

# Loch Lomond

## likely to last through season

But the biggest trout and bass  
have been caught, ranger says

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Rangers at Loch Lomond Reservoir in Lompico are optimistic that the popular fishing spot will remain open until mid-September.

"We should be able to make it through the season," said Walt Cacace, chief park ranger at the 3,200-acre preserve in the Santa Cruz Mountains. "As long as they conserve in Santa Cruz, we should be OK."

The storage reservoir, which the city of Santa Cruz Water Department uses to supply its customers when the San Lorenzo River is dry, had been closed to anglers since 1987 because of the drought. It was reopened to the public April 8 after winter rains raised the water level to 563 feet above sea level, about 14 feet below capacity. Rangers, who in previous years kept the park open from March 1 to Sept. 15, warned they would close it earlier this year if water levels dropped too much.

"If it gets down below the 550

elevation, the banks are too steep to safely launch boats," Cacace said.

Lured by hopes of hooking a fish that had had five years to grow, thousands of eager anglers mobbed the preserve on opening day. Rangers, who attributed the size of the crowd to the media attention the reopening received, were forced to turn away hundreds of cars. To the dismay of nearby residents, traffic on Lompico Road was backed up for miles in both directions.

The fishing frenzy faded after the first few days. With the exception of Easter week, Cacace said, the visitor totals have returned to predrought normals.

"We get our largest crowds on the weekends, and the weekdays are usually pretty quiet," he said.

Anglers are allowed to keep five fish a day. Most of the biggest trout and bass in the reservoir were caught during the first two months of the season. Cacace describes the fishing now as fair.