FISH LAKE NON-MOTORIZED BOAT LAUNCH FACILITY
PROJECT SCOPE AND BUDGET SUMMARY

The Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) proposes to fund up to $525,000 from the Waterway Connection Initiative (WCI) funding to the United States Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest (USFS) to engineer, design, acquire permits, and construct non-motorized boating access improvements at the Fish Lake Non-Motorized Boat Launching Facility (NMBLF) in the Six Rivers National Forest.

PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE

Engineering, permitting, construction, and inspection of the following items:

- 8’ wide by 50’ long low freeboard boarding float, & concrete abutment
- 12 single vehicle gravel parking stalls, 1 accessible concrete parking stall near the restroom (3 single gravel parking stalls and 1 accessible concrete stall west of the existing restroom, 2 gravel stalls east of the restroom, convert campsite #19 into 5 stalls, and create 2 more gravel stalls near the loading/unloading zone. Gravel parking can be asphalt if feasible.)
- An accessible gravel loading/unloading zone. (Gravel loading/unloading zone can be asphalt if feasible)
- An accessible path of travel from the accessible parking near the restroom area to the low freeboard boarding float
- Project credit sign and boater parking signage (signage installed to designate for day use boater parking only)

Background:

Access to the facility from the town of Hoopa is via CA 96. Head north on CA 96 for approximately 16 miles; turn left onto Bluff Creek Trail continue for approximately 5 miles; arrive at the Fish Lake Campgrounds at Bluff Creek Trail, Orleans, CA 95556.

Fish Lake is the second-largest freshwater lake in California's Humboldt County and receives the highest visitor use of the county’s developed recreation sites. The largest freshwater lake is Big Lagoon, located seven miles north of Trinidad, along Highway 101.

Fish Lake offers camping, fishing, boating, and hiking on more than five miles of trails. The campground provides both tent and RV campsites. Campground amenities include drinking water and vault toilets.

The USFS currently charges a $5 per day use fee and does not charge any boating fees. Visitors can enjoy access to Fish Lake for fishing, kayaking, canoeing, or simply enjoying the scenic views. Boating at the lake is a popular activity and the lake is a non-motorized boating only lake.

There is an existing narrow and steep concrete boat launch ramp for vehicles towing trailers located at the northern end of the lake that was funded and constructed by USFS in 2002. DBW has not funded boating improvements at Fish Lake before.

The ramp is suitable for vehicle-trailer launching but could be challenging for hand launching, especially for individuals with mobility challenges. Parking at the concrete ramp is limited. According to the Forest Service, the lot can accommodate approximately six vehicles with trailers, limiting day use access for car top or hand launch vessels.

The water surrounding the ramp is infested with Eurasian Milfoil weed. The weed is an invasive species but is restricted to the north end of the lake due to its need for shallow water and topography of the lake. The Forest Service conducts an annual hand clearing of the weeds to create a path for launched vessels, but boaters tend to avoid the northern end of the lake and prefer to boat near the day use area, which has picnic tables, shade, and single vehicle parking.

According to USFS, the boating season at Fish Lake is usually June through October and is determined by regulations protecting the Port Orford cedars. The lake and campground are closed during the wet weather months due to the presence of Port Orford cedar root disease.

Waterway Connections Initiative

In the FY 2021-22, the Department of Parks and Recreation was allocated approximately $154 million in a direct appropriation in the state's Budget Act, SB-170. This funding was intended to expand waterway-related outdoor access to under-resourced, underserved, or park-poor urban communities with a population of at least 2,500, that lack connection to waterways. Of this appropriation, DBW was allocated $10 million for local assistance boat launching facility projects that fit this funding criteria.

The town of Hoopa is 21 miles south of Fish Lake and has a population of 3,200. Hoopa is identified as a disadvantaged community. The town and the surrounding Hoopa Valley Reservation faces challenges related to income and employment. There is limited access to resources such as reliable internet, technology, and a vulnerability to wildfires. The community currently lacks waterway-related outdoor access for non-motorized boating. The proposed project will provide a safe and convenient ADA accessible boating access at Fish Lake that will improve water-related recreational opportunities to the town of Hoopa and the surrounding Hoopa Valley Reservation.

