



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • (213) 217-6485 • www.mwdh2o.com

Note to editors: Digital color photos of 2008 wildflowers available on request

Contacts: Rob Hallwachs, (213) 217-6450; (213) 324-1255 mobile
Bob Muir, (213) 217-6930; (213) 324-5213 mobile

March 4, 2009

**WILDFLOWERS WILL CARPET HILLSIDES AT DIAMOND VALLEY LAKE;
RECENT RAINS EXPECTED TO BRING SPECTACULAR DISPLAY OF SPRING COLORS
*Seasonal wildflower reserve trail opens to the public Friday***

The recent rains have not ended California's drought—or the need to conserve water—but they *are* expected to bring a bounteous show of wildflowers in coming weeks to the hillsides around Diamond Valley Lake.

“While this year's rains and snows are far from fully replenishing drinking water reservoirs in Northern and Southern California, they will bring us spectacular displays of poppies and other wildflowers at Diamond Valley Lake,” said Wendy Picht, senior environmental specialist with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the regional water importer and wholesaler that owns and operates the reservoir at Hemet, in southwestern Riverside County.

The seasonal wildflower trail that adjoins the lake's east marina, and is part of the Southwest Riverside Multi-Species Reserve, will open to the public Friday [March 6], said reserve naturalist William Wagner. The trail, which traverses nesting areas for protected species, is only open during wildflower bloom, and visitors must stay on the trails.

“The wildflowers color-palette includes orange California Poppies, deep blue Arroyo Lupine, yellow Brittlebush, and crimson-to-purple Owl's Clover, among many others,” Wagner said. “The blooms should last about a month or longer and are most spectacular during mid-morning, when they have fully opened to the day's sun.”

The 1.3-mile seasonal wildflower trail is a loop trail and rated as an easy-to-moderate hike, with some rugged terrain. Open from 6:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., it is about a half-mile from the lake's East Marina parking area, along a portion of the Lakeview Trail that also is designated for shoreline fishing.

more

Visitors can reach Diamond Valley Lake's East Marina by entering at Searl and Domenigoni parkways in Hemet. The \$7 entrance/parking fee includes a trail map and a wildflower brochure.

Two other Diamond Valley Lake trails are open to the public year-round and also afford good views of the blooming flowers: the 26.1-mile Lakeview hiking and bicycling trail that circles the 4,500-acre lake, and the 5.9-mile North Hills trail for equestrians and hikers.

Pets are not allowed on the trails or in the marina.

A third option is to rent one of the lake's pontoon boats, bring fishing poles and lunch, and enjoy the 360-degree views from the lake itself. Boat rental and fishing information is at **dvlake.com**. Due to low lake levels, the public boat-launch ramp is closed, but rental boats are still available for use by the public.

In addition, Diamond Valley Lake features the Western Center for Archaeology and Paleontology, and Metropolitan's Diamond Valley Lake Visitor Center, both near the Domenigoni Parkway entrance.

Related information on California native plants and water-saving tips are at the Web site **bewaterwise.com**. For more information about the seasonal wildflower trail call 1-800-590-Lake or (961) 926-7201.

###

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.