



ISABELLA LAKE, CA CONSTRUCTION

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

Location & Description

Isabella Lake Dam (consisting of a Main Dam, Auxiliary Dam and service spillway) is located about 40 miles northeast of Bakersfield in Kern County, California, and became fully operational in 1953. The Main Dam is located near the confluence of the north and south forks of the Kern River and the Auxiliary Dam is located about half a mile east of the Main Dam. The Main Dam is a 185-foot-high earth-fill dam, and the Auxiliary Dam is a 100-foot-high earth-fill dam. The service spillway is located between the two dams. The reservoir (Isabella Lake) has a gross storage capacity of 568,075 acre feet.

March 2020



Improvements to the existing service spillway at Isabella Lake, looking west from between the dams toward SR155. (Photo: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Advisory

- Starting March 17, traffic along SR155 near the main dam (where the current detour is) will be temporarily restricted to one-way traffic. This restriction is expected to be in place until the end of September. The signal lights used will have sensors that will help minimize delays.
- USACE has scheduled two public scoping meetings – March 18 at the Senior Center in Lake Isabella and March 19 at the USFS administrative building in Kernville. These meetings are intended to help inform the public regarding site selection for a permanent USFS visitor center in Lake Isabella and to collect public comment for that project. Meeting times for both locations will be 6-7:30 p.m. Look for a news release with more details in the next few days.

Looking Ahead (Next 30+ days)

- Construction on SR155 near the Main Dam will continue into mid-2020. Periodic delays will continue so the contractor can move equipment, and as mentioned above, traffic will be temporarily restricted to one-way traffic beginning March 17 to add room to continue construction on the right abutment wall.
- Production blasting for the new emergency spillway continues. The contractor will establish a safety perimeter to restrict access during each blast, including along SR155 near the main dam, which will be temporarily closed during blasting operations.
- Work on the Old Isabella, South Fork, and Auxiliary Dam recreation areas continues. The contractor will make their best effort to minimize impact to the public and provide temporary replacement for facilities if there are service interruptions. The recreation areas will remain open but the contractor will mark certain areas off-limits to ensure public safety during construction operations. This work is expected to be complete by Memorial Day this year.

Current Lake Status (as of March 9, 2020)

The current pool resides at 173,796 acre-feet, which is 48% of restricted pool, and an elevation of 2,561 feet-IPD. As part of our interim risk reduction measures, Isabella Lake has a restricted elevation of 2,589 feet-IPD (361,250 acre-feet). Current lake status can be viewed at <https://go.usa.gov/xE2pX>

Milestones	
Pre-Construction Engineering and Design	Complete
Construction of USFS Fire Station and Admin Facilities	Complete
U.S. Forest Service Visitor's Information Center	In Planning
Dams and Spillways Construction	2018-2022