Existing Conditions:

Boaters launching at the existing concrete ramp need to navigate across a thick patch of invasive weeds to access open water. They typically like to boat around the day use area, which has picnic tables and shade but to access this area from the water, they tie

their boats to an old log and traverse an embankment to access the day use area. The embankment is uneven, steep, and comprised of fine clay, which is slick and sticky when wet, making it difficult to gain traction. The area surrounding the embankment also has many obstructions from low hanging tree branches, shrubs, and exposed tree roots.

The Forest Service is proposing to develop boating access at the day use area which does not currently meet accessibility requirements and has only a handful of single vehicle parking spaces available.

There is one existing ADA compliant restroom near the day use area. However, there is no accessible path of travel for boaters between the restroom and the proposed boating access location.

Grant Award Includes:

Funding to reimburse for costs to design, permit, construct, and inspect the non-motorized improvements identified above under PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE. The BUDGET below and PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE identified above supersede the USFS application and all previous designs and cost estimate.

The USFS and DBW agreed to the proposed Fish Lake NMBLF Project Cost Estimate in Table 1 below on page 4, and USFS developed the concept design included on page 6 of this exhibit.

Project Funding Excludes:

Any costs associated with administration, owner's representation, project management, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related studies, picnic tables, shade structures, bike racks, etc., landscaping (unless required by permits), and all other non-boating related campground amenities.

The Forest Service completed NEPA compliance requirements for the proposed project and both the California Water Resources Board and U.S. Army Corps agree the Forest Service will not need the 401 and 404 permits.

Conditions:

The Forest Service agrees to abandon campsite #19 to create 5 additional day use boater parking spaces.

All identified boater parking spaces will have signage reserving the parking for recreational boaters only.

Table 1: Fish Lake NMBLF Project Cost Estimate

CONSTRUCTION SCOPE	COST ESTIMATE
Mobilization/Demolition	$ 75,000
8' wide by 50' long low freeboard boarding float, & concrete abutment	200,000
12 single vehicle gravel parking stalls, 1 accessible concrete parking stall, and an accessible gravel loading/unloading zone	75,000
Accessible path of travel from the accessible parking near the restroom area to the low freeboard boarding float	25,000
Project credit sign and boater parking signage	11,029
Construction Subtotal	**$ 386,029**
NON-CONSTRUCTION COSTS	
Escalation 6%	23,162
Contingency 10%	38,603
Engineering 12%	46,324
Inspection 5%	19,301
Permits 3%	11,581
Non-Construction Subtotal	**$ 138,971**
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	**$ 525,000**

Source = USFS Engineering Cost Estimate dated May 19, 2025
*Percentages are of the Construction Subtotal
*3% per year for 2 years = 6% escalation

PROJECT METRICS

Annual Launches

Current: The USFS has not tracked annual boat launches at the facility but estimates to have approximately 1,000 non-motorized launches per year.

Future: The USFS and DBW estimate the annual number of public non-motorized boat launches at the improved facility will be 2,000 launches per year.

Annual User Days

A typical non-motorized boat can accommodate one person per vessel. Therefore, DBW estimates that the annual user days for this facility will be 2,000 annual user days.

Unit Day Value

The 2018 California Boating Needs Assessment Study established a unit day value in the Northern California. The unit day value is an established way to measure recreational benefits boaters gain from the experience of boating on a particular body of water. The unit day value, adjusted for the consumer price index (CPI), is $46.65. DBW estimates that the unit day value for the proposed facility will increase after the facility is improved to $93,300 annually (unit day value x projected annual user days).

Benefit-Cost Ratio

A common method used in the analysis of investments is to establish net present value of the benefits and costs associated with a project. If the Benefit/Cost ratio exceeds “1” then the investment, weighed against available investment alternatives, is worthy of consideration from a financial perspective. The results of this analysis are as follows:

Benefit: The total benefits over the 20-year life of the project are estimated to be $645,480.

Cost: Net costs over the 20-year grant period are estimated to be $525,160.

Ratio: Assuming a total project cost of $525,000 to complete designs, acquire permits, and complete construction, the Benefit-Cost Ratio is 1.23.

Fish Lake Non-Motorized BLF Concept Design