



VALLECITO LAKE

General Information

Located 18 miles northeast of Durango, CO, Vallecito Lake is one of the largest and most beautiful bodies of water in Colorado.

Activities

Boating, kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting and tour of the carvings.

Facilities

One day use area and six public campgrounds are available at Vallecito Lake. These public campgrounds are managed by the San Juan National Forest Service:

Old Timers Day-Use Area

Located at the southeast shore about 0.5 mile north of the dam on County Road 501A (Forest Rd. 603). Ten shaded picnic sites are on a gentle hillside near the water. The picnic area is open daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. (gate is locked at night).

Graham Creek Campground

Located 2 miles north on Forest Road 603. Some of its 25 sites are shaded; others are more open, 15 campsites can be reserved. Hillside sites are about 100 yards from the high-water line. Sites are available for larger RVs.

www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/sanjuan/recrea/?recid=42942

North Canyon Campground

Located another 1/2 mile north on the east side of the reservoir on Forest Road 603. Among the 21 sites are several suitable for larger RVs, 15 campsites can be reserved. North Canyon Trail across the road offers scenic vistas of the reservoir. East Creek Trail is 1/4 mile up Forest Rd. 852, northeast of the campground. Both trails are popular with horseback riders. Horses are not allowed in the campground.

www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/sanjuan/recrea/?recid=43098

Pine Point Campground

Located 1/2 mile north of North Canyon Campground on the east side of the reservoir on Forest Road 603 midway up the lakeshore. It has views of high peaks to the northwest. Its 30 shady sites include several pull-thru and larger sites for trailers and RVs, 15 campsites can be reserved. Commercial development on the east side of the reservoir is limited to resorts north of Pine Point. They have camping services, but gasoline is not available.

www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/sanjuan/recrea/?recid=43132

Middle Mountain Campground

Located about 1/2 mile north of Pine Point Camp Ground. It has 24 sites with southern exposure and walking access to the water. Some shade is provided by ponderosa pines and small aspen. A few sites accommodate large RVs. The Middle Mountain Road (Forest Rd. 724) leads to the old mining townsite of Tuckerville and to the boundary of the Weminuche Wilderness. Motorized vehicles and bicycles are not allowed past this point.

www.fs.usda.gov/recrea/sanjuan/recrea/?recid=43060

Pine River Campground

Located 4 miles north of Middle Mountain Campground, at the end of Forest Road 602. This primitive campground has a parking area with hitching posts and a turn-around parking area for trailers. Pack stock may be unloaded but you cannot camp with your pack stock in the campground. Campsites accommodate only tents or small RVs. There is no potable water..

www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/sanjuan/recarea/?recid=43134

Vallecito Campground

Located north of Vallecito Lake and off of County Road 501/500. It is some distance from the reservoir but abuts Vallecito Creek. The campground is large and very popular. Its 80 campsites (33 sites can be reserved) in four loops are shaded, and most sites are large and fairly level (16 sites have electrical hookups). Those near the creek fill up quickly. Seven fee picnic sites are along the creek. Parking for the Vallecito Creek Trail, a major access point for the Weminuche Wilderness (no mountain bikes or motorized vehicles allowed), is at the entrance. Hitching posts and an unloading dock are available for livestock, but overnight horse camping is not allowed.

www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/sanjuan/recarea/?recid=43288

Vallecito Marina

Open from May 1st through mid-October, the marina is a full service operation open 7 days a week from 7 am to 7 pm. Fishing bait, fishing licenses, and tackle is also available at the marina. The business is run by the Vallecito Conservation and Sporting Association, which is a non-profit 501c4 under parks and recreation.

www.vallecitolakemarina.com

Fees

Launching your boat is free but you must have a boating permit issued by the lake recreation management agency. A FREE pre-launch inspection of all motorized vessels is required. Camping fees at the public campgrounds listed above.

Reservations (877) 444-6777

www.recreation.gov

Fishing

Vallecito Lake is a perfect getaway for summer fishing vacations, fall fly fishing, even winter ice fishing. The lake is stocked with brook, brown, and rainbow trout, small mouth bass, walleye, northern pike, and Kokanee salmon. The reservoir offers a good opportunity to fish in late spring, when the rivers in the area are high with runoff. Fishing in Vallecito Creek inside the Wilderness is restricted to artificial flies and lures.

Fishing License

Colorado Parks and Wildlife
(800) 244-5613

cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/Fishing.aspx

Water Recreation

Motorized boating is allowed, with boats and equipment rentals available. A boat permit is also required for use of motorized crafts. Boats can only be launched from Vallecito Marina on the west side of the reservoir where they can be inspected for mussels. Rentals are available for pontoon and fishing boats.



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