

John Martin Reservoir State Park



Who we are

John Martin Reservoir became a state park in 2001 and was built as a flood control and irrigation reservoir by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1939 and 1948. When full, John Martin Reservoir is one of the largest reservoirs in the state, and it is known for its excellent fishing, boating and waterfowl hunting. The park is also a bird-watcher's paradise with a diverse community of over 400 resident and migratory birds. In recent years we are becoming more widely known for the tarantula "migration" which occurs in southeast Colorado in the early fall. The mild southeast Colorado weather provides year-round opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Top attractions

- The reservoir provides uncrowded boating and water skiing, as well as spectacular conditions for a wide variety of wind watersports.
- There are many fishing and hunting opportunities. Casting from shore or boat, anglers catch walleye, saugeye, bass, wiper, crappie, perch and catfish.
- The park is recognized as one of the premier birding locations in the interior U.S., including a designation by the Audubon Society as an "Important Bird Area."
- The park is located in a history-rich portion of the state with dinosaur tracks, petroglyphs, and a portion of the Santa Fe Trail all located on and near the park.
- The park is close to several southeastern Colorado historic landmarks, including: Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site in La Junta, the Big Timbers Museum in Lamar, the John W. Rawlings Museum in Las Animas, the Camp Amache National Historic Site in Granada, the Boggsville Historic Site in Las Animas, the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in Eads, and the Comanche National Grasslands between La Junta and Campo.
- The park offers year-round wildlife viewing and camping.

Our partners

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Bent County
- Southeast Colorado Regional Tourism Group
- Santa Fe Trail Association

Challenges we face

- We are working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve our delivery of programs to the public. We continue to seek ways to combine efforts when possible to ensure that visiting this eastern plains park remains a pleasant and attractive outdoor experience for customers.
- The park experiences fluctuating water levels due to long-term drought. CPW has spent a lot of time and effort identifying ways to locate and provide a sustainable water supply to maintain the fishery as well as boating and other forms of flat-water recreation.
- We continue to strive to ensure we stay relevant with our customer base. We target the known user groups such as boaters, campers and anglers while always keeping an eye out for ways to include new groups and introduce them to outdoor recreation at our location.
- We are working toward a more comprehensive trail management and development plan.
- We are supplementing operational and staffing needs by expanding our volunteer forces, particularly during the high use season.

Volunteer Activities

- The Campground host program provides valuable services to campers and assists park staff during the long camping season.
- The Naturalist program offers a way to connect our park to our visitors, by providing insightful information in the form of interpretation on campfire talks, hikes, programs and events.
- Visitor Center/Office Support provides experience in helping customers understand our agency and our park. These positions provide much needed coverage during our shoulder season and winter when visitation rates change and staffing cannot cover office operations during the entire week.
- We also offer Special Projects, Group Projects, Raptor Monitoring and Reptile and Amphibian Monitoring.



VIC-SCHENDEL/CPW

John Martin Reservoir State Park

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Park Manager: Dan Kirmer

As of July 1, 2022

Geography

Region: Southeast
County: Bent
Year Acquired: 2001
Elevation: 3,851 ft
Miles From Denver: 215

Acreage

Total Acres: 12,286

Governmental

US Cong Dist: 4th
CO Senate: 35th
CO House: 47th

Employees

Permanent: 5
Temporary: 12
Volunteers (FY 22): 9
Volunteer Hours (FY 22): 352

Annual Visitation

FY 22: ~250,000

Facilities

3 Boat Ramps (2 on Park, 1 on Wildlife area)
Dump Station
3 Group Picnic Areas
Laundry
20 Picnic Sites
Showers (coin-operated)
Visitor Center

Trails

Biking: 4.5 miles
Hiking: 4.5 miles
Horseback: 3 miles
Total: 4.5 miles

Roads

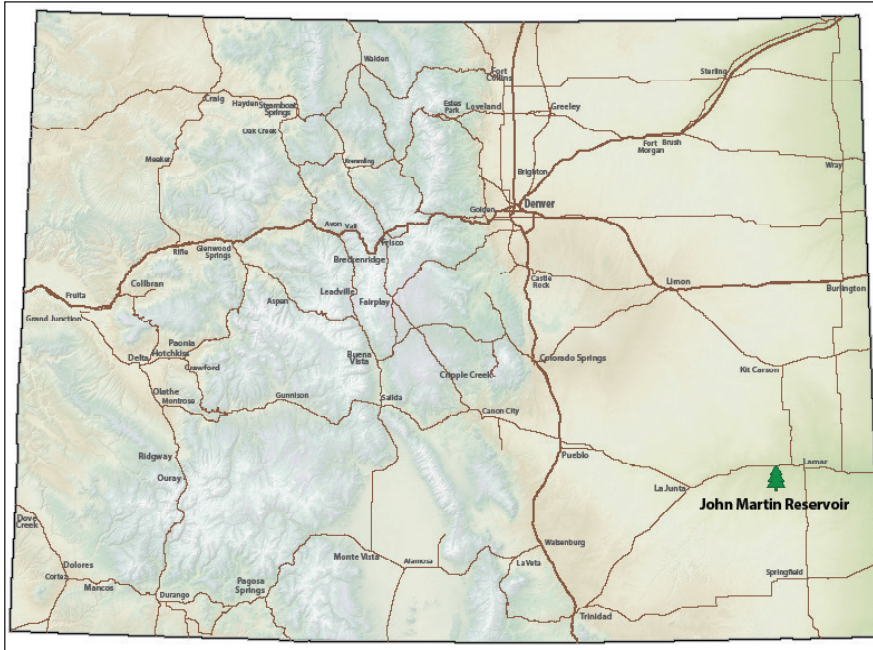
Paved: 4.5 miles
Unpaved: 8 miles

Recreation

Boating
Fishing
Ice Fishing
Ranger/Nature Programs
Sailboarding
Swimming
Wildlife/Bird Viewing
Winter Camping

Camping

Campsites (Basic, year-round): 104
Campsites (Electrical, seasonal): 21
Campsites (Electrical, year-round): 88
Group Facilities (year-round): 3



THOMAS KIMMEL/CPW

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