



## More than 150,000 pounds of trout stocked in Lake McClure to help population after historic drought

**For Immediate Release:** July 8, 2019

**Contact:** Mike Jensen

209-354-2856

[mjensen@mercedid.org](mailto:mjensen@mercedid.org)

As part of its long-term environmental stewardship efforts, Merced Irrigation District is undertaking actions to restore the Lake McClure trout population that was severely impacted during the recent multi-year statewide drought.

This last week Lake McClure was stocked with more than 150,000 pounds of rainbow and brook trout as a crucial and immediate step to recovery. Lake McClure was stocked in the past but fresh plants have not occurred until MID's recent action.

Prior to the drought, among the worst in the modern era, Lake McClure had been a premiere trout fishing destination. The Lake had both a natural fishery and a stocking program. Although the reservoir recovered after the drought, the trout population has yet to reestablish itself to abundant pre-drought conditions.

"This stocking is an absolutely superb step in restoring Lake McClure's fishery, supports MID in meeting numerous objectives and restores an incredible opportunity for fishing on Lake McClure," said MID General Manager John Sweigard.

Over the years, MID has consistently advocated for the health and scientific management of fishery populations on the Merced River and within Lake McClure. This includes advocating and supporting efforts to restore natural riverine habitat for salmon-rearing after it was altered by historic mining on the Merced River. The trout stocking will also help MID in supporting recreation and trout management at Lake McClure as part of its relicensing process through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The trout stocked in Lake McClure included thousands of pounds of trophy-sized fish reaching up to 18 pounds. More than 6,000 trout were planted that were over four pounds and more than 20 inches in length. More than 1,500 were planted weighing at least 8 pounds and measuring up to 30 inches.

The average trophy trout size is about 10 pounds and 2 feet in length.

As part of the trout plant, six fish were tagged and will each be worth a significant cash prize to be announced in the coming days.

“We encourage anyone and everyone to visit Lake McClure,” said MID Parks and Recreation Director Brooke Gutierrez. “Come on out, stay at our campgrounds, and see if you can bring in these tagged trout and a trophy-sized fish.”

Gutierrez also encouraged anglers to stop by the kiosks and have photos of their catch taken.

MID expects to develop a long-term partnership with Calaveras Trout Farm, located on the Merced River downstream of the reservoir, to ensure the long-term health of the trout populations in MID’s lakes and recreation areas. MID will monitor angler success and look to maintain an excellent fishery into the future.

For more on Lake McClure recreation, visit [www.LakeMcClure.com](http://www.LakeMcClure.com).

###