



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

Team rowing powers this trio across Loch Lomond on Saturday. There is no swimming allowed at the reservoir, which stores three-quarters of Santa Cruz's drinking water.

Reservoir

Continued from Page A11

Tourists, day trippers and natives could have their hassles of jockeying for space on Santa Cruz beaches, folks said.

It was all too much for them.

Karen Beltramo of Live Oak sat on a parking lot curb beside the recreation area, watching her 21-month-old daughter, Carmen, explore the finer details of dry brush.

"I found more," said the gravelly-voiced toddler. She reached out her palm to show specks to a stranger.

"They're seed pods," her mom said. "Seed pods," the child repeated.

No swimming rules at Loch Lomond, which stores three-quarters of Santa Cruz's drinking water, helped to feed Saturday's frenzy of idleness.

Little Beltramo pointed to the glassy lake. "Water," she said. "I want to get in."

Her mom smiled and shook her head no.

Along the trail that winds around the lake, Eleanor Lattner and Ryan Deller headed back toward the

parking lot with fishing poles but no catch.

The state Department of Fish and Game stocks the reservoir with rainbow trout about every three weeks from March to July. Other fish — largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish — make their home there too.

But Saturday's activity level seemed universal, even among the gilled.

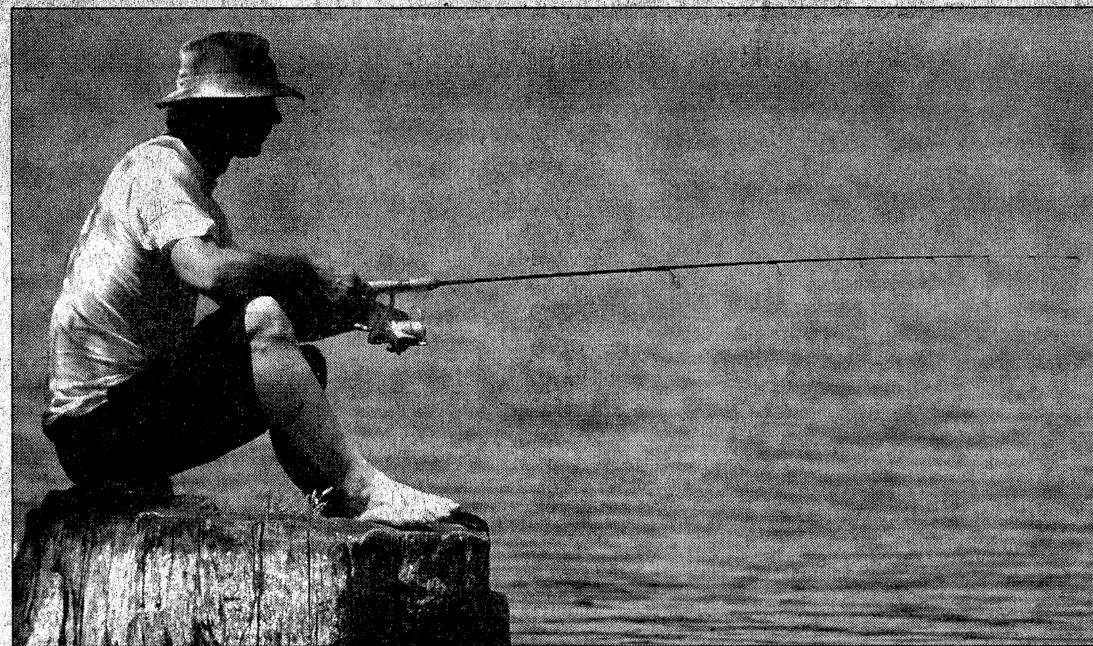
Lattner and Deller discussed various conspiracy theories during their walk back, including one that had a completely fishless lake, and actors walking around posing as successful fishermen, only to taunt them.

In more than six trips to the lake, Lattner said she had seen only one fish actually pulled from the water.

"Whenever we see someone with fish, it's always exactly six fish perfectly hanging from the line," Lattner said. "And the people always have the L.L. Bean wardrobe from head to toe."

"They're definitely actors," she said. "Poorly paid extras, I'm sure."

After an hour of keeping an occasional eye on his poles, Villalobos still had seen no movement.



Loch Lomond is a footwear-optional environment.

He wasn't buying the fishless lake theory though.

"Oh, they're out there," he said. As far as he's concerned, there's a reasonable explanation for the slow fish day.

"See, the colder water at the bottom has more oxygen and the

hotter water at the top means less oxygen."

Waiting for science takes time, and today, he said, he had plenty of it.

Near-future plans, Villalobos said, include sleeping, chatting with strangers and watching some television on a small set he likes to

bring for days like this.

None will require action.

"I'm a lazy-man fisherman," he explained. "I like to sit down and that's it. Period."

Contact Nancy Pasternack at npasternack@santacruzsentinel.com.