioneering forefathers struggled to survive the dangers of the desert and of the mighty Colorado River, we now play, relax, and enjoy the brilliant sunshine which was such a torture to them.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT

The park is open all year. From late September through late May the weather is delightful. Even in July and August, when daytime temperatures may rise above 42°C (100°F) many visitors do not find the heat oppressive because of low humidity. Summer nights are usually comfortable with low temperatures averaging 21°C (70°F). **For protection against brilliant sunshine, wear a hat and tinted glasses.** Be prepared for low temperatures on winter mornings and evenings. **Bring warm clothing.**

The Alan Bible Visitor Center near the west end of Lake Mead is open daily. It has exhibits on natural history and publications that will help you plan your visit. A botanical garden surrounding the visitor center can be an interesting introduction to several natural communities of the desert. Interpretive program schedules are posted at campgrounds and ranger stations around the lakes.

WHAT TO SEE AND DO

This list can only hint at the variety of activity you will discover at Lake Mead.

Swimming. Except for the extremely cold water in the upper section of Lake Mohave, the lakes are ideal for swimming most of the year. At Boulder Beach and Katherine, lifeguards are on duty in summer. Be very careful swimming elsewhere.

Distances to islands, buoys, and across coves are easily underestimated. Caution—air mattresses and blow-up toys, any inflatables, can blow away on even gentle wind, leaving you stranded far from shore. Never swim alone or from an unanchored boat. Remember—muscles tire quickly in cold water.

Fishing. If you fish from shore, you need a fishing license from Arizona or Nevada. Fishing from a boat requires a license from Arizona or Nevada along with special use stamp from the other state. Most marinas have fishing licenses.



Shadows deepen on the upper reaches of Lake Mohave in the region known as the Black Canyon.

Boating and water skiing. Launching ramps are located at each developed area. Always check the weather forecast and look for storm warning flags before going out. **If bad weather catches you on the water, put on your life jacket, head for the nearest sheltered cove, and wait it out.** Call (702) 736-3854 for a current forecast from the National Weather Service.

Boats, moorings, and marine supplies can be rented from most concessioners. Use sanitary dump stations at major harbors; don't dump refuse in the lakes.

Water skiers must wear a lifesaving device, and an observer must accompany the boat operator.

Dam tours. Tours through Hoover Dam are conducted daily, subject to seasonal changes. Davis Dam is open every day for self-guiding tours.

Lake Mead cruises. Boat excursions to Hoover Dam depart Lake Mead Marina near Boulder Beach four times daily for 1-1/4-hour round trip.

Diving. Scuba divers and skin divers are required to fly the diver's flag. Divers must stay away from swimming beaches and boat harbors.

Camping and trailer sites. Nearly all developed areas have campgrounds equipped with individual campsites, fire grates, tables, water, rest-rooms, and sanitary disposal stations. Only at concessioner trailer courts are there utility hookups. You may stay up to 30 days in the calendar year; campsites are not reserved.

To protect your gear, lock it when you leave camp and notify a ranger if your campsite is left unattended for more than 24 hours.

