
WIEST LAKE BOAT LAUNCHING FACILITY



Existing Parking Area and Proposed Expansion



Existing Ramada

County of Imperial
\$1,430,000 Grant

SUMMARY

The Boating and Waterways Commission is being asked to provide Advice and Comment on the County of Imperial's (County) request for a \$1,430,000 construction grant from the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund (HWRF) for improvements to the Wiest Lake Boat Launching Facility (BLF).

The proposed grant would fund permitting and construction expenses for the following improvements: demolish and replace the existing lakeshore shade structures (ramadas); add slope protection to protect the footings of the shade structures, resurface and stripe the existing parking area; add a new boater restroom, boarding floats with gangway abutment and three guide piles; and add accessible pathways, security lighting, and project signage.

There are no expected problematic financial, engineering, permitting, stakeholder, or public access issues associated with this project.

The Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) seeks Commission Advice and Comment on this proposed \$1,430,000 Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund construction grant to the County of Imperial for the Wiest Lake BLF improvements described in this February 9, 2023, Feasibility Report.

GRANT APPLICANT AND PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION

Grant Applicant

The grant applicant for this project is the County of Imperial which owns and operates the Wiest Lake County Park. The County would be responsible for operating and maintaining the proposed boat launching facility for 20 years after construction.

Commission Site Visit

Boating and Waterways Commission members completed an official site visit to the Wiest Lake BLF on February 8, 2023, as part of the Commission tour.

Previous Commission Action

In FY 1974/75 the Commission approved a \$50,000 grant to construct the original existing Wiest Lake BLF.

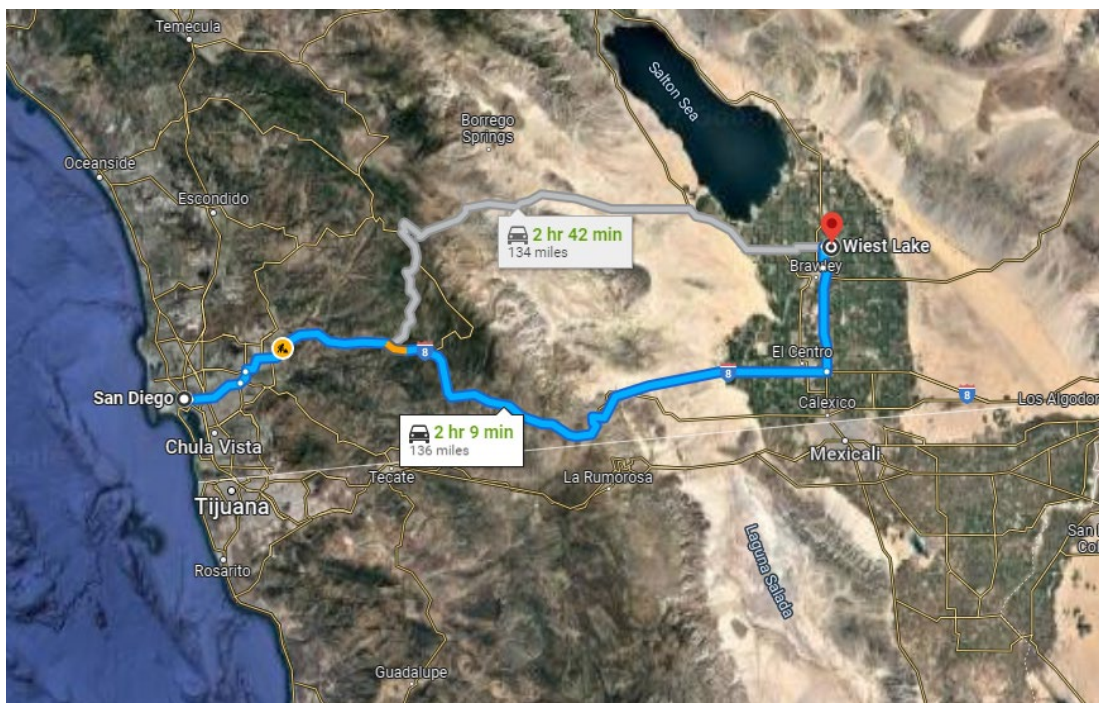
In FY 2013/14, the Commission approved a \$1,050,000 planning and construction grant for improvements to the Wiest Lake BLF.

In September 2020, The County of Imperial requested, and DBW agreed, to a scope reduction of the Wiest Lake BLF grant to only complete the project designs. Remaining grant funds totaling \$977,583 reverted to the HWRF.

GENERAL LOCATION AND AREA

Location

Wiest Lake County Park (Park) is located in Imperial Valley, along the Alamo River, in Imperial County. From San Diego on Interstate 8, exit at Imperial Avenue and head north to the City of Brawley. From Brawley, go east on State Route 78 for approximately one mile. Turn left on State Route 111 and travel four miles. Turn right on Rutherford road and continue for two miles. Turn right on Dietrich and continue for ½ mile to the entrance of Wiest Lake County Park at 5351 Dietrich Road, Brawley, CA 92227.



(source: Google Earth)

Area

In 2021, the population of Imperial County was 179,851 and with more than 26,500 people in the City of Brawley. Wiest Lake County Park is 25 miles north of the Mexico border in Imperial Valley and surrounded by farm and ranch land. Rainfall averages three inches per year and

temperatures range from 60 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to well over 100 degrees in the summer, at times reaching as high as 130 degrees. Wiest Lake offers the community much needed respite from the heat and boating opportunities in an area with limited bodies of fresh water.

Wiest Lake County Park

The 74-acre park includes the 45-acre Wiest Lake, a man-made and County regulated lake, fed by the Alamo River. Wiest Lake is used commercially for irrigation of surrounding farms and recreationally for boating, water skiing, kayaking, jet skiing, swimming, and fishing. The Park also includes twenty-five recreational vehicle (RV) spaces and ten spaces for tent camping as well as designated swim, picnic, and biking areas. All facilities are owned and operated by the County.

The hot season at Wiest Lake lasts from June to September. July is the hottest month of the year in Brawley, with an average high of 107°F. Due to the extreme summer heat, the BLF's shade structures (ramadas) are the central gathering place for boaters. Boaters beach their boats under the ramadas or anchor offshore while they picnic and lounge at the shaded water's edge.



Wiest Lake (source: Google Earth)

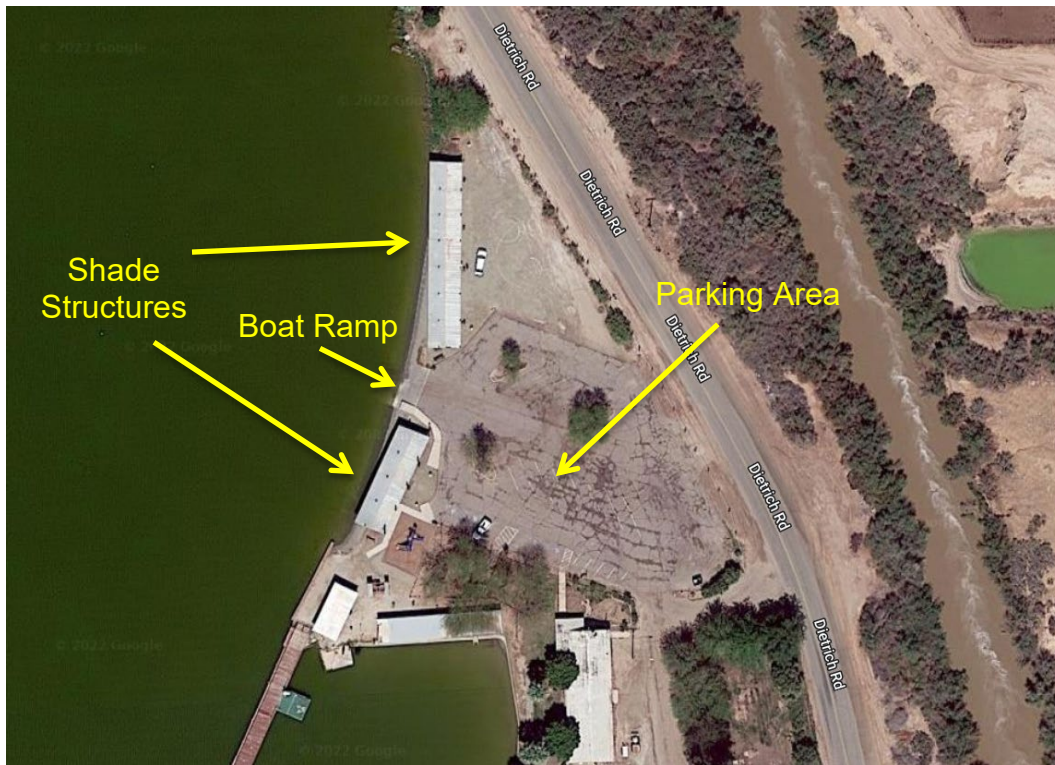
History

Wiest Lake Park was established in the late 1940s as a recreational facility. The Park was initially used for daytrip type activities, such as fishing, boating, picnicking, and swimming. Over time, the park developed an RV park component, making the lake a multi-day destination. The lake is named after John Alfred Wiest, a well-known industrious, agriculturist instrumental in the County's early development as one of California's premier farming regions. The majority of the Park's facilities including the boating ramadas, existing bathroom, fishing dock, swimming area, and office date back to the 1940s and 1950s. The RV spaces were developed in the 1960s. The

most recent addition occurred in 2008 with an expansion of RV spaces, addition of a playground, and improved landscaping.

Existing Conditions

The two existing boating ramadas are nearly 50 years old and suffer from dry rot and insufficient structural support. These structures have very few years left before they become hazardous. The existing concrete boat launch ramp is still in good condition and quite serviceable. The existing parking area needs resurfacing and striping and contains only 12 vehicle-trailer parking spaces. A dirt lot adjacent to the paved parking area is often used for overflow parking. Boaters use the campground and park day use restroom facilities which are not ADA compliant. There are no boarding floats on the lake.



Wiest Lake BLF (source: Google Earth)

Project Status

The County has submitted a grant application and a resolution from the Board of Supervisors supporting the grant application. The County has also determined, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is suitable for a Negative Declaration.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed grant would fund construction costs to update the existing Wiest Lake BLF.

Proposed Project Scope

Shade Structures (Ramadas) – Demolish the existing shade structures and construct two shade structures, one 24' wide by 140' long and the other, 24' wide by 80' long.

Slope protection – Add riprap at the footings of the shade structures. Riprap will protect the footings from lakeside erosion, and then be covered by sand so vessels can still beach as they have historically.

Abutment - Demolish the existing abutment and install a new abutment to fit the new pile-guided boarding float.

Boarding Float and Piles - Install an 8' wide by 50' long steel frame boarding float with concrete decking that will be attached to the boat launching ramp abutment and supported by three guide piles.

Parking Area - Resurface and stripe the existing parking area to include a minimum of 19 vehicle-trailer parking spaces, one vehicle-trailer ADA parking space, 10 single-vehicle parking spaces and one accessible single-vehicle parking space.

Boater Restroom - Install a new single unit unisex ADA compliant boater restroom near the boat launch ramp.

Accessible Path of Travel - Install an accessible path of travel from the accessible parking stalls to the boater restroom, and to the top of the boat launch ramp.

Storm Drainage System - Adjust the existing storm drain catch basin and install a new storm drainage system at the BLF.

Site Lighting - Install new site lighting to improve safety at the facility.

Signage - Install directional and overhead powerline warning signage at the facility and a new concrete project credit sign giving credit to the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund for funding the project.

Cost Estimate

The County estimates the project cost total as currently proposed is \$1,430,000. Table 1 (see below) identifies the current cost estimate. This estimate includes a contingency budget (10% of the construction subtotal) to supplement any unforeseen construction expenses that may occur during the construction process that affect the approved scope items.

Table 1: Wiest Lake BLF Project Cost Estimate	
CONSTRUCTION SCOPE	COST ESTIMATE
Mobilization/Demobilization	\$ 60,000
Demolition	\$ 123,000
Shade Structures (Ramadas)	\$ 330,000
Slope Protection	\$ 16,000
Abutment	\$ 20,000
Boarding Float and Piles	\$ 147,000
Parking Area	\$ 187,000
Boater Restroom	\$ 81,000
Accessible Path of Travel	\$ 58,000
Storm Drainage System	\$ 9,000
Site Lighting	\$ 23,700
Signage	\$ 14,002
*Construction Subtotal	1,068,702
NON-CONSTRUCTION SCOPE	
*Escalation **10%	106,870
*DBW Contingency 10%	106,870
Geotechnical Testing	30,000
*Permitting 5%	53,435
*Inspection 6%	64,122
Non-Construction Subtotal	\$ 361,298
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$ 1,430,000
Source = County Of Imperial Grant Application dated January 05, 2023	
Cost Estimate	
<i>**5% per year for 2 years = 10% escalation</i>	

Project Status

The project's plans and cost estimate have been completed to the 100% design level (see Wiest Lake BLF Design) on page 9.

Timeline

If approved, the County estimates construction will be complete by June 2025.

Engineering Feasibility

There are no particularly difficult or unusual problems associated with the proposed project.

Environmental Impact and Permits

The proposed project received a recommended Negative Declaration by the County Environmental Evaluation Commission on October 27, 2012. The Negative Declaration was publicly circulated from November 1, 2011 to November 21, 2011, and the document was certified by the County Planning Commission on February 8, 2012. The Notice of Determination was filed on February 13, 2012.

The County has identified a need for permits or approvals from County Public Works Department, Environmental Health Services, and the Air Pollution Control District.

PROJECT METRICS

Annual Launches

Current: Based on the County's estimates, currently there are 1,598 motorized and 98 non-motorized launches per year. However, without immediate improvements to the facility, the deteriorating conditions will significantly reduce these numbers.

Future: The proposed improvements will revitalize the facility for an estimated twenty years, thereby maintaining the existing usage and increasing its availability to new users. For this analysis, DBW assumes a modest 20 percent increase in immediate usage to 1,800 motorized and 118 non-motorized launches per year.

Annual User Days

Current: DBW estimates that the base annual user days for this facility is currently 3,098 user days. (Annual boat launches * 2.0 boaters)

Future: DBW estimates that the annual user days for this facility this will increase by 20 percent to 3,718 annual user days.

User Day Value

Current: The 2018 Boating Needs Assessment Study estimated a base unit day value in Southern California on an inland, motorized lake. The unit day value is an established way to measure recreational benefits that boaters gain from the experience of boating on a particular body of water. This value, adjusted for CPI, is currently \$50.56 per user. The total current annual user day value for this facility is approximately \$156,635 (user day value * annual user days).

Future: DBW estimates that the total annual user day value for this facility will increase after the facility is constructed by \$31,347, or 20 percent, to \$187,982 (\$23.34 * annual user days).

Benefit-Cost Ratio

Benefit: The total benefit over the 20-year grant period is estimated to be \$2,714,110.

Cost: Net cost over the 20-year grant period is estimated to be \$1,728,777.

Ratio: Assuming a total project cost of \$1,492,417 (\$1.43 million + previous planning grant of \$62,417) to complete designs, acquire permits, and complete construction, the Benefit-Cost Ratio is 1.57.

User Fees

The County currently charges a \$2 per vehicle park entrance fee and a \$5 launch fee at Wiest Lake BLF. The County does not plan to increase fees.

CONCLUSION

The Department's analysis indicates that this project, as proposed, makes needed improvements, is feasible from an engineering perspective, is cost effective, and increases public safety and access.

COMMISSION ADVICE AND COMMENT

DBW seeks Commission Advice and Comment on the proposed \$1,430,000 HWRF construction grant to the County of Imperial for improvements described in this February 09, 2023, Feasibility Report.

WIEST LAKE BLF DESIGN LAYOUT

