

number of swimmers at the reservoir has been decreasing with reductions in lake levels, which has led to the creation of several undesignated swim beaches.

The greatest potential for conflict with swimmers is near Diablo East and San Pedro Canyon. This is where many of the park's visitors swim, and it includes popular PWC boat launches. Buoys warning motorized watercraft to keep out of the official swim areas were vandalized, and PWC users occasionally enter these areas. Amistad is working with the USCG to replace those buoys. Of the five designated swim beaches, all but one are in the area of Diablo East or San Pedro Canyon. Most currently experience little to no use due to low lake levels.

Of the three new undesignated swim beaches, one is also popular with PWC users. All are located in the San Pedro Canyon area. A total of approximately 80 to 120 swimmers use these beaches on busy summer weekend days. An estimated 20 to 25 personal watercraft are launched in this area during peak use days. The potential exists for an accident involving a swimmer, particularly if lake levels rise and swimmer visitation increases to previous levels. Due to the number of visitors involved, impacts at this location are predicted to be moderate adverse. Amistad maintains the authority to close areas to swimming or PWC use should the conflicts escalate. The NRA will also be seeking to increase buoys in swimming areas and work to coordinate land-based and water-based patrols to further mitigate the possibility of swimmer/PWC conflicts.

The remaining reservoir locations would have little or no conflict between PWC users and swimmers because designated and undesignated swim beaches are concentrated in the Diablo East and San Pedro Canyon areas. There is one designated swim beach at Rough Canyon, but the swim area currently has no water due to low lake levels. Thus, conflicts in other areas would constitute negligible, adverse impacts over the short and long term. All motorized vessels are prohibited from entering designated swimming areas. The recreation area continues to work with the USCG to install buoys informing boaters to "Keep Out" of swimming areas.

Overall, PWC use would have minor adverse impacts on swimmers at Amistad National Recreation Area. Impacts would be perceptible to a relatively small number of visitors at localized areas, primarily at San Pedro

Canyon where the undesignated beaches exist.

PWC Users/Other Boater Conflicts. Other motorized watercraft are distributed throughout the reservoir. Their use patterns are not exactly the same as those for personal watercraft, but the two groups do use the same areas. Motorboats are concentrated in the Castle Canyon area, the Devils River area between the Devils Shores subdivision and Indian Springs, and the area in front of Amistad Dam. The same launch ramps that are popular with PWC users are also popular with motorboaters. The Spur 454 boat ramp, Devils River upstream of the Rough Canyon boat ramp, and the area in front of the Diablo East harbor have the most potential for conflicts between PWC users and motorboaters. These three launch areas experience the highest visitor use. Traffic gets congested in these areas, which increases the risk of collision and the potential for conflicts. Because both motorized boat and PWC use are projected to increase each year (2% and 1.5% respectively), the potential for conflicts could increase in this area, resulting in minor to moderate adverse impacts.

The remaining areas of the reservoir would experience negligible conflicts between PWC users and other motorboaters, due to the small number of watercraft being launched at these areas.

Overall, PWC use would continue to have minor adverse impacts on other motorized boat users at Amistad National Recreation Area. Impacts would be perceptible to visitors at localized areas, primarily at Spur 454, Devils River upstream of Rough Canyon, and the Diablo East harbor. Conflicts at other locations would remain negligible because use is lower, and conflicts would be less likely to occur.

Allowing PWC use would have short- and long-term, minor to moderate adverse impacts on visitor conflicts and safety in the areas near Spur 454, the Devils River upstream of Rough Canyon, and in front of the Diablo East harbor due to the number of visitors and boats present on high use days. Conflicts at other locations would remain negligible because use is lower, and conflicts would be less likely to occur.

Cumulative impacts related to visitor conflicts and safety would be minor to moderate for all user groups in the short and long term, particularly near the three areas listed above. Cumulative impacts in other segments would be negligible because of reduced use.

Cultural Resources

Under the proposed rule, PWC use would be allowed within Amistad National Recreation Area with few locational restrictions. PWC users would continue to have access to archeological and submerged cultural resources under this alternative. Four national historic districts within the national recreation area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places; additional sites are located outside the districts. Not all identified sites have been formally evaluated for national register eligibility.

The most likely impact to archeological and submerged cultural sites would result from PWC users landing in areas and illegally collecting or damaging artifacts. According to park staff, looting and vandalism of cultural resources is not a substantial problem. A direct correlation of impacts attributed to PWC users is difficult to draw, since many of these areas are also accessible to hikers or other watercraft users. Under this proposed rule the low number of PWC users within the national recreation area would have only minor adverse impacts on potentially listed archeological resources.

Allowing PWC use under this proposed regulation is not expected to negatively affect the overall condition of cultural resources because site specific condition inventories, surveys and mitigation would still be conducted. To further reduce the likelihood of damage to cultural resources, this rule proposes to close all or a portion of Hidden Cave Cove, Painted Canyon, Seminole Canyon and all terrestrial cave and karst features. Closing these areas will protect a variety of resources but most notably the cultural resources located in these areas including cave drawings and lithic artifacts.

PWC use within the national recreation area could have minor adverse impacts on potentially listed archeological sites and submerged resources from possible illegal collection and vandalism. (For an explanation of terms such as "negligible" and "adverse" in regard to cultural resources see page 145 the Environmental Assessment.)

On a cumulative basis impacts to all visitor activities could result in minor to moderate adverse impacts on those resources that are readily accessible, due to the number of visitors and the potential for illegal collection or destruction. PWC use could have minor adverse impacts on cultural resources from possible illegal collection and vandalism.