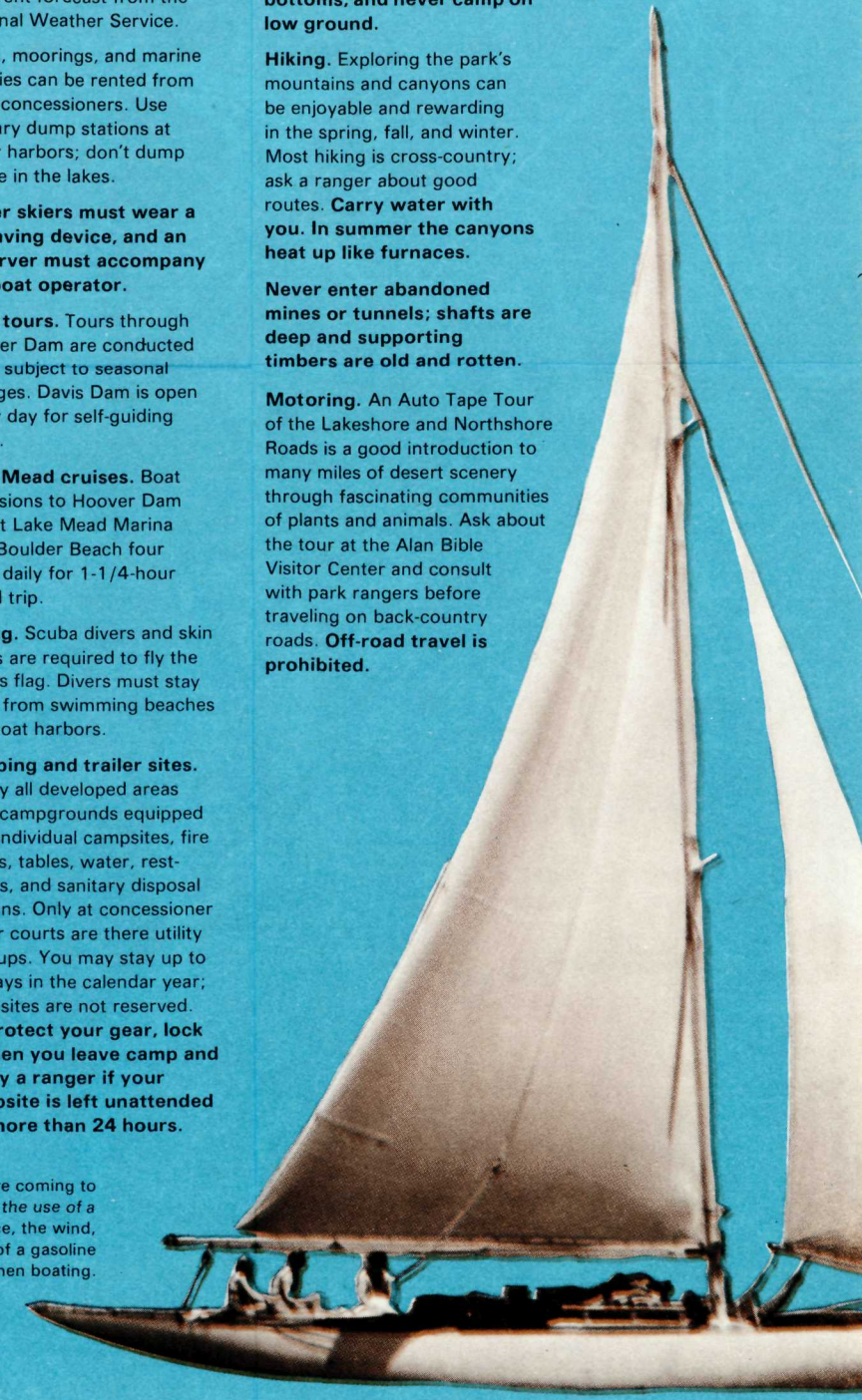
On remote beaches and in the back country away from the developed areas you can find places for more primitive camping. Please bring back your litter in litter containers which you can pick up before you leave at launch ramps and campgrounds. **Be alert for flash floods in stormy weather. Avoid wash bottoms, and never camp on low ground.**

Hiking. Exploring the park's mountains and canyons can be enjoyable and rewarding in the spring, fall, and winter. Most hiking is cross-country; ask a ranger about good routes. **Carry water with you. In summer the canyons heat up like furnaces.**

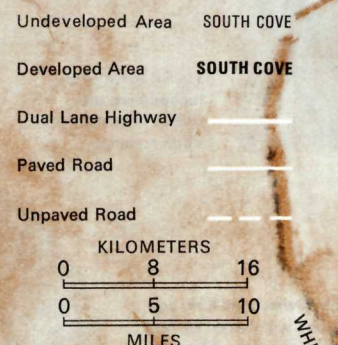
Never enter abandoned mines or tunnels; shafts are deep and supporting timbers are old and rotten.

Motoring. An Auto Tape Tour of the Lakeshore and Northshore Roads is a good introduction to many miles of desert scenery through fascinating communities of plants and animals. Ask about the tour at the Alan Bible Visitor Center and consult with park rangers before traveling on back-country roads. **Off-road travel is prohibited.**

Many people are coming to appreciate the use of a natural force, the wind, instead of a gasoline engine when boating.



LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



Concession facilities. For detailed information, write to or phone the following concessioners:

- Callville Bay Marina
2103 Western Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 565-8956
- Cottonwood Cove Development Co.
P.O. Box 1000
Cottonwood Cove, NV 89046
(702) 297-1464
- Echo Bay Resort, Inc.
P.O. Box 384
Overton, NV 89040
(702) 397-2661
- Lake Mead Ferry Service, Inc.
5300 Paradise Road Suite A
Las Vegas, NV 89109
(702) 736-6180
- Las Vegas Boat Harbor
P.O. Box 771
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 565-9111
- Lake Mead Lodge & Marina (Boulder Beach)
2103 Western Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 293-3484, 293-2074
- Lake Mohave Resort, Inc. (Katherine)
Bullhead City, AZ 86430
(602) 754-3245
- Lakeshore Trailer Village
Boulder City NV 89005
(702) 293-2540

Overton Beach Resort, Inc.
P.O. Box 714
Overton, NV 89040
(702) 397-2569

Temple Bar Marina, Inc.
Temple Bar, AZ 86443
(602) 767-3400

Willow Beach Resort, Inc.
P.O. Box 187
Boulder City, NV 89005
(602) 767-3311

Nearby services. Telephone and telegraph services, churches, motels, cafes, garages, service stations, photographic and curio shops, and stores are in Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Searchlight, and Overton, Nev., and in Bullhead City and Kingman, Ariz.

Transportation to the park. Most visitors come here in private vehicles. Others use the nearest commercial airport at Las Vegas. Airports for private planes are at Boulder City and North Las Vegas. Additional landing strips are at Overton and Echo Bay in Nevada and at Temple Bar in Arizona. Mohave County Airport in Bullhead City, Ariz., serves Katherine, and an unimproved airstrip is located across Lake Mohave from Cottonwood Cove. Seaplanes may land on the lakes, but they may not enter harbor areas under their own power.

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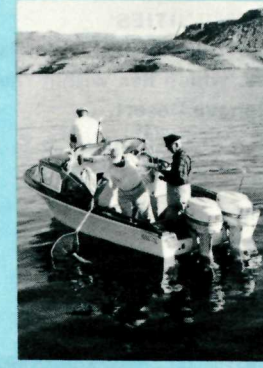
VISITOR SERVICES CHART:



The Visitor Center is the place to learn about the park and to begin gathering information about your visit. These developed areas are listed with distances from the Visitor Center.

LAKE MEAD	Ranger station	Marina (rentals, supplies)	Campground	Restaurant	Grocery/curio shop	Gasoline	Trailer sewage dump	Marine sewage dump	Trailer hookup/fee	Shower/fee	Self-service laundry	Lodging	Picnic shelter	Propane service	Amphitheater	Swimming beach	Houseboat rentals
Boulder Beach, 3.2km (2mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Temple Bar, 89km (55mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	○	x	x	x	x	x	x
Echo Bay, 79km, (49mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Callville Bay, 43km (27mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	○	x	x	x	x	x	x
Overton Beach, 101km (63mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	○	x	x	x	x	x	x
Las Vegas Wash, 16km (10mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
LAKE MOHAVE																	
Katherine, 130km (81mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	○	○	x	x	x	x	x
Willow Beach, 35km (22mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	○	○	x	x	x	x	x
Cottonwood Cove, 87km (54mi)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

● Marine fuel only
○ Reserved for trailer village occupants



Fishing for bass, trout, and catfish is a year-round pastime on the lakes.

FOR YOUR SAFETY

The safety notes printed in bold letters in this folder are for your protection. Please read them. Never travel alone. Someone else should always know where you are going, when you expect to return, and have a description of your vehicle or boat. The 24-hour, park emergency number is (702) 293-4041.

A note about pets. Pets are prohibited on beaches, in swim areas, or in public buildings and must be kept leashed. Heat rapidly kills pets left in parked cars. Do not allow them to drink irrigation water which may be toxic. Also, the flowering oleanders in many of the developed areas contain a poison that can be fatal if eaten.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area, established on October 8, 1964, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The superintendent's address is 601 Nevada Highway, Boulder City, NV 89005.

National Park Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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