



ISABELLA LAKE, CA CONSTRUCTION

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

Location & Description

Isabella Lake Dam (consisting of a main dam, auxiliary dam, emergency and service spillways) 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 emergency and service spillways are located between the two dams. The reservoir (Isabella Lake) has a gross storage capacity of 568,075 acre feet.

May 2023



Photo shows aerial visual overlooking the Labyrinth Weir and Main Dam Control Tower.

Advisory

- The Phase II Dams and Spillways contractor continues construction activities. As a result, the site including Engineers Point is an active construction area and is off limits to the public.
- USACE policy prohibits public operation of unmanned aircraft systems, such as drones, on or above federal lands and waters managed by USACE. The policy is intended to ensure critical infrastructure security and public safety.

Accomplishments

- The Isabella Dam Safety Modification Project was the recipient of the USSD 2023 Excellence in Constructed Project Award on April 18, 2023. This annual award recognizes a water resource project with significant contributions to the dam community and /or to society that met the challenges of the nation's aging infrastructure in an era of limited financial resources and increasing environmental awareness.
- Concrete work on the Labyrinth Weir Apron was completed last week.

Looking Ahead (Next 30+ days)

- Ongoing construction efforts continue into spring/summer 2023; that will not affect the functionality of the project and includes road work, utilities, site restoration, disposal of waste materials, final clean-up of local rock surfaces, and demobilization.
- In support of the USFS Visitor Center project, USACE continues working closely with the U.S. Forest Service on the design process. The 35% design is scheduled through the beginning of June. The Main Dam Campground is projected to be in the 95% design stage by the end of this month.

Current Lake Status (as of May 4, 2023)

The current pool resides at 349,115 acre-feet (elevation 2,536 feet-IPD), which is 97% of restricted pool and 201% of flood conservation pool.

Isabella Lake has been approved to temporarily exceed the operating restriction of 361,250 acre-feet (elevation 2,585.5 feet-IPD) up to gross storage capacity, outside of flood season. During flood season (~November-April), flood conservation pool is restricted to 170,000 acre-feet (elevation 2,560.4 feet-IPD). Current lake status can be viewed at <https://www.spk-wc.usace.army.mil/fcgi-bin/hourly.py?report=isb>

Completion Milestones	
Pre-Construction Engineering and Design	Complete
Construction of USFS Fire Station and Admin Facilities	Complete
Dams and Spillways Construction	2023
Permanent Operations Facilities	2024
U.S. Forest Service Visitor's Information Center	